Poster Review: Multimodal Building Use Study

By Deborah Lauseng


In Multimodal Building Use Study, a poster presented at the 2016 Midwest Chapter meeting, Bette Sydelko from Wright State University shared the multiple methods used to collect data from students about their use and perceptions of use of library space. Data gathering included gate counts, questionnaires, “guerrilla whiteboards,” SUMA counts (observational data), “picto-tales,” WiFi connection analysis, and a traditional needs assessment survey. Together the data provided the library with a rich image of the current use of the space and a number of ideas for changes in the space to better meet student needs. While much planning and coordination went into this multimodal assessment, the actual data collection period was only over three months. The idea of incorporating several creative methods of assessment, like whiteboards to collect student preferences and photographs to tell the “use story” (or “not use story”), is intriguing and informative. In the midst of many conversations about the intent of library space, this assessment by Wright State University Libraries generates possibilities for examining and assessing our own students’ use of space.

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