

5-2005

LR&TS Assessment Report 2004-2005

Doris U. Bolliger
St. Cloud State University

Melinda Dermody
St. Cloud State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/lrs_annualrpts



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bolliger, Doris U. and Dermody, Melinda, "LR&TS Assessment Report 2004-2005" (2005). *Library Annual Reports*. 14.
https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/lrs_annualrpts/14

This Research Study is brought to you for free and open access by the Library Services at theRepository at St. Cloud State. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Annual Reports by an authorized administrator of theRepository at St. Cloud State. For more information, please contact rswexelbaum@stcloudstate.edu.

Assessment Report

Learning Resources & Technology Services
at St. Cloud State University

submitted by

Doris U. Bolliger, Assistant Professor
Melinda Dermody, Assistant Professor

May 18, 2005

Introduction

In order to prepare for a visit by the North Central Accreditation (NCA) agency in 2007, St. Cloud State University (SCSU) needs to demonstrate a continued commitment to assessment of student learning. The University appointed a University Assessment Director who chairs the University Assessment Committee which consists of Assessment Directors from all five colleges and one unit. Learning Resources & Technology Services (LR&TS) is a unit whose faculty and staff provide resources and services to the campus community. Because its faculty members teach in an academic unit, they report to two deans, the Dean of LR&TS and the Dean of the College of Education (COE).

Nine work groups are housed in LR&TS: Access Services, Collection Management, Computing & Technology Services, Office of the Dean, InforMedia Services, Information Technology Services, Instructional Technologies & Infrastructure Services, Reference Services, and Technology Support Services (Appendix A). The Center for Information Media is an academic unit housed in LR&TS; however, it belongs to the COE, and is not included in the LR&TS assessment project or report.

Assessment Personnel

The LR&TS assessment project began in Spring Semester 2004. Melinda Dermody and Tom Stachowski were each provided with 3-credit-hour release time. The Dean of LR&TS charged the Co-Directors to “assess the contributions our services activities make to student learning in a broadly defined manner” (Appendix B). During that semester, the assessment planners met with each work group to discuss assessment priorities in order to create an assessment project plan.

At the end of Spring Semester 2004, Tom Stachowski retired and was replaced by Doris Bolliger. The reassigned time continued at a 3-credit-hour replacement for each Co-Director. Co-Director Melinda Dermody went on family leave from November 22, 2004 to March 31, 2005. To support assessment efforts, Dana Drazenovich, the communication specialist, was reassigned for 3 hours per week, and one graduate student was hired for 10 hours for the remainder of Fall Semester 2004 and for Spring Semester 2005.

Process for Determining Focus

The original LR&TS assessment project plan addressing a three-year period of time was created by Melinda Dermody and Tom Stachowski. It was revised by the 2004-2005 Co-Directors, referred to as the assessment team from this point forward, during summer 2004 and presented to the Dean’s Advisory Council (DAC) in September 2004.

In DAC, the plan was reviewed by all the work group coordinators. They were of the opinion that the list of possible assessment items was too extensive and that some of the goals needed to be redefined. Questions that were raised included whether the assessment process would be ongoing, and how the finished product would look. There was also concern that some of the results would be negative. In order to keep the project

manageable and outcomes useful, the Dean recommended that the assessment team select three to four major issues and focus on measuring them.

The assessment team decided that the target population for this phase of the assessment project would be students only. We were aware of the fact that faculty have an impact on student learning outcomes; however, having limited resources and knowing that the project needed to be kept manageable, we determined that faculty could not be included in the LR&TS self-study during the 2004-2005 academic year.

A 1-hour meeting with all workgroup coordinators was scheduled in October 2004 to generate a list of priorities. We asked workgroup coordinators to each bring three or four assessment priorities in their work areas. At the beginning of the meeting, we provided coordinators with a brief overview of the project including potential areas of concentration and possible data collection tools.

None of the workgroup coordinators were prepared to provide the assessment team with specific priorities. After an initial discussion, however, several issues emerged: (a) adequate access to technology, (b) adequate resources, and (c) areas/resources used. The workgroup coordinators then suggested focusing on four categories: (a) collections/software, (b) facilities/equipment, (c) services, and (d) communication.

We generated a list of questions related to those four categories. Then, individual meetings were scheduled with each of the workgroup coordinators. During these meetings we asked each coordinator to identify two or three workgroup priorities. Coordinators also were asked to identify important and unimportant questions on the list. In addition, they assisted us in formulating an “awareness” question that we wanted to include on one of the surveys. They also provided us with information about collected statistics and evaluation efforts already taking place in each work area. At the end of each meeting, we provided coordinators with an overview of data collection tools considered useful in the self-assessment study. These included paper-based surveys, telephone surveys, a focus group, and workgroup-specific evaluation survey.

Session Outcomes

Workgroup coordinators generated a list of 29 assessment priorities. Every workgroup coordinator provided us with at least two, and up to six, priorities. The issues that were central to all nine workgroups were: (a) quality of, and student satisfaction with, services and resources; (b) student awareness of resources and services; and (c) internal and external communication.

After deleting and adding some of the questions on our initial list, 57 important questions remained. Not surprisingly, the majority of questions addressed facilities, equipment, and services. It was clear that not all questions could be addressed in this assessment cycle; however, the list was used as a starting point in developing data collection instruments.

All but one workgroup coordinator had items that could be included in the awareness question. This question began with “Are you aware that LR&TS provides the following services and resources ...”. For example, the Information Technology Services group included Campus Desktop, laptop checkout, and Lab Seats.

We discovered that each workgroup collects statistics on various activities and services. This information is forwarded to the Dean’s office and used in an annual report. Five of the nine workgroups had collected feedback on their services in the past. Some of these efforts, however, were not standardized. For example, not all faculty members who provide library instruction sessions used the same evaluation form. Participants expressed the need for standardized evaluation material.

Most workgroup coordinators agreed that a combination of data collection tools were appropriate for our self-assessment study. One of the workgroup coordinators suggested administering the paper-based survey as students exit or enter the library. Another coordinator assisted us in identifying time blocks for the administration of the paper-based survey. He also advised us to rotate the awareness items for eight workgroups in order to reduce the length of the survey. Some individuals expressed concern about excessively surveying our population. After we met individually with all coordinators, a new project plan was created and forwarded to the Dean in December 2004 (Appendix C).

Research Methodology

The input from coordinators was valuable even though not everyone agreed with one another; however, we did not expect that the outcome would be mutual agreement. In order for results to be more credible, we used triangulation. We included multiple data collection instruments that have quantitative and qualitative components. They were: (a) a paper-based *Building Survey* (Appendix D), (b) a *Telephone Survey* (Appendix E), and (c) a focus group session with open-ended questions (Appendix F). In order to ensure unbiased research results, an external as well as an internal evaluation component was included.

Instrument Administration

Building Survey

The Building Survey was administered to individuals who entered or exited the Miller Center during the third week of February 2005, Monday through Sunday. Eight 2-hour time blocks were selected during which two people distributed the surveys. These individual volunteers were either faculty, staff, or students. Patrons were asked if they were students on campus and if they had time to complete the surveys. No incentive was provided to participants. Originally, we planned to administer the survey for eight 1-hour time blocks during two weeks; however, a sufficient number of completed surveys were returned during the administration period in February, so a second week of survey administration was considered unnecessary.

Telephone Survey

An external group, the SCSU Survey team housed on campus in the College of Social Sciences, conducted the Telephone Survey. The group uses a calling center with 13 computer stations, each equipped with a phone, headset, and computer-assisted interviewing software program. A random sample of 667 students was called Sunday, February 27, 2005 through Wednesday, March 3, 2005.

Focus Group

After the data analysis for surveys was completed, we conducted a focus group session with four students from four different colleges on April 26, 2005. One of the students was a sophomore, one was a senior, and two were graduate students. At the beginning of the session, focus group members were encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions openly and without reservations.

During the duration of the 90-minute session, during which three facilitators took notes, participants were asked several open-ended questions to gain insights into some of the data collected with the surveys. The session was audio recorded after obtaining written permission from the students with the stipulation that the audio tape would be deleted within 30 days of the session. The only incentive provided for participation in the session were refreshments.

Instruments

Building Survey

The Building Survey had two versions: A and B. The survey had a total of 20 questions that consisted of two categorical, three open-ended, two demographic questions, and 13 Likert-type items (ranging from 1-*strongly disagree* to 4-*strongly agree* and an option for *no opinion*). The only difference between version A and version B was the categories of resources and services listed for questions No. 1 and 2.

We used the questions that were generated in meetings with workgroup coordinator to develop a first draft of the paper-based questionnaire which then underwent several revisions due to the participatory nature of the study. The first draft was reviewed by a content expert before it was tested on four students who worked in one of the main computer laboratories in the Miller Center. Minor changes were then made and the survey was presented in a DAC meeting in February 2005. During the meeting, DAC members provided feedback pertaining to some of the wording and layout of the survey. DAC then approved the survey with noted revisions. Revisions were made and the survey was submitted to the Dean for review, which resulted in additional minor revisions.

Telephone Survey

The Telephone Survey consisted of 10 questions including three yes/no, three multiple-response items, and four 4-point Likert-type scale items. Questions on the Telephone Survey also originated from the list of questions generated by the assessment team and workgroup coordinators. A draft version was presented during a DAC meeting in December 2004. Attendees provided feedback and the survey was approved.

After revisions were made, the survey was sent to the Dean who recommended minor changes. The survey was then submitted to members of the University's Survey team who made considerable changes to the order of questions. Because the questions were to be read to participants during a telephone interview, the order of questions needed to be simplified. The revised document was returned to the Dean for review. Again, a few minor changes were made to ensure consistent wording.

Focus Group

Participants were asked 11 open-ended questions. Some of the questions we used had been generated by the assessment team and during the individual sessions with work group coordinators. Other questions were developed after examining the data we collected in February 2005.

Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used. Quantitative data was analyzed with the use of SPSS 13.0. We used open coding to analyze qualitative data.

Building Survey

The questionnaire return rate was 70%. A total of 972 individuals completed the Building Survey during the third week of February 2005. Eleven respondents indicated they were not students; these cases were deleted. Cases with missing values exceeding one-third were deleted for the analysis of the 13 scale items ($n = 891$). Of these items, the highest inter-item correlation coefficient was .76. All other inter-item correlation coefficients were lower than .57.

The survey had a satisfactory Cronbach alpha (.83). Frequencies, descriptive statistics, and Chi-Squares were calculated. We used open coding for the open-ended questions in order to find common themes and summarized the information.

Telephone Survey

The sample consisted of 1,500 students. The cooperation rate was 90% and a total of 602 contacted students chose to participate. The SCSU survey team attempted to contact each student in the database a maximum of 10 times. Once contacted, only one out of 10 participants refused to cooperate. A detailed report by the SCSU Survey team is attached in Appendix G.

Focus Group

After the focus group session, facilitators shared and compared their notes. Responses from participants were summarized to provide an in-depth understanding of issues and problems addressed. The answers to one question were quantified because participants were asked to rank their responses.

Results

Building Survey

A detailed analysis of all questions on the Exit Building surveys is attached in Appendix H). Missing values and *no opinion* responses were eliminated.

Demographics. The majority of respondents were juniors (29%) and seniors (28%), followed by sophomores (19%) and freshmen (14%). Seven percent were graduate students and 2% classified themselves as *other*. Only 14% of students had not been enrolled in the previous semester at SCSU. Students who had been enrolled during Fall Semester 2004 were asked how often they visited the Miller Center during that time period. The range was from 0 to 315 times ($M = 42$, $SD = 37.7$, $MD = 20$). Most respondents visited the Miller Center on Thursday afternoon (21%), Wednesday morning (17%), or Tuesday evening (16%).

Student awareness. Students were most aware of technical assistance/help in the computer laboratory (93%) and journal indexes or databases (93%), closely followed by options for requesting articles and books from other libraries (89%), assistance of periodical service desk staff (89%), assistance of reference librarians (88%), technical assistance at the campus' help desk (84%), help with troubleshooting their student accounts (83%), available audio/video equipment for checkout (83%), and Campus Desktop personal settings (80%). Resources and services with which students were least familiar were: statistical consulting (18%), video conferencing sessions upon request (31%), and laptop checkout (48%). Slightly more than half of the participants had seen promotional material by LR&TS (53%). Of respondents, 56% knew they could renew checked out items online and 55% were aware that they could purchase software programs at educational prices.

Contribution to student learning. Of the participants who had *used* particular resources and services, the vast majority indicated that these resources and services had contributed to their learning: availability of indexes and databases (92%), the LR&TS Web site (90%), in-class computer technology instruction sessions (87%), assistance at the periodical desk (87%), assistance at the reference desk (87%), technical help in the computer laboratories (86%), library instruction sessions (86%), Campus Desktop personal computer settings (85%), faculty assistance in the open computer laboratories (83%), checkout of audio/video equipment (81%), and interlibrary loan services (80%). The least helpful service considered by participants was statistical consulting (50%); however, only 9% of participants responded to this question.

There was a statistically significant difference in student awareness of resources and services and class standing with several items: inter-library loan services ($p = .001$), LR&TS Web site ($p = .01$), assistance with the course management system ($p = .05$), computer software workshops ($p = .05$), and statistical consulting ($p = .05$). In terms of contribution to their learning, only Campus Desktop personal settings was statistically significant different at the alpha level of .05.

Scale items. Some of the items had a large percentage of students choosing *no opinion*. The following questions had the largest percentage of *no opinion* response: 26% of respondents did not voice an opinion about checked out equipment properly functioning, 25% had no opinion about electronic equipment, 23% did not rate the item regarding assistance of services in relationship to assignments, and 15% of respondents had no opinion about availability of equipment at the circulation desk.

Of respondents who rated the scale items from strongly agree to strongly disagree, 90% or more agreed or strongly agreed with the following: resources available in the Miller Center support their learning in the academic setting (98%), available equipment in the electronic classrooms support their learning (97%), equipment in the electronic classrooms is reliable (94%), sufficient software programs are installed on the computers in the open laboratories for their academic needs (93%), services in the Miller Center helped them with their assignments in the past (93%), equipment at the circulation desk is available for academic needs when they need it (90%), adequate variety of study areas are in the building (92%), sufficient technology training opportunities are available (90%), and equipment in the open computer laboratories is updated often enough (90%). At least 80% strongly agreed or agreed with the following: equipment that was checked out properly working (89%) and adequacy of available hardware in the open computer laboratories (85%).

Seventy-nine percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that the study areas are free of distractions most of the time, and only 53% strongly agreed or agreed that there were enough computer stations available. These were the same two items that had a mean below 3.0, $M = 2.9$ ($SD = .78$) and $M = 2.5$ ($SD = .87$) respectively.

The top five reasons of why students visited the Miller Center on the day of the survey administration included that participants needed to study, use the computer, do home work, meet their groups, or attend class. Other reasons mentioned by at least 20 participants included doing research, checking e-mail, using the bus, picking up a book or article, printing files, and using the Internet (Figure 1).

Ninety-four percent of participants were satisfied with their visit that day. The three most cited reasons for their satisfaction were that students liked the quiet environment, computers were available, and they were able to get things accomplished. Also, students found or received the resources or services needed and they perceived the building as a good place to study and they liked the environment or atmosphere. The top 10 reasons why students were satisfied are illustrated in Figure 2.

Eleven reasons for dissatisfaction with their visits to the Miller Center that particular day were unrelated to the services and resources that LR&TS provides. These responses included, but were not limited to: students did not like the course, projects, amount of studying, or group members not participating. Valid reasons with at least two responses are shown in Figure 3. The top three reasons for dissatisfaction relate to unacceptable noise levels in the library. Ten people each thought there were too many

individuals on cell phones and too many people talking to each other. Three respondents indicated there were too many distractions with too high noise levels in certain areas.

Even though several participants reported they were satisfied with the visit on that day, four students mentioned that librarians and student workers should warn patrons who use their cell phones or who display disruptive behaviors. Four other respondents indicated that even though they were satisfied, they were upset because of the disruption cell phone use causes in the building.

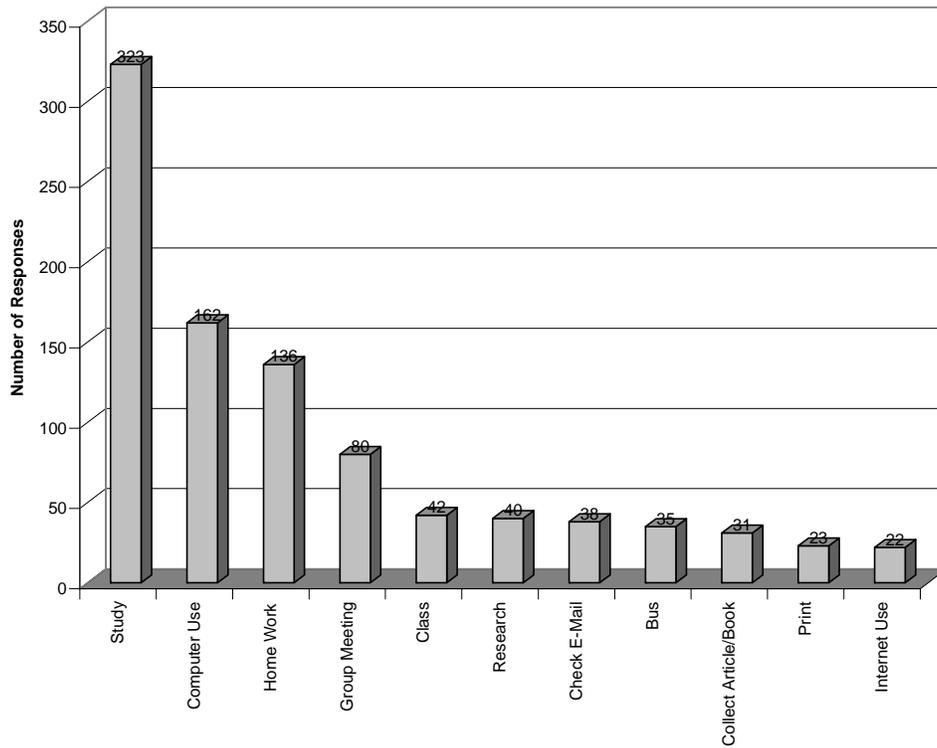


Figure 1. Reasons for visiting the Miller Center.

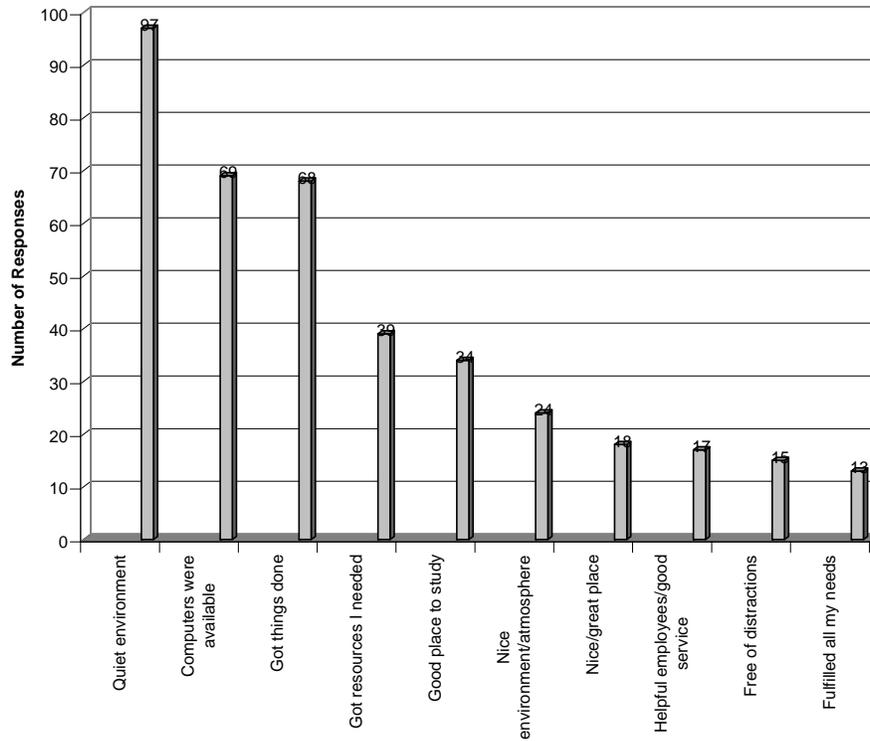


Figure 2. Top 10 reasons for participants' satisfaction with their visit.

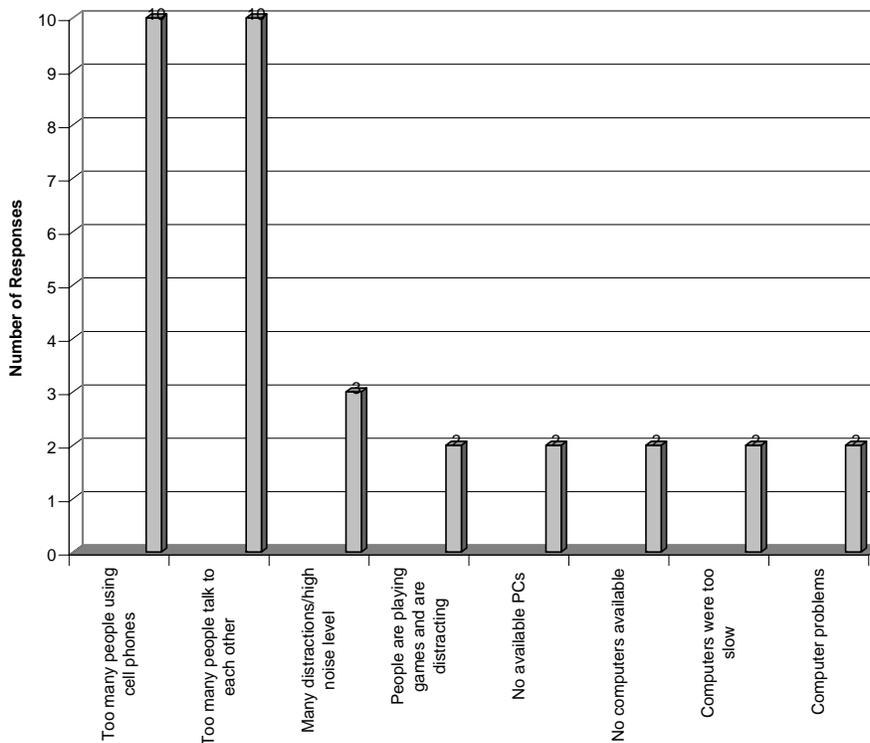


Figure 3. Reasons with at least two responses for dissatisfaction participants mentioned with their visit.

Telephone Survey

Demographics. Demographic information was retrieved from the database of the State-wide colleges and universities system by the survey team. Of respondents, 53% were female and 47% were male. The age distribution was as follows: 18-20 (17%), 21-23 (48%), 24-26 (16%), 27-29 (6%), 30-39 (8%), 40-49 (4%), and 50 or older (1%). The majority of interviewees were juniors (24%) and seniors (35%). Most of them were Caucasian (75%) and citizens of the United States (91%). Only 20% of respondents lived in residence halls.

Utilization of resources and services. The vast majority of students (95%) had either physically been to the Miller Center or accessed resources and services by telephone or computer. Only 8% did not use LR&TS services during the previous semester. Fifty percent of students who had used the services reported they utilized services 16 or more times and 17% used services 1-5 times.

The most frequent responses for use of services were: the computer help desk (28%), research assistance (23%), or technical assistance in the computer laboratory (18%). Other responses were the use of the computer store (14%) and participation in training opportunities (6%). Nine percent of participants did not use any of the listed services. Most frequent responses for use of resources were: computer laboratories (26%), general study areas (22%), and group study rooms (20%). Eighteen percent had used the library collection and 13% had checked out equipment.

When asked why students do not use resources and services at the Miller Center more often, they mentioned parking (24%), accessing them online or via telephone (20%), or not having the need for them (16%). Fourteen percent of respondents did not have a reason. Other reasons were service hours (9%), location (6%), other reasons not listed (4%), and unsatisfactory services (3%) or resources (3%). Interestingly, 60% of respondents indicated they had never seen any promotional materials by LR&TS.

Scale items. Telephone interviewees were asked about the adequacy of the library collection, access to online journals and magazines, and wireless access on campus. Ninety-two percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the library collection is adequate and 89% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement regarding the access to online material. Interestingly enough, 28% responded they did not know if the wireless access across campus is adequate while 64% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. The majority of respondents (91%) strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied with the LR&TS resources they had used; only 3% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

Focus Group

Who are we? We asked students what Learning Resources and Technology Services (LR&TS) and the Miller Center meant to them. Interestingly, LR&TS meant “library” to three of the students. One person indicated it meant the library and computer labs to him. The Miller Center meant classrooms, media and computer center to one student. One student thought of computers and the coffee shop. One participant never

heard the term Miller Center before and, therefore, did not associate anything with the term. Another student indicated that the terms mean the same to him. When prompted to explain the differences, two students said that LR&TS means technology and information, whereas the Miller Center is perceived as the entire building. The other two students combine the terms because they mean the same to them.

Items of highest importance. When asked which five resources and services were most important to the students by ranking, they mentioned computers, references services, access to books and articles, computer lab assistance, the Web site, tables and chairs, personalized desktop settings, circulation services, group study rooms, the coffee shop, and quiet space. We assigned numbers to the items they mentioned (5-most important to 1-less important) in order to determine the most important items. Computers received the highest score (16), followed by reference services (9), books (9), and articles (8). It should be noted that several of the students did not know what to call the Reference Desk; they referred to it as the Help Desk.

Services not provided. We asked which resources or services we do not provide that would support participants' academic work. Both graduate students responded they wished more resources for more extensive graduate-level and undergraduate-level research were available. These students needed to use interlibrary loan services quite often. Participants suggested they would like to be notified if an interlibrary loan item was available for pick up. Students indicated that more full-text online journal articles would be useful.

Another issue was the time limit on laptop checkout. Currently, students can check out a laptop for a maximum of 3 days. Occasionally, students have a need to check out the laptops for a longer period of time. They suggested extending the borrowing time by request. There was also a suggestion to allow hourly checkout of laptops. If more laptops were available, students would be able to check them out during times computer usage reaches full capacity, e.g. at the end of the semester. Related to laptops, one student also indicated that he wanted to be able to install and save files to the hard drive.

Suggestions to improve group study rooms included extending time limits from 2 hours to 3-4 hours. The furniture in some of the rooms is designed more for comfort than functionality for a group work session. Participants indicated they would prefer more practical furniture such as a big table and computer chairs instead of the big armchairs and coffee tables. According to them, students are used to not having comfort. Another suggestion was to provide instructions on how to use the equipment in the rooms.

One student mentioned that the software programs available on the computers are helpful to him. During the end of the semester, however, it is difficult to locate an available computer in the building. A mobile desktop would be of great help because it would enable students to bring their own laptop, connect to the network, and access all software programs available on the desktop computers for the duration of the session.

Customer service. Students rated services overall as mixed. Services at the reference desk were rated as terrific. Participants stated that people who work in reference are extremely helpful and very knowledgeable. One student mentioned that the person at the circulation desk applied strict rules to laptop checkout and would not make any exceptions. One student, who filed a lost book report, did not receive good service. She complained that library employees never looked for the book and that she is still waiting to hear from them.

In general, students agreed that faculty and staff were more helpful and caring than the student workers in the Miller Center. Participants also agreed that Lab Seats was extremely helpful, particularly during the busy time of the semester. Instead of wandering around and searching for an available computer, patrons can locate open computers quickly and move to another building if none are available.

How do they know? One student was aware of many services right away because other students had shown him around. Others had library or technology instruction sessions in their courses or had asked for assistance when they visited the building. The board by the computer lab on the second floor that has student software workshops listed was found to be helpful by one of the participants. It made him aware of who is able to answer questions about certain software programs. Other sources mentioned included flyers handed out at Mainstreet or information on the Web site. Several students also indicated that they learned about some of the resources because their professors told them about them or required the students to use them.

Some of the participants indicated they had several courses in which library instruction sessions were presented. Even though the information was helpful, they felt it was repetitive and not a good use of class time to go through multiple instruction sessions. Students agreed it would be helpful if a required introductory library course for approximately 2-3 hours was available. Another idea was to have a combination of a physical tour of the building incorporated in this introductory class session, because the building has much to offer and many individuals do not know about the resources and services available to them. An introductory class session would also be beneficial to graduate students; however, this session should be optional for them.

How can we reach them? One participant mentioned one good way to reach students was via e-mail. However, others disagreed. Several students do not use the campus e-mail system; others delete e-mail messages quickly without reading them. Good distribution methods included whiteboards in the library, the Web site, and professors making announcements in class. Participants indicated being particularly attentive to information presented at point of need; that is, announcements or information they saw when they were in the Miller Center and using library or technology services.

Students, in general, do not pay much attention to posters on the wall; however, they said they pay attention to notes placed in the computer stations in the open labs. One good way to reach students who live in the dormitories is to distribute flyers in their

mailboxes. Other things that were mentioned include University Chronicle, posters in unusual areas, and signs at the doors of the library.

Catching their attention. Participants liked individualized posters with specific messages such as “Do you need help with . . . ?” or “Have you ever had problems with . . . ?”. The words that draw their attention are free, new, or more. Another message that would draw their attention is when the beginning of the message states what the message is about right away (e.g. “Mobile technologies . . . ”). Shorter messages, according to our participants, are perceived as better, but they also appreciate additional information at the bottom of the announcement or the name of a point-of-contact person. One focus group participant mentioned that humorous messages about common problems encountered by others would catch the attention of students.

Web site use. All of the students in our session had used the LR&TS Web site. They use the site to locate articles and books in the collection. They also access information pertaining to hours of operation. Participants preferred using online articles for their projects instead of information published on other Web sites. They suggested providing a link to the Write Place’s style manuals on the LR&TS site. However, while they use the LR&TS Web site, none of the participants regularly checked the announcements on the LR&TS homepage other than the library hours listings. One participant indicated that, had she known announcements contained information about new services and how to access and use them, she would have been more likely to look at them.

Noise levels. We shared with focus group members that we were aware of a perceived problem with cell phone use and noise in the library. One student was less concerned about noise levels but was annoyed with patrons using computers for playing video games while others search for available computers to do coursework. In his opinion, someone should enforce the rules and ask gamers to log off the system. Participants were in agreement that cell phone use was perceived as less of a problem than the gaming problem. Everyone agreed that they need to answer incoming cell phone calls during the day, but that cell phones should be set to vibrate and that additional signs reminding students to put their phones on vibrate and take calls elsewhere should be distributed.

Interest in social events. We asked students if they would be interested in attending entertainment events at the library and, if so, which events they would most likely attend. Students mentioned the following events: speakers, movies, and book signings. All focus group members agreed the book signings sessions would be great events. Movies could be shown on the same days as in the Atwood Theater, but they should be different movies. Participants suggested having a coffee area for social gatherings. Current popular magazines to which the library has a subscription could be made available in the coffee shop. Current popular issues could also be made available on a shelf in the periodical section.

At the end of the session, we asked if participants would like to share anything else with us. Students were in agreement that the setup of the building was really nice. They were impressed with the building and services it has to offer. They shared with us that they show off the building to friends and family when they come to visit the St. Cloud area.

Other Assessment Activities

In-House Contributions

During several meetings, workgroup coordinators expressed the need for standardized evaluation material for their specific areas. Therefore, the assessment team offered assistance to workgroups in either revising existing work area specific questionnaires or consulting members in the development of new feedback tools. Several workgroups expressed interest and used our service.

InforMedia Services. A new, standardized feedback form was created for the InforMedia Services group in order to gather data pertaining to roving activities (Appendix I). The form was distributed in the beginning of October 2004 and is still in use.

Information Technology Services. Information Technology Services was in the process of developing a survey in order to evaluate computer and technology services for students. Feedback to the group was provided on two occasions. We recommended shortening the questionnaire by deleting some of the questions. We also revised some of the terms and response categories. At this time, the survey has not been approved by members of DAC.

Reference. Members of the reference team developed a short survey for the evaluation of library instructions in the academic environment. We reviewed the form and provided general feedback to the coordinator. Reference started using the survey in Spring Semester 2005.

Computer Technology Curriculum (CTC) Laboratory. The individual who oversees the daily activities in the CTC Laboratory invited us to review a survey targeted at faculty of the College of Education. We recommended substantial changes, including adding an introduction and a conclusion, changing some of the words, revising the scales, and deleting redundant questions.

Committee Work

University Assessment Committee

Assessment directors automatically serve on the University Assessment Committee, which consists of one appointed University Assessment Director, Assessment Directors from each of the six colleges or units, and administrators. The committee was charged to guide and coordinate assessment activities at the University.

The first meeting was attended by both LR&TS Assessment Co-Directors. It was held on September 28, 2004 to introduce committee members, provide an overview of individuals' assessment experiences, explain the current status of the NCA Accreditation, and discuss ideas. Many discussions which occurred during the bi-weekly meetings were centered on general education courses and assessable student learning outcomes.

Committee members assisted the University Assessment Director with establishing priorities in the assessment process, establishing an assessment budget, developing a request for proposal (RFP) and criteria for assessment grants, and creating an assessment matrix for the university. The LR&TS matrix for the academic year 2004-2005 is attached in Appendix J. Committee members reviewed and evaluated submitted proposals in March 2005 after the RFP was publicized.

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools Assessment Committee

Doris Bolliger was appointed by the Dean to serve on the university-wide NCA Assessment Committee, Criterion Three: Student Learning. The chair of this committee convened the first meeting in January 2005.

Programs/Seminars/Research

Doris Bolliger participated in the teleconference "Shaping the Future: Aspirations, Assessment, Action!" organized by the Policy Center on the First Year College and the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition in December 2004.

Melinda Dermody attended an Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) pre-conference session on April 7, 2005 titled "Outcome Assessment Tools for the Library of the Future: Measuring Service Quality (LibQUAL) and the Impact of Networked Electronic Services (MINES)" which provided training and information on how these tools can be used to gather information about library users' perceptions, the use of library services, the purpose of use, and demographics.

Dana Drazenovich performed a literature review investigating assessment issues related to communication, reviewing communication- and awareness-related research other academic libraries have conducted.

Recommendations

Results of this self-assessment study using three data sources have been very positive. However, some suggestions for improvement pertain to library policies, communication, access, and customer service. Additional suggestions for addressing these issues should also come from LR&TS, the work groups, and administration.

Library Policies

It is clear that not all patrons who visit the Miller Center obey policies that are in place. Some cell phone users do not set their phones to vibrate; they take calls and continue their conversations in all areas. They also occupy computers while playing computer games. There are signs distributed throughout the Miller Center outlining acceptable use of cell phones and computers and employees are encouraged to monitor patrons.

We suggest that personnel responsible for signage perform review and evaluate the location and number of signs in the entire building. In addition, staff in the Miller Center should reinforce current policies related to noise from various sources. Two of the top three reasons for visiting the Miller Center cited by students were to study or do homework. We should try to preserve a quiet environment where students can pursue academic endeavors productively. If resources are available, perhaps the administration can hire persons to monitor noise levels and take action if unacceptable behavior occurs.

During the focus group session it became apparent that participating students are not aware of the fact that they can report disturbances to staff in the Miller Center. Perhaps we need to communicate to patrons whom they can contact in case they need to report incidents.

Communication

Participants are not clear about who we are; they use the terms Miller Center, LR&TS, and the library interchangeably, but they mean different things to them. Student who participated in the focus groups were not sure what to call our services. For example, some called the reference desk on the first floor and the student consultant desk on the second floor *Help Desk*. How can they effectively evaluate the resources and services which we provide if they do not know what they are?

We recommend that administration provides continued support for marketing and communication in order to continue educating our patrons regarding of what we have to offer and how our services and resources can contribute to their academic work. In addition, we also should concentrate on marketing to faculty and staff, because students hear about our services while they interact with SCSU faculty and in their classrooms.

Faculty Awareness

Because the role of faculty is essential in student learning, one of the recommendations we have is to assess faculty awareness regarding our resources and services in the academic year 2005/2006, if there is continued support for assessment from administration.

Customer Service

We are currently employing approximately 200 students in the Miller Center. Members of the focus group pointed out that student workers in general sometimes lack essential customer service skills. Perhaps completing a customer service training session within the first 90 days of employment could be a contingency for continuous student

employment or pay increases. One suggestion that was mentioned during one of the work group leader sessions was to have secret shoppers visit and evaluate our level of service.

Acknowledgements

The assessment team would like to express its gratitude to all work group coordinators in LR&TS whose cooperation was essential in the successful completion of this assessment project. We would like to acknowledge the help of Randy Kolb, work group coordinator of CTUS, who provided us with excellent input regarding the development and administration of the Building Survey.

A special thanks to Dana Drazenovich, who assisted with many coordination and communication issues. We are deeply appreciative of the assistance of J.C. Turner, associate dean, who assisted us in formulating and answering questions, and keeping us on track. Finally, we wish to thank faculty, staff, and students who volunteered to administer the surveys and everyone who took the time to take part in the study.