

Subject: Byerly Hall classroom history

From: "Lubniewski, Amanda"

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Date: 1/28/26, 10:51 AM

To: "Williams, Lauren Kiyomi" <williams@math.harvard.edu>

CC: "Hall, Alexander Ferrell" <alexander_hall@radcliffe.harvard.edu>

Dear Lauren,

I hope this email finds you well amidst the first week of spring classes!

As promised, I reached out to my colleagues in the Schlesinger Library to answer your question regarding the last time the Byerly Classroom was used as a classroom. They enjoyed searching for an answer very much!

My colleagues Sarah Hutcheon and Tamar Brown shared the following: Their best guess is that the classrooms in Byerly were used by Harvard classes up until the 1971 -1972 time period; unfortunately it isn't easy to determine exactly what term was the last time a course was taught there or what that course would have been.

Based on what Sarah found, it sounds like the most likely suspect might be a physics course in Fall 1972. Below is more detail on where she looked and what she shared. Tamar put the part that made her think "physics, fall 1972" in bold, but it is hard to know for sure since the letter may be referring to office space and not classroom space.

Here are the details:

Byerly Hall

FOUND IN: Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute / Collection: Records of the Radcliffe College Office of the Administrative Vice-President, 1959-1972 (inclusive), 1965-1972 (bulk).

Item — Box 02: [Barcode: RA12QB]Identifier: RG IIA, Series 1, Ser.1, Box 2.

This folder contains a handwritten list of courses using Byerly Hall Lower Floor Lecture Halls – Morning only 9am – 1pm. The date of the document is 4/17/69. A scan is attached for ease of reference.

1971-1972. B.

FOUND IN: Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute / Collection: Records of Radcliffe College President Mary Ingraham Bunting-Smith, 1960-1972

Item — Box: 50Identifier: RG II, Series 4, 797.

This folder contains a letter regarding Byerly Hall under date of 10/1/71. It's from Richard Leahy (more about Leahy's titles beginning at the bottom of [this page](#) in the Harvard annual report for 1967-68) to Hale Champion, Mass Hall.

Excerpted below are key paragraphs. N.B. My transcription is a little rough; I didn't include all punctuation and I used abbreviations FAS and GSE.

...The building is owned by Radcliffe, but for the last several years has been used by the FAS and the GSE. My office has operated as the coordinator for the building and has allocated space and the distribution of expenses to the departments of our Faculty using the building, and the GSE. Last year's assignment of space was approximately 40% to the Physics Dept, 23% to Chemistry and 31% to the GSE. Professor Fletcher Watson of the GSE has acted as a sort of senior officer on board and has been responsible for overseeing both the employees of the GSE and the FAS who have been assigned to the building for the last few years....

....

The occupancy situation is as follows: The Chemistry Dept as of the beginning of the current academic year, has entirely vacated its assignment of space in the building. Physics is continuing to use the space assigned to that department, but as soon as the Science Center becomes available it will move out .Presumably this might mean that they will continue to be in the building through the Fall Term of the next academic year. Education, which is currently in the library area of the building, will, presumably move as soon as the Gutman Library is ready for occupancy. Consequently, over half of the building will be vacant before the end of the current term.

Correspondence, 1972-1973. Bi-Bz: biography project notes; Kay Bullitt's proposed outline for the Harvard/Radcliffe merger; Byerly Hall and Harvard/Radcliffe agreement concerning renovation and use

FOUND IN: Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute / Collection: Records of Radcliffe College President Matina Horner, 1972-1989

Item — Box 001: [Barcode: RA01AJ]Identifier: RG II, Series 5, 1.9.

This folder contains a letter from Harold Goyette, Director of Harvard University Planning under date of 7/11/72 to Richard Leahy, University Hall and provides information about a Byerly Hall renovation project and references the Harvard and Radcliffe administrative departments to be included in the space considerations. (No references to class space.)

One update to the previous message- When Byerly was leased to FAS in 1973 it became the admissions office as well as home other Harvard and Radcliffe administrative offices.

I hope you find this as interesting as we did. We are very excited to know that the space will be used as a classroom, by you and your students, once again in Fall 2026!

Best,
Amanda

—Attachments:—

Byerly Hall Lower Floor Lecture Halls - Morning only- April 1969 .pdf	645 KB
letter of July 11, 1972 from Harold Goyette to Richard Leahy.pdf	2.2 MB