



# Learning Spaces and Assessment: National Trends and Perspectives

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# What are key trends and issues in assessment at the moment?

- Accountability
- Learning analytics
- Concerns about student and faculty effort in teaching and learning
- Questions about methodologies



# Assessment within the IT and library community

- EDUCAUSE ECAR
- EDUCAUSE ELI
- ARL LibQual+ and assessment initiatives
- ACRL Value of Academic Libraries
- Learning Spaces Collaboratory
- NC State Learning Spaces Toolkit



# Learning spaces assessment - classrooms

- Often there are inextricable links between new classroom styles, technologies, and new pedagogies
- These approaches have documented increases in student learning
  - Math Emporium at Virginia Tech
  - Active learning or Scale-Up Classrooms
- Reports on learning environments, pedagogies, and learning at U. Minnesota  
<http://www.oit.umn.edu/research-evaluation/selected-research/learning-environments/index.htm>



## Learning spaces assessment – informal spaces

- Many qualitative needs assessments based on methods championed by Nancy Foster and Susan Gibbons; little post-occupancy
- Surveys focusing on use and satisfaction but seldom linked to learning
- Some post-occupancy efforts using interviews and focus groups are yielding information related to learning (Yale, U. Washington)



# Opportunities and challenges

- Working with initiatives at the institutional level
  - National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) added questions
  - Graduation or exit surveys
  - Program surveys, e.g. Business School
- Leveraging the work of national initiatives
  - Participating in ELI SEI, LSC
  - Working with ARL assessment initiatives
  - Extending the work of ACRL Value of Academic Libraries



# Opportunities and challenges

- Developing questions that many institutions can use
- Developing a case study guide
- Collecting examples of existing learning space assessments



# Thinking about what matters

- For libraries, “studying” has been the clearest link to space and learning outside the classroom
- For computer labs, access to and use of hardware and software has been the primary focus
- Do we want to broaden and/or deepen the links to learning?
  - Support of specific programs
  - Support of capstone projects or undergraduate research
  - Support of creativity through new media





## Thinking about what matters

- “Intellectual curiosity is a strong predictor of future academic success...That conclusion was based on a meta-analysis of 200 previous studies...”
- *CHE 10/27/11 citing study in Perspectives on Psychological Science*
- Can we demonstrate that we inspire curiosity?



## The Challenge

- “Increasingly, it is less about the resources that libraries offer their communities, but rather how libraries combine their resources, services, space, outreach, and expertise to resolve and meet community challenges...The key challenge is clearly articulating and demonstrating value in measures and language that resonate with policy-makers.”

- Paul Jaeger et. al. *First Monday* v. 16, Nov. 2011



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