

ScholarWorks@GSU

What Do They Need?: Collecting Meaningful and Actionable Data through a User-Centered Needs Assessment

Authors	Hansen, Mary Anne;Swedman, David
Download date	2026-05-08 10:51:27
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14694/14188

What Do They Need? -

Collecting Meaningful and Actionable Data Through a User-Centered Needs Assessment

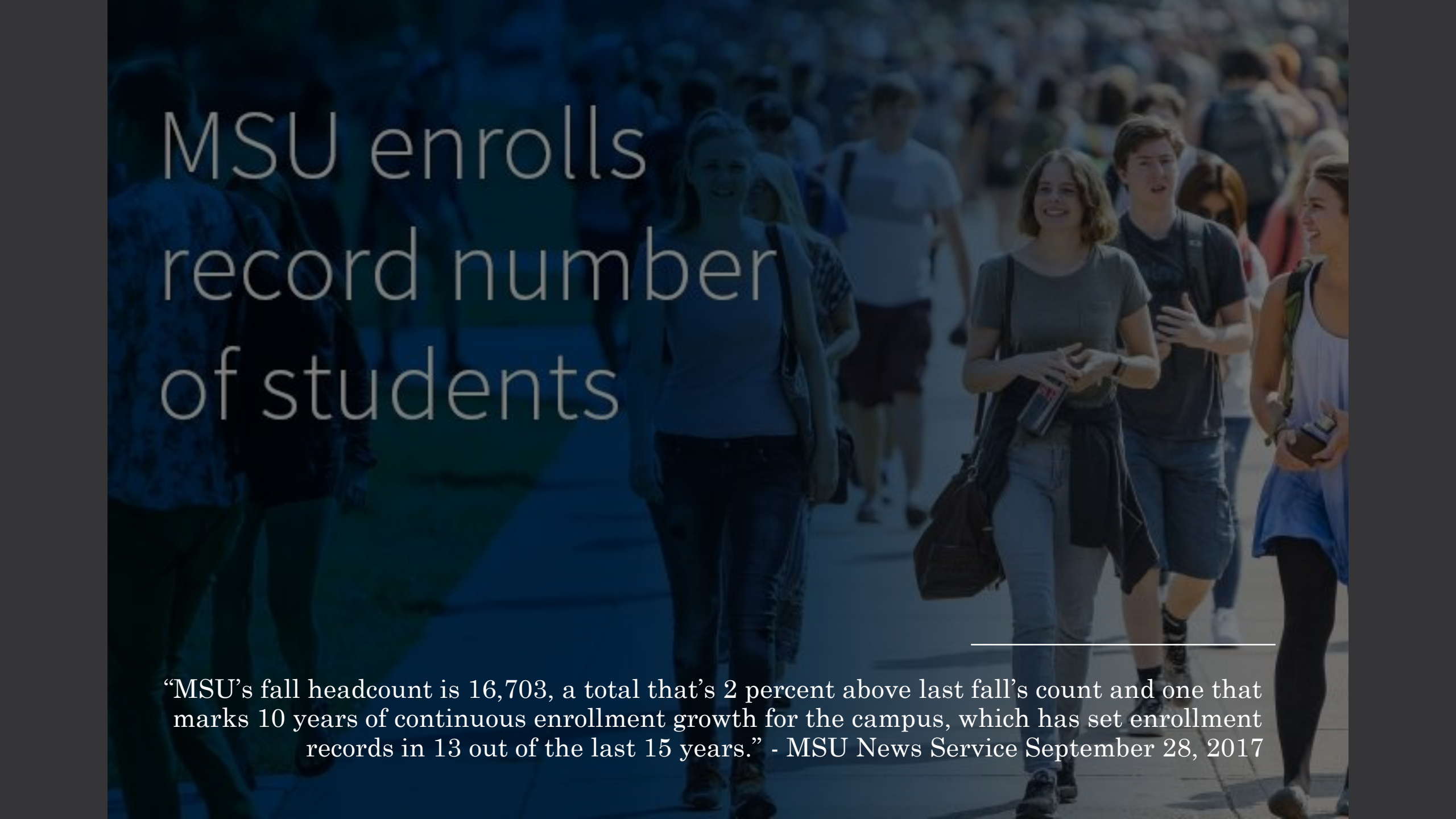
Mary Anne Hansen, Professor and Research Commons Librarian

David Swedman, Grants and Assessment Coordinator

The Montana State University Library

An aerial photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there are several large, multi-story brick buildings, some with distinctive architectural features like towers. A large, circular white structure, possibly a stadium or arena, is visible in the middle ground. The campus is surrounded by green lawns and trees. In the background, a vast valley stretches out, leading to a range of rugged, dark mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

Who Are We?



MSU enrolls record number of students

“MSU’s fall headcount is 16,703, a total that’s 2 percent above last fall’s count and one that marks 10 years of continuous enrollment growth for the campus, which has set enrollment records in 13 out of the last 15 years.” - MSU News Service September 28, 2017

Commons Assessment Group 2.0

We know we need to do assessment!

BUT what do we assess?

And how do we assess it?

How do we show impact of library services & resources on student success?

Assessment – Struggling with Metrics

- We need to assess what we do, but what are we measuring?
 - Student success?
 - How do you quantify “student success?”
- We struggled with articulating what it was we wanted to assess

Purpose

- Develop a set of recommendations for the MSU Library's Research Commons based on user feedback
- Promote a culture of evidence-based decision making

Methods and Tools - LibQUAL+

- LibQUAL+
 - “LibQUAL+ is a web-based survey offered by the Association of Research Libraries that helps libraries assess and improve library services, change organizational culture, and market the library. The survey instrument measures library users' minimum, perceived, and desired levels of service quality across three dimensions: Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place.” - Association of Research Libraries’ [“What is LibQUAL+®?”](#)
- MSU’s 2016 LibQUAL+ Results
 - 1049 respondents from a randomly selected sample of ~4,000 students, faculty, and staff
 - 422 comments

Methods and Tools - Qualtrics

- Survey distribution via Qualtrics
 - Qualtrics is a powerful online survey tool for building, distributing, and analyzing surveys
- Tutor Surveys
 - 43 Respondents
 - 5 Questions
 - 215 Individual Responses

Methods and Tools - NVivo

- Qualitative coding via NVivo
 - “NVivo is software that supports qualitative and mixed methods research. It’s designed to help you **organize, analyze and find insights in unstructured, or qualitative data** like: interviews, open-ended survey responses, articles, social media and web content.

NVivo gives you a place to organize and manage your material so that you can start to find insights in your data. It also provides tools that allow you to ask questions of your data in a more efficient way.” – QSR International’s [“What is NVivo?”](#)

Methods and Tools - Coding

- A group of 8 faculty, staff, and students read through the 422 LibQUAL+ comments, and coded them using Brown University's [Methodology for Coding Qualitative Data \(User Comments\)](#)
- The 173 comments coded as “Suggestion” and/or “Negative” were combined with the 215 tutor responses then coded within NVivo according to the following parameters:
 - “Awareness” – does the comment indicate a lack of awareness of library spaces and/or services?
 - “Suggestion” – does the comment provide a suggestion related to something that the library can change?
 - “Space” – does the comment focus on the library’s spaces?
 - “Service” – does the comment focus on the library’s services?
 - “Use” – does the comment indicate using a specific library space or service?
 - “Policy” – does the comment relate to a library policy?

Analysis and Recommendations

Close Zoom Detail View Coding Stripes Highlight Node Node Matrix Classification

Window Coding Detail View

Name	Nodes	Referen...	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By	Color
CAG-WritingCenter-Smar...	570	2,028	Nov 7, 2017, 2:58 PM	DS	Nov 7, 2017, 3:06 PM	DS	
LibQual	1,010	4,741	Oct 6, 2017, 5:13 PM	DS	Oct 6, 2017, 5:13 PM	DS	
CAG-Writin...SmartyCats							
ID	How do you use the space, resources, and services provided by the Library...	If you could implement changes to the Li...	Consider the resources and services available to MSU students at th...	Reflect on y			
1	1						Where th
2	2	The rolling chairs are nice to be able to move around easily while helping multiple students.			I refer many students to the writing center in the library.		
3	3	I hold most of my hours as a drop in center and do a majority of my appointment tutoring in the library drop in center as well	The primary issue is that it gets crowded when both drop in sessions and appointments are being held simultaneously. More space would help this issue		As a math and physics tutor, most of the services I refer students to are not located in the library		Most of m library ex
4	4	I do not, I usually just tutor at a table on the second floor of the library.	Wouldn't		Theres books and helps centers		Most are
5	5	I use the tables and chairs, thats about it.	dividers for noise or a general understanding between tutors to not get loud when others are there, most of the times i wont tutor here because of this issue		none		Most stud studying. as what it
6	6	Nice to have a quiet space to work, atmosphere is the greatest quality	None		not much, really just research for books, great place to meet and study		They und anything
7	7	The white boards are amazing!	Make it isloated from the library, maybe doors? Students not receiving tutoring taking up the limited space is annoying at times.				
8	8	I have not yet used the drop in center. I reserve group rooms in	No suggestion		I have not yet encountered a situation in which I needed to		We discus

1. Implement a Campus-Wide Communications Campaign to Increase General Awareness of Library Spaces and Services

Name	Sources	Referen...	Created On	Created...	Modified On	Modified By	Color
Awareness	2	56	Oct 6, 2017, 4:28 PM	DS	Nov 8, 2017, 6:23 P...	DS	
Policy	2	40	Nov 7, 2017, 5:13 PM	DS	Nov 8, 2017, 6:23 P...	DS	
Service	2	117	Nov 7, 2017, 4:51 PM	DS	Nov 8, 2017, 6:25 P...	DS	
Space	2	209	Nov 7, 2017, 4:50 PM	DS	Nov 8, 2017, 6:26 P...	DS	
Suggestions	2	227	Oct 6, 2017, 4:25 PM	DS	Nov 8, 2017, 6:25 P...	DS	

Awareness Code Annotations

Summary **Reference**

[Internals\\CAG-WritingCenter-SmartyCats](#)
22 references coded, 6.71% coverage

Reference 1: 0.47% coverage

Where the library is

Reference 2: 0.47% coverage

Most of my students are not aware of the services offered at the library except for smartycats.

Reference 3: 0.47% coverage

Most students dont actually use the library for anything other than studying. The library in general is not very well understood as far as what it offers.

Reference 4: 0.07% coverage

It is surprising how little people know about the library.

Reference 5: 0.17% coverage

it would be helpful if they hosted tours periodically (and if they do that already I guess better advertising since I haven't heard of them before).

Reference 6: 0.24% coverage

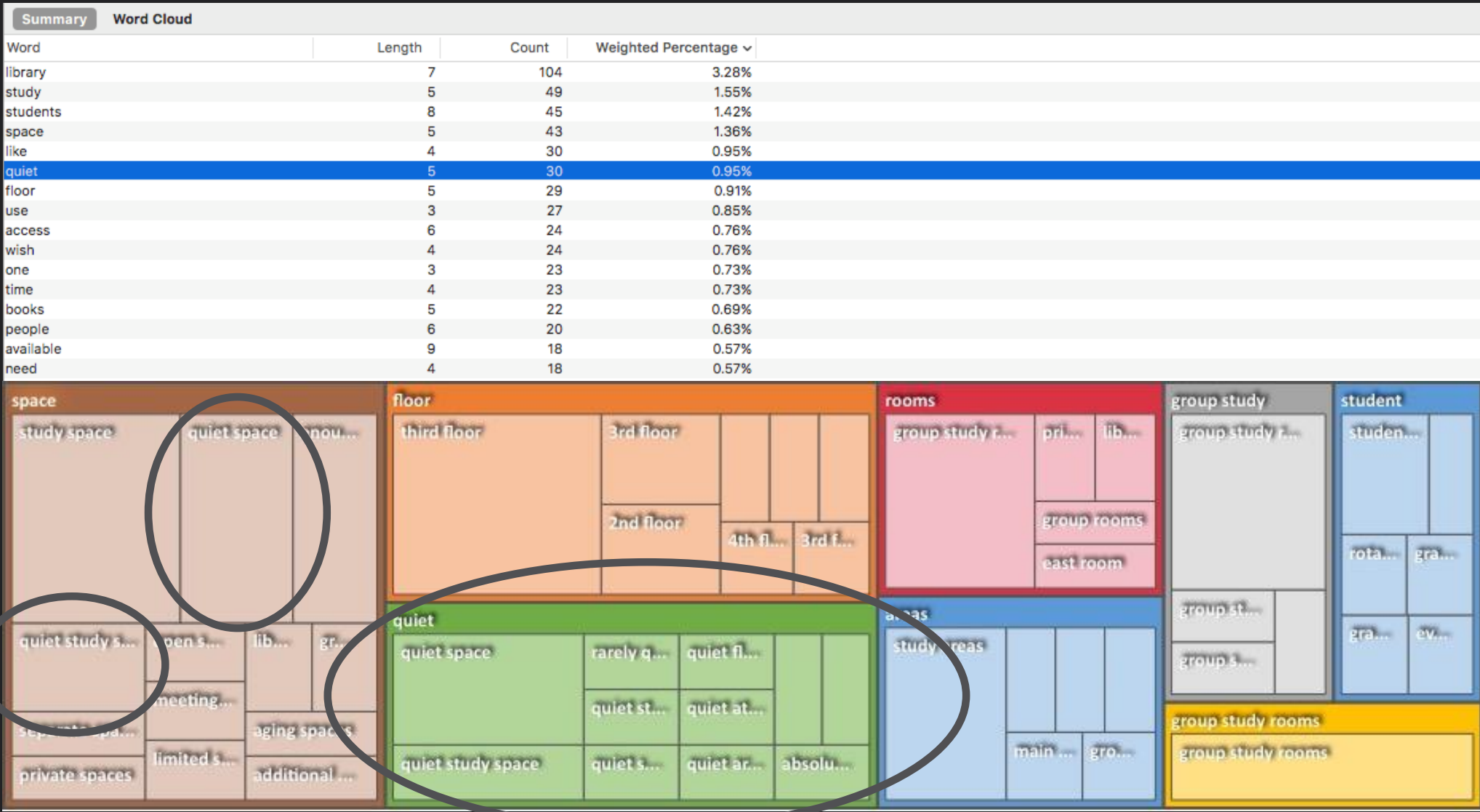
It would be hard to change this, but the drop-in center is pretty tucked away in a hidden corner and a lot of people don't know it's there/where it is.

Reference 7: 0.47% coverage

They do not realize that they can check out most math books from the library for the time

NODES > Nodes > David and Mary Anne > Manual Coding > Awareness

2. Enforce Current Quiet Policies, and Possibly Expand Quiet Areas



4. Increase Number of Power Outlets Available to Users

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage
library	7	41	3.73%
space	5	33	3.00%
study	5	33	3.00%
floor	5	22	2.00%
quiet	5	19	1.73%
students	8	17	1.55%
use	3	14	1.27%
outlets	7	12	1.09%
spaces	6	12	1.09%
computers	9	11	1.00%
group	5	10	0.91%
wish	4	10	0.91%
enough	6	9	0.82%
find	4	9	0.82%
one	3	9	0.82%
books	5	8	0.73%
need	4	8	0.73%
paint	5	8	0.73%
rooms	5	8	0.73%
sit	3	8	0.73%
times	5	8	0.73%
work	4	8	0.73%
available	9	7	0.64%
better	6	7	0.64%

QUERIES > Queries > Word Frequency - Space Suggestions

5. Improve our Users' Understanding of Our Online Offerings and Resources



Takeaways

- Through this process, we created a rich database of information that will help us respond to questions about library usage while also giving us the ability to identify and address some immediate “low-hanging fruit” to improve our library’s user experience
- This database, and the process used to create it, have given us the ability support our stakeholders in making evidence-based decisions on matters both anticipated and *unanticipated*

Discussion

- What questions do you have about our process, themes, outcomes, and/or data?
- What have you done in your libraries to help with making evidence-based decisions?

Contact Information

Mary Anne Hansen – mhansen@montana.edu

David Swedman – david.swedman@montana.edu