University Library spaces and hours: FY23 and beyond
Document shared with DIVCO, CAPRA, Council of Deans, department chairs, and University Library staff
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Executive summary

[The University Library](#) currently oversees 23 campus libraries and dozens of service points within those libraries. Within the context of a reduced budget and smaller workforce, evolving faculty and student needs and preferences, and campus priorities, the Library will be refreshing its long-term strategic plan during FY23. As part of that plan, the Library will confirm a sustainable vision for Library spaces and services informed by input from the campus community.

While those discussions are underway, the Library needs to temporarily adjust the services/hours of campus libraries for FY23. Services and hours for fall 2022 and spring 2023 are needed by mid-May 2022 to prepare the staffing and facilities for the next academic year.

The Library has considered many influences and factors -- such as quantitative and qualitative data, unique features of each library, and discussions with campus stakeholders -- which have informed our recommendations. In the 2021-2022 academic year Library leadership engaged with various groups to determine priorities for our services. The University Librarian met regularly with the Academic Senate Committee on the Library (LIBR) to provide updates and seek input. Library leaders also met with leaders from the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC), Graduate Assembly, Division of Undergraduate Education, Division of Student Affairs, Division of Academic Planning, as well as some deans, department chairs, and departmental library committees as issues arose related to specific campus libraries.

For FY23, the Library recommends:
- 11 libraries maintain normal services/hours, similar to the previous academic year: Bancroft Library

Bioscience, Natural Resources & Public Health Library
Chemistry & Chemical Engineering Library
East Asian Library
Engineering Library
Environmental Design Library
Main (Gardner) Stacks (access through Moffitt Library when Doe Library is closed)
Moffitt Library (reopening fall 2022)
Morrison Library
Music Library
Social Research Library

- <u>11 libraries adopt temporary adjusted service models</u> -- such as reduced hours, by appointment, unstaffed reading room, paging only, or study only -- for FY23:
Anthropology Library
Art History/Classics Library
Business Library
Doe Library
Earth Sciences & Map Library
Graduate Services
Mathematics Statistics Library
Media Resources Center
Newspaper & Microforms Library
Physics-Astronomy Library
South/Southeast Asia Library

The Northern Regional Library Facility (NRLF) budget and services are shaped by the UC Shared Library Facilities Board thus set aside from consideration in this document.

In May 2022, the Library needs to confirm the planned hours and service models for all campus libraries for FY23.The short timeline for implementation requires an accelerated process for vetting and confirming plans. Since these libraries serve many disciplines and user groups, the Library will discuss the FY23 plans with the Provost, Council of Deans, and key Academic Senate committees in spring 2022 to confirm a final decision.

By December 2022, the Library seeks to affirm a future vision of Library spaces, services, and operations that is sustainable with our anticipated resources. Ideally that future vision will be informed by and endorsed by students, faculty, staff, campus leadership, and Library staff. The Library will also assess the viability and impacts of the temporary service models adopted in FY23 as part of the consideration of space planning and the long-term health of the Library. The Library's process for proposing major changes to a campus library will be adapted to accommodate a proposal that includes major changes for several campus libraries as a package. In addition to the groups named above, the Library will discuss the longer-term vision for Library services, spaces, and collections with the broader campus community of faculty, students, and staff in fall 2022.

Problem statement

[The Library](#) is facing a significant structural budget deficit and in fall 2022 will be developing a new strategic plan and priorities to continue to deliver quality services that support the research, teaching, and learning mission of the university. In FY23 the Library must begin to reduce expenses to align with our revenue (we have been covering a structural deficit with reserves, but discretionary reserves have now been run down). The two largest portions of the Library's expenses are the acquisition and licensing budget and the personnel budget. In general, less reduction in one category will require greater reduction in the other. Library leadership and Library staff have shared suggestions internally for ways to scale back our expenses and reshape our services with attention to the varied priorities and needs of our diverse user populations, especially in light of our post-pandemic environment.

While Library staff care deeply about our campus libraries, there is widespread recognition that our current workforce cannot continue to support all the services and operations that we have to date. We reached an emergency state in spring 2022 when staff resignations required the Library to curtail services at two subject libraries. The Library is organizing a consultation process to take place in fall 2022 to confirm a longer-term vision for Library spaces and services with the campus community. For FY23 the Library needs to temporarily adjust the service models of some of our many campus libraries to operate within budget and align with our available staff and student workforce.

Specifically:

- In May 2022, the Library needs to confirm its operations and services plans for FY23. Due to the reduced operating budget for FY23, the Library needs to adopt temporary service model changes in multiple campus libraries. The scope of changes and the short timeline for confirmation, require a streamlined consultation process to include the Provost, Council of Deans, and Academic Senate committees by the end of spring semester 2022.

- By December 2022, the Library seeks to affirm a future vision of Library spaces, services, and operations that is sustainable with our anticipated resources. Ideally that future vision will be informed by and endorsed by students, faculty, staff, campus leadership, and Library staff. The Library has a formal process for proposing major changes to a campus library that includes campus consultation during a fall or spring semester. The first phase of the process generally takes a couple months to develop the proposed plan, a month for campus conversations and input, and a month for refinements and final decisions; if the recommendation is endorsed, the second phase of the process focuses on implementation and generally takes a year. Depending on the scale of the future vision, implementation of the full plan may take a couple of years.

Introduction

When one thinks of a library, the vision of a building with print collections and spaces to use those collections comes to mind. In an academic library, spaces for students and faculty to learn and research -- in some cases quietly and alone, and in other cases collaboratively and in groups -- are critical to advance the university's mission. Contemporary libraries and library staff ensure discovery and access to both print and digital information. Library staff are an essential component of a well-functioning library, ensuring the spaces are open, accessible, welcoming, productive, and catalytic places for the campus community and the broader general public; and ensuring access to scholarly resources in a timely manner.

The UC Berkeley University Library supports the research, teaching, and learning activities of our campus community, visiting scholars, and independent researchers. As of 2021 Berkeley enrolled 30,799 undergraduate students and 11,548 graduate students, with more than 1,600 faculty and over 350 degree programs in 130 academic departments and 80 interdisciplinary research units. The Library holds more than 13 million volumes and manages 23 campus libraries. Sustaining the services and operations of the UC Berkeley Library requires staff in dozens of areas of expertise — such as access services, acquisitions and licensing, collection management, instruction, research consultations, interlibrary lending and borrowing, archives, cataloging and metadata, digitization, preservation, scholarly communications, data services, information technology — with some services and spaces available 24 hours a day throughout the academic year.

The most essential component for the successful operation of our campus libraries is the Library staff. The people who work for the Library make it possible to sustain consistent and predictable hours of operation; hire and training staff and student employees who work at service points such as information desks and circulation desks; process, page, and deliver the print collections for users to checkout; ensure access to digital resources through our on-site computers and printers, and manage problems to ensure the safety and security of users and collections alike. Librarians complement these services by building and weeding the associated collections, providing instruction and research consultations, creating events and exhibits, and engaging with user groups to enhance their awareness and use of Library resources.

Influences

Library services are influenced by the needs, preferences, and priorities of our user communities. Within the campus community, undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty are three primary user communities. While there are also disciplinary, cultural, generational, and other variables, surveys reveal that these groups have different preferences and priorities. For example, on-campus spaces to study and meet are a high priority for undergraduate and graduate students; this is especially true at Berkeley where campus spaces provide a productive oasis different from their living environment. For those with personal offices and/or flexibility to work remotely, as is the case with most faculty, "library as place" is less important to their goals than the Library as the provider of access to scholarly content and

research material. Both groups also value the services provided by Library staff -- such as consultations, instruction, and digitization -- which are not necessarily bound by physical space. With an understanding of the various needs, preferences, and priorities of our user communities, the Library designs our menu of services with goals of supporting both the student experience and faculty productivity.

As the information landscape evolves, so do the methods of research and learning. The roles of the Library and of the Library staff evolve in tandem. For example, the Library continues to acquire research materials in print format which require processes for receiving, marking, cataloging, shelving, and checking them out. At the same time, more than half of the Library's collection budget is spent on digital content such as ejournals, ebooks, and datasets which require different skills for licensing, making them discoverable, and assisting people in using them. While the print materials are still valuable resources for research for many disciplines and users, they are just a portion of the full menu of research materials. Over the past few decades, research libraries have seen a steady decline in the number of print materials checked out. This is true at Berkeley as well. Continuing to make these collections accessible is a high priority, as is supporting users in finding and using the relevant resources in digital format and resources available through our shared print programs and partnerships with other UC Libraries and other peer research libraries across the country.

The campus context shapes the ways in which the Library must evolve. Innovative research and teaching spark changes in the academic curriculum. Social, technical, and environmental challenges require new approaches to ensuring reliable and steady service. The campus commitment to ensuring equitable and inclusive access highlights the need for new processes, and sometimes the need for new services altogether. With a growing campus population, the finite amount of campus space is a precious resource that is under constant consideration. The increasing enrollment has put special pressure on the central campus to provide many services to support the student experience, not least of which is study space. As the campus community grows and the Library budget shrinks, it seems clear that all student study space need not -- and indeed cannot -- be centered in and managed by the Library. Creating an appropriate atmosphere, ensuring user safety, maintaining clean and updated spaces and furniture, and providing core student services (such as printing) in those spaces is critical to their success but incur costs and require oversight that the Library has long provided as one of the unseen benefits to campus. Study spaces located in campus libraries require unique policies and tremendous overhead with the requirements to responsibly steward the access and preservation of the print collections co-located there. Study spaces outside of the Library do not need these requirements.

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically changed things. For the past decade Library staff sustained operations even with staffing gaps, but primarily through their deep dedication to stepping up to expanded roles, and their dogged commitment to hiring and training a large corps of student employees (600 students were employed annually by the Library pre-COVID-19). From the point campus pivoted to remote learning, the Library began reinventing its services nearly monthly. Some staff were identified to provide on-site services,

while others were asked to take on entirely new roles to support new work and services offered online. In fall 2021, with the return to on-site services, the campus community expected all the traditional services and operations to be restored as well as all the newly created services to be retained. At the same time, the Library workforce was smaller as a result of resignations and retirements from the previous years, the campus hiring freeze, and continuing deterioration in the Library's budget. Additionally all student employees had graduated, thus an entirely new group of hundreds of student library employees had to be hired and trained. Hiring, scheduling, and retaining student library employees has been particularly difficult since the pandemic. While the Library has nearly reached equilibrium with student staffing, the toll has been heaviest for the Library supervisors who, like many people in service industries, are exhausted and find themselves stretched too thinly. As additional staff resign, the Library has had to be selective in replacing positions in order to meet our anticipated budget reduction. Ultimately, the Library's budget determines the scope and scale of the menu of services that we can sustain.

Overview of library spaces

The Library currently oversees 23 campus libraries and dozens of service points within those libraries. A few libraries are in Library-managed buildings (such as Doe Library and East Asian Library), most libraries are embedded within other campus buildings (such as Bioscience, Natural Resources & Public Health Library in the Valley Life Science Building). These campus libraries are clustered in administrative groups, much like departments are clustered in Colleges or Schools. Currently the Access Services Division (which oversees libraries such as Doe and Main Stacks), Engineering & Physical Sciences Division (which oversees libraries such as Engineering and Physics/Astronomy), Life & Health Sciences Division (which oversees libraries such as Biosciences, Natural Resources & Public Health and Optometry), and Social Sciences Division (which oversees libraries such as Anthropology and Environmental Design) are all seriously impacted by staffing shortages in public services positions. There are also many other libraries and reading rooms that are managed by units, thus not within the scope of the University Library (such as the Ethnic Studies Library, Law Library, and Philosophy Library). The campus libraries managed by the Library are *not* departmental libraries. While subject libraries are focused on specific disciplines that describe the focus of the collections within, they serve students and faculty from all campus departments and programs and are considered holistically when the Library crafts policies, budgets, and services.

In response to changing user needs and campus realities, we adapt our library spaces. Over the past 20 years, the Library has refreshed many libraries including: East Asian Library, Bancroft Library, Music Library, Doe Library, Environmental Design Library, Physics-Astronomy Library, Social Research Library, Engineering Library, and the Chemistry & Chemical Engineering Library. Several have been dramatically reimagined including: Business Library (removal of collections), Moffitt Library (removal of collections, creation of a 24 hour library with collaborative and quiet spaces), and the Newspapers & Microforms Library (reduced footprint). Several have been closed and merged with other libraries including: Education/Psychology Library, Public Health Library, and Optometry & Health Sciences Library (as of fall 2022). A proposal to close the South/Southeast Asia Library in 2021 garnered heavy opposition from people on and

beyond the Berkeley campus community; that proposal was withdrawn. The Library recently completed renovations in several areas of Doe Library to support the long term plans for the Center for Connected Learning at Moffitt Library and the campus's space utilization goals. In the next several years the Library anticipates a temporary closure of the Engineering Library due to the Bechtel Project, the temporary closure of the Moffitt Library for the transformation to the Center for Connected Learning, and the closure of the Mathematics-Statistics Library due to the demolition of Evans Hall. To date most of the library closures have been triggered by facilities issues or academic changes determined by the broader campus.

The current constellation of 23 campus libraries and services is unsupportable with the Library's current staffing. Temporary service model changes need to be implemented in summer 2022; these might include interim solutions as we work toward the preferred long-term vision. In 2012, the Library was faced with a similar ebb in funding and reduced staffing and produced the Library Service Models report. On page 4, the recommendation is that the Library evolve to include "8-9 full service libraries" by consolidating collections, services, and staff that will better serve an increasingly interdisciplinary faculty and curriculum; providing extended open hours in more locations than many disciplines now receive; offering more opportunity for excellent service; and providing more flexibility to develop new and enhanced services in the long term. Operationally that vision allowed for more staffing in each location for increased collaboration and staff backup; reduced the staffing required for hiring and scheduling a large number of student employees across many locations and requiring remote supervision; and provided more stability in light of future budget reductions. Assuming the Library's permanent budget is not enhanced and the opportunity for creation of new spaces is not envisioned, this is the preferred recommendation of the Library again today.

Rather than endorsing the Library's recommendations in 2012, the campus launched a year-long review with a Commission on the Future of the Library. The Library defaulted to adopting a version of the other model proposed in the report which included 1-2 hub libraries in each disciplinary division with the remaining libraries having shorter hours and reduced services according to the available staffing. As staffing was further reduced and use continued to decline, the hours at some campus libraries were further curtailed. As campus returned to on-site services in fall 2021 and Moffitt Library was closed for seismic work in spring 2022, students clamored for more campus study spaces. The Library was not positioned to increase hours at the campus libraries, nor to take responsibility for overseeing additional campus spaces. Unfortunately, with staff resignations and slow hiring processes, over the academic year the Library is able to support fewer locations, services, and hours — not more.

The Library uses qualitative and quantitative data to identify patterns in user needs. See the Library data table for a snapshot of key data points (FY19 data included in some cases as that was the last date for consistent data prior to the pandemic). Circulation data indicates a decline in the number of printed materials checked out, thus the Library is investigating ways to merge collections together to continue to provide access efficiently. Similarly we gather patron count data that shows the number of people entering and exiting each library by hour, day, week, and

month, and use that information to determine where and when to expand or decrease scheduled hours.

The transition back to on-campus services during the pandemic has been challenging for all campus units in several ways, including communicating the realities related to staffing and service changes. In the 2021-2022 academic year Library leadership engaged with various groups to determine priorities for our services. The University Librarian met regularly with the Academic Senate Committee on the Library (LIBR) to provide updates and seek input. Library leaders also met with leaders from the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC), Graduate Assembly, Division of Undergraduate Education, Division of Student Affairs, Division of Academic Planning, as well as deans, department chairs, and departmental library committees as issues arose related to various campus libraries and services.

One of the most significant hurdles to implementing any new vision of Library spaces is the symbolism that some students and faculty associate with having an associated and physically local subject library as a measure of their department's value or prestige. Some graduate students note that they chose Berkeley largely because of the Library. Some undergraduate students note that they specifically seek out some of the smaller libraries precisely because they are less busy and less intimidating. As the Library explores ways to sustain excellence and enact diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging into our spaces and services, thoughtfulness about the value of different types of spaces beyond simple statistics matters.

Short-term decisions consider many factors such as which libraries, services, and hours are affected by the staffing gap; what activities or collections are unique to that library and could they be provided elsewhere; which of the group of libraries and services could be most easily shifted elsewhere quickly; which libraries and services have highest use and/or special partnerships (such as a general assignment classroom within the library) that would be affected; and what combination of library hours and services would best support the greatest number and broadest needs of Berkeley students and faculty, with the staffing available?

These are difficult choices — but critical ones — that we must make to ensure that Library patrons are able to continue their research and learning. At the same time we must ensure that Library staff are supported. The last several years have been tiring, especially for the Library staff who continued to work on-site throughout the pandemic. We did not return to this academic year able to resume all operations as they were pre-pandemic. Confirming the service models and hours for all campus libraries for FY23 and beyond is the best approach for restoring stability.

Service model options

Currently the Library has too few career staff to support all Library operations offered prior to the pandemic. There are four service model options appropriate for temporary actions and three service model options appropriate for permanent actions.

Paging-only location
Temporary action. Most of our campus libraries house print collections. The Library's primary responsibility is to handle access to and preservation of information resources. Changing a library to a paging-only location allows users to request items to be paged and delivered to another library for checkout. The library is closed, alleviating the need to staff the location all open hours. Part-time student library employees provide the majority of staffing at campus library desks and the scheduling of those students requires constant attention as they regularly drop shifts for which substitutes are needed, and because there are so many, with short shifts. With the current vacancies in career staff positions the Library lacks the supervisors who handle these schedules and who help fill the gaps.

Study-only location
Temporary action. Study spaces are one of the services most in demand currently. Depending on the layout of the library and nature of its collections,the Library may be able to block off the collection in order to convert the space to a study-only location. In this case the collection will be inaccessible for paging for the academic year. Another campus unit would take temporary responsibility for monitoring the space and responding to any safety and security issues for the academic year. The campus unit that is assuming temporary responsibility for the location and the Library both sign an MOU for the agreed upon period of this transfer. (If a library is permanently closed, the space might be transferred to another unit to manage as a study-only location.)

Reduced hours or 'by appointment'
Temporary or permanent action. If staffing is unavailable to ensure consistent service during posted hours, the Library will first consider reducing the hours to the minimum (e.g., Monday through Friday 1-5p). Depending on the use data for that location and the types of materials available at that location, the library may shift to provide access just by appointment (e.g. scheduled in advance with Library staff via an online calendar).

Unstaffed reading rooms
Temporary or permanent action. Libraries within Doe Library that have non-circulating collections can become unstaffed reading rooms; users would be stopped at the exits to Doe Library if they have materials they have not checked out. Outside of Doe Library, only those campus libraries without collections could use this model. Measures such as intermittent rovers for safety/security checks and installation of Cal1 Card readers to help manage access could be explored.

Merger (with closure)
Permanent action. Two or more libraries may be merged into one, with the other(s) closed. A portion of the collections from each of the libraries must be withdrawn or sent to off-site shelving at NRLF (requires approval of the Shared Library Facility Board and a per book deposit fee), with the on-campus collections integrated. Merging libraries generally takes a year (depending on the load of simultaneous projects). The former Library space returns to central campus assignment by the Space Assignments and Capital Improvement Committee (SACI). Due to the

dearth of common spaces for Berkeley undergraduate and graduate students, priority for reassignment of the former Library space would ideally be given to units committing to support it to enhance the student experience and provide long-hour study, collaboration, and community space for Berkeley students regardless of their department or major.