

SWOT Analysis

The EMU Library has a number of **strengths** upon which to build. It has an agile, flexible organization and dedicated, knowledgeable faculty and staff. It has a reputation on campus for excellent service and is looked to among Michigan peers for best practices and innovation in a number of areas. While the Library has overall strong instruction and liaison programs, those areas are so core to our role on campus that there is a desire to share best practices among library faculty and look for areas for enhancement. We are fortunate to have a well-designed, technologically equipped, and attractive library building.

The Library also identified a number of **weaknesses**. Our development, marketing, and assessment infrastructures are not as mature as they should be and will need work over the next three years.

The Library is excited about several significant **opportunities**. On campus the strategic emphasis on student success, student research, quality programs and service engagement are natural areas for library involvement. In recent years, awareness of the need for EMU to more consistently preserve its history has grown, and there has been a desire for greater involvement by the University Archives in events and displays. Within the region, we have built a solid partnership with ProQuest and have close ties with the two library schools in the area -- both of these we hope to exploit more fully in the next few years. The increasing levels of cooperation among Michigan libraries, in general, and the fifteen public universities in particular, hold promise for shared collections and technology projects.

The **threats** to the EMU Library fall into three categories. First are changes in the information industry, including reliance on a smaller number of vendors for both content and access technologies. This dynamic leads to library materials having some of the highest inflation rates among all sectors of higher education, and also requires continuous professional development for library faculty and staff to keep up with new technologies, new workflows, and new financial/pricing models. Second is the decentralized nature of curriculum planning at EMU, which impacts the Library in two ways -- the inconsistency of information literacy components across programs, and the lack of required documentation of resource needs in the course/program proposal/revision process. Third is the difficulty all academic libraries face in proving their impact and value in quantifiable ways, and the lack of clear standards in the profession for support levels needed for academic libraries to be successful. Compared to peer institutions, the EMU Library is underfunded for collections, facilities, and technology costs, and the Library has lost a significant percentage of its human resources since 2007. Balancing our ambitions for excellent service and technology innovation with these fiscal realities is the single most significant challenge faced by the EMU Library.

The SWOT analysis has informed the Library's selection of strategic goals and initiatives in the plan. Cognizant of threats that may impede progress, the Library is excited to build upon our existing strengths, take advantage of the opportunities we see before us, and make progress on improving some of our relative weaknesses over the next three years.



EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 - 2017

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Introduction

EMU is currently undergoing a strategic planning effort. The five colleges have completed strategic plans, as have several other academic support areas on campus, so it is an appropriate time for the Library to develop a tentative strategic plan. This plan will be revised to reflect the outcomes of the campus strategic planning effort.

The plan acknowledges the realities of resource limitations while seeking to contribute to each of the four strategic directions articulated in the EMU strategic plan. Stagnant operating budgets and significant loss of faculty and staff lines have created major challenges in the Library, and the Library's goals are correspondingly modest. These goals represent a balance between what we know to be leading edge, best practices among public academic libraries and the recognition that we are not resourced at the same level as peer libraries. The EMU Library has an excellent history of setting priorities and finding efficiencies in order to meet campus expectations for collections, services, facilities, and technology, and this plan continues in that tradition while also proposing some aspirational initiatives for the future. Throughout the plan we emphasize partnerships on and off campus -- it is through collaboration that the Library achieves almost all of its ambitions.

Strategic Planning Process

The Library has a well-established process for developing a set of goals each year that represent a consensus-derived, prioritized list of library-wide initiatives. Individual units and teams also have their own annual lists of goals. This is the Library's first effort toward strategic planning in many years.

In 2012-13 the Library revised its mission and vision statements. The vision statement bullet points read very much like goals, and they became the core of the strategic goals in this plan.

Our next step was to review each of the college's current strategic plans and write up our thoughts on how we could support those goals. The Dean reviewed library literature, as well as key related higher education and institutional/information technology literature, and she reviewed current strategic plans from peer institutions. She created her own SWOT analysis and a lengthy set of possible initiatives under each strategic goal. Possible initiatives were labeled as high, medium or low priority in order to begin the process of narrowing in on the most strategic, yet realistic, initiatives for this three-year period.

Each unit/team within the Library did its own SWOT analysis and reviewed the Dean's ideas for possible initiatives. The Dean took all of the unit/team responses and worked with the Library Coordinating Council to develop a more targeted set of initiatives under each strategic goal. This version was then sent to the Library Advisory Committee and discussed in a special library faculty meeting for further refinement.

A penultimate draft was then sent to the Provost and two external reviewers for comment, as well as being discussed at an all-staff retreat. This "final" version of the strategic plan is considered to be a work-in-progress; it will be refined as conversations, resource availability, and university-level planning results reveal new opportunities and priorities.

Mission Statement

Serving as an intellectual and community center for Eastern Michigan University, the EMU Library maintains both a welcoming and accessible facility and a dynamic virtual presence. We support the teaching, lifelong learning, scholarship and creative activity of EMU's students, faculty and staff. We select, organize, preserve, and provide access to information in all its forms. The Library upholds professional values of free access to information, intellectual freedom, accessibility for all users, and privacy of information use.

Vision Statement

1. The Library serves as a center for intellectual discovery and inquiry at EMU, as well as a repository and archive for the products of EMU scholarly and creative effort.
2. The Library is positioned as a key partner in provision of leading edge information and instructional technologies to support the educational mission and goals of the campus.
3. The Library manages an increasingly complex collection of both electronic and physical content to support the curriculum and research needs of the EMU community.
4. The Library maintains a dynamic online presence that serves as a gateway to library services and resources.
5. The Library provides a student-centered facility that enhances and supports teaching, learning and collaboration.
6. The Library supports information literacy in partnership with teaching faculty to promote student success.
7. The Library provides exceptional, proactive, personalized customer service.
8. The Library employs liaison relationships, promotional opportunities and campus information exchange venues to ensure that faculty and students are aware of the Library's services and collections.
9. The Library's collaborative work environment brings out the talents of library faculty and staff.
10. The Library collaborates with libraries and other organizations in Michigan and beyond to maximize services and collections.
11. The Library balances visionary aspirations with fiscal realities in selecting resources and technological innovation to bring to campus.

Strategic Goals & Initiatives

1. Centrality

The Library serves as a center for intellectual discovery and inquiry at EMU, as well as a repository and archive for the products of EMU scholarly and creative effort. The Library provides leading edge information and instructional technologies to the campus. The Library maintains a strong role in the teaching, learning, research and service mission of EMU.

1. Work with the Provost's office to insure timely involvement of the Library in new/revised course/program proposals and to ensure that resources follow when courses and programs are approved. Use the new electronic tracking system as an opportunity to embed the Library at the best times in the process.
2. Document the resources needed for the Library to support the campus goals relative to graduate education, such as subject librarians, specialized databases, and thesis research support.
3. Continue dialogue with EMU leadership in defining the scope of operation for the University Archives, commensurate funding, and articulation of a records retention policy.
4. In collaboration with the Faculty Development Center, initiate campus conversations pertinent to teaching and learning, such as information literacy, scholarly communications, and interdisciplinary inquiry.
5. Market the availability of Digital Commons as EMU's institutional repository and as an open access dissemination option.

2. Collections

The Library manages an increasingly complex collection of both electronic and physical content to support the curriculum and research needs of the EMU community. The Library provides a balanced collection in a variety of formats; the Library selects, houses, and preserves the collections.

1. Continually assess evolving eBook provision models in the industry for the right balance at EMU.
2. Update the Library's collection development policy.
3. Prepare for the possible growth of EMU to over 20,000 FTE students by estimating the total cost of database, eBook and other license agreements, for which 20,000 is a significant price point division.
4. Given new next-generation system capabilities, reconsider technical services workflow.
5. Review the Map Library and make recommendations for the future in terms of services, new technologies, and operational processes.

3. Information Literacy

The Library fosters wise selection, utilization, evaluation, and synthesis of information. The Library faculty teaches the research process and information literacy skills. The Library collaborates with teaching faculty in curriculum and instruction design, implementation, and assessment to strengthen the information literacy of EMU graduates.

1. Use English 121 library instruction efforts as a model for other core lower division courses in order to strengthen information skills of first-year students.
2. Identify programs willing to consider the creation and/or assessment of a formal information literacy component in the curriculum.
3. Analyze the new ACRL information literacy standards and their implications for EMU practice and assessment of library instruction.
4. Expand the availability of online tutorials and learning modules.
5. Work with the campus implementation team for the new learning management system to design and negotiate a library presence.
6. Based on current courses/programs in which librarians are embedded, outline the cost-benefit of being able to scale the practice across a wide array of courses/programs.

4. Customer Service

The Library provides exceptional, proactive, personalized customer service. The Library continually studies the needs and preferences of library users.

1. Conduct a review of the current reference staffing model and define its next phase of evolution.
2. Develop a proposal for funding of a campus document delivery service.
3. Investigate student space usage in the Library for possible modifications to hours, room designations, and use policies.
4. Analyze results of the 2014 LibQUAL satisfaction survey and establish an appropriate action plan for service improvements. Repeat LibQUAL in 2017.
5. Implement the three-year assessment plan developed in 2014. Prepare for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visit in 2017.
6. Prepare print and digital materials designed for specific stakeholder groups to make them aware of services available to them (alumni, community borrowers, users with special needs).

5. The Electronic Library

The Library maintains a dynamic online presence that serves as a gateway to library services and resources. The Library maintains core information architecture that provides bibliographic control and interfaces for user discovery of the Library's print, media, and electronic resources.

1. Complete the ProQuest Intota Beta Partner program and implement a next-generation integrated library system, including maximizing the opportunities for system interoperability.
2. Undertake a review of the current availability of LibGuides to support specific programs / courses and common research assignments.
3. Refresh the library website design, integrating principles of accessibility and responsive design, as well as balancing functionality with appeal.

4. Maximize accessibility of library resources for all types of devices and to all users, including those with disabilities.
5. Evaluate and implement the most effective mechanism by which to provide electronic reserves and plan for conversion.

6. Partnerships & Engagement

The Library creates and sustains strategic partnerships to achieve library goals. The Library markets its value in order to maximize campus utilization of the Library's wide range of services. The Library collaborates with libraries and other organizations in Michigan and beyond to maximize services and collections. The Library contributes to library-related initiatives in the community and to the library profession in Michigan.

1. Share best practices in subject librarianship and liaison among library faculty, and explore ways to provide even more consistent, meaningful, and robust information exchange.
2. Leverage partnerships within Halle Library and across campus to involve the Library in designing, implementing and assessing student retention and degree completion efforts.
3. Participate in the University's efforts as a Carnegie-rated community engagement institution.
4. Continue commitment to a leadership role in the state-wide 24/7 collaborative virtual reference service.
5. Explore next steps after the Michigan Shared Print Initiative in building collections collaboratively within public academic university libraries in Michigan.
6. Look for ways to provide more opportunities and continued solid mentorship for graduate library school interns and graduate assistants.
7. Inventory individual faculty/staff and library-wide service involvement in the Southeast Michigan region and seek opportunities to build on current activities.

7. Resource Management

The Library manages its financial, infrastructure, and human resources. The Library balances visionary aspirations with fiscal realities in selecting resources and technological innovation to bring to campus.

1. Reconfigure library faculty and staff areas of responsibility to cover key areas left vacant by retirements and resignations and determine what services will be curtailed or scaled back given human resource constraints.
2. Examine the service and funding models for the Academic Projects Center.
3. Consider ways to recoup, negotiate and/or minimize costs of service; seek entrepreneurial opportunities that are consistent with our service ethic.
4. Work with the Foundation to more actively include library needs in undesignated giving, annual fund, faculty/staff giving, and other Foundation-run programs.
5. Engage in more concerted development efforts and cultivate a strong donor base to support goals and projects.
6. Track the newly established library efficiency metrics to identify improvements needed and possible revision of the metrics; work with the Provost's office to identify a budget-flexing metric.