

Judge Kathryn J. DuFour Law Library

**Student Survey
Spring 2008**

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Columbus School of Law**



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DuFour Law Library Student Survey

From January 25th through February 11th 2008, the DuFour Law Library conducted a survey to determine how the law students perceive library services and facilities. A total of 271 students participated in the survey, over 30% of the total law school population. 33% of the law school's day students completed the survey, while 24% of evening students completed the survey.

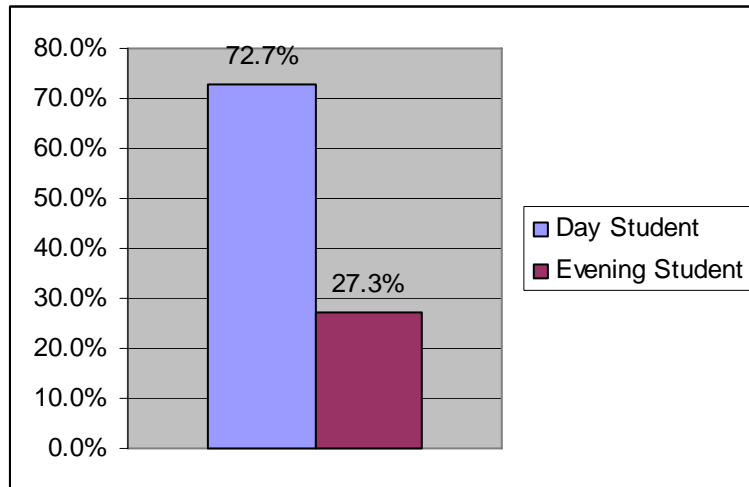
The survey measured three general areas:

1. Library service
2. Library collection and web page
3. Library facilities

Overall we are pleased to report that in almost all categories the students rated library services either excellent or very good. The library's print and online collections together with the Library webpage also received high ratings. Pertaining to the library collection and webpage, students appear to want further instruction in the resources that are available. The majority of students rated the library facilities as comfortable and conducive to studying; however, the issues of temperature (too cold) and noise (too loud) surfaced in the respondents' comments. In addition, a number of both day and evening students raised issues regarding laptop printing.

The survey was illuminating in showing the library how it is perceived by our student patrons, and provides a roadmap for future improvements and strategic planning.

Q. 1 Please check one (answer required):



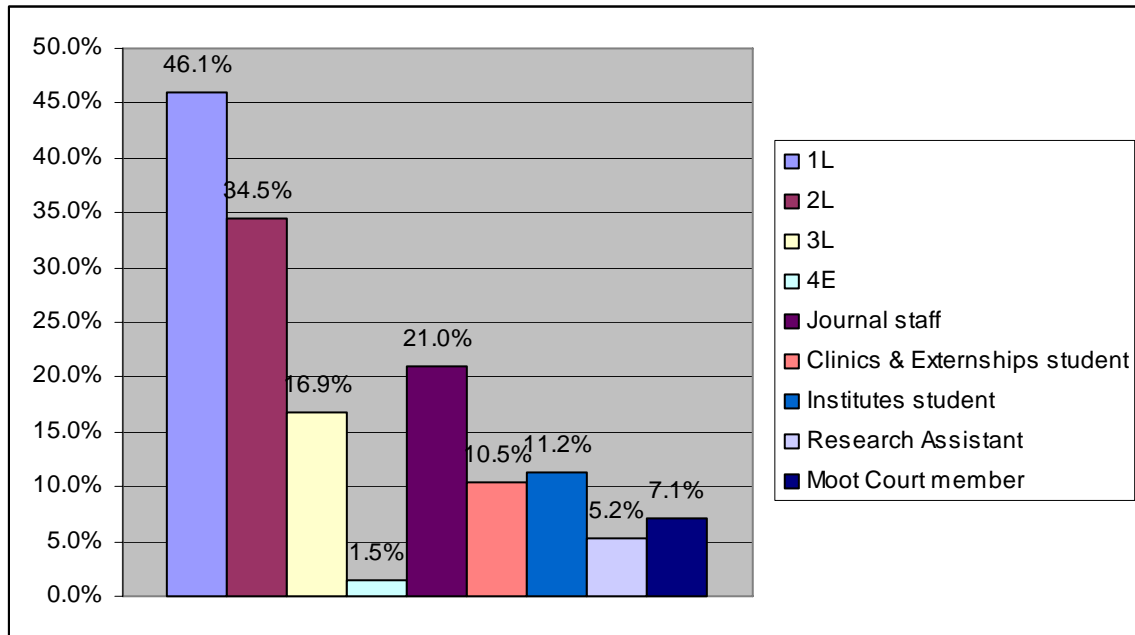
Analysis:

This was a simple demographic question which enabled us to determine two things:

1. The percentage of day student respondents and evening student respondents
2. Whether day and evening students have a different perception of library services and facilities.

A total of 271 students took the survey, over 30% of the total law school population. Thirty-three percent of the law school's day students completed the survey. Twenty-four percent of evening students completed the survey.

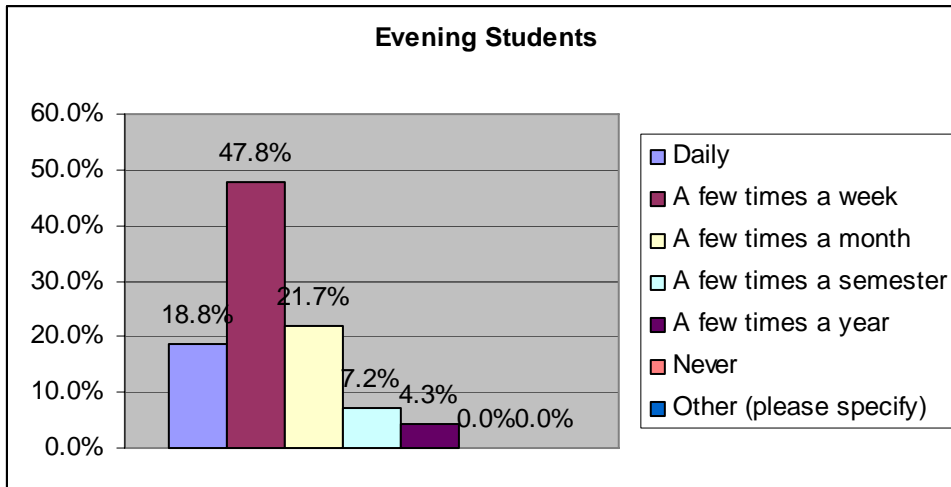
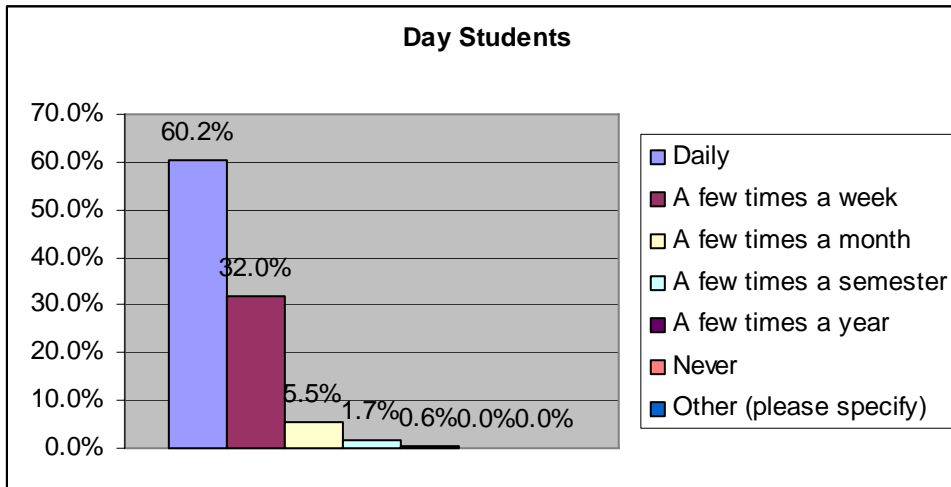
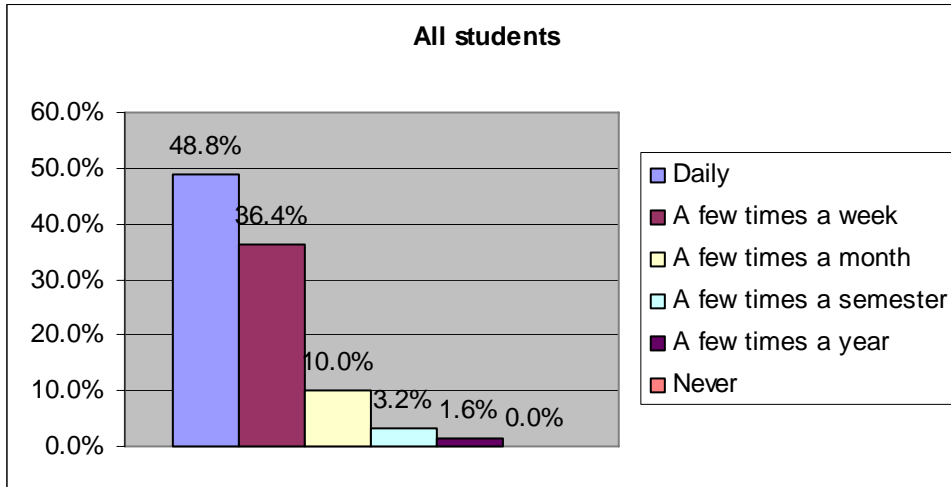
Q. 2 Please check any of the following categories that apply to you:



Analysis:

The majority of the respondents, 46 %, identified themselves as 1st years, followed by 2nd years at 34.5 %. Only 1.5% of respondents identified themselves as 4th year evening students, the lowest percentage of all categories. Students who are on the various journal staff constituted the biggest block of respondents who identified with an organization or activity.

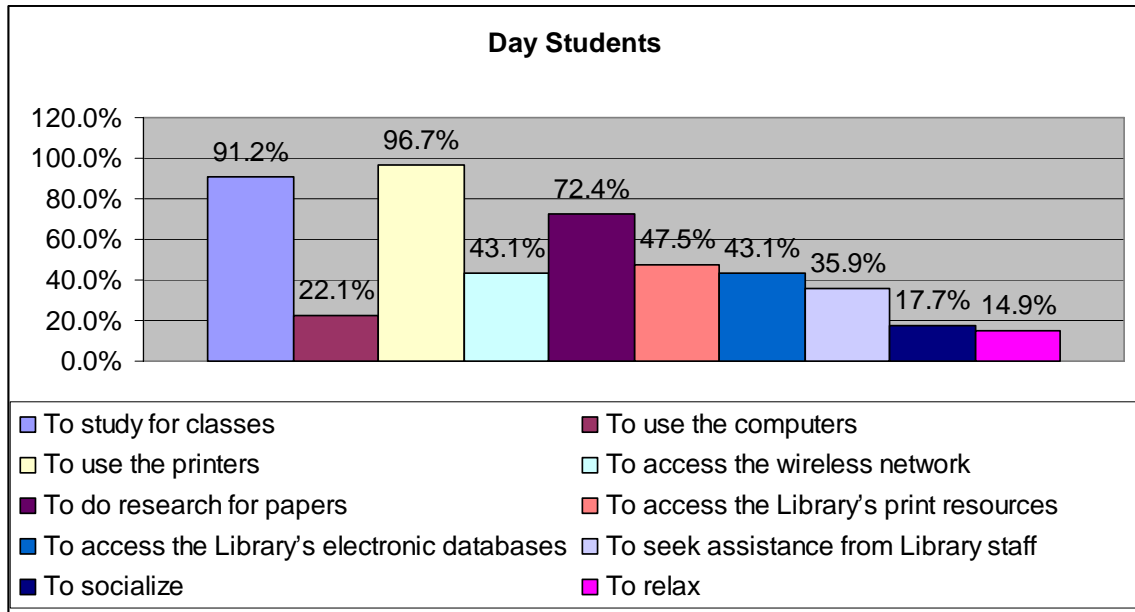
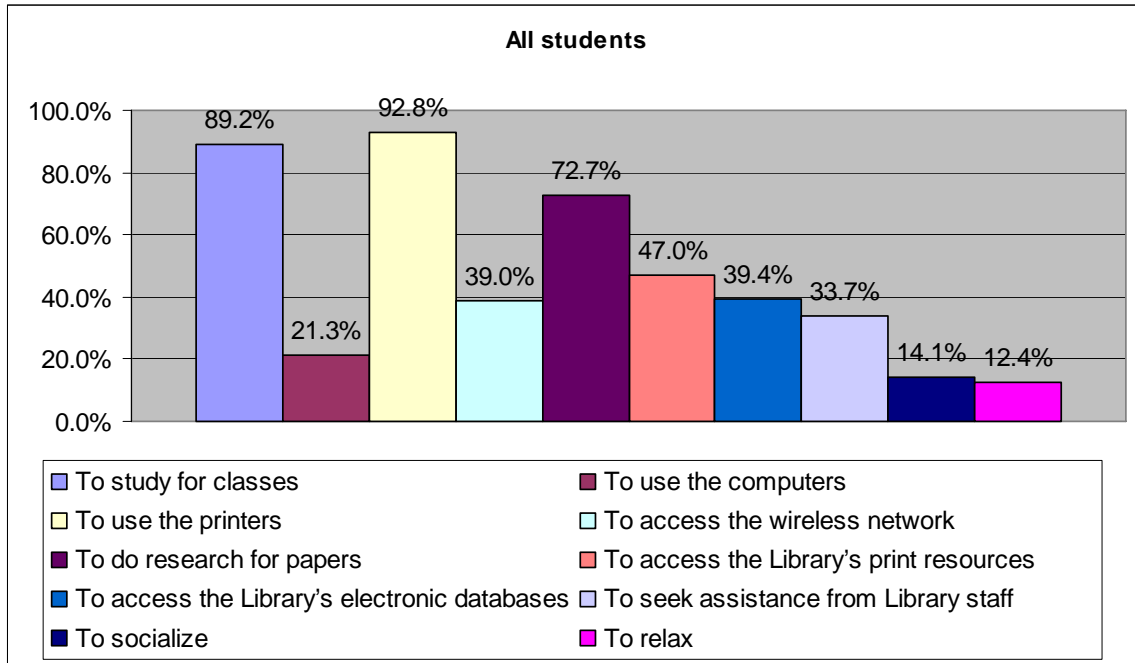
Q. 3 How Often Do You Use the Library?

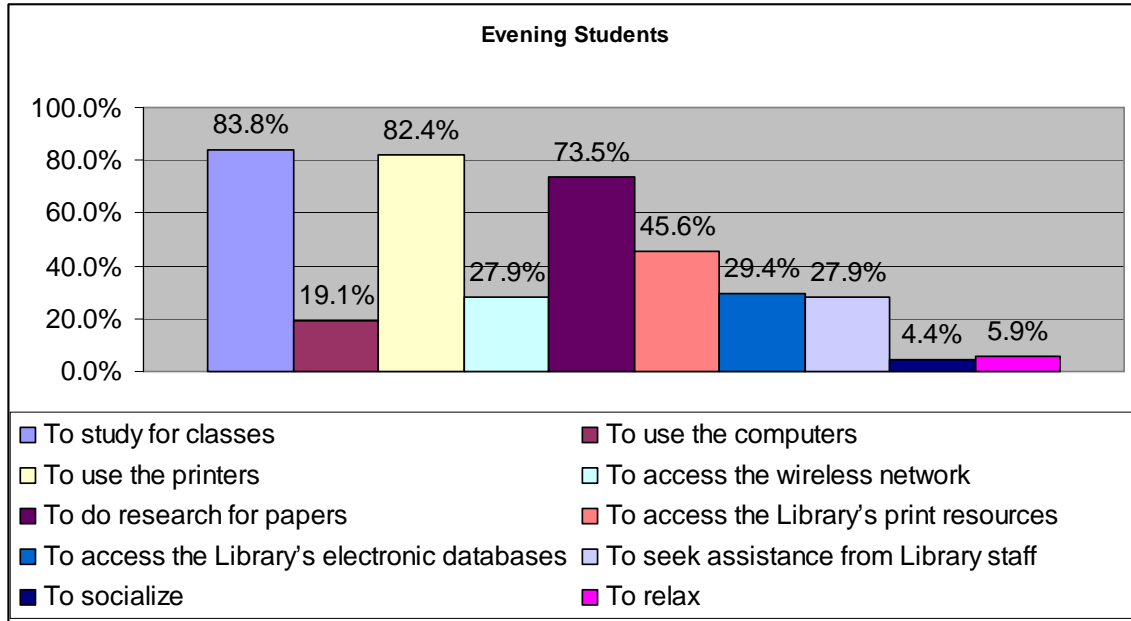


Analysis:

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 85.2 %, use the library either daily or a few times a week, which means the library is an integral part of the student's academic experience at the Columbus School of Law. The majority of day students use the library daily, while a majority of evening students use it a few times a week. Both groups of students seem to be making regular use of the library. In comparison with 2006 results, library usage has increased overall by approximately 4%.

Q. 4 Why do you use the Library? (check all that apply)

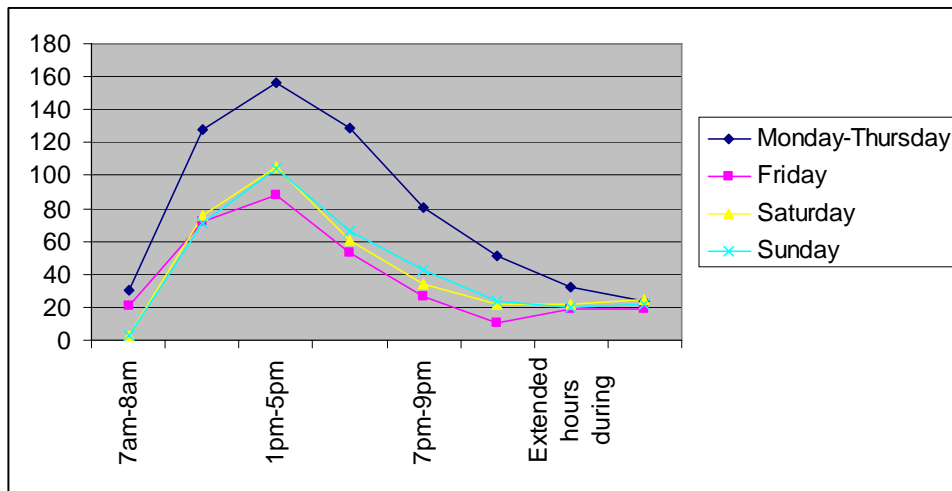
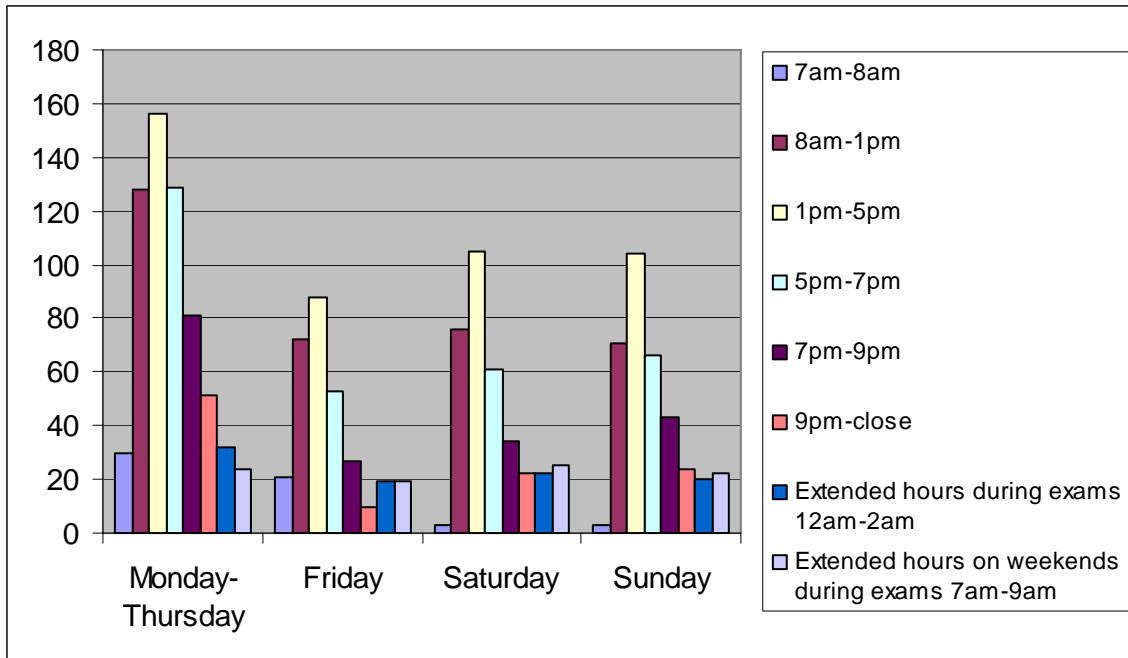




Analysis:

Solid majorities of both day and evening respondents use the library for both studying and printing, with high percentages using the library for research. However a significantly higher percentage of day students use the library for access to the wireless network and to socialize. In the comment section of this question students also listed the availability of study rooms as another reason to use the library.

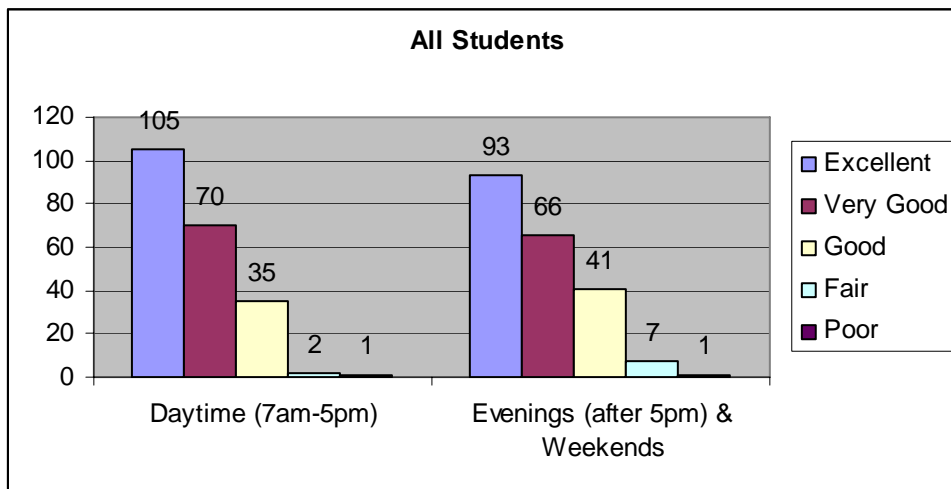
Q. 5 What time of day do you use the library?



Analysis:

The library's peak hours are between 1-5 pm, however responses indicate that there are a steady stream of patrons into the library at most hours of operation. It is interesting to note that Friday evenings are the least popular times for using the law library, while Saturdays and Sundays appear to garner equal attention in terms of usage. A few of the respondents in the comments section requested that the library extend its hours.

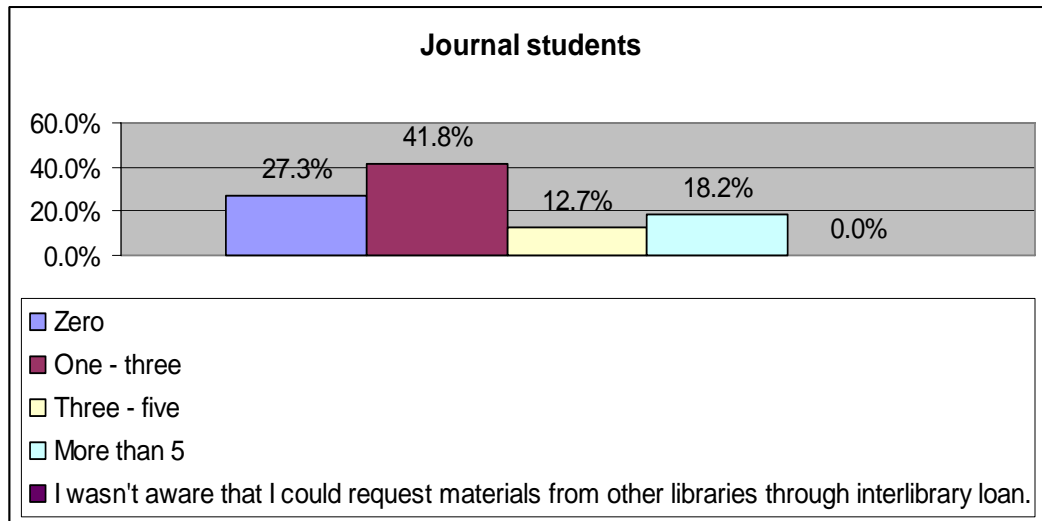
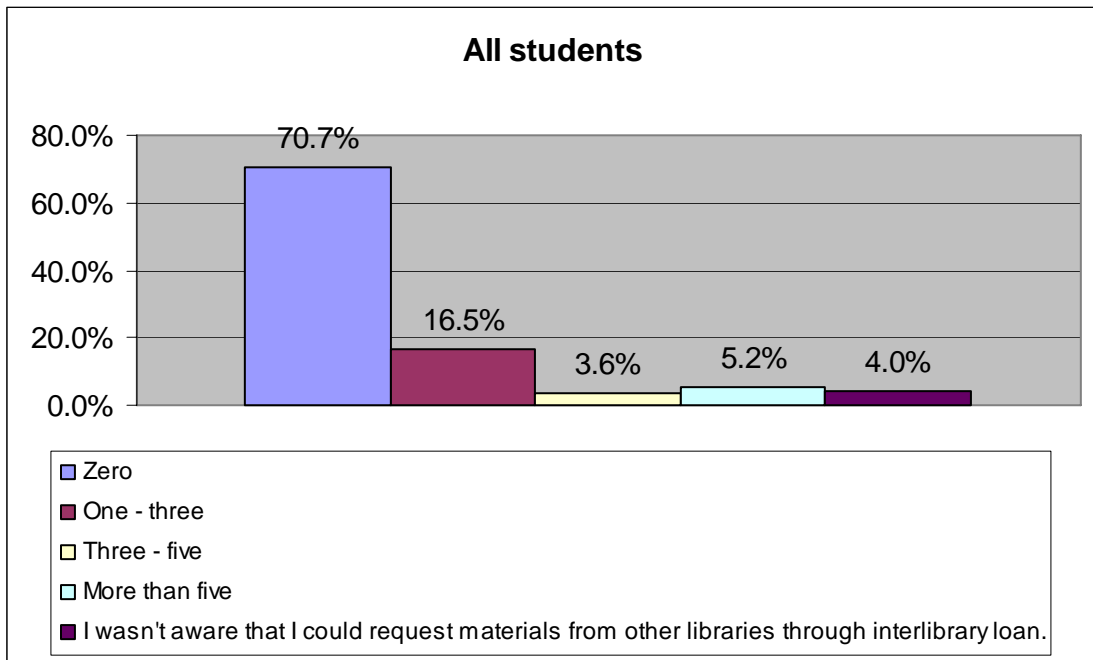
Q. 6 Please rate the level of service provided by the Circulation Staff (e.g. checking-out books, course reserves, etc).



Analysis:

Overall the quality of service was rated excellent or very good for both the day and evening circulation staff by the overwhelming majority of respondents.

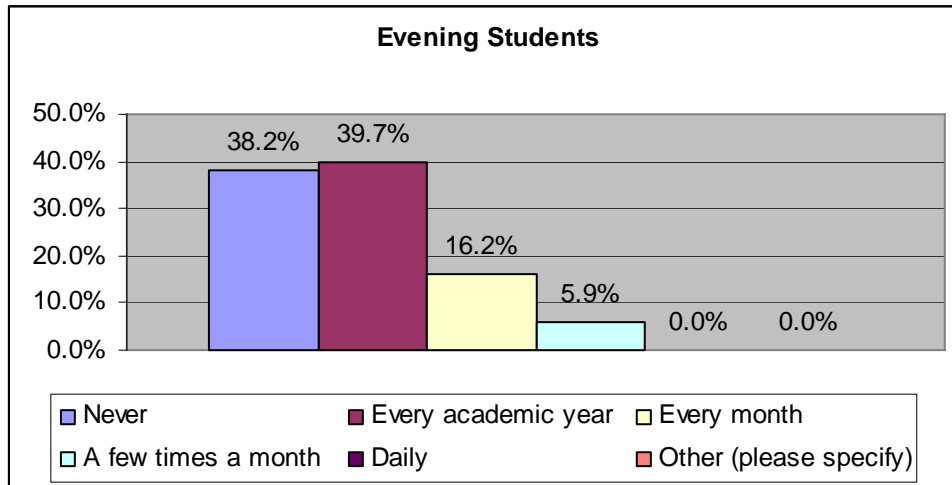
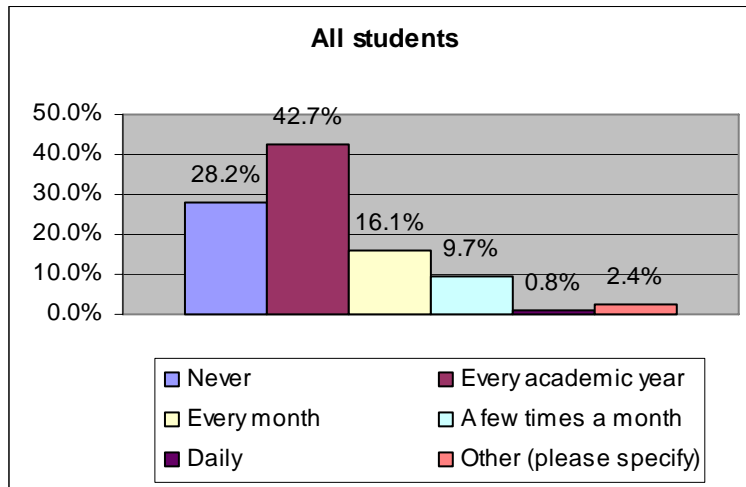
Q. 7 How many times have you requested materials from other libraries through the Law Library's interlibrary loan service?



Analysis:

A solid majority of respondents have never used interlibrary loan while an additional 4 % did not know that the service was available to students. As anticipated, journal students comprise the majority of students who do use interlibrary loan. Numbers have improved slightly since 2006, when over 81% of respondents indicated that they have never used interlibrary loan.

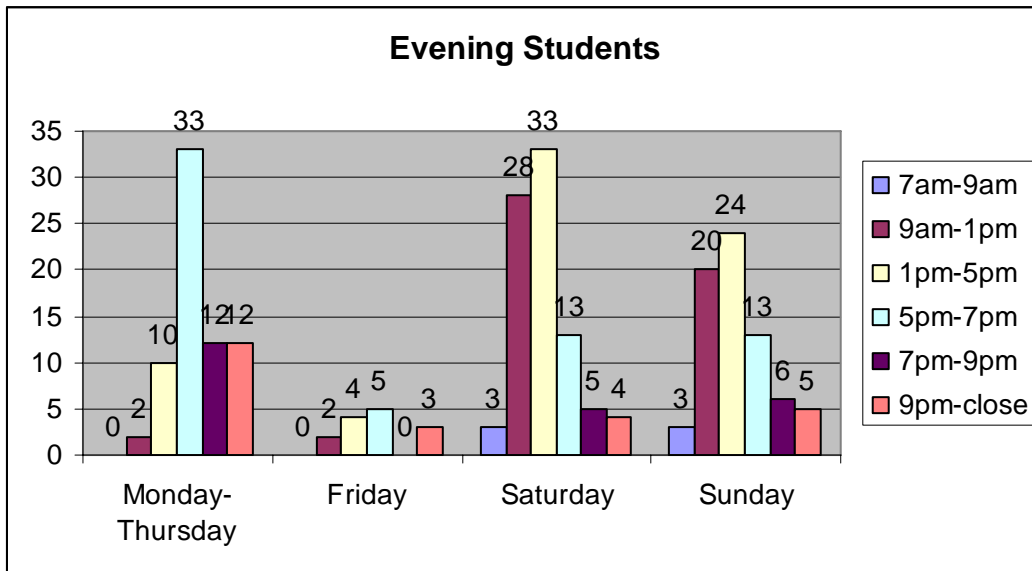
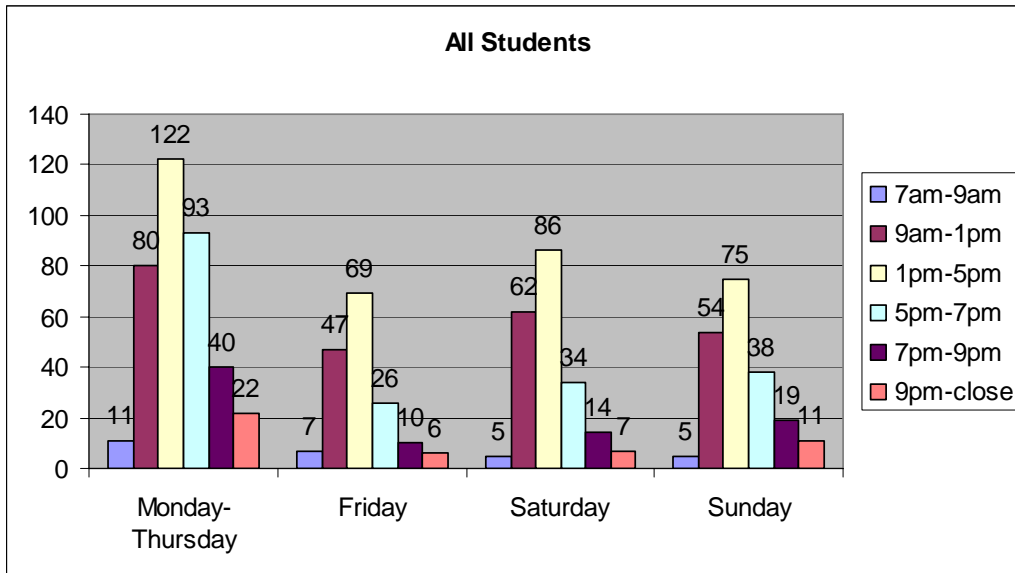
Q. 8 How often do you seek assistance from the Reference Staff?



Analysis:

Over 40% of the all respondents seek assistance from the reference staff at least once a year with almost 10% seeking assistance a few times a month. Among evening students almost 40% seek assistance every academic year with over 16% seeking reference help every month. Compared with 2006 results, reference usage has decreased a bit. Twenty eight percent of respondents never seek assistance, compared with 17.5% in 2006. Nearly 43% seek assistance every year, compared with 53% in 2006. On a positive note, 9.7% seek assistance a few times a month, compared with only 7.6% in 2006.

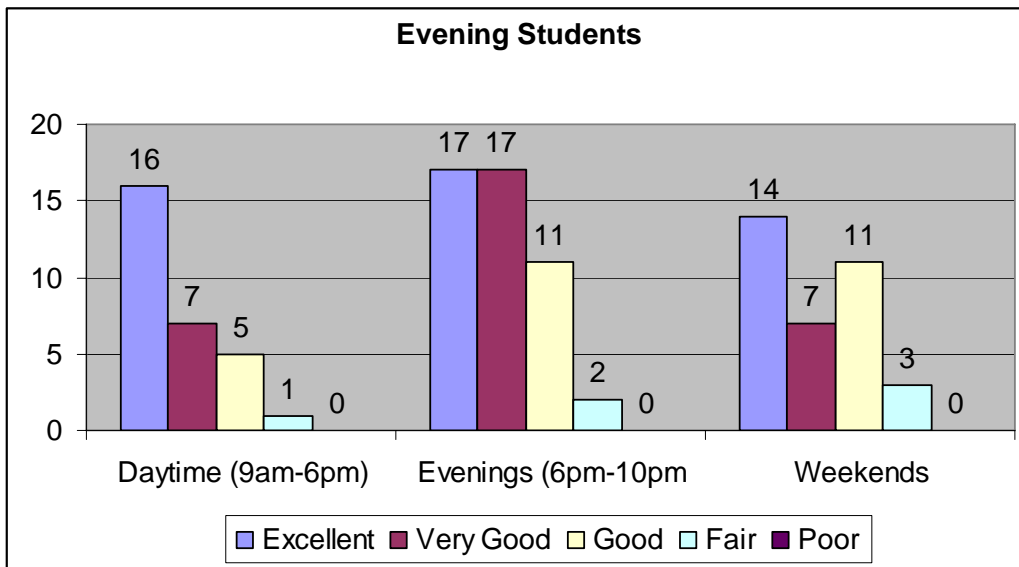
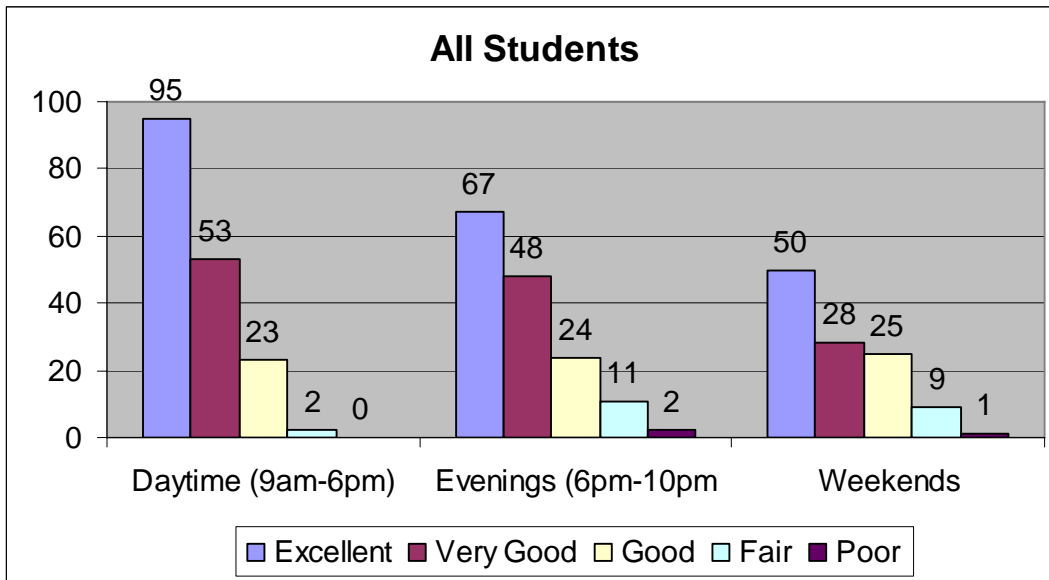
**Q. 9 When are you most likely to need research/reference assistance?
(check all that apply):**



Analysis:

This was a relatively straight forward question that provided us with useful information for staffing purposes. Not surprisingly, research/reference assistance is most in demand Mondays-Thursdays during the day time, and evening students are more likely to need research/reference assistance in the afternoon/evening time periods. However, the value of the responses was really in seeing what other times students would like assistance (e.g. Saturday day time is more popular than Sunday day time, however Sunday evenings are more popular than Saturday evenings). The information gleaned from this survey will be used to assist us in scheduling reference desk hours.

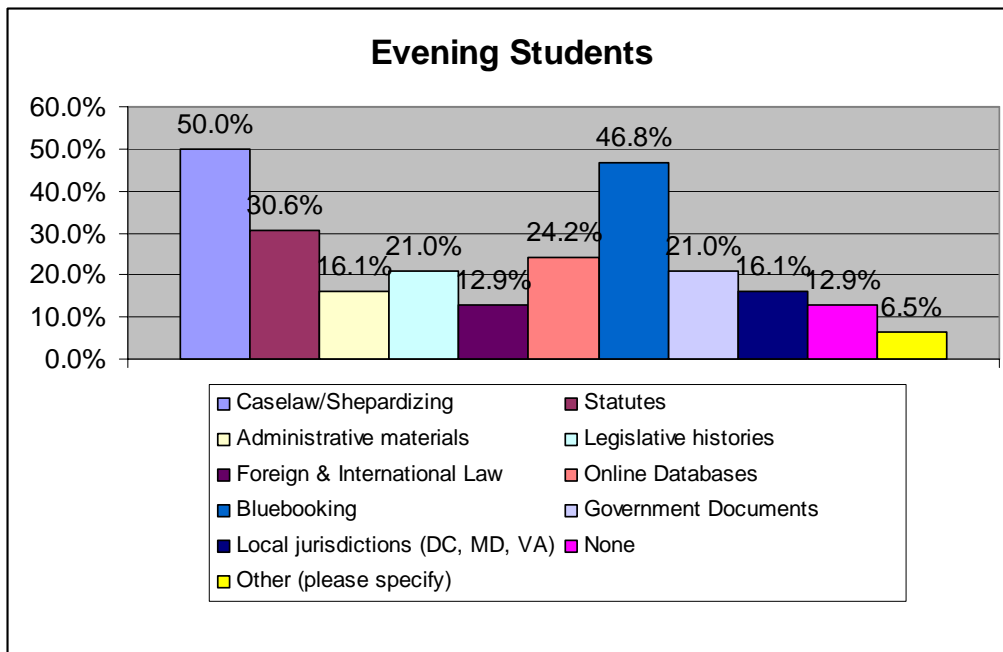
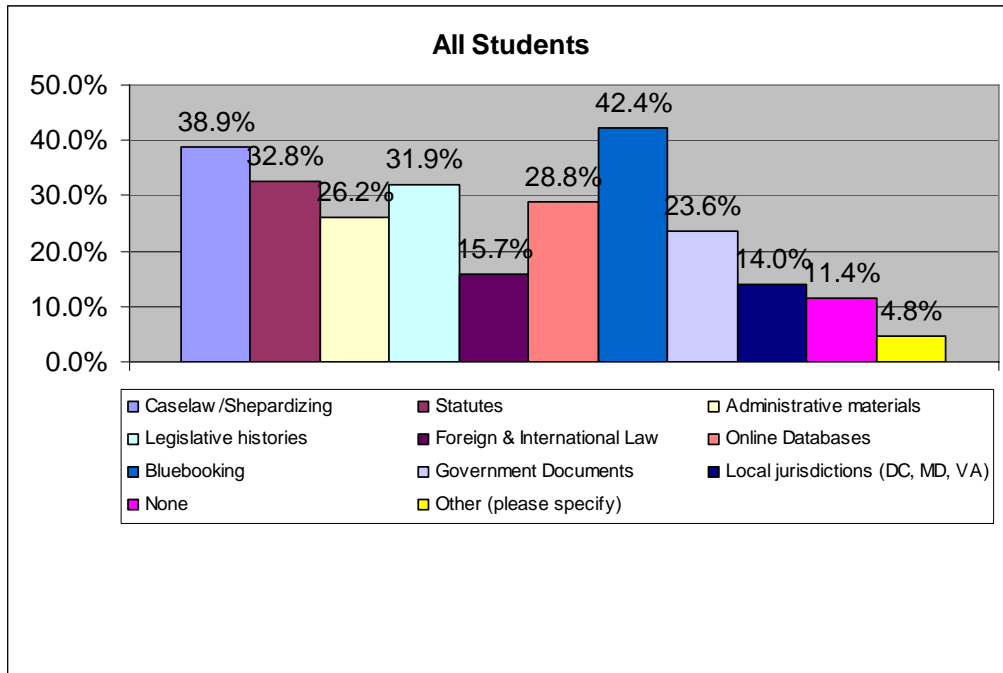
Q. 10 Please rate the level of service provided by the Reference Staff:



Analysis:

Overall, we are pleased to report that the vast majority of respondents rated the level of reference service as either excellent or very good. There did, however, appear to be a drop-off in the level of reference service in the evenings and particularly on the weekends as evidenced by the results obtained from the evening students. The comments reiterated this lack of consistency in the level of service. Currently, the Reference Department is staffed by part-time staff in the evening and a mixture of full-time and part-time staff on the weekend. It is hoped that in the near future the level of reference service will be more consistent.

Q. 11 Please indicate the area(s) of legal research with which you would like more assistance (multiple selections are okay):

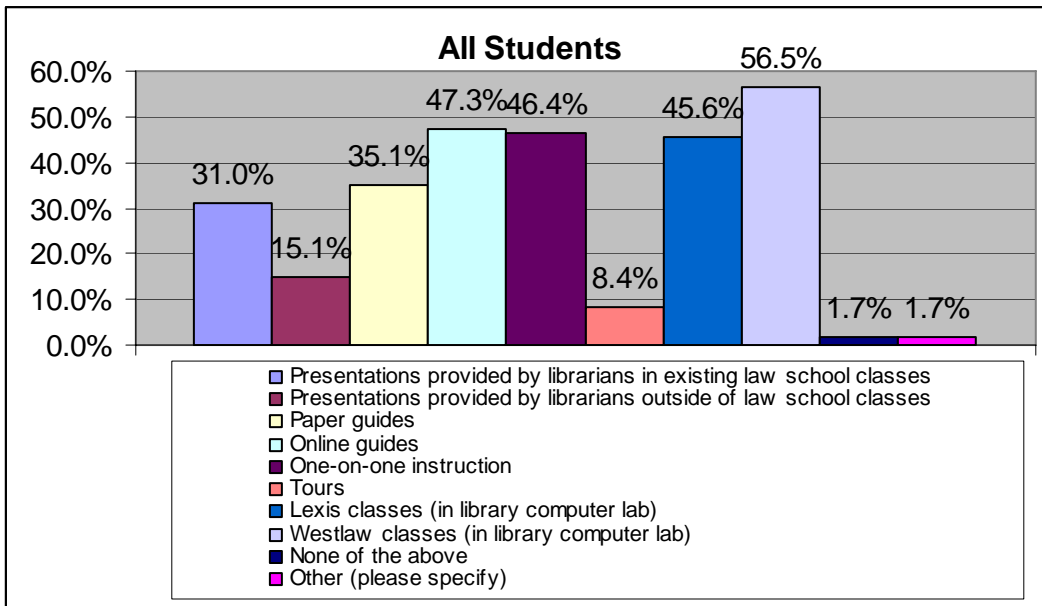


Analysis:

This question elicited some of the most interesting and varied responses in the survey. Bluebooking was the most popular selection for areas where respondents felt they needed more help; however, there were a number of categories that were relatively similar in

terms of respondents' need for more assistance (e.g. legislative histories, caselaw/Shepardizing). A slight split between the day and evening students was noted, with evening students wanting more instruction in caselaw/Shepardizing, while their need for instruction in legislative materials was not as high as the day students. This might reflect the possibility that some evening students work on Capitol Hill or for the Federal Government, and might therefore be more familiar with these resources. In reviewing the comments, there appeared to be some demand for librarians to get more involved with the research component of the LSP course, and even some desire for the librarians to assist in Westlaw/LexisNexis training.

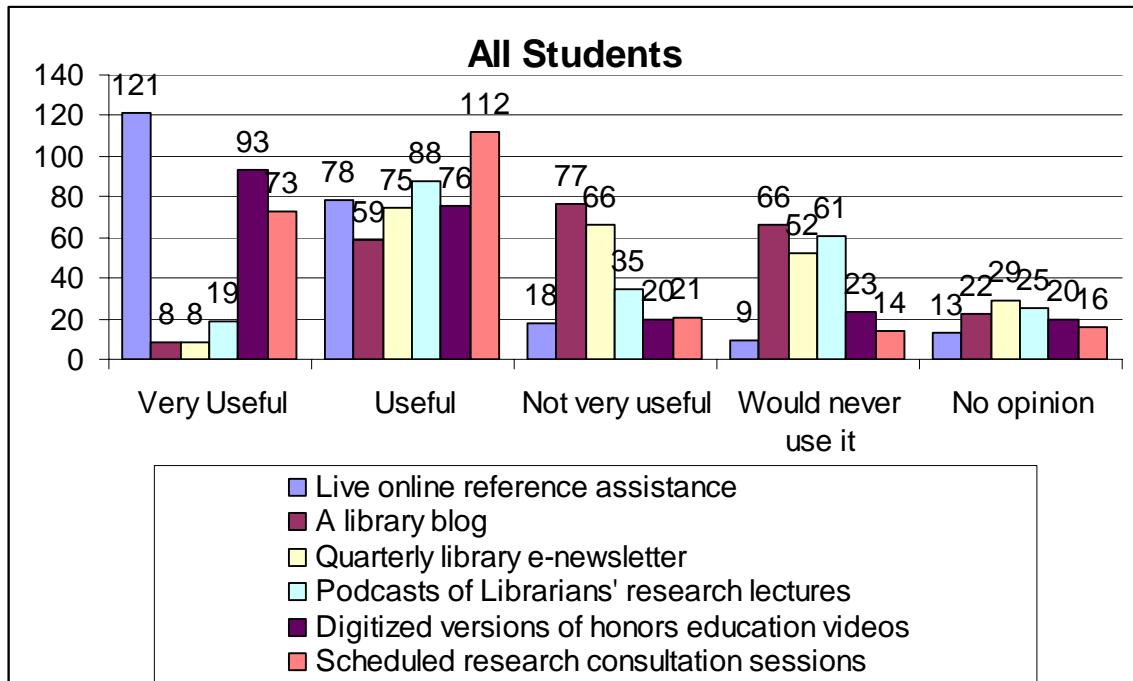
Q. 12 Please indicate which type of research instruction you find most helpful (multiple selections are okay):



Analysis:

The results of this question indicate that students prefer instruction in the major legal databases (Westlaw, LexisNexis) and would also make use of online research guides (certain guides are currently available on our website) and one-on-one instruction. Equally important to note is that students are not embracing library tours or presentation by librarians outside of class as a source of research instruction. Based on the respondents' comments there was some demand for the librarians to provide instruction as a component of the LSP course.

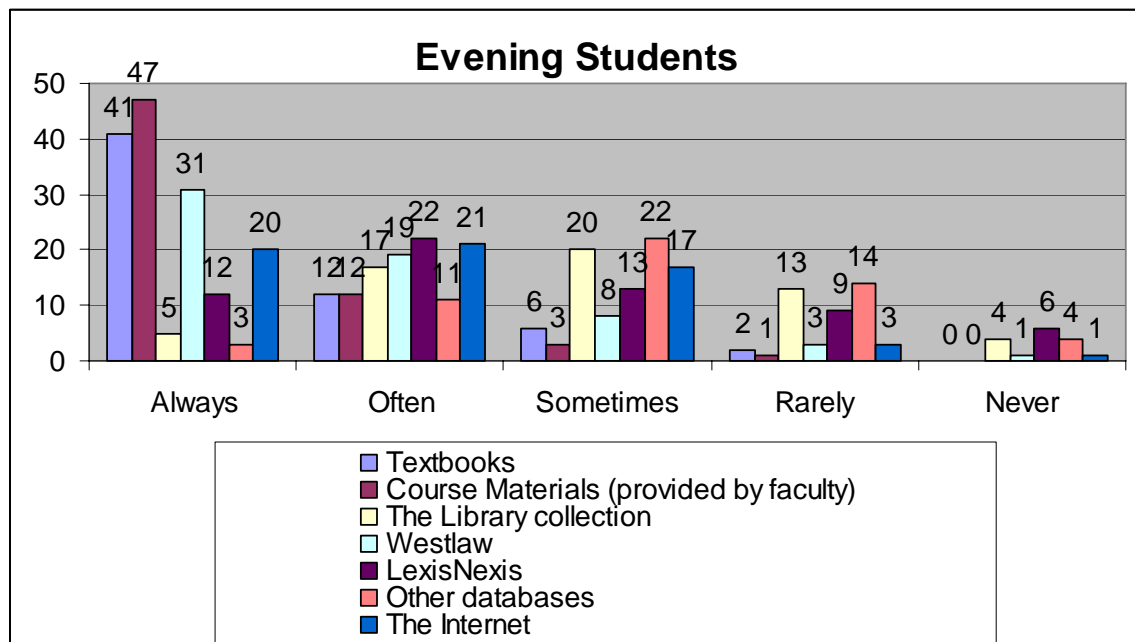
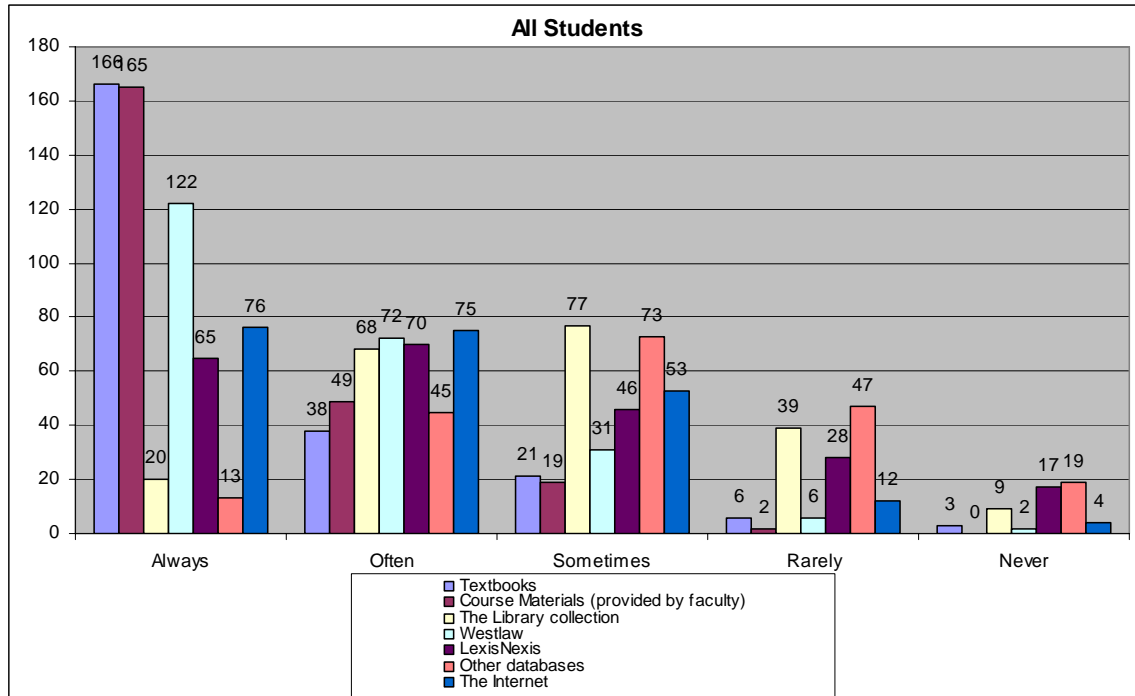
Q. 13 The Law Library is considering introducing a variety of new services. If implemented, how useful would you find these services?



Analysis:

This proved to be one of the most interesting questions in terms of the respondents' choices. It is clear from the survey that certain services, if offered, would prove to be valuable to our student body (e.g. online reference assistance, digitized honors education videos, scheduled research consultations), while other services might not be as popular (e.g. a library blog, e-newsletter). Although the Library has not committed to introducing any of these services at this stage, these results certainly provide us with a useful gauge as to how we should focus our efforts.

Q. 14 In preparing for class or writing a paper how often do you use the following resources?

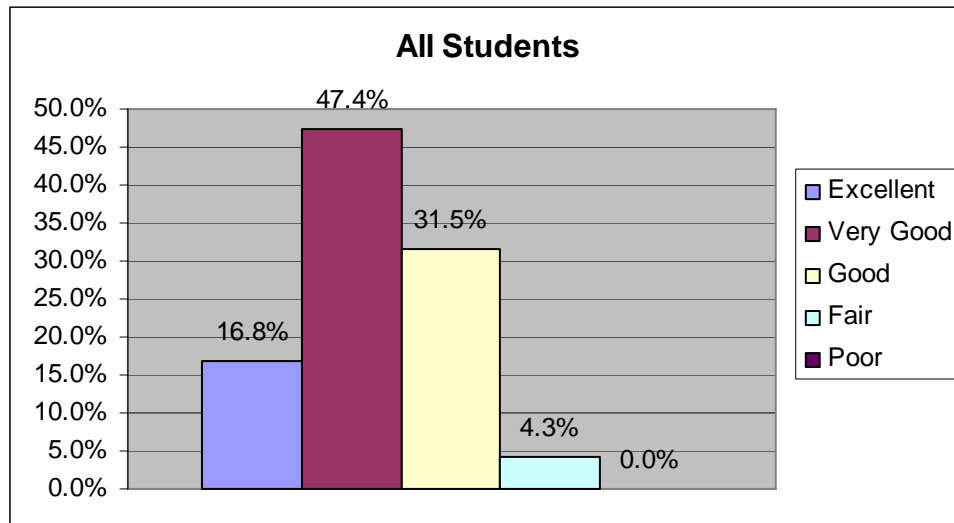


Analysis:

This question provided us with a snapshot of how often students are utilizing the various resources at their disposal. Not surprisingly, textbooks and course materials proved to be the most popular choices; however the Library’s collection proved to be less popular. In

terms of the major legal databases, Westlaw was preferred over LexisNexis by almost 2:1 in the “Always” category. There appeared to be little difference between day and evening students in their responses.

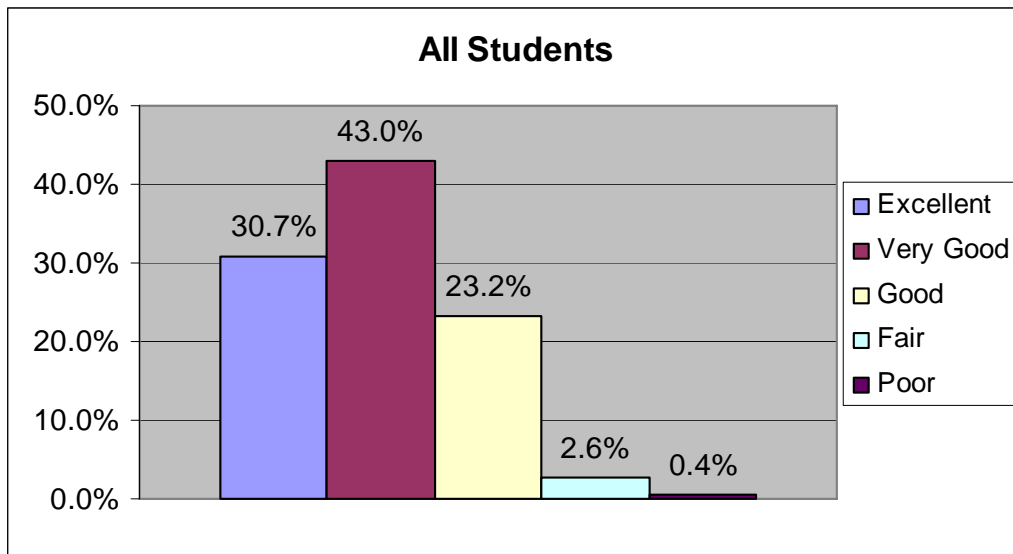
Q. 15 Please indicate how successful the library's print resources are in meeting your research needs (this includes books, journals, newspapers, etc.):



Analysis:

Although over 64% of respondents rated the library's print collection as excellent or very good this is still an area where the library would like to see some improvement. The comments were enlightening in that a couple of the resources that were requested are either not available (e.g. 2006 edition of the United States Code does not yet exist) or we already possess in the collection (e.g. recent issues of law reviews are available at the Circulation Desk).

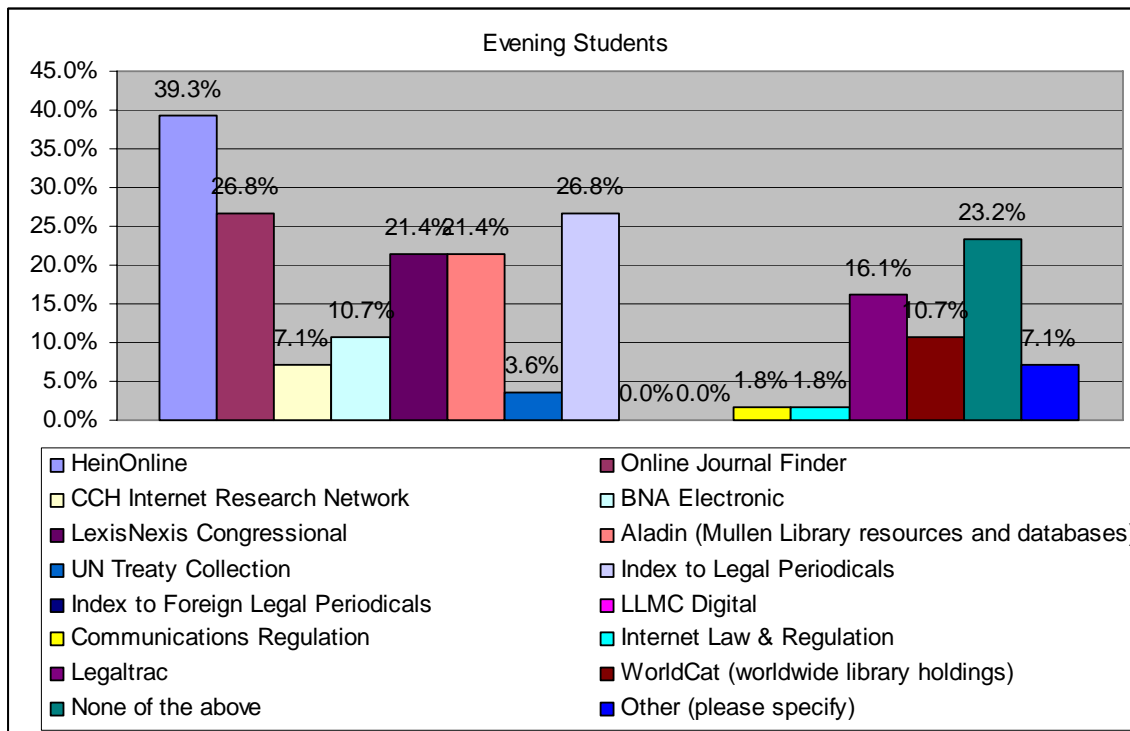
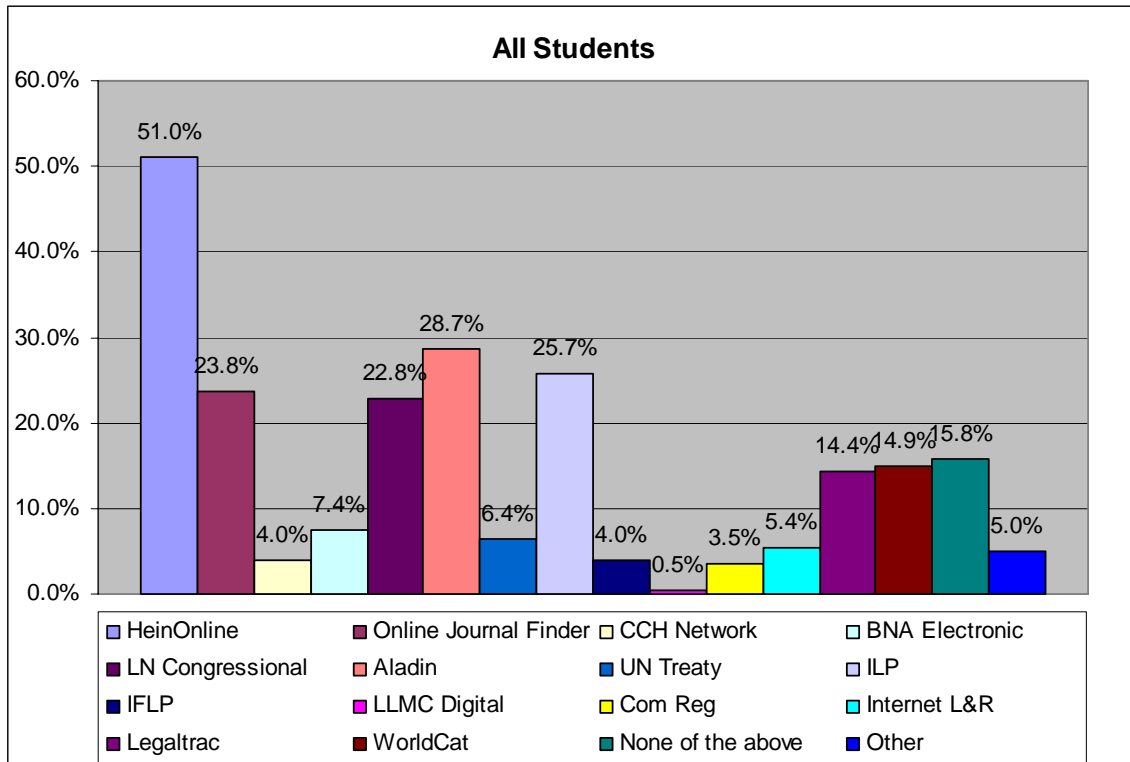
Q. 16 Please indicate how successful the library's online resources are in meeting your research needs:



Analysis:

By and large students appear to be satisfied with the availability of online resources for their research needs. Over 73% of respondents rated the online resources as either excellent or very good. A couple of respondents asked about the availability of JSTOR. This database is available as part of the Aladin suite of databases.

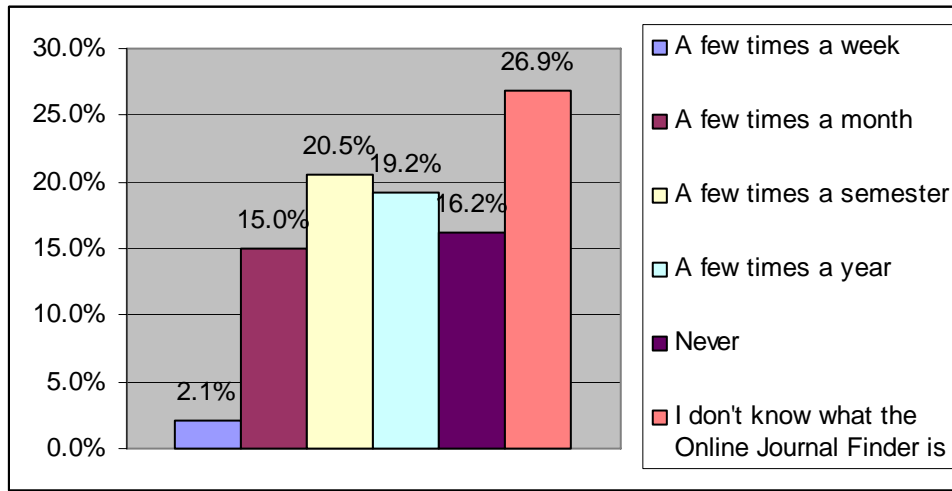
Q. 17 Please indicate which of the following online databases you find most useful (multiple selections are ok):



Analysis:

Not surprisingly HeinOnline was the most popular of the databases offered by the Law Library. It was encouraging to see that Aladin, Index to Legal Periodicals, and LN Congressional were also used in fairly large numbers. There did not appear to be any major difference between evening students and day students in their database use patterns. In the comments provided by the students there appeared to be some confusion; a few students asked that JSTOR be made available, however this database is currently offered as part of the suite of databases on Aladin. This indicates that the Law Library could perhaps do a better job of educating students as to the availability of certain databases, particularly those databases that are currently being under utilized.

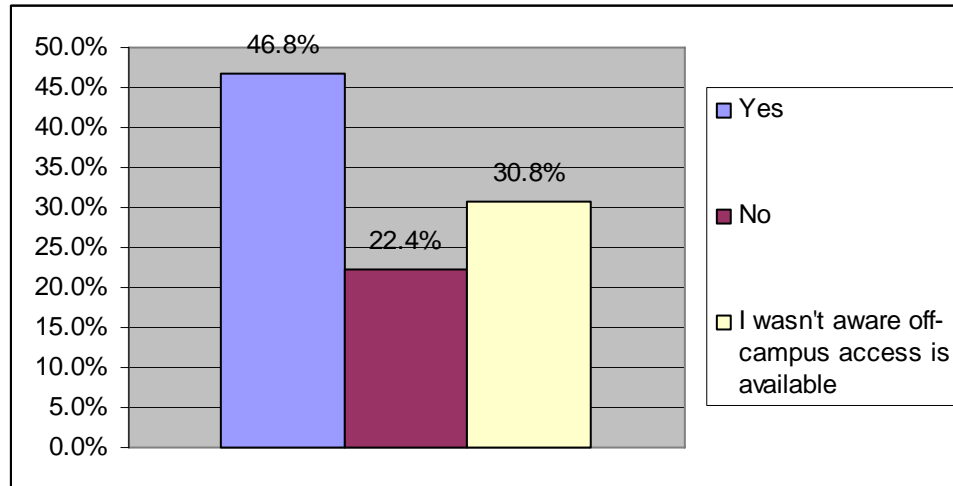
Q. 18 How often do you use the Online Journal Finder to locate an electronic journal?



Analysis:

As expected, a large number of respondents (a total of 43%) either don't use the Online Journal Finder or are unaware of its existence. However, over half of the respondents do use the Online Journal Finder, most a few times a semester.

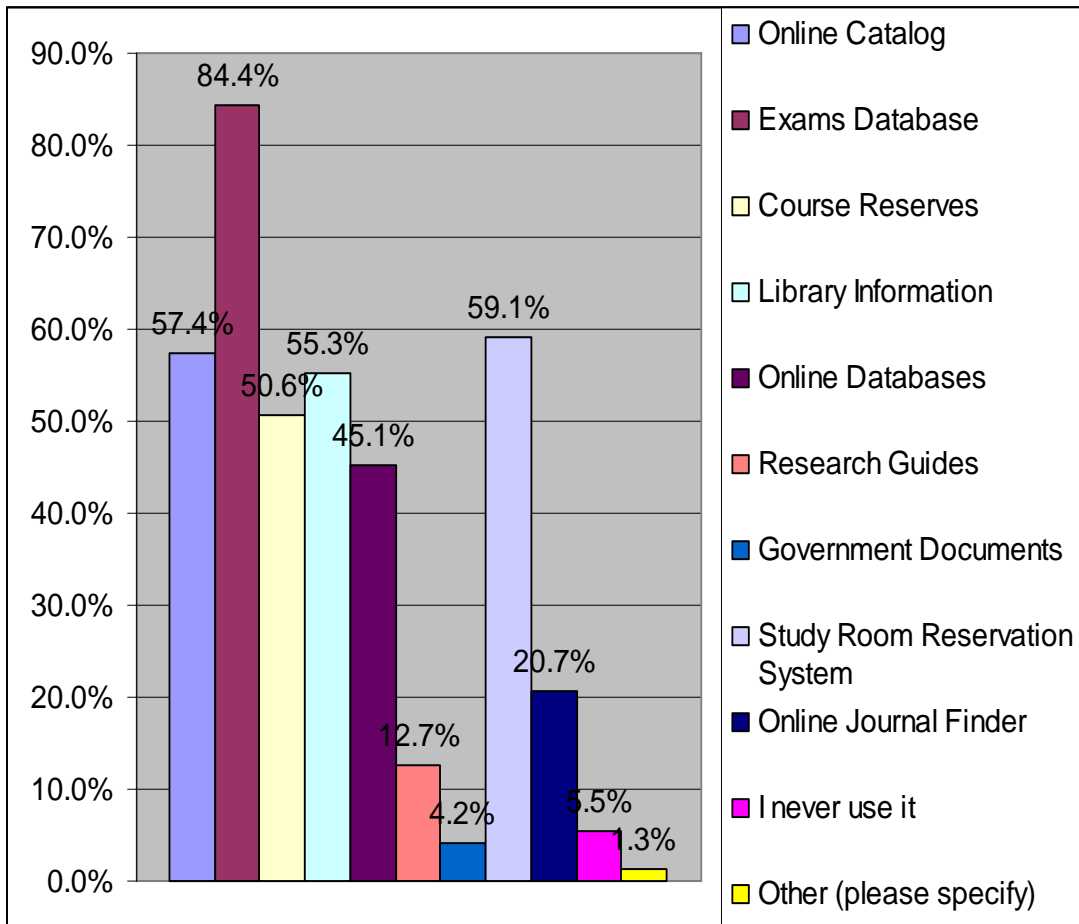
Q. 19 Students can use their law library barcode to access most of the law library's subscription databases off campus. Do you use the library's subscription databases (other than Westlaw and Lexis) off-campus?



Analysis:

Nearly half of the respondents do take advantage of the library's off-campus access to our online databases. These numbers are a slight improvement over the 2006 results for this question, where 40% of respondents took advantage of off-campus database access and 36% of respondents were unaware that the library offers off-campus database access to patrons. The majority of patrons who do access databases off-campus do so several times a semester.

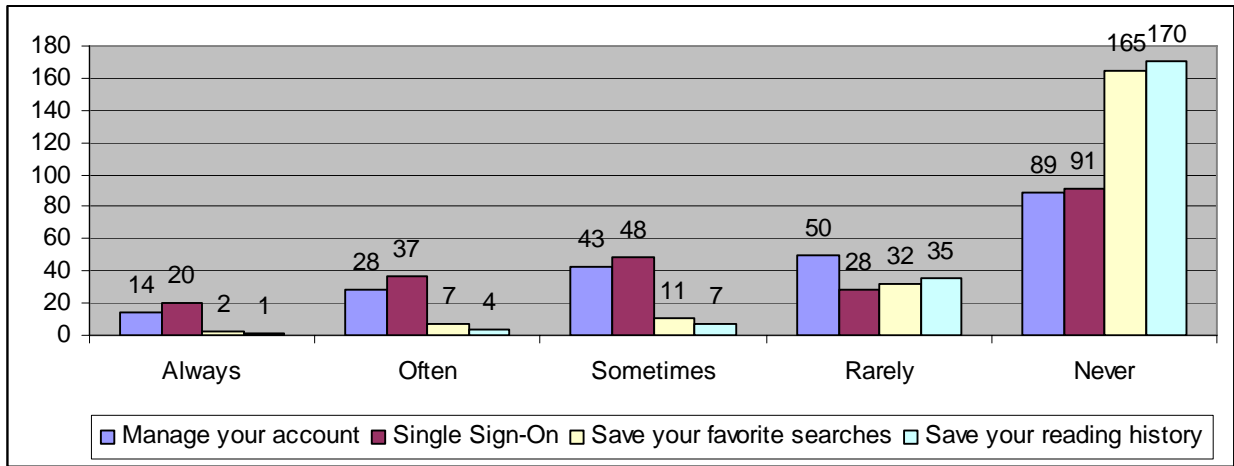
Q. 20 Please indicate why you use the library web page (multiple selections are okay):



Analysis:

As in 2006, the majority of respondents cited the exams database as the primary reason they use the library web page. The Study Room Reservation System, a new addition, is also a popular choice at 59%. The online catalog and library information are top choices, again similar to the 2006 survey results. Overall, usage of the library web page appears to have declined slightly since 2006, with 5.5% of respondents not using the page, as compared to 4.7% in 2006.

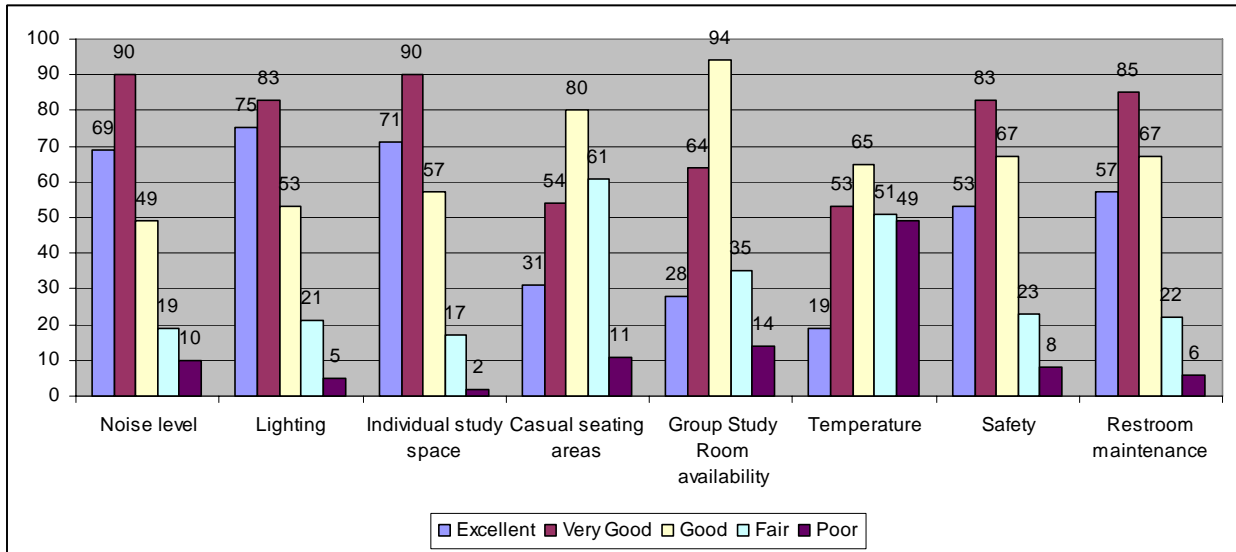
Q. 21 Please indicate how often you use the following MyColumbo features:



Analysis:

As anticipated, the majority of respondents do not use MyColumbo. Comments indicate that students are not aware of MyColumbo. Of those that do use its features, the most popular choice is single-sign-on. The next most popular choice is the account management feature. Saved searches and reading history are used by only a few respondents. Hopefully the insertion of this question into the survey served an educational purpose.

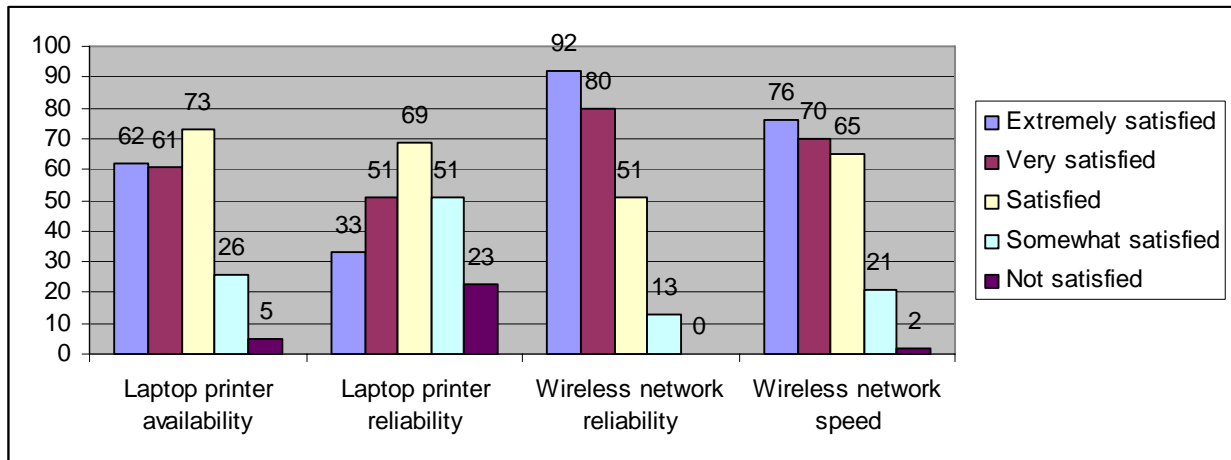
Q.22 Please rate the following aspects of the library atmosphere:



Analysis:

Overall, the majority of respondents find the library a comfortable place to work and study. All aspects received a higher percentage of positive ratings than negative ratings. The temperature ratings were fairly evenly distributed, with 58% positive ratings and 42% negative. Fifty six comments were received, with the number one complaint being that the library is too cold (24 complaints). Other complaints include noise, particularly students talking to each other and on cell phones, and the need for more comfortable seating. Security was also mentioned. Some students feel that the current level of security is not adequate and that visitors need to be more closely monitored.

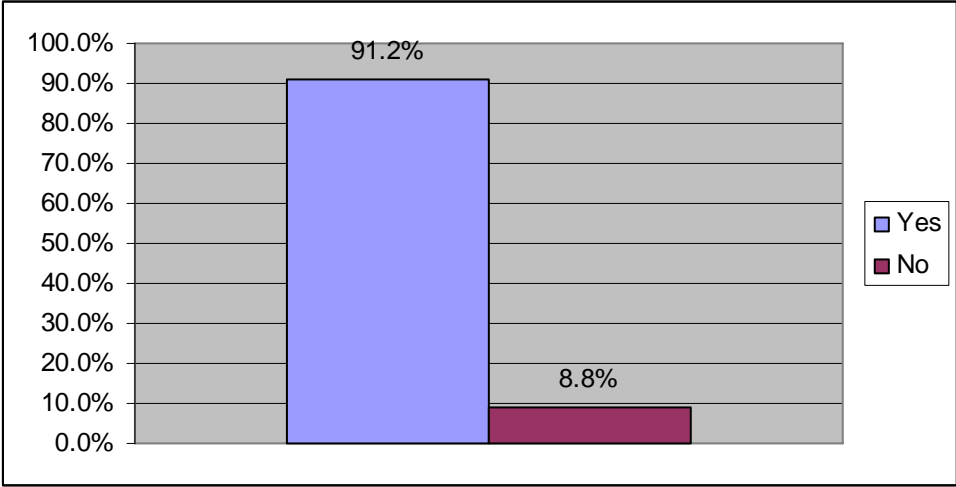
Q. 23 Please rate your level of satisfaction regarding the following equipment:



Analysis:

Overall, respondents are satisfied with the library's laptop printers and the wireless network, with all aspects receiving a high percentage of positive ratings. Thirty two comments were received, with the majority noting that additional laptop printers are needed, particularly on Floor 2. Students also mentioned that the wireless network often slows down on weekday afternoons.

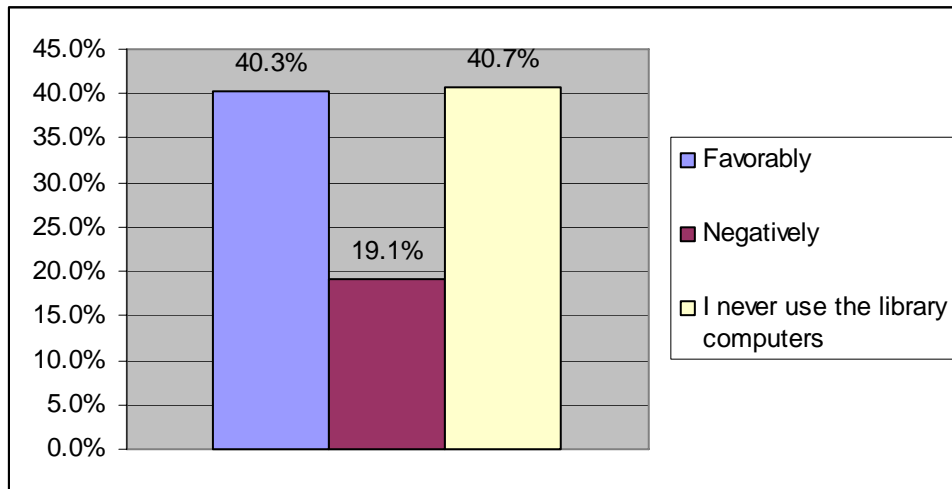
Q. 24 If more printers offered double-sided printing, would you use it?



Analysis:

The overwhelming majority of respondents would use double-sided printing. Most of the 25 comments received essentially reiterated the “Yes” response.

Q. 25 How would you react if the number of library-provided desktop computers was reduced in order to provide more work space?



Analysis:

The majority of respondents are in favor of reducing the number of desktop computers. A wide variety of comments were received, 25 in all. Several students recommended removing the computers on Floor 4, particularly the Macs. Several students indicated that they were in favor, but only if the large lab was not changed. The need for more computers on Floor 2 was also mentioned.

Q. 26 If you were in charge of the law library for just one day, what would be your top priority?

Analysis:

This question received 189 responses. The top three areas that respondents identified as needing improvement are (1) laptop printing, (2) temperature control, and (3) noise level (i.e., students talking and using cell phones in quiet areas of the library). Seventeen percent of respondents feel that the library needs to increase the number and reliability of laptop printers. Seventeen percent of respondents believe that the temperature needs to be increased, and 11.5% believe that the noise problem needs to be addressed. The need for more study space, both group and individual, was also mentioned. Security is another concern. Some respondents feel that the current level of security is not adequate, while others believe that it's too much. There was a wide variety of comments concerning other areas, most relating to the library facility (lights, cleanliness, and seating).