Student Focus Group – Learning Commons (comments from both sessions, 18 participants total)

1. **Have you heard the term “information commons” or “learning commons”?**
   
   *No one at either session had heard of this concept.*

2. **How and where do you study?**
   - Want quiet – more space like 3rd floor *(this was the first thing mentioned in both sessions)*
   - Like the views and windows on upper floors
   - “there should be rules” – they are not sure what “quiet conversation and study area” means
   - Lack of enforcement is a problem *(were actually talking about SGA lab)*
   - “kids” making noise is a problem *(seemed to be talking about high school & younger)*
   - Staff should “kick people off” computers if they are just doing myspace, etc and others need to do schoolwork or give time limits or limit computers for recreational use
   - Like having the coffee shop as a place to study/ just meet and talk
   - Wi fi and outlets important; would like clear indication (signs) where the wireless works reliably
   - Would like furniture that is “comfortable but not too comfortable”
   - Would like to have room to “spread out” at computer *(for books, etc.)* . Too cramped.
   - Scatter computers around room more—little more private
   - “Does anyone use those little carrel rooms? Could we use those for individual study?”
   - MORE GROUP STUDY ROOMS *(clear need in both sessions)*
     - they like to use them to study alone, even though they’re not supposed to.
     - Chalkboards on 2nd floor in bad shape; need whiteboards or chalkboards
     - Would be nice to have a computer in each GSR
     - Better chairs (very uncomfortable)
     - Like the idea of glass (or partial glass) walls for group study – no closed off spaces
   - They liked the idea of making the first floor the “loud” place *(moderate amount of noise permitted)* and having other floors CLEARLY designated for quiet study. One suggested making floors go from loudest (first) to quietest (fourth). They want it to be very clear where talking is permitted and where real quiet is expected.

3. **What technology/software/computing applications do you use as part of your coursework?**
   - Office 2007 should be available on every computer on campus
   - Flash player should be available
   - Quick link to MS Word from desktop would be nice *(don’t have to dig it out of menus)*
   - “Math Lab” should be on computers
   - Ebrary reader not available everywhere *(esp outside library)*
- Printing process in Reference is intimidating to many; only those who have to will use it (they expect to have free printing). Provide instructions at each computer.
- Free printing option should be available on ALL computers in library.
- Color printing should be an option from any computer you sue.
- Would like a scanner with a dedicated computer (don’t allow those simply browsing the web to use it—for scanning only so you can use the scanner when you need it).
- Sufficient number of Macs currently.
- Privacy screens would be nice (don’t want to see others viewing porn), but allow those who want to work together to have an open computer.
- Sometimes need to install software for assignments . . . should be a way to get software installed.
- More laptops to checkout with longer checkout period (4-5 hours?)

4. What kind of help do you need when you are doing coursework (instant reference vs appointments, etc)? (Do you know where to get help now?)

- According to STA’s, most students can figure out the computers (they don’t need a lot of technical help). Students are more likely to need help finding library resources. The public needs both technical help and library help.
- Make it visually clear and welcoming that there is a place to ask for help—students want to get help from the person who can really answer the question.
- Students are embarrassed to ask other students to help—prefer a staff person “not too old.”
- Only one librarian available, sometimes you have to wait, takes a long time to get help.
- Hard to get help in SGA lab; student assistants often busy.
- SGA lab people are helpful, library STAs less so.
- Need help to use microfilm, equipment (both sessions mentioned) .
- Availability of specialist librarians should be promoted more.
- Didn’t know they could make an appointment with a librarian; didn’t think the librarian would reply if they sent an email asking for help/appointment.
- Writing help—didn’t know how to use APA style – wasn’t convenient to go to Writing Center.
- Would like the style guides and other sources for writing help all together in one place.
- Would like to get math help at library.

5. Where do you go for “social spaces”?

- Outside the library is a natural gathering place for many students—please put more chairs and tables out there—they will be used (both sessions mentioned this).
- Univ Center and Kirschman Hall are other good gathering places.
- Like having the coffee shop (both sessions mentioned this as the only real “social space” in the library).

6. What other services would you like the library to provide?

- More comfortable chairs (like the new ones with desk platform).
- Fix tampon/sanitary napkin machines in bathrooms
- Grace period for Reserve books
- Keep *current* textbooks on Reserve
- More security to prevent theft
- Somewhere on upper floors to take a break (eat snack, relax)

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS:**

- Include library info as part of packet of info distributed to people in dorms; put in P.O. boxes
- Have information sessions to teach students how to use libraries
- Manga collection, anime movies, more leisure reading
- Stay open later at night – suggest 1:00 or 2:00 AM to close
# Library Student Focus Group Questionnaire Results

**Grade Level:**  
- Freshman: 6  
- Sophomore: 5  
- Junior: 0  
- Senior: 3  
- Graduate Student: 1  
- [No answer – 1]

**Major:**  
- Engineering: 5  
- English: 2  
- Psyc: 2  
- Accounting: 1  
- Biology: 1  
- Bus Admin: 1  
- FTCA: 1  
- Int’l Studies: 1  
- Poli Sci: 1  
- [No answer – 1]

Please indicate how important it is to you to have the following services available in the Library:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>TOTAL SCORE*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wireless access</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet study space</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable chairs, desks, tables</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCs/MACs available for use</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group meeting and study rooms</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research consultation with a librarian who has expertise in area</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scanning equipment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical assistance with computers/printing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open electrical outlets</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment for multimedia use (DVD/VHS players in addition to computers)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immediate research assistance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>Laptops available to checkout and use in the library</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic displays providing campus and library information</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Place to relax and take a break; take a short nap</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color printing</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magazine reading area</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/drink allowed where I study/use computers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*3 pts for each Very Important rating, 2 points for each Important rating, 1 point for each Somewhat Important rating, and 0 points for Not Important.*