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Library Space Assessment

Abstract
Presented research and data findings of Library Space Assessment to librarians and library staff on how students use the Lavery Library.

Document Type
Undergraduate Project

Department
Sociology

Professor's Name
David Baronov

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Subject Categories
Sociology

Comments
Presented at the St. John Fisher College Student Scholarship and Creative Work Symposium on April 28, 2017.

View the poster presentation of Library Space Assessment presentation here.
Kaitlyn Shamp (*Class of 2017*)
Sociology major and
Psychology minor

Chenisvel Nunez (*Class of 2017*)
Double major in Sociology and
Criminology; Minor in Communications
Background: Lavery Library

- Serves entire campus

- 3 floors:
  - Quiet floor with study rooms
  - Learning Commons
  - Lower level: mixed use

- Built in 1975, Main Level remodel 2012

- ~20 Library staff
Background: Lavery Library

- 221,134 visits in ‘15-‘16 FY
  - Average of 58 visits per FTE

- Past surveys:
  - Special headcounts (2010)
  - Commuter survey (2010)
  - Architect survey (2011)
  - Library redesign survey (2013)
  - MISO survey (2013)
Background (Lit. Review)

• “Library as place” and “third space” \(^4\) \(^3\)
  ○ Flexible learning spaces that are neither home or the classroom

• Informal learning, a place for students to “be intentional about their learning” \(^10\)

• Library users’ needs are unique to the individual & can be task specific \(^2\) \(^6\) \(^2\)
Background (Lit. Review)

- Quiet & individual study
  - For “getting serious” $^{2\ 3\ 4\ 8}$
  - Communal study space, but with personal boundaries $^{1\ 7\ 8}$

- Group study & non-quiet space
  - Social and informal learning space $^{10}$
  - Flexible learning for working collaboratively, socializing, studying alone and alone-together $^{2\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 8\ 10}$
Objective

● How are students using our library spaces?
  ○ Collect evidence to inform future space planning and renovations
  ○ What works? What doesn’t? What’s needed?
Mixed Methods

- Seating Sweeps -- 3x a day, 2 non-consecutive weeks (spring 2016)
- Focus Groups -- 6 focus groups by student type
- Survey -- 3-week run, undergraduates
Method: Seating Sweeps

- Anyone in library
- Lasted between 15 minutes - 1 hour
- Library staff floor by floor
- Pen and paper, then digital (Google Forms)
- Categories: Desktop, laptop, cell phone, tablet, whiteboards in use, food/drink, group work, note taking, reading, sleeping, talking, headphones, other
Method: Focus Groups

- Participants (N=41)
  - Freshmen (*n* = 9)
  - Sophomores (*n* = 9)
  - Juniors (*n* = 10)
  - Seniors (*n* = 8)
  - Graduate (*n* = 2) and doctoral (*n* = 3)

- ~1 hour session

- 2 sets of questions: undergraduate, graduate
Method: Survey

- Survey development based on common focus group responses
  - Questions and question types modeled after previous library surveys
- Created using Qualtrics
- Piloted with small group of students
- To boost response rate, emails sent through Student Government
- Distributed only to undergraduates
- N=2948
Findings: Seating Sweeps

- Flexible furniture
  - Chairs, tables, whiteboards for privacy

- Technology
  - Multiple, simultaneous device usage
    - Tablets, laptops, phones, desktops
      - 41.5% of users during the two weeks of sweeps were using at least 2 devices
      - High use of outlets

- Collaboration
  - Group work around one computer, rather than group workstations
Findings: Focus Groups

- Most common uses for the library:
  - Studying
  - Computer use/printing
  - Work on group projects

- Services and features that students like about the library:
  - Interlibrary loan
  - Librarians and research desk
  - Group work tables with TV screens

- Services and features that students would like the library to add:
  - Stress relief room
  - Extended hours
  - More study rooms on the quiet floor
Findings: Survey

- Monday – Thursday and Finals Week are popular times
- Academic activities are primary focus
- Academic activities are highly tech-oriented or collaborative
- Quiet floor is most utilized
- Lower level (basement) is underutilized
Question: “I think the library needs...”
Limitations

- **Seating Sweeps:**
  - Multiple recorders’ interpretations

- **Focus Groups:**
  - Low graduate participation

- **Survey:**
  - Not a random sample
  - Graduate populations excluded (low participation in focus groups)
  - Excluded demographics (differentiation between commuters/residents)
Recommendations

● **Small, incremental changes:**
  ○ New, more smaller tables on upper level
  ○ Updated seating options
  ○ Promote available spaces

● **Large scale changes:**
  ○ Prioritize in Campus Master Plan
  ○ More outlets (60.7%)
  ○ New HVAC (57.6%)
  ○ Grab ‘n Go Foods (59.8%)
  ○ More lighting (natural and task)

Question: What updated features in the library are most important to you? Please rank order of least important to most important.
Thank You

- Faculty advisers: Patricia Tweet, PhD & David Baronov, PhD
- Library staff: Kate Ross, Marianne Simmons, Brian Lynch, Lynn Seavy, Stacy Celata


Questions?