

LibQUAL+ 2003 Comments

For two weeks in April 2003, all users of the Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center had the opportunity to participate in the LibQUAL+ survey. This online survey is given annually nationwide. The purpose of the LibQUAL+ survey is to use your feedback to identify areas needing improvement, and to measure HSLIC in four broad categories: Access to Information, Library as a Place, Affect of Service, and Personal Control.

Of special importance to HSLIC were the comments you made. Sometimes the standardized survey questions cannot paint a picture of how HSLIC is doing as well as your own comments in your own language. We would like to take this opportunity to address some of your comments. For ease of reading, this summary has been divided up into topics that received multiple comments.

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The Library Collection: Books, Journals, and Electronic Resources

Age of the Book Collection

“What good is a ten year old book on molecular biology?” “The book collection is too old – not enough newer books.” There were several comments suggesting that HSLIC update its aging book collection. We agree wholeheartedly. Unfortunately, we have limited financial resources. Our book budget has been flat for several years. We attempt to get around these constraints as best we can. In the past two years, the book selection process has been completely revised in an effort to maximize our book budget. Library faculty and staff also undertook a project in FY03 to “weed” the book collection. By removing out-of-date materials, the overall age of the collection will improve over time.

Adequacy of Journal Collection and Electronic Access to Journals

Over the past year we worked to improve our journal collection. We added the full Nature package, the Cell Press titles and the full Wiley catalog – all in electronic format. We have added a number of important titles from Elsevier and with those, ScienceDirect. At this time we are preparing our annual cancellations, renewals and additions for journals. In 2004 you can expect to see many more journals available in electronic format only, including more from ScienceDirect (e.g. Trends in..., Current Opinions in..., Neuroreport, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences.)

A number of comments specified titles as lacking that we actually do have. Please be sure to check the Full Text Finder for electronic journals available at all UNM libraries.

<http://libdata.unm.edu/ftf/default.asp>

Interlibrary Loan Charges

Some patrons complained about the Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center charging a fee (\$6) for Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery services. They cite the UNM General Libraries (Zimmerman, Centennial, etc.) which offer this service for free. There is a philosophical difference between General Libraries and HSLIC in allocation of resources. HSLIC emphasizes programmatic resources, so ILL is viewed as benefiting the individual requestor, not an entire program. The General Libraries prefers to fund interlibrary loans under the assumption that ILL requests are for resources which they would have bought if they had sufficient funding.

The \$6 fee is an attempt to recover at least some of our costs for providing the Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery services. We must pay other libraries from which we borrow, and must pay the Copyright Clearance Center fees for articles in journals from which we borrow more than five articles per year. Taking that into consideration, plus personnel and equipment, our actual costs are significantly greater than \$6.

Your Computing Resources

Public Computing & Printing

All our PCs have Microsoft Office productivity software (Word, Excel, and Access) as well as Internet capabilities. Many computers have additional, unique software for HSC students. We routinely replace the oldest and slowest machines. Unfortunately, we are restricted by space to add any more computers to the public areas. Patrons with WiFi laptops are encouraged to take advantage of this service.

Please note that the building supports 802.11b wireless access to the campus network. Offering laptops to checkout is currently cost prohibitive, but we are looking for funding opportunities.

We have also added a second public printer to ease the burden of printing and we have a spare printer in the event that one of the production printers has a malfunction.

There are no plans to place PCs in study rooms, but personally-owned wireless laptops may be used in those areas.

The Web Site

Regarding comments about the timeliness of the HSLIC web site, and other sites around the HSC, HSLIC is putting together a plan for periodic review of all web site material so we can more rapidly make corrections and changes. Departmental web authors maintain most HSC web sites. Consequently, we can just share concerns with those individuals if a problem arises. However, we try to respond as quickly as we can to any concerns that people have in those instances where we actually maintain sites for departments.

Difficulty of Using HSLIC Resources from Remote Locations

Three months after the LibQUAL+ survey, we introduced a new method of remote access to HSLIC resources. We are seeing a significant drop in complaints and problems from people using this new access method. If you are still using the old system (logging in with a username

and password that are not your HSC NetID login) we encourage you to move to the new authentication method. You can learn about it by visiting: <http://hsc.unm.edu/library/computing/>. If you need more information or assistance, call us at 272-2311 and ask to speak to a member of the “Remote Access Team”.

Library as a Place

Environment

Several respondents commented favorably on the study environment HSLIC provides. Three floors of varied seating niches take care of most people’s requirements. Some comments requested additional table seating, and so we added four study tables to the 3rd and 4th floor during the summer of 2003.

Some comments dealt with inadequate parking and one with lack of directions for reaching the library. We now sell \$4 single-day parking permits as a supplement to the metered parking available in Lot M. We can’t do anything about adding parking spaces, however. The new library web page (as of August 1) includes directions to the library from north-, south-, east- and westbound I-40 and I-25. HSLIC is also served by the campus shuttle bus system.

Two comments asked for additional group study rooms. Growth in HSLIC staff makes it difficult to add group study rooms; indeed, several HSLIC staff members are housed in offices not in the library building. However, HSLIC administration continues to investigate options for additional collaborative space.

Food/Drink

We received suggestions to establish coffee/tea room or lounge. We have looked into the possibility of food and drink vending machines; space, and access to a water supply for a coffee machine are limiting factors that make such an enterprise difficult.

We are pleased with the favorable comments on HSLIC’s open food and drink policy.

Free Printing

Two individuals (both students) felt that the library should not charge for printing from the public computers. Unlike the ITS pods on Main Campus, HSLIC does not receive funds from student fees to subsidize student printing. The costs of equipment, maintenance, toner and paper for 3,500 – 4,000 prints per month adds up, so HSLIC recovers some of the costs rather than take the expenses out of other budget lines. In our present arrangement, it would be difficult to charge students one amount (or nothing) and charge other users a different amount. In 2004, HSLIC will prepare a proposal to receive funding from student fees to offset these charges.

Hours

In response to patron requests, we have expanded hours twice in the past year. The weekday opening time was moved from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. at the beginning of the Fall 2002 semester in order to provide a full hour of library access prior to the daily start of classes. The Sunday opening time was moved from 1:00 p.m. to noon August 10, 2003 to meet demand shown by patron counts taken at opening and to bring us in line with other campus libraries’ opening times.

We continue to take patron counts in the evenings to gather data on whether the Sunday-Thursday “school night” closing times ought to change, and we continue to add electronic resources available remotely at all times of the day or night, to provide as many services as possible when the library is closed.

Weekend access to the Health Historical Collection can be arranged by contacting the Archivist by 6:00p.m.on Friday. For materials the Archivist must retrieve and have available, arrangements must be made by Thursday at 6:00 p.m. You may e-mail the Archivist at Archivist@salud.unm.edu.

Quiet/Noise

The 3rd and 4th floors are designated study areas where noise – particularly in the form of conversation or cell phone use – should be kept to a minimum. Cell phones, pagers, and beepers should be set not to ring audibly and cell phone conversations should be taken outside to avoid disturbing other users. Group study rooms are provided for groups of students who need to work together on study projects.

The 2nd floor is recognized to be a noisier place, although not a place where noisy behavior is welcome, and this includes noise generated by HSLIC employees. Employees are reminded to “keep it down” as much as possible; however, direct conversations with users and with each other cannot always be kept at the level of a whisper and telephone conversations have to be carried on in a normal tone of voice. Nonetheless, there’s no doubt room for improvement on our part.

View

Two users commented favorably on the wonderful view from the 3rd and 4th floor windows. We think the windows provide visual relaxation for our users and they are an exceptional feature of the HSLIC building’s design.

Copy Machines

Not surprisingly, a few individuals commented unfavorably on the HSLIC photocopier machines. We are sadly aware of the age and decrepitude of the copiers. We hope very much that we can replace all the public copiers with new generation digital copiers during the current academic year. Copier contracts are a campus-wide business entity, handled by University Services, so we are limited on what we can do on our own. We keep after the vendor to keep them running and producing decent copies.

HSLIC did add an additional public machine during the past academic year, by converting a staff machine to a public machine; the new public machine has an automatic feeder that can take a stack of pages and copy or duplex them.

Temperature

We have heard that the Library is either too hot or too cold. The technical reason for temperature shifts is an imbalance of the HVAC mechanical systems. Due to growth in services and personnel, we utilize space differently than when the building was originally constructed.

To deal with the temperature issues, the Physical Plant Department agreed to perform routine

assessments of the HVAC system. Also, as part of the HSLIC Strategic Plan, there is a team that is currently assessing the physical environment, including the temperature. Currently we are replacing the thermostats throughout the building, and new front doors are forthcoming.

General Comments

One patron wondered about a shared catalog with UNM General Library (UNMGL). We have investigated this and are working with the General Library so that we purchase compatible hardware to facilitate such sharing. There are other technical issues to overcome such as the subject headings used to catalog materials (UNMGL uses Library of Congress headings; HSLIC uses National Library of Medicine headings). In the meantime, users of the HSLIC catalog can click on a link that will automatically run their search in the UNMGL catalog and vice versa.

A patron inquired about access by the public to the library. Members of the public are welcome to use materials in this library onsite. They may also use the public computers in accordance with the HSLIC Workstation Use policy and the UNM Computer Use Policy.

A comment was received regarding confusion while using the Full Text Finder (FTF) and in using proxy access from home. There was some confusion for all of us in the spring of 2003 as the library changed its "Internet Protocol" (IP) addresses. It took some time for our journal vendors to make the changes necessary for users to be able to view articles from computers with the new addresses. We should now be current; users encountering problems should alert the Info Desk staff to the problematic title(s) so that we can address the problem. We have also moved to a new type of remote access so that you no longer have to go through a setup process to access the proxy server. Your login to the new remote access service should be the same as your login to the HSC network. If you continue to have difficulties, please check with the desk staff who will refer you to the best person to clear up the problems.

A patron suggested more peer-reviewed PDA material, and we are investigating licensing PDA products and including them in our resource budget.

Parking. What can we say? Parking is a problem for all HSC students, faculty, and staff. If you must drive to the library, we can recommend trying to arrange your schedule so that you arrive after 4:00 p.m. On weekends, you may park in any non-reserved spot in the M lot without a parking permit.

A user would like to know more about the location of UNM libraries. Info Desk staff can give you a copy of a map indicating those locations. A campus map including libraries is available on the web at <http://www.unm.edu/campusmap.html>.

A user commented that the library needs new furniture. We undertook a major renovation in 1999. New furnishings were purchased for the public computing area and the classroom. Funding didn't allow for new furniture on the 3rd and 4th floors, so we recovered the reading chairs and installed new carpeting throughout. HSC Facilities Planning assisted with the décor which was planned to be harmonious throughout the facility while accenting the view from the

3rd and 4th floors.

There was a comment that the library needs directions. We take this to mean directional signage, and we agree we could do better. In fact, we have identified additional signage to be ordered and installed in FY04.

“Make it friendly and attractive for over 25 people” was another comment. We have attempted to do that through the remodeling which emphasized ease of use by relocating the collections, through the provision of more than 50 public computers to meet users’ needs, and through efforts to preserve study space for individuals and groups. The building is equipped with seating for over 300 people.

The actual survey itself received several comments (time consuming, not fun, redundant, repetitive). LibQUAL+ is a national survey, created by researchers at Texas A&M University in partnership with the Association of Research Libraries. Survey development was supported in part by a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. The survey’s reliability and validity have been established, and over the years the number of survey items has been reduced in size from an initial survey of more than 60 items. A bibliography of scholarly publications about the survey can be found at <http://www.libqual.org/Publications/index.cfm>.

Another respondent couldn’t “delete” their responses when they decided to choose “Not Applicable (NA).” Selecting the NA response button would have automatically removed previously selected scores.

A question was raised on how to access journals through our online databases, and if there were classes available to teach those skills. This year our curriculum-integrated instruction, as part of courses or blocks in all HSC academic programs, has given special attention to this issue. If you are not scheduled for such instruction, feel free to ask a reference librarian for a 5 minute mini-instructional session during the 8am to 5pm weekday or 9:30-5:30pm Saturday timeslots at the Information Desk. The Library IQ class listed on our website includes the option of learning how to access journals.

A faculty member would like to know how to communicate the need for specialized resources required for his/her field. The HSLIC faculty is beginning a liaison program by which each department will have a liaison that will work with the department in resource identification and selection as well as in notifying department members of new resources and access procedures. The Coordinator of Collection Resources, Christee King, is another person with whom faculty members can discuss their resource needs.

A Message from the Deputy Director

The following is a response from Janis Teal, the Deputy Director for Library Services.

In conclusion, let me thank you for taking the time to complete the LibQUAL+ survey. The positive comments about the library and its employees are welcome words, and several examples are quoted below:

- Our library facilities and staff are really excellent. I have nothing but good things to say about them. They are friendly and knowledgeable and always willing to help out.
- Exceedingly courteous and knowledgeable staff!!
- The service at the library is great.
- Library staff is always responsive to my needs and very helpful and courteous while keeping me on the right track! We have a great library at the HSC!!!

We appreciate knowing that you think we're doing a good job; we also want to know when we stumble and need improvement. Please continue to let us know what you think so that we can continue to serve you well.