Theme 07: ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility – Exploring universal design and accessibility needs to support teaching learning and research in the library
10.21 // STUDENT TEA: “MAKING THE LIBRARY ACCESSIBLE”
Options for learning about library (signs, etc.) beyond talk to librarian

- some rooms or more acoustic privacy
- appropriate for function
- devices/interpreters
- appropriate for

In addition to model building sources (for science, architecture, etc.) science-themed area around tech area

Outlet at all carrels
How are spaces (like group study rooms) available to use?
Noise levels separated by floor
More printers more spread-out

Characteristics of an accessible library:
- outlet-visible, marked on maps
- repetition (consistency)
- where to find things
- visibility of accessibility features
- options!- flexibility
Lighting
Height adjustment (chair/table)
Choosing spaces (doors/sound control/visual distractions)
Table angle
Bookshelf height

Libraries are classed and racialized environments—explicitly quiet + loud spaces—though not necessarily rigidly policed.

Go *beyond* A.D.A. compliance

Enforced segregation may not be desirable, but people of disabilities should have access to their own spaces as well as *all* other spaces.
What we heard...

Building elements should go **BEYOND ADA** compliance
- Don’t just ensure equal access, but complete access
- Don’t move accessible features (signs, ramps, room technology) to the visual margins. Make disability and accessibility highly visible

**IMPROVE NAVIGATION:**
- Provide repetition (consistency) as to where things can be found
- Clear wayfinding, labeling

**ENVIRONMENT:**
- Ability to focus and study/work are affected by a range of environmental factors: Sound/Noise, Temperature, Light type/level, furniture style/adjustability.
- Redesign should include both variety for **CHOICE** and flexibility for **PERSONALIZATION**

**RESOURCES:**
- Basic assistive technology should be found in a range of spaces, but dedicated lab space is also needed, for consistent availability, tutoring/consultation/group work.
- In thinking of Accessibility – it should **not** be an EITHER / OR
What we heard...

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

• Braille texts
• Accessible bookshelf heights in browsing areas
• Interpreters
• Tutors / Academic resources
• Mental Health: support / resources / spaces to rejuvenate / take a break / decompress
• Options for learning about the library (signs, technology, maps etc.) beyond “talk to a librarian”
• Clear info on what resources/spaces are available through the building at the entry (and what is currently in use?)
• Control/adjustability/individualization of furniture, lighting, noise, environment is important
Provide Feedback Here:

http://www.smith.edu/libraryproject/feedback.php