



1-10-2012

Library Constituency Survey

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Recommended Citation

Stone, Lorraine H.; Cline, Lynn; Stout, Tracy; Thompson, Rebecca; and Jones, Cheryl Gudmundson, "Library Constituency Survey" (2012). *MSU Libraries Reports*. 2.

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Library Constituency Survey

Survey of MSU Students and Faculty

**Center for Social Sciences and Public Policy Research
Missouri State University**

January 2012

Lorene H. Stone, Ph.D.

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Background of the Study

The Center for Social Sciences and Public Policy Research (CSSPPR) at Missouri State University was contracted by the Duane Meyer Library at Missouri State University to conduct a survey of MSU students and faculty concerning their use of and preference for library services. Separate on-line instruments were used for each of the two sample groups. In this study the CSSPPR measured the responses of a random sample of 266 MSU students and 60 MSU faculty members. Questions focused on the use of various library services and asked respondents to indicate their preferences for particular services. This report summarizes dominant trends in the responses of Missouri State University students and faculty.

In late October, 2011, 1125 MSU students (undergraduate and graduate) and 164 MSU faculty members (full-time and per course) were e-mailed an announcement that they had been randomly selected to participate in the study and would be receiving an on-line survey within ten days. The link to the survey instruments was distributed to the samples on November 1; a reminder e-mail was sent out to those who had not completed the survey a week later; and the surveys ended on November 25, 2011. Data were collected utilizing CSSPPR's computer-assisted survey research system, which utilizes state-of-the-art software to manage the sample, distribute the on-line survey and e-mails, and directly enter responses into a digital data base. Using these automated features greatly enhances the validity of the survey data collected.

The final sample size of 266 students results in a margin of error of +/- 5%, with a response rate of 23.6%. (This rate is fairly low and probably reflects the fact that a number of college students do not use their MSU e-mail accounts on a regular basis.) The final sample size of 60 faculty members results in a margin of error of +/-4%, with a response rate of 37.5%. (Four members of the original faculty sample were not included in the response rate, since return e-mail messages indicated that they were either not on campus during the semester due to a sabbatical or the individual no longer was employed at the University.) In the detailed analysis following the Executive Summary, the results of the survey are presented in the order that questions were asked.

Executive Summary

STUDENT SURVEY

- The majority of student respondents (65%) prefer to communicate with library personnel in person/face-to-face.
- While the largest percentage of students (44%) reported that they never hesitate to ask questions of library personnel, the next most common responses were “I didn’t want to interrupt” (10%) and “I felt intimidated” (7.5%).
- In general, the student group owns a number of technological devices. A sizeable majority of MSU students sampled own smartphones (64%), iPods (62%), and laptop computers (90%). Smaller percentages of students reported owning an iPad (11%) or an eBook reader (13%).
- Several forms of social media are used by the student group. The vast majority reported using Facebook (96%) and YouTube (78%). Other forms are used by a smaller percentage of students – Twitter (35%) and Blogs (17%) – and few students reported the use of Flickr (7%) and RSS feeds (7%).
- The largest percentage of MSU students reported using Meyer Library mainly to study (45%), while 18% said that they use the library to conduct research for a project of paper and 13.5% use the library for the computer labs.
- Most students reported that when they are given a class assignment, they typically seek out information by using the internet (73%). An additional 19% use library resources on their own. NO student asks library personnel to help them.
- The majority of MSU students felt that Meyer Library has the material they need for their studies; 33% strongly agreed with the statement, and 44% agreed. NO student strongly disagreed with the statement.
- Most students (54%) have never been on a tour of Meyer Library. When asked why, the largest percentage said that they “didn’t know there were tours” (43%); an additional 21% said that they had “no time in their schedule” and 21% said that they “didn’t

need a tour.” Of the 122 students who have been on a tour, the vast majority said that the tour had increased their understanding of the Library (87%) and had made them more likely to use the Library or its resources again (79%).

- A small majority of the students (51%) have never had a class session in which library personnel presented specific library information relevant to a class assignment. Of the 126 students who reported that they had such a session, most claimed that the class presentation by library personnel helped them complete the assignment (81%) and made them more likely to use the Library or its resources again (76%).
- When asked about barriers to their use of Meyer Library, most students do not feel that distance from dorm/home (70%), hours of operation (79%), physically bringing books or materials to and from the Library (68%), time needed to locate material (71%), or availability of library materials (79%) are barriers.
- When asked about their preference for type of seating, there is no clear cut response by students. Some prefer a large rectangular table and chairs (27%); some like soft furniture (26%); others want an individual table/desk (20%).
- When asked about their preferences for studying, the vast majority of MSU students in this study prefer to study in a quiet setting (80%) instead of in an area where conversations are tolerated (20%). Most prefer to study alone (70%) instead of in a small group (30%), and most prefer to study in an open area (65%) instead of in an enclosed study room (26%).
- The majority of students said that they have never looked for a group study room at the Library to work in (63%). Of the 98 students who reported that they had looked for a study room, 82% said that they had trouble finding an available room.
- The largest percentage of students visit Meyer Library on a “weekly” basis (48%), while 13% said that they are at the Library “daily,” and 11% reported “twice a month.” Approximately 8% reported that they “never” visit the Library.
- The sample of 266 MSU students is quite equally distributed on the basis of class rank: 23% are freshmen; 22% are sophomores; 17% are juniors; 24% are seniors; and 12% are graduate students.

FACULTY SURVEY

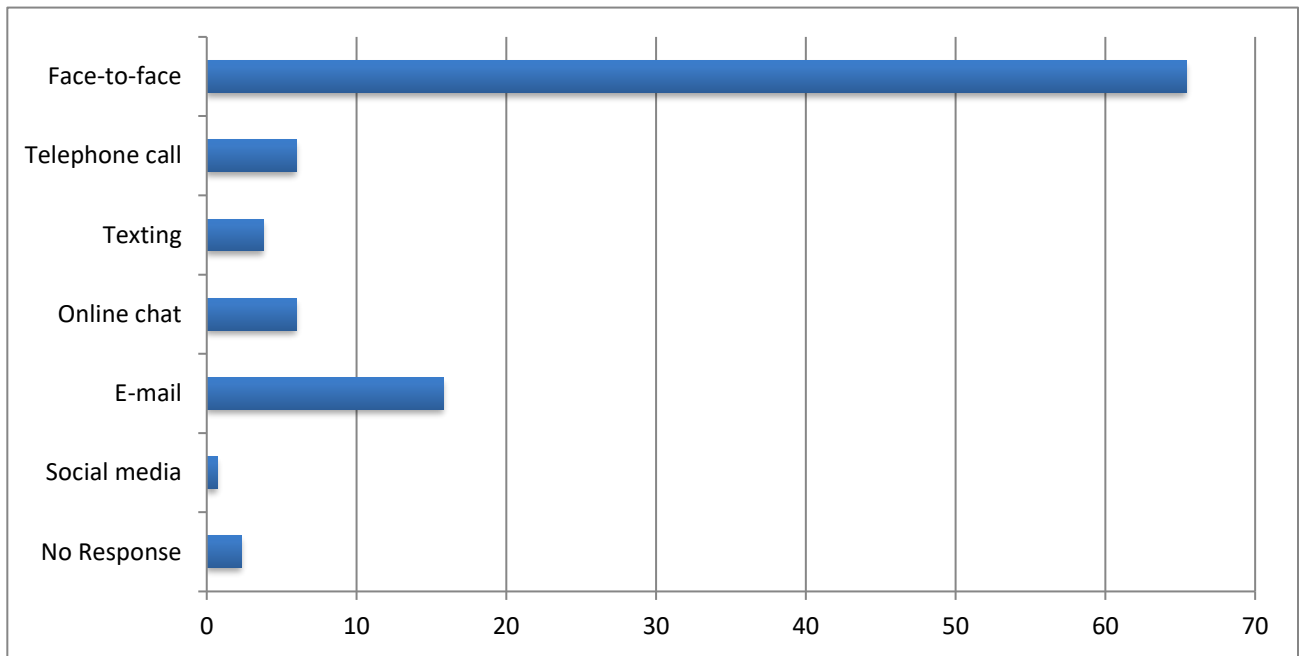
- Sixty (60) MSU faculty members completed the on-line survey. The majority of this group reported that they seek assistance from Library personnel “once per semester or less” (55%). An additional 27% seek assistance “once a month,” and 8% said “twice a month.” Only 5% of the faculty sampled in this study replied “never.”
- Like the student group, the largest group of faculty members prefer to communicate with library personnel in person/face-to-face (47%), but an additional 35% prefer by e-mail.
- The faculty group does not own as many technological devices as the student group. Only laptop computers are owned by a majority of the faculty (83%). Most faculty reported that they do not own smartphones, PDAs, iPads, iPods, or eBook readers.
- Like the student group, faculty members reported using Facebook (53%) and YouTube (60%). Approximately one-third of the group uses blogs (32%), while a very small percentage uses Twitter (13%), Flickr (12%), and RSS feeds (12%).
- The vast majority of faculty members use Blackboard in their courses (82%).
- Most faculty reported that they do NOT use print reserves (58%), electronic reserves (77%), embedded links in course pages to article in Meyer Library e-journals, databases, or subject guides (77%), or embedded links in course pages to sites or articles from non-Library resources (55%).
- The largest percentage of faculty members said that they give their students an assignment that requires use of library resources “more than once a semester” (47%). Another 32% replied “once a semester,” and 12% replied “once a year or less.” Only 5% of this group responded “never.”
- The vast majority of MSU faculty members felt that Meyer Library resources adequately support the needs of their courses. On this question, 47% “agreed” and 33% “strongly agreed.”
- Most faculty reported that they use the Library for all listed services: to conduct research (90%); to pick up ILL/MOBIUS material (80%); to gather material for a student class assignment (68%); to get help from library personnel (90%); to browse materials (85%); to place items on reserve (55%); and to borrow materials (90%).
- The largest percentage of MSU faculty members responded that they typically go to the Library web site when they have a library question (47%). Other responses included

“personal contact in the library” (25%), “reference department” (13%), and “Library department most closely aligned with their question” (8%). Very few faculty rely on a University colleague or their department’s library representative.

- Most faculty felt that Meyer Library resources adequately support their research needs. On this question, 42% “agreed,” and 25% “strongly agreed.”
- The majority of faculty have never arranged for a class session in which a librarian presents specific library information relevant to a course assignment (58%). Of the 25 faculty members who had arranged for this session, 60% responded “strongly agree” to the statement that the presentation was effective, and 36% responded “agree.”
- Responses were divided on whether the faculty member is confident that their students can effectively utilize library resources. On this item, 41% of the faculty either “agreed” or “strongly agreed,” while 25% “disagreed.”
- “Availability of library materials” was the only item that the majority of faculty in this survey felt is a barrier to their use of Meyer Library (52%). Most did not feel that distance from their office/home/classroom (60%), hours of operation (85%), physically bringing books or materials to and from the Library (60%), or time needed to locate material (80%) are barriers.
- When asked how often they visited Meyer Library, the largest percentage of faculty replied “weekly” (37%), while 20% said “once per semester or less,” 18% said “once a month,” and 17% said “twice a month.” No faculty member responded “never.”
- The faculty group was made up of 40% professors, 20% associate professors, 25% assistant professors, 5% clinical faculty, and 10% instructors/senior instructors. No per course faculty completed the survey.

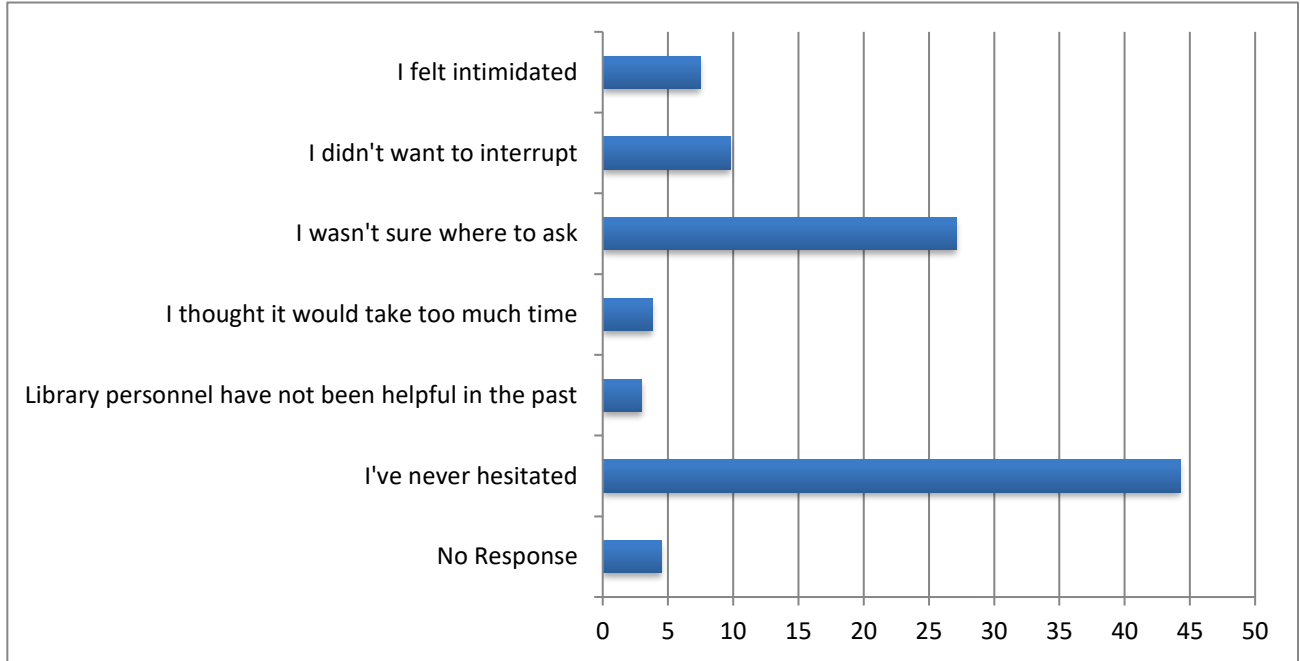
Student Responses to Survey Questions (in Percentages)

1. Which method of communicating with library personnel would you prefer?



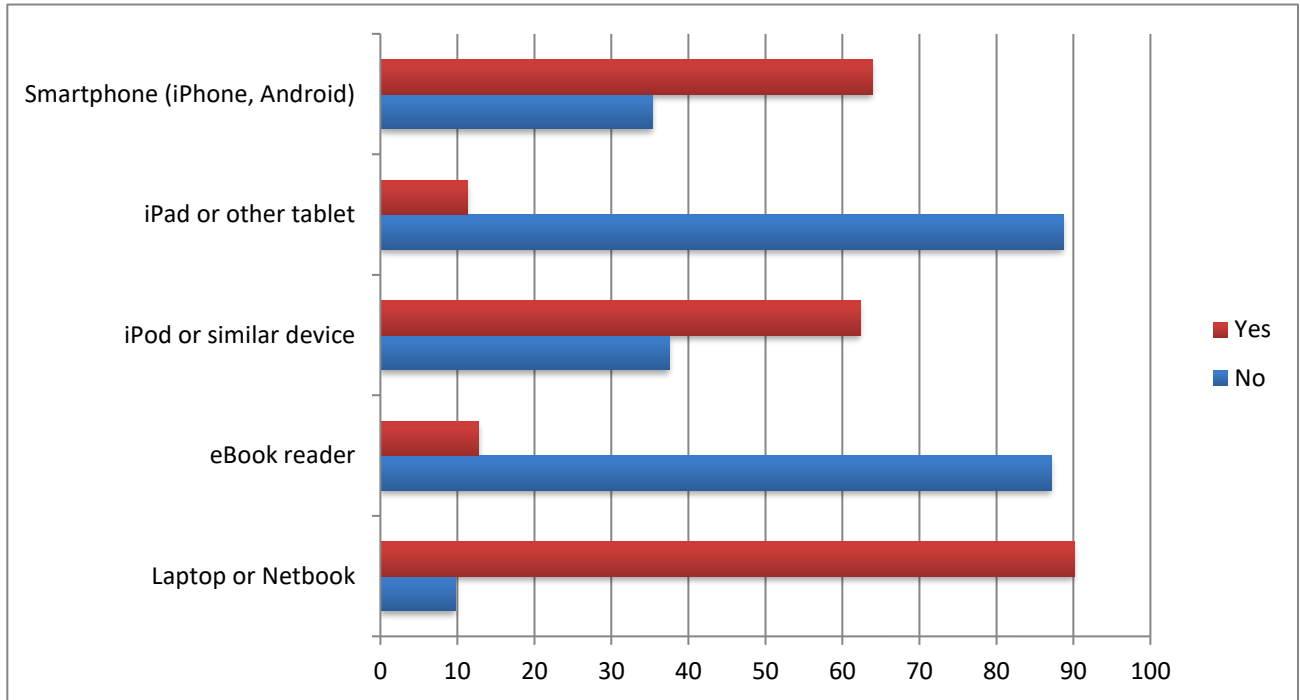
Most students preferred to communicate with library personnel in person/face-to-face.

2. If you have ever hesitated to ask questions of library personnel, why did you hesitate?



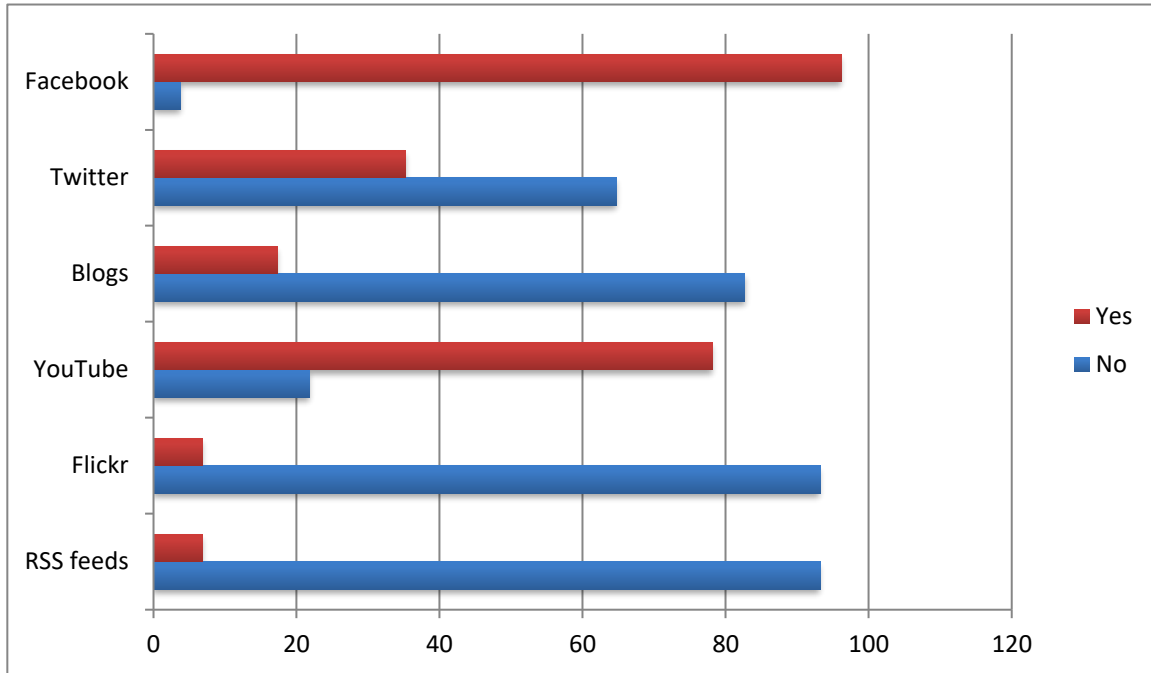
The largest percentage of MSU students reported that they had never hesitated to ask questions of library personnel.

3. Do you own the following devices?



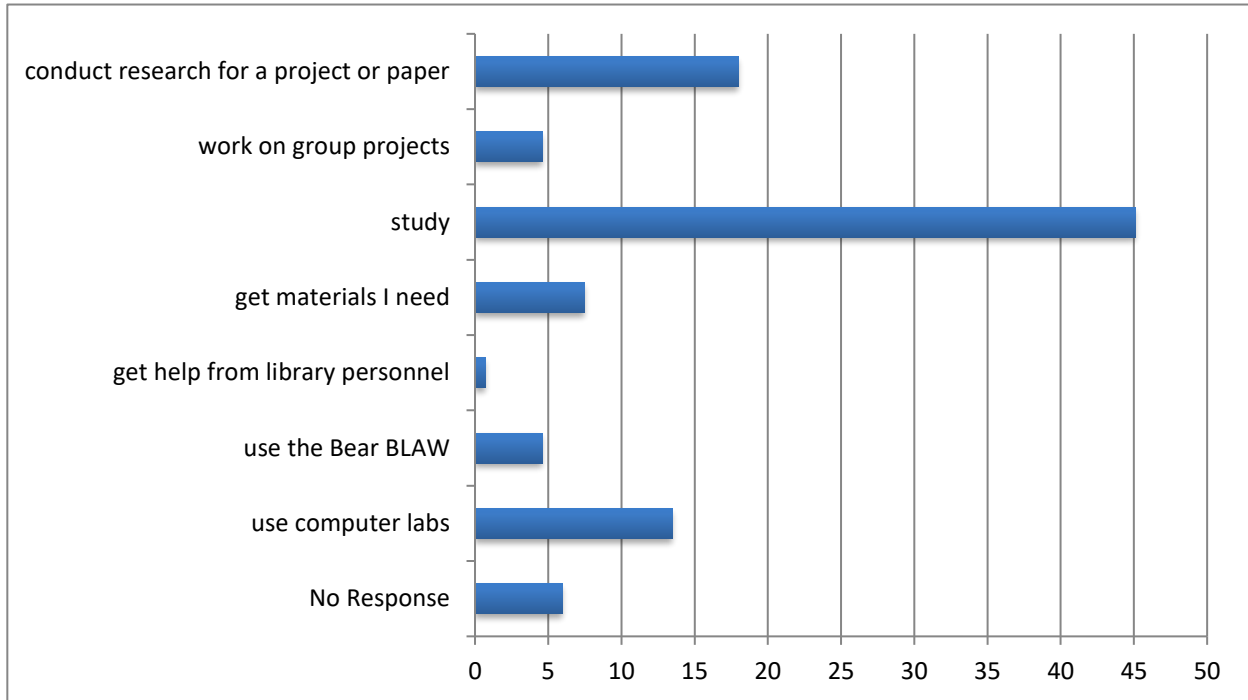
A majority of students sampled owned smartphones, iPods, and laptop computers.

4. Which social media do you use?



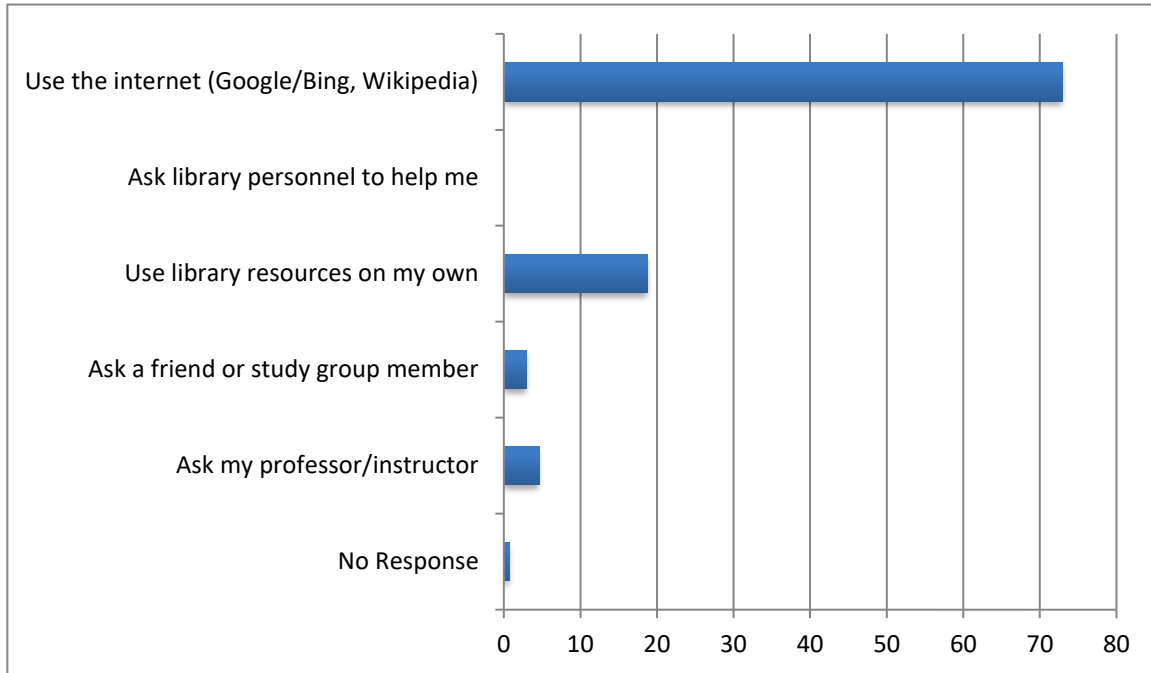
A large majority of students use Facebook and YouTube.

5. I use Meyer Library mainly to:



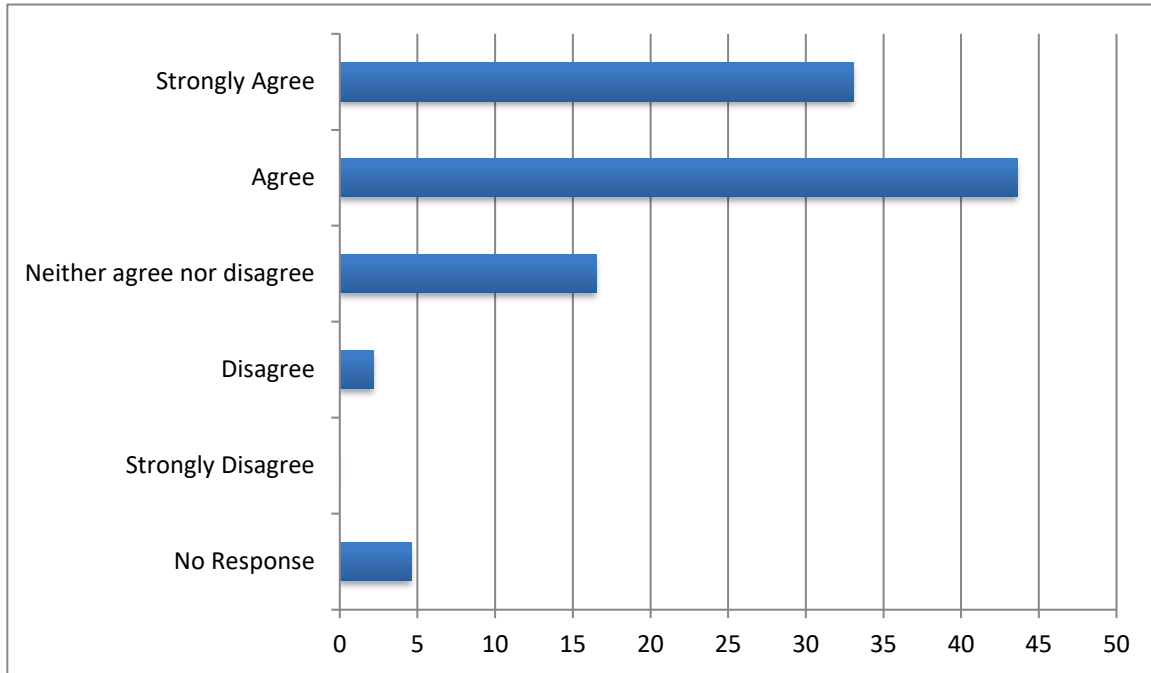
The largest percentage of MSU students reported using Meyer Library mainly to study.

6. When you are given a class assignment, how do you most often seek information?



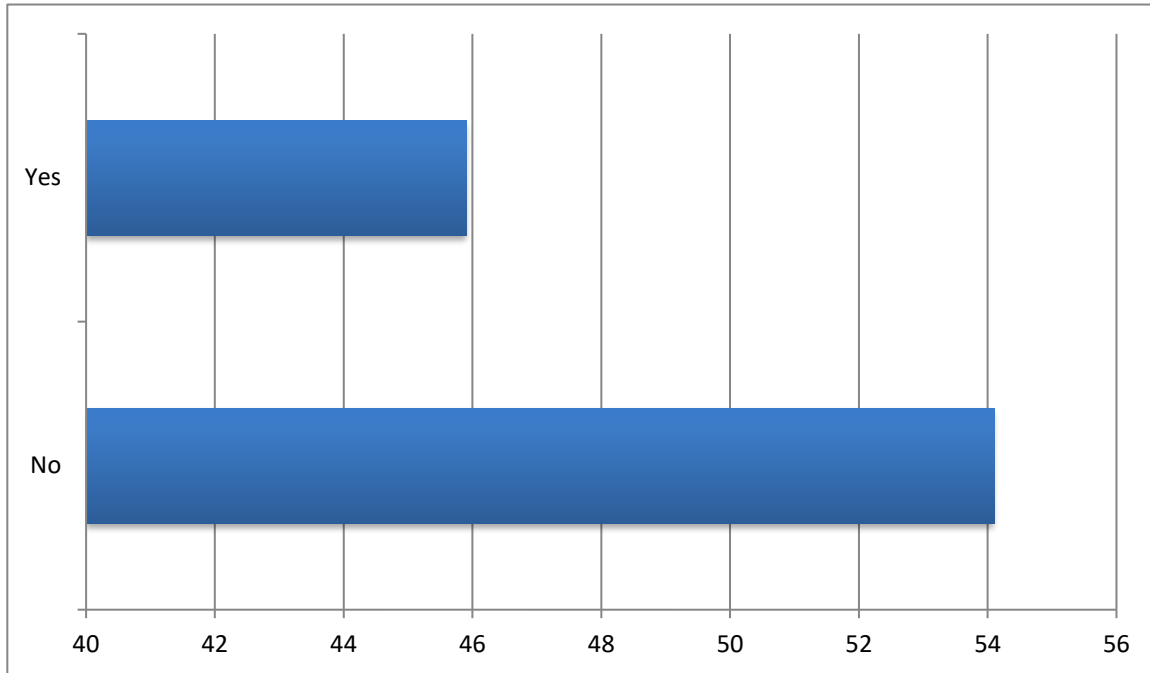
Most students reported that they typically use the internet when given a class assignment.

7. Meyer library has the material I need for my studies.



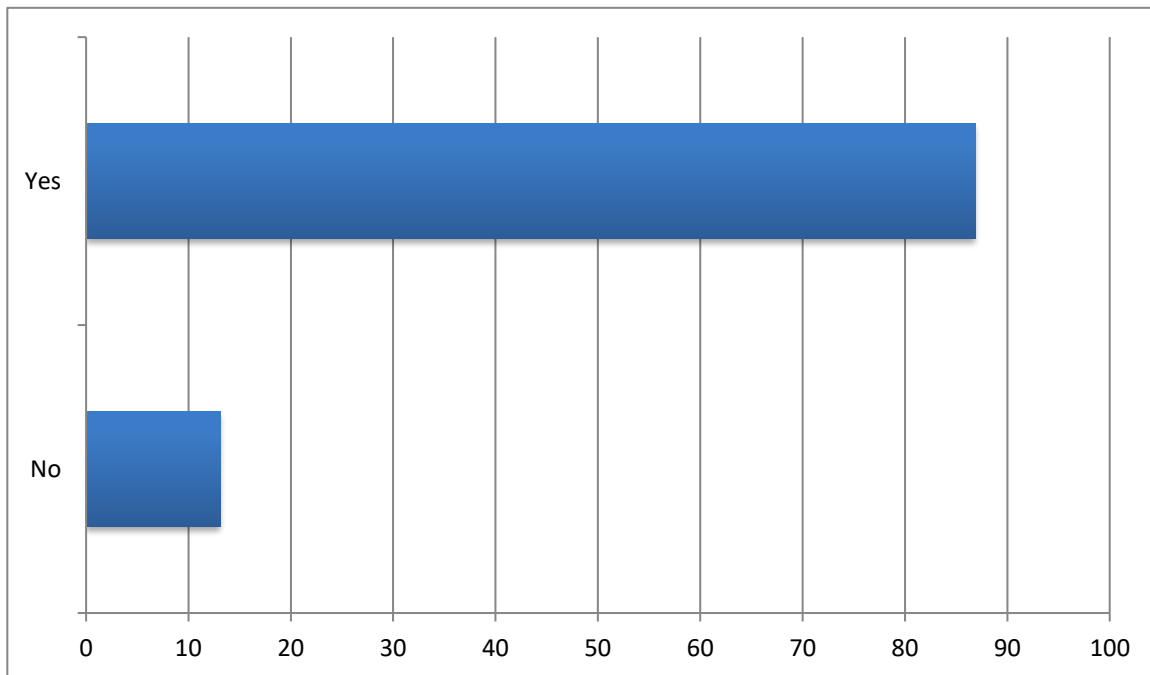
Most students felt that Meyer Library has the material they need for their studies.

8. Have you ever been on a tour through Meyer Library?



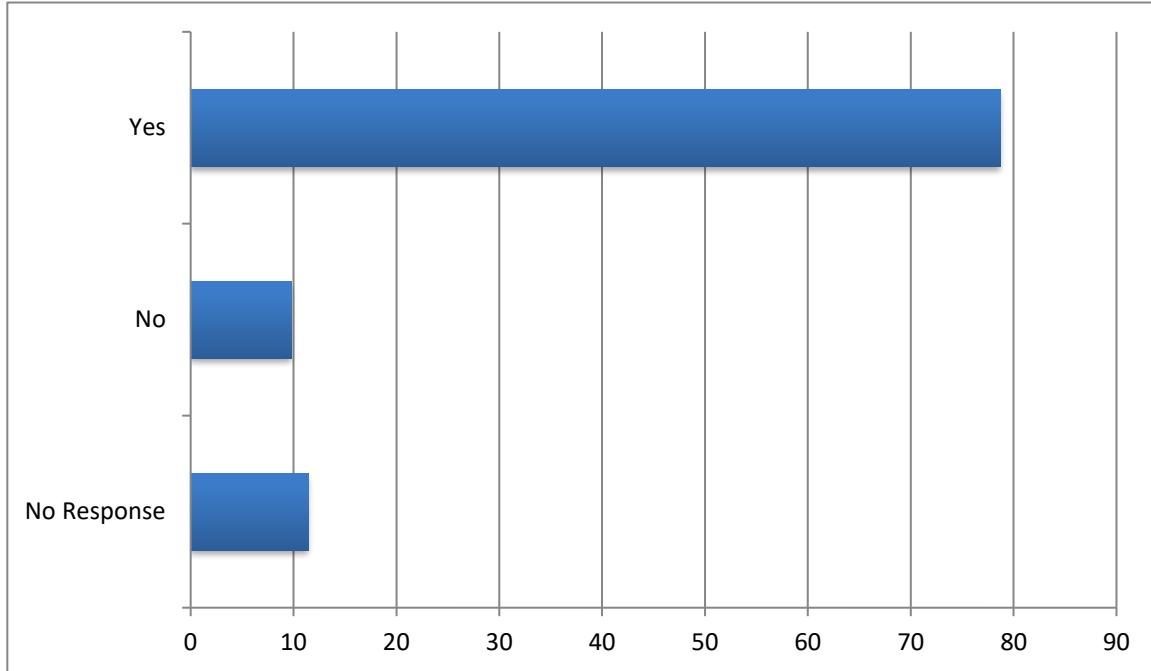
Most students had never been on a tour of Meyer Library.

9. Did the tour increase your understanding of the library?



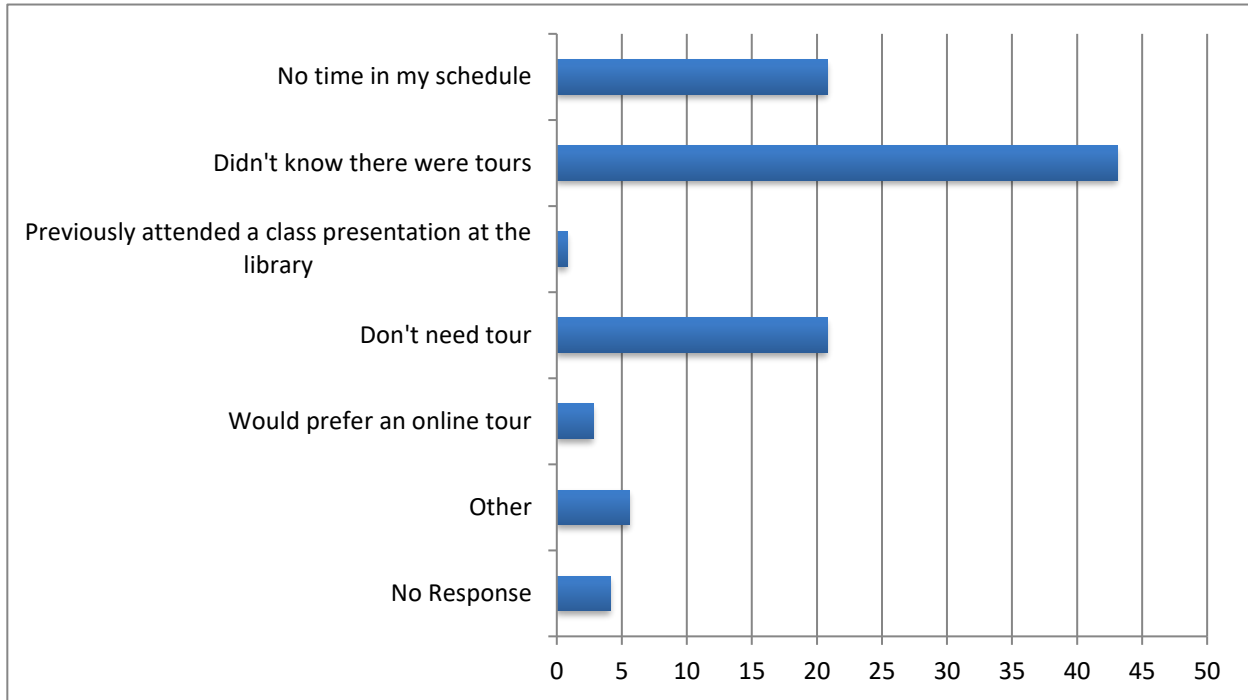
Of the 122 students who had toured, 87% said it had increased their understanding of the Library.

10. Did the tour make you more likely to use the Library or its resources again?



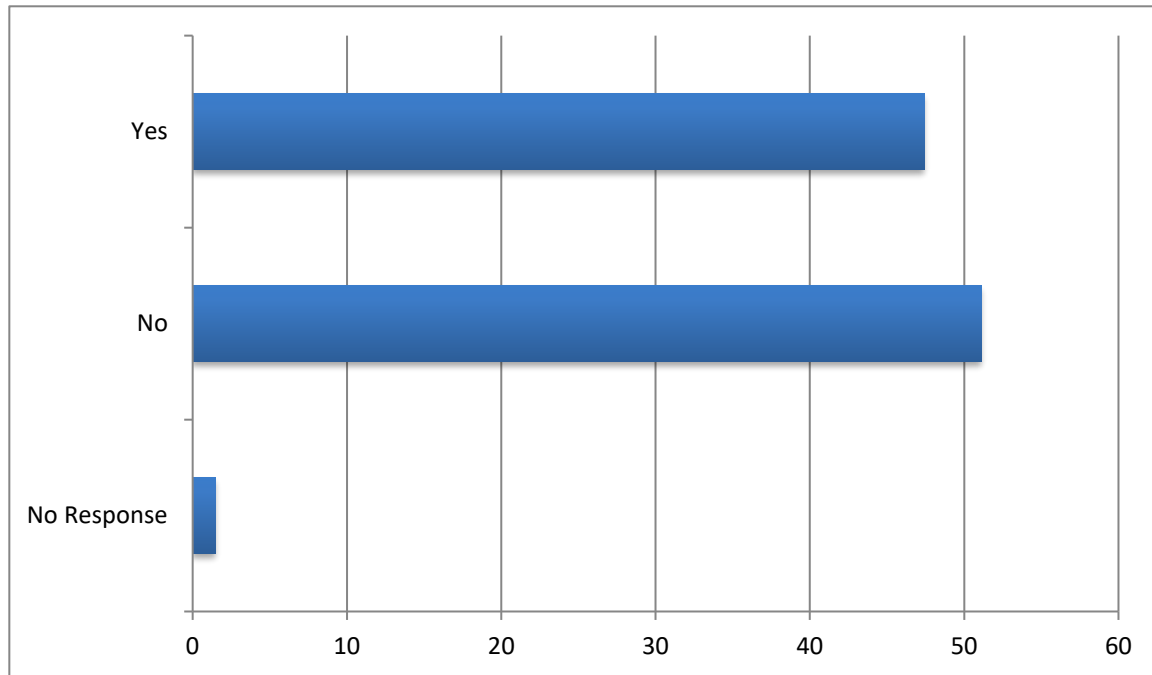
Of the 122 who had toured, 79% said that it had made them more likely to use the Library again.

11. If you have not been on a tour of the Library, why not?



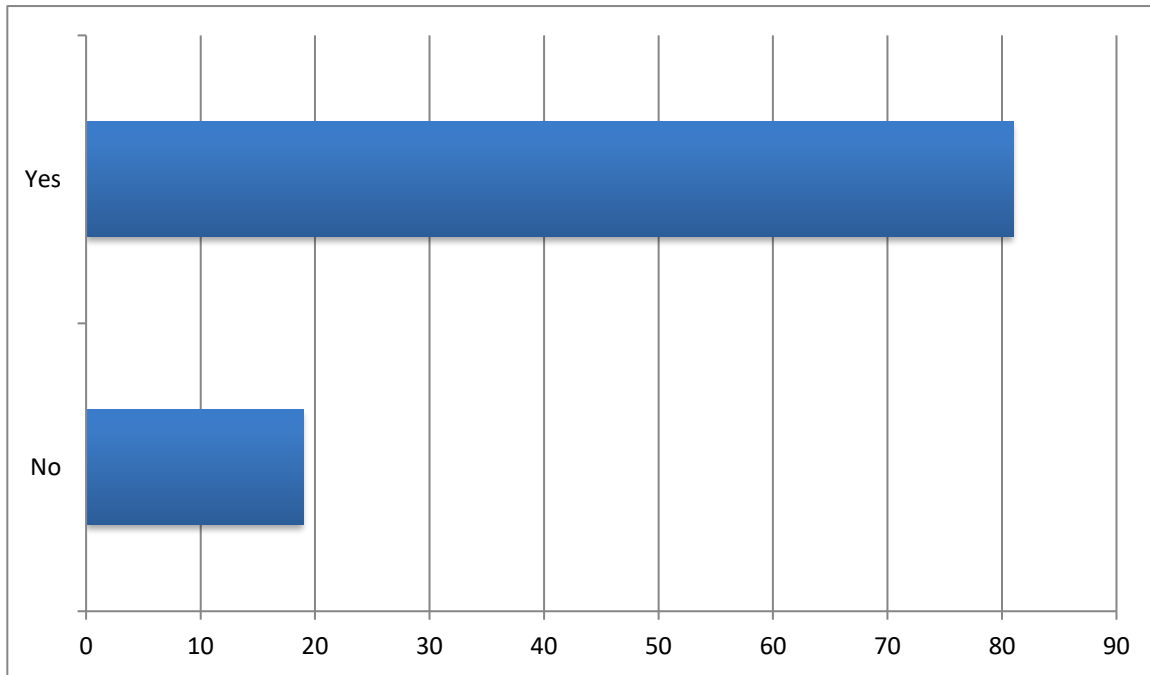
Of the 144 students who had not toured Meyer Library, the largest percentage said that they didn't know there were tours or didn't need a tour.

12. Have you ever had a class session in which library personnel presented specific library information relevant to a class assignment?

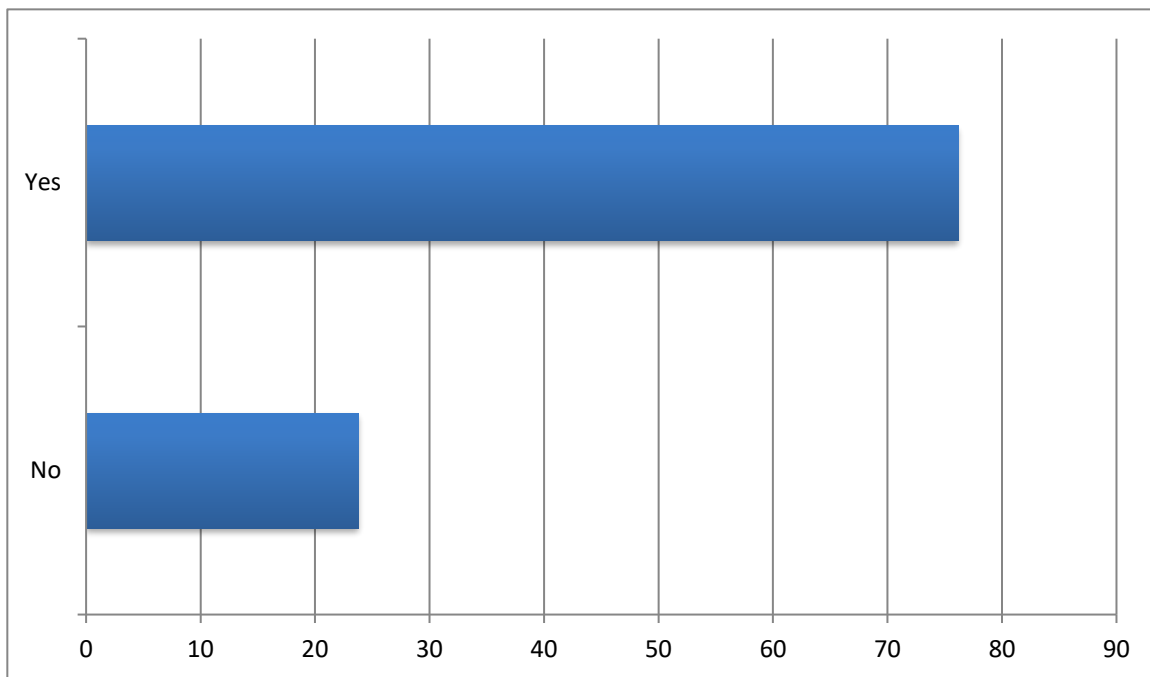


A small majority of students had never had a class session in which library personnel presented library information relevant to a class assignment.

13. Did the class presentation by library personnel help you complete the assignment?

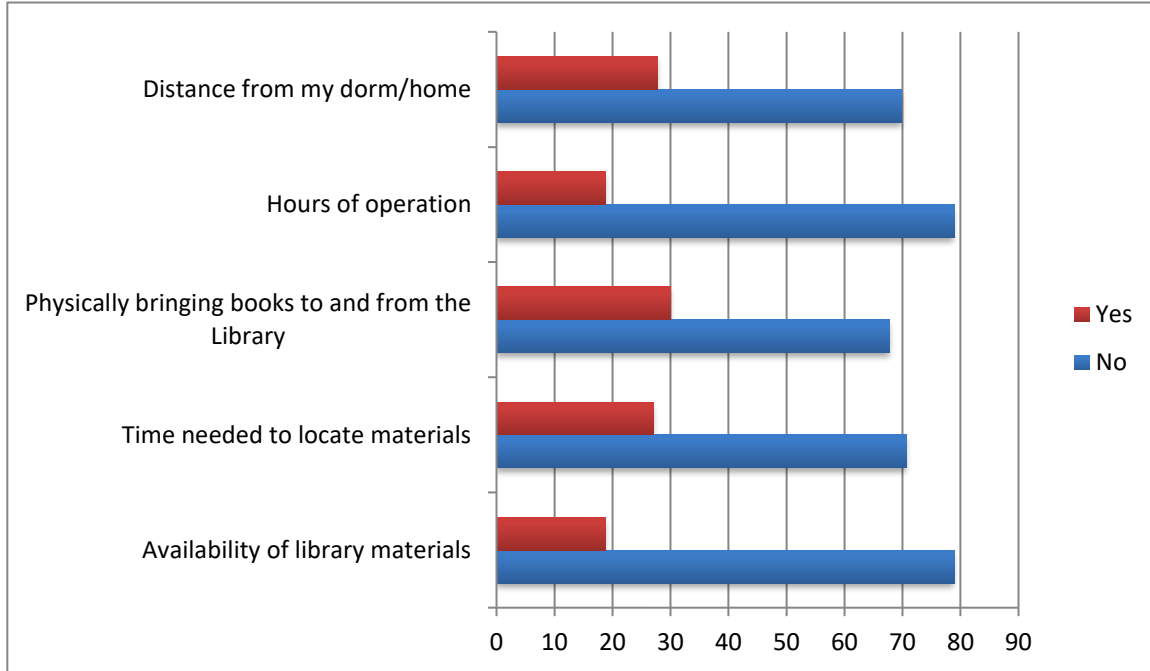


14. Did the class presentation make you more likely to use the library or its resources again?



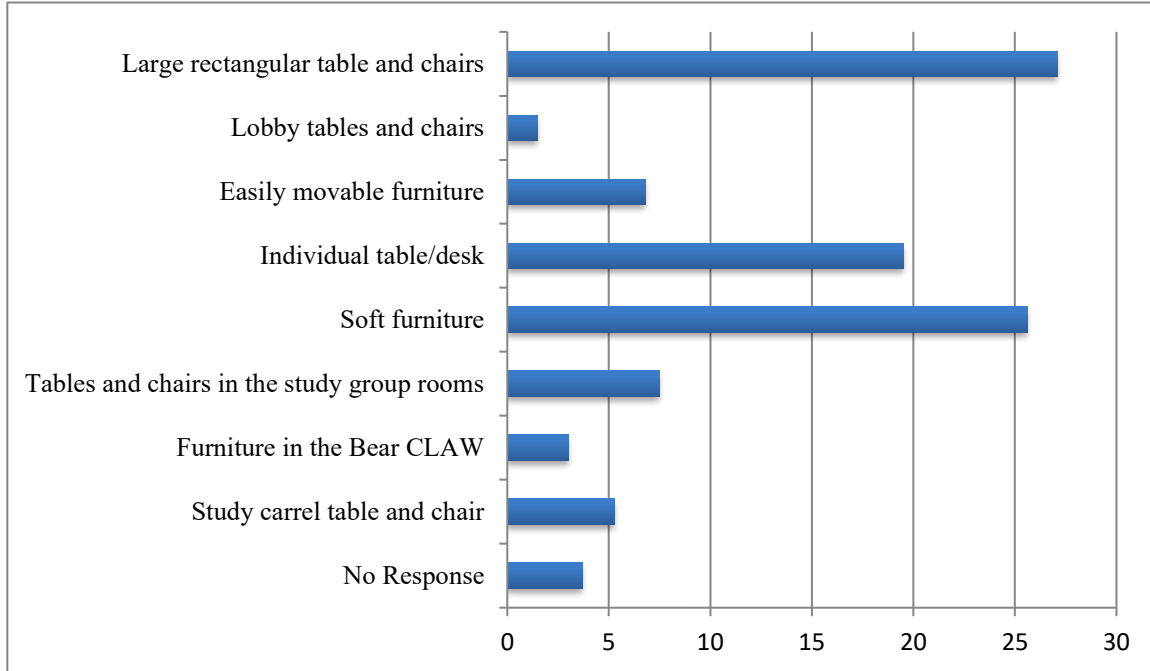
Of the 126 students who had the presentation, 81% said that it helped them complete the assignment, and 76% said that it made them more likely to use the Library again.

15. Do any of the following present barriers to your use of Meyer Library?



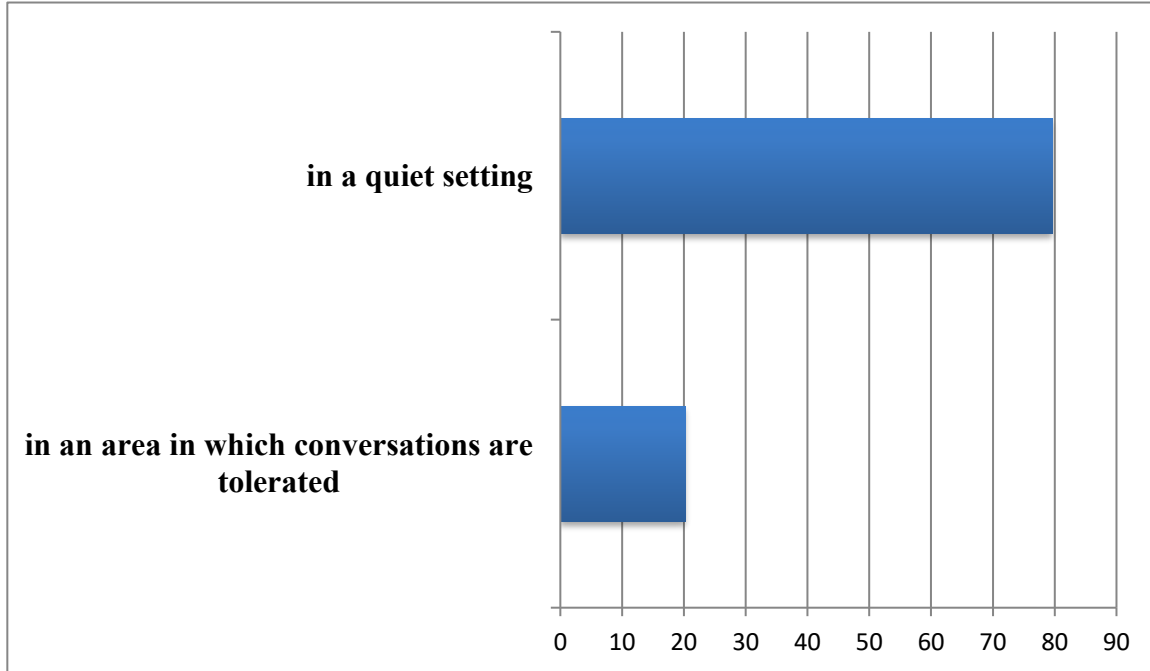
Most MSU students in this study did not feel that distance from dorm/home, hours of operation, physically bringing books or materials to and from the Library, time needed to locate materials, or availability of library materials were barriers to library use. (No Response = 2.3%)

16. When you are in Meyer Library for any length of time, what type of seating do you prefer?

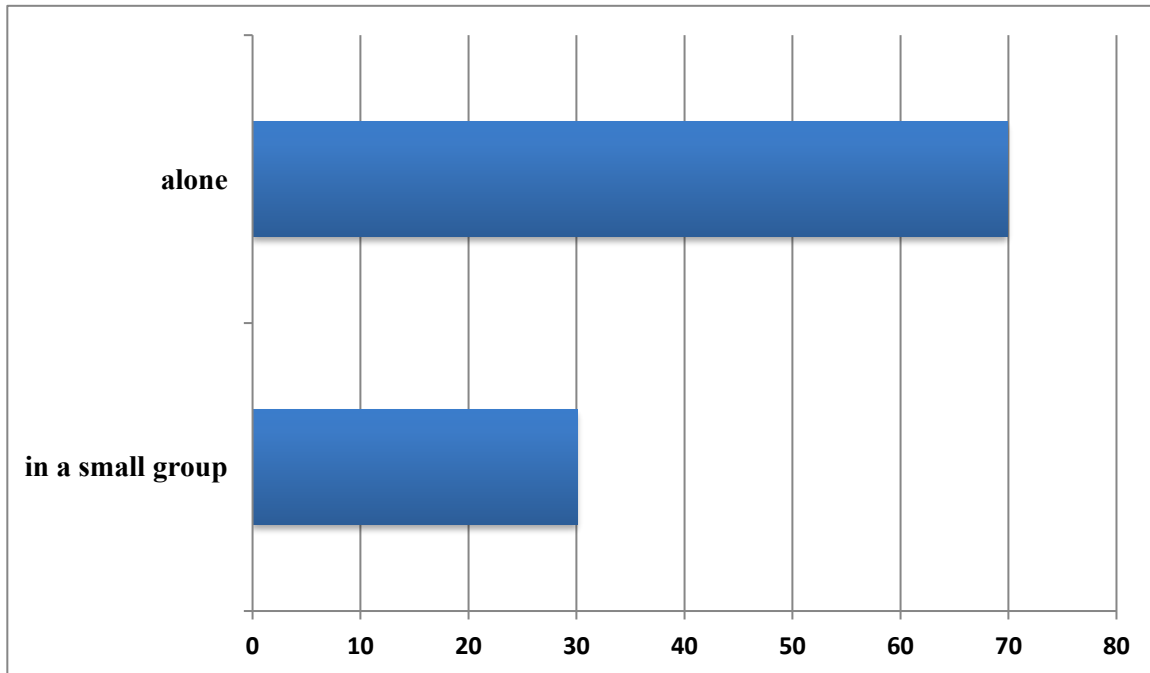


Student responses varied on this question. The largest percentages of students preferred a large rectangular table and chairs, soft furniture, or an individual table/desk.

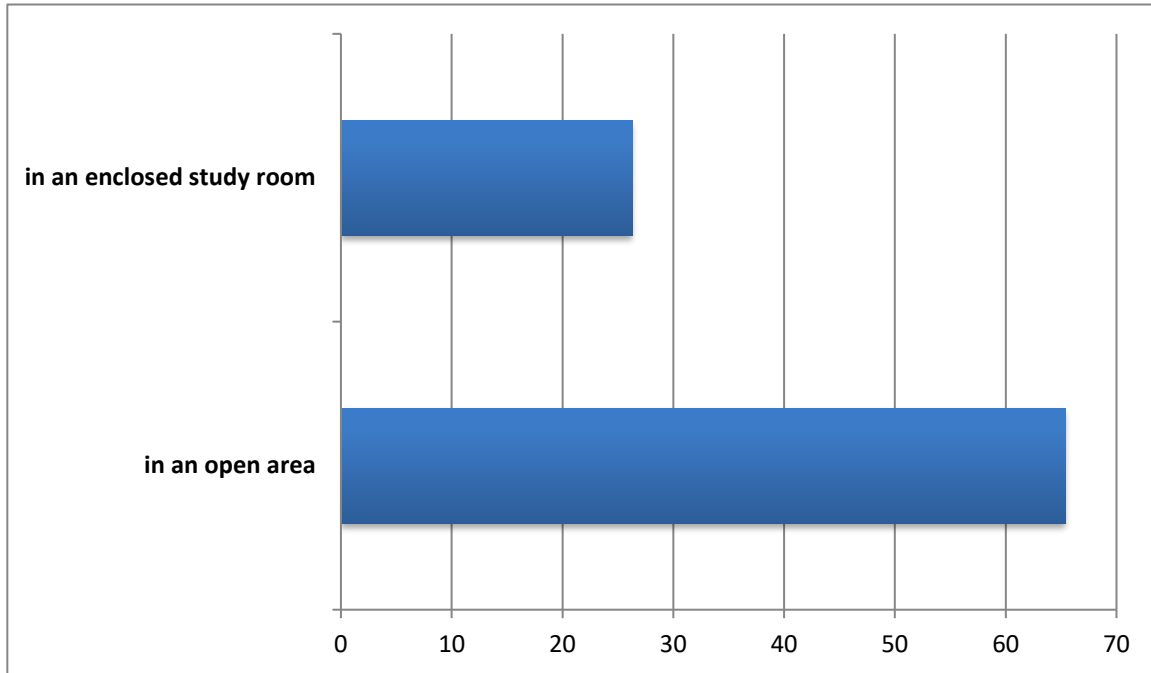
17. At Meyer Library, I prefer to study:



18. At Meyer Library, I prefer to study:

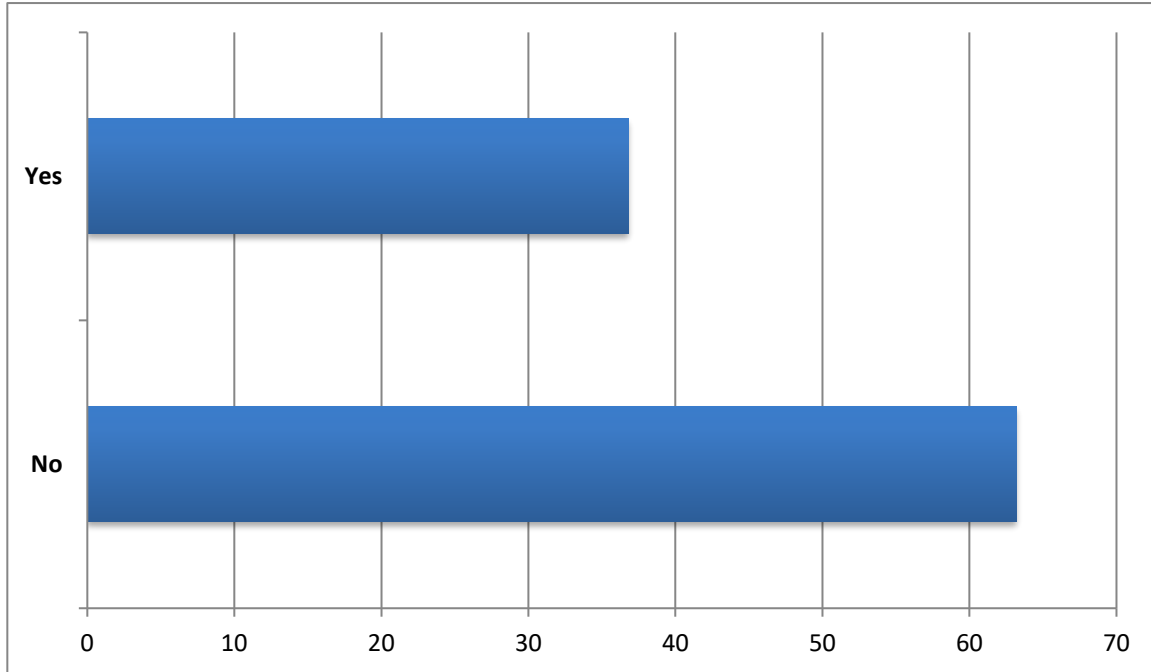


19. At Meyer Library, I prefer to study:



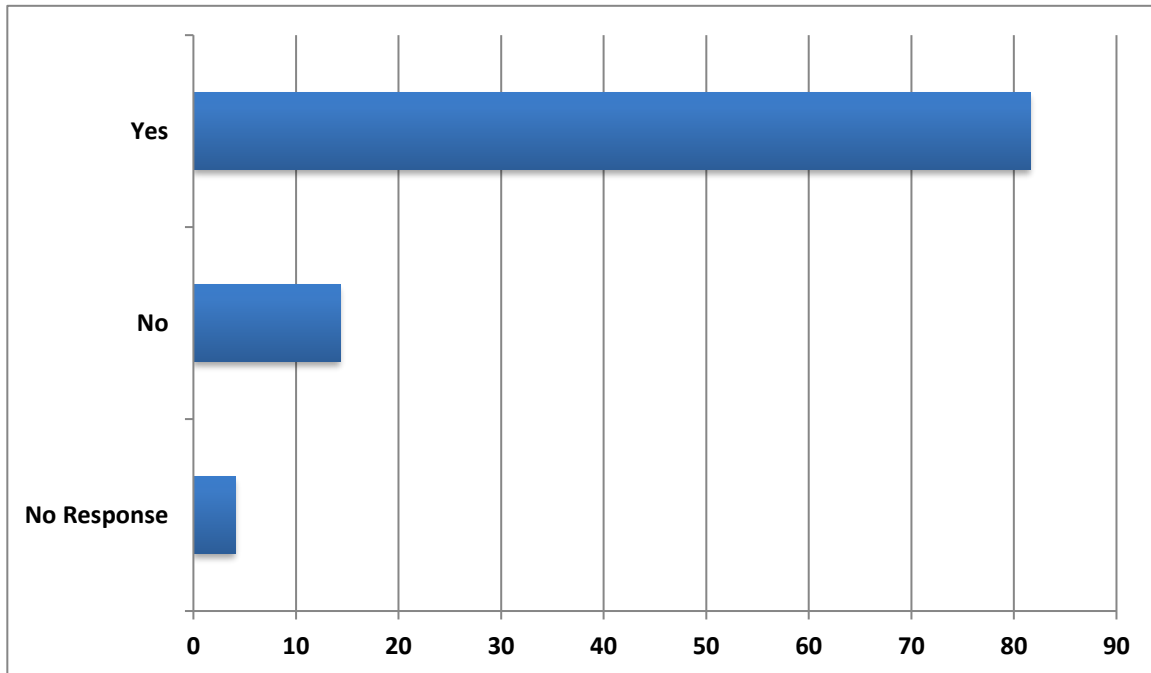
The student responses on Questions 17, 18, and 19 indicate that most students in this study preferred to study in a quiet setting, alone, and in an open area.

20. Have you ever looked for a group study room at the Library to work in?



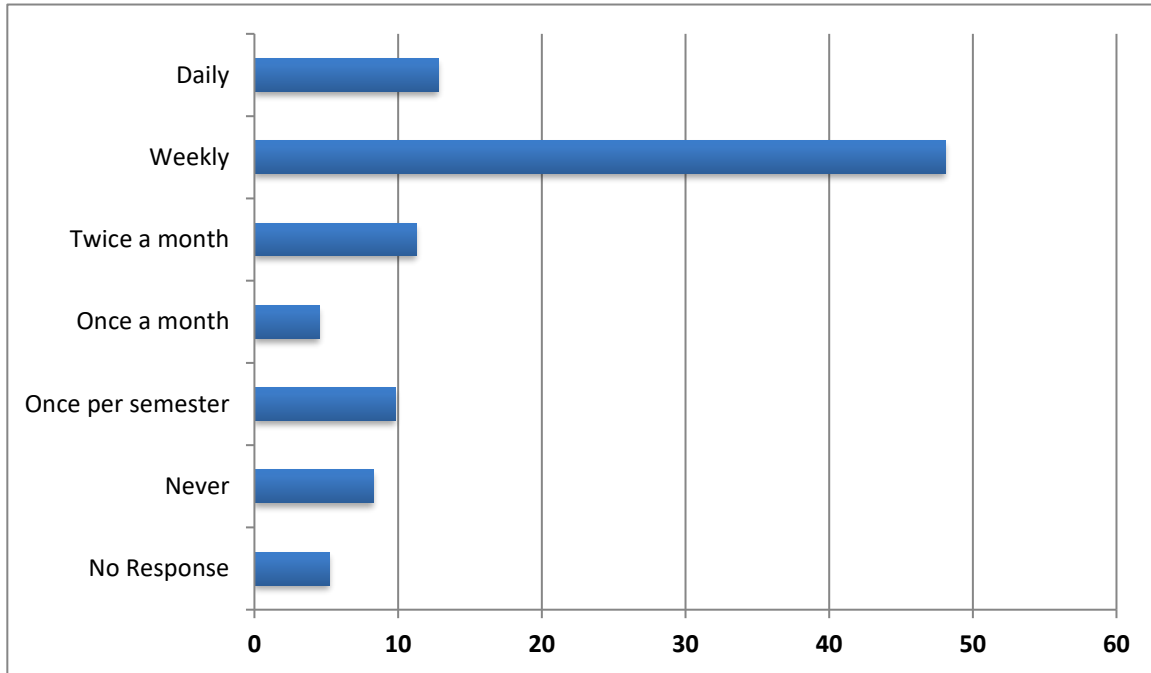
Most students had never looked for a group study room at the Library.

21. Have you ever had trouble finding an available room?



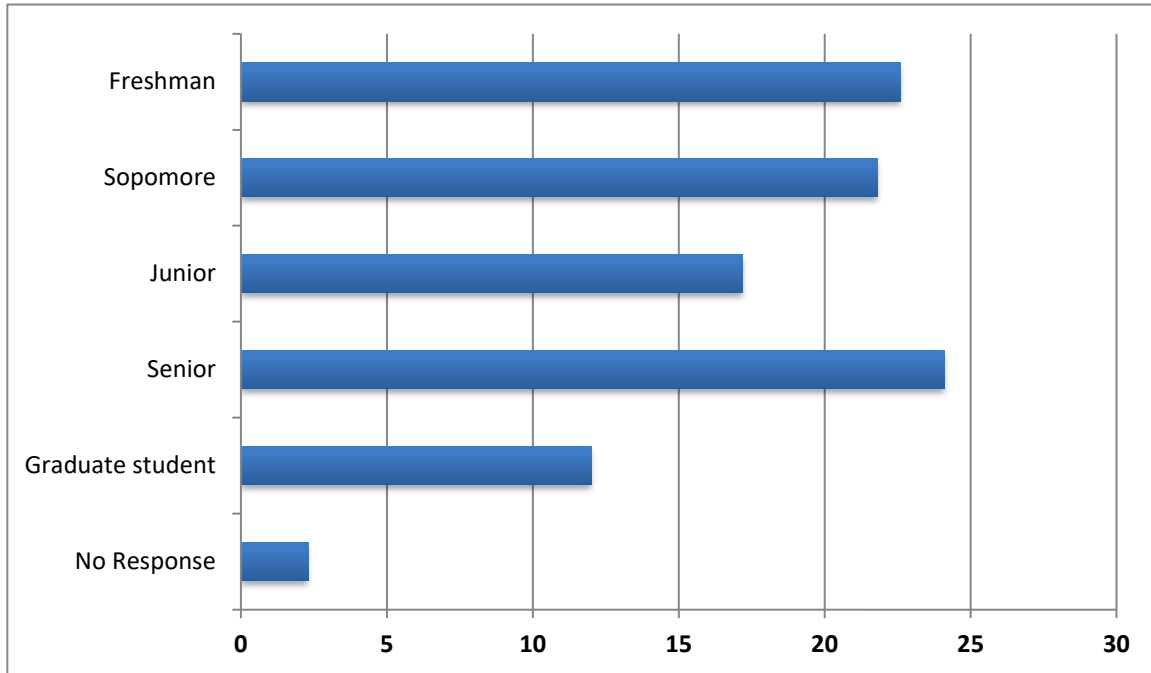
Of the 98 students who had looked for a group study room, 82% had trouble finding an available one. 17

22. How often do you visit Meyer Library?



The most common response by students on this question was that they visited Meyer Library on a weekly basis.

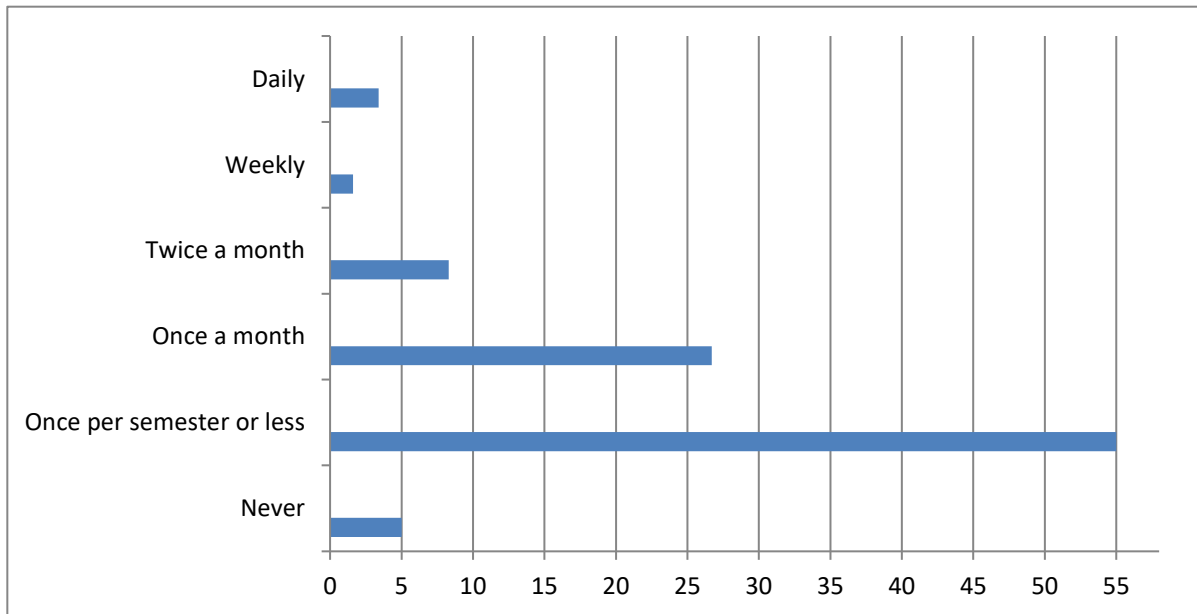
23. Are you a:



The sample of MSU students was equally distributed on the basis of class rank.

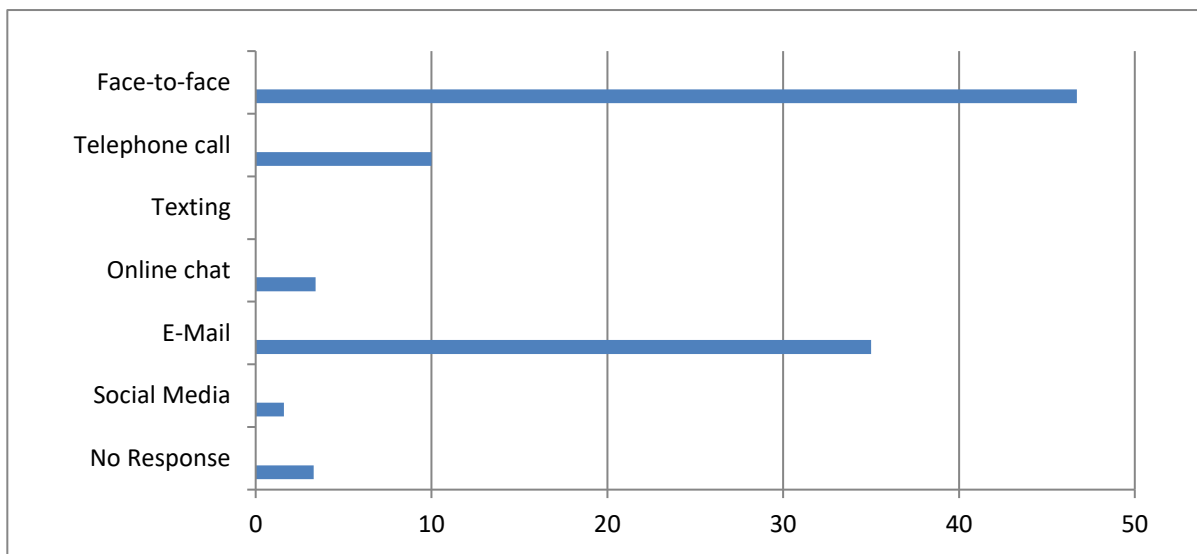
Faculty Responses to Survey Questions (in Percentages)

1. How often do you seek assistance from Library personnel?



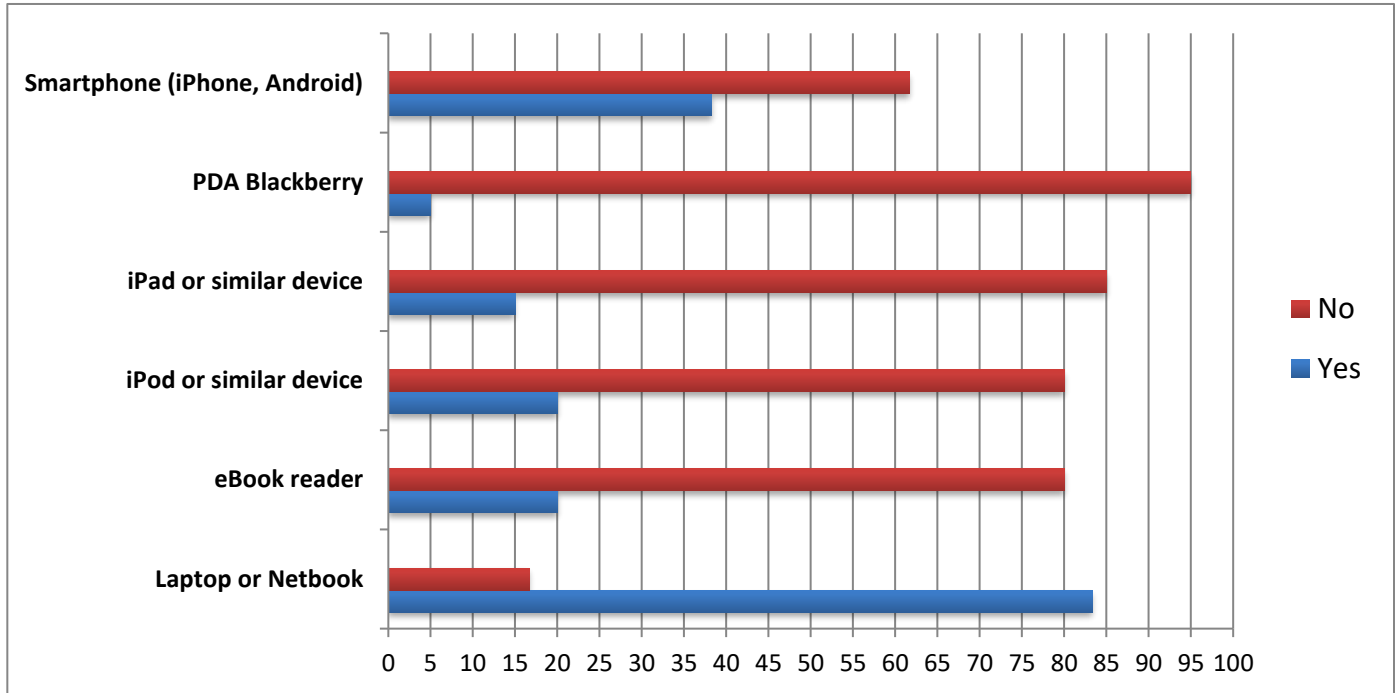
Most faculty responded that they seek assistance from library personnel “once per semester or less.”

2. Which method of communicating with library personnel would you prefer?



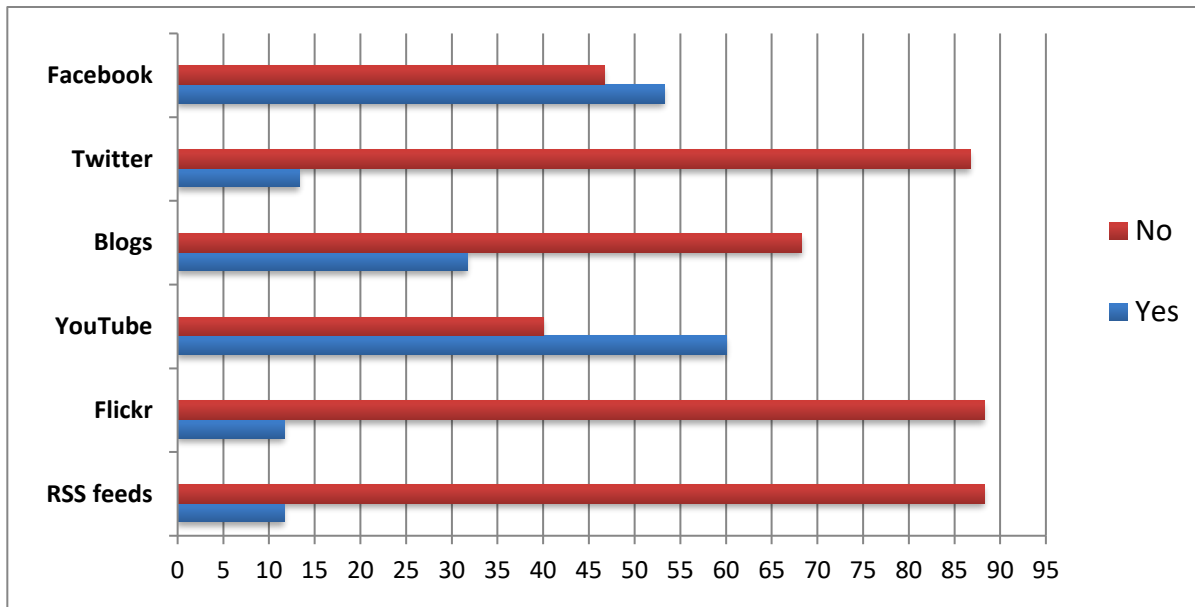
Most faculty members prefer to communicate with library personnel in person/face-to-face.

3. Do you own the following devices?



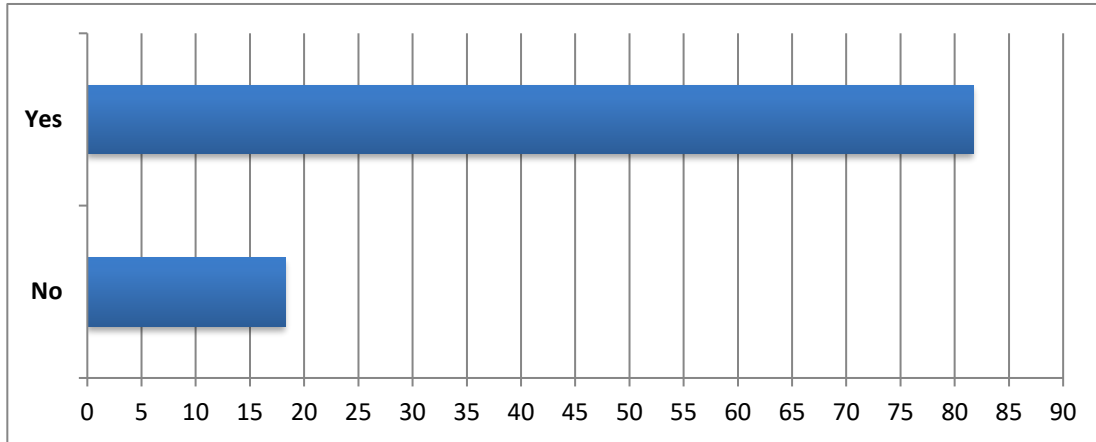
The only one of the listed devices owned by a majority of the faculty members is a laptop computer.

4. Do you use the following social media?



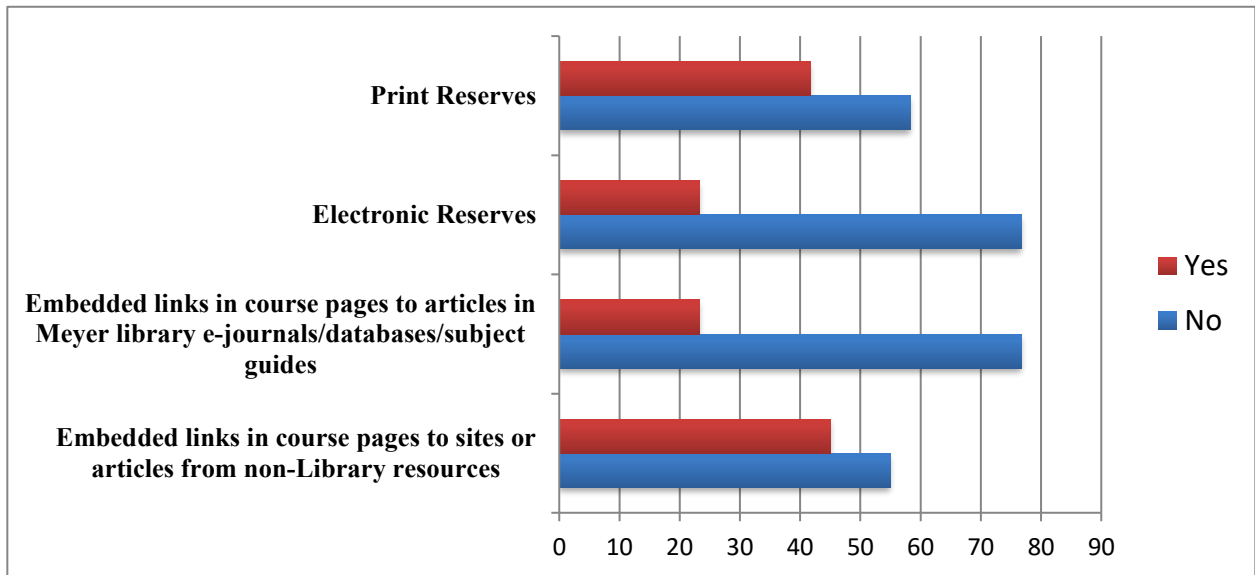
Most faculty members reported using Facebook and YouTube.

5. Do you utilize Blackboard in the courses you teach?



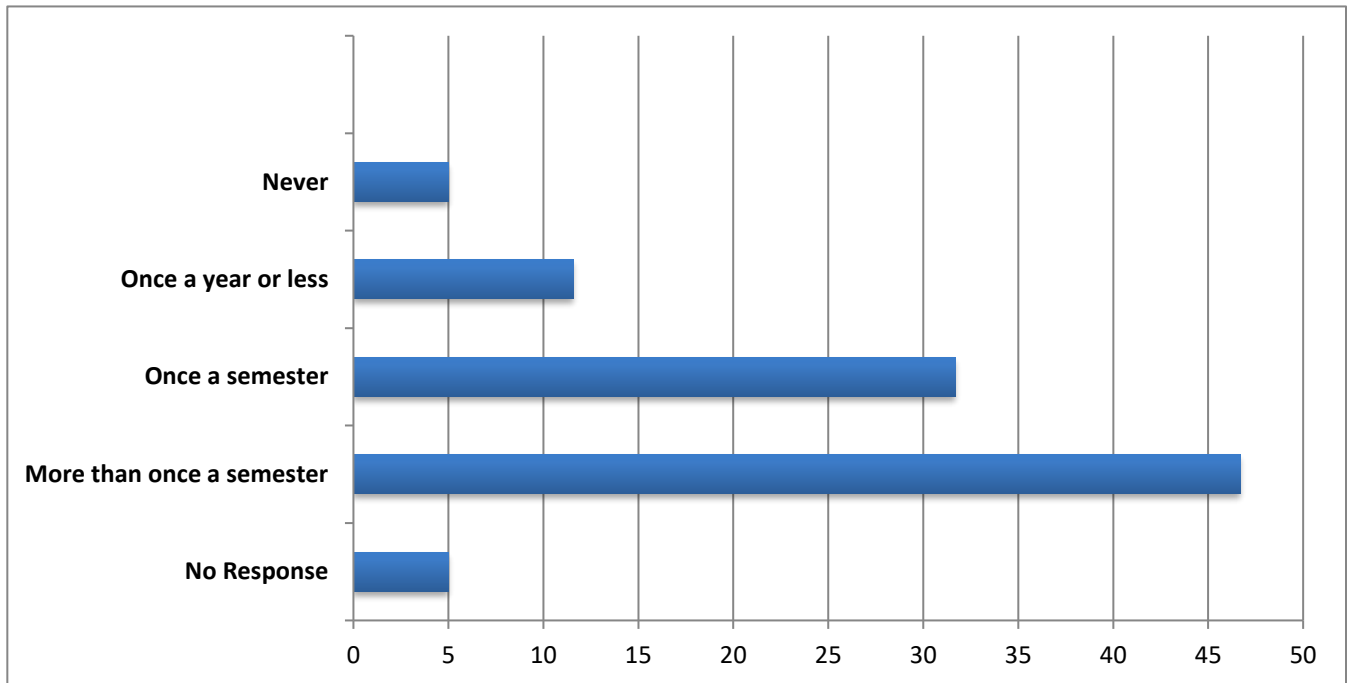
The vast majority of MSU faculty members in this study use Blackboard in their courses.

6. Have you used any of the following for the courses you teach?



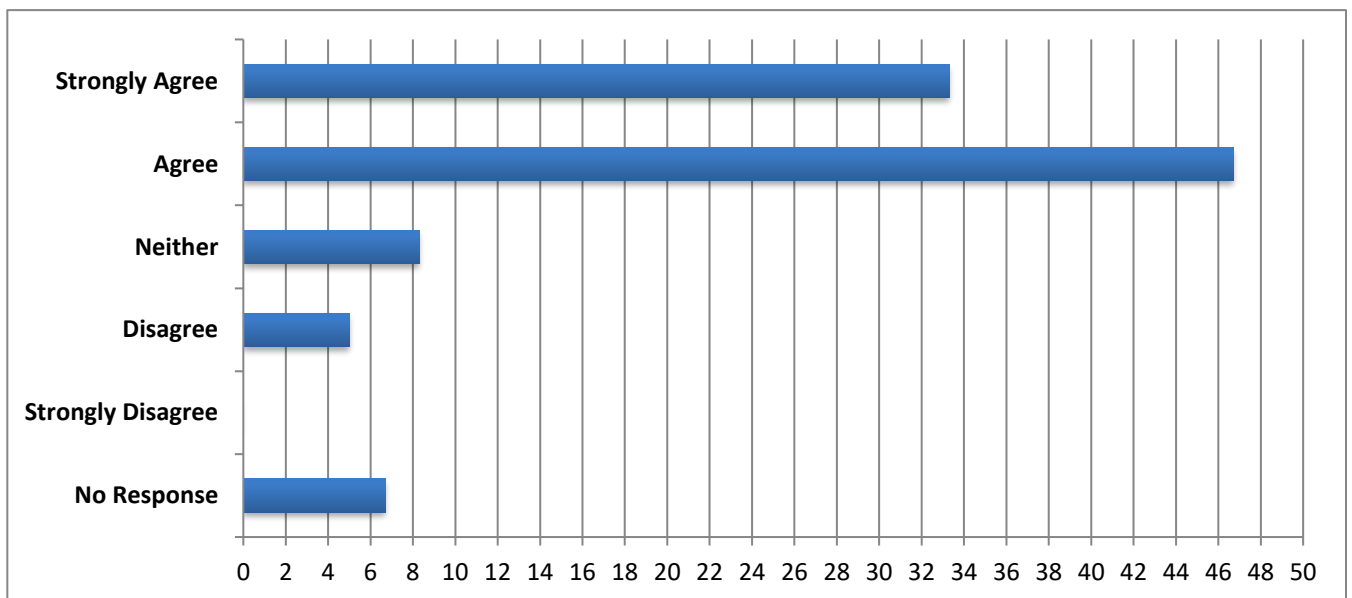
A small percentage of faculty members use the listed services in their courses.

7. How often do you give students assignments that require the use of library resources?



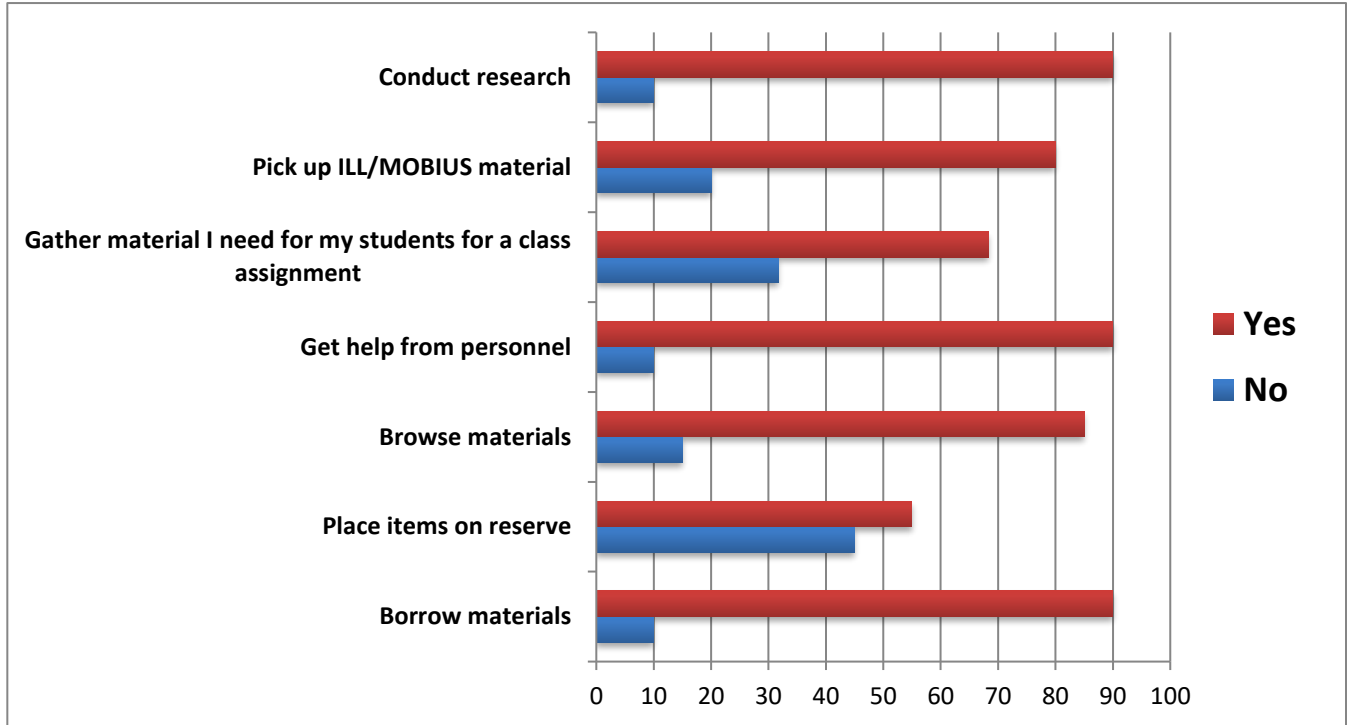
The largest percentage of faculty members said that they give their students an assignment that requires use of library resources “more than once a semester.”

8. Meyer Library resources adequately support the needs of the courses I teach.



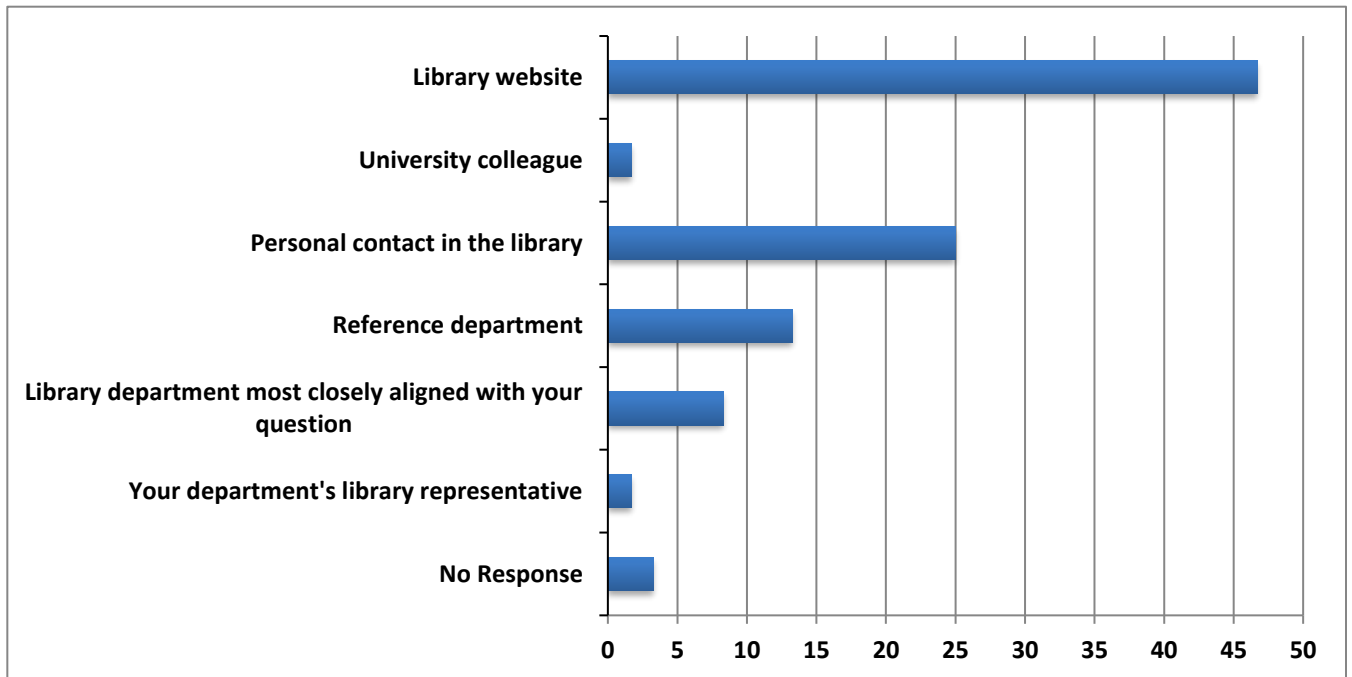
The vast majority of faculty in this student felt that Meyer Library resources adequately support the needs of their courses.

9. Have you used Meyer Library to?



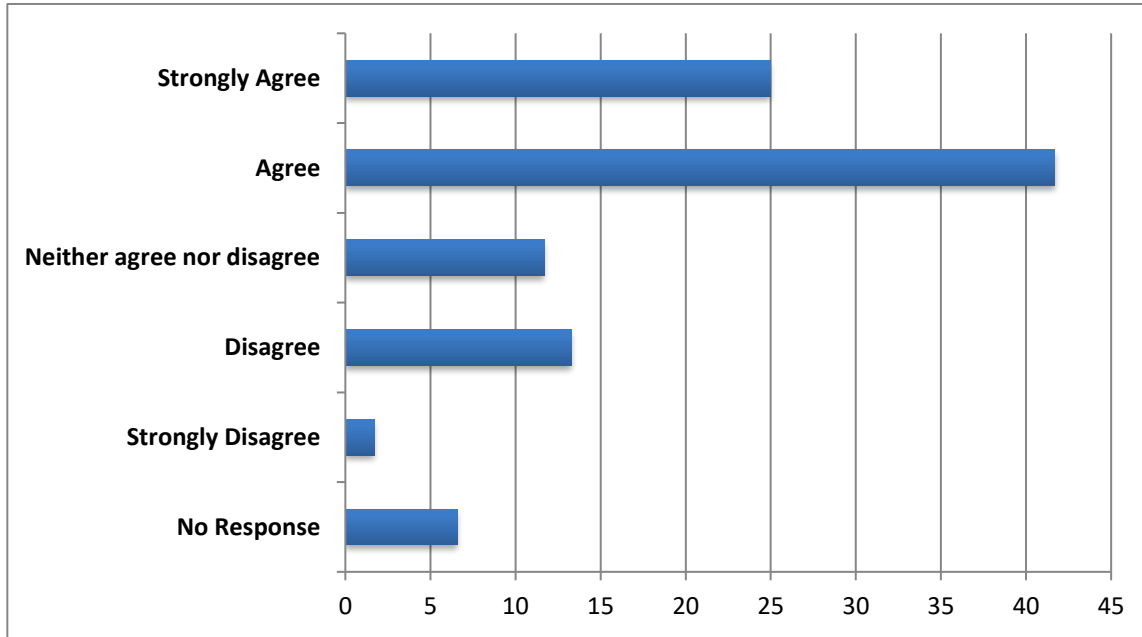
Most faculty members reported that they use the Library for all the listed services.

10. When you have a library question, what is your typical path to the answer?



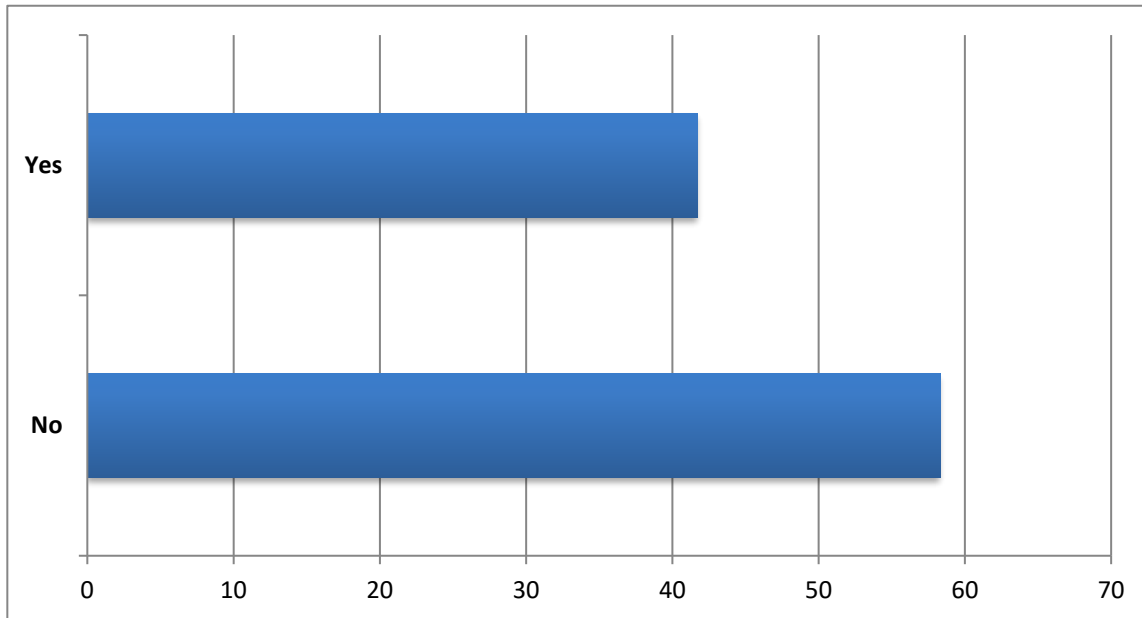
The most common response was to go to the Library website when they have a library question.

11. Meyer Library resources adequately support my research needs.



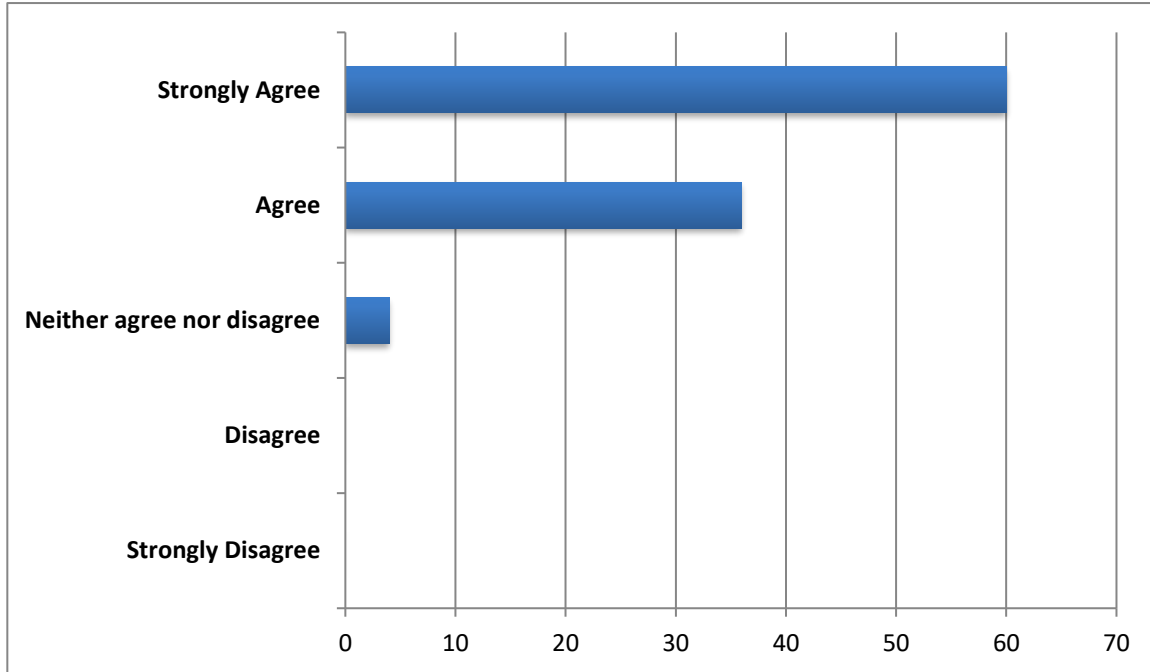
Most MSU faculty in this study felt that Meyer Library resources adequately support their research needs.

12. Have you ever arranged for a class session in which a librarian presented specific library information relevant to a course?



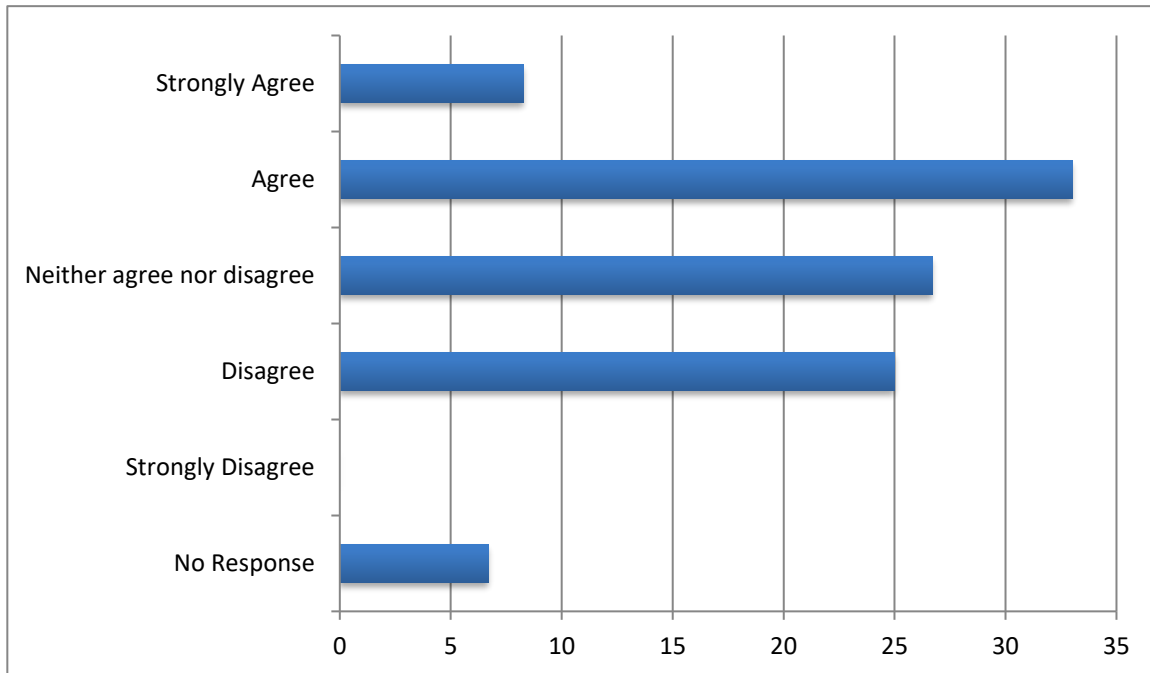
The majority of faculty had never had this presentation in their class.

13. The presentation by the librarian was effective in helping my students complete the assignment.



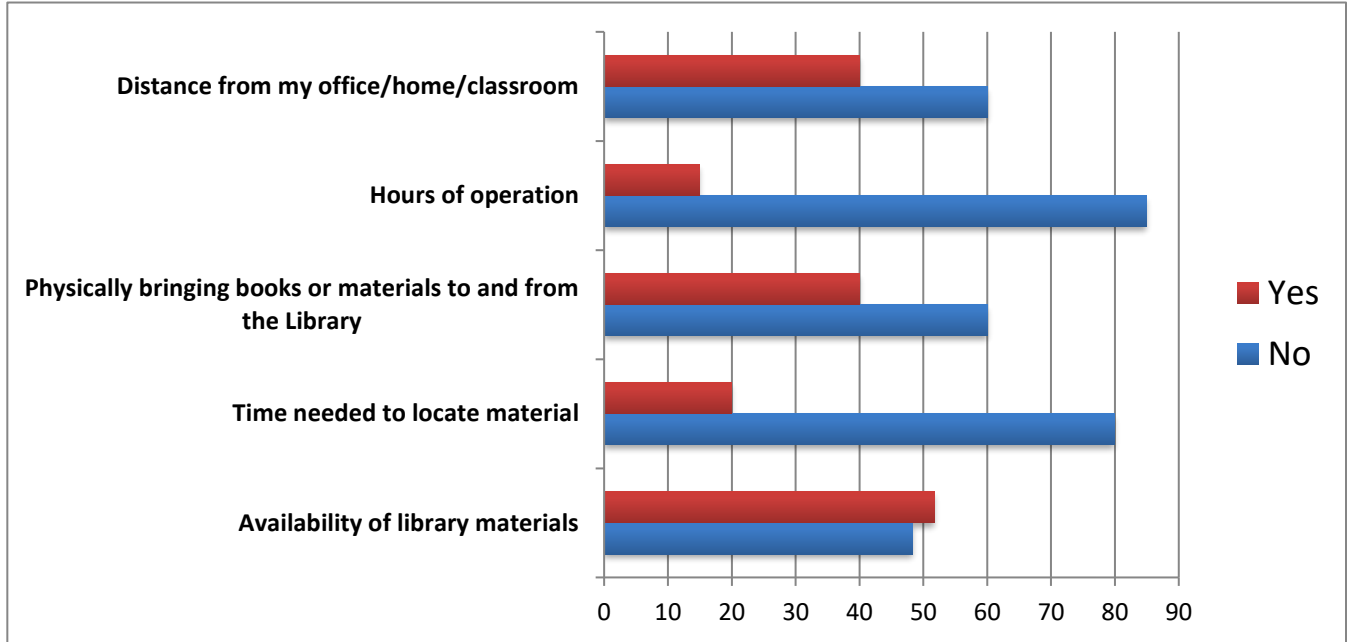
Of the 25 faculty members who had the presentation in their class, nearly all agreed that the presentation by the librarian was effective in helping students complete the assignment.

14. I am confident that my students can effectively utilize library resources.



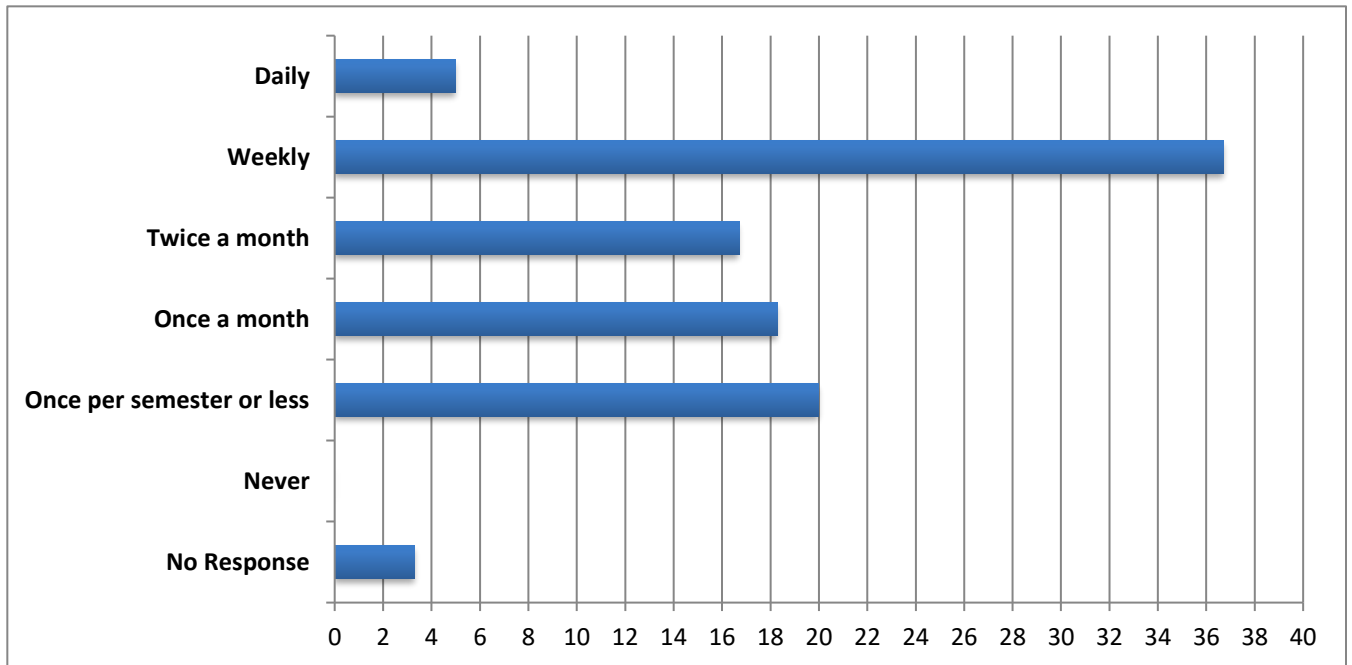
Many faculty were not confident that their students can effectively utilize library resources.

15. At times the following present barriers to my use of Meyer Library:



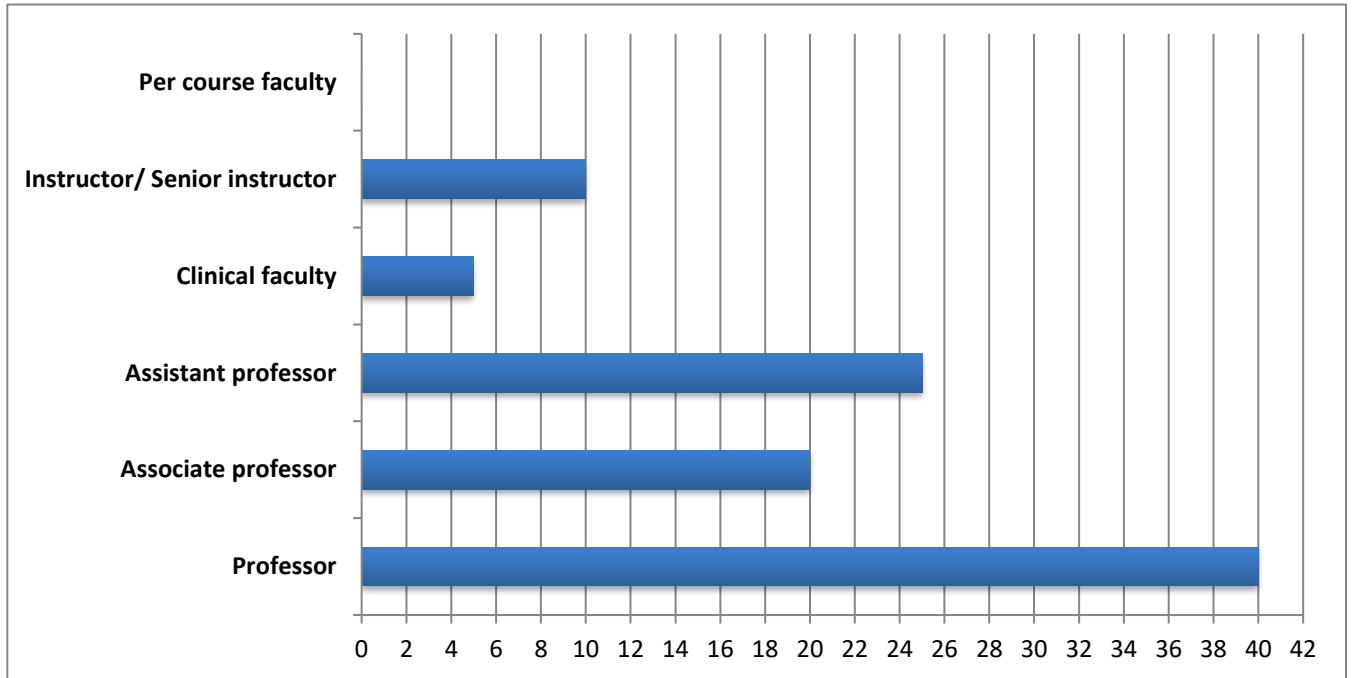
The only item that most faculty members felt was a barrier to their use of Meyer Library was the “availability of library materials.”

16. How often do you visit Meyer Library (physically or virtually)?



The most common faculty response was “weekly.”

17. Indicate the faculty status that best describes you.



This sample of MSU faculty members included all ranks except per course.