Assessing the Digital Media Commons: Evaluating New Library Spaces and Services at UNC Greensboro

Southeastern Library Assessment Conference 2013

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do something bigger altogether

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About UNCG

- Public University
- University of North Carolina system
- ~17,00 students
  - ~14,000 undergraduate
  - ~3,000 graduate
- 1,000 faculty

Founded in 1891
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Downtown Greensboro

About the University Libraries

- Jackson Library
- Schiffman Music Library
- 1.2 million book volumes
- 37,000+ e-subscriptions
- 500 databases
- Approximately 100 faculty and staff

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First step: needs assessment!

- Survey of UNCG students in Spring 2010:
  - 835 responses (22% response rate) from sample
  - 120 had developed a video presentation for a class
  - 60% did so because it was required
  - 28.2% decided a video the best way to fulfill an assignment
  - 77.6% did not receive any assistance on campus
  - 54% would have appreciated help with multimedia production

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Media assistance in 2010

- Cameras, voice recorders, tripods, projectors in Libraries

- Media Studies lab for Media Studies students only

  BUT…….

- No office at UNCG provided assistance in developing media (videos, blogs, podcasts, PPT, etc.) for non-Media Studies majors.

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Why establish a Media Commons?

- Supports University learning goals for critical thinking, communication and information literacy

- Supports Libraries' goals of providing learning spaces, supporting student research and partnering with faculty

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Campus partnerships

- Digital ACTS (Action, Consultation & Training Studio)
  - Undergraduate Studies
  - Multiliteracy Centers
- Media Studies Department

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Digital Media Commons opened fall 2012

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DMC services

- Identifying and evaluating media sources
- Technical assistance with media projects
- Consultation on communicating media
- Technology, space and software
- Faculty development and training

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Assessment study outcomes
February – May 2013

- Staff will gain understanding of what current practices are effective/ineffective
- Services will better support user needs regarding hours of operation, materials, and services

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Assessment methods

Formal

- Surveys
- Desk Statistics
- Focus Group
- Usage Study

Informal

- Whiteboard photos
- Weekly poll

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Surveys

- Developed among staff
- 100 distributed, 70% returned
- 10 questions
  - Demographic information
  - When did they visit DMC?
  - Why did they choose DMC?
  - How helpful was the staff?
  - What is the awareness of DMC on campus?
  - Open comments

Desk statistics

- Used LibAnalytics
- Entered information after each patron interaction (in person, phone, instant message or email)
- Recorded type of question (general info, reference, technology). Recorded date and time info
- Recorded date/time via Time Stamp

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Focus group

- Low participation rate
- Offered incentive from film production professor
- Discussed DMC policies, hours, services, customer service
- Recorded and transcribed audio

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Usage study

- App created by UNCG Libraries technology services team

- Statistics taken 4x daily on iPad over one week in March, April

- Number of patrons, noise level, activities, materials used, food and drink consumption were all tracked

Whiteboard photos

- Recorded types of studying happening in DMC

- Indicated what subjects were most often studied

- Used with permission of students

- Took photos at closing time

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Weekly poll

- New questions about DMC and study habits each Monday
- Captured by photo each Sunday evening

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# Limitations of assessments

- Most assessments completed by one staff member

- Assessment took place over just one semester

- Too many assessments without any one being completely thorough

- Assessment only factored in current DMC users

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Survey results

- Average patron aged 19-21
- 12% were biology students
- 56% discovered DMC through word of mouth
- Most visited days: Mon-Wed
- Saturdays least popular

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Desk statistics results

- April saw highest usage numbers
- Typically had 10-15 official consultations per month, fewer in Dec, more in April

DMC-Consultations-monthly

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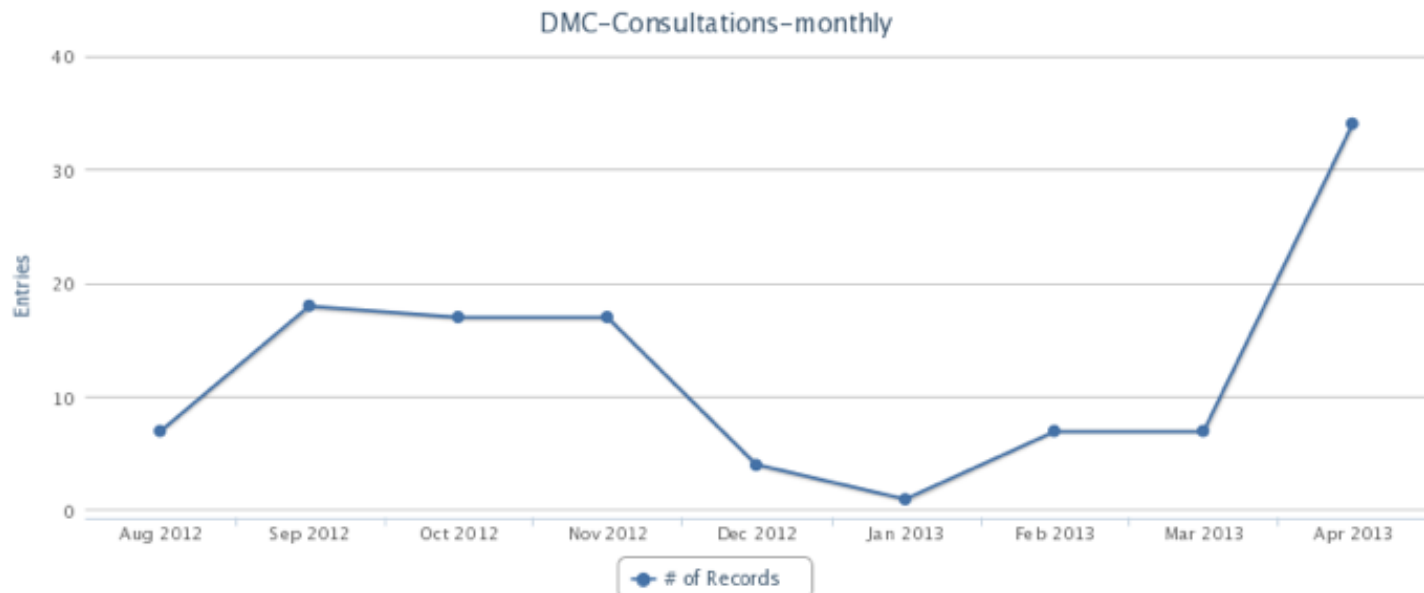
Focus group results

- Participants noted that services and technology were great but "9 times out of 10, I'm just coming for a relaxing place to work."

- Participants agreed best thing about DMC was comfort level

- Requested 24/5 services, like other parts of the library

Usage study results

- Patrons most often sit in section closest to service desk

- 1/3 of all patrons had personal laptops with them

- 1/3 of all patrons had food or drinks with them

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Whiteboard results

- Math, science and foreign language students most frequently utilized the boards
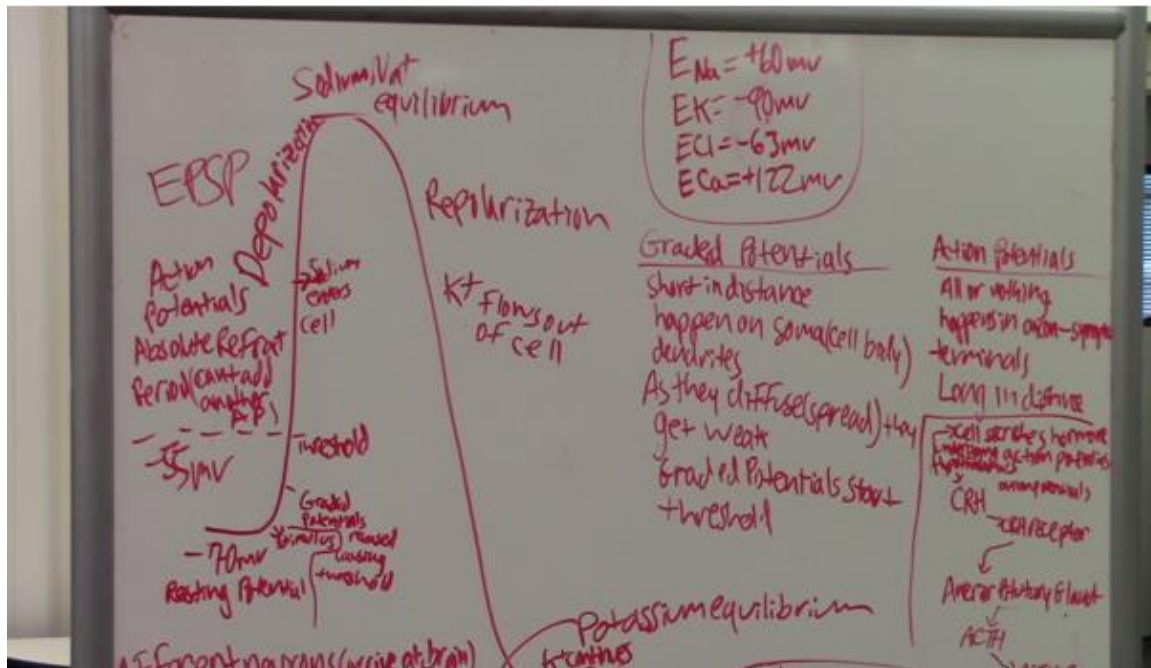
Poll results

- Students report visiting most frequently from noon – 4 pm weekdays
- Presentations were the most common type of multimedia project used for classes
- Requests made for 24/5 services, more computers

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Recommendations for Future Assessment

- Continue desk statistics with clarified language

- Year long usage study needed to properly track trends

- Assessment team headed up by GA, recruit student staff members to take larger role

- Focus groups with incentive to cast wider net for both DMC users and non-users

- Impact of DMC on student learning

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Questions?

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