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## New library instruction classrooms better accommodate large classes



As incoming freshman classes grow at Ole Miss, class sizes and needs grow with them. This past summer, the J.D. Williams Library added two new state-of-the-art classrooms, complete with new computers and flat-screen monitors. One class has 20 desktop computers, and the second class has 40 laptops.

Thanks to funding provided by the university administration, the renovated classrooms allow the library to better accommodate the ever-growing classes. The library held 582 sections and reached 11,000 students in the 2009-10 school year, and those numbers continue to rise.

"The primary purpose of the library classrooms is to provide a space for students to learn about the research process through librarian-taught instruction sessions," said Amy E. Mark, information literacy and instruction librarian and associate professor. "These instruction classes help not just academically but will also help with seeking employment. They teach research and critical-thinking skills that students will need on the job," Mark said.

Freshman classes, including LIBA 102-First Year Seminar and EDHD 101-Academic Skills for College, use the library classrooms, which are located on the first floor, west side of the library. Library course coordinators can tailor instruction specifically to the needs of individual classes. Mark said the classes put all freshmen on a level playing field by giving them firsthand experience with research, and the mobility of the classrooms allows for a variety of learning styles. The classrooms also are used for several upper-level and graduate workshops, which give students more in-depth experience with using the library's databases.

"The faculty members who have used our classes are impressed by the larger room capacity and number of computers," said Julia Rholes, dean of the University Libraries. "We are now able to accommodate larger classes than before."

Rholes said that trying to reach every freshman who comes through Ole Miss is one of the goals of the library instruction program, as well as getting each student more individual, hands-on experience with the library's online information.

"We would ideally love to see all students more than once during their career at Ole Miss," Rholes said. "We want to make students comfortable navigating our extensive virtual presence and get students comfortable with basic ideas doing research. We think the new classrooms definitely help."

For more information about the J.D. Williams Library classes, contact Amy E. Mark at [aemark@olemiss.edu](mailto:aemark@olemiss.edu) or 662-915-7867.

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