

Bass Library renovation planned



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Construction will start in the Spring, after Commencement, on a renovation of the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Library to accommodate the growing student population. Bass Library is a favorite study space for many Yale College students.

Last renovated in 2007, the two-story underground library holds about 150,000 items, including scholarly works related to the undergraduate curriculum, English-language literature, graphic novels, DVDs, and audiobooks. After renovation, the collection will be curated with the goal of encouraging students to explore and engage with the materials more intensively.



The project, now being led by Assessment Librarian Sarah Tudesco, started last year with open meetings, design charrettes, and a comprehensive study by anthropologist Nancy Fried Foster of how students and faculty perceive and use Bass.

Among the study's conclusions:

- Students go to Bass expecting study space to be available. If they begin to perceive Bass as overcrowded, they will likely go elsewhere.
- Students choose Bass when they have papers, problem sets, or other work to do for class, and they tend to

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work alone there, rather than in groups.

- Many students find it motivating to have peers working nearby, but they also seek to limit distractions by working in study carrels and individual study spaces.
- Students like to work in a library where they are surrounded by books. They seek out course reserve books from the stacks, but they do not spend much time randomly browsing.
- Faculty place a high value on opportunities for students to use and browse in the physical collections, and especially on the educational impact of serendipitous discoveries.
- Some faculty worry that reducing the size of the collection to provide more study space will have a negative effect on students' library experience and academic development.

To address these factors, the planning committee will continue working with students and faculty to develop an appropriate collection strategy. Architects from DBVW Architects will share designs with faculty, staff, and students for review and comments.

The Bass collection will be housed in the Sterling Library stacks until the project is completed in early 2020. Some of the Bass books will remain in Sterling, interfiled with the books already in the stack tower. Others will be returned to the renovated Bass Library.

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