Unbooked & Unbound

Central University Libraries for the Second Century

Strategic Plan 2008-2013

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Unbooked & Unbound:
# Central University Libraries For The Second Century

"..the library - especially one so vast - is no mere cabinet of curiosities; it's a world, complete and uncompletable, and it is filled with secrets. Like a world, it has its changes and its seasons, which belie the permanence that ordered ranks of books imply. Tugged by the gravity of readers' desires, books flow in and out of the library like the tides."

" The digital objects of today are the incunabula of a not-too-distant tomorrow - our palimpsests, our geniza bits, the refuse of our restless and inconsolable appetite for change and immortality."
Matthew Battles, *Library: An Unquiet History*, 2003

Prologue

As the above quotation from Matthew Battles indicates, the Central University Libraries (CUL) finds itself pulled between two gravitational force fields – the past, which we are honor-bound to preserve and protect – and the future, serving new generations of users in new ways. The title for our transformational strategic plan – *Unbooked and Unbound: Central University Libraries for the Second Century* – points to the changing landscape of our world and our desire to empower our users by removing traditional restraints. At the same time, we hope to capture the reality of the growing digitization of our world while still paying homage to the book in all its beloved, tangible and tactile glory. SMU's newly announced capital campaign – *SMU Unbridled* – points both forwards and backwards; it contains both past – the University growing out of the North Texas prairie – and future, "inspiring new ideas in a classical setting." As members of the SMU family, we honor this legacy and are proud to be a vital part of this heritage.
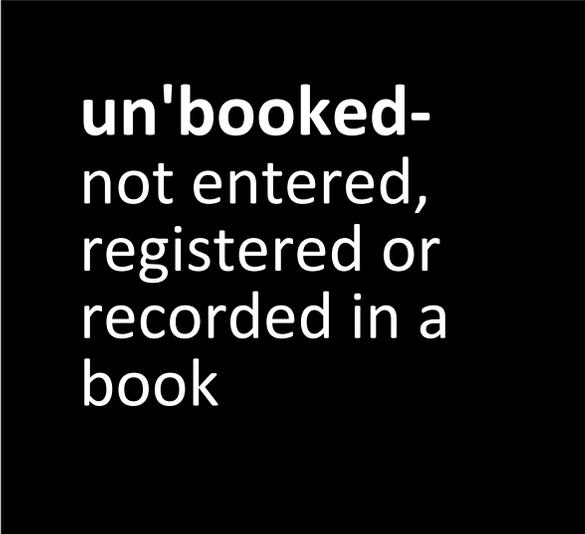
un'booked- not entered, registered or recorded in a book

Introduction

The library occupies an unparalleled place in an institution of higher education. It is a center of

un'bound- of books: not provided with a binding or cover

learning and knowledge unlike ordinary classrooms, lecture halls, or laboratories. Within its physical and burgeoning virtual realms, researchers and scholars can do much more than simply access information that has been systematically collected, cataloged, referenced, and preserved. Through today's academic library, they can search worldwide for information, network and dialogue both in person and digitally with other scholars, and use newly-acquired knowledge to test hypotheses, advance theories, synthesize new learning, and contribute to the ever-growing bodies of knowledge in a myriad of disciplines. Evidence that SMU subscribes to the belief that the library is preeminent can be found in its *Centennial Strategic Plan: Developing Leaders for an Emerging Global Society 2006-2015,* where the libraries are referred to as "the heart of academic excellence," and of fundamental importance to enhancing the academic quality and stature of the University.

Central University Libraries Today

As a center of intellectual life at SMU, Central University Libraries has been encouraging the discovery and acquisition of knowledge since the opening of the first SMU library in Dallas Hall in 1915. CUL is now the largest component of the University Library System and considers its primary goal to be the creation of a 21st century library that uses technology as a catalyst for learning, supports the research needs of the academic community and provides comfortable and graceful physical settings conducive to study, research and intellectual inspiration.

CUL has a distinguished record of providing a high level of personalized service and support to the University, and can take pride in its significant contributions to SMU's progress over the years. CUL's collections, at over two million volumes, make up the heart of the collections on campus. The SMU Libraries together constitute the largest private academic library in the Southwest. CUL's collections are both broad and deep, and include not only printed materials, such as books and periodicals, but other media as well; for example, manuscripts, prints, maps, photographs, films, videotapes and DVDs, sound recordings, and electronic resources.

Notable areas of specialization within CUL include the DeGolyer Library, home to over 120,000 rare books as well as two million manuscripts and other archival collections. The Hamon Arts Library houses over 180,000 volumes of fine and performing arts materials, the Jerry Bywaters Special Collections, and the G. William Jones Film and Video Collection. The Foscue Map Library, located in Fondren, contains over 250,000 maps; and the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man Reading Room offers more than 10,000 books and journals, chiefly focused on geology and anthropology. Finally, at the Taos campus in New Mexico, the Fort Burgwin Library serves the needs of the academic programs of SMU-in-Taos, with particular strengths in Native American studies, Southwestern history and literature, geology, and anthropology. The collection contains over 6,000 books and journals.

CUL's collections contribute directly to the University's goals of "enhancing the academic quality and stature of the University," "improving teaching and learning," and "strengthening scholarly research and creative achievement." For example, the DeGolyer Library collects rare books and manuscripts that support the curriculum in Dedman College, especially doctoral programs in English and History. The Hamon Arts Library actively supports the research and curriculum of the Meadows School of the Arts, and has strong collections in Spanish art and 19th and 20th century French music. Within the Hamon Library, the Bywaters Collection concentrates on arts of the Southwest, and the G. William Jones Film and Video Collection provides instructional and research support for the study of moving images, with collection highlights including the Tyler, Texas Black Film Collection, and the Sulphur Springs Collection of pre-nickelodeon films. The Fondren Library Center's collection of over 1.8 million volumes supports the programs of Dedman College, the School of Engineering, the Simmons School of Education and Human Development and (in partnership with the Business Information Center) the Cox School of Business. Fondren Library's collection also goes beyond strict curricular needs to provide representative texts that support the study of all areas of human knowledge not represented by other libraries on campus.

The varied campus library facilities support access to these collections. Fondren Library Center is a popular location for individual and group study, and the number of people using the library continues to increase. In response to ███████████████

student demand for quiet, secure study space, Fondren is now open 24 hours daily during the fall and spring semesters, providing continuous access to a learning environment. CUL provides almost 200 computers for in-library use with up-to-date software, full Internet access, and high-speed black/white and color printing capability. Wireless Internet access and wireless printing are available throughout CUL buildings and wireless access is available on the outdoor patios as well. Generous site licenses negotiated by Collection Development staff allow walk-in patrons access to many of our digital resources.

Hamon Arts Library is also popular among students, not only those in the Meadows School of the Arts, but in the general population as well, having comfortable, well-lit study areas and multi-functional group study rooms for media viewing. The new Norwick Center for Digital Services, adjacent to the Information Commons in Fondren Library, includes the Student Multimedia Center where students can create multimedia projects for class assignments and practice their presentations, a film screening room and a digital projects area where staff can digitize CUL collections. The DeGolyer Library finds its seminar room and exhibit facilities frequently used. The Texana Room, with its oak panelling and book-lined walls, is considered a premium venue for lectures, seminars and regular meetings. The SMU Board of Trustees annually holds its February meeting in DeGolyer's Stanley Marcus Reading Room, which also serves as CUL's largest event space, holding about 150 people.
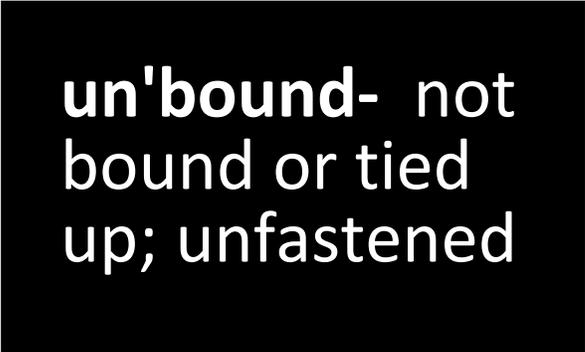
un'bound- not bound or tied up; unfastened

The Strategic Planning Process

In 2000, Central University Libraries unveiled its five-year strategic plan, entitled *For Future Reference.* The plan marked a new era of systematic planning for and implementation of strategic objectives by outlining a course of action designed to help CUL become a more flexible and agile partner in the University's academic and cultural transformation. In 2007, as the University positioned itself to launch a new capital campaign and to define a brave, bold and academically rigorous vision for SMU, it became clear that CUL needed to refresh its own roadmap and take some time to look within, refocus, and retool in order to strategically support these new directions.

Accordingly, in the fall of 2007, CUL launched a strategic transformation process. Under the guidance of an outside consultant, a group of 35 people representing all areas of the SMU community spent a day 'in retreat.' This strategic plan, *Unbooked and Unbound: Central University Libraries for the Second Century*, is the result of that retreat plus a year of meetings, focus groups, environmental scanning, and plain hammering out of the issues. It represents the best thinking of a large and diverse number of people who have in common a passionate interest in SMU's long-term, sustainable success, and the role that CUL plays therein. The document outlines the strategic objectives for the years 2008 through 2013.

One of the first activities of the group was to identify a set of assumptions about the future state of CUL and the University. Doing so enabled participants to examine those changes in the academic environment, the library profession, the evolving use of technology, and the needs and behaviors of library users that would play a role in the future of CUL. These assumptions are as follows:

- Demand will continue to increase for all CUL services and resources, including in-person services and resources at CUL facilities and access to Web-based services and resources.
- CUL will grapple with how to best meet new and evolving user needs and expectations, while continuing to provide more traditional and still-valued library services and resources.
- Institutional focus on research activities at SMU will increase, with a corresponding demand for access to new and different types of information resources to support faculty and student scholarly pursuits.
- The George W. Bush Presidential Library will be on the SMU campus, bringing with it the need to increase library support for external researchers as well as building and network security.
- Adequate space for collections, services and resources, scholarly activities, and personnel workspaces will continue to be at a premium within CUL facilities.
- Students will have greater technical sophistication and higher expectations for online services and resources, while continuing to value high quality physical facilities and in-person services and resources.
- Librarians will play a larger role in supporting academic activities through structured subject liaison activities, including integration of library materials into classroom instruction.

- CUL staff will become increasingly sophisticated users of technology as advances in technology continue to exert influence on the way services and resources are acquired, organized, and delivered.
- Funding needs across CUL will grow as costs for personnel, resources, and space increase.

Environmental Trends and Influential Factors

Consideration of the above assumptions helped drive the identification of strategic goals. However, as CUL maps out and develops its strategic vision, it must also give due consideration to trends and factors that may affect our ability to be successful in the future. To this end, the strategic planning group reviewed numerous reports, white papers and national surveys to seek out potential trends and influencing factors. These include trends in the ways individuals seek and use information, patterns of change in the ways libraries respond to and adapt their services to user needs and expectations, and technological advances (particularly as these affect the publishing and music industries.) The following environmental trends and influential factors are highlighted as having high potential for changing both the way CUL operates and the performance expectations the campus community may place on CUL.

- **Student Behavioral Trends**

Most students entering colleges and universities today are younger than the personal computer, are more comfortable working on a keyboard than writing in a spiral notebook, and are happier reading from a computer screen than from a piece of paper. Constant connectivity – being in touch with friends and family at any time and from any place – is of utmost importance to most young adults. Many information searches that traditionally used physical library spaces and resources now occur more familiarly on the Internet. CUL has already begun to address these trends by creating a very

> "There are rich fields of yet unbooked English life…"
> David Masson, *British Novelists and Their Styles.*
> Cambridge, Eng.: Macmillan and Co., 1859

successful 24/7 library in the Fondren Library Center, connected via wireless and hardwired computers, providing any time/any place connectivity.

Student expectations for faster and greater access to services are documented in Neil Howe and William Strauss' "Millennials Go to College: Strategies for a New Generation on Campus" (2003). This study reports that the college students of today have much higher expectations for college services of all types, including library services, than did their parents. College students still use the library, but they use it less often than did their predecessors, often substituting Internet research capabilities for library research resources. When asked how they identify with campus libraries, students are most likely to identify "books" as being the product they most associate with a library. However, when questioned about specific library services used, students are frequently using more electronic resources than print materials. Furthermore, the current generation of college students tends to prefer visual information to text information, which will have an impact on how we design our web pages. CUL should focus some considerable attention on marketing its services and rebranding itself.

Stephen Abram and Judy Luther (2004) describe how the members of the Millennial Generation differ from Baby Boomers, and identify nine Millennial Generation behavioral traits and their effect on library services. According to Abram and Luther, Millennials do not differentiate information on the basis of format or media type, do expect information and entertainment to be available to them whenever they need it and wherever they are, multitask and expect all information appliances to support multitasking, and see content and technology as inseparable. Further, Jill Taylor-Roe (2006) noted that "the success of e-journals means that many users now expect 24/7 access to a much wider range of library resources."

Faced with the prospect that both students and faculty will increasingly want primary access to information online, CUL must become more e-consumer friendly, and less dependent on traditional means of delivering services. Furthermore, CUL must develop a means of monitoring and evaluating user behavior, and must be responsive to behavioral changes.

- **Digital Technology**

Libraries across the country are placing increasing emphasis on digitizing collections, preserving digital archives, and improving methods of data storage, retrieval, curation, and service. Public

awareness of the issues associated with large-scale digitization projects has grown as an increasing number of libraries have signed on as partners in projects such as the Open Content Alliance and the Google Book Search Library Project. Publishers continue to develop extensive digital collections, moving beyond electronic versions of existing collections into the creation and marketing of digital collections the publishers themselves have created. The University of Michigan library system has installed the very first Espresso Book Machine for patrons to generate print books from its digitized books in the Google project. For CUL, developing our own digital collections to 'open up' previously hidden collections (as opposed to simply licensing access to content created by others), establishing institutional repository programs, adopting advanced search technologies, and creating more robust tools for scholarly use of digital content are a necessity. At the same time, CUL must develop ways to handle information that was 'born digital' and be more aggressive in creating digital archives that are accessible on the web.

The digitization of most media sources has liberated faculty from having to deal with multiple pieces of equipment and formats. However, this unshackling of media from their original formats has also separated the content from the creator, often bypassing copyright restrictions along the way. CUL must be assertive in assisting faculty with this transition while at the same time safeguarding copyright protections. We must also remember to use our acquisitions resources wisely and take care that we do not find ourselves in a mode of constant reformatting, or repurchasing in a different format.

- **Professional Requirements for Librarians**

The skill set necessary for librarians will continue to evolve in response to the changing needs and expectations of the populations served. The professional background of library staff will need to become increasingly diverse in order to support expanded international programs and administrative needs, assisting the University in its quest to become more global in its reach. A study conducted by Kennan, Cole, and Willard in 2006 analyzed job openings from 1974, 1984, 1994, and 2004, and found that librarians today are expected to have a broader range of skills than in the past. Specifically, the researchers noted a marked increase in the need for skills in Web design and the use of electronic resources, as well as for interpersonal and teamwork skills. At the

same time, in 2006, James Neal (Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian at Columbia University) introduced a new dimension to the discussion by identifying an increasing need to incorporate individuals with professional backgrounds outside the library field such as economics, anthropology and public policy into the academic library. Doing so, he argues, brings a greater level of richness and diversity to the traditional set of skills associated with academic libraries.

In recognition of this trend for greater levels of professional skills, CUL has placed a priority on enhancing the skills and competencies of its professional library staff, and going outside traditional professional forums when hiring new staff.

- **Demand for Access to Research Data**

Demand for free public access to data collected and research completed as part of publicly funded research programs is likely to continue to grow. Recent literature on Open Access (OA) reflects the extensive growth of this relatively new movement to make publicly funded scientific research freely available. High profile OA initiatives like Highwire Press, Public Library of Science (PLoS), BioMedCentral, and others have attracted the attention of scholars interested in supporting improved publishing models.

The battle between OA proponents and the publishing industry is escalating. The Association of American Publishers recently hired a public relations consultant (who is famous for using "media messaging") to shape the climate change debate, to assist it in shaping the debate on OA. However, many publishers support OA in one form or another and are

un'bound- to deprive of bounds or limits

experimenting with a variety of business models. Some publishers have hybrid programs that give authors the option of paying to make their articles freely accessible. Others are altering subscription models to give free access to older journal content. This multifaceted and contentious issue will likely continue to get coverage in the professional literature over the next several years.

CUL must work to educate faculty and administrators alike about the ramifications of these debates for research and potential funding and access issues.

- **Trend Toward Greater Accountability in Higher Education**

Throughout the country, institutions of higher learning are being asked to account for their operations – to their constituents, to their governing boards, and to their donors. Within the university, all units are being held more accountable and being asked to document their return on the University's financial investment. This trend has challenged libraries over the years to demonstrate the value-added effects of large investments in electronic resources, technology and – most recently – in an old technology, print books! CUL must avail itself of better data gathering tools and hire staff with strengths in statistical analysis to document usage of both resources and facilities. This will aid in both justifying current expenditures and strategically directing funds to high use research areas.

> **un' bound-**
> not secured with a band or border of some strong material

Major CUL Accomplishments 2000-2007

We know we will have challenges ahead to support the University in light of the above trends and as SMU expands its research agenda. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge how far we have come since the last period of review. Some of the most obvious changes have occurred in the use of space. The Fondren reference area that previously housed a collection of 10,000 reference books is now a humming Information Commons with over 70 computers supported by a much-reduced physical print collection. At the request of the students, we created group study rooms with computers, white boards and vibrant colors as well as a student lounge with vending machines and coffee to fuel creativity during the 'night owl' hours. The Hamon Arts Library created a similar space where students listen to and view all forms of media at one-stop shop multimedia stations.

CUL's budget stabilized over the last five years with a regular infusion of acquisitions increases, additional funding for student workers to support new services such as the 24/7 study hall, and support for a variety of temporary positions that enabled the Libraries to pilot new initiatives such as digital content management and grant writing. Several new permanent positions were added in

the areas of web services, fundraising, technical support, personnel, university archives, music media, photography curation and digital services.

Our collections have grown by more than 280,000 volumes, and we have doubled the number of databases and e-journals to over 5,000. We acquired many notable archival collections, such as the JCPenney Archives, the Stanley Marcus Library, the Horchow papers, the Temerlin Archives, the TI Historical Archive, the contents of the Texas History Museum, the Hahn Algonquin papers and two collections of unique WWII photographs. We subscribe to various 'big deals' of online resources and databases through consortia such as TexShare and Phoenix to leverage our acquisitions dollars for electronic resources, and provide access to over 33,500 eBooks.

Another obvious area of progress has been to make our services more convenient for our users, specifically by moving many of our functions online. For example, renewing books, borrowing from other libraries and 'chatting' with librarians can all be done via the internet. We incorporated the media library into the main library, created iPod reserves for music, developed an online resource alert service for faculty and students and repurposed our classroom technology support unit to focus on digital production and student multimedia support.

At the same time, we raised CUL's visibility both on and off campus with the creation of a portfolio of high quality, glossy publications such as *Annotations* (a biennial newsletter*)* and the *CUL Annual Report.* CUL news items are included regularly in the *SMU Forum* and picked up by the national press. Our first centrally-funded major gifts officer joined the staff in 2008 and CUL is now well-placed to play a central role in the upcoming campaign with its own volunteer fundraising committee and staff support. Various projects funded externally over the intervening years include the *Remember the Ladies!* Campaign, which has raised over $500,000 for the Archives of Women of the Southwest; the commissioning of an architect to develop initial plans for the FLC renovation; the creation of a staff award endowment; and the digitization of the *Tyler, Texas Collection* of race movies. At the same time, the SMU Libraries Executive Board has grown stronger, more focused and more enthusiastic in its advocacy of our cause, as has the Friends of the SMU Libraries/Colophon (FOL).

CUL worked hard over these years to collaborate with many SMU units. In partnership with

the School of Education and Human Development, CUL received temporary funding for a grant writer; with support from the Faculty Senate and the Provost's Office, CUL created an annual Faculty Recognition day to honor faculty and their publications. We formed the Strategic Alliance to unite contiguous, non-CUL units to work on information technology issues as well as a Student Advisory Council that acts as a forum for students to voice their concerns and give input on service enhancements.

Internally, CUL worked diligently to improve opportunities for staff. We created additional awards such as the FOL Library School Scholarship, CUL Team Award and the Dean's Eureka Award; raised the librarian minimum salary; created a promotional ladder for librarians with annual support from the Provost's Office; created a library mentoring program and a support group for library staff going to (or thinking of) library school. For more efficient personnel practices, we established a separate CUL human resources office and consolidated student payroll and hiring staff processes.

CUL has much to be proud of as it looks back over the last seven years. We are well placed to succeed as we challenge ourselves to move ahead and play an integral role in SMU's second century.

Organizational Strengths and Current Challenges

It is within this context of challenges and opportunities that CUL must consciously strive to expand and enhance its support for SMU's scholarly activities. This discussion is broken down into four main areas: **collections and services, funding for collections, staffing and internal organization, and facilities constraints.**

- **Collections and services**

CUL's collections and services are fundamental to enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning environments and are worthy of special note. Easy access to an impressive array of electronic resources, such as specialized journals, indexes, databases, and full-text initiatives, enables students and faculty to pursue in-depth research using materials that would have been

difficult to use just ten years ago. The print collections are wide and varied, a testament to the committed efforts of collection development staff over the years. One of the other keys to CUL's ability to provide such excellent service is the dedication and service orientation of our staff, a quality that is regularly noted by patrons. This is evident in the high service and satisfaction ratings regularly given to staff in periodic user surveys. This history of service excellence is a hallmark of CUL's enduring commitment to supporting the University's research, teaching and learning needs. One example of an area noted for service excellence is CUL's robust interlibrary loan service that frequently garners high praise from users. The staff speedily locate hard-to-find materials from other libraries worldwide in support of scholarly activities.

CUL staff are responsive to changing user information seeking behavior. Surveys and focus groups help to identify new and revised expectations and have provided feedback about the organization's effectiveness in meeting them. Most units actively solicit input from users, review comments, and implement suggestions to strengthen service delivery; recommendations and questions submitted in suggestion boxes are addressed by library staff, who post responses on bulletin boards in the lobby and on the web. The Dean regularly meets with the CUL Student Advisory Council to seek input on planned initiatives and recommendations for service improvement. The Dean and the Deputy Director also meet frequently with the Faculty Senate Subcommittee on Libraries. These types of feedback are useful for assessing current organizational performance, setting priorities for change, and advocating for library support in various non-library forums. The Dean encourages innovation and creative problem solving among the staff through her "Eureka!" Award, given annually to individuals and teams who exemplify "thinking outside the box." Innovation is also supported through the SMU Libraries Award for Technical Innovation.

un'bound- of substances: In a loose or free state. Also of a particle:= free

In the Norwick Center for Digital Services, which brings together the staff and space necessary to convert non-accessible collections into digital objects, CUL is working actively to bring these service standards into the digital realm. The next challenge in the digital arena will be to define and put into place standardized, documented workflow processes to implement digital projects, particularly in the area of metadata creation. Experimentation will

be necessary to determine how to execute projects most efficiently. Labor, equipment, and expertise needs will vary widely from project to project and staff must allot adequate time for planning and training at the onset of each project. The digital collection development policy will need refinement as the library moves forward with its digitization goals. Similarly, staff must create

un'bound- unbounded; boundless

a new framework to provide for the sound and timely evaluation and selection of other new strategic technologies. Libraries worldwide are in a transition period of responding to changes in user information needs and adapting services to meet those needs. CUL must be prepared to implement new technologies more quickly and to make internal operations more efficient.

Another example of recent efforts undertaken to improve the quality of service offered to library users is the ongoing implementation of a library-wide subject liaison model. This new model of providing combined reference and collection development service will better support academic research and programs, and speaks directly to the University goal of improving teaching and learning. To date, outreach efforts to academic departments have been strong in those areas where CUL already has subject specialists and liaisons, such as in the Hamon Arts Library. Current research shows that both student grades *and* student retention rates improve when faculty and librarians work together to integrate information literacy and research methodologies into the curriculum early in a student's program of study. These findings would support the creating of an information literacy requirement for all first-year students.

CUL's well-honed acquisitions and cataloguing processes enable library staff to make newly purchased materials available to users quickly and efficiently. However, backlogs of gift materials, ephemera, music scores and archives and manuscripts remain. These need to be addressed in order to better serve our users as well as be accountable to our generous donors. As is true for many libraries, CUL adheres to national cataloging standards, but at the same time must explore ways to provide more timely access to these largely invisible collections.

Meanwhile, catalog access to library materials is not nearly as useful as researchers would like. They find the existing library online catalog interface dated and difficult to use, often attempting to search as though using Google or accessing a commercial web site such as Amazon.com. The

catalog is not nearly as powerful as these tools and fails to deliver expected results. Additionally, library users have increasing expectations for the presence of digital content. CUL's digital collections are still few in number and some are currently embedded within systems that are challenging to use and non-intuitive for most users. CUL must work with its partner libraries at SMU to explore solutions to this situation.

- **Funding**

Given the University's increasing emphasis on research and graduate studies, CUL must prepare to support curricular changes and new research endeavors. CUL is grateful for its healthy acquisitions endowments. The DeGolyer endowment provides support that enables the DeGolyer Library to maintain its collections and services, including its distinguished holdings of Western Americana and railroad history; the very generous Prothro endowment provides a major source of income for the purchase of books on every subject supported by the University. Other large endowments include the McManus endowment for bibliographic material, the Kahn/History endowment for books in history, and the Oost endowment for classics. Moreover, the continued generous support of the Friends of the SMU Libraries (FOL) enhances CUL's ability to acquire specialized materials and equipment for its collections, and is a valued source of both advocacy and financial support. The FOL endowment has grown sufficiently for the income to partially subsidize the salaries of the Director and staff support, while the annual fundraiser, Tables of Content, has grown to be a star event on SMU's social calendar, enhancing CUL's reputation within the Dallas community and raising much-needed funds for grants and staff awards.

To optimize scarce resources, CUL is an active participant in various joint purchasing arrangements that enable the library system to acquire information at substantial discounts. The most important of these consortia is TexShare, partially funded by the State of Texas, which provides deep discounts on electronic materials. This enables CUL to acquire important e-resources for a fraction of their usual cost. CUL also takes advantage of other purchasing relationships with groups such as TCAL (a consortium of Texas libraries focused on products not available through TexShare) and PHOENIX (major North Texas university libraries) to obtain favorable pricing on other electronic products. At the same time, CUL must continue to advocate

for funding that both maintains and increases the number of these crucial research tools. The expanded research agenda will bring expectations for support in both current and new research areas.

CUL faces significant financial challenges as it looks forward to the next five years. Chief among these challenges is maintaining the core acquisitions budget in light of continued inflationary increases. Faculty hired in new Ph.D. programs and interdisciplinary areas will need both retrospective and current collection support.

- **Staffing and internal organization**

Like many other organizations facing rapid change, CUL must modify staffing patterns and job responsibilities in order to adequately support new and revamped services. CUL is challenged to critically evaluate, restructure, and reassign job responsibilities as new priorities and new technologies emerge. CUL managers need to place greater emphasis on managing job duties and providing staff with clear job expectations to ensure high levels of productivity. The groundwork for a new emphasis was laid in 2000 when CUL developed a customized evaluation instrument for senior managers. Building on this, in 2006, the Executive Council participated in Advanced Performance Management training program with its 360 review process. Work must continue, in partnership with SMU's HR staff, to coach senior managers and provide them with the tools to manage their staff in a vastly more complex work environment.

CUL is fortunate to have a large number of staff with significant length of service at the University. This core group of long-term employees helps sustain an internal culture that embraces respect for and commitment to the core mission of the organization – providing high-quality, responsive service, and maintaining and growing excellent collections. Long-term staff collectively comprise an important framework of institutional knowledge and experience upon which to build and expand service capabilities as user needs change. They act as role models for staff with less experience, and can help mentor and guide less experienced workers.

At the same time, new staff members bring new ideas and new ways of looking at library services. CUL recognizes the important contributions of those who challenge old ways of

un'bound-
unconfined,
unconstrained

thinking and who help reframe service paradigms within CUL. They bring new approaches, often technology-driven, to solve both old and new problems. These newer staff members represent the next generation of knowledge workers who see possibilities where none may have existed before, and who will help grow and sustain excellence within CUL over time. The combination of well-qualified and well-educated, seasoned staff and newer staff is a powerful resource within CUL. At the same time, staff salaries and benefits need boosting in order to become competitive locally and nationwide. CUL faces particular challenges when looking to hire qualified staff with high-level technical skills, particularly in middle management.

Growth and change mean that employee competencies must be kept current. Within CUL, both managers and staff believe that more training is needed to help employees develop and refine skills and knowledge. Managers are encouraged to participate in SMU's varied management training classes; however, we need to go one step further and provide management training for all first-time managers before assuming their new duties. As technical expertise becomes more important than ever in libraries, technology training must keep pace with new demands. CUL must define the technical competencies required for all staff positions. This will help identify training needs for current staff as well as clarify technical requirements for future vacancies.

Closely related to the need for skill development training is the perceived need for a career advancement path for non-librarian staff. A career ladder for librarians was formalized in 2002 with the creation of an annual review process and the setting aside of a promotion fund by the Provost. While CUL has a policy of promoting from within and creating positions to meet specific needs, there is as yet no similar promotion process or career ladder for non-librarians. Additionally, succession planning must be strengthened in order to prepare for a large number of impending retirements over the next five years. The Executive Council currently assesses all vacant positions, providing opportunities for strategic direction of blocks of staff towards newly defined goals, along with opportunities to begin training staff for anticipated openings. However, CUL must develop a more conscious strategy for rethinking the organizational structure in light of the rapidly changing information landscape.

Notwithstanding these challenges, recent innovations by CUL staff have focused on enhanced service dependability and accessibility for users. For example, Fondren Reference Services staff are in the process of reorganization, and the Public Services and Collection Development divisions are working to transition to a subject liaison model. The Center for Information Processing is reviewing the charges and make-up of its teams and work groups, and has developed a new reporting structure; new positions have been created, existing positions have been modified, and a new Director has been hired. The Norwick Center for Digital Services (nCDS) grew out of the former Center for Media and Instructional Technology (CMIT), requiring several staff members to take on new or changed responsibilities that now support student multimedia needs and digital library projects. The Systems/CUL Information Support Services department has taken on responsibility for CUL web development and has restructured to form a Web Team. These examples speak to the flexibility and adaptability of staff, but reinforce the need for a revitalized performance management system that will clearly and succinctly spell out performance expectations across all CUL departments.

- **Facilities constraints**

A recent space analysis conducted by an outside consultant, at the request of SMU's Campus Planning & Plant

> **un'bound-** "This precious Booke of Loue, this vnbound Louer, To Beautifie him, onely lacks a Couer." William Shakespeare, *Romeo & Juliet*. 1592.

Operations, documented numerous areas that need attention in order to resolve dysfunctional traffic flow and obsolete mechanical systems, particularly in the FLC. Deferred maintenance issues in the three separate buildings that comprise the FLC are noticeable. Books and patrons alike suffer from temperature extremes. There are no humidity controls in areas that house our most precious rare books. The DeGolyer Library is storing collections in all parts of the FLC building (and on our Legacy campus) to the detriment of efficient staff curation and security. Exhibit space is limited and slowly erodes due to the continual need to expand shelving. In the Hamon Arts Library, shelf space is also an issue. The Library will be completely out of shelf space in two years, and must look at either building up another floor, adding compact shelving (and reducing study space) or sending collections to offsite storage.

The challenges for CUL are many, but so are our strengths. CUL has established a reputation for being a proactive, responsive, learning organization and has a track record to prove it. We welcome the opportunities these challenges bring and look forward to serving our users to the best of our abilities.

Conclusion

It is an exciting time to be at SMU. As it prepares to enter its second century, the University has embarked on a path that will enable it to become one of the nation's leading educational institutions. This path will not be without challenges. The same can be said for CUL's task as it reinvents itself to be a key player in the University's transformation. However, we have every confidence that we are up to these challenges. The CUL staff are enormously gifted, motivated, and passionate about serving the SMU community. We are blessed with the support of faculty, staff and students who encourage us and appreciate our efforts serve them, and we look forward to continuing and enriching this partnership. We have set the bar high in our strategic plan, but, like Alice in *Through the Looking Glass*, we have learned to believe in the impossible:

> *"Alice laughed. "There's no use trying," she said; "one can't believe impossible things."*
>
> *"I dare say you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."*
>
> Lewis Carroll*, Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There,* 1871

Vision Mission & Values

Vision

As the primary information resource for the SMU community, and commonly referred to as 'the heart of the University,' the Central University Libraries plays a central role in supporting the University's aspiration to be a leading research institution and a dynamic, engaged, learning environment. CUL will be committed to the use of transformative processes and tools in support of this vision, and will be an active participant in the digital revolution. As information needs change and grow, CUL will seek to play a leadership role in the intellectual life of the SMU community.

Mission

The Central University Libraries supports and enriches SMU's academic mission and heritage. CUL serves students, faculty, staff and the general public by building collections, organizing information, providing high quality research assistance, and preserving, digitizing and showcasing library materials. CUL staff will provide outstanding professional assistance in the access of diverse resources, and create an environment that respects academic freedom, encourages open enquiry and excites the mind.

Staff Values

- We value all members of the SMU community and the contributions they make to the teaching, research and learning environment.

- We value an environment of integrity, trust, diversity, open communication, and respect that fosters collaboration, creativity and learning.

- We value intellectual freedom and support its role in academic research and education.

- We value the unique quality of our collections and our ability to provide access to the world's information resources.

- We value our role in preserving and maintaining the SMU collections for future use.

- We value our collective knowledge, experience and skills to provide quality services in a professional manner.

- We value the Central University Libraries as a place that provides a cultural and intellectual center for study, research, work, and life-long learning.

- We value the joy and excitement of learning, both for ourselves and those we serve.

- We value an environment that encourages innovation and new ideas.

Goal 1

Create, organize, and deliver collections that support the evolving curricular and research needs of the University community.

Critical Success Factors

1) Acquisition decisions are informed by and responsive to user needs as collections are systematically evaluated for curriculum support.

2) Users report that CUL collections meet or exceed their needs.

3) An established inventory control program successfully manages and evaluates collections on an ongoing basis for physical condition and relevancy. Conservation and preservation are performed as needed.

4) Collections are easy to access, navigate, and use, both physically and virtually.

5) Course reserves are delivered through a system that successfully addresses user needs.

6) Special collections materials and gifts are rapidly represented in the catalog upon their acquisition.

7) CUL is included in all critical initiatives regarding SMU's expanded research agenda.

Goal 2

Transform the tools of scholarly research by implementing strategic technologies that reflect the priorities of SMU while serving the broader scholarly community.

Critical Success Factors

1) Strategic technologies are progressively implemented.

2) New technologies are thoroughly evaluated, selected, and implemented on a timely basis to support scholarly research and to make internal operations more efficient.

3) Technology evaluation, selection, and implementation are informed by and responsive to input from faculty and students.

4) Documented processes guide the review of proposed and adopted technologies so that decisions about purchase, implementation, and retirement/replacement are made in a timely and systematic manner.

5) The evaluation and prioritization of digitization projects reflect the priorities of students and faculty for online access to collections, and are guided by established processes.

Goal 3

Re-brand CUL as a powerful resource for the University community and increase awareness and use of collections and services.

Critical Success Factors

1) CUL is a catalyst to deepen and broaden the information fluency and technical literacy of its users.

2) CUL enhances the quality of scholarship by providing the tools for skillful access, organization, and evaluation of information.

3) CUL's web presence incorporates contemporary web design, is accessible to users with disabilities, and provides efficient and easy-to-use access to collections and services.

4) CUL proactively reaches out to faculty, students, and others in the SMU community through a strong subject liaison program.

5) CUL is actively involved with faculty and administration in curricular initiatives.

6) CUL provides active and engaging programs that educate users and promote library resources and services to the SMU community.

7) CUL programs, collections and resources are marketed and publicized to both internal and external constituents.

8) All SMU departments work closely with the University Archivist to identify and preserve their records of historical value and to transfer them in a timely manner to the SMU Archives.

Goal 4

Create comfortable, inviting, and vibrant library spaces – both physical and virtual – that are responsive to the social dimensions of learning and research, that protect collections, promote the discovery of knowledge, that allow for growth, and that provide appropriate workspaces for staff.

Critical Success Factors

1) Building architecture, design, and collection arrangement enhance the user experience.

2) Public spaces create an environment conducive to quality education, research and work.

3) Staff workspaces are located to maximize workflow efficiency and to take advantage of existing strengths of CUL's physical facilities.

4) CUL has full use of and access to all space within its various facilities.

5) Collections, especially the rarest and most valuable, are located in physical environments that support both access and preservation.

6) CUL provides a virtual environment where students and researchers can connect with one another and feel comfortable exploring and interacting with digital collections and services.

Goal 5

Build on the high level of customer service provided by CUL and proactively address changing user behaviors and needs.

Critical Success Factors

1) CUL responds quickly to and better understands user needs and information-seeking behaviors, developing enhanced systems to assist users identify and use information.

2) Users report high levels of satisfaction with service and support.

3) User services are effectively marketed and publicized to internal and external constituents.

4) All staff go above and beyond the norm necessary to provide excellent customer service.

5) CUL contributes to the university's mission and spirit by encouraging innovation and responding creatively to new challenges with service improvements.

6) The CUL website serves as an effective portal to library resources and is an important research tool for students, faculty, staff, and the wider SMU community.

7) CUL is a proactive partner with the Office of Student Affairs, expanding library involvement with Resident Life and Student Housing.

8) Information literacy and library research skills are an integral part of every undergraduate's education.

Goal 6

Invest in the requisite talent and expertise needed for a preeminent research university library system by recruiting, developing, and retaining staff with the skills and knowledge required to provide leadership in a complex environment.

Critical Success Factors

1) Recruitment and employment processes enable CUL to attract highly qualified staff.

2) CUL follows established career advancement and management succession practices that support internal promotion and job growth.

3) Staff and managers receive training and development opportunities that enable them to successfully meet job expectations.

4) Staff and managers report being satisfied with and engaged in the CUL organization.

5) Managers use the CUL performance management system to hold staff accountable for performance.

6) CUL expands its range of required skill sets by hiring beyond traditional positions.

Goal 7

Create a culture of open communication and collaboration, encourage and reward innovation, facilitate and empower staff initiatives, and streamline work processes.

Critical Success Factors

1) Goals and priorities are communicated clearly to and understood by all staff and managers.

2) Established goals and priorities govern decisions regarding resource allocation.

3) The organization is structured effectively to align people and resources to support achievement of goals and priorities.

4) Collaboration, flexibility, innovation, and enhanced efficiency are promoted and rewarded.

5) Best practices from benchmark and other universities are adopted to improve work processes.

Goal 8

Develop a stronger financial base to acquire the raw materials of university research and meet CUL programmatic goals through a vigorous and successful program of fundraising and development.

Critical Success Factors

1) Librarians receive competitive salaries and benefits based on regional and national standards.

2) Salaries for non-librarian staff and students are competitive with those in other SMU divisions.

3) Acquisitions funding is competitive with both area institutions and with research libraries nationwide.

4) Allocated funding is used efficiently to support CUL programs and initiatives.

5) A robust development and external relations unit focuses efforts on fundraising and development activities.

6) CUL is well-positioned to play a central role in SMU's Centennial Campaign and to achieve CUL's campaign goals.

7) CUL fundraising priorities are effectively marketed to SMU donors and prospects.

8) CUL's major campaign goals are funded e.g. the first phase of the renovation of the Fondren Library Center by 2013.

CUL Strategic Planning Advisory Council Members

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