



*The large-clawed jaws of an excavator bring down sections of concrete walls reinforced with rebar Wednesday morning as a crew begins work to take down the north wing of California State University, Fresno's Madden Library.  
John Walker / The Fresno Bee*

## **Noise librarians like**

### **Demolition begins to pave way for new building full of books.**

*By Denny Boyles / [The Fresno Bee](#)*

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#### **BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.**

Time and again, a metal wrecking ball swung back and forth Wednesday as workers started to demolish the old library at California State University, Fresno.

#### **BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.**

Again and again, the ball struck the lower wall of the north wing of the Madden Library at Fresno State without producing any signs of damage other than the resounding noise of its impact.

Staff librarians, watching the work, joked that maybe the building was stronger than they had thought.

Then the ball broke through, and the librarians laughed and talked about how they once had worked in rooms now open to the sky.

The \$1.2 million demolition is the next step in a project that will end with construction of a \$95 million building, part of a combined 350,000-square-foot library.

The workers started with a mechanical claw that removed a section of the wall on the second floor.

Then it was time for the ball, which was needed to tear down the thicker walls of the first floor.

Construction managers said they weren't surprised the ball didn't punch through on the first try.

"It was just a matter of time," said Bob Boyd, Fresno State's associate vice president for facilities management. "That lower portion of the building, where they are using the wrecking ball, is 10-inch-thick reinforced concrete that was poured in place. It was strong, for sure, but the new building will be much stronger."



*Dolores Pires, right, of the Madden Library staff takes a photo of co-workers, from left, Diana Takaragi, Glenda Harada and Cindy Renteria, in front of the library's west wing.  
John Walker / The Fresno Bee*

In fact, the new Madden Library will feature many improvements over the one being torn down. It will be much bigger, have much more space for students and also feature much more capacity for technology and the power that feeds the computers and other devices.

"This building will be twice as nice. It's going to be beautiful," said Lisa Black, who started work at the Madden Library as a student in 1974 and has been there ever since. "In the old building, the students didn't have any place to study, and now they will have all kinds of room."

Boyd said the new library building will feature 3,500 study stations for students, wireless Internet access, ethernet connections at 90% of the workstations, and the capacity to hold up to 2 million books.

"We're building enough room to handle 20 years of growth," Boyd said.

Workers plan to have the top two floors of the existing library demolished before students start classes Aug.28.

A basement area will then be excavated, and work on the new library will begin in September. The library is expected to be completed in the fall of 2008.

*The reporter can be reached at [dboyles@fresnobee.com](mailto:dboyles@fresnobee.com) or (559) 441-6659.*



*Demolition crews use a 3,100-pound steel wrecking ball to knock holes in the thick concrete walls as they begin work Wednesday to take down the north wing of Madden Library.  
John Walker – Fresno Bee*