
*A Strategic Plan
For the University Library*

1995-2000

Iowa State University

May 1995

Mission

Iowa State University has a long and proud tradition of quality library service. Through national leadership on the part of its faculty and staff, careful attention to building local collections, development of outstanding services, and responsiveness to changes in scholarly communication, the library has been essential in building this quality university. The Iowa State community has come to depend heavily upon the library as a leading resource for teaching, research, outreach, and service.

The Academic Enterprise

The ISU Library is critical to the university's aspiration to be the nation's premier land-grant institution. As an instrumental partner in the academic enterprise, the library's resources and services are crucial elements in student achievement and retention. The library acquires, organizes, preserves, and interprets information and collections required to support the teaching, research, and outreach mission of the university. It must also integrate print resources with electronic information for an expanding group of users, a growing number of whom are external to the ISU campus. Increasingly, this involves partnerships to provide a rich array of materials, both local and remote. Through effective access tools, strong collections, essential instruction programs, and comprehensive reference and research assistance, the library fosters effective teaching, research, and learning by linking users with global sources of information regardless of location or format.

Outreach

As part of a land grant institution, the library has a special outreach mission at the state and national levels. The library recognizes a responsibility for supporting cooperation within the state and through the university's outreach and extension programs. Initiatives in technology transfer and distance learning will make new demands on the library for support of outreach programs to extension, industry, state agencies, and citizens of Iowa. Within Iowa, the library works closely with the State Library as a participant in the state's interlibrary loan network and with the other public university libraries to facilitate interinstitutional resource sharing. At the national level, the ISU Library maintains close working relationships with other land grant libraries and the National Agricultural Library, and partnerships with the Association of Research Libraries and the Greater Midwest Research Libraries Consortium.

Knowledge Management

The array of online bibliographic and research networks already used by the library is a forecast of changes underway in the scholarly process. The library plays a leadership role in shaping information systems for knowledge management through faculty research and service, participation in research and demonstration projects, and as a test site for new systems and information products. Traditionally, libraries have served as repositories of knowledge. Today, new opportunities exist for the library to play a pivotal role as a center for access and knowledge management.

Vision

The ISU Library will undergo profound change within the next five years. Initiatives by the university to strengthen educational programs will require the library to be an integral partner offering strong local collections, comprehensive access tools to global information, effective local application of technological advances, enhanced services, and a cohesive organization to support the teaching, research, and outreach needs of the university.

Scholarship is being transformed through new bibliographic networks, electronic publishing, and scholarly research initiatives and bulletin boards. Local convenience has already begun to give way to a new culture based upon electronic access to information regardless of format or location. An increasing reliance upon access will require alteration of cultural patterns of scholars and students and development of the educational and technological supports to aid the transition. The ISU Library must absorb new methodologies and electronic resources into its services, collections, and management systems in order to provide effective access to and management of information and collections. At the same time, the library will be called upon to continue providing traditional services based upon solid local collections. Complexity of accessing information both locally and from remote sites will result in greater emphasis upon user education programs, research and demonstration projects, and design of new software tools to effectively use information technologies.

The ISU Library is nationally recognized as an innovator in information technology and has taken a leadership role in the developing technological infrastructure for libraries. Its charter membership in the Coalition for Networked Information and close working relationships with the National Agricultural Library and Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) are indicative of its ability to forge alliances in the national arena. Through major research and demonstration projects, the library is now partnering with other academic disciplines and institutions to advance electronic publishing for creating, distributing, and accessing educational and research materials and integrating knowledge management concepts. The ISU Library is clearly in the forefront of libraries prepared to deal with the provision and management of information in the evolving electronic environment.

Challenges

Many challenges shape the environment in which research libraries now function. New information and communications technologies call for innovative approaches to research and an increased level of instruction to access those resources. The proliferation of publications mandates that appropriate automated systems be acquired to manage the information and collections available. High inflation and the fluctuating value of the U.S. dollar result in reduced purchasing power and increased reliance upon cooperative collection development and remote document delivery. In addition, many valuable collections in research libraries today are deteriorating due to acidic paper, previously inadequate preservation methods, and heavy usage. To address these challenges a library must have sufficient space, appropriate staffing, and the necessary equipment and software.

The ISU Library must play a major role in these key strategic areas:

- ***Instruction.*** Innovative instruction must be broadened due to the rapidly changing networked electronic information environment.
- ***Information Technology.*** Profound changes in production, distribution, and delivery of information require the ISU Library to play a leadership role in implementing systems to organize, access, and disseminate information.
- ***Collection Development.*** The library's collections must balance adequate local holdings with access to remote materials at other institutions, and integrate electronic resources with print information.
- ***Specialized Collections.*** Unique primary resources are important to the scholarly enterprise and for understanding our society, economy, and culture.
- ***Collection Preservation.*** Print-based library collections are facing increased deterioration and electronic formats are posing new challenges. As keepers of knowledge, libraries are challenged to protect as well as disseminate and interpret information.
- ***Physical Facilities.*** The library now faces a crisis in which book stacks, public seating, and service/staff areas are competing for limited space.
- ***Human Resources.*** In order to provide the information and collections necessary to support the teaching and research mission of the university, the library must have adequate staff support. These faculty, staff, and student assistants must be well trained in order to carry out effectively the programs of the library and must be supported with appropriate equipment.
- ***Student Retention.*** The library plays a special role in providing employment opportunities and instruction in research skills which are important elements in student retention.

I. Undergraduate Programs and Services

Strengthen undergraduate teaching, programs, and services through library services and instruction as well as through integrated use of library resources and information technologies necessary to support academic curricula, interdisciplinary and collaborative teaching programs, and an enhanced liberal education. In addition, assist university efforts to improve the quality of undergraduate education as measured by student retention, graduation and placement rates.

Goal A: Teach library and information research skills to undergraduate students for use within their academic programs, individual courses, and general education, characterized by a growing use of technological applications and emphasizing the integration of library resources and information technologies.

- Assist and enable users to identify, locate, evaluate, organize, and use information resources through formal instruction (e.g., Library 160) and informal instruction (e.g., course-related instruction, subject-based seminars, workshops, computer-based tutorials, and guides).
- Develop and improve evaluative mechanisms to assess instructional services.
- Publicize and promote to students and faculty the library instructional services that support undergraduate education.

Goal B: Provide information, collections, reference and access services, and access tools to support and strengthen undergraduate teaching, programs and services. Provision of these library services is characterized by a growing use of technological applications and integration of library resources and information technologies.

- Improve bibliographic and physical access to information resources, regardless of the location of user or collection through the expansion of the SCHOLAR System, innovative techniques for bibliographic and holdings linkages to full text/image files; and enhanced delivery of remote and/or electronic resources.
- Assist and enable users to identify, locate, evaluate, organize, and use information resources, with a growing emphasis on electronic formats, through general and subject-based reference services.
- Maintain necessary resources critical to undergraduate education with increased emphasis on electronic formats--they may be local or remote and include print and non-print materials as well as citational and full-text databases.
- Develop and improve evaluative mechanisms to assess user needs and improve collections, access tools, and reference services.
- Ensure library collections and programs support university goals in such areas as diversity, multiculturalism, and internationalization.
- Publicize and promote to students and faculty the library services, resources and programs that support undergraduate academic programs and individual courses.

II. Graduate, Professional, and Research Programs

Strengthen graduate, professional and research programs through access to library research materials, services, and information systems necessary to support the existing or newly-identified research programs in basic and applied research, the transfer of research results into new technologies, and continuing graduate and professional programs.

Goal A: Provide information, collections, services, access tools, and instruction to support goals of the university strategic plan for achieving outstanding graduate, professional and research programs, both basic and applied. Provision of these library services is characterized by a growing use of technological applications.

- Improve bibliographic and physical access to information resources, regardless of the location of user or collection, through the expansion of the SCHOLAR System, and enhanced document delivery services.
- Assist and enable users to identify, locate, evaluate, organize, and use information resources, with a growing emphasis on electronic formats, enhanced reference and instructional services, and a growing remote user population.
- Provide in-depth resources, with increased emphasis on electronic formats, that support university graduate and professional programs and research. These resources may be local or remote, and include print and non-print materials as well as citational and full-text databases.
- Ensure that library collections and programs reflect the university initiatives in distance education through close coordination with colleges/departments and established equipment and telecommunication standards.
- Ensure that library collections and programs reflect university goals in the areas of diversity, multiculturalism, and internationalism through targeted instructional programs, improved international interlibrary loan borrowing services, and acquisition of pertinent overseas publications and non-English language materials.
- Improve the holdings of and electronic access to research materials in Special Collections.
- Develop and improve evaluative mechanisms to assess user needs and improve collections, and reference instructional services.
- Publicize and promote library services, resources, and programs that support graduate, professional and research programs through a unified public relations program, expanded use of electronic interfaces, and increased library involvement in special graduate student/faculty programs.

Goal B: Create and support opportunities for research in library and information science, knowledge management, and related areas.

- Create and support new approaches to the management of knowledge in an electronic environment, individually or collaboratively with other faculty and subject specialists. These approaches will involve increased use of information management tools that support information needs in specific disciplines within the emerging digital library environment.
- Provide opportunities for publication and/or presentation of library faculty research, projects, and activities within the library profession and internally within the library. These research projects are increasingly characterized by close relationships to primary faculty assignments and aided through internal library support, adequate collections, and services.

III. Extension and Outreach Efforts

Strengthen outreach and extension efforts through access to library materials, services and information systems necessary to support integration of outreach with expanded teaching offerings, degree programs, and research; provision of non-credit courses and workshops to meet life-long learning needs of Iowans and promote life-long learning with increased use of communications networks; and development of national and international leadership in information-sharing arrangements.

Goal A: Provide information, collections, services, access tools, and instruction to support university outreach programs appropriate to the needs of the state and beyond. Provision of these library services is characterized by a growing use of technological applications.

- Establish for all client categories (both ISU-affiliated and non-affiliated users) clear definitions, policies, and procedures regarding basic vs. value-added (subsidized vs. fee-based) services, cost-sharing, and partnerships, etc.
- Provide basic reference, instructional, and access services for remote clientele (within licensing agreement conditions). These services are characterized by increased cooperative relationships with campus units and off-campus institutions, and, as appropriate, fee-based structures.
- Extend outreach of Special Collections through greater use of electronic networks to publicize holdings and increasing public presentations and lectures.
- Inform remote users about library services, programs, resources and access tools that support outreach.
- Assess user needs in order to improve reference/instructional services, collections, and access tools through improved evaluative mechanisms; and determine if services are meeting client needs (particularly for students at remote service sites).

Goal B: Provide leadership in developing local, regional, national, and worldwide information-sharing arrangements and knowledge management systems. Provision of these library services is characterized by growing use of technological applications.

- Participate in expanding global outreach and resource-sharing networks that include government agencies, state libraries, public and private libraries, archives, associations, consortia, bibliographic networks, businesses, research organizations, and universities.
- Position the library as a resource in information technology issues.
- Strengthen support for international library outreach and training projects through increased staff participation in international library programs.

IV. Library Collections: Development, Management, Access, and Maintenance

Build, strengthen, manage, provide access to, and maintain comprehensive collections of information resources to support the University's academic, research, and outreach programs. These collections include, in addition to books and journals, information resources in all formats, with an increasing emphasis on electronic information, supported either locally or remotely, accessed through state-of-the-art information systems.

Goal A: Identify, select, and acquire appropriate information resources in all formats to build and strengthen library collections that support the university's goals for teaching, research, and outreach.

- Ensure that the collection development policy is current, governs all formats and locations, and addresses emerging information technologies and collection management issues.
- Enhance and develop automated systems to support collection development, collection management, and acquisitions work.
- Carry out collection evaluation studies to assess the quality of the collection in accordance with university goals, both discipline-specific and more broadly, e.g. diversity, internationalism, and distance learning.
- Develop well-informed and cost-effective decision-making mechanisms for purchase of and timely access to publications and information products, including use of interlibrary loan and document delivery as part of the larger collection development strategies.
- Manage effective programs for obtaining materials through purchase, gifts, and exchange agreements, using funds generated through state revenues, grants, and gifts.

Goal B: Effectively manage library collections of information resources in all formats, including those held or supported locally as well as those housed or stored remotely.

- Incorporate systematic location, withdrawal, and preservation decisions into performance expectations and into the time allocated for collection development work.
- Maintain strong cooperative collection management programs among the Regents' libraries and other consortia as appropriate.

Goal C: Strengthen access to all information resources that support the university's goals for teaching, research, and outreach with increased reliance upon electronically stored information accessed through information systems.

- Provide effective access tools, utilizing the SCHOLAR system not only as a source of information but also as a gateway to other networks or sources of information.
- Increase the effectiveness of and employ new methods for processing materials.
- Ensure timely access to information resources, whether subsidized or fee-based, needed by library users.
- Lead and participate in state and national efforts to seek innovative solutions to problems of information management and access.

Goal D: Maintain collections by providing a comprehensive preservation/conservation program for information resources in all formats in accordance with national preservation standards for academic research libraries.

- Provide a preservation program for embrittled materials that provides access to endangered brittle materials of permanent value through treatment, re-formatting, or replacement, as appropriate.
- Design and carry out a program of educating library staff and users in preservation, conservation, and disaster preparedness issues and standards.
- Enhance conservation services for rare, unique, and valuable library materials needing treatment; these items are usually but not always in Special Collections.
- Provide binding services, book repair, and regular cleaning services tailored to the needs of all collections.
- Provide a clean and controlled environment for collections according to local and national standards.

V. Human Resources

An adequate, well-trained, knowledgeable, diverse, and service-directed staff (library faculty, professional/scientific staff, merit staff, and student assistants) is essential to the operation of the library.

Goal A: Ensure recruitment of a qualified, diverse, and service directed staff.

- Provide for an effective, flexible and responsive recruitment and hiring process characterized by timely actions and clear procedures.
- Ensure effective search processes through promotion of and adherence to university, state, and national hiring regulations (e.g. affirmative action, equal employment opportunity, and ADA).
- Continue to improve methods for increasing diversity in search pools through focused recruiting efforts involving traditional and non-traditional measures.
- Clarify roles of library supervisors, search committees, and administration in the recruitment and hiring processes.
- Ensure competitive compensation to recruit and maintain qualified staff.

Goal B: Maintain a qualified and knowledgeable library staff.

- Ensure broad understanding of the mission and goals of the library and university.
- Encourage staff to participate in designing, planning and implementing library programs and services.
- Support professional and personal growth of staff through a comprehensive staff development program. Establish outcome expectations for training and include opportunities for retraining.
- Provide broad training for staff to utilize new systems and procedures productively in their work. Ensure opportunities to practice new skills.
- Encourage staff to provide leadership and expertise in the area of information technology.
- Enhance channels of communication within the library and between library staff and patrons.
- Ensure an effective evaluation process.

Goal C: Ensure a work environment that is intellectually stimulating, humane, nurturing, and professionally supportive.

- Promote an understanding of and adherence to existing laws, regulations, and guidelines pertaining to library services and collections.
- Maintain an appropriate balance between staff size, staffing levels, and workload demands for current as well as new or expanded programs.
- Foster an environment conducive for library faculty professional growth.
- Increase faculty and staff involvement in international activities and their awareness of international aspects of library services and resources.
- Develop effective methodologies for staff retention and maintain/enhance staff morale.
- Provide an environment supportive of a diverse workforce and increase staff awareness of cultural diversity in the workplace.

VI. Infrastructure Support

Provide a dynamic library infrastructure to meet the rapidly changing field of knowledge management.

Goal A: Maintain an effective, flexible and dynamic organization that will carry the library into the 21st century.

- Review and adjust organizational structures, communication effectiveness, decision-making patterns, budget, and utilization of staff to support library priorities.
- Continue to be in the forefront in seeking external, competitive grant funds for projects that support the strategic goals and objectives of the library.
- Provide an effective program for library development and fundraising in partnership with the ISU Foundation.
- Promote the library's image and the key roles it plays in information and knowledge management and as a partner in the educational enterprise.
- Provide effective infrastructures for supporting special activities (e.g., value-added, fee-based services; cost-sharing partnerships; grants, etc.).

Goal B: Provide comprehensive and state-of-the-art automated library systems.

- Extend SCHOLAR as the library's gateway to library-identified resources, both local and remote.
- Improve accessibility to the library services and collections through expanded delivery systems, electronic access of full-text databases, and enhanced electronic messaging systems.
- Ensure appropriate automated systems and software for staff to carry out their work.
- Improve functionality of the library management system, improve local area networks, and complete migration to client/server architecture.
- Reduce differences in user interfaces provided by local and remote systems (commercial or otherwise) consistent with campus platforms.
- Select and manage hardware platforms appropriate to our storage and access needs and meeting national standards.
- Add full-text capabilities to existing library systems and networks.

Goal C: Ensure well-equipped, safe, and appropriately-designed public space for study, research, and collections with increased reliance on technological equipment.

- Improve physical accessibility to library facilities, collections, and services in compliance with appropriate standards (e.g., ADA and OSHA).
- Ensure an attractive environment conducive to study and research through adequate seating, study and research facilities, and current-generation hardware for public use.
- Ensure the library is a safe and secure environment for patrons and collections.
- Maintain adequate building systems to support technological changes.
- Resolve the immediate storage needs for library materials, including general collections and Special Collections.

Goal D: Ensure well-equipped and appropriately-designed workspace for staff, processing, and collections with increased reliance on technological equipment and based upon available resources and feasibility.

- Provide a well-designed, safe, comfortable, and adequately equipped work environment.
- Provide adequate and ergonomically-designed computer workstations for all employees needing them to carry out their work.
- Provide adequate storage space for library supplies, equipment and furniture.
- Create/improve space for short-term processing, equipment testing, and storage needs.

Measures

Dean of Library Services prepares annual reports to the University Administration to summarize progress the ISU Library has made on implementing its strategic plan. The following are key indicators that will be used within this reporting structure. Other indicators may be used as appropriate for internal assessment of progress.

Key Indicators

- Responsiveness to all categories of library users, based on assessments of user needs, use, and satisfaction.
- Attainment of goals and objectives for Library 160 and other teaching activities and materials through student/faculty evaluations, course enrollments, passing rates, etc.
- Evolution of SCHOLAR into an information gateway to an increasing number of electronic resources and services.
- Progress on migration toward client-server architecture.
- National ratings (e.g., ARL) and recognition of ISU Library services, collections, and programs.
- Participation in state, regional, national, and international programs for resource sharing and cooperative collection development.
- Participation in externally-funded projects that further the goals of the plan.
- Numbers, quality, and diversity of faculty, staff, and student employees.
- Competitiveness of compensation for library faculty and staff.
- Involvement of library faculty or staff in activities that have a national or international impact.
- Awards and honors received by library faculty, staff, and student employees.
- External funding received (such as contracts, grants, and private contributions) that supplements state allocations.
- Adequacy of overall physical facilities.