Highlights of 2006 Faculty Survey Responses

Many thanks to those full and part-time faculty who participated in the 2006 Faculty Survey of Library Services. As promised, we want to share with you some of the highlights of the survey.

When you were asked about a library in the “best of all possible worlds,” 81% of you felt that reference librarians would be Absolutely Essential (thank you!). 74% said that online databases were Absolutely Essential, while 71% said the library web site would be Absolutely Essential. In terms of the importance of library orientations, 45% thought they were Absolutely Essential, with 35% saying they were Very Important.

We were very interested to learn your opinions of the adequacy of our services. Librarians were rated Excellent by 45%, with 39% saying Very Good. Most of our services were considered Very Good (e.g., periodicals, variety of online databases, library web site, and library orientations, etc.) When asked to write in whether you had ever heard students remark about a lack of materials or services, the majority replied that they had not, but two comments raised red flags for us: one mentioned a lack of 24/7 access to online databases (we DO have 24/7 remote access) and one faculty member did not know that we conduct library orientations for evening classes.

We asked about the frequency with which you used various library services. 56% of you had scheduled an orientation sometime during the past two semesters, but over a third (36%) have never requested an orientation. More faculty members (65%) put textbooks on Reserve than ever before – THANK YOU! There were a few services of which faculty members were unaware – such as the fact that we have a library blog (36%) and that items can be requested on inter-library-loan (14%).

With regard to the adequacy of specific kinds of resources, one-third of you responded that the books in your subject areas were Adequate, with another third saying that they Needed Improvement. We received valuable write-in suggestions, and this is an area in which we will be looking for more faculty input. Print journals, the range of online databases and audio/visual resources were all considered adequate.
We wanted to know how often and in what manner you interact with library staff. Reserving audio/visual equipment was the most frequent type of interaction for 25% of you. 41% occasionally speak to a librarian, 36% interact while putting a book on reserve, and 30% interact by requesting a library orientation. Faculty members overwhelmingly (82%) indicated that their dealings with library staff were Pleasant and Professional, with 15% saying that their dealings with staff were Excellent.

Our next question queried your knowledge of, and use of, the library web site. You indicated that – sometime during the semester - 34% of you use the video/DVD list on the web site, and 34% use specialized orientation handouts. Roughly 20 – 30% of you use most features on the web site at least sometime during the semester, but relatively few use any feature on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Over 14% of you did not know about the subject guides on the library web site, the citation guides, or Internet guides. 13% did not know that they could access our online databases remotely using the library web site. Note to [our]selves: we must find a way to better promote our excellent web site!

Library instruction is a very important part of what we do, so we were curious to get your input about library orientations and workshops. While 63% said no, they had not requested an orientation in the past year, 37% of you had requested one. The most frequent reason listed for not requesting a library orientation was the belief that the course did not require library research. When we asked what you wished library orientations contained more of, 7 respondents mentioned hands-on activities, 3 respondents mentioned humor (!) and one of you said, “Nothing, it was great!” You responded very positively to possible topics for workshops. Fully 74% of you are interested in a workshop on “How to evaluate web sites,” 69% liked “Finding articles in ProQuest,” and 66% liked “Citing Electronic Resources.”

Finally, we asked for your ideas about the future directions that the library could take. We provided a list of our ideas – among them, 36% (25 of the 72 respondents) thought that wireless access throughout the library was Absolutely Essential. Other items that were deemed Very Important included check-out laptops for students (37%), Flash tutorials on library-related topics (30%), while approximately 30% felt that additional online databases, print periodicals, guest speakers and a ‘repository of sample ‘effective library assignments’ were considered Important.

We enjoy working with the dedicated, innovative faculty here at Rio Hondo. The Faculty Survey has given us some good feedback to “chew on” and we look forward to putting into action some of the ideas you’ve given us. And we can all look forward to the new LRC in 2008!