

## **Assessing the Library Needs and Preferences of Off-Campus Students: Surveying Distance-Education Students, from the Midwest to the West Indies**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In order to have a successful library program for distance-education students, librarians must understand who their students are, as well as what their students want and need. Of course, the best way to get this information is to ask the students. *The ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services* emphasize this point, encouraging librarians to regularly survey students involved in distance-education and off-campus programs. This paper is based on two student surveys, one conducted by the Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education at the University of Iowa and the other conducted by the Distance Librarian at University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. The paper focuses on the issues that librarians confront when they conduct a survey of distance-education students. In addition, it covers details on writing and developing a survey instrument, including the need to ask the right questions in a proper manner and the need to arrange the questions and information in a user-friendly format. The results of the two surveys are presented, including a comparison of some data between the two programs.

### **Introduction**

The authors of this paper originally met at the Tenth Off-Campus Library Services Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 2002. As happens quite frequently among the attendees of the Off-Campus Library Services Conference, the authors conversed at length about the similarities and differences in their experiences with distance education students, and in this case, after the conference, the authors continued their contact, exchanging e-mail messages about a wide variety of matters concerning library services and distance education. During the spring of 2003, as both authors were discussing past student surveys and efforts to conduct new surveys, they shared ideas about questionnaires and considered the possibility of comparing data. From these developments, the idea for this paper was born.

First, the paper will review the literature on user surveys; then it will summarize the University of Iowa's experience in developing a survey and tabulating results; and then it will address the survey experience at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. The paper concludes with a comparison of some of the data and experiences between the two programs.

### **Review of the Literature on User Surveys**

An interdisciplinary review of the literature on user surveys shows that, as a tool to assess quality of service and customer satisfaction—key indicators of an organization's performance, user surveys are increasingly popular in many institutions, especially academic libraries. Hiller (2001) points to the substantial body of literature developing on library surveys. The qualitative and quantitative data secured periodically from such surveys allows librarians to keep current about client issues and concerns,

otherwise, without the use of surveys, librarians would “ignore user perceptions of library service quality at their peril” (Cook and Thompson, 2001). According to Talbot, Lowell, and Martin (1998), by completing library surveys, users “help determine (the) future direction“ of the library.

Surveys can take many forms, but one of the most popular instruments is the self-administered questionnaire (SAQ). If its findings are to be statistically valid, however, its proper design is critical. According to Labaw, “a questionnaire is not simply a series of questions, nor is a question merely a series of words” (as cited in Synodinos, 2003). Suggestions on the art of good questionnaire design abound in the literature of the various professions.

Having decided on the SAQ as the instrument by which quantifiable data will be obtained, the researcher should bear in mind that “one size does not fit all,” so it might be necessary to gear the questionnaire and the method of administering it to each user group to be surveyed. In addition, a sample of the population to be surveyed should be asked to provide input, identifying issues to be examined in the survey (Talbot et. al 1998). To hold the users’ attention, the reason for the survey must be made clear early. He/she should be provided, either at the beginning of the questionnaire or in a cover letter, with a motivating reason for wanting to complete the questionnaire (Dolle, 2001).

In addition, a careful crafting of each question is critical for good quality data. The choice and order of the words, the form of the question, as well as the design of the response categories will affect respondents’ answers. Questions should have a simple structure, words should be familiar, and slang or jargon should be avoided (Lockyer, 1998). Open-ended questions, which allow respondents to give their own replies, should be used sparingly, because as Fowler points out, they tend to produce “inconsistent and often uninterpretable answers from respondent to respondent” (as cited in Lockyer, 1998). Close-ended questions on the other hand, allow respondents to select answers from a wide range of alternatives. However, when appropriate, respondents should also be given the option of a blanket category “other” in order to accommodate unexpected responses. Close-ended questions are more difficult to construct, but they are usually the most suitable response format and are relatively simpler to analyze; therefore they should be used (Synodinos, 2003). So as not to skew results, respondents should never be asked to limit their choice to only two options (Dolle, 2001). The sequencing of the questions is also very important. Synodinos (2003) emphasizes that the questions should be in a logical order—similar questions should be grouped together, items should be arranged topically, and within a topic, they should begin with the general and end with the specific.

Another important consideration is the appearance of the questionnaire. Font size and spacing should be attractive, instructions should be clear and should be distinguishable from the questions. In addition, the tone should be polite and conversational (Lockyear, 1998). Each question should be brief, simple, and unambiguous, so that all respondents interpret it as intended. Furthermore, a question should ask for no more than one piece of information and be easy to answer (Dolle, 2001).

After the questionnaire has been constructed, it should be pre-tested before use, so that any flaws can be spotted early and ironed out. An excellent method of doing this is to distribute the questionnaire to a small sample of the target population (Stone, 1993) (Hafner, 1998). Take extra steps to improve response rate. After the survey has been distributed, responses have been received, and it appears that only a few more responses will be received, if at all possible, the researcher should aim at a higher response rate by sending non-respondents a reminder and a copy of the questionnaire (Stone, 1993).

### **The University of Iowa Survey, 1998-99**

In the fall of 1998 and the spring of 1999, the University of Iowa (UI) conducted a survey of students enrolled in its distance education programs, and the results of that survey were presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Off-Campus Library Services Conference in Portland, Oregon (Dew, 2001). The 1998-99 survey instrument was based on a previous survey conducted in 1992 at the University of Northern Iowa (Rose and Safford, 1998). The UNI questionnaire was used as a template; it was slightly revised, and a few new questions were added. The 1998-99 survey was rather expensive: it was distributed through a general

mailing using the United States Postal Service. The mailing (to 706 individuals) consisted of the survey instrument, a cover letter, and a stamped return envelope, which was addressed to the Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education. Expenses included photocopy charges for the survey instrument and cover letter, the cost of the envelopes, postage for the initial mailing, and the postage for the return envelopes. Although relatively expensive, the survey did pay off with a rather good return rate of almost forty percent, and it proved very useful in helping library staff understand distance learners. It was especially helpful to the Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education, who had been hired for the newly created position just two months prior to the distribution of the survey. Importantly, the results showed that distance education students highly valued a number of library services, especially access to electronic resources, access to e-mail and toll-free reference help, and access to a document delivery service. Informed by the opinions and values expressed through the student survey, library administrators strongly supported the Coordinator's efforts to develop new library services for distance learners. Such new developments included a separate Web site for distance learners, an e-mail reference service, a toll-free telephone number for reference assistance, a fee-based document delivery service, and an electronic reserve service.

The 1998-99 survey was quite significant for the distance learning library services at the University of Iowa. The survey was conducted immediately after the Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education had been hired, and its results supported a range of new library services for distance learners. Any follow-up or new survey could never have quite the impact that the first survey had, but nevertheless, three years after the first survey had been conducted, the Coordinator felt it imperative that another survey be planned. Regular evaluation is necessary in order to understand the constantly changing student community of distance learners; so in 2002, the Coordinator began an effort to undertake another survey.

### The University of Iowa Survey, 2003

In the spring of 2002, at the Tenth Off-Campus Library Services Conference in Cincinnati, the Coordinator attended two informative presentations concerning surveying practices for distance education library services (Jerabek & McMain, 2003) (Harrell, 2003), reinforcing the idea that a new survey was a "must." During the fall of 2002, using the previous survey instrument as a template, the Coordinator worked with the staff in the Division of Continuing Education and the campus Audio-Visual Center to develop a new questionnaire. A few questions were dropped; several were revised; and a number of new ones were added (See Appendix A). The new questions included usage and evaluation of particular library services (Web pages, handouts, instruction, e-mail and telephone reference, document delivery etc.), as well as the level and type of connectivity students have (access to the Internet, e-mail, FAX, etc.). Some questions were edited to remove unnecessary jargon; in several cases, primary subjects and key words were highlighted in **bold print** to assist the reader; and the option to answer "do not know" was added to appropriate questions.

In early 2003, the Coordinator originally planned to set up the survey in *WebCT*, which would allow for students to fill out and submit the survey entirely online. Unfortunately, a complication arose over how distance learners would access the survey. During the 2003 spring semester on the Iowa campus, *WebCT* required each student-user to submit a campus-assigned ID (called HawkID) and a password in order to gain access. For on-campus students, that was certainly a reasonable requirement—on-campus students generally used their HawkIDs for library services and many other matters. For off-campus students, however, this was a different situation—off-campus students rarely had a need to use their HawkIDs, and only a rare few even knew there was such thing as a HawkID. Since few distance learners knew their HawkIDs and since instruction in how students could find out would have been complicated, the Coordinator and the Division of Continuing Education reluctantly decided on another alternative. The survey was placed on the Web in PDF as an *Adobe Acrobat* document. Students with access to electronic mail were sent a message with a link to the survey instrument, and for a few students without access to e-mail, a print version was sent through the U. S. Postal Service (See Appendix B). Every student enrolled at that time in a distance learning class through the Division of Continuing Education was contacted (over sixteen hundred folks). When the data was received, it was loaded into *Microsoft Excel*.

Unfortunately, the process for completing the survey was a bit cumbersome, which no doubt affected the response rate. Students were asked to print the survey off of the Web site, then fill it out with a pen or pencil, and then mail it to campus—a process that some might find too demanding or time consuming. As a result, only about eleven percent responded to the survey. Compared to the 1998-99 survey, which had a return rate of about forty percent and was conducted entirely by regular mail, the 2003 survey was significantly less expensive. Unfortunately, the return rate was also significantly less. In spite of the low return rate, one can be encouraged by the opinion of J. A. Krosnick (1999), who observed that “recent research has shown that surveys with very low response rates can be more accurate than surveys with much higher response rates.” Even though the return rate was very low, the data nonetheless proved useful, providing an insight into the opinions and values of Iowa’s distance learners (for a summary of the data, see Appendix A).

The 2003 survey provided some significant information that was not obtained in the 1998-99 survey. Several of the questions were new in the 2003 survey, but also, the sample included a very large group of distance learners with newly acquired library privileges. The 1998-99 survey did not include students enrolled in the Guided Independent Studies (GIS) Program (mainly traditional guided correspondence classes, however, including an ever growing number of fully Web-based classes). At the time of the first survey, GIS students did not have access to library services—this was due to the Registrar’s determination that their tuition was not large enough to fully enroll them for library and other privileges. In the spring of 2002, however, accompanying a slight increase in tuition, GIS students finally became eligible for library resources and services—meaning that, over the next year, approximately three-to-four-thousand additional students became eligible for library services. In the 2003 survey, not surprisingly, GIS students comprised a large percentage of the survey respondents. Seventy-five percent of the respondents had taken a GIS class at one time or another; fifty percent of the respondents were currently taking their first class; and fifty-seven percent had never enrolled in a class that required use of library resources—a characteristic of many “self-contained” GIS classes. These numbers indicate a definite need to promote the library among GIS faculty and to better inform GIS students about their privileges.

For the respondents who have used library services, however, the survey reflects an overall satisfaction with the resources and services. Over seventy percent graded the Distance Education Library Services Web site as “good” or “excellent,” and none rated it as “below average” or “poor.” Over eighty percent graded the student handouts summarizing distance education library services as “good” or “excellent,” and none rated the handouts as “below average” or “poor.” Eighty-seven percent rated the toll-free telephone reference service as “good” or “excellent,” however, about eight percent rated it “below average.” Seventy-seven percent rated the e-mail reference service as “good” or “excellent,” however, about ten percent rated it “below average” or “poor.” Over ninety percent rated the document delivery service as “good” or “excellent,” and none rated it “below average” or “poor.” The statistics reflect a good overall satisfaction with resources and services, but there is certainly room to improve the telephone and e-mail reference services (speed of response may be a key factor).

In the 2003 survey, in observing the ranking of library services that students value most, access to electronic resources ranked highest, followed by access to document delivery, followed by access to reference help, followed finally by instruction. Although this was similar to the earlier survey, in the 1998-99 survey, reference assistance and document delivery services actually ranked slightly higher than a couple of the electronic services. This higher ranking for reference assistance and document delivery was probably due to the fact that a graduate students made up a larger percentage of the first sample; their classes tend to require research papers; and they tend to value these services more than undergraduates. If one looks at only graduate and professional students in the 2003 survey, eliminating the GIS students from the sample, the rankings of all library services fall into a list that looks very similar to that from the 1998-99 survey.

Regarding Internet connections, according to the 2003 survey, the vast majority of students have Internet access from home (over ninety percent), about half have access from their offices, and over forty percent use the access provided at their local public library. About sixty percent have access through a

telephone modem, twenty-five percent have access through cable, and less than twenty percent have T-1 access to the Internet. How one accesses the Internet affects the loading speed for certain electronic and Web-based resources, especially electronic reserves and other PDF files—many Web resources load much slower through a telephone modem or cable connection than through a T-1 line. Since such a large percentage of UI distance education students depend on home computers and modems to access the Web, library Web pages and electronic reserve modules should keep bandwidth and file sizes to a minimum in order to speed access for users.

From the experience with the 2003 survey, the Coordinator and the Division of Continuing Education determined that the best option for future surveys was to develop a fully Web-based survey using *WebCT*. Importantly, beginning in the fall semester of 2003, all UI distance education students were informed about their HawkIDs and passwords, and since August 2003, they have been required to use those IDs in order to access the Libraries' electronic resources. Therefore, since distance education students are now familiar with the use of HawkIDs and passwords, *WebCT* appears to be the most viable option for conducting a future survey. Through *WebCT*, the survey instrument is easily accessible from a link that will be provided in a general cover letter, which will be e-mailed to students. Students can fill out and submit the questionnaire totally online—there is no need for printing or mailing, so expenses are kept to an absolute minimum. Importantly, through *WebCT*, the Coordinator will be able to tell which students have completed the survey. The Coordinator, however, will not be able to tell which student completed which particular survey, so the survey process remains anonymous, and students will be informed about that. However, by being able to tell who has (and who has not) completed the survey, the Coordinator can send follow up e-mails to those students who have not completed the survey, in hopes of gaining more in-put and a higher return rate. The University of Iowa has set up a schedule to conduct another survey in the spring of 2004, and the survey will be based in *WebCT*. The survey instrument will largely be the same as the instrument used in 2003, with few additional questions—at least two regarding employment (an idea borrowed from the UWI survey) and two regarding the evaluation of *Library Explorer*, the UI Libraries' online tutorial.

### **The University of the West Indies**

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is the successor institution to The University College of the West Indies (UCWI), founded in 1948 at Mona, Jamaica to cater to the tertiary education needs of the English-speaking Caribbean countries. In 1960, St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago became the site of the second campus, and two years later, in 1962, the institution received full university status. UWI's third campus opened at Cave Hill in Barbados in 1963. As one of two regional universities in the world (the other being the University of the South Pacific), UWI serves the three countries where campuses are located, as well as the non-campus countries (NCCs) in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)—Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts/ Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines—and those in the Northern Caribbean—Belize, the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

### **Distance Education at UWI**

UWI has been involved in distance programs for more than two decades. Its offerings, which are at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, are faculty-driven and, in most cases, mounted and delivered by its Distance Education Centre (UWIDEC), which was established in 1996. For most courses delivered by UWIDEC, the primary medium of instruction is print, supported in varying degrees by face-to-face tutorials and interactive audio-teleconferences at the twenty-seven UWIDEC sites spread across the region. Each of the sites is equipped with a number of computers, and importantly, most have Internet access. At the moment, the program delivery method is undergoing restructuring, and the facilities are being upgraded with loan and grant funding from the Caribbean Development Bank. According to the UWI Office of Planning and Institutional Research, in the 2002/2003 academic year, 2,486 students were registered in the various UWI distance programs, and of this total, 669 were attached to Mona.

### **Distance Library Support at UWI, Mona**

For all programs delivered through UWIDEC, students are encouraged to and expected to access library services and resources, in order to broaden and deepen their knowledge gained from course material. Each of the three campus libraries is responsible for distance library services to the various sites assigned to its Campus. Mona Library, therefore, has responsibility for services to the Northern Caribbean, as well as ten intra-Jamaica sites. To better meet this responsibility, in 1997, the Mona Library created a new library position—Distance Librarian; however, since the position is not full-time, the amount of attention given to distance library support has been limited. Nevertheless, the Distance Librarian has been involved in the implementation of a number of library services and resources to support the research needs of the Mona distance learning community.

### **Background to User Survey**

The distance library services and resources introduced by the Mona Library between 1997 and 2000 were selected intuitively and not as a result of the analysis of data obtained empirically through a user survey. Consequently, in late 2000, Mona's Distance Librarian undertook a review of services and resources for distance students because, from a review of the literature, she concluded that the best way for libraries to provide quality service and satisfaction to users is to "understand who and what their clients are" (Shouse, 1995), "question them about their needs" (Kelly, 1987), and "search for methods to meet those needs in a reasonable and cost effective manner" (Pettingill, 1998). In addition, the Distance Librarian found strong support in the *ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services*, which strongly recommends that students be surveyed to determine library service needs and user satisfaction. In the absence of separately published guidelines for places such as the Caribbean, many libraries, such as Mona and the other UWI libraries, have embraced the *ACRL Guidelines*. On a personal level, the Distance Librarian also saw that she could enroll in the Masters in Library Studies program at the UWI School of Library and Information Studies and use the research findings as the basis of her research paper.

### **Objectives and Methodology**

The objectives of the survey were to assess distance students' use of and satisfaction with current services, to determine the extent distance students were using other libraries, and to determine their new service requirement. Distribution of the survey was limited to the students enrolled in the print-based programs sponsored by the UWIDEC (the Library has not been involved with the other groups of distance students in any meaningful way). The methodology of data collection was a print self-administered questionnaire (SAQ). Some of its questions were borrowed from various other survey instruments, some were informed by the literature reviewed, and some were informed by the input provided by students themselves.

In keeping with advice from the literature, several steps were followed. The questionnaire was piloted at three sites in order to ensure that the items were unambiguous and relevant to the objectives of the survey. After some alterations, a final draft of the questionnaire was developed (See Appendix C). In order to encourage response, a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and requesting participation was attached to each questionnaire (See Appendix D). The Distance Librarian then informed the Site Coordinators of her intention to administer the questionnaire and solicited their help. Several Site Coordinators informed her that students were not amenable to questionnaires, hence the likelihood of a low response rate. As proof, some showed folders of other questionnaires from the University which students had refused to complete. However, the Distance Librarian decided to proceed with the SAQ, since it stood the best chance of gathering the desired data. After some amount of skepticism, the Site Coordinators finally agreed to administer the questionnaire.

UWIDEC staff administered the questionnaire at the sites throughout November 2000; the Distance Librarian was personally involved in its administration at two sites. Convenience sampling was

used to select the participants, as it was the surest way of securing willing participants. Students who were early for their tutorials or teleconference sessions were requested to complete the questionnaires while they waited for their classes. This method ensured the return of the questionnaires, since they were completed at the sites. Constant follow-up by telephone calls and e-mail had to be done to improve the response rate, however. The site coordinators returned the completed questionnaires to the Distance Librarian by courier.

### **The Nature of the Questionnaire**

The final instrument comprised twenty-one questions, most of which were partially close-ended (See Appendix C). This means that suggested answer choices were provided but respondents had the opportunity to add their own answers. A five-point Likert-type scale with response categories was used for three questions. However, a neutral category was not included in the scale as it was the researcher's intention to force respondents to choose one of the specific responses. One question was fully open-ended in order to allow the respondents to give suggestions for improving Mona's distance library services.

In keeping with suggestions from the literature, the questionnaire was divided into four sections: profile of the distance students; use of Mona's distance library services and level of satisfaction with the services; use of other libraries; and new services required and recommendations for the improvement of existing services.

### **The Sample, Response, and Data Analysis**

The sample population targeted for the survey comprised 148 individuals, 37% of the 400 students who had completed at least one year in the usual UWIDEC program—it was felt that this sample would sufficiently reflect the views of the entire population. Unfortunately no questionnaires were received from a few sites, despite telephone calls and e-mail messages sent by the researcher. Nevertheless, seventy-nine questionnaires were returned, so the percentage of returned surveys was a respectable 52%—well above forty-percent, the minimum response rate that many researchers feel necessary in order to judge results as accurate (Clougherty et al, 1998).

The Distance Librarian was aware of the many statistical and analytical programs readily available to make data analysis less challenging (SPSS, SAS, etc.); however, the researcher did not have access to any of those programs at the time. After the data was collected, the seventy-nine questionnaires were coded and entered into *Microsoft Excel*. The program was then used to generate frequency tables, and cross tabulations. A few examples of the findings are looked at here (for a summary of the data, see Appendix C).

### **Key Findings and Recommendations for UWI**

The data shows that females make up 66% of the sample, while males account for 25%. Women therefore outnumber men by about 2.5:1. The age range 25-50 accounts for 71% of the sample, while those in the under 25 and the over 50 age groups make up 29%. Females dominate every age category, with the highest percentage (20%) in the 25-35 age-range. The highest concentration of males, 10%, is in the 36-45 age-range. The findings also indicate that the on-campus trend of female dominance at UWI, the 70-30 ratio is replicated in the distance education segment.

Sixty-three percent of the students are enrolled in social sciences, particularly management studies, no doubt for career advancement in either the private or the public sector, or to facilitate a career switch to the private sector. Thirty-five percent are in education, and these are no doubt teachers seeking to upgrade themselves for positions, possibly as school principals, as subject specialists, or as leaders in other areas of education.

The resources most used by students are textbooks at sites (72%), photocopies of articles and chapters of books from the Mona Library (63%), as well as book loans from the Mona Library (53%). Many book loans are accessed from the Mona Campus Library because students do not have a set text or a supplementary reader at the local site. This data indicates the significance of book loans to students. Reference service (49%) had average access, while the Mona Library collections enjoyed less than average usage (37%), this is no doubt due to the correlation between library use and distance from the Mona Campus. Only thirteen percent of those who visited the Mona Library accessed user instruction, perhaps because they were unaware of the service. Interlibrary loan (8%) is grossly under-subscribed. The reason could be that the service is marketed to the postgraduate students, but hardly to the undergraduates.

According to the literature, students tend to use other libraries in addition to their host libraries, so the students were asked to indicate other libraries used in addition to the Mona distance library services. The majority of respondents (36.6%) indicated that they had used public libraries while (12.5%) used workplace libraries, which are usually special libraries provided by employers. Just over thirty percent used school libraries, community college libraries, and teachers' college libraries. The implication for the Library is that a significant number of students are using other services, especially public libraries. The Distance Librarian should therefore have discussion with the public libraries with an eye to collaboration of some sort.

Fifty-three percent of the sample said they have access to the Internet, while just under a half (47%) said that they had no access. Although most of the sites have Internet access, the large percentage without access implies that a significant number of respondents are unaware of the availability of this important service at the sites. There is therefore a need for greater publicity of the service by the site administrators. Home (36.6%), work (25.4%) and UWIDEC sites (20.6%) are the chief access points. The above findings are not surprising as many private sector companies and educational institutions have Internet access. Additionally, with the price of computers decreasing, more individuals now own computers. The implication for the library is that the majority of students have access to the Internet, therefore the Library's Web resources should be accessible to them.

Access to the three primary electronic resources (the Mona catalogue, databases, and electronic journals) received approximately the same rating (extremely useful 1.6 to useful 1.8), indicating the sample's high level of interest in them. "Supplemental reading at sites" and "research consultation with Distance Education Librarian" are the two additional services most highly ranked by the sample (1.5 – 1.8—"extremely useful" to "useful"). Here again is an indication of two other services that are highly desirable. Visits to UWIDEC sites by the Distance Librarian are considered "useful" (2.0), while information literacy was ranked only "moderately useful" (2.6).

Students were asked to rate the usefulness of three electronic resources to their studies. To get an indication of how useful at least one of these resources, electronic databases, which was being enjoyed by on-campus students, would be to different age categories, the ratings and age groupings were correlated. The findings show that all age categories considered access to electronic databases useful. However, to the under thirty-fives it was "extremely useful" while to the over thirty-fives it was "useful." The lower rating given by the latter group could be attributed to the fact that older persons tend to find electronic resources intimidating. Students in this category would therefore need technical and instructional support.

Age categories and ratings given to usefulness of supplemental reading at sites were correlated for the same reasons that age and usefulness of electronic databases were correlated. The findings show that this resource is also important to all age categories. However, students above age thirty-five gave it the higher rating of "extremely useful," while those below thirty-five rated it as "useful." One can conclude that all age categories recognize the importance of supplemental texts at the UWIDEC sites, but that the older students consider them more useful, as they are more comfortably familiar with print than electronic for finding information to satisfy their research needs.

Peters (1998) advises that the best way to know whether a customer is satisfied with a product or service is to ask the customer. With this in mind, students were asked about their level of satisfaction with the distance library services. Overall, the average satisfaction rating given by the distance students ranged

between “satisfied” and “moderately satisfied” on the five-point Likert Scale. The highest level of satisfaction was with copies of journal articles and chapters of books (2.1—“satisfied”); following were reference services, book loans and the UWI Mona Library collection, which were rated similarly (“satisfied” to “moderately satisfied”—2.5, 2.5, and 2.6 respectively). Interlibrary loan proved to be a little used service, and those who used it were only “moderately satisfied” (3.0). Library instruction received a rating of only “moderately satisfied” (3.0), no doubt because students who visited the Mona Library and tried to access this service might have received less than adequate library instruction because of staff constraint. Timeliness of response to requests and availability of core texts at site received ratings of 3.3, indicating less than moderate satisfaction. The other service with which students were “moderately satisfied” to “dissatisfied” was the provision of core texts at sites (3.3). The rating given to this service is no doubt a response to the inadequate number and variety of titles available at the sites. This situation has arisen, no doubt, not only because of the need to acquire more core texts for the sites, but also because poor management of site collections by some site personnel has resulted in depletion.

Based on the results of the survey, the Distance Librarian made several recommendations for the improvement of the distance library service. The most significant of these are as follows:

- Create a distance-learners Web site, from which electronic services can be accessed.
- Give distance learners access to electronic databases
- Increase the number of titles and copies of supplementary texts
- Improve the turnaround time for the delivery of material to the sites for use by students

The Distance Learners Web site is in an advanced stage of construction, and distance learners have been given access to three of the databases to which the Library subscribes. When completed, the Web site will be available at [http://mona.uwi.edu/library/distance\\_learners.html](http://mona.uwi.edu/library/distance_learners.html). In addition, new titles in multiple copies are being added as recommendations come in from tutors and site coordinators. However, to send requested material to the UWIDEC sites, a consistent turnaround time of three days was recommended, but it is yet to be achieved.

### **Iowa and the West Indies: A Comparison of Data and Experiences**

A comparison of the data between the University of Iowa and the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, shows a number of similarities; however, some significant differences can be noted, as well. Regarding similarities, first of all, both institutions offer a range of undergraduate and graduate level programs. In addition, at both institutions, women make up a sizeable majority of distance education students (UI 76.8%, UWI 66%), and for both institutions, the vast majority of students are older than the traditional on-campus student (UI 89.4% over the age of 22, UWI 71% over the age of 25). Although the majority of students in both programs use the resources and services of their home institution, many of them also use public libraries and other academic libraries to support their studies. Importantly, students at both institutions appeared to value the resources and services available to them through their home institutions. Students tended to rank most resources and services favorably, but at both institutions, they found more value in technology than in instruction—students tended to rank electronic resources quite high, while they ranked instructional services significantly lower. Importantly, however, those students who had received library instruction tended to rank such services highly.

Probably the most significant difference for UWI students and Iowa students concerns their access to the Internet—a major factor in how successful a library can be in providing electronic resources and services. Almost ninety-five percent of Iowa students have convenient access to the Web (from their homes, work, public libraries, etc.), whereas only fifty-three percent of UWI students have convenient access to the Web (nevertheless, a majority of students and a number that will certainly continue to increase). Over ninety percent of Iowa students have Internet access from their homes, but only about thirty-seven percent of UWI students have Internet access from home. Regarding future surveys, with a vast majority of its students having easy access to the Web, Iowa can confidently plan on developing a Web-based student survey that will be cheap and accessible to practically all of its students. For the near future, however, student surveys at UWI will need to take into consideration the lack of Web access by a significant number of its students, and paper-based surveys will remain an important tool for some time.

Undoubtedly, however, Web access will continue to increase at UWI, and library staff are focusing on the continued development of Mona Library's Web presence.

In some ways, the University of Iowa and the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, are worlds apart; however, in other ways, the two institutions are inside the same ballpark working at the same game—providing the best library resources and services possible for their students. In order to be successful at that game, each institution must address the needs and wants of its students, and that requires a knowledge of the student population that can only be gained by asking and assessing the right questions. The University of Iowa and the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, undertook separate projects to survey distance education students. Each survey helped lay a foundation for understanding student needs, and from that foundation, better library service can be built. Communication and cooperation among two librarians facilitated the development and evaluation of those surveys. Similar communication and cooperation among librarians will help facilitate the assessment and development of library services wherever distance learning programs are offered—from the Midwest to the West Indies and beyond.

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**Appendix A**  
**University of Iowa Libraries, Survey of Distance-Education Students**  
**Survey Instrument & Summary of Results**

**2003**  
**185 responses from 1,662 students contacted, 11.1% return rate**

**1998-99**  
**272 responses from 706 surveys mailed out, 38.5% return rate**

**Personal Characteristics**

1. Student Status	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
Undergraduate (Part-time)	48.4	Undergrad	43.7
Undergraduate (Full-time)	17.3		
Graduate (Part-time)	21.2	Graduate	56.3
Graduate (Full-time)	7.6		
Graduate, Doctoral Level	1.6		
Other	3.7		
2. What gender are you?	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
Male	23.2		34.2
Female	76.8		65.8
3. What is your ethnicity?	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.5		NA
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.5		NA
Black, non-Hispanic	1.0		NA
Hispanic	2.1		NA
White, non-Hispanic	91.9		NA
Race/ethnicity unknown	3.8		NA
4. What Age Category are you in?	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
18-22	20.6	18-21	0.7
23-29	22.8	22-30	28.5
30-39	14.7	30+	70.7
40-49	26.6		
50+	15.2		
5. What is your program or major?	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
Computer Science	1.0		1.1
Education	11.4		7.0
Electrical & Computer Engineering	0.0		1.5
Guided Independent Study	17.3		NA
Liberal Studies (BLS)	20.5		36.4
Library & Information Science	2.7		4.4

Nursing	15.1	11.1
Public Health	2.7	NA
Social Work	8.7	13.2
Pharmacy	NA	4.0
Business	NA	28.0
Other	20.5	NA

**Coursework**

6. How many distance-education courses have you taken from the UI in recent years?

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
This is my first one.	50.5	18.7
2 to 5	29.4	39.5
6 to 10	9.8	17.6
10+	10.3	14.2

7. What types of delivery modes were used for your courses (Check **all** that apply)?

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Face-to-Face	18.2	NA
ICN (state-wide, fiber-optic television)	19.3	NA
GIS print	74.4	NA
GIS Web	13.1	NA
Web, semester-based	14.2	NA
Cable Television	4.6	NA
Microwave Television	0.0	NA
Videotape	8.5	NA

8. How many of your University of Iowa distance-education courses have required the preparation of papers/reports/presentations?

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	25.8	9.7
1 to 3	49.5	45.8
4 to 8	13.2	22.8
8+	11.5	21.7

**Library Use**

9. How many of your distance-education courses have required the use of library materials?

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	57.7	34.7
1 to 3	26.4	53.8
4 to 8	8.2	17.5
8+	7.7	11.9

10. For those courses that have required the use of library materials, which libraries or types of libraries have you used (Check **all** that apply)?

	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
U of Iowa Libraries	51.9		34.7
ISU Libraries	5.1		4.0
UNI Libraries	3.8		2.8
Other Academic Library	45.6		62.5
Public Libraries	55.7		68.2
Special Libraries	13.9		22.2
Area Education Agency	1.3		5.7
Personal Library	39.2		47.7
Instructor Materials	43.0		33.5

11. Which type of library have you **used most frequently** to complete the requirements of your distance-education course (s)? (Check one)

	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
U of Iowa Libraries	36.3		NA
Another academic library	13.7	Academic	47.2
Public library	30.0		29.0
Special library	6.3		10.2
Personal library	5.0		13.6
Materials instructor provided	8.8		NA

12. How **satisfied** have you been with the adequacy of the **collections** (electronic resources, databases, books, journals, etc.) of the library you have used the most? (Circle one)

	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
Very Satisfied	40.0		24.0
Somewhat Satisfied	43.8		56.6
No Opinion	7.5		7.4
Dissatisfied	6.3		8.6
Very Dissatisfied	2.5		3.4

13. How **satisfied** have you been with the adequacy of the **services** (reference help, instruction, document delivery, etc.) of the library you have used most?

	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
Very Satisfied	49.4		33.7
Somewhat Satisfied	36.7		46.9
No Opinion	8.9		9.1
Somewhat Dissatisfied	2.5		8.0
Very Dissatisfied	2.5		2.3

**Library Services for Distance-Education Students**

14. How **often** do you use the UI Distance-Education Library Services Web site? <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/disted> (Circle one)

	2003		1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Percent</u>
Once a week	15.0		NA
Once a month	15.0		NA
Once a semester	10.0		NA
Never	60.0		NA

15. If you have used the Web site, how would you **judge** it? (Circle one)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	9.7	NA
Good	61.3	NA
Average	29.0	NA
Below Average	0.0	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

16. How **often** do use other UI Web pages? (Circle one)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Once a week	28.6	NA
Once a month	28.6	NA
Once a semester	14.3	NA
Never	28.6	NA

17. Among the following UI Library Web pages, please judge those that you have used. (Circle one judgement for each that you have used)

	2003	1998-99
<u><b>The U of I Libraries Catalog</b></u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	28.1	NA
Good	56.3	NA
Average	15.6	NA
Below Average	0.0	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u><b>InfoHawk Gateway</b></u>		
Excellent	18.9	NA
Good	46.0	NA
Average	32.4	NA
Below Average	2.7	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u><b>Hardin Library (Health)</b></u>		
Excellent	36.4	NA
Good	41.0	NA
Average	22.7	NA
Below Average	0.0	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u><b>Psychology Library</b></u>		
Excellent	7.1	NA
Good	71.4	NA
Average	14.3	NA
Below Average	7.1	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

18. Have you used one of the **handouts that summarize library resources and services** for distance-education students? (Circle one)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	69.2	NA
No	30.8	NA

If yes, how would you **judge** the handout?

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	29.2	NA
Good	62.5	NA
Average	8.3	NA
Below Average	0.0	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

19. Have you ever attended a **lecture** or observed an **instructional session presented by a UI librarian?**

(Circle one)	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	83.3	NA
No	16.7	NA

If yes, how would you **judge** the instruction?

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	46.7	NA
Good	53.5	NA
Average	0.0	NA
Below Average	0.0	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

20. Have you used the **toll-free telephone number** to receive reference assistance or ask for help?

(Circle one)	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	87.2	NA
No	12.8	NA

If yes, how would you **judge** the service?

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	53.9	NA
Good	23.1	NA
Average	15.4	NA
Below Average	7.7	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

21. Have you used **electronic mail** to receive reference assistance or ask for help?

(Circle one)	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	69.2	NA
No	30.8	NA

If yes, how would you **judge** the service?

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	30.8	NA
Good	46.2	NA
Average	11.5	NA
Below Average	7.7	NA
Poor	3.9	NA

22. Have you used the **Distance-Education Document-Delivery Service?**  
 (Circle one)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	67.1	NA
No	32.9	NA

If yes, how would you **judge** the service?

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Excellent	77.8	NA
Good	18.5	NA
Average	3.7	NA
Below Average	0.0	NA
Poor	0.0	NA

**23. Most useful services** **Rank 1, 2, 3**  
 Please consider the following eleven library services. **Check each** service that is important to you in your coursework, and **rank the three services (1, 2, & 3)** that are the **most important** to you.

23-1. Remote access to full-text articles and journals

	2003	1998-99
<u>An Important Service</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	83.5	65.1 (2 <sup>nd</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	34.3	22.4
2 <sup>nd</sup>	25.4	11.8
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.4	11.8

23-2. Remote access to the UI library catalog.

	2003	1998-99
<u>An Important Service</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	65.7	49.1 (6 <sup>th</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	3.0	5.9
2 <sup>nd</sup>	4.4	7.0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	20.9	8.1

23-3. Remote access to electronic indexes and databases

	2003	1998-99
<u>An Important Service</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	65.7	42.3 (8 <sup>TH</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	4.4	4.0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	12.0	6.3
3 <sup>rd</sup>	13.4	6.6

23-4. Distance-Education Document-Delivery Service (articles and books, involves a basic charge of \$3 per item)		
	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	50.8	60.7 (3 <sup>rd</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	10.4	9.2
2 <sup>nd</sup>	7.4	11.4
3 <sup>rd</sup>	10.4	8.1
23-5. Toll-free telephone number for reference help		
	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	47.8	49.3 (5 <sup>th</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	12.0	7.0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	3.0	5.1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	3.0	7.0
23-6. Web-based e-mail services for reference help.		
	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	47.8	71.3 (1 <sup>st</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	10.4	15.1
2 <sup>nd</sup>	4.4	17.3
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.4	9.6
23-7. Remote access to reserve reading materials for class		
	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	46.3	NA
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	5.9	NA
2 <sup>nd</sup>	7.4	NA
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.4	NA
23-8. Interlibrary loan of books and articles		
	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	44.8	43.8 (7 <sup>th</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	7.4	4.8
2 <sup>nd</sup>	5.9	5.1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.4	10.7

23-9. Guides for doing library research in a subject area

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	35.8	30.9 (10 <sup>th</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	3.0	2.6
2 <sup>nd</sup>	1.5	2.6
3 <sup>rd</sup>	5.9	6.6

23-10. Computer-assisted instruction in doing library research

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	25.4	27.9 (11 <sup>th</sup> )
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	0.0	1.5
2 <sup>nd</sup>	1.5	1.8
3 <sup>rd</sup>	3.0	2.2

23-11. Librarian-provided instruction in doing library research  
(in person or over the ICN)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>An Important Service</u>	20.9	20.2
<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	1.5	2.2
2 <sup>nd</sup>	1.5	2.9
3 <sup>rd</sup>	3.0	0.7

**Connectivity**

24. What Kind of **computer** do you usually use? (Circle one)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
PC	86.9	NA
MacIntosh	6.6	4.8
Other	1.1	NA
Do not use one	5.5	NA

25. Do you have convenient access to the **Internet**? (Circle **all** that apply)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	NA	Yes 83.8
at home	93.5	NA
at work	48.4	NA
at local library	43.5	NA
other	6.5	NA

26. What kind of **connection do you have to the Internet?**

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
T-One-line or other direct connection	17.9	NA
Television or other cable connection	25.0	NA
Telephone/modem connection	58.3	NA
Do not know	6.0	NA

27. Does your computer have the capacity to use **CDs?** (Circle one)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	92.7	75.3
No	0.6	24.7
Do not know	6.7	NA

28. Do you have convenient access to **electronic mail?** (Circle **all** that apply)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	NA	Yes 85.2
at home	92.9	NA
at work	48.8	NA
at local library	29.8	NA
other	9.5	NA

29. Do you have convenient access to a **FAX machine** for sending and receiving documents?  
(Circle **all** that apply)

	2003	1998-99
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	NA	Yes 73.8
at home	26.2	NA
at work	55.4	NA
at local library	11.3	NA
other	10.7	NA

**Comments**

30. The input that we get from you and other distance-education students like you is very helpful to us. From it, we hope that we can continue learning about how students use library resources and services, how they judge and value those resources and services, and how we might improve them. Do you have any further comments that you would like to express regarding library services for distance-education students?

**Thank you for your input!**

**Appendix B  
University of Iowa Libraries  
Cover Letter for Survey**

Dear Distance Education Student:

We are requesting your participation in a Library Services survey that is posted on the Web at **[www.uiowa.edu/~ccp/survey](http://www.uiowa.edu/~ccp/survey)**. The objectives of this survey are to assess the effectiveness of the information services that are currently available to distance education students and to identify areas for potential improvement. **We are aware that you are very busy with your academics and other matters, but we hope that you take time to respond.**

Your participation in this survey is completely confidential. No names are associated with individual responses. You were chosen to participate in this survey through the use of a random selection process, and each distance-education student had an equal chance of being selected. **Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary, but it is crucial to the success of our project. Your response will give us an idea of how well we are currently meeting your information needs, and it will help us improve future services.**

The University of Iowa Libraries is committed to creating a learning environment that encourages quality research and scholastic achievement. Your participation in this survey provides us with the type of feedback required to achieve this goal. In addition, should you later have a question about library services or need assistance with any library matter, please feel free to contact me. My university address, a toll-free telephone number, and my email address are provided below.

**Access the survey at: [www.uiowa.edu/~ccp/survey](http://www.uiowa.edu/~ccp/survey)**

**Please print the survey, complete the questions, and mail it to us in the provided envelope.**

**It will take you approximately five-to-ten minutes to complete this survey.**

Thank You,

Stephen H. Dew, Ph.D., Coordinator  
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100 Main Library  
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Tel: 877-807-9587  
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**Appendix C**  
**University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Survey of Distance-Education Students**  
**Survey Instrument & Summary of Results, 2000**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**SECTION ONE**  
**PROFILE OF DISTANCE STUDENTS**

**1. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female

**2. What is your age category?**

- Over 50
- 46-50
- 36-45
- 25-35
- Under 25

*Age Range	GENDER			
	Male	Female	Not stated	
>50	2	8	2	15%
46-50	2	9	2	16%
36-45	8	10	0	23%
25-35	6	16	3	32%
<25	2	9	0	14%
Totals	20	52	7	79
%	25	66	9	100%

\* Seven participants did not indicate their ages.

<b>3. Are you employed?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Full time	92
Part time	5
Not working	3

<b>4. In which sector are you employed?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Education	58
Finance	16
Civil Service	11
Police Force	5
Utilities	4
Tourism	1
Transport	1
Other	4

<b>5a. At which institution did you study last?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Teacher Training College	33
University	22
High School	20
Professional institution	4
Community College	6
College of Agriculture, Science and Education	5
Other	10

<b>5b. What program did you study?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Education	33
Management	33
High School curriculum	7
Computer studies	3
Agriculture	3
Other	21

<b>5c. Which qualification did you obtain?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Tertiary Diploma	42
Post High School Certificate	29
General Certificate of Education	
Advanced Level Certificate	6
General Certificate of Education	
Ordinary Level Certificate	6
Associate Degree	3
Other	14

<b>5d. When did you graduate?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1970's	8
1980's	27
1990-1994	25
1995- 1999	25
Other	15

**6. Why did you choose to study by distance education? Please tick all relevant answers.**

	<b>Percent</b>
Distance from Mona Campus	56
Work commitment	38
Home commitment	32
Career advancement	38
Change of occupation	25
Flexibility (time, place, pace)	13
Other	10

<b>7a. Which is your distance education site?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Mona	24
Denbigh	18
Morant Bay	13
Savana-la-mar	10
Ocho Rios	9
Montego Bay	8
Brown's Town	5
Vere	5
Mandeville	4
Turks and Caicos Island	4
Cayman Islands	1

**7b. In which distance education programme are you enrolled?**

<b>UWIDEC Programme</b>	<b>% Of Sample</b>
B. Sc Managent Studies	42
B.Ed.Educational Administration.	29
Certificate Public Administration	9
Certificate Adult Education.	6
B. Sc Public Administration I	8
B. Sc Agri-Business.	4
B. Sc Accounting I	1
Not Stated	1
Grand Total	100

**8. How far do you travel to get to the UWI Mona Library? Please tick the answer that applies to you.**

	<b>Percent</b>
10 miles/16km or less	17
11-25 miles/18-40km	8
26-50 miles/41-80km	30
Over 50 miles/80km	43
Other	2

**9. How often do you visit the Mona Library? Please tick the answer that applies to you.**

	<b>Percent</b>
At least once per week	10
Every 2-3 weeks	6
Every 4-5 weeks	6
Every 6-7 weeks	4
Once per semester	23
Never visited	51

**10. If you visit the Mona Library, when are you most likely to do so?**

	<b>Percent</b>
Weekdays (8:30am-4:30pm)	18
Saturdays	19
Evenings (4:31pm-10:00pm)	11
Other	52

**SECTION TWO  
USE OF DISTANCE LIBRARY SERVICES**

**11. Which of the following library services have you accessed? Please tick all that you have used.**

<b>Services</b>	<b>% of Sample</b>
Core Textbooks at site	72
Photocopies of articles and chapters of books	63
Book Loans from Mona Library	53
Reference Services	49
Mona library Collections	37
User Instruction	13
None (have not used any)	13
Inter-library Loan	8

**12. How do you submit your requests to the Mona Library? Please tick the methods that you have used.**

	<b>Percent</b>
FAX	8
Email	6
Telephone	14
Tutors	5
Site Coordinator	3
Administrative Assistant	32
Personal visit to Mona Library	26
Other	5

**13. How did you learn about the distance library services? Please tick all that apply.**

	<b>Percent</b>
Brochure	13
Site Coordinator	15
Student Orientation	35
Tutors	5
Student Handbook	27
Administrative Assistant	4
Other	1

**14. How satisfied are you with the library services provided? Please circle the relevant number as indicated in the scale below.**

1 = very satisfied; 2 = satisfied; 3 = moderately satisfied; 4 = dissatisfied; 5 = very dissatisfied

<b>Item Rated</b>	<b>Weighted Average Rating</b>
Timeliness of response to requests for materials	3.3
Number and variety of core textbooks at site	3.3
Inter-library loans	3.0
Library instruction	3.0
UWI Mona Library collections	2.6
Book loans	2.5
Reference service	2.5
Photocopies of journal articles and chapters of books	2.1

**15. Why haven't you used the distance library services? Please tick all answers that apply to you.**

	<b>Percent</b>
I get books & resources elsewhere	53
I was unaware of the library services	31
Reading outside course materials not required	16
Other	5

**SECTION THREE  
USE OF OTHER LIBRARY SERVICES**

**16. In addition to the Mona Distance Library Services, which of the following other libraries have you been using in your research? Please tick all the answers that apply to you.**

<b>Type of library</b>	<b>% of other library usage</b>
Public library	36
None (no other library used)	14
Workplace library	13
School library	13
Community college library	10
Teachers' college library	8
Other university library	4
Other libraries	2

**17. What are the factors responsible for your choice of library? Please tick all the answers that are relevant to you.**

	<b>Percent</b>
Convenient opening hours	26
Close to home	37
Library owns books I need	16
Library owns journals I need	6
Helpfulness of staff	16
Other	6

**18a. Do you have access to the Internet?**

	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	53
No	47

**18b. If yes, tick the places from which you have access.**

<b>Access Points</b>	<b>% Of all responses</b>
Home	37
Work	25
UWIDEC Site	21
Other	9.5
Home of friend/relative	7.9

**SECTION FOUR  
NEW SERVICES**

**19. Do you think the following services would be useful to you in your studies? Please circle the relevant number as indicated by the scale.**

Scale: 1 = extremely useful; 2 = useful; 3 = moderately useful; 4 = somewhat useful; 5 = not useful at all

<b>Services</b>	<b>Weighted Average Rating</b>
Access to Mona catalogue	1.6
Access to electronic databases	1.8
Access to electronic journals	1.8
Supplemental reading at sites	1.5
Research consultation with Distance Education Librarian	1.9
DEC site visits by Librarian	2.0
Information literacy (Research Skills instructions)	2.6

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Access to Electronic Databases Weighted Average Rating</b>
>50	2.5
46-50	2.7
36-45	2.3
25-35	1
<25	1.4

**20. How useful would the following additional services be to your course of studies? Please circle the relevant number as indicated by the scale.**

Scale: 1 = extremely useful; 2 = useful; 3 = moderately useful; 4 = somewhat useful; 5 = not useful at all

Supplemental reading at sites  
 Research consultation with Distance Education Librarian  
 Site visits by librarian  
 Information Literacy (research skills instruction)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Supplemental Reading at Sites Weighted Average Rating</b>
>50	1.7
46-50	1.3
36-45	1.1
25-35	1.8
<25	2.0

**21. What recommendations would you like to make to the Mona Library to help us to serve you better?**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

**Appendix D**  
**University of the West Indies, Mona Campus**  
**Cover letter for Questionnaire**

University of the West Indies, Mona  
Department of Library and Information Studies

August 20, 200

Dear Distance Learner:

I am pursuing a Master's degree in Library and Information Studies and my area of interest is library services for distance learners. As part of the requirement for the degree, I am conducting a survey to ascertain how the Mona Campus Library is serving you and the new services you would like to see introduced. I will not use the information you provide for study purposes only but also to develop the Library's distance library service in order to serve you better.

I am therefore seeking your participation in the survey by requesting that you complete the attached questionnaire. Your answers will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Evadne McLean (Mrs)