The Context for Library Planning

This plan updates and continues the previous Library Strategic Plan, which covered the period from 1999 to 2004. Strategic planning is a comprehensive and ongoing process, which means that the Library Strategic Plan must be updated and revised continuously as library services and new directions evolve over time. The goal of the library strategic planning process is to synthesize and document current thinking about library collections and services at California State University, Stanislaus, to provide guideposts for current and future pathways to change, and to measure the effectiveness of actions and accomplishments. Not only should our library strategic plan insure that university students, faculty and staff receive the greatest possible benefit from the wealth of information resources we provide, it must also reflect campus strategic and budget planning efforts and processes. The participation of library faculty and staff, as well as consultation with and feedback from our various campus and community constituencies, is essential.

The planning horizon for this iteration of the library strategic plan is a major capital project to expand and renovate the library facility, which is currently scheduled for completion in 2012. A feasibility study for the project, including program space requirements and general building design criteria, has been conducted, and the project awaits capital funding. This project will ultimately bring about a major transformation that will embrace teaching, learning, research, and scholarship and enable the University Library to continue meeting the library service and information resource needs of the university community for the foreseeable future.

The current strategic plan for the CSU libraries, Advancing Together: 21st Century Strategies for the CSU Libraries, developed by the Council of Library Directors, provides an excellent context for library planning at the campus level. Following is an excerpt from the introduction to that plan:

To enhance support for the teaching, research and service mission of the California State University, the Council of Library Directors’ (COLD) 2005 Strategic Plan is organized around four themes:

- Advancing Student Success
- Advancing Scholarship
- Advancing Outreach and Service to Our Communities
- Advancing the Continuing Transformation of Library Services

These themes were chosen to reflect the strategic objective of CSU libraries—excellent service to our students and faculty. To maintain high standards of service, the Plan highlights the continuing improvement of current collections and services and emphasizes the need to remain agile and innovative to develop the new services that will take us into the future.

The four themes of the CSU Libraries’ strategic plan align with and augment the three key themes of the CSU Stanislaus strategic plan, and together they form the framework for the CSU Stanislaus University Library Strategic Plan. They are the foundation on which we will build action plans each year that will enable us to support campus goals and objectives, as well as track and respond to changes in the environment of libraries and higher education. The annual action plans will serve as a roadmap for library faculty and staff, guide the transformation of the collections and services of the University Library over the next five years and enact this Strategic Plan.
Advancing Student Success

In order for students to be successful at CSU Stanislaus and as 21st Century citizens, they must have the well developed information seeking and discovery skills that will equip them to be lifelong learners. This goal correlates with the first theme of the campus strategic plan, which is “student engagement, development, and academic achievement.” The University Library, through this strategic plan, will focus on delivering instruction programs that increase the information fluency of students, faculty and staff. Collaborative endeavors with other campus entities will also be used to achieve this goal.

For example, the Office of Information Technology has been a major partner with the Library in enhancing students’ access to electronic information resources and in providing the infrastructure needed for effective access. That continuing partnership will expand students’ access to computer hardware and software, which has become integral to most of the university curricula and a necessity for student success. Partnership with the Faculty Development Center will continue to enable librarians to play an active role in preparing faculty to take advantage of technological advances in the delivery of the curriculum. The strong connection between library faculty and faculty in the academic departments and programs will be an additional tool used in this strategic plan to further develop students’ information seeking and critical thinking skills.

Related Goal Areas

- **Partnerships and collaboration**: Strategies and activities will focus on enhancing established relationships and fostering new collaborations across campus, within the larger regional community, among the libraries on our sister campuses, and within the academic library community at large.

- **Information fluency**: Strategies will focus on developing library instruction programs. Activities will include infusing the General Education curriculum with library instruction, developing and offering credit bearing courses, enhancing and promoting workshop offerings, and strengthening ties with academic departments and programs.

Advancing Scholarship

This theme of the CSU Libraries’ strategic plan aligns with the second theme of the campus strategic plan, which is “support for teaching, learning, scholarship, and service.” The University Library through its strategic plan will support the research and scholarship of students and faculty by providing access to a comprehensive set of information resources, regardless of format or mode of delivery. It will strive to be a repository for the scholarly output of students and faculty, as well as an effective partner in providing access to historical artifacts, documents, and records of the university and the region. The library strategic plan will create mechanisms to build, fine tune, and increase access to the collection of library materials housed on site, as well as via electronic delivery and interlibrary cooperation, to information resources that are not held locally.

Related Goal Area

- **Collections**: Strategies will focus on clarifying and refining collection development policies to assure that adequate library collections and other information resources and services will be available to meet current and future needs of students and faculty. Activities will include participating in the development of new academic programs, regularly assessing collections, continuously reevaluating priorities, expanding the Library’s role in archiving and providing access to graduate theses and projects, enhancing bibliographic control and access mechanisms, educating library users about collection strengths, and cooperatively developing and sharing collections with other libraries.

Advancing Outreach and Service to Our Communities

For the University Library, this theme will mean increasing awareness and use of the rich array of available information resources and library services in order to enhance teaching and learning. It will also mean maintaining the physical library as an inviting, technology-rich space where students, faculty, staff, and members of the community at large can come together to learn, interact and collaborate. Ultimately, the University Library will be a focal point for intellectual and cultural exploration on campus, for the City of Turlock and within the Central Valley. Strategies developed by the Library will support the third theme of the campus strategic plan, which is “the University and the community.”

Related Goal Areas

- **Technology**: Strategies will focus on improving remote access to library collections and services by enhancing the infrastructure that supports them. Activities will include upgrading hardware and software, improving user interfaces, enhancing technology-based library services, increasing electronic resources, building the capacity to store and distribute digital collections, and making traditional print collections more easily accessible.
• **Library building:** Strategies and activities will focus on revitalizing and optimizing space in the current and future library facility by enhancing comfort, appeal, functionality, accessibility, capacity, and versatility.

• **Public relations:** Strategies will focus on promoting the library in order to increase awareness and use. Activities will include developing targeted outreach programs, developing partnerships with student and other constituent groups, co-sponsoring cultural events with our partners, and developing the use of newsletters and electronic media to enhance external communication.

## Advancing the Continuing Transformation of Library Services

A major driver for the current library planning process is the need to respond creatively and aggressively to a changing environment. External factors that are influencing the development of collections and services include the increasing predominance of electronic communication and information exchange, the evolution of scholarly research and publication, and a growing emphasis on assessment and accountability. Another significant factor is the heightened focus on the academic library as a “learning commons.” This notion recasts the academic library as a place that is openly accessible to all members of the campus community and where traditional library collections and services are melded with new and evolving information technologies and access mechanisms to create an environment that fosters information fluency and student success.

There are also internal factors that mandate a planned library response. They include increasing enrollment on the main campus and at the Stockton Center, implementation of a doctoral program, development of other new academic programs, WASC re-accreditation review and recommendations, expansion and renovation of the library facility, upgraded library computer systems and technical capabilities, and other campus and systemwide strategic initiatives. Library collections and services will be transformed by changes in the environment just as the Library itself will be transformed physically by a major renovation and expansion. The library strategic plan will anticipate changes in both the external and internal environment, identify actions that will drive the transformation in a positive direction and result in the most beneficial outcomes, and thereby support and contribute to the three themes of the campus strategic plan.

### Related Goal Areas

• **Environmental scan:** Strategies will focus on tracking trends in library service and information technology, as well as in curriculum delivery and pedagogy.

• **Assessment:** Strategies will focus on assessing user needs, user satisfaction, effectiveness of services, adequacy of collections, value added to teaching and learning, benefits to campus constituencies and community, effectiveness of planning efforts, etc. Activities will include conducting focus groups, user satisfaction surveys, statistical analyses of collections and usage patterns, etc.

• **Continuous improvement:** Strategies will focus on examining the organizational structure of the library, developing the library faculty and staff, refining and clarifying roles and responsibilities, improving internal communication, and maximizing faculty and staff efficiency and productivity. Activities will include providing team building exercises, in-service workshops, external professional development and training opportunities, cross training, orientation programs for new employees, etc.

• **Funding:** Strategies will focus on developing avenues for new and expanded sources of funding. Possible activities include building partnerships with various campus constituencies, identifying sources of external funding, pursuing student fees, and reexamining and realigning library budget priorities.