

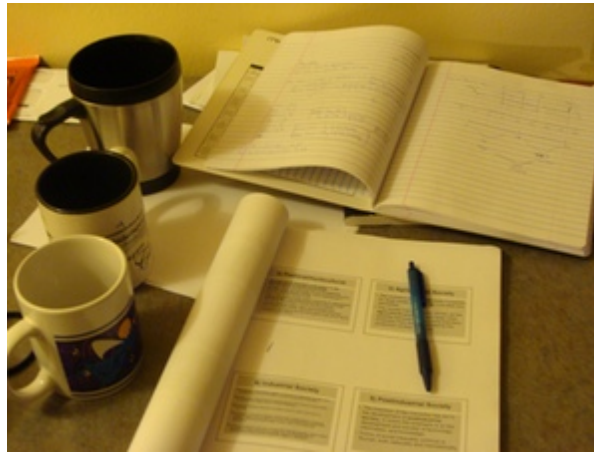
“Sometimes I type papers on my cell phone” Mobile Digital Technologies and CUNY Students

Maura A. Smale
New York City College of Technology

Mariana Regalado
Brooklyn College

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Undergraduate Scholarly Habits Ethnography Project



CUNY = NYC

228,484 undergraduates at CUNY in Fall 2010.

17% Asian
27% Black
29% Hispanic
26% White

43% born outside
the US

Mean age = 24
28% over age 25

44% 1st generation in college

38% household income < \$20,000

31% work for pay > 20 hrs/wk

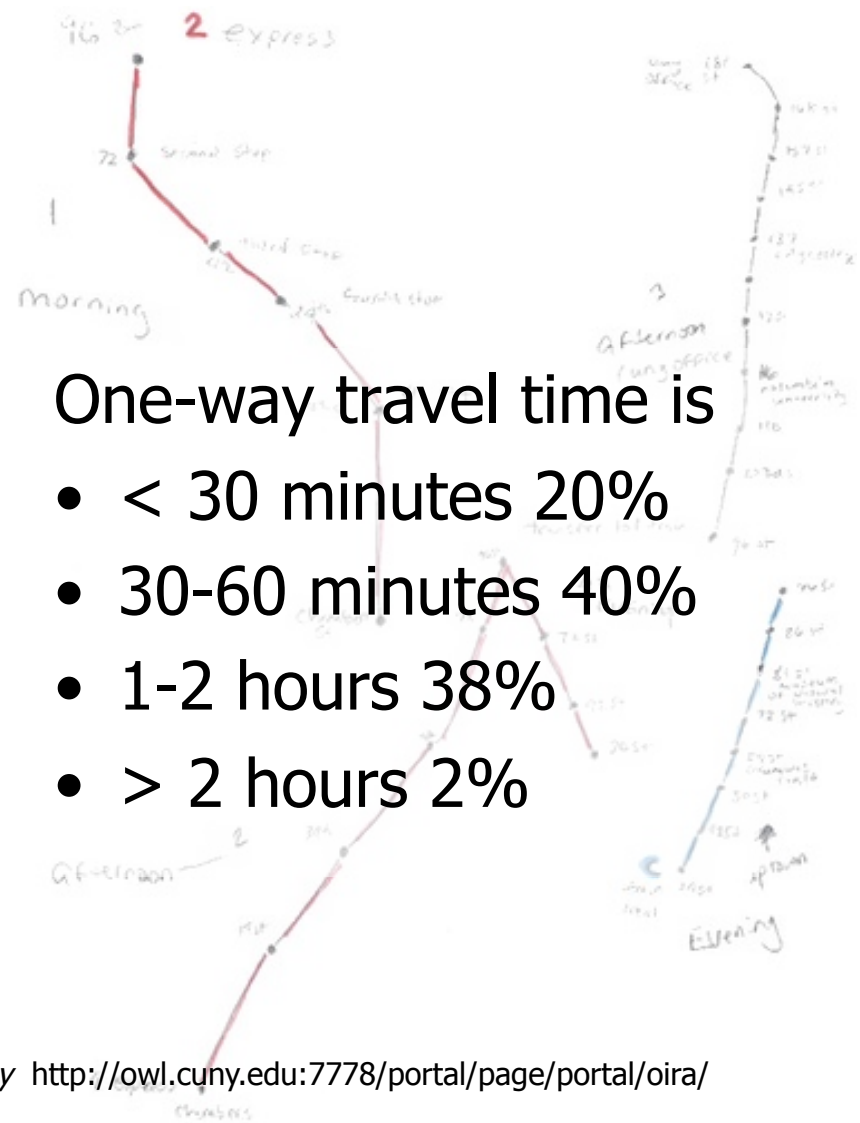
14% support children



CUNY Commutes

They get to campus by

- Public transit 77%
- Driving/car pool 18%
- Walking 5%
- Bicycle < 1%



Mobile Tech By the Numbers

U.S. undergraduates

own

a cell phone 96%

a laptop 88%

access internet/email on a
cell phone 63%

Also

84% own a portable music
player

9% own an ebook reader

CUNY undergraduates

own

a smartphone 50%

a laptop 64%

access the internet on a cell
phone 36%

Also

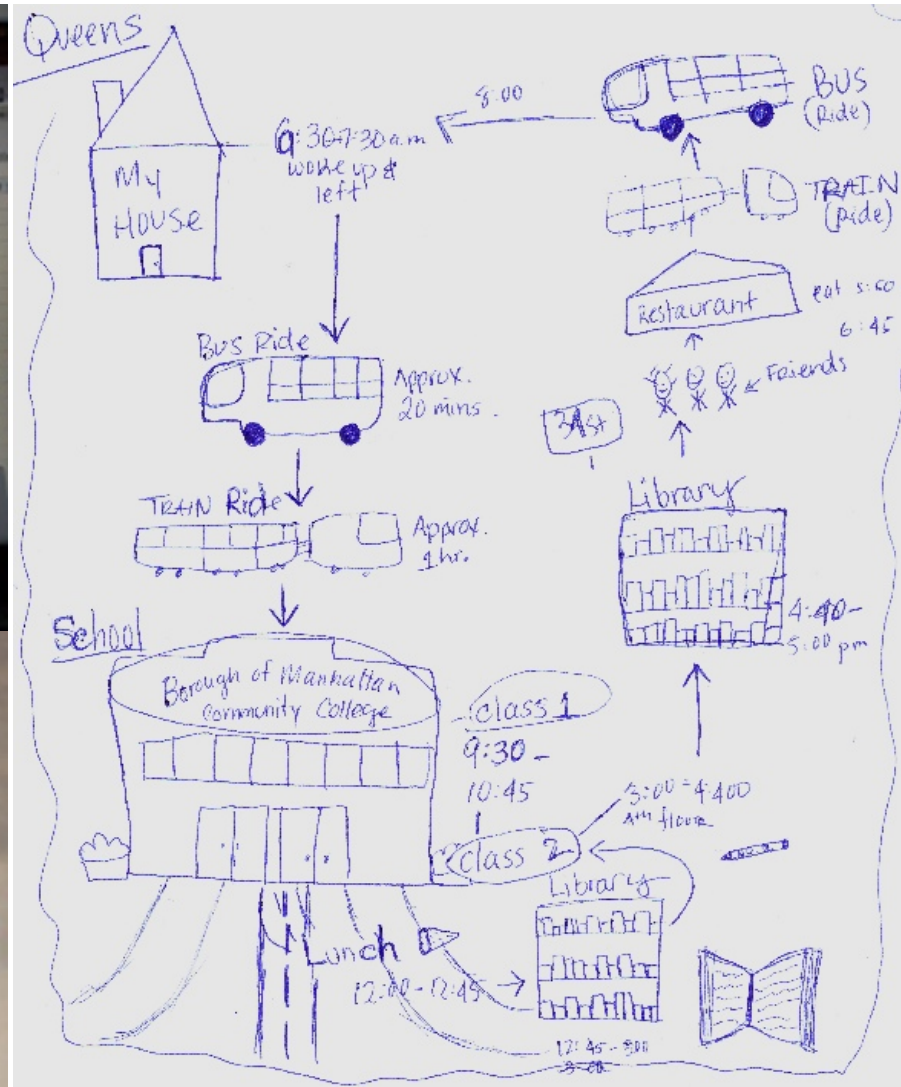
43% own a portable music
player

2% own an ebook reader

Smith, A., Rainie, L. & Zickuhr, K. (2011).
College students and technology. Pew Internet
& American Life Project, <http://pewinternet.org/>

CUNY OIRA. (2010). Table 6A, Student use of
technology. *Student Experience Survey*. <http://oira.cuny.edu>

What Students Showed Us



Cell Phones and Smartphones

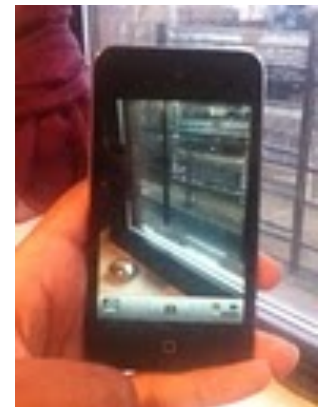
"If I don't have my phone, I feel kind of out of place, because I can't call anybody, I can't communicate with anyone."



"I think I left my phone home one time and I felt so naked. I felt like I didn't know what was going on in the world. I didn't know what time it was. ... I didn't think I could function without my phone."



"I can check e-mail faster on the go, calendars, Internet, GPS if I get lost somewhere and I'm going around, I don't know I just use it for a lot of stuff. ... It would make life pretty inconvenient to not have it."



Laptops

"No, no. It's too big, too heavy. With commuting and everything, I can't bring it."

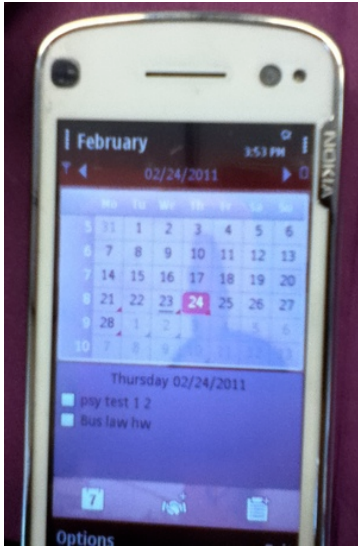
"Mmmm.... Maybe once a week. Because it's heavy. Plus my books. It's heavy. It kills my back. Because I'm in school from 11:00 until 8:30."



"I'd just rather keep it at home so nothing would happen to it. No water spill, no damage."

"I brought it once and I forgot to charge it [laughs]. I brought it all the way from home and it doesn't do shit with no battery."

Other Mobile Academic Tech



“The Blackberry keeps me organized. ... it’s like basically a handheld organization device.”

“Sometimes I type papers on my cell phone. And then I upload it. I send it to myself as an email. Then I’ll upload it once I get to school.”



“Just plug the PDF to research and read it really fast. And I make notes... make annotations on it. And then I just export that out and stuff.”

Access Issues

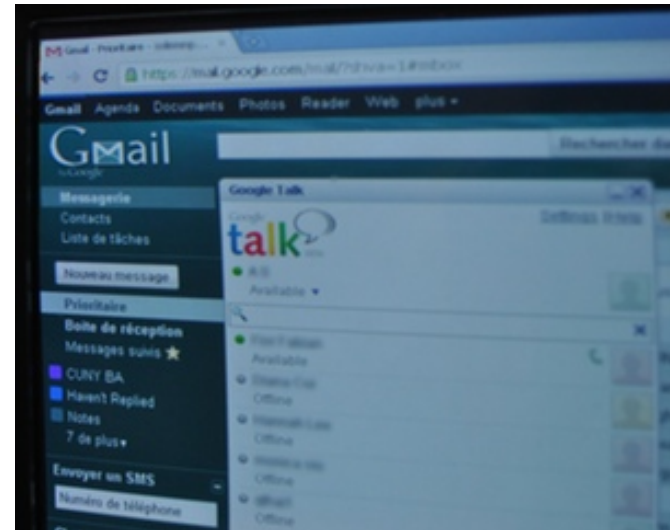
"Well I usually go [to the public library] after school because the internet I think is more better because the internet in the school, like some areas are restricted and most of the time I just want to go on for fun since I don't have a computer or internet in my home."



"So, basically finding a printer is the biggest problem [...] finding a printer and making sure my work is done before my class. That's really frustrating."

No Mobile Tech...By Choice

"So, my friends get in contact with me through Gmail. Either GoogleTalk or GChat. So, I can send text messages through Gmail, or I can go on AIM from Gmail and talk to them there. So, if they need me, they know how to get in contact with me."



"I actually prefer email over phone because I don't have a cell phone and if somebody wants to get in touch with me immediately, you know, my phone is at my house, I'm out a lot of the time but I can usually get to a computer and check my email."

Encouraging Mobile Tech



Thank you!

Here's how to reach us:

Maura A. Smale

msmale@citytech.cuny.edu

Mariana Regalado

regalado@brooklyn.cuny.edu

<http://ushep.commons.gc.cuny.edu>