SNAP, CLICK, CHAT: INVESTIGATING THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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Today’s Presentation:

Background and impetus for the study

Methodology

The study
  ◦ Funding
  ◦ IRB
  ◦ Pilot testing
  ◦ Conducting methods
  ◦ Data analysis

Preliminary findings

Next Steps
BACKGROUND AND IMPETUS

THE SITUATION
SIUE @ a Glance

Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs

Over 14,000 FTE

103 undergraduate programs
78 graduate & professional programs
11 doctoral programs
SIUE @ a Glance

422 international students from 47 nations (Spring 2016)

**International Population @ SIUE**

- India: 30%
- Turkey: 16%
- Iran: 8%
- Nigeria: 7%
- China: 6%
- Saudi Arabia: 6%
- Others: 27%

**Students by School**

- Engineering: 54.74%
- Arts & Science: 29.86%
- Business: 10.19%
- Education: 4.03%
- Nursing: 0.95%
- Pharmacy: 0.24%
Graduate Students @ a Glance

Graduate vs. Undergraduate Population

Graduate 63.98%
Undergraduate 35.78%
Professional 0.24%

Majors - Graduate Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Engineering</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Management &amp; Info Sys</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Research</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Sciences</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Eng as 2nd Language</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rising Numbers

**US Data**
- International students studying in the U.S. grew by 10% in 2014/2015 from the previous year (*Open Door Data, 2015*)

**SIUE**
- Grew 30% from 330 FTE to 430 FTE between 2014 and 2015.
Why Library?

Why Not?
We want to reach out to our international students

Observations

◦ Textbooks
◦ On campus during the holidays

...so not much

Interviews with key people on campus

◦ Director of Retention
◦ Director of International Studies
◦ In communication with international office
◦ Consulted with various library faculty/staff
Literature Review

Specific issues
- Plagiarism
- Acculturation
- English language
- Experience with technology
- Academic expectations
- Social media
- Information literacy
- Information needs

Various methodologies
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Tracking software
- Written diary or journal
- Longitudinal study
- Specific frameworks
Investigating our students’ experiences from a **broader perspective** with both quantitative and qualitative elements

Areas we wanted to know more about:
- Recruitment to SIUE
- Academic experiences
- Library experiences
- Social experiences
- Space preference
- Library needs (Resources/Services)

Chosen methodologies
- In-depth interviews
- Photo diaries
- Survey
METHODOLOGY

DESIGN OF THE STUDY
In-Depth Interviews

Areas of Focus

- Recruitment to SIUE
- Academic experiences
- Library experiences
- Social experiences

Question Analysis Matrix

**Question:**
How did you hear about SIUE?

**Reasoning for Question:**
To understand how they heard about the university and to understand a bit about student’s background. It is also provides a nice opening question to frame the rest of the inquires.
Photo Diaries

Areas of Focus
- Study space
- Social space
- Uncomfortable space
- Preferred library space
- Negative library space

Two-part study

First meeting
- Asked participants to take pictures of different spaces in response to 9 different prompts
- Prompts include –
  - What are some of your favorite places on campus?
  - What are the places that you avoid or feel uncomfortable?

Second Meeting
- Meet to discuss student responses with their photos
Survey

Areas of Focus
- Library Services
- Library Resources
- Library Spaces

- Qualtrics
- Use & Frequencies
  - What do you do when you visit the library –
    - Every time ... never (5 scale)
  - How often do you use these library services –
    - All the time ... never (5 scale)
- Usefulness
  - How helpful...
    - Very helpful ... Not helpful (5 scale)
  - How much do you agree...
    - Strongly agree ... Strongly disagree (5 scale)
- An open text question: What would you change about the library?
Combining the Three Methods

Library overlap in each method

- **Survey**
  - Library resources
  - Library materials
  - Activities in the library

- **In-Depth Interviews**
  - Recruitment Experience
  - Academic Experience
  - Library Experience
  - Social Experience

- **Photo Diaries**
  - Preferred Study Space
  - Social Spaces
  - Preferred Library Space
  - Negative Library Space
The Study

IN ACTION
A Research Grant

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) Research Subsidy Grant

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

Funds covered:

◦ Student incentives (gift cards)
◦ Materials: cameras, memory cards
◦ Man power: GA to transcribe interviews
◦ Transcription software
◦ Travel for presentation
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

A. Initial Contact
- 2/24/2015

B. CARLI Grant
- Awarded: 3/17/2015

C. IRB
- Initial submission: 7/28/2015
- Revision submission: 8/27/2015
- Approval: 9/11/2015 (45 days)

D. Pilot Study
- After IRB approval
- Tested questions with students
- Revision

E. In-depth Interview
- From Nov 2015 to May 2016
Additional Aspects

Interviewed and hired a GA to transcribe the interviews for IDIs and PDs

Student worked during the Spring 2016 semester

Kept working notes/running commentary
  ◦ Everything we did and when
  ◦ Any outcomes or opposition we encountered
  ◦ Things to consider for next time
In-Depth Interviews

Conducted between November 2015 and May 2016

Stratified Systematic Sampling Method:
- Randomly selected 52 students in each group
- Stopped at a data saturation point (48 participants)

Audio recorded and transcribed
- Audio/Video/Digital Recording Release Consent Form

n=48, two of the interviews were not usable due to language and recording issues
# In-Depth Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Better understanding the why’s behind answers</td>
<td>• Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Probing into new areas of information</td>
<td>• Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recording issues</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Photo Diaries

Conducted between December 2015 and May 2016

Stratified Systematic Sampling Method:
- Randomly selected 20 students in each group
- Stopped at 13 participants

Audio recorded and transcribed
- Audio/Video/Digital Recording Release Consent Form

n=13, one of which was not usable
**Photo Diaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
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</table>
| • Unique perspectives into the student’s space use and needs  
• Vehicle for conversations  
• Visual information that accompanied the interview | • Two-part study  
Incompletion rate  
• Cameras and technologies  
Slower timeline  
Download or email?  
• Confusion on directions  
Prompts  
• Risks |
Survey

Administered April 4-22, 2016

Sampling: All international students enrolled in classes for the Spring 2016 semester

Sent a personalized form email to students to invite participation with a link to the survey
  ◦ Sent two reminder emails

Provided a 1 $100 cash prize incentive

n=188
## Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>• Quantitative data about use of the library</td>
<td>• Optional questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open questions</td>
<td>• Correlation between variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multiple takers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Data cleaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **PROS**: Quantitative data about use of the library and open questions.
- **CONS**: Optional questions, correlation between variables, multiple takers, and data cleaning.
Analysis: In-Depth Interviews

Process

- Worked as a team of 4
- Paired work on each transcript for interrater reliability
- Created an agreed-upon codebook

**Code: Home Education**

**Brief Definition:** When students describe their educational experiences in their home country

**Full Definition:** Many students mention their educational experiences in their home country including their classes, class size, interactions with other students, relationships with faculty, campus facilities and activities, etc.

**When to use:** Apply this code when students describe their educational experiences or setting in their home country

**When not to use:** Do not apply this code for descriptions of a student’s experience with libraries or library resources in their home country (see Home Library)

**Example:** “We have never had that back in Brazil. We go to class, you sit there and you just listen to the teacher”—ID01
Analysis: Photo Diaries

Process
- Work as a team of 4
- Inductively code transcripts
- Work in pairs on each transcript for interrater reliability
- Create an agreed-upon codebook
- Photos will also be uploaded and coded

- n=12 usable transcripts
Analysis: Survey

Process
- Exported the results from Qualtrics
- Cleaned up the data
- Imported data into SPSS
- Formatted in SPSS (variable types, etc.)
- Ran frequencies and statistical testing
- Imported responses from free text into Nvivo for analysis
Preliminary Findings

WE’RE JUST SCRATCHING THE SURFACE
Textbooks

Students expressed wanting the library to provide textbooks in every methodology

Part of the issue is that undergrads are “given” e-textbooks (from student fees)

Financial squeeze:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly stipend from scholarship</td>
<td>$930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly student fees</td>
<td>-$437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 textbook per class (3 needed)</td>
<td>-$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money left for living expenses</td>
<td>$343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Asking for Help

87.3% of students feel comfortable asking for help, but 52.6% say they rarely or never do so.

**Level of Agreement: I feel comfortable asking for help in the library**
- Strongly agree: 35.2%
- Agree: 52.1%
- Neither agree or disagree: 10.3%
- Disagree: 1.8%
- Strongly disagree: 0.6%

**How often do you ask a librarian a question?**
- Every time I visit: 3.3%
- Often: 11.2%
- Sometimes: 32.9%
- Rarely: 38.2%
- Never: 14.5%
Survey: What would you change about the library?

116 out of 188 students responded to this question

Top Response:

1. More **resources** (25 comments)
2. Longer **hours** (22 comments)
3. More **quiet areas** or enforce already existing quiet areas (12 comments)
4. **Textbooks** (8 comments)
5. **Food and drink** options (7 comments)
6. Easier or free **printing** (7 comments)

Library Satisfaction

- 18 comments expressed satisfaction with the library
Multiple Study Spaces

Students appreciate multiple types of study spaces (lighting, materials, desk size, noise level) depending on the type of work they are doing.
In-Depth Interview
Word Analysis

INTERVIEWER

PARTICIPANTS
Possible Applications

- Furniture in the library
- Food in the library
- [ ] Hours (in discussion)
- [ ] Textbooks
- [ ] International student orientation
- [ ] In-house staff training
Limitations of the Study

All information about students was self reported

Some conversations were influenced by current events
  ◦ Ex. Bombings in France

Students expressed wanting to “help” us
  ◦ Wanted to know the purpose of the study so they could answer accordingly

Respondent Bias
Lessons Learned

Pilot testing

Incentives
- Procurement
- Student preferences (online vs. local)

Word choices
- Consent forms: Meaning of “initials”
- Photo diary method: Meaning of the word “prompts”

“Free” transcription software

IRB
- Never too early

Interviewing skills
- Active listening
- Probing questions
- Building rapport
- Environmental control
Next Steps

Finish inductive coding of IDIs and Photo Diaries

Run analysis tests in NVivo

Run more analysis tests in SPSS

Combine into cohesive report with recommendations to address student needs
Tools Used

Camera: Olympus Stylus (2)

Voice Recorder: Sony MP3 IC Recorder, Olympus IC Recorder

Survey software: Qualtrics

Analysis software: NVivo and SPSS

Transcription software: Express Scribe Transcription Software
ANY QUESTIONS?


Bibliography (cont’d)


THANK YOU!

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