

Checking the Pulse: 2011 ECU Division of Academic Affairs Faculty Survey

During the spring of 2008, Academic Library Services conducted a faculty survey as one component of its assessment plan. The survey instrument was modeled on the University of Washington Libraries Triennial Survey. The results were reported in *Taking the Pulse: 2008 ECU Faculty Survey*. During the fall of 2011, Academic Library Services modified the survey and identified faculty in the Division of Academic Affairs as the target audience. This document presents the overall survey results and initial analysis. Separate results are available for some departments, colleges and schools.

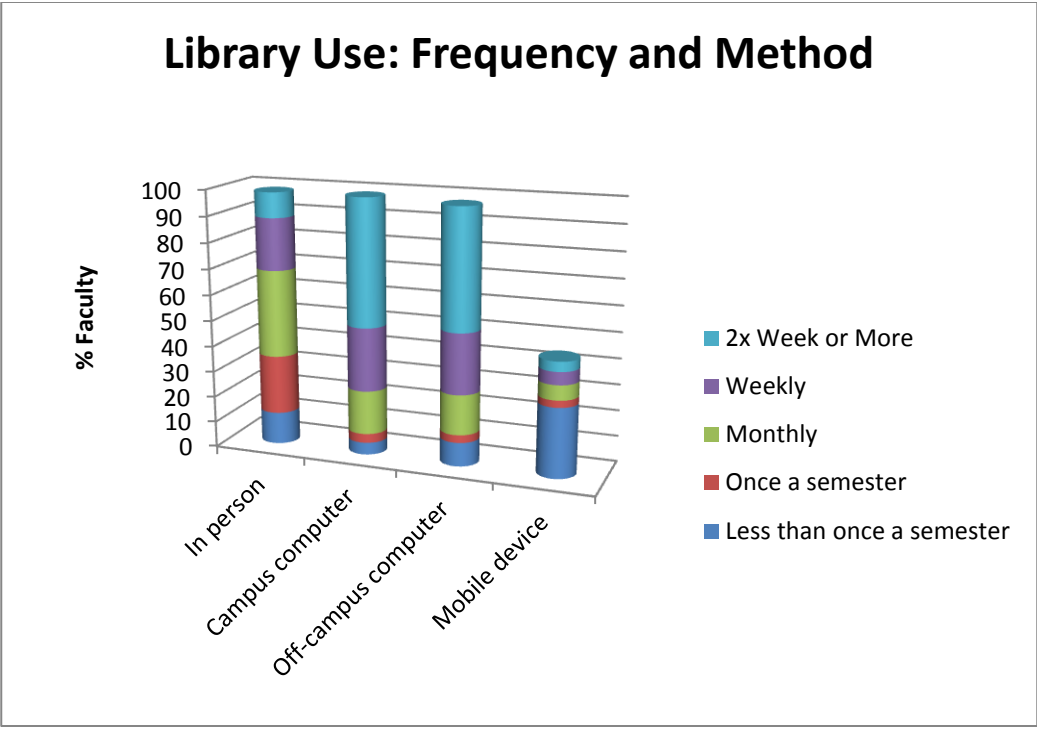
Survey Administration and Response

The 17-question survey was administered using SurveyMonkey. It was open from September 30 through December 17, 2011. Deans in each college in the Division of Academic Affairs were asked to send information about the survey to their faculty and encourage them to complete it. The survey was also promoted via emails from subject liaisons, the library e-newsletter, an announcement and flier distributed at the October 2011 ECU Faculty Senate meeting, emails from department chairs and members of the ECU Faculty Senate Libraries Committee to their colleagues, as well as reminders to faculty who used the ILLiad interlibrary loan system and/or brought their classes to the library for instruction sessions during the time the survey was conducted.

416 faculty members started the survey, with approximately 350 completing most of the questions. 310 faculty members identified their department, college or school. The College of Education had the largest number of respondents (58), followed by the Department of English (39), the College of Business (25), and the College of Technology & Computer Science (22). These categories also had the highest number of respondents in 2008, when a total of 252 faculty members completed the survey.

Use Patterns

Faculty are more likely to access the Library via computer than in-person or by mobile device. In both 2008 and 2011, just over 90% of faculty indicated that they accessed the library via computer at least once a month. Approximately two-thirds of faculty (63.4% in 2011 and 67.6% in 2008) visited the library in person at least once a month. A question about mobile devices was added to the 2011 survey. Slightly more than 14% of faculty indicated that they accessed the library via a mobile device at least monthly.

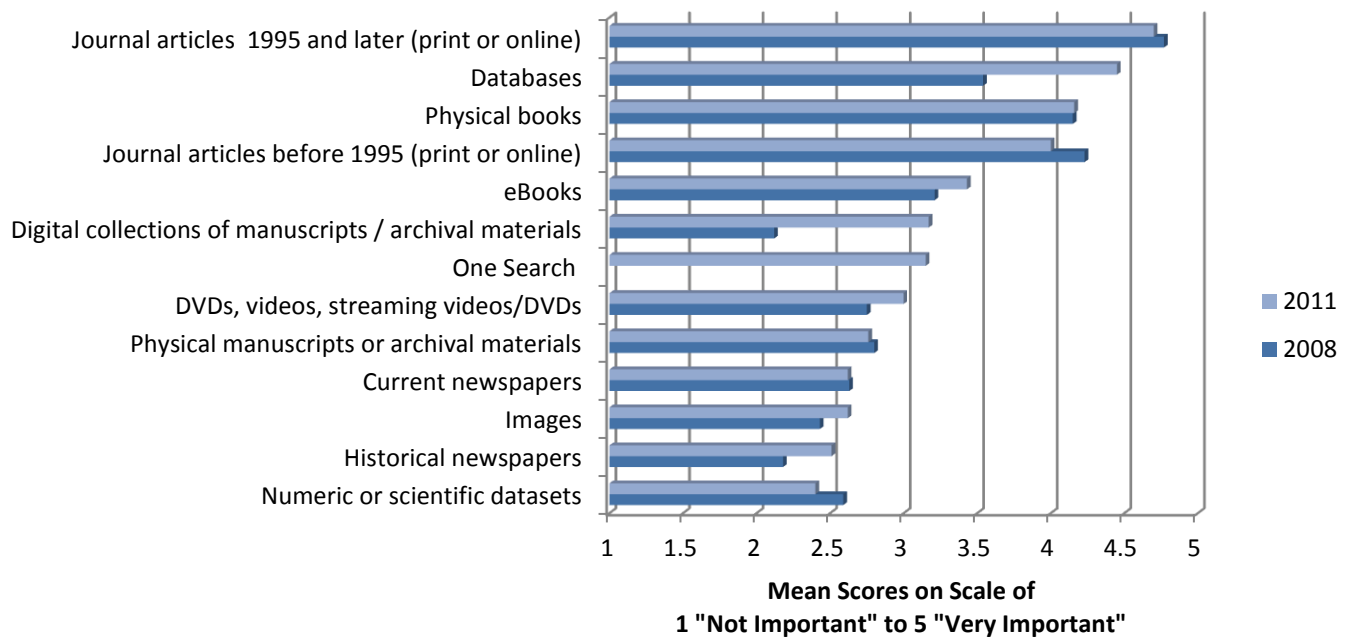


Importance of Resource Types

The survey asked faculty to indicate the importance of various types of resources to their work on a scale of 1 “Not Important” to 5 “Very Important.” As in 2008, recent journal articles were ranked highest. Databases received a much higher mean score in 2011 -- 4.45 compared to 3.54 in 2008. In 2011, this item was called “Databases (e.g., Academic Search Premier, PsycINFO, Web of Science)” whereas in 2008 it was called “Bibliographic databases/article indexes.” A large increase was also seen in 2011 for “Digital collections of manuscripts/archival materials.” The mean score in 2011 was 2.76 compared to 2.12 in 2008, when the item was called “Online archival materials such as Eighteenth Century Collections Online or Digital National Security Archive” and may have been interpreted to exclude local digital collections and collections available in open repositories.

Small increases were seen in the importance of eBooks, images, historical newspapers and DVDs/videos. The 2011 survey added “streaming videos/DVDs” to the label for the latter item. One Search -- Serials Solutions’ Summon discovery tool -- was implemented in August 2010, and was included on the 2011 survey for the first time, receiving a rating average of 3.15. Niche audiences were seen for all resource types surveyed. Further analysis will be done to identify resource importance at the discipline level.

Importance of Resource Types



In comments, faculty also mentioned the importance of trade magazines, conference proceedings, reports from national laboratories, government documents, maps, rare books, standards, and reference materials. Comments related to resource type included:

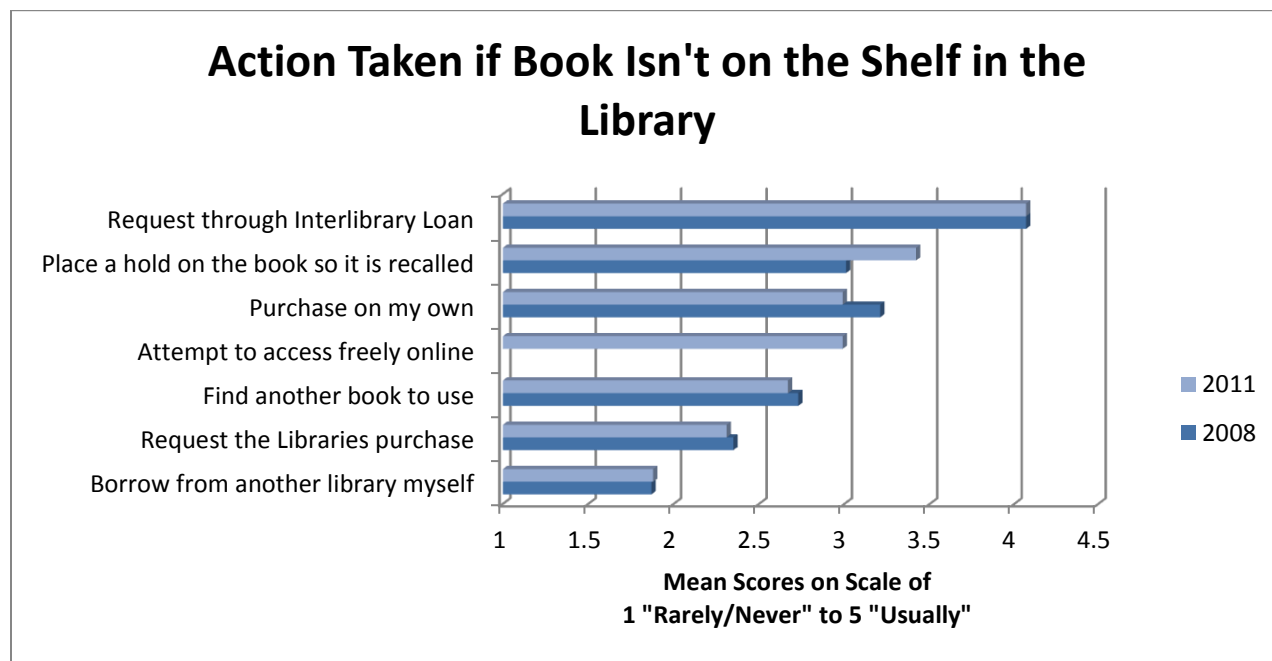
- *Hurrah for JSTOR!*
- *Not into ebooks yet.*
- *I find that One Search confuses students who cannot distinguish between sources, and I strongly discourage them from using it. I myself do not like it. When I am searching for something in particular, I don't want to get 100 results.*
- *I have enjoyed checking out the Nook.*

Availability of and Sources for Obtaining Books

Budget cuts over the past four years have led to reductions in the amount allocated for all areas of the collection, including books. Survey results indicate that despite the cuts, the ECU Libraries usually have the books needed by faculty in the Division of Academic Affairs. In 2011, when asked if the ECU Libraries have the books needed for their work, the largest number of respondents selected "5", on a scale of 1 "Rarely" to 5 "Usually." In 2008, the largest number of respondents selected "4." The mean score rose from 3.65 in 2008 to 3.82 in 2011.

When the desired book is not available on campus, faculty are most likely to request it through Interlibrary Loan. Faculty are more likely in 2011 to place holds on books that are checked out and slightly less likely to purchase books themselves than in 2008 – perhaps a sign that the recession and lack of salary increases for four years have had an impact on this type of individual purchase. A new

question on the 2011 survey asked faculty if, when a book wasn't available at the ECU Libraries, they tried to access it freely online via Google Books or another web resource. More than 60% of respondents tried this approach at least some of the time.



Unfortunately, despite outreach by liaison librarians and attempts to make the purchase request form more visible, faculty were no more likely than in 2008 to request that the Library purchase specific books that they need. Further action is needed to inform faculty of the availability of this option and of the Library's commitment to acquiring books using a "just in time" approach. Comments to this question indicate a clear need for the Library to communicate clearly and consistently its commitment to purchase materials requested by faculty that fall within collection development guidelines. Among the troubling comments were these:

- *We have been told we cannot request books for purchase any longer so this question is surprising, but implies that this is no longer the case. Please clarify.*
- *I rarely request Joyner to purchase books anymore because in recent years I have been told there is little to no money. Why waste time asking if there is no money or will to purchase books?*

Perhaps it is time to inform faculty about the existence of the Interlibrary Loan Purchase on Demand program and specifically alert them when the Library purchases an item that was requested via ILL. Other options include providing a link to the purchase request form on the ILLiad web page or otherwise integrating purchase requests with ILLiad. The e-book demand driven acquisition plan—another "just in time" approach—might also need to be more visible to faculty, perhaps by actively encouraging them to search ebrary for titles of interest or by exponentially increasing the number of ebrary titles included in the online catalog. A cautionary note was sounded by several survey respondents who indicated that in some cases e-books are not suitable:

- *Electronic books have major problems in quick access.*
- *For most purposes, I need hard copies of books. The kinds of reading I do require it. E-books are extremely difficult to skim, and can't be read "closely," carefully, or critically. They are ok for checking out general contents, to decide if I really will use the hard copy enough to bother chasing it down.*

Disciplinary differences along with individual preferences, the type of reading, and the ease of printing/downloading will likely affect acceptance of e-books as substitutes for the physical item.

Finally, some faculty noted that they had trouble having materials recalled from other patrons. Further investigation is needed to determine if these are isolated events or if the recall procedures need to be examined.

Satisfaction Levels

Faculty were asked to rate their satisfaction with 18 services on a scale of 1 "Low" to 5 "High." They also had options to indicate that they did not use the service or had not heard of it before. As in 2008, satisfaction levels with traditional services such as reference, library instruction, interlibrary loan, and circulation were high. Faculty also expressed high satisfaction with convenience services such as delivery of PDF articles from the Library's print journals and the Pull & Hold service (now called "Place Hold").

Service	Mean Score
Delivery of PDF articles from Joyner Library print journals	4.41
Library instruction sessions for your classes	4.40
Borrowing books/articles from other libraries (interlibrary loan)	4.34
Library reference assistance (in library or remotely)	4.16
Other library staff assistance	4.20
Pull & Hold service	4.15
LibGuides (Research Guides)	4.03
Distance education services	4.00

Slightly lower mean scores were seen for several newer or recently-expanded services:

Service	Mean Score
New Joyner Library web site	3.58
Plagiarism education	3.55
One Search	3.48
Equipment loaned by the library (e-book readers, iPads, etc.)	3.37
Copyright advice	3.34
Exhibits	3.27

The comments provided more details about faculty concerns relating to the library catalog and One Search:

- *Used to be, if I knew the book title I'm looking for and put that into a catalog search, that's all that would come up—now, I'll get several responses and the book I'm looking for isn't even at the top of the list.*
- *One Search and the catalog search function on the new website are both very hard to use – I get all kinds of unrelated things even when I enter the exact title of a book I'm looking for.*
- *One Search is a disaster for student use since they don't know the difference between a review of a book and the book itself, so if they get both, and one is short and electronic and the other requires going in to the library, guess which one they pick?*

Suggestions for improvements included:

- *I wish the plagiarism education were more extensive and involved more than links to other schools.*
- *I'd like to see longer check out times for the e-readers.*
- *When perusing book shelves one often stumbles on other books one would never have thought to look for—it would be nice to be able to do the same [with music] in the music library.*

More than ten percent of faculty indicated that the survey was the first time they had heard of seven of the services. Existing publicity, marketing and web presentation should be examined to try to improve awareness of these services.

Service	Percent of Faculty Not Aware of Service
Plagiarism education	23
Equipment loaned by the library	17

Copyright advice	15
One Search	15
LibGuides (Research Guides)	15
Delivery of PDF articles from Joyner Library print journals	13
Music Library	12

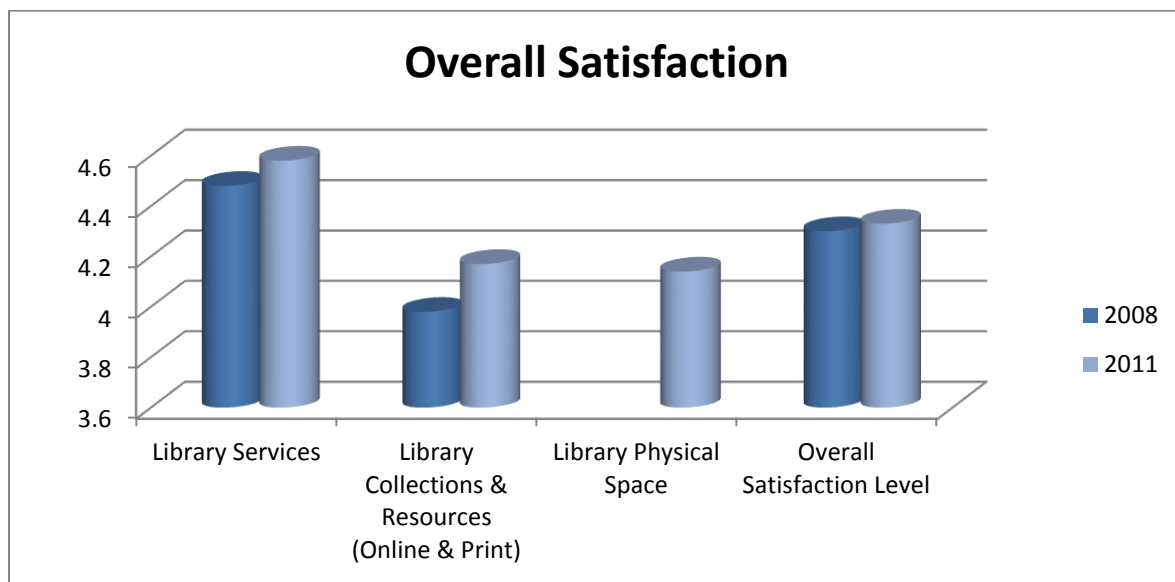
In 2011, several specialized service areas within the Library asked to be included in this section of the survey. The results indicate generally high satisfaction levels among each one’s specific user population. For each area, the largest number of respondents who used the service chose “5” to indicate their level of satisfaction with the service. Reflecting their specialized nature, however, these services are not used by a large percentage of faculty and surprising numbers do not even know of their existence.

Service Area	5 High	4	3	2	1 Low	Don’t Use	This is the first I’ve heard of it
North Carolina Collection	16.9%	10.7%	8.7%	5.2%	5.5%	45.1%	7.9%
Manuscripts / Rare Books & Archives	15.8%	10.9%	8.4%	4.6%	4.9%	48.8%	6.5%
Teaching Resources Center	24.2%	11.6%	9.1%	3.9%	2.2%	39.9%	9.1%
Music Library	10.2%	6.3%	4.7%	4.1%	4.4%	58.4%	11.8%

These, as well as other service areas, received some very favorable comments, including:

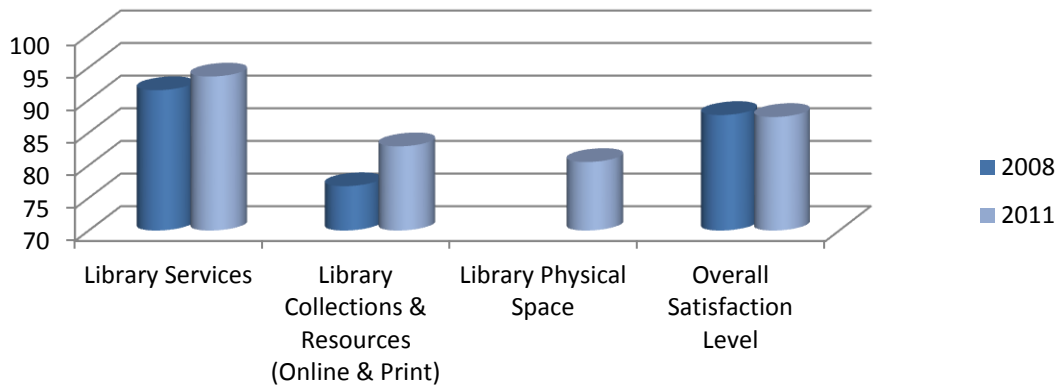
- *The TRC is the most valuable resource for the College of Education undergraduate majors! Outstanding staff and materials!*
- *Special Collections (including NC Collection) are simply superb people to work with (opinion of my students and myself!).*
- *The music and educations collections are impressive.*
- *Very good services for DE teaching!*
- *The Circulation desk staff and the ILL staff are excellent.*
- *Excellent services—better than I’ve seen at other universities.*

The overall average rating for library services exceeded the highest rating for any individual service and was up slightly from the 2008 average rating. The average rating for online and print library collections and resources was up slightly, while the overall Library satisfaction level was about the same. A new question in 2011 asked faculty to rate their satisfaction level with library physical space. 2008 and 2011 mean scores are compared below:



The percentage of faculty indicating high levels of satisfaction (4 or 5 on a scale where 1 is “Not Satisfied” and 5 is “Very Satisfied”) also increased for services and collections, compared to 2008 results, while the overall satisfaction level dropped very slightly:

Percent of Faculty Indicating Satisfaction Level of 4 or 5



Concerns expressed in the comments included the noise level in the Library, loss of Library space to other purposes, reductions in the size of general and reference collections, lack of quiet study and research space, and the need to focus on collections. As the comments below indicate, there is no consensus among faculty as to what the Library should be:

I love the library; I think it should be the hub of student life.

Let us return the library to a place of scholarship instead of a student fun shop.

Our library is one of the things I like best about ECU. It is a place where people clearly care about learning, scholarship, and service. Almost every time I go to the library, it makes my day.

Need to do more to maintain a quieter atmosphere. Library employees as well as students often speak at levels that suggest they are unaware or don't care that others are trying to read/study.

The recent remodeling of the library has created an environment that is welcoming, provides varied spaces for use, and is a pleasure to visit.

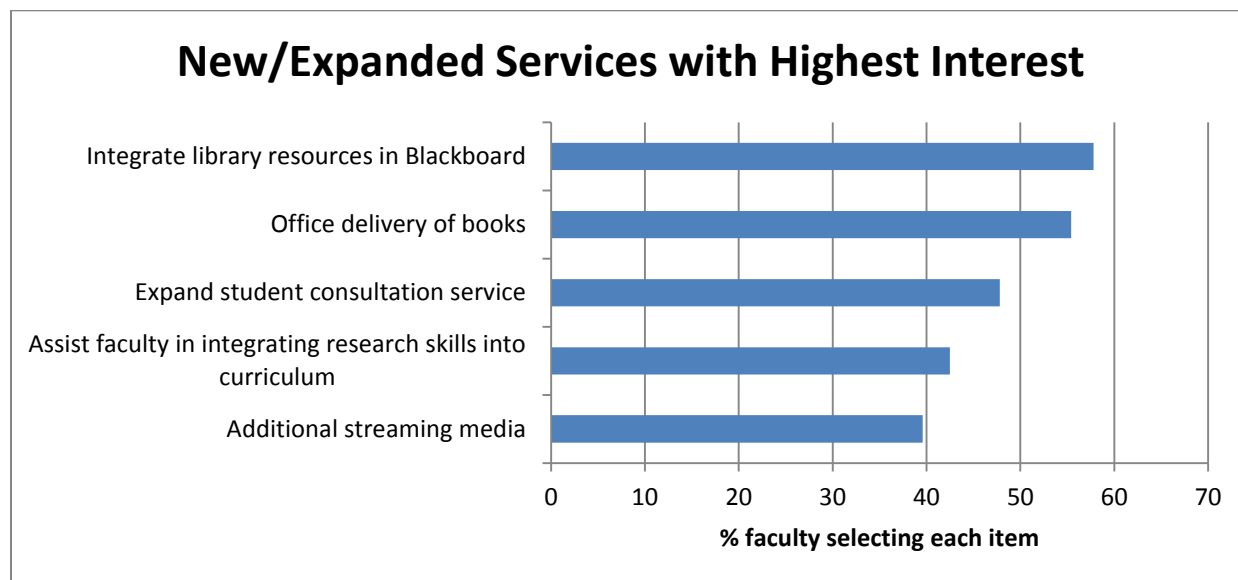
Stop making the library a student recreation area, and please preserve primary sources—the actual artifacts—instead of turning library space into a common area better suited for dorms.

My students have been using the new smart rooms to work on their group projects, so those have been useful.

Physical space continues to be reallocated to functions that aren't central to library mission.

New and Expanded Services

Like most academic libraries, Academic Library Services is exploring new ways to help the University achieve its teaching and research missions. The survey listed ten services -- some that are currently offered as well as some that are being considered -- and asked faculty to mark up to five that they would find most useful. 341 faculty members responded to this question. Their top five preferences are shown below:



The top four services in 2011 also garnered the most interest in 2008, with the percentage of faculty interested in each one in 2011 even higher than three years prior. Office delivery of books is the only service not currently offered, and the decision not to pursue it following the 2008 survey was due primarily to the large permanent cuts to the Library's operating and personnel budgets. Continued high interest in this item warrants a new analysis of cost and logistics.

The first and fourth items are closely related. While the Library has taken steps since 2008 to further integrate research skills and library resources into the curriculum and Blackboard, there is much more that can be done and the survey results offer an opportunity that should not be missed. Possibilities for Blackboard include adding links to relevant LibGuides, resources, and/or online tutorials in specific Blackboard courses; adding contact information for Ask a Librarian; and incorporating modules on critical evaluation of sources, plagiarism education, etc. Integration of research skills into the curriculum could involve some of the items mentioned above as well as collaboration on the design and/or assessment of specific course assignments.

The fifth service on the list -- additional streaming media -- was not listed as an option on the 2008 survey, but the Library learned of the need for this content in other ways. In response to demonstrated need and interest, *Films on Demand* was licensed for ECU in November 2010, providing thousands of streaming titles. Within the last year, additional video content has been made available through *JoVE*, *On the Boards*, a supplemental *Theatre in Video* module, and *Classical Music in Video*. Two video

resources are on the list submitted by the Library to the Division of Academic Affairs in March 2012 for possible end-of-year funding.

The new service that received by far the most interest in 2008 was free scanning and online delivery of print journals held in the ECU Libraries. The Library began offering this service to faculty on a trial basis in October 2008. In May 2010, the service became operational. It was successfully expanded to staff, graduate students, and Friends of Joyner Library and now includes scanning from most of the Library's microform collections as well as from print journals.

Lower priority was given in 2011 to these possible new or expanded services:

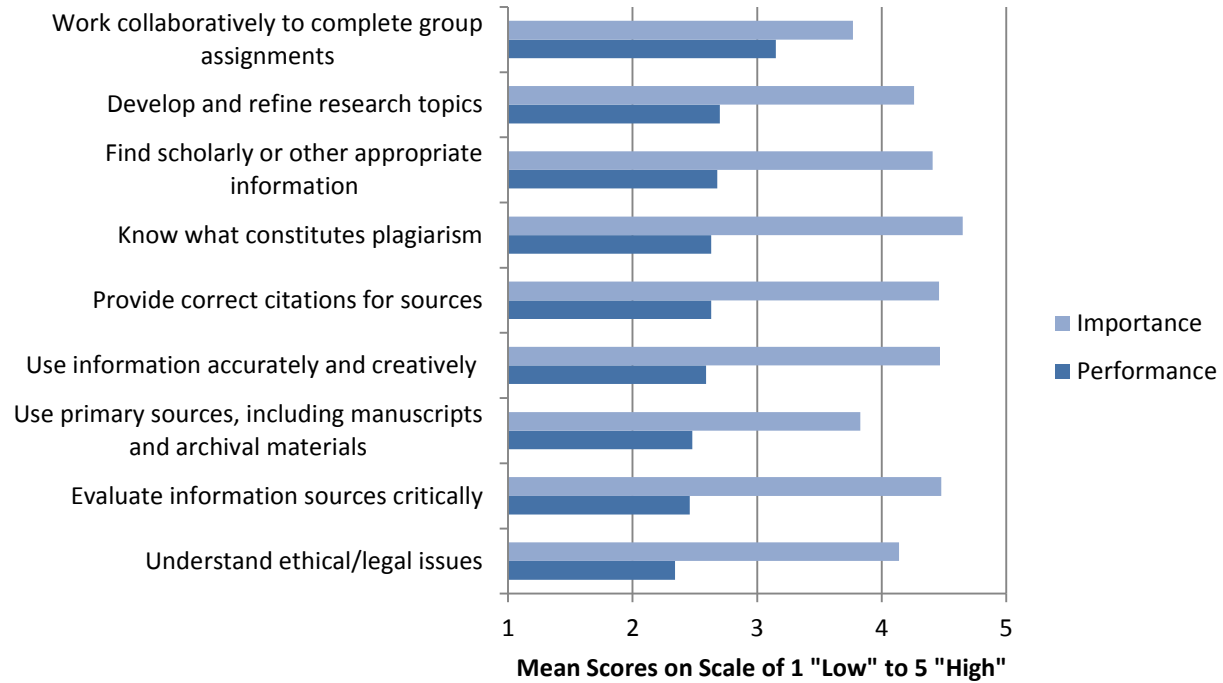
- a faculty commons or faculty-only quiet reading room (34%)
- current information on journal and monograph publisher quality, publishing fees, and open access policies (28%)
- support in managing, archiving and preserving research data and related materials (27%)
- specialized interlibrary loan services (options to pay for faster delivery; purchase options presented during ILL transactions) (21%)
- expand library applications designed for use with mobile devices such as smart phones (19%)

Results at the department, school and college level will be examined to determine if specialized demand exists for these services. It is worth noting that momentum and interest can develop quickly as shown by the recent boycott of Elsevier by researchers and the ensuing interest in journal publishing models and pricing structures which led to an ECU faculty panel discussion in March 2012 co-sponsored by the ECU Libraries and the Faculty Senate Libraries Committee. Expansion of federal requirements for sharing funded research data sets or an increase in ECU grant activity subject to data-sharing requirements could lead to increased interest in this item. Even though interest in mobile apps is still relatively low, the percentage of faculty indicating that this service should be a priority doubled from 2008 to 2011. As smart phones and tablets become more ubiquitous and use of apps becomes routine, it seems safe to predict that interest in library apps will grow rapidly.

Importance of Information Literacy Skills for Students

Survey questions asked faculty to rate the importance of nine information literacy skills to undergraduate student success in their programs and to assess student performance in each area. Mean scores for importance ranged from 3.77 for "working collaboratively with peers to complete group assignments" to 4.65 for "knowing what constitutes plagiarism." Assessment of performance ranged from 2.34 for "understanding other ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information (fair use, copyright)" to 3.15 for "working collaboratively with peers to complete group assignments." Thus, the ability rated highest in terms of performance was the one rated least important. The greatest gaps between importance and performance were for students' ability to evaluate information sources critically and know what constitutes plagiarism.

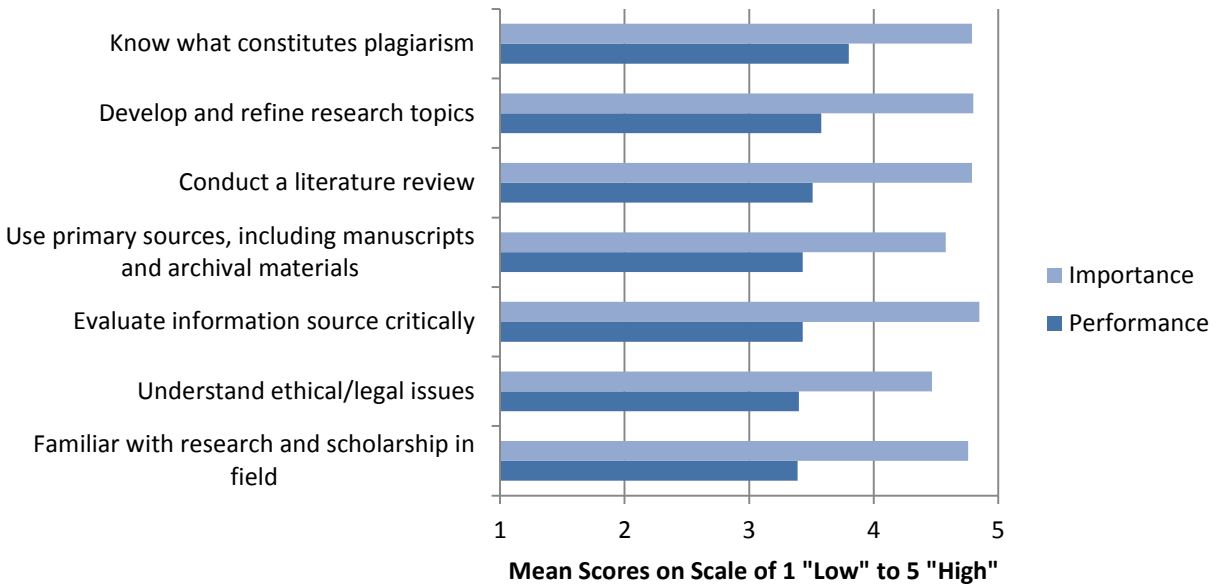
Undergraduate Student Information Literacy



Graduate students were rated on seven information literacy skill areas, including five that were also rated for undergraduates. In each of the five areas of overlap, faculty rated both importance and performance higher for graduate students. Improvement in performance between the two groups was especially notable for knowing what constitutes plagiarism.

Mean scores for importance ranged from 4.47 for understanding ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information such as fair use and copyright to 4.85 for evaluating information sources critically. Assessment of performance ranged from 3.39 for familiarity with research and scholarship in the field to 3.8 for knowing what constitutes plagiarism. As with undergraduate students, a large gap was seen between the scores for the importance of the ability to evaluate information sources critically and performance in this area. The second largest gap was for familiarity with research and scholarship in the field.

Graduate Student Information Literacy



While 59% of faculty who responded to the survey schedule library instruction sessions for their classes, 78% of respondents require library research in the courses they teach. Faculty use a variety of assignments to evaluate student research, as shown by the table below:

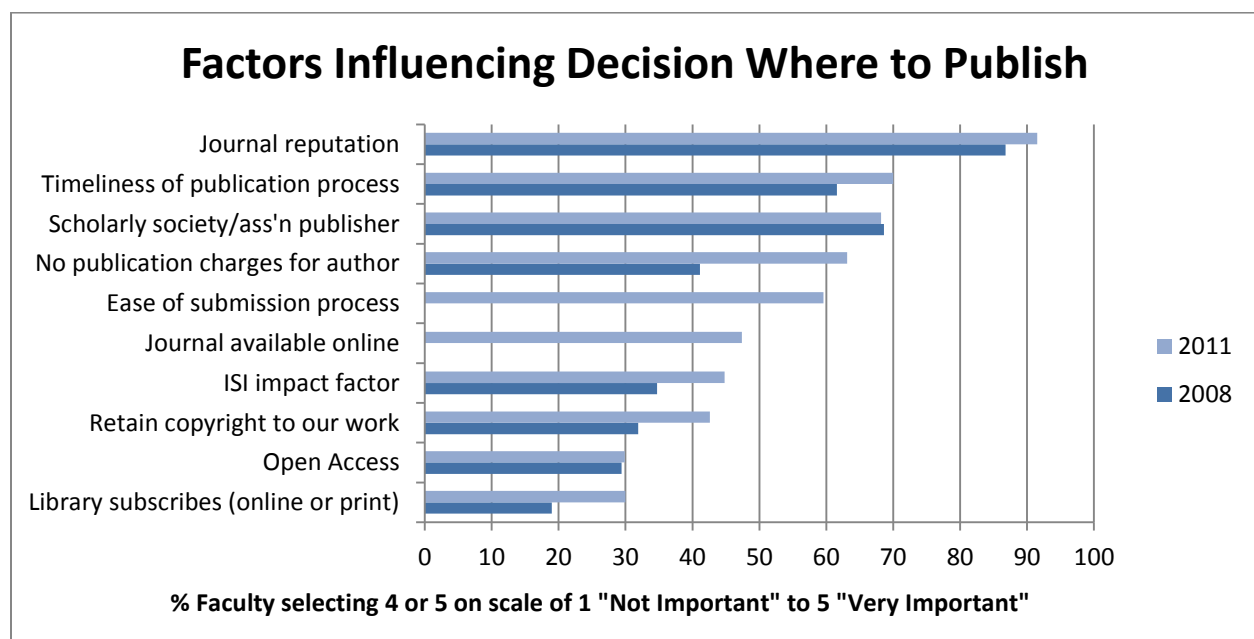
Assignments Used to Evaluate Student Research	Percent Using
Papers & reports	92
Presentations	61
Group projects	45
Homework	39
Exams	37
Informal writing	29
Lab work	13

The Library should conduct further assessment to determine whether faculty who are not scheduling library instruction sessions for their classes are using LibGuides, online tutorials, or self-created materials to help students learn library research and information literacy skills and how well these services meet their needs. The Library should also pursue additional ways of integrating library

resources and services more fully into Blackboard and other courseware and of helping faculty incorporate library research and information literacy skills into the curriculum. Teaching students how to critically evaluate information sources should be an area of focus. These steps should help achieve desired student learning outcomes relating to information literacy.

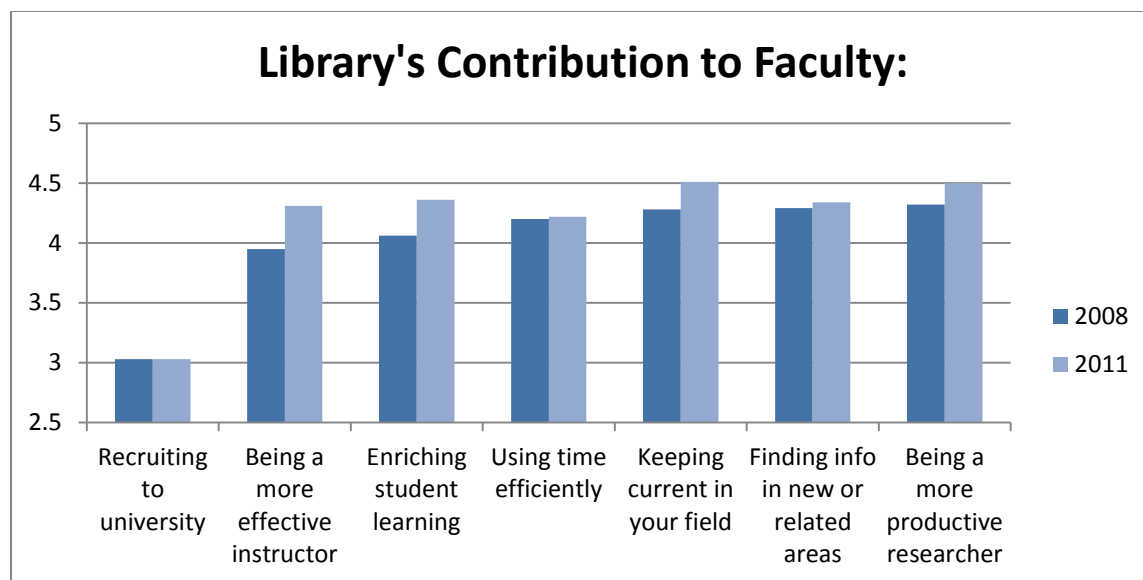
Publication Decision

What factors are important to faculty when deciding where to publish journal articles? How have these factors changed over the past three years? Journal reputation is still by far the most important factor, followed by the timeliness of the publication process and the type of publisher. The least influential factors also remained the same – whether the library has a subscription to the journal, whether the journal provides open access, and whether the author has the ability to retain copyright to the work. However, the percentage of faculty indicating that particular factors were of importance increased for seven of the eight factors that were included in the survey both years. New to the survey in 2011 were items measuring the importance of ease of the submission process and the availability of the journal online (regardless of whether it was open access). These factors ranked fifth and sixth out of the ten items listed.



Library’s Contribution to Faculty Work and Success

This question attempted to measure the impact of the Library on faculty work and success. The results help show the centrality and value of the Library to the University. The percent of faculty indicating that the ECU Libraries make a strong contribution (4 or 5 on scale of 1 “Minor” to 5 “Major”) increased in 2011 for all six items measured. Mean ratings increased for five of the six items and remained stable for the sixth. The greatest increases were seen for the faculty member “being a more effective instructor” and “enriching student learning experiences.” Nearly a quarter of respondents selected “N/A” for their response to the item “recruiting colleagues and students to ECU.” Perhaps this item is more appropriate for a survey targeted at deans, chairs and administrators.



In comments, faculty also mentioned the Library’s contribution to new program development, providing a place to read and work outside of the individual’s office, and making use of the knowledge and expertise of library staff. Several faculty members commented that cuts in book/monograph acquisitions meant that the collection was “almost” or “nearly” useless for their research and their ability to keep current in their field. Liaison librarians may want to consider how they can help these faculty members use resources such as WorldCat and alerting services to stay informed about new publications and research in their field and reinforce the Library’s commitment to purchasing materials requested by faculty that fall within collection development guidelines.

Conclusion

The 2011 faculty survey showed that faculty value the Library and recognize its importance to the research and teaching missions of the University. Despite the significant budget cuts that occurred between 2008 and 2011, faculty indicated that the Library is now making a greater contribution to their success and that they are more satisfied with Library services and collections. However, some serious concerns were expressed that warrant attention and action.