

Bennett College Holgate Library Major Needs Assessment Findings

1. How can the library best align with the strategic needs of Bennett College?

- Help with our academic brand and core areas of strength
- Promote our strong history and archives
- Be ready for and prepare 21st Century learners
- The Library space needs to invite conversations and communication as well as offer spaces for quiet reflection, thought, and scholarship
- The Library serves as the foundation of the academic piece – to remain competitive we must have a modern 21st Century Library.
- To grow our academic areas and we must also grow our library – it is a collaborative experience; meet and support the needs of those areas.
- The Library definitely needs more staff - no archivist, no reference/research librarian, no outreach librarian. Also needs a digital services librarian.
- Students: Compared to other libraries our library is underfunded; the technology is not as high tech as other libraries; resources are limited. Libraries are a place to study – how can we excel without this space?

2. Top resources or services that would be of interest and motivate faculty and students that do not currently use the Library (n=15):

1. Coffee and snack area for reading and relaxing
2. Comfortable studying areas and spaces (both individual and group)
3. Multi-purpose meeting rooms
4. Benches and tables outside of the Library for reading, studying, and relaxing
5. State-of-the-art technology
6. Hi-tech teaching and learning classrooms
7. History and Archives museum that shares the history of Bennett College
8. Renovated, modern building and interior spaces
9. Technology for check-out (e.g. laptops, tablets, printers, etc.)

3. Describe your ideal library that would best serve you and Bennett College overall (building, services, personnel, etc.)?

- For Faculty: have a plaza in front so that on good days you could have class outside or have a small group meeting or just read and relax. The building itself would have plenty of big glass windows so you could see the sky throughout the library. There would be charging stations and outlets everywhere. Comfortable couches for reading and relaxation. Coffee would be offered and allowed throughout the building.
- For Administration: Our ideal library should reflect a combination of the pictures you showed (Hunt, Norfolk State, and Slover) and must have SPACE, TECHNOLOGY, and HUMAN RESOURCES. It would also have benches outside for social gathering that would lead up to the library, well-manicured where you can slip away. When you walk in everything is pristine. Everything is there - books, newspapers, and magazines and comfortable seating. Robust Internet, spaces where you can work as a group, smart boards, group rooms, special carrels where you can work on your own as well. The History of Bennett would be everywhere – a pictorial that would take me through the history. There would also be coffee, tea, a place to meet and discuss with colleagues about current events – brown bag lunches and brainstorming sessions.

- For Students: Our ideal library would have three floors – blinds need to be open – light and seeing outside is important. It would have vending machines, more cozy furniture, more collaborative spaces, markers, erasers, boards. The Library needs to be a workshop, a one-stop-shop – do any kind of work we need there. There would be more computers that are not as closely connected – further apart and some stand alone. I would also like to challenge my faculty to talk about the resources more and even use them in your classrooms so students understand what is in the Library and why they should use it. Digital information is good and important but if you do not know how to access it appropriately you are not getting the right information; you will not be able access the resource on the Internet. Outside appearance is critical – curb appeal. Nice benches, plants; promotes wanting to hang out with friends. Stairs are very inconvenient. Inside there would be a little café with food and drink also where you could study. There should be in general nice décor with more bright colors; right now it is kind of DEPRESSING (old wood floor) and dark.

4. Top Library priorities over the next five years according to Bennett College Stakeholders? (N=118)

1. Improving technology within the Library (e.g. workstations, mobile technologies, teaching and learning technologies)
2. Comfortable studying areas and spaces (both individual and group)
3. Online web services and databases that have what I need for teaching and learning
4. Increase book and journal collections in all mediums (electronic and print)
5. History and Archives museum that shares the history of Bennett College
6. Convenient hours and days of operation
7. Increased staffing
8. State-of-the-art technology
9. Improving online services (e.g. website, access to online data bases, e-books)

Participant quotes:

“The library is the center piece for every educational institution and neglecting it means neglecting the educational needs of the students.”

“We just need to make more opportunities for people to want to come to the library not only study but to want to read and have fun within the library.”

“Limited research and academic resources does not show that the college is committed to scholarship and research excellence if we must use other schools libraries to complete our work.”