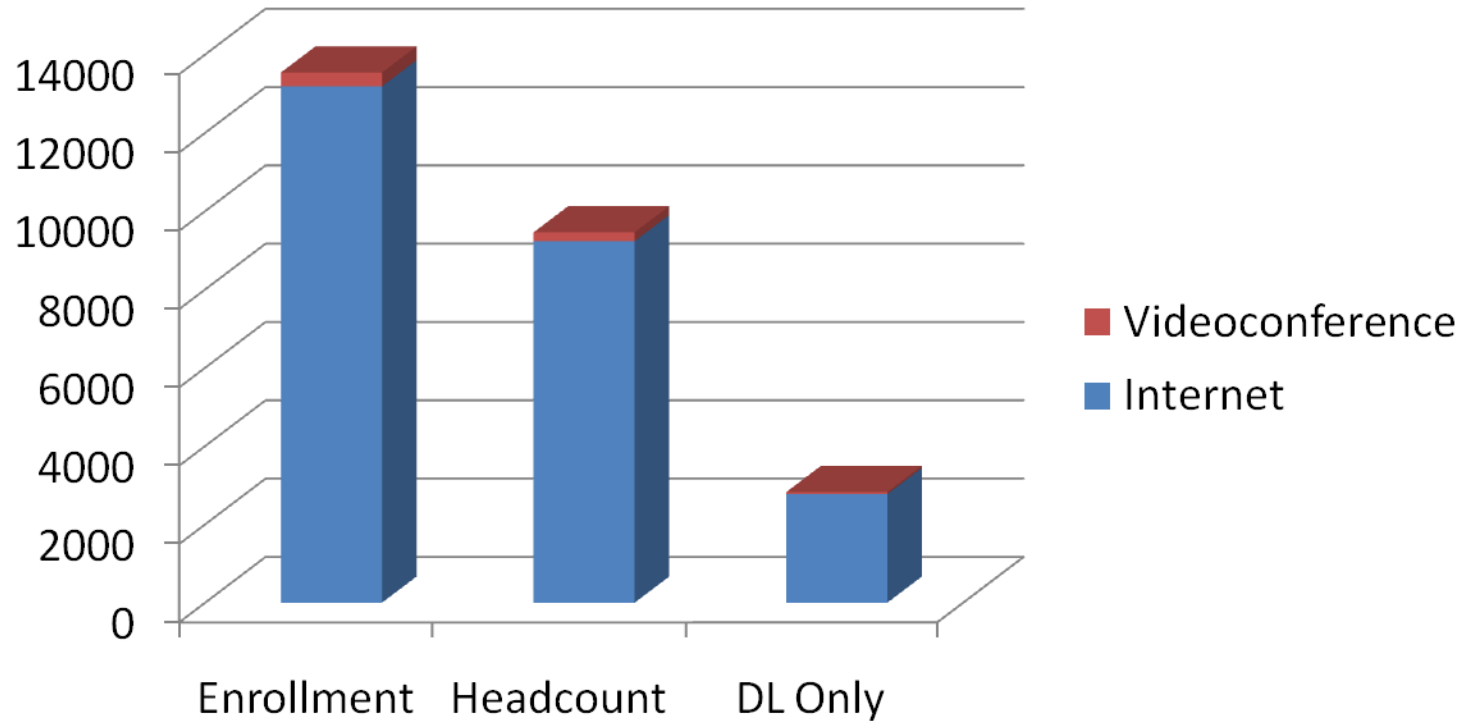# Assessment of Library Support for Distance Learning at UNT

LITA Distance Learning Interest Group
ALA Annual Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana
June 27, 2011

Objectives

- Overview
- LibQUAL+
- Focus Groups
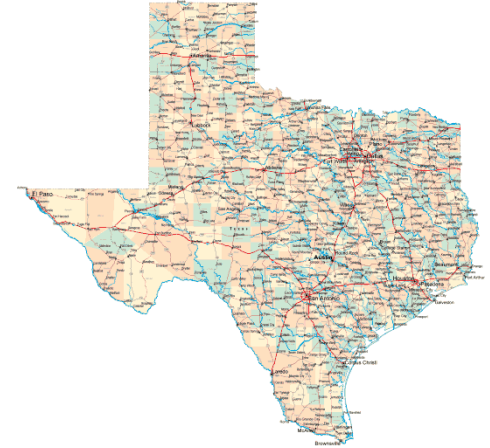- Ethnographic study
- Comparison of findings

Distance Student Population

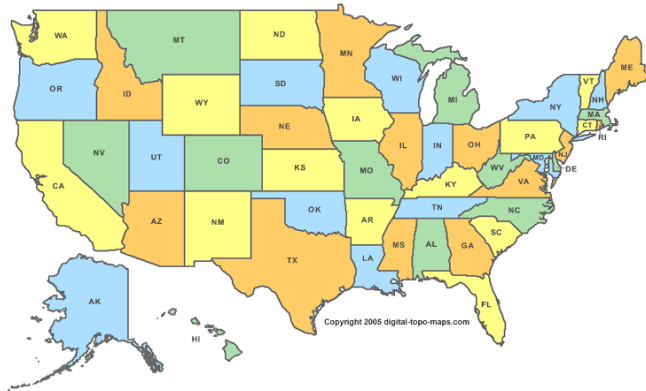|	Enrollment	Headcount	DL Only
Videoconference	354	226	52
Internet	13,187	9,233	2,733

Data is from Spring, 2009.

For more data, see http://clear.unt.edu/index2.cfm?M=2&SM=7

Distance Student Locations

Online Degree Programs and Certificates

- **College of Business**
  - 2 MBAs

- **College of Education**
  - 3 master's degrees
  - 3 graduate academic certificates

- **College of Information**
  - 6 master's degrees
  - 1 bachelor's degree
  - 3 advanced certificates
  - 2 graduate academic certificates
  - 1 school library certification

- **College of Public Affairs and Community Service**
  - 4 master's degrees
  - 1 bachelor's degree
  - 2 graduate academic certificates
  - 2 certificates

- **School of Merchandising and Hospitality Management**
  - 2 master's degrees
  - 2 graduate academic certificates

Research Approach

- Triangulation: use of multiple methods for a study
- Benefit of triangulation: Addresses the issue of biases in social science research
- Types of triangulation:
  - Data
  - Researcher
  - Theory
  - Method

Methods Used at UNT

- LibQUAL+ survey
- Focus Groups
- Ethnographic research

Where We Started

- LibQUAL+ Survey 2009 Results

- Assessed problem areas by looking at items with largest superiority gaps

- Superiority gap = the difference between what is perceived and what is desired

Largest Online User Superiority Gaps in 2009

Rank	LibQUAL+ Survey Item	Mean Score
1	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own	-1.43
2	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own	-1.3
3	Availability of online help when using my library's electronic resources	-1.27
4	Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work	-1.17
5	The electronic information resources I need	-1.15

Next Step: Focus Groups

- Population: distance learning students – meeting their needs will improve services for everyone

Recruiting
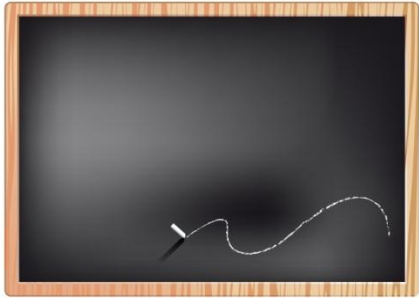
Blackboard Announcements

Email Invitations

**Incentives**

Volunteer Demographics

- 16 volunteers

- Academic level
  - 9 graduate students
  - 5 undergraduates
  - 1 certificate program
  - 1 undecided

- College
  - College of Business
  - College of Education
  - College of Information
  - College of Public Affairs and Community Service

- Basic demographics
  - 5 men, 11 women
  - Most over 30
  - 1 African American; 1 Asian American; 14 Caucasian
  - 1 foreign student

- Location
  - 4 on campus
  - 3 in DFW metroplex
  - 2 in other parts of Texas
  - 6 out of state
  - 1 out of country

Script

Technology
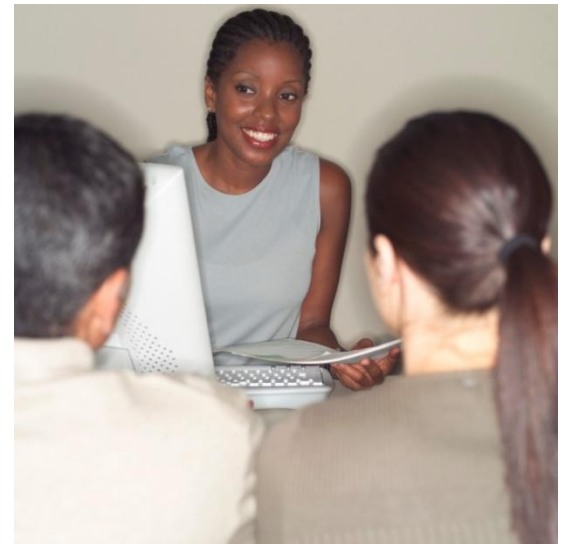
IRB Approval
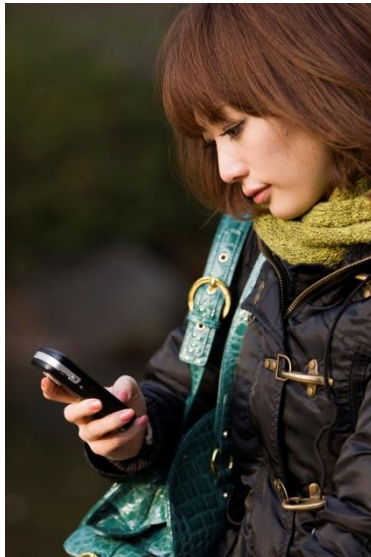
- Required to use results for

Presentation

Publication

Scheduling

Email

Doodle®

http://doodle.com/

Problems Encountered in Focus Groups

Data Analysis

Microsoft Office Excel


Microsoft Office Access

atlas.ti

Representative Online Student Comments

- **COB Male**: How would I like to learn--right as a distance learner I wish there were more mention of the UNT Library on the main UNT page, or my UNT page, or in ….. Blackboard so that way I don't have to go to any course to look at that library. It should just pop out right there.

- **MLS Female**: The only thing that I find out about these things that ya'll have on campus like training for graduate students with RefWorks and graduate research. It seems like they are always on campus, and maybe ya'll do have it where distance students can access that or get transcripts somehow. But, I've never seen it, but I would like to do something like that. But I just live too far away from Denton to try to actually go to one.

- **Applied Technology Male**: Well I will say this about the UNT Library. When I was going there in 1994 and 1995, um I actually had somebody lead me around and show me pretty much everything I needed to know at the physical library. But that was probably my most memorable experience was having somebody actually there with me. So that's why I'm saying it would be great to have somebody online with me showing me.

Follow Up Committees

Outreach Services
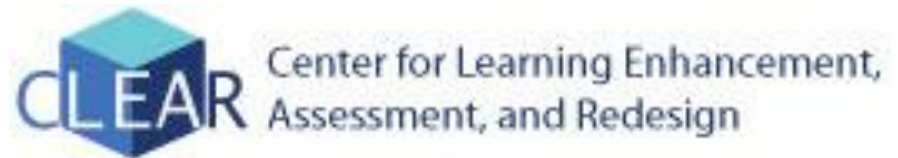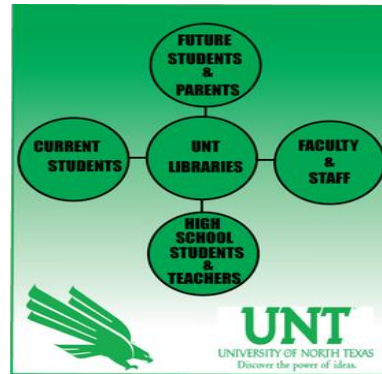
Comparing Survey and Focus Group Results for Online Students

Rank	LibQUAL+ Survey Items with Largest Superiority Gaps – Online Students	Online Student Focus Group Recommendations
		Increase the Libraries' presence and visibility in Blackboard.
1	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own	
2	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own	Make the UNT Libraries' website easier to search.
3	Availability of online help when using my library's electronic resources	Obtain, publicize, and provide instruction in the use of a discovery tool.
4	Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work	Provide library instruction that doesn't require being at the physical library.
5	The electronic information resources I need	Communicate and collaborate more effectively with faculty members that teach online classes.

Ethnographic Study by Anthropology Graduate Students

- Fall 2010
- Graduate level Anthropology Dept. qualitative analysis classes
- One on campus and one online
- Used a variety of methods:
  – Focus groups
  – Interviews
  – Observations

Anthropology Class Recruiting

- Students had a difficult time recruiting participants:
  - What didn't work: Blackboard announcements
  - What was missing: Incentives
  - What worked:
    - Reserved volunteers from Blackboard announcements for online class researchers
    - Changed research population and focus to use of online services and resources by any students
    - Announcements in class by professors
    - Incentive: extra credit for participation as research subjects

Research Method: Observation

- On campus students: observed students researching at various physical locations on campus

- Distance students: used Wimba and shared the desktop so that the Anthropology student could observe the student volunteer doing research on the library website

Research Method: Interviews

- Students being interviewed didn't always remember the details of their problem(s).

- Recommendations for the future
  - Conduct the interview during or immediately following the observation
  - Increase number of observations

Comparing Results of Different Methods for Online Students

Rank	LibQUAL+ Survey Items with Largest Superiority Gaps – Online Students	Summer 2009 Online Student Focus Group Recommendations	Fall 2010 Anthropology Class Recommendations
1	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own	Increase the Libraries' presence and visibility in Blackboard	Improve user experience with the UNT Libraries website; (includes problems with access tools)
2	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own	Make the UNT Libraries' website easier to search	
3	Availability of online help when using my library's electronic resources	Obtain, publicize, and provide instruction in the use of a discovery tool	Improve library instruction
4	Print and/or Electronic journal collections I require for my work	Provide library instruction that doesn't require being at the physical library	Improve communication
5	The electronic information resources I need	Communicate and collaborate more effectively with faculty members that teach online classes	

Comparing Results of Different Methods for Online Students

Rank	Spring 2009 LibQUAL+ Survey Items with Largest Superiority Gaps – Online Students
1	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own
2	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own
3	Availability of online help when using my library's electronic resources
4	Print and/or Electronic journal collections I require for my work
5	The electronic information resources I need

Summer 2009 Online Student Focus Group Recommendations
Increase the Libraries' presence and visibility in Blackboard
Make the UNT Libraries' website easier to search
Obtain, publicize, and provide instruction in the use of a discovery tool
Provide library instruction that doesn't require being at the physical library
Communicate and collaborate more effectively with faculty members that teach online classes

Fall 2010 Anthropology Class Recommendations
Improve user experience with the UNT Libraries website (includes problems with access tools)
Improve library instruction
Improve communication

Rank	Spring 2011 LibQUAL+ Survey Items with Largest Superiority Gaps – Online Students
1	Online course support (readings, links, references)
2	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own
3	Making me aware of library services
4	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own
5	The electronic information resources I need

Contact Information

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Link to anthropology class reports and slides:

http://digital.library.unt.edu/search/?q1=lisa+henry&q3=&q2=&q5=&q4=&searchType=advanced&q6=&o6=NOTANY&o5=NOTANY&o4=NOTANY&o3=EXACT&o2=EXACT&o1=EXACT&t6=fulltext&t4=fulltext&t5=fulltext&t2=fulltext&t3=fulltext&t1=fulltext&q=&t=fulltext&fq=str_degree_department%3AAnthropology