

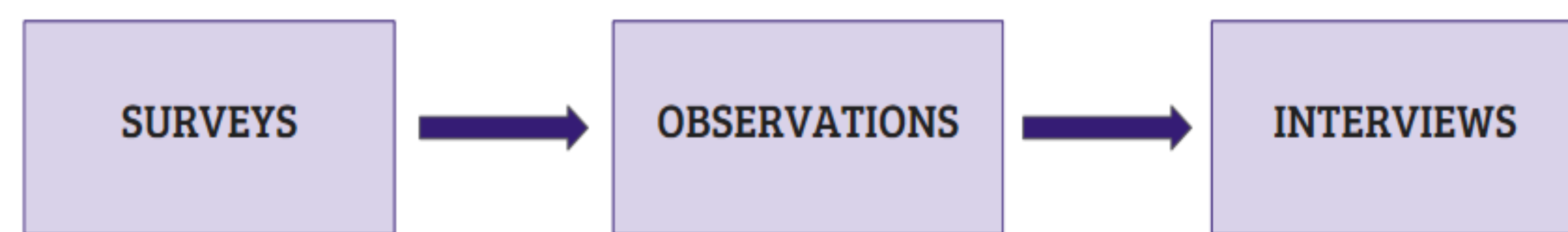
Asking, Listening, Observing:

Learning about Student Research and Study Behaviors through an Ethnographic Investigation

Background

The Long Island University Libraries conducted a large-scale ethnographic study from 2012-2015 to explore undergraduate and graduate student work habits at its urban and suburban campuses. The intent was to improve the library's understanding of student research, study, and instructional needs, with the ultimate goal of enhancing user experiences.

Methodology



Survey: Fifty-one questions on technology integration, library use, research and study habits yielded 1182 responses

Observations: 32 hours of unobtrusive observations recorded as field notes and interpretations

Interviews: 30 one-hour semi-structured videotaped interviews

Data Analysis

Survey

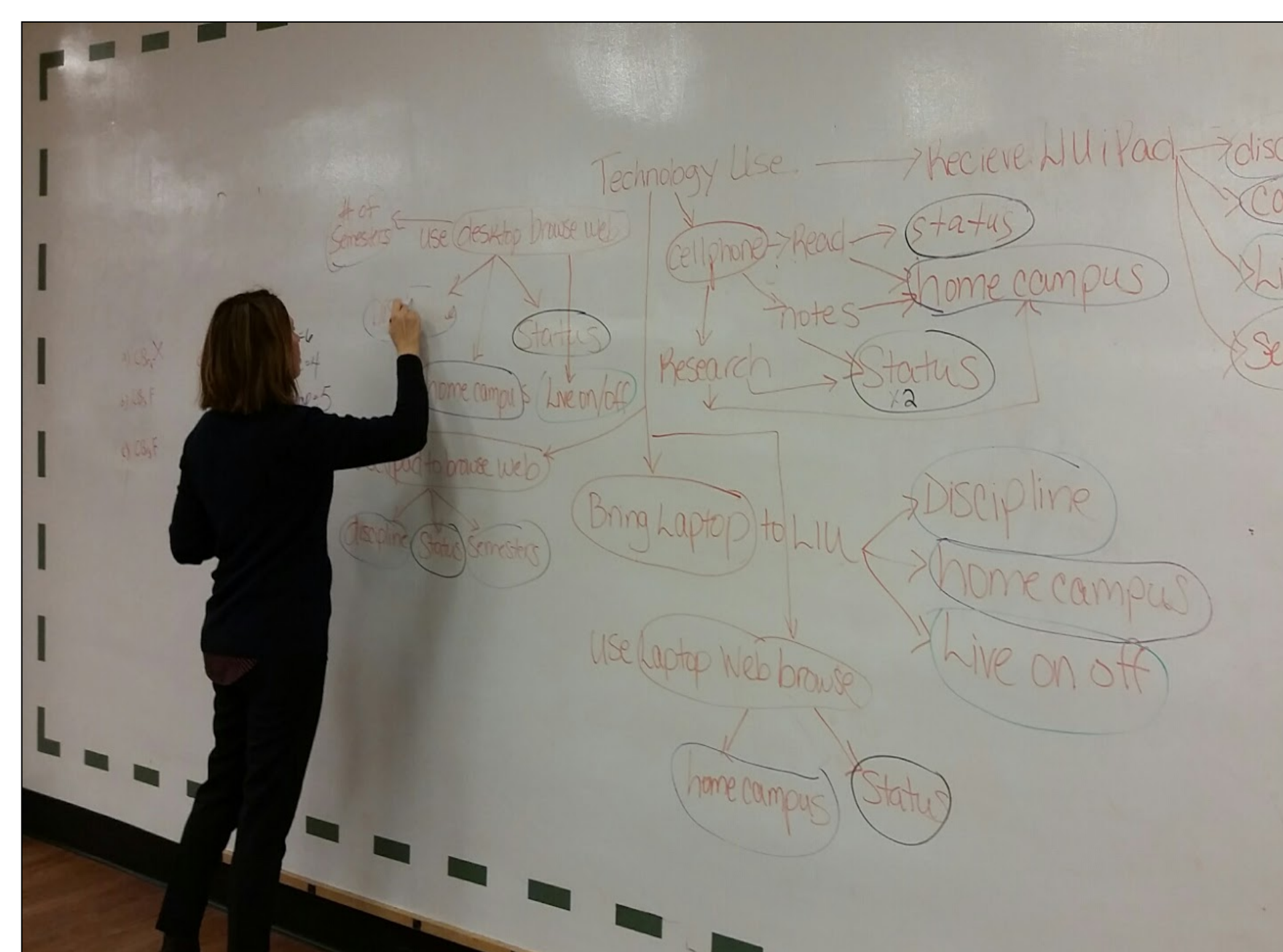
1. Performed descriptive statistical analysis and content analysis of open-ended questions
2. Performed inferential and descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS
3. Identified five themes from statistically significant findings

Interviews

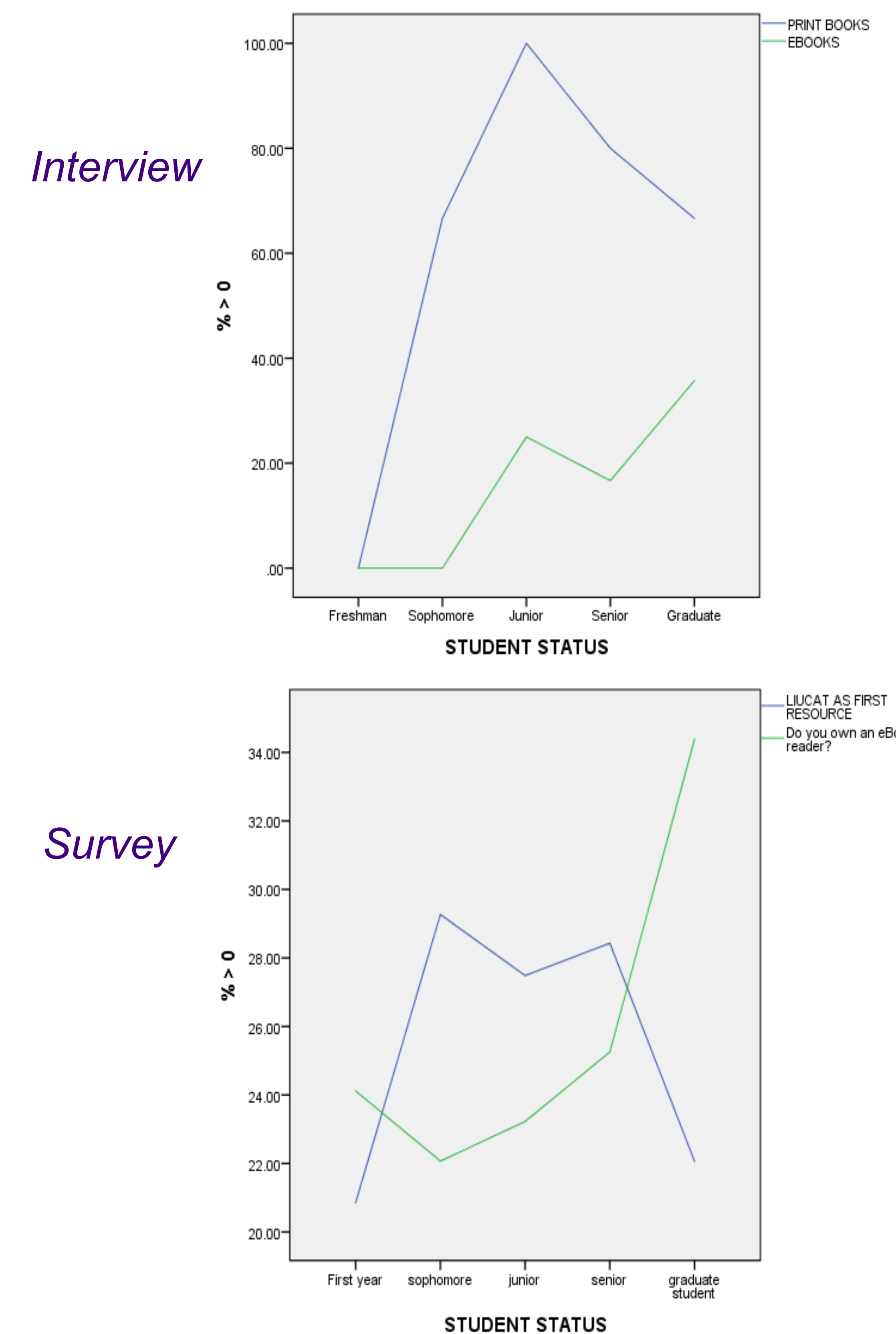
1. Professionally transcribed
2. Developed codebook (+400 codes created over one year)
3. Coded transcripts (85% inter-coder reliability)
4. Entered codes in SPSS
5. Performed descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS

Observations

1. Performed descriptive statistical analysis using word frequency count
2. Updated codebook
3. Entered codes in SPSS
4. Performed descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS (in progress)



Print vs. e-Book Data Triangulation



Select Findings

- Students use Google and the Libraries' databases equally
- Students go to peers and instructors first for research questions; embarrassed to approach librarians
- Students DO evaluate sources
- Students often prefer shelf browsing for finding book resources
- Signage is an important communication vehicle
- Students prefer print over e-book

Actions Taken

Instruction

- At one campus, basic library instruction and an information literacy exam were integrated within the first semester curriculum
- At another campus, librarians performed syllabus analysis for various Departments to identify library instruction opportunities
- Librarians became involved in Learning Communities to communicate directly with students early in their academic careers

Services

- Extended hours
- Website redesign
- Skype by appointment

Space

- Both libraries underwent renovations that included additional group study areas, a "lounge environment," and "Genius Bar" workspace

Non-Library Source Data Triangulation

