International overview of the University Library as a central facility
A comparative analysis

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September, 2011
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how does the university library operate now and what is its role in future?
what are the University library’s demands? both physically and functionally?

Project Faculty of Humanities Library, University of Amsterdam

based on report "International overview of the University Library as a central facility" - Real Estate & Housing 2011
13 university libraries

central level

- University of Aveiro, Portugal
- TU Delft Library, NL
- Utrecht University Library, Uithof
- Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Centrum Library, Humboldt University, Berlin

faculty/college level

- Squire Law Library, Cambridge
- Bibliothèque de Droit Université Paris 12
- Faculty of Education Library, Cambridge
- Faculty of Law Library, Zurich
- Greek Library, Yale University
- Philology Library Free University, Berlin
- BK City library, TU Delft
- Christ's College Library, Cambridge

Comparative data

Strategic data
- type of library
- year of construction
- project demand/supply

Physical data
- type of project
- size (GFA)
- location
- type of campus
- m2/user

Functional data
- registered users
- staff
- type of program
- special facilities
- # study places
Results

Strategic drivers

1. Changing academic demands through the improvement of ICT library’s facilities supporting the new ways of academic and research activities (62%)

Results

Strategic drivers

2. Efficiency of library processes through the integration of existing libraries –previously accommodated in different locations- under one single roof (54%)
Results

Strategic drivers

3. Combined profile of library and knowledge/learning centre (54%)

4. Improving the image of the university campus which is indicated by the relevance of the university library as landmark on campus and high standards on architectural design quality. (54%)
Results

Strategic drivers

5. Flexibility of place to respond to the changing working patterns in libraries as place of formal and informal meeting. (31%)

Results

Physical indicators

1. Central location of the library is relevant for the type of use of the facility and it differs according to the population served.

Based on report "International overview of the University Library as a central facility" - Real Estate & Housing 2011
Results

Physical indicators

2. High quality buildings do make a difference in the use of improved or new facilities in libraries by attracting students and visitors.

3. Library projects located in historical areas on campus or cities tend to preserve heritage buildings and incorporate them in their designs in order to strengthen their image and historical roots with cities.
Results

Physical indicators

4. The size of the library is strongly influenced by the type of library.

Results

Functional indicators

1. New library projects tend to accommodate multifunctional programs.
Results

Functional indicators

2. Mono functional programs in new or renovated libraries are common for faculty and college libraries with restricted use such as reference libraries with specialised collections, in most of the cases exclusive only for college or faculty members.

Conclusions

Trends that influences the university library of the future

• Decreasing of libraries’ physical collection and increasing importance of information reference.

• Integration of library services in the processes that are supported by the libraries linked to the primary process of universities; research and education.

• Increasing diversity in the location of research activities which appeals for a more diverse physical requirements on libraries.
Trends that influences the campus of the future translated into university library projects 1

Campus:
Less space for individual territory and more space to share

Library
Increasing amount of space designed for group work and (in)formal meeting

Trends that influences the campus of the future translated into university library projects 2

Campus:
Place independency – caused by ICT developments – allows students and employees to study and work at the most meaningful places - the best place to work

Library
Increasing flexibility on the design of learning/academic environments
Trends that influences the campus of the future translated into university library projects 3

Campus:
New life for old, heritage buildings – revaluing the old instead of creating the new, also linked to sustainability goals and the trade of quantity for quality of space.

Library
Increasing library projects located in historical areas on campus or cities tend to preserve heritage buildings and incorporate them in their designs in order to strengthen university’s image and historical roots.

Trends that influences the campus of the future translated into university library projects 4

Campus:
The campus is used for branding the university

Library
The library building is used for branding the campus
University library and the city

“the location of the university library is addressed as relevant indicator that supports its changing profile as central facility which might differ according to its specific users”