

**Intermediate Review and Reflection, 2017-18**  
Due 1 April 2018 (email to [snowell@gustavus.edu](mailto:snowell@gustavus.edu))

## **Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library**

### **Looking Backward**

#### **What were the primary recommendations of your most recent external review?**

Our 2012-2013 Library External Review outlined strengths and challenges related to staffing, budget, student learning and the library's physical and virtual environments. (All related documents, including the study and responses, can be found here: <https://gustavus.edu/library/Pubs/>). The reviewers made these primary recommendations for the Library:

1. Re-establish trust between the Library and the administration, by providing more opportunities for librarians to make a case for innovation and change; consider revising tenure & promotion criteria for librarians
2. Add instructional technologists to the Library staff to further develop the Library as a place where knowledge is discovered and created
3. Continue educating the campus on intellectual property, copyright, open access and open educational resources, such as textbooks
4. Investigate cooperative collection management opportunities between the Oberlin Group and other small, liberal arts college libraries
5. Envision the Library building as a space to “celebrate the student as a growing and developing learner” so that all services and expenditures support deep student learning
6. Rethink the policy of reclaiming unused restricted funds for the general operating budget

In spring 2013 we asked for and received an addendum from the reviewers, as they initially failed to address our most pressing questions: 1) what can we do to advance department-integrated instruction efforts and 2) are we taking an appropriate approach to licensing digital content and promoting open access?

7. In terms of advancing department-integrated instruction efforts, reviewers recommended a multi-pronged approach, while cautioning us to consider plans within the limits of our available time and workload:
  - Continue to develop and expand on our strong relationship with faculty in other departments, including working closer with the Kendall Center
  - Target instruction to the First Term Seminar and core departmental courses
  - Pilot a version of the Political Science library lab with another department
  - Consider developing a peer reference tutor model, similar to the Writing Center
  - Add a librarian to CAPSUB
  - Utilize future curriculum reforms to promote information fluency across the curriculum
  - Experiment with online information fluency tools, such as quizzes, to test research concepts

8. In terms of approaching our digital content, the reviewers made these recommendations:
  - Librarian representation on the Curriculum Committee, which should consider cost estimates of resources for new programs and courses, including library resources
  - Explore more joint or consortial licensing deals
  - Review journal holdings see if moving to a pay-per-article model may save money
  - Continue making the case for open access educational and research materials

**What steps has your department/program taken to address these recommendations? If you have not followed up on these recommendations you will want to provide some explanation as to why not.**

1. In the past five years, the campus has seen leadership changes at the highest levels. Currently, we feel we have a respectful and supportive relationship with Provost Kelly. Revising the tenure & promotion criteria is a non-starter for the department. The Faculty Manual includes language that addresses the unique teaching we do (1.1.1) and members of the department who have recently been tenured and/or promoted have seen no issues whatsoever in applying the T&P criteria to our work.
2. The Library has long seen itself as a place where knowledge is both discovered and created. With a recent retirement in the Audio Visual department, the Library is poised to capitalize on plans to expand the position to a full time Digital Learning & Media Collections Manager; the position would support the establishment of a makerspace. This makerspace would contain equipment and materials for student learning and creation, including 3-D printers, specialized software for design, video production, green screens, art supplies, etc. Should the College hire more instructional technologists, we would be receptive to discussions about whether those positions could be Library positions.
3. The Library continues the important work of helping educate the campus on issues of open access and copyright. Barbara Fister in particular has been instrumental in accomplishing this work, offering several Teachers Talking sessions on these issues. We have also established a working group to explore options for buying select textbooks to put on reserve, as well as investigating and promoting open textbook options.
4. We continue to monitor regional discussions of cooperative collection development models, primarily through conversations with the CALD Cooperative Collection Management Program, a shared print retention partnership of academic and research libraries across the state of Minnesota. Our geographic location makes it less useful to share physical collections with other libraries, but we stay abreast of developments and discuss impacts on our own collections.
5. In terms of space, our vision is hampered only by budget limitations. The past five years have seen massive changes to the Library, including relocating collections to create study spaces for students on the first floor; establishing and opening of the Special Collections and Rare Book room, which provides study and learning space on the second floor; and building an Archives classroom/reading room on the third floor. All space priorities are considered in light of student learning and grow out of extensive space studies, conducted by the Library in both 2010 and 2015 with significant student input.

6. There is no easy answer to restructuring the Library's budget. Restricted funds simply do not cover acquisition costs from the operating budget. We do the best we can within the accounting practices and budget history we have inherited, and would welcome opportunities to discuss restructuring options, with the understanding that the College would not decrease its contribution to the Library budget. As has been communicated many times, including the external review, the Library budget is woefully inadequate, and our primary concern is increasing the budget to better match peer libraries.
7. Our focus on instruction and reference forms the core of our teaching, and we had already been doing much of the work recommended by reviewers, like working closely with faculty in other departments, exploring partnerships through the Kendall Center and targeting specific courses for instruction. We are encouraged that the Gustavus ACTS strategic plan prioritizes library funding (within 2.1.2) and emphasizes research, scholarship, creativity and dialogue across campus.

Since the review, we have revised certain aspects of our work:

- Using assessment data, relevant library science literature and examples from other academic libraries, we moved to a hybrid single-service desk model. Library faculty hold in-person and on call hours and encourage student contact through email and an online appointment form. Student workers are trained to answer basic reference questions and refer more complex questions to librarians. We continue to expand and promote our online research guides in order to promote asynchronous instruction (<http://libguides.gustavus.edu/?b=s>).
- We have developed course-integrated library instruction with a few departments, including Religion and Geography, although not to the same degree Political Science. We have also collaborated more closely with Writing Center tutors to train them how to recognize and refer reference questions to us. While we would like to further develop these kinds of initiatives, the time and teaching load required to fully implement course integrated instruction in all departments, as well as training and supervising a full cohort of research tutors, would necessitate additional tenure lines.
- We have begun a long-term research project to investigate how students learn essential research mindsets (referred to in our discipline as the Threshold Concepts: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>). Our project grows out of research conducted by Michelle Twait and with seed money from the Mansergh-Stuessy Fund for College Innovation; the project involves library faculty interviewing other faculty across campus about how and where students learn higher-level research concepts.
- The Library Chair now serves as a non-voting, ex officio member of CAPSUB. More details of the limits of this system are discussed below.
- Although the Library plays a key role in promoting information literacy, the concept is not owned by the Library; rather, it is shared by all departments across the curriculum. Current revisions to the General Education curriculum place research more squarely within the major, rather than general education courses. We will

continue to teach sessions and work with other faculty as appropriate to address student research needs and how the library can best help. We encourage the entire campus to be more intentional in discussing *how* and *where* undergraduates learn research skills and mindsets. We also frequently remind key figures that whenever undergraduate research is discussed, the Library must be at the table. We are like writing faculty - we can all (across campus) teach writing, but we also defer to the expertise of our faculty members trained to teach writing for support and guidance. Likewise, we faculty can all (across campus) teach research, but the campus can gain tremendously by drawing more heavily on the expertise of library faculty, who have training, education and experience in research as both a process and a subject of study – and how to teach it well.

- We have not experimented much with online tools like quizzes, mainly because such modules require a lot of time, which we do not have, and we are not convinced there is much payoff for student learning, especially on a residential campus. Our teaching focuses on developing sophisticated research skills and habits of mind, usually within specific disciplinary contexts and tied to particular assignments. This kind of learning cannot happen easily with a quiz. We do support online learning, most notably through our Research Guides, and two tutorials: Quick Answers (<http://libguides.gustavus.edu/quickanswers>) and a more in-depth exploration of how libraries and research work (<http://libguides.gustavus.edu/tutorial>).
8. We are careful stewards of our library budget and constantly monitor changes to ever-increasing pricing models for scholarly materials. We have investigated and frequently use pay-per-view models, conducted several reviews of our print journal holdings, compared print holdings to database offerings, explore and negotiate joint and consortial deals when available, and have also cut certain journal subscriptions after analyzing use data. As noted above, we continue to advocate for open access resources and we devote a small portion of our budget, in collaboration with the Kendall Center, to innovative open access publishing initiatives.

Finally, while the CAPSUB appointment allows for the Library to see new courses and plan for resources accordingly, we have also noted that typically faculty assume the Library has what is needed. Faculty do not tend to delve into library holdings at the course proposal stage. What remains often invisible to us is the larger directions in which a department's curriculum is headed. It would actually be more useful to have advance information about changes in the discipline a new hire is intended to support and new ways the curriculum will demonstrate those disciplinary directions.

As an example, we didn't know we were embarking on a neuroscience program until a new hire arrived and asked what resources we had. Alas, the answer was, "None. We didn't know you were coming." More importantly, we didn't know the department was headed in that direction at all, and it is an area that was both new to us and extremely expensive. We had no additional funds to support it. A more macro-level approach would be extremely helpful and might be something the Provost's Office could facilitate through some sort of advance warning mechanism.

**After implementing these recommendations, what does your assessment data suggest regarding these changes?**

Our assessment data primarily focus on our instruction program, which is discussed in more detail below. We do collect data from students about space changes, usually once every five years as part of a large space study, as well as through occasional means such as the Patricia Lindell Scholar project (depending on the project) and library interns. Data suggest that students continue to want the same kinds of spaces and resources they have been requesting for years: more resources (especially access to full text of articles), more flexible spaces, more private study spaces, more group spaces, and a café.

Finally, as library faculty, we are always studying our building and programs, whether through the College's formal assessment program, through more informal focus groups and surveys of students, through circulation and use data of materials, or through the library faculty's own research agendas.

**What else does your assessment data of the last 5 years suggest as strengths and weaknesses of your department/program?**

Our instruction program is primarily a collaboration with faculty across the disciplines. We do offer credit-bearing courses (partial credits within load and full courses as overloads), but the majority of our learning opportunities with students occur while meeting with students enrolled in courses taught by faculty in other departments. We also support learning that occurs without a formal class meeting in the library through providing resources, learning spaces, and one-on-one assistance. Everything we do in the library is framed around how it helps students learn, which gives us a clear focus for library decision-making. We continually struggle to build lasting relationships with faculty and programs across the curriculum, however. We want all of our students to have the information literacy skills and dispositions to function as free human beings and as citizens in a world where information is abundant and in flux. We would like the entire campus to be more systematic about how this happens, and are prepared to work to achieve this goal.

**What changes have you implemented to capitalize on these strengths and address these weaknesses?**

In the past five years we have examined and changed the ways we provide research support to students one-on-one by consolidating reference desk support and promoting other paths for meeting with us. Based on mixed-methods research on student learning preferences and behaviors, we have made changes to our physical space and website to provide better learning experiences. We have made efforts to deepen our relationships with faculty in other departments through meeting with departments, providing information for their self-studies, participating in campus-wide curricular planning and advisory groups, through providing Kendall Center-funded workshops, and using mini-grants and our Patricia Lindell Scholar projects to deepen our understanding of student learning experiences. We have begun the process of reexamining our roles to ensure they meet the needs of campus-wide strategic goals. We are continuing to explore with faculty across the curriculum how students learn "threshold concepts" in information literacy – concepts that are difficult to grasp but can change a student's perspective fundamentally and permanently. We hope this will provide some ground for deeper collaboration between the library faculty and faculty in other disciplines and improved learning for students.

## **Overall, how are you using the assessment results in curricular and program development?**

Every year in an assessment retreat we discuss the findings of our assessment plan activities and what we can do to respond to what we've learned. Those ideas fold into our work during the subsequent year. Some of the challenges we identify remain difficult to solve largely because of time – both our time (we have a very small department compared to other academic libraries) and the limited time of faculty in other departments, which makes developing and sustaining collaborative relationships difficult. We are also stymied when it comes to finding a way for us to care, as a community, about information literacy beyond college. Our efforts tend to focus on helping students be better students, which is appropriate, but the information environment they graduate into will have enormous challenges that searching JSTOR won't solve (in part because they likely won't even have access to JSTOR). This is a problem we feel we own as librarians, but it's a tough issue to address comprehensively when most of the learning experiences related to using and creating information happen in discipline-specific courses that may not have that broader need in mind. We are not sure how well the college's institutional student learning outcomes that relate to information literacy transfer once students graduate, and we will continue to explore this question in the coming years.

## **If you have implemented any other innovations in pedagogy, curriculum, or advising in the last 5 years? Please identify them and explain why these changes were made.**

Creating improved learning and research spaces for both our Special Collections and Rare Books Room and the College and Church Archives have helped broaden the use of these resources in a variety of courses. Our archivist, Jeff Jenson, has done a lot to bring the use of unique primary sources into courses for experiential learning. The changes we made to our reference services are a response to changing student needs and perceptions and we feel they have improved the quality of interactions with students (in that they are asking more sophisticated questions at the reference desk while our information desk handles routine directional questions, suggesting our students have a better grasp of the difference). We are also exploring ways to focus our instruction on complex concepts rather than basic skills. We began this work in 2013 and it prepared us for a discipline-wide shift from a set of information literacy standards that were skills-based to a new Information Literacy Framework that is focused on concepts and was heavily influenced, as we were, by research on "threshold concepts."

## **Looking Forward**

### **How has your field changed in the past 10-15 years and what trends are currently emerging? (A good source for this would be a state of the field document from your professional association. Please provide sources.)**

Our students have changed, as is generally the case in US higher education, so we have to continually adapt our collections, services, and teaching efforts to meet their needs. We are exploring ways to establish a more focused approach to first year learning, the needs of a diverse student body, and accessibility, as well as being more intentional about working with campus offices that support learning. Diversity, social responsibility, and the public good are core library values, and we will apply them to making social justice a library goal. We always consider student learning preferences as

we make changes to library spaces and will continue to study the ways students use our space for learning.

The “inside-out” library (as Lorcan Dempsey calls it) shifts the role of the library from exclusively bringing information from outside to the local community to helping make local information discoverable beyond our community. We have been part of this shift locally in the establishment of GustieScholar (our institutional repository) and in the progress the College and Church Archives has made in digitizing unique materials and making them accessible to the world. We also have participated in the Mellon grant for Digital Humanities and have recently restructured an existing library faculty position to supporting the digital liberal arts on campus. Supporting the creation of public-facing research and creativity by our students is appealing to us as a particularly useful and practical application of information literacy.

Scholarly publishing has changed enormously and libraries have shifted their focus from owning collections, to licensing access to collections owned by publishers, to an emerging movement to promote open access to knowledge. This has implications for how our students learn to access information and has the potential to make it more likely they will have access to scholarly knowledge post-graduation. This is both an information literacy and a social justice issue for us. We are supporting various open access projects (such as the Open Library of Humanities, with support from the Kendall Center) and will bring open access options to campus through programs such as the Minnesota Library Publishing Project as well as keeping up with new open access platforms such as Humanities Commons and the Open Science Framework.

Our non-scholarly information environment has changed dramatically. Currently two giant corporations, Google and Facebook, have profoundly altered the way people communicate with each other and get news. These companies do so through gathering enormous amounts of personal information, all within black-box proprietary systems that, in the United States, lack regulation. The recent hearings in Congress indicate that these tech giants themselves have little internal control over the unintended consequences of their algorithms, which exacerbate social biases and lend themselves to political and cultural polarization and manipulation. Libraries have a commitment to helping students learn how information works, and understanding the ways these systems are influencing us as individuals and citizens will require rethinking what our graduates need to know. Being able to find scholarly articles in an academic library to complete an assignment is one thing; being able to understand the ways corporate interests and their use of personal data are changing our information landscape profoundly at a global scale is also important, and we’ll have to figure out how to bring that kind of learning into the curriculum.

Academic libraries are beginning to tackle data literacy and data management and preservation. We do not have the staff or resources to do that and we haven’t had much of a demand yet, but funding agencies are requiring data plans and there is a growing interest in sharing data sets as well as a need for students to become more literate about the uses of data sets. As an example, GIS has applications in many disciplines, but it is not something students beyond Geography and Geology courses get exposure to, whereas at other institutions libraries provide GIS software and training for all disciplines. This is a trend we will have to watch, as it would require new resources.

ACRL Planning and Review Committee. “2016 Top Trends in Academic Libraries: A Review of the Trends and Issues Affecting Libraries in Higher Education.” *College and Research Libraries News* 77.6 (2016) <http://crln.acrl.org/index.php/crlnews/article/view/9505/10798>

ACRL Planning and Review Committee. *Environmental Scan*. Association of College and Research Libraries, March 2017.

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Steven Bell, Lorcan Dempsey, and Barbara Fister. *New Roles for the Road Ahead: Essays Commissioned for ACRL's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*. Chicago: ACRL, 2015.

[http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/publications/whitepapers/new\\_roles\\_75th.pdf](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/publications/whitepapers/new_roles_75th.pdf)

## **What are your departmental/program goals for the next 5 years?**

We are structuring our major goals around the same themes we used for our 2013 external review: staffing, budget, student learning, and the Library's physical and virtual environment. Achieving many of these goals require support from the College; achieving these goals will also put us closer to the kinds of services, support, budget and staffing levels currently enjoyed by both aspirant and peer libraries. We recognize that many of these goals are limited by resources; we welcome creative partnerships across campus to address them.

### *Staffing*

- The College will provide the required staffing levels and flexibility within positions to best support student learning in an ever-changing information environment; this will require expanding current staffing levels (both faculty and administrative positions) and rethinking how and where essential tasks are done. Areas for expansion include support for digital scholarship, first year students and retention, resource discovery, community engagement, data services and quantitative literacy. The Library is responsible for initiating and directing staffing conversations through appropriate processes.
- The Library will work with Human Resources to explore the feasibility of implementing a system of library staff promotion, which is included in our 2009 Strategic Plan.

### *Budget*

- The College will fund the Library adequately to support Gustavus ACTS initiatives, especially those related to 2.1.2. We submitted peer data to the Provost's Office in fall 2017 for library funding; comparative data indicate our library budget significantly lags behind peer institutions.
- The College will recognize that libraries are appealing to donors and provide a rich opportunity to bring funds to the College, and thus encourage Advancement to explore funding opportunities related to library collections, services and building.

### *Student Learning*

- The Library will position current and future staffing lines and expertise to support ongoing student learning as formats and access continue to evolve. This will mean close collaboration with faculty who may feel librarians only help students find information in the collection and may not think of librarians as partners in creating new digital projects, researching media landscapes, or contributing to students' understanding of how the internet works (such as the ways values embedded in search and social platforms have a harmful effect on vulnerable

populations and on global affairs). We need to help faculty know what librarians do and how our core values extend to critically interrogating all forms of information.

- The Library will facilitate student discovery and creation of knowledge through existing programs and through new initiatives, including a makerspace similar to initiatives at other peer and aspirant libraries (like the Idea Lab at Macalester: <https://www.macalester.edu/library/level2/idealab/>). The work will also involve conversations with external experts and those across campus who are currently involved in or interested in pursuing this kind of teaching and learning, to position the Library to be a key resource in digital scholarship and learning.
- The Library will continue to cultivate relationships across campus, including our existing faculty liaison relationships and newer relationships with student support offices such as CARE, the Diversity Center, and the Writing Center.
- The College will ensure that the Library is at the table whenever undergraduate research is discussed, especially as the campus continues to implement strategies in Gustavus ACTS Strategy 2.
- The Library will work with appropriate partners to encourage discussions across campus about how and where undergraduates learn the skills and mindsets for both college-level research and lifelong learning.

#### *Library Physical and Virtual Space*

- The Library will continue to create student-centered research spaces, including spaces that provide access and instruction to students as they create knowledge, like the makerspace described above. The Library will work with the College on resource questions related to these kinds of initiatives.
- The Library will revise our website to further support asynchronous instruction.
- The Library will plan for the 50th anniversary of the current library building, working with offices across campus, including Advancement, to discuss big picture initiatives.

#### **Do you anticipate any changes in your department/program (faculty retirements, etc.) that will shape your opportunities before the external review?**

We are closely examining all of our positions, knowing there will be some upcoming changes that will impact us significantly. Our work is also influenced heavily by changing information environments and curricula. We have plenty of vision, but worry - as we have for years - that we will continue to see library faculty and staff lines shrink or disappear altogether. If faculty lines in particular are not preserved, the kinds of learning we promote will suffer campus-wide.

#### **How will you accomplish these goals?**

We will continue to build on our strengths: our collegial management structure, our innate curiosity and innovation, our creativity and the research we do that informs our practice here as well as informing our discipline more widely.

We also see a need to be even more intentional about developing and maintaining relationships across campus. We note that we already feel stretched thin, and this kind of work, while important, also requires resources of time and energy we do not always have, due to the demands of the rest of our work within the context of a very lean staffing model.

All of our goals and plans require us to be circumspect. We are naturally limited by staffing levels. We will not be able to do everything we dream of doing, but we remain committed to innovation in support of student learning.

**How will you know whether you have met these objectives?**

We will continue to refine our assessment plan to measure goals related to student learning. Other measures will be more obvious (i.e., has the budget grown? have we initiated conversations about how and students learn research skills in the curriculum? do we have a new tenure line?). Most importantly, we will continue to align our work with the mission of the College and seek continuous improvement through our assessment work in order to prepare students for undergraduate research and lifelong learning.

Prepared on behalf of the Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library  
by Julie Gilbert, Library Chair  
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