

In View Of ... The Renovated UNCW Library

The UNCW (formerly Randall) Library opened its new three-story, 80,000+-square-foot expansion in time for Fall 2024 classes. The planning for this expansion began in Summer 2018, and contractors broke ground in July 2022. The first floor houses a greatly expanded Maker Studio with 3-D printing and scanning and laser cutting, along with a virtual reality room, a much-expanded recording studio, a publicly-accessible digitization lab, a visualization analysis lab, an events space and an exhibit gallery, along with multiple group study rooms, new computing areas and a new TechDesk service point. The guiding principle of the library's design has been "learning on display;" to that end, windows or glass walls allow visitors to see the ongoing activities in all the public spaces.

The second floor is home to the Center for Southeast North Carolina Archives & History, which is comprised of University Archives, Special Collections, Government Information, and the University's







art collection. The new center will have approximately 1100 sq feet of high-density shelving customized for the collection and a new research room adjacent to the collections, near staff/faculty offices and processing spaces. The floor also includes two library classrooms and additional group study and student spaces.

Lastly, the third floor includes a Grand Reading Room, a modern take on a timeless library institution, as well as the “Lookout” lounge, overlooking the front of campus, and a wide variety of group and individual study spaces of all types. The entire building increases student occupancy from approximately 1650 seats to more than 2700 seats.

The Link, a two-story glass bridge between the new building and the existing Randall Hall, includes

a food market with pre-made sandwiches, salads, snacks and coffee, and seating on both floors. Two outdoor spaces flank the Link, with a patio to the north and a lawn to the south, both with available Wi-Fi.

The existing Randall Hall boasts newly renovated spaces as well, including 13 new group study rooms and a greatly expanded graduate student lounge, a general lounge, a wellness space, and a sensory-friendly lounge for neurodivergent students. Library departmental offices have also been reconfigured for greater effectiveness and accessibility.

The grand opening celebration took place September 25, 2024. We invite all our library colleagues to visit!

