

**New Jersey City University
Congressman Frank J. Guarini Library
Survey of External Community Users**

Survey Results

The total number of students counted during this period was 7,613, of which 1,405 (18.5%) were found to be external users. The approximate gate count for this period was 20,000, which means we counted 38% of library users during this period. The gate count is approximate due to counter malfunction during part of the counting period. The time period sampled was a convenience sample selected based on prior observations of varying traffic patterns throughout the semester. We expected to find less traffic at the beginning of the semester, more in the middle and most and least right before finals and during intersession respectively. The data confirm these patterns, and this report provides a snapshot of library users during these periods. Complete count results are appended at the end of this report. The percentage of external users varied from a low of 4-10% during the morning hours to highs of 40-60% during intersession, evenings and weekends. Percent of external users also varied during data collection periods, as follows:

Week	External Users	NJCU Users	Percentage
1	340	2,059	16.5%
2	432	2,363	18.2%
3	434	2,825	15.4%
4	199	167	54.5%

Who Are External Users?

External users are a diverse group and come from all over Jersey City and its surrounding areas. The list below shows the percentage breakdown of external users:

Jersey City Residents	812	58.1%
Other college/univ	202	14.5%
K-12	136	9.7%
NJ Residents	121	8.7%
did not specify residency	69	4.9%
other school, did not specify	46	3.3%
other state/country	11	0.08%

The largest category of external users was Jersey City residents. 812 library users identified themselves as Jersey City residents exclusively. They made up 58.1% of external users. The actual number and percent is higher but users who identified as K-12 or college students were not also counted as Jersey City residents, even when they identified themselves as such. Jersey

City residents use the NJCU Library for many purposes including Internet access, to compose personal documents using Microsoft Word and to rest, read and relax.

We also found community users studying for a variety of professional licensing exams. We came across medical students studying for their medical board exams in a variety of specialties, police officers from the Jersey City Police Departments studying for promotional exams, nurses studying for nursing exams, an occupational therapist studying for his professional exam, and an accountant studying for her CPA exam. We also found law students studying for their bar exams. By providing a quiet and comfortable environment for study, NJCU's Library contributes to the professional development of the area's residents and by extension, the economic development of the city, county and state. Moreover, because these "studiers" do not usually make demands on the library's services or resources, their presence benefits everyone.

In addition to community adult users, many of the external users were students at other colleges and universities. They attend an impressive array of institutions:

Bayonne Medical Center School of Nursing, Bergen County College, Berkeley College, Bloomfield College, Caldwell College, Capella University, Chubb Institute, DeVry University, Essex County College, Felician College, Hudson County Community College, Kean University, Kenyatta University (Kenya), Long Island University, Merritt College, Montclair State University, Morris County College, New Jersey Institute of Technology, New School University, New York Law School, New York University, Nova Southeastern University, Penn State University, Richard Stockton College, Rutgers University, St. John's University, St. Matthew's University, St. Peter's College, Seton Hall University, Sussex County College, The College of New Jersey, Trinitas Nursing School, UMDNJ, Union County College, University of Hartford, University of Massachusetts-Boston, University of Phoenix, William Patterson University

The third largest category of users is K-12 students, most of whom were using the library unaccompanied by adults. Although they comprise fewer than 10% of external users, youth users are a highly visible population because they sometimes pose challenges to staff, students and NJCU's Office of Public Safety. As a matter of policy persons under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult to use NJCU's Library. But neighborhood youth, usually unsupervised and lacking in resources, gravitate to the library after school because it is a comfortable and welcoming environment with high speed internet access. Most of the youth who filled out a survey were quietly working on assignments or surfing age-appropriate web sites. Students came from the following local schools:

Academy 1 Middle School, Dickinson High School, Emma Willard School, Ferris High School, JCCC Middle School, John M. Bailey School, Lincoln High School, McNair Academic High School, MS #41, Primary Prep, PS #41, PS #38, Snyder High School, St. Peter's Prep, St. Patrick & Assumption All Saints School, St. Dominic's Academy, University Academy Charter High School, Woodrow Wilson School.

The neighborhoods surrounding NJCU offer limited recreational opportunities for young people, so it is no wonder that they come to the library to seek refuge from the streets. Our service to this population, while occasionally fraught with danger and tension may have a major positive impact on the surrounding communities and could benefit the university's image and reputation within

these.

Residents of other New Jersey municipalities also use the library but we did not ask them to specify the towns in which they live. A few users did volunteer that they lived in Bayonne, and it is likely that other NJ state residents live in the nearby communities of Newark, Hoboken and other parts of Hudson and Essex counties. Residents from other states and/or countries comprised less than 1% of our sample.

Usage Patterns

Library use by external users was consistent with our expectations. During the first three survey periods, there were more external users during the late afternoon and evening and on weekends. Total usage during the first three weeks of the count was relatively stable, with 340 external users in the first counting period, 432 in the second and 434 in the third. During intersession, when the library is open 40 hours versus 81.5, there were 199 external users.

The number of NJCU students increased during each of the first three periods. There were 1,719 in the first period, 1,931 in the second counting period and 2,391 during the third counting period. During intersession more external users visited the library than users affiliated with NJCU.

Since the percentage of external users is relative to the number of NJCU users, as the number of NJCU users decreased, the percent of community users increased. For example, even though we counted only 199 external users during intersession, they constituted 54.5% of library users during that period, because there were fewer NJCU users during intersession. Percentage of external users was quite high during the first two weekends we counted: one in three users was an external user during those weekends. But when we counted in December, which is right before finals week, there were more NJCU students in the library studying, so only one in five users was an external user.

Although gate count data has provided us with information about day of week usage patterns, this survey was the first to shed light on usage patterns during time of day and user affiliation. We have known from gate counts that certain times of the semester are busier than others, but this survey now provides us with empirical evidence of library usage patterns throughout the day as well as number and types of external users.

User Count Survey Instrument

We are surveying library users and would appreciate your help.

Please check ONE:

- I am a student, faculty, or staff at NJCU.
- I am a visitor.

FOR VISITORS ONLY:

- I attend another school.
Which one?
- I live in Jersey City.
- I live in New Jersey.
- I live in another state or country.
Which state or country?

Thank you for taking this survey.

Prepared by Laura Kortz, virtual services/reference librarian, March 6, 2009

For more information about this survey, please contact:

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