

# Personalized Wayfinding Help: Lessons Learned from a Library Concierge Service

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**Abstract:** Challenges with wayfinding, or navigation inside a building, can create frustrated and often anxious users. To help alleviate some of these wayfinding issues for users, a large research university's main campus library created a flexible concierge service in the library entrance at the beginning of the Fall 2015 term; staff from all library departments have worked at the concierge station at the start of most subsequent terms. Questions asked at the concierge station that first academic year along with feedback from library staff were analyzed using the constant comparative method. Findings indicated users primarily had directional and technology-based questions. As a result of these findings, multiple suggestions for library service improvements were made, and additional improvements are being considered for future implementation.

This paper discusses why a flexible concierge service was created; how it revealed wayfinding issues, thereby leading to changes that improved the user experience; and how the participation of a wide range of library staff in the flexible concierge service can build empathy with patrons.

**Keywords:** *concierge, wayfinding, user experience*

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## Introduction

Wayfinding, or navigation inside a building, can be complicated by a range of factors. Wayfinding challenges include unique architectural features, new additions to older buildings, lack of a service design, limited incorporation of best practices from learning space research on spaces and furniture choices, and even personal experiences of the user. Wayfinding confusions create frustrated and often anxious users. Like many libraries, the Oregon State University Library (OSUL) has its own set of wayfinding problems. To help alleviate some of these spatial uncertainties for users of this large research university's main campus library, a temporary mobile concierge station was set up in the library entrance at the beginning of the Fall 2015 term to augment services provided by other public service desks that are located in less immediately noticeable locations (see Figure 1).

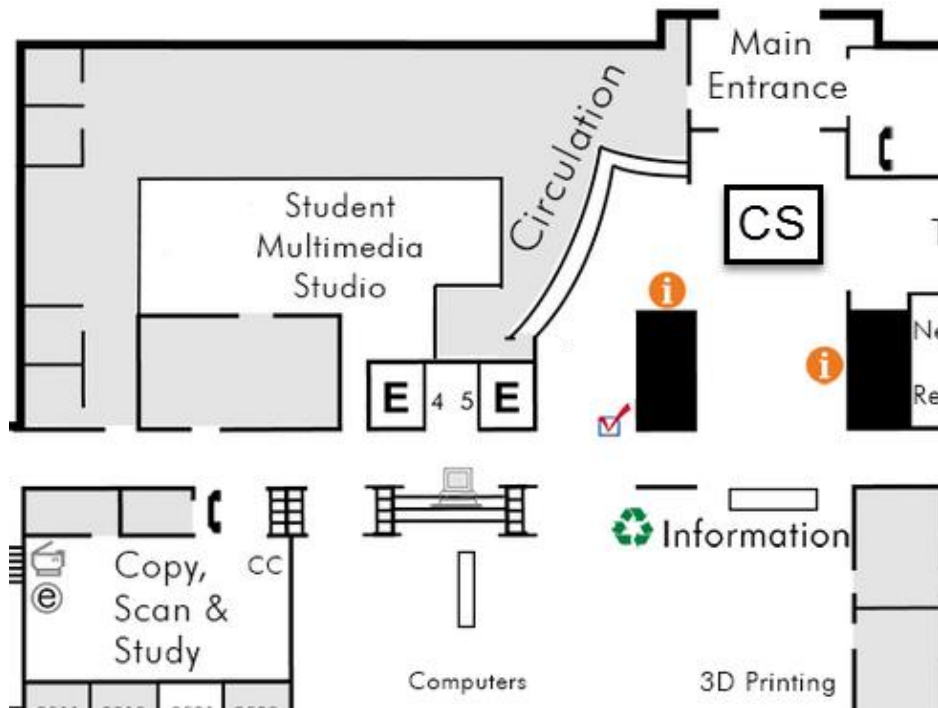


Figure 1. Floor map demonstrating the location of the temporary concierge service station (CS).

There have been several studies on library anxiety due to university students' confusion and stress navigating large, new libraries and their spaces (Mellon, 2015; McPherson, 2015; Onwuegbuzie, Jiao, & Bostick, 2004). One key article on this subject is Constance Mellon's (2015) research study of students' personal writings in dozens of composition courses over a two-year period in which she found that 75-85% of students in each class expressed feelings of fear or anxiety regarding the library. Students were overwhelmed by the sheer size of the building, they did not know where to start or where to look within the building itself, and in addition, they did not know where to begin the process of research. As a result, they exhibited feelings of stress and anxiety noted by other researchers as well (Mellon, 2015). Alleviating anxiety is critical for students to access the resources, services, or assistance they need. Our campus library's ethos easily aligns with the values of our university's Student Affairs mission: educating the whole student through social, emotional, intellectual, and physical support. Library spaces can often be intimidating—services may be distributed across several floors, the location of books may not be readily apparent, and library workers may be hidden behind large service desks. In this situation, many students do not have the confidence to ask for assistance. Sometimes there are cultural reasons students do not ask questions, which is a more challenging problem to consider at some point.

Public services staff are increasingly aware of these affective concerns. However, in a large university library some staff members have little opportunity to engage directly with students and observe the anxieties they have about interacting with library spaces and services. Therefore, the OSUL concierge service invited all library staff to work at the station. In addition to providing enhanced services for students in an unfamiliar space, a secondary goal of this service was to give library professionals and staff from across the library the experience of seeing these interactions first hand as a way to build empathy for the library challenges students face.

The concierge station has been staffed at the start of most terms since the fall of 2015. To assess the effectiveness of this new service, researchers collected the questions asked at the concierge station along with feedback from the staff that worked at the concierge station. This paper describes this innovative service, shares the results of the mixed methods research project and discusses suggestions for improving library services as a result of these findings.

### **Literature Review**

Upon hearing the word “concierge,” the image most often conjured up is from the hospitality industry—for example, a hotel lobby station. Hotel guests are typically unfamiliar with their new surroundings, which leads them to seek help. A hotel concierge, possessing insider knowledge and recognized for their authority, is well positioned to offer assistance (Sumner & Quinn, 2017). Articles on hotel hospitality describe the concierge as an integral part of their overall service, a valuable function for orienting hotel guests (Withiam, 1993). Similar to libraries, the hospitality industry seeks to provide exemplary service, critical in an era more known for self-service and technological solutions (Sumner & Quinn, 2017). Another similarity between libraries and hotels with a concierge service is that a user-focused attitude comes first. As a hotel concierge staffer says in an interview “...we don’t train people to be nice, we hire nice people” (Stoessel, 2010, p. 39).

Although there is a lot of literature on the usefulness and need of concierge services in the hospitality industry, as well as in hospitals, retirement communities, office buildings, and department stores (Withiam, 1993), less research has been published on library concierge desks. In addition, few descriptions of existing concierge services have been written about in the literature. An article by Hunter College librarians mentions a successful concierge station, or welcome desk, created to “relieve the reference desk of the tedious informational/directional questions that seemed to make up a large chunk of

the interactions, and overwhelmed librarians during busy times" (Cain & Treneman, 2015 p. 369). Additionally, the Beaumont (public) Library District re-envisioned their circulation staff as "Information Concierges," who meet and greet patrons as they enter, perform service triage, answer questions, or direct customers to the appropriate location (Dempsey, 2010). More common is a trend toward rethinking the reference desk. For example, a report by the Astoria (OR) Public Library Renovation Study notes "many libraries are adopting compact, concierge-like services rather than sit down service desks" (Ruth Menz Associates, 2013 p. 8). While there may be a trend to shift to more agile, flexible, or stand-up style service points in libraries, the original goal of the OSUL project was to help students begin to feel more confident navigating the library's spaces and services without having to wait in line at a desk.

There are benefits of using staff to help alleviate wayfinding anxiety as the frustrations of trying to find one's way in a library of most any size is a cause for trepidation and will diminish the effectiveness of the library use (Onwuegbuzie, Jiao, & Bostick, 2004). Wayfinding research focuses both on how humans navigate a built or natural environment as well as on the effectiveness of wayfinding tools. One type of wayfinding tool is signage. Researchers have argued that studying signs' meanings and how users interpret those meanings can help alleviate wayfinding confusion (Mandel, 2009).

Technology offers another type of wayfinding tool. Some institutions are looking at mobile phone technology to help with wayfinding, sometimes using augmented reality systems. For example, Hahn, et al. (2010) used wireless beacons and RFID to develop an application that provides real-time directions to physical resources. Currently his team's Minrva app project at the University of Illinois Undergraduate Library allows the user to search in the app's wayfinder module for an item in the catalog, tap the wayfinder module and be directed to the location of an item shown on a map, allowing the user to navigate on their own (Hahn, 2017). The University of Oulu, Finland created SmartLibrary, a web-based guidance service,

which allows users to find a book in their library (Aittola, Parhi, Vieruaho, & Ojala, 2004). Virginia Tech's Newman Project used WiFi and location-aware systems on mobile devices to display a physical map showing the user's position as well as providing directions to the resource (Sciacchitano et al., 2006). These prototypes might be key for future DIY library navigation, but they still require: 1) a student to have a smartphone which gets reception in the stacks; 2) the need to possibly download an app or software, a drawback for many users; and 3) the assumption that users are looking for a known item in a catalog like a book, rather than a place to study, a study room, or an unknown but desired location.

It remains unclear whether tech tools can provide successful and efficient wayfinding assistance (Mandel, 2009). Key wayfinding researchers Arthur and Passini in 2002 stated that by improving wayfinding systems one can alleviate the stress and frustration experienced when navigating a building. Emotional reactions such as frustration, anxiety, anger, and feelings of inadequacy are commonly noted in the wayfinding literature. Several research studies have shown that many library users who are unsure of where to find something, who are anxious, or who are frustrated would rather turn to a person to help alleviate their anxiety.

Library anxiety can emerge in many types of libraries. Mandel's (2018) research in public libraries confirmed the findings of Schoonover and Kinsley's (2014) research that was conducted in a university library based on data gathered at library help desks. Schoonover and Kinsley's (2014) study showed that ultimately users preferred human interaction as the most frequent "tool" they sought for wayfinding help. Similarly, a research study by Hahn and Zitron (2011) concluded that users preferred signs, but they also sought out humans for help. The authors concluded that "having staff near where students need help is crucial for them to create a context for which to begin their research" (p. 34). Schoonover and Kinsley (2014) found that in their academic library, people like to talk to other people when attempting to locate

something. Respondents commented that desks should be structured and located to help with wayfinding issues and should involve pleasant and personal human experiences. When describing a remodeling project at their public library that included signage updates, McMorran and Reynolds (2010) observed, “all too often a customer would ask a question that was answered by the very sign they had pushed aside to speak with us” (p. 6). The literature describes several tools libraries have for improving wayfinding, including signage and technology, but users consistently prefer to ask another person for help. The use of temporary, flexible library concierge stations staffed at strategic points in the term may be one solution for alleviating these anxieties.

### **How our Concierge Service Got Started**

The Library Experience and Access Department of OSUL was created in late spring of 2015 with a vision of creating and maintaining engaging spaces, exceptional service, and superior access. During the early stages of growing this new department, an Oregon State University professor from the Department of Design & Human Environment in the College of Business shared earlier wayfinding studies, which provided a baseline understanding of how difficult it is to navigate the Valley Library of OSUL (Lee & Dazkir, 2015). During the first annual departmental retreat that summer, the Library Experience and Access Department (LEAD) members worked together to determine and prioritize problem touch points (points where users interact with library services and resources). The staff immediately indicated that many questions asked at public service desks revolved around signage confusion and wayfinding issues. These types of questions are not surprising as the library literature demonstrates that directional questions are the major type of question asked in most libraries (Bishop & Bartlett, 2013; Mandel & Johnston, 2016).

This insight led to the development of a temporary, flexible, movable concierge service staffed at the beginning of the term. The main goal in designing this concierge service was to provide a friendly,

welcoming greeting as new students, faculty, staff, and community members entered the library building. Providing an early contact point for patrons would not only create a more positive user experience, but could also relieve the demand placed on the public service desks at the busiest periods of the day during the busiest weeks of the term. The idea was proposed to the library administrative team who accepted the plan of piloting it for fall term. It was then promoted to all library staff to get library-wide participation.

To create an accessible and friendly concierge station, LEAD members brainstormed about what furniture to use for the station, the type of signage to be included, and what types of reference materials might be needed. Few funds were available for making a mobile desk from scratch, so the team chose to repurpose a podium from the library's surplus storage. To make the podium flexible and mobile, caster wheels were added, allowing our team to move the station to the front and center of the foyer as needed for the concierge shifts. A clear, neatly formatted sign saying, "Ask me!" was adhered to the front of the podium to promote approachability and clarity of purpose for the desk.



Library Staff working the Concierge station in the OSUL lobby



To determine when the station would be most useful, and to plan staffing for the mobile concierge station, LEAD staff used the previous (2014) year's data that was gathered at the Information Desk and the Circulation Desk borrowing statistics to identify the busiest times of day. A schedule for the concierge station was then developed around those busy hours. Next, all library departments were sent an informational email about the project and an invitation to sign up for a shift via [signupgenius.com](http://signupgenius.com). Shifts were one hour each, staffed by one or two people, and volunteers transitioned shifts on the hour. The volunteers at the station were asked to wear their name tag, along with an OSUL or Oregon State University t-shirt and an "Ask me!" button while working at the concierge station. The combination of the location of the concierge station, the signage on the station, and the clothing worn by library staff signaled to patrons that the concierge station was a place they could go to for information.

### **Early Improvements to the Concierge Service**

While our department wanted to make observations about users' experience with the concierge service, it took some time to settle on the best method for carrying out those assessments. Those working the concierge station were equipped with a clicker as a quick method for counting patron interactions. During the first few days of the concierge pilot, staff on their own started jotting down the general topics of questions being asked at the station, such as "printing" or "borrow a laptop." Realizing the usefulness – and willingness of the staff – to capture this data more consistently from our users, sheets of paper with date and time were added. With procedures reiterated, everyone staffing the desk now understood the expectations for recording interaction information and could quickly record question topics according to the hour, with the cumulative data later added to a spreadsheet.

It also quickly became apparent that additional supplies were needed at the concierge station. Materials that helped to answer commonly asked questions were requested for the station. Also, paper and

brochure holders with informational materials were added to the sides of the podium so that the podium always included items such as campus maps and instructions for how to print using a laptop or using an OSUL computer. As a result of the agility of this service, patrons were assisted quickly and more efficiently supported.



Concierge station upgrades

During Fall Term the concierge service operated from 10am-4pm, Monday-Wednesday for the first three weeks of the term. With fewer new and transfer students enrolled in Winter and Spring terms, the service was shortened to only the first week of the term. An added benefit of the flexibility of the service was the ability to add earlier hours since the confusion of an unusual weather closure for Oregon State University on a Monday, and first day of Winter Term, would likely lead to more anxious students. Staffing started at 8:30 a.m. and continued until 3:30 p.m. Tuesday instead, and then resumed the regular hours of 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Wednesday. Spring term was minimally staffed a few hours for the first day only, but due to inconsistencies in staffing and in capturing data spring term, this data is not included in the study.

Another change that happened early on was an adjustment in shift start times. Usage patterns indicated that the rush of users entering the library occurred right before and after the turn of the hour. Realizing shift changes on the half hour would better accommodate these usage patterns, the service was staffed from 8:30 or 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 or 3:30 p.m. (times range due to staff availability) instead of on the hour.

### **Assessing User Experiences**

Beginning in Fall term 2015, the questions asked by patrons at the concierge service station were collected during each concierge shift for that academic year. Questions were analyzed by the research team, which included the head of LEAD, the library's Assessment Coordinator, and a Reference Desk librarian. The research team analyzed 1,368 patron questions using the constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), an iterative process where research team members first identify themes individually, and then through group discussion to find consensus in order to determine shared themes. Themes from this data were derived from several iterations of this analytical process. Data was re-analyzed multiple times, group discussion was held to tackle disagreements, and themes were re-coded according to a final consensus. Finally, one member of the research team analyzed a random sample of the data to check for agreement amongst the researchers.

Miscellaneous questions that did not seem relevant were eliminated from the coding. These items included questions like "what do you think are the winning lottery numbers today?", "what is the meaning of life?" (asked several times), "why is it raining again?", "what are you doing/what do I ask you?", "do I have to go to this meeting?", and "when will there be peace in the world?" These questions revealed that people were enjoying our large "Ask Me" sign or were just being friendly and chatty. If these questions were placed

in any category, it would be a category that demonstrated the humanizing effect of the temporary concierge service station.

Questions were divided into four main thematic groups: directional, technology, finding sources, and library policies (see Table 1). In addition to the four main thematic areas, sub-themes were developed for each thematic group as appropriate. The findings will discuss the thematic areas and the solutions provided by the concierge station service that helped address the questions within each theme. Within each section below we will introduce the theme, discuss how it was addressed, and any changes that were subsequently made.

| Theme<br>( <i>subtheme</i> )                     | Number of questions | Percent of all questions asked<br>( <i>subtheme</i> ) |
|--|---------------------|---|
| <b>Directional</b>                               |                     | <b>40%</b>  |
| <i>Library directions</i>                        | 273                 | 20%   |
| <i>Locating library study spaces or tutoring</i> | 141                 | 10%   |
| <i>Campus directions</i>                         | 137                 | 10%   |
| <b>Technology</b>                                |                     | <b>30%</b>  |
| <i>Library technology</i>                        | 318                 | 23%   |
| <i>Non-library technology</i>                    | 94                  | 7%  |
| <b>Finding Sources</b>                           | 275                 | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Library policies</b>                          |                     | <b>10%</b>  |
| <i>Library policies and supplies</i>             | 82                  | 7%  |
| <i>Food and drink policy</i>                     | 48                  | 3%  |
| <b>Total number of questions</b>                 | <b>1368</b>         |   |

Table 1. Themes derived from questions asked by patrons at the concierge service station (Fall 2015 and Winter 2016 terms).

### Directional Theme

Directional questions were divided into three sub-themes: general library directions, campus directions, and directions to specific study spaces or resources within the library. Directional questions were the largest theme, comprising 40% of the overall questions asked.

The most common directional questions were about where to find general services in the library (n=273). The top question in this sub-theme was the location of the restrooms (n=61). This is a long-standing

issue because it is not obvious where the restrooms are located. They are not located where most people expect they might be, for example, by the main elevators, stairs, or drinking fountains. Meeting rooms in the library are frequently used by non-library campus constituents. Many directional questions were about how to find these specific rooms (n=55). Others asked questions about which floor they were on (the main floor is the second floor) or how to get to the elevators or stairs. Finally, users asked how to get to a specific floor without indicating their needs on that floor (n=50).

The high percentage of library directional questions collected at the concierge service station indicates signage and wayfinding issues in our library. Reviewing the questions in this sub-theme led us to create a library wayfinding team to tackle these directional issues. We began using Mandel's signage inventory method (Mandel and Johnson, 2016) first to audit our signs, then to analyze which signs are necessary, which signs are confusing or misleading, and how to standardize the building signs.

The second sub-theme, locating study spaces or tutoring, combines both tutoring services in the library as well as spaces for studying quietly or sometimes with groups. This sub-theme had 141 questions, about 10% of the total questions analyzed for this study. Within this sub-theme, 86 questions were related to tutoring and 55 questions were related to study rooms or quiet study. Schoonover & Kinsley (2014) found the second most frequently asked questions were those related to study rooms in the library. Our findings generally align with these previous findings. Sometimes tutoring happens in small groups in study rooms, but usually students are searching for the designated official campus tutoring space in the library. Tutoring services for specific disciplines are well established in one central location in the library, making it easy for directing patrons, but other space needs might shift this location in the near future. Establishing appropriate wayfinding tools to help users find these new locations will be the next challenge.

The third most frequently asked type of directional questions were related to locating spaces or services outside the library (n=137). The campus directional questions were related mainly to finding other buildings on campus. However, campus directional questions also included a wider range of questions, including directions to services such as food locations, current events, where to buy textbooks, ID and registration services, and even (since we are a smoke-free campus) a few questions, about the “quickest place off campus to have a cigarette.” To address campus questions, we maintained a supply of campus maps at the concierge station. This wayfinding issue is especially pertinent in the fall term when there are so many new students. Providing easy-to-find and approachable human options for solving these directional questions was an important benefit of the concierge service station.

### **Technology Theme**

Technology questions made up 30% of the total questions analyzed, the second highest category. Our sub-themes distinguished between library-related technology services, which we most likely had agency to improve or control, and non-library technology questions, over which we have little control. Library technology questions had the most total questions (n=318), just slightly higher than library directional (n=273) or finding sources (n=275). Almost two-thirds of this sub-theme of library technology questions related to printing. Questions about printing made up 17% of the overall total questions asked at the concierge station. These findings align with Schoonover & Kinsley’s (2014) findings that their most frequently asked questions were about printing.

Examples of specific printing questions received at the concierge service station include: “where are your printers,” “how to use Beaver print” (the library handles over three-quarters of the campus’s “Beaver” print service), and “how to print from my laptop.” Based on these frequent questions, we provided small business-card size handouts for laptop printing steps, and created ¼ sheets for the Beaver printing steps

and information. These handouts were well received by students and are now regularly used at both the circulation and information desks.

Non-library technology questions made up a small portion (n=94) of the total questions asked. The majority of the non-library technology questions were related to personal computer issues: the need for laptop repair, wifi connection issues, forgotten passwords, and general personal computer help. Our campus has a computer help desk where students can get assistance repairing their own personal computing devices. This campus IT desk was previously housed in the library but recently relocated. As a result, students were frequently confused about where to find help with their personal computer questions. These inquiries about non-library technology services led us to reach out to campus IT, who created a ¼ sheet handout to highlight their location and services.

### **Finding Sources Theme**

Questions about finding sources made up 20% of the total questions asked and was the theme with the third-highest number of questions (n=275). Questions asked in this theme all fell into the same main theme and were not subcategorized. This theme could also be referred to as borrowing items for classes or for research, finding discipline-focused resources, and finding known items on the shelf. Examples of questions in the finding sources theme include “how do I find books related to [a discipline],” “where is the [call number or range] section?”, or questions related to how to find and check out books from the collection. Library brochures that included floor maps and call number locations were often shown or given to users to help find known areas. Staff working the concierge service who had access to a tablet or even their phones often brought these devices with them to assist with quick reference help. Longer and more involved reference questions were directed to the Information Desk. While not divided into its own sub-theme, the most common questions in this theme were “textbook,” “reserves,” or similar words related to

inquiries about having course materials available for short term checkout (n=102). Since the Information Desk often gets this type of question, business size cards were already printed in which staff or users searching the online course reserve system can write down the course reserve specific call number, saving time once at the circulation desk. Sometimes these questions led to communication and collaboration between concierge staff and Information and Circulation desk staff, facilitating learning experiences on both sides.

### **Library Policies Theme**

Questions about library policies made up the smallest category of questions asked, with a total of 9% of the questions falling into this category. Sub-themes in this category included questions about general library policies (n=82) and questions specifically about food and drink policies (n=48).

The general library policies category included a wide range of questions about how the library functions. Patrons frequently had questions about supplies the library makes available in a variety of ways. The library provides access to supplies such as staplers, hole punchers, pens, scantrons, and blue books. Initially, the library sold some of these items at a vending machine, but some heavily used items were offered for free at a supply desk in the library's Learning Commons area. After analyzing the sales data and the supply questions at the concierge station along with general desk statistics, we eliminated the costly vending machine and decided to sell key items like blue books and scantrons at the circulation desk. Other supplies continued to be made available for free in the Learning Commons. A range of other library policy questions were asked at the concierge station. Examples of other questions asked in this sub-theme included "what hours is the library open," "where can I post a flyer," and "are you hiring?" We continue to work on making signage related to questions like the library hours clear both on the website and in the building, as well as improving how we communicate our policies on the website.



Questions in the sub-theme of food and drink policies arose fairly often. Different libraries have different policies around food, so it is understandable that many patrons would initially be unsure about what our local policies are. The data from the concierge service station, along with previously collected data from other service desks, and aging thin client computers (RE: simple catalog searching only computers) led the library to install computer kiosks on each of the library's six floors. We hope these kiosks will help with wayfinding. In addition, the kiosks offer a simple catalog search and also assist with promoting policies (e.g., messages rotate like "it's okay to have food and drink") as well as services (e.g., displaying messages like "we sell scantrons").

### **Assessing Staff Experiences**

Our initial goal for the concierge service was external — improving the user experience — but internal, staff-side benefits arose too. All departments and units in libraries are part of a larger library ecosystem, with every area affecting its users — directly or indirectly. A library ecosystem at larger institutions can often result in siloed workflows with some staff doing only behind-the-scenes work, others only working with certain patron groups, and others interacting only in public-facing roles. Often library staff work within the same small circles, frequently with cultural dividing lines established between public-facing units and the back-end units. The concierge service desk offered a way for anyone working in the library to see how their (often behind-the-scenes) work affects the users. In addition, more staff had a chance to observe first-hand the problems faced by users that they might have the skills to improve. It is worth noting that at OSUL tenure-track and tenured faculty librarians do not work at the public service desks like they do in many libraries, though they often interact with students through instructional sessions. The number of library staff - estimating over 70% - without direct daily contact with patrons is quite high.

Feedback was solicited from those who staffed the concierge service through a Qualtrics survey distributed after the Winter term in January 2016. The in-house survey was sent to everyone working the concierge desk and at the two public desks to gauge desk impact. Questions included whether those staffing the concierge service thought it was useful for patrons, how it was useful, and whether they would continue to volunteer, and why or why not. In particular, it was noted that those who do not regularly work at a public service desk expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work directly with users. One librarian, who no longer works at public service desks, commented “It was good to have contact with our users again, and good to have to think through how our library does or doesn't work from their perspective.” Another library staff member, who also works behind the scenes, commented, “I support this idea wholeheartedly - we can't easily change our architecture, but we can change what we do to help our users.”

As the comments indicate, assisting patrons first hand can serve as a learning experience for library staff who do not work public desks, and assists in a cultural shift by creating better connections between those who work behind the scenes and those involved in providing the day-to-day public services. Overall, the concierge service helped to alleviate the disconnect between the work that is distributed throughout the library and the day-to-day needs of patrons in the library. Other library staff reflected that working the concierge service station gave them the chance to work with staff from departments they do not work with normally. Since the inception of this service point, a member from each department in the library, including the library director, took a shift at the concierge service station.

### **Changes Based on Data Analysis & Future Considerations**

After the initial Fall term pilot, LEAD learned that staff, especially those who are not used to providing public service, lacked confidence in their knowledge of the library spaces and services. To

address this issue, two people were assigned to each shift to help build confidence; an added benefit was that the two staffers could learn different approaches and information about the library from each other.

Also, in the first year the data indicated that the number of questions asked decreased considerably by week three of fall term and especially for winter and even more so in spring term. As a result, we decided that we did not need to staff the service for fall term after the first two weeks. The concierge station is now staffed for slightly shorter hours for a few days at the start of fall term. Depending on the day of the week, sometimes it is also staffed into the second week of the term. Based on the data gathered, the concierge service is staffed only the first day of winter term and is not staffed at all during the spring term. The data gathered have allowed us to staff the concierge service stations at the times and locations it is needed the most.

The library is considering the potential of using the flexible concierge service in other locations in the building to guide users when new services are debuted or for prototyping a service point. One idea being considered is a student staffed concierge station near the printers. Instead of the students going back and forth from the main information service desk to the far side of the Learning Commons to deal with printing issues, perhaps personal help can be located where students are struggling. The flexible concierge service could also be used out for various large library or campus events that draw attendees into the library (e.g., homecoming, graduation, or author readings), providing campus visitors with a friendly service point. As Vanderkupp (2013) writes, "even the slightest negative perception can have a bearing on where families invest in their children's future," which is one reason he gives for why campuses should have a solid, consistent wayfinding plan (p. 209).

The concierge service data collection has continued, and preliminary analysis of the data from subsequent terms not analyzed using the constant comparative method have shown that the themes of the

questions remain unchanged. During data sampling weeks at the two main library public service desks, staff collect the text of questions asked for an entire week, rather than just tick marks in one of six categories. Comparing the concierge service data with the existing data collected at the other public service desks during these sampling weeks shows alignment with the concierge service themes during the early weeks of the term. Although no formal analysis has been done to compare the types of questions asked at the different service points, it appears the concierge service desk receives many more directional questions, indicating the flexible service is accomplishing one of its main objectives, which is to relieve the pressure on the other public service points early in Fall term. Further analysis to see if question themes vary at the different service points could be useful, as would be comparing concierge themes from the first year to subsequent years. We will continue to analyze data and see if the question themes change as we make improvements to wayfinding within the library.

Also, since this project started, significant changes have been made in the services offered in the library. In Fall 2017 a new collaborative service space opened on the main floor of the library called the Undergrad Research and Writing Studio, in partnership with the Oregon State University's Writing Center (Deitering & Filar-Williams, 2018). The addition of this new service resulted in shifts to other services in the library, thereby creating new wayfinding challenges. We are also using the concierge service data, along with the data collected at both public service desks and in the new Studio space, to revise how we provide services and reduce wayfinding issues in the library.

This concierge services data can also be combined with other data to better analyze wayfinding in a library. Our library just wrapped up a signage inventory and audit in order to better understand wayfinding issues and will soon be analyzing the data. In conjunction with the concierge data, we hope to determine the key directional confusions our users' experience. Due to the constant confusion patrons experience on

the main level of the library, we are considering color coding areas and using that on signage to help provide users with additional visual cues of their location.

### Conclusion

If a library does not facilitate patron wayfinding and patrons cannot find what they seek, then it does not matter if the desired information materials and services are available because they cannot be located and used (Mandel, 2010). A service like our concierge can be a critical component of fulfilling the library's main goal of supporting the success of students and the campus community. Additional benefits from the OSUL concierge service desk were building empathy in a range of library staffers and practicing effective service design. Undertaking a service such as the flexible concierge station for a limited time period is one way libraries can learn how to improve processes, signage, communication, and services without committing large amounts of funding or time. Even something as simple as a concierge service station allows libraries to collect information about users and their needs. Combining clear signage and technology solutions, with easily accessible personal contacts like those offered by the concierge station, help libraries successfully support our communities.

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