

Exchange of Ideas:

MIT Libraries' Student Feedback Sessions on October 6th and October 14th

1. Salient Impressions (Noteworthy Ideas)

- One of the best spaces to sit on campus is at the windows in Hayden overlooking the Charles River.
- Mix fun and studies to attract people to the Library.
- Make physical navigation through Hayden more clear and natural.
 - Several students did not know there was a second floor in Hayden.
- Practicality and use of space by the maximum number of people is very important.
- Strong desire for lockable storage for personal items for short periods of time.
- Important elements: Light, nature, snacks, coffee, durable aesthetics, artistic design, music.

- Library spaces to support a variety of activities
 - Work and study spaces for individuals, small groups and large groups
 - Spaces to learn and create: classes, tutorials, design software, recordings
 - Semi-social, quasi-public places to work and socialize while not disturbing others
 - Spaces to reflect and take a break: eat, recreate (game, physical activity), meditate
 - Visible and prominent places to display exhibits, rare collections, student art

2. Technology

- **Ability to integrate one's own technology throughout the Library**
 - Plug into large monitors/screens for both Macs and PCs
- **Full technical, multi-media services and support**
 - Technical support: IS&T located closer to the library
 - Access to software and training:
 - (1) Adobe Creative Suite
 - (2) GIS: Resources, training, and tutorials
 - (3) Other: Data visualization, Solidworks, Sibelius and other music software
 - More printers, color printing, scanners
 - Strong Wifi throughout the library; lots of power outlets
- **Exposure to new technology, and training**
 - iPads, google glasses and other emerging technologies
 - Ability to check-out devices: iPads/Tablets, Laptops, headphones, etc.
- **Technology in Group Study/Instruction rooms**
 - Video/picture, editing/recording tools
 - (1) Again, ability to integrate one's own technology
 - (2) Mac and PC compatibility
 - (3) Large screens/monitors/displays, possibly overhead projector
 - (4) Sound system (for playing music, watching videos, practicing presentations)
 - Cameras and Skype capability
- **Visualization Spaces**
 - There was general consensus that a data visualization space is interesting but may not be practical. Potential cost, size, and availability were concerns; as well as maximizing library space for individual or group study.

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3. Group Study Spaces

- **Never enough group study spaces**
- **Available 24/7**
- **Mix of spaces**
 - For Small (2-3), Medium (4-6) and Large (7-10) groups
 - Greatest demand for 4-6. Do not need a lot of large group rooms.
 - Also provide rooms/areas that cannot be reserved
- **Degrees of privacy and sound isolation**
 - **Ability to interact with groups and make noise without feeling like disturbing others.**
 - Visible and located near activity
 - Alcoves: not too open, but not entirely closed off
 - Preference for doors especially on medium and large group study spaces, but make spaces transparent and not too formal.
 - Reactions to examples:
 - Grand Valley State Library: Nooks seemed too open and disruptive
 - Northwestern: Nooks at edges of stacks work well. Provide privacy and focus. With other people around, get less distracted.
 - The Media Lab (E14) group study/conference rooms are good examples.
- **Range of activities**
 - group work / discussions
 - ability to interface and share computer screen with group
 - presentation practice, poster sessions
 - work with friends
 - informal job interviews
 - study languages
 - screenings to watch DVD's etc.
- **Furniture**
 - Big table, plenty of outlets, whiteboards, chalkboards, writable surfaces
 - For medium spaces: Sit 4-6 people around a table each with a laptop
- **Room reservations**
 - Ability to reserve on-line and at-the-door, with ID card access
 - Ability to know what spaces are available, including rooms that cannot be reserved.

4. Media Creation

- Media Creation with design software could be a good fit for the Libraries as many departments do not have access to such facilities.
 - Adobe Creative Suite software, green screen, Mastercam, video editing.
 - Sound, music, recording studio.
 - 3D printer, laser cutter, color printer.
 - Require training and ID access to use.

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- Hobby Shop/Mechatronic Maker Space was not viewed as practical for the Libraries.
 - These spaces require dedicated, technical staff. And students who need this type of Maker Space may have access to it elsewhere on campus or through their DLCs.
 - Could the Libraries collaborate with the Hobby Shop or provide a guide to navigating existing maker spaces on campus?

5. Furniture

- **Mix of seating and surfaces**
 - Comfortable chairs for long-hours of working
 - Soft, comfy seating for relaxed reading, napping
 - (1) individual lighting
 - (2) individual surfaces/flip tables
 - Non-traditional seating:
 - (1) standing desks or walk-up bar. Chairs not required.
 - (2) booths
 - (3) benches
- **Moveable furniture that can be used to reconfigure space for multiple uses**
 - Panels (whiteboards and blackboards) that can be written on and used to create “shifting rooms” (Stanford D-School does this well.)
- **Big tables**
 - Some less formal than the current large tables in Hayden
- **Single-person spaces**
 - Chairs, tables designed for one person. But with visibility.
 - Bigger individual desks, room for laptops
 - Sound-dampening carrels to allow one to read out loud
- **Don't forget about the lefties.**

6. Noise/Quiet/Densities

- **Be able to do work without fear of disturbing others.**
- **Different zones for different noise levels**
 - Quiet spaces, possibly some isolated for quiet study
 - Open “louder” spaces (Ambient noise can allow one to focus.)
 - Quiet and louder spaces within the same space
 - Can be dense and quiet. (Example: Bass Library)
- **Some group activity is louder than others.**
 - Group project work may be better suited for enclosed, soundproof room
 - Groups working on problem sets could be more out in the open
- **Acoustic dampening** and noise cancelling surfaces and furniture.
- **Different requirements for different times of year**
 - More privacy during finals
- “Barker dome (reading room) works well, but everyone goes in expecting it to be quiet. It is almost ‘intimidatingly quiet’”

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7. Cafe, food, social

- A Café
 - **Space to meet, get work done and take a break**
 - **Coffee 24/7**
 - Possibly half inside and half outside the Library
 - Possibly near recent periodicals
- On campus,
 - **Steam Café works well.** It has big tables and one can work and socialize.
 - Bosworth Café in Lobby 7 is too loud and does not have enough tables.
 - Stata does not have a friendly feeling.
- Café at Yale's Bass Library is a good example.
 - Right style of enclosure/connection to library (Could eat in the library.)
 - Good mix of foods (coffee, tea, pastries, sandwiches, cold sushi) and integration of cafe and vending
 - No smells from foods
 - Enough seating
- Zone where one can and cannot eat

8. Quality of Experience and Aesthetics

- **Inside Out and Outside In**
 - **Natural sunlight** is one of the biggest draws to Hayden, especially in the winter.
 - (1) One student observed, Hayden can be cold, dark and too big in the wintertime.
 - Enhanced views and feeling of being outside when inside.
 - **Stronger relationship to the Charles River.**
 - **Access to outdoor yards**
 - (1) More useable courtyard
 - (2) Possibly café out onto terrace.
- **Furniture and architectural finishes should age gracefully and not wear out quickly.**
- **Various opinions on aesthetics and feel:**
 - Some like wood and warm colors for a sophisticated, homey feel.
 - Some like more natural materials like wood, fabric, stone, and fewer plastic surfaces.
 - Others like current aesthetics and bright colors.
 - Open feeling, natural light, but not sterile architecture.
- **Lighting considerations:**
 - Well lit and inviting.
 - Lighting for individual spaces, from tables, desks, carrels, to seating.
 - LED and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) lighting

9. Collections and Stacks

- **Maintain some stacks**
 - Reading through titles is a rich and interactive way to search for information.
 - Stacks are reminders of the physical artifacts of knowledge.

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- Sitting among books is calming and makes you want to study harder.
- ***Stacks can provide a buffer zone.***
 - Balance stacks, study areas, and group spaces without compromising open feel or natural light.
- ***Other ideas for physical materials***
 - Improve navigation; make it easier to find materials
 - Prominent display of new, odd and interesting books
 - More required textbooks and recommended books for classes
 - More how-to, resource books for research
 - Visible reading and listening suggestions
 - Visible magazine covers
- ***Ideas about services***
 - The current book request service is incredibly convenient.
 - Consider providing pick up for reserved books at Stata
 - Consider drop box for books even when the Library is open
 - More book re-shelving carts
 - Maintain OPAC stations for quick look-ups while in the stacks

10. Services and Operations

Provide more, clearer information about what the Library offers.

Digital services

- More digital services
 - Kindle checkout option to easily borrow ebooks
 - Cloud for checking out music
 - “Recommendation Engine”: suggests literature based on past checkout history
- More efficient look-ups on Barton system.
 - The current engine is not efficient in using key words.

Other services and operations

- Have Librarians more out in the open and available to help you in the stacks and online.
- Consider “Library Loyalty Rewards”: members get points for checking into the library and possibly redeem points for coffee.
- Consider longer hours at one library, especially on Friday/Saturday and in the summer.
- Secure ID access to key spaces after hours.
- Low room temperature is good for odor control and focus.
- Boston Library Consortium and Ivy League Bookshare are great.