

# Needs of the Virtual Engineering Community

## Introduction

With over 5,000 undergrads and 1600+ graduate students, we are unable to orient everyone to the NCSU Libraries environment; therefore by evaluating the questions asked this semester by the virtually by the engineering community, I was able to find out common types of questions. Using these themes, resources were enhanced or will be developed for self exploration by the engineering community or useful tools for all levels of staff (from undergraduates to librarians) to use to assist engineering students, faculty and staff.

## Methods

Tutor.com provides you with a variety of reports. Unfortunately there was not a report that provided me with all the information that I needed. I wanted to see the date, time, college they associated with, status, the question, and the librarian that helped the patron. To get all of these variables, I had to merge three different reports. By using excel, I was able to sort the data in a variety of ways.

## Types of Questions Asked by Patrons

Library Services: this category includes questions about hours, interlibrary loan

*Example: How do I request a book from another library?*

Known Item: this category includes questions dealing with finding out if the library has a specific title of a resource (i.e. book, journal or database)

*Example: Can you help me find the book "Embedded Internet Design"?*

Research: this category includes in depth questions about resources to use

*Example: I need information on spam filtering. Can you help me?*

Technical: this category deals with questions about how patrons are unable to access and electronic resource

*Example: Why is the electronic reserve for my class not opening for me?*

## Conclusion

From the results short and long term solutions were developed. The solutions will both help patrons with self-exploration, provide tools to help staff assist patrons and be used as a feedback mechanism for training.

Tamika Barnes McCollough  
Engineering Services Librarian  
North Carolina State University Libraries  
Tamika\_barnes@ncsu.edu