

## FNU opens modern Learning Commons facility in Koronivia



*(L-R) FNU's Director Capital Projects and Infrastructure – Niranjwan Chettiar, Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching – Professor James Pounder, Acting University Librarian – Dr Udy Shukla, Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey, Dean College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Professor Paul Ade Iji and Acting Director Human Resources Professor John Chelliari at the opening of the Learning Common in Koronivia.*

Students attending the Fiji National University's (FNU) College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF) in Koronivia will enjoy using the new learning commons which provides a more interactive, collaborative and inclusive learning environment.

The new facility is an expansion to the CAFF Library with comfortable group seating and discussion areas. The refurbishment works cost around half a million dollars.

While opening the facility earlier today, FNU Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey said students will now be able to access multiple resources and services at the Library to assist them in their studies.

"Universities have a greater emphasis on graduate attributes, including the ability to think independently and critically, work in teams and be able to communicate your findings. Learning is much more student centric and students routinely need to work in groups to jointly research and solve problems," said Professor Healey.

"Today, almost all the resources in the library are digital – eBooks and eJournals – which can be searched remotely in a tiny fraction of the time. It is possible to access the library collections of journals and books without ever stepping foot in the library."

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"The implications for libraries are profound. They no longer need to house physical collections of books and journals that students browse in silence. Instead, they need to make accessible vast digital collections and provide social "open learning commons" where students can work together to analyse problems and develop solutions," added Professor Healey.

The new facility which is suitable for creative and dynamic learning consists of three discussion rooms which has smart TV's and WIFI connectivity.

Acting University Librarian Dr Udy Shukla said as an integral part of the academic programmes of the University, the FNU Libraries provide state of the art communications and information resources.

"This facility is remarkable and was designed to engage students to research, interact and providing the students a tool to support. This common collaborative learning space will have a seating capacity of 42 students," he said.

FNU's Director Capital Projects and Infrastructure, Niranjwan Chettiar said there was a growing need for expansion of the Koronivia library.

"As part of the feasibility, we had determined that there was a possibility of going up another floor. Immediately an idea of Learning Commons had come up to encourage collaborative learning for students. Such arrangement has become a growing trend amongst universities across the world. The aim was also to provide students access to technology and internet to support their studies," said Chettiar.

A similar facility is expected to be constructed at the FNU's Nasinu Campus.



*An inside look of the new Learning Common facility at CAFF.*