Survey of nursing students

At the end of the 2010 spring semester, Rentschler Library staff administered a survey to nursing students at the Hamilton campus. We sensed that students were not taking full advantage of all the library has to offer. We wanted to learn about their perception and use of library services and resources so that we might better serve them. Survey results support our hunch – showing that the majority of nursing students are not taking advantage of library resources. The results suggest that students both need our help and are open to receiving it from us.

Notable Statistics:

- 62% of students find it helpful when a librarian comes to their class to talk about research (30% show a neutral or unsure response)
- Fewer than 35% of students feel comfortable searching for information on evidence-based nursing.
- 90% of students are in Blackboard weekly or daily to find information about their classes
- 51% of students are interested in having a librarian assigned to help their class in Blackboard
- 64% of students feel they lack the time to come to the library
- 76% of students do not use library resources because they believe they can find what they need elsewhere
- 15% of students have never used CINAHL

If you are interested in additional information about our survey, please contact Polly Whitaker (whitakpj@muohio.edu or 5-3229).

Instruction

We would like to be more involved in helping nursing students learn effective research skills. Here are some ways you could help us to achieve that goal.

- Invite a librarian to visit your class early in the semester so that we can introduce ourselves, pass out an informational brochure, and briefly mention some of our resources and services. This would only take 10-15 minutes and would be a great way for us to reach out to students personally.

- Schedule an instruction session for your class if you have any assignments that require library research. If you are asking your students to find nursing articles, please make time in your schedule for library instruction. We tailor each session to the requirements of your assignment and teach students the most efficient and effective techniques for finding the information they need.

- Ask to have a librarian “embedded” in your course via your Blackboard course page. Ideally, this would involve an introductory instruction session, followed by a few weeks of a librarian being available in Blackboard to assist students with a specific project. Although we can be embedded for the whole semester, this can be less effective if it is not tied to a certain project. This service may be particularly useful for online courses.

If any of these suggestions appeal to you, please contact Mark Shores (5-3203 or shoresml@muohio.edu). Mark will coordinate with other library staff and we will work with you to come up with the best library instruction plan for your class.
Other things you can do

• Send a copy of your syllabus to the library. It is very helpful when we can review course syllabi and anticipate your students’ needs over the course of the semester.
• If you require your students to search for evidence-based nursing articles, please contact us. The library staff would like to meet as a group with 1-2 nursing faculty to get a better understanding of how to help students locate these articles.
• If you have any interest in the book and/or media collection in the library, make an appointment with the library liaison for nursing – Polly Whitaker. She would love to talk with you about how to make the library collection of nursing materials most useful for you and your students.

Contact information for Polly Whitaker: whitakpj@muohio.edu or 5-3229.

Other things the library is doing to help nursing students

• We will provide “office hours” for students at University Hall during mid-terms and again right before finals. We will be available to students who need help with their research, but are unable to come to the library. This is a pilot project and could be expanded in the future if it the service is heavily utilized.
• We are setting up an organizational site in Blackboard for MUH nursing students. This will be a forum where Miami Hamilton nursing students can communicate with library staff about their research needs and learn about library resources and services that might benefit them.
• We will provide additional training opportunities for students. These may include video tutorials for CINAHL or other topics relating to nursing research. We may also hold special workshops for students focusing on evidence based research or exam prep.
• The library will heavily promote services that are already in place such as chat reference and one-on-one research appointments to reach students who feel they don’t have time to come to the library.