

Reopening Data & Spring Services Survey, 2021

Purpose

The Individual Study Space @ Research Commons was the first Libraries space to reopen after closure in March 2020. This project enabled us to respond to immediate user needs for the reopened space as well as wider needs for future reopening. One of the Libraries strategic priorities is to [Enrich the Student Experience](#), recognizing that “students reach their full potential...when we collaborate to transform support for the holistic experience.” In partnership with many Libraries units and external partners, Assessment, Data Visualization & Planning staff developed two short surveys, reviewed booking data from LibSeats reservations and reviewed and coded chat reference questions. Put together, this data has guided Libraries reopening plans for Spring 2021 and helped prioritize services for Summer and Fall quarters. The data has also been shared with partners and stakeholders to extend support for students and maintain staff safety as we reopen our spaces to in person use.

Key Resources

- [Individual Study Space @ Research Commons](#) homepage

Methods

- A student survey open to all students prior to the opening of the Individual Study Space @ Research Commons (March 15-April 9, 2021) received 573 responses. This was designed to get an overall sense of student space and service needs for Spring Quarter 2021.
- Students were required to book a seat in advance online through LibSeats. Assessment staff conducted a weekly review of seat booking reservation data through the first month after opening and monthly thereafter (March 29-April 30, 2021).
- A short follow up survey to confirmed visitors was automatically distributed via LibSeats after the seat reservation ended. This survey received 70 responses in the first month after opening and helped distinguish general student priorities from the more specific priorities of users of the Individual Study Space @ Research Commons. The post-reservation survey remained active throughout the 2020-21 academic year for student visitors to submit comments and suggestions.
- Review and coding of chat transcripts was conducted during the first two weeks the Individual Study Space @ Research Commons was open to identify emerging questions about using and accessing the reopened space (March 29-April 12, 2021).

Results

- **For students using the individual study space**, their top priority was longer reservation times (reservations were initially restricted to 2-hour blocks), followed by space for individuals to attend Zoom meetings/classes, and printing/scanning (distant 3rd)
- These priorities were corroborated by student respondents on the **open student survey**: quiet individual study space, printing/scanning, and space to attend Zoom meetings/classes were the top three priorities. There was some variation by program/discipline in priorities.
- Bookings steadily increased over time and as new reservation availability was opened. Most students learned about the opening from a Libraries email but many found it on the Libraries website or heard about it from a friend.



Overall responses (n=573) from the public survey. Students were asked to select up to 3 options for Libraries reopening that would help them complete their work for classes and research in Spring quarter.

Actions & Improvements

- The limit on 2-hour reservations was extended to 3 hours. Multiple reservations in a day (up to the maximum of 3 hours) were enabled to allow students to take breaks and attend classes.
- An individual, enclosed space for activities requiring audio/verbal participation (such as conducting a phone call or attending a virtual class or job interview) was made available for reservation.
- While the Research Commons is traditionally a collaborative space, it will remain a reservation-only individual study space in Fall 2021 to maintain continuity of service if local restrictions are increased.
- The data continues to be a useful reference point to guide further reopening plans and to share with campus partners.

“ I appreciated the Research Commons study space so very much this spring quarter. A change of scenery was exactly what I needed to break through my writer's block and procrastination. Special thanks to all the library staff who stepped up to make this option available! I'd also like to call attention to the *excellent* reservation system; the map and individual photos of each study space helped me feel comfortable and confident venturing out into public after months of isolation. Also, I know the adjustable-height tables are especially meant for wheelchair users (which is so important), but they're also awesome to provide a standing-desk option for fidgety people. Can't wait to explore the rest of the libraries in the fall! ”

- Student comment on post-reservation survey, June 2020