

Student Library Advisory Committee (SLAC)- November 15, 2019

Attendees

Students: Divya Shansoli (Engineering), Molly Boord (General Studies), Tyler Campbell (Columbia College/BSO), Alex Cuadrado (Italian), Darold Cuba (Oral History), Laura DiNardo (GSAS, Italian), Rads Mehta (Columbia College), Nicole Saldarriaga (School of the Arts)

Columbia University Library Staff: Kaoukab Chebaro, Michelle Chesner, Jim Crocamo, Mona Elayyan, Nancy Friedland, Pamela Graham, Sophie Leveque, Abbey Lovell, Jeremiah Mercurio, Allison Morrow, Miriam Neptune, Barbara Rockenbach, Breck Witte

Agenda

Alice and Student Wellness

Katie Wilkinson, guest from Alice! Health

Goal: Discuss how the libraries can better embed wellness into research activities and reduce stress through environmental changes.

Questions for Students:

Factors that present challenges to study, research, work time? What do you encounter that adds to stress?

- Limited space for STEM students to study, of particular concern among undergraduates.
- Unavailability of niche STEM journals/delay of ILL stress. Do not necessarily consider consulting a librarian.
- Space concerns across campus (30-40 min. searching for study space) + impulse to camp in order to avoid losing seat, which is not conducive to healthy study habits. Significant concern for commuter students.
- Potential to alert students to under-utilized spaces that could be used for studying (e.g. Brownie's, Joe's in Pulitzer, etc.).
- "How to use an index" 15-minute workshop, quick tips to streamline research process (e.g. how to utilize academic reviews, introductions, etc.). Frame workshop offerings as e.g. "how to read 50 books in week."
- Added stress of outlets/technology that don't work in certain study spaces.
- Struggles with ILL/Borrow Direct requests + restrictions of Butler Reserves, especially for commuter students.
- Pricing/options for food within the Libraries/on campus. Improve accessibility of food options, especially for commuter students. Extremely limited in healthy options, which when available, tend to be much more expensive. Restrictive food policies in many libraries + limits to what students can bring into which libraries.

Library Space Discussion

Exercise: In our ideal library, here are examples of things we do, things we notice, and things we value

Things we do

Use technology:

- Unnecessary amount of desktop workstations.
- Loaner laptop program? Potential to borrow laptops from the Libraries for several days, several hours in the library, etc. with hold on accounts for accountability.
- General adjustments to workstations to potentially accommodate laptops.

Print:

- Concern among graduate students about printing reading materials due to limited printing dollars.

Borrow books:

- Recall system to retrieve books of interest to avoid time/labor intensive experience in Stacks.
- Self-checkout: Unknown to many students. Possibility to acquire an app to check-out books on smartphones.

Things we value

Grad student perspective - people with lots of physical books. Ability to recall things from the stacks rather than find things themselves. Paging system. Efficiency and staff expertise.

Save trips to the stacks and bring a duffel

Students value a sense of community, inclusivity, support, and welcome in these spaces.

Things we notice

Signage:

- Lack of clear way-finding signage.

Environment:

- Lack of sense of welcome in Butler Library, further hindered by unclear way-finding + non inclusive artwork, iconography, etc. "Scary - I want to leave now."
Poor/artificial lighting.
- Improve comfort in Butler; create a "comfy reading room" with cozy chairs, ambient lighting, etc. Limited technology (i.e. no laptops). Guilt over taking away study space/table to do reading.
- Lack of healthy eating options