

CONNECTIONS BEYOND CAMPUS



Outreach services for high schools at Ontario university libraries

Purpose

- Provide a snapshot of what is happening in the area of university library outreach to high schools in Ontario.
- Offer ideas and information for other university libraries looking to offer outreach opportunities to high schools.

Methods

- Online survey sent out via direct email & Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) listserv to Ontario university libraries.
- 13 responses received out of a possible of 21 universities (62% response rate).



Tips & Issues



- Offer outreach during off-peak times on campus (e.g. May/June)
- Limit # of classes offered during the year to make it manageable



- Staffing for courses to meet demand, especially year-round
- Suitable instruction space

Reasons to connect

Research conducted examining high school students’ research and writing skills indicate that it may not be at a level expected for when they enter university (Head, 2013).

Introducing high school students to university-level research can better prepare them.

On average, 44% of students at Ontario universities attended a high school nearby (COU, 2018).

Providing university library outreach programs to future students can give them a head start for what awaits them at their post-secondary institution.

“High school librarians and faculty can learn what is expected of students who transition to higher education and which skills these students often lack.

Librarians and faculty in higher education can see which skills are actually taught at the high school level and how high school librarians frame their information literacy instruction” (Saunders, Severyn, & Caron, 2017, p. 276).

References

Council of Ontario Universities (COU) (2018). Application Statistics 2016 (Table 9A). Retrieved from: <https://cou.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Application-Statistics-2016.pdf>

Head, A.J. (2013). Learning the ropes: How freshman conduct course research once they enter college. Project Information Literacy Research Report. Retrieved from: http://www.projectinfoilit.org/uploads/2/7/5/4/27541717/pil_2013_freshmenstudy_fullreportv2.pdf

Saunders, L., Severyn, J., & Caron, J. (2017). Don’t they teach that in high school? Examining the high school to college information literacy gap. *Library and Information Science Research*, 39 (4), 276-283. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2017.11.006>.

All icons from [The Noun Project](#), through NounPro subscription.

Findings



- All survey respondents (13 of 13) offer some form of high school outreach.
- Annual average of outreach activities/classes offered = 8.3 (highest = 30; lowest =2).

What forms of outreach are offered?

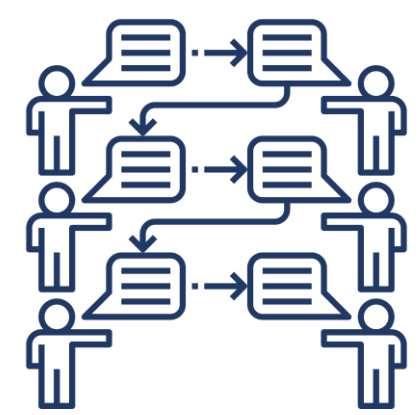


N = 13. More than one response per item.

How is outreach service promoted?



- Library website
- Direct communication with school/school board
- Word-of-mouth



How is outreach service assessed?

- Online surveys
- Follow-up with teachers
- In-class feedback forms

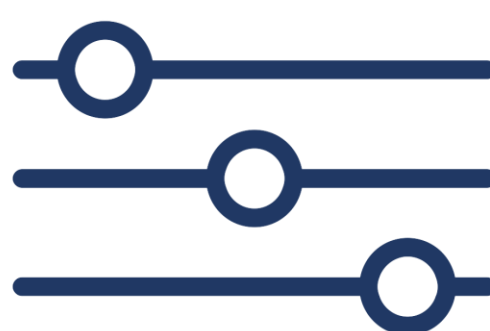


77% of respondents conduct some form of assessment.

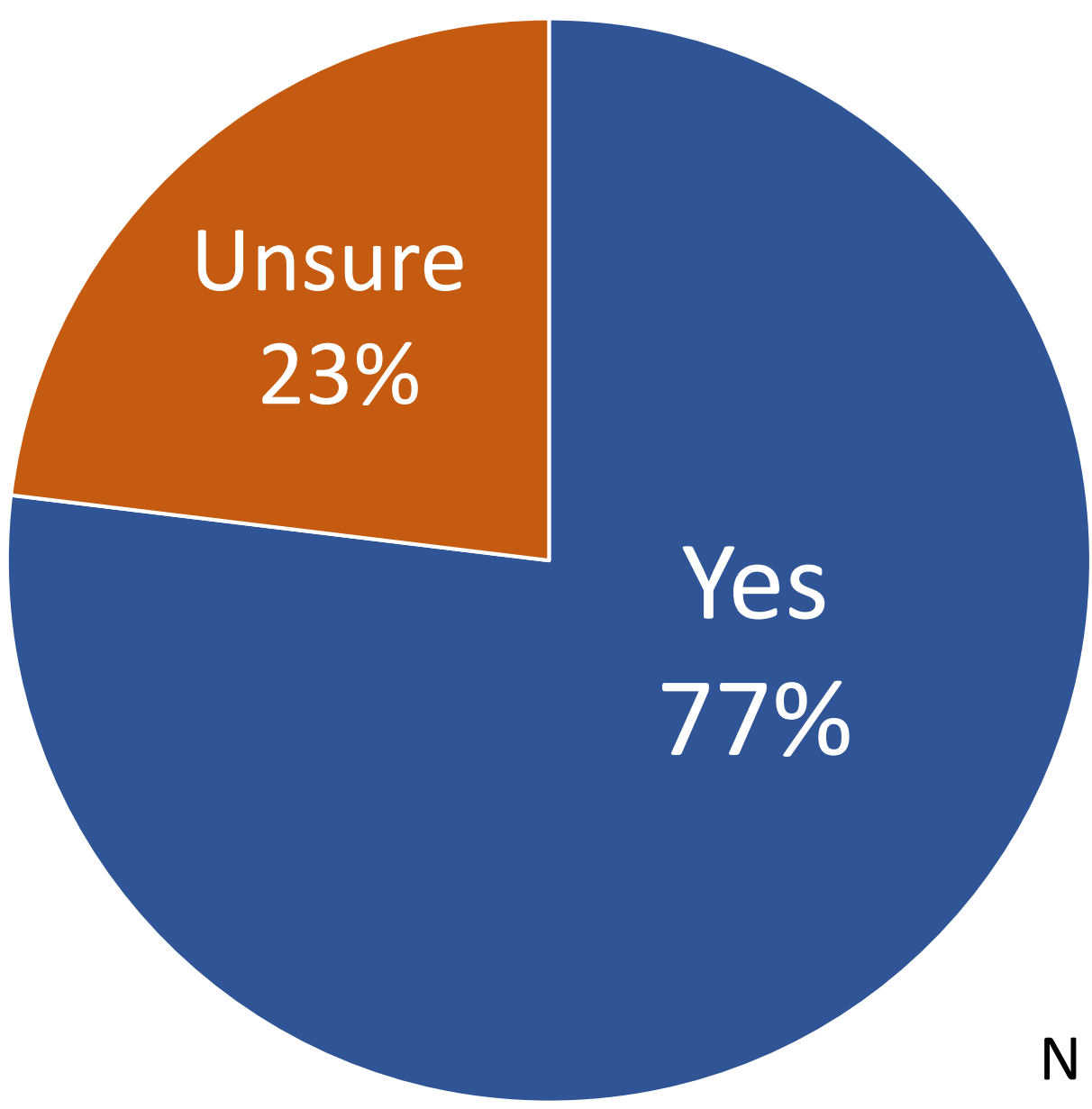
Does outreach service have conditions or preferences?

Top 3 answers, based on 13 responses:

- Local high schools
- Class size
- Senior grades

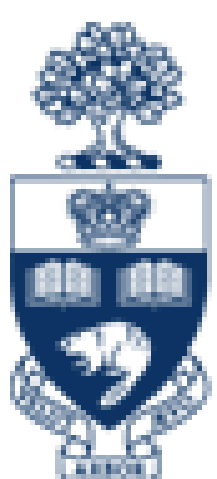


Is outreach service well-received?



N = 13

This research is approved by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board (Protocol #00036861).



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