February 7, 2019

Dear Faculty, Students, and Staff,

I am pleased to share with you an update on the planned renovation of Bass Library.

In response to community feedback, the project architects have adapted their plans to allow for a shorter construction period, less inconvenience for students next fall, and a larger post-renovation collection.

The trade-off for these changes is a smaller increase in study spaces than we initially envisioned. As you know, the reason for this project is to make sure our growing undergraduate population will continue to find ample, good study space in Bass. Although the increased study space is smaller now, I believe it will still make a significant difference for students.

Here are some highlights of our revised plans:

- **No fall closing.** To minimize disruption to students, we are planning a “soft opening” of the space when the fall semester starts on August 28. This means that Bass will be open for students to study and work, but services, staffing, collections, and, likely, some of the furnishings will still be in flux. The official opening of the fully renovated space will be October 1.

- **A larger print collection.** The plan we presented on Jan. 23 called for an estimated 40,000 volumes in the post-renovation collection. The new plan has an estimated capacity of approximately 61,000 volumes. Setting aside more than 40,000 duplicates in the current collection, Bass houses just over 104,000 individual titles. The new collection, then, will be equivalent to about 58 percent of the materials currently available in Bass.

- **Eighty-four new study spaces.** The trade-off for the latest revisions is a smaller increase in study spaces. The Jan. 23 plan called for an increase from the current 365 to 470. Seating in the revised plan will top out at 449 spaces—21 fewer than in the earlier plan, but still a meaningful step toward addressing the overcrowding we see at key points in the semester.

- **Making trade-offs.** The reduction in seating is due, first, to an increase in shelving on the lower level, and, secondly, to our decision to retain more of the current Bass furniture, which has a larger footprint than some alternatives we had been considering. Since the lead time for ordering furniture is a major factor in the project timeline, this change will help us shorten the construction period, with the caveat that some of the new furniture will arrive after August 28.
• **Easy, ongoing access to the current collection.** All books removed from the Bass collection will be re-shelved right next door in Sterling Memorial Library, fully available and accessible to students. We continue to make the Sterling stacks more accessible and usable for students. (You can read about one initiative here.) In addition, we have commissioned new signs and content maps for the stacks, which will make books easier to find.

• **Next steps.** While we are pleased to be able to offer a somewhat larger post-renovation collection, we feel strongly that the quality of the collection is more important than the specific number of volumes. We look forward to working with interested faculty and students to plan and maintain a post-renovation collection that better supports the undergraduate curriculum and is selected and arranged to attract and engage students.

• **Bass as a gateway.** No collection in any Yale library – not even the three million volumes adjacent to Bass in the Sterling stacks – stands alone. Each library collection should invite users into the more than 12 million books and other items of our extraordinary collection and introduce them to library services and instruction. Through expanded study space, a renewed collection, and the move of two librarians to more visible, upper-level offices, we will make Bass a more effective gateway to all the resources of Yale University Library.

As we have since our planning began in 2017, we continue to welcome your input. You may email me at susan.gibbons@yale.edu, or find ongoing updates and a feedback form at guides.library.yale.edu/bass2019. Faculty and others may make collection suggestions using our collections form or by contacting a subject librarian.

I look forward to working with you to implement this important project in support of our students.

Sincerely,

Susan

Susan Gibbons
Stephen F. Gates ’68 University Librarian
Deputy Provost for Collections & Scholarly Communication