

2003-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
January 14, 2003

Vision and aspirations, strategic challenges, and right size

Vision and aspirations

In the age of electronic information resources and the Web, the library is even more visible and valuable as the means for selecting and organizing knowledge, for creating and preserving access to that knowledge, and for providing a Web-accessible information space where users find and use information. Students and faculty depend on the information and knowledge resources of the Libraries for their teaching, learning and research activities. Faculty and students value the Libraries as a source of credible, reliable and non-commercially provided knowledge resources, personal assistance and instruction in how to find and use a wide range of information.

We aspire to be a great library, a great destination for teaching, learning and research. Greatness lies in distinguished research collections that bring the best students and faculty to Notre Dame and attract international scholars. Great research libraries by definition hold large collections and have for years been known by their most distinguished, complete or unique collections. Today, however, greatness comes from many roles:

- distinguished research collections and access to information resources
- services that connect users to the Libraries' resources and enhance scholarly productivity
- support for the development of teaching and learning activities
- fostering of intellectual engagement, an intellectual commons
- an agile and knowledgeable organization one step ahead of its users
- and, at Notre Dame, support through collections and services for the Catholic intellectual heritage and an expression of the Catholic identity of Notre Dame

Strategic challenges

The Libraries face several challenges in the aspiration towards greatness:

- achieving excellence in meeting information needs across all disciplines and in providing services to all campus constituencies
- building rich and unique research collections in areas that support Notre Dame's aspirations to be a scholarly destination

- defining our role and place within the global network of research libraries in acquiring, cataloging and preserving the record of scholarship for future generations
- creating a Catholic identity in a research library

Right size

In 1994, the Ad Hoc Committee on Libraries addressed this topic and concluded that the Libraries at that time were "too small" on all dimensions: library faculty and staff, collections and information resources, and space. That assessment resulted in a substantial increase in the annual budget between 1994/1995 and 2000/2001, although the \$12 million recommended for retrospective purchasing was not funded. Since then, further assessment and input has come from the Self Study Review Committee and the Notre Dame faculty. While noting that collaboration in collection development is essential, their recommendations still categorize the Libraries as "too small" and emphasize the critical need to strengthen the Libraries' collections and provide access to electronic resources, which together are requirements for enriching graduate programs and faculty research.

Notre Dame is focused on maintaining academic excellence and expanding research initiatives. The right size for the Libraries is a function of University goals for graduate programs and faculty research. More funding is needed to support graduate programs and research than is needed to support undergraduate learning and research.

In addition, the right size in library collections and information resources is a function of the cost effectiveness of collections versus interlibrary loan/document delivery in meeting information needs. A critical mass of faculty and students working in any specific subject area usually means that the library collections and subscriptions to electronic resources are more cost effective than document delivery on request.

Determining the balance between these methods, that is between the role, and therefore size of the collection, and the role of resource delivery on request is an art, not a science, and the balance will vary by subject. We have attempted to describe the Libraries' collections on the basis of their purpose and relation to faculty research at Notre Dame. In some disciplines and fields of study, library collections are the research laboratories. In these cases, the building of a "just-in-case" collection, that is the research laboratory, is critical; the presence of a systematically and comprehensively developed collection in which any number of scholars can work is the desired condition. In the second instance, Notre Dame faculty use the library collections to find information or knowledge, but while they want to find information within the collection, the library collection as a whole is not their laboratory. And, in these cases, while there must be some collection in place to provide frequently requested information, the focus is less on building a comprehensive and systematic collection, but rather on building a collection that meets specific information needs with greater use of document delivery/interlibrary loan for ensuring timely access to the desired information.

In general terms, we can categorize the arts, the humanities, and some social sciences, and even an occasional science or two, mathematics comes to mind, as areas where the emphasis is on the laboratory. Some social sciences, engineering, other sciences, and business lean toward the other end of the continuum, requiring significant amounts of information in all formats, but the focus is on meeting current information needs, a "just-in-time" approach. Even these labels are arbitrary and there can be many useful arguments made to that end. However, the purpose is more clearly to delineate a range of purposes for library collections, to offer assistance in identifying what is needed, and to match resources to appropriate aspirations.

In the Libraries today, we have looked at the question of what is the right size by thinking of what we want to achieve and what resources are needed to do that. Particularly for library collections and information resources, we have included consideration of current library collection strengths; priorities for colleges and Ph.D. programs; University aspirations to grow research programs and to be a scholarly destination of choice; the role of library collections and information resources as a research laboratory; and the anticipated cost-effectiveness of the collection in meeting information needs. To support university aspirations, the Libraries must continue to grow" (Report on the University Libraries Strategic Planning, November 7, 2002).

Overview of strategic areas

"With clear ideas on our contributions to academic excellence and commitment to the Catholic intellectual tradition, on aspirations of being a great library, ... we have articulated four areas of library responsibilities, within which to identify strategic directions and initiatives. These areas speak to the library as a:

- Facilitator of learning and teaching
- Center for research and scholarship
- Intellectual commons
- Creative and knowledgeable organization"

(Report on the University Libraries Strategic Planning, November 7, 2002)

Area A. Facilitator of Learning and Teaching

"Academic programs at the University are changing in curricular content and instructional styles. Information technologies are rapidly affecting University services and classroom instruction, and the web in particular is dramatically expanding the availability of information. To remain effective and supportive of the learning and teaching efforts of the University, the library of the 21st century must transform services to meet changing user needs and expectations and develop services to make users more productive. To help prepare students for their academic studies and employment in the

information age, the Libraries will be deeply involved in the teaching of information seeking skills and concepts, as information technology is integrated into all aspects of the curriculum" (Report on the University Libraries Strategic Planning, November 7, 2002).

Direction 1. Assume a leadership role in developing the Libraries' services to support traditional and innovative ways of teaching and learning.

Initiative A. In collaboration with the Kaneb Center, the Office of Information Technologies, and other campus units, develop programs that incorporate new learning technologies and online information resources into classroom instruction through the use of creative teaching methodologies.

Initiative B. Lead campus efforts to promote the understanding of copyright issues, particularly those that deal with fair use in the digital environment.

Initiative C. Facilitate faculty and students use and creation of digital information in collaboration with campus partners.

Initiative D. Integrate adaptive technology and other related services throughout the Libraries to facilitate the use of the Libraries' resources by individuals with disabilities.

Initiative E. Provide enhanced data services to promote the understanding of statistical methodologies.

Direction 2. Assume a leadership role in promoting and teaching research and information seeking skills as a basis for lifelong learning.

Initiative A. Articulate an information fluency plan.

Initiative B. Expand training in research and information seeking skills.

Initiative C. Increase partnerships with teaching faculty to incorporate a library research component into their courses.

Initiative D. Increase opportunities for librarians to develop or improve teaching skills.

Initiative E. Provide campus leadership in the assessment of information fluency skills.

Direction 3. Transform services to meet changing user needs and expectations.

Initiative A. Employ a variety of assessment methods to learn about our various user groups and their distinct needs, and redesign or develop new services to meet those needs.

Initiative B. Collaborate with key departments and units outside the Libraries in order to be well informed about the latest developments in the curriculum and in technology and to respond to the changing needs of students and faculty.

Initiative C. Develop library services for alumni.

Initiative D. Develop library services for participants in international programs.

Direction 4. Create integrated, clear and seamless access to the Libraries' services, collections, and other information resources.

Initiative A. Seek ways to make the Libraries' catalog more accessible, functional, and easy to use.

Initiative B. Apply user-interfaced research to redesign the Libraries' web site to include a customizable "My Library" information gateway.

Initiative C. Assist faculty in incorporating links to the Libraries' resources and preparing customized resource web pages for their courses.

Initiative D. Seek maximum integration of the Libraries' catalog and the web site.

Initiative E. Enhance ways to move easily between bibliographic citations and full-text.

Initiative F. Ensure that all the Libraries' resources are accurately represented in the catalog and are reliably available.

Direction 5. Deliver information resources and services that enhance the quality of teaching and learning and make students and faculty more productive.

Initiative A. Publicize and promote to students and faculty the Libraries' services that support teaching and learning.

Initiative B. Enhance users' awareness of reference librarians and subject or topic specialists.

Initiative C. Provide more efficient user-initiated electronic services that allow users to self-checkout, renew books, request interlibrary loan items, etc.

Initiative D. Support teaching and learning through an efficient, integrated document delivery and interlibrary loan system.

Area B. Center for Research and Scholarship

"Library collections in many formats act as a physical and virtual center for [research and scholarship] ... and provide one of the strengths of the University in support of academic excellence. [Research] collections [and the services associated with them] are developed in cooperation with the faculty and support the academic priorities and initiatives of the University. While most collections provide support for [teaching and learning], our signature collections support those areas [where] the University has a significant historical investment, ... a history of academic excellence, and ... a focus on the great issues facing humanity" (Report on the University Libraries Strategic Planning, November 7, 2002).

Direction 1. Evaluate, develop, and align the Libraries' collections with current University programs and priorities, through collaboration and renewed outreach with academic units.

Initiative A. Collaborate with the various University constituents, i.e., the Libraries, faculty, and administration in developing collections and resources.

Initiative B. Align resources and allocations to reflect both new research and scholarly priorities and support University identified centers of excellence.

Initiative C. Support interdisciplinary collections and programs.

Initiative D. Develop collections that distinguish Notre Dame as a Catholic university.
Initiative E. Continue to develop selected collections to an internationally distinguished level.
Initiative F. Establish assessment processes to evaluate collections.
Initiative G. Create endowed positions for library faculty in areas of University priorities, especially in support of interdisciplinary programs.
Initiative H. Expand access to image and sound collections by creating a digital resources collection.
Initiative I. Provide enhanced data services.

Direction 2. Identify strategic partnerships that support collection development.

Initiative A. Develop partnerships with the Graduate School and other University units to identify and support major purchases.
Initiative B. Develop partnerships with appropriate library consortia and individual libraries to facilitate cooperative collection development and resource sharing.
Initiative C. Develop partnerships with other libraries with research collections that could support new programs which have inadequate local collections and minimal library expertise.
Initiative D. Develop partnerships with donors to secure long-term sources of financial support for selected collections.

Direction 3. Expand a focused preservation program to ensure the long-term usefulness of the Libraries' resources.

Initiative A. Expand internal and outsourced preservation initiatives.
Initiative B. Establish a digital imaging program for both preservation and access.
Initiative C. Continue preservation efforts for the various Catholic collections.
Initiative D. Establish a digital library depository program for the creation of scholarly materials, in collaboration with other campus units.

Direction 4. Inform the University's academic units and faculty about the Libraries' ability to provide resources to meet their information needs and determine from them which programs are considered to be areas of strength and excellence.

Initiative A. Improve collection development efforts through better communication with researchers and scholars through ongoing development of liaison relationships.
Initiative B. Clearly define and communicate the extent of resources needed to maintain our pre-eminent collections.

Direction 5. Promote the Libraries and their resources to increase visibility in the larger academic community.

Initiative A. Catalog unique materials in a timely fashion.
Initiative B. Enhance the web presence of research and scholarly collections.

Initiative C. Encourage active participation in professional programs and associations that are affiliated with specialized collections.

Direction 6. Lead campus-wide efforts to promote understanding of scholarly communication issues.

Initiative A. Promote partnerships with on-campus publishers to collaborate with digital initiatives.

Initiative B. Develop a series of programs relating to scholarly communication.

Initiative C. Launch an educational effort on campus to provide guidance on fair use and other issues such as database licensing, user privacy, electronic reserves and copyright aspects of interlibrary loan and document delivery services.

Direction 7. Create integrated, clear and seamless access to the Libraries' services, collections, and other information resources for researchers.

Initiative A. Seek ways to make the Libraries' catalog more accessible, functional, and easy to use.

Initiative B. Apply user-interfaced research to redesign the Libraries' web site to include a customizable "My Library" information gateway.

Initiative C. Seek maximum integration of the Libraries' catalog and the web site.

Initiative D. Enhance ways to move easily between bibliographic citations and full-text.

Initiative E. Ensure that all the Libraries' resources are accurately represented in the catalog and are reliably available.

Direction 8. Transform and develop services to make researchers more productive.

Initiative A. Employ a variety of assessment methods to learn about our various user groups and their distinct needs, and redesign or develop new services to meet those needs.

Initiative B. Expand campus document delivery services.

Initiative C. Enhance "just-in-time" acquisitions.

Initiative D. Develop and expand current awareness services.

Area C. Intellectual Commons

"Even as the Libraries work to develop the 'virtual' library, the concept of the library as a place remains key to the services we provide and the role of the Libraries in meeting the educational and research needs of the University community. The Libraries should provide secure, comfortable, and useable environments for students. The Libraries should serve as meeting places for faculty and students; should provide an intellectual commons. We must adapt our facilities to provide for growth of the collection, support changing patterns of teaching and learning, and optimize the use of new technologies" (Report on the University Libraries Strategic Planning, November 7, 2002).

Direction 1. Make the Libraries more comfortable and appealing.

Initiative A. Renovate the Libraries' interiors to improve the looks and comfort of both Hesburgh and the branch libraries through carpeting, lighting, paint and plants, and by providing an ergonomically-sound mix of furniture.

Initiative B. Improve HVAC to help make people more comfortable and also to preserve the collections.

Initiative C. Incorporate a café into Hesburgh Library to facilitate social and intellectual discourse.

Direction 2. Arrange collections and service points logically to facilitate their use.

Initiative A. Arrange collections based on projected use, for example, quick access to frequently consulted materials, specialized environments for unique materials, and remote access for selected materials.

Initiative B. Locate service points so that they are highly visible and logically arranged.

Initiative C. Install a system of signs and maps to facilitate the use of collections and services by using principles of way-finding.

Direction 3. Provide an appropriate variety of spaces for the Libraries' users.

Initiative A. Zone some areas for quiet study for individual users.

Initiative B. Zone some areas for collaborative activities.

Initiative C. Zone some areas for food and drink.

Initiative D. Separate collection storage areas from service and social ones.

Initiative E. Design flexible classroom spaces to facilitate instructional activities in consultation with the Kaneb Center.

Initiative F. Address deficiencies in the quantity and quality of private study carrels.

Initiative G. Establish a publicly accessible computing area with both Library and technical assistance immediately adjacent.

Direction 4. Develop staff work spaces that are efficient and logically arranged.

Initiative A. Design a logical work-flow arrangement.

Initiative B. Provide adequate space for equipment and activities.

Initiative C. Develop appealing work spaces to aid in recruitment, morale, and retention of personnel.

Initiative D. Provide an appropriate mix of group and private office spaces.

Initiative E. Provide an adequate number of meeting rooms.

Direction 5. Develop a comprehensive infrastructure for proven leading-edge technological needs.

Initiative A. Expand wireless capacities throughout the buildings in collaboration with the Office of Information Technology.

Initiative B. Develop a high-end laboratory for digital conversion of the Libraries' materials.

Initiative C. Bring current technological infrastructure of the Libraries up-to-date.

Initiative D. Bring network infrastructure to maximum possible bandwidth and to allow for further expansion.

Direction 6. Address the collection space needs of the Libraries.

Initiative A. Install movable shelving where appropriate.

Initiative B. Explore cooperative off-site storage for selected materials.

Area D. Creative and Knowledgeable Organization

"To fulfill its role as an information leader in support of the University's ambitions for teaching, learning and research as stated in the Quest for Leadership, the Libraries need highly knowledgeable, skilled, flexible and creative library faculty and staff.... The Libraries need people who can see opportunities, set directions, align themselves, and generate the necessary motivation to convert challenges into information solutions" (Report on the University Libraries Strategic Planning, November 7, 2002).

Direction 1. Recruit, train, develop, and effectively utilize the Libraries' employees in a flexible manner that acknowledges the evolving nature of our work and the changing demands of our users.

Initiative A. Create position descriptions that encourage and support changing environments and new responsibilities.

Initiative B. Enrich current career path opportunities.

Initiative C. Attract diverse library faculty to Notre Dame, in collaboration with the Kresge Law Library, and provide them opportunities to gain academic library experience.

Initiative D. Enhance current library training and development programs.

Initiative E. Initiate additional opportunities to learn skills and competencies.

Initiative F. Establish standards of excellence that include "best practices" and "core competencies."

Initiative G. Provide financial resources for continuing learning and professional development.

Direction 2. Foster an organic culture that enables the Libraries to adapt to the evolving University identity and to be relevant in the future.

Initiative A. Develop a reward system that recognizes individual or group accomplishments and activities based on risk taking, innovation, and flexibility.

Initiative B. Attract diverse library faculty to Notre Dame, in collaboration with the Kresge Law Library, and provide them with opportunities to gain academic library experience by endowing the Librarian-in-Residence program.

Initiative C. Provide, in collaboration with the Kresge Law Library, opportunities for four diverse high school students to experience academic libraries as summer student assistants by endowing the summer program.

Initiative D. Provide, in collaboration with the Kresge Law Library, opportunities for diverse high school students to experience academic libraries as summer student assistants.

Direction 3. Optimize organizational structure to support the Libraries' programs and initiatives.

Initiative A. Link individual goals to department, Library, and University mission and directions.

Initiative B. Publicize the Libraries' mission and goals to users and the Libraries' staff.

Initiative C. Expand the use of cross-functional teamwork.

Initiative D. Partner with Human Resources and a library consultant to design position descriptions to include measurable expectations, clear responsibilities, and fair assessments.

Initiative E. Obtain additional human resources expertise and support.

Direction 4. Develop a user-centered culture that guides the Libraries and informs all their policies, procedures, and decisions.

Initiative A. Integrate accountability and performance measures into the unit and planning process.

Initiative B. Demonstrate effectiveness of programs, services, and collections through regular assessment, benchmarking, and the identification of "best practices."

Initiative C. Establish performance standards