Raether Map
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Raether Map is an Android application that allows users to locate Trinity Library materials (books, DVDs, CDs) and resources (printers, scanners, study rooms). When working part-time at the Library Circulation Desk, I noticed that the staff memberss need to help many students with finding books and other library materials. On busy days, like those at the beginning of the semester, it is challenging for two Circulation Desk staff memberss to help a long line of students in a timely manner. Besides asking for help at the Circulation Desk, students can take advantage of the paper maps or Google Maps. However, there are certain drawbacks to using these maps. The paper maps are not very intuitive to many students and do not keep up with the frequent changes of library materials' locations. On the other hand, Raether is well-mapped on Google Maps. However, Google Maps only shows us where things are. It does not provide a direct search for book's location or flexible search of library materials, such as search by topic or author. My senior project aims to solve this problem. Raether Map is a combination of library catalog and indoor mapping. The application displays the floor plan image of the level its user is currently on. On top of the image is a blue dot updated in real time to represent the user's current location. The flexible search tool allows its user to search for any item whose fields contain the entered query as long as the item is physically available in the library. Once the user hits Enter, all relevant results are displayed in an expandable bar that enables the user to have a full view of the map and at the same time refer to the current item's information if needed. The search tool gets direct access to the library's database system, thus guaranteeing search results' accuracy. When an item is selected and the user is on the floor where the item is located, a blue path is drawn from the user's current location to the item's location, represented by a red marker. This path is also updated in real time. With these features, Raether Map will immensely reduce the workload for Circulation Desk staffs, give users a more personal and visual book search experience, and adapt to the frequently changing location details of the library materials.