

A New Library for Murray State University

★ What is the projected timeline for building a new library?

While planning for a new library is well underway, that does not mean the groundbreaking ceremony will take place anytime soon. The tentative plan includes asking the Kentucky State Legislature for “planning” money in the 2010-12 biennium, with a further ask for construction funding being made for the 2012-14 biennium.

★ Why do we need a new physical library when everything is going digital?

Everything is *not* going digital. Even if Murray State could afford to purchase everything digitally, that completely ignores the purpose of a library facility in providing the personalized attention and services students need to succeed academically. Working as the negotiator and provider of content is only one aspect of the University Libraries’ mission. Equating the availability of electronic resources with the absence of a need for a physical library building marginalizes the collaborative nature of learning attributed to the modern student. Students need a place to go in which to learn outside of the classroom and the library should be that place.

★ Why are we pursuing a new library building (or any building) when faculty/staff are facing the possibility of another year without raises?

Funding from the State of Kentucky for capital construction projects comes from a different source of funds than state appropriations. Despite the fact that the state is not providing enough in the way of allocations to Murray State University to cover raises, the state can still provide funding for capital construction projects.

★ Why are we pursuing a new library building (or any building) when students are facing a tuition increase to compensate for state allocation shortfalls?

The discussion for increasing tuition is based on the fact that the state appropriations for daily operation of the university have been cut in the past two fiscal years and is likely to continue being cut. Funding from the State of Kentucky for capital construction projects comes from a different source of funds than state appropriations. In other words, tuition is not being raised to pay for a new building; it is being raised to keep the university running. The state has different pools of money that are to be used specifically for capital construction projects.



★ Isn't this the wrong economic climate in which to pursue a new library building?

Just because the New Library Task Force is working on determining what should be included in a new library building and what that building should look like does not mean the money will be spent or the groundbreaking ceremony will take place anytime soon. It is necessary for the university to plan ahead to meet the needs of our students. Planning for a new library now places Murray State in a position so that when funds become available the university will be ready to access those funds.



★ Why can't we just renovate the existing Waterfield Library?

The current facility was never designed as a library and the amount of structural reinforcement, electrical updates and other renovations required are cost-prohibitive. The floors are not designed to accommodate any additional weight above what currently exists in the Waterfield collections.



★ With a café in it, won't this be just another Curris Center?

No. The point of the new library is to bring together select academic services within a single building and to provide a space that, by its very design, facilitates student learning. A Written and Oral Communication Center is being discussed for the new building, as is the housing of tutoring services, printing services, places for students to engage in group projects and silent spaces for solo students to have some peace and quiet for studying. The availability of food and coffee is not the primary focus of the building and will not dominate the planning of the building, but as a necessary component of student life will be considered in the planning process.




★ Why a library, and not another building?

The library is intended to be the academic heart of the university, with its physical space contributing toward a high percentage of learning that takes place outside of the classroom. The library and its faculty/staff are in place to support all academic departments, meaning our target audience is *every enrolled student and employed faculty/staff at Murray State University*. Our ability to serve the campus community is dampened by the lack of an adequate building. We have big dreams for the academic services the University Libraries could provide in the future and a new physical structure is integral to achieving those ends.



★ Where will the new library be located?



There are several possible locations outlined in the Campus Master Plan and several other possible locations that have been discussed. Nothing has been decided at this point, but it is certain that ease of access for both foot traffic and for parking is very important to the library's use. These factors will certainly be taken into account when deciding where to locate the building.