



Learning Commons

Year in Review, Year Ahead

Table of Contents

I.	Service Desk	3
	Staff Training	
	New Services	
	Staffing	
	Statistics	
	The Year Ahead	
II.	Research Consultation Stations	6
	Statistics	
	The Year Ahead	
III.	Programming	7
	Programming Schedule	
	Focus Group	
	Issues	
	The Year Ahead	
IV.	Tutoring	9
	Statistics	
	The Year Ahead	
V.	Solicitation Tables	10
	Statistics	
	The Year Ahead	
VI.	Course-Related Efforts	10
	Statistics	
VII.	Outreach	11
	Student Outreach	
	Statistics	
	Faculty Outreach	
	The Year Ahead	
VIII.	Food For Thought Cafe	11
	Statistics	
	The Year Ahead	
IX.	Group Spaces	12

	Statistics	
	Issues	
X.	Technology	13
	Computer Usage & Printing Numbers	
	Notebook Transition	
XI.	Digital Signage	14
	Campus Partner Signage	
	Learning Commons Signage	
	Issues	
XII.	Facility	15
	Issues	

Service Desk

Staff Training

Service desk staff were offered weekly training sessions during the Fall 2013 semester and bi-weekly sessions in Spring 2014. Before each semester, a weeklong training boot camp was arranged with multiple topics each day. The following were presented:

Library

- Suma (data tracking software)
- Learning Commons Reserving group spaces
- Learning Commons troubleshooting
- Library technology
- VLC Media Player
- Tumblr (Hannah Kane)
- Microfilm readers
- Evacuation Plans
- Emergency Procedures
- Community Borrowers
- Aleph user and item records
- Interlibrary Loan
- Policies
- Springshare products
- EndNote and RefWorks
- Government Information
- Reference Collection
- Electronic Resources
- Referrals
- Special Collections and Iowa Woman's Archive Tour
- Map Collection Tour
- Main Library Storage Tour
- Learning Commons Tour

ITS

- Print queue management (Les Neu)
- ITS Help Desk, including HawkID password reset and print refunds (Virginia Drake)
- SITA services and UI Capture (Megan Mathews)
- TILE (William Dawson)

Campus Partners

- SWAT: Supplemental Instruction, Workshops, and Tutoring (Stephanie Preschel)
- De-escalation techniques (Alton Poole)
- Customer Service (Sean Hesler)
- Assistive Technology (Jim Stachowiak and Marti Slaughter)

New Services

- In October 2013, began checking out PC and Mac notebook chargers. These were provided by the UI Student Government and have since become a very popular item for checkout.
- Library staff working overnight took over from ITS the cleaning of the computers.
- November 2013, the North entrance opens.
- HDMI, VGA, Ethernet cables, Dell mice, and wireless presentation slide advancers checked out to facilitate usage of technology in group rooms and areas.
- In January 2014, began resetting HawkID passwords and refunding print jobs up to \$1.00.

- Fall semester, student workers roved the first and second floors to provide point of need assistance. Spring semester, student workers were stationed at “Ask Me” booths to provide assistance away from the service desk.
- Suma was implemented to track service desk transactions, roving transactions, and counts of what users are doing on the first and second floors. It has proven a useful tool to collect data to help assess services and staffing levels.

Staffing

A Library Assistant III was hired to work 11:00pm to 8:00am, Sunday through Friday. They are responsible for answering basic questions related to technology, library services, directional, campus, and refer users to other staff or services. They also facilitate the resolution of facility and security issues and are assisted by two student workers. After the initial person hired left, the replacement position’s hours were altered slightly and the overnight shift is now 9:00pm to 6:00am, Sunday through Friday. This change was made to accommodate having a full-time staff member at the service desk during the busier times of the evening.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) staff were added to the daily schedule in January 2014. This additional staff provided more flexibility and better coverage at the service desk.

Librarians from the Research and Library Instruction (RLI) department are no longer scheduled at the service desk but are available for referrals by stationing themselves at the nearby research consultation workstations. They are occasionally asked to fill in at the service desk, particularly during unforeseen scheduling problems or during busy times. The librarians are included in all training and communication activities.

We hope to hire a library assistant that can be devoted to the service desk, much like the overnight position. This would allow RLI, ILL, and Circulation staff time for their regularly assigned duties away from the desk, as most are not able to keep up with departmental tasks.

Because of data from Suma and staff input, the staffing level at the service desk was reduced by one during the 8am to 10am hours. We are currently working on adjusting our staffing levels for the Fall 2014 semester.

Statistics

Service Desk Transactions

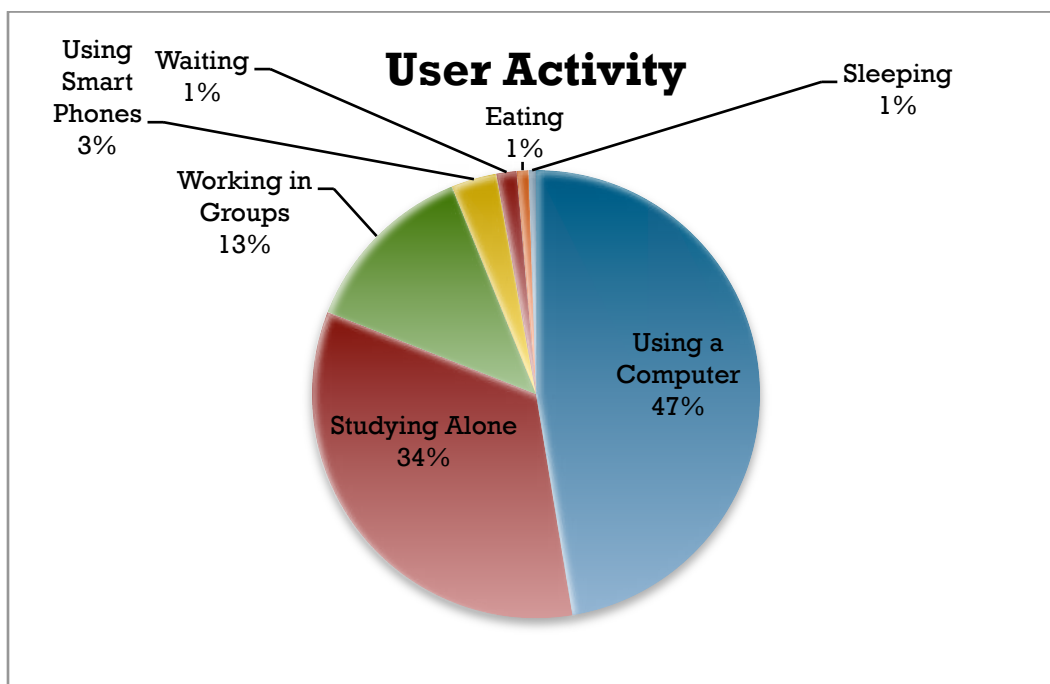
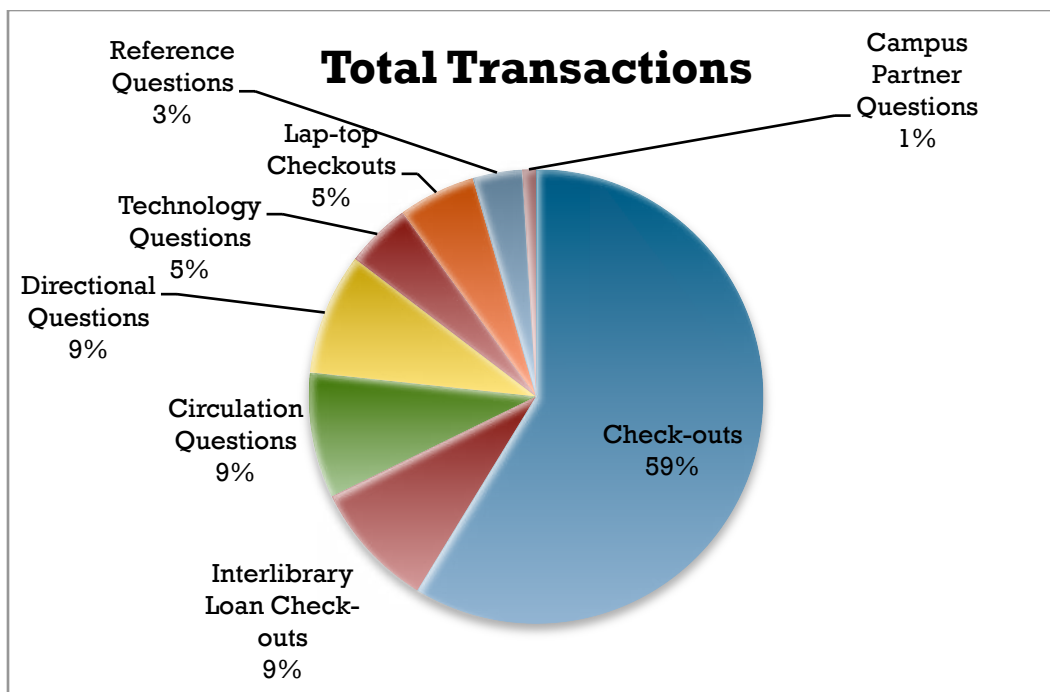
- 54,588 check-outs
- 8,382 interlibrary loan check-outs
- 8,292 circulation questions
- 8,049 directional questions
- 4,342 technology questions
- 5,100 notebook check-outs
- 3,270 reference questions
- 906 campus partner questions

Building Counts

- 967,696 people entered the building

User Activity

- 374,303 using a computer
- 265,133 studying alone
- 101,850 working in groups
- 25,893 using smart phones
- 11,594 waiting
- 6,754 eating
- 4,129 sleeping

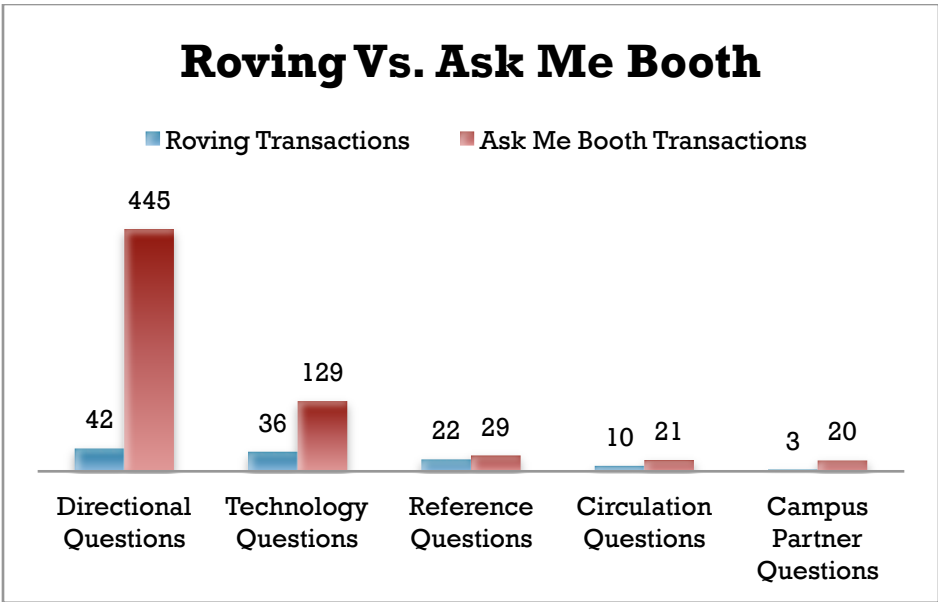


Roving Transactions, Fall 2013

- 42 directional questions
- 36 technology questions
- 22 reference questions
- 10 circulation questions
- 3 campus partner questions

Ask Me Booths Transactions, Spring 2014

- 445 directional questions
- 129 technology questions
- 29 reference questions
- 21 campus partner questions
- 20 circulation questions



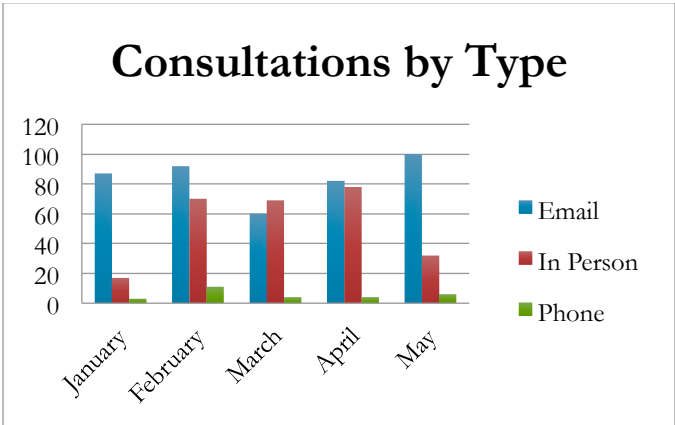
The Year Ahead

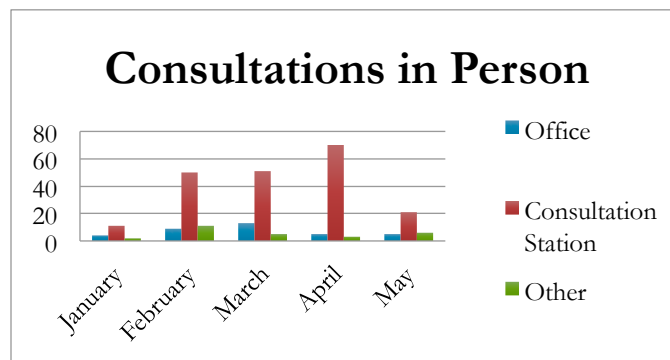
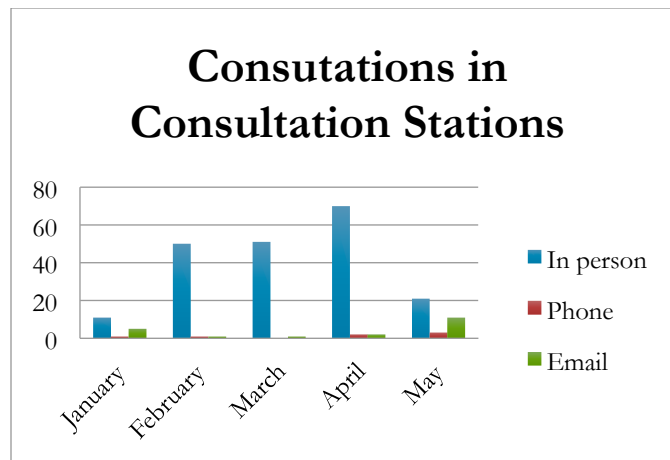
During the Fall 2013 semester student workers were assigned to rove around the first two floors of the library, making themselves available for questions. Data showed that patrons were not making use of this service so we switched to stationing students at a booth located at each entrance to answer technology and directional questions. Data showed that this service was heavily used during the first two weeks of classes and then dropped off significantly. This fall we will be scheduling library staff volunteers & student workers at each booth during the first two weeks of classes.

Research Consultation Stations

The research consultation stations are exclusively used by librarians to offer research consultations and hold office hours. Librarians monitoring the library’s instant messaging service are also stationed at 1101 C, the station closest to the service desk, to act as backup and to accept referrals from the desk.

Statistics





The Year Ahead

Feedback from the librarians using the research consultation stations indicated that the two stations are too close together and it can be awkward if both stations are in use. During the summer break the stations were reconfigured so they are facing away from each other. This will give the librarians a better line of site to the service desk allowing for better referrals.

Programming

All of our programming for the year was held in one of the six group areas. During the Fall 2013 semester we scheduled a few programs in Area C, located in the Food for Thought Café, but feedback from presenters highlighted significant issues with the space. Many people didn't see the space as a reservable area and often patrons would walk right through a program that was taking place. Presenters also felt that they were interrupting other patrons or that there was too much going on in that area and they had to compete with high noise levels. We moved to Area D beginning Spring 2014. Area D is located across from the Food for Thought Café and was preferred because of its location to a high traffic area, ease of way finding, and semi-enclosed environment.

Programming Schedule

Fall 2013

Learning Commons Programming

- Finals Week Activities
- Express Workshops
- On Iowa! Open House
- Late Night in the Learning Commons Open House
- Learning Commons Open House

Campus Partner Programming

- Studio Talks
- Fluxus Website Design Focus Group
- An Eating Disorder Awareness Event
- On Purpose: A Conversation About Assignments
- Voting Registration
- Ghosts in the Stacks
- TRiO: GRE Test Prep
- SWAT Study Groups
- Book History Exhibit
- Securing Nonprofit Internships

Spring 2014

Learning Commons Programming

- Finals Week Activities
- Express Workshops
- Social Media Boot Camp
- Juried Undergraduate Video Show
- Grand Opening

Campus Partner Programming

- Brain Gain Academic Fair
- Capture Iowa Photo Exhibit
- Financial Aid Program
- Shakespeare Live-Steam Event
- TRiO Book Club
- Pi Day
- Archives Alive
- SWAT/Financial Aid Workshops
- Valentine's Day Activities
- SWAT study groups
- Voting Registration
- Studio Talks

Focus Group

At the end of the Spring 2014 semester we gathered a small group of campus partners together to discuss the programs that worked and didn't work in the group areas and to come up with recommendations for the future. The group focused on Area D.

The group felt that all of the programs offered during the last year worked well and that the only improvements needed were logistical. They liked Area D because it was a high traffic location and is able to accommodate a wide number of people in the space. The quality of the a/v equipment was a plus although the ambient noise (people walking by, printers, café) from the rest of the Learning Commons made it difficult to hear presenters, especially during class presentations, and to record presentations.

The group felt that it could be difficult for students to find the group areas and liked the fact that we made use of the large monitors and print signage to help students find the space. They suggest we continue that practice in the future.

Many students don't recognize the group areas as reservable spaces and it was sometimes difficult to ask students to leave a group area when a program was about to take place. The group suggested we think about how presenters can "claim the space" including putting up a daily events list on the large monitor so people can see what's going on that day or setting out table tents.

Another issue was making sure they had the correct technology for the event (notebook, cables, adaptor). It was suggested that the Learning Commons provide for checkout a cart that is preloaded with a notebook, cables, slide advancers and adaptors. The cart could also serve as a place for the notebook to sit during the presentation. It was also

recommend that the Learning Commons make available for check out adaptors for patrons to use to hook their mac and mobile devices up to the monitors and mikes for program presenters to use.

Issues

Undergraduate outreach & marketing has been a challenge for the Learning Commons. Because the space is located in the Main Library, the identity of the Learning Commons is tightly tied in with that of the library. As a result, many of the programs offered in the Learning Commons are either collaborations with the library or programming developed by the library itself. This is advantageous in that it allows the Learning Commons to make use of various outreach channels already located within the library. It muddies the waters, however, in that it makes branding an issue and it is difficult to decide who should pay for what.

The Learning Commons needs more direction on the types of programming it hosts. We've been asked to host large academic fairs and while that is an academic activity that would fit within the scope of the learning commons the size of the event is not. We have hosted a small academic fair, the Brain Gain, in January and it worked very well. It seems to be within the scope of the Learning Commons to provide programs and workshops that can stay within the capacity of the group areas. We also have requests to put on workshops and programs sponsored by student organizations. These events can be considered both academic and social and it is difficult if they are within our scope or if they would be better suited at the IMU.

The Year Ahead

We plan to continue working on making our outreach efforts more streamlined and effective. By continuing to work with campus partners and by increasing our partnerships with key faculty we hope to identify workshop topics that are of relevance to undergraduate student success and are directly connected to courses offered at the University.

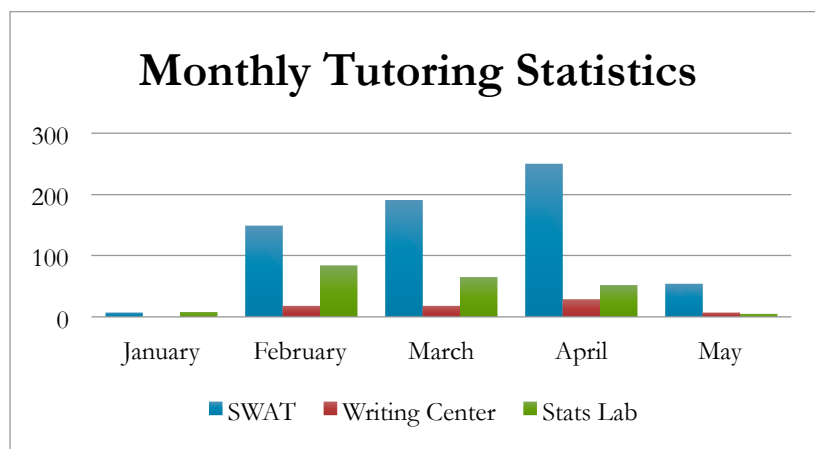
We will continue to offer much of our programming lineup from Spring 2014. The Digital Studio for Public Arts & Humanities will not be offering their *Studio Talks* series in the Learning Commons due to logistical issues. We will continue offering our *Express Workshop* series and we will host an open house again for *On Iowa!* We are working with Matt Gilchrist, from the Rhetoric Department to set up a program series called *Show What You Know*. This series will feature students teaching short workshops on topics of interest. We are planning on partnering with Hancher Auditorium on a project called *Worth Fighting For* to host a pop up museum featuring student projects based around artist in residence Liz Lerman. We are also partnering with the University Libraries to offer a series of digital badges to undergraduate students in order to increase student engagement with the University Libraries and the Learning Commons.

Tutoring

The Learning Commons did a trial run for the Statistics Tutoring Lab during the Fall 2013 semester. The lab reserved one group room for two weeks during midterms and again at finals. Their attendance went up 20%. As a result we decided to continue stats tutoring for the entire spring semester. We also entered into partnerships with SWAT tutoring and the Writing Center.

Statistics

- Statistics Lab Tutoring, South Lobby (1103, 1105, Area A) held 214 sessions
- SWAT Tutoring (1113 Red) tutored 522 students
- Writing Center Satellite Station (Area D) held 72 appointments



The Year Ahead

We have evaluated our partnerships with the three groups and have decided to continue offering tutoring sessions in the Learning Commons for the next academic year. All three groups were satisfied with the semester's outcomes and we will not be making any significant changes at this time.

Solicitation Tables

We had many requests from student group and departments across campus to set up solicitation tables at the Learning Commons entry points. Solicitation tables are provided at the IMU so that organizations and departments may make contact with students for the dissemination of information. While the operations team did not think it within the scope of the Learning Commons' mission to offer tabling sessions in these locations we did allow them to use the group areas for tabling. We hoped this would help boost interest in and use of the group areas. These efforts were minimally successful.

Statistics

Total Tabling Sessions: 9

The Year Ahead

The group areas aren't conducive to tabling and to the expectations of student groups and departments who use the spaces for this purpose. The Learning Commons does not have the staff time to support tabling efforts in the space and it is not within our mission to do so. We plan to discontinue the use of tabling in the Learning Commons and will direct interested parties to the IMU in the future.

Course-Related Efforts

The Learning Commons began hosting class presentations in the group areas for rhetoric classes during the Spring 2014 semester. Instructor feedback was very positive and all instructors plan to continue the practice. Instructors also scheduled individual class sessions in the Learning Commons, reserving some group rooms for students to work on group projects. The space has also been used for one-shot library instruction classes and workshops. Class use of the Learning Commons has been very successful, especially when using the group areas.

Statistics

- Total Class Presentations: 7
- Total Class Reservations: 20

Outreach

Student Outreach

The Learning Commons has partnered with several different groups on campus to reach out to undergraduate students. We work very closely with the IMU Marketing & Design team to create marketing materials for the services, resources and activities offered in the Learning Commons. We've worked closely with the Office of Admissions to put the Main Library & Learning Commons as an essential destination on all campus tours.

Statistics

- Total Tours - 17

Faculty Outreach

The Student Instructional Technology Assistant group has agreed to give us some time during their TILE training sessions to give a short elevator speech on how faculty can use the Learning Commons to support their classroom initiatives. The Library Liaisons and the Center for Teaching have also been instrumental in helping to get the word out to faculty.

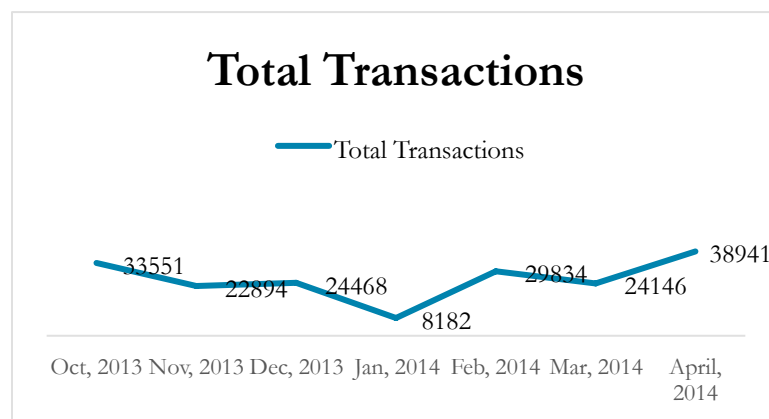
The Year Ahead

This coming year we plan on focusing our outreach efforts on the Rhetoric Department and all TILE-trained faculty. We also hope to continue developing our relationships with campus partners including the Library Liaisons and the Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology. These two groups are key in reaching out to faculty. We plan on reaching out again to the Office of Admissions to provide tours for any new tour guides.

Food For Thought Cafe

Statistics

- Total Transactions: 182,016



The Year Ahead

Beginning August 2014 the Food for Thought Café will be going cashless. The only effect this may have on Libraries services is the distribution of print keys, which guest users currently purchase at the café. Many guest users who use these keys tend to pay cash.

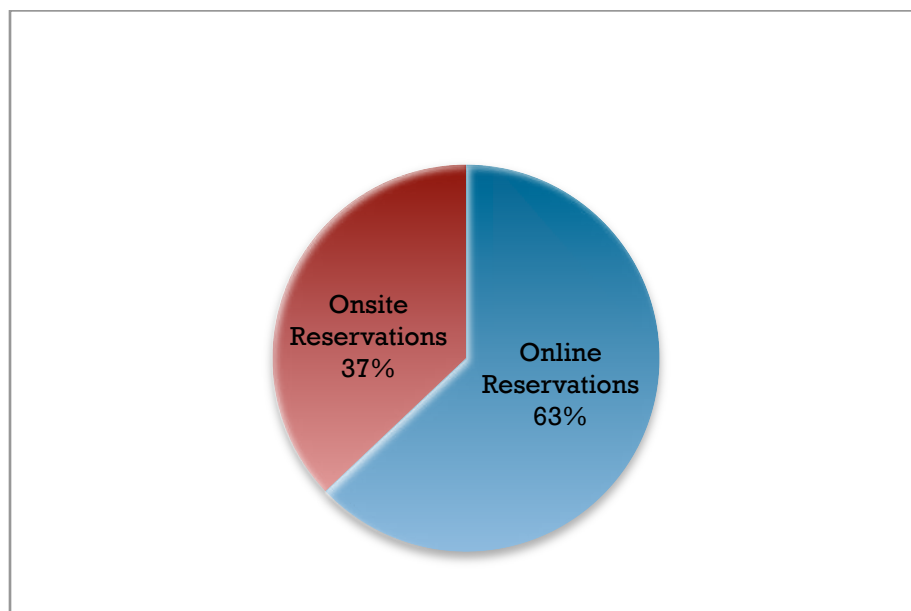
Group Spaces

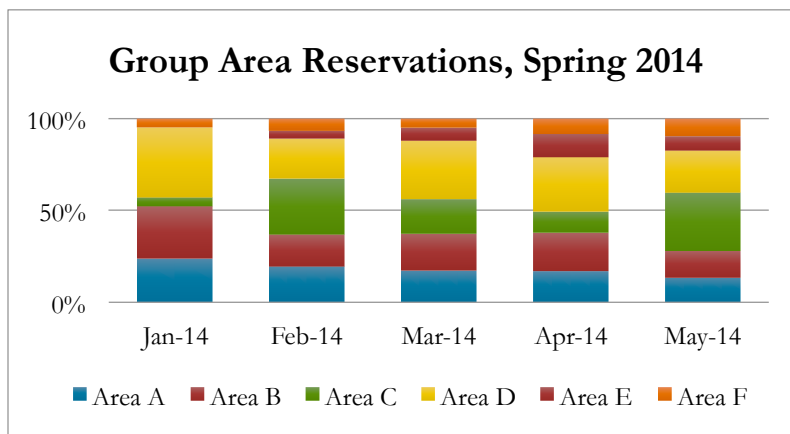
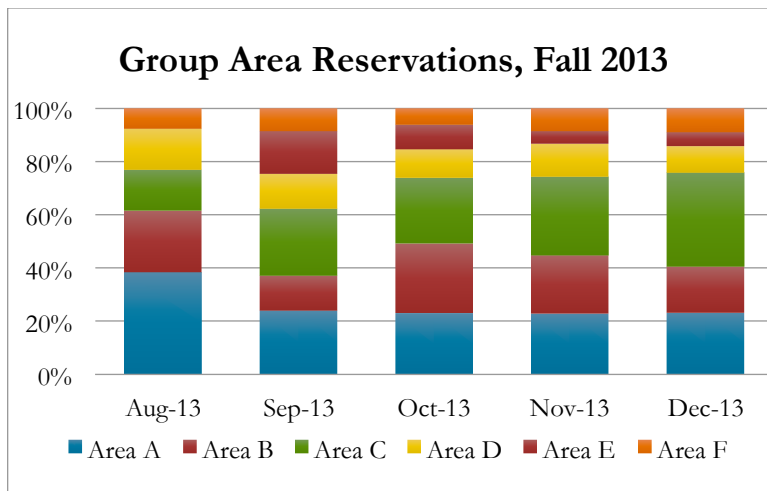
Private group rooms are by far the most reserved spaces, although, anecdotally, it seems that the group areas are being used more and more and that the groups who do use the group areas tend to reuse them. Their experiences with the areas seem positive.

Because the group areas were not being used as heavily as the group rooms we began using the group areas to bring in programming and course-based initiatives. We've also begun using the monitors in the group areas to promote events happening in the Learning Commons and, during finals week, we used the monitors to direct students to quiet study areas. The areas most used were Area C, located within the Food for Thought Café, and Area D, located across from the Food for Thought Café. The areas least used were Area E and Area F located on the either side of the east entrance.

Statistics

- Total Reservations: 28,539
- Total Online Reservations: 17,963
- Total Onsite Reservations: 10,576





Issues

The group room glass walls were originally supposed to be writable but due to installation error were not. Due to high demand it was decided to fix the error and new writable film was installed on the glass walls during spring break 2014.

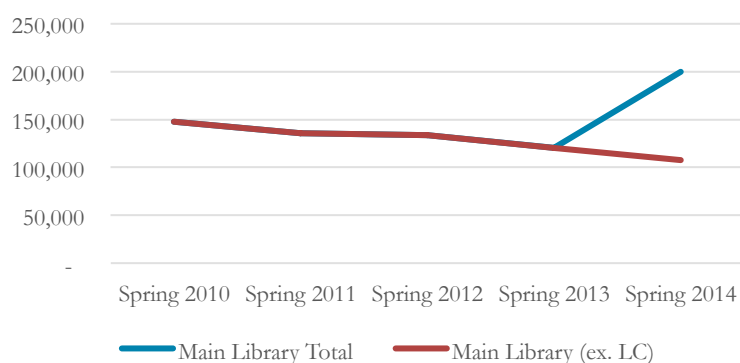
The sliding doors to the group rooms were designed to come off of their tracks easily when the door is pushed open, which happens quite frequently. The Learning Spaces Operations Team considered and the rejected the idea of putting up signs indicating how to open the door. The team suggests looking into finding a replacement handle that will better indicate to the user how to open the door.

Technology

Computer Usage & Printing Numbers

Computer use in the Learning Commons is very high. The north and east zones have desktop computers designed for students to camp out. The south zone has fewer computers than the other two zones and is made up of only express computer stations that are designed for quick transactions. Even so, computer usage in the south zone is comparable to other ITCs on campus. Printing in the Learning Commons is also very high in all three zones. As a result we now offer print refunds at the desk for up to \$1.00.

Public Computer Use - 5 Year Trend (hrs)



Learning Commons Usage (AY 2014)		
	Hours/Comp/Week	Pages Printed
Main Library Commons - East	65.15	511,967
Main Library Commons - North	56.56	509,612
Main Library Commons - South	37.64	376,163
Main Library Laptops	7.35	
Total Prints		1,397,742

Notebook Transition

The service desk has 100 laptop computers available for checkout. Laptop checkout numbers are low and as a result ITS will be repurposing 50 laptop computers this fall.

Digital Signage

The Learning Commons digital signage, located at each entrance, displays a list of the events happening in the building, the bus schedule for the two bus stops located outside of the Madison St. Entrance, a section devoted to ads for services, resources and events for our campus partners, and one section for ITS, University Libraries and the Provost's Office. Here's a sample of some of the signs we posted throughout the year.

Campus Partner Signage

- SERU Survey
- Carver Scholarship, Office of Financial Aid
- EpxCon, Epx Studios
- Black History Month Events, Division of Student Life
- RecycleMania, Office of Sustainability
- Find Your Focus Info Session, Pomerantz Career Center
- LGBTQ History Month, Division of Student Life

Learning Commons Signage

- Lynda.com, ITS
- Rick & Michael Mast Lecture, University Libraries
- Finals Week Events, Learning Commons
- Intro to Environmental Science, ITS
- Help Desk Hours, ITS
- Food for Thought Café Hours
- Express Workshop Series, Learning Commons
- Open Access Week, University Libraries
- BrowZine, University Libraries

Issues

AxisTV is not an easy system to use and took quite a bit of time to learn. Periodically our screens have frozen and someone must go down the basement of the Main Library to unfreeze the screen.

Facility

Issues

There is still signage in the Learning Commons that is incorrect and some locations don't even have signage. We are currently waiting for the signs to be replaced or fixed.

Trash was a major issue when the Learning Commons opened. The space did not have enough trash receptacles or custodial staff to keep the place clean. Things came to a head during a football weekend where trash was overflowing in the learning commons. As a result trash receptacles were added and two more custodial staff were assigned to the library. The custodial staff has done a fantastic job keeping the facility clean, although, we had one other major trash incident during the weekend before spring finals. That was a scheduling error and is not likely to happen again.

The interior doors at the Madison St. Entrance are extremely heavy. To fix this problem, the doors were switched from manual entry to automatic. This transition has made the problem worse. Now the doors even heavier to open manually. They also open very slowly when opened automatically. A patron exiting the building must push on the door and then stand there and wait for the door to slowly open.

The Learning Commons is also experiencing issues with the temperatures in the group rooms and behind the service desk. The group rooms are usually too hot and the thermostats located in each group room don't work leaving users very frustrated. The area behind the service desk is always very hot. The ITS Learning Spaces Team will be removing one shelving unit with 50 notebook computers which may help with the heat.