CUL in Numbers FY12

In 2011/12, CUL’s most compelling stories continued to be the waxing of all things digital, and the waning of print:

- About 60% of our collection expenditures went toward e-resources. There was a 32.7% one-year increase in number of e-books, and a 9.2% decrease in print volumes added new. Current serial titles saw a 10.7% increase in electronic titles and an 18.2% decrease in print titles.
- Journal article downloads from our most popular publishers showed a slight decrease from 2010, however, these counts for the past 3 years have hovered at just under 5 million. E-book requests, a new metric for us, debuted at over 720 thousand section requests, and close to 15 thousand title requests. At the same time the use of physical items continued to decrease, with total charges and renewals dropping under 1 million for the first time in many years. Even equipment charges dropped for the second year in a row. The largest circulation decrease occurred in physical reserves, probably in part due to the physical relocation of some reserve operations as well as the continued shift to e-reserves.
- Our virtual library saw almost 10.5 million visits from outside of library buildings, an increase of 5% from 2010/11. With multiple consolidations and a temporary relocation, the physical library counts tracked here saw decreases; physical library visits dropped by 12.7% to just under 4 million, and net square footage, user seat and public computer counts dropped by 5.1%, 6.3% and 20.9% respectively. The biggest contributing factor to these changes is the fact that the heavily used Engineering Library space is not part of CUL anymore, and is therefore is no longer included in these counts.
- After several hard years, the non-student staff count was more stable (-1.5% from last year). The decrease over the past 5 years was 14.7%. The total is now just below the 400 FTE mark, a first in decades. Materials expenditures increased most significantly in 2011/12 (10.2%) thanks to one-time efforts to improve collections support. Total library expenditures increased by 3% from 2010/11, although adjusted for inflation we have lost ground over the past five years. Due to these changes, the proportion of materials to total expenditures has increased at CUL to 34.7%.

This information and much more can be found in the newly released 2011/12 Cornell University Library Trends report available here: http://ecommons.library.cornell.edu/handle/1813/31306.

Since our performance data is now stored in the LibPAS system that can easily be queried to meet the Library’s decision-making needs, this publicly available report can now focus on what has been the most interesting function of our statistical reports: system-wide changes and major library trends. Additionally, CUL staff can access unit-specific reports and data notes through the updated annual data collection Confluence wiki at https://confluence.cornell.edu/display/culdata/Unit-specific+data+-- +CUL+staff+use+only (reports include five years of data for key measures). As last year, LibPAS reporting training will be offered to interested staff. Stay tuned!

CUL undertakes the annual data collection, which is just one component of CUL’s assessment program, to provide a basic set of measures for descriptive and high level decision-support purposes. It also meets outside reporting requests (such as ARL, NCES, CU’s Division of Financial Affairs) and allows for benchmarking of core indicators across peer institutions. Data supplied to ARL serves as the basis for CUL’s national rankings and contributes to the overall portrayal of the important role of research libraries.

Join us in thanking the many CUL staff members who collaborated on this report, contributing their time and insights. We encourage you to explore the report and welcome your feedback.