BRIDGING THE LIBRARIAN-FACULTY GAP IN THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bridging the Librarian-Faculty Gap in the Academic Library

Are academic faculty members and academic librarians on the same page when it comes to understanding the purpose and essential functions of an academic library? Do they communicate their respective needs to each other? Is there room for improvement?

Answering these questions was the objective of two complementary surveys, one sent to academic faculty members, the other to academic librarians. Similar sets of questions were asked of the 547 faculty members and 499 academic librarians answering.

Common Perspective

Faculty and librarians agree that the most essential service provided by academic librarians is the instruction of students in information literacy.

When asked for suggestions to improve or encourage interaction between library staff and faculty, common threads involved meetings and dialog. Faculty wants dedicated library liaisons to learn their discipline and instruct how the library can help them. Academic librarians want more opportunities to attend faculty meetings and an institutional commitment to embedding library-taught research skills.

Despite the advice of personal connection, both faculty and academic librarians indicated that their most preferred method of communication with the other is email.

Databases were featured among the wish lists of both faculty and librarians when asked to name additional services their library could provide.

Service Disconnects

Several disconnects became apparent from the research:

- The library's support of faculty research is of utmost importance to faculty, but of secondary importance to academic librarians.

- Faculty's ratings of the following services provided by their library were low, "development of collections in support of course curricula" and "development of discipline-wide collections." Both of these areas were among the core group of services named by academic librarians and received high self-performance ratings.

- Over half (57%) of faculty report that they consult with the library to coordinate course reserves versus 31% of librarians reporting course reserve discussions with faculty.

- When asked what prevents faculty and the library from consulting with each other, a quarter of faculty (27%) replied there is no need for it. Librarians were most likely to blame the lack of coordination on time constraints (63%).

- Nearly every librarian surveyed (98%) desires better communication with the faculty at their school. Fewer than half of faculty feel changes are needed in that regard (45%).
Essential Services and Performance Ratings

In response to a question asking librarians to rate how essential certain library services are, librarians identified what they feel are four primary, essential services: “instruction of students in information literacy,” “development of collections in direct support of course curricula,” “aiding students one-on-one in conducting research,” and “development of discipline-wide collections.”

“Supporting faculty research” was slightly secondary to librarians, but tied for first place among faculty in primacy.

Figure 1. How essential is it for the campus library to provide the following services for students and faculty? *NET Essential/Very Essential*
For the service areas that librarians deem most essential, librarians rated their performance quite high. For services regarded as less essential, librarians gave themselves lower performance ratings, while faculty generally assessed higher ratings in those areas.

**Figure 2. Please rate your library’s level of service in each of the following…**

- Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
- Instruction of students in information literacy
- Manage course reserves
- Support faculty research
- Develop collections in direct support of course curriculums
- Add faculty articles to digital repository
- Coordinate research data services
- Develop discipline-wide collections
- Parcel course materials from separate texts
- Text and data mining
- Manage research grants

NET Excellent/Above Average

For each service area, the chart shows the percentage of librarians and faculty giving the highest rating. Faculty generally rated their performance higher than librarians in all areas except for text and data mining and manage research grants.
The quadrant analysis in page 6 on the next page maps the library’s average service performance ratings versus importance scores, as appraised by faculty. The map pinpoints two areas of high importance to faculty for which library service ratings are low: development of collections in support of course curricula and development of discipline-wide collections. Both of these service areas were among the core group of services recognized by librarians.

**Figure 3. Library’s service performance ratings vs. importance scores, as appraised by faculty**

**Academic Faculty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop discipline-wide collection</td>
<td>Support faculty research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop collections in support of course curriculum</td>
<td>Instruction of students in info literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate research data svcs</td>
<td>Aid students in conducting research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add faculty articles to digital repository</td>
<td>Manage course reserves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text &amp; data mining</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel course materials from separate texts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage research grants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO ACTION RECOMMENDED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCES TRANSFER AREAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Collaboration Conundrum

Faculty members were far more likely to say they work together with librarians to coordinate course reserves than vice versa.

Figure 4. Do faculty and librarians work together to coordinate course reserves?

- Faculty:
  - Yes: 57%
  - No: 43%

- Librarians:
  - Yes: 31%
  - No: 69%
Communication Breakdown

Perhaps the biggest source of disconnect is in the need for improved communication. Even though nine out of ten librarians met with faculty in at least one discipline during the 2014–2015 academic year, nearly all librarians think communication could be better. Less than half of faculty (45%) feel the same need.

The preferred methods of communication for librarians are email and in-person consultations. Faculty primarily prefers to email with librarians.

Figure 5. Do you think there needs to be better communication between the campus library and faculty?
What prevents faculty and campus librarians from consulting with one another to coordinate acquisitions or help meet curricular needs? Librarians were likely to blame faculty for being too busy and having no time for such meetings. One-in-five also acknowledged that faculty members are unaware of how the library could support them. A few mentioned that they rarely cross paths with faculty, especially adjunct faculty, because they do not receive on-campus offices. Faculty commonly responded that they had no need to consult with campus librarians or that they were too busy to do so.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What prevents faculty and campus librarians from consulting with one another to coordinate acquisitions or help meet curricular needs?</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Librarians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No need</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>No time/Too busy (mostly referring to faculty, but librarians said this about themselves, as well) 63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no time/Too busy</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Faculty unaware how library can support them 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Distance/Library &amp; faculty rarely interact in person 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do everything myself</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Faculty has no interest 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do communicate with library as needed</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Conflicting schedules 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility/Need contact info</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Campus culture/No formal procedure in place 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never thought of using them as a resource</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Library is understaffed 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything is available online</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Faculty ego/Feel they are better instructors 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library staff not helpful/responsive</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Faculty won’t trust/respect librarians 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians have insufficient topic knowledge</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Challenges working with adjunct faculty 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Regular meetings between departmental ‘library liaisons’ and librarians. Librarians occasionally visiting department meetings.”

“More ‘forced collisions,’ such as librarians serving on faculty committees, or institution wide grant project committees.”
Service Wished For

What services do faculty members ask for or do librarians wish their campus library provided? Faculty commonly asks for specialized journals to aid in their research. The library is reluctant to fulfill these requests because their highly specialized nature will not benefit a broad spectrum of users and therefore does not justify the cost.

Additional databases is a desired service agreed upon by both faculty and librarians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What services do faculty members ask for or do librarians wish their campus library provided?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (common write-in answers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to more specialized journals to aid my research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Databases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information literacy instruction for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlibrary loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More classrooms in the library</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

About the Bridging the Librarian-Faculty Gap in the Academic Library Report

Are academic faculty members and academic librarians on the same page when it comes to understanding the purpose and essential functions of an academic library? Do they communicate their respective needs to each other? Is there room for improvement?

Answering these questions was the objective of two complementary surveys, one sent to academic faculty members, the other to academic librarians, and similar sets of questions were asked of each sample. This report summarizes the responses.

How This Report Is Organized

Part 1 of this report summarizes the responses from the faculty members, while Part 2 summarizes the responses from the librarians. Part 3 presents a demographic profile of both sets of respondents. The Appendix provides a rundown of the methodology used for these surveys, as well as copies of the questionnaires themselves.

For each question, we provide the top-level survey results—in essence, the “all responses” results, or what all respondents surveyed said about a specific question. In some cases, we have called out significant differences among specific classes of respondents, such as Humanities or Business faculty. Also, to keep the reader from having to flip back and forth, we have also highlighted any important differences between faculty members and librarians.

Areas of Inquiry

Generally, the questions we asked both sets of respondents fell along these lines:

- Essential library resources
- Rating the library’s performance of those services
- Extent to which faculty and librarians communicate with each other
- Method and quality of that communication
- Communication barriers and suggestions for improvement
- Educating students about using library resources

For More Information

For questions or comments regarding this study, please contact our research manager, Laura Girmscheid by phone (646) 380-0719 or by e-mail at lgirmscheid@mediasourceinc.com.
1. Academic Faculty

Academic Faculty Summary

The majority of academic faculty (87%) feels that the library is essential to the success of students and the success of faculty themselves in doing research. Campus libraries are meeting undergraduate students’ needs well, with nearly half of faculty giving theirs an A grade, and an overall GPA of 3.29. Nearly 4-in-10 gave an A to their library with regard to how well it serves the needs of faculty (3.08 GPA). Service to grad students received the lowest ratings: 34% gave their library an A, 4% gave it an F, and the overall GPA was 2.96.

The top five most essential services that faculty feel libraries provide are:

1. Instruction of students in information literacy
2. Support of faculty research
3. Development of a discipline-wide collection
4. Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
5. Development of collections in direct support of course curriculum

When asked to rate how well their library provides core services, those that stood out with the highest ratings were:

1. Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
2. Instruction of students in information literacy
3. Management of course reserves

“My ratings are impacted by the dramatic reduction in library resources over the years. The library would do more if they had the finances to support faculty and students.”

“Development of a discipline-wide collection” received particularly low scores, considering it made the list of five most important services. Humanities faculty were the most likely to give their library poor marks for this service.

Fifty-seven percent of faculty reaches out to library staff while planning courses reserves and acquisitions to support curricular needs. The percentage is highest among Humanities faculty (74%) and lowest for Business faculty (43%). Email is overwhelmingly the most preferred method of communicating with the library among all disciplines.
What prevents faculty from contacting the library, said 27% of faculty, was “no need” (and given disproportionately by faculty in Business and Science/Technology disciplines). “No time/too busy” was named by 15% and “nothing” by another 11%. Fewer than half of all faculty (45%) feel there needs to be better communication between them and the library.

The majority of respondents who do contact the library (73%) say it is very responsive to their requests, and another 22% appraised it as adequately responsive. There are no significant differences among the different disciplines. Suggestions to improve interaction between faculty and librarians included requests for more scheduled meetings and workshops, inclusion of librarians at department meetings, and instructional liaisons.

Topping the faculty wish list as far as the library goes was the availability of more specialized resources (journals and databases). However, in the survey of academic librarians (see below), respondents wrote off these requests as very specialized and expensive, and noted that their usefulness extended only to certain faculty and were not broad-based enough to be worthwhile.

Faculty members were somewhat less inclined to suggest information literacy instruction for their students. Maybe this is because 70% of faculty said they devote class time to teaching information literacy already (51% teach it themselves and 35% use an embedded librarian).

Half of faculty point to library resources in their instructional handouts and just about half embed library resources/resource links in their LMS and/or electronic syllabus. Graduate level faculty members are less likely to have an LMS, but those who do are much more apt to include library resource links (74%). About half of respondents point to library resources on their course or faculty webpage. Graduate level faculty is more likely to have a webpage and is also more likely to point to library links on it (70%).
Are Libraries Essential to Research?

The majority of faculty members surveyed who assign or conduct research feel the library is essential to their students’ research efforts (87%).

Figure 6. Do you feel library resources are essential to your students’ research?

However, only 77% of Business faculty respondents felt that libraries were essential to their students’ research, while 94% of Humanities faculty felt that way.

A majority of academic faculty (89%) also feels that libraries are essential to their own research efforts (see chart on next page).

“All we need as faculty doing research is quick and easy access to Google Scholar. All the other databases and search engines that the library develops are inessential.”
Figure 7. Do you feel library resources are essential to your own research?

![Pie chart showing responses]

A low of 81% of Science/Technology/Math faculty felt that the library was essential to their own research, compared to a high of 94% of Humanities faculty who felt this way.

“Our library does an excellent job with the extremely limited resources they have; our problem is that the university does not support the library to the extent necessary. Our library does not support my research specialty at all and I would have to have access to a research institution to do functional research in my field.”

Grading the Library

According to faculty members, campus libraries meet undergraduate student needs well, with nearly half (49%) giving them an A grade, and an overall GPA of 3.29. Nearly four in ten gave an A to the library with regard to how well it serves the needs of faculty (i.e., “your needs”), with an overall GPA of 3.08. Service to graduate students received the lowest rating: 34% of faculty gave their library an A and 4% gave it an F, for an overall GPA of 2.96. (See chart on the next page.)
Figure 8. What grade would you give your campus library with regard to how well it supports...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Needs</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Student Needs</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Needs</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“My ratings are impacted to the dramatic reduction in library resources over the years. The library would do more if they had the finances to support faculty and students.”
**Essential Services**

How essential is it for your campus library to provide the following services for you and your students?

The top five most essential services that faculty members feel libraries provide for both faculty and students are:

1. Instruction of students in information literacy
2. Support of faculty research
3. Development of a discipline-wide collection
4. Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
5. Development of collections in direct support of course curriculum

As we’ll see in Section 2, academic librarians have a slightly different sense of priorities. They feel the number one essential service is “development of collections in direct support of course curriculum,” which is number five among faculty. Librarians also feel that “manage course reserves” is a top five essential service. Faculty feels that “support faculty research” is the number two essential service; it is number six among librarians. Generally, though, there is not too much of a disconnect between the two camps, and both consider student education as top essential services.
**Rating the Campus Library Services**

When asked faculty members to rate how well their library performs a variety of services, the services with the highest ratings were:

1. Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
2. Instruction of students in information literacy
3. Management of course reserves
4. Support of faculty research
5. Development of collections in direct support of course curriculum

*Figure 10. Please rate your campus library with regard to how it performs the following services:*

The ratings varied by the respondent’s discipline. The disciplines most likely to give below average or poor scores were:

- **Humanities**: Development of discipline-wide collection (22% below average or poor)
- **Science/Technology**: Development of collections in direct support of course curriculum (16% below average or poor)
- **Science/Technology**: Support faculty research (18% below average or poor)
- **Business**: Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research (17% below average or poor)
- **Business**: Instruction of students in information literacy (18% below average or poor)
As we’ll see in Section 2, librarians’ own grades were not too far afield. Librarians gave themselves higher marks for “aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research” but actually gave themselves lower marks for “manage course reserves.”

Wish List

What service(s) do faculty members wish their campus library or librarians provided? The top responses were:

- Access to more specialized journals to aid my research
- Databases
- Information literacy instruction for students
- Interlibrary loans
- Remote services
- More classrooms in the library

In Section 2, we provide a list of what librarians wish they could provide. “Databases” is the only common item, suggesting somewhat of a disconnect in what services libraries should add.

Communication with Library Staff

Do faculty members reach out to library staff when planning courses to coordinate course reserves and acquisitions to meet curricular needs?

Fifty-seven percent of faculty say they do reach out to library staff while planning courses. The percentage is highest among Humanities faculty (74%) and lowest for Business faculty (43%).

Figure 11. Do you reach out to library staff while planning your course(s) to coordinate course reserves and acquisitions to meet your curricular needs?

Curiously, far more faculty than librarians claim they reach out to the library when planning courses; less than one-third of librarians say they work with faculty to contribute to course reserve development or curriculum planning.
**Preferred Communication Method**

Email is overwhelmingly the most preferred method of communicating with the library among all disciplines, followed by in-person consultations. Few seem too enthused about talking on the phone.

*Figure 12. What is your preferred method of communication with the library?*

**Responsiveness**

The majority of respondents (73%) say their library is very responsive to their requests, and nearly all say the library is at least adequately responsive. There are no significant differences among the different disciplines. Only 2% say that the library is “not too responsive.”

*Figure 13. How responsive is the library to your requests?*
Barriers to Communication

What prevents faculty from communicating with the library? This was presented as an open-ended question, and coding out the written responses revealed that 27% of faculty felt there was simply “no need” to communicate with campus librarians. Business and Science/Technology disciplines were most likely to say they had “no need.” The next most common response, cited by 15%, was “time/too busy.”

![Figure 14. What prevents you from communicating with the campus library/librarians?](image)

Interestingly, only 8% of the librarians themselves said “faculty has no interest/feel there is no need.”
Room for Improvement

Fewer than half of faculty feel there needs to be better communication.

Figure 15. Do you think there needs to be better communication between the campus library and faculty?

However, virtually every librarian surveyed (98%) said there needs to be better communication between the two camps.

So what do faculty members think would improve or encourage interaction between library staff and faculty? Department meetings, more scheduled meetings/workshops, and instructional liaisons were the most oft-cited suggestions.

“Have discipline-specific workshops once a semester where new additions to the reserves could be introduced and faculty members could inform librarians about what they need.”

“Librarians need to have one-on-one meetings with faculty. It’s not enough to send mass emails or show up to faculty meetings that faculty want to end quickly. They need to ask the faculty how we distinguish between good and poor sources/journals. They need to reply to our requests quickly with direct and transparent answers. They also need to be aware that cries of poverty from what is obviously a better-funded unit in the university (nicer building, better furniture, nicer offices, newer computers, and higher pay for librarians than faculty, etc.), are more likely to be alienating than informing.”
Teaching Information Literacy

A net of 70% of faculty said they devote class time to teaching information literacy—51% teach research skills themselves, while 28% use embedded librarians. Business and Science/Technology faculty are the least likely to devote class time to information literacy.

Figure 16. Do you devote instructional time in your courses to talk about research skills and information literacy?
Links to Library Resources

Half of faculty point to library resources in their instructional handouts while 14% do not provide instructional handouts at all. Graduate level faculty are more likely to point students toward library resources (61% said yes) than undergraduate faculty.

Figure 17. Do you provide your students with instructional handouts that point to library resources?

Just about half of faculty embeds library resources/resource links in their LMS and/or electronic syllabus. Faculty teaching graduate level classes are less likely to have an LMS, but those who do are much more likely to include library resource links (74%).

Figure 18. Do you embed library resources or library resource links in your LMS and/or electronic syllabus?
Again, about half of respondents point to library resources on their course or faculty webpage. Graduate level faculty is more likely to have a webpage and is also more likely to point to library links on it (70%).

Figure 19. Does your course or faculty webpage point to library resources?
2. Academic Librarians

Academic Librarian Summary

Three tiers of service are apparent in academic librarians’ rating of essential library services. The primary services that libraries offer are (over 90% naming them as essential or very essential):

1. Instruction of students in information literacy
2. Development of collections in support of curriculum
3. Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
4. Development of discipline-wide collections

The second tier of services deemed essential are “support of faculty research” and “management of course reserves,” with about 80% rating them as essential. Third-tier services include “addition of faculty articles to digital repository” and “coordination of research data services.”

Librarians gave themselves high marks for three of the primary services they provide. However, they were less sanguine about their performance in developing discipline-wide collections.

“Our library strives to provide the necessary research materials to support faculty and student research. Due to severe budget cuts the last seven years, we’ve had difficulty in achieving this goal.”

One of the most common ways librarians talk with students about research skills and information literacy is when students approach them for help ad hoc in the library. Three-fourths of respondents have scheduled classes in the library and more than half have taken part in classroom instruction.

A net 84% of academic librarians have been invited to speak with students during class time. Some librarians pointed out that a truly embedded librarian is present in the classroom on an ongoing basis, not on a one-time basis. The truly embedded librarian was most common in English, freshman writing, nursing, business, and social work classes. The most common classes employing a librarian to come into classes a single time were English, history, psychology, biology, and communications classes.
About half of academic librarians (52%) feel that faculty members should teach their students information literacy skills themselves. When we asked, “In what disciplines?” the most popular answer was “all disciplines.”

“Faculty does not view the library as an up-to-date resource. It’s very easy to refer them to the internet. Campus librarians are consulted about resources after the curriculum has been developed rather than during the process.”

Nine-in-10 librarians communicated with faculty to meet curricular needs this academic year. Most commonly, librarians coordinated the acquisition of support materials with faculty in the humanities, social sciences, education, business, science and nursing. Slightly less than a third of librarians said they worked with faculty to contribute to course reserve development (31%) or curriculum planning (30%). The majority of librarians (62%) only need a week’s lead time to prepare relevant materials for student visits.

Email (98%) and in-person consultations (80%) were the most common methods used to coordinate with faculty. Phone and departmental meetings were also employed by nearly half the sample. The preferred method of communication, however, is email (49%), followed fairly closely by in-person consultation (42%).

“Lack of time/busy workloads “(for faculty, but sometimes librarians too) is the number one thing preventing librarians and faculty from consulting with one another (63%). Twenty percent reckon that faculty is unaware of how the library can support them. To that end, nearly every respondent feels communication between academic librarians and faculty could be improved (98%). Inviting librarians to departmental meetings, granting faculty status to librarians, and venturing out of the library to interact with faculty are some suggestions to improve communication.

“At the beginning of a relationship between faculty and librarians, it would be nice if administration would allow for certain required times of interaction like at department meetings.”
Underutilized services include course reserves, information literacy sessions, print collections, and LibGuides. Missing services that librarians would like to provide or faculty request most often are:

- Databases
- Institutional repository
- Online tutorials
- Makerspace/3-D printer/Innovation lab
- Data management
- Streaming media
- Copyright clearance
- E-reserves

**Essential Services**

The last section revealed what faculty members feel are the most essential services librarians provide. What are the top five most essential services that academic librarians believe libraries provide?

The primary services that academic libraries offer are:

1. Development of collections in support of curriculum
2. Instruction of students in information literacy
3. Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
4. Development of discipline-wide collections
5. Management of course reserves
As related in Section 1, academic faculty members have a slightly different sense of priorities. They feel the number one essential service is “Instruction of students in information literacy”—although 81% of librarians feel teaching information literacy is “very essential” compared to 51% of faculty.

Along those lines, 39% of faculty felt that to “aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research” was “very essential,” here we find that 75% of librarians find this to be “very essential.”

“Instruction of students in information literacy is a primary mission of the library; however, we cannot rely solely on how many classes are taught or students we reach. Even assessment tools do not give the best understanding of our students’ abilities. We can instruct, but the effectiveness is not gauged. Library instruction is not mandatory, so the long term has not yet been assessed.”

Rating the Campus Library Services
Librarians gave themselves high marks for three of the primary services they provide (66% to 76% rated themselves excellent or above average), however are less sanguine about their performance in developing discipline-wide collections (about 51% excellent or above average).
As we saw in Section 1, faculty’s grades were not dramatically different. Librarians give themselves higher marks for the “education of students one-on-one in conducting research” but give themselves lower marks for “management of course reserves.”

**Services Wanted**

Are there any services that libraries do not or cannot provide for faculty that librarians wish they could or faculty request? The top responses to this open-ended question included:

- Databases
- Institutional repository
- Online tutorials
- Makerspace/3-D printer/Innovation lab
- Data management
- Streaming media
- Copyright clearance
- E-reserves

In Section 1, we revealed what faculty said they had been requesting. “Databases” is the only item on both lists, suggesting somewhat of a disconnect in what services libraries should add. Librarians did note that many of the journal requests they receive from faculty are too specialized to merit the expense.
“I suspect they would complain to each other about the library before they would come to us and ask for improved service.”

“Not so much service as resources. Each faculty member has a favorite resource that is essential for their research. But we don’t have the budget to support each individual faculty member’s research. We’ve tried to help some by negotiating licenses, but we don’t have the funds to buy things that are primarily used by one person. But, we should! Or the College should, if we are serious about supporting faculty research.”

Underutilized Services

Course reserves, information literacy sessions, print collections, and LibGuides are cited as underutilized services.

“Circulation is going down, and some faculty are not giving librarians enough input about collection development in their areas. Some will scarcely respond to email inquiries about new resources we are considering.”

Services for Distance Learners

Academic libraries support distance learners by providing electronic course materials and texts and offering live reference chat online. Write-in answers included “offering live reference help via the phone,” “LibGuides,” and “delivery of interlibrary loan books to the home.” Only 8% of respondents replied that they do not support distance learners.
Figure 22. How does your library support distance learners?

- Provide access to E-texts: 71%
- Online reference help via live chat: 71%
- Electronic course materials: 65%
- Online information literacy instruction (e.g., video, podcast, slide deck): 57%
- We do not have/support distance learners: 8%
- Email/Telephone reference (write-in answer): 6%
- LibGuides (write-in answer): 3%
- Delivery to students’ homes/ILL (write-in answer): 3%
- Embedded librarianship (write-in answer): 2%
- Liaison librarian (write-in answer): 1%
- Other: 11%
Communication with Faculty

Less than one-third of librarians say they normally work with faculty to contribute to course reserve development or curriculum planning.

**Figure 23. Do you normally work with faculty to contribute to...**

As we noted in Section 1, 57% of faculty said they reach out to the library when planning courses.
In the current academic year (2014–2015), nine in ten librarians communicated with faculty in at least one discipline to meet curricular needs.

**Figure 24. Did you communicate with faculty in any of the following disciplines to coordinate acquisitions to meet curricular needs for the 2014–2015 academic year?**

Most commonly, librarians coordinate the acquisition of support materials with faculty in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, Business, Science, and Nursing disciplines.
**Used and Preferred Communication Methods**

Email and in-person consultations were most commonly used to coordinate with faculty. Phone and department meetings were also used by nearly half the sample.

**Figure 25. How did you communicate with faculty to accomplish this?**

![Chart showing communication methods used by librarians]

Half of librarians may have used the phone to confer with faculty, but that doesn’t mean they necessarily liked it. Their preferred method of communication is email, followed fairly closely by in-person consultation. Indeed, practically no librarians prefer the telephone as a mean of communicating with faculty.

**Figure 26. What method of communication do you most prefer?**

![Pie chart showing preferred communication methods]

Faculty are bigger fans of email (61%), but less enthused about in-person meetings (27%).
Barriers to Communication

What prevents faculty and campus libraries from communicating and consulting with each other? Lack of time/busy workloads was by far the number one reason librarians cited that prevented librarians and faculty from consulting with one another. Twenty percent reckon that faculty is unaware of how the library can support them.

Figure 27. What, if anything, prevents faculty and campus librarians from consulting with one another?

As we saw in Section 1, 27% of faculty said there was “no need” to communicate or consult with the library.

“Campus culture is that librarians are not ‘officially’ part of any one of the four colleges in the university, so we are not allowed at faculty meetings, don’t participate in committees, and have little interaction with faculty or students. This is the first thing that needs to change. Faculty need to see us as active participants in the students’ education.”
Room for Improvement

Almost every library respondent feels communication between them and faculty could be improved.

Figure 28. Do you think there needs to be better communication between the library and faculty?

In contrast, *less than one-half of faculty (45%)* said there needed to be better communication between faculty and libraries.

So, then, what would academic librarians suggest to improve or encourage interaction between library staff and faculty? Top write-in responses to this open-ended question were “inviting librarians to departmental meetings,” “providing faculty status to librarians,” and “librarians getting out of the library more and interacting.”

Discussions based on common goals. Not specific needs, but goals (like teaching students or faculty research). Don’t send faculty (or anyone) on a wild goose chase: identify who they need to talk to, and send them directly to them. Think of it like web surfing: when folks go to a site, they want to find what they’re looking for with two clicks or less. Anything more than that and they’ll give up. Same applies to requests for assistance. Which ultimately means that internal communications within the library need to be great, and folks need to be aware of their limitations, and who knows what. And be willing to share the ‘credit.’”
Teaching Information Literacy

Librarians have many touch points with students, most commonly when students approach them for help *ad hoc* (93%). Three-fourths (76%) scheduled classes in the library and 58% were present in the classroom as part of faculty instruction. The most popular “other” comments included “electronic chat” and “scheduled in-office consults.”

![Figure 29. Where have you talked with students about research skills and information literacy topics in the last year?](image)

A net 84% of academic librarians have been invited to speak with students during class time. Some librarians pointed out that a truly embedded librarian is present in the classroom on an ongoing basis, not on a one-time basis.

The most common classes employing a librarian to come into the classes one time were English, history, psychology, biology, and communications classes. The truly embedded librarian was most common in English, freshman writing, nursing, business, or social work classes.
Figure 30. Have you ever been invited by faculty to talk with students in the classroom about research skills and information literacy?

- Yes, on a one-time basis: 64%
- Yes, on an ongoing basis: 44%
- No: 5%
Advance Notice

The majority of librarians (62%) say they only need a week’s lead time to prepare relevant materials for student visits.

Figure 31. How far in advance do you require information from faculty about curricular needs and assignments to prepare for student visits?

- 1 week or less: 62%
- 2 weeks: 25%
- 3 weeks: 7%
- 6 weeks or more: 3%
- 4 to 5 weeks: 3%
Information Literacy Taught by Faculty

About half of academic librarians (52%) feel that some faculty members should teach their students information literacy skills themselves. Looking at the open-ended responses to the question, “In what disciplines?” the most popular answer was “all disciplines.”

Figure 32. Do you feel that faculty in certain disciplines should teach their students information literacy skills themselves?
3. Respondent Demographics

This section profiles the faculty members and the academic librarians who responded to our surveys, as well as their institutions.

Faculty Respondents

Figure 33. Please describe your institution:

- Community college/2 year junior college: 12%
- College/university satellite campus: 6%
- Online academic institution: 0%
- Other: 1%
- College/university main campus: 81%

Figure 34. Is your institution public or private?

- Private: 48%
- Public: 52%
Figure 35. Approximately how many undergraduates were registered in your school for the 2014–2015 academic year?
Mean: 7,927
Median: 3,500

Figure 36. Approximately how many graduate students were registered in your school for the 2014–2015 academic year?
Mean: 1,957
Median: 600
Figure 37. In what region do you work?

New England = ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT
Mid Atlantic = NY, NJ, PA
South Atlantic = DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL
East So. Central = KY, TN, AL, MS
West So. Central = AR, LA, OK, TX
East No. Central = OH, IN, IL, MI, WI
West No. Central = MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS
Mountain = MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV
Pacific = CA, WA, OR, HI, AK
Figure 38. Which of the following best describes the level of instruction you are responsible for this year?

- Undergraduate classes: 74%
- Graduate level classes: 5%
- Both undergraduate and graduate level classes: 21%

Figure 39. How many students did you teach during the 2014–2015 academic year?

- Mean: 173
- Median: 120
Figure 40. In which discipline do you teach?

- Humanities: 21%
- Science: 20%
- Social Science: 13%
- Business: 13%
- Education: 7%
- Nursing: 5%
- Mathematics: 5%
- Engineering: 4%
- Technology: 3%
- Theology: 1%
- Law: 1%
- Medicine: 1%
- Other: 7%
Academic Library Respondents

Figure 41. Which of the following best describes your library?

- Undergraduate 4 year college/university: 46%
- Graduate/professional academic library: 29%
- Community college or 2 year junior college library: 21%
- ARL library: 10%
- Other: 3%

Figure 42. Is your institution public or private?

- Public: 59%
- Private: 41%
**Figure 43.** Approximately how many undergraduate students were registered in your school during the 2014–2015 academic year?
*Mean: 8,747  
Median: 5,000*

![Pie chart showing distribution of undergraduate student registration numbers.](chart1.png)

**Figure 44.** Approximately how many graduate students were registered in your school during the 2014–2015 academic year?
*Mean: 2,386  
Median: 700*

![Pie chart showing distribution of graduate student registration numbers.](chart2.png)
Figure 45. How many full time equivalent (FTE) employees work in your campus library?

Mean: 177
Median: 20

Figure 46. Does your institution offer tenure to librarians?

Yes: 39%
No: 61%
Figure 47. In what region do you work?

- South Atlantic = 22%
- East No. Central = 16%
- West So. Central = 12%
- Mid Atlantic = 12%
- West No. Central = 9%
- Pacific = 9%
- East So. Central = 6%
- Mountain = 5%
- New England = 4%
- Canada = 5%

New England = ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT
Mid Atlantic = NY, NJ, PA
South Atlantic = DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL
East So. Central = KY, TN, AL, MS
West So. Central = AR, LA, OK, TX
East No. Central = OH, IN, IL, MI, WI
West No. Central = MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS
Mountain = MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV
Pacific = CA, WA, OR, HI, AK
Figure 48. What was your library's total acquisition budget (print and digital) for this academic year?
Mean: $1,369,000
Median ($000): $375,000

Figure 49. Which of the following comes closest to your job title?
APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY AND QUESTIONNAIRES

The Academic Faculty/Academic Library surveys were developed in conjunction with Gale/Cengage. This survey was programmed and tabulated by Library Journal. Data in this report is unweighted and includes responses from the United States and Canada.

Faculty Methodology
The faculty survey invite was emailed to a selection of Gale’s faculty list on April 17, 2015, with a second mailing going to additional faculty on April 22. The survey closed on May 5 with 547 respondents.

Librarian Methodology
This survey is part of a two part study to measure the effectiveness of communication and coordination between academic faculty and libraries. The academic library survey invite was emailed to a Library Journal list on April 17, 2015. The survey closed on May 5 with 499 respondents.

A drawing to win one of three $100 American Express gift cards was offered as incentive to reply.
Academic Faculty Questionnaire

1. In which discipline do you teach?
☐ Business  ☐ Nursing
☐ Education  ☐ Religion
☐ Engineering  ☐ Science
☐ Humanities  ☐ Social science
☐ Law  ☐ Technology
☐ Medicine  ☐ Other (specify) ______________

2. Do you feel library resources are essential to your students’ research and/or to your own research?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are library resources essential to...?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do not do research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your students’ research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. What grade would you give your campus library with regard to how well it supports your needs and your students’ needs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your needs</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>n/a / Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate student needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate student needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How essential is it for your campus library to provide the following services for you and your students?

Very essential
Essential
Somewhat essential
Not at all essential
Don’t know/Unaware

- Develop discipline-wide collection
- Develop collections in direct support of course curriculum
- Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
- Instruction of students in information literacy
- Manage research grants
- Manage course reserves
- Parcel course materials from separate texts
- Support faculty research
- Coordinate research data services
- Add faculty articles to digital repository
- Text and data mining
- Other, please specify: ____________________________
5. Please rate your campus library with regard to how it performs the following services?
   Excellent
   Above average
   Average
   Below average
   Poor
   Don’t know/Unaware

   Develop discipline-wide collection
   Develop collections in direct support of course curriculum
   Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
   Instruction of students in information literacy
   Manage research grants
   Manage course reserves
   Parcel course materials from separate texts
   Support faculty research
   Coordinate research data services
   Add faculty articles to digital repository
   Text and data mining

   OPTIONAL COMMENTS: __________________________________________

6. Do you reach out to library staff while planning your course(s) to coordinate course reserves and acquisitions to meet your curricular needs?
   □ Yes
   □ No

7. [if yes] What is your preferred method of communication with the library? Please check only one answer.
   □ Email
   □ Social media
   □ Online forms
   □ Paper forms
   □ Phone
   □ In-person consultations
   □ Department meetings
   □ Other, please specify: ________________________________

8. [if yes] How responsive is the library to your requests?
   □ Very responsive
   □ Adequately responsive
   □ Somewhat responsive
   □ Not too responsive

9. [If no in q6] What prevents you from communicating with the campus library/librarians? __________
   __________________________
10. Do you think there needs to be better communication between the campus library and faculty?
   - Yes
   - No

11. [IF YES] What would you suggest to improve or encourage interaction between library staff and faculty?

12. Do you devote instructional time in your courses to talk about research skills and information literacy?
   - Yes, I cover this on my own
   - Yes, with embedded librarians
   - No
   - Other, please specify: ______________

13. Do you provide your students with instructional handouts that point to library resources?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Do not have instructional handouts

14. Do you embed library resources or library resource links in your LMS and/or electronic syllabus?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Do not have LMS or electronic syllabus

15. Does your course or faculty webpage point to library resources?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Do not have a course or faculty webpage

16. How do you personally utilize the campus library or the expertise of campus librarians for your own research? Check all that apply.
   - I use the campus library on site
   - I access library resources remotely
   - I consult with campus librarians
   - I do not utilize campus library resources for my research
   - I do not do research

17. What service(s) do you wish your campus library or librarians provided?

DEMOGRAPHICS

18. In what state/location do you work? ____________________ (drop down list of states + Canada/International)

19. Please describe your institution:
☐ Community college/2 year Junior college
☐ College/university main campus
☐ College/university satellite campus
☐ Online academic institution
☐ Other ____________________________________________

20. Is your institution public or private?
☐ Public (government-funded)
☐ Private

21. Approximately how many undergraduate and graduate students were registered in your school for the 2014-2015 academic year?
   # Undergraduate Students: ____________
   # Graduate Students: ____________

22. Which of the following best describes the level of instruction you are responsible for this year?
   ☐ Undergraduate classes
   ☐ Graduate level classes
   ☐ Both undergraduate and graduate level classes

23. How many students did you teach during the 2014-2015 academic year?
   ___________________

24. Would you like to be included in the drawing to win a $100 American Express gift card? Three gift cards will be awarded.
☐ Yes
☐ No, thanks [skip to thank you page]

Please enter your contact information below to be entered into the drawing. The three winners will be notified by email.
Your name: ________________________________________
Institution: ________________________________________
Email: ____________________________________________
Street address: ______________________________________
City, State and zip/postal code: ________________________
**Academic Librarian Survey**

1. **What is your job function?**
   - ☐ College/university librarian
   - ☐ College/university faculty [skip to faculty survey]
   - ☐ Librarian in another type of library (public, school, special library) [thank and terminate survey]
   - ☐ School (PreK-12) faculty [thank and terminate survey]
   - ☐ Other [thank and terminate survey]

2. **How essential is it for the campus library to provide the following services for students and faculty?**
   - Very essential
   - Essential
   - Somewhat essential
   - Not at all essential
   - Not applicable/Unaware

   Develop discipline-wide collections
   Develop collections in direct support of course curriculums
   Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
   Instruction of students in information literacy
   Manage research grants
   Manage course reserves
   Parcel course materials from separate texts
   Support faculty research
   Coordinate research data services
   Add faculty articles to digital repository
   Text and data mining
   Other, please specify: ____________________

3. **Please rate your library’s level of service in each of the following:**
   - Excellent
   - Above average
   - Average
   - Below average
   - Poor
   - Not applicable

   Develop discipline-wide collections
   Develop collections in direct support of course curriculums
   Aid and educate students one-on-one in conducting research
   Instruction of students in information literacy
   Manage research grants
   Manage course reserves
   Parcel course materials from separate texts
   Support faculty research
   Coordinate research data services
   Add faculty articles to digital repository
   Text and data mining
   Other, please specify: ____________________
OPTIONAL COMMENTS:__________________________________________________________

4. Where have you talked with students about research skills and information literacy topics in the last year? Please check all that apply.
☐ In the library, one-on-one when students come in for help
☐ Scheduled classes in the library
☐ In the classroom as part of faculty instruction (embedded librarian)
☐ During freshman orientation
☐ Other, please specify:______________________________________________________
☐ I did not interact with students

5. Have you ever been invited by faculty to talk with students in the classroom about research skills and information literacy (embedded librarianship)?
☐ Yes, on a one-time basis; For which classes? _________________________________
☐ Yes, on an ongoing basis; For which classes? _________________________________
☐ No

6. Do you feel that faculty in certain disciplines should teach their students information literacy skills themselves?
☐ Yes, in what disciplines?__________________________________________________
☐ No

7. Do you normally work with faculty to contribute to curriculum planning or course reserve development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum planning</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course reserve development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Did you communicate with faculty in any of the following disciplines to coordinate acquisitions to meet curricular needs for the 2014-2015 academic year? Check all that apply.
☐ Business
☐ Nursing
☐ Education
☐ Religion
☐ Engineering
☐ Science
☐ Humanities
☐ Social science
☐ Law
☐ Technology
☐ Medicine
☐ Other (specify)________________________
☐ None [skip to Q11]

9. How did you communicate with faculty to accomplish this? Check all that apply.
☐ Email
☐ Social media
☐ Online form
☐ Paper form
☐ Phone
☐ In-person consultation
☐ Department meetings
☐ Other, please specify:____________________________________________________
☐ I did not communicate with faculty
10. What method of communication do you most prefer? Please check only one answer.
   - Email
   - Social media
   - Online form
   - Paper form
   - Phone
   - In-person consultation
   - Department meetings
   - Other, please specify: ________________________________
   - I do not communicate with faculty

11. What, if anything, prevents faculty and campus librarians from consulting with one another?
______________________________________________________________________________

12. Do you think there needs to be better communication between the library and faculty?
   - Yes
   - No

13. What would you suggest to improve or encourage interaction between library staff and faculty?
______________________________________________________________________________

14. How far in advance do you require information from faculty about curricular needs and assignments to prepare for student visits?
   - 1 week or less
   - 2 weeks
   - 3 weeks
   - 4 to 5 weeks
   - 6 weeks or more, please specify: ________________________________

15. How does your library support distance learners?
   - Provide access to E-texts
   - Electronic course materials
   - Online reference help via live chat
   - Online information literacy instruction (e.g., video, podcast, slide deck)
   - Other, please specify: ________________________________
   - We do not have/support distance learners

16. What service(s) does faculty ask your library for that you don’t currently provide?
   - Are there any services that you do not or cannot provide for faculty that you wish you could?
______________________________________________________________________________

17. What service(s) that your library provides for faculty are underutilized or experiencing declining use?
______________________________________________________________________________
DEMOGRAPHICS

18. Which of the following comes closest to your job title?

☐ Dean of libraries
☐ Library director
☐ Assistant library director
☐ Library manager
☐ Head librarian/Department head
☐ Reference/Information Services librarian
☐ Electronic resources librarian
☐ Technical Services librarian
☐ Collection development/Materials selection librarian
☐ Acquisitions librarian
☐ Serials librarian
☐ Cataloging librarian
☐ Systems librarian
☐ Access services/Circulation librarian
☐ Library administrator
☐ Library aide
☐ Other (please specify)_______________________

19. Does your institution offer tenure to librarians?

☐ Yes
☐ No

20. In what state/location do you work? ____________________ (drop down list of states + Canada/International)

21. Which of the following best describes your library?

☐ Community college or 2 year junior college library
☐ Undergraduate 4 year college/university library
☐ Graduate/professional academic library
☐ ARL library
☐ Other ______________________________

22. Approximately how many undergraduate and graduate students were registered in your school during the 2014-2015 academic year?
Undergraduate Students: ____________
Graduate Students: ____________

23. Is your institution public or private?

☐ Public (government-funded)
☐ Private

24. How many full time equivalent (FTE) employees work in your campus library?
# FTE employees: ____________________
25. What was your library’s total acquisition budget (print & digital) for this academic year? Please answer in U.S. dollars.

- Under $50,000 (specify)_____
- $50,000 - $99,999
- $50,000 - $99,999
- $100,000 - $249,999
- $2.5 - $4.9 million
- $250,000 - $499,999
- $5 million or more (specify)________

26. Would you like to be included in the drawing to win a $100 American Express gift card? Three gift cards will be awarded.

- Yes
- No, thanks

Please enter your contact information below to be entered into the drawing. The winner will be notified by email.

Your name: ________________________________
Institution: ________________________________
Email: ________________________________
Street address: ________________________________
City, State and zip/postal code: ________________________________