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Vision for 2020

Teresa Fishel

Macalester College, fishel@macalester.edu

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Vision for 2020
DeWitt Wallace Library
Macalester College
June 2013

“...truly one of the jewels of the institution. We would not be what we are as a college did we not have our library at our heart.”¹

Our Vision

Our vision for the DeWitt Wallace Library of 2020 is to expand and build up our current vibrant and active space for engaging scholars. We want a library that contributes to the transformative experience for all students as well as a space that will attract faculty to utilize our space, resources, and expertise for collaborating on digital projects. We want to continue to be a community gathering space where all points of view can be shared and civil discussions can take place. We want to continue to partner with the Center for Scholarship and Teaching on programs that contribute to faculty development. We want to be a welcoming center of learning and understanding. The library will always have books, but by 2020, the transition to a smaller current print collection with increasing access to a larger electronic collection will be realized. Content will always be a focus of the library, but changes in scholarly publishing should result in an increase in openly accessible scholarly materials, a larger circulating ebook collection, and less reliance on a print collection within the library building. We expect that a larger percentage of our media (film and sound) collections will be available through streaming services and fewer CDs and DVDs will require physical storage space. As our physical collections become reduced in size, we see great opportunities for repurposing spaces for new educational initiatives and services.

A primary emphasis for the library of 2020 will continue to be on the services we provide to support the scholarship of faculty and students. Our role is changing as we transition from primarily focusing on enabling access to content, to streamlined fulfillment, and fostering new content creation. The library won't be just a storehouse of information, but rather enable faculty and students to create new scholarly works made visible to the larger world through our publishing services. Building on our current success with Digital Commons and CONTENTdm to publish student and faculty scholarship in an open access environment, by 2020 we hope to provide more collaborative workspaces within easy access to librarians with expertise not only in research methods, but also expertise in digital publishing, intellectual property management, managing metadata, and curating content. Access to information will still be abundant and sometimes overwhelming for students, and thus it will be even more critical that librarians are engaged in collaborative activities with faculty to develop information fluency skills in all students. Working together we can develop programs that better engage students in developing the critical thinking skills needed to locate and evaluate the appropriate information resources. It is also essential that we develop a keen awareness of how to use materials appropriately according to scholarly standards. Flexible teaching spaces will enable us meet the needs of working with a class of sixteen, a group of four, or a single individual. At the same time, it will not be just the physical spaces that need to be considered, but also our virtual spaces which should fulfill the expectations that access to the library's resources, expertise by librarians, and tools to manage information are fully embedded in our course management systems and accessible 24x7. We will continue to need spaces for activities that require focusing on our digital presence, our discovery systems, and our systems that support instant access to resources beyond materials that we subscribe to or provide via networks. It is possible that by 2020, the college will be engaged in more SPOCs (Small Personalized Online Courses) and we need to ensure that the library is discoverable from within these courses as well. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the opening of the DeWitt Wallace Library in 2013, in order to realize this vision of 2020, it is time to prepare for making the renovations needed to help us accomplish this vision.

¹ President Brian Rosenberg, "Welcome Comments", 6th Annual Library Technology Conference, March 20, 2013.

Introduction

Anyone who walks into the front door on the main level of the DeWitt Wallace Library during the academic year on an average weekday afternoon is always struck by the high level of activity and the sounds of a vibrant social hub on campus. Those of us who work in the library are very proud that we have been able to create and maintain a center of social and intellectual activity that students are still drawn to despite the fact that a majority of our resources and services are available anywhere one has a network connection and a device to connect to the network. Students also have increasing options to gather and socialize elsewhere on campus in newer spaces with attractive features including soft seating, areas for group work, and coffee and food services. The library seeks not to compete with these other spaces, but rather to complement and to provide unique resources and inviting spaces that support the educational and intellectual needs for students, faculty, and staff. It is both the space and the people who reside in the building that have something unique to share and our vision for 2020 is to build on the success we've had in our first 25 years by creating new spaces within the existing building to better meet the 21st century needs of our community. It is also an appropriate time to reflect on what those needs will be as the college is currently engaged in strategic planning.

August 2013 marks the 25th anniversary of the DeWitt Wallace Library. The design of the building was intended to be flexible and one that could accommodate change. Over the past 25 years, the library and library staff have adapted to a number of changes mostly driven by ongoing technological changes. When we opened this building, the Internet was a text-based system that was limited to use by educational institutions and the military. E-journals didn't exist. Over time, our physical spaces have changed in small, incremental ways. Our 2nd level Bibliographic Instruction Room opened in 1988 with one piece of technology, a slide projector. Our library instruction room now provides hands on access to 10 desktop computers and utilizes overhead projection. Our original computing lab was relocated to an area that originally housed our card catalog. After a period of three years, the new furnishings and computers were relocated to the main level. The lower level area then became our second teaching classroom space. We welcomed the Center for Scholarship and Teaching in 2003. We created space for faculty emeriti in 2012. The library has continued to evolve as our services have changed. Where we once housed the campus web coordinator, we now have the Digital Scholarship and Services librarian. Our Imaging Annex has been absorbed into main level computing support. Our children's collection, the Wood Room, received a cosmetic makeover in the summer of 2012 and has become a favorite study spot for students and a favorite of faculty and staff with young children. In the summer of 2013 we will see the consolidation of the Circulation and Reference desks into a single service point which will also include space for Help Desk services. This merger will create spaces on the main level that could be adapted for new purposes, but for the foreseeable future will be kept as staff and student employee workspace.

In the fall of 2013 we will begin a major weeding project for our print collection. Large scale digitization projects such as the Haithi Trust and ongoing work by JSTOR are creating online collections that enable access to a rich online environment of resources and enable college libraries to focus their print collections on their current curriculum needs. We believe that our current print collection can be reduced in size which will allow us to accomplish several short term goals as well as free up spaces for new needs. Our vision for the library of 2020 is to work to accomplish the possibilities outlined below.

Content Creation Labs

*"The mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities."*²

We have expanded our services to support publishing of original content by faculty and students over the past decade.

² Atlas of New Librarianship. R. David Lankes. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011. p.13.

We provide support for publishing journals as well as for publishing honors projects. We are nearing completion on the publication of a multi-media book. We are collaborating with faculty to provide access to their digital media collections that are part of their ongoing scholarship and we are helping them to make that scholarship visible to the world. We have worked with faculty to increase their knowledge of their rights as authors and supported publishing their work in openly accessible journals. We are currently working with the Ordway Natural History Study Center and other faculty members to curate data collections. The Content Creation lab would be a space where we could further our digitization efforts and place specialists within close proximity to students and faculty seeking assistance with digital projects. Consultative services for digital projects that would provide information on copyright, authors rights, and fair use as well as instruction on use of production tools such as InDesign would take place in this space. More students are producing videos for course assignments and need spaces for collaborative production activities. In May 2013 in the Media and Cultural Studies CVD (Curricular Visioning Document) they stated:

“As our students have begun to do more and more creative projects, we have begun to realize that we need to buy more equipment, although most of what we need is not overwhelmingly expensive. We do need someone who can maintain and update the equipment, however, and **we need some space where our students can routinely do their creative work that can be open for extended hours.** [from Curricular Vision , spring 2013, *added emphasis*]

Digital projects featuring data visualization is another area of knowledge creation for which we can provide support. Data visualization is applied to all disciplines, but is currently a growing area in the social sciences and humanities and it focuses on the ability to “communicate information clearly and effectively through graphical means.”³ Data literacy is closely linked to information fluency and librarians have a key role in training future scholars on the use of data for data visualization projects and creation of new knowledge. The library is inclusive of all disciplines, and digital projects are developing within all disciplines. Our extended hours as well as our expertise in publishing make this a natural fit for placing this type of unit within the library.

More Comfortable Quiet Reading Spaces

In 2020, reading will be more likely to be taking place using a tablet computer. Currently, some of the favorite reading furniture for students are the soft, bean bag chairs. Our furnishings are now 25 years old and while they have served us well, we’d like new and softer furniture to create more spaces that are comfortable for students. Minor modifications in the Children’s Room in the summer of 2012 have created a space that students gravitate to because of its whimsy as well as the soft comfortable seating. We’d like to create similar spaces throughout the library, and especially on the 4th level which is the designated quiet space. In addition to more comfortable seating, we’d like to ensure that students can recharge their electrical devices with more electrical outlets that are easily accessible, but don’t create hazardous conditions. It is not uncommon to step over cords that have been strung from various work tables to wall outlets.

More Comfortable Collaborative Working Spaces

We have added additional round tables for students in the Harmon Room to use for group projects and we have added a MediaScape on the main level which allows students with two computers to display on side-by-side screens and work collaboratively. We would like to create more spaces throughout the library on all levels except the fourth to enable comfortable seating for collaborative projects. Students have been attracted to the round tables in the Harmon Room and we’d like to see more of these placed throughout the library. In the summer of 2013 we are focusing on creating a space on the main level intended for working on group projects, but we’d like to create spaces throughout the library with whiteboards and comfortable tables that allow for group work.

³ “Data Visualization”, Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data_visualization, visited 6/10/2013.

Classroom 2020 Learning Lab

IUPUI has a modular classroom that allows for [multiple configurations](#). Having a classroom that could accommodate multiple configurations while also providing power to individual workstations would be a tremendous asset for our teaching programs. In addition to teaching critical thinking skills, librarians provide instruction on use of tools to manage information. Managing information by utilizing bibliographic utilities such as RefWorks or Zotero requires the ability to work with students who are utilizing their own laptops, desktops, or tablets. While we have adapted our current instruction spaces to utilize computers, having more options and flexible configurations and tables with power that could accommodate students with their own personal devices would enhance our instruction programs. A recent survey of Macalester students revealed that of the students responding, 98% owned a laptop.⁴ We believe by 2020 all students will have a personal computing device that they will carry with them at all times.

We are also exploring opportunities to partner with faculty and campus units including Multicultural Life and Civic Engagement to develop summer programs utilizing our computer resources to work with underprivileged and at risk youth in the Twin Cities. A program under exploration includes working with Kimberly Bryant, founder of Black Girls Code. Her program “focuses on introducing girls of color between the ages of 7-17 to the field of digital technology and computer programming with a focus on emerging entrepreneurial concepts.”⁵ Enhancing our current classroom spaces would enable us to provide an engaging learning space, explore further opportunities to create summer programs that utilize our resources and provide support for our communities.

Special Collections - Expanding access and space

While there is an ongoing continuous transition to digital resources, we have found increased use in working with students with many of our rare book and archival collections.⁶ The current Rare Books room houses many unique items including the first edition of the Samuel Johnson dictionary, Diderot’s Encyclopedia, and more treasures. The Rare Books room presents a nice environment for working with students, but there are opportunities to expand spaces to house the special collections as our print journal collections shrink. There are some print journals that we will want to retain, but primarily for their historical record. It makes sense to combine these historical journals with other special collection materials and our archives on the lower level. With appropriate climate control and additional compact shelving, the lower level could be developed to house the special collections and archives and provide access to teaching spaces that would allow further development of new collaborations for instruction throughout the curriculum. These materials would also be prime resources for contributing to the development of new knowledge. Having the appropriate technologies on the lower level to enable digitization of special collections to incorporate into new publications would further enhance the use of special collections and our archival material.

Media Collections Consolidated

Currently the library houses the CD sound recordings and a collection of popular DVDs. The Humanities Building, 4th level, houses the DVDs used for teaching in the curriculum. Use of film has increased across all disciplines and is no longer just a tool used for humanities and language courses. DVDs kept on reserve for classes are kept in the Humanities building, but Media Services does not have the same hours as the library, so access for students is more limited. In

⁴ MISO Survey, Spring 2013.

⁵ Keynote Speaker, Kimberly Bryant, Library Technology Conference, March 20-21, 2013.
http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/libtech_conf/2013/keynotes/

⁶ “Life of a Library”, Laura Billings Coleman, April 19, 2013, <http://www.macalester.edu/news/2013/04/life-of-a-library>

addition to more use of films across all disciplines, we also have seen an increase in requests for lending of our DVD collection. Our vision for the library of 2020 is to consolidate all physical content in one location. Consolidating the Media film collection within the library would improve ease of student access as well as interlibrary lending of media materials. We expect the transition to streaming services will increase over time, but during the transition the consolidation of collections would help facilitate use by students and faculty. Having media collections within the library would also assist in providing resources for production of new content.

Extended Hours Study Space

It is an annual request by students to have the library hours extended beyond our current 1 a.m. closing. The Link is accessible 24 X 7 during the academic semesters. However, while the Link houses food and beverage vending machines, there is no access to restrooms. In an urban environment such as ours, it is not feasible to keep the entire building open for 24 X 7 access. However, with modifications, we could create access to one level of the library that could be accessible 24 X 5, depending on staffing. With modifications to the main level, areas could be partitioned off for access by students between the hours of 1 and 8 a.m. The main level provides access to restrooms and is where the majority of the computers and printers are located.

Conclusion

Over 10,500 individuals visit the DeWitt Wallace Library every week during the academic year. Every prospective student along with his or her parent(s) visits the library as part of the admissions tours. The vision of the library for 2020 focuses on public spaces and supporting scholarship. However, there are a number of needs in the library including carpeting, painting, and improved workspaces for staff as well as improved furnishings for students. If we are able to create new spaces for students and services, it is critical that we also address staff workspaces that enhance our ability to support these new spaces and services. Workflows and services in the library have changed considerably in the past 25 years, but we have not addressed staff workspaces that need attention.

Furnishings throughout the library are now 25 years old. Most of the furniture in the building is from the original opening. We have a number of wooden individual study carrels located throughout the library, but it would be a service improvement for students if we could replace them with more comfortable tables and chairs. The fourth level in particular is in need of new tables and chairs. Currently tables that were used in the prior library building are placed on the fourth level, but they are neither comfortable nor used by many students.

We've added a laptop charging station to provide a place for students to recharge their devices. This is just one small step to address a growing problem. Throughout the library we need to address how to provide access to outlets that are convenient for students and not presenting a hazard for those walking through the stacks.

Vending options in the library are limited and students now have many options for food service in other buildings. We currently have a vending machine to provide coffee, but if we were to expand our hours, it would be desirable to have a more robust coffee and beverage service for students to utilize.

We do believe that the library will continue to provide a welcoming space for the community for the foreseeable future. We believe in addition to providing a welcoming space, it is the people within the building who provide the greatest contribution by their commitment to innovation, service, connecting faculty and students to resources to complete their scholarship, and to teaching. We believe with attention to helping us realize our vision for 2020 that we will continue to meet our goals as we expressed in our 2006 vision statement:

- Offering resources and innovative services for inspired scholarship
- Providing exceptional virtual and physical spaces for learning
- Fostering community and conversation
- Preserving and promoting the history of the college

We hope that by helping us accomplish our vision for 2020 the library will be able to continue to be “a jewel” beyond the next 25 years.

Terri Fishel
Library Director
June 2013