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Natural Selection and the Workshop

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NATURAL SELECTION AND THE WORKSHOP

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ABSTRACT

In Fall of 2017, the Sprague Library began offering workshops for citation management software in response to the increasing number of 1-on-1 appointment requests. While workshops covering various topics had been offered in the past, attendance had been low. Casting this precedent into the wind, we offered additional workshops (using anecdotal evidence from library instruction classes, research appointments, and conversations with faculty to guide the topics), and targeted graduate students and faculty as our audience. Instead of using attendance as a way to measure success, we focus on participant feedback, follow up appointments, and word-of-mouth to advertise the guide topics and scheduling for future events.

LITERATURE SUMMARY

. Low attendance is common, marketing is the biggest challenge

. Scheduling is a challenge, interest may be high but timing may not work for all

. Targeted topics and populations work best

. Graduate students are an underserved population

. Tailored series may work better than standalone (Peacemaker and Roseberry, 2017)

. Interest about equal across all subject disciplines (Fong, Wang, White and Tipton, 2016)

SUGGESTED READING

Fong, B. L., Wang, M., White, K., & Tipton, R. (2016). Assessing and Serving the Workshop Needs of Graduate Students. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 42(5), 569–580. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2016.06.003

Hoffmann, K., Antwi-Nsiah, F., Feng, V., & Stanley, M. (2008). Library Research Skills: A Needs Assessment for Graduate Student Workshops. *Issues in Science & Technology Librarianship*, 53(3). https://doi.org/10.5062/F48P5XFC

Peacemaker, B., & Roseberry, M. (2017). Creating a sustainable graduate student workshop series. *Reference Services Review*, 45(4), 562–574. https://doi.org/10.1108/RSR-04-2017-0010

HISTORY OF WORKSHOPS AT THE SPRAGUE LIBRARY

Pre-2016

. Workshops held on an irregular basis, based on interest and availability of librarians

. Advertised through "Campus" listserv with limited success (1 to 2 attendees per session)

2017-2018

. One-on-one research appointment requests increased 400% from 2014-2015 to 2017-2018 (result of expanding availability from graduate-only to undergraduate/graduate, outreach to departments, etc.)

. 7 requests for Mendeley appointments in one week (following a demo during a graduate class), only one librarian familiar with the software and each appointment 1hr+ each

. Scheduled open workshops using SignUpGenius and advertised through "Campus" listserv (staff and faculty only), initial response positive

2018-2019

. Upgraded to Springshare's LibCal and LibWizard

. Enabled registration, user cancelations, waiting lists, and automated reminders/follow-up e-mails with feedback surveys

. Dedicated workshops for Graduate Assistants

. Added "Library 101," "Library 101: Graduate Edition," Open Access, and Journal Rankings/Citation Tracking workshops in addition to citation management

. Advertised via library website and Campus listserv; faculty shared opportunities with students

. Referred requests for APA, MLA, etc. to workshops hosted by the Center for Writing Excellence (to avoid duplicating efforts)

. More consistent scheduling during blocks when Graduate Assistants met, or before Graduate level evening classes would begin
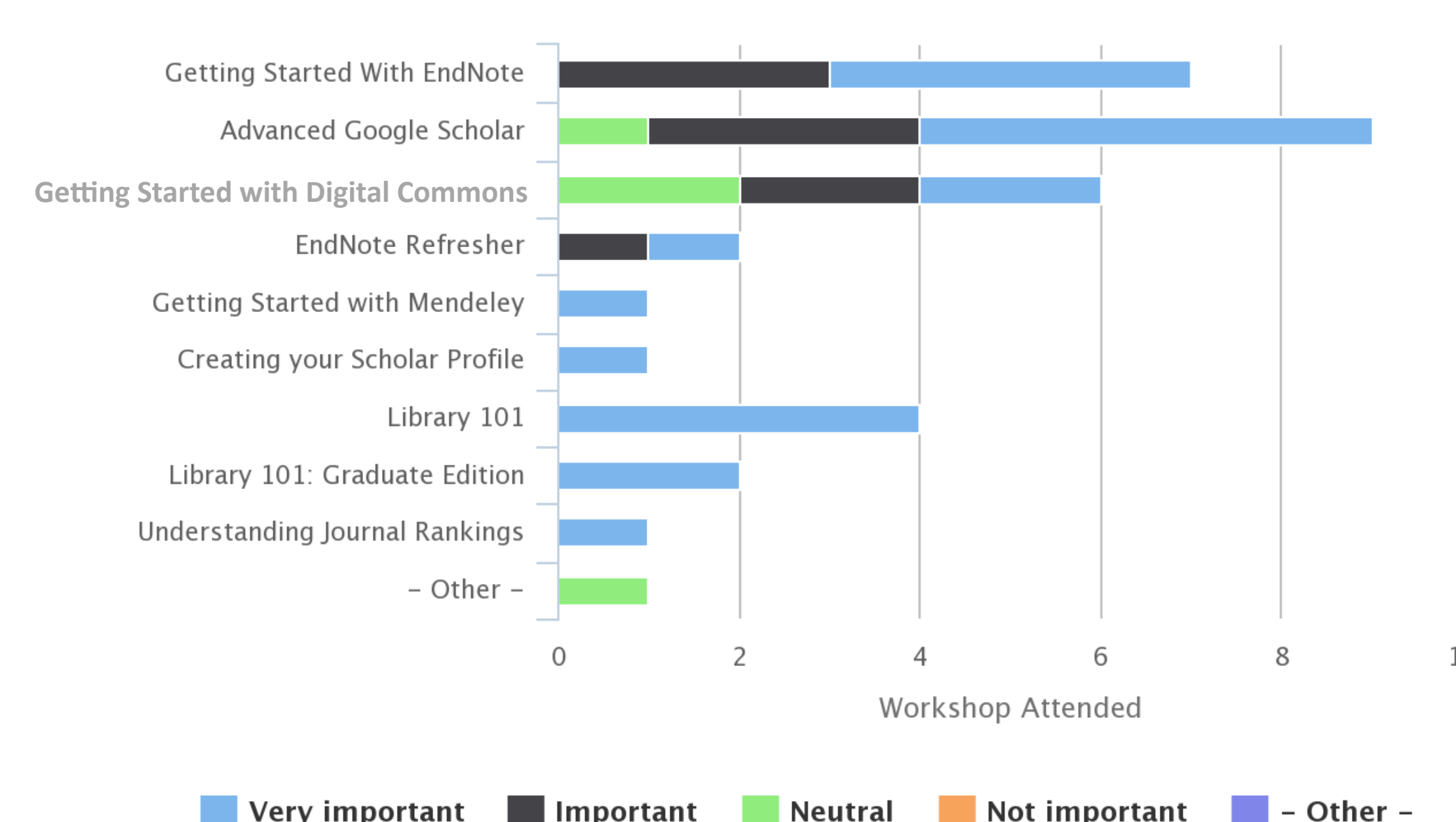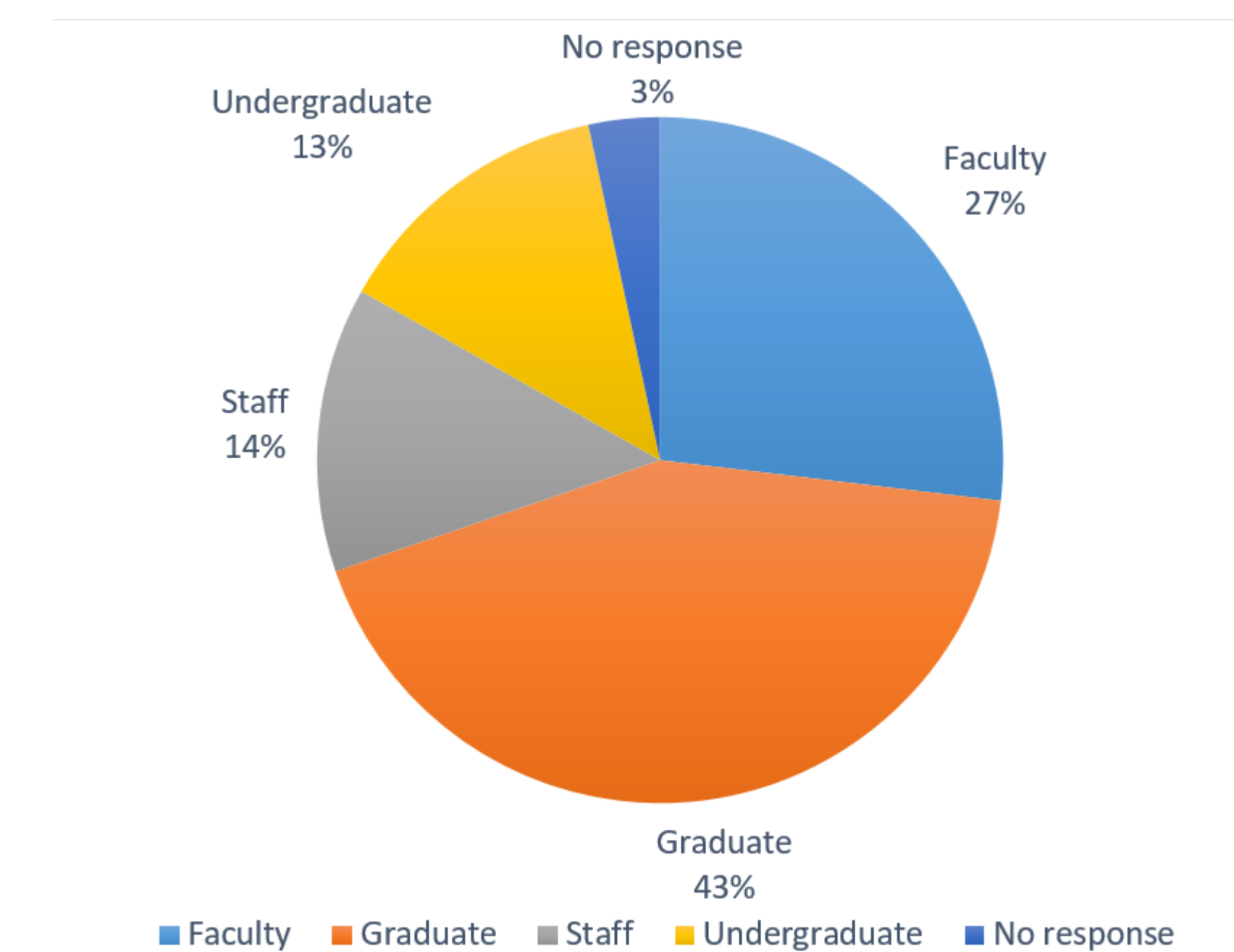
ATTENDANCE & FEEDBACK

Total Reach:

Year	Appointments	Workshop Attendance
2014-2015	27	-
2015-2016	52	-
2016-2017	67	-
2017-2018	130	24*
2018-2019	120	124

* Spring semester only, does not account for attendees who did not preregister

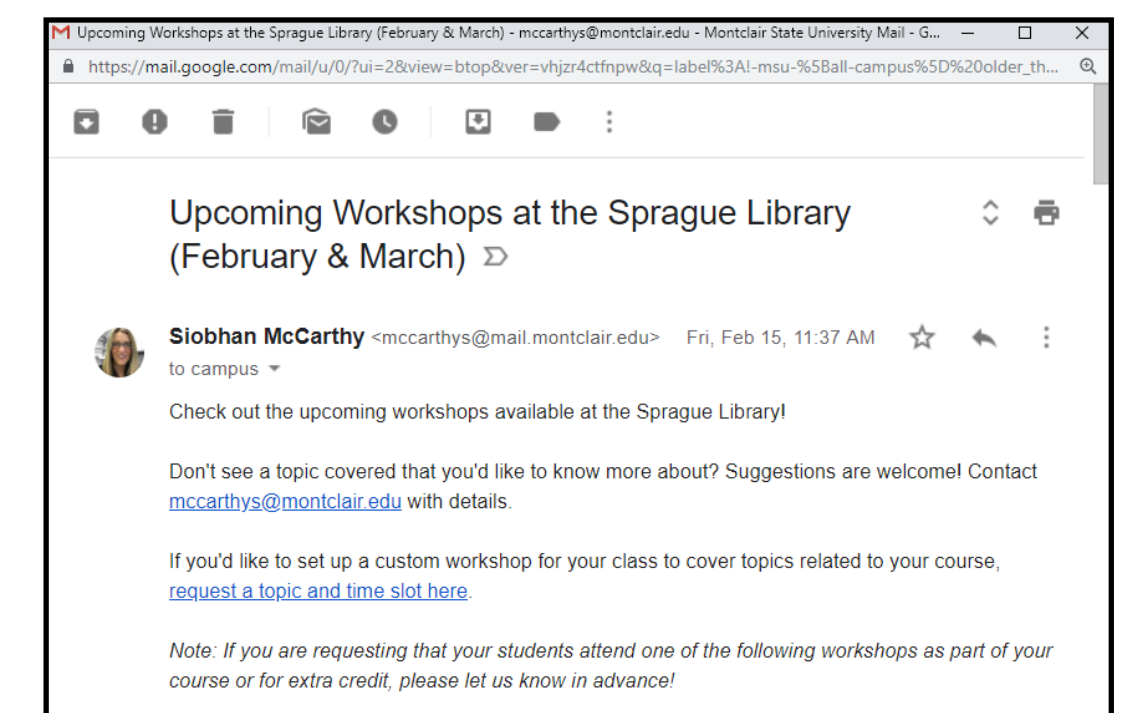### Importance of Topic Covered:

Demographics:

- No response 3%
- Undergraduate 13%
- Faculty 27%
- Staff 14%
- Graduate 43%

Faculty · Graduate · Staff · Undergraduate · No response

Registration Breakdown:

OPPORTUNITIES

Workshops as a marketing tool:

"This is great, and we need to have more of these that help with research and also publicize it more so more faculty can benefit from them."

"Would love to see the same type of workshop(s) for our DT's"

Instruction opportunities:

"I was interested in directing the students in my History seminar to your Library 101, but unfortunately the course meets at that hour and I already scheduled something for them to do that day. Would there be any way to schedule a Library 101 on another Monday (or Thursday) for the 15-18 students in this class?"

MOVING FORWARD

. Not reducing research appointments, but overall reach has increased

. Continue to market customized class-based library instruction as alternative to undergraduate workshops

. Using LibCal to schedule research appointments

. Target graduate program coordinators during the Spring/Summer semesters through liaison program, and coordinate with Graduate Assistant advisors

. Expand topics: Literature reviews, specialized subject databases, etc.

. Online workshops using Zoom

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