

User Experience Strategies for Every Library:

Yes, Even Yours!

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<http://bit.ly/UXLTC>

Hennepin County Library

HCL is a public library system serving the city of Minneapolis and surrounding communities:

- forty-one libraries
- online resources
- outreach service.

Our patrons and users are comprised of a diverse population of 1.2 million Hennepin County residents in an area of 611 square miles.

www.hclib.org



Metropolitan State University

11,505 total students

6,220 full-year equivalent
(2015–2016)

90% undergraduate students

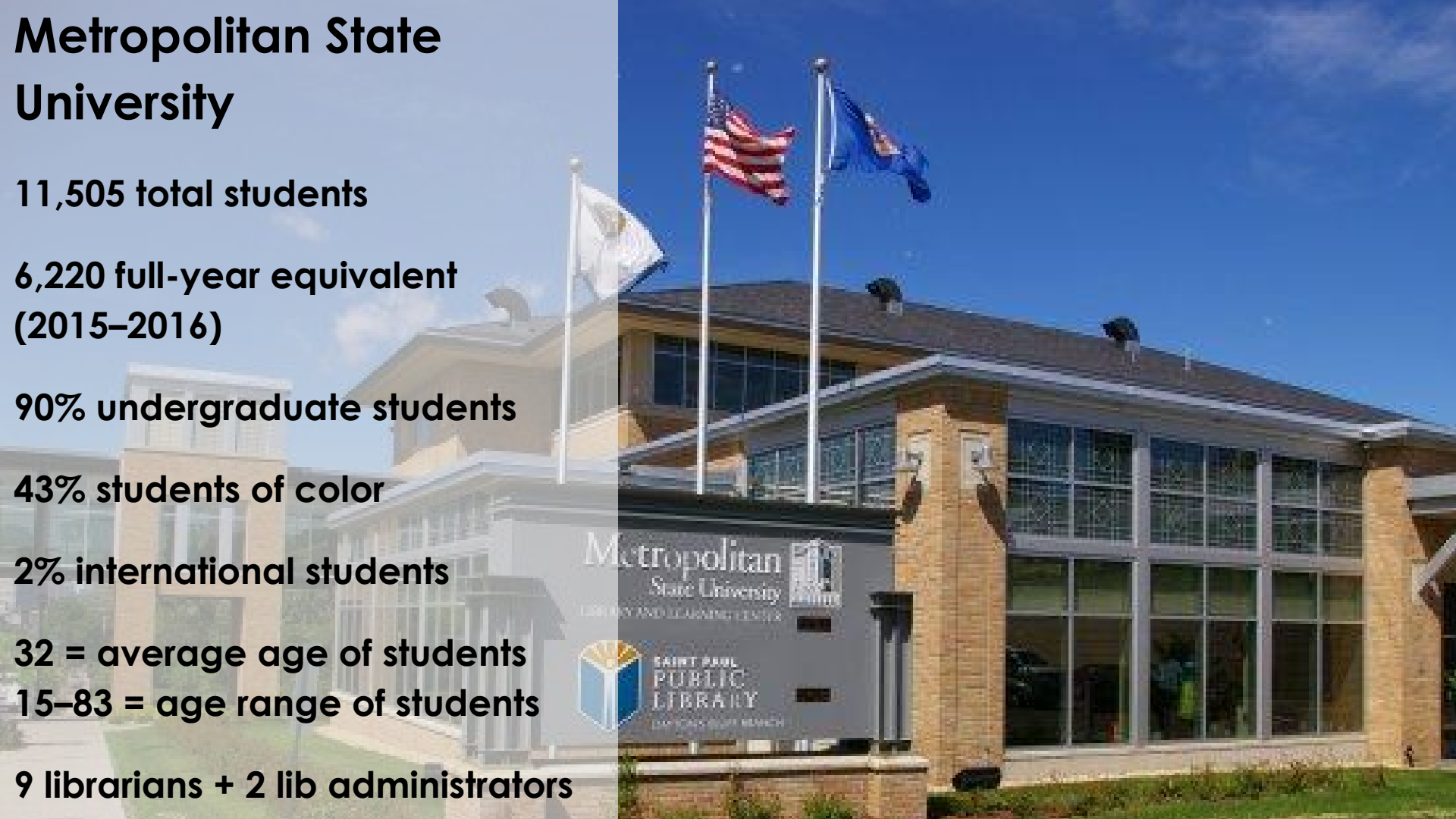
43% students of color

2% international students

32 = average age of students

15–83 = age range of students

9 librarians + 2 lib administrators



Normandale Community College

14,632 credit students

6,837 student full-year
equivalents

58% part-time students

38% students of color

74% age 24 or younger

6 librarians (5.6 full-time
equivalents)



User Experience (UX)

HCL	Metro	Normandale
Usability testing Google analytics User diaries	Usability testing A/B testing Card Sorting User Journey Mapping Google analytics Surveys Focus Groups	Usability testing Google analytics Surveys

Qualitative and Quantitative, often inform each other

Our UX Work

““User experience” encompasses all aspects of the end-user's interaction with the company, its services, and its products.”

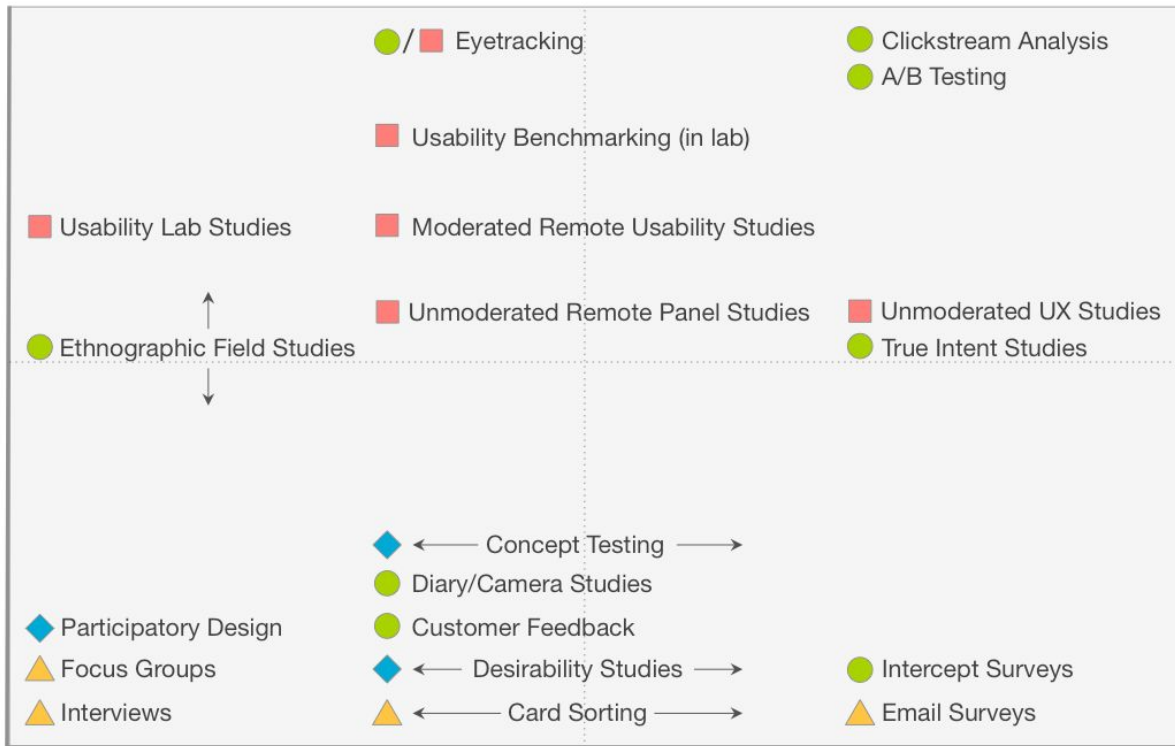
- *Don Norman and Jakob Nielsen Nielsen Norman Group*

“Most of our users' experience of the library occurs online and through software regardless of whether the user is physically present in the library.”

- *Libraries are Software by Cody Hanson*

A LANDSCAPE OF USER RESEARCH METHODS

BEHAVIORAL



QUALITATIVE (DIRECT)

QUANTITATIVE (INDIRECT)

KEY FOR CONTEXT OF PRODUCT USE DURING DATA COLLECTION

- Green circle: Natural use of product
- Red square: Scripted (often lab-based) use of product
- Yellow triangle: De-contextualized / not using product
- Blue diamond: Combination / hybrid

And You?

Usability Testing

- One of a variety of tools and measures to evaluate your website (including analytics)
- Methods vary but at the core is observing users as they use your website
- Tests yield a mix of qualitative and quantitative data

Why Do Usability Testing?

- Test new features or areas in development
- Increase awareness of issues or possible areas of development, as well as to help prioritize known issues or features
- Understand your website from the perspective of the user

Monthly (mostly) Testing at HCL

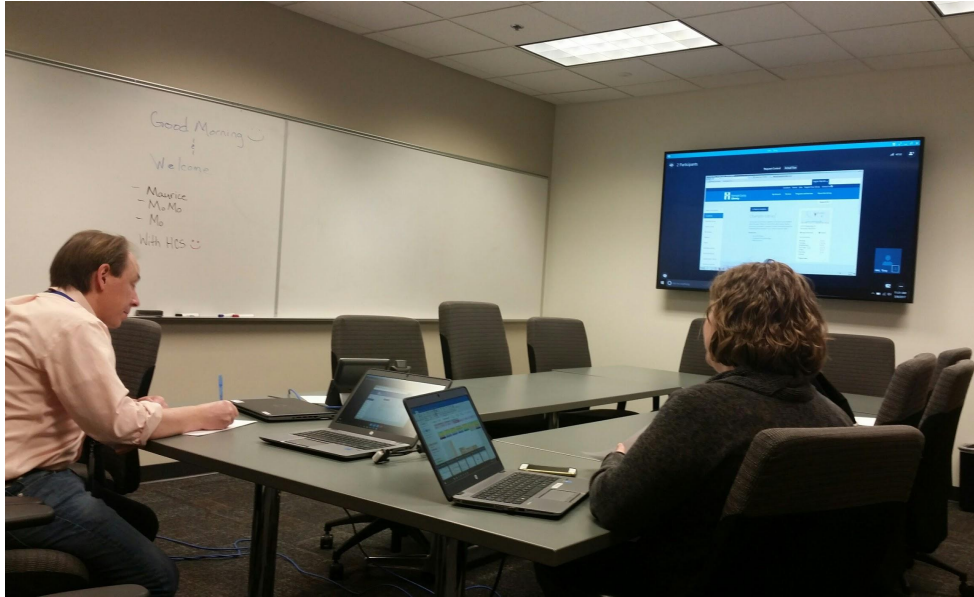
Since *May 2015* we have conducted 61 individual tests (3 tests per testing day)

Tests usually last 30-45 minutes and we ask participants to complete 4-5 tasks

Usability Testing Room at HCL



Observation Room at HCL



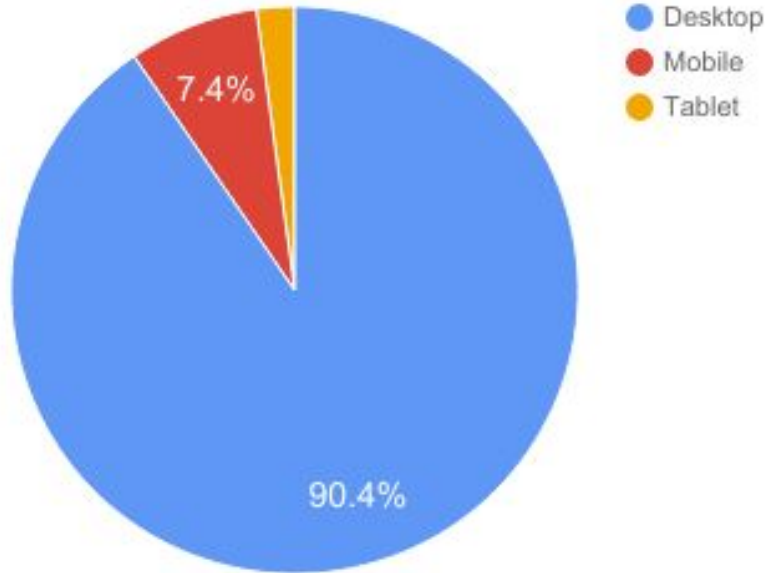
Communicating Results at HCL

After each round of HCL testing the testing team submits a report that is posted on the staff web. Report includes:

- Participants' perceived task success
- Participants' actual task success
- Participants feedback and comments
- Issues identified by observers
- Recommendations to address usability issues

Testing for Mobile at Metro

Mobile Usage



Flash Usability Testing at Normandale



Fast and Cheap Usability Testing

What We Did

3-5 minute tests

1 task per test

5-6 user tests per task

High foot-traffic times =
6-7 tests/hour

Resources Needed

- 2 people (one to run and observe test, one to recruit)
- Laptop
- Task cards
- Clipboard, pen, and paper
- Large sign and candy

Usability Testing Limitations

It's important to keep in mind:

- Usability testing is not indicative of how all users behave, only the particular users that participate
- Usability testing is one important source of user experience data that also includes website analytics, patron comments and questions received through multiple channels, and general usability research and best practices
- Usability testing shows you what is not working, but figuring out how to fix it is another matter

User Personas & User Journey Mapping at Metro

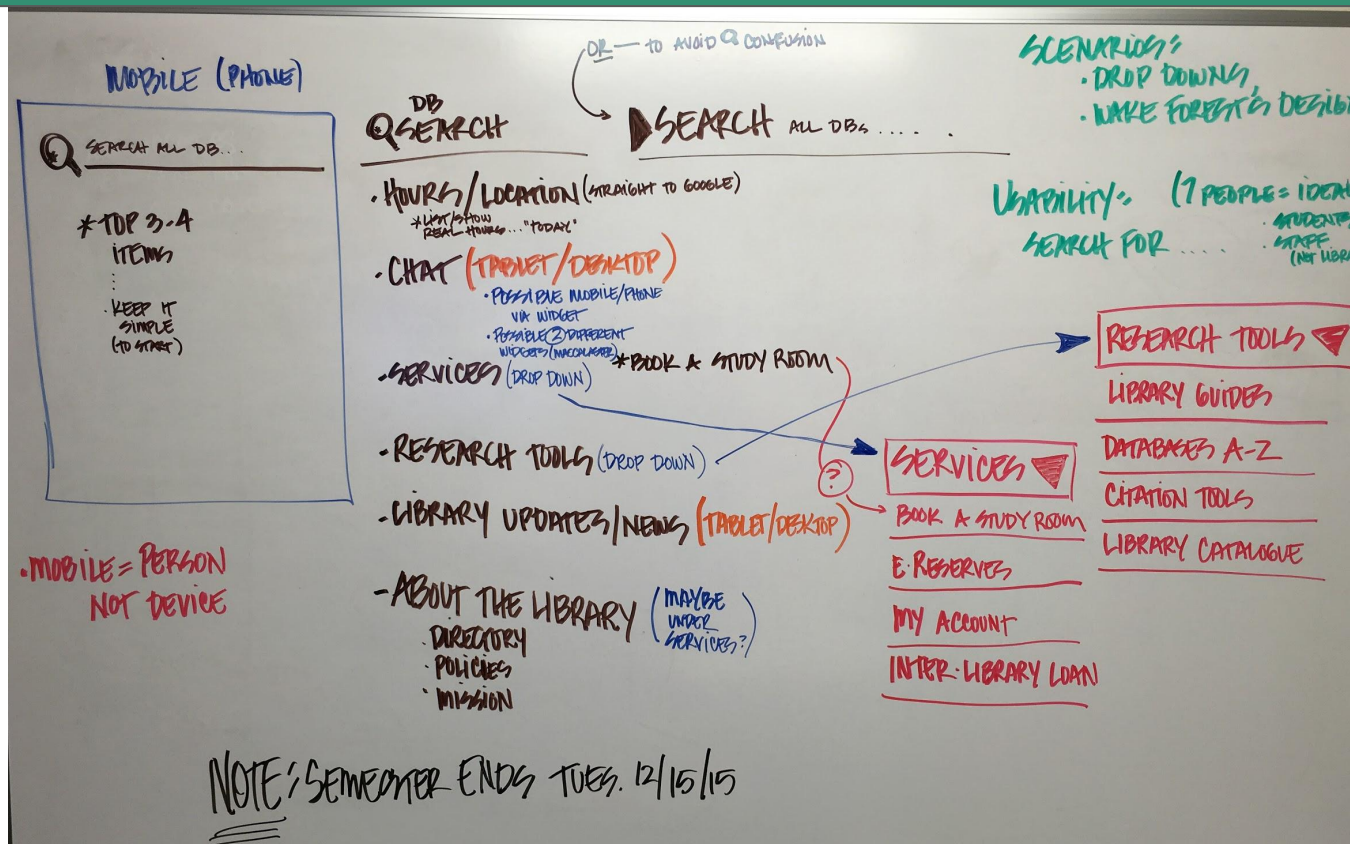


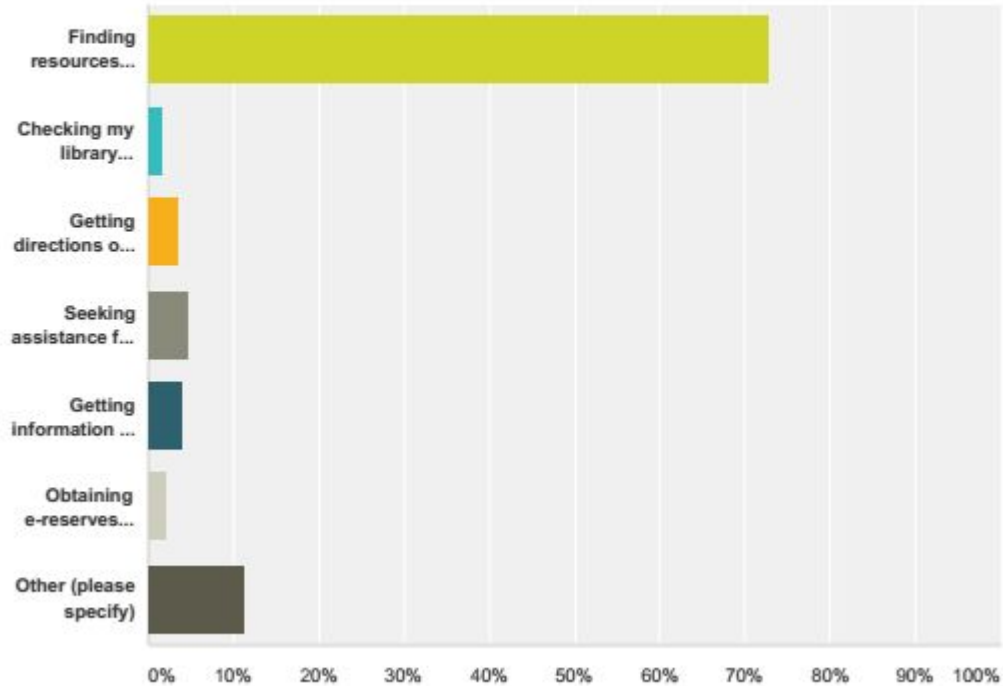
Photo by Rich Harrison
Drawing by Diane DeRosier

Focus Groups and Surveys at Metro



Q4 What is the most common reason you use the Library website?

Answered: 250 Skipped: 7



[Link to survey results](#)

Card Sorting at Metro



The screenshot displays the OptimalSort interface. On the left is a vertical list of source cards. On the right are two target category boxes, "Community" and "Research", each containing one or more destination cards.

Source Cards (Left):

- LIBRARY STAFF DIRECTORY
- FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)
- COURSE RESERVES
- TEENS KNOW BEST Community BOOK CLUB
- INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- U OF MN BORROWING CARD
- HANDOUTS / HELP GUIDES

Community Target (Middle):

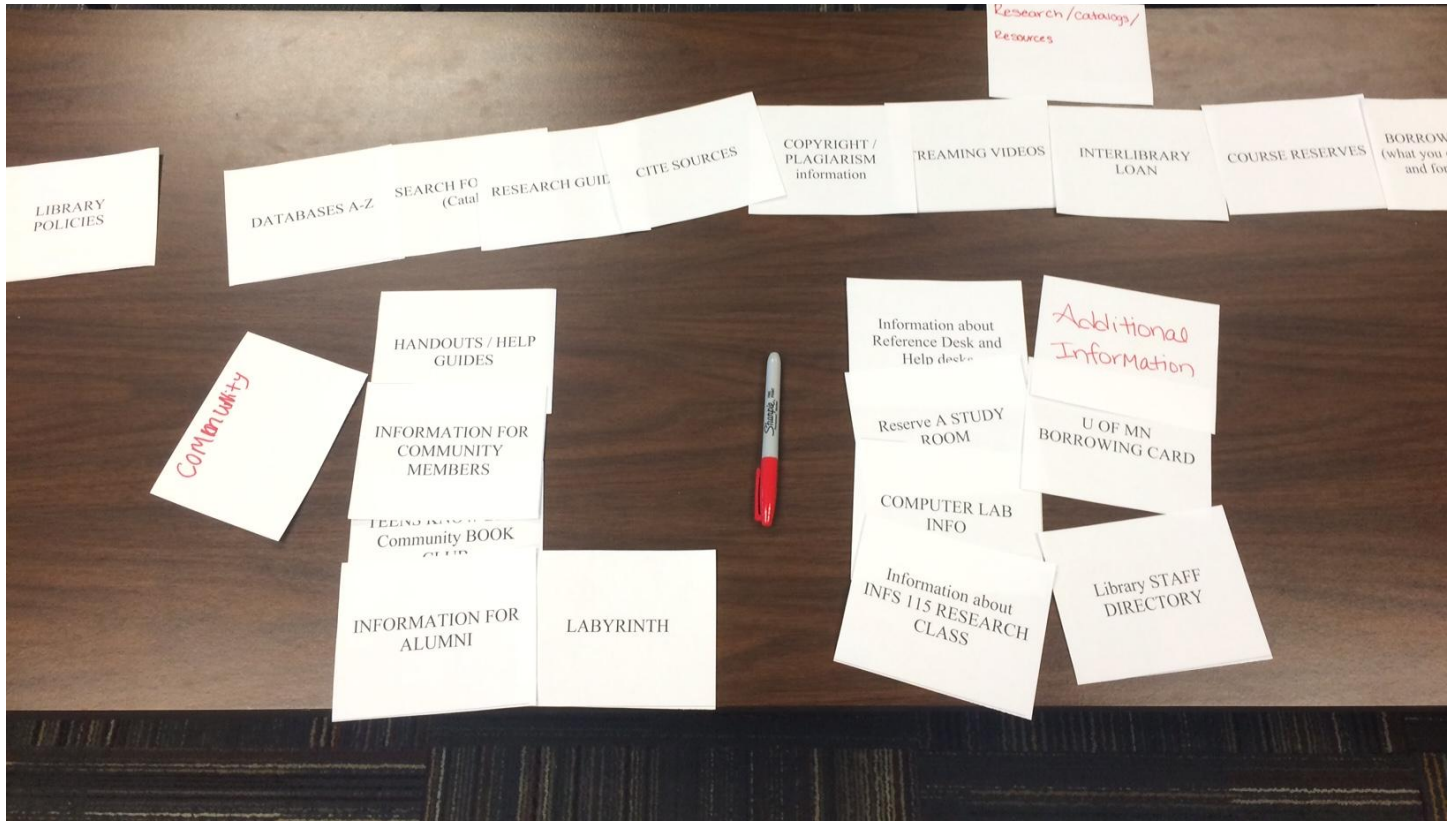
- INFORMATION for ALUMNI
- ARCHIVES

Research Target (Right):

- CITE SOURCES

[Results link](#)

[Participant link](#)



LIBRARY POLICIES

DATABASES A-Z

SEARCH FO (Catal)

RESEARCH GUIL

CITE SOURCES

COPYRIGHT / PLAGIARISM information

STREAMING VIDEOS

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

COURSE RESERVES

BORROW (what you and for)

Research/catalogs/ Resources

Community

HANDOUTS / HELP GUIDES

INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Community BOOK

INFORMATION FOR ALUMNI

LABYRINTH



Information about Reference Desk and Help desk

Reserve A STUDY ROOM

COMPUTER LAB INFO

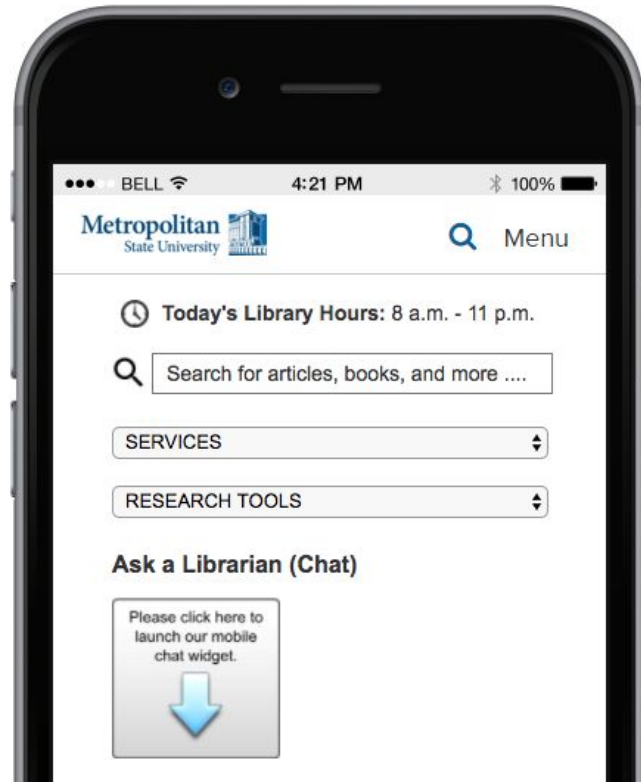
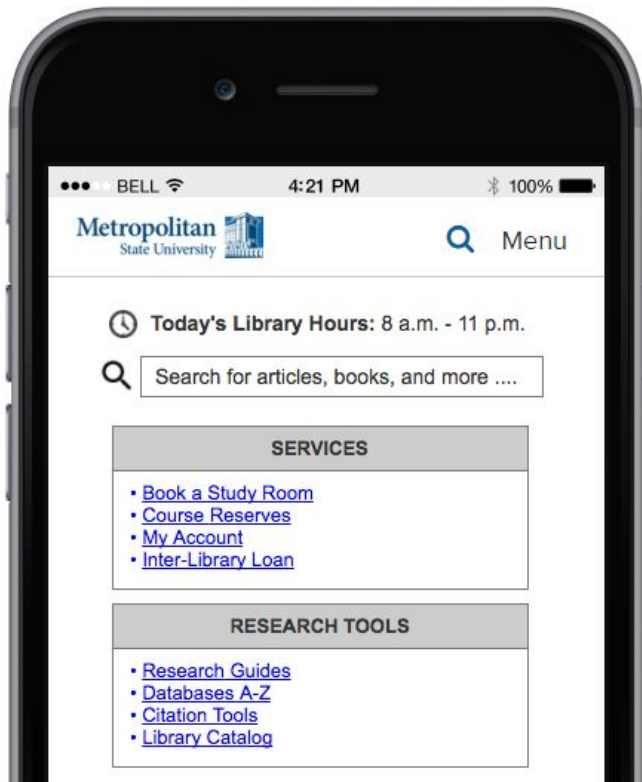
Information about INFS 115 RESEARCH CLASS

Additional Information

U OF MN BORROWING CARD

Library STAFF DIRECTORY

A/B Testing Wireframes at Metro



Recruitment & Incentives

At Metro



At Normandale



Recruitment & Incentives at HCL

HCL recruits volunteers from friends and family, regular volunteers and Library Friends' members, and through public website. Try to have staff backup.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Hennepin County Library website. The header is dark blue with the library logo on the left and navigation links on the right. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is light gray and features a sidebar on the left with a menu of library services. The main content area displays a recruitment announcement for a web usability session, including a description of the session, a list of upcoming sessions, and a link to apply.

Log In / My HCL ▾

Locations Events Jobs Support Your Library Contact Us ⓘ

Hennepin County Library

My Account Browse Programs and Services About the Library

Search Q ▾

About the Library

Locations

Meeting rooms

Library cards

Borrowing

Participate in a web usability session

Help us make the Hennepin County Library website better by participating in a usability session. Volunteers complete several tasks while sharing their thoughts, reactions and processes. No advanced computer skills necessary. Regular library website users and people unfamiliar with the library website are welcome.

Upcoming sessions

- Ridgedale Library, March 8 at 10:00 a.m.

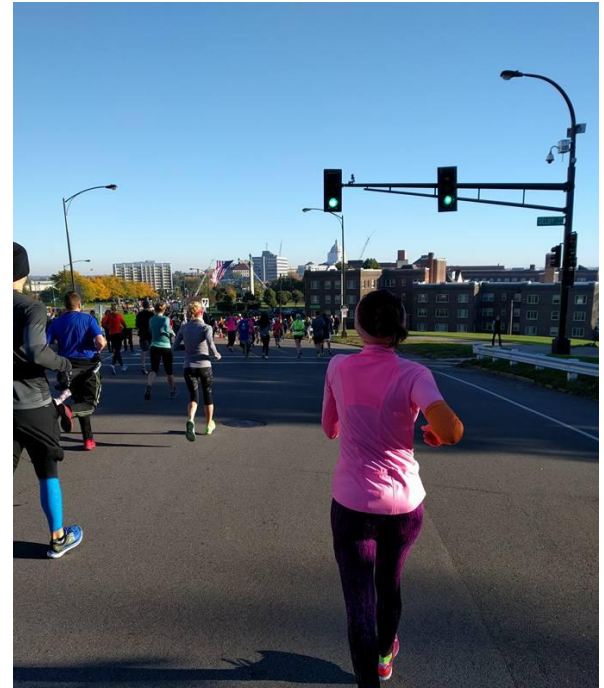
[Apply to participate in a web usability session](#)

Implementation Considerations

We don't run right back to our desks to start making changes after UX work.

Team assesses findings from all participants and other data and changes are—

- discussed
- prioritized
- implemented



Implementation Considerations

Ability to immediately enact changes may be limited

Factors include:

- Resources (staff time, money)
- Technical considerations and limitations
- Governance
- Impact on other library services

Sharing, Collaborating & Getting Support



Institutional Involvement

Invite staff to observe usability tests

And remember, IT staff can be your friends

*WHERE THERE'S A WILL DONUT,
THERE'S A WAY*



Our Core Principles

Some user testing is better than none.

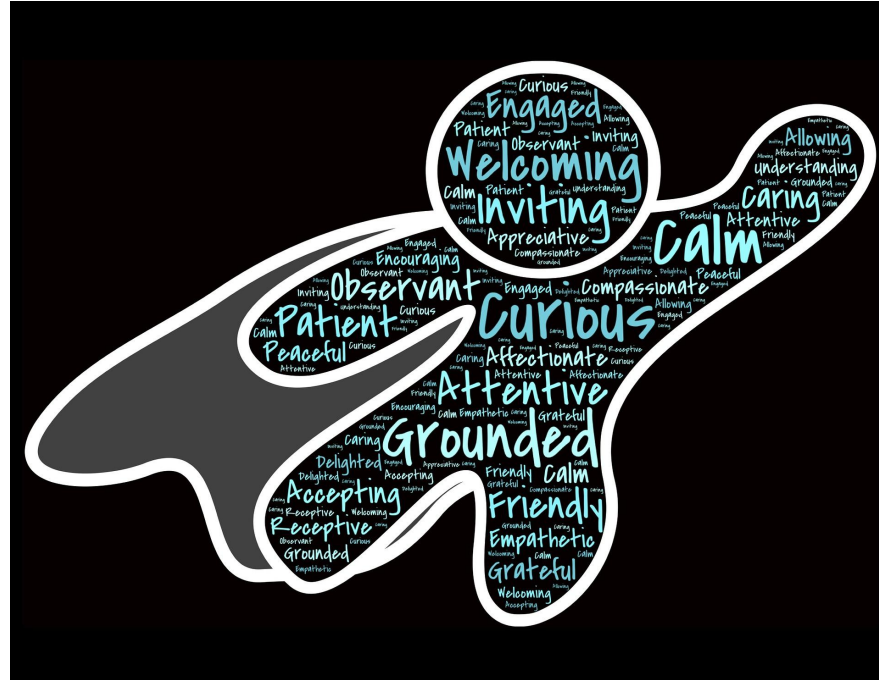
- Commit to small, frequent, iterative changes
- You will learn from every test and get better and better

Our users are
not broken.



“We need to exercise a disciplined empathy.”

Sumana Harihareswara “User Experience is a Social Justice Issue” *The Code4Lib Journal* Issue 28



Feminist authors in particular have often called for changes in the way in which the social and human impact of technology is evaluated. They have stressed the need to base such evaluation on the experience of those who are at the receiving end of the technology.

- Ursula Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*

Tools and Resources

Axure (free educational licenses)

Optimal Workshop

SurveyMonkey

UXPA MN (monthly trainings)

IAI (Information Architecture Institute)

LibUX



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Image attributions

Post-It wall: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dolske/9029594967>

Donuts: <https://pixabay.com/p-1988584/>

Square peg round hole:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/epublicist/3546059144>

Hero figure: <https://pixabay.com/en/superhero-human-being-power-alive-450419/>

Contact us!

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We are happy to share scripts, tips, and pool our resources. Access some here: <http://bit.ly/UXLTC>