



## Part 4: College Students' Advice to Libraries

### Be more fun

18-year-old undergraduate from the United States

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

### *Keep up the good job*

27-year-old undergraduate from Australia

### *renovation needed to improve the building to make it more accomodating to study*

21-year-old graduate student from the United States

### *need a bigger work space*

47-year-old graduate student from Canada

### *Train librarians to be more friendly and helpful*

22-year-old graduate student from the United Kingdom

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of phrases and characteristics to determine how they see the library's role in today's society. When prompted, respondents *completely agree* or *agree* that libraries serve many community roles, including a place to learn, a place to read and support literacy, a place for free computer/Internet access and a place to promote childhood learning and development.

Respondents were also asked to rate their library service across six service dimensions ranging from librarian assistance to technology. Less than 25 percent of all respondents, including college students, *completely agree* that libraries meet their needs on any single dimension.

As the wrap-up to the survey, respondents were offered the opportunity to provide—in their own words—one piece of advice to libraries. We received 371 responses from college students.

## 4.1 College Student View: The Library's Role in the Community

***When prompted, college students agree that libraries serve many community roles.***

Respondents were asked to rate the library on 14 attributes that describe potential community roles that a library could provide. Fifty percent or more of college students and total respondents *completely agree* or *agree* that their library provides 12 of the 14 community services surveyed.

College student responses were similar to that of total respondents when asked to respond to the statement the library *is a place to learn*. Eighty-six percent of college students and 85 percent of all respondents *completely agree* or *agree* that the library *is a place to learn*.

Eighty percent or more of all respondents also agree (*completely agree* or *agree*) that the library is a *place to read* and *makes needed information freely available*. These results were similar to those of the college student respondents, with 81 percent agreeing (*completely agree* or *agree*) that the library *is a place to read* and 79 percent agreeing (*completely agree* or *agree*) that the library *makes needed information freely available*.

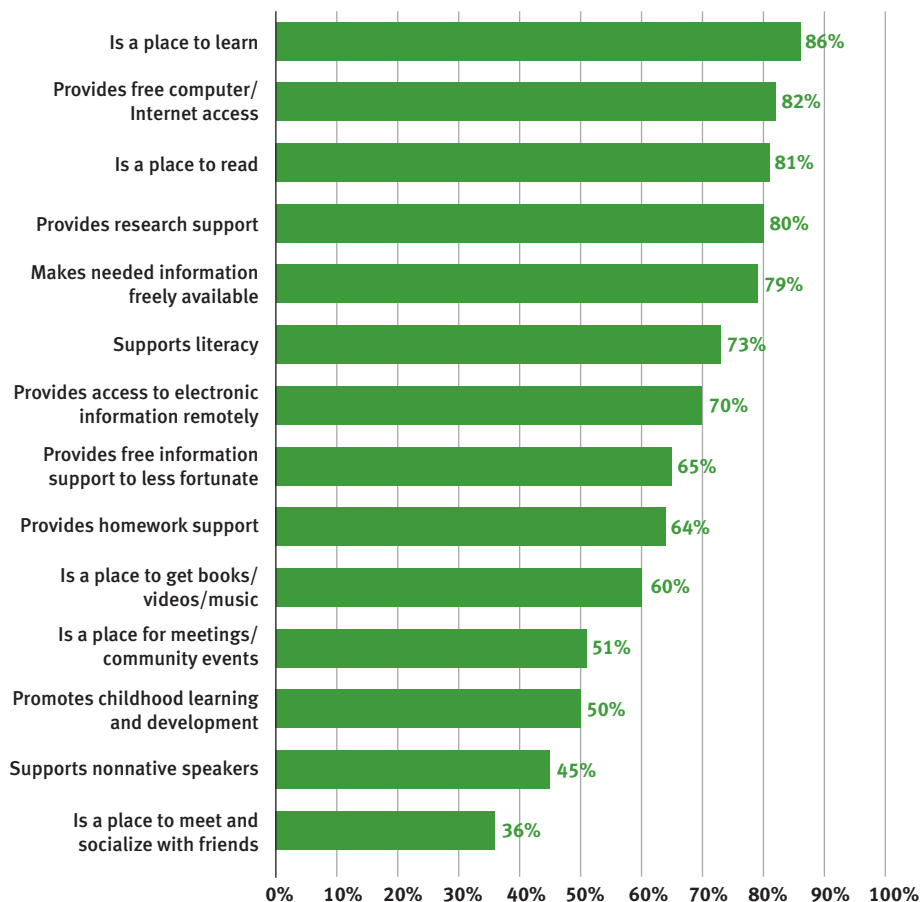
Fifty percent of college students *completely agree* or *agree* that their library *promotes childhood learning and development*, while 73 percent of total respondents *completely agree* or *agree* with that statement.

**86%**  
*of college students at least agree their library is a place to learn.*

## The Library's Role in the Community— by College Students

Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your library's role in the community.

Note: This graph shows the *completely agree* and *agree* responses.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1210.

*to provide services to the community like books and computers and resorses for everyone not just people who can pay for them.*

23-year-old undergraduate from the United States

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 810, "What do you feel is the main purpose of the library?"

## 4.2 Rating Library Services

***Seventy-five percent of college student respondents at least agree that assistance from a librarian is available when needed.***

***Seventy-seven percent at least agree that library technology meets their needs.***

The survey asked respondents to rate their library's performance across six service dimensions ranging from librarian support to content to resource availability. Nearly two-thirds or more of college students *completely agree* or *agree* that all six service dimensions meet their needs.

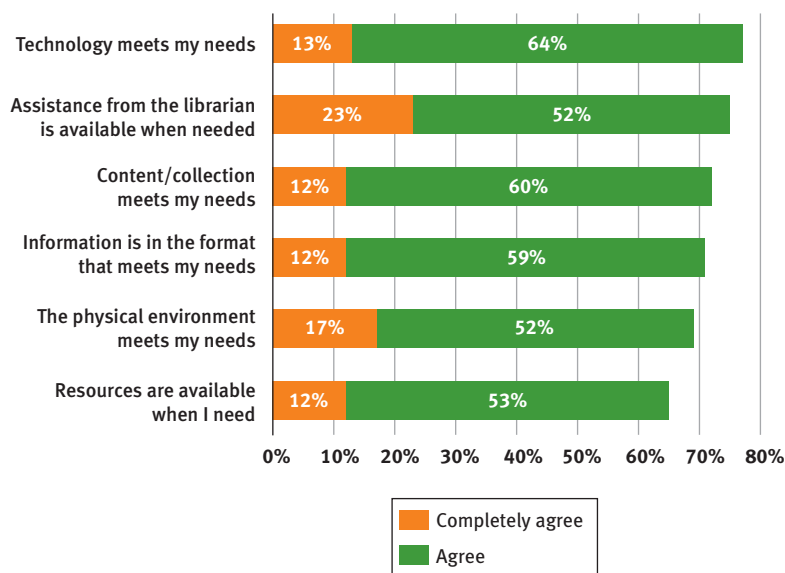
Seventy-five percent of college students and 65 percent of total respondents *completely agree* or *agree* that *assistance from a librarian is available when needed*. Seventy-seven percent of college students and 54 percent of total respondents at least agree that *library technology meets their needs*.

A larger percentage of college students than total respondents agree (*completely agree* or *agree*) that the *content/collection meets their needs*. Seventy-two percent of college students agree that the library's collection meets their needs, while 52 percent of total respondents agree.

### Librarian and Library Services— by College Students

Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your library.

Note: This graph shows the *completely agree* and *agree* responses.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1207.

## 4.3 Advice to Libraries

***College students had opinions on all aspects of library staff, products and services, and facilities.***

### *Listen to patron requests!*

**19-year-old undergraduate from the United States**

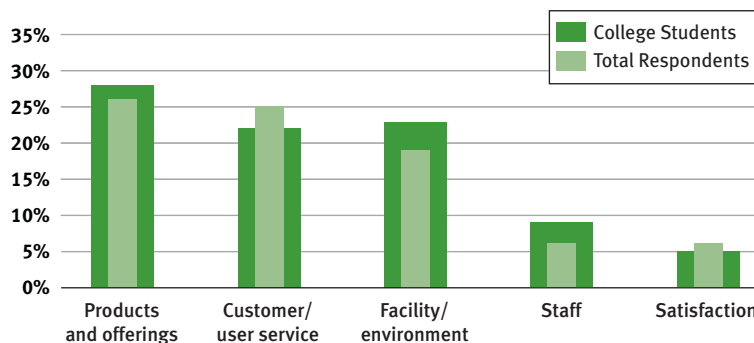
Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

Respondents were invited to offer one piece of advice to libraries as a wrap-up to the survey. Some respondents offered more than one piece of advice and others declined to comment. We received 371 pieces of advice from college students out of over 3,000 overall advice comments. The advice covered a wide range of topics across a wide range of library services. We categorized the advice into the following five themes: products and offerings, customer/user service, facility/environment, staff and satisfaction.

### **Advice for the Library— by College Students and Total Respondents**

If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?

Note: This graph shows the percentage of respondents who offered advice related to the following themes: products and offerings, customer/user service, facility/environment, staff and satisfaction.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240.

### *keep up the good work!*

**18-year-old undergraduate from the United States**

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

## College Students' Advice

*If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?*

Note: All verbatim comments presented as entered by survey respondents, including spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors.

### Products and Offerings

**Add to collection:** 12 percent of college student respondents advised libraries to add material to their collections.

**Update collection:** 7 percent of college student respondents suggested that libraries update their collections with new books, materials, information and other resources.

**Computers:** 7 percent of college student respondents advised that libraries should increase the number of computers or update them.

**Online catalog:** 2 percent of college student respondents suggested improvements to the local library system.

*My public library needs to expand its horizons and add more books that appeal to more people.*

**19-year-old undergraduate from the United States**

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

*classify databases according to faculty. improve the search function of databases. improve signage/layout. extend the size of the room for group meetings (quiet talking and food and drinks allowed)*

19-year-old undergraduate from Australia

*Get more current information and new books in there.*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Increase the amount of new titles. Bring in DVDs etc and videos of academic need.*

29-year-old undergraduate from Canada

*Allow personal wireless cards for use on library network*

44-year-old graduate student from the United States

*Get electronic access to older back issues of academic journals or take them out of the annex and put them back in the stacks.*

27-year-old graduate student from the United States

*Subscribe to more electronic journals*

24-year-old graduate student from Canada

## College Students' Advice (cont.)

*don't direct every-  
one to the card  
catalog....get up  
and help them*

21-year-old undergraduate  
from the United States

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and  
Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005,  
question 1240, "If you could provide one  
piece of advice to your library, what  
would it be?"

### Customer/User Service

**Service:** 14 percent of college student respondents provided advice related to libraries' services.

**Promote:** 2 percent of college student respondents suggested increasing libraries' promotional efforts.

**Access:** 6 percent of college student respondents advised libraries to increase accessibility to the physical library, as well as to electronic resources.

#### *Free copiers*

20-year-old undergraduate from the United States

#### *library website for info and renewing books*

42-year-old undergraduate from the United Kingdom

#### *More borrowing time*

20-year-old undergraduate from Australia

#### *Setting up a physical library at major offices can be good.*

35-year-old graduate student from Singapore

#### *It could be a bit more accessible for independent use by mobility impaired users*

50-year-old graduate student from Australia

#### *Longer opening hours*

29-year-old graduate student from Australia

#### *open up earlier in the morning so that i can use the facility before my morning classes*

21-year-old undergraduate from the United States

#### *To email details of local events happening to readers who may be interested especially in events happening in association with the library.*

51-year-old undergraduate from the United Kingdom

## College Students' Advice (cont.)

### Facility/Environment

23 percent of college student respondents provided advice related to the physical library environment or facility.

*Let us eat and drink in the library..or at least designated study areas instead of no food or drink anywhere*

19-year-old undergraduate from Canada

*Cleaner bathrooms*

18-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*It is always very cold and this makes the environment very unpleasant*

21-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Do something about the bums and transients*

24-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Regulate temperature better for comfort*

35-year-old graduate student from the United States

*Some table lamps would be nice*

23-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*better atmosphere, more tables to do work on...a lot were eliminated when computers were added (computers are nice but more tables are needed for group work)*

22-year-old graduate student from the United States

*Arrange seating so students can NOT sit in clusters and socialize.*

*Library is for studying, not socializing*

44-year-old graduate student from Canada

*Update the look a little bit so it's easier to find things other than the tape on the floor*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Change the fluro lighting. It's a health hazard*

29-year-old undergraduate from Australia

*Get a snack bar*

21-year-old graduate student from Canada

*Get more comfortable chairs, tables, and meeting spaces so people actually want to go there*

18-year-old undergraduate from the United States

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

## College Students' Advice (cont.)

### Staff

9 percent of college student respondents provided advice regarding library staff.

*Hire people who really want to be there and will be friendly and readily available to help students who ask for help.*

29-year-old undergraduate from Canada

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

*Be friendly and helpful to students*

23-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Friendlier librarians and assistants*

20-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*More staff would be helpful*

57-year-old graduate student from Canada

*Hire a nicer staff*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Be much more student friendly*

23-year-old undergraduate from Australia

*friendlier staff*

22-year-old graduate student from the United States

*More librarians who aren't snotty*

20-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Train librarians to be more friendly and helpful*

22-year-old graduate student from the United Kingdom

## College Students' Advice (cont.)

### Satisfaction

5 percent of college student respondents indicated they were satisfied with the library and the services offered.

*Continue to support education and literacy among the community*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Great job! Need more computers, though*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*good work*

19-year-old undergraduate from Australia

*I can't think of anything, the library is great*

32-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*It is a very friendly place*

21-year-old undergraduate from Canada

*Keep it alive!*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*Nothing. I think that my college library is very well kept. They have the latest information and technology and they have very helpful staff on hand.*

19-year-old undergraduate from the United States

*None. It is a good library*

43-year-old graduate student from the United States

*Keep keeping up! You are an invaluable resource/facility in the community. Without you, many people's opportunity/desire to learn & develop would be greatly diminished (think Billy Connelly & Michael Caine's love of libraries)*

26-year-old undergraduate from Australia