


Self-Study 2020 University Libraries

December 15

**Kent State University Libraries
Kent, OH**



**University
Libraries**

Executive Summary

Introduction

Inspired by Dean Ken Burhanna's desire to "figure out, as best we can, who we are as a research library," this self-study is unique in that it looks deeply inward and outward and focuses on key questions identified as critical and important. This self-study aims to enable Kent State University Libraries (KSUL) to see themselves in comparison to how external stakeholders see them. It also relooks at organizational climate and gauges how it has or has not evolved in the last three years, and more importantly what climate issues need discussion and attention.

The self-study's charge is:

University Libraries will engage in a self-study to better understand its identity as an academic research library, its challenges, and strategic opportunities. The intended readers of this self-study are the library faculty and staff, its leadership, and other academic leaders. The results of the self-study will inform action plans and strategic planning into the future.

The self-study will be driven by questions. Key questions include:

- 1. Who are we strategically? What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats?*
- 2. What is the organizational climate of University Libraries and how do we best appreciate and support each other?*
- 3. How do we stack up against other academic research libraries?*
- 4. How do our external stakeholders view us and what are their needs?*
- 5. What is our impact and how do we measure it?*

Who Are We Strategically?

KEY FINDINGS

1. KSUL is student/patron focused and viewed as supportive, positive change agents (at least externally).
2. Not surprisingly, access to resources is a strength of KSUL, but at the same time, some perceive this as a weakness.

3. While externally, the KSU community views KSUL as vital to the university, this view is not shared internally.
4. Both internal and external stakeholders (including deans) recognized a similar set of threats related to funding, changing student needs, technology, and space.
5. Also, not surprisingly, while KSUL has demonstrated strength in designing and investing in student-focused spaces and services (many characterize KSUL as leading in this work), future success depends on continuing to adapt and innovate to meet student needs.
6. KSUL can do a better at promoting its services, resources, and spaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a more complete and systematic marketing plan that is decentralized, meaning that every department plays a role with centralized support.
2. Continue to advocate for additional centralized funding, using the self-study findings as the impetus for an initial conversation.
3. Continue to advance fund-raising efforts, including garnering more centralized support.
4. Make KSUL spaces and services even more welcoming to all, including underrepresented students, ensuring that students can see themselves, their languages, and their cultures present in signage, décor, web services, etc.
5. Continue to develop the KSUL building master plan that addresses all Kent campus library facilities.
6. Continue "Right Book, Right Place" initiative to balance value of the print collections with access to additional space.
7. Invest in additional usability studies focused on accessing information and explore innovative approaches to easing access.
8. Explore renewed information literacy programming that focuses on curricular and co-curricular partnerships.
9. Continue to explore organizational innovations through cross-training, re-organization, collaboration, and professional development.

What is the Organizational Climate of University Libraries and How Do We Best Appreciate Each Other?

KEY FINDINGS

1. The majority of KSUL faculty, staff and administrators were comfortable or very comfortable with the climate of KSUL and with their department/unit.
2. The majority felt that KSUL is friendly and a positive place for most groups (non-English speakers, nonbinary, transgender, women, men, people of color, persons identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, persons with disabilities...). However, a little over 10% rated KSUL as not positive for people of color and/or women.
3. Classism by position-type was rated as regularly or constantly encountered by 46% of those responding to the question.
4. Most staff and faculty feel that their abilities are not prejudged based on their identity (e.g. race, disability, gender) by their supervisors or department chair/school director. The majority of staff reported that their abilities are not prejudged by their co-workers based on their identity. However, 42% of faculty think that faculty in their department prejudice their abilities based on their identity (e.g. race, disability, gender).
5. A little over half of faculty, staff, and or administrators reported considering leaving KSU in the last year with limited opportunities for advancement, financial reasons (salaries, resources, etc.) and tension with supervisor/manager most frequently cited as reasons.
6. There are some key differences in staff and faculty perceptions:
 - a. Staff feel more confident that their voices are heard by KSU Library senior administration than by KSU senior administration. Faculty have concerns around shared governance and workload assignments.
 - b. While staff report an overall positive working relationship with faculty, only around one-third reported feeling valued by faculty. The majority of faculty feel that they have a strong working relationship with staff in KSUL.
 - c. Overall, staff are more positive than faculty about KSUL policies and procedures. Most tenured or tenure-track faculty responded positively to questions around tenure and promotion.
7. Comparisons between 2017 and 2019 data found that the 2019 ratings of staff-oriented items with 2017 comparison available were positive for all but two staff items. For most of

the faculty-oriented items, the 2019 ratings were more favorable or comparable to the 2017 KSU statistic and/or showed improvement over the KSUL 2017 rating.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthen and extend diversity, equity, and inclusion work with a particular focus on class by position, race, and gender issues. This work must include reaching out beyond KSUL for assistance and guidance.
2. Review and redevelop the diversity committee, taking care to ensure that it is inclusive to all of KSUL, focuses on strategy and action, and plays a visible and critical role in governance.
3. Explore implementation of themes emerging around support including asking and listening across individuals and departments to the needs, ideas, and preferred ways of receiving acknowledgement.
4. Engage in a mixture of celebratory, tangible incentives, and individualized ways to acknowledge and motivate one another.
5. Explore other less obvious ways to show appreciation such as providing flexible work hours, creating clear pathways for career advancement, and support for professional development.
6. Continue and strengthen suggestions that emerged during the self-study that were piloted or implemented right away including: all-staff shout-outs, cross-department sharing, and creation of a staff advisory council.

How Do We Stack Up Against Other Research Libraries?

KEY FINDINGS

1. Kent State University Libraries' (KSUL) financial resources measure up well when compared to peers. The KSUL collections budget trails many peers, but more often KSUL's budget resources are on par with their peers or at least in the middle. The KSUL budget looks especially strong in comparison to peers when examined as a percentage of overall institutional budget and percentage of institutional academic support budgets. However, in general, financial resources for academic libraries are and have been declining. While KSUL is not out of alignment with peers, most, if not all, academic libraries face financial challenges.

2. KSUL 's collections budget trails many peers, especially those in ARL. For the most part peers' collections budgets, even those that have trended up slightly, are not keeping up with inflation. When we consider collections spending per student FTE and recognize that KSUL's collections resources support the entire Kent State system, we see KSUL lagging behind many Ohio peers. This may also be a sign of budget ROI in the form of efficiency.
3. KSUL's personnel resources have remained comparatively strong to peers, yet all peers report flat to declining salaries and wages.
4. KSUL's staffing is very similar to peers. All peers show staffing declines over the last five years. KSUL has lost 28 employees since 1998, but the bulk of that (18) was experienced before 2011.
5. KSUL enjoys the efficiencies of being a leading member of OhioLINK. Shared services and shared collections strategies are on the horizon.
6. Among KSUL's distinctions are its internationally renowned special collections, its multi-faceted and innovative plagiarism educational programming, its potential to support emerging publishing innovations, and its strong support for entrepreneurship and design innovation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Remain vigilant about financial resources, both managing them and advocating for new strategic investments. Its collections or materials budget appears especially vulnerable.
2. Create a strategic staffing plan and update it at least twice a year to continually examine how to reorganize staffing to meet the needs of their university community and respond to future vacancies.
3. Endeavour to help keep OhioLINK strong financially through advocacy and strategic thinking/leadership.
4. Continue to pursue the Right Book Right Place initiative, as it focuses on the efficient and effective shared management of legacy print collections.
5. Explore win-win-win shared service relationships with regional partners.
6. Support advancing the work of its areas of distinction through goal setting, grant work and publicity.

How Do External Stakeholders View Us and What Are Their Needs?

KEY FINDINGS

1. Over 80% of external stakeholders rank KSUL as above average or among the best.
2. The three primary areas of need noted across external stakeholders were:
 - a. Access to resources (particularly research materials).
 - b. Library services and staff.
 - c. Library spaces, technology, and amenities.
3. Looking at needs holistically, many times services and resources were equally praised and criticized. For example, many celebrate our access to resources while many others criticize our lack of access to resources.
4. Stakeholders groups emphasized different aspects of the strengths of KSUL.
 - a. Upper Administration (including the Provost):
 - i. Intentional leadership of KSUL in changing to meet the needs of the University and the changing landscape of information, space, and higher education.
 - ii. The willingness to create non-traditional activities.
 - iii. Strong leadership and partnering within KSUL and across KSU.
 - iv. High-quality responsive staff and faculty.
 - v. Understanding of academic needs, resources, and IT.
 - b. Faculty, Graduate Students, and College Administration:
 - i. Online access to resources.
 - ii. Interlibrary loan.
 - iii. Study spaces.
 - c. Undergraduate Students:
 - i. Partner services co-located in KSUL.
 - ii. Study spaces.
 - iii. Printing and copying.

5. While overwhelmingly, the feedback was positive, the following areas were noted by external stakeholders as room for improvement in:
 - a. the age, size, subject content, breadth of scholarly materials, and delivery time for collections.
 - b. the website in general, off-campus access, and search tool ease of use.
 - c. an increased emphasis on information literacy programming that focuses on curricular and co-curricular partnerships.
 - d. balance between centralized access to partner resources, amenities, and group spaces with quiet study spaces.
6. Students, primarily undergraduates, do not differentiate between library services, resources and services and those of University Library partners. For example, they view the One Stop as part of the Library.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Celebrate and reflect on the finding that KSUL is viewed very, very positively by its external stakeholders.
2. Explore KSUL partnerships, especially those with University Library building partners, to determine ways to differentiate the KSUL brand at times and when to work with partners for a common brand at other times.
3. Develop strategic communication strategies to help students and faculty understand that while we don't have every journal or book in our collection, we can usually provide access through OhioLINK or interlibrary loan.
4. Do a deep dive on the rich data set derived from the undergraduate survey to identify more granular findings and action steps.

What Is Our Impact and How Do We Measure It?

KEY FINDINGS

1. KSUL has made modest progress in assessing and evaluating its work in recent years, but it lacks an overall assessment plan and many of its initiatives lack assessment strategies.

2. Assessment expertise does exist within KSUL, but the organization could use additional professional development to refresh knowledge and to build deeper knowledge of assessment practices and approaches.
3. KSUL lacks awareness across functional areas of what data and statistics have been collected or are available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. KSUL should revise and redeploy its stats dashboard, providing public and internal versions to create a transparent and accessible means of sharing library statistics and data.
2. KSUL should discuss and develop a privacy statement and policy that navigates important issues of patron privacy while allowing space for the anonymized use of patron data to measure library impact and the efficacy of services and resources.
3. KSUL should offer professional development on basic assessment and evaluation to build capacity within the organization to build this work into their practice.
4. KSUL should avoid over-relying on quantitative data in general, and work to utilize assessment practices that recognize what many scholars refer to as the three learning domains of Bloom's Taxonomy: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective, or in other words: what learners know, how learners behave, and how learners feel.
5. KSUL should conduct stakeholder surveys periodically, targeting different user groups. KSUL should develop surveys for undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and community members, and schedule them to be administered every other year (e.g., students one year, faculty and community the next year). The surveys should be partially standardized and partially customizable.
6. KSUL should continue and further invest in building observation and user dialogues, like Pizza for Your Thoughts.
7. Standardized, nationally recognized assessment instruments such as LibQual may be helpful at the right time with the right resources, but this report neither recommends nor dismisses the use of these tools.
8. KSUL should develop, however modest, an assessment plan that speaks to institutional assessment needs, KSUL impact needs, and is reviewed annually.

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Preface

When then Provost Todd Diacon appointed me Dean in March 2019, in the midst of ongoing budget disruptions and a hiring freeze, I discussed with leadership my desire to conduct a self-study. It was clear that higher education was headed into a period of change and challenges, while the libraries that serve them had been for years already trying to adjust to the proliferation of digital media, decline of print, and the economic pressures of scholarly publishing. Yet at the same time, I held and still hold a high level of optimism for Kent State University Libraires (KSUL). Three things have driven this sense of hope and confidence. First, having worked across Kent State at the highest levels of leadership as Provost Fellow and then as Interim Dean, and that after years as a library faculty member, I had witnessed the positive impact of KSUL and the additional opportunities for us to make a difference. “We are a pretty good library,” I said to myself. Second, having had a chance to visit dozens of leading research libraries in North America and meet and talk with their leadership as an ARL Leadership Fellow and UCLA Senior Fellow, I recognized that we more than hold our own in comparison. “We’re a pretty great library,” I thought. Third, I am convinced daily by the great people collaborate with and their great accomplishments that we work for a great institution. “Kent State is poised to do great things,” I reminded myself.

Yet I observed cognitive dissonance on the ground in KSUL. We, it seemed to me, did not recognize how good we were or can be. Certainly, we have challenges. We have concerns that need addressed. We have many areas ripe for improvement. But at the same time, isn’t KSUL a pretty good, if not great, research library? This question, above all, motivated me to enter into this self-study process. *Let’s figure out, as best we can, who we are as a research library.*

Of course, we have faced many additional challenges since March 2019. When we began the work of this self-study we had no way of knowing that a pandemic would beset us, followed by tremendous financial challenges. We also did not recognize, although we should have, that our nation’s deep-seated history of racism and social injustice would be painfully exposed and demand to be addressed. Despite all of this, we persisted onward in our self-study, believing that while these new challenges may place an asterisk by some of our study’s findings, much of what our self-study can tell us will help move us forward.

Discovery Strategic Planning

While I wished to explore and define the identity of KSUL, this work had already begun. This self-study is inspired by the prior work of our Discovery Strategic Planning Task Force. During Dean James Bracken’s last months at Kent State, a group formed to work on succession planning. When Provost Todd Diacon named me the Interim Dean, this group transitioned to the Discovery Strategic Planning

Task Force. This task force which [reported out](#) in December 2017 focused on identifying the key questions critical to the future of KSUL. Simply stated, they worked to “discover” those concerns and ideas that would prepare University Libraries for future strategic discussions. This self-study is indebted to the foundational work of that task force, and I want to acknowledge and thank its membership:

Cindy Kristof (co-chair)
Kate Medicus (co-chair)
Dave Elswick
Penny Englehart
Stephanie Gaskins
Michael Hawkins

George Leggiero
Roman Panchyshyn
Karen Ronga
Melissa Spohn
Amy Thomas
Tom Warren

Also, near the end of the Dean Bracken era, the university conducted a climate study. The results of the initial climate study came slowly. University Libraries didn't see them until almost two years after the data was collected. When we did learn of the results, they raised additional critical questions for consideration.

Self-Study Charge

As mentioned, after my appointment as dean, I discussed a self-study with leadership and we agreed it could help inform our organizational culture and position us for a strong strategic future. This study would be unique in that it would look deeply inward and outward and would focus, like the work of the Discovery Strategic Planning Task Force, on key questions, many of which would be identified by ourselves as critical and important. This self-study would enable KSUL to see how we see ourselves in comparison to how our external stakeholders see us. It would also allow us to relook at our organizational climate and gauge how it had or had not evolved since the departure of Dean Bracken. After some discussion, we developed the following self-study charge:

University Libraries will engage in a self-study to better understand its identity as an academic research library, its challenges, and strategic opportunities. The intended readers of this self-study are the library faculty and staff, its leadership, and other academic leaders. The results of the self-study will inform action plans and strategic planning into the future.

The self-study will be driven by questions. Key questions include:

1. *Who are we strategically? What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, aspirations, and results?*

2. *What is the organizational climate of University Libraries and how do we best appreciate and support each other?*
3. *How do we stack up against other academic research libraries?*
4. *How do our external stakeholders view us and what are their needs?*
5. *What is our impact and how do we measure it?*

The Process

We secured the expertise of consultant Tina Ughrin from Smile Minded Smartworks. Known for her expertise in strategic planning, data collection and analysis, Tina also added objectivity and distance to the work, which was essential at critical points in the self-study (e.g., collecting new climate study data, interviewing the departments within KSUL). Together Tina and I led the self-study. We also formed a Self-Study Team. This team guided planning, assisted in data gathering, and performed other general duties or tasks. I want to thank this team for their patience and perseverance:

Cindy Kristof
Roman Panchyshyn
Ginnie Dressler
Kelly Shook

Kristin Yeager
Edith Serkownek
Anita Clary
Stuart Moye

Additionally, my Executive Committee (leadership) and the College Advisory Committee (CAC) were identified sounding teams to receive periodic updates and provide guidance. In 2020 a third sounding team was added, with the formation of the Staff Advisory Council (SAC).

We conducted the self-study in four phases:

1. Question discovery
2. Data gathering
3. Analysis
4. Reporting

The question discovery phase engaged KSUL staff and faculty in identifying key questions. Staff and faculty were also heavily involved in the data gathering phase, specifically through the climate survey and departmental discussions/interviews.

It may go without saying, but we also committed to a safe and welcoming process, one that not only listened and questioned, but also protected the voices of internal and external participants. Our consultant Tina Ughrin and self-study team members have been careful to remove identifying and personal information from our data to maintain anonymity of our participants.

The Pandemic and Limitations

The pandemic, continued financial challenges, and our social justice ruptures all likely color and perhaps sometimes disconnect parts of our self-study from our new, evolving reality. At the same time these forces magnify other parts of our self-study. In late May 2020, I questioned with library leaders the viability of continuing our self-study. On the eve of the pandemic, we had completed about 90% of our data gathering. Over half of our data had been analyzed. We had invested hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars in the self-study. Ultimately it was the understanding that some aspects of our self-study (e.g., climate study, financial advocacy, appreciation—both internal and external) were now more important than ever that convinced us to continue. Nonetheless, the self-study report is diminished in consideration of what was planned.

This self-study is largely focused on data gathered in later 2019 and early 2020.

Due to incomplete data gathering, we lack department or position-level organizational staffing and structure comparators. A plan to conduct dean/director-level interviews with peers was scrapped. We were limited to examining website data and national data sets.

Due to the time constraints driven by the operational demands of the pandemic (i.e., lack of time), the self-study is abbreviated or shorter in some areas than had originally been planned. The section on impact, for example, is very brief. While we find that we have some foundational work to do on building a culture of assessment, we did not have the time to delve deeply into a granular discussion of the many data sources currently available to us and strategies for interrogating them.

Our ability to address specific questions raised early in the self-study was limited as well by the time available to us. We focused mainly on answering the largest questions before us. When the answers to more specific questions presented themselves clearly, we included those, but we do acknowledge that many questions were not able to be answered. These questions can serve to drive further discussion and discovery as we design our future as a library.

The pandemic itself has also changed our world in ways that may outdate some of our data and findings. Discussions of space and offices need to be considered with the knowledge that the pandemic has changed our views on space. Health and safety has risen, at least for the time being, as the chief concern for public spaces. Remote work has altered our views on what is needed for one's office. We talk of "hoteling" or shared, interchangeable office spaces, and ask *what are the true needs of the remote or semi-remote employee?* This points to the realization that the needs and questions raised by external stakeholders or constituencies have likely changed in important ways since we collected our data. At the same time, our myriad crises underscore other needs and findings of our self-study. The importance of the user-experience on digital platforms, the need to strengthen

the libraries' financial resources, or the need to take action to ensure an inclusive, welcoming work place that values and respects everyone, these are examples of some of our report's themes that are more important than ever.

This self-study is also limited in ways that limit all studies of this nature. These limitations are more fully discussed within specific sections of this report. For example, the section on How We Stack Up is limited by the data sets consulted. The Association of Research Libraries and the Association of College and Research Libraries gather and build their data in different ways. Different institutions may interpret survey questions differently. In terms of qualitative data, of which much was collected for this study, we must remember that it is unverifiable, not statistically representative, and is limited in its application to questions of causality. We must remember that this self-study in many ways is a collection of snapshots of views, opinions and ideas from a specific time and place, yet together and apart these can provide guidance and direction for strategic action and thinking.

A Note on Definitions

Terminology can be confusing if we don't understand the intentions of the words we use. The reader of this report is advised to note the definitions shared in the individual sections of this report. They can also refer to Appendix A on definitions for further clarification. One term worth pointing out upfront is "external stakeholder," sometimes appearing as "external constituent." These terms are meant always to mean those external to the KSUL organization, including students, university staff and faculty, university leadership, and community members.

Next Steps

We will formally roll out the Self-Study Report in spring 2021. Our roll out plans include three deep dives, in which we dig deeper and discuss specific areas of the self-study:

1. Deep Dive: Student Survey Data
2. Deep Dive: Climate Study
3. Deep Dive: Developing a Professional Development Agenda

Kenneth J. Burhanna
Dean and Professor
Kent State University Libraries

Who are we strategically?

Key Findings

1. KSUL is student/patron focused and viewed as supportive, positive change agents (at least externally).
2. Not surprisingly, access to resources is a strength of KSUL, but at the same time, some perceive this as a weakness.
3. While externally, the KSU community views KSUL as vital to the university, this view is not shared internally.
4. Both internal and external stakeholders (including deans) recognized a similar set of threats related to funding, changing student needs, technology, and space.
5. Also, not surprisingly, while KSUL has demonstrated strength in designing and investing in student-focused spaces and services (many characterize KSUL as leading in this work), future success depends on continuing to adapt and innovate to meet student needs.
6. KSUL can do a better at promoting its services, resources, and spaces.

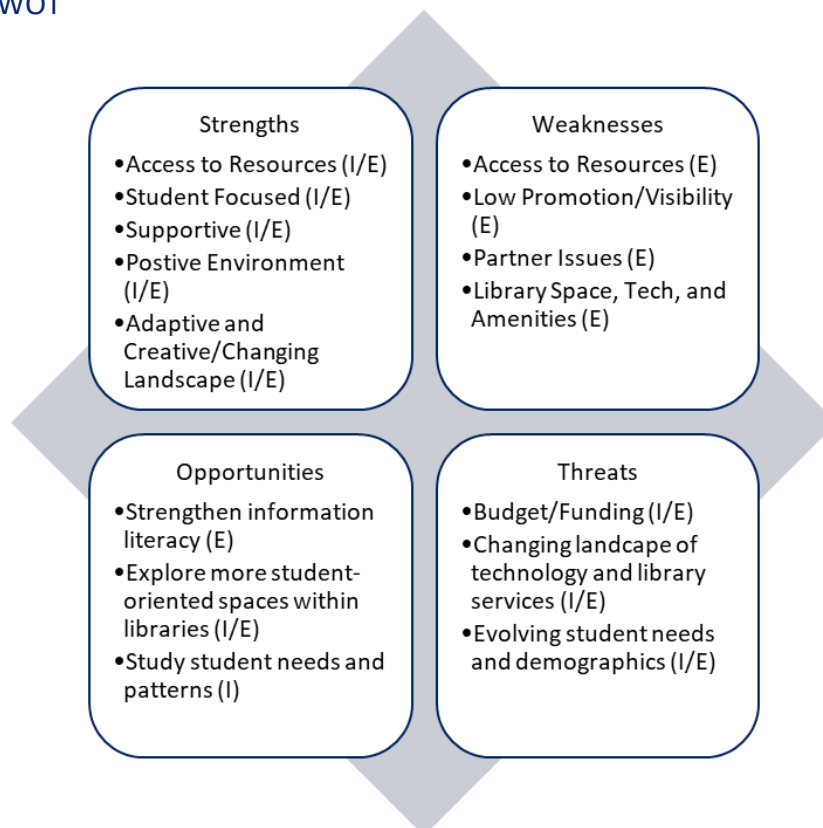
Recommendations

1. Develop a more complete and systematic marketing plan that is decentralized, meaning that every department plays a role with centralized support.
2. Continue to advocate for additional centralized funding, using the self-study findings as the impetus for an initial conversation.

3. Continue to advance fund-raising efforts, including garnering more centralized support.
4. Make KSUL spaces and services even more welcoming to all, including underrepresented students, ensuring that students can see themselves, their languages, and their cultures present in signage, décor, web services, etc.
5. Continue to develop the KSUL building master plan that addresses all Kent campus library facilities.
6. Continue “Right Book, Right Place” initiative to balance value of the print collections with access to additional space.
7. Invest in additional usability studies focused on accessing information and explore innovative approaches to easing access.
8. Explore renewed information literacy programming that focuses on curricular and co-curricular partnerships.
9. Continue to explore organizational innovations through cross-training, re-organization, collaboration, and professional development.

What are our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats?

Figure 1: Overall SWOT



Note:

The SWOT emerged from multiple avenues of input from internal (I) and external (E) stakeholders.

They are academically grounded and understand the needs of the academic sector with minimal need for "translation." They also are helpful if finding resources that may not be known for a particular interest or effort in the academic sector. The faculty and staff are quite IT informed.

A Dean of a College

Table 1: SWOT and Stakeholder Type

Internal	External
Strengths	
Access to Resources Student Focused Supportive Positive Environment Adaptive and Creative/Changing Landscape	Access to Resources Student Focused Supportive Positive Environment Adaptive and Creative/Changing Landscape
Weaknesses	
Addressed in Climate Study Section	Access to Resources Low Promotion/Visibility Partner Issues Library Space, Tech, and Amenities
Opportunities	
Study student needs and patterns Explore student oriented spaces within libraries Pilot means to adjust service models to patron needs Deepen department collaboration, cross-training, and professional development Encourage employee empowerment Deepen consistent and timely communication Enact means to honor and appreciate individuals, teams, and departments	Strengthen information literacy Explore student oriented spaces within libraries
Threats	
Budget/Funding Changing landscape of technology and library services Evolving student needs and demographics Competition for Library space	Budget/Funding Changing landscape of technology and library services Evolving student needs and demographics Competition for Library space

Online access to materials and journals, extended hard-copy check-outs, easy renewals with reminders, copies through ILL, resource desk assistance for unusual reference/citation/resource issues.

Faculty, Lifespan Development & Educational Sciences

Internal and external stakeholders shared similar perspectives on strengths. Internally, KSUL faculty, staff, and administrators noted organizational concerns, while external stakeholders noted concerns with awareness of and access to resources and services including those hosted by partners in Library space. Interestingly, both internal and external stakeholders recognized the threats of budget evolving student needs/demographics, and the changing landscape of technology and library services but also noted the adaptive and creative response of KSUL and noted opportunities to further explore student needs and strengthen services.

Strengths

Access to Resources	Student Focused	Supportive	Positive Environment	Adaptive and Creative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collections -- breadth and easy retrieval • Course Reserves • Interlibrary Loan • OhioLINK • Textbook rental • Printing and scanning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on meeting student needs • Events tailored for students • Student Instruction • Open 24/5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference and Subject Librarians • Circulation Staff • Online Digital Experience • Multimedia Resource Center • Statistical Consulting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical space and amenities • Friendly • Respectful • Feel valued and supported • Caring and Collaborative • Accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving beyond traditional library functions • Changing to meet users evolving needs • Intentional leadership of KSUL in changing to meet the needs of the University and the changing landscape of information, space, and higher education

Figure 2: Strengths across internal and external stakeholders

One of the largest categories of strengths mentioned by internal stakeholders (KSUL faculty, staff, administrators, and student workers) as well as by external stakeholders (KSU faculty, staff, administrators, graduate and undergraduate students, and community members) was **access to resources**. This is a broad category that spans the collections to printing and scanning. It is also a category that includes criticisms and opportunities for growth as will be noted below.

Having different levels of quietness throughout the library; people have different study habits and it is nice to see that Kent pays attention to this detail

Undergraduate student majoring in studio art, visits library occasionally

Being a welcoming place for people to gather - not just for studying but for social interactions as well. Also, evolving our services, resources, and spaces to meet the changing needs of our users.

KSUL Department

Both internal and external stakeholders commented on the emphasis KSUL puts on **meeting student needs** with specific examples often listed. Internally, KSUL faculty, staff, and administrators perceive their work to be **supportive and welcoming**. Externally, KSU administrators, faculty, as well as, graduate and undergraduate students noted many examples of **support** they receive from KSUL. Both internal and external stakeholders noted the stresses that changing technology and user needs (especially evolving student demographics) placed but emphasized that KSUL has been a leader in **adapting and creatively addressing the changing landscape**. Internally, KSUL while positive about how departments are operating and noting their work to be welcoming, did not spend a lot of time singing their own praises. However, there were quite a few ways external stakeholders expressed **positive views** that ranged from comments on the **space** itself to **shout-outs** for particular departments and individuals, to overall feeling of caring, collaboration, and being valued.

The subject librarians have been helpful by providing resources for the undergraduate courses I teach and for providing some research strategies for my own doctoral studies. The GPAD workshops are a great resource, and the stats consultant is amazing.

Graduate Student, English

Weaknesses

Figure 3: Weaknesses across stakeholder groups

Access to Resources	Low Promotion/Visibility	Partner Issues	Physical Space, Tech, and Amenities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Collection Limitations •Age •Size •Subject Coverage •Scholarly Materials •Turnaround Time •Online Digital Concerns •Search tools -- hard to search, find, and locate •Website •Off-campus access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Marketing •Hours •Events and Cancellations •Instructions/how-tos •Services and Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Printer tech trouble, wait time, costs •Computer access •One-Stop •Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Crowds and Noise •Noise level in general or on specific floors •Physical space concerns •Insufficient tables, seating, outlets, booths, etc. •Bathrooms •Elevators/Escalators •Wayfinding •Confusing or limited signage •Hard to find physical books •Hard to find places •Hours/Closures

While access to resources was the top strength listed, concerns about limitations to collections, frustrations with online search tools, the website, and off-campus access were also frequently mentioned by primarily external stakeholders. Similarly, while physical space, tech, and amenities were noted as reasons for a positive environment, issues were raised about physical space and amenities when asked about concerns related to KSUL.

External stakeholders noted that KSUL is not always top of mind with limitations to how well the word gets out through marketing and concerns that events, cancellations, and resources are not always well communicated. Finally, increased hours and more instructional resources were requested. The distinction between the Library and other partner services are not clear especially to undergraduate students so printer, computer, One Stop, and other concerns were noted.

We don't have access to the most recent issues of many of the top journals in my field.

Faculty, Biological Sciences

Figure 4: Threats across stakeholder groups

Budget/Funding Constraints

Changing landcape of technology and library services

Evolving student needs and demographics

Competing priorities for Library space

Most internal and external stakeholders noted budget and/or funding as a constraint on the work of KSUL. Both internal and external stakeholders also noted that academic libraries in general, and KSUL in particular, face challenges from the rapid an ongoing change in technology, student needs, and the role of libraries. Similarly, both internal and external stakeholders recognized that there is competition for Library space.

At the KSU Main Library, I find it hard to get any work done on the louder floors. This is unfortunate because they are the only floors that have been renovated. The study spaces on these floors are designed to enhance productivity, and they would if not for the noise. I have recently stopped coming to the main campus library to study for this reason.

Undergraduate student majoring in interior design, visits library 4-6 times a week

Accessing information online (particularly database articles and other such materials) is not intuitive, often does not retrieve the item, and is not a reliable resource, though it really should be.

Graduate Student, Communication Studies

Opportunities

Figure 5: Opportunities across stakeholder groups

Strengthen information literacy

- Deepen collaborative work with instructional classes
- Continue to explore and develop EBP around information literacy

Explore more student-oriented spaces within libraries and with ideas suggested such as:

- Student club events on nights/weekends
- Commuter student events
- Serve as a meeting place for underrepresented groups such as LGBTQ, Pan African, and Asian student groups
- Stress free zones
- Gaming zones
- Areas for graduate students

Study student needs and patterns

- Conduct study exploring and potentially demonstrating efficacy of library instruction over Google Scholar in quality of student course submissions
- Explore student impact data
- Construct measures of student library use patterns

Pilot means to adjust service models to patron needs

- Participate more widely in student events/initiatives across campus
- Create mechanisms for more regularly asking underrepresented groups about needs
- Increase representation through photos, language translation, and other visible means for underrepresented groups

The willingness to create non-traditional activities/spaces such as tutoring, Starbucks, therapy dogs, welcome weekend activities, and pizza parties to encourage the use of the Library and support students to encourage them to feel welcome on campus.

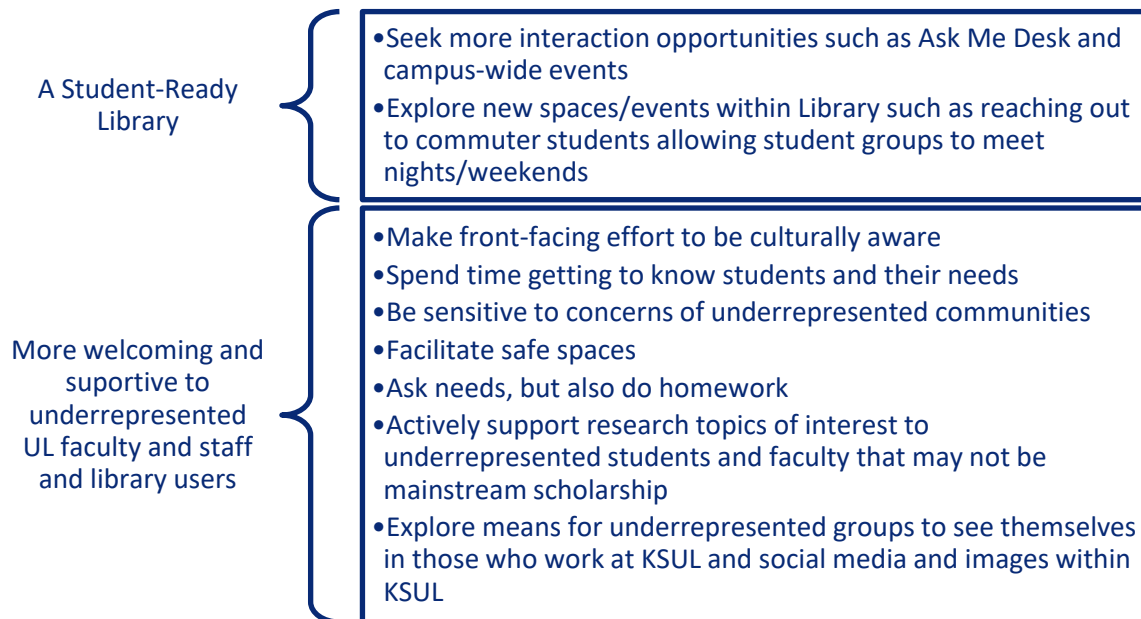
A Dean of a College

As I've said above, I think the most critical issues for the University Libraries in the future is helping students and faculty learn and/or adapt research practices as availability continues to expand. In the "old days," looking up published research in abstract indices and annual paper volumes was relatively time-consuming but more straightforward in terms of what was available and how to use it. I think nowadays the access to previously-unimaginable amounts of published material has made research even more complicated, albeit "quicker." I find my students don't seem to process the material they read and have almost no idea how to take and organize notes while exploring digital materials. As rudimentary as this might sound, I think it could really help to put more focus on assisting research with digital materials, including investing in software and other resources that will support various approaches to research.

Faculty, Modern and Classical Language Studies

Aspirations

Figure 6: Aspirations



While KSUL faculty, staff, and administrators were not asked directly about aspirations as part of two emerging priority areas, they did ask themselves how can we be a student-ready library and how can we be more welcoming and supportive to underrepresented UL faculty, staff, and library users? Initial ideas were generated, but further exploration is warranted moving forward.

What is the Organizational Climate of University Libraries and How Do We Best Appreciate Each Other?

Key Findings

1. The majority of KSUL faculty, staff and administrators were comfortable or very comfortable with the climate of KSUL and with their department/unit.
2. The majority felt that KSUL is friendly and a positive place for most groups (non-English speakers, nonbinary, transgender, women, men, people of color, persons identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, persons with disabilities...). However, a little over 10% rated KSUL as not positive for people of color and/or women.
3. Classism by position-type was rated as regularly or constantly encountered by 46% of those responding to the question.
4. Most staff and faculty feel that their abilities are not prejudged based on their identity (e.g. race, disability, gender) by their supervisors or department chair/school director. The majority of staff reported that their abilities are not prejudged by their co-workers based on their identity. However, 42% of faculty think that faculty in their department prejudge their abilities based on their identity (e.g. race, disability, gender).
5. A little over half of faculty, staff, and or administrators reported considering leaving KSU in the last year with limited opportunities for advancement, financial reasons (salaries, resources, etc.) and tension with supervisor/manager most frequently cited as reasons.
6. There are some key differences in staff and faculty perceptions:
 - a. Staff feel more confident that their voices are heard by KSU Library senior administration than by KSU senior administration. Faculty have concerns around shared governance and workload assignments.
 - b. While staff report an overall positive working relationship with faculty, only around one-third reported feeling valued by faculty. The majority of faculty feel that they have

a strong working relationship with staff in KSUL.

- c. Overall, staff are more positive than faculty about KSUL policies and procedures. Most tenured or tenure-track faculty responded positively to questions around tenure and promotion.
7. Comparisons between 2017 and 2019 data found that the 2019 ratings of staff-oriented items with 2017 comparison available were positive for all but two staff items. For most of the faculty-oriented items, the 2019 ratings were more favorable or comparable to the 2017 KSU statistic and/or showed improvement over the KSUL 2017 rating.

Recommendations

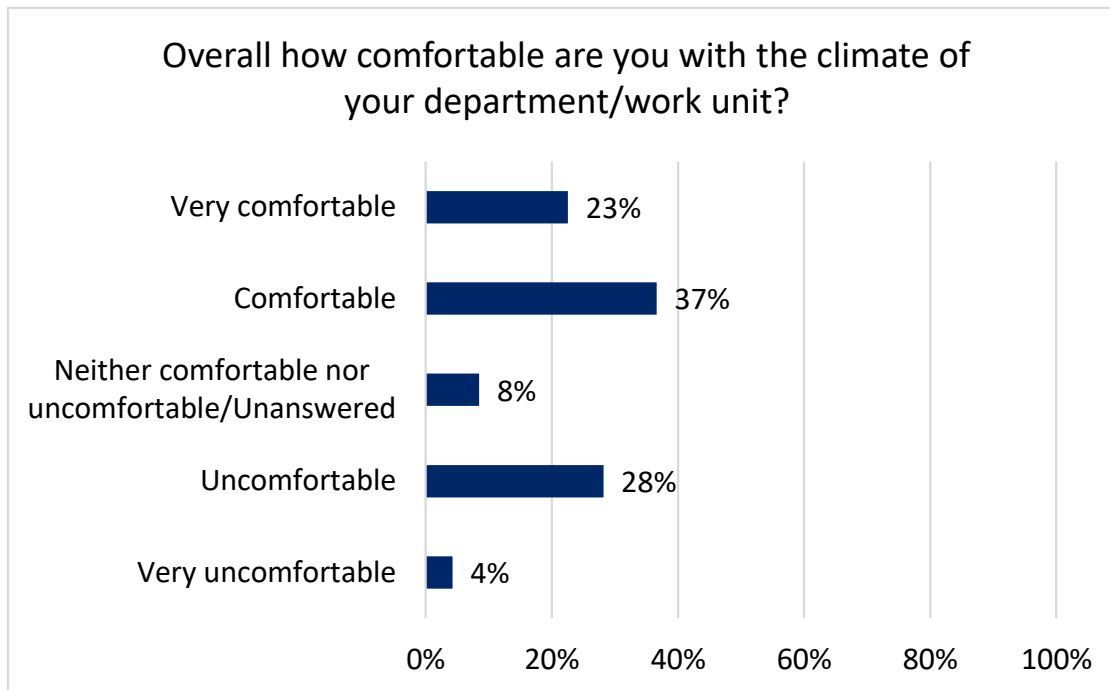
1. Strengthen and extend diversity, equity, and inclusion work with a particular focus on class by position, race, and gender issues. This work must include reaching out beyond KSUL for assistance and guidance.
2. Review and redevelop the diversity committee, taking care to ensure that it is inclusive to all of KSUL, focuses on strategy and action, and plays a visible and critical role in governance.
3. Explore implementation of themes emerging around support including: asking and listening across individuals and departments to the needs, ideas, and preferred ways of receiving acknowledgement.
4. Engage in a mixture of celebratory, tangible incentives, and individualized ways to acknowledge and motivate one another.
5. Explore other less obvious ways to show appreciation such as providing flexible work hours, creating clear pathways for career advancement, and support for professional development.
6. Continue and strengthen suggestions that emerged during the self-study that were piloted or implemented right away including: all-staff shout-outs, cross-department sharing, and creation of a staff advisory council.

What is the organizational climate of University Libraries and how can climate be improved?

The Self-Study team worked with the outside consultant and the Dean to update the 2016 Kent State University-wide Climate Study. The questions were based on the climate survey administered during 2016 by Rankin & Associates. Per the original Climate Study, climate is defined as "the current attitudes, behaviors, standards and practices of employees and students of an institution." "The climate is often shaped through personal experiences, perceptions and institutional efforts." Additional questions measuring peer-to-peer relationships were included in the follow-up survey. All questions referred to the past 12 months (January 2019 through January 2020).

Overall, how comfortable are faculty, staff, and administrators with the climate?

Figure 1: Overall Comfort with KSUL Climate (n=55)



The majority (57%) of the 58 responding KSUL faculty, staff, and administrators were comfortable or very comfortable with the climate of KSUL. Fourteen individuals indicated being uncomfortable or very uncomfortable. Of those 14 individuals, leadership was the primary reason given for discomfort. Additionally, the majority (60%) of the KSUL faculty, staff, and administrators were comfortable or very comfortable with their department/unit. For the nine individuals who noted discomfort with their department, leadership and peers were cited most frequently as reasons for great discomfort.

What words describe our KSUL climate?

Figure 2: Positive Words Describing KSUL Climate (n=50)

For the following words describing the overall climate of KSUL, where do you think KSUL falls?	Describes KSUL very well	Describes KSUL moderately well	Describes KSUL slightly well	Does not describe KSUL
Friendly	42%	50%	6%	2%
Improving	29%	41%	18%	12%
Inclusive	25%	27%	40%	8%
Respectful	28%	52%	16%	4%
Positive for persons with disabilities	27%	50%	21%	2%
Positive for persons who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual	35%	41%	20%	4%
Positive for people of color	34%	28%	28%	11%
Positive for men	72%	22%	6%	0%
Positive for women	24%	46%	20%	10%
Positive for persons who identify as transgender	26%	47%	21%	7%
Positive for persons who identify as non-binary	25%	43%	23%	9%
Positive for non-English speakers	26%	44%	26%	5%

Overall, most of the words/phrases listed described KSUL climate moderately to very well with the lowest percentage still being a majority (52%). Friendly had the largest proportion (92%) rating it describes KSUL very well to moderately well. Areas with the 10% or more rating the word/phrase as not describing KSUL were: positive for people of color, positive for women.

Most rated KSUL overall climate as free of or mostly free of xenophobia about immigration (77%), xenophobia about religion (80%), and discrimination against people with disabilities (80%).

Homophobia (35%), age bias (42%), classism by Socio Economic Status (SES) (24%), sexism (39%), and racism (43%), were rated as encountered occasionally. Classism by position was rated as regularly or constantly encountered by 46% of those responding to this question.

What additional general perceptions do faculty and staff have of the KSUL climate?

Table 1: Climate Study Items (n=52)

Climate Study Faculty, Staff, Administrator Items	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
I am comfortable taking leave that I am entitled to without fear that doing so may affect my job/career.	64%	21%	15%
I have to work harder than I believe my colleagues/co-workers do to achieve the same recognition.	40%	25%	35%
I am reluctant to bring up issues that concern me for fear that doing so will affect my performance evaluation or tenure/merit/promotion decision.	37%	13%	50%
My colleagues/co-workers expect me to represent "the point of view" of my identity (e.g. ability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual identity).	9%	55%	36%
The process for determining salaries/merit raises is clear.	27%	29%	44%

Sixty-four (64) percent of faculty, staff and administrators are comfortable taking leave without fear that doing so will affect their job/career. Forty (40) percent agreed that they have to work harder than they believe their colleagues/co-workers do to achieve the same recognition. And 37% of respondents were reluctant to bring up issues that concern them for fear that doing so will affect their performance evaluation or tenure/merit/promotion decision. Less than 10% of staff, faculty, and administrators agreed that their colleagues/co-workers expect them to represent “the point of view” of their identity. However, only 27% agreed that the process for determining salaries/merit raises is clear.

In general, most faculty, staff, and administrators are comfortable or very comfortable with the climate of KSUL and their department. KSUL is perceived as friendly, respectful, and positive for many groups as well as free or mostly free of xenophobia and discrimination based on disability. However, 36% expressed concerns around classism by position, sexism, racism, and ageism. That being said, less than 10% of staff, faculty, and administrators perceived their colleagues/co-workers as expecting them to represent “the point of view” of their identity.

What are the experiences of staff, faculty, and administrators around identity?

Table 2: Identity (staff n=25; faculty n=26)

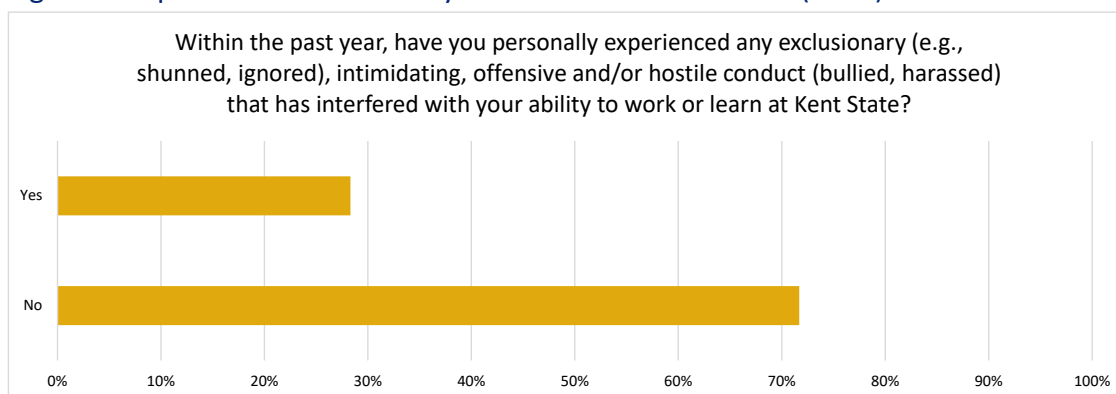
Identity	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
I think that faculty in my department prejudice my abilities based on their perception of my identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender) (faculty)	42%	31%	27%

I think my department chair/school director prejudices my abilities based on their perception of my identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender) (faculty)	15%	31%	54%
I think that co-workers in my work unit prejudice my abilities based on their perception of my identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender) (staff)	13%	17%	70%
I think my supervisor/manager prejudices my abilities based on their perception of my identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender) (staff)	13%	13%	74%

Most staff and faculty feel that their abilities are not prejudged by their supervisor or department chair/school director based on their identity (e.g. race, disability, gender). The majority of staff (71%) feel that their abilities are not prejudged by their co-workers based on their identity (e.g. race, disability, gender). However, 42% of faculty feel that faculty in their department prejudices their abilities based on their perception of identity/background.

Have staff, faculty, and/or administrators reported experiencing exclusionary behavior?

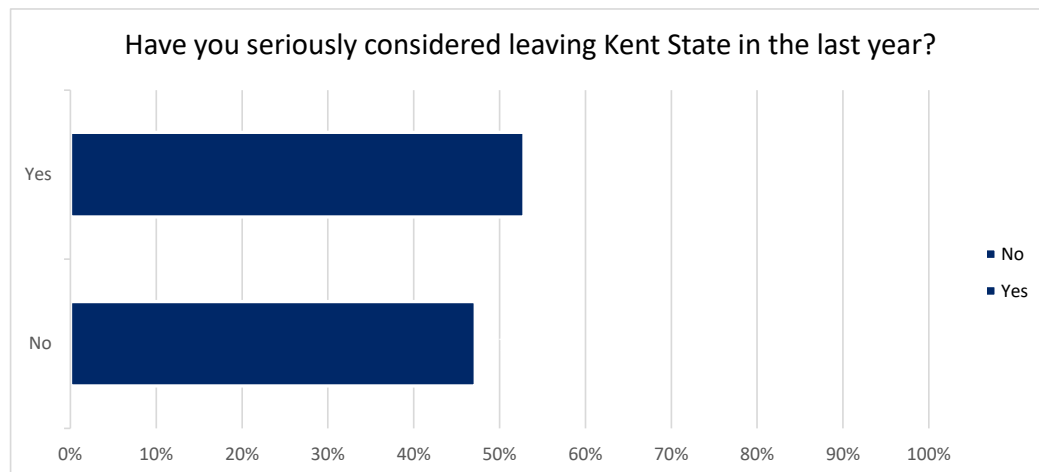
Figure 3: Experienced Exclusionary Behavior within Last Year (n=53)



Over 70% of staff, faculty, and administrators answered no to experiencing exclusionary behavior within the last 12 months. Fourteen KSUL faculty, staff, and/or administrators answered yes to having experienced exclusionary behavior with the top five reasons being: position (staff, faculty, student), a reason not listed, gender/gender identity, age, and educational credentials (M.S. Ph.D., etc.). The top three ways the 14 respondents experienced the conduct was being ignored or excluded, disrespected, and or isolated or left out. Those 14 individuals noting experiencing exclusionary responded most frequently by feeling uncomfortable or angry and telling a family member or friend, with half reportedly avoiding the person they feel is harassing them.

Have faculty, staff, and/or administrators seriously considered leaving KSU in the last year?

Figure 4: Considered Leaving KSU within Last Year (n=53)



A little over half (52%) of faculty, staff, and or administrators reported seriously considering leaving KSU in the last year. With limited opportunities for advancement, financial reasons (salary, resources, etc.), and tension with supervisor/manager most frequently cited as reasons.

What impacts our feeling valued by KSUL?

The majority (54% to 80%) of faculty and staff felt valued in the following areas:

- Skills (faculty)
- Job performance (staff and faculty)
- Contributions to KSUL (faculty)
- By faculty/co-workers in my department/work unit (staff and faculty)
- By department head/supervisor/manager (staff and faculty)
- By KSUL administration (staff)

Where there may be room for growth is around feeling valued by KSU administration, service and diversity in pedagogy and research, and staff feeling valued by faculty. Only 42% of faculty felt that KSUL administration is genuinely concerned for their welfare compared to 64% of staff. Neither a majority of faculty (15%) nor a majority (24%) of staff felt that KSU administration is genuinely concerned for their welfare. A little more than third of faculty felt that that their service contributions were valued (38%) and that including diversity-related information in their pedagogy/research is valued (35%). Of particular note, despite staff noting a positive working relationship with faculty (63%) only 36% feel valued by faculty.

How are we supporting professional development?

Over half (58% to 60%) of staff feel that Kent State and/or their supervisor provide them with resources to pursue professional development. A little over half (54%) of faculty feel that their department provides them with resources to pursue professional development opportunities.

What is the relationship staff and faculty have with their supervisor/department head?

Table 3: Staff/Faculty Relationship to Supervisors/Department Heads (staff n=25; faculty n=26)

Supervisor Relationship	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
I feel valued by my supervisor/manager (staff)	80%	4%	16%
My supervisor provides ongoing feedback to help me improve my performance (staff)	64%	20%	16%
My supervisor provides me with resources to pursue professional development opportunities (staff)	60%	28%	12%
I have supervisors who provide me with job/career advice or guidance when I need it (staff)	56%	28%	16%
My supervisor provides adequate resources to help me manage work-life balance (staff)	52%	32%	16%
Negatively Worded Items			
I think that my supervisor/manager prejudices my abilities based on his/her perception of my identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender) (staff)	12%	12%	76%
I think that my department chair/school director prejudices my abilities based on his/her perception of my identity/background (e.g. age, race, disability, gender) (faculty)	15%	31%	54%

All but one of the items in Table 3 pertain to staff. Most staff feel valued by their supervisor/manager, agree that their supervisor provides ongoing feedback to help improve performance, and provides resources to pursue professional development opportunities. Over half of staff agreed that their supervisor provides adequate resources to help with work-life balance and provides job/career advice when needed. The majority of staff (76%) do not think that their supervisor/manager prejudices their abilities based on perception of identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender). However, only a little over half (54%) of faculty disagrees that their department head/chair prejudices their abilities based on perception of identity/background (e.g. race, disability, gender).

Do staff and faculty feel heard?

Table 4: Staff/Faculty Feel Heard by Administration (staff n=25; faculty n=25)

Feel Heard	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
Staff opinions are taken seriously by Kent State senior administration (e.g. Vice Presidents, Provost)	16%	56%	28%
Staff opinions are taken seriously by KSUL senior administration (e.g. Dean, Assistant/Associate Deans)	56%	20%	24%
I feel that faculty voices are valued in shared governance	28%	24%	48%
I feel that my point of views are taken into account for work load assignments (faculty)	40%	44%	16%

Staff feel more confident that their voices are heard by KSU Library senior administration than by KSU senior administration. Only a third of faculty feel that their voices are valued in shared governance and 40% feel their voice is heard around workload assignments.

How do our policies and procedures impact KSUL climate?

Overall, KSUL policies and procedures are considered supportive by staff with the majority (58% to 96%) agreeing that Kent State is supportive of taking leave, provides adequate resources for work-life balance, and is supportive of flexible work schedules. Overall, staff are more positive than faculty about policies around work-life balance and feeling that people without children are not disproportionately burdened with work responsibilities.

How much is open communication encouraged within our organization?

Most staff (64%) believe that their work unit encourages free and open discussion on difficult topics. However, less than half (48%) believe Kent State does and only 40% believe KSUL encourages free and open discussion on difficult topics. Faculty are even more skeptical with only a quarter (25%) believing KSUL environment and less than one fifth (19%) believing the campus environment encourages free and open discussion on difficult topics. A little less than half (46%) of faculty feel that the University values academic freedom. Another 46% neither agreed nor disagreed with only 8% disagreeing that the University values academic freedom.

How well are we supporting one another?

Table 5: Peer Support (staff n=25; faculty n=26)

Peer Support	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
I have colleagues/co-workers who provide me career advice or guidance when I need it (staff)	52%	36%	12%
I have peers/mentors who provide me career advice or guidance when I need it (faculty)	58%	19%	23%
I believe colleagues include me opportunities that will help my career as much as they do others in my position (faculty)	36%	48%	16%

A little over half of staff (52%) and faculty (58%) agree that they have colleagues/peers that provide them career advice or guidance as needed. Only a little more than a third of faculty (36%) felt that their colleagues include them in career assisting opportunities at the same rate as others in their position.

How do we describe our peer relationships?

Table 6: Peer Relationships (staff n=25; faculty n=26)

Peer Relationships	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
I have a good working relationship with faculty (staff)	60%	36%	4%
I have a strong working relationship with staff in KSUL (faculty)	77%	15%	8%

The majority of staff (63%) feel that they have a good working relationship with faculty. A majority of faculty (77%) agree that they have a strong working relationship with staff in KSUL. Note that while “good” and “strong” are both positive terms, they are not synonyms. In addition, only 36% of staff feel valued by faculty as noted earlier section on “What impacts our feeling valued at KSUL.”

How do we view our work in comparison to our peers?

Equity in workload appears to be an area where there is some room for growth in terms of faculty perceptions with only 12% of faculty feeling that faculty members are equally accountable and less than half (44%) agreeing that the load is equitable and that their colleagues perform as much work to help students.

What are the experiences of organizational climate for tenured and tenure-track faculty?

Around half (46% to 54%) of tenured and tenure-track faculty feel that their service contributions are important to tenure/promotion, that their research is valued, and that Kent State is supportive of the use of sabbatical/faculty professional improvement leave. Most (61% to 100%) are either neutral or agree that the tenure/promotion process is clear and/or reasonable, tenure standards/promotion standards are applied equally to all faculty, and that their diversity-related research/teaching/service contributions have been/will be valued for promotion or tenure. The majority (61% to 84%) do not feel that faculty members that use FMLA are disadvantaged in promotion or tenure and do not feel pressured to change their research agenda to achieve tenure/promotion.

What additional thoughts were shared by faculty, staff, and administrators?

There were three comments (two from staff, one from a faculty member) indicating concerns with KSU Library administration around transparency, workload fairness, and trust. As some of the quantitative rating scale data indicates, there are some staff/faculty tensions. These tensions show up in three comments. Two comments were from staff suggesting faculty are negative and/or hostile to the KSUL administration. One comment was from a faculty member expressing frustration that staff do not value the research faculty do as part of their positions. Additionally, there was one comment each of the following:

- One comment by a faculty member around need and reluctance of faculty to revise/approve RFP policies
- One comment expressing concern that they experienced an ongoing issue with sexism that was subtle and has gone unaddressed
- One comment by a staff member expressing frustration with a faculty supervisor including trust issues

How does our current perceptions (2019) of organizational climate compare with the past climate study results (2016)?

Items where Kent State University Libraries' 2016 averages were either statistically or practically significantly different than the averages in 2016 for KSU as a campus were identified from the 2016 report. A third column with KSUL 2019 averages is included for both faculty and staff tables below.

Faculty and Staff

Table 7: Faculty and Staff Comparison 2016 (n=55) and 2019 (n=53)

Overall (Staff and Faculty) Items	2017 Campus Average	2017 University Libraries Average	2019 University Libraries Average
Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate at Kent State?	3.78	3.67	3.89
Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate in your department/work unit?	3.75	3.45	3.78
Have you ever seriously considered leaving Kent State?	53%	62%	52%
Within the past year, have you personally experienced any exclusionary (e.g. shunned, ignored), intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct (bullied, harassed) that has interfered with your ability to work or learn at Kent State?	22%	*	28%

Faculty

Table 8: Faculty Comparison 2016 (n=21) and 2019 (n=28, including admin with faculty rank)

Faculty Items	2017 Campus Average	2017 University Libraries Average	2019 University Libraries Average
Department Supportive of Taking Leave	2.96	2.69	4.00
Service Contributions Important to Tenure/Promotion	2.39	2.15	4.00
Comfortable with KSU Climate*	3.78	3.67	3.89
Comfortable Taking Leave (Entitled to) without Fear for Job/Career	2.82	2.71	3.42
Tenure/Promotion Process is Clear*	2.75	2.50	3.38
Tenure/Promotion Process is Reasonable*	2.77	2.44	3.25
Points of View Taken into Account Scheduling*	2.96	2.5	3.18
Work Load is Reasonable	2.71	2.62	3.18
KSU Senior Admin Genuinely Concerned for Welfare	2.85	2.85	3.00
Departments Provides Adequate Resources for Work-Life Balance	2.39	2.65	2.94
Tenure Promotion Process Applied Equally to All Faculty*	2.38	1.76	2.89
Department Head/Chair Pre-Judges Abilities Based on Identity/Background*	3.48	3.05	2.75
Seriously Considered Leaving KSU	62%	53%	36%
Valued by Department Head/Chair*	3.84	3.24	3.75
Comfortable with Department Climate	3.75	3.45	3.60
Faculty Voices Valued in Shared Governance	2.95	2.81	2.94
Colleagues/Co-Workers Pre-Judges Abilities Based on Identity/Background*	2.81	2.75	2.75
Percent Comfortable/Very Comfortable with Department Climate	68%	55%	65%
Burdened by Service Responsibilities Beyond Colleagues	2.62	2.78	3.35
Diversity-Related Info in Teaching/Pedagogy/Research Valued	3.51	3.44	3.29
Burdened by Service Responsibilities	2.47	2.67	3.25
Service Contributions are Valued	3.37	3.29	3.25
Perform Work to Help Students Beyond Colleagues/Co-Workers*	2.28	2.60	3.06
Department Faculty members Disadvantaged Using FMLA*	3.02	2.06	2.88
People with No Children More Burdened with Work Responsibilities*	2.94	2.57	2.71
Pressured to Change Research Agenda to Achieve Tenure/Promotion*	2.15	2.69	2.67

*-Items flagged in 2017 report as University Libraries averages significantly different from the Campus average.

For most of the items (highlighted in green and yellow), 2019 ratings were more favorable or comparable to the 2016 KSU statistic and/or showed improvement over the KSUL 2016 rating. Items such as feelings of being burdened, pressured to change research agenda, and feeling service contributions and diversity-related contributions are valued were less positive in 2019 are highlighted in red.

Staff

Table 9: Staff Comparison 2016 (n=21) and 2019 (n=25, including admin without faculty rank)

Staff Items	2017 KSU Statistic	2017 KSUL Statistic	2019 KSUL Statistic
Staff Opinions Taken Seriously by Senior Administrators	2.86	3.00	3.08
Comfortable with Department Climate	3.9	3.73	4.13
Percent Comfortable/Very Comfortable with Department Climate	58%	68%	84%
Seriously Considered Leaving KSU	52%	53%	48%
Comfortable Taking Leave (Entitled to) without Fear for Job/Career	3.01	3.34	3.63
Process Determining Salaries/Merit Raises Clear	2.24	2.31	2.82
Supervisor/Manager Pre-Judges Abilities Based on Identity/Background	3.69	3.93	2.62
Experience Exclusionary Behavior	27%	18%	20%
Believe Work Harder than Colleagues/Co-Workers	2.64	2.97	2.88

Overall, except for experiencing exclusionary behavior and believing working harder than colleagues, 2019 ratings of staff-oriented items with 2016 comparison available were positive.

How can the climate be improved?

In general, the climate of KSUL is positive and affirming. However, there are some tensions that merit exploration primarily around the relationship of faculty and staff with KSU administration, faculty perceptions of the KSU Library administration, class differences around position particular between faculty and staff, and faculty perceptions of shared governance.

Additional approaches toward appreciation are outlined in that section below.

How do we best appreciate and support each other?

Faculty, staff, and administrators were asked to share ideas around appreciation and support for one another through department discussions, an online survey, an all-staff opportunity to post ideas on flip-chart paper, and a follow-up opportunity for individuals to continue to post ideas to the flip-chart questions over several weeks in a shared space. Specifically, faculty, staff, and administrators were asked to respond to the following questions:

- How do we create a more positive work environment?
- What do we do to motivate each other within departments?
- How do we better communicate individual/department successes?
- How do we learn what people are most proud of in their work and showcase/celebrate it at the department level?
- How can we reward staff achievement at the department level?
- What is one thing that could be done to improve our department working environment?

Across all these questions three major themes emerged and were often repeated as answers to multiple questions.

1. Ask and listen across individuals and departments to the needs, ideas, and preferred ways of receiving acknowledgement
2. Engage in a mixture of celebratory, tangible incentives, and individualized ways to acknowledge and motivate one another
3. Explore other less obvious ways to show appreciation such as: use of space, support for advancement, and flexibility

A few suggestions that emerged have already been piloted including:

- all-staff shout-outs
- cross-department sharing
- creation of a staff advisory council

How Do We Stack Up Against Other Research Libraries?

Key Findings

1. Kent State University Libraries' (KSUL) financial resources measure up well when compared to peers. The KSUL collections budget trails many peers, but more often KSUL's budget resources are on par with their peers or at least in the middle. The KSUL budget looks especially strong in comparison to peers when examined as a percentage of overall institutional budget and percentage of institutional academic support budgets. However, in general, financial resources for academic libraries are and have been declining. While KSUL is not out of alignment with peers, most, if not all, academic libraries face financial challenges.
2. KSUL 's collections budget trails many peers, especially those in ARL. For the most part peers' collections budgets, even those that have trended up slightly, are not keeping up with inflation. When we consider collections spending per student FTE and recognize that KSUL's collections resources support the entire Kent State system, we see KSUL lagging behind many Ohio peers. This may also be a sign of budget ROI in the form of efficiency.
3. KSUL's personnel resources have remained comparatively strong to peers, yet all peers report flat to declining salaries and wages.
4. KSUL's staffing is very similar to peers. All peers show staffing declines over the last five years. KSUL has lost 28 employees since 1998, but the bulk of that (18) was experienced before 2011.
5. KSUL enjoys the efficiencies of being a leading member of OhioLINK. Shared services and shared collections strategies are on the horizon.
6. Among KSUL's distinctions are its internationally renowned special collections, its multi-faceted and innovative plagiarism educational programming, its potential to support emerging publishing innovations, and its strong support for entrepreneurship and design innovation.

Recommendations

1. Remain vigilant about their financial resources, both managing them and advocating for new strategic investments. Its collections or materials budget appears especially vulnerable.
2. Create a strategic staffing plan and update it at least twice a year to continually examine how to reorganize staffing to meet the needs of their university community and respond to future

vacancies.

3. Endeavour to help keep OhioLINK strong financially through advocacy and strategic thinking/leadership.
4. Continue to pursue their Right Book Right Place initiative, as it focuses on the efficient and effective shared management of legacy print collections.
5. Explore win-win-win shared service relationships with regional partners.
6. Support advancing the work of its areas of distinction through goal setting, grant work and publicity.

Who are our peers?

Our purpose in identifying peers was to list a cohort of libraries like us, that is to find libraries to be used as comparators. Academic libraries were examined for similarities of total library expenditures, staff FTE, and institutional enrollment. We also looked for peers with common affiliations (OhioLINK, Association of Research Libraries, and Mid-American Conference). Figure 1.1 lists KSUL Peers (note this list was built on 2018 data. Similar data is shared later and in many cases, it has been updated with 2019 data).

We did not use the peers that Kent State University had identified in their most recent strategic planning process because they used a multitude of comparative metrics, some of which may relate to libraries, but many which do not. Two of those peers, Ohio University and Western Michigan University, were found to fit into our peer list as they were very similar per the basic measures we used.

TABLE 1: KSUL PEERS [ACRL 2018]

Potential Peer List	Total expenditures, includes fringe	Total # of Staff FTEs	Enrollment (Total Headcount)	Affiliations
Auburn University Libraries	\$16,370,095	104	29,776	ARL
Georgia Tech Library	\$11,651,588	92	29,376	ARL
Grand Valley State University Libraries	\$11,353,524	93.7	27,613	
Kent State University	\$13,210,938	103.9	26,991	MAC, ARL, OhioLINK
Ohio University Libraries	\$14,182,590	116.89	29,147	MAC, ARL, OhioLINK
Western Michigan University Libraries	\$15,923,881	112.75	22,894	MAC

At times, we also include the University of Cincinnati and the Miami University (Ohio) for additional OhioLINK comparators and in the case of Cincinnati an aspirational comparator, as they are much larger.

A Note on Data Sources and Limitations

The data used in this benchmarking analysis largely comes from [ACRL Metrics](#), which reports data from ACRL Academic Library Trends & Statistics Survey (1998-present), a select subset of IPEDS data specific to academic libraries, and the former NCES academic library statistics data. ACRL reports data from all peers. At times [ARL Statistics](#) are examined, but not all peers are included in this data. Peer libraries' websites were also examined selectively for some staffing data. KSUL staffing directories were examined through use of the [Internet Archive's Wayback Machine](#). Some data was gleaned from self-study events and departmental discussions. For one question, data is taken from the survey that deans completed for this self-study. For another question, data compiled informally among Ohio library deans and directors (Ohio Academic Libraries) is referenced.

Some limitations to be aware of include:

- When this study began, ACRL data was available through 2018. In early 2020, the 2019 data set became available. For example, when peers were selected, 2018 data was consulted. Later, when staffing was examined, we looked at 2019 data.
- The data in ACRL and ARL is dependent on the consistency of the data informant, that is how well did the individual at each institution report the data per the instrument's requirements. You will notice anomalies in reporting (for example, an obviously incorrect value may appear, like -1, or data may be completely missing).
- The data are also limited by the collection instrument's standards. For example, ACRL and ARL use slightly different definitions for materials expenditures. ARL attempts to only collect expenses focused on materials, while ACRL includes service expenses within this category. Again, how the person reporting the data interprets this and how their native data sets are structured can influence the overall consistency of the data.
- The data available has limitations in what it addresses. Some of our questions were not addressed by the data and therefore were not answerable under the circumstances in which this analysis was completed.
- LaunchNET and University Press data has been excluded from all analysis in this section of our report.

How does our overall budget compare to our peers?

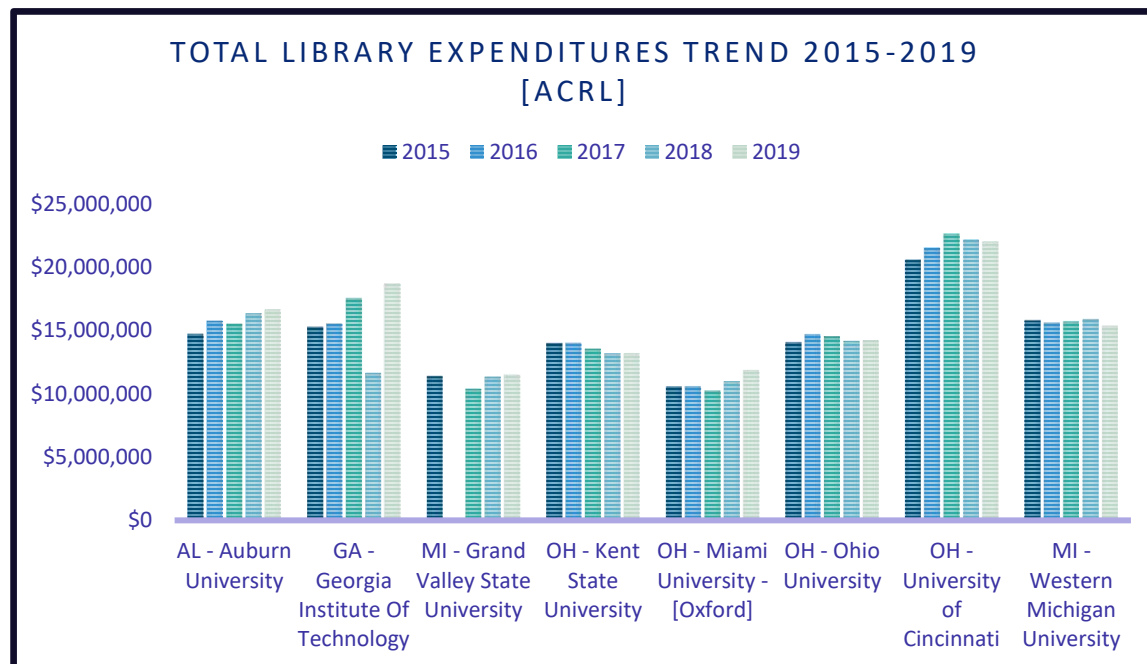
TABLE 2: TOTAL LIBRARY EXPENDITURES (ACRL 2019)

Location	Total expenditures, includes fringe 2019 [ACRL]
GA - Georgia Institute Of Technology	\$18,701,477
AL - Auburn University	\$16,668,851
MI - Western Michigan University	\$15,371,534
OH - Ohio University	\$14,236,429
OH - Kent State University	\$13,189,890
MI - Grand Valley State University	\$11,519,236
	Mean= \$14,947,902

While KSUL ranks next to last among our five peers, our budget is very near the mean of \$14,947,902. It might be safe to say that our total expenditures is a little low compared to our peers, but not dramatically so.

How does our budget compare to our peers over the last five years?

CHART 1: FIVE-YEAR BUDGET TREND



Examining the five-year trend on total expenditures (chart 3), we see relatively flat budgets. A few trend up slightly, and a few, like Kent State, trend down slightly. Georgia Tech has experienced substantial enrollment growth in 2019 (11%), which may account for their jump. KSUL's total expenditure could be said to be trending down, but again, not dramatically in comparison to peers like Ohio University.

How does our budget compare to our peers as percentage of overall *academic support budget?

**Note that IPEDS defines academic support as follows (from IPEDS survey instructions) -- Enter the expenses for support services that are an integral part of the institution's primary mission of instruction, research, or public service and that are not charged directly to these primary programs. Include expenses for libraries, museums, galleries, audio/visual services, academic development, academic computing support, course and curriculum development, and academic administration.*

TABLE 3: LIBRARY EXPENDITURES AS % OF INSTITUTION TOTAL EXP FOR ACADEMIC SUPPORT [IPEDS]

Location	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
GA - Georgia Institute Of Technology	25.43%	24.68%	26.21%	26.77%	26.55%	24.07%	26.62%
OH - Kent State University	19.35%	18.30%	19.99%	21.37%	21.11%	18.69%	24.91%
MI - Western Michigan University	22.19%	22.14%	25.60%	24.12%	23.15%	22.68%	24.60%
MI - Grand Valley State University	16.91%	17.35%	23.63%	20.75%	21.81%	19.66%	20.57%
OH - Ohio University	19.13%	19.02%	16.36%	16.65%	16.78%	15.41%	16.37%
AL - Auburn University	21.80%	19.78%	19.66%	19.89%	27.33%	18.49%	15.25%

Table 3 shows that in 2018 KSUL ranks among peers as having the second highest percentage of total expenditures for academic support. Although the previous year, KSUL ranked in the middle. In general, we can state that KSUL's share of academic support expense has been flat to trending up, but holds its own with peers.

How does our budget compare to our peers as percentage of overall institutional budget?

TABLE 4: LIBRARY EXPENDITURES AS % OF INSTITUTION TOTAL EXPENDITURES

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
MI - Western Michigan University	2.53%	2.37%	2.75%	2.91%	2.63%	2.72%	2.85%
MI - Grand Valley State University	1.98%	2.07%	2.86%	2.57%	2.55%	2.28%	2.41%
OH - Kent State University	1.73%	1.64%	1.87%	2.03%	2.00%	1.79%	2.27%
OH - Ohio University	1.98%	1.80%	1.93%	1.99%	1.99%	1.83%	2.26%
AL - Auburn University	1.54%	1.53%	1.71%	1.70%	1.68%	1.51%	1.49%
GA - Georgia Institute Of Technology	1.10%	1.08%	1.11%	1.06%	1.07%	0.99%	1.03%

Another indicator of financial health is to consider our total library expenses as a percentage of overall institutional budget (table 4). Here KSUL's percentage has increased substantially in recent years. KSUL ranks a strong third. This could be showing that KSUL's budget may be holding its own, while other areas of the university have taken more substantial cuts. It should be noted that this data exemplifies the differences in institutions. Auburn and Georgia Tech have large budgets with bigger areas around athletics, engineering and health. These influences can make healthy library budgets appear as smaller percentages when compared against the total overall expenditures.

How does our collections or materials budget compare to our peers?

TABLE 5: TOTAL LIBRARY MATERIALS EXPENDITURES [ACRL]

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
OH - University of Cincinnati	\$10,451,640	\$10,524,251	\$11,268,058	\$10,857,607	\$10,679,101
AL - Auburn University	\$7,439,180	\$8,148,138	\$7,847,041	\$8,525,739	\$8,489,821
MI - Western Michigan University	\$6,848,711	\$6,782,866	\$7,456,693	\$7,336,399	\$6,791,586
OH - Ohio University	\$5,317,325	\$5,773,163	\$5,731,071	\$5,704,735	\$5,827,799
OH - Kent State University	\$5,588,610	\$5,613,802	\$5,089,075	\$5,185,199	\$5,682,893
MI - Grand Valley State University	\$4,704,252		\$3,747,052	\$5,058,744	\$5,040,730
OH - Miami University - [Oxford]	\$3,993,377	\$4,210,662	\$3,892,957	\$4,128,251	\$4,106,333
GA - Georgia Institute Of Technology	\$7,878,745	\$9,044,584	\$3,261,396	\$3,840,647	\$2,984,199

CHART 2: TOTAL LIBRARY MATERIALS EXPENDITURES 5 YEAR TREND [ACRL]

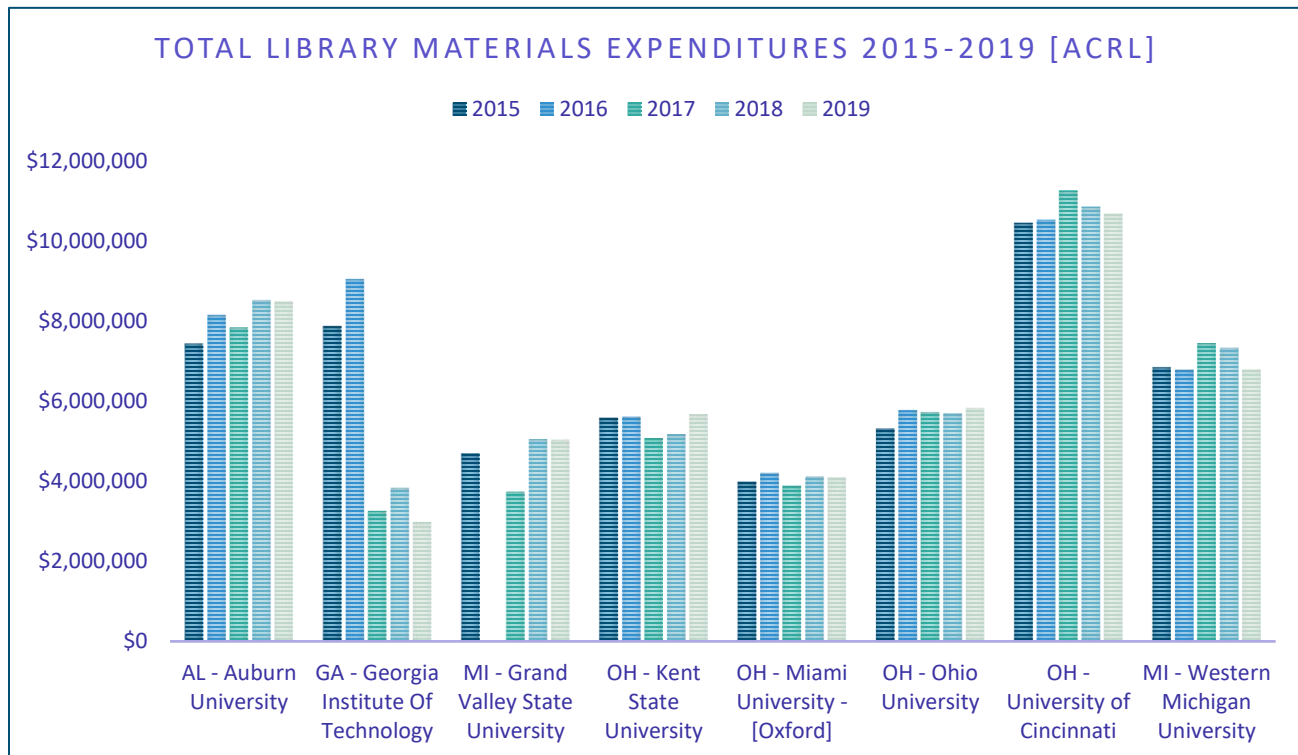
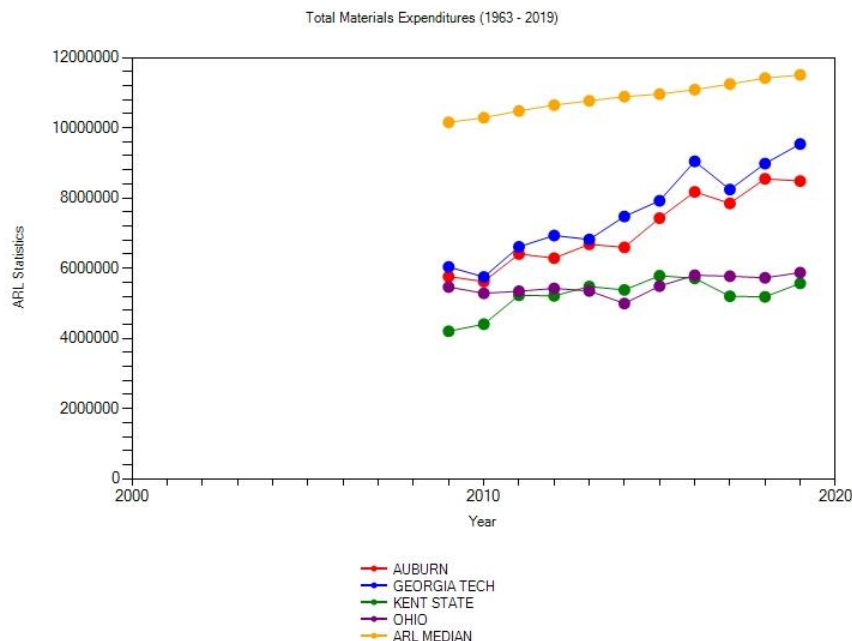


CHART 3: TOTAL MATERIALS EXPENDITURES TREND [ARL]



Tables 5 and charts 2 and 3 share multiple views of peers’ collections budgets. Table 5 compares collections budgets among peers in the most recent year using ACRL data, and chart 2 graphs this same data. Chart 3 graphs collection budget trends for ARL peers using ARL data. For the most part these are budgets, even those that are increasing slightly, that can’t keep up with inflation, with Georgia Tech and Auburn being outliers (notice also the discrepancy between Georgia Tech’s ACRL and ARL numbers). Despite KSUL’s challenges in recent years with their collections budget, their numbers look to be middle of the pack among peers, but not strong compared to the ARL median and ARL peers.

TABLE 6: COLLECTIONS ALLOCATION PER STUDENT FTE (OHIO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES)

Library System	Allocation per Student FTE
Wright State	\$282.29
Cincinnati	\$256.14
Ohio State	\$225.17
Ohio	\$199.73
Akron	\$174.48
Miami (OH)	\$172.36
Toledo	\$144.44
BGSU	\$132.84
Kent State	\$127.28
Cleveland State	\$118.67
Youngstown	\$102.07

When we examine KSUL’s collection budget allocation per student FTE across the KSU system, we see that KSUL ranks next to last among the reporting library systems (table 6). This could indicate a good return on investment, as Kent State’s retention and graduation rates have been improving. It should be noted that enrollment declines could inadvertently inflate this number.

How does our personnel budget compare to our peers?

Table 7: Total salaries and wages [ACRL 2019]

Location	Total salaries and wages (excluding fringe)
GA - Georgia Institute Of Technology	\$5,866,568
OH - Ohio University	\$5,150,822
OH - Kent State University	\$5,026,986
AL - Auburn University	\$4,866,578
MI - Western Michigan University	\$4,814,364
MI - Grand Valley State University	\$4,239,565

CHART 4: TOTAL SALARIES AND WAGES TREND

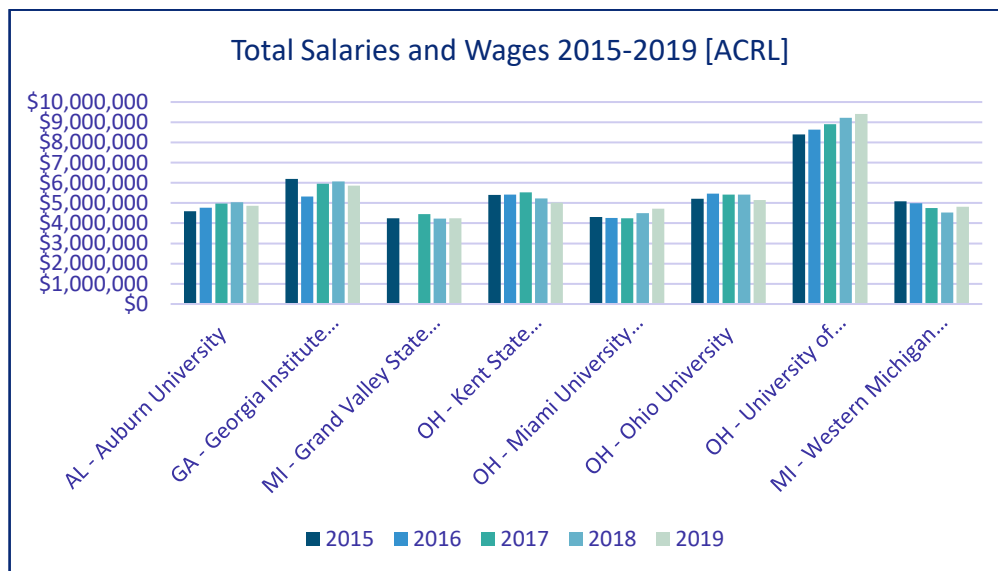


Table 7 lists total salaries and wages for KSUL and peers for 2019. Chart 4 graphs total wages and salaries over the last five years. KSUL appears to be in the middle of the pack compared to peers regarding their personnel budget. KSUL also appears to hold its own better with the ARL peers in this comparison. Aside from the University of Cincinnati, we see flat to slightly declining personnel budgets in this analysis.

How does our staffing compare to our peers?

TABLE 8: CURRENT OVERALL STAFFING (ACRL 2019)

Location	Librarians FTE	All other staff FTE	Total less Students	Student # of FTE	Total Staff FTE
GA - Georgia Tech	28	52	80	5	85
OH - Ohio University	37	42	79	28	107
MI - Grand Valley State University	34	39	73	26.7	99.7
OH - Kent State University	33.8	39	72.8	34.9	107.7
AL - Auburn University	27	44	71	32	103
MI - Western Michigan University	23.75	44	67.75	27.6	95.35

Table 8 provides several data points on staffing. Compared to peers, KSUL's librarian FTE appears middle of the group, but only 3.2 from the top. In the category of total staff FTE less students, KSUL appears in the middle again. KSUL has the highest number of student FTE. Only Auburn approaches KSUL's student FTE number. With students included, KSUL has the highest FTE staffing number among peers.

Peer websites were examined in an attempt to compare staffing levels for specific departmental areas. Due to differences in nomenclature and organizational structure, these comparisons were very difficult. We share two findings, one with low certainty and one with high certainty:

1. KSUL has more catalogers than all peers except Ohio University (low certainty).
2. KSUL branch libraries are all understaffed by half to one whole FTE per branch library (high certainty).

CHART 5: TOTAL STAFF FTE TREND [ACRL]

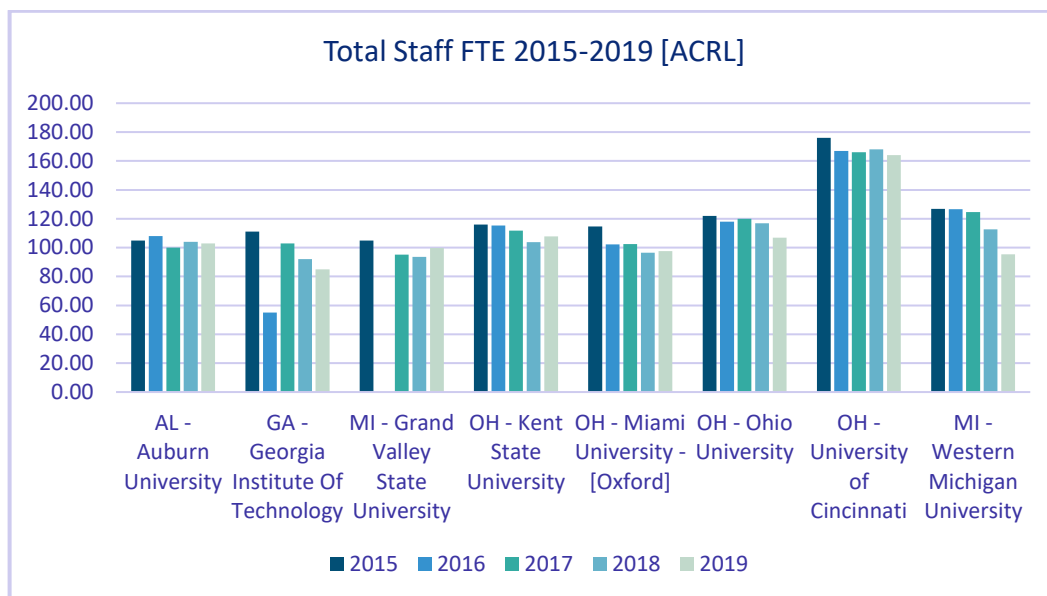
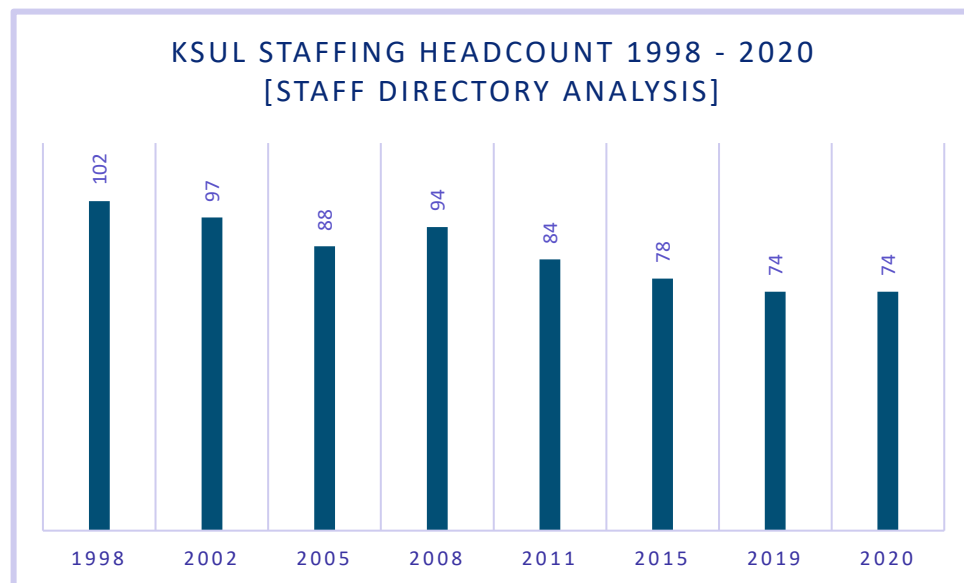


Chart 5 graphs the total staff FTE staff trend for the most recent five years. Most of our peers have experienced flat to slightly declining staffing over the last five years. In fact, no single peer shows steady growth or even incremental growth.

How has KSUL's staffing changed over the last two decades?

CHART 6: KSUL STAFFING HEADCOUNT 1998-2020



Analysis of KSUL staffing directories since 1998 (chart 6) shows a steady decline in staff headcount. Interesting to note is that the staffing headcount fell more sharply between 1998 and 2011 (18), than from 2011 to 2020 (10). The staff directories were normalized by removing classroom services, Teleproductions and new media (departments within the library organization, but not discrete library

departments) before analysis was conducted. Just as more recent headcounts do not include LaunchNET or the University Press.

What opportunities might exist for us to work with or across other libraries to gain efficiencies, grow resources or otherwise better improve our operations?

These responses were gathered from internal survey and interviews:

- KSUL and other Ohio peers already enjoy significant efficiencies as part of the OhioLINK consortium.
- Regional shared services may be something to examine, such as a regional technical services center. But such developments come at some cost to the library ecosystem, as administrators supporting such efforts are looking to lower costs and lower staffing.
- Shared collection development and last-copy initiatives have already begun to be discussed and could lead to strong efficiencies related to managing legacy print collections.
- Opportunities might exist to develop shared networks for sharing and digitizing special collections.

What is distinctive about KSUL in comparison to our peers?

These distinctions were generated from surveys and interviews:

- KSUL enjoys the distinction of holding several distinctive special collections. Each peer has their own distinctive collections, but with May 4 and True Crime, KSUL is well-positioned to continue to grow an international reputation in these areas.
- KSUL has remarkably advanced plagiarism educational programming that is distinctive among peers and nationally.
- KSUL and the Kent State University Press are positioned to create distinctive publishing arrangements in the future.
- KSUL's support of Design Innovation combined with its makerspaces, LaunchNET and strong entrepreneurship librarian marks KSUL as an entrepreneurially distinctive library organization, well-positioned to support KSU and community-based economic development and innovation.

How does KSUL support for faculty travel compare to other units at Kent State University?

Tenured/tenure-track faculty are asked to participate in scholarly activities and conduct research as part of their job assignments. With this in mind, we asked Kent State (Kent Campus) deans to report their estimated travel funding given to their faculty members. Five deans responded. Two reported they gave faculty \$500 annually. One reported \$1,250 to \$1,500. Two others reported more than \$1,500. The mean response comes out to \$1,075. A review of KSUL travel expenditure for faculty

members in 2019 revealed that 24 faculty members traveled, and they received a total of administrative and travel funding equaling \$53,318. The average KSUL faculty member received \$2,222 during 2019 for travel. This places KSUL in the highest tier of support, at more than \$1,500. We note that the dean's survey was self-reported and asked for only ranges. So this analysis can be counted on only for a general sense or a guideline for what is happening at the university overall, but it does show that KSUL faculty have received healthy travel support, at least for 2019.

How Do Our External Stakeholders View Us and What Are Their Needs?

Key Findings

1. Over 80% of external stakeholders rank KSUL as above average or among the best.
2. The three primary areas of need noted across external stakeholders were:
 - a. Access to resources (particularly research materials)
 - b. Library services and staff
 - c. Library spaces, technology, and amenities
3. Looking at needs holistically, many times services and resources were equally praised and criticized. For example, many celebrate our access to resources while many others criticize our lack of access to resources.
4. Stakeholder groups emphasized different aspects of the strengths of KSUL.
 - a. Upper Administration (including the Provost):
 - i. Intentional leadership of KSUL in changing to meet the needs of the University and the changing landscape of information, space, and higher education.
 - ii. The willingness to create non-traditional activities.
 - iii. Strong leadership and partnering within KSUL and across KSU.
 - iv. High-quality responsive staff.
 - v. Understanding of academic needs, resources, and IT.
 - b. Faculty, Graduate Students, and College Administration:
 - i. Online access to resources
 - ii. Interlibrary loan
 - iii. Study spaces

- c. Undergraduate Students:
 - i. Partner services co-located in KSUL.
 - ii. Study spaces.
 - iii. Printing and copying.

- 5. While overwhelmingly, the feedback was positive, the following areas were noted by external stakeholders as room for improvement in:
 - a. the age, size, subject content, breadth of scholarly materials, and delivery time for collections.

 - b. the website in general, off-campus access, and search tool ease of use

 - c. an increased emphasis on information literacy programming that focuses on curricular and co-curricular partnerships.

 - d. balance between centralized access to partner resources, amenities, and group spaces with quiet study spaces

- 6. Students, primarily undergraduates, do not differentiate between library services, resources and services and those of University Library partners. For example, they view the One Stop as part of the Library.

Recommendations

1. Celebrate and reflect on the finding that KSUL is viewed very, very positively by its external stakeholders.

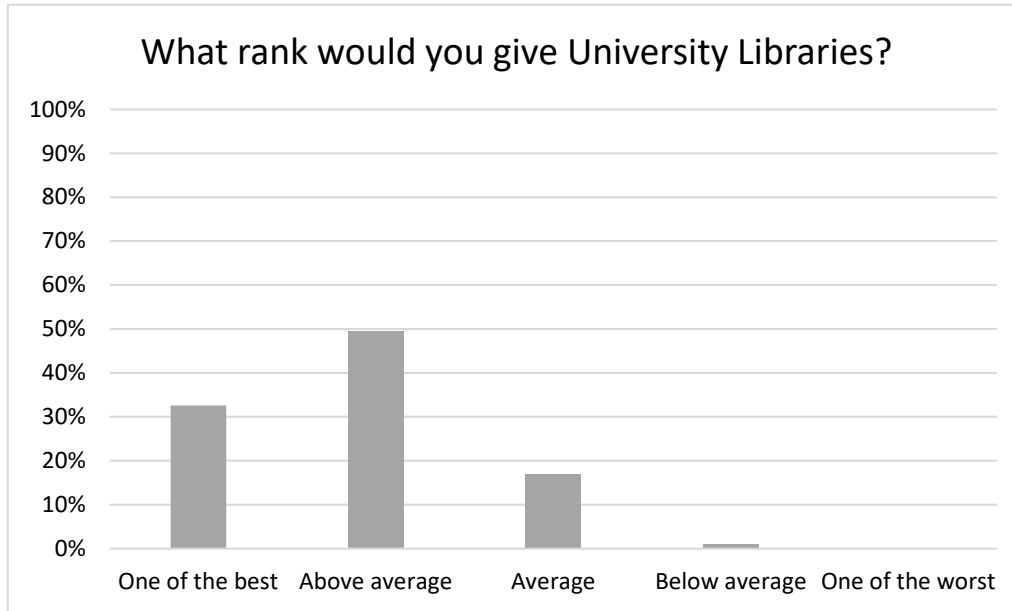
2. Explore KSUL partnerships, especially those with University Library building partners, to determine ways to differentiate the KSUL brand at times and when to work with partners for a common brand at other times.

3. Develop strategic communication strategies to help students and faculty understand that while we don't have every journal or book in our collection, we can usually provide access through OhioLINK or interlibrary loan.

4. Do a deep dive on the rich data set derived from the undergraduate survey to identify more granular findings and action steps.

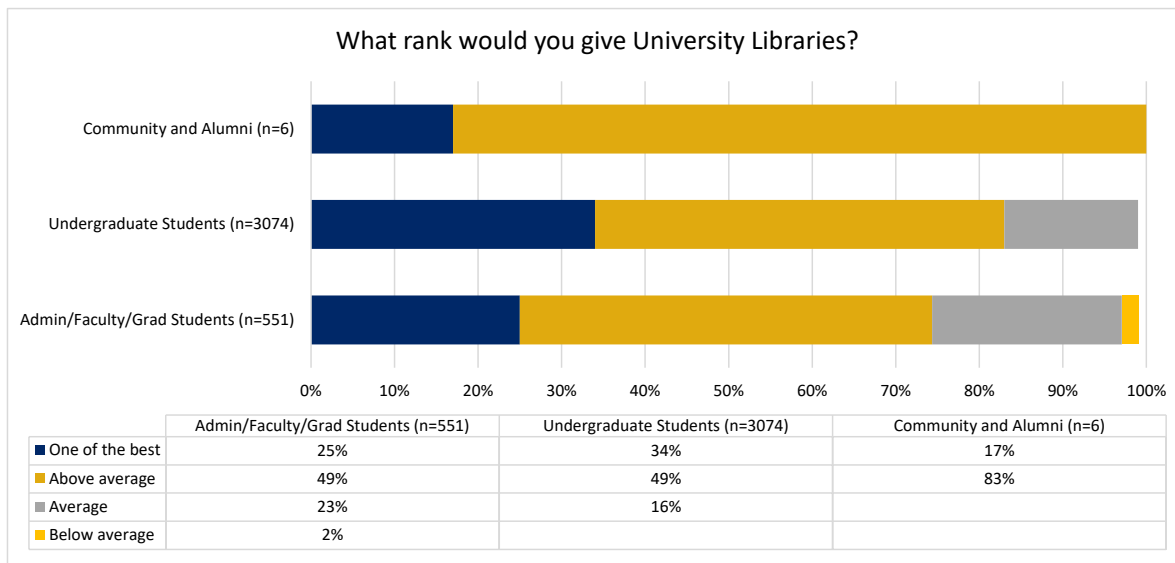
How do our external stakeholders rank KSUL?

Figure 1: Rank of KSUL across all stakeholder groups (n=3,643)



Impressively, over 80% rank KSUL as one of the best or above average. This is a finding to be celebrated.

Figure 2: Rank of KSUL by stakeholder group (n=3,643)



- Faculty and graduate students were generally positive with similar response patterns
- Undergraduate students were generally positive
- Administrators were very positive overall

What are External Stakeholders Needs?

The three primary areas of need noted across external stakeholders were:

1. Access to resources (particularly research materials)
2. Library services and staff
3. Library spaces, technology, and amenities

Access to Resources (Particularly Research Materials)

Graduate students, faculty, and administrators universally agreed on the importance of access to research materials of all types, especially digital access. Undergraduates too noted a general appreciation for digital access to resources but also mentioned the importance of print collections and retrieval from the stacks as well as circulation desk staff.

Graduate students, faculty, and administrators often specifically noted the importance of OhioLINK and Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery for accessing materials not held by Kent State, as well as book delivery and the ability to request materials. Among administrators and chairs/directors, OhioLINK was highly praised.

Collections lacking specific content was one of the biggest concerns of graduate students, faculty, and administrators. Both graduate and undergraduate students also noted issues with accessing and using resources (user experience obstacles). In particular, concerns were noted from students and faculty around the age, size, subject content, breadth of scholarly materials, and turnaround time for collections.

Library Services and Staff

Faculty appreciated how the library's high-quality resources could be incorporated into their course materials with the help of course reserves and e-reserves, and that they could have library instruction incorporated into their courses. Concerns were raised primarily by graduate and undergraduate students around the website and search tools. Students and faculty both noted frustrations with the website in general, off-campus access, the quality of search tools, and difficulty accessing articles or results from a search.

Library services noted as strengths and needs included: Special Collections, Statistical Consulting, Copyright Services, Plagiarism School, SMS, library instruction, research help (including the LibChat service), reserves, interlibrary loan, and LaunchNET. There was high praise for the library's faculty and staff, including several shout-outs by name. The library's staff and librarians were described as helpful, quick to respond to inquiries and requests, knowledgeable, friendly, and student-focused.

The availability of quiet study space is the biggest weakness of University Libraries. The main library has been voted for many years as the 1st study space on campus. With the Starbucks and One-Stop service came into the main library, the first floor became crowded and noisy and filthy in general. People who come to the library for group meetings or discussions may not affect a lot by the One-Stop or Starbucks, but that is not the case for those who seek a quiet place and study alone. It is nice that the University Libraries created new quiet space one the sixth floor. However, the 2-hour time limitation could be a hassle for graduate students because they usually need longer study time.

Graduate Student, Lifespan Development and Educational Sciences

There is room for improvement in how off-campus access of electronic resources works and also a desire for an increased emphasis on information literacy programming that focuses on curricular and co-curricular partnerships.

Library Spaces, Technology, and Amenities

The library's physical spaces, amenities, and technology mostly appealed to undergraduate and graduate students. For undergraduates, they mentioned study and quiet areas, convenient printing and computer access and then a number

*The folks who do the e-course reserves...are awesome. The circulation desk is always staffed by great people. Book delivery is *fabulous*...*

Faculty, Political Science

I enjoy the work space available for students on the main floor of the library. It is the floor I am most familiar with and the one I usually hang out on to study. I think the layout is good for the amount of students that come in and out on the daily. There is often heavy traffic, but the space works well in handling it.

Graduate Student, Foundations, Leadership, and Administration

of partner services such as tutoring, One Stop, and Writing Commons. Graduate students especially valued access to the Writing Commons and quiet study space. Both undergraduate and graduate students mentioned Starbucks.

Similarly to the undergraduate students, graduate students also liked that the library had a variety of different study environments to choose from (both quiet and non-quiet); however, graduate students tended to place more value on quiet study space than undergraduates. Faculty mentioned these spaces and amenities as needed for their students. There are differences in opinion about the spaces and how well they are presently working with both praise and concerns raised.

What Is Our impact and How Do We Measure It?

Key Findings

1. KSUL has made modest progress in assessing and evaluating its work in recent years, but it lacks an overall assessment plan and many of its initiatives lack assessment strategies.
2. Assessment expertise does exist within KSUL, but the organization could use additional professional development to refresh knowledge and to build deeper knowledge of assessment practices and approaches.
3. KSUL lacks awareness across functional areas of what data and statistics have been collected or are available.

Recommendations

1. KSUL should revise and redeploy its stats dashboard, providing public and internal versions to create a transparent and accessible means of sharing library statistics and data.
2. KSUL should discuss and develop a privacy statement and policy that navigates important issues of patron privacy while allowing space for the anonymized use of patron data to measure library impact and the efficacy of services and resources.
3. KSUL should offer professional development on basic assessment and evaluation to build capacity within the organization to build this work into their practice.
4. KSUL should avoid over-relying on quantitative data in general, and work to utilize assessment practices that recognize what many scholars refer to as the three learning domains of Bloom's Taxonomy: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective, or in other words: what learners know, how learners behave, and how learners feel.
5. KSUL should conduct stakeholder surveys periodically, targeting different user groups. KSUL should develop surveys for undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and community members, and schedule them to be administered every other year (e.g., students one year, faculty and community the next year). The surveys should be partially standardized and partially customizable.
6. KSUL should continue and further invest in building observation and user dialogues, like Pizza for Your Thoughts.
7. Standardized, nationally recognized assessment instruments such as LibQual may be helpful at the right time with the right resources, but this report neither recommends nor dismisses the use of these tools.

8. KSUL should develop, however modest, an assessment plan that speaks to institutional assessment needs, KSUL impact needs, and is reviewed annually.

How are we currently measuring impact?

Impact is a measure of the effectiveness of the work of an organization on outcomes. In a higher education setting, this may include critical learning, teaching, and research outcomes. KSUL has made some progress in assessing and evaluating its work recently, but it has primarily been focused on services, resources, and their usage rather than long-term impact of the use of resources and services.

Table 1: Past and Current Measures

Available Resources	Resources and Services Usage	Demographics	Short-Term Outcomes
Online suggestion box	Building observation project	Patron demographics	Website feedback form
Suggestion for purchase form	Ref analytics statistics	Swipe ins Banner demographics (events, late night)	Discovery feedback form
Reference management software survey	Accreditation reports	KSUL faculty, staff, and admin demographics	Stat software tutorials feedback form
LibCal study space booking statistics	Discovery searches (Library.kent.edu, Libguides, Ome ka, EBSCO, ILLiad, Intranet)		Research data management survey
Scheduler appointment signups	Webpage clicks		LibChat transcript dataset
Proxy data	Internal site search – top queries		Pizza for your thoughts
Fashion Library Hours Survey	Acquisition stats		LibAnswers
Student applications	Special Collections patron interaction stats		LibCal
Scholarship application	In-person research appointments		How Are We Doing Page
Financial data	Scan/digitization requests		Graduate student library survey
New locations page submissions	Statistical Consulting appointment stats		LibQual Survey
ARL Salary Survey	SMS 3 D printing request form		
Lists of services	Reference by appointment (RBA) log form		
Review annual departmental goals	Instructional statistics log form		
User testing	ILL Statistics		
	Circulation statistics		
	Equipment for check out statistics		
	Database click count statistics (LibGuides)		
	Database usage/downloads statistics		
	Main library gate count		
	Computer usage by floor		
	Materials sent through UPS		
	Just-in-time book ordering		
	Streaming media usage		
	Branch library usage		

The assessment work that has been done has been helpful in shaping the high-quality resources and services noted by external stakeholders. However, as there is no position in KSUL with assessment expertise there are challenges in data sharing/transparency and in moving toward impact (or long-term outcomes) level data. Engaging in professional development across the organization to refresh and deepen knowledge around assessment practices and approaches would provide a foundation for identifying and implementing a broader and deeper strategy to evaluating KSUL resources and services and measuring impact on stakeholders.

With a refresh and deepening of assessment and evaluation best practices, KSUL should explore continuing and refining the opportunities for observation and dialogue with stakeholders such as Pizza for Your Thoughts and building use observation studies; adapt or design stakeholder surveys targeting various user groups (e.g. graduate students, faculty, community users...); revise and redeploy its stats dashboard with both internal and external versions to assist in providing transparent library statistical data, and finally, discuss and develop a data privacy policy that protects users while leveraging anonymized patron measures of impact and service/resource effectiveness.

Impact-Related Questions

- **How can we find data that links UL with student success?**

This is usually done through correlative studies, meaning anonymized yet identifiable data points are mapped to both library usage and student success data. This requires tracking library users' interactions with KSUL spaces, resources and services. One good example of this is a study conducted by KSUL faculty: Scarletto, Edith; Burhanna, Kenneth; Richardson, Elizabeth A (2013). *Wide Awake at 4 AM: A Study of Late Night User Behavior, Perceptions and Performance at an Academic Library*. *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 39(5) 371-377. doi: 10.1016/j.acalib.2013.02.006. Retrieved from <https://oaks.kent.edu/libpubs/51>.

- **How do ARL libraries measure their impact?**

ARL libraries use the same approaches that most libraries use, which includes a variety of approaches and methods. ARL is working on developing a [research library impact framework](#), but much work remains, and challenges exist applying this across libraries due to the heterogeneity of libraries within ARL.

Some ARL libraries still rely on the ARL rankings based on the [ARL investment index](#). The ARL Index, compiled from the prior academic year's data, provides a yearly snapshot of the size of each research library's collections and its capacity to provide services to students, faculty and staff, as well as to visiting researchers. Many believe that this index overvalues collection size and budget size.

Appendices*

[Appendix A: Key Definitions](#)

[Appendix B: Self-Study Data Lake Directory](#)

(Use the Data Lake Directory.xlsx file to navigate the data)

[Appendix C: Student Worker Report](#)

Appendix D: Administrator, Faculty, Graduate, and Undergraduate Data Themes

1. [UL Self-Study Survey of Undergrads - Q2: What library services/resources have been helpful to you? \(slides\)](#).
2. [UL Self-Study Survey of Undergrads – Q4: Have you run into any problems using the library? If so, please describe. \(slides\)](#).
3. [UL Self-Study Survey of Undergrads – Q6: What additional services/resources need to be added to the library? \(slides\)](#).

The following sections will be available after the student data deep dive.

4. [Summary: UL Self-Study Survey of Administrators, Faculty, and Graduate Students.](#)
5. [Summary: UL Self-Study Survey of Undergraduates.](#)
6. [Q2 Strengths of the Library \(Searchable\).](#)
7. [Q4 Weaknesses of the Library \(Searchable\).](#)
8. [Q6 Issues Most Critical to UL in the Future \(Searchable\).](#)
9. [Q9 Additional Comments \(Searchable\).](#)

*Access to some sections of the Appendices will require login to the KSUL intranet or extranet.