

Florida State University Libraries
2016 Quality Enhancement Review

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Overview

The library leadership team is outstanding. Their consensus approach to decision-making is successful. Everyone we met with expressed a strong belief in the importance of the library to the university's success. They provided reviewers with useful information regarding the strengths and challenges of the FSU library. The FSU Faculty Senate Library Committee is particularly helpful and supportive of the library agenda. We were impressed by their hard work in assisting and advocating for the library on serious collections budget issues, for example.

The success of FSU's new strategic plan will depend on strengthening the library, which is fundamental to each of FSU's six strategic goals. Investing strategically in the library will ensure fulfillment of these goals. The same is true for Florida State's Preeminence Measures and its goal to be in the US News Top 25. The library is currently ranked 51st among public university research libraries but should be higher.

Financial Resources

The library does an outstanding job of stewarding its limited resources to achieve greatest impact, but challenges include:

The collections budget is inadequate for a university of FSU's size and breadth. FSU's administration has increased the libraries' collection budget over the past two years by \$750K recurring, augmented by non-recurring funds, but more is needed.

While one-time funds can be used to address gaps in the book budget, they don't address the demand for journals. The budget is insufficient to cover inflation in the price of scholarly subscriptions (loss of about \$400K in spending power each year).

The budget doesn't allow for acquisition of publications in new areas of inquiry that represent, in many cases, the disciplines and transdisciplinary areas in which FSU intends to grow research. Further, an "unmet needs" list of databases, journals and books currently totals \$2.5 million, mostly recurring.

Recommendations:

- Provide recurring funding of \$600,000 each year for 5 years to stabilize and sustain the collections budget. This would bring the collections budget to \$11.5 million, on par with peer institutions such as Georgia and Tennessee
- Seek additional sources of funding: Office of Research, Student Tech Fee, and distance learning program.

General Collections

Successful collections initiatives: new faculty funding of \$1000; strong access model for collections that obtains information for FSU faculty and students at point of need; sophisticated models of patron-driven acquisitions for ebook materials and data-driven approaches for journal title subscriptions.

Nevertheless, the collections are not keeping pace with the scholarship in the fields covered at FSU. There are significant gaps in the collection due to shortfalls in the collections budget, the library is unable to support new materials in the STEM fields and in interdisciplinary research.

Recommendations:

- Develop a multi-year, multi-step strategy to increase the baseline collections budget with recurring dollars.
- Increase Bradley funds to \$100K.
- Create a provost-sponsored scholarly communications intervention fund that would fund new models and modes of scholarly communication
- Ensure that new curricular programs and degrees and/or new strategic initiatives are analyzed for library needs and provide these funds at the front end.
- Negotiate a new MOU with other Florida libraries regarding cost-sharing of consortial electronic resource packages.
- Obtain one-time funds for monographs, back files, and other non-subscription items on the faculty "wish list."
- Increase philanthropic giving targeted for collection endowments
- Improve workflows for e-books and streaming videos

Special Collections (including Technical Services)

The special collections unit at the FSU libraries is a very active, skilled, and forward-thinking department. The integration of special collections into the curriculum at the undergraduate level is impressive.

There are no major cataloging backlogs, which is a tremendous success.

The libraries are to be commended for our leading role in the Digital Public Library of America's Florida service hub development and leadership within the digital special collections world in the region/state.

Recommendations:

- Develop a facilities master plan that includes more space for special collections,
- Co-locate technical services and special collections staff.
- Develop a multiyear strategic plan for digital collections that includes priorities for choosing locally-held materials to digitize and a digital preservation plan.
- Facilitate regular discussions among cultural heritage units at FSU (the libraries, museums, WWII institute etc.) for collaborative opportunities
- Partner with the School of Information to develop a track for archivists and rare-book librarians.

Services

The FSU libraries embrace a focus on service; the needs of the faculty and students drive every decision.

The library liaison program works well.

The library is ahead of many research libraries in its digital scholarship services, particularly in its support of digital humanities.

The library has also created strong partnerships with other campus units to provide services to undergraduates, hosting many academic support services in the library.

Recommendations:

- Investigate partnering with Undergraduate Programs on offering tutoring services rather than running them independently within the library.
- The libraries should take a leadership role in accessibility issues, particularly those surrounding access to library facilities and materials.
- Expand on success of embedding librarians in the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory by embedding librarians in other important research groups at FSU
- Explore possibility of merging departments that handle access to materials (collections, access services, circulation, interlibrary loan, catalog maintenance) in order to create seamless user discovery/delivery.
- Explore possibility of opening earlier on Sunday (10 am versus noon).

Critical Thinking QEP

Florida State's QEP for SACS accreditation is focused on critical thinking. The library provides instruction in introductory classes as well as in advanced classes. It is noteworthy that the library reaches between 80-85% of ALL Florida State undergraduates in the English 2135 required writing requirement.

Resource Sharing

The library employs a variety of successful resource sharing strategies using a variety of ILL platforms for requesting materials, but they are not seamless and nor always easy to use.

Recommendations:

- Develop a seamless interface to the variety of discovery/delivery services offered by the library (so that the user does not have to determine which platform (LEDS, UBorrow, etc.) to use
- Consider adding delivery of library materials to undergraduates.

Facilities

There are major capacity shortages in Strozier. At times there are few, if any, seats available for study. Strozier, Dirac, Pepper, and Engineering have a total of 2634 seats which can seat only 6% of the student population at a time, well below the Council of Educational Facility Planners International standards of library seating for 12% of the undergraduate population and 30% of the graduate population.

There are not enough instructional rooms in the library.

Approximately 20-25% of the floorspace devoted to stacks in Strozier could be freed up for additional student seating and other purposes.

Recommendations:

- Relocate the Madison Street storage facility and increase overall storage capacity.
- Move staff in the Madison/Technical Services Building into Strozier.
- Space in Dirac assigned to non-library uses should be reclaimed by library.
- Develop user-friendly wayfinding systems for all libraries.
- The five year facilities master plan should be refreshed to address space issues throughout the library system.

Technology

The library has an expert technology staff, supported by the Florida Virtual Campus. Library technologists are also developing DigiNole, FSU's institutional repository. Innovative cost-saving solutions, such as adopting virtual desktops and using Amazon Cloud, are commendable.

The library and FSU would benefit from a stronger collaborative relationship with ITS. An academic computing unit for FSU also seems absent. FSU seems to lack an ITS vision for user services and support.

Recommendations:

- Central administration at FSU should foster a positive, student-centered, and collaborative relationship between ITS, Office of Distance Learning, and libraries.
- Ensure that the Florida Virtual Campus is supporting FSU and other SUS research libraries. Recent changes have curtailed work that supports research libraries.

Staffing

One of the FSU libraries' major strengths is its staff. Campus administration and faculty alike were unanimous in their praise of the expertise and service focus of the library staff. However, staff salaries are low compared to other ARL libraries, creating challenges in recruitment and retention of the best staff. New positions are needed in strategic areas.

Recommendations:

- Develop a multi-year staffing plan that includes strategic hire priorities, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and joint hires with other library units (Law, Medicine).
- Employ more Graduate Assistants to fill in staffing gaps.
- Develop a policy for faculty release time to devote to research and writing.
- Create a library writing/peer-editing group that holds annual writing retreats.

Relationships to Other Units

The FSU libraries have a remarkable relationship with the Faculty Senate Library Committee, a knowledgeable group that is articulate and active in advocating for libraries. The libraries have established a vital relationship with FSU's faculty via the faculty senate and the liaison program.

Recommendations:

- Obtain membership on the faculty senate curriculum committee in order to become knowledgeable about new programs and areas that might have an impact on the library.
- Create a stronger formal and informal relationship with ITS. The campus as a whole needs to develop an academic and research computing plan.

- Develop partnerships with the new center for teaching and learning.
- University Libraries, Law Library, Medical Library, and Music Library should develop stronger relationships to increase shared services and increase efficiency via a reduction of duplicated effort/expertise, better support for interdisciplinary research, and increased innovation.
- Partner with the School of Information to conduct research including collections analysis and usability testing.

Assessment

The library has conducted assessments including a climate study and LIBQUAL survey for faculty, students, and staff at regular intervals, as well as special, targeted assessments.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive multi-year assessment action plan to address the library's balanced score card strategic initiatives and including all of the assessments and surveys currently done or planned.

Fundraising

The library is part of a \$1 billion dollar campaign for Florida State with a library goal of \$4 million. This effort is staffed by one experienced fundraising professional. The library goal seems low.

Recommendations:

- Raise the library goal for the current campaign by at least \$2 million dollars for a goal of \$6 million dollars.
- Ensure focused support from central development to identify major donors for the library; partner with colleges and units for joint support.
- Seek funds for endowed senior faculty positions as well as early career faculty positions, creating named positions with spendable earnings.
- Create a stronger annual giving program to identify additional library donors. The Foundation should provide access to different categories of alumni.

Internal Climate

The climate of the FSU libraries is extremely positive. Morale is high and there is a great deal of communication and collaboration, which is noteworthy in an organization this large and complex.

Library staff communicate in a variety of ways via a multitude of channels.

Senior leadership in the libraries is considered approachable and fair, and the atmosphere is one of mutual respect.

A strong performance management culture is in place, and supervisors are well trained. Both administrative and faculty leaders seem well versed in conflict resolution.

Management in general is by team rather than by hierarchy.

Funding for professional development is adequate.

The AD for Administration is particularly well versed in HR issues.

Recommendations:

- Develop a mentoring group and/or professional career pathway planning for A&P positions that mirrors the work being done with library faculty.
- Hold regular town hall forums where the dean and others address the staff as a whole.
- Develop diversity and inclusion initiatives, focusing on both recruitment and retention.