

Graduate Program Support by the Libraries

The Rutgers University Libraries provide scholarly information resources and services for all of the graduate programs at the university. Support is available for research, teaching, and learning.

A graduate student visiting the libraries can consult research collections in paper and digital form, view media and special collections materials, check out circulating materials, make copies, visit graduate reserve and reading rooms, ask questions at the reference or information desk, consult with a subject librarian, attend a class or scholarly event, create an original multimedia work, view an exhibition, or find quiet space for study and reflection.

From a desk top computer at home or in the office or laboratory, a graduate student can consult digital information resources, review his or her checkouts and the status of requests, ask a reference question, request materials from within or beyond the Rutgers library system, receive copies from the Libraries via the web, read electronic reserve materials, consult subject research guides, search the Libraries' catalog and a large selection of digital databases, book media for preview and classroom use, schedule a library instruction

session, or make a selection from the faculty services page to support their teaching.

During the coming academic year, the Libraries will open RUcore, the Rutgers Community Repository. An important feature for graduate students is the ability to deposit their theses or dissertations electronically. The ETD service allows both the graduate school and the student to track the dissertation acceptance process. All deposited works will be available permanently and globally.

Liaison librarians who are subject specialists are the graduate students' personal links to the Libraries. They "are responsible for selecting library materials in specific subject areas, for communicating with appropriate departments and individuals about library collections, and for assessing information resources in their subject areas of responsibility. They also teach library instruction sessions, develop online and print materials that support research and instruction, and provide information consultation services in their subject specialties." Librarians attend orientation events to meet new graduate students, and some librarians have office hours in academic departments and schools.

Assessment

Because library services and scholarly information resources are developed in support of the academic and research programs of the university, the Rutgers University Libraries have a long history of asking students, faculty, and administrators from all disciplines and campuses what they need to be successful. The Libraries assessment activities are described at http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/staff/planning/reports/assessment_program_summary.shtml.

The assessment study that has most recently provided the clearest direction for the Libraries from graduate students is LibQUAL+™. During the spring 2005, the Rutgers University Libraries were one of 234 libraries internationally that participated in the Association of Research Libraries sponsored LibQUAL+™ survey. This survey helps libraries assess and improve library services, change organizational culture, and market the library services using a web-based survey to track, understand, and act upon users' opinions of service quality. LibQUAL+™ measures user perceptions of service affect (customer service), information control (information provided and its accessibility), and library as place. Open-ended comments are solicited. The Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning drew a sample of 7,624 individuals across all three campuses, excluding library personnel. We received

796 usable surveys and collected 372 comments. We learned that, like faculty, graduate students do not find our collections adequate and, like undergraduate students, do not find our facilities adequate.

In response, the Libraries have continued to develop their resource sharing partnerships and processes, renegotiated resource licenses, coordinated collections universitywide to avoid duplication, worked to procure and expand support from the state legislature for statewide academic library resources, and developed proposals for new and improved facilities for the capital campaign.

The LibQUAL+™ executive summary and full report are available at <http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/about/libqual.shtml>.