What Do Distance Education Faculty Want From the Library?

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About the studies

- Generally formally gathered survey data
- Eight to sixteen questions
- 6 surveys on paper
- 3 surveys entirely online
- 1 sent out on paper but allowed paper or online responses
  - Online responses beat out paper 2 to 1
- Response rates: 24% to 50%
Non survey studies

- Focus groups
- Face to face collaboration on projects
- Service/statistical analyses
- Telephone interviews

Commonalities with Faculty Services

Faculty Services

- Difficult to determine/reach those teaching at a distance
Faculty Services

- Lack of understanding of what ILI is or how it can be done at a distance
  - Faculty feel it’s their role, not librarians’

Faculty Services

- Integration of the library and library services into courseware
  - Discussion forums
  - Library instruction modules
  - Subject guides
  - Online lectures

Faculty Services

- Lack of ‘time’ in distant classes
Faculty Services

- Copyright concerns
  - Online resources
  - Traditional resources used in the digital/distant classroom

Faculty Services

- Technical Support
  - Courseware
  - Library Resources

Faculty Services

- Notification of available services/materials
  - They don’t use resources much themselves but want to guide their students
  - Email works
Faculty Services

- Use of the library and its resources is required for many assignments!
- Faculty value library services and resources!
  - Lends legitimacy to online ventures

Commonalities with Student Services

Student Services

- Handouts
  - Course specific
  - General guides
  - Printable
- Online Tutorials
- Could benefit faculty as well!
Faculty assume students know how to use library resources and services

Minimizing the difference in materials available on campus and off
- Full text popular
- Speedy delivery

Increase awareness of what the library has to offer
University of Montana-Missoula’s Faculty Evaluation of Services

Methodology

- 10 questions
- Online (free, quick and easy!)
- Anonymous
- Assessment of services, both currently provided and potential
- Sent to 35 instructors of online classes with possible research components

Goals

- Do faculty know about library resources?
- Do they expect their students to use these resources?
- What else would they like us to do?
Response rate

- 16 responses came back within a week
- 46% response rate

Length of Time Teaching

- Majority had been teaching online for 3 or more years
  - 87.5% (14 respondents)
  - All other respondents were teaching online for the first time this semester

Use of Library Resources

- 75% (12 respondents) required research in their classes
- 87.5% (14 respondents) knew we had online library resources
- Split results on whether faculty felt students knew about resources
- Most not providing access to the library’s website through their courses
Useful Services for Instructors

- Resource guides
- Course module for library skills instruction
- Library discussion thread nixed
- A separate online course

Conclusions from our study

- Our instructors are relatively experienced at teaching online
- Their assignments require the use of library resources
- They feel informed about the library, but aren’t sure their students are

Overall Suggestions

- Need better publicity
- Use faculty concerns to market services
- Addressing copyright could hook them
- Creating guides/handouts/tutorials increases awareness, could lead to collaboration
Future Research?

- Complete a wide, statistically valid study of distant faculty assessing library services generally
- Design and test a reliable and valid assessment of these services that could be deployed at individual campuses

Questions?