Kellogg Learning Commons

Guerrilla Assessment Report

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Assessment Librarian
25 April 2016

Executive Summary

The Kellogg Learning Commons (Kellogg LC) opened in the new Collaborative Health Education Building (CHEB) on January 4^{th} , 2016. With the following six types of work spaces, this new learning commons will bring together students from the faculties of Dentistry, Health Professions and Medicine in a purposefully collaborative setting:

- 6 bookable study rooms
- 8 study booths
- 1 silent study room
- 94 computer workstations
- the back corridor with soft seating and individual study carrels
- the front study area with soft seating, stand-up computer workstations, and 3-person table pods

In late January, an assessment planning team consisting of the assessment librarian, the Head of the Kellogg Library, Kellogg librarians and staff, and the LITS service manager met to discuss their observations and experiences in the Kellogg LC and the types of information that should be gathered from the users. Agreeing that the guerrilla assessment study of the Wallace McCain Learning Commons (WMLC) yielded actionable results, the planning team decided to utilize similar assessment methods and tools. The results would identify timely changes and potentially inform more formal assessment in the future. A full guerrilla assessment plan was drawn up and is attached as Appendix A.

Since whiteboards were used to gather preliminary user feedback in the weeks just after opening, we decided to use only question slips and question cards in the various workspaces. Question slips were deployed in the study rooms (see Appendix B), and three different question cards with backing colour-coded to the remaining five different workspaces were deployed in the other areas (see Appendices C, D & E). We also conducted seven, 1-hour observations in the spaces (see Appendix F). Headcounts were conducted in the morning, afternoon and evening. Computer usage data was also retrieved. The assessment study took place over the two week period, February 22nd - March 6th. All raw data may be found in the Libraries' Share drive at S:\Library\Share\Assessment\Spaces\Kellogg LC. A copy of the LC floor plan is attached as Appendix G.

Respondents were enthusiastic about the spaciousness, lighting and design of the new Kellogg LC, but the clearest message from the study was that there is an overabundance of computer workstations and not enough individual, quiet study space. One-third of the computer workstations could be removed as a first course of action and replaced with a mix of study carrels and 3-person table pods. Signage to remind passers-through of quiet zoning will help to alleviate noise complaints, but the back corridor has been deemed inappropriate for quiet, individual study. Study carrels in this area should be moved to the front study area. Please see the Recommendations section of this report for further details and additional recommendations. Follow-up assessment should be done immediately following proposed equipment/furniture changes and also in one year's time.

Results Summaries

Bookable Study Rooms

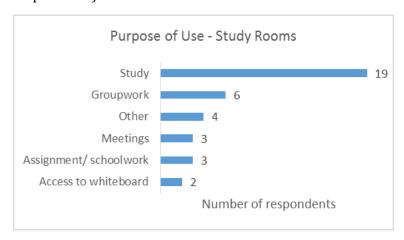
Question Slips

Total slips received: 27

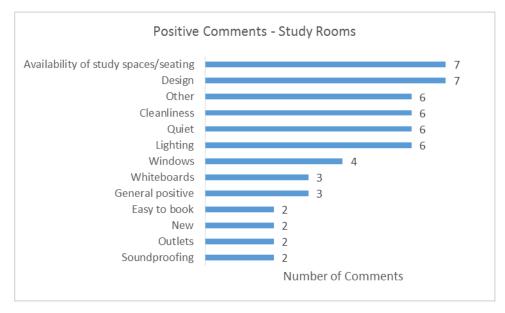
Nearly all of the respondents booked their room online. Only 2 booked in person and 1 did not book ahead.

Observation notes indicated that rooms were mostly occupied and usually with 2 or 3 people, occasionally just 1.

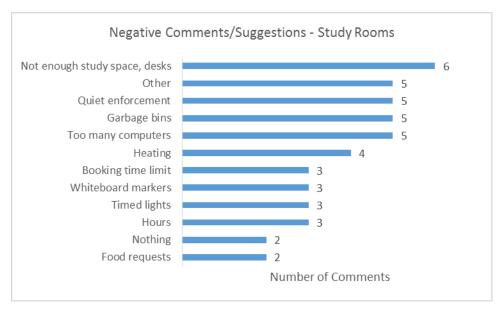
The most common reason respondents gave for using the study rooms was for studying (19 respondents).



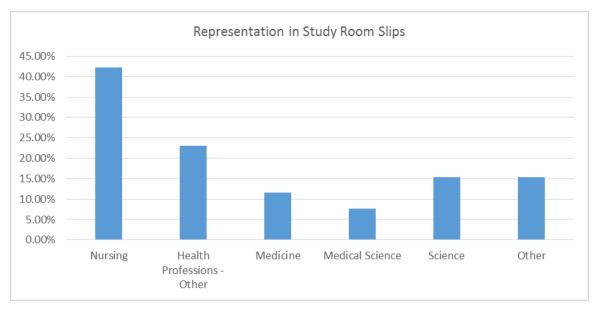
What they liked: Positive comments tended to be about the entire LC. The availability of study spaces and design were the top favourites.



What they would change: Negative comments also tended to pertain to the entire LC, except for requests to increase the booking time limit (this also came up in the WMLC assessment), and requests for garbage bins and more markers for the whiteboards. Despite stating an appreciation for the availability of study space, respondents' top complaint was that there is not enough study space – desks, in particular. They also complained of the lack of quiet and an overabundance of computers.



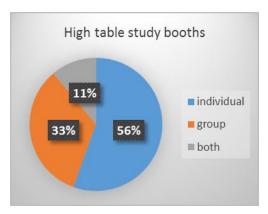
Affiliation: Respondents were instructed to indicate the programs of all those in the study room, so affiliation is reported by representation in the study room slip responses. Nursing had the highest representation (42.31%), followed by the Health Professions (other than Nursing) (23.08%).

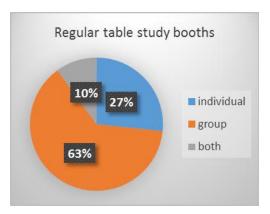


Study Booths

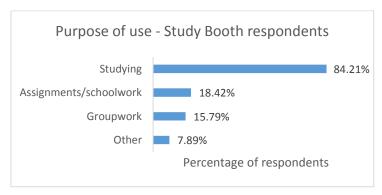
Total question cards received: 42

Observation notes indicated that booths at most times were all occupied and with a range of occupants from 1 to 5. Overall, respondents indicated that the booths were being used mostly by groups (57%). However, when the responses were separated by type of study booth, it was revealed that the high table study booths (off the general LC) are used by more individuals, and the regular table study booths (in the hallway) are frequented by more groups. (It should be noted though that we only received 9 completed question cards from the high table booths, 33 from the regular table booths.)

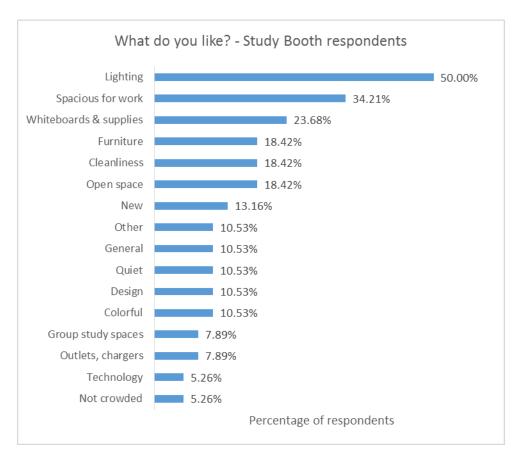




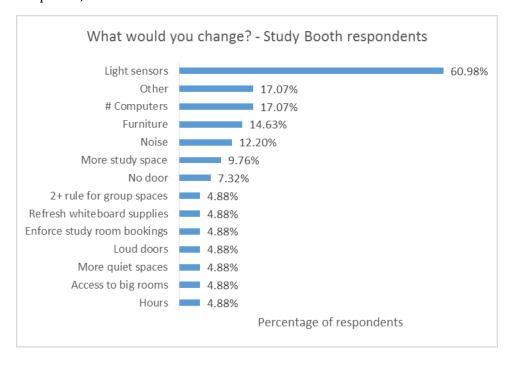
The most common reason respondents gave for using the study booths was for studying (84.21%). Groupwork was only mentioned by 15.79% of respondents. – Could this indicate that the study booths are a default for individuals seeking ample desk space for individual work?



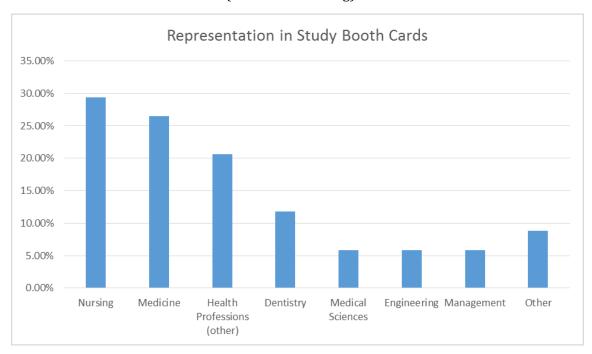
What they liked: Positive comments tended to be about the entire LC. Lighting and spaciousness get the top bill, and they like the whiteboards.



What they would change: Negative comments were consumed by light sensor complaints (60.98%). Many occupied study booths with lights out were recorded in observations as well. After the light sensor complaints, negative comments tended to be about the general LC – the number of computers, furniture and noise.



Affiliation: Nursing was represented in 29.41% of completed question cards, followed by Medicine at 26.47% and Health Professions (other than Nursing) at 20.59%.

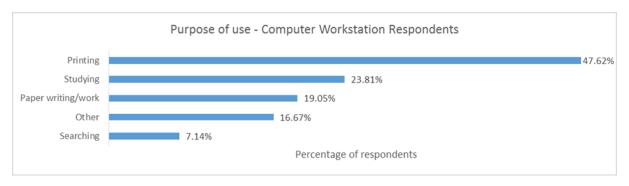


Computer Workstations

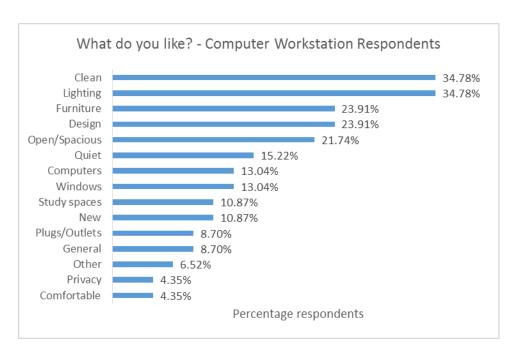
Total question cards received: 48

48% of respondents indicated the space met their needs.

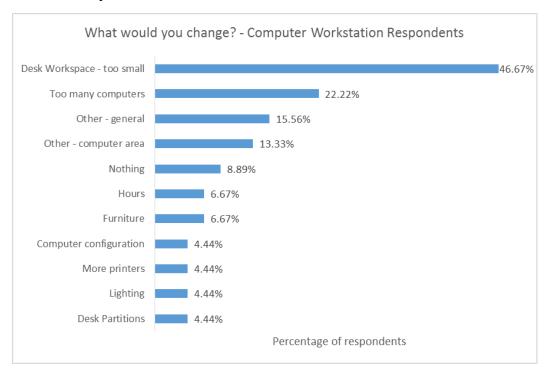
Purpose of use: 47.62% indicated their reason for using the computers was for printing. For 80% of these respondents, it was the only reason given for using the computers.



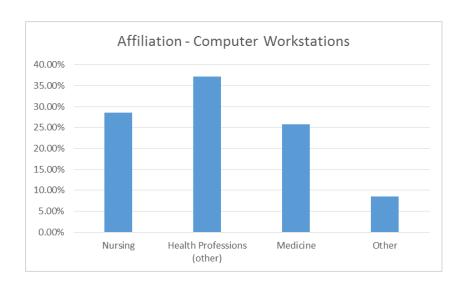
What they liked: Positive comments were mostly for the entire LC. The "spacious" theme continues with 21.74%. Cleanliness and lighting take top bill (each at 34.78%), with furniture and design coming second at 23.91% each.



What they would change: Nearly half the respondents (46.67%) indicated that the desk workspace at the computer workstations is too small. An overabundance of computers was highlighted by 22.22% of respondents.



Affiliation: 1 faculty member filled out the question card and 1 respondent indicated they were not affiliated. Of the rest, 29% were students from Nursing, 37% from Health Professions (other than Nursing), 26% were from Medicine, and the rest were from other programs.



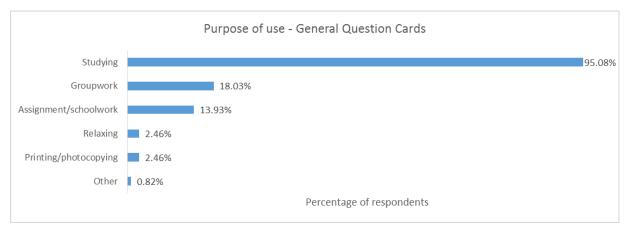
General Question Cards - Silent Study Room, Back Corridor, and Front Study Area

Each of these areas was given a different coloured backing on the question cards in order to identify which area the respondent was in. The questions on the cards were identical. Unless where indicated, response data analysis revealed no major differences to warrant separate reporting.

Total completed question cards: 126 (32 – silent study room, 37 – back corridor, 57 – front study area)

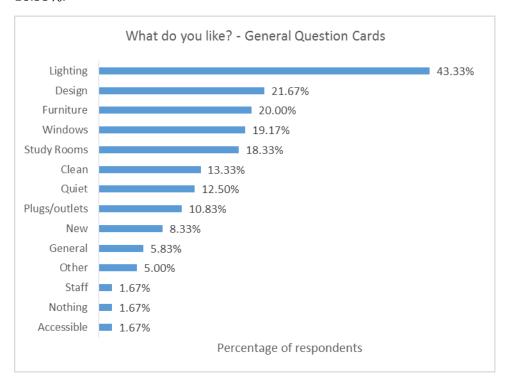
In general, 41% indicated the new LC met their needs. The front study area had the most content respondents with 48% saying it met their needs.

Purpose of use: 95.08% indicated that they used the space for studying; 18.03% for groupwork, and 13.93% for assignments/schoolwork. Relaxation was mentioned by a few respondents.



What they liked: Lighting was a clear winner, getting top votes from 43.33% of the respondents. Design and furniture were appreciated by 21.67% and 20.00%, respectively. (Standing desks were

mentioned by a few of the respondents.) Windows and study rooms follow with 19.17% and 18.33%.



What they would change: 38.21% indicated there were too many computers. 83% of these respondents also said there should be more study space/quiet space/furniture for individual use. Examples include:

"More study spaces - perhaps replace some of the computers with cubbies (lots of computers) or use another floor/part of floor"

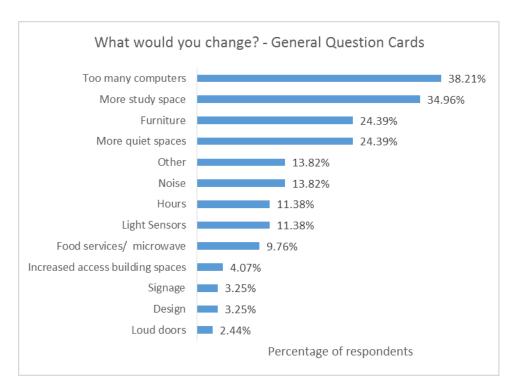
"I think removing 1/2 of the desktop computers to make more study space"

"More individual desks (with no computers)"

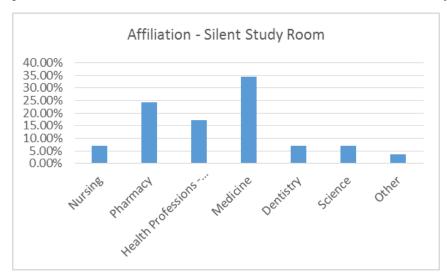
"More study space, don't need so many computers, they take up tables that could be used for studying"

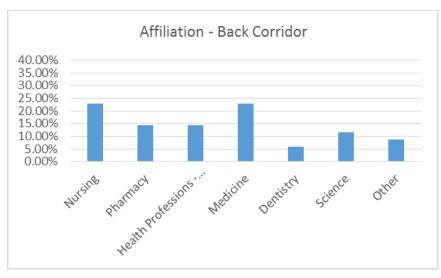
After computers, the next common request was for more study space (34.96%). 24.39% wanted different furniture (mostly for individual work spaces), and more quiet spaces. Noise, hours, and light sensors were also issues. Almost 10% requested access to food services or a microwave/kitchenette.

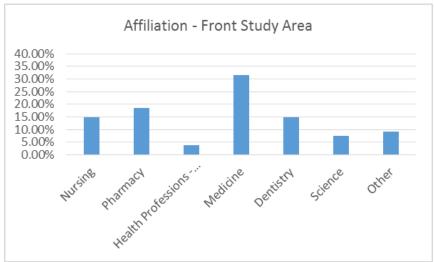
It should be noted that when analyzing the response data by area, the request for more quiet space rises to a full $1/3^{\rm rd}$ of back corridor respondents. Observations in the back corridor showed the individual study booths to be in heavy use, despite the observed noisiness of the corridor. This may indicate an unmet requirement for functional, individual work spaces in quiet areas.



Affiliation: Only 2 respondents were not affiliated with Dal; all the rest were Dal students. Of these, Medicine and Pharmacy dominate in the silent study room. Nursing students have a stronger presence in the back corridor, and Medicine dominates the front study area.





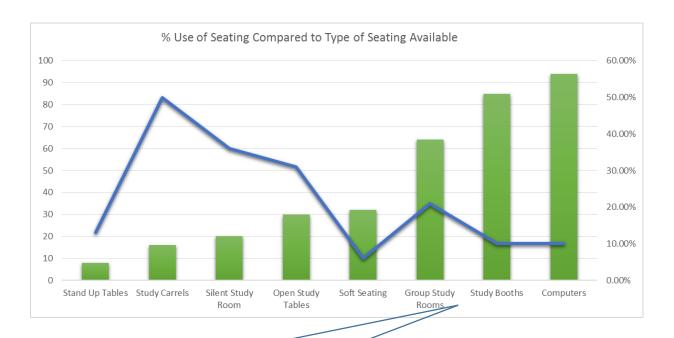


Other Assessment

Headcounts

It appears that the Kellogg LC is busiest Mon-Thu, in the afternoons. The number of available seating and percentage in use data indicate less need for computer workstations and more need for study carrels and silent/quiet study. Please note when viewing the heat map and graph below that both visuals under-represent the usage of the study rooms and study booths, as the data represents the number of seats in use not the number of rooms/booths in use. (Using 2 as the number of seats in these rooms/booths that must be occupied in order to consider the room/booth "in use", then **observations showed that study room usage amounted to 79% and booth usage 67%.**)

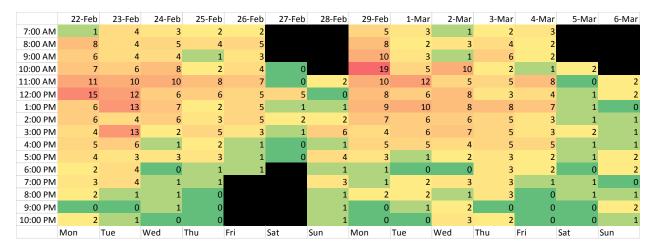
| | | | | | He | at Map Cl | IEB Learni | ng Comm | ons | | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|-----------|------------|---------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| Morning | 51 | 27 | 42 | 30 | 49 | 29 | 85 | 38 | 42 | 46 | 58 | 49 | 22 | 21 |
| Afternoon | 115 | 101 | 91 | 79 | 68 | 62 | 61 | 78 | 86 | 84 | 101 | 81 | 26 | 56 |
| Evening | 66 | 69 | 56 | 60 | CLOSED | CLOSED | 66 | 73 | 49 | 45 | 39 | 12 | 22 | 40 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KEY: Red - Highest use Vellow - Lowest use Note: We are regularly closed Friday and Saturday nights however we were onen for extended hours for one count | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



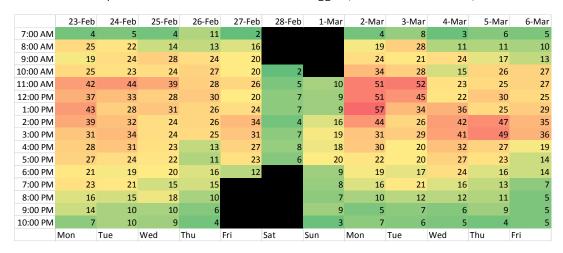
Note: This data represents the percentage of seats used in the group study rooms and study booths according to head counts, not percentage use of the rooms per se, which, according to observations, amounted to 79% for study rooms, and 67% for study booths (see above).

Computer Usage Data

Computer usage data indicates the heaviest use is Mon-Wed from late morning to early afternoon. This data does not include the Mac stations (6). Of the remaining 88 stations, the highest number in use over the course of one hour was 19. Comparisons with usage numbers from last year (i.e., the old location) show a significant and perplexing decrease in usage.



Number of computers in use over each hour – Kellogg LC, Feb 22nd – Mar 6th, 2016



Number of computers in use over each hour – Kellogg LC, Feb 23rd – Mar 6th, 2015

Observations

Sample observation notes are attached as Appendix F, and mirror some of the findings above, including:

Both the bookable study rooms and the study booths are heavily used. The lights were often off in the study booths even though they were occupied. There appears to be a confusion around speaking volume. Conversations are easily heard outside of the study booths. This unawareness of noise policies may be due to lack of signage.

In the computer area, Macs were observed to be in heavy use, but not the rest of the computers. The stations with the scanners seemed popular, but we think that could be because there is more desk space. Observers' personal use of the computer workstations proved frustrating due to lack of desk space. A lack of collaborative computer workspace was also observed. It was also noted that while the computer workstations were mostly empty, the four cubbies on the side wall were usually fully occupied. Passersby seemed to be quiet, but conversations in the study booths could be heard, as could conversations at the help desk and in the staff area behind.

Occupants of the silent study room are, indeed, silent. One of the three observers felt uncomfortable in the room because of this. The other two observers felt the glass wall was distracting (i.e., passersby) and felt disrupted by noise from the seminar rooms and the top of the stairs. It is a well-used space, however, with most occupants using laptops. The table pods of 3 appear to be more popular than the carrels facing the side walls.

Observers felt the back corridor was a dysfunctional space. With regular, talkative passers-through, easily heard washroom noise, elevator use, cleaning staff, and conversations at the top of the stairs the space is simply noisy. Yet, the study carrels are often in full use by laptop users. We wondered if these users simply didn't have any other options for individual work space. The comfortable seating was mostly observed to be empty or just one or two occupants.

The front study area seemed to be the best of all worlds. Table pods here were in good use with laptop users, but the computers in this area were mostly empty. There is great natural lighting here and little noise. While the computer area around the corner was susceptible to conversation noise from study booths and the service area, the front study space is either far enough away or the air exchanger renders that noise inaudible. As for the air exchanger, one observer barely noticed it; another did. The comfy seating in this area was rarely occupied.

Overall, the lack of signage was noticeable. Observers felt the spaces could be more quiet if signage was present. Temporary bathroom signage was observed to be inadequate. Laptop lending signage was noticeably absent as well.

Other

It should be noted that similar feedback was received, informally, during an ice breaker discussion with Dentistry students at the beginning of an information literacy session, particularly with regard to the desire for more study space and less computers. These eight students also noted that the study carrels were a little cramped and voiced the need for signage in order to keep noise levels down.

Recommendations

- Remove one-third of the computer workstations as soon as possible, beginning in the area furthest from the printers, and replace with a mix of study carrels and the popular table pods of three. (A future reassessment will ascertain if more terminals can be reallocated.) Based on all four assessment methods (question cards, headcounts, computer usage data, and observations), it is clear that the new Kellogg LC has an overabundance of computer workstations that are occupying space that could be better utilized as sought-after, quiet, individual study.
- Investigate solutions for expanding computer desk workspace (e.g., removing the next computer to double a workspace). Removing privacy screens at some terminals could provide a little more wiggle room and allow for collaborative activities.

- Relocate study carrels in the back corridor to the front study area, and relocate comfortable seating from the front study area to the back corridor. The back corridor is a route of natural human traffic and is therefore too noisy for individual work space. The comfortable seating is, at present, underutilized.
- Consider relocating the silent study room. The assessment planning group would like to highlight room 268, just off the far end of the LC, as a potential new home for silent study. This room is removed from the busy flows of traffic, and still has plenty of windows and natural light. In its current location, at the end of the back corridor and near the top of the stairs, the silent study room is prone to noise from human traffic. This room is also heavily used and could stand to have a larger footprint.
- Staff are encouraged to observe noise level changes now that quiet signage has been put in place. The lack of this signage was clearly an issue at the time of this study.
- Signage promoting the use of the wireless printing service should be placed in the Kellogg LC. The Libraries should also attempt to gather feedback on the wireless printing services across all of the learning commons.
- Signage promoting the laptop lending service should also be strategically placed in the Kellogg LC.
- Staff are encouraged to observe how often occupied study booths are unlit. Light sensor recalibration was definitely a requirement during the course of this assessment and it appears that maintenance staff have since adjusted the sensors.
- Consider a trial of 3-hour study room bookings (rather than 2 hour) at all learning commons, including the Kellogg LC.
- An overall, follow-up assessment study should be conducted in about one year's time, following implementation of the recommended changes. A smaller, focused assessment study should be conducted immediately following computer workstation removal and furniture moves.

Appendix A

Guerrilla Assessment Plan

Kellogg Learning Commons

Feb 22nd-28th, 2016

Guerrilla Team: Mick Bottom

LITS Manager of Services, Support & Training

Kellogg Librarians & Staff:

Ann Barrett

Nadine Day Boutilier

Patrick Ellis Melissa Helwig Robin Parker

Jan Pelley - Coordinator at Kellogg LC

WMLC Navigators:

Faye Teeuwen Sandeep Kuri Gagneesh Singh
Deric Johnson Danish Malik Harpreet Singh
Jobanjot Singh Chirag Sharma Sahil Nagpal
Manisha Arora Dhruv Bhatia Shannon Steele

Linda Bedwell

Assessment Librarian

(text: 817-4155, office: 494-2680)

With support from: Carol Richardson, Marlo MacKay

The Kellogg Learning Commons (LC) Guerrilla Assessment Plan is adapted from the Wallace McCain Learning Commons Guerrilla Assessment Plan.

The Kellogg LC has 7 distinct areas that we would like to gather user feedback from:

- bookable study rooms
- computer terminals
- silent study room
- back corridor (mostly individual work spaces)
- study booths with regular tables
- study booths with high tables
- front study areas (mixed furniture arrangements)

Question cards, with different coloured backings, will be dispersed in all areas except the bookable study rooms. (The coloured backings aid in retrieval and replacement [respondents are instructed to turn the cards upside down upon completion] and in identifying which area the respondent was

Appendix A

in.) Question slips with specific questions will be placed in the bookable study rooms, along with collection boxes. Question cards/slips details follow.

Completed question cards should be retrieved and replaced with new ones as often as possible by library staff/navigators (e.g., once every 2 or 3 hours, depending on time of day). Study room question slips can be retrieved from the boxes at the beginning/end of day. Completed slips and cards can be placed in a central box behind the service desk for Linda to retrieve as often as possible (e.g., every other day). Jan, as the on-site coordinator for the project, will ensure the cards are regularly retrieved and replaced, and notify Linda if supplies are running low.

General Question Cards

For: silent study room (yellow backing), back corridor (green backing), front study areas (pink backing).

1. Does this new learning commons meet your needs?

| | Yes | No | Partly | | | | |
|----|--------------|-------------|------------------|-------|-----------|------|-----|
| 2. | What do you | like about | this new space? | | | | |
| 3. | What would y | you change? | | | | | |
| 4. | What are you | using this | s space for? | | | | |
| 5. | Are you a: | | | | | | |
| | Dal student_ | Dal fac | culty member | not a | ffiliated | with | Dal |
| | - Please i | ndicate you | r program or fac | culty | | | |

Study Booth Question Cards

For: study booths with regular tables (blue backing), study booths with high tables (orange backing).

1. Are you working in this study booth as an individual or as a group?

(If as a group, please answer the following questions as group; otherwise, please give your own answers.)

2. What do you like about this new space?

3. What would you change?

4. What are you using this space for?

5. Are you (a):

Dal student(s)___ Dal faculty member(s) ___ not affiliated with
Dal___
- Please indicate your program(s) or faculty ______

Computer Terminal Question Cards

Appendix A

(red backing)

- Does this new computer workstation area meet your needs? Yes__ No__ Partly__
- 2. What do you like about this new space?
- 3. What would you change about this space or the computers?
- 4. What are your reasons for using this computer station? (e.g. accessing a specific program, scanning etc.)
- 5. Are you a:

Dal student___ Dal faculty member ___ not affiliated with Dal____
- Please indicate your program or faculty ______

Bookable Study Rooms

Question slips and collection boxes.

(Please answer as a group, rather than individually)

- 1. What do you like about this new space?
- 2. What would you change?
- 3. What are you using this space for?
- 4. How did you book this study room?
 __online __in person __I didn't book ahead (it was empty)
- 5. Please tell us the makeup of your group which program(s) of study are you in?

Other assessment activities

- Kellogg staff will devise a 2-week head counting schedule for each area of the LC.
- LITS staff will track computer usage for a 2-week period (Feb 22^{nd} Mar 6^{th}) to determine current demand on computers.
- Linda and Nadine will conduct observations 1 to 1½ hour, at least once per weekday, at various times of day. Notes will be stored in the Share folder and will be discussed at a future meeting.

Prepared By:

Linda Bedwell Assessment Librarian (text: 817-4155, office: 494-2680)

Appendix B Question Slip – Study Rooms

Welcome to the new Kellogg Library Learning Commons. Please help us improve this space by answering a few questions.

| (Pl | ease answer as a group, rather than individually.) |
|------|---|
| 1) | What do you like about this new space? |
| 2) | What would you change? |
| 3) | What are you using this space for? |
| 4) | How did you book this study room? Online In person I didn't book the room (it was empty) |
| 5) | Please tell us the makeup of your group – which program(s) of study are you in? |
| Th | anks! Please place this slip in the box. |
| ries | s.dal.ca UNIVERSITY |

libraries.dal.ca

Appendix C Question Card – General (Silent Study Room, Back Corridor, Front Study Area)

| Welcome to the new Kellogg Library Learning Commons. Please help us improve this space by answering a few questions. |
|---|
| 1. Does this new learning commons meet your needs? Yes No Partly |
| 2. What do you like about this new space? |
| 3. What would you change? |
| 4. What are you using this space for? |
| Are you a: Dal Student Dal Faculty Member Not affiliated with Dal Please indicate your program or faculty |
| Thanks! Please place this card upside down. Someone will be along shortly to collect it. Deliveries |

Appendix D Question Card – Study Booths

Welcome to the new Kellogg Library Learning Commons. Please help us improve this space by answering a few questions.

| r lease help as improve this space by answering a few questions. |
|---|
| Are you working in this study booth as an individual or as a group? (If working as a group, please answer the following questions as a group; otherwise, please give you own answers.) |
| 2. What do you like about this new space? |
| 3. What would you change? |
| 4. What are you using this space for? |
| 5. Are you (a): Dal Student(s) Dal Faculty Member(s) Not affiliated with Dal Please indicate your program(s) or faculty |
| ibraries.dal.ca Thanks! Please place this card upside down. DALHOUST |

Someone will be along shortly to collect it.



Appendix E **Question Card – Computer Workstations**

Welcome to the new Kellogg Library Learning Commons. Please help us improve this space by answering a few questions. 1. Does this new computer workstation area meet your needs? Yes ____ No___ Partly ___ 2. What do you like about this new space? _____ 3. What would you change about this space or the computers? 4. What are your reasons for using this computer station? (e.g. accessing a specific program, scanning, etc.) _____ 5. Are you a: Dal Student ____ Dal Faculty Member ____ Not affiliated with Dal ____ Please indicate your program or faculty. DALHOUSIE Thanks! Please place this card upside down. libraries.dal.ca UNIVERSITY Someone will be along shortly to collect it.

Delheusia Libraries

Appendix F Sample Observation Notes

Observations - Friday, February-26-16 11am

Study rooms – 2 unoccupied. 3 with 2, 1 with 1.

Study booths – all occupied. High tables – 1 with 3. 2 with 1. All lights on. Regular tables – 3 with 3, 2 with 2. All lights on.

Main computer area - 11am

18 in use.

Desks on side – all in use (4).

Very light talking from around corner (study booth, regular table)

Greeting at service desk.

Walk throughs are not disruptive.

Quiet from people at computers – only light discussions are heard from staff at service desk and sstudy booth in hallway.

Discussion has sparked up on other side of divider – could be distracting.

Discussion getting louder and more annoying – where are the signs?

Front study area - 11:20pm

1 person at computers. No one at stand up.

4 pods of 3 - 3 with 2, 1 with 1 - all on laptops

Quiet, bright

I always like this space. Airier feel.

No one in chairs.

Idea – change configuration in this space. Move some of the desk from back corridor and place along side wall, move the 2 pods there over toward the windows. Move most or all the chairs to the back corridor. This is a great space here and it is underutilized whiel the back corridor is dark and noisy and is a thoroughfare.

The guy at the pod of 1 just left.

Convo at service desk is not distracting – because the sound of air exchanger? Again, this space works – if it had the right furniture.

Appendix F

Should also move out the computers. Replace with another pod?

Someone is taking seat by window, behind stand up computer.

Girls talking at pod by window. Not distracting from here (far corner, chairs). They are packing to leave.

Back corridor – 11:45am

Seems quiet today – at least from this end (chairs by window).

4 people at desks (12) – all on laptops

No one in all these chairs.

Can easily hear flushing toilets, paper towel from here.

Can hear convo is seminar room next to me.

Bulletin board here with nothing on it. No one here to see it anyway.

Guy on a mission, walking with his lunch, took study room/seminar room hallway.

Male just came out of seminar room to put something in recycling.

Went to washroom. From this direction, the washroom and sign are not visible.

Loud doors. People talking and walking.

While walking to study room, I could clearly hear a personal convo in the last study booth.

Silent Study Room 12:05pm

2 people at far side row of 4.

4 pods of 3 - 2 with 3, 2 with 1. Someone at pod of 2 is leaving.

Can hear guy across from me tapping his cursor.

Back is against windows. Good light coming from them. Nicely lit worksurface.

Privacy screens don't really provide any privacy.

Half the people here aren't using laptops today.

Bumped wall with my chair. Tight fit. Bumped it again upon leaving.

Sign on wall says Pack I up, pack it out – but I can't read the fine print from here.

Guy across from me is munching on nuts(?) – it's actually distracting. I'd be annoyed if I needed silence.

Someone returned to his seat with plastic bag – lunch. Now his eating is distracting.

Different feel in here at lunch time. Less silent.

Appendix F

Someone else leaving. Now 7 people here, plus me. (room seats 20) – Friday? Lunchtime? Sounds from outside – more like white noise (wind?).

Someone from side set of 4 is leaving.



Appendix G
Kellogg LC Floorplan

