

Bowdoin College Library - Strategic Plan for 2006-2008 – Executive Summary

Mission Statement

Bowdoin College Library staff, services, resources, and collections advance the pursuit of knowledge and offer a gateway to the world of information and ideas. In support of that mission, the Library serves as an intellectual gathering place that fosters and enhances learning, education, research, and personal fulfillment.

Introduction

As technology continues to reshape scholarship, pedagogy, and scholarly communication, students, faculty members and researchers face an increasingly complex information landscape. Bowdoin students, who never have known life without computers, arrive on campus deiced with laptops and myriad electronic gadgets used to access and record a web of information. Meanwhile, the curriculum, faculty interests, and scholarship are increasingly interdisciplinary and multi-cultural, and along with pedagogy, continue to be transformed by technology. Within this shifting landscape, the primary mission of libraries, to make the universe of recorded knowledge accessible, endures, as do librarians' commitments to such core values as the individual right to intellectual pursuit, free from censorship or violation of privacy. Planning enables the Library to achieve this mission.

This document presents highlights from the Library's Strategic Plan for 2006-2008. That plan is informed by curricular change at Bowdoin; developments in librarianship, technology, scholarly communication, publishing, and higher education; responses received through assessment tools and focus groups; consultation and collaboration with colleagues in Information Technology and other campus departments, the Library Committee, faculty members, and students; and partnership with the librarians at Colby and Bates colleges. Neither this plan nor this summary is meant to be an exhaustive list of ongoing activities, but rather to frame significant new and emerging initiatives.

Library Collections & Information Resources

- CBB Mellon collaborative collection development grant
Coordinate selection, purchasing, and physical collection management to facilitate sharing of budgetary and space resources and provide a broader universe of materials to the three academic communities.
- Journal review/realignment project
Evaluate journal holdings, minimize duplicate format subscriptions, and reallocate funds to increase monographic and digital content purchases.
- New collection initiatives
Develop collections to support research interests of new faculty, campus institutes/programs, and curricular offerings.
- Digital content
Deliver and promote use of digital information resources, such as music online, Google Books, and ebrary, in the framework of integrated library collection development.
- Digital asset management
Develop metadata standards, policies, and procedures to facilitate implementation of digitization projects, particularly Special Collections resources, and to broaden public access to digitized collections through management systems such as Luna.
- Scholarly communication
Inform faculty about new communication systems, publishing models, and open access initiatives to create the broadest access to scholarly content; educate faculty about the author rights movement; build faculty interest and participation in developing a digital institutional repository.
- Preservation of collections
Conduct a preservation assessment survey to identify at-risk library materials in all formats, in preparation for developing a comprehensive preservation program that insures the long-term survival of the collections, both digital and print.

Instruction, User Services & Information Access

- Information literacy instruction
Partner with faculty to incorporate new approaches to information skill instruction into first-year seminars and the first- and second-year curricular experiences. Instruct student majors in discipline-specific research skills.
- Research support
Provide assistance and consultation for users of new pedagogical and research tools, e.g. GIS and streaming multimedia, to support the research and teaching needs of the College, especially new faculty and the new curriculum.
- Discovery tools
Implement software applications, e.g. federated search, that permit simultaneous searching of multiple databases to facilitate interconnectivity among information sources.
- Customized interfaces
Develop user-defined portals in the context of overall campus initiatives that feature library resources and services and that enable users to create personalized information environments. Utilize RSS feeds and customized alerts to notify library users about new materials and services.
- Just-in-time services
Enhance NExpress and other document delivery systems to broaden access to resources held by other libraries and commercial providers; expand reference assistance through IM (instant messaging) and other services.

Facilities – “The Library as Place”

- Short-term space needs
Address pressing space needs of Art and Music libraries. Develop a plan to accommodate anticipated growth of print holdings through 2015.
- Long-term space needs
Envision 25-year facilities requirements for collection storage, technology services and resources, the role of the branch libraries, and use of the library as a collaborative learning and research center.

Management & Assessment

- Joint strategic planning with Information Technology (IT)
Collaborate with IT in the development and implementation of emerging digital tools, to improve the user experience.
- Librarian liaisons
Reformulate librarian assignments for reference, instruction, and collection building to improve services to students and faculty, and to capitalize on staff expertise.
- Assessment activities
Analyze collection and service usage statistics to evaluate the effectiveness of and changing expectations for library services and resources; utilize First-Year Information Literacy survey data to shape instructional programs.

Professional Responsibilities

- Copyright
Lead Digital Copyright Policy Group in drafting comprehensive copyright policies and guidelines for education and administrative use of copyrighted digital resources for the College.

See <http://library.bowdoin.edu/news/pdf/libstratplan-2006-2008.pdf> for the complete Bowdoin College Library Mission Statement, Core Values, Goals, and Strategic Plan 2006-2008.