

*Please feel free to add comments to any part of this questionnaire.*

# SCIENCE FACULTY INFORMATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In this section we would like to learn about resources you use to gather information in four separate contexts: 1) current research developments, 2) routine research-related information needs, 3) thorough searching of the literature on a specific topic, and 4) learning about new or less familiar areas.

1.a. Which resources are **most useful** to you in staying abreast of **current research developments** in your field? YOU MAY CHECK MORE THAN ONE.

- ☐ Current Contents or other alerting service, such as Science Online's E-mail Alerts
- ☐ read review journal(s) or review article(s)
- ☐ scan indexes/abstracts
- ☐ browse recent issues of print journals
- ☐ follow references or leads from an article or item of interest; "citation trail"
- ☐ consult a colleague (email, telephone, mail, or in person)
- ☐ listservs or online discussion groups
- ☐ attend conferences, symposia, or other professional meetings
- ☐ preprints or similar literature
- ☐ journal club or reading club
- ☐ other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

1.b. Which of the following factors **most** influence you in preferring these information resources for current research information? Please check NO MORE THAN THREE.

- ☐ Least **Time** to track down the information
- ☐ Most **Convenient** — at place/time of my choosing, e.g. office or lab
- ☐ Most **Current** — I need the most up-to-date information possible
- ☐ Most **Authoritative** — gives the most reliable, complete information
- ☐ Most **Familiar** — "tried and true," has worked for me in the past
- ☐ Most reliably **Available** — no waits or hassles

Please return completed survey to:  
Science Faculty Information Needs Assessment  
Attn: Jane Quigley  
3039 Shapiro Science Library, Univ. of Michigan  
quigleyj@umich.edu

2.a. Which resources are **most useful** to you in meeting your **routine research information needs**, such as needing a specific piece of data? YOU MAY CHECK MORE THAN ONE.

- ☐ follow references or leads from an article or item of interest; "citation trail"
- ☐ search databases, indexes/abstracts (e.g., PubMed, Biological Abstracts, Math Reviews) or library catalogs (e.g., MCAT)
- ☐ refer to handbook, encyclopedia, or similar resource
- ☐ read review journal(s) or review article(s)
- ☐ browse/scan publications, including books, journals, indexes/abstracts
- ☐ consult personal collection of books, journals, photocopied articles, reprints etc.
- ☐ use preprints or similar literature
- ☐ listservs or online discussion groups
- ☐ consult a colleague (email, telephone, mail, or in person)
- ☐ consult librarian
- ☐ ask a research assistant (e.g. grad student, secretary) to get the information
- ☐ other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

2.b. Which of the following factors **most** influence you in preferring these information resources for routine research information needs? Please check NO MORE THAN THREE.

- ☐ Least **Time** to track down the information
- ☐ Most **Convenient** — at place/time of my choosing, e.g. office or lab
- ☐ Most **Current** — I need the most up-to-date information possible
- ☐ Most **Authoritative** — gives the most reliable, complete information
- ☐ Most **Familiar** — "tried and true," has worked for me in the past
- ☐ Most reliably **Available** — no waits or hassles

3.a. Which resources are **most useful** to you on occasions when you need to conduct a **thorough search** of all the available literature on a specific topic? YOU MAY CHECK MORE THAN ONE.

- ☐ follow references or leads from an article or item of interest; "citation trail"
- ☐ search databases, indexes/abstracts (e.g., PubMed, Biological Abstracts, Math Reviews) or library catalogs (e.g., MCAT)
- ☐ refer to handbook, encyclopedia, or similar resource
- ☐ read review journal(s) or review article(s)
- ☐ browse/scan publications, including books, journals, indexes/abstracts
- ☐ consult personal collection of books, journals, photocopied articles, reprints etc.
- ☐ use preprints or similar literature
- ☐ listservs or online discussion groups
- ☐ consult a colleague (email, telephone, mail, or in person)
- ☐ consult librarian
- ☐ ask a research assistant (e.g. grad student, secretary) to get the information
- ☐ other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

3.b. Which of the following factors **most** influence you in preferring these information resources for conducting a thorough search on a topic? Please check NO MORE THAN THREE.

- ☐ Least **Time** to track down the information
- ☐ Most **Convenient** — at place/time of my choosing, e.g. office or lab
- ☐ Most **Current** — I need the most up-to-date information possible
- ☐ Most **Authoritative** — gives the most reliable, complete information
- ☐ Most **Familiar** — "tried and true," has worked for me in the past
- ☐ Most reliably **Available** — no waits or hassles

4.a. Which resources are **most useful** to you when you begin to look for information in a **new, or less familiar area**, outside of your current primary research interest? YOU MAY CHECK MORE THAN ONE.

- ☐ follow references or leads from an article or item of interest; "citation trail"
- ☐ search databases, indexes/abstracts (e.g., PubMed, Biological Abstracts, Math Reviews) or library catalogs (e.g., MCAT)
- ☐ refer to handbook, encyclopedia, or similar resource
- ☐ read review journal(s) or review article(s)
- ☐ browse/scan publications, including books, journals, indexes/abstracts
- ☐ consult personal collection of books, journals, photocopied articles, reprints etc.
- ☐ use preprints or similar literature
- ☐ listservs or online discussion groups
- ☐ consult a colleague (email, telephone, mail, or in person)
- ☐ consult librarian
- ☐ ask a research assistant (e.g. grad student, secretary) to get the information
- ☐ other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

4.b. Which of the following factors **most** influence you in preferring these resources for information on new, or less familiar, topics? Please check NO MORE THAN THREE.

- ☐ Least **Time** to track down the information
- ☐ Most **Convenient** — at place/time of my choosing, e.g. office or lab
- ☐ Most **Current** — I need the most up-to-date information possible
- ☐ Most **Authoritative** — gives the most reliable, complete information
- ☐ Most **Familiar** — "tried and true," has worked for me in the past
- ☐ Most reliably **Available** — no waits or hassles

5. What is the greatest barrier you typically encounter in seeking information for your research?

6. What do you enjoy most about seeking information?

In this section we would like to learn about the impact of “late discoveries” of research-related information—for example, an article or other research-related information that would have had a significant impact on your research, had you learned about it sooner.

7. Since beginning work on your current research project(s), have you discovered any information that might have had a significant impact on your research, if you had been aware of it sooner?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

☐ Not applicable

8. If yes, how did you learn of its existence?

- ☐ attention drawn to it by library/information staff
- ☐ attention drawn to it by a colleague
- ☐ through a current awareness information service (e.g., Current Contents)
- ☐ cited as a reference in another document
- ☐ by chance while looking through publications
- ☐ searching databases, indexes/abstracts, or library catalogs
- ☐ other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Why do you think you did not find the information earlier?

- ☐ had not been published yet
- ☐ did not make a systematic approach to the literature
- ☐ published in an unexpected place
- ☐ it was not available to me when I began my research
- ☐ it was not indexed in the way I expected
- ☐ other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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In this section, we'd like to invite your thoughts on the following questions:

10. Which libraries or information services have you used (either physically or remotely) that you might compare to the University of Michigan's library? What features or services did you particularly like, or dislike?

11. If you could change one thing that affects your interaction with the library or other information providers, what would it be?

Finally, some additional information:

12. Please enter your **assigned ID number** from the letter you were originally sent: \_\_\_\_\_  
(This number is assigned for administrative follow-up purposes only.)

13. Your department (primary affiliation):

- |                                    |                                      |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astronomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology     | <input type="checkbox"/> SNRE        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biology   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> Statistics  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry | <input type="checkbox"/> Physics     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

14. Faculty rank:

- |  |                                   |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full Professor      | <input type="checkbox"/> Lecturer | <input type="checkbox"/> Primary Faculty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Professor | <input type="checkbox"/> Postdoc  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Professor |                                   |  |

15. How many years at U-M?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 1 year | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 years         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 years        | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 10 years |

16. Do you use an assistant (e.g., grad student, secretary) to help with seeking information?

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Often        | <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely or never      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally | <input type="checkbox"/> None available to me |

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Optional:

17. Would you be interested in learning about the results of this assessment?

- ☐ yes (e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_)

18. May we contact you if we have any follow-up questions?

- ☐ yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ no

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**THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME.  
YOUR RESPONSE WILL GREATLY HELP THE SCIENCE LIBRARY  
IN UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING YOUR RESEARCH NEEDS.**