If You Can’t Expand, How Can You Grow?

Space Assessment Studies in the Academic Library

Kristina Clement, Brianne Dosch, Jordan Kaufman, Lauren Johnson, & Regina Mays - University of Tennessee Knoxville
Kristina Clement, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville

Brianne Dosch, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville

Jordan Kaufman, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville

Lauren Johnson, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville

Regina Mays, Coordinator Strategic Planning & Assessment, University of Tennessee Knoxville Libraries
But first, let’s see who is here!
How many of you have an assessment plan at your organization?
Have you personally conducted an assessment study (of any kind) at your institution?
Have you personally conducted or assisted with an assessment study related to library space at your institution?
A Community of Practice: Assessment & User Experience

Regina Mays, Coordinator for Strategic Planning and Assessment
University of Tennessee Knoxville Libraries
Experience Assessment

- Funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services’ (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grant program
- Focus: creating new information sciences professionals educated to perform assessment and UX research in both libraries and science-intensive information environment
- Funded April 2016
- 12 Students –began program in August 2016
Who's Who Behind the Scenes

Grant personnel:
Dr. Carol Tenopir, UTK Chancellor’s Professor, SIS Faculty: Principal Investigator
Dr. Dania Bilal, SIS Professor: Co-Principal Investigator
Dr. Rachel Fleming-May, SIS Associate Professor: Co-Principal Investigator
Regina Mays, UTK Libraries Coordinator Strategic Planning and Assessment: Senior Staff
Teresa B. Walker, UTK Libraries Associate Dean for Learning, Research, and Engagement: Project Mentor
Need For & History of Program

Increasing need for information professionals with assessment and/or user experience expertise

Carol Tenopir’s extensive work in area of Assessment (Fleming-May, Mays, and Walker involved in Lib-Value)

Relationships with/network of information professionals in Knoxville and Oak Ridge, TN
PROGRAM STRUCTURE

1st Year - 1st Semester
9 credit hours
Co-curricular workshops and trainings

1st Year - 2nd Semester
9 credit hours
Co-curricular assessment/UX project

2nd Year - 1st & 2nd Semesters
6 credit hours each
Practicum placement both semesters (another 3 credit hours)

Two years, 42 credit hours
Graduation in May 2018
Structured, guided curricular & co-curricular experiences

- Theoretical and practical context
- Relationship and community building
- Professional development

Program Goals

- Theoretical foundations AND hands-on training in assessment and user experience

- A significant edge in obtaining positions in assessment and user experience

- A broader understanding of the organization than one might develop in a practicum devoted to a particular department or task
Sian Carr
BA in History (Early European) and Classical Studies from Wellesley College.

Alexa Carter
Originally from Knoxville, Tennessee
BS in Chemistry from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Kristina Clement
BA in Italian Literature from the University of Kansas and MA in Italian Literature from the University of Notre Dame.

Lauren Johnson
BA in English and Theatre from Presbyterian College and MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Jordan Kaufman
BA in English and Linguistics from Indiana University – Purdue University Fort Wayne.
Are libraries just about books?

Very few libraries follow the ‘traditional’ expectations of library spaces

Libraries are less about books and more about:
- Learning
- Community
- Collaboration

"You don't have any books do you?"

Image via Cartoonstock
“The design challenge is less with the interaction of readers and books and more with the connection between space and learning” (2009, p. 188).

Why and how did this shift happen?

- Not only the revolution in information technology
- Librarians’ recognition and embrace of the revolution
- And changing library space in response
Challenges with Library Spaces

There are many challenges, but what we encountered...

1. Creating new and needed spaces with finite space
2. All existing spaces allocated and utilized in the best way possible

Big Question: What do you do with finite space in your library?
SPACE ASSESSMENT

In our experiences we found meaningful answers to our library’s space demands.

So...

We want to share our experiences with other librarians hoping to impact spaces in their own libraries.
Space Assessment in Libraries

Kristina Clement, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville
DESIGNING THE STUDIES

- Obtaining Institutional Review Board approval
- Determining methodology and assessment tools
- Analyzing data to determine outcomes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT SPACE?</th>
<th>WHAT METHOD?</th>
<th>WHAT DATA?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are priority spaces to evaluate?</td>
<td>Which one? How many should I choose?</td>
<td>What type of information do you need to collect to tell your story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High usage?</td>
<td>Survey?</td>
<td>Qualitative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough usage?</td>
<td>Observation?</td>
<td>Quantitative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste of space?</td>
<td>Focus group?</td>
<td>Combination?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough space?</td>
<td>Interviews?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So many spaces...</td>
<td>So many methods...</td>
<td>So much data...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.
CONSIDER THE CLIMATE
What do your users need? What are you not doing that maybe you should be doing?

REVISE
Based on assessment outcomes, what needs to change?

PLAN TO PLAN
Set up relevancy; tailor goals to the parent organization; shared vision and mission.

DEVELOP THE PLAN
Determine outcomes and metrics - what do you want to know and how do you want to know it?

PLANNING & ASSESSMENT CYCLE

ASSESS
Evaluate services or resources using assessment tools.

PROVIDE / IMPLEMENT
Roll out new services or resources or restructure existing services.
WHY ASSESS?

- To demonstrate relevancy to the university or parent organization.
- To drive change.
- To improve and meet the needs of the user.
- And so many more!
Two Spaces: Active Learning Space and Graduate Student Study Room

Jordan Kaufman, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville
WHAT IS THE ACTIVE LEARNING SPACE?

- Alternative to sitting for long periods of times
- Psychological and physical benefits

EQUIPMENT

- Cycling & treadmill desks
- Balance-ball chairs

WHY THIS SPACE?

- Newly implemented in 2016
- Commons area

BENEFITING STUDENTS

- Emotional health
- Physical health
WHAT IS THE GSSR?

- Enclosed study room
- Quiet space for graduate students and faculty

ROOM LAYOUT

- Access ensured by card swipe
- Movable and fixed furniture

WHY THIS SPACE?

- Targeted Audience
- Assumption it was being underused

STUDENTS' NEEDS

- Are their needs being met?
- How can we improve?
How We Did it: Designing the Studies

Lauren Johnson, MLIS Graduate Student, Experience-Assessment Cohort, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee Knoxville
**PROJECT TIMELINE**

**SPRING 2017**
- First Project Planning Meeting
- Literature Reviews
- IRB Drafting and Submittal
- First Phase of ALS study and GSSR study

**SUMMER 2017**
- Ongoing ALS and GSSR Surveys

**FALL 2017**
- End of ALS and GSSR Surveys
- Data Analysis of GSSR and ALS Findings
GSSR
- Observations
- Surveys
- Interviews

ALS
- Observations
- Surveys
138 surveys
In five months

78 first-time users
And 60 regular users

79 comments
With 68.3% positive reactions
### Why Graduate Students Want Dedicated Space in the Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quiet Study</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned
BEFORE THE STUDY

important  optimistic
clueless  thrilled
overwhelmed  unsure
nervous
excited
anxious
confused
progression
motivated
“What surprised me about the process was the amount of work involved. It wasn't until I actually worked on a project that I had any idea of the scope and time it takes to conduct a study—especially the amount of work that goes into the "front" end: planning the study, reading the literature, writing and submitting the IRB—before you actually get to conducting the study itself.”

-- Lauren Johnson

“And after the few set-backs, like being told no by my first interviewee, and losing the notes from my first observations, we did successfully conduct the studies. And now in the midst of analyzing data, and learning from my many research mistakes, I know I will at least know where to start when designing and conducting assessment studies in the future. And I'm not sure if I would have that confidence unless they threw us in the deep end, and trusted us to rely on their experience and expertise while learning the hard lessons of conducting successful assessments.”

--Brianne Dosch
AFTER THE STUDY

experienced

confident

tired

knowledgeable

new

gained

excited

curious

inspired

skills

passionate

hopeful
What would we do differently?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Student Study Room</th>
<th>Active Learning Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ More observations</td>
<td>☐ More observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Focus groups instead of interviews</td>
<td>☐ Data about demographics to understand users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ More data in general</td>
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What we learned about assessment

- Assessment requires patience
- Not to judge or assume - let the data speak louder than your assumptions
- Be prepared to take steps backwards, without becoming discouraged

And most importantly......
Teamwork
Any questions?

You can find the slide deck at:

https://tinyurl.com/UTK-UXA

You can find us at:

Regina Mays: rmays@utk.edu
Brianne Dosch: bdosch@vols.utk.edu
Kristina Clement: kcleme10@vols.utk.edu
Jordan Kaufman: jkaufma9@utk.edu
Lauren Johnson: ljohn114@vols.utk.edu
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