

# University Libraries Strategic Plan



University of Nevada, Reno  
2016-2021

# University Libraries Strategic Plan 2016-2021

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## Strategic Context

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The University Libraries' strategies for the future reinforce the themes of learning, discovery, and engagement that are the central elements in the University's strategic plan. The Libraries are dedicated to supporting the university's high-quality degree programs through the provision and continual improvement of critical information resources, engaging spaces, innovative technologies, and valuable services. As the university aspires to attain R1, the highest level of Carnegie research classification, the Libraries will grow both our collections and the infrastructure to deliver those collections. As a land grant institution, the outreach mission is key to the university's strategic direction, including, as stated in its strategic plan, the dissemination of "useful and practical information." The Libraries will continue to maintain a high level of service to all of our user groups in support of the university's commitment to engagement.

The Libraries must approach a five-year plan with an eye toward current trends in higher education, particularly those impacting libraries and teaching and learning technologies. There are dramatic forces of change affecting libraries and the learning environment. Some with the most direct impact include advances in technology, new approaches to teaching/learning, changes in scholarly communication, and the economics of higher education. The 2016 Higher Education edition of the New Media Consortium Horizon Report highlights rather dramatic shifts in approach to teaching and learning which pose both a challenge and a great opportunity for the Libraries and Teaching and Learning Technologies. To capitalize on these trends, we will re-think and adapt our own instruction and information delivery strategies, as well as the spaces and technologies that we provide and support. Major trends include:

- A shift to deeper learning approaches that favor hands-on and student-centered experiences, supporting various models such as project-based and challenge-based learning, as well as informal learning experiences
- A focus on measuring learning with a renewed interest in assessment to document academic readiness, learning progress, and skill acquisition, employing a wide range of tools including data mining software and LMS analytics, among others
- An increasing focus on digital literacy as a core competency
- The adaptation of a wide range of technologies for higher education, including social media, mobile technologies, visualization technologies, enabling technologies, and augmented reality

This is fertile ground for teaching/learning technologists, digital media specialists, and library personnel engaged in discovery, liaison work, instruction, and front-line customer services to expand, improve, and transform services in support of teaching and learning.

As we develop plans for the next five years, we must realistically assess our current characteristics and articulate goals that incorporate this self-understanding. Limited resources from the state to support higher education will most likely persist. A rapidly growing student enrollment partially offsets the lack of state funding, but it also increases the demand for resources. University aspirations to be an R1 university require an R1 library; these are aspirations for which we are currently greatly underfunded. But attaining that status will afford us greater opportunities to collaborate with other research libraries through consortial partnerships.

The aim of this plan is to describe and prioritize the higher-level aspirations of the University Libraries as an organization. The plan was written by a small team, drawing from the compiled discussions and comments of departments and committees throughout the Libraries. Included with the plan are statements of the mission, vision, and values of the Libraries. Each goal enumerated in the plan is accompanied by a statement of context, objectives, and outcomes. The goals address big-picture aspects of library management. Each Library unit will work to develop more specific objectives and indicators that complement and support the overall Library strategic plan.



## Mission

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In support of the University mission to advance teaching, research, student learning, and community engagement, the University Libraries embrace intellectual inquiry and innovation, nurture the production of new knowledge, and foster excellence in education through scholarly resources, active learning environments, cutting-edge technology, and exceptional service.

## Vision

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The University Libraries aspire to be partners in the scholarly and creative achievements of students, faculty, and staff, leaders in the academic library community, and contributors in the University's efforts to become nationally known for academic excellence and positive community impacts.

## Values

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### Service

We provide excellent, proactive, user-centered services and a service environment, supported by continuous assessment, in which user satisfaction goals are shared by all library staff; operations and policy decisions are focused on the user; and staff are empowered to respond and solve problems to facilitate the attainment of user-centered objectives.

### Engagement

We build meaningful, sustained connections with students, faculty, and the larger community in order to more deeply understand and more effectively respond to their needs. We bring enthusiasm and dedication to our work, and we give ourselves fully in service to our users.

### Teamwork

We collaborate with other library staff in a collegial and respectful manner because we recognize that we can be more effective when we combine our strengths and work toward shared goals. We cultivate trust in each other, embrace the idea of disagreement with respect, value the contributions of all library staff, and strive to work together in a spirit of inquiry and openness.

### Responsiveness to Change

We respect standards and proven practices but recognize that technological, social, and professional changes will affect our operations. We stay abreast of recent developments and respond proactively to a changing world. Sometimes we are the change leaders.

## Diversity

We respect and appreciate the variety of beliefs, behaviors, orientations, identities and cultural backgrounds of the university community and foster an environment of understanding, respect and sensitivity in our services to the community. We provide a work environment of inclusion in which every member's voice is valued and respected and actively seek opportunities to engage, communicate, collaborate, and advance our understanding and appreciation of differences.

## Intellectual Freedom

We embrace intellectual freedom as an essential element of learning, discovery, and engagement. We value the curiosity of all library users and provide services and resources to address all points of view.

## Privacy

We recognize that privacy is vital to free speech, free thought, and the free pursuit of learning and research, and that libraries carry a special responsibility to protect the activities of library users from unwanted scrutiny or observation.



# Goals, Objectives, Outcomes

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# 1. Teaching and Learning

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*Goal: Expand and strengthen our support for teaching and learning.*

## Context

The educational landscape continues to evolve as a result of changes in educational technologies, the continued growth of online education, and a growing emphasis on active and collaborative learning strategies. We play an important role in helping to produce graduates who possess competencies in multiple literacies, but we know that we can best achieve these goals through close collaborations with teaching faculty. We are also responsive to increasing calls for accountability in higher education and the need to both continually improve what we do and to demonstrate our impact on student learning and success. Through the different ways that we support teaching and learning, we strengthen the university's educational quality and help to ensure that every graduate is equipped to succeed in the knowledge economy.

## Objectives

- Increase integration of liaison librarians into academic departments and programs in order to promote use of information, instructional, and scholarly support services by students and faculty.
- Partner with faculty to implement Core Objective 3 of the general education program and to integrate information, media, and digital literacies into all levels of the university curriculum.
- Support campus efforts to improve digital fluency through technological resources and services that enable students to more deeply participate in learning communities, share information, and create knowledge products.
- Implement and support creative and engaging approaches to instruction that enhance active, student-centered, and self-directed learning experiences both inside and outside of the classroom.
- Support faculty in integrating innovative and effective instructional technologies into online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses, ensuring that technologies meet the needs of our faculty and students.
- Implement assessment methods that lead to improvement of face-to-face, hybrid, and online instructional techniques and that document our positive impact on student learning. Explore the use of learning analytics data to better understand our impact on student learning and to make changes accordingly.

## Outcomes

- We engage in varied, substantive collaborations with faculty to improve courses and programs, and faculty and students value our instructional support.
- Library resources and information, media, and digital literacies are integrated into classes and programs.



- Students improve their abilities to critically analyze and use information throughout their college careers.
- Students improve their digital fluency skills through interactions with library/TLT resources and services.
- We provide engaging, interactive learning opportunities in a variety of formats.
- Faculty are able to effectively use online technologies to teach courses, and the quality of online, hybrid, and face-to-face classes at UNR improves.
- We have a positive impact on student learning and success.

## 2. User experience

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*Goal: Foster positive experiences for library users in order to support and advance the teaching, learning, and research output of the university.*

### Context

Both physical and virtual interactions with spaces, services, collections, technology, and personnel define one's experience with the libraries. These experiences then directly impact future interactions with the library: whether the user will ask questions, develop relationships, or persist in using technology or research materials. It is essential that we understand and manage the user experience, removing obstacles and creating intuitive physical and virtual interfaces. It is also important to see beyond ease-of-use to provide welcoming and meaningful experiences and opportunities for active engagement to enhance the learning experience.

### Objectives

- Develop a focused, effective approach to accurately assess the user experience with library and classroom spaces and services and to inform the website, service and resource development.
- Ensure that consideration of user needs is the foundation of decision making.
- Examine service desks, policies and procedures, and information and service delivery mechanisms to improve services and user satisfaction at all points of contact.
- Improve communication tools to assist the user in understanding library services, including predictable wayfinding.
- Provide innovative library services that foster collaboration among faculty and students.
- Extend the Libraries' application platform to provide a consistent virtual user experience through the effective integration of commercial APIs and in-house applications.
- Build confidence among staff and pride in excellent customer service.

### Outcomes

- Our service infrastructure is transparent, efficient, and easily navigated. Users are able to identify and connect with assistance and resources without impediments or dead-ends and with minimal referrals.
- Virtual spaces are intuitive, clear, and easy to navigate.
- Organizational decisions are made in response to assessment and analysis of user needs.

## 3. Discovery and Collections

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*Goal: Create an environment that connects users with the information they need to build knowledge.*

### Context

Collections exist in a matrix of local and remote, physical and digital, free and commercial, owned and rented, perpetual and ephemeral. Building collections means making all of those meaningful and navigable for Library users in the most effective and efficient ways. Increasingly, users find information in multiple places through multiple channels. The world is the collection. The Libraries will enhance this virtual collection in every way possible. User needs are ultimately the most important criteria for directing library collection activities and services. The University Libraries will advocate for continued and growing support of core information needs while also exploring alternative resources and methods of accessing them. We will take responsibility for identifying, describing, delivering, and preserving unique, local collections.

### Objectives

- Implement a proactive approach to collections that facilitates user input, supports the curriculum, and serves the research agenda.
- Deploy commercial discovery tools and in-house web applications to expose and surface our collections and make them useful. Continually improve our discovery ecosystem. Create platforms and services that remove barriers to access.
- Strengthen investment in a diverse and multi-format collection along with effective infrastructure to facilitate the pursuit of research, scholarship, and creative activities.
- Explore new processing, digitizing, and preservation methods to enhance and increase use of our collections.
- Promote and interpret our collections to increase recognition and usage of our unique materials for scholarship and teaching.
- Partner with consortia to expand our effectiveness, influence, and reach.

### Outcomes

- Our management of collections is efficient, balanced, responsible, and responsive to the needs of faculty and students.
- Users can effectively access information through the library web presence.
- We provide effective means (both technological and human) for users to express and fulfill their information needs.
- More unique content is made available online and this content is increasingly used.

- We promote sound use of open access resources on campus and integrate these into our discovery tools.
- Our archival papers, photographs, and other unique materials are effectively ingested and processed with the latest methods for tangible and digital archives. Our toolkit of skills is expanded.
- We add value to our collections through meaningful exhibits and programs.
- We identify and seek to join appropriate library consortia that can help us build collections and staff expertise.

## 4. Spaces and Technologies

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*Goal: Provide spaces and technologies that enhance learning and scholarly experiences.*

### Context

Information technologies are evolving at a rapid pace, creating new possibilities for teaching, learning, and scholarship. At the same time, an increasing need exists for engaging and flexible spaces that support formal and informal learning, digital projects and presentations, hands-on experiences, and collaboration. In both our physical and virtual library spaces, we use digital technologies and design innovations to maximize learning and nurture the production and distribution of new knowledge. In the larger campus environment, we bring our expertise in classroom technology and pedagogy to support active learning and positive classroom experiences.

### Objectives

- Repurpose and enhance physical spaces to support active learning and scholarship in many forms, from independent study and reflection to interactive collaborations to various types of events and gatherings.
- Expand and enrich library makerspaces and other technology-enhanced spaces that promote active learning and engagement along with information and knowledge creation.
- Expand new media and video production through expertise and facilities that support the needs of the campus community.
- Build expertise and offer instruction in data manipulation and visualization.
- Expand training/faculty development opportunities for active learning classrooms.
- Expand, upgrade, and maintain classroom technology across campus to meet enrollment growth and maintain campus standards for AV/classroom technology.
- Provide effective classroom support services in the face of campus growth.

### Outcomes

- Library spaces and technologies are well-used by students and faculty for courses, research, and other purposes.
- Our technology support and media assistance help to further student learning and faculty research.
- Media and digital content creation that is supported by the Libraries/TLT is integrated into courses.
- Faculty and students benefit from support and instruction in data manipulation and visualization.
- Faculty and students successfully use the Libraries' virtual spaces for teaching, learning, and scholarship.
- The use of interactive learning models is more widely applied.

- Outdated/obsolete technologies are replaced in classrooms on a timeline that prevents significant downtime/disruptions in usage.
- Campus standards for AV/classroom technology remain current and relevant.

## 5. Scholarly Communication

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*Goal: Become a valued partner with the campus in furthering the scholarly enterprise.*

### Context

Libraries have always played an important role in the lifecycle of research outputs, especially as pertains to the discovery and preservation of scholarly information, but now there are so many changes afoot in scholarly communication that the role of libraries is both expanded and, at the same time, thrown into question. Scholarly communication is no longer circumscribed by the traditional publishing model, but uses new technologies and new social organizations to transmit ideas and discoveries. We must continue to maintain our expertise in discovery and preservation while also exploring new modes of contributing value to university students and scholars—and reaching beyond campus to those supporting scholarly activity elsewhere—in their goals to create knowledge.

### Objectives

- Strengthen the liaison librarian program to support faculty in various aspects of digital scholarship, including GIS, data visualization, data management, digital preservation, user experience, and other areas.
- Grow and promote the Institutional Repository.
- Partner in big data, digital humanities, and other digital scholarly communication projects.
- Grow our expertise in and provide assistance with topics related to scholarly communication (e.g., copyright, intellectual property, open access, open educational resources, author rights, scholarly metrics, and altmetrics).
- Lead development of an open access policy framework and initiate steps toward implementation that will support faculty needs in different disciplines.
- Expand relationships with the community, especially education, innovation, and tech business partners.

### Outcomes

- Our institutional repository becomes a trusted place to store and discover the intellectual output of campus, including student, faculty, and departmental resources.
- We participate in campus projects involving big data, digital humanities, and digital scholarship. These projects bring value to the university's scholarly output, and faculty and students value library support.
- Faculty and students value the expertise of liaison librarians and other library staff regarding recent developments and best practices in scholarly communication.
- We connect community groups to our campus objectives.

## 6. Organizational Culture

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*Goal: Foster a healthy organizational culture that appreciates the value of the individual, encourages collaboration, recognizes accomplishments, and unites employees from diverse backgrounds around a shared mission.*

### Context

The shifting landscape of both higher education and libraries requires us to re-examine, rethink and respond to threats and opportunities. In a rapidly changing industry, the organization must meet user needs, maintain a stable and capable work force, and continuously evolve to adapt to social, economic, and technological trends and pressures. These challenges impact both our internal organizational culture and external relationships.

Internally, the Libraries must create a flexible, responsive, learning culture in order to meet these challenges and maintain effectiveness. It requires a workforce that is adaptable and forward-thinking, embraces change, and has the knowledge and skills to solve current problems and recognize future opportunities. The Libraries must invest in the staff and address organizational effectiveness to meet these challenges.

Externally, communication with library users and the wider community is essential. We live in a complex information environment, where we must strive to keep university students, faculty, and administrators aware of the scope of services and resources the Libraries provide. We have a responsibility, foremost, to communicate our services and resources in order to support the academic mission of the campus and to contribute to student success. We share the university's goal to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of Nevadans. Finally, the Libraries must be able to articulate our impact on users and communicate our value and need for resources.

### Objectives

Staff:

- Hire and retain sufficient professional, technical, and support staff to assist the teaching, learning, research, and outreach mission of the Libraries and university.
- Align workforce skills with library priorities; continuously evaluate and redefine vacant positions to meet priority workforce needs.
- Establish a proactive culture of continuous improvement, curiosity, and recognition of mutual responsibility for a positive customer experience.
- Develop a well-informed, diverse staff with the knowledge, skills, and resources to provide a quality experience for library users.



- Support professional development, training, and other growth experiences that enhance the employee’s ability to excel in job performance and prepare for advancement.
- Enrich onboarding and mentoring programs for librarians and staff.
- Create a rich and coordinated training program for student employees and engage their skills.
- Create a culture of recognition.

#### Planning and budget:

- Frequently revisit and clearly communicate priorities.
- Manage financial, human, and space resources to support established priorities and articulated goals.
- Improve project management strategies.
- Actively engage staff in planning and implementing responsive change.
- Foster an innovative culture that unites technology, information, experimentation, and active learning.
- Support the experimentation necessary to create leading edge services.

#### Diversity:

- Create an environment of inclusion and respect.
- Recruit talented and diverse faculty and staff.

#### Assessment:

- Support evidence- and data-based decision making and implement mechanisms for accessing and disseminating useful data.
- Establish a library-wide assessment plan aligned with strategic planning. Identify strategic and useful metrics.
- Continuously self-assess and review operations, adjust workflows, and implement technologies to improve operational efficiencies.
- Train staff to collect, analyze and interpret data.

#### Marketing and external relationships:

- Develop a cohesive, achievable marketing plan to reach students and faculty as well as the external community, taking advantage of multiple forms of communication and tailored messages.
- Build strong relationships with an extended community of education, business and philanthropic partners in order to promote social and educational opportunities, as appropriate, and increase the Libraries’ base of support with potential donors.
- Increase our profile and recognition through a variety of strategies (including participation in library organizations and conferences, news stories, scholarly output and speaking engagements) in order to create partnerships, learn what other libraries are doing, and facilitate recruitment of new faculty.

## Outcomes

- All staff have a clear understanding of goals and priorities.
- Staff are well-trained, well-informed, and have the technological and administrative support to perform successfully.
- We attract diverse and talented applicants.
- Decisions impacting user services and resource allocations are supported by evidence and all staff have access to data needed for decision making and exploration.
- Students, faculty and researchers know about our resources and services and how to connect with them.
- We routinely assess and analyze feedback from various user communities in a continuous improvement process.
- We have strong external relationships and are recognized by the local community and national library community for the quality of our programs and contributions to the profession.
- Across the organization, we are able to respond quickly and effectively to needs, challenges and opportunities.