

**MOTION TO APPROVE
FAILED**

RS.21.03
April 5, 2021

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
PRE-FILED RESOLUTION
(Final; Action)

RS.21.03 Resolution Regarding the Proposed Library Renovations

WHEREAS, in late 2018 the library introduced a proposal “focused on the humanities, arts, social and behavioral sciences” to (1) renovate the Main Library by demolishing the dilapidated old east stacks and rearranging the floor plan, (2) reconfigure the Undergraduate Library as a Special Collections facility, and (3) relocate undergraduate resources and services to the Main Library;

WHEREAS, although we acknowledge with admiration and gratitude the commitment and effort that the library administration and staff have put into attempting to meet the needs of faculty and students by undertaking these renovations, and we applaud the library’s efforts to solicit faculty and student input, concerns nonetheless have arisen regarding this ambitious plan;

WHEREAS, many faculty and students concur with the need to renovate the Main Library, concerns remain about the proposed reconfiguration of the Undergraduate Library as a Special Collections facility, including (1) The loss to undergraduates of their special community and their home away from home in a building specifically designed for their needs; and (2) A danger to our most precious library resources if they are stored in a sub-basement with known drainage issues;

WHEREAS, funding exigencies, exacerbated by the covid crisis, have resulted in the drastic cutting back of the original full-scale plan (estimated at around \$260 million) to include only the bare bones first phase of the reconfiguration of the Undergraduate Library (estimated at \$50 million);

WHEREAS, because the timelines for renovating the Main Library and completing the reconfiguration of the Undergraduate Library are uncertain, having been postponed to 5 or more years in the future, the resulting lack of additional space from the Main Library renovation means that when the undergraduates and their services are removed from the Undergraduate Library they will need to be squeezed into inadequate, much smaller spaces in the Main Library;

WHEREAS, because the covid crisis will have effects on how library services are most effectively delivered to faculty and students, it seems that additional planning ought to be done before finalizing a supremely expensive project designed in the context of the pre-covid era;

WHEREAS, many faculty and students feel that although the library solicited and received input regarding the conversion of the Undergraduate Library, this input was not acted upon, and by the time the drastic cut back in the plan was announced, the opportunity for further input had passed;

WHEREAS, there is a continuing perception that, despite several requests to do so, no serious consideration has been given to other options for gaining additional space for Special Collections, such as expansion within stack range 6 or the construction of an addition to the west stacks;

WHEREAS, the University administration has often expressed its commitment to funding a plan that meets the needs of faculty, students, and the library, but has yet to craft a firm plan to do so;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate Library Committee name a committee including library staff and concerned faculty and student stakeholders to meet during the next six months so that faculty, students, library staff, and the university administration can work together (1) to prioritize the needs and desires of undergraduates, (2) to consider other options for increasing Special Collections space, (3) to consider how covid will affect the delivery of library services, and (4) to help craft a financial plan in which the university ensures that the needs of all stakeholders will be met by making a formal commitment to provide the funding necessary to complete all phases of the library renovation project within the next five years.

Co-Sponsored by

John Levi Barnard, Academic Senator, Department of Comparative and World Literature
Anustup Basu, Academic Senator, Department of English
James Brennan, Academic Senator, Department of History
David Cisneros, Academic Senator, Department of Communication
David Cooper, Academic Senator, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Ralph Mathisen, Academic Senator, Department of History
Zachary McVicker, Academic Senator, Department of English
John M. Murphy, Academic Senator, Department of Communication
Bruce Rosenstock, Academic Senator, Department of Religion
Mark Steinberg, Academic Senator, Department of History

With endorsement from the following EO's

Antonios Augoustakis, Head, Department of Classics
Antoinette Burton, Director, Humanities Research Institute
Luisa-Elena Delgado, Director, Program in Translation and Interpretive Studies
Jonathan Ebel, Head, Department of Religion
Brenda M. Farnell, Head, Department of Anthropology
Wail S. Hassan, Director, Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
Stephanie Hilger, Head, Germanic Languages and Literatures
Robert Markley, Head, Department of English
Paul A. Prior, Director, Center for Writing Studies
Dana Rabin, Chair, Department of History
Robert Rushing, Director, Program in Comparative and World Literature
Gisela Sin, Director, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
Siobhan B. Somerville, Chair, Department of Gender and Women's Studies
Terri Weissman, Program Chair, Art and Art History