March 22, 2017 Meeting notes

ATTENDING

HL: Christine Boehler, Amy Deschenes, Enrique Diaz, Tom Dodson, Paul Hanna, Barbara Meloni, Jonathan Paulo, Linda Rosen,

FTS: Jenna Bantjes, Geordie Kaytes, Chris Tucker

SUMMARY

Today’s meeting, facilitated by Amy Deschenes, served as a check-in with experience designers at Fresh Tilled Soil, who have been conducting interviews with students, researchers, faculty and staff about their current impressions and experiences with the Harvard Library Portal. FTS walked HL through the preliminary synthesis of interview data, reviewed the current working hypotheses for the directions the site could take, and explained the content audit that will inform the card sorting exercises to come. All members of the Working Group participated in the review throughout.

UPDATE FROM CHRIS

• Completed 29 interviews across the different user groups
• Working on data synthesis at the moment: comparison of responses, pulling out key insights and quotes to support those insights
• Hypotheses are in a good place: the slide deck being used for the discussion today is a living one, so things can still be refined and corrected as needed

UPDATE FROM GEORDIE

• Before jumping into walkthrough of high-level findings and hypotheses, question from Amy to the group: Any concerns over groups that weren’t represented? For example, no one from the Med School is in the data. Would we expect their input to be any different than from the schools that are represented? Consensus: no. Linda: Business School isn’t represented here, either, but also feel that the input would have been tangential at best.
• A lot of support for librarians as individuals; once they’re found/contacted, provide great value to user
• Not everyone sees the library as a place, majority see it as a collection of resources, collections, and archives. The question becomes how to regard the library: as abstract concept versus physical beauty and materials
• Almost no one uses library.harvard.edu; everyone uses hollis.harvard.edu
• Few people interviewed were aware of research guides
• Uneven knowledge across the user base. Surprisingly to FTS, undergrads were the best off: they had concrete onboarding via Expos, etc. Grad students or other students don’t get that kind of onboarding.
• Uneven library landscape, too: everything is independent, despite “One Library.” Do we fight that concept, or do we end up compromising?
• Linda: A big reason for lack of research guide awareness: research guides aren’t discoverable in HOLLIS+!
• Amy to FTS: Be sure to emphasize the access part of the ‘library as place’ facet of findings.
• Geordie to HL: Anything jump out?

FINDINGS

Linda: A lot of stuff we’ve heard before.

Amy: a sense of the library as place was surprising. Also surprising: Users defining certain activities as “non-library things” despite the fact they were done in a library.

Paul: confusion over the comment about searching and getting results right away without being filtered through libraries. Also, a consideration to be given about ways to integrate content from the Portal to external presences, versus pulling everything from the external sites into the Portal.

Amy: if there is a reason to go to the new portal, it should be consistent in how it’s presented from a school’s website.

Barbara, following up to Amy: even featuring the new portal as an FYI-style, awareness/promotion idea would be helpful.

Tom: What’s the deal with an Ask a Librarian? Surprised by feedback about it. Amy to Tom: The service is dissimilarly handled across the schools (i.e., same label is used for entirely different systems). Coincidentally, user-testing is underway at the moment for the HCL/FAS instance.

HYPOTHESES

• Geordie: The Missions to Balance—Find, Teach and Inspire—did this capture everything properly?

Do resources include the people? Yes.
Enrique: How will this be presented to leadership? They will ultimately define the goals of this site regardless of these three sound approaches, or any combination therein. Geordie to Enrique: further testing (e.g., card sorting) will yield data that will bear out what the mission ought to be. Leadership ultimately decides, yes, but they will be presented with all the information as it has best been gathered and synthesized for them. Amy to Enrique: Suzanne and Kerry will represent leadership for quick response to keep things moving.

Geordie: My bias is that Research Hub is what hollis.harvard.edu evolves into, Research Catalyst and Research Cathedral are what library.harvard.edu evolves into.

Jenna: majority of people are going to hollis.harvard.edu, but in the context of this slide deck, the data is all about library.harvard.edu.

Jonathan: Catalyst is particularly striking because this content represents transactions that are things that currently happen in-person, but not necessarily on the site. This would be a huge boost, rather than a shift.

Christine: Is there already a focus on Research Cathedral underway through other projects? If so, how do they fit into this?

Amy: Research Catalyst is best analogized as LibGuides. Liked the Research Cathedral hypothesis, but it doesn’t really exist right now, or is not easy to find.

Paul: Auxiliary resources (room booking, device loaning, etc.) is really important to users, especially those that regard the library as a place.

Amy: sharing what other team members submitted:

Jess: Thought that the Research Cathedral would be the most valuable for Law School, as it would reveal to Law students what else there is on campus for their research and study.

Corinna: Liked the Research Catalyst vision, should include faculty. “Cathedral” isn’t the right word for the “Inspire” hypothesis.

Kathleen: If the site would continue to be HCL then the focus should be the Research Hub. Research Catalyst is a nice hypothesis, but there are no tools nor time for what would be required to make it happen.

Barbara: not everyone uses research guides—they’re good for some stuff, not for others—should not be the benchmark for the “Catalyst” hypothesis.

Tom follow-up: should focus on things/systems we can actually control.

Increased consensus that “Cathedral” is a term that will distract from the goal of the testing and research. The best replacement for the moment is “Library Space.”

CONTENT AUDIT

- Explanation of Content Audit by Geordie: Looking at a Google Sheet with content topics organized by each theme (Find, Teach, Inspire). The arrangement reflects the kinds of content that FTS would expect users to consider as important were that theme important to the user.

To clarify: we’re talking about library.harvard.edu specifically, not HOLLIS+.

- [a bunch of reorganizing and cleanup of the lists by the group and FTS; for example, Records Data Management was going to be subsumed into Research Guides as a content topic had the group not identified the discrepancy]

Library “Meta” contains things people won’t care about, but it’s important to include these things so that the user testing bears out that lack of importance.

NEXT STEPS

- Card sorting: will see which hypothesis users demonstrate a preference for
- With Tree Sorting we’ll also understand the best way to organize what people want most
- Google Sheet with content topics and themes will be shared with the group shortly
- Use the Google Docs Comments feature to leave feedback; don’t edit the content directly