WE ASKED AND THEY TOLD US:
USER AND LIBRARIAN SERVICE PERCEPTIONS

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

What works and what doesn’t work in the IC?

Why two surveys?

Five University Libraries participated

“Meeting the Needs of Student Users in Academic Libraries: Reaching across the great divide”
LIBRARY USERS

- Library user demographics
- Use of in-house library services and resources
- Use of services and resources from outside library
- Means of access
“I didn’t know that they were allowed to help with research.”
DO YOU EVER ASK LIBRARY STAFF FOR HELP?

STUDENT COMMENTS ABOUT ASKING FOR HELP

n = 1069

n = 506
“... I’m a big boy, I can do it myself.”
When not in the library, how do you access library service/resources?

- From laptop, tablet (iPad), netbook: 76.3%
- From home/dorm computer: 62.3%
- From phone: 14.9%

n = 798
What services or resources do you use from outside the library?

- Library databases: 70.5%
- Library online catalog: 43.7%
- Course reserves: 35.1%
- Library online circulation services (renewals, holds, etc.): 29.0%
- Interlibrary loan requests: 23.5%
- Chat / IM / Ask a Librarian service: 14.4%
- Library "how to get started" Web pages: 7.2%
- Phone calls to the reference or circulation desk: 7.2%
- Other (please specify): 5.1%
- Delivery from storage or closed stacks: 3.3%
- Library or librarian Facebook site: 2.8%
- Text message to a librarian: 1.7%
- Phone calls to specific librarian (someone you know or have worked with before): 1.5%
- Library or librarian blog: 1.3%
- Library or librarian Twitter site: 0.5%

n = 783
“I do my research at my apartment.”
Why don’t you use library services or resources from outside the library?

- I prefer to go to the library: 66.7%
- I have never figured out how to get to e-books, e-journals or library services from home: 20.0%
- Other (please specify): 8.2%
- I can’t find what I need on the library Web pages: 3.6%
- I don’t know what number to call when I have a question: 1.5%

n = 330
LIBRARY STAFF

- Where and how do staff respondents serve the patron
- Position
- Years in position
- Years in profession
- Preferred means of outreach
WHEN I PERFORM REFERENCE SERVICES I PREFER? (NO.6)

WHEN RESOURCES ARE SCARCE, WHAT REFERENCE SERVICES ARE PREFERRED? (NO.7)
DOES YOUR LIBRARY CONDUCT FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS/INTERVIEWS WITH USERS?

- 41.1% Yes
- 34.8% No
- 22.2% I don't know

n = 158
COMPARING USER AND STAFF PERCEPTIONS

- Signs of the great divide (compared like questions)
- Why do users come to the library
- How do/should users start their research
- Perceptions about the library staff
- Perceptions about the facility
WHY DO YOU THINK MOST STUDENTS COME INTO THE LIBRARY? (STAFF)

WHY DO YOU COME INTO THE LIBRARY? (USER)

- I don't come to the library: 1.7% (Staff), 1.7% (User)
- Consult with a librarian about my thesis or dissertation: 4.9% (Staff), 4.9% (User)
- Check on status of overdue fines or lost items: 3.7% (Staff), 3.7% (User)
- Consult with a librarian about a class assignment or group project: 3.9% (Staff), 3.9% (User)
- Take a class or workshop on library resources: 5.6% (Staff), 5.6% (User)
- Other (please specify): 6.8% (Staff), 6.8% (User)
- Use interlibrary loan: 3.1% (Staff), 3.1% (User)
- Check out a laptop or other equipment: 11.1% (Staff), 11.1% (User)
- Watch a video/DVD: 7.4% (Staff), 7.4% (User)
- Browse the collection: 7.4% (Staff), 7.4% (User)
- Use a computer workstations for personal/social activities (Facebook, Twitter, Web browsing, job searching, gaming, etc.): 36.4% (Staff), 36.4% (User)
- Get a study or media room for my group: 30.2% (Staff), 30.2% (User)
- Get coffee/snacks and/or hang out with friends: 22.6% (Staff), 22.6% (User)
- Use course reserves: 27.8% (Staff), 27.8% (User)
- Check my e-mail: 9.9% (Staff), 9.9% (User)
- Use a copier or scanner: 25.9% (Staff), 25.9% (User)
- Check out or renew books: 23.5% (Staff), 23.5% (User)
- Collaborate with others on a project: 46.9% (Staff), 46.9% (User)
- Use a computer workstation for a class assignment: 53.7% (Staff), 53.7% (User)
- Comfortable, quiet place to study: 62.3% (Staff), 84.0% (User)

n = 162 (Staff), n = 1148 (User)
WHEN YOU ADVISE A PATRON ON HOW TO START RESEARCH WHERE DO YOU BEGIN? (STAFF)

WHEN YOU HAVE A PAPER TO WRITE HOW DO YOU START YOUR RESEARCH? (USER)
“I don’t know what I’m supposed to ask them about. I think I would come to them if I had a question I couldn’t google, but that hardly ever happens.”
HOW DO YOU THINK PATRONS PERCEIVE LIBRARY STAFF (STAFF)

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE LIBRARY STAFF (USER)

- Too much information: Staff 1.6% | User 8.9%
- Internet/technology expert: Staff 6.4% | User 3.3%
- Irrelevant - I can find all I need online without a librarian’s help: Staff 4.5% | User 20.4%
- Other (please specify): Staff 6.4% | User 5.0%
- Rule enforcer/monitor: Staff 6.5% | User 10.2%
- N/A - I never interact with library staff: Staff 9.9% | User 13.9%
- Instructor - they show me how to find what I need or want: Staff 15.6% | User 24.2%
- Content provider - they get me what I need or want: Staff 19.1% | User 38.9%
- Helpful for technical problems: Staff 16.3% | User 19.1%
- Advisor/consultant: Staff 14.0% | User 17.5%
- Helpful for research problems: Staff 18.8% | User 43.9%
- Generally helpful: Staff 80.9% | User 80.2%

n = 157
n = 1070
“I don’t usually find they are very helpful. I wish they were.”
What do you think of the present library facility?
BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

- Ask the patrons what they want
- Engage students to reach faculty
- Be nimble: let go of legacy practices
- Assess, assess, assess
- Encourage community

Complete survey data: http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/2011userstaffsurvey