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Transforming Academic Libraries for 21st Century Students: UMass Amherst Libraries -- a Case Study

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/schafer_jay/3/
Transforming Academic Libraries for 21st Century Students

UMass Amherst Libraries
A Case Study

Jay Schafer – Director of Libraries
Old Favorite Quote:

“The parallels between the printing press era and today are sufficiently compelling to suggest:
• Changes in the information age will be as dramatic as those in the Middle Ages in Europe.
• The future of the information age will be dominated by unintended consequences.
• It will be decades before we see the full effects of the information age.”  (paraphrased)

http://rand.org/pubs/papers/P8014/index2.html
New Favorite Quote:

The Digital Revolution [is] ripping through our lives like the meteor that extinguished the dinosaurs.

Louis Rossetto (founder of Wired)  
“What we got right – and wrong.”  
*Wired.* June 2008
University of Massachusetts Amherst

- Founded 1863 as Land Grant University (Mass Aggie)
- 1,450 acre campus
- Currently 25,593 students
  - 19,823 undergraduate
  - 5,770 graduate
- 1,169 faculty
- 10 Schools & Colleges
  - 87 bachelors degrees
  - 73 masters degrees
  - 51 doctoral degrees
- $244,681,262 campus base budget
UMass Amherst Libraries (FY 06)

- 3,230,697 volumes
- 40,749 current serial titles (including all electronic journals)
- $14,680,447 total expenditures
- $7,176,049 professional wages
  - 55 FTE librarians & professional staff
  - 76 FTE support staff
  - 46 FTE student staff
- $5,579,248 total materials expenditures
  - $974,487 monographs
  - $4,339,742 serials (including electronic)
- $1,836,714 operating budget
W.E.B. Du Bois Library

- Opened 1973
- Tallest academic library building in the world
- 28 floors
- 405,000 gross sq. ft.
- 286,000 net assign.
Fiscal Years 2002 - 2004

The Bad Years
Libraries Total Expenditures FY01 – FY04

- Total
- Campus
- Direct State Funding

FY01 FY02 FY03 FY04

$14,000,000
$12,000,000
$10,000,000
$8,000,000
$6,000,000
$4,000,000
$2,000,000
$-

CASLIN – June 16, 2008
Libraries Acquisitions Spending FY 00 - FY 05

- **Maintain FY00 Buying Power (7% Annual Inflationary Increase)**
- **Actual**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year (FY)</th>
<th>Lost Buying</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY00</td>
<td>$364,425</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY01</td>
<td>$2,249,446</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY02</td>
<td>$1,089,285</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY03</td>
<td>$1,512,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY04</td>
<td>$1,770,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY05</td>
<td>$1,770,394</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CASLIN – June 16, 2008
Staffing FY01 – FY05

- Total
- Professional
- Support
- Student

Estimated
Managing Change

Working with the Remaining Staff
Library Staff Reaction to cuts ...

- Many staff who have worked in the library for 20+ years
- We are doing great work – why are we being punished?
- Don’t funders understand the importance of our work?
- Will cuts continue?
- How can we meet the needs of students and faculty with these reduced resources?
Managing Change
Managing Change

Shift in Organizational Thinking

- **OLD CHEESE**
  - Focused on print resources
  - Tradition of “perfection” in cataloging and other services
  - Comprehensive collection building and service (“just in case”)

- **NEW CHEESE**
  - Shift to digital (electronic) resources
  - Outsource acquisition of routine books
    - Approval plans
    - Cataloging/processing (Shelf-ready)
  - Concentrate staff resources on unique materials
  - Redirect staff to priority areas:
    - Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery (“just in time”)
    - Electronic Reserves
    - Development (fund-raising) & Communications (telling our story)
Re-Imagining
Du Bois Library Deck Replacement Project
2004-2006
Du Bois Library Deck Replacement Project
2004-2006
Today’s undergraduates...

- Thrive in a digital, graphical, gaming, noisy, and multitasking world
- Interactive life that blends the social and academic with food
- Multiple and integrated communication modes (cell phones, pdas, IM, RSS, blogs, podcasts, etc.)
- Learn experientially (by trial and error and through collaboration with their friends, normally in groups)
- High-achievers
- Expect choices, customization, self-service, and instant gratification
Today’s undergraduate students require us to take risks and revolutionize library services and systems ...

- Consolidate service points (make most efficient use of staff and minimize frustration for students)
- Add convenience for users; self-service options
- Provide 24/7 access to resources, services, and facilities (remote and in building)
- Study new technologies our students are using to see if they have potential for enhancing our services (IM, texting, Facebook, Second Life, etc)
- Study emerging technologies; look at what other libraries are doing with technology
Learning Commons or Information Commons
Integrated Services in a Learning Commons

- Integrates library and other campus services, staff, resources, collections, and technologies
- Brings services into the Library as the heart of the campus
- Integrates the social and academic
- Accommodates student lifestyles with long hours and food services
- Provides varied and flexible collaborative spaces that adapt to students’ changing patterns of learning and innovating
- Connects students with the information, resources, and support they need to succeed on campus

A Learning Commons is not just more computers ...
Connecting to the academic mission ...

- Student success
- Student retention
- Inclusion of diverse populations
- Increased student learning
Before...
After...used to be Reference Books...
Spaces...

- 25,000 square feet
- 17 group study rooms, each of which accommodates 4-10 people
- Combined total of over 250 seats
- Computer classroom for library instruction plus...
Resources...

- 200 computers (PCs and MACs)
- 400+ ports for laptop network access to campus network and the internet
- 50 laptop PCs & 2 projectors for student check-out
- Wireless on all floors
- Copying, printing, faxing, scanning, UCard transfer station
What can students do in the Learning Commons?

- Use library collections, databases and services
- Get help with technology, writing, career services, academic advising, and academic tutoring
- Study
- Collaborate
- Socialize
- Eat and drink
- Meet in group study rooms and spaces
- View exhibits
- Attend events and training
- Attend library instruction
- Make copies, print-outs
- Use wireless
- Borrow tablet PCs and projectors
- Buy office supplies
A variety of flexible spaces...
More spaces...
2nd & 3rd Floor Quiet Study
Cell Zone™ Cell Phone Booth
Service Points and Staffing
Campus Partners

- Academic Advising
- Campus Bookstore
- Campus Police
- Career Services
- Center for Teaching (Instructional Design)
- Disability Services
- Food Services (Café)
- Learning Resource Center (Student Tutoring)
- Janitorial Services
- New Student Orientation/Campus Tours
- Office of Information Technologies (Help Desk & Computer Classrooms)
- Writing Center
Help is always available...

- Building Security Desk
- Course Reserves & Media Desk (Laptop checkout)
Research help...
Other student support services...

- Writing Center
- Assistive Technologies
- Learning Resource Center (10th floor)
- OIT Classrooms (7th & 16th floors)

Academic Advising & Career Services
Coffee and Food – Procrastination Station

• 75,600 cups of coffee
• 184,000 transactions ($2.20 average per sale)
• $404,000 gross
How do you measure success?

- Positive comments from students, faculty, administrators, community
- Gate counts average 5,000 per day
- Procrastination Station sells most coffee on campus
- Long lines for computers
- Asking for 24 hours / 7 days per week
- All laptops checked out most of the time
Lessons Learned

- **Create a space for students – not librarians**
- Partners the Library with the Teaching/Learning community as well as the Research community
- Involve students in planning (focus groups)
- More electricity and networking (especially wireless)
- Food & drink available during all open hours (vending machines)
- Events: a space everyone wants to use
Designed for students not librarians
Post Script

Administrators Support Winners
Not Whiners
“A campus library is the soul of the academic institution and we want our students to spend quality time there, transforming information into learning, exploring ideas and sharing insights with other students as they blur the line between studying and socializing

-- Provost Charlena Seymour
Libraries Total Expenditures 1997 - 2008

Staff
Materials
Operating
Total
Conclusion and Beginning

The transformation of the UMass Libraries in four short years is remarkable to those who have experienced it.

The dedication and hard work of library staff and the synergies of reorganization forced by:

- Budget Reductions
- A commitment to excellence in providing information resources and services
- The challenges of technological change, and
- Opportunities to create 21st Century facilities

have allowed the phoenix to rise renewed from its ashes.
Thank You

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