MAGNET Grad Research Lab

Oct. 1, 2014; around 5:30pm

Sandra and Sriya

* Only two students in the lab
* One student, Neill, is working on his programming homework for C++
* Both have snacks for themselves
* Neill is studying using both a textbook and laptop
* Another student, Ayanna, is only using her laptop
* Nobody is using the provided computers
* The whiteboards all have writing and information on them; probably from past meetings
* Very quiet; the observers (Sandra and Sriya) are whispering because we don’t want to interrupt or disturb anyone
* Quietest place we have observed so far, even though it is not billed as a quiet study area
* Fully stocked in terms of markers, erasers
* The printer needs paper but it has a big sign marking that
* The area is decorated - the organizers clearly wanted to create a comfortable and creative space
* There is an unequal number of chairs and tables; more chairs are needed
* There is only one desk lamp
* View outside the windows is of another building
* Constant whirring of the AC is audible (or some sort of air ventilation)
* Two small plants are placed on the windowsill
* The tables are really clean and uncluttered
* Neill gets help with his programming help from Sandra; he just found out she knew C++ and

INTERVIEWS

NEILL CHUA

* Grad, 1st year

What do you think of the research lab?

* likes having our own space
* quiet
* it’s more exclusive, that’s why he likes it
* no reason to go outside besides bathroom
* sometimes he thinks there’s too many people, but he’s never felt like there wasn’t space for everyone
* it’s really cold, but that’s how the whole school is

How do you think our room is better than outside?

* brighter in here than outside

Have you been to Dibner?

* There’s too many people there and it gets distracting

What about the games?

* Yeah, that’s more distracting
* makes me not want to do my work

Is the room comfortable? It’s decorated

* it’s comfortable
* hasn’t had issues with it
* maybe more couches!

What are your typical study habits?

* wait until the last minute
* due tomorrow, do tomorrow

Do you procrastinate less if here?

* yeah, if at home i don’t do work because im comfortable
* If i have a lot of homework, i come here specifically bc i’m out of my comfort zone and makes me need to work
* There’s nothing else I can do
* I don’t bring my mouse bc that makes me want to play games
* forcing myself to do my work when I come here

Do you study better individually/group?

* individually
* I get too comfortable when with people
* I can never do study groups bc we end up slacking more than getting shit done
* I’ll work with people but only online
* in person you end up talking more, eating more, you make up more excuses with more people
* You can get more work done if you do separate parts and meet, but more gets done when online
* it’s faster to ask questions, but

How often do you come here?

* only three days, M-W
* usually come after lunch
* after class, or afternoon

Do you find it open to collaboration and asking questions?

* yeah
* everyone who comes in is friendly
* everyone’s nice
* it’d be weird if someone was like NO and mean. if you’re mean, it’s awkward

What’s your ideal study environment?

* a giant bed and bottles of wine
* studying slightly buzzed is really really good
* not drunk! but great to do hw slightly buzzed
* i’ve done it several times and its beneficial creatively and it really helps
* for me, at least
* sometimes if i get too much work, i get really stressed so a little bit of alcohol eases it up; helps me work better
* i like to give up if it gets too much
* i get overwhelmed easily so if there’s any way to stop overthinking my workload, it helps
* sometimes it backfires and you’re like whoops

What are some shortcomings/ problems you face as student?

* no money

LAZARUS DUPREE

* graduate student; 1st year

Which place do you prefer to study? Dibner, MAGNET, or grad lab?

* prefers grad lab
* it’s quieter
* you see people you are actually in class with
* you don’t see people you don’t know
* there’s always something to talk about

How often do you study here?

* usually when i have projects to work, usually with groups
* if i’m early for class, I stop by here

How long do you study here?

* if i have a project, at least an hour i stay
* I live kind of far, i don’t come here just to study; i need to have something else to do

What are your study habits?

* don’t know if i have them
* study based on what’s due in the week
* sometimes i try to put aside time to learn software or research based on a project or idea i have

Do you study better with a beautiful view?

* i’d probably be more distracted
* i’d daydream and think of doing things other than studying

Why don’t you like MAGNET as much as the lab?

* it can be loud
* sometimes not enough table space
* people are usually walking all around, so i get distracted
* here, everyone’s usually sitting down
* no one really talks loudly unless it’s a funny joke

What’s your ideal study environment?

* COMFORTABLE CHAIRS, THESE CHAIRS SUCK
* good lights; not a fan of these lights
* lots of space
* wearing my playstation headphones
* good headphones are essential
* lets my relax and study at the same time
* at home, i have one office chair and a huge bean bag on which i do homework. I use it for posture :)
* never ending buffet

Do you study better individually or as a group?

* individually
* the way i learn is to be really engaged; i like to focus in on something without distractions that don’t come from me
* if im going to be distracted, i want to distract myself; don’t like being distracted by others
* once i get that learning/understanding, i don’t mind sharing with a group; but initial learning must be done alone

Do you find the space (MAGNET/lab) open to collaboration/questions?

* absolutely; i’ve never been rejected

Do you like to eat while studying?

* i like to snack
* if i have a big meal, i won’t do work
* snacking doesn’t break attention

What would make you a more efficient studier?

* having more hours in the day
* i don’t know; i take on too much and stretch myself thin
* stop taking on too much

What are some shortcomings/problems you face as a student?

* Not enough mentorship in IDM
* Opportunities, but not enough understudy work
* Often difficult when you don’t see people that look like you; hard to study when you don’t see people where you want to be
* You need to imagine what the right thing to do is or try and be like everyone else

RACHANA OZA

* Graduate student; 1st year

How often do you come to MAGNET?

* 4x a week for class
* Sometimes I come in early for group projects, but otherwise I study at home

What are your study habits?

* Easily distracted
* Likes quiet places
* No windows so I don’t look out
* Better at night

What are problems or shortcomings as a student?

* Travel! Commute is too long and takes too much time
* Easily distracted - no quiet place to study in MAGNET
* Hasn’t tried studying in Dibner
* Feels comfortable in MAGNET
  + If confused, can ask classmates or professors

Do you feel like you are being primed in the right direction for your post-grad career?

* Yes, definitely
* At the end of the day, it all depends on how much effort you put in

Do you feel you get enough student-teacher interaction?

* Not all the time
* Not in class because there’s too many student
* Outside, not really; their hours don’t match with mine
* Wish there was more interaction