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Presentations and Posters

Title
Assessing Reference Services Using the READ Scale (Reference Effort Assessment Data)

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Assessing Reference Services Using the READ Scale (Reference Effort Assessment Data)

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Why adopt a new system?

- Biomedical Library was collecting 3 levels of statistics at our Single Service Desks (SSD)
  - ✓ Directional questions
  - ✓ Informational questions
  - ✓ Search questions
- We were not tracking the effort needed or expertise needed or time spent per question, just numbers
- Our overall reference stats were **-9.5%** comparing 2008/2009 to 2009/2010 (although E-reference was up **+20%**), so we needed better data

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- We have three work stations at our Single Service Desk
  - One Reference station
    - ✓ staffed by 7 librarians and 2 library assistants
    - ✓ **9 AM – 4 PM, weekdays only**
  - Two Circulation stations
    - ✓ staffed by 8 library staff and several student employees
    - ✓ 8 AM – midnight, Monday – Thursday, with shorter hours on Friday, Saturday & Sunday

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- **READ** Scale (**R**eference **E**ffort **A**ssessment **D**ata) was developed at Carnegie Mellon University & launched with a trial in Spring 2003

- Why? – Because their Reference statistics being collected were not adequate

- READ Scale incorporates:
  - Effort
  - Time dedicated to the transaction
  - Knowledge skills used by the librarian or staff member

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- **Level 1** – Directional, requires no specialized knowledge skills or expertise
  - What are the library hours?
  - Where are the printers/restrooms/scanners?
- **Level 2** – Informational, requires only minimal specific knowledge
  - Using the catalog to find call numbers, library policy information, troubleshooting printing problems

- **Level 3** – Minimal Instruction, answers require some effort and time, consultation of ready reference materials
  - ➤ Assistance with PubMed, ILL, how to search for a topic in the catalog
- **Level 4** – Search/ Some Instruction, requires the consultation of multiple resources, difficult to find answers
  - ➤ Complex search techniques, RefWorks, EndNote

- **Level 5** – Extensive Instruction, substantial time/effort spent, multiple resources
  - ➢ Graduate research, helping user modify their original research question
- **Level 6** – Very Extensive Instruction, may take 90 minutes or more
  - ➢ In-depth PhD or faculty research, in-depth bibliographic citation assistance

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- Task Force is created with:
  - ✓ 2 librarians
  - ✓ 2 Single Service Desk Supervisors
  - ✓ Information Commons Desk Supervisor
- Training is initiated & a needs assessment survey is done
  - ✓ Training includes role playing scenarios at All Staff Meeting in August 2010
- Single Service Desk (SSD) Forms are revised
  - ✓ Sample statistics are collected at SSD for first three weeks of September so that staff has a chance to practice.
  - ✓ Statistics are collected during the 12 weeks of **Fall Quarter** (9/19 – 12/10/10) and 11 weeks of **Winter Quarter** (1/3 – 3/19/11)

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- Forms used at the SSDs were revised and new ones created

Date: Mon Tue Wed Thur Fri circle one		1		2		3		4*		5*		6*	
		Walk-up	Other	Walk-up	Other	Walk-up	Other	Walk-up	Other	Walk-up	Other	Walk-up	Other
9 AM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
10 AM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
11 AM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
12 PM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
1 PM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
2 PM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
3 PM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email
4 PM			Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone		Phone
			IM		IM		IM		IM		IM		IM
			E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		E-mail		Email

New Form Used at Ref Desk, with 6 READ Levels & Question Method Boxes

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Date	READ #	UC?	Comments (question, answer, to whom referred, etc.)
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	
	❏ 4 ❏ 5 ❏ 6	❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ Don't know	

New Form Used to Record Level 4-6 Actual Questions Received at the SSD
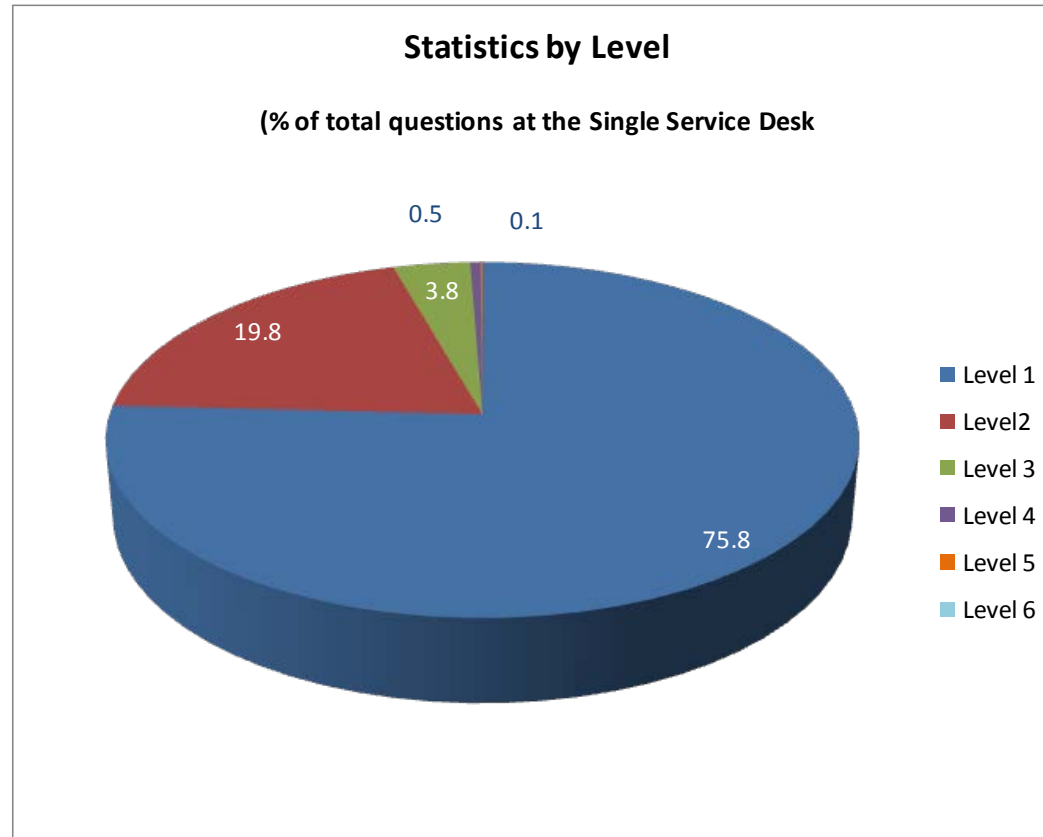
Total Questions at SSDs

Total Questions Received at the Single Service Desk by Level
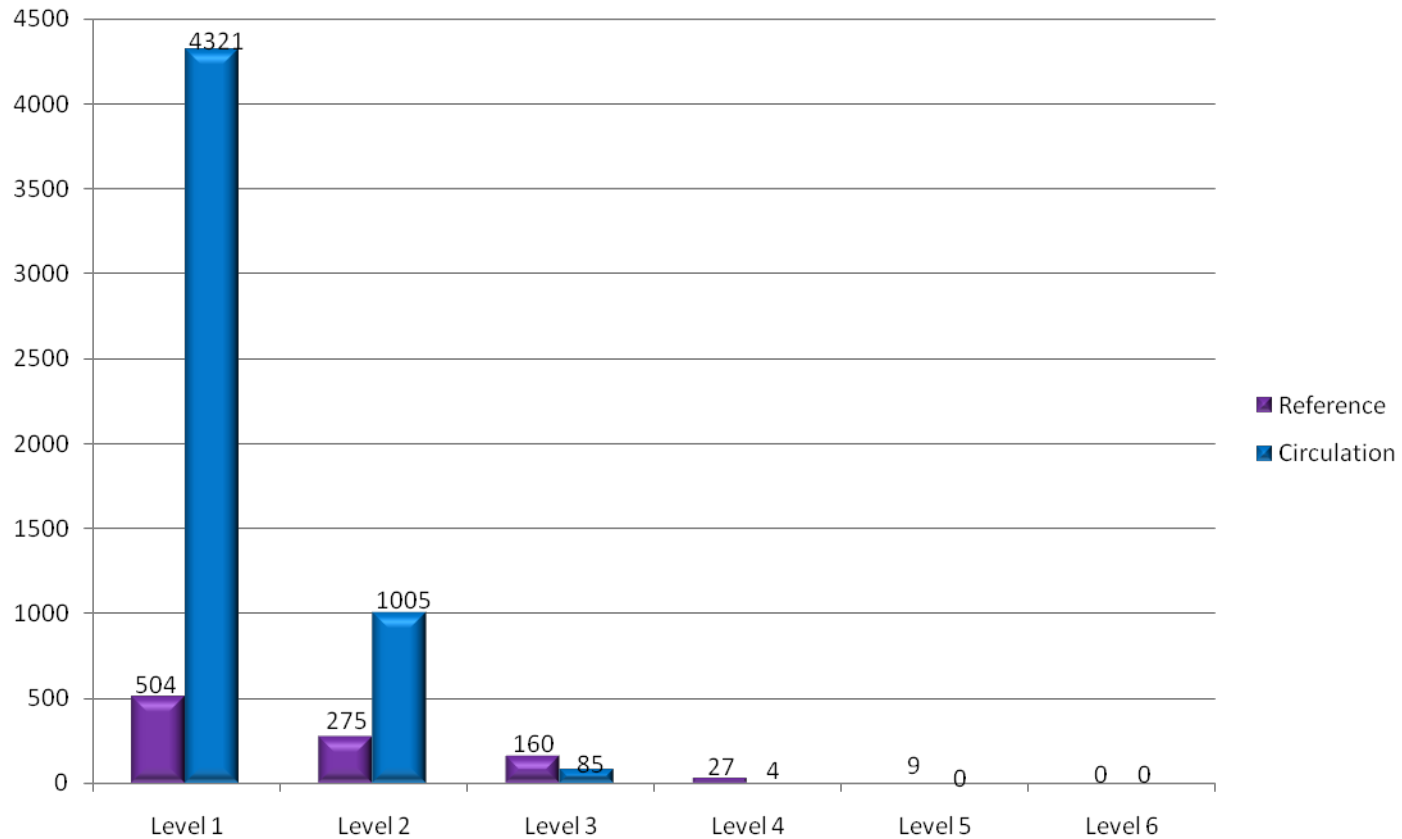
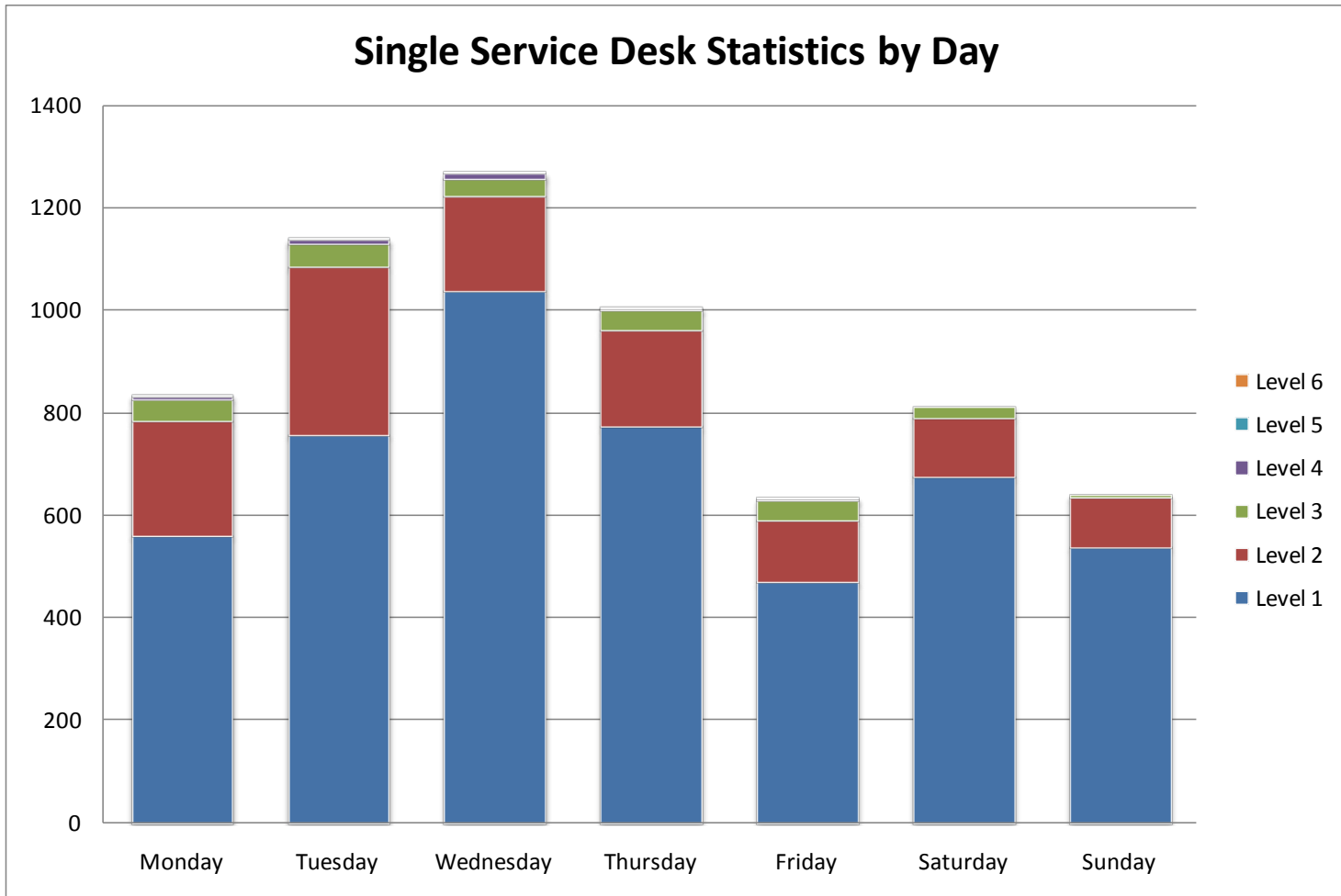Total Questions at all levels = 10,551
No Level 6 Questions at all at SSDs!
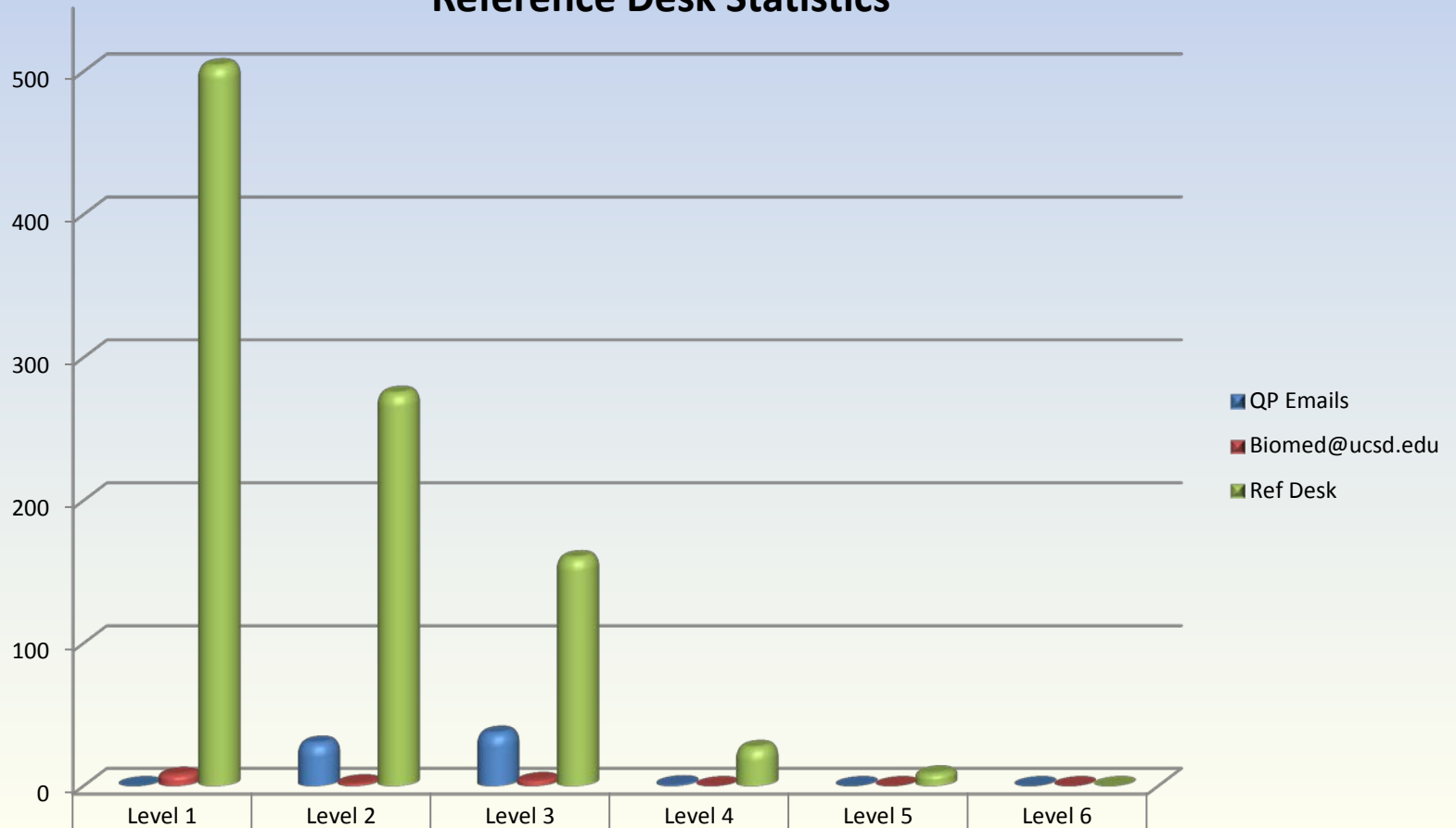
Statistics by Service Point and Quarter
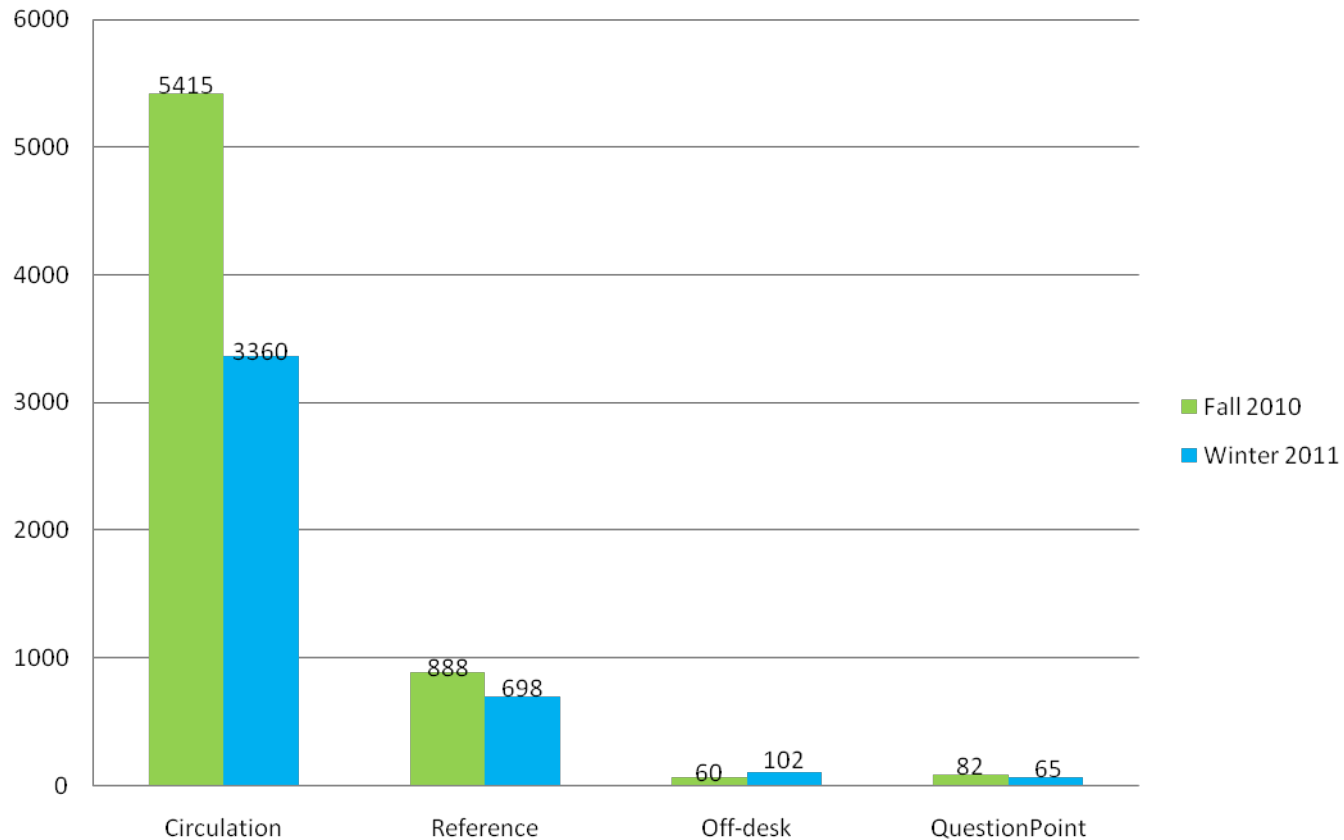
Reference Desk Statistics

Reference Desk Statistics

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
QP Emails	0	30	37	1	0	0
Biomed@ucsd.edu	8	2	4	0	0	0
Ref Desk	504	275	160	27	9	0

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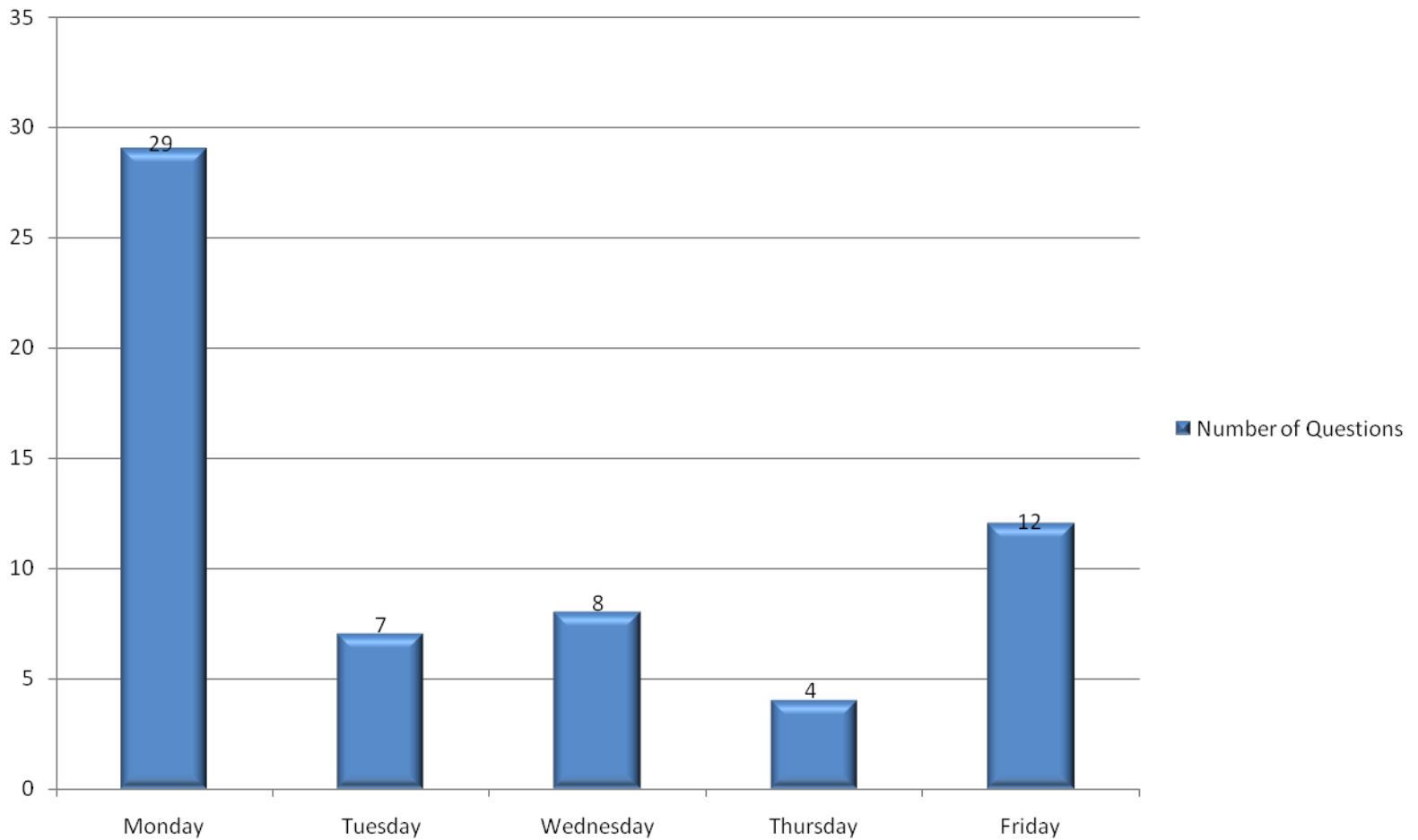BIOMEDICAL LIBRARY

- Walk up - 84%

- Phone   - 14.4%

- IM   - 0.2%

- Email   - 1.4%

Includes all levels of questions received at SSD

Librarian Off-Desk Statistics by Method

Categories of Questions in Levels 4 and 5
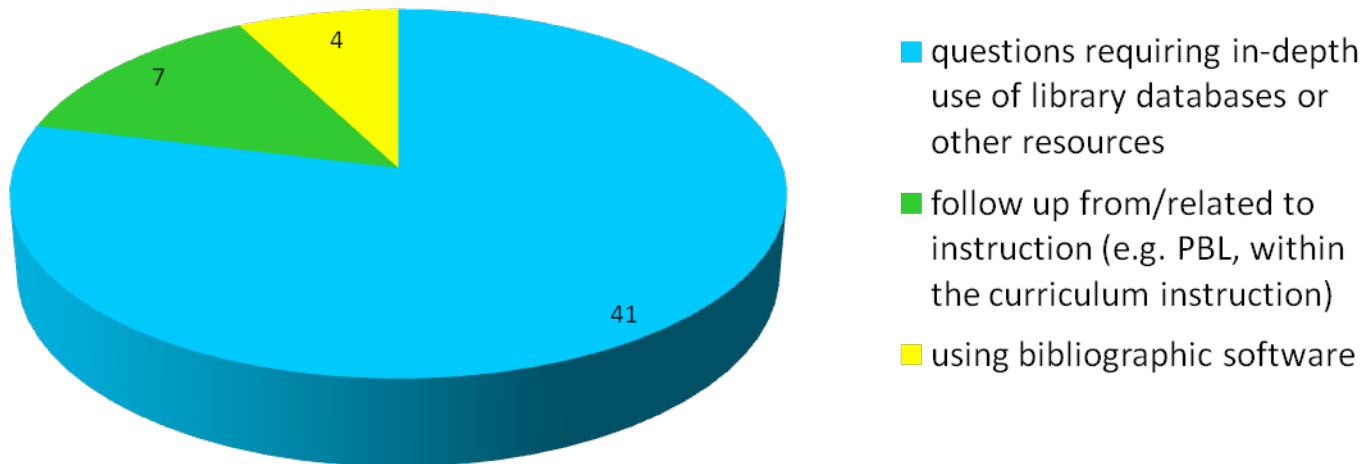
(Three Level 6 Questions were answered via email off desk by an individual librarian, but the actual questions were not recorded.)

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- Task Force Report has gone to our library administration team for review

- Fall & Winter Quarter statistics give us 2 quarters worth of data

- Budgetary issues may cause major changes within the UCSD Libraries (merging libraries and eliminating staff)

- SSD staffing changes are probable

Questions?

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