



**University Faculty Senate**

**State University of New York**

**Library Space Survey**

**University Faculty Senate  
Operations Committee  
March, 2010**



State University of New York  
University Faculty Senate

Operations Committee

2009-2010 Membership

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The Operations Committee acknowledges the work of Werner Sbaschnik, Old Westbury, and Ron Foster, SUNYIT, as the principal authors of this report.

The Operations Committee of the University Faculty Senate was asked to examine the encroachment of library space by non-library activities. A survey was sent to the SUNY Librarians Association (SUNYLA) delegates via the SUNYLA Council listserv. An identical survey was sent to SUNY library directors via the SUNY Council of Library Directors listserv. The information was gathered from November 11<sup>th</sup> through November 17<sup>th</sup>. The responses were only from state-operated units and were anonymous.

SUNYLA is a state wide organization that promotes professional development and communication amongst SUNY campuses to enhance library service. Membership is open to all librarians or others working in SUNY libraries. A delegate is a member of SUNYLA and there is one delegate per campus. The SUNY Council of Library Directors is made up of the chief administrative officer from each campus library.

The survey consisted of five questions. It asked if your library has experienced any reassignment of space and if yes, what those alterations were. Opinions on the changes were solicited. The final two questions asked for solutions to space issues and any other comments.

According to the survey responses, the majority of libraries has had some space converted to non-library activities. In almost all of these cases, the space has been used for student oriented programs. In a small number of cases, office space was created for faculty and/or administration, though that usage could be temporary while renovations were taking place in other buildings.

Opinions about the changes vary between the two groups. The library directors generally embrace the increase in foot traffic as long as the alterations serve academic needs. The librarians were not as enthusiastic. Many felt they were not consulted or the modifications were not handled correctly.

In conclusion, there appears to be no crisis but the issue should be revisited in the future.

Prepared for the Operations Committee by

Ron Foster

Werner Sbaschnik



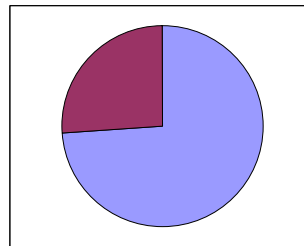
## 2009 Space Survey: Librarians

The Operations Committee of University Faculty Senate surveyed SUNY Librarians Association (SUNYLA) delegates on space issues within their libraries. (A separate survey was sent to library directors to solicit their opinions.) Responses were anonymous. The survey ran from Wednesday, November 11th, through Tuesday, November 17th. Solicitation to participate was sent via the SUNYLA Council listserv; the solicitation asked for responses from only state-operated units. Responses are reported as received.

Ron Foster  
Werner Sbaschnik  
November 2009

### 1. Within the last 10 years, has space within your library been converted or reassigned to non-library activities? 23 responses.

Yes	17	74%	[Light blue]
No	6	26%	[Dark red]



### 2. To what kinds of activities has the space been reassigned? 15 responses.

*Eleven responses indicated library space went to computing & IT services, and nine responses indicated space went to some type of administrative or office space.*

1. Learning Commons (Writing lab, testing area, etc.)
2. computer labs and other technological tools (learning commons environment); Jazzmans coffee shop; telecommunications; Teaching Learning Technology Center (faculty assistance); Center for Academic Excellence satellite
3. more computer lab space, Center for Teaching Excellence office, Computing Support office
4. 1. The Campus Writing Center was moved into the library.  
2. A room in the library was converted into a computing lab for the Teacher Education Department.  
3. EAP Coordinator Office is now located in the library.  
4. The College took over three Media Services rooms and turned them into classrooms. The Office of the Registra now controls the use of these rooms.  
5. A library room was converted into a micro-computing lab for Chemistry classes.
5. IT staff & labs
6. study abroad, classrooms have been taken over by the registrar
7. Advisement and Transition, administrative offices

## 2009 Space Survey: Librarians

8. Tutoring & other academic support services
9. Academic Enrichment Center including tutoring, CSTEP, special needs, and international student services.
10. We have created an Information Commons, which in turn has lead to the creation of a computer help desk and an application support desk.
11. To accommodate renovations on other parts of the campus, temporary faculty offices were created.
12. Much of the bottom level (of three) has been taken for Computing Services.
13. late night study room
14. A former faculty study room was converted to temporary office space for a small campus department during building renovations. They were here for about a year.
15. Administration, IT, registrar

### **3. What are your feelings about the change(s)?** 15 responses.

*Six responses were mixed positive and negative. Five responses were generally negative, and four were generally positive.*

1. It's ok, but don't love it.
2. Most are positive. Feel we may have to give up too much to activities and deparments that only support the library in more infrastructure ways.
3. Most are tied to our over-all mission and are generally a good fit in a library setting but concerned that 'they' are taking over and we wil have less say about keep library resources
4. Our library is being carved up like Africa was. Everyone on campus wants bits and pieces of the library. The library is being renovated in the very near future, but I fear that it will be a top down approach and the librarians and library staff will have very little input (if any) in the process. I like having the Writing Center located in the library since students often need this type of help in the library. Since the College has been scheduling classes in the library, our space has turned into Grand Central Station. It no longer feels like a library.
5. not in itself a bad thing, but has been poorly handled in terms of integration of people and services
6. ok with study abroad, a little annoyed about the classrooms
7. we lost Special Collections space due to it

## 2009 Space Survey: Librarians

8. Mixed. I think this is a natural extension of library services but it was handled poorly (to say the least)
9. Tutoring area is not walled off - so the library is now much noisier and we have problems with students hanging out & socializing adding to the noise. On the positive side, the tutors send students to the reference desk for help and we may be seeing students who might not otherwise come into the library.
10. We are certainly headed in the right direction.
11. Not a big deal, and created more traffic flow to the library.
12. There is a lack of planning on the part of the college's administration. In effect, the library is being used for surge space for Construction Fund projects, but there are no plans for a future relocation of Computing Services.
13. an accommodation to students without library consent, carried out by Provost office
14. We were happy to share a space for them. We learned more about their functions and they learned about ours. Since it was temporary, it did not have a huge impact.
15. mixed but accepting of change.

**4. If space is a problem for your library, what solutions would you propose?** 13 responses.  
*Four responses suggested a new building.*

1. Reconfiguration or expansion.
2. A new Library
3. Not a problem at the moment, but having a discussion on how we think we can best make use of the space we have.
4. I definitely would NOT recommend compact shelving in our library because it has severe problems with mold.
5. space is a problem - office space for library faculty in particular - either off site storage to dramatically reduce shelving, or a new building, or perhaps placing some staff in other buildings...
6. We need a new building
7. There is a space issue in the library in the sense that the library needs the space to evolve as an information center. More room for a larger and more central computer lab.

## 2009 Space Survey: Librarians

8. A new wing! We've weeded to make space. Moved things to storage to make space. Rearranged to make space... we're running out of non-construction options.
9. Right now, we are not facing major space shortage issues. We need to evaluate how library spaces are being used by students and make adjustments in furnishings and arrangements - particularly to accommodate group study.
10. We need a major cosmetic change. The building does not have a very comfortable, nor a warm feeling. Also, we need new furniture.
11. Space is not currently a problem.
12. The college administration has to accept the fact that it has to have surge space for construction projects, and that both the library and Computing Services are important to the institution and need permanent space.
13. late night study room probably better suited to Student Union building

### **5. Please add below any comments you would like to make to the Operations Committee regarding space issues within SUNY libraries. 7 responses.**

1. Stop crowding out the library.
2. The age of buildings and the infrastructure (namely needing more plugs for students with laptops) is an issue.
3. given current fiscal issues i think making do with the space one has will be vital - remote storage for bound journals would be useful, perhaps several sites scattered through out the state.
4. We need more group study areas and dedicated instruction space. Everything else is gravy at this point.
5. Space is not the number one deterrent to creating new services or making a library vibrant. A space needs to be comfortable and inviting, but you have to have a philosophy that matches what you want your space to be.
6. There has been talk of repurposing space for joint library /academic purposes but we have resisted to maintain library control of the space> Space is used limited for other purposes, but nothing permanent
7. We will be losing space in the near future due to reorganization of the library with ITS and other offices. I think there are good and bad points. One concern is maintaining a library/academic presence in a hybrid use building. There has to be a way to balance the newer functions of libraries and keeping quiet space and making sure that the space has the ability to support new technology (connectivity, for example).

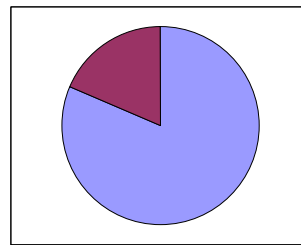
# 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

The Operations Committee of University Faculty Senate surveyed library directors on space issues within their libraries. Responses were anonymous. The survey ran from Wednesday, November 11th, through Tuesday, November 17th. Solicitation to participate was sent via the listserv of the SUNY Council of Library Directors; the solicitation asked for responses from only state-operated units. Responses are reported as received.

Ron Foster  
Werner Sbaschnik  
November 2009

## 1. Within the last 10 years, has space within your library been converted or reassigned to non-library activities? 27 responses.

Yes	22	81%	[Light blue]
No	5	19%	[Dark red]



## 2. To what kinds of activities has the space been reassigned? 20 responses.

*Sixteen responses indicated library space went to some type of student services. Nine responses indicated computing & IT services, and nine responses also indicated space went to some type of administrative or office space.*

1. cafe and computer lab and tech staff offices
2. Advisement, Teaching Learning Center
3. Info tech presence for both the library as well as other departments
4. TRiO - tutoring service not part of Library operations.
5. Fast Forward, Tutoring, Testing Center.
6. office space for administrative officers who have no library affiliation
7. IT Classrooms and offices
8. A branch library was closed and the space used for faculty offices; librarian offices were given to a grant funded minority science program
9. writing program, academic success center, A/V services, computer lab, class room, conference room.

## 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

10. Other student support services such as disability services, writing, and tutoring.
11. Classrooms (although I consider this a "library" activity)
  - Temporary relocation of faculty offices due to building renovations
  - Permanent relocation of other campus offices
12. tutoring, eop, advisement, cafe, helpdesk
13. Computing & Media Services has been relocated to the building. The Instructional Technology unit also resides in the building. A new initiative of the campus, The Center for Teaching Excellence, is currently in the building as well.
14. Center for Reading and Writing
15. Faculty Learning Center, Centrally scheduled computer classroom, Disability services, Honors group study rooms, Educational Opportunity tutoring area
16. writing center, which I promoted - it's a good fit. in the future the math learning lab will come here, which I also support.
17. The "Learning Center" a peer tutoring center has been moved in to the library. It is a good fit. The Registrar's office has been moved into the library on a "temporary basis", originally for three months, they have now been here for 3 years. We await their departure at some point in the future.. This is not considered a good fit, as the Registrar does not offer direct support to the academic enterprise. The Academic Affairs staff and Information Technology Staff is temporarily occupying a large portion of library space that formerly housed all of technical services while their space is being rehabbed in another building. The Professional Development Center, a new unit on campus will be in the library in (we hope) newly constructed space.
18. 'Surge' office space for faculty. Faculty, whose departmental space is being renovated or relocated, transfer to Library space for the duration of the renovation/building project. Student Organization Space - student organizations now have offices in the library.
19. Classrooms, Graduate School Space
20. tutoring is going on in a corner of the library. IT has taken over our remaining storage space

## 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

### 3. What are your feelings about the change(s)? 20 responses.

*Fourteen responses were generally positive. One response was neutral. Four were mixed, and one was negative.*

1. I embraced the addition of these to the library
2. We have formed nice partnerships with Advisement and Faculty Development
3. I think it is good for the library.
4. Fine -- it seems a good fit!
5. Some staff feel like they are being encroached upon. The reality is that our campus have very limited space and there really isn't any other place for these important functions.
6. Other than loosing valuable space, the changes have been positive. Having college administration within the library has helped them better understand the importance of library services to the campus.
7. This has been a much-needed consolidation and opportunity for service collaboration. While initially painful, it has resulted in beautiful new spaces, increase foot traffic, helped library to do weeding that would take years otherwise. Library has become a center for learning. Overall, very positive.  
Campus wanted to re-purpose library space as semi-permanent swing space/office park. Fortunately they changed their minds - Library/IT. Learning spaces have been much more healthy combination of services that should serve us well into the future.
8. I'm ok with the branch library which was located in a department. Not OK with minority program because it is first floor space which could be used for public services
9. Some are positive, some aren't. Just because the space exists in our building doesn't mean it needs to be hoarded by the library, unless there is a real need. Information Commons concept is good. Arbitrary territoriality isn't
10. I love it. It provides students with multiple services at their points of need. Also, once the traditional library space was "invaded" librarians had to rethink the way we do business - in my opinion: change is good (even if people get a little cranky!).
11. The classrooms are a positive and aligned with the library's teaching mission.  
The faculty offices are ok. We had space available and it is supposed to be temporary -- year or two.  
Not enthusiastic about the size of the footprint for the permanent campus offices. They will be physically segregated from the Library so compatibility is not an issue, and we do have some space to spare. However, it required relocation of a learning commons space that was heavily used and any further reallocation of space will start to impinge on student study space.

## 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

12. positive

13. All of these units are part of the Library & Information Services division so their presence seems totally appropriate, even vital.

14. I promoted this change on the theory that we had valuable space dedicated to storing old periodicals and that this would be a better use. It will also benefit students.

15. For the most part, these have been justifiable repurposing of campus space as library areas have been cleared by moving old/electronically superseded materials to remote storage.

16. positive they belong together

17. AA and ITS will be leaving in July of 2010 when renovations in their areas are complete. Displaced library faculty and staff will move into newly renovated space in the library. It will be wonderful. The Registrar needs to leave, as they are a "business office" and we feel they do not directly serve the academic needs of students and faculty. The PDC is felt to be a wonderful fit as they directly support the improvement of teaching and learning. As we move towards an information commons model I look forward to new partnerships, hopefully all of the library's choosing!

18. Would prefer the space to be used to the benefit of ALL campus constituencies - not a warren of offices. Traditionally, Libraries serve all members of their communities. Prefer to see the repurposing of Library space follow that principle.

19. I have inadequate space for the Library and this space is needed to support Library 'as place' as identified in my recent Library Strategic Plan.

20. good about the tutoring - it's a step towards the "learning commons" model. Bad about the storage space - we have no space, and I feel as if we were duped into giving it up.

### **4. If space is a problem for your library, what solutions would you propose?** 19 responses.

*Five responses involved the storage and weeding of collections. Four responses concerned planning, reviews and professional advice. Three responses involved the use of existing space.*

1. compact shelving, off site storage, relocating departmental offices that are unrelated to library mission.

2. Program study to better utilize the space; compact shelving, a radical weeding.

3. We need a major renovation.

4. Space is a problem (some was taken away abt 12 years ago that we could have used!). Solutions include a facilities plan to make better use of the space we kept!

## 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

5. Our building is old and was not designed to be a hub for the information age. We have high demand on connectivity to the internet with only limited ability of our ITS department to meet this growing demand. My suggestion would be to build a new Library building designed to expand with future information needs and include a classroom wing and a Fine and Performing Arts wing. This would solve multiple problems concerning space on our campus.

6. We are looking at different furniture types and arrangements. Currently we have large tables in our open study areas. Shifting to a greater number of smaller tables will give us more individual seating. Relocation of services is another possible solution. Tutorial services has a significant space within our library that could be reallocated to student study. The downside to this is the loss of a service that is student centered and library related.

7. Storage is a problem, but changing dynamics of both libraries (e-books and journals) and IT (personal laptop ownership) make predictions difficult.

Off-site storage facilities are proposed from time to time.

8. Creating a better campus storage facility so that we can move print materials out and convert the space to public use.

9. comprehensive review of all library spaces so real rather than perceived needs are met.

10. Taking a deep look into exactly how stacks are arranged, how we offer reference and circulation services - no matter how big or small the space, I can guarantee, there is under utilized space that could be reclaimed and put into action.

11. Space is not a big issue yet but we are under some pressure to relinquish more space. We are reducing collection size due to digital availability and will continue that process as well as utilizing more compact shelving.

12. not a problem

13. At present, office space is our biggest obstacle; no easy solutions.

14. We have adequate space right now

15. As warehousing needs shrink space becomes available - the library can be reimagined. What would be wrong is a grab for admin offices, faculty offices etc.

16. Working with a library space planning consultant. Compact shelving, weeding, redesigning library space.

17. 1 - service personal should be visible to clients; clients should be visible to service personnel  
2 - safety features (security cameras, proximity readers) need to be installed  
3 - space needs to focus on the clients - learning commons, flexible study space, meditative space. Library buildings are no longer just warehouses to store physical objects

## 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

4 - inclusion of more green space and green technologies. Renovations/refurbishments should aim for LEED certification. Gardens, water features, fireplaces should be incorporated into the space. It can be argued that students 'live' at the Library. The space should reflect their behaviors and provide an environment that supports 12 hour days.

17.5 - Seating should be replaced to meet today's ergonomic standards. Again, students/researchers can spend 12 or more hours a day sitting in the Library, using its resources. The furniture should make that a comfortable experience - not result in backaches.

18. As the Master Plan recently done indicates FIT needs a bigger library.

19. We don't store anything any more - all the printed indexes are gone. A change in attitude, a focus on electronic delivery of content

### **5. Please add below any comments you would like to make to the Operations Committee regarding space issues within SUNY libraries.** 14 responses.

1. Program study recommendations need to be funded

2. Libraries are, despite predictions of a decade ago, growing in importance to higher education, but our work is changing. Our space configuration and relationships to other departments must reflect the changes.

3. Libraries are in a state of flux - it's important to stay "user-centered" and keep in mind the different ways our users learn and research! Flexibility and a mind to what's coming next!

4. I believe SUNY should set standards on all campuses for building mainance, upkeep, and renovations to force local campuses to maintain building maintenance standards.

5. Most SUNY libraries have space shortages. Library addition/renovation projects are sorely needed/

6. A full service central storage facility would help.

7. Librarians need to do some self reflection and prepare themselves for the future - otherwise, libraries will be subsumed because students don't use the old services.

8. There are several external factors that are decreasing the demand for traditional library space: 1) reduction in acquisition budgets; 2) move to full-text online journals; 3) availability of archival journal collections (e.g. JSTOR) that are replacing paper holdings; 4) increased cooperative collection purchasing by SUNY libraries; 5) availability of 24-48 hour delivery of articles and books; 6) the Google online book collection.

However, there is increased demand of the library for quiet study space (e.g. away from keyboards and cell phones); for study centered space including computer labs and specialized resource rooms; and group study space.

## 2009 Space Survey: Library Directors

9. need to be as flexible and technology adaptable as possible. also should look at sharing helpdesk/support type functions with other people in the shared spaces.

10. We are seeing greater usage of space by students for studying and could use more PCs , but we will also decrease the size of our print reference collection

11. Capital money is badly needed to upgrade dated infrastructure and to furnish library space to meet current learning/study needs.

12. In general, the majority of the Libraries look old and worn. Many continue to use furniture that was bought 10 or more years ago: sturdy but unattractive and uncomfortable. Though there are some newer libraries, they are few. The dichotomies between Library standards and use of 20 years ago and today are particularly visible when visiting a library that has refurbished 1 or 2 areas. The comparison between old and new is startling.

13. We need to keep our eyes on the prize, namely better services to our students and faculty in a safe, comfortable and productive environment.

14. After having visited SUNY libraries around the state, many suffer from inferior design and maintenance issues. Shabby furniture, unpainted walls and worn carpets for the crown jewel of academic life seem like a contradiction.

I would recommend that the "Face of SUNY Libraries" perhaps a virtual across the 64 webpage illustrating these conditions be done.

Hopefully some facilities like SUNY IT could serve as models to move towards.

