

Transformative Learning Spaces - Andersen Library



The second oldest building on campus, Andersen Library opened in 1953 – named in honor of Harold Gilbert Andersen '17, who represented the Whitewater State Teachers College on the Board of Regents(1957-60). At the time, the college was the first in the University of Wisconsin system to have a dedicated library building.



Andersen Library remains a vital hub for quiet study and group collaboration. Additionally, the library offers programming throughout the year to encourage lifelong-learning, research skills, recreation and wellness.

Some campus traditions are forever carried forward, and studying at the library is one of those lasting traditions that is just as prevalent as when the university was founded 150 years ago. Since Andersen Library opened in 1953, it has been a central study destination for students. Even in today's digital age, the library remains an active hub on campus with over 300,000 visits each academic year.

Students come to the library for a variety of reasons. They seek course materials, research help, collaborative spaces, and private study. Some seek sanctuary at the library to find quiet focus, while other students want social hubs for active learning. In a time when students are inundated with potential distractions and diversions, the sanctity of studying at the library remains consistent. And even as technology has shifted and the accessibility of resources and research is increasingly available electronically, students continue to seek out physical spaces to collaborate and engage with the research. To ensure the library remains a valued resource to students and the campus community, as with all learning spaces it must be updated at regular intervals to remain relevant to current trends in classwork, technology, and study and learning styles.

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The Academic Commons will help modernize the library to ensure its usefulness and relevance for years to come.

As more and more reference material is available in digital formats, the footprint of physical collections has shrunk while access to these volumes has increased. This provides a perfect opportunity to renovate parts of the library into learning spaces that can evolve with students' needs. As their coursework adjusts to meet the changing realities of disciplines and workplaces, so must the library adjust. Andersen Library seeks philanthropic support to establish an Academic Commons, a hub of active learning spaces to support student and faculty collaboration and hands-on engagement with resources.

The Academic Commons in the Andersen Library will cultivate learning and strengthen research support across all disciplines and colleges by combining access to learning spaces, technology, physical resources and digital materials to allow students and faculty to work collaboratively on research and projects. An Academic Commons will ensure the library remains a central resource for students while evolving with the future needs of the university. This forward-looking approach creates a common shared space that is welcoming and accessible and accommodates any learning style. It recognizes the need for focused study and embraces the camaraderie of campus life. The Andersen Library seeks to create a modern setting where engaging dialogues are welcomed and students feel at home for generations to come.