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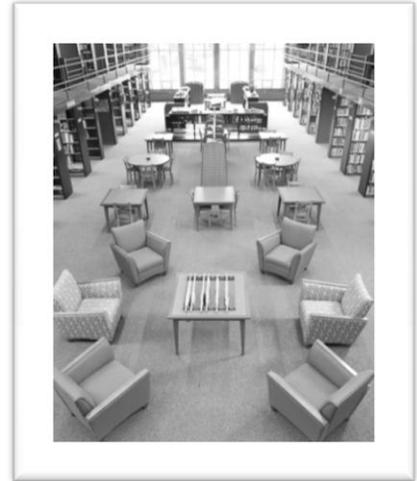


The Art of Detail™

The Changing Face of the College Campus

Increasing Demands and Expectations for Academic Libraries

Never before in history have so many people – on their own – had the ability to find so much information about so many things and about so many other people.



Easily re-configured reading areas



Open and inviting entrance and front desk

Photo's of The James Prendergast Library in Jamestown, New York.



Movable bookcases

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES OF TODAY – CHANGING NEEDS ON A CHANGING CAMPUS



The college campus of today is undergoing a transformation that will promote learning in all spaces. This same thing is being seen in the academic library, leading to a rethinking and reorganizing. Based on new approaches to learning the college student of today has increased demands and expectations for academic libraries. In order to meet the changes in the learning styles in the college campuses, libraries will need to include a variety of spaces for consultation, collaboration, and instruction to foster varied learning needs. The investment in the library will lead to increasing areas for dynamic learning.

Today's students learn by accessing knowledge and exploring new ideas with their peers, learning in isolation is no longer an option. The library of today needs to be a dynamic learning space, not just a place for quiet reading. The changes going on in the classroom are beginning to migrate into the rest of the campus. The classroom experience is moving out to other spaces so collaborative teaching and learning can happen.

Flexibility has become a key factor in the library footprint. This is seen in the seating, the bookcases, and the tables. Flexible furniture supports the evolution of the library into a resource center. The majority of space must be capable of adapting to changes in use.

PLANNING

To ensure a project is well thought out the students, library staff, faculty, and IT personnel should be invited to participate early in the planning process.

An inviting and welcoming entrance is important to the project. This area should have an abundance of display space to showcase work, promote artists, books, or school projects. There should also be areas for teaching, learning and project work. Another important aspect of the updated college campus is flexibility. The final thought is with the traffic flow. There are many considerations when allocating and organizing the library space, some of these include the prime real estate of the first floor that should be reserved for more public functions such as commons, group study areas, collaboration zones, and help or circulation areas. In addition, the academic program areas tend to work better in areas on upper floors, away from public zones. The basement is a good place for archives and stacks. It is important to the overall plan to keep the floor plans open and spacious with a logical workflow, while keeping clear sight lines. Finally, it is important to plan for adequate technology use.

TECHNOLOGY

Today's high school graduates are the first generation to grow up with technology, this has led to changing needs in the learning environment as well as the library. Because of the changing technology the typical library setting is beginning to see a need to be redesigned and repurposed.

This changing technology is causing libraries to evolve into resource centers where people gather and socialize. The new uses and increased traffic flow can lead to security issues. Libraries must rethink all aspects of their operation to manage these security issues. Unsupervised areas, theft of personal property and library materials, unsecured doors, non-student visitors, vandalism, and food and drink enforcement are just a few areas of concern.

Library spaces should be filled with technology. This may include:

- Wireless internet and printing access
- Readily accessible public computers with basic software and internet connections
- Distance learning classrooms that provide videoconferencing capabilities and electronic flip charts to share information both graphically and electronically
- Practice presentation rooms equipped with projection systems and conference tables
- Advanced computing centers with the latest video, graphics, and science software
- Lockers with built-in outlets for charging personal devices such as cell phones and laptops
- Outsourcing, online research data services, and shared access to collections
- New generations of computer hardware and software
- The yet-to-be defined role of electronic readers such as Kindle and the iPad
- What's coming in the future



Today's libraries have four key needs:

- 1. Collaborative, meeting and break out areas**
 - Lounge areas
 - Cafe' areas
 - Computer/technology area
- 2. Individual contemplative spaces**
 - Study areas
 - Quiet study/recreational reading area
- 3. Collection storage and display**
 - Reference area
 - Multimedia production area
- 4. Staff work space**

The new academic library is designed for students to collaborate, enjoy fellowship, engage in healthy debate, create and challenge ideas, and experience learning and discovery in a multitude of meaningful ways.

When students are allowed to reconfigure their work environment, they will find ways to create the most conducive environment for collaboration and optimal learning in an effort to maximize flexibility in spaces and infrastructure. The traditional reading rooms and stacks are giving way to areas such as computer commons, social networking areas, places for quiet reflection, presentation spaces, and even cafes', the facility will house multiple areas and services, meaning that students will need clear signage and assistance so they can easily find the areas they need for a specific academic, research or social activity.

Today's college students have heightened expectations and demands for academic libraries based on new approaches to learning. The new academic library model provides a forum for students to collaborate, enjoy fellowship, engage in healthy debate, create and challenge ideas, and experience learning and discovery in a multitude of meaningful ways. It is also a place to search for knowledge, surf the net or gather with friends. The commons has become the heart and soul of the academic library – also known as “information commons”, “learning commons”, “intellectual commons”, “electronic commons”, or “e-commons”.

The academic library has many different uses today:

- Convenient spot between classes
- Place to socialize with others and to be motivated by them
- Where to collaborate on group work
- Close to many resources
- A safe, non-distracting place to study
- Where collections are on reserve
- The place for computing software, copying, printing, scanning
- A great atmosphere

The majority of space must be capable of adapting to changes in use with flexible furniture supporting the evolution of the library into a resource center so that it remains a viable student space in numerous ways. Since everybody learns in different ways – it is critical to create a variety of spaces for students. The library should support student collaboration and group work, the dominant instruction and learning style today. The traditional reference section is already giving way to increased usage of computers for primary research on the Web. The circulation desk, where books are checked out and returned, may be replaced with multiple mobile locations using highly automated services. One of the keys to accommodating this evolution is furniture flexibility. Modularity of furniture is important so that students can be off by themselves for privacy or teaming together for projects. The addition of soft seating is especially useful for creating a comfortable environment that encourages students to read books, which is so critical to their development. In addition, the use of flexible seating in terms of stackable chairs also allows library space to easily be reconfigured for various functions.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE...



Academic libraries are becoming hubs for specialty spaces:

- **Tutoring centers**
- **Writing centers**
- **Group study rooms**
- **Presentation rooms**
- **Seminar rooms and classrooms**
- **Distance learning rooms with access to video conferencing software**
- **Cafes and light dining venues**

Library Design Questions

General Information

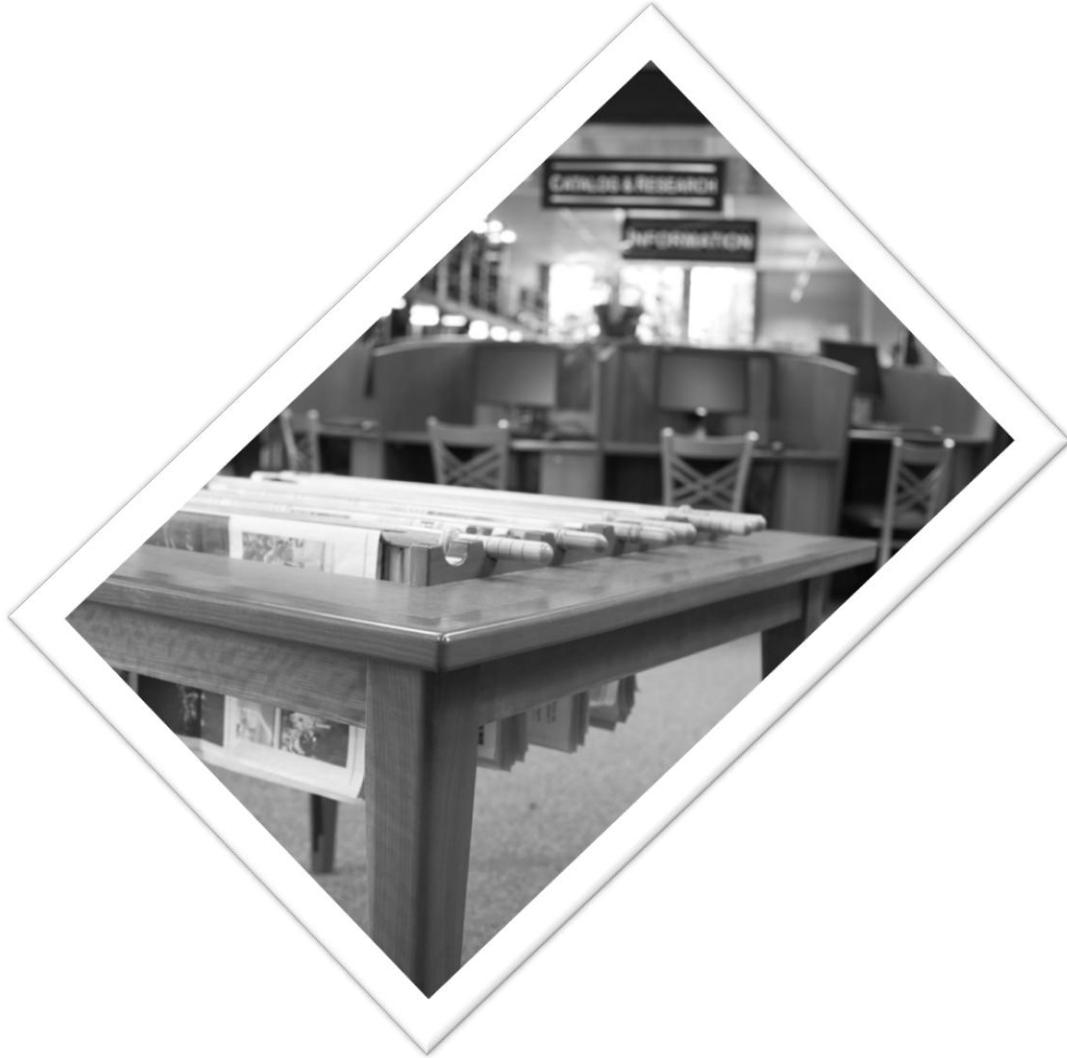
- Know your parameters in regards to scope of the project, space, money available, etc.
- Do you have anything currently in your library that needs to be incorporated into a new design?
- How many square feet is your library?

Space Needs

- Do you need a display cabinet in an entry or central area?
- Do you need a coat rack area?
- Do you need an art project area?
- Do you need a book return area?
- Do you need flexible areas – these are areas that serve more than one purpose.
- Do you want a café area – to create a more relaxed environment.
- Do you need a seating area – consider soft seating for your casual reading area.
- Do you need a place for people to be able to search for books – a computer search area.

Functional Needs

- Do you want study carrels for individual work or tables for collaborative work or both?
- Do you want ports nearby to plug in computers or is the library wireless?
- How many study carrels/computer stations do you need?
- How much closed storage do you need – does it need to be lockable?
- How many square feet of bookcase space is needed by type (face area):
 - Non-fiction
 - Young adult
 - Youth
- Do you want magazine racks?
- How many seats would you like to have in your seating area?
- Do you need moveable bookcases to create open spaces for meeting areas?
 - We're seeing a lot of freestanding shelving being put on caster bases for mobility – the library can quickly be reconfigured to allow for functions such as meetings or presentations – it also allows the librarian to effectively configure the space to accommodate various groups and the corresponding curricula
- Will you have a screen or flat panel anywhere in the library?



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