

State of the Library Presentation  
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It is my pleasure this afternoon to deliver my annual state of the library address. This year, I will not recap the accomplishments of the past year. You can review these in the annual report which will shortly be available on the library homepage. Rather than reflect on the past year, I would like today to focus on the present and discuss what the future holds for us all. (This should make for a shorter address, leaving more time for the reception.)

*New Organization*

We are entering a new period in the development of the University of Georgia Libraries. The reorganization that we implemented over the past year or so is starting to take hold. We were fortunate to attract Merryll Penson to be our new Associate University Librarian for Public Services (and you will all have a chance to meet her during the ensuing reception). The search for the Associate University Librarian for Collection Services has resumed, but even without that position in place, we are adjusting to the new organization. Indeed, the period of transition where we did not have either position filled has, I believe, been fruitful. I was pleased at the way department heads have taken turns as the coordinator of their divisions. I was even more pleased at the initiative shown by many people in seeking solutions to problems without recourse to an AUL. This period of transition has made people more aware of the need for and the value of the AUL positions. I hope it has also given people some sense of expanded boundaries as they think about their jobs.

Let me say a word or two about the AUL for Collection Services position. As you know, the first search for this position was not successful. A new search has begun and I expect we will field a good pool of candidates. The ad for the job is more informative and stresses in the headline that responsibilities include both collection development and technical services. I have spoken with colleagues in the profession and I know of several strong candidates who are planning to apply. So, as I said, I expect we will be successful this time around. A second search for a position at this level is not unusual. The closing date for applications is October 22.

The new structure for administrative committees is also in place. The Cabinet has replaced Administrative Council and the Forum has replaced Management Council. The Forum is intended to be a much more grass roots body than Management Council and, so far, it has functioned quite well. An examination of faculty governance committee structure for librarians and archivists is also underway.

As part of the reorganization, and as the result of a generous budget increase, we were able to establish a budget line of about \$65,000 for staff equipment and \$100,000 for equipment for use by the public and to house the collections. These amounts are small compared to our actual needs, but they are a big improvement over the previous situation where we had no budget for these categories. The budget for staff equipment will be allocated to the divisions based upon the number of staff. The budget for public and collection equipment will be distributed in January on a formula that has not yet been determined.

The most important development with the reorganization and the planning that has gone into it, largely by the Reorganization Advisory Committee, is improved communication. We are making much better use of the local area network and the Libraries' homepage to distribute information quickly and comprehensively throughout the organization. GRAPEVINE has provided a means for rapid distribution of timely information, the local area network has allowed committees to share their work, and the homepage provides access to a variety of documents, including minutes of meetings.

The result of all this should be an organization that is more conducive and responsive to change, one that is better informed and thus can seize upon opportunities to improve the way we do things – both in terms of offering new services and in improving our core operations.

As we put the structure and mechanics of the new organization into place, people may feel that our goals have been attained. However, we need to be careful that we truly are a new organization and not just the old structure with a new facade. In other words, everyone needs to embrace the basic goals of reorganization – flatter communication, a broad understanding of our common purpose, greater cooperation, and the ability for anyone to voice new ideas. I think we have come a long way, but we must be vigilant.

### *Our Environment*

The environment in which the University Libraries exist is changing. We have a new President and the decisions he will make over the coming years will have a profound impact on us. Fortunately, everything I have learned about him, including conversations with him and discussions with the library director at Centre College, give me every reason to believe that he will be supportive of the Libraries.

Support for higher education in the State of Georgia is very strong now. The Governor has delivered three years of six percent raises and is committed to a fourth year. Funding for GALILEO continues to be strong and I expect additional funding for a shared integrated library system, which I will discuss below. However, we may be at a high point for support of higher education. A new governor and a new legislature may not be as committed.

We can be sure, however, that enrollment will increase. The target is for 32,000 students by 2002 and I expect this will grow to 35,000 by 2010. We need to be thinking about what this increased enrollment will mean for the Libraries.

The power and capabilities of information technology continue to increase. It is amazing to compare the price and performance of the standard PC we purchased five years ago with the ones we are buying today. Unfortunately, many of the ones we purchased five years ago are still being used. This defines a major problem that faces us. Technology is improving, becoming more powerful and, often, less expensive. Software is also becoming increasingly powerful, offering abilities to share work and communicate more effectively with each other as well as offer improved services to our community. However, we have not always been able to keep pace with new technology because we cannot afford to upgrade our existing base of computers and workstations. While I have attempted to budget more funds for technology, we will never have enough to really keep up with advances. This is a fact of our environment that we need to confront and manage.

Another major factor confronting us is the continuing increases in journal prices. Subscription costs continue to escalate. For 1998, we expect journal prices to increase about ten percent, at a time when inflation is running less than three percent. Further, the cost increases from European publishers like Elsevier are in this range despite the fact that the dollar has gained about ten percent against European currencies since last year. For these foreign publishers, a ten percent increase and a ten percent gain in the dollar against their local currency translates into a twenty percent increase in what they receive for their journals. This is ludicrous, but it shows no sign of stopping.

We cannot do much to influence these environmental factors. The political situation in the state, the pace of technology, and the price of journals are all things that happen to us. The best we can do is anticipate developments and plan the best approach to manage them.

### *Specific Projects Over the Coming Year*

Over the coming year, we will be working on a number of projects. Let me discuss each of them:

GALILEO – Staff in the Virtual Systems Group, a component of the Library Automation Group, are hard at work on expanding GALILEO, both in terms of the number of databases and in terms of the number of libraries served. Their most pressing task right now is loading the Ebsco Master File which, when combined with databases already in GALILEO, will provide the full text of almost 2,000 journals. Other databases they will be adding include the full text of about fifty newspapers, literary texts including all British poetry up to 1900 and the complete works of Shakespeare, and the Oxford English Dictionary. The legislature provided funding to extend GALILEO into all public and school libraries during the coming year and a core set of the GALILEO databases will be available in virtually all libraries in the

state and to all citizens. GALILEO is a model for other states and we should be proud that much of the planning and implementation happens here. I should mention with regard to GALILEO that a new Vice Chancellor for Instructional and Information Technology has been appointed. His name is Michael Staman and I expect that he will play a major role in the future development of GALILEO

- Integrated Library System – As many of you know, the libraries of the University System have been looking at integrated library systems with the aim of selecting one that we all could use. (We have been asked by staff at the Regents office not to call it GALILEO 2 or G2 and we are looking for another name now.) This system would replace GALIN. Having all the libraries using the same system would allow us to share access to our collections and to expedite the lending of books among University System libraries. The cost of this project is estimated to be \$10,000,000 and the Presidents of the 34 institutions in the University System have recommended that this project be funded. I expect that the Chancellor will propose funding this project over three years and that he will secure the support of the Governor. This means that the allocation of funds for this project will depend upon the legislature. In anticipation of this funding becoming available, the System-wide steering committee for this project, chaired by our own Merryll Penson, will resume its work shortly on identifying the best possible system. If funding is made available, I expect that we will play a leading role in mounting a prototype. Our actual implementation of the new system will have to wait because while we can get along just fine with GALIN for some time to come, other libraries in the system must migrate from their current system as soon as possible. Still, rest assured that we will play a leading role in the selection and implementation of this new system.
- Approval Plan – We are about to start a revised version of the approval plan with BNA. This plan will be scaled down considerably from the plan we tried previously. It should be more manageable and more understandable to all. I fully expect that this plan will work and that everyone will work to see it succeed.
- Budgeting for Bibliographers – A new budgeting system has been set up that gives each bibliographer a set budget for firm orders, continuations, and journals. Each bibliographer is free to move funds from one category to another, but must stay within the assigned allocation. The Acquisitions and Periodicals departments have developed the means to monitor expenditures. It is hoped that this close monitoring of the budget will help the bibliographers gain a better understanding of how their funds are spent.
- PromptCat – This is a service offered by OCLC that supplies cataloging records with the books we receive on the approval plan. We are currently using PromptCat with books we receive on the University Press plan and the results are impressive. Books are being processed in a matter of days rather than weeks. As the new approval plan is implemented and becomes stable, PromptCat will be extended to it as well and, it is hoped, it can be used with individually ordered books in the future.

- HVAC – The renovation of the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in the old library building is, I know, a matter of great concern to everyone. This project will require that significant portions of the collection be moved out of the building to free up space so that we can move people, equipment, and collections as the work progresses. While we originally hoped to move materials over the summer, delays in the provision of off-site storage have delayed this move. The current plan is that we will add shelving to the Library Repository to accommodate the materials that will be stored off-site. This requires purchasing new shelving and upgrading the sprinkler system. While this is taking longer than we had hoped, the good news is that we will gain about 15% storage capacity at the Repository, capacity that we can use after the HVAC project is finished. Also, the Repository will be decked so that we will not have to use rolling ladders to reach the higher shelves. At this point, we do not know when the work to upgrade the Repository will be completed. Physical Plant is working on this now. I will let everyone know when we have a better idea, but I do not expect that any actual renovation work will take place in the Main Library during the Fall quarter.
- Electronic Resources – There is an increasing wealth of materials available in electronic form. The databases we have loaded on GALIN, LIBRA, and GALILEO are fairly easy to handle as are the external resources we can use on the Web like the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the Gale reference works on GALILEO. However, there are other resources that are more difficult to handle – for example, CD ROMs that contain the equivalent of one reference work and multimedia works. Over a year ago, the Electronic Resources Task Force looked at these materials and John Yelverton developed a set of recommendations before he left in June. This previous work will form the basis of deliberations over the next few months as we discuss the best way to handle these “hand held” electronic files. Related to this is the creation of electronic text files. Standards are emerging for taking printed books and converting them to electronic format. Other ARL libraries are establishing electronic text centers to take portions of their collections and convert them to electronic format. We need to consider moving into this arena as well, both for preservation work and as a way of making our collections more widely available. Over the summer, several staff were trained in the conversion process.
- Public Printing – Printing by the public from GALILEO and other Internet resources has placed a major burden on our budget. Last year, we spent about \$40,000 on paper and toner for the printers that are used by the public. We have been exploring ways to charge for printing but, to date, a suitable means has not been found. University Computing and Networking Services has decided that they also need to explore charging for printing, and we are beginning to investigate a joint solution. It is much better that we do this in conjunction with UCNS.

### *Longer Term Projects*

Many of the projects that we will deal with this year will be with us for years to come. However, they are tangible and can be worked on during the coming year. There are also several longer term projects that are not so tangible and that we can really only plan for during the coming year.

- Space – As I discussed last year, we are taking three staged approach to our need for additional space. First, the proposed Student Learning Center will provide us with space for students to study and to consult our electronic services. This project is currently number one on the campus list and 13<sup>th</sup> on the Board of Regents list of capital projects. Second, a Special Collections Building is ranked 15<sup>th</sup> on the campus list of building projects and it will be the focus of our fund raising efforts over the years to come. This building would house the Hargrett Library, the Russell Library, and the Peabody Archives and would also feature a long term Repository that would replace the present building on Whitehall Road. Third, a project to add additional floors to the Science Library is also on the campus list of buildings.
- Library Cooperation – Cooperation among libraries will become increasingly important as libraries organize to optimize available resources. GALILEO and the shared integrated library system are important in the University System. We are also seeing more cooperation regionally through SOLINET and ASERL. There are also national efforts, largely through ARL, in which we will need to be involved. In short, as local resources are constrained, there will be an increased need to cooperate more effectively among libraries.
- Less Dependence Upon State Funding – Many believe that the funding the University receives from the state will become static or even dwindle over the coming years. To counteract this, and to achieve a greater margin of excellence, we must cultivate outside sources of funding. This takes two forms – grants and fund raising. We have increased our activities in both areas, but we must do much more.

All of these longer term projects – space, greater interlibrary cooperation, and increasing outside sources of funding – have one thing in common and that is that they will require an increasing amount of my time and energy. In the years to come, I must devote more and more of my attention to people and organizations outside of the Libraries. I must work to ensure a good relationship with the University Administration, I must work with other libraries on cooperative efforts, and I must cultivate people and foundations for increased support. To do this will require greater reliance upon the associate and assistant university librarians to manage the day to day operations of the Libraries. It will also require a greater assumption of responsibility and initiative by the department heads and, indeed, by all staff, for their immediate operations. If we are to have the space we need, the involvement in cooperative efforts that we will increasingly rely upon, and the increased financial support that we must have, I must focus more of my attention outside. Over the coming months, I will discuss what this might mean with Cabinet, Forum, FAB, SRG, and other groups.

## *Conclusion*

Our new organization and our increased use of information technology internally are improving communication throughout the library. We need to continue to break down walls within the library, to cooperate more, and to work together to find solutions. The biggest problem facing us is how to do all the things we need to do with the resources we have. To do this, we may need to organize ourselves differently, to try new ideas and approaches, to listen carefully to the people who are actually doing the work. We must implement new services while at the same time ensuring that our core services do not suffer. We must offer new databases, new technology, new services, but we must still buy books, we must still make sure that materials are reshelved promptly, we must still ensure that our service points are staffed so that students and faculty can receive the face to face support they need.

As we confront the many challenges before us, we must recognize that there are not always clear paths or answers. These are complex problems that require flexibility, creative ideas, continued risk-taking, and much more working across functional and divisional lines than in the past. We have to break away from doing things simply because we have always done them a certain way.

I continue to marvel at the opportunities presented to us through technology. Opportunities that allow us to acquire and preserve knowledge faster and more comprehensively than ever before and opportunities to serve our students and faculty better than ever before. But we must still never lose sight of the fact that it is people that make the library work. It is all of you. I thank you for your dedication to our community and I ask you to bring to your jobs a new level of curiosity and reflection. Consider what it is that you do. Think about how it might be done better. Talk with your colleagues. Learn about what goes on in other areas of the library. Think about the larger picture, about how the library contributes to learning, to the advancement of knowledge, and to the preservation of our cultural and intellectual heritage. Think about the value of the University Libraries to the State of Georgia and to the region and nation. Think about the value we add by building our collections, by offering the services we offer. Consider all this and think about how our contribution might be improved. Take pride in what you do here, but also think about what we can do to make an excellent library even better.