

Assessment Report 2006-2007

Response to LibQual+

Library staff has been busy the past year working on ways to improve the library's services and appearance. As many know, the national web-based library survey called LibQual+ was re-administered last spring (March 27 through April 14, 2006). Developed by the Association of Research Libraries, it is a tool for measuring library users' perceptions of service quality and identifying areas for improvement. The results of the 2006 LibQual+ survey were very positive and encouraging and showed we are on the right track. However, there were certain areas identified by respondents that needed improvement. In response the library has:

- Reduced the cost of printing (with the help of USG)
- Purchased comfortable furniture (new chairs and work spaces) for many areas in the library
- Created more quiet study areas for students to use
- Using focus group discussions, evaluated the effectiveness of the library's website, and began redesign of the website
- Held training for library staff for improving customer service
- Upgraded the computer workstations throughout the library
- Continued to add quality full text online databases and journal collections
- Created an online book renewal service on our website

The 2006 LibQual+ survey had an increased response compared with the 2003 survey: there were 568 respondents or those who completed the survey as opposed to 422 respondents for the 2003 survey; a 34.6 % increase. Amy Rockwell, Assessment Librarian, and Al Riess, Reference and Electronic Database Librarian, analyzed and compared the results of the 2003 and 2006 surveys, scoured the over 400 written comments generated by both, and met library staff in October 2006 to present and share in detail the surveys' results. This forum allowed us to not only share how well we are doing, but also to identify and discuss areas needing improvement and elicit comments, ideas, and suggestions from library staff. In comparing the two years we administered the LibQual+ survey, we found that in virtually all categories for almost all survey questions, we exceeded minimum expectations in 2006 as measured against 2003, and came closer to desired levels of service quality in 2006 as compared to 2003. Some of the things the library has done since the 2003 survey which might account for this improvement include:

- Opened StudyQuad, a 24 hour computer lab in the library with over 50 computers, both PC and Mac, all connected to a scanner, printer, and photocopier. This area also includes wireless access, public plug-in ports for laptops, and two group study rooms with dry erase marker boards.
- Created an Information Commons, where patrons benefit from united service points (circulation, reference, and help desk in the same general area), and more visible reference librarians
- Purchased modern equipment (computers, printers, scanners, etc.) for the library
- Developed significant full text and online database and periodical collections

Library Instruction Assessment

Librarians continue to use the "short" form to assess their course-related classes. This is a short, four question survey based on the survey technique mentioned in Ten Best Teaching Practices (2000) by Donna Walker Tileston. There is space for students to complete the statement, "Three things I have learned in this class are:" At the bottom of the form is space for students to

complete, “One thing I don’t understand is:” On average, less than 5% of the time, this last statement is completed with a question about library resources, while on average over 95% of the time the first statement has three completed answers. An example of an ENG 102 student’s comment listed under “One thing I don’t understand is” would be: “Are academic journals the same as peer-reviewed journals?” Often this area on the form is left blank or filled in with a statement such as “Nothing – everything was clear to me.” This form allows the teaching librarian to check for student understanding of the material covered in class, and to revise teaching strategies if needed.

The assessment tool for the credit-bearing library instruction classes is a ten question multiple choice instrument that continues to be used as both a pre- and post-test assessment. This tool reflects basic concepts of information literacy that should be covered at some point in each library course. The questions were developed from the college’s Information Management: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education document. This past year found approximately 55% of the students taking LIB 100 would start out with only 5-6 questions (out of ten) correct on the pre-test, while approximately 90% of these students got 9-10 questions correct on the post-test. This indicates that the students are indeed learning the concepts covered in class by the end of the course.

A goal this coming year is to investigate other methods of assessment within library instruction, such as online and other assessment tools.

- Amy Rockwell, 7/10/07