Library Snapshot Day
or the 5 W’s - who, what, when, where, & why
are student using academic library space

A Method for Library User Experience Assessment

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Library Snapshot Day

- 1-day, 3-hour observational study
- 6 public floors, 9 Zones
- Teams of 2 - 4 per Zone
  - two single researchers in two zones
- 34 factors in 3 categories under observation

Additional resources: pop-up comment boards, photographs, tweet campaign, survey
Purpose

• Address student and faculty concerns
• Identify user behaviors and needs
• Find areas for improvement
  • spaces, services, and policies
• Promote library as place
The team

- 18 researchers
- Interdepartmental team of faculty and staff
- Led by the associate dean
- IRB trained and certified
Method

Seating Sweeps, or Library Observational Studies (see Linn, 2013)

- Identify location(s) and factors for observation
- Select a period for observation
- Make a checklist
- Schedule rounds and divide the space(s), assign teams
- Arrange a practice run, troubleshoot in advance
- Observe, collect, disseminate
Sample Checklist

**Observational Checklist (Adapted from Jinn, 2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: Nov 2nd</th>
<th>Time: 3:00</th>
<th>Floor: 3rd</th>
<th>Zone: 2</th>
<th>Round number: 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Where is this person
- In a car
- In private/unobservable seat/space
- In a lounge chair
- At a public computer
- At a table
- Sitting on floor
- Walking
- In group study/media study
- In a research carrel
- At service point
- Other (Ex: Honors, GIS classroom etc)

### Possessions
- Printed material
- Writing material
- Electronics stuff (laptops, ipads, etc)
- Food
- Drink
- Unusual Photo worthy stuff
  - Example: Backpacks, cords, skateboards in aisles etc.

### Activities
- Reading
- Writing
- Using laptop, ipad etc.
- Using library computer
- Using an outlet
- Talking/listening
- Using cellphone
- Using whiteboards
- Drinking something
- Eating something
- Sleeping
- Searching for library materials
- Searching for a seat
- Using copier
- Using BookEye scanner
- Attending function (class, program etc.)
- Other (Ex: Using digital signs etc.)
Conversations with Students

more tables. Outlets for each table. And a study break room; for naps and activities take the mind off studies, just for a moment

send reminders before books return deadline via email!

more chairs that resemble beds (since I'm here 7+ hours)

more "shh...quiet zone" posters around. And maybe a more convinient way to report noisy people-thank you

power outlets, clean desks and restrooms, textbooks, some good pc with internet on all floors, replace sluggish pcs

more independent quiet rooms for freshman+other undergrads

more public computers+place to eat that isn't starbucks.more booths, hire more ppl

individual study rooms for all students like BBC's library

longer for electronic devices loans. Devices such as laptops, tablets... and have a 30 minutes grace period before charging someone for a late fee.
Value to LIS Students

During the study

- Transferrable skills & knowledge
  - IRB and research
- Broader context of service and organizational culture
- Interaction with colleagues

After the study

- Conference and Presenting Experience
- Publication opportunities
- Networking (Internal & External)
- Sense of the profession
A More Effective Observation

- Reformulate focus and goal
- Improve consistency in data collection
- Share widely to gain direction
- Expand opportunities for academic community engagement
Conclusion

The times, they are a’ changin’...

- Students use spaces in unexpected ways
- Let students lead
- Change how we manage and design spaces
  - Collaborate with other units
  - Reconsider furniture/study areas
  - Address technology needs