EIFL Webinar
April 26, 2012
Overview of Today’s Webinar

- Participatory design and user research
- How AUCA used this approach to improve the library
- What to consider if you want to do a project
Ethnography

• Documentation of close study of a people and their social and cultural practices
User Research

- User research is the application of ethnographic and other methods drawn mainly from anthropology to develop a description and an understanding of the work practices of the people who use the tools (and spaces and services) we offer in libraries.
Studying Students
The Undergraduate Research Project at the University of Rochester

edited by
Nancy Fried Foster and Susan Gibbons
Participatory Design

• A process that makes possible the collaboration of the people who will use a tool with the people who have specialized expertise in making the tool, in a process of designing and developing the tool.
Why?

• Pretty is not necessarily best
Why?

• Pretty is not necessarily best
• Don’t make assumptions
Overall atmosphere is quiet but not silent. Lot of bright colors, semi-modern but not too weird looking furniture. Sort of like an all weather space but makes you feel at home. Ceiling has clouds painted on it. Georgia O’Keeffe's work on walls.

You should be happy when you are here! (Even if you are studying)

Meeting room with tables, chairs, can connect to similar space or discover others. But try to stay in one spot. Crucial to have a focus group sight.

Soothing background music playing. Can hold conversations. Soft noise is okay. No loud music. Somewhere you would want to read or work.
Why?

• Pretty is not necessarily best

• Don’t make assumptions

• Anticipate use
Case Study

American University of Central Asia
Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan (Kyrgyz Republic)
- borders with China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan

Capital: Bishkek

Gained independence in August, 1991

Parliament Republic (since July 2010)
AUCA

- Former American University in Kyrgyzstan - Founded in 1993
- Liberal Arts University
- Private University
- 11 Degree programs (undergraduate) and MBA
- 1,200 students (40% men and 60% women) – from 15 countries
Research Questions

• How do students accomplish their research projects and papers?

• Where do our students work on their research projects and papers and why?

• What resources do AUCA students rely on?
Library space for Learning
Library Silent Room, Library corridors and Computer Labs
Space for learning - Cafeteria
Key Research Findings

• That the students don’t use the Library databases as a primary information resource
• That students are “Google-centric”
• That the students in most cases don’t use other resources than those pointed out by or handed out by their professors
• That the students have problems with analyzing texts or data
• That there is a need for stronger Library-Faculty, Library-Student and Student-Faculty collaboration
The Research Resulting Activity

- Introduce Information Literacy into courses across the disciplines
- Incorporate Bibliographic Instruction into courses
- Library collaboration and workshops for faculty
- Provide e-Resources introduction meetings, consultations and training session for faculty
- Student oriented Library reference and Students’ consultation services – “Reference Hub”
Value for Research Teams

• Provided successful collaboration experience across departments & services

• Strengthened communication with students

• Deepened our insights into and our appreciation for students
Conducting a Project
Recruit participants and refine objectives

Identify what they need to do and how they like to work

Select and refine solutions
Conducting a Project

• Imagining your project and its outcomes
Conducting a Project

• Imagining your project and its outcomes
• Making sure you have the support you need
Conducting a Project

- Imagining your project and its outcomes
- Making sure you have the support you need
- Forming and training a project team
Conducting a Project

- Imagining your project and its outcomes
- Making sure you have the support you need
- Forming and training a project team
- Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
Conducting a Project

• Imagining your project and its outcomes
• Making sure you have the support you need
• Forming and training a project team
• Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
• Getting human subjects approval
Conducting a Project

• Imagining your project and its outcomes
• Making sure you have the support you need
• Forming and training a project team
• Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
• Getting human subjects approval
• Searching the literature
Conducting a Project

- Imagining your project and its outcomes
- Making sure you have the support you need
- Forming and training a project team
- Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
- Getting human subjects approval
- Searching the literature

Zotero group bibliography: “AnthroLib”
Conducting a Project

- Imagining your project and its outcomes
- Making sure you have the support you need
- Forming and training a project team
- Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
- Getting human subjects approval
- Searching the literature
- Engaging experts in the process
Methods
Methods
Methods
Methods
Conducting a Project

• Imagining your project and its outcomes
• Making sure you have the support you need
• Forming and training a project team
• Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
• Getting human subjects approval
• Searching the literature
• Engaging experts in the process
• Analyzing and interpreting data
Analysis and Interpretation
Analysis and Interpretation
Analysis and Interpretation
Conducting a Project

• Imagining your project and its outcomes
• Making sure you have the support you need
• Forming and training a project team
• Getting equipment, supplies and other resources
• Getting human subjects approval
• Searching the literature
• Engaging experts in the process
• Analyzing and interpreting data
• Sharing and taking action
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing and Taking Action</td>
<td></td>
<td>1/2006</td>
<td>2/18/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Faculty to Improve Content Recruitment for Institutional Repositories</td>
<td>Nancy Fried Foster, Susan Gibbons</td>
<td>1/2006</td>
<td>2/18/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research supported by a National Leadership Grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a Shoehorn or Design a Better Shoe: Co-Design of a University Repository</td>
<td>David Lindahl, Nancy Fried Foster</td>
<td>31/2004</td>
<td>3/30/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty members are offered a repository for storing work in digital formats but do not immediately see its value. The authors' research identifies a range of faculty needs for web-based services to support their research activities and academic roles. The authors discuss the dilemma of launching a digital repository when the faculty members' exper...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The education function of the academic library is a natural outgrowth of academic work. Students and faculty are both engaged in a cycle of the assimilation of existing knowledge (as embodied in library collections), and the creation of new syntheses based on existing knowledge. The purpose of the library’s education function is thus to help students n...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Researchers Do: A Report on User Research for the eXtensible Catalog</td>
<td>Nancy Fried Foster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikis as Legitimate Research Sources - Part 1</td>
<td>Suzanne Bell</td>
<td>12/2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Part 1 of 2) - Background; wikis for health and community information sharing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Part 2 of 2) See also part 1, &quot;Wikis as Legitimate Research Sources - Deposited with permission of the publisher, Information Today, Inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See the eXtensible Catalog website at <a href="http://www.eXtensibleCatalog.org">www.eXtensibleCatalog.org</a> for more information about the overall project.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sharing and Taking Action

International Journal of Library Science

ISSN 0975 – 7646

Home > Volume 5; Issue No. 1; 2012 > Click

Open Access  Subscription or Fee Access

Studying Students across Borders: An Ethnographic Study of Research Behavior

A. Click, M. Stöpel, M. T. Alam, S. Kreidieh, D. Flanagan, N. F. Foster, K. Ray

Abstract

Librarians often feel that we understand the needs of our undergraduate users. Isn’t it possible, however, that we make incorrect assumptions based on our perception of these learners? In 2009, representatives from four American style universities, the American University in Cairo, the American University of Sharjah, the Lebanese-American University, and the American University of Paris, conducted an ethnographic study on their respective campuses. These librarians undertook the project in order to learn more about how students use library and campus spaces for learning, and how they conduct academic research. For the mapping study, students marked a campus map as they moved throughout a typical class day, and then explained their movements in an interview with a librarian. In the photograph study, students responded to a series of prompts by taking a series of photographs and then described the significance of each in a follow-up interview. Librarians assessed the data and identified assumptions, surprises, and overall themes. Each library then developed action plans to address the needs of the users, and to make necessary changes. The study demonstrates the usefulness of ethnographic research in developing library policies and services. It also identified the differences and commonalities between individual students, and the specific cultures in which they are situated, both academically and socially.

Full Text: pdf
Sharing and Taking Action
Projects Around the World
The University of Rochester's River Campus Libraries use a participatory design process to build and improve library spaces, services and technology. The following links take you to information about participatory design in academic libraries and higher education. The map shows where others are doing projects that build on this work. The bibliography includes a range of descriptive and theoretical work related to these projects.

**AnthroLib Bibliography**
A collection of books, articles, sites and other resources related to user research in libraries and higher education.

**AnthroLib Listserv**
Using ethnographic methods in library and higher education assessment.

- **American University of Cairo**
  Participatory design of library, American University of Cairo, Cairo, Egypt

- **American University of Central Asia**
  Participatory design of the library and curriculum design, American University of Central Asia, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

- **American University of Nigeria**
  Participatory design of American University of Nigeria Library (Yola, Nigeria)
Thank you!

Sania Battalova
battalovas@mail.auca.kg

Nancy Fried Foster
Nancy.Foster@Rochester.edu