

Kemp Library Strategic Plan 2010-2015: Draft

East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

Summary

East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania (ESU), one of fourteen State-owned institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), aims to be the institution of first choice for students seeking a comprehensive university distinguished by innovation and a tradition where students learn to serve, lead and succeed in a global society. To achieve that, students participate in challenging and contemporary undergraduate and graduate curricula, a learning community that promotes diversity and acknowledges the primacy of teaching, and engage in research and creative activities in a university that provides leadership and service in the educational, cultural and economic development of its region.

The mission of the university library at ESU is to support the mission of the university by providing materials, services, equipment, spaces, and environments that support the curricula, assist students, faculty and staff with their study, research, and informational needs, and stimulate cultural development. The Library participates in academic programs and activities that facilitate the information literacy training of ESU students. Kemp Library also supports the strengthening of relationships between ESU and its region through library-based services and activities.

Kemp Library aims to create within the next five years, a physical and virtual library environment that supports and enriches student learning, advances faculty and student research, and supports the university's mission of academic excellence, service and outreach. The goal is to design a library with comfortable facilities, and a welcoming décor, while providing wireless connectivity throughout the building and areas immediately outside it. Significant presence of group study and quiet spaces is an objective, in an environment rich in technology and supportive of the entire process from information seeking to the creation of the final output.

These aspirations require an environment with significant information resources and services as well as adequate tools to support research and learning. The library's electronic resources will be integrated into the university's course management system to enable students to use these resources in their everyday class engagements and research activities and in a seamless manner that connects the library directly to classroom activities and the virtual platforms that support them. Librarians will partner with teaching faculty and work collaboratively with them to achieve the curriculum integration needed to ensure that East Stroudsburg University students graduate with the information literacy skills they need to become effective researchers and lifelong learners. Collections will be developed in response to constituent needs and preferences and the university's aspiration to academic excellence.

The library's strategic goals over the period covered by this plan will be to:

1. Improve information resources and services that support academic excellence at East Stroudsburg University

2. Make library services more user-friendly and effective, design new learning and community spaces within the library that are supportive of individual and collaborative learning and relaxed reading, and provide equipment and resources that permit the creation and presentation of outputs from the research and information seeking process
3. Improve awareness and use of the library's resources and services among all user constituencies
4. Engage in rigorous collection development and review, form collaborative partnerships that enhance the quality of available library resources, ensure that resources are selected, acquired, and managed effectively and strategically, and leverage collaborations and partnerships to provide access to the most amounts of scholarly materials at the most manageable costs
5. Continue to recruit and retain a qualified, competent, and diverse workforce that values effective services and exhibits the expertise and commitment needed to ensure achievement of the library's strategic goals

Introduction

When it opened its doors in 1893 East Stroudsburg State Normal School reported a presence of a library and reading room accessible to all students and consisting of basic reference books, educational journals and some leading periodicals. Steady growth would bring the library's size to 600 volumes by its third year of operation. In its tenth year, collection size had more than doubled, increasing to 1300 volumes in 1903. A century into its existence, the library boasted of an elaborate collection that was more than two hundred and fifty times its 1903 holdings. That year, 1993, was the year in which the birth of Mosaic would begin the popularization of the World Wide Web and usher in the transformative changes in personal communications and information access and retrieval that has come to characterize today's information access and the platforms that support its relatively easy to use and ubiquitous availability. A decade after that, Kemp Library would witness a significant presence of digital resources. The analog world was embracing and at times slowly giving way to digital alternatives.

Today, the library has a significant collection of electronic resources. The library's webpage is its portal to the East Stroudsburg University community and the world outside it. Remote access to library resources has become a natural expectation for student, faculty and staff of the university. While a significant amount of library materials are still available in print, the accelerated race to digital formats continues unabated. Of library users current access to the contents of 28,670 periodicals, barely a thousand are in print or microform and require a physical visit to the library building; over 96% are available online and can be accessed from locations outside the library, on any computer with an Internet connection. This provides for and responds to the need for more convenient remote access. It also enables provision of comparative library services for distance learners as the library provides for its traditional student body. Further improvements in document delivery and interlibrary loan solutions targeted to distance learners should further improve their access to library resources and bring those to par with services afforded onsite users.

The themes that will drive the library's initiatives in the next five years will be 'push out' and 'draw in.' In "pushing out" library resources, students will be provided seamless access to relevant library collections and services through course management systems already used in their classes. Electronic reserves will be accessible on such platforms. Interactive tutorials and informative research guides will instruct and support learning and research and be available on the library's portal and incorporated into course management systems. The library will work in collaboration with classroom faculty to integrate information literacy competencies into the curriculum and teach information literacy skills that empower lifelong independent learning and effective research. In "drawing in," library space will be reconfigured to provide new physical spaces for learning and leisure activities within the library building. The library will have comfortable seating spaces and configurations so that students can study alone, in groups, or with a faculty member. A wireless environment will exist that allows for laptops and iPods and compliments abundant wired terminals. Additionally, a library café will offer food and beverages.

This forward looking vision of a library based on user expectations and responsive to the ways in which students use information and faculty conduct research will service students through simpler and better integrated solutions and faculty through efficient and targeted delivery of services and support of technologies that enable research, store output and provide access to the institution's collective intellectual productivity. Such a solution will embrace the development of an infrastructure that collects, delivers, and preserves faculty and student research through storage in institutional repositories and the search mechanism that provide access to the contents of the repositories. The library will also provide a virtual repository for the intellectual property and other reports and content that document and preserve institutional operations and planning; it will store the data and information generated by the university and preserve such content for future reference and research.

This plan is based on input by students, faculty, administrators, and library faculty and staff. It responds to strengths and weaknesses identified in the library's 2007 LibQual+™ survey, results and conclusions of a survey conducted by the H2L2 consulting group, and the library's 2002-2007 self-study findings and recommendations.

The Environment

The emergence of electronic information storage and retrieval and the spread of the Internet as an avenue for access to such information have revolutionized how libraries do business. If change in libraries has always been a constant, dramatic change is the latest rendition of that experience. But while new technologies have brought new challenges, they have also created opportunities for libraries to serve their clients in ways never imagined or possible in the analog worlds of paper and microforms. With these opportunities to reach more people in distant places without the limitations of time have also come challenging cost factors and professional redefinitions. Will the library building become a relic of the past, displaced by virtual access or will it find a new purpose and usefulness even more gratifying to its clientele than the silent spaces with rows and stacks of books and seating to support use? In a world where digital reigns supreme, broadband invades many homes, and cloud computing sounds no longer a distant dream, will the library's role as a collector, preserver and disseminator of information remain?

This is the environment in which the library of today must ponder its current solutions and prepare for its future. The university library at East Stroudsburg University is no exception.

The environment demands a critical examination of current practices and careful and deliberate considerations regarding future intentions. It calls for a review of the library's strengths, an examination of the weaknesses that compromise best services to its patrons, an awareness of the opportunities that must be embraced if the library is to achieve its strategic objectives, and a clear understanding of the lurking threats that might forestall progress. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the university library at East Stroudsburg University?

Strengths

Kemp library, like almost all academic libraries in the United States, serves an institution of higher learning that requires a critical collection of selected scholarly literature to support its academic programs and faculty research. The university's geographical location, physically distanced from major population centers with advanced research and academic collections reinforces the need for a quality local collection and organized access to high quality proprietary research materials.

While online resources permeate the current environment in institutions of higher learning across the United States and unmediated use of these resources is undoubtedly possible and occurs frequently, trained mediation that makes searching effective and ensures quality of results is definitely a desirable asset which the library with its virtual as well as physical resources and the professional expertise of its librarians can provide. Kemp Library has a highly service-oriented, knowledgeable and dedicated library faculty and staff conversant with information organization and structure and skillful at maximizing efficiency and use of the library's resources. They constitute the library's greatest strength.

Close working relationship developed over long periods of time between librarians and several members of the classroom faculty and many academic departments provides favorable basis for further collaborations.

The library provides opportunities for and directly participates in efforts to facilitate efficient and cost-effective searching, and has the expertise to provide information literacy training for students and faculty.

The library's extensive hours of operation make it a natural draw for those seeking conducive academic spaces and environments for study on campus both during the week and on weekends.

Weaknesses

Believed by many to be relatively removed from the academic core of the campus, and generally not seen as playing a central role in the academic or social life of the university, the library is perceived to be in a peripheral position both geographically and in the mindset of many campus stakeholders.

While many academic libraries provide meeting spaces for students to interact with each other and with faculty to work together on class assignments and content or group activities, the

current spaces in Kemp Library are neither supportive of group learning or activities related to academic production. The lack of a computer lab and appropriate software on library computers, and the virtual inexistence of group and collaborative study space, constitutes a major obstacle for students seeking to work together on class projects or learn in groups and those who desire to write papers and prepare presentations after they have done the supporting and enabling research.

The absence of group study spaces for undergraduate and graduate students compromises the library's ability to support quiet study, group learning, and collaborative student efforts as well as the ability of faculty to engage one-on-one with students or small student groups in teaching-learning activities outside the classroom and in environments designed for academic activity.

The library's technological deficiencies are marked by the unavailability of adequate computing capabilities that greatly impact seamless and efficient services, the low number of computer terminal for student work, the unreliability of its wireless network, and the current unavailability of software needed to support student productivity.

Of concern are gaps in the library collection and the dated nature of many items in the collection, which may be attributed to the limited collection development funds, inadequate weeding activity, and the need to better coordinate and evaluate collection development activities.

Librarians and staff need to approach library operations as predominantly customer-centered operations, and make the required adjustments to appropriately respond to user demands and changed or evolving behaviors and expectations.

The widespread lack of awareness on the part of served constituencies of the actual scope and nature of the library's resources and the potential of the library to play a critical role in the education of students and provide needed support for teaching and research continues to place the library at the periphery of academic life and lowers user demand and expectations of the library.

The library's current web portal serves as an unsatisfactory gateway to library services and resources and requires a new and logical structure that supports effective and intuitive navigation, incorporation of new technologies that respond to student experiences and expectations, more inviting and aesthetically attractive look, and distinct and consistent branding that runs through the library homepage and all subsequent pages designed and maintained by the library.

Opportunities

The current position and general architecture of the Kemp Library building lends itself to a clear identity as a unique building and place of retreat for learning, research, and recreation with adequate parking and easy accessibility to non-drivers as well if configured to attract students, faculty, and the local community.

The open access movement and its potential cost saving benefits.

Participation in the PASSHE system and the opportunities it presents for collaboration among its libraries, the resulting cost savings, sharing of knowledge and experiences; the benefits of consortia relationships in the Keystone Library Network, Lyrasis, and PALCI.

Promote desktop delivery of articles and its potential to serve remote users, support push out efforts, and improve user satisfaction and appreciation.

The emergence of the concept of a library available anytime and anywhere and the ability of such a library to impact the quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of information retrieval.

Threats

The popularity of the Internet and the persistent Google related fallacy that all that is worth knowing is on Google creates challenges for those who would insist on the quality and integrity of information sources and the critical assessments necessary for differentiating between resources of differing quality.

The convenience and ease of use of free Internet resources as opposed to prevailing proprietary library resources has created a preference for the former even if the veracity of the information accessed is frequently of inferior quality to that obtained from the proprietary sources.

Persistent increases in publication costs and the cost of library materials and subscriptions concurrent with library budgets that have not kept up with inflationary increases and have often been static in absolute terms.

The perception of the university library as a demanding cost center with no clear or tangible financial return on investment.

Library staff levels inadequate to meet rigorous and effective information literacy and outreach program and provision of effective research support and consultation services.

Long tenure of most library faculty and staff, the absence of any clear strategies for succession and transfer of skills, and lack of required technical expertise to provide needed solutions in some areas of service and operation.

Lack of clear library identity/branding and weak public relations efforts by the library both within the parent institution and with its external community.

Strategic Goals

Kemp Library's strategic goals reflect East Stroudsburg University's intent to promote learning, support and encourage academic excellence, improve and ensure effective and efficient utilization of institutional resources, embrace and promote diversity, and commit to the economic development of ESU's region. The library articulates its strategic goals under these broad needs: to address and support learning and academic excellence at ESU, address student and faculty expectations of library resources and services, improve communications with the library's constituency and among its faculty and staff, improve the quality and quantity of library

resources, address personnel needs to ensure a diverse and inclusive environment with highly qualified personnel capable of achieving the library's strategic goals.

Learning and Academic Excellence

The university's proclaimed intent to develop curricular and co-curricular programs that promote learning and its encouragement of actions that enhance the academic quality of the institution will require a vibrant library with adequate resources and capable, engaged and committed librarians and support staff to select, process, and provide access to high quality scholarly information and the training and activities that support effective and efficient use of the resource both on and off campus by students and faculty. This is the imperative that informs the library's first strategic goal and the steps to achieve it.

Strategic Goal I: Improve information resources and services that support academic excellence at East Stroudsburg University

To this end the library will:

Expand electronic and print collections to better respond to student and faculty needs; bring the print collection up to date through more intensive collection development activities that incorporate weeding as an essential component and actively engage classroom faculty in the process of selecting items for the collection

Adopt and create tools that provide easy and convenient access to both electronic and print scholarly resources

Pursue a vigorous and effective information literacy program in collaboration with classroom faculty for the teaching and facilitation of information literacy competency in students at various academic levels and in various academic disciplines

Support academic excellence and a richer intellectual life at ESU through increased diversity of the library's workforce and its collections and services

Develop and maintain services that facilitate scholarly communication and preserve the result of faculty research and superior student intellectual output through the development and maintenance of a well indexed and selectively populated institutional repository

Enhance collaboration and reciprocal partnerships that ensure that ESU faculty and students have unfettered access to collections outside the university

Effective and Efficient Resources and Services

That the library of today is a much different entity from the analog libraries that have dominated library history for over five thousand years is not only an acknowledged fact, but obvious reality. With the emergence of digital resources and expansion of opportunities for remote access and the spread of computers in library and home environments, library users have come to expect library resources and services that embrace these opportunities and developments. They want a library that responds adequately to the ways they discover and use information. They expect remote

access and physical library environments supportive of flexible movement and leisurely approaches within the library, an adequate availability of networked computers, easy printing, spaces that are conducive to group and collaborative work and those that allow for independent quiet study as well. They expect comfortable seating spaces for the relaxed reader, gathering spaces to socialize or work in less restricted environment. Faculty members appreciate informal academic spaces where they can meet with each other or with their students as they extend classroom and departmental activities beyond the walls of the classroom and department. The ultimate goal is to create a library that integrates study and socialization and provides the services to empower efficient and effective individual and group information seeking skills and behaviors. These are the evolving expectations and emerging realities that inform the library's second strategic goal and the steps to achieve it.

Strategic Goal 2: Make library services more user-friendly and effective, design new learning and community spaces within the library that are supportive of individual and collaborative learning and relaxed reading, and provide equipment and resources that permit the creation and presentation of outputs from the research and information seeking process

To this end the library will:

Upgrade and repurpose physical library spaces and environment to create a library that is welcoming and comfortable

Create a library instruction lab to provide the environment and equipment for effective information literacy instruction and hands-on activity by students to ensure a participatory classroom experience that reinforces learned skills and concepts in the presence of and with the active supervision and mentorship of professional librarians

Expand wireless availability throughout the library as well as desktop terminals to support student research and productivity

Create a general purpose lab in the library to provide opportunities for student productivity and form dedicated space for such productivity, while providing access to software applications for productivity on all library desktops and laptops to ensure research and writing activities are dispersed throughout the library and that library resources respond to student preferences for more freedom of movement and variability of options

Provide easy and seamless printing services consistent with campus-wide printing solutions for both desktop and laptop computers throughout the library

Introduce compact shelving to allow for efficient use of space and permit the creation of more spaces supportive of student and faculty work habits and socialization trends, like group study spaces, a café, relaxed seating arrangements that are comfortable and adaptable to individual or group reading or study and that have immediately available electrical outlets for prolonged laptop use

Awareness of Library Resources and Services

While Kemp Library has an extensive collection of print and electronic resources and the electronic collections continue to provide the East Stroudsburg University greater opportunities for access to an increasing number of high quality scholarly material, awareness of these resources does not appear to be clear or widespread on campus. Improvements are needed to update many resources and realign collection activities. These, however, do not undercut the fact that existing and valuable library resources appear underutilized and go persistently unnoticed. The desire to rectify the relative obscurity of many of the library's resources and to improve their utilization drives the library's third strategic goal and the steps to achieve it. The intent is to make the library's constituencies aware of the services and resources available to them and to demonstrate the positive impact the university library can have on their work

Strategic Goal III: Improve awareness and use of the library's resources and services among all user constituencies

To this end the library will:

Develop and maintain a library portal that informs in timely fashion library users and the university community of existing and new services and resources and provides intuitive access to such information as well as to the guidance needed to make efficient and effective use of the resources and services

Create and maintain interactive tutorials and provide informative links that explain, train, and announce new resources and provide instruction in their effective use

Continue use of library liaisons to effectively communicate information about the library and its resources and services to their respectively assigned departments and explore more avenues for improving communications between the library and the academic departments

Establish and sustain a library liaison system in the academic departments that assigns a departmental representative to articulate and communicate with the library departmental requests, concerns and suggestions as those relate to library resources and services in support of the teaching, learning and research activities of the academic department, its members and students

Integrate the library's electronic resources into the university's course management system to allow easy access at point of need or moment of interaction with academic content as a conduit for promoting use of the resources and incentive to improve use of scholarly resources by students

Collaborate with other university departments, programs, and offices to enhance communication about the library's resources and services and continuously solicit input from the departments, programs and services on needed improvements to enhance library services and resources in response to university and community needs

Collection Development and Review

The dynamic growth in programs at ESU and increased number of accredited programs creates the need for improved library support. The unabated conversion to digital formats and the growing dominance of access over ownership presents libraries with new dynamics regarding the need to balance the materials they collect or provide access to. Both developments have far reaching implications for collection development in libraries. The relatively isolated geographical position of ESU calls for forms of collaboration and access that will require an increasing application of electronic solutions to bridge the disadvantages of geographical distance from a major population center with extensive scholarly information infrastructure and provide service where it is preferred when possible, in faculty offices, student housing facilities and the homes of commuting and distance education students. Collection development and the organization and processing of library resources should respond to such challenges, accommodating to a greater degree resources available in digital form, maintaining a core of high quality print resources and the mechanisms for providing access to their content upon demand regardless of user location, developing and leveraging collaborations and consortia relationships that enhance and expand access to an increasing number of resources. This need for more efficient and effective, targeted and selective collection development concurrent with the collaborations that leverage local, system-wide and other library resources to maximize service to ESU's local community is the driving force behind the library's fourth strategic goal and the steps to achieve it.

Strategic Goal IV: Engage in rigorous collection development and review, form collaborative partnerships that enhance the quality of available library resources, ensure that resources are selected, acquired, and managed effectively and strategically, and leverage collaborations and partnerships to provide access to the most amounts of scholarly materials at the most manageable costs

Respond appropriately to changes in programs and curriculum at the university by providing collections and resources that adequately serve existing and evolving academic needs

Engage in rigorous collection development review to establish collection priorities and the formats to be collected, as well as establish an appropriate balance between the library's print and electronic collections with the goal of improving anytime anywhere access to library resources whenever feasible

Address uneven depth of collections across subject areas

Improve Interlibrary Loan and document delivery services to take maximum advantage of system-wide and other collaborative opportunities and enhance desktop delivery of requested items

Covert from current Dewey Classification to Library of Congress Classification to allow for seamless navigation of PASSHE system-wide cataloging records and most academic library cataloging records in the United States by ESU library users

Human Resources

Evolving library trends and technologies call for new skills and ways of doing things that require retooling and training of existing personnel and careful selection of new hires to ensure the library's adaptation to changing times and expectations. The growing diversity of ESU students and faculty and the national and international trend toward ever increasing globalization has transformed diversity not only into a desired social need but also a strategic necessity. A diverse workforce in the library that reflects the growing demographic trends within the university and society at large and possesses the high level competencies required to run a contemporary academic library places the library in the mainstream of campus development and promises quality services and activities that respond with greater sensitivity to the needs and concerns of a diverse student, faculty and staff body. This need for quality and diversity informs the library's fifth strategic goal and the steps to achieve it

Strategic Goal V: Recruit and retain a qualified, competent, and diverse workforce that values effective services and exhibits the expertise and commitment needed to ensure achievement of the library's strategic goals

Examine vacant positions for possible redesign to support evolving needs and priorities dictated by developments in the library, its technological and professional expertise requirements, as well as the evolving programmatic needs of the university through innovative replacements and injection of new skills

Support staff development and career training, and implement a mechanism for recognizing excellence, innovation and commitment by library faculty and staff

Improve the diversity of the library's faculty and staff workforce

Implementation:

This plan outlines the library's strategic priorities for the next five years and the context and reasoning that informed their identification and articulation. Further discussions, reassessments, and monitoring of specific actions will be required on a yearly basis to steer these through the stages and processes needed and to measure success along the way. The library will evaluate on a yearly basis its progress toward achievement of these strategic objectives, and identify and articulate on an ongoing basis the immediate steps and solutions necessary to move the plan through its various stages of realization. This will require total commitment and effort on the part of library leadership, faculty, and staff as well as the support of the university. Kemp library acknowledges and embraces its primary responsibility to provide high quality service and operate efficiently and cost-effectively as responsible steward of the resources of the university and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The library and its employees hope that this plan will advance the successful delivery of that service to students, faculty, staff, and the community in which the university is situated.