University Libraries

With access to more than 3.6 million print and electronic resources, University Libraries, a system of five separate disciplined-related libraries, provides both traditional print collections and cutting-edge technology. All library buildings offer a fully computer-networked environment providing enhanced access to electronic information sources. In addition, a wireless network facilitates students’ use of their laptop computers.

As research has become increasingly interdisciplinary in nature, students may find collections of importance in more than one library.

The University Libraries’ website, lib.ua.edu, available 24/7 from any computer, provides all library users with access to integrated collections, services and information resources. Currently, the University Libraries system provides access to 124,145 full text print and electronic journals. In addition, more than 400 databases, including indexes, abstracts and other reference resources, are linked from the Libraries’ website. The collection of electronic books continues to grow with 1.2 million e-books in all disciplines.

The Libraries’ catalog, containing records for almost 4 million items in all formats (print, microfilm, archival and serials), can also be accessed via the Libraries’ website. Links to books and electronic materials on reserve, Interlibrary Loan services and other self-initiated services, like renewing books and requesting materials from the Libraries’ Annex, are also available. Faculty and students also have access to research collections encompassing more than 1 million titles from the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) via Interlibrary Loan.

In 2013, the Libraries joined HathiTrust, a partnership of major research institutions around the world. By participating in HathiTrust, the Libraries now has access to more than 6.6 million digitized book titles and 12.9 million total volumes as well as a research center available to scholars.

The University Libraries system offers academic software to support student assignments and class projects. Software is upgraded and added annually. Students can find locations of the current programs available on library computers by accessing the Libraries’ website.

Subject specialists work closely with students and faculty to assist them in ordering or locating materials and in advising students and faculty who need specialized assistance with research projects. A list of subject specialists is available on the Libraries’ website. Reference services are available in person, over the phone and online through the Ask-a-Librarian service. University Libraries also provides services for users with disabilities.

Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library, located on the Quad, contains the social sciences, arts and humanities collection, and features a state-of-the-art Learning Commons. Located on the first floor are the Music Library and the Digital Humanities Center. Reference assistance is also available on the first floor and online. For students needing digital media for class projects or individual papers, expert assistance is provided in the Sanford Media Center located on the second floor. Group study rooms can also be found on the second floor of the building. The Center for Academic Success and the Writing Center both provide services in Gorgas Library.

The 2010 acquisition of the A.S. Williams III Americana Collection, located on the third floor, brings to Gorgas Library an additional 20,000 volumes, more than 15,000 photographs, hundreds of maps, an extensive collection of manuscripts, and historical documents as well as numerous other artifacts. The book collection published between the late 17th century and 2009 pertains to the US presidents and the history and culture of the South. The Civil War is particularly well represented with approximately 6,000 volumes, published from the earliest days of secession to the present, reflecting the observations and opinions of the Union, the Confederacy, European visitors during the War, veterans and subsequent generations of scholars. Unpublished portions of the collection contain archival materials ranging from 19th-century letters, diaries and newspapers to business records and a wide variety of documents recording the American experience of both the famous and the unknown from the mid-18th century to the Great Depression. Particularly noteworthy are photographs of the South taken between the 1850s and the mid-1930s.

Angelo Bruno Business Library serves the business information needs of the campus and in particular the students and faculty of the Culverhouse College of Commerce and the Manderson Graduate School of Business. The library also houses the College’s Sloan Y. Bashinsky Sr. Computer Center. Combining business library services and business computer laboratory services in the same facility provides seamless access to information services for business students.

Bruno Library’s resources comprise a wide variety of online computer databases and over 190,000 volumes, including hundreds of business periodicals. Library faculty and staff offer users specialized information assistance and services and individual and class instruction in library research and effective use of library databases. Special features include an electronic library instruction classroom and several types of seating and study accommodations, including group study rooms for collaborative assignments. The 64,000-square-foot facility is conveniently located on Stadium Drive within the Culverhouse complex.

McLure Education Library serves primarily the faculty, students, and staff of the College of Education and the Graduate School of Education. McLure Library includes the School Library and Curriculum Materials Center on the lower level; reference and periodical areas and public computer areas on the main floor; and study rooms, two presentation practice rooms, and a computer lab on the third floor. The main collection of the library is made up of professional books related to education (including sports and physical education). A reference collection is on the main floor. The School Library collection contains approximately 20,000 trade books for preschool through young adult readers. The Curriculum Materials Center holds approximately 10,000 items including K-12 textbooks, curriculum guides, supplemental classroom materials, and educational media including CD’s, DVD’s, videos, kits, games, and other items. McLure is located on University Boulevard.

Rodgers Library for Science and Engineering serves students and faculty in the sciences, engineering, and nursing programs. Rodgers is the first departmental library built with the intent of taking maximum advantage of computer-based information systems for teaching and research. Rodgers Library offers a 3D Studio and other Makerspace resources; seven group study rooms; and equipment and special spaces for students to prepare, practice, and record presentations. Rodgers Library offers expanded hours, open 24 hours daily, Sunday-Thursday, giving students more opportunities to learn, study, and do research. Rodgers Library is located immediately south of Shelby Hall and the Science and Engineering Complex, north of the Biology Building, and one building west of the Campus Drive Parking Deck.

W. S. Hoole Special Collections Library contains materials related to Alabama and the Deep South (including manuscripts, rare editions, Confederate imprints, pamphlets, maps, archives of the University, and Alabama state publications. Digital collections from Hoole Library are linked on Hoole’s home page. The library is located on the second floor of Mary Harmon Bryant Hall on Hackberry Lane.

Under separate administration are the Health Sciences Library in the University Medical Center, the Bounds Law Library in the Law Center, and the Map Library in Farrah Hall.

The University of Alabama has an academic membership in the Association of Research Libraries, a selective group of institutions emphasizing research and graduate instruction at the doctoral level and supporting large, comprehensive collections of library materials. The University Libraries system also holds memberships in the Center for Research Libraries, the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries, the Southeastern Library Network, the Coalition for Networked Information, and the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries.