UMass Amherst Libraries

Three-Year Plan
Fiscal Years 2013-2015

UMass Amherst Libraries Mission Statement:

As a gateway to knowledge, the Libraries are key partners in teaching, learning, and research at UMass Amherst and in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Supporting freedom of inquiry, the Libraries foster a diverse and inclusive environment in which to engage with ideas and acquire the critical skills necessary for lifelong learning. By combining the latest information technology with excellent public service, the staff build and maintain a rich information environment, facilitate access to it, and create a hub of campus and community scholarly activity.

Introduction

The Libraries have identified four areas for strategic transformation:

- The User Experience
- Knowledge Creation and Management
- Relationships
- Our Workplace

The UMass Amherst sesquicentennial offers a unique opportunity for the Libraries to reflect on our service-oriented roots, build on our strengths and further the campus's public, land-grant mission. This document describes the ways in which the Libraries will build on the successes coming out of our two previous Three Year Plans and address comments from users (through surveys like LibQUAL) and staff (through ClimateQUAL). Understanding that focusing our resources, containing costs, and demonstrating value are campus imperatives, we will challenge ourselves over the next three years to develop programs, services, and information sources that support teaching, learning, and research for the 21st century university.

Transforming the User Experience

The UMass Amherst Libraries create and develop services, spaces, and collections that enhance the teaching, learning, and research experiences of our users. The Libraries purchase or provide access to collections relevant for campus curricular support, interdisciplinary initiatives, and research.
We will continue to move aggressively from print to digital resources in order to provide users with access to desired information anytime from anywhere. We will continue to preserve physical collections where desired and needed. The Libraries must be both a physical and virtual destination of choice, woven seamlessly into our users’ lives.

Goal: The Libraries will assess user needs and provide services, resources, and spaces that anticipate and respond to those needs. We will support student academic success and new forms of scholarship. We will capitalize on advances in information technology that support user needs and that are seamless, attainable, and sustainable.

Objectives:

1. Strengthen teaching and student learning: The Libraries will increase support for teaching, learning, and research by strengthening campus partnerships with appropriate academic and technical units. We will collaborate with faculty to improve academic success, embedding librarians and library resources in the teaching and learning process. We will expand information literacy awareness to include knowledge management, digital competencies, and media literacy. We will contribute toward campus-wide efforts to assess student learning outcomes.

2. Support campus research: The Libraries will actively promote, support, and endorse new models of scholarship, and will provide effective management of the products of scholarship. We will collaborate with the campus community on shared research endeavors.

3. Enhance our virtual presence: To promote self-sufficiency on the part of our users, we will further develop the Libraries’ online presence to make it more intuitive, convenient, relevant, and informative. Librarians will integrate content and services seamlessly into all learning environments. Our websites will respond to changing user needs and expand flexibility in the delivery of resources. We will become virtual partners in the university’s online presence.

4. Provide unfettered access to information resources: The Libraries will provide access to unique digital collections of scholarly significance and to licensed resources (e-books, images, databases, video, etc.) that enrich the teaching and research environment. We will expand access to resources through strategic relationships that facilitate borrowing of materials not owned locally. We will continue our commitment to eliminating barriers to information access that have an adverse impact on teaching, learning, and research.

5. Transform physical spaces: The Libraries will continue to renovate and provide flexible learning places that serve different learning styles, constituencies, and partners.

6. Enhance our culture of assessment: The Libraries will collect, analyze, and use data to improve services, facilities, and collections for users.
Transforming Knowledge

The development of new technologies and their integration into the academic enterprise is rapidly transforming the means by which faculty and students achieve academic goals. The Libraries are responding to this changing scholarly environment by strengthening our digital infrastructure and transforming the services and tools we offer.

Goal: The Libraries will serve as a catalyst for the creation of and access to knowledge by providing tools that support teaching, learning, and research within the expanding universe of digital scholarship. The Libraries will lead efforts to preserve the campus’s scholarly record.

Objectives:

1. Spur knowledge creation: The Libraries place a high value on collecting the products of digital scholarship and building digital collections. We will solicit content for digital collections in order to create vital resources, including donated digital materials and materials contributed to our institutional repository.

2. Lead knowledge sharing & access: The Libraries place a premium on helping users find, access, and evaluate the resources they need. We will support and participate in new publishing models such as the Open Access and Open Educational Resources initiatives to ensure barrier-free access to as many information resources as possible.

3. Foster knowledge management: The Libraries will respond to the rapidly rising need for appropriate management of research data across the disciplines. We will provide consultation services and support for data management, sharing, and access for the small- and large-scale research projects conducted by the campus community.

4. Transform digital preservation: The Libraries will develop plans for the long-term preservation of library and campus digital collections. We will consult with users about the best methods to preserve their digital materials. We will participate in Five College efforts to investigate preservation opportunities for the consortium and coordinate local preservation plans.

Transforming Relationships

The Libraries provide spaces, services, collections, and programs that bring diverse constituencies into an environment that encourages the organic exchange of ideas and methods. The Teaching Commons and the Learning Commons, the Science and Engineering Library, the Multimedia Center,
and the Image Collection Library all foster unique connections between and among staff, students, faculty, and the broader public.

**Goal:** Enhance the role of the Libraries as a connector to a broader community that builds working partnerships with our faculty, colleagues, the Five Colleges, and the people of the Commonwealth through the thoughtful development of places, programs, and resources useful for participatory learning and preservation of cultural heritage.

**Objectives:**

1. *Energize strategic relationships*: The Libraries serve as a “commons” for the campus to form and lead partnerships that benefit the university. The Libraries will continue to engage appropriate partners and consortia to manage and share data and scholarly output.

2. *Strengthen academic relationships*: Through deeper and more effective communication with academic departments and faculty, the Libraries will continue to ensure that its resources, programming, initiatives, and scholarship support the university’s comprehensive academic goals, and that they are thoroughly understood, shared, and utilized by the user community.

3. *Broaden philanthropic relationships*: Fundraising is vital to the Libraries’ growth. The Libraries will sustain and expand its base of donors and encourage investment through the cultivation of leadership gifts, planned gifts, and gifts-in-kind. The Libraries will continue to identify additional sources of funding from corporations, foundations, and other grantors who share our goals.

4. *Cultivate community relationships*: The Libraries will continue to form productive alliances and reach out to other libraries, both within our local communities and in the international community of research universities. The Libraries will engage appropriate partners in the preservation of the Commonwealth’s heritage and in other collecting areas that reflect the mission, values, and history of the university.

**Transforming the Workplace**

The Libraries’ staff embrace a spirit of inclusion and culture of diversity that enriches and strengthens services to users. Our knowledge, service ethic, and ability to create a welcoming and collegial library environment make staff our most valuable resource.

**Goal:** The Libraries will continue efforts to support staff success in a changing academic and research environment. We encourage staff to become active participants in the campus’s mission. The Libraries will continue to provide a work environment that supports diversity and promotes mutual respect, acceptance, cooperation, and teamwork.
Objectives:

1. **Identify new competencies and develop flexible skill sets:** The Libraries will establish benchmarks and define key proficiencies that allow staff to continue to support the evolving needs of the academic community. We will encourage and promote staff development initiatives that enable greater cross-functional support and maximize organizational flexibility.

2. **Broaden opportunities for training and education:** The Libraries will provide technical, non-technical, and educational training opportunities that support proficiency in the skills needed to adapt to rapidly changing user needs and advance the Libraries' mission.

3. **Encourage and reward excellence and innovation:** The Libraries will recognize significant staff contributions in services, practices, and workflow effectiveness that enhance the user experience.

4. **Share workplace and organizational knowledge:** The Libraries recognize the importance of sharing, preserving, and documenting the applied skills and specialized knowledge possessed by our staff. We will establish a culture of mentoring across all levels of the organization and in processes through which skills and areas of strategic overlap can be transferred to the next generation.

5. **Foster diversity:** The Libraries will continue to promote organizational policies and best practices that foster a healthy organizational climate and diversity of all types.

Conclusion

Responding to both economic and technological imperatives, the University Libraries have transformed ourselves quickly and dramatically, perhaps more so than any other organization on campus. This Three Year Plan is ambitious in scope and scale. It responds to the major issues currently affecting the University. Moving forward, the Libraries will increase our flexibility in delivering content and services to users wherever and whenever they are needed. The Libraries will continue to be user focused, working alongside faculty and students to address the very real challenges and transformations we face in teaching, learning, and research. The Libraries will continue to foster a diverse culture of collaboration, responsiveness, innovation, and assessment that anticipates user needs, supports excellence in teaching, learning, and research, and aligns with the mission, goals, and success of UMass Amherst.