

Cornell University Library

Opportunities and Challenges for the Immediate Future

2016-2017

Cornell University Library's Strategic Plan concluded in 2015. The fruits of that work are well documented in the 2015 [Annual Report](#) to the Provost. We take justifiable pride in this work, which provides a wonderful springboard for moving forward. This document is intended to provide guidance for the Library in 2016/2017. The university will soon initiate an 18-month long strategic planning process and as such, we will postpone developing a new strategic plan until after this process is complete. This way, our next plan can build upon the university's goals, priorities, and strategic directions. In the interim, we recognize the [Provost's four areas of future focus](#) (curriculum, educational technology, engagement, research) as a starting point. With very valuable feedback from the Managers' Council—the Library Executive Group has identified five leading issues that will affect our future. The recent faculty survey confirms the importance of these directions and the need to continue to build out our capabilities.

None of the areas should be construed as being brand new. Library staff have already made significant progress across the board. In tandem with building research level collections, staff have developed specialized services across the full disciplinary spectrum. They have built expertise to work with humanists to use new digital research tools and methodologies; to work with scientists and social scientists to manage large data sets and comply with regulatory requirements; and to work with artists and others to create, share, and preserve new media art forms. Our support of open access provides critical scholarship to developing countries, and increased visibility to Cornell University research.

Five leading issues affected by technological and economic changes—research processes, accessibility of Cornell scholarship, student learning, international engagement, and digital preservation—have led the Library Executive Group, with the Managers' Council support, to embrace the following directions. None of these is new, but rather represent efforts in process. The next two years will be used to further this work, to knit together the various efforts across the system, and to position Cornell Library as an essential component in the evolving 21st century academic infrastructure.

1. Effectively and efficiently facilitate research processes from investigation to dissemination.

The Library has always provided Cornell researchers with privileged access to the scholarly literature and other information resources by building exceptionally wide and deep collections and developing outstanding services to support the production of new scholarship and public knowledge. CUL will continue to build digital and physical collections that are tailored to Cornell's established and emerging fields of inquiry and optimized – in format, functionality, and license terms – for a full range of research methods. Current changes in technology and external research requirements open up both new opportunities and present challenges in the way research is produced, shared, preserved, and archived for future generations. The Library can:

- Enhance the liaison structure and liaison expertise to be able to offer customized subject and discipline-specific research services (e.g. systematic reviews, new modes of publishing, digital humanities, etc.).
- Facilitate the exploration of digital scholarship methodologies through workshops, consultancies, and speaker series.

- Support research strategies such as text mining and visualization by making available large corpora of content and assisting in locating analysis tools and methodologies.
- Expand support for public access compliance and research data management.
- Collaborate with other institutions worldwide to provide access to research sources and services.

2. Advance the visibility and accessibility of Cornell scholarship and creative expression.

Coherent strategies for managing Cornell's reputation are crucial to securing research funding, recruiting top students and faculty, and building relationships with alumni and other stakeholders. Historically, Cornell's administrative offices tracked, managed and reported faculty's research and output. Today, that mission has grown more complex. It is critical to the University's reputation and to faculty recruitment and success that Cornell's work can be discovered and accessed worldwide. The Library has deep expertise in identifying, organizing, and publicizing scholarly work, as well as making it accessible. This expertise is increasingly valuable to the University and its researchers as they compete for external funding and name recognition in an increasingly competitive environment. In particular, the Library can:

- Participate in campus efforts to evaluate and pilot tools to track research, scholarship, and creative outputs and to create a University-wide system for managing research information.
- Develop the Library's semantic web and identity management expertise to help faculty, units, and the University broaden research visibility and use.
- Build a Scholars@Cornell portal that helps ensure the visibility of Cornell's research and scholarship, aids in faculty recruiting, and enhances opportunities for interdisciplinary research and collaboration.
- Provide services and advice to faculty to protect their intellectual property and ensure the widest possible dissemination and visibility of their scholarship.
- Increase the Library's presence in campus initiatives seeking new ways to make scholarship visible and accessible, including through open access options.
- Document the university's scientific, scholarly, and creative work and its impact on the world at large.

3. Prepare students to effectively use and produce knowledge in a digital world.

The powerful forces transforming higher education call for deeper library engagement in the entire academic experience. Technological advances and major shifts toward digital production and distribution are changing research, teaching and learning. Students will need concomitant skills as they leave Cornell to pursue jobs, additional education, and public service. The Library can:

- Work with other academic and service units (e.g., the Office of Sponsored Programs, Academic Technologies, the Center for Teaching Excellence, Office of Undergraduate Research, Graduate School) to identify gaps and opportunities in support for new forms of technology-enabled research, teaching, and learning.
- Expand support for the growing set of 21st century competencies (e.g., visual, data, and information research workflows).
- Ensure that library instruction will facilitate and enable technology-enhanced pedagogies and active learning on campus, online, and around the globe.
- Leverage and build library staff expertise to increase student and faculty participation in the production, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge in the digital age.
- Offer graduate student fellowships and training/consulting in research data management, digital humanities tools and methodologies, new forms of publishing, etc.

4. Enhance the Library's Support for the University's international goals.

In 2012, the Cornell University Task Force on Internationalization concluded that Cornell had fallen behind its peers. Since then, the campus has taken multiple steps to address this concern. As the University advances the Global Cornell agenda in the coming years, the Library can focus on the following areas:

- Enhance Cornell's global collections and expertise to support study and research here and abroad, including dual-degree programs in other countries.
- Develop more domestic and international library partnerships that expand access to onsite collections and subject expertise around the globe, wherever Cornell faculty and students can be found.
- Continue the Library's international engagement to strengthen local information infrastructures, disseminate and preserve scholarly resources and scholarship here and abroad, and document Cornell's impact worldwide.
- Increase the Library's presence through outreach to campus units and engagement with international student organizations on campus, and international alumni groups.

5. Preserve Cornell's digital assets and scholarship for future generations of scholars and students.

The library has invested heavily in digitizing collections and curating born-digital content and we need to ensure that this content will be usable now and in the future. The Library began collecting Cornell-related sites, including the cornell.edu web domain, in June 2012, representing more than 5 TB of information. The Library also anticipates greater demand for managing data associated with federally-funded research projects. Given the increasing reliance on digital sources and applications, we are projecting a substantial increase in our scholarly digital assets, estimated at 100 TB/year. The need for a comprehensive preservation program has grown with demand and with the development of new technological capabilities. Over the next three years, the Library will phase in an integrated, systematic, and cost-efficient digital preservation and access program together with key partners on campus and beyond to accomplish the following goals:

- Align various preservation strategies to create an integrated service framework to reduce duplicative effort, identify service gaps, and increase efficacy. Consider how our investments in various digital repositories, including the Cornell University Library Archival Repository (CULAR), as well as HathiTrust, LOCKSS, Portico, and Archive-it, meet our preservation needs.
- Engage CUL's curators/selectors in setting priorities for long-term archiving and delineate categories of commitment and levels of preservation and long-term access to be achieved. Work closely and cross-departmentally (DSPS, RMC, Kheel, etc.) to understand short- and long-term needs with regards to digital content and co-create best practices for the management of digital resources.
- Create a web archiving strategy in support of web resource curation, collection, and preservation.
- Develop a model to anticipate costs and staffing needs associated with the preservation goals and recommend models for supporting such a service framework through central funding allocations and cost-recovery models.
- Analyze the recently completed campus-wide AV survey in order to recommend and implement strategies associated with AV content and large data sets.