Draw Your Ideal Library Space: Student Library Advisory Board Focus Group

Days of the study: Student Library Advisory Board Meeting, October 2017

Population: Graduate and Undergraduate student representatives from multiple disciplines and class years. Approximately 15 students in attendance.

Format: Groups of 2-3 students drawing their answer to the prompt “Draw your ideal library work space” on large sheets of paper, followed by discussion.

Type: Focus Group

Data: Drawings and Student’s explanations of drawings begin on page 2.

Appendix A includes prompt given and also detailed notes on discussion by students, see page 10.

Results: Assessment Team Discussion of Data begins on page 8.

Recommendations begin on page 9.
DATA:

For detailed notes on students’ discussions, see Appendix A, see page 10....

Figure 1 -- Drawing from Group 1

Student’s explanation of drawing:
Main level

--Atrium at the entrance— greenery
——Wider space in front; not as much compartmentalization
——Oil defuser
——not quiet
——Cafe more open
——more of a hangout
——some computers
——Stacks of books to keep noise down
——platform step in atrium; place to hangout
——natural light
——petting zoo (said jokingly)
Students’ explanation of drawing:
—more cozy when you come in
  —it’s cold
  —“Oh god, I have to be here for the next 5 hours.”
—high tables
—take the computers out of the 24 hour space—just cubbies
  —more 24 hour space
—front doors lead straight to 1 service desk
—social room that’s closed off—comfy chairs, conversation
  [a la AVA chill lounge? — CF]
—sides with study rooms. 1/2 the size of the ones upstairs. Students say most groups are 2,3,4 people.
—circle tables and long tables. Long tables are for solo work. group work needs a round table.
—ITS in the back
—offices in the back
"gotta have books in the library."
Students’ explanation of drawing: 2 separate entrances—1 for the quiet side of the library, one for the noisy side. A floor to ceiling wall runs down the center and divides the two. "no librarian stuff. you have a call center where you can call a librarian to come down if you need help."
Dunkin Panera
More focused on restructuring what we already have.
Group study rooms on mail level to keep the noise there
Couches
individual cubicles, like the ones in the lower-level near microforms. But, instead of having them face each other, have them face the wall, and have a divider between them
Students point out that when they're facing each other, the divider is not high enough. You can still see the other person, and that can be distracting if they aren't as focused as you.
no books on the top floor. open it up to more study space
Main level is the noise level. More 24 hour space
Figure 4 -- Drawing from Group 4

**Students’ explanation of drawing:** Individual cubbies along the back windows with individual shades

options for a quiet floor for when I want to be quiet, but not by myself

can't cross legs underneath upstairs tables (cross bar?)

mix up study space-- cubbies for focus, other spaces for less focus

separate hallways fro group study rooms

little coffee tables in the cafe
  --more cozy

at least 1 computer in cafe
Figure 5 -- Drawing form Group 5

Students’ explanation of drawing:

Modeled on middle pod area on upper level

--stacks-- you're enclosed, don't see people walking by
darker

like seeing the books
Figure 6 -- Drawing from Group 6
DISCUSSION OF THE DATA:

General trends

Students expressed a desire for multiple types of work spaces—spaces conducive to quiet, intense focus work, and spaces for group work, or work that could include conversation. Noise levels were a concern for almost all respondents, with students voicing a desire noise expectations to be clearly designated. IT was also noted that a desire for quiet, intensive work space did not necessarily mean isolated space. Students also expressed a desire for spaces that were not task oriented, aka a “hangout” space. They expressed a desire for the building to be more “cozy” and for more food options. Space needs are function dependent.

Detailed student comments

Furniture

High tables for solo work
Round tables for group work (“you can’t do group work at a square table”)
Individual cubbies, but facing away from each other, with taller dividers
Couches “see Campus Ministry”
Ottomans
Upstairs desks have supports that make it difficult to cross legs
More ergonomic chairs “like the furniture in Egan School” or Library collab chairs
“Sleep pods”

Ambience

Atrium at the entrance with greenery
Entrance should be more inviting
“Modern cozy”
“Like Panera”
“Like the Egan School”
Wanted to see books, even if they weren’t using them

Technology

Computers are good for backup if personal computer fails
Group areas with Smartboards
At least 1 computer in the cafe

Structural

More bathrooms upstairs; currently 1 stall
Back entrance (more convenient Uber drop-off and pick-up)
Front doors lead to 1 service desk
ITS and offices removed from student work space
More 24 hour space
Separate hallways for group study spaces
**Food**
Hot food in the library
Café to be more inviting and warmer space
Grab and Go stations
“The minute you leave the building you know you’re not coming back in the same mindset.”

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Easy responses**
Buy lap desks for circulation
Set more Purell out during finals
Better signage designating quiet areas

**Long term planning**
Turn upstairs bathrooms into unisex bathrooms
Paint accent walls to bring some warmth, especially to main level
Conduct a furniture scan for future needs
Devote architectural resources to long term café and food solutions
Investigate permanent anti-bacterial wipe solution
Work on a “one desk” service model is currently underway; decided to conduct journey map project

**Crazy idea?:**
Entrances: atrium in the front, additional entrance in the back
Put in a Panera
Appendix A

Exercise:

In groups of 2 or 3, draw your ideal library work space.

What would it have in it?
What kind of furniture?
What kind of atmosphere?

Questions from reports:

What makes the collaboratories so appealing as a work space?

We noticed that the library’s computers were often at capacity. How often do you use the computers in the library for your work? What determines if you use a library computer or your own laptop?

Open area on main level often busy—even in front of ITS. This strikes us as a busy, noisy area. What is the appeal?

Does what you want from a work space change depending on time of year? Finals, e.g. Or, do you always tend to gravitate to the same kind of arrangement?

General comments:

cafe needs to be more cozy, more dynamic

more ergonomic chairs
   --like the furniture in Egan school

"dynamic environment"
   --like in the egan school

"modern cozy."
   Like Panera

group areas with smart boards

see the UCLA renovation

circular tables in study rooms
ottomans--there's no where to put your feet up

see UAE airline first class commercials

sleep pods, a la google
   --students voiced desire for somewhere to take a quick nap. one student commented that "sleep pods" could turn into "creep pods" pretty quickly. I suggested recliners, but they didn't jump at that.

sectional couches
   see campus ministry?

lapdesks on the wall that you could take down and use in the comfy chairs

wet wipe stands, like at the gym, spread throughout the building
   a way to fight germs, clean up other people's messes
   One student explained that her friend has significant nut allergies, and they have to really scope out a study place before they sit down to make sure that no one nearby is eating nuts. wet wipes would be helpful to wipe down work spaces before they sat down
   drink rings on the desks

have students swipe in more to collect data

more bathrooms?
   only one stall in upstairs bathrooms. Make these all gender?

upstairs is too loud

there should be a back entrance. Students in those dorms are close, but it doesn't feel like it if you have to walk all the way around. Also, a more convenient uber drop off/pick up

hot food in the library, e.g. soup
   on going to barone: "the minute you leave the building you know you're not coming back in the same mindset."

swipe and go

Collabs
   the draw was that you didn't have to reserve them. people's schedules are so hectic that group work tends to be ad hoc--"do you have time right now?"
   these spaces are also somewhat private, and you don't need to worry about noise
   "not as serious" as the group study rooms upstairs
   they like the collab chairs a lot

basement is a "mishmash" of stuff
"the books no one goes into"

dividers in the upstairs study rooms are confusing. Labeling and signage are not clear, noise is an issue. If one side is quiet, the other side feels weird about making noise. no guilt about talking in the collabs.

on the need for computers: Using library computers is good for focus, back up if yours dies, and if you need 2 screens

on the ITS area: in terms of noise, it's not as bad as upstairs. they like the desk configuration

The service desks don't create noise. Plus, sitting near the service desks feels like those areas will be policed--noise won't be as much of an issue.

on whether space choices differ at different times of the semester: space needs are more function dependent. Writing = need for private space. Reviewing notes can be a group activity, more open