

LIBRARIES STRATEGIC PLAN September, 2003

The mission (<http://www-lib.uwyo.edu/movingforward/movingforward.html>) of the University of Wyoming Libraries is to provide information resources to meet the instructional, research and outreach needs of UW students, faculty and staff in all colleges and departments. As a primary information provider for the University, the Libraries enhance access to knowledge and support instructional programs and research.

Technological advances in the way information is created, disseminated and distributed have created new expectations for the Libraries. Digital collections and services join their physical counterparts. The UW Libraries must not merely replace traditional information with online information but seek new models for accessing information and transferring knowledge. Existing patterns of funding for resources and staffing must be examined to assure that the Libraries are meeting their mission in the most effective way.

Our strategic plan will strengthen the UW Libraries, ensure continued innovation and confirm organizational values.

EFFECTIVE SERVICES

Services

Provision of service to users is an essential function of the UW Libraries. The Libraries should provide relevant and high quality services to our users. Broadly put, our service imperative is to acquire, describe, interpret and provide gateways to information resources for our users.

All library services need to be regularly evaluated. The Libraries plan to implement LibQUAL+ to help us identify our strengths and weaknesses. LibQUAL+(TM) is a research and development project undertaken by ARL in collaboration with Texas A&M University as one of the [ARL New Measures Initiatives](#). A web based survey instrument will define user expectations and user satisfaction. Participation in LibQUAL+ will allow the UW Libraries improve service based on feedback.

Other vehicles for user feedback include Library Council, ASUW and focus groups.

The Libraries web page is our primary gateway to resources and services. As such, it should be logical, well organized and easy to understand. The Libraries plan to unveil a new and improved web page for Fall 2003 semester, and evaluate its usefulness regularly.

The lines between the library as a place and the library as a service are becoming blurred and our challenge for the next five years is to improve service to all faculty and students, regardless of their location. We will continue to move in the direction of ubiquitous access to services such as electronic reserves, virtual reference and patron initiated interlibrary loan. Prospector will enable users to borrow materials directly from a number of libraries in Colorado. Offering these services will not allow the Libraries to realize significant efficiencies in staffing, as it will be necessary to maintain some level of traditional service as well.

To maximize use of all material purchased by the Libraries, we will investigate acquiring a federated search tool, which will provide access to the local catalog, commercial abstracting and indexing databases, web search engines and a variety of other databases simultaneously. This capability can extend to the AHC, Law Library and other UW databases.

The Libraries will consider the creation and management of an institutional repository, which allows faculty to index, publish and preserve digital scholarly materials. A feasibility investigation is underway and the Libraries will coordinate archiving needs with the American Heritage Center.

Collections

The Libraries have a commitment to provide the highest quality collections possible. The definition of library collections includes resources that are housed in physical facilities on campus, resources from commercial information providers, such as databases, full-text articles and online journals, and resources obtained from other libraries.

Since the University's first mission is to provide excellent undergraduate instruction, the Libraries will build and maintain collections in support of this mission. Beyond that, the Libraries will pursue a collection-building program designed to meet other university priorities, which include support of graduate level and faculty research, areas of distinction, such as ENR or the life sciences, and interdisciplinary programs as outlined in *Moving Forward III*.

It will be impossible to comprehensively purchase materials for ownership in all the above-mentioned areas. We will move away from purchasing resources "just in case" they are needed to a new model of information resources "just for you", which denotes personalized desktop delivery of information on demand.

The Libraries will explore an expanded collection model that adds digital resources to existing print and other traditional format collections. Students and faculty expect desktop delivery of information resources. When a single resource is offered in both print and online format, the online format will be preferred if it is relatively equivalent in price. A methodology for tracking use of digital resources is essential. Archiving and storage of digital library resources must be carefully planned in order to assure that gaps in coverage do not occur.

We will improve access to the Libraries' collections through new technologies, by acquiring a federated search tool that allows for simultaneous searching of multiple databases and an open-URL resolver, which would seamlessly link bibliographic citations to the full-text of articles.

The Libraries will also evaluate the expansion of current approval plans for book purchasing and additional alternatives to traditional scholarly communication, along the lines of SPARC and BioOne, which we have already acquired. JSTOR is one possibility. The Libraries may also want to investigate the possibility of hosting electronic journals.

Wyoming and the West have been recognized as institutional priorities. The Libraries Hebard collection speaks directly to this area of distinction as outlined in *Moving*

Forward III. The collection is currently located at the American Heritage Center. Responsibility for the acquisition and cataloging of Hebard materials rests with the Libraries, while AHC staff physically manage the collections. The question of the best location for the collection needs to be resolved. If it is to be located within the Libraries, appropriate space must be identified and collection guidelines and management issues should be brought into line with organizational priorities. Another option would be to shift responsibility for the Hebard collection entirely to the American Heritage Center.

Technology

Technology is a tool the Libraries depend upon to fulfill our basic mission. As we look toward the future, we need to anticipate changes and advances in technology, rather than react to them. We will continue to develop and maintain a technological infrastructure that enables us to meet our service goals and provide access to and delivery of our collections.

It is fair to say that our integrated library system is to the library as People Soft or Banner is to the University. It is integral to our operations. We know that the average life expectancy of an integrated library system is 5-7 years. We will evaluate our current integrated library system (implemented in 2000) and engage in an RFP process within the next five years. We will also engage in ongoing evaluation of the software, databases, server support, hardware, and telecommunications environment of the Libraries.

The Libraries will look to implementing state of the art services such as wireless network access, digitization (including metadata creation), federated search engine, portals, open URL resolves, and a digital asset management system for the campus that will work for the Libraries, AHC and Art Museum. Staff with the proper training and adequate resources will be necessary to support our technological infrastructure.

We will expand collaboration with University IT to discuss use of the IT server room and services; develop an information commons environment in the Libraries and coordinate the development of an institutional repository. A joint IT-Libraries committee is already at work, discussing these issues.

To ensure technological competency, the Libraries are committed to providing general library staff and Systems staff with appropriate levels and amounts of training.

EFFECTIVE PROFILE

Partnerships

It is imperative that the Libraries maintain strategic alliances and forge new ones to assure success. We need to examine current agreements and seek to maximize the benefit that accrues to the institution as a result of our participation. We also need to seek new areas of cooperation.

The Libraries have a number of existing partnerships that should be maintained. We will continue to work with BCR and OCLC to provide quality bibliographic records and access. Provision of medical information to Wyoming health care providers and libraries

will be continued through our involvement in the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

We will continue our relationship with the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries, especially with Colorado academic libraries. Use of the Prospector database will strengthen our ties with other libraries in the region. The Libraries are purchasing a server, to be housed at the Alliance, which will be shared with the Colorado School of Mines for Prospector development.

The Libraries acknowledge GIS as a technological tool that contributes to the interdisciplinary focus of the university and realizes the vast untapped potential of the technology in general. We will work more closely with WyGISC to develop and provide GIS applications in the Libraries. Additional GIS training for staff will be necessary.

The Libraries support the mission of the university through strong partnerships with community college libraries, public libraries and the Wyoming State Library. More active participation in the WYLD Network is a goal as we strive to expand communication and resource sharing among Wyoming Libraries.

We will continue to work with the AHC, the Law Library, and the Art Museum on common issues, goals and projects. For example, the Western Trails Digitization Project, a joint endeavor between the Libraries and the AHC, involves the digitization of approximately 500 primary source materials from both collections. We hope to build on this success with the development of an institutional repository. There are a growing number of management and preservation issues inherent in the expanding computerization of campus information and systems. The Libraries will work cooperatively with the AHC and University IT to identify and resolve these issues.

Librarians should be involved in collaboration and teamwork outside the Libraries for instruction and curriculum support. Information literacy has been endorsed by the institution and is an embedded requirement for USP. Librarians have unique expertise in the field of information literacy and should seek to collaborate with teaching faculty on designing instruction that meets USP requirements. Since many librarians are also gifted teachers, library faculty should consider expanding the scope of their teaching beyond bibliographic instruction.

The Academic Success Center, which speaks to the institutional commitment to student success strategies, is slated to be located in Coe Library. The Libraries endorse this concept and are involved in constructing the detailed vision of the project, along with the E-CTL and Student Services

The Libraries should investigate membership in the Greater Western Library Alliance (<http://www.gwla.org/>). GWLA is a consortium of 30 research libraries located in the greater Midwest and Western U.S. with common interests related to scholarly communication, shared resources, interlibrary loan, cooperative collection development, digital libraries, staff development and continuing education. Twenty-four Greater Western Library Alliance libraries are also members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL).

Public relations

In addition to maintaining and enhancing strategic partnerships and alliances, the Libraries recognize the need to work positively and effectively with our all of our user groups. We have many constituencies and it is important that communication be targeted and clear.

It is desirable that we work closely with students to address their concerns. Student representatives on Library Council and members of ASUW will be targeted for their feedback. They will assist us in strengthening our communication with students.

Communication patterns between librarians and faculty need attention. More one-on-one communication is needed to establish positive dialog between the Libraries and faculty about information resources, funding, and information literacy.

We will expand university and community programs that highlight library collections, especially the Hebard collection. We will collaborate with university departments and colleges on public programming such as hosting speakers, colloquiums and forums. We will work with donors on projects and programs that promote the Libraries and UW.

Funding

The Libraries budget planning should be flexible enough to enable good choices even in difficult funding environments. We realize that budget increases provided by the state will be irregular and annual inflationary adjustments to deal with rising serial prices will not keep pace with journal price inflation. We will employ a two-pronged method of dealing with these realities: more efficient use of existing resources and active participation in strategic funding-raising and partnership activities that will increase the flow of funds to the Libraries.

Moving Forward III directs the Libraries to evaluate the collection budget given the inflationary crisis in scholarly publishing. Cancellation of journals has become a way of life for the national academic research community. Faculty and students are demoralized when they see essential research tools cancelled for lack of funds. Something drastic must be done to change the reactive pattern of journal purchasing that has evolved.

A logical plan for funding needed materials using the current budget will be devised. We will develop a model that more closely aligns with the overall university priorities of undergraduate instruction, graduate/faculty research and other areas of distinction. Some expensive journal subscriptions will be replaced with timely access to individual articles at point of demand. In this way the Libraries will be able to support research within the current budget.

We understand that funds from private sources are important. The Libraries case statement has identified two endowed positions as logical targets for fundraising, one for a Geology Librarian, and one for a Hebard Librarian. Both endowed positions would support the crucial collection development and reference functions inherent in these two areas.

The Libraries will seek grant writing and partnership opportunities for additional funding. We have an arrangement with the College of Health Sciences to purchase SciFinder Scholar with BRIN funds; similar opportunities should be identified and explored.

EFFECTIVE STRUCTURE

Staffing/Organizational issues

Human capital is an important organizational resource. The Libraries will strive to hire and retain skilled and diverse workforce. The Libraries will provide a positive work environment and will value participation and engagement on the part of staff and faculty in the decision making process.

As the Libraries collections change, staffing must change to keep pace with workflows and priorities. The expectation that digital resources will become increasingly prevalent will drive us to conduct careful workload analysis for re-staffing. We will pay special attention to the way the community uses information resources physically and digitally.

We will examine current staffing levels (faculty, staff and student employees) and seek to assure our human resources are efficiently deployed. We will adjust organizational structure as appropriate for workflow and division of labor.

The Libraries, in coordination with University Human Resources, will investigate compression in staff classification levels and seek opportunities to allow for advancement in rank.

The Libraries will address the loss of senior and experienced staff and faculty due to attrition and retirement. We will examine staffing opportunities as these situations arise.

We will strengthen our staff development program and increase faculty involvement on national and regional levels for professional development, research and service.

The Libraries will improve overall communication within the organization. We will strive for better sharing of information from the top down and laterally between departments. All library work is interconnected; slow-downs and inefficiencies in one area have a ripple effect throughout the organization.

Facilities

Our strategic vision of the Libraries combines elements of the library as a place and the library as a service. The availability of journal articles, course reserves and reference services online should not obscure the importance of the library as a physical location on campus. The library should be a vital and vibrant place that supports and enriches campus life. As a focal point of research, writing, reading, technology, culture and social activity on campus, the library should stimulate students and faculty to engage in investigation and discourse and be central to their academic careers.

Whatever facilities the Libraries occupy, the primary focus should be on providing a meaningful learning environment for students and a clear and logical means of accessing library collections. We are committed, either in our current facilities or in an ILLC, to the

provision of a resource-rich and state of the art environment of classrooms, study facilities, computer labs and library materials.

The Information, Library and Learning Center, defined as a major funding priority in the *Capital Facilities Plan*, provides for the integration of students, technology, and the library in a single location. The “information commons” delivers electronic library resources and productivity software applications in the same location. This combination is highly desirable from a student perspective.

The Libraries will participate in the creation of a comprehensive plan for the ILLC that includes the necessary elements to make the facility integral to student learning and success.

The Libraries face immediate and serious space constraints. The Science Library is filled to capacity, with overflow material located in Coe library. Efforts to integrate Science Library collections and personnel into Coe operations met with stiff resistance from some faculty. For the next five years, The Science Library should be maintained as a separate facility, with circulation and reference functions intact. However, this is an issue that cannot be ignored in the future.

Further space pressures will be brought to bear upon the Libraries with the location of the Academic Success Center within the Coe building. Collections and staff will be displaced and adequate replacement space will be sought. All options should be investigated. Some solutions may include off-site storage of lesser-used materials and compact shelving.