Promoting Library Services with User-Centered Language

Allison R. Benedetti

Abstract: As libraries respond to new teaching and research practices in the twenty-first century, it is important to consider how to advertise library services. Users are often surprised to learn about the varied expertise of library staff and the many services the staff provides. To investigate this issue, the author designed a study to identify a more user-centered vocabulary for marketing library services. Prompted by vignettes illustrating a range of faculty and student needs, focus groups of undergraduate and graduate students suggested words they would look for to find help in each situation. The author compiled the groups’ suggestions as options in a questionnaire sent to a larger campus population sample. The results suggest best practices and guidelines to employ when marketing library services.

Introduction

As teaching and research change in the twenty-first century and libraries adjust to meet these new opportunities, it is important to consider how libraries describe and advertise their services. At the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), library staff have begun using research help instead of reference desk, attempting to reduce jargon and convey more varied expertise. In UCLA’s Powell Library, which is focused on undergraduates, librarians have branded their service points “Inquiry Desk” and “Inquiry Space.”

Even interior design sometimes makes it difficult for libraries to draw attention to their services. For example, the design concept for a renovation of the Charles E. Young Research Library at UCLA called for minimal signage, so there is little to provide directions and information to visitors. In general, user awareness of library offerings remains a challenge. Students are often surprised, for example, to learn about library experts in citation management software or copyright.

While there is much literature about changing librarian roles, few articles address the vocabulary libraries use, and those that do focus primarily on professional titles,
including the health sciences’ trend toward informationist rather than librarian to convey a new type of role and engagement with research. Along with job titles, library vocabulary should evolve to convey value to users of all types.

This article will discuss the state of research in this area, present the findings of a study to identify a more user-centered vocabulary for marketing library services, and make recommendations for libraries as they plan for public services in the future. This article should be useful to librarians in a variety of academic settings to raise their awareness of the disconnect between commonly used library terms and the language that makes sense to users, and to encourage them to evaluate local practices.

Literature Review

Changing Roles, Professional Identity, and Value

A fair amount of library literature has focused on the changing roles of librarians and libraries. Experimentation with job titles has been one approach to conveying new roles and expertise. In fact, some job titles no longer even include the word librarian. Similarly, librarians have long struggled with concerns about the jargon often employed in reference transactions, in instructional sessions, and on websites. As the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and other organizations increase their focus on communicating value,¹ librarians confront uncertainties regarding patron comprehension of the words they use.² Mary Ellen Bates recommends job titles and descriptions that convey value rather than merely listing the duties involved.³ Helen Jezzard reports that the Information World Review/Dialog Pulse Survey found that 50 percent of professionals avoided using the word librarian in job titles because of the negative connotations.⁴ Leonard Kniffel notes a similar phenomenon,⁵ as does Stephen Abram, who also encourages librarians to think about how to convey value to their communities rather than be concerned about a perceived loss of professional identity.⁶ J. P. Huffman writes about a change at the Penn State University Libraries in State College aimed at business students; Penn State rebranded librarians as research consultants to convey a sense of value to aspiring business professionals, who expect a consultant to provide valuable services, but to whom a librarian might not seem relevant.⁷

Graduate students are looking for services ranging from data curation and visualization to time management and writing support, services that in most cases have not traditionally been the purview of the library.⁸ Libraries have added new skills and services to their repertoires but still call services by their traditional names; this time-honored nomenclature could contribute to some of the challenges related to librarian and library image stereotypes and the plea to advocate for value.

Library Jargon and User Comprehension

In a linguistic content analysis of library literature, Anne Candido warns of the trend toward mixing jargon from business and technology with library terminology, pointing to
increased confusion for patrons and readers as a result. As early as 1978, David Isaacson wrote about the negative repercussions of library jargon. Rachel Gordon critiques the abandonment of book-related terminology in favor of technology-influenced words. These examples highlight the confusing state and varying influences of the words currently employed by libraries to describe themselves and the services they offer. Research by Norman Hutcherson in 2004 and by Rachael Naismith and Joan Stein in 1989 focuses on student comprehension of specific vocabulary terms and recommends the use of definitions and explanations in reference transactions and instructional sessions. Although their work does not ask what the user would prefer, only whether the user understands the terms employed, Naismith and Stein highlight that students do not understand library jargon (for example, citation and university archives) almost 50 percent of the time. Hutcherson’s study, conducted more than 10 years after Naismith and Stein’s, indicates that students understood the terminology 62 percent of the time, a slight improvement, but still a high level of misunderstanding. In a study based on e-mailed reference transactions, Abdus Chaudhry and Meng Choo note that users correctly identified the meaning of library terminology 75 percent of the time, but 65 percent of them had difficulty discerning the actual meaning and instead often guessed at the correct definition. Research by Kimberly O’Neill and Brooke Guilfoyle investigates users’ perceptions of the word reference to determine the best name for that service point. Their results indicate that help and research were the most preferred terms. This study was limited to reference services and did not include the many other services offered in academic libraries.

Librarians have written about the problems of jargon for decades and made recommendations to ameliorate the issue, but still the problem persists. It is time to take action.

**Research Need**

What words would patrons (students, faculty, and staff) use to describe the services that libraries provide? Influenced by a consultation with Greg S. Guest, an applied anthropologist and expert on qualitative research methods, the author designed a study utilizing a vignette method to identify a more user-centered vocabulary for marketing library services. Vignettes are “short stories about hypothetical characters in hypothetical circumstances, to whose situation the interviewee is invited to respond.” The focus group and vignette model, as described in *Public Health Research Methods*, would present realistic scenarios of patrons in need and avoid further use of jargon that would occur by describing the services themselves. To reach faculty who were too busy to schedule focus groups, the author decided to conduct a two-part study, first using vignettes in student focus groups to generate terminology and then using an online questionnaire to test those suggestions with a larger campus population sample that would include faculty.
Method

Population Characteristics

UCLA is a large, public university in an urban setting. Total enrollment is over 43,000 (about 29,000 undergraduates and 13,000 graduate students). The UCLA Library has 10 different campus locations, serving disciplinary areas from arts, humanities, and social sciences to physical and life sciences, medicine, law, management, and other professional schools.

Sampling Procedures

The intended focus group size was 8 to 12; students were recruited via campus e-mail lists and offered $20 gift cards for participation. The plan was to have separate sessions for undergraduates and graduate students and, ideally, a broad mix of disciplines and knowledge of the library. The recruitment message asked students to fill out a brief form that asked for contact information, discipline or major, number of years at UCLA, and status (undergraduate or graduate). After they indicated their interest on the form, the author contacted them to schedule a session. Unfortunately, it proved more challenging than anticipated to find common times when dividing the groups by student status, so the author decided to mix the statuses in favor of getting more students in each session.

In survey data analysis, the margin of error is reduced at around 500 responses. With that target in mind, the author selected a stratified random sample of 5,000 from the UCLA population, dividing the population into groups by demographic categories (in this case, user type) and taking random samples of each group in proportion to its size. The sample was large enough to account for the low response rate (about 10 percent) of many online surveys. The sample included faculty and staff, as well as students, in proportion to the makeup of the campus population, with the exception of staff, for which the author reduced the sample size. Many staff on campus do not use the library for their work, which could lead to skewed results; by reducing the number of staff in the sample, the author aimed to more closely reflect the library’s primary constituents.

Research Design

The author selected the vignette method to depersonalize the scenarios and attempt to reduce bias due to previous library interactions or opinions. Other disciplines have successfully utilized vignettes to elicit opinions about sensitive topics. For example, sociology employs vignettes for research about family obligations, and public health uses them for a variety of subjects. The vignette method allows the respondent to talk about what he or she thinks the person in the hypothetical situation would do, rather than what the respondent would do.

According to Paul Fleming and Michael Stalker, “One of the simplest ways to develop vignettes is to transform relevant real-world scenarios into fictional narratives.” Following this recommendation, the author created vignettes portraying a variety of library users—from undergraduate students to faculty members—in situations requiring assistance and for which the library has (or could have) services to help them. The scenarios were based on public services interactions, both online and in person. Each
situation included a protagonist and short description of his or her role on campus (for example, faculty member in economics or senior undergraduate working on a capstone project) to give context and help the participants imagine this fictitious person’s viewpoint. After crafting an initial set of vignettes, the author submitted them for review to colleagues to test for accuracy of portrayal and made edits based on the feedback. The author started with 20 vignettes, but after testing the protocol with some library student workers, it became clear that 20 would be too many to cover in a 90-minute focus group. Scheduling a longer session would have been more difficult and would have reduced the number of available participants. Therefore, the 20 vignettes were reduced to 15, focusing on the most common questions received and key areas of interest for the library.

During each focus group session, after signing consent forms and participating in an ice-breaker activity, the students were provided with printouts of the vignettes, along with pens. The author (who also acted as facilitator) explained that the students should read the scenarios and think of words or phrases they thought the person in the vignette would look for or that would signify the type of help that person needed. In an attempt to account for the different speed with which participants would complete the activity and not break up the flow of creative thinking too much, students were instructed to work on three vignettes at a time but told they could move on to the next vignettes if they finished and others were still working. After everyone had ideas for the block of three vignettes, the facilitator led the students in a discussion of what they had written down for each scenario, making notes on large sheets of paper on the wall. The intention was to gain consensus among the participants as to the best word or phrase to market or describe the help for each scenario. Agreeing on a best word or phrase proved difficult, and the group often indicated that general concepts or words were good, but without strong preferences about a specific phrase—for instance, *your* to emphasize the personal quality of a service, or *how-to* or *workshop*. After the group discussed all 15 vignettes, the facilitator asked for general comments and feedback about the activity and the marketing of library services.

To test the results of the focus groups with a larger, more diverse population and to look for trends or preferences by patron type and discipline, the author created an online questionnaire with the same 15 vignettes. The questionnaire provided the words

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<th>Table 1.</th>
<th>Survey sample</th>
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<td>Undergraduates</td>
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<td>Graduate students</td>
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<td>Interns/residents</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>Academic personnel</td>
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<td>Staff</td>
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and phrases suggested by the focus groups as multiple choice answers, along with a free-text, “other” option, in case the respondents did not like any of the suggested terms. The author also included the current terminology employed by the library for those services to compare with the focus groups’ suggestions. The full text of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. The survey was sent via the campus e-mail service, BruinPost, whose staff also created the sample of e-mail addresses in coordination with the Registrar’s Office.

Results

Phase 1—Focus Groups

The author conducted five focus groups with undergraduate and graduate students. The groups ranged in size from three to nine students, with a total of 31 participants (11 graduate students and 20 undergraduates). Unfortunately, due to illness and no-shows, it was not possible to consistently achieve the desired group size. The participants varied in discipline or major—from English to political science, cell biology, and social welfare. They also represented a range of experience at UCLA—from first year to fourth or fifth year.

The students frequently suggested words and phrases that included terms from the vignettes itself; in other words, if the question was about film research, they said that they would look for film databases. Specificity came up repeatedly; a general resource was not what they sought, but instead something tailored for the situation. The students seldom suggested terms that the library currently uses: reference only came up in the context of citations. Undergraduates had a harder time suggesting terms for the vignettes geared toward faculty and higher level research. All students drew from their own experience and seemed more hesitant when the questions dealt with something they had not encountered before. Group discussions also led to peer-to-peer outreach in which some students told others about services or resources they had used. Most groups were practical in their suggested phrases, but one group offered more “catchy,” marketing-oriented ideas.

After the sessions, the author entered the top words and phrases from each group into a spreadsheet by date and question number. Because the purpose of the focus groups was to identify terminology to use with the survey, in-depth analysis was not conducted at this point. Although there appeared to be general trends, the lack of clear consensus confirmed the author’s plan to conduct a phase two survey. The preferred words and phrases from each group were inserted as response options for the corresponding vignette in the online questionnaire.

Phase 2—Online Questionnaire

The survey was open for three weeks, and one reminder message was sent; respondents were offered the chance to win a $20 gift card for participation. There were 391 responses for a 7.8 percent response rate; however, not all respondents answered each question, and
some did not answer any. For the 15 questions, \( n \) values range from 367 to 360, which is closer to a 7.2 to 7.3 percent response rate.

Of the 367 valid responses, 204 (55.6 percent) were undergraduates, 97 (26.4 percent) were graduate students, 30 (8.2 percent) faculty, 33 (9 percent) staff, and 3 (0.8 percent) librarians or library staff. The respondents broken down by disciplinary area were 17 (4.7 percent) in the arts, 41 (11.2 percent) in the humanities, 65 (17.8 percent) in the social sciences, 124 (34 percent) in physical or applied sciences, 106 (29 percent) in health and life sciences, and 12 (3.3 percent) in education, law, management, and public affairs \((n = 365)\). Well over half the respondents, 63 percent, represented the sciences.

Compared to the campus population, the respondents were slightly over-representative of undergraduates (55.6 percent versus 53 percent) and of graduate students (26.4 percent versus 20 percent), while under-representative of faculty and academic personnel (8.2 percent versus 20 percent). UCLA classifies personnel in a variety of ways. For the purposes of requesting random e-mail addresses for the sample, faculty and other academic personnel were grouped together. The survey asked for self-identification as faculty, staff, or library staff. Some respondents with academic status may have self-identified as “staff” in the survey. This could account for the slight over-representation of staff in the responses (9 percent versus 4 percent).

It is more difficult to calculate the disciplinary distribution across campus. There are statistics for number of degrees awarded; however, the number of UCLA employees classified as staff can dramatically skew the numbers for a school or department, and the majority of them are not library users. Staff were under-sampled to account for this skewing, but it makes comparison across disciplines less precise. If, for convenience, the number of faculty and staff is assumed to be roughly proportionate to the number of degrees awarded, then this survey response sample is fairly accurate for the arts, slightly over-representative of the humanities and sciences, and under-representative of the social sciences and professional schools. (See the figures in Appendix B for a breakdown of answers by university status and by disciplinary area.)

In the seven vignettes that refer to services traditionally thought of as reference (Q1 to 3, 5, 7, 10, and 15), the term *reference desk* was the least likely to be selected, except for Q15 about primary sources, for which *special collections 101* was less popular. This could indicate that the term *special collections* is even less understood than *reference desk*.

In Q4, the vignette about National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant requirements, the overall preferred responses were “understanding grant requirements” and “grants: step by step,” but faculty and graduate students preferred “NIH compliance.” Given that faculty and graduate students will more likely need this type of assistance, in this case, their responses should be weighted more heavily. The term *data management plans* was the least likely to be selected (less than 5 percent), especially noteworthy because that term is the current, commonly used wording. In Q6 about publishing and author agreements, the term *scholarly communication* was the least likely to be selected, but it is common language on library websites to categorize services related to publishing and copyright.
least likely to be selected, but it is common language on library websites to categorize services related to publishing and copyright.

Because the vignettes were created to demonstrate a variety of user profiles, respondents in some cases had to offer an opinion about an unfamiliar situation. This could yield a skewed result when looking at overall responses to a particular question, such as the questions about NIH compliance or instructional support.

Q9 and Q11 presented scenarios about characters in a teaching role. In these, the primary audience for the service was faculty and graduate students, and so their responses should be considered more heavily than those of undergraduates. With that in mind, the choices of “redesigning your course” and “achieving student learning outcomes” were the most favored by faculty in Q9, followed closely by “library services workshop.” The choices of the graduate students did not always mirror those of the faculty. This highlights the inherent challenge of marketing services—the target audiences for the same service can have very different opinions and preferences.

In general, the preferred responses seem to indicate a desire on the part of users to solve the problem independently, rather than to ask a person. For example, in Q5, the options most closely associated with a person providing help are the least popular, while the favored response, “working with census data,” seems to indicate a do-it-yourself solution or set of information, as does the second most popular response, “census data tutorial.” Examples from other questions include “navigating databases,” “how to access public records,” and “organizing references.” Furthermore, the phrasing “how-to” with the addition of a topic was for some questions the most popular and for others not. One of the focus groups liked that phrasing particularly, but the survey responses indicate it was not universally favored.

**Discussion**

The focus groups’ responses and discussions left the impression that specificity and context were important to the students when thinking about their needs. They suggested terms that included the subject of the provided question or research area; they were looking not just for help, but for specialized help. The comments from the focus group participants at the conclusion of the sessions confirmed this observation. The focus groups recommended language that took the intended audience into consideration—to use simpler language for beginners and more complex terms for users with more experience. Their suggestions did not include the general terminology that has been standard parlance in libraries for many years, and those students who proposed phrasing currently used by the UCLA Library also mentioned that they had used those services. Survey responses confirm these recommendations; for most vignettes, the preferred terms were specific to the topic rather than a generalized type of assistance. One reason could be that users often are not aware of the breadth of
expertise available in the library, and general-sounding help does not resonate as appropriate for a specific or complex research query.

Focus group participants also made suggestions about marketing and advertising in general. These included more advertising of librarians and research help, and letting students know that librarians can assist with more than just book searching. Participants recommended that the library advertise the research guides (LibGuides), which they said were really useful but not widely known. Several students said that the library needed to make clear what resources are available in each library building, indicating that with 10 campus locations, students may not understand the differences (or similarities) between the locations. The students also suggested that standard workshops should be tailored and advertised for a specific field (for example, “Getting Started with Research . . . for History”). Undergraduates indicated that their primary place for getting information was the MyUCLA page, and that the library should put notices about services and programming there.

The results from the online questionnaire further expand on many of these points and confirm that the library can do much to improve its marketing of services. Library jargon still commonly in use (for example, scholarly communication, reference, special collections, and data management plans) needs to be reconsidered for outreach. Internal structures and parlance should be translated into user-centered terms or supplemented with descriptions that explain the purpose and possible uses for a variety of audiences.

In four of the scenarios, from one to three respondents wrote in “ask a librarian” in the “other” (free text) box. In a few cases (Q1, 5, and 7), “ask the professor” was suggested as a better approach. While these were not a significant number of responses, the insertions are intriguing: what determines how an individual views the expertise and role of a librarian versus those of a professor? It could be based on prior experience, or it could be the result of cultural norms or even marketing. As libraries expand and adjust services and staff expertise to support emerging needs in research and teaching, it becomes even more important to invest in their outward-facing image and marketing strategy.

At the outset of this project, the author had hoped that user-centered design could help determine the best terms to use across a variety of demographics and disciplines. While these results may not provide that, they do serve as a useful guideline when considering how to market and name services. Considering the unpopularity of the term reference desk in all the vignettes where it was included, there is a strong argument to cease use of that designation in libraries. In the vignettes about copyright and publishing, copyright was a preferred term, but scholarly communication was not. Given that the latter is often the name of the library unit tasked with services in this area, this finding highlights a need for descriptive marketing to
better convey the expertise available and the situations in which patrons could receive assistance, rather than merely advertising the name of the unit. The same is true for data management. The commonly used term is *data management plans*, the choice least likely to be selected in that scenario. If libraries want to continue to use that terminology, though it is arguably a logical choice, extra effort must be made to explain its usefulness to the target audience.

These results leave a quandary for libraries to address: how to market to such a varied group of patrons when faculty prefer one thing and students another? When describing services meant for all audiences, the opinions of all constituencies should be taken as equally relevant. When talking about services intended for one group over another, as in publishing or grant compliance, the preferences of the targeted group should be more heavily weighted. This may mean selecting a name for a service and developing marketing or advertising campaigns that target different users.

Furthermore, the question of teaching people new vocabulary or changing vocabulary to suit the audience is worth discussion. The term *reference desk* has been used for decades but nonetheless appears to be unpopular, little understood, or perhaps simply outdated. Another challenge of this term is the historical association it often brings with it—an older woman sitting behind a desk, sometimes intimidating, sometimes friendly, but in all cases waiting passively for someone to approach with a question. In an era when libraries strive to assert their value and engage in new ways with the academic community, it may be preferable to use new terms to avoid historical stereotypes or assumptions. For newer terminology, such as *data management plans*, lack of outreach may play a more significant role, and for those unfamiliar with the data requirements of granting agencies, the term is purely jargon. *Scholarly communication* is both jargon and rather vague—to what type of communicating does it refer? And what denotes a scholar? Because there are so many component services and types of expertise offered by librarians in a scholarly communications role, including help with copyright and author rights, which were preferred choices by survey respondents, it would be advisable to use the more specific wording to advertise services, rather than the umbrella term.

When discussing library marketing in general, it should be acknowledged that many libraries do not have a dedicated person or team for this role, and the frontline staff tasked with advertising their own services are often not trained in this capacity. Having a website and a social media account are not enough, especially if the wording used there does not send an intelligible message to the users. As libraries expand their services and expertise into new areas, they need to effectively share these new offerings with their target audiences. For instance, *library services workshop* was a popular choice among faculty for Q9; however, given the lack of specific connection to the topic of the vignette...
(updating a syllabus), when for all other scenarios specificity was preferred, this seems to indicate a lack of general awareness of the type of services available. Libraries may need to consider providing additional resources or marketing experts to develop an effective strategy for their campus.

This work does raise further questions, and future research could examine other types of services not included in this set of vignettes. Other studies could also more specifically target a comparison of library staff opinions with those of users. The vignette method did allow the focus groups to discuss terms without introducing the bias of standard library terms; the participants rarely suggested terms that were already in use. It was more difficult for the participants to discuss unfamiliar situations, and thus, were this study to be replicated, it would be preferable to adhere to the original design intent with distinct groups for undergraduate and graduate students. Another way to address this issue might be to have fewer personas for the different situations and to more fully describe their needs and outlook. With greater character development, respondents unfamiliar with the exact situation might be better able to imagine how this person would act.

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to identify a user-centered vocabulary for marketing library services. While the results do not reveal an exact glossary or menu of terms, they do indicate some words to avoid, highlight principles to employ when naming and marketing services, and serve as a guideline for improved advertising and outreach efforts. Library outreach for public services should avoid jargon and provide specific examples that have context for the target audience. As library offerings expand to new areas, libraries should invest in marketing campaigns. Given the challenges outlined in the literature about user understanding of services and the focus on demonstrating library value, it is ever more important to make sure users know what we do.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix A

Survey questionnaire

Help improve Library marketing!

This is a research study being conducted to improve the UCLA Library’s marketing of its services to students and faculty. By responding to this survey, you are consenting to participate; responses are anonymous. You may decide to discontinue at any time.

This survey should take 10–15 minutes to complete. If you complete the survey, you may enter to win a $20 gift card. Survey responses are not linked to drawing entry. You may complete the survey and enter the drawing only once. The next 3 pages present 15 short scenarios of hypothetical situations faced by students or faculty members involved in research or coursework. For each scenario, please select the phrase that best describes a service or resource to help with the person’s challenge or question. You may use “other” to suggest your own phrasing.

1. Steve is writing a paper about imagery in animated films. His professor recommended some articles, but he doesn’t know how to find them. He tried searching in Google, but didn’t have any luck there. What is the best match to help Steve?

   - Research assistance
   - Navigating databases
   - Locating sources
   - Reference desk
   - Ask a librarian
   - Need help finding articles?
   - Other (please specify)

2. Harrison is a sophomore, and it’s getting close to the end of the quarter. He has his first big research paper due soon and wants to make sure he is looking in the right places for information to support his argument. He also wants to make sure that he is doing the bibliography correctly. What is the best match to help Harrison?

   - Source check
   - Citation guide
   - How-to: research papers
   - Citing and writing
   - Research help
   - Other (please specify)
3. Max is a senior in communication studies and is just about to start work for his capstone project. He has done some research, but needs help narrowing his topic to something with a manageable amount of information. He’s heard the terms “literature review” and “annotated bibliography” mentioned and he knows that he’s supposed to use a certain citation style. He’s feeling rather daunted. What is the best match to help Max?

○ How-to: capstone
○ Getting started with literature reviews
○ Research assistance
○ Capstone workshop
○ Personal help
○ Other (please specify)

4. Joanne is a researcher in a chemistry lab and is applying for grant funding through the National Institutes of Health. She’s heard about federal requirements regarding how she collects her data, but needs some help understanding what she has to do. What is the best match to help Joanne?

○ Understanding grant requirements
○ NIH compliance
○ Developing NIH grants
○ Grants: Step-by-step
○ Grants: guidelines and deadlines
○ Ask a librarian
○ Data management plans
○ Other (please specify)

5. A group of undergraduate students is working on a project and needs to find census data of where Japanese were living in Southern California from 1900–1940. What is the best match to help these students?

Working with census data

○ Reference desk
○ Ask a librarian
○ How-to: government information
○ Research help
○ Census data tutorial
○ Other (please specify)

6. Martha is an assistant professor in the economics department. Her manuscript has been accepted for publication at a journal, but she has some questions about the agreement she needs to sign giving permission to the publisher to use her work. What is the best match to help Martha?

○ Negotiating with publishers
○ Author rights
7. Sarah has a writing assignment for a course about poverty and health in Latin America, but does not know what to write about. She is feeling overwhelmed by all the information she has found and is not sure how to make it more manageable. What is the best match to help Sarah?

- Getting started with research
- Organizing a paper
- Consult with a specialist
- Access your librarian
- How to choose a topic
- Sculpt your essay
- Reference desk
- Other (please specify)

8. Patricia is a graduate student in digital humanities and history. She is interested in learning about software or other options to visually represent her project about the correspondence sent by soldiers in the Civil War. What is the best match to help Patricia?

- Multimedia tutorials
- Using presentation software effectively
- How to use visuals
- Media tools
- History in the digital age
- Consult with a librarian
- Other (please specify)

9. Celine has been teaching with the same syllabus for a number of quarters for a GE cluster. She would like to update it and incorporate more group assignments. She would like some guidance about revising assignments around learning outcomes and using library collections. What is the best match to help Celine?

- Redesigning your course
- How to get students in the library
- Curriculum planning
- Effective teaching tools
- Achieving student learning outcomes
- How to engage your students
- Library services workshop
- Other (please specify)
10. Elena is a graduate student in political science. She is working on a project related to legislation and funding for use of public lands. She is looking for data about the amount of funding per state for roads, recreation, and grazing. She is pretty sure this information must be publicly available, but is having difficulty locating it. What is the best match to help Elena?

- Navigating public records
- Ask a librarian
- Research help
- How to access public records
- How to work with data
- Reference desk
- Other (please specify)

11. Stewart is a faculty member who would like to have the students in his communication studies class create an interactive project rather than a final paper, but he’s not sure what type of tool or product would be the best choice for the subject matter. What is the best match to help Stewart?

- Designing innovative projects
- Alternatives to papers
- Project-based learning
- Ditch the essay
- Active and engaged students
- Technology learning center
- Digital humanities
- Interactive projects
- Other (please specify)

12. Rachel is a junior in an economics class. She needs to create some graphs for an in-class presentation. She has only used Excel to enter data in cells, but has not created charts before. One of her classmates told her that she can import stuff from Excel into PowerPoint, but she’s not sure how. She also heard someone talking about pivot tables, but is not sure what they are used for. What is the best match to help Rachel?

- Excel essentials
- Can you Excel?
- Visualizing data
- Excel workshop
- How to: Excel
- Tips and tricks for MS Office
- Other (please specify)
13. Xavier is a PhD student about to finish his dissertation in world arts and cultures. He has some questions about the images he wants to use to illustrate his arguments. He pulled clips from a few short films, but is worried he may be violating copyright regulations. He is not sure if his dissertation is considered a publication and if the rules are different than for a book or a journal article. What is the best match to help Xavier?

○ Copyright guidelines
○ Avoiding plagiarism
○ Finalizing your dissertation
○ Ins and outs of publication
○ Dissertation checklist
○ Media copyright
○ Dissertation 101
○ Other (please specify)

14. Jane is working on her dissertation. She has a lot of pdf files of articles saved on her computer, but is having a hard time staying organized about which authors wrote about which topics. She remembers that something she read a few years ago illustrates a point, but can’t find the article. This has happened before and she spent hours searching her computer files. She is sure there is a better way to approach this, but does not know how. What is the best match to help Jane?

○ Organizing references/sources
○ Keep track of sources
○ Better than EasyBib [a free bibliography generator]
○ The organized researcher
○ Organize for free
○ Sifting through your research
○ Lost articles?
○ Zotero [reference management software] workshop
○ Other (please specify)

15. Antoinette is a sophomore. For her history class, she needs to write a paper using primary sources about the Civil Rights Movement. She is not really sure what this means or how to look for them. What is the best match to help Antoinette?

○ First time using primary sources?
○ Primary vs. secondary sources
○ Special collections 101
○ Reference desk
○ Research assistance
○ Identifying primary sources
○ Other (please specify)

Thank you for responding. You’re almost done! Please fill out the following demographic information to be used in data analysis.
16. Please indicate your UCLA status:
   - Undergraduate student
   - Graduate student
   - Faculty
   - Staff
   - Librarian or library staff

17. Please select your disciplinary area.
   - Arts
   - Humanities
   - Social sciences
   - Physical and applied sciences
   - Health and life sciences
   - Education, law, management, and public affairs

Notes
15. Survey questions: Q6 “If you needed help with research at the Library, what words on a sign would let you know that you could get help at this location?” and Q7 “Thinking about


17. Ibid.


22. Total campus full-time equivalent (FTE)—students, faculty, and staff—for 2014 was about 50,000: http://www.aim.ucla.edu.


26. Ibid., 614.

27. The survey’s demographic section asked librarians or library staff to self-identify to see if their preferences were different from the rest of the sample, but with such a small number, the author cannot make any generalizable conclusions. However, there are some interesting trends that could be examined further in another study.


29. MyUCLA is the student dashboard where they log in to enroll in classes, check grades, and access a variety of campus services. It also includes news announcements and a calendar of events.