

Cohort 4 – Report Template

Section Header	Description
CARLI Counts Participant	Kim Tipton Reference Librarian McHenry County College
Project Name/Title	<i>You Belong in the Library: Assessing the Impact of Library Spaces on Student Belonging and Success</i>
Single Sentence Abstract	Through student interviews, I plan to study students' feelings of belongingness in the library space to better understand how their use of the space contributes to their success at McHenry County College.
Motivation(s) for Project	<p>The McHenry County College Library is a multi-use campus space that houses the library's print collection, library service desks, computers, the campus tutoring center, and the IT Help Desk. However, the library is much more than these points of service. We also offer a variety of spaces that aren't readily available on other parts of campus, like group and quiet study areas, a family-friendly study space where student-parents can feel comfortable bringing their children while they use the library, and various displays that highlight affinity months and represent our diverse student population. We see students using and interacting with these library spaces, but we are unable to assess their impact on our students. For example, does imagery throughout the library (ie, art and book displays) make them feel seen and included? In the article <i>How Academic Libraries Can Help Students Get the Most Out of College</i>, Eliot Felix noted, "Libraries sit at this intersection of curriculum and community and are uniquely positioned to welcome all students." How can the MCC Library position itself to welcome all students, increase their feelings of belongingness, and have a positive impact on their success? Only by talking to our students and getting their feedback can we assess the library's impact and make meaningful changes toward our goal of increasing students' feelings of belongingness. This will also allow us to 1) contribute in more meaningful ways to the College's DEBI initiative and 2) play an important role in helping the institution meet its mission of student success.</p>
Partners and Stakeholders	All library staff; staff of IT Help Desk (shares library space); tutoring staff (shares library space); Coordinator of Student Diversity and Inclusion; AVP of Diversity, Equity, Belongingness, and Inclusion;

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	Coordinator of Student Life; student organizations and faculty advisors; college president.
Inquiry Question	What are the effects of the spaces within the MCC Library on feelings of student belongingness?
Study Participants/Population	The surveys will target our student population who uses the library. Students must be 18 years or older, but no other demographics or requirements will be needed to participate in the study.
Method(s) of Data Collection and Analysis	<p>Initial surveys will be conducted in March 2024. Follow-up interviews will be conducted in April 2024.</p> <p>This study will use two research methods to collect data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A survey will be offered to students who visit the library. The survey should take 10 minutes or less. There will be an online option to take the survey as well as a paper option. The paper survey will be given at the Circulation desk to students who check out materials from the library. There will be a drop-box in the library for students to leave the completed paper surveys. The paper survey will also have a QR code for students who wish to take an online version of the survey. Students can take the online survey via the QR code at any time. We will also offer the survey in the library near the entrance and students will be invited to take the survey as they leave the library. The survey will be offered in the Spring 2024 semester to students on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10-11 am during weeks 8 and 9. The online survey will be conducted using SurveyMonkey. 2. The final survey question will ask students if they wish to participate in an individual follow-up interview. Follow-up interviews will be conducted in in the library. Individual interviews should take 30 minutes or less. Questions asked during the interview will be specific to their responses on the survey.
Findings	Findings are yet to be determined. Data will be collected in March and April 2024 and analyzed when surveys and interviews are completed.

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Use of Findings	One anticipated use of findings (when completed) is to help inform campus administrators and library staff as we make plans for our library renovation beginning this summer 2024.
Next Steps and Other Results	My immediate next steps are to administer the survey and analyze the results. Even though the project is not yet complete, one impact I experienced was the partnerships formed through communicating the project with campus stakeholders, especially our administration.
Additional Reflections	The project is not yet complete, but I haven't experienced any issues or roadblocks up to this point. One concern I have is not having many (or any) students interested in participating in individual follow-up interviews. Up till now, I haven't had any budget needs. However, at the end of individual interviews, I anticipate asking for funds to provide students with a small MCC café card as a thank you for participating.
Timeline	Spring and Summer 2023: attended in-person 3-day intensives; identify and define the variables of my study (for example: what constitutes a "space" within the library?); finalize inquiry question; identify what I wanted to learn from our survey to help inform the questions that would be asked. Fall 2023: finalize survey questions; submit research proposal to our Office of Institutional Research (OIR); proposal approved by Cabinet. Winter 2023/2024: Survey will be administered and data will be collected. Spring/Summer 2024: data will be analyzed and findings will be presented to Executive Director of Library and Learning Resources. Findings may be presented elsewhere within the college as appropriate.
Bibliography/Works Cited	Works Cited (follows report)
Appendices	Appendix A: Informed Consent Appendix B: Survey Questions

Note: Submit report as a single PDF to Michelle Haake (mjhuls@uillinois.edu) and cc Lisa Hinchliffe (ljanicke@uillinois.edu) by February 1, 2024.

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Works Cited

- Bell, Steven. "Moving to Mobile: Space as a Service in the Academic Library." *EDUCAUSE Review*, 15 Apr. 2022, er.educause.edu/articles/2022/4/moving-to-mobile-space-as-a-service-in-the-academic-library.
- Felix, Elliot. "How Academic Libraries Can Help Students Get the Most out of College: Peer to Peer Review." *Library Journal*, 26 Oct. 2022, www.libraryjournal.com/story/How-Academic-Libraries-Can-Help-Students-Get-the-Most-Out-of-College-Peer-to-Peer-Review.
- Kane, Cynthia M., and Megan Hayes Mahoney. "Using Evidence-Based Library Space Planning for Long-Term Student Success." *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, vol. 26, no. 2-4, Apr. 2020, pp. 291-303. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13614533.2020.1785517>.
- Scoulas, Jung Mi, & Sandra L. De Groote. "Impact of Undergraduate Students' Library Use on Their Learning beyond GPA: Mixed-Methods Approach." *College & Research Libraries*, 83.3 (2022): 452, <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/24743/33322>.
- Spencer, Mary Ellen and Sarah Barbara Watstein. "Academic Library Spaces: Advancing Student Success and Helping Students Thrive." *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, vol. 17 no. 2, 2017, p. 389-402. Project MUSE, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2017.0024>.
- "Students' Sense of Belonging Matters: Evidence from Three Studies." *Teaching + Learning Lab Students Sense of Belonging Matters Evidence from Three Studies Comments*, tll.mit.edu/sense-of-belonging-matters/.
- Zelazo, Madeline. "A Place for All: The Libraries' Critical Role in Supporting Student Success." *University of Massachusetts Libraries*, 2 Dec. 2022, www.library.umass.edu/news/a-place-for-all-the-libraries-critical-role-in-supporting-student-success/.



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Appendix A: Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a research study about the MCC Library.

The goal of this research study is to determine your feelings of belongingness at the MCC library and how using the library and the spaces it contains contributes to your overall success at MCC.

This study is being conducted by Kim Tipton, MCC Reference Librarian. There is one qualification to participate in this study: (1) You must be 18 years of age. Participation in this study is voluntary. The information you will share with us if you participate in this study will be kept completely confidential to the full extent of the law. Following the analysis of the data, all responses will be deleted.

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Appendix B: Survey Questions

(Questions 1-4 will use a Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)

Questions 5 and 6 will be a short answer.

Question 7 will be a yes or no answer with an option to include name and email address.

1. This library space contributed to my ability to learn something new.
2. Using this library space makes me feel more confident about my ability to achieve my goals.
3. I am likely to use this space again in the future.
4. After using this space, I am more aware of the library resources and services available to me.
5. What did you like most about this space? (short answer)
6. What can the library do to increase your feelings of belonging here? (short answer)
7. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up individual interview? (yes or no, with a space for name and email address)