

APPENDIX\*

(To President's Convocation Address, September 5, 1978)

Inadequacies of the Iowa State University Library Building

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\* Material in this Appendix was prepared by the Iowa State University Library.

### Inadequacies of the Iowa State University Library Building

Library space must meet requirements for three basic needs: collections, readers, and service and work space. Inadequacies of library space and facilities are compounded by the sheer complexity of modern libraries and the fact that patrons cannot go elsewhere to do their library work. There is also the subtle but nonetheless damaging influence on educational and teaching programs when these inadequacies act as barriers to knowledge.

The following is a list of the more disturbing inadequacies in Iowa State's ability to meet the three basic areas of need. Also included are more general inadequacies of the overall Library building itself.

#### A. Collections

##### 1. Crowded bookstacks

Libraries should fill their bookshelves to no more than 85%, or what is termed "working capacity". The remaining open 15% permits adding new books and internal transfers, and it keeps constant shifting of collections to a minimum. Collection shifting due to overcrowding is especially costly in terms of staff time and extremely confusing to readers. The present shelving provides for 1.1 million volumes, including bound volume equivalents\*; this amount was made possible by adding stack sections not in the original plans. With ISU's collection now well above 1.2 million, even this capacity has been exceeded. Seating and aisle space has, of course, been reduced by the additional shelving.

##### 2. Proximity of stacks to readers

Most study tables are within arm's length of the stacks. This means constant disturbance to readers. Shelving and study tables should be sufficiently separated to keep these functions well apart from one another, which is impossible at Iowa State. Stack users actually bump into readers in many locations.

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\* Bound volume equivalents (BVE): term used to describe the shelf space required for the vast number of library materials in formats other than books, i. e. , microfilm, microfiche, maps, photographs, films, manuscripts, etc.

3. Access to collections

Readers must move back and forth between five open stack floors and seven tiers through a confusing arrangement of stairs and entrances. There is a constant problem of orienting users. The Library is even hard pressed to maintain an intelligible pattern of subject and classification arrangements of materials.

4. Storage of collections

A Library Storage Building has been in use at Iowa State since 1940; this two-story warehouse structure is located on the campus periphery. The Library has just transferred 25,000 more books to storage, bringing the collection in storage to a total of 84,000 volumes and BVE's. Portions of the Library's collections must be housed in storage since room does not exist for them in the Main Library. The Storage Building, now nearly 40 years old, is heated in the winter but has no cooling or humidity controls; the temperature extremes are wide, and books suffer from inadequate preservation. Books are also subject to damage from dust, dirt, and insects.

As a means of temporarily meeting severe space pressures, the Library has found it necessary to rent space in the new addition to the Memorial Union to house archival materials and other collections.

It is conceivable that at present rates of growth the Library may have to seek further storage elsewhere once the Storage Building is full.

B. Reader Space

1. Lack of undergraduate seating

The Library lacks almost half the number of undergraduate seats recommended by the standards. The standards point to approximately 3,700 such seats; the Library has less than 2,000. The Library may be forced to remove an average of from 50 to 100 seats each year until additional space is found.

2. Compressed seating and study arrangements

To make room for collections and services, and to keep loss of seating to a minimum, study seating has been tightly compressed. Student seating in many areas is close to heavily-trafficked room entrances or corridors.

3. Lack of graduate study spaces

There are no separately designated graduate study spaces. Graduate students generally require larger carrel and study space than undergraduates. Such space should be assignable, have lockers for graduate student use and offer some measure of privacy. For example, the University of Iowa Main Library has approximately 240 available. Iowa State has none.

4. Extremely limited faculty studies

Standards recommend an estimated 170 faculty studies, and Iowa State presently lists only 35. These include some single studies, some shared studies and some old wooden desks in a former map room on the Third Floor of the Original Building. The latter is a completely open room with no opportunity for private study or restriction of noise from typewriters, tape recorders, etc. A waiting list must be maintained for faculty studies.

5. Lack of group studies

Iowa State offers no opportunity, now standard in university libraries, for students to study and work in a group setting. Such rooms would accommodate 4 to 6 students, and include blackboard, table, and chairs.

6. Lack of study facilities for the visually handicapped

It is imperative that a separate room with specialized facilities be available for visually handicapped students. Space for a room of this type does not now exist.

C. Service and Work Space

1. Inadequate Reference Desk space

Library reference facilities are severely cramped, as are patron service desks throughout the building. The shelving for ready-reference materials is far below adequacy, and it has become necessary to move index tables immediately adjacent to the service desk, thus creating disturbance for users and congestion.

2. Inadequate Reference Reading Room space

The essential reference room collection should offer at least 35,000 volumes; space is now possible for only 20,000; all other works have had to be transferred elsewhere, including the Library's extensive collection in bibliography. The index tables now have room for approximately 800 volumes, but should provide for 2-3,000. Seating is needed for at least 200 readers; only one-third of that number is available. The space constraint greatly diminishes the value of the reference collection.

3. Inadequate national and trade bibliography area

Space exists for only 1,000 major national and trade bibliographies which are needed constantly by staff and patrons. Shelving space is required for at least 3,000 items. Seating is almost non-existent.

4. Inadequate Circulation Desk facilities

Waiting lines of patrons impede building entrance traffic. There is limited temporary sorting space for returned books and almost no booktruck storage. Personnel must pass through the Circulation work area to get to other Library areas because of space constraints.

5. Inadequate Government Publications space

This collection is separated into three locations due to space problems. There is insufficient patron seating, and microform equipment has had to be housed in a closet.

6. Inadequate Reserve Desk facilities

There is insufficient shelf space for Reserve materials and overcrowded and inadequate staff work space. These facilities are far removed from the Library entrance despite extremely heavy use by students.

7. Inadequate Map Room facilities

The Map Room space is greatly overcrowded. The floor load limits have been reached, despite a great need for additional heavy map files.

8. Lack of separate Interlibrary Loan facilities

More and more use is being made of loans to and from other libraries, but this activity is forced to share cramped quarters with the Reference staff. TWX machines belonging to this service are now located in the Library's basement, requiring constant staff movement between floors. A separate area is necessary to accommodate staff, users and equipment.

D. General Inadequacies

1. Lack of emergency lighting

The seven tiers, the entire Ground Floor and many interior offices, study and workspaces of the Library are without natural lighting. As overloads on the University Power Plant have occurred increasingly in recent years, the Library has regularly been plunged into darkness. Flashlights are maintained in staff offices for leading patrons to exits, but the many interior stairs, steel shelving and other structural equipment pose potential injury and resulting liability for the University and the State.

2. Limited access for handicapped

Although a lift for the handicapped is now installed in the Rotunda entrance and modifications have been made in the Library's elevator and in two restrooms, access by the handicapped is still very limited. Doorsill and drinking fountain heights and cramped study

space make handicapped use and movement difficult. The Department of Special Collections is accessible only by a temporary wooden ramp. The entrance to the Library is poorly designed for the handicapped.

3. Inadequate ventilation, heating and cooling

The present ventilation system is uneven. Temperatures vary radically from floor to floor and even from one side of a room to another. Attempts to average temperatures between floors seem unworkable, and complaints of overheating or overcooling are constant. Humidity control is inconsistent. The upper floors of the building, especially the tiers, become overheated both winter and summer, reducing the desirability of study and thus preventing greater use by patrons, to say nothing of the excessive deterioration caused to materials.

4. Flooding

In recent years repeated flooding of the Ground Floor, notably the Mail Room, supply rooms, Thesis, Business and Personnel offices and large portions of the open floor itself, including the Microform and Media Center, has occurred. Measures have been taken, but the overall danger still exists due to the inadequacy of the campus drain system. Water, mud and detritus have caused repeated damage and cleaning problems.

5. Limited (and poor) elevator facilities

Only a single slow and small-sized passenger elevator serves the entire Library, despite the annual 1.5 million user traffic in the building. It is distant from the entrance and is also used as a freight elevator since the only staff and freight elevator, located in the Original Building, serves just the four floors of that building. The latter elevator is a 50-year-old, semi-open cage too small to accommodate major equipment and is poorly located.

6. Lack of general office facilities

Faculty studies, group study rooms and other less desirable locations have been pressed into use for Library offices. Two assistant directors and their secretaries share a group of first floor study rooms, a third occupies a former cloak room. Offices for certain department heads and the bibliographers are in faculty studies. Five reference librarians occupy a former small microform room where they must work with students and faculty under appallingly crowded conditions.

7. Inadequate Microform and Media facilities

This heavily-used area for audio/video materials cannot provide an appropriate separation of study space from the Library's microform readers; one requires controlled lighting, one does not. The collections are tightly shelved behind a service desk that is too small to handle patrons adequately. Necessary supervision of equipment and materials is inhibited by the lack of space, and the room is in a poor location. The area has been pressed into use for its present purpose, and thus equipment connections and wiring are exposed to student contact and possible accidents.

8. Inadequate staff work space

Work space for the Library staff is substantially less than that recommended by standards. In most departments, individual staff members have only 45 square feet of work space per person, less than half that required to meet standards. The present building configuration fosters inefficiencies and the improper flow of material caused by the necessity for the illogical placement of staff work space. Many staff offices are constructed of temporary materials.

9. Inadequate terminal and computer facilities

The Library's increasing reliance on the computer for improved patron service has caused severe difficulties in locating and installing such equipment. Space is greatly limited for any reader/faculty

interaction in computer use. Electrical outlets are sparse in the building, and new installations require dangerous use of floor and hanging wires. Poor and substitute locations for equipment are made necessary.

10. Inadequate Library main entrance

The present main entrance, the Rotunda, is a circular, domed structure attached to Addition I. Large numbers of users entering or leaving the building are constricted in this poorly-designed space. Bottlenecks occur regularly at the exit desk where monitoring is done of materials being taken from the building. Students now use the Rotunda heavily as a substitute smoking area and lunchroom as well; prevention of this is difficult due to the Rotunda's design.

The Rotunda must handle from 25,000 to 40,000 patrons during the normal class week despite these problems. As indicated, access by handicapped is inadequate. Also, there are no entrance facilities to control dirt and water during inclement weather.