**What Students Really Want: Library as Place at Andrews University**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The debate over academic libraries’ importance and role in higher education is not new. Papers presented at a conference at Harvard in 1949 questioned the future of the library as an academic institution and declared the end of the print-based library (Dowlet, 1996; Hanson, 1950). These issues still remain 65 years later. (Coffman, 2006) article “The basement Library” predicted the death of the academic library—and prompted a passionate response, indicating that the issue was still alive (Brogan & Engel, 2006).

William H. Wisner (1950) argued that the traditional quiet individual study areas are still as important as they were 50 years ago. Wector, Dixon. (1950). General Reading in a University Library. Harvard Library Bulletin, 4, 5–15.


CITED REFERENCES

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- Role in universities is evolving.
- Gorman (2003), amongst others, have also argued against the
- Larry Dowlet (1996), William A. Gosling (2000), and Michael
- Weise (2004, p. 9) notes that the “popular image of the library
- for collaborative learning and research (Carlson, 2001).
- busting with students and that they were using the building
- number of participants indicated that their libraries were
- direction. In 2001 Carlson promoted an online discussion
- This trend seems to have changed and taken an opposite
- nostalgia lane.”
- the portable e-book, once perfected, will drive the last nail
- that the historic mission of libraries is finished…and that
- Library” predicted the death of the academic library—and
- prompting a passionate response, indicating that the issue
- was still alive (Brogan & Engel, 2006).
- William H. Wisner (1950) argued that the traditional quiet individual study areas are still as important as they were 50 years ago. Wector, Dixon. (1950). General Reading in a University Library. Harvard Library Bulletin, 4, 5–15.

**OBJECTIVE**

Identify what types of library spaces students at Andrews University want or value most to accomplish their academic requirements and social needs.

**RESEARCH DESIGN & PROCEDURE**

The data was collected through a design charrette technique. Pictures depicting 6 different types of library spaces were shown to students: (1) Closed Individual Study Areas; (2) Open Individual Study Areas; (3) Closed Group Study Areas; (4) Open Group Study Areas; (5) Social Spaces; and (6) Interactive Learning Spaces. Each of these spaces is represented by a different symbol, a design element, an ethnographic approach.

**RESULTS**

1. Overall Preferred Spaces

2. Space Preferences by Gender

3. Space Preferences by Program Level

4. Space Preference by Students Who Participated Inside and Outside the Library

5. Space Preference by Library Use Frequency

**CONCLUSIONS**

The case of the debate today regarding academic library as place is whether or not students prefer open social and gathering spaces over quiet individual study areas.

Contacting the trend today, which asserts that students want social and group gathering spaces to accomplish their academic activities, this study examined that overall, students at Andrews University prefer quiet individual study areas. This preference is highlighted by students who attend the library more frequently. In terms of social spaces, the results demonstrate that men and graduate students prefer it more than women and undergraduates, which also goes against the perceived perception of libraries and education today.

Academic libraries should reflect and embrace changes within the pedagogical and learning styles which emphasize collaboration, interaction, and flipped classrooms by providing different types of spaces to satisfy different types of needs and expectations. As students still consider the library as the place to do their serious studies, libraries should not neglect the traditional quiet individual study areas as they remodel and renovate to build new library buildings.