

Strategic Priorities

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

1 To expand the Digital Scholarship and Literacy Program.

The Libraries will provide tools, expertise, and training for creating and organizing digital content to support research and instruction. Further, to facilitate research and creative work the Libraries are developing more seamless and secure access to digital content through IRIS and Blackboard. This priority includes the wide range of activities in the Libraries that support digital scholarship, an emerging frontier in today's research environment. Activities include the initiatives in Digital Research in the Humanities, creation of image databases using CONTENTdm, expansion of a program to promote Geographic Information Systems (GIS) research, and tools to facilitate the establishment of an institutional repository, an electronic archive, for faculty scholarship. The Libraries continues to expand its digital initiatives with the support of POE funding, various grants, private donations, the student library credit hour fee, the student technology fee, and the UCARE program. The Libraries has partnered with academic units including the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the many humanities departments to advance our digital research activities. Our goals for the next two years are to receive approval for the Center, and to move from pilot projects to production for image databases and the institutional repository. These efforts will put us at the forefront of research Libraries and will build further collaborations with faculty. We also plan by 2006 to have single sign-on from Blackboard to the Library system's licensed databases, through a development project with Innovative Interfaces. Success will be measured by the extent of adoption of the new content databases into instruction and research.

2 To enhance reference and instructional services to students, faculty, and the community.

The Libraries will implement new technologies to improve services as needs change and as programs change. By continuing to enhance our services to meet the needs of a digital age, the Libraries provide user centered support for research and creative activities by our students and faculty that meet the needs of a new generation. New services include the digital learning librarian program for access to multimedia resources; expanded online (chat) reference services through consortial arrangements; enhanced document delivery services, for students and faculty, both on campus and off campus. Currently, over 62% of the searches each week on the library system come from outside our library buildings. We expect to see this percentage increase even as we are seeing increased traffic in our libraries.

We continually assess new technologies, based on user needs, for application in the Libraries. The Libraries will also continue to enhance search tools, providing students with the capability of searching across multiple resources including Google with one search. This new tool for multi-

searches is one of the more popular search choices for students, even though it is still in a pilot phase. These tools are also available to our community users. The Libraries has also revised the Library 110 curriculum to address issues of assessing electronic information and websites and addressing issues of plagiarism. We are also collaborating with departments to link Library 110 with core courses. This approach makes us a leading library in the area of instruction. The Libraries uses state, foundation, and credit hour fee funds to support enhanced services. Our goals for the next two years include moving the toolkit we are developing for faculty for using e-resources in their instruction from a pilot project to full implementation. The pilot includes a plagiarism unit. We plan to design and add modules on copyright, designing library assignments, and other teaching-related topics. We will also expand document delivery and online reference services, and expand options for offering Library 110. Success will be measured through statistics showing use of our systems, increases in use of our services, as well as positive feedback from our users about these specific services.

3 To enhance collections to support research, instruction, and service for today's users and tomorrow's scholars through increases in acquisitions.

The Libraries targets funds for Program of Excellence areas, for preservation of collections, and for additional access to electronic resources. The Libraries will continue to balance access to resources with ownership of resources to provide the best mix of research materials available for our faculty and students. Access to electronic resources is becoming more and more important for our students and these resources are heavily used. For example, last year there were over 3.6 million searches done on our databases. In August, 2004, there were over 1 million searches of our web site, the second most heavily used website at UNL, after the main homepage. The Libraries continue to see over 75,000 searches each week of the catalog. These data support the need to continue to move from print based works to electronic works when available. The Libraries goal for the next two years is to assess overall collection strengths and funding allocations to match purchases to campus priorities and programs and to balance support for the different disciplines.

Through consortial purchases the Libraries is able to achieve significant discounts which allows us to increase the number of resources that we make available to our users. Recent acquisitions utilizing funding from the credit hour fee and foundation funds help support the University's priorities, Programs of Excellence, and will help to increase the Libraries' ranking and overall effectiveness. The Libraries also work closely with the other NU campuses, particularly with UNMC, to provide access to biomedical literature for joint projects with medical researchers, as well as support for research funded through the EPSCOR program. The Libraries goal is to negotiate for the best possible prices for acquisitions purchases, entering consortial arrangements as appropriate. Success in this area is seen through increased searches of databases, through increased partnerships for purchasing materials, and finally with an increase in our ARL ranking.

The high-density storage facility will allow the Libraries to consolidate materials, with improved climate control to preserve materials, and to create needed shelf space for current materials. With the closure of three branch libraries the Libraries will establish a science wing in Love library. The Libraries' goal is to consolidate many of our science collections and to be able to enhance support for science research including interdisciplinary research in these areas.

The Libraries will also be in a better position to support the priority programs on campus in the sciences by providing additional electronic-resources to meet the specialized needs in these fields. In summary, the Libraries goals in this area for the next two years include conducting an assessment of the overall collection strengths and funding to match purchases to campus priorities, to enhance support for the sciences and develop alternative approaches to providing services to these departments, and to increase consortial purchases as appropriate.

4 To seek enhanced funding for the Libraries by leveraging and expanding our funding sources.

The goal is to have the funding to enhance collections, services, and improve our ranking in the ARL. In 2003/04, 42% of state funds were used to support collections, 60% of the library credit hour fees supported collections, and 86% of foundation funds supported collections. While the Libraries currently spends 49.3% on staff we have experienced a decrease in the number of positions from 156 in 1997/98 to 141 in 2003/04. Although three branch libraries will close in summer 2005 we have also added services that need specialized staffing. The library credit hour fee has been used to add faculty and staff (7 positions), to provide new and expanded services and collections and also supports the diversity program, the multimedia program, and the GIS program. The Friends of the Libraries continue to make an annual gift to the Libraries for collections and worked this year on a special fundraising project to raise \$25,000 for preservation of Special Collections materials.

Through these funding sources, the Libraries has been able to add new technologies needed by today's students to do research in the many non-text disciplines that are part of our University program. The funds have also been used to enhance special collections where key purchases have included the Wright Morris collection, numerous Willa Cather letters, and, most recently, an Elizabeth I seal. The Libraries also partners with academic departments for grants, particularly in the area of water, where the Libraries provides a national database on water resources and in the humanities in support of numerous digital projects. These partnerships build on strengths in the Libraries collection, build on expertise among the faculty and staff, and help the Libraries to leverage resources to improve overall University activities. Continued support for the Libraries from multiple funding sources will continue to provide the flexibility the Libraries needs to function in the highly changing world of information.

Success in this area will be seen with steady to increased funding to the Libraries, continued grant funding, and continued improvements in donor support. With increased funding, the Libraries will be able to cope with the continued increases in materials costs in the range of 9-10% per year, the increasing difficulties of foreign purchasing with the fluctuations in the value of the dollar, and the need to increase or enhance electronic access to electronic resources which may cost more than their former print resources. Without sufficient funding the Libraries will be unable to achieve excellence and provide enhanced services to meet the increasing demand for online and digital services.