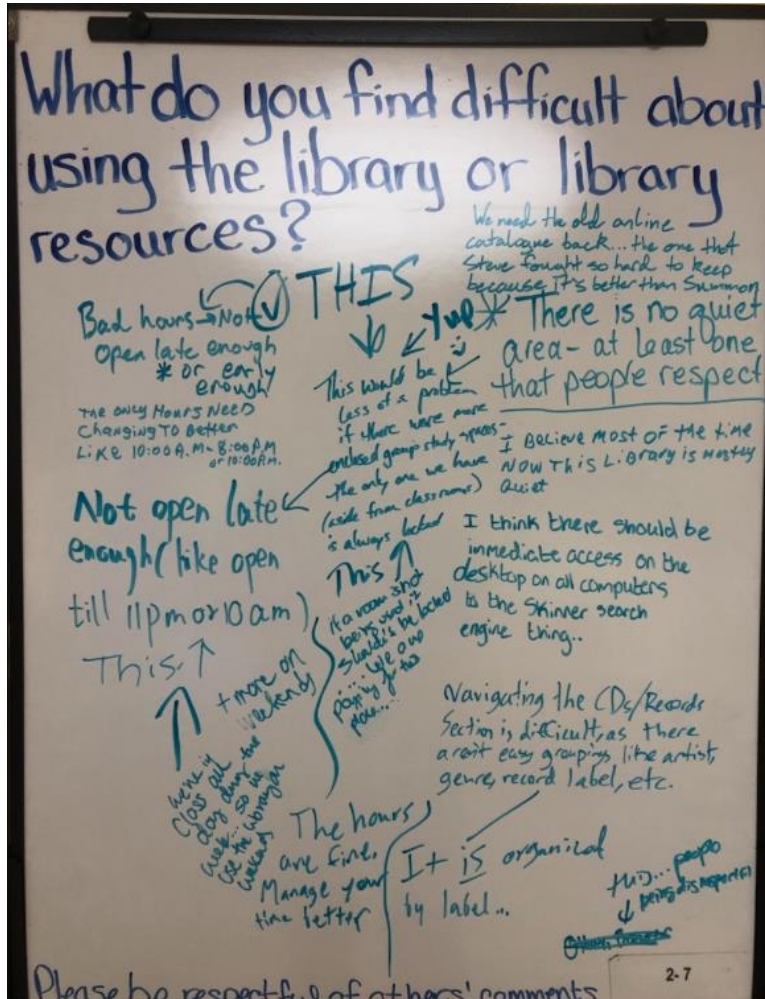


University of Northern Colorado Libraries Assessment Committee Report

2019-2020



Committee Members:

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Image from Skinner Music Library - Week 1 Whiteboard Question

INTRODUCTION

Each year, the University Libraries Assessment Committee pursues a project to guide decision-making throughout the Libraries. Last year, in the 2018/19 academic year, the committee coordinated the fifth implementation of the LibQUAL® survey at UNC's University Libraries (the Libraries) as it has done every 3 years since 2007. This well-established multiple choice and yet complex online instrument produces normed data about libraries from all over the world. The structure of the survey is designed for replicability and generalization across those many libraries, with even the optional "local questions" phrased for the broadest possible setting and use. Every implementation of that survey at UNC has generated at least a handful of comments about how complicated, complex, difficult, and confusing it is to complete. Therefore, in response, the committee chose to go to the opposite end of the data-gathering spectrum for the 2019/2020 year. We knew that the qualitative results of simple whiteboard queries could directly inform the committee and Libraries administration about specific aspects of our own, location- and population-based circumstances.

This report outlines the implementation of a month-long project focusing on how to make the Libraries better for our patrons, including spaces, collections, and services.

BACKGROUND

Assessment projects in recent years have often included the method of asking patrons to respond to one or more questions on a whiteboard posted in a central location in Michener Library. Participation and responses have been edifying, particularly when the question prompts text-based answers, not simply a tick-mark. This qualitative data has a number of appeals, including the chance for patrons to respond to the answers of others. The image on the cover of this report is a good example of this amplifying response. Sometimes respondents will simply place a check-mark or a "Me too!". Occasionally respondents will provide greater, more nuanced, but still amplifying information. It was this chance to tap into the collective mind of those who enter our buildings that prompted the use of whiteboards (physical and virtual) for the 2019/2020 project.

METHOD

To collect data on general customer satisfaction with the University Libraries' resources and services, the Assessment Committee members designed a series of questions displayed on whiteboards at the Skinner Music Library and the James A. Michener library between February 3 and March 1, 2020. Information about the project was shared through the University Libraries' social media channels. It was also integrated into online learning objects for distance education students. In addition to in-person data collection, the same questions were distributed to distance library users via Padlet linked to the website for the Libraries, the Archives, and Skinner Music Library. During the data collection period, the following questions were posed, with the frequency of one question each week:

Week	Question (Whiteboard and Padlet)
1	What do you find difficult about using the libraries or library resources?
2	Do the libraries provide what you need, online and/or in person?
3	What role do the libraries and library resources play in achieving your goals?
4	If you were in charge, how would you make library services better?

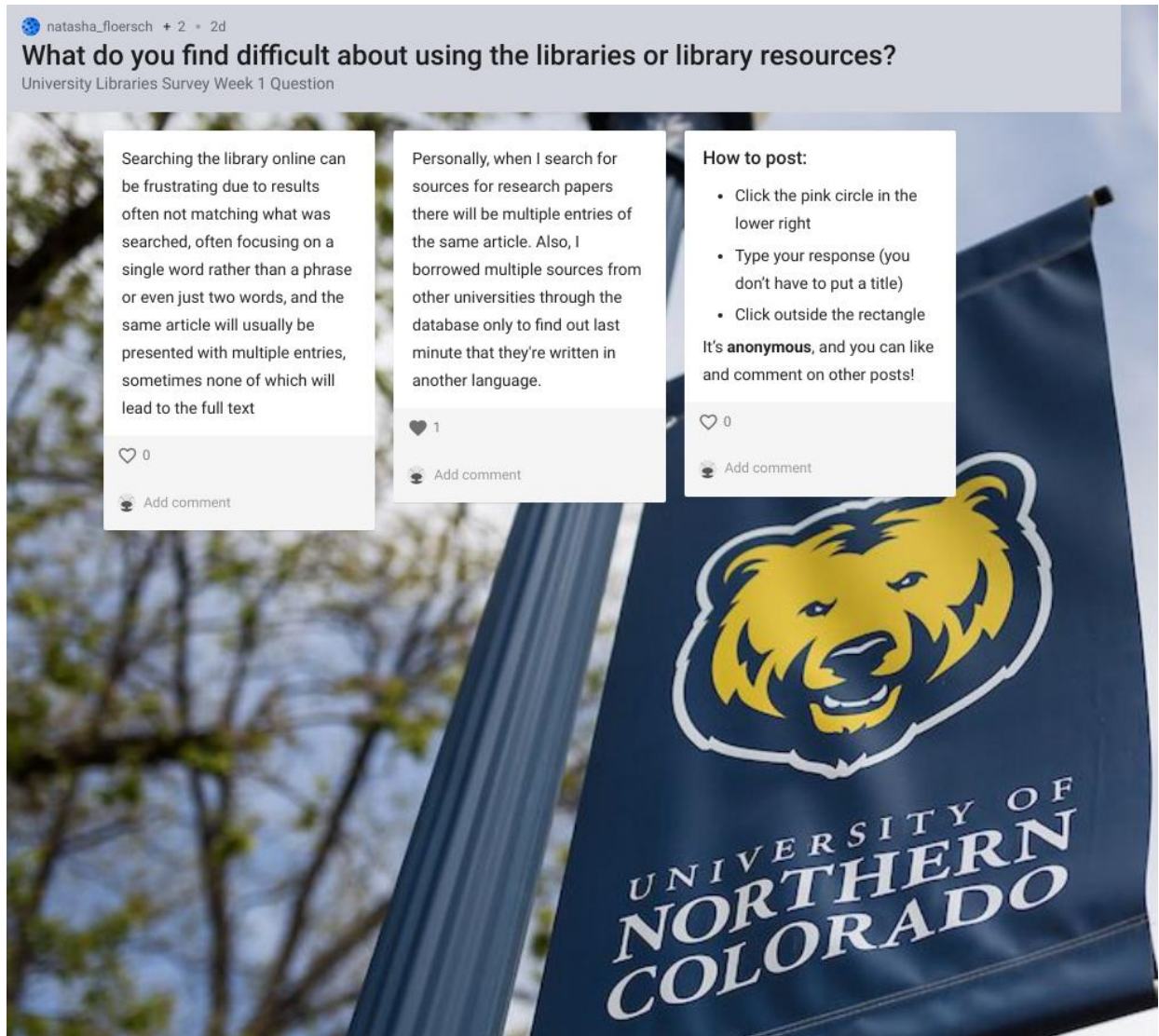


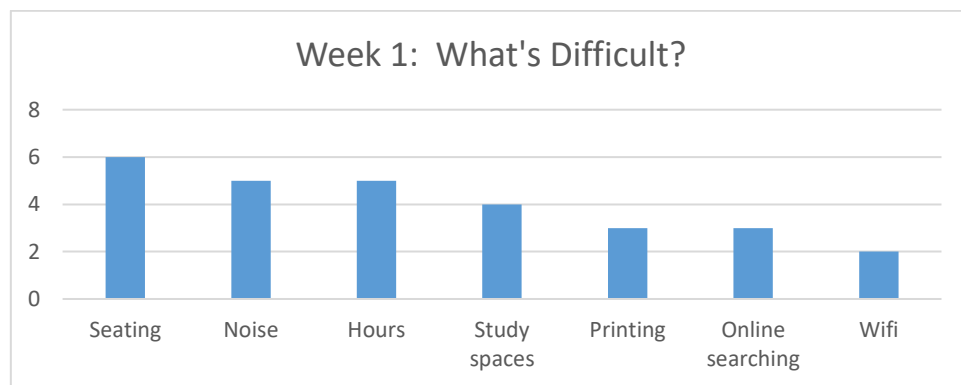
Image from Padlet - Week 1 Question

LIMITATIONS

The project is limited in a number of ways, including that data was collected only from those who visit the physical library locations or the Libraries website, the questions were posed only in English, and the method of inquiry and response was visual/textual, excluding those with impaired vision.

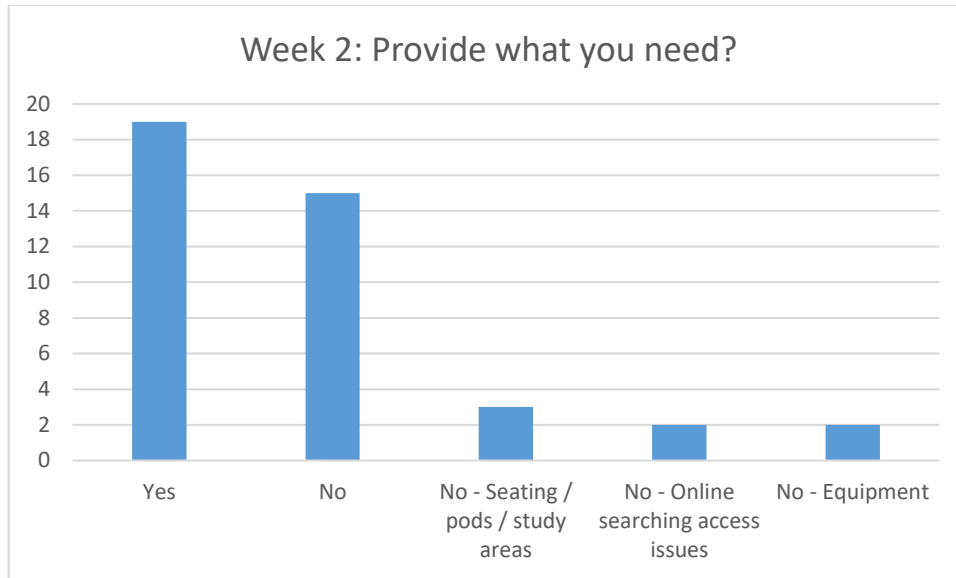
RESULTS

Each week's data is summarized below. For complete raw data, please see the appendix. Images of the whiteboards for all weeks are available upon request.



The Week 1 question, posed from February 3 to February 9, was "What do you find difficult about using the Libraries or library resources?"

There were 41 total responses, including 6 marks indicating agreement with previous responses. A large number of comments from the Michener and Skinner whiteboards focused on the physical environment at the Libraries, with comments about furniture, noise, study spaces, and open hours. The Padlet comments, as well as a few of the whiteboard comments, focused on the Libraries' online research tools. Printing and Wi-Fi were also topics of whiteboard comments.



The Week 2 question, posed from February 10 to 16, was “Do the Libraries provide what you need, in person and online?”

There were 33 tick marks on the whiteboard in Michener (18 positive and 15 negative), plus 14 comments (five about resources the Libraries currently offers and nine about resources the Libraries should provide or improve). There was one positive response on the whiteboard in Skinner Music Library, and there were two comments containing mixed responses via Padlet.

Positive feedback highlighted the free and varied materials in the Libraries as well as the atmosphere and employees.

Suggestions included additional equipment and supplies, more comfortable study areas, and improved functionality of online research tools.

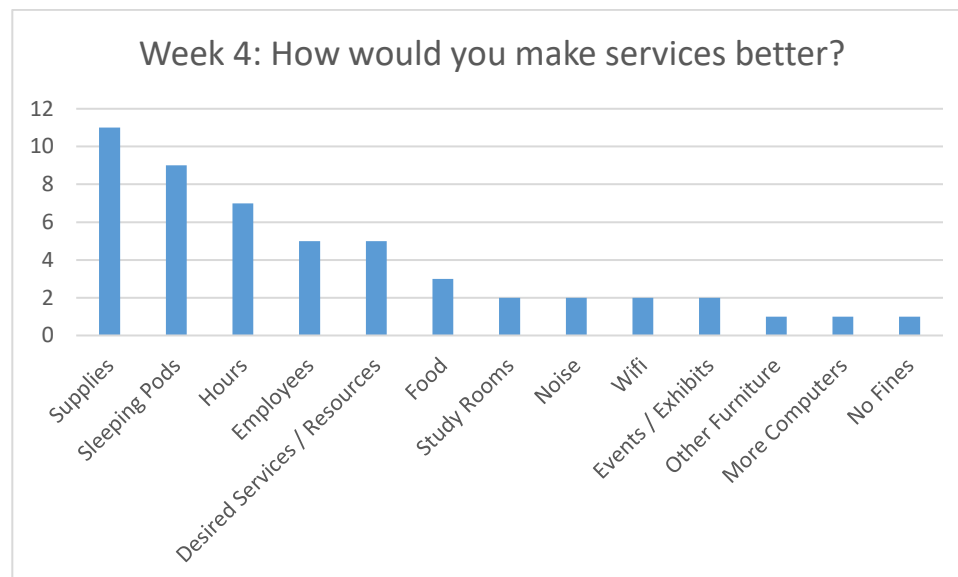


The Week 3 question, posed from February 17 to February 23, was “What role do the Libraries and Library Resources play in achieving your goals?”

There were 24 total responses. This number included both initial comments and others’ responses to those comments. The largest number of comments on a single topic (10) pertained to library space in general. All of these comments were positive, and 5 noted the quiet aspect of both Michener and Skinner libraries.

Nine responses related to various resources and materials offered by the Libraries. Four comments specified books. Respondents also appreciated being able to access articles, online resources, recordings, Late Night Study, computers, and SPSS software (1 each). One comment mentioned both Wi-Fi and access to resources the respondent could not afford. This comment received two “likes,” indicating that Wi-Fi and/or cost savings may be important to multiple students.

Three comments related to people and/or library departments (1 general, 2 specific), and two related to printing. All were positive.



The Week 4 question, posed from February 24 to March 1, was “If you were in charge, how would you make library services better?”

There were 51 total responses, the most of any week. This number included both initial comments and others’ responses to those comments. The largest number of comments on a single topic (11) pertained to supplies that respondents wished were available in Michener Library. Four comments specified a single item. One simply said, “More supplies,” to which another respondent wrote, “What kind?”, resulting in a list of 6 more items.

The next highest number of responses (10) related to furniture in Michener Library. One commenter asked for more sleep pods, with 8 subsequent responses agreeing; and another requested more comfortable chairs and laptop plugs.

There were a large number of responses mentioning Michener Library hours. One comment asked for the library to be open 24 hours, with 4 subsequent responses agreeing. Two others requested longer hours (one including the coffee cart).

Several responses also mentioned library employees in general, including hiring more staff and better training for student employees (1 each). One Skinner Music Library respondent wrote, “Keep all of our staff,” with a second respondent endorsing this comment.

Five comments related to resources and materials that respondents wished the Libraries would offer, including the ability to record music and songs in the recording studio, and longer hours for the Boomerang shuttle that stops outside Michener Library. Respondents in Skinner Music Library asked for the old catalog to be brought back, easier online searching, and a material recommendation system (1 each).

Other topics had fewer comments (2 each), but are noteworthy because they reflect findings from other surveys and Assessment Committee activities. Respondents asked for more study rooms or for the rooms to be unlocked. They also noted that the first and second floors tend to be noisy, and better Wi-Fi is needed on the third floor.

Lastly, there were a few responses about offering food (3) and more events/student art displays (2) in Michener Library. One respondent requested additional computers, and one asked for late fines to be eased (the Libraries eliminated late fees earlier this year).

ANALYSIS

JAMES A. MICHENER LIBRARY

Respondents provided positive feedback and noted a few areas that might be improved. Issues such as Wi-Fi connection appeared as both a helpful resource to achieve goals and a noted problem. Noise was also an issue for which respondents report a mixed bag: some find the library to be a quiet environment, others complained that it’s too noisy and more quiet areas are needed. Similarly, regarding furniture, respondents approved of some items (e.g., study pods), disliked others (e.g., computer chairs), and requested new, more comfortable ones (e.g., couches, sleeping pods). Also, the archives was positively mentioned twice, indicating that recent outreach efforts may be raising visibility.

Areas of most concern:

- Furniture, in particular, sleeping pods and more comfortable chairs
- Need for more general supplies, such as pens, markers, highlighters, etc.
- Although respondents appreciated the variety of both physical and online resources available to them, some reported difficulty with online searching for articles and in Encore
- Desire for 24 hour access (or at least expanded hours)

SKINNER MUSIC LIBRARY

As in Michener, respondents appreciated the study space and resources afforded by Skinner. However, they also noted several areas that could be improved. Respondents complained about noise, requested enclosed study spaces, and complained that the single study room is always locked. They also asked for longer hours. In addition, as at Michener, several comments mentioned difficulty with online searching.

Areas of most concern:

- Need for expanded hours
- Need for enclosed study spaces, including complaints that the single study room is always locked
- Complaints about noise
- Searching/finding resources

Padlet

Of the 8 comments on Padlet, 4 complained about searching for materials online. These complaints were all posted within the first two weeks (February 3-16), when there were at least two known technical issues with EBSCO databases and Summon. One of these comments noted that the Archives' website works well. The other four comments contained suggestions for a recording studio, expanded Boomerang (campus bus) access, and training student employees. One respondent left positive comments about library space and online resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Within this assessment project, patron comments were largely consistent with feedback we have received in previous surveys and evaluations. In analyzing the Michener, Skinner, and Padlet comments as a whole, the top overall themes concerned furniture, supplies, access to online resources, and various aspects about library buildings and spaces. These themes are discussed here as recommendations.

Furniture

Providing comfortable and appropriate furniture has always been a library concern for patrons. We strive to provide a variety of furniture in different configurations to meet a variety of patron needs. Patron concerns about the furniture vary with their preferences, but there is somewhat of a consensus that the wood chairs are uncomfortable and the library needs more furniture conducive for sleeping. However, a more detailed discussion and assessment of the furniture will be needed to determine our furniture needs (i.e. do we want to provide spaces to sleep?), arrangement, which furniture to replace, and what new furniture to purchase.

Free Supplies

Comments asking for more office supplies to be available in the library are consistent with questions that have been received at the service desks. The Libraries currently provide pencils, pens, and highlighters free of charge for patrons. Because patrons fairly consistently ask for office supplies, we should at least explore whether providing additional supplies is feasible for the libraries. Questions to consider may include: which supplies should we provide; can we provide them for free, or charge a fee; if we charge for supplies, what will the process be?

Access to Online Resources

The comments pertaining to the inability to access online resources were of particular concern to the committee. Technical issues do sometimes occur when accessing online resources. Sometimes the

technical issue lies with the end-user equipment, and sometimes it's a larger problem that the Libraries need to address. Regardless of the cause, we want to know about technical issues so we can provide patrons with the resources that they need. Exploring ways to communicate to patrons that we are here to help with technology issues, and providing easier methods for patrons to report issues could empower them to report more technology issues and get them resolved faster.

Expanded Hours

Requests for Michener and Skinner Libraries to extend hours of operation are also not new to the Libraries. We've addressed this by creating "Late Night Study" that allows for students to utilize study space and computers in Michener Library from midnight to 3am. Attendance numbers will help us determine if we are meeting patron needs or if we need to expand our hours.

Study Rooms

Many of the other comments about Skinner Library pertained to finding quiet study spaces in the building. While we have added individual study rooms in Michener over the last few years to address this need, the Skinner library building is smaller and presents more challenges to creating quiet individual study spaces.

Appendix

All responses, unedited

	<p>Week 1: What do you find difficult about using the Libraries or library resources?</p>
Michener	Lots of older uncomfortable tables and chairs.
	Not enough plugs for computers
	Chairs are uncomfortable and hurt my back
	I can't check out the books I want!!
	I am pregnant and I don't feel good. Can we get a couple comfy couches?
	The internet is pretty spotty. +1
	Printing is way too expensive
	Comfy seats for computers plz
	Sometimes it's hard to focus because a lot of people tend to be very loud but yet the library don't do anything about it! [a side comment reads "go to the third floor"]
	The fact that there is no hold punch near the basement printer
	Printing is expensive
	Pretty disappointed that we didn't get printing \$ this time, but I do like working and meeting people here, it's a good place to be and helpful for getting my classwork and research done
	The online resources in the library are not readily made known to students. Can we have signs explaining these resources?
	Hard to find DVDs thru the Summons system
	There aren't nearly enough designated quiet areas, so it's very hard to focus when I need to
It's hard to sleep at night because the security guard keeps kicking me out	
References, R. Brennan. "USAU Rule Book." UNCO. 2020-2021. www.unco.edu.unc.ultimatefrisbeecoed2020//59236831973.com . Cutting in Ultimate Frisbee requires proper accuracy, intuition and timing. When cutting- the act of running towards or away from the disc, on a USAU secified field- it is important to look before you run. It is improper to make your cut when another one of your teammates is also cutting to the same space. If this happens, President Brennan says, "There is a 78 percent chance that you will run into your teammate," [see USAU Rule Book mandate (page 78).] To correctly cut one must check to see that they are on the "open" [USAU, pg 78] side of the field. Provided that they are, the must then confirm the cutting space in which the wish to move is unoccupied by their fellow teammates. Once these measures have been tacken, the cutter- player wishing to cut- may then proceed to run at a slight diagnal towards or away from the handler- the thrower. [spelling/grammatical mistakes maintained]	
Padlet	Searching the library online can be frustrating due to results often not matching what was searched, often focusing on a single word rather than a phrase or even just two words, and the same article will usually be presented with multiple entries, sometimes none of which will lead to the full text
	Personally, when I search for sources for research papers there will be multiple entries of the same article. Also, I borrowed multiple sources from other universities through the database only to find out last minute that they're written in another language.

Skinner	Bad hours—not open late enough or early enough +1
	The only hours need changing to better like 10:00 am to 8:00 pm or 10:00 pm
	Not open late enough (like open till 11:00 pm or 10:00 pm) + more on weekends +1
	We need the old online catalog back...the one that Steve fought so hard to keep because it's better than Summon
	There is no quiet area—at least on that people respect
	I think there should be immediate access on the desktop on all computers to the Skinner search engine thing
	Navigating the CDs/records section is difficult, as there aren't easy groupings like artist, genre, record label, etc.
	More enclosed group study spaces—the only one we have (aside from classrooms) is always locked +3
	If a room's not being used it shouldn't be locked...we are paying for this place...
	Have open access computers in the stacks for quick reference
	We might need a vending machine
	Not enough open hours
	Newer headphones
	Not enough cozy chairs/spaces +1
	No truly quiet areas
Too loud/people goofing off in lobby	

	Week 2: Do the libraries provide what you need, in person and online?
Michener	Yes: 18 ✓
	No: 15 ✓
	Everyone is nice
	Great atmosphere
	Rentable touch screen pens for the poor art people like me
	Laptops that you can use outside the library
	Better couches
	TV launch(?) room
	More study pods!
	It's free! Right?
	Y'all got so many movies
	Better coffee
	Can y'all be quiet on the 2nd floor?
	Coffee & books, What's not to like?
More comfortable study(?) areas (like the 2 study pods)	
Padlet	I use the library all the time, on and offline. I've never had an issue finding what I need. Still, there have been server issues that have made it nearly impossible to request a book in advance. The archives and special editions offices are always on top of things as well, and their website works perfectly well, from my experience.
	The library does well providing what is needed in person. However, as of late, it has failed tremendously online. Unrelated to UNC's regular internet issues, the library's online search

	engine has had repeated issues even showing students articles. Likewise, encore has been having its own difficulties for weeks which makes it unusable.
Skinner	One response: Yes!

	Week 3: What role do the Libraries and Library Resources play in achieving your goals?
Michener	History major says: You could knock the entire library down except for the second floor and I would still graduate- second floor is best floor
	Jay and the archives are awesome!
	I met some pretty inspiring people here that motivate me
	Books are my safe space
	Can get all of my textbooks here or on loan!
	I don't always have a computer, and I am a horrible procrastinator. Computers and late night study save me!
	Great place to focus
	The library is the only place I actually get work done
	Great place to nap
	Research dept is awesome!! Very helpful
	Access to wifi and resources that I can't afford to purchase myself [possibly 2 "thumbs up" or "likes" for this]
	Great place to study without too much noise or distractions
	I print things here. I would use the computers more if the chairs were more comfortable
	The library provides me with papers for my literature reviews and other books I need for research
	It has provided quiet environment for studies and brainstorming with research partner
The library provides me with access to IBM's SPSS program so I can do my statistics homework for PSY 120 (extended campus student)	
It provides a quiet study space that allows me to get into an academic headspace that optimizes my work here. Thanks for being safe and quiet.	
Padlet	The library gives me a quiet place to work, as well as multiple online resources that I need to write my papers effectively.
Skinner	A place to study/be since the music building doesn't have any good space for that
	Letting me print things
	Books
	I love the library of recordings
	Being a quiet and calm place to study for music school

	Week 4: If you were in charge, how would you make library services better?
Michener	Have more events
	Offer more study rooms
	Don't lock the study rooms
	Tissues pls
	Open 24 hrs (Yes x3; This idea is fine; Or open earlier/stay open later not just for finals)
	Hire people to do graveyard shifts (all floors included) (Yes x2)
	Sell pens
	Sleep pods for catching a few zzz's between classes (Yes x7; This is genius)
	More computers on 3rd floor. The first + second are too loud sometimes.
	Actually help control noise levels. First floor is for socializing & Second is for study & some chit chat, but sometimes the second floor gets out of hand. Pls help!
	More clorox wipes
	More whiteboards + markers
	Longer library hours, with coffee stand open later and on <u>weekends</u>
	More comfortable chairs, more laptop plugs
	Chill with the fines for returning something late
	Better wifi on 3rd floor! (I second that!)
	Free snacks sometimes? :) (yes)
Pizza sale	
Student art galleries more	
More supplies for students [What kind of supplies?] pens; highlighters; post-its (small for TB); flash cards; lined paper (loose); hole punch	
Padlet	[Title: Let us record!] I would set maybe an hour or so a day or a couple of days a week where students can use the recording studio to record songs and/or music. It's very inconvenient that arts majors or people interested in music aren't able to actually use the recording studio in the way that they need to. Especially for auditions and such. There's nowhere else to go for this. Or perhaps the library could offer a suggestion for a different location that is also free and accessible to students.
	i would have the boomerang run till 4 or later on all days since the library s open till midnight on weekdays. I've missed the boomerang several times coming out of the DRC on a Tuesday. I'd like to spend more time in the library, but its hard for me to get across campus as a disabled person.
	I would train the student staff so they have a more thorough knowledge of library because each time I ask, they never seem to know how the books are organized
Skinner	Keep all of our staff (another person drew an arrow toward this and wrote "x17")
	More intuitive and easier internet search for materials
	Bring back the old catalog system
	Have a material recommendation system to guide users in learning more about our interests