

Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice

Practice

The Heritage Hunt

Ten Years Later

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In his 2013 article, Professor George Aulisio introduced the Weinberg Memorial Library's Heritage Hunt, an interactive scavenger hunt designed to introduce first-year students to the library. Ten years later, the Heritage Hunt program still plays a critical role in library orientation at the University of Scranton. In this article, the authors discuss changes made in collaboration with multiple library departments to transform and refine the Heritage Hunt. The article will describe the adaptations made to the orientation program as it evolved and will also share insights into how the program expanded to broaden its reach to students beyond their first year.

Introduction

The Heritage Hunt library orientation program was developed in an effort to create an introduction to the library, in addition to in depth one-shot information literacy sessions, that would meet program objectives while providing a more engaging experience for students. In 2012, a group of librarians at the University of Scranton Weinberg Memorial Library launched a scavenger hunt orientation activity for students. Named after the library's 5th floor Reading Room, the Heritage Room, the Heritage Hunt program has expanded and adapted over time to meet the changing needs of students, library faculty, and library staff. Now over ten years after it began, the Heritage Hunt program is still a crucial part of introducing students to the library and its resources.

Literature Review

Eshbach identified that the inclusion of "library resources, information literacy, and research skills into library programming can help build academic self-confidence and equip students to better engage academically" (2020, p.4). In a study of correlations between the use of the library, its resources, and student success by the University of Northern Colorado, Mayer et al. found that "the library's space, people, place, and resources and services contribute to [students'] academic ability, wellness, sense of belonging, and financial capability" (2020, p.380). The study identified that learning activities related to library services, such as checking out a book or using library technology, increase student

persistence (Mayer et al., 2020). In De Groote and Scoulas's study at the University of Illinois at Chicago, when asked to share how the library "positively impacted your coursework or research," students responded they felt their library experiences had resulted in better grades and performance on assignments and tests (2022, p.361). These studies show how library programming offers value, not only for college success but for social well-being. Eshbach stated in her research on academic library programming that "the library is in a unique position to bridge the academic and social pieces of the college experience" (2020, p.1). Student engagement builds trust and fosters a sense of community.

For many students their first time on a college campus may be the first time using a library. Access to K-12 school libraries, particularly in the University of Scranton's regional area, has been declining, which means there is the potential for many students to arrive on campus having never used a library before. These factors can contribute to library anxiety or students being reluctant to seek help from library staff or faculty librarians when utilizing library resources and services. Research conducted by Kannegiser (2021) found that students who experience library anxiety are at a disadvantage, impacting student success. Results of a 2020 study by Jan et al. concluded that emotional intelligence and library anxiety are connected and impact students' academic performance in terms of their GPA. However, library anxiety can be overcome. Research and studies have found that students' perceptions and confidence can be changed by using active learning experiences to interact with librarians. Interaction through programming helps reduce library anxiety levels, and introducing students to library spaces and services helps relieve the anxiety that may come with the unfamiliar (Kannegiser, 2021; Jan et al., 2020; Muskiewicz, 2017; Carlile, 2007).

A two-year study by Muskiewicz (2017) sought to understand students' feelings toward librarians and library anxiety. One of the pre-orientation survey questions asked if students had experienced anxiety; 48% of students indicated that they had. Those who experienced library anxiety were uncomfortable or fearful of asking librarians questions. Students felt that their questions were "silly" or not important enough to bother or annoy a "busy librarian" (Muskiewicz, 2017, p.233). However, after completing the "Get to know your Librarian" orientation, students felt more comfortable interacting with librarians and the library. When asked, "Would person-to-person contact with a librarian potentially make you feel less anxious about using the library?" in a post-activity survey, 78% of students responded yes (Muskiewicz, 2017, p.234-235).

The need for reducing library anxiety has also become more important given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research shows that the closure of physical spaces and setting usage limitations led to declines in the use of the library's physical space. However, studies have also found a decrease in virtual library usage. While De Groote and Scoulas (2021) found an increase in online virtual reference interactions, the overall number of interactions decreased. More students also reported in 2021 that they had never used the online library (29.2%) than in 2019 (23.2%), and the number of students who neither visited the library nor used the online library went from 4.4% in 2018 to 21.3% in 2021 (De Groote & Scoulas, 2021). Connell et al. (2021) also saw a similar decline across three institutions' libraries; the use of their website and online resources decreased during the investigated pandemic period. This decrease in online usage during a time when most coursework was done online may be due to the lack of library interaction and knowledge of off-campus access to resources, the prevalence of other online tools such as Google Scholar (Connell et al., 2021), or changes in course requirements (De Groote & Scoulas, 2021).

And so, it is important now more than ever to create opportunities to introduce, or reintroduce, students to library resources. However, learning about library services does not need to be boring. Gamification can make the experience memorable and fun, adding a social element to discovery. Walsh found that "bringing play into the library space is particularly appealing, as 'play' can help us feel we are in a safe environment to experiment and to learn new things that we may otherwise be reluctant to do" (2014, p.41). It is important that students feel comfortable with library spaces and services, given that studies have found correlations between student success and engagement with the library (Croxtton & Moore, 2020).

Reed and Miller's (2020) survey of undergraduate students who utilized their online orientation program found that undergraduate students preferred the gamified library orientation experience and indicated they were more likely to use the library after completing the experience. UC San Diego's first-year experience scavenger hunt activity found in post-evaluation that students felt more comfortable using the library after the activity and that the activity improved their knowledge and skill levels (Goldman et al., 2015). A study at Chiang Mai University identified that using mobile gamification to market and promote library services to first-year students enhanced knowledge retention of services better than e-learning sessions (Leenaraj et al., 2021). Franco and DeLuca (2019) emphasize the importance of interactive, collaborative learning environments over memorization, especially considering students' potential future in team environments.

When the Heritage Hunt began in 2012, game-based learning was becoming popular, and many libraries had begun using activities like scavenger hunts to introduce students to their spaces, staff, and resources. More than a decade later, game-based learning and scavenger hunts remain popular as methods of introducing students to various concepts. These elements all factor into the development and evolution of orientation programming at the Weinberg Memorial Library.

Evolution of a Library Orientation Program

Prior to 2012, orientation programming at the Weinberg Memorial Library took the form of classroom instruction that was part of a First Year Seminar (FYS) course, during which librarians would discuss library resources in a conventional classroom setting. Librarians needed to accommodate an average of 51 sessions during the fall semester. These sessions were taught by between five and nine librarians, depending upon their availability. Sessions were scheduled at the discretion of the seminar instructor, not the librarians, and were held at various times during the semester, often after students needed to utilize library resources (Aulisio, 2013).

The Heritage Hunt was developed as an alternative to this previous programming. The first planning committee, consisting of two instructional librarians and two technical services librarians, established the following guidelines for the program: the Heritage Hunt would aim to reach at least 70% of the first-year students, it would take place within the first two weeks of classes, and the process would not overload the librarians (Aulisio, 2013). These goals were important to establish a new system that was dynamic and scalable for the library, but it was also important that the students learn and engage in a fun and interactive way.

The new program's content and structure sought to bring students into the library for an hour-long scavenger hunt, familiarizing students with spaces and services while encouraging better student engagement and information retention through gamification. The Heritage Hunt is intentionally non-competitive; students are encouraged to take their time exploring the library and not hurry through the tasks in an attempt to finish first. In order to accommodate each freshman class, which over the last ten years has varied between 711 and 1062 students, the library typically hosts 40 to 45 Heritage Hunt sessions per semester, administered by 10-12 library faculty and staff who hold a master's degree in library science. Broadening the administration of the sessions to additional librarians reduced session load and provided opportunities to involve other faculty and staff with program development, instruction, and student engagement.

Holding the Heritage Hunt during the first week of classes rather than throughout the semester ensures that participating students are oriented to the library before they need to use library resources for their classwork. Moving away from being tied to the First Year Seminar and condensing the sessions into one week made scheduling easier for the librarians and staff who can choose the timeframes of the sessions they want to cover.

Engagement with students begins through an initial registration email sent to students through a listserv managed by the Dean of Students. Registering for a Heritage Hunt session is the responsibility of the student. The

email strongly encourages participation by associating the Heritage Hunt with other orientation activities (Aulisio, 2013). Additional marketing is done through the library's social media channels. Online registration is automatically capped at 24 students per session, but the instructor can manually add students if they arrive at their session with friends or roommates. Students can sign up for the 50-minute time slot that best fits their schedule, as sessions are offered throughout the day and into the evening.

Each session begins in one of the library's classrooms with a brief introduction and library building orientation by a faculty librarian or staff member. The instructor takes attendance and outlines the directions for completing the Heritage Hunt. Each group of students follows one of six routes through the library, learning about the spaces and services available to them at each stop and performing a task or answering a question in each location. The tasks historically include visiting library service points, like the Media Resources department and Circulation Services, learning about library services like the Archives and Digital Collections, and using library technology to perform catalog searches and learn how to print (See Appendix A for examples of routes and service points). The locations and services included in the Heritage Hunt have been revised over time as services and physical locations in the library evolve, as well as in response to student feedback (See Appendix B for examples of questions developed as part of the program). As each group finishes, the students return to the classroom to check in with the instructor. They may ask any follow-up questions they have, and each student receives an email confirming that they finished the Heritage Hunt. Students generally complete the Heritage Hunt within the time allotted but are advised to return after 50 minutes if they have not yet finished.

The Heritage Hunt is run by a rotating committee of library faculty and staff from various departments who develop and test the content; work with library administration to procure resources, such as new signage and giveaway items like pens and candy; and advertise the event across campus. The library's systems department assists the Heritage Hunt committee with technical problems during the Heritage Hunt and administers the software and hardware used, such as the mobile printing system and the iPads that students can borrow to complete the scavenger hunt.

The Heritage Hunt also calls for close collaboration with departments outside the library, most notably the University's Information Technology (IT) Department. For example, developers in the IT department have worked back and forth with library staff and faculty to refine and further automate the registration process, most recently configuring the system so that students could modify their own signup time. This new system removed a large burden from library faculty, who had frequently received requests from students to confirm their registration or change it to another date or time. The registration system also allows Heritage Hunt instructors to mark students as present or absent in the system, which provides easy access to attendance rates. The newest iteration of the registration system is tied to the University-wide single sign-on system, providing a greater level of security.

Changes and Challenges

As with any large ongoing initiative, changes and challenges are expected. Each year the Heritage Hunt committee works to make sure the program continues to align with our goals of introducing the students to the library, its resources, and its staff in a fun and engaging way while not overburdening library faculty and staff. Every iteration of the Heritage Hunt has brought improvements and inspired new ideas that have influenced adaptations. Minor adjustments have been made in certain years, while other years have seen major overhauls of content, tasks, and logistics. One lesson learned early on was that it is crucial to remain flexible and approach any problems as a learning experience, develop backup plans when possible, and consider each problem when designing the following year's program.

The various tasks performed and services highlighted on the Heritage Hunt have changed over time with input from the instructors, the library's systems department, and those staffing the featured service points. Feedback

and improvements come from regular communication throughout the duration of each year's Heritage Hunt and an annual meeting with all participating faculty and staff before the start of the fall semester. For example, in 2022, after an invitation went out for library employees to test the changes made to the Heritage Hunt, one staff member identified potentially confusing directions for performing a catalog search. Student workers are also often asked to review content and give feedback, running through the Heritage Hunt before its widespread implementation, which led to additional signage for areas of the library not easily identified.

Since the Heritage Hunt is focused on orienting students to the library building, any changes to the library's physical spaces can necessitate changes. These can greatly complicate matters if the changes are made close to the start of the semester. In 2021, a delay in planned renovations required the Heritage Hunt to relocate one stop from the second floor computer lab, which was still under construction, to the first floor computer lab. In 2022, building renovations, location name changes, removal of equipment, and the consolidation of services into a one-desk model required careful review of the existing questions to ensure they were updated to match revised building signage and physical locations of services.

The biggest challenge to the Heritage Hunt came in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing restrictions, it was unclear if the Fall 2020 semester would be held in person and whether programs such as the Heritage Hunt could be offered. Ultimately, it was decided that offering any version of the Heritage Hunt was not feasible, as most university and library services were only available online, and much of the content involved becoming acquainted with the library's physical spaces and services. A group of faculty librarians participated in the University's summer online orientation, and incoming students received an email with a detailed description of library services and a video overview of the library's unique spaces. Due to the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine and the lessening of campus restrictions, the Heritage Hunt resumed in 2021. The committee utilized a new technology platform, SurveyMonkey, to make the sessions as safe and streamlined as possible, which required adjusting the Heritage Hunt clues and tasks to limit in-person contact.

As the library returned to full staffing post-pandemic, the 2023 Heritage Hunt reintroduced some of the interactions previously removed due to pandemic-related restrictions and concerns. In response to a request from library administration, the committee modified the Heritage Hunt to reintroduce a task involving the first floor Library Services Desk, which had recently combined the Circulation and Research Services desks into one location. This task stepped students through the process of searching for, locating, and checking out a book, and also introduced them to a new feature that the library implemented in 2023: dedicated iPad kiosks, located one per floor near the stacks, for searching the library's discovery service. In addition to showing students a new piece of library technology, this task also familiarizes students with where they can get help and how they can check out materials.

Also in 2023, the committee added a clue that required students to visit the University Archives and Special Collections and search a historical document on display for the answer to a question. Due to the sensitive nature of special collections materials and the limited hours of the Archives and Special Collections department, close collaboration with the department was required to successfully incorporate this clue into the Heritage Hunt. This question was added in response to student feedback that indicated a desire to learn what was available on the 4th floor of the library, since all other floors were featured, and to employ more "fun" clues that involved searching the library's physical spaces for answers.

Improvements in Gamification

Over the years, students have employed a mix of analog and digital technologies to complete the Heritage Hunt. For example, from 2013 through 2019, each group of students used one of the library's iPads to scan printed QR codes assigned to their group letter (A through F) at different locations to access a website with a question to answer. The students wrote down their answer to the question on a provided worksheet and received directions to the next

location. Randomized routes spread out the groups of students and reduced bottlenecks at the in-person locations, where students interacted with library staff and faculty to get the next QR code. In 2021, the Heritage Hunt transitioned to an all-digital format utilizing the library's existing subscription to the SurveyMonkey platform.

In the first iteration of the Heritage Hunt, when all questions were visible from the beginning, some students shared answers among groups, and some groups split up to obtain answers from different locations simultaneously (Aulisio, 2013). Aulisio (2013) suggested instituting a type of questioning where only one task was visible at a time. The pre-SurveyMonkey version of the Heritage Hunt did display the questions individually before the students moved to the next task; however, nothing required them to write down an answer, which led to skipped questions. SurveyMonkey's "quiz" format requires students to answer each question before receiving directions to the next stop on their route. This change in format allows each group to follow a unique version of a particular order of tasks. Being unable to see what comes next ensures that the students are unaware of the other groups' precise locations, allowing for the reuse of questions without the fear that students would copy answers from each other.

In the most recent version of the Heritage Hunt, students still scan a QR code at the beginning to direct them to their assigned SurveyMonkey quiz, which then follows a specific route. Due to the upgrade of many smartphones to allow for native QR code scanning within the phone's camera, students were given the option of using their own devices or one of the library's iPads to complete the Heritage Hunt. Since 2021, most students have utilized their own devices.

This new platform incorporates all the questions into one place instead of using multiple web pages and QR codes, which in the past had occasionally caused students to lose their place on their route if they scanned the wrong QR code for their group. Images and videos embedded into the SurveyMonkey questions give students a look at some areas they do not visit during the activity. For example, the overview video has evolved over the years from a video on DVD of the Dean of the Library speaking on camera that needed to be viewed in the Media Resources department to a more dynamic tour of the library, including pictures of locations and their corresponding floor, embedded into the SurveyMonkey platform. An embedded video that was created for the printing question was repurposed and added to the library's LibGuide on how to print, and so reaches not only the first year students but anyone looking to print at the library (see Figure 1).

Heritage Hunt - Group A

Printing

Watch the video below to learn how to print at the Weinberg Memorial Library.



* If you want to print something, what website do you visit to upload and print the document?

- pharos.scranton.edu
- printing.com
- www.scranton.edu/library

Figure 1

Screenshot of sample question employing video in SurveyMonkey

Additionally, the students were now able to answer questions directly on the SurveyMonkey platform. This platform and its automatic grading of certain answers also provides students with instant feedback on their performance, something that previously was not possible with handwritten answers. This also allowed for a more streamlined game experience, with less confusion between scanning multiple QR codes and allowing for the inclusion of more spaces and resources since students moved faster. Before the 2021 move to SurveyMonkey, most groups took most of the hour to complete the tasks. In 2022, the average was 23 minutes, 42 seconds, which led the Heritage Hunt committee to add another task to the orientation.

Reducing Library Anxiety and Improving Confidence

The Heritage Hunt has always invited students to meet with faculty and staff formally and informally at various points throughout the activity. Some route destinations, like those to the Circulation, Research, and Media Resources departments, involved direct interaction with the faculty and staff who work in those departments. Since the research suggests the importance of meeting individuals to reduce library anxiety and encourage students to utilize services, the Heritage Hunt committee has tried to incorporate as much interaction as possible, which has proved challenging at times.

One challenge over the years has been the level of library staff and faculty involvement. Everyone in the library has multiple responsibilities, so there is always the possibility that staff who were previously relied on to augment portions of the Heritage Hunt might be unavailable to assist. For the 2021 Heritage Hunt, the COVID-19 pandemic brought a new level of change, requiring the committee to rethink contact with staff at service points. That year, the many unfilled, frozen positions in the library and the anticipation of employees needing to be out of the office or away from service points also necessitated a reduction in dedicated staff time to the Heritage Hunt during the ten

hours it ran each day. Health and safety concerns also required careful consideration and resulted in the decision to temporarily move some in-person interactions with the students to another format. The videos and informational graphics embedded in the digital content (see Figure 2) and printed for use on site (see Figure 3) could convey information previously delivered by library staff and faculty in person.

Call Numbers

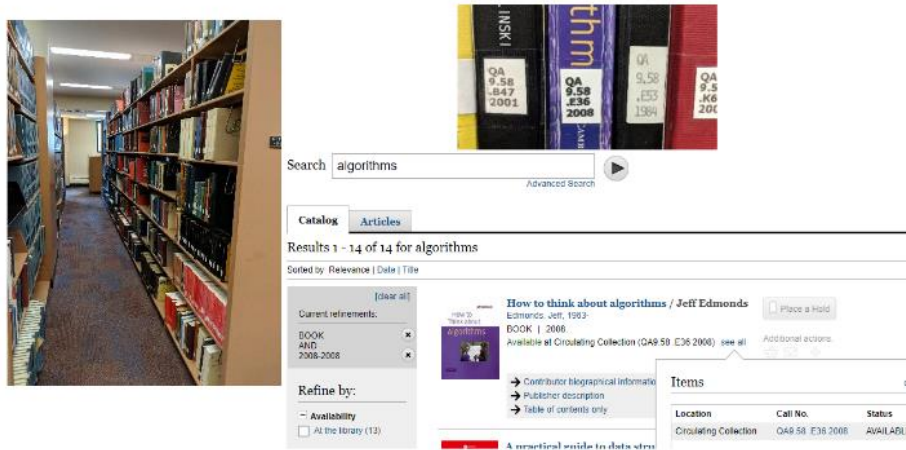


Figure 2

This image from a previously used call number tutorial was embedded directly into the content, including a picture of the stacks, an example call number on a book, and a screenshot of a catalog record with the call number featured.

Do you have a quick question? Need to reach us from off-campus or after hours?
Need help with a research project? Have questions about our hours or services?

NEED HELP?

Have questions about citing references? Need help finding a resource?
Need assistance with scanning or printing? Have questions about copyright?

Ask a Librarian

- 1 Instant Message Us**
Chat services are available 24 hrs per day / 7 days a week
- 2 Call Us**
570-941-4000
- 3 Visit Us**
Stop by at the Research Services Desk on the 2nd Floor
- 4 Email Us**
askalibrarian@scranton.edu
- 5 Contact a Subject Specialist**
Reach out directly to a librarian assigned to your subject area to get individualized research support

Find a Subject Specialist at: <https://library.scranton.edu/wml/subjectspecialists>

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Figure 3

The Need Help Poster aided in removing an in-person interaction that had been part of the pre-COVID-19 Heritage Hunt.

One element retained each year is the students' interaction with the session instructor. The instructor welcomes the students to the library and serves as a point of contact for the student during the Heritage Hunt, remaining in the room and available to answer any questions or address any issues. The instructor also is meant to be a familiar face the students can seek out later if they have any questions after the Heritage Hunt is concluded. This interaction was a little limited during COVID, with more Heritage Hunt instructions included in the platform itself. Still, the session instructor serves an important purpose to help the students feel more comfortable in the library and understand the importance of library resources in their education. Instructors come from various library departments, introducing students to functional roles within the library they may not be familiar with, which helps give students a bigger picture of the library and its employees. While this establishes an important relationship for students with the library, the workload on the instructor is limited to the hour of the session. Each year, the Heritage Hunt committee provides an outline of what information should be covered before students start the scavenger hunt.

Another important element of the Heritage Hunt is completing the tasks as a group. Library orientation programming offers an opportunity for connection not only with library faculty and staff but also socially with other students on campus. If there are not enough students to fill all six groups, the instructor will combine students into a group to avoid single participants and encourage collaboration. While some students arrive with friends or roommates, instructors of the Heritage Hunt have often witnessed groups of students recognizing each other from their classes and choosing to work together or exchanging contact information with students they met while participating. The Heritage Hunt brings together students from different majors, including commuters and students housed on campus. Making social connections has the potential to improve student confidence and reduce anxiety (Eshbach, 2020; Goldman et al., 2016).

Participation

Following the completion of sessions each year, the Heritage Hunt committee composes an internal report comparing attendance rates and survey results to those of previous years. The attendance data gathered from the registration system provides details as to what percentage of the incoming class registered for and completed the Heritage Hunt to help determine whether more marketing or outreach is needed the following year. As stated earlier, one of the initial guidelines set for the orientation program was for at least 70% of first-year students to complete the Heritage Hunt (Aulisio, 2013), and prior to 2020, the Heritage Hunt had between 78% and 91% of students attend (see Table 1). These numbers dipped lower after COVID-19, which the committee posits may be due to students dealing with various effects of the pandemic and adjusting to higher education, and perhaps still feeling reluctant to participate in in-person activities. Research findings by McLeish et al. (2022) identified that over the course of the first year of the pandemic, students experienced increased levels of depression and anxiety. The study found that 64.9% of students surveyed in spring of 2021 were above the clinical cutoff for anxiety regarding social interaction, suggesting that "after a significant period of social isolation and physical distancing, college students may be even more anxious about interacting with others" (McLeish et al., 2022, p.1025). Attendance in 2023 indicated an increase in participation with 71.1% of students attending and included an expansion to the number of sessions held to 49. The expansion of the number of sessions ensured the accommodation of 2023's larger freshman enrollment.

Since the program's start in 2012 to its most recent iteration in 2023, the Heritage Hunt has reached 8,561 students. The average number of students attending annually from 2012-2019 is 817. The average attendance for 2021-2022 was 649 students. In 2021, the University of Scranton had a smaller freshman class, with only 813 students

enrolled. In 2022, 711 out of a class of 1,043 students attended the Heritage Hunt. In 2023, 729 attended out of a class of 1,026 students.

Table 1
Heritage Hunt Attendance Rates from 2012 to 2023

| Year | Number of Sessions | Students Registered | Students Attended | Total Freshman Enrollment¹ | Percentage of Freshman Class Oriented² |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| 2012 | 39 | 778 | 750 | 961 | 78.0% |
| 2013 | 39 | 805 | 728 | 878 | 82.9% |
| 2014 | 39 | 1003 | 912 | 1062 | 85.9% |
| 2015 | 42 | 881 | 828 | 907 | 91.3% |
| 2016 | 41 | 855 | 813 | 1002 | 81.1% |
| 2017 | 43 | 823 | 776 | 902 | 86.0% |
| 2018 | 48 | 888 | 854 | 940 | 90.6% |
| 2019 | 41 | 910 | 873 | 994 | 87.8% |
| 2020³ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 879 | 0% |
| 2021 | 41 | 640 | 587 | 813 | 72.2% |
| 2022 | 44 | 772 | 711 | 1043 | 68.2% |
| 2023 | 49 | 821 | 729 | 1026 | 71.1% |

Assessment

Historically, the Heritage Hunt has used both multiple-choice and open-ended questions for the various tasks to engage the students and discourage sharing answers. Before the introduction of SurveyMonkey in 2021, the students answered questions on provided worksheets, which were briefly checked afterward and retained but not extensively tabulated. Students also did not receive any formal feedback about whether they answered the questions correctly. Switching to the new platform allowed the students to be “graded” after finishing the quiz, indicating whether they answered any of the multiple-choice questions incorrectly. The SurveyMonkey platform also provides statistics on the percentage of correct responses so the committee can adjust questions and content as needed if the rate of incorrect responses is high (see Figure 4). For example, a question whose answer is contained in a longer video had a lower correct response rate than other questions. In such a case, the committee will evaluate whether the video is too long and may suggest that the content be broken up or put into another format. The question statistics also provide

information to help adjust the timing and routes of the Heritage Hunt, as SurveyMonkey also provides detailed data on how long it took students to complete the individual questions and the entire orientation program. This data helps identify areas where the content could be clarified or expanded.

Question Ranking

| QUESTIONS (3) | DIFFICULTY | AVERAGE SCORE |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Q2 Look around the room and locate the University’s Alma Mater [hint: it is engraved somewhere]. Complete the following lyric: The hours too quickly slip away and mingle into years... | 1 | 89% |
| Q4 After speaking with the person at the Library Services Desk, move to the area near the Library Services Desk labeled Recreational Reads. Use the brochure you received at the desk to choose the name of the service that allows you to borrow books from other libraries in Pennsylvania and nearby states. | 2 | 91% |
| Q11 If you want to print something, what website do you go to upload and print the document? | 3 | 100% |

Figure 4
Question ranking percentages on the SurveyMonkey platform.

Figure 5 is an example of statistics accessible from SurveyMonkey that gives a broader look at the Heritage Hunt at the route level, including the number of responses (or number of groups who started the route), the completion rate, and the average time it took the group to complete the activity. The actual completion rate might be higher than the statistics indicate, as not all students finish clicking through to the last page after completing the final task, which directs them to go back to the room where the Hunt began. Average time data indicates whether additional locations or tasks could be added without exceeding the allotted time for the session. For example, the 2023 Heritage Hunt included additional services and spaces, partially in response to the recognition that students in previous years were consistently completing all of the questions under the allotted 50 minutes.

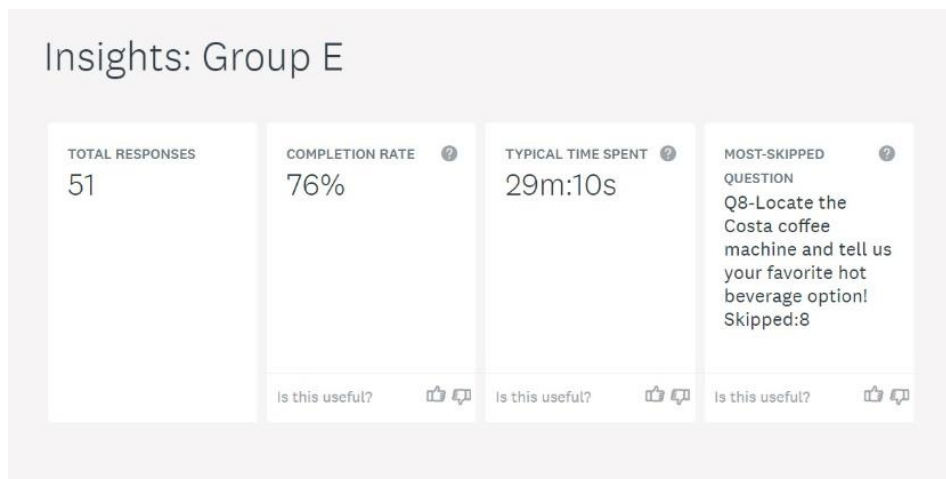


Figure 5
Snapshot of available statistics in SurveyMonkey including completion rates and times for one route.

While open-ended responses are harder to evaluate than multiple-choice questions and do not allow for immediate feedback, they are useful for providing insights into students’ thought processes and identifying knowledge gaps. For example, as part of the Heritage Hunt, students are asked to look up a book on a particular subject and record

the Library of Congress call number of the book. The committee noticed that students were answering with ISBN or barcode numbers for the physical books rather than the call number. Identifying this issue led to the creation of a call number tutorial, which was first included as part of the instructional content at the beginning of each Heritage Hunt session but was later integrated into the task in SurveyMonkey with screenshots to alert students to the location of a call number in an item record.

SurveyMonkey is also helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the program itself. At the end of each Heritage Hunt session, students marked present in the system receive an attendance confirmation email, which also asks them to fill out an anonymous survey in SurveyMonkey to help the library assess and improve the program (See Appendix C for student feedback survey questions). Historically, this data has not gone through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and is meant for internal use only.

Two of the questions in the student feedback survey ask about the value of the orientation and if the students had fun. When asked for the names of specific services highlighted during the orientation, the answers often vary from year to year and provide an opportunity to see trends in the interest of services and spaces. New technologies added to the library will often be mentioned as part of the responses. Responses to another survey question indicate whether students feel more comfortable using the library and asking for help after attending the Heritage Hunt, which quantifies one of the primary goals for the programming: to reduce library anxiety. The Heritage Hunt committee utilizes responses from the suggestions for improvement to incorporate any student ideas that would improve the Heritage Hunt experience for the following year.

Response rates vary from year to year. Students are allowed to skip questions they do not wish to answer. Responses to the Heritage Hunt survey between 2015-2019 averaged around 14%, while post-2020 responses were lower than expected, averaging around 10% (see Table 2).

Table 2
Heritage Hunt Survey Response Rates from 2015 to 2023

| Year | Number of Students Attended | Number of Students who Responded to the Survey | Response Rate |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 2015 | 828 | 120 | 14.5% |
| 2016 | 813 | 141 | 17.3% |
| 2017 | 776 | 108 | 13.9% |
| 2018 | 854 | 119 | 13.9% |
| 2019 | 873 | 73 | 8.4% |
| 2021 | 587 | 56 | 9.5% |
| 2022 | 711 | 73 | 10.3% |
| 2023 | 729 | 81 | 11.1% |
| 2015 | 828 | 120 | 14.5% |
| 2016 | 813 | 141 | 17.3% |
| 2017 | 776 | 108 | 13.9% |

| | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-------|
| 2018 | 854 | 119 | 13.9% |
|------|-----|-----|-------|

Expansion of the Heritage Hunt

While the library sees the largest influx of first-year students in the fall semester, students beginning their studies at the University during other semesters do not have access to the program. Due to the intensity of the scheduling involved in the Heritage Hunt, this program has been developed for and offered only to first-year undergraduate students, excluding transfer students, graduate students, and online students. By offering the Heritage Hunt program to students beyond the first year and during other semesters, it may be possible to include students the program would typically miss. With the Heritage Hunt now being less staff-dependent, expanding access to the program is a possibility. However, it will require additional logistical changes or the adaptation and development of programs specific to the type of students the library seeks to reach.

One of the adaptations that came out of the Heritage Hunt revision in 2021 included the development of a self-guided library tour. Utilizing QR code technology, the SurveyMonkey platform, and modified content from the Heritage Hunt, the self-guided tour takes visitors on a tour of the building, describing library spaces and services. While not providing exactly the same content as the Heritage Hunt, the self-guided tour has the ability to act as a placeholder until new content can be created to meet the needs of students who have yet to be able to participate (see Figure 6).

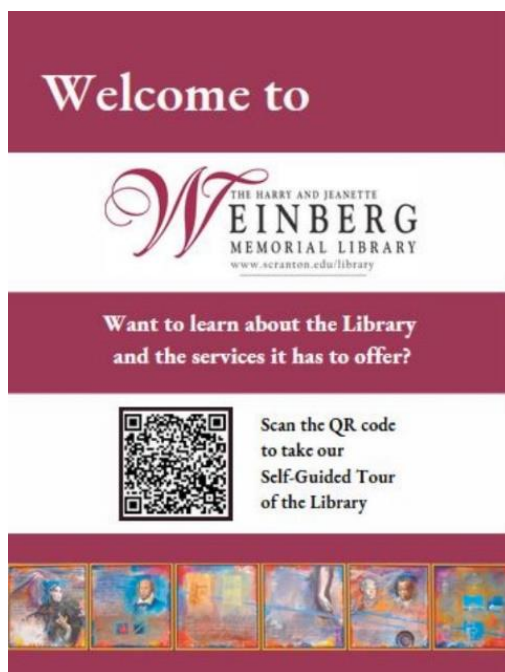


Figure 6
Poster with QR Code to access the self-guided tour.

To reduce interactions with staff during the 2021 Heritage Hunt, a member of the committee developed a poster with content describing how to get assistance. What became referred to as the Need Help Poster proved popular,

and as a result, the posters have been printed in various sizes and are now posted on each floor of the library and shared with other buildings on campus. The content from the poster was also adapted and repurposed as a bookmark (see Figure 7), which is being used as a takeaway for orientation and information literacy sessions. Other content created for the Heritage Hunt such as the library overview video and the how to print video have been reused and featured on LibGuides, blog posts, and handouts.



Figure 7
Image of Need Help? bookmark adapted from the Need-Help poster.

The Heritage Hunt's success has been assisted by many departments and faculty outside of the library. Various efforts have also been made to include teaching faculty in the promotion of the Heritage Hunt. During various faculty development and orientation events, library faculty have asked them to promote the Heritage Hunt in first-year focused courses. Some instructors choose to offer extra credit for proof of completion of the Heritage Hunt. After over 10 years of including the Heritage Hunt as part of the first-week activities for incoming students, it has become a well-known event on campus. The committee continues to investigate other possibilities for outreach to students, most recently working with the Office of Global Education to ensure inclusion of new international students onboarding in the fall of 2023. Also new in 2023, students that completed the Heritage Hunt were emailed a document that provided an overview of the spaces and services they learned about and highlighted contact information for library services.

Marketing and promotion of the program remain important ways to encourage participation. Beginning in 2021, the committee began encouraging in-person registration at a New Student Resource Fair held on the second day of classes by the Center for Student Engagement. The library also relies on social media to promote the event through the library's blog, Instagram, and Facebook. In 2023 the committee explored a new option for promotion: an internal engagement platform, RoyalSync, which provides a hub for student activities and engagement on campus. The RoyalSync platform also offered the opportunity to award badges, which were given to students who completed the Heritage Hunt in 2023. In the future, it could potentially be used to deliver the wrap-up email to participants with a summary of the library resources and services they learned about during the Heritage Hunt. As another incentive for students to participate, in 2023 the committee entered the names of those who completed the Heritage Hunt into a raffle for several small prizes. Each student had a chance to win one of seventy-five gift cards for local establishments. Previously, the library had offered gift cards to the first 100-150 students who registered and completed the activity but did not advertise this incentive.

Conclusion

The Heritage Hunt as a library orientation program continues to play an essential role at the Weinberg Memorial Library, evolving each year as technology and student needs change. Modifications to the program over time have made the program easier to maintain and facilitate. Running the program for the past decade has made it clear that regular review and maintenance is required. Facilitating a program at this level of participation requires dedication to the effort and buy-in from those involved to keep it running for this long. This buy-in and involvement of multiple stakeholders across the library also ensures a robust feedback system, which allows for opportunities to collaborate and give observations on what is and is not working with the program. Any changes made by the committee are carefully considered and meant to enable the program to run smoothly in future iterations and without inconveniencing the staff and faculty who enable its success. Assessment of student input through the SurveyMonkey platform and anecdotal comments also creates opportunities for improvements in ensuring we are meeting student needs. Ultimately, the time and care and yearly revisiting of the program have made it a very successful initiative that engages a large percentage of our students and provides a pathway for further student outreach.

As session instructors involved in the program, we witness students making social connections and believe that the program empowers them with knowledge and tools to help them as they advance through their college experience. During Heritage Hunt week, we often hear other students studying in the library interacting with those participating, recounting their own experience their first year at the University of Scranton. Making social connections and having a positive engagement experience reduces anxiety, improves student confidence, and makes it more likely that students will visit the library, reach out to librarians, and use the library's resources (Eshbach, 2020; Goldman et al., 2016). As we move forward with the Heritage Hunt into the next decade, future formal research into the program should include IRB-approved data to support our anecdotal evidence of the student experience. While the Heritage Hunt will need to change and evolve with student populations, the library remains committed to offering this opportunity to incoming students and expanding it to other populations.

Notes

¹ Data for Total Freshman Enrollment retrieved from the 2023-2024 Stat Sheet <https://www.scranton.edu/pir/institutional-research/institutional-research-reports/fact-sheet-2023-2024.pdf>

² Percentage of students oriented is calculated using the number of students attended divided by the number of total freshman enrolled

³ The Heritage Hunt was not held in Fall 2020 due to pandemic distancing requirements.

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Appendix A – Routes and Service Points

Heritage Hunt Routes 2014 (sample)

| | Group A | Group B | Group C |
|----------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) | Media Resources (3rd fl.) | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) |
| 2 | Media Resources (3rd fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) | Periodicals (2nd fl.) |
| 3 | Catalog Search (5th fl.) → Circ Desk (1st fl.) | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons (2nd fl.) |
| 4 | Periodicals (2nd fl.) | Catalog Search (5th fl.) → Circ Desk (1st fl.) | Media Resources (3rd fl.) |
| 5 | Printer Video (2nd fl.) → TV QR code (2nd fl.) | Periodicals (2nd fl.) | Catalog Search (5th fl.) → Circ Desk (1st fl.) |
| 6 | Computer Lab PDF (2nd fl.) | Printer Video (2nd fl.) → TV QR code (2nd fl.) | Reference Desk (2nd fl.) |
| 7 | Reference Desk (2nd fl.) | Computer Lab PDF (2nd fl.) | Printer Video (2nd fl.) → TV QR code (2nd fl.) |
| 8 | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) | Reference Desk (2nd fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) | Computer Lab PDF (2nd fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) |

Heritage Hunt Routes 2021 (sample)

The 2021 routes were reduced from 8 to 6 stops due to construction on the 2nd floor and streamlined to limit the amount of time students spent moving throughout the building.

| | Group A | Group B | Group C |
|----------|---|---|--|
| 1 | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) | Heritage Room (5th fl.) | Media Resources (3rd fl.) |
| 2 | Reilly Learning Commons Computer Lab (1st fl.) | Media Resources (3rd fl.) | Heritage Room (5th fl.) |
| 3 | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) | Research Services (2nd fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) |
| 4 | Research Services (2nd fl.) | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons Computer Lab (1st fl.) |
| 5 | Media Resources(3rd fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) |
| 6 | Heritage Room (5th fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons Computer Lab (1st fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) | Research Services (2nd fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) |

Heritage Hunt Routes 2023 (sample)

The 2023 routes returned to 8 stops and added a new stop on the 4th floor which had not been incorporated previously.

| | Group A | Group B | Group C |
|----------|---|--|---|
| 1 | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) | Media Resources (3rd fl.) | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) |
| 2 | Media Resources (3rd fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) | Heritage Room (5th fl.) |
| 3 | Heritage Room (5th fl.) | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) | Kiosk (3rd fl.) |
| 4 | Archives (4th fl.) | Heritage Room (5th fl.) | Library Services Desk (1st fl.) |
| 5 | Kiosk (3rd fl.) | Archives (4th fl.) | Research Services (2nd fl.) |
| 6 | Library Services Desk (1st fl.) | Kiosk (3rd fl.) | Media Resources (3rd fl.) |
| 7 | Research Services (2nd fl.) | Library Services Desk (1st fl.) | Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.) |
| 8 | Pro Deo Room (1st fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) | Research Services (2nd fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) | Archives (4th fl.) → Classroom (3rd fl.) |

Appendix B – Sample Questions

Changes to examples of some of the directions and questions over time are identified in RED in the chart below.

Route: Reilly Learning Commons (1st fl.)

| | 2014 | 2021 (post-pandemic) | 2023 (current) |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Student Learning Outcome (SLO) | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Reilly Learning Commons</p> <p>Students will learn about Library technologies and spaces available for student use</p> <p>Students will be able to identify three pieces of library technology available for student use</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Reilly Learning Commons</p> <p>Students will learn about Library technologies and spaces available for student use</p> <p>Students will be able to identify three pieces of library technology available for student use</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Reilly Learning Commons</p> <p>[Part 1]¹ Students will learn about Library technologies and spaces available for student use</p> <p>Students will be able to identify three pieces of library technology available for student use</p> <p>[Part 2] Students will gain a basic understanding of printing at the Library</p> <p>Students will be able to identify the website used for printing</p> |
| Direction | <p>Go to the Reilly Learning Commons on the 1st floor.</p> <p>The Reilly Learning Commons is an interactive space designed to enhance collaboration. The Learning Commons houses unique pieces of technology, group study rooms, two writing center offices, technology support, printing services, and computers.</p> | <p>Go to the Reilly Learning Commons on the 1st floor past the elevators.²</p> <p>The Reilly Learning Commons is an interactive space designed to enhance collaboration. The Learning Commons houses unique technology, group study rooms, two writing center offices, technology support, printing services, and computers.</p> | <p>[Direction part 1] Go to the Reilly Learning Commons on the 1st floor past the elevators.</p> <p>The Reilly Learning Commons is an interactive space designed to enhance collaboration. The Learning Commons houses unique technology, group study rooms, two writing center offices, technology support, printing services, and computers.</p> |

¹ This question was expanded to include printing. The printing services room is located adjacent to the Learning Commons and is included as a space as part of Question 1.

² Additional direction was added to clarify how to find the space as it was lacking permanent signage in the building.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | <p>[Direction part 2]</p> <p>Watch the video below to learn how to print at the Weinberg Memorial Library.</p> <p>[View Printing Video]³</p> |
| <p>Question or Clue</p> | <p>(Write-in) Look around the room for the Heritage Hunt symbols and write on the back of your handout the names of three of those unique pieces of technology.</p> <p>[Write-in Possible Answers]</p> <p>After you have written down three items, look for your next clue located in the printing room. Make sure you use the correct clue!</p> | <p>(Type-in) Look around the room for the Heritage Hunt symbols and type in the boxes below the names of three unique technologies.⁴</p> <p>[Type-in Possible Answers]</p> | <p>[Question part 1]</p> <p>(Type-in) Look around the room for the Heritage Hunt symbols and type in the boxes below the names of three unique technologies or spaces.⁵</p> <p>[Type-in Possible Answers]</p> <p>[Question part 2]</p> <p>(Multiple choice) If you want to print something, what website do you go to upload and print the document?</p> <p>a. pharos.[university 2].edu [Correct Answer]</p> <p>b. printing.com</p> <p>c. www.[university 2].edu/library</p> |

Route: Media Resources (3rd Floor)

| | 2014 | 2021 | 2023 |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Student Learning Outcome (SLO)</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Media Resources</p> <p>Students interact with Media Resources Staff</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Media Resources⁶</p> <p>Students learns the types of media and collections that are located in the Media Resources</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Media Resources</p> <p>Students learns the types of media and collections that are located in the Media Resources</p> |

³ Addition of video embedded into survey platform.

⁴ Transition from writing on paper slips to SurveyMonkey platform where students could type-in their response.

⁵ Addition of spaces to the response options for the question

⁶ Interaction was removed due to pandemic restrictions.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | Students interact with Media Resources Staff ⁷ |
| Direction | <p>Go to Media Resources located on the 3rd floor and ask for the Heritage Hunt reserve.</p> <p>Use one of the DVD players to watch the video.</p> | <p>Go to Media Resources located on the 3rd floor through the glass doors.</p> <p>This is where you can rent DVDs and Blu-rays for 48 hours.</p> <p>The EdLab collection, found within the Media Resources Collection, consists of juvenile literature and K-12 textbooks to support the curriculum of The University of Scranton's Department of Education.</p> | <p>Visit Media Resources located on the 3rd floor (look for the glass doors).</p> <p>This is where you can borrow DVDs, Blu-rays and CDs for 48 hours. Media Resources also provides thousands of educational streaming videos.</p> <p>The EdLab collection, found within the Media Resources, consists of juvenile literature and K-12 textbooks to support the curriculum of The University of Scranton's Department of Education.</p> |
| Question or Clue | <p>On the back of your handout write down the answer to the following question: Which library resources would you use if you were doing research on the history of The University of Scranton?</p> <p>The video will also tell you where to get your next clue.</p> | <p>(Type-in) Look at the current movie display and type one of the titles into the box below.</p> | <p>(Type-in) Look at the framed posters and type the title of one of the movies into the box below.</p> |

⁷ Comments from students indicated that they desired more interaction with staff, interactions were added back into the experience in 2023.

2014 Route: Reference Desk (2nd fl.)

2021 & 2023 Route: Research Services (2nd fl.)

| | 2014 | 2021 | 2023 |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Student Learning Outcome (SLO) | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Reference Desk</p> <p>Students interact with a Reference and Instruction Librarian</p> <p>Students learn about services offered by Reference and Instruction Librarians and how to get help when needed</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Research & Scholarly Services⁸</p> <p>Students learn about services offered by Research and Instruction Librarians and how to get help when needed</p> | <p>Students are introduced to library space: Research & Scholarly Services</p> <p>Students learn how to locate the on-call librarian.</p> <p>Students interact with a Research and Instruction Librarian⁹</p> <p>Students learn about services offered by Research and Instruction Librarians and how to get help when needed</p> |
| Direction | <p>Go to the Reference Desk on the 2nd floor and tell the Reference Librarian that you are on the Heritage Hunt.</p> | <p>Go to the Research & Scholarly Services Desk on the 2nd floor.</p> <p>Look for the poster on the column behind the desk.</p> <p>The poster shares information on how to get help both during and after Library business hours.</p> | <p>Go to the 2nd floor, and look for the office with a purple sign that says "Research Librarian on Call."¹⁰</p> <p>The Research Librarians are there to help you with your research, such as finding databases, articles, books and more resources. You can stop on the 2nd floor to locate the librarian on call to get help whenever you need it, or you can make an appointment with a specific librarian.</p> <p>Knock on the door and introduce yourself to the librarian.</p> |

⁸ Interaction with a Reference and Instruction Librarian at the 2nd floor was removed due to pandemic.

⁹ Comments from students indicated that they desired more interaction with staff; interactions were added back into the experience in 2023.

¹⁰ Library moved to a one-desk model in 2022 so there was no longer a desk on the 2nd floor.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Question or Clue | <p>(Write-in) On the back of your handout write the reference librarian's first name.</p> <p>The Reference Librarian will share information about the library and provide you with your next clue.</p> | <p>(Type-in) In the box below, describe how you would get research assistance after the Research Services desk closes.</p> | <p>(Type-in) In the space below, write down the name of the librarian you met.¹¹</p> |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|

¹¹ Adding a personal connection their experience of meeting with a librarian.

Appendix C - Student Feedback Survey Questions

The survey is short in the hopes of getting a good number of responses; there are currently five questions. The students are asked:

Was the Heritage Hunt activity fun and enjoyable?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Name one service offered by the Weinberg Memorial Library that you found out about by participating in the Heritage Hunt activity.

[Open-ended response]

Do you feel comfortable asking a Library staff member a question after participating in the Heritage Hunt?

Yes

No

Not Sure

How valuable was the Heritage Hunt activity in orienting you to the physical layout of the Weinberg Memorial Library?

Very valuable

Somewhat valuable

Not sure

Somewhat not valuable

Not valuable

How do you think the Heritage Hunt activity could be improved?

[Open-ended response]