

Strategic Plan 2017-2021
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Vision: The library collaborates with other university units to provide an environment that supports teaching and learning, and encourages intellectual exchange, scholarship, and creative expression.

Context: The library's plan results from the staff's explorations into the changing nature of academic libraries. Each unit in the library submitted objectives for the new strategic plan. These objectives were then placed under four broad, library-wide goals: Collections, Services, Spaces – both physical and virtual – and Library Staff. The [University of Southern Indiana's \(USI\) new strategic plan for 2016-2020](#) also provided context for the library's plan.

Challenges for today's university libraries include the growing cost of library resources, the changing nature of scholarly publishing, the library as a space, the changing work habits of students, and the ongoing transition to digital collections. A key piece guiding current thinking in the field has been the Issue Brief [Library Leadership for the Digital Age](#), by Deanna Marcum (March 2016). In the brief, Marcum posits that "...libraries have become a community center – a place where users can bring their laptops or iPads and sit in the presence of their friends and fellow students, have their coffee, and do their academic work," a trend that has certainly been realized at Rice Library (Marcum, p. 5).

Over the last ten years, average *weekly* visits to Rice Library have risen steadily, from 3,673 in 2005-2006 to 11,456 in 2015-2016, peaking at 12,307 in 2014-2015. In addition to in-person visitors, we must also attend to those who use our services and collections via the library's virtual space. Maintaining an up-to-date and intuitive digital presence is crucial, as the library's web pages regularly receive an average of nearly 800,000 hits per year.

In alignment with the broader university goal of [Excellence in Learning for the Entire USI Community](#), the library will work toward the following:

Goal 1: Provide high-quality information resources to members of the USI community.

Objective 1.1: Given available funding and curricular focus, members of the USI community will have the most appropriate and extensive library resources possible, emphasizing undergraduate and graduate curricula, as well as university and regional history.

- Through the library's Collection Development Team, evaluate and develop collections across formats (print, electronic, streaming, etc.) to meet the needs of new and existing academic programs

- Collaborate with other libraries and consortia – public and private, state-wide and regional – to expand resource-sharing partnerships, shared print initiatives, group purchases, and shared collection development

Objective 1.2: Improve resource discovery for enhanced access.

- Explore new methods to provide expanded access to resources, including open access journals and user-driven purchases
- Establish an institutional repository to store and present scholarship created by USI faculty, staff, and students

Goal 2: Provide high-quality services to members of the USI community.

Objective: Members of the USI community, whether onsite or online, will have high-quality services of intellectual and practical value.

Checkout, Reference, and University Archives & Special Collections:

- Increase the use of Rice Library materials through new services, such as the Indiana State Library’s state-wide virtual union catalog and borrowing program and the expansion of *Campus Express*
- Incorporate the Association of College and Research Libraries’ (ACRL) January 2016 [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#) into research instruction and reference services
- Explore the use of video technologies for research instruction, reference service, and discovery

Library Systems and Processing/Technical Services:

- Replace Voyager, the current integrated library catalog/system, with a library resource management tool
- Expand document delivery and purchase-on-demand services as resources permit
- Explore options for providing technology assistance as a library service
- Explore the use of video technologies for training library staff on IT-related processes and issues
- In collaboration with Information Technology, work toward making available within the library’s computer labs at least one copy of any licensed software used on campus

Outreach and Marketing Services:

- Increase outreach to USI faculty, staff, graduate students, retirees, and other special groups via tailored events, workshops, and/or communication

- Increase visits to intentional communities – defined as a group of individuals who choose to live together in order to advance a shared set of values or beliefs – to forge relationships and grow signature special collections
- Share knowledge of scholarly communication and copyright issues with USI faculty, staff, and students

Goal 3: Enhance library spaces to meet changing needs.

Objective: Library facilities will provide a safe and welcoming environment in support of learning, collaboration, and research, and will house current information technology, print, and special collections.

- Collaborate with USI Facility Operations and Planning personnel to complete a long-range plan for the renovation of the library building, including updating public-use space and evaluating the changing space needs of existing library units
- Implement multi-functional spaces where possible
- Expand the use of the library’s lower level as additional study space after 9:00 pm during the academic year
- Implement zones for different floors of the library, encouraging collaboration and group work on the lower level and first floor, and graduating to quiet study on the upper floors
- Explore possibilities for sound-proof rooms for students to use for web-based job interviews or to record/practice presentations
- Explore options for incorporating a makerspace – a do-it-yourself space where people gather to create, invent, and learn – especially as such a space may tie in to the curriculum
- Improve security by installing additional security cameras

Goal 4: Recruit and retain a well-trained, innovative, and committed staff who work together to advance library and university goals.

Objective 4.1: Provide and support opportunities for library personnel to develop skills, expand knowledge, and pursue scholarship goals.

- Expand the use of training modules for student employees

Objective 4.2: Maintain an organizational structure that will support the evolving needs of our users as well as the changing library and higher education environment.

- Work toward replacing part-time staff with permanent staff
- Reallocate staffing where needed and as possible

Objective 4.3: Cultivate a culture of transparency and civility.

- Strive for “an entrepreneurial culture that values experimentation and creativity” (Marcum, p. 7), professional growth, commitment, and achievement
- Through the library’s Staff Development Team, search for ways to build community among library employees, including student employees

Conclusion: The library’s goals for 2017-2021 focus on supporting excellence in learning through its collections, services, spaces, and staff. As we monitor national trends, we will also consider the context of our local community’s needs, interests, and work styles, and will remain the intellectual hub of the USI campus.

These are the facts. The old library was passive, asleep, a reservoir or cistern, getting in but not giving out...the librarian a sentinel before the doors... The new library is active, an aggressive, educating force in the community, a living fountain of good influences...and the librarian occupies a field of active usefulness second to none.

Melvil Dewey

“Libraries as Related to the Educational Work of the State.”

Speech read before the Convocation of the University of the State of New York.
July 1, 1888.

Retrieved December 1, 2016, from
https://books.google.com/books/about/libraries_as_related_to_the_education_al.html?id=xmIEAAAAMAAJ.