Academic library pandemic responses
As of April 6, 2020, 1,067 of 1,259 U.S. academic libraries responding to an Ithaka S+R survey about responses to the COVID-19 pandemic reported that in-person classes had moved to online/remote instruction. Sixty-six institutions reported classes continuing as usual. Of the 1,280 responding to a question about library hours, 457 institutions reported all libraries closed while 359 reported libraries remaining open during their usual hours.

Continuing digital divide
“Whether people use the Internet varies widely by level of education” in 34 countries surveyed by the Pew Research Center. “Internet use (including smartphone ownership) is particularly rare among people with a lower level of completed education in Nigeria, where only 13 percent of people say they use the Internet, compared with 73 percent of those with more education in that country. In 10 countries surveyed, the difference in reported Internet use between those with lower educational attainment and those with more education is greater than 30 percentage points. In two countries, Italy and Turkey, the higher-lower education difference is quite stark: Everyone in these countries with a higher education level reports using the Internet, compared with only 77 percent and 82 percent, respectively, of those with a lower level of education.”

Library employment
“In 2018, there were approximately 191,500 librarians, 29,400 library technicians, and 103,000 library assistants employed in public libraries, primary and secondary schools, institutions of higher education, museums and archives, as well as in libraries operated by private corporations, government agencies, religious groups and other organizations.”

ACT test
In 1995, 38 percent of all high school graduates took the ACT. In 2018, 52 percent of high school graduates took the ACT. The average composite score was 20.8 in both years (the minimum score on the ACT is 1 and maximum score is 36).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities
“In 2018, there were 101 HBCUs located in 19 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Of the 101 HBCUs, 51 were public institutions and 50 were private nonprofit institutions. The number of HBCU students increased 47 percent, from 223,000 to 327,000 students, between 1976 and 2010, then decreased 11 percent, to 292,000 students, between 2010 and 2018.”

Gary Pattillo is reference librarian at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; e-mail: pattillo@email.unc.edu