Trusting Our Students

How Standard Setting Makes or Breaks a Team

Hamilton College

INTRODUCTIONS

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Our Roadmap

01 Patron Counts
How clearly communicated, meaningful goals determine success

02 Fall 2021 Late-Night Shifts
How poorly communicated goals and expectations can pose consequences

03 Mold Mitigation
A challenging example of the importance of setting projects up for success from the beginning

04 Pathways to Growth: Building Buy-In
Avenues for students to grow within their positions and to pursue their interests
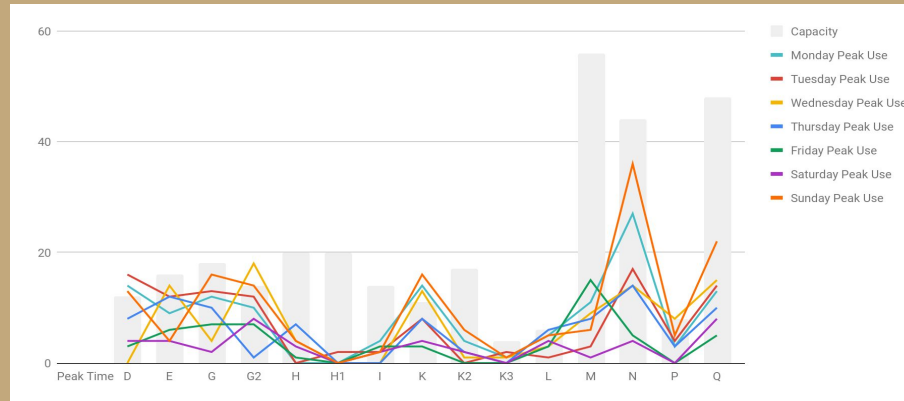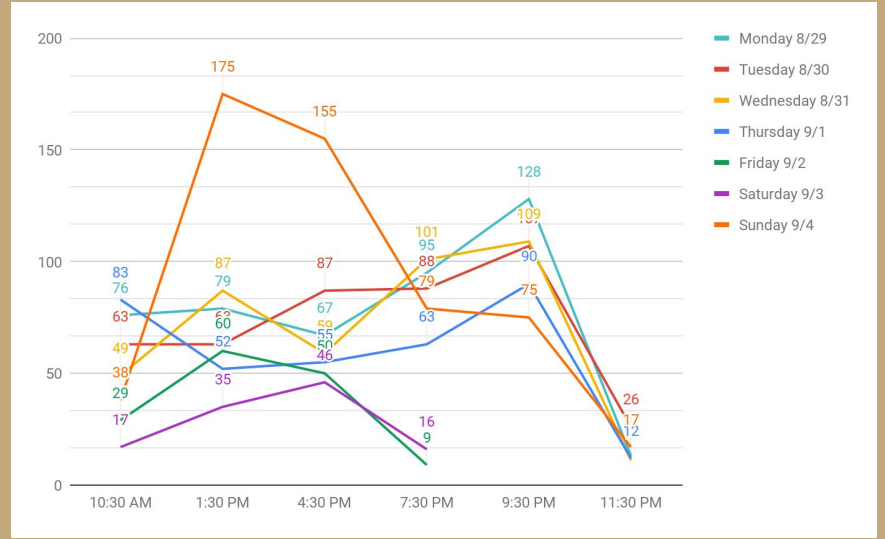
Major Takeaways

01

PATRON COUNTS

What are patron counts?

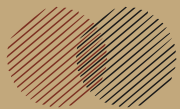|	A	C	D	E	F	G	G1	H	H1	I	J	K	K2	K3	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
10:30 am	0	2		0	0	0	0	0	0		0										
1:30 pm																					
4:30 pm																					
7:30 pm																					
9:30 pm																					
11:30 pm																					

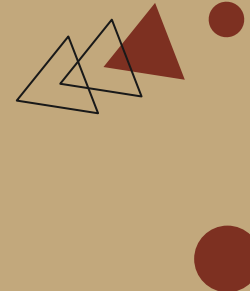# Why do we do them?

Student Buy-In

At the start:

- Counts were viewed as 'busy work for students to do

- The data was seen as something for staff to have, but not actually use

As we progressed:

- The counts began to impact students, showing why it mattered

- They are now fully accepted as a core responsibility

Student Meetings as Forum for Feedback

- Meeting structure
- Space for student employee feedback
- Staff communication through Senior Circ students
- Concrete actions were taken based on feedback received from meetings

Demonstrating Importance

Presentations shown in student meetings gave updates in the numbers behind data collection–giving students an opportunity to see how your particular hour fits into the grand scheme of our entire project
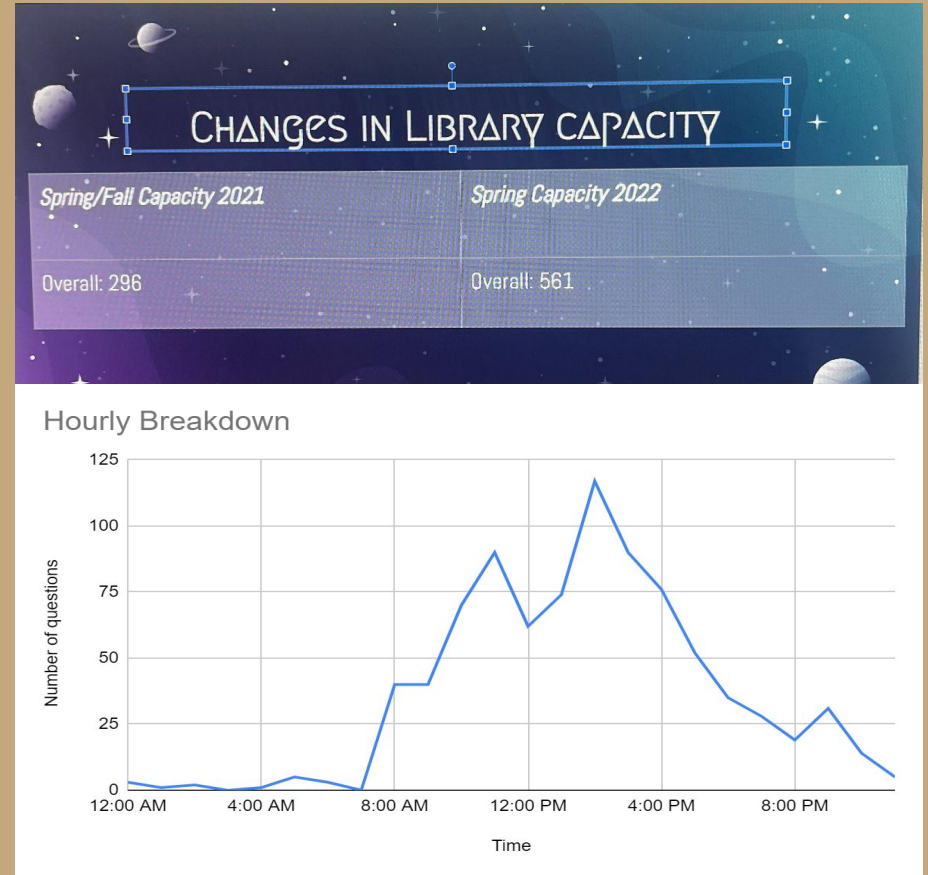
Concrete Action

- Opting not to continue 12am-2am shifts

- Helped us to decide not to have the library open 24/7 during Finals Week

- Gauging student feedback on furniture placement, and replacing that layout after COVID protocols were loosened

Why was this effective?

- Consistent communication and tangible action demonstrated that the work had purpose

- Student employees had space to provide feedback without staff present

- Senior Circulation Students were excellent at linking the student employees and staff members

02
FALL 2021 LATE-NIGHT SHIFTS

HOW LATE NIGHTS FIT INTO STUDENT SCHEDULE

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8-9am							
9-10am							
10-11am							
11-Noon							
Noon-1pm							
1-2pm							
2-3pm							
3-4pm							
4-5pm							
5-6pm							
6-7pm							
7-8pm							
8-9pm							
9-10pm							
10-11pm	/	/	/	/	/		
11-Midnight							
Midnight-2am						Total available hours: 110	

- Closing shifts
- 2 Circ students on shift
- No other service points open
- No other staff (student or professional) in the building
- Pay increase for these hours

What Went Wrong

Absenteeism & Time Sheet Fraud:

- Skipping shifts/trading off who actually worked each night

- Abandoning the service point

- Claiming unworked hours
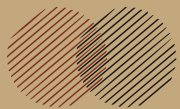
Discovery & Scope of Issue:

- Newer hire mentioned it to Senior Circ Student in February

- Investigation showed one veteran hire was instigator

- Half of student workforce directly impacted

# WHY, Part 1: Staffing Changes / Challenges

- Staff retirements & reshuffles

- Supervisory changes

- Unusually long student hiring cycle

WHY, Part 2: No Sense of "Normal"

- Occupancy was still drastically reduced due to the pandemic

- "Active" tasks were reduced, particularly during late-night shifts

- No new responsibilities were added, leaving students unsure of what they were accomplishing

Average Patron Use Throughout the Day
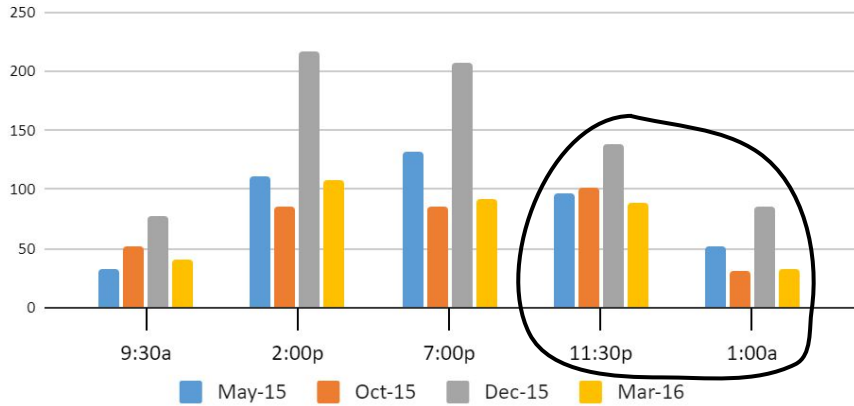
Overall Averages Fall 2021, 9/6-11/29
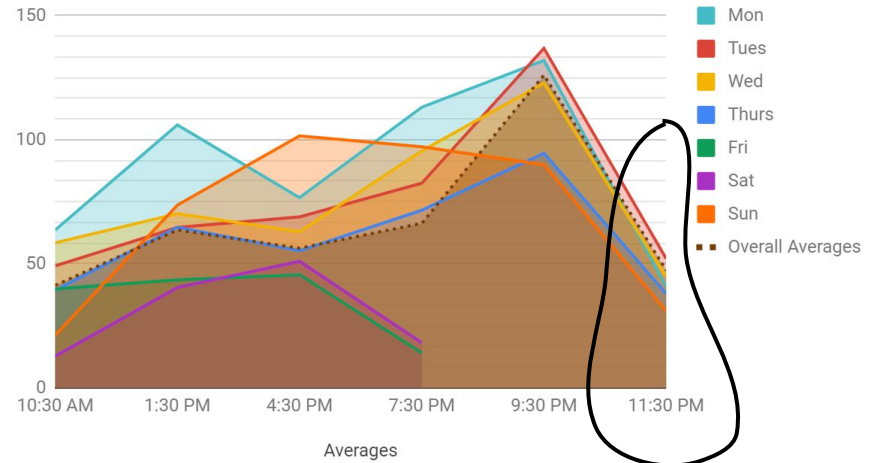
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Influence of Veteran Late Night Students

- Confidence

- Modeling good behavior, or problematic habits for new employees

- How challenging interactions impact buy-in for double staffing

How the Fallout was Corrected

- Investigation and staffing shake-up

- Team Retreat

- Resuming active tasks in all shifts

- Timely filling of student staff positions

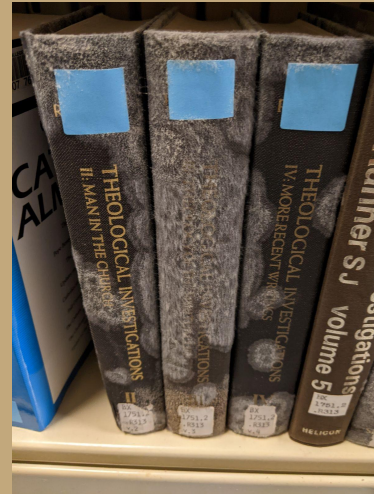- Better communication among staff members to ensure standards don't vary based on shift

03

Mold Mitigation

What happened and how are we dealing with it?

- At the end of the summer break, a significant mold outbreak was discovered in one of our collections.
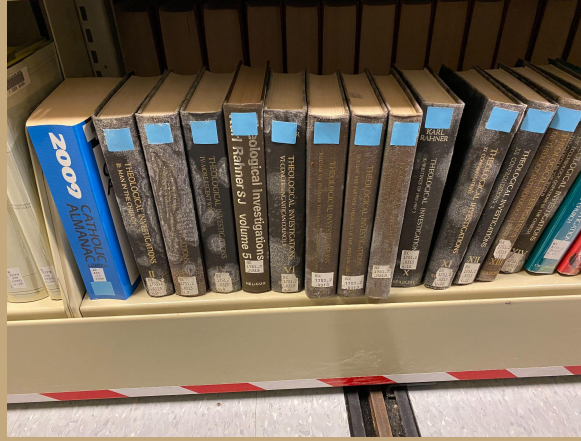- HEPA Vac process

Implementing Student Feedback

- [One-page Guide to Vacuuming Protocols](#)
- Made adjustments to protocols in response to pushback, and to reduce likelihood of burnout
- Setting up success from the start

Before & After

04

Pathways to Growth: Building Buy-In

Roles Beyond Circulation Student Assistant

Circulation	Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	Courier
- All student employees begin in this position - Formal Application for Senior Circulation Position	- Student Assistant (primarily lending, tapped for position) - Senior ILL Student Assistant (cultivated to take on borrowing & shipping responsibilities)	- Delivers books to academic offices - Works concurrently as Circulation Assistant

Fostering Engagement Through Specialization

- Not everyone has the same skills or interests, and that's okay
- Rather than sharing all tasks equally, specialization allows students to achieve ownership over projects they enjoy
- Having varied strengths promotes organic training among students

The Importance of Senior Students

- Senior Student employees are considered staff backups, and are trained to be able to handle complex tasks
- Increased responsibility also means a seat at the table to directly impact policy creation
- Senior Students have the ability to view projects from a unique perspective, having both high expertise and a strong connection to other students

Major Takeaways

1. Creating room for ownership of work and specialization enhances student engagement
2. Clear communication of goals and results is key to gaining buy-in from student employees

Credits

Contributions to this presentation were made by:

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