

Meeting Future Space Problems: University of Illinois Library

FOR THE FALL SEMESTER of the academic year 1956-57, student enrollment on the University of Illinois's Urbana campus was 19,223, to which the University's several professional colleges and undergraduate division in Chicago added 5,824, bringing the total to 25,047. These figures represented an increase of 5,000 or 20 per cent in the past five years. Looking not too far ahead, the educational forecasters are predicting an enrollment of 25,500 in Urbana and 7,900 in Chicago by 1963, a growth of 8,553 or 34 per cent in six years. By 1971, fifteen years hence, if the upward curve continues without major fluctuations, the total enrollment on the Urbana campus alone is expected to reach 30,800.

Various factors may reduce these figures somewhat. Proposals for a string of new state-supported junior colleges, if approved and implemented, will drain off a sizable percentage of freshmen and sophomores. Expansion of other state colleges, and perhaps state subsidies to increase enrollments in private colleges and universities, may relieve the strain on the University of Illinois. Also, recommendations have been made for more selective procedures in admitting students, though these have not been warmly received by citizens who feel that every high school graduate should be given a chance to show whether he is of college caliber.

Proceeding on the reasonably safe as-

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sumption that, like every other state university, it must prepare for the influx of record-breaking numbers of students in the period immediately ahead, Illinois has in progress a huge program of construction of dormitories, classroom buildings, and other facilities. The university library system figures prominently in this design for the future.

Fortunately, the central library building at Urbana was planned with admirable forethought. Ample space was reserved for its future growth, and no problems of ground area will be encountered in adding units. In the area reserved, immediately adjacent, it will be feasible to double in size the present building.

As a first step in the expansion program, in the biennium 1957-59, it is planned to add two units, one a stack section shelving a half-million volumes, and the other a wing containing 34,000 square feet for special reading rooms, technical services, and faculty studies. Later, contingent upon approval in 1958 of a bond issue for state-financed buildings in Illinois, two similar units will be constructed in the next building period.

The library service load at Illinois is divided between the central library and a strong system of departmental libraries. As opportunity offers, such as in new building programs, space is added for library functions. A new law building, dedicated in 1956, provides excellent facilities for the law library. New departmental libraries for veterinary medicine and home economics have been estab-

lished recently, and buildings under construction or planned will make adequate provision for the biological sciences, agriculture, art, architecture, music, education, and commerce.

In Chicago the building program planned over the next few years includes a separate building for the medical library. This library, now containing 120,000 volumes, serves the Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Nursing, with 1,689 students enrolled and a staff of 2,500.

A permanent home for the Undergraduate Division in Chicago, now at Navy Pier, is still in the planning stage. When a site is chosen, construction of a new campus will be started, probably by 1959. Maximum capacity at Navy Pier is 4,500 students, while plans for the new home anticipate an enrollment of 15,000 by 1970. One of the first buildings to be erected when the division transfers its base of operations will be a

library, with seating sufficient for one-third the number of students expected to be enrolled. Present planning for the division does not extend beyond the undergraduate stage.

The impact of large student registrations will, of course, affect libraries in other ways than space requirements, notably in the case of book funds and staff. Obviously, more copies of more books must be provided to meet the needs of vastly increased enrollments, unless the universities revert to the single textbook method of teaching. Likewise, augmented library staffs must be recruited to serve the students and expanded faculties, though where the librarians can be found, unless the library schools succeed in producing more graduates, is now unclear. Perhaps university libraries will be forced into that sharper differentiation between professional and clerical duties which many of them have been tardy in making.

ACRL Meetings at Midwinter

Board of Directors: Tuesday, Jan. 28: 10:00 A.M.; Wed., Jan. 29: 2:00 P.M.

College Libraries Section, Junior College Libraries Section, Teacher Education Libraries Section, University Libraries Section: Wed., Jan. 29: 2:00 P.M.

Organizing Committee, Special Libraries Section: Mon., Jan. 27: 2:00 P.M.; Tues., Jan. 28: 2:00 P.M.; Fri., Jan. 31: 10:00 A.M.

Advisory Committee on Cooperation with Educational and Professional Organizations: Wed., Jan. 29: 2:00 P.M.

Committee on Committees: Wed., Jan. 29: 4:30 P.M.

Committee on Foundation Grants: Tues., Jan. 28: 4:30 and 8:30 P.M.

Committee on Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Special Collections and Special Committee on Section Status (joint meeting): Tues., Jan. 28: 8:30 P.M.

Committee on Standards: Mon., Jan. 27: 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M.

Publications Committee: Tues., Jan. 28: 4:30 P.M.

Special Committee on Activities Development: Mon., Jan. 27: 2:00 and 8:30 P.M.

State Representatives: Wed., Jan. 29: 4:30 P.M.

College and Research Libraries editorial staff: Wed., Jan. 29: 12:00 noon

ACRL Monographs editorial board: Tues., Jan. 28: 8:30 P.M.

Pure and Applied Science Section: Wed., Jan. 29: 4:30 P.M.