Space Assessment Report of the MacRae Library

AUGUST 2017

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Executive Summary

The MacRae Library is the only library located on the Dalhousie University Agricultural Campus. Centrally located on campus, the library is open to the public and is the only building on campus open during evenings and weekends. Built in 1983, it has had very limited renovations over the years. The carpets, paint and some of the lighting are still in their original format. The main collection is located on the lower floor, and the Service Point is on the middle floor. Up until late 2016, government offices occupied the upper floor. When the government offices vacated in September 2016, temporary library spaces were added to the upper floor – a quiet space and learning commons with 5 group study rooms. In addition, a Program Room and kitchenette for students was added to the temporary space.

With the knowledge that there would be a future opportunity for additional student space, it was determined that a library space assessment would be implemented in Fall 2016. This would provide library staff with a better understanding of students needs, wants and changes they would recommend to update and modernize the MacRae Library building. The assessment had several components:

- Question Cards and White Board
- Head Counts
- Gate Counts
- Observations

The participants in the assessment were the library users that included students (diploma, undergraduate and graduate), staff, faculty and community members. The general assessment plan is in Appendix A, and followed a process similar to the guerrilla-style assessments of the Wallace McCain and Kellogg Learning Commons in 2015/16.

The assessment took place over a two-week period from Nov. 14th – Nov. 28th, 2016. The library was divided in to three locations: the basement (lower floor), first (main) floor and second (upper) floor. Within the three locations, there were *seven distinct zones* used for individual and group study. Appendix A contains a description of each zone. Maps of the lower, main and upper floors of the MacRae Library are in Appendix B, C and D, respectively.

Question cards and paper slips were created and colour-coded for and placed in each zone in the library (Appendix E). Post-it notes were placed on a whiteboard in one zone. Completed cards and paper slip responses were collected by library staff during the 3x daily head counts. While the scope of the formal assessment was limited to the original library spaces (lower and main floor), informal comments on a whiteboard (using post-it notes) were solicited regarding the temporary spaces (upper floor) that were opened in mid October 2016. In addition, Question 5 on each of the cards asked participants to consider what should be included if additional or redesigned spaces were a possibility. The results of this question for all locations is reported as a combined response as it is not location specific.

At the end of the assessment, there were 71 cards received, 24 paper slips, 12 sticky notes for a total of 107 responses. Results from the cards were transcribed on spreadsheets and grouped in common themes. Results are displayed in bar charts and pie charts by counts and percentages in the Results Summaries section of this report. Data for this report will be stored on the O:drive.

Overall, there are several key recommendations for change based on overall assessment results:

- Add a coffee shop with snack food options to the upper floor.

- Update the interior design throughout the entire library, with a focus on painting, floors, and lighting. (The term décor was most frequently used by students in negative comments.)

- Improve temperature flow (some areas are too hot, some are too cold)

- Implement quiet private study spaces for individual/group work, with whiteboards and proper HDMI cabling.

- Implement comfortable/ergonomic chairs, larger tables for spreading out work, and placement of outlets at each study location.

- Add spaces for small groups (2-3 students) and individual use to the upper floor

- In collaboration with stakeholders and requirements on campus, it is recommended that the upper floor be used as a mixed-use space centered around students. The library is looking at alternate spaces in the building to accommodate the demand for quiet, study space.

Finally, it is recommended that implementation of any changes be assessed at a later date, potentially one (1) year after implementation.

Table of Contents

Results of the Assessment

In total, there were **107 responses** received for the assessment:

- The total number cards received for the assessment was **71.**
- The total number of paper slips in the study rooms was **24.**
- The total number of white board sticky notes on the upper floor was **12.**

Not all questions on each card were answered and some cards had spoiled responses for some of the questions.

First Floor Computers (Networked and Public) – Red Cards

The total cards received were 27. Not all respondents answered all questions.

Question 1 asked students their purpose for using the space. Of the 25 who responded, the majority (76%) used this space for study. Over half, or 52%, used the space for Internet and 28% were used it for printing.
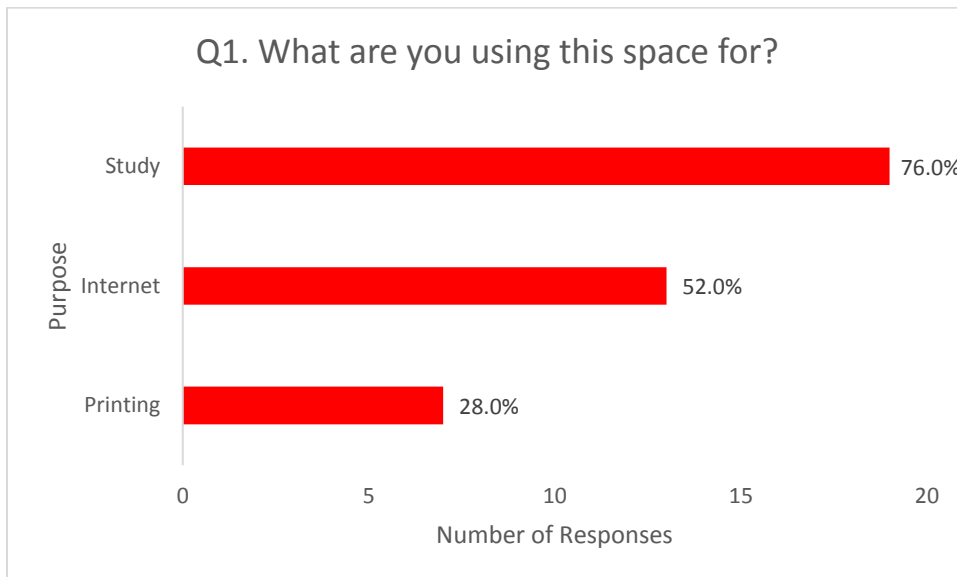
Question 2 asked library patrons what they liked about the new space. Of the 18 who responded to this question, half (50%) commented on the general environment.

Positive comments related to the general environment included: "*very inviting and welcoming space,*" "*openness, windows*". In addition, comments about the noise levels were positive (e.g. "*can talk but quiet*", "*very study oriented*") and there was a positive comment about staff ("*the staff here are amazing!*").

Q2. What do you like about this new space?

Category	Number of Responses
General Environment	61.1%
Computers	27.8%
Noise Level	27.8%
Furniture	16.7%
Staffing	6%

Number of Responses (x-axis: 0 to 12)
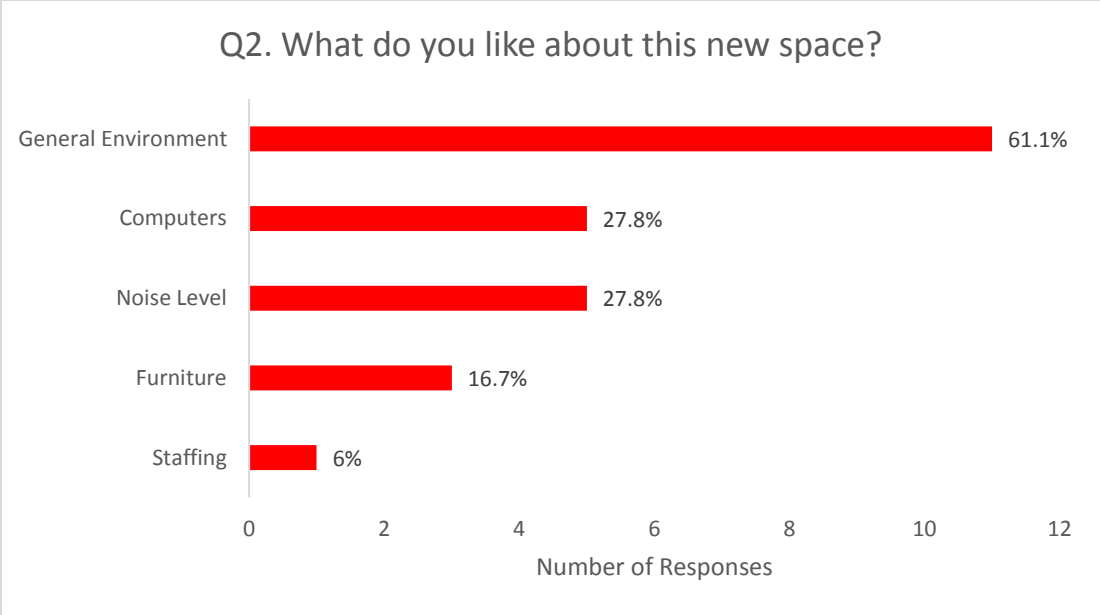
Question 3 asked respondents what they would change about this space. There were 18 responses to this question and 38.9% of respondents suggested changes related to computers and printing. One respondent requested Mac computers. While only one respondent suggested this, there are currently no Mac labs on this campus. However, at the time of the assessment an additional 14 student computers were installed on the second floor. In addition, some respondents suggested changes (or additions) to existing ITS services, such as making colour printing accessible and having the ability to save documents to a computer. While colour printing is available, print jobs must be retrieved by staff from behind the Service Desk due to the shared staff/student colour printer.

Other suggestions related to the furniture and decor, specifically, more comfortable chairs, updated décor and better lighting. Finally, 22.2% of respondents stated they did not know what they would change, or said they would change nothing.

Q3. What would you change?

Category	Number of Responses
Computers/printing	38.9%
No change / don't know	22.2%
Décor	16.7%
Furniture	11.1%
Layout	11.1%
Food Rule	5.6%

Number of Responses (x-axis: 0 to 8)
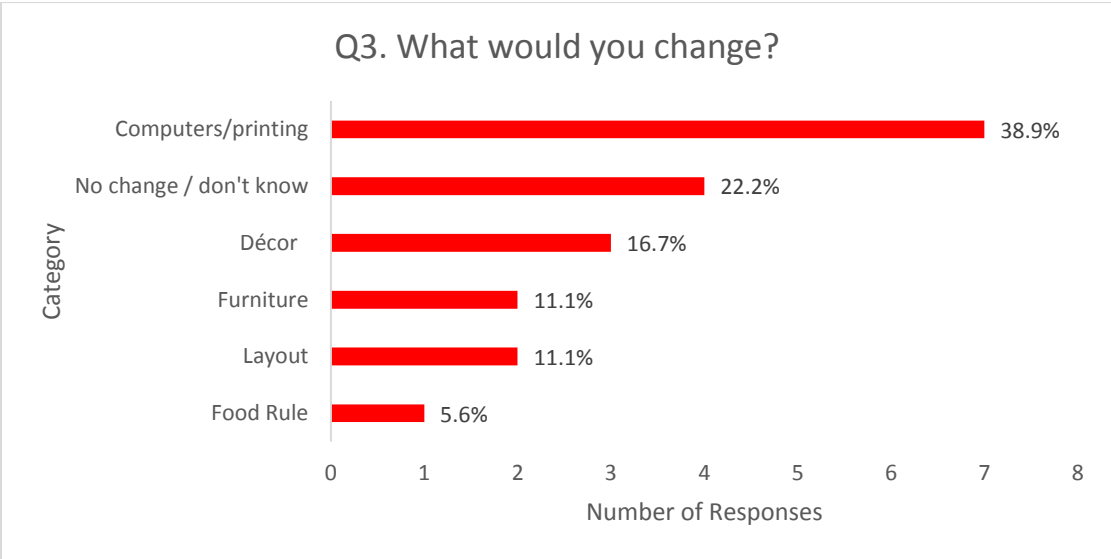
Question 4 asked respondents for their affiliation and there were 25 responses to this question. Undergraduate students (including diploma students) accounted for 60% of responses. The next largest group was graduate students, followed by community members, faculty and staff.
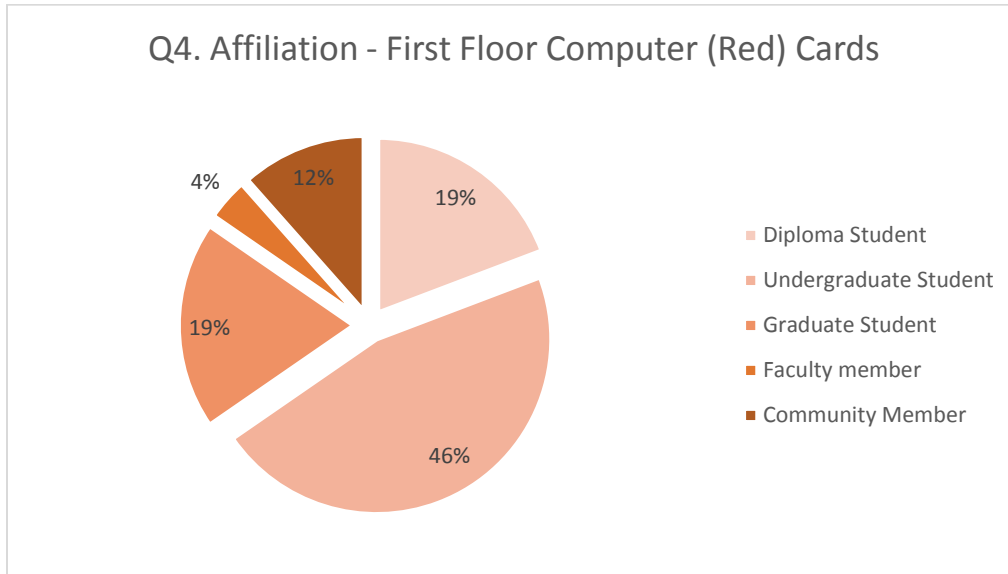
General Seating (First Floor) – Orange Cards

Question 1 asked students what they were using this space and seven (7) cards were received. Multiple answers could be selected for this question. The majority of respondents (85.7%) are using it to work on assignments. Other uses of the space are for writing and printing.
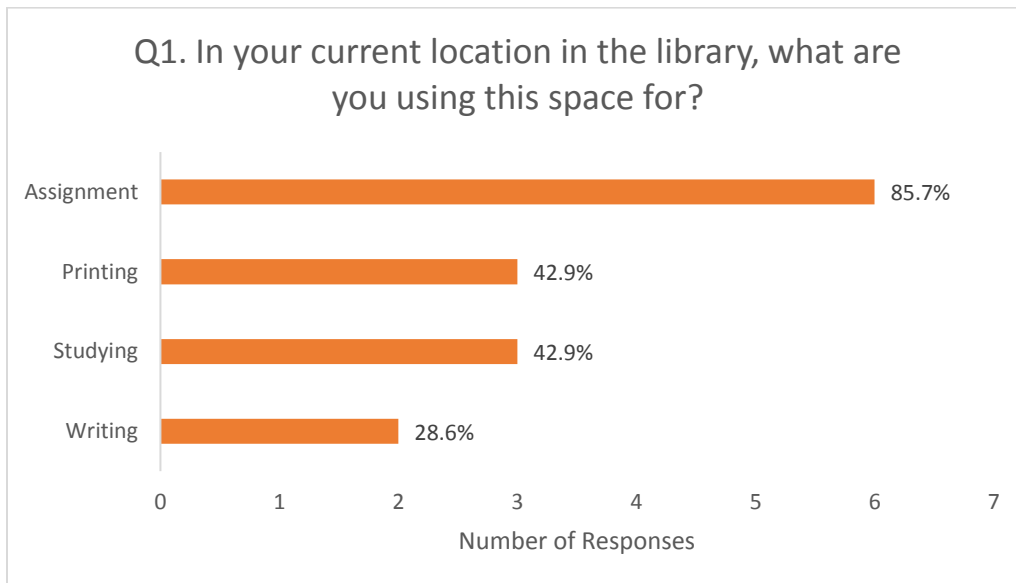
Question 2 asked respondents if they were working alone or in a group. Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents stated they were working in a group and 57% responded as working alone.

Q2. Are you working alone or in a group?

43%

57%

- Group
- Alone
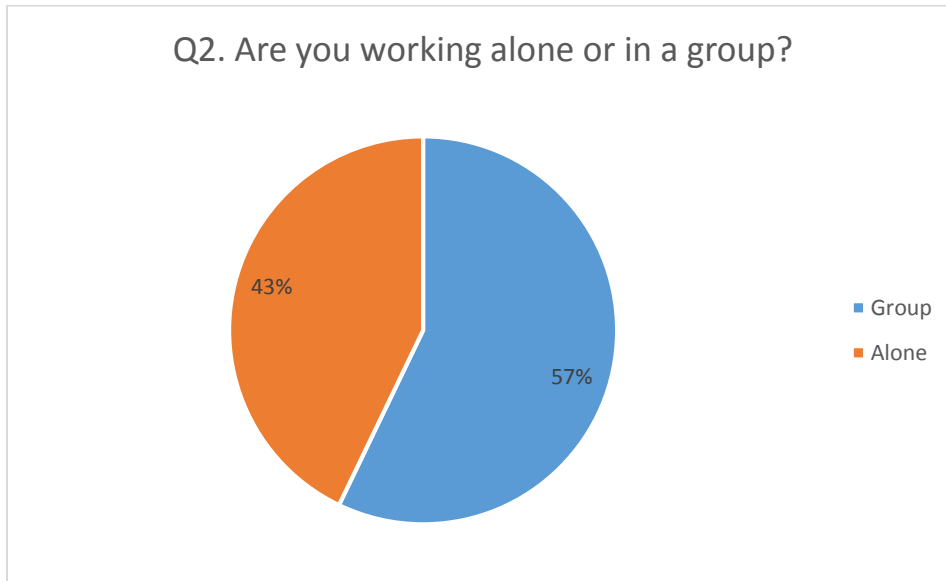
Question 3 asked respondents what they liked about this space. Equally, 42.9% of responses were positive about the general environment and layout of the space. Positive comments included: *"it's comfortable, quiet enough to not be distracting, can still see everything…"*, *"it is good for studying"*, *"spacious, open,"* and *"How…open the space is in comparison to other academic…"*

Q3. What do you like about this space?

Category	Percentage
General environment	42.9%
Layout	42.9%
Resources	28.6%
Furniture	14.3%

Number of Responses
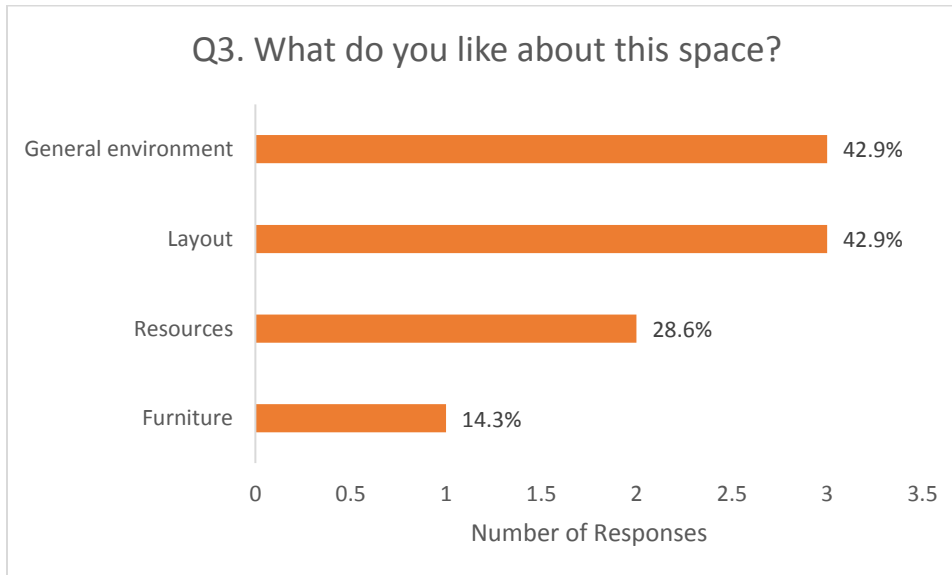
Question 4 asked respondents to state what they would change about this space. Fifty percent (50%) of respondents stated they would improve the lighting. Specifically, suggestions included having brighter lights or more natural or white lights particularly around the Circulation Desk where at the time of the assessment, are orange.

In addition, 25% of respondents commented on the noise level, particular around the area where Cultiv8 is located which appears to be a preferred study space. Other suggestions included the need for more tables and 25% of respondents stated they would not change anything.

Q4. What would you change?

Category	Percentage
Lighting	50.0%
Nothing	25.0%
Furniture	25.0%
Noise Level	25.0%

Number of Responses
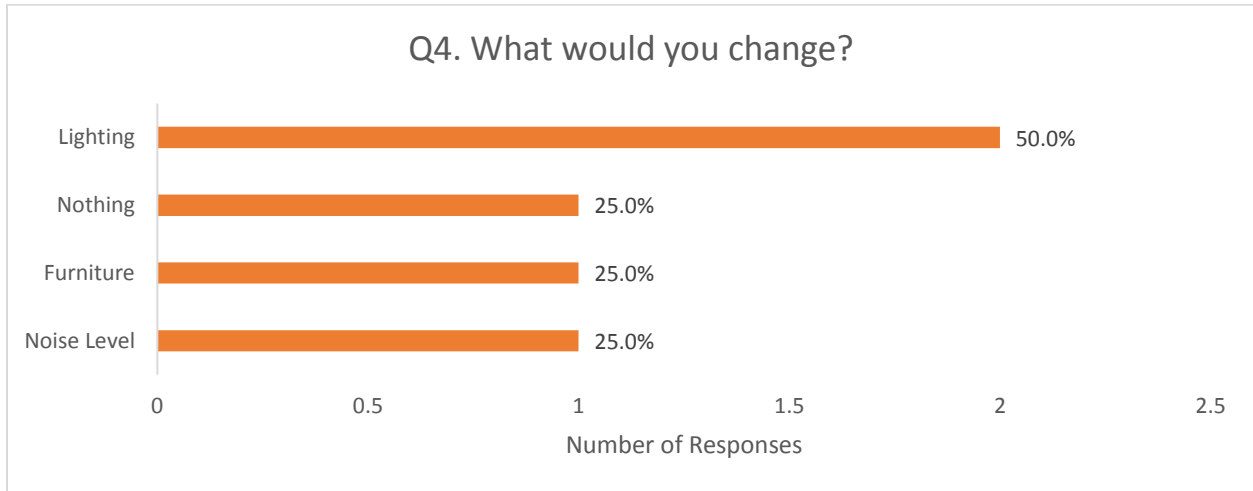
Question 6 asked respondents to list their affiliation and there were nine (9) responses to this question. The majority were undergraduate students (86%) and 14% was a diploma student.

Figure 11. Q6. Are you a (please check one)

- 14% Diploma student
- 86% Undergraduate Student
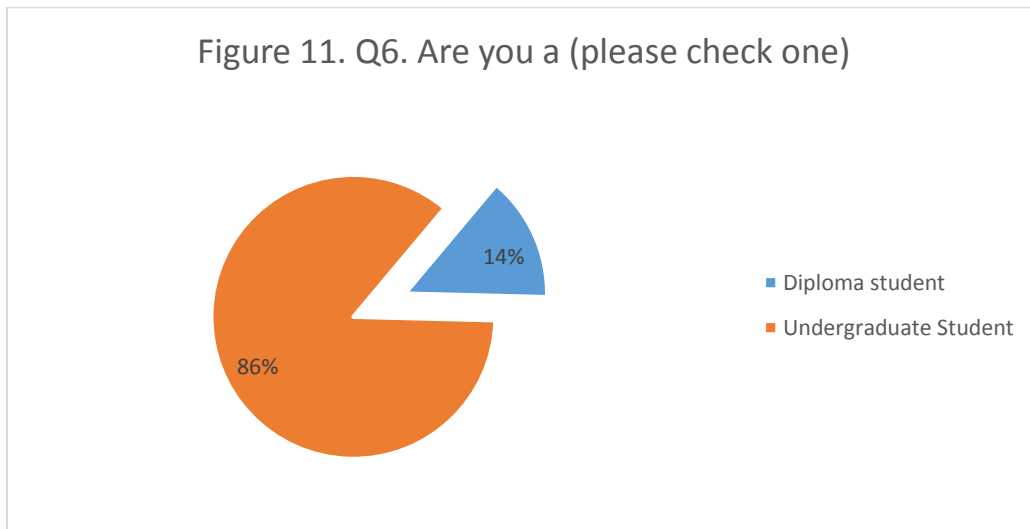
Librarian's Corner (First Floor) – Blue Cards

A total of 24 cards were received for the Librarians' Corner. Not all respondents answered every question.

Question 1 asked students what they were currently using this space for. Of the 24 responses, 69.6% were working on assignments. The next most common response was studying (26.1%), followed by socializing, printing, wireless internet and group work.

Q1. In your current location in the library, what are you using this space for?

Category	Percentage
Assignments	69.6%
Studying	26.1%
Socializing	8.7%
Printing	4.3%
Wireless Internet	4.3%
Group Work	4.3%

Number of responses
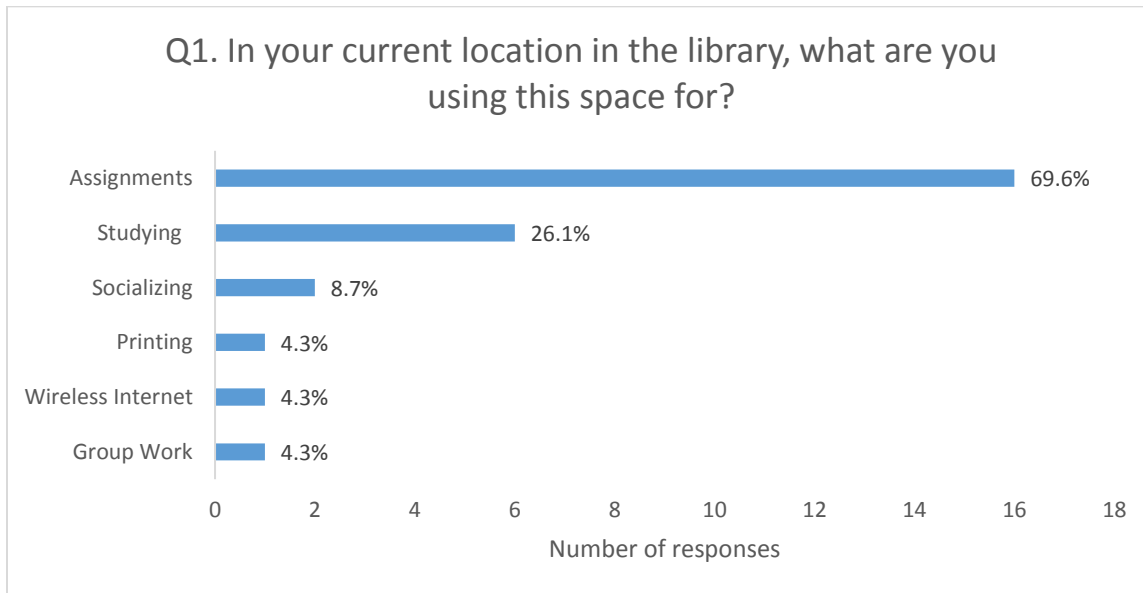
Question 2 asked students if they were working alone or in a group. Over half of the respondents stated they were working alone and 33.3% stated they were working in a "group". However, 12.5% stated they were *working on individual assignments in a group.*

Q2. Are you working along or in a group?

Category	Percentage
Alone	54.2%
Group	33.3%
Working on individual assignments in group	12.5%
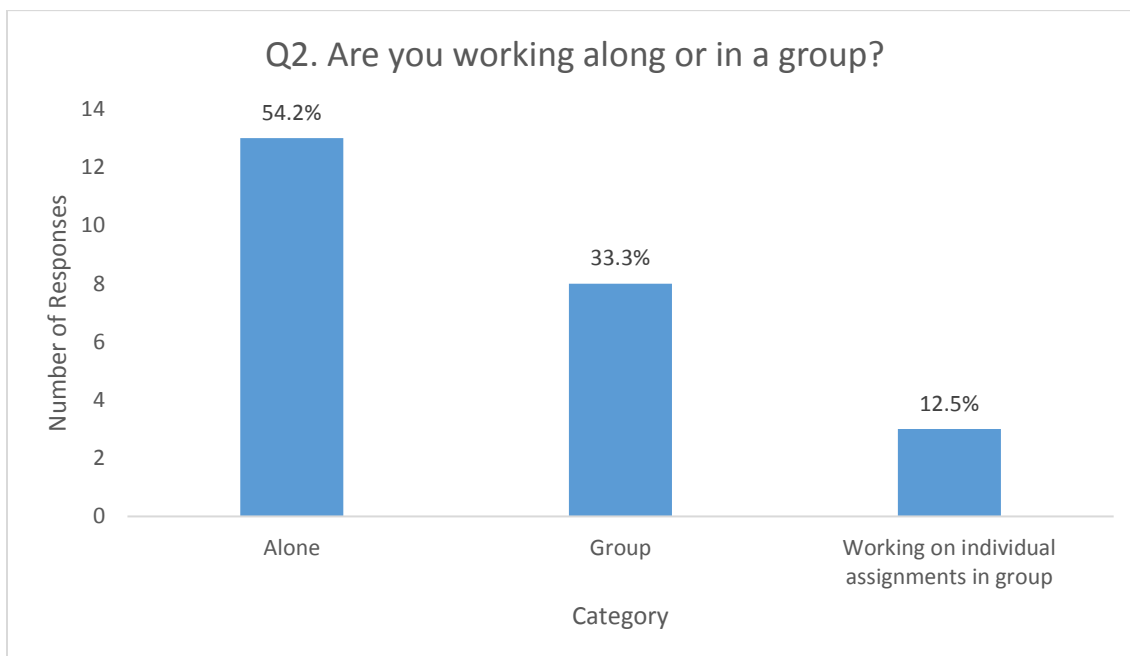
Question 3 asked respondents to list what they liked about this space. In total, 24 respondents answered this question and respondents could list multiple items. Many respondents indicated that they liked the quiet space and the amount and size of tables. Positive comments included: *"lots of desk space for books/binder/laptop", "desk wraps around my body", "large tables to spread out notes for studying."* Other positive comments related to the space included the electrical outlets/charging outlets and the warm temperature. Finally, respondents liked that it is permitted to have food and drink in this space.

Q3. What do you like about this space?

Category	Percentage
Quiet	41.7%
Furniture	41.7%
General environment	29.2%
Outlets	25.0%
Temperature	16.7%
Privacy	12.5%
Food Rule	12.5%
Internet	8.3%
Noise Levels	8.3%

Number of Responses
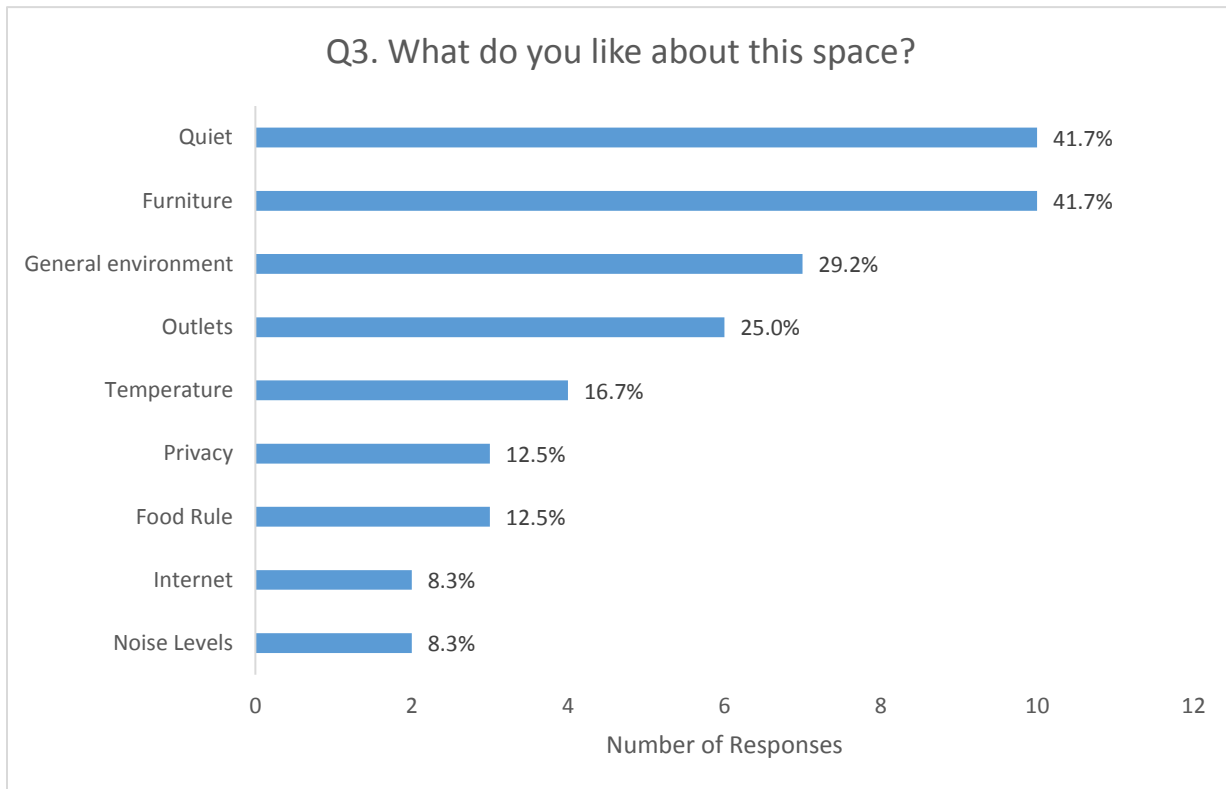
Question 4 asked respondents what they would change about this space. Suggestions included changes to the décor or ambience such as adding a variety of paintings (specifically, less horse pictures). Others would like to see changes to the furniture, specifically, more comfortable and functional chairs (with wheels) and larger "group" tables. It was observed that it is difficult to seat 4 students comfortably at those tables and often groups will push tables together.

In addition, others suggested food/beverage options in the library (e.g. *"add Tim Hortons in the library", "get Tims in library", "I would like a coffee"* and *"drink vending machine in the library")*. Related to this, others would like to see microwave returned to the main floor (it was relocated to the upper floor). Finally, 9.1% of respondents stated that this area was too warm. This area is noted to have poor air circulation and can get quite stuffy.

Q4. What would you change?

Category	Number of Responses	Percentage
Furniture	6	27.3%
Décor	5	22.7%
Food/beverage options	4	18.2%
Microwave	3	13.6%
Electrical Outlets	2	9.1%
Spoiled	2	9.1%
Temperature	2	9.1%
Noise Levels	1	4.5%
Privacy	1	4.5%
Nothing	1	4.5%

Number of Responses
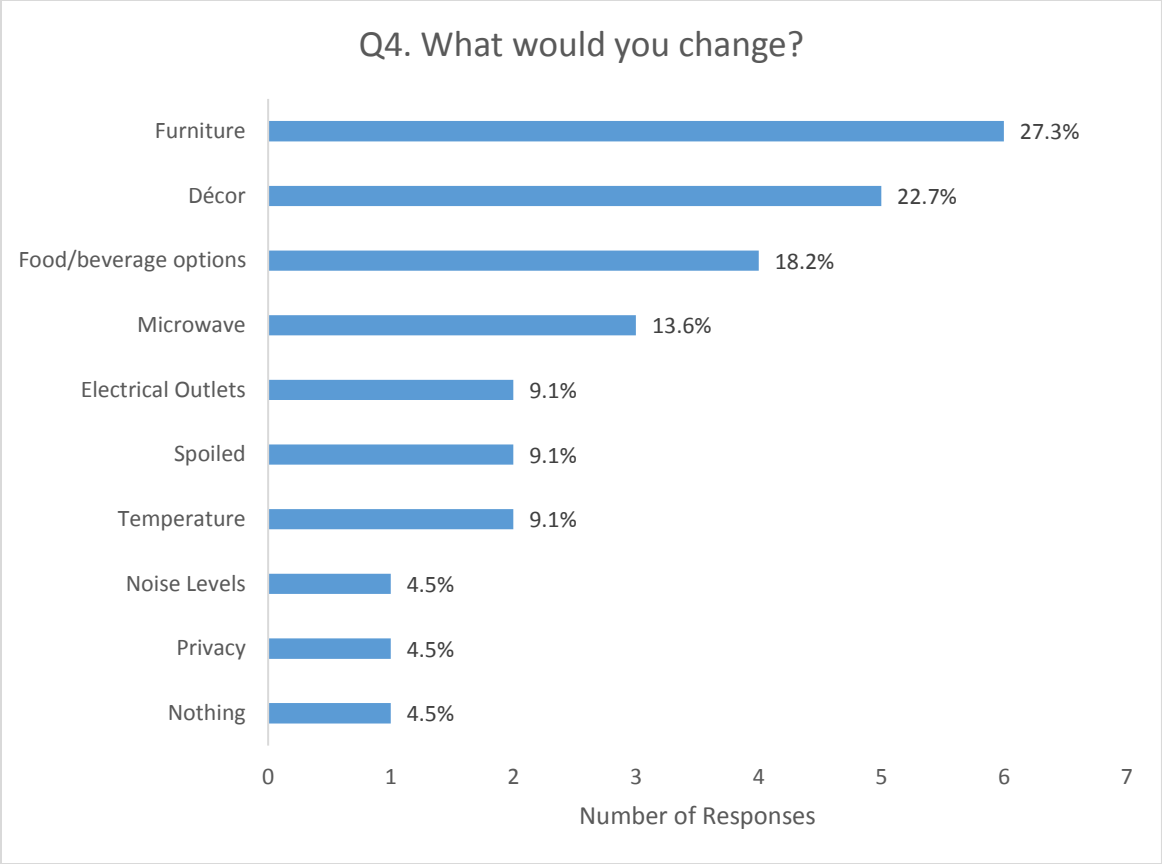
Question 6 asked respondents to list their affiliation and the majority of respondents (67%) were undergraduate students and diploma students made up 25% of respondents. Graduate students and staff each comprised 4% of respondents.

Q6. Are you a (please check one)

- 4% (Graduate Student)
- 4% (Staff member)
- 67% (Undergraduate Student)
- 25% (Diploma student)

Legend:
- Diploma student
- Undergraduate Student
- Graduate Student
- Staff member
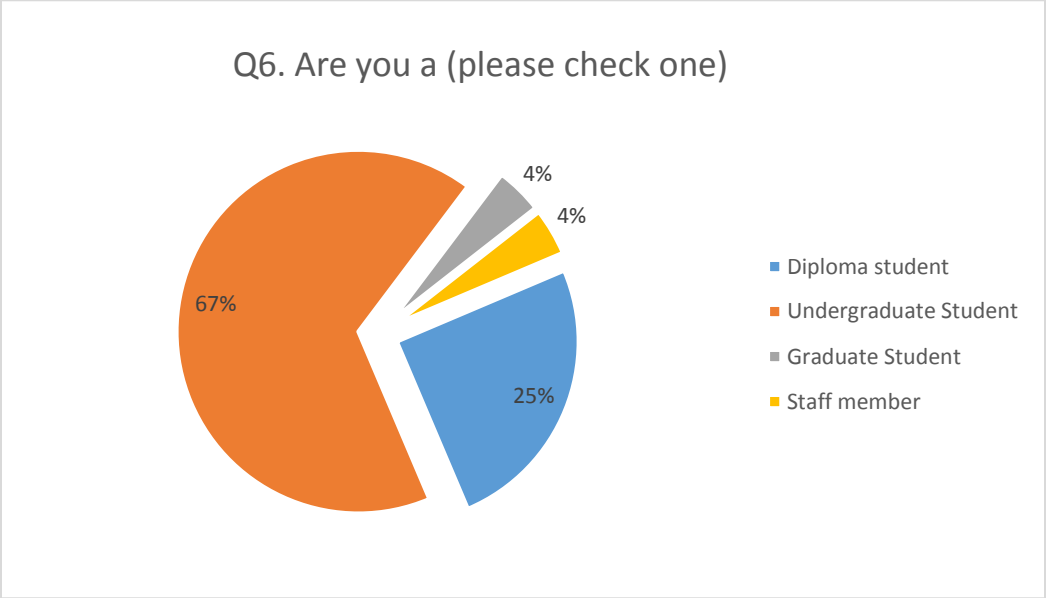
General Seating (Basement) - Yellow Cards

In total, 12 responses were received for the general seating (basement) space. Not all respondents answered each question and some questions allowed for multiple responses.

Question 1 asked students what they were currently using this space for. Most responded they were using it to work on assignments or for studying. A smaller percentage are using it for group work.

Q1. In your current location in the library, what are you using this space for?

Category	Percentage
Assignment	58.3%
Studying	41.7%
Group work	8.3%

Number of Responses
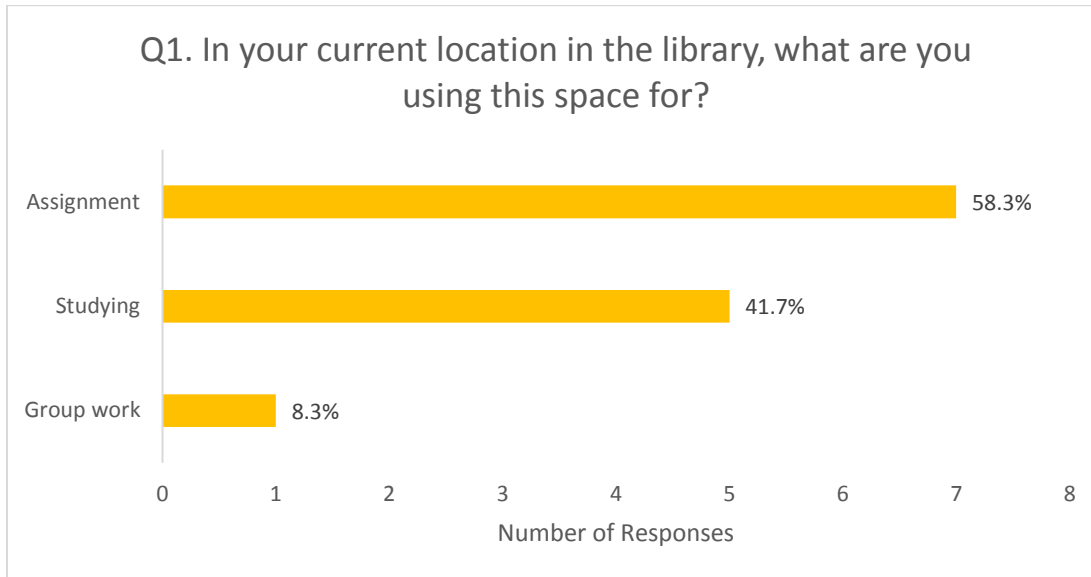
Question 2 asked respondents if they were working alone or in a group. All 12 participants respondents said they were working alone in this location. One respondent stated they were alone *"…90% of the time",* which suggests others may periodically join them.

Question 3 asked respondents what they liked about this space. The majority liked that it was quiet (it is a designated quiet space). Other positive comments were directed towards privacy and a place where they could avoid others and focus on work (e.g. "*free from distractions", "…a one-person space, which makes it suitable for assimilative reading."*)

Q3. What do you like about this space?

Category	Percentage
Quiet	77.8%
Private space	44.4%
Other	11.1%
Electrical outlets	11.1%
Library Resources	11.1%

Number of Respondents
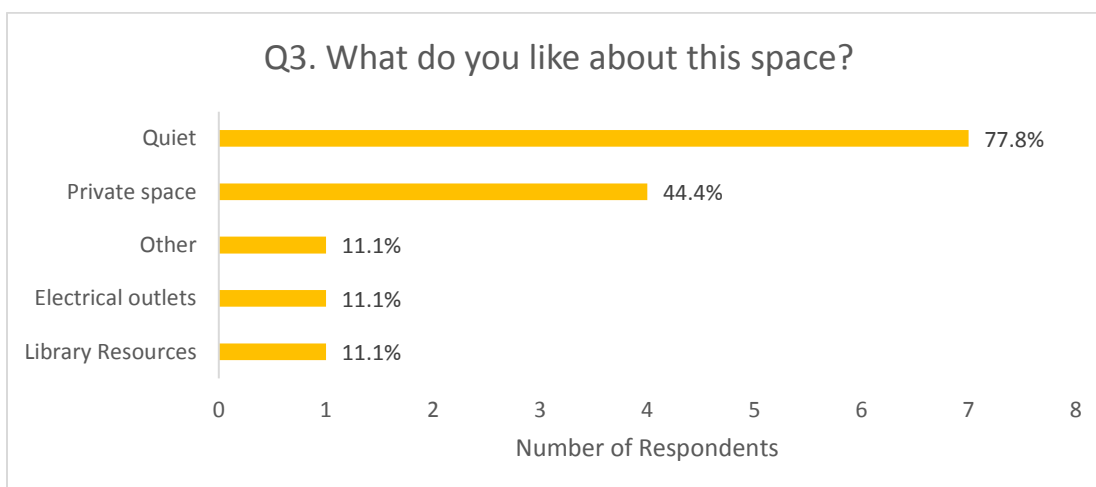
Question 4 asked respondents what they would change about this space. Suggestions related to furniture included: *"The tables are relative short when compare to chairs not comfortable when study*

13

in this table chair set", "The height of desk should be higher. There was also suggestions that there should be a place to get coffee. Finally, temperature was suggested by some to change as it was stated it gets too hot near the heaters and study rooms should have thermostats as there are extreme temperature fluctuations, making it difficult to work.

Q4. What would you change?

Category	Value
No change	20.0%
General environment	20.0%
Temperature	20.0%
Food/Drink Option	20.0%
Furniture	20.0%

Number of Respondents
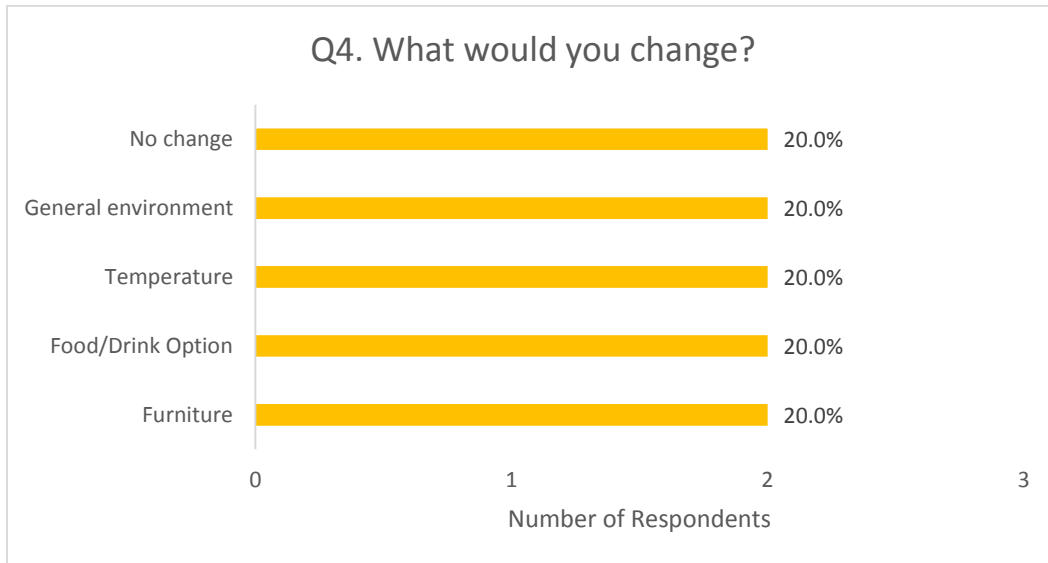
Question 6 asked respondents to provide their affiliation and all of the respondents were students. The most responses (75%) came from undergraduate students.
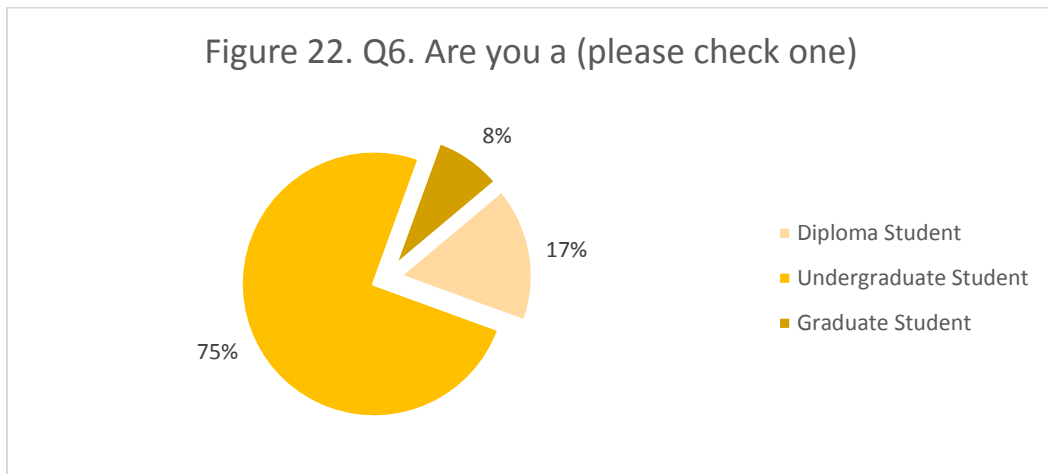
Figure 22. Q6. Are you a (please check one)

8%
17%
75%

- Diploma Student
- Undergraduate Student
- Graduate Student

Basement Computers (Networked and Public) - Green Cards

At the time of the assessment, there were 6 computers located in the basement of the MacRae Library. Two are public computers that provide internet access and basic word processing software. Four are networked computers only for Dalhousie students, staff and faculty are provided licensed and related software. Printing is available from both networked and public computers.

Only one response was obtained for this location and they completed four questions. They identified as a diploma student who liked using the space to study in isolation. The student suggested changing the location of the computers as they were too close to the basement entrance doors.

Reading Rooms and Study Rooms – Paper Slips

In total, 24 responses for the reading and study rooms questions. The responses were grouped together and not analyzed by room (reading rooms versus group study rooms). Also, the number of students per room was not collected for this question, however, reading rooms hold between 1-2 people, and study rooms must have a minimum of 3 people in order to book the room.

Question 1 asked students what they were using the rooms most responded they were using the room for studying/schoolwork followed by assignments. Group work accounted for 37.5% of responses and 8.3% of responses stated they were working individually.

Q1. What are you using this study room for?

Category	Percentage
Studying/Schoolwork	62.5%
Group work	37.5%
Assignment	20.8%
Individual work	8.3%

Number of responses
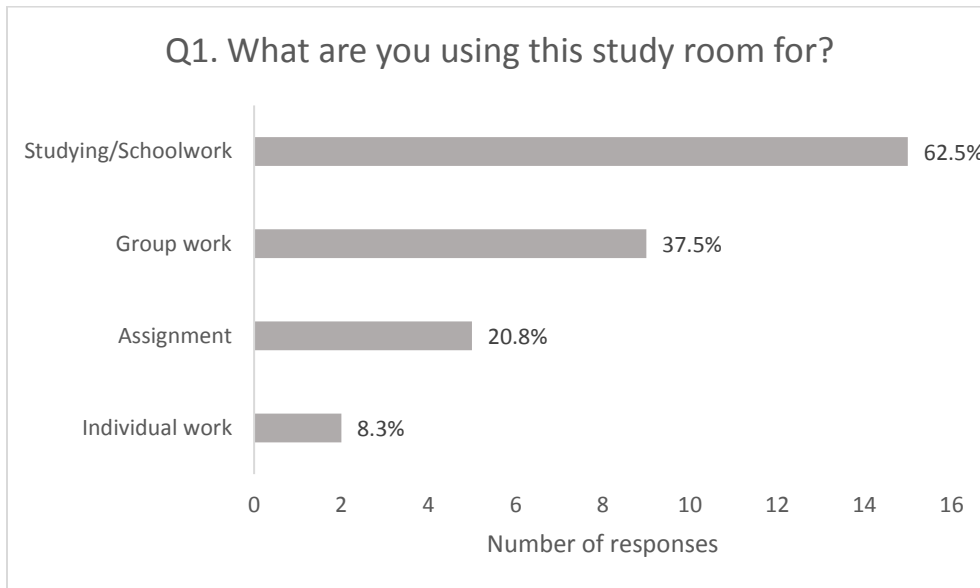
Question 2 asked students to list what they liked about this space. Responses suggested that privacy was a positive feature - they can talk amongst each other without disturbing other students and there are no distractions. Positive comments included: *"privacy is a rarity when you live on campus", "you can talk with another student without disturbing others"* and *"quiet, lots of space to yourself, no distractions."* Results indicate that students need more of this kind of space.

Q2. What do you like about this study room?

Category	Percentage
Private space	50.0%
Noise levels	37.5%
Study room resources	25.0%
Group space	20.8%
Individual space	8.3%
General environment	8.3%
Furniture	4.2%

Number of Respondents
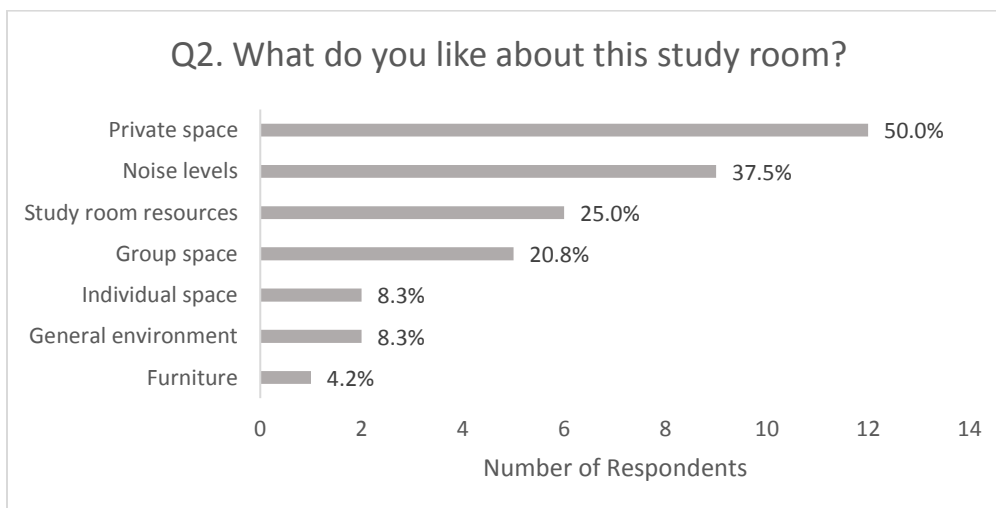
Question 3 asked respondents to list what would they change about the space. Specific suggestions included adding whiteboards and chalkboards to all rooms. In addition, others noted a problem with the HDMI cables in the study rooms. This is a known, reoccurring issue and has been reported to campus ITS. Finally, other respondents suggested changing the furniture/décor, specifically, painting the walls and footrests under the tables.

Q3. What would you change?

Category	Percentage
Whiteboard/chalkboard	38.1%
Digital Resources	33.3%
No change	19.0%
Furniture	9.5%
Décor	4.8%
General environment	4.8%

Number of Respondents
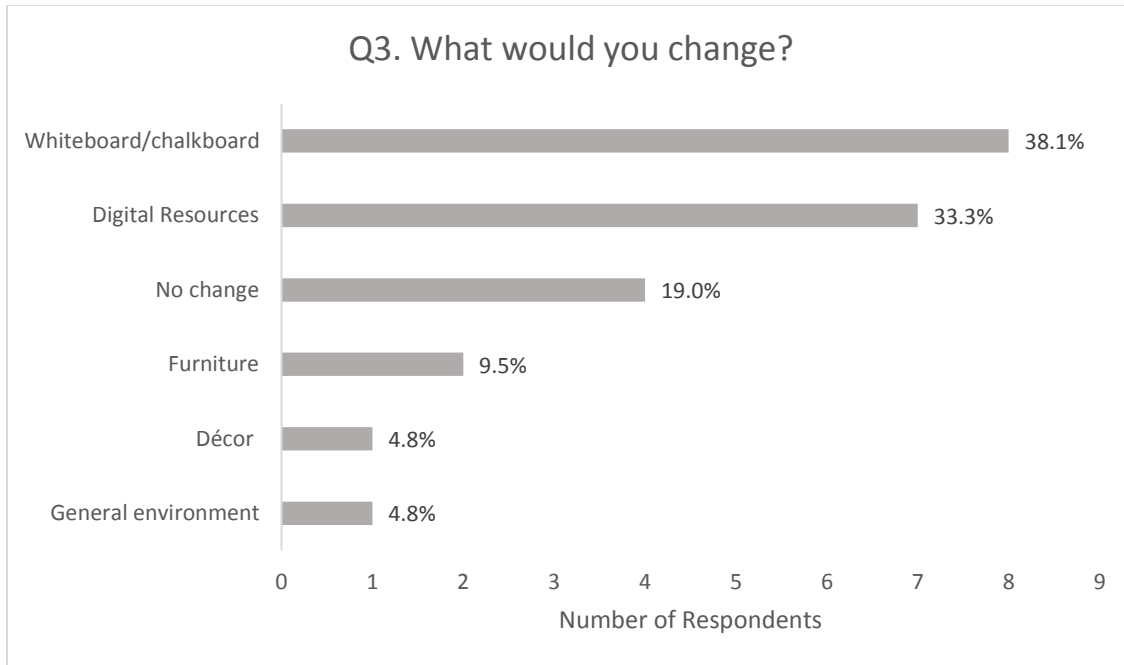
Question 4 asked respondents to list their affiliation and the majority of students are undergraduate (52%) and diploma students (38%), with graduate students accounting for just 10% of respondents.

Q4. Please tell us the makeup of your group - are you diploma, undergraduate or graduate students?

- 38% Diploma Student
- 52% Undergraduate Student
- 10% Graduate Student
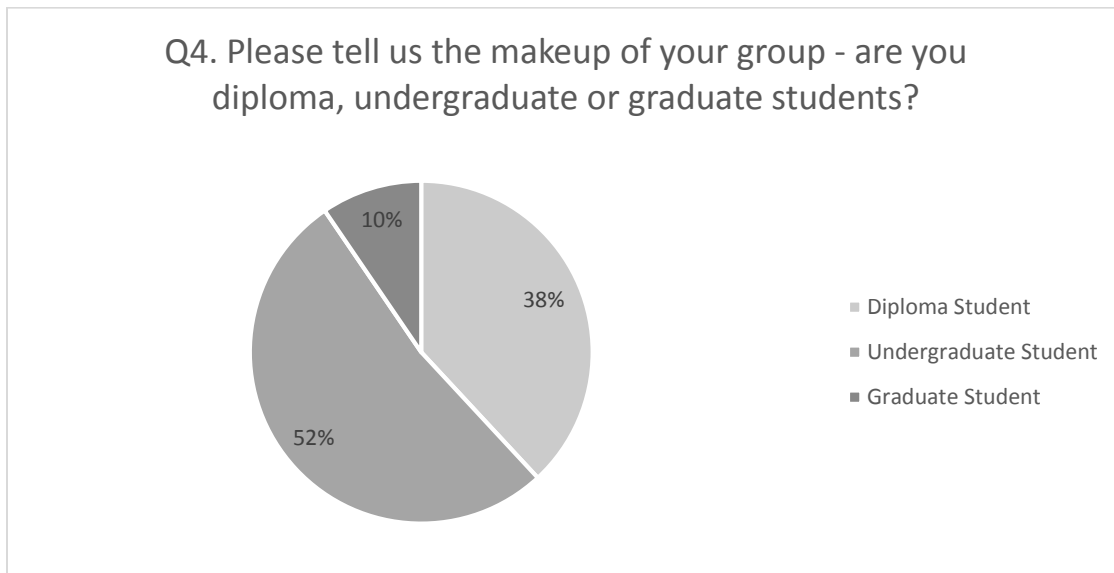
Add or redesign space in the library – Question 5 combined

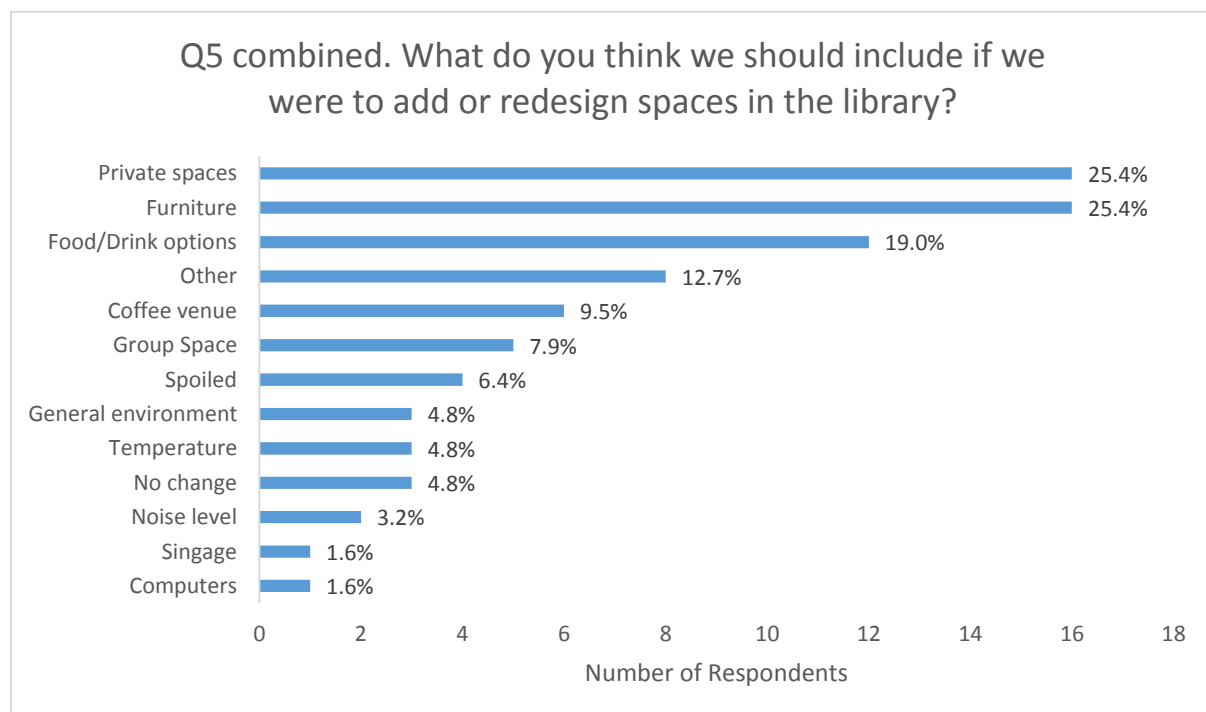The responses for Question 5 in all zones were combined in to one response, as the answer was not location specific. Respondents were asked to list what they thought should be included if we were to add or redesign spaces in the library. Many respondents wanted more private spaces or single rooms. A selection of comments include: *"Small rooms available that have doors so I can talk or do group work"*, *"definitely add more single rooms"*, *"more private spaces"*, *"more areas for group study where we can talk freely"* and *"individual rooms with doors."*

In addition, other suggestions included changes with the furniture and seating. Selected comments include: *"comfy yet functional chairs for work spaces"*, *"more wheel chairs"*, *"...roller chairs 4 some tables are really comfy"*, *"more comfy chairs"*, *"...bean bag chairs in corners"* and *"comfier seating in private rooms, not just main rooms."*

In addition, respondents also suggested a desire for food/drink options including a beverage dispenser/machine and a water bottle fountain in the library basement. Currently there is no venue for coffee and related items in the evenings and weekends on campus. As one respondent stated: *"Personally, I usually don't have time to pack up my things, leave to get food and come back."* Other suggestions included adding a coffee venue or coffee machine in the library.

Q5 combined. What do you think we should include if we were to add or redesign spaces in the library?

Category	Percentage
Private spaces	25.4%
Furniture	25.4%
Food/Drink options	19.0%
Other	12.7%
Coffee venue	9.5%
Group Space	7.9%
Spoiled	6.4%
General environment	4.8%
Temperature	4.8%
No change	4.8%
Noise level	3.2%
Singage	1.6%
Computers	1.6%

Number of Respondents

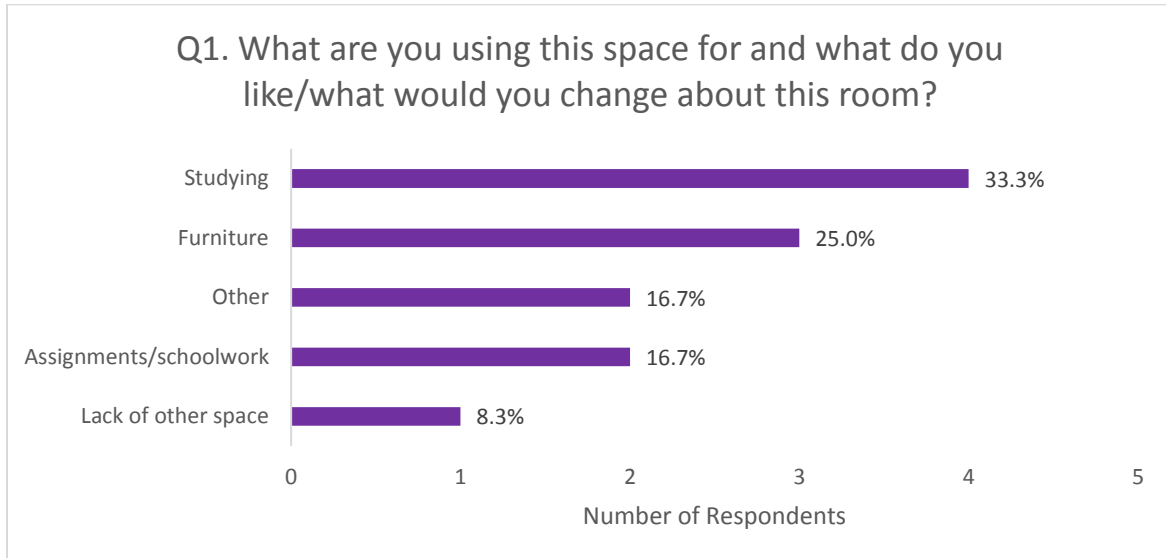## Upper Learning Commons – Whiteboard Comments

The following question was written on the whiteboard:

> *What are you using this space for and what do you like/what would you change about this room?*

Respondents were asked to place their responses on sticky notes on the whiteboard, which were collected daily. In total, 12 responses were received and approximately one-third indicated they were

using this space to study, followed by assignments/schoolwork. A number of respondents (8.3%) stated they were using this area due to lack of space in other areas.

Another one-third of respondents provided suggestions on the furniture, with several stating that there needs to be more chairs in the study rooms and that the study rooms should have doors. It should be noted that they lack of doors was due to a budgetary decision as this is only a temporary space. Finally, some respondents also requested that photos/art have explanations or descriptions.

Q1. What are you using this space for and what do you like/what would you change about this room?

Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Studying	4	33.3%
Furniture	3	25.0%
Other	2	16.7%
Assignments/schoolwork	2	16.7%
Lack of other space	1	8.3%

Other Assessment

Upper Floor Temporary Space (Program Room)

The new, temporary "Program Room" on the upper floor of the Library was evaluated to determine how often it was booked and what groups were booking it. The number of users in the room was not included in this evaluation. This was the first room of this size in the Library that was made available for students to book.

The Program Room was booked 58 times from Oct. – Dec. 2016. It was booked by a variety of groups, for presentations, workshops and meetings:

- Cultiv8
- Seed Library Workshop
- RESPECT Activity to Promote Wellness
- Weekly Meditation
- Group Prayer
- Anime Club Weekly Meeting
- Study Skills Open Session
- IFB (International Food Business) Proof Group Work

- SAIL (Student Advancement in Leadership) Conflict Resolution and Leadership Activities.

- Student Group Work Bookings

- Class Discussions

- Public Speaking

- Information Literacy Classes

Head Counts

Library staff perform headcounts as part of their daily duties. The process includes counting the number of people in the library during specific times per day every day of the week. Previously, head counts were taken twice daily at 2:00pm and 7:00pm, but in the Fall 2016 changed to three times per day at 11:00am, 3:00pm and 8:00pm. For the purposes of this assessment, head counts were analyzed during the period from February 20 to April 20 and from October 10 to December 14.

Heat maps were created to determine busy periods in the library. The maps show the head counts (number of people in the building) during selected times of the day during the specified time periods during the 2016 academic year (Appendix D). Blank spaces in the heap maps denote when statistics were not collected.

The heat maps showed that the busiest times is generally in the Fall Semester in the evenings, from mid-October until mid-December. The Winter semester shows a similar pattern, being busier in the evenings from mid-March to mid-April. Mornings are generally not busy during the Fall semester (counts were not taken during the Winter semester) and become increasingly busier in the afternoons and the evenings.

Gate Counts by Month (2016)

Monthly gate counts were assessed for selected months during the academic year, using the same months as those used for the head counts (Table 2). Similar to the head counts, it is typically busier during the middle and end of the academic semesters. February has a fewer patrons than October, which may be due to the Winter Study Break and shorter number of days in the month. In addition, November may have fewer patrons than October due to the newly introduced Fall Study Break.

Table 2. *Gate counts for February to April and October to December 2016.*

Month	Summary Gate Counts
February	4101
March	6707
April	5051
October	6650
November	5537
December	2499

Observations

The Assessment Librarian conducted observations on the main floor and lower levels of the MacRae Library on September 13th, 2016. Her observations generally reflected the results obtained from the assessment (Appendix H). As she conducted her observations early in the semester and during mid-morning, there were not many people in the library. This is reflected in the Head Counts in Appendix G which shows the library is typically busier in the evenings. Ideally, more observations would have been conducted.

Information Commons Area

In the Information Commons area, she noticed that the signage was confusing *("what is upper level? Maybe should say "this floor is quiet convo(?), downstairs is quiet").* In addition, she noticed it was a good environment to focus and there was a good blend of noises. She also observed that most people do not wear headphones.

In the Area behind the IT desk (this is still considered part of the Information Commons), she observed that it was quiet. She also noted that while the chairs were comfortable, they were too low for the table. At the time, there was only one (1) person in the area with their work spread out. Again, it wasn't clear whether this was supposed to be a quiet conversation area due to the set up (4 seats per table) or a quiet area.

Area outside of Cultiv8 (General Seating area)

This area was observed to be noisier and more active with people working and talking. In addition, the microwave acted as background noise. It was noted that talking inside Cultiv8 could easily be heard. Again, this sentiment was echoed in the student responses. She questioned if having one side of the library naturally quiet but the other side nosier worked.

Area Outside Elaine's Office (Librarian's Corner)

Only six (6) people were seated in this area and all but one were using a laptop. It was observed that some people were seated at a table together but were obviously working separately. This behavior was reflected later in the results. This area was observed to be quieter than the main area, however, doors, foot traffic and wind or an air exchanger can still be heard. In addition, talking in this area appeared to be quiet and not disruptive. It was noted that this area could be suited as a quiet area particularly if the staff area is regularly used. The lack of natural light was also observed.

Downstairs

Observations from downstairs (lower level) were summarized together. It was observed the windows in the basement provided very little light and it was cold, dull and felt "industrial." There appeared to be only one person using this space at that time and although quiet, it does not have desirable characteristics for studying.

The computers located downstairs were not used at the time – it was observed that while well lit, it was lonely and cold. The only visible traffic was a few people going to the washrooms. The study carrels only had one (1) person using them who appeared to be on his phone/relaxing. This space was even colder than the other spaces downstairs.

Recommendations

Any changes made as a result of these recommendations should be assessed at a future date, possibly a year from the time changes are made. In addition, changes to the upper floor should be considered in the context of the entire library building and services offered.

General recommendations for the MacRae Library:

- There is a strong desire by respondents for a coffee shop with snack food options in the library, or at the very least, an option for coffee and/or a beverage vending machine. Currently, the campus coffee shop closes at 2pm and is not open on weekends. There is no beverage vending machine in the library and access to other buildings on campus is very limited after 5pm weekdays and on weekends. These food and beverage services should be located close to study space.

- The dated design was a recurring theme, specifically the need for updating paint on all floors and overall design. In addition, there were several comments regarding lack of variety for paintings and photos. Library staff should consider utilizing some of the archival and special collections items, highlighting our agricultural history. Also, while carpeting was not mentioned specifically as an item, it is nearing 35 years old and is a health issue which can hold mould spores and allergens.

- Lighting appears to be an issue, particularly on the middle (main) floor where there are orange lights as opposed to natural/white lights. In addition, several areas, particularly the Librarian's Corner and areas of the lower floor were noted to have little natural light and have either a dull, or "industrial" feeling.

- Facilities Management needs to be made aware of the temperature issues in various parts of the building, in particular how changes to the layout can impact the temperature. Currently, there is extreme temperature variance from excessively hot to excessive cold from floor to floor, and also in different locations on the same floor.

- Furniture and study space was a recurring theme. Students are looking for quiet, private study space for both individual and group work. They want comfortable seating and "nooks and crannies" similar to the area near the Circulation Desk/Elevator. They are also want furniture or tables that have privacy features, rooms with doors and larger tables suitable for groups and individuals to spread out their work. In collaboration with stakeholders and requirements on campus, it is recommended that the upper floor be used as a mixed-use space centered around students. Library staff are looking at alternate spaces in the building to accommodate the demand for quiet, study space.

- Consider the placement of outlets at each study location ideally, outlets at tables and workstations.

- All study rooms should be equipped with whiteboards and markers.

Middle (Main) floor recommendations

Middle (main) floor Information Commons

- Many of the change they would like to see relates to ITS services, such as printing and saving documents. This highlights the continued need for information sharing and dedicated ITS staff to assist with these types of queries.

- ITS should consider installing a separate colour printer for student print jobs. The colour printer isn't easily accessible for students as items must be retrieved from behind the Circulation Desk. This is also a privacy issue as staff must retrieve their print jobs.

- It may be worth further assessment to determine if adding a suite of Mac computers to the learning commons would be desirable. There are no Mac computers on campus. It is observed that a number of students and faculty are Mac users.

- Students generally like the layout and openness of the area, but we should consider privacy options with respect to spacing of the computers.

- Students want more natural lighting, particularly in the Circulation area where it is orange.

Middle (Main) Floor General Seating

- Students want more natural lighting, particularly in the Circulation area where it is orange.

- Students want more tables for studying, large enough to lay out their materials.

- They want a quieter space with more privacy, particularly around Cultiv8 which is a desirable study area.

- Students using this space also requested food options, particularly as there are no options on campus in the evening and weekends.

Librarians Corner

- Students are looking for more comfortable and functional chairs and larger tables that can accommodate groups. It was suggested that side walls around big tables could be an option for work that requires concentration.

- Several students noted the need for a coffee machine or coffee shop as it was noted that it was inconvenient for them to pack up and leave to get coffee or food in another building.

- The temperature issue needs to be revisited and it gets extremely warm in the space and there is no air circulation.

- Students liked this space because there were lots of outlets, but this is not consistent throughout the library. Placement of outlets at each study location should be considered.

- Design in this area is an issue, there were several comments regarding the lack of variety for paintings and photos. Library staff should consider utilizing some of the archival and special collections items, highlighting our agricultural history.

- The lack of natural lighting in this area is an issue.

Lower floor recommendations

General Seating and Basement Computers

- Only 1 response was received for the computer area. There is minimal use of computers in this area. The respondent stated they liked the privacy but found it noisy due to the location near the doors/washrooms. It is recommended that these computers be redeployed to other floors. The respondents request for privacy and reduced noise could be accommodated by other recommendations from the main floor information commons.

- Respondents stated that the desks are too low to sit comfortably with the chairs provided.

- Interior design and the temperature needs to be addressed. Design was raised as an issue for this location as well, in particular, it's the colour of the area and lack of art. The temperature in this area is quite cold. This is consistent with the Assessment Librarian's observations of the area as "cold and industrial".

Study Room and Reading Room Recommendations

- Every study room/reading room should have a whiteboard/markers.

- All technology, such as HDMI cables, should be working correctly.

- Students want spaces where they can work together that provide privacy for conversations and also where they will be free from distractions. They are also looking for individual study spaces.

Upper Floor Temporary Space (Upper Floor Commons) Recommendations

The Upper Floor Commons will include library space to be shared with other student services. Recommendations include:

- An expanded Program Room that can accommodate up to 60 people. This is based on the membership size of groups that use the existing Program Room.

- Adding spaces for small groups (2-3 students) and individual use.

- In collaboration with stakeholders and requirements on campus, it is recommended that the upper floor be used as a mixed-use space centered around students. The library is looking at alternate spaces in the building to accommodate the demand for quiet, study space.

- Spaces where students can work together privately but also free from distractions.

- If feasible, consider updating the interior design and lighting.

- All study rooms be equipped whiteboard/markers.

- Addition of a coffee shop with snack food options.

Appendix A: Space Assessment Plan

MacRae Library

Assessment Team: Erin MacPherson, Research & Instruction Librarian
Leah Unicombe, Manager of Library Services
Linda Cormier, Evening Supervisor
Elaine MacInnis, Head of MacRae Library and AUL Access Services

MacRae Library Student Assistants:

Ian Sewell	Weixi Shu	Zhixu Rao
Ross Mallov	Xujie Li	
Sashoy Wright	Wenfeng Zhu	

With support from:
Linda Bedwell, Marlo MacKay

Question Cards and White Board

The question card and white board portion of the assessment was conducted during November 14th-28th, 2016.

Zones and Locations

The library was divided in to three zones: basement, first floor and second floor. From there, several locations were identified for assessment and assigned colours that would be used on the assessment cards (Table 1).

Table 1. Library zones and locations with assigned card colour coding.

ZONE	LOCATION	CARD COLOUR-CODE
BASEMENT	General seating areas	Yellow
BASEMENT	Computers (networked and public)	Green
BASEMENT	Study rooms	Paper question slips and boxes for completed slips
FIRST FLOOR	Computers (networked and public)	Red
FIRST FLOOR	General seating	Orange
FIRST FLOOR	Librarian's Corner	Blue
FIRST FLOOR	Reading Rooms	Paper question slips and boxes for completed slips
SECOND FLOOR	Upper Learning Commons	Wheeled Whiteboard

General Seating areas, Computers, and Librarian's Corner

The general seating areas in the basement and first floor, networked and public computers (basement and first floor) and the Librarian's Corner on the first floor were all assessed using assessment cards (see Appendix B for card design). The cards will have questions on the front, and different colours on the back depending on the location. The cards should be placed in appropriate location with the question side facing up on every table and workstation. Once a student completes a card, instructions on the card will state that they are to be placed back in their location with the solid colour facing up. Library staff, including student assistants will periodically retrieve the cards, preferably during the 3x daily head counts. The completed cards should be placed in Leah Unicomb's mailbox.

Study Rooms and Reading Rooms

Paper question slips were placed next to envelopes in the study rooms in the basement (3 rooms) and in the Reading Rooms on the main floor (5 rooms). Once a student completed a card, they are to place it in the envelope provided. These envelopes are to be checked daily (either at the beginning or the end of the day, as determined). The completed paper question slips are to be placed in Leah Unicomb's mailbox.

Upper Learning Commons

A wheeled whiteboard was placed in the top floor of the MacRae Library in the Upper Learning Commons sections. On the whiteboard, the question: "*why are you using this space*" will be written and post-it notes with pens are available for students to write their comments. The IT student working at the desk will collect all post-it notes at the end of their shift and put them in Leah Unicombs' mailbox.

Other Assessment

Head Counts

The team also assessed busy periods in the library by taking head counts during selected times of the day. The assessment times were from the periods of February 20 to April 20 and from October 10 to December 14, 2016.

Gate Counts

The team also used gate counts to determine busy periods during the semester. The assessment times were the same as those used for the head counts: the period of February 20 to April 20 and from October 10 to December 14, 2016.

Observations

The Assessment Librarian conducted observations on the main floor and lower levels of the MacRae Library on September 13th, 2016.

Appendix B: Lower Floor Plan – MacRae Library

Bound Periodicals

Some public and networked computers

Archive Storage

Journal Storage

Agricola Collections

Group Study Rooms

Archival/Special Collections Processing Room

Monograph Collection
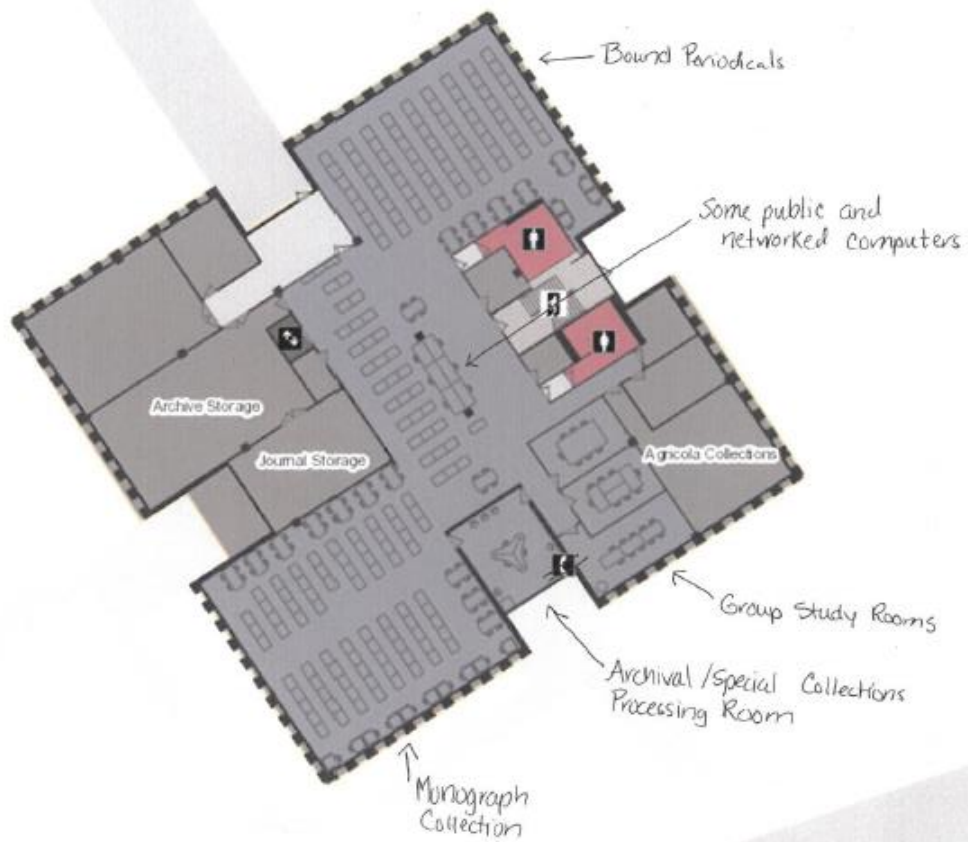
Appendix C: Main floor plan (MacRae Library)

Information Commons

Current Periodicals

Access Services

Head, MacRae Library, AUL Access Services

Writing Centre

AV Area

Librarian's Corner

Government Documents

Writing Centre

Reference Collection

Public Computers

Cultiv8
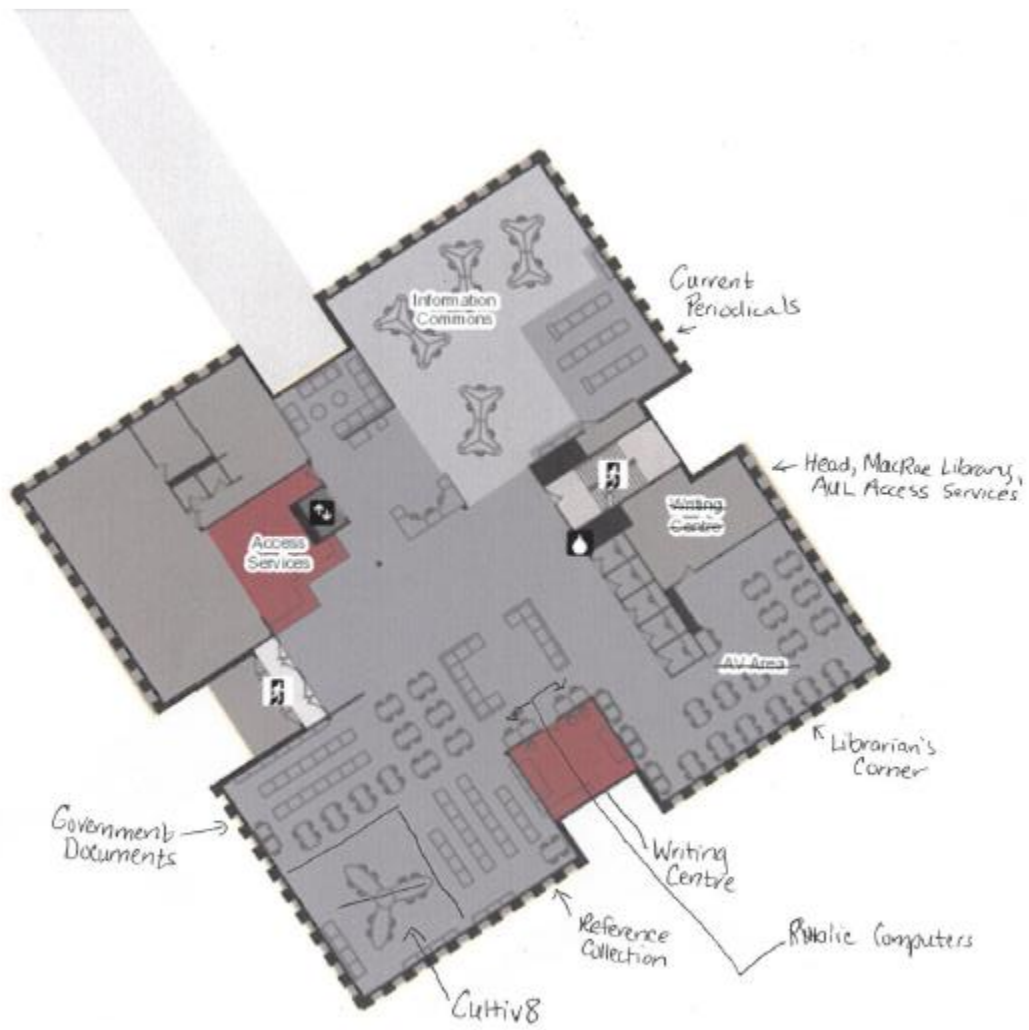
Appendix D: Upper Floor plan (Temporary Space, MacRae Library)

Cobequid Boardroom (Videoconference) Space

Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada

Technical Services

Currently Library Space ("Quiet study")

Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board

Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board

Currently Library Space (Computers and Study rooms)
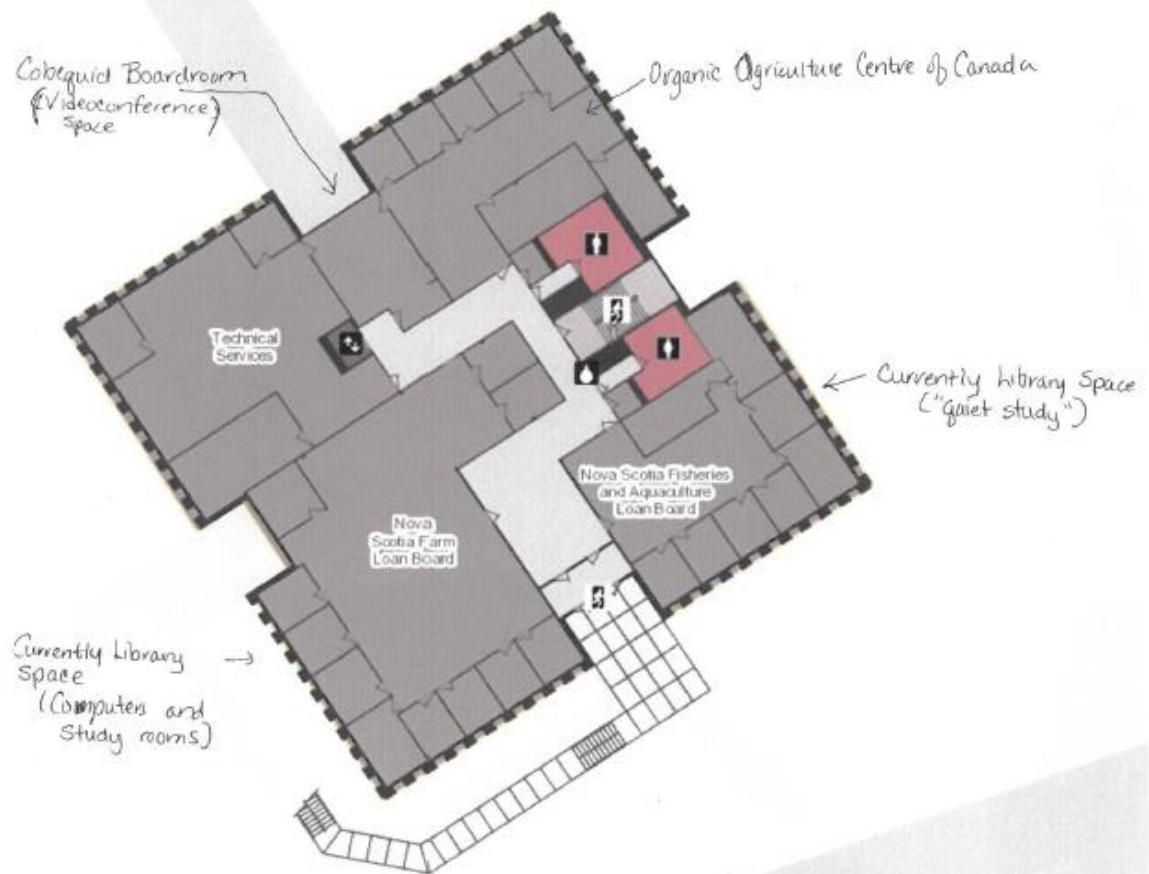
Appendix E – Question Cards

Question Card for Librarian's Corner and General Seating (Middle and Lower Floor)

Welcome to the MacRae Library
We are currently reviewing our spaces. Please help us by answering a few questions about your visit today.

1. In your current location in the library, what are you using this space for? (e.g. working on an assignment, reading for class, accessing the internet, relaxing, etc.)
   _____

2. Are you working alone or in a group? _____

3. What do you like about this space?
   _____

4. What would you change?
   _____

5. What do you think we should include if we were to add or redesign spaces in the library?
   _____

6. Are you a (please check one):   diploma student_____   undergraduate student_____
   graduate student_____ Faculty member _____   Staff member _____ Community member_____

libraries.dal.ca   **Thanks! Please place this card upside down.**   DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
                         Someone will be along shortly to collect it.   Dalhousie Libraries

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Question Card for computers (networked and public) on the middle and lower floor

---

Welcome to the MacRae Library
We are currently reviewing our spaces. Please help us by answering a few questions about your visit today.

1. What are you using this space for?   Printing   --   Internet   --   Study

2. What do you like about this space?
   _____

3. What would you change?
   _____

4. Are you a (please check one):   diploma student_____   undergraduate student_____
   graduate student_____ Faculty member _____   Staff member _____ Community member_____

5. What do you think we should include if we were to add or redesign spaces in the library?
   _____

libraries.dal.ca   **Thanks! Please place this card upside down.**   DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
                         Someone will be along shortly to collect it.   Dalhousie Libraries

Appendix F: Study Room and Reading Room Slips

Welcome to the MacRae Library

We are currently reviewing our spaces. Please help us by answering a few questions about your visit today.

1. What are you using this study room for?

2. What do you like about this study room?

3. What would you change?

4. Please tell us the makeup of your group – are you diploma, undergraduate or graduate students?

5. What do you think we should include if we were to add or redesign spaces in the library?

libraries.dal.ca   Thanks! Please place this slip in the envelope.   **DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY**
Dalhousie Libraries

Appendix G: Heat Maps for Head Counts during selected busy times during the 2016 Academic Year

Red indicates higher numbers, Yellow in-between, Green lower numbers.

February 20 – February 29, 2016

Time	20-Feb-16	21-Feb-16	22-Feb-16	23-Feb-16	24-Feb-16	25-Feb-16	26-Feb-16	27-Feb-16	28-Feb-16	29-Feb-16
2 PM	9	28				7		35	26	
7 PM	n/a	20	48	54	33	22		n/a	37	49
	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon

NOTE Statistics are not collected when the library is not open. Those times are designated with an n/a.
NOTE Blank spaces denote when the statistics were not collected.

March 1 – March 31, 2016

Time	1-Mar-16	2-Mar-16	3-Mar-16	4-Mar-16	5-Mar-16	6-Mar-16	7-Mar-16	8-Mar-16	9-Mar-16	10-Mar-16	11-Mar-16	12-Mar-16	13-Mar-16	14-Mar-16	15-Mar-16	16-Mar-16	17-Mar-16	18-Mar-16	19-Mar-16	20-Mar-16	21-Mar-16	22-Mar-16	23-Mar-16	24-Mar-16	25-Mar-16	26-Mar-16	27-Mar-16	28-Mar-16	29-Mar-16	30-Mar-16	31-Mar-16
2 pm						31						24	28			33	40		24		32			30	13	14	28	83			46
7 pm	74	26	36	n/a	23	39	49	41	29	25	n/a	n/a	23	57	48	55	41	9	n/a	40	49	68	55	18	12	n/a	29		55	75	53
	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur

NOTE Statistics are not collected when the library is not open. Those times are designated with an n/a.
NOTE Blank spaces denote when the statistics were not collected.

April 1 – April 20, 2016

Time	1-Apr-16	2-Apr-16	3-Apr-16	4-Apr-16	5-Apr-16	6-Apr-16	7-Apr-16	8-Apr-16	9-Apr-16	10-Apr-16	11-Apr-16	12-Apr-16	13-Apr-16	14-Apr-16	15-Apr-16	16-Apr-16	17-Apr-16	18-Apr-16	19-Apr-16	20-Apr-16
2pm	33		55	61		37		69	60	73	79	68		59	21	11	15		6	5
7pm	28	33	52	58	73	28	39	63	n/a	54	70	48	20		26	n/a	21			
	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed

NOTE Winter exam period is from April 8-15, 2016 for the Agricultural campus.

NOTE Statistics are not collected when the library is not open. Those times are designated with an n/a.

NOTE Blank spaces denote when the statistics were not collected.

Oct 10 – Oct 31, 2016

Time	10-Oct-16	11-Oct-16	12-Oct-16	13-Oct-16	14-Oct-16	15-Oct-16	16-Oct-16	17-Oct-16	18-Oct-16	19-Oct-16	20-Oct-16	21-Oct-16	22-Oct-16	23-Oct-16	24-Oct-16	25-Oct-16	26-Oct-16	27-Oct-16	28-Oct-16	29-Oct-16	30-Oct-16	31-Oct-16
11am	12	38	32			n/a	24	24	34	29	34		n/a	34		15				n/a	17	27
3pm	16	44	47	24		23	47	32	41	40	21	34		28	35	38	36	32		12	34	31
8pm	12	65	42	17	n/a	n/a	47	54	48	59	38	n/a	n/a	52	40	53	50	34	n/a	n/a	37	39
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon

NOTE Statistics are not collected when the library is not open. Those times are designated with an n/a.

NOTE Blank spaces denote when the statistics were not collected.

Nov 1 – Nov 30, 2016

Time	1-Nov-16	2-Nov-16	3-Nov-16	4-Nov-16	5-Nov-16	6-Nov-16	7-Nov-16	8-Nov-16	9-Nov-16	10-Nov-16	11-Nov-16	12-Nov-16	13-Nov-16	14-Nov-16	15-Nov-16	16-Nov-16	17-Nov-16	18-Nov-16	19-Nov-16	20-Nov-16	21-Nov-16	22-Nov-16	23-Nov-16	24-Nov-16	25-Nov-16	26-Nov-16	27-Nov-16	28-Nov-16	29-Nov-16	30-Nov-16
11 am		26	32		n/a		11	23	14	25		n/a	4	30	18	18			n/a				27		n/a					29
3pm	37	31	21		12	15	19	21	26	24		30	37	28	37	31	44		44	37	37	26	51	28		19	42	37	45	44
8pm	42	43	48	n/a	n/a	6	9	7	10	14	n/a	n/a	57	54	55	65	39	n/a	n/a	54	52	32	77	72	10	46	49	83	90	78
	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed

NOTE Nov 7-11 was Fall Study break, not as many students around campus.

NOTE Statistics are not collected when the library is not open. Those times are designated with an n/a.

NOTE Blank spaces denote when the statistics were not collected.

Dec 1 – Dec 14, 2016

Time	1-Dec-16	2-Dec-16	3-Dec-16	4-Dec-16	5-Dec-16	6-Dec-16	7-Dec-16	8-Dec-16	9-Dec-16	10-Dec-16	11-Dec-16	12-Dec-16	13-Dec-16	14-Dec-16
11 AM			n/a				53			11			28	
3 PM	41	18	28	62	48	54	71	78		20	49		22	10
8 PM	71		n/a	61	64	60		76	59	n/a	44		18	4
	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed

NOTE Exams period was Dec. 8 – 15 on the Agricultural Campus.

NOTE Statistics are not collected when the library is not open. Those times are designated with an n/a.

NOTE Blank spaces denote when the statistics were not collected.

Appendix H: Raw Observation Notes

…. Observations are interspersed with thoughts/ideas. I can't help it, given the space projects I have worked on.

12:30-1pm – Area A – Information Commons

Noticed in café – shift @ 12:20 – flows of people. Now it is active in here.

Noticed on way in a sign on the door that said upper level quiet (?), lower level quiet (?) – kind of confusing. What is upper level? Maybe should say "this floor is quiet convo(?), downstairs is quiet"

8 people at workstations – evenly spread out, 1 ea per computer "pod"

No one at tables/chairs

Tables have 2, 3 & 4 chairs – there's really only room for one person to work (studying/working requires a spread of material) (curious how often there's more than one person)

Most people aren't using headphones – just 2

Windows are nice – but not a lot of light coming in

Current periodicals - one side empty – no activity over there

9th person arrives, chats with someone else. Borders on distracting because in fairly quiet here.

Good blend of noises – keyboards clicking, light traffic through middle of this floor, light talking around the corner at service desk.

10th person arrived – took far peripheral seat

There is a wooden ceiling in the main lobby!

People run little errands – get water, print jobs? Feel comfy leaving stuff. Someone came and parked her stuff and hasn't been back since. (15 mins now)

Good environment to focus

Lighting is good.

1-1:15pm – Area C – Area behind IT desk

Nice ceiling

Comfy chairs too low for table

One person in this area. Only someone who knew her would share her table, but with work spread out, only room for 1 other

With 4 seats per table, appears more suited as a meeting/conversation area – but supposed to be quiet conversation?

It is quiet here.

Very light through-traffic – but will this change with top floor opening up? - more traffic to stairwell. Keep this in mind for quiet expectations on this floor.

1:15-1:30 – Area D – Outside of Cultiv8

Noisier spot. 7 back here at 2 tables. One table very active – working away and talking.

Talking inside Cultiv8 easily heard.

Definitely wouldn't call this a quiet area/quiet convo.

3 people at soft seating in the middle. 2 are working together, chatting.

Hmm.. It is naturally quiet/quiet convo on one side of this floor (info commons side) but not the other. Does this work?

Can one expect quiet in the basement?

Now 4 people in middle soft seating. Quiet convo as they work.

Microwave in use – part of background noise.

1:30-2 – Area B – Outside Elaine's office

There is a guy with very hairy legs, with his legs and bare feet up on the table. Hope he isn't a regular. Did staff plant him here for me today?

6 people here. All but one are using a laptop.

Barefoot guy and female at separate tables.

2 females at separate tables that are next to each other. Light talking between them. Not disruptive.

2 – one male, one female, at two tables joined together. Working separately but must know each other. Laptop cords are strung to the outlet, creating tripping hazard.

Track lighting (directed at wall/pictures) - not in use?

Can hear wind? Air exchanger?

These tables are a little bigger than those on other side of room? Probably don't get more than 2 people per table.

Lighting ok, but you notice the lack of natural lighting.

Quieter here than in main area, but can still hear thoroughfare/doors, from around the corner.

Naturally, this area would be more conducive to quiet, especially if staff office is regularly used. - panopticon effect, esp with windows uncovered, well lit inside, perhaps used by multiple people coming and going. Quiet rule could be more easily enforced.

Today it is quiet but is it always?

Could take out extra chairs to encourage solo, quiet work. 1 chair per table, tables spaced apart.

2-2:15pm – Area E – Downstairs, to the right of stairwell.

No one here.

As far as I know, only 1 person down here and she looked up startled when I came in.

Cold

Windows – better than no windows, but not a lot of light.

Hear door to stairwell open and close – people must be coming in – but not to this side of the room. (I realized later they were coming down to use the washroom.)

It's nice and quiet here, but honestly, I wouldn't choose it for a place to work. Dull, cold, "industrial" feeling.

Would have to observe when in use – does it get used?

Maybe use this space for all storage? Move the "people" space to upstairs?

Decide how much quiet space is needed and strategically position it. Maybe down here isn't the best location?

2:30-2:45pm – Area G – Downstairs Computers

A few people came (males) came down the stairs but just to use the washroom

Well lit, good place to do computer work – just lonely and cold.

2:45-3pm – Area F1 – Forward and to left of stairwell

1 man at back of opposite side (tables) (I'm at carrels), on his phone/relaxing

Even colder over here

I will leave soon.