

# REFRAMING REFERENCE THROUGH PARTICIPATORY VISUAL METHODS

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# OVERVIEW

- Research focus
- Method
- Findings
- Implications



# RESEARCH FOCUS



# AREAS OF INTEREST

- How can academic librarians improve reference services for marginalized students?
- How can research into library services center students' ideas and experiences?



Library workers must “relinquish the notion of total control over space and instead empower students, faculty, and community members to take ownership of academic libraries and use them as sites of social justice.”

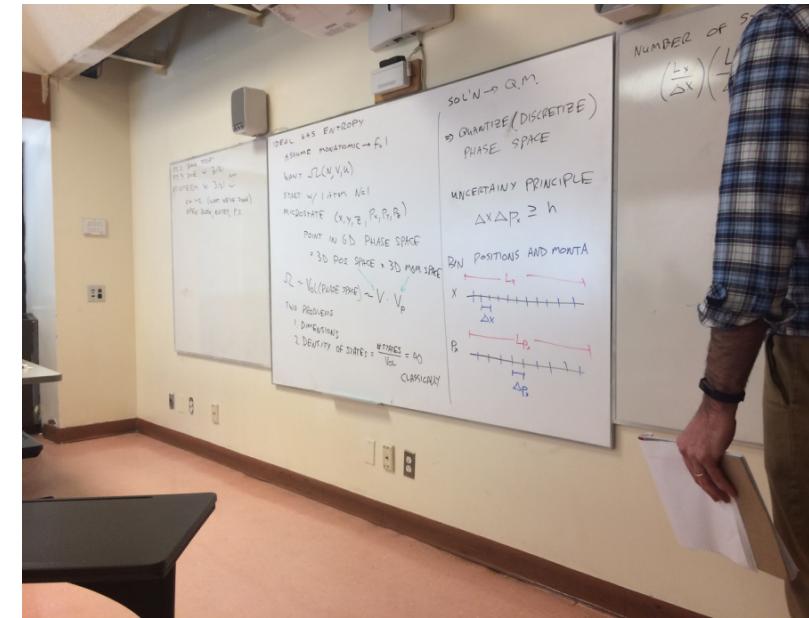
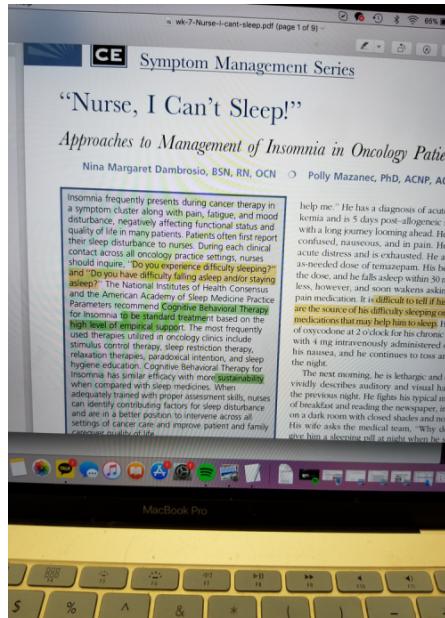
- Freeda Brook, Dave Ellenwood, and Althea Eannace Lazzaro, “In Pursuit of Antiracist Social Justice: Denaturalizing Whiteness in the Academic Library,” 2015

# METHOD



# PHOTO VOICE

- A visual, qualitative method combining photography and participant narratives
- Participatory: subjects and themes are determined by participants



“[Photovoice’s] theoretical basis brings together Paulo Freire’s theories on participatory education, Feminist theory focusing on giving voice to the disadvantaged, and documentary photography techniques representing societal realities.”

- Lisa M. Given, Anna Opryshko, Heidi Julien, and Jorden Smith, “Photovoice: A Participatory Method for Information Science,” 2011

# PROCESS

1. Recruited 11 participants through flyers posted on-campus
2. One-on-one meetings to describe photovoice, ethical considerations, and the project's goal
3. Participants had two weeks to take 20 photos of times they looked for information
4. In-depth interviews held with each participant
5. Focus group held with most participants, to share photos and determine themes

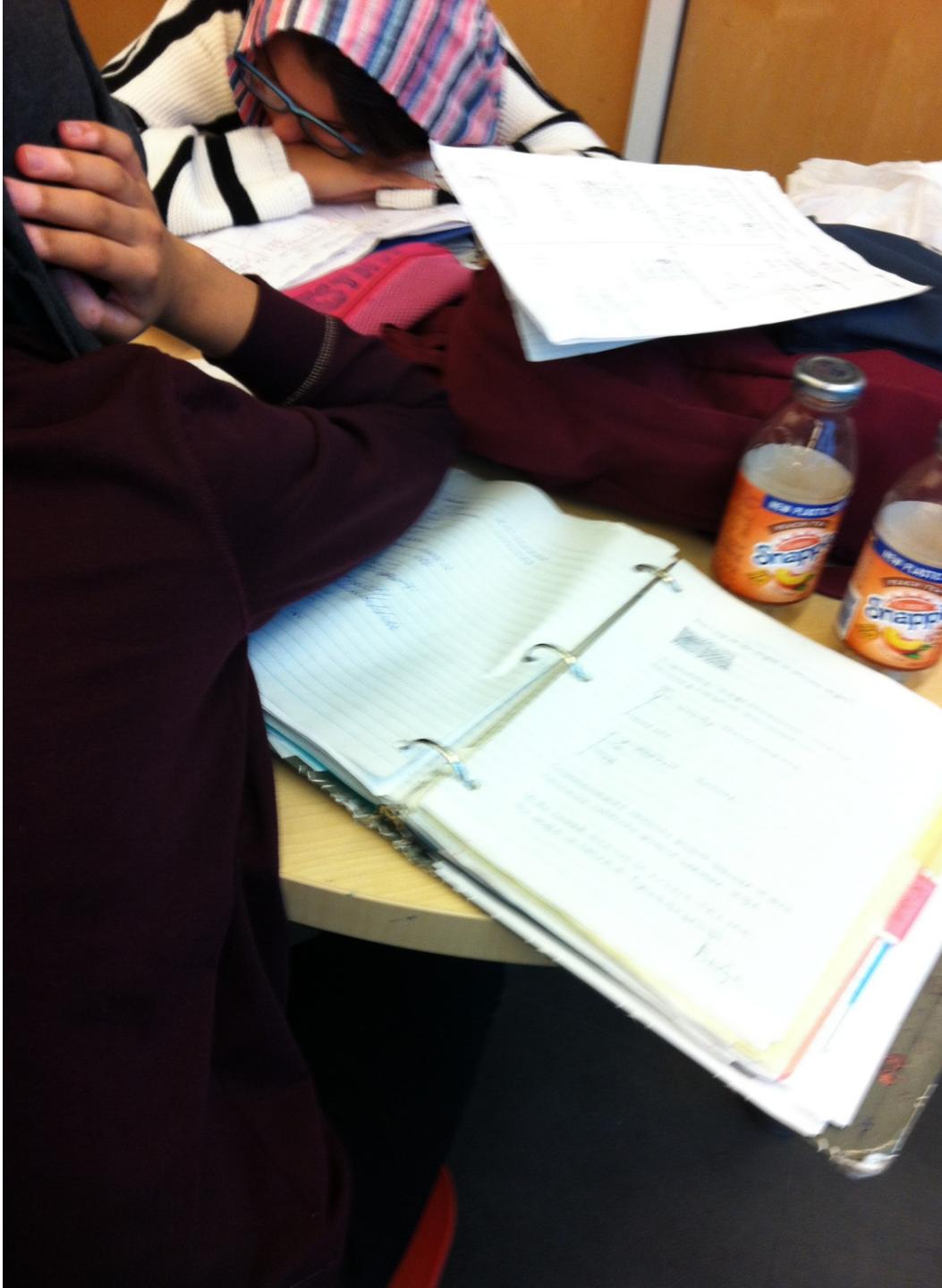
# FINDINGS



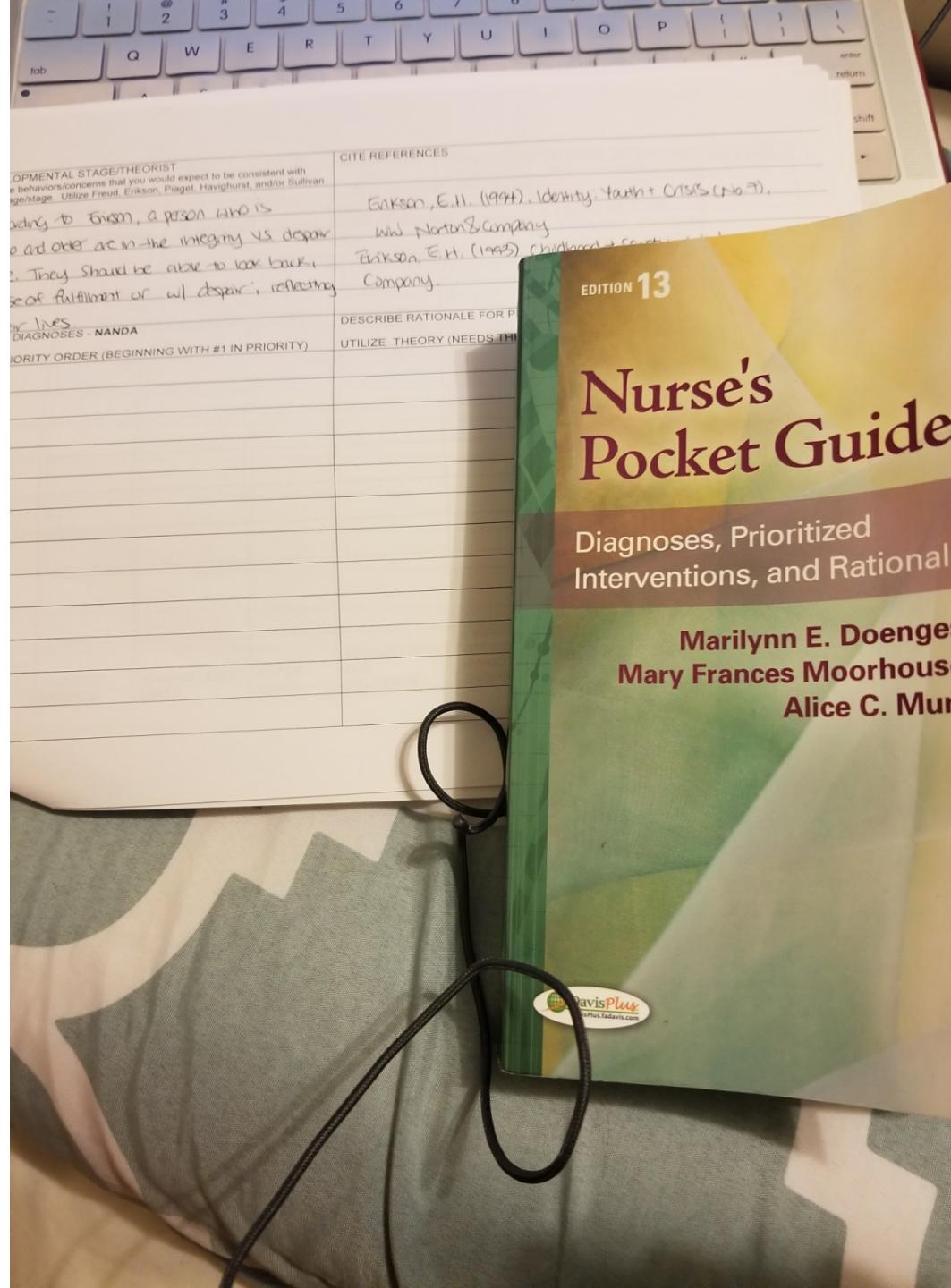
# THEMES

- **Academic work**
  - Keeping up in class
  - Studying with friends or alone
  - Help from professors
- **Information in the moment**
  - Getting around
  - Connecting with loved ones
- **Gathering information for later**
  - Parsing complex information
  - Personal interests

# ACADEMIC WORK



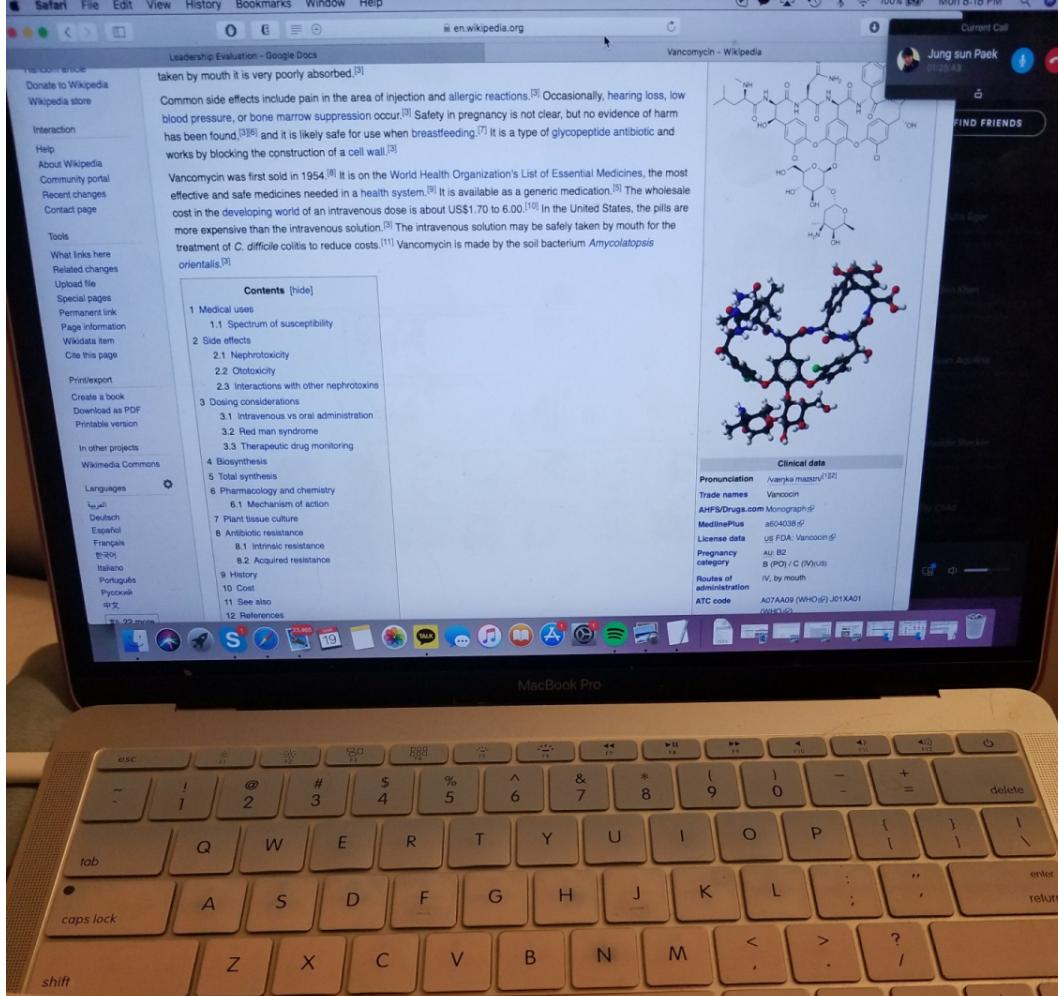
“Studying with friends.”



**“Using textbook that  
was listed in my course  
syllabus”**



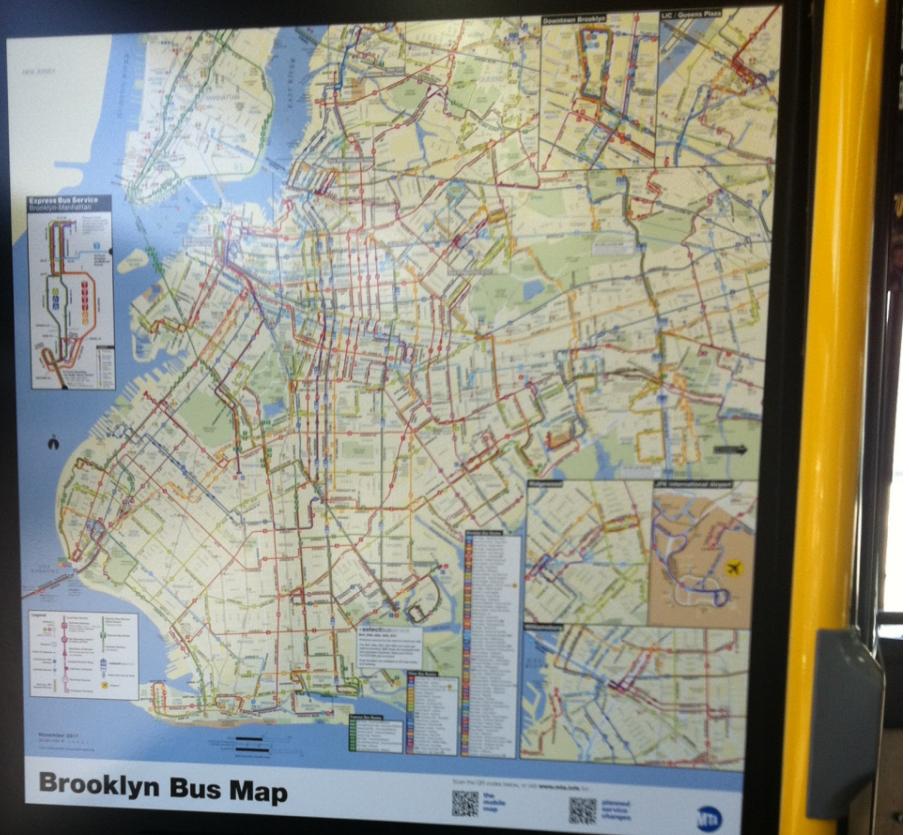
"Teacher's office."



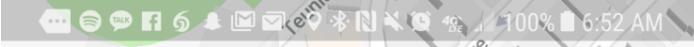
CATEGORY E/GENERIC	DOSAGE ORDERED	TIMES ADMINISTERED	DOSE/ ROUTE	RATIONALE FOR ADMINISTERING	THERAPEUTIC RANGE FOR AGE/WEIGHT If Applicable	NURSING IMPLICATIONS Required Patient Education	CITATIONS
Vancomycin	125 mg	q6hrs.	oral soln PEG	sepsis	—	Nephrotoxicity + ototoxicity	
Clindamycin	500mg	q8hrs	IV	C. diff	—		
	3mm over affected areas	daily	topical	pressure ulcer	—		
	8 units	twice daily with meals	Subcut	DM II	—		
	1mg/kg	q12hrs	Subcut	W. thermophilus	—		

“Using Wikipedia for school related assignments. Bad but I use this often”

INFORMATION  
IN THE MOMENT



"Shuttle bus"

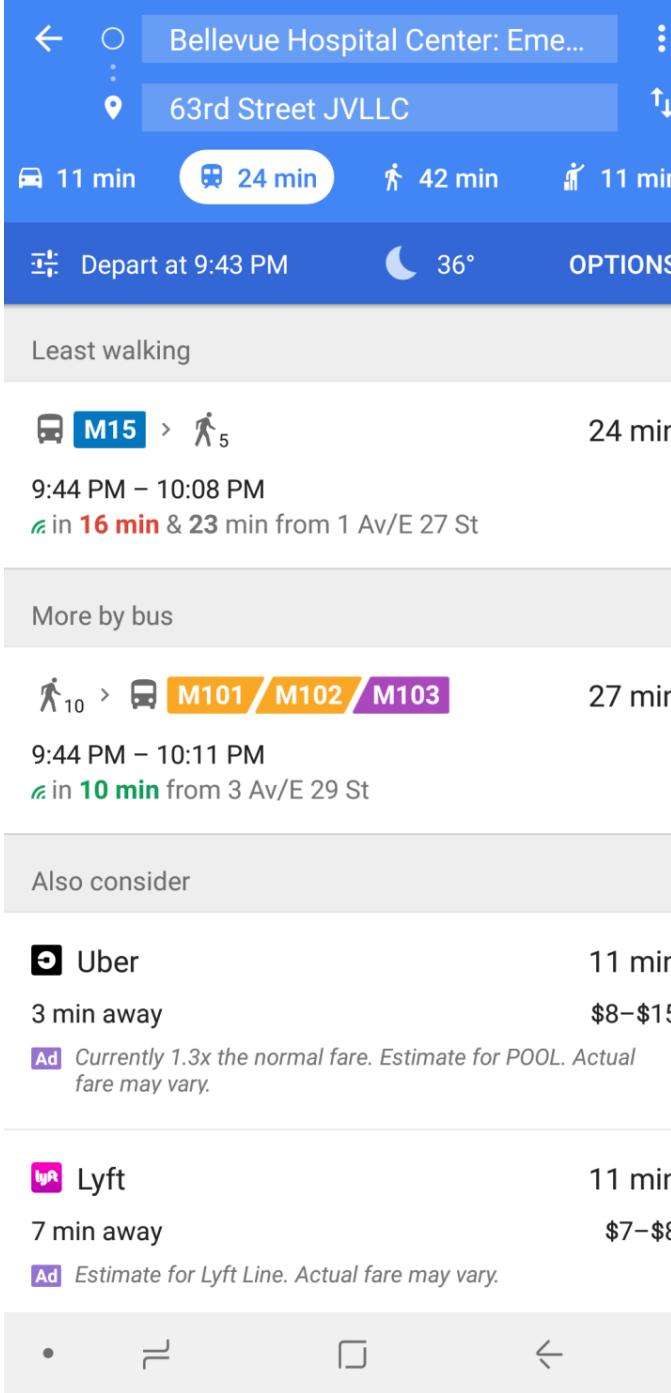


NewYork-Presbyterian The Allen Hospi...

3.2 ★★★★★ (140)

[MORE INFO](#)

[DIRECTIONS](#)



“Google Mapping directions to NYP Hospital for clinicals”

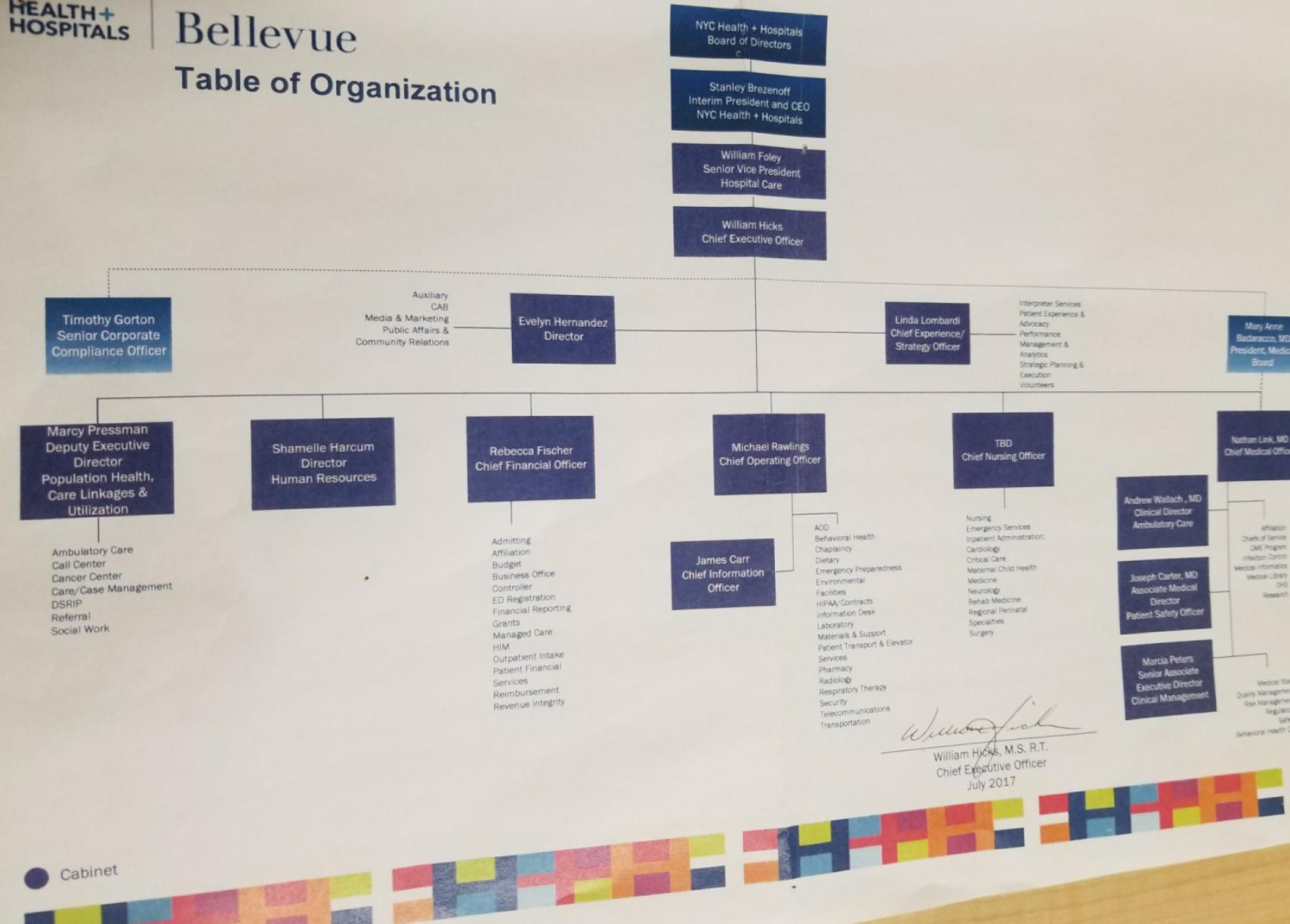


“Financial aid office for  
one on one sessions”

GATHERING  
INFORMATION  
FOR LATER

# Bellevue

## Table of Organization



“Document to help me  
on my assignment”

Fri(2)

wakeup	6 sharp
Ex.sh.BF	6-8
meditation	8-8:30
study(FGPEE)	8:30-11
Typing	11-12
study(FGPEE)	12-1
lunch	1-3
study	3-7
movie	7-9
study	9-10:30

bed 11

even

Thur(1)

wake up	6 sharp
Ex.sh.BF.meditation	6-8:10
study(D.E)	8:10-12
Typing	12-12:45
lunch	12:45-3
walking	3-3:45
Bloomberg	3:45-5:45
class	6-8
Gym	8-9
walking	9-9:45
writing	9:45-10:30

prints for Bibi

Ehsan Afshar

"This gives me an idea of my boyfriend's schedule so we have time to spend with each other"



"Information of  
produce prices"

# IMPLICATIONS



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# IMPLICATIONS FOR REFERENCE

- Participants held no strong opinions about reference

Interviewer: "Have you asked for help at the Ask a Librarian desk, which is on the 3rd floor as you walk in?"

Participant: "Only if I need a stapler."

# IMPLICATIONS FOR REFERENCE

- What participants *did* care about:
  - Library hours
  - Noise
  - Printing
  - Getting textbooks
  - Updated computers
  - Study rooms that can be booked online
  - Full-text access to articles
  - Financial aid

# IMPLICATIONS FOR REFERENCE & LIS RESEARCH

- People's experiences and information practices are unique
- Universal models and generalizations about different populations are not useful to librarians or library users
- Commonalities among participants: striving to remain focused, stay positive, juggle multiple jobs and family/school/work obligations

# NEXT STEPS

- Exhibit of participant photographs to be displayed in campus gallery
- Summarize and share findings and participant recommendations within the library and with other departments
- Future studies using photovoice and photo-elicitation methods

# THANK YOU

SLIDES AND NOTES

[tinyurl.com/ReframingReference](http://tinyurl.com/ReframingReference)

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Lisa M. Given, Anna Opryshko, Heidi Julien, & Jorden Smith. "Photovoice: A participatory method for information science." *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 48, no. 1 (2011): 1-3.

April Hathcock and Stephanie Sendaula. "Mapping Whiteness at the Reference Desk." In *Topographies of Whiteness: Mapping Whiteness in LIS*, ed. Gina Schlesselman-Tarango, Library Juice Press, 2017.

Alison Hicks and Annemaree Lloyd. "Seeing Information: Visual Methods as Entry Points to Information Practices." *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* (2018).