

The Wiedman Fitness Center

Interior Design Strategies That Create
a Co-ed College Fitness Setting that
is Comfortable for All Genders



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Class of 2023

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Interior Architect and
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Design Program



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Committee Member

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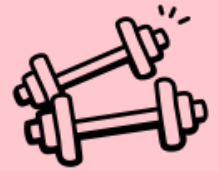
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Committee Member

Adjunct Faculty in RIT's
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Query

What role do gender related discomforts play in comfortability in co-ed, college fitness settings and how can spatial allocation, acoustics, and other design elements be utilized to eliminate these barriers?



Why is This Important?

- Environmental discomfort around gender is an aspect that keeps many from utilizing fitness centers
- A wide range of diseases can be prevented by physical activity.
- Physical exercise is a significantly gendered health behaviour.
- This imbalance exists relating to muscle-building and moderate to strenuous levels of exercise.
- Positive health impacts are not being realized.
- There are limited solutions on the market that don't involve isolation of genders.

Literature Review

5 Key Variables

Literature Review +
Research Agenda



Gender in Fitness Settings



Barriers to Comfort



Active Comfort Aids



Effectiveness of Design Elements



Desired Elements of Function

GENDER IN THE GYM + GYM CULTURE



- Men's vs. Women's motivations for going to the gym
- Cardiovascular activity and weight training are categorized as feminine/masculine
- Connection between gendered body ideals and participation in weightlifting
- The perception of the gym as a hyper-masculine setting
- Little is understood about the socio-spatial processes that take place in gyms
- Who is included in or excluded from particular workout environments and activities

SOCIO-SPATIAL PROCESSES IN FITNESS

Three socio-spatial processes tied to the genderment of physical activity:

1. Achieving gender expectations
2. Patrolling gender performance
3. Establishing gender relations in space

Laying the foundation for normalization of gender variance in exercise participation.

BARRIERS TO COMFORT

Evaluation,
Comparison,
Ineptitude.



Evaluation

Feeling scrutinized and/or judged by others

Comparison

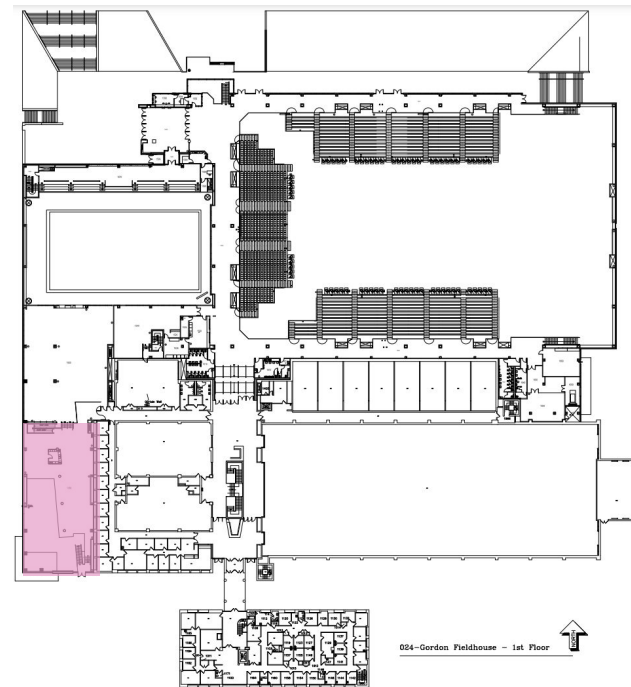
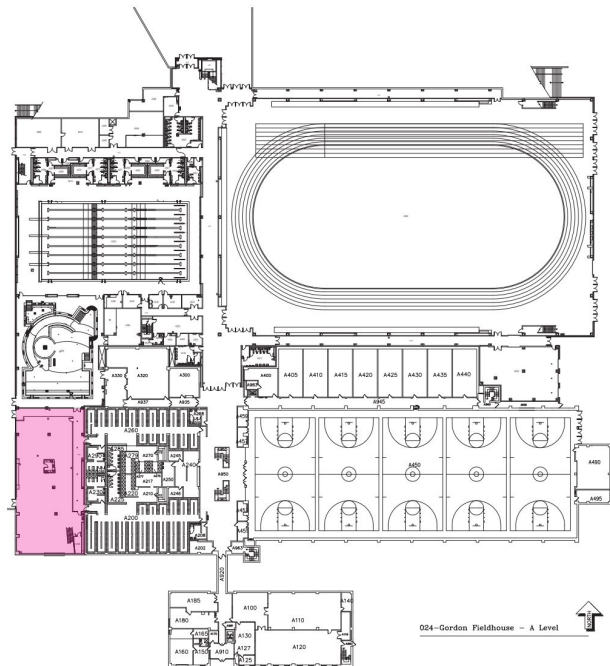
Judging oneself against the others, comparing oneself to others, and/or feeling that one does not measure up to others

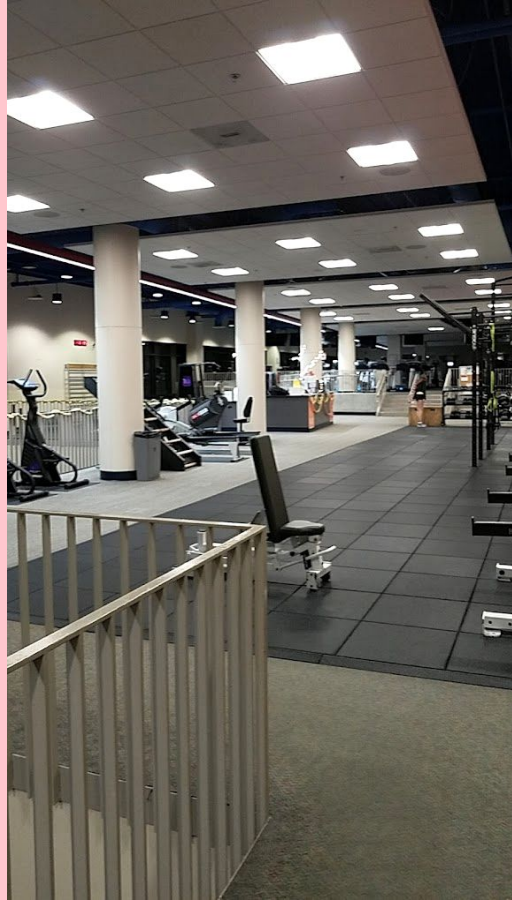
Ineptitude

Feeling a lack of experience or expertise

Site Introduction

Spatial Context





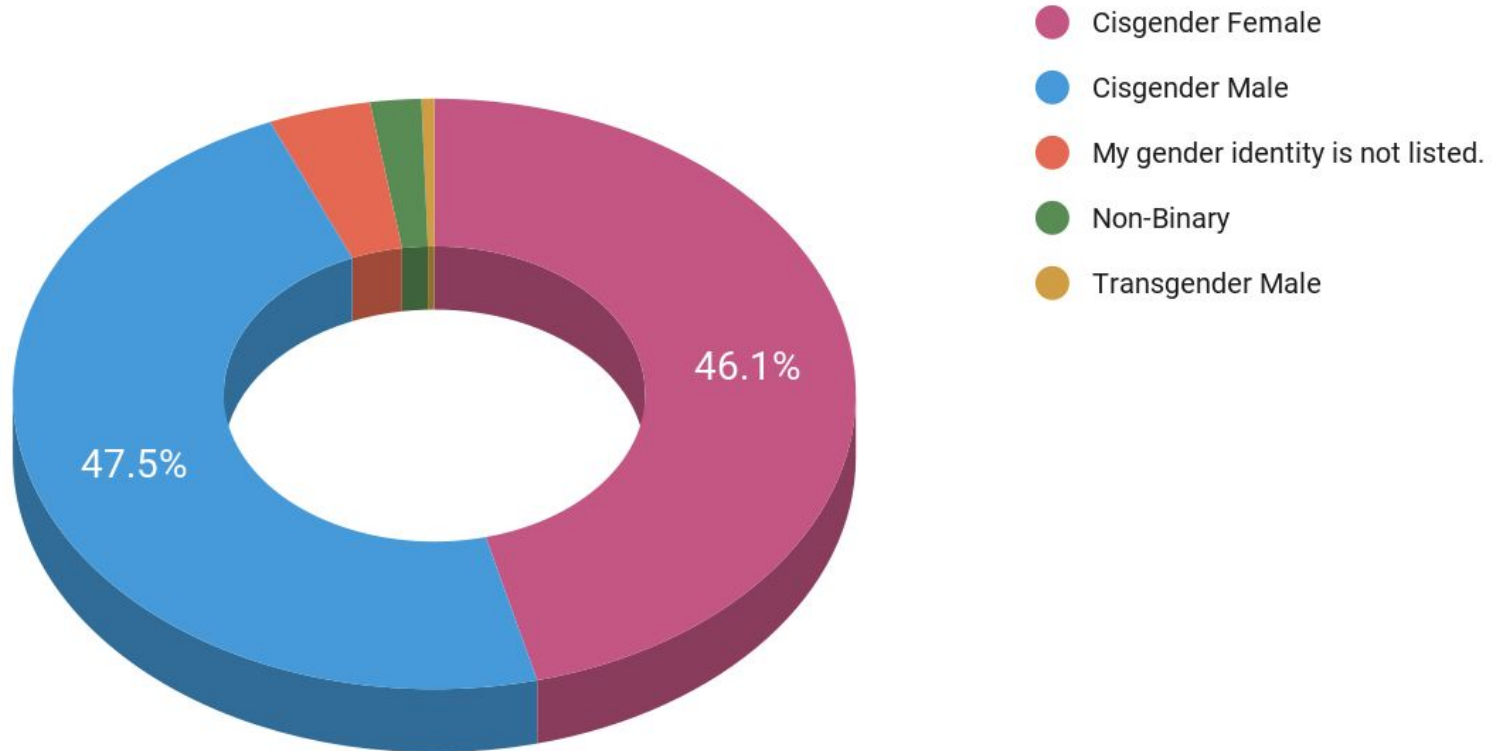
Existing Conditions

Research Agenda

Survey Distribution



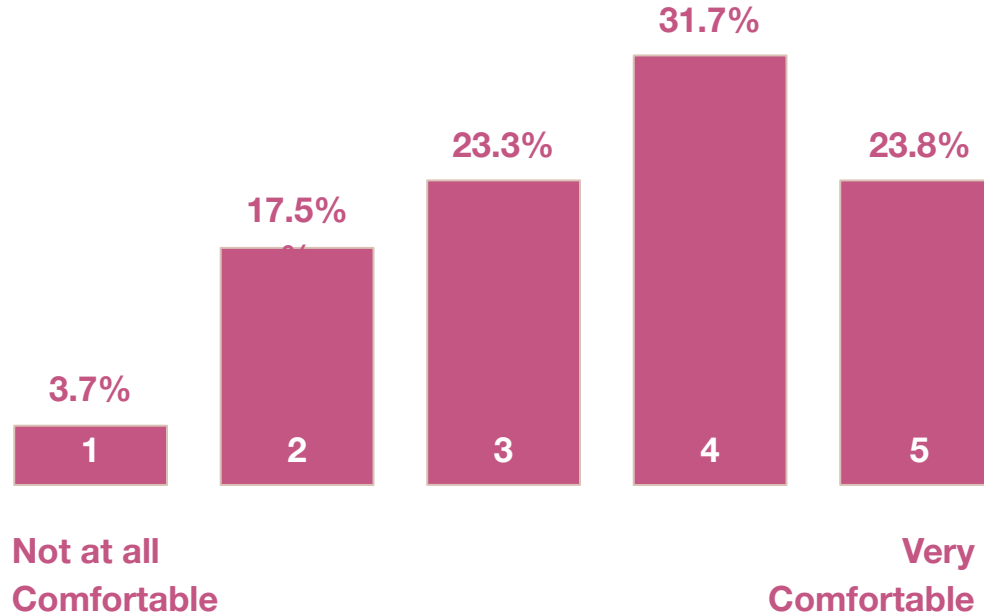
Surveyed Gendered Identity



61.5%

of respondents expressed they are not entirely comfortable in co-ed fitness environments.

RIT Specific Comfort Levels:



Surveyed Discomfort in Fitness Settings

The element perceived
as least functional:

Ability to see how
busy the gym is prior
to entering



The element perceived
as most functional:

Cleanliness



Surveyed Desired Elements



Cleanliness



Free Weights



Ability to See Busyness Prior to Entering



Organization



Clear Sense of Equipment Location

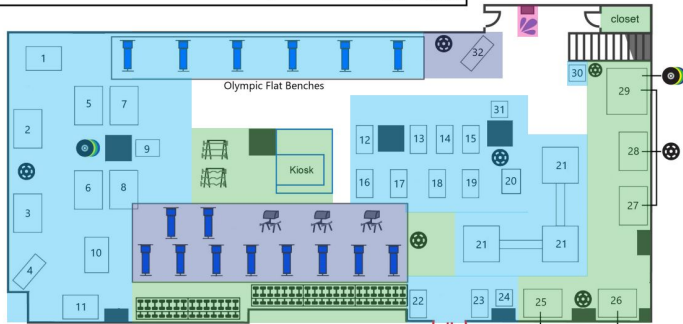
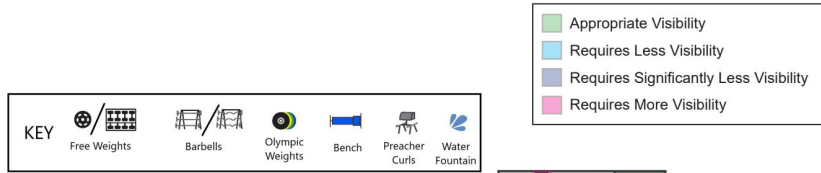


Weight Machines

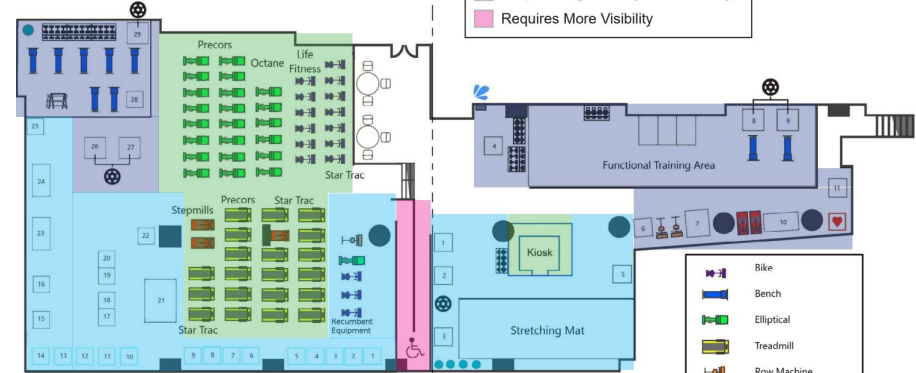
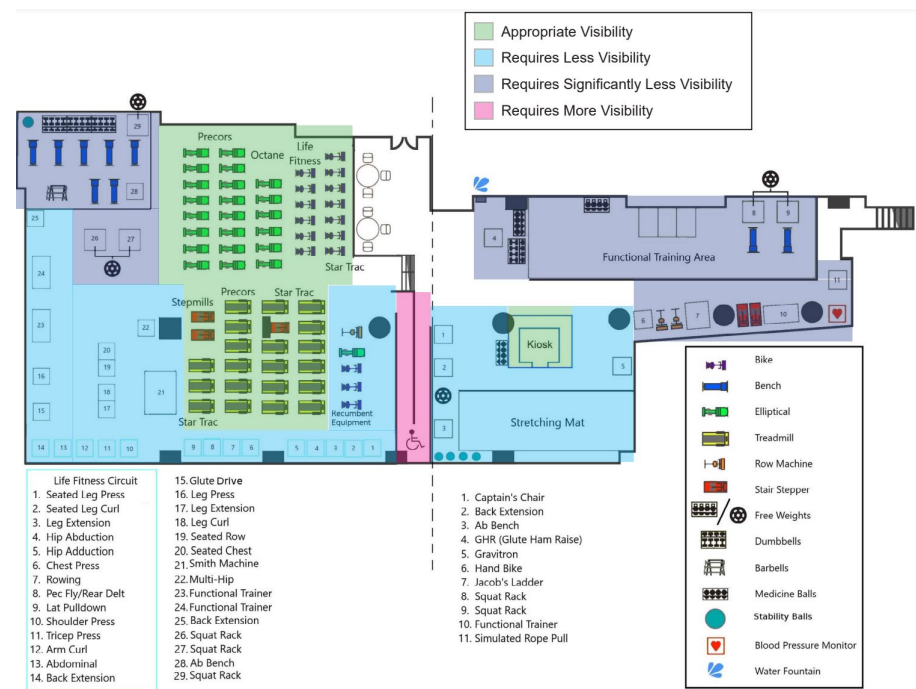


Cardio Machines

Visibility Analysis



- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Iso-Lateral Super Incline Press | 12. Seated Calf Raise | 23. Standing T-Bar Row |
| 2. Power Lifting Area | 13. Standing Calf Raise | 24. Captain's Chair |
| 3. Hex Bar Lifting Area | 14. Leg Press (45 deg) | 25. Power Lifting Area |
| 4. T-Bar Row Platform ("Landmine") | 15. Leg press (35 deg) | 26. Power Lifting Area |
| 5. Incline Bench | 16. Iso-Lateral Low Row | 27. Full Rack |
| 6. Incline Bench | 17. Multi-Grip Row | 28. Full Rack |
| 7. Decline Bench | 18. Iso-Lateral Leg Extension | 29. Half Rack with Platform |
| 8. Decline Bench | 19. Iso-Lateral Kneeling Leg Curl | 30. Glute Drive |
| 9. Ab Bench | 20. Multi-Use Machine Accessory | 31. Back Extension |
| 10. Iso-Lateral Shoulder press | 21. Multi-Use Machines | 32. T-Bar Row |
| 11. Pec Fly/Rear Delt | 22. Hack Squat | |

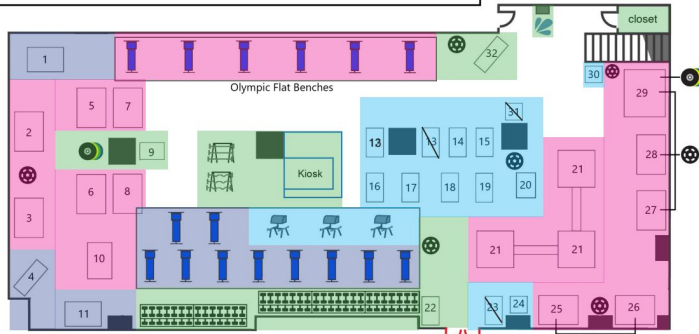
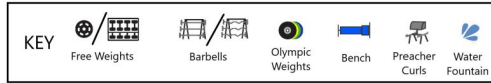
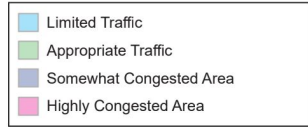


- Life Fitness Circuit**
- Seated Leg Press
 - Seated Leg Curl
 - Leg Extension
 - Hip Abduction
 - Hip Adduction
 - Chest Press
 - Rowing
 - Pec Fly/Rear Delt
 - Lat Pulldown
 - Shoulder Press
 - Tricep Press
 - Arm Curl
 - Abdominal
 - Back Extension

- 15. Glute Drive**
- Leg Press
 - Leg Extension
 - Leg Curl
 - Seated Row
 - Seated Chest
 - Smith Machine
 - Multi-Hip
 - Functional Trainer
 - Lat Pulldown
 - Back Extension
 - Squat Rack
 - Squat Rack
 - Ab Bench
 - Squat Rack

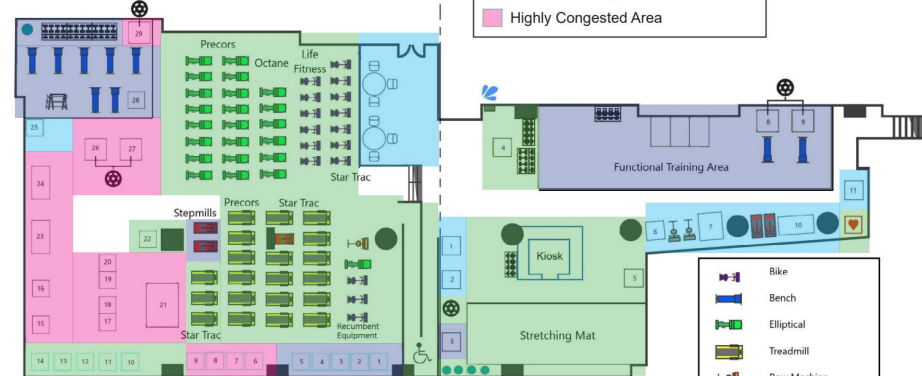
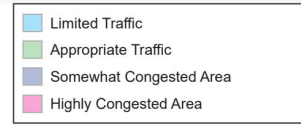
- Captain's Chair
- Back Extension
- Ab Bench
- GHR (Glute Ham Raise)
- Gravitron
- Hand Bike
- Jacob's Ladder
- Squat Rack
- Squat Rack
- Functional Trainer
- Simulated Rope Pull

Congestion Analysis



- | | | |
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Emergency EXIT



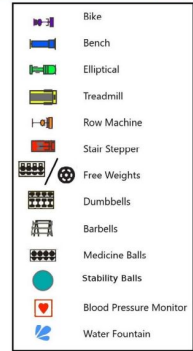
Life Fitness Circuit

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15. Glute Drive

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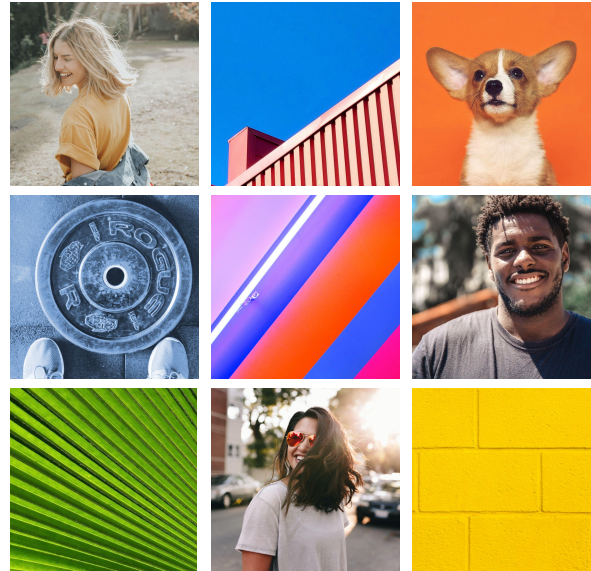
Creative Agenda

Concept Statement

“

A welcoming space that fosters comfort for users of all identities and experiences. More specifically, a fitness setting that is comfortable and functional for all genders.

”



User Profiles



Justin, 18

Cisgender Male

Gym Use

Frequency

6 Times/Week

Type

Strength Training/Weightlifting

Notes

Competes in Weightlifting through RIT's Barbell Club and is very comfortable in fitness settings. Justin has found a sense of community within RIT's gym.

Justin, 18

Cisgender Male

Problem

The Barbell Club can make a lot of noise

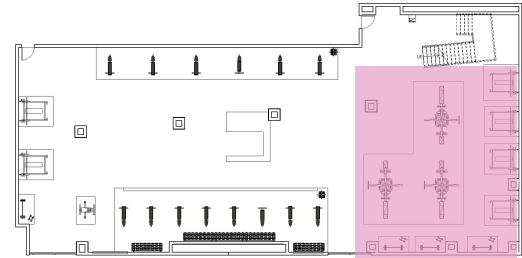
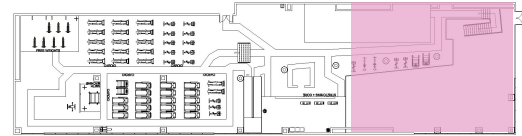
As the weightlifting club tends to lift quite heavy they make a lot of noise dropping weights. Additionally, they communicate throughout their lifts which is sometimes affected by the excessive noise within the gym.

Solution

Improved acoustics + sound absorption

Implementing more acoustic materials within the space (especially in squat rack areas) as well as other methods of sound absorption.

Location:



Solution 01

Acoustics

- Acoustic Materials
 - Applied to all columns
 - Flooring in areas where weights may frequently be dropped
- Acoustic Ceiling Clouds
- Acoustic Lighting Fixtures

Solution 01: Acoustics



Stella, 29

Transgender Female

Gym Use

Frequency

Never

Type

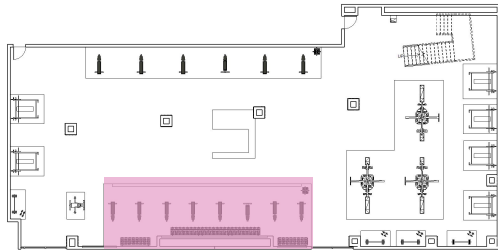
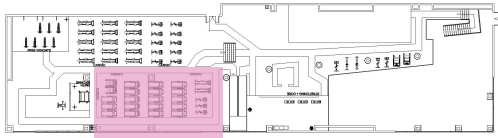
N/A

Notes

Stella is a graduate student who is not at all comfortable in gym environments; has worries of criticism and judgment. She would love the ability to work towards a healthier lifestyle but is not comfortable in RIT's gym as it stands.



Location:



Stella, 29

Transgender Female

Problem

Worries of criticism and judgment

Stella is not confident in her abilities within the gym environment and believes that other users of the space will judge her if they see she is able to see this.

Solution

Reduced visibility options

Offering more privacy for Stella to learn, on her own, with more comfort. Additionally, offering educational materials that she can easily access on her own.

Solution 02

Reduced Visibility

- Covers applied to some treadmills and all stair-climbers for additional privacy
 - Limiting consciousness of others looking
- Additional partial walls to create more separation between different areas

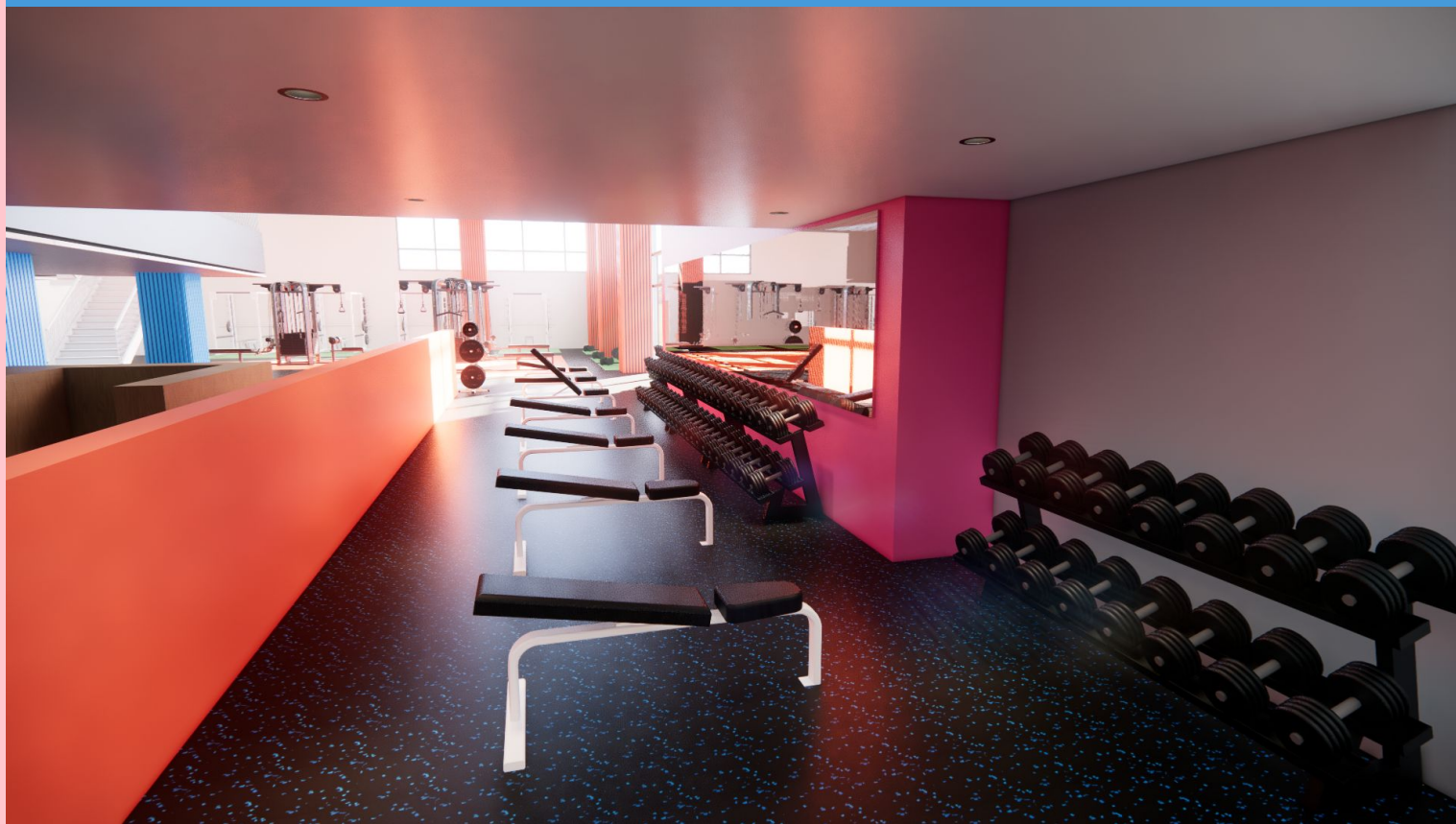
Solution 02: Reduced Visibility



Solution 02: Reduced Visibility



Solution 02: Reduced Visibility





Jude, 21

Nonbinary

Gym Use

Frequency

3 Times/Week

Type

Light Cardio and Some Exercise
Machines

Notes

Jude is very nervous in all gym environments but has aspirations of a healthier lifestyle. They are more comfortable sticking to machines.

Jude, 21

Nonbinary

Problem

Nervous in gym settings; would like to learn machines

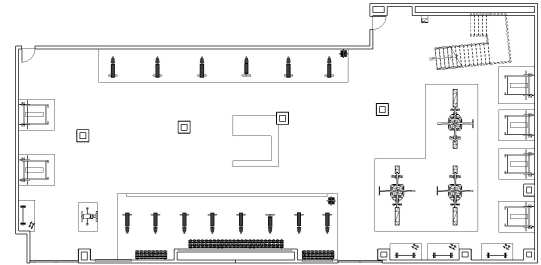
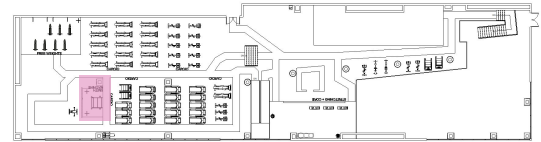
Jude is very nervous in gym environments and wishes to start by using the machines because that feels less vulnerable to them. Jude has limited gym experience and is only familiar with a few machines so far.

Solution

Instruction on machines via an application

Offering guidance on machines that are new to Jude without forcing them step further outside their comfort zone to ask another user or staff member.

Location:

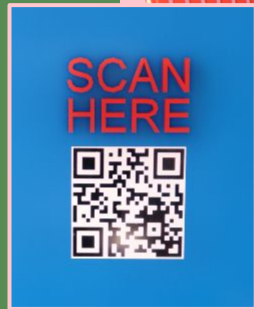


Solution 03

Machine Instruction

- Simple access to an online interface via QR codes placed by machines around the gym
- The interface outlines how to set up and use unfamiliar equipment

Solution 03: Machine Instruction



Delilah, 23

Cisgender Female

Gym Use

Frequency

6 Times/Week

Type

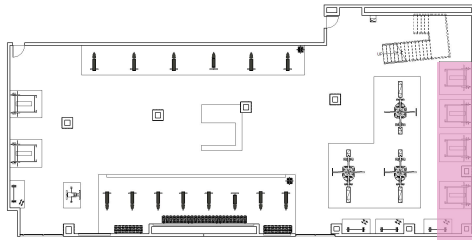
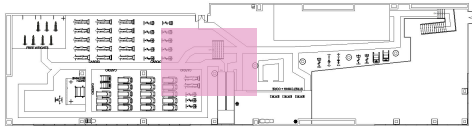
Strength Training, Endurance Training, and Cardio

Notes

On top of her participation in the gym environment, Delilah additionally is a member of RIT's Volleyball Team.



Location:



Delilah, 23

Cisgender Female

Problem

Congestion

Delilah has limited time in her schedule to make it to the gym and doesn't have the privilege of avoiding peak times. She often deals with congestion of popular areas.

Solution

Replacing unused equipment with more popular machinery

Implementing more of popular equipment and areas and reducing the less so.

Clarifying Spaces; Workout vs. Circulation

Creating clarity of stationary/circulation areas to ensure users aren't disrupting each other & help users move through the space confidently.

Solution 04

Clarifying Spaces

- Adding more of popular equipment such as squat racks
- Implementing pathways imbedded into the flooring
- Incorporation of ground labels for ease of direction for users who may be unfamiliar/new to with the space

Solution 04 A: Replacing Unused Equipment



Solution 04 B: Clarifying Spaces



Solution 04 B: Clarifying Spaces





Elijah, 42

Cisgender Male

Gym Use

Frequency

2-3 Times/Week

Type

Strength Training and Cardio

Notes

Elijah is a Mechanical Engineering professor at RIT. He likes to take advantage of the on-campus fitness facilities but sometimes feels awkward working out in front of the students.

Elijah, 42

Cisgender Male

Problem

Feels awkward working out in the same environment as students

Appreciates the value and convenience of having access to RIT's fitness facilities but would like to find times to go when there is a lower chance of running into his students there.

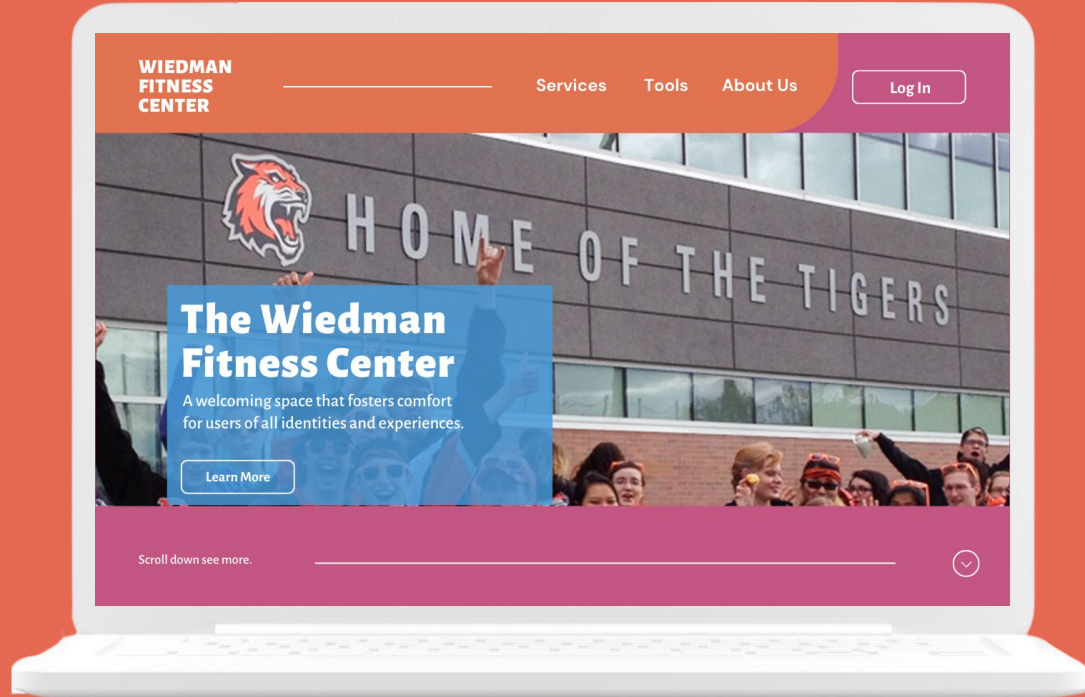
Solution

Access to interface outlining live facility occupancy

An easy to use interface that shows how many people are currently in the gym. This would allow Elijah to avoid peak times at the gym and limit the chances of running into his students.

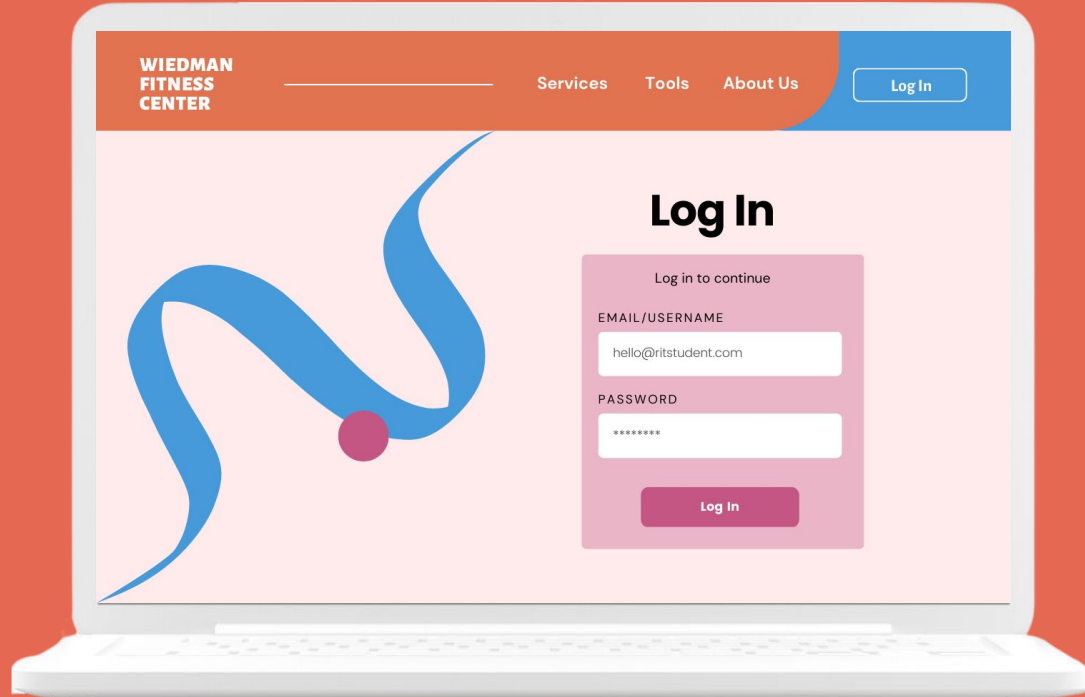
Solution 05: Online Interface

Home Page



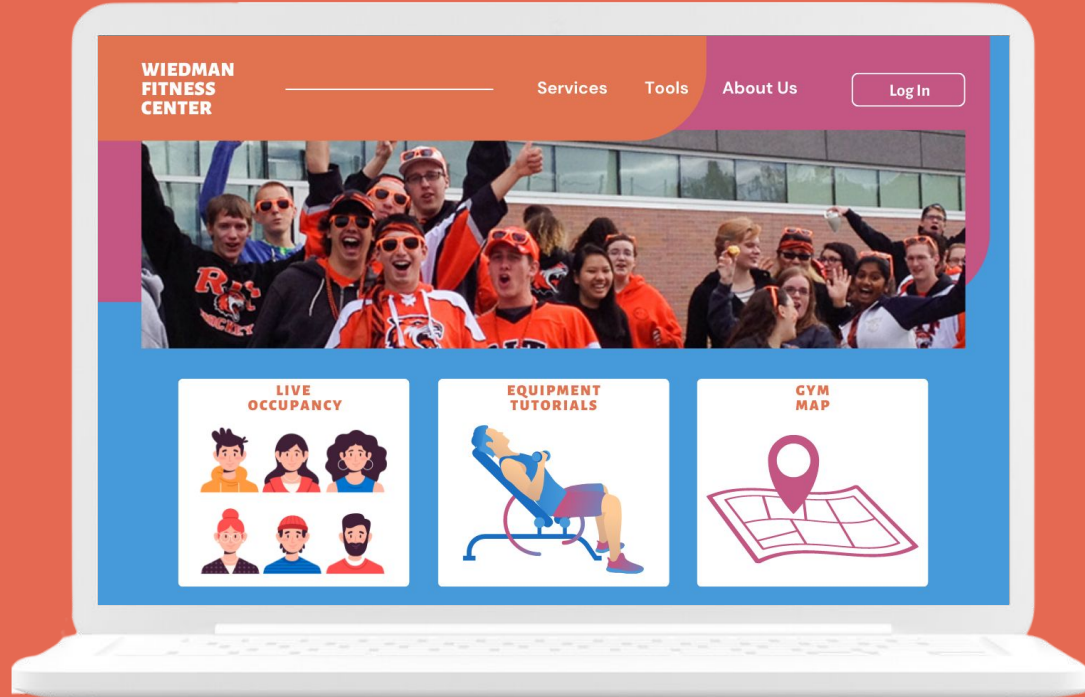
Solution 05: Online Interface

Log In



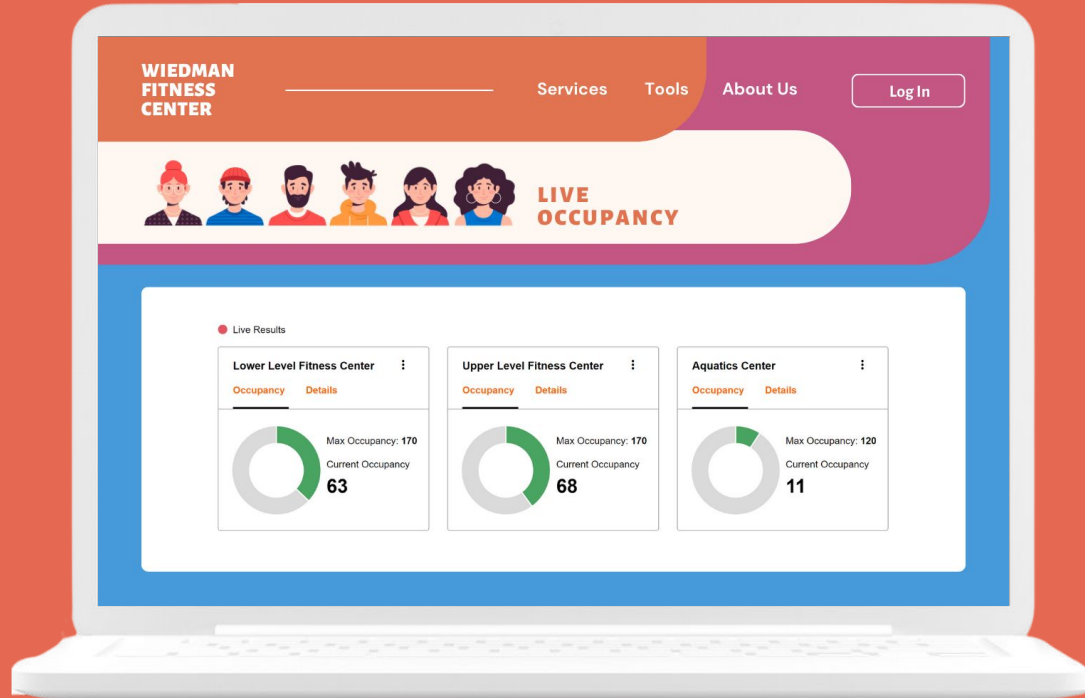
Solution 05: Online Interface

Tools



Solution 05: Online Interface

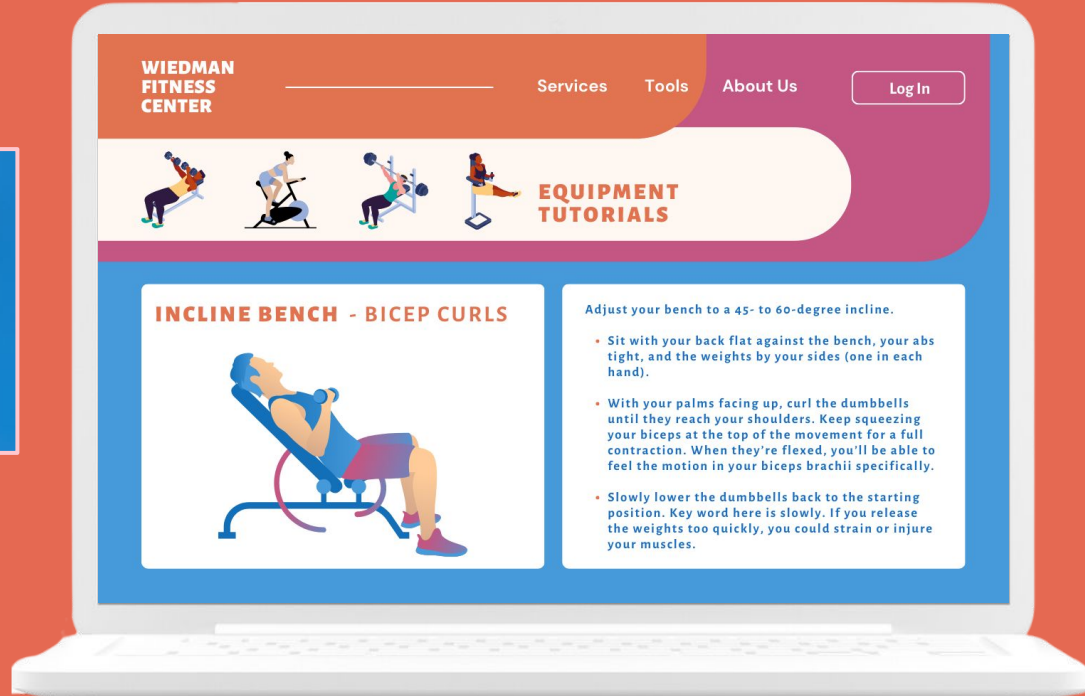
Live Occupancy



Solution 05: Online Interface

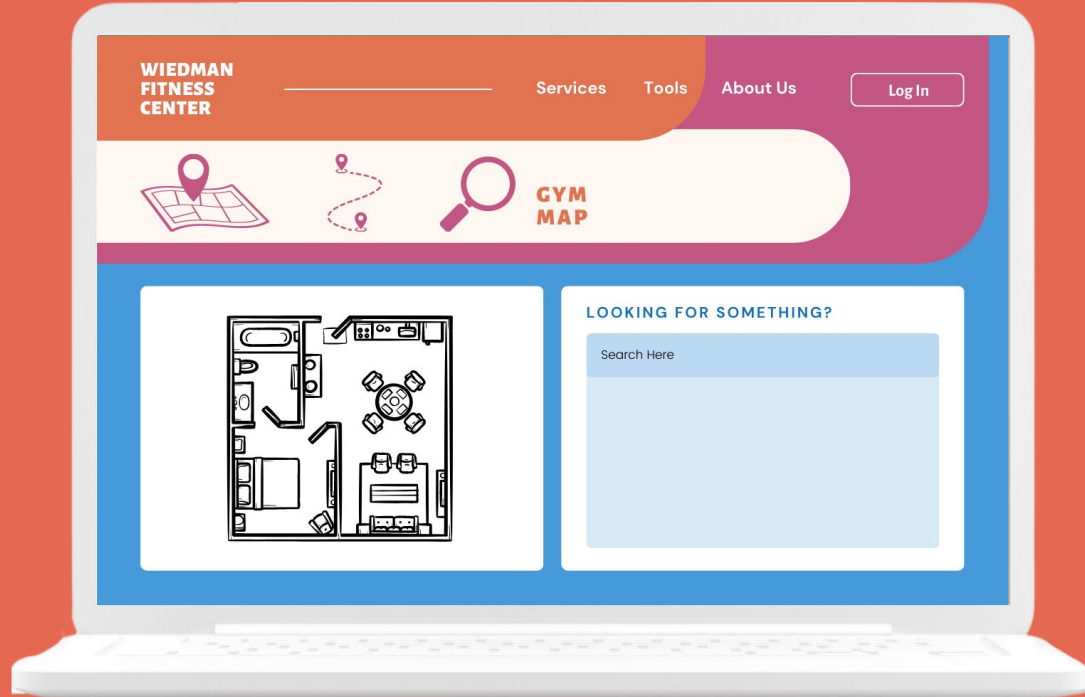
Equipment Tutorials

SCAN
HERE



Solution 05: Online Interface

Interactive Gym Map



THANK YOU