A 21st-Century Library
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After nearly fifty years as the cornerstone of the Laird Bell Quadrangle, the D’Angelo Law Library is now better than ever. During the 2006–2008 Law School renovation, the five floors of the library were transformed into attractive, inviting spaces for individual and collaborative learning. The newly renovated space enables students to work more comfortably and efficiently with collections and online resources, with librarians and staff, and with each other.

SPACES THAT PROMOTE LEARNING
Pre-renovation surveys showed that students mostly congregated at tables along the windows on the two main library floors, taking advantage of the natural light and relative comfort. The library now has study areas distributed throughout all five floors, with study tables—consistently the most popular work spaces in the library—available in a variety of sizes. “The renovation created spaces with different purposes on each floor of the library,” 3L Laura Heinrich explains. “The variety in space allows the library to serve a greater range of academic and social functions for students.”

More than 100 secluded carrels offer quiet and convenience for students working on journals and as faculty research assistants. According to 3L Shannon Barrows Bjorklund, “My favorite part of the library renovation is the installation of new carrels. … Before, there were small tables and not enough space for all of the students. Now, there are roomy carrels, with bookshelves and locked cabinets. I am on a journal and have spent many hours cite-checking in the library. These carrels were a real life saver … [and] really do lead to a better, and more comfortable, educational experience.”

The library’s seven conference rooms are extremely popular, offering collaborative work space and natural light exposure.

New lounge seating areas provide convenient space for breaks and more comfortable reading.

The carrels were redesigned for the 21st-century law school student.
Helping Students Connect—Comfortably and Conveniently

To support the twenty-first century student, network access and electrical outlets are now available throughout the library. Students have the option of using the building-wide wireless network or one of the data jacks available at nearly every seat. For those not traveling with their laptop computers, walk-up workstations are centrally located on every floor. And a computing lab on the third floor houses all student printing, technical support, and tables equipped with individual-use desktop computers. Other facilities upgrades in the library include new locker areas, which allow students to secure their belongings during class time and study breaks. Students can also recharge their computers or other electronic devices in any of the eighty-eight specially designed laptop lockers, each equipped with an electrical outlet.

One of the more innovative additions to the library is the technology-equipped media room located within the fourth-floor stacks. The room provides space for students to view course-related videos either individually or with a group. With a large television, video viewing equipment, and cable TV access, the room is also the perfect location for students to unwind with a sporting event or a movie selected from the library’s extensive Fulton DVD collection.

Enhanced Services in Enhanced Spaces

Services are at the center of the D’Angelo Law Library’s mission to support students. In renovation planning, the library considered how spaces should best be arranged to promote research and learning. One result was the combination of circulation and reference services at one central desk. “The rearrangement of the library’s staff and support make it easier to get help,” says 3L Eric Fraser.
“During my 1L year I didn’t really understand the difference between the two desks and the reference desk seemed intimidating. Now it seems much more approachable.”

Adjacent to the reference and circulation desks is a new enclave for librarians to meet with students about research and paper assignments. The design of the consultation area provides generous space for a librarian and a researcher to view online resources together on one of several workstations or to work with printed materials.

While the renovation improved the library in many ways, previously successful spaces remain even as upgrades to furnishings and lighting make them more attractive. The reserves room continues to provide students with a core collection of texts, study aids, and other resources supporting their coursework, as well as the Library’s very popular and continually expanding collection of law-related movies and television series on DVD. The Maurice and Muriel Fulton Room remains an inviting location for students to enjoy popular magazines and newspapers.

The Law School’s library renovation transformed a building designed primarily for books into an attractive yet highly functional environment for student learning. “The wood furnishings and natural light create warmer, more desirable spaces,” notes 3L Christopher Lentz. “It’s an immeasurably better library to work in.”

**POST-RENOVATION CAPACITY**

- 500+ seats
- 90+ study tables
- 300+ open wire (network) connections
- 100+ carrels
- 88 specially designed laptop lockers, with outlets
- 44 book lockers