

Amidst Budgetary Doom & Gloom, a UC Technology Leader Unveils a Bright New Library

UC San Diego's Newly Renovated Arts Library Opens its Doors with Advanced Technology Features

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Thanks to advance planning, investment, and a commitment to technology, the UC San Diego Libraries have recently unveiled a newly renovated, interdisciplinary Arts Library that includes the latest in digital technology infrastructure, including digital media production studios and high-definition media workstations. The Arts Library renovations began in winter 2007, spurred by changes in technology and the way patrons were utilizing the library's collections, services, and spaces.

According to Leslie Abrams, director of the Arts Library at UC San Diego, while these technology features are not common in most art libraries today, for the UCSD Arts Library, investing in leading-edge technology and digital infrastructure was par for the course. In 2004, the UCSD Arts Library teamed up with the Mellon Foundation to build the core content for ARTstor, the digital image repository that set a new national standard for high-quality digital images in support of instruction and scholarship.

"We were early adopters in using digital technology to expand access to content, notably our electronic reserves efforts for audio, still images, and moving images," said Abrams. "The UCSD Arts Library was the first library to digitize its entire slide collection; more than 200,000 slide images from UCSD's collections were digitized to form the core of the ARTstor Slide Gallery, which is now utilized by art and academic institutions throughout the world."

The renovated library, which features a continuous wall of vividly colored glass panels, includes a single service desk, small group viewing rooms, a self-serve scanning station, graduate student lockers, wireless connectivity, and welcoming open spaces for study, research, and collaboration as well as exhibits and events.

"In today's challenging budget climate, the type of investment needed for a major library renovation like this would just not be possible," said Abrams. "I'm glad that we were able to make the commitment and investment needed to undertake this renovation," said Abrams.

The UCSD Arts Library is also uniquely interdisciplinary, incorporating the previous libraries of Art & Architecture, Music, and Film & Video to meet the needs of faculty and students in visual arts, music, film, theatre, and dance. This consolidation was envisioned nearly a decade ago, and reflects the highly interdisciplinary nature of scholarship in the arts and other academic areas at UCSD as well as many other universities.

The UCSD Arts Library is housed in UC San Diego's iconic flagship building-Geisel Library. The colorful glass walls that define the Arts Library space tip their hat to the multi-colored glass installation by artist John Baldessari -"Read/Write/Think/Dream" -that graces the entrance to Geisel Library.

In addition to the Arts Library's enhanced infrastructure for the delivery of digital and analog media, including high-definition viewing, UCSD students and other patrons are also benefiting from an expansion of service hours

and access to arts reserves and media collections. The Arts Library is open 96 hours per week, including until midnight Sunday through Thursday during the academic quarter.

The UC San Diego Libraries, ranked among the top 25 public academic research libraries in the nation, play an integral role in advancing and supporting the university's research, teaching, patient care, and public service missions. The nine libraries that comprise the UCSD Library system provide access to more than 7 million digital and print volumes, journals, and multimedia materials to meet the knowledge demands of scholars, students, and members of the public. Each day, more than 7,300 people stream through one of the university's nine libraries. The Libraries' vast resources and services are accessed more than 87,500 times each day via the UCSD Libraries' Web site.

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