Claremont Colleges Library Student Library & Technology Engagement Survey: 2012

Executive Summary with Recommendations

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Based on our initial research questions, the authors make the following characterizations of survey responses with recommendations for Claremont Colleges Library (CCL) services:

1. What are the library profiles (defined as library use, skill, and awareness) of Claremont Colleges students?

Claremont Colleges students expressed high use of and appreciation for Library spaces, materials, staff, and services, and strongly value CCL in terms of their learning and academic development. For example, a respective 50% and 42% of respondents reported accessing online articles or using library databases at least frequently, 63% of respondents used the Library as a study space at least occasionally (Figure 2), and 34% responded that CCL resources are at the highest level of importance (very important) to their learning and development on a 7-item scale, with a further 50% indicating importance at levels of 5 and 6 (Figure 1). Responses to open-ended questions emphasize these trends; many respondents expressed appreciation for a diverse range of specific CCL services such as Link+ and ILL, Chat/IM, and (Love Your) Library drop-in workshops. Conversely, many expressed low awareness of the breadth of Library services and a wish for increased marketing and communication of CCL offerings. For example, 10% of respondents were not aware they could seek research support from a librarian on the phone, and 15% didn’t know they could do so via IM or chat (Figure 2). Many of the comments and concerns raised in the open-ended survey responses could be mitigated by better advertising and more consistent Library procedures (for example, making all CCL policies available via the website). Both areas could also be addressed by dedicated

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1 For the complete Student Library & Technology Engagement Survey Summary Report: 2012, please contact the authors – sara_lowe@cuc.claremont.edu and char_booth@cuc.claremont.edu.

2 N=1,038, or approximately 15% of the total 7C student population, participated in the Fall 2012 Library and Technology Engagement Survey. See Demographics in the full report for more information, including participation by campus.
marketing/communications staff who received support from Library administration, as well as a Library-wide understanding of the importance of this work. In areas specifically under Educational Services purview (e.g., Ask Us), although students are highly engaged with librarian research support options relative to other campuses, more could be done to make students aware of the nature and benefit of these services. Again, better marketing of the services Educational Services provides is needed.\(^3\)

2. What are the technology profiles (defined as technology ownership, use, skill, adoption status, and emerging technology receptivity) of Claremont Colleges students?

\(^3\) See pages 8-16 and 27 of the full report for complete information.
Based on survey findings, Claremont Colleges students tend to be receptive to emerging technologies (Figure 3), express positive impact of technology on their academic performance, engage heavily with mobile technology, and own a range of devices they believe are integral to facilitating academic success. Laptop ownership is virtually ubiquitous (98%), while a sizeable proportion of Claremont students own dedicated e-readers (21%), tablets (19%), and other e-reading and research devices (e.g., smart phones, 71%) (Figure 4). Based on this profile, CCL should aggressively prioritize the development and maintenance of its tech-equipped spaces, digital collections, and interfaces to meet the high expectations of CCL students.4

3. How can student receptiveness to and awareness of emerging technology Library services be characterized? How willing are students to integrate social and mobile library tools into their personal learning environments?

Many students already conduct academic research and access CCL resources from mobile devices such as smartphones and tablet computers, while more expressed interest in increased Library support and research functionality on these tools. For example, via mobile devices, a majority of respondents indicated they were at least fairly likely to want to: receive item renewal notices from the Library (78%), check their library account (77%), send call numbers from Blais (64%), and/or use mobile versions of databases to conduct research (57%) (Figure 5). At the same time, Library spaces are still heavily used and highly valued by students (see Research Question 1). Students expressed relatively less but still considerable interest in engaging with Library research

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4 See pages 17-18 of the full report for complete information.
services in web-based and mobile forms – for example, 47% were at least fairly likely to indicate interest in engaging with a librarian via mobile chat reference. Library social media engagement among the 7C population remains modest, but a number of the survey population already engages with CCL via Twitter and Facebook (3% and 5%, respectively) while more indicate receptivity to Library presence in social media sites (65% would consider friending the library on Facebook and 22% would consider following the library on Twitter). Increasing mobile device and e-reader ownership indicates that the Library consider student use of handheld devices to make sure we meet their research needs via mobile devices as well as know how to facilitate effective pedagogical and research/reference interactions. 5

4. What are student perceptions of and expectations for e-books?
A substantial minority of Claremont students own dedicated e-readers (21%) and tablets (19%), while a sizeable majority owns smart phones (71%), which are also commonly used as e-readers. Considerable numbers already access CCL resources and/or conduct academic research from these mobile devices; 35% of respondents accessed e-books at least occasionally. Of those with smartphones, 30% read e-books on them at least occasionally. In the event that their mobile devices supported it, almost 50% of respondents would be fairly or very likely to read e-books and 60% would search for e-books. While print collections are still very much utilized and valued (over 50% of respondents use the Library to check out books at least occasionally, and space and physical resource appreciation was frequently expressed in open-ended comments), CCL should continue to strategically build its e-book collections to satisfy growing student demand. It will be useful to see how respondents answer these questions in subsequent years to establish what trends will continue to impact e-reading at the 7Cs. 6

5. How do students characterize their information literacy skills, and how well do students perceive that they are being supported in their IL skills development?
Respondents expressed confidence in their information literacy-related skills and abilities such as source integration and attribution (about 70% rate their abilities as high on a five-point scale with a maximum of very high), but also indicated the need for development in the IL skill areas of awareness and evaluation of source materials as well as understanding open access resources (a relative 50% rate their abilities as high in each area, Figure 6). These results are unfortunately not corroborated by ongoing CCL and CCL/5C collaborative assessment projects evaluating student work using a CCL-developed Information Literacy rubric. In these studies, students tend to demonstrate difficulty with attribution and identification of authoritative sources.

5 See pages 19-22 of the full report for complete information.
6 See Figures 5, 12, and 13 in the full report for more information.
Students also report that a range of IL-related skills are emphasized in the classroom context, but that faculty tend to emphasize academic honesty over evaluation of source materials (Figure 7).

Strong librarian collaboration in classroom settings is evident in survey findings – at least 70% of respondents reported attending a workshop by a CCL librarian in their classroom or in the Library (Figure 8).

In sum, results indicate much can be done to support student IL skills development by librarians directly and in collaboration with faculty via curricular-level planning, implementation, and assessment. As more structure and cohesion is being built into the CCL IL Instruction program and attempts are made to meet increasing demand, librarians should be reaching students more effectively in classroom settings and doing more to support key IL skill areas through targeted efforts such as curriculum mapping, which highlight how IL can be better scaffolded into departments.7

7 See pages 23-29 of the full report for complete information.