In order to provide badly needed study space, the library has consolidated the entire print journal collection at Thode into a compact storage system within the basement with staff-only access. While the basement is well-suited for collection storage, the lack of public access to a significant portion of the collection—the result of insufficient storage infrastructure—compromises research and discovery, and has been a significant point of contention with faculty and researchers.

While Thode accommodates study, teaching, and faculty space for the iSci program, opportunities for additional programming that could enhance the library’s Science and Engineering focus have yet to be realised. Previous plans to introduce additional program elements have not come to fruition, for example an additional general purpose classroom and more group study rooms.

Originally designed as a building for storing books, Thode enjoys large, open floorplates and a great deal of interconnected floor space. With the transition from books to people, these features have created severe acoustic issues: quiet and silent study areas are in short supply, as the acoustics of the first and second floors make such uses impossible. Removal of various acoustic absorption, most notably the building’s dropped ceilings, has exacerbated issues of acoustic control.

Primarily as a result of the lack of acoustic control, the majority of Thode’s study space has been programmed as open study space—it is simply not possible to offer quiet or silent study in the majority of the building as the floorplate is currently being used. As with Mills, while these study seats are heavily-used, they do not support the full range of learning behaviours that today’s students engage in. A shortage of dedicated group study rooms exacerbates acoustic issues, as students are forced to undertake their group work in the open.

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Like Mills, Thode’s infrastructure provisions reflect its original design as a building for books rather than people. The building is relatively accessible, given its large, open floorplates, but washroom counts do not reflect the building’s current occupant load and power and data access are insufficient.