



University of Pittsburgh

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TO: Dr. James V. Maher
Provost

FROM: Rush G. Miller
Director, ULS

RE: ULS Plan for FY09

Attached is the FY 09 Planning and Budget Document for the University Library System organized on the template first by University goal and then by corresponding ULS goals, objectives and strategies. One caveat is that since this is a new format for us, we have established new metrics for each one of these objectives, but we will not have the outcomes of those metrics until next year's report.

It is worth repeating the Mission of the ULS because it is a carefully crafted definition of how we see our role in the University and beyond:

"The mission of the University Library System (ULS) at the University of Pittsburgh is to provide and promote access to information resources necessary for the achievement of the University's leadership objectives in teaching, research, creativity, and community service, and to collaborate in the development of effective information, teaching and learning systems.

The primary users of the ULS include the students, faculty, and staff of the University of Pittsburgh and, through our collaboration with organizations and institutions worldwide, the global research community."

Our nine overarching goals based on this statement in our current strategic plan (2007-10) provide the framework for all of our planning and new initiatives, as well as to define ULS planning in the context of the user. I want to provide you these goals and then discuss what we are planning to address each of them.

(1) Access and Resource Management: To describe and organize knowledge and information resources to empower our primary users, regardless of location, so that they can obtain information resources they need to accomplish their research, teaching, and learning activities in the most effective and efficient manner.

(2) Facilities and Equipment: To ensure that all collections, information resources, and services are housed in accessible, functional, and attractive facilities.

(3) Assistance and Education: To assist our primary users in making the most effective use of information resources, regardless of format.

(4) Information Resources and Collections: To support and enrich our primary users' research, teaching, and learning with appropriate materials in a variety of formats.

(5) Leadership in Digital Library Development: To lead the University of Pittsburgh in the digital environment to positively contribute to the changing models of scholarly communication.

(6) Collaboration: To build upon and increase our collaboration with other University of Pittsburgh units, research institutions, and organizations that support our mutual endeavors.

(7) Assessment: To develop a culture of continuous assessment for all services offered by the University Library System.

(8) Foster a Learning Organization: To promote a work environment that is challenging, satisfying, and rewarding for staff at all levels as well as capable of responding to changing organizational needs.

(9) Outreach Development and Private Support: To obtain external sources of financial support beyond annual appropriations and enhance our public image as a world class library system.

The attached brochure outlines the Strategic Plan goals and what we call "aspirations" upon which individual departmental/unit objectives are based each year. These aspirations provide more detail to understanding how we view these nine major goals. Rather than repeating them, I simply refer you to the attached brochure for this detail.

In the planning document for FY09, the ULS Planning and Budgeting Committee has provided the most important of our objectives arranged by University goal. Therefore, often more than one ULS goal relates to a University goal and thus some of our goals are combined for purposes of this template. To be clear, I will provide my analysis based on the organization on the template:

Support for undergraduate and graduate programs

ULS goals 1, 3 and 4 are directly related to this broad goal; and the objectives listed on the template are quite ambitious. I want to highlight some aspects of them that I think are especially important to understand.

The transformation of our long-standing "Library Instruction" program into a full Information Literacy program represents a tremendous amount of planning and hard work by a large number of librarians across the ULS. Guided by the Provost Office's *Assessment of Student Learning* initiative, the ULS is developing an information literacy assessment program to support students across all disciplines. Our LI program, which emphasized having classes come into the library to receive instruction specifically related to their research needs in that course, as well as a general orientation program associated with the Freshman Seminar program, was one of the largest such programs in the United States. Through that program approximately 16,000 students were instructed in using library resources each year. However, despite its size, it was a simpler program than the new Information Literacy program. For one thing, a key component of the IL program is developing an assessment system that is part of the overall learning outcomes assessment system being implemented in academic programs campus wide. And it also

involves developing online tutorials and working with individual faculty to tailor such tools to the specific needs of each class or program. The variability of need and the complexity involved in creating new tools such as these require more training for librarians, and the use of many more librarians than was true of the old program. We are making good progress in evolving our program in this direction, however, and hope that the faculty will begin to use these services as they learn more about them in the next year. Once we have implemented the SAILS test for our students, we will have a benchmark to evaluate the effectiveness of this program and data to help shape it.

A very exciting new development in our field is the availability of new systems based on Web 2.0 technologies that provide a single and simplified search interface across all types of resources, digital and print. We are calling this the “**Next Generation OPAC**” and are in the middle of evaluating products based on a recently completed RFI process. We believe that this may well become the single most important development in our effort to enable students, especially undergraduate students, with the types of tools they can use to do more effective library-based research. For the first time, the library databases and systems, including the online catalog, will have functionality similar to the tools students use in other online venues (Google, Amazon, Face Book, etc.). We hope to implement this new technology by the fall, 2008, and I expect that we may well see an increase in the use of our online resources as a result. Use of the print collections has been dropping steadily. As with all academic libraries, the use of books is dropping each year. Based on feedback from our users, we know that they expect to be independent users of intuitive systems and that the online catalog is now considered difficult to use and “clunky.” This new system should make the online catalog functionality approach that of Google.

Another aspect of what we have been doing this year is to improve access to the resources of other libraries through re-engineering our interlibrary loan processes. Through PALCI, we are implementing a system that will allow us to gain quick access to simplified searching and free electronic delivery of all journal holdings of U.S. libraries. We are also implementing a new system internally through which users can request material online and track their requests through the system. We anticipate that these new systems, when fully implemented, will result in a much greater use of interlibrary loan for material not held at Pitt.

Diversity

(ULS Goal 4)

Diversity is an issue that the ULS, along with all of our peer libraries, have long taken very seriously. We now have two diversity programs that result in recruitment of minority librarians to Pitt and the profession: the Diversity Internship/Residency Program and a post-degree Residency Program. The first one is a partnership with the School of Information Sciences and provides a tuition waiver for the selected student combined with work experience in the ULS, followed by a one year professional position in the ULS. At any time, there are two people in this two year program. The second program is national in its recruitment and attracts candidates from a number of MLIS programs.

Our Coordinator for Diversity Initiatives is a member of every search committee and has been working to establish contacts and networks to help us recruit a more diverse pool of librarians and staff. Additionally, she has been working closely with staff in the Office of Student Affairs to co-sponsor diversity-related events for students. She has also recently begun a new internal training program related to the promotion of diversity which has been well received. We are planning additional programs and hope to increase the number of underrepresented faculty librarians and staff in the coming year.

Ensure Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness

(ULS Goals 2 and 8)

No research library in the nation has undergone the level of change experienced by the ULS during the past dozen years. We were the first major library to completely re-design our technical processes, creating a savings that enabled us to become a leader in the implementation of information technologies, and to become a more agile organization. This culture of change, set by this major project, has continued to set the tone for the ULS overall. We have used re-design and reallocation of existing personnel and operating budgets to accomplish major change in the services of the ULS over time, and that model continues to serve us very well. Frankly, the ULS operates at a level of efficiency and effectiveness that is the envy of most of our peers. And we are succeeding in doing this while at the same time creating an improved climate for support, mutual respect and collegiality within the organization.

One major area that we placed under this goal is that of **assessment**. While we have been working toward a Culture of Assessment for some years, we have not generally tried to create measurable objectives. Libraries have a lot of data that is routinely gathered, such as the number of volumes held in the libraries, the use of the collections, the number of electronic resources and their use, the number of reference transactions at our service desks, and much more. However, outcomes assessment has been more difficult to achieve in library settings, despite the best efforts of the profession to establish them. ARL, for example, has had a long-standing project to create outcomes assessment for ARL libraries and little has come of it. We can easily measure “inputs” but measuring “outcomes” is much more difficult for us. It is also difficult to know which things to measure to ensure that our measures are those things that actually affect students’ performance and faculty members’ productivity directly. In order to assist us in creating better measures and gathering in a more systematic manner the data that will demonstrate outcomes, via reallocation of an existing position we are employing a person beginning in March, 2008, who will be responsible for assessment. His duties will range from assisting librarians from every ULS unit to develop a program of effective, sustainable, and relevant library assessment. This will include working with others in the ULS to identify, gather and compile existing library data and develop library performance measures and gather statistics for evaluation and outcomes based on ULS goals. We plan to design and implement an online statistical repository project to ensure that we capture data to be used in these measurements, and to assist in managing the assessment systems. I am excited about the potential for these steps to result in a model program at Pitt for a library system to create measurable objectives that lead to a proper outcomes assessment system. In the meantime, this report represents our best effort to place our key objectives in that context.

However, I do not want to give you the impression that we have not had a solid record in assessment to date. For more than a decade, we have been making major changes to services, collections, and facilities based on direct input from our user population. In fact, no new service is initiated without extensive user input and all new services are required to have an assessment component to test their usefulness over time. We were an pilot site and early implementer of the national LibQual+ assessment system, which provides an annual Web-based assessment from our users on a standardized “gap analysis” program which shows us in a broad sense how effective we are in various key areas of concern, from collections to services to facilities. Since we inaugurated this system, the feedback we have received has been steadily improving. For example, our worst area at the beginning was physical facilities. Now, with the changes we have made to all of the libraries, from use of the storage facility to reduce crowding in stacks, to the coffee shop in Hillman, to the new carpet, paint, etc., we find that physical facilities is one of the highest categories for us. This is borne out also in the increased use of Hillman Library for study during the past few years. With increased access to online resources, especially online journals, we no longer are falling short of meeting the needs of graduate students and

faculty for research material. The gaps that existed in our print journal collections have for the most part been filled in by sets of online journal backfiles, and we have increased access to new journals dramatically. Fifteen years ago, we subscribed to 27,000 print journals. Today we have online and print access to almost 60,000 journal titles! That is a dramatic change and is reflected in our feedback from LibQual+. Our new Information Literacy program is focused primarily on providing tools for faculty and academic programs to use to teach information literacy skills related to those programs, but the more important aspect is the use of another national system to assess these student's skills in the first place. When fully implemented next year, this assessment of information literacy skills will provide us with appropriate knowledge of how our students are doing relative to our peer institutions. Our new Web site design was assisted with usability studies conducted during the design process, and each year we continue to conduct studies to test its effectiveness as a portal to our information services and resources. The bottom line of all of this is that we are a library system that is user-centric. We listen and listen well to our users on a continuous basis, and that leads us to make changes to services so that they remain current and relevant. But we can and will be doing much more of this in the future.

Our re-purposing of space continues to be a high priority within the ULS. We need to continue to study how departmental libraries are used, and to assess the needs of academic units for library services. In some disciplines, those needs are changing rather rapidly, and research libraries all across the spectrum are re-evaluating their library spaces. Many are closing or consolidating libraries in response to the need to re-purpose library space in academic units, as well as to the changing use patterns caused by the availability of electronic access to traditional resources. We hope to do a systematic study this year of how the use of departmental libraries is changing (and we know that it is changing in most of them). Clearly, we want to be able to respond in the most appropriate manner to the information needs of all disciplines represented on campus.

Within Hillman Library, we are working with a major design firm in Pittsburgh to create a new approach to signage. We are excited about the work they have done to date, and hope to have something in place within the coming year that will greatly improve the look and functionality of the building.

We also are planning a major reorganization and study of our special collections and archives operations. We have been adding collections in this area for many years without a cohesive and focused collections policy. We hope to employ an outside consultant to assist us in developing a collections policy.

Expand international focus and activities:

(ULS Goals 5 and 6)

The ULS over the years has developed large and comprehensive international collections to support area studies programs within UCIS. Although Pitt got a late start in this development compared to other major area study centers, our collections are truly significant in many ways. Our Latin American collection is among the largest in the U.S. and some components of it are the most comprehensive anywhere, such as the Bolivian Collection. We have a very large Cuban collection also. Our East Asian Collection is the 13th largest such collection in North America. And our East European Collection now exceeds 400,000 books published in Slavic languages.

In addition to these research collections, we continue to collaborate in innovative ways with libraries in other countries. Our Gateway Service provides journal articles and other materials from Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean libraries to scholars at Pitt and other universities in a major project funded initially with a federal grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and now is self-

sustaining. We also continue to conduct staff exchanges and training with a large number of Chinese academic institutions, including all of the “key” or major universities in China. Each semester, we host three librarians from China and we send one or two of our librarians/staff to China for short periods to lecture on those partner campuses. We are now in discussions with several African university libraries and will soon be looking for partners in the Middle East to establish smaller scale collaborations for document delivery in those regions, serving the needs related to our programs.

Engage in research that advances learning

(ULS Goals 4 and 5)

We continue to develop new initiatives related to the creation of digital content. Our D-Scribe Program has grown exponentially over the past few years and has completed sixty projects to date. These projects fall into the following types: (1) digitization of materials from our special collections, (2) open access repositories related to disciplines in collaboration with Pitt faculty and units, (3) open access models for traditional publications including books and electronic journals owned by the University, and (4) Electronic Theses and Dissertations (in fact, the ULS was selected to co-host the 2009 International ETD Conference, based in no small part on the success of our program). It has been a long-term goal to develop an expertise and capacity that would allow us to respond to needs of faculty to create digital content or manage born digital materials to assist them in research and teaching and collaboration with others. After a decade of development, we now have the technology infrastructure and staff expertise to do so fully. We are in an enviable position among our peers, many of whom have a very limited capacity to meet the needs of their faculty in this arena. Our fully developed Electronic Course Reserves program is also a related service that has grown in size and capacity, and now includes the ability to stream audio and video files from our collections to students’ desktops in a controlled and legal manner. Our recent collaboration with the University Press to place digitized copies of backlist titles online is another example of our capacity to respond to need, and also to create projects that will inform new models of scholarly communication in the future as we learn more about how these titles are used and what, if any, impact they have on the sale of equivalent print titles. There is much fear and concern toward open access on the part of publishers, but very little hard data upon which to base decisions. Our assessment of this pilot project will help fill in the gaps and provide insight into what kinds of open access models can work for university presses.

The digitization project for the Darlington Library collection is well underway and we are about one-fifth of the way to completion. This is a very ambitious project that involves the mounting of 11,000 books, 500 maps, plus atlases, manuscripts, and other materials. Another aspect of the Darlington Collection is the very rare Audubon’s Birds of America collection. We have one of only 120 complete sets extant today. We have now digitized with a very high resolution scanner the entire set, including the five- volume *Ornithological Biography* that he wrote to accompany the plates. The linking of the plates and the history online is a first, and we have the best scans of these double elephant folio plates anywhere on the Web. This site will soon be announced and we anticipate that it will bring a great deal of positive attention to our digital library.

As the University begins to deal with open access issues and issues related to the distribution of the scholarly output of its faculty, we in the ULS need to develop an institution-based repository that will provide a vehicle for faculty to deposit copies of their publications where possible in an open access format (as Harvard has done recently). We have the capacity to do this, but we need to determine the best platform and functionality for such a repository here at Pitt. We intend to do this during the coming year.

Conclusion

So much of what the ULS undertakes is technology-based. Online catalogs, “Next Generation OPACs,” digitization projects, open access repositories, and so forth. But it is worth noting that we continue to grow in our traditional collections at a rate that is not abating. We achieved the 5 millionth volume recently and already we hold more than 5.1 million volumes. We achieved our 4 millionth volume less than a decade ago, so the rate of growth of our book collection is rising! We added more than 200,000 books to the library collections last year! So while we are building a hybrid library (both print and electronic), we are not close to being a digital library yet. The fact is that we have as much need for print books and print journals (especially from other countries) as ever. And we continue to suffer from double-digit inflation in the cost of periodicals and books, both print and electronic. The largest portion of our overall budget is acquisitions funds. And that is the portion of the budget that must be increased each year to keep pace with the rising costs. So once again, we will need an increase of approximately **\$500,000** to keep pace with journal inflation. We have benefited by the understanding of this issue at Pitt. In the day-to-day excitement about all of our new initiatives and projects, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that the book collection is still a major asset of the University and one necessary for the continued success of its academic programs and faculty research.

We also continue to become more and more efficient through reallocation from low priority to high priority activities and goals. We are placing our emphasis on the major goals we have established and re-designing the use of space and personnel over time to ensure that our highest priorities are achieved.

Last week, I had a meeting with the Sumter Link, President of the Student Government Board (SGB). He wanted to talk to me about the new Hillman plaza and the possibility of adding furniture to it. I was glad to report that we were planning to have some seating there. In the course of our meeting, I offered to meet with SGB at any time there is a concern related to the libraries. He thanked me, but then said that at this time the students at Pitt were quite happy about the libraries and especially Hillman Library and that he could not think of a thing to ask me for except seating on the deck! We talked about how students are using the libraries and their importance as places to study. It was a useful meeting for me and reinforced my perceptions from other discussions with students that they are generally very happy with our library policies, services and facilities. As we complete our new classroom, additional group study space and reading room this year, I anticipate that that will only add to this sense of contentment. I know the additional weeks of twenty-four hour operation for Hillman this year have been very welcome and heavily used by the students.

I believe that the program we have outlined for next year will be accomplished and that it will be a significant step in enhancing even further the library services offered by the ULS.

At the core of the success of the ULS during the past decade or more, in addition to the support we have received from the University’s administration, are a highly professional, collegial, innovative, and hard working faculty and staff. We are fortunate to have a number of “change agents” in key positions, both administrative and in the trenches of the libraries. Without these individuals, we would not have made the progress we have attained. And I know that in the next year, we will meet the objectives we have outlined and continue to develop user-centric services and collections.