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WHAT'S THE HUB, BUB?

A Post-Occupancy Evaluation of BruinHub

Lucie Wu • June 2023

Client: UCLA cityLAB

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A comprehensive project submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Master of Urban and Regional Planning.



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As a land grant institution, the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies at UCLA acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (Los Angeles basin, So. Channel Islands).

Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

The goal of this study is to evaluate the BruinHub one year after its opening in Fall 2021. BruinHub is a space dedicated to serve long-distance commuter students at UCLA. Primary research questions for this project are:

1. Does BruinHub serve the intended target audience of long-distance commuters, including commuters who experience some form of housing insecurity?
2. What changes to the current and proposed BruinHub program(s) would further benefit the intended audience?

For this study, I analyzed the BruinHub Passholder registration data, conducted one-on-one interviews with UCLA students and staff, and conducted on site observations in the BruinHub space.

BruinHub is the first step in the right direction in addressing the needs of long-distance commuters. However, there are more improvements that can be implemented in order to reach its full potential, especially by prioritizing and directly serving its intended audience.

Recommendations to come out of this study involve spatial recommendations, programming recommendations, and recommendations for outreach and data collection. While many of the suggested improvements will be challenging to implement, students and staff must actively advocate for the changes. The newly opened second location, BruinHub Strathmore, presents an opportunity to address many of the current concerns and service gaps that BruinHub experiences.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In Fall 2021, a space for UCLA student commuters known as BruinHub, was established. This space was intended for long-distance commuters in particular, those who travel 60 minutes or more one-way to and from campus, and gives them a place to rest and study. BruinHub is the first of its kind on the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus, a space and service catered towards commuters. BruinHub is located in what used to be a racquetball court in the John Wooden Center, the recreational facility on campus. BruinHub amenities include couches, chairs, desks, tables, a microwave, fridge, a food cart with snacks, and 32 lockers. What makes BruinHub especially unique are the five pods which can be used for resting or sleeping. The creation of BruinHub was the combined effort of UCLA Campus Life, UCLA Recreation, and cityLAB, a design research center housed under the School of Architecture.

One year after its opening, the cityLAB team sought an evaluation of the space and the programming behind BruinHub. Of interest in this post-occupancy evaluation is not only an evaluation of the degree to which the BruinHub has been successful in serving its commuter student population, but also assessing the degree to which the BruinHub serves students at the intersection of both long-distance commutes and some form of housing precarity. Thus, the BruinHub and this post-occupancy evaluation of BruinHub at UCLA is situated at the intersection of housing, transportation, and education.

Before BruinHub existed, cityLAB published a report titled “My Commute is Hell” (Cuff et al., 2019). The primary goal of the study was to better understand students who face long and extreme commutes to campus, which are 60-90 minute and 90+ minute one-way commutes, respectively. The researchers conducted surveys and focus groups to answer this research question. The report outlined the issues that students at UCLA face in regards to commuting and housing. The study also examined possible solutions to the challenges of long-distance commuting, including a commuter lounge or hub.

cityLAB partnered with UCLA Transportation to conduct a survey which found that 5.6% of commuting students have 90-minutes or more one way commutes. This is estimated to be around 1700 students when extrapolated to the number of off-campus students in the academic year 2018-2019. Out of the survey respondents, 28% had one-way commutes of less than 30 minutes, 28% of commutes between 30-60 minutes, 25% of commutes between 60-90 minutes, 14% of commutes between 90-120 minutes, and 18.5% of commutes over 120 minutes. Additionally, 5% of survey respondents have experienced homelessness during their time at UCLA (Cuff et al., 2019).

Key recommendations that came out of the report include: creating a commuter hub, creating short-term accommodations such as a commuter hostel, and providing safe parking for students to park and stay in their cars overnight safely. “My Commute is Hell” and a subsequent on-campus exhibition “Fitting In, Fitting Out” complemented ongoing, student-driven efforts to create a space for commuting students. The BruinHub is the culmination of these efforts. This report is an extension of “My Commute is Hell,” by evaluating one of the proposed solutions, which is BruinHub.

In this report, I share existing literature on transportation and housing issues in higher education. I also look at research on the role universities play in design and space. I also examine existing commuter spaces at several universities to better understand the current landscape and best practices in the design of public space to serve commuter students and students facing housing insecurity. With data gathered from BruinHub registration, UCLA student and staff interviews, and site observations, I share the findings and propose recommendations for the future of BruinHub and implications for BruinHub Strathmore, a second location which opened in May 2023.



Figure 1. BruinHub space



Figure 2. Sleep pod in BruinHub



Figure 3. Study bar area with nearby fridge and microwave

My Background and Interest in the Topic

I was drawn towards the evaluation of BruinHub and chose it as my capstone project because I am a long-distance commuter student myself at UCLA and I heard of BruinHub when it first opened. I commute to campus by transit and each way takes around two to two-and-a-half hours. During my interviews with students, I empathized deeply with their struggles and challenges. I'm excited to support this research as somebody with lived experience. I hope that my lived experience as a long-distance commuter offers a different perspective on this evaluation and the recommendations for BruinHub.

Another reason for why I chose this project is that it is applicable and implementable with direct impact on those it is trying to serve. The project is backed by funding, resources, and a path forward with the support of UCLA staff and higher administration. On September 14, 2022 the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs announced the use of the Strathmore building in an email titled, "The Future of Addressing Students' Basic Needs at UCLA". My research will help to improve the BruinHub in Wooden Center and may also inform the design and programming of BruinHub Strathmore. The findings from this project can also go beyond UCLA to help other universities and colleges get their own BruinHub space off the ground. We won't be able to solve the issue of sprawl, poor public transit, and skyrocketing housing costs in Los Angeles in the span of this capstone project, but we will be able to offer support and address immediate needs for underserved commuter and housing-insecure students.

Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

A year after its operation, the team behind BruinHub wanted to know whether BruinHub has achieved its goal of providing a space of respite for UCLA commuters and housing insecure or homeless students. BruinHub started out as a prototype and this evaluation is necessary to see how well the space is working. BruinHub and the evaluation is situated within the larger problem of students experiencing long-distance commutes and various forms of precarities, including housing, financial, and food insecurity.

My role involved conducting an evaluation upon the one-year opening of BruinHub to learn whether BruinHub is targeting the right audience and how to increase outreach to further benefit the intended audience. Primary research questions for this project are:

1. Does BruinHub serve the intended target audience of long-distance commuters, including commuters who experience some form of housing insecurity?

2. What changes to the current and proposed BruinHub program(s) would further benefit the intended audience?

The first question is aimed at identifying users of BruinHub and better understanding their needs during the first year of operation. The second question identifies ways that BruinHub could meet those needs or address any gaps. The findings from this capstone research project will serve as foundational research for not only the current BruinHub in Wooden Center, but also the second BruinHub location planned for the Strathmore building in the future. I plan to propose short-term and long-term strategies for the improvement of BruinHub, which may also translate to the BruinHub in Strathmore and identify unexplored service gaps.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review will define several key topics relevant to the evaluation of BruinHub. These topics include commuters and commute length, housing insecurity and homelessness, the role of universities and design of campus space. Although the primary focus of this BruinHub evaluation is on student commuters, I also share existing literature on housing insecurity and homelessness in students. While that is not necessarily the primary focus of this project, it is important to highlight the bigger problem that BruinHub is situated in as it relates to housing.

The second half of this literature review is composed of three case studies of existing commuter spaces on campus. I will explore each of the programs from Drexel University, University of San Diego, and Rutgers University in the form of case studies. These case studies were selected because of their geographic diversity, representation of public and private institutions. Additionally, there were few studies to draw from in academic research and these were the most substantial studies available. To inform these case studies, information was collected from academic sources, gray literature, and university websites.

Commuters and Commute Length

Commuter students account for the majority of college students and the population is continuing to increase with the rise of the “nontraditional student” (Snyder & Dillow, 2002 and Choy, 2012 as cited in Weiss, 2014). According to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), nontraditional students may embody at least one of the following characteristics: financial independence, part time enrollment, not attending college directly after high school graduation, full-time employment, single parenthood, claiming dependents, and having a GED (Choy, 2002 as cited in Weiss, 2014).

In “The College Experience of Commuter Students and the Concepts of Place and Space,” Weiss (2014) suggests that there is a relation between these characteristics and the living arrangement and commute status of students alongside other factors such as age, enrollment status, race, and employment. While commuter students are universally understood as residing in any non-university owned housing, there is yet to be consensus around whether students who live off campus in temporary residences for the purpose of attending college are considered commuter students as opposed to those who live in permanent off campus housing (Weiss, 2014). This discrepancy in defining a commuter student may have implications on how these students are perceived, understood, and ultimately, served (Weiss, 2014). This shows up in the physical design and services (Pope et al, 2009 as cited in Weiss, 2014) provided by the college, which is typically based on the traditional student that lives on campus.

In an analysis on urban commuter campuses, Clark (2006) mentions that commuter students tend to have a variety of responsibilities outside of school which contribute to their college experience. This creates “subcultures” within commuter students, such as dependent commuters who live with family or independent commuters who are financially independent and live apart from family. Dugan et al. (2008, as in cited in Weiss, 2014) also found significant differences between independent commuters and dependent commuters in relation to their leadership efficacy. It is worth defining distinct “subcultures” such as undergraduate versus graduate student commuters, commuters who live in a permanent versus temporary residential area, and commuter students with dependents or children.

Clark (2006) also identified several challenges that commuter students face, including the isolation that commuter students face, their silent acceptance of “inappropriate challenges within the college environment,” and the challenge of having to start over and adapt repeatedly at the start of every semester or quarter. Clark (2006) looks at best practices on campus and a key practice related to this study is “extending campus resources” by fostering strategies that ensure that students are well aware of and have access to helpful campus resources.

Commuter students face commutes that can be categorized based on time and distance. Following previous studies, including “My Commute is Hell” and UCLA Transportation’s State of the Commute, this study will focus on one-way commute times. Manageable commutes are defined as under 60 minutes one-way, long commutes are between 60 to 90 minutes one-way, and extreme commutes are over 90 minutes one-way (UCLA State of the Commute, 2021). During Fall 2021 at UCLA, there were 31,685 commuter students out of a total of 47,516 undergraduate and graduate students (UCLA State of the Commute, 2021), which is an estimated 67 percent of students who commute. At least 910 students and university employees engaged in extreme commuting during Fall 2021 (UCLA State of the Commute, 2021). These statistics show the significance of establishing programs such as BruinHub to serve students who make up a majority demographic. With non-traditional students on the rise, and many of them being commuters, university services and spaces should reflect that.

Housing Insecurity and Homelessness

Commuter students tend to also include housing insecure or homeless students, as the researchers discovered in “My Commute is Hell” (Cuff et al., 2019). Their needs are similar in terms of what commuter spaces such as BruinHub can provide. Therefore, it is essential to understand not only the primary user of BruinHub, the commuter student, but the student facing housing insecurity and homelessness as well.

Housing insecurity is a concept that ranges across a wide spectrum with multiple ways to define and measure it (Cox, Rodnyansky, Henwood, & Wenzel, 2017; Curry et al., 2017; Hallett & Crutchfield, 2017; Morton et al., 2018 as cited in Broton, 2020) with homelessness at its most extreme and other forms including limited availability housing, unaffordability, and inaccessibility. Homelessness is defined as “the lack of a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” (McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act, 2001 as cited in Broton, 2020). Housing insecurity can be defined as “limited or uncertain availability of stable, safe, adequate, and affordable housing and neighborhoods; limited or uncertain access to stable, safe, adequate, and affordable housing and neighborhoods; or the inability to acquire stable, safe, adequate, and affordable housing and neighborhoods in socially acceptable ways” (Cox, Henwood, Rice, and Wenzel (2017, p. 7) as cited in Broton, 2020).

Data from the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study found that approximately one in 10 students experience homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. This number varies across different types of colleges, affecting 5.7 percent of students at public 4-year institutions and 10.0 percent of students at public 2-year colleges, such as community colleges (Broton, 2020). Broton’s study (2020) indicated that 45 percent of students experience some form of housing insecurity, including housing unaffordability, instability, or homelessness. In a similar vein, in 2016 and 2018, The Hope Center found that 60 percent of the 40,000 California community college student participants were housing insecure the previous year and 19 percent were homeless in the previous year (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2019).

These numbers are in line with the University of California (UC) study which found that 5 percent of students across the 10 UC campuses experience homelessness (UC Global Food Initiative: Food and Housing Security at the University of California, 2017) and the California State University study which found one in 10 of its students are homeless (Crutch & MacGuire, 2018).

The Role of Universities and Design of Campus Space

Despite the increase in commuter students and the considerable number of housing insecure and homeless students, universities have not adapted their services to accommodate these students’ needs. In fact, Dugan et al. (2008, as cited in Weiss, 2014) noted over a decade ago that colleges provide “programs and interventions designed for residential students with commuter student populations under the assumption that the effect on learning will be equivalent” and this continues to persist. And as mentioned previously in the Commuters and Commute Length section of this literature review, the perception of a commuter student impacts both the physical design and services (Pope et al., 2009 as cited in Weiss, 2014) provided by the college.

In Weiss's study, "The College Experience of Commuter Students and the Concepts of Place and Space," one of the theoretical frameworks they utilized to guide their research is "campus ecology," a model of human environments described by Strange & Banning (2000, as cited in Weiss 2014) as being made up of four components: "physical condition, design, and layout; characteristics of the people who inhabit them; organizational structures related to their purposes and goals; and inhabitants' collective perception or constructions of the context and culture of the setting." These components are typically defined and set up by the institution, but members of the community—the students in this case—are the ones who interpret the environment and decide how to use the space. Campus ecology believes that the institution must actively involve community members in guiding the design of campus spaces.

The campus ecology model is particularly relevant to this evaluation on BruinHub. The model emphasizes "that student and campus are mutually shaping forces in the complex balance of institutional life" and that "the students shape the environment and are shaped by it" (Strange & Banning, 2001 as cited in Weiss 2014). The shaping of these environments and having a space to call one's own can affect a student's experience by fostering a sense of belonging, security and ownership, as well as connection to and involvement with the university (Strange & Banning, 2001 as cited in Weiss, 2014).

With campus ecology in mind, Weiss (2014) concluded their study with several key recommendations. Rather than a commuter lounge, they propose that commuter students should be assigned to a community center with resources and amenities of a "home away from home." The university should also demonstrate the recognition of commuter students by offering convenient class scheduling and creating a stronger image of commuters as part of the institution. Lastly, increased data collection of commuters by the university is needed to inform the assessment of students' needs.

Case Study 1: Drexel University

Drexel University's commuter programming consists of the development and implementation of Commuter Connection Day, Commuter Assistants, and web resources, as mentioned in the article "Serving the Quiet Majority: The Drexel Commuter Program" (Wilson, 2003). For Commuter Connection Day, workshops, known as "Sessions that will Save You Stress," are put on by staff. A couple of these sessions include "Public Transportation or Personal Vehicle?" and "Computing while Commuting." There are also Commuter Assistants (CAs), who are students that are hired as advocates for commuters and provide support. The CAs also put on an unofficial "underground campus tour" of places where commuters eat, study, hang, out and nap, which the admin staff do not show students. Drexel's commuter program also includes a

website of resources for commuter students: <https://drexel.edu/studentlife/campus-living/commuter-resources>. However, upon visiting the website, the site does not seem to offer an extensive amount of information. Other services the program offers include locker rentals, assistance with public transportation and parking and a monthly newsletter. The article briefly touches on the commuter lounges at Drexel, Charlotte Alletag Commuter Lounge and Main 220 Lounge. While there are no photos of the lounges on the school's website, there are descriptions provided. Charlotte Alletag Commute Lounge is described as "the most visible gathering space for commuter students" and is a place mostly for relaxing, socializing, and light studying. The space contains couches, tables, chairs, two 50-inch televisions, and a kitchenette. Main 220 Lounge is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm and offers free coffee, a television, and a conference room for reservation. Drexel evaluates their commuter program through 30-second surveys at events, virtual and physical suggestion boxes in commuter lounges, and an annual commuter experience satisfaction survey (Wilson, 2003).

Case Study 2: University of San Diego

University of San Diego (USD) offers a Commuter Commons, known as "a hangout spot for commuter students to study, sleep, play video games, and eat their lunch, among many other things" (Velasquez, 2021). The primary intention of the commuter lounge is to have a space on campus for commuter students, whether they are a first-year student, transfer student, or a continuing student who has never lived in university housing (Velasquez, 2011).

Similar to Drexel, USD employs Commuter Assistants, which they liken to Resident Advisors at dorms, but for commuters. "The Commuter Student Experience: Building Community at USD" (Velasquez, 2021) was a research study with the aim to evaluate the commuter experience at University of San Diego. Velasquez created a programming model to incorporate more learning and community building in programs. They conducted one-on-one interviews with students to assess what they needed and wanted to see in the commuter commons. The study's main research question was "how could I enhance the experience of commuter students within the Commuter Commons at USD?"

Velasquez found that overall, students feel that there is an adequate level of institutional support from the University, but more could be done. Recommendations that came out of the study include: 1) have at least two full-time staff members apart of Community and Leadership Development, 2) more institutional funding for the Commuter Student Commons, and 3) revamp the LLC program at USD to support commuters.

Case Study 3: Rutgers University

The article, "Renovation of a Rutgers Space for Use as a Commuter Lounge to Reduce Our Carbon Footprint," (Lato et al., 2012) consists of a proposal to create an improved commuter lounge on campus at Rutgers University. The authors cite multiple approaches that other universities have offered their commuters. There is the exclusivity factor, which is that the lounge would be restricted to commuters. The current lounge, known as "Commuter Lounge," at the Douglas Campus Center is open to everyone and people who are not commuters also use the space. The authors suggest following Stony Brook University's model of requiring students to swipe their student ID to enter the lounge.

Having a quiet space to get sleep and rest is another approach in creating a commuter lounge. The authors point to Miami University in Ohio which has a designated area for commuters to sleep in, separate from other parts of the commuter center. Mt Hood Community College takes on another approach; they provide a hostel with showering and sleeping facilities for commuters. The hostel has 12 bunk beds for women and 12 bunk beds for men. Kent State University reserves four residence hall rooms for commuters or provides hotel accommodations if the residence hall rooms are not available.

With these other facilities in mind, Lato et al. (2012), suggest a resting center exclusive to commuters. This space would include 40 chair beds, an ID card reader at the entrance, outlets for charging electronic devices, and a small kitchen with a microwave. The room will be monitored by staff to ensure that students stay within their allocated time on the chair beds. Maintenance and cleaning of the space would be managed by the Douglas Campus Center staff. The authors end on example proposal letters written to university administration asking for a commuter lounge with these amenities.

Conclusion

In my review of existing literature, there is a dearth of research on the commuter student, particularly with regard to the design of space for commuters. Additionally, while commuters do come up with the few studies that exist, rarely are housing insecure students or homeless students brought into the dialogue. "My Commute is Hell" (2019) found that many students who face housing insecurity or homelessness also experience long-distance commutes. This intersectionality of commuting and housing insecurity is not explored enough. Additionally, there is little consensus around what defines a commuter. The idea of subcultures within commuters show that commuters can be defined in various ways and have different life circumstances which can affect their needs.

The case studies presented show examples of commuter programs and resources for students across universities in the US, but in my research I found there are few articles or research on existing commuter programs. Given that commuters tend to make up a majority of university students, as is the case at UCLA with 67 percent of all students identifying as a commuter (UCLA State of the Commute, 2012), there needs to be more resources dedicated to this population. Among these case studies, some of the resources appear outdated or not updated. And while there are services to assist these students, there is little written about in terms of space and design. Rather, it appears most services for commuter students are centered around programs over space.

UCLA BruinHub is unique in that it recognizes the role that design and space can play in addition to services and programs. This is demonstrated by the five sleeping pods in BruinHub, something that other commuter lounges do not have. These pods allow students to rest, sleep, or work inside them. This design points to an understanding of commuters' needs. I believe that the framework of "campus ecology" which Weiss (2014) mentioned in their study, along with an understanding of the subcultures among commuters and a formal definition of commuters, can greatly inform the evaluation of BruinHub.

One of the goals of BruinHub includes the destigmatization of being a commuter and/or housing insecure and the importance of design in doing so. BruinHub was inspired by the intersection of housing insecurity and commuting. What sets BruinHub apart from the commuter programs mentioned in the case studies is the extensive evaluation process that other schools may not be doing. The staff behind BruinHub emphasize the importance of tailoring design to the specific needs of people over conventional design.

Additionally, the evaluation of BruinHub is supported through the lens of urban planning and architecture as opposed to the studies and articles in the literature review which tend to come from education and leadership studies (Weiss, 2014; Velasquez, 2021). However, existing commuters have common experiences accessing and using commuter spaces. As we shall see, BruinHub struggles with similar issues, such as benefiting from having staff in the space, non-commuters using the space, lack of institutional recognition, and a lack of data collection on commuters. These are challenges that will be further addressed in Chapter 4: Findings and Chapter 5: Conclusion.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

Understanding students' and staff's experiences with BruinHub is at the core of this research project. Therefore, this project uses qualitative methods backed by descriptive statistics to answer the following research questions:

1. Does BruinHub serve the intended target audience of long-distance commuters, including commuters who experience some form of housing insecurity?
2. What changes to the current and proposed BruinHub program(s) would further benefit the intended audience?

The goal of this study is to evaluate the operation of BruinHub a year after its opening. To achieve this, one-on-one interviews were conducted, which are backed by data from BruinHub registration form, and on-site observations.

Data Collection

Passholder Registration Data

Data was collected through the BruinHub Passholder registration form, which every student who signed up for a passholder account was asked to fill out. The students fill out the passholder registration each quarter in order to be eligible to make a BruinHub pod reservation. The data being analyzed begins in Fall 2021 and ends in Winter 2023, separated by the UCLA quarter system. The passholder survey included 25 questions about the students' commutes, housing, financial state, food insecurity, and demographics (Appendix A).

The screenshot shows a registration form for BruinHub Passholders. At the top is a blue navigation bar with the UCLAREC logo and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, the form is divided into four sections, each with a blue title and a yellow 'REQUIRED' label:

- Student Commuter:** A question 'Are you a student commuter?' with radio button options for 'Yes' and 'No'.
- Commute Text:** A question 'Where are you commuting from? (enter your zipcode)' followed by a large empty text input field.
- Mode of Transportation:** A question 'How do you most often commute to campus?' followed by a dropdown menu currently showing '--SELECT--'.
- Commute Duration:** A question 'How long is your total commute time (both ways) on a typical school day to campus and from campus?' followed by a dropdown menu currently showing '--SELECT--'.

Figure 4. BruinHub Passholder Registration

Student Interviews

Outreach for research interviews was conducted via a digital flyer (Appendix B) on UCLA’s Bruin Commuters Instagram social media channel and physical flyers which were posted at BruinHub in the John Wooden Center. Students were also recruited for interviews at a commuter breakfast event hosted by Campus Life. The flyers encouraged students to take an eligibility survey (Appendix C) to see if they would qualify for the study and also offered a \$25 Target gift card as compensation. The survey included questions related to demographic information, their commute experience, and how often they used BruinHub.

As part of the eligibility, I screened for students who were commuters, who had a certain commute length, and fulfilled other characteristics, as stated below. A total of 58 respondents were recorded on the survey. Out of those respondents, 11 interviews were conducted and each interview ranged from 30 to 45 minutes on Zoom. Participant recruitment ended after the eleventh student interview as I reached data saturation, which occurs when new information is not likely to be generated from additional interview participants. One-on-one interviews were selected as the main form of research due to being able to dive deep and understand a student’s experience. Interviews took place over the course of a few weeks in late February and early March 2023.

Students that fulfilled a variety of these characteristics were selected to interview. These characteristics include:

- Long distance commuters (60+ minute commutes one way)
- Housing insecure or homeless students
- BruinHub passholders
- Non-BruinHub passholders
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students

The characteristics of each of the interviewee participants are shown below:

Table 1. Study Population Characteristics

Year at UCLA	BruinHub Usage (per week)	Commute Length (one-way)	Mode of transport	Experienced housing insecurity	Pronouns	Race/Ethnicity

3	Never	90+ min	Car	No	She/her	Japanese
3	1-3 times	< 30 min	Car	No	She/her	Latina
PhD	< 1	30-60 min	Car	No	She/her	Middle Eastern
3	Never	60-90 min	Car	No	--	--
1	4+ times	60-90 min	Public transit	No	She/her	Latina
4	4+ times	60-90 min	Car, Public transit	No	He/him	Latino
PhD	1-3 times	60-90 min	Public transit, Walk	No	He/him	Bolivian, Native American
PhD	1-3 times	60-90 min	Car	Yes	She/her	Black
4	4+ times	90+ min	Car	Yes	He/him	Mexican, Native American
4	1-3 times	90+ min	Public transit	Yes	She/her	Latinx
4	1-3 times	90+ min	Car, Public transit	Yes	She/her	Mexican

The group includes 3 graduate students and 8 undergraduate students. Two of the students are commuters who never use BruinHub although they have one-way commutes of 60-90 minutes and more than 90 minutes. Five participants have one-way commutes lasting 60-90 minutes and four participants have one-way commutes over 90 minutes long. Two participants are BruinHub users with shorter one-way commutes around 30 minutes long. Four participants have experienced some form of housing insecurity during their time at UCLA. Six students rely on public transit as their mode of transportation. All of the participants who chose to identify their race or ethnicity were people of color.

Staff and Administration Interviews

Staff interviews were conducted with the goal of understanding the staff perspective and how they might respond to student feedback. Four staff interviews were conducted in total. Two interviews were with staff from Campus Life, one interview with former Campus Life staff, and one interview with staff from UCLA Recreation. The roles they embody include: the FITwell Program Director at UCLA Recreation who manages the facilities and maintenance of BruinHub, the Director of Campus Life who oversees BruinHub, and the current and former Program Coordinators at Campus Life who are behind the administrative and programming side of BruinHub.

The staff were recruited through contacts from cityLAB. The interviews lasted from 30 to 45 minutes and took place on Zoom. The interview questions (Appendix D) consisted of challenges they face, successes with the BruinHub, and their responses to what students mention in their interviews. Interviews took place in April 2023.

Site Observations

Observations were conducted in order to observe behaviors and ways that students use BruinHub and its amenities. A total of three observations were conducted in BruinHub.

Observations ranged from 30 to 60 minutes in length and consisted of how students utilize amenities such as the microwave, fridge, pods, and lockers. Some students were approached and asked about the task they were doing.

Data Analysis

For the passholder registration form, data from the form was populated in an Excel spreadsheet format. The data was cleaned up and descriptive statistics were created within Excel. One correlation that cityLAB and I wanted to focus on was also drawn out from the data. This was the correlation between housing insecurity/homelessness and commute time, to discover if any patterns exist.

I took notes and recorded videos of the student and staff interviews on Zoom for transcriptions. After all interviews were completed, analysis took place in March and April 2023. I looked at student interviews first, and patterns were identified and grouped together using a coding process. Similar patterns and interview quotes led to a finding. Eventually, overarching themes were drawn out from the findings. Findings that were similar in nature and could be grouped together fell under a single theme. I repeated the same process for the staff interviews. Staff interviews offered background and context as well as a different perspective to what the students mentioned in their interviews. Thus, I created findings and themes for the staff

interviews with the student interview themes in mind. I checked in often with my clients at cityLAB to revise and iterate on the themes. The findings and themes are represented in Tables 4, 5, and 6 in the Chapter 4: Findings.

Limitations

There are several existing limitations among the methods employed. On the passholder registration form, terms such as commuter, housing insecurity, and financial insecurity were not defined. The questions containing these terms were up to student interpretation.

The question about the commute length was also unclear and not consistent with the one-way commute times that previous studies have followed. The question was posed as “How long is your total commute time (both ways) on a typical school day to campus and from campus?” It appears to be asking for the total commute time, but it may have been interpreted as one-way as well based on the wording. The answers that students can choose from are different from categories in “My Commute is Hell” (2021) and UCLA Transportation’s State of the Commute (2021). They include: under 30 minutes, 30-60 minutes, 60-90 minutes, 90-120 minutes, and more than 120 minutes. This inconsistency may skew the results in the Chapter 4: Findings section. For this study, the question will be interpreted as a one-way commute length, as many students’ home locations did not match a total commute length when checked on Google Maps.

Another limitation is the COVID-19 pandemic which began in 2020. BruinHub opened in the midst of the pandemic in Fall 2021. UCLA shut down in-person operations in Winter 2022 and moved classroom instruction to online remote learning due to a surge of COVID cases in Los Angeles County. The findings collected from the passholder registration form may be skewed around this time frame, as precautions were taken around in-person activities among students, faculty, and staff.

Chapter 4: Findings

Passholder Registration Data

Several of the questions and responses most related to this study are depicted in the table below along with corresponding graphs. BruinHub opened during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, which may affect the results:

Passholder Survey Question	Fall 2021	Winter 2022	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Winter 2023
Student Type					
Undergraduate	43%	78%	77%	82%	82%
Graduate	57%	22%	23%	18%	18%
Identifies as a commuter	60%	68%	65%	70%	71%
Financial insecurity in the last six months	28%	38%	36%	31%	40%
Homelessness in the last six months	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Housing insecurity in the last six months	8%	11%	7%	11%	10%
Slept overnight on or near campus instead of returning home as a result of commute	18%	32%	29%	28%	26%
Places on or near campus for sleeping overnight					
An acquaintance's house		54%	57%	44%	50%
Campus building, not including dorm		12%	10%	16%	20%
Hotel or hostel		10%	5%	6%	3%
My car or friend's car		25%	28%	35%	27%
Length of commute to and from campus					
< 30 minutes	38%	28%	29%	23%	20%
30-60 minutes	22%	21%	22%	22%	23%
60-90 minutes	12%	18%	17%	19%	20%
90-120 minutes	15%	20%	19%	21%	18%
> 120 minutes	12%	13%	14%	15%	18%
Gender					
Male	62%	30%	28%	27%	27%
Female	35%	68%	69%	70%	72%

Nonbinary/Genderqueer/Transgender	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%
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A few of the statistics in the table are depicted visually using graphs, as seen below.

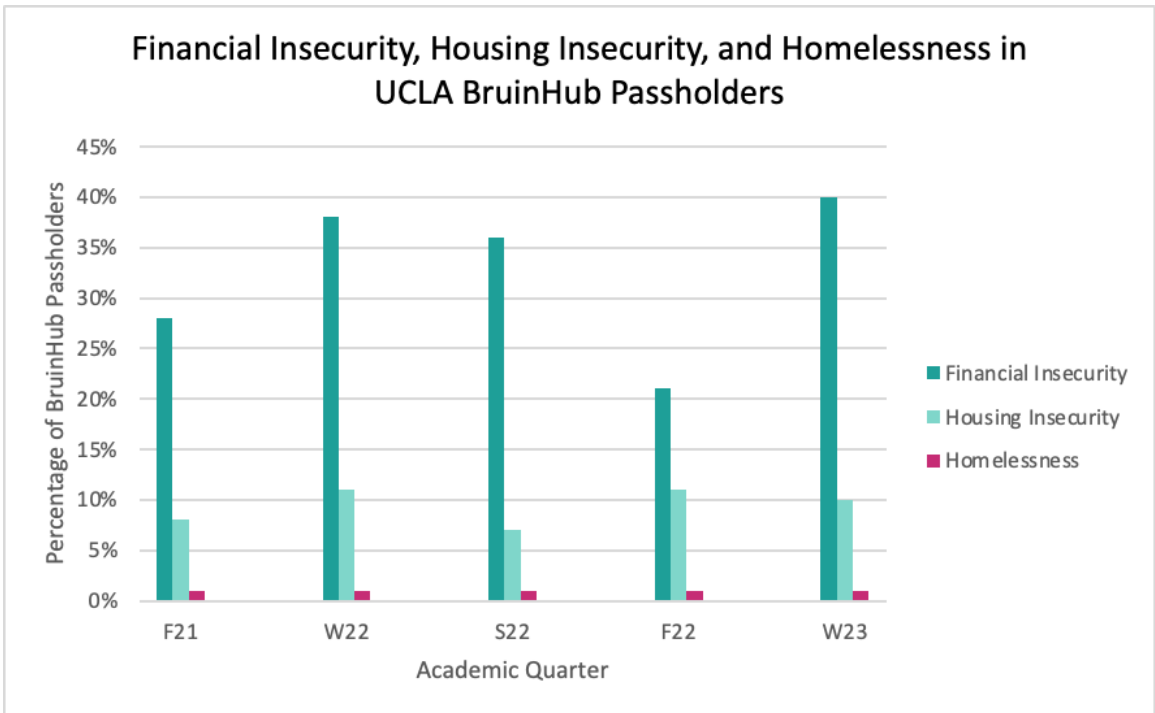


Figure 5. Bar Graph of Various Precarities that BruinHub Passholders Experience

Students experience financial insecurity at greater levels compared to housing insecurity and homelessness. Financial insecurity dipped in Fall 2022. Rates of housing insecurity and homelessness tend to stay consistent throughout each quarter.

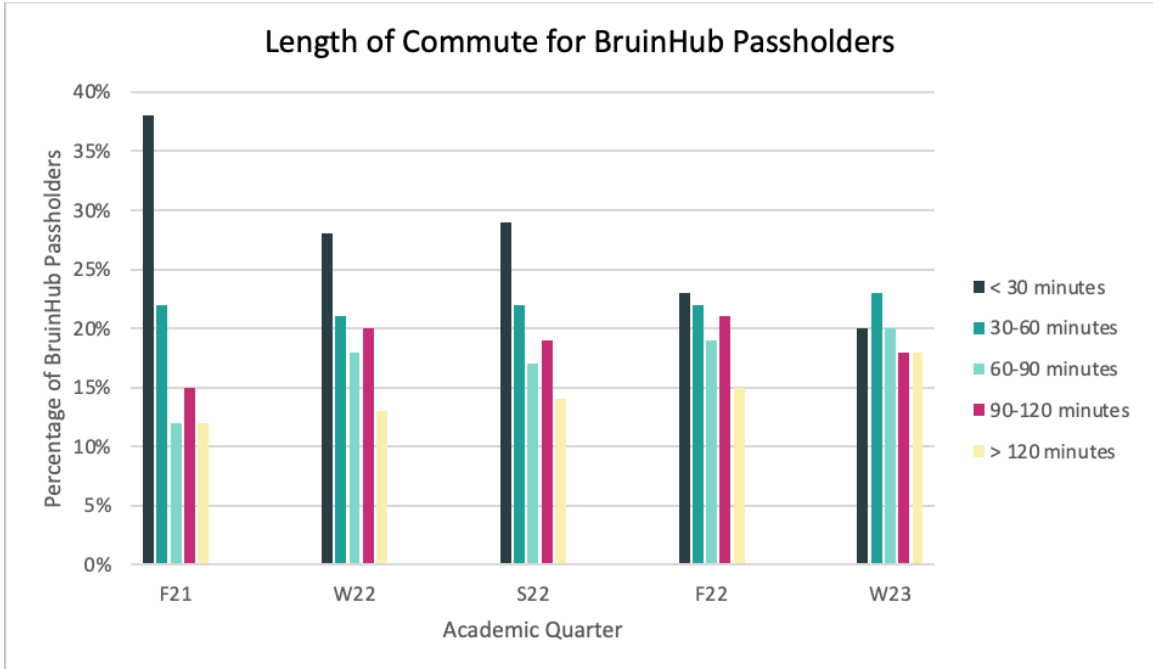


Figure 6. Bar Graph of Commute Length that BruinHub Passholders Experience

Students with one-way commutes under 30 minutes made up a large portion of BruinHub users during the first quarter BruinHub opened. They have begun to decrease over the following quarters. Students with one-way commutes of 60-90 minutes, 90-120 minutes and over 120 minutes have grown since the opening quarter. Students with one-way commutes of 30-60 minutes have stayed relatively consistent across the quarters. Students from each commute length quarter are almost equally represented in Fall 2022 and Winter 2023 compared to previous quarters.

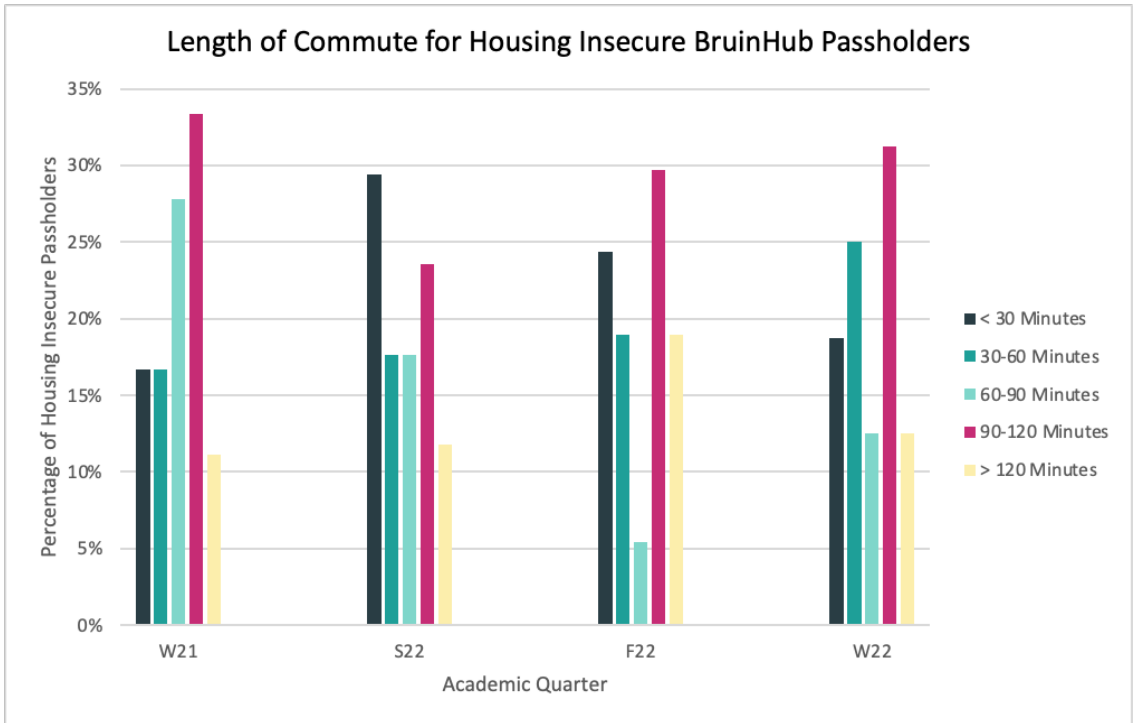


Figure 7. Bar Graph of Commute Length that BruinHub Passholders Facing Housing Insecurity Experience

For each quarter, commute length tends to be around 90-120 minutes one-way for students who have or are currently facing housing insecurity. An exception is in Spring 2022, where a commute length of less than 30 minutes one-way was most common in housing insecure students, followed by those with a 90-120 minute commute one-way.

Student Interviews

Nine themes emerged from student interviews. These themes are categorized into two sections: Commuter Circumstances and Commuter Experiences with BruinHub. The Commuter Circumstances section focuses on the overall experience students have around being a commuter. The Commuter Experiences with BruinHub section relates to experiences that the students have specifically with the BruinHub space and programming. The themes are as follows:

Section 1: Commuter Circumstances

- Cost
- Scheduling
- Belonging and Coping
- Housing insecurity and Sleeping in Car

Section 2: Commuter Experiences with BruinHub

- What is Working with the Space and Programming
 - Design and Comfortability
 - Amenities
- What Needs Improvement with the Space and Programming
 - Reservation System
 - Storage
 - Commuter Priority
 - Overnight Access
 - Spatial Attributes
- Reasons that Commuters do not use BruinHub
- Bigger Ideas that Students Suggest

Table 3. Section 1: Commuter Circumstances

<p>Theme 1: Cost</p>	<p>Students choose to commute because it is expensive to live near campus.</p> <p><i>[I commute because of] financial reasons. I come from a low income household. Going to college seemed infeasible for me. Ran the numbers, I can't dorm. - E, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>[The reason I commute is] mainly financial. I'm lucky enough to have a comfortable housing situation with my parents. I don't pay rent or anything basically. I take advantage of that. - T, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p>Even though commuting is cheaper than living near campus, there are still financial costs that come with it. Some students take transit over driving due to cost as well.</p> <p><i>This economy is why I hate coming [to campus]. I pay \$15.45 a day for parking. Plus gas prices, plus living on a stipend. It's stupidly expensive to come here. - H, PhD student</i></p> <p><i>I use public transit, I do have my license but buying a car isn't accessible. - J, 3rd year undergrad</i></p>
<p>Theme 2: Scheduling</p>	<p>Commuters juggle personal time management and scheduling constraints due to commuting</p>

	<p><i>I realize people who don't commute have a lot more time. That's a cost. You don't need to get to school, you're already there. An hour of being productive.</i> - T, 3rd year undergrad</p> <p><i>Three days a week I go to campus and everything is scheduled to be optimized. Having fun doesn't fit anywhere into that.</i> - T, 3rd year undergrad</p> <p>Use of BruinHub and other spaces changes each quarter depending on class schedule/location</p> <p><i>I'm currently not using [BruinHub]. Since schedules change each quarter, it's hard to stay consistent using BruinHub.</i> - N, 3rd year undergrad</p> <p><i>My first quarter everything was online so I didn't use [BruinHub]. But everytime I schedule a class that has mandatory in-person I'll use it. This quarter it's Tuesdays and Thursdays.</i> - J, 4th year undergrad</p> <p>Commuting impacts students' sleep schedules and may cause a lack of sleep.</p> <p><i>I have to be pretty scheduled. I'm waking up to take the 6am bus, I wake up at 5am. Have to have a good sleep schedule. Sometimes I'm exhausted from waking up.</i> - D, PhD student</p> <p><i>There's pressure to take advantage of the time while commuting. I usually have work to do after I leave home. The later I start my work, the later I can go to sleep.</i> - J, 4th year undergrad</p>
<p>Theme 3: Belonging and Coping</p>	<p>There is a lack of sense of belonging for most commuters due to the time spent on commuting.</p> <p><i>I don't feel like a big part of the campus. I'll drive home right after class and miss the social aspect like enjoying UCLA as I otherwise would. This year I joined clubs to be more involved before I graduate. That's helped a lot.</i> - J, 4th year undergrad</p> <p><i>I have noticed that when I do have to commute more, it's more difficult to see people. You miss out on things. You feel more disconnected. I struggle to feel a sense of belonging because I'm mostly here to do schoolwork. The earlier I leave campus, the better to get the bus and leave traffic. I'm not trying to stay here and socialize. Better to get home earlier than later and not be on the bus for a long time. It is difficult to go to events. The lack of belonging comes when you're not connecting with people and vice versa. Making friends as a commuter is hard.</i> - T, 3rd year undergrad</p>

	<p>Students appreciate the commuter breakfast/lunch events and want to see more of them. It's an opportunity for not only free food, but to meet/make friends.</p> <p><i>It didn't feel forced to go, very free and you could make friends on your own, not like [forced to] make friends right now. ...A lot of us don't have a place to get to know each other. But everyone is cool. I made friends at breakfast events. - C, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>I didn't expect being a commuter would be an identity or label that resonates with me. I didn't expect it to have such a huge impact on time I'm spending and how I navigate being a student on campus. The commuter breakfast was the first on-campus event I have been to. - T, 3rd year undergrad</i></p>
<p>Theme 4: Housing Insecurity and Sleeping in Car</p>	<p>The students that sleep in their car the most have the longest commutes. It may be sleeping overnight or for napping.</p> <p><i>Usually I have to leave at 4 or 5 am. I prefer that or there's a lot of traffic. It's 2 hrs and 20 min with no traffic. I sleep in my car until 9:30 am. I will get ready in my car. Sometimes I leave with my PJs on and change in the car. Parking Lot 4 is where I park. Inside, I can sleep there and put my car in the corner and not be disturbed. - D, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>I'll park on [redacted - street name]. Most places don't allow overnight parking. I found on Reddit places to park overnight at UCLA. I don't think I've slept anywhere else aside from there. I think Westwood's safe. Usually there's students walking around. I have window shades in the front and around. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p>Commuters who currently sleep in their car would find safe parking useful</p> <p><i>I would use [safe parking]. Sometimes I don't wanna drive back or ask my mom to sleep at her house every day. I have slept in my car but not on purpose. It was not a safe parking lot, I could've gotten kidnapped. - D, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Yeah I would definitely [use safe parking]. Right now at [redacted - street name], it's quite a ways walking. I probably wouldn't use it if there's an extra cost. On Thursday mornings, there is street sweeping and I have to park at campus for \$7 a day. I don't have a quarter permit. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p>

Table 4. Section 2: Commuter Experiences with BruinHub

<p>Theme 6: What is Working with BruinHub and its Programming</p>	<p>Students use a variety of the amenities provided at BruinHub and enjoy using them.</p> <p><i>I go there and do my homework, warm up my lunches, and sometimes take a nap. I put lunch in the fridge when I arrive on campus. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>[I use the] refrigerator, pods, and charge my phone. I nap and eat there. I don't use the lockers. I see a lot of people use them. On average I spend maybe an hour or sometimes 4-5 hours there. I'll go in between classes. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Stay at BH for 2 hours at a time. Relax, store items. Sometimes I do assignments and readings. Go there even though it is out of the way for classes. - E, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p>Pods are used resting and napping, but also doing work in. They are designed well and feel cozy.</p> <p><i>Days I'm here are long. I leave at 9pm. After our meeting I'm going to go there, answer emails, meet on zoom, grade. Feels cozy and insular. - H, PhD student</i></p> <p><i>I loved how it had connective cords within the pod. And the little lamp. Feels comfortable to use, feels like you're at home. - N, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>I use BH to sleep between classes. - D, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p>Lockers are useful since commuters often have to carry a lot of items to campus. Lockers help not only public transit commuters, but also those that drive so they don't have to go back to their car.</p> <p><i>I use the lockers almost every day. As a commuter you carry a lot of things - chargers, snacks, an extra sweater. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>The lockers are really helpful. If I have a break in between classes, I'll put my backpack in there and walk around. I don't have to go back to my car to get stuff or if I'm on the bus, bringing all that is uncomfortable. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p>
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<p>Theme 7a: What Needs Improvement, Reservation System</p>	<p>The reservation system is not enforced. Students have had to kick others out if their reserved pod is occupied.</p> <p><i>I know that's annoying for other people who are waiting for a reservation. It would be so awkward to ask people to get up. I've had to do it. They get mad. I've had to where I let it slide and I'm not as sleepy. If I am sleepy I kick them out. / I've always used the reservation system. A lot of people don't. I'm not sure if that's allowed. It's very uncomfortable kicking them out.- D, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>I definitely use the reservation system. I notice non-commuting students tend to take up a pod. But if you have a reservation you can kick them out. The reservation allows me to get a spot. I like the reservation system. I have had to kick someone out. Show them I have the reservation. Everyone's been polite about it. - D, PhD student</i></p> <p><i>I am a passholder. But I find the reservations aren't respected in the pods. If one's empty people just go in. if you have a reservation it doesn't count unless you want to kick someone out which nobody wants to do. Has happened, but just leave. I don't bother making reservations anymore. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p>
<p>Theme 7b: What Needs Improvement, Storage</p>	<p>Some of the lockers often stop working. Some students cannot get a locker because they are all taken up and need to wait for one to open up.</p> <p><i>[The lockers] definitely get used up by non-commuters. Sometimes I wait while working and someone will open a locker. Lockers will jam a bit, where you put the code and [with the] weird locking mechanism, it registers the code wrong. I have to ask the front desk to unlock it with a key. - D, PhD Student</i></p> <p><i>A third of the lockers don't work. I use the lockers even if they don't lock. By 9am the lockers are full. But you'll see someone at the gym getting their gym shoes. I wish there were more lockers. There have been times I couldn't drop anything off or have to wait a little bit to see if anyone gets their stuff out. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes it's not just the lockers that are taken but they are locked and open. There will be like 5-8 like that. Just having more would be nice. More of them or making sure they are usable and not just locked and open. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p>

<p>Theme 7c: What Needs Improvement, Commuter Priority</p>	<p>Some students believe BruinHub should be exclusive to commuters, whereas other students think there shouldn't be a division but rather create more resources/amenities for all to use.</p> <p><i>I don't think there should be a fight with it, for both parties. I don't think it needs to be more exclusive. As long as there's enough for everybody. People who dorm also like to take a nap in the pods. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>[I would like] more sleeping pods and more lockers. People who dorm here or use the gym, also use the lockers. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>[BruinHub] is in the middle of Wooden Center so I feel like not only commuters use it. Like people who are working out in the gym and want a place to sit. I don't think there's a way to verify if you're a commuter. Be more exclusively for commuters. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p>
<p>Theme 7e: What Needs Improvement, Overnight Access</p>	<p>Overnight access accommodations would greatly benefit commuters who have scheduling constraints as well as housing insecure students.</p> <p><i>I did like the idea of the overnight thing. That's always a thought in the back of my mind. Sometimes I'm working on campus and realize I have to catch the 8pm bus. There is an alleviation of being able to set up overnight. - D, PhD Student</i></p> <p><i>I wish there were a way to use the pods overnight. So students wouldn't have to sleep in their cars. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p>
<p>Theme 7f: What Needs Improvement, Spatial Attributes</p>	<p>Students find that enforcing or creating a quiet zone would be beneficial, as well as options for more privacy in the pods. More separation of quiet and social spaces and a bigger space overall is desired.</p> <p><i>Creating more of a quiet zone. I would love it if there were more on campus. Clearly a thing that people want and need. More of it. - H, PhD student</i></p> <p><i>[I would like] more sleeping pods and more lockers. People who dorm here or use the gym, also use the lockers. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>The more privacy that can be added, like the screen/net in pod. I wish it was blocked off more. More of a curtain. I wish UCLA expanded it to the workspace area. Or as big as the game room. It's such a small space. - N, 3rd year undergrad</i></p>

	<p><i>The thing that annoys me is people who are talking. It's clearly designed for resting. It's for people to nap. But it's not like you want someone policing the place. - H, PhD student</i></p>
<p>Theme 8: Reasons Commuters do not use BruinHub</p>	<p>Reasons for why commuters don't use BruinHub include: couldn't find the space, unaware of resources, utilizing other spaces (libraries), BruinHub not near classes or doesn't work with schedule if classes are back to back.</p> <p><i>I knew about BruinHub because I follow the "bruincommuters" instagram. But I couldn't find it. It was scary walking in. I obviously didn't belong in the gym and tried to find it quickly. I couldn't find it. - C, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>I never heard of BruinHub before the commuter breakfast or before signing up for this survey. I was unaware of resources. - N, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>[I might use] the lockers. I get my backpack which has my entire life in it and a lunch box. I have two bags, so it looks like I'm going on a hiking trail. - T, 3rd year undergrad</i></p>
<p>Theme 9: Big Ideas Students Suggest</p>	<p>Commuters want ways to connect with others, such as a tool that helps connect them with other commuters who live near them in order to carpool. There is also a desire for more commuter social events and more advertising/outreach about the commuter events.</p> <p><i>Maybe a way to get to know another commuter for carpool purposes, a way to find someone with a similar commute to you. That would help to have commuters talk to each other, and make the commute a little better. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Would be cute if there were a dance event, something nice for commuters. A lot of us don't have a place to get to know each other. - C, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>More advertising of programs like this. From commuters I have talked to, I have the impression that a lot of these resources are not well advertised and not put on blast like other events. I never see flyers about commuters breakfast going on. Have to go looking for these events. - N, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p>Commuters want enrollment priority due to their scheduling constraints.</p>

	<p><i>Giving priority to commuters when it comes to enrollment passes because commuters have a lot of different factors to consider when creating their schedules. A schedule that would ensure their success as a student. - E, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Commuters should have more of a priority enrollment. It's very difficult, especially for freshman. A lot of my times that would go with my commuter schedule got filled up. There would be an 8am class left and that's not ideal for someone that takes the bus. The university doesn't prioritize commuters and that shows up through enrollment. - J, 1st year undergrad</i></p> <p>Commuters want more resources to help with housing and food.</p> <p><i>Free housing for students. - B, PhD student</i></p> <p><i>Be able to get food without worrying about money. - D, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Expanding free food resources. - H, PhD student</i></p> <p><i>Personal lockers. Another microwave. - J, 4th year undergrad</i></p> <p>Commuters want more transportation services and subsidies to help alleviate the costs of commuting.</p> <p><i>If money wasn't an issue, no more parking permits - free parking. - T, 3rd year undergrad</i></p> <p><i>Grants to alleviate costs of commuting. If 30+ miles, subsidy for parking rates because you're already paying so much for gas. - H, PhD student</i></p>
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Staff and Administration Interviews

Three themes emerged from the staff interviews, which include: Improvements for the space and programming, staff constraints and as related to student feedback and what is working. The improvements theme is divided up into three parts for clarity and organization. The themes are as follows:

Staff and Administration Themes

- Improvements for the Space and Programming
 - Spatial Improvements
 - Data Collection and Sharing of Information
 - Programmatic Improvements
- Staff Constraints to Student Feedback
- What is Working

Table 5. Staff Interview Themes

<p>Theme 1a: Improvements for the Space and Programming, Spatial Improvements</p>	<p>Staff would like to see a bigger space for BruinHub, improving its location and usage of the current space, and expanding hubs throughout campus.</p> <p><i>Our vision is to have a community center. Lots of students are quiet in there, studying and napping. We really have been wanting to use BruinHub as a programming space. We don't want to interfere with students being able to take a nap without being bothered. There is no differentiation between communal space and library quiet hours. Staff</i></p> <p><i>With the location of the hub, right now it's in Wooden Center and to some that's a middle ground for it to be at. I've heard from students that they wish there were more hubs in North Campus. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>More hubs across campus. I would definitely want overnight. I would staff all the BruinHubs so we could have more conversations, data points, and engagement with students. Lockers would be better. More power bars, snacks. I would have blankets. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>If there's nap opportunities, that should be separate from engagement opportunities. A quiet space and an active space. There could be more amenities in the space - aromatherapy, headphones, better sleep pods. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>One other thing that is a challenge is the intention of the space - when you want a quiet zone, but it's not in a quiet area. Programming within the space is not quiet. The space is advertised to be multifaceted but some of those goals conflict. The space isn't large enough or designed for them to coexist. It's</i></p>
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	<p><i>a small space for so many different purposes and some of those purposes can conflict. Can they coexist? Absolutely but timing needs to be mapped out better or the way it's advertised. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>It would be really great to have different BruinHubs throughout the campus. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>It was a little odd in terms of how how people ended up using the space. Some people wanted to take study breaks and rest. Some people wanted to study, some people wanted to talk. But when all of it was in the same space. It was just hard to do all those things. I think if we had a bigger space we could designate an area for building community, an area for studying, and perhaps quietly talking if you're studying with a partner and then for resting. - Staff</i></p>
<p>Theme 1b: Improvements for the Space and Programming, Data Collection and Sharing of Information</p>	<p>More data collection and identification of commuters and housing insecure students are needed. Currently, there is no explicit recognition from the university towards the commuter student population.</p> <p><i>The university doesn't have a way for students to self-identify as a commuter student. If we want to see the commuter program develop and be able to track important data points on it, it's going to take an university step to identify commuter students. Then we can say this is the hard number of commuters on campus. It would allow us to do more efforts and endeavors. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>Something that could push us further is wrap around services which starts with identifying students to whatever reason. Developing a better way for us as a uni to capture who those students are. It's difficult for us to keep track of who is a commuter student, bc uni doesn't ask them to identify that. Trying to figure out identification of students better. More wrap around services to help those students. There's ECRT, case management but what throws a wrench is the ID portion in the beginning bc we don't have a streamlined way to capture. To built up their toolkit and get them out of their situations [housing insecurity and homelessness]. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>And the other second challenge was how do we define student commuters? Is it just people who don't live in the residence housing? But then that wouldn't include those who live in Westwood or on Gayley. We ended up creating a definition just</i></p>

	<p><i>for our office in terms of what we wanted to focus on. So defining commuters was a challenge. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>Students that commute always felt like the university didn't know they existed. They are a very resilient student population, because they go through hell to get to campus. I mean by the time they get to campus they've already lived a whole life versus students who walk down from the residence falls - a very different experience to start their day. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We haven't really been able to get a solid number on those that experience housing insecurity, which would help trying to figure out if there is a need for [overnight access]. And to figure out what we can do on campus to find a space or remodel spaces we have cleared for such accommodations. - Staff</i></p> <p>More awareness of resources towards commuters is needed via marketing and outreach</p> <p><i>I think the university needs to realize that a big part of their population commutes and they need to create more things beyond just a BruinHub for them, even in communication. I remember when COVID happened and the experience residence hall students had versus the commuter students in terms of communication on when they came back to campus wasn't always clear. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>[To improve the reservation system] Maybe there's actually a whole marketing blast around campus with a QR code to sign up to be a BruinHub member at all bus stops and parking lots. Like just very simple, really cool marketing. It can be like "Do you want to go to place for commuters frequent, and can study and rest? Sign up to be a BruinHub member" and just like a QR code." - Staff</i></p> <p><i>[On students not using overnight access] There's something like 20,000 student commuters. Do they actually know that there's a 24 hour place during midterms? I don't think so. I think that's something that would be used if there was better awareness. - Staff</i></p>
<p>Theme 1c: Improvements for the Space and Programming, Programmatic Improvements</p>	<p>Other improvements to implement involve the BruinHub passholder survey, locker issues, enrollment priority for commuters and the commuter buddy program.</p>

	<p><i>One of my goals is to work towards getting students priority access to registration. Students with dependents have access to priority registration. I've heard feedback from commuter students - schedules are so dependent on what classes they get. Some of them get caught in coming to campus 5x a week. If university could give special consideration to commuters, to give them an edge to get classes to fit their ideal schedule. It would be uni acknowledging their presence. Realizing and giving validity to commuter student struggle. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We had a commuter buddy program that I thought was great to establish. But money wise and staffing wise, it is hard to put together. You need to make sure that there is funding and staff to be able to coordinate something of that nature. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>The passholder survey itself is extensive. We wanted to gather as much information as possible about the students to sign up. But it also deters people from signing up because it's question after question after question. I don't have data on this, but I would imagine just knowing how busy students are they are probably like, I can't do this right now and they don't come back to fill it out. - C</i></p> <p><i>I've heard people say they have difficulties with the lockers. One solution is - I believe the lockers are different from the ones in the locker room/rec system. They operate on a coin that you use. I think in the future, reevaluating the style of locker. Right now they are not as user friendly. Right now there's no set schedule for someone to check on the lockers every day or night. If a student has difficulty, the best next step would be to stop by a rec staff (front desk) to assist them. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We can check on the lockers more. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>[For the lockers jamming,] as far as communication goes, that's us so we need to show students. It has to be user error or a defunct product. - Staff</i></p>
<p>Theme 2: Staff Constraints as Related to Student Feedback</p>	<p>Staff want to see overnight access offered throughout the quarter but do not receive feedback nor a strong turnout from students when it is offered (Weeks 5 and 10) and also do not have permits to do so.</p> <p><i>My thought is if there is a need, we should do everything we possibly can. We have yet to encounter student feedback that they need an overnight space. It's been campus partners that</i></p>

	<p><i>reach out regarding students that need it (interestingly enough it's been housing partners for students facing issues like roommates) we haven't really been able to get a solid number experience housing insecurity. Which would help trying to figure out if there is a need for it. And figure out what we can do on campus to find a space or remodel spaces we have cleared for such accommodations. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>There was a delay in obtaining permits for sleeping in that space. Because that was not done we're not allowed. What we can do is have extended hours on occasion. Week 5+10. We have to remember that all of our rec centers are student-run. It's very difficult to get our staff to work when they need to sleep and study. Our managers end up staffing it but that's difficult too. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We staff these overnights with students or with use and there are times when nobody would show up.hey have to make the reservation by 9pm and check in by 11pm. Sometimes we would cancel overnight and they wouldn't cancel online. So now they are there and we don't have staff to stay over. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We did overnight, people made reservations, and they didn't show. For whatever reason, they don't show. But they pay staff to be in the building overnight. Amber has to recruit and hire. If nobody shows up, they still have to pay people. It was fiscally confusing. - Staff</i></p> <p>Three out of four staff believe BruinHub should be open for all. The reservation system operates as a way to give priority to commuters.</p> <p><i>We've been mindful about it being a space designed for commuter needs in mind, not just for commuters...It's been a tight rope to walk because facilities are so limited in size. Commuter student frustration is there. They don't always know if the people there are commuter students. The space is so small, the first of its kind. Students have a glimpse of this space and want to preserve it for themselves. I don't think it should be exclusionary. To address accessibility, the easiest way to address is to expand. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We need to go back to the intent of the building. John Wooden Center has his name on it. Wooden said a building with my name on it should be open to all students. If the space is full, we've created ways to give certain people priority like the</i></p>
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	<p><i>passholder reservation for pods. Creating a priority system in that space is important. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>I believe it should be exclusive to commuters. I've always believed that. But the only way to make that exclusive is to have staff there to monitor the space. I would love to have seen some sort of staffing at the BH at all times, so that we could get more information about who actually using it. You can get really accurate data on what the needs are the students using it so that the people who use it are the people it was intentionally designed for. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>I don't think that's UCLA way. I think UCLA is a really accessible and open space for everybody. I don't actually know how many people from passholders are residents. There is no strong data point. I do think somewhere like Strathmore will lend itself more to exclusivity. - Staff</i></p> <p>Staff believe that the reservation system is not effective and may need improvements, however budget is a main constraint.</p> <p><i>I think we shouldn't have a reservation system. It's not the right place. Students don't know how to talk to other students. They don't want to go downstairs to tattletale. There's no monitor. Because of that it isn't working. It's causing more danger than good. The system sucks. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>The new BruinHub Strathmore will have staff. The dream is to have staff for individuals. If we just had the staff during hours of operations, it would make the reservation aspect more flawless than it currently is. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>With more money, there would be someone staffed there. We're trying to push social media graphics, put new signage on the pods themselves that make it clear that priority use is for those who have them reserved. We've given students instructions, they can call the front desk or find a staff member downstairs to help navigate the conversation. The intention is to more or less handle to conversations themselves. This quarter will be interesting to see the comparison between Wooden and what happens with reservations in that space if difficulties continue and see success in Strathmore with someone staffed there. - Staff</i></p>
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	<p>There are limitations to BruinHub and it cannot serve housing insecure students directly.</p> <p><i>I do think that this is a population of students that fall into the commuter background identity that do need something specific to them like, Why, why are they housing insecure? What could we offer to help them long term? At one point there was talk about having a hostel near campus for students like this. I don't know where that stands. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>BruinHub is one of [the services] that we could improve with overnight. Emergency housing and dorms, emergency loans or grants are others. I don't think students should sleep in their cars. I don't have an answer except more overnight experience at BH but fire marshall won't allow that. - Staff</i></p> <p>Staff from various departments play a part in running BruinHub. This can lead to challenges in communication as well as different expectations for BruinHub.</p> <p><i>Some communication [between staff] could've been more timely so students could be notified. There can be confusion as to who does what. Improvements could be made so that they are working on the same goal such as getting the same and correct and consistent message to students that need. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>Lot of people have a hand in BH. there are folks in Rec that oversee the space. The hub is housed within the Wooden center and they have to deal with the day to day. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>There's a food cart that needs to be kept up regularly and it's not. Having a staff member to make sure of that should be programming staff, not facilities staff. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>CPO stocks the cart and it's been stalled since summer. It's a contentious issue, I've emailed them about it. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>We had a BruinHub coalition where we met regularly to discuss our areas related to the BruinHub and student commuters. It was definitely a collaborative effort. I don't think we have been able to have done what we did - not only opening the BruinHub, but maintaining it, and and tweaking it as we went along. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>BruinHub Strathmore is part of the Basic Needs Center [as opposed to Wooden Center] and it has money for student jobs. We have concerns about the location. The gym has</i></p>
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	<p><i>many systems in place. Strathmore needed safety measures. - Staff</i></p>
<p>Theme 3: What Is Working</p>	<p>Successes include its existence, the design of space, safe environment, and the de-stigmatization of being a commuter.</p> <p><i>Bruin Hub is unique because it's designed to meet the specific needs of commuters in a way that did not stigmatize. What I mean by that is it was cool to go in there. It was fun to go in there. It made you feel comfortable to go in there. It really was a space that was about welcoming to commuters, and told them that we know you exist. We value you at the university. There's a space designed specifically for you where you can meet each other, and you can also engage with people. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>A success is it's existence in the first place. A place for students to study, nap, eat in one safe environment is a huge pro. And having it in the Wooden Center where hours are extensive and security is great. - Staff</i></p> <p><i>Commuter students feel comfortable in that space. They feel comfortable laying their heads on the desk or taking a nap in the pods - it's not strange to be sleeping. A large portion of people using the space are commuters. They are coming in with 3-4 bags for the day, and they are not self conscious about that. With Wooden it's open so early and late, and lot of commuters that come in to beat traffic. That specific space is successful because it's open so early.- Staff</i></p> <p><i>The sheer design of the space. It's an open welcoming space that contributes to its purpose where commuters can engage - Staff</i></p>

Site Observations

Observations were conducted on February 2, 2023 from 12:10pm to 1:10pm, February 13, 2023 from 9:45am to 10:40am, and February 16, 2023 from 8:55am to 9:25am. Anywhere from 26 to 31 lockers out of a total of 32 were in use throughout the observation period. People using the pods ranged from one to five, which is the maximum number of pods. During two of the observations, 4 people using the lockers were observed to have come from the gym. Anywhere from 2 to 8 people were in the BruinHub space. If people were not in the pods, they were mostly working on their laptops sitting at either the bar or the couches. Based on these observations, it appears that usage of BruinHub is busy in the early morning hours around 8-9am, slows down in the later morning hours around 10am, and picks up again in the afternoon around 12-1pm. The observations are limited to the earlier half of the day.

During one of the observations, a student was asked about their locker usage. They said that they mainly came here to BruinHub to use the gym but may use the rest of the space later. They live on campus. Another student was approached and asked about their microwave usage. They said that this is only their second time using the microwave, as they usually use the microwave in the Physics department, but they come to BruinHub more often to rest. They live off campus in an apartment.

Summary of Findings

Undergraduate and female students make up the majority of BruinHub users. The number of those users who are financially insecure is rising, with the latest registration data showing 40 percent of those students are financially insecure. The commute length among BruinHub users varied widely when BruinHub first opened, but lately it has been almost equal among all commute length groups, ranging from under 30 minutes to 120 minutes or more one-way. Rates of housing insecurity and homelessness among BruinHub users have stayed consistent across the quarters, at about 10 percent and 1 percent, respectively. About 25 percent of BruinHub users who have stayed on or near campus overnight, with about half having stayed at an acquaintance's place. One correlation was examined between commute length and housing insecurity. Out of the BruinHub users who experience housing insecurity, most had 90-120 minute one-way commutes and under 30 minute commutes one-way.

The findings from the student interviews show that the challenges they face as commuters impact how they use BruinHub and whether it can meet their needs. There are many things that are working such as the existence of the space, the commuter events, and the usefulness of the sleep pods and lockers. However, improvements can be made in regards to the registration system, the jamming of lockers, commuter priority, spatial accommodations, and overnight

access. Students also express a desire for bigger needs beyond the basics, including priority enrollment for commuters and affordable housing and transportation.

In the staff interviews, the staff want to see improvements for the space and programming which align with the feedback and desires students have. For example, they also want to have a bigger BruinHub, be able to offer overnight access, and see more recognition of commuters from the university. However, they face constraints within their budget and resources to do so. The observations that were conducted validate the experiences that students voiced during the interviews. In particular, the fact that students coming from the gym use BruinHub amenities such as the lockers, as well as non-commuter students who live in residential housing or nearby. The observations also show that students appreciate and use a variety of the amenities, including the lockers (which are easily jammed), study spaces, fridge, microwave, and sleep pods.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Summary of Study

The goal of this study is to evaluate BruinHub a year after its opening. For this study, I analyzed the BruinHub Passholder registration data, conducted one-on-one interviews with UCLA students and staff, and conducted on site observations in the BruinHub space.

This study also sought to understand not only the commuter student, but also the housing insecure or homeless student, which often is an identity that intersects with being a commuter, particularly long distance commuter (>60 minutes one way).

Themes that came out of the interviews include:

Student Interview Themes, Section 1: Commuter Circumstances

- Cost
- Scheduling
- Belonging and Coping
- Housing insecurity and Sleeping in Car

Section 2: Commuter Experiences with BruinHub

- What is Working with the Space and Programming
 - Design and Comfortability
 - Amenities
- What Needs Improvement with the Space and Programming
 - Reservation System
 - Storage
 - Commuter Priority
 - Overnight Access
 - Spatial Attributes
- Reasons that Commuters do not use BruinHub
- Bigger Ideas that Students Suggest

Staff and Administration Themes

- Improvements for the Space and Programming
 - Spatial Improvements
 - Data Collection and Sharing of Information
 - Programmatic Improvements

- Staff Constraints to Student Feedback
- What is Working

At the end of this study, I return to the research questions posed at the beginning. The first question is: *Does BruinHub serve the intended target audience of long-distance commuters, including commuters who experience some form of housing insecurity?* I believe that BruinHub does capture the commuter student by serving their needs of having a space to go to and store belongings during regular class times. Students appreciate the design of the space and the pods and find it a comfortable place to rest. However, it could increase awareness of its services to reach commuters who do not use the space and prioritize commuters over non-commuters. BruinHub also falls short of serving housing insecure or homeless students. A main reason for this is the lack of overnight access, which long-distance commuter students could also benefit from. Many non-commuter and non-housing insecure students, including students in residential housing, also use BruinHub. This is due to the lack of monitoring of the space and ineffectiveness of the pod reservation system. However, this calls attention to an overall need for such spaces among the greater student population.

The second research question is: *What changes to the current and proposed BruinHub program(s) would further benefit the intended audience?* There are many improvements BruinHub could benefit from based on student feedback. I believe it will be challenging to implement these improvements, however, due to constraints that staff face in budgets, resources, and approval from the institution. Nevertheless, this does not mean that students and staff should not continue to actively advocate for certain amenities and improvements such as more commuter events, a budget for staff to monitor the BruinHub in Wooden Center, more BruinHubs across campus, and bigger BruinHub spaces for community events, permits for overnight access, a program for student hostels and/or safe parking, and priority class enrollment for students, and more. Despite the challenges staff face, the second BruinHub location in Strathmore presents an opportunity to address many of these concerns. I discuss this further in the Recommendations and Implications sections below.

Discussion of Findings

Three overarching findings from this study include:

1. BruinHub is successful in overall creation and design of the space. The amenities, including the pods, lockers, study areas, fridge, and microwave are useful to commuters. Students and staff want to see more BruinHubs and bigger BruinHubs.

2. There are still barriers to BruinHub in that it does not meet all of commuter students' needs. It is not reaching full potential, particularly due to a lack of prioritizing commuters.
3. Students and staff offered a range of recommendations for how to improve the BruinHub. The biggest improvement BruinHub could make is by either offering overnight access and improving the reservation system.

How do we determine if BruinHub is successful? On one hand, BruinHub can be considered successful because the space was built, which speaks to the recognition from higher up administration of commuter needs. There has also been a push to build a second BruinHub space in the Strathmore building in the past year.

On the other hand, BruinHub is not meeting its full potential. BruinHub can be improved to better serve the intended population. Commuters do use the space, but more can be done to prioritize them over non-commuters.

Overall, I believe BruinHub is a success because throughout all the interviews I conducted, students and staff consistently express a desire for more BruinHubs. The future of BruinHub looks promising and it can continue to grow and evolve.

Recommendations

Recommendations for BruinHub

Based on the research with students and staff, particularly with their constraints in mind, my recommendations for improving the BruinHub space include:

Spatial Recommendations

- **Maintain the lockers more frequently** by having staff check in on them and improve communication about how to properly use the lockers or how to get help when they are jammed.
- **Create signage** for reservations near BruinHub pods explaining the reservation process. To improve the reservation system in low-cost way.
- **Improve wayfinding** in John Wooden Center to help students find BruinHub, such as signage near the front desk check-in.
- **Increase overall capacity.** There is a high demand for spaces such as BruinHub and the sleep pods. The opening of BruinHub Strathmore is a promising step in this direction.

Programmatic Recommendations

- **Create a pilot program for overnight access.** Students want to have the option of staying overnight, whether they are a commuter or facing housing insecurity. Staff, however, mention constraints within staff and permits. However, with BruinHub offering overnight only during Midterms and Finals week, it is not enough to evaluate the success of overnight access. Overnight should be consistently offered to determine if it is successful and valuable to students. A pilot study for overnight access would be a low-commitment method to employ before securing necessary permits if successful.
- **Create a staff monitor position** at the BruinHub to improve and enforce the reservation system. Seek more funding and resources, and prioritize that increased budget towards this.
- **Host more commuter events** and ways to connect with commuters such as a buddy program or carpooling program. Seek more funding and resources, and prioritize that increased budget towards this.
- **Change the name of BruinHub to Commuter Hub.** This title explicitly states the purpose of the space and prioritizes commuters without excluding other students.

Recommendations for Outreach and Data Collection

- **Improve the passholder registration form.** Revise the questions by offering definitions for “commuter,” “housing insecurity,” and “financial insecurity.” Clarify the question about commute length. Make the passholder annual instead of quarterly or auto-populate answers each quarter that can be edited.
- **Conduct more data collection** on who commuter students are at UCLA, especially from the institution’s administration standpoint. Additionally, more data should be collected on BruinHub users. Since this study began an iPad kiosk was installed at the entrance of BruinHub. It may be beneficial to evaluate whether students are using the kiosk and if the data is useful so far.
- **Show a formal recognition of commuters** from the institution. This could be in the form of priority enrollment, marketing, and additional programs.
- **Conduct more outreach and marketing** to increase awareness of BruinHub, commuter services, resources, and events. There are commuters who aren’t aware of BruinHub. More information can be shared during new student orientation, at campus locations, and through channels outside of social media.
- **Create a formal definition of commuter** with the distinction of “subcultures” as mentioned by Clark (2006) in order to have a multifaceted understanding of the different types of commuters, such as but not limited to, graduate versus undergraduate, financially independent versus dependent students, temporary versus permanent housing.

Limitations

One of the biggest limitations to this study is the time constraint. This project began in Fall 2022, but there is still much more that could be done. As part of the study population, there were no interviews conducted with students who experienced homelessness nor commuter students in a master's graduate program. Understanding their perspectives would be useful, especially when it comes to defining who a commuter is and the various commuter subcultures. Additionally, more time to spend on analyzing the passholder registration data would be valuable, particularly for Fall 2021. A correlation between commute length and housing insecurity was not done for that quarter.

The site observations that were conducted all took place around the morning. More observations at different times throughout the day would be useful to look at. Also, with the new iPad kiosk installed for students to sign in when entering BruinHub, observations involving the new device would also be valuable.

The passholder registration included skewed data due to COVID-19 pandemic as well as a lack of clarity in passholder registration questions, particularly the question around commute length. Continued data collection and analysis will be essential as the statistics will likely stabilize over time.

Implications for Further Study

A continued evaluation for the next year of BruinHub should be conducted, especially as improvements are made in the passholder registration and with the installation of the kiosk. This will improve data collection for BruinHub users.

Many of the challenges that BruinHub currently faces may or may not be present at BruinHub Strathmore, which opened in May 2022. At the second location, there will be staff to monitor the space due to different resources and budget for the area BruinHub Strathmore is housed in. I predict the registration system will be more effective with the monitor and the space may naturally build a sense of exclusivity for commuters without explicitly excluding any particular population. Students who need to use the space but are not commuters are welcome to.

However, this means that the registration system is not likely to go away or be replaced with something else at BruinHub in Wooden Center. The challenges students face may continue. However, knowing that there is a second location, commuters may start to use BruinHub Strathmore. The two BruinHubs will have a different culture and environment. An evaluation of BruinHub Strathmore will also prove to be beneficial in the future.

Due to a lack of research in commuter needs and design of space to accommodate those needs, a comparative analysis of existing commuter lounges across universities in the country would be valuable.

Summary and Concluding Thoughts

Spatial design is a powerful way to meet the needs of commuter students. A commuter space on campus can be shaped, not only by the university, but also students themselves. Commuters who can shape their environment and have a space of their own can increase their sense of belonging and their overall connection to the university.

BruinHub is the first step in the right direction in addressing the needs of long-distance commuters. However, there are more improvements that can be implemented to reach its full potential, especially by prioritizing and directly serving its intended audience. While many of the suggested improvements will be challenging to implement, students and staff must actively advocate for the changes. The second BruinHub location in Strathmore presents an opportunity to address many of the current concerns and service gaps that BruinHub in Wooden Center currently experiences. The desire for more BruinHubs across the UCLA campus from both students and staff shows how invaluable a space is for commuters.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Passholder Registration Form

1. Are you 24 years or older?
2. How long is your total commute time (both ways) on a typical school day to campus and from campus?
 - a. < 30 minutes
 - b. 30-60 minutes
 - c. 60-90 minutes
 - d. 90-120 minutes
 - e. > 120 minutes
3. Considering where you begin your commute to campus, what is your address (or if you prefer, what is the nearest intersection)?
4. Would you like to receive updates on commuter resources (e.g. being added to the commuter newsletter to receive weekly emails regarding events, campus resources, job opportunities, scholarship information, and transportation updates)?
5. Do you consent to receiving information that may be helpful to you?
6. Do you live with your parent(s)?
7. Do you live with your children or dependents?
8. What is your current employment status?
9. Are you currently experiencing or have you experienced financial insecurity in the last six months?
10. Are you currently experiencing or have you experienced food insecurity in the last six months?
11. What gender do you identify as?
12. Are you currently experiencing or have you experienced homelessness in the last six months?
13. Are you currently experiencing or have you experienced housing insecurity in the last six months?
14. Which places on or near campus have you slept overnight? Select all that apply:
 - a. An acquaintance's house
 - b. Non-dorm campus building (e.g., library)
 - c. Hotel or hostel
 - d. My car or friend's car
15. As a result of your commute, have you ever slept overnight on or near campus instead of returning home?
16. Do you have a current UCLA parking pass?
17. What is your preferred email address?

18. Are you currently experiencing homelessness or do not have a permanent residence where you can live?
19. Do you want to be connected to resources to help you if you are experiencing housing and/or financial insecurity? (e.g. you need a permanent place to sleep, you need meal vouchers, etc.)
20. Are there other kinds of locations you have slept overnight on or near campus? Please describe.
21. Are you a student commuter?
22. Are you an undergraduate or graduate student?
23. What is your student university ID number?
24. Do you live in university-owned housing? (e.g. University apartments, University Village, residence halls, Weyburn Terrace)
25. Are you a veteran?

Appendix B: Recruiting Flyer

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!

For paid study on commuting and housing

You may qualify if you fulfill any of the following:

- Are a UCLA student (undergrad or grad)
- Have experienced a long-distance commute (60+ minutes) to campus in the past 12 months
- Have experienced housing insecurity or homelessness in the past 12 months

Are you a long-distance commuter (60+ min one way) or have you experienced housing insecurity? UCLA cityLAB* would like feedback on your experience. Our goal is to improve UCLA's commuting and housing services for students.

Participation: One 30-45 minute interview

Location: BruinHub Strathmore or Zoom

Compensation: Participants will receive a \$25 Target gift card



tinyurl.com/CH-Study



*UCLA cityLAB is a research center that focuses on architecture, urban design, and planning. It is housed in the UCLA Department of Architecture and Urban Design

citylab
UCLA



For more information, contact
Lucie Wu at luciew@ucla.edu

Appendix C: Eligibility Survey

Section 1 - Background Information

- Are you a UCLA student?
 - Yes
 - No
- What year are you?
 - Undergrad - Year 1
 - Undergrad - Year 2
 - Undergrad - Year 3
 - Undergrad - Year 4+
 - Graduate - Masters
 - Graduate - PhD
- How often do you use BruinHub?
 - Never
 - Less than once a week
 - 1-3 times a week
 - 4+ times a week
 - Every day
- Are you a commuter or resident (living at dorms or on-campus housing) student?
 - Commuter (if selected, go on to section 2)
 - Resident (if selected, jump to section 3)
 - Other (if selected, jump to section 3)

Section 2 – Commuter

- How long is your commute to campus (one-way)?
 - Less than 30 minutes
 - 30-60 minutes
 - 60-90 minutes
 - More than 90 minutes
- How do you typically get to campus? (select all that apply)
 - Car - drive alone
 - Car - carpool
 - Public Transportation
 - Other

Section 3 – Housing

- Have you experienced housing insecurity or homelessness in the past?
 - Yes
 - No

Section 4 - Contact Information and Demographics

- Name
- Email
- Pronouns
- Race/ethnicity
- Age

Appendix D: Student Interview Questions

Interview Questions - Students / BruinHub passholders

- Initial Background Questions
 - Can you tell me a little about yourself such as your year, your major?
 - Are you involved in any clubs or organizations or interested in joining any?
 - Which of these do you identify with?
 - Traditional student
 - Non-traditional student
 - Lived in dorms previously
 - Currently living in dorms
 - Transfer student
 - Non-transfer student
 - Commuter
 - Experienced housing insecurity/homelessness
 - Currently experiencing housing insecurity/homelessness
 - Live with family
 - Live with roommates
 - Live independently or with partner
 - Mark rating on chart: school-home life balance. Elaborate in the interview.
 - Do you prefer in person or virtual options for classes, events, etc? Why?
- Commute Questions
 - Can you tell me about your commute?
 - Why do you choose to commute? Tell me about your decision to be a resident on campus or live off-campus and commute?
 - What or who motivated/ contributed to your decision?
 - How does your resident or commuter status impact your daily life at UCLA, both positively or negatively?
 - How does your commuter status positively affect your overall experience as a student?
 - How does your commuter status negatively affect your daily life and overall experience as a student?
 - What is one of the biggest struggles you encounter daily as a student? Explain.
 - What are your favorite memories as a commuter?
 - Commuter identity: How have you felt or not felt a sense of belonging at UCLA? Do you feel you have a community or support resources on campus?
 - On a scale of 1-5 (1 being low, 5 being high), how would you rate your sense of belonging at UCLA?
- Housing Questions
 - Can you tell me about your experience with housing insecurity or homelessness?
 - Housing-insecure identity: How have you felt or not felt a sense of belonging at UCLA? Do you feel you have a community or support resources on campus?

- On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your sense of belonging at UCLA?
- BruinHub Questions
 - What common spaces on campus do you utilize? How often do you utilize these common spaces?
 - What do you use the common spaces for?
 - What made you use BruinHub? What do you use BruinHub for primarily?
 - How often do you use BruinHub? When do you use BruinHub? How long do you spend at the BruinHub? (multiple times a week to once a month) (morning afternoon evening, before or after classes) (minutes, hours)
 - Does BruinHub meet your needs as a student? Describe your needs as a student.
 - What do you wish BruinHub could do better?
 - In what ways do you think BruinHub could be improved? What do you wish BruinHub could do better?
- Brainstorm
 - Space of infinite possibilities: What would you like commuters and housing insecure students to have if money were no issue?
 - In your opinion, what are the best type of programs offices, clubs and/or organizations put on?
 - How can the university better support their students?

Interview Questions - Students / non-BruinHub passholders

- Initial Background Questions
 - Can you tell me a little about yourself such as your year, your major?
 - Are you involved in any clubs or organizations or interested in joining any?
 - Which of these do you identify with?
 - Traditional student
 - Non-traditional student
 - Lived in dorms previously
 - Currently living in dorms
 - Transfer student
 - Non-transfer student
 - Commuter
 - Experienced housing insecurity/homelessness
 - Currently experiencing housing insecurity/homelessness
 - Live with family
 - Live with roommates
 - Live independently or with partner
 - Do you prefer in person or virtual options for classes, events, etc? Why?
- Commute Questions
 - Why do you choose to commute? Tell me about your decision to be a resident on campus or live off-campus and commute?

- What or who motivated/ contributed to your decision?
 - How does your resident or commuter status impact your daily life at UCLA, both positively or negatively?
 - How does your commuter status positively affect your overall experience as a student?
 - How does your commuter status negatively affect your daily life and overall experience as a student?
 - What is one of the biggest struggles you encounter daily as a student?
 - Mark rating on chart: school-home life balance. Elaborate in the interview.
 - What are your favorite memories as a commuter?
 - Commuter identity: How have you felt or not felt a sense of belonging at UCLA?
 - Do you feel you have a community or support resources on campus?
 - On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your sense of belonging at UCLA?
- Housing Questions
 - Can you tell me about your experience with housing insecurity or homelessness?
 - Housing-insecure identity: How have you felt or not felt a sense of belonging at UCLA? Do you feel you have a community or support resources on campus?
 - On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your sense of belonging at UCLA?
- BruinHub Questions
 - What common spaces on campus do you utilize? How often do you utilize these common spaces?
 - What do you use the common spaces for?
 - Have you heard about BruinHub?
 - Do you think you could benefit from BruinHub?
 - Do you think BruinHub could meet your needs as a student? Describe your needs as a student?
 - What prevents you from trying BruinHub?
- Brainstorm
 - Space of infinite possibilities: What would you like commuters and housing insecure students to have if money were no issue?
 - In your opinion, what are the best type of programs offices, clubs and/or organizations put on?
 - How can the university better support their students?

Appendix E: Staff Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about your role at UCLA? with BruinHub?
2. What has been the process of creating BruinHub? Your opinion of the process – challenges, successes? What has gone smoothly vs not?
3. What do you think makes BruinHub successful?
4. In what ways do you think BruinHub could be improved? What do you wish BruinHub could do better?
5. For Bruin Commuters: When events are held, how many students show up? What makes an event successful? Unsuccessful?
6. What are future plans for BruinHub or BruinHub Strathmore?
7. Space of Infinite Possibilities: If funding were not an issue, what would you like to see in BruinHub and its programming and staff needs?
8. In working on BH, what do you think the school needs beyond BH?
 - a. Housing insecurity
 - b. Extreme commute
9. Share what's working and what's not working. What can we do to improve [what's not working example]?
 - a. Reservation system
 - b. Overnight access
 - c. Lockers
 - d. Exclusivity