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Western Washington University Library Survey Series, Fall 1996-97: Faculty and Staff and Administration

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Western Washington University Library
Survey Series, Fall 1996-97: Faculty
and Staff & Administration

(Report 1998-04)

Carl Simpson
Linda Clark
Gary R. McKinney

July, 1998

THIS REPORT IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS. SECTION ONE FOCUSES ON WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND BEGINS ON PAGE 2. SECTION TWO FOCUSES ON WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS, ADMINISTRATIVE EXEMPT STAFF, AND CLASSIFIED STAFF, AND BEGINS ON PAGE 25.

Section One: Faculty

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the new University Librarian, Western's Office of Survey Research (OSR) and Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing (OIAT) worked with the library's faculty and staff to conduct a series of surveys focusing on library resources and services. Drafts of this report were reviewed by library personnel and their comments and insights were extremely valuable. These surveys were intended to provide a base of information to help guide an in-depth assessment and planning effort aimed at improving Western's library. Indeed, "Western Washington University Libraries: Organizational Directions and Major Strategies: 1998 - 2003" was published December 31, 1997, a strategic plan which utilized, among other sources of information, the findings found in this report. The library's strategic plan is available in hard copy through their main administrative offices, and on-line via the Western Libraries home page (<http://lis.wwu.edu/screens/mainmenu.html>).

During Fall quarter, surveys were conducted of faculty, administration/staff, returning undergraduates with more than 120 credits, returning graduate students, newly entering undergraduate and graduate students, the library faculty and staff, and community library users.

Section One of this first technical report presents the findings of one of these surveys: the survey of Western Faculty members. Faculty completed an extensive survey, with questions concerning their own use and evaluation of library holdings, facilities and services, perceptions of the library's ability to serve student needs, recommendations for changes to the library, and recommendations regarding a variety of library policy questions. This report summarizes basic findings from the faculty survey. Two notes of mention are:

One: Although Western's library system includes some satellite holdings, the largest being the music library, the great majority of use is of Wilson Library. For convenience of expression, this report adopts the convention of referring to "the Western library" while recognizing the existence of plural holdings.

Two: This report is intended to provide information as background to strategic planning efforts by the library staff, faculty, and administration of Western. This creates a natural division of labor between this report and the planning bodies that will use it. This report provides concrete empirical observations with little comment, and planning bodies will interpret these and other observations within the WWU context, as a basis for planning recommendations. With this in mind, this report is written with a minimum of interpretation or discussion.

METHOD

Faculty received an extensive questionnaire, followed by up to three reminders, one including a new questionnaire. A total of 272 faculty members completed the survey— 156 tenured, 51 tenure-track and 65 others. Calculation of a response rate is complicated by the fact that our original mailing list was produced at a time when the list of active faculty included many temporary hires whose terms had ended during the previous Summer or Spring quarters. We can, however, report accurate completion rates for tenured and tenure-track faculty. The 156 tenured respondents represent 54.7% of those available on campus during Fall. The 51 tenure-track faculty represent a 63.8% response. The remaining 65 respondents represent fewer than half of the temporary non-tenure track faculty, but an exact figure is impossible to calculate.

This means that tenured and tenure-track faculty influence the findings reported here somewhat disproportionately. Since these groups represent the long-term core of the faculty, that weighting seems appropriate. Findings are therefore reported without adjustment. The reader should bear in mind, however, that when we report the percentage of faculty who say this or that, the figure is most accurate for the tenured and tenure-track groups.

The response from tenured faculty, while acceptable for analysis, is lower than preferred in order to be assured that findings accurately represent the entire group. The danger is that nonresponse might have occurred primarily among those who use the library the least and are therefore least engaged with it. If so, the findings reported here would be biased. They would show faculty using the library more than they do and perhaps expressing fewer extreme evaluations.

To analyze possible bias, we sent greatly shortened surveys in Winter quarter to all tenured and tenure-track faculty who had not responded to the Fall quarter main survey. We asked 25 of the original survey questions, including use patterns and evaluations of the library. Fifty-four responded, enough to compare with those who responded to the initial survey. What we found was a very slight and non-significant tendency for the later 54 to use the library less and to give more positive evaluations of the library. These differences were, however, so small as to easily have occurred by chance, so small that any adjustment to the our original estimates would have negligible effect. We therefore proceeded to analyze the original dataset.

The approximate 95% confidence error term for any given percentage finding reported here is between .04 and .05. Where findings are based on fewer than the entire sample, as, for example, when some but not all faculty offer open-ended comments, the error term is larger.

FINDINGS

Findings in this report are broken into three major sections: faculty use of the library, faculty evaluations of the library (including a limited analysis of whether and how use is associated with evaluation of the library), and faculty recommendations concerning various policies under consideration for the library.

Faculty Use of the Library

Faculty were asked how often they use selected aspects of Western's library and other libraries. Use is high, as would be expected. The greatest use is of the "Western library collections," with 41.0% using collections at least once a week and only 19.1% using them as seldom as twice a quarter.

Two-fifths (40.6%) also report using the on-line catalog and/or reference bases from outside the library at least once a week, while 39.0% say they use it as seldom as twice a quarter. The option of accessing the on-line catalog and/or reference databases from within the library is used somewhat less

often than remote access from faculty offices or homes. Some faculty may use the in-library facilities because of limitations in their office computers or because the reference databases they most need are not on-line. We examined whether some faculty are choosing one mode of access only, or using neither with any frequency and found that about two-thirds (64.2%) of those using either mode of access seldom (twice a quarter or less often) also use the other method seldom. This translates to 25.0% of the entire faculty who make very limited use of the on-line catalog or computerized reference databases.

Three-fourths (72.3%) of the faculty report they also use libraries other than Western's at least once per quarter, of whom 39.6% do so at least three times per quarter and 15.4% do so at least weekly. Many of the faculty most engaged in research necessarily need to use libraries other than Western's. The question is how many use only Western's library or only other libraries, and how many make intensive use of both or use neither.

The answer is that most faculty either use Western's library only or use both Western and other libraries intensively. A few (5.4%) make relatively intensive use of other libraries (i.e., use them at least "three-six times" per quarter) but use Western's library collections less often than twice per quarter. Many more (46.6%) make relatively intensive use of Western's collections while visiting others less often than twice per quarter. And one-third (34.2%) use both Western's collections and other libraries at least three to six times per quarter.

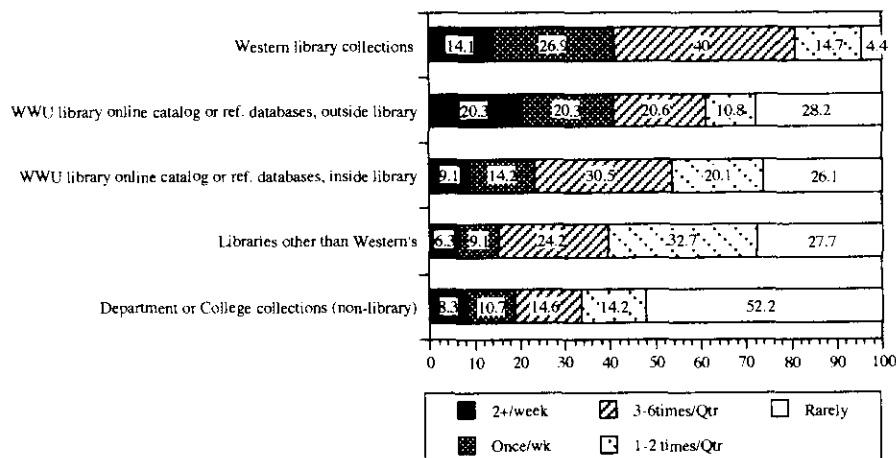
Only 13.9% of faculty say they use neither Western's library nor other libraries more often than twice a quarter. These faculty report making more use than others of their own purchased collections for teaching preparations, although a few appear simply to be low users of library or other resources. Few of this group use any type of resources for research purposes. (See Figure 1.)

Faculty were also asked in how many courses each year they assign each of three types of student work using the library. Nearly two-thirds (61.4%) assign at least one "exercise in using the resources in Western's libraries." One-fourth (24.2%) say they make such assignments in at least four separate courses per year.

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

How often, on average, faculty use selected library resources

Figure 1



“Term papers requiring extensive library research” are assigned in at least one course per year by 81.7% of faculty. Faculty assigning no term papers are, as would be expected, clustered in the natural sciences, math, and the performing arts. In addition, few tenure-track faculty fall into this category. Half (51.2%) assign library-intensive term papers in two or more courses per year; one-fourth (27.0%), in three or more.

When asked about “other assignments requiring use of the library,” even more instructors (88.3%) respond positively for at least one class, with 46.8% doing so for three or more classes and fully 30.8% doing so for five or more classes.

More precise estimates of the numbers of students doing library intensive work are offered in our reports of the student surveys. The finding here simply makes clear how central library use is to course work at Western. If we combine these measures to determine how many classes make *any* one or more of the three types of library assignments, we conclude that only 4.7% of all Western professors teach no courses making use of the library, while, at the other extreme, 29.3% make at least two of these three types of library assignments in at least five different courses during the year.

Independent papers represent another major type of student work using the library intensively. We asked faculty “How many Masters theses, undergraduate honors theses or independent term papers requiring extensive library research do you direct each year, on average?” While 21.7% said “none,” estimates ranged as high as 150, with more than half (52.5%) saying at least two. Another fourth (24.8%) say they direct 3-5 such projects per year, 13.1% 6-10, 8.3% 11-20, and 7.7% over 20. Certain faculty are less likely than others to direct such projects: those who are temporary or part-time or who are in the math/science or performing arts areas. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: In how many courses each year to faculty typically make course assignments of the following types? (n=300)

	Number of courses per year						Average
	None	1	2	3	4	5+	
Exercises in using resources in Western's libraries	38.5	10.6	12.0	14.6	5.3	18.9	1.9
Term papers requiring extensive library research	18.3	15.1	16.4	23.2	12.2	14.8	2.4
Other assignments requiring use of the library	11.7	10.0	16.4	19.1	12.0	30.8	3.0

* * *

One of the recent technologies with greatest impact on library use is the availability of computerized reference databases. We asked faculty to list up to three databases they use most often that are on the library's network and up to three that are available only in “stand-alone” form in the library. Table 2 displays the number of faculty in our sample who reported that each database listed was among the three they use most often in either form.

Table 2: Reference databases most frequently used by faculty

Reference databases			
(* = databases available through the network, Fall Quarter, 1996)			
	Network (n=175)	Stand alone (n=99)	Total (n=274)
Info Trac*	24	11	35
MLA Bibliography*	22	7	29
SSCI*	18	11	29
ERIC*	21	7	28
PsychLIT*	18	7	25
Medline*	11	4	15
Environmental Abstracts*	8	3	11
Art Index*	4	3	7
Disclosure	-	8	8
GEOREF	-	5	5
Historical Abstracts	-	5	5
Sociofile	1	4	5
American History & Life	-	4	4
Sport Discus*	4	-	4
Biological Abstracts/Bio.&Ag. Index*	2	1	3
Music Index*	1	2	3
Applied Sciences & Tech Abstracts*	1	-	1
Current Contents	-	1	1
Exceptional Child Education Resources	-	1	1
F&S Index*	-	1	1
National Trade Databank	-	1	1
Newsbank	-	1	1
RecPark Discus	-	1	1
Other on-line services			
WWU LIS*	14	4	18
UW Cat*	8	-	8
LIBS*	3	-	3
Carl	2	1	3
Bellingham & County Libraries*	2	-	2
YAHOO	2	-	2
IRS forms	-	2	2
EDGAR	-	1	1
HAPI	-	1	1
Netscape	1	-	1
Oxford Dictionary	1	-	1
Pro Quest	1	-	1
"Several others"	3	1	4
"Too hard to use"	2	-	2
Databases not used by survey respondents: Biography & Genealogy Master Index; DocBase; Dun's Business Locator; Economic Literature Index; Marcive; Muse; Science Citation Index; Statistical Masterfile; and Wildlife/fisheries Review			

Several observations can be generated from viewing Table 2. Given the diversity of disciplines and specialties, many different databases are, of course, used. Some databases are used more than others, which may mean they need to be the most easily available to large numbers. The seven most frequently used databases are on the network—the popular SSCI was added recently—which may mean: a) the library has done a good job of putting the most used resources on-line, or b) the availability of resources on-line drives faculty use of resources.

Six of the seven databases with highest use are interdisciplinary in nature, consistent with the high demand interpretation. The seventh, PsychLIT, serves a large department and is also used often by at least one faculty member in each of four other departments, three of which have no database specific to their field on the network. In that case, both demand and availability on the network appear to drive use.

At the other end of the scale, nine of the reference databases currently held by the library were listed by *no* faculty in our sample, and ten were listed by only one respondent. Some of these are quite specific, while others are interdisciplinary, but perhaps less well known. Surprisingly, one truly interdisciplinary database that is also widely known, the Science Citation Index, is included in the category of resources that no faculty member in our sample reported using.

Five databases are used by a relatively large number of faculty but are not at this time on network: Disclosure, GEOREF, Historical Abstracts, Sociofile, and American History. Three of these—GEOREF, Historical Abstracts, and Sociofile—were also requested by at least two faculty in response to our question asking which, if any, additional reference databases should be added to the network.

The database most often requested for addition to the network, SSCI, has been added since the survey—at least in part. Six of the 31 faculty who requested a specific reference database noted that the full SSCI should be added, but at present only the current year is available. Other resources requested by at least two faculty members for addition to the network are: a) Historical Abstracts (four requests); b) Lexis/nexis, American History and Life, and Sociofile (three requests each); and c) GEOREF and Stats Canada (two requests each).

* * *

Having considered the issue of which reference databases faculty are using, we turn now to the question of how many faculty are using *any* reference databases. Surprisingly, only a little more than half (52.3%) of faculty say they use these databases. Only 38.2% actually listed a database they use by name; 24.0% listed two or more databases, while 11.6% listed three or more.

The surprisingly low use of electronic reference databases may represent a preference for more traditional search methods; the survey did not probe that option. Consistent with that interpretation, faculty who have been at Western longer use these databases less often, but the margin of difference is not great. Use may also vary with discipline-dependent traditions and search engines. Indeed, Western's faculty use of electronic reference systems does vary by discipline, but that variation does not seem dependent on the availability of electronic databases. The tendency to make use of such databases is higher than average in the humanities, social sciences, the College of Business and Economics and Fairhaven College, and lower than average in The College of Fine and Performing Arts, Woodring College of Education and the math/natural science departments.

Another reason for the low use of electronic databases may be that many faculty draw extensively on privately-owned materials for their research. Over one quarter (27.5%) of faculty reported that two-fifths of their research materials were their own and only one-fifth accessed through Western's library. Indeed, for faculty drawing least on their own purchases, 57.6% reported the names of databases, while for faculty drawing most on their own purchases, only 32.2% reported the names of databases. The circumstances are different, however, when it comes to teaching preparation, where no association between reliance on private collections and use of the library was found.

The issue of where Western professors get their print and media resources for “research, course preparation, and personal leisure” was approached directly in the survey by asking what percent come from Western’s library, Western’s Interlibrary Loan (ILL), other libraries, the Internet, or their own purchases. Relative use can be suggested by the average percent reported for each resource (although averages mask great variation among faculty). The Internet constitutes about 5% of the average use for each of the three purposes: research, teaching, and leisure. Other resources vary by purpose.

For *research*, the average percent that faculty draw from Western’s main library is 30.6%, with an additional 5.5% from departmental collections. Nearly as much, 28.4%, comes on average from individuals’ own private libraries. Another 18.0% comes through Western’s ILL and 10.5% from visiting other libraries. For *teaching preparation*, use is about the same, averaging 30.5% for the main library and 7.0% for departmental collections. In this case, fully 39.1% of materials come from private purchase, with only 9.0% from ILL and 4.2% from other libraries.

Private leisure use of “print and media resources” comes, as would be expected, primarily from private purchase or rental, averaging 56.4%. For private use, Western’s main library averages 11.0%, its departmental collections 1.9%, ILL 2.2%, and visiting other libraries, 15.7%.

* * *

Computer access to library systems is, of course, dependent upon users having access to a computer linked to the Library Information System (LIS), and at Western most faculty (76.2%) do have computer access to the LIS from their office computers. Of the 13.3% without library access and the 10.5% without computers, most are temporary or part-time faculty. Among tenured and tenure-track faculty, only 3.0% report having no office computer and another 11.1% report their office computers are not networked to the LIS.

LIS access from a home computer is less common than from offices, but nonetheless quite common. While 13.9% report having no home computer and 43.8% report home computers without access to the LIS, 42.2% do have computer access to the LIS from home. These figures are about the same for tenured, tenure-track and other faculty.

Faculty were also asked how often they use computers—at home or office—to access the LIS and to access the Internet/World Wide Web. Responses are, of course, influenced by the availability of computer facilities. Two-thirds of faculty (66.3%) connect to the Internet at least “2-4 times per week”, with all but 13.5% connecting at least “occasionally.” While connection to the LIS is, naturally, less frequent, about half (49.6%) say they connect at least once per week and 75.0% do so at least occasionally—reports that correspond to reported library use shown previously in Figure 1.

Asked to identify their best source of information concerning the library, 23.9% chose the option “library personnel/signage/handouts,” while 21.3% chose “library publications,” 18.9% chose “campus publications (e.g. FAST),” 17.6% chose “on-line access (e.g., library home page),” and 15.6% chose “personal contact; word of mouth.” The fact that all these sources are best for at least 15% and that none predominates indicates the variety of mechanisms through which faculty learn about the library and also the relative informality of the information system.

A particularly user-oriented new technology put in place by the library is its document delivery service. Because it is quite new, it provides a test case for how quickly information spreads concerning library innovations. Asked if they are familiar with “Western’s new Access/Document

Delivery Service,” 28.2% of faculty say they have used the service, another 40.1% say they are aware of the service but have not used it, and 31.1% are unaware of it.

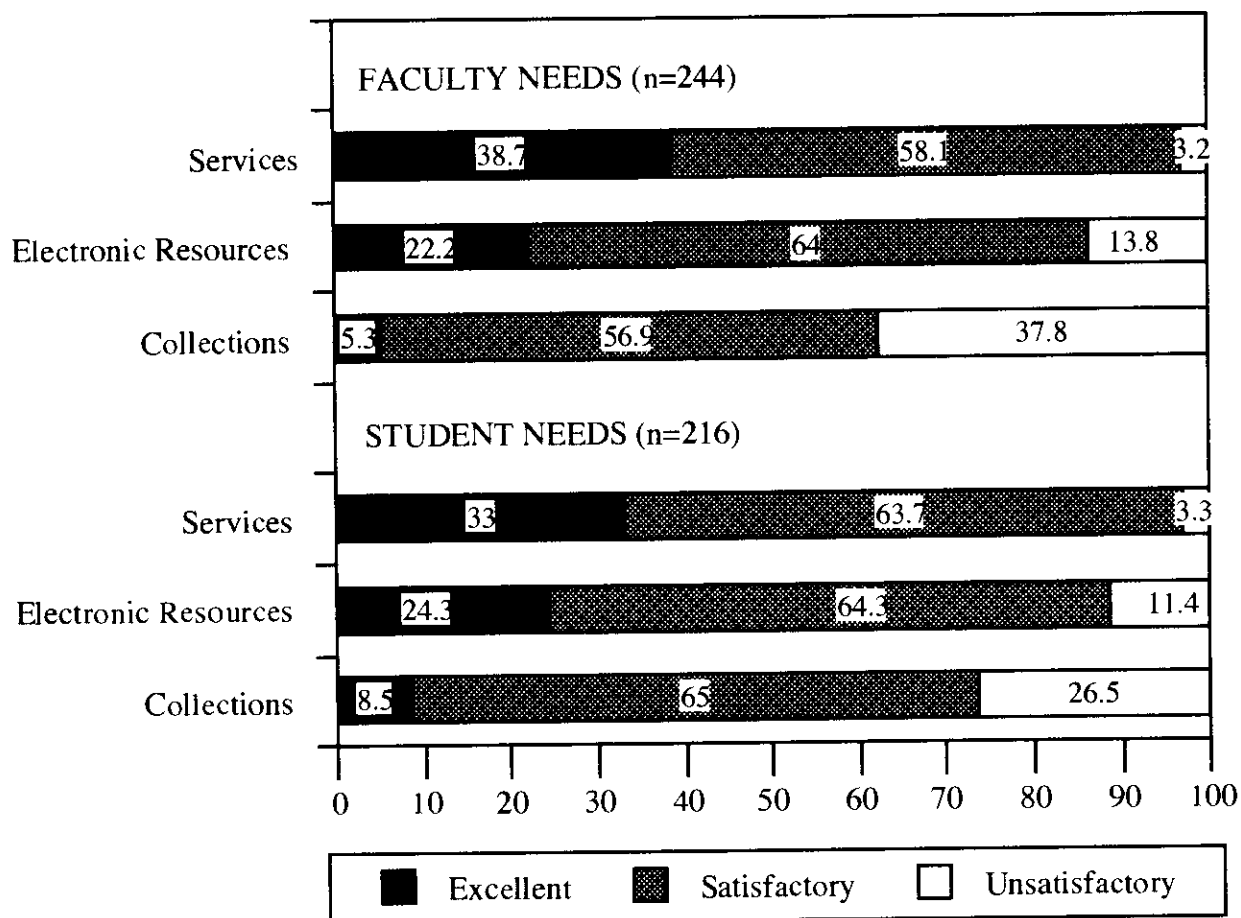
Faculty Evaluations of the Library

The survey began by asking whether three broad aspects of the library—collections, services, and electronic resources—were excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory in meeting the needs of faculty and of students. Results, displayed in Figure 2, show quite high satisfaction with services, moderately high satisfaction with electronic resources, and considerable dissatisfaction with collections. In all cases, the majority rated the library “satisfactory.” However, ratings of “excellent” outnumber those of “unsatisfactory” by a ratio of 9 to 1 in the case of services, while the “unsatisfactory” ratings outnumber the “excellent” ratings by 7 to 1 in the case of collections.

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

Evaluation of the library's support of faculty and student needs in three overall areas:

Figure 2

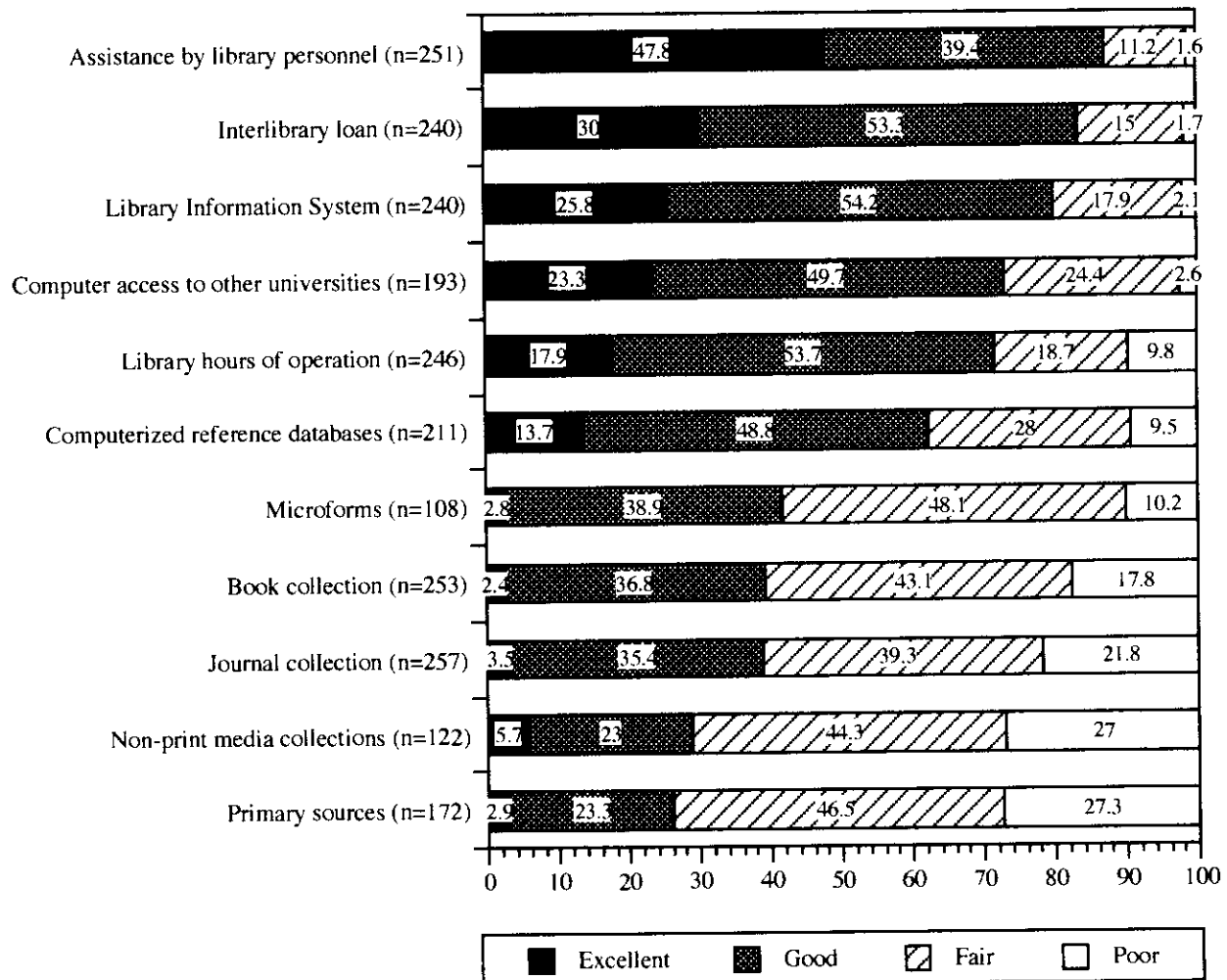


Levels of satisfaction were covered in greater by a question asking faculty to "evaluate how well each of the following resources and services of Western's libraries meet your research and course preparation needs." This question was difficult for many faculty, in two regards. First, it asked for an average between research and teaching preparation needs, which are typically very different among active researchers. Second, many faculty lack knowledge concerning particular services or holdings, such as microforms. For these reasons, a few skipped the entire question and many more marked the "don't know" option for particular items. Figure 3, which displays findings, therefore reports the number of respondents for each specific target of evaluation. Nearly all of the non-responding remainder are omitted because they indicated too little experience with that service or holding to know how to evaluate it.

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

How well each resource or service meets faculty research and course preparation needs:

Figure 3



The pattern of "don't know" responses is valuable to review in itself. More than half of faculty felt unable to evaluate microforms (57.4%) and non-print media (52.0%); more than one-third felt unable to evaluate primary sources (32.3%). These figures no doubt reflect the types of materials used by the various disciplines. Findings of greater importance, perhaps, are that 24.9% felt unable to evaluate computer access to other universities and 17.5% could not evaluate computerized databases in the library. Presumably, these figures indicate that a sizable portion of Western faculty are not making use of either resource. A smaller percent (9.2%) could not assess Interlibrary Loan services. On the other hand, only 7.5% could not evaluate the Library Information System's on-line catalog. All the "don't know" responses are higher among non-tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Faculty evaluations of the library shown above in Figure 3 are highest for services, with 87.3% rating assistance by library personnel as "good" or "excellent" and 83.3% giving the same ratings to Interlibrary Loan. The Library Information System is also rated high, with 80.0% "excellent" or "good." Satisfaction is also relatively high for computer access to other universities and hours of operation.

Computerized reference databases occupy an intermediate evaluation level between services and holdings, with 62.6% responding "good" or "excellent," but 28.0% saying "fair" and 9.5% saying "poor." Library holdings receive almost uniformly low evaluations by the faculty. Of five types of holdings (including microforms), only one, non-print media, garners more than 4% "excellent" ratings, and in no case do more than 40% give the rating of "good." Only in the case of holdings do more than ten percent give the rating "poor." Journal collections, primary sources, and non-print media garner more than 20% "poor" ratings.

* * *

Faculty were also asked to "evaluate how well each of the following resources and services meet the needs of students majoring *in your field*." The list of resources and services was nearly identical to the list for faculty uses. (Students' own evaluations of the library are reported elsewhere.) Here, faculty report their perceptions of how well student needs are met.

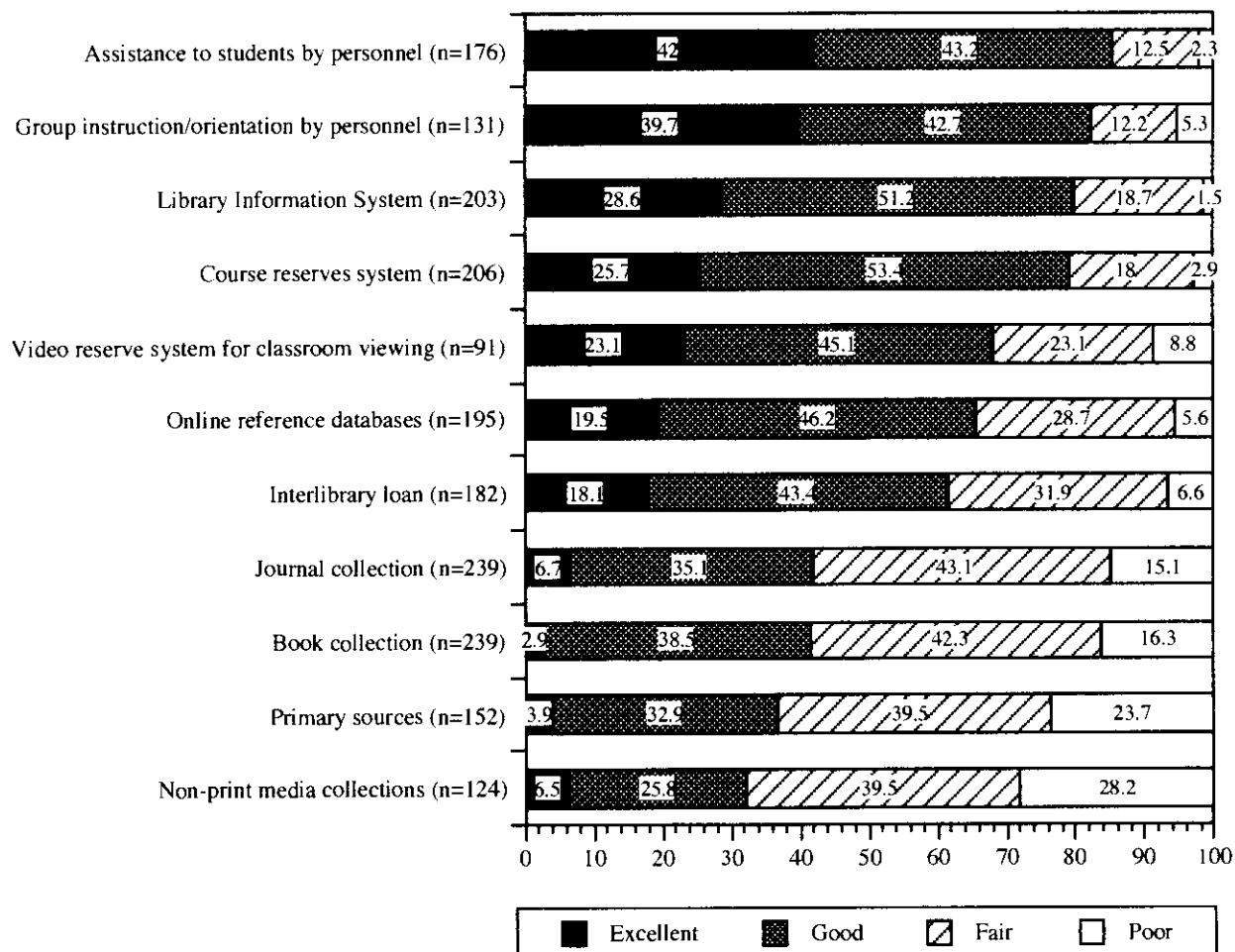
Generally, faculty ratings of the library's value for students run nearly parallel to faculty ratings of the library's value for themselves. In most cases where the same item is rated for both constituencies, responses indicate no difference or slightly higher evaluations for meeting students' needs—with exceptions. For one, primary sources, the difference is considerable, with student needs seen as met more fully; for another, Interlibrary Loan, students needs are seen as being met considerably less well.

Items indicated as meeting student but not faculty needs are all services. Consistent with the larger pattern, these services are given high evaluations. Librarians' individual assistance and group instruction are both given very high ratings, followed closely by the LIS and course reserve system. Video scheduling received slightly lower ratings, though the number of faculty who had knowledge enough to rate that service was low (91).

Once again, many faculty felt unable to evaluate how well particular aspects of the library serve students' needs. Figure 4 therefore indicates how many faculty answered each question. (The only items not already discussed are "reserve system to schedule videos for classroom viewing," which 63.4% felt unable to evaluate, and "group instruction or orientation by library personnel," not evaluated by 46.7% of faculty.)

How well each resource or service meets the needs of students:

Figure 4

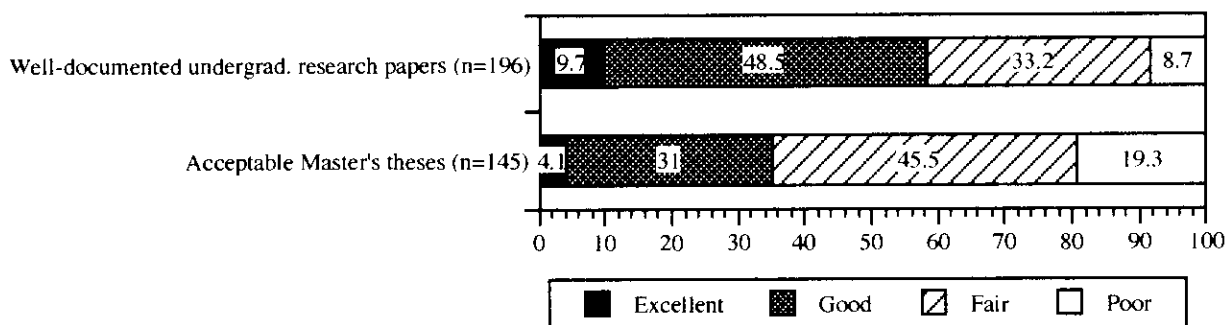


Finally, faculty were asked for overall summary evaluations of “how well Western’s library resources support student efforts in two areas: completion of well-documented undergraduate research papers, and completion of acceptable Master’s theses.” As would be expected, many faculty, 41.0%, responded “Don’t Know or Not Applicable” to the question concerning Master’s theses. More surprisingly, 21.2% gave the same response for undergraduate papers. This finding becomes less surprising, however, when we account for faculty respondents who are relatively new to Western and who are not tenured or tenure-track. For undergraduate papers, the “don’t know” response was given by 45% of those here less than one year, 28% of those here 1-2 years, and by well under 20% of others. Parallel figures for graduate papers are 65%, 54%, and 38%.

Ratings for these overall “bottom line” evaluations is moderate for undergraduate papers and low for graduate theses. For undergraduates, the modal (most common) response is “good,” with as many rating “poor” as “excellent.” For graduates, the modal response is “fair,” with nearly five times as many ratings of “poor” as of “excellent.” (See Figure 5.)

How well Western's library resources support student efforts to complete each of the following, overall:

Figure 5



Evaluations of the Library by Rank, Time at Western, and Discipline

In addition to knowing overall evaluations of the faculty, as presented in Figures 1 to 4, it is also valuable to ask whether evaluations are higher or lower for those who know Western best by virtue of having been here longest or among those who are least permanently attached to Western vs. those who are tenured or are tenure-track, and to ask whether judgments vary significantly by academic department or college. This section summarizes analyses of these questions.

Comparison by rank:

The greatest danger to the interpretation of findings reported above would be that some group, likely the non-tenured, non-tenure-track faculty, might have very different perceptions than others, thus skewing the total results. Our analysis shows that not to be the case. Aside from the fact that fewer tenured and tenure-track faculty than others give the "don't know" response, responses by all ranks are highly similar and typically not significantly different in our sample. There are, however, some patterned differences, which we note below.

- In the case of the summary evaluations reported in Figure 2; one pattern characterizes the great majority of ratings: tenure-track faculty give lower evaluations than both tenured and "other" faculty, with the latter two groups approximately equal. Differences are more marked when the evaluation is of faculty needs, but follows the same pattern for all measures. Other factors, such as college or time at Western do not explain away this finding. It is logical to assume, although speculative, that tenure-track faculty feel the most urgent need for library resources and are therefore most critical of them.
- Evaluations of how well specific services and holdings meet faculty needs (reported in Figure 3) are typically equal across rank. The exceptions are that tenure-track faculty give lower evaluations to journal and book collections and tenured faculty give higher evaluations to the LIS. Further analysis shows that the latter finding results from tenured faculty having been at Western longer, which may make them especially appreciative of the recent catalog changes.
- Evaluations of how well services and holdings meet student needs (reported in Figure 4) follow closely the patterns for meeting faculty needs. In addition, among student-only services, one—"group instruction or orientation by library personnel"—is rated significantly lower by tenure-track than by other faculty.

- For the overall evaluation of library support for student papers (see Figure 4), we once again find the pattern that tenure-track respondents give lower evaluations than tenured or other faculty.

Comparison by time at Western

Before we can interpret the finding that tenure-track faculty tend to be more critical of library resources, it is valuable to ask whether recent arrival at Western is at issue. Moving from a Ph.D.-granting institution, as the majority of tenure-track faculty have done recently, establishes a comparison base which necessarily embarrasses Western, whereas working at Western for a prolonged period may lead faculty to adjust expectations. While most "other" faculty are also newly arrived at Western, they may be less uniformly recent Ph.D.s.

- Regarding collections, journals and books, and regarding overall supports for student papers, it is the case that faculty who have been at Western for a shorter period of time, offer lower evaluations. More precisely, evaluations are lowest for those here 2 years or less, intermediate for those here 3-6 years, and higher for those here more than six years.
- For all the other evaluations reported earlier, however, there are no statistically significant differences by time at Western.

Combining the analysis of rank and status we find that the particular group most critical of the library is the tenure-track group, with newer arrivals most critical.

Comparisons by academic discipline and college

Comparisons by academic department are important because they may speak to how well current resources meet widely divergent needs of the various fields. We therefore offer below a summary of a simple descriptive analysis of the ratings offered by each field, though the reader should be warned that this analysis faces interpretive difficulties.

First, satisfaction is affected by the research holdings within the department and by faculty's expectations (i.e., the weight given research and teaching as their primary responsibility). Second, each academic department is small enough that statistical analysis becomes impossible in many cases and difficult in others. The strategy of combining related disciplines into collegiate groups increases the number of cases, but often combines incompatible units with regard to their library collections or facilities, making it an unsatisfactory solution.

With these rather serious caveats in mind, we offer a brief summary comparing disciplines on those evaluation questions that might most logically vary by field: journal and book collections, and computerized reference databases. We report those cases where the departmental response is higher or lower than average to an extent that is statistically reliable and those that are marginally reliable.⁶ What this means is that the smallest departments have very little chance to be listed because statistical significance is so unlikely.

- For journal collections, departments significantly *higher* in satisfaction than average are education, music, and theater-dance; marginally higher are communications and journalism. Significantly *lower* are biology, communications, and computer science.
- For book collections, departments significantly *higher* in satisfaction than average are education and music. Significantly *lower* are art, computer science, English, and sociology.

- For computerized reference databases, departments significantly *higher* in satisfaction than average are foreign languages, physical recreation, health and recreation, psychology, and technology, with theater-dance marginally higher. Significantly *lower* are anthropology, chemistry, and sociology.

It is worth noting that Education and Music, two fields with separate and highly developed holdings, report higher satisfaction with both book and journal collections. High satisfaction with reference databases appears to occur when disciplines have specialized databases available to them on the university network. Departments reporting lower-than-average satisfaction have less in common, except that none of those least satisfied with computer databases has a disciplinary database on the network.

Satisfaction with Reference Databases

Earlier, this report reviewed faculty use of reference databases (see Table 2). We also asked faculty who use each database to evaluate how well each “meets your needs at this time.” On the whole, evaluations are quite high, with 38.4% of all ratings “excellent,” 43.4% “good,” 13.1% “fair,” and 5.0% “poor.”

While reference databases on the network are rated slightly higher than those not available on the network, the difference is too small to be statistically reliable or meaningful. This rather surprising finding probably indicates that faculty were rating the adequacy of the service itself, not access to it. In addition, this finding is explained in part because it happens for rather unique reasons that the lowest ratings of any reference database were given to two widely-used services that are on the network (see Figure 6.)

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

Faculty evaluations of how well the most frequently used reference databases meet their needs at this time

Figure 6

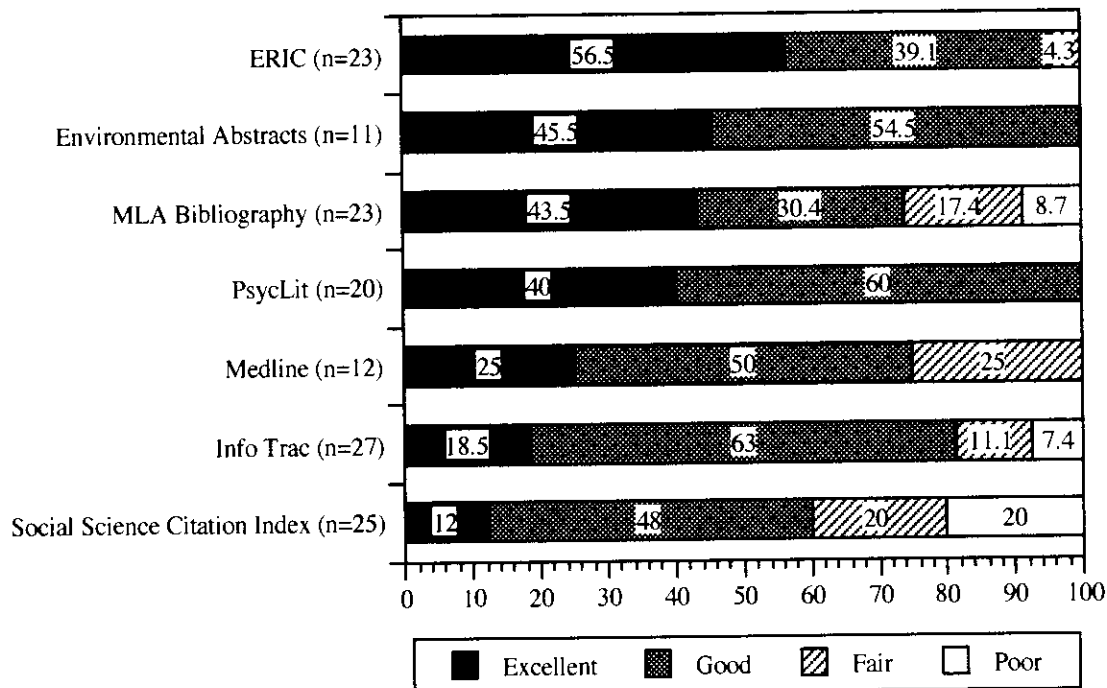


Figure 6 notes that Info Trac is used more often than any other reference database, but few find it "excellent" at meeting their needs. Presumably, the breadth of the service, intended more for students than for faculty research, and its availability on the university network account for both the frequent use and the low satisfaction. While the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) is also used widely, only 60% find it at least "good" at meeting their needs. In this case, faculty comments and their requests for the addition of reference databases to the network make clear why ratings are low: only the most current year of SSCI is available as an electronic database. The surprising number who use this limited database probably results from its centrality to several fields, some with few other options. The dissatisfaction stems from the limited usefulness of a single year, which also explains the large number of requests for the addition of the full SSCI to the network.

Adding detail to this analysis are the satisfaction levels for the seven databases for which at least ten faculty offered evaluations. Evaluations for other databases tended to be somewhat more positive than for those shown, but there were too few responses to make the figures meaningful.

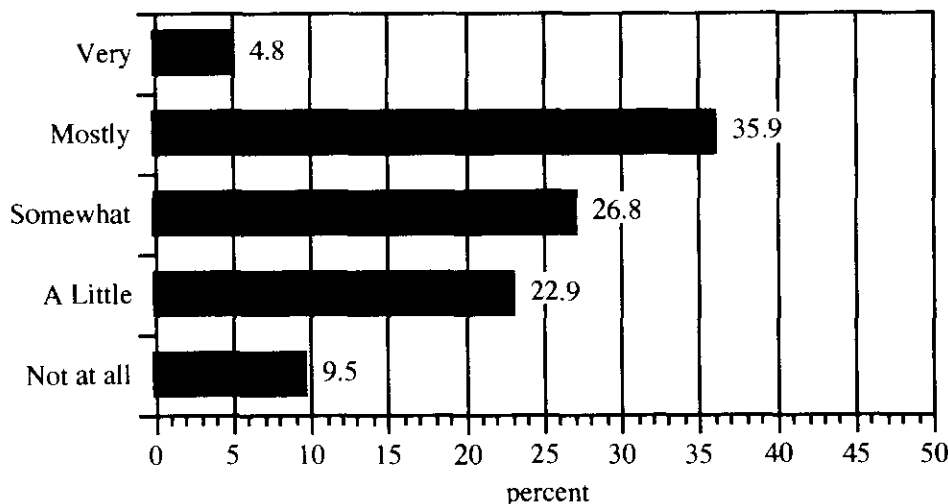
Faculty Preferences Concerning Selected Library Policies and Improvements

Over recent years, the most heated debates concerning library policy have been over the distribution of acquisitions. Not surprisingly, therefore, faculty express marked dissatisfaction with "the present acquisitions policies and practices." Only 4.8% are "very" satisfied, with another 35.9% "mostly" satisfied. About half say they are only "somewhat" (26.8%) or "a little" (22.9%) satisfied, with nearly one-in-ten (9.5%) "not at all" satisfied. (See Figure 7.)

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

How satisfied are faculty with the present library acquisitions policies and practices? (n=231)

Figure 7



One issue driving departmental concerns about the allocation formula is the division between journals and books. To offer some guidance to library planners, we asked faculty "how should acquisitions funds in your field ideally be apportioned toward the purchase of library resources?" Table 3 displays the average percentage recommended by faculty in each field where at least five faculty members responded to the survey. These percentages are based on too few respondents to be reliable, but are presented as extremely tentative but perhaps nonetheless useful information.

When sorted according to the percentage of allocations preferred for journals, Table 3 shows the marked differences by discipline, although it probably also shows the growing reliance of all fields on journals. Business and the natural sciences rely most heavily on journals, preferring about two-thirds of funds for that purpose (although currently about 90% of funds for science research acquisitions are spent on journals.) Social sciences prefer a more even split, with just over half of purchases in journals, while the humanities prefer a majority in books. As expected, the Fine and Performing Arts would place greater resources in "other materials," as would some other fields.

Table 3: Preferred proportion of allocated funds devoted to journals and books, by department*

Department	% Journals	% Books	% Other	Cases
FMDS	67.5	18.7	13.8	8
Accounting	67.1	25.7	7.3	7
Geology	67.1	28.5	4.4	7
Chemistry	66.7	27.8	5.5	10
Biology	65.5	30.0	4.5	9
Sociology	56.4	39.2	4.4	7
Huxley	55.6	39.3	5.1	8
Psychology	55.5	35.2	9.3	15
Math/Math-CS	55.0	42.1	2.9	7
Anthropology	50.0	48.1	1.9	8
PEHR	45.0	41.0	14.0	5
Education	44.1	37.4	18.5	23
Technology	39.6	48.8	11.6	6
English	38.8	50.8	10.4	18
Foreign Lang&Lit	35.3	56.6	8.1	15
Fairhaven	34.1	57.5	8.4	6
History	30.2	62.0	7.8	11
Art	27.0	59.2	13.8	9
Music	20.0	37.5	42.5	8

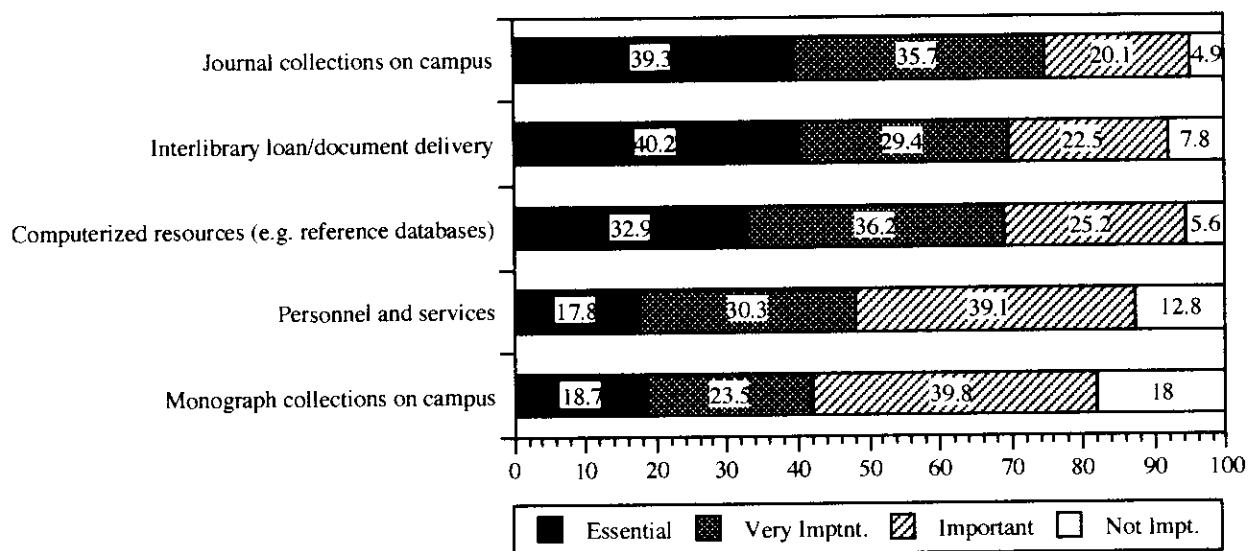
*Only departments with a least 5 respondents are included.

Building on the allocations issue, we also asked faculty which of five areas should be highest priority for expansion: "Bearing in mind the realities of limited funding, please indicate how important you feel it is that Western give very high priority to expanding each of the following library resources or services." The five areas are indicated in Figure 8, with at least some faculty viewing expansion in each area as essential. Expanding journal collections is seen as "essential" or "very important" by the greatest number, 75.0%. Tools providing access to materials here and elsewhere (interlibrary loan and computerized resources) are given high priority by about two-thirds of faculty, personnel and services by just under half, and monograph collections by just over two-fifths. Caution must, of course, be used in the interpretation of such figures. Monograph collections, for instance, are given high priority for expansion among humanities departments, but lower than average priority among math/natural sciences.

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

How important do faculty feel it is that Western give very high priority to expanding each of the following library resources or services? (n=300)

Figure 8



Faculty also responded to three sets of questions concerning the directions that should be taken by the library, beginning with several possible library expansions involving uses of the library and library staff (rather than acquisitions). Figure 9 shows moderate support for various areas of expanded service by the library, with greatest support for direct research assistance and training in the use of library resources—though it should be kept in mind that the question asks about the value of *expanding* library roles. The perception that expansion would not be valuable could mean that the present level is satisfactory or that the activity in question is seen as of little value. All that is clear is that about half of respondents feel expanded research assistance and faculty training would be "very" or "moderately" valuable, and about two-fifths would find the other possible expansions very or moderately valuable

How valuable would it be for the library to expand its role in each of the following areas? (n=250)

Figure 9

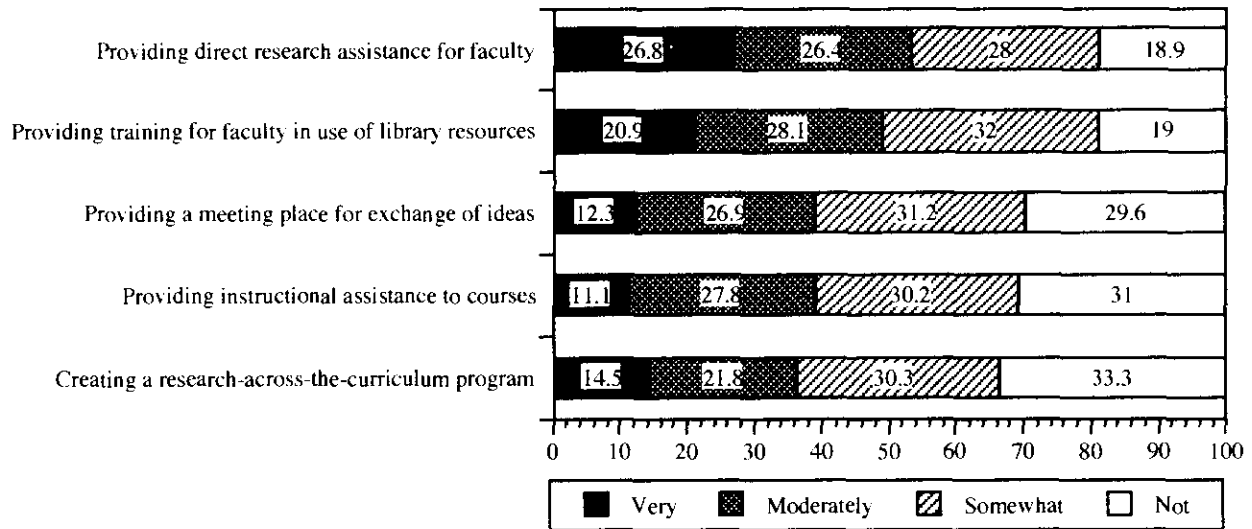


Figure 10 is concerned with the value of various roles played by library faculty, with most respondents placing greatest value on selecting, acquiring, analyzing, and organizing collections. Serving as liaison between the library and departments or colleges is also seen as very valuable, though acquisitions activities are by far the most valued. Other activities may be important to the library faculty themselves but are not embraced as valuable by many non-library faculty.

How important is each of the following roles for library faculty? (n=253)

Figure 10

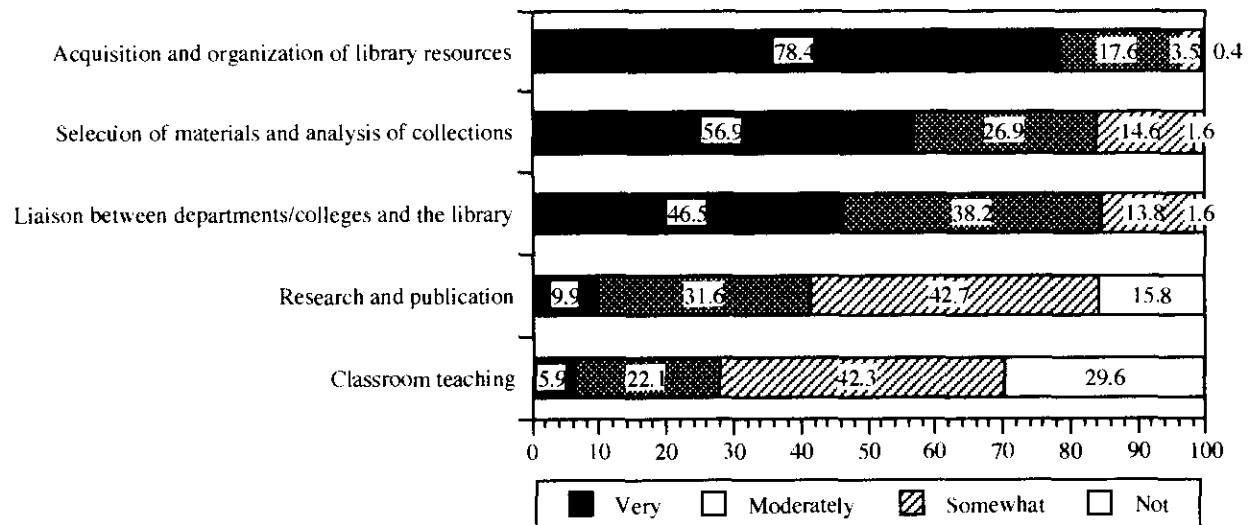
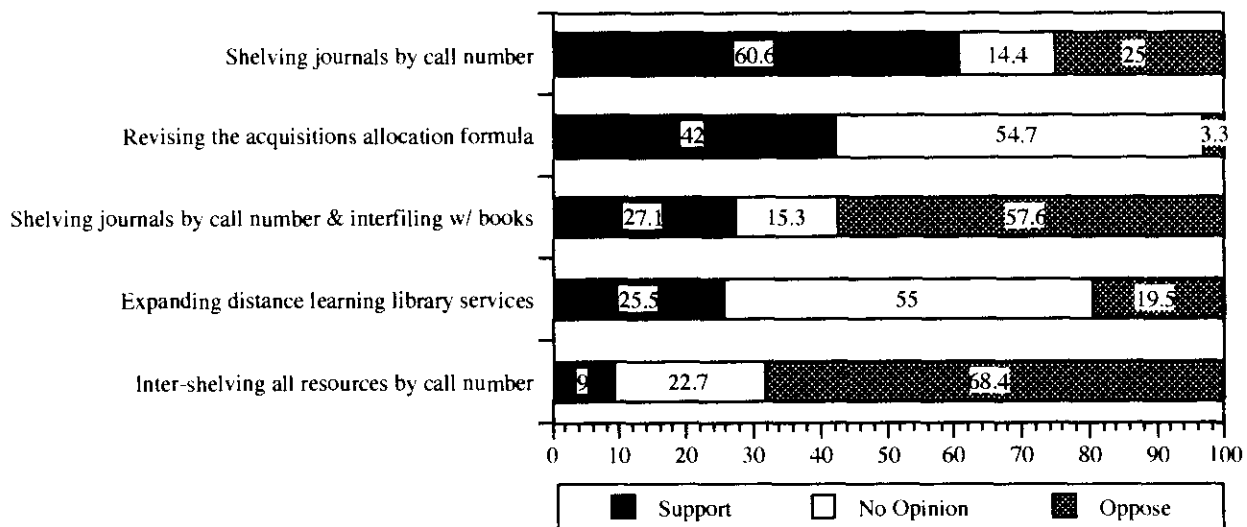


Figure 11 is concerned with the organization of library holdings, revision of the acquisitions allocation formula, and expanding library services via distance learning. Regarding organization, the marked majority of faculty prefer separate shelving for journals and other resources. Shelving by call number is viewed favorably, but not any form of integrated shelving. Over half the faculty (54.7%) have no opinion as to whether or not the acquisitions formula should be revised, presumably having no knowledge about it. Of those who do have an opinion, thirteen times as many favor as oppose revision. The distance learning question appears to be too new for many to have formed opinions. Over half (55%) say "no opinion" and the remainder are split almost evenly between supporting and opposing expansion.

W.W.U. Library Survey, Fall 1996: Faculty

Do faculty support or oppose each of the following initiatives presently being discussed in the library? (n=250)

Figure 11



* * *

Finally, faculty were asked to list up to three "changes that would most improve the value of the library for your course preparation and research needs", and the same for "students majoring in your field." Categories of responses were constructed inductively on the basis of specific responses offered. Comments were then coded systematically into those categories. Suggestions pointed at faculty only, and at faculty/students ran closely parallel and are presented in Table 4a. Suggestions pointed at students only were rather different, and are presented separately in Table 4b.

The most frequent change suggested for both faculty and student is, unsurprisingly, to increase holdings of journals and books, with expansion of computerized reference supports following close behind. From that point on, suggestions become quite specific and are listed without further comment.

Table 4a. Suggestions Offered By Faculty Re: Changes That Would Most Improve the Value of the Library for Both Faculty and Students (60.9% of faculty responses; n=190), and Faculty Only (n=122)

	Faculty & Students	Faculty Only
Comments Re: Journals/Magazines/Periodicals	58	36
More journals in my field (specific topic)	23	12
Expand/update journal collections(general comment)	22	11
More electronic/ on-line journals; full articles and indices	3	1
Easier access to periodicals/newsletters (e.g. microform); get journals bound quicker	2	3
Improve access to journals/organize by department	2	--
Increase allocation of funds for journals	2	--
More progressive journals (feminism, etc.)	1	1
Avoid esoteric journals; subscribe to serious magazines; avoid "fluff"	1	2
Ensure complete "set" of journals	1	2
Renew subscriptions that have been cancelled due to budget constraints	1	2
More journals of a cultural nature (Native American etc.)	--	2
Comments Re: Books	36	14
Add books that are newly published/up-to-date; and publicize new acquisitions (on-line)	16	7
More books in my field (specific topics)	13	5
More money for purchase of books (generally)	6	--
Get books out into the stacks/immediate access (no commissary waits/archived material)	1	2
Comments Re: Databases/Internet	26	15
Add new databases (specific databases listed)	7	3
Electronic databases/CD Roms: more investment; better access	6	5
Home/office/off-campus access to library databases	4	5
Internet: available content/more access	3	1
More "intelligent" on-line catalog system	3	--
Provide computer help for faculty re: use of new systems (i.e. internet, AOL, WWW)	3	--
Put copyright reserve readings on line	--	1
Other Comments Re: Acquisitions	32	22
Expansion of textbooks/ current curriculum guides/new essential training requirements	7	1
Expand video/film library; more up-to-date; more funding; better access	6	6
Increase primary source acquisition (fill in gaps in the collection)/coordinated series	5	1
Current and complete monograph collection	3	3
More rational organization & distribution of materials (e.g. Dewey Decimal system)	3	2
Enlarge reference section	2	--
More faculty input re: acquisitions: clear, timely, accurate discussions w/ faculty re: needs and development of acquisitions	2	6

(Continued)

Table 4a (Continued)

Comments re: Interlibrary Loans	13	7
Better interlibrary loan <u>service</u> --strengthen, faster service	9	2
Fewer ILL charges	1	1
Longer time allowed for ILL borrowings	1	1
Added support to ILL (\$\$)	1	1
Please maintain ILL & access as priority!	1	1
On-line I.L.L.	--	1
 Comments Re: Library Technology/Facilities	 10	 13
More computer terminals	3	3
Computer lab in the building/computer stations (personal use while studying)	2	2
Coffee shop/ <u>reading area</u> for rest/relaxation/collegial intersection on library premises similar to Barnes & Nobles/ Starbucks Area	1	1
Improved <u>access</u> for fairhaven students and faculty!!	1	1
Make layout less confusing/more logic to arrangement of resources	1	1
Upgrade technology ("move into 21st century")	1	2
Strengthen faculty facilities/resources/"collegiality"	--	1
Improve copy/print capabilities	--	1
Other comments re: facilities (not coded above)	1	1
 Comments Re: Library Administration/Budget	 3	 2
Expand budget	2	1
More equitable allocation of budget	1	--
Better enforcement or rules (quiet rules, return policies, etc.)	--	1
 Comments Re: Library Personnel	 5	 6
More emphasis on staff professionalism; level of help and attitude need improving	3	2
More research assistance from staff	2	4
 Other Comments Re: Library in General	 7	 7
Expanded hours (Sundays, Holidays, Fridays, and especially <u>Weekends</u>)	3	4
Better hours during breaks, to do serious research	1	1
Delivery/pick up of materials	1	--
"Keep upgrading and modernizing" (gen. comment)	1	--
No changes needed	1	2

Table 4b. Suggestions Offered By Faculty Re: Changes That Would Most Improve the Value of the Library for Students (n=110)

Comments Re: Journals/Magazines/Periodicals	49
Expand/update journal collections in field	21
Increase journal access (also make available from off campus sites)	3
Make journals available on-line	1
Comments Re: Books	18
Expand book collections/more money for purchases	6
Ethnically diverse collections	3
Add books that are newly published/up to date	3
Larger selection of textbooks/reserve/used statewide	2
Make most books available on-line	1
Purchase all books from university presses	1
Race, class, gender sensitive literature	1
Revise loan policy (3 wks is too long)	1
Comments Re: Databases/Internet	5
More on-line capabilities (internet, WWU)	3
Foreign language on-line	1
Easy searching of Chem Abstracts	1
Other Comments Re: Acquisitions/Collections	33
Better access/expanded collections re: non-print materials (audio/video; CD Roms; microfilm)	12
Update/continually add to entire collection (including primary sources, dictionaries, etc.)	7
Increase holdings in my field; more up-to-date information	4
Strengthen map library (increase budget, resources on LIS, expand hours, etc.)	3
Strengthen reserve room, including copyright issues	3
Current & complete monograph collection	2
More faculty input re: acquisitions	1
Strengthen inter-library loans	1
Turn documents into electronic items	1
Comments Re: Library Technology/Facilities	16
Familiarize students w/library facilities/resources; require students to take library course	4
More computers (study use/ word-processing, as well as terminals)	4
Longer hours	3
More study/quiet space	2
Econ-Business satellite library	1
Locate all science materials in one place	1
Lounge area	1

(Continued)

Table 4b (Continued)

Comments Re: Library Personnel	8
Staff should have more positive attitude toward students; not rude!	5
Staff should be more helpful	2
More staff help re: databases	1
Other Comments Re: Library in General	2
Library is student oriented and greatly appreciated	1
Other comments (not coded above)	1

Section Two: Administrators, Administrative Exempt Staff, and Classified Staff

INTRODUCTION

One: For convenience and brevity, this report will refer to administrators, administrative exempt staff and classified staff using the term "staff." At one point in the report, these different groups will be discussed separately, but for the most part results are presented for all, under the title, staff.

Two: Although Western's library system includes some satellite holdings, the largest being the music library, the great majority of use is of Wilson Library. For convenience of expression, this report adopts the convention of referring to "the Western library" while recognizing the existence of plural holdings.

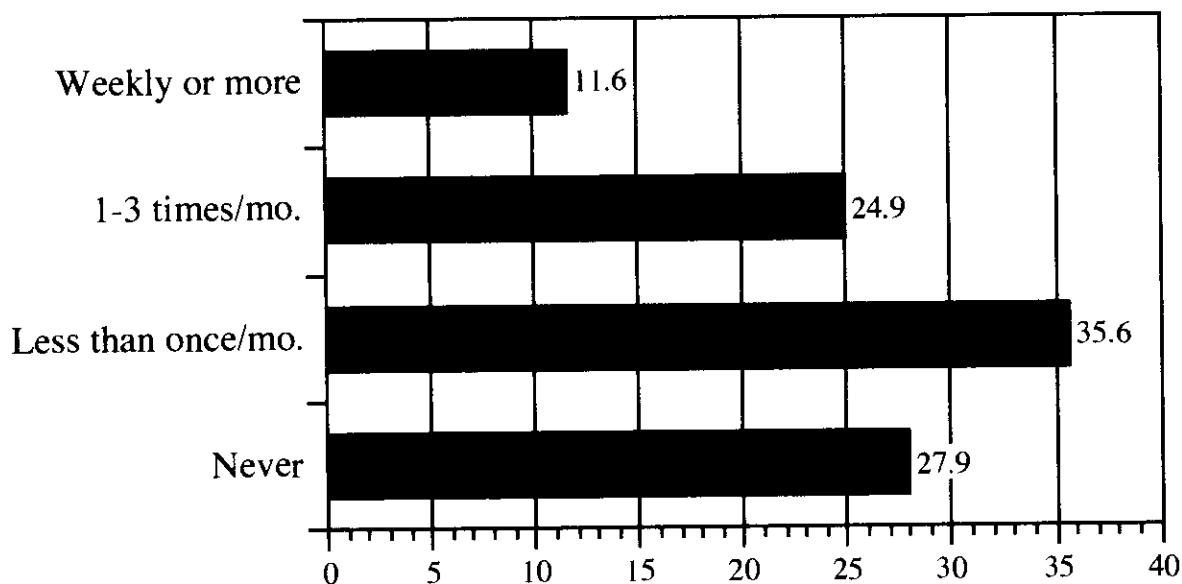
FINDINGS

Although two-thirds of staff and administrators use the library less than once a month, enough use the library regularly to make input from staff a valuable part of the library planning process. Over one-tenth (11.6%) use Western's libraries at least weekly, and another 24.9% use it 1-3 times per month (see Figure 1). Some staff, 27.9%, never use Western's libraries.

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

On average, how often per quarter do staff/administrators currently use the Western Library? (n=233)

Figure 1

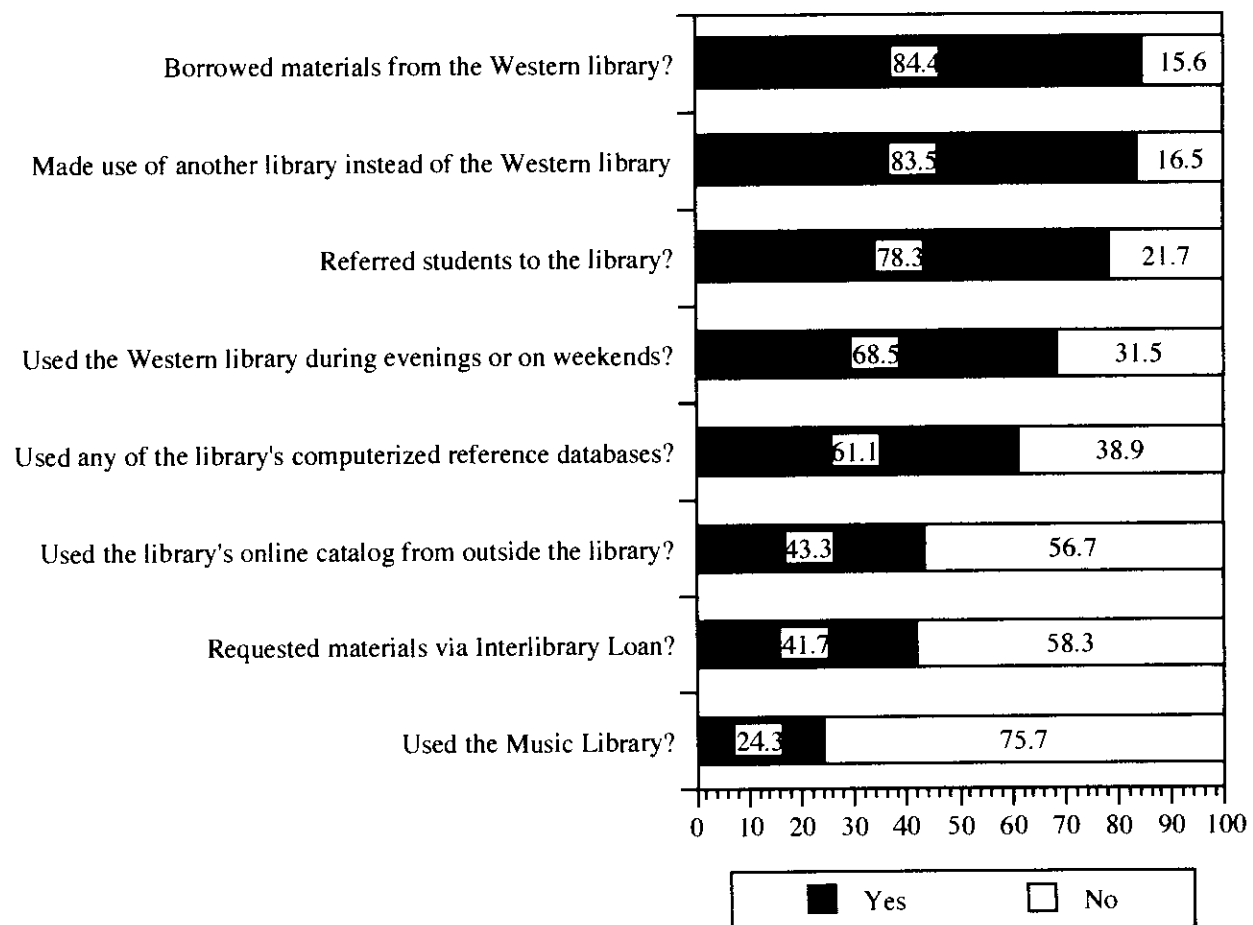


Asking staff whether they “have ever” used Western’s library results in quite high use figures, despite the fact that for over one-fourth that current use is rare enough or far enough in the past for them to say they currently use the library “never.” The majority of staff have borrowed materials from Western’s libraries (84.4%) and used the library’s computerized reference databases (61.1%). Nearly half have used the on-line catalog from outside the library (43.3%) and have requested materials via Interlibrary Loan (41.7%). As important or perhaps even more important, 78.3% of staff say they have referred students to the library (see Figure 2).

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

Have Staff/administrators ever...

Figure 2



Staff use of the library is often personal, rather than work-related, as illustrated by the fact that 68.5% say they have used the library during evening hours. Similarly, the great majority have “made use of another library instead of the Western library.” Most (68.3%) of the 196 who report they have used other libraries say they used the Bellingham Public Library. Another 22.8% refer to the University of Washington library. Another 7.8% refer to other university libraries, primarily the University of British Columbia library, with the remainder using various other public libraries.

When asked why they used other libraries rather than Western's, about half indicated that the other libraries have materials not found at WWU. This answer was given in virtually all cases where the other library used was located at a university. Other reasons refer primarily to convenience, both in the sense of location and in the sense of user-ease, hours, parking, and the like. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Reasons why staff/administrators make use of another library instead of the Western library (n=173)

	Percent*
Has current and extensive material not at WWU	51.0
Access, closer to home	15.6
Familiar, user friendly	12.2
Convenience	10.2
Children use, family use	6.8
Special collections (CD's, videos, films & music)	6.8
Parking available	4.8
Reserve books	2.7
Internet available	2.0
Library hours of operation	2.0
Recreational material	1.4
Dewey Decimal System	0.7
Habit	0.7
Lack of knowledge about WWU library	0.7

*Percentages add to more than 100% because of multiple responses

The Nature of Staff Use of the Library

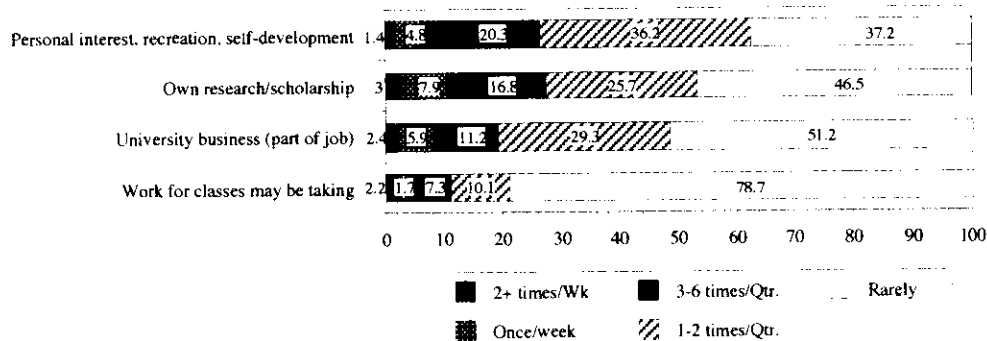
Staff use the library for a variety of reasons, as indicated below in Figure 3. One is that staff are sometimes also students. About one-fifth use the library at least quarterly as part of classes they are taking. About half of these used the library at least 3-6 times per quarter during the Fall quarter of the survey.

Figure 3 also shows the percent of staff who use the library as part of their university job, for their own scholarship, and for personal recreation, with 48.8%, 53.5%, and 62.8%, respectively, making at least occasional use of the library for each of these reasons. The great majority of all use for these purposes is once or twice per quarter. In addition, however, about one-tenth of staff use the library at least weekly for each of these reasons.

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

How often do Staff/Administrators use the Western library for each reason listed below? (n=205)

Figure 3



There is considerable overlap among persons who use the library frequently for courses and for personal scholarship and among those who use it frequently for their jobs and for personal scholarship. Also, those who use the library frequently for any purpose are also more likely to use it for personal recreation. Thus, the 10-12% who make most frequent use of the library tend to do so for a variety of reasons.

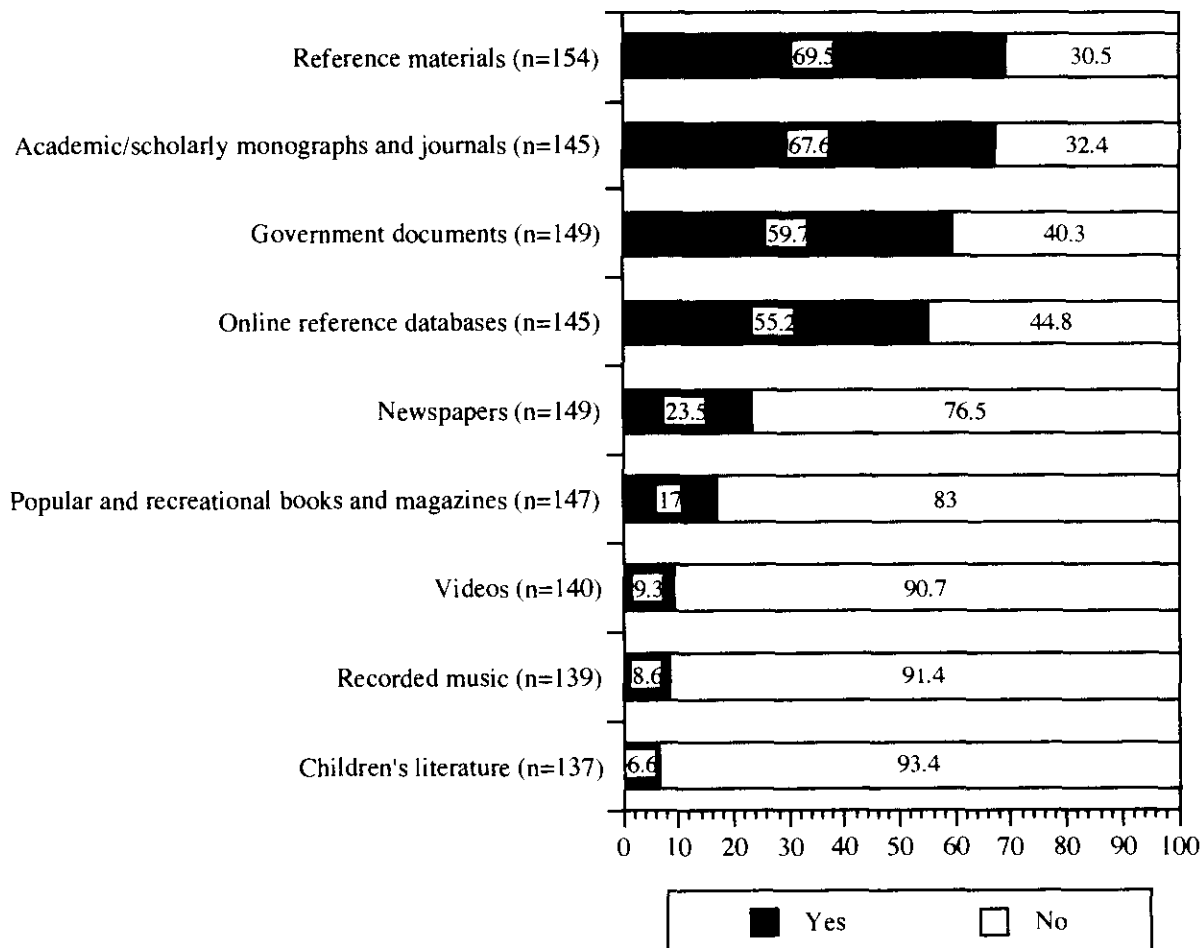
We asked those staff who say they currently use the library at least "less than once per month" (see Figure 1 above) whether Western's library is their "primary resource" for various types of materials. Findings are displayed in Figure 4. Some respondents gave no response to each question, presumably because they made no use of that type of material, with the result that the percentages shown in Figure 4 are based on 137-154 staff responses.

The primary uses of Western's library are clearly academic. For two-thirds, Western is the primary resource for "academic/scholarly monographs and journals" (67.5%) and for "reference materials" (69.5%). Rates are nearly this high for "government documents" (59.7%) and "on-line reference data-bases" (55.2%). On the other hand, fewer than one-fourth say Western is their primary resource for "news-papers" (23.5%) and "popular and recreational books and magazines" (17.0%), and less than one-tenth for "videos" (9.3%), "recorded music" (8.6%) and "children's literature" (6.6%).

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

Is the Western library the primary resource for Staff/Administrators re: each of the following library materials?

Figure 4



Evaluations of Western Library Holdings

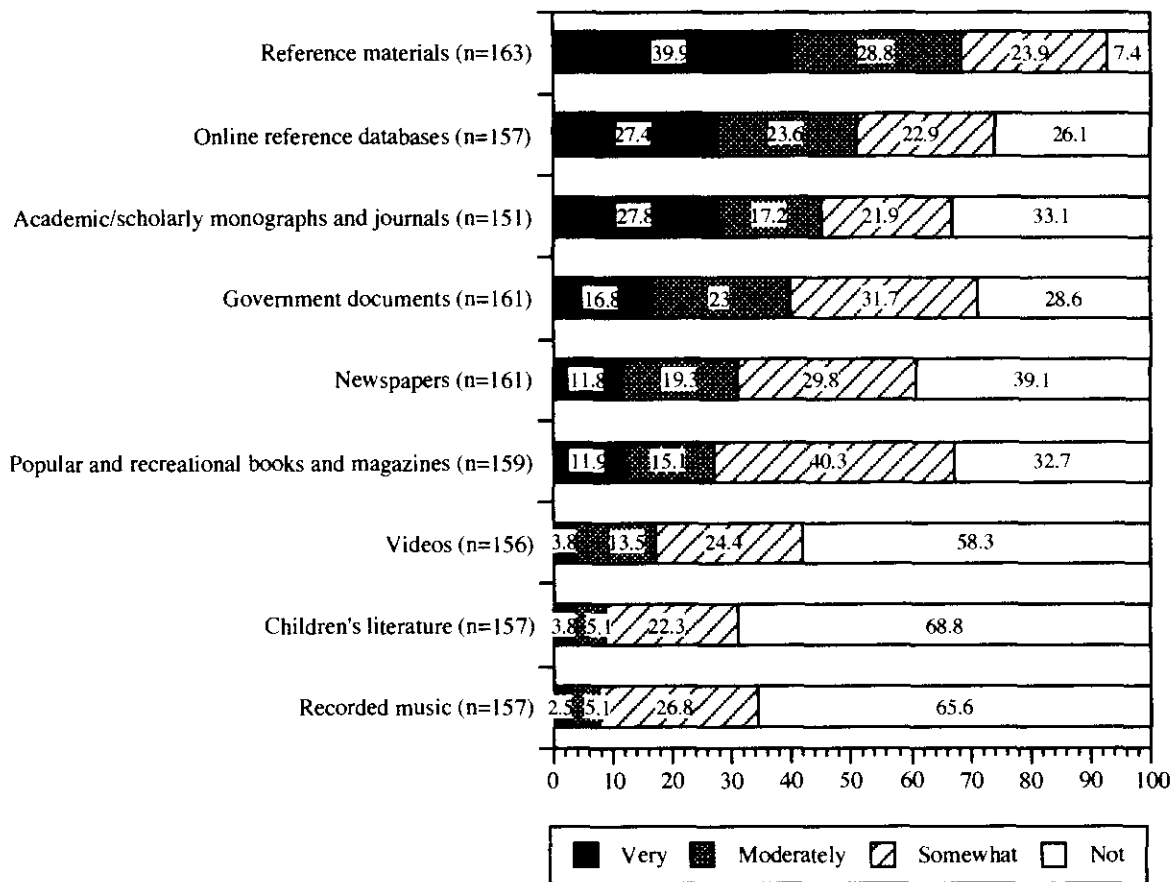
We also asked all those who use the library at least occasionally to assess "how valuable ... library materials are to you." This question was applied to the same list of holdings as reported in Figure 4, and was asked regardless of whether or not the individual used Western as their primary resource for each type of material. The number responding varied between 151 and 163. Ratings are displayed in Figure 5.

Ratings as to the value of Western's holdings in various areas correspond closely to the rate at which holdings are respondents' primary resource; i.e., if I see facilities as of little value, I will tend not to use them; if I do not happen to use facilities, they are by definition of little value to me. Also, ratings are highest for the most academic uses. Two-thirds (68.7%) rate reference materials as "very" or "moderately" valuable. About half rate on-line reference databases (51.0%) and scholarly monographs and journals (45.0%) as "very" or "moderately" valuable. The least frequent ratings of "very" or "moderately" valuable are given to the least conventionally academic areas: recorded music (7.6%), children's literature (8.9%), and videos (17.3%). Government documents and popular books and magazines fall in-between with 39.8% and 27.0%, respectively. For planning efforts, it is perhaps of greater interest how many rate various holdings as "not valuable" than how many give positive ratings. Quite naturally, holdings in the least academic areas are rated as not valuable by many. In addition, academic holdings aside from reference materials all receive relatively high "not valuable" responses: 33.1% for scholarly monographs and journals, 26.1% for on-line reference databases, and 28.6% for government documents.

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

How valuable are each of the following library materials?

Figure 5

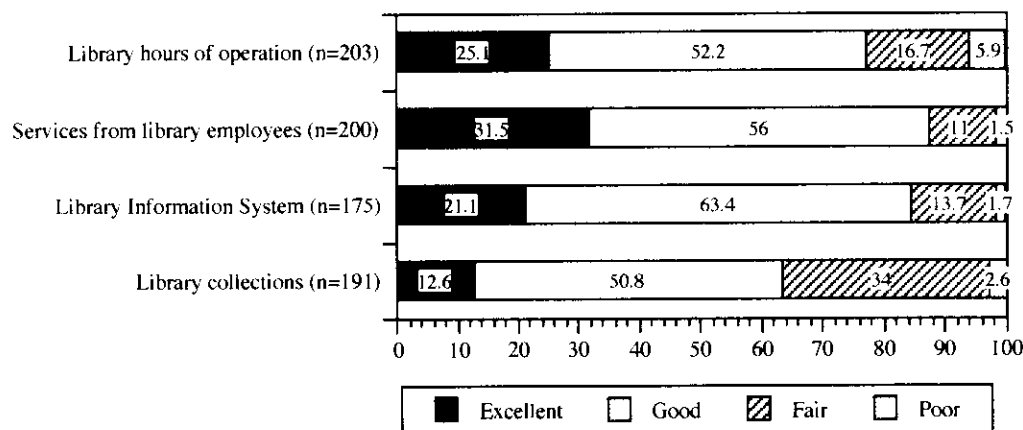


We also asked for evaluations of four broad areas of library holdings and operations. This question was addressed to everyone, regardless of library use, asking respondents to base their evaluations on "your own use of the library and impressions you have gained from others ..." That is, the question was in part reputational. Findings are displayed in Figure 6. Satisfaction with the services provided by library employees is high, with 87.5% rating either "excellent" or "good." Satisfaction is also high for the library information system (84.7% at least "good") and quite high for hours of operation (77.3% at least "good"). Satisfaction with library collections is lower, with 63.7% rating at least "good," but 34.0% rating only "fair." In no case are there more than a handful of "poor" ratings.

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

Evaluation of the library on each dimension listed:

Figure 6

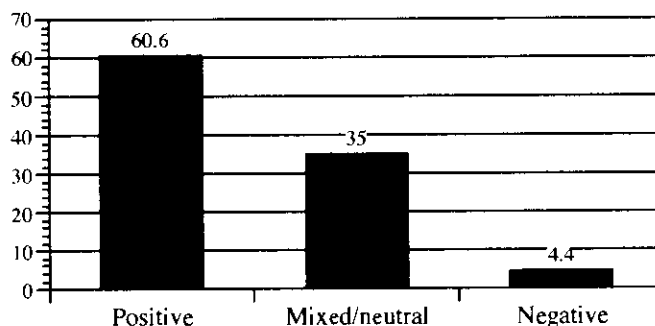


Finally, a completely reputational question was asked: "What is your perception of the overall reputation of Western's library among students, faculty and fellow employees?" Answer categories were broad: "positive," "mixed/neutral," "negative" and "don't know." One fifth (20.1%) felt they did not have enough impressions to answer the question. Responses by others, shown in Figure 7, were quite positive, with three-fifths saying "positive," one third saying "mixed/neutral" and only 4.4% saying "negative."

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

What do Staff/Administrators perceive to be the overall reputation of Western's library among students, faculty, and fellow employees? (n=203)

Figure 7



Staff Access to the Library

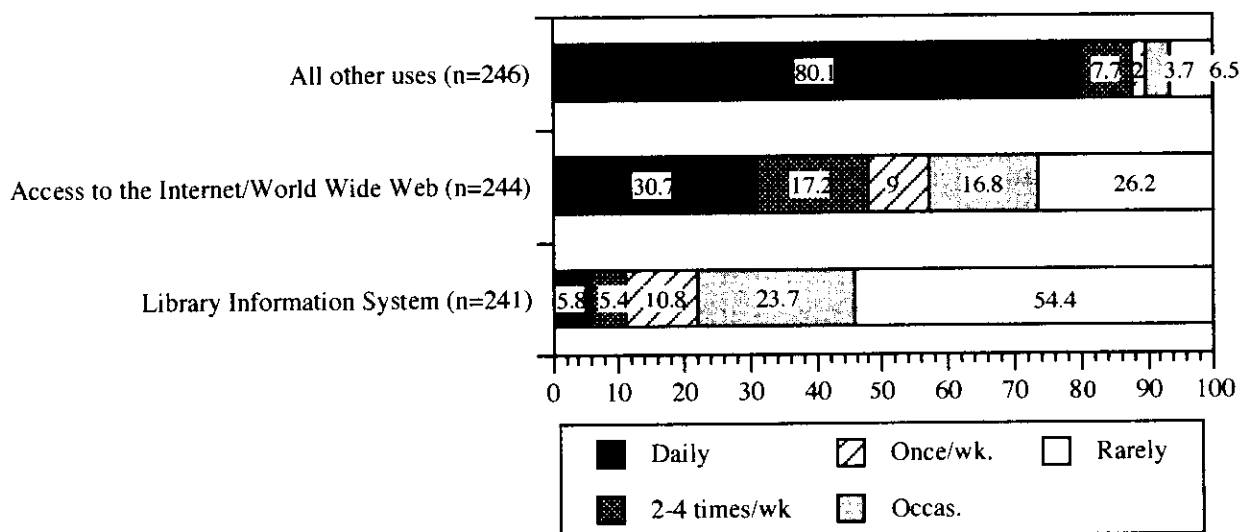
Some uses of Western's library are facilitated by access to computer networks. We therefore asked staff if they have access to computers at home and at work. Three-fourths (73.2%) of staff say they "own or have access to a computer in your residence" and nearly all (92.6%) "have access to a computer in your office." All but two respondents indicating no access to a computer at work are classified staff assigned to posts outside the instructional arena. It is clear that lack of computer access is problematic for very few staff.

We also asked how often staff and administrators use a computer to connect to Western's library information system, to the Internet/world wide web, and for all other purposes. Computer use is very high among this sample, as shown in Figure 8. Fully 80.1% say they use computers at home or the office "daily" for "all other uses." Only one-tenth use computers less often than once a week. Connection to the Internet is also frequent, with 30.7% making "daily" use and over half (57%) making at least weekly use. As would be expected, connection to the library information system is less frequent than other uses. Although 22.0% connect at least weekly, the majority (54.4%) respond that they "rarely" use their computers for that purpose.²

Library Survey, Fall 1996: Staff/Administrators

How often do staff/administrators use a computer, either at home or at the office, for each of the following:

Figure 8

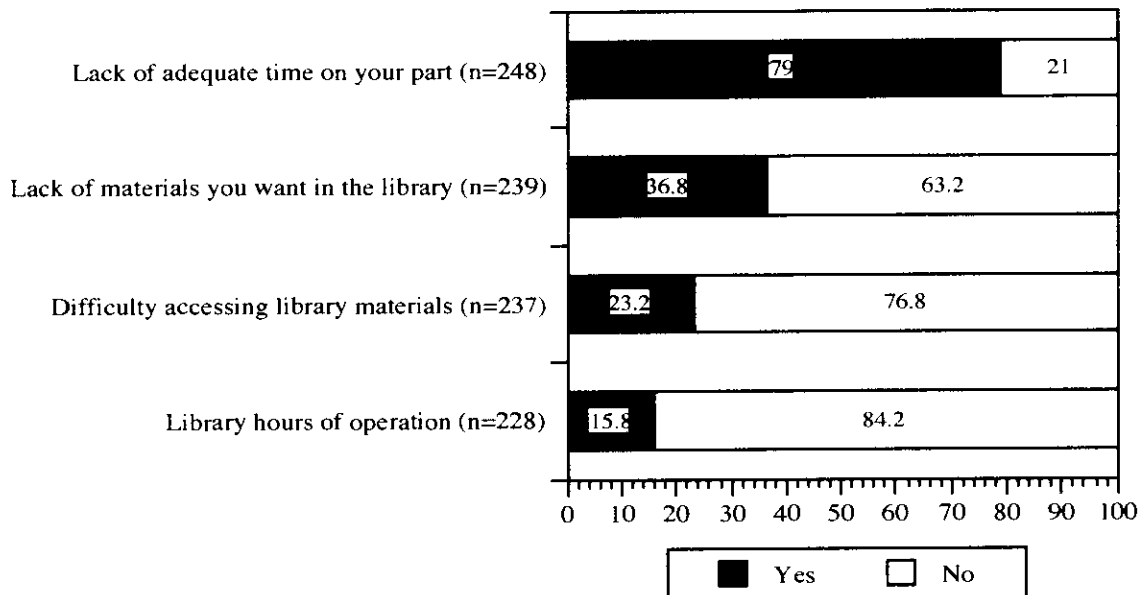


When we asked whether various factors "prevent you from making as much use of the library as you would like" we find only 13.9% implying that they use the library as much as they wish by responding "no" to all the options listed as possible detractors. On the other hand, we find 15.8% responding that at least three of the four options do prevent desired use (see Figure 9).

By far the factor most often blamed for reducing library use is "lack of adequate time on your part," a response given by 79.0%. In addition, more than one-third (36.8%) say "lack of materials you want in the library" prevents them from using the library as much as they would like. Another fourth (23.2%) blame "difficulty accessing library materials," while only 15.8% say "library hours of operation" hinder them.

Do any of the following prevent staff/administrators from making as much use of the library as they would like?

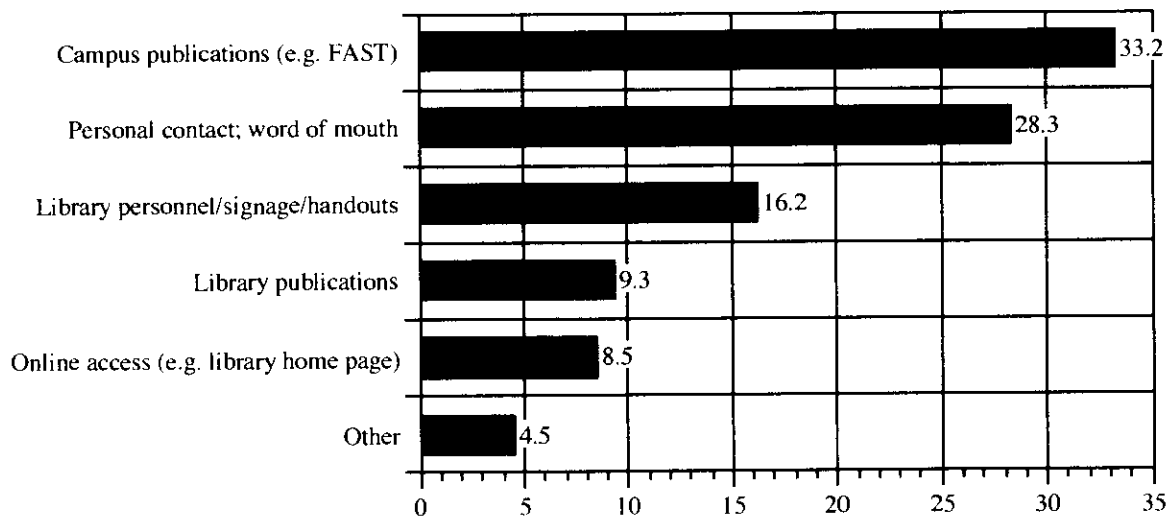
Figure 9



Finally, we asked staff about access to information about the library. Asked “Which of the following is your best source of information about the Western library,” one-third (33.2%) point to “campus publications (e.g., FAST)” while one-fourth (28.3%) reference “personal contact; word of mouth.” (See Figure 10.)

For Staff/Administrators, what is the best source of information about the Western library? (n=247)

Figure 10



Comparisons by Staff and Administrative Position

Because classified staff and administrative positions differ in many ways, we include in this report a brief analysis of whether their reported use of the library or their perceptions of the library differ. Comparing classified staff, administrative exempt, and administrators, we find the following similarities and differences.³

- Administrators use the library considerably more often than staff. Fifty-eight percent of administrators, 46% of administrative exempt, and 28% of classified staff use the library once per month or more often.
- Library use is much more often a part of the job for administrators than for classified staff: 95% of administrators report such use, compared to 62% of administrative exempt and 35% of classified staff.
- Three-fourths of administrators and about half of administrative exempt and staff use Western's library for their own research/scholarship.
- There is no difference across groups in recreational uses of the library except that classified staff are slightly more likely to use the library at least weekly for such purposes.
- Classified staff are considerably more likely to use the library as students in classes they are taking: 24% vs. 12% for administrative exempt and no administrators.
- Evaluations of the library are remarkably similar across job classification. No significant differences emerge, except that administrators and administrative exempt are slightly more often critical of the library hours and marginally more satisfied with services from library employees.
- All classifications are equally likely to say their use of the library is hindered by lack of time. Administrators and administrative exempt are, however, considerably more likely than classified staff to say their use is reduced by lack of materials they want in Western's library (54% vs. 31%) and somewhat more likely to reference hours of operation (22% vs. 11%).

Use level and Evaluation

The final question addressed in this report is whether those who use the library most and, therefore, have greatest knowledge of it are more or less satisfied with it. The answer depends on the type of use and the type of satisfaction we ask about. Overall frequency of use is unrelated to satisfaction with collections, LIS, or services, but high users are less satisfied with hours of operation. Satisfaction with staff services, which is high among all respondents, is unrelated to use or to use for any particular reason. Level of use for own scholarship is related to satisfaction with only one aspect of the library, the LIS; those making most use of the library for research are significantly less satisfied. Satisfaction with university collections is significantly lower for those who use the library more often as part of their work or for classes they are taking. Satisfaction is marginally lower for those using the library for their own research, and unrelated to personal recreational use.

¹ Error term is based on sample size adjusted for finite population.

² Because "rarely" was the lowest response on the answer scale, that response includes respondents who never as well as rarely use their computers in each way shown in Figure 8.

³ These figures are subject to considerable error, since the samples of administrators and administrative exempt are particularly small. These samples do, however, represent more than one-third of all personnel in these categories.