Using Assessment to Improve Library Services

Daphne Flanagan, University Librarian
dflanagan@aus.edu

American University of Sharjah

- 6000 students
- Co-educational
- College of Engineering / College of Arts & Sciences / College of Architecture, Art & Design / School of Business Administration
- American-style curriculum

AUS Library

- SEATING FOR 900 STUDENTS
- 140,000 PRINT AND MEDIA
- 180,000 EBOOKS
- 50+ ELECTRONIC DATABASES

AUS Library

- 135+ DESKTOP COMPUTERS
- 45+ LAPTOPS TO CHECKOUT
- GROUP STUDY ROOMS
- PRESENTATION ROOMS

AUS Library

Library Use

- 19,000 weekly gate count
- 3000+ students attend research skills instruction annually
- 820,000+ full-text retrievals last year

Why do we assess?

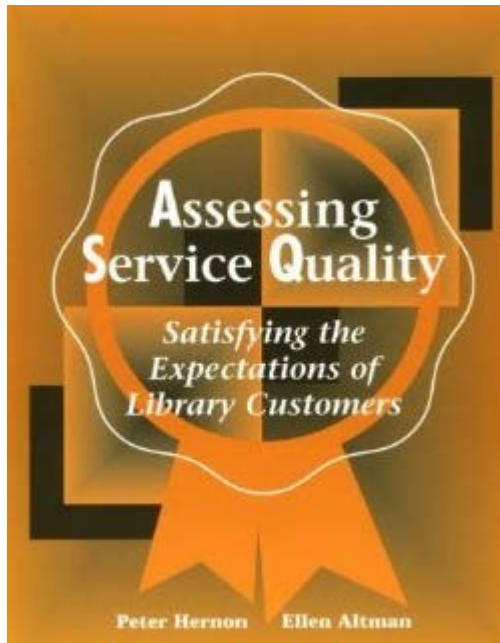Desire to solve problems and develop new knowledge
Create or improve services
Prove library impact
Measure effectiveness and user satisfaction
Maintain successes
Increase or decrease services or resources
Improve subsequent assessment projects

"*Customers are more than a source for data collection; they are the reason for libraries' existence. It is important (if not essential) to listen to, and learn from, customers and to use the insights gained to improve services.*"

Peter Hernon and Ellen Altman

COMMENTS COMPLAINTS COMPLIMENTS

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH
LIBRARY

Comments
Complaints
Compliments ...

I JUST WANTED 2
SAY THANK YOU 2
THE WONDERFUL STAFF
YOU HAVE ♥♥
A.K.A.

Your comments MAY be posted on this public bulletin board

20/9/08

Our reply ...

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH
LIBRARY

27/03/2010

Comments
Complaints
Compliments ...

i be shuddering.
pls adjust the
thermostat

Your comments MAY be posted on this public bulletin board

Our reply ...

Dear Student, You are right about the cold temperature in the library. Some of the study/media rooms have manual temperature controls that you can adjust. For the overall library, we are working with the building engineers to adjust the temperature; however, this is an ongoing problem here during the warmer months of the year. Please bring a sweater, just in case. Sally Crosby scrosby@aus.edu

What makes the CCC successful?

- Simple and easy
- Anonymity
- Prompt, sincere responses
- Transparency
- Review of comments with staff input
- Closing the loop, make changes when you can

LibQUAL

- Web-based survey from ARL
- 3200 USD
- Gap-analysis survey
- Every 4 years

Measures:

- Affect of service
- Information control
- Library as place

When it comes to...	My Minimum Service Level Is	My Desired Service Level Is	Perceived Service Performance Is	
	Low ———— High	Low ———— High	Low ———— High	N/A

Affect of service

Information control

Library as place

1) Employees who instill confidence in users
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

2) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

3) Library space that inspires study and learning
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

4) Giving users individual attention
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

5) A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

6) Ability to navigate library Web pages easily
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

7) Employees who are consistently courteous
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

8) The printed library materials I need for my work
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

9) Quiet space for individual activities
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

10) Readiness to respond to users' questions
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

11) The electronic information resources I need
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

12) Adequate hours of service
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | N/A

Satisfaction

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

28) The library helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

29) The library aids my advancement in my academic discipline or work.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

30) The library enables me to be more efficient in my academic pursuits or work.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

31) The library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

32) The library provides me with the information skills I need in my work or study.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

33) In general, I am satisfied with the way in which I am treated at the library.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

34) In general, I am satisfied with library support for my learning, research, and/or teaching needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

35) How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided by the library?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Extremely Poor — Extremely Good

LibQUAL major findings:

- Overall satisfaction is excellent
- Noise is an issue
- Website needs improvement
- Faculty want more resources

Studying students: an ethnographic study

- Based on the University of Rochester's study

- Collaborated with LAU, AUP, and AUC

- Mapping Exercise and Photo Survey

- Recruited 8 students – 22 photos

Solutions

Google
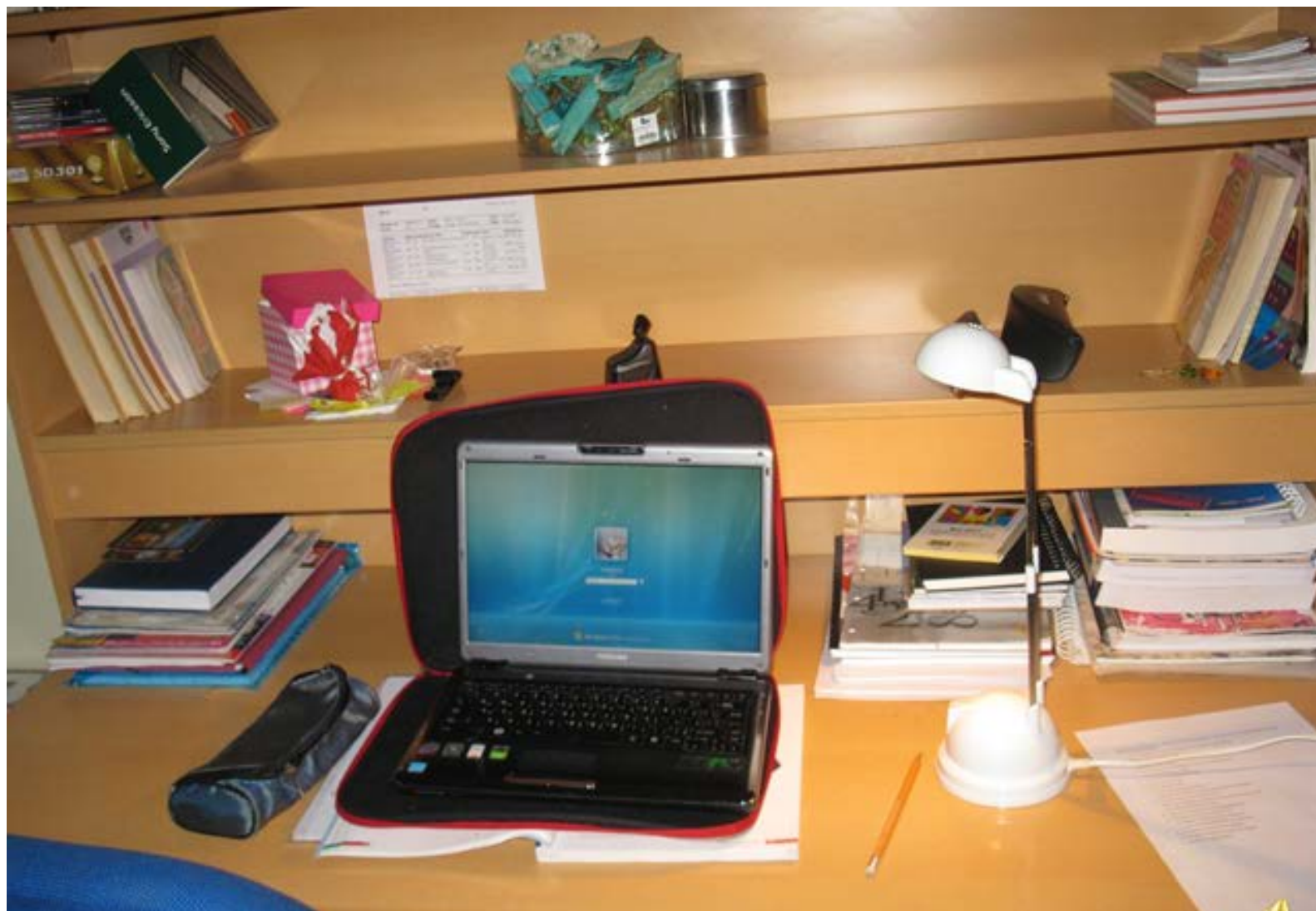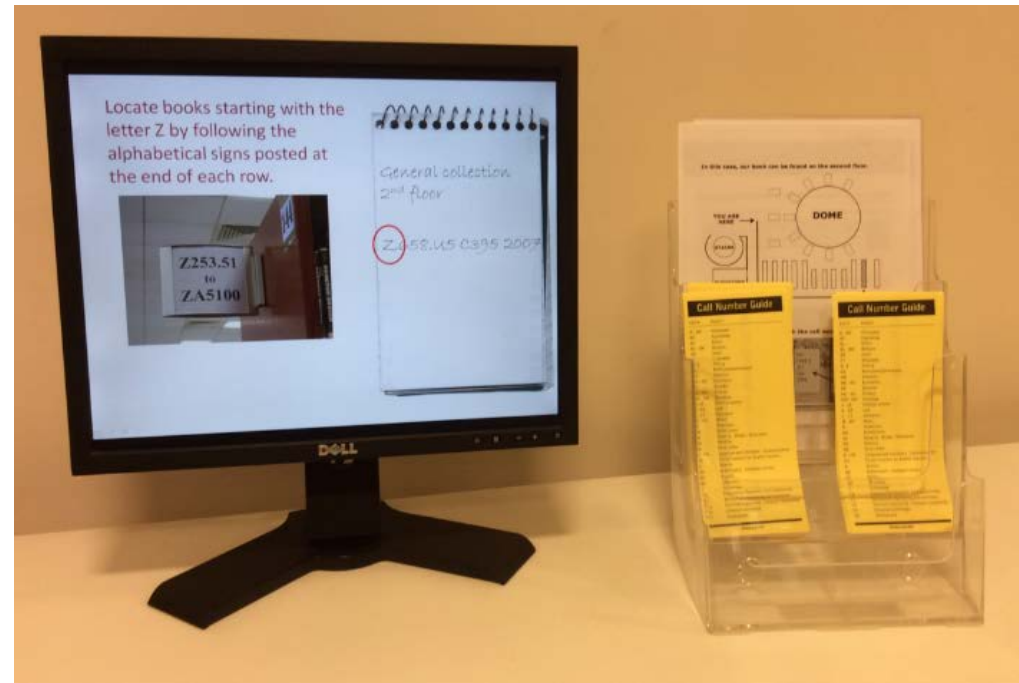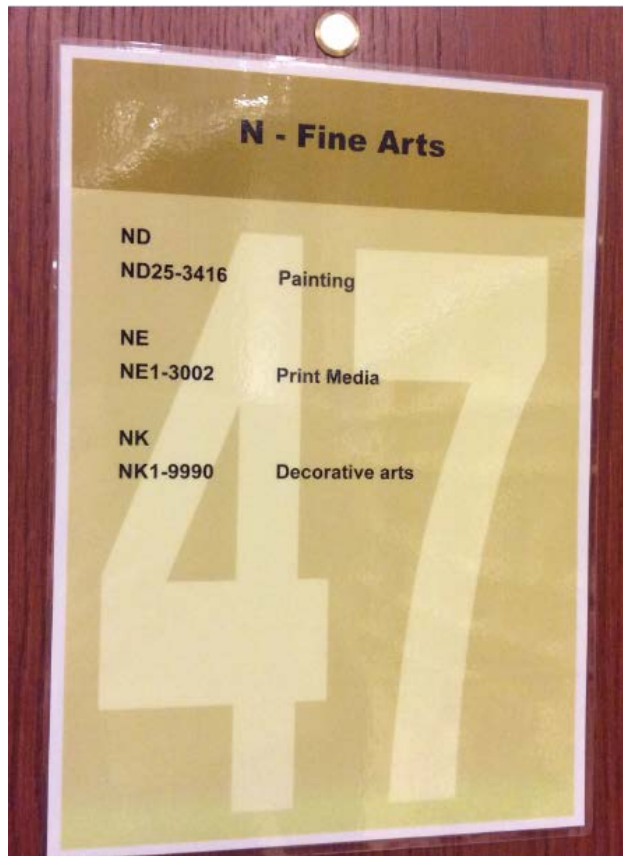
AUS · AUS Library · Mailspot · AUS Banner · Blackboard Learn · AUS IT FAQ · AUS IT Help Desk

Start Over | Place Hold | Add to My Lists | Save Records | MARC Display | New Search

RECORD # ▾ | b1361202 | Search

☐ Limit search to available items

Reviews & More

More Resources:

Locate *Ethnographic fieldwork : an anthropological reader* in

General Collection Map

Title Ethnographic fieldwork : an anthropological reader / edited by Antonius C.G.M. Robben and Jeffrey A. Sluka.

Publisher Malden, MA : Blackwell Pub., c2007.

LOCATION	CALL #	STATUS
General - 2nd Fl	GN346 .E675 2007	DUE 05-02-15

BOOK

College of Engineering

Prayer Room

Women's Phone Zone

Fire exit

Library Catalog

Fire exit

Seminar room 1 | Seminar room 2

YOU ARE HERE

DOME

Quiet Study Area

STAIRS

YOUR BOOK IS HERE

Library Catalog

Fire exit

A i r p o r t   R o a d
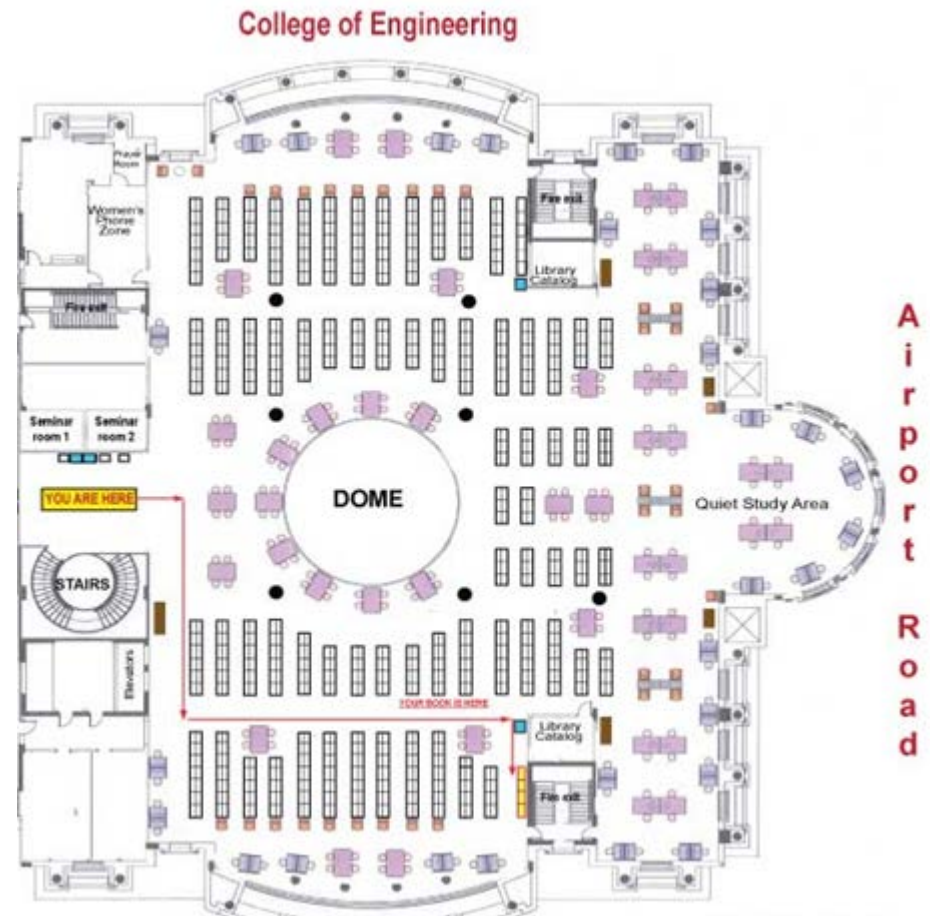
Students need many
different learning spaces

Research Help Desk (RHD)

Research Help Services

- What is the level of student awareness?

- How do students prefer to communicate with librarians?

- Where do students seek research help?

- How satisfied are students?

Methods used

Surveys (online & paper)

Focus Groups

Initial Findings

- Students prefer to communicate with a librarian in person

- Students seek help from friends before approaching the RHD

- High satisfaction rate

- Possible need for assistance on the weekends

- Students seek research help at other service points in the library

Action taken

Research Help Desk
1st Floor-Library

researchhelp@aus.edu

06 515 2277

Ask A Librarian
library.aus.edu

- Changed our email address

- Additional and more prominent links from our homepage

- Weekend "Ask a Librarian" coverage

- RHD outreach to schools on campus

Other Considerations

- Students or respondents being allergic to surveys

- Identify best time to engage respondents

- Join campus-wide initiatives if possible

- Ensure you close the loop by taking action

Further Reading

Click, A., Stopel, M., Alam, M.T., Kreidieh, S., Flanagan, D., Foster, N.F., and Ray, K. (2012) Studying Students across Borders: An Ethnographic Study of Research Behavior, *International Journal of Library Science*, 05(1): 1-13.

Hernon, P. and Altman, E. (2010). *Assessing service quality: Satisfying the expectations of library customers*. Chicago : American Library Association.

Murphy, S.A. (2014). *The quality infrastructure : measuring, analyzing, and improving library services*. Chicago : American Library Association.

Nelson, W.N. and Fernekes, R.W. (2002). *Standards and Assessment for Academic Libraries: A Workbook*. Chicago : American Library Association.