



## UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

# Hesburgh Libraries Strategic Plan, 2012

### Envisioning Library Services

In August 2010, the Hesburgh Libraries began preparing for a strategic plan that would focus the Libraries resources and talents on advancing the University's research, scholarship, and teaching ambitions now and in the digital age.

The Libraries assessed our current situation, researched trends in academic libraries, scholarly research, and communications, and sought input on campus directions.

In the fall of 2011, a Strategic Plan was designed to promote service excellence. The Libraries are committed to deepening collaboration with campus and more deliberately aligning collections, resources, services, and expertise with University goals.

Our five overarching goals are:

- Advance Research and Scholarship
- Enrich Educational Experience & Intellectual Growth
- Heighten the Value & Impact of the Libraries by developing digital programs & services
- Transform library spaces to foster and inspire intellectual engagement
- Create a sustainable culture of continuous improvement & service excellence in support of the University's mission.

## **I. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, opportunities, Threats) Assessment**

### **Strengths**

- **Signature and Special Collections:** Hesburgh Libraries collections in Medieval Studies & Theology, Dante, Irish Studies, Peruvian Studies, European Catholic Studies, 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century sports, and Colonial American Numismatics support faculty and student researchers at Notre Dame and attract scholars from around the world. The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections is exceptionally active in developing and promoting collections that support undergraduate and graduate student research. This year the Department hosted 125 classes for Notre Dame students and acquired twenty-six North American manuscript collections which enriched the Library's support for undergraduate research in History, American Studies, and other disciplines.
- **Burgeoning leadership in digital development:** The Libraries' digital library development group is expanding access to digital resources through its local innovations, campus partnerships, and participation in a high profile, multi-institutional development team for open source digital repository/portal services known as the Hydra Partnership (Stanford, Northwestern, University of Virginia, and the University of Hull). Examples of their recent work include the Digital Library prototype for VecNEt Malaria Research Project (PI Frank Collins with Gates Foundation Grant) and the Seaside Portal Development for the School of Architecture <http://seasideat30.library.nd.edu/>.
- **Contributing innovations in open source software:** Electronic Resource Management System developed within the library and released as open source software. It is used by approximately 25 universities, including Stanford, Texas A&M, and Northwestern.
- **Increasing our outreach to undergraduates:** Librarians customized their approach to instruction through programs such as the embedded librarian in the First Year of Studies Program, the Seniors Thesis Camp, the Undergraduate Library Research Award, the Math Library tutoring partnership, and the contributing instructional sessions to the Junior Research Challenge: Foresight in Business and Society in the College of Business.
- **Preserving and sharing Catholic literature:** The Libraries established and are the leading partner of the multi-institutional Catholic Research Resources Alliance, a partnership of

27 libraries nationwide whose members collaborate to create a digital depository of materials to enhance research on Catholicism.

### Weaknesses

- **Engagement and Communication with the University:** Although some highly effective campus collaborations have been developed, more and deeper ties are needed. Stronger relationships with academic departments and programs would allow us to better understand their needs, target their priorities, and share resources and expertise. Formal and informal studies show that many users are unaware of the libraries' resources and services.
- **Professional Capacity and Expertise:** During the last decade, technology, internationalization, digitization, cross-organizational collaboration, and mobile communication radically changed expectations and opportunities for the library. While opportunities and demands increased, the Library's staff size decreased. In 2003, the Library encompassed 203 FTE positions -- 154 staff and 49 professionals (professionals include library faculty and professionals in other areas, such as systems, human resource, or budget administrators). By 2010, the number of total positions had declined to 195 and the proportion of staff to professionals had shifted to -- 128 staff and 67 professionals. Lines from vacated positions were repurposed and at times combined to fund higher-level positions in the areas of technology, special and research-related collection development, and campus outreach. Even with these adjustments, the library's professional ranks are lean.
- **Gaps in our Preservation Program:** The Preservation Department has excellent programs in conservation, disaster preparedness, and disaster recovery. Our collections, however, are vulnerable to unstable and unsafe environmental conditions due to the age and deficiency of our HVAC system. In addition to print preservation, we must (in collaboration with and beyond campus) expand our preservation efforts to protect and ensure long-term access to digital content that is core to the University's academic mission.
- **Hesburgh Library space:** Nearly 50 years old, the Hesburgh Library building shows its age. Collections, patrons, and staff compete for space. User spaces are utilitarian and do little to invite private intellectual pursuits or collaborative discovery.

### **Opportunities:**

- The arrival of the new university librarian and the retirement of twenty employees offer the opportunity to rethink the Library's organizational structure, align our staffing, operations, and services with campus priorities, support employee growth and initiative, and to refresh the Library's vision, values, and focus.
- Using existing development and travel funds in a more strategic manner, the Libraries can deepen individual and organizational knowledge and expertise in targeted areas.
- Building on strong relationships with the Kaneb Center, selected Departments, and the Colleges of Business, Engineering, and the First Year of Studies, the Libraries can increasingly integrate advanced research skills into the undergraduate experience.

### **Threats**

- The digital age – Even sophisticated researchers often underestimate the Libraries' role in providing access to research materials.
- Pressure to learn -- Some dedicated individuals in legacy positions are poorly equipped for the demands that will impact library positions.
- The current economic situation makes it challenging to address collection, staffing, space, and technology needs.
- Both geographic and consortium-based Isolation of Notre Dame from other large academic institutions limits collaboration which is so essential to digital development projects, resource sharing, collection development and even collection space storage initiatives. Academic library members of CIC, TRLN (Research Triangle) and Northeast regional partners have taken significant advantage of these partnerships.

## Hesburgh Libraries' Mission, Vision, & Values

**Mission:** The Hesburgh Libraries contribute to the mission of the University by providing distinctive collections, services, tools, and spaces that enhance learning, teaching, and research for, and in collaboration with the University community.

**Vision:** The Hesburgh Libraries are integral to achieving Notre Dame's ambitious aspirations to be a preeminent research institution that provides an unsurpassed undergraduate education while ensuring that the University's Catholic character informs all its endeavors. Keenly attuned to the distinctive needs of this academic community, the Libraries exercising leadership in identifying and acquiring information resources critical to Notre Dame's larger mission. Employing professional expertise, interpersonal skills and appropriate technology, the Libraries provide uncomplicated and swift access to needed resources regardless of format or location and assistance in their use. To achieve this vision, it fosters an organizational setting that is open, collaborative, empowering, energizing, dynamic, and results focused.

<i>Division Goal</i>	<i>University Goal(s) Supported</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goal 1 Advance Research &amp; Scholarship</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Become a preeminent Research University</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goal 2 Enrich Educational experience and Intellectual Growth</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Offer an Unsurpassed Undergraduate Education</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goal 3 Heighten the value and impact of the Libraries through digital programs and services</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Become a preeminent Research University</b></li> <li>• <b>Offer an Unsurpassed Undergraduate Education</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goal 4 Transform Library Spaces to foster and inspire intellectual engagement</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Become a preeminent Research University</b></li> <li>• <b>Offer an Unsurpassed Undergraduate Education</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goal 5 Create a sustainable culture of continuous improvement and service excellence</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure that the University's Catholic Character Informs All of Its Endeavors</b></li> </ul>

### Goal 1. Advance Research & Scholarship

**Strategy A** Identify, fund, build, describe, maintain, and preserve collections that are aligned with ND's established research programs and emerging academic areas.

Collection expenditures represent the largest part of the Hesburgh Libraries' budget. As new academic programs are proposed, the libraries will assess collections and expertise needed to support the program and work with the University to secure needed financial resources.

To offer our researchers in existing and new fields of study access to the full scholarly record, the library will strengthen and refine our subject liaison program. Our subject liaisons will actively engage with faculty, students, and administrators in the departments and disciplines they serve. Through these ongoing collaborations, they will be better able to create a program of collection building, preservation planning, resource sharing, and information access that will target the needs of the department and the ambitions of the University.

**Related Strategies:** 2b

**Indicators:** An increase in the number of subject specialists with academic expertise in the fields of study they are supporting; Incorporate "best practice" from peer institutions into a model start up plan for supporting emerging programs/subject areas. Meet OAI (Open Archival Information System) digital preservation standards.

**Strategy B. Use technology to enhance the discovery of scholarly resources in all formats**

To facilitate the discovery and use of scholarly resources requires understanding the user's experience, needs, and preferences and capitalizing on changes in cataloging concepts, web technologies, and systems operations.

Building on a series of individual efforts to gather user input on new products, interfaces, and services, we are creating a student/faculty emerging technologies advisory group. This group will help ensure that library technology-related developments address the priority needs of various user groups and will allow us to integrate our services and expertise into systems and tools that people are already using for teaching, research, and learning.

Large research libraries are currently at an intersection where existing library catalog/discovery system technology is being replaced by more highly integrated 'webscale systems' which are better designed to support the dynamic digital environment. Top contenders include open source grant-funded developments and also commercial enterprise products. We plan to postpone the expensive and labor intensive transition until clear winners emerge from the present competitive environment of early adoption, but energetic investment in local user interface and functional improvements are needed to bring intuitive and powerful access to our users in the meantime.

One specific initiative designed to enhance access to selected materials in Special Collections will ingest Encoded Archival Descriptors (EADs) for these materials into the online catalog discovery system (CatalogPlus).

**Related Strategies:** 2.a, 3a, & 3b

**Indicators:**

## **Goal 2: Enrich Educational Experience & Intellectual Growth**

### **Strategy A. Support discovery by providing easy and expert access to resources and services, informed by user input**

Studies of today's users indicate that they want easy, fast, and reliable delivery of information resources, regardless of format or the physical or electronic location. They want to be able to search for and access information 24/7 and to be able function independently and quickly.

The Library will streamline and improve at least one service operation each year. The immediate emphasis will focus on speeding Acquisitions and Interlibrary Loan processes to shorten the time between request and receipt of materials. Having recently expanded its support for the Departments of Music and Film, Television, and Theater, the Libraries will implement streaming media and music services for the University.

#### **Related Strategies: 1a**

**Indicators:** Increase in the number of classes using streaming media services; increase in the number of titles accessed through this service; reduction in the amount of time it takes to place an order; measures on user satisfaction survey

### **Strategy B. Foster student research through targeted services and collections**

The Library is committed to easing user access to information resources. The ultimate goal, however, is to spark student curiosity and to expand and enrich the student research experience.

In recent years, the Library has expanded its efforts to advance student research through individual research consultations, credit courses and course integrated instruction, provocative exhibits, and special programs (such as, the Thesis Boot Camp).

In the future, our focus on student research will intensify. We will expand our efforts to understand the users' experience. We will present our resources, special collections, and services in ways that connect with user needs. We will expand our campus collaboration with partners, such as the Center for Creative Computing, the Graduate Student Office, and the Honors Program and create customized multi-faceted, research services.

#### **Related Strategies: 1a**

#### **Indicators:**

### **Goal 3. Heighten the value and impact of the Libraries through digital programs and services**

#### **Strategy A. Digitize to expand access to unique library collections.**

The Libraries own many exceptional special and unique collections which are accessible to on-site users for limited periods of time. Digitization enhances access and reduces physical handling of fragile materials. Digital collections allow both Notre Dame researchers and scholars worldwide to recognize and use some of our most unique collections in Catholicism, theology, medieval studies, Byzantine studies, and numismatics. Digitized collections can be presented through digital ‘portal’ access such as the Inquisition Collection ([http://www.library.nd.edu/rarebooks/digital\\_projects/inquisition/collections/RBSC-INO:COLLECTION](http://www.library.nd.edu/rarebooks/digital_projects/inquisition/collections/RBSC-INO:COLLECTION)), or used to expand the horizons of scholarship in new ways. Digitized unique collections provide a foundation for local ‘digital humanities’ scholarship, supporting use of sophisticated text mining and visualization tools.

The Hesburgh Libraries is poised to expand our digital presence in the scholarly community. A digitization program level should be targeted, and implemented by librarians knowledgeable about the technologies and metadata as well as the Notre Dame unique collections. Basic expertise exists, but staff capacity and programmatic goals are needed to advance this goal.

**Related Strategies:** 1a

**Indicators:**

#### **Strategy B. Collaborate to create and support digital repository tools to manage and provide access for university and library digital assets.**

Beyond Special Collections digitization opportunities, media, text and data digital content created by programs across campus requires services and technology to provide for its management, description, discovery, and access over an extended period of time. The Hesburgh Libraries is a critical partner in the University initiative to develop a set of broad, comprehensive digital strategies. Over the last three years, the Libraries have been building expertise in digital asset techniques and processes. Creation of a 4-FTE programming team with high-level programming skills has enabled us to collaboratively plan and build a community-based, open source digital repository to manage the life cycle of digital content in many forms, both in the Libraries and scholarly information throughout campus. This has led to close partnerships with Stanford, the University of Virginia, Northwestern, and the University of Hull in the shared development of a software architecture that is applicable to the management of any kind of digital content. Internal partners include DigitalND, CRC. Examples of digital ‘portal’ access includes IQ and Seaside Portal.

**Related Strategies:** 1b

**Indicators:**

Image repository management (commercial version @\$40K per year for limited numbers);  
. [data management with associated metadata and persistent access technologies for interoperability of access systems]

#### **Goal 4: Transform library spaces to foster and inspire intellectual engagement.**

##### **Strategy A. Develop a master program plan for Hesburgh Library that will guide renovation planning and fundraising.**

All library space is foremost University space and must adapt to the changing research, teaching, and learning needs of the University. Although the Hesburgh Library remains an impressive structure, it no longer meets the wide-ranging needs of undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and library employees. Newly constructed or renovated academic libraries offer multiple environments to support student group projects, the use of media and information technologies, quiet research enclaves, and displays designed to stimulate intellectual engagement.

In collaboration with the campus, the Library plans to identify and understand faculty, student, and library staff needs for collections, services, and space and to develop a Master Plan to guide realigning our space to meet these needs and serve as the basis for fundraising.

**Related Strategies:** 4b

**Indicators:** Gate count; user satisfaction

##### **Strategy B: Create spaces that promote intellectual growth & discovery.**

Transform the Current Periodicals Room to create a highly visible and flexible space that will foster and inspire intellectual activity in a variety of ways and serve to demonstrate the potential for renovation of the building while becoming a magnet for faculty and students in the near term.

**Related Strategies:** 4a

##### **Strategy C: Collaborate with appropriate Colleges and Schools to determine library service needs and the best use of the space occupied by branch libraries**

**Related Strategies:** 4a

**Indicators:** Percentage of decision makers interviewed about their academic plans by December 2012

**Goal 5: Create a more sustainable culture of continuous improvement and service excellence.**

**Strategy A. Steward and develop financial, personnel, and space resources in alignment with academic and research priorities.**

Develop, implement, and communicate a more thoughtful budget that aligns our resources with the strategic goals of both the Libraries and the University and with the Libraries' new organizational structure.

**Related Strategies:** 5b

**Indicators:**

**Strategy B. Create a more flexible, responsive, and well-managed organization with a strong ethic of service excellence.**

Although the Library has actively modified its organizational structure, repurposed positions, raised expectations, and supported training, development and performance management, it has not fully capitalized on these activities. Events often stand as isolated moments of achievement. An organization of nearly 200 employees and infinite opportunities needs strong leadership to stretch our vision, propagate a coherent and compelling story, and to focus our efforts on high priority targets. We need skilled managers to ensure that we make sound decisions, reach targeted goals, and assess our success in addressing campus needs.

The Libraries have established the key imperative of developing a culture of service excellence. This commitment is being incorporated in our major organizational programs: recruitment, employee orientation, goal setting, and performance assessment. The Library will revitalize its organization by developing, implementing, and communicating a plan for reorganization that aligns all of our resources and priorities with the strategic goals of both the Libraries and the University and employs our talents and resources to achieve service excellence.

**Related Strategies:** 5a

**Indicators:** Ratings in patron service satisfaction survey; Improvement in the area of empowerment on ND Voice survey;

**Strategy C. Communicate regularly and strategically with both internal and external constituents.**

The Library will revamp its external and internal communications. On campus, we will increasingly focus on understanding faculty and student preferences and on more vividly portraying resources and services that can enrich their work. We will recruit a communications professional to guide us in crafting messages whose timing, content, and format maximize impact.

Within the Libraries, we will strengthen two-way communication. The Notre Dame Voice Survey clearly indicated that we also have internal communication issues. Some 2011-2012 initiatives (the introduction of This Week in the Libraries, a mandatory session on communicating with respect, and lunches and unit visits with the University Librarian) have begun addressing this concern. A Communications audit will help us assess our progress and develop some internal communication guidelines.

**Related Strategies:** 2a

**Indicators:** Improved score on ND Voice; Increase in the quantity and quality of library-campus collaborations

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