Redesigning Library Spaces to Meet Students' Needs

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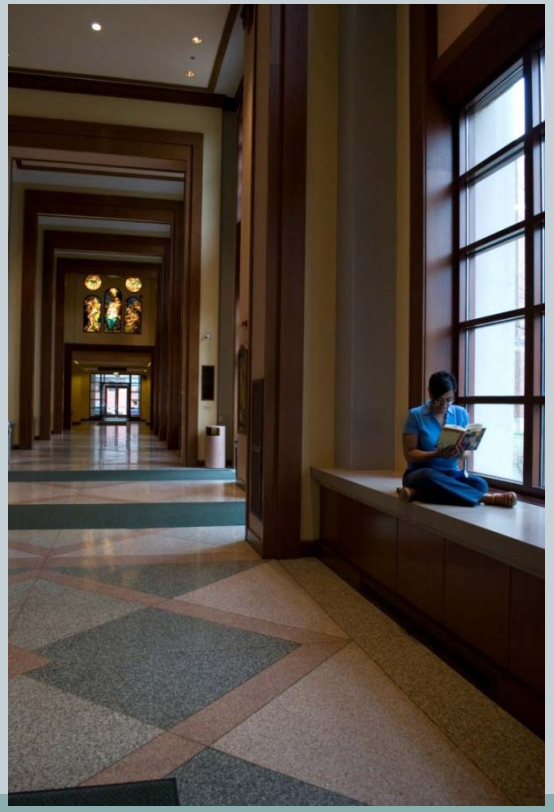
When it comes to library space, what do students want?

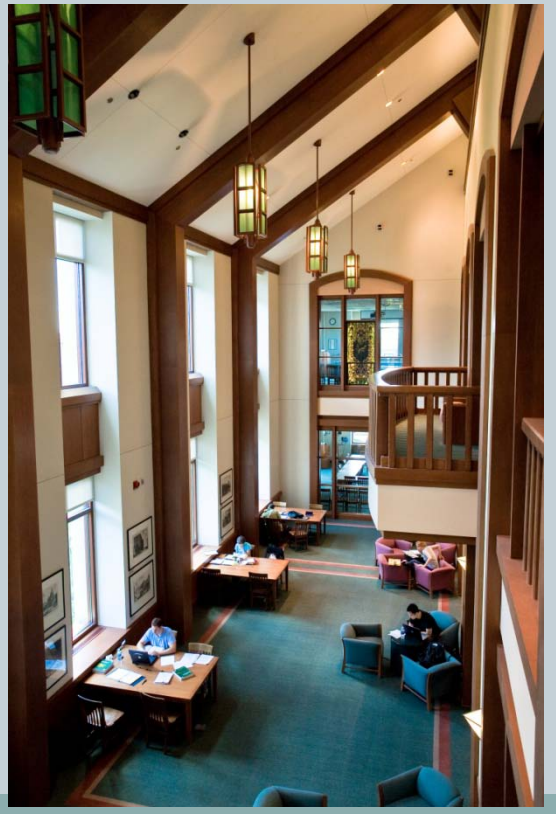
Do they want this?

Or this?

- Richardson Library
  - Kelly Hall



- Richardson Library
- O'Neil Reading Room



And, who wants what?

- UIS posited a difference between traditionally-aged (18-22 yrs) residential students & older (25+) commuter students
- Other members of the ERIAL group studied space informally

Library space trends, 1995-2010

- Information/learning commons
- Group studies
- Reading room
- Media Lab
- Smaller “footprint” for print volumes

How is library space usually studied?

- During design/redesign, through architect-led charettes
- Through informal observation
- As an element of more comprehensive user studies (i.e. LibQual+, etc.)
- Not studied at all; simply follow trends

How space was studied in the ERIAL Project

- Interviews
- Photo diaries
- Cognitive maps
- Space design workshops
- Flip chart suggestions

Interview questions about space

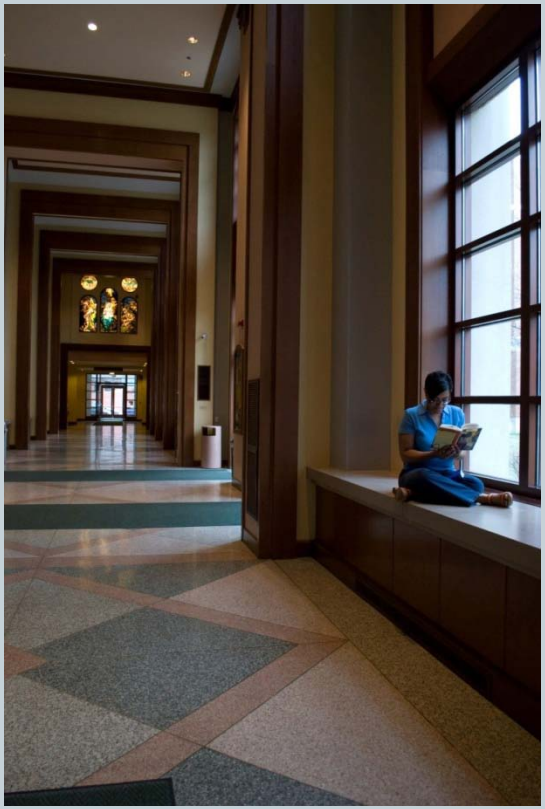
- What do you like most about the library?
- What don't you like about the library?
- Thinking about space…what would you like to see changed?

Flip chart questions

- What do you like about this space?
- What is missing from this space?

DePaul University Photo Interviews

Richardson Library
Kelly Hall



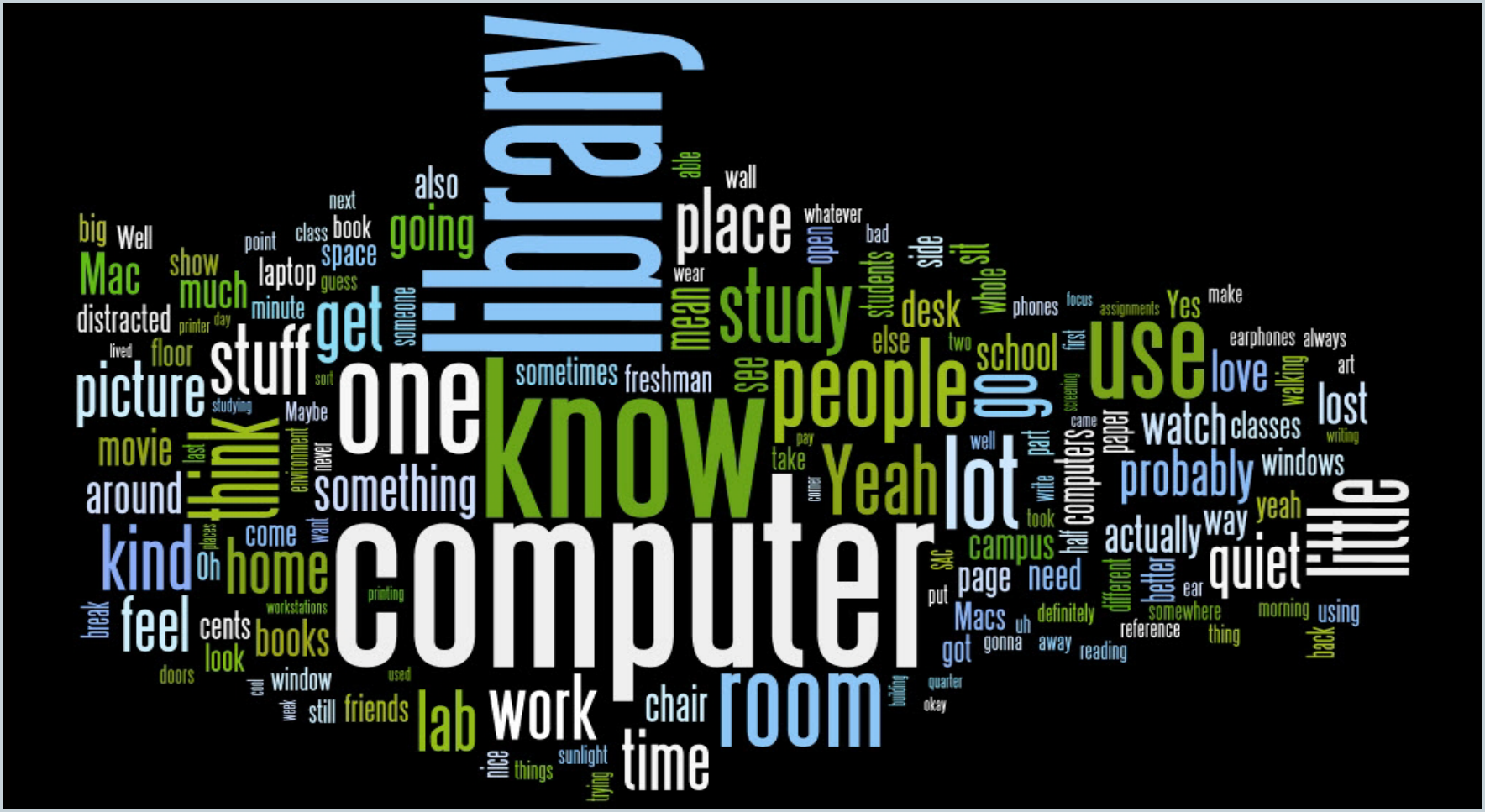
Richardson Library
O'Neil Reading Room

DePaul University Photo Interviews

Students took photographs based on a list of prompts related to study habits and/or library use.

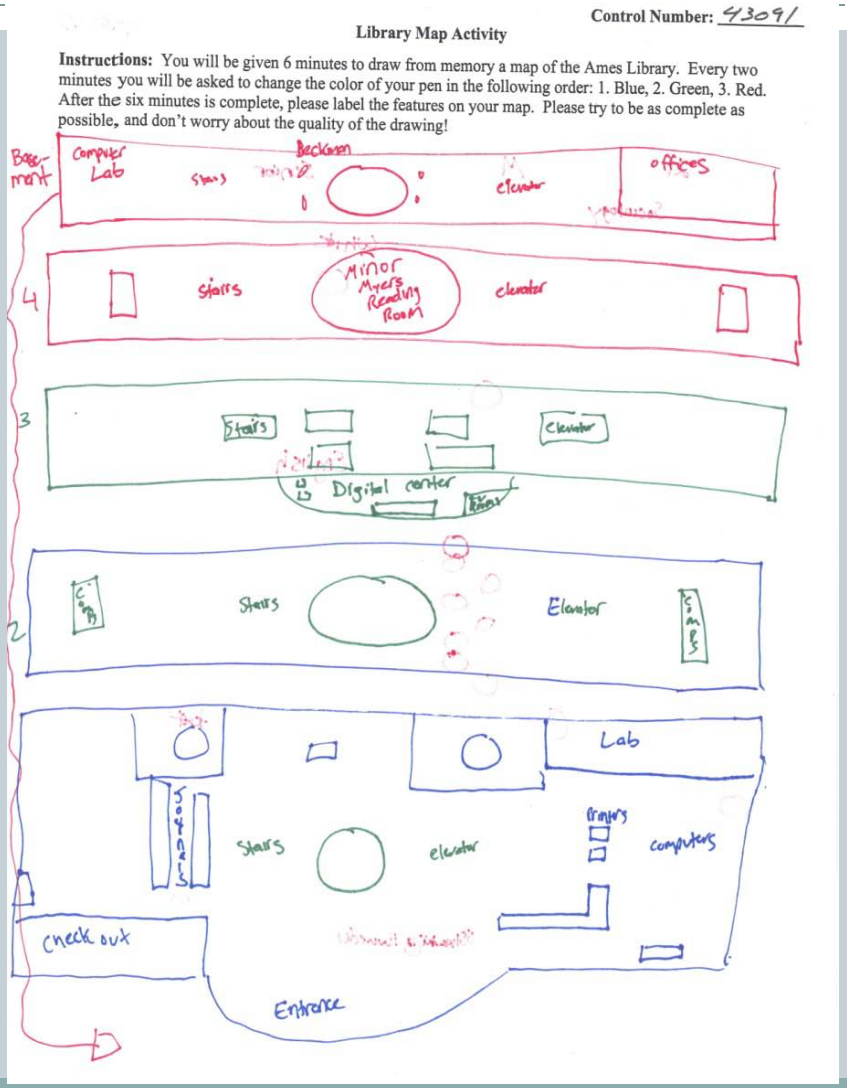
- One picture of the library to show a new freshman
- Where you study in the library
- The computer you use in the library
- Where you feel lost in the library

DePaul University Photo Interviews



The Ames Library

Cognitive Maps

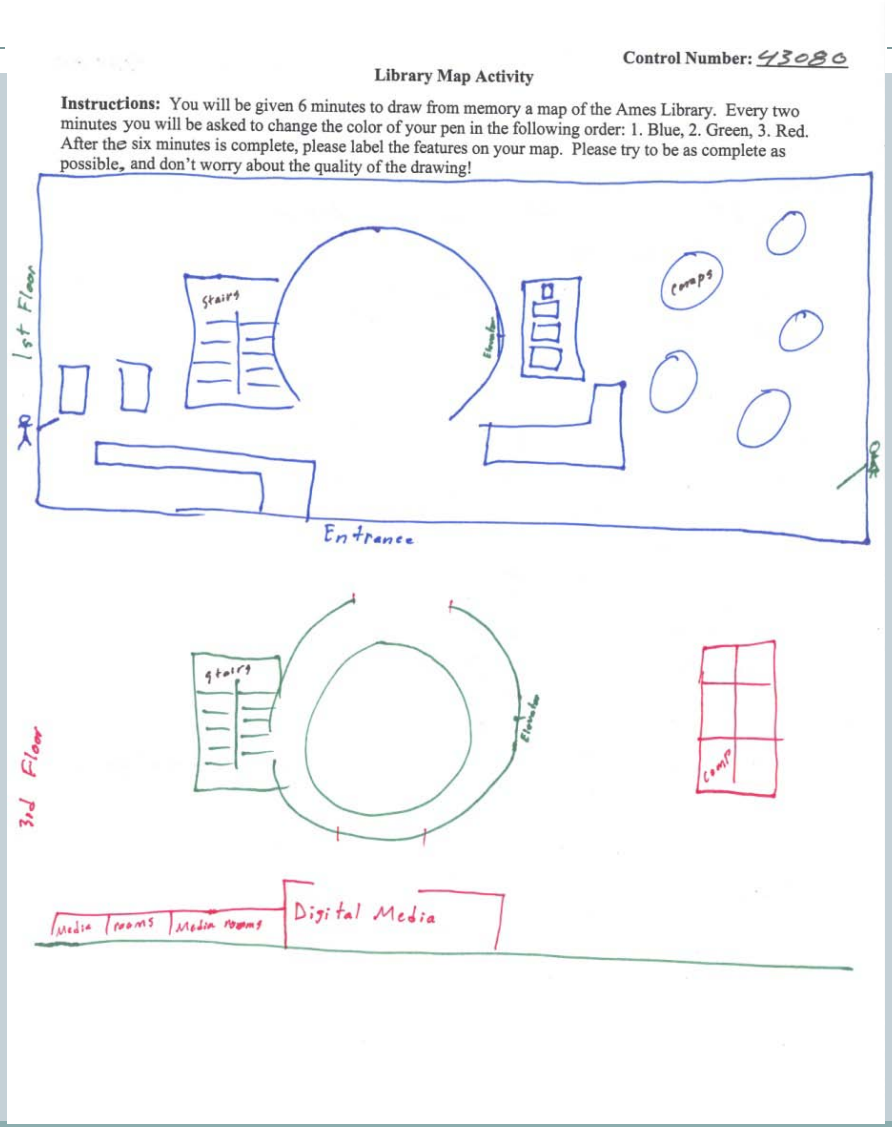


Control Number: 4309/

Library Map Activity

Instructions: You will be given 6 minutes to draw from memory a map of the Ames Library. Every two minutes you will be asked to change the color of your pen in the following order: 1. Blue, 2. Green, 3. Red. After the six minutes is complete, please label the features on your map. Please try to be as complete as possible, and don't worry about the quality of the drawing!

Cognitive Maps



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Library Map Activity

Instructions: You will be given 6 minutes to draw from memory a map of the Ames Library. Every two minutes you will be asked to change the color of your pen in the following order: 1. Blue, 2. Green, 3. Red. After the six minutes is complete, please label the features on your map. Please try to be as complete as possible, and don't worry about the quality of the drawing!

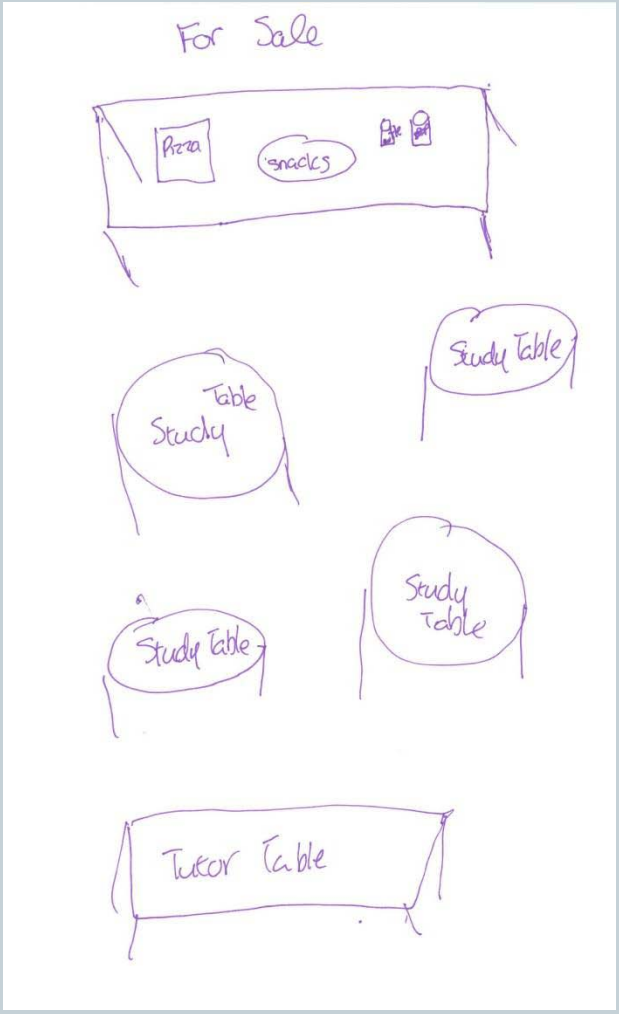
Cognitive Mapping Findings (44 maps)

- 95% - Computers
- 81% -Info Commons & Circulation Desk
- 68% - Computer Lab
- 59% - Reference Desk
- 36% - Project Rooms
- 31% - JWP Statue
- 25% - Books
- 24% - Journals
- 11% - Librarian Offices
- 11% - Reference Section

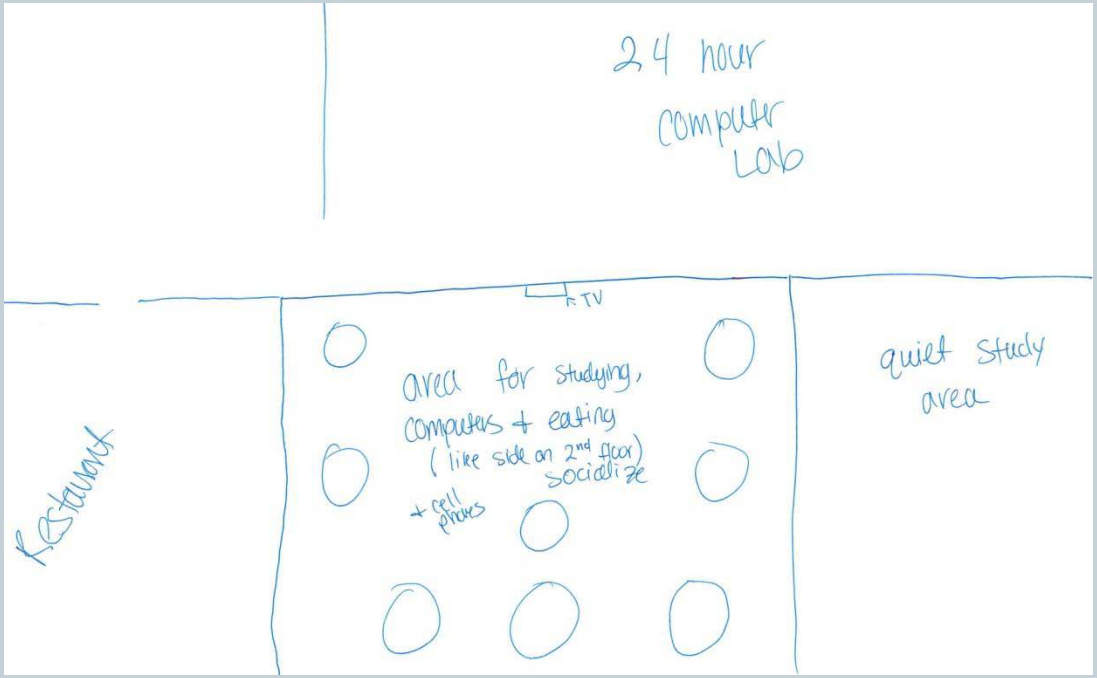
Brookens Library

- Four levels
- Located within larger building that houses the Department of Education, writing center and other offices
- First permanent structure on campus

Space Design Workshops



"Design a new floor for the library that would be perfect for everything you want to do here"



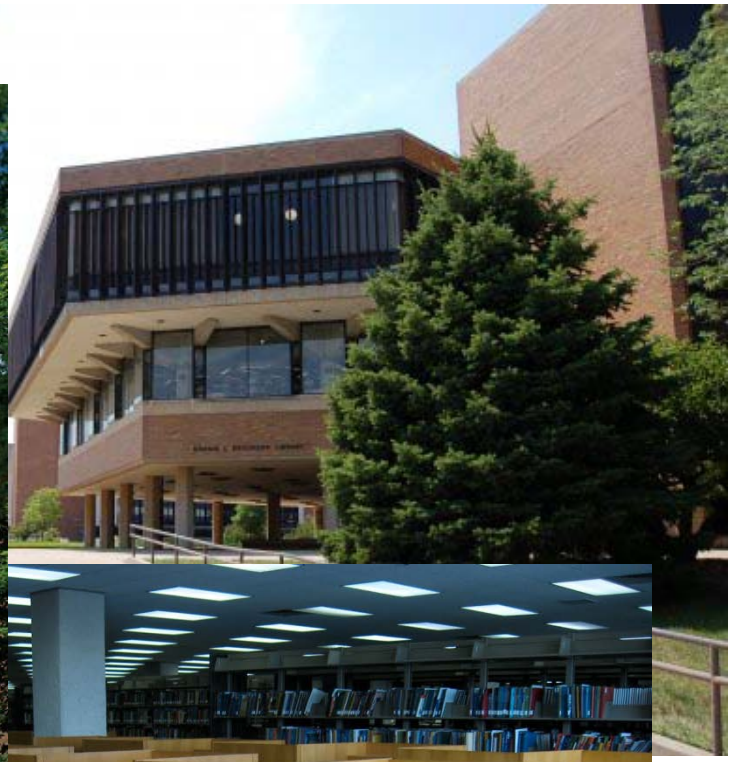
What do students think about the space?

LIKES:

- Mary Jane's Café
- Quiet Study Spaces
- 2nd Floor Computer Area
- Media Lab
- Lounge Areas

DISLIKES:

- Difficult to navigate
- Confusing
- Not enough/better signage
- Decorum
- Furniture
- Not enough computers
- Hours



Questions?

- Jane Treadwell (UIS) – Interviews/Flipcharts
- Elisa Addlesperger (DePaul) – Photo Diaries
- Sue Wilson (IWU) – Cognitive Maps
- Natalie Tagge (UIS) – Space Design Workshops