Report 2 on Space Planning to User Services Task Force

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The purpose of this report is to identify Information or Knowledge or Learning Commons to visit to look at examples that we can use to inform our space planning. To do this I looked at pictures and floor diagrams of Learning Commons on the Internet and in the literature. There are many. I also identified some criteria to use to narrow the list of possible places. I wanted Commons that were built fairly recently and decided to limit our visits to the region meaning Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, New York. If we decide to expand this, no problem, but there are Commons worth visiting all over the United States and Canada as well as Australia and others. I will discuss some other criteria we should consider later.

The places I selected and it is by no means an exhaustive list are the following:

University of Maryland. McKeldine Library. Terrapin Learning Commons.

http://www.lib.umd.edu/guides/mckfloorplan.pdf

Ohio University. Learning Commons.

http://www.library.ohiou.edu/serv/lc/index.html

Pennsylvania State University. Tombros and McWhirter Knowledge Commons in Pattee Library

http://live.psu.edu/story/56617#rssUniversity_Libraries

Syracuse University Libraries. Learning Commons.

http://library.syr.edu/about/tour/spaces/learning_commons.php

The suggestions above may be added to as we discover other places to visit, but these are large institutions with populations similar to those at Pitt. We will probably select two to visit and then decide whether we want to look at more.

Some of the other design criteria we should think about are the following:

Open plan with closed spaces glassed in to allow the light to flow through the area.

Group study rooms.

Collaborative work spaces and individual work areas.

Felxible spaces so that we can change them as needs and technologies change. Our current configuration of hard wired machines and laptop work tables is a good foundation on which to base our planning.

Computer teaching area.

We need to decide what we want to do and where we would like to move things before we can make any detailed plans. Visiting other sites will give us a more concrete idea of what information commons look like and how well they function. We can also get specific ideas of furniture and arrangement of spaces.

Suggested additions to list of possible places to visit:

University of Michigan Libraries. Tech Deck.

http://www.lib.umich.edu/techdeck

Binghamton University. Bartle Library Information Commons.

http://ic.binghamton.edu/