EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION
As Ekstrom Library rethinks its spaces, with hopes of consolidating services and improving student spaces on the 1st floor, the library embarked on an assessment of the 1st floor, focusing on the east side. We sought to learn how and why users utilize the 1st floor. This report serves as one piece of the puzzle as we rethink this space.

METHODS
A combination of methods were used to collect data about the 1st floor:

| Observations: | Student staff collected information on usage of spaces and what objects visibly surrounded them on the desk. Data was collected at strategic intervals based on semester and daily patterns. |
| White boards: | Placed in strategic locations in reference, Media, the Browsing Collection and the Learning Commons Computer Lab, patrons were periodically given the opportunity to interact with 3 prompts - how, why, they used a space and how the space could be improved |
| Focus Groups: | These were conducted for users and modified versions for staff and partners |
| Charrettes: | This exercise was given to the Libraries Student Advisory Board with emerging trends for guidelines. Charrette designs also emerged from the Reference Department in response to a question about the 3-5 year outlook on Reference/Information Literacy |
| Datasets: | Door counts, computer usage and correlating demographic data, desk transaction data as well as the 2012 & 2014 Benchmark surveys were utilized to learn who and how users utilized spaces. |

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Spaces
Layout and function presented challenges especially with aesthetic dichotomy of the east and west wings, and discovery of spaces. Users desired a mix of independent and group spaces and technology spaces with furniture that supported the usage of the space. Proximity to highly trafficked increased desirability of locations for meeting peers and influenced choosing a space. Nosie levels continue to be a concern for patrons and desired staff enforcement of quiet spaces. Finally the desire for natural light was a repeated theme in spaces.

Select Recommendations
- Clearly define spaces’ form and function
- Increase the visibility/discovery of group spaces
- Create technology enhanced spaces conducive to group work

Services
Users expressed confusion over what services might be included in a “Learning Commons”. Users also experienced a disconnect with why borrowing an item happened at the ‘back’ of the library and learning which desk provided what services was a challenge. It was felt that Media’s proximity to the high-use east entrance, made it the de facto information desk and the natural place to go to check out any item. Users expressed a repeated need for central information/service desk near the east entrance.
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staffed by people with the expertise to provide answers and reduce ‘desk-bounce’. While
organizational relationships were unclear, many expressed the desire to consolidate
service points and collocate similar resources/services.

**Select Recommendations**
- Make function and purpose of current and future service points clear
- Cross-train all staff to reduce ‘desk-bounce
- Defining the function of Ekstrom west and providing ancillary services to
  support that function

**Navigation**

Physical barriers present hindrances to discovery of the first floor. While architectural
constraints present some real challenges, users suggested that relocation of the
Browsing Collection would improve sight lines. Most users didn’t recall seeing existing
signage. They also reported that digital signage was often above eye level or had static
enough content that they ignored it. Most requests for signage focused on directories or
interactive kiosks. Users also felt that the library needed to do a better job of promoting
collections and services offered by the library. Additionally, there was some interest in
developing a space to share information about faculty/student accomplishments to
provide a venue of cross-campus collaborations. Finally, users recommended that color
could be used to help provide visual cues to help navigate the space.

**Select Recommendations**
- Reduce Browsing Collection’s foot print to open up sight lines
- Lower ceiling height signage and displays
- Use semi-transparent walls when creating new spaces to increase the
  ability to assess the area

**Technology**

There is a high level of dissatisfaction, among staff and users, with printing services in
the library. Users report unreliability with printing the same file from desktop to
desktop. For users who were aware of quick print stations, there was a need for more.
For some users printing stations were not immediately discoverable. Staff expressed a
dire need for real-time support with printing and technology. Card readers
inconsistently work and users desire an alternative to the card reader system.

**Select Recommendations**
- Make printing stations more visible by relocating and or improving
  signage.
- Provide an alternative to the card swiping system for payment
- Install a technology support/help desk within the LCCL

**CONCLUSION**

While the data revealed a variety needs and challenges, library users desired:
- Easily discovered clearly defined spaces that supported group and independent
  work
- Clarity of the function and purpose of services with a reduction in referral to
  another service point
- Improved sight lines and navigation aids
- Increased printing and technology support