



## College and Center Program Review: 2004 George A. Smathers Libraries

### *1. Please address the steps taken by the College to ensure the success of the University's strategic plan.*

The mission of the university library is to support the research and degree programs of the University of Florida – all of them. A successful university library is characterized by several attributes that work together to create conditions for first-rate library service.

- A. A sufficient library resources budget to provide all of the information resources required by the degree and research programs offered by the institution.
- B. Sufficient well-designed space to house the collections and provide ready access to them – both physical and electronic.
- C. A well-educated and well-trained staff of sufficient size to provide physical and intellectual access to information housed both locally and at a distance for the number of students and faculty served.

The above may look simple, but books have been written about what success in each one of those characteristics actually entails. And the UF Libraries have been short on resources in all of these areas for many years. See *Attachment A* which demonstrates some of the results of years of underfunding:

- UF has the smallest collection size of the top 11 public university libraries in the U.S.;
- UF added the fewest books last year (so it is not making any progress in catching up);
- UF has the second smallest library staff to serve the second largest student body and the third largest faculty (ergo, students and faculty get less library staff time and attention than normal);
- UF spends the fewest dollars per student to provide library service and the fewest dollars to purchase collections, therefore, not surprisingly, UF has the fewest volumes per student and the fewest volumes per Ph.D. program contrasted with the fourth largest number of Ph.D. programs and the second largest number of students to support (so students at UF are shortchanged in comparison with students at peer institutions);
- UF has the largest number of students per library staff member, the largest number of faculty per librarian, and the second lowest number of librarians per Ph.D. field (which translates into more limited support for building research collections and supporting research level work than is common at institutions of UF's quality);
- See *Attachment B* for a chart showing UF library faculty salaries are ranked 93<sup>rd</sup> of 114 university libraries in the US and Canada – in the lowest 18% of university libraries on the North American continent. This has a definite impact on morale since acquiring tenure at UF

and the nature of supporting research level work is just as tough here as at better paid universities.

Despite historic drawbacks, recently the library has had a unique opportunity to enlarge and update the main library. As a result, a number of directors and chairs spent the past two years working with architects to plan a very effective building for faculty and student needs – primarily targeted at the College of Liberal Arts, one of the colleges the university intends to improve. During the past eight months, many of these people also worked with Physical Plant planning the remodeling of a new storage building to serve all UF libraries' need for additional collection space. During the same period, it became necessary to relocate 81 staff from Library West to Smathers and Marston Libraries, so the group planned and oversaw the design and renovation of spaces for each staff member and the moves of staff and more than 1.5 million volumes in the Documents, Reference, Current Periodical, humanities and social science collections to several locations – Smathers and Marston Libraries as well as the new Auxiliary Library Facility (ALF). Having been advised that all moves and shelving had to be covered from the Library budget, most staff vacancies were held open for six months to save carry-forward funds to cover these costs. This further reduced staff support for faculty and students.

During the past year, significant numbers of staff have been working with FCLA and other SUS university librarians to plan the shape of ExLibris, the new Library management system, and to develop training for all our staff who are, as we speak, being trained. The new system is planned to go up in May. ExLibris will order, catalog, and circulate library materials, thus every library staff member will have to learn new electronic processes to perform their daily tasks.

Collection Management staff evaluated many of the materials still classed in Dewey on the shelves of Library West and catalogers have already reclassified all of the 900's and biographies. When collections return to the new library, all materials in Library West will be classed in the LC system thus reducing confusion for library users. Access Services and Systems staff designed and programmed a book retrieval system that returns up to 1000 volumes per day from storage to campus. About 65% of the retrievals return the same day, 80% are there within 24 hours. Staff are also being trained to deal with the requirements of the new ERP – payroll will touch every library department.

Besides these large scale projects that consumed enormous amounts of staff time, staff maintained 9 libraries open about 100 hours per week, provided reference and research support services, worked with faculty to ensure that our collections support their research needs as well as the resources budget allows, and processed more than 300,000 books, journal issues, and electronic resources into the collections. We have made every effort to ensure that we support the areas the university has earmarked for improvement.

***2. Identify hiring done by the College in the past year and the ways these faculty hires have strengthened the college. Please identify areas that need improvement and state the ways that you are addressing these areas.***

We are making a strong effort to reduce the average age of and diversify library faculty, and to recruit and retain well qualified library staff with good IT skills and management potential who will be able to move up into responsible positions within a few years. This is particularly an issue given that the average age of the current faculty is 57 and many are slated to retire over the

next five years. In fact, we will lose 90% of the current library faculty in the Marston Science Library including the current chair between 2004 and 2008. During the past year we were able to hire several assistant librarians; a number have masters' degrees in relevant disciplines while one has a Ph.D. in addition to the MLS.

***During fiscal year 2003-2004, the following searches were completed:***

Ast Univ Lib- Iris Salcedo, Reference Librarian in Humanities & Social Science Services  
 Ast Univ Lib- Paul Losch, Reference Librarian and Selector in the Latin American Collection  
 Ast Univ Lib- John Nemmers, Archivist in Special Collections  
 Ast Univ Lib- Paul Victor, Reference Librarian in Humanities & Social Science Services  
 Ast Univ Lib- Julia Allen, Catalog Librarian in Resource Services  
 Ast Univ Lib- Ben Walker, Assistant Chair of Access Services (Storage Collections)

***Positions currently in search are:***

Ast Univ Lib- Foreign Documents Librarian -- at interview stage  
 Ast Univ Lib- Biological Sciences Bibliographer – at interview stage (a key appointment)  
 Ast Univ Lib- Science Librarian and Selector in Marston Science Library

***Planned Searches After July 1, 2004:***

Ast Univ Lib- Archivist in Special Collections  
 Ast Univ Lib- Geo-Information System Specialist in Documents  
 Ast Univ Lib – Reference/Selection in a science area yet to be identified

We will concentrate on: strengthening the library faculty in science areas including greater capacity to support GIS research and emphasizing technological skills to design ways to utilize library content in course management applications and to develop a pilot university repository. ***It is critical that DROP positions routinely return to the Library*** so that we may continue to make strategic assignments to library faculty with different skill-sets that allow the library to function effectively in this rapidly changing information world. ***It is also critical that salaries improve so that we can attract the skills the university must have if it is to succeed.*** It is enormously important to increase the technical skills of ALL library staff. This entails restructuring individual jobs and organizational arrangements, providing extensive on-going training, and providing higher salaries.

**3. Continuing efforts at internationalization - how have you assessed the achievements of these goals and what changes have you implemented as a result of the assessment?**

Since the Library follows the university in program areas, we have attempted to support university and college programs. Because of the great research interest in Latin America, we have:

- Built one of the world's pre-eminent collections of Latin Americana;
- Partnered with Caribbean universities (University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) & University of the West Indies (UWI) to digitize scholarly material that is not otherwise available; both have placed digital content in PALMM, (maintained by FCLA);
- Invited the University of Puerto Rico to join the partnership;
- Will attend the annual ACURIL meeting (an association of Caribbean university and research libraries) in May to introduce the concept of a Digital Library of the Caribbean and invite broad participation;

- Anticipate providing UF Library's technical expertise to assist Caribbean libraries in implementing in-house digitization as we did for UVI and UWI to assist entire area in making scholarly information more widely available;
- Received positive Getty Foundation interest for a portion of the Cuban Protocolos project;
- Will meet with Tavera Foundation in Spain to discuss equipment & salary funding for Protocolos project (equipment and salaries benefiting Cuba seem to be the primary stumbling block for American foundations);
- Built one of the top four or five African Studies Collections in the country;
- Support IFAS projects in Latin America and Africa through both African & Latin American collections, additional materials in the Marston Science Library, and exchange/training programs with partner universities;
- Built excellent Jewish Studies Collection, the best in the South East ;
- Built collection for Asian studies primarily tailored to meet the needs of undergraduates.
- Built good European collections which provide solid support to students in European language, literature, and history programs.

**4. *What are your major goals for the library next year? What plans do you have in place for achieving these goals?***

Our goals are:

- 1. *Provide 5-Star User-Centered Service.*** This includes: improving electronic services through evaluating electronic resources, and desktop delivery while optimizing for costs and ease of use; improving quality of user interaction with library staff and services; developing collections supporting UF strategic plan, academic programs, and patron needs while optimizing user convenience and access to traditional and digital materials, and improving our processes.
- 2. *Develop financial, developmental and amenity incentives to recruit, recognize and retain staff at all levels.*** This includes increasing salaries, rewarding achievement, recruiting strong staff, and cross-training staff to have people ready for advancement.
- 3. *Create new library spaces with an inviting "relax and read" environment to encourage intellectual interaction.*** This includes expanding our development program to support facility improvement, identifying and designing and enhancing physical and virtual library space with user requested features, reshaping our user interactions by arranging physical and virtual spaces to increase visibility and interaction between staff and users. *UF's 2004 Library User Survey strongly underscores the need for this kind of space.*
- 4. *Increase staff participation/influence within the library and throughout the university.*** This includes increasing the Libraries' allocation and establishing a stable base of funding commensurate with the quality of the academic program; jointly developing academic activities with other colleges; increasing staff participation in university governance structure.
- 5. *Promote the library.*** This includes investing in PR, reaching out to serve a larger number of community members, increasing potential users' knowledge of library resources and services, and gaining a better understanding of marketing library services.

These goals were established last summer and were worked into departmental and individual goals for the year. The library will be doing its annual review of goals in early summer. We will also be assessing the impact of initiatives such as Bridges/ERP and Vista WebCT to ensure that our resources are committed most effectively. We welcome opportunities to collaborate on university planning and priority setting.

### **Impediments to goals:**

- **Library Budget.**

- Budget too small for number of students and programs. See *Attachments H, D, E.*

**Solution:**

- Set *university* goal of developing a library budget similar to the average of the top ten public university libraries (an increase of \$11 million, see *Attachment A*) and gradually increase library budget to these levels over a period of five years.
- Set *university* goal of developing a major endowment for the libraries for which the President and Provost would take a leading role. This would reduce need for general funds.

- **Library Resources Allocation.**

- UF's collections compare badly with those of institutions it aspires to join – *Attachment A*;
- During the past 40 years, *Attachments D and E* demonstrate that UF had *well above* the median number of students and Ph.D. programs;
- Alone of the comparison libraries in *Attachment C*, UF spent 18 of the last 40 years with resources funded *at or below* the median for ARL libraries. See *also Attachment H*;
- *Escalating cost* of electronic resources exacerbates the pressure on resource funding – most contracts for e-information include annual price increases at or above inflation;
- Current *allocation* too small for academic program – *Attachments A, C, D, E*;
- Result: smaller collections than those of peer institutions, fewer scholarly journal runs, runs with gaps, important scholarly books missing -- weak academic support – *Attachment A*;
- Current *funding methodology* inadequate – *must be* annual increases to cover inflation;

**Solution:**

- Bring resource allocation up to standard of other research universities (an increase of \$2.5 million, see *Attachment A*). This increase is included in the suggested total budget increase above.
- Tie resource allocation to the size of the student body, graduate programs, grant income, faculty size, and inflation. If any of these increases, the resource allocation should increase in similar degree.
- Develop a source of income to provide such funding; e.g., recognize that tuition must cover these infrastructure costs as well as the cost of tuition.

• **Other Operating Expenditures Allocation.**

- Allocation too small for size of library and user group. See *Attachments I, J, and K*. Funding is *far below the ARL median* for furniture and equipment, facility maintenance, supplies, library vans, library organization memberships, faculty and staff training, travel to professional meetings, data provider services (e.g., cataloging copy), physical processing/book security materials (Tattle-tapes, machine readable classification labels, book labels, blank CDs), etc.
- Until the late 90's, when library began to carry forward unexpended funds, there was no option but special funding from the Provost's Office and many needs went unmet.
- Result is: a large **backlog of unfunded maintenance** -- library space looks tacky, carpeting and furniture is worn, public computers are insufficient in number and not up to date, not all new books and journals are given security strips, library faculty have insufficient funding to get to meetings resulting in tenure problems, and many expenses. Most important is that for many years, the *library resources allocation has been used to pay for items that should come from Expense* further exacerbating the problem of inadequate resource funding.
- Additionally, there is *little funding to furnish the renovated Library West*. \$3 million will be required to provide tables and chairs for student use.
- There is *no funding* to provide greatly increased numbers of **public computers** to increase student access to electronic information in renovated Library West.
- There is *no funding* to pay *new charges for network* ports scheduled to start in Fiscal 05. This will increase the library's costs by thousands of dollars.

**Solution:**

- Other Operating Expenditure allocation should be increased to approximately \$5,000,000 so that Library does not have to rely on holding positions open to accrue funds to repair reader chairs, etc. This increase is included in the suggested total budget increase above.
- Without additional funding in this category, the only possible solution open to the library is to hold more positions vacant to accrue needed funding, thus *further reducing staff support for students and faculty*.
- There is no solution to the Library West problem other than *opening an empty library, raising private money* to furnish the library, or getting an *additional infusion of funds from PECO*.

**Lack of Sufficient Space**

- **Library West** will continue to be substantially smaller than the normal "main" library. At 140,000 sq. ft., it compares badly with universities having 350,000 sq. ft. main libraries in addition to branches, and undergraduate libraries. UF will continue to have limited seating for a very large student body and limited on-campus collection space for research level scholars.

**Solution:**

- Place all general collections in compact shelving to maximize seating.
- Consider renovating Peabody for a Special Collections Library and moving all area study collections into Smathers Library.

- Consider building a large learning center similar to the University of Georgia which integrates digital library services and study seats into a large classroom building.
- **Music and Architecture & Fine Arts Libraries** are both out of space and in environmentally flawed space. Both have parts of their collections in storage and the Music library has to remove more library material or risk falling through the floor since the building was not built to handle library floor loads. Engineers have declared the situation dangerous. Neither library can seat the desired number of students. Temperatures and humidity are high and the buildings' air conditioning is turned off when students are not present. These create poor conditions for preservation and contribute to the decline of the collections.

**Solution:**

- Consider building a stand alone Architecture & Fine Arts library that would incorporate library services for all of the Architecture and Fine Arts as well as the schools of Building Construction and Music that could be appropriately maintained to protect expensive art, architecture, and music materials.

**Lack of Sufficient Staff**

- *Attachment L* demonstrates that UF has had many fewer staff members per student than peer universities over the past 40 years. This makes it harder to build effective collections, provide interactive services and instruction in library use & research, process large numbers of acquisitions, and develop new programs such as archiving digital dissertations, providing digital information for course management software, digitizing print information needed by our students and faculty, and/or building a university digital repository.

**Solution:**

- Increase staff size to a ratio commensurate with like universities. This cost is included in the total budget increase outlined above.

**ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION ONLY:**

1. *Has the Library examined or initiated way to reduce class size at the various undergraduate levels?* Not applicable.
2. *Please review and be prepared to discuss your undergraduate and graduate enrollment goals for the next three - five years.* Not directly applicable. However, it should be noted that continued enrollment increases and distance education programs further strain the library budget and staffing. Our ability to provide quality services and resources per student FTE is limited by the very high ratio of students to staff. (See *Attachments H and J*.)
3. *What Distance/continuing/Executive Education programs do you have in place and what new ones are you considering. Will they be on-book or off-book?* N. A.

**4. How have you gone about diversifying the faculty and staff in the past 12 months?**

UF had six beginning librarian positions open last Spring. A concentrated effort was made to solicit resumes from diverse applicants through on-site visits to schools of library and information science in Northern, Midwestern and Southeastern states. Our team consisted of some combination of a director, the Personnel Officer and a recent minority library school graduate who had worked with us for a year. The on-site visits allowed for personal interviews to occur with soon-to-be graduates. Minority applicants whose resumes might have been excluded for lack of experience were given equal priority with those who had more experience for our entry-level positions. The on-site interviews provided students the opportunity to explain their career goals and objectives verbally, while allowing the visiting team to observe their demeanor in a potentially stressful interview situation. This effort attracted a number of minorities, who would probably never have considered UF as a potential employer, to apply for our positions. Through this personal communication with participants, we were able to interview several minority candidates for the open positions. Ultimately two minority candidates were selected for hire. One accepted, and one declined for a better paying position closer to family.

Other initiatives included participating in the American Library Association Spectrum Scholars Program, which acts as a liaison with diverse candidates nationwide. The Spectrum Initiative provides a unique opportunity to connect with an ever-growing pool of exceptionally trained and professionally networked individuals from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and library interests. We will be attempting to utilize this program with more senior level positions.

Finally, UF has "grown" some of its own library faculty by assisting support staff to gain library degrees with flexible hours, etc. Because UF does not offer the MLS, we need *continued inter-institutional tuition reimbursement*.