VISION TASK FORCE REPORT

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MSU LIBRARIES

Table of Contents

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Introduction

It has almost become trite to suggest we are in a time of change. Yet, the change in information technologies and accompanying changes in research habits, scholarly communication preferences, reduction in public funding and greater focus on outcomes necessitates that we first take stock of where we are and then take measures to envision a desired future to accomplish the fundamental mission of the Libraries.

Charge and Method

In late 2007, the Executive Committee of the MSU Libraries acknowledged these rapid changes when it assembled an eleven-member team "to consider what lies ahead, and to then suggest how the Libraries might best prepare, plan and modify operations to successfully engage our mission in the future." To meet this charge, the Vision Task force (VTF) sought input from Library staff through email, blogs, one-on-one and small group meetings, plus large open forums. Through these sessions, it was made clear that the VTF should also seek input and information from without the Libraries. Following an extensive literature review, meetings with campus leaders such as the Provost and Vice Provost were held. Teaching faculty from a wide variety of disciplines were surveyed, as were undergraduate and graduate students. All told, the VTF received input from nearly 1000 stakeholders from within and without the libraries.

> *"The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created—created first in the mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating."*
>
> *--John Schaar*

Goals

From these 1000 stakeholders came nearly as many ideas and concepts. The final report identifies five broad Goal Areas that act as the organizing principle:

1. **Assist with the intersection of technology and learning.**
2. **Put the patron first in how we organize, create, preserve, and provide convenient, seamless access to information and resources in all formats.**
3. **Create a nimble organization that can respond to a rapidly changing environment. Foster new mindsets, organizational structures and culture.**
4. **Curate collections of relevancy and sustainability, and maximize our impact by increasing visibility and collaboration across campus.**
5. **Create library space that puts the patron first, reflects the diverse needs of our user population and responds to evolving technologies.**

The principles of inclusion, interdisciplinarity, outreach and engagement are primary to the mission of Michigan State University as the foundational land-grant institution of the nation. This mission and its principles were simultaneously at the forefront of the thinking of this committee while developing these five distinct Goal Areas. Our report further illuminates these Goal Areas with richer objectives and more concrete action items in order to facilitate adopting strategies pursuant to the rapidly changing environment.

Moving Forward

We note that the VTF did not agree unanimously on every single objective and action item. We were a diverse group and struggled with the mandate to provide a report that was at once visionary and challenging while also being practical and attainable. We are proud, however, that we engaged in debate, brought forth issues and moved the conversation forward. Moreover, we are proud that the final report suggests several concrete ways that the Libraries can prepare and modify operations to successfully make a difference in student learning and faculty teaching and research--now and into the future. That the Libraries' mission remains vital to the campus and wider community and that we have a solid foundation from which to build is something we all agreed upon.

Goal Area 1: Assist with the intersection of technology and learning.

In the first Horizon Report, the higher education association EDUCAUSE acknowledges the importance of emerging technologies in education. In 2008, this report pointed to the growing importance and availability of collaborative technologies and collective knowledge building, and predicted that mobile tools and data mashups will play an even larger role in education.[1] The ACRL's Top Ten Assumptions for the Future of Academic Libraries and Librarians said it succinctly: ***The demand for technology-related services will grow and require additional funding.***[2]   What we find is that by expanding some programs, consolidating others, and artfully pursuing partnerships, the Libraries can successfully meet our mission to "support the instructional, research, and public service programs of the University."[3]

Objectives:

1. Consolidate Main Library service points to the first floor to improve and integrate research and technology services and make them more visible to patrons.

Rising costs, declining state budgets and abundant research that points to the staying power of group and integrative learning suggests that we must pursue a model that functionally and spatially integrates library, information technology and other academic support services. We envision the library as a dynamic place that encourages learning through collaboration, discussion and consultation. We believe it is critical to leverage the collocation of these various units to fully take advantage of the combined talents and expertise within the MSU Libraries.

Action items:

• Create a streamlined Main Library Support Center. This center would combine Current Periodicals, Copy Center, Distance Learning Services, Circulation and Reference functions.

• Create a flexible learning space surrounding this new service point. Though not as important as the streamlined service point, this idea grows out of the now maturing concept of a learning commons. A well-designed area would increase the impact of the library, foster research and facilitate learning. Research has shown that when students engage in collaboration and conversation, they are more likely to learn deeply.[4] Deliberate design of library spaces can facilitate such interactions, and the library can thereby see better integration with the University's Liberal Learning objectives.[5]

2. Position the Libraries through infrastructure development to accommodate the needs of next generation researchers and students.

David W. Lewis, Dean of the Indiana University Purdue University Libraries, asserts that the future of academic libraries depends in part on their ability to "reposition library and information tools, resources, and expertise so that they are embedded into the teaching, learning, and research enterprises" of the university.[6] In order to survive, we must demonstrate the value of the library to the university's mission and be where the faculty and students' eyes are.[7] In today's world, the attention of students is drawn to online search engines such as Google, where some research finds that as many as 89% of college students begin their information searches.[8] Online course management systems such as ANGEL, and social networking software must also command our attention.[9]

Action items:

• Embed library resources and expertise in the university's course management system (ANGEL).

• Explore social networking software more comprehensively as means to connect with faculty and students.

• Partner with Academic Technology Services (ATS) to step up the financial commitments necessary to provide routine and innovative upgrades and advances in hardware, software, and other cyber-infrastructure.

• Provide network upgrades and robust wireless functionality. Such technological infrastructure is critical to patrons working with video, audio and large image files, particularly as learners increasingly approach their studies through intensely visual and sensory means.

• Increase electrical and Internet connectivity in the Libraries' buildings in the short term. We do not foresee a lessening in the need for PCs as study after study shows that even in the face of more laptops coming to campus, students prefer not to carry them. In the long term, mobile technologies will likely reduce this need.
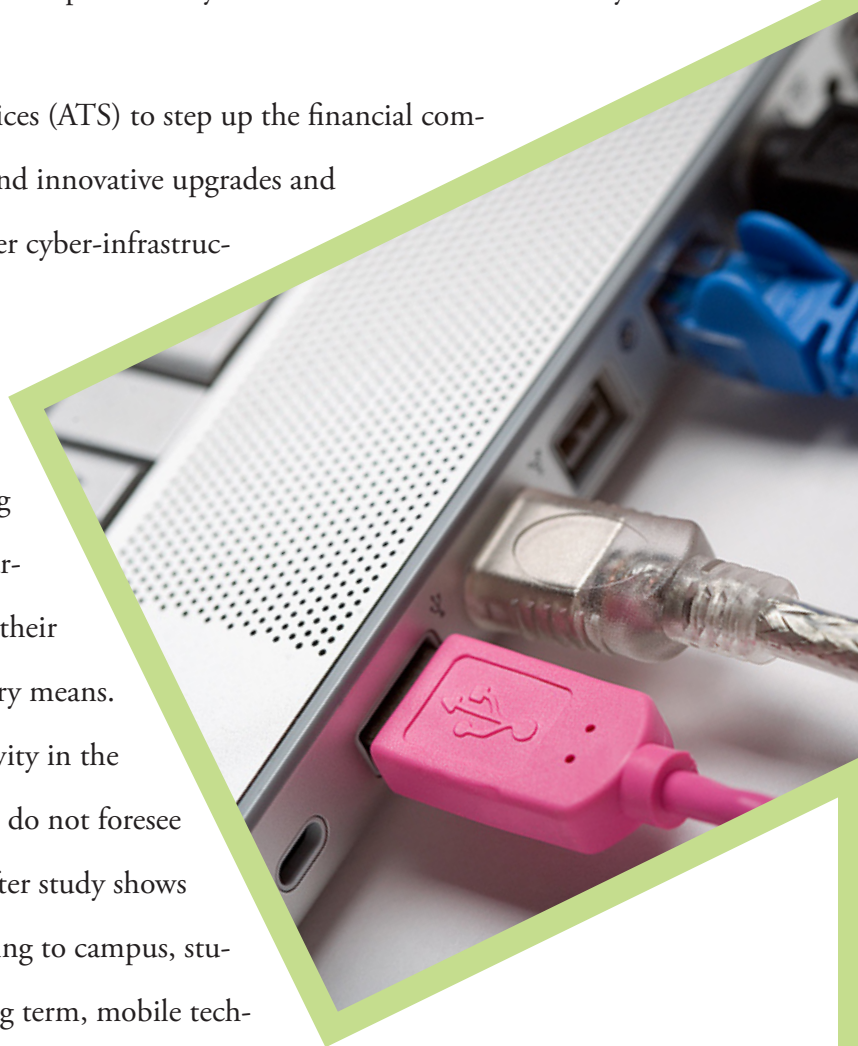
3. Be at the forefront of promoting information literacy skills as a primary issue in relation to critical thinking and liberal learning.

The student experience is a cornerstone of the University's Boldness By Design initiative.[10] The University Committee on Liberal Learning outlines 6 critical skills all students should acquire during their time at MSU. One of these skills, Analytical Thinking, includes an information literacy component.[11] Although an information literate student body cannot be the sole responsibility of any single unit, the Libraries have a central role to play in empowering students with information literacy skills. So critical is this imperative that we believe the liaison activities of

the Collection Management Division should take precedence over many of the routine collection building activities.

Action items:

• Grow the familiarity of all library staff with emerging technology tools.

• Continue to support and expand the emphasis on library instruction for first-year students.

The Libraries have a central role to play in empowering students with information literacy skills.

• Emphasize liaison activities for Collections librarians rather than routine collection-building activities.

Goal Area 2: Put the patron first in how we organize, create, preserve, and provide convenient, seamless access to information and resources in all formats.

By directly connecting users to information, the library catalog is a key service to support unmediated information discovery and access. Today, however, the library catalog operates against a backdrop of flat or declining use of library collections as patrons turn to alternatives such as Google and Amazon.[12] In particular, the Ithaka report asserts, "the library is in many ways falling off the radar screen of faculty."[13] In order to stay relevant to the university, we must stop looking at information access from a library point of view and focus on what our patrons (faculty, graduate students, undergraduates) want.[14] We must facilitate access to digital collections, integrate digital collections with traditional collections, reassess cataloging standards and practices to account

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for new forms of publication, and create a coherent information environment that brings together the heterogeneous cataloging and metadata generated throughout many diverse silos of information.[15] In short, we must provide patrons with the information resources they seek **FIRST, FAST, and FULL-TEXT**.[16]

Objectives:

1. Support MSU research and teaching by providing access to relevant content, particularly MSU-generated content.

Universities are taking a stronger interest in managing their own digital assets and in making them more accessible.[17] Academic libraries are uniquely positioned to support research, teaching and scholarship by becoming involved with institutional information asset management. As the system of scholarly communication is being transformed by technology, the Libraries must seek new ways to curate and catalog the intellectual output of campus.

Action items:

- Catalog the intellectual output of Michigan State University.

- Make the cataloging of unique items a priority.

- Promote and streamline access to digital collections, particularly our own digital projects, licensed content, and open access resources.

2. Make our resources more transparent, seamless and easy to access.

In a recent presentation to the ProQuest Higher Education Advisory Board, Corey Seeman, Director of the Kresge Business Administration Library at University of Michigan, asserted, "We need systems that talk to each other. We need a balance between 'compartmentalization' and 'simplification' of information requests. Our patrons/customers do not care where something is."[18] This statement highlights the importance of making our information resources easier to access and of making the search process transparent and seamless for patrons.

Action items:

- Develop a **single** method (i.e. "easy button") by which patrons can request items not available on the shelf; including Interlibrary services, ArticleReach Direct, Remote storage, and MelCat, and link this mechanism with the catalog.

- Streamline full-text electronic resources searching.

- Investigate discovery layer software that provides patrons with a single search interface across multiple silos of information resources.

3. Build and maintain the library catalog as much as possible on the network level, rather than on the local level.

In our conversation with Nancy Fleck, Assistant Director for Technical Services at the MSU
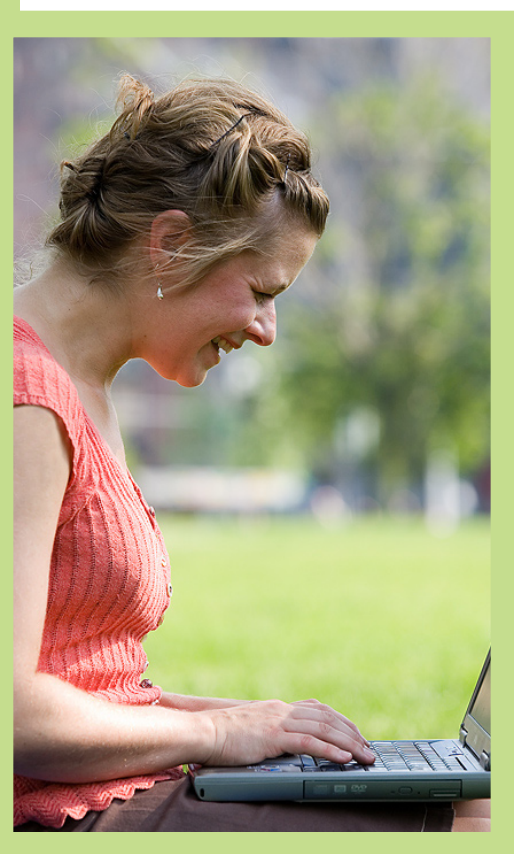
Libraries, she reminded us "the library catalog is not 'our' catalog anymore. We have a responsibility beyond our local patrons." For our library catalog, this means realizing that our local catalog is NOT the end all and be all of bibliographic description nor of access to resources. Our catalog is only one part of a much wider world of bibliographic description, and our part must interact seamlessly with those other parts. We must accept that our cataloging activity is part of worldwide efforts at bibliographic description, and not paint ourselves into one little corner of the web. We must, as much as possible, catalog on the **network** level, rather than just for our local catalog. We need to take advantage of the efficiencies of collaboration, accept a variety of national standards and best practice guidelines, and resist the urge for local cataloging practices.

Action items:

- Provide patrons with options for different levels of searching in the OPAC (for example, local catalog only, Encore, MelCat, CRL, WorldCat, Google API).
- Implement cataloging services from OCLC and other vendors, such as BibNotification, OCLC Cataloging Selection (PromptCat), Shelf Ready, and outsourcing authority record processing.
- Continually assess the role of Erasmus in relation to library access needs.

4. Update the Libraries' technological infrastructure.

Today's undergraduate students "have never known a world without personal access to information technologies, often take them for granted and integrate them seamlessly into their daily lives."[19] The MSU Libraries must be able to support the use of the varied information technologies used by patrons. This support is not just technological; it also involves the organizational structure of the IT unit and the training and professional development support for IT staff. The Libraries do not have to be responsible for all IT developments, but can partner with ATS to support patron access to information technology.

Action items:

- Provide upgraded wireless service and more power outlets in the building.

- Investigate and support mobile computing devices (such as web-enabled cell phones).

- Establish cross-departmental communication/meetings between IT and other library units.

- Develop a process to disperse funds for IT staff to attend professional development activities.

- Effectively align Libraries IT with campus IT in support of scholarship; specifically leverage the Libraries strength at collecting and organizing content while building on campus IT's strength to support computing infrastructure.

Goal Area 3: Create a nimble organization that can respond to a rapidly changing environment. Foster new mindsets, organizational structures and culture.

The world in which libraries find themselves today is one of rapid and continual change, and personnel matters are critical to achieving success in such changing times.[20]   As Andrew Pace, Executive Director of Networked Library Services at OCLC, said at the 2008 Charleston Conference, "It is not necessary to change; survival is not mandatory."[21] The continued survival of the academic library will require a deep and continued commitment to communication, leadership and training of its personnel.

Objectives:

1. Expand current training and organizational development efforts.

A recent issue of *American Libraries* describes the library as a place in which "library staff and library users find themselves immersed in a Web 2.0 world and need assistance in learning, using, and coping with new technology."[22] All library employees, regardless of their position, must therefore have an understanding of the technological changes occurring around them and be prepared to adapt their work to fit into the changing mission and vision of the MSU Libraries in order to be successful. Employees must also become comfortable with constant change and be willing to switch gears if necessary. The MSU Libraries has had an outstanding tradition of support for the professional development of librarians. Funding for support staff to attend conferences, workshops and training not covered by Educational Assistance needs to be expanded.
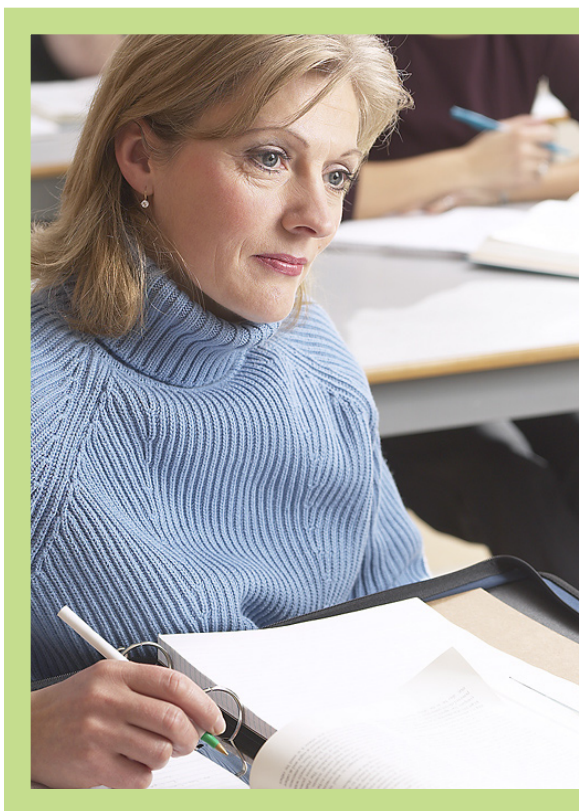
Action items:

- Continue to support professional development activities of librarians, especially those without continuing appointment.
- Implement a comprehensive training program to help *current employees* adjust to change and embrace a philosophy of adventure as well as a service ethos that places the patron first.
- Create a comprehensive orientation program for *new employees* that emphasizes the need for flexibility, an adventurous spirit and a customer service orientation.
- Compassionately assist individuals who are not able or willing to make desired changes to find fulfilling employment elsewhere.

The MSU Libraries has had an outstanding tradition of support for the professional development of librarians. Funding for support staff to attend conferences, workshops and training not covered by Educational Assistance needs to be expanded.

2. Create a culture of assessment and support data-driven decision making.

As the Spellings Report has shown, the pressure to demonstrate value will only increase throughout all of academe.[23] In her Elsevier white paper, Judy Luther further reports that

We must be able to demonstrate that what we do is valuable and effective, and have the data to support our assertions.

"Academic libraries are being challenged increasingly to demonstrate their value to their institution in compelling **quantitative** terms."[emphasis added][24] The Libraries arguably face an even greater challenge than other campus units to demonstrate worth given the fierce competition from outside forces such as Google. It is therefore imperative that the Libraries make strategic decisions based on empirical evidence. Essentially, we must be able to demonstrate that what we do is valuable and effective, and have the data to support our assertions.

Action items:

- Align assessment efforts with university priorities as outlined in MSU's *Boldness by Design* strategy and participation in the "Voluntary System of Accountability."[25]

- Create a working group / community of practice that is charged with conducting an environmental scan / SWOT analysis on a regular basis.

- Consider doing a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis of the MSU Libraries.

3. Hire a Training and Assessment Coordinator.

In order to best lead workplace learning and staff development initiatives as well as organization-wide assessment efforts the library should hire a Training and Assessment Coordinator. This person would lead the Libraries in creating and implementing a wide range of assessment tools as well as creating a comprehensive training program for library staff to continually upgrade skills and foster the acceptance of change as the norm in the workplace.

4. Provide "sandbox" time for employees to explore new ideas and technologies.

A recent issue of *Library Journal* reported the results of a survey of emerging "movers and shakers" in librarianship. One of the significant findings of this survey was that these innovators "struggle to get the backing and time they need to keep creating positive change."[26] In order to foster innovation in library service, MSU Libraries must acknowledge the need for innovation, support the time required for it, and recognize that "the time crunch can have a significant impact on the employee's ability to come up with creative solutions to problems in the library."[27] The Libraries can position itself at the forefront of innovation in library and technology services by fostering a work environment that is particularly supportive of innovation and risk-taking.

Action items:

- Encourage library employees to take time to work on creative library-related projects outside of the regular job description.

- Purchase hardware and software with which library staff can experiment. This investment

should produce new educational modules and new ways of delivering services and information to our patrons. Examples include e-book readers, smart phones, iPods.

- Publicize the options for technology experimentation that are currently available to staff.
- Devote a physical space to this effort. There should be a single location to store technological devices and experiment with them. For example, currently many librarians cannot record Camtasia tutorials in their offices because of surrounding noise.

5.   **Streamline the librarian evaluation process.**

The delivery of constructive feedback on performance improvement is crucial if the MSU Libraries are to meet the challenges of the future. Although the librarian evaluation process is a model for the rest of campus, it is a very time-consuming and demanding one. If the time spent on this process could be reduced, time would be gained for work on other projects. Although a re-visioning of the librarian evaluation process has been addressed in the past, we believe that the time is right to look at this issue again.
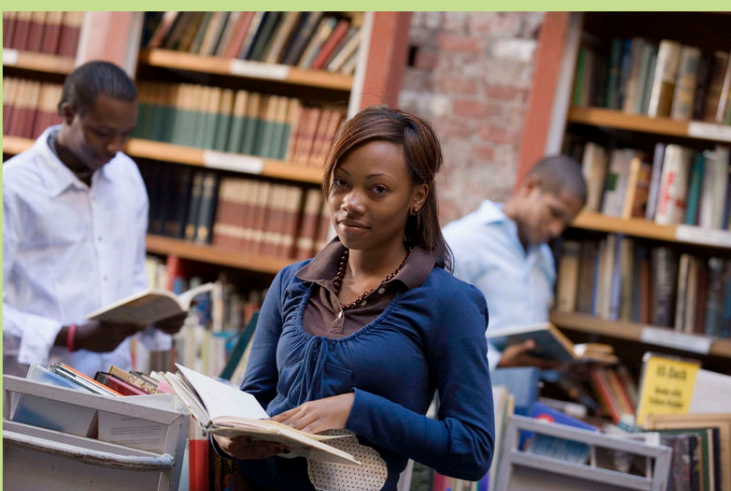
Action item:

- Create a task force to consider the implementation of a ranking system based on years of service (supervisors/non-supervisors, those with/without Continuing Appointment.

6. Enhance minority recruitment and retention and actively engage in succession planning.

The MSU Libraries have been committed to and recognized for our commitment to diversity.

This should continue. Currently, we actively pursue minority applicants who apply for our positions and post our positions in places where minority applicants are likely to see them. But in order to attract minority candidates from library schools across the nation, we will need to be more proactive. In addition, as the peak of retirements hits the library profession in the next 7-10 years, some writers have suggested that there will not be enough new library school graduates to fill the these vacant positions.[28] Such competition may be particularly acute in health and natural sciences librarianship.[29]

Action items:

• Develop ways to be more proactive in soliciting applications from minority librarians, library school students, and staff.

• Develop a program to identify talented MSU students, especially those who work in the Libraries, encourage them to go to library school and possibly offer to defray the cost of their education.

• Increase participation in national or regional initiatives such as LAMP and consider the creation of a minority residency program for librarians.

• Engage in aggressive succession planning to ensure sufficient staff to continue our core functions and to attract job candidates in the face of stiff competition.

7. Foster improved communication.

For innovation to take place in the Libraries, there needs to be "more trust, more conversation and 'just listening.'"[30]

Action items:

• Committees and task forces should be, as much as possible, formed as **communities of practice** where anyone with an interest can participate. Traditional methods of choosing com-

mittee members can leave stakeholders feeling left out. It will be the responsibility of the

COP chair to report on the level of commitment and performance to supervisors.

• Promote and reward cross-divisional and interdepartmental initiatives.

Goal Area 4: Curate collections of relevancy and sustainability, and maximize our impact by increasing visibility and collaboration across campus.

The realities of open access, Google digitization of print materials, a reliance and expectation that scholarship must be delivered electronically, and the changing financial infrastructure of the publishing world lead to assumptions that collections and collecting activities in academic libraries have been unalterably changed. As the possibility of collections budgets shrinking or remaining stagnant seems likely, the role the Collections division should trend toward a rethinking of a previous model which suggested that a subject librarian's primary role is to purchase materials.

Simultaneously, the Libraries must work to demonstrate their relevance to the academic endeavor by playing an even larger role in the dissemination of scholarship to the at-large public through the curation of digital materials. Yet to be true to the role of a research library, the Libraries must find a way to continue to fund the purchase of unique research materials—both electronic and in print—but with the added responsibility of strengthening personal and professional social networks with faculty and students in order to best connect all stakeholders to these resources.
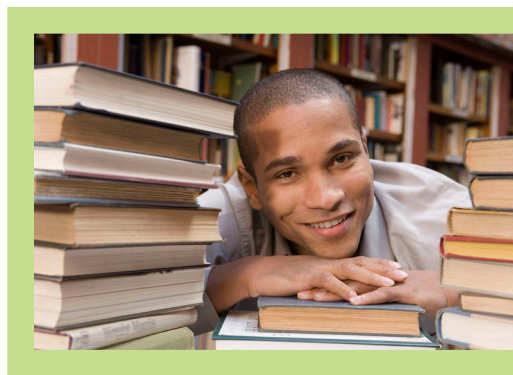
Objectives:

1. Continue to dedicate significant investment in electronic resources across the disciplines.

Though science faculty are leading the demand for all electronic access to scholarly materials, it is clear that all fields need support in this way. Electronic formats put the patron first by making the material easier to access: our user surveys indicate that faculty consider electronic essential because physically coming to the library is time-consuming and inconvenient. Also, the trend toward "interdisciplinarity" on campus requires further library attention to invest-

ment in unique e-resources. As students become "full partners in their own education," they break down boundaries that departments and the "silo" of the traditional major area of study maintain.[31]   The rise of interdisciplinary study accompanies the rise of an interdisciplinary faculty and the Libraries' hiring practices and collections budgets should mirror these developing trends.

Action items:

• Establish a community of practice on curriculum issues to monitor trends in undergraduate and graduate education in order to best understand material needs.

• Consider the creation of a general fund for "big ticket" purchases for the Social Sciences and Humanities.

2. Bolster Science, Engineering and Medicine electronic journals

Our survey of the faculty made it clear that many believe that our journal collections are inadequate, particularly in the Health Sciences. The Provost has also emphasized that the university budget needs to focus on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Medical (STEM) departments, because their prosperity is the key to the financial health of the university. We can and should promote open access to scholarly production, since it is estimated that 15% of scholarly production is now open access, but we have learned that open access is not necessarily free.[32] It is also clear that the Libraries' collection budget is already heavily committed to journal literature: *nearly 45%* of the 2007-8 budget was committed to subscriptions to scholarly journals in the STEM areas alone.   Sustaining this level of commitment continues to drain our ability to purchase books and other materials to support the rest of the university.

Action Items:

• Lobby for central university support to increase our commitment to purchasing access to scholarly journals in the STEM areas.

• Aggressively advertise our resources through branding and liaison work to make clear that these expensive materials are being provided by the Libraries.

3. Encourage the growth of our unique print collections.

As more resources become electronic and the Libraries become committed to large packages of electronic journals, our collection becomes increasingly "vanilla." Slowly our research collection will begin to look much like any other library collection in the United States.[33] It is essential for a research library to collect and maintain unique materials for scholars and students to explore now and for future generations. These collections also appeal to university donors, who appreciate the ability to provide something unique to the community.[34]

In an age where many anticipate that projects such as Google Books will make everything available freely on the Internet, it is clear that in the short term this is not the case. If anything, mass digitization of materials still in copyright will make our unique collections more in demand, as Internet users will find our materials much more easily than ever before. Therefore, it is critical that we make them more accessible. Special Collections in particular has unique materials that are in heavy demand by our users, but are behind closed doors with limited hours. Our user survey found that patrons felt strongly that hours in Special Collections should be increased, or that parts of the collection should be made more accessible in some way.[35]

Action Items:

• Establish a task force to examine what print collections should be emphasized to coincide with MSU strengths.

• Increase the hours of Special Collections and consider moving reference materials to Main Library Reference.

• Investigate the possibility of digitization on demand of unique materials.

• Focus Development efforts on unique collections, and train and support bibliographers to contribute to Development efforts.

4. Create more space and expand resources for collections by eliminating print journals and purchasing journal backfiles.

We need to assertively, as David Lewis says, "capture efficiencies," and "reclaim resources," that are the result of our rapid shift to electronic collections.[36] The current economic climate is likely to prevent the Libraries from gaining the space needed to properly house our print collections. Despite the massive investment in electronic resources, the Libraries are still purchasing over 30,000 print monographs per year.[37] Our remote storage facility is at capacity, and we are nearing capacity for the installation of compact shelving within the Main Library.

> *Despite the massive investment in electronic resources, the Libraries are still purchasing over 30,000 print monographs per year.*

Action Items:

- Aggressively weed our print journal collection where digital exists. Dispose of print titles unless restricted by consortial agreements.
- Establish a regular procedure to weed print journals to which we have electronic access with rolling access walls or embargoes (e.g. JSTOR).
- Reclaim resources by ceasing binding such journals, since it does not make sense to bind materials that will be discarded after a few years' time.

5. Plan and implement cost-effective means to capture and curate campus-produced research.

The Top Ten Assumptions for the Future of Academic Libraries emphasizes that "Librarians should collaborate with disciplinary colleagues in the curation of data as part of the research process."[38] The issue of the curation of digital collections is echoed elsewhere in the literature, pointing to a unique position of leverage in academic libraries to bring together varied campus units and publishing efforts in this collaborative venture, and to become a "hub" for this activity.[39] Possibilities abound for what is potential for inclusion: University-born research, library digitization projects, and the curation of MSU data-related projects all factor prominently.

Action Items:

- Creation of a university "repository" for digital collections.

- Establish full partnerships with MSU Archives in order to best curate and disseminate university research.

6. Streamline the ordering process and redeploy selectors to focus on liaison services.

The current materials ordering process relies heavily on the system created to order print materials. Selectors and Acquisitions staff create an enormous paper trail to order materials, and in some cases materials to be ordered are sorted and searched numerous times by multiple staff persons in both Bibliographic Support and Acquisitions. We need to take greater advantage of the efficiencies of electronic ordering to save costs and to refocus the work of Selectors on liaison and instruction activities.

Action Items:

- Abandon paper slips and move to ordering all Yankee books via the GOBI system.

- Collapse Bibliographic Support and Acquisitions into one department, so selectors who need to order materials from print or electronic catalogs outside of GOBI can simply send marked lists directly to Acquisitions for them to be searched and ordered.

7. Emphasize the instruction and liaison role of selectors in order to increase library impact and visibility.

Research has found that both librarians and researchers feel that the role of liaison is critical to how effectively researchers use library resources.[40] Yet both groups admit that communication

between them is often difficult to establish and maintain. Some of the most successful liaison relationships come from having embedded librarians in departments. This increases the visibility of the library, and allows the librarian to more easily insert themselves into the social network of the faculty. Additionally, instruction to students and faculty is critical to our mission as information providers. Both external surveys

The role of liaison is critical to how effectively researchers use library resources.

of faculty and students and our own internal poll have demonstrated that faculty and students want and need instruction, either in a group session or preferably one-on-one.[41]

Action Item:

- Establish a community of practice within the Libraries to develop strategies for librarians to better weave our resources into the curriculum.

- Encourage and reward librarians for innovation in liaison and instruction activities.

8. Hire a Scholarly Communications/Copyright Librarian.

Such a position could push the Libraries to the forefront of thought leadership on campus, creating awareness of alternative publishing models and coordinating e-publishing activities.

Potential new roles for librarians abound, especially with possible creation of a university repository and the balanced migration from content purchase to content curation. As cited by Vice Provost Gift, it should be a charge to the Libraries to become a more integrated part of academic life on campus, and the creation of this position would go far toward this goal area. Communication and thought leadership to all of campus in the critical areas of scholarly communication and copyright would position the Libraries to be a leader in this realm.

Goal Area 5: Create library space that puts the patron first, reflects the diverse needs of our user population, and responds to evolving technology.

Objectives:

1. Space planning should be an ongoing and concerted effort to keep patron needs first.

Although much of the library literature, and indeed this report, have focused on the library's online presence, we cannot forget that the physical library buildings and collections are what remain central in many patrons' minds when they think of the library. Space planning for patron use, collections, and staff work areas therefore needs to be an ongoing practice to better enable the Libraries to respond to a changing academic and technological environment.

Action item:

• Create a task force charged with ongoing space planning and environmental scanning.

2. Design library spaces for the convenience of patrons, not library staff.

"In a society that jealously guards its time, our job – if libraries are to remain relevant – is to get patrons in the door and in front of the materials they want quickly and easily."[42] Patrons have become accustomed to "one stop shopping" in other areas of their lives and have a similar expectation for their academic lives. According to our survey results, our patrons want convenience, and the Libraries must acknowledge that there are many competitors for our patrons' attention.[43]   The Libraries should therefore consolidate on the first floor, as much as possible, the services of most interest to patrons.

Action items:

- Create a single service point on the first floor that incorporates many of the services most wanted by patrons, such as Circulation, Reference, Distance Learning Services, the Copy Center, and technology assistance.

- Examine the possibility of creative relocation of technical services staff away from the first floor to free up valuable public space.

- Create a task force to examine the repurposing of space across the Libraries to reflect the changing nature of the collections from paper to digital.   Some areas of the Libraries (e.g. Current Periodicals, Government Documents) are far less paper-intensive than in the past.

3. Provide space that can accommodate instructional technology and has the seating capacity necessary to provide an optimum learning experience.

As the role of librarians shift from information gatekeeper to information guide, the instruction of students and faculty in the evolving tools of information research has become a paramount duty.[44]

Action items:

- Explore the creation of a larger venue for library instruction with a seating capacity for larger classes (30-35 students) which is configurable for a variety of instructional purposes.

- Explore the creation of a suitable auditorium-style seating space (similar to floor plan of the former International Center Library). Such space could be used for the film series or library events, as well as library instruction classes.

- Create a cutting edge area for staff to record multimedia tutorials, hold webinars or conference calls, etc. which will be maintained and upgraded as needed.

4. Upgrade the electrical and computer network infrastructure of the Main Library.

Repurposing and reassigning physical space in the Main Library can only be accomplished if the underlying electrical and computer network infrastructure is able to support such changes.

As laptop computer usage increases, so does the demand for electrical access by patrons. The Libraries will need to explore creative solutions to meet user's electrical needs while being mindful of overall electrical consumption. The Libraries have one of the most heavily used wireless networks on campus, yet does not currently have priority for upgrades. The Libraries need to work more closely with ATS to improve this situation, as it is in the user's best interest for the Library to have the most reliable wireless system possible.[45]

Action items:

- Find creative solutions to meet user's electrical needs.
- Push for Libraries priority in wireless upgrades, based on sheer use.

5. Develop spaces that balance the competing needs of patrons for quiet and group study.

Users are polarized in their study habits and the Libraries need to find a balance between quiet and group study areas.[46]

Action items:

- Remove larger tables from East side of the Main Library, making the furnishings in line with the desired atmosphere.
- Place more reconfigurable furniture in the West side of the Main Library.

6. Find creative ways to address the parking situation.

Part of putting the patron first at the Main Library should include addressing the parking situation. While parking on campus is not wholly under the Libraries' control, some steps can be taken to clarify the options that are available to patrons and staff.[47]

Action items:

- Promote parking across the river, ensuring that there are also adequate signs directing people to the Main Library. In addition, directions to parking lots need to be easy to find and clearly worded on the Libraries' website.

- Encourage bicycle commuting by providing facilities for secure, sheltered bike parking.

7. Promote environmental initiatives in the Libraries.

To take advantage of its prominence in the MSU community, the Libraries have a responsibility –and particular opportunity--to be at the forefront of the University's environmental initiatives. The Libraries already have several established programs in place, some ahead of campus initiatives. We should continue this practice and look for ways to exceed campus environmental standards, within the context of the University's "Be Spartan Green" program.[48] Our work in these areas should be continued and promoted to the larger University community.

Action items:

- Reduce paper and electricity use by staff.

- Make it easy to recycle, and recycle more than just paper, for staff as well as for the public.

- Seek opportunities for University support for additional green initiatives in the Main Library.

- Start a green roof.

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Appendix A1: Link to User Survey

http://intranet.lib.msu.edu/ref/LibraryUserSurveyApril2008.pdf

Appendix A2: Goal Areas and Objectives

1. **Assist with the intersection of technology and learning.**
   *Consolidate Main Library service points to the first floor to improve and integrate research and technology services and make them more visible to patrons.
   *Position the Libraries through infrastructure development to accommodate the needs of next generation researchers and students.
   *Be at the forefront of promoting information literacy skills as a primary issue in relation to critical thinking and liberal learning.

2. **Put the patron first in how we organize, create, preserve, and provide convenient, seamless access to information and resources in all formats.**
   *Support MSU research and teaching by providing access to relevant content, particularly MSU-generated content.
   *Make our resources more transparent, seamless and easy to access.
   *Build and maintain the library catalog as much as possible on the network level, rather than on the local level.
   *Update the Libraries' technological infrastructure.

3. **Create a nimble organization that can respond to a rapidly changing environment. Foster new mindsets, organizational structures and culture.**
   *Expand current training and organizational development efforts.
   *Create a culture of assessment and support data-driven decision making.
   *Hire a Training and Assessment Coordinator.
   * Provide "sandbox" time for employees to explore new ideas and technologies.
   *Streamline the librarian evaluation process.
   *Enhance minority recruitment and retention and actively engage in succession planning
   *Foster improved communication.

4. **Curate collections of relevancy and sustainability, and maximize our impact by increasing visibility and collaboration across campus.**
   *Continue to dedicate significant investment in electronic resources across the disciplines.
   *Bolster Science, Engineering and Medicine electronic journals
   *Encourage the growth of our unique print collections.
   *Create more space and expand resources for collections by eliminating print journals and purchasing journal backfiles.
   *Plan and implement cost-effective means to capture and curate campus-produced research.
   *Streamline the ordering process and redeploy selectors to focus on liaison services
   *Emphasize the instruction and liaison role of selectors in order to increase library impact and visibility.
   *Hire a Scholarly Communications/Copyright Librarian.

5. **Create library space that puts the patron first, reflects the diverse needs of our user population and responds to evolving technologies.**
   *Space planning should be an ongoing and concerted effort to keep patron needs first.
   *Design library spaces for the convenience of patrons, not library staff.
   *Provide space that can accommodate instructional technology and has the seating capacity necessary to provide an optimum learning experience.
   *Upgrade the electrical and computer network infrastructure of the Main Library.
   *Develop spaces that balance the competing needs of patrons for quiet and group study.
   *Find creative ways to address the parking situation.
   *Promote environmental initiatives in the Libraries.