

ASL Library Student Survey 2000-2001 School Year Report

The Appalachian School of Law Library's student survey ran from September 7 through 22, 2000. Surveys were placed in all student mailboxes. Although several questions were skipped or otherwise not answered on several survey forms, there were no forms that were not counted due to errors or multiple (and inconsistent) answers.

Total: 34 responses

ASL has a student population of 165 students. That means that approximately 21 percent of the school responded to the survey. (Faculty were surveyed independently during the spring of 2000; other staff have not been surveyed.)

1. What is your current status at ASL?

| | | | |
|-----|---|----|-------|
| 1Ls | - | 21 | 61.8% |
| 2Ls | - | 7 | 20.6% |
| 3Ls | - | 6 | 17.6% |

This distribution is almost proportional to the school population. There are 104 1Ls (63% of the student body), 28 2Ls (17% of the student body), and 33 3Ls (20% of the student body).

2. Are the hours that the Library is currently staffed sufficient for your study and research needs?

| | | | |
|-------------|---|----|-------|
| Yes | - | 28 | 84.8% |
| No | - | 5 | 15.2% |
| no response | - | 1 | |

Although many Library staff members have overheard students suggesting longer hours, these tend to occur near a research paper's due date. The survey results show that students, in general, are satisfied with our current hours, which run Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 8 pm; Friday, 8 am to 6 pm; Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm; and Sunday, noon to 8 pm. On Sundays we are closed to the public, but students have 24-hour access to most parts of the building (except offices and Reserve). We have shorter hours during vacations and during the summer.

The comments suggest that alternative times to close would be 9 or 10 pm. Since staffing is a budgetary issue, we will consider expanding hours when our budget

allows us to. The comment regarding Saturday allows us to explain that when our Reference Librarian is hired, he or she will be working on Sunday through Thursday, allowing us to provide Reference services all hours that we are staffed except for Saturdays.

comments:

- "until 9 pm"
- "1/2 day Saturday" [*sic*; perhaps Reference service on Saturday?]
- "Informed staff"
- "Sat & Sun until 9 or 10 pm"
- "10"
- "Until 10 pm"

3. Are the resources (book, microfiche, audiovisual) available in the Library sufficient for your study and research needs?

| | | |
|-------------|------|-------|
| Yes | - 30 | 90.9% |
| No | - 3 | 9.1% |
| no response | - 1 | |

We are quite pleased that so many students feel that the Library has sufficient resources. Most of the comments are requests for duplicate copies. It should be noted that many of the Legal Process (the ASL equivalent of Legal Research and Writing) students were given the same assignment, which caused a number of shortage problems with certain books.

If "research law books" means "books on legal research," then students have not used the online catalog (or asked) to find out that many legal research books are on Reserve. We also have a second copy of the Virginia Code on Reserve.

comments:

- "more copies of VA, WV books"
- "duplicates on the books used a lot; e.g., CJS & Am Jur"
- "[e]xtra copies would be nice, but I know that's not possible"
- "for now, based on research needed for process; don't know about what need in future"
- "extra research law books needed"
- "we could use more than 1 copy of the Virginia Code"

4. What electronic resources available to ASL have you used?

| | | |
|------------------------|---|----|
| CALI | - | 12 |
| CCH Networks | - | 1 |
| Congressional Universe | - | 0 |
| History Universe | - | 0 |
| LegalTrac/InfoTrac | - | 14 |
| LEXIS | - | 13 |
| LOISLaw | - | 1 |
| State Capital Universe | - | 0 |
| Statistical Universe | - | 0 |
| Westlaw | - | 16 |
| no choices selected | - | 11 |

These results reflect what was guessed about electronic resources: the ones that are taught (LegalTrac, LEXIS, and Westlaw) and promoted (CALI) are heavily-used. It should also be pointed out that 1L students do not have access to Westlaw and LEXIS during their first semester of law school, which is when we took this survey.

5. On average, how often do you access the ASL Library web site?

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----|-------|
| Never/Almost Never | - | 12 | 35.3% |
| Once or twice a week | - | 14 | 41.2% |
| Three or four times a week- | | 2 | 5.9% |
| Five or more times a week | - | 6 | 17.6% |

Much of the information on the ASL Library web site is "static," thus not requiring frequent visits during the week. We promote the web site as a gateway to electronic resources, such as Westlaw and LEXIS. During the past two years, when the then-Reference Librarian taught electronic legal research, he walked through many of the links that are available on the web site. Since this segment has not yet been reached in Legal Process, it is likely that the site will see more visitors on a regular basis once electronic resources is taught.

comment:

- "more when the printers are working"

6. Do you feel that the overall design of the ASL Library web site allows for easy navigation to the various pages and links within the site?

| | | | |
|-------------|---|----|-------|
| Yes | - | 23 | 95.8% |
| No | - | 1 | 4.2% |
| no response | - | 10 | |

Apparently, if students go to the web site, they can find what they are looking for. Most of the "no response" answers directly corresponded to those students who wrote that they never viewed the ASL Library web site.

comments:

- "haven't used enough yet"
- "Don't know. Will try the site"
- "increase speed"

7. Please rate the following Library services.

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion | No Response |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| Circulation/Reserve | 11 | 19 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Interlibrary Loan (ILL) | 7 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 15 | 1 |
| Reference Services | 13 | 15 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Library publications | 14 | 14 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Library orientation tour | 10 | 16 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 |

We are quite pleased with the responses. Our services are predominantly given high marks. We believe that we are student-oriented and try to provide our students with the information they need to study or do research.

In response to the comments: We do have a map of the Library, which was passed out during the orientation tours; there is also a copy in the Student User Guide, which is distributed to all students and is also available on the Library web site. We will pass along the comments about having more time during Orientation for tours and perhaps a more detailed explanation of our services and our collection.

Chris King was promoted from Reference Librarian to Public Services Librarian in the summer of 2000. He still provides reference services, and will do so even when the Reference Librarian is hired.

comments:

- [next to Library orientation tour line] "Needs more in depth AND a map"
- "For those of us without experience an hr a day for a week during Orientation, being led through a sample research exercise"
- "Make computer guy available so that I can get whatever # will allow me to print my 250 pages"
- "Do we have reference services - since Chris is not the reference librarian now?"
- "I've never used ILL or had a tour."
- "Everyone I have delt [*sic*] with has been extra nice."
- ["Library orientation tour" circled with an arrow next to:] "I would suggest having a more in-depth introduction to materials during orientation"

8. Do you feel that further guidance in using the Library and its resources would help you?

| | | |
|-------------|---|----|
| No | - | 9 |
| Yes | - | 23 |
| no response | - | 2 |

Of the "yes" responses:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----|
| more handouts/research guides | - | 10 |
| appointments with librarians | - | 4 |
| Library workshops/"brown bag" lunches | - | 17 |
| other | - | 2 |

These answers surprised us to some extent. We are slowly increasing the number of research guides and handouts. However, when we have offered workshops or other training sessions in the past -- including three classes for Library Week 2000 and five classes the year before -- only two students have attended. As soon as our staffing needs are met (i.e., the hiring of the Reference Librarian), we would like to offer more Library workshops in conjunction with vendor training (for products such as CCH Networks).

comments:

- "For those of us without experience an hr a day for a week during Orientation, being led through a sample research exercise" [actual comment: "see #7 note"]

9. Please rate the Library's physical condition in these areas.

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion | No Response |
|--------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| Carrels | 23 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Tables | 24 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Soft Seating | 22 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Study Rooms | 24 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Temperature | 17 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Lighting | 20 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| TV/VCRs | 17 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 5 |
| Noise | 14 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| Computers | 7 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 4 |

Again, we are pleased with the very high ratings that the students have given to us. Most of the comments were about the temperature, which does vary from hot to cold, sometimes within the same day. We are trying to lock the thermostats, which are currently accessible to all patrons -- and several of them turn the thermostat to a temperature which pleases them, not necessarily others. The item with the most negative responses was the computer/printer workstations, which tend to be quite ornery. The Library staff is not well-equipped to solve computer or printer problems, and when we tell the students to see Brian, the Computer Administrator, we often receive remarks suggesting that he is extremely hard-to-find.

comments:

- [near "good" computers mark] "When working"
- "need more library computers"
- "keyboards w/ letters worn off"
- [near "good" noise levels mark] "Generally quiet but sometimes people get loud during regular library hours"
- "The software is outdated and the printers work randomly."
- "A break room for students would be helpful in that one wouldn't have to leave just to eat."
- [near "fair" temperature mark] "Varies usually too cold upstairs but it keeps me awake"
- "It's always too hot or too cold."
- "Need more computer/printer stations"
- "I feel that the library is wonderful as are those who work there"
- "The arms of the chairs are such that you can not pull them very close to the tables. This does not make [sic]"
- "Printing difficulties this semester have not been nice"

10. Please make any comments or suggestions.

As expected, the comments mostly average out: some people like us, some people don't, but overall, we feel that the students appreciate the services that we provide.

A note about several comments: We check all student IDs every night when the staff leaves, even if the student is well-known to our staff. This prevents any charges of favoritism or discrimination. We even dedicated a story in the *ASL Library News* to this issue (see the September 2000 issue on the ASL Library web site).

We also hired a new employee around the time classes were starting. Obviously, she knew little more than the students about where to find certain materials. However, we believe that she now knows the Library as well as any other member of our Library staff. She also was the one who fixed the clock next to the Reference Area, which had its battery die.

- "The ID thing at night is getting a little old; they know your first name but still have to see that stupid ID. And the staff seems VERY UNFRIENDLY this year!!!"
- "Love our library staff!!"
- "You folks are doing an outstanding job"
- "The staff working there w/Circulation/Reserve seems to have no knowledge where a book can be located. They should be able to show us the general area of where we may find Am Jur, CJS, or a treatise on a Certain Topic. (Exception - Chris King is Great.)"
- "Duplicates on most used materials like CJS and Am Jur, as well as things like citation manuals and such. An official Kentucky Reporter is needed and it would be more efficient if the Regional Reporters for Ky were by the Ky Digests and Statutes." [Also written on the top of the page: "Please fix clock next to Reference Materials."]
- "Perhaps post signs reminding other students that libraries are generally meant to be quiet areas -- that socializing can be done outside -- some people just do not get it" [from front page: "It may be helpful to distribute this survey later on in the semester once 1Ls have had more exposure to everything and may have a better understanding of their needs"]
- "Need to implement workshop on where to find the major sections we will be working on, specifically 1Ls, which don't know their way around"