

ASL Library Student Survey

The biennial ASL Library student survey ran from March 21 through April 7, 2006. Although thirty-two (32) responses were returned, one was clearly intended as parody, so only thirty-one (31) responses were analyzed, which is approximately 9% of the student population of 356. Not all respondents answered every question. Most of the comments received have been typed exactly as we were able to read them, and can be found in Question 10.

1. What is your current status at ASL?

1L: 13 out of 137 (9%)
 2L: 12 out of 107 (11%)
 3L: 6 out of 112 (5%)

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

Yes: 27 (87%)
 No: 4 (13%)

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

Yes: 29 (94%)
 No: 2 (6%)

4. What electronic resources available to ASL have you used? (Check all that apply.)

BNA All	0	LexisNexis	31
CALI	17	LN Congressional	2
CCH Networks	0	LN Prim. Sources/History	4
Environmental Law Reporter	1	LN State Capital	2
FirstSearch	2	LLMC-Digital	0
HeinOnline	4	Loislaw	1
Internships USA	2	Versuslaw	2
LegalTrac	14	Westlaw	31

These numbers are similar to past results. We tend to promote CALI, Lexis, and Westlaw, but not many of our other resources. We hope to do some in-class training with BNA All and the CCH products in the near future.

5. Please rate the following Library services.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Circulation/Reserve	11	14	4	0	2
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	9	2	2	0	18
Reference Services	8	11	3	1	8
Library publications	8	11	1	0	11

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

(No answer: 1)

No: 17 (55%)

Yes: 13 (42%)

- More handouts/research guides: 5
- Appointments with librarians: 4
- Library workshops/"brown bag lunches": 11
- Other: 3

"Lexis/Westlaw practice beyond certification ... attaining efficiency and thorough knowledge of Lexis/Westlaw"

"More outlines/'Crunch Time' or Legal Lines on reserve"

"Small research groups with librarians"

We usually compare the number of people asking for more Library workshops with Question 7. Of the eleven people asking for more training, only 4 of them had not attended any "Get REAL!" training sessions.

7. Have you attended any of the Library's "Get REAL!" training classes?

No: 22 (71%)

Yes: 9 (29%)

- attended one: 3
- two: 3
- three or more: 1
- did not answer: 2

How were the class(es)?

- Very Good: 4
- Fair: 5
- Poor: 0
- Other: 0

8. Are there any topics that you would like to see as a "Get REAL!" class?

"Not really."

"No, you cover it fairly well on topics the content needs work"

"What are they?"

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

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Carrels	9	14	5	2	1
Tables	9	16	5	1	0
Chairs/Couches	8	14	7	2	0
Study rooms	8	10	5	1	2
Temperature	4	13	7	7	0
Lighting	5	19	4	2	0
TV/VCRs or TV/DVDs	6	10	3	1	11
Noise levels	4	6	8	13	0

10. Please make any comments or suggestions that you have that will help us improve the services, resources, and facilities at the ASL Library. You may attach extra pages, if necessary.

SHHHHH! Apparently, we weren't the only ones who thought the noise levels have been increasing over the past year. The noise in the Library was the top complaint among our respondents.

Another recurring issue has been the leaky roof and skylight (our favorite question: "Is there anyone in Grundy that can fix a leaking roof?"). We are still in negotiations to have that fixed. [Interestingly, as we finish writing this, several men are on the roof looking at the problem!]

The other major complaint – which, frankly, we expected – was the lack of enforcement of the "don't leave your junk" policy. We had tried to strike a balance between "being inviting" and a strict compliance with the rules. Unfortunately, that didn't work this year. (We were, however, a bit surprised to see only one student thankful that we haven't taken his or her stuff: "If we leave it (books etc ...) ... it is on us!! NOT Your Problem!!") We have a few ideas that we're going to try next semester, but we're open to other suggestions (sadly, increasing the number of carrels or study rooms is not a feasible option).

As a side note, we don't ask questions about computers or Internet connections, since that is handled by the Information Technology department. We'll pass along the several comments about those issues, though.

Here, then, are all of the various comments we received on the student survey. Spelling and punctuation have been kept intact (or it was how we read it, anyway!).

By Question 6: Other classes: "I don't know how to use anything there."

By Question 8 ("Get REAL!s"): "What are they?"

"Yappy 1L's need to shut up. Is there anyone in Grundy that can fix a leaking roof?"

"With the Internet, I don't feel I need all of the reserves or library services. Maybe I'm wrong, but if I actually did learn how to use the library more effectively I would."

"Need more study group areas; computers in library run very slow"

"24 hours would be great. Some of us are late-night studiers, and don't have internet in Grundy."

"Carrels have campers who do not leave."

"enforce carrel policy"

"You said you'd be policing carrels and yet people still 'camp' at them. Follow through on that. People talking is also a problem."

By rating of carrels and tables: "Excellent when internet is working!"

"RIDICULOUSLY LOUD!!!"

"Please extend the hrs till 1 or 2 am. Please."

"I have never been able to study in the library because of the noise levels."

"I know this is difficult b/c I have asked folks to keep it down & have experienced the responses."

"Becky Belcher rocks!!!"

(We think so too. That may be why she's won the "Library Staff of the Year" award for five consecutive years.)

"DVD/TVs should be in every study room. Get rid of VHS/TVs."

(We will be putting a DVD/VHS/TV system in every room this upcoming school year. We still have a number of movies that are not yet on DVDs, so we need to keep a few VHS machines.)

"Please fix the roof."

"Having the ref material unavailable for patrons w/o staff assistance is a problem"

(We think this person is referring to RESERVE materials.)

"The carrels are mini offices for a select few and the library is doing nothing about it – Rules were established & ignored. How do I get my own office? The students using the carrels are loud & intrusive keeping others from study. The library is the worst place to study on campus. (The lions den is better!) The computers and printers are horrible and a blimish on the campus as a whole. Suggestion – Washington & Lee gives each student thier own study carrorel."

(Indeed, Washington & Lee has 540 seats for their 387 students. We only have 232 seats at ASL, and sadly, nowhere to put any more.)

"Study 'carrels' have become occupied by certain overnight guests – students are taking up residency. Is there NOT a rule against this?"

"temperature is almost always too cold this time of year"

"noise levels should be enforced – especially during class transition periods."

"FIX THE LEAKS"

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"Working internet connections at all carrels and tables, along with in the study rooms"

"The talking on the bottom floor is outrageous. Conversations will last in loud tones for 20+ minutes. This needs to stop. I have said things, but to no avail."

"The late fees are too high!"

"Most tables have inoperable int. ports!! Some do not have any ports that will work."

"9:00 AM card access on Sat & Sun is too late. 7:00 AM would be better. Thanks."

By Question 2, asking about staffed hours: "Yes – most of the time"

By Question 5, rating Library services: "It is all good."

By rating of "Fair" on Temperature line in Question 9: "unpredictable"

By rating of "Poor" on Noise line in Question 9: "instead of bothering us about IDs when we are studying why not tell the talkers and the staff at lunch to SHUT UP"

" – children (including new babies) should NEVER come in the door"

" – food and drink policy is for a public high school, not an overpriced private law school"

" – If we leave it (books etc...) ... it is on us!! NOT Your Problem!!"

"Extend the hours of the library. Maybe till 2 AM"

"The staff is extremely helpful please don't lose that"

"Please stop people from leaving their study belongings in the carrels when not in use"

"Need more desks"

"Fix leaky ceiling!"

"Many of the study carrels are taken up by students that leave stuff overnight, it is messy and annoying."

"All of the library employees have very nice and helpful, the use of study carrels are my only complaint."

"Publications are a little unprofessional"

By rating of "Poor" on Lighting line in Question 9: "many are out"

"Repair roof"

"Need to lighten up on the collection policy for fines. Way to serious about \$.50. 2 e-mails and a letter in box is too much, make me not want to pay, as other students feel as well."

(Our library system is set up to provide two e-mail notices – one immediately after the fine is incurred, and one sent about a week later – before a printed message gets put in the student's physical mailbox, to formally notify those who claim "I didn't get that e-mail.")

"I wish cubicles were not occupied by absent student's books and papers – Sometimes it is hard to find a place to study!"

"We do not have help in determining career paths, opportunities, and how-to's, I would like to see a careers section and seminars on finding a job, making choices, etc.

'Meaningful seminars' "

(Did you know we had a Career Services office that does this? You can find materials about job interviews and writing resumes in that office, or in our Reference collection. We also have a research guide called "Preparing for Job Interviews" which is available at the Circulation Desk and can also be found on our web page.)

"Sometimes it seem like a party instead of a library"

"We should be open 24/7."
"The roof must be fixed. It's embarrassing."
"Fix the leaks. Open 24 hrs"

"Need more carrels and/or study rooms available"

By rating of "Fair" on Carrels line in Question 9: "not enough"

By rating of "Fair" on Study Rooms line in Question 9: "not enough"

By rating of "Poor" on Temperature line in Question 9: "freezing"

By rating of "Poor" on Noise levels line in Question 9: "unbearable"

"– The computers are a joke. My inner city public elementary school had more reliable computers."

" – The noise levels that are tolerated are absolutely ridiculous. The library should be absolutely silent. A quick whisper is fine, but many students don't know how to whisper. I realize social activities are limited in Grundy, but we should not be allowed to use the library as a social venue. Children & babies should not be in the library under any circumstances! If they get past the circulation desk, the library employees are not doing their jobs. If I'm in the library, I'm studying – I cannot study with toddlers running about. I don't see any reason why a child should need to be in a law library. I think an 18 & over policy is in order."

"Also, there seems to be arbitrary enforcement of policies taking place. I was studying in the library for several hours one day – interrupted by crying babies and rude 1Ls constantly – I got up to use the restroom & when I came back, I was being questioned about a container of sealed fruit visible in my tote bag. I was not eating it & what was I supposed to do with it? I got a ride to school that day & there was nowhere else to put it. I could not believe that a container of sealed fruit could attract more attention to the library staff than nearby 10 1Ls laughing & carrying on for over an hour. If the library is going to arbitrarily enforce policies, it should at least be against the most egregious & disruptive violations."

One person wrote a very lengthy critique of several Library policies. We appreciate the fact that he was willing to sign his name to his comments.

"Reserve is for 2 hours. I guess I am not as smart as most, b/c it takes me much longer to get things read."

"Too many people are loud in the library and you need to warn them, + then kick them out for a week or month. It is disruptive + rude."

"To whom it may concern:

" 1. Reserve Items. I spoke with Mrs. Belcher who advised me of the two hour time limit on reserve materials, after the fact that I got a fine. I think this is ridiculous, it

takes much longer to study anything associated with the law. That might be appropriate at an undergraduate college, but not at a law school. Along with this matter I was charged three dollars for a book that was checked out in the morning and returned that afternoon. I find this to be ridiculous as well."

(Our two-hour reserve policy is consistent with the majority of nearby law schools. This is actually the first time anyone has ever asked us to consider a different checkout period. Also, our policy is to charge fifty cents per hour per overdue reserve item, since these items tend to be heavily used and should be returned quickly.)

"2. Checking of ID's. I think that instead of checking to make sure it is only students in the library after 6:00pm, it might be more efficient to kick those students who are disruptive out of the library, not simply the ones who don't have their id cards. This is a job that needs to be done not by a student aid, but rather by someone such as Mrs. Belcher, Chris King, or even better Professor Condon. These are the people that get respect. They should have the authority to kick disruptive students out of the library, rather than telling them to be quiet. It is embarrassing that I have to wear EAR PLUGS to study in your library. It is also annoying to be interrupted everyday at 6:00pm to check for my id, studying is hard enough without getting interrupted. I don't think that you need to worry about any unauthorized use of the library by non-students, for the most part they are more respectful than the students who are loud and disruptive. (I don't mean regular talking, but rather a few students who are very loud.)"

(We check IDs nightly for several reasons. Of course, it is the simplest way to determine whether a person is a current ASL student or not, and if not the person would be asked to leave. We check everyone's card nightly, since it is our opportunity to warn you that the doors are now locked and you will need your ID to re-enter the Library. We do have different people close the Library – sometimes it is the security guard who does the rounds, sometimes it is a student worker, but most of the time it is one of our full-time Circulation Assistants – and just because one of them knows who you are doesn't necessarily mean that we all do (and although we hate to admit it, we're all getting a bit older and our memories for student names and faces isn't getting any better). And finally, we check everyone's ID card to avoid any appearance of favoritism or discrimination. Most students find it is easiest to leave their ID card on the corner of their carrel or table – so long as we can see it, we won't have to interrupt you. However, since we recognize that there's a bunch of "regulars" in the Library in the evenings, we are interested in finding a satisfactory compromise.)

"3. Please try to fix the leak in the roof."

"4. If I think of any thing else I will be sure to let you know."

"Besides the things I listed, the staff and the library itself are great. The noise is what I really have a problem with and it needs to be addressed immediately."