EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Assessing Physical Spaces to Maximize Student Learning Success

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Background

Research Project Objectives

Campus Demographics

Changes in the Physical Library Space

Library Space Study – Objectives

Objectives:

- To learn more about the present utilization of the William Allen White Library building by patrons (faculty, staff, students) in terms of its physical space
- To discover how patrons' library space preferences for individual and group study, recreation, cultural programs/events, and other aspects of academic life are informed by the current library building space
- To provide qualitative and quantitative evidence from patrons for more informed decisions about future library building projects

Why?

- The library building has been the focus of several remodeling projects – particularly between the years of 2013 and 2017. We had a sense that patrons like and use many of the spaces, but we wanted to document their perceptions much more specifically.

Library Space Study: Phases 1, 2, and 3

PHASE 1 (Spring 2018)

- Survey of all ESU faculty, staff, and students about their familiarity and use of the WAW Library building, and other preferred places for their study and research
- Focus group to follow up on initial survey findings

PHASE 2 (Fall 2018)

- Focus exclusively was upon ESU undergraduate and graduate students
- Survey about students' familiarity and use of the WAW Library building, and other preferred places for their study and research
- Unobtrusive observations (AKA "seatings sweeps") for two two-week periods (October 14-27 and December 2-14)

PHASE 3 (Spring 2019)

1. "Flip charts" – questions on whiteboards on floors and Learning Commons
2. Focus group and individual interviews of students

Emporia State University – Headcount Enrollment, On- and Off-Campus

FY 2009 compared to FY 2018

Populations	Summer 2008	Summer 2017	Fall 2008	Fall 2017	Spring 2009	Spring 2018
UG on campus	847 (28%)	400 (15%)	4046 (63%)	3428 (60%)	3725 (61%)	3156 (59%)
G on campus	545 (18%)	183 (7%)	769 (12%)	511 (9%)	729 (12%)	437 (8%)
UG off campus	294 (10%)	521 (20%)	221 (3%)	177 (3%)	229 (4%)	139 (3%)
G off campus	1302 (44%)	1517 (58%)	1397 (22%)	1616 (28%)	1462 (24%)	1639 (31%)
TOTALS	2988	2621	6433	5732	6145	5371

SOURCE: *Emporia State University Fall 2018 Data Book*.
https://www.emporia.edu/oira/documents/institutionalresearch/ESUDatabookFall2018XA.pdf

Emporia State University – Student Residential Population

Fall 2018: 5796 headcount enrollment (Undergraduate and Graduate)

- 3809 students were classified as “on-campus” (66%)
- 2842 students were classified as living at “home/apartment/commuters”
- 787 students lived in residence halls
- 178 students lived in fraternities/sororities
  - 74 students -- fraternities
  - 104 students – sororities

SOURCE: *Emporia State University Fall 2018 Data Book*. https://www.emporia.edu/oira/documents/institutionalresearch/ESUDatabookFall2018XA.pdf

What Do These Numbers Tell Us?

Initially:

- The majority of our undergraduate students continue to be on-campus;
- The majority of our graduate students are increasingly off-campus
  - SLIM and HPER graduate programs are online
  - Other graduate students may come to campus only once or twice a week for classes and may not live in or near Emporia

What, then, are the implications for the use of a physical library space for study, research, etc.?

William Allen White Library - Building

Remodelings of WAW Library

William Allen White Library building

1st portion - completed construction in 1951

- Four floors and six "decks" - the decks were closed to patrons and accessible only to library staff

2nd portion (addition) -- completed in 1971

- Addition: Library lobby
- Expansion of 1st-4th floors
- Relocation of entrance from south side of building to east side (leading into the library lobby)
- Circulation Desk moved to library lobby
- Decks "opened" to public
- Entrances to decks added to 1st, 2nd, and 4th floors

Remodelings of WAW Library

1996:

- Library Electronic Classroom – LEC - added to 2nd floor (relocated on same floor in 2010, with former LEC becoming the Writing Center)

Early 2000s:

- South side of library building remodeled and Library Seminar Room created for additional instruction needs
- 1st floor, Periodicals, renovated for more study and research space (6 study rooms; booths and tables; compact shelving for bound periodicals and microform materials)

2013:

- Based upon student feedback: Library lobby renovated into Learning Commons (open 24/7, 365 days a week)
- 2nd floor adapted to house Circulation Desk and Reference Desk in one central location

Remodelings of WAW Library

2015-2017:

- ACES (Academic Center for Excellence and Success) is created and housed on the library's 2nd floor
- 4th floor of the library is completely redone to house the ESU Honors College, an Honors College Seminar Room, and individual/group study spaces
- 2nd floor of the library receives a "facelift" of new paint, carpet tiles, additional outlets, and refacings of pillars to match the 4th floor

4th Floor – Before and After

2nd Floor – Before and After

Methodology

Ethnography: the examination and exploration of a culture and/or cultural setting with the purpose of learning about the lives of that specific cultural group (Ramsden, 2016)

Ethnographic Research in Libraries

- Purposes (Ramsden, 2016):

- Landmark examples
  - University of Rochester Undergraduate Research Project (Foster & Gibbons, 2007)
  - ERIAL project (Duke & Asher, 2012)

Examples of Ethnographic Methods Focused on Library Space

- Interviews
- Observation
- Cognitive mapping
- Activity mapping
- "Ideal Space" design sessions or drawings
- Photo responses to prompts
- Photo/research diaries

Methods Employed in this Study

- Mixed methods

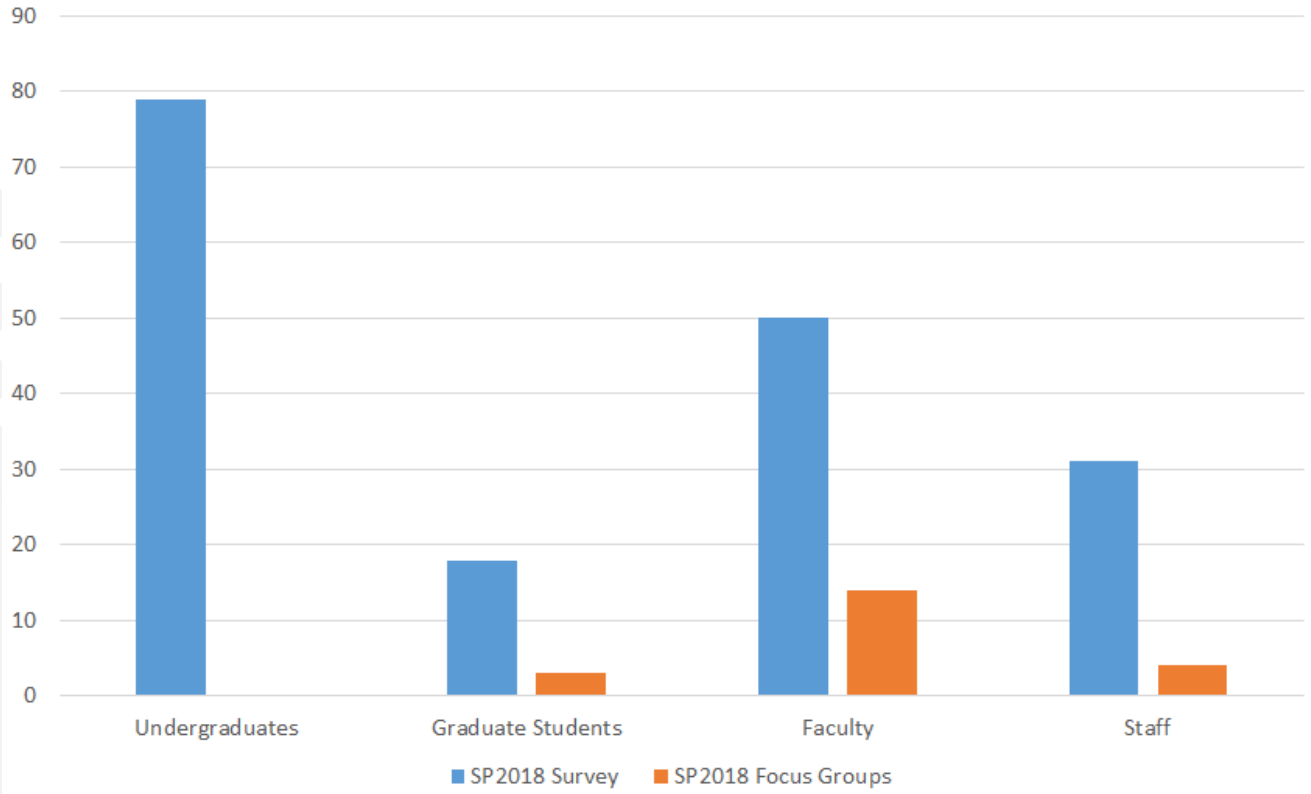
- Why??? Data triangulation

Results

Disclaimer: Analysis is ongoing!

Phase 1: Spring 2018

- Campus-wide survey (P = 187)



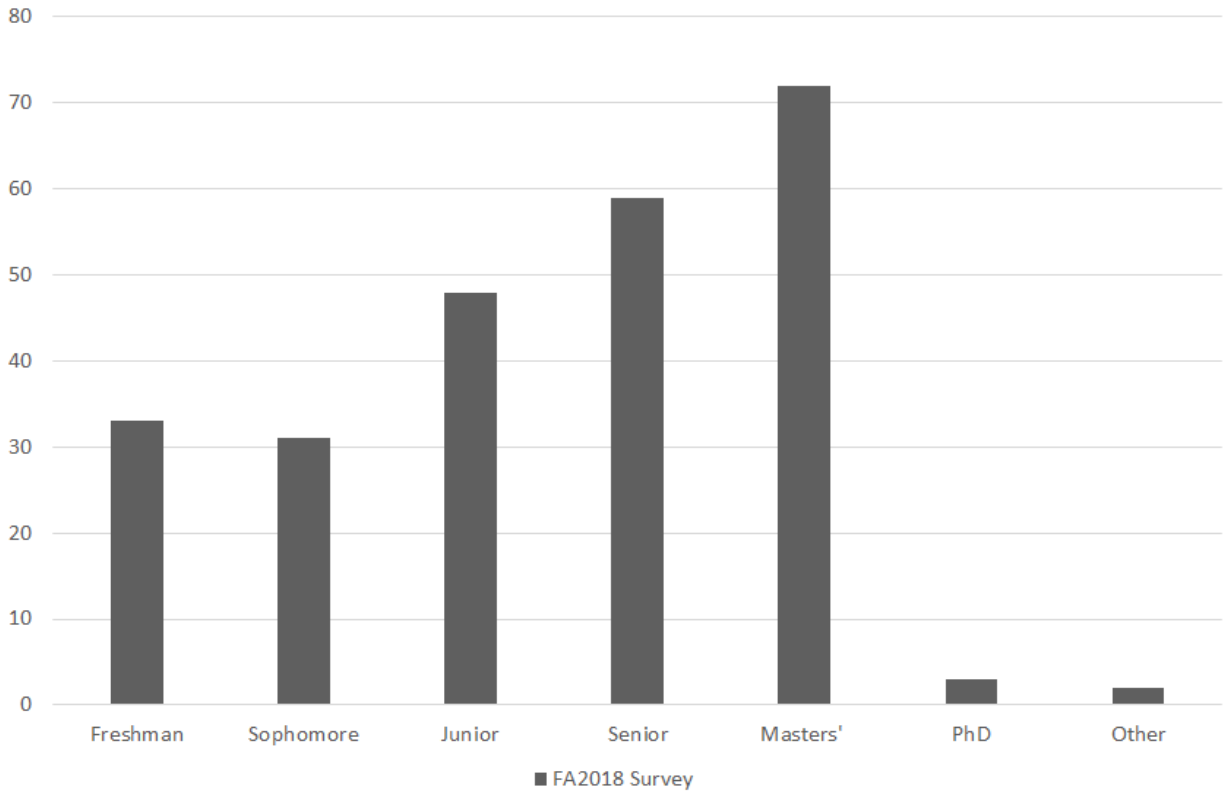
Phase 1, Focus groups

- Mixed focus groups (P = 21)
- Content analysis using some pre-set themes and some emerging themes
- Dominant themes (selected):
  - Students
  - Resources
  - Behaviors
  - Awareness of relationship to space
  - Welcome/Comfort
  - Communication

Phase 2: Fall 2018

- Student survey (P=248)

40% of students who did not use a library space study/do research elsewhere



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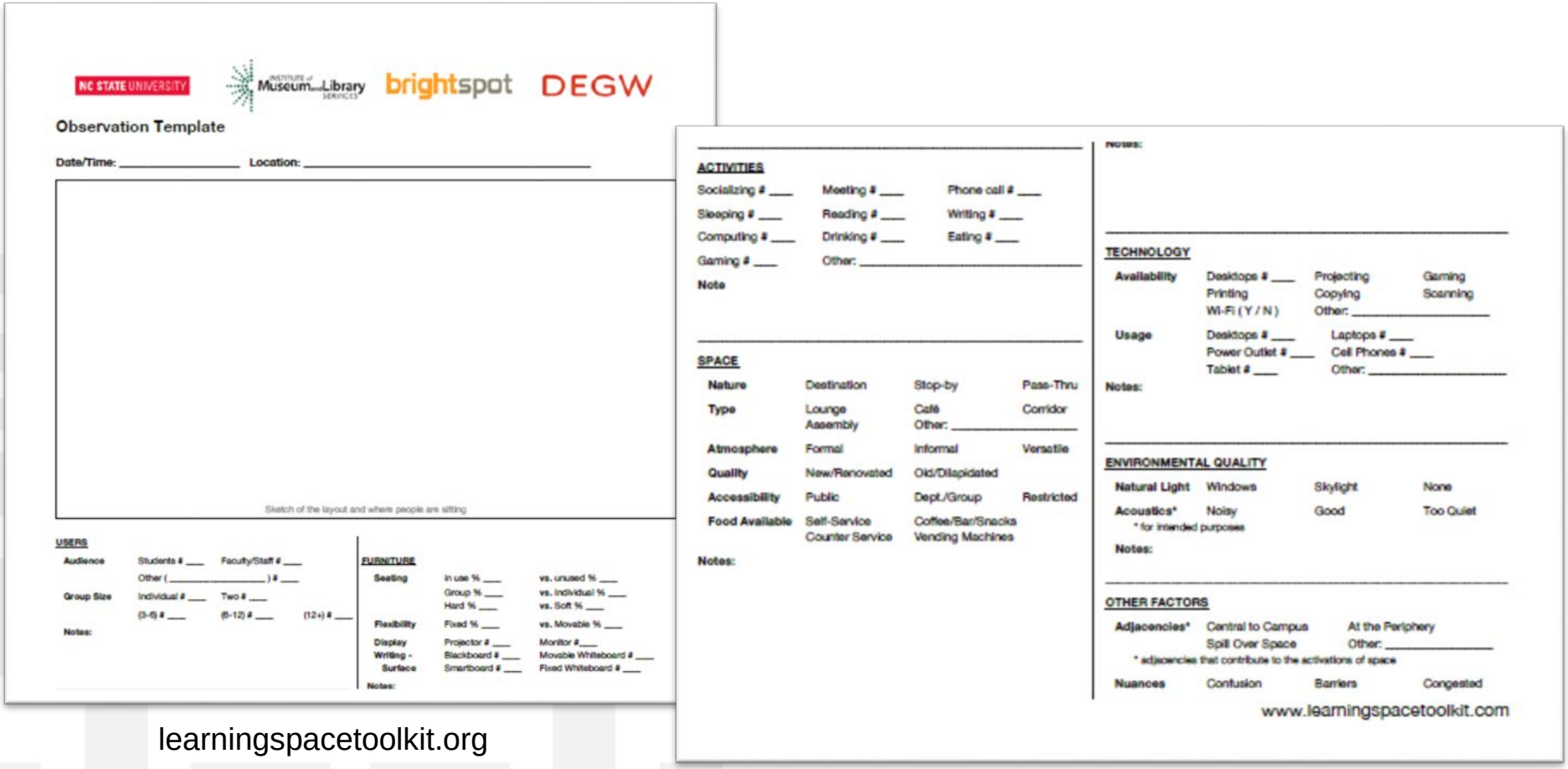
Phase 2, seating sweeps template



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Observation Template

Date/Time: _____ Location: _____

Sketch of the layout and where people are sitting

USERS

Audience — Students # ___ Faculty/Staff # ___ Other (_____) # ___

Group Size — Individual # ___ Two # ___ (3-5) # ___ (5-12) # ___ (12+) # ___

Notes:

FURNITURE

Seating — in use % ___ vs. unused % ___ Group % ___ vs. Individual % ___ Hard % ___ vs. Soft % ___

Flexibility — Fixed % ___ vs. Movable % ___

Display Writing Surface — Projector # ___ Monitor # ___ Blackboard # ___ Movable Whiteboard # ___ Smartboard # ___ Fixed Whiteboard # ___

Notes:

ACTIVITIES

Socializing # ___ Meeting # ___ Phone call # ___

Sleeping # ___ Reading # ___ Writing # ___

Computing # ___ Drinking # ___ Eating # ___

Gaming # ___ Other: _____

Note

SPACE

Nature	Destination	Stop-by	Pass-Thru
Type	Lounge Assembly	Café Other: _____	Corridor
Atmosphere	Formal	Informal	Versatile
Quality	New/Renovated	Old/Dilapidated	
Accessibility	Public	Dept./Group	Restricted
Food Available	Self-Service Counter Service	Coffee/Bar/Snacks Vending Machines	

Notes:

Notes:

TECHNOLOGY

Availability — Desktops # ___ Projecting Gaming Printing Copying Scanning Wi-Fi (Y / N) Other: _____

Usage — Desktops # ___ Laptops # ___ Power Outlet # ___ Cell Phones # ___ Tablet # ___ Other: _____

Notes:

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Natural Light — Windows Skylight None

Acoustics* — Noisy Good Too Quiet

* for intended purposes

Notes:

OTHER FACTORS

Adjacencies* — Central to Campus At the Periphery Spill Over Space Other: _____

* adjacencies that contribute to the activations of space

Nuances — Confusion Barriers Congested

www.learningspacetoolkit.com

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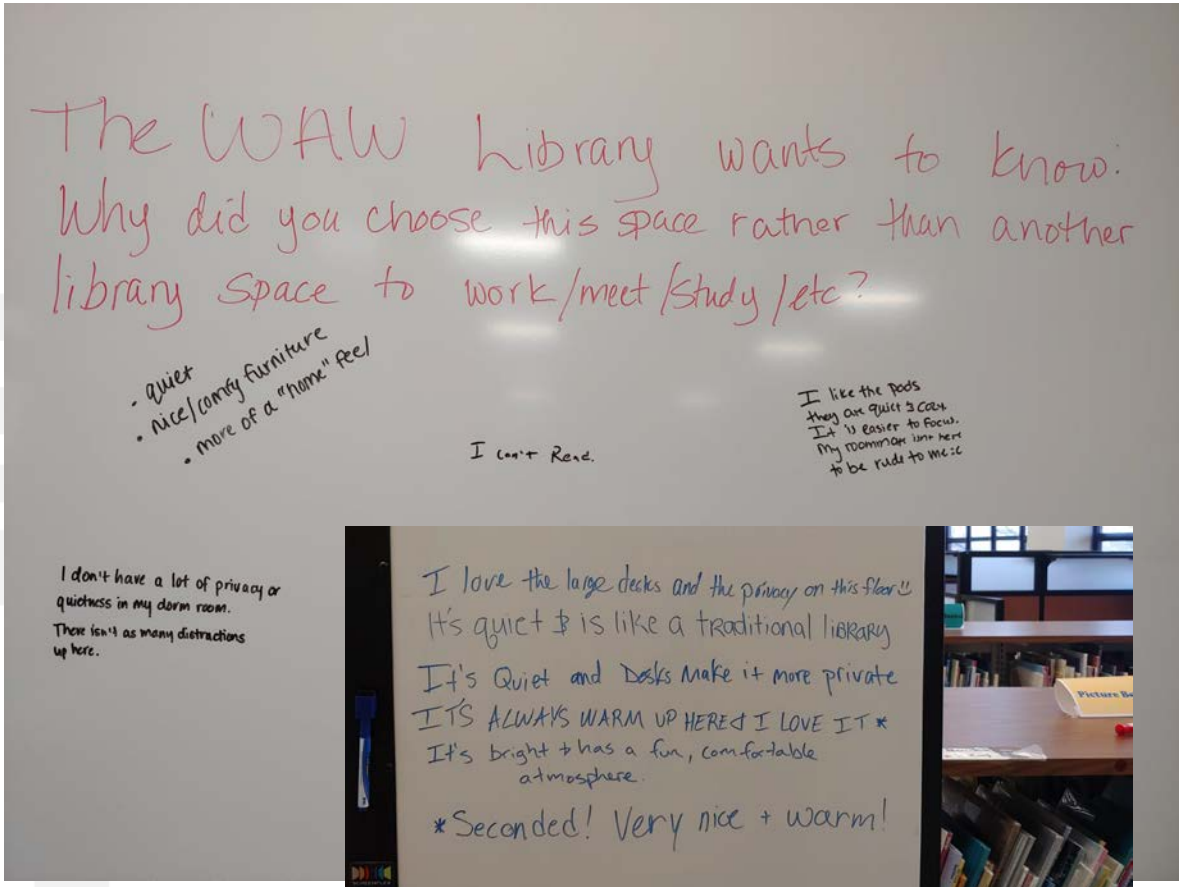
Phase 3: Spring 2019

- Flip charts
- 1 student focus group (P=7)
- Student interviews

(P=14)



Trends in the Data

- Most survey participants visit the library less than once per week.
- When survey participants visit, they use the Learning Commons and 2nd Floor.
- Students like to study alone but not *be* alone. Also found in Hedge, Boucher & Lavelle (2018) and Oliveira (2016).
- Students want more!!!
- Faculty/students envision ideal library space with comfortable furniture, but they don't use our soft seating.
- Concerns in Fall SP2019 focus groups do not seem to echo concerns in SP2018 focus groups.

Implications & Future Directions

1) User centered design
2) **ESU Strategic Plan, 2015-2025** (proposed revisions)

   Goal 4: "Create and support sustainable innovation and growth"

   Objective 1: "Implement the Campus Master Plan"

   Objective 5: "Employ shared data governance and comprehensive data information systems to inform decision-making"

Selected References

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