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Giving It All You've Got: The Value of Extending Hours in an Academic Health Sciences Library

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Giving it All You've Got: The Value of Extending Hours in an Academic Health Sciences Library

G.J. Corey Harmon and Kerry Sewell
Laupus Health Sciences Library, East Carolina University

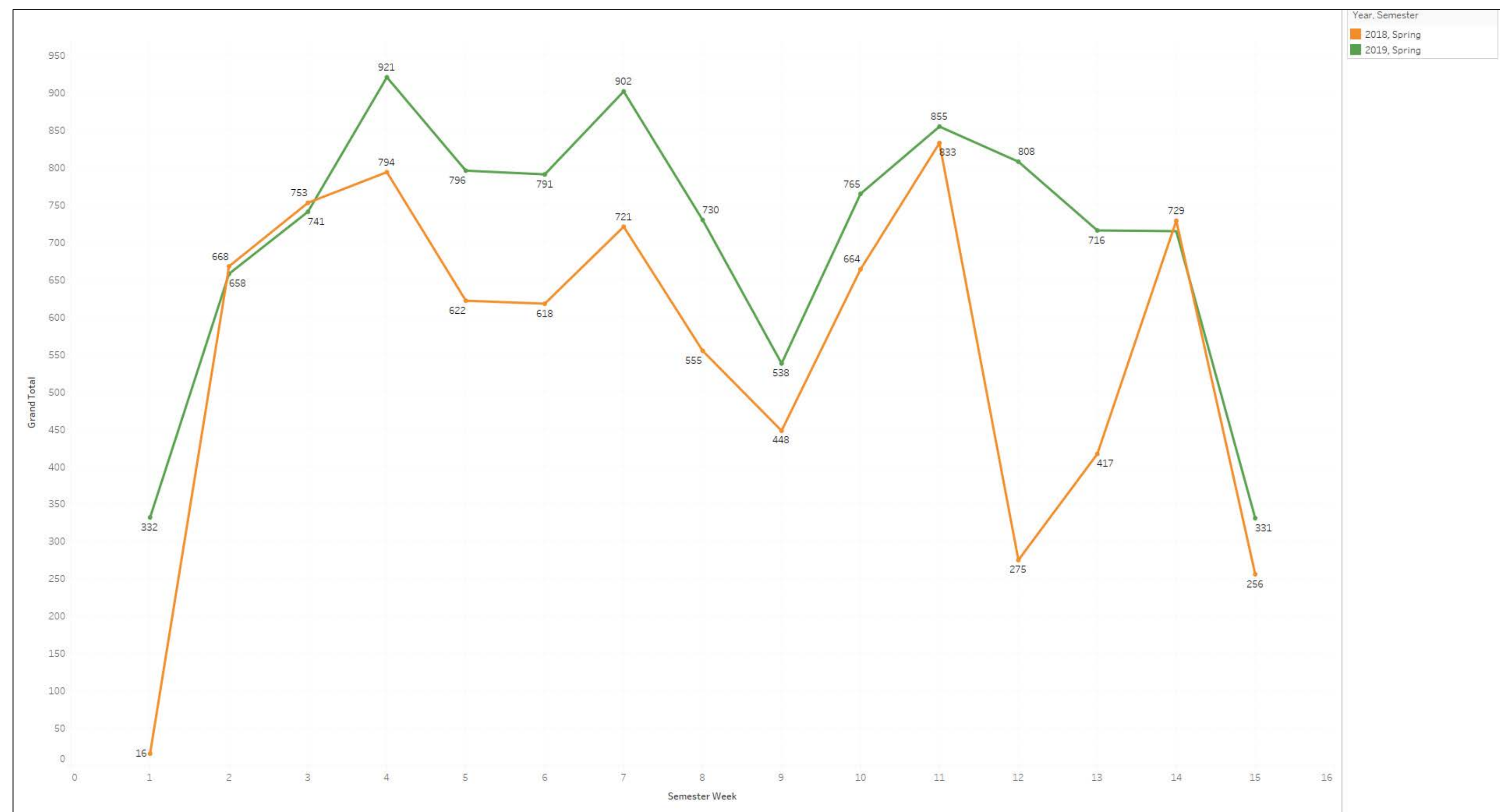


Gate Count Changes

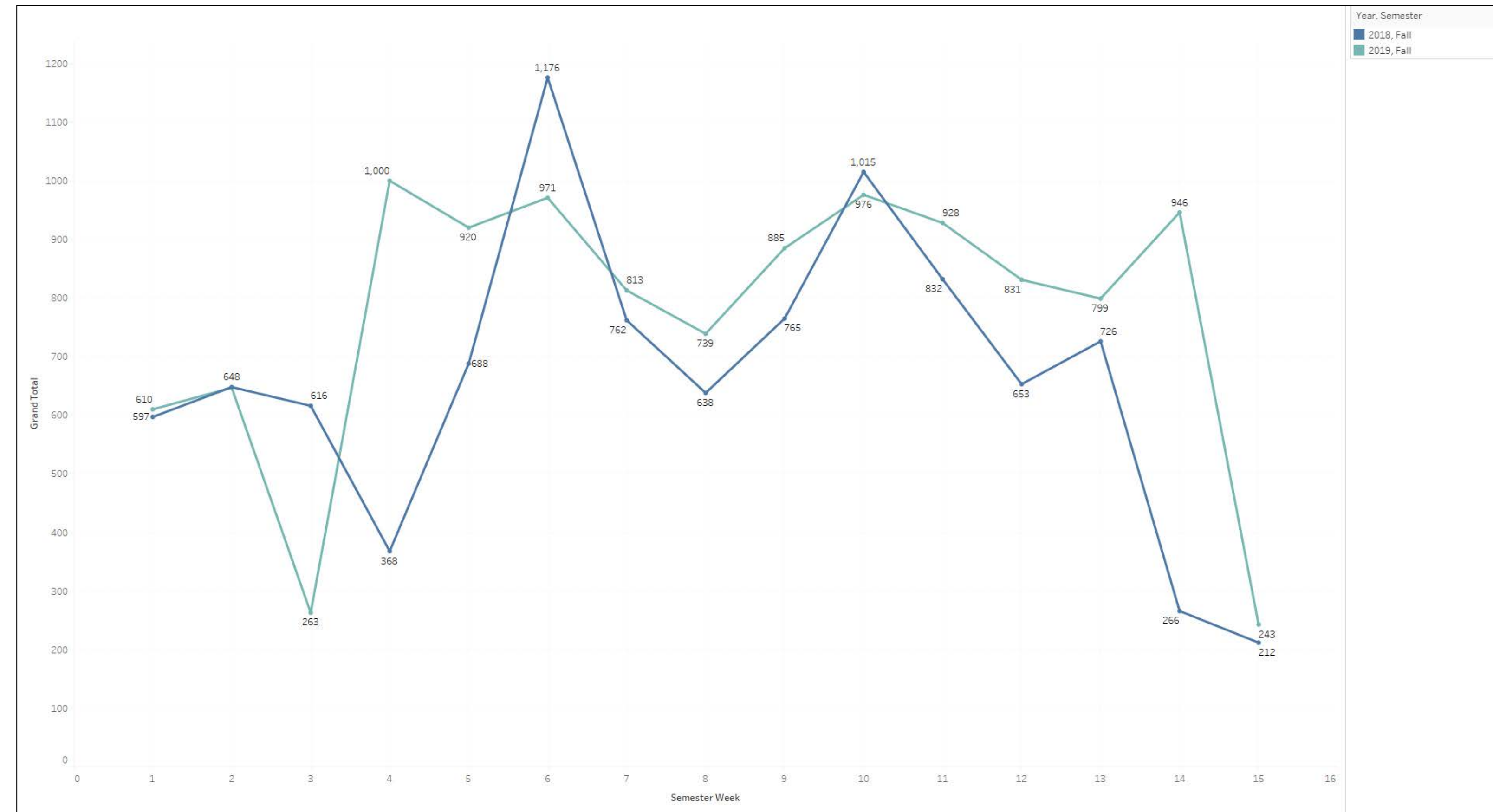
Effect of Extended Hours on Gate Counts (Exam Periods Excluded), by Weekend Day									
	Friday			Saturday			Sunday		
	Pre-Extended Hours	Post-Extended Hours	Percent Increase	Pre-Extended Hours	Post-Extended Hours	Percent Increase	Pre-Extended Hours	Post-Extended Hours	Percent Increase
Total Gate Count	10758	11515	7%	5424	7184	32%	8789	10397	18%
Gate Counts for Extended Hours of Operations		964			790			2155	
Extended Hours Gate Counts as % Total Daily Gate Count		8%			11%			21%	

Gate Counts by Semester and Week of the Semester Show Variability in Overall Use of Extended Hours

Spring Semester Gate Counts by Week of Semester, All Weekend Days

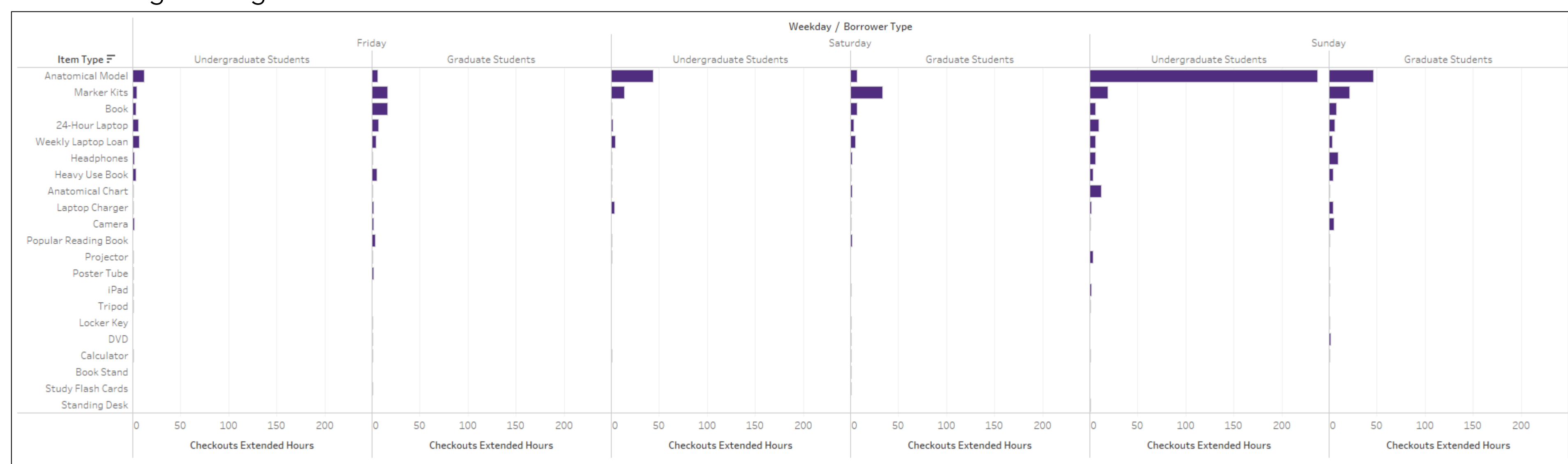


Fall Semester Gate Counts by Week of Semester, All Weekend Days



Changes in Circulation

What Are Students Using in the Library during Extended Hours? Analysis of Checkouts by Item Type during Extended Hours, by Student Degree Program Level



Background: University libraries' student satisfaction surveys regularly reveal student demand for increased operating hours to accommodate student learning. While academic libraries may provide extended hours, use of such models in academic health sciences libraries appears to be less widely adopted, perhaps due to budgetary concerns and lower general gate counts than academic library counterparts that may already provide extended hours. In the face of student demands, Laupus Health Sciences Library shifted its budget to provide an additional 10 weekend hours, between Friday and Sunday, to help meet these demands. Among the costs associated with this increase in hours, Laupus Library added an additional .5 FTE staff member and additional security guard hours.

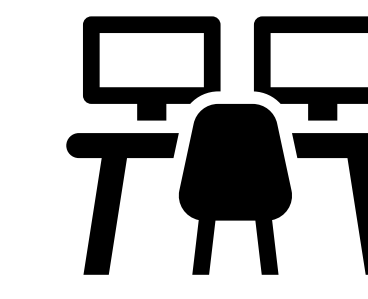
Objective: This study assessed the return on investment for those increased hours by tracking increased physical use of library spaces in the year following adoption of extended weekend operating hours.

Methods: This study utilized physical library usage data [gate counts, room reservations, and circulation transactions] for the time period January 2018-January 2020, restricted to Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. The date range allowed for comparison of weekend physical use statistics during one complete year pre-extended hours with one complete year post-extended hours data. For the two time periods, for all periods except exams, we ran descriptive statistics to assess the percent increase in physical library usage, with sub-analyses by patron type whenever data allowed.

Results: Laupus Library's statistics showed an increased use across all three of the physical usage data sets that we collected.

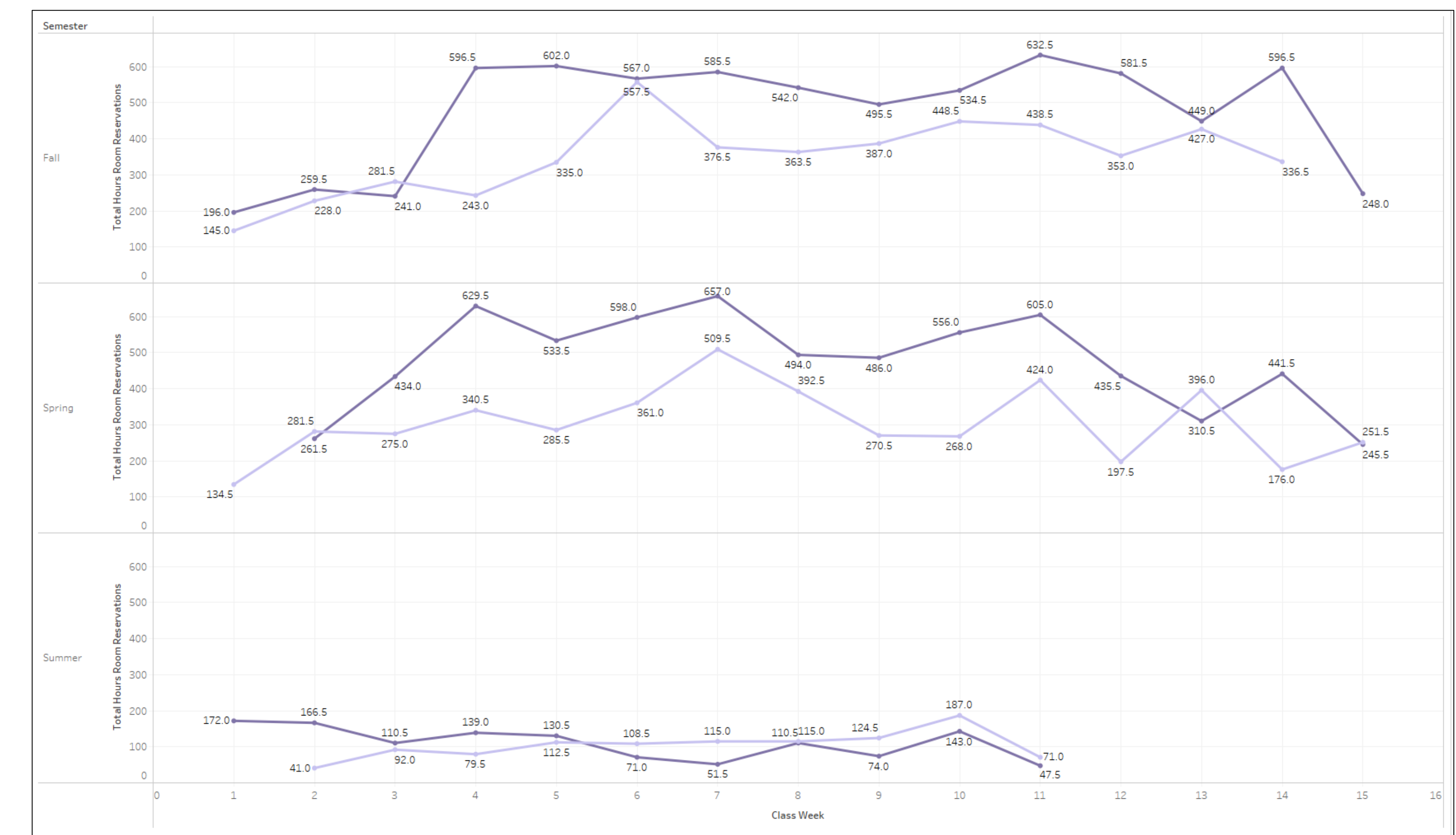
- Gate Count
 - Our gate count increased by 17% across all three weekend days following the increase in operational hours.
 - Extended hours also represented 8%, 11%, and 21% of the total gate count for Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays respectively.
- Room Reservations
 - We saw an upsurge in room reservations across all three weekend days with a 52.95% increase during the Spring Semester, a 38.81% increase in the Fall Semester, and a 9.16% increase during the Summer Semester.
 - Room reservations during the extended hours in 2019 accounted for 17.42%, 20.98%, and 18.92% of all reservations during the Spring, Fall, and Summer Semesters respectively.
- Circulation
 - Overall, we saw a 32.92% increase in circulation following the increase in hours. The biggest percentage increase occurred on Saturday (39.66%) followed by Sunday (34.66%) and Friday (22.86%).
 - Unsurprisingly, our anatomical models (library-use only) saw a large increase in use during extended hours.

Conclusions: Based on this data, we are confident that our Laupus Library attained a high return on investment from increasing our operational hours over the weekend.

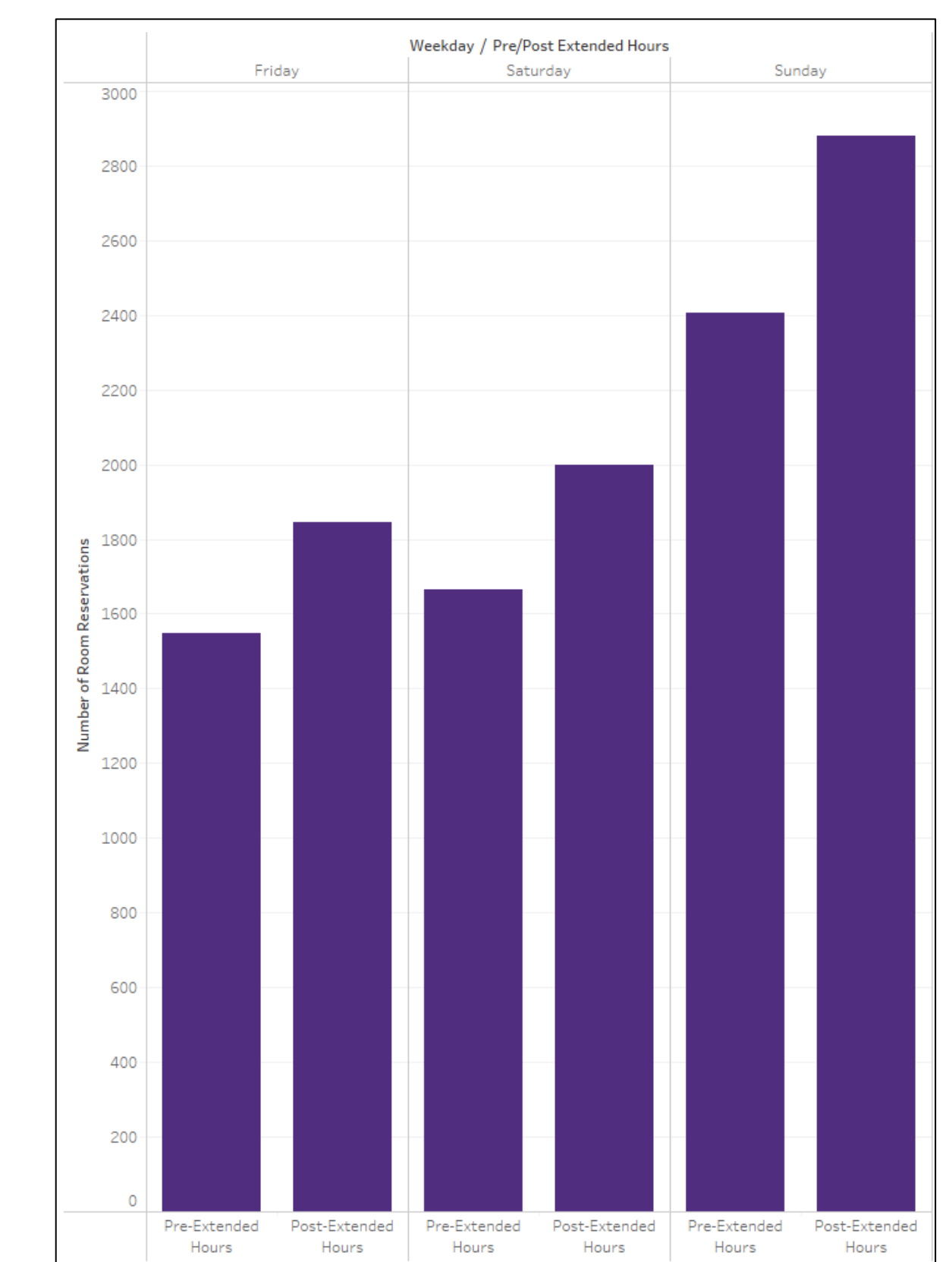


Study Room Reservation Changes

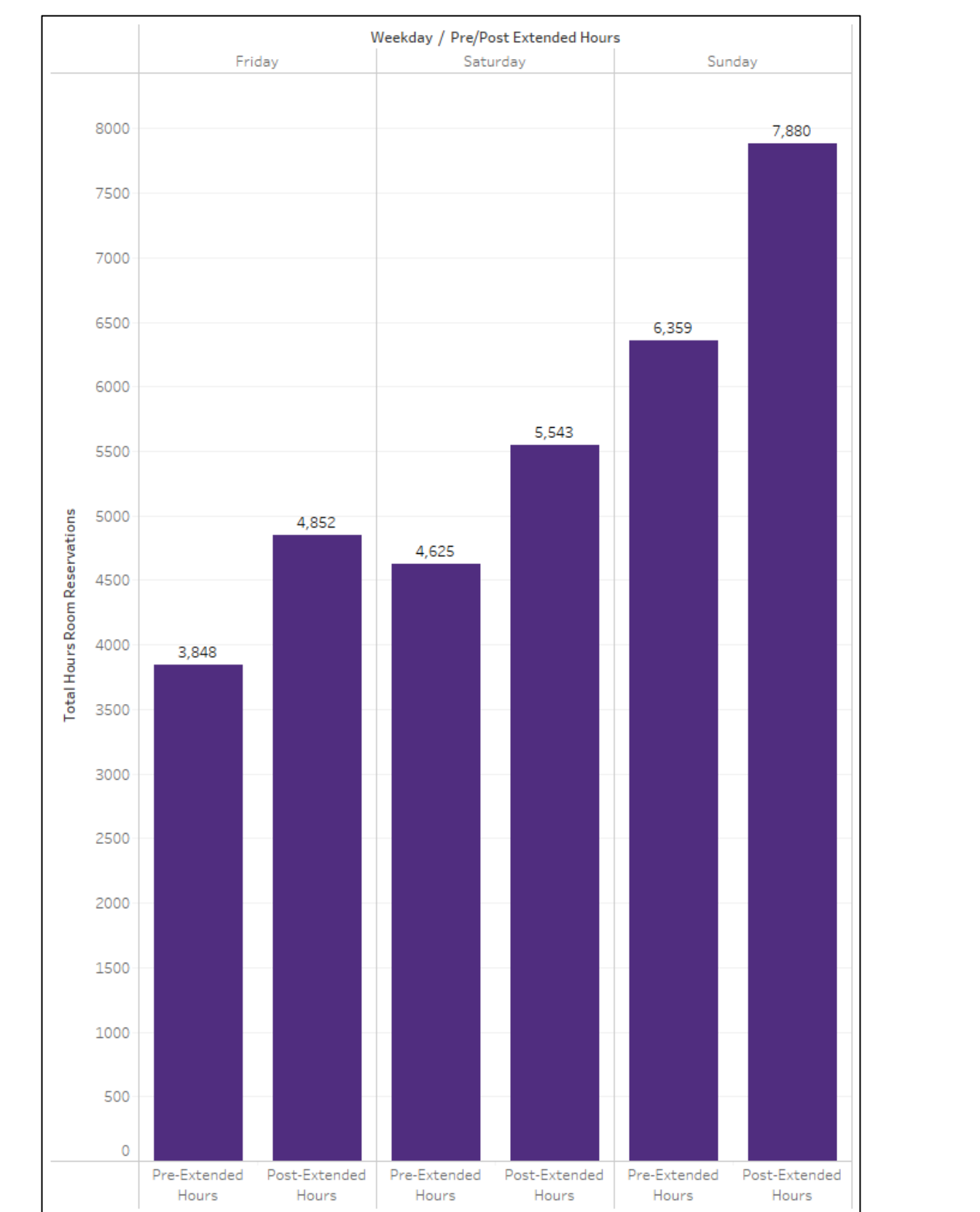
Changes in Total Hours of Room Reservations Across Academic Semesters by Week of the Semester, Pre- and Post-Extended Hours Implementation



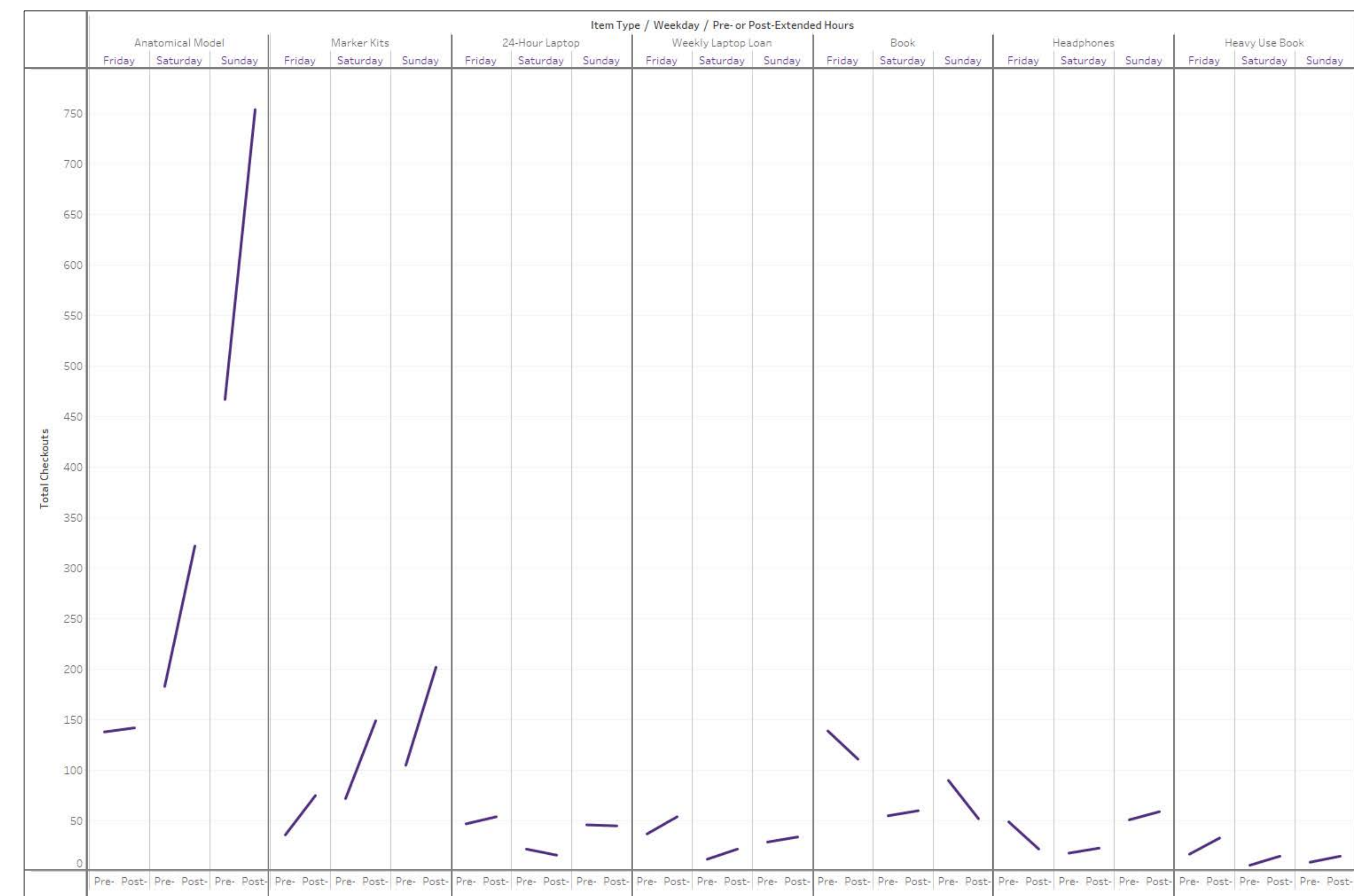
Change In Total Number of Room Reservations by Weekday, Pre- and Post-Extended Hours Implementation



Change In Total Hours of Room Reservations by Weekday, Pre- and Post-Extended Hours Implementation



Changes in Circulation by Item Type, Pre- and Post-Extended Hours Implementation, by Weekday



Changes in Circulation by Borrower Type, Including Faculty and Staff, Pre- and Post-Extended Hours Implementation

