

Judge Kathryn J. DuFour Law Library

**Student Survey
Spring 2010**

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Columbus School of Law**



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In February 2010, the DuFour Law Library conducted a survey to determine how the law students perceive library services and facilities. Thirty one percent of the law school student population completed the survey.

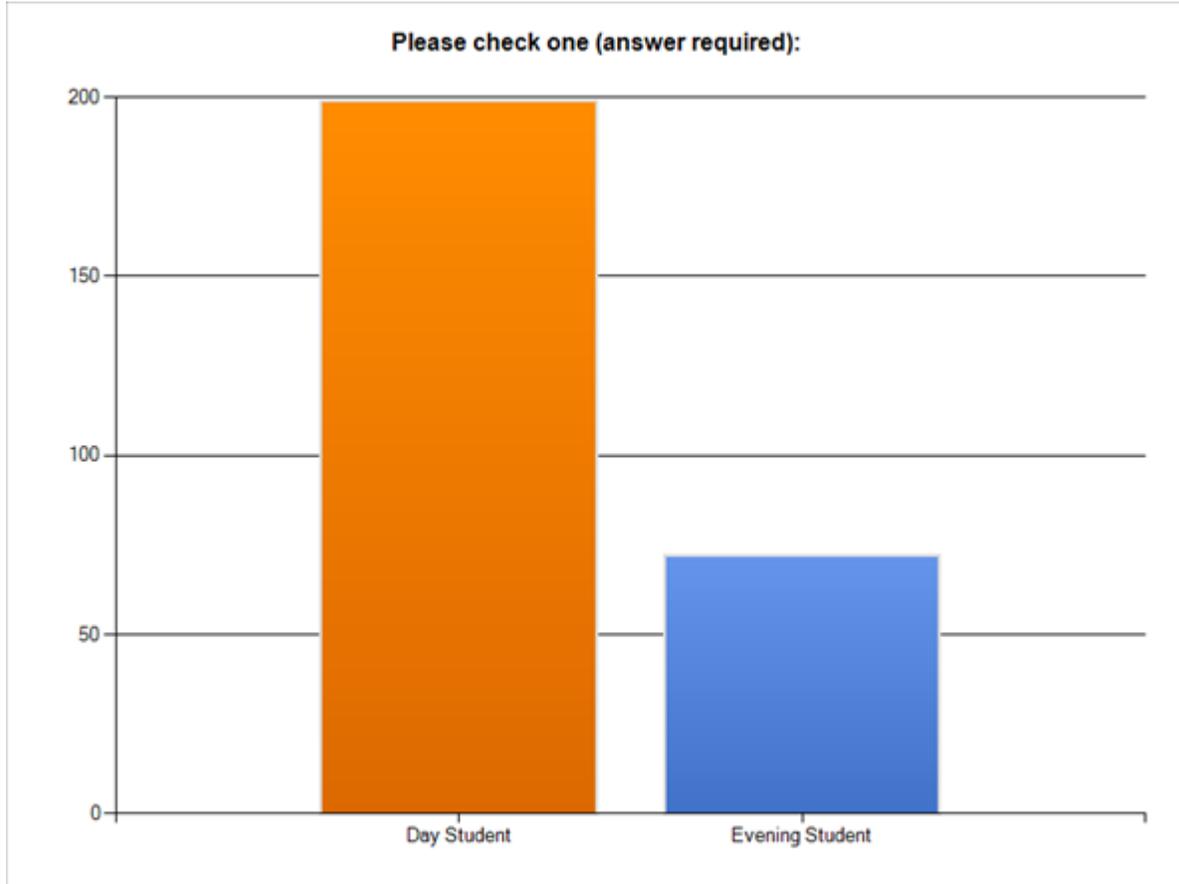
The survey measured three general areas:

1. Library service
2. Library collection and web page
3. Library facilities

Overall we are pleased to report that in almost all categories the students rated library services either excellent or very good. The library's print and online collections together with the Library webpage also received high ratings. Regarding the library collection and webpage, comments indicate that the library needs to improve promotion of available resources. The majority of students rated the library facilities as comfortable and conducive to studying; however, the issues of temperature (too cold) and the need for comfortable seating surfaced in the respondents' comments. In addition, a number of respondents requested more printers.

The survey was illuminating in showing the library how it is perceived by our student patrons, and provides a roadmap for future improvements and strategic planning.

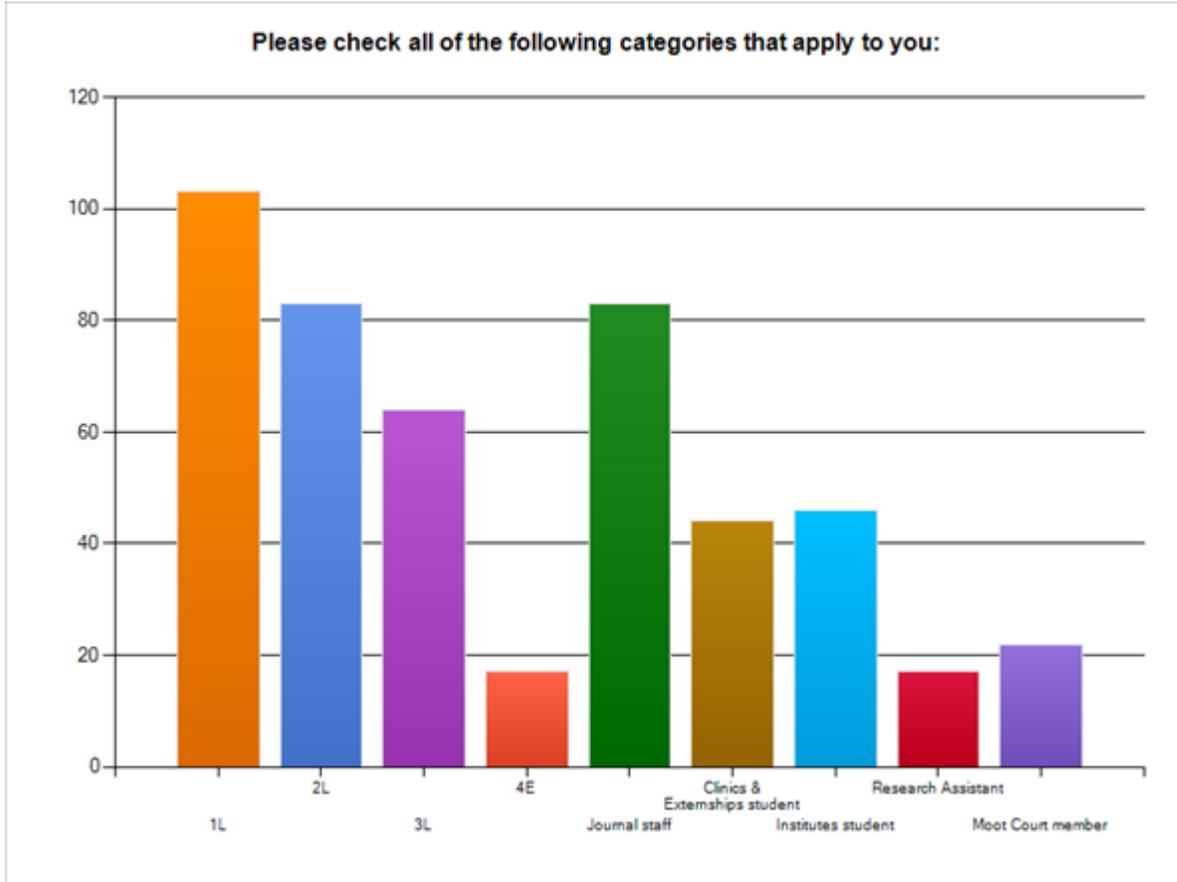
Question 1



Analysis:

This was a simple demographic question, which enabled us to determine the percentage of day student respondents and evening student respondents. A total of 271 students took the survey, an impressive 31% of the total law school population. We had a 34% response rate from day students and a 23% response rate from evening students. The 2008 survey saw a similar percentage of the total law school population take the survey; in 2008 we garnered a 30% response rate.

Question 2

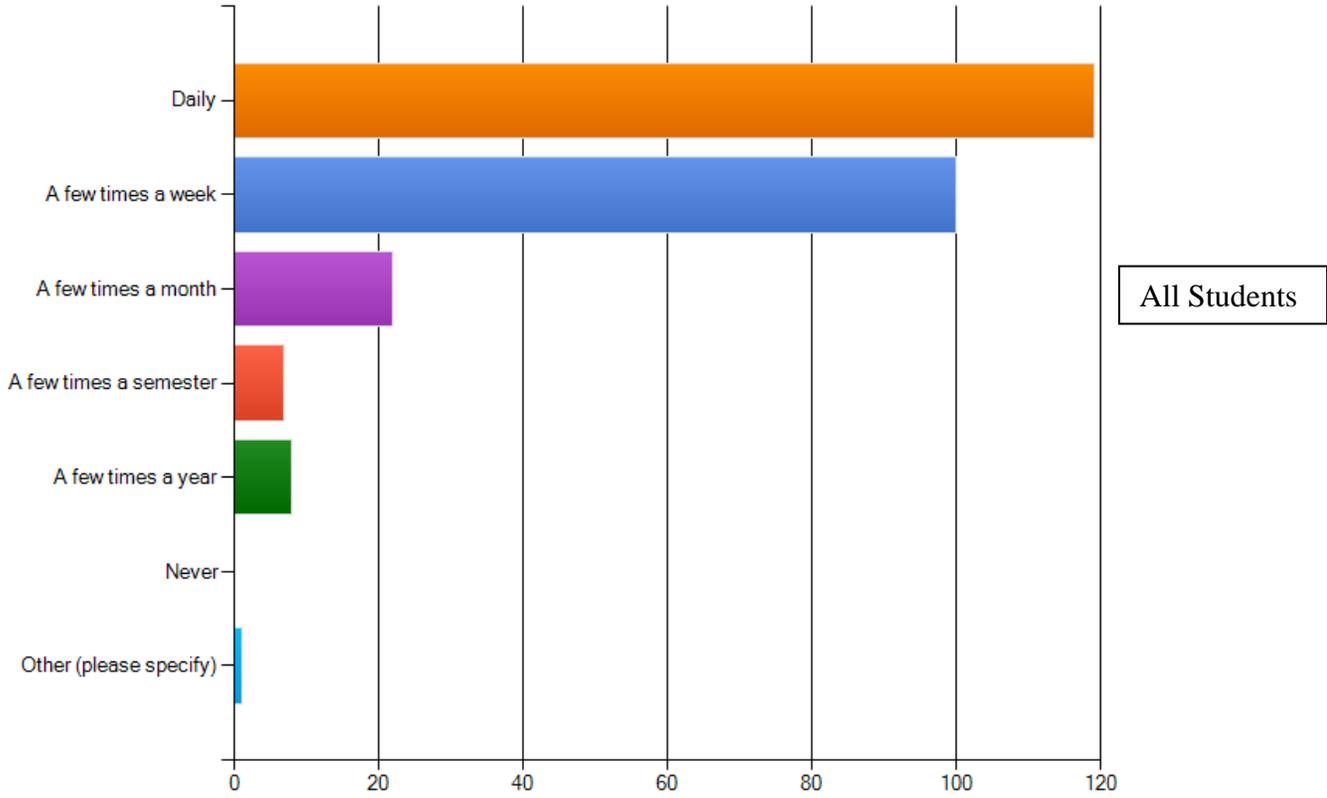


Analysis:

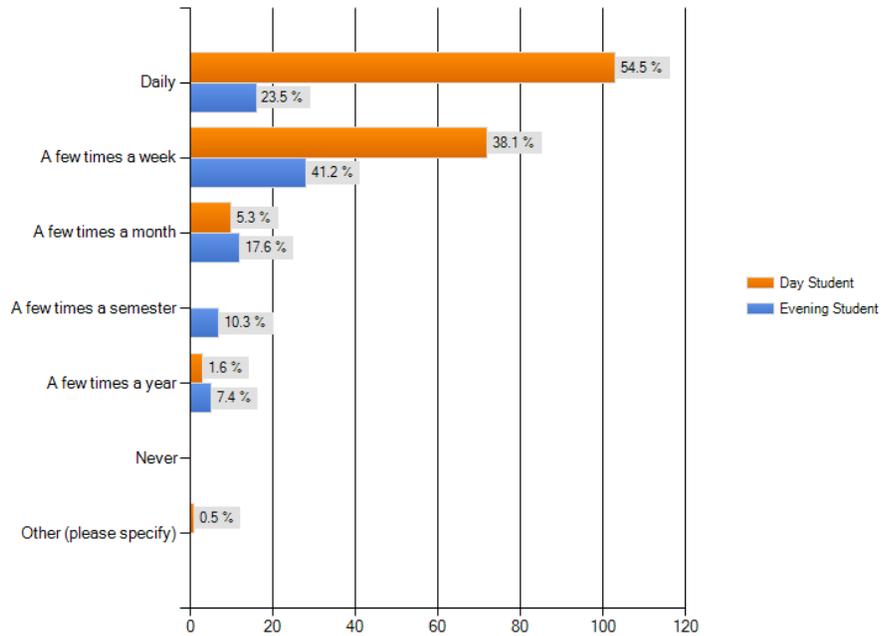
The most responses, 38.3%, came from students who identified themselves as 1st year law students followed by 30.9% of 2nd year law students and journal students. Only 6.3% of students identified themselves as 4th year evening students.

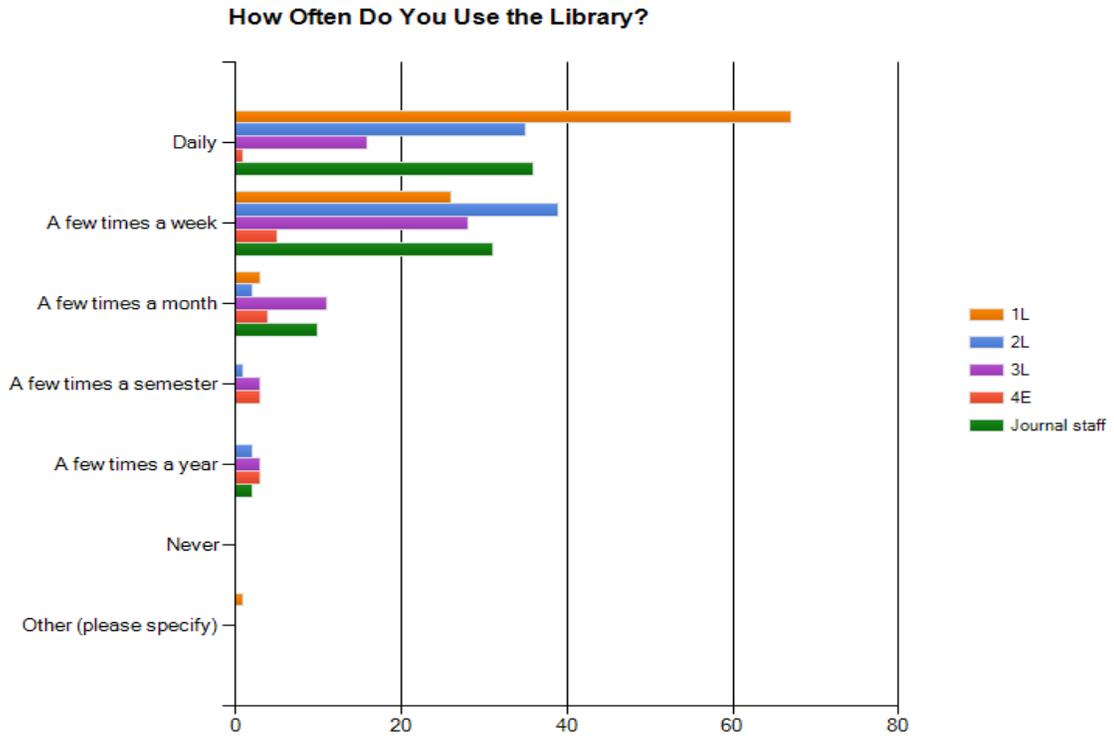
Question 3

How Often Do You Use the Library?



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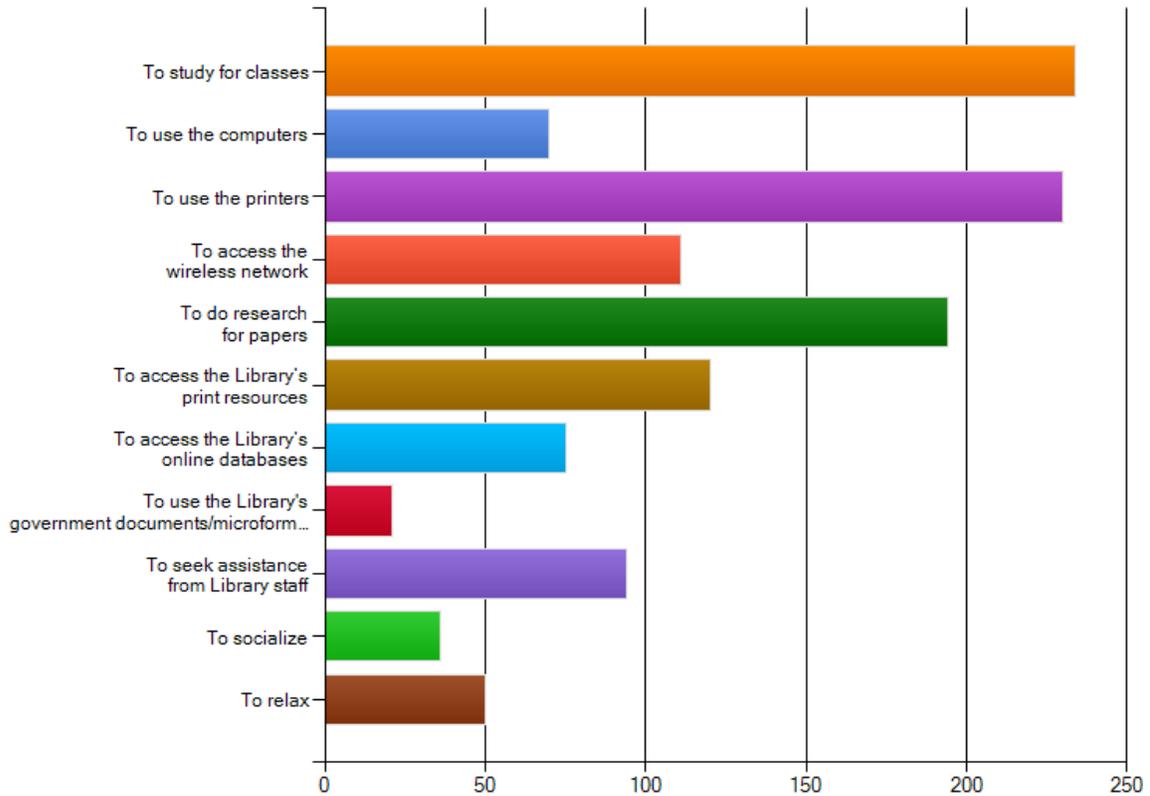


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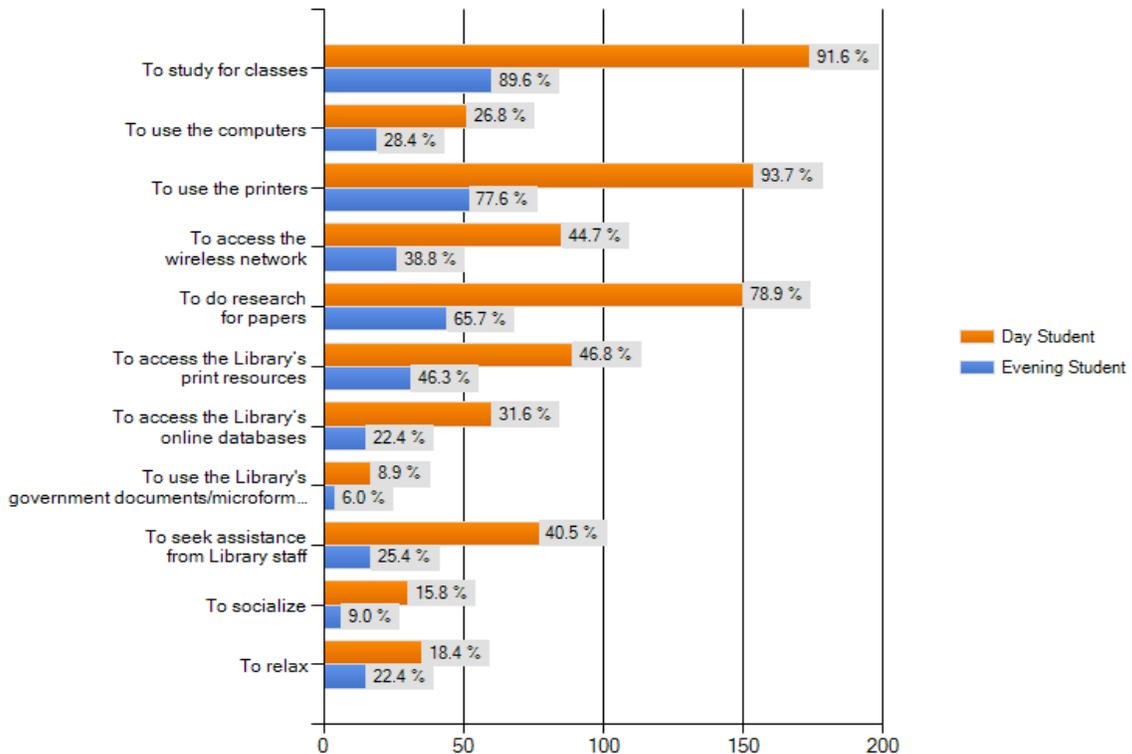
The library continues to play an integral part in our students’ academic lives, with 85.2% of respondents using the library daily or a few times a week. Usage has remained steady since 2008, when 85.2% of respondents also reported using the library daily or a few times a week. Not surprisingly, our biggest users are 1Ls, 2Ls, and journal students.

Question 4

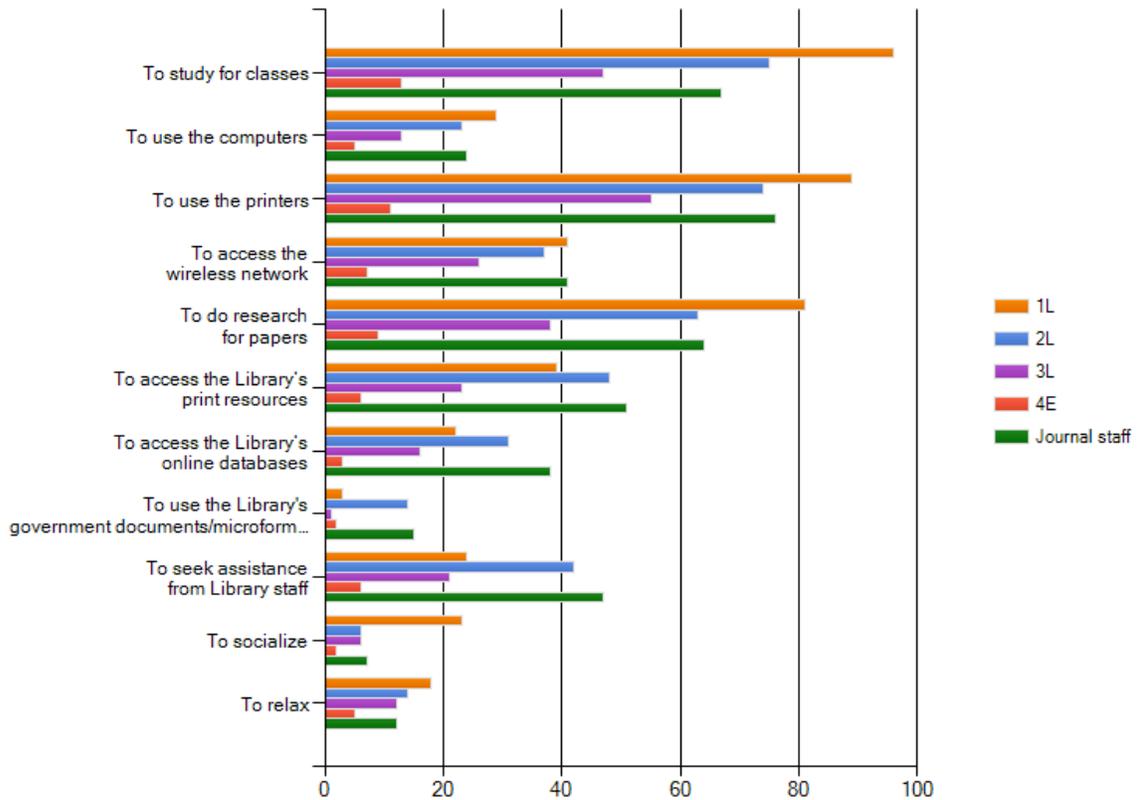
Why do you use the Library? (check all that apply)



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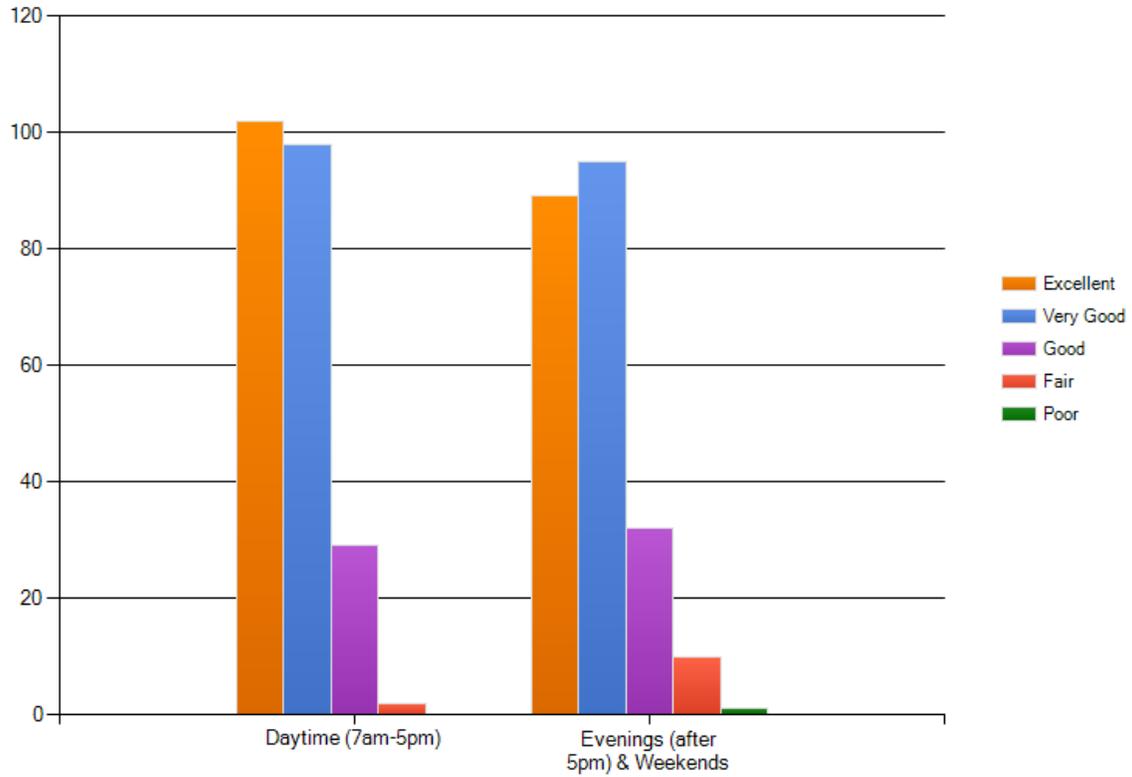


Analysis:

As in 2008, the top three uses of the library are to study for classes, to use the printers, and to do research for papers. Overall, printer use and use of online databases was down from 2008, while all other areas remained steady or increased. While 1Ls are the biggest users in terms of researching for papers (83%), only 24% report seeking assistance from library staff. Journal staff and 2Ls, also high users in terms of research, do seek assistance from staff, at 59% and 53% respectively. More evening students than day students use the library to relax (22.4% as compared to 18.4%). In the comment section of this question students listed the availability of study rooms as another reason to use the library.

Question 5

Please rate the level of service provided by the Circulation Staff (e.g. checking-out books, course reserves, etc).

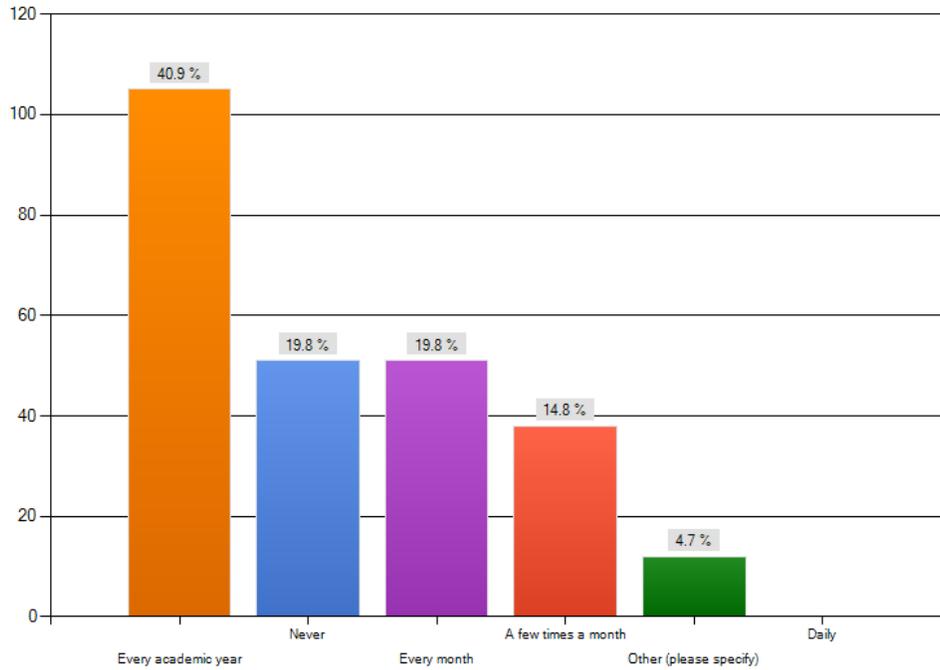


Analysis:

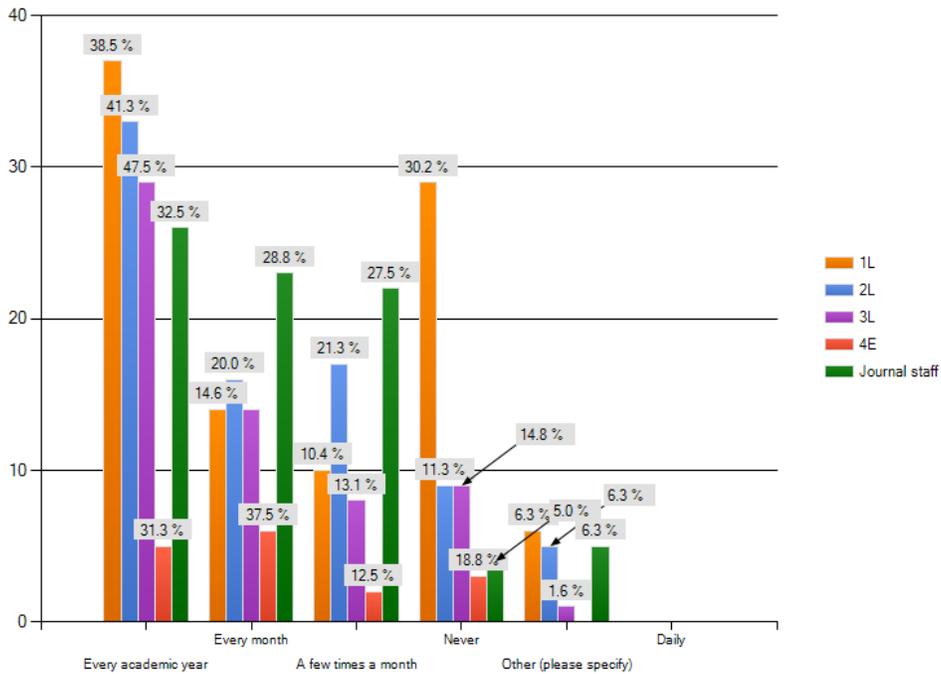
As in 2008, satisfaction with the level of service provided by the circulation staff is high. Eighty-seven percent of respondents rated daytime service as excellent or very good, while 81 % rated evening service as excellent or very good.

Question 6

How often do you seek assistance from the Reference Staff?



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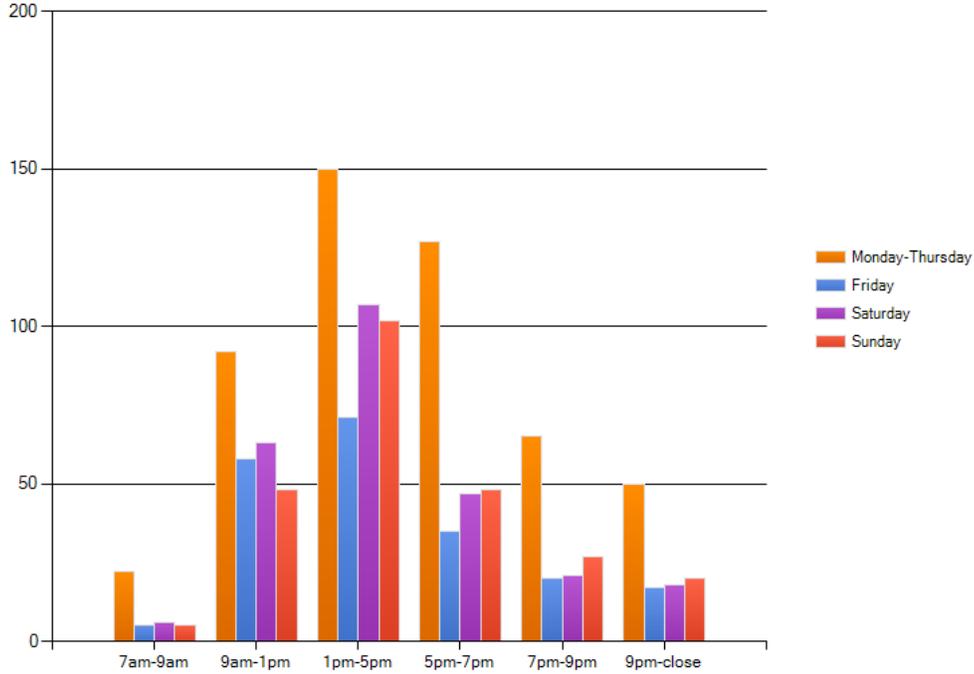


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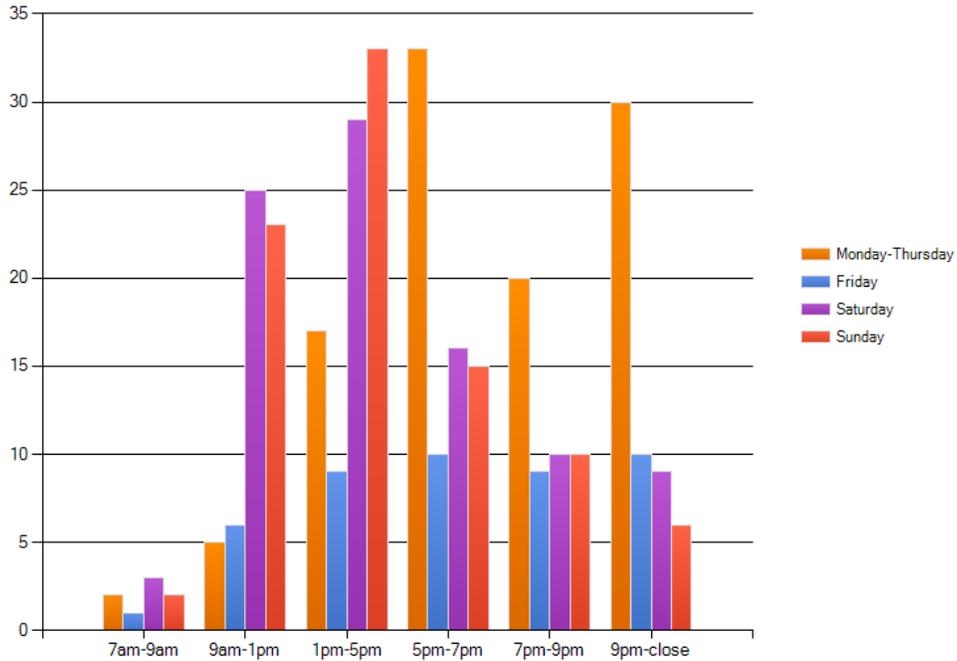
The majority of respondents seek assistance from the Reference Staff at least once during their time in Law School. Over 40% of all respondents seek assistance from the reference staff at least once a year, with almost 15% seeking assistance a few times a month, and 20% at least every month. The difference in usage between Day and Evening students is statistically insignificant. Not surprisingly, journal staff tend to seek reference assistance more frequently than other library users.

Question 7

**When are you most likely to need research/reference assistance?
(check all that apply)**



**When are you most likely to need research/reference assistance?
(Evening Students)**

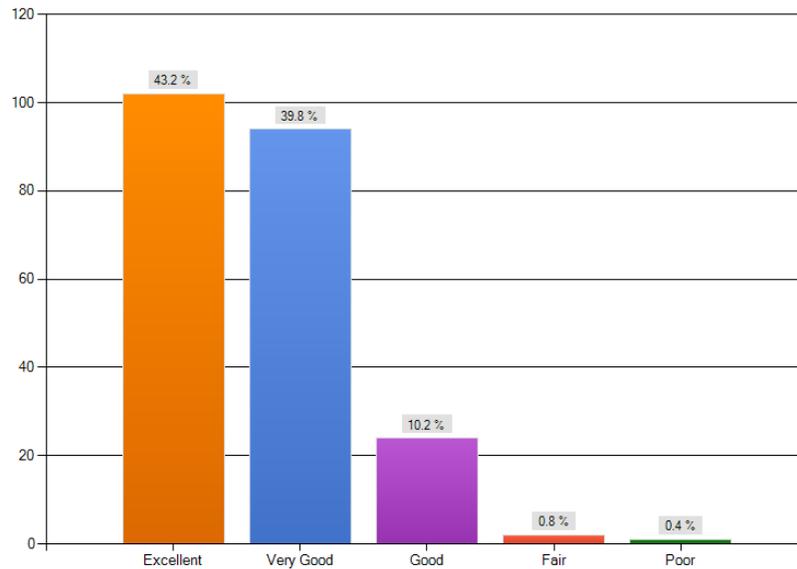


Analysis:

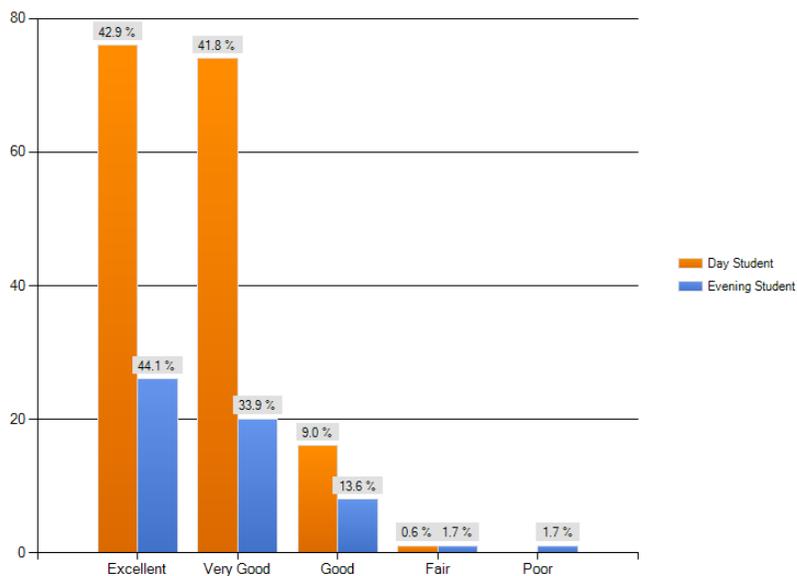
In 2008 this question provided us with useful information that in part led to the hiring of a full-time Evening/Weekend Reference Librarian. This year's survey showed that research/reference assistance is most in demand Mondays-Thursdays during the day time. Inevitably, evening students are more likely to need research/reference assistance in the early evening time periods. However, the value of the responses was really in seeing what other times students would like assistance (e.g. Saturday day time is slightly more popular than Sunday day time, however Sunday evenings are more popular than Saturday evenings).

Question 8

Please rate the level of service provided by the Reference Staff.



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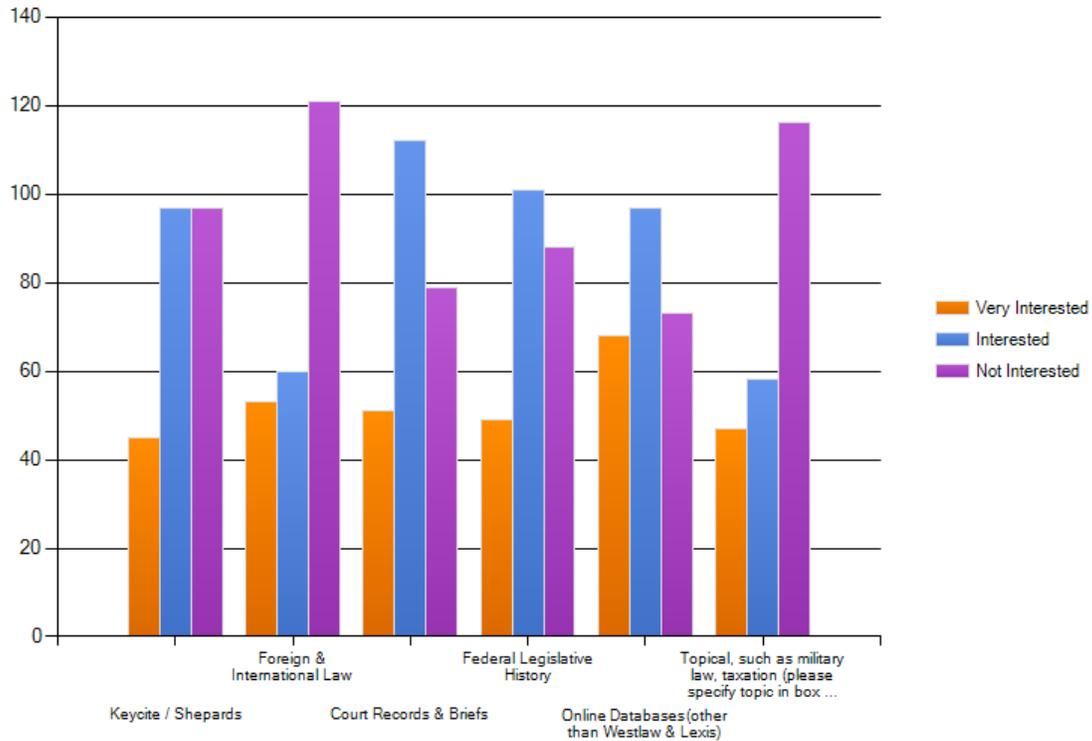


Analysis:

Overall, we are pleased to report that 83% of all respondents rated the level of reference service as either excellent or very good. One interesting change from the 2008 survey is that there now appeared to be no statistical difference between the responses of Day and Evening students. This may reflect the change in Reference staffing in the Evenings and Weekends from part-time to full-time professional librarians.

Question 9

If the Library offered short research presentations outside of class, how interested would you be in attending?

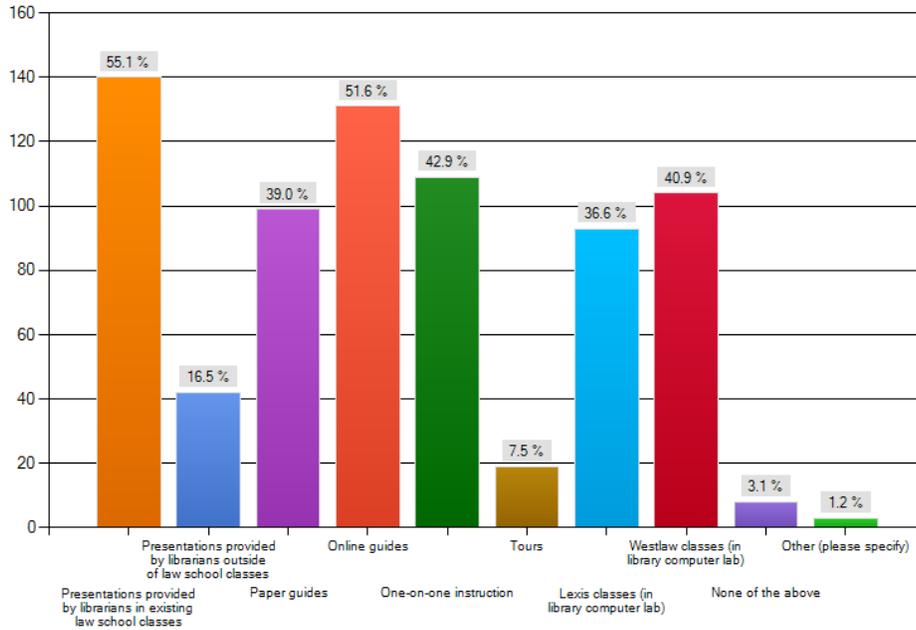


Analysis:

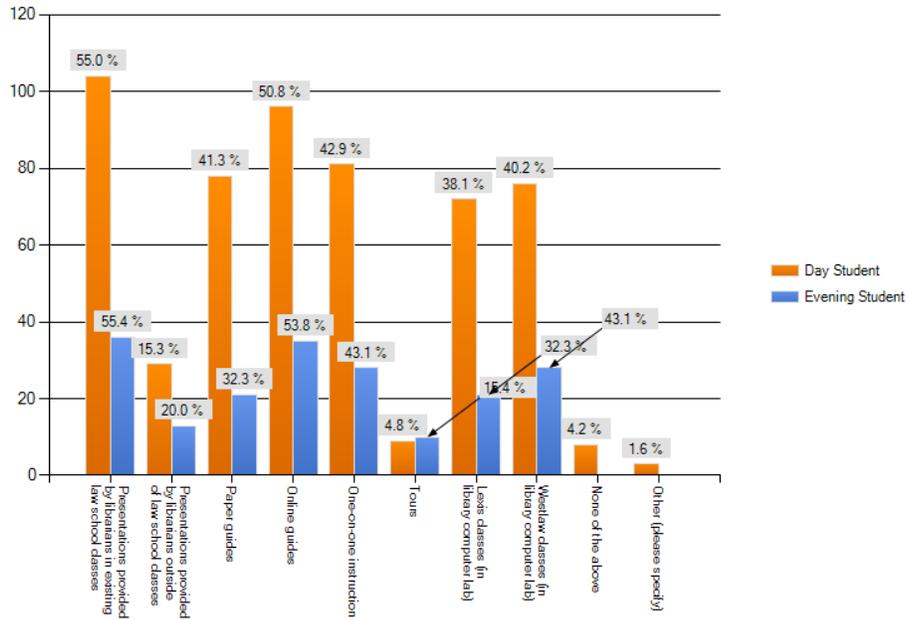
This question elicited some of the most interesting and varied responses in the survey. For a number of the potential presentations respondents seemed to be equally split between being interested and not interested. In reviewing some of the comments that were made, there did seem to be some demand for certain topics like Intellectual Property and Taxation; however, there were also a number of comments that suggested students would not have time to attend presentations outside of class time. The responses to this question will be further reviewed and any decision on research presentation offerings will be based partly on this survey's results.

Question 10

Please indicate which type of research instruction you find most helpful (check all that apply):



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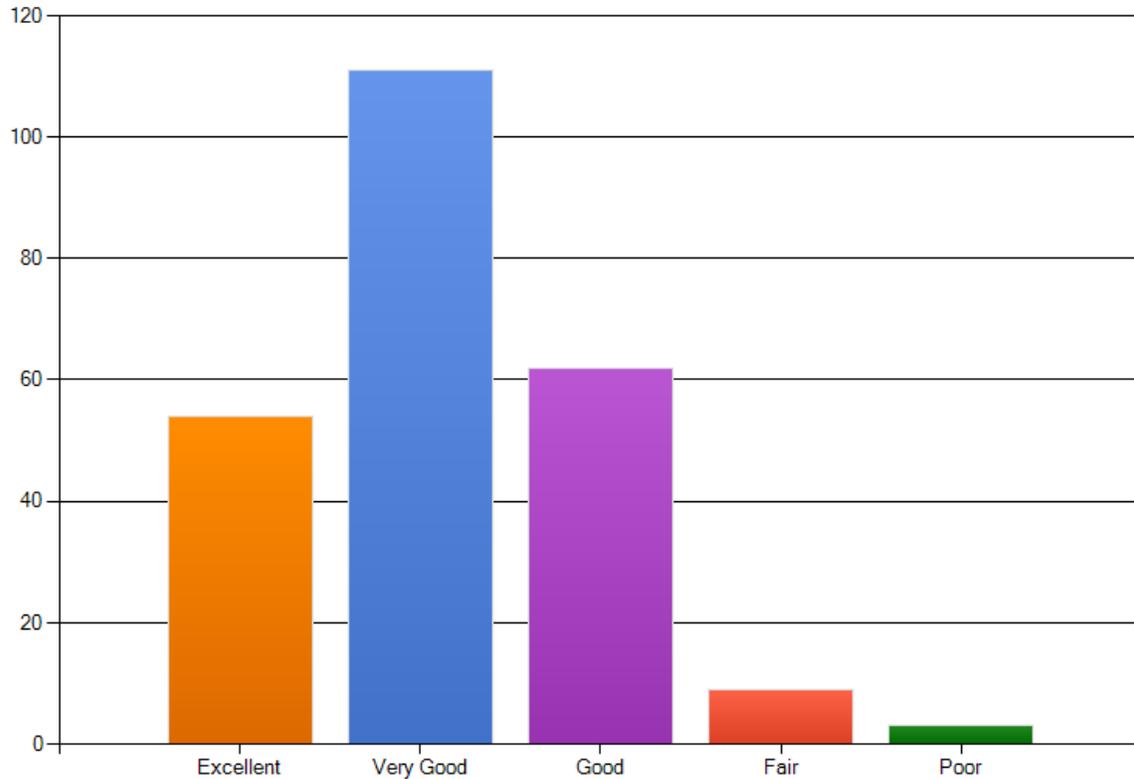


Analysis:

The results of this question indicate that students prefer instruction by librarians in existing class time. In many ways this also reflects the librarians' preference for instruction; however it requires the cooperation of the faculty and finding sufficient time within the syllabus to offer the presentations. Respondents also indicated that they would make use of online research guides (certain guides are currently available on our website) and one-on-one instruction. Equally important to note is that students are not embracing library tours or presentation by librarians outside of class as a source of research instruction – this was also reflected in our 2008 survey. There appeared to be little statistical difference between the response of Day and Evening students.

Question 11

Please indicate how successful the library's print resources are in meeting your research needs (this includes books, journals, newspapers, etc.):

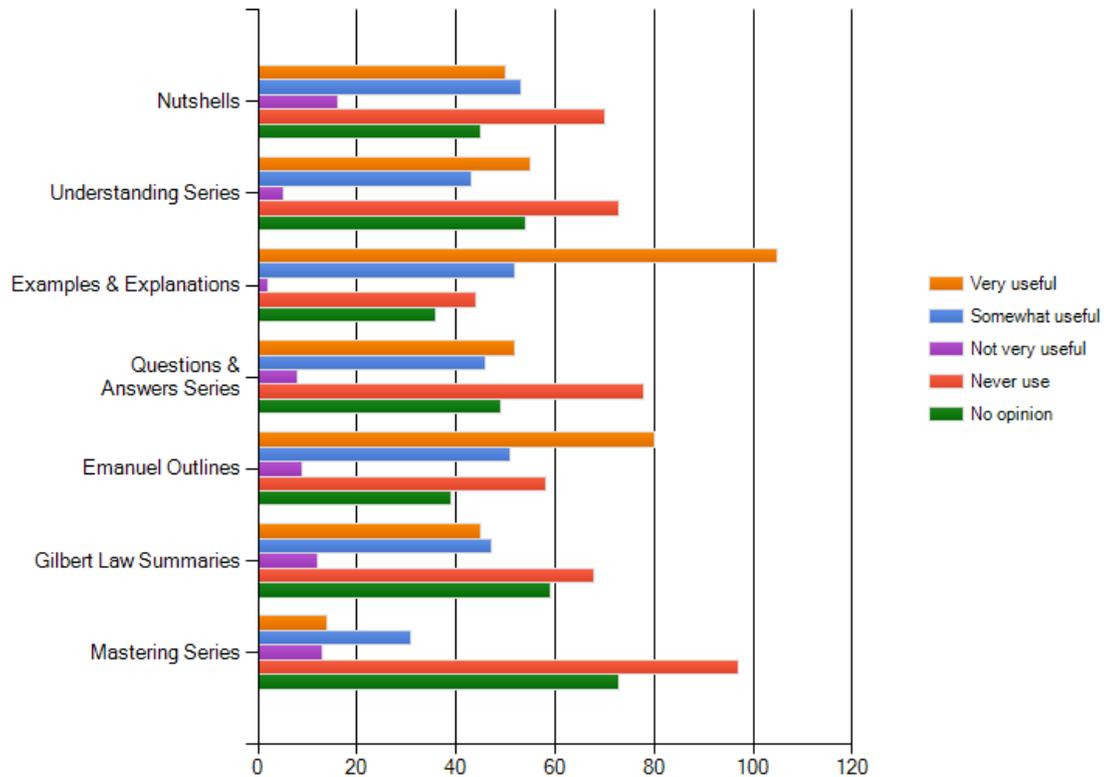


Analysis:

Satisfaction with the library's print resources increased 5% since 2008, with 69% of respondents rating our resources as excellent or very good. The comments section included requests for more resources on Asia (specifically China) ICC publications, and health law. Several students requested frequently-used periodicals for journal pulls.

Question 12

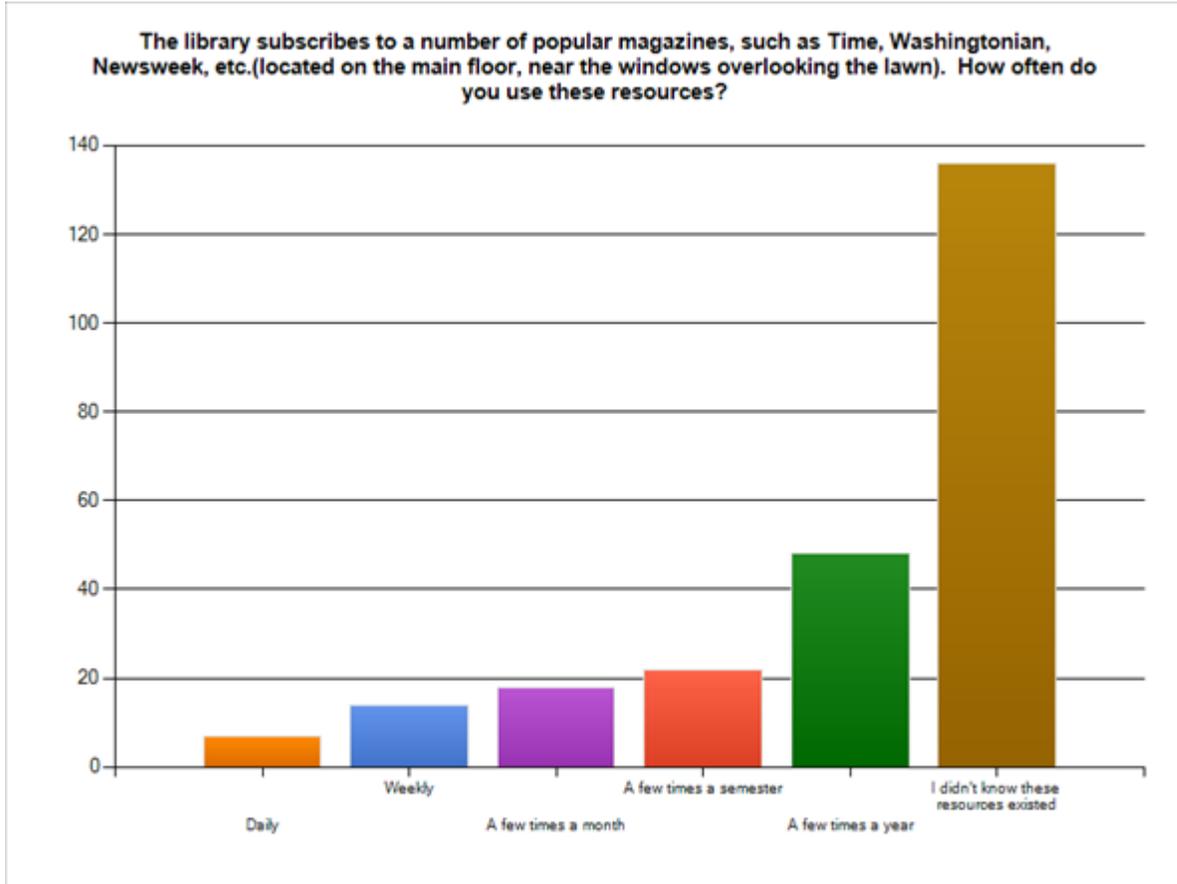
The library provides a number of commercially-produced study aids (located on reserve). How useful do you find these study aids?



Analysis:

As expected, the popular Examples and Explanations Series is considered the most useful of the library's study aids, with Emanuel Outlines a distant second. The majority of respondents indicated that they never use the other five study aids, with the Gilberts and Mastering series proving to be the least popular. A number of students commented that they didn't know the library had study aids available for loan. A few students also commented on the need to keep study aids current. The responses to this question will be further reviewed and used to make collection development decisions regarding commercially-produced study aids.

Question 13

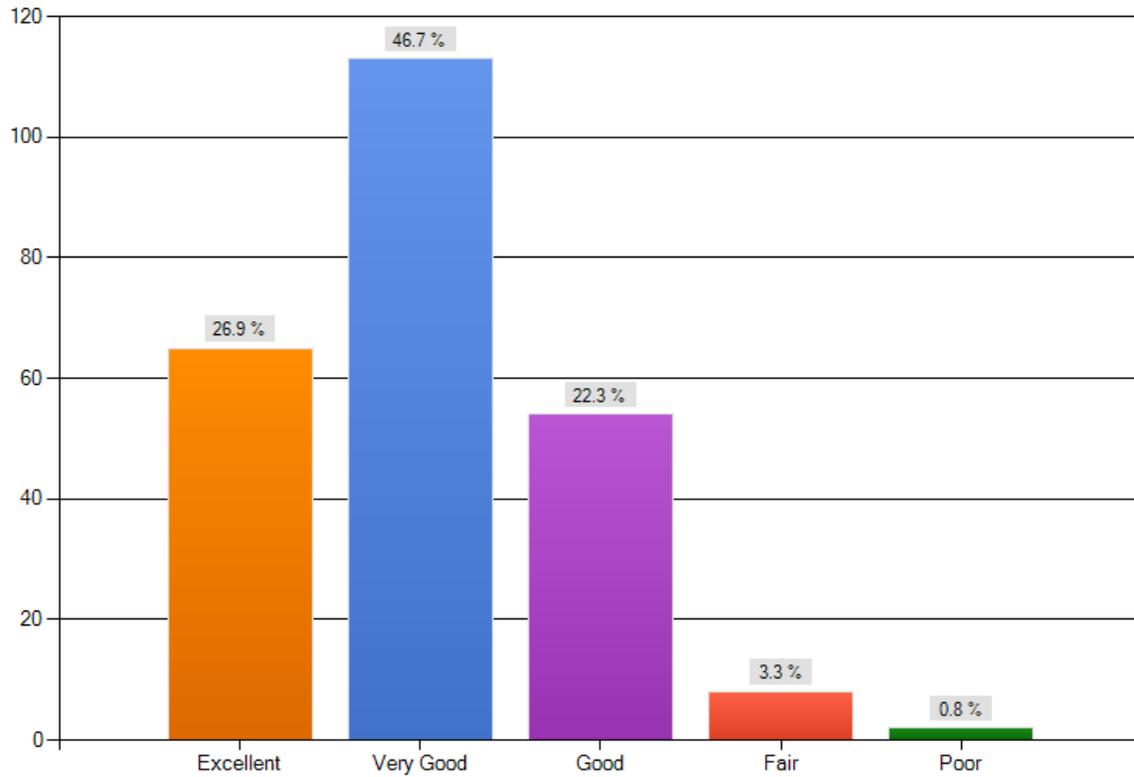


Analysis:

The overwhelming majority of the students who responded to this question, 55.5%, did not know these resources existed and only a tiny minority 2.9% use them on a daily basis. Two respondents suggested placing these resources in a more prominent location in the library so students are more aware of their availability, while two others suggested expanding and/or changing the titles selected.

Question 14

Please indicate how successful the library's online resources are in meeting your research needs:

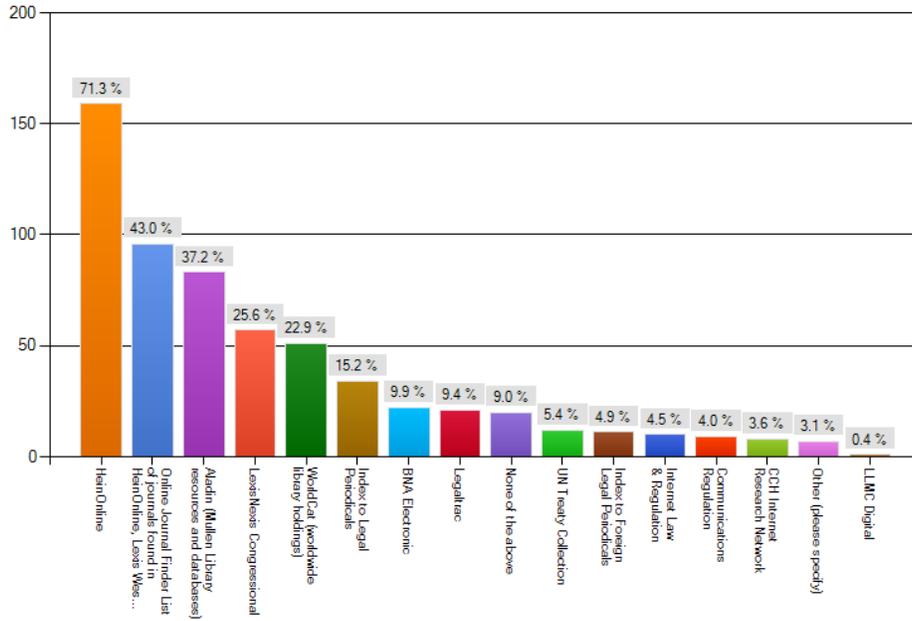


Analysis:

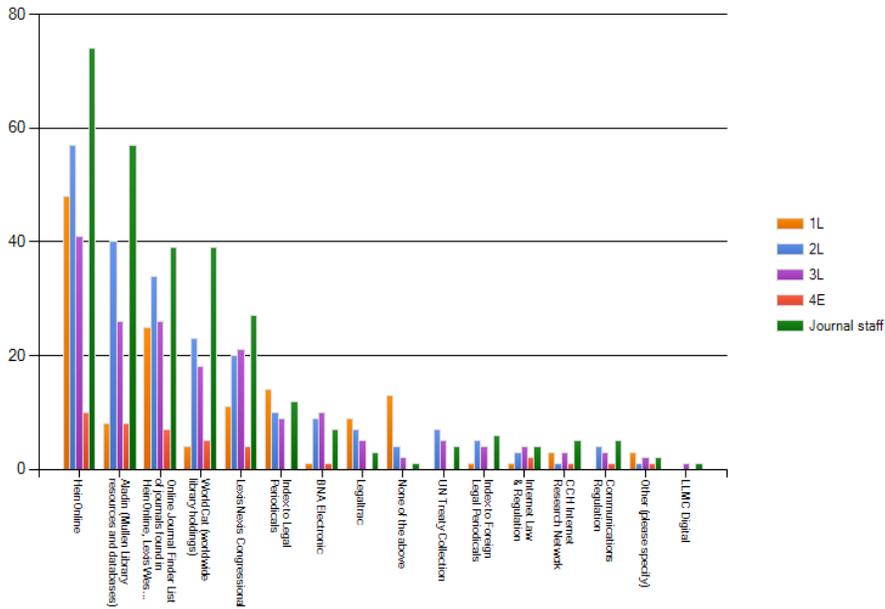
Satisfaction with the library's online resources remains steady, with the same percentage of respondents as 2008 (73%) rating them as excellent or very good. Not surprisingly, journal students singled out HeinOnline as particularly useful. A few students commented that our databases are difficult to locate and that searching Columbo or our web page for them is not intuitive.

Question 15

Please indicate which of the following online databases you find most useful (check all that apply):



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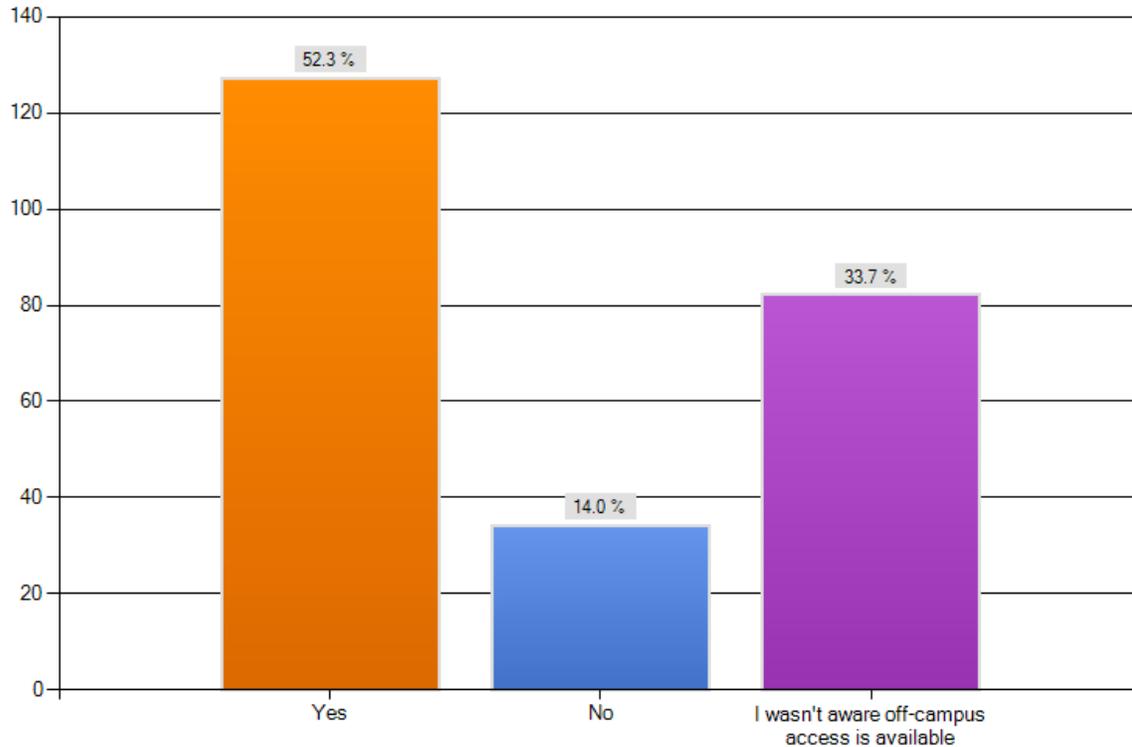


Analysis:

Not surprisingly, HeinOnline was the most popular of the databases offered by the Law Library. It was encouraging to see that the Online Journal Finder, Aladin, and LN Congressional were also used in fairly large numbers. There did not appear to be any major difference between evening students and day students in their database use patterns; however as the above chart indicates there were differences between 1Ls, 2Ls, etc. In particular, it should be noted that the various members of the journals' staff were the heaviest users of these databases. In the comments provided by the respondents there seemed to be some indication that the Law Library could perhaps do a better job of educating students as to the availability of certain databases, particularly those databases that are currently being under-utilized.

Question 16

Students can use their law library barcode to access most of the law library's subscription databases off campus. Do you use the library's subscription databases (other than Westlaw and Lexis) off-campus?

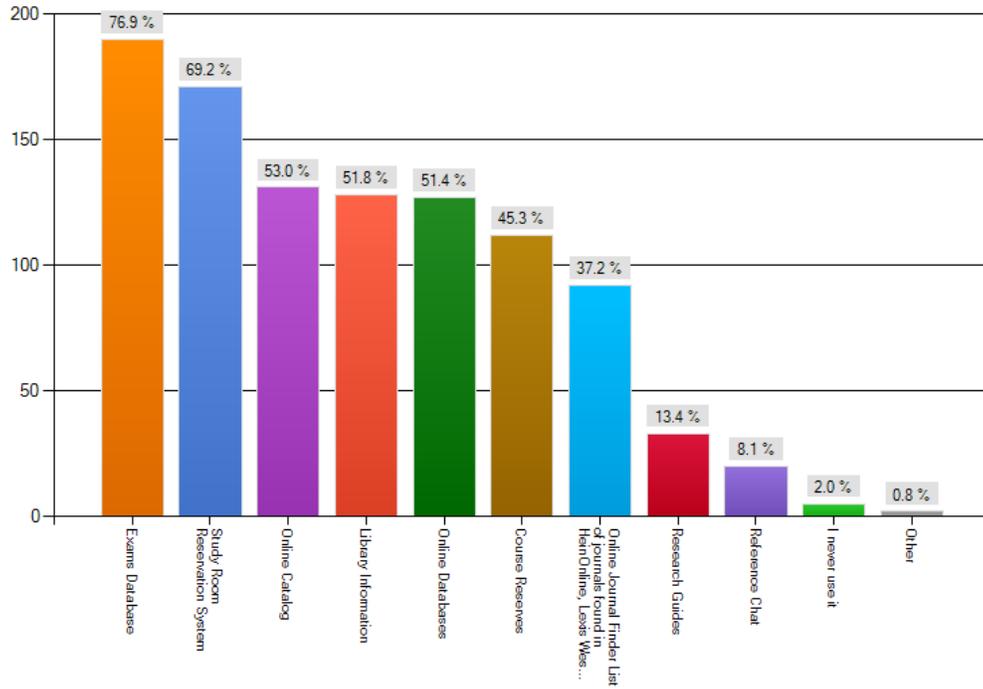


Analysis:

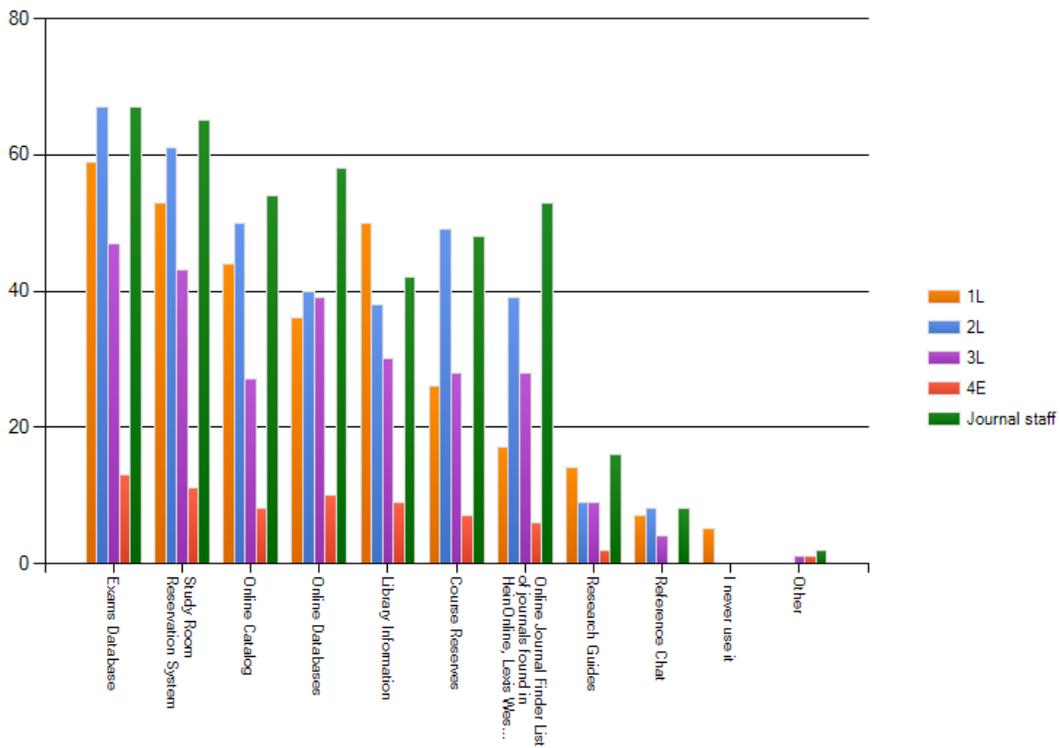
Over half of the respondents do take advantage of the library's off-campus access to our online databases. This number reflects some improvement over the 2008 results for this question, where 47% of respondents took advantage of off-campus database access. However, the number of students who are unaware of off-campus access went up by 3%, indicating that we need to do a better job of advertising this access. Comments indicate that the majority of patrons who access databases off-campus do so several times a week. This represents an increase from 2008, when respondents used this feature several times per semester.

Question 17

Please indicate why you use the library web page(check all that apply):



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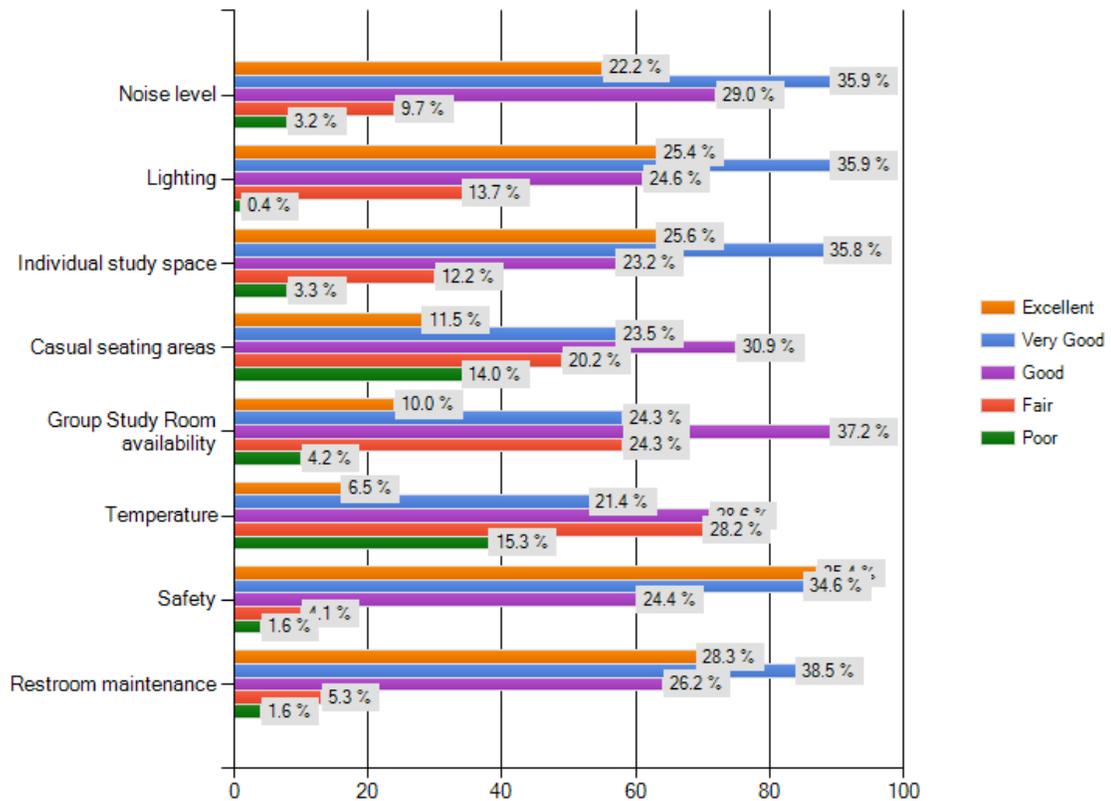


Analysis:

As in 2006 and 2008, the majority of respondents cited the exams database as the primary reason they use the library web page. The Study Room Reservation System, a new addition, is also a popular choice at 69%. The online catalog and library information are top choices, again similar to the previous survey results. Overall, usage of the library web page appears to have increased slightly since 2006, with only 2% of respondents not using the page, as compared to approximately 5% in previous surveys. Once again, 2Ls and journal staff appear to be the biggest users of the Library's website.

Question 18

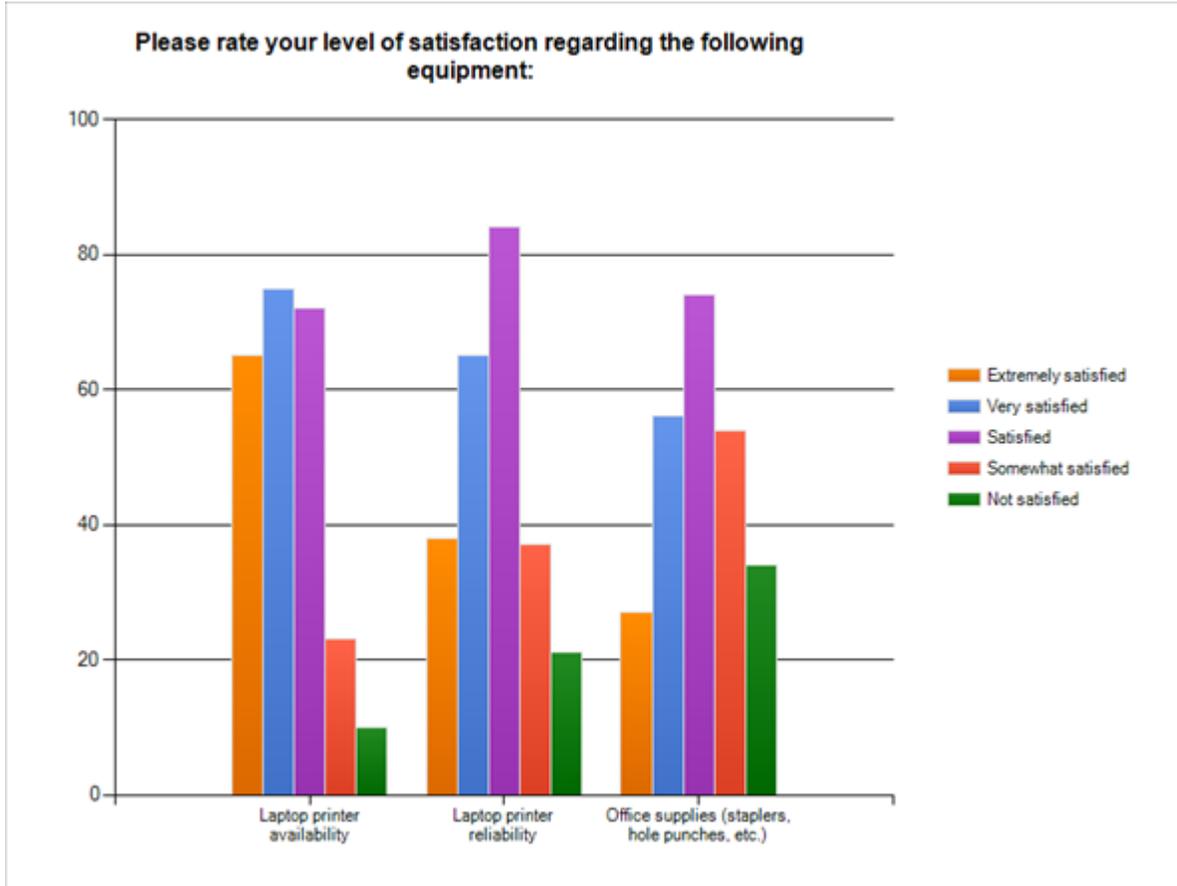
Please rate the following aspects of the library atmosphere:



Analysis:

Overall, our students find the library a comfortable place to work and study. The majority of respondents rated all aspects of the library as excellent, very good, or good. Satisfaction with safety increased 10% since 2008, with a 70% rating of either excellent or very good. As expected, temperature is a concern for many students. Fifty-six percent of respondents gave the temperature a positive rating, while 43% rated it as fair or poor. Seventy-two comments were received with the number one complaint being that the library is too cold. As in 2008, students complain that the library's chairs are uncomfortable. Noise is also of concern, particularly students talking to other students.

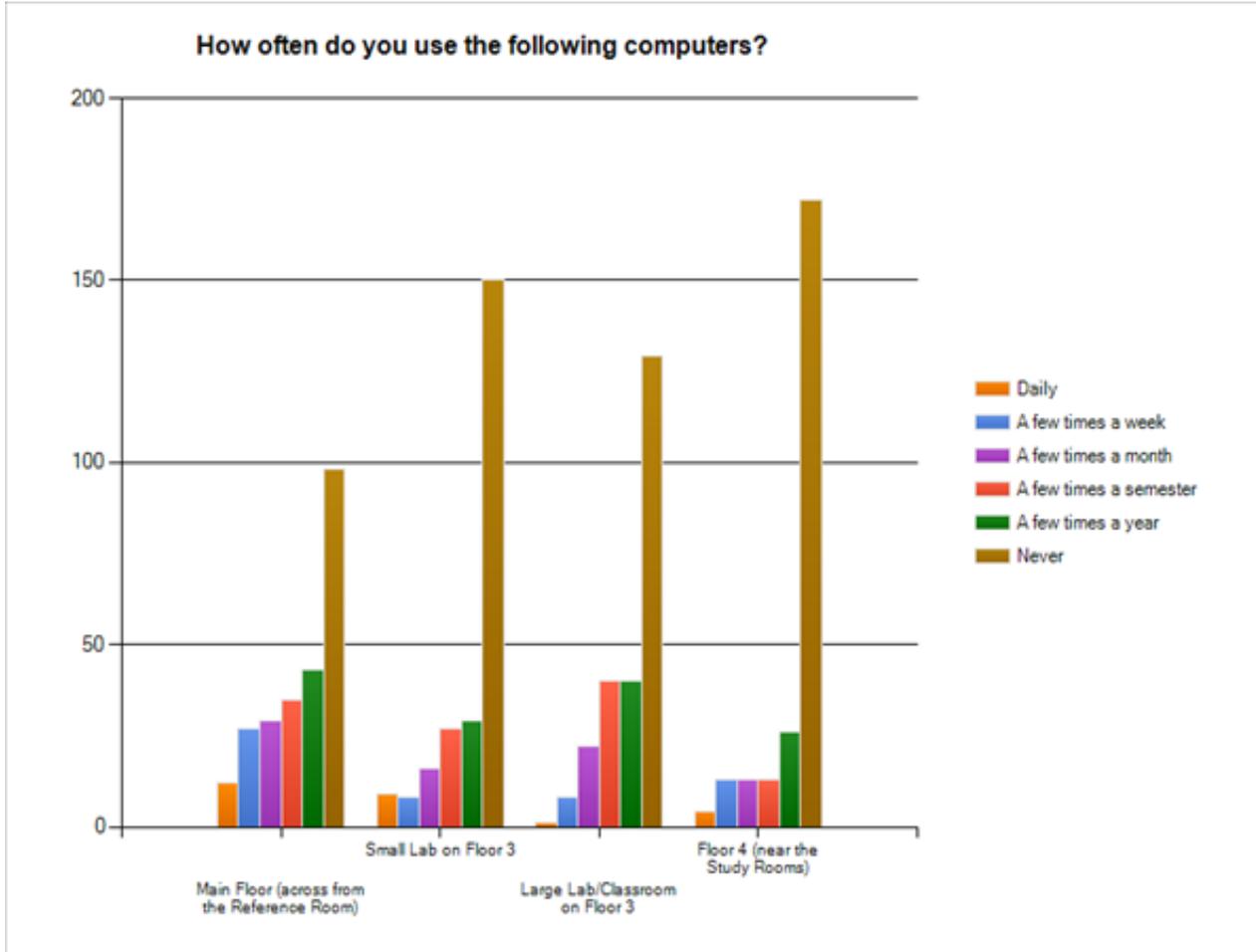
Question 19



Analysis:

Most students were either very satisfied or satisfied with laptop printer availability, reliability, and the availability of office supplies. Nearly 31% of respondents were very satisfied with laptop printer availability, 34.3 % were satisfied with laptop printer reliability and 30.2% were satisfied with the office supplies provided. Even though most respondents are satisfied, a significant number of students seem to find laptop printer availability a problem at times, with some complaining the printers get bogged down with big printing jobs. Another concern of the survey respondents was that the stapler supplies frequently run out or are in short supply.

Question 20



Analysis:

The overwhelming majority of all respondents never use the library computers and the reason cited was that they use their own personal computers while working in the library.

Question 21: If you were in charge of the law library for just one day, what would be your top priority?

Analysis:

This final question gave students the opportunity to discuss what they thought were the biggest challenges facing the law library. As in 2008, the four areas that garnered the most responses were library temperature, comfortable seating, printer availability and printer room maintenance. Many of the respondents stated that they felt the library temperature was too cold and want the library heated more adequately. In addition students seemed to disapprove of the desk chairs in the library stating that they were uncomfortable. Some students would prefer more of the red cushioned chairs, which they find much more comfortable for studying. Lastly many students requested more printers be available and the printer room be adequately stocked with additional supplies. One other area that garnered a few comments was the noise made by other students. Respondents complained that fellow students disregarded the need for quiet study and engaged in distracting conversations in the library.