St. Cloud State University

Learning Resources Services

Planning for the Future: an overview of building goals for Learning Resources Services

Summary of interviews with and research by Learning Resources Services faculty and staff

"Information technology poses two classes of urgent problems: how to provide access to information that is encapsulated within expensive and proprietary technologies; and the definition of the new roles of the traditional centers of knowledge in a world of decentralized information and reorganized knowledge."
—*Peter Lyman*, Associate University Librarian, University of Southern California

The library of the future will require:

- A facility that will ensure a ready and free flow of information utilities, collections, and services available to all clients equally and integrated into the teaching, research, administration, and public service functions of the university.

- A design and layout which promotes the emerging "access model" of library and information services, providing library clients direct access to specific information via integrated data, voice, and image computer networks (focus on what client needs rather than just providing access to resources owned); access to printed (books, maps, documents, and especially journal literature) and media resources acquired to support curriculum and research needs; access to building and campus networks (PALS with external files, cd-rom databases, magnetic tape, etc.); and access to global resources (Internet, Bitnet, Dialog, BRS, STN, OCLC); a design which focuses on clients and our emerging understanding of their information seeking behavior

- An environment and furnishings which acknowledge human aesthetic and ergonomic needs; an inviting interactive facility that recognizes the library's role as a campus social and intellectual learning center, allows casual encounters, blurs the distinctions and relationships between learners, instructors, and information resources, and allows for services tailored to the information tools, resources, and needs of different disciplines.

- A variety of enhanced learning environments, flexible enough to accommodate everything from a pair of clients to seminars, that allow for a diversity of learning and cognitive styles, facilitate access to information networks and library staff, and promote collaborative and group learning; an environment that recognizes the library's expanded teaching and collaborative curriculum roles rather than simply providing a place for study ("reading room") and the warehousing of books.

- An integrated data, voice, and image information network that promotes decentralized access to an increasing array of technology-based information resources

(eg. PALS, magnetic data tapes, cd-rom databases, video and video disks, satellite television, Bitnet and Internet resources) and will release students and faculty from site specific learning or research and link physical collections for "just-in-time" use; facilities to transmit information, within the limits of Copyright Law, to remote users; potential for digital circulation of information; a system that applies developments in information technologies to expand the possibilities of communication.

- Student and faculty use information technology facility with scholarly information workstations that allow access to a variety of computer applications (word processing, database, spreadsheet, graphics), to electronic sources of information, and to campus computing facilities, including access to Bitnet and/or Internet; allowing geographically distributed learner work groups; providing adequate and safe individual and group workspaces with networked output resources.

- Library faculty and staff offices and work areas, with sufficient space to promote individualized or group collaboration, consultation, and assistance with information utilities and collections, the acquisition of information, and the selection and preparation of presentation support media, convenient to users and service points; links to campus and external networks for distributed information access consulting (remote reference and information delivery).

- Flexible instruction areas for course integrated instruction in information access, understanding, production, and use, with access to the full range of information resources; to allow teleconferencing, distance education, and interactive instruction.

- Facilities for the production of information in diverse formats, both for individual and group student projects and research/speaker support (thermofax, laminator, darkroom, video/photostudio, computer graphics applications, etc.); professional facilities to support production of reformatted or new formats of information appropriate to the need.

- Electronically integrated learning environment to support study and collaborate research that is available to the campus community 24 hours.

General Building Considerations

- Climate control for temperature, humidity, and light to ensure optimum conditions for long term preservation of information resources in any format. Dry pipe sprinkling (for printed materials) and halon-based (for electronics and computers) fire systems. Anti-static carpeting.

- Adequate and sufficient lighting (indirect, recessed, or parabolic) to allow for efficient and healthy work with both print and electronic media, with special attention to ambient light; variable lighting in computer and electronic information work areas.

- Numerous grounded outlets and sufficient capacity (with adequate backup systems); installed, easily accessible pathways and connections for local area networks, campus-wide networks, and other electronic information resources for LRS and personal computers; flexibility to accommodate changes in technology; dedicated phone lines for access to electronic information unavailable via networks.

- Attention to emerging health and ergonomic considerations for people working with electronic equipment or in an electronic environment, especially in seating and adjustable height work/study tables.

- Open stack shelving with point-and-time-of-need lighting for continuing and current print resources (200—250,000 items) and reference; compact shelving for "just-in-case" information resources in all formats (800,000—1,000,000 items) to support SCSU's role as a regional information resource utility (statewide hierarchy of all information resource collections: local—regional—statewide—national); special consideration for storing alternative media.

- Space to support increased service demands for remote access and transmission of information resources; space to handle the service and maintenance of equipment.

- Logical physical relationship of service areas (traditional and emerging):
  Circulation—Distribution—Reserves—Interlibrary Loan;
  Archives—Rare Books—Central Minnesota History Center;
  Reference—Online Services—Government Documents—Periodicals;
  Instructional Development—Reference
  CIM—Classrooms/Labs—Production (ITS)
  Faculty Offices—Functional Area
  all linked electronically to overcome physical separation.

- Integrated relationship of campus information services, regardless of physical location:
  Learning Resources—Academic Computing—Printing Services.

Specific Building Needs & Desires

- **Work and Office Areas:**
  —as much natural light as possible without damaging resources
  —approximately 150 sq ft/person workspace, including associated storage
  —sound baffling and sound barriers to lessen ambient noise; anti-static carpeting
  —single reception area with conference facilities accessible to all divisions
  —separate mail and supplies storage facility
  —separate photocopy and printer resource rooms
  —central technical support and maintenance center with electronic controlroom
  —faculty and administration offices with space for 2-4 person conferences and consulting and wired for full information resource access
  —offices accessible when building is closed, yet convenient to work areas
  —controlled access storage areas
  —furnishings that meet ergonomic specifications and aesthetic needs
  —lounge, possibly combined with student access lounge to promote interaction
  —professional media production facility with consultation and preview spaces

- **Service Areas:**
  —visibility and accessibility of all service points to non-disruptive traffic patterns
  —central reference/user assistance point visible from entrance, large enough to support larger instructional role
  —central circulation/document delivery service
  —as much natural light as possible to diminish negative psychological impact of electronic information
  —student and faculty learning and research areas in varying sizes and configurations, with comfortable seating (carrels to seminar rooms; single person desks to 6-8 person conference tables) capable of supporting access to information network, audio or visual media
  —no barriers, real or psychological, for access to information

—anti-static carpeting
—physical layout that requires a minimum of signage (electronic signs?)
—emergency notification system
—mix of PALS terminals and scholarly information workstations scattered throughout building, in service and resource areas; wiring to allow connecting laptops or personal computers into information networks
—sound isolated photocopy and network linked printing rooms
—lounge with vending facility
—student media production facility, including darkroom, photo/video studio, speaker support media production facilities
—faculty/university development facility (grants support, preview)
—8-10 "classrooms," some with seminar/conference arrangement, some with stepped arena with desks (possibly with individual integrated workstations), some with variable seating; all classrooms electronically integrated into information networks and interactive systems
—large meeting hall/auditorium with access to electronic information networks, variety of projection systems, adequate sound systems, wired for interactive potential
—gallery/art space in learning environments
—adequate washroom and janitorial facilities; drinking fountains

- **Resource Areas**
—limited open shelving, reserved for reference and high use materials in all formats
—open current periodicals shelving and reading lounge
—accessible compact shelving with point-and-time-of-need lighting for large portion of ciruclating, index, periodical, and document collections
—adequate security for resources and people
—broken by learning areas, lounge spaces, study areas, photocopy rooms
—dry pipe sprinkling
—climate control

Target Building Size:
- Approximately 220,000 sq. ft. assignable space for Service and Resource areas
- Approximately 30,000 sq. ft. assignable space for Office and Work areas

Parting Comment:
"Very few college libraries have spent money on the future. They've just shrugged and said 'Well, we can't afford it. The very best we can do is house what we've got. We can't allow for other possibilities.' I think one doesn't necessarily have to throw up one's hands and give up on that one."
—*Mary Jane Long*, School of Architecture, Yale University