



Why Do I Need The Library?

By Richard Kearney

“Oh no!,” you might be thinking. “Here’s another lame marketing pitch for a campus service I don’t need!”

Well, maybe not. I *could* try to sell you my “product.” After all, libraries do that kind of promotional work all the time. The Cheng Library is doing it right now on Facebook (and please go “Like” us if you don’t believe me).

But in this case I’d rather focus on you. Because let’s face it: people are different.

If you’re an undergraduate student, you might need to see a textbook, or print an essay you typed at home last night, or find a quiet place to study, or get a question answered.

If you’re a commuting student, you might need a place to decompress after being stuck in traffic, or after facing the ordeal of finding a parking space.

If you and some friends are working on a group project, or preparing for an exam together, you might need a comfortable space to do that, maybe one with useful extras like a whiteboard or a large computer monitor so everyone can see the screen.

You might even need to reserve that space in advance, to ensure it’s available when everyone in your group can meet.

If you're a graduate student, maybe you need help getting started on research for a thesis project.

Maybe you need any or all of these things bright and early in the morning, or late at night, or during the weekend.

Maybe you need help with an assignment or some research even when – or *especially* when – you're not on campus, so it becomes very important that someone pick up the phone, or answer an email quickly, or respond to a chat message even faster.

Your needs demand attention and flexibility. And that's fine with us!

Students often contact us when they're feeling some stress. You're under a tight deadline, or a paper you turned in was given back to you with a request to do it over again, and you're not sure how to proceed.

That's why we're here.

For Library staff, helping students doesn't just mean assisting with an information need. It's also about reducing that stress, building your confidence, and supporting your achievements.

Student needs are the starting point for almost everything in the Library, seen and unseen: the staffing, the services, the hours, the arrangement of our physical space, the design of our web pages, and our collections.

And as your needs change, we try our best to change with you, and for you.

So I'm not going to try to "sell" you the Library. Instead, I'm going to tell you what you already know: as a student, you have needs. And I'm going to invite you to visit us – in person or online – to see how your needs can be met. Maybe we can't address every need, but we're willing to bet you'll go away smiling, and that you'll visit again.