

**TREXLER LIBRARY STUDENT SURVEY – 2005
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Trexler Library is committed to delivering the highest possible level of collections and services to the entire Muhlenberg College community. Assessments such as this survey are critical to assuring that the library is meeting users' needs. The student survey was designed to help us understand how students currently use the library, their opinion of the library and its services, and changes they would like to see in the future.

In the Trexler Library Student Survey, the profile of the respondent pool correlated well with the student population. Responses revealed that students feel they receive a high level of service from the library and, overall, are satisfied with the library and its resources. The findings also identified areas for improvement and exposed student priorities.

The library as a place:

- Students use the library primarily for individual and group study, secondarily to do research and thirdly, for the computer labs.
- Two-thirds of the students visit the library one or more times per week and only 4% “never / rarely” visit the library.
- The library website receives fewer reported visits but still has significant use. Almost half of the respondents visit the library website one or more times per week, although 9% never or rarely do so.

The library's resources:

- Three-quarters of the students rate the quality of collections as “excellent” or “very good.”
- Online databases have the highest rate of use, with 29% of students accessing them one or more times per week. By contrast, 19% use print journals & periodicals with the same frequency, and 10% check out books at that rate.
- Trexler has only one collection, videos, that students cannot browse on open shelves, which may explain why 54% of the students never or rarely check out videos.
- By far, students lodged the most complaints against malfunctioning equipment.

The library's services:

- Trexler Library staff treats the students well; students awarded staff nearly a 100% satisfaction rating.
- In particular, reference librarian assistance rates high: 80% rate service as “excellent” or “very good,” and help was available when needed.
- The library staff reaches the majority of students with library instruction. 84% of students have had at least one instruction session. However, students did not find the sessions to be consistently valuable, and the staff will work to improve content.
- 61% report that they never or rarely use interlibrary loan, although the underlying cause for non-use and whether non-use affects student performance bears further investigation.

Future enhancements:

- Students would like more convenience in their services and collection access: 85%-95% would like online access to course reserves, online renewals, the ability to use flex accounts on copiers, internet access from study carrels (before wireless was available in the library), and more online periodical databases.
- 54% “strongly agree” that they would like more full text online journals and 43% “strongly agree” that they would like more print journals.

Not only the resources, but also a quiet atmosphere, pleasant ambience, and friendly faces draw students into Trexler Library. Students mind it when the calm is broken. They do not want the stress of meeting academic obligations to be bogged down by excess noise, malfunctioning equipment, or seemingly unsuitable information sessions. Although generally quite satisfied with the library, students would like to see the status quo at the library match the world to which they are accustomed: readily available reference resources, online self-service account options, and coffee or snacks nearby.

The Trexler Library staff thanks everyone who participated in this survey. After carefully reviewing the results, the library’s Assessment Committee compiled a full report with recommended actions. The full report along with the original survey and results can be found online at: <http://www.muhlenberg.edu/library/about/assessment/> .