Institution Case Study:
Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University

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PLACE INFORMATION AND INTRODUCTORY GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Location Address

Robert W. Woodruff Library
Emory University
542 Asbury Circle
Atlanta, GA 30322

Introduction and Location Background

Each institution is unique in its own way. The idea of this case study is to analyze its components by the following general sections and detail considerations that are either good or poor. Being a case study, observations are subjective to the observer. This introduction takes into account the following general points of consideration (not all points will necessarily apply to this institution): *location data, purpose/mission of the institution, its background/history, and general feel of the facilities on arrival, etc.*

One of nine libraries on the Emory University campus, The Robert W. Woodruff Library is the university's general library and houses just over 2,250,000 volumes. The Goizueta Business Library, Marian K. Heilbrun Music & Media Library and the Manuscript, Archives, & Rare Book Library (MARBL) are all located within Woodruff Library. The nine libraries house close to 3.5 million volumes. The Woodruff Library is located behind the Emory University Hospital near the campus quadrangle.

COLLECTION SPACE OBSERVATIONS

Physical Collection

Section general rating: 3
Rating scale: 1 = bad, 2 = bad-average, 3 = average, 4 = average-good, 5 = good

This section focuses on specifics in collection development of the institution's collection space. The general rating (listed above) took into account the following general points (not all will necessarily apply to this institution): *general stacks, special collections, rare books/artifacts, ready reference area, dedicated interest areas (business area, art, etc.), special events areas (holiday/seasonal); as well as the shelving layout, the space on shelves, order of material, and indexing system of each of these sections*.

Specific considerations worthy of a 1 (poor) rating or 5 (good) rating are detailed below. Considerations rating 2-4 will not be as well documented. The idea is to highly document practices which can either be avoided (in the case of poor) or utilized (in the case of good) in future planning and design in either library renovations or new establishments. Documenting and re-documenting standard practices and mediocrity here will not lead to the elucidation of superior or inferior methods. As a whole, the institutions of tomorrow can learn from the practices of today.

Woodruff Library's general collection is just over 2,250,000 volumes and is housed on levels four through eight of the 10-story stack tower. The library has spent the last several years renovating each floor of the stacks and installing compact shelving. Currently floors four through seven have compact shelving and level eight still has the old standard shelving. The library plans to covert Level 8 to compact shelving as well. Installing compact shelving has created more space for the collection, which once filled levels four through nine. Overcrowding was a problem on most floors.

Level nine is currently closed but will one day house the Manuscript, Archives, & Rare Book Library (MARBL) along with floor ten, where MARBL currently is housed. MARBL's collection has grown and this library needs additional space. Overcrowding was a serious issue in the stacks prior to the installation of compact shelving. The space issue has improved but it may be only temporarily resolved with the loss of level nine. As the collection continues to grow, it will need to be weeded on a regular basis to avoid overcrowding in the stacks again. Some sections are more crowded than others at this time.

On the second floor is the Reference collection. This is a good location for the reference collection because it is close to the Library Service Desk, which serves as the Reference desk in addition to the Circulation and information desks. There are few overcrowded shelves in the reference collection and overall there is room for growth.

Virtual Collection

Section general rating: 4
Rating scale: 1 = bad, 2 = bad-average, 3 = average, 4 = average-good, 5 = good

This section focuses on specifics in collection management of the institution's collection space. The general rating (listed above) took into account the following general points (not all will necessarily apply to this institution): *the virtual collections (e-books, etc.), online databases, intranet, and Internet availability; as well as the ease of access, organization, and how searchable they are*.

Specific considerations worthy of a 1 (poor) rating or 5 (good) rating are detailed below. Considerations rating 2-4 will not be as well documented. The idea is to highly document practices which can either be avoided (in the case of poor) or utilized (in the case of good) in future planning and design in either library renovations or new establishments.

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