

Library Liaison Committee Annual Report 2011-2012

Chair: Victor Pambuccian

The Library Liaison Committee has looked primarily into the issue of which books should be acquired in paper format and which should be acquired in e-format. After being informed of the current trends in the readership's preference for electronic access and the decline in checkouts of books in paper format, the committee has sent out a survey designed to find out the actual reading experience and reading preference of faculty members. 100 of these answers were evaluated, and it turned out that 40% never read an e-book from the ASU Library, than 54% prefer paper to e-format, and that even e-book readers find that they are not yet designed to be used for actual research, and that they are more appropriate for fiction. The problem of the more sustainable alternative has also been raised, but no conclusive answer has been found (there has been no life-cycle assessment done for a book in paper format (including its storage and a/c costs) vs. e-book for a longer period of time (200-300 years)).

A very preliminary conclusion from both the responses to the questionnaire and the probable sustainability preference is:

Popular, short-life books are ideal as e-books, whereas books that have very few potential readers (if any), but that have very long lives (200 years or more), are preferable in paper format.