Notes on Case Study for Systems Analysis

[Koelker, J, Bouchard, K. & Lutz, J. (2010). Development of the Information Commons at TCU: A Case Study.](http://libproxy.lib.unc.edu/login?url=http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wjla20/50/2)  Journal of Library Administration, 50(2), 95-115.

Information Commons (IC)

2000. Computer and telecom committee: Information commans combined help/information desk, user support. Combined ref/IT. Rather than separate lab/help desk

Library had longer hours.

Vision:

need for greater collaboratin in patron referrals

library as prime real estate

if you're open, students will come.

underused user services.

Reality.

Depts had little knowledge of what each other did. Volume, types of questions, resources.

Differences between IT help desk and library reference

Reference. instant referral from student to full-time staff member. patrons can directly contact full-time. most reference questions can be answered quickly.

IT: many more questions, including FAQs, coaching student through a procedures. Others took much longer, research, multiple failures. Triage 1st-2nd tier servise.

Informaiton Commons recommendation

expanded computer lab

virtual IC that is task-oriented rather than department oriented. (User starts with task, rather than having to start with department)

move IT desk near reference desk, but not combining.

tracking referrals

new positions for IC administrator.

expand space for IC – group study, collaboration spaces, faculty learning space.

Funding was limited. Combined ref and IT for first tier questions.

Challenges. different hours for different depts. attempt to combine student workers into 1 group. different training, pay incentives. Multiple bosses.

Insufficient desk space for all

Different patterns: IT by phone, Reference mostly walk-up.

Survey of students, faculty; reactions. and concerns.

expanding lab was success.

noise was a problem (atrium allowed noise to drift upwards. phone center in middle was very noisy for reference librarians.

Problem with Web site: list of all departments sent students to department sites, rather into the IC services.

Assumptions that didn't hold up.

Authentication for services was one motivating factor for the combination, but no other reason really emerged. "It is not cear that there is as much natural synergy between reference and IT support functions as was assumed.

Problem combining IT and reference and computer lab student help into 1 group: management, training, language skills (international IT), reward structures. "unspoken assumption tht the various skills and attitudes possessed byt the two groups would "rub off" on each other. That did not happen".

Assumptions, customs, around the jobs, perceptions,value, p. 104

Task Forces: <useful approach ? 9 of them!> some were successful, some weren't.

1. noise at service desk. – recommend new phone center

2. noise: need for quiet study areas.

3. collaborative work areas.

4. student worker training and supervision.

5. logging unresolved calls in software for IT and reference.

6. Web site design

7. use of services by faculty – target some services to grad students and faculty.

8. Service levels. tier-1: qs answers by students. tier-2 qs answered by reference/IT staff. Tier-3 formal instruction and consulting. tier 3 needed development.

9. need for ongoing communications among staff for software, resources, etc.

Group Study spaces, collaborative work support.

matrix of seating and presence of computing to work out seating needs. (p. 107)

need for flexibility, affordability, little sound excaping. -- pods

sight lines for IC desk: visible from entrance, need to see computer labs, equipments.

extended gours.

level of support – IT withdrew, turned it over to library.

"three distinct co-located service functions: library reference, computer lab, IT help.

Current problem: inadequacy of the library building. highly used, seats, individual work space, collaburative areas, quiet areas. "more space will be turned over in the future to users rather than storage of print material"

Themes

IC is ongoing process.

Partnering with other campus departments outside the library challenges library-centric perspectives and goals.

frequent assessment of IC facilities, services, and resources is time-consuming but necessary.