**Assessing Student Perceptions and Uses of New Library Spaces**

**The Project**
A qualitative study focused on a “neighborhood” of recently renovated library spaces in the main Library, including:
- Silent Reading Room
- Technology Sandbox
- Cone Zone
- Clusters of ball chairs
- Terrace

The project was a collaboration between a student in NCSU’s doctoral program in Communication, Rhetoric, and Digital Media and a librarian.

**Research Questions**
How do students perceive the spaces on the first floor of DH Hill Library’s West Wing?

How do they use the spaces?

**Participants**
9 students were recruited within the West Wing. All were self-reported frequent users of the area. They were paid $15 for participation in a 30 minute interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Animal Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Business Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Natural Sci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Animal Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Mechanical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Operations Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Mechanical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activities**
- Camping out
- Writing papers
- Studying alone
- Reading
- Killing time

**Perceptions**
- Good views
- Spacious
- Relaxed
- Distracting for some

**Activities**
- Extended stay
- Napping
- Social gathering
- Studying

**Perceptions**
- Multipurpose space
- Not private
- Can be loud
- Technology-focused

- A “good” distraction

*Mixed views: eating is ok/not ok, good for group work/not good for group work, spacious/crowded, multipurpose/confusing purpose*

**Methods**
- Preliminary observation established the foundation for interview questions.
- Participants were interviewed to learn about their behaviors and preferences.
- The interviewer used mapping to capture space preference data related to a variety of activities / uses.

**Mapping Activity**
Students were asked to mark locations on a floor plan where they preferred to do activities. The interviewer prompted for why they preferred these locations and other data about personal use of the spaces.

**Data Analysis**
- Interviews were coded for core themes based on activities, behaviors, and socio-cultural dynamics in the spaces
- Future work can be done with the maps
- Data was shared with library staff