

AUM Library Annual Report 2005 – 2006

Submitted by Rickey Best

This has been a busy and productive year for the Library and its staff members. Among our major accomplishments was the beginning of a weeding project covering the entire collection. The project was begun when it was determined that given our rate of acquisition for books, the library would completely run out of shelf space in the tower by the end of the calendar year. To date, weeding has been completed on floors 5 and 6, and is nearly completed on floor 4. Over 32,000 volumes have been weeded from the collection.

A second accomplishment was the completion of the LibQual+ Survey measuring user satisfaction with library services. Overall, the library saw improvement in user satisfaction with library services. In areas relating to the library instruction program, the scores indicated that the services provided to the library exceeded our user expectations. In the other areas of the survey, reflecting on the library as place, the affect of service, and the control of information, the library scores reflecting the perceived level of service provided by our users increased over our 2003 scores as indicated in table 1 below.

Table 1
LibQual+ Comparisons by Questions 2003 and 2006

Question	Perceived Level of Service
Employees Instill Confidence in Users	
2003	6.49
2006	6.83
	+ .34
Readiness to Respond to Questions	
2003	7.32
2006	7.60
	+ .28
Willingness to Help Users	
2003	7.30
2006	7.64
	+ .34
Dependability in Handling Users Service Problems	
2003	7.32

2006	7.53
	+23
Employees Who Are Consistently Courteous	
2003	7.28
2006	7.48
	+20
Employees Who deal with Users in a Caring Fashion	
2003	6.98
2006	7.46
	+48
Employees Who understand user needs	
2003	7.15
2006	7.39
	+24
Quiet Place for Individual Activities	
2003	7.56
2006	7.70
	+14
Printed library materials needed	
2003	6.97
2006	7.18
	+21
Print Or E-Journals Needed	
2003	6.84
2006	7.30
	+46
Easy to Use Access Tools	
2003	6.92
2006	7.42
	+50
Information is easily accessible for independent use	
2003	7.26
2006	7.60
	+34

Electronic Information Resources I Need	
2003	7.19
2006	7.60
	+ .41
Library Website Enables me to find information on my own	
2003	7.46
2006	7.63
	+ .17
E-Resources Available from Home	
2003	7.24
2006	7.67
	+ .43
Overall Comparison	
2003	7.16
2006	7.44
	+ .28

The library has also played an important role in providing service to the state through its status as a Regional Depository of the Federal Government. In December of 2005, the Library hosted a workshop with a representative from the U.S. Government Printing Office and demonstrated the new online search tool for users to locate federal documents.

The library has also accumulated a full year of statistics on use of the library web-page. The AUM Library website had 2,558,651 hits during the year (June 2005-May 31, 2006), averaging 7,010 hits per day. Some 243,991 visitors came to the library website. The web logs recorded users coming to the site from locations in Sweden, China, Japan, and Korea among others.

Usage of the library's electronic resources has continued to grow. In this year, the number of searches in all of the library's databases increased to 390,641. This is an 85% increase in the number of searches conducted over the previous year. In spite of the increase in search activity, the amount of full-text articles retrieved decreased by 30%.

One project which has facilitated the research of the users has been the loading of a product called *Article Linker*. This software provides for openURL linking between databases, regardless of vendor. As an example, a student searching in an Ebsco database and locating a citation to an article could click on the link to the article which might be in a journal with full-text provided by a ProQuest database. The end result has been to make searching more efficient for the user.

Finally, the library received good news this year with the granting of tenure to Lucy Farrow, our Documents Librarian, and Tim Bailey, our Systems Librarian. Their hard work and dedication to the library patrons has benefited us all.

The following section will detail highlights from the various areas within the library.

Public Services

Reference – The reference area reported a 9% decrease in the number of reference transactions this year, along with a .79% decrease in use of the computer lab. However, the e-mail reference service provided by the library saw an increase of 1.9% over the preceding year. These numbers indicate the growing importance of the web and electronic access to our students.

Interlibrary Loan - This year saw a significant decrease in the number of borrowing requests submitted by our faculty and students (-16.4%). However, the library still remains an important contributor statewide in loaning materials. The increase in loans was 1%. The majority of ILL usage was made by AUM faculty and graduate students.

The library also made an investment of computer equipment which will allow the scanning and making available electronically resources needed by faculty and staff. The library remains cognizant of copyright restrictions, however, and steps are in place to ensure that any scanning of materials complies with copyright law.

Instruction – The instruction program of the library received high marks in the recent LibQual+ survey, as indicated earlier. Barbara Hightower's work with the faculty and students has resulted in an increase in the number of instruction sessions offered (+2%). However, declining enrollment has seen a 5% decrease in the number of students in those instructional sessions.

Circulation – The circulation data provides some unique and interesting information. Overall, circulation usage by AUM faculty, staff, and students showed a 5% increase over the previous year. Usage by the Auburn faculty of the AUM Library increased by 393%. Other user categories, such as use by the local K-12 students, the community users, AU students, and the students of the Montgomery Higher Education Consortia, all declined to such an extent that overall circulation by the AUM Library was down by 12.5%.

Government Documents – The staff in this area continues to provide service to the library's collection of federal documents and legal materials, as well as also in coordinating the activities of the other federal documents depository libraries in the southern half of the state.

While the physical usage of the documents and legal collections declined this year, the number of materials within the collections that access is provided to electronically has increased from the previous year. For example, the proportion of documents in electronic format distributed by the Government Printing office in the depository library program decreased by 6% from 2004-2005, yet the number of publications that are available electronically increased by 4%. While not all of the electronic publications are available on the web, an increasing number are.

Technical Services

The Technical Services area of the library consists of book and serials acquisitions, and cataloging. A number of changes have taken place in this area as well this year.

Acquisitions – The unit has been short-staffed for the last two months because of the resignation of a staff member in book acquisitions to take another job in the library. Never the less, the library saw an increase in the number of new titles ordered this year by 11%.

Cataloging – This unit has also been short-staffed with the resignation of Johnna Childs as the cataloging librarian. Ms. Childs left in May and the Head of Technical Services has been involved in conducting the search for Childs' replacement.

In spite of the shortfall, the staff in technical services has kept up with the pressure of new titles coming in and old titles being weeded. There is no significant backlog of materials waiting cataloging.

Automation

Tim Bailey, the Systems Librarian, was actively involved in upgrading software necessary for our patrons to have off-campus access. In addition to this, he worked to implement the *ArticleLinker* software mentioned above. Tim has also been working with the Computer Center staff planning for the replacement of the current SSN# based system to a unique system. The anticipated timeline for this change is Fall semester of 2006.

Daryl Woods, the library webmaster, has also been busy during the year conducting user group sessions with students and planning for a re-design of the library web-page into a cleaner, more user friendly style.

Goals for 2006-2007

First, we hope to complete the weeding of the book collection and make decisions on the weeding of the library's serials collections.

Second, we hope to be able to conduct a reconversion project and have the library's holdings reloaded into the server at Auburn. This project will also involve the loading of tables of contents for the titles we hold. This will increase access for the end user in searching.

Third, we hope to complete the search process and hire a cataloging librarian.

Finally, we will investigate and determine the most effective ways in which the library can support the University's Quality Enhancement Plan (Writing across the Curriculum.)