August 27, 2019

Dear Students and Colleagues,

I am pleased to update you on the Bass Library renovation project.

We are on schedule for our planned soft opening tomorrow, Wednesday, August 28. The full, official opening will take place, as previously announced, on October 1.

If you visit in the next few weeks, you will find many of the new reading and study spaces completed on both levels. Staff and services, including course reserves and media equipment check-out, will also be back in place. However, we will still be assembling and positioning furniture, moving the renewed print collection back into the library, and otherwise completing the project throughout the month of September. Please be prepared for occasional disruption as well as some still empty shelves and shifting collections between now and October 1.

Should you need access to collection materials that are in transit, please ask for assistance at the service desk on the Courtyard Level. See the Bass Library web pages for more information on collections and services.

Available study space has been expanded and improved with new configurations, including additional soft seating. Access to the courtyards has been improved. New carpet and lighting fixtures have been installed throughout. Adjacent to the courtyards, you will also see two new librarian
offices, part of our plan to make undergraduate research support more visible and accessible.

As of October 1, a focal point of the Courtyard Level will be the new Model Research Collection, a small-scale research collection designed to show the breadth and depth of library resources in a specific subject area. The first Model Research Collection is being selected and curated by Laura Wexler, professor of American Studies and of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. We look forward to unveiling this collection on October 1.

Over the summer, a team of librarians has continued to assess and review the Bass collection in relation to the undergraduate curriculum and the full breadth of Yale Library collections. With advice from faculty and more than 25 subject-expert librarians, we have established new collection parameters to ensure that the collection shelved in Bass remains up-to-date and supports the Yale College curriculum across all disciplines.

The 61,000-volume collection being re-assembled in Bass over the coming weeks has a renewed focus on critically acclaimed titles and books written or recommended by Yale faculty. Disciplines that were somewhat under-represented before the renovation, such as the arts, sciences, and law, will have a proportionally larger presence. The collection also features titles recommended by students and other members of the Yale community through engagement programs like the Reading Resilience Project, which aims to highlight underrepresented voices.

Going forward, we expect to purchase approximately 3,000 new print volumes a year for the Bass collection. As new books are added, others may be shifted next door to the Sterling stacks in response to curricular changes and collection usage.

I am grateful to all the library and university staff and contractors who have worked so hard over the summer to meet unusually ambitious project deadlines that were set to minimize the impact of this project on students and other library users.

I hope that all members of the campus community will enjoy studying, working, and browsing in the renovated Bass Library. Our staff is happy to welcome you into the almost completed space, and we appreciate your patience as we finish up the project over the next five weeks.
In September, further details will be forthcoming about the October 1 reopening event and activities. I look forward to seeing many of you then.

Sincerely,

Susan Gibbons
Stephen F. Gates ’68 University Librarian
Vice Provost, Collections & Scholarly Communication