Boston University Libraries

Strategic Plan: 2010-2015

Preface

The goals for the BU Libraries grew directly out of a strategic planning process conducted in early 2010 that sought to include all staff and departments. The planning documents that grew out of conversations with departments and working groups are the primary sources from which this plan was developed. The Libraries' planning efforts occurred in the context of similar efforts taking place in all of the University's academic units and reflect a continuity with the University's strategic plan published in 2007 as well as more recent conversations about the future of undergraduate education at Boston University.

Foundational to these goals is the assumption that through its programs and services, the Libraries are responsible for not only the curation and dissemination of information, but facilitating learning and knowledge creation. The library is an intentionally multidisciplinary meeting ground for scholarly engagement. Curation and dissemination of information are always performed in service to the Libraries' mission to increase connections between people that result in knowledge creation.

Programmatic and service priorities drive the design of library space, both physical and virtual. Through the information intensive spaces they provide, the Libraries invite and facilitate intellectual engagement, interdisciplinary inquiry, and critical assessment. Through the Libraries' instructional programs and services, students build capacities for information literacy that support lifelong learning and creativity.

The strategic goals defined in this document along with the objectives and measures that support implementation and assessment represent an intentional redefinition of the Boston University Libraries to develop programs, services, and information sources to support learning and scholarship in the 21st century. The iterative nature of this redefinition requires consultation and collaboration with the Libraries' primary stakeholders: the faculty, staff, students and alumni of the University. The Libraries' success in meeting these goals depends in large measure on its success in developing new and revitalizing existing means of communication with their stakeholders.

A strategic plan is ultimately a statement of how an organization will use its finite resources to accomplish its mission. It can be viewed as a sustainability document. In our context, the Libraries recognize that we think of sustainability both

environmentally and economically. The Libraries are committed to practices that are environmentally sustainable and that utilize their limited financial, physical and personnel resources in scalable and sustainable ways to achieve their goals. Essential to the Libraries' success is the development of a culture characterized by both continuous learning on the part of its staff and data-driven decision-making. Though not itself a goal, the Libraries are engaged in building their own competency and resources for gathering data to assess the Libraries' effectiveness in attaining their goals.

The digital production and management of information is central to the redefinition of the Boston University Libraries. Through digitization and the development of new tools and systems for information discovery, management and analysis, academic libraries are poised to play a pivotal role in the production of knowledge as both publishers and disseminators of knowledge. Academic libraries will contribute to the internationalization of scholarship by building and integrating access to global resources.

Create a "One BU" Libraries experience for all users that

1. Communicates information about services, resources and collections so that users are able to search, browse and discover in ways that are most useful and convenient for them,

2. Provides physical space designed to facilitate learning, research, and sustained intellectual engagement,

3. Extends the information intensive resources, services and programs of the library virtually to the University community regardless of location,

4. Improves coordination of collections, services and policies among all the BU libraries, to develop a consistent user experience,

5. Facilitates collaboration among librarians that enables sharing expertise and best practices to improve user service, expand access to library resources, and increase the Libraries' efficiency,

6. Develops and implements open library technologies capable of communicating and interacting with administrative and business processes in the University's information technology landscape.

Enhance faculty teaching, research and scholarship by

1. Effectively "on-boarding" new faculty with information, services and a primary librarian contact to enable them to quickly and effectively enter the University's research and teaching environment,

2. Broaden the Libraries' faculty liaison program to effectively discover and meet faculty needs,

3.   Increase the profile of the BU faculty by capturing, promoting and disseminating their intellectual output,

4.   Providing access to strong collections of digital and print content,

5.   Providing consultation, instructional and reference services designed to enhance the use of scholarly resources,

6.   Providing discovery tools that facilitate efficient information discovery and retrieval as well as text and data analysis.

Strengthen library services and programs to support graduate research and education that

1.   Expand and enhance access to collections and information sources to support graduate research,

2.   Provide information discovery tools that satisfy the requirements of graduate level research for both high precision and contextual recall,

3.   Develop and provide access to text corpora and other data sets for analysis with tools for topic modeling, text encoding, text analytics and data mining,

4.   Provide instructional, consulting and research services designed to enhance graduate students' ability to discover, access, and analyze appropriate scholarly resources in their specific subject area,

5.   Ensure a safe, secure and comfortable environment for research and writing at a graduate level.

Provide a learning environment, both physical and online, for undergraduates that

1.   Improves students' ability to discover, access, analyze and critique information,

2.   Invites sustained engagement with intellectual pursuits by individual students or groups of students,

3.   Promotes curiosity, creativity, and scholarly work through research services,

4.   Enables students to build capacities for information literacy that support lifelong learning and creativity,

5.   Ensures a safe, secure and comfortable environment for both collaborative learning and private study.

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Enhance the Libraries' support for the College of Arts and Sciences by

1. Building on the Arts and Sciences Writing Program to integrate information literacy into the curriculum for undergraduate and graduate students,

2. Expanding the library liaison program to more effectively discover and respond to faculty needs for library support services,

3. Collaborating with the Office of Alumni Relations to offer a suite of databases to alumni to enrich their life-long learning opportunities for continuing education and development.

Strengthen Library services for the four key professional Schools: Law, Medicine, Management, and Fine Arts by

1. Providing stronger coordination and collaboration with LAW and MED with a focus on interdisciplinary learning and research,

2. Continuing to support and develop the "embedded" library model adopted by the School of Management,

3. Using the models and best practices from our experience with the LAW, MED and Management libraries to expand library services and resources for the College of Fine Arts, with special attention to non-textual media and information sources.

Develop, describe and preserve a wide range of high-quality networked information resources for Boston University scholars, students, alumni, and the broader global community by

1. Increasing awareness and support for open access in the University faculties, particularly attending to the promotion and tenure process for junior faculty,

2. Providing a broad range of open access venues for publishing and dissemination of scholarly communication to Boston University faculty, staff, and students,

3. Establishing an effective preservation program for digital content curated by Boston University,

4. Develop and provide access to text corpora and other data sets for analysis with tools for topic modeling, text encoding, text analytics and data mining,

5. Developing an effective data library system that provides open access to data collected and used by BU faculty and students,

6. Improving both precision and recall in the searching and information seeking of the Boston University faculties, students, and staff,

7. Collecting the intellectual output of the Boston University faculty, students, and alumni.

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Maximize the Libraries' ability to meet the research and learning needs of the University by adapting to the increasingly global, digital and distributed information landscape by

1. Actively participating with leading organizations in defining the future of scholarly communication and research,

2. Utilizing new and existing networks and relationships of research libraries to maximize the network effect of these relationships,

3. Supporting the collaborative work of research libraries to maximize access to and preservation of scholarly resources,

4. Ensuring the sustainability of scholarly collections in the context of the global research community by employing a digital strategy that distinguishes between access and ownership based upon university priorities.