

## **Kelvin Smith Library: Reference/Research Services for 2008-09**

### **Background**

Kelvin Smith Library (KSL) offers reference assistance at three main service points:

Reference Desk in KSL

Kulas Music Library (Haydn Hall)

Special Collections (Housed in Kelvin Smith Library)

Supplemental remote services offered from two points:

Case School of Engineering, Nord Hall 509/510

Weatherhead School of Management, Peter B. Lewis Building lobby

The Kelvin Smith Library is the main library for Case Western Reserve University. It houses collections and services for Case faculty, students, and staff in of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Case School of Engineering, and the Weatherhead School of Management. Reference service is provided in a variety of formats.

- In person reference assistance is provided at the KSL Reference desk during the semester on Monday - Thursday 9am-10pm, Friday 9am-5pm, Saturday 9am-5:30pm, and Sunday 1pm-5pm.
- Chat Reference service is provided: Monday - Thursday 1pm-10pm, Friday 1pm-5pm, Saturday 9am-5:30pm, and Sunday 1pm-5pm.
- E-mail service continued, but was changed to [askalibrarian@case.edu](mailto:askalibrarian@case.edu) to match the branding used for the chat service.. Questions can be sent to e-mail at any time and replies are made within 24 hrs.
- Instant messaging (IM) reference service began in August of 2007, and is offered the same hours as chat reference.

Kulas Music Library is a satellite library of Kelvin Smith Library. It houses Case's library collections in the area of music. The library contains 45,000 items, including music scores, books on music, sound recordings, video recordings, microforms and music periodicals.

- Reference service is provided all of the hours that the Library is open.
- Hours are Monday: 8:30am-9pm, Tuesday: 8:30am-5pm, Wednesday 8:30am-9pm, Thursday -Friday: 8:30am-5pm, Saturday: 10am-4pm, and Sunday: 1pm-5pm.

The Department of Special Collections houses the rare books, manuscripts, and special collections of University Library. These areas of the Library were designed to provide protective and controlled environments for such materials which, because of their rarity, value, fragility, ephemeral nature, or because they are part of a distinctive subject or author collection, require special care and handling.

- Reference assistance is provided all of the hours the department is open.
- Hours are Monday through Friday: 9am-12pm and 1pm-5pm.

## **Discussion**

For the academic year 2008-2009 in-person reference assistance continued to make up the major portion of our interactions with our community. We experienced an increase of 3% in the overall number of reference transactions – in part because we decided to start including tours and orientation sessions. We saw the number of queries declining at the formal service desks by 3%, but saw similar declines in other methods (individual consults -2% and reference email -11%). 2008-2009 was the first year that our data was not fully or partially estimated. On 2007-2008, numbers were a combination of data and estimates. This year, every transaction was directly recorded into an in-house system, and we look forward to see the trends in 2009-2010 now that we have real-time accurate numbers.

The reduction of transactions can be explained by a two factors.

- We began using a new technique for collecting data. Staff had to get used to using it on a regular basis. It is also the first year that data was record for all transactions and no estimates were used. Next year's numbers will be needed to see if any trends actually exist.
- The tendency being found across all academic libraries for patrons to conduct more of their research from a remote location (such as office, home or dorm room).

## **Interesting Observations of Reference Interactions (not instruction or tours)**

- The busiest date was Monday, August 25, 2008, with 102 questions, which was 24 questions more than the next busiest day. It was the first day of fall classes.
- 5 of the top 10 busiest days were all Mondays. The year before the top 6 days were all Mondays, but this year you had to go down to #6 to experience another Monday. Surprisingly, Saturday, October 25, 2008, was the second busiest day.
- 20% of all transactions occur on Mondays. The year before Monday was the busiest with 22% of all the transactions. The other days were: Tuesday at 19%, Wednesday at 18%, Thursday at 15%, Friday at 13%, Saturday at 8%, and Sunday at 6%.
- We received questions on 97% of the calendar days. It was 96% the year before.
- 50% of the questions occurred within the top 25% of the busiest days. 80% of the questions occurred within the top 53% of the busiest days.
- 38% of help went to students, 9% to faculty, &7% to the public, and 4% to staff. The rest were a combination of alumni, OhioLINK, or unknown.
- 65% of transactions are in-person, 19% are direct email to librarian, 5% are direct emails to Reference department, and about 3% are chat/IM.
- 4pm to 5pm was the busiest hour with 14% of all transactions. 12pm-5pm are the 5 busiest hours and account for about 1/2 of all transactions. A clear pattern shows the ranking of hours from 10am-5pm with each new hour being busier than the previous.

## 2008-09 Highlights

- In January of 2009, KSL hired a new Science Librarian, Shu Guo. She is the subject specialist for Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Studies, Geological, and Communication Sciences. Her responsibilities include collection development, instruction, and reference. She brings with her a graduate education in chemistry and extensive instruction experience which can only strengthen the services KSL can offer to our users.
- 2008/09 was the first full year of keeping a record of all transactions and being able to do real time reporting of the data. System was built in-house by KSL's Technology Team.
- In fall of 2008, Case was one of 8 schools internationally to have at least 100 students enter a contest conducted by Knovel, a collection of engineering and science e-books provided by KSL. Contest promotions were conducted by Karen Oye in the KSL lobby and by Brian Gray in the Nord Hall lobby.

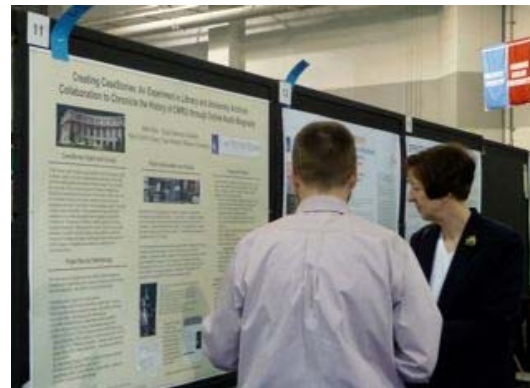


Source:

[http://blog.case.edu/orgs/ksl/news/2008/11/17/you\\_can\\_be\\_a\\_winner\\_in\\_this\\_photo](http://blog.case.edu/orgs/ksl/news/2008/11/17/you_can_be_a_winner_in_this_photo)

[http://blog.case.edu/orgs/ksl/news/2008/12/16/case\\_is\\_a\\_winner\\_in\\_the\\_knovel\\_university\\_challenge](http://blog.case.edu/orgs/ksl/news/2008/12/16/case_is_a_winner_in_the_knovel_university_challenge)

- Kelvin Smith Library continued its annual tradition of highlighting services and its staff with a booth at the Research ShowCase in April of 2009. KSL staff highlighted their role in partnering on instruction and research, Digital Case, Freedman Center, and the new advanced energy resources added to the print and electronic collections. Mark Eddy shared a poster called *Digital Knowledge Capture Initiatives at the Kelvin Smith Library: Creating and Archiving First-person Accounts of Institutional History for Online Presentation*, which highlighted KSL's Case Stories project.



Source:

[http://blog.case.edu/orgs/ksl/news/2009/04/16/see\\_kslresearch\\_showcase\\_09](http://blog.case.edu/orgs/ksl/news/2009/04/16/see_kslresearch_showcase_09)

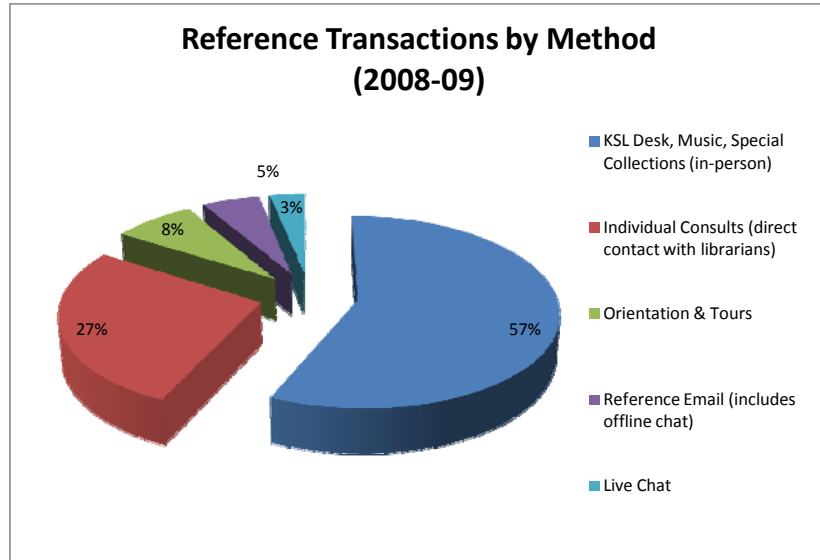
- Several internal trainings were conducted for reference librarians, including an all day retreat to share subject specialty advice between librarians. The highlight was a summer-long, self-paced training prepared in-house by Mark Eddy with assistance from the Freedman Center staff. The training provided a strong foundation for the reference librarians to understand the resources and services of the Freedman Center.
- Updated the *Ask A Librarian* Chat service (LivePerson subscription service) to include new survey questions that a user may complete at the end of the transaction.
- In December of 2008, KSL rolled out a new service called **Research Guides** (<http://researchguides.case.edu>). The new service replaced the static pathfinders and online instructional web pages with an interactive platform of tools that can be customized to a specific subject research or class's needs. In 6 months, KSL librarians had created 45 new guides that had received over 7500 hits. The most popular guides included guides in support of research and instruction in Chemistry, Africa Studies, and English.

### **2009-10 Plans**

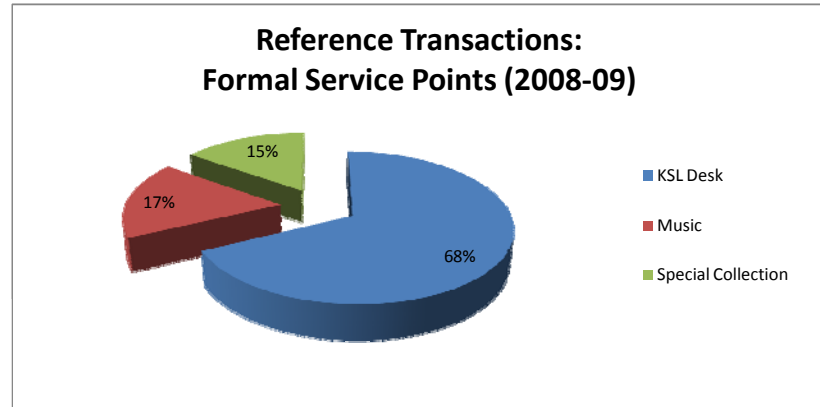
- Analysis of virtual chat logs to look at survey responses, staffing levels, hours of availability, and future staff training needs. Improvements in “canned” messages and consistency from person to person are goals for the new year.
- Analysis of hour-by-hour in-person reference to maximize staffing needs.
- Increased marketing of *Ask A Librarian* services.
- Development an assessment tool or process directed to in-person desk transactions.

## Kelvin Smith Library Reference Transactions 2008-09

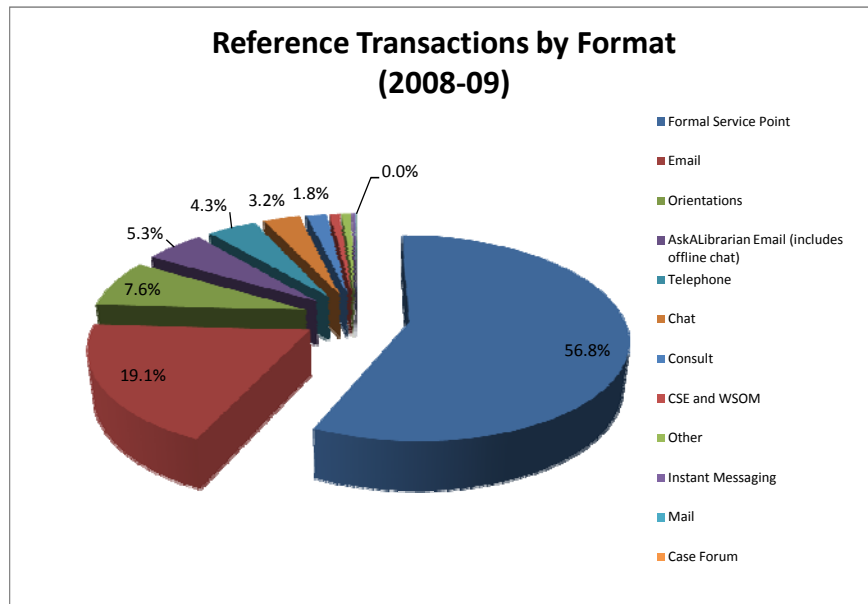
Format	Transactions
KSL Desk, Music, Special Collections (in-person)	7708
Individual Consults (direct contact with librarians)	3687
Orientation & Tours	1027
Reference Email (includes offline chat)	714
Live Chat	438
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13574</b>



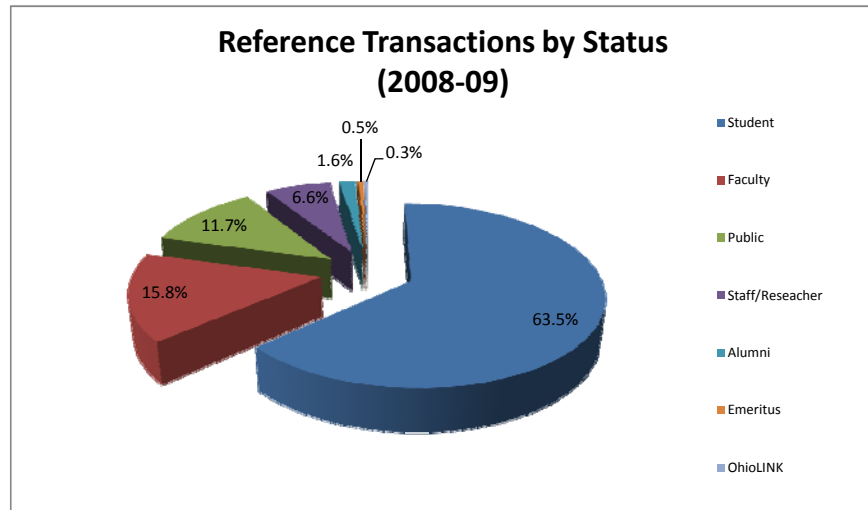
Service Point	Transactions
KSL Desk	5819
Music	1471
Special Collection	1296
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8586</b>



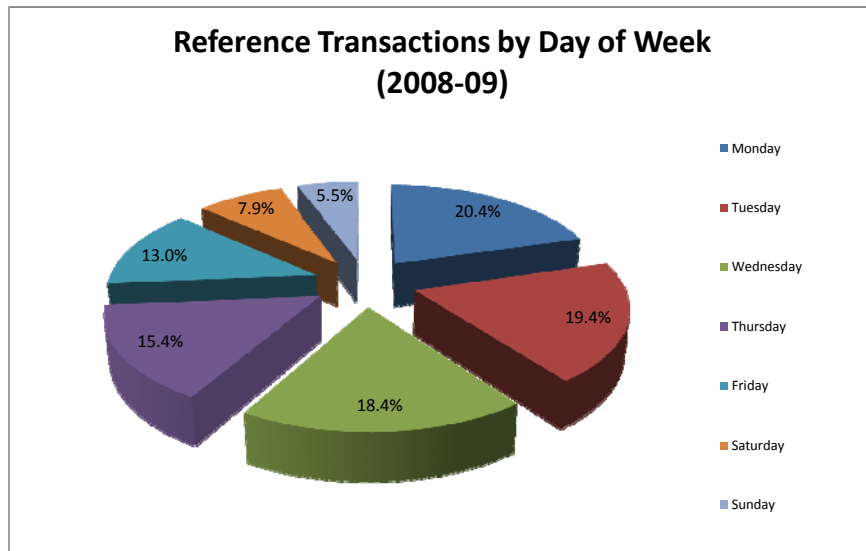
Method	Transactions
Formal Service Point	7708
Email	2591
Orientations	1027
AskALibrarian Email (includes offline chat)	714
Telephone	583
Chat	438
Consult	242
CSE and WSOM	118
Other	112
Instant Messaging	28
Mail	10
Case Forum	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13574</b>



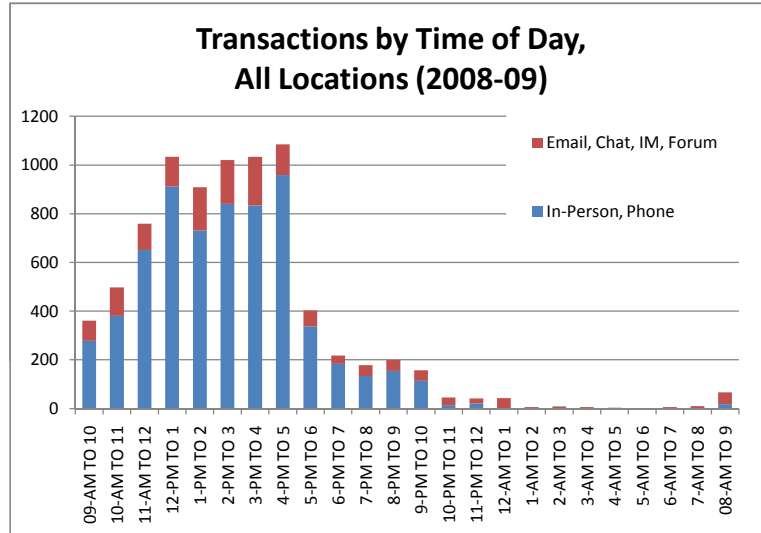
Patron	Transactions
Student	5190
Faculty	1287
Public	955
Staff/Reseacher	538
Alumni	131
Emeritus	44
OhioLINK	24
Unknown	5405
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13574</b>



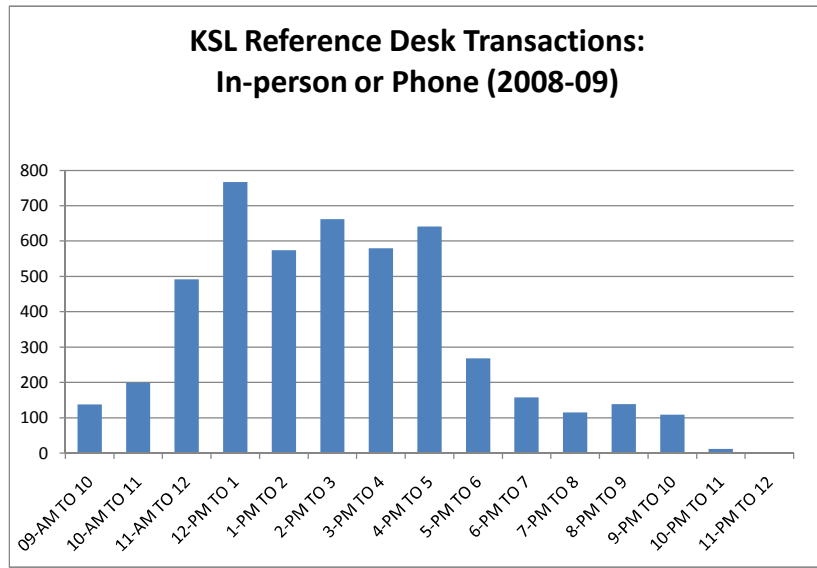
Days of the Week	Transactions
Monday	1634
Tuesday	1556
Wednesday	1472
Thursday	1229
Friday	1037
Saturday	634
Sunday	443
Unknown or Categories Where Date is Not Recorded	5569
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13574</b>



Time of Day	In-Person, Phone	Email, Chat, IM, Forum
09-AM TO 10	278	83
10-AM TO 11	380	118
11-AM TO 12	651	108
12-PM TO 1	912	121
1-PM TO 2	732	177
2-PM TO 3	840	181
3-PM TO 4	834	200
4-PM TO 5	959	126
5-PM TO 6	337	66
6-PM TO 7	183	35
7-PM TO 8	134	44
8-PM TO 9	155	44
9-PM TO 10	114	43
10-PM TO 11	14	31
11-PM TO 12	20	22
12-AM TO 1	0	43
1-AM TO 2	0	6
2-AM TO 3	0	9
3-AM TO 4	0	6
4-AM TO 5	0	3
5-AM TO 6	0	2
6-AM TO 7	0	6
7-AM TO 8	0	10
08-AM TO 9	18	48



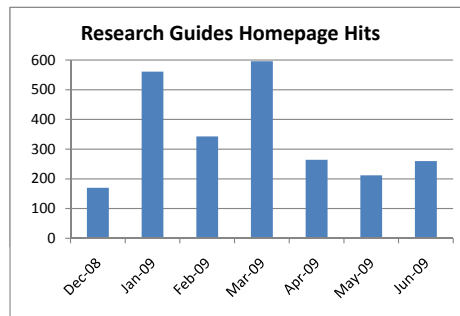
Time of Day	In-Person, Phone @ KSL Ref Desk
09-AM TO 10	138
10-AM TO 11	199
11-AM TO 12	492
12-PM TO 1	767
1-PM TO 2	574
2-PM TO 3	662
3-PM TO 4	580
4-PM TO 5	641
5-PM TO 6	268
6-PM TO 7	158
7-PM TO 8	115
8-PM TO 9	139
9-PM TO 10	109
10-PM TO 11	12
11-PM TO 12	2





**Research Guides Homepage Hits**

Dec-08	170
Jan-09	561
Feb-09	343
Mar-09	596
Apr-09	264
May-09	212
Jun-09	260
<b>Total</b>	<b>2406</b>


**Guide Hits 2009**

Guide	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total	
Africa Studies Guide		104	126	155	66	31	4	486
African American Studies	-	-	-	26	11	4	41	
Anthropology	-	44	30	13	28	16	131	
Art History and Art	8	25	26	9	13	14	95	
Blogs	-	-	16	3	3	1	23	
Chem - Cholesterol	-	-	7	25	2	3	37	
Chemistry	40	92	189	85	73	82	561	
Classics	18	25	41	12	18	30	144	
Cognitive Science	36	4	19	8	2	6	75	
Communication Science	-	-	-	57	5	7	69	
Engineering	28	25	17	4	6	17	97	
English	120	88	114	49	64	43	478	
English 302 (spring 2008)	-	1	1	1	1	3	7	
English 380: Departmental Seminar- Short Story (spring 2009)	-	181	67	76	4	6	334	
English 400 (fall 2008)	-	-	1	1	2	-	4	
ENGR 145 - Chemistry of Materials	24	13	9	8	2	2	58	
ENGR 398 - Professional Communication for Engineers	118	127	27	147	5	6	430	
Finding Tests and Measures	1	-	2	-	1	-	4	
Government Documents	3	-	7	1	10	2	23	
History	-	37	24	55	70	51	237	
Introduction to Adobe Connect	-	-	21	8	9	1	39	
Introduction to Chemistry	-	-	76	9	9	2	96	
Introduction to SQL	15	1	2	3	2	-	23	
Judaic Studies	-	17	26	8	13	11	75	
Labor and Human Resources Policy	2	4	2	5	4	8	25	
Locating Standards and Technical Reports	7	6	7	4	3	2	29	
Macromolecular Science & Engineering	-	-	-	-	10	10	20	
Marketing	-	4	4	1	2	1	12	
Organic Chemistry	-	-	-	-	-	27	27	
Patents	108	19	57	2	3	7	196	
Physics Research Guide	145	9	32	15	7	4	212	
Political Science	-	3	7	165	16	13	204	
PSCL 394 Psychology Senior Capstone Research	-	37	5	1	-	-	43	
RefWorks Guide: How to Use RefWorks at Case	59	27	41	51	20	40	238	
Religious Studies	5	7	18	13	6	19	68	
USNA 238 - Role of Materials in Emerging Technologies	36	15	15	13	1	-	80	
USSO 228 - Our Plastic World	-	3	13	35	12	4	67	
USSO 265 (spring 2009)	-	-	2	3	2	-	7	
USSO 285 - Advertising and the American Dream	44	19	6	8	17	10	104	
USSY 236 (spring 2008)	-	1	7	3	5	-	16	
USSY 285b (spring 2008)	-	-	2	2	1	1	6	
USSY 285c: Conviction and Fiction (spring 2009)	-	39	22	3	3	-	67	
USSY 285r, spring 2009	-	-	167	18	1	-	186	
Wikis	-	9	13	3	7	3	35	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>1008</b>	<b>1297</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>5209</b>	