

The Diverse Library Spaces Survey: A Tale of Unfocused Responses, Low Engagement & Naysayers

Jena Styka Payne, jena.styka@case.edu
Kelvin Smith Library, Case Western Reserve University

Key Project Details

CWRU Libraries launched a Diversity Working Group in Spring 2021 to identify areas for growth and improvement in DEI

One Area of Focus- Physical Spaces:

- Task: “Create a survey to assess spaces and identify structures that work against CWRU Libraries’ anti-racism, equity, inclusion, and diversity efforts.”

Survey:

- Academic year 21-22, developed and launched survey
- Matrix style and open-ended questions
- Goal: Identify student-driven changes in the libraries’ physical spaces that would support diversity and inclusion

Complications

Unfocused Responses:

- Students addressed other issues unrelated to diversity (library hours, collection development, etc.)

Low Response Rate:

- Launched at end of fall semester
- Gift card raffle did not seem to increase participation

Naysayers:

- In a highly divided political landscape, several responses were not just neutral, but hostile towards the libraries’ diversity initiatives

Central Issue

Hope:

- Students would be excited about finding ways to make library spaces more inclusive
- Share creative and thoughtful changes they wanted to see in the library

Issue:

- Respondents voiced all their thoughts and opinions of the libraries – not just related to DEI
- Had to weed through unfocused responses to find quality feedback pertaining to DEI

Questions

Logistics:

1. Should we try this again in a few years?
2. How could we have focused the respondents to get the details we wanted?
3. How could we have reached a wider audience?

Analysis:

1. What does it mean when students do not stay on topic?
2. Were students not interested in creating a diverse and inclusive library space?
3. Do students believe libraries have more important priorities?

Q11

Please let us know to what degree you agree or disagree with this following statements pertaining to Kelvin Smith Library:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	⊗ n/a
I feel welcome in this building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like I belong in this building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel similar to other people in this building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel this building positively reflects the CWRU community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12

The following aspects of the physical spaces at Kelvin Smith Library **currently** reflect my personal life experiences and identity:

Please note: Not all options listed below are currently available in every library. Please use n/a if you are not aware of an option.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	⊗ n/a
Portraits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Artwork (paintings, statues, posters)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building/room names	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exhibits/displays/artifacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Furniture types (functional for people of all sizes, shapes and abilities)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender neutral bathrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private space for prayer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private space for breastfeeding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private space for other needs (such as private conversations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q44

Now think of your **ideal** library environment.

The libraries would like to increase diverse representation in various aspects of library spaces. Which of the following would increase your feelings of inclusivity in Kelvin Smith Library? (Choose top 3)

- Add more diverse portraits
- Add more diverse artwork (paintings, statues, posters)
- Diversify building/room names
- Diversify exhibits/displays/artifacts
- Increase gender neutral bathrooms
- Add more furniture types for people of all sizes, shapes and abilities
- Increase private space for prayer
- Increase private space for breastfeeding
- Increase private space for other needs (such as private conversations)
- Other suggestions or comments:
- No preferences

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Q13

Please provide any additional ideas, information or feedback on improving Kelvin Smith Library spaces for a diverse campus community?