

Vision for the Future of Library Space

The Role of the Library Today

UC Davis has changed dramatically over the past 25 years. The student body grew by 50 percent — from 22,000 students in 1992 to more than 35,000 today — and is expected to continue to grow.

At the same time, collaboration, teamwork, digital technology and data science have become increasingly important in academic life. How we work and study — and how we access, use and share information — has been transformed.

Yet, beyond the deployment of computers and wifi, the library facilities on the main Davis campus have remained fundamentally unchanged since the newest wing of the Peter J. Shields Library opened in 1990.

Changes in Library Use

The way students and faculty use the library has changed over the past 25 years, as well. Study of library use, as well as interviews and focus groups with UC Davis students and faculty, indicate that:

- Use of the library's physical collections is declining.
- At the same time, use of the library's physical space is growing — particularly among students, who make up 93% of library visitors.
- Students are seeking more work spaces to accommodate a diverse range of needs, from meeting spaces equipped with display technology that facilitates group work, to places where they can access digital research and media editing tools.

The Opportunity

In early 2016, the campus ran an online game called *Envision UC Davis* to crowdsource a vision for the future of the university. The #1 “thing to do today” ([see page 11 of the report](#)) was to “enhance and extend the library” as “a hub of technology and learning.”

What is library space planning?

The goal of space planning is to reimagine how the library's physical facilities can evolve to best meet the needs of the UC Davis community now and into the future.

Space planning is a long-term process. It begins with a **vision** for how the library's role as the academic heart of campus comes to life through space and building design. That vision will inform the top priorities for renovations and development of corresponding architectural plans.

Building renovations will take place in stages, based on campus priorities, as funds become available. This phased approach will also enable the library to remain open even while renovations are underway.

The library completed the first phase of the space planning process — visioning — in 2016. While the resulting **Facility Vision + Space Playbook** focuses on new library spaces in order to guide the work of the architects and designers who will create them, the library will continue its enduring functions as a study space and a home for physical collections.

The library is the principal shared academic resource that is equally accessible to students and faculty in all disciplines. In establishing priorities for its future — including which new resources, technology and workspaces will most enhance the teaching, learning and research missions of the university — the library will continue to seek input from across the campus community.

That same year, the library undertook its own campuswide engagement process, facilitated by brightspot strategy, llc, to inform the development of a vision for future renovations of the library spaces on the Davis campus, particularly its flagship facility, the Peter J. Shields Library.

brightspot's research revealed that today's students and faculty expect three key experiences, which are consistent with the library's vision:

- Accessing information in all forms, both print and digital;
- Engaging with information to create new knowledge; and
- Connecting with others in an academic hub at the center of campus.

Today, UC Davis has an opportunity to reimagine how we use our library space to meet these needs.

How can we modify our space to make the library more welcoming for students?

What technologies can we provide to facilitate research, learning and collaboration?

What new kinds of spaces would enable interdisciplinary dialogue, innovation and discovery?

UC Davis Library Vision

The library is the academic hub of UC Davis, advancing research, education and innovation in a networked world.

It will be an interdisciplinary resource for the entire community that enables transformative research and education through its provision of critical scholarship, tools and services.

As we explore these possibilities, we are fortunate that Shields Library is large enough — at 350,000 square feet, it is nearly the size of the Sacramento Convention Center — to accommodate many current and future needs. By making efficient use of Shields, there is enough space to continue to offer on-site access to physical collections, while also adding new shared technology resources, immersive learning and research environments, and more spaces for independent study, collaborative work, one-on-one consultations and workshops.

The Vision

Over time, space planning may expand what the UC Davis Library has to offer in many ways — with new technology; new spaces for teaching, learning and idea-sharing; and a fuller integration of digital and traditional research. To start, we have worked with our campus partners to identify three initial priorities. The *Facility Vision + Space Playbook* includes specific changes for the campus to consider that could support each one. The library has identified spaces for these initial improvements that would achieve key campus priorities with minimal disruption to current services and collections.

1. Create a more welcoming, versatile and contemporary environment for UC Davis students.

For some undergraduates, the transition from high school to college can be intimidating, even overwhelming. The library should be a comfortable, welcoming and supportive environment for our students. Potential changes include:

- **First impressions:** Make the entrance and main lobby of Shields Library more welcoming. Make library services and personnel who are available to help students more accessible and readily visible. (See pages 13, 24, 63.)

- **Library café:** As an informal and welcoming space where students can study, work with mentors, socialize with friends or attend events, a café can provide an approachable and comfortable space that reduces barriers to entry and draws in students who do not currently use the library. (See pages 31, 63.)
- **Academic event space:** Create an event and meeting space to host speaker series, lectures, workshops and dialogues that enrich the academic life of the campus and bring together different segments of the campus community. (See pages 34, 52.)

2. Provide a central hub for campus resources focused on student academic success.

As a large space at the heart of campus, the library is uniquely suited to support student success by bringing together a range of academic resources under one roof. New spaces could include:

- **Learning commons:** Designed to support the diverse ways that students study today — whether “working alone, together,” collaborating on class projects, or getting help from TAs or library staff — this flexible co-working space would feature open study spaces, comfortable furniture, round tables for dialogue, improved spaces for one-on-one consultations, and group study rooms equipped with collaborative technology.
- **Instruction:** Enhance and expand instructional space for classes and workshops taught in the library, which currently include undergraduate writing courses, the library’s first-year seminars on information research and workshops in advanced digital research techniques such as text mining.
- **Campus resources:** To make it easy for students to access a range of academic resources in one place, the library could provide space for other campus services to have a “store-front” presence in Shields. Potential offerings include writing, tutoring and undergraduate research support.

3. Support faculty and other researchers interacting with information in new ways.

While faculty are experts in their disciplines, library experts in data management, data visualization and digital scholarship can help them uncover new ways to approach research problems. Spaces for those interactions and for shared access to data visualization and digital research technology could include:

- **Interdisciplinary collaboration space:** Building on the success of the Data Science Initiative, a campus-wide effort to coordinate data science activities that is housed at Shields Library, the “research kickstarter” would feature open, flexible co-working space as well as classroom space for workshops and “problem talks” in which researchers present a challenge for interdisciplinary group feedback. (See pages 38, 39, 53, 64.)
- **Visualization and digital media lab:** The library has always been the home of shared academic resources that are too expensive for every department on campus to provide, but that advance research and teaching in many different disciplines. Those resources could include not just books and journals, but also state-of-the-art resources such as data visualization and virtual reality technology, GIS mapping and displays, a digital learning center, and media editing and production facilities. (See pages 11, 39, 51, 64.)

What’s Next? Throughout fall 2017, the library will be inviting feedback from the campus community on these opportunities for change and which to prioritize first. To learn more, please see the *Facility Vision + Space Playbook* or visit library.ucdavis.edu/future.