Strategic Plan 2005

The mission, vision, strategic directions, and goals of ACRL

As academic librarians enter the 21st century, we are presented with new opportunities and new challenges. Technology, in particular, offers us opportunities heretofore seemingly unthinkable. Thanks to technology, we have made considerable progress in delivering to library users "what they want, when they want it, and where they want it." However, a misunderstanding of the promise of technology threatens to marginalize us.

Some individuals have looked at our considerable progress and assumed our work is complete—"Isn't everything on the Internet?—And for free!" Who needs librarians to select, organize, and interpret knowledge when a few keystrokes results in more information than the typical user needs anyway—so goes the thinking of some! Therefore, we are at a critical juncture in our profession.

A plan for the 21st century

Over the past many months, the ACRL Board of Directors—led by Maureen Sullivan, now past-president of ACRL—has worked with both the leadership of units of ACRL and ACRL membership to develop a new ACRL Strategic Plan. At the Midwinter 2000 meeting the ACRL Board adopted this plan. This is the strategic plan that will permit ACRL and its members to focus their goals and activities to lead us into the 21st century.

The Strategic Plan, while the result of considerable effort and input, is not a static, inflexible document for the ages. It is a dynamic document reflecting the needs of a vigorous organization of a vital and ever-changing profession.

We should view the Strategic Plan as a document that facilitates the achievement of widely held, if not universal, goals. It is not a gatekeeper, a hurdle, an obstacle, or something to which we pay occasional lip service and, in general, ignore.

It is a document that provides a framework within which to focus our efforts and to concentrate our energies and other resources in moving both the organization and the profession ahead.

The strategic directions outlined in the plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect our needs. New challenges arise. New opportunities present themselves. New members and new leaders offer fresh perspectives. Therefore, the Strategic Plan should always be a constantly evolving document.

I encourage ACRL members to present any recommendations for change in writing for consideration by the ACRL Board at its regular meetings or the Executive Committee at its meetings.

I urge you to read carefully the Strategic Plan and work to help the unit or units of ACRL in which you are active to focus on one or more of the goals outlined in the plan.

Through working together we can marshal the collective might to take advantage of the opportunities presented and to confront the challenges we face as we enter a new millennium.—*Larry Hardesty, ACRL President*

Overview

Through the active efforts of ACRL members, ACRL sections, committees, chapters, councils, and partners:

 • Public policy and legislation manifest the core values of academic librarians in serving the needs of society in learning, teaching, and research.

• The system of scholarly communication ensures wide access, reasonable pricing, permanence, and fair use.

• The core values of academic librarianship are reflected in higher education.

• Educators and the general public widely recognize that information literacy is a fundamental competence for lifelong learning and information literacy is incorporated into the curricula of higher education and the workplace.

• Research by librarians influences developments in higher education, information technology, and related areas.

• Libraries and institutions of higher education use ACRL standards and outcomes measures to assess and improve the effectiveness and future direction of academic libraries. ACRL defines knowledge and core competencies for academic library professionals.

Core values

These core values guide the strategic directions that shape the programs and services of ACRL.

• Equitable and open access to information.
• Service.
• Intellectual freedom.
• Cooperation, collaboration, and sharing resources.
• Commitment to the profession of librarianship.
• Fair use.
• Education and learning.
• Commitment to use of appropriate technology.
• Knowledge for its own sake.
• Conservation and preservation of knowledge.
• Diversity.
• Scholarly communication/research.
• Global perspective.

Mission

ACRL enhances the effectiveness of academic and research librarians to advance learning, teaching, and research in higher education.

Vision

• ACRL is the leading professional organization of choice for promoting, supporting, and advancing values of academic libraries to the higher education community.

• ACRL's organizational structure and systems facilitate maximum membership participation.

• ACRL supports the professional growth of members through a diverse and widely distributed array of programs and publications that integrate new formats and delivery options.

• ACRL members are leaders in librarianship, higher education, scholarly communication, and civic development. They are culturally and ethnically diverse; have a broad range of knowledge and experts; and represent academic librarians and professionals in related careers.

• ACRL's initiatives enable the higher education community to understand the role that academic libraries play in the teaching, learning, and research environment.

• ACRL members are valued, welcomed, respected, and connected within the association.

Strategic directions

1.0 Society recognizes the contributions that academic and research libraries and librarians make in higher education, scholarly communication, and civic development.

Goals

1.1 Librarians understand their roles as information leaders in their institutions.

1.2 Librarians, other members of the scholarly community, including campus academic officers, students and faculty and society, recognize the importance of the library to teaching, learning, and scholarly communication.

1.3 ACRL increases its efforts to promote academic librarianship.

1.4 Society recognizes information literacy as a fundamental competency for lifelong learning.

1.5 Academic librarians identify and agree upon core competencies for their profession.

2.0 Academic librarians advocate for public policy, legislation, and institutional change that enhance the values and contribution they make to learning, teaching, and research.

Goals

2.1 ACRL improves its ability to function as an authoritative and influential advocate for academic libraries.

2.2 ACRL enhances the visibility, credibility, and favorable resolution of issues affecting academic libraries at the federal, state, and local levels.

2.3 Skills of academic librarians are developed and librarians are seen as essential leaders in institutional change and improvement of learning and teaching practices.

2.4 ACRL facilitates increased collaboration between academic librarians and all sectors of higher education.

2.5 ACRL strengthens its partnerships with other information-related or higher education organizations.

3.0 ACRL is an inclusive organization serving academic librarians and other information professionals in related professions.

Goals

3.1 Participation within ACRL continues to include librarians from diverse populations.

3.2 ACRL will expand standards and guidelines to include statements on inclusiveness.

4.0 Academic and research librarians are continually engaged in learning for their professional development and growth.

Goals

4.1 Leadership skills among academic librarians are strengthened. "Every librarian a leader" is fully realized.

4.2 Academic librarians are effective and productive professionals who make significant contributions to their organizations, librarianship, and higher education.

4.3 Members are supported in the development of their scholarly research skills through training and nurturing and providing mechanisms for publishing.

4.4 Programs are developed at local, regional, state, and national levels using new formats and delivery.

5.0 ACRL is a national and international interactive leader in creating, expanding, and transferring the body of knowledge of academic librarianship.

Goals

5.1 ACRL firmly establishes its position as a leader in research.

5.2 The speed of dissemination of research and effective practices in academic librarianship is increased.

5.3 Research that involves all sectors of ACRL's organizational units is expanded and supported so it demonstrates the value of contributions the units make to the profession and higher education.

5.4 Collaborative research and development projects that may involve risk but whose results promise to make a positive difference to ACRL and its members are developed and supported.

6.0 ACRL is an effective and a dynamic organization that continually enhances its capacity to create its future and assess and improve its performance in carrying out its mission.

Goals

6.1 Data about member and nonmember needs and interests is collected and analyzed on a regular basis. Actions are taken to address and meet these needs and interests.

6.2 Relevant benchmarks to which ACRL aspires are established.

6.3 Assessment and evaluation of association programs and activities are expanded.

6.4 Organizational audits are conducted and the organizational structure is reviewed to determine if it lends optimal support for the strategic directions.

6.5 The strategic planning process for the association becomes an integral part of operations and member leader activity. ∎

---

integrated library and information instruction and be applied to other disciplines at Rutgers.

Notes

1. Tess Tobin and Martin Kesselman, "Evaluation of Web-Based Library Instruction Programs," (prepared for the Workshop on Web-Based Instruction and sponsored by the IFLA User Education RT at King Moghut University, IFLA Annual Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, August 1999).
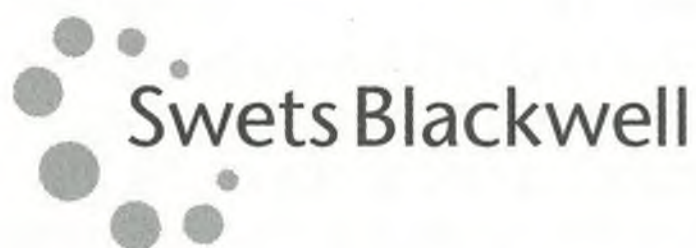
2. Mary Lee Bretz et al., "Learning Links: Reading, Writing, Information, the Web, and the World," (proposal to the University Vice President for Academic Affairs, Rutgers University, Spring 1999). ∎