The Library in the Life of the User

*Exclusively for OCLC Research Library Partners,* this meeting will present information about how ethnography and design thinking can help to bring insights into the life of the user, outside the library that can help us to think about providing more meaningful support based on what students and others really do, the importance and significance of convenience and satisficing, and the importance of understanding real and not imagined workflows. #orlp

OCLC Research Library Partners are invited to join us for a day and a half of presentations from library leaders, design and ethnography practitioners, and librarians at The Westin Michigan Avenue in Chicago, Illinois on 21-22 October 2015. Learn and be inspired.

As user behaviors and user expectations change, it is vital that libraries understand these important shifts, and effectively reposition services in order to most usefully serve their constituencies. Ethnographic work and design thinking have underlined the importance of understanding actual behaviors, and provided some techniques to do this in rapidly changing environments. It has made libraries more aware of the need to be visible and engage with their constituencies. And it has highlighted the importance of understanding workflow and incentives as services are reconfigured in a network environment. It thus provides an important context for understanding how behaviors and technology are increasingly infused.

Ethnographic approaches in libraries have formed an important and influential strand of work in recent years, beginning with the formative and influential large scale study on student behavior at the University of Rochester beginning in 2004. An important outcome of this work has inspired other institutions to pursue their own lines of inquiry, recruiting staff with ethnographic/anthropological or user-centered design backgrounds. Findings have been illuminating and inspiring, helping us to overcome preexisting assumptions about patrons, based on what we saw inside the library. Ethnography and design thinking can help to bring insights into the life of the user, outside the library that can help us to think about providing more meaningful support based on what students and others really do, the importance and significance of convenience and satisficing, and the importance of understanding real and not imagined workflows.

The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 21 October and conclude at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, 22 October 2015. Additional details will be shared in the following weeks as they become available.

Contact Jeanette McNicol with questions.

Register now to secure your spot at this meeting!

To reserve a room at The Westin Michigan Avenue Chicago, see the hotel registration details below.