

# Piloting Graduate Student Spaces and Services in Temporary Digs

UT Libraries Scholars Commons

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**The University of Texas at Austin**

**University of Texas Libraries**

*Scholars Commons*

# UT Austin



- ▶ 51,000 enrollment
- ▶ 39,619 undergraduates (119 degree programs)
- ▶ 11,331 graduate students (223 degree programs)
- ▶ 3,090 teaching faculty
- ▶ 18 colleges and schools
- ▶ “40 acre” campus in the heart of downtown Austin, the state capital

# UT Libraries

- ▶ Perry-Castañeda Library (PCL) is main library
- ▶ 9 additional branches on campus, 1 in Port Aransas
- ▶ 650,000 sq ft of UT Libraries Space at UT
- ▶ 2,492,477 users by gate count
- ▶ 220 FTE
- ▶ 10,613,861 volumes held, print and “e”



# Scholars Commons Pilot Project Concept

- ▶ Opportune window of **time** with access to viable, existing spaces to test services
- ▶ Ideal placement; visible, tangible means of showing graduate students there's a **place** and **services** for them
- ▶ Evolving, organization-wide **interest** in **and desire** to introduce new research lifecycle and digital scholarship support services

# Scholars Commons Pilot Goals

- ▶ **Space** for graduate student use
- ▶ **Services** for (and by) graduate students
- ▶ **Technology and tools** for digital scholarship
- ▶ **Silent study** space for serious students
- ▶ **Salon area** for presentations, events and exhibits
- ▶ **Low** renovation **cost** now = future **flexibility**

# Project Timeline

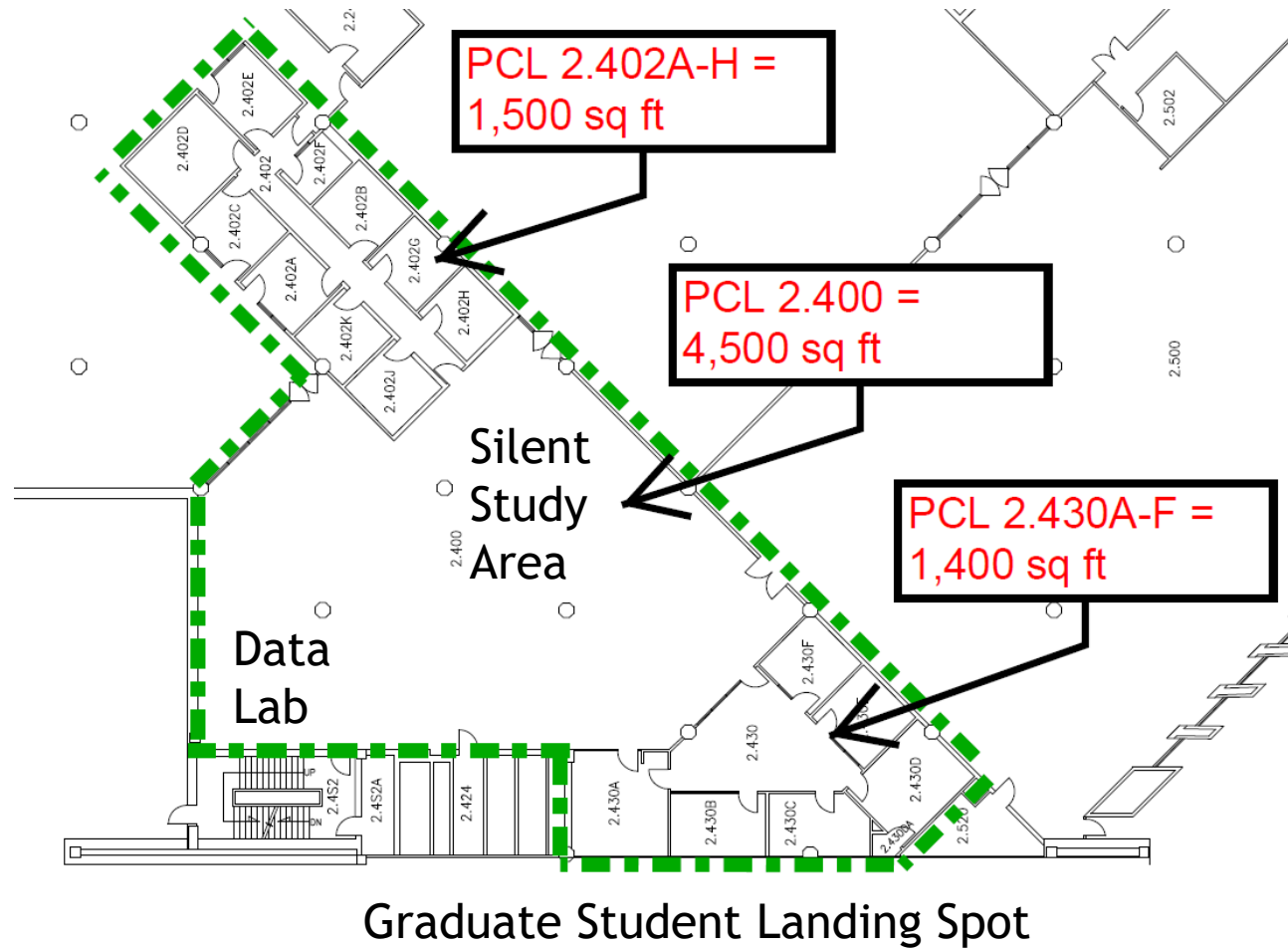
## 2015

- ▶ January Proposed pilot project
- ▶ February – March Conducted focus groups
- ▶ March Convened Working Group
- ▶ March – June Design Development for spaces
- ▶ April – May Conducted online survey
- ▶ June – August Planned services, web portal, technology
- ▶ Sept 16 “Before Party” Kick-off Event
- ▶ Sept – Dec Construction, continued planning

## 2016

- ▶ January 20 “Launch Party” Opening Event

# Available Entry-Level Space



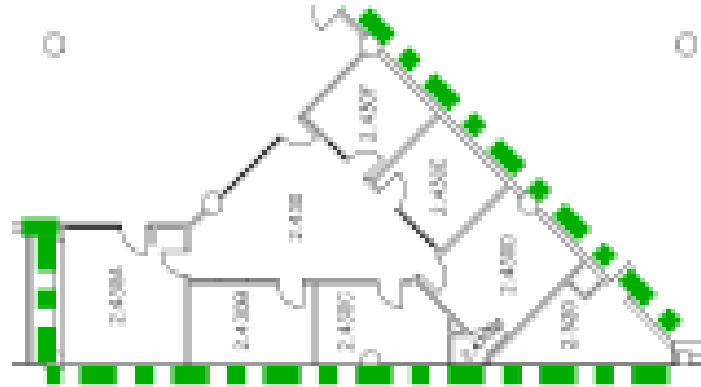
# Scholars Commons Footprints: PCL 2.400



- ▶ Retrofit open room space, formerly the Periodicals Room:
  - ▶ silent study space
  - ▶ Digital Scholarship/Data Lab (in existing Media Lab Pilot space)
  - ▶ research-focused programming, exhibits, displays and events



# Scholars Commons Footprints: PCL 2.430



- ▶ Re-envision office suite as dedicated Graduate Landing Spot:
  - ▶ swipe-card access
  - ▶ reservable technology-equipped group study/meeting rooms
  - ▶ networking and conversation space
  - ▶ microwaves and snack area

# Information Gathering

Key themes: spaces, services, technology

- ▶ 4 Focus Groups, February – March 2015
  - ▶ 2 with graduate students
  - ▶ 2 with faculty
  - ▶ 10 graduate students total
  - ▶ 12 faculty members total
- ▶ Survey, April – May 2015
  - ▶ received 1,133 responses
  - ▶ distributed via subject specialist liaisons, Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), Graduate Student Writing Group and UT Libraries website

# Focus Group Key Findings

- ▶ Desire for **expertise to support the research lifecycle** and publication process – accessible in workshops, drop-in hours, or by appointment
- ▶ Users would like a **balance of collaborative spaces**, small teaching spaces, and silent study space
- ▶ Would like to have support for and facilitation of **interdisciplinary collaboration**

# Selected Focus Group Comments

“It would be awesome if there were places where we could have comprehensive exam study group meetings, or dissertation support group meetings. Additionally, if the librarians held general lecture series related to [writing the dissertation, finding sources, or time management](#), I would go to that.”

“I have no [idea how to do \[OCR for non-Roman characters\]](#) and I don’t know who to go to to find out.”

“Probably [graduate-specific](#) but okay for enthusiastic undergrads, but [intentional space](#). A place where you could only walk into it because you want to talk into it, not because you’ve stumbled upon it. That would naturally weed out [unwanted noise and distraction](#).”

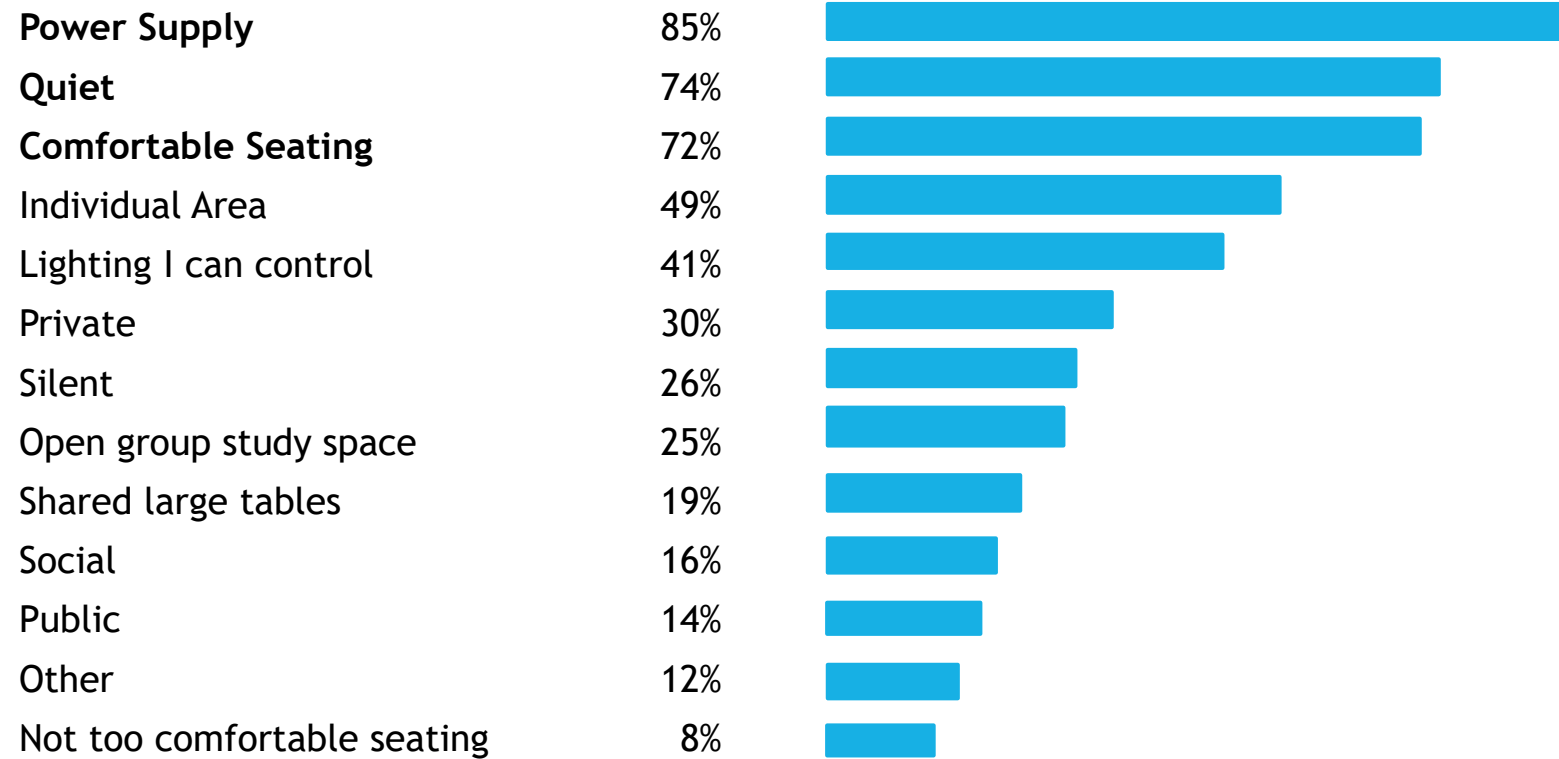
# Survey: Respondents

1,049 graduate students + 84 faculty, post-doc, or staff = 1,133 responses



# Survey: Spaces

What features would you like to see in a reading/study space?



# Survey Comment Themes: Spaces

- ▶ Comfortable furniture
- ▶ Good coffee
- ▶ Lack of distractions
- ▶ Natural light
- ▶ Outlets
- ▶ Security for belongings

# Survey Comments: Spaces

Designating an area as silent is unambiguous.

**OUTLETS/PLUGS!!!**

Being around other people working on academics is motivating to help me stay focused.

The Library is too cold!

I'm always looking for ways to save money on food. I bring my lunch but having a graduate refrigerator or microwave would help in the library.

Balance between quiet, focused work  
and some interactions and coffee.

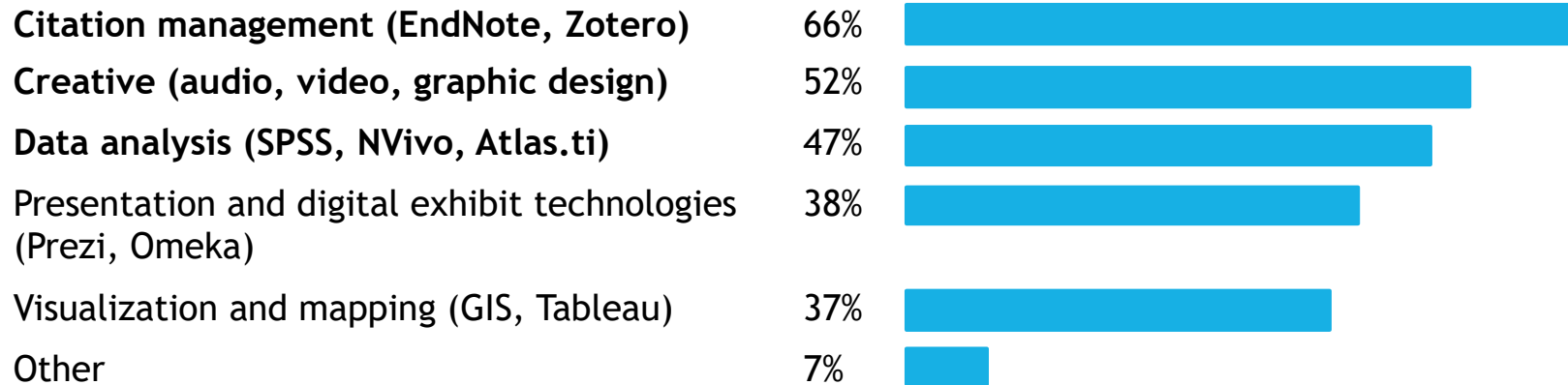
Adjustable chair heights. The tables are too low for the chairs in the PCL Collaborative Commons so you wind up hunched over your computer.

I have no designated space in my college/department,  
so I must find other places.



# Survey: Services and Technology

I would like access to or help with the following technologies in the library:



# Working Group Members

## ▶ Administrators

Chris Carter, Director of Planning and Operations

Catherine Hamer, Associate Director for User Services

## ▶ Liaisons Librarians and Staff

Allyssa Guzman, Research & Liaison Services Senior Library Specialist

Janelle Hedstrom, Education Librarian

Colleen Lyon, Scholarly Communications Librarian

Elise Nacca, Learning Librarian

Mary Rader, Global Studies Coordinator

## ▶ Advisors

Aaron Choate, Interim Assistant Director for Technology Innovation Strategies

Krystal Wyatt-Baxter, Assessment Coordinator

# Pilot Project Planning Principles

- ▶ Spaces as perfect as they can be
- ▶ Services identified as core to the research lifecycle
- ▶ Assessment ongoing, informing adjustments
- ▶ Learning and planning for the future
- ▶ Commitment to all scholars

# Data Lab: 15 High-end, Dual-boot Seats



# Data Lab: Software

## Mac OS X 10.11.2

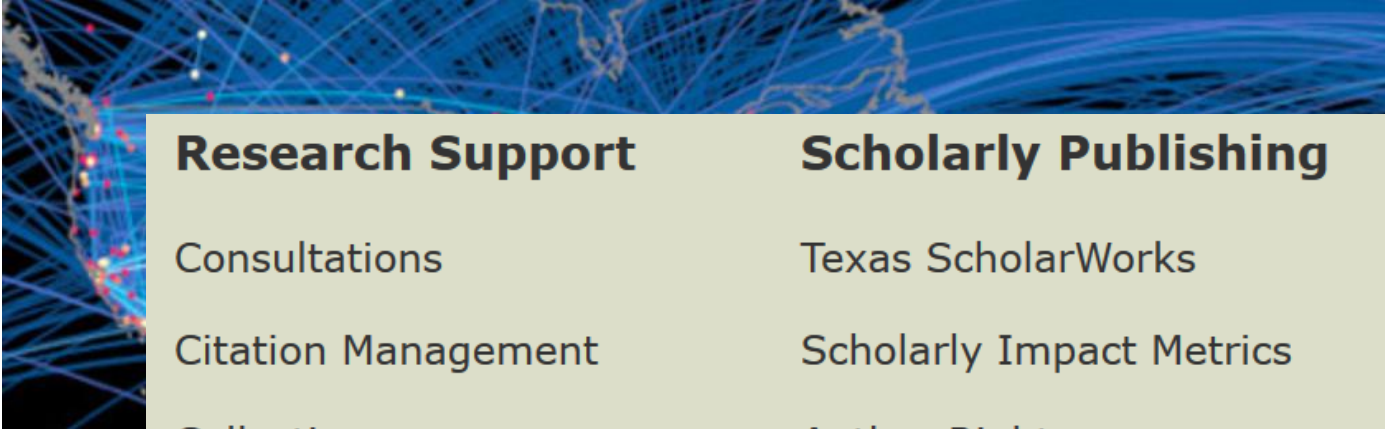
- ▶ Adobe Creative Suite 6
- ▶ Microsoft Office
- ▶ NVivo
- ▶ Oxygen XML
- ▶ R
- ▶ RStudio
- ▶ Stata/MP
- ▶ Sublime Text
- ▶ Tableau Public
- ▶ Text Wrangler

## Windows 8.1

- ▶ Adobe Creative Suite 6
- ▶ ArcMap
- ▶ Autodesk Design Suite
- ▶ Microsoft Office
- ▶ NVivo
- ▶ Oxygen XML
- ▶ R
- ▶ SAS
- ▶ SPSS
- ▶ Stata/MP
- ▶ Sublime Text
- ▶ Tableau Public

# Scholars Commons Portal

[www.lib.utexas.edu/scholarscommons](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/scholarscommons)



## **Research Support**

Consultations

Citation Management

Collections

Data Management

Digital Scholarship

Writing Support Services

## **Scholarly Publishing**

Texas ScholarWorks

Scholarly Impact Metrics

Author Rights

Copyright

## **Spaces**

Data Lab

Silent Study

Exhibits

Graduate Landing Spot

# Workshops @ PCL

## **Workshop @PCL:**

**Omeka**

**3/3/2016 - 2:00pm  
to 3:30pm**

## **Workshop @PCL:**

**Web and Social  
Media Data  
Analysis**

**3/22/2016 - 10:00am  
to 11:30am**

## **Workshop @PCL:**

**Introduction to R**

**3/31/2016 - 3:00pm  
to 5:00pm**

**Digital Scholars in  
Practice**

**Workshop: Ed  
Triplett, Capturing  
Large, Sculptural  
Art and  
Architecture with  
Photogrammetry**

**4/6/2016 - 9:00am  
to 11:00am**

## **Workshop @PCL:**

**Using the  
Thesis/Dissertation  
Templates**

**4/7/2016 - 10:00am to  
11:30am**

## **Workshop @PCL:**

**CartoDB**

**4/7/2016 - 2:00pm to  
3:30pm**



# Exhibits: Crafting Art and Geology

The Publications of Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy (1877-1947)





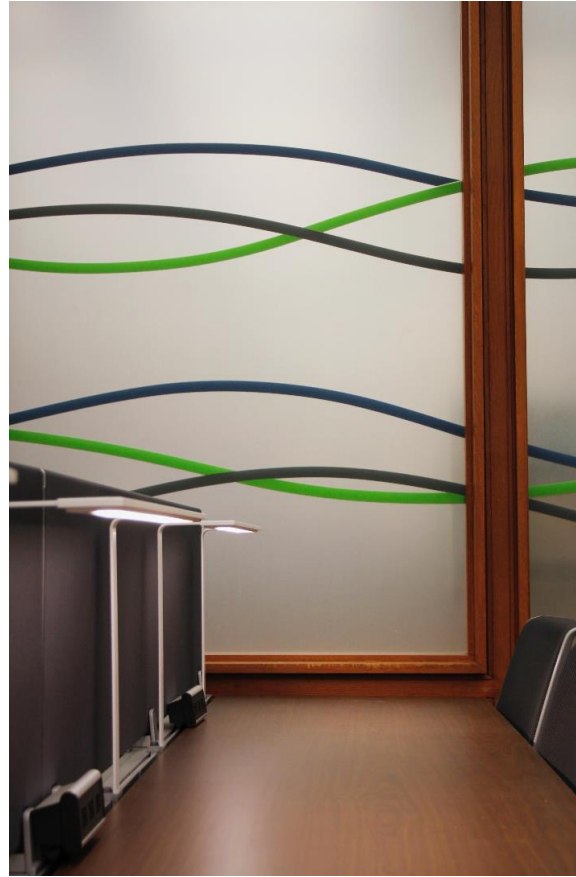
# Before: Knoll Interpole Dividers with Power



# After: Knoll Interpole Dividers with Power



# Big Tables: Touch-Controlled Lighting, Dividers and Multiple Power Outlets





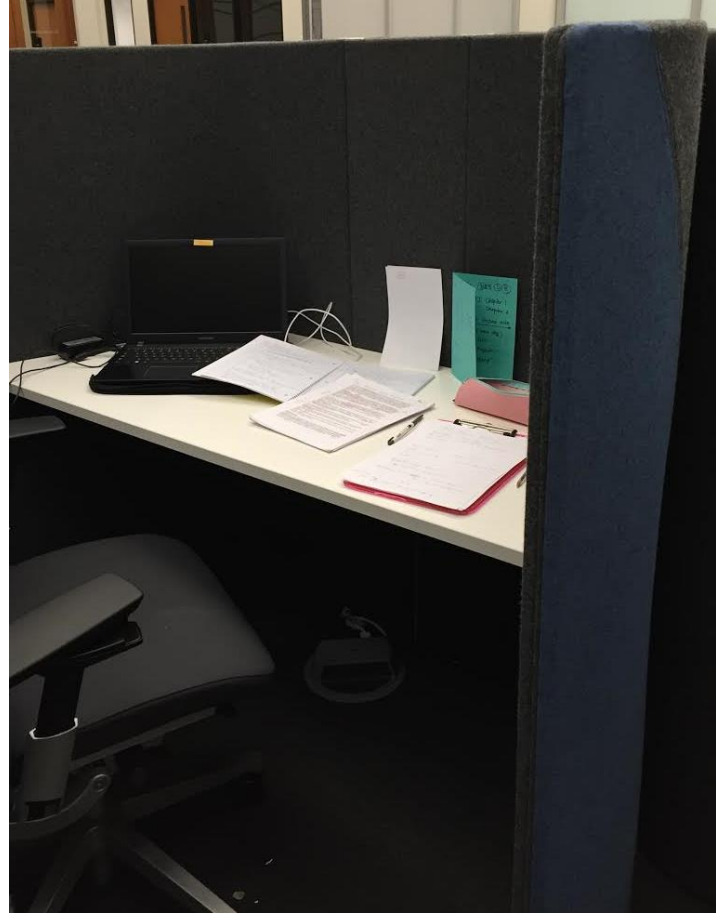
# Kimball Villa Seating with Outlets



# “Campfire” Cluster with Privacy Screens



# Allermuir Haven Pods: Baffled “Study Nooks”





# Allermuir Haven Pods: Baffled “Study Nooks”



# Vista View: Alone, Together, in Silence





# Before: Computer Lab Window Wall



# After: Computer Lab Window Wall



# Before: Scholars Commons Entrance





# After: Scholars Commons Entrance



# Bolder Signage and Symbols



# Trying Again: Hanging Entrance Signage

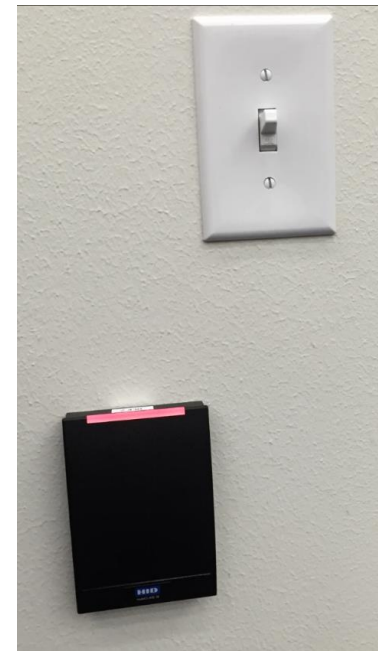
Prior to Blue Hanging Sign



New Blue Hanging Sign



# Graduate Landing Spot: Entrance



# Graduate Landing Spot: Kitchenette





# Graduate Landing Spot: Lounge



# Graduate Landing Spot: Tack Board



# Graduate Landing Spot: Meeting Room



# What We're Hearing...



**garrettsawyer**

11:56am via Twitter for iPhone

Exploring the new Scholars Commons at @utlibraries.  
Pretty sweet quiet study space.

Looks like a great space. Looking forward to spending time here.

This looks great!

Is there a reason that Python isn't included as software on the data lab computers?

Looking forward to using the silent study room!

This commons was so great and actually, I did not know there is such space at UT.

Please find a spot that has natural light/ windows



**universitywritingcenter**

2 hours



So much good energy here at the opening of the #scholarscommons @utlibraries! Graduate students will love working in this beautiful space. #utaustin

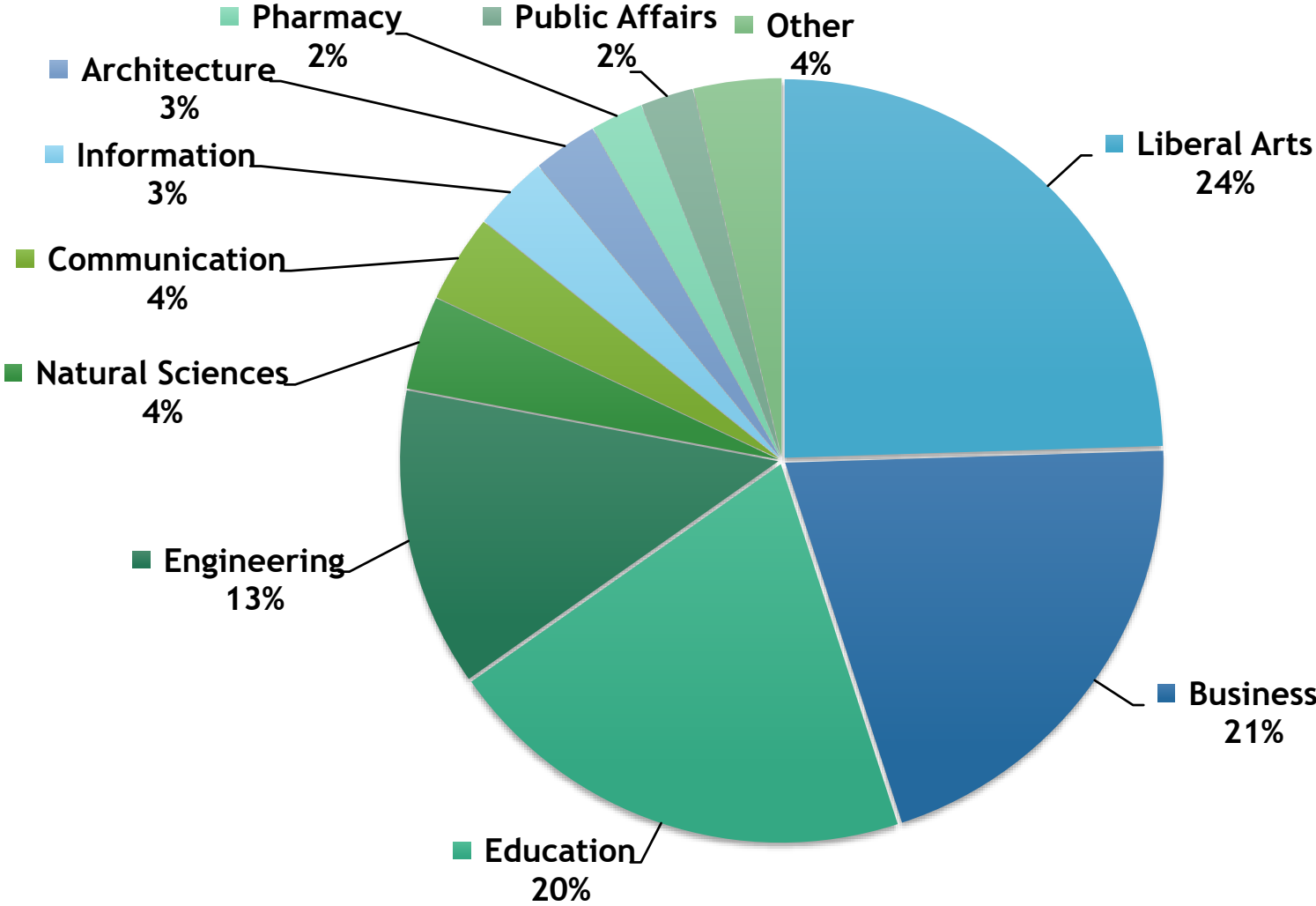
# Assessment Plan: Use Metrics

## Ongoing Use Metrics

- ▶ KeyConfigure software data for Data Lab
- ▶ Consult statistics
- ▶ Event attendance
- ▶ Entrance-mounted people counter (500-800 per weekday)
- ▶ Google Analytics for online portal
- ▶ Proximity card data for Graduate Landing Spot access

# Assessment Plan: BACS Card Swipe Data

## January 20 – February 29



# Assessment Plan: Spaces

## Space Assessment

- ▶ Kindness audit
- ▶ Interactive survey/data capture
- ▶ Data Lab pop-up user survey
- ▶ Persistent feedback link



# Assessment Plan: Kindness Audit

## Likes:

- ▶ *“Silent study space!!!”*
- ▶ *“I love the abundance of outlets. Every seat...has its own outlet, if not numerous outlets.”*
- ▶ *“...all the signage about silence in this study space...it was both polite and firm...”*
- ▶ *“...the cubby spaces for individual students...looks like they are very popular.”*
- ▶ *“...the multiple options for silent study - big tables...and a variety of little pod-like things.”*
- ▶ *“Individual desk lamps”*
- ▶ *“Water fountain with bottle filler”*



# Assessment Plan: Kindness Audit

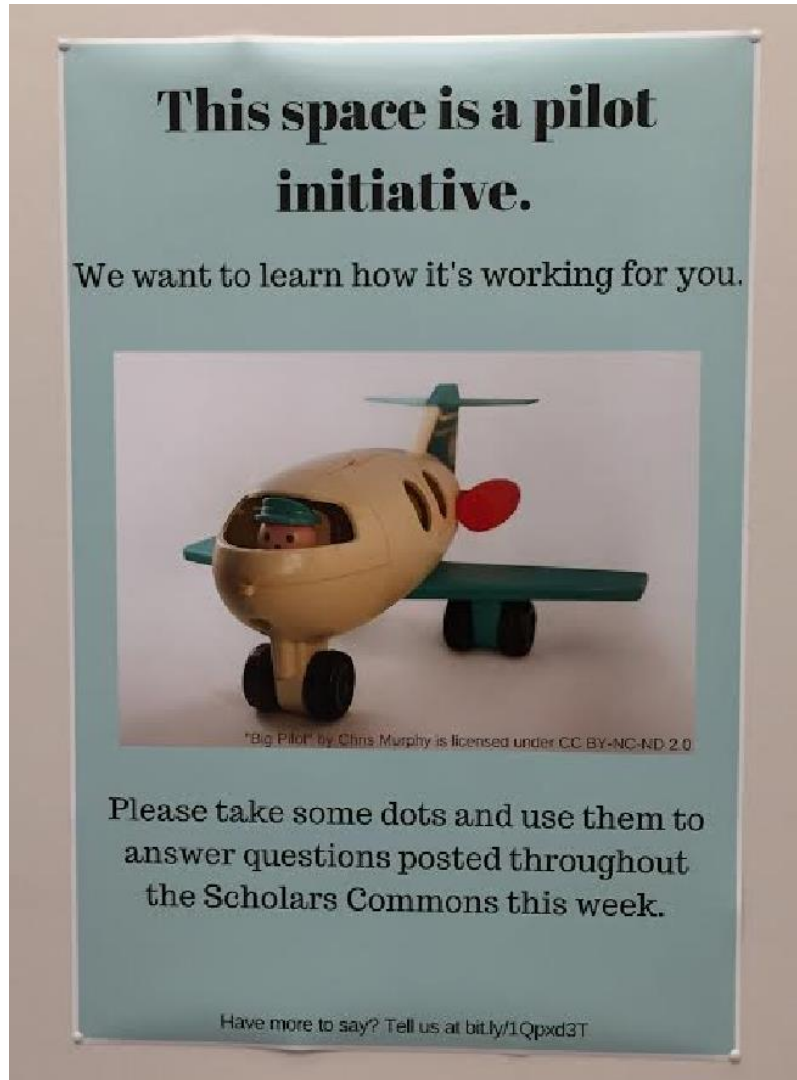
## Dislikes (or at least “Meh”):

- ▶ *Living room style and lounge-type chairs... “nice but aren’t very usable or practical...”*

## Confusing:

- ▶ *Exhibit case seems random... “weird use of space upon entry”*
- ▶ *Entrance to the Scholars Commons isn’t very noticeable...*
- ▶ *Signage to find the Scholars Commons seemed non-existent...once you are in front of the doors, they looked pretty classy with white lettering...and they emphasized “silence”*
- ▶ *“...the name “Data Lab”...makes it seem like the computers can only be used for very specific tasks – “data” tasks...*
- ▶ *“Graduate Student Landing Spot”...will only graduate students’ IDs work to open this door?*
- ▶ *Are “Landing Spot” spaces restricted to just graduate students?*

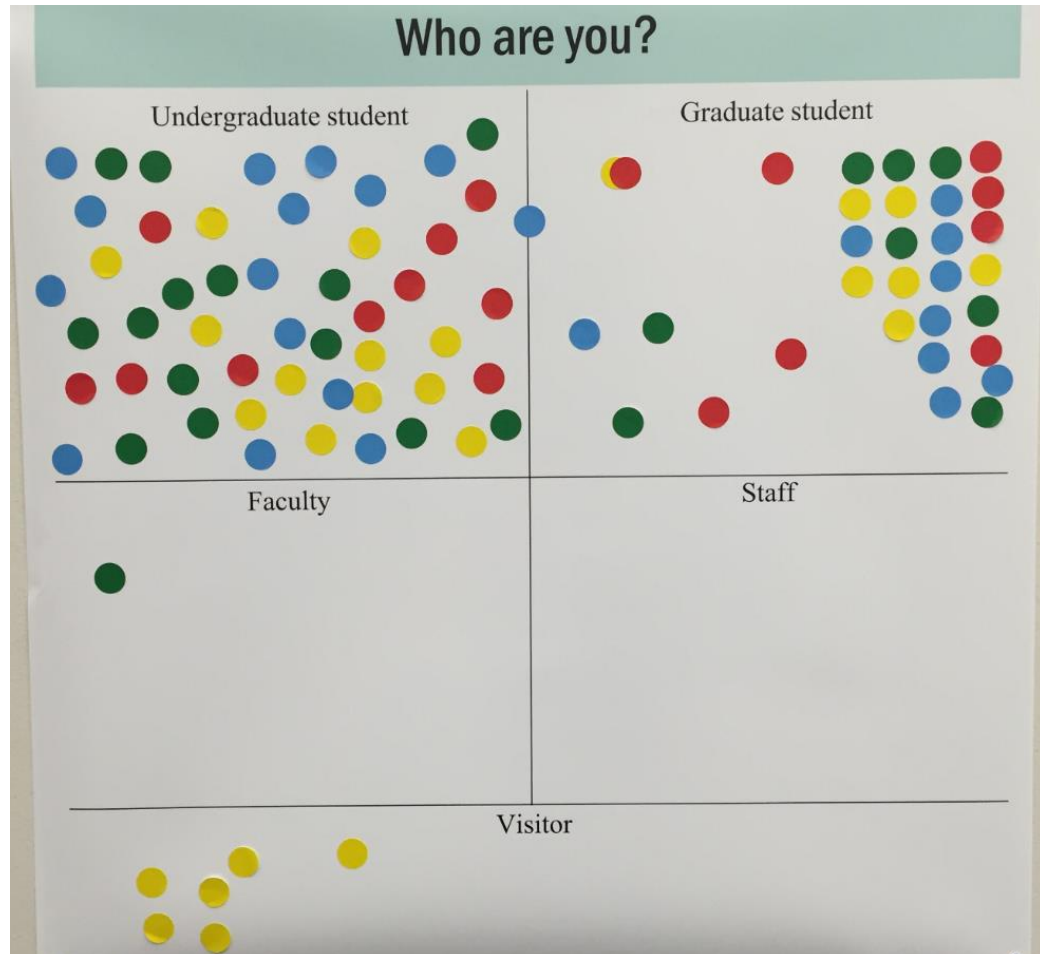
# Assessment Plan: Interactive Survey



We want to learn how it's working for you.

“...take some dots and use them to answer questions posted throughout the Scholars Commons this week.”

# Assessment Plan: Interactive Survey



## Tally

Undergradates - 51

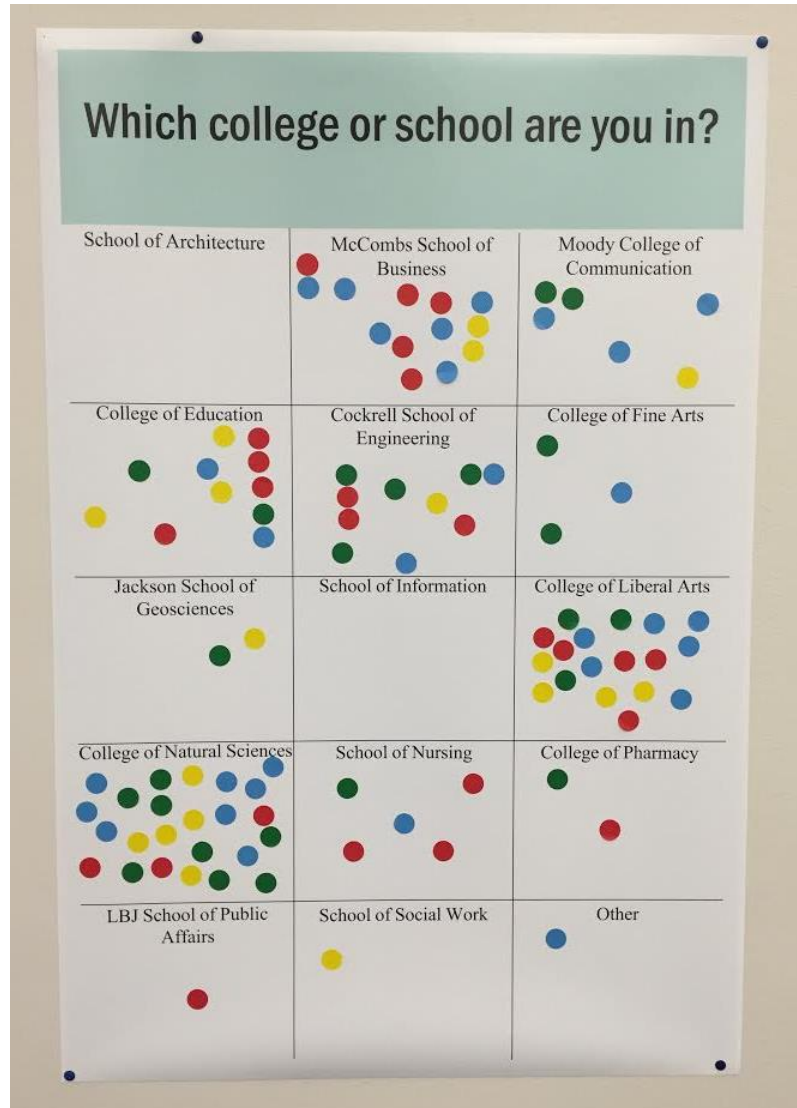
Graduates - 32

Faculty - 1

Staff - 0

Visitor - 6

# Assessment: Interactive Survey



## Top 5

College of Natural Sciences

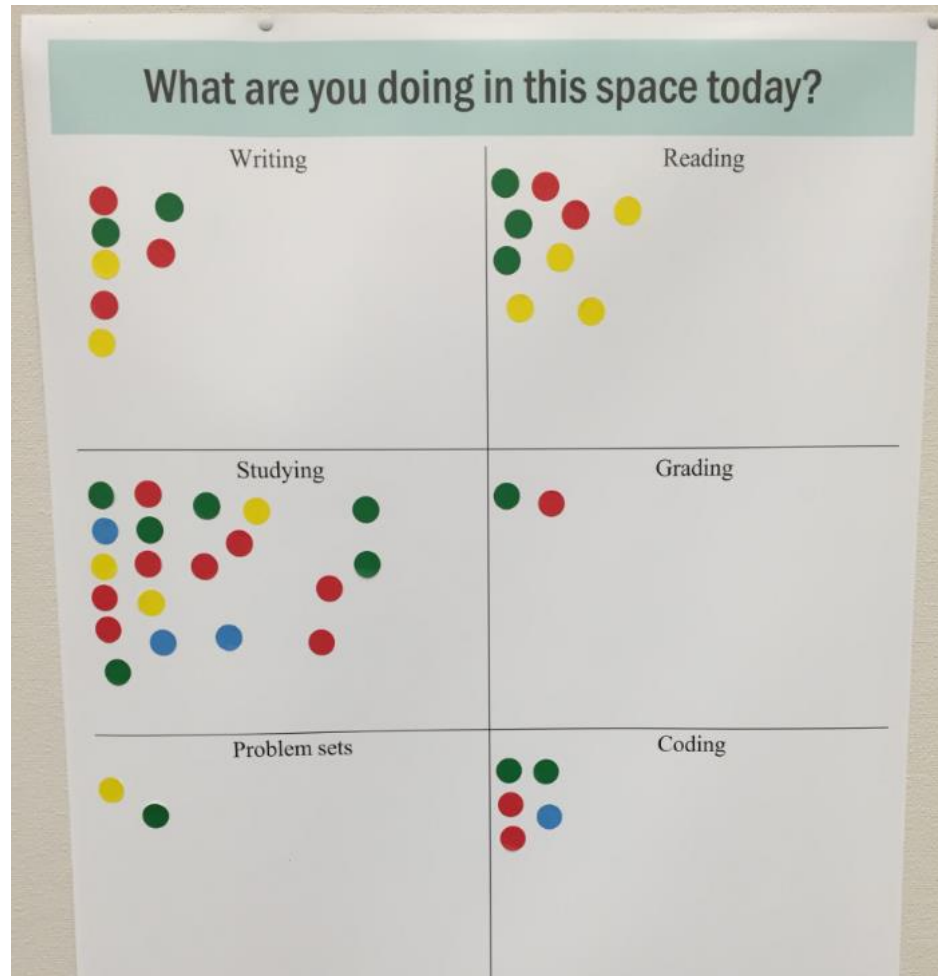
College of Liberal Arts

McCombs School of Business

College of Education

Cockrell School of Engineering

# Assessment Plan: Interactive Survey



Writing - 7

Reading - 9

Studying - 20

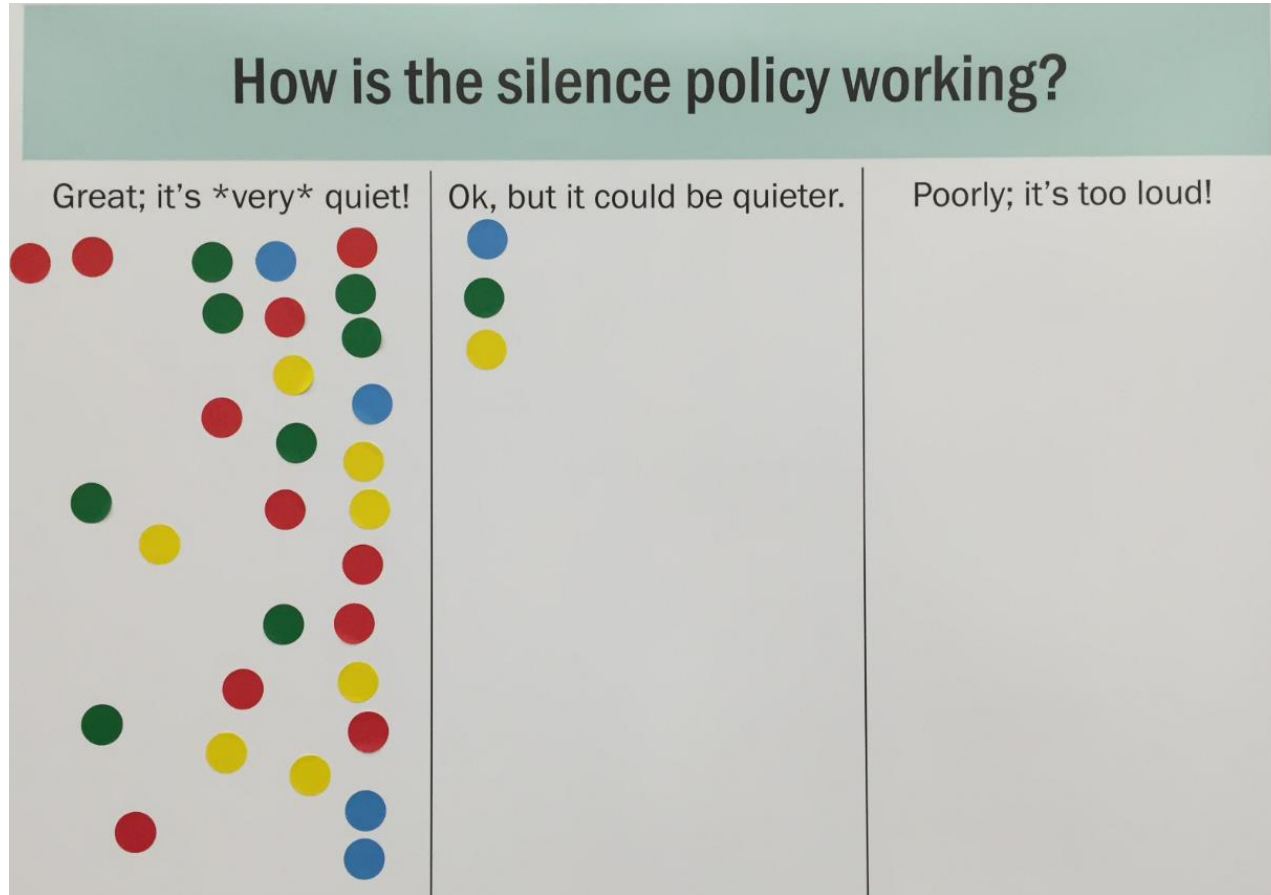
Grading - 2

Problem Sets - 2

Coding - 5

Other: Watching a Video - 1; Finding Articles - 1

# Assessment Plan: Interactive Survey



*“It was so tranquil while I was in there.”*

# Assessment Plan: Services

## Service Feedback

- ▶ Consultation feedback questionnaire
- ▶ Data Lab class and workshop assessment forms
- ▶ Event feedback forms

# Steering Committee

**Purpose:** The Scholars Commons Steering Committee, comprised of UT Libraries staff with a vested interest in the initiative and a graduate student representative, is a decision-making oversight committee charged with:

- ▶ review and discussion of issues
- ▶ policy formulation and adoption
- ▶ fostering liaison engagement
- ▶ communication with campus stakeholders, including advocacy and fund-raising efforts



# Promotion and Communication

## Winning “Dot”!

See me on your way out to claim your branded UT Scholars Commons tote!



The Scholars Commons is a hub for research and serious scholarship within the PCL. A space for experimentation and scholarly inquiry, it supports interdisciplinary collaboration by fostering a dynamic intellectual environment.

**INNOVATE AND EXPERIMENT WITH DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP**  
in the  
**DATA LAB**  
which offers  
SOFTWARE FOR DATA ANALYSIS & VISUALIZATION

**DEVELOP NEW KNOWLEDGE**  
through  
SILENT STUDY

**COLLABORATE**  
in the  
GRADUATE LANDING SPOT

**SHOWCASE YOUR RESEARCH**  
through  
EXHIBITS &  
PRESENTATIONS

For more information visit  
[lib.utexas.edu/scholarscommons](http://lib.utexas.edu/scholarscommons)

 **TEXAS Libraries**  
The University of Texas at Austin  
University of Texas Libraries

Questions?

**Thank you!**

This Pilot initiative successfully launched  
through collaboration and  
inspiration...from colleagues like YOU!

[jflaxbart@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:jflaxbart@austin.utexas.edu)