

Crisis as Catalyst: Academic Library Space Design Post COVID-19

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PanHellenic Conference of Academic Libraries

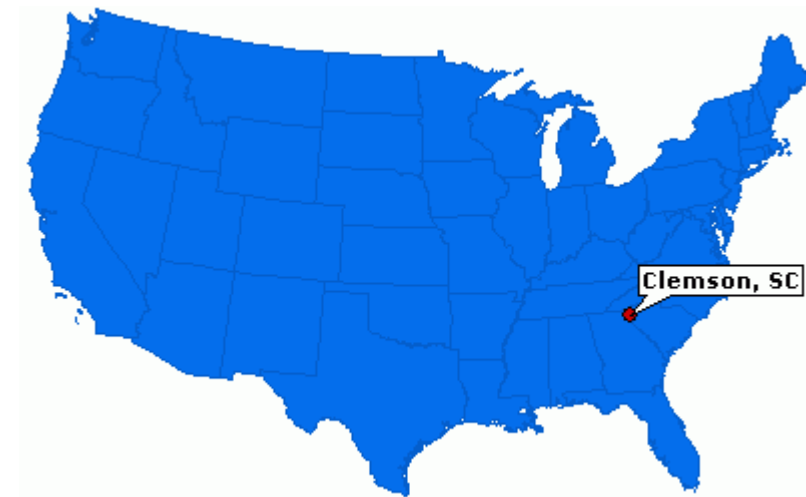
December 17-18, 2020

Outline

- A Little About Me
 - Today's Research Question
 - Libraries and COVID-19: Current Responses
 - Losses and Gains
 - Design Considerations Post COVID-19
 - Key Takeaways
-

Who is this guy?

- Dean of Libraries, Clemson University
 - Located in Clemson, SC
 - Founded 1889
 - 26,406 students (FY21)
 - Public, land grant, research university
- Librarian for 23 years; 16 in administration; 3rd deanship
- Not an architect
- Wrote article in “Inside Higher Ed” on impacts of COVID-19



Today's Research Question:

How will COVID-19 permanently change library design?

Assumptions:

- The virus may never completely go away; may not be the only pandemic
- Patrons will develop preferences/expectations based on recent experiences (safety protocols, pickup, online access)
- Some recent changes are positive and deserve expansion

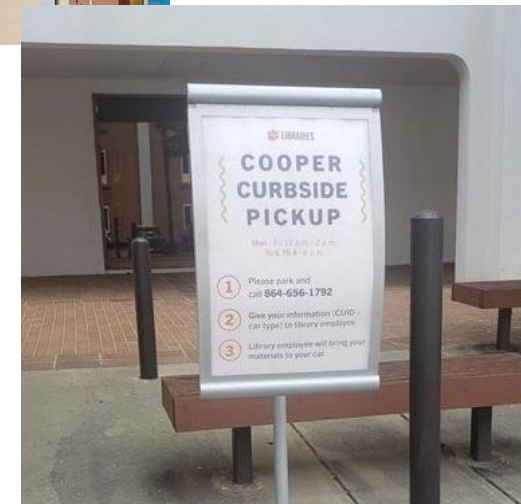


LIBRARIES

Libraries and COVID-19: Current Responses

Collections

- Stacks closed/Browsing limited
- Request item instead and receive at in-person desk, via curbside pickup, 24/7 outdoor lockers
- Increased usage of digital collections (ebooks, online journals, streaming media)
- Challenges presented by physical archival collections

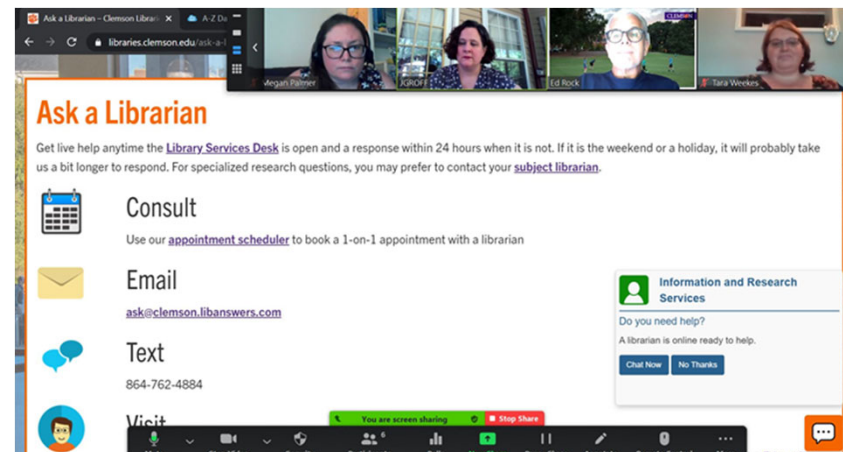


Services

- More self-service options
- Research consultations, instruction, programs all move online
- Public technology inaccessible – BYO tech
- Equity of access
 - Expand WiFi
 - Open Education Resources (OER)



Fayetteville Public Library, AR



Ask a Librarian - Clemson Librar... A.Z. Dr...
libraries.clemson.edu/ask

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Spaces

- Reduced hours
- Removed furniture; reduced seating; increased social distancing
- Monitored capacity; added seat booking
- Added plexiglass at service desks
- Added signage to show where to sit, stand, how to move throughout the building
- Increased cleaning



Operations

- Work-from-home
- Flexible schedules
- Need for private office spaces



Losses and Gains

Losses

- Physical collection access
- Building as community hub
- In-person teaching and programs
- Seating

Gains

- Expansion of digital collections
- Collaborate anytime/anywhere
- Increased virtual participation; underserved can access
- Partnerships to increase study spaces, expand services

How might these changes impact libraries and library design in the long term?

Library Design Considerations Post COVID-19

Overview

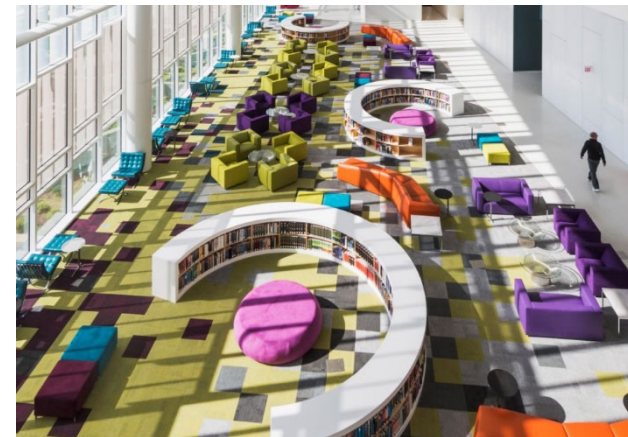
- Physical collections
- Digitization spaces
- Drive-up/pick-up/self-serve
- Modular service desks
- Content creation spaces
- Learning commons
- Programming spaces
- Create-your-own study spaces
- Technology
- Cleanable surfaces
- Touchless environment
- Ventilation improvements
- Entrances and traffic flow
- Employee spaces
- Outdoor spaces
- Equity and Inclusion

Physical Collections

- Need multiple access points to content
 - More digital?
- Off-site storage/bookbots
- Self-serve, 24/7 collection access
 - Vending machines?
- Collections as room dividers



Northland Public Library, MN



Hunt Library, NC State

Digitization Spaces

- Need equipment to digitize and share archival materials on the fly
- Need back-of-house space for increased digitization
- Digitization not for archiving but access



John McCrory and Catherine Smith (U. Manchester, UK Libraries) set up the visualiser ready for a digital appointment

Drive-up/Pick-up/Self-Serve

- Circulation moves to self-serve and outside the library
 - Curbside pick-up, drive-up/walk-up windows/book drops
 - Delivery to homes/offices
 - Self-service reserves, technology, self-check via phone, 24/7 lockers
 - Benefit: limits number of people in the building



Flower Mound Public Library, TX



Book lockers

Modular Service Desks

- Easy to move to another location
- Responsive to needs of patrons, programs, changes in research and instruction delivery
- “Go where the patrons are”



DEMCO

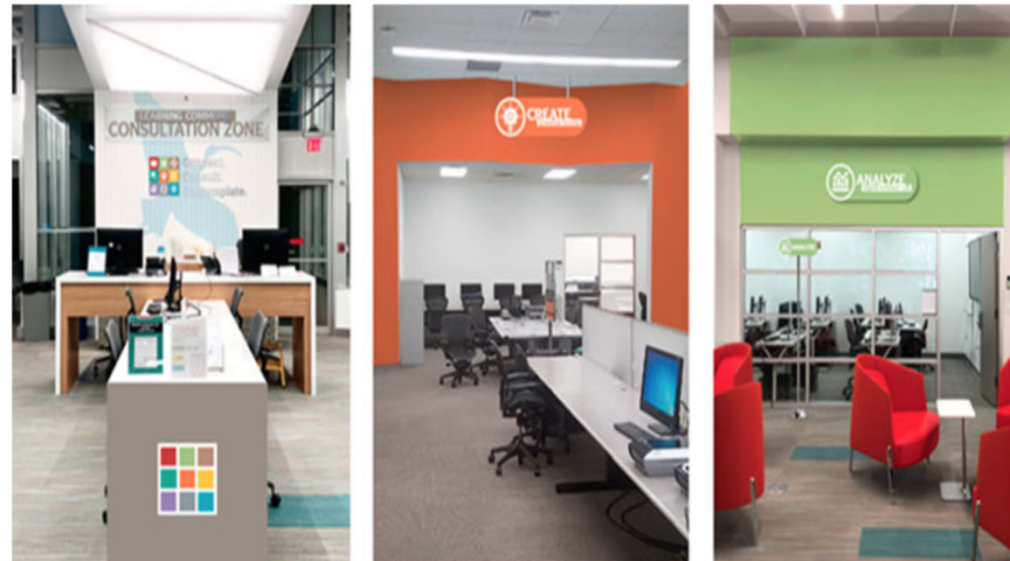
Content Creation Spaces

- Hands-on creativity and meaning making
 - Makerspaces
 - Project spaces
 - Audio/Video recording
 - 3D/VR/Data Viz
 - Online content for teaching
 - Tech support



Learning Commons

- One-stop shop for student success not going away
- Will have a more vibrant virtual component
- Library connection point to student support services across campus
- Offers opportunity for more partnerships



Learning Commons – University of Miami, FL

Programming spaces

- Indoors or outdoors
- Delivered in person, virtual, hybrid
 - Need equipment (cameras, etc.) to record and deliver content
- Reservable seating
- Easily reconfigurable for other uses



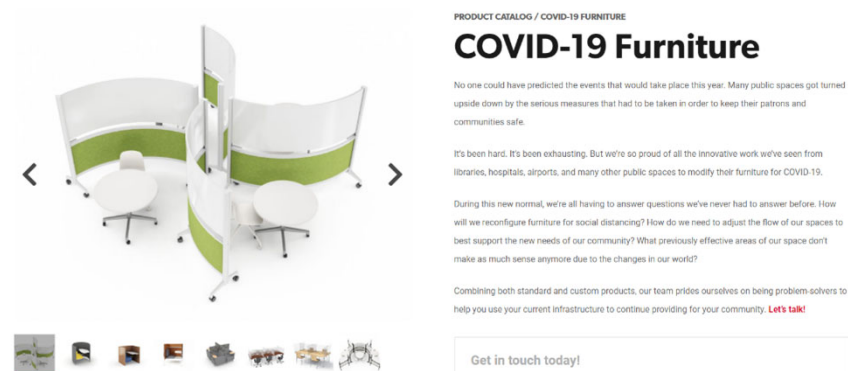
Viridian Event Center, Salt Lake County Library, UT

Create-Your-Own Study Spaces

- Ability to use moveable furniture, markerboards, walls to create own space
- Seat/space reservation system still desirable
- Demand for enclosed, individual study spaces
 - Could include sound-proofing, climate control, light control for Zoom meetings
 - Work from home @ the library
- Easily move from open to closed study spaces based on virus prevalence/patron preference



[Steelcase Brody](#)



PRODUCT CATALOG / COVID-19 FURNITURE

COVID-19 Furniture

No one could have predicted the events that would take place this year. Many public spaces got turned upside down by the serious measures that had to be taken in order to keep their patrons and communities safe.

It's been hard. It's been exhausting. But we're so proud of all the innovative work we've seen from libraries, hospitals, airports, and many other public spaces to modify their furniture for COVID-19.

During this new normal, we're all having to answer questions we've never had to answer before. How will we reconfigure furniture for social distancing? How do we need to adjust the flow of our spaces to best support the new needs of our community? What previously effective areas of our space don't make as much sense anymore due to the changes in our world?

Combining both standard and custom products, our team prides ourselves on being problem-solvers to help you use your current infrastructure to continue providing for your community. **Let's talk!**

Get in touch today!

Technology

- Increased mobile technology lending for easier cleaning
 - Could be vended
- Tech-based project spaces
- Create spaces where patrons can use their own devices
 - 3D Zoom sessions



Dimensions in Testimony, Shoah Foundation



Greenhouse Studios, University of Connecticut Library

Cleanable Surfaces

- Preference for hard surfaces, flooring (tile/wood) – easier to clean
- Upholstered furniture/carpet with cleanable fabrics
- Antimicrobial surfaces/paint/walls



[MPA Maquies Peruzzi Architects](#)

Touchless Environment

- Bathrooms include touchless faucets, soap dispensers
- Automatic doors
- Voice/phone activated elevators



[Open Path Smart Elevator Technology](#)

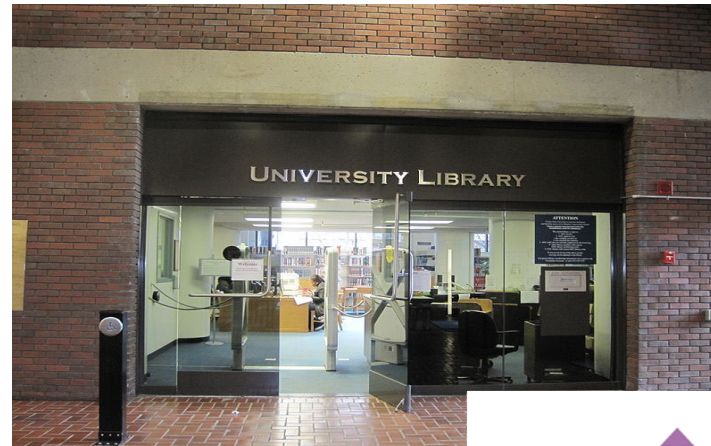
Ventilation

- Need for increased outside air, improved indoor air quality
 - Budget for HVAC improvements; hire an environmental engineer
 - Add windows that open
 - Explore air cleaners/HEPA filters, UV cleaning
 - See [ASHRAE Standard](#)

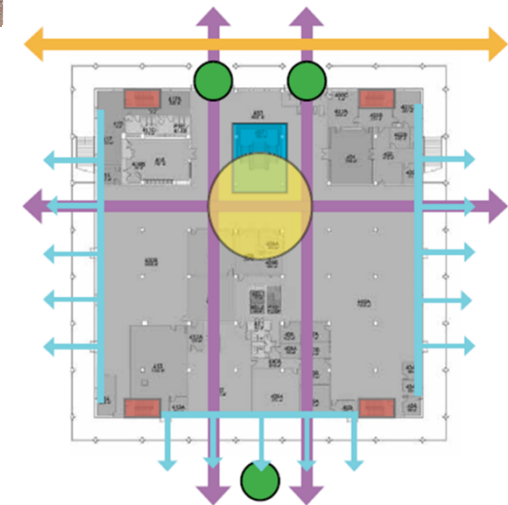


Entrances and Traffic Flow

- Entrances are most dangerous spot
 - Widen?
- Advocate for more than one entrance – one in, one out?
- Hallways and walkways provide visual cues for traffic flow



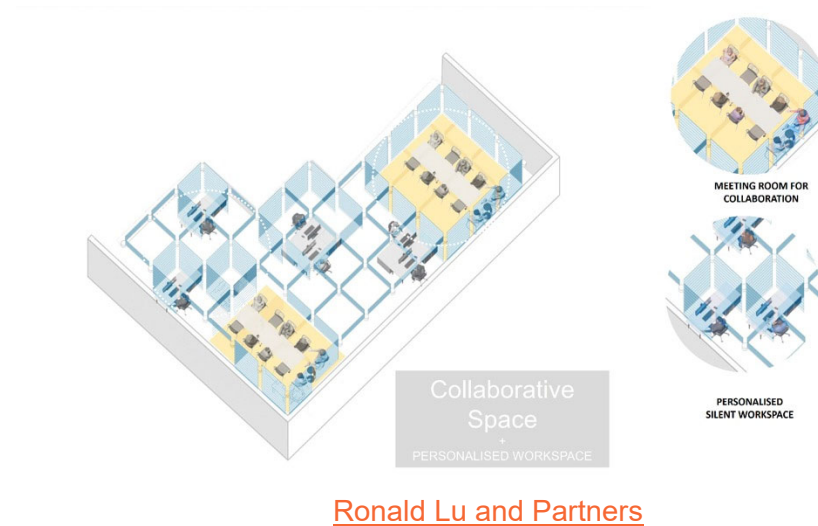
Golden Gate University Library



Patron Flow Diagram - Cooper Library Renovation
Clemson University

Employee Spaces

- More employees work-from-home
 - Employees “hotdesk” or share office spaces?
 - Cleaned with UV light, other means
- What happens to the open concept office?
- Provide both private and collaborative spaces – allow for flexibility
- Provide natural light, plants, windows that open, outdoor spaces
- Install bathroom cubicles and shared sinks



Employee Spaces

- Social distancing possible when needed
- “Sanitary corridor”
- More room for back-of-house processing of materials for pick-up/delivery
- Better tech to provide virtual services



CookFox Architects NYC

Outdoor Spaces

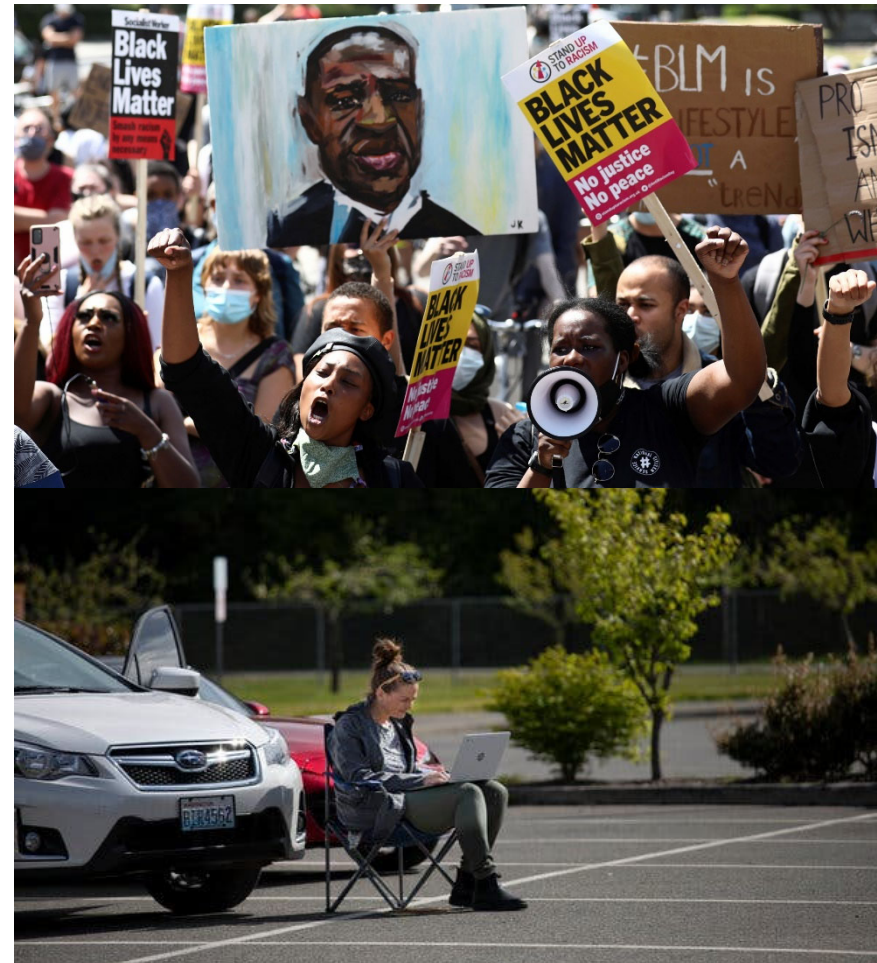
- Create outdoor library spaces
- Doors that open to the outside
- Access to bathrooms



Cedar Rapids Public Library, IA

Equity and Inclusion

- Black Lives Matter/Digital Divide
- Expand WiFi access
- Circulate devices
- Improve ADA access/usability
- Review collections, spaces, staffing for inclusion



Key Takeaways

- Flexibility
- Resiliency
- Sustainability
- Connectivity
- Equity

- **COMMUNITY:**

“It’s not about the building – it’s about building community”

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Questions?

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