MISO Survey 2014: Preliminary Report of Results

Response Rates

The survey was sent via email to a sample group of undergraduates and graduate students, as well as to all faculty members. Of the 5,381 people who received an invitation to participate in the survey, 2,013 completed and submitted the responses, for a 38.7% response rate. These responses were approximately evenly divided between the four user groups (faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences, and graduate students in the professional schools.)

Quantitative results

The largest section of the survey asks users to provide a numerical response to questions about how often they use various services; how important those services are to them; and how satisfied they are with those services. Other sections of the survey ask about users how much they know about a variety of topics, what ones they want to learn more about, and how they would prefer to learn about them. This preliminary report focuses on the scores for importance and satisfaction assigned to library services.

Each item is scored on a 4-point scale: not important, somewhat important, important, and very important; and dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, somewhat satisfied, and satisfied. The number 4 is assigned to the positive end of the scale, so 4 is the highest possible score and 1 is the lowest. The numbers below reflect the mean score.

In terms of importance, the same items are in the top three for faculty, graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences, and graduate students in the professional schools. They are: 1) Access to online resources from off-campus, 2) Library databases, and 3) Overall library services. Undergraduates also rank access to online resources highly, but physical comfort and quiet work space in the library round out their top three.

Most important: faculty
Access to online resources from off-campus 3.87
Library databases 3.57
Overall library service 3.56

Most important: undergraduates
Physical comfort in the library (e.g. seating, lighting) 3.69
Access to online resources from off-campus 3.65
Quiet work space in the library 3.49

Most important: CAS graduate students
Access to online resources from off-campus 3.79
Library databases 3.67
Overall library service 3.51

Most important: professional school graduate students
Access to online resources from off-campus 3.72
Library databases 3.40
Overall library service 3.38

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All user groups report a high level of satisfaction with the library web site, and undergraduate and graduate students are very satisfied with the current library schedule. Other selections differ by patron category. People are least satisfied with the library’s e-book collection, Pegasus, and their input into library decision-making.

**Most satisfied: faculty**
- Subject librarian 3.83
- Library reference services 3.77
- Library web site (e.g. library hours, policies) 3.77

**Most satisfied: undergraduates**
- Current library schedule 3.66
- Library web site (e.g. library hours, policies) 3.65
- Library databases 3.64

**Most satisfied: CAS graduate students**
- Current library schedule 3.71
- Library web site (e.g. library hours, policies) 3.69
- Library circulation services 3.67

**Most satisfied: professional school graduate students**
- Access to online resources from off-campus 3.68
- Overall library service 3.68
- Library web site (e.g. library hours, policies) 3.67

**Least satisfied: faculty**
- Your input into library decisions that affect you 3.37
- Library e-book collections 3.35
- Access to online resources from off-campus 3.35

**Least satisfied: undergraduates**
- Pegasus 3.46
- Library e-book collections 3.43
- Your input into library decisions that affect you 3.42

**Least satisfied: CAS graduate students**
- Physical library collections 3.28
- Pegasus 3.27
- Library e-book collections 3.25

**Least satisfied: professional school graduate students**
- Your input into library decisions that affect you 3.44
- Pegasus 3.38
- Library e-book collections 3.38
Qualitative results

The creators of this survey instrument encourage libraries to focus more on the quantitative results and not to over-emphasize the comments. This is in part because the number of comments is small related to the total number of responses, and in part because the people most motivated to leave a comment are likely to have very strong opinions, thus skewing the data. In our case, less than ¼ of the respondents chose to leave a comment, and less than half of those are about the library. (The others are about ITS or about the survey instrument itself.)

Upon a preliminary analysis of the free-text comments, they seem to be pretty widely scattered as related to library issues. The most frequent of the free-text comments that relate to the library is general praise for the library’s services and staff. There are also many requests for enhancements to collections of various types. The lack of doors to Cudahy library was mentioned a number of times, sometimes coupled with general sense that Cudahy is "neglected". Other frequent requests include better search interfaces, more training and information about the library, quieter study spaces, and more comfortable furniture.