

Internationalization and the Canadian Academic Library: What Are We Offering?

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Introduction

Although the population of St. John's, Newfoundland, is largely homogenous - recent Census data reveal that its inhabitants are 98% English-speaking and visible minorities make up around 1% of the population - one can't help but notice that from behind the Information and Research Help desk at the Queen Elizabeth II Library (QEII) of Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), things look a lot more diverse than reflected in the general population (Statistics Canada, 2006, 2012). Despite the remoteness of the province and its small size (around half a million people call it home), what is happening on the MUN campus is part of a greater trend in academia affecting university campuses all over Canada and the United States, which is the rise of the international student. This research study was undertaken to examine the role of the library within the Canadian academic institutions these international students attend, and the services that are being offered to them. The main questions we sought to answer are: do academic libraries in Canada offer specialized services for international students? And, if so, what types of programs are being offered? This information will be useful for future program development at our institution, and other universities and colleges throughout Canada and the rest of the world.

Despite the topic first being introduced in the literature back in the 1980s (Goudy & Moushey, 1984; Kline & Rod, 1984), specialized library service for international students is a fairly new occurrence at MUN. The first orientation event, an informal "Coffee Club" session on the library, hosted by the International Student Advising office (ISA) and delivered by librarians, took place in 2010. Since that time, the library has continued to conduct outreach to international students through an information session held at the ISA and through course-integrated library instruction for classes such as English 1020: Writing for Second Language Students. In addition, the library has reached out to groups and organizations that work directly with international students such as the ISA, the English as a Second Language (ESL) program and other units that support internationalization, such as the Faculty of Education, which is developing a study within the

Teaching and Learning Framework (TLF) aimed at students who have been targeted based on cultural differences and second language challenges. Internationalization is defined as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2004, p.11). However, much of the outreach we do is based on our own personal research interests in internationalization and the library, and is not grounded in any formal identification, or needs assessment. We simply witnessed the changing demographic, and developed an informal program as the result.

The Rise of the International Student

The most recent data from the Institute of International Education (IIE), which collects and publishes data on international students in the United States through its Open Doors Report, reported that 819,644 international students enrolled in programs in the U.S. during the 2012/2013 academic year (IIE, 2012). While this number has increased dramatically over the past decade (586,323 students were recorded for 2002/2003), the percentage of international students as part of total student enrollment has increased slightly, from 3.5% in 2002/2003 to 3.9% in 2012/2013 (IIE, 2012). In Canada, the federal government has called for a doubling of the international student population, aiming for 450,000 international students by 2022 with the goals of creating new jobs, contributing to economic development and making Canada a more competitive society in the global market (CBC, 2014). In 2012, 265,377 international students studied in Canada, with the province of British Columbia hosting almost a quarter of those reported (CBC, 2014). When the 2012 figure is compared to Statistics Canada data from 1991, when less than 50,000 international students were attending Canadian institutions, it is clear there has been an exponential increase over the last two decades (Howard, 1995). But even in 1991, British Columbia enrollments were the highest in Canada.

On an institutional level, MUN has seen a large increase in the number of international students choosing to study in the eastern-most province. In 1991, 552 international students studied at Memorial (Howard, 1995). In 2013, nearly 1,900 full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate international students enrolled at MUN, around 10% of the total enrolment (MUN CIAP, 2013). The main countries of citizenship for international students at MUN mirror trends seen in the rest of Canada and the United States, with China dominating, and other Asian countries such as India, Bangladesh and South Korea accounting for over half of the total international student enrolment number (MUN CIAP, 2013). Representatives from MUN frequently travel around the world with the goal of recruiting international students, as explicitly stated in the university’s Strategic Plan (MUN, 2011). Also, exchange and partnership program agreements exist with different faculties, such as the Faculty of Business Administration, which has developed a number of relationships with primarily European and Asian universities to bring foreign students to MUN. However, the university, like the QEII, is still in the early stages of its internationalization efforts. For example, although it has been proposed, a formal university-wide international strategic plan still remains to be adopted (MUN, 2014).

The Role of the Library

It has been said that it is the responsibility of the whole university to support international students. This means that all units, including the library, need to consider the diverse backgrounds and cultural differences in educating students who have chosen to study in Canada. It is not solely the job of the international student office on campus. The QEII Library has identified several special-user groups, and actively conducts outreach and attempts to engage with them, as we recognize that the library environment can pose certain challenges that are not encountered by the mainstream student population. For example, many international students are not familiar with the concept of open stacks, having lived in countries that restrict access to their collections. In addition to international students, the library has identified Aboriginal students and students with disabilities as special user groups. The QEII has created LibGuides, and conducts separate orientations or tours for international and Aboriginal students. For students with disabilities, a separate Subcommittee on Library Services for Students with Disabilities exists, and includes representation from students and staff members from the campus centre for students with disabilities. However, there is more work to be done, which is how this study developed; the QEII hopes to get ideas and inspiration on how to best serve international students from surveying libraries across the country. Because the library tends to be the heart of the campus for all students, it is important to play a welcoming and inviting role in the lives of international students. At MUN, the QEII Library tends to be a home away from home for many international students, as the majority take their academics very seriously, and spend a lot of time studying here. In addition, the building that houses the international office on campus is located on the outskirts of campus and is small. Thus, international students tend to gravitate to the QEII, which is centrally located, and contains resources that they need to use like computer terminals with access to word processing software, and library tools such as article indexes.

Unique Needs of International Students

Although, as mentioned, specialized library services for international students at the QEII were born more out of visible shifts in student demographics vs. a more formal assessment of the library needs of this group, other libraries have conducted surveys of international students that confirm that specialized library information or orientation sessions are important and beneficial - both for students and for librarians who want a deeper understanding of the previous library experiences of this group. Jackson (2005) conducted a survey to assess the level of library and computer experience in international students at San Jose State University. Her findings revealed that although a high percentage of students were familiar with conducting library research online, services such as chat reference, ordering items not held in the library via interlibrary loan and research appointments with a reference librarian were not as well-known (Jackson, 2005). Wang and Frank (2002) also have noted that international students tend to underutilize the professional expertise of librarians when it comes to research or information needs. Thus, promotion of library services is an important part of information sessions at the QEII. One concept that has been central to the development of international student library outreach at the QEII is Constance Mellon's theory of "library anxiety" (1986). The belief is that if

library anxiety widely exists in the general student population, it is felt more acutely by international students who are grappling with language and cultural differences. A few studies have looked specifically at library anxiety in international students (Jian & Onwuegbuzie, 2001; Lu & Adkins, 2012). The 2012 study by Lu and Adkins found that affective barriers and barriers with staff to be the major sources of library anxiety in international graduate students. These barriers included: not finding study space, confusion over the layout of the library and resources available and experiencing a lack of understanding and help from staff and librarians (Lu & Adkins, 2012, p. 3).

One difficulty in needs assessment is that it is very difficult to generalize for the group, as each international student is unique and students from diverse countries from all around the world are lumped together under the umbrella of *international students*. Although France is listed as one of the top countries represented by country of origin in Canada, the majority of these students likely end up studying in Quebec, as MUN enrolls few students from this region (Choudaha & Owen, 2014). Also, the University of British Columbia reported that international students from the United States had the second highest enrolment (China is first) (UBC, 2013). However, MUN enrolls few students from the United States compared to the rest of the world (MUN CIAP, 2013). Just as the countries of citizenship for international students vary from one institution to another, the international students themselves are very diverse and have unique library experiences and needs.

Literature Review

A review of the literature has identified several key areas in which academic libraries can help to ensure that international students get the most out of their library experience. These include: outreach; collaborations and partnerships with campus organizations; and specialized resources and services, including library instruction. It is also fairly well documented in the literature that in order for the needs of international students to be adequately met at American and Canadian academic libraries, proper staff training is essential. It is evident as well that studies focusing on international students at Canadian institutions are lacking (Morrissey & Given, 2006).

Outreach

The literature suggests that it is not enough for libraries to simply provide targeted and useful resources and services for international students. It is also essential for libraries to adequately market themselves so that international students are aware, and able to take advantage, of their offerings. Ishimura, Howard, and Moukdad (2007) note that library outreach to international students is integral to improving their information literacy skills and suggest that libraries have a designated librarian(s) for international students. Jackson (2005) also suggests that academic libraries assign a librarian to international student relations, with Jackson further noting that this librarian should also be responsible for bringing international students into the library “as it is important for them to see the physical space” (p.206). Moeckel and Presnell (1995) stress that libraries should “consider assigning a librarian to each student to meet at least once a semester or designating one librarian to work with the international students” (p. 316). Other forms of

outreach include: highlighting existing international sources in library collections (e.g., recreational reading materials in various languages); providing a welcome to the library sign that is presented in a number of foreign languages; creating displays in the library that relate to campus wide international student activities; and displaying a large map of the world highlighting international students' countries of origin (Bordonaro, 2006).

Mundava and Gray (2008) note that outreach to international students at the University of Tennessee is carried out virtually as well as physically, and the authors suggest that libraries extend services to where their students tend to spend most of their time (such as international student centres and student housing). The Golf Range Apartment Outreach program is a pilot service that Mundava and Gray (2008) discuss that was designed to meet students (mostly senior and non-traditional students, including a large population of international students) in their residences, while the virtual outreach program includes diversity resource guides created by the Diversity Outreach Subcommittee. Both Morrissey and Given (2006) and Zhang (2006) suggest that librarians reach out to faculty members for assistance in designing library instruction. Morrissey and Given (2006) recommend that getting in contact with professors to arrange instructional sessions is a great idea for librarians because instructors can help to ensure that library instruction sessions are designed to best meet student needs. Professors can provide information regarding course objectives and assignments, as well as information about international students' skill levels (Morrissey & Given, 2006).

Collaboration

It is also clearly communicated in the literature that in order for libraries to be effective in offering services and resources to international students, it is essential that they collaborate with organizations and offices on campus. This type of campus-wide collaboration can be helpful both in designing and in promoting library services and resources for international students. Many studies concerning international students and academic libraries touch on the value of collaborating and forming partnerships with groups, offices, and organizations on campus that have an interest in international students. These include: ESL programs (Bordonaro, 2006; Jackson, 2005; Ishimura, Howard, & Moukdad, 2007); the international education office (Kline & Rod, 1984); international cultural services programs (Chau, 2002); international student services centres (Downing & Klein, 2001); and writing centres (Mundava & Gray, 2008). Zhang (2006) also suggests that libraries partner with departments and offices on campus such as: "the Department of Admissions, the English Language Centre, and the International Student Services office" (p. 172). Other studies, like that of Love and Edwards (2009), focus solely on collaboration as an important aspect of assisting international students in their use of academic libraries. Love and Edwards (2009) note that it has become fairly common for academic libraries to create these partnerships with groups such as career centres, writing centres, cultural centres, fraternities, sororities, and other student organizations.

Specialized Resources and Services

A review of the literature establishes the fact that numerous resources and services are offered to international students to help ease their transition when confronted with a new academic library. There is, however, a lack of such studies concerning Canadian academic institutions. Resources and services for international students (apart from those surrounding library instruction) tend to consist of either targeted print and/or virtual resources or current library holdings/collection development possibilities.

Several studies highlight the importance of print resources that are targeted towards international students. Moeckel and Presnell's (1995) study of academic institutions in Ohio consisted of a survey being mailed out to the library directors of each one. Ultimately, the authors suggest a five part model of library service for international students. This model not only includes a focus on instruction, promotion/outreach, staff development, and purchasing, but also on the need for written resources for this target group. The written program suggested by Moeckel and Presnell identifies several examples of written resources that could be made available to international students. These include: a glossary; a list of newspapers held by the institution (specifically those written in foreign languages); a list of currently held periodicals; explanations of library services; and specialized bibliographies. Liu and Winn (2009) suggest that libraries provide a pamphlet featuring a glossary of library jargon in English with Chinese translations (which can be extrapolated to include other international student populations depending on the institution). In addition, Jackson (2005) suggests that libraries include a print handout introducing the library at general student orientation, while Chau (2002) proposes a multilingual two page handout that identifies important library services and resources. This project, entitled the *Helping Hands Project*, translated the two page document into fourteen different languages in an effort to meet the needs of a diverse international student population. Finally, Zhang (2006) recommends that libraries offer translated handouts for international students that include glossaries of common library terminology, floor maps, and general instructions on library use.

In terms of virtual services, Downing and Klein (2001) note that The William and Anita Newman Library of Baruch College, City University of New York, offers a multilingual, self-paced tour that would be provided in an international student's native language and be available whenever needed, including prior to arrival on campus. This virtual tour consists of a library welcome, a tour (that introduces key features of the library), and interactive floor plans. Both Jackson (2005) and Mundava and Gray (2008) also advocate for highlighting a library's online resources. Jackson (2005) suggests providing demonstrations and tours of the library's online resources and website, while Mundava and Gray (2008) suggest offering online tutorials or websites with simplified language. Finally, Knight, Hight, and Polfer (2010) highlight webpages for international students that were being developed at both California State University (CSU), Stanislaus and the University of the Pacific. CSU's webpage was being created in order to provide access to research material, links to tutorials explaining research expectations at the university, and resources on copyright and plagiarism. The webpage at the University of the Pacific included information about library liaisons, links to language glossaries and definitions,

an explanation of the library's system for resource classification (LC), as well as descriptions of relevant library resources. In addition to print and virtual resources that are targeted towards international students, it has also been suggested that libraries purchase materials in the languages of its international students in an effort to engage with them. Moeckel and Presnell (1995) advocate for the purchasing of materials in foreign languages, but acknowledge that this may not be possible and is dependent upon the library's budget. They specifically suggest that libraries consider purchasing the following: newspapers; periodicals; dictionaries; specific instructional tools; and extracurricular materials in languages that serve the international students at a particular institution. Knight, Hight, and Polfer (2006) specifically highlight Soka University of America's efforts to provide materials in languages other than English (at the request of the students). They have already purchased Dialog's World News Connection and plan to purchase paperbacks in various languages as well.

Studies Focusing Specifically on Library Instruction

The literature on academic library instruction (LI) for international students highlights two seminal works, those by Goudy and Moushey (1984) and Kline and Rod (1984). Both studies survey a large selection of post-secondary academic institutions in the United States to determine offerings for international students. Goudy and Moushey's (1984) study was based on the results of a survey that had been distributed to the directors of forty-four academic libraries in the United States, while Kline and Rod's (1984) study surveyed fifty-four U.S. colleges and universities. These two studies are broad in scope, while the majority of the recent literature in this area seems to focus on a small number of institutions (between one and three). The more recent studies covering this topic focus on the types of LI being offered/suggested at specific institutions (e.g., formal LI, non-credit courses, etc.) as well as the content of these offerings.

Goudy and Moushey's (1984) study reveals statistics concerning American academic library offerings for International students. The authors, for example, asked library directors whether they believed foreign students having any degree of difficulty using the library would find targeted LI programs valuable. Twenty-nine of the thirty-one library directors who responded indicated that they would find this type of program helpful. In terms of types of LI offered, twenty-four libraries confirmed that they did offer some type of specific library instruction for international students, with eighteen of these occurring on an as requested basis (on the part of a teaching faculty member). Based on survey results, the content of the sessions typically consisted of either a tour of the physical library or a bibliographic instruction session. A number of other options for types, and content, of library instruction (in addition to traditional class-based) were suggested or provided, including: self-instructional materials; one-on-one instruction when requested; a non-credit course in using the library; and library instruction for graduate students specific to their field of study. It should also be noted that one respondent raised the notion that perhaps all foreign students should not be grouped together for library instruction as students' challenges and needs will vary depending on their background and place of origin. It is important to emphasize that Goudy and Moushey (1984) assert that library

instruction for international/foreign students varies across the United States, with no prevailing trends or themes visible.

Results from Kline and Rod's (1984) survey revealed that library instruction programs for international students were lacking, with only fifty-six percent of libraries offering specialized instruction for these students. The survey revealed that there was no separate orientation program for foreign students at twenty-four libraries. Of the thirty libraries that did provide a separate library instruction program, "ten were through English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, two excluded undergraduates, and three were by request only" (p. 212), twenty-five were provided by librarians, and twenty percent included an evaluation of the program. Results of the survey touched on session length, type, and content, as well as when the sessions should be offered. The length of the library instruction programs varied between fifteen minutes and three hours, with approximately half lasting one hour. The type and content of the sessions varied, but included: tours; instruction on finding books and articles; indexing services; and examination of reference tools. Although some literature suggests that library instruction for international students be delayed due to the stress of the first few weeks at a new academic institution, Kline and Rod disagree, stating that the sooner students are introduced to the library by a librarian, the better able they will be to meet their academic goals. The authors also suggest a number of additional areas in which academic libraries can better assist international students: providing self-guided tours, video-tape presentations and slideshows.

More recent studies examining library instruction for international students center around types of library instruction sessions as well as the content covered during these sessions. Moeckel and Presnell (1995) mention a number of types of LI sessions, including: tours, one time instruction sessions, workshops, and credit courses. The authors note that the size of the international student population at an institution will likely affect the type of library instruction that is offered them. For institutions with a small international student population, the authors recommend that students be served individually as needed, as opposed to special tours or LI classes. The authors make a number of additional recommendations to aid in these types of LI sessions: including one or more senior international students, who are familiar with the library; point-of-use providing instruction that stresses practical aspects of using the library; including students' families in tours and sessions; and incorporating hands-on exercises whenever possible. Providing hands-on opportunities for this target group is also encouraged by Morrissey and Given (2006) and Mundava and Gray (2008).

A number of suggestions for content coverage are presented in the literature. Several studies recognize that international students have difficulties when faced with academic library terminology and jargon. It is suggested that introductions and explanations of these terms be included in LI sessions. Chen and Brown (2012) recommend including the terms Boolean operators, call numbers, fair use, plagiarism, and citation styles. Ishimura, Howard, and Moukdad (2007) make similar suggestions, including not only Boolean operators, but also truncation, phrase searching, search techniques, and the differences between controlled vocabulary and natural language. Morrissey and Given (2006) suggest that LI for international students feature examination of efficient and effective searching techniques as well as

discussions on plagiarism, copyright, and citation strategies. Mundava and Gray (2008) also suggest covering library terminology in LI sessions, as well as explanations of library services, academic honesty, and avoiding plagiarism. Plagiarism and citation issues seem to receive special attention in discussions surrounding LI content for international students in the library literature. Numerous studies mention the importance of these concepts in their treatment of library resources and services for international students. Liu and Winn (2009), for example, note that international students tend to be unaware of the legal and ethical issues that come with information use. A few studies, such as the one done by Chen and Ullen (2011), specifically focus on plagiarism and citation practices. Chen and Ullen discuss a workshop for international students that was designed at the University of Albany and focused specifically on the research process and plagiarism. The research process section focused on formulating research questions and locating and evaluating sources, while the plagiarism section covered acknowledging sources, quoting, paraphrasing, citation styles, and tips on avoiding plagiarism.

Additional recommendations for LI content include offering library instruction and workshops in the students' native languages, if possible (Mundava & Gray, 2008) and providing library instruction programs that are tailored to students' majors or specific fields of study (Jackson, 2005). Chen and Brown (2012) suggest detailed instruction in the use of the library's homepage in either a face-to-face or virtual format. Morrissey and Given (2006) suggest that librarians make use of both Google and Google Scholar in their LI sessions due to the need to address tools that students are clearly already using. Exploring these tools will help students with effective search techniques and skills as well as with the evaluation of websites and web resources - all of which can be applied to other types of library research.

The studies done by Morrissey and Given (2006) and Ishimura, Howard and Moukdad (2007) are examples of Canadian studies that discuss academic library services for International students - in Alberta and Halifax, respectively. However, Canadian studies are certainly lacking in the literature. Howard's (1995) master's thesis attempts to address this gap. Howard examined the then current state of orientation programs for international students at Canadian academic libraries. She found that the leading types of library instruction offered to International students included: tours; lectures; individualized instruction; hands-on experience with using library materials; seminars; computer assisted instruction; and course related instruction. In terms of content, Howard (1995) found that general library use; online public access catalogues (OPACs); periodical literature; indexes and abstracts; print reference materials; classification; and electronic reference tools were prominent.

Staff Training

Many studies, both current and retrospective, suggest that library staff need to be properly trained and educated in order to provide the best possible library experience for international students. Jackson (2005) notes that a professional development seminar for library staff will help to ensure positive and beneficial communication with students from varying language and cultural backgrounds, "through increasing awareness of body language, eye contact, personal space, cultural customs of other countries and teaching methods" (p. 207). Moeckel and

Presnell (1995) recognize that few librarians have formal training in assisting international patrons and their program advocates for staff training and development via readings and workshops in order to help eliminate cultural barriers. Zhang (2006) also suggests that it would be beneficial if libraries provided cultural awareness and sensitivity training.

The Survey: Methodology and Findings

The survey was sent out electronically on provincial and regional listservs across Canada during the spring and summer of 2013, in both English and French. There were a total of thirty-three responses, with seventeen coming from university libraries in Western Canada, eleven from Central Canada, and five from the Atlantic. The survey asked ten questions, about the percentages of international students at the institution and the home countries that they represented, what kinds of library information sessions and activities were offered by each library, what other campus organizations libraries were partnered with, and what services, in languages other than English or French, were offered by the library. The intent was to take as national a snapshot as possible of library services for international students.

Defining “International Students”

According to the survey results, the definition of “international student” varied slightly from campus to campus. Generally, “international students” were defined as distinct from language students who were enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) or Français Langue Seconde (FLS) programmes. At twenty-one of the institutions surveyed, international students were enrolled as regular academic students, while ESL or FLS students were on campus to learn English or French. Many of these language students were preparing for University entrance, but were not yet classified as “regular students”. International students on the other hand were classified as regular students because they were required to pass English testing before they could enroll in university.

In seven instances, however, the distinct natures of the two groups was blurred to some extent. On these campuses, the majority of foreign students were enrolled in language programmes, and the answers to the survey reflected an assumption that the term “international students” most likely referred to ESL students. On other campuses, language students could take regular classes at the same time they were enrolled in an ESL programme, so the term “international students” was not always applied strictly to regular students from outside of Canada. Another related issue concerned the status of foreign born naturalized Canadians. This group was not usually included with the “international” grouping of students. It was felt that some of these students could benefit from library instruction designed for international and ESL students, and yet they were not included in either of those groups. It was suggested that greater awareness of and outreach to this group could lead to greater inclusion in library instruction sessions.

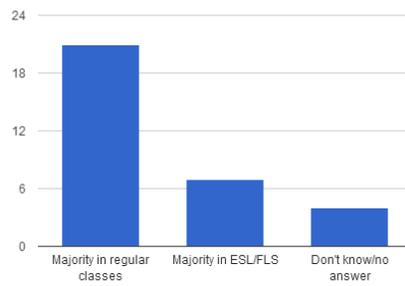


Chart 1. Are the majority of international students enrolled in regular classes or are they language students? (n=33)

Percentages of International Students on Canadian Campuses

The numbers of international students on campuses varied considerably from campus to campus. The majority of the institutions surveyed had less than ten percent international student enrollment. Four institutions reported they had international student enrollment of between ten and fifteen percent, and two reported between fifteen and twenty percent. Nine respondents did not know what percentage of their enrollment was international.

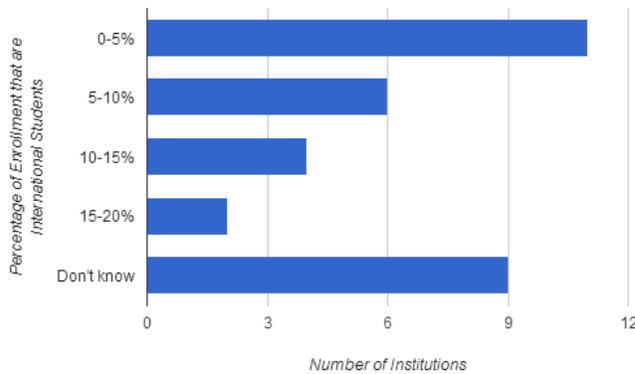


Chart 2. Percent of overall enrollment that are International Students

Countries Represented on Canadian Campuses

Canadian universities attracted students from every continent in the world, in some cases counting almost eighty countries represented on their campuses. Most estimated that international students from Asian countries were the most common international students. One library reported that seventy-nine percent of their international students came from Asian nations, followed by eight percent from Europe, six percent from Africa, and six percent from the US, South America and the Caribbean. Every institution surveyed drew students from China, and many from other Asian nations such as Korea and Japan. India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh were also well represented, as was Saudi Arabia, and other nations in the Middle East. One

librarian commented that if the library was to offer language translation services to students, Chinese and Arabic would be the most common languages spoken. Another noted that Chinese students and students from Hispanic countries were the most commonly represented, although with the caveat that many Spanish-speakers were possibly recent immigrants to Canada rather than international students. Students from the English-speaking world, particularly the United States, were also fairly well represented in Canadian institutions. On one campus, Americans were the most numerous of the foreign student population. Students from European countries were also well-represented. Institutions in Quebec attracted students from Asia, but also from the US and France, as well as from other countries in the French-speaking world.

Formal Library Instruction vs ad-hoc Library Instruction

Many of the libraries surveyed viewed international students as a specific student population with different needs than domestic students. This was often reflected in the kinds of library services that were offered, and in the way library instruction (LI) sessions were taught. Some libraries conducted formal LI sessions that were designed specifically for international students. These sessions were offered at least once a year, and sometimes more often. Depending on the institution, these LI sessions were sometimes held as part of a specific class, or were sometimes held on a drop-in basis only. Some were held in cooperation with other campus organizations, such as the office for international students, or student advising. Of the libraries that responded, thirty-nine percent said they offered some kind of formal LI for international students. Other libraries did not offer formal LI for international students, but relied on more irregular, ad-hoc sessions. Twenty-seven percent of these less regular sessions were said to be initiated by faculty, and eighteen percent were initiated by librarians. Fifteen percent of the libraries surveyed did not offer specific classes for international students, stating instead that international students were included in regular library instruction, as first year students, and then later on as part of more focused single library instruction sessions.

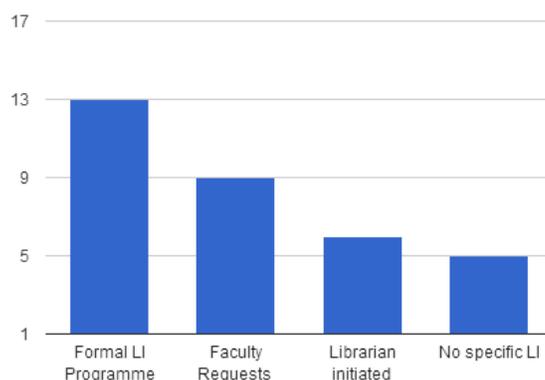


Chart 3. How international students receive library instruction (n=33)

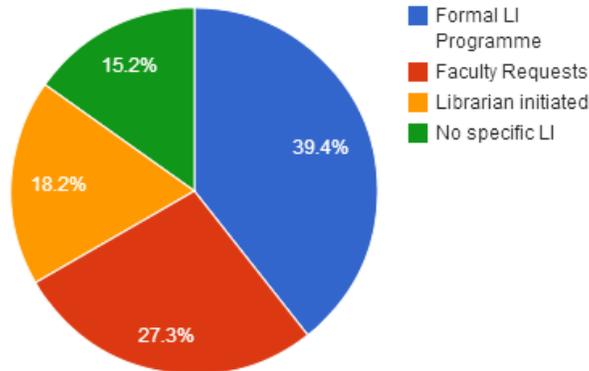


Chart 4. How international students receive library instruction (in percentages)

Undergraduate and Graduate International Students

Almost all of the libraries surveyed reported that they offered some form of library instruction in many of their undergraduate programmes, although consistency could vary from institution to institution. International undergraduates, like their undergraduate peers, might receive library instruction in regular LI sessions, or they might receive library instruction in their own LI sessions. Again, consistency varied, depending on the institution. About thirty-one percent of survey respondents also said they offered some library instruction for international graduate students, in addition to undergraduates. In about half of these cases, international graduate students were given instruction as part of a formal LI programme. In other cases, LI was offered on a more irregular, informal basis. One institution for example, offered a one-time LI session for a group of graduate students from Korea, but reported that international students normally received LI in their regular courses. International faculty also took advantage of LI sessions. Another librarian reported offering general LI sessions for new faculty, but noted that invariably the faculty who showed up were from non-English speaking countries.

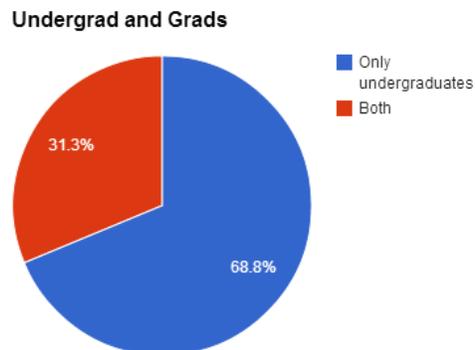


Chart 5. Do you offer library instruction for undergraduates only, or both undergraduates and graduates?

Session Content of Library Instruction Sessions for International Students

Almost every library surveyed reported that if international students were offered an LI session, it included at least a “general introduction” to library services. A general introduction included at least one session on how to do a basic search in the library catalogue and an introduction to a database. One librarian described their session as an introduction to library services for international students, and how to use the library catalogue. This session included an overview about how to undertake research at university, how to choose a topic, how to prepare an effective search strategy, how to locate journal articles using databases, and how to create a bibliography. In other cases, hands-on practice time was important, and some sessions included online assignments. In addition to catalogues and databases, another library noted that they gave an overview of basic library vocabulary as part of their introduction to the library. General introductions also included a summary of basic library services, librarian contact information, and sometimes referred students to other study support services on campus. If the library provided unique services for international students, these were highlighted. General introductions also sometimes included activities that were intended to familiarize students with the library, such as a scavenger hunt, or a tour of the building. Tours were not always led by librarians. In one case, library tours were conducted by students from the international peer mentoring programme on campus. In another, the tours were conducted by students trained by the library, and were offered to different groups on campus. In a third case, several tours were offered by the library in English, but were broken down by language level, depending on the comprehension of those attending. Tours were usually offered in the summer or during the early fall.

Many of the libraries surveyed provided general instructions to the library, but almost thirty percent reported that they also covered more advanced catalogue and database searching for international students. Advanced sessions included other topics besides the catalogue and the databases, such as how to use RefWorks, how to evaluate a website, and how to use Google Scholar. Another session compared Google searching to library tool searching. Plagiarism received special attention in a few cases, given the various cultural understandings of how to give credit when borrowing someone else’s ideas. Other topics that were handled in more specialized library sessions included a class on how to improve computer skills, for students who needed extra help. The library that offered this session found that many of the students who attended were former refugees, presumably new Canadians, who had not had the opportunity to develop these skills. In another instance, a library put on a session for international students about how to adapt to Canadian culture. Most of the international students in attendance were new to Canada, and some basic information about Canadian culture was thought to be practical. It was also regarded as a fun way to make early connections between the library and the students. This session topic was unusual in that surveyed libraries did not generally hold sessions on subjects other than library instruction or library services.

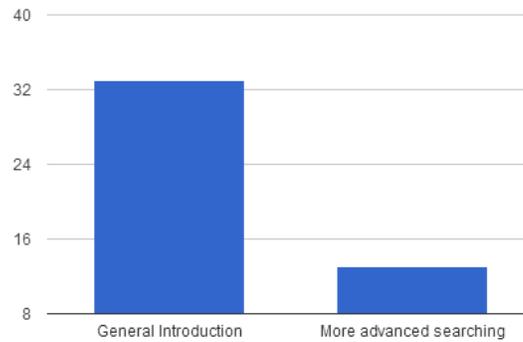


Chart 6. General introduction and more advanced searching in Library Instruction sessions

Session Format and Structure

While thirty-nine percent of surveyed libraries said they offered some kind of formal library instruction for international students, there was some variation in the format of these programmes. Several offered a series of LI workshops, which depending on the institution were either required, or were offered on a drop-in basis. Some libraries offered LI for international students up to three times a year, usually once a semester. In one instance, three or four sections of the same class were offered to international students, per semester. Some libraries organized their own instruction sessions for international students, and some LI was included as part of a broader campus-wide orientation programme. These programmes provided informational sessions on a variety of topics, including an introduction to campus services, and an introduction to the layout of the campus. Other topics were more generally practical, such as how to set up a bank account, and what to know about adapting to Canadian culture. In several cases, librarians mentioned they were involved in these programmes, but as one librarian reported they were not always “the right venue for library instruction, beyond introducing a friendly face and name”. Librarians were also asked to present library sessions in language classes. In one case, a library session was part of a prerequisite intensive English-language programme that required students to write a research paper. In another, library instruction was offered as part of a Writing Centre programme offered to international students who needed extra help with English, held during the summer term. In a third, the library offered library tours to ESL students, but simplified the language.

Library Coordination with Other Organizations

Of the libraries that responded, thirty-three percent coordinated in some capacity with campus international student organizations, while others worked with continuing education or student advising services, and ESL or FLS programmes. Other groups or individuals that worked with the Libraries on LI included specific academic departments, programme heads, and individual faculty and instructors. In a couple of instances, librarians noted that they were closely involved with international student clubs on campus, and one library noted that they participated in campus International Week events. Two libraries also reported working with off-campus international organizations from the broader community.

Services in Languages other than English

Some of the libraries surveyed offered some limited services in languages other than English, such as pamphlets or flyers describing library services, or AV tours in other languages. In one instance, the library had QR code-based tours, located around the library. Students could scan the QR code with their smartphones and view a short help video. In some libraries there were librarians on staff who could speak other languages, and could therefore provide translation services on the spot, when it became necessary. In one instance, a library orientation was offered in Chinese by a librarian. Another library had signage in several languages, and another had a multilingual welcome page on the library website.

However, while efforts have been made to provide assistance in other languages, many libraries did not offer these kinds of services because they were time-consuming and expensive to produce. In some cases, universities discouraged the use of resources in languages other than English or French. ESL programmes and students preferred there to be limited access to other languages, as ESL and FLS students were there to learn English or French. Having too many services and signage in their native languages was considered to be a hindrance to learning English or French.

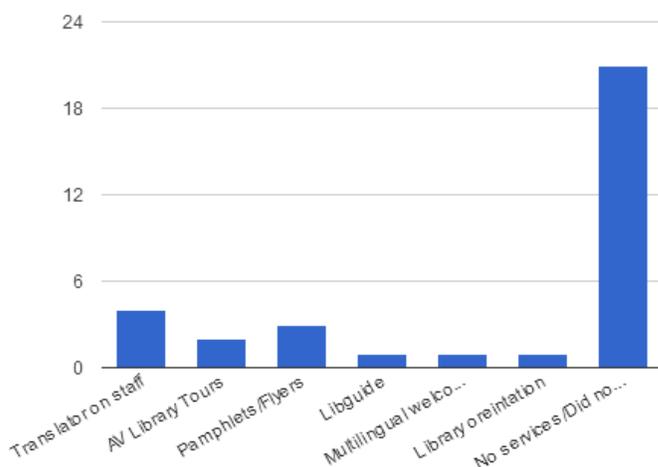


Chart 7. Most common types of services in other languages

Other Unique Services

Aside from services in other languages, some libraries had other unique services for international students. In one instance, the library provided a location for English conversation drop-in sessions for language and international students who wanted to improve their conversational skills. In another instance, there was an International Commons located in the library, where international students could come to receive academic support through individual assistance, workshops and mentoring. But while the Commons was in the library building, it was coordinated by another campus organization, and was not directly sponsored by the library. In another case, the library offered service to international students by lending out international

keyboards and audio language learning kits. The same library pointed out that they also had a comprehensive range of dictionaries, grammar books, and book collections in other languages, something that most library collections would have in common, to some extent.

Generally, it was reported that international students spent considerable time in the library, in part because many of them lived on campus. One librarian reported that anecdotally, “international students were the biggest users of library space.” At another institution, international students were well represented during library sponsored “stress free” activities during final exams.

On one campus, a separate first-year college has been established for international students. The focus is on acquiring English language skills through an eleven month “international programme”. Students can then transition into their second year of regular University upon completion of the programme. The college has a brochure in thirteen languages on its website, although the information is about the institution, and not library-specific. As this is a new initiative, the library is looking at how this will impact their programmes and services.

Conclusion

The findings of this research point out that most of the surveyed Canadian academic libraries are conscious of, and care about, offering specialized library services to international students. However, knowing the population you hope to serve is a crucial step in delivering quality service. One major finding of this survey is that twenty-seven percent of the respondents are not aware of how many international students are enrolled at their institutions, which underpins the necessity of libraries reaching out and establishing relationships with units on campus that can provide information on who the international students on campus are, and their numbers. There was some diversity in the responses regarding which campus organizations libraries partnered with. Some libraries established relationships with international student offices and organizations on campus, while others directed their efforts toward working with language programmes. In some instances, librarians also made connections with off-campus community organizations, suggesting there was an ongoing process of engagement between some universities and their broader communities. There was also some diversity in the responses concerning what programmes international students were enrolled in. On some campuses, international students had to pass a language test before they could enroll as regular students, while on others, second language students were allowed to take regular classes. The comprehension levels of students could vary, depending on the institutional requirements. Some librarians identified another group, foreign born naturalized Canadians, who were enrolled as regular Canadian students, but who could benefit from library instruction designed for international or second language students. Some libraries did not offer specific instruction sessions for international students, but stated that as regular students, they were included in regular library instruction. The majority of the LI was given to undergraduates, which suggests that more needs to be done to include international graduate students in library outreach.

Relating this study to past research, it is worth pointing out that this sample size of thirty-three is comparable to the seminal studies done by Goudy and Moushey (1984) and Kline and Rod (1984), which received responses from thirty-one and fifty-four academic libraries, respectively. However, in this study, only thirty-nine percent of surveyed post-secondary institutions were found to provide specialized LI for international students (vs. fifty-five percent and fifty-six percent for the 1984 studies). As Goudy and Moshey (1984) remarked, and as this study confirms, there are no prevailing trends in how LI is addressed in relation to international students, except that “such instruction should be much more extensive than is presently the practice...” (p. 224).

There are many libraries and universities across Canada that provide innovative programmes for international students. The findings reveal the content of some of these programmes, and can serve as points to consider for institutions that incorporate internationalization goals into their strategic plans, or as experiences that can be built on. In addition, this study fills a gap in the literature on international students in Canadian libraries. With the United States hosting the largest share of the world’s mobile students, the majority of the library literature on this user group is naturally U.S.-focused. This survey contributes a Canadian perspective to the trend, and can be of particular importance to libraries where internationalization has just been recently-embraced. Because the term *internationalization* originated with Jane Knight, a Canadian, it is important for Canadian academic libraries to contribute to the scholarly conversation about international students, and what we are doing to assist and serve them in terms of their information and research needs as they pursue educational opportunities in their host country.

Recommendations for Future Studies

To determine how best to serve this target group, a needs assessment of international students should be conducted. While a few small scale needs assessments of international students at Canadian academic libraries have been done (Morrissey & Given, 2006; Ishimura, Howard & Moukdad, 2007), a similar contemporary study on a larger scale would be helpful. Such a study would better prepare librarians to engage in profitable and positive interactions with these students; to provide beneficial and needed resources and services; and especially in planning effective and successful library instruction and orientation sessions for international students.

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