

Renovating a 1970's Library One Room at a Time

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Space 2.0: Small-Scale Library

Redesign Projects

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Dartmouth Biomedical Libraries

Lehman Social Sciences Library

- Located in the International Affairs Building - opened in 1971
- Collection:
 - Anthropology, political science, sociology, international and public affairs, environmental policy, journalism, political geography
 - US Government documents
 - Map collection
 - Electronic Data Service

Primary Users

- School of International & Public Affairs
- Academic Departments:
 - Political Science
 - Sociology
 - Anthropology
 - Economics

Lehman Physical Space

- Underground
- Poor lighting
- Uneven temperature
- Original furniture, carpet, etc.
- Old, uncomfortable chairs
- Too few electrical outlets
- No major renovation until Summer 2007

Partnering with SIPA

- Town Hall Meetings lead to opportunities to work with SIPA
 - Opportunity for us to hear the topics and issues of concern to the students (not just the library)
 - Opportunity to learn about new needs, i.e. group study, laptop support
 - Opportunity for the SIPA Dean and administrators to hear students concerns about the library, which invariably were about the physical space.
 - SIPA began to realize that the School and the Library could partner to deal with some of these issues.
- Student Petition
 - “You’re too polite”

Early Projects

- First Group Study Room
 - Small room, small budget
- First phase in West Reading Room
 - Electrical outlets and data jacks to table tops
- Inexpensive projects, very well received
- Gave our administration confidence in us
 - In understanding what students wanted / needed
 - Able to plan and carry out projects effectively and within budget
- School appreciated that we were responding to their students needs

Vision Statement

- Broad Plan for entire library
- Basic tenets for the future Lehman established
 - Collection of 160,000 volumes to be kept on-site
 - Group study
 - Spaces that support new technology
 - Expand GIS and electronic data service
 - Improve and upgrade physical plant

Developing detailed plans

- 9 projects developed – collectively cover the entire library
- 4 were developed in more detail with an architect
 - West Reading Room
 - Group Study Room
 - Digital Social Science Center (DSSC)
 - Main Lobby
- 3 have been approved and financed (so far)

Collection Use Study

- Current periodicals
- Reference materials
- Government Documents
- Microfilm / fiche
- Bound journals

Collection Use Study: results

- Significant decline in use of all these collections. Particularly
 - current periodicals
 - government documents.
- Small number of reference titles used repeatedly
- Microfilm use down. Patrons want to scan.

User Input

- Two focus groups with SIPA students
- Small group of students served as consultants.
- Observational study
- Town Hall presentation on our plans for first two projects

Students Wanted

- Electrical outlets for laptops
- Better lighting
- More comfortable chairs
- Group study space

Talking with colleagues

- Site visits to
 - University of Michigan Social Work Library
 - New York University
 - University of Pennsylvania Information Commons
- Virtual site visits via the web, in particular
 - Georgia Tech
 - North Carolina State Univ.
- Info Commons discussion group at ALA
- Info Commons listserv

Summer 2007 Projects

West Reading Room & Group Study Room

- Architect brought back
- Weekly meetings
 - Setting schedules
 - Planning for disruption
 - Making decisions: furniture, carpeting, light fixtures, etc.
 - Take notes
- Final design decisions
 - Group study room partitions
 - to bring in electricity
 - To break the space up
 - to give the space character

First Project: West Reading Room

- Removed current periodical shelves
 - Relocated collection
- Re-carpeted
 - Warmer, quieter, more welcoming
 - Removed old floor outlets
- Improved lighting
 - Added light fixtures, replaced lenses on existing fixtures
- Used the original tables; new chairs
 - Power and data outlets on table top for each seat
- Painted ceiling and columns

West Reading Room - before



West Reading Room - after



West Reading Room - after





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West Reading Room

- 96 seats with power & data
- Wireless throughout
- 9 more seats at conference table
- Improved lighting
- New carpet

Second Project: Group Study Room

- Formerly the Reference Room
- Completely emptied room
- Reduced and relocated reference collection
- Removed the card catalog
- Relocated microfiche cabinets
- Removed computer workstations, index tables, everything.



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Group Study Room

- Painted and carpeted space
- Cleaned and re-lamped fixtures, replaced lenses
- Electrical outlets at every table
- Data on walls, wireless throughout
- New tables and chairs
- Glass boxes down the center of the room
- LCD panels at 4 tables to use with laptops
- Blackboards







Group Study Room

- 4 LCD panels - popular
 - 5 more will be added this year
 - Mac adaptors
- 5 Blackboards - heavily used
- 19 tables, 82 seats
 - tables seat 4 – 6
 - one larger seats 6-8

Key Elements in Both Rooms

- Improved lighting
- Added power and data at tables
- Comfortable chairs
- Large tables
 - plenty of room to spread out
 - small groups can work together, or study together quietly
- Carpeted floors: warmer, quieter

Policies

- West Reading was always a quiet space for individual study either singly or with friends.
 - This continues to be the case with some self-monitoring among the students
- Group Study intended for groups working together.
 - This is how it is being used for the most part. No conflicts yet
- We are not interfering with the way students are using these spaces.

Results

- Gate count up 12% in first year
- Students vocal in praise. Want more.
- School pleased. Contributed money again this year for DSSC.
- Library Administration pleased. We will re-carpet the lobby in January.

Final Comments

- Student support is important
- Get user input
- Partner with Schools or Academic Departments.
 - Group study spaces
 - Presentation practice rooms
 - Late night study spaces

Final Comments (cont'd)

- Use an architect
 - Brings a different perspective
 - More polished, better finished spaces
 - More knowledgeable about
 - Materials
 - Structures
 - Aesthetic sensibility

Final Comments (cont'd)

- **Assess**
 - check / confirm assumptions
 - Assemble data to back up potentially controversial decisions