

Report of Faculty and Student Interviews Finding and Using Information Resources

In the spring semester of 2008, Boatwright Library liaison librarians and others conducted 78 interviews with students and faculty to learn more about how these two key groups of our user community use information resources. The librarians conducted 41 faculty interviews and 37 student interviews. Various groups of staff in the library have read and analyzed the interview data and this report highlights the major findings and themes of the interviews. Our conclusions have identified information services and sources that users are satisfied with or that have been improved in recent months as well as services and sources that warrant further improvement or assessment.

User Satisfaction

Library Building Services

Although the library cannot meet all space needs, especially during peak study times during the semester, students are satisfied overall with the library space and the opportunities for group work, individual work, commons spaces and quiet spaces. Increased identification and promotion of available quiet study areas would assist students. Faculty and students also expressed some concern about the ability to locate books that should be in the stacks. Library staff addressed this problem during the summer of 2008 by completing a major inventory project and then assigning a new unit of student assistants to regularly perform stack maintenance during the academic year. Students indicated their satisfaction with their personal/human interaction with library staff, including service desks, electronic communication and personal research appointments with librarians.

Electronic Services

Faculty and students rate interlibrary loan service highly and value its contribution to their scholarship. In addition, students appreciate the electronic coverage that is provided by the library, especially full-text journals and the breadth of databases that are offered through the library's website. Students also expressed satisfaction and high use of the *Research Guides by Subject/Major* on the library's website. Both faculty and students expressed some concern with navigating the library catalog and journal locator and library staff are pleased to report that new product interfaces were installed in August of 2008 for the *UR Library Catalog, Journal Locator* and *Article Finder*.

Further Improvement and Assessment

Faculty expressed interest in learning how to better manage information, both for their research interests and teaching needs. Librarians and Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology staff should collaborate to offer additional tools and training for personal information management. Faculty would also like to expand their knowledge and use of resources for both teaching and research. Examples include using images and music in teaching and learning more about new databases and digital

resources. In terms of collection development, the highest priority is with increased purchases of digital archives, including newspapers and primary sources. Although satisfaction with interlibrary loan service is rated highly by faculty, some expressed frustration with the library's interface and request forms. Library staff will continue to explore other interlibrary loan software and suggest improvements to our current vendor.

Some students indicated that the more research they have done, the more they appreciate the library. Other comments focused on how they wished they had known more about library resources and librarians earlier in their academic career at Richmond. These comments suggest probing further with students about their perceptions and urging faculty to promote library resources (collections and staff) on a regular basis through their classes and individual meetings with students. Students also expressed some confusion and frustration on finding appropriate library resources (both physical and electronic) and identifying relevant and authoritative resources. In order to further assess students' research skills and understanding, the library will conduct the HEDS/NITLE Research Practices Survey in the spring 2009 and liaison librarians will pursue collaboration with academic department assessment initiatives. The library is also in the process of redesigning the library website and we hope to gain further knowledge of users' approach to finding information electronically through focus groups and usability studies in the spring of 2009.