

2017 Library User Survey

Executive Summary

Each year, the Library launches a survey to a representative sample of UVA faculty and students to assess their viewpoints on existing services, to recognize unmet needs, and to gather information about future needs.

Many of the questions are constructed to determine satisfaction with and importance of Library services and spaces. Satisfaction and importance ratings are typically on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being the most positive.

We give users the opportunity to provide textual comments and we assess these comments to identify themes and to look for tie-in with quantitative data.

In addition, this year, we asked about awareness of and interest in research tools, and questioned how Library spaces could optimally enhance studying and research.

“The library provides a physical forum for achievement, a space to work on ideas. The spaces vary, to enable both personal and collaborative study. Resources are also at our fingertips. Ideally, we could live at libraries, so long as we have access to nutrition to maintain basic needs as we move into uncomfortable territory intellectually. I suppose the thing I value most about the library is its emphasis on creating accessible knowledge, and the space to practice that knowledge.”

--Undergraduate student

Highlights

- ◆ Confirmation of the impact that Alderman renovation will have, not only on our spaces but also on our services
- ◆ Necessity of preparing for and communicating about space changes to maintain services during transitions or closures
- ◆ Indications of substantial Library use from all academic schools
- ◆ Powerful role of the Library in helping to control the costs for course materials
- ◆ Call to increase focus on Graduate students
- ◆ Continuing improvements to the Library's catalog

We want to sustain and encourage Undergraduate use of physical materials while most of the collection is stored in Ivy Stacks.

The renovation of Alderman Library will necessitate the temporary off-site storage of the 2.5 million items in Alderman's collection. According to our user survey, 64% of Undergrads have used physical items at least occasionally this past year, however only 12% indicate that they have used Interlibrary loans services (and anecdotal evidence suggests that undergraduates often seek materials on the night before an assignment is due).

While Ivy Stacks will house the majority of the physical collection during the renovation, the ILL request module will be the primary resource for retrieving items. Faculty and Graduate students are strong users of the request module and indicate high satisfaction levels with interlibrary loan services. Undergraduates are far less familiar with these services.

Communicating and educating Undergraduates on the proper steps to request items from Ivy will be a priority to ensure access to needed items and to ensure a smooth transition. Also, careful assessment and selection of books with high circulation will be necessary to maintain a strong, browsable collection on Grounds.

Students use Libraries less when Library spaces are changed or closed.

In this year's survey, there were fewer Undergraduate respondents who indicated that Clemons was their primary Library than there were in the previous year's survey. We suspect a movement to other Libraries, due to the changes and closings in Clemons spaces. We want to adequately accommodate students whenever Library spaces are changed or closed.

We also gained useful information about what students want to see in library spaces. "Recharging" is a major theme for spaces, with added emphasis on quiet space, natural light, charging devices, resting areas, and varied seating.

The Library has engaged planning groups, sharing the results of the survey and other assessment data regarding space enhancements. There is a need to prepare for space changes, and to communicate with constituents, so that we provide outstanding spaces and maintain services during transitions and closures.

All Schools indicate substantial usage of Library services and spaces.

87.5% of users from each School indicated that they visited a Library this academic year and at least 50% have used physical materials.

	During the current academic year, how often have you physically visited a UVA library?				During the current academic year, how often have you used physical Library materials (books, DVDs, print journals, etc.)?			
	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never
Architecture	55.56%	18.52%	25.93%	0.00%	25.93%	22.22%	37.04%	14.81%
Arts & Sciences	66.40%	12.70%	19.84%	1.06%	15.27%	17.66%	37.85%	29.22%
Engineering	54.40%	16.58%	24.87%	4.15%	7.81%	16.15%	33.33%	42.71%
Commerce	29.17%	22.92%	35.42%	12.50%	6.25%	12.50%	39.58%	41.67%
Batten	56.25%	18.75%	18.75%	6.25%	6.25%	31.25%	50.00%	12.50%
Education	42.31%	11.54%	38.46%	7.69%	13.73%	7.84%	39.22%	39.22%
SCPS	11.76%	17.65%	58.82%	11.76%	5.88%	5.88%	41.18%	47.06%

In addition to the high use of physical materials, the survey results indicate that 44% of users from each School use online materials frequently (weekly or monthly).

To discover these materials, at least two thirds of users in each School have used Virgo, with frequent use in Architecture, Arts & Sciences, Batten, Education, and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS).

To get information about Library services, more than 70% of users from each School indicate use of the Library website; with frequent use by Architecture, Batten, Education, and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

Undergraduates who indicate strong importance for cost of course materials are heavily engaged with the Library.

30% of Undergraduates indicate that, when registering for a course, the total cost of materials was either very or extremely important. A substantial number of these same Undergraduates indicate that Library access is very or extremely important.

Although about an equal percentage of these same Undergraduates use Library spaces, a higher percentage of them indicate frequent (weekly or monthly) use of Library materials (both physical and online), frequent interactions with Library staff, and frequent use of the Library website.

The survey results confirm that students value the availability of Library materials related to their course work and that Library services are crucial to helping students find relevant materials and control the costs of course-related materials.

Graduate students are “left behind.”

While overall satisfaction with the Library increased for both Faculty and Undergraduates, it continues to remain lower for Graduate students, even though Graduate students indicate no declining satisfaction with individual Library services.

The survey results indicate that the distribution of dissatisfied Graduate students is similar to Faculty, while the distribution of satisfied Graduate students is similar to Undergraduate students. While intense users of Library services and spaces, Graduate students do not share the high level strong satisfaction with the Library that Faculty do, nor the low levels of strong dissatisfaction the Undergraduate students do.

We need to find the disconnection between use and satisfaction.

Virgo has a history of demonstrated continuous improvement.

New Virgo feature testing and the resulting interface changes have led to rising satisfaction scores for Virgo, the Library catalog.

Satisfaction with Virgo, the Library catalog, improved markedly among all three principal constituencies, Faculty, Undergraduate, and Graduate students. In addition, all constituencies indicate long term improvement in satisfaction scores over the previous 5 years, demonstrating the effectiveness of a cycle of continuous improvement.

