

Relating 2009 LibQUAL+ Comments to Library Goals

Access to Library Resources

Comments

Although not always stated, access issues concern electronic access. Comments range from easy to use Web page, confusing directions, to inconvenient for the user. At least one student and one staff member suggested more targeted instruction on appropriate use of library resources. Faculty comments include meeting curricular needs for teaching to not having needed resources and turning to his alma mater University of Iowa). A staff member said that only about one third of what he needs is available (IIRA). One graduate student would like full-text access to everything he/she finds through a database. Another student expressed a need for classes on appropriate access and use of library resources.

Access issues also deal with interfaces. The comment about confusing directions and interfaces is about online resources in different databases where different vocabularies are being used. Another wishes for a "save" button so when interrupted, he does not have to start over. The library Web site is viewed as easy to use, antiquated, difficult to navigate, or not user-friendly by different users. While interlibrary loan is viewed as invaluable, the I-Share interface, of having to type the ID number in twice, is not convenient. Also scanning journal articles to be posted on the Web should be extended to titles held in-house.

Library Goals

These comments address Goal 1, *Support Student Learning*. Of particular concern is 1.7, *Support training and instruction in the use of educational technologies to promote academic success and lifelong learning for students, faculty, and the university and surrounding community*. Related to this is Goal 5, *Enhance technology innovation and implementation to provide the delivery of quality resources, services, and information*. Sub-goals include 2.2, *Utilize technology where appropriate to: a) Provide multiple access points and user guides to library resources, and b) Educate library users in the access and use of available print and electronic resources*. Also related is 2.4, *Enhance information delivery using high-end copy, transmission and data management systems (e.g., ILLiad, ERes) to support WIU and our educational partners*, and 2.7, *Develop web-based databases, applications, gateways, resource guides and other technologies that integrate and provide access to library resources, services and information*. Without appropriate access, the level of library resources is not likely to be viewed as sufficient. These two points are closely related. In view of comments regarding excellent service, the negative comments related more to the human-computer interface and navigational issues.

Library Resources and Budget

Comments

One faculty member stressed that books are still an essential part of humanities education, and particularly for undergraduates. But “the budgets for printed books have diminished to almost nothing, leaving my field and discipline completely behind in offering students the most rudimentary acquaintance with their field of study.” Another said “I would like to see improvement in the library’s acquisition of new titles. It seems that fewer newer volumes have been acquired in the last few months. I find it much more convenient to find a relevant book at Malpass instead of googling for the information or waiting for another library.”

Others say they understand about reduced funding. What we do have need to be more publicized. Archives is great, but the library lacks journals on Mormon history. Other comments include re-organization in Periodicals to separate scholarly materials from the popular. One student also wants more graphics novels. One faculty member wants more and better computers, especially on the upper floors. Another commented on the need for new computers since the rest of campus received new computers.

The perception, according to one faculty member, is that the library has tended to promote "style" over "substance" technology is embraced “with what appears to be little concern for the quality of information accessed by that technology.”

Library Goals

While the comments do not directly address any of the sub-goals, they deal with Goal 1, *Support Student Learning*. The comments also concern Goal 2, *Acquire, preserve, protect catalog and assess current and future collections of the WIU Libraries*. Particularly related is 2.1, *Conduct ongoing assessment of the libraries print and electronic collections as the library migrates to an online environment and as publishing practices change*. The comments articulate the need to draw a balance between electronic and print materials because of different needs in disciplines. Also to be examined is the “appearance” of the level of appropriate library support in the move to the electronic. To the user, regardless of budget and resources, access as discussed above is essential to use. So whether the library has enough resources is ambiguous. We have to pay more attention to how we communicate with the rest of campus.

Physical Facilities and Environment

Comments

Comments in this area reflect those who want the library to be a “social space” or do away with the “social experience.” Some like the coffee bar while one said that those who want

to eat and drink can go to the union. One person would like the coffee bar open whenever the library is open. Faculty like the faculty lounge. One calls for the return of faculty carrels because they seem empty (during the day). Some say that the changes over the past two years make the library an inviting place while others want to rid game nites, coffee bar, and programming in the Garden Lounge. One comment is the wish for direct access to elevators without having to go through gates. Another student said that there are too many blank walls that need art work. While one says plants make the place inviting, another commented on allergies. Two comments worth noting is about providing more workstation for the disabled in the computer classrooms and providing a space for children of students.

There is agreement, particularly among students, that quiet study space is hard to find. Contributing factors include groups who meet in open areas instead of group study rooms, cell phone use without regard to the environment, and the TV in the coffee bar area. Also mentioned is library staff who gather at the Reference Desk and talk. One questioned whether it is time to return the "quiet area" signs to the upper floors.

Library Goals

The major concern here is Goal 4, *Create usable, attractive physical and virtual spaces to support library activities and student learning*. All of the sub-goals are relevant to some degree. The most cogent point is whether the library should return to the view of twenty or thirty years ago as only a quiet learning space or the current view as a social space. With students and some faculty and staff, the social view is deemed more appropriate. There seems to be a need to emphasize civility as addressed in a previous institutional theme. We seem to be moving in the right direction.

Library Operations and Personnel

Comments

Comments are generally positive. Those who commented on the lack of resources say that the librarians are always ready to help. Faculty members are particularly impressed by the quality of service. Another said that the library has finally moved into the 21st century. However there was one comment about circulation staff not being knowledgeable. One faculty member disliked the circulation policy, particularly on renewal and not being able to place a recall. Another would like self-serve checkout. One comment is that it seems you are "bothering" them when approaching librarians and another said librarians need to smile more. There were a few comments on hours, particularly expanded hours at the Curriculum Library to accommodate students doing practicum and expanding hours at the Quad Cities Campus. On the Macomb campus, calls for more hours, as last time, are from the traditional 18-22 age cohort group who want a quiet place to study. There was also a faculty comment on more hours, including reference, on weekends and during breaks.

Library Goals

Putting this succinctly, these comments concern the delivery of services and resources. They address Goal 1, *Support Student Learning*, and Goal 7, *Foster library faculty and staff development in order to deliver better service to our library users*. While offering excellent service is assumed to achieve all of the library goals, it is essential to receive outside views so that we can re-examine our current assumptions of what constitutes “excellent service,” and make adjustments. Overall, we do offer excellent service, but need to be aware of unmet needs.