

Russell Library Strategic Planning Subcommittee Report

Each strategic planning committee's report should be no more than 3-5 pages in length, and should provide a data-based systematic approach that shows priorities essential to Georgia College's mission and changing environment. It should not attempt to predict the future, but rather align and situate GC to focus on important issues coming to higher education in the near future.

Introduction

Please list the members and chair of your committee.

Joe Mocnik (chair), Donna Bennett, Kell Carpenter, Jeff Dowdy, Jennifer Harris, Evan Leavitt, Jennifer Price, Matt Roessing, Shaundra Walker, Charlie Weaver, Joe Windish

Briefly describe the state, regional, or national/international trends that may impact your area of focus.

Provide a narrative stating where we are now in regard to your strategic planning committee's area of focus, and include institutional data supporting the narrative. These data are likely to become the critical baseline data as we begin to longitudinally track trends in our new strategic plan. For example, in the fall of 2015, Georgia College enrolled 6,036 undergraduate students and 853 graduate students. The undergraduate students had average high school grade point averages of X and average SAT scores of X. (If you have specific data needs, please contact the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.)

Introduction

(please add bullet points to be expanded into "a narrative stating where we are in regard to your strategic planning committee's area of focus, and include institutional data supporting the narrative")

Ina Dillard Russell Library at Georgia College supports the University mission of enriching the lives of students and setting them on a path to success. The Library places a high value on providing a unique learning environment while equipping students with diverse resources aimed at expanding their ability to think critically both in and out of the classroom. With approximately 7,000 Georgia College students, Russell Library attracts more than 3,500 average daily visitors with a total of nearly one million gate passes for 2015 academic year. The Russell Library provides scholarly and recreational resources including 205,600 physical volumes, 165,000 ebooks, and 350 databases providing full text and streaming video and audio available remotely 24/7.

Russell Library is a unique mixture of the best of the old and the new. Our 2004 grand opening revealed a modern expansion, while showcasing the classical charm of the original 1932 building. The added space allows ample room for growing print collections, student study and collaborative areas, computer labs, a coffee shop, and more research and shelf space for the library's distinctive special collections which include the Flannery O'Connor collection, university archives, Paul D. Coverdell papers, Carl Vinson exhibits and the most recent major acquisition, signed first-edition books and personal documents by Pulitzer Prize winning author Alice Walker.

At nearly 140,000 sq. ft. our facility is home to the library and several partners (the Learning Center, the Writing Center, the Innovation Station, SERVE, Books & Brew, IDEAS, and the Advancement Call Center), with Disability Services and Testing Services soon to take residence, which are structured to provide student-centered services and faculty support. The ever changing demands for student study space and campus needs presents the library with the challenge of being proactive in maximizing the footprint and relevancy of the physical collection and the spatial usage of the facility, so that it is a reflection of the community it serves.

As the landscape of academic libraries continues to change and evolve, Russell Library has relied on national and state trends in librarianship to inform decision-making. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the American Library Association (ALA) provide a foundation for highlighting the value of the library, while showcasing emerging trends within the field. Scholarly communication and the push toward open access have resulted in the Affordable Learning Georgia initiative at a state level. Additionally, many institutions, including Georgia College, are discovering way to educate users on the research lifecycle and provide a platform for preservation through institutional repositories.

Trends in digitization efforts have created a need for technology-enhanced spaces and new skills in the areas of data management and visualization. Russell Library is meeting those needs by assessing the organizational structure and creating positions more closely aligned with evolving trends in both scholarly communication and digital initiatives.

ALA has also developed a model for supporting equity and inclusion, which along with Georgia College's Diversity Action Plan, has served as a catalyst for developing a more diverse collection and moving forward toward inclusive excellence through education, promotion, and assessment at Russell Library.

Looking to the future, Russell Library strives to align with ACRL and ALA standards by assessing current models related to space, user education, professional development, marketing and outreach, and collections. The goals outlined below provide a roadmap for our vision of imagining, inspiring, and innovating.

Environment and Desired Outcomes

What are the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and immediate threats at the present time and in the future?

The Library's strengths are its human, physical, and technological resources, and its status as a hub for campus activity. The human resources are two-fold, comprised of library employees and patrons. Employees bring strength from their backgrounds, talents, and discipline-specific skillsets, while patrons reflect the diversity found on campus. Physical resources encompass the Library's spaces and collections, meeting both physical and virtual scholarly needs. Technology is represented through resources ranging from everyday computing to exposure to emerging technologies. The final strength builds on the Library's centrality to campus life and the diverse group of campus partners sharing space with the Library.

The Library's weaknesses are adapting to new instructional methods and technologies, developing a cohesive identity, and securing new funding opportunities. With modern challenges facing all libraries, it is imperative to proactively develop skillsets needed to meet the needs of our campus and community patrons while creating an identity that is more focused. The Library also needs to seek new paths to funding. We have a need to measure our value in new ways. To

prove their value and to compete for limited campus resources, progressive libraries are moving away from collection, circulation, gate and other "counts" toward measurements that better describe the contributions that the library makes towards student and institutional outcomes. We are moving in that direction slowly, but we are not there yet. We currently lack the infrastructure to conduct these new types of assessment. Seeking new paths to funding, we may be challenged to become more conscientious stewards of our existing resources to remain as relevant and proactive as possible to serve their patrons.

The Library has the opportunity to be a technology leader, expand its status as a campus and community hub, and develop a more diverse patron base. The Library is well-positioned to increase early adoption and access to emerging technologies as an opportunity to better serve its patrons. There is also opportunity to grow the Library's reputation as the hub of creative and scholarly work. As these opportunities connect, a very real possibility for attracting more diversity in the patrons served emerges.

The Library's immediate and future threats include an identity crisis, competition for limited resources, and inadequate funding. Changing attitudes about libraries are driving questions about traditional library roles and what libraries will become. Central to these questions are two threats that are connected: limited resources and funding. The Library's access to some resources is restricted due to funding remaining mostly static while costs for those resources continue to grow. Specifically, journal subscription costs will continue to be a threat to the Library's ability to provide patron access to those resources if funding cannot be increased.

How might these affect your committee's area of focus?

The items listed above outline challenges that affect most libraries today; Russell Library has worked to adapt to the challenges of modern instructional, technological, and human needs. Constant attention and institutional support are essential to maintaining that adaptive quality and increasing our capacity to engage patrons.

Given this information, what are your area's specific requirements for success?

The Library's success will depend upon flexibility, education and outreach, and sustainability. Flexibility will come through delivering innovative and collaborative physical and digital resources that focus on the needs of library patrons. Education and outreach will drive developing information literacy and scholarly communication programs that will encourage diversity both on campus and in the community. Sustainability will result from cultivating responsive collections that satisfy patron demands and develop previously untapped locally distinct resources.

Goals and Objectives

How can your strategic planning committee's area of focus contribute to helping achieve the vision of becoming a preeminent public liberal arts institution?

The hallmarks of a preeminent public liberal arts institution are a faculty, staff, and student body that engages with the community, works collaboratively to develop essential skills and has a strong civic identity.

Our committee's focus on improving education, outreach, and sustainability will help us develop an environment of community engagement and encourage our patrons to discover and build a strong civic identity. Our committee's focus on delivering flexible, innovative, and collaborative resources and scholarly experiences will encourage our patrons to work together, building stronger essential skills, including analysis, problem-solving, and communication.

Please draft one to three measurable goals, each with three to five measurable objectives, which will enable your committee's area of focus to contribute to the achievement of the university's mission and desire to become a preeminent public liberal arts institution. These goals and objectives will be measured and reviewed annually.

Goal: Strategically position the library so that students, faculty, staff, and the community see us as the destination for discovering, collecting, organizing, publishing, and preserving their scholarly and creative information.

Five Objectives support this goal:

- Develop user-centered physical and digital spaces that are conducive to innovation and collaboration.
- Develop an integrated scholarly communication and information literacy program that anchors the library to student curriculum and faculty development.
- Invest in a library-wide program that re-focuses organizational capacity and growth in the areas of information literacy/scholarly communication, digital initiatives, and customer service.
- Market and deliver programming, resources, and services that respond to the needs of our diverse community.
- Cultivate a dynamic collection that is responsive to shifting demands and develops locally distinct resources.