First-generation students comprise up to 77% of U.S. undergraduates. Despite their prevalence, limited library research on first-gen students exists. Extant research often takes a deficit perspective and assumes students are monolithic. However, first-gen students’ intersecting and often marginalized social identities likely manifest in differing library needs. Academic libraries must understand first-gen students’ experiences before they can effectively support them.

Favorite Library Aspects

- **Starbucks**: “I also like that we have a Starbucks right there, so I don’t have to go very far for food, and they’re open pretty late compared to other places.”
- **Quiet Spaces**: “I study best when it’s really quiet and it’s really hard to find places on campus that are quiet.”
- **Study Rooms**: “There’s rooms for group projects. Like, I’ve never seen that before.”
- **Comfy Seating**: “The seating was the biggest thing because I just love being comfortable when I’m sitting somewhere for a long time.”
- **Multi-Functional**: “I guess my favorite aspect of the library thus far is definitely the different variety in terms of how the space is used. I just like a quiet space versus like a talk, eat, working space, so I appreciate that.”

Obstacles to Library Use

- **Complex Printers**: “I started using my own printer because I didn’t know how to use the printer in the library.”
- **Wi-Fi**: “The Wi-Fi, it sucks, but that’s not the library’s fault.”
- **Limited Signage**: “Every couple of hours or so, the website would sign me out, and then I’d have to sign back in and pull up what I was looking at.”

More Info
