

Summary of GSA Recommendations to Library based upon 03/04 Library Survey
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Preface: It is recognized by Drew's graduate student body that many Library issues addressed by the survey have budgetary components, and that many others originate outside the Library but impact upon it. The purpose of these recommendations is to present these issues and proposed solutions to the Library Committee for their knowledge and use in presenting these problems to other relevant University committees; e.g. the Expenditure Committee, Space Committee, etc.

The demographic data collected by the survey indicates that approximately 75% of Drew graduate students work and live off campus. They work an average of 22 hours per week and commute an average of 45 minutes. Almost half of Drew graduate students have children, and about half of those with children consider themselves their children's primary caregiver during the day. The typical Drew graduate student is juggling serious commitments to work, family, and school, so University policy (not just Library policy) should be designed to accommodate students who fit this demographic. "One size fits all" policies, especially policies that stem from a perception of graduate students as fitting the same demographic as undergraduate students, are generally perceived as inconsiderate of graduate student needs. The following recommendations reflect the distinctive needs of Drew's graduate student population, needs which may also be shared by the Theological school student population.

1. Library Equipment and Environment

- The most serious problem with Library computers is in the long turnaround time between the time they go down and the time they are brought back up.

Question: does the CNS helpdesk provide support for Library computers, and what priority is the Library assigned for service?

Recommendations:

- Circulation desk staff and reference desk staff should receive training to reboot computers when they go down for the most common reasons.
- Set up two additional computers for catalog use only. Ideally these computers would be either on the second floor in a central location, or near the reference desk where their use can be monitored.
- Microfiche and microfilm viewers are inadequate for student use.

Recommendations:

- Replace existing microfiche/microfilm viewers with machines that take both dimes and a Library card.
- Install a change machine (one and five dollar bills to dimes) near the front entrance of the Library, on the wall adjacent to the telephone.

- Most students are very unhappy with the new web catalog, but it was unclear if this was due to lack of familiarity (simply because it is new), or because it really isn't as good as the old web catalog. More than one student reported not being able to find works by author, but able to find the same works by title. While there is a help menu available, an online tutorial may also be appropriate. *Question*: has the Library conducted usability studies for the new web catalog?
- Climate control during summer months seems to be an issue with some areas in the Library. An HVAC contractor should be hired to survey airflow in different areas of the Library and make recommendations for the improvement of the HVAC system. Does the Library have an effective Energy Management system installed?

2. Library Orientation and Services

Comments: it should be recognized that graduate student response to this section of the survey was overwhelmingly positive. Students generally feel that when they walk into the Library and use either the Reference Desk, Circulation Desk, or the Interlibrary Loan Office, they are treated well, are served by competent staff, and receive the services they need. The relatively low scores for Library Administration are largely reflective of Library hours and carrel policy, not necessarily the Library Administration itself.

Recommendations:

- The Reference Desk needs to be open between 5 PM and 7 PM. Since many graduate students work and attend evening classes which begin at 6:45 PM or 7:00 PM (especially Arts and Letters and Medical Humanities students, which comprise approximately 30% of Drew's graduate student population), the Reference Desk is unavailable to them during a prime use period. Keep in mind that many of these students have a 45 minute commute home after a class that ends at 9:30 or later, then have to get up to go to work in the morning.
- Extended hours need to be maintained year-round, with the exception of the week between Christmas and New Year's. This includes Spring Break, summer, and Jan term. Only two to three days during the week and one day during the weekend would be sufficient, and graduate students don't necessarily need full services all those days – just access to the Library. Given student demographics, open hours of 9 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday effectively bar a significant proportion of Drew graduate students from using the Library. It should also be taken into account that study for comprehensive exams, dissertation writing, and conferences and publications are not driven by the semester system.

3. Carrel and Locker Policy

Again, Drew graduate students recognize that even in this area broader University issues (such as space) impact upon availability and policy. Drew's graduate student population

agrees with the overall philosophy behind the proposed carrel policy, which was read to Drew graduate students for comment during the March 22nd GSA meeting. Notes, comments, and recommendations will be provided for each area of carrel and locker policy.

Group Study Room: agree with presented policy.

Day Carrel: agree with presented policy, with two questions.

1. Is a “day” defined as the period from the opening of the Library to the closing of the Library?
2. When is the key due?

Lockers: agree with presented policy.

Faculty Carrel: agree with presented policy, with these questions:

1. Are faculty carrels assigned out of the same pool as graduate student carrels, or is there a discreet group of carrels reserved for faculty use?
2. Is there a minimum use requirement for faculty carrels and is usage tracked?
3. How many faculty carrels are there?
4. Is the Visiting Scholar carrel a single carrel set aside for only that use, or is it drawn from the graduate carrel pool?
5. Is there a minimum use requirement for the Visiting Scholar carrel and is usage tracked?

Semester and Dissertation Carrels: proposed revisions to the policy described below.

Graduate students recognize and appreciate the increased flexibility of the new proposed policy, but still feel it continues some of the same problems found in the old policy. Our proposals are intended to avoid these problems while still keeping to the same intent behind the Library’s proposed revisions. The policy suggested by graduate students is based upon a clearly expressed priority for carrel assignments rather than minimum use requirements.

Students apply for whichever priority level is relevant to their proposed use and stage in their program of study.

Priority 1: Individual Dissertation Carrel.

- Available to students who have a signed prospectus by their dissertation committee.
- 1 year assignment renewable for one additional year with application.
- 100 hours use per month, no requirement for any number of days per week.

Priority 2: Shared Dissertation Carrel.

- Available to students who have a signed prospectus by their dissertation committee.
- 1 year assignment renewable for one additional year with application.

- 80 hours use per month, no requirement for specific number of days per week.
- Student submits proposed schedule with carrel application. Students can recruit/choose carrel mates in advance of application and submit both applications simultaneously.

Priority 3: Individual Semester Carrel:

- Available to students registered for any section of full time maintaining matriculation after coursework and language exams, and before the dissertation prospectus is approved by their dissertation committee.
- 1 semester assignment renewable with application, so long as the student continues to be registered for full time maintaining matriculation.
- 100 hours use per month, no requirement for any specific number of days per week.

Priority 4: Shared Semester Carrel:

- Available to students registered for any section of full time maintaining matriculation after coursework and language exams, and before the dissertation prospectus is approved by their dissertation committee.
- 1 semester assignment renewable with application, so long as the student continues to be registered for full time maintaining matriculation.
- 80 hours of use per month, no requirement for any specific number of days per week.
- Student submits proposed schedule with carrel application. Students can recruit/choose carrel mates in advance of application and submit both applications simultaneously.

Sign in/sign out log at Circulation Counter without continual rounds in Pilling and Baldwin by Library staff.

Graduate School Dean approval for carrel assignment (student must be in good academic standing) and for the revoking of carrel privileges. Students should receive two weeks warning, in writing, before having their carrel privileges revoked, and be given a chance to appeal during that two weeks.

Students sharing carrels must get approval in writing or by e-mail from their carrel mate to work beyond their proposed schedule and notify the Carrel coordinator in writing or by e-mail that they will be doing so.

It is understood that carrel usage may fall below requirements in January and summer. If assignee will not be using his/her carrel for a period greater than four weeks, carrel may be assigned as a share for that period of time. Assignee must inform carrel coordinator if he/she will not be using the carrel for a period of one week or greater.

Conflict resolution policy should be included with carrel policy. Recommended process:

1. Student informs his/her carrel mate of problem in person. If informal discussion doesn't resolve the problem:
2. Student informs his/her carrel mate of problem, with proposed solution, in writing or by e-mail. If this communication doesn't solve the problem:
3. Student informs carrel coordinator of history of problem and proposed solutions in writing or by e-mail, sending a copy of this communication to his/her carrel mate. Carrel coordinator then proposes a solution to both students, who have to respond within three days in writing or by e-mail. Students who refuse to respond can have their carrel privileges revoked. If the carrel coordinator's proposal doesn't resolve the problem, or if students refuse to comply with the proposed solution after agreeing to it:
4. An in-person meeting is called between the carrel coordinator and both carrel mates. A solution should be agreed to at this meeting. If no agreement can be reached or if either or both students do not comply with this agreement:
5. The Graduate school Deans will be given a history of the problem and proposed solutions by the Carrel coordinator. A copy of this correspondence will be sent to both carrel mates. The Graduate school Deans will then rule on the issue. If students do not agree or refuse to comply, the carrel privileges of either or both students can be revoked.

Long term goals for Library carrels:

Move them to an area where they can be externally accessible 24/7, such as the area under the Library, the current Reference offices, etc.

Increase number of available carrels by purchasing more closet carrels and placing them in empty wall space/corners around various areas of the Library where space is available.

Abandon plans for large study tables in place of the cubicles currently being used in either Baldwin or Pilling. This proposal had the lowest response rate on the survey: 1.74.

Section 4: Library Holdings

Overall, Library holdings are adequate for most fields of studies at Drew University, but not excellent. Relatively recent programs, such as Medical Humanities, are grossly under supported by Library holdings, which may be reflective of a lack of planning for the institution of new programs at Drew University. Planning for each new program should include Library holdings and space in addition to funding for faculty, classroom space, promotion, etc. Again, this doesn't necessarily reflect upon the Library itself but upon an overall University problem.

Recommendations:

The online acquisition request form needs a higher profile and better tracking, one that includes an e-mail sent to the student when the request has been filled.

The proxy server off campus students need to access online journals is inadequate for graduate student needs. The Library Committee needs to request that Academic Technology incorporate Library journals into iChain protected services or reconfigure the proxy server. This may be reflective of a larger problem of lack of University technological support for the Library itself.