# Patron Driven Access Services

Steve Griffes

University of Michigan

Library Operations

*sgriffes @umich.edu*

# Think of a time when…

- Students proposed something out of the ordinary, and you, your manager, or administration said "No, we can't do that in the library."

- Or, when you found a group of students trying to do something on your library "no list."

# …now consider

- Access Services' role in the library.

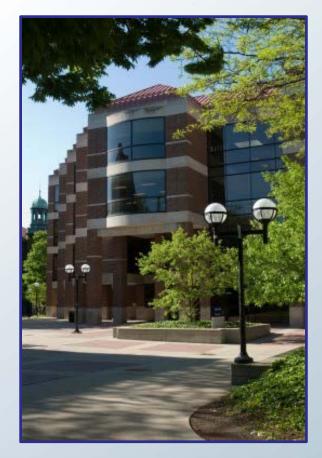- Your library's mission and role within the university.

- Flexibility

# Background

# Shapiro Undergraduate Library (or…UGLi)

- September – average 7000+ visitors per day.

- History of listening to student requests and collaboration with student orgs.
  - 24 / 7 Operations as of Fall 2011
  - Outreach, Student Enrichment, and Learning Librarians
  - Used to have a history of "no"

LIBRARY

# Table Share

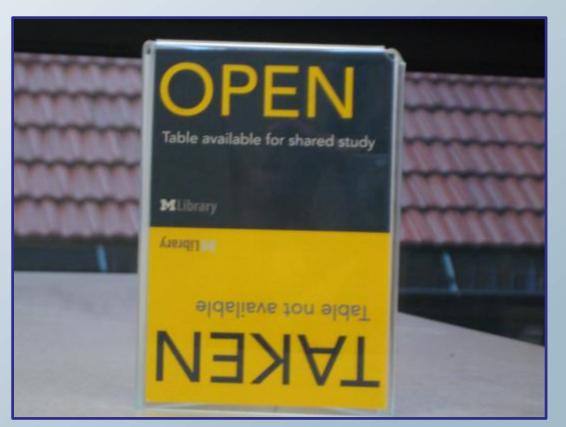## (or…Maximizing Study Space through Signage for the Shy)

# UGLi Study Spaces



- Group study rooms can be reserved
- Basement, 1$^{st}$, and 2$^{nd}$ floors – communal study tables
- 4$^{th}$ floors – 41 single tables for 4 around perimeter and single study carrels

# Table Share

- Central Student Government: can the Library help maximize usage of space on 4th floor to avoid awkward interactions?

- Suggested an "Open / Taken" sign, as seen in other libraries

- Our initial reaction…

**Open – Available for Shared Study**

**Taken – we're waiting for our other group members**

# Solicit Feedback

# Table Share - Feedback

- *I have been nervous to disrupt someone and join them, and this way you can let people know its fine to sit down.*

- *Keep this table share idea up! It makes for a lot more seating availability in the always-crowded UGLi.*

- *Great idea!! Just helped me find a table when I normally would not have asked. Thanks.*

- *Easily allows for students just looking for an open spot in the library to join a stranger at a big table. Definitely keep them!*

- *The only thing that I can see being a problem is that if a table is "taken" and those people leave without turning the sign back over to "open", other people may think that the table is reserved or something. I saw this tonight and the table sat open for almost 2 hours (unheard of in the ugli!) while many people walked by.*

# Table Share
## Tips & Lessons Learned

- Don't be afraid to pilot something. Let students know you will try it in one area for a period of time, then expand if successful.

  - Table Share expanding to single tables in other areas.

- Something simple and inexpensive might be really effective.

- Solicit user feedback and listen to it.

- Make changes as program progresses.

  - Change the wording.

  - Add helpful info – "please flip the sign to OPEN when you leave."

**M**
**LIBRARY**

# Shapiro UGLi Lobby

Mission of Bert's Study Lounge: Social space, student collaboration, interaction with technology

# Shapiro UGLi Lobby

# UGLi Lobby Screens

- Promotion of student org events on screens vs. telling orgs they can't post paper flyers everywhere.

- Postcards with submission info and tech guidelines.

M LIBRARY

# Student Org Screen Takeovers

- Thematic promotion of student org events and initiatives on all screens for one week.

# UGLi Screens
## If there is high student demand, why not improvise?

- Library as a space to watch speakers via live stream (e.g., President, Angela Davis).

- Events that foster community (e.g., World Cup).

# UGLi Screens
## Tips & Lessons Learned

- Avoid the F-Word – students aren't flaky, they're busy. Be flexible!

- Students want to promote their initiatives, events, and projects in library spaces. Turn negative (paper flyers, disruptive flash mobs) into positive by offering engaging alternatives (digital flyers, screen takeovers).

- Develop, document, communicate, and implement policies (e.g., nothing for-profit).

  - Have a back-up plan (e.g., referrals).

- If it's within your power, why not try it?

  - Align with your mission to get buy-in.

LIBRARY

# Student Org Tabling / Pop-Ups

## (Or…Whoa, Wait, You Want to Do WHAT in the Library?)

# Student Org Tabling / Pop-Ups

- Genesis: reeling in rogue pop-ups.

- Students see the UGLi lobby as their space. Aligns with mission.

- Prime real estate.

# Student Org Tabling / Pop-Ups



- Wellness, de-stressing (critical for a 24/7 library), inclusive campus, teams with projects/apps looking for feedback.

- Visibility – average of 10 tables a semester in 2013 to 50 in 2014.

LIBRARY

# Student Org Tabling
## Tips & Lessons Learned

- Engagement paints library in positive light. Student presence at "gateway" helps solidify Undergraduate library as student space.

- Be flexible!

- Develop policies and procedures and communicate clearly. Have a "space usage agreement" form.

  - Org representatives cannot call-out to library users, must allow them to approach the table. Challenge is on the org to draw users in before engaging them (catchy digital and physical signage, swag, activities, etc.)

  - Meet with students in-person to clarify policies. Your enthusiasm goes a long way.

# Student Org Tabling
## Tips & Lessons Learned

- Let policies evolve based on your experiences

    - Started with four hours a month, bumped it to eight based on interest.

    - Decide what you cannot accommodate, based on mission: petitions, for-profit ventures, fund-collecting.

    - Be prepared: coloring contests, stress flour balls, bone marrow "cheek swabbing."

    - Collaborate with Outreach Librarians.

- It might take time to find your footing.

LIBRARY

# Student Org Tabling
## Tips & Lessons Learned

- Positive spin is critical to demonstrate that the library desires to engage with students.

  - The answer is never "you can't do this here," but rather, "here is where you can do this."

  - Appropriate referrals if the library cannot accommodate.

- Onboard staff, and train to communicate policies and procedures.

M
LIBRARY

# The Unexpected Rise and Fall (?) of the Napping Station

(or…Dear Prospective Employers. I'm Not Lazy, Googling My Name Just Makes It Look I Love Naps. A Lot.)

Detroit Channel 7 News

# Napping Station - Genesis

- 24 / 7 library with a "the library is not a place to camp out and sleep" policy.

- Central Student Government's original request: our constituents want this, we have funding.

- The Library's initial reaction: safety is our primary concern, develop a stronger proposal.

LIBRARY

# Napping Station – Student Proposal

- Student survey about lack of sleep – What is most important?
  - A designated location.
  - Close to where they're already studying.
  - Close to classes,
  - Somewhere to lock their belongings.

- Head of Sleep Clinic – benefits of short nap.
  - Study indicating correlation between naps and academic performance.

M
LIBRARY

# Napping Station - Implementation

Strategize space and resources and policies.

- Call it a pilot.
- Open corner space on busy 1ˢᵗ floor where we had comfy chairs.
- Usage policies and procedures (students only, 30 minutes or less).
- Clear signage: procedural but also contextual.
- Self-service, but monitored regularly by staff.
- Safety and sanitation measures.

# Usage Policies Sign

# Napping Station – WHOA!

- Regular use in the weeks leading up to final exams.

- Unsolicited (and unanticipated—we didn't promote it) press and popularity.

LIBRARY

# Napping Station - Press

## Who Interviewed Me

- Michigan Daily
- MLive News
- Detroit TV20 News
- NPR's Stateside with Cynthia Canty
- Library Journal
- Time Magazine

## Who Did Not Interview Me But Reported Some Interesting Things

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- NBC News
- USA Today
- University Herald
- Huffington Post
- Jezebel
- The College Fix, etc.

*"College Students Now Napping in $10,000 Sleep Pods"*

**M**
**LIBRARY**

# Napping Station
## Lessons Learned

- Working with student orgs is a collaboration. Be honest when something isn't strong enough.

- Always be clear that a new initiative is a pilot.

- Clearly post policies and context (brought to you by CSG / Benefits of Napping).

- Initiatives that seem big can be inexpensive.

# Napping Station
## Lessons Learned

- Initiatives that seem ridiculous might be well received.


- Publicity – if something gets huge, have talking points prepared.


- Cover all of your bases (Fire Safety Services should be the first people to talk to!)

# Napping Station
## Not an Unhappy Ending

- We responded to a strong student proposal, and it was well received, even if it ultimately did not work. Engagement with students brought positive results and press.

- Other student organizations, other depts on campus, and other universities want to try similar initiatives, can learn from our experience.

- The future of the Napping Station?
  - Relaxation Zone?
  - Survey students about what they want to see

LIBRARY

# 1000 Speak Out Event

(or…How U-M Library Realized It Needed to Stop Worrying and Learn to Proactively Become Part of the Solution)

# U-M Campus
# Cultural Climate in 2013-14

- Over a decade since affirmative action rulings; enrollment of students of color decreased.

- Power of social media: #bbum (Being Black at U of M).

- Email blasts that a new student org, United Coalition for Racial Justice planned a 12 hour overnight "takeover" of UGLi with the goal of getting 1000 people.

- [Detroit TV News Coverage of Speak Out Event](#)

# U-M Library Goal

**Become the place on campus that develops deep skills, individually and collectively, in manifesting diversity**

Embracing and manifesting difference is vital because it is a:

- Core tenet of the academy's existence--a crucible of ideas rubbing together and generating new insights and knowledge.

- Path to engagement and innovation.

- Pragmatic response to changing demographics. Our colleagues and patrons are increasingly diverse. If we fail to understand and develop intercultural competence we will risk another kind of irrelevance.

# Speak Out – Implementation

- Buy-in from Admin by aligning to our mission.
- Met with UCRJ to let them know the Library would logistically support the event, and worked closely (but carefully not to reappropriate as a "Library event") with them over a week long period.
- Org wanted to do the event in the library because they saw the library as central student space, thought the message would be "you can't do this here."

# Speak Out – Logistical Support

- Operational – space, furniture relocation, signage, storage for food, PA announcements, safety.
- This is a student initiative. No library programming, but handouts with library resources at front check-in table.
- Digital signage – screen takeover.
- Screen documentaries in Screening Room.

# Speak Out Schedule

- Keynote Barbara Ransby
- Open Mic Demonstration
- Teach-Ins (e.g., what makes for an inclusive classroom environment?)
- Community Building sessions
- Action Planning sessions.

# Speak Out – UGLi Screens

# Speak Out - Keynote

# Speak Out

**Feedback**

*I wanted you to know how much we appreciated all your support. It was tremendous.*

UCRJ Founder

*Everything went really smoothly, and I attribute that to the great work you and your staff did with the students to ensure a successful event. Thanks again for all of your work.*

Dean of Students Office

# Post-Speak Out

- Report of Recommended action for all U-M departments from Office of Provost Committee (which is comprised of faculty, staff, and STUDENTS) on Diversity and Inclusion.

- Conversations Series by Library Diversity Council
  - Highest attended programming in years.
  - What is the Library's role in cultural climate, what can we do?
  - LDC is looking at forming an advisory board of student orgs.

# Speak Out
## Tips & Lessons Learned

- Get buy-in from admin by aligning to Library's mission and/or goals.

- Logistical support does not have to encroach upon student activism

  - Level with students without being condescending or influencing their action, based on your experience with your library spaces and how they are used. They'll appreciate it!

- Onboard your team.

- Be prepared. Have back-up plans.

# Conclusion

- Be flexible!

- Find ways to turn "no" into "yes."

- Start with a "pilot."

- Listening to students' needs can help us think outside the box with what we can do with library services and spaces.

- Keep an ear out: read student blogs, twitter feeds, form advisory boards, collaborate and make contacts through Outreach Librarians.

- Align with mission/goals to get buy-in from your team and your administration.

**Rethink what "Access Services" means**

M
LIBRARY

# Steve Griffes
## Contact info: sgriffes@umich.edu