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Integrating Circulated Technology into the Library Collection Development Plan

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Integrating Circulated Technology into the Library Collection Development Plan

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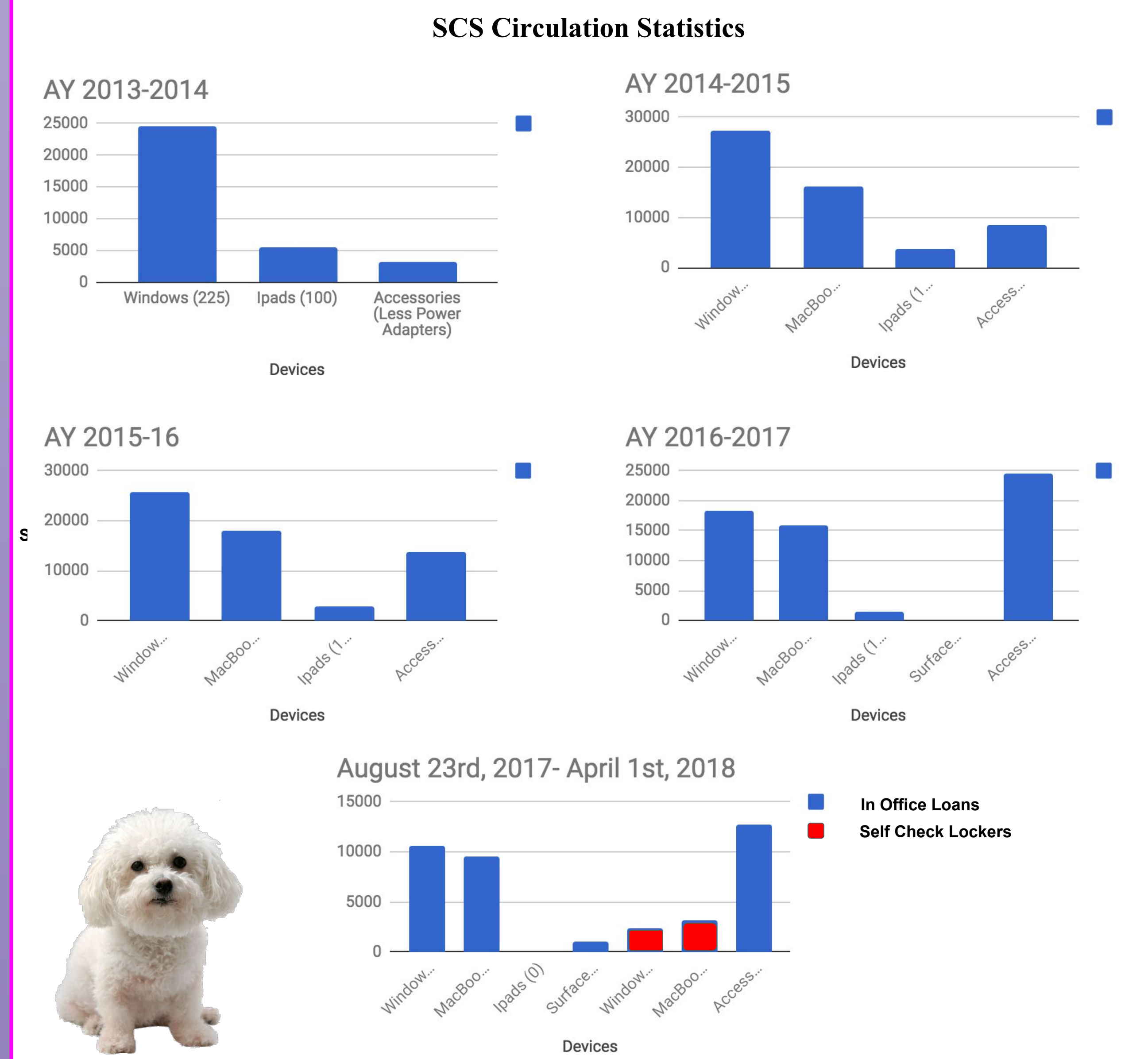Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, San José State University

Abstract: Academic libraries are increasingly focused on the acquisition and expansion of circulating technology collections. Technology is often governed by auxiliary library services such as Access Services or IT departments and not considered as part of the general library collection. Technology are typically purchased with one-time-use funds and replacement is an ad-hoc process depending on budget availability. Laptops, tablets and other technologies need to be integrated into the regular collection and included in the library's collection management planning. This poster chronicles the efforts of San José State University Library's Student Computing Services department to unify technology purchasing with other collection management strategies and policies, which includes demand driven acquisitions, ongoing evaluation and in-depth assessment. It highlights how these methods bring users in from the margins of technology collection development, putting them at the center of technology purchasing decision.

Research Question: How are circulated technology purchases for users handled?
- Sub Question: How are technology needs assessed?
- Sub Question: Who manages the circulation and condition of the technology?

Methodology
- Literature review
- Aggressive Assessment and Evaluation
- Policy Analysis
  - Analyze how individual libraries codify purchasing of technology strictly for circulation for students.
  - Find collection development policies, IT purchasing policies or specific plans that address circulated technology. The research will record specific selecting and acquisition policy, where it is located and under whose purview decisions are made.
  - Identify policy regarding assessment of user needs and how those needs, both hardware and software, are addressed.
  - Observe collection maintenance, including reviewing circulation policy and statistics.

SCS Circulation Statistics

"The goal of any collection development organization must be to provide the library with a collection that meets the appropriate needs of its client population within the limits of its fiscal and personnel resources." (Johnson, p 1)

Background: As circulation and usage numbers drop, many libraries have undergone the process of trying to redefine themselves in order to remain significant with past, current and potential users. In an effort to break the community's antiquated view as the library being only a house of books, libraries have pushed to seek to fill user's other demands, especially their need for computer access. This has led to libraries to begin, at different rates, to shift resources towards technology purchases for circulation. These purchases, though, are typically one-time-use funds, not accounting for depreciation and attrition. Any replacement is planned externally -- by budget availability or a campus refresh program. The technology resources, itself, are one-size-fits-all, utilizing hardware specifications, popular apps and programs, to blanketly meet a general user.

Literature Review:
- **Users demands for tools and technology**
  - The library serves as a place of practicality and convenience. Laptops, hardware tools and even toys provide a cost effective and motivating method for the libraries to involve itself into the community.
- **Makerspace technology availability as an evolutionary step for the library**
  - Makerspaces have become a more participatory culture, feeding on social engagement and based on both technical and communicative skills for knowledge and innovation. This connection shows how providing equal access to tools and knowledge redefines the librarian's role to becoming an advocate and a matchmaker connecting potential collaboration.
- **Formal collection development planning focuses on recognizing the current and predicting the future environment.**
  - Collection development policies are the embodiment of a social contract between the library and its clientele, synchronizing the library's collection activity with the mission of the library and its parent institution addressing the needs of its identified clientele.

Discussion: Circulated technology needs to be recognized as a part of the main collection and be standardized to adhere to the library's collection development plan. **As part of the collection development plan, it places circulated technology on a routine schedule for selection, acquisition, maintenance and replacement.** More importantly, it opens the collection for evaluation by **continually assessing the library's users' needs and seeing how the collection meets those needs.** This continuous scanning for needs will allow technology purchases to be more precise, possibly, and quite necessary, breaking away from only laptop and tablet devices.

Applying collection development strategies also opens up the collection to a variety of options, such as **Technology Demand Driven Acquisition**, in which libraries are dependent on users for its decision making evidence.

By standardizing all resources -- text, audio visual and technology tools -- in the library into the library wide collection development, it maintains the library social contract with its users with the adequate assessment and evaluation required to satisfy users' needs.

Student Computing Services:
- Located on the student designated 4th floor of the library, SCS loans out Windows laptops, MacBooks, Surface Pro tablets, and other technology accessories to the SJSU community.
- Manage the technology located on the 4th floor including: Video Wall, KLEVR Lab and Sound Studio.
- 12 student assistants from a variety of backgrounds and majors. Our students are encouraged to:
  - Be engaging to fellow students;
  - Provide input in SCS purchasing and policy making.

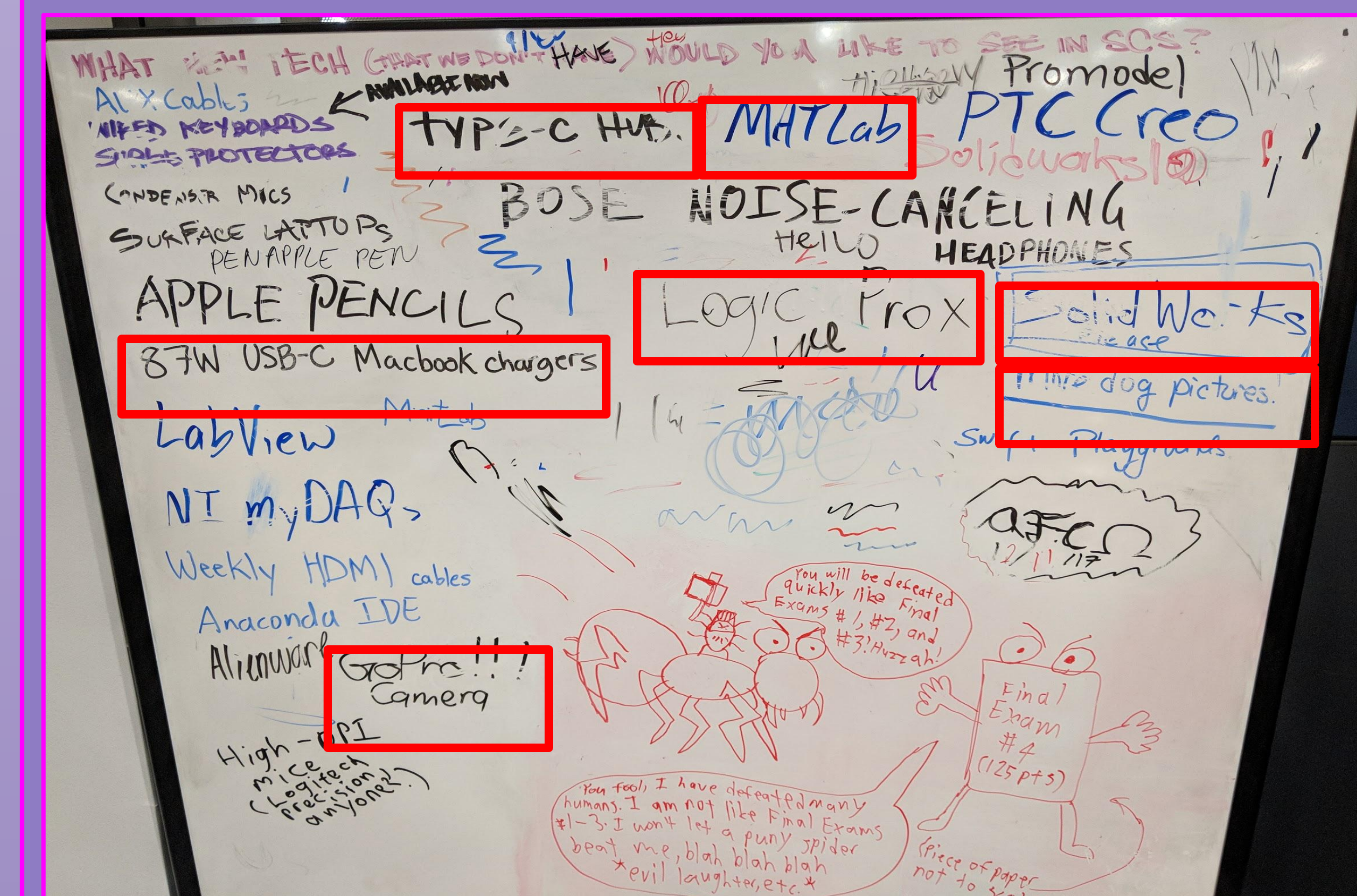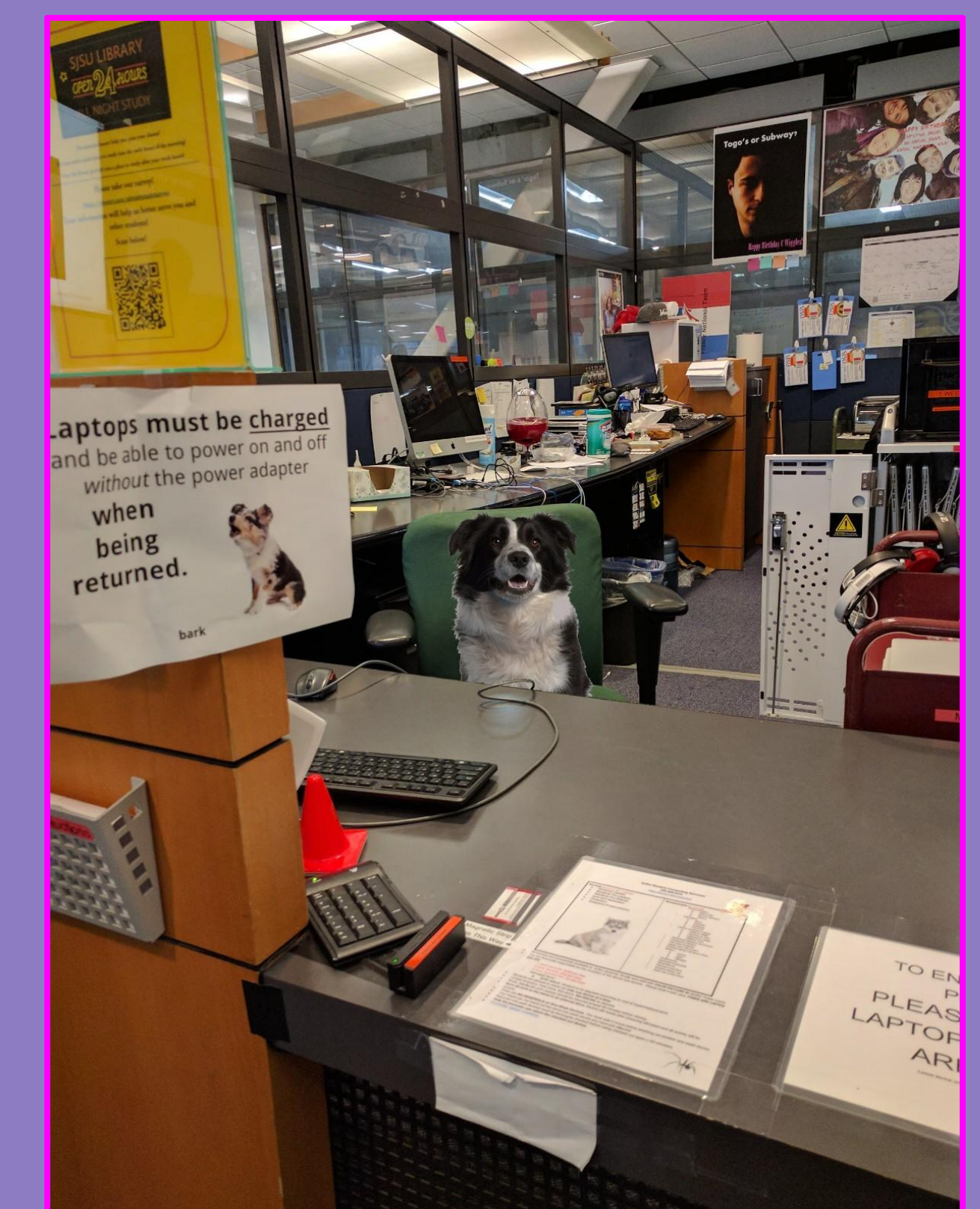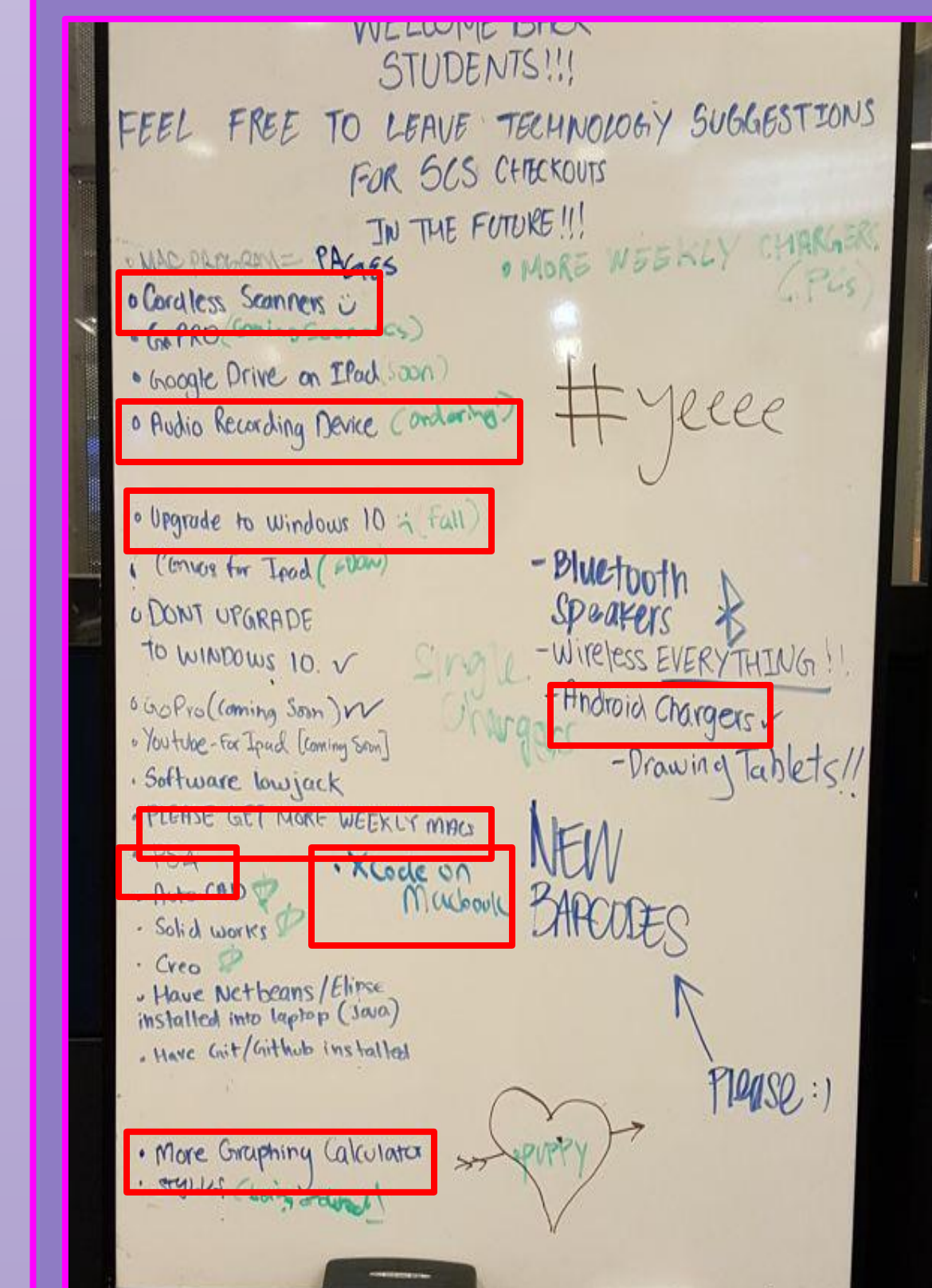**Libraries are collections built and organized for users.** (Eng, 2017)

Conclusions
- Acknowledgement that technology is a circulated resource
- Importance of codifying technology plan
- Committed student assistant staffing
- Week loans preferred
- User needs go beyond MS Office, Adobe CC, laptops and macbooks

Future directions
- Departmental Collection development plan vs. integration into library collection development
- Demand driven acquisitions
- Creative Media equipment
- Tools and Workstations

References:
Eng, S. (2017). The library profession in the time of open access. *The Serials Librarian*, 1-11.

Johnson, P. (2014). *Fundamentals of collection development and management* (3rd ed.). Chicago, IL: ALA Editions.

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