

A Living Strategic Plan K-State Libraries 2007-2012

Mission

We guide our community in its quest for intellectual discovery and lifelong learning. We advance the creation, sharing, and preservation of knowledge at Kansas State University.

Vision

We aspire to be a leading intellectual and learning environment that anticipates and creatively fulfills the needs of our communities by funding, acquiring, and organizing a diverse array of resources and providing personalized expert assistance. We will be the answer to the question of why libraries remain relevant in a digital world full of options.

Values

We live by the following values to meet our commitment to our foremost priority and highest value, meeting the needs of our diverse users.

We value intellectual freedom.

We respect and protect the right to explore all points of view and the right to privacy.

We value the many communities we serve.

We encourage interaction with any individual or group and treat all people with respect, dignity, and courtesy.

We value contributions and ideas from all individuals.

We consider many viewpoints before making decisions and encourage creativity, risk-taking, and innovation.

We value responsible resource management.

We spend our money wisely and in ways that afford the broadest benefit to our users.

We value learning.

We create an environment that promotes ongoing learning for ourselves and our users.

We care (and go the extra mile).

Our Goals

One: Our users will find collections tailored and managed to meet their changing needs and advance the priorities of the University.

Two: Our users will have seamless, user-driven access to reliable information, scholarship, and services when and where needed and have opportunities to learn how to effectively use and apply these resources.

Three: The Libraries will increasingly support the creation, discovery, sharing, and preservation of the unique digital academic and institutional knowledge assets produced at our University.

Four: Our users will find innovative and welcoming learning spaces, both physical and virtual, that stimulates learning, continually respond to user needs, and enrich the library experience.

Five: Our internal capacity will expand so we can deliver 21st-century library and information services aligned with the University's missions and academic priorities.

Section 1. Where Are We Today and Where Are We Going?

K-State Libraries, like the rest of the University and libraries around the world, has been adapting for the past decade to both the challenges and opportunities posed by today's digital information environment. The rise of Internet technologies has created change in the ways the University teaches its students, conducts research, and interacts with its communities. More and more information is created, maintained, stored, and shared electronically. As the world moves from one that is predominately paper-based to one that is digitally-dominated, the work of our students, faculty, and researchers is changing: from individual to collaborative research, from single discipline to integrated, multidisciplinary perspectives; from individual owners to groups who own and share information, from PC-centric to network-centric, and from paper to the Internet, the Web, and multimedia. Teaching, learning, and research occur not just in a single physical location, but in multiple locations connected through technology. Information seekers find traditional library bibliographic records and subject headings confusing. Today's information seekers want to access information online in a variety of formats with the speed and simplicity offered by Google or Amazon.

The fact is that digital technology is changing the ways we all discover, create, maintain, and use information and knowledge. Those changes, coupled with the spiraling costs of library materials and increasing space costs, will profoundly impact the work of our libraries for the foreseeable future. As our users' needs change, so will the role of K-State Libraries in meeting those needs.

Put simply, as the University adapts to the new information environment, so must K-State Libraries. If the University community is going to continue to rely on us as a center for learning and knowledge, we must foster a flexible, adaptable, and creative environment to meet these changing needs. While continuing to provide excellent traditional library services, we will:

- **move more of our collections and services online;**
- strengthen our services **as a vital gateway to the information needed by our users**, whether held by us or elsewhere;
- take a leadership role in **discovering, capturing, preserving, and making available the unique digital research, knowledge, and information assets** created or collected by users;
- rethink the role of the library as a physical space – no longer just a quiet place to study alone or check out a book, but also a campus **environment for collaboration, learning, and social interaction**; and
- **build our own capacity to provide 21st-century library and information services**, aligning our work and services directly to the University's teaching, research, and service missions and academic priorities.

Section 2. How We Will Get There

K-State Libraries will excel as a 21st-century academic research library. This strategic plan sets key directions and strategies to guide us as we continue to move forward. Those directions are captured in the following five strategic goals and associated objectives.

Goal One: Our users will find collections tailored and managed to meet their changing needs and advance the priorities of the University.

Strategic Overview

K-State Libraries have built a rich set of collections that are appropriate to a major 20th-century research library. However, library collections everywhere are changing because both the producers of information and those who consume it have changed. We see a clear preference from our users for more online content. Coupled with the rising costs of library materials, ever-present space constraints, and the fragility of digital materials, this shift from print to online requires that we rethink the way we acquire, maintain, access, and preserve collections, both in traditional and digital formats.

We envision coming together on an inventive strategic philosophy for managing collections. Future collection building will be more proactive, based on quality analysis of current and projected user needs. We will use improved models for containing acquisition and storage costs. Finally, our users will have access to more online collections, whether housed within our own libraries or elsewhere.

Objectives for Goal One:

Objective 1.1. We will develop dexterous methodologies to better understand the usage of our collections and the current and future needs of users in order to make informed decisions in collections development and management.

Objective 1.2. We will articulate and implement a comprehensive development and management policy for collections, providing a framework for targeting future acquisitions on user needs and institutional strengths while reducing acquisitions in other areas.

Objective 1.3. We will seek realistic approaches to contain the rising acquisition and storage costs of collections.

1.3.1. We will expand the use of consortia, collaboration, and outsourcing in order to contain the cost of selecting, purchasing, processing, housing, and preserving collections.

1.3.2. We will assess acquisitions/collections services to reallocate resources strategically and eliminate services that are no longer needed.

1.3.3. We will establish criteria for long range maintenance and storage of collections.

1.3.4. We will work with vendors for licensing terms that maximize cost-effective access to the electronic scholarly resources needed by our users.

1.3.5. We will expand cooperative relationships that allow us to rely on other institutions to provide materials in areas which are not K-State strengths.

Objective 1.4. We will increase the number and range of digital resources available to our users, based on their needs.

Objective 1.5. We will develop and test approaches, standards, best practices, and business models for collecting, preserving, and accessing digital collections, collaborating with University, state, regional, national, and international organizations.

Goal 2. Our users will have seamless, user-driven access to reliable information, scholarship, and services when and where needed and have opportunities to learn how to effectively use and apply these resources.

Strategic Overview

Libraries have always served as gateways to the world of knowledge and information. Today users expect information to be easy to access regardless of origin, anywhere and at any time. In our role as K-State's gateway to information, we need to provide our services when and where needed – in person, on paper, or online. We need to develop vibrant services appropriate to an interactive environment where rapid exchange of information is the norm. We need to make it easier for users to chart their own course through our collections by simplifying and expanding access to our locations, our technology, and our people. Finally, if people are going to use our services, they have to know what they are. We need to do a more effective job of conveying who we are – to ourselves, our current and potential users, and other organizations.

We envision “taking the library to the user” by making the knowledge and expertise of our staff, our services, and our collections more accessible. Our services will become increasingly integral to the University's teaching, learning, and research environment. Our users will have simpler, more integrated access to collections in all formats. And our teaching of lifelong-learning and research skills will help individuals better understand how to navigate today's ever-expanding information environment and locate reliable, authoritative information appropriate to their needs.

Objectives for Goal Two:

Objective 2.1. We will enable users to interact with our services through emerging or user-familiar technologies.

Objective 2.2. We will simplify access to our services and our collections.

Objective 2.3. We will expand and advance online reference services.

Objective 2.4. We will develop indispensable services that further integrate collections and services into the online teaching, learning, and research environment.

Objective 2.5. We will promote and expand access to unique K-State and Kansas collections by seeking partnerships and funding for onsite and online exhibits and digitization efforts.

Objective 2.6. We will strengthen our outreach activities to ensure users know how the Libraries can and do serve them.

2.6.1. We will develop and implement innovative communications and marketing strategies including targeting general, specific, and under-served audiences with focused marketing campaigns.

2.6.2. We will create a consistent, uniform image to establish the Libraries as a visible, branded, recognizable resource.

Objective 2.7. We will find innovative ways to enhance our users' understanding of the complexities of the information environment and help them become more adept at conducting effective searches, evaluating information sources, analyzing information needs, and using information effectively.

Objective 2.8. We will expand our role as active partners on University multidisciplinary research teams, contributing our experience as professional information consultants.

Goal 3: The Libraries will increasingly support the creation, discovery, sharing, and preservation of the University's unique digital academic and institutional knowledge assets.

Strategic Overview

Academic libraries have always played a role in making available the unique unpublished scholarship, personal papers, and other information created or collected by its graduate students, faculty, researchers, and administrators through their special collections and University archives programs. With the exception of theses and dissertations, libraries typically placed limited emphasis on these programs, instead focusing efforts on purchasing, organizing, and making available published research and scholarship. Today, this publisher-driven model is changing with the impact of networked technologies on scholarly communications, the escalating costs of published materials, and the need to find solutions for preserving unique locally-produced

research and information that is either born or maintained digitally on our campuses. We need to shift focus from acquiring materials that we can easily find elsewhere and make available to our users, to helping users create, discover, share, collect, and preserve their own scholarship, information, and data as well as other unique materials important to our University and our state.

We will lead efforts to address challenges to open access and fair-use principles and find solutions to sharing research and scholarship legally, equitably, and cost-effectively. As partners with users creating exciting digital scholarly resources and undertaking new research, we will bring our unique expertise in finding, organizing, and delivering information to such projects. Working collaboratively with others, we will develop policies, processes, and systems to capture, manage, preserve, and share K-State records, information, and knowledge assets now and into the future. And by becoming more proactive in collecting, sharing, and preserving the University's institutional history and scholarship, we will ensure that K-State's rich history and academic contributions are not lost to future generations.

Objectives for Goal Three:

Objective 3.1. We will define and communicate the Libraries' role in the University digital information environment, particularly our role in the creation, maintenance, preservation, storage, and sharing of the University's digital information and scholarship.

Objective 3.2. We will advocate open access and fair use principles on campus, leading the development of forums and tools to raise awareness about scholarly communication issues and promote alternatives to traditional publishing models.

3.2.1. We will support open access publishing by serving as an online, open access publisher.

3.2.2. We will establish an authors' advisory service to help researchers, faculty, and students understand their intellectual property rights and publishing alternatives.

3.2.3. We will encourage the University to establish a central K-State fund to cover author fees for open access journals.

Objective 3.3. We will develop additional consultation services to support users creating digital scholarship, particularly services related to best practices for project development, metadata creation and encoding, usability, and digital conversion of materials in a variety of formats.

Objective 3.4. We will make it a priority to ensure that K-State's institutional and knowledge assets in both physical and digital form are available and preserved for as long as needed.

3.4.1. We will facilitate the planning and implementation of a shared campus approach to the management of K-State's digital information and scholarly assets as an extension of the Libraries' traditional role with University archives/records.

3.4.2. We will review the University's special collections, records management, and University archives programs and develop recommendations to address the life-cycle management and long-term preservation of University records and personal papers in all formats.

3.4.3. We will implement digital projects to collect, preserve and make available unique collections of value to the University and the state of Kansas, selecting projects based on their relevance to our teaching, learning, and service missions and institutional history; their broad potential for use; their possible contribution to state, regional, national, and international digital collection efforts; and their potential to generate external support.

3.4.4. We will develop a suite of services to support the planning and implementation of institutional and/or disciplinary/multidisciplinary repositories for storing, managing, discovering, sharing, and preserving the University's digital knowledge assets now and in the future.

Goal 4: Our users will find innovative and welcoming learning spaces, both physical and virtual, that stimulates learning, continually respond to user needs, and enrich the library experience.

Strategic Overview

As the roles of librarians have been changing, so has the role of the academic library as place. Campus libraries across the country now have information commons, coffee shops, 24/7 access, collaborative learning areas, and social and cultural event spaces. Although the main and the branch libraries continue to be places for students to find information and study, these libraries are also evolving as campus and community centers for collaboration, group study, social interaction, and pursuing intellectual and cultural interests through exhibits and programs. Our presence on the Web represents another way in which the role of library as place has changed. Indeed, many more users worldwide will visit us online, never coming to Manhattan for our services. It is important that we carefully consider and plan for imaginative new uses of our space, both physical and virtual, working to complement one another to meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's users.

We envision expanding efforts to make the Libraries comfortable and welcoming in our physical and virtual spaces. Users will feel at home in our libraries and will not be held back by intimidating or confusing barriers. Our space planning will be proactive, and collaborative with others. Reallocation and repurposing of space will be flexible,

reflecting the changing needs of our users. Finally, users will be able to attend an expanding variety of intellectual and cultural events sponsored by the Libraries and the University.

Objectives for Goal Four:

Objective 4.1. We will develop guidance for effective use of our space, balancing the needs of our staff, our users, the public, the collections, and technology.

Objective 4.2. We will develop methodologies for strategic space planning, analyzing current and future space and user needs, and finding cost-effective solutions to those needs.

Objective 4.3. We will repurpose and renovate space in the main Library to make it more inviting and navigable to our users and to facilitate emerging needs for space.

Objective 4.4. We will strengthen measures to ensure the security of our users, guests, staff, and materials, recognizing that having reliable security is of paramount importance to expanding our role as an intellectual and learning environment and meeting user expectations.

Objective 4.5. We will explore options to existing library collections space in all library facilities in collaboration with on- and off-campus partners.

Objective 4.6. We will fully develop our role in virtual learning communities through dynamic information portals and online reference services.

Objective 4.7. We will develop and deliver cultural outreach programs that promote learning and discovery.

Goal 5: Our internal capacity will expand so we can deliver 21st-century library and information services aligned with the University's missions and academic priorities.

Strategic Overview

The work of libraries has been dramatically impacted by the rapidly changing information environment and the effect of technologies on that environment. To succeed as a 21st-century academic library requires the Libraries to build their internal capacities to adapt to rapid social, economic, technological, and lifestyle changes. We must address challenges in the areas of people, organizational and process advancements, and technology.

Our most pressing need is to guarantee that we have expert, diverse, and dedicated staff to support the University in this vibrant information environment. We need to identify our skill gaps and develop strategies to fill those gaps. Working to clarify performance expectations and holding ourselves accountable for results will help to ensure that, once employed new staff is encouraged to continue to grow in their abilities

to support the University. And we must ensure that we all work together in an environment built on mutual respect, integrity, and creativity. K-State Libraries will work to nurture this atmosphere, valuing open communications, fairness, trust, and risk taking at all levels.

In order to make the best use of limited resources in times of rapid change, we must continually review our organizational and staffing structures, our business processes, and our uses of technology. K-State Libraries' digital future must be seen as integral to our core services and collections rather than a separate initiative or program. At the same time, we must recognize that the new technologies and tools should be seen as means to an end, not as ends in themselves. We should guarantee sound investment decisions based on user needs. We need to expand collaborations with partners internal and external to the University, while keeping pace by integrating appropriate dynamic technologies into our work and services.

We envision building a learning organization that is diverse, collaborative, user-centered, and innovative. Our culture will be one of "can do" – one that is facilitative, values creativity, and encourages decision making and responsibility at all levels. We will work together and with others across the University to share data, information, and knowledge across traditional organizational lines. We will better understand our users and their needs. Our policies and business processes will be more responsive, efficient, and appropriate in today's environment. Finally, by making greater and more sophisticated use of technology, we will advance learning, create knowledge, and share that knowledge in fulfilling our University's core land-grant mission.

Objectives for Goal Five:

Objective 5.1. We will foster an organizational culture based on mutual respect, understanding, and commitment to the work of the Libraries by facilitating effective internal communications and openness in decision making.

Objective 5.2. We will develop mechanisms to better understand the needs of our users, assess our effectiveness in meeting those needs, and incorporate those needs into our services and collections.

Objective 5.3. We will routinely assess and improve our core work processes and organizational design to ensure they are adaptable, efficient, and staffed to meet our mission and goals in today's environment.

5.3.1. We will develop a project-based, multidisciplinary management approach to pursue mission-critical programs and manage such programs in an integrated manner.

5.3.2. We will strengthen and clarify our planning and reporting processes and develop the information necessary to track success in achieving our mission and goals and to inform decision making.

5.3.3. We will design and implement planning, management, and evaluation processes to support the creation of innovative, useful products and services that are responsive to the needs of our communities.

Objective 5.4. We will replenish, develop, and retain a talented, diverse staff capable of meeting the challenges posed in today's academic libraries, with a focus on competencies at the highest risk of depletion or for which we have major gaps in capacity.

5.4.1. We will determine the appropriate staffing necessary to meet our mission and goals by developing a staffing plan and allocating resources to implement that plan.

5.4.2. We will utilize best practices in job analysis and needs assessment to define the general and job-specific core competencies needed by our staff working in a constantly evolving information environment, identify our skill gaps, and incorporate those competencies into our recruitment, performance management, and professional development activities.

5.4.3. We will ensure that all staff understand their performance expectations and responsibilities and are held accountable for results by refining our performance management processes.

5.4.4. We will support our staff with the resources and workplace flexibility needed to perform their jobs.

Objective 5.5. We will provide continuous learning opportunities for all staff to ensure that every staff member has the opportunity to keep up with developments in their field and develop practical skills needed by the Libraries.

5.5.1. We will design and implement essential professional development opportunities, including on-the-job training, staff workshops, cross training, job shadowing, and mentoring, to ensure that our staff have the competencies needed to perform their jobs.

5.5.2. We will increase staff opportunities for continuing education and participation at professional meetings and in professional organizations.

5.5.3. We will establish incentives and flexibility to encourage employee participation in staff development activities.

Objective 5.6. We will build and sustain a secure, robust, expandable, and cost-effective information and technology infrastructure to support University access to essential collections and services.

5.6.1. We will evaluate and redesign our technical architecture and infrastructure to ensure that it is sustainable, scalable, adaptable, and interoperable with state, regional, national, and international library and archives initiatives.

5.6.2. We will plan for systematic replacement, upgrade, and maintenance of equipment to support library collections and services.

5.6.3. We will participate in the wider library and university communities by developing and sharing open source software.

5.6.4. We will create a planning and investment decision-making process focused on ensuring that digital products and technology investments are cost-effective and driven by user and mission/program needs.

Objective 5.7. We will seek additional opportunities to partner with University colleagues and with other universities; state, regional, and national organizations; professional associations; and private sector organizations to realize our goals.

Objective 5.8. We will establish better communication and strengthen our relationships with the Colleges, the K-State Foundation, the Friends of KSU Libraries, and the Alumni Association to aggressively pursue funding for targeted projects and activities of mutual interest.

Section 3. Next Steps

In developing a living strategic plan, we have set the course K-State Libraries will take as the academic research libraries supporting the needs of our users. The Libraries will work consistently to achieve the goals of the strategic plan. The plan will be actively monitored, improved, and updated. This is the core idea of the living strategic plan: goals and objectives vibrant and forward-thinking enough to allow for the evolution of the environment in which we exist. As we implement the plan, measuring the success of our efforts will be critical. Over the next several months, we will begin developing specific work plans against which we can track and measure our results. However, success will ultimately be judged by how well we:

- Create opportunities for users with variant points of view to provide input for decisions;
- Directly participate in the curriculum and research goals of Kansas State University by proactively connecting our users to the research resources and available assistance;
- Respond in both physical and virtual space to allow users intuitive and seamless navigation;
- Understand the needs of our users and develop services and collections to meet those needs;
- Communicate among our staff and with our users;
- Develop a culture that fosters creativity and teamwork while removing barriers;
- Attract and retain a highly competent and motivated staff; and
- Ensure the availability of our unique academic and institutional knowledge for as long as needed.

By itself, this plan is merely a piece of paper. Only the K-State Libraries staff who implements it can turn it into the powerful document it is intended to be. Together, our efforts will create a K-State Libraries legacy of excellence in service to our communities, our University, and our state. An excellent university requires an excellent library.

Section 4: Definitions

To ease the understanding of the themes used in the K-State Libraries strategic plan, we sought to use consistent vocabulary. This section is included to define the word choices in the plan.

User/s: All users: students, faculty, staff, and the public, such as K-12 students, Manhattan and Kansas residents, and remote users and researchers.

Library staff: All employees: student assistants, graduate assistants, classified, unclassified, and library faculty.

Collection/s: All printed and digital material in all formats that the Libraries own or have rights to. This includes the increasingly online information and knowledge resources.

Community/Communities: Groups of constituents that the Libraries serve including the University, Manhattan, and the state of Kansas.

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