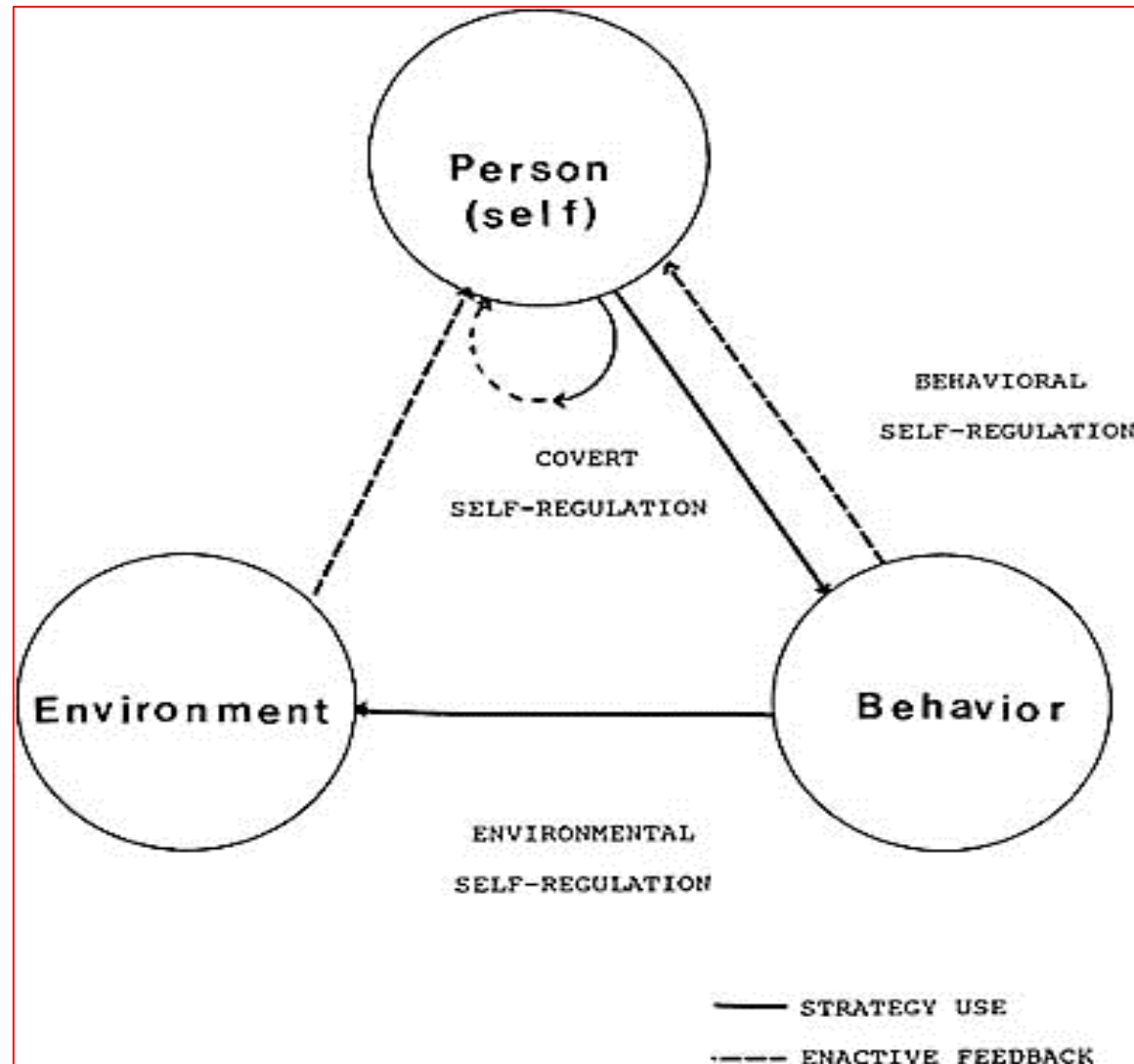


# Library spaces and learning; the students' view

Discussion of a study of students' use of informal  
learning spaces in the TFDL

[illegible]

# Zimmerman: Self-regulated learning



# Library Space Design Features



## COLLABORATIVE

- Floors 1-3
- Café
- Social areas with tables
- 27 Workrooms
- Workstations, some dual monitors
- Public access computers
- Comfortable lounge areas
- Varied seating choices
- Distributed wiring

## QUIET SPACES

- Floors 4-6
- Classrooms (2 traditional and 2 collaborative) with pc's
- Study carrels
- Study tables
- Individual study tables
- Some lounge seating
- Some pc's
- Varied seating choices
- Distributed wiring

# Why do students choose specific spaces in the TFDL as their learning space?



- Interview Questions focused on
  - Students' learning styles
  - Learning activities in the library
  - Preferred location for study
  - Description of ideal learning space
  - Response to types of learning spaces in the TFDL – review 15 photos of representational spaces in the TFDL
- Analysis open and axial coding using Nvivo software

# Demographics

- Interviewed 21 students ( M=10, F=11)
- 20 Undergraduates: 11 – 2<sup>nd</sup> year or below; 9 – 3<sup>rd</sup> year or up including 3 with previous degree
- 11 in STEM, 10 in Arts and Humanities
- N=18 report coming to the library 3-5 times per week
- N=14 stay 1-3 hours per visit, N=7 stay more than 3 hours per visit

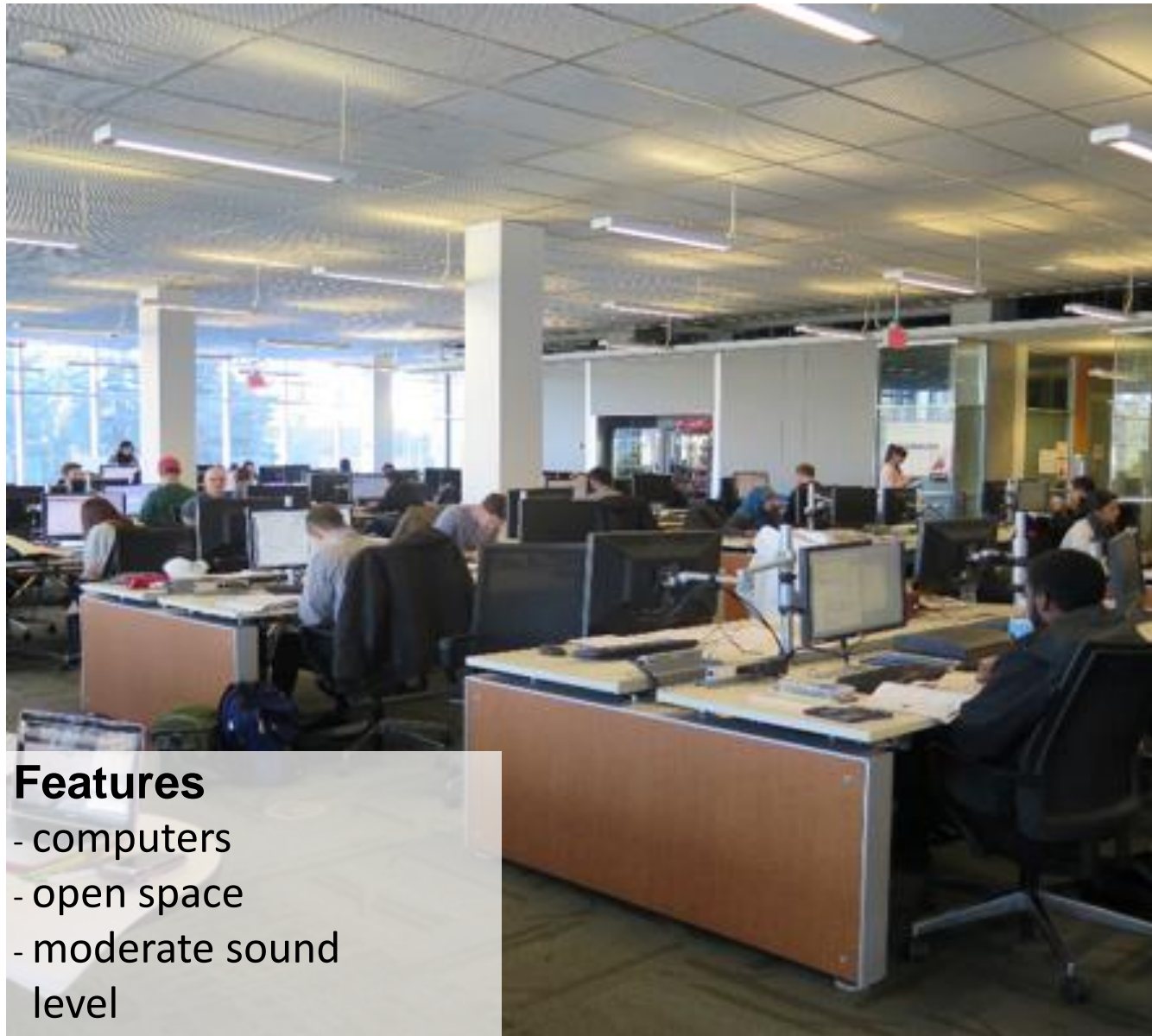




# Spaces and Awareness for Learning

- Students often agreed on spaces and what they could see as supporting learning, even if they would not use the space themselves.
- This is an indication of learner space awareness.





## Features

- computers
- open space
- moderate sound level

“If you need to scan, if you need to quickly print something, you just run up the stairs, print it, and head out, you know, if you’re in a hurry. ”

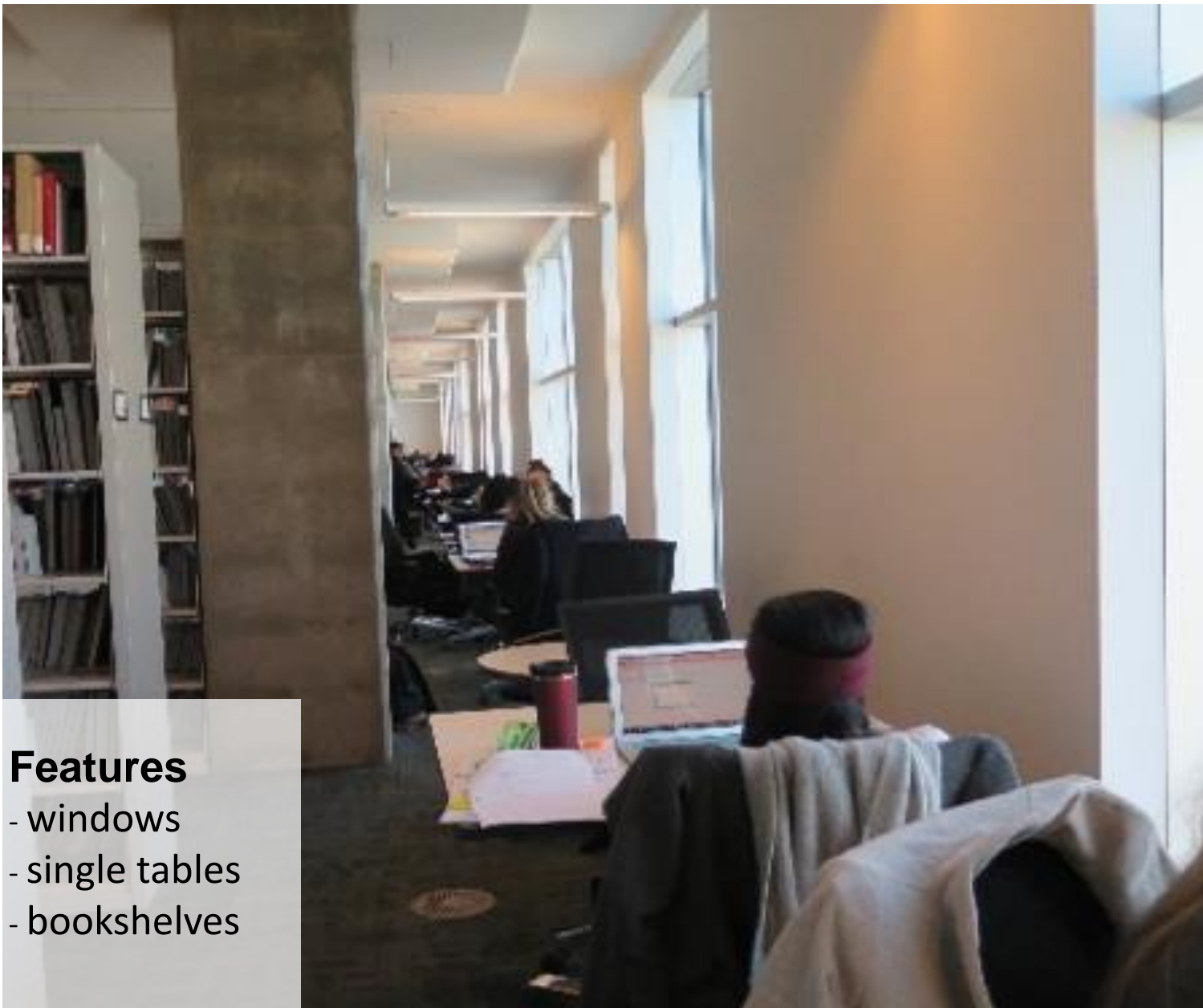
“The only time I find myself using these is if I need to do some last minute printing.”

“So distracting, because everyone keeps walking around. And [...] I’m like, “Oh, do I know this person?”

“I find these places super crowded. They are almost always busy and it’s just kind of off-putting. It just feels too busy to really sit down and focus on anything.”

**TFDL 2<sup>nd</sup> floor computer workstations**





## Features

- windows
- single tables
- bookshelves

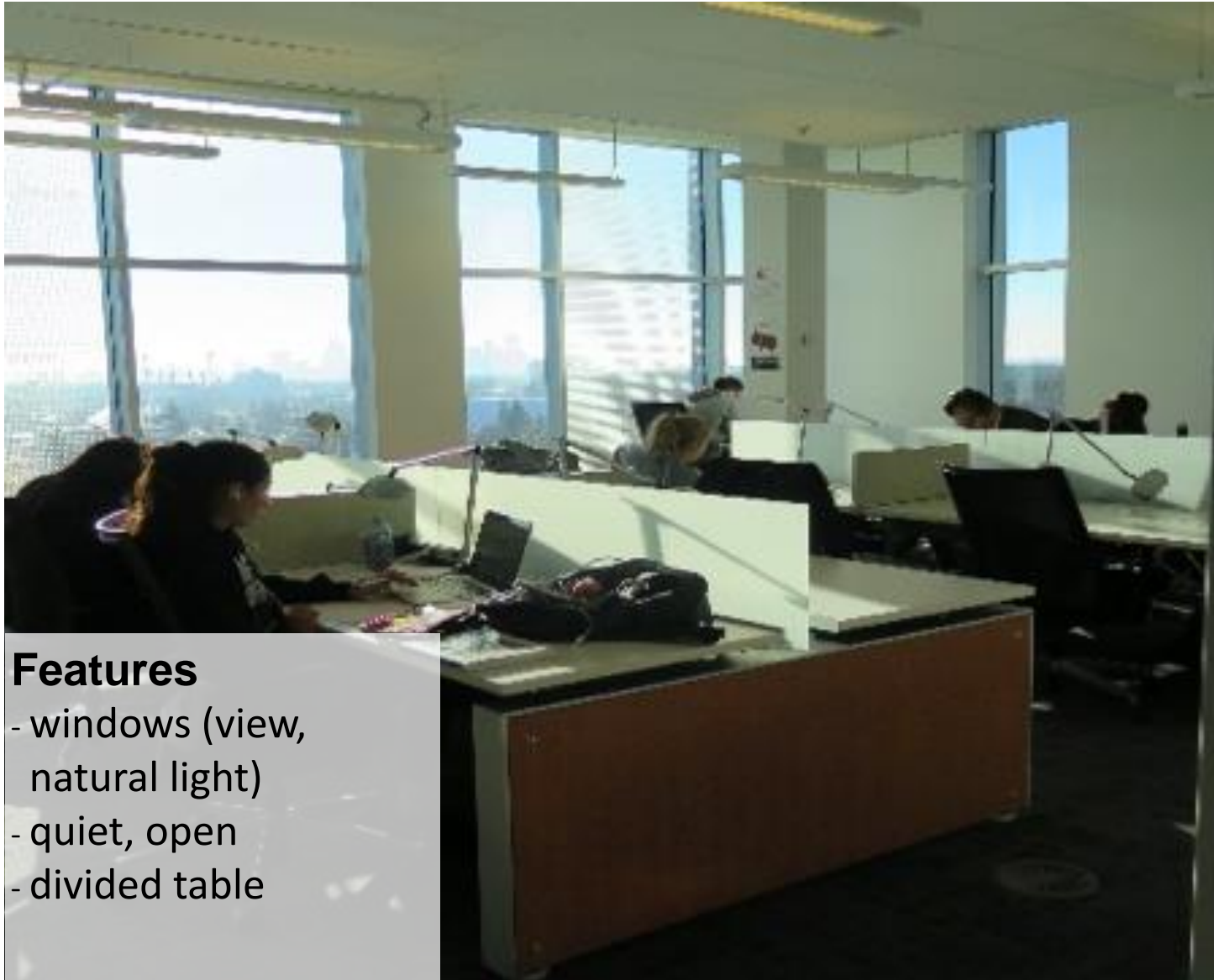
"It gives you a view of both the library and downtown. It's also close to the wall so it's less open, it gives you a feeling of [...] focus. [... ]."

".. we're all there, doing our own thing, but we're together."

"I'd be too busy trying to figure out what the people ahead of me are doing."

"I've tried actually sitting there but I found it distracting. So if I'm looking to work individually on something, I would rather be in a kind of enclosed table."

TFDL 5<sup>th</sup> floor, east side



### Features

- windows (view, natural light)
- quiet, open
- divided table

“You see everyone around you engrossed in what they’re doing. You feel the sense of learning community.”

“I find the dividers are nice, you have the mild sense of privacy.”

“With everyone being very quiet, or into their own thing, I find it very easy to focus.”

“if I see two people at a desk, I try to avoid that area. [...] if they’re talking [...], it [...] gets a little distracting.”

“You might have people right in front of you ...That’s a little bit distracting because the divider doesn’t go all the way up.”

TFDL 6<sup>th</sup> floor, quiet, corner

# Space Preferences for Learning

- **Sound:** most frequently mentioned, but space could be either too loud or too quiet
- **Distraction:** either need it or avoid it
- **Openness** – high ceilings with natural light or not isolated or confined, but could be too open
- **Comfortable** – definition varied
- **Outlets** needed but not a deal breaker
- **People vs isolation**, what works for them
- **Furniture:** varied, no real preference except for “enough desk space”
- **Space definition:** Preference for spaces where “their space” was physically defined



# The Value of Library Space to Students



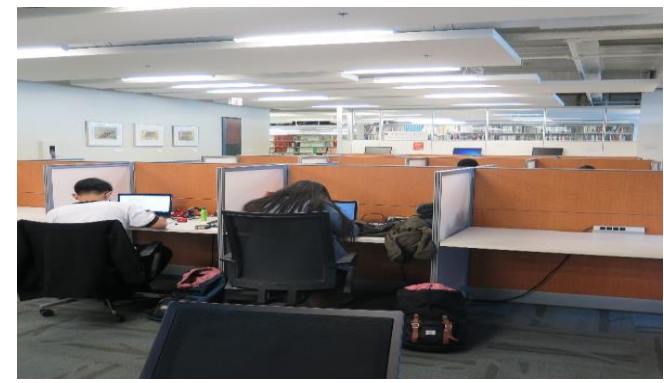


# Functionality



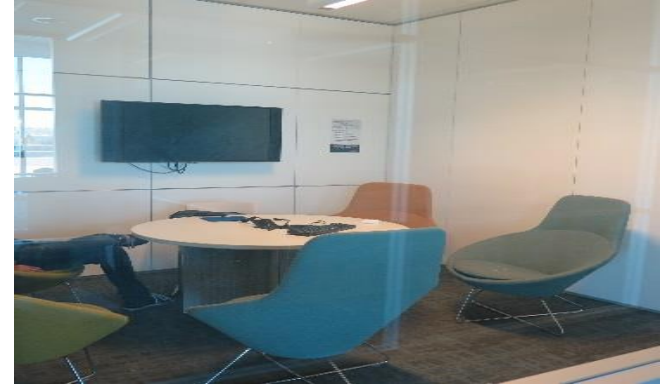
- P4: I am the kind of person who doesn't like to be very specific with my **study** habits in the sense of I don't like to just be in one space. I like to **move about**. I like to look around. Stretch maybe or whatever have you. I like to go for **coffee** or something. **So I like that the library is able to accommodate all of that.**
- P12: "so for **printing** 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors and then **group** work. 3<sup>rd</sup> floor or 1st floor for the rooms and then **studying** by myself, I would go to either the 4th floor computer area or 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> floor."
- "I live in the TFDL. I like it. There's a lot of **sources to really focus** on what you have to do, and **even hang out** with friends, or just to walk."

# Learning Atmosphere



- P1: the library forces me to work...work to get my degree. ..It is **essential**...it's where I can **work efficiently**"
- P11: "It's the whole **sense of .belonging and community and having a feeling of safety and having people-** like the same goals for anything, I really like that library still provides that sense of **community** whenever you are studying because you're there for a purpose and ..you're there **together**.
- P21: " the **resources** that they have, **books, facilities that they provide and how conducive are they for learning of the student...**it's like a home ...the **best home for a student.**"
- P6: **Stimulate** is the word. ..just seeing people around you ... gives you a feeling of **motivation.**"

# Student Space Ownership



- P3: ...it's just sort of **your space**. ...It feels like a place where I just know I'm going there, start studying and the studying is going to go well..
- P5: "love the library as a concept of place where you can go and have **your learning and second home**."
- P9: " It does feel like an **independent student space**,...it feels like kind of, you **have your own ownership when you do things** ...it feels like a free space so that really helps."
- P18: "I come in early, **come in to get my spot** and then I stay there for six to eight hours"

# Library as Academic Symbol



- P16: “ that’s the library, so **that’s going to be a place where you can find some place to work.**”
- P11: “**Knowledge and determination.** It also represents what the **goals** of students are, which is basically to **learn and to embrace knowledge**, and I feel like **libraries are the symbol of that.**
- P11: When you think of a university or setting, you would first think of the library ...I feel like **it represents what it means to be a student.**”
- P19: “ beautiful buildings....when I put myself in these surroundings I feel a bit **more inspired and motivated. ...definitely very symbolic.**”



# Mood and Motivation

- Students choose a space based on knowing how they learn and what works for them
- They know how they learn best and they choose to organize their surroundings to be successful



# Learning Spaces: Considerations

- Space design influences students choice of learning space
- Students seek design features that relate positively to their learning goals
- Environmental self-regulation is more than just making things comfortable, it is about creating a frame of mind



# Conclusions

- Our informal learning space design choices for libraries should be intentional, based on an understanding of how students learn and regulate their learning environment.
- The library is an important learning space for students



# Further Reading

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- Contact: Susan Beatty, [sdbeatty@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sdbeatty@ucalgary.ca)