University Libraries 2015 Library Communication Study

University Libraries Assessment Committee

2014/2015 Report

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Introduction

For its 2014-2015 project the University Libraries Assessment Committee gathered data about student preferences regarding social media tools and other forms of communication (e.g., email, signage, etc.) used by the Libraries to reach users in order to provide information about services and events. The information gathered during this study might help the Libraries make informed decisions about how to most effectively reach UNC students for various types of news and information.

Method

The Committee concluded that one-on-one interviews with UNC students would be the best way to collect the type of information needed. A Qualtrics questionnaire and a series of interview questions were created. The Qualtrics survey compiled basic demographic data about the respondents as well as data about use of common social media sites (see Appendix A). The interview questions were then used to determine preferences for Libraries communication with students (see Appendix B).

During the period of March 2-6, 2015, committee members set up tables in high-traffic areas and asked students passing by to take the survey. Over the course of the week, tables were set up at the University Center, at Holmes Dining Hall, and in the Michener and Skinner Libraries. Two committee members staffed each table; one to ask the interview questions and one to take notes. As an incentive, respondents were offered a choice of Libraries marketing items, such as tote bags, pens, and highlighters, as well as candy and snacks. Respondents also had the option of providing an email address to be entered into a drawing for one of four Bluetooth speakers.

Results

Twenty-three interviews were conducted at the table locations. Average age of the interviewees was 20. Sixteen identified as female and seven as male. Level of study ranged from freshman to graduate with many majors represented (Figure 1), and most (15) lived on-campus.
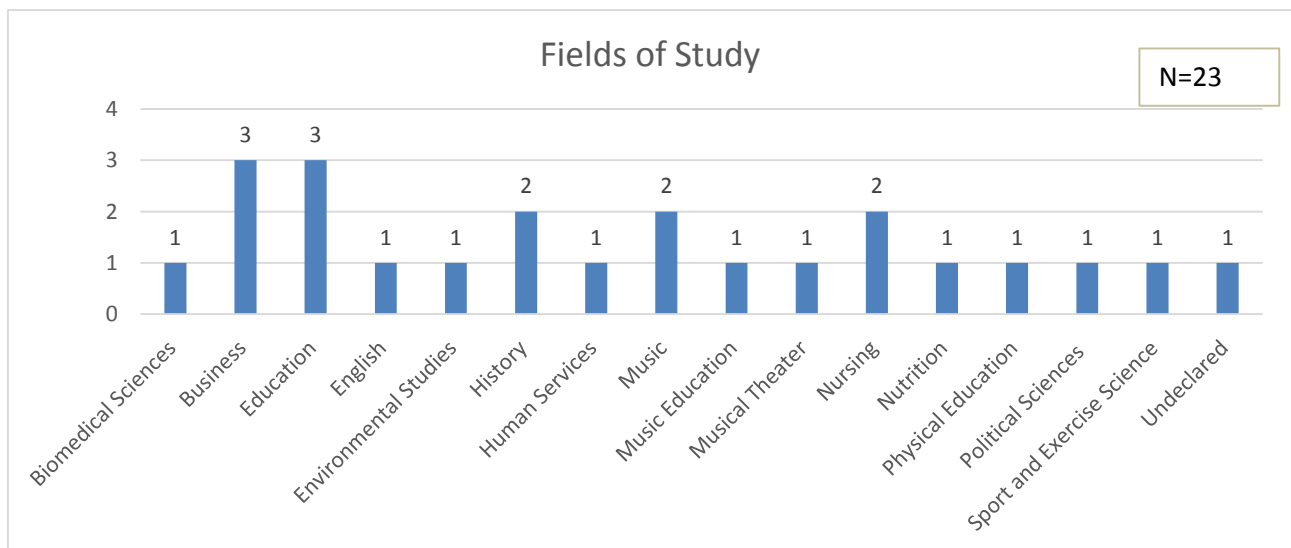

Figure 1

Two of the survey questions focused on social media use. The first asked which social media platforms the student used, and the second asked about the frequency of visits (see Appendix C) to each of the used sites.

Students reported the highest participation in three social media tools: Facebook, SnapChat, and YouTube (see Figure 2). Respondents were offered the opportunity to add other social media sites used, but there were no additional entries to those listed in the survey.
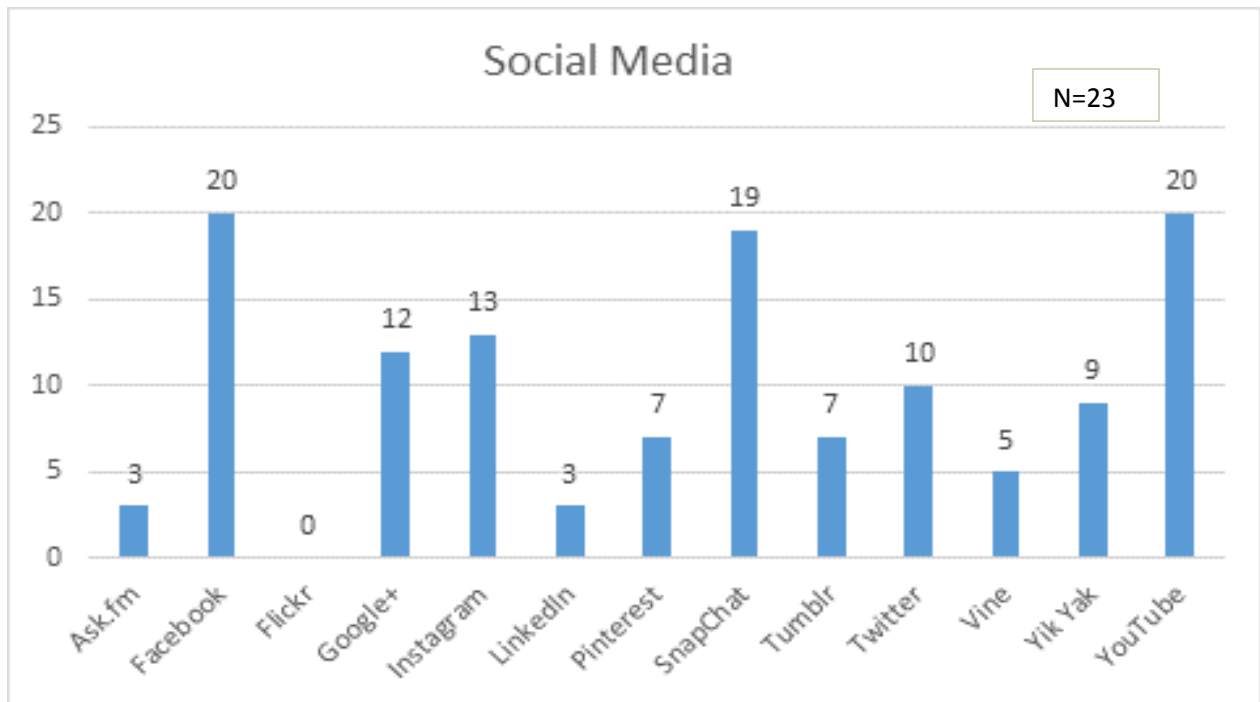

Figure 2[1]

Qualitative Analysis

Questions 1 & 2: What campus organizations or activities are you involved in, and how do you get information about these organizations or activities?

Out of the 23 students surveyed, there was a wide variety of organization and activity involvement. Only four answered "none" to activities. Nineteen of those surveyed are involved in some type of campus organization or activity. Preferences as to how they receive information about these organizations or activities were varied as well, with email being the front-runner. The least favored method of receiving information was via phone calls.

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[1] Note that data represented in this and the following graphs depict multiple answers from interviewees.

Question 3: How do you get information about student services or departments across the university?

Email was the most common way students received information about student services and departments at UNC (see Figure 3). Most participants did not indicate whether they preferred individual or mass email (such as the weekly student newsletter). When indicated, the preferred emails primarily came from individuals, such as instructors or advisors, rather than organizations or groups. Flyers were also a popular means to get information. Participants said that they noticed flyers in a variety locations around campus, including classroom buildings, libraries, dining halls, residence halls, and the UC. Three of the six participants who received university information in-person stated that they got this information in the classroom. Social media and other forms of communication, such as texting and Blackboard, were less common.
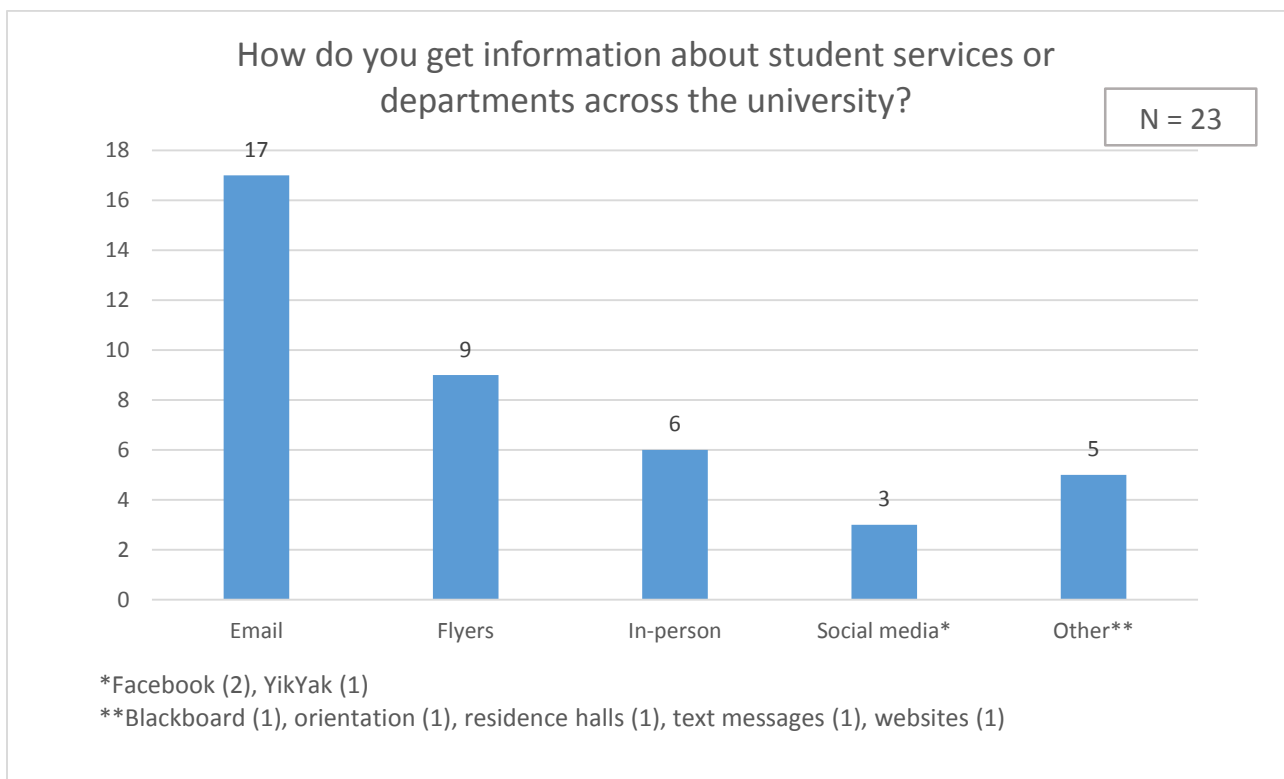

How do you get information about student services or departments across the university?

N = 23

*Facebook (2), YikYak (1)
**Blackboard (1), orientation (1), residence halls (1), text messages (1), websites (1)

Figure 3

Question 4: Can you recall any communication that you have received about the UNC Libraries?

Among the 23 students surveyed for this report, eight could not recall getting communication from the UNC Libraries. Of the remaining 15 students who had received communication about the UNC Libraries, they had received it in a wide variety of ways. Individual students mentioned hearing about the Libraries from their sorority, from a roommate, and at orientation. Three students had received communication exclusively through emails about items checked out, while two others had heard about the Libraries through mass campus emails. Another five students learned about the Libraries through a class, including

ENG 122 or LIB 150. Three students recalled receiving communication through multiple channels upon visiting the Libraries; through computer screens, flyers, the electronic sign, and in person.

Question 5: How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about new library technology?

Nineteen of the 23 students said that email was one way that they would like to receive communication about new library technology (see Figure 4). However, print forms of communication—flyers, billboards, bulletin boards, posters, and table tents— were also mentioned frequently. Two students recalled learning about Libraries technology through flyers in the library: "I know about laptop checkout because of the flyers on the front desk," and "I know they do tablet checkout because of the flyers in the elevator." Students suggested the library, the University Center, and Ross Hall as locations where they would like to see print communication from the Libraries.
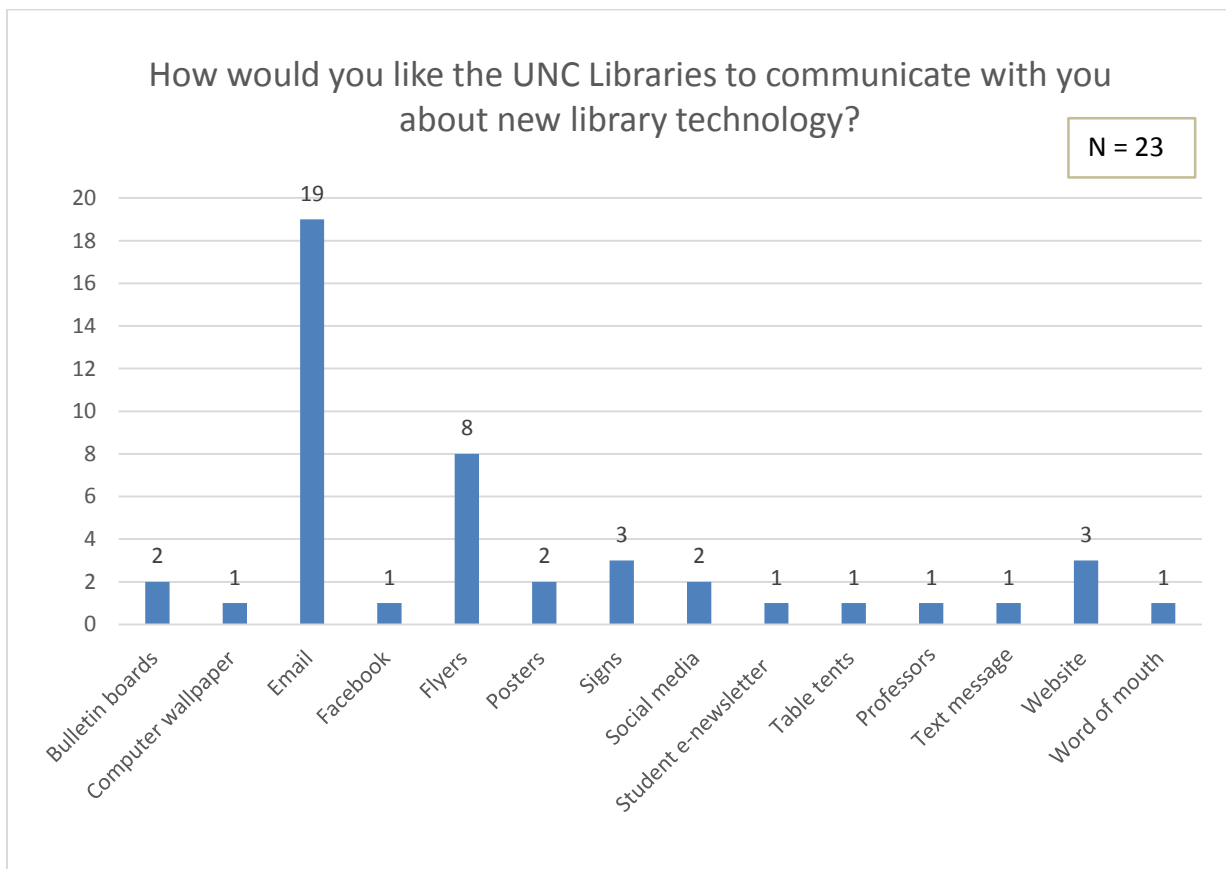

Figure 4

Question 6: How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library services?

Twenty of the 23 students said that email is one way that they would like to learn about library services (see Figure 5). Eight students also said that text messages are another way that they would like to learn

about library services, with three of the eight saying that text messages are a good way to learn about due dates on items that they have checked out.
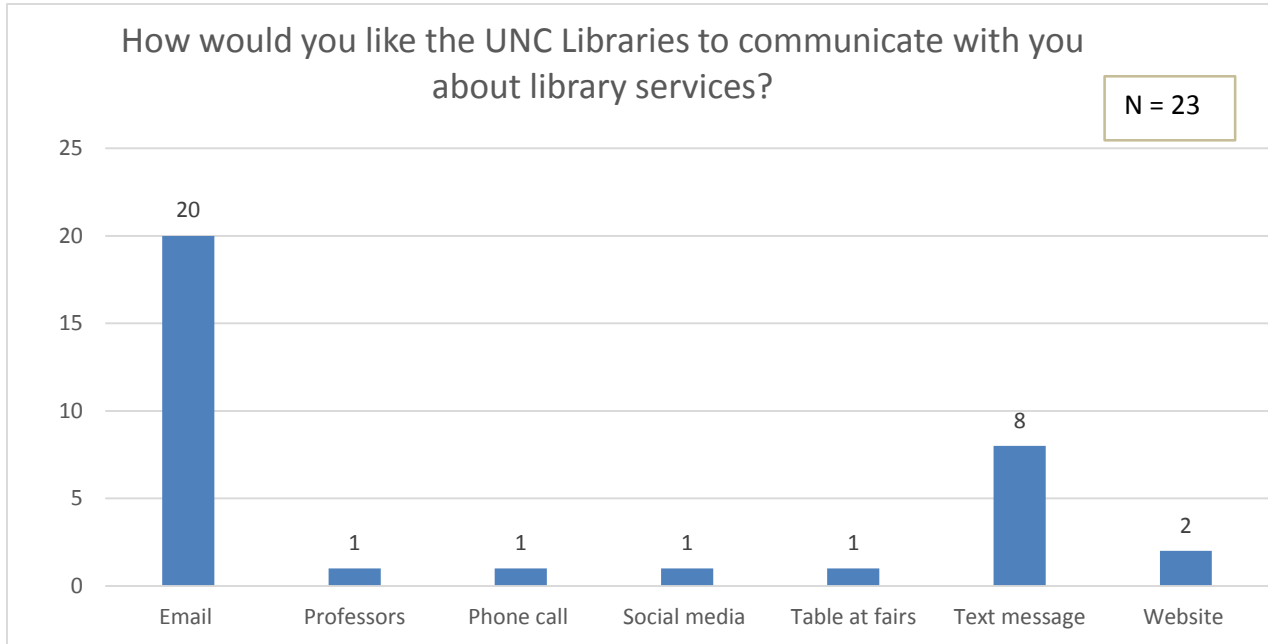

How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library services?

N = 23

Question 7: How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library events?

Twenty-six of the tabulated responses expressed a preference for some form of electronic communications for library events, and 16 of that 26 prefer email specifically (see Figure 6). Student newsletters (3), text messages (3), and computer screen wallpapers (2) were the next three most popular responses. Social media was mentioned once. Fourteen of 40 tabulated responses preferred some form of non-electronic communications: flyers (7), in-person (2), whiteboards at dormitories (1), etc. Students remarked on wanting "visuals instead of so much text," and "flyers as well in areas where students are, where it catches their eye." One student commented that they don't read the What's Happening at UNC emails: "There's so much information that it's hard to catch the eye and find what's important to me."
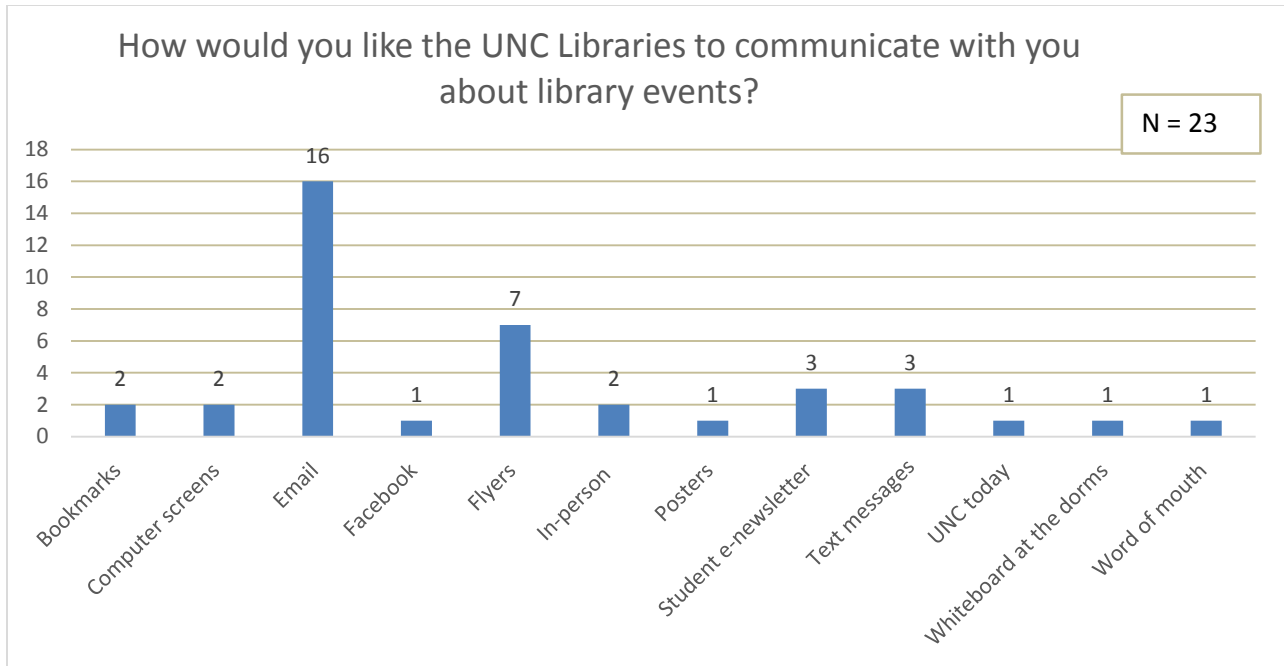
Figure 6

Question 8: How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library activities?

Twenty-three of 36 tabulated responses expressed a preference for electronic communications, with email (15) most suggested, followed by social media/Facebook (5), and text (3) (see Figure 7). The remaining 11
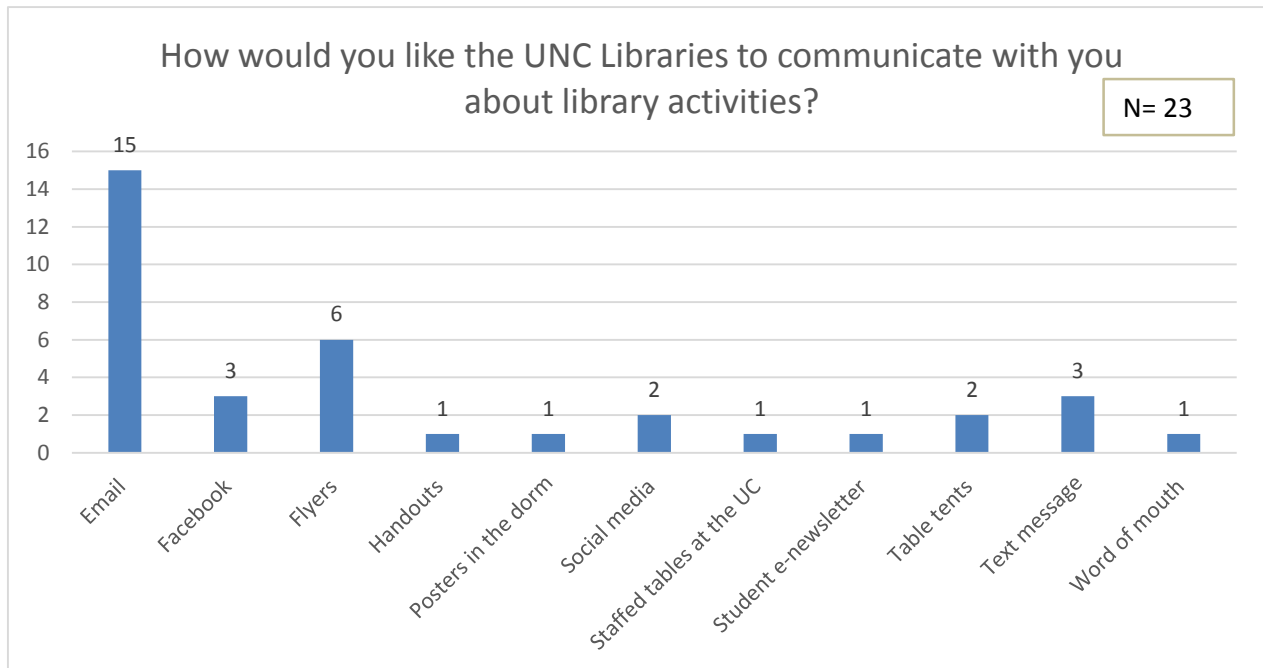

Figure 7

responses expressed a preference for non-electronic communications: flyers/handouts (7), table tents (2),

etc. One student commented that they had lost interest in the electronic sign as "it has the same things all the time, so I quit reading it." Seven students expressed a preference for physical communications outside library facilities, such as in the dorms and the UC.

Question 9: Are there any other ways that the library can reach out to you that we haven't discussed yet?

Five of the 23 students surveyed for this report had nothing to add. Three reiterated that Facebook is a good way to reach out, while three other students reiterated the use of email. Yik-Yak, Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter were individually suggested as well. Four students suggested texts as a means for the Libraries to communicate with students, while another specifically commented that they wouldn't like to receive texts.

Recommendations

Results of the interviews conducted indicate that students prefer email and signage as the best methods to reach them for all manner of Libraries communication. While many are active on one or more social media platform, they expressed little interest in using those tools to gain Libraries information. Since many students mentioned flyers, both in the Libraries and outside, and the electronic sign in Michener as specific ways that they have gained information in the past, it seems that the Libraries' efforts in those areas are working well. Based on the results of this project, the Committee recommends that the Libraries do the following:

- Explore opt-in and other non-mass email options, including the possibility of email on first check-out;
- Explore opt-in SMS for Libraries circulation services;
- Explore ways to enhance existing pathways for using flyers/signage inside the Libraries, for example by communicating it in UL News or posting on SharePoint;
- Explore ways for Libraries personnel to get information on the electronic sign in Michener, for example by communicating it in UL News or posting on SharePoint; and,
- Link existing social networking accounts to the Libraries Facebook page, and investigate additional visually-based social networking outlets to funnel into our existing Facebook page.

Appendix A. Qualtrics Survey Questions

Enter the last four digits of your telephone number. This information will be used as an anonymous identifier.

What is your age?

What is your gender?

What is your major or field of study?

What is your level of study?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Master's student
- Doctoral student
- Certificate student
- Other

Do you live on-campus or off-campus?

- On-campus
- Off-campus

In the last year, approximately how often did you use the Libraries website?

(If you have attended UNC for less than a year, please indicate how often from when you started)

- More than 2 times a week
- 1-2 times a week
- 1-2 times a month
- 1-2 times a semester
- Never

In the last year, approximately how often did you visit a UNC library (Michener or Skinner)?

(If you have attended UNC for less than a year, please indicate how often from when you started)

- More than 2 times a week
- 1-2 times a week
- 1-2 times a month
- 1-2 times a semester
- Never

Which of the following social networks do you use? Check all that apply.

- Ask.fm
- Facebook
- Flickr
- Google+
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- SnapChat
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- Vine
- Yik Yak
- YouTube
- Other
- Other

Appendix B. Interview Questions

I am going to ask you a series of questions concerning how you learn about campus activities and organizations in general followed by a few Libraries-specific questions. Remember that we are interested in learning about all forms of communication and not just social media methods.

Last four digits of phone number: _____

1) What campus organizations or activities are you involved in?

2) How do you get information about these organizations or activities?

3) How do you get information about student services or departments across the university? Examples: tutoring, career services, academic advising, your major's department, etc.

4) Can you recall any communication that you have received about the UNC Libraries? Follow-up: If so, how?

5) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about new library technology? Example: laptop-checkout, tablet-checkout, etc.

6) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library services? Example: due dates, hours, holds, etc.

7) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library events? Example: guest speakers, book sales, etc.

8) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library activities? Example: pizza lunches, game nights, etc.

9) Are there any other ways that the library can reach out to you that we haven't discussed yet?

Appendix C. Frequency of social media use

How often do you use the following social networks?

#	Question	Daily	2-3 Times a Week	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Month	Less than Once a Month	Never	Total Responses	Mean
x1	Ask.fm	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	4.33
x2	Facebook	18	0	0	1	1	1	0	21	1.57
x3	Flickr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
x4	Google+	4	4	2	0	0	2	0	12	2.50
x5	Instagram	6	3	0	2	0	2	0	13	2.46
x6	LinkedIn	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	4	3.75
x7	Pinterest	4	2	0	2	0	0	0	8	2.00
x8	SnapChat	14	3	1	0	0	1	0	19	1.53
x9	Tumblr	2	1	1	0	1	2	0	7	3.43
x10	Twitter	3	2	1	2	0	2	0	10	3.00
x11	Vine	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	5	4.00
x12	Yik Yak	3	1	3	0	1	1	0	9	2.78
x13	YouTube	16	2	0	2	0	1	0	21	1.62
x14	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
x15	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
x16	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

Statistic	Ask.fm	Facebook	Flickr	Google+	Instagram	LinkedIn	Pinterest	SnapChat	Tumblr	Twitter	Vine	Yik Yak	YouTube	Other	Other	Other
Min Value	3	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Max Value	6	6	-	6	6	6	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	-	-	-
Mean	4.33	1.57	0.00	2.50	2.46	3.75	2.00	1.53	3.43	3.00	4.00	2.78	1.62	0.00	0.00	0.00
Variance	2.33	2.16	0.00	3.18	3.60	4.25	1.71	1.49	4.95	3.78	4.50	3.19	1.85	0.00	0.00	0.00
Standard Deviation	1.53	1.47	0.00	1.78	1.90	2.06	1.31	1.22	2.23	1.94	2.12	1.79	1.36	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Responses	3	21	0	12	13	4	8	19	7	10	5	9	21	0	0	0

Appendix D. Interview Data

1) What campus organizations or activities are you involved in?	2) How do you get information about these organizations or activities	3) How do you get information about student services or departments across the university	4) Can you recall any communication that you have received about the UNC libraries	5) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about new library technology	6) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library services	7) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library events	8) How would you like the UNC Libraries to communicate with you about library activities	9) Are there any other ways that the library can reach out to you that we haven't discussed
Phi Sigma Pi	email	email, Blackboard	Phi Sigma Pi has study tables at Michener. Friend works at Michener--"ask me" badge, so asks in-person questions.	email is checked daily, social media would be ok	email	see in UNC today	email	no. Would not like to receive texts
French Club	email, verbal communication	email, flyers	read about book sale in "This week at UNC"	email	put on website	email, social media (Facebook)	social media, email, flyers - both at library and around campus	no
none	PE major, gets information about PE club in classes from in-person visits	usually instructors in class, references to specific websites	no	email	email	email	email	text would be ok
none	weekly student engagement emails, yik-yak	part of Denver Scholarship Foundation--gets information from that affiliation both by email and in-person	visited library with class	email	website or email	email	email- student engagement email	yik-yak helpful to find out about things, information gets lost on Facebook so that's not the best option, flyers are good
alternative spring break, study abroad, international ambassadors	Beginning of year fairs, displays & activities, some stuff on social media, text is better than email, don't read student engagement emails	MCB major, gets information through email and in class, required to go to career services for class	no	social media, table tents and other visuals like flyers, computer wallpaper ads	Bear mail, a general beginning of year email about services, table events at fairs, get professors on board to talk about library	computer wallpaper ads, emails with visuals instead of so much text	table tents, flyers to pass out, advertise with staffed tables at the UC, etc.	promote extras such as dual screens in computer labs, catch people early so they know about services, face-to-face is best for remembering

					services in class			information, second best is to have professors talk about it in class, third is email
Youth for Environment & Sustainability, LEAF, Student Senate, Sustainability Council	email, Facebook, calls & text	flyers, email is a big one	computer screens in labs, TV screen in Michener when visiting library	flyer with list of services or signage near circulation desk, on UNC webpage, email	email, text for due dates would be good	email, no texts for this	email	talk about library services when English class is held in library
NCSC – National Collegiate Scholars Colorado	You have to be inducted. They email me. They have activities like fundraising, relay for life, homes for humanities. We communicate with flyers or Facebook us the information, and some email. They tell us in person at meetings	My advisors email me information. As far as other things I see flyers around campus. I see the most flyers in Michener. I'm taking classes on the bottom floor. In the lobby of North Hall.	No	Email is the most effective way, because as students we have to check our email daily. I don't know if they have a student e-newsletter. I know they do tablet checkout because of the flyers in the elevator. I have not noticed the electronic sign.	Email. People would get annoyed at text. You would expect a text from a friend, not the library.	Email and flyers. They have a big whiteboard and it has all the events (like open mic night or basketball games). If you have an event at the Libraries you can contact the dorms to put it on the whiteboard.	Email and flyers.	It's effective how it has been. Facebook is better, because Twitter is so crowded. I'm just friends with UNC Athletics and NCSC on Facebook.
I go to the dorm activities. The Community Campus for the RHA does a "treat yourself" thing. The RAs put on events in the dorms.	Email or the "What's Happening" email (a daily or weekly email telling you what's happening around campus). Or they have a whiteboard or posters around campus. I see flyers at the UC and in the classroom buildings where I have classes.	Email, posters around campus, and teachers. I get individual emails as well as mass emails. Follow-up: Have you followed any UNC organizations on Facebook? The nursing program	I've seen stuff about a library survey (LibQUAL) through a mass email	Email, because I've looked for stuff like that, but I can't find anything in-depth. Have something more in-depth on the website. I do know about laptop checkout because of the flyers on the front desk.	Email or text message. Text message before (like your book's due in two days). Text would be preferable because it's easier, it comes straight to my phone.	Email. I prefer email to text messaging because not everyone's interested in those events.	Text, because it's more immediate and it's something everyone would be interested in (everyone likes free pizza)	No

None. Follow-up: Have you liked any campus organizations on Facebook? I used to be in a sorority so I liked some of those.	NA	I had a question about how to declare a major and I posted on Yik Yak. It's all students and people will answer your questions. Someone at UNC answered my question and told me to go to the Student Advising Center.	I went to a class on how to look up stuff through your systems. It was a one-time thing (through ENG 122). I go to the library a lot, but I don't communicate with them.	Email. I always look at my UNC email. I saw a flyer in the elevator at the library. I look at the billboards, usually at the UC or the library. I don't read the student e-newsletter. If you were to send a mass email I would probably read it.	If I got a phone call I would be fine with that. Text would be okay, but I might ignore it. It isn't as immediate if I get a text.	Flyers and emails. I only check my school email about once a week. I only have about 4-5 emails a week.	Flyers	Facebook. Twitter. Follow-up: Do you follow any other UNC organizations on Twitter? UNC Confessions
Korean Language Club. I work at the Alumni Center	Usually just through other people, word of mouth. From my friend who is a Japanese exchange student. They post events on Facebook. The Alumni Center communicates with me through email.	Usually through BearMail or flyers. I see flyers at the UC, the dining halls, and in classroom buildings around campus.	No	The weekly emails from UNC. The library could put it in their section. The weekly student e-newsletter. Maybe Facebook.	Email or even text would be good for that. Text will get your attention right away. Email is immediate too. I check text more than email. Sometimes you get so many emails that you get behind and have to click on them.	Definitely email. Email is good for school stuff. Part of the newsletter or regular BearMail would be good for all these things. I prefer the newsletter because it helps me to keep in organized and have all my events in one place.	Just email. Follow-up: Have you liked any other organizations at UNC? The main UNC page and the Nursing page	If there's something huge, sometimes they put things in everybody's mailboxes. Postcards or little flyers in your mailbox. Usually I learn about things like apply for housing date, but it could be something about a library event.
Note-taking for DSS, it's a volunteer job	My teachers and professors ask students if they want to do that. I email my notes to the professors. Follow-up: Have you liked any campus organizations on Facebook? No	I see flyers on the boards in the hallways. In Candelaria and Ross, where my classes are. I get emails about volunteer work and campus activities in BearMail. I	I was in an English class and we had to go into the library and get a feel for how to use the website. Had an instruction section in the library that was part of an English class.	The flyers in the elevators. Maybe emailing us through our BearMail. Follow-up: Do you read the weekly student e-newsletter? No, would want an individual email	You're doing great with that. I get the emails from you already. I prefer email because I check my email all the time. Students who don't check their email	Have people around campus promoting (like here recruiting for the survey). In-person table. Flyers as well in areas where students are, where it catches their eye.	Email or handouts, because students don't always pay attention to the flyer boards. I only see them when I'm waiting for classes.	No

		check BearMail almost every day.			should get a text.			
None	N/A	Orientation Flyers across campus Flyers on the bulletin board in Ross Hall	No	Email is good.	Email	Email	Maybe social media Facebook	No. Email works the best for me. Maybe text messages if they are short. No one wants to read a long text message.
Community Council at Wilson Hall. Involved in RHA [Resident Hall Association] HHS Student Council [Humanities and Social Sciences]	Student Involvement Fair Posters in the dorms Flyers Emails	Emails from my advisors	No, I am here all the time. I do get emails about my checked out books Flyers in the elevators. That's how I knew about laptop checkout	No calls! Save paper Email or the website would be best	Email works best. Send reminders about the hours. Social media might work.	Email with reminders. Weekly e-newsletter to students "Around Campus"	I am always at the library so I see what going on when I am here. Change the electronic sign. It has the same things all the time so I quit reading it.	Not that I can think of. Maybe text messages if it could be short text about events.
Stryker McNair Scholars CHE African Students Association Use to work for ASA [Academic Support and Advising]	Orientation Word of mouth CHE presentations	I talk to people. When I hear about something then I'll go to that office to get more information.	Through CHE I learned about the Library 150 course and got a lot of information in that course.	Email Signs The webpage is not helpful	Email	Email is still the best. Maybe some flyers Computer screens	Email	Texting for specific events. Maybe even texts when the hours have changed.
UNC figure skating team	Facebook page for the club Facebook page for club sport in general Email	Facebook I prefer email and texts	Emails when my books come in from Prospector Signs at the computers In person, from my roommates	In person (word of mouth) Email More communication campus wide. Bulletin boards at Ross or the UC Teachers could pass the information along to their classes	Email works very well.	Post flyers Bookmarks Book sale bookmarks with the dates are great.	Word of mouth. Post more information at the UC Get information to Central Campus	Social media…maybe Snapchat

Ghosts of UNC	Student Involvement Fair Word of mouth	Flyers and signs	At Orientation	Text messages but no more than once a week	Text messages	Text messages The flyers posted around are sometimes out of date so I don't even look at them anymore.	Text messages	No
Football	Recruited from Illinois to play here	I am involved in the Bridge Program In the classroom. [Name] Lib150 class was great. A sort of University 101 course helped a lot.	Lib150 Online information about software.	Email. There are still wireless problems on the 2nd floor.	Email Text messages	Text messages that maybe have a link to a flyer that could be read on your phone.	Text messages Flyers outside the libraries The flyers at the dining halls. [Table tents]	Text Email Flyers
Guitar ensembleClub Tennis	Guitar ensemble: go out and pursue itMusic - information is on PVA's websiteGuitar group - corresponds via emailClub Tennis: I went to the athletic dept and askedTennis - calls members	emailstudent weekly email	none	signs and flyers on the circ deskbroadcast visually	email	in personadvertiseh and out flyers	email	be more concerned about due dates
opera/theatre ACDA (American Choral Directors Association)	opera: FB or email choir: email ACDA: announcement at weekly meetings	email	email	email	email	email	email* *Would like a personal, separate email for each thing and from each group, such as the library, rather than the weekly campus student email, which I never look at.	something like "this week in the library" sent via email
UNC Running Club	texts FB email	email	nothing	email	email	email	email library weekly notice	no

CKI (Circle K International)	FB	email flyers	no	posters in the library	email	"this week on campus" student email flyers	FB (but is not a Friend of the library's FB page) email	not that we haven't discussed
performances events in the residence halls hula dancing	word of mouth posters in residence halls	residence halls email	email about a late book	posters/flyers in the library - on the front doors and on both sides so you see them when you come in and again when you go out	email alerts and text alerts, and 5 days before the due date	emails texts posters	posters in residence halls email	FB or Instagram - show what it looks like Not a Friend of the library FB page
Christian group at UNC. Was RA for Weibking and Turner halls	flyers on campus. Facebook. Mass text messages. Prefers phone calls and texts -- can read texts quickly.	bear mail. FB for special events.	Due dates for materials -- received via email.	Email. Signs at the doorway or displays at designated times (not all the time). Prompts by students at the circulation desk.	Email is most effective. Check it regularly. Used to getting Library info from there. Upcoming release emails for DVD (new TV shows or movies). Email, for sure.	I don't read the What's Happening at UNC emails. So much information that it's hard to catch the eye and find what is important to me.	Same as above. Could follow on FB. Associate fun stuff with social media.	Swag and snacks. It helps to have incentives!