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I served as a library director at three academic libraries in my career. The data from the survey was invaluable. The data provided a tape measure against which to measure my libraries' performance. In fact the data became increasingly important as college administrations and funding organizations such as foundations, demanded more data driven decisions. I don't know where I would turn to get such data if I were still the director of a college library.

Some might argue that the profession or colleges themselves should bare the burden of doing such a survey. However government is the only organization that has the apparatus for doing a comprehensive national survey. The cost of starting up an entire new operation would be prohibitive. The amount the DOE is spending to conduct the survey is probably a very small portion of its budget and chaos and cost of recreating the tool will be a great disservice to colleges.