

# INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

## 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 Goals**

In the Strategic Plan of January 2003, we articulated four areas of library responsibilities, and used those to identify strategic directions and initiatives. These areas spoke to the library as a:

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

The Strategic Plan of January 2004 works within this context but organizes the Libraries Goals and Action Items under six primary goals. These Goals are to:

- Provide enhanced and secure access to the Libraries resources and services
- Facilitate the University's teaching efforts
- Provide library collections and information services to meet curricular, research and archival needs
- Renovate the Libraries
- Increase the effectiveness of the Libraries' organization
- Assess the Libraries

## University Libraries of Notre Dame: Strategic Plan, January 2004

### Goal 1: Provide enhanced and secure access to the Libraries resources and services

Priority	Action Items	Assessment	Target	Timeline
highest	a) Provide more online user services, including online renewal, borrowing requests, chat reference for anytime/anywhere access			
highest	b) Create a user-centered library portal fully integrated with the campus portal			
highest	c) Create, manage and preserve digital content using rare, unique or special library collections: Dante, Civil War manuscripts, Architecture lantern slides	# of collections converted		2010
high	d) Market new library services and collections to users to enhance user productivity			
highest	e) Evaluate and improve the electronic delivery of library services and collections	Assess delivery tools against available alternatives	Maintain use of highly ranked tools	2010
high	f) Offer services to alumni on a cost-recovery basis			2010

### Goal 2: Facilitate the University's teaching efforts

Priority	Action Items	Assessment	Target	Timeline
highest	a) Increase library research, instructional services and special collections components in University seminars and upper-level courses	# of courses		
highest	b) Offer one-on-one and small group training programs for faculty to facilitate use of electronic resources	# of programs		
high	c) Design and measure library instruction learning objectives for students	National Survey (SAILS)		

## University Libraries of Notre Dame: Strategic Plan, January 2004

### Goal 3: Provide library collections and information services to meet curricular, research and archival needs

Priority	Action Items	Assessment	Target	Timeline
highest	a) Develop assessment goals and metrics for library priorities in distinguished/special collections and document delivery: Early Christian/Medieval/Byzantine, Latin American civil society & Southern Cone lit., English lang. & lit., Irish, Catholic Studies, Theology, Dante & other library special collections	Goals & metrics established	all	2004
highest	b) Develop assessment goals and metrics for library priorities in use-based research collections and document delivery: social sciences, history, philosophy, foreign langs & lits, art, music, architecture, engineering, sciences, and government documents and data as format-specific collections	Goals & metrics established	all	2004
highest	c) Provide and preserve distinguished/special library collections	1) Benchmark selected peers 2) North Am. Title Count		2010
highest	d) Provide and preserve use-based research collections and document delivery services	1) Benchmark selected peers 2) North Am. Title Count		2010
highest	e) Expand partnerships with library consortia, selected libraries and other organizations for cooperative collection development, resource sharing, and support of emerging models of scholarly communication, including the Center for Research Libraries, Academic Libraries of Indiana (ALI), Latin American Resources Program (LARP)			
highest	f) Incorporate price inflation into budget modeling for library collections in all disciplines			2004
highest	g) Create six named library faculty positions with particular attention given to areas of distinguished and special collections as listed above			2010

## University Libraries of Notre Dame: Strategic Plan, January 2004

### Goal 4: Renovate the Libraries

Priority	Action Items	Assessment	Target	Timeline
highest	a) Reconfigure library services and collections in the Chemistry/Physics Library			
highest	b) Offer information services in the Jordan Hall of Science			
highest	c) Share library digital asset management tools (DigiTool, etc.) for digital asset collections among campus units including libraries, OIT, museums, archives and departments	Availability of tools	to all campus units	2010
highest	d) Assess space needs, reconfigure services and collections, and renovate libraries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renovate the 1st floor of Hesburgh Library for better social/learning space</li> <li>• Upgrade current library instruction facilities in Hesburgh Library</li> <li>• Complete renovation of Hesburgh Library               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Sciences</li> <li>• Engineering</li> <li>• Slide Library</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

### Goal 5: Increase the effectiveness of the Libraries' organization

Priority	Action Items	Assessment	Target	Timeline
highest	a) Recruit Librarian-in-residence			
highest	b) Restructure, retrain and where appropriate, revise compensation of existing staff to better meet the changing needs of the Libraries			2010
highest	c) Create more efficient work flows and lines of communication in light of new priorities, new technologies and reorganized spaces	Number revised	50%	2010

### Goal 6: Assess the Libraries

Priority	Action Items	Assessment	Target	Timeline
highest	a) Complete annual statistics collected by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL)		Maintain rank in top 50	
highest	b) Review rank with top 20 private universities (USNWR)		Maintain rank of 15 or better	
highest	c) Survey ND user population through nationally validated survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to information services and library collections</li> <li>• Library as a place</li> <li>• Personal control</li> <li>• Quality of service</li> </ul>	LibQUAL+	Above the median on key metrics in peer group	