

2012 Survey Comments and the Library's Responses

During the Spring Semester of 2012, the University Library asked GSU sophomores and juniors to complete a survey so we might find out how we are doing and identify areas where we could do better. Sophomores and juniors received one of two surveys. The first survey, the Library Priorities and Satisfaction Survey, was designed by us and asked students to gauge things such as impact of library services and resources on their undergraduate learning research and satisfaction levels with library services, resources, and study spaces. We were also interested in why they visited the library during certain times. The other survey was a standardized survey designed by the Association of Research Libraries called LibQUAL+®, which we have used in years past to gauge library users' perceptions of services, resources, and library spaces. What follows is a summary of comments from GSU sophomores and juniors on both surveys and our responses.

We hope the following information helps answer some of your questions about the library, and we offer our thanks to those of you who took the time to share your feedback with us.

For more information about the surveys, see the [2012 Library Survey Results Summary](#).

Compliments

First, let's start with some of the positive feedback we received. We received much appreciation through the survey, including thanks to "all of the librarians and staff at the library for all of their help," and "thank you for all that you do to help us succeed academically."

We also heard from you that you love the library, the space, the building, and the coffee shop. You told us that it is a "great place," and encouraged us to "keep up the good work." Someone even suggested that we "keep it classy"; we'll certainly try!

The Library Website

You told us that you would like a better online experience and that navigating and using our online databases can be frustrating and difficult. Additionally, you want more full-text articles (PDFs) from the databases.

Our response:

We're sorry that you're having a difficult time trying to use the library's online resources; with several hundred scholarly databases to search within, it can be easy to become overwhelmed! However, we provide several easy ways to get help when you're searching: first, try [contacting your subject librarian](#) for a one-on-one consultation appointment. They can show you how to use resources specific to your research topic. You can also go to the [Ask a Librarian web page](#) to use find the phone number and email address for the Research Support Desk, or you can chat with a librarian from any library web page using Live Assistance.

Regarding more full-text articles, we wish we had more control over format. The decision to offer journal articles in PDF or HTML is up to the publishers and the database providers. While the library prefers to subscribe to journals that offer PDF articles, they are not always available in that format.

Though you didn't mention this, we are adding more ebooks to the collection; check out our [ebooks guide](#) to find out more about these collections.

The library is constantly seeking ways to improve web-based access to its resources and services. We perform regular assessments to ensure that our services are meeting changing user needs. If you would like to help us in this endeavor, please consider signing up to participate in our focus groups on our [participation form](#).

Books

You wish the library had more books, particularly textbooks for your courses

Our response:

The library recognizes the increasing demand by faculty and students for books necessary for their learning, teaching and research. Unfortunately, even before the recent budget cutbacks, funding for library collections failed to keep pace with enrollment growth, new programs and degrees, and the escalating costs of scholarly resources. If you know of resources that would be beneficial to study in your discipline, please suggest them to your [subject librarian](#). We will be happy to consider all requests, and though funding to obtain the resources may not be immediately available we are always striving to provide a collection that best meets the needs of our users and will consider requests as funding becomes available.

It is impossible for the University Library to meet student demand for textbooks at Georgia State given our large student population, limited financial resources for library materials, staffing costs, and the high rate (often yearly) of textbook revisions. The University Library collection is intended to provide research materials and other resources which supplement the learning experience taking place in the classroom. Although space is limited, where appropriate, we encourage professors to contribute one complimentary copy of a textbook from textbook publishers to our library reserves desk so that all students in the class may benefit from access to these resources.

Computers & Technology

You wish we had more computers, and you have suggestions for computer use restrictions. You want a more reliable wireless network, and you have concerns about printing and software availability.

Our response:

We just don't have the physical space to add any more computers! There are currently 341 PCs, 19 Macs, 98 computers in classrooms (2 rooms opened for students when not being used for teaching), and 90 circulating laptops. We also regularly discuss the need for additional campus computer labs with campus administrators. In spite of very heavy use, we do our best to keep the computers working. We occasionally do take down a group of computers for maintenance. Please alert one of the student workers at the computer support desks if a computer is out of order, so we can quickly investigate the problem. You can always search for an open computer using the [computer availability tool](#) on a desktop, smartphone, or tablet.

As a university and an academic library that values intellectual freedom, we do not restrict information or websites that are being accessed by our students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, we are aware that

there are classes on campus that are using Facebook, YouTube, and other social media sites for class assignments, so feel that there is no way to make a blanket policy about limiting access.

We are aware that the wireless network in the library does get overloaded. Campus computing (IS&T) manages the wireless network, and is seeking solutions to the problem. If you have trouble connecting please submit a help ticket to IS&T so that they can track when and where there are issues connecting. There are Ethernet ports around the walls on Library North 3-5. You will need to provide your own cable, but you can plug your laptop into any of those ports for wired access.

Good news! We have enabled wireless printing. This will work with most personal laptops, but unfortunately not with tablets such as iPads. IS&T is still investigating a solution for tablet printing.

We are in the process of updating the public computers to Windows 7 and the most recent version of software packages installed on the computers. Microsoft SQL Server is on the new Windows 7 Image. Unfortunately, the campus does not have a license for Visio, so we cannot add that to our computers at this time.

Hours

You would like the library to be open more hours, specifically 24 hours a day during some portion of the week and/or additional hours on weekends.

Our response:

We have been studying the library hours issue for some time, and we continue to look at the feasibility of extending library hours. Based on head counts and library turnstile data gathered during the last weeks of school while the library is open until 2:00 a.m., we know that a very small percentage of students use the library after midnight. Georgia State has far fewer students living on campus than Georgia Tech and Emory, but we do acknowledge the need for a secure late-night study solution for students.

When we asked the primary reason why sophomores and juniors come to the library on weekends in the 2012 Library Priorities and Satisfaction Survey, the largest percentage of responses was, "I have never visited the library on weekends." We do understand that there are students living on campus as well as commuter students who need a quiet place to study, conduct research, and work on research papers. Current library usage on Friday and Saturday late afternoons makes it difficult for us to justify staying open past 6:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. We have noticed an increase in activity on Sunday evenings and have increased our Sunday evening hours until midnight because of this. We plan to continue to monitor Saturday and Sunday usage patterns, especially student needs on Saturday mornings.

As a growing research institution with a changing and growing student population, we realize that the library must evolve to meet the needs and expectations of today's students and researchers who need immediate, online access to research materials. We will continue to invest significant staffing and resources in providing online access to electronic databases, ebooks, ejournals, and other resources that can be accessed from anywhere via the library's website 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition, we provide live assistance via the library's website until 9 p.m. during the week and on Saturdays and Sundays.

Noise

You told us that the library is too noisy. After all, it is a library!

Our response:

We hear you. Sometimes there are a lot of students in here -- over 10,000 visitors on a good day -- and it gets noisy! We have been stepping up our patrols through the building, especially in the evening. Currently, the fifth floor of both library buildings is considered a quiet study zone, designed for users who want to get away from the traffic on the lower floors. You may have noticed our new silence campaign on the fifth floor featuring the characters "Courteous" and "Crass." We mostly rely on our users to self-police these areas, but if you do not feel comfortable asking another user to be quiet, please ask a library employee at one of our service desks to intervene for you.

Policies & Practices

You would like to receive a reminder email prior to the date when a book is due.

Our response:

Our statewide library system GIL is currently set up to email courtesy notices to patrons before an item is due. Sometimes there are technical issues beyond our control, and we apologize if your notice did not arrive before the item was due. Exceptions may also occur if we do not have the correct GSU email address listed for a patron.

You think we should ban food and drink from the library.

Our response:

While we do permit food and drink in the library, having "aromatic" or smelly food in the library is against the Library's Patron Food and Drink Policy. If you do not feel comfortable intervening, please report issues with others' eating or food to library employees so that they can intervene for you.

You think we should restrict library access to students only, and you don't think the library should require users to swipe their PantherCards to enter the library buildings.

Our response:

The primary function of the University Library is to serve the teaching, research and scholarly activities of GSU students, faculty, and staff. To ensure this, we require that all GSU users swipe their PantherCard to gain entrance. All other visitors must check in at the Library North security desk and present an official ID, which is kept on file while the visitor is in the building, and visitors can use the library only during regular business hours (8:30-5:15). Access to the University Library outside of regular business hours is limited to currently enrolled GSU students, faculty and staff, visitors from University System of Georgia schools and Atlanta-area colleges and universities with a valid institutional ID card, and other recognized affiliated groups. We take security and student safety very seriously! Visitors who do not belong to one of these groups are required to exit the library at the close of regular business hours.

You don't like the environment created by smokers just outside the library entrances.

Our response:

According to Georgia State Policy ([206.05](#)), no smoking is allowed within a 25-foot radius of all University building entrances including the Library. If you are uncomfortable asking a smoker to move away from a Library entrance, please inform the security officer stationed inside the entrance who will assist.

Customer Service

Some of you have had great interactions with library employees, but others of you think the customer service could be much better.

Our response:

We love to hear it when our librarians and other staff are helpful, but regret those times when you are treated in a less than friendly manner. We strive to provide all library employees with training and professional development opportunities and to keep them informed on the latest library and university-wide issues that affect students. Please let a library supervisor or administrator know when an employee is rude or unhelpful. We take seriously our commitment to good customer service, are constantly striving to improve customer service in the library, and do address issues that are brought to our attention.

Learning About the Library

You would like the library to provide more instruction on its services and resources.

Our response:

The public services librarians are currently implementing instruction plans for each major at GSU in order to ensure that all students receive the training and skills necessary to be successful in their research. We are also working to implement a First-Year Instruction Plan so that all new students are introduced to basic resources and research success skills. Additionally, you can find a number of [online tutorials](#) linked from the library's website on topics ranging from finding a book to distinguishing between scholarly and popular articles. These videos are available anytime you need to learn a new research skill or simply need a refresher.

Spaces & Facilities

Overall, you like the library building and spaces, but you have some concerns about the group study rooms, people using the library as a hangout, and the size of the library given the large student population. And you can't find your way around the library!

Our response:

We are aware that the reservation system no longer emails reservation confirmations and are working to find a solution. The new software that we use for the reservations only works with one campus domain and GSU has two: @gsu.edu AND @student.gsu.edu, which is why this won't work. We went with this system because it does allow mobile access via smartphones which students rated as important. Please remember that you can reserve a study room three weeks in advance, so plan your study time accordingly. If you need assistance with a study room, please contact the Research Support Desk, 404-413-2802 or via live chat. Unfortunately, we cannot monitor the rooms or what students choose to do in those rooms.

We acknowledge that students like hang out in the library between classes to catch a nap, chat with friends,. The challenge for us is to provide spaces that can accommodate these more recreational

activities as well as quiet study. Students need both. That's why the 5th floor is a designated quiet space. If you need a computer on the 5th floor, we have over 90 laptops that you can check out at the Library North Circulation Desk.

The Dean of Libraries has recently formed a Library Space Planning Group to conduct an internal audit of our spaces and make recommendations for how space should be used over the next five years. Although the University Library completed a \$23.5 million renovation project in 2007, space requirements are constantly in flux as our user population grows and changes. Among the things this group is looking at are growing group and individual study space needs, increased hours, improved infrastructure (power and wifi), and improved collaborative spaces for GSU students and faculty. Stay tuned.

Finally, we are currently investigating the need for digital signage in the building as well as improved online maps for our main and mobile websites. Collection layout maps are available on the floors, and please ask at one of our service points or use our live chat service if you can't find what you need.

Thanks again for allowing us to respond to your comments.