Kent State University

Stark Campus Library

Annual Report, 08/09

Prepared by

Rob Kairis
Library Director
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Introduction

The annual report for 2007/2008 showed all-time high levels of activity in five areas measured by the library:

1. **Attendance.** At 61,522, more users visited the library last year than any other year. This marked a 37% increase from the previous year.
2. **Library Instruction Classes.** The library taught more classes (208) and more students (4,361) than ever before.
3. **General Collection Circulation.** More books (7,016) circulated last year than any previous year.
4. **Book Lending.** The library loaned more of its books (5,082) to other libraries than ever before.
5. **Database Searches.** More searches (94,283) of selected library databases were conducted last year than any other year searches were analyzed (since 2002/2003).

With the exceptions of the first and last listed items (attendance and database searching), last year all of those measurements went down. In some cases there are viable explanations to the decreases. In others, after attaining an all-time high, it would seem natural to expect some decrease in activity. Specifics regarding the measurements listed above (as well as others) will be presented in other parts of this report.
Highlights

The focus of this year’s Highlights is similar to last year’s. In addition to discussing the impact of online journals, a continuing discussion of the impact of moving from print reference titles to electronic reference titles will be presented. The past year allowed for a comparison of print vs. online usage for analysis. In addition, several more reference titles migrated from print to online during the course of the year and more are planned for migration in the future.

Moving Print Standing Orders Online

The library started the process of subscribing to online versions of traditional print titles many years ago. Usually these titles fell into one of two categories. They were either smaller, monographic resources like the *Grove’s Dictionary of Music & Musicians* (a multi-volume set), or larger database-like titles such as *Opposing Viewpoints*, which includes a variety of types of materials (essays, journal articles, reference resources, multimedia, etc.). With the 8-campus purchase of *Gale’s Literature Criticism* series online, significant multi-title sets consisting of hundreds of volumes each, the rules changed a bit. The impact of subscribing to this set of titles is important to note. For example, replacing the 8 volume *Grove’s Dictionary of Music & Musicians* frees up almost 1 single shelf in the reference collection. The literature criticism set includes 10 titles (8 subscribed to in print by the Stark Campus Library), takes up many units of shelving, and continues to expand as more print volumes are published (usually several each year for each title).

While freeing up shelf space is no insignificant matter, perhaps the greater impact is how content contained in the online version suddenly becomes more useful for today’s college student. With a year’s worth of usage data now available, comparing last year’s use of the online resource to last year’s use of the print resource (as well as the complete historical record of the print version’s usage) reveals that online resources get used a great deal more than their print equivalents.

Although not a formal part of this annual report, the library has tracked yearly use of all print volumes in its reference collection. Last year the aggregated usage of all 8 titles of the print version of the literary criticism titles yielded 50 total uses. The table below shows the usage of the electronic versions of those same titles (as well as the two additional ones the library does not subscribe to in print):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sessions</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Text</td>
<td>615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrievals</td>
<td>944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual Report 08/09, Stark Campus Library
The total searches could be viewed as the equivalent to the uses tracked for the print volumes. However, the library has always matched these measurements by correlating the print use to the number of times the full text was accessed. In this case the ratio is 50 to 615. This shows that the online version was used 12 times more often than the print version last year. For a more dramatic expression of the usage difference between print and online resources, the total historical usage of the print version of all literature criticism titles adds up to 1,239 uses. This reflects usage that goes back decades, not just years. The number of full text accesses last year alone (again, 615) accounts for half of that total. So in effect, one year of online usage accounts for half of the total, historical usage of the print version recorded over decades.

A final advantage to note is that the Stark Campus Library is saving money by canceling its print standing order for 8 of the titles and joining the Kent Campus in subscribing to the online edition. The table below shows all 10 titles included in the online subscription, the average number of print volumes published each year, and the average cost per year for the 8 titles the library received as standing orders. In the last year of its print subscription to these titles, the library paid $17,052. The financial arrangement with the Kent Campus was that the Stark Campus would simply pay a fixed cost for the back files (all online equivalents to the previously published print volumes) and the Kent Campus would pay for the continuing subscription to all 10 titles. Since the Stark Campus could pay this amount over the course of three years, the annual cost was $14,977, saving the Stark Campus $2,075 for three years and then $17,052 (and more as prices go up) in perpetuity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Ave. Vol. per Year</th>
<th>Cost per print Volume</th>
<th>Annual Print Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Literary Criticism</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
<td>$3,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twentieth Century Literary Criticism</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
<td>$2,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nineteenth Century Literature Criticism</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Criticism from 1400-1800</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical &amp; Medieval Literature Criticism</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shakespearean Literature Criticism</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
<td>$1,350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry Criticism</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$168.00</td>
<td>$1,512.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Story Criticism</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$168.00</td>
<td>$1,680.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama Criticism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Literature Review</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$215.00</td>
<td>$1,935.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$17,052.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear by this analysis that, at least in this case, migrating print standing orders to the equivalent online version makes sense for many reasons. The one down side to doing this was discovered after the change was made. A review of the content in the online back file compared to what was published in print revealed gaps. Due to copyright restrictions some of the content published in print was not available from the vendor for inclusion in the online version. While this fact was minimized by the vendor prior to establishing the deal, the review showed the problem was more widespread than
anticipated. As a result, the library has begun a review comparing all of the print content to what exists online and will be keeping the print volumes that are not completely duplicated online. As the library converts more titles from print to online, this type of analysis will be important to ensure completeness.

This example also shows the advantages for Kent State libraries to work together to forge deals with vendors that provide the benefits demonstrated here. Other titles under consideration to replace print with online content include:

- Europa World Handbook
- Market Share Reporter
- Standard & Poor’s Netadvantage
- Dictionary of Literary Biography
- Something About the Author

In some cases (the last three for example) the Stark Campus Library already had established online subscriptions. The deals for these included adding other KSU campuses, expanding the content included in those titles, and/or obtaining permanent ownership of the content (instead of simply leasing the content year-to-year).

Print vs. Online Periodicals Subscriptions

Last year the annual report documented the challenges for maintaining print serials subscriptions. The data showed that in 2007/2008 only 2% of the print collection was used; 475 of the total volumes (23,968) in the collection of were re-shelved. In comparison, when six of the databases subscribed to by the library were analyzed for usage, 36,399 articles were downloaded from just those six databases (the library has access to more than one hundred different databases). The ratio of usage between downloaded articles and print serials is 99:1. In addition, just factoring the cost of print subscriptions, it costs more for print serials (54% of the serials budget) than online serials (46%). Those costs do not include staff resources for maintaining the print collection (checking in, binding, re-shelving, etc.), which are significant. As a result, it is worth repeating the data from last year’s report that it costs more than $91 per use of print serials compared to about 75 cents per use for online serials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>06/07</th>
<th>07/08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ave cost per print article</td>
<td>$80.20</td>
<td>$91.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ave cost per online article</td>
<td>$1.01</td>
<td>$0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reason last year’s data was presented in this report is that there was a problem in calculating usage of print serials this past year. When the library eliminated print serials from its collection due to online, perpetual duplicates, the item records representing those printed volumes should have been withdrawn (removed from view in the public catalog) but not deleted. This prevents users from thinking that the library owns volumes and/or
titles that have been discarded from the collection while retaining historical usage data. Instead, hundreds of volumes were deleted from the library integrated library system (KentLINK) along with the usage data. When usage information was gathered for 2008/2009 it resulted in negative usage (-60, to be exact). Actual usage could never be negative. Either some volumes were re-shelved, indicating users made some use of them, or no items were re-shelved and usage was zero. Although new volumes were added for current serials subscriptions, the use of those added volumes was offset to such an extent that the total usage for the collection (accounting for the usage of individual items that were deleted) was less than zero. Nothing can be done to correct this unfortunate error (it should not be repeated in the future), but analysis of usage is impossible. If anything, it does imply that usage must still be at a very low level as reported last year.

**Ebooks**

The library has had access to electronic books (or ebooks) through OhioLINK for many years. Until the spring of 2008, Kent State’s only access to ebooks has been through membership in OhioLINK. At that time, all 8 campuses, as part of a cooperative collection development project in nursing, licensed an ebook collection of approximately 1,700 health-related titles from ebrary. Since the content from these books was leased (not purchased) and access to it would be lost once our subscription ended, the cost was relatively low. Usage has been tracked. Since this is a new area for measuring usage, it is difficult to make any judgments about its success. Here are the statistics for last year for the Stark Campus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Documents Viewed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pages Viewed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pages Copied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pages Printed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Sessions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A rough estimate of the checkout activity of the library’s general collection suggests that about 10% of the collection circulated last year. Depending on which measurement is used for the ebrary collection (Documents Viewed, Pages Viewed, Pages Copied, Pages Printed, or User Sessions), different comparisons can be made. The most logical similarities are probably the number of Documents Viewed or the number of Pages viewed. The former suggests that the ebrary collection is used less than the library’s print collection. The latter suggests that ebrary is used significantly more than the print collection (about six times more).

Perhaps the most important thing to consider regarding Kent State’s entry into the world of ebooks is that a model has been established. ebrary provides a platform and purchasing model that can easily be translated to other disciplines. With the flexibility to purchase or lease content and with an interface that provides a great deal of functionality, building a more comprehensive ebook collection at Kent State should become a reality. Still, a key concern is how OhioLINK’s development of ebook collections will impact Kent State or any other OhioLINK member institution.
The following includes a description of some specific highlights of library activities for the academic year 08/09:

**Teaching Area Proposal**

The library submitted an LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant in hopes of securing funds to renovate its teaching area. The proposal included funding for 18 netbooks and 16 iMacs. The idea was to recreate the teaching area in a way to facilitate different teaching styles and multiple arrangements of seating with a mixture of technologies. Unfortunately, the grant was not successful. The library will be working with the campus administration to see what alternatives can be funded to make renovations to the teaching area a reality.

**Cooperative Collection Development**

All 8 KSU campuses have worked to put together a plan to cooperatively share resources in the area of Nursing. An ebook subscription (from the company ebrary) with access to about 1,700 health-related titles was established. Additional nursing-related databases were licensed (including Ovid, which provides access to more than 50 journals published by Lippincott). Perhaps the hardest challenge was putting together a shared approval plan with the university’s primary book vendor, YBP Book Services. After establishing a shared financial commitment, selection and owning responsibilities, the libraries worked with YBP to create the approval plan and evaluate its anticipated activity. It is expected to be in operation during the coming academic year.

**Reference Statistics**

Trying to make any usable sense of the types of questions library users ask or the success with which library staff answer those questions has eluded the Stark Campus Library (and probably most, if not all libraries). Such an important aspect of library work should not simply be relegated to counting hash marks. On the other hand, creating a realistic way to measure this activity (considering the complexity and variety of user questions, along with the difficulties of trying efficiently to document each interaction) has proven to be a challenge. A new form was created to at least differentiate certain types of questions (in-person questions, phone inquiries, simple questions, and complex questions). It is hoped that a fresh approach will provide the opportunity to rethink how the library handles reference questions and to see if some level of analysis can be obtained to allow the library to better address this important aspect of library service.
New Student Worker Position

With the recent addition of sixteen computer workstations on the second floor along with the general increase in the number of computers available to the public, the library decided to create a student worker position specifically designed to handle user problems related to the use of those computers. The position also served to direct users to librarians when the question had more to do with library research than basic technology. After one year, some information has been gathered. For instance, most technology-related inquiries concern issues such as printing problems, using a USB flashdrive, and logging into computers. Although the chart indicates most computer usage between 9am and 3pm, since the position is only 15-20 hours each week, those data were only gathered during the times the student was working. The library will continue to track the data collected to see if more resources need to be invested in this type of activity.

New Web Pages

To enhance its web presence, the library created some new pages for its web site:

- Library Instruction. A page describing the various ways the library provides instruction was added, along with pages on Information Literacy, Plagiarism Workshop, and “Plagiarism School”. In addition, a new online feature that allows faculty to request instructional sessions was created.
- Collection Development. This web page describes various collections owned by the Stark Campus Library, including Rare Books, Local History, Featured Speakers, Faculty Publications, and Best Sellers.
- Displays created for the library’s display case now appear on the library’s home page

LibQUAL+

The library has participated in the LibQUAL+ survey twice before its participation last year (in the spring of 2002 and the spring of 2003). Those reports are available on the About the Library web page. In the spring of 2009 the library conducted the survey again. The report for this past year is also available on the library’s web site. Analysis of the results suggests the following changes for consideration:

1. Scheduling full time library staff at the circulation desk to address concerns over the quality of service provided to users.
2. Creating a Quiet Area in the library.
3. Improving the library’s print collection.
Staff

The following individuals comprised the library staff for the 08/09 academic year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rob Kairis</td>
<td>Library Director (Professor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Kooistra</td>
<td>Collection Development Librarian (Associate Professor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Kilcullen</td>
<td>Reference Librarian (Associate Professor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Davis</td>
<td>Serials Librarian (Assistant Professor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Birtalan</td>
<td>Cataloging and Interlibrary Loan (Library Associate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Hawley</td>
<td>Acquisitions (Senior Library Assistant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffery Moore</td>
<td>Circulation/Student Worker Supervisor (Senior Library Assistant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although not a member of the library staff, Jason Piatt, the campus’ ET (Education Technology) Designer moved his office from the Main Hall to the second floor in the library. The library has found Jason to be a great asset, particularly in helping with improving the library’s ability to assist users with technological (computer-related) problems. Shelley Blundell, a master’s student completing her degree in Library and Information Science from the Kent Campus, finished a practicum at the Stark Campus Library. Shelley worked in a variety of service areas and submitted a proposal for implementing an online chat/IM reference service.
Interlibrary Borrowing and Lending

The gap between the number of items Stark Campus users obtain through interlibrary borrowing (ILL) compared to the number of items they check out from the library’s local collection widened last year as ILL borrowing increased by 12% while local circulation decreased by slightly more than 10%. It has been ten years since the circulation of local materials outnumbered the borrowing of materials from other libraries.

As mentioned in last year’s report, with the Kent Campus accommodating all KSU campus requests for interlibrary borrowing (beyond OhioLINK requests for books via PCIRC), the Stark Campus Library no longer has information about non-returnable (article) interlibrary activity.

Similar to the spread increasing between local circulation and ILL borrowing, there was a fairly dramatic downturn in book lending last year that resulted in a widening of the difference in borrowing compared to lending:
Interlibrary Borrowing and Lending

Borrowing

Book borrowing increased by 12%. This marks the second highest year of book borrowing over the past 11 years of recorded data. It’s hard to determine if any trends appear over the course of that time period. The last two years of increases were preceded by two years of decreases. It will be interesting to see if previous patterns appear and the activity starts decreasing next year.

Lending

Following a sharp increase of 26% in book lending in 2007/2008, last year lending went down by the margin of 36%:

This major change started a reversal of steady increases dating back to the turn of the century (with only the 2005/2006 year seeing a slight decrease in lending). Further examination of OhioLINK practices help explain the sharp increase in 2007/2008 and then the sharp decline last year. Starting in 2007 OhioLINK changed the way it applies its algorithm for selecting which copy is chosen when a user requests an item in the central catalog. Every year an analysis of how much each institution borrowed is compared to how much it loaned. When institutions borrow more than they loan, the algorithm changes to select that institution’s materials more often (to balance the activity between institutions). Obviously, in 2006 Kent State was borrowing more. This caused a change in the algorithm and Kent State was placed higher in the order and began lending more. This explains the Stark Campus Library’s 26% increase in lending. Then the following year OhioLINK changed the algorithm again to select Kent State less often,
resulting in the 36% decrease reflected in last year’s data. Further proof that changes to the OhioLINK algorithm for selecting which institution’s materials are higher in the pecking order for online requests is the comparison between KentLINK requests (users requesting materials in the KentLINK catalog—not affected by the OhioLINK algorithm) and OhioLINK requests. KentLINK lending increased from 1,651 to 1,742 (a 6% increase) while OhioLINK lending decreased from 3,412 to 1,492 (a 56% decline).

If the practice continues like this at OhioLINK and the algorithm keeps swinging back and forth, such fluctuations should be expected. It is difficult to say whether or not other institutions are seeing the same variations over the past two years. If so, it might be better for OhioLINK to reevaluate how it changes the algorithm. Having a more reliable expectation of OhioLINK lending seems better than having to deal with wild shifts in activity each year.
Information Literacy

After two straight years of significant increases in library instruction activity, culminating with the highest number of classes taught in 2007/2008, the library experienced a 19% decrease in teaching last year:

There was a large decrease in Stark State classes taught. It is important to note that Stark State has been focusing their attention more on library services. Since it is now an AQIP institution (as is Kent State University), an action project was created to enhance library services for Stark State students. One result of this action project was that library services became more visible to more Stark State faculty. The library saw significant increases to the number of instructional classes requested by Stark State faculty beginning in 2006/2007. In fact, 2007/2008 included the most classes ever taught to Stark State students (80, up from 53 the previous year—a 50% increase).

As part of the AQIP initiative for enhancing library services, Stark State created a library teaching lab and discussions are underway for hiring a professional librarian at Stark State. Assuming this initiative produces the anticipated outcomes, the level of services provided by Kent State University (with regards to library services contracted by Stark State College of Technology) will likely need to be reevaluated. In the meantime, the Stark Campus Library continues to offer the same level of service to Stark State users that it has in the past.
Collection Development

The library’s budget stayed relatively flat last year. The chart below shows how money was spent on books and videos (by faculty and library staff):

Although these types of purchases were down slightly, overall expenditures were up 6% from $169,013 to $179,440. The increase was due to subscriptions (both print and online). Print periodical subscriptions went up 7% while the investment in online databases increased by 34%. As discussed in the Highlights sections, there has been an on-going shift from purchasing content previously available in print to the online equivalent. So naturally there would be an expected decrease in print expenditures and an increase in the cost for databases. Because some of the deals for these shifting resources involve costs being incurred in the first few years of the subscription (dramatically decreasing or being eliminated after that point), a more significant increase to online subscriptions was expected.

Also mentioned in the Highlights section, the library made efforts to enhance the visibility of its various collections by promoting library displays, adding a Collections web page, posting bibliographies online, and adding its collection of Best Sellers as a featured list in KentLINK.
One somewhat curious aspect to the data collected last year describes the number of items purchased. The chart below shows a 27% increase in the number of items (mostly books and videos) purchased last year:

![Items Purchased Chart]

This is unusual, since the library spent 3% less overall on those items. Somehow the library managed buy more and spend less. The peaks in the above chart mirror peaks in expenditures; 2002/2003 and 2004/2005 were the highest in money spent. In an age of ever-increasing inflation for library materials, it is good to know that the library spent its budget more efficiently and bought more items than the previous year while spending less than the previous year.
Library Usage

This section on usage focuses on four areas:

1. Head Count
2. Reference Statistics
3. Circulation
4. Database Searches

Head Count

For the second year in a row the library set an all time high in attendance. This 30% increase was mostly due to more activity on the second floor. After adding 16 public PCs, more and more users are going to the second floor to do their work.

The increase in attendance on the first floor was only 8%. However, attendance on the second floor nearly doubled from 16,582 in 2007/2008 to 33,010 last year.
Reference Statistics

Other annual reports have discussed the problems related to gathering and analyzing reference statistics—the number of times users ask for help. Although an attempt was made to improve statistics gathering, there is still little useful information to reflect upon. The number of questions asked did go down significantly (41%):

Reference Stats

Since the library has changed how it gathers these data several times over the years, it is difficult to rely on this information as showing any trend. The library will continue to look at new ways to record reference statistics until it finds one that is easy to administer and produces valuable information.

Circulation

Overall circulation activity decreased significantly last year:
This 15% drop is hard to explain. After years of gradual increases from the turn of the century until 2006/2007, circulation activity of materials stored in the university’s KentLINK online catalog is dropping dramatically. In the last annual report it was interesting to note that while activity leveled off, there was actually a 25% increase in circulation of the general collection. Last year that increase disappeared when activity decreased by 28%:

Although online resources have been around for many years now, it could be that newer library users are less interested in reading printed materials (books) and are used to getting more and more of their research exclusively online. If that is the case, the library can anticipate these statistics to continue to decline over the coming years.

**Database Searches**

The library has provided statistics for usage of online databases for as long as it has subscribed to them. They can be found on the library’s web site at the bottom of the About the Library web page:

http://stark.kent.edu/Library/AboutTheLibrary.cfm

These statistics are only for a small fraction of the databases available to Stark Campus users. While users have access to over 100 different databases, the library is not able to track the use of all of them. Many, if not most, are licensed through OhioLINK and statistics are provided at the institutional level and not broken down by campus. Of those that the library can track, it selects the ones it feels are most useful for its users. Since each database reports activity in a different format, the library simplifies the data by placing them into three categories:
1. **Sessions**, the number of times users accessed the database
2. **Searches**, the number of unique searches entered during a session
3. **Full Text**, the number of full text articles downloaded during a session

The chart below shows a six-year trend for use of the databases tracked by the library:

As described in the Highlights section, the use of these electronic resources far exceeds that of the library print subscriptions. The most notable information is the number of searches conducted last year. Although all other activity (the number of user sessions and the number of full text articles downloaded) remained stable, the number of searches conducted (particularly for the EBSCO set of databases) more than doubled. Since these statistics are delivered by the vendor, it is possible that some reporting problem occurred. Otherwise, the library will want to track the number of searches in the same set of databases next year to see if a pattern of user behavior is developing.
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Teaching Area
Although the library was not successful in obtaining an LSTA grant, there is still a desire to improve the area used for teaching. The hope is that the area on the first floor behind the reference collection be enhanced with more user devices, a larger SmartBoard, and the capability for students to print during instructional sessions. The general goal is to provide an area for teaching that can accommodate larger classes while still providing flexibility to configure the space for different teaching styles. The library feels that at this time the appropriate technology for meeting this goal would be netbooks (smaller-sized laptops).

More Web Development
The library continually updates its web site. One of the purposes of the site is to promote library services to various campus constituents. Perhaps the most impacted, long-standing type of library user is the faculty. Hopefully, faculty can find the services they need somewhere on the library’s web site. It was felt that a more direct way to assist faculty would be to create a web page specifically designed to consolidate the library services faculty are interested in. This new web page for faculty is expected to be rolled out in the fall of 2009. Also expected in the coming academic year is an upgrade to the content management system used by Kent State University. CommonSpot will be upgraded for all units using it within the university. This will require the library to migrate its current content and adjust web pages, hopefully making use of the system’s new features.

Reference Statistics
An on-going strategic initiative has been to improve the way the library collects statistics on the number of times and the manner in which it provides direct reference help to its users when they come into the library, call in on the phone, or send an email message. Last year a new form was developed that more clearly (yet still generally) categorized the different types of reference questions. It divided questions into the following groups:

- Simple in person, phone, or email questions (taking about 5 minutes or less to answer).
- Complicated in person, phone, or email questions (taking about 5 minutes or more to answer).
- Directional questions (users needing to locate something in the building or on campus).
- Remote access questions (typically phone questions from users needing to know how to access library services from off campus).
Stark State Digital Library and Librarian

As mentioned in the Information Literacy section of this report, in the spring of 2009 Stark State College of Technology unveiled its new Digital Library. It was created as a space for students to receive class instruction on the use of electronic library resources as well as getting one-on-one help with library-related assignments. In addition, as part of an AQIP action project, Stark State also plans on hiring a librarian. These are two significant developments. The Stark Campus Library continues to serve as the more traditional library for Stark State users and continues to provide all of the services it has in the past. The Stark Campus Library plans to work closely with any librarian hired by Stark State to enhance library services and provide a library presence on their campus.

Staffing the Circ Desk

The Highlights section of this report described some of the findings of the LibQUAL+ survey administered this past spring. The full report is currently available from the library’s About the Library web page. One of the important results of this past year’s survey (similar findings were reported in previous LibQUAL+ surveys given to Stark Campus users) was the quality of service provided at the library’s circulation desk. The desk is staffed with student workers who are instructed to fetch a librarian when a user asks a reference question. While this may sound simple, reference work can be tricky and knowing exactly when a user needs help from a professional can be difficult. Added to that complication is the desire by our student workers to help users the best way they can. Still, the results are clear. Respondents to the LibQUAL+ survey indicate that student workers are not always able to answer their questions. For the coming year (and beyond) the library will show its commitment to providing the best possible service to users who appear at the library’s circulation desk by staffing it with a full time library employee during it busiest hours (Monday through Friday from 9am until 4pm).

Designating the Second Floor as Quiet Space

Another outcome of the LibQUAL+ survey was the concern many respondents had over the noise level in the library. Previous reports have documented how the library has changed over the past several years. With regard to noise, the creation of classrooms on the lower level and the addition of 16 public computers on the second floor have generated more traffic and (along with more people in the building) more noise. It would be impractical to believe that the library will sometime soon become the quiet place for reflective, individual learning it once was (primarily when it was a print-only facility). As a measure of combating this problem and trying to make users more aware of the need for quiet, the library will be designating the second floor as its quiet space. A sign will be displayed at the top of the stairway and information will be posted on the library’s home page.