Compilation of Learning Space Observations – Dulaney Browne Library

1. Date and Time of Observation:

Monday, November 30, 2015  3:15 P.M.
Wednesday, December 2, 2015  3:30 P.M.
Thursday, January 14, 2016  5:45 P.M.
Friday, January 15, 2016  9:15-9:35 A.M.

2. Location:

First Floor  January 14, 2016
Second Floor  December 2, 2015
Fourth Floor  November 30, 2015
Fifth Floor  January 15, 2016

3. Number of student present within visible radius:

Except for the fourth floor observation which had 29 students, there was a range of 3-8 students with one observation including 3 tutors.

4. Number of possible spaces available to sit (utilization of space):

In each of the spaces there were at least 21 and as many as 36 spaces. (These excluded classroom 503.)

5. Types of tasks students engaging in (ex. Homework, group projects, non-school/social):

All four observations reported individuals studying/homework, some with computers. Two observations described some group work, one with three people on a computer. None of the observations noticed any non-school/social activity.

6. Campus services perceived to be utilized? (ex: Food from Alvin’s, library books, computers, assistance, etc.)

One tutor had a to-go meal, probably from Alvin’s. Library books, power, and printers/copiers were reported to be in use.

7. Campus services offered within visible radius:

Computer stations, books, power, network cables, normal library services (including archives assistance), and printer/copier were offered within visible radius.

8. Environment:

a. Did students move furniture around to create their own environment?

Generally speaking, no; however, one student in a chair in the meditation space turned around the chair so that his back was to the room but facing the window.
b. Is natural light available?

If natural light was seen to be available, it was not enough to impact the activity. Only one venue stated that there was no natural light.

c. Are students wearing headphones?

Only two students were wearing headphones.

d. Are students sitting alone or working in groups?

On the fourth floor the 29 students were working in groups: there were 5 groups in the rooms and 2 groups on the floor with laptops. During this observation there were 2 students working alone. For the other observations, the students are primarily working either alone or in groups of two.

e. Are students working at tables? Sitting in comfortable chairs?

Except for one student who was sitting in a comfy chair, book open, taking notes on a laptop, all other students were sitting at tables. The importance of tables seemed to be the ability to spread out.

f. What technologies are present?

Along with the desktops/printers available, there were a lot of laptops in all the venues and some smart phones.

g. Is electricity or the availability of a power source important?

In all of the venues, most of the laptops were plugged into a receptacle on the wall.

h. What is the noise level of the area?

In all of the venues, all was quiet with low level conversations taking place.

i. What is the average time on task of students observed?

Generally speaking, except for two visitors, all of the students were focused on their work for the duration of the observations.
j. What surprised you about how the students were engaging in learning?

No one was using a white board or an OCU computer.
Of the 5 present, all stood and left the study areas within the 30 minute period at least twice.
I was surprised by the student who had a laptop with her but was taking notes by hand.
Also somewhat surprised by the photocopying student; scanning is free whereas copying costs (though perhaps experience has shown that person that the $40 printing credit is more than enough for their needs in a semester).
They were copying pages from library books ... but put the books back into their bag so I don’t think they were reserve books which cannot be taken from the library. My conclusion is that this person likes to write notes in margins but knows he shouldn’t do so in a library book, so made copies in order to enable this process.
In general a little surprised to have seen 4 students there circa 9:30 A.M. on the first Friday of the semester.

k. Based on your observation/perception, what attracts students to the building/space?

Two [students] reported, it was a common study spot and that it was a nice place to do work in between classes.
Two [students] reported, they lived off-campus and the library was a place to do homework away from home.
One [student] reported, he was killing time before going to eat, but would be back after getting food.
Apparently some of these students were attracted [by] some computer program, and another probably liked the absence of distraction.
Comfort of seating (both sitting/studying students were in comfy chairs)
Quiet but not silent
Relatively private (no through traffic on fifth floor as there is especially on the first floor)
Student copying may have liked having no one else potentially be waiting for the machine.