

Conant Library Annual Report

2018-2019

Submitted

by Jim Douglas, Director

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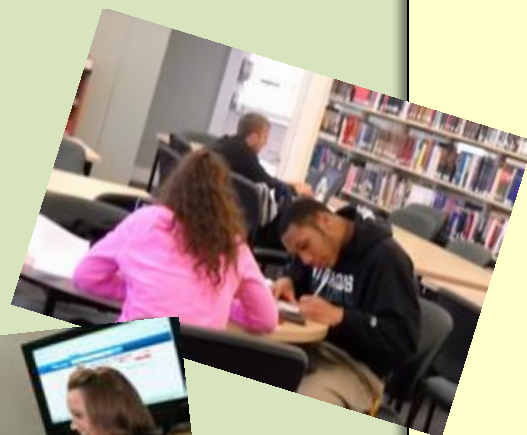
At Your Service

A word cloud graphic with the word "LIBRARY" in large, bold, black letters at the center. Surrounding it are various words in different sizes and orientations, including: technology, students, relevant, academic, skills, environment, evaluate, teaching, concepts, welcoming, new, reading, literacy, information, better, access, school, modern, research, 21st, century, learning, tools, online, today, librarian, resources, instruction, understand, materials, passion, community, digital, collaboration, exciting, and collection.

This Annual Report presents the major Library accomplishments and activities for the past academic year.

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By The Numbers

	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Items in the collection (hard copy books, videos)	25,836	27,627	28,677	29,670	30,392	36,832
Circulation transactions (includes books, media and e-books but not Reserves)	1,059	1,148	1,008	1,135	1,246	1, 159
Ebooks in the collection	163,501	150,177	144,048	135,329	125,035	113,410
Times ebooks accessed	483	501	258	293	130	416
Times Hard Copy Reserve items circulated, not including Textbooks	386	308	359	575	667	454
Times Textbooks on Reserve circulated	2,931	3,445	4,983	4,754	5,959	4,898
Classes receiving instruction	43	35	38	51	47	48
Articles, books, videos borrowed from other libraries	277	240	360	281	223	308
Articles, books, videos loaned to other libraries	66	90	111	98	95	114
Times laptops / tablets / projector were loaned	529	617	483	221/239	270/158/7	387/77/35

STAFF

Library Director-----Jim Douglas, MLS
Systems and Instruction-----Matthew Haggard, MLIS
Patron Services-----Rosalba Onofrio, MLS
Weekend Supervisor-----Andrea Lee
Student Workers

Jim Douglas served on the Library and Information Resources Committee. He continued to serve on the Executive Board of the Worcester-area Academic and Research Collaborative (ARC). During the year he taught sessions for Project Management, Strategic Management capstone classes, and Entrepreneurship classes. He also team taught a class on the history of Nichols with Assistant Professor Paul Lambert, making extensive use of the Nichols Archives. Jim also presented research instruction for a number of classes, including Entrepreneurship and Strategic/Project Management, as well as a session with the Faculty 365 Research Collaborative.

Matthew Haggard successfully led the library ILS transition from III Millennium to OCLC's World Management System. During the course of the year Matthew attended various ACRL and ARC workshops, courses and meetings. He presented to the Faculty Development Center on the library's learning resources and the new management system. Along with one-on-one research consultations, Matthew taught 39 class sessions in various disciplines, including Sport Management, English, Crit/WRR, and PDS.

Rosalba Onofrio attended meetings of the Worcester Area Academic and Research Collaborative (ARC) Access Services Interest Group, participated in ACRL-ASIG Virtual Forums: Spring 2019 *"From Staff-directed to Self-Guided: The Evolution of a Library Student Assistant Training Program"* and Fall 2018 *"Service Desk Mergers"*, attended NETLS (New England Technical Library Services) – Spring 2019 – Conference: *"Back to Basics: Everyday Skills for Technical Services"* and taught Spanish I, II instructor (Fall 2018-Spring 2019).

Andrea Lee served as the weekend Patron Access Services Assistant.

This academic year we employed 21 student workers (11 at the Circulation Desk and 10 at the STAR Desk).

THE COLLECTION

- 25,836 items (print books, DVDs)
- 163,501 ebooks through EbookCentral
- 35 subscription-based electronic databases (*Statista* and *Cabell's* business directory and *Consumer Brand Analytics* were added)
- 33 subscriptions to print periodicals (magazines/newspapers)
- Feature movies for classroom and/or individual streaming via Swank Digital Campus

During the fiscal year 2018-19:

- Textbooks on reserve circulated 2,931 times
- 483 ebooks were accessed
- 576 hard copy books and videos circulated
- Laptops, Surfaces, iPads, or Androids were borrowed 529 times
- Headphones, Mouse, flashdrives, and adaptors were borrowed 162 times
- A total of 4,927 circulation transactions occurred
- 13,218 searches were conducted in our databases

Information Resources:

The Library currently provides access to 63 databases. The most recent additions include *Statista*, *Cabell's Business Set*, and *Consumer Brand Analytics*. Faculty can request classroom-related feature films for on and off-campus streaming via *Swank Digital Campus*.

Student use of the library's information resources is driven almost entirely by course assignments. The 2016 Satisfaction Survey noted a fairly substantial rise in the percentage of students who indicated they did not use Library-related sources of information to complete assignments from 9.2% in 2014 to 15.8% in 2016. We saw a further rise in that percentage in the 2019 survey, to 19.1%. 17% indicated they didn't use books; 20.5% didn't use ebooks; 14.1% didn't use our databases, and 17.2% indicated they didn't use *WorldCat Discovery* for a 'one-shop search' for books, ebooks, and/or articles. We should note that this is not particular to Nichols. A 2015 survey of 5,000 college students by Cengage found that only 11% of them began their research in the school library. EBSCO did a survey of how college students conduct research that same year and found that 36% did not use library resources.

For traditional undergraduate students, library information resources are less important than physical space and service. Our satisfaction surveys consistently indicate that student satisfaction with our physical book/ebook collection and databases are somewhat less than with other resources (because of the relatively small size of our collection in the case of books, difficulty in accessing full text in the case of articles, or because they aren't relevant to student needs? All of the above? None?) but become more important as first-year and sophomore students move to juniors and seniors and, encouragingly, also receive improved satisfaction ratings. The same holds true for our resource guides..

PATRON SERVICES

Prepared by Rosalba Onofrio

The focus of the fall 2018 semester for Conant Library and for the circulation desk was on transitioning and training student staff on utilizing OCLC WorldShare Management System. Following several months of webinars and working with our OCLC representative Beth, Systems Librarian Matthew, and IT Support Specialist Jared, all of the circulation policies, loan rules, shelving locations, and patron accounts were set up and running for the start of the academic year. Our weekend access services assistant, Andrea, and all of our circulation desk student staff received training during their first week back and responded to the new ILS with positive feedback. The student workers felt that the system was more efficient and had a cleaner and more user-friendly interface. In addition to learning the new library system, the student workers also learned how to navigate and reserve library space using the new reservation software 25LIVE. Following training, student workers had access to all updated training documents in Canvas and received one-on-one assistance during their shift from the librarians on duty.

The circulation desk team consisted of 11 student workers, including 8 returning students and 3 new hires. Carly Wilson served as the circulation desk team leader and assisted with the hiring process, facilitating meetings, sending out reminders, scheduling, troubleshooting, and covering shifts. Our senior student worker and history major, Savannah Taylor, dedicated many hours to helping organize the Nichols College Athletics Photo Collection and updating the finding aid. Savannah also completed an internship at Conant Library by working with Jim Douglas in the Archives and creating displays using materials and information from her research. She is planning on pursuing a Masters' degree in Library Science and fulfilling her dream of working as an archivist. Our 11 student workers covered 86 hours of circulation desk coverage weekly, and 3 members of our team bravely battled the elements to open the library on snow days. Four of our senior student workers were acknowledged for their service to the library with a new book purchase of their choosing that was added to the library collection. The students were: Matthew Ferreira, Joseph Santese, Savannah Taylor, and Marissa Piedmonte.

As part of the year-end work evaluation, all student workers were asked to reflect on the skills they developed as part of their work study position and that are applicable to their course work and vice versa. Students highlighted the following skills: time management; customer service and communication; problem solving; critical thinking; research using library databases and discovery tools; organizational skills; technology and new software platforms; multitasking. They noted that these skills are transferable to both their classroom work and their work study position, as well as being relevant skills for their future careers.

The circulation desk processes and manages the borrowing and lending of reserve items, print books and media, and laptop and tablet loaners. This academic year the Nichols community checked out materials on reserve 3,317 times. Reserve items included textbooks, professor owned or library owned books, DVDs, journals, and a board game. Print books and media from the library collection circulated 576 times, laptops/tablets/iPads were checked out 529 times, and miscellaneous technology devices 162 times. The number of devices that circulated from the library was reduced from last year with the transfer of the hard drives to the Green Screen Room. This transition was decided in order to maintain all video filming equipment and file storing devices together in the location in which they are utilized. A second change was made to our device borrowing program involving loaners. In the past, the library has fulfilled laptop requests for campus events, but, following a meeting with the I.T. Dept., it was decided that library loaners should be accessible to all individual requests by students, faculty, and staff. Requests for multiple devices for campus events must now be made via the I.T. help desk request system. In this way, more library devices are available for individual use throughout the academic year, especially during busy periods of the semester, which is our main objective.

Resource sharing continues to provide the Nichols community with access to a variety of resources that are not owned by and available at Conant Library. With our new library system WMS, patrons can now initiate interlibrary loan requests right from the *WorldCat Discovery* page by clicking on the link "Request from other libraries". The ease of placing requests in the discovery page may be one reason for the increase in interlibrary loan borrowing which is up 15% from last year, increasing from 240 to 277.

The Human Touch: The friendly circulation desk team is happy to answer library-related questions, initiate an interlibrary loan request, refer students to the STAR Desk or to a librarian for research assistance, reserve a group study room space, direct patrons to the stacks to locate a book, and process a multitude of borrowing and lending transactions. In addition to the physical space, students also value overall library service and here again we rated well, with satisfaction with the Front Desk and STAR Desk workers receiving high ratings.

STAR DESK

The Support for Technology and Academic Research (STAR) Desk provides assistance in the library to students with issues with personal devices and library hardware and to evening GPS faculty in Fels classrooms.



Trained jointly by I.T. and Library staff these students were responsible for answering directional reference questions and helping students, staff, and faculty with basic technology-related questions/problems across campus. 235 tickets were resolved at the STAR Desk ranging from troubleshooting printer issues and jams, teaching students how to use the library scanners, various issues with Word, Powerpoint, and Excel, and assisting faculty with classroom technology.

Both the Library's and I.T.'s Satisfaction Surveys found that satisfaction with the STAR Desk continues to be very high.

USER EDUCATION

Information about the Library's services and resources was distributed to first year students (undergraduate and graduate) through an insert in their orientation packet. Two newsletters are also distributed via e-mail to the campus community and news is also electronically disseminated on an ad hoc basis as appropriate via e-mail or on our website. We also began tweeting more on Twitter.

When asked in the 2019 Satisfaction Survey how they preferred to receive news about the Library 70% of the responding students preferred Email, 12% said by newsletter and 6% said Twitter.

Instruction

The Library's instruction program is dedicated to improving students' ability to use information resources effectively. Instruction is offered in support of coursework in academic subjects in the form of formal group instruction, in online guides, point-of-use aids in the library, and informal point-of-need contacts with individual students. Instructional Services updates all resource guides at least once a year and creates new resource guides as needed to assist in student research.

A total of 43 class sessions (including First-Year Library Week sessions) received formal instruction this year. Disciplines included Management, Sport Management, Business Communication, History, English, Human Resource, and ITM. Many requests came from faculty who had previously invited us into their classes. Topics included: introduction to research and library resources, the research process, looking beyond Google for information, advanced database searching, and direct assignment-specific Q&A sessions. Instruction often combines lecture/demonstration with active learning applications. The efficacy of classroom instruction is measured through faculty and student spot surveys and analysis of course assignments/projects, journal logs and other embedded assessments.

Library research instruction for courses is an area in our recent *Satisfaction Survey* where students are less satisfied, but also deem this less important, compared to other areas. One of the more striking differences between the 2019 survey and the 2016 survey was the percentage of students who indicated they had not had any instruction during the semester the survey was conducted. In 2019, 25.4% of those who responded to this question indicated they had not had any instruction, whereas in 2016 it was 9.8% who responded similarly. We have, indeed, seen fewer in-class instruction sessions in the last few years due, in part, to what appears to be a shift in the CRITR courses to less research. As the College looks to more research from students it will be interesting to see if there is a greater demand for librarian-led instruction.

LIBRARY WEBSITE



Our patrons' interaction with the Library and its resources is often (and for some, only) through the Web. The Library's website includes:

- Research pages with links to, and information about, our print and electronic resources.
- Resource guides for every major as well as course-specific guides.
- Tutorials on how to find company information, cite sources, avoid plagiarism, locate books and articles, and how to use our electronic databases.
- Information about the Library (hours, staff, the Nichols Archives) and its services (instruction, interlibrary loan, electronic reserve, etc.).
- Access points to our ebook and Reserve collections.
- Access to web-based printing.
- A link to a webpage providing minute-to-minute stats on the number of available Library computers for each floor.
- Links for contacting staff, including a chat service.

The navigability of the Library's website was one of the areas discussed in our peer review, and one of the 5 areas that received less than a 3.8 Mean score in our satisfaction survey. Our ability to revamp and improve the user experience has been somewhat hampered by the limitations of our current platform and the time I.T. staff have available. We expect to address this situation this summer with the creation of a new platform. We will be working closely with I.T. on a totally new Library site design which we expect to go live before fall semester begins.

TECHNOLOGY

There are currently 43 public computers (including 1 MAC), four laser printers (one color), and three scanners for public use. Each office, the Reference, STAR, and the Circulation Desk is equipped with a PC. This academic year the library made available for borrowing 16 Surfaces, 4 Lenovo Laptops, 4 iPad Airls, 1 iPad Pro. The Circulation Desk also has 1 Apple video, adapter kit, an LCD projector, and an HDMI adapter kit for use in the library group study rooms, as well as headphones and mouses. Results from the *Satisfaction Survey* were over a 4.0 Mean rating on the availability of devices.

Most significantly, OCLC's WorldShare Management System, a new integrated library system for circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, etc. went live July 1, 2018, providing workflow efficiencies and new features, such as the ability to search not only our holdings, but those of institutions regionally and nationally. It also enabled users to place interlibrary loan requests at the point of discovery. We believe the increase in ILL requests this year is due in large part to this feature, as well as the increase in faculty research. We also set up a link from Google Scholar so articles from our databases will show up in the results list.

WorldCat Discovery: This is the first year we introduced *WorldCat Discovery*. *WorldCat* is a powerful (and expensive) tool but it is different from our previous system and more complex. So it is not entirely surprising it received the lowest satisfaction rating in our *Survey*. However, the fact remains it is an important gateway to many of our resources and searchers need to be comfortable with its various features and are able to use it effectively. (One positive example is that with the ability to discover material held by other libraries and easily submit an interlibrary loan request, we have seen a doubling of such requests this year.) With fewer students than ever indicating they have not had any instruction from a librarian the challenge will be how to increase student and staff comfort with this new tool.

THE FACILITY

Library As Space: The library continues to be an active center of campus life for academic work, social gathering, meetings, relaxing, reading, web browsing, and printing.

During the year, library space was utilized not only for individual study and pc usage, but also for First Year PDS classes, course research instruction, group and club meetings, art exhibits, and National Library Week events to name a few. On Wed. April 10th Conant Library celebrated National Library Week with a book swap, library scavenger hunt raffle, cupcakes, and "Love Your Library" tweets. According to *25LIVE* Reports, there were 115 reservations made for library group study rooms, 40 reservations for the Upper Level, 17 for the Lower Level, and 4 for the Library Main Floor. All members of the community are welcome to use any available group study space without needing to place a reservation in *25Live*. During busy periods of the semester, usually mid-term time on, placing a reservation is recommended to guarantee that the space needed for group meetings is available at the time convenient for the group.

The sophomore and junior *Survey* results indicate that the physical space in the library is most important to our undergraduates (this is generally true elsewhere as well). According to our survey, the aspects of the library they value most include: physical comfort, hours of operation, an environment conducive to study, individual and group study spaces, and the availability of public computers in the library. Happily, these are areas in which the library meets their needs. Satisfaction with all these physical spaces was at or above the median.

Although it has been 20 years since the Library was most recently renovated, satisfaction with the Library’s physical environment remains high. In the 2019 *Survey*, the Library’s appearance received a Mean score of 3.92, 4.05 on comfort, 4.17 for its conduciveness to study, and 4.26 for our current hours. Fall 2018 saw the addition of another group study room and student satisfaction with the availability of rooms has risen continually in the last three surveys, now standing at above a Mean rating of 4.

Usage

When asked what they used the Library for in the 2019 *Survey*, students indicated they used it for printing (35%), study (34%), group meetings (34%), research (20.5%), reserves (18%), leisure reading (3%) and to borrow devices (3%). Practically no one used the library for only one thing.

While we see a little change in the percentage who use the Library, we do see a more pronounced decline in the frequency of use of the Library facility. Here are the 2019 results to the question: “*How often do you use the Library’s resources in the Library?*”

	2019	2016
Daily	7.2%	17.4%
Weekly	47.2	53.6
Monthly	20.6	14.1
1-2 Times a Semester	19.4	13.1
Never	5.2	1.8

Of course, some, if not all, of this decline could be attributed to the new Fels Center, and improved wi-fi in the dorms since 2016.

The Library continues to offer its resources and space to various groups, including visits by students participating in the Honors Academy Partnership with Bartlett High School. Artwork by Karen Reid of Oxford, MA was showcased this spring and we also provided a showcase for student art each semester.

ASSESSMENT

The adequacy and utilization of the Library’s information resources is measured, in part, by monitoring the use of books, journals, audio-visual materials, and electronic databases, faculty recommendations for collection development, and comparison of key areas with standard bibliographic guides and selected peer libraries. Student and faculty satisfaction surveys are also very important, as are one-on-one meetings with faculty, and the results are used to help improve our services and resources.

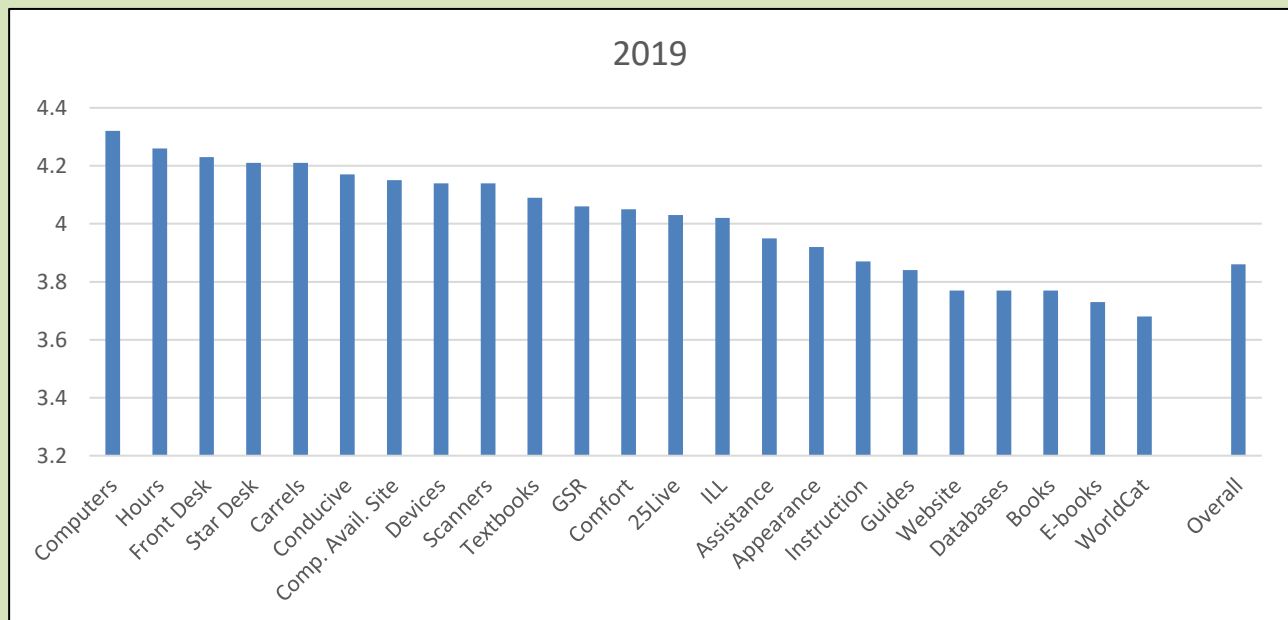
During fall semester 2018 the Library underwent a peer review of our operations, services and resources by Ms. Vivienne Piroli, Library Director at Simmons University Library. She identified and made some suggestions for areas of improvement but, overall, was rather complimentary. She noted, for example, that the library was a very welcoming space, well utilized by students, and commended the staff on its “efforts to support student learning, campus engagement, and social responsibility”. We expect to have addressed all of her recommendations prior to the beginning of the fall 2019 semester.

Additionally, a student satisfaction survey was conducted this year, via the PDS classes. A total of 844 surveys were collected and analyzed. 35% of the respondents were First Year students (294), 28% were Sophomores (238), 17% were Juniors (146), and 20% were Seniors (166). Satisfaction ratings were compiled for each question from those who used a particular service or resource and also indicated an opinion.

Overall Satisfaction: We were happy to see the third consecutive increase in overall satisfaction with the Library. We are also once again pleased that the overwhelming majority of students are “Satisfied” or better with the Library’s resources and services, and we appreciate the many nice comments we received.

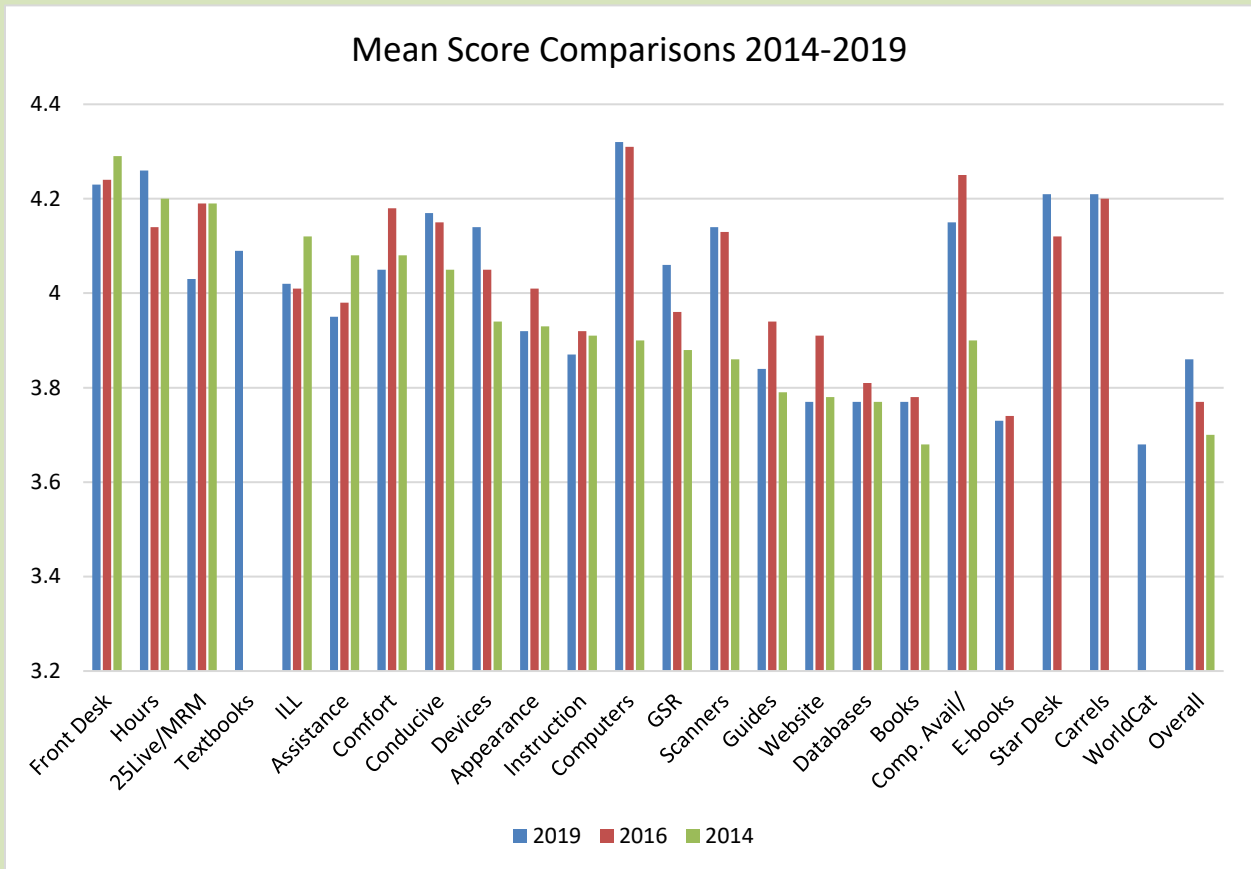
Overall satisfaction with the Library’s resources and services, as measured by this survey, continues to be good. Twenty-three satisfaction-related questions were asked. Thirteen of these ratings were above 4.0 and all other satisfaction ratings were 3.68 or higher. An independent question asked students to rate their “overall” satisfaction with the Library’s resources and services. The mean response was 3.86 (where a 3 indicated “Satisfied” and a 5 indicated “Very Satisfied”). (The overall mean for 2015-16 was 3.77.) Only 1.5% of all respondents who gave an ‘overall’ satisfaction rating were less than ‘satisfied’.

The largest percentages for less than satisfied was for ‘Appearance’ (9%), ‘Comfort (6.7%), ‘Website Ease of Use/Navigability (5.8%), followed by “Availability of Group Study Rooms” (4.8%) and then “Hours” and “WorldCat Discovery Ease of Use” (both 4.3%).



This was the first time we asked Sophomores and Juniors to not only indicate their satisfaction with various resources and services, but to also rate their importance to them. The top services/resources ranked highest for importance by *both* Juniors and Sophomores were: Conducive for Study, Group Study Rooms, Hours, Comfort, Textbooks on Reserve, STAR Desk Assistance, and Computer Availability. The differences between satisfaction and importance for most services/resources were either very or fairly close and we saw improvements in satisfaction over the previous survey in the areas of hours, conducive to study, STAR Desk, and group study rooms.

For comparison with previous surveys (2014, 2016) see chart below: **Scores by Mean (5=Extremely Satisfied 3=Satisfied 1=Not At All Satisfied)**



GIFTS

The Library welcomes donations of books and other items. Although we do not accept every item that is donated, many may be appropriate to our collection. A number of alumni and others continued to give generous monetary contributions to the Library this year.

NICHOLS ARCHIVES

The Nichols Archives maintains College-related material of historical importance. Included among the many record series are: material concerning the College's founding (including its predecessors, Nichols Academy, Nichols Junior College, and Nichols College of Business Administration); descriptions of the College and its buildings; photographs; faculty, staff, student, and alumni publications including Senior Theses; campus newspapers and literary publications; student yearbooks; scrapbooks; records of athletic competition, student organizations and activities; administrative reports and general records; papers and correspondence of Presidents, faculty and alumni; and minutes and reports of the Board of Trustees. The Archives also house some 300 books, c. 1809-1920, from Nichols Academy's early library collection, financial records from the H. Conant Real Estate Company, and the Goodell Collection (sermons and published works of Methodist clergyman and author, Charles L. Goodell [1854-1937]).

The Archive was utilized a number of times by administrators, students, and outside researchers. Material from the Archives was used to support and inform the campus community of the college's history by providing images and information for the exhibit cases in Davis Hall, the Library, and NAB. Students from History 270 course 'The History of Nichols' made use of Archive photographs for course assignments.



RESOURCE SHARING/CONSORTIAL AGREEMENTS

Conant Library and its users benefit a great deal from our membership in various library organizations and associations. For example, expensive resources can often be purchased at a much greater discount than would otherwise be possible and staff can attend professional development seminars and workshops for free or at a reduced rate. Currently, the Library is a member of:

- Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a non-profit library service and research organization that provides a database of bibliographic and library holdings information for more than 25,000 libraries worldwide for interlibrary loan facilitation.
- Massachusetts Library System (MLS), which provides access to state-funded databases, a weekly shuttle service for Interlibrary Loan, and professional development opportunities.
- Academic and Research Collaborative (ARC), which provides cross-borrowing privileges with the Worcester Public Library and many of the Worcester-area college libraries, knowledge sharing, and continuing education opportunities.
- Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization (WALDO) through which we subscribe to several online databases at a reduced rate.

