The Value of Involving Student Colleagues in Library UX Work

Heather Allen, Katie Alphenaar, Rya Greene, and Kristin Meyer

Purpose:

To help you think about how you might want to involve student colleagues in UX work at your own institution.

🔊 Kristin

Presenting from Grand Valley State University Libraries:

🔊 Kristin

Kristin Meyer

UX Librarian

Katie Alphenaar

Library Specialist

Rya Greene

Lead UX Student

Heather Allen

Library Specialist
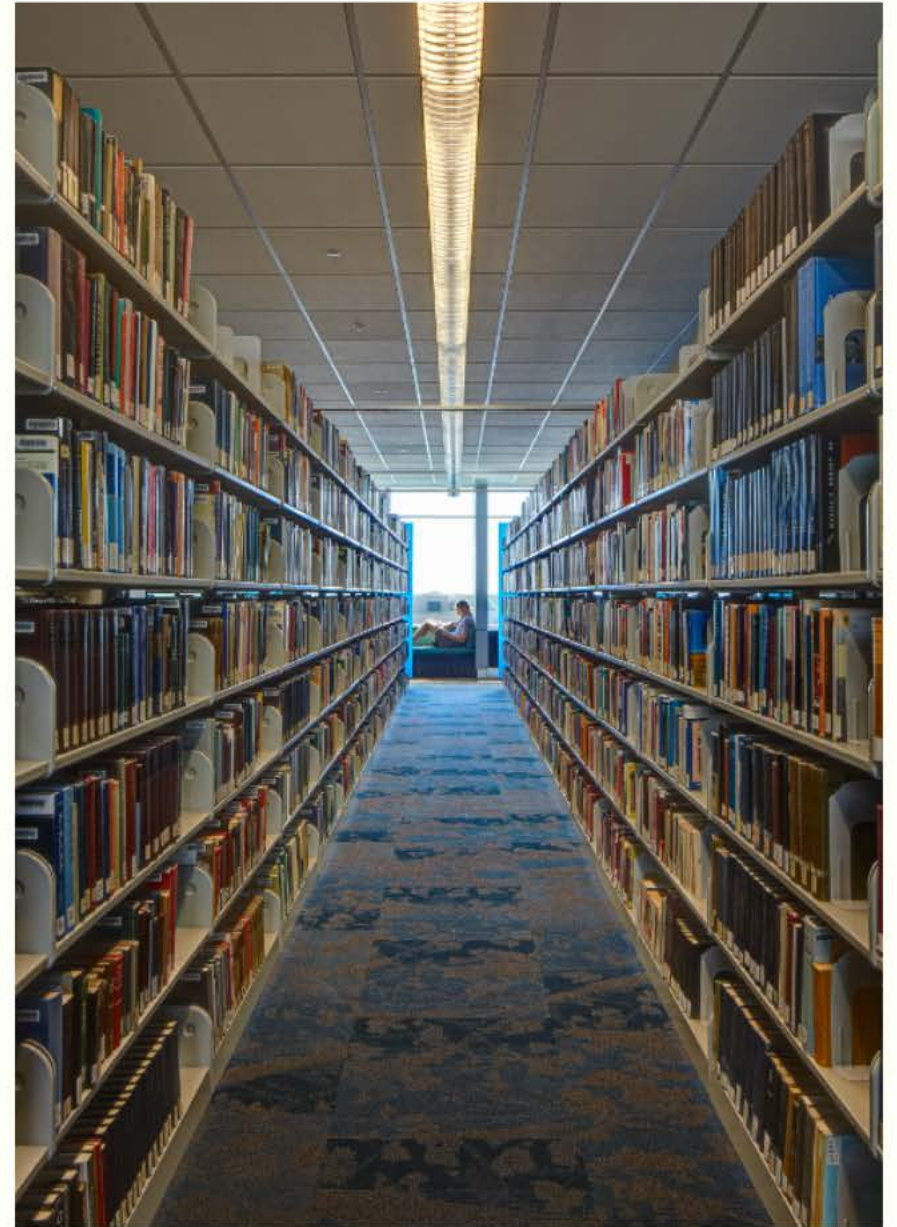
Background & Context

"UX Work"

Any intentional effort to improve library spaces and services, physical or digital

🔊 Kristin

GVSU's UX Team of Students

- Embedded in Operations & User Services Department

- Primarily work single service desk

- Provide input and feedback on UX initiatives, collect UX data, understand their role is more than providing quality transactions

However you're structured, there are benefits to involving student employees in UX efforts.
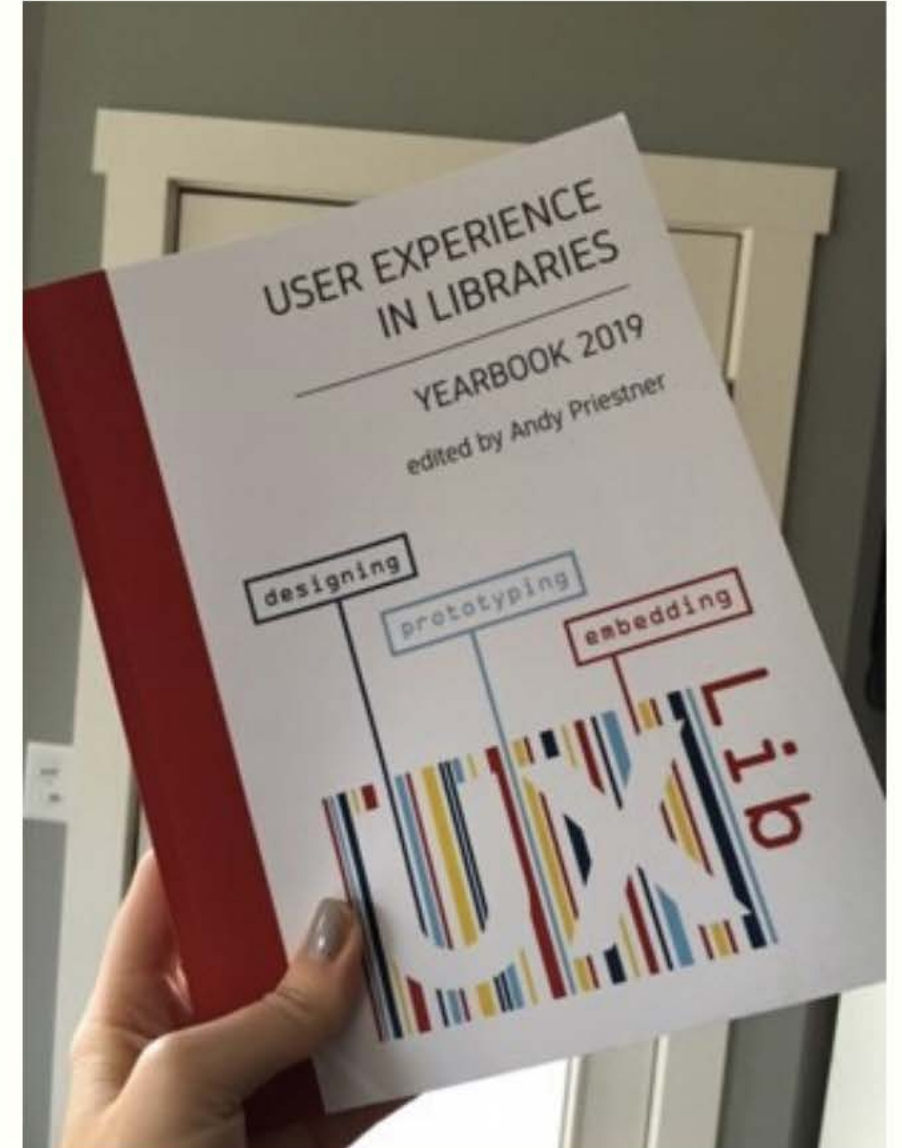
🔊)) Kristin

1) Rodriguez, Meyer & Merry (2017); 2) Meyer & Torreano (2017)

Trends in Other Libraries

- Rebecca Blakiston, University of Arizona, @BlakistonR

- 2019 User Experience in Libraries Yearbook

🔊 Kristin

Benefits

Benefits for the Library

- More student-centered library spaces and services
- Student colleagues—unique, valuable perspectives
- Transaction vs. Interaction
- Approachable UX research
- Aligns with other high-impact education experiences

Katie

1) Mitola, Rinto, & Pattni (2018)

Benefits for Student Colleagues

- Opportunities for advancement
- Looking into the future
  - Workshops
  - Mentorship
  - Skills learned and workplace dynamics
- Participating in new initiatives
- Aligns with other high-impact education experiences

🔊 Rya

Personal Reflections

🔊 Rya

Heather Allen

- Prototyping a way to gather feedback/interact with us

- Opportunity to learn/strengthen skills/interests

- Mutually beneficial

🔊 Heather

Kristin Meyer

- Touchpoint tours
- Students assisting with UX techniques can be beneficial in multiple ways

🔊 Kristin

Katie Alphenaar

- UX student → career in libraries
- Open seating service
  - User need: directional assistance during peak times
  - Library need: a way to collect current information to make good recommendations

🔊 Katie

Text the library for custom seating suggestions!
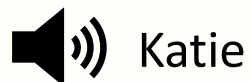(616) 818-0219

Open table for 3?

Quiet place for one?

Where should I sit?

Visit the 1st floor service desk for a pair of free earplugs!

GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Katie Alphenaar

- Developing the open seating system
  - Prototyped versions with UX student colleagues
  - Found a balance of useful information and manageable workload
- Continues to be a popular service we provide

🔊 Katie

Open Seating/Unattended Belongings

	A	B	C	D
1	**Key**			
2	5 or more open seats/tables	M		
3	Less than 5 open seats/tables	L		
4	No open seats/tables	Leave blank		
5	*Please do not count the computers (except in Labs 001 & 002)*			
6	**Space**	**Open Seats**	**Open Tables**	**Any Additional Comments**
7	Living Room			
8	Exhibition Space			
9	Multipurpose Room			
10	Atrium Under the Stairs			
11	Area Outside Labs			
12	Lab 002			
13	Lab 001			
14	4th Reading Room			
15	4th quiet window seating			
16	4th between maps & south windows			
17	4th between stacks & Reading Garden			
18	4th bridges			
19	4th collaborative			
20	3rd Innovation Zone			
21	3rd Reading Room			
22	3rd quiet window seating			
23	3rd between study rooms & south windows			
24	3rd between stacks & Reading Garden			
25	3rd bridges			
26	3rd collaborative			
27	2nd outside elevator			
28	2nd quiet window seating			
29	2nd between study rooms & south windows			
30	2nd between stacks & windows over 1st floor			
31	2nd bridges			
32	2nd collaborative			
33	Cafe			
34	Knowledge Market			
35				

Rya Greene

How my job as a UX student prepared me for my future...
- Training led by a former student employee
- I ran my own training
- Participating in this webinar
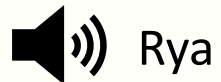
Rya

Applying to Your Context

Recommendations

- Buy-in from supervisors
- Benefits to students
- Highlight successes
- Examples of ideas you have for your library
- Collaborate to develop scope and details

🔊 Heather

Close the Loop at the End!

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1			**UX Improvements Log 2018-2019**			
2		**A UX improvement** is defined as a change in policy, process (a direct action that is user-focused), space, or service that improves User Experience and which resulted from a UX technique or intentional UX effort.				
3						
4	**Timestamp**	**Improvement**	**Perceived Impact**	**Why? (What insight prompted the change?)**	**Cost**	**Location**
5	September 18	We moved the adjustable table at the Frey Library to a more visible location	The desk is now more visible (for discovery) and students are able to look outside/be by the windows while using the desk	Observations and feedback indicated users liked this desk option but wanted to look out the windows and not be tucked in the corner so much	Staff time	Frey
6	November 18	A&D students started manually sending hold pick-up notifications after the mail delivery so patrons get	Users are notified about their holds more quickly	We observed our own instances of realizing that books had been here for us the day before we were notified	Less than 5 minutes of A&D student time per day	All locations
7	November 18	We worked with Kyle Felker and Matthew Reidsma to migrate to LibCal to display library hours on the website. The significant UX improvement with this is that we can use a text description for Exam Cram hours, which makes much more sense than what we had to display in the past	Users can more easily understand what hours we're open during Exam Cram.	We had documented MANY instances of users not being able to tell what hours the library was open from the old way that Exam Cram hours displayed.	Staff time--LibCal is free with our Spring Share suite	All locations

🔊 Heather

Discussion & Questions

Heather

Discussion Questions

1. How do you already involve student colleagues in UX work at your institution?

2. How might you further involve student colleagues in UX work?

3. What existing student employee groups might help you improve library spaces and services?

Heather

References

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🔊 Kristin