HPC Customer Use Patterns Project, Summer 2015

This HART, made up of undergraduate students from Statistics, Economics, Political Science, Policy Studies, and Philosophy, were called upon to assist Houston Public Libraries in better understanding what libraries Houstonians use and why. The team utilized card swipe data collected from over 24,000 library customers. They used this data to map the specific libraries customers were using, the distance users were traveling to said libraries from their homes, and the features around the libraries (e.g. businesses and bus stops). One important finding was that customers were not using the libraries closest to their homes, in fact, customers on average traveled more than 6 miles away from their homes to use library services. The team also found that the reasons for using the libraries were not the features surrounding the libraries but possibly the features within the library. Their contribution provided Houston Public Libraries with the knowledge that no matter where a library is located, customers will be willing to travel to it because of the features within the library.