

University of South Florida

From the Selected Works of Matt Torrence

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Students, Faculty, and the Library: Research at the University of South Florida

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/matt_torrence/12/

Students, Faculty, and the Library: Research at the University of South Florida

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STUDENT JOURNALS

- Track the research habits on graduate and undergraduate students
- Use blogs or handwritten journals
- Collaborate with teaching faculty - credit or extra credit assignment



EXIT SURVEYS



- Survey of activities users engaged in while visiting the library
- The instrument asks "what did you do in the library today?"

USABILITY TESTS

- Structured exercise using the library website
- Participants are asked to perform tasks and articulate their steps to performs the tasks
- Movements and verbal remarks are recorded



PROJECT ABSTRACT

This ongoing study at the University of South Florida examines various aspects of library services and resources from the user perspective, utilizing a number of methodologies, including surveys, usability testing, observation, and focus groups. The study takes an anthropological approach to an examination of how students and faculty use the library. The results will guide efforts to improve library services and resources and facility that relate to student success. General research areas include:

- How students and faculty begin and conduct research, with focus on how it relates to the library
- How students and faculty use the library resources, services, and physical facility
- How technology is used and is integrated into the academic work of users

The study received IRB approval for five years, which will allow the study team to repeat the protocols over a period of time. Several protocols were administered during Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 and others will be administered in Fall 2011 and beyond.

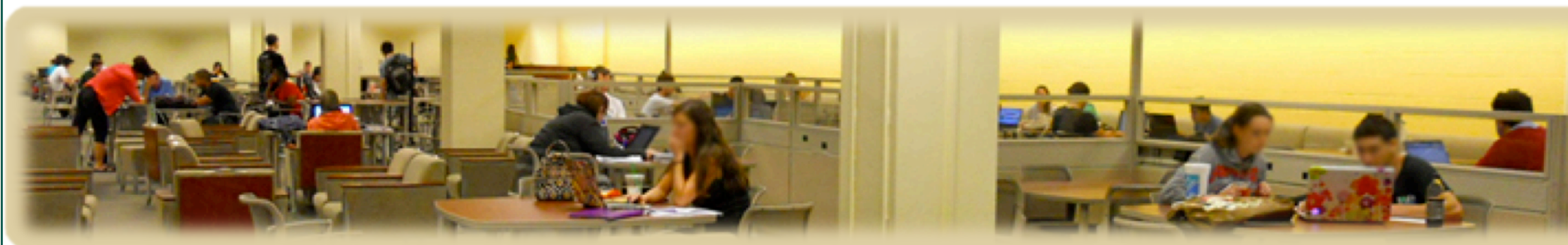
FOCUS GROUPS

- Small groups of students and faculty
- Asked about how they do research and how the library fits into their research processes
- Focus groups are recorded and transcribed



OBSERVATIONS

- Study team members will at various times, observe numbers of users in the library and their behaviors
- Study vs. social use; group vs. individual use; technology being used
- Level of use (numbers of people in the library at various times/dates)



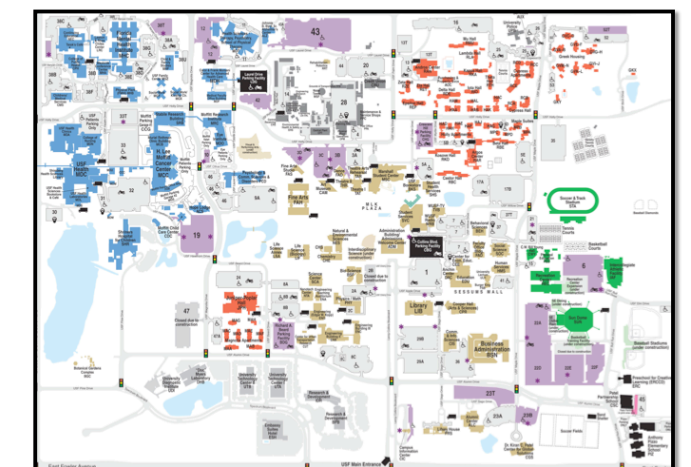
VIDEOTAPED INTERVIEWS



- Faculty members and graduate students are the focus
- Interviews and observations of workspace and research habits will be captured
- Where do they do their research?
- How do they start research?
- What tools/technologies do they use to make the research process easier?
- How do they collaborate?
- How do they disseminate?

MAP DIARIES

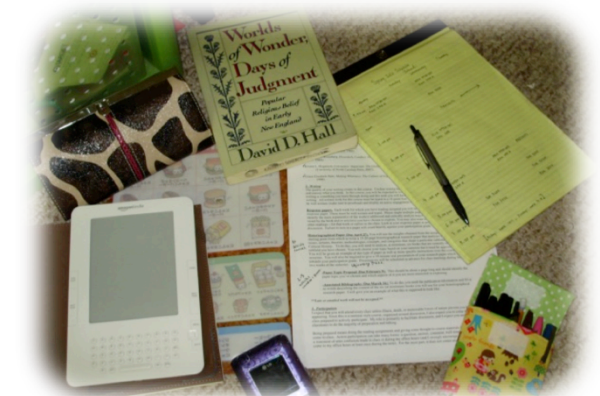
- Students use maps of campus to track their movements over a single day



- Students are interviewed and asked questions about how their academic work falls into their daily movements around campus

PHOTO DIARIES

- Students take photos that track their daily activities on and off campus
- Students are interviewed and asked questions about how their academic work falls into their daily movements around campus



WEBSITE/PHYSICAL SPACE MARKUP



- Participants given a print page of the library website or map of the library building
- Circle items used or physical spaces frequented regularly
- X-out items never used and places never visited
- Suggest locations of items on the website and in the physical facility