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How Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of Academic Librarians Can Inform Innovative Teaching

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About the survey

Who Students Think Librarians Are

- The duties students think we perform most frequently:
  - Giving general directional help
  - Lending books, films, and equipment to users
  - Helping users to find books
  - Helping users to find articles or journals
  - Giving general directional help

- Survey included 26 statements beginning “How often do you think academic librarians perform the following duties?”
- The chart shows responses to the 6 statements most related to teaching.
- The duties thought to be most frequent (Giving general directional help) and least frequent (Working in Starbucks) are included for reference.
- Students do know that we teach, and quite a few realize we do other things involved in teaching.

How Often Respondents Consulted Their School / College Librarian

- Over 40% of students reported “never” consulting their college librarian
- More than once a month: 10%
- About once a month: 20%
- Several times per year: 30%
- Less than once per year: 15%
- Never: 10%
- My school didn’t have a librarian: 5%

Skills Students Perceive as Valuable to Them or to the University

- Business
- Health Sciences
- Humanities & Social Sciences
- STEM

Why Students Think We Became Librarians (n=440)

- My school didn’t have a librarian
- Never
- About once a month
- Several times per year
- Less than once per year
- More than once a month
- My school didn’t have a librarian

Other Things to Keep in Mind

- Survey data suggests that students think:
  - They only have a bachelor’s degree.
  - Their education focused on English, Literature, and History classes.
  - They are an expert in citation styles and formatting.
  - Books are central to their work, but they aren’t a total luddite because technology plays a role in the modern library.
  - The Dewey Decimal System is the only classification system.

Tip: Consider preparing an elevator speech to help students understand what you do and how you can assist them. See handout for examples.