

# Students petition to prevent cuts to Hunt Library's hours

**Jake Moser, News Editor and Joseph Havey, Staff Writer | Posted: Thursday, March 27, 2014 1:06 am**

Students at N.C. State voiced their opposition this week to a proposed change to the hours of Hunt Library on Centennial Campus.

David Fiala, a graduate student in computer science and engineering, launched the website [savehuntlibrary.com](http://savehuntlibrary.com) after students returned from spring break in response to an administrative proposal to begin closing the facility each night from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. The proposed change is due to budget cuts to the NCSU Libraries system.

"I started the website, and I slowly heard about what was happening in terms of cutting hours at the library," Fiala said. "The administration knows what the cuts are, and they have the numbers and facts, but the one thing that's very absent is the students' passion and their voice. I don't think the students are aware of these cuts, because if they were, they'd be up in arms about this."

Susan Nutter, vice provost of NCSU Libraries, said there was "absolutely no reason" other than budget cuts for the proposal to reduce Hunt's hours.

"The introduction of overnight hours almost 20 years ago was one of the best received and valued services we have offered," Nutter said. "The idea for overnight hours came from students, and we listened and responded."

At press time, 5,337 students had signed the petition, which is about 16.2 percent of N.C. State's 33,000 student population.

"That's small if you think about it—it's just a single digit number—but 7 percent of the entire student population, in my opinion, is quite substantial, and that's in only three days," said Fiala, who only began intensive work on the site last Thursday. "I think that's an astounding message from the students."

Fiala said the goal of the website is to take the comments and names of students who have voted to keep Hunt open to "anyone who can provide funding to keep both libraries open."

"It's been told that we should go places like the provost and the chancellor for emergency funding," Fiala said. "I think that anyone else who's willing to fund this should."

Fiala said he has received support from the library employees, who he said have been open and forthcoming during the process.

"They're on the students' side, and they're doing everything they can, to my knowledge, on a razor-thin

budget to prevent this," Fiala said.

Nutter said she and her staff have watched the online petition with real interest.

"We have always known that many students need these late hours to safely and effectively do their research and study during times that meet their schedules, and the petition validates this clearly," Nutter said. "We think that it's very healthy that the issues are being discussed in this public forum and know that ultimately these sorts of discussions will help influence the educational priorities that are critical for the health of the university and the NCSU Libraries."

According to Student Body President Alex Parker, Student Government supports the petition.

"We want to communicate to the faculty that this is a core academic issue," Parker said. "The library is where students go overnight to study and collaborate, and we want to encourage that process, not limit it."

Parker said he supported the plan to gather student support before going to the administration.

Sidhartha Jandhyala, a sophomore in biomedical engineering and the chairman of Student Advisory Board for NCSU Libraries, said he helps hold monthly meetings during which students are invited to address concerns about the libraries. The recent meetings, which have highlighted the proposed cuts to hours, have consisted of only 10 or 20 people, Jandhyala said.

"There's not enough awareness that it exists, and there hasn't been as much advertising of meetings, which is something we're working on," Jandhyala said. "To be honest, ever since we posted the proposed hours on Twitter and Facebook we saw that students really are concerned about this. They're commenting on Facebook posts, having discussions, asking if we should protest. They're interested now in the issue, because it's affecting them."

Nutter said she is unsure of what outcomes are possible, but that she is inspired by the importance N.C. State students place on academics.