

Students want library to stay open 24 hours

BY TRICIA RIDGWAY
THE GAMECOCK

Finals week is approaching, and USC students are once again turning to last-minute, all-night cram sessions.

While some students are able to study in their rooms, others take to the Thomas Cooper Library for some peace and quiet. The only problem is they have to be out by midnight on most nights and 2 a.m. in the weeks before exams.

"It would be great if the library were open 24 hours. It's good to have a place to study other than my dorm room," said third-year pharmacy student Ann Wiesner.

It's often too difficult to pay attention in residence-hall rooms and study rooms, students say.

"I usually come to the library to study. It's quiet and convenient between classes and stuff. ... There are too many distractions in my dorm, especially during football season, when the band practices outside my dorm," said Phan Nguyen, a second-year criminal justice student.

Huaiann Tan, a first-year chemical engineering student living in Capstone, agrees that it's harder to study in her dorm and that the library is the best place for peace and quiet. She also said she would benefit from having the library available 24 hours a day. The first time she came to the library, she didn't realize what time it closed and had to come back the next day to do her research.

She said Thomas Cooper being open 24 hours would be nice because "then I could come anytime I wanted, whenever it worked out for me."

Thomas McNally, director of Thomas Cooper Library, said the administration has heard and understands students' need for longer hours and that keeping parts of the library open 24 hours a day every day has been in the plans for about three years. They have considered keeping the fifth

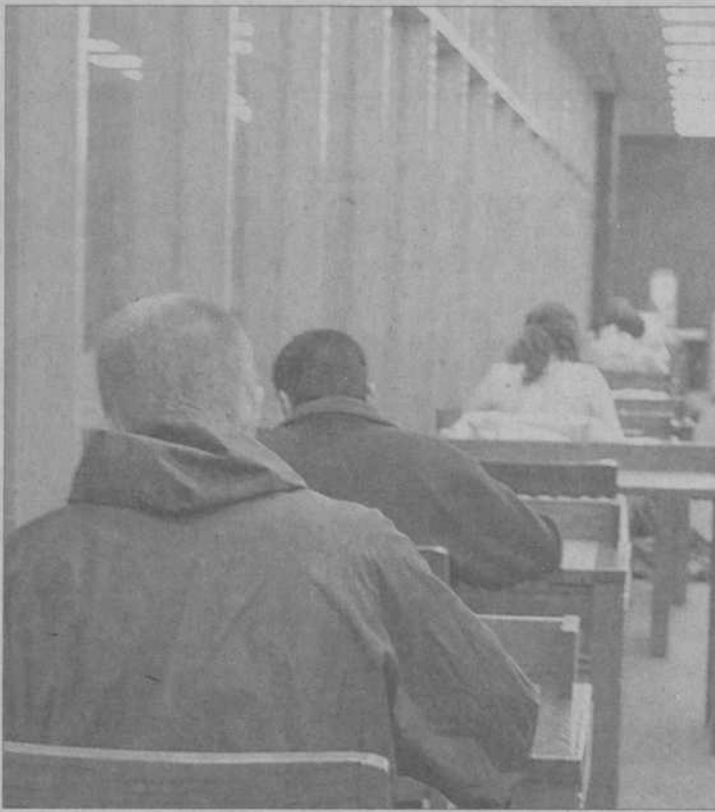


PHOTO BY MORGAN FORD/THE GAMECOCK

Students study for exams in the Thomas Cooper Library.

floor, which has computer labs and many study areas, open.

"We understand what life in the dorms is like, and there are a lot of people who, for whatever reason, like to study in the middle of the night, and it's not very quiet in those dorms," he said.

Renovations and funding have been holding up the plan. But once renovations begin, McNally said extending hours wouldn't be too expensive, so it would be near the top of the to-do list.

Other universities, such as Emory in Atlanta, already have their libraries open 24 hours. Emory's library keeps its main floor open with a security guard on staff, and students have to slide their IDs to enter. The main library stays open from noon Sunday until 8 p.m. Friday, with shorter hours on Saturday. Narci Jeter, a graduate student in theology who works at the library, said

many students take advantage of the hours.

"It's very much a friendly environment for students, especially right now. I think every computer is full with the exam crunch," she said.

Krissy Dunn, a graduate student in public history at USC who earned her bachelor's degree at Emory, said she liked the 'round-the-clock hours for the times she was in "panic mode" trying to get her work done. But she also said many people would hang out in the library to talk.

"Everyone always went there during exam week. It was more like a social thing," she said.

For now, students will have to fit in all their studying at Thomas Cooper before 2 a.m. during the upcoming finals week.

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AIM

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truly illegal virus," Christopher said.

The good news is that the changes made by the virus aren't permanent.

Kaiser, who was first alerted to the virus in late October, said those with computers that are already infected with the virus

could either contact Computer Services or search the Internet to find specific removal instructions.

As for those students whose computers are not infected, Kaiser said they should frequently update their antivirus software and run Microsoft Update, which both would greatly decrease infection chance.

He said Microsoft Update MS03-40 is the specific fix to Internet Explorer's vulnerability.

"People who patch have no problem," Kaiser said.

While this particular virus has an antidote, the effects of its maliciousness still linger.

"If those fat cats at Time-Warner would start working on some decent security features for their software, perhaps we could still save the children," Christopher said.

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Public forum to recognize Interfaith Awareness Week

BY JULIE LEDBETTER
THE GAMECOCK

USC's Department of Religious Studies will sponsor a public forum Tuesday to observe national Interfaith Awareness Week, the week of Dec. 7 to Dec. 13.

The free forum, titled "The Changing Religious Landscape in South Carolina: New Realities and Challenge," will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Gambrell Hall Auditorium.

Carl Evans, chairman of the Department of Religious Studies, will be the key speaker at the forum and said he will discuss the recent immigration into South Carolina and the different cultures and religions it has brought. Evans said he will also discuss some of the challenges that come from this new diversity and ways to respond to these challenges.

In addition to Evans' presentation, the forum will include representatives from nine different faiths who will share prayers and scriptures. The faiths will include Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Unitarian Universalism, Bahaism, Native Americanism,

Sikhism and Christianity.

Evans said this forum is a first-hand experience. "It's going to be not only an academic kind of exercise to learn about them, but also an opportunity to meet and encounter the folks from other faith traditions," he said.

Evans also said this is the perfect time to hold such a forum. "The highly publicized issues surrounding the anticipated arrival of the Somali Bantus in Columbia is only the tip of the iceberg," he said. "There are many other groups who have arrived in South Carolina in recent years, dramatically changing the religious and cultural landscape of the state."

Evans has recently researched the growing religious and cultural diversity in South Carolina and has noticed many new changes.

Among the changes is the Sikh Gurdwara, a place of worship now located near Columbia. It serves about 100 Sikh families from India. An Islamic Center in Charleston has members from 22 different countries, and a street in lower Greenville county called Kurdistan Way houses nine

Kurdish families who are refugees from Iraq. In addition, five different groups in Columbia practice Buddhism.

A record number of Hispanics and Latinos also have moved into South Carolina communities. More than half of Walhalla's population is Hispanic, and almost 90 percent of these newcomers are undocumented.

"These are only some of the new realities. The challenges are enormous," Evans said. He said social, economic and political changes are taking place as well.

Evans said there is much to gain from the forum. "We should be learning that in a multi-religious, democratic society such as ours, there are always challenges for how we negotiate the relationship between unity and diversity," Evans said.

Evans also said that Columbia Mayor Bob Coble might issue a proclamation declaring the week of Dec. 7 to Dec. 13 Interfaith Awareness Week.

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