

Research Implementation: Gathering Qualitative Data

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CUNY LEAD Workshop, April 25, 2017

Photo Survey – Reading Room

Photo surveys are a great way to learn more about how space, technology, and other objects are being used, especially outside the library or off-campus. Students can be given a list of objects and locations to photograph, then interviewed in order to hear details about the photos in students' own words. Photo surveys also produce visual data which can be useful to illustrate reports, presentations, and publications.

We'll do an abbreviated photo survey (without interview) today. Let's assume for this activity that everyone in the space you're working in is a student. Please take a photo of:

- A student doing academic work
- A student doing leisure or non-academic activities
- A spot that you would choose if you had academic work to do
- Something else you notice

After you've taken your photos, come back in and sit with your group to discuss. You can use the space below to take notes.



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Space Use Observation – Reading Room

Anecdotal observation is something that we probably all engage in every time we walk through our libraries. Systematic, repeated, recorded observation is a research method that can reveal much about how our community uses our library. Observations can be recorded by walking through a space and taking notes and/or making tallies, or by sitting or standing in a location and taking notes on what's happening around you.

For today's purposes you will spend 10 minutes doing an observation of the space you're working in. Pick an unobtrusive spot to sit or stand, and use the space below to take notes as you observe. Questions you might want to consider include (though are not limited to):

- How many people are in this room?
- What do they appear to be doing? Is it academic work or not?
- How many are using technology? What kind(s)?
- Is anyone using this space in ways it's not intended to be used? (Example: sleeping on the floor in between the stacks)

After you've finished your observation, come back in and sit with your group to discuss. You can use the space below and on the reverse of this sheet to take notes.



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