

Seating Achievement in Larger University Libraries

A questionnaire was sent to the thirty-six largest university libraries in the country inquiring as to their current ability to seat their students. Thirty-two replied. They indicate that the larger libraries, as well as those in private universities, were generally able to seat larger proportions of their students than were smaller libraries and those in state institutions. Plans indicate that these averages will be considerably improved by the year 1970.

THE STANDARDS for seating in academic libraries are generally well known. The most familiar of these, developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries, recommends reader stations for at least one-third of the student body in colleges and universities granting the bachelor's and master's degrees.

There is a dearth of inclusive and current information, however, with respect to actual percentages of library seating maintained among types of academic institutions, although such information would be extremely helpful for planning purposes. The most recent general statistics available are for 1957 and provide seating ratios derived from reports from institutions in the United States representing 95.7 per cent of the enrollment in higher education. These reports showed average seating percentages for the fall 1957 enrollment to be as indicated in Table 1.¹

It is apparent from these figures that,

¹ U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Office of Education, *College and University Facilities Survey; Part 3: Inventory of College and University Physical Facilities* (OE-51007, 1965), p. 389.

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as of ten years ago, academic libraries in every category fell considerably short, on the average, of meeting generally recognized standards of seating. Whether the over-all average has improved in the last ten years is difficult to determine in the absence of adequate statistical evidence, but the impression of many observers has been that the trend is in the direction of providing reading stations for an increasingly larger proportion of the student population.

Certainly the greatly augmented expenditures on academic library buildings in the last few years would lend strength to that belief. In 1957, for example, only \$20,800,000 was spent on new library construction and rehabilitation projects

TABLE 1

Types of Institution	Public	Private
All types	13.4	16.0
University	15.1	12.3
Liberal arts college	12.7	19.6
Teachers college	15.6	16.1
Independent technological school	9.5	6.8
Theological and religious school		25.7
Other independent professional school	13.8	11.7
Junior college	9.0	22.1
Technical institute	6.5	5.0

TABLE 2. SEATING STATISTICS FOR LARGER UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Institution ^a	Library Seats Current	Seating Ratio Current	Add. Seats Expected 1970	Ratio Expected 1970	Standard for Undergrad.
Harvard	6,381	43.0	600	40-45.0	none
Yale	1,152 ^b	13.5	1,600 ^b	27.5	
Illinois	3,892	13.4	1,905	18.5	25.0 ^d
Columbia	4,208	25.0 ^e	3,150	37.0	37.0 ^e
Michigan	5,783 ^h	20.5	2,923		1
California-B.	4,591 ^m	17.0	6,448	24.0	25.0
Cornell	4,466	32.0	158	30.0	
Stanford	4,000	36.0		36.0	
Chicago	2,474	33.0	1,706	47.0	25.0
Minnesota	4,457 ^o	12.3 ^o	2,800 ^o	15.0 ^o	
Princeton	2,946	62.0	572	73.0	
Wisconsin	4,220	14.0	4,145	23.0	25.0
Penn. U.	3,242	27.0	1,571	36.0	
Indiana U.	2,700 ^q	10.0 ^q	5,500 ^q	25.0 ^q	20.0
Ohio State	4,010	10.0	4,000 ^r	20.0 ^r	30-38.0 ^a
Texas U.	4,241	15.5	1,052	16.5	18.0
Duke	1,764 ^v	25.0 ^v	2,547 ^v	54.0 ^v	35.0
Northwestern	1,349	16.0	2,200 ^x		40.0 ^x
New York U.	1,219 ^y	6.0	4,800	25.0	
North Carolina	2,813	21.0	1,909	28.5	25.0
Johns Hopkins	1,400	22.6	255		
U. Washington	3,631	13.0	2,250	20.0	25.0
Virginia	1,240	16.0	300	15.0 ^z	25.0
Louisiana State	2,068	11.0			
Iowa U.	2,575	14.0	2,500	20.0	
Missouri	2,850	16.0	6,250	25.0	20.0
Michigan State	2,500	7.0	3,000-5,500	10-15.0	25.0
Kansas U.	2,020	13.8	1,085	18.2	
Brown	1,366	27.0	600	37.0	30-37.0
Florida	3,172	17.6	1,221	19.9	30.0
Kentucky	2,228	16.8	1,272	21.8	25-30.0
Oklahoma U.	2,360 ^{aa}	15.3	2,304	20.8	15.0

^a Arranged by size of book collection.

^b Central Building.

^c 25 square feet currently provided.

^d Includes students in Master's programs.

^e 25 per cent standard for doctoral students in areas with high laboratory research demands; 60 per cent standard for doctoral students in areas with low laboratory research demands.

^f 10 per cent standard for faculty with high laboratory research demands; 50 per cent standard for faculty with low laboratory research demands.

^g Does not take into account student readers from affiliated institutions such as Barnard and Teachers College.

^h Does not include 5 off-campus libraries.

ⁱ No official standard. Minimum desirable is 25 per cent average. For science students, 15 per cent; for humanities and social science students, 33 per cent.

^j No official standard. Minimum desirable is 50 per cent average. For science students, 50 per cent; for graduate students in humanities and social sciences would like to provide 100 per cent for those engaged in writing dissertations, 33 per cent for others.

^k No official standard. Modest standard might be 16 per cent in humanities and social sciences, 4 per cent in sciences.

^l Includes allowance for aisles.

^m Law students and Law Library excluded in all figures.

ⁿ No specified standard, but 25 square feet is commonly used in planning.

^o Minneapolis and St. Paul campus only.

^p In closed one-station carrels.

^q Bloomington campus only.

^r Estimated.

^s For humanities, 30 per cent; for sciences, 33 per cent; for social sciences, 38 per cent.

^t For sciences 25-30 per cent; for humanities and social sciences, 45-60 per cent.

^u For sciences, 10 per cent; for sciences, 50 per cent; for humanities, 55 per cent.

^v Includes Law and Medicine. The Law Library provides seats for 100 per cent of law students and faculty. The Medical Center Library now being planned will seat 100 per cent of its students and most of the faculty.

^w Applies to General Library. More space will be allowed in Medical Center and Law Libraries.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Institution ^a	Standard for Grad.	Standard for Faculty	Sq. Ft. Allowance Undergrad.	Sq. Ft. Allowance Grad.	Sq. Ft. Allowance Faculty
Harvard	none	none	varies	varies	varies
Yale			40 ^e	40 ^e	40 ^e
Illinois	25-50.0 ^e	10-50.0 ^f	30	30	30
Columbia	37.0		30	30	
Michigan			30 ¹	40 ¹	64 ¹
California-B.	25.0		25 ⁿ	25 ⁿ	
Cornell			30	32	80
Stanford			25-30	30-35	
Chicago	25-60.0		25	40	60
Minnesota			25	25	60
Princeton			25	18 ^p	45
Wisconsin	25.0		25	25-27	25-120
Penn. U.			20-25	30	60
Indiana U.	33.0		20-25	25-30	60-70
Ohio State	25-60.0 ^t	10-55.0 ⁿ	30	30-40	40-86
Texas U.	20.0	4.0	30	35	40
Duke	75.0		25 ^w	28 ^w	28 ^w
Northwestern	80.0 ^x	25.0 ^x	25	25-30	72
New York U.					
North Carolina	50.0	10.0	25	25	50
Johns Hopkins				15	48
U. Washington	25.0	5.0	25	30	50-60
Virginia	50.0	75.0	25	30-35	40
Louisiana State					
Iowa U.			30	30	
Missouri	35.0	10.0	25	35	50
Michigan State	30.0	25.0	30		
Kansas U.					
Brown	30-37.0	20.0	30	30	48-96
Florida	50.0		25	25	
Kentucky	35.0	25.0	25	45	60
Oklahoma U.	40.0	10.0	25-30	30	100

^e Humanities and social sciences only.

^f Washington Square only.

^t Ratio expected in 1975 is 35.0.

^{na} Norman campus only.

by all academic institutions. By 1962, the amount spent had risen to \$58,700,000.² This increased to \$79,000,000 spent in 1963 and to \$90,000,000 spent in 1964. But the most impressive advances occurred in 1965 and 1966 when expenditures for academic library construction soared to an average of over \$288,000,000 per year—almost fourteen times the \$20,800,000 expenditures in 1957.³ It would be logical to assume that alloca-

tions of these proportions, representing the significant impact of the Higher Education Facilities Act, should eventually have a favorable effect on library seating achievement in spite of increases in enrollment and the factor of inflation.

In order to determine the extent of library seating currently provided or expected in the near future in larger university libraries, the University of Illinois library recently queried the thirty-six university libraries in the United States with book collections of one million or more volumes. The questions covered not only seating ratios but square-foot allowances per reading station. Since

² Theodore Samore, "Academic Library Buildings: Needs, Legislation, Inventory," *College and Research Libraries*, XXV (July 1964), 296.

³ *The Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information* (New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1966), p. 32.

