

# 2013 Student Library Survey Executive Summary

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*May 1, 2013*

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## Overview:

The Student Library Survey was conducted at CSUN Oviatt Library from March 8<sup>th</sup> to March 16<sup>th</sup> during the 2013 spring semester. It consisted of 34 questions. Although the survey was not blind, responses were not tied to specific participants and results are kept strictly confidential.

Out of a sample of 10,000 randomly-generated students currently enrolled at CSUN, 810 responses were culled with 792 (97.8%) finishing the survey to completion. This response rate results in a 3.34% margin of error at .95 level of confidence. Of the respondents, the following breakdown is found: Freshman 9.77% (N=79); Sophomore 12.36% (N=100); Junior 26.21% (N=212); Senior 33.99% (N=275); Graduate Student 17.68% (N=143); one did not answer this question; total 809. The survey included a random drawing of ten \$50 *MataMoney* cards as an incentive for participation. Participation in the drawing required students to include contact email information. 87.78% of participants opted to participate (N=711).

Additionally, the survey was tested to determine results validity. Responses basically mirror the composition of the student body. Only students self-identifying as freshmen appeared to be out of proportion to the actual student body. Yet analysis of the absolute difference reveals this to still be an acceptable representative sample. **[See Appendix A for data]**

The survey was designed to address the following four areas related to the library and its users: Facilities, Collections, Technology, and Customer Service. The results provide important feedback and outline student needs for the upcoming library redesign projects, including the LRC integration, the *Learning Commons* development and planning, and the renovation of the library's first and second floors.

## Library Facilities (Questions 2 – 4, 14 – 17, 31 – 33):

These questions were designed to address student usage and attitudes regarding Oviatt library's facilities, including its individual study and group study areas.

The results of the survey show heavy and steady use of the library and its spaces. The library is used at least a few times per semester by 98.6% of the students surveyed. 67% use the library at least once a week. Use of the library is evenly distributed across the first three floors. The TCC shows the least amount of access. The top three reasons to come to the library are related to study and group study. 82% reported that they come to the library to study independently; 61% come to study with groups/friends; and 55% come to work on group projects. This suggests that the move toward more and better study areas is warranted. Notably, research and use of library materials are each strongly represented. It should be noted that only 20% use the library in order to get research assistance. Other responses included: getting coffee, taking naps, using single study rooms, "killing time" between classes, and attending mandatory bibliographic instruction sessions.

Regarding usage of student study spaces, 73% stated that they always (27%) or frequently (46%) had access to individual study areas. Only 16% were infrequently able to access these areas. Conversely, group study areas showed greater infrequency in accessibility. 33% stated that these were infrequently available while only 47% stated that these were always (7%) or frequently (39%) available. This suggests

that the amount of space available for group study is not as sufficient as individual study. In some ways individual study spaces are more flexible and therefore alternatives are more easily obtained. At the same time, a greater number and more flexible usage arrangement of group study rooms may be warranted. In terms of individual study facilities, students expressed across the board needs for individual study tables, tables partitioned for individual study use, and individual study rooms. For group study facilities, students expressed the need for more group study tables, more “smart” group study areas (i.e. with shared monitors, laptop plug-ins, projectors, etc.), and multi-person lounge seating.

Finally, the issue of locker usage was addressed. 95% of respondents stated that they did not use a locker. In this case, it may be warranted to phase out space dedicated to lockers if they are not used by a sufficient number of students. **[See Appendix B for data]**

### **Library Collections (Questions 5 – 13):**

These questions were designed to assess student use of library materials, including their use of print and electronic books, journals and audio/video collections.

Overall, use of library digital database collections appears to be very high. Nearly 92% reported using library databases at least a few times per semester.

Regarding the use of specific library collection formats, the survey reveals paradigms at the moment of shifting. Overall, student usage of e-books in comparison to print books remains equal. 47% of students reported that they use print texts while 49% reported that they use e-books. It is too early at this point to see whether students will shift over to e-books en masse. These are well within the margin of error as well and may not represent usable numbers. When looking at journals, however, the difference is clear. 29% of students reported using print journals while 66% reported using electronic journals. Course reserves also appear to be relatively well-used. 51% reported that they had used them. This is likely more due to a professor’s active engagement.

Finally, use of multi-media formats was also measured. 80% of students responded that they do not check out materials from the Music and Media department. Many free-form responses indicated that students were not aware of the ability to check out CDs or DVDs. Additionally, some responses indicated that other items such as sheet music had been checked out from M&M. Overall, only 23% of students reported viewing videos or listening to audio (including DVDs, VHS, CDs, etc.) at the library, while only 19% reported viewing videos or listening to audio through Oviatt library online services. These results suggest that greater awareness of these services would have a positive impact on rates of use. **[See Appendix C for data]**

### **Technology Ownership & Usage (Questions 18 – 26, 29 – 30):**

These questions were designed to assess both students’ personal use and ownership of technology, use and ownership of tablets and laptops, and their use of library-based technology, including whether they use library desktop computers and the software provided by CSUN.

The results indicate several important distinctions. First, it is apparent that student ownership of laptops is high; 91% of the students surveyed owned them. However, use of laptops in the library is low relative

to this number. Only roughly 31% bring their laptops with them more than a few times a week. 18% stated that they never bring a laptop to the library. Tablet ownership and use was much lower in comparison. Only 27.6% claimed ownership of a tablet. As a result only about 20% reported bringing a tablet to the library. Desktop usage was also evaluated. Roughly 36% used them more than a few times a week. 14% stated that they never used them. It appears that laptop and desktop usage is roughly similar.

In terms of the type of tablets used, 133 (70%) students reported that they used some type of Apple/iPad tablet device (133 of 190). The second largest group was users of Amazon Kindle devices at 16. The remainder of the subsample included Google/Asus devices, Acer, Motorola, Samsung, Nook and others.

Student behavior on checking out laptops and tablets was also measured. 81% of students reported never checking out a laptop from the library. However, 67% of students nevertheless either agreed or strongly agreed that laptops should be available for checkout from the library; almost 50% agreed or strongly agreed that tablets should be available. This difference between attitude and action is problematic. Students state that the library should have a service, but then do not appear to be taking advantage of it in the case of laptops. One reason appears to be that many may not be aware of such services. Given this apparent lack of actual laptop checkout, the library may need to proceed with caution before implementing a tablet checkout program, especially as new students will be receiving iPads as part of the *myCSUNtablet* initiative.

Despite the apparent ubiquity of mobile devices among students, 58% responded that they did not use a mobile phone to access library services. In measuring student creation of digital media content, 50% stated that they had never created digital content. Only 11% had done so many times and 24% only a few times. **[See Appendix D for data]**

### **Library Customer Service (Questions 27, 28):**

These questions were designed to assess the students' perceptions of the level of customer service at the Oviatt Library.

Overall it appears that the students are especially pleased with the level of service provided at the library. Question 27 assessed the level of in-person library service. Nearly 29% strongly agreed and 54% agreed that the level of service was satisfactory. In Question 28, online service was assessed. In this case, 21% (N=173) strongly agreed and 37% agreed (N=296) that the level of online library service was satisfactory. 38% (N=310) did not have an opinion. This suggests that these students may not have been aware of these services and therefore had never used them. **[See Appendix E for data]**