
2011 Space Study -- Qualitative data themes [from task survey comments & flip chart responses]

General themes

- “More Library Hours” was a universal theme that resonated across locations in both the task survey and the flip chart responses.
- Users have a need for both group and quiet study space – both during open hours and 24/7.
- Users want power outlets, working printers and consistent, comfortable temperatures.
- In general, people value and enjoy the Libraries physical spaces.
- Each library has something that draws patrons in and makes it their preferred space. The quiet grandeur of the Barker Reading Room, the river views of Hayden, the natural lighting and big tables in Rotch, and the group study rooms of Dewey.

1. Task Inventory Survey

responses-Qualitative:

- Over 900 surveys completed – containing approx. 293 comments
- Free text comments were captured and coded in Evernote software and as a “word cloud.”
- See “Task Survey Comments Wordle” for visual representation of comments

Themes from comments:

Hours: Comments on hours & people wanting more were the most common comment – 90 comments. (see CQs hours report for complete details)

Space themes: Comments surrounding space – praise, suggestions, etc. garnered 64 comments

Appearing frequently:

- Temperature issues plague our users
- People generally like and enjoy the spaces – particularly the grandeur and quiet of the **Barker Reading Room**, the space, natural lighting and river views of **Hayden**, the natural lighting and big tables in **Rotch**, and the group study rooms of **Dewey**
- Noise issues in Rotch, some felt group study should not happen in Rotch as it is not designed to accommodate it and sound travels throughout the building.
- People want and need different kinds of spaces – group, quiet, private

Less frequently noted:

- A number of users, particularly at Dewey, desire private enclosed space for one person to make a phone call or have an interview.
 - People notice cleanliness – and lack thereof. (eight comments)
 - They like the “comfy” chairs – and would appreciate more. Wooden chairs in Hayden were noted by one user as being “unpleasant”, several Barker & Rotch users desire more couches
 - People noted “awesome” chairs in group study spaces in **Rotch**, green chairs in **Barker** are perfect for naps, and chairs with the “soft red cushions” were appreciated in **Hayden**.
 - Be aware of ergonomics in our study areas
 - Rare book area in Rotch needs better seating and lighting
 - Exhibit in the middle of the Rotch reading room was disrupting to several – both the installation process and the general existence of it.
 - Two comments on poor quality of drapes in Hayden, one comment on carpet needed on 2nd floor of Hayden and Music Library
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Electricity:

Appearing frequently

- people desire more power – basically, wherever there are study spaces, the option for power ideally would be there. Comfy chairs, tables, carrels, etc.

Equipment:

Frequently appearing:

- people love the scanners
- people need and love working printers – ours don't always work or are slow
- printer maintenance was a common theme – weekends mentioned (nobody maintains)

Less frequently noted:

- GIS computers old and slow
- more Athena computers
- headphones to check out
- better wifi
- test power outlets on tables and elsewhere occasionally (particularly Hayden)
- outlets & extension cords
- confusion over charging for scans on scanner/copier

Staff:

- close to twenty comments praising staff. One mentioning a loud staff member.

Public access:

Several patrons commented on our open door policy:

- *"thank you very much for allowing public access. around the USA only a few regions are as accessible as this area. thanks M.I.T. I could not be writing my book without you or doing research that may have saved my life"*
- *"The availability of Hayden Library to the community, particularly to those of us, who are studying for professional exams or applying for new jobs, is *extremely* valuable. I do not know what I would do without it. Thank you so much for hosting us!"*
- *"I am a BU graduate student. I appreciate that the library is not restricted to MIT students and faculty only."*

Food issues:

Only five comments regarding food:

- presence of food relates to cleanliness, lack of perceived "rules"/respect.
- several patrons would like food to be blocked.
- several other patrons would like access to food, hot water, cold water, vending machines

Collections:

- Vera confusing to use for some - "searching for things online is a bit tricky",
 - more databases, more ejournals, more online everything desired
 - more reserve books – but also have some that can be checked out for longer than two hours
 - one faculty member (Rotch) would like quicker turn around & some influence on requested book purchases
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Circulation:

- several comments regarding disliking high fines

Directional/organizational:

- several comments about directional issues, things being hard to find, books not where they should be on the shelf.
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2. Flip Charts – Open-ended questions:

- Three questions were posted over the course of three weeks.
- Each question stayed up for approximately three days
- Response was good – with Hayden collecting the most comments.

Question #1: positive and negative words to describe space

Barker: + inspiring, pretty, spacious, calming;

- temperature issues (too warm usually), too dark, need more electrical outlets, lamps don't work, comfy chairs needed on other floors, check wifi on 6&7, holes to lock laptops.

Dewey: + study rooms and good lighting, quiet but cold

- not enough lighting upstairs, group study room issues (one person taking entire room)

Hayden: + sunny, quiet, river view, lots of space, comfy chairs

- noisy spots, too cold, slow computers, printers have issues, power outlets needed in basement and on desks, drapes on "last leg"

Music: +relaxing, quiet, comfortable, friendly

- at MIT (only one comment)

Rotch: +bright, not crowded, quiet

- temp issues, no bathroom, noise travels, need more outlets

Question #2: Favorite feature of the MIT Libraries

Barker: beauty, space, dome, privacy, quietness, inspiring, an escape

Dewey: quiet study rooms and reservation system

Hayden: views, big tables, good atmosphere, DVDs, windows, outsider access, views, collections (magazines, detective, browser, novels, DVDs), long tables, sunlight, quietness

Music: Tables, comfy chairs, space

Rotch: tables, sunlight

Question #3: I wish the MIT Libraries had...

Barker: working lamps, working printers, outlets, free coffee

Dewey: coffee/snacks/water, more study rooms, more printers, better individual lighting, more comfortable chairs (get rid of wooden chairs)

Hayden: Athena computers, coffee, vending machines, food truck, better bathroom, better lighting, hot water, pdf reader, better HVAC, more macs, more comfy chairs

Music: online books

Rotch: more trash cans, coat hooks, more outlets, water fountain/bathroom, more comfy chairs, closed group study
