

Challenges and Innovations: Collections, Access, and the South Caroliniana Library Renovation

When your library is emptied for a major renovation, collections and user services staff can work together to turn a daunting situation into an opportunity for productive change.

Join us as we highlight some of the impacts and associated challenges of a major renovation and show how a flexible and communicative staff can use challenging circumstances to increase productivity through assessment and innovation.

The South Caroliniana Library

- The South Caroliniana Library is one of the premier research archives and special collections repositories in South Carolina and the Southeast region.
- The Library's holdings are essential to the understanding of South Carolina and Southern culture over the past 300 years, and includes the printed, written, and visual history of individuals whose stories have intersected with the history of state of South Carolina.
- Since 1940, the Library has resided in the South Carolina College Library building, built in 1840 and based on a design by Robert Mills. It is the oldest freestanding academic library in the United States, and the previous major renovation was completed in 1985.



The South Caroliniana Library, c. 1950, when parking was allowed on the UofSC Horseshoe!



The South Caroliniana Library reading room, 1899.

Impacts of Major Renovation:

Collections:

- physical location of materials changes
- disruption to staff location and workflow

User Services:

- Change in location of services
- Disruption to access of collections
- Policies out of date

Challenges of Major Renovation:

Collections:

- The Move
- Facilitating access to disrupted collections
- Managing staff

User Services:

- Communicating change to users
- Delay in reference services
- Writing new policies

Increasing Productivity

Assessment

Collections:

- Physical contact with most collection items during move
- Staff workflow
- Collections use, and impact on item location

User Services:

- Previous communication methods (written and verbal) with patrons
- Collections use, in collaboration with collections staff

Innovation

Collections:

- Handling collections more, to develop priorities for preservation, processing, and bibliographic control
- Implement workflow / project management systems
- Intentional communication with user services regarding use and under-processed collections

User Services

- Changing *how* and *what* we communicate with patrons
- Using delay in access to conduct more in-depth reference
- Intentional communication with collections staff regarding use and under-processed collections

Conclusion

Collaboration between Collections and User Services staff has increased: first as a necessity, and then deliberately. Staff have implemented the use of intentional communication, which expands the use of collection materials, allowed for more efficient use of building space, and led to more informed decisions that further the mission of the Library.

