What is Gimlet?

Gimlet is a web-based tool used to record information about encounters at the Hannon Information Commons Desk. It allows us to collect basic statistics such as time, type and number of questions answered. It also allows us to record additional information such as sample answers, resources used, tags, etc. The information collected can be analyzed and used to create reports and make decisions about skills, training, services and staffing.

What Do I Access Gimlet?

The link to Gimlet is located in the toolbar on the computers at the Info Commons desk. The direct link is: https://lmu.gimlet.us/. Sign in with your LMU email and password.

How Does Gimlet work?

The Gimlet form contains boxes for pre-set categories requiring a selection and other boxes requiring the user to type in information. The form should default to the “Add a question” tab, or you can click on the “Add a question” tab at the top of the page to start entering your statistics.
For each question, please record:

1. **Duration**: Select the approximate amount of time spent with the patron.

2. **Question type**: Categorize the question(s) as Directional, Reference, Technical, or Policy.
   - **Directional**: Facilitates the logistical use of the library (or campus) and its Web site. Usually does not involve consulting information sources other than those that describe the library or campus, such as schedules, floor plans, maps, and calendars. Usually involves patron asking directions to a specific person, place, or thing.
   - **Reference**: Involves the knowledge, use, recommendations, interpretation, or instruction in the use of one or more information sources (printed material, electronic resources, library home page, Web, library’s own catalogs, other holdings, etc.).
   - **Technical**: The patron has a request or needs help related to technology (e.g. printers, copiers, software, wireless access, LMU account support (Manegate, PROWL, Blackboard, etc.), personal computing support). This does not include basic directional, i.e., where are the copiers?
   - **Policy**: Questions that relate to the specific rules of the library.

3. **Asked by**: Select whether the patron is a student, faculty or RA (research assistant), staff, alumni, law school, visitor, or unknown. This information is not usually sought by librarians directly, but the patron type frequently arises during a reference/info commons exchange.
Format: How did you receive the question? Was it in person, or over the phone? For librarians, it could also be in their office, through email, through Virtual Reference (VR), or through Text (SMS).

Location: For all student workers at the Information Desk, their response would be the default “information desk”. Librarians can also select office or roving.

Question: This is a text box to record the question asked by the patron. Examples: “Where are the copiers?”, “How do I reboot into Windows?”, “Do you own the DVD The Godfather?”

Answer: This text box is used to record the information/resources given. Include resources such as databases (cut and paste full names from Research Databases webpage), LINUS (for catalog), collection (reference, curriculum), Google, referrals to other departments, etc. For technology questions give details for troubleshooting if possible (“Microsoft Help” is considered a resource). You can leave blank for basic routine questions (“restrooms,” “where is this call number”).

Tags: Try to tag your question. Use the tags that are already in the system rather than creating new ones. For a list of tags and their definitions, see the “Gimlet Tags” document.

Difficulty: Rank each question on a scale from 1 to 6. We use the READ scale (Reference Effort Assessment Data) for this purpose. The READ scale is explained in the background and introduction and the user guide. A one page quick guide with definitions and examples is also kept at the Info Commons desk.

*For students: Any question ranked as a 4 or higher on the READ scale should always be referred to a Reference Librarian or Technology Specialist (or other appropriate staff member).

Time of question: Each submission of the form is automatically marked in real time, or the time and date can be changed if you are entering your questions later.

Your initials

Flagging:

If you have a question that needs the attention of a library staff member, after the question is submitted please refer the question back to a staff member by clicking on the envelope icon (email this question) and then typing in the staff member’s email address on the “To” box at the top (if you’re not sure who to send it to just use: refdesk@lmu.edu). To send the email, click on “submit”. This could be a referral or possibly a question you weren’t sure how to categorize, rank, answer, etc.

Photocopier

Tags: Library_Building copier

Information Desk · Student · Directional · In-Person · less than 5 minutes · sb · Difficulty: 1

Using the Search Feature:

Information recorded in Gimlet can be searched by clicking on the Search tab and doing a Simple search or an Advanced search. This can helpful if you are looking for a question you or someone else already answered. It can also be helpful if you need to go back and edit something you previously recorded.
Rules of Thumb:

- **Do not** record office supplies questions such as scissors, staples, dry erase markers, pens, paper clips, etc.

- If a non-technical directional question (such as “where are the videos?”) or a policy question (such as “can I check out the videos?”) becomes *instructional* in nature, count it as reference. “Instructional” means you teach or instruct the patron on how to use something or how to search. For example: “Where are the videos? I need to find a film about monkeys” starts as directional but turns into instructional. You would record it as a reference question.

- If you have multiple questions from one patron that include reference, policy, directional, etc., count it as reference. For example, “where is your journal list? how can I find the full text of this article? As an alumni, will I be able to do this from home?” starts off as directional, turns into reference, and ends with policy, but you will count it as a reference question.

- If a directional or policy question related to technology becomes *instructional* in nature, count it as technical. For example, “where can I get an adapter?” followed by “how do I connect the adapter to the big screen in my group study room?” would be counted as a technical question.

- All referrals should be recorded as a 1 or 2. If you immediately refer, without any time/effort, the referral should be recorded as a 1. If you spend some time/effort and then refer, record the referral as a 2.

- For students, **ALL** questions that, if answered, would warrant a READ level of 4 or higher should be referred to a librarian or library staff member.

- All policy questions are ranked level 2 (possibly higher if it becomes very complicated).

- All reference questions are ranked level 2 or higher.

- When in doubt, email your question to a staff member or supervisor to follow up!