



CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

March 2021

With this Call for Comment — issued by UC Berkeley’s University Librarian Jeffrey MacKie-Mason, College of Letters & Science’s Division of Arts & Humanities Dean Anthony Cascardi, and Division of Social Sciences Dean Raka Ray — we encourage all interested parties to carefully read the Library’s proposed plan for the South/Southeast Asia Library at UC Berkeley and to share comments and recommendations.

The comment period is open through Friday, April 9, 2021. We invite you to submit comments via email to libraryforum@lists.berkeley.edu.

In addition to aiding University Librarian MacKie-Mason and Deans Cascardi and Ray, comments will be reviewed by the Academic Senate Library Committee (composed of faculty, a representative of campus librarians, and students). Consideration will be given to all suggestions; most helpful are ideas that take into account the academic and scholarly needs of students and faculty at UC Berkeley and enhance the mission of the Library and the University. Revisions to the proposed plan may be made in light of public comment. A final decision will be shared publicly by May 2021.

Proposal for the South/Southeast Asia Library

The University Library has developed a proposed vision for the South/Southeast Asia Library collections and services to be integrated with the Doe Library and Gardner (MAIN) Stacks in 2021. The [Commission on the Future of the UC Berkeley Library report](#) (2013) asserted that the consolidation of campus libraries “could reduce costs, increase efficiency, and improve the quality of collection development and service delivery to both students and faculty,” and encouraged the University Librarian to work with academic leaders to “identify where and how space usage can be improved for user communities and service delivery better attuned to the needs of users.” In recent years the Library has closed, merged, and re-envisioned several campus libraries in response to changing user needs, emerging programs, and campus space-planning decisions. In making our decisions, we consider usage patterns and data as well as the evolving needs of Berkeley research and scholarship.

One major project, the Center for Connected Learning (CCL) at Moffitt Library, will be an important step forward in enabling the Library to better support student learning and engagement. To construct the Center for Connected Learning, we will be making substantial renovations to Moffitt that will increase space available to users. This requires relocating core Library staff and operations currently located in 100,000 sq. ft. of Moffitt to Doe Library, which in turn requires redesigning parts of Doe to accommodate these core functions.

Planning for the Doe renovation will occur March-May 2021. This renovation will touch many spaces throughout Doe, including on the first floor south corridor adjacent to the South/Southeast Asia Library’s current location. This proposal outlines plans to integrate the collections, services, and staffing of the South/Southeast Asia Library with the rest of Doe Library. By redesigning the Doe South corridor, the Metadata and Acquisitions units currently in Moffitt will be relocated next to the Business Office, which will improve workflows between these departments and allow us to make new collections available faster.

The South/Southeast Asia Library, located in the southwest corner of Doe Library’s first floor, houses a collection of about 6,400 reference materials and periodicals which are largely focused on the humanities and social

sciences for the countries in these regions; about 2,700 of these items are possible duplicates with collections in other campus libraries. The research interests of faculty and students focused on South and Southeast Asia are multilingual and highly interdisciplinary. The majority of the Library's research collections for these interests, curated largely by the librarian-curators of the South/Southeast Asian Library, are located in the Gardner (MAIN) Stacks and Northern Regional Library Facility (NRLF) with other holdings in The Bancroft Library, Newspaper/Microforms Library, Media Resources Center, and East Asian Library. The proposed relocation will reduce the number of disparate locations, bringing related materials into closer proximity. The South/Southeast Asia Library is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. With 40 seats, this is the smallest of our campus libraries and attracts the lowest foot traffic. The South/Southeast Asia Library is often the location for exhibits and events that celebrate scholarship and community for the Department of South & Southeast Asian Studies and related campus centers. Deans Cascardi and Ray and University Librarian MacKie-Mason will help ensure that other spaces will be sought to accommodate the gathering and exhibiting functions served by the current room.

Doe Library is the primary campus library for many social sciences, humanities, and international and area studies departments. On the second floor, Doe Library has a reference collection and current periodicals collection that includes materials selected by the librarians and curators from many disciplines. Doe Library is generally open 8 a.m.-9 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. weekends, providing access to those materials for extended hours, and with reference services available nearby. The circulating collection of Doe and Moffitt libraries is located in Gardner (MAIN) Stacks with 2.5 million items and open even longer hours — many days until 2 a.m. The proposed integration — merging the South/Southeast Asia Library collection into Doe reference, Doe current periodicals, and Gardner (MAIN) Stacks — would greatly increase user access to these collections and be more efficient for the Library to maintain. Items that need to remain non-circulating will move to Doe reference; items that can be changed to circulating status will be transferred to Gardner (MAIN) Stacks and the Northern Regional Library Facility (NRLF). This proposed change would integrate collections and reference support for South and Southeast Asian Studies with other humanities, social sciences, and area studies within Doe Library.

The year-long closure due to COVID-19 has prompted the Library to take a fresh look at how we should evolve our services, spaces, and staff to best support campus and user needs for the future. New procedures are being developed to more quickly process newly-acquired materials and get them to the shelves for users. The Library is committed to sustaining its research collections (print and digital) to support the research needs of our faculty and students, including developing distinctive collections that align with current research interests of the Berkeley community. Collection development includes new approaches for sustaining strengths and stretching resources through cooperative relationships with peer institutions. New tools have been implemented to support reference and research consultations for longer hours and for users working remotely. Librarians and curators are working even more collaboratively to provide research and teaching services to students and faculty. Bringing the two librarian-curators from the South/Southeast Asia Library to new office spaces in Doe Library, closer to their Arts & Humanities Division colleagues, will also lead to greater opportunities for deeper partnerships and sharing of best practices. As they have historically, the librarian-curators may continue to develop in-person and online exhibits and events that promote the advancement of research, teaching, and learning for their disciplines. Continued close connections with the departments, centers, and faculty are strongly encouraged, such as those exhibited in honoring the intellectual legacy of Professor Jeff Hadler.

The proposed plan continues to support the departments and disciplines with the same level of librarian-curator support provided today. The integration of the South/Southeast Asia Library aligns with the vision identified in the [University Library Strategic Plan 2017-2021](#). The proposed changes to collections and space usage will continue to support faculty and students with relevant library expertise, scholarly resources, and user-focused spaces and to ensure the viability and integrity of Library support for the future.