

Bowdoin College

MISO Survey 2017 | Library Results Report

The MISO (Measuring Information Services Outcomes) Survey is a web-based quantitative survey hosted by Bryn Mawr College that is designed to measure how faculty, students, and staff view library and computing services in higher education. The survey employs a 4-point Likert scale for the majority of questions. Participants are also offered the opportunity to provide open-ended comments. Bowdoin's Library and Information Technology departments conducted the survey during the Spring 2017 semester along with a number of other schools across the United States.

Response Rate

Faculty: 61.7%

Students: 56.9%

Staff: 47%

2017 Survey Cohort

Allegheny College, Assumption College, Barry University, Bates College, Carthage College, Colgate University, College of Saint Benedict / Saint John's University, Cuyahoga Community College, Evergreen State College, Grinnell College, Lakehead University, Oregon Institute of Technology, Oxford College of Emory University, Pomona College, Spring Hill College, The College of St. Scholastica, The University of Findlay, University of Tennessee, Westminster College, Whitman College, Willamette University, Wittenberg College, Wofford College, and York College of Pennsylvania.

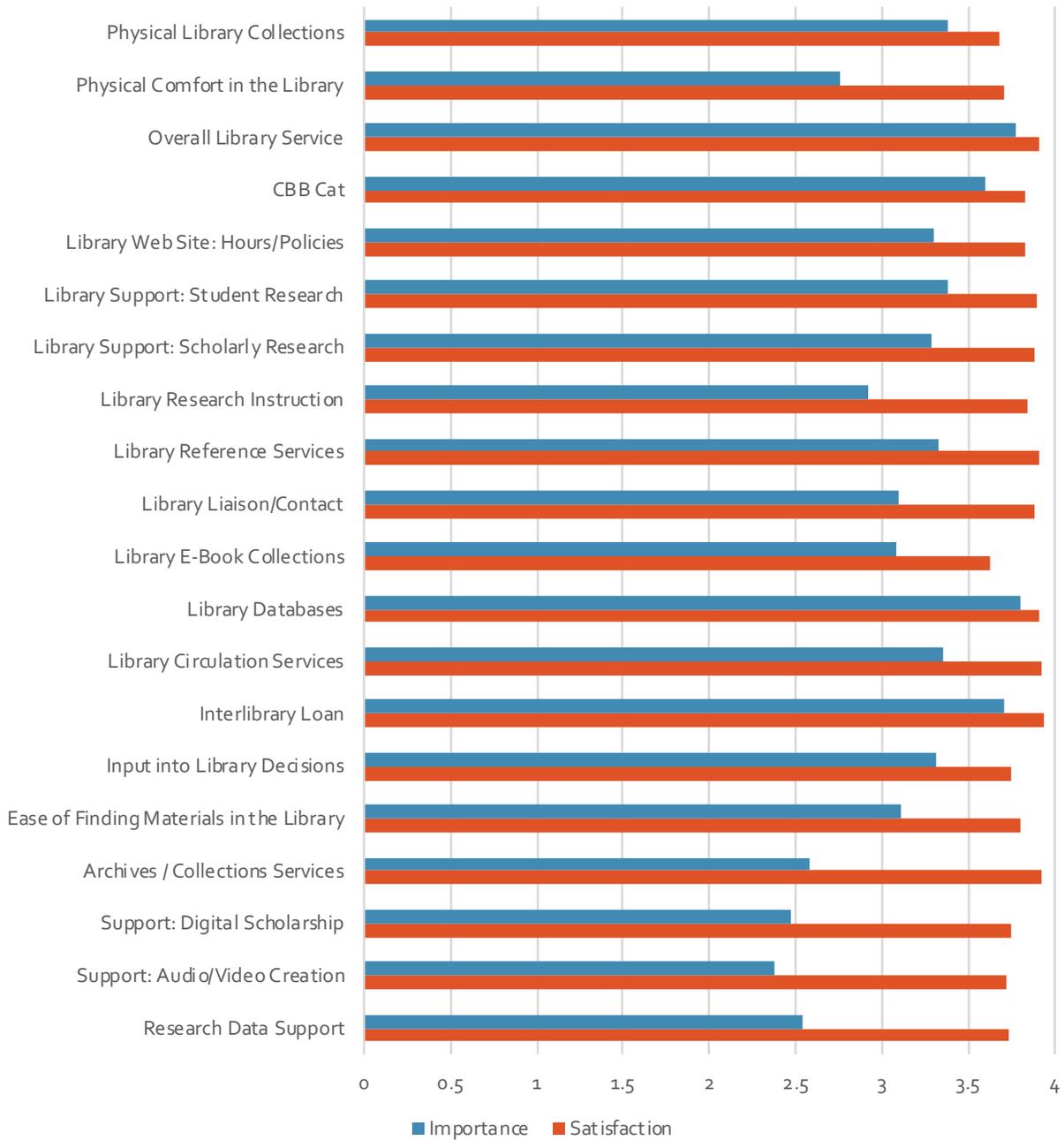
Bowdoin's Survey Team

Judy Montgomery, Associate Librarian, Stephen Houser, Director for Academic Technology & Consulting, Joan Campbell, Collections Librarian, and Amy Kerr, Technology Training and Project Management Specialist.

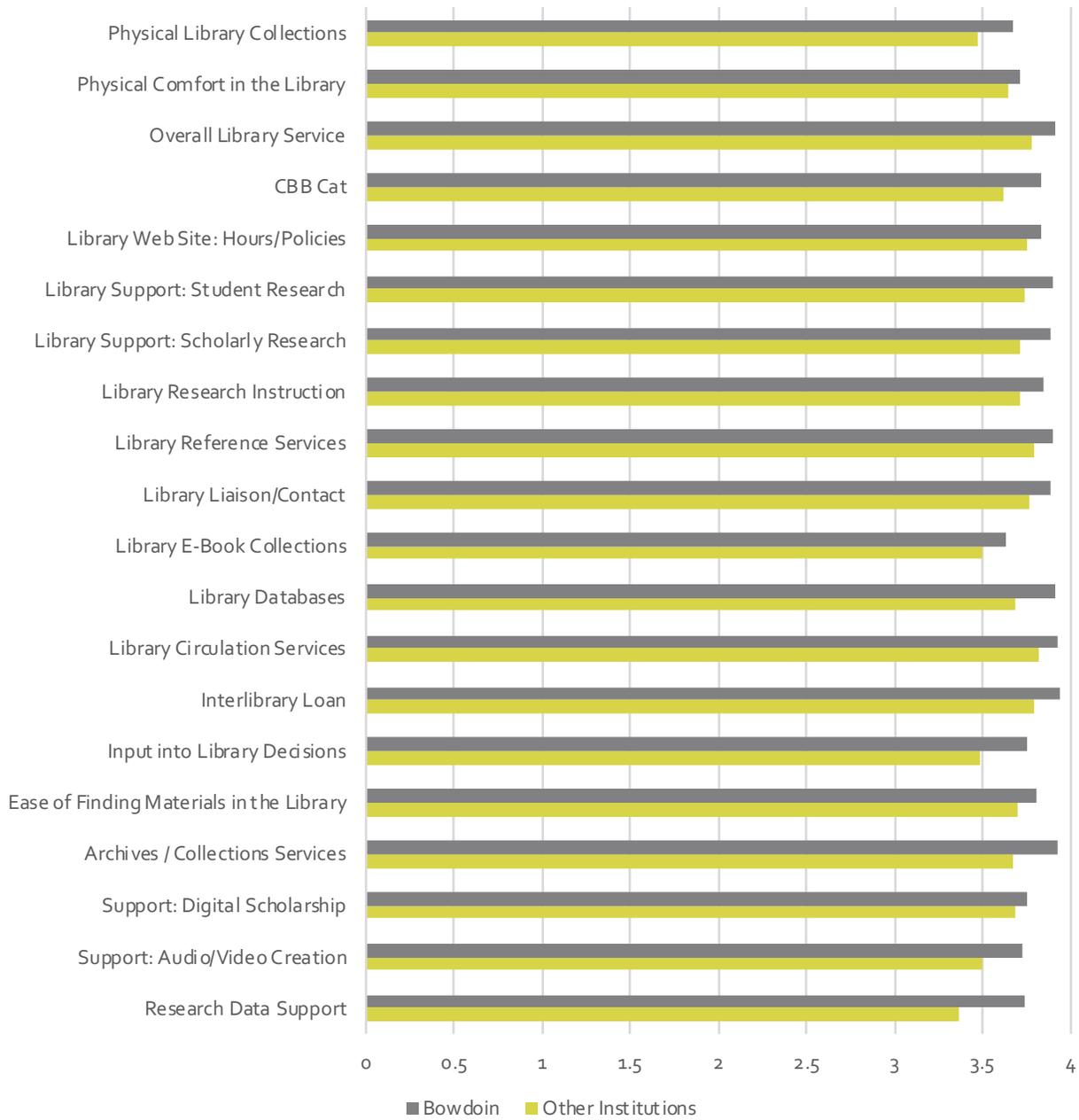
About This Report

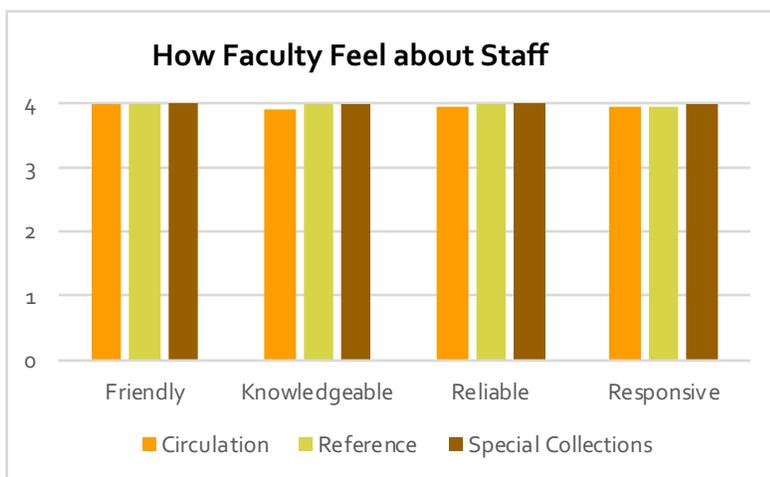
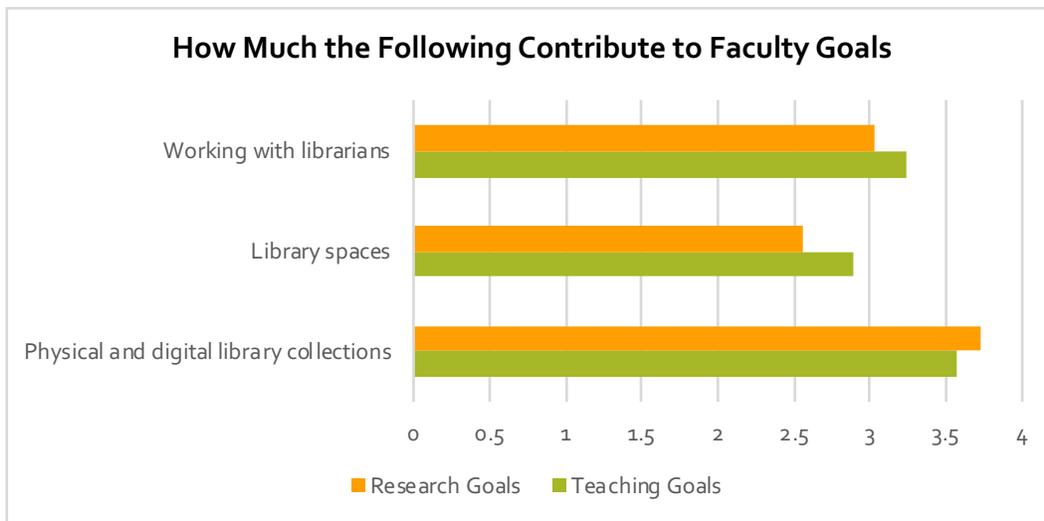
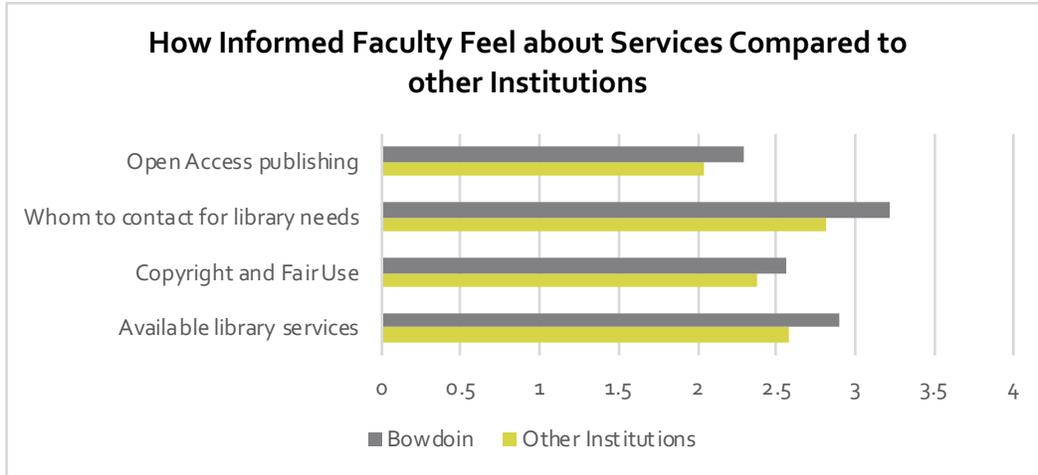
This report summarizes the responses and comments from the MISO Survey that focus specifically on the Library; a separate report has been prepared that provides the full MISO survey results. Overall, survey responses regarding the Library were positive, with participants expressing high satisfaction across the spectrum of Library services and in regard to their interactions with staff. The following charts detail responses from faculty and students, the Library's primary constituencies. Comments summarized at the end of this report include those provided by staff as well as by faculty and students. The Library has taken note of areas for improvement reflected in the survey. These are primarily related to physical space.

Faculty: Importance of and Satisfaction with Library Services

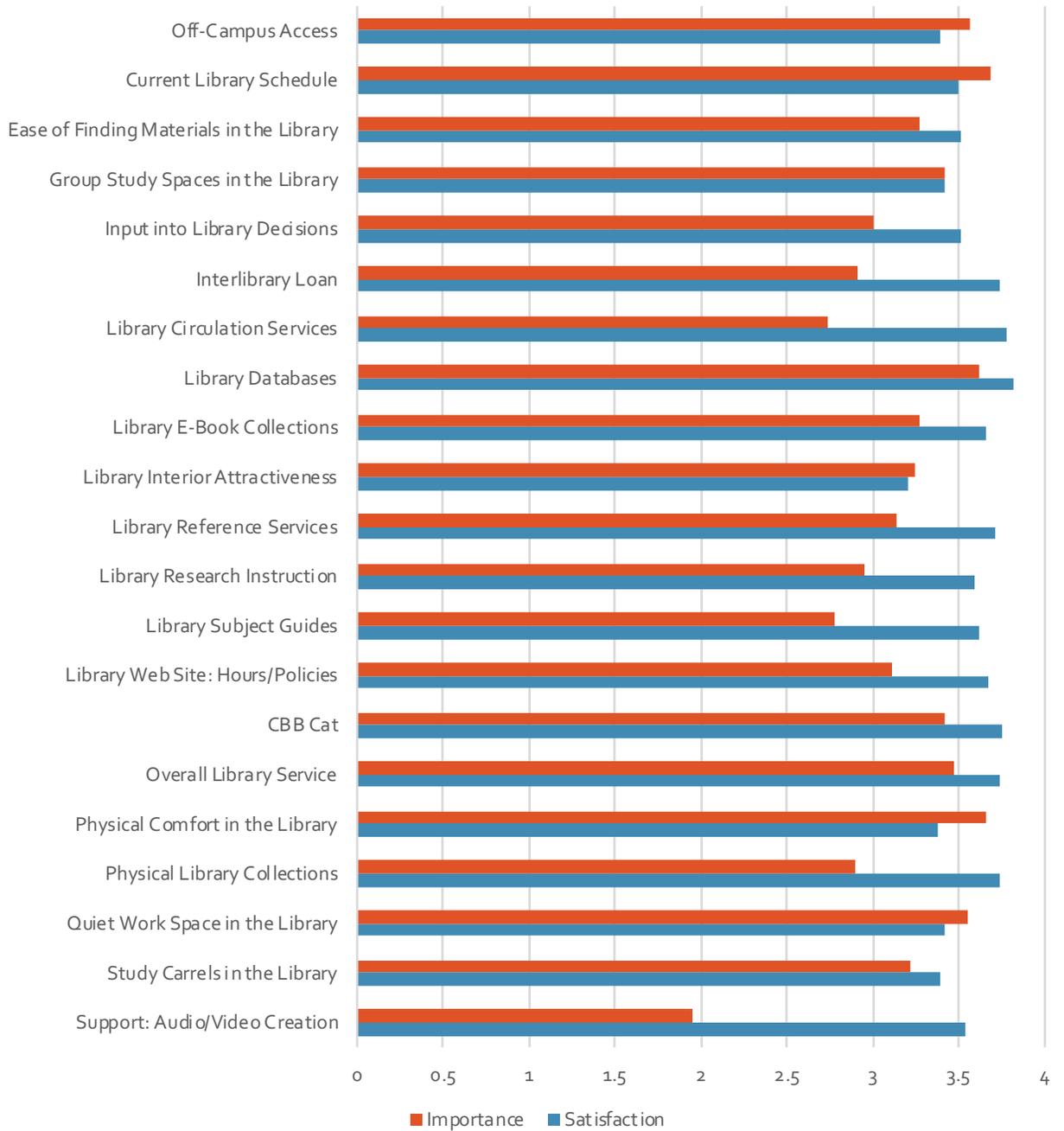


Faculty Satisfaction with Library Services Compared to Other Institutions

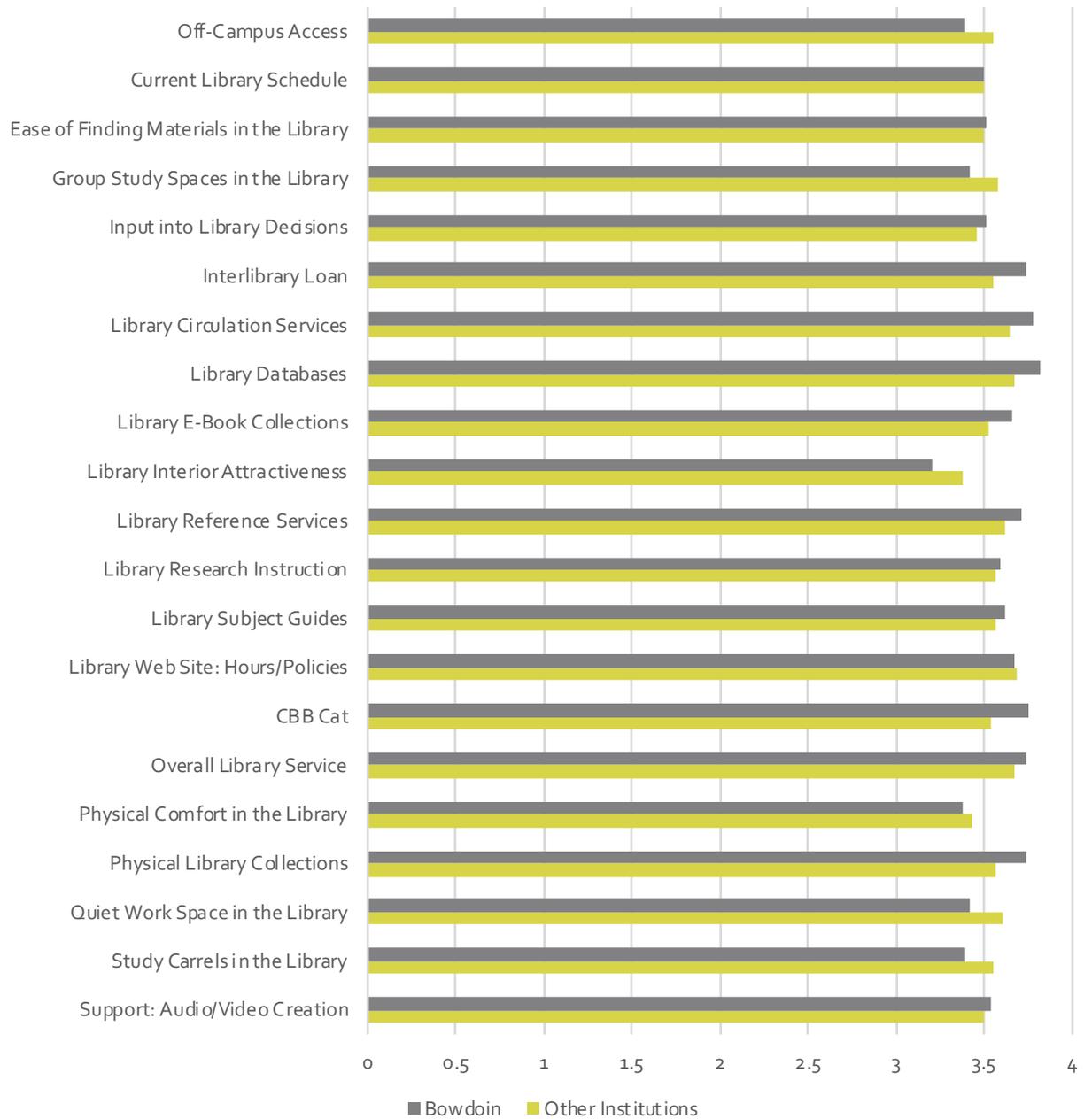




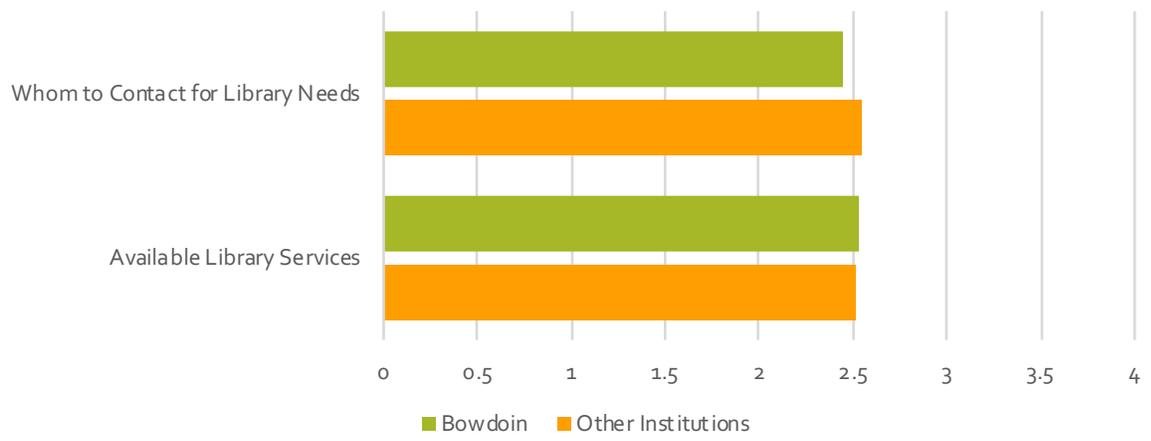
Students: Importance of and Satisfaction with Library Services



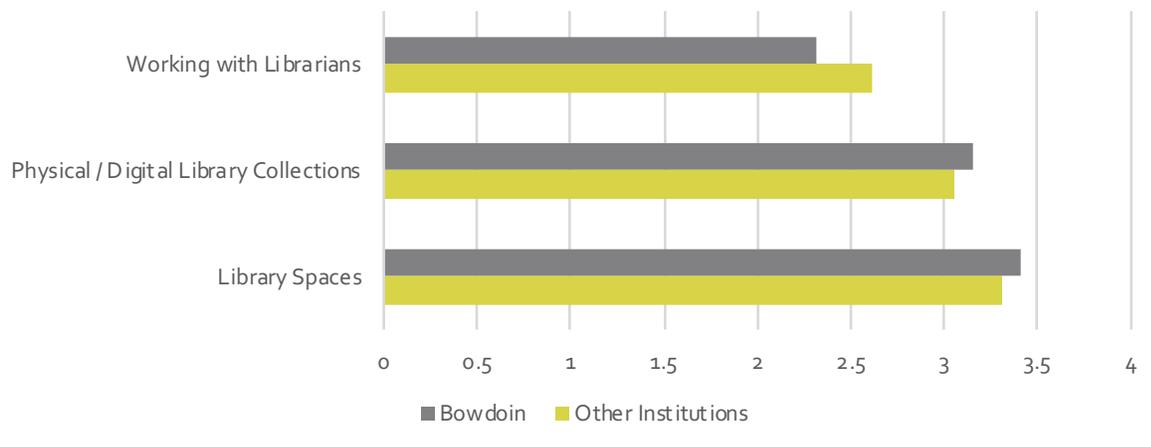
Students: Satisfaction with Library Services Compared to other Institutions



How Informed Students Feel about Services Compared to other Institutions



How Much the Following Contribute to Students' Academic Goals



Survey Comments

The following comments, a selection of those received from faculty, students, and staff, provide further insight into the Library's successes and areas for improvement.

Collections

There were several comments about ebooks vs. print books, with faculty and staff expressing frustration with ebook platforms and their preference for print, and students expressing a need for the availability of more resources on campus.

Faculty

- As a scholar I really dislike using e-books--I find it difficult to read them without the ability to take notes; often there are limits to how many pages can be printed out; I constantly have technical problems downloading chapters. The feedback from students is similarly negative. Please buy physical books. Also please assess how you can make interlibrary loan links and services more obvious on webpages and make available the parameters you use for choosing books to purchase for Bowdoin (as opposed to Bates or Colby). Different institutions seem to purchase different disciplines/specialties.
- Continued acquisition of physical books alongside continued instruction in research skills regarding all media.
- I would like the library to digitize some of its historical holdings.

Students

- I really hope that students are told more about the library services such as interlibrary loan and CBBcat, NExpress, and Maine cat. I was told about this from a professor after she realized that I couldn't afford to buy books for her class. Also, a lot of my friends who can't afford to buy books were not aware of this service, but it has helped me a lot during my four years at Bowdoin.
- I think the range of what we have could be expanded. That is really my only request. There have often been times that I couldn't access articles I wanted through our journal subscriptions, or books through ILL.
- For my honors project, the vast majority of the books I have used so far have come from Bates or Colby, and Bowdoin has not owned copies at all. It's a high number and they're not particularly obscure. So long as there is always easy access to them, this alone is not an issue, but it could be important to be aware of.

Staff

- The online services and resources offered by the Library are outstanding! Access to journals, newspapers and online books is most generous and greatly appreciated!
- I answered "dissatisfied" when asked about the physical library holdings. I did so because I think too many of the journals were removed or transferred to electronic format. I understand the desire to save money and/or paper but it used to be very helpful to have these journals physically present and visible. I find that I do not use the Hatch science library as much as I used to as a result.
- Research and Library services: I am gratified by the resources and content of the stacks, CBB and online.
- The inclusion of "eBooks" in our collection without a satisfying way to read them that is not on a screen is puzzling. I haven't had luck (and appear to have baffled staff members when I've asked for help) downloading them onto a Kindle (mine or the Library's) and so have instead had to do

an ILL, which is sort of cumbersome when we "own" the resource as a digital resource. Luckily ILL works so smoothly and satisfyingly this isn't much of an issue, but a closer look at eBooks -- either why/how/whom they work for, or how to give patrons access to them -- could be in order. I've also tried to get on a "waiting list" for an item currently checked out by another patron, and that ability doesn't seem to exist.

Instruction and Research Support

There were only a few comments regarding instruction and research support.

Faculty

- More robust support for student research & acknowledgement that my research area is different from the person who held the position before me and that the resources need to shift accordingly.
- Assistance with creating, using, teaching digital data--summer workshops of a day or week would be great.

Students

- I am on the whole highly satisfied with Bowdoin's library services. I feel it would be helpful to know more about the services that the library and IT have to offer. I have had reference librarians visit my classes before with tutorials on how to use the library's databases, which I think is helpful, but the tutorials are the same every time and never talk about other library and IT resources that are available, such as the software available for download from the IT website, or instructions how to use microwave, or information about the hours and availability of library computer labs.
- I think more needs to be done with training students with citation programs (i.e. endnote). I have endnote, but I feel that it is out-of-date. Also I usually just use google scholar when researching because I don't feel as if the library databases really give me an edge, or I don't know enough about navigating them.
- THE RESEARCH LIBRARIANS ARE AN AWESOME RESOURCE THAT ARE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

Physical Space

By far most of the survey comments pertained to physical spaces, with many respondents requesting improvements and a few praising specific features. A number of faculty commented on the need for more/refurbished faculty studies, carrels, and workspaces in the library. Students commented about the library being too loud in general, and the need for dedicated quiet space. One student suggested designating noise levels on individual floors. There was also a suggestion that quiet study carrels should be separated from group study areas that are often noisier. Respondents also commented about lighting and the need for more and larger group study rooms and tables as well as additional restrooms.

Faculty

- I would like more dedicated work space for doing research and teaching with real books. I regularly consult a variety of concordances, encyclopedias, etc. in the library for my work, but their location, and the lack of work space, is a big inconvenience. Old-fashioned library tables would be a big help.
- The chairs in Hatch are really uncomfortable. Too low for working at the tables and too hard for sitting and writing at a computer.

- Renovated library offices for faculty.
- More carrels for faculty.
- The library is the single most important academic resource on campus for me and my research. Books matter--real, physical ones--as does preservation of knowledge. I would love to see faculty offices in the library, adjacent to seminar rooms--what a great way this would be to teach with the collection!

Students

- The more recent changes to HL would be great for Hatch.
- Please improve the interior of HL lobby.
- The libraries really need to be renovated.
- I think the more recent changes to HL library would be great for Hatch library. Updating our library to have a more modern feel or a classy traditional feel are good things. Libraries, in my opinion, should have some "character", which I think can be improved over time with a little more work (i.e. new carpet etc.).
- The libraries are very dull and dingy. The overall appearance & mustiness makes me feel confined and stressed. The addition of the orange tables helps to add color and brightness, but the overall color scheme of Band-Aid yellow, maroon, and dark green make the library much less appealing to study in. That goes for both HL and Hatch.
- HL needs more restrooms. Other amenities and services are nice, but cover the basics first.
- I do not like the first floor of HL. It has become very loud now that there are new desks.
- I do think that the library should consider having floors that highlight noise level. Some people do well with chatter, others get annoyed. I've heard throughout my four years here complaints about people talking or listening to their music loudly. If the library had a system for noise level, I think it would be effective and organized. For example, first floor is meant to be really quiet. Second floor, moderately quiet, 3rd floor relatively not quiet, etc. Some colleges have this system and it seems to benefit them from what I've experienced/have heard.
- HL is too loud. Needs dedicated quiet spaces.
- More *silent* library spaces please!!!!
- Make HL a 24-hour study space please!
- Having the library open 24 hours during exam period.
- HL is loud on all levels. I hear people telling the campus tours that the library gets quieter as you go up, but that is not true. I have sometimes gone to the 3rd floor and seen people having a conversation hour on the couches. I assume these people were staff, but in a library that small, there are only so many other spaces to go. I would like to study more in HL, but the atmosphere is not conducive to quiet studying. Also, it closes too early on the weekends. I would like a 24-hour library.
- It would be really nice if there were more places for casual group work in the library, like larger tables for maybe 4 people.
- Would love more wooden table spaces in the first floor of the library.
- Keep the library open later! It closes too early. The lighting is too bright as well. I hate the fluorescent lights. Also, could we have more of the Yogibo chairs? They're very comfortable and add to my library experience.
- Larger/more comfortable group study rooms with whiteboards and sound proofing.
- I like the library. Maybe more study spaces on the second floor instead of books.
- I would love more encouraged quiet space in the library! The basement area is weird because sometimes its dead quiet down there (which is usually what I want when I'm there), but since

there are big group tables right next to individual carrels, there can be loud groups "studying" right near people who want to focus. Please divide up/separate those two types of tables! In general, if individual carrels (which attract quiet folks) are right next to group tables, that's not ideal-- I'd say pick one or the other to have in any given space. Also, I think it would be really good and important to give more reserved carrel access, including to seniors like myself who aren't in an independent study, but who are in 2 seminars and therefore have 70 pgs. of research writing to do still.... I know that there's a carrel lottery for all students post-assigning the Honors ones, but I think seniors (and juniors in 3000 level seminars) should still get preference over first years and sophomores, who honestly don't need a carrel (for the most part). In other words, I think the carrel partitioning should be done on a little more of a case-by- case, humanized basis.

Where Students Like to Study

In addition to the preferences regarding physical space noted above, students cited a variety of reasons for preferring particular study spaces, including proximity to their dorm; quiet; sociability; light; aesthetics; and availability of tables, carrels, and/or group studies.

Beckwith Music Library

- As a musician, I go to the Music Library to see other people I know, since I'm not in any particular need of any library's physical materials. Also, Beckwith is both quieter and more casual than HL
- The Music Library is the brightest space and has large tables."
- The quiet and intimacy of Beckwith, combined with the openness, brightness, and windows make for a fantastic study space.

Hatch Science Library

- Hatch has room for both groups and individual study. I love the seminar rooms there. It's not technically quiet study, but there is an unspoken agreement amongst clients to be quiet.
- I like how less people occupy the space and that it's overall very quiet. I also like the ease of browsing through journals, the study carrels, and the group tables.
- Hatch is quiet and filled with a good aura. People don't talk too much or make much noise. We have a great GIS alcove that I wished the entire library looked like because it looks awesome.

Hawthorne Longfellow Library & Hubbard

- I like the Hawthorne Longfellow library the best because it has a number of different study spaces and help if I need it.
- HL library feels like its slowly becoming a homework/social space. The college should invest in making the student union more appropriate for hanging out and in making study spaces. I think Bowdoin lacks study spaces, as the library often gets crowded and depressing.
- I like the varied work spaces [in HL] for different needs. There are quiet spaces (mostly) when desired, and more lively spaces when needed. I like the warm lighting, the carpeted floor, the wooden/white paint aesthetic, the natural light. The first floor can be too noisy a lot of the time, but I like the quieter options of the basement and the 2nd/3rd floors.
- This library has everything I need; all of the books I might use for research, plenty of computers, a scanner, a computer lab with Stata and regression analysis software, two printers, a color printer, the circulation desk.
- It's the only one that has later hours, but all levels are too loud.
- I love that first floor HL has become a somewhat social space, with the potential to become a buckle-down work environment when the time crunch is on. I love the space. I would add more plant life to boost the mood, and definitely more Yogibo bean bags. And the books are incredibly important to the space!!! Please do not take away any more books!!!

Pierce Art Library

- I use The Art library for a quieter space.
- I also love to go to the Art Library when I need a change of venue or to really focus individually, especially in the spring when it is warm and beautiful outside and I can open up the windows next to my carrel while I work.

Additional Comments

Faculty, students and staff were generally pleased with Library services and staff overall, with a few comments about the unevenness of service provided by both Library staff and student assistants.

Faculty

- All in all very positive.
- Love the library!
- I would say that the library staff is uniformly great to deal with.
- Overall, I give very high marks to the library, academic computing and information technology.
- Staff are incredibly helpful and engaged given the many demands on their time and limitations on their resources.
- For me the library is very important and I order books all the time. They do a great job. Since I am not so good with technology I ask for help all the time. And I get it. Thank you.
- As a liberal arts college, Bowdoin obviously does not have all of the resources of a major research university. However, the exceptional IT and library personnel here more than compensate for the shortfall. I have never encountered a situation where they did not exert themselves to the fullest to address questions that arose in teaching and research. I'm exceedingly grateful for their helpfulness, competence, efficiency, and prompt responses to problems and inquiries. When I'm away at schools such as Stanford or Harvard I miss the personalized Bowdoin IT/library service!
- Not a useful questionnaire. Why is friendliness over being responsive, cordial and knowledgeable the first thing you ask about?
- So many mini-units have been formed in IT and the Library with names that mean nothing to those of us who are outsiders. Is there really a unit that would help me organize and disseminate my research? Who knew?

Students

- I very much appreciate how helpful and warm the library staff is. I am always impressed with their willingness to assist me.
- Libraries are great!
- I LOVE THE LIBRARIANS at this school! My experiences so far with academic tech have also been fabulous. Overall, I feel so supported by the library services here and am so thankful for them, especially as an honors student. Besides very insignificant issues, I would say it might be nice if the student employees in the library had more knowledge and were more attentive while working. Some of them are great, but it is uncommon that any of them can help me with an issue or question I have -- e.g. how to use a scanner.
- I work at the Library circulation desk so I know a lot about which library resources exist, and am comfortable using them. I think for the most part, my coworkers are very reliable and knowledgeable, however, I worry that some small proportion of new workers don't know what

they're doing as much, so services can sometimes be unreliable from that grab-bag. To be clear, these comments are just the things that stand out to me as things that could really be changed and improved! I really think the library is doing a great job and providing for so many of our needs in great ways!!

Staff

- It would have been helpful to know who is designated as "library reference" staff and who is designated as IT support---at least an org chart. I know faces and names but I don't know which cohort within the library or IT for whom they work.
- I believe that the customer service offered by our IT department and all Library departments (reference, circ, special collections/archives, technical services, etc.) is really exceptional and we are extremely fortunate to have these resources available to us in our professional lives as College employees as well as in our personal lives.
- Any dealings I have had with the Library services have been very positive.
- Because I do my independent work at night in the Library, I do see some environments where staff are less present and students rule the roost. This is always a challenge, but I cannot say enough that students need to remind themselves that how they present behind the desk really does matter.... As always the students are eager to help, but sometimes have to weed through their very own needs to get to the computer to assist. This may seem mundane, but I think it matters and over time reflects a mindfulness about the work at hand. The library as a service destination and a location for clear thinking and clean service is important to me.
- I work mostly with the Special Collections staff and they are truly wonderful and I love working with them.

Updated 12.19.17