

## **Mission**

The Harrison Libraries provide services and resources that support teaching, learning, research, and creativity at the University of Hartford. We foster intellectual curiosity, scholarly integrity, and critical inquiry. We incorporate principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, and justice into the work we do.

## **Goals/Objectives**

### **Library As Place**

**Foster attractive learning environments conducive to study, teaching, research, artistic preparation, creativity, collaboration, cross-disciplinary interaction, and community building, social empowerment, belonging, and well-being, all in close proximity to essential collections, facilities, and services.**

**Explanation:** Libraries are vibrant learning hubs, intellectual centers, and indeed cultural phenomena. Even though many materials are online or could be checked out and taken home, students and faculty still gravitate toward these physical spaces for a variety of reasons. The Harrison Libraries spaces are finely crafted, albeit snug and, in some areas, in need of enhancement. The Libraries have many desirable features, including study areas, computers and other technologies, seminar rooms with computer and AV projection, listening/viewing facilities, and more, in close proximity to collections and services. The Libraries hum with activity and are truly a community center.

- Assess public spaces and identify opportunities to enhance accessibility and efficacy.
- Enhance usability, accessibility, effectiveness, and reliability of the classrooms, seminar rooms, listening/viewing/computing facilities, and other public areas.
- Assess staff spaces and identify opportunities to enhance efficacy, sense of professionalism, and well-being.
- Ensure continual repair, updates, enhancements, and replacement of infrastructure, furnishings, and equipment (including but not limited to windows, shelving, technologies, other physical apparatus used to manage and use collections, and so forth).

### **Library As Expertise**

#### **1. Visibility and User Engagement**

**Expand the library's reach: ensure that students, faculty, and other current and potential users are aware of our expertise and resources; that they have opportunities to be part of a vibrant learning and cultural community; and that the library is integral to their success at the university and beyond.**

**Explanation:** Many users are only partially aware of the myriad of resources available to them, and other potential users are not aware of resources or the Libraries' existence, or have misperceptions about libraries. We cannot wait for users to find us. We must find them and establish relationships, physically and virtually. The resulting skills, knowledge, and support structures for our users can last a lifetime.

- Promote visibility by making information available where users will see it (e.g., social media presence, email, in their departments, at their meetings and events), campus media announcements, exhibits, etc., via a combination of direct outreach and partnering with others on campus (e.g., OMC, departmental contacts) and signage.
- Educate the university community about services, resources, and tools offered.

- Engage in liaison activities that build relationships with individual schools and departments and facilitate responsiveness.
- Continue assessing and updating library policies related to collections, services, and access to improve inclusiveness, equity, and access.
- Offer programming for students, faculty, staff, and community that will engage and educate our community.
- Implement a creative marketing plan to draw new users to the library and elevate our position and impact on campus and in the community.

## 2. Research Support, Assistance, and Information Instruction

**Provide users with seamless, responsive assistance and instruction finding, assessing, selecting, using, and synthesizing physical or online materials in ways that will help them excel in their careers at the university and beyond, tailoring offerings to support learners of all backgrounds and abilities, and meeting specific educational goals or needs in various disciplines.**

**Explanation:** Library circulation assistance, reference services, and information literacy instruction take place at a much deeper level than the outreach above; they delve deep into the specific resources and strategies needed to support the task, curriculum, or program at hand; one size does not fit all. Effective information instruction is better done over the course of a university career (not in one session), is tailored to the task at hand, and should become more complex as students' needs and questions become more sophisticated. Library instruction and support strategies include reference assistance (at a service desk or online), detailed one-on-one consultations, course-integrated library instruction (in-person or online), workshops, online tutorials, and finding aids.

- Reach out to first-year students in one or more of their classes to orient them to basic library and research services and skills.
- Where possible, work with faculty to find opportunities to scaffold information skills across a student's course, major, or university career, at the undergraduate and graduate level, customized by discipline.
- Revamp and migrate current instructional tools (e.g., digital learning strategies; synchronous and asynchronous information instruction) to appropriate new or emerging platforms.
- Work with faculty to develop online, hybrid, and in-person library instruction approaches that can serve students with varying needs and be responsive to emerging campus and global issues.
- Find new ways to reach and support part-time faculty, to be more inclusive of them, support their activities, and to reach additional students through them.
- Continue to comply with accessibility standards and address accessibility issues that affect our community members.
- Work with partners within and outside the university to improve access to Open Educational Resources (OER) for faculty and students, to enhance access to free or low-cost course materials for students and to help improve equitable access to resources.
- Enhance physical and digital facilities that are used to provide these reference and instruction services, to improve visibility, accessibility, approachability, and efficacy.

## 3. Discovery and Delivery

**Build, enhance, or provide access to systems and tools that help users find and use the wide variety of information resources that are available to them.**

**Explanation:** Users have a wide array of physical and online materials available to them, but need ways to effectively search for, locate, access, and use those materials. (Google finds only a small fraction.) Discovery and usage tools come in a variety of formats that must be procured, created, configured, and maintained by library staff. This includes circulation, cataloging, and acquisition systems; e-resource platforms and services; inventory processes for physical and digital collections; creation of web pages and finding aids; locally created digital services or collections; license management; and more.

- Continue to manage and develop our interactive library system (Bibliovation, formerly Koha) and other bibliographic management tools, partnering with service providers and institutional peers

where applicable. This includes both the public interfaces (keeping in mind how users approach their work, ask questions, and interpret results) and behind-the-scenes tools that staff use.

- Increase discoverability of materials, and promote and interpret targeted areas of collections (physical and online) by adding or refining terminology in descriptive records to improve findability, taking advantage of emerging data management standards.
- Make others aware of these resources, tools, and purposes.
- Amplify and promote materials related to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, and justice.
- Improve terminology in our catalogs to reflect critical cataloging and ethical cataloging standards, for example, to identify people in the way they wish to be identified, remove/replace terms that are inaccurate or pejorative, and apply terms ethically.
- Continue exploring and implementing new modes for delivering electronic and physical materials to users.
- Collocate selected materials (online or physical) to facilitate browsing, discovery, or ease of use, through the use of websites, selected open-access material links, and library guides, as well as selected physical locations or displays.

## Library As Collections (Physical or Online)

**Provide content that users need, in the online or physical formats best suited to the work, balancing a need for deep, focused collections in physical and digital formats against collaborative arrangements locally, regionally, and nationally.**

**Explanation:** Assessment and management of current physical and online collections is part of our daily work. This includes user and program needs assessment based on consultation and collaboration with faculty and students, staying current with peer activity and new vendor resources, selecting new resources (both purchased and donated), resource procurement, managing acquisitions budgets, and removing or preserving resources. Library collections management can include circulation and shelved material, as well as review, organization, and updating of electronic holdings.

- Continue to evaluate and procure physical and e-resource collections, keeping the curriculum, usability, appropriateness, costs, diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, and justice in focus.
- Follow emerging research, remain engaged with the university community, and work in collaboration with end users to maintain awareness of trends, user needs, and so forth.
- Serve as subject matter and/or information management experts to provide consultative support or guidance for other units on campus that manage collections.
- Maintain and secure additional temporary and longer-term financial resources via a variety of means to support enhanced collecting that addresses and supports University goals in academics and student support, with a particular eye toward diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, and justice.
- Continue refining processes for accepting, adding, and making discoverable locally produced materials, including Open Educational Resources, dissertations, theses, selected recorded performances, and faculty activities.
- Continue building University Archives holdings in the Connecticut Digital Archives and watch for other crossover opportunities to make our local archival resources more discoverable.
- Foster partnerships with other institutions and service providers for collection sharing and cooperative collection building.
- Continually assess and adjust collection areas, to address space restraints, collocation, and findability of materials.
- Continue regular assessment, inventory, and weeding to keep collections relevant, discoverable and accurate.

## Library as [an] Organization

Ensure the existence and deployment of excellent staff, dedicated to achieving the goals of this plan. The Harrison Libraries are structured to be organized and efficiently managed. They function most effectively and at their highest levels of service and productivity when they are administered with an eye on good management processes and positive human relationships.

## 1. Staffing

Libraries are dynamic and developing centers of learning, education, and democracy. Library workers, as professionals on the leading edge of this development, require constant and continuing improvement at all levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

- Recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, inclusive workforce at all levels of the Harrison Libraries.
- Pursue salary benchmarking, position reclassifications where appropriate, and salary adjustments to assuage inequities and improve competitiveness and retention.
- Review all position descriptions to incorporate promotional tiers for both librarians and support staff. Provide internal opportunities for development and advancement.
- Foster professional development for both librarians and support staff.
- Develop student workers as future professionals and citizens, and provide opportunities for them to build work habits.
- Create a culture of staff recognition.
- Promote a culture of continuing education and lifelong learning.

## 2. Library as Partner/Collaborator (Across Campus and Beyond)

The Libraries develop and maintain partnerships and collaborative relationships across campus and beyond the . This includes all formal offices on the campus and beyond the campus with consortia of which Harrison Libraries are a member. We do this to extend our reach, enhances the student experience, augment our visibility and resources through mutual support, and embed ourselves into the university community. We are partners in education.

- Continue with, create, and/or explore multi-departmental/organizational partnerships to address complex issues that are too extensive to be solved by any one group. This includes but is not limited to Development and Alumni Affairs (DAR, formerly Institutional Advancement), the Office of Sponsored Programs, HRD, Facilities, ITS, the Provost's office, Office of Diversity and Engagement, Graduate Studies, individual schools or offices, other libraries and consortia, vendors, service providers, and so forth.

## 3. Financial Base to Support Activities/Resources

Every productive and developing library must have a secure financial base of support. Library and university leadership must continue to develop and expand the libraries' financial base to continue to render high level services. This includes donor development and budgetary advocacy.

- Identify opportunities to diversify and increase the libraries' financial base to more robustly support library programming; enhance user education/outreach; diversify, refresh, and strengthen collections to keep up with advances, emerging research, new voices, and underrepresented voices; and offer new resources or services that users seek.
- Increase development fundraising and grant writing, working with Development and Alumni Affairs (formerly Institutional Advancement), the Office of Sponsored Research, the Provost's office, and individual schools as appropriate.

## 4. Business Continuity and Disaster Response Planning

The Harrison Libraries have disaster response plans that augment the university's emergency plans. This is typical for libraries. Such plans address issues specific to library facilities and services, and help minimize the loss of library materials. The Harrison Libraries have also worked with Public Safety on details that go beyond the university's plans for broader emergencies. Plans should include library service continuity plans in the event of extended loss of access to library facilities (due to damage or shutdown) and/or computing resources (e.g., multi-day loss of network, power, or access to servers). Disaster and continuity plans need regular updating, but at this writing are in need of a deeper overhaul due to recent changes in university facilities, personnel, and post-pandemic work practices (e.g., Work from Home).

- a) Reconstitute one or more working groups in the library and/or library facilities to help coordinate and update disaster/continuity planning. (Note: all staff remain responsible for contributing to a safe environment and to effective responses. Individuals outside any working group(s) should be tapped to assist with items below.)
- b) Update key immediate items to assist with emergency response.
  - i. Update contact lists of library staff, tenants, and key university personnel, and ensure others have our contact information, to facilitate rapid communication internally via a variety of methods and pathways.
  - ii. Assign a staff member to annually update list of external resources and contacts.
  - iii. Assemble a list of items to have staff check annually for preparedness, and designate someone to ensure items are checked (e.g., flashlights, panic buttons, supplies, access to response procedures).
  - iv. Update the Libraries' emergency quick guides to account for changes in personnel, facilities, university policies, and work practices.
- c) Ensure graduated levels of staff training/involvement.
  - i. Continue ensuring that staff (especially newer staff) have access to existing university and library plans and training, and that basic procedures have been walked through or drilled.
  - ii. Resume the provision of additional time for staff to think through and discuss various scenarios; hold conversations with library staff/tenants about expectations or tasks in certain kinds of emergencies/drills. Consult with Public Safety as appropriate.
  - iii. Conduct occasional tabletop walk throughs of fictional disasters (physical or technological).
- d) Create or update additional plans.
  - i. In select cases, build out additional rapid-response plans or resources (e.g., business continuity in case of extended lost access to network, web site, or servers).
  - ii. Gradually update the library's broader disaster/continuity plans, especially post COVID.
  - iii. Consider broader role as being a resource for the university community during campus or regional disasters.