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A Law Building for Indiana University

by Betty Virginia LeBus, Law Librarian

For the first time since law was introduced into the curriculum at Indiana University in 1842, the School of Law occupies a building specifically designed for the teaching and study of that subject. A law building had been on the priority list at Indiana University for many years. Early in 1954, funds became available and construction was authorized to begin as soon as plans were completed and approved. Construction began January 1, 1955, and occupancy occurred in September 1956. The site selected by the Board of Trustees was a rectangular strip adjacent to the Administration Building and one block from the Central Library. Ample room for future expansion exists. Prevailing architectural style employed on the campus dictated that the Law Building would be modified or modern Gothic, faced with Indiana limestone. No restrictions were placed on interior design; a functional and flexible interior was desired by all.

Planning

As a preliminary step, the present and future space needs of the School of Law were discussed, and it was determined that the building should be designed to accommodate a student enrollment of five hundred. Space would be required for class and seminar rooms, a library of 150,000-175,000 volumes with sufficient seating and reading facilities, offices for faculty, administrative staff, and law journal personnel, a moot court room, student and faculty lounge areas, and student locker facilities.

The next stage involved the allocation of space for each of these functions. This led to problems involving the amount, type, and relative location of this space. Traffic patterns were given particular attention. The building was designed as a rectangle with a central tower and a wing extending to the east from the north portion of the rectangle. The Law Library occupies most of the space in the north and east portions of the building. On the first floor, the south wing contains the Moot Court Room seating 272 persons, two classrooms seating 156 each and two classrooms seating eighty each. On the second floor, this wing contains one seminar room seating thirty which may be divided into two rooms by means of folding wooden doors; one seminar room seating twelve; one seminar room equipped with casual furniture seating fourteen; the administrative offices and lounges. On the third floor, the south wing contains the faculty offices and faculty stenographic pool. Halls, stairwells, restrooms, locker rooms, and mechanical equipment areas were concentrated in the central tower.
Law Library

In the early stages of planning, several basic decisions concerning the Library were made:

1. **The Library should be a flexible, functional, and attractive stack and reading area.** The traditional reading room with high ceiling and adjacent stack areas was considered but abandoned. Instead, the Library was developed as an area in which the stack and reading space is integrated. The ceiling height varies from eight feet to ten and one-half feet. The entire collection, except approximately 5,000 reserve books, is housed on open shelves. Individual study tables, as well as group tables, were distributed throughout the Library and free-standing stacks were concentrated in the center of the rooms.

2. **There should be a single control point in the Library.** This point was located on the first floor. Since the classrooms are on the first floor also, student traffic is concentrated there. The Control and Circulation Desk is located at this entrance. Special reserve books, unbound periodicals, frequently used materials, and much of the Library's text collection are shelved in the stacks behind this Desk.

3. **All areas of the Library should be equally well lighted.** Fluorescent fixtures with warm white tubes were hung on 54-inch centers throughout. After eight months of operation, light intensity readings range from eighty foot candle power in the more open areas to sixty foot candle power in the stack aisles, offices, etc.

4. **Adequate staff offices should be provided.** The staff offices consist of an office for the Law Librarian and one large room used by the Assistant Librarian, secretary and part-time employees. The Circulation Assistant has charge of the Control Desk area.

5. **Special facilities should be provided where practicable.** A room for use by attorneys and faculty was included. More conference rooms were requested but were not included. A student typing room was included on the second floor of the Library and conference-study is permitted there. A room for microfilm and microcard reading machines was requested but, again, was not included. It has been possible to locate the Library's microfilm and microcard machines in an area where the lights may be turned off without disturbing other readers. It is regretted that the problem of additional conference rooms cannot be so easily resolved.

The Library seats 285 persons and has a stack capacity of approximately 130,000 volumes when computed as five volumes per lineal foot. The Library areas on the ground floor are presently being used by another department of the University; however, when this area is available to the School of Law, shelving for an additional 32,000 volumes can be installed. There are approximately 11,000 square feet of floor space on each of the first and second floors and approximately 1,900 square feet in the faculty library located on the third floor.

The walls in the Library areas are concrete blocks, painted a pastel green. Concrete columns, set on a 22-foot module, are painted Swedish red on the first and third floors and turquoise on the second floor.
ber tile floors throughout the public areas of the Library are dark beige marbleized with Swedish red and cream. The asphalt tile floors in the staff offices, typing room, reserve areas, etc. are beige marbleized with dark brown and cream. All shelving is steel in a warm beige finish with oak end panels on the first and third floors and steel end panels on the second floor. The Library furniture is white oak with a slightly grayed finish. The blending of these colors creates a warm, dignified atmosphere which has proven particularly pleasing.

Equipment

In general, the equipment has proved very satisfactory and several items deserve special mention.

1. The counter-high shelving units with wooden tops are very convenient for looseleaf services, digests, and frequently—but briefly—consulted reference materials.

2. The slotted shelf has solved the problem of shelving unbound periodicals, Congressional hearings, etc. Since these shelves may be interchanged readily with any of the regular shelves, it is convenient to use them throughout the Library wherever special shelving problems are encountered.

3. After studying the problem of table and carrell sizes, 40" x 60" tables were purchased; and, since it was felt that the standard size carrell was impractical for use by law students, 30" x 40" carrells with one shelf above the writing surface were ordered.

4. Armchairs were purchased in the belief that they would prove to be more sturdy and comfortable.

5. The convenience of the large rings and large label holders on the card catalog trays well justified the added cost.

Unfortunately, there are some items which have not proved entirely satisfactory. The book trucks have a 10½" space between the shelves which is insufficient to accommodate such volumes as those of the National Reporter System which measure 10¾". It is possible to purchase trucks where the spacing is greater if specified.

Some of the paint on the shelves has chipped. The problems of handling during the installation of this equipment were aggravated by a number of factors outside of the control of the supplier, and it must be recognized that these marks are more readily seen on a light finish than on a gray or green finish. However, the extent of chipping raises questions which should be considered in planning for any stack installation.

Moving

It may be fortunate that no one understands fully the magnitude of the task of moving an entire school to new quarters except in retrospect. In this instance, however, moving the Library presented much less of a problem than anticipated. All sets and groups of books were measured and the size of volumes and number of volumes per year was noted for all open sets so that the required expansion might be computed. This information was recorded on 3" x 5" cards. Each section of new shelving was numbered on the stack layout drawings. These numbers were taped on each section of shelving in the new Library. Regular notebook
sheets were prepared to record the new location of all books. These sheets were divided into squares with seven lines within each square. A square represented a section in the new building and the seven lines represented the shelves in that section. Thus “706-4” referred to the fourth shelf from the top of Section 706. With all of this information it was possible to record the exact location of each volume on the notebook sheets. Titles were noted on the line representing the first shelf to be used and lines for the succeeding shelves required were checked. Those which would be left vacant for expansion were marked with a zero. For each shelf which would be filled at the time of moving a card was prepared showing the section and shelf number.

One law student was in charge of the loading crew and another was in charge of the unloading crew. Each of these foremen had a copy of the stack layout drawings and of the notebook sheets. Books were loaded into 35-inch long wooden book boxes, the appropriate card taped onto the box by the loading foreman, and the box was sent to the new building. When received, the box was checked in by the receiving foreman and sent to the shelf indicated for shelving. This system proved amazingly accurate and workable. It even withstood the test of organizing into a single alphabet periodicals which had been shelved in four widely separated areas.

The First Eight Months

After two years of planning, choosing colors, furniture, equipment, moving, etc., it was difficult for the faculty and staff to settle down to the usual routine. During the fall semester almost every question raised was a “case of first impression” which had to be answered without benefit of precedent. The building was new to the faculty, the staff and to the students. The fact that the building was far from complete and much of the equipment had not been received when the semester began added to the confusion.

However, the beginning of the second semester brought a noticeable change in attitude. Construction was completed and most of the equipment had been received. The full cycle of the semester’s work from registration through finals had been completed, and it was with a feeling of security which is associated with the familiar that everyone began the second semester.

It is now possible to evaluate the effect of the new building on the use of the Library by the faculty and students. It has become clear that adequate space, light, and air, plus pleasant surroundings and adequate study facilities, have contributed to everyone’s enthusiasm for library research. The individual study tables are very popular and are in constant use. Library attendance and circulation has increased at least thirty percent. The sheer size of the new law building and of the library areas has brought with it problems for everyone. Students, faculty, and staff have had to revise patterns of work. Some of these problems have been solved. Others remain for solution.