Co-Curricular Students as Stakeholders: Gauging Perceptions of an Academic Library

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Overview

Research Question
How does student involvement in co-curricular programs impact student perception of the library?

*Refers to programs outside of the regular curriculum centered on activities like leadership, service-learning, community-engagement, and entrepreneurship.

Methods & Process

Phase 1
- Compared MISO* survey results of co-curricular students to their peers
- Assessed trends in MISO data

Phase 2
- Generated focus group questions based on MISO trends
- Held focus group sessions with students in co-curricular programs

Results Phase 1 (MISO Analysis)

Student Avg. Rank of Importance vs. Satisfaction (Space & Comfort)

- Key Trends
  - Co-Curricular students tended to rank aspects of the library as more important than their peers.
  - This trend held for: Space/Comfort, Services, Collections.
  - Notably, co-curricular students were less satisfied with space than their peers.

Results Phase 2 (Focus Groups)

Major Themes

Function of Space
- I only go to the library when I have work to do

Atmosphere
- “Coldness” of physical space
- Library is inherently a stressful place

Librarian Visibility
- I didn’t know about research consultations
- Library staff are friendly, but I never know where they are

Discussion

Cold-Spots or Cold-Thoughts?
Co-curricular students describe the library as cold and as a de facto study space.
- Is the space or the function of the space responsible for low atmosphere?

Ignorance is Bliss?
Low awareness of library services, despite reported high satisfaction with staff

Co-Curricular or Everyone?
Only students in co-curricular programs were interviewed. Do their peers think differently?

Next Steps

Revise Space & Services
Targeted Surveys

Agile Development

- As improvements are made to space & visibility, the library will continue to assess its impact on students involved in co-curricular programs.