

TRLN Seminar 3/21/2014
Francesca Allegri
Health Sciences Library UNC-CH



MERGED SERVICE DESK: 15 YEARS LATER

RESULTS FOR PATRONS & THE LIBRARY
LESSONS & TIPS

APPENDIX

- What We Did
- Why We Did It
- Communication Methods
- Training Program

A long time ago, in a library far, far away...

It is a period of confusion for patrons.
Entering the library, they see two places to turn.

Staff are awaiting their questions and, hidden bases
within the library are also awaiting their
approach. If only they knew,
victory would be theirs.

During the Dilemma Era, Rebel library staff, the User Services Coordinating Group (USCG), have hatched plans to create the Single Service Point, a physical and virtual station with enough power to answer every question launched at it.

Pursued by doubters, skeptics, and naysayers,
the USCG, custodian of the plans, create the
Single Service Point and save patrons from
bewilderment and endless handoffs
and restore freedom to the patron galaxy...

THE SETTING

- **Open 93.5 hrs/wk**
(regular semester)
- **6 floors**
- **80,000 square feet**
- **Gate count ~500,000**
- **HSL web 1.3M sessions**
- **16K reference and 28K circulation**
- **66 FTE**



THE DILEMMA ERA (1970 – 1998)



Walk Into the Library...

Information Desk on your right,
circulation desk on your left

Reserves and AVs: Hidden base on
ground floor, and 4 other places to
which you could be referred!



MERGED SERVICE DESK


THEN-1999

- Cross-trained
- Paired staffing
- No students
- Generalist librarian on call

NOW-2014

- Cross-trained
- Core staff
- Students paired w core staff
- Students evening w security
- Librarians on call, fill in

STAFFING OVER TIME

- Core staff became support staff & research assistants
 - Support staff schedules rotate weekends, holidays, opening
 - Evening supervisor added; discontinued last year
 - Services available modified & student staff reintroduced
 - Level of training and responsibilities expanded for all
 - Liaison librarians shifted to on call, virtual, out of library
 - Generalist Librarian on call became shared responsibility
 - Librarians scheduled for AskALibrarian shift rotations daily, weekends, holidays
- 

USER SERVICES CENTER 2005 AFTER WHOLE-LIBRARY RENOVATION



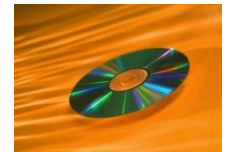
QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

- Did it save money?
- Did it save staff?
- Did you consider other models?
- What software & hardware help support the merged desk?



SHORT ANSWERS

- Did it save money?
Yes: student wages; No: remodeling, shift pay
- Did it save staff?
Yes: reallocated librarians to liaison roles
- Did you consider other models?
Yes: one desk, different “stations”
- What software & hardware help support the merged desk?
Lots! More in Appendix



QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

- What metrics do you have?
- Did you survey patrons?
- How did you evaluate effectiveness after the change?
- Were staff for it or against it?



EVALUATION ANSWERS

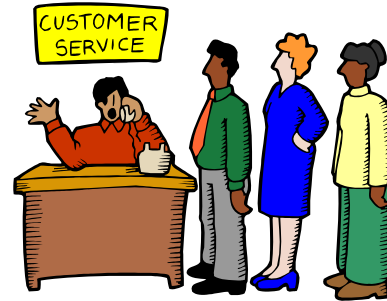
PATRONS



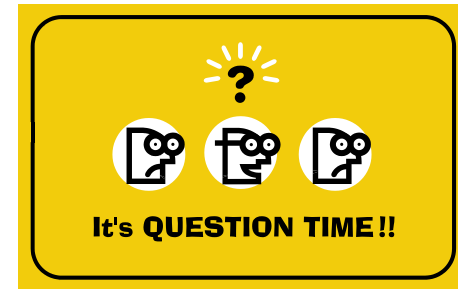
Staff/Student Studies of Chat, 2002 & 2003



I Love My HSL Blog, 2012---



Operations Research Student Study, 2000



ServQual ~2000 & LibQual, 2002,2004

EVALUATION ANSWERS

STAFF

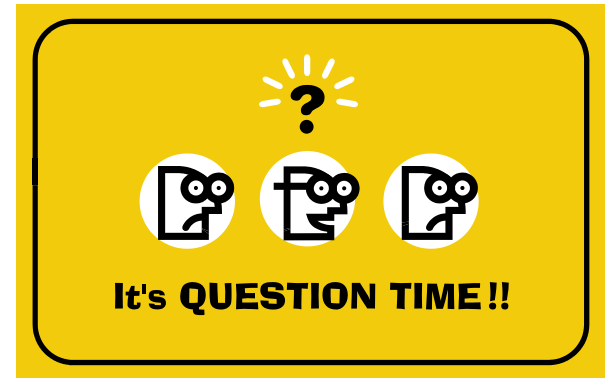


Before implementation

Checklists: What do you need to learn?

After implementation

Staff training assessment
Feelings & ways to improve



WHAT CAN YOU USE AT YOUR LIBRARY



ESTABLISH GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Involve staff, communicate, test


HSL examples

- Continuous improvement
- Simplicity & convenience
- Service awareness
- Innovation
- Performance

IT'S THE PEOPLE NOT THE DESK



COMMUNICATIONS & TRAINING!

- Over-communicate
 - Over-train
 - Provide support tools
 - Expect willing back-up
 - Expect to refer & follow-up
- 

Desk

Questions? Comments? Problems? [Send Feedback to Kate McGraw](#) .

- **New!** [Desk Guide](#)
- [User Services Wiki](#)
- [Catalog \(Endeca\)](#)
 - [Classic Catalog](#)
 - [TRLN Catalog](#)
- [Room Schedule](#)
 - [Class, Conference, and Video Conference Rooms](#)
 - [Group Study Rooms](#)

University Libraries

FAQs

- [Hours](#)
- [Directions](#)
- [Wireless Networking @ UNC](#)
- [Onyen](#)
- [Reserves Page](#)

Phone Numbers

- [Campus Security, 911 or 962-8100](#)
- [Staff Directory](#)
 - [Intranet](#)
 - [web site](#)
- [Pocket Phone list, After Hours Bldg Emergency List](#)
- [ITS Pager \(Emergency only\)](#)
- [more key phone numbers](#)

Software

- [307 Software](#)
- [329 Software](#)
- [EIC and ADA Computer](#)
- [IT Computer Lab Information](#)

Manage Statistics

- [Record a Reference Transaction \(LibAnswers\)](#)
To Sign In, Use
hsl-usc-l@listserv.unc.edu (email)
[uscdesk](#) (pwd)
- [Stats](#)

Patron Maintenance

- [PID Inquiry Screen](#)
- [Verify Duke](#)
- [Verify UNC System](#)
- [Verify UNC Alumni](#)
- [NC Community College](#)
- [Borrower Page](#)
 - [Borrower's application](#)
 - [RA Borrower's application](#)

Quicklinks

- [Reserve a Room](#)
- [Room Schedule](#)
 - [Class, Conference, and Video Conference Rooms](#)
 - [Group Study Rooms](#)
- [IT Service Request](#)
- [Report a Problem](#)
- [User Services desk](#)
- [USC Desk Guide](#)



335 S. Columbia Street CB 7585 Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7585 (919) 962-0800

[Health Sciences Library's Hours >>](#)

[Ask a Librarian](#) | [FAQs](#) | [My Library Account](#) | [Chat Now!](#)

- Resources ▾
- Services ▾
- About ▾
- Help ▾

HSL USC Guide

- Main
 - Borrowers
 - Building/Equipment ▾
 - Reference
 - Circulation
 - Emergency
 - Electronics Troubleshooting
- Who knows what?

Who Knows What?

AHEC Digital Library	Mary Beth Schell, Adam Dodd, adl-questions@listserv.unc.edu
Allied Health	Barbara Renner
APA Style Guide	Julia Shaw-Kokot
Audiovisuals and AV equipment	Carol Payne , Barbara Tysinger, Levi Turner
Bioinformatics	Barrie Hayes
Book Purchases	Susan Swogger
Bookings	Denise Mabe
Borrower's Accounts	Carol Payne, backup Kate McGraw
Building Problems	Pam Roberts, Tess Sharpe
Bullitt Club	Barbara Tysinger, Dawne Lucas, backup Kathy Fujiwara
Cancer Information	Jennifer Walker
Collaborator Center (orientation, equip use and issues)	Barrie Hayes, John Wysor
Collection damage issues (water, etc)	Susan Swogger, Barbara Tysinger
Compact Shelving	Carol Payne, most students
Consumer Health	Christie Silbajoris, Karen Crowell, Kate McGraw, Brenda Linares
Copyright	Julia Shaw-Kokot, Lee Haney, Anne Gilliland (Scholarly Communications Officer at Davis)

STAFFING DECISIONS

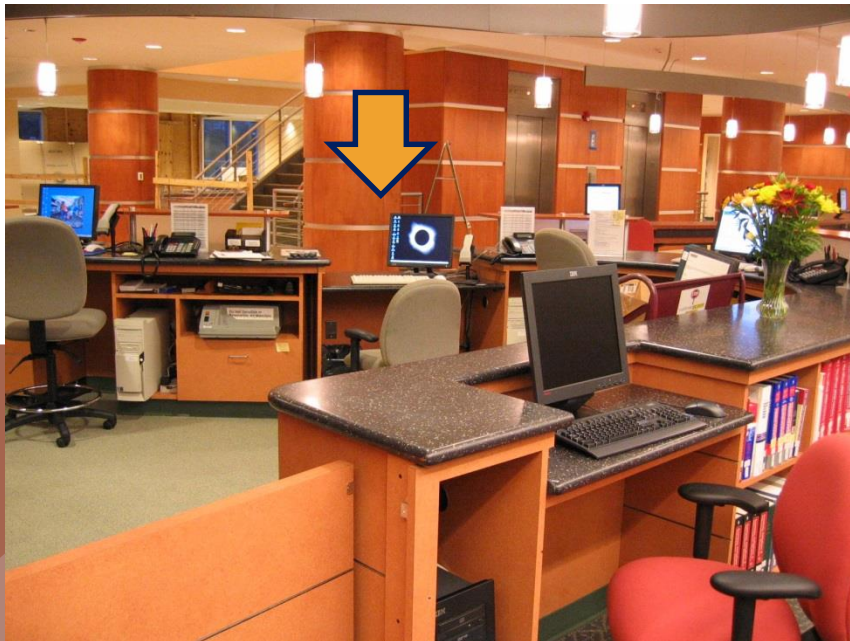
- Collect data (#, level, when, where)
- LibAnswers statistics (desk, consults)
- Security Guard evening headcounts
- Gate Counts

From	Gate	Time	Status
Chicago-Midway	8	7:35 PM	On Time
Detroit	2	7:40 PM	On Time
Atlanta	6	7:41 PM	On Time
Washington-IAD	3	7:42 PM	On Time
Waukegan	8	7:45 PM	On Time
Chicago-Midway	3	7:50 PM	On Time
Fort Worth	7	8:00 PM	On Time
Here	8	8:20 PM	On Time
Here	2	8:50 PM	On Time
Here	8	9:15 PM	On Time
Here	9	9:30 PM	On Time
Here	2	9:40 PM	On Time
Here	2	9:55 PM	On Time
Here	5	10:15 PM	On Time
Here	5	5:55 PM	On Time

USER SERVICES CENTER TODAY



View from main/front entrance



The low seated section of desk is most approached station – even when staff are at the other stations!

APPENDIX

What we did

Why we did it

Communications methods

Training program

WHAT WE DID: FROM...

7 places to get service

- 3 service desks (reference, circulation, curriculum support)
- Admin for copy cards
- Resources Management for Special Collections
- Interlibrary Loan
- Education Department



WHAT WE DID: TO...

1 place to get service

Backed up with RPO...

- Reference Help (staff scheduled to be on call)
- Phones off desk peak hours
- Online desk = Ask A Librarian and chat (from offices)



WHY CHANGE?



Users told us they...

- Were confused about locations
- Had little awareness of the range of services HSL offered
- Waited in line for help
- Needed skilled help and we did not have staff with the skills



WHY CHANGE?

Staff committee reported...

- Data collected showed
 - a) high number of referrals to another place or person in HSL
 - b) 2/3 of questions required basic training
- Observation verified patron confusion
- Schedules showed inconsistent service hours, skill levels (quality)
- Underutilized staff in non-peak hours (efficiency)



COMMUNICATIONS METHODS

5-10% FTE in work-related meetings and training to start

HSL Examples-

- Weekly supervisors' meeting
- Biweekly (alternating Tues) support staff and liaisons meeting (separate listservs)
- LibGuide desk manual (key points & esoteric points)
- LibAnswers FAQ (public answers)
- Clipboard at the desk
- Listserv (archived) for all who work merged desk + support (tech, acquis)
- Desk Intranet (with problem report form)
- Refresher sessions, e.g., difficult situations, personal safety, RefWorks

TRAINING PROGRAM

- ~ 30 hours of training from specialists
- Includes self-study assignments
- Overlaps with shadowing
- Followed by pairing with experienced staff
- Followed by solo with on-site backup
- Go solo with on-call help

