



EYP/ research

Living-Learning Research Report: Michigan State University

Residence Hall Spaces and their Contributions to Student Learning

November 2015



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Confidentiality Statement

This report concerns the impact of Living-Learning buildings on college campuses. The report has been developed by EYP, Inc. (EYP) at significant expense, devotion of resources, and time. As such, EYP considers the report as its proprietary information.

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/ Research Team

Leila Kamal, AIA, LEED AP BD+C
Vice President / Design & Expertise
EYP Architecture & Engineering

Sara G. Stein, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C
Academic and Student Life Planning, Senior Associate
EYP Architecture & Engineering

Karen Inkelas, Ph.D.
Director of the UVA Center for Advanced Study of
Teaching & Learning in Higher Education
University of Virginia

Paul Goldblatt
Assessment Analyst
Michigan State University

Josh M. Durbin
Community Director
Michigan State University

Larry Lock, M.A.
Community Director
Michigan State University

/ Introduction

For traditionally aged undergraduates, living in a college residence hall can have profound effects on their learning and development. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005)¹, in a meta-analysis of research published between 1989 and 2002, wrote that students who live on campus are more likely to persist in college, exhibit greater developmental growth cognitively and psychosocially, and change their values and beliefs more significantly than those who do not live on campus. Students who live on campus also tend to interact more often with their peers and participate more frequently in co- and extra-curricular activities, which often lead to greater retention and achievement. Finally, all of the above outcomes can be more pronounced in residence halls intentionally designed to achieve those goals.

The physical design of the residence hall can play a major role in shaping how successful a residence hall staff can be in facilitating certain learning goals. For example, if a residence hall staff wished for students to interact more frequently with their peers, it would be difficult to enact those ambitions in a facility with few public gathering spaces. Thus, the architectural design of residence hall buildings is a critical element in shaping the learning environment in American colleges and universities.

¹ Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers.

/ Purpose of the Study

EYP is committed to designing and creating college residence halls that promote and enrich student life and learning. EYP research is thus measuring the impact of the built environment on students who live in residence hall buildings intentionally designed to be living and learning spaces. Similar to a study that EYP commissioned at the University of Michigan, this study examines student usage of academic and social spaces in a residence hall at Michigan State University using Living-Learning design principles. In addition, it compares the experiences of students living in the Living-Learning designed hall to a more traditional residence hall on a number of student outcomes, including interactions with peers, faculty, and residence hall staff; satisfaction with their residence hall experience; and co- and extra-curricular involvement.

This research builds upon the aforementioned University of Michigan (U-M) study by utilizing the same survey instrumentation developed in the 2014 U-M study. The survey was administered to all students living in Michigan State University's Snyder-Phillips Residence Hall, which underwent a significant renovation in 2006-2007, and Mason-Abbot Residence Hall, a building adjacent to Snyder-Phillips with a similar physical design. Like the U-M study, this research shows that intentionally designed Living-Learning environments do create conditions that facilitate linkages to student learning.

/ Methodology

Study Site and Sample

This study took place at Michigan State University (MSU) in East Lansing, Michigan. MSU is the land grant public research university of the state, with an undergraduate enrollment of over 38,700 students. MSU's Residence Education and Housing Services serves nearly 15,000 students annually and operates 27 residence halls and two apartment communities.

Two samples of students were selected for the study: the first sample (the experiment group) included students living in an EYP-renovated living-learning residence hall (Snyder-Phillips). The second sample (the comparison group) included students living in traditional residence hall space (Mason-Abbot).

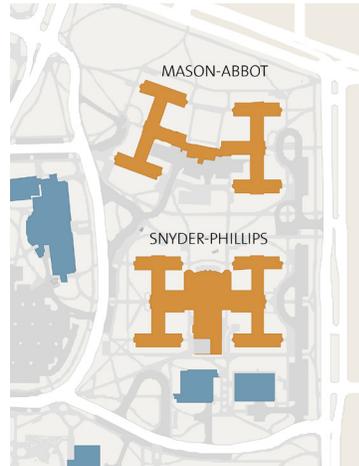
Built in 1947 and named for MSU master plan architect T. Glenn Phillips and former President Jonathan L. Snyder (1896-1914), the Phillips and Snyder Residence Halls were two separate buildings with a small one-story structure between them that was demolished in 2006-2007 as a part of an overall project to create a Residential College for the Arts and Humanities. The project included improvements to the building's exterior, upgrades to aging infrastructure and a new connecting space in the middle to unify the two buildings into one complex. The new connecting space included an innovative dining service venue and an overlooking Gallery, as well as a convenience store, art studios, a flexible theater for the performing arts, a media laboratory, a language proficiency center, music practice rooms, faculty/staff offices, and classrooms. Snyder-Phillips has an occupancy of 633 students, and features furnished single and double rooms with community-style bathrooms; all rooms include high-speed Internet, cable television, and Wi-Fi in individual rooms and public areas. The facility's amenities include free laundry, air conditioning in public areas, study rooms, community meeting spaces, and an ATM. Some of the floors are alcohol-free zones. Snyder-Phillips is also home to the Honors College and Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH), two Living-Learning communities.

Mason Residence Hall was named for Stephens T. Mason, the first governor of Michigan, and opened in 1938. One year later Abbot Hall, named for Theophilus Abbot, MSU President from 1862-1884, opened with what was then the first college-operated dining room. Mason and Abbot Halls combined house 611 students and feature furnished single and double rooms with community-style bathrooms; all rooms include high-speed Internet and cable television. Wi-Fi is only available in public areas. The facility's amenities include free laundry, a community kitchen, classrooms, study rooms, a TV lounge, a game room, and ATMs. Similar to Snyder-Phillips, some portions of Mason-Abbot are alcohol-free zones.

All four buildings, Snyder, Phillips, Mason, and Abbot are located in the North Neighborhood section of MSU, and take the shape of a serif "I," with the primary difference being the new connector between Snyder and Phillips. Thus, MSU provides an excellent backdrop for a comparison study, since the only difference between the two

sets of buildings (Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot) is the EYP-designed Living-Learning connector between Snyder and Phillips (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Layout of Mason-Abbot and Snyder-Phillips Residence Halls



Instrumentation and Data Collection

The survey instrument used in this study was modeled after the instrument created to assess Living-Learning environments at the University of Michigan. The instrument asks students which spaces they used the most often, the time they used the space, what activities they performed in those spaces, and why they preferred to use that space. The survey also asked the students in both residence halls to provide the researchers with recommendations or feedback they would offer to architects who design residence halls about their particular building.

Because EYP is interested in understanding how Living-Learning designed residence halls facilitate student learning, the survey instrument also asked students to respond to a series of questions regarding their:

- Relationships and interactions with students, professors, and staff
- Co-curricular (e.g., student clubs, organizations) involvement
- Extra-curricular (e.g., socializing, partying, exercising) activities
- Satisfaction with their residence hall experience

Upon gaining MSU Institutional Review Board approval to conduct the study, the survey instrument was administered online to all students living in the Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot Residence Halls in Spring 2015. The web survey firm, Survey Sciences Group, hosted the online survey from late March to late April 2015. A total of 1,244 students (Snyder-Phillips=633 and Mason-Abbot=611) were sent an initial email invitation to participate in the survey, and non-respondents were followed-up with up to three additional times. The final sample includes 394 students (a 31.7% response rate), 213 of whom lived in Snyder-Phillips (33.6% response rate) and 181 of whom lived in Mason-Abbot (29.6% response rate).

/ Results

Before reporting the results of the survey, it is important to compare the student respondents in both residence halls to see if there are any significant differences between the two groups. Such differences may affect the interpretation of the findings.

As Table 1 shows, the Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot Residence Hall samples are statistically similar by race/ethnicity and college grade point average. However, the two samples differ significantly by gender. The Mason-Abbot sample is comprised of 75.1% women, while the Snyder-Phillips sample includes only 59.1% women. Due to the much higher proportion of women in the Mason-Abbot sample, all subsequent analyses will control for gender.

Table 1: Demographic Comparisons of the Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot Hall Samples

| | Snyder-Phillips (n=213) | Mason-Abbot (n=181) | Sig Chi-Square |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 40.9 | 24.9 | $\chi^2=12.05; df=1; p<.001$ |
| Female | 59.1 | 75.1 | |
| Race/ethnicity | | | |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native | 0.4 | 0.0 | $\chi^2=9.27; df=6; NS$ |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 5.2 | 12.1 | |
| Black/African American | 5.7 | 3.2 | |
| Hispanic/Latino | 2.6 | 3.2 | |
| White/Caucasian | 78.7 | 75.8 | |
| Multiple ethnicities | 3.0 | 3.2 | |
| Race not indicated | 4.3 | 2.6 | |
| College GPA | | | $\chi^2=4.73; df=4; NS$ |
| 3.50 - 4.00 | 56.0 | 48.4 | |
| 3.00 - 3.49 | 29.1 | 31.8 | |
| 2.50 - 2.99 | 12.0 | 14.6 | |
| 2.00 - 2.49 | 2.6 | 5.2 | |
| No GPA | 0.4 | 0.0 | |

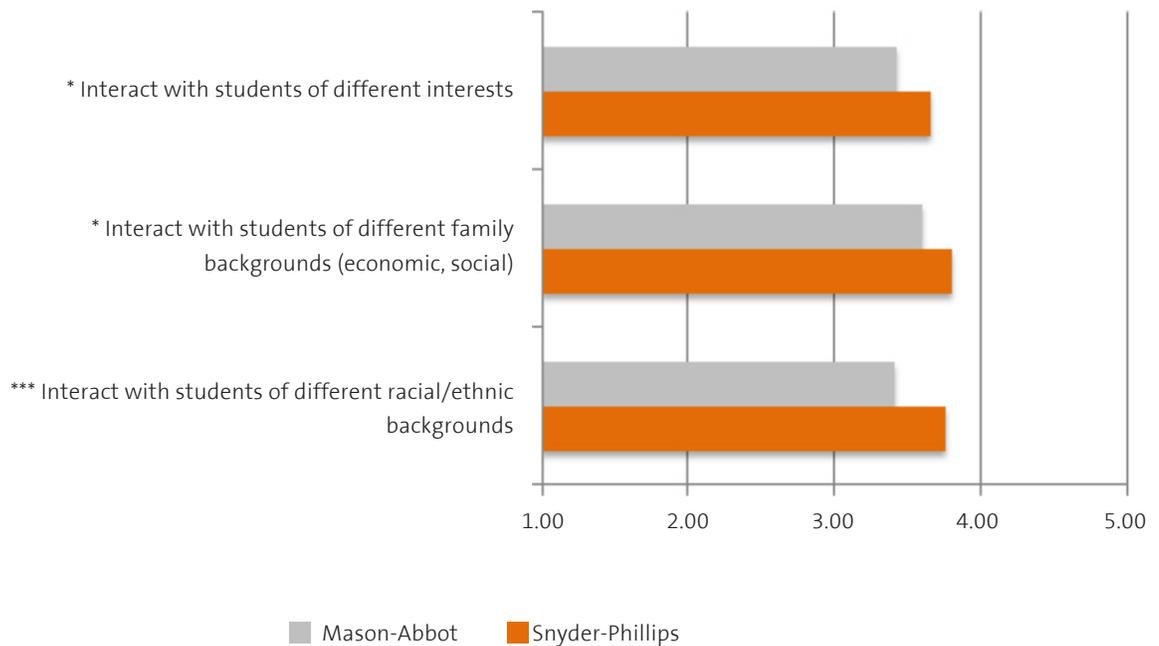
The results from the survey can be divided into six primary findings.

Finding #1: *Snyder-Phillips Residence Hall students participate more often in learning-related activities and tend to use their building more often than Mason-Abbot Residence Hall students for such activities.*

As Table 2 shows, students living in Snyder-Phillips are significantly more likely than students in Mason-Abbot to interact with their peers in learning-facilitative ways. Snyder-Phillips students are significantly more likely to:

- Interact with students with different interests
- Interact with students of different family backgrounds (economic, social)
- Interact with students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds

Table 2: Comparison of Average Interactions with Peers ¹



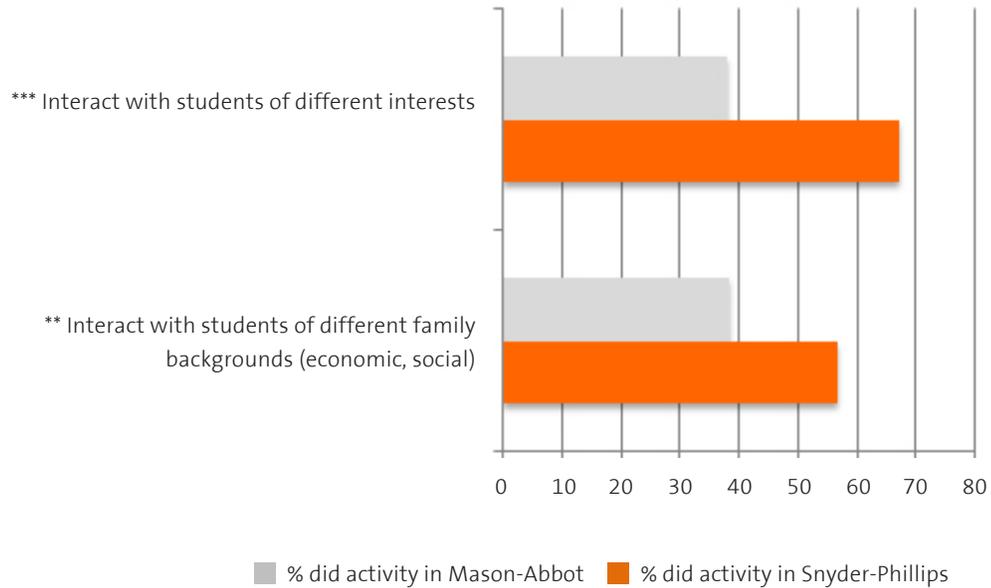
¹ Controlling for gender

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Because the above types of peer interactions could occur anywhere on or off campus, we also asked Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot residents if they typically had those interactions in their residence halls. Among those students who frequently interacted with diverse peers, a significantly higher percentage of Snyder-Phillips students were more likely than Mason-Abbot students to interact with peers in their residence hall. Snyder-Phillips students were significantly more likely to do the following in their residence hall:

- Interact with students of different interests
- Interact with students of different family backgrounds (economic, social)

Table 3: Percentage of students Who Performed Interactions in Residence Hall



* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

In general, students in both Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot were not very likely to interact with faculty or residence hall staff, but as Table 4 shows, students in Snyder-Phillips were significantly more likely to:

- Discuss ideas for a paper or class project with a faculty member
- Meet or talk with their resident assistant (RA)
- Attend an event organized by their RA or residence hall

Table 4: Comparison of Average Interactions with Faculty and Staff ¹

| | Snyder-Phillips | | Mason-Abbot | | Sig MANCOV |
|--|-----------------|------|-------------|------|------------|
| | M | SE | M | SE | A |
| Experiences with faculty (1=Never to 4=Once or more a week) | | | | | |
| Talked with instructor about course you were taking | 2.48 | 0.05 | 2.40 | 0.06 | |
| Discussed academic program with faculty member | 2.21 | 0.05 | 2.16 | 0.05 | |
| Discussed ideas for a paper or class project | 2.21 | 0.05 | 2.01 | 0.06 | ** |
| Discussed career plans and ambitions | 2.17 | 0.05 | 2.05 | 0.06 | |
| Worked harder as a result of feedback from instructor | 2.55 | 0.06 | 2.41 | 0.07 | |
| Asked instructor for comments/criticism about academics | 1.99 | 0.06 | 1.84 | 0.07 | |
| Worked harder to meet instructor's expectations | 2.48 | 0.07 | 2.33 | 0.07 | |
| Cumulative scale | 16.09 | 0.29 | 15.20 | 0.32 | |
| Experiences with residence hall staff (1=Never to 4=Once or more a week) | | | | | |
| Had a meeting/conversation with your RA | 2.80 | 0.07 | 2.36 | 0.07 | *** |
| Had a meeting/conversation with your Hall Director | 1.34 | 0.05 | 1.43 | 0.06 | |
| Attended an event organized by your RA or hall | 2.14 | 0.06 | 1.88 | 0.07 | * |
| Participated in your residence hall council | 1.38 | 0.06 | 1.33 | 0.06 | |
| Used the community center (front desk) | 3.00 | 0.05 | 2.93 | 0.06 | |

¹ Controlling for gender

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Finding #2: Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot students tend to participate in co- and extra-curricular activities less frequently, but in a few cases, Snyder-Phillips students were more engaged than Mason-Abbot students.

Generally speaking, students in both Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot Residence Halls did not participate frequently in co-curricular activities. As Table 5 shows, most students participated in student clubs and organizations less than 1-5 hours per week. However, Snyder-Phillips students were slightly more likely to participate in arts/music performances and activities and political or social activism. Given that the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH) resides in Snyder-Phillips, it may be of little surprise that students living in the building were more likely to participate in arts/music performances.

Students in both residence halls responded that they attended classes about 11-15 hours per week and studied as well as socialized with friends approximately 6-10 hours per week, each. Students in both Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot participated in extra-curricular activities, such as exercising, partying, watching TV, emailing/texting, or playing video/computer games, at about the same rate.

Table 5: Involvement with Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities ¹

| | Snyder-Phillips | | Mason-Abbot | | Sig MANCOV |
|--|-----------------|------|-------------|------|------------|
| | M | SE | M | SE | A |
| Involvement with co-curricular activities (1=Not at all, 2=1-5 hrs/w, 3=6-10 hrs/wk, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hr/wk, 6=21+ hrs/wk) | | | | | |
| Fraternity/sorority | 1.26 | 0.07 | 1.45 | 0.07 | |
| Arts/music performances and activities | 1.97 | 0.09 | 1.55 | 0.09 | *** |
| Intramural or club sports | 1.48 | 0.06 | 1.36 | 0.06 | |
| Varsity sports | 1.11 | 0.04 | 1.18 | 0.05 | |
| Student government | 1.16 | 0.04 | 1.08 | 0.04 | |
| Political or social activism | 1.28 | 0.04 | 1.10 | 0.04 | *** |
| Religious clubs and activities | 1.35 | 0.06 | 1.32 | 0.07 | |
| Ethnic/cross-cultural activities, clubs | 1.23 | 0.04 | 1.21 | 0.05 | |
| Media activities (e.g., newspaper, radio, web) | 1.73 | 0.10 | 1.83 | 0.11 | |
| Work-study or work on campus | 2.43 | 0.12 | 2.57 | 0.13 | |
| Work off campus | 1.50 | 0.09 | 1.51 | 0.09 | |
| Community service activity | 1.57 | 0.07 | 1.60 | 0.07 | |
| Involvement with extra-curricular activities (1=Not at all, 2=1-5 hrs/w, 3=6-10 hrs/wk, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hr/wk, 6=21+ hrs/wk) | | | | | |
| Attending classes | 4.22 | 0.06 | 4.24 | 0.07 | |
| Studying/doing homework | 3.61 | 0.09 | 3.85 | 0.10 | |
| Socializing with friends | 3.66 | 0.09 | 3.43 | 0.09 | |
| Exercising/sports | 2.09 | 0.07 | 2.22 | 0.07 | |
| Partying | 1.76 | 0.06 | 1.80 | 0.07 | |
| Watching TV alone | 2.03 | 0.08 | 2.14 | 0.08 | |
| Email or texting | 2.63 | 0.08 | 2.71 | 0.09 | |
| Playing video/computer games | 1.69 | 0.08 | 1.86 | 0.09 | |

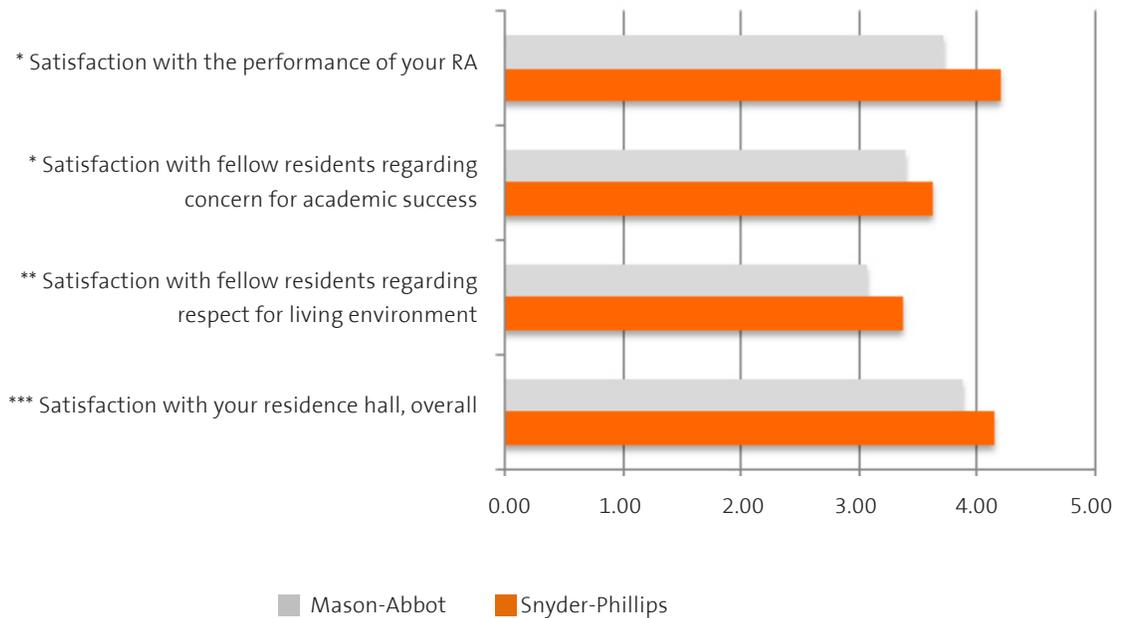
¹ Controlling for gender

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Finding #3: Snyder-Phillips students are more satisfied with their residence hall experience than Mason-Abbot students.

Overall, Snyder-Phillips students are more satisfied with various aspects of their residence hall than Mason-Abbot students. Whether it be related to their RAs' performance, their fellow residents' concern for academic success, their peers' respect for their living environment, or their overall satisfaction with their residence hall, Snyder-Phillips students were highly satisfied with their residence hall, with average scores ranging in the "satisfied" response category.

Table 6: Satisfaction with Residence Hall ¹



* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

¹ Controlling for gender

1=Strongly dissatisfied; 2=Dissatisfied; 3=Neutral; 4=Satisfied; 5=Strongly satisfied

Finding #4: Snyder-Phillips students, other than using the Dining Room, tend to use spaces in their residence hall most often for studying or academically related activities.

The survey results (Tables 7 and 8) show that the most popularly used spaces in Snyder-Phillips were most frequently used for studying and group projects. However, those same spaces were also regularly used for informal socializing, student clubs, and events.

Table 7: Top Five Spaces Used Most Often in Snyder-Phillips

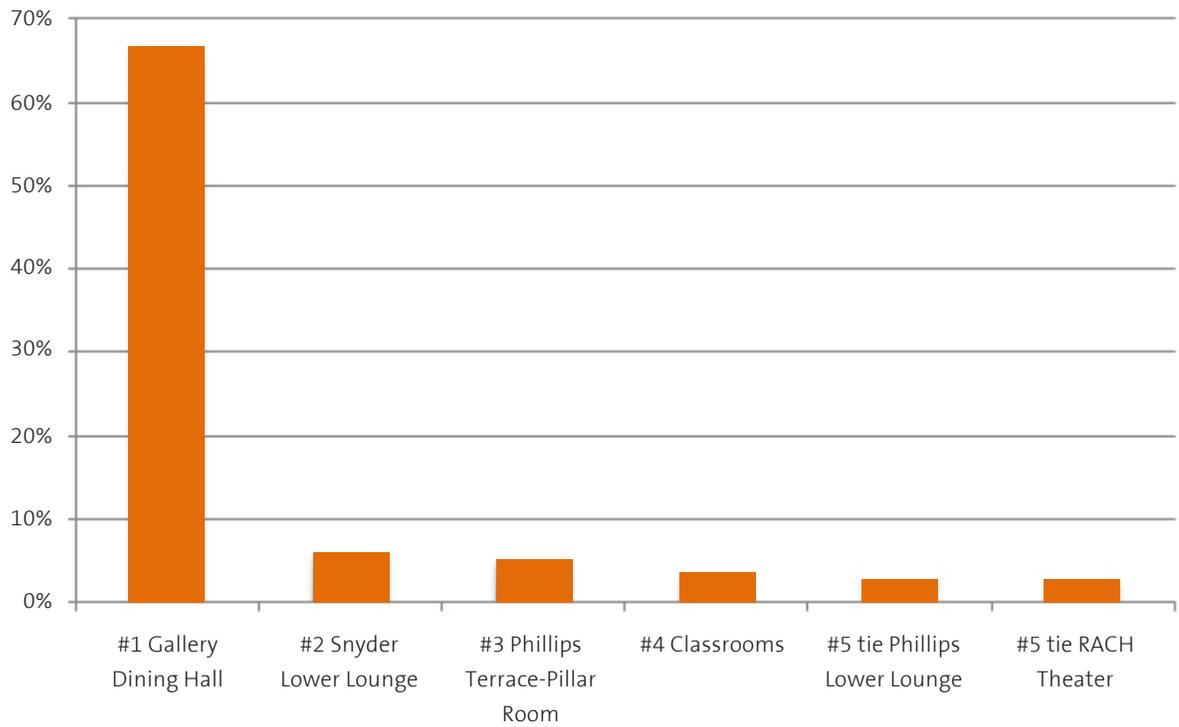


Table 8: Top Reasons Snyder-Phillips Residents Used Residence Hall Spaces

| Gallery Dining Room | Snyder Lower Lounge | Phillips Terrace-Pillar Room | Classrooms | Phillips Lower Lounge | RCAH Theater |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Eating 99% | Socializing 15% | Studying 91% | Studying 50% | Socializing 33% | Student clubs 67% |
| Socializing 83% | Group project 15% | Watching TV 73% | Student clubs 50% | Group project 17% | Socializing 50% |
| Studying 63% | | Group project 18% | Events 38% | | Events 50% |
| | | Student clubs 18% | | | Meeting Professor 33% |

Even the Dining Room, which Snyder-Phillips residents would—not surprisingly—use daily for meals, was reported to be used over half of the time for studying and socializing. Thus, it would appear that the greater amounts of peer interactions and conversations are happening while students are engaged with studying, working collaboratively on group projects, and gathering for informal and impromptu socializing.

Finding #5: The features of Snyder-Phillips spaces that students preferred the most are related to comfort and convenience.

Consistent with the notion of using the public spaces in Snyder-Phillips most frequently for studying and meeting with students (either for working on group projects or for informal socializing), the reasons cited most often by residents as to why they preferred to use certain spaces had to do with factors commonly associated with good studying and socializing spaces (see Table 9). For four of the top most-used spaces in Snyder-Phillips, the most common reason cited by students for preferring to use the space was related to the comfort of the furniture and the quietness of the room—which is essential for sedentary activities such as studying. Other factors also conducive to studying that were frequently cited as factors why students preferred certain locations included the fact that the room was in a convenient location, was close to the student’s room, and was open late. The one space that appears to be reserved for social events and socializing is the Phillips Terrace – Pillar Room, which students prefer due to the large screen TV and comfortable furniture, as well as conveniences like being close to students’ rooms and being open late. For this room, it was also important for students to be able to rearrange the furniture into different configurations.

Table 9: Top Reasons Snyder-Phillips Residents Preferred Residence Hall Spaces

| Gallery Dining Room | Snyder Lower Lounge | Phillips Terrace-Pillar Room | Classrooms | Phillips Lower Lounge | RCAH Theater |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Convenient location 83% | Quiet 54% | Comfortable furniture 73% | Quiet 63% | Comfortable furniture 83% | Good lighting 83% |
| Open late 84% | Convenient location 54% | Close to room 64% | Convenient location 38% | Quiet 83% | Big, open space 83% |
| Good food 79% | Close to room 54% | Open late 64% | Chalk/white boards 38% | Close to room 67% | Quiet 67% |
| Close to room 78% | Open late 54% | Big screen TV 64% | Flexible space 38% | A lot of outlets 67% | Comfortable furniture 50% |
| Natural lighting 69% | Private/secluded 46% | Can socialize without disturbing others 55% | Private/secluded 38% | Private/secluded 50% | Convenient location 50% |
| | | Flexible space 55% | Can socialize without disturbing others 38% | Good lighting 50% | Private/secluded 50% |
| | | Convenient location 55% | | | |

Finally, findings from the study appear to show that the top five most-often used spaces in Snyder-Phillips are in use throughout the afternoon and evening (see Table 10). Interestingly, the room most often used for social events and socializing was most often used in the late night hours. This suggests that lighting and security issues should be considered when designing these spaces and access to them, given the need for personal security in the late evening hours.

Table 10: Time of Day/Evening When Snyder-Phillips Spaces Are in Use

| Gallery Dining Room | Snyder Lower Lounge | Phillips Terrace-Pillar Room | Classrooms | Phillips Lower Lounge | RCAH Theater |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Morning 64% | Morning 23% | Morning 9% | Morning 0% | Morning 0% | Morning 0% |
| Afternoon 75% | Afternoon 39% | Afternoon 36% | Afternoon 25% | Afternoon 33% | Afternoon 33% |
| Evening 94% | Evening 69% | Evening 73% | Evening 75% | Evening 100% | Evening 83% |
| Late night 69% | Late night 54% | Late night 82% | Late night 25% | Late night 83% | Late night 50% |

Finding #6: Feedback students provided to architects regarding changes and/or improvements they would make to Snyder-Phillips were varied.

Finally, we asked Snyder-Phillips students on the survey in an open-ended question what feedback they would provide architects about improvements or changes they would recommend for their residence hall.

Consistent with the theme of studying, the most commonly mentioned change in the feedback involved study spaces: 49 separate comments advocated for more individual or small study rooms. Other recommendations included: larger student rooms (25), more open community spaces (20), a better fitness facility (13), more natural light coming into the building (12), more outlets (10, both in individual rooms and in the dining hall), and air conditioning.

Table 11: Student Feedback for Architects

| Snyder-Phillips | Mason-Abbot |
|---|---|
| More individual study rooms (49) | More individual study rooms (37) |
| Larger individual student rooms (25) | More natural light (18) |
| More community spaces (20) | Better fitness room (15) |
| Better fitness room (13) | More open/community gathering space (15) |
| More natural light (12) | Bigger, wider rooms (14) |
| More outlets (10, in rooms, dining hall) | Higher ceilings in rooms (7) |
| Air conditioning (10) | Bigger closets in rooms (6) |
| Larger dining hall (7) | Equal sized individual rooms (6) |
| Bigger closets in rooms (5) | Better color scheme throughout building (6) |
| Computer lab (4) | Bigger computer lab (6) |
| More washer/dryers in laundry room (4) | Add elevator (5) |
| No exposed pipes in rooms (4) | Update/create more kitchens(5) |
| More classic look (gothic, archways, pillars) (4) | Air conditioning (4) |
| Ability to control temperature in room (4) | More outlets (3) |
| Kitchen (3) | More stable beds in rooms (3) |
| Bathrooms further from rooms (3) | Sparty's in Mason-Abbot (3) |
| | Dining hall attached to building(2) |
| | Better garbage disposal system (2) |

/ Comparison of University of Michigan and Michigan State University Responses

Despite the fact that they are separated by over 60 miles, the students at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University who live in EYP-built or-renovated Living-Learning residence halls have very similar experiences and perceptions. Generally speaking, students in North Quadrangle at U-M and Snyder-Phillips at MSU tend to interact more with their peers than students in Stockwell (U-M) and Mason-Abbot (MSU), the traditional residence halls. There are fewer statistically significant differences among the Snyder-Phillips students versus the Mason-Abbot students at MSU regarding peer interactions, but the three peer interactions where there are significant differences are with peers of differing interests, racial/ethnic backgrounds, and family backgrounds (economic, social)—(all of key importance for Michigan State for interacting across difference). Moreover, like their U-M counterparts, where students do interact more often with their peers, they tend to perform those interactions inside their residence halls: Snyder-Phillips students are 20-30% more likely to interact with peers with different interests and from differing family backgrounds inside their residence hall than Mason-Abbot students.

Again, like their U-M counterparts, MSU students are not very likely to interact with faculty and staff, but Snyder-Phillips students are significantly more likely to speak with faculty about ideas regarding a paper or class project than Mason-Abbot students, and they are more likely to have a conversation with their RA or attend an event organized by their RA or residence hall. Moreover, MSU students appeared to mirror their U-M counterparts concerning a rather low co- and extra-curricular involvement, overall. However, U-M students in the EYP residence hall (North Quadrangle) did tend to participate in extra-curricular activities, such as socializing, exercising, and partying, more often than their comparison sample in Stockwell Residence Hall—a pattern that was not repeated among Snyder-Phillips (EYP hall) students versus Mason-Abbot (comparison) students.

Once again, a pattern was repeated among MSU students: Snyder-Phillips students are significantly more likely to be satisfied with various facets of their residence hall (RA performance, fellow residents' concern for academic success, fellow residents' respect for their living environment, and overall satisfaction) than Mason-Abbot students.

In terms of usage patterns of public spaces in their residence halls, the U-M and MSU students tended to exhibit similar patterns. Not surprisingly, both groups reported using their dining rooms most frequently. Both groups of students also reported using some of the signature spaces in their halls: U-M students in North Quadrangle reported that they enjoyed using the Tower Room, while MSU students in Snyder-Phillips reported frequently using the RCAF Theater and Phillips Terrace – Pillar Room. Both sets of students tended to use the rooms for similar purposes as well, ranging from the most popular usage being for studying and group projects, but social activities such as

informal socializing, student club meetings, and events were also popular reasons. And, comfort and convenience were the most cited reasons for why students preferred these spaces, whether it is the comfortable furniture, the quiet atmosphere, the convenient location, the late hours they were open, or the flexibility of the space to move around the furniture. One difference between the two groups of students is that U-M students tended to use the rooms during all different hours of the day, while MSU students tended to use the spaces most often in the evenings and late at night.

Finally, in terms of recommendations for the architects, some of the same suggestions were popular among both U-M and MSU students: more individual study spaces, larger common lounge spaces, and more natural light. However, MSU students also tended to list aspects of their individual rooms, such as larger configurations, bigger closets, and higher ceilings.

The similar patterns of responses among the U-M and MSU data show that, despite being on two different campuses, students tend to prefer similar amenities in their residence halls. The MSU students living in the EYP residence hall (Snyder-Phillips) exhibited fewer significant differences than their counterparts in the traditional hall (Mason-Abbot), but this may be due to the fact that the Snyder-Phillips and Mason-Abbot buildings are nearly identical in physical layout, except for the new EYP addition connecting Snyder to Phillips. Thus, one might construe that it is all the more remarkable that there were as many significant differences in students' perceptions and experiences between the two residence complexes at MSU, given that the buildings are so similar in structure.

/ Summary

The survey results reveal the following:

Students living in the Living-Learning residence hall environment (Snyder-Phillips) were more likely than students living in a traditional environment (Mason-Abbot) to:

- Interact with diverse peers
- Discuss assignments with their professors
- Participate in arts/music and political activities
- Be more satisfied with their residence hall experience.

Students in both residence halls, but especially in the Living-Learning environment, preferred public spaces that were conducive to studying, working on group projects, and formal and informal socializing.

Features that students in the Living-Learning environment preferred in their residence hall spaces related to their comfort and convenience. Popular features of spaces that the students liked included:

- Comfortable furniture
- Quiet and privacy
- Open during late hours
- Good location
- Flexible usage and ability to rearrange furnishings

Implications for Future Residence Halls

Both the University of Michigan and Michigan State University research findings suggest that intentional learning spaces in residence halls do have an impact on students' experiences and perceptions. And, while the newest residence halls tend to focus on the latest "bells and whistles," such as high-tech equipment or entertainment, the students in the two EYP studies tended to focus on more basic amenities such as comfortable furniture, good lighting, and convenient locations and hours.

The popular public spaces in both the U-M and MSU residence halls tended to be used for both academic (e.g., studying) and social (student club meetings, social events) activities. Thus, it remains important to design rooms that can be adaptable for both types of activities, with features such as movable and reconfigurable furniture, adequate table space, and ample electrical outlets to support students' electronic equipment such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. And, students should be able to change the configuration of the room with little-to-no difficulty, so the space can transform from study to social space, and vice-versa, effortlessly.

The twin studies at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University underscore the importance of intentionality to living and learning when designing a residence hall. EYP continues to lead the way in providing empirical evidence to the architectural design of college residence halls.

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