Montana State University Billings Library 2013 Student Survey

Executive Summary

During the spring semester of 2013, the MSUB Library surveyed students about services and resources in the library. The survey was created and administered through Survey Monkey, and consisted of ten questions. Five of these questions included the option to add comments. The survey questions focused on the following categories:

- Online library services and resources
- On campus library services and resources
- Marketing
- Free text comments

This report will be divided into these categories.

The survey was e‐mailed to 5,274 students. The number of responses received was 714, which is a 13.5% response rate. Of the 714 respondents, 84.7% were undergraduate students. This mostly included undergraduate students that either took only in‐person classes in the spring semester or took both in‐person and online classes. The other 15.3% of the respondents were graduate students, the largest percentage of which were completely online students in the spring semester. Students had the option to include their e‐mail to be entered into a drawing for a Samsung Galaxy Tab 2. This entry was not connected to the students’ survey responses.

Online Library Services and Resources

Key Findings:

- 54% of respondents visited the library website more than 5 times in the last year, while 36% visited the library website more than 11 times in the past year. (Table 1)
- 70% of respondents used the electronic databases to retrieve articles. (Table 2)
- 37% of respondents used the course reserves online. (Table 2)
More Key Findings:

- 40% of respondents describe the navigation of the library website as easy to use. 15% of the respondents said it was very easy to use. (Table 3)

- While the percentages show that respondents find the website easy to use, there were quite a few comments about the difficulty they had with the website.

"It is easy, but that is because I have had several tutorials on how to use it. It may be difficult for a person who is brand new. However, there is always someone available to assist with that if you are trying to search or access the website."

-Survey Respondent

"You have to know where things are in order to find them. I took a class where I learned how to use the library website. I shouldn’t have to do that." -Survey Respondent
More Key Findings:

- 27% of respondents have accessed the library website using a mobile device. (Table 4)
- The most important potential online service to respondents was online chat help. (Table 5)
On Campus Library Services and Resources

Key Findings:

- 48% of respondents visited the library on campus more than 5 times in the last year, while 38% visited the library on campus more than 11 times in the past year. (Table 6)
- 65% of respondents come to the library to use the computers. (Table 7)
- 59% of respondents come to the library to study alone. (Table 7)
- 37% of respondents come to the library to study with a group. (Table 7)

Table 6

“I print out all my assignments at the library. Don’t know what I would do without it.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library

“Also asked for help at the reference desk and printed several papers.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library

“Plan class schedules, attend library events, and sleep on the couches upstairs during finals week.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library
“Use the television downstairs for connection with laptops for study groups. Too bad there is not more of these resources available currently.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library

“Go in to get food or freebies they have.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library

“Get help and direction with research projects and papers. Used microfilm and Interlibrary Loan office for help.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library

“Meet with tutor. Use printer.”
-Survey Response regarding activities in the library
**Marketing Library Services and Resources**

**Key Findings:**

- 76% of respondents learned about library services and resources from their class instructors. (Table 8)
- 60% of respondents learned about library services and resources from the library website. (Table 8)
- 42% of respondents learned about library services and resources from other students. (Table 8)

---

**Q9 How have you learned about library services and resources?**

(Please mark all that apply)

Answered: 699  Skipped: 15

- Library’s website
- Class instructors
- Other students
- At the Ask Here desk in the library
- Library information tours
- Librarian visits to class
- Campus TV monitors
- Signs in the residence halls
- Facebook

---

"I haven’t learned anything about the library from any source."
-Survey Respondent

“It would be great if there was a single webpage for newer students that explained just how many amazing resources the library has.”
-Survey Respondent

“A friend of mine took a class involving library resources three years ago and she has been very helpful to me in my journey of research. I wished I had taken that class.”
-Survey Respondent
**Free Text Comments**

Students were asked to finish the sentence: “I wish the MSUB Library would offer additional online or in person services and resources to students, such as__________.”

There was a great response to this question, as 320 students responded. While the hundreds of comments were varied, a few themes appeared. First of all, there were many students who were satisfied with the library’s current services and resources. In terms of the on campus library, a common comment was that the library should be open more hours. Some students also pointed out a need for delineated quiet spaces and/or group study spaces. Other common themes are as follows.

**Tutoring and Research Assistance**

Students are looking for more assistance with their research and studies. Many students mentioned the tutors on campus, suggesting more hours or even that the Academic Support Center should be in the same building as the Library. Students also liked the idea of getting more research help online through tools like a chat service, screen-sharing, and online tutorials. It seems that students are often looking for more research assistance in the library.

**Technology**

Some technology concerns also surfaced in the comments. Some students mentioned that they would like to see better computers and software in the library. They also communicated the desire to keep free printing. Another technology issue that arose was the students’ feelings of frustration when trying to navigate the library website. Students also mentioned that they would like more online resources such as ebooks and ejournals.

**Marketing**

One particular item that became apparent was the need for more marketing. Some students outright stated that the library needed to market their services more. Other student comments pointed to this through the obvious lack of knowledge the students had about library resources and services. Occasionally, students would request a service or resource that the library already offers. The students were just not aware of it. Some students even stated that they were not aware of a certain service or resource until they saw it mentioned in the survey itself.

While the free text comments presented a wide variety of student requests, there were clear themes. These common themes add some qualitative information to the quantitative data that was collected in the earlier portions of the survey. Together this information will lead to some conclusions and actions on the part of the library.
Conclusion and Action Items

With a 13.5% response rate, this survey shows a fairly good sampling of student opinions regarding the library. The qualitative and quantitative data collected show the variety of ways that students use the library, both online and on campus. Based on the survey results, students are predominately pleased with both online and onsite Library services and resources. These favorable results concur with a faculty survey of Library services, which was conducted in March 2012. In an effort to further improve Library resources and services, a number of action items are listed below.

Action Items:

- Create a mobile friendly website
- Offer additional technology-rich group study areas
- Enhance electronic collection with additional ebooks and ejournals
- Simplify the main library homepage
- Expand the LibGuide collection to create user-friendly research portals
- Initiate online chat service for students
- Explore a potential collaboration with the writing lab for onsite tutoring
- Visit with ASMSUB about launching a student advisory group