

PUBLIC SERVICES

The services at the Emmanuel library are excellent in terms of locating books on the shelves, training to use and assisting in library services and research (for example, offering workshops on how to use ATLA), and open attitude of help toward users. These excellent services at Emmanuel (the library I use the second most frequently) are the only reason some of my survey results were moderate and not rated at 4 or under.

I say this because the services at Robarts are appalling. Book "self finding rate" I would place at 60% at best for my field of study (Hebrew Bible/Ancient Israel/Dead Sea Scrolls), and staff are very unfriendly and unhelpful.

Robarts has fairly helpful translation software available; however, I only heard about this tool by word of mouth from another student. When I went off to seek this machine, no one at the library knew what I was asking about, and it was only by persistent looking that I finally found the service.

Thus, overall, while the U of T library system is fantastic simply in its scope and size, the service is very inconsistent from library to library.

The above survey is a reflection poor service at Robarts on a continuous basis. The service I get at the ROM library is not a reflection of the above, and the service there is impeccable.

The senior staff at the circulation desk has an unacceptable rudeness towards its inquiries. It has been this way for at least 10 years now, embarrassing!

Very good service provided by library personnel@ OISE. - not consistent throughout the campus.

The library space could be quieter which is of course due to the high volume of usage. I have nothing but praise and admiration for the staff.

I have seen significant progress in the improvement of library services over the past 30 years and I am generally very happy with it. I especially like the availability of digital textbooks through the library system, which can then be used as course material at not additional cost to students.

It is occasionally hard to tell who is an employee and who is a student.

More quiet space and people who understand or guide you on how to reference or guide you to the right materials for essays

More needs to be done by staff members to engage with students beyond group/class presentations. Also more information about library events need to be publicized on various student email distribution list. I feel like the library offers some great services that few people know about/use.

If the staff couldn't help me, they have always been able to point me to someone who could

The Graham Staff is simply amazing.

Service is very different in different locations which shouldn't be the case. In Robart's I feel often lost and very secluded from the outside world. It is almost a scary place. The Munk library has a completely different atmosphere: people like working between the books and spending time here.

We are lucky to have such an excellent library, collection and staff. I suppose the libraries of the U of T are one reason why I spent my career here.

Overall very impressed and satisfied with the Library service at UofT.

Excellent library service. Extended library hours on Fridays and Saturdays are recommended.

Staff are most often friendly and can direct you appropriately.

Perhaps sending out (or more frequently sent) "departmentally-related" information regarding services provided by the library would help to improve usage of said services.

Comments about library service were made in terms of the overall services on the UofT libraries (Robarts, Trinity, Emmanuel, etc.)
Services at Caven Library are excellent.

I love the library chat feature, but both times I have had to use it, the person wasn't able to help me. In each instance, I said, 'forget it' and just emailed the library help desk and you know what? No one ever answered me. So, the library is great when it works but having issues resolved just doesn't happen...apparently (ie: wasn't able to access a journal online even though I should have been able to, according to the library).

The Regis College library staff are always very friendly and of great assistance to all my research/library questions.

The librarians at UTSC are, as a group, very hard working and motivated individuals. They take the initiative to contact me at the beginning of each term to assess my library needs and are willing to go beyond what I am usually able to integrate into my courses. Their approach is perfect for a teaching-focused employee.

I all the interactions with library staff they have been extremely courteous, helpful and respectful. for example:
My library card did not allow me to take out books however the librarian let me borrow the books while waiting for IT to sort out issues with my card

I booked an information search session with a librarian which was extremely helpful for my literature review
I had difficulty locating an old journal-library staff wandered around the stacks with me until the journal was located

the new books have to be displayed visibly as for decades prior at the entrance and more information about the history of UofT and library staff

Invariably friendly and informed staff at BOTH libraries I most frequently use. Laidlaw Library at UC is a MUCH friendlier physical environment for reading and other coursework. Robarts has a GREAT collection but the lighting and spaces for study are not very hospitable. ... Question: Why is this survey being processed in the USA? Is this task beyond the capacity of Canadians?

In general, I am very happy with the library system. I particularly appreciate the extensive catalogue and the relative ease of finding academic articles through the library website.

Whenever I have dealt with library staff they have been polite and helpful.

Robarts map library staff are particularly helpful but all staff have provided helpful experiences. Returned to U of T after many years and found the library services very much improved. Small things like the location of books (shown on the catalogue and street names on the stacks) simple but useful devices. Thanks

I think the library's glossy newsletter should be electronic only. It would be good to have the recall (not Hold) facility online.

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Staff are very helpful, creative and greatly assist in course support. Books and journals need as much support as e-material. Problems if any are not staff-related but more due to poor funding. Need more staff to re-shelve books.

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At Robarts Library, the staff working at the reference desk on the fourth floor are very helpful and friendly. The staff working in the offices on the first floor of Robarts are somewhat helpful and for the most part friendly. Security at Robarts are also very helpful. The rest of the library staff are extremely rude and unhelpful. The staff at Kelly Library are friendly and helpful as well, but the staff at other libraries (ie Pratt, Gerstein) are not very helpful either. Designated study spaces in which graduate students receive priority in booking would be nice, as I tend to avoid the libraries during specific times of the year when I know space is at a premium due to the high demand of undergraduates seeking study spaces. Although I would like to see improvements in study spaces and services from staff, I am extremely satisfied with the amount of materials, both material and electronic that U of T libraries provides - it surpasses all university libraries in Canada and most university libraries in the US and Europe.

My comments apply largely to Robarts. Staff at the smaller libraries (I also often use Gerstein, for example) are generally courteous and helpful, and I can generally find the books that I need on the shelves. This is almost never the case at Robarts, unfortunately.

It would be helpful to be able to renew/update one's lib card offsite more easily and have it mailed sent to those of us who are not on campus regularly

The human resources are exemplary in every respect at Earth Sciences and Robarts but physical deterioration of Robarts Library is noticeable, also use of computers for downloading of inappropriate material continues at Robarts.

Robarts Library is an excellent research library in terms of its scale and its openness. It has suffered over the years as budgets have gone down. I still, however, find it remarkably easy to use.

The majority of my experience with the U of T library services comes from working in Robarts. While I find many of the staff reflexively charmless in their interactions with students, and the peak hours of student-library activity challenging to negotiate re: study space/computer usage, I'm mostly happy with the services on offer and the library's generous hours.

Robarts' resources are very good but I have had less than stellar service from some of the staff while I have had excellent service from other members of staff.

The Ask Gerstein service has been terrific! Every single person who I have contacted has taken the time to ensure that I have all the information I need.

The people are cold and do not seem like they want to help you, I feel like I'm bothering them

That said, it's pretty complex and the website could be simplified (there are many external sites which can be pretty difficult to navigate and access via the website). The resources the libraries have to offer could also be publicized a bit more as I haven't much knowledge as to what is offered besides books, journals, and articles.

The front-line staff in the check-out areas are consistently surly and slow. I was once called at home and told that I had to come to the library (Pratt) and pick-up all the books I had returned, and return them to each individual library. Never mind my broken foot. I watched a staff member at Robarts berate an alumni for not having the right ID to get a library card. Ug! How many years did it take Robarts to properly re-label the stacks to reflect the real call numbers of the books behind each door? The fact that you are surveying for the minimal acceptable service speaks to the culture of mediocrity that rules library service at most UofT Libraries. Also - the library searches for e-books is totally confusing. Only pleasant library is the BIC, and they don't have library in their title.

I am very impressed by Robarts and by the ROM Near Eastern Library, which I use frequently. The staff of both have been very helpful, particularly the RACER office. However, it is very discouraging how many volumes that I need are missing/lost. It is also unfortunate that some journals I would like to consult regularly are not in the collection.

I am not really familiar enough with the library to answer questions with confidence. I am generally satisfied and have had positive interactions with the staff.

As a former undergraduate student, I found I often had to rely on word-of-mouth from peers to find out about library services beyond circulation and reference. I find the UTL twitter account does a great job at bridging that gap, but there needs to be more outreach to students and staff who don't use social media.

The level of service at the personal level is high; only problem is, it is very difficult to find staff outside of the 4th floor Research area.

Very occasionally have experienced surly staff when I need help, but mostly the staff there are amazing. Really love the U of T libraries!

I have had excellent support from both Robarts and the Gerstien Science Library.

I have only had one Robarts staff member appear to be impatient with my request during an orientation session to demonstrate how to use an RSS feed. I had the impression she was not well acquainted with the technology herself and so the request for help made her nervous. It would have helped if she had pointed me toward a resource who could have helped, rather than to ignore the request.

I have generally received excellent service from the Robarts and occasionally UTM and Scarborough libraries.

Service in Robarts library could sometimes be friendlier and more courteous. Some inter-library loan staff could be more forthcoming and generous in their communications. Library staff should be required to give their names in all email and telephone communications.

Biggest issue with the library system is that the stacks are a freaking mess. I keep stats on my book searches (the number of books that I need, how many I find and don't find) and I've seen a drop every year, currently down to 64%. This is pathetic, worse than when I was using Yale's library system (another terrible system with no respect for the stacks). You really need to get more full-timers working in the stacks, student workers don't cut it and never well (which is why Yale is so awful, and you guys are sicking down to their level).

More than once I have experienced unprofessional and rude behaviour on the part of staff at the circulation desk

Trinity is super comfortable and has excellent service, but its holdings and more restricted lending policies (i.e. six weeks versus 6 months) mean that I spend much more time at Robarts.

Gerstein has better service than Robarts when I use it.

Sometimes the unionized staff is effusively friendly (welcome), othertimes unsmiling (professional). Human nature will out.

Yet Robarts is an amazing place to work; and the librarians there and elsewhere in the UT library system make great efforts to help everyone. Managing access to the world's online research resources is an especially staggering job. You are all doing a fine job under very difficult circumstances.

poor servies when it comes to going downatares and helping locate a specific book or journal; apparently some library employees are not paid to move beyound the service counter and help student locate a book; some employees are unaware that journal articles can be found electronically

the catalogue is often unreliable when it comes to the actual location of a book, especially with regard to old call numbers, and librarians, consulted on such problems, are seldom better informed; sometimes it takes several phone calls and verifications in situ to locate a book.

I have used Robarts library a lot lately because I take my SCS Academic students there to help them learn how to do research. The workshops that my students have attended have been fantastic. The staff have been very helpful.

I am extremely pleased with the University of Toronto libraries, particularly because of the extensive collection, quality of staff, and helpful services.

Staff should be even more cordial and empathetic

Very satisfied with the librarian service at Laidlaw library. Of the 4 times I have visited, every one of the staff has been extremely courteous and helped answer questions and ensured that I was satisfied.

The Library atmosphere is great but I would prefer if there was an easier way to locate different libraries on campus

Some staff aren't patient enough to answer my questions.

I have nothing but admiration for the staff at the Robarts library -- and at Trinity library as well -- for the assistance they've given me throughout my career at the University of Toronto. I've written whole books in my carrel at the Robarts, and I've acknowledged these libraries in the forewords.

I often find a disconnect between the librarians encounter at the Inforum with those at various other libraries on campus - specifically Robarts. I have been a graduate student for many years (having completed a Masters and a PhD) and I rarely find myself disliking a library experience, sadly any encounters I have in Robarts are negative. The staff is unfriendly and completely unhelpful and the atmosphere is generally not a positive one.

On most issues the Robarts Library ranks very, very high; and I have always found library staff, especially in the Reference division, to be very highly competent, intelligent, helpful and anxious to please. I could not do without the Library

I really like Graham library, I find it warm and welcoming, comfortable and easy to study. However, I find Robarts to be the complete opposite. Robarts is confusing, and frustrating to find materials or even to find someone to help you find materials.

I graduated from OISE in 2010 and used the library sources frequently. I found the information easily accessible and staff were helpful when I had questions.

I hate the website, but the people at the Inforum are simply the best. Will go out of their way to help you- which is sometimes necessary when the website / catalogue is not helpful at all (which happens to me most of the time).

I've generally had a great experience with the U of T libraries throughout my 7 years at the university, but I've found the OISE library staff to be particularly great since beginning there this fall.

I have always had excellent service at Gerstein, although I frequent it less often now. Staff are also highly responsive by email.

I am retired, and visit the library buildings (Pratt and Robarts mostly) less often than I did, but I use the electronic resources of the library virtually every day and am deeply grateful for both. The Fisher provides admirable service likewise, in one of the most splendid reading rooms in the world. Keep on your present course!

Inforum staff is top notch! Always friendly, always happy to help - truly a model for library staff everywhere.

I do find the level of customer service at different libraries to be quite varied.

I am very pleased at the efficient and courteous service.

Librarians should be able to assist in finding books or ask if we need help in finding the books and not just point where the books are kept.

It is fascinating how librarians are committed to their job. Many thanks to them.

In all other respects, I find UTSC library staff exceptional, always helpful and patient, and I am encouraged by their responsiveness to students in helping making the library progressively better, despite the resistance they face (for example, from the building's open concept, which itself seems to amplify conversation, and the student's natural response to subconsciously feel that loud conversation is appropriate as a result). For the record, I feel that they are making all the right choices to improve this problem.

I have experienced great service thus far!

needs improvement regarding interaction/support to staff and students

The unfriendliness of the staff at many of the UoT libraries is proverbial; smiles, friendliness and an attempt to convey a sense that your needs are ones they would actually like to resolve would be a real game-changer!

I think the staff and resources at the Gerstein library are excellent both for teaching and research

The reference librarian at Graham has been a wonderful resource

I had an awesome librarian sit down with me and help get me started on a research project - very helpful.

Staff could proactively ask if you need assistance. Library staff, many don't appear friendly--unapproachable.

The library online is absolutely amazing for a grad student. However, I feel that undergrad do not get informed or trained enough on how to best use the resources. I often end up having to go through the webpage of the library myself with students when teaching.

Maybe the library employees could at least go to some classes to help out and break the ice with young undergrads who still have no clue how to do research. There needs to be a physical presentation, not just short classes that new students will not even know they have access to.

But still thanks for all the library staff.

Highly professional, knowledgeable and client focused; partner in learning

Well done! A consistently high level of service and resource provision.