

ENDOWMENT FLUSH, LIBRARIES CUT

Occupy Harvard Statement | February 15, 2012

Students at Harvard have occupied the Lamont Library cafe.

We occupy to create a space in which students, staff and faculty will have a voice in shaping the future of our libraries. The university wants to impose its restructuring plan unilaterally, with no questions, no discussion, no transparency, and no respect for workers.

Already understaffed after major reductions in 2009, the library staff has now been threatened with more layoffs. Already enduring speed-ups and outsourcing, some 900 staff members are being required to re-apply for their jobs. The Harvard administration is treating the libraries like an under-performing investment, and the staff whose work supports the learning and research of our community like expendable commodities.

We welcome all to visit us in Lamont, and to join in our Think Tanks at 1:00 pm and 9:00 pm everyday, for facilitated discussion on topics ranging from “What is a Library?” to “The Role of Knowledge in Social Equality.”

While the University wants to ignore us—as students, staff, and faculty—we will not accept their top-down plans and cost-cutting imperatives. We stand in solidarity with the workers in the libraries fighting layoffs, outsourcing and intimidation. With Harvard’s endowment flush with cash and expanding rapidly, no university workers should face layoffs, management intimidation, or threats to their security.

We invite all members of the community to help us imagine and build a library that supports us all.

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