

Report on Emerson Library's Satisfaction Survey

Executive Summary by E. Condon May 2007

In spring 2007, the Emerson Library conducted an online survey of its users regarding their satisfaction with the library's materials, services, technology, and facilities.

Separate surveys were administered to each of the following groups:

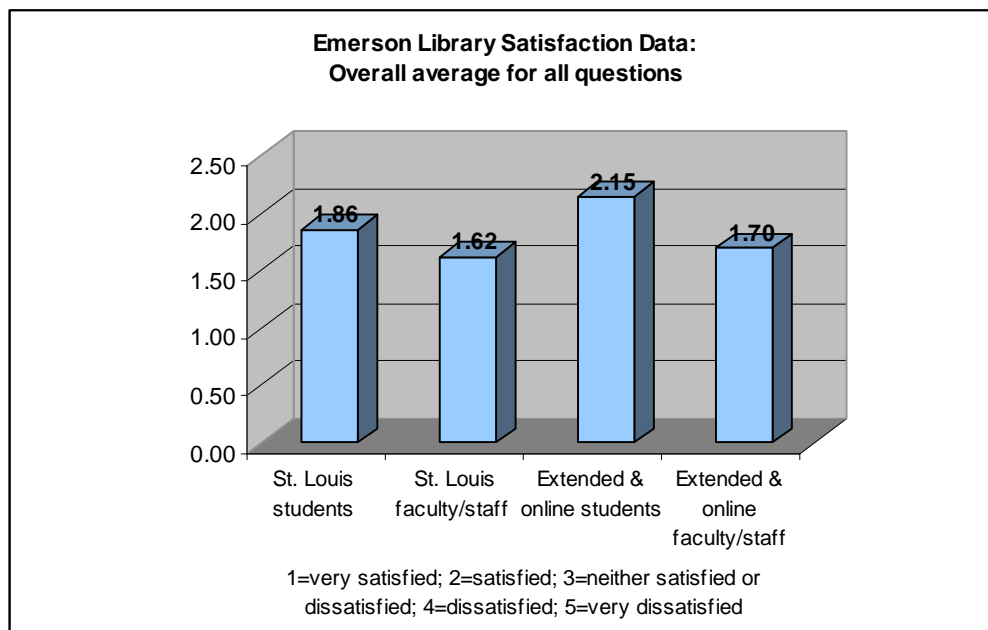
- St. Louis campus students
- St. Louis campus faculty and staff
- Extended campus and online program students
- Extended campus and online program faculty and staff

A total of 946 survey responses were received. Overall, the responses showed a high degree of satisfaction with the library. Replies regarding degree of satisfaction were scored using a five-point scale, with a score of one indicating "very satisfied" and a score of five indicating "very dissatisfied". Nearly all satisfaction-related questions received an average response score of 2.00 or better, meaning that they fell within the range of "very satisfied" to "satisfied".

Survey respondents were also invited to provide open-ended comments on areas of concern, as well as on the library in general. Of the surveys, 413 respondents included 750 open-ended comments covering approximately 100 topics. The most frequent type of comment, at 34%, involved compliments on the library, its staff, and services. The largest subset of complimentary comments involved compliments toward library staff in general or specific library staff; this category of comments comprised 9%. The next most frequent type of comment, at 15%, was concerns or suggestions regarding Passports (including the website and online databases). The third most frequently mentioned topic was concerns with the copiers and printers at the library (10%). Other areas of concern included collection development (9%) and services (8%).

Lack of comments on certain areas may indicate that these areas do not cause our users difficulties. For instance, though parking is a perennial concern on college campuses, there was only a single comment regarding library parking. Comments involving the library's policies and procedures, including fines, loan periods, and types of material that may be borrowed, comprised only 1% by the comments. Building related concerns, including study space availability, generated only 1% of the total comments. Concerns regarding the behavior of high school students and noise in general comprised only 2% of the total comments, indicating that recent efforts to control the behavior of high school students have been successful.

Satisfaction data and the types of issues raised in the open-ended comments varied slightly by user group. The following chart summarizes overall satisfaction data by user group. Each group's results will be discussed in detail in the next sections.



Students at the St. Louis Campus

St. Louis campus students returned 507 survey responses. On average, the students reported being “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with all areas except audiovisual materials, which received an average score of 2.04 (between “satisfied” and “neither satisfied or dissatisfied”) and copiers/printers, which received a score of 2.52 (also between “satisfied” and “neither”). St. Louis students reported most satisfaction with study rooms and areas (1.65) and Circulation Desk assistance (1.68).

The topic area most frequently mentioned in open-ended comments by St. Louis students was compliments about the library, at approximately 29%. The next most frequently mentioned topic was concern about the copy/print system, at 17%, followed by concerns or suggestions regarding Passports (the website and online databases) at 10%, concerns or suggestions regarding collection development at 9%, and requests for increased open hours at 8%.

Using “not applicable” responses as a guide, it appears that several types of library materials and services may be underutilized by St. Louis students. These included audiovisual materials (29% of respondents rated this category as “not applicable”), MOBIUS (30% “not applicable”), and ILL (33% “not applicable”)

73% of St. Louis students reported using the library in person at least monthly; 76% reported using online library resources from outside the library at least monthly.

Faculty and Staff at the St. Louis Campus

There were 82 survey responses from St. Louis faculty and staff. On average, faculty and staff reported a high degree of satisfaction with the library, with an average score for all questions of 1.62. St. Louis faculty and staff were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with all areas except copiers/printers, which received an average score of 2.16 (between “satisfied” and “neither satisfied or dissatisfied”). St. Louis faculty and staff were most satisfied with Circulation Desk assistance (1.37), MOBIUS (1.37), and interlibrary loan (1.38).

Of all the topics covered by St. Louis faculty and staff in the open-ended comments, 56% involved compliments toward the library, its staff, and its services. The next most frequently mentioned topic involved concerns with or suggestions for collection development (11%), followed by concerns with the Passports website and databases (9%), and concerns with the copy/print system (6%).

Survey data indicated that the Faculty Research Service may be underutilized (49% of St. Louis faculty rated it as “not applicable”).

92% of St. Louis faculty and staff reported using the library in person at least monthly, and 82% reported using online library resources from outside the library at least monthly.

Students in Online Programs and at Extended Campuses

Students in online programs and at extended campuses submitted 262 survey responses. Questions scored using satisfaction scales earned responses ranging between 1.83 and 2.50, with an average for all questions of 2.15, or between “satisfied” and “neither satisfied or dissatisfied”. Online and extended students reported most satisfaction with Passports (1.83) and online materials (1.87), and least satisfaction with audiovisual materials (2.50) and MOBIUS (2.46).

Compliments regarding the library and concerns regarding Passports (website and databases) were tied for first place, with each comprising 28% in comments. The next most frequently mentioned type of comment involved issues with services (15%). Comments that the respondent didn’t know about the library’s services, or hadn’t used the library or some of its services, were the next most frequent, at 14%. Another recurring type of comment involved concerns with or suggestions for collection development, at 10%.

Possible underutilized services include reference services (31% of online and extended campus students rated this category as “not applicable”), document delivery (32% “not applicable”), and E-Reserves (26% “not applicable”).

72% of online and extended campus students reported accessing library materials and services at least monthly.

Faculty and Staff in Online Programs and at Extended Campuses

Faculty and staff in online programs and at extended campuses submitted 95 survey responses. These users reported a high degree of satisfaction with the library, with an average score for all satisfaction-related questions of 1.70. Online and extended faculty and staff reported most satisfaction with online materials (1.50) and reference services (1.52), and the least satisfaction with MOBIUS (1.97) and audiovisual materials (1.91).

The topic most frequently mentioned in open-ended comments was compliments regarding the library, at 49%. Concerns with Passports (website and databases) comprised 23% of all topics. Other frequently mentioned topics were concerns about services (14%), collection development (6%), and the library's catalog and organization of its materials (4%).

Several services appear to be underutilized, as significant numbers of respondents rated them as "not applicable". These include audiovisual materials (25% "not applicable"), electronic reserves (30% "not applicable"), and video/DVD reservations (35% "not applicable").

78% of online and extended campus faculty and staff reported accessing library materials and services at least monthly.

Conclusions

Emerson Library's satisfaction survey generated a great deal of very useful data. Overall, library users seem satisfied with the library, as indicated by satisfaction scale data and a large number of positive and complimentary comments. Some of the library's services appear to be somewhat underutilized, and this may require further study. In addition, our users reported experiencing difficulties or offered concrete suggestions for improvements in several areas, including the copy/print system, Passports, collection development, and services.

We have already begun making changes in response to specific survey suggestions, including enhancing documentation in study rooms and improving the confirmation pages on our online request forms. More complex issues, such as improving the copy/print system or making Passports more user friendly, will be discussed by the library's Management Team and other library staff, involving other units on campus when appropriate

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