

**University Strategic Planning: Library Task Force**  
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**Task Force Membership**

Chair, Jerry Floersch

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**Overview: Partners in Scholarship Production, Dissemination, and Preservation**

Trends in information technology, interdisciplinary research, scholarly publishing, and so-called Net Gen student learning styles are encouraging a re-conceptualization of academic research libraries. The libraries of Case Western Reserve University—oriented in the past to a traditional scholarly publishing culture and to the structure of the university’s academic departments and its budgetary and management practices—are transforming their budgeting, collection management policies and procedures, technologies, services, and facilities to support an increasingly networked and interdisciplinary world. Libraries are a primary integrating mechanism at Case Western Reserve University, supplying common goods to diverse elements of the University community. The libraries symbolize and make real the concept of a university that reaches across departmental and disciplinary divisions by partnering with faculty, students and staff in accomplishing the highest purposes of the University. Library staff members are professional colleagues whose specialized expertise is called upon by the University’s researchers and educators ***in generating knowledge*** and, most significantly in contemporary society, in ***preserving and disseminating that knowledge*** to a large and diverse population of scholars and practitioners.

Information technologies, now common for over a decade, allow for uncoupling ownership from access, the material object from its intellectual content, making it possible to search, retrieve, and manipulate digital information in ways never dreamed a few years ago. For a growing number of scholars, technology is changing methods of research, in some cases opening up new areas for exploration. Satellite images, digital images, audio and video files, electronic maps, data sets, and web pages are just some of the types of information that are forming an expanded concept of “library collections.” If preserved, these digital materials become the primary source materials for future research.

Like most academic libraries today, Case Libraries are “Transitional Library” bridges between a “Classical Library”, with large print collections, and the “Virtual Library” that is a model for the future, but is not yet fully formed. In this transitional state, **library facilities must balance demands for print and digitally based collections** while continually evolving to accommodate new ways of creating, accessing and using information. New technological capabilities, new styles of seeking and utilizing knowledge, and new forms of scholarly communication enable the intellectual output of the University to be widely recognized and utilized, enhancing the university’s visibility and ensuring ready access to applied research that informs professional practice.

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### Vision: Leading in New Modes of Scholarly Production & Dissemination

The Case libraries are the intersection of physical and virtual space where information from a multitude of disciplines across time, in a variety of languages and formats, is organized in consistent ways and made available for purposes of research and learning. Working in collaboration with faculty, students and administrators, the Case libraries use new modes of scholarly communication to advance research and learning by:

- Fostering Open Access and the University's visibility through innovative ways of creating, managing, using, sharing, disseminating, publishing and preserving information in response to a changing information environment;
- Serving as model information providers committed to excellence;
- Providing collections of physical and virtual information resources to maximum advantage;
- Serving as a laboratory with its own research agenda which may include research on knowledge generation and dissemination;
- Leveraging resources to make available high quality library services and to educate the community in their effective use;
- Developing opportunities to enhance the libraries' earned income, as well as securing corporate, foundation, and federal investment, and investment by individual donors.

### Connecting Library and University Strategic Visions and Initiatives

To be ranked as a premier institution Case Western Reserve University must support both the *generation* of knowledge and the *dissemination* of that knowledge to key scholarly and practitioner communities within and far beyond the University's boundaries.

Developing world-class collections that support the generation of knowledge with an interdisciplinary focus in areas such as plant sciences and ecology, or the intersection of the medical sciences with other fields, requires a holistic vision and a new approach to collection development. Partnerships with faculty must be strengthened to include collaborations that produce knowledge, such as aiding in the preparation of grant proposals and participating in externally funded research processes.

**Digital Case, the university's digital library, constitutes the beginnings of a technical infrastructure to ingest, preserve and disseminate the intellectual output of the university's research.** The Case Libraries are going beyond the practices at other universities with digital archives by aggressively reaching out to departments and researchers to aid them in preserving their scholarship, protecting their authors' rights, and making widely visible their research papers, websites, and data.

The Case Libraries have four areas of strategic initiatives:

- I. **The libraries will emphasize the interdisciplinary and dynamically collaborative nature of research and teaching.** The interdisciplinary, public good aspects of libraries require that library funding be a centralized responsibility to allow for as yet unforeseen models of interdisciplinary collaboration. For instance, SciFinder, an interdepartmental and interdisciplinary resource is used by departments in the College of Arts and Sciences, the Case School of Engineering and the School of Medicine. Internationally recognized graduate programs such as plant sciences and ecology, which were recently proposed, will require an increased materials allocation to build the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary collections.

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As part of an interdisciplinary focus and initiative: (1) the libraries will continue to provide materials and services in the face of high rates of inflation; (2) the libraries will provide statistical reports on use of materials; and (3) the libraries will convene systematic discussion of collection needs with faculty and graduate students across the university.

- II. Central to the success of the libraries in meeting the needs of faculty, staff, and students is the **creation of physical spaces where research and scholarship are fully supported**. The Kelvin Smith Library Master Space Plan, when fully implemented, provides for the ongoing need of students—especially undergraduates—to be able to study and collaborate on class assignments in proximity to librarians and library facilities such as the Freedman Center.
- III. The libraries will play a key role in the **dissemination** and **preservation** of the research and intellectual output of the university, thus raising our **visibility** in the world of scholarship. The digital publishing environment brings a still emerging set of rules to the process of scholarly communication. An important university goal should be to assure that scholars and students retain the full benefits of legal protection under copyright and fair use. The **Scholarly Communication Center**, a strategic goal/initiative for the Case Libraries, will offer guidance on university copyright, fair use, and intellectual property policies to faculty, staff, and students. In recent decades the publishing industry has consolidated, resulting in costs for publications rising at consistently higher rates than budgets have allowed. Along with many other research libraries, the Libraries of Case will, over time, step into the publishing arena helping to level the playing field and allowing the centrality of the library to the academy to act as a catalyst for change in the scholarly communication arena. Using the technology infrastructure of Digital Case and additional e-publishing software, the libraries enable faculty to control more directly their own research output, at the same time creating a greater good of visibility to the university.
- IV. **The libraries will facilitate mechanisms to enable students of Case Western Reserve University to stay connected to the university following their graduation by supporting a life-long appreciation for the power of information literacy skills**, enabling alumni to find information efficiently, validate its quality, and use it effectively in their future working lives. Alumni will be connected to many of the resources and personalized services that they enjoyed as students by means of the **Kelvin Smith Library Online Alumni Library**, thus contributing to the intellectual enrichment and lifelong learning goals of CWRU alumni.

## Resources to Support Strategic Initiatives

It is axiomatic that the university's financial resources are finite, and every dollar allocated to libraries is a dollar that does not go for faculty salaries, laboratories, scholarships and a myriad of other worthy projects. One key to advancing the financial health of the libraries is the ability to develop long-term relationships with donors and to raise funds specifically for library purposes. Every new endowment for collections frees up library funds that may be reallocated *within the libraries* for other materials and operation costs. Case Western Reserve University has not yet tapped the potential for library fundraising. The commitment to fundraising for the libraries must come at the university presidential and dean level, and it needs to be stated clearly as a development priority for the university. The libraries stress the need for long-term development planning and implementation in conjunction and cooperation with the university's development officers.