Report of Faculty Satisfaction with the University Library 2011

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Introduction

In Winter Term of 2011, the University Library followed up the Student Satisfaction Survey of 2010 with the Faculty Satisfaction Survey of 2011. The purpose of this survey was to gauge faculty opinions and use of the University Library and try to determine which new directions the Library should take with regards to services, resources, and programs. This survey was part of the University Library's ongoing assessment of our success in areas such as instruction, collections, and services for faculty. A committee consisting of Mary Abdoney, Yolanda Merrill, Elizabeth Teaff, and John Tombarge developed and conducted the survey, with help from other library staff and the University Library Advisory Committee.

Method

Creating the Instrument

The committee began meeting during Fall Term 2010 to start thinking of questions to ask on the survey. All of the professional librarians participated in a brainstorming session, led by Mary Abdoney, to discuss questions they would like to see answered by the survey. This was a very helpful exercise, as it highlighted certain issues that the committee may not have focused on initially. After this session, Mary Abdoney compiled all of the suggestions, and the committee chose which issues to target in the survey.

The committee agreed to focus on the services offered by the Information Desk and Reference staff, as well as the library’s collections. We were sure that some respondents would be unfamiliar with some of the services offered by the University Library, so we were careful to include details about each service surveyed. In some ways, the committee saw the survey as an
opportunity to advertise some services that faculty might be unaware of. After carefully crafting the survey questions, the University Library Advisory Committee tested the survey for clarity. Once this review was complete and appropriate changes made, the survey was distributed.

**Distributing and Advertising the Survey**

The committee used [SurveyMonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) to distribute the survey, but had a print version available upon request. No print surveys were requested. To advertise the survey, the committee used Campus Notices, email, and a graphic link on the University Library homepage. In Campus Notices for January 31, 2011, the following message appeared:

Please take 10-15 minutes to complete an online survey ([http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fac2011](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fac2011)) about your satisfaction with the University Library's resources and services. The results are completely anonymous, so please be sure to share your comments. These questions are designed to let us know how we are doing in our current endeavors and what we should attempt in the future. If you would rather complete the survey on paper, please let Mary Abdoney (abdoneym@wlu.edu) know.

The survey will be open until Sunday, February 13th.

For email notifications, each of the subject librarians edited the following message to contact their assigned departments:

Dear colleagues,

Please take 10-15 minutes to complete an online survey about your satisfaction with the University Library’s resources and services. The results are completely anonymous, so please be sure to share your comments. These questions are designed to let us know how we are doing in our current endeavors and what we should attempt in the future.

The survey is at [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fac2011](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fac2011). If you would rather complete
the survey on paper, please let me know and I will send you a print copy. The survey will be open until Sunday, February 13th.

Thank you in advance,

(NAME)

The faculty received a reminder email midway through the survey window, as final encouragement to complete the survey. Finally, the University Library's webmaster inserted a graphic on the library's homepage that linked to the online survey (Figure A). The survey began on Monday, January 31, 2011 and ended on Sunday, February 13, 2011.

Results

Types of Respondents

The survey was distributed to faculty and retired faculty only. However, because there was a link on the library homepage, the committee expected to receive results from students and other members of the W&L community. Fortunately, this did not happen, according to the results of the first question which asked about status. Over 95% of respondents were faculty, with over 4% being retired faculty. Of these respondents, the largest group...
had been at W&L for over 15 years (Figure B). Most of the respondents were from either the Humanities (36) or the Sciences (17) (Figure C). In total, 73 faculty members began the survey, which is slightly more than 42% of the entire undergraduate faculty.

![Figure C](chart)

**What department do you teach in?**

- Sciences: 9
- Humanities: 36
- Williams School: 1
- Social Sciences: 1
- Other: 17

**Analysis of Responses**

*Interlibrary Loan.* Question 4 asked if the respondent had made any Interlibrary Loan (ILL) requests in the previous year. Over half of the respondents had made up to 15 requests in 2010, with a small portion making zero ILL requests (Figure D).

The Interlibrary Loan service is quite satisfactory to our users. None of those who had used ILL (according to question 4) skipped the satisfaction rating in question 5. Over 90% were either Satisfied or Extremely Satisfied with ILL service (Figure E). A few respondents were Very Dissatisfied, and, unfortunately, they did not provide additional comments on why they were so unhappy with the service.
Technology. The Information Desk at Leyburn Library offers several portable technology devices (i.e., camcorders, Kindles, digital voice recorders) to be checked out by W&L patrons. We wanted to know if faculty members found this service useful. In question 8, which included a picture of the technology (Figure F), we learned that a large majority had not taken advantage of this service (Figure G). Looking at the comments for this question, several respondents replied that they did not know this service existed, but that they planned to use it in the future. Several others replied that their departments have access to these devices, all of whom were from the Humanities. Of those that responded that they had checked out technology, 100% reported that
they felt the library’s staff provided adequate support and maintenance.

**Scanning Service.** The University Library offers a service to faculty who want to post journal articles, book chapters, or other documents to their Sakai course sites. A copy of the item is dropped off at the Information Desk at Leyburn, and in 24-48 hours a digital copy is sent to the faculty member’s email address along with pertinent copyright information. The faculty member is then able to upload the document to their Sakai site for students to use. In question 10, we asked if the respondent had used this service. An overwhelming number had not (Figure H) and we hope that this question served as an advertisement for this service. In the comments portion of this question, 13 respondents answered that they were not aware of this service, and mentioned that they would use it in the future. Sixteen respondents replied that they do their own scanning with the BizHub machines available in academic departments. Of those that had used the
service, half responded that they were Satisfied, and the other half responded that they were Very Satisfied (Figure I).

_Multimedia Support._ The University Library offers support for students and faculty when creating multimedia presentations, such as PowerPoint slides, posters, videos, and websites. This is a fairly new offering, and information about its popularity and usefulness was highly interesting. When asked if they or their students create multimedia projects for classes, over 60% answered that they did (Figure J). Of those that answered Yes, almost 62% felt that they received adequate support from the library in creating these projects; however, over 35% reported that they were unaware that this type of support was available (Figure K). Again, we hope that this question served as an advertisement for this type of support available at the Information Desk.
Resource Use and Collections. Some of the most important information gathered from the survey dealt with the library’s collections. We wanted to know if the faculty felt like students were benefitting from the collections as well as from librarians who support the collections. We also wanted to know what format(s) faculty members might want our collections to take. In this time of rapidly changing information delivery, these are questions the library will face in the near future. It is best to gauge where the faculty stand on these issues so that we can serve them as effectively as possible.

Question 12 asked faculty if their students find the library resources needed to write papers, finish homework assignments, and prepare other projects for classes. All but one responded positively (Figure L). Some of the comments expressed worry about students relying too much on Google and not on critical thinking skills, which is something librarians are all too aware of. Other commenters, all in the Sciences, mentioned that students do not need to use the library to complete assignments for their classes. The one respondent that felt that students did not find adequate library resources commented that we had lost access to many journals that we had previously had access to. All of the respondents felt that the librarians provided adequate support for students in finding library materials for assignments.
Electronic books are a controversial topic in librarianship as well as the broader umbrella of higher education. With many books being published electronically, this is a factor the library staff needs to consider very carefully before making any major changes. In questions 14 through 16, we tried to determine faculty members’ attitudes toward ebooks and e-book platforms. In question 14, the answers skewed toward no experience using ebooks (Figure M). Of those that had used ebooks, most used either a desktop computer or a laptop (Figure N). Several others have used dedicated ereaders such as Kindles or Nooks, while others used portable devices such as iPads or smartphones. Over 75% of respondents felt that the library should offer
ebooks on these platforms (Figure O); however, the comments on this question showed some hesitation. Many were concerned with costs, others worried that print books would disappear in favor of electronic, while others felt that this issue was not very important at this time.

Electronic journals are a more pressing issue, when one considers the expanding nature of a journal collection. In both libraries, space is at a premium, and our periodicals take up much of that space and continually eat more as the years progress. With many journals available electronically, the University Library needs to look at which journal collections could be converted to electronic-only. One of our options is with the journal archive JSTOR. Question 17 asked faculty members how comfortable they
would feel if the University Library removed the print copies of journals that already appear in JSTOR if shelf space becomes too scarce. The results were varied, with a slight majority (40%) feeling Very Comfortable with this kind of project (Figure P). In the comments for this question, respondents seemed most concerned with the library mistakenly discarding volumes of journals that are not archived in JSTOR due to the “moving wall”, which many respondents might not be familiar with. Many felt that access to JSTOR’s content might become compromised at some point; however, W&L is a participant in Portico, which guarantees access to digital archives of owned content even if the platform fails for any reason. Still, other commenters felt that we were past due to discard print copies of journals and claimed that they never used them.

*Library Website.* The library’s website, http://library.wlu.edu, is the “front door” for many of our users, and the University Library wants to be sure that it is as useful as possible. Several survey questions concerned faculty use and satisfaction with the library website. Overall, faculty are satisfied with the library website, with just over half being Satisfied (Figure Q). Nearly all of the comments suggested that some faculty members felt like the website is not “flat” enough, meaning that too many steps are required to reach the pages they need. This is something we tried to address with the previous website redesign, but need to work harder on.

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*Figure Q*

What is your satisfaction with the University Library's website?

- Very Satisfied: 37
- Satisfied: 29
- Not Satisfied: 3

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Off-campus access to library resources is crucial to many faculty members, especially those who leave the country for research purposes or who are on sabbatical. In question 19, respondents rated their satisfaction with accessing resources from off-campus using the library’s proxy server. Half of the respondents were Very Satisfied, and only one respondent was Not Satisfied (Figure R). The comments indicated that faculty appreciate the ability to access library resources from off campus, while others seem to think it is a hassle. One commenter indicated that The Stable might eliminate this issue in the future.

There are several components of the library website that are geared toward faculty: Services for Faculty, Subject and Course Guides, and My Library Account. In order to determine the effectiveness of these components, question 20 asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with each. Overall, faculty are satisfied with these components, except for Subject and Course Guides, which most faculty reported not using (Figure S).
**Mobile Applications for the Library.** One surprising set of responses came from question 21, which asked faculty members how interested they are in mobile applications for the library catalog and databases. Over half answered that they were Not Interested in either of these services being provided via mobile applications (Figure T). Nearly
all of the comments mentioned that they do not use devices that support these applications. However, several mentioned that these would be great features for students, so the library might look into employing some of these applications in the future.

_The Smart Zone._ The Smart Zone in Leyburn Library was a project initiated by Academic Technologies to provide quick training sessions for technology products and other services. Sessions are scheduled three times per day, and the space is also open for faculty to use for their classes. Because we were not sure that those surveyed would know about the Smart Zone, we included a picture in the survey (Figure U). We also asked respondents if they had attended any of the sessions held in the Smart Zone. Almost 60% responded that they had not (Figure V). The comments indicated that most had attended a registration training session. Feedback was very positive, and those that had not attended stated that they had just not had time to make a session. The lack of required reservations seemed most appealing. Many respondents felt that the training sessions were valuable, however a majority answered N/A (Figure W).
Overall Satisfaction. Faculty are satisfied with the University Library. Question 26, which asked respondents to rate their overall satisfaction with the library, received completely positive ratings, with 75% being Very Satisfied (Figure X). This is most encouraging to library staff, who work hard to provide resources and services to faculty in a friendly and timely manner.
Conclusion

With very positive responses from our colleagues, it is easy to rest on our laurels knowing we have satisfied our users. However, we must always assess our effectiveness in all areas, and make changes accordingly. It is also crucial to spot developments in the profession and to determine if they are appropriate for our environment. Surveys such as this are a valuable tool to determine how to proceed in the following years. The University Library does not belong to the librarians, but to the users, and we are determined to stay informed of what our users need and want, and to provide it as effectively as possible.