

# UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES FACULTY SURVEY SUMMARY

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## **Assessment Committee**

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# Summary of Key Findings

The University Libraries conducted this survey with the goal of better understanding the research and teaching goals of our faculty and their perspectives on the role of the library in helping them to achieve these goals.

This report includes a summary of the key findings drawn from the survey analysis and strategic recommendations based on these findings. Details on methodology and a link to the complete survey questionnaire follow.

## Discovery

Discovery questions ask how faculty start the research process and how they keep up with the literature in the field. While not always their starting point, faculty require access to traditional indexes and journals to do research and keep up with the latest scholarship.

- When starting a new research project:
  - 35% of respondents start their research using a “general purpose search engine on the internet;” and
  - 37% use a “specific electronic research resource/computer database.”
- When searching for new articles and books:
  - 30% of respondents use Google Scholar; and
  - 38% start in a specific scholarly database.
- When asked how they kept up with current scholarship:
  - 59% of respondents said they “regularly” skimmed new issues of “key journals;” and
  - 56% were “regularly skimming table of contents (TOC) alerts of key journals”.

## Access

Access questions ask about faculty members’ preferences in accessing scholarly journals and monographs in both digital and print formats as well as how they gain access to these materials within and outside of the library. Results from our survey indicate faculty are comfortable with moving to the electronic environment, especially for journals, but believe the libraries should still have hard-copy books as “reading cover to cover in-depth” is much easier in print (55% of respondents).

- Faculty were evenly divided when responding to the statement “scholarly print monographs are very important to research & learning.”
  - 37% of respondents said they were important;
  - 31% were in the middle; and
  - 31% said they were not very important.
- 56% of respondents are happy to see print journal collections discarded and replaced by e-versions (assuming the e-collections work well).
- 79% of respondents were comfortable with an e-subscription replacing a print one.
- 51% of respondents said searching for a particular topic was much easier in digital format.
- Results also showed the faculty rely on the libraries for articles and monographs for research and teaching purposes.
  - 90% of respondents find library subscriptions or collections very extremely important.
  - 58% of respondents said they often used ILL or document delivery for items not owned by MU.

## Research Topics & Practices

### Data Management

Faculty are collecting data in various formats and using a variety of methods to manage and preserve data.

- Faculty feel fairly confident in their ability to manage data.
  - 26% of respondents found storage of data/media/images difficult;
  - 19% said it was difficult to organize or manage data/media/images;
  - 41% often use a cloud storage service to organize or manage; and
  - 6% said the library manages or organizes their data/media/images for them.
- Faculty were asked about the value of different sources who might provide data management.
  - 51% of respondents indicated having the library do this would be valuable;
  - 26% said it wouldn't; and
  - 53% said freely available software would be the most valuable resource to have for managing their data.
- Regarding types of data created:
  - 59% of respondents produced qualitative;
  - 51% produced scientific (lab experimental data, slides, etc.);
  - 66% produced quantitative; and
  - 34% produced computational (scripts, algorithms, etc.).
- Lastly in the data management arena, faculty responded to a question about methods they use to preserve data.
  - 68% of the respondents said they do the preservation using commercial or free software/services;
  - 38% use an online repository, University of Missouri's Institutional Repository (MOspace) or other;
  - 13% rely on a publisher; and
  - 10% said they're not preserving data at the end of a research project.

### Research Dissemination

Traditional publishing remains a priority for faculty, but new areas of publishing, such as open access are becoming more prevalent.

- 67% of faculty have at least one of their peer-reviewed journal article or conference proceedings available for free online.
- Faculty have made their articles available for free via the following venues:
  - 23% of respondents have used MOspace;
  - 49% an open access disciplinary repository (e.g. PubMed Central, SSRN); and
  - 58% elsewhere online.
- 70% of respondents "support the federal policy mandating that publicly funded scholarly research and/or data be made freely available online."
- 61% of respondents "would be happy to see the traditional subscription based model replaced entirely by an open access publication system in which all scholarly outputs would be freely available to the public."
- 37% of respondents say they consider whether a journal makes its articles freely available online as an important factor when deciding on publication.

## Dissemination Support Services

Libraries have a role in offering publication support. When asked about the value of the library supporting the functions or the potential of the library supporting these functions, the following percentage of faculty found the support would be valuable:

- 45% responded managing a public webpage that lists scholarly outputs;
- 46% responded “helping to assess the impact of my work following” publication;
- 35% responded helping to determine where to publish; and
- 31% responded helping me to “understand and negotiate favorable publication contracts.”

Faculty comments indicated that some faculty had never thought about the library offering these services.

## Instruction

Instruction questions include how faculty feel about their students’ research skills and how librarians can assist with education. The majority of faculty feel strongly that their undergraduate students have inadequate research skills and feel that the librarians can help improve research skills.

- 52% of respondents feel that “undergraduate students have poor skills related to locating and evaluating scholarly information.”
- 59% of respondents indicated that librarians at my “university library contribute significantly to my students’ learning by helping them to find, access, and make use of a range of secondary and primary sources in their coursework.”
- 50% of respondents feel that “librarians at my college or university library contribute significantly to my students’ learning by helping them to develop their research skills.”

## The Role of the Library

Despite the changing roles of libraries, most faculty feel that libraries still have a major role in paying for resources and helping to improve undergraduate research skills.

- 57% strongly disagree that “because scholarly material is available electronically, colleges and universities should redirect the money spent on library buildings and staff to other needs.”
- The majority of faculty believe that the library is very important in the providing the following functions:
  - 91% of respondents chose “library pays for resources I need, from academic journals to books to electronic databases;”
  - 74% chose “library helps undergraduates develop research, critical analysis, and information literacy skills;”
  - 73% chose “library serves as a starting point or ‘gateway’ for location information for my research;”
  - 69% chose “library serves as a repository of resources – in other words, it archives, preserves, and keeps track of resources;”
  - 62% chose “library supports and facilitates my teaching activities;” and
  - 61% chose “library provides active support that helps to increase the productivity of my research and scholarship.”

## Assessment Committee Recommendations

1. Actively share information with faculty about the cost of access to scholarly publications and work with faculty to support open access as a means to ensure global access to scholarship.
2. Advocate for library collections that support scholarly research and teaching across the disciplines.
3. Collaborate with Research Computing and the Office of Research to support faculty needing to manage data for preservation and access.
4. Promote best practices for negotiating with publishers, author identity management and using impact metrics.
5. Assess impact of library support for teaching and work with campus partners on how to best support student learning.

## Methodology

The survey was distributed by e-mail to all 3,090 faculty members on October 2, 2017. A voluntary opportunity to participate in a random drawing for twenty \$25.00 Amazon cards was offered as an incentive for participation. There were 680 respondents who clicked on the survey, with 611 starting the survey and 433 respondents completing the survey for an overall response rate of 14%. The survey closed to responses on October 27, 2017. This report covers results from completed surveys and does not include an overview of partially completed responses.

Responses were received from faculty in all colleges and schools. Note that law school faculty were not included in this survey process.

All respondents answered questions on discovery and access, research practices, perception of students' research skills, and the role of the library. Respondents were presented randomly with additional modules on library space planning, scholarly communication or market research.

Aggregated results for all questions are available online at [library.missouri.edu/about](http://library.missouri.edu/about).