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Crossroads, Connections, and Creativity: Musselman Library Strategic Plan

Musselman Library
Gettysburg College

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Abstract

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In late January, Robin Wagner, Director of Library Services, formed the Strategic Planning Committee (see list of participants below). The committee's initial tasks were to complete an environmental scan and to identify upcoming trends and best practices in library services, while formulating mission and vision statements for Musselman Library. These were presented to the rest of the staff for feedback during meetings in March and April.

Also in April, the Strategic Planning Committee invited other library staff to serve on task forces charged with creating goals and action items for the plan's four core issues (see Appendix C). Maureen Sullivan facilitated the launching of these task forces, and each group, led by a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, then met independently numerous times during the next few weeks.

The final task force reports were completed in early May and shared with the entire library staff. On May 21, Maureen Sullivan led an all-staff meeting to discuss the task force recommendations. Ms. Sullivan then met with the Strategic Planning Committee and Robin Wagner to begin the process of revising, prioritizing, and incorporating the goals and action items into one cohesive strategic plan. Crossroads, Connections, and Creativity: Musselman Library Strategic Plan was submitted to Robin Wagner, on June 12, 2007. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Musselman Library, Gettysburg College. strategic plan, college library

Disciplines

Library and Information Science

Crossroads, Connections, and Creativity: Musselman Library Strategic Plan

June 12, 2007

Submitted by

Musselman Library Strategic Planning Committee

Overview of Process

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Participants:

Maureen Sullivan, Organization Development Consultant
Robin Wagner, Director of Library Services

Strategic Planning Committee:
Mary Holland, Interlibrary Loan/Technical Services Assistant
Kerri Odess-Harnish, Chair, Reference & Instruction Librarian
Tim Sestrick, Music Librarian
Donna Skekel, Serials Librarian
Meggan Smith, Reference & Instruction Librarian (formerly Library Program Assistant)
Janelle Wertzberger, Director of Reference & Instruction

Mission Statement

Musselman Library engages our community of learners by
- building and providing access to collections that support study within traditional and emerging disciplines,
- creating learning opportunities that support curricular inquiry, encourage critical thinking, stimulate curiosity, and enliven the imagination, and
- providing an inviting environment in which to think and study, question and discover, reflect and connect.

Vision Statement

Musselman Library is a nexus of tradition and innovation.

The library encompasses physical and virtual learning environments that invite study, discovery, and creation. Our spaces and technologies enable independent and collaborative work as well as consultation with information experts. We recognize that our community of learners will continue to value the library as a place to gather and to work, while also expecting the virtual library to connect them with resources they need.

The library-learner relationship will be marked by personalization, patron autonomy, and interconnection. Our interfaces will emphasize self-direction, ease of navigation, and intuitive searching. At the same time, options for skilled guidance and instruction will be interwoven into all levels of the information seeking experience.

Above all, our 21st century academic library will be a blend of academic and social spaces, where users are empowered to connect with information and each other, converging in ways that enrich and enlighten.

Core Issues

The wealth of ideas generated during the strategic planning process was distilled into four "core issues." These issues relate to service, collections, learning, and access. Each is further described by a series of goals, as well as individual action items for each goal.

Core Issue: Provide Great Service

Musselman Library strives to provide great service to all of its users while supporting the educational mission of Gettysburg College. We define service as any interaction our primary users have with our library, both physically and virtually. Great service means exceeding our users' expectations.

Goal A: Empower our users with personalized library services and experiences.

Action 1. **Create a single point of service to assist library users more proactively.** Combine the Circulation Desk and Reference Desk on the main floor of the library for an integrated and seamless interaction.

Action 2. **Investigate new "on demand" options for our users.** Explore trends such as text messaging of research help and overdue notices, self-checkout, video/audio streaming, 24 hour research assistance, direct mailing of library materials, etc.

Action 3. **Enhance our library catalog and website with social networking and other Library 2.0 technologies.** Use blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, etc. to provide a more individualized user experience.

Goal B: Promote library services and collections.

Action 1. **Establish a library-wide marketing committee.** This committee would coordinate all publicity efforts related to collections, information fluency, services, programs and events. (See Appendix A for proposed changes to the library's committee structure.)

Action 2. **Establish a student advisory group.** Student advisors can provide us with quick feedback on the effectiveness of library services and messages.

Action 3. **Strengthen faculty-liaison program.** Review librarian liaison responsibilities and explore new initiatives, such as hosting regular events to exchange information on library collections and services, and provide training for faculty on using library resources. Investigate an affiliation with the Johnson Center for Creative Teaching.

Goal C: Assess and evaluate library services.

Action 1. **Implement appropriate technologies that allow user feedback.** Embed evaluation forms, usability testing and feedback opportunities throughout the library's website and College courseware.

Action 2. **Provide ongoing training for library staff** (including student employees). Expand training to include topics such as customer service and Web 2.0 technologies.

Action 3. **Implement plan for regular review of statistics.** Coordinated analysis of an ever-growing number of statistics will improve collections and services.

Action 4. **Anticipate new trends.** Review current research on learning styles of the next generation of college students, and incorporate findings into library services.

Goal D: Provide comfortable, inviting, and well-equipped spaces in which library users can learn, produce, and recreate.

    Action 1.   **Create more spaces that support a variety of learning activities.** Define quiet study space for our users to work without interruption or distraction. Create more collaborative space for group learning and knowledge production.

    Action 2.   **Investigate building a café in the library.** Create a lively gathering space where students and faculty can meet, study, and enjoy the comfortable surroundings.

Goal E: Explore ways to contribute to the College's goal of becoming more environmentally sustainable.

    Action 1.   **Implement paperless business practices wherever possible.** Investigate paperless Circulation, Acquisitions, and Collection Development procedures to improve efficiency and reduce waste.

    Action 2.   **Improve recycling rate in the library.** Use recycled products wherever possible such as recycled paper for printers, restroom supplies, office supplies, etc. Promote environmental awareness to students at high-waste areas such as the printing stations throughout the library.

Core Issue: Cultivate and Shape Collections

Musselman Library collects materials in anticipation of curriculum development and other new areas of exploration. We preserve the College's unique and rare collections prized by students and scholars alike, while developing core collections in formats that will meet the needs of students and faculty anywhere, anytime. We provide leadership about critical issues regarding ongoing access to scholarly research.

Goal A: Improve access to collections.

    Action 1.   **Continue the transition from print and analog formats to digital online access**. Expand digital access to special collections, college archives, music, videos, books, journals, reference materials, etc. as a way to improve access for simultaneous users and to create more physical space in the library.

    Action 2.   **Expand in-house preservation methods**. Continue staff training in preservation methods to speed accessibility and shelf-life of rare and/or damaged materials. Investigate grants for library-wide preservation assessment.

    Action 3.   **Provide access to library collections via Angel courseware.** Address copyright concerns regarding posting of reserve materials in Angel.

Goal B: Evaluate existing collection practices to ensure our resources are current and relevant.

    Action 1.   **Create a collection development committee**. Establish a committee to set library-wide collection priorities and policies, and encourage broad communication regarding collection development issues (see Appendix A). Continue to be proactive in selecting and budgeting for growing and new academic programs.

Action 2. Advance innovative collection development initiatives and strategies.
Develop strong partnerships with the campus's Information Technology in order to provide improved access to library resources in innovative formats, such as audio/video streaming, GIS, datasets, and more.

Action 3. Investigate opportunities for outsourcing library functions in order to reallocate staff for new work. Create new models of staffing to support new initiatives in the strategic plan.

Goal C: Advocate for library initiatives that are essential for future growth.

Action 1. Embrace the library's role as a copyright expert on campus. Develop instructional materials on fair use practices for faculty, staff, and student use. Train library staff in copyright guidelines.

Action 2. Partner with IT to implement an Institutional Repository and expand the library's role as a leader in this collaborative undertaking. Investigate technology, models of support, and usage guidelines and standards for implementing a successful institutional repository. Provide outreach to campus groups for records management procedures.

Action 3. Actively engage the campus in the discussion of changes in the scholarly publication model. Advocate and support initiatives for change such as the Scholarly Publishing and Resources Coalition (SPARC).

Action 4. Cultivate donor relationships. Investigate the growth potential of existing endowments and identify new areas for development.

Core Issue: Create Learning Opportunities

We engage students and others in learning activities that range from independent inquiry to curriculum-based instruction and study. Musselman Library's exhibits and programs invite learners to interact with library collections and related materials. Librarians create opportunities for students and faculty to become masterful seekers, finders, and evaluators of information.

Goal A: Develop exhibits and programs that promote library collections and highlight connections between the Library and the College's learning communities.

Action 1. Create an Exhibits and Programs Committee. Strengthen the quality and impact of library exhibits and programs by creating a new Exhibits and Programs Committee that coordinates the planning and development of library outreach efforts (see Appendix A).

Action 2. Explore more opportunities for working with students. Investigate the creation of an Exhibits Internship, funded either by a donor or offered for course credit.

Action 3. Develop an exhibits lab in the Library. This dedicated space would provide library staff and others access to tools needed to create and store exhibits.

Goal B: Expand opportunities for students to develop information fluency.

Action 1. Create strategies to teach students information fluency skills outside of the traditional class structure. Provide individualized instruction when and where students need it, such as embedding learning objects in the Library's website or Angel courseware. Continue to build relationships with co-curricular departments such as Off-Campus Studies, Career Services, Intercultural Resource Center, and others. Develop a peer training program for research skills.

Action 2. **Enhance outreach and instruction at strategic learning points throughout a student's academic career.** Survey current students to assess student needs during the first year of college. Evaluate and improve current first year student library orientation. Develop new strategies for integrating librarians into First Year Seminars. Create an outreach program for juniors and seniors to help prepare them for senior project research.

Action 3. **Improve classroom instruction by applying innovative methods to engage students in learning**. Employ more learner-centered pedagogy in the classroom. Explore new technologies for integration into information fluency instruction.

Goal C: Improve existing and develop new teaching and learning spaces in the library.

Action 1. **Explore options to make the main floor reference area a collaborative workspace for librarians, faculty, and students.** Create a studio environment for students to learn alongside experts.

Action 2. **Develop additional teaching classrooms which enable hands-on learning.** Create new flexible spaces that allow for creative teaching and can accommodate more faculty requests for instruction.

Goal D: Expand efforts to assess student learning.

Action 1. **Develop a menu of options for assessment techniques to use during or after library instruction.** Increase assessment of student learning to maximize teaching effectiveness.

Action 2. **Consult with other campus constituents about the implementation of a standardized assessment test**, such as the Educational Testing Service Information and Technological Literacy Test.

Core Issue: Connect People with Content

Musselman Library connects people with content by being where our users are. Our systems look familiar and simple, but they return robust results. All research tools, products, and services should interconnect and are not limited to traditional library tools. Users have increasing opportunities to personalize their library experiences and interfaces, and help is always available.

Goal A: Make searching and finding easier.

Action 1. **Create a seamless search experience.** Create universal login for all library products and services. Implement federated search technology and install a link resolver to enable more direct access to fulltext articles from subscription and free finding tools. Create downloadable library/research toolbar.

Action 2. **Improve access to "hidden" materials.** Improve searchability of Special Collections finding aids. Integrate GettDigital and institutional repository with other search systems.

Action 3. **Explore opportunities for patrons to individualize their online experiences.** Use customer relationship management to customize library webpages. Investigate "My Library" options.

Goal B: Be available.

Action 1. **Create virtual and physical learning spaces.** Explore the usefulness of providing reference assistance within non-library virtual environments. Explore opportunities to let users connect directly with each other in ways that enrich the research experience.

Action 2. **Improve research assistance.** Add context-sensitive help throughout our website. Explore service via mobile and video technologies. Explore ways to extend service hours, such as utilizing 24/7 consortial services and creating student research assistants. Investigate the usefulness of providing physical research assistance outside the library building.

Appendix A: Proposed Changes to Committee Structure

The current committee structure in Musselman Library is loosely defined. Committee members may serve for years, and size is often unwieldy. During the Strategic Planning process, the creation of several new committees was proposed in order to support new initiatives. Discussion ensued on changes that could be implemented to committee structure to ensure quality of work and experience for those involved. These proposed changes are outlined below.

Existing Library Committees

Exhibits Committee
This committee develops and installs a wide array of exhibits throughout the building to support the Library's mission of engaging its community of learners.

Social Committee
The Social Committee is responsible for planning and carrying out a variety of social events for library staff to foster community and cohesiveness.

WebLib
An advisory group for guiding website maintenance and development.

Proposed New Committees

Collection Development Committee
This committee will set library-wide collection priorities and policies, and encourage broad communication regarding collection development issues.

Exhibits and Programs Committee
The Exhibits and Programs Committee will coordinate the planning and development of all library exhibits and programs.

Marketing Committee
The Marketing Committee will coordinate all publicity efforts related to collections, information fluency, services, programs and events.

Social Committee
The Social Committee is responsible for planning and carrying out a variety of social events for library staff to foster community and cohesiveness.

Virtual Library Committee
This advisory group will guide website maintenance and development. They will also make recommendations on virtual products and online delivery systems and stay abreast of new technology to improve library service.

Copyright Committee
Volunteer "experts" will coordinate copyright statements for the library and respond to inquiries. Training will be provided for all members.

Proposed Committee Guidelines

1. Each committee will consist of 4-5 appointed staff members.
2. To broaden participation, members of each committee will serve 2-year terms. You may serve longer or serve on more than one committee.
3. In order to foster continuity, the chair of the committee will have served the preceding year.
4. Library staff members who have expertise in areas of benefit to a committee's work may be consulted on individual projects.

Appendix B: Facilities Issues

Musselman Library strives to provide comfortable, inviting, and well-equipped spaces for library users. The original task force reports outline many facilities issues that are integral to the library's future growth. These issues were culled from the original documents and are listed below.

New and Redesigned Spaces

- Increased shelf-space for growing collections (alternately, revisit weight-bearing capacity of floors 2, 3, and 4 and consider installation of compact shelving to extend shelving capacity within Musselman Library)
- Teaching classroom(s)*
- More collaborative and quiet study/work areas*
- Main floor redesign:
    - Create a single point of service by combining the reference and circulation desks*
    - Create a studio environment in the main floor reference area for collaborative workspace*
    - Build a café*
- Special Collections
    - Teaching classroom*
    - Preservation lab*
    - Expansion to accommodate growing collections
- Digital Project Lab
    - Create space adjacent to Special Collections for scanning, conservation and other activities related to the expanding digital collections initiative

Exhibits and Programming Improvements

- New exhibits lab (for storage and supplies)*
- New display cases that are mobile, have secure locks, and UV-filtered glass
- UV-protective windows in Browsing Room to preserve exhibited items
- Moveable partitions/dividers in apse for programs and events

Off-site Storage

- Double current off site storage space, primarily to address housing for college archives
- Install compact shelving in off-site storage
- Locate art storage in new gallery space or provide compact storage for art so it can be efficiently stored in library off-site storage

Safety & ADA

- Card-swipe access to building at night
- Update library security system/cameras
- ADA-compliant elevator
- Outside ramp slope

Green Initiatives

- Automatic configurations in bathrooms (faucets, lighting, soap, flush, etc.)
- Intuitively designed recycling bins around the Library
- Switch to Energy Star-compliant light bulbs

Wiring and Network

- Replace HUB (interior wiring upgraded in 2006 but not HUB)
- Upgrade/expand wireless connectivity to create more robust wireless network in library

Miscellaneous

- Electric
    - More electrical outlets
    - Improved lighting
    - More effective ceiling lighting (particularly in Apse, study carrels)
    - Replace lighting in study bays
- Restroom upgrades
    - Build additional restrooms
    - Even stall width in existing restrooms
    - Repair doors so they will stay shut
    - Better lighting
- HVAC
    - Complete HVAC upgrade
    - VAV box replacement
    - Bays on second floor
- Complete recarpeting project (floors 2, 3)
- Repair water fountains on each floor

* See Action Items for additional detail about these high priority items.

Appendix C: Task Force Members and Reports

The Strategic Planning Task Forces played a pivotal role in drafting the goals and action items for each of the four core issues of the Strategic Plan. The task forces were comprised of library staff members from all professional levels of each department and were chaired by a member of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Provide Great Service
- Meggan Smith, Chair, Reference & Instruction Librarian (formerly Library Program Assistant)
- Cinda Gibbon, Reference & Instruction Librarian
- Natalie Hinton, Circulation Supervisor
- Miranda Speelman, Administrative Assistant

Cultivate and Shape Collections
- Kerri Odess-Harnish, Co-Chair, Reference & Instruction Librarian
- Mary Holland, Co-Chair, ILL/Technical Services Assistant
- John Barnett, Director of Collection Development
- Nancy Johnson, Media Services Supervisor

Connect People with Content
- Janelle Wertzberger, Chair, Director of Reference & Instruction
- Ronalee Ciocco, Reference & Web Services Librarian
- Catherine Perry, Project Assistant
- Carolyn Sautter, Cataloging & Metadata Librarian

Create Learning Opportunities: Exhibits and Programs
- Donna Skekel, Chair, Serials Librarian
- Kathy D'Angelo, Director Technical Services
- Lisa McNamee, Reserves/Copyright Specialist
- Susan Pinkey, Circulation Desk Assistant

Create Learning Opportunities: Information Fluency
- Tim Sestrick, Chair, Music Librarian
- Katherine Downton, Reference & Instruction Librarian
- Chris Gwinn, Holley Intern