MODERN AND MOTIVATING: AN EXPLORATION OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF DESIGN ON PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH ARCHITECTURAL AND LIBRARY ASSESSMENT LENS
PRESENTERS

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Agenda

- Today’s Students
- Programming Considerations
- University Libraries Study
TODAY’S STUDENTS

the first generation of people who grew up in the era of ubiquitous technology
Generational Traits

- Grew-up Surrounded by Technology
- Demographically Diverse
- Constant Contact via Social Media
- Can Learn Anywhere
- Weak Interpersonal, Face-to-Face and Problem-Solving Skills
Institutional Response

- Fast, Easy & Convenient
- Collaborative Projects
- Need Varied Settings for Studying
- Flexible Learning & Social Environments
- Engage & Apply Versus Sharing Content
- Technology ‘Enables’ Rather than ‘Controls’ Learning

“Students are capable of performing at higher intellectual levels when asked to work in collaborative situations than when asked to work individually. Group diversity in terms of knowledge and experience contributes positively to the learning process.”

Types of Learners

- Support Various Learning Styles
  - Visual: Imagist or Verbalist
  - Auditory: Oral or Aural
  - Physical: Motor Mechanic or Kinesthetic

Learning is more effective when it is an active rather than a passive process.

Kurt Lewin
Proxemics

- How people use space while communicating
- Realms of Personal Territory:
  - Public Space: 12’-25’
    - How close we sit or stand to someone, like a public figure or public speaker
  - Social Space: 4’-12’
    - Talking to a colleague or a customer at work
  - Personal Space: 1’-4’
    - Distance reserved for talking to friends or family
  - Intimate Space: Less than 1’
    - Spouse or Partner
Proxemics

- **Physical Territory:**
  - The way furniture is arranged to optimize a space
    - Perceived barriers that separate parts of a room
  - Why desks face the front of the classroom instead of the aisle
  - Color also affects the physical territory
    - Impacts the atmosphere of a room
Proxemics

- The impact of COVID-19 on proxemics:
  - Personal Territory boundaries grow
    - Social space increases to 6’-12’
    - Personal Space is no longer appropriate
  - Physical Territory is altered
    - Occupancy limits established
    - Furniture is dispersed and barriers are installed
    - Physical territory feels more isolated and blocked
Study Goals

Research goals:

- Identify how students are using the Collaboration Commons
- Investigate student perceptions of how the space supports their academic work
Methods

- Semi-structured in-situ interviews, n=34
- Focus Group, Libraries Student Advisory Board, 14 participants
- Observational study, 41 rotations over 3 weeks
  - Recorded by “zone” and time of day
    - Seating usage by type
    - Decibel level
Motivating and Productive

- Seeing others working similarly
- Room to move
- Open sight lines
- Color
- Windows
- Versatility
- Light
- Equipped:
  - White boards
  - Outlets in furniture
  - Large tables
  - Personnel
  - Collections

Light: Students said the abundant natural light and bright white overhead lighting helped them stay focused.

Versatile: Students liked the ability to re-configure the furniture according to their needs.

"I'm a lot more productive than if I go other places that are a little noisier because it's kind of nice and quiet down here but not too quiet that you can't talk with people that you are working with." — junior, biobehavioral health

Functional and Spacious: The powered tables, which can accommodate multiple people and their belongings, enabled students to "get work done."
Impact – Group Study Rooms

I like them because it brings focus to a group, and especially like you can close the door, or use the whiteboards. It’s a really good brainstorming place, and a good planning space, but also a good spot to collaborate on homework. – sophomore, Biology major

- 16 study rooms added
- Fall to fall reservations up 73%
  - 12,602 in fall 2018
  - 21,839 in fall 2019
- In fall 2019, each of the 37 rooms reserved on average 5 times a day for a total of 12 hours
Collaboration Commons Use Assessment

October 2019

https://tinyurl.com/CCStudy2019
Implications for Future Spaces

- Build and evolve on the ideas of providing motivating spaces and the libraries role of being a space to get your work done
- Don’t underestimate the impact of design elements and configuration on the experience of users
- Provide a balance of spaces supportive of collaborative work and individual study
- To increase the occupancy percentage, create more spaces for individuals or small groups of two to three
When I’m there [the library] in a quiet space even if it’s with friends, you feel like your mindset is you just have to work. And I really like that. And people around you are all working, so if you’re not you kind of feel like “what are you doing?” – junior, Communication Arts & Sciences

Questions?