Poised for Greatness

A Strategic Plan for A.A. Lemieux Library
2003-2007

(Accepted and approved by the Provost, September 2003)

The Seattle University Commitment

“Seattle University will strengthen, extend and maintain its library collections, services, and physical facilities. In addition, Lemieux Library will employ enhanced information technology strategies in support of an increased emphasis on academic quality and scholarship throughout the university.”
(A Decade for Distinction, Seattle University Strategic Plan, 2000-2010. “Strategic Support,” p. 6.)

Introduction and Context

Lemieux Library’s first formal strategic plan is founded upon a close and realistic look at the needs and current conditions of the library and the campus. It seeks to identify and to pursue improvements and transformations that will position the library more fully to support Seattle University in becoming the premier, comprehensive, Jesuit, Catholic university of the Northwest.

This document is the result of an extended process involving multiple constituents. The Library Management Committee worked for more than a year to develop the original draft. It was based on a review of environmental characteristics; on a series of “visioning sessions” conducted with students, faculty, and administrators during fall 2001; on an awareness of emerging trends in academic librarianship; and, on our aspirations for meeting current and future needs of our academic community. To test the accuracy and priorities of our internal document, we sought the comments and advice of our external constituents through a set of focus group discussions: Executive Team; Deans’ Council; Academic Assembly; Teaching & Learning Technology Roundtable; two open sessions for SU faculty; representatives of the Associated Students of SU; University Planning Council; Law Library professional staff. Their insights, comments, and encouragement contributed to this refined document.

In offering this plan to the university, Lemieux Library is being neither naïve nor modest. To achieve it will require commitment and creativity on the part of library staff to refine and to re-focus themselves and their resources in order to extend and enhance current strengths to new levels of effectiveness. The success of the plan depends on more active collaboration of the library staff with all units of academic affairs and student development, but particularly with SU’s faculty with whom the library shares a deep commitment to inquiry, discovery, and learning. The fulfillment of this plan will be a challenge for the entire extended SU community, requiring new investment by the university and by its friends and colleagues in the donor and foundation communities.

The energetic pursuit of this plan will accelerate the transformation of A.A. Lemieux Library from a traditional and adequate unit into a robust, influential, contemporary academic resource. As the heart and the intellectual soul of a thriving academic community, Lemieux Library will then be poised for greatness, poised to become the pre-eminent independent academic library in the Northwest, fully in support of its premier university.

John Popko, University Librarian, July 2003
A Vision for A.A. Lemieux Library

As the premier independent academic library in the Pacific Northwest, A.A. Lemieux Library is a supportive, sustaining, and compelling force in helping Seattle University achieve its educational mission. The library integrates comprehensive collections, flexible and personalized services, innovative instructional programs, collaborative relationships, and enabling technologies -- operating in, and accessible through, both the physical and the digital environments -- and directs them to ensure a powerful contribution to the educational and scholarly processes of inquiry, discovery, and learning.

Evidence of the achievement of this vision will include:

- Collections in multiple formats fully support the breadth, depth, and diversity of the university’s academic programs.
- State-of-the-art information technology and a superior physical facility are employed not as ends in themselves but as means to the fulfillment of each student’s potential.
- The library supports students in the mastery of their disciplines and their application of this knowledge to a life of leadership and service, assists faculty in their scholarly endeavors, and provides support for staff in their work and opportunities for their personal development.
- The Jesuit principle of cura personalis – the care of persons – informs and inspires the library staff's attitudes and behaviors in delivering responsive and personalized service.
- The library works in harmony with and supports each stage of any student’s progress through the iterative Ignatian pedagogical process – context, experience, reflection, decision, and action.
- A.A. Lemieux Library supports and enables all members of this community to live out the enduring values and purposes of a premier Jesuit, Catholic educational institution for the 21st century.

The Mission of A.A. Lemieux Library

As an intellectual, educational, and cultural center integrated with and in service to a vibrant academic community, A.A. Lemieux Library and its staff are dedicated to supporting Seattle University's vision and mission as expressed by these commitments to:

- Build, organize, and maintain superior collections of informational and scholarly resources in tangible and digital formats;
- Connect the members of the community to those resources through effective physical and electronic access, reinforced by flexible and personalized services;
- Teach information competencies to ensure the effective use of those resources in our academic programs and to enable the pursuit of lifelong learning.

Libraries are distinguished by their ability to connect people with the information and knowledge they seek. Such connections are only possible if the library is committed to and successful in carrying out a fundamental responsibility: to collect, organize, maintain, and provide ready access to a superior collection of library resources in a variety of useful formats. The effectiveness of Lemieux Library is founded on such collections. We are further distinguished by our commitment to connect the members of the community to information and services at the time and point of need, through multiple modes of connection, enabling
both individual investigation and direct assistance and support of learning and research. Lemieux Library is committed to teach by expanding and extending current service practices and by employing new models and methods of teaching and instruction—in the library, in the classroom, and in the digital world. To better respond to ongoing changes in technology, higher education, and our social and cultural environment, the library will continue to integrate proven and emerging models of services and instruction.

Values of A.A. Lemieux Library

**Student-Centered**

We work for the success of our students in their academic endeavors and for their growth and empowerment as individuals taking their Seattle University education into the world. Our students are both the immediate and the ultimate focus of all of our activities.

**Excellence in Service**

We strive to deliver highly responsive, timely, and accurate services in response to widely varying demands from a diverse population of library users.

**Innovation**

We continually assess and evaluate what we do and we embrace and initiate new ideas.

**Accessibility**

We are committed to working for full accessibility to the library’s services, collections, and facilities for all our constituents, independent of time or place of need.

**Collaboration**

We express our commitment to the value of collaboration through an emphasis on teamwork among members of the library’s staff, cooperation with faculty and campus organizations, and partnerships with external organizations and agencies.

**Respect for Persons**

We encourage personal growth, treat all with dignity and respect, empower our employees, and seek to elicit each individual’s unique contributions.

**Professional Commitment**

As members of the profession of academic librarianship, we are committed to the fullest expression and the spirited defense of academic freedom and to ensuring the perpetuation of rich intellectual diversity in our collections and on our campus.

Lemieux Library’s Strategic Directions, 2003-2008:

1. Develop Collection Excellence
2. Connect Campus to Information Resources
3. Educate for the Information Age
4. Renew and Redesign the Library Building
Strategic Direction 1: Develop Collection Excellence

Defining Goal: Provide collections of information and knowledge resources as rich and comprehensive as the finest private academic institutions in the Pacific Northwest and which exceed in breadth and depth the median of a designated group of peer institutions.

Context: A strong library collection is central to the University’s mission and vision, and the pursuit of teaching, learning, and scholarship on campus. Each resource format in our library plays an important role in the educational process. Our collections will strike a dynamic balance among print, media, and electronic resources, ensuring that every SU academic program has basic, comparable access to a useful body of literature in a variety of formats. We will supplement our online and onsite resources with access to other library’s collections through reciprocal and consortial relationships. Lemieux Library will actively consult with the Seattle University community and continually assess campus information and collection needs.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Build and sustain a library acquisitions budget that consistently exceeds the median expenditure per student FTE of a designated peer group.
2. Establish a permanent library endowment targeted for building and sustaining library collections.
3. On a regular basis, collect, and compile budget, collection and usage data for assessment purposes.
4. Aggressively pursue a strategy of moving to digital resources wherever appropriate, considering issues of campus demands and technical capabilities, space limitations, costs, and archival access.
5. Join the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a consortium of 26 colleges, universities, and community colleges throughout Oregon and Washington, and provide the SU community with access to the 22-million books, sound recording, films, maps, and more, shared by the consortium members. Migrate to Innovative Interfaces, the integrated library system that allows Lemieux Library to participate in the Orbis Cascade Alliance Union Catalog, Direct Patron Borrowing, and Courier Service.
6. Develop a regionally renowned collection of religious, theological, and pastoral resources that reflect the university’s unique Jesuit and Catholic heritage and commitments, that respect all religious and spiritual traditions, and that support ecumenical and inter-denominational dialogue in the Pacific Northwest.
7. Create and manage a Seattle University Archive that preserves the important documents of the university’s heritage and that integrates the use of these materials into curricular and scholarly activities.
8. Develop collections cooperatively with the Seattle University Law Library.

As an academic library seeking to strengthen its Pacific Northwest connections:

9. Develop specialized or unique collections, in printed or digital formats, that document specific aspects of Northwest history and life and that contribute to a greater awareness and appreciation of the shared Northwest experience.
10. Establish and maintain relationships with cultural, artistic, and educational institutions as a means of enriching traditional library resources with special events, exhibits, programs, and resources for the benefit of the campus community.

11. Establish and maintain relationships with other libraries, information organizations and associations, and library consortia in order to: (a) obtain information resources at reduced consortial rates; (b) acquire and share expert advice and comparative experience that might contribute to the library’s operations; and, (c) allow Lemieux Library to offer additional services and resources to SU students and faculty.
Strategic Direction 2: Connect campus to information resources

Defining Goal: Connect the Seattle University community to the information resources they need to achieve their academic goals, when and where they need them. By delivering responsive and personalized service from highly qualified staff, and by employing effective and user-centered information technology, we support academic excellence and the education of the whole person by providing an effective form of access anytime and anywhere.

Context: Information resources continue to be produced at accelerating rates. The forms, formats, and access methods by which such resources are being made available proliferate and evolve. Contemporary library users face significant challenges in locating and making use of the wealth of information resources at their disposal. High-quality, responsive reference service and research consultations are required to help connect students and faculty to the resources they need to achieve their academic goals. The use of advanced information technology can extend the reach, the power, and the functionality of the library’s core collections, services, and facilities into a digital environment. Effective service and access require that a library succeeds in bridging the digital divide, supporting both the high-end power-user of advanced information technology as well as the less-sophisticated, less well-equipped beginner who is equally in need and equally deserving of support.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Create and continuously develop a dynamic information portal that integrates resources and services into an accessible, customizable interface for effective use by a diverse campus population at the time and place needed.
2. Migrate from our current integrated library system to Innovative Interfaces, allowing Lemieux Library to provide sophisticated access to its own collections and to participate in the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a consortia of 26 colleges, universities, and community colleges throughout Oregon and Washington with a database of 22 million books, sound recording, films, maps, and more.
3. Respond effectively to the evolution of interlibrary loan and document delivery services in the changed environment brought about by participation in the Orbis Cascade Alliance.
4. Experiment with alternative public service models and implement a model that best balances the multiple demands on librarians and support staff with the evolving just-in-time information needs of the entire SU community.
5. Offer an electronic current contents alerting service, capable of customized profiling for each faculty member. Subsidize the cost of a full-text article delivery service linked to the electronic alerting service.

As an academic library seeking to strengthen its Pacific Northwest connections:

6. Provide broader public access to the library’s renowned collection of religious, theological, and pastoral resources to the local and regional community in order to foster the university's commitment to become a center for inter-religious dialogue.
Strategic Direction 3: Educate for the Information Age

Defining Goal: Through effective engagement with the Academic Assembly, the CORE Policy Committee, the Teaching & Learning Technology Roundtable, the Center for Teaching & Learning, the Writing Center, the Learning Center, and similar groups of faculty, provide a collaborative instructional program of information competencies that ensures every student the opportunity to master basic skills of information retrieval, evaluation, and use and to develop advanced skills specifically applicable to his or her major discipline or profession.

Context: Personal computers and a worldwide system of networks are transforming user experiences in the academic library and the librarian’s role in the academic community. As boundaries for acquiring information have diminished in this new environment, the need has increased for all library users to develop and refine new skills in information navigation, evaluation, and application to critical thinking. Our librarians’ experience in the evolving online environment and our knowledge of print and electronic information resources place us in a unique position to collaborate with faculty in order to educate our students in such programs. The ability of each student to successfully retrieve, evaluate, and use information is central to the university’s mission of academic excellence and the foundation for life-long learning. To realize our ambitious teaching mission, we must re-design our instructional efforts from the anecdotal and the intermittent to the systematic and the sustained.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Assess the interests, needs, and readiness of the faculty and academic administration to incorporate principles of information literacy (as promulgated by various educational associations) into the university’s expected educational outcomes.
2. Jointly develop mechanisms through which librarians and faculty cooperate to ensure SU’s students master a broad range of information competencies, whether through the expansion of existing class-based instructional sessions or the creation of new models of instructional programming.
3. Create a new dimension of instructional services in the classroom and in the digital environment that complement the high-quality, responsive services delivered in person. Development could include: web-based instructional services available from the Library’s portal; the design and testing of a full-quarter foundational course in the structure, retrieval and use of information and library resources.
4. Provide instructional and information services to faculty in support of their scholarship or research needs and in the development of class assignments.
5. Create a state-of-the-art training facility in the Library where information competencies are taught in an interactive, hands-on environment.
6. Expand the Library’s Research Consultations in which an individual student or faculty works with a librarian on a specific research or instructional need.
7. Develop assessment tools to measure the effectiveness of the library’s instructional programs and to relate them to our students’ overall educational outcomes.
Strategic Direction 4: Renew and Redesign the Library Building

Defining Goal: Establish a comprehensive master plan and generate the financial support to renovate and expand the current A.A. Lemieux Library building. Success in both of these endeavors will result in superior library facilities that respond flexibly to the research, information, and instructional needs of our students and faculty, that support and enhance access to library collections and services, and that provide a variety of learning environments in response to the university’s varied, comprehensive curricula.

Context: Digital and online information resources grow in coverage, availability, and acceptance. Students and faculty increasingly expect, and prefer, to conduct some of their work online. Simultaneously, we are witnessing a resurgence in the appreciation of, and the need for, the library as a place -- where digital and traditional materials are consulted simultaneously in support of research; where all members of the academy can strengthen community around common or related scholarly pursuits; where all members of the campus community can consult knowledgeable and supportive staff, work with teaching and learning colleagues, and make use of services that facilitate interactive learning and teaching; where students feel comfortable and at home, but can also be inspired to reach their intellectual potential. The library should help a university express and realize all these values. The collection, connection, and teaching goals of this strategic plan require a physical facility that enables all these activities. The current building, constructed in 1966 and typically denigrated by SU students, faculty, and staff, does not allow the library to realize its potential nor does it contribute adequately to the university’s mission and vision, aspirations and plans. The Seattle University community needs an attractive, accessible, flexible, inspiring, state-of-the-art building that enables and enhances intellectual inquiry, the pursuit of scholarship, collaborative learning, and the recruitment and retention of faculty and students. Such a facility will be the physical sign of the library’s multi-modal role as the intellectual and cultural center for a vibrant academic community.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Participate in the university’s next capital campaign to raise funds for:
   a. the renovation and expansion of the library building and
   b. the establishment of collection endowment(s) that will strengthen university-wide access to superior information resources.
2. Take necessary and appropriate steps to maximize the use of the current library building while completing a library master plan that can be implemented following the success of the university’s next capital campaign.
   a. Create a dedicated, technologically-advanced library instructional facility that enables librarians to carry out their educational programs and that is recognized on campus as a dynamic, interactive place to learn and develop information competencies.
   b. Design and implement a signage system that effectively informs library users of the location of collections, facilities, and services available throughout the building.
   c. Refresh the Reading Room furniture and interior design to create an attractive, comfortable, and productive environment for student study.
   d. Improve group and individual study spaces throughout the Library where students can study and learn, individually or collaboratively.
e. Replace library staff furniture to ensure the productivity and safety of employees.
f. Establish the Library as a place to explore and collaborate with technology by creating an interactive multimedia center. Examples of potential hardware and software include videoconferencing, streaming video, web casting, media editing services, scanners, etc.

3. Through continuous evaluation of campus needs and preferences and through the regular monitoring of technological and organizational developments in the academic library profession, establish the functional service and collection characteristics that will be reflected in, and supported by, the renovated and expanded building.

4. Conduct site visits of other academic libraries in an effort to help identify the best practices relating collections and services to the efficient and productive use of library space.

5. Retain a structural engineering firm to conduct a comprehensive seismic analysis of the building to identify factors that must be accommodated in a future renovation and expansion.

6. Through on-campus discussions and with the assistance of an architectural firm, evaluate the FFA preliminary master plan (August 2002) for its long-term viability. As a result of such review, establish the architectural and interior design specifications of a final building master plan consistent with the university’s capital and operating funds capacity.