Assessment & Planning: 2023 Seattle Emerging Research Needs Survey
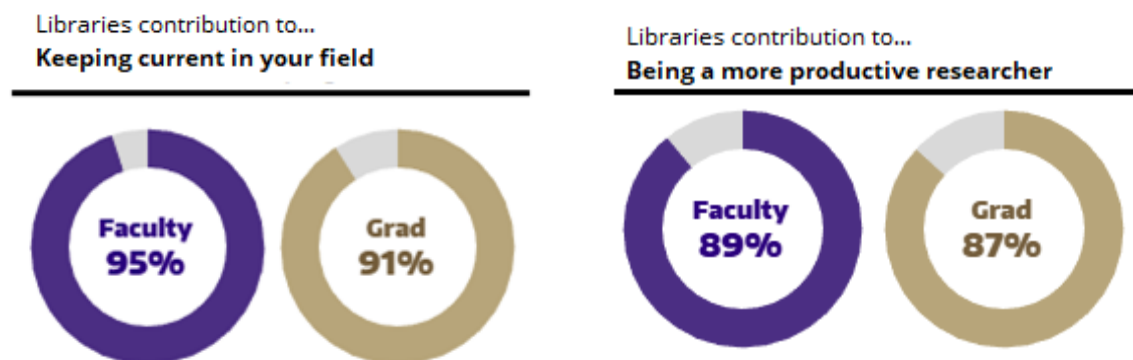
Purpose

In collaboration with the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA), UW Libraries conducted two user surveys during the Spring quarter of 2023. The purpose was to gather data to help inform the review and update of the Libraries' strategic goals. This survey also coincides with the continued development of the Open Scholarship Commons, new Federal funding mandates around open data sharing, developments in support of community engaged scholarship, and campus interest in building research infrastructure support.

Methods

Surveys were distributed by the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA). The Faculty and PhD student surveys targeted faculty, postdoctoral researchers, and PhD students in all Colleges and Schools at the Seattle Campus only, focusing on emerging research needs. The survey was distributed to 4287 faculty (for a 15% response rate) and 2274 PhDs (17% response rate) in April-May 2023.

Results

The Libraries continue to make a major contribution to faculty and PhD teaching, research, and clinical care. The highest Libraries contribution was to faculty keeping current in their field[1], followed by being a more productive researcher.

Faculty and PhD students expressed a high reliance on UW Libraries for various research support services, including access to scholarly resources, research consultations, and specialized workshops.

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[1] of respondents who indicate the Libraries have a positive contribution (selecting a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, with 5 representing "Major Contribution" and 1 representing "Minor contribution").

The results also gave crucial insights into the evolving research needs of faculty and PhD students on the Seattle campus:

- The highest priorities for faculty overall were assistance with depositing data into a repository and support for complying with mandates for open data sharing.
- Early career faculty showed particular interest in assistance with finding existing data and support for translating research for diverse audiences.
- Both faculty and PhD students emphasized the importance of assistance with data management, compliance with open data sharing mandates, and support for finding existing data.
- The majority of PhD student respondents were interested in assistance with data analysis, including identifying relevant tools, and assistance finding existing data.
- Finally, the results show that it is important to increase the impact of UW scholarship by investing in and promoting institutional open access publishing, open scholarship, and open infrastructure.

Opportunities and Recommendations

Overall, the survey results provided valuable insights and direction for the UW Libraries in enhancing its support services for students and faculty:

- There is a clear need to bolster support for research impact and aiding researchers in communicating their work to diverse audiences. Strengthening partnerships between subject and functional liaisons in data services and digital scholarship is also an opportunity to address disciplinary differences in emerging research areas.
- Collaboration with campus partners) can be leveraged to support early career faculty in their data lifecycle needs. Additionally, partnering with disciplinary liaisons to emphasize relevant datasets and working with data throughout the lifecycle could benefit faculty and graduate students. . Priorities moving forward include expanding assistance with organizing research sources and citations, addressing questions regarding open access publishing costs, and collaborating with UW partners to support data storage needs and compliance with NIH grants.
- To mitigate challenges with open access and publishing costs, the Libraries can increase support for open publishing agreements, green open access, and clarifying policies.