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Using Academic Librarians and the Academic Library: Survey Results from Mathematics Faculty in United States and Canada

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Using Academic Librarians and the Academic Library: Survey Results from Mathematics Faculty in United States and Canada

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STEM South Conference 2024

Copy of slides:

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Boulder

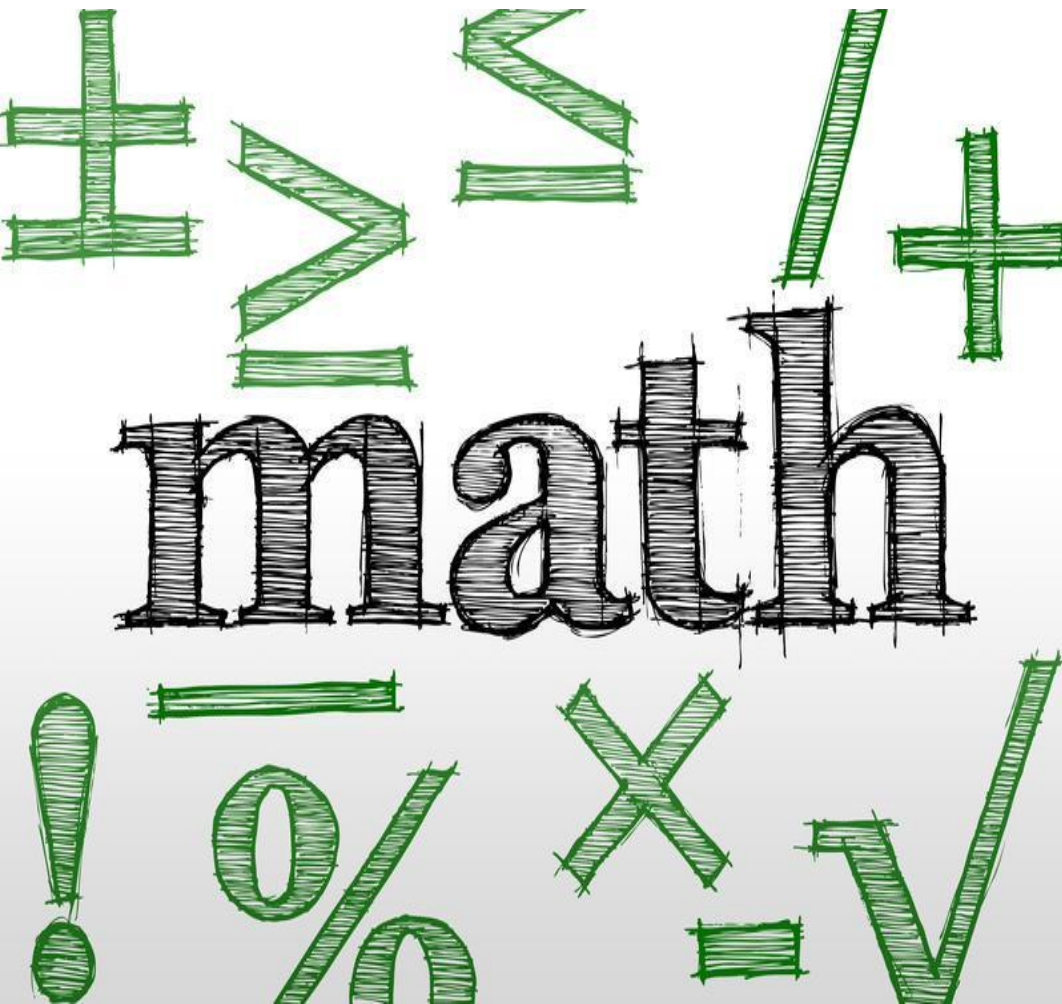
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Intro

- Some STEM departmental faculty tend not to engage with their academic libraries or librarians
- Our team designed & launched a survey for Mathematics faculty to learn about their library and information-related needs
- Analyzed findings and paper is currently under review, we are excited to talk to our peers about their experiences

Agenda

- Where the Project Started
- Why We Chose Math
- Our Team
- The Survey
- Applicable Results



Why Math?

- All three librarian authors worked with math departments
- Noticed lack of engagement
- Gap in research & literature
- Goals: to better understand math faculty and how to optimally support them

The Team



Jenni Burke
Assistant
Professor
Science
Librarian



**Rasitha
Jaysekere**
Associate
Professor
Statistics &
Actuarial
Science



**Daniel
Kipnis**
Associate
Professor
STEM
Librarian



**Elizabeth
Novosel**
Assistant
Professor
Computer Science
& Mathematics
Librarian

The Survey

The Details

How it was Sent

Key Limitations

Responses

Qualtrics software
20 questions
Mix of quantitative
and qualitative
questions
Sept. & Nov. 2023

Listservs:
- ALA Science &Tech
- PAMnet
- Am. Mathematical Assn

Websites:
- STEM Librarians
-Discord

Emails:
to librarians & faculty

No response rate
can be calculated

Sample size too
small for some
statistical models

188 valid, complete
responses from
USA and Canada
(89% US)

Primarily
tenure-track faculty
(58.5%)

How do math faculty use their library?

- **13%** contact their librarian often (3x+ year)
- **48%** contact their librarian occasionally (1-2x year)

- **10%** often encourage students to use library
- **29%** occasionally encourage students to use library

- **15%** use academic articles to teach
- **44%** use ILL service for research
- **21%** use library to find articles for research

Reasons Respondents Do Not Work with Librarians for Instruction:	Percentage
Students don't use library resources in my course	46%
I didn't know librarians could offer instruction	19%
Other: do it myself, librarians don't know math, not necessary, students learn on their own	19%
I have no time for a library session	16%

What do math faculty think of their librarians & libraries?

“I'm happy with my library liaison. I just don't use them much.”

- 27 of the 75 who answered liked their librarian or academic library
- Responses were generally positive
 - Collaboration, positive interactions
 - Commented on use of library services & equipment
- Disappointment & frustrations
 - Lack of communication
 - Trouble accessing materials
 - Concern that institutional leadership undervalues libraries and librarians

What Faculty Want

- Access to journals, books, ebooks, and textbooks
- Access to expensive software like Overleaf / NVivo
- Physical spaces:
 - Virtual lecture rooms, more study rooms, extended hours
- Funds for APCs
- Support for OERs, systematic reviews, writing support for graduate students
- IL instruction & more collaboration

Other Responses

“I’m not sure what resources the librarians could offer that would be helpful in my class”

“Students do use library resources, but I am able to provide them with a direct link to the materials I want them to use.”



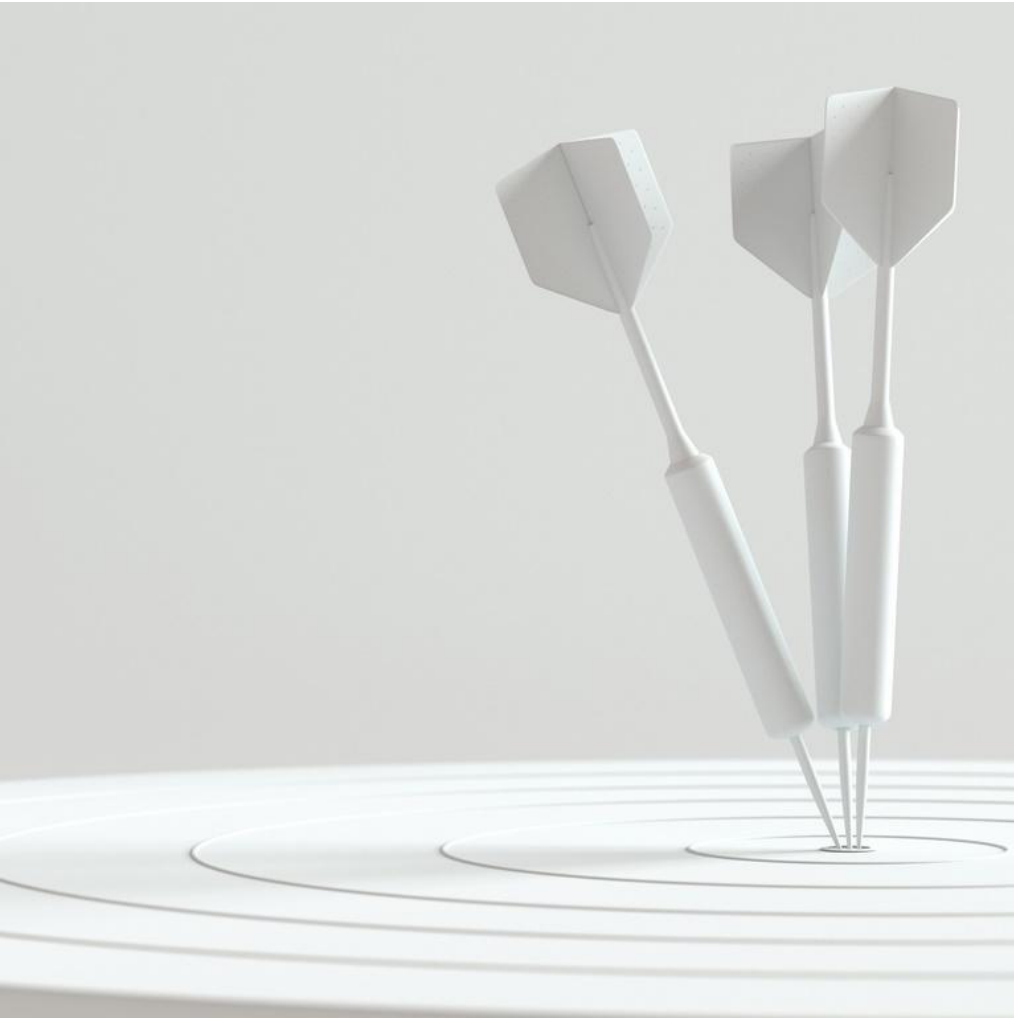
“Math is too advanced and technical for a librarian typically to deliver insight on mathematical topics.”

“I do not know how exactly that can help my students.”

Discussion

A row of ladders against a grey wall. The ladders are arranged in a line, with one ladder in the center being significantly taller than the others. The ladders are white and have a simple step design. The background is a plain, light grey wall.

<https://go.rowan.edu/stemsouth24>



Thank You!

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