University Libraries Strategic Plan 2017-2021: Comprehensive Report

This report provides a concise overview of accomplishments relative to the University Libraries Strategic Plan (2017-2021). Over the past three years, University Libraries has aggressively pursued successful outcomes for the five goals, 17 sub-goals, and 144 action items that comprise this plan. While not all accomplishments are listed in this document, we believe those selected represent key points of impact that are of interest to our stakeholders.

(Graphic for overall plan elements)

Goal 1: Partner across the disciplines to deliver innovative instruction that empowers students to engage with, integrate, create, and transform knowledge through the use of library resources and collections.

Academic libraries, at their core, are teaching organizations. Each year, UA librarians teach hundreds of general information literacy sessions and targeted research workshops for students. Through the provision of these learning opportunities, University Libraries is actively supporting the University's vision of creating a student-centered research university. These activities also directly support *Goal 1* of the *UA Strategic Plan*, which aims to provide premier undergraduate and graduate education that is characterized by outstanding teaching, high-quality scholarship and distinctive curricular and co-curricular programs.

> *1.1 Reframe the liaison program to include proactive communication and embedded presence, physically and virtually, in instruction across campus. Liaison and collection assignments will no longer be distinct.*

> Liaison roles and duties have been reimagined to emphasize relationship building with students and faculty through both outreach and instruction. Liaison assignments have been adjusted to promote greater consistency in service to campus communities, as well as additional flexibility in responding to organizational need that continues to evolve. Liaison librarians actively work with teaching faculty across academic departments to strategically embed themselves within research-intensive courses. This is accomplished through the provision of: classroom-based research workshops, customized virtual course shell content, and point-of-need research assistance.

> For undergraduate and graduate students alike, persistence through graduation is heavily dependent upon positive, value-additive experiences during their first year on campus. Success depends upon a student's ability to identify and access important co-curricular networks of support, which includes the library and its numerous resources. For this reason, liaison librarians have strengthened their efforts to impact first-year students through instruction and orientation outreach activities.

> To promote continual liaison development and success, an in-house skills development training program has been established. Through this training program, librarians can share their unique skills and knowledge with their liaison colleagues. Training workshops focus on learning technologies, instructional techniques, as well as a variety of specialized software packages. In addition, University Libraries has hosted an annual *un-conference* for librarians working across the entire UA System

(i.e., UA, UAB, and UAH)—providing an opportunity to learn and share instructional best-practices.

University Libraries is constantly evaluating and expanding its collections with content selected to serve the specific research needs of UA students and faculty across all academic disciplines and programs. This has led to a world class research collection that can easily overwhelm users with its expansive offerings. Therefore, librarian liaisons have been tasked with the development and management of an ongoing program of targeted promotional efforts tied to library collections. To provide a solid foundation for these activities, a stronger relationship has been forged between liaisons and library personnel tasked with procuring and managing collections.

Resource Acquisition & Discovery (RAD) provide regular collections updates, as well as access to ready-made promotional content, to assist liaisons. This allows liaison librarians to develop a multifaceted approach to library outreach that incorporates promotion of library collections across multiple platforms, including virtual course shells, research guides, PDF quick guides, and instructional videos. These efforts have helped to increase use of library resources—resulting in more favorable return on investment for collections expenditures.

1.2 Develop innovative library instruction and services for diverse users, delivered through multiple channels.

An extensive curriculum mapping project has allowed University Libraries to identify key points of impact where instructional interventions provide students with optimal value. A robust instructional program focused on first-year learners promotes the development of information literacy skills that prepare students for the research and writing-intensive courses to come. These efforts also promote early recognition among students of the library's value as the University's central hub for research support.

Strategic targeting of upper-level research-intensive courses, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, provides liaison librarians a means to foster continual information literacy skills development among students. Through this expansion of focus, the University Libraries information literacy instructional program is now effectively scaffolded to course content and tiered to provide students with the support they need throughout a progressively rigorous matriculation process.

While librarians dedicate hundreds of hours each semester to classroom instruction, these efforts represent just one aspect of the multi-faceted research support offered by University Libraries. Classroom-based research workshops and information literacy training sessions are supplemented by point-of-need research consultations and general reference services made available in-person, as well as via phone, email, and chat. As outlined under *Goal 1.3*, a variety of asynchronous

instructional offerings, serving both generalized and course-specific needs, provide additional support for students who want to work at their own pace.

1.3 Develop instruction, learning objects, and resources that are easy to discover and incorporate into the learning management system and other delivery systems for teaching and learning.

As previously mentioned, liaison librarians collaborate closely with librarians in Resource Acquisition & Discovery (RAD) to develop and disseminate promotional materials for library resources. These materials are then shared directly with students and faculty through multiple communications channels. While members of RAD lead development on the creation of promotional materials, liaisons ensure that these materials are disseminated to their respective academic departments via email newsletters and in-person exchanges with stakeholders. A shared digital repository has been established to provide liaisons with quick and easy access to these promotional materials. RAD presentations within monthly liaison meetings ensure liaisons have the most up-to-date information about new and existing library collections.

Discovery is defined by a library user's ability to locate appropriate library resources to fulfill a specific information need. A key aspect of discovery in the virtual environment relates to the strategic placement of information where users will encounter it without the need for excessive searching. To that end, liaison librarians partner with instructors across academic departments to gain access to virtual course shells that provide students with web-based access to course materials, assignments, and communication with their instructor. With course shell access, liaisons upload information about library collections and services, as well as digital learning objects that supplement course assignments and reinforce those concepts and skills covered during librarian-led instructional sessions and research workshops. Contact with students at this strategic point of access allows librarians to mitigate barriers to students' discovery and effective utilization of library resources and services.

At a time when most library collections and services must be web-accessible, a variety of technical considerations and workflows make their ongoing management and delivery possible. Members of RAD have worked with members of Web Technologies & Development (WTD) to effectively deploy several new tools that streamline management of the library's growing collection of electronic resources. Deployment of Springshare's *A-Z List* database portal has simplified and streamlined the process of managing user discovery and access for over 500 databases. Refinements made to the Scout discovery tool, coupled with the implementation of the *Full Text Finder* knowledge base, have improved the e-journal discovery for library users. This improved experience is defined by more relevant search results, and more effective peripheral linking from those records to tens of millions of full-text articles across thousands of academic publisher sites.

University Libraries has completed several major projects aimed at improving discovery and access of tangible, on-site collections. Personnel in Metadata Management worked with the contracted firm, Backstage Library Works, to carry out several complex updates to millions of library catalog records. Personnel in Special Collections collaborated with WTD to migrate digital collections to the CONTENTdm digital collection management system, which has helped to streamline management processes while also improving the organization and discovery of digitized special collections. The University Libraries Annex has also conducted an extensive series of database maintenance projects to bolster discovery of collections held in its facility. Annex personnel have also provided integral support in the digitization of student dissertations and theses produced throughout UA's history.

Goal 2: Develop and maintain dynamic and flexible physical and virtual spaces that meet the needs of our campus, informed by trends in higher education and technological advances.

University Libraries receives millions of visitors to its virtual and physical spaces each year. What's more, these strategically designed spaces are the foundation atop which the library's value-additive services are built. Library personnel understand that these spaces must be dynamic in changing to fit the evolving needs of UA communities. University Libraries has expanded and refined its spaces that support collaborative study and classroom-based instruction. Recent renovations provide technology-infused spaces for meetings, academic celebrations, and public lectures. Refreshment and vending options have also been expanded. Of course, the library continues to provide ample space for solitary study as well. What's more, as virtual environments and mobile technologies continue to redefine the information expectations of library users, University Libraries continues to expand and refine its virtual spaces ensure an intuitive and seamless library experience that places collections and services within convenient reach.

2.1 Implement new assessment measures, using qualitative and quantitative data, to assess and improve University Library services.

A new library department has been created to coordinate an ongoing program of strategic assessment for its collections, services, and facilities. This program has been formalized in the University Libraries Assessment Plan, which identifies areas of assessment focus and related evaluative methods. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are defined and related data are collected, aggregated, and reported on a monthly basis to Libraries Administration. These data are also compiled and reported on an annual basis to UA's Office of Institutional Research & Asessment (OIRA) and various external accrediting and membership bodies (e.g., ARL, ACRL, and IPEDS). Biennial library-wide meetings are held to promote organizational discussion of progress made toward library goals.

University Libraries employs a variety of technologies to support assessment workflows. Tableau Online has been instituted as an administrative tool for tracking assessment goals in the library. A standalone SQL database has been set up to host data that feed Tableau-based analytics dashboards, which replace the less interactive Excel-based reports previously used. Website use and performance are tracked through the Google Analytics platform, while usage of video tutorials is tracked via YouTube's native analytics platform. Springshare's LibApps suite

provides additional support for the assessment of web-based research guides and learning objects (via LibGuides), as well as real-time KPI tracking across many library departments (via LibInsight). These data are consolidated and archived on a monthly basis using the web-based LibPAS assessment management system, providing for easier point-of-need assessment analysis and reporting.

The Dean of Libraries endorses a data-driven approach to organizational decision making. Data made available through the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) are utilized for benchmarking purposes. The resulting analyses are leveraged toward deeper understandings of the operations and overall position of University Libraries in relation to its peers within the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the Southern University Group (SUG). Detailed analyses of collection expenditures have revealed the enormous return on investment (ROI) for library expenditures. An ongoing analysis of cost-per-use (CPU) for library collections has been implemented to ensure optimal ROI is maintained. Data from these analyses have also been leveraged toward more advantageous licensing agreements with large academic publishers, such as Elsevier and Springer.

The library's instructional program is another area of assessment focus. Each year, librarians teach hundreds of instructional sessions and research workshops in support of student and faculty research need. Students enrolled in UA's First Year Writing Program (FYWP) represent over 30% of library instructional session attendees, providing a strategic focal point for instructional assessment efforts. Since 2017, learning outcomes among these students have been assessed using a pre/post-test regimen administered in collaboration with instructors in the Department of English. Analyses of anonymized data collected through this program have shown statistically significant improvements in student comprehension relative to threshold information literacy concepts.

Librarians utilize a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to assess learning outcomes and classroom perceptions of value among non-FYWP instructional attendees. A combination of peer and manager-based teaching evaluations supply instructional librarians with constructive feedback that helps to define an ongoing commitment to the provision of high-quality and engaging learning experiences for library users. In addition, learning outcomes among students who take advantage of the library's asynchronous training program, Roll Tide Research, are assessed via module-embedded quizzes that provide valuable insights into instructional quality and effectiveness.

2.2 Evaluate existing physical and virtual spaces to align services, collections, and changes in resources and technology with evolving needs of users.

A vast majority of a library's physical space has traditionally been allocated to the storage of book collections, with a small percentage set aside to support information service desks, study space for users, and office space for library personnel. However, over the past two decades the information landscape has evolved, with electronic information resources (e-resources) supplanting tangible

print resources as the standard. Universities have also evolved through their shift to a learner-centered teaching model with greater focus on collaborative, experiential learning. Taken as a whole, these shifts have led University Libraries to update its facilities to better support user need.

In 2017, University Libraries began working with the architectural firm of Shepley Bullfinch to formulate plans for an extensive renovation of Gorgas Library that included an expansion of its physical footprint. To initiate the planning phase of this project, the library hosted public meetings that provided stakeholders with the opportunity to share their vision for this project. From there, a multiphase plan was devised that begins with updates made to core building systems (e.g., plumbing, elevators, and restrooms). These updates provide a foundation for more extensive renovations to follow.

As of December 2020, Gorgas Library has completely remodeled restroom facilities throughout the building, upgraded elevators, as well as upgraded water and sewage lines into and throughout the building. A variety of public use areas supporting both collaborative and solitary study were renovated (see Goal 2.3 for details). The library's café, Java City, has also been fully renovated to provide a wider variety of food/beverage offerings as well as expanded seating. The Libraries Administrative Suite, as well as a large number of other offices throughout the building, have been renovated with new carpet, paint, and furniture. Extensive renovations to the 4th floor provide new carpet, paint, and furniture for faculty and staff offices. The 4th floor has also been redesigned to make better use of floor space. New modular offices, as well as renovated faculty/staff meeting spaces, are included in these extensive improvements.

For the 21st century library, virtual spaces are as important to its mission as physical spaces. For this reason, library faculty and staff remain focused on continuous improvement and innovation within the realm of the library's virtual spaces. These spaces are comprised of several web-based properties that include: the University Libraries main website, the Institutional Repository (IR), the Digital Collections web portal, the Acumen Digital Archives portal, as well as several peripheral web tools that support asynchronous learning (e.g., LibGuides, LibCal, Roll Tide Research, and UL's YouTube channel). To maintain the quality of its web offerings, library personnel conduct user surveys and website usability studies to better understand user need and improve users' web experience. The quality of virtual spaces is further bolstered by regular updates and improvements to library's underlying technology infrastructure and support workflows. Details of these activities are outlined throughout the remainder of Goal 2 and Goal 3.

2.3 Create innovative research spaces and services to accommodate new technology and to meet the needs of faculty and students.

An expansion of spaces for users in Gorgas Library has been a key pursuit throughout the lifecycle of this strategic plan. Spaces within the existing footprint of Gorgas Library have been reimagined and repurposed to better fulfill changing user need. Analysis of collection usage patterns revealed that tangible print collections, though still valuable as research assets, have been circulating at increasingly lower rates since peaking in 2007. This trend coincides with the increasing availability

and use of high-quality electronic resources, made available through the library's website, that support academic research needs.

Analyses of course syllabi, library usage patterns, and user survey feedback, indicate an increasing demand for spaces in the library that support both solitary and group study. Over the past three years, more than 65,000 volumes of less-frequently-used materials were relocated from Gorgas Library to the University Libraries Annex (an off-site library storage facility). Carried out in conjunction with several renovation projects, these activities allowed for the expansion of library seating by 65% (from 865 to 1,410 seats). Carpeting, furniture, lighting, and paint were updated on floors 1, 2, and 4M. With user spaces expanded, focus was shifted toward the improvement of those spaces via specialty furniture and technology.

Study areas on floors 2 and 4M have been extensively renovated with new carpet, paint, and soft seating. New furniture that supports both solitary and collaborative study was placed in these areas, expanding seating capacity and improving user experience in these spaces. Group study rooms, as well as faculty and graduate student carrels throughout the building have been updated with new furniture, flooring, and paint. New guidelines for accessing carrels, as well as a new web-based reservation system, have been implemented to improve and expand access to these spaces. When not booked for specific instruction/informational programming, the Alabama Digital Humanities Center (ADHC) now provides a designated solitary study space for graduate students in Gorgas Library. Two Whisper Booths have also been installed in the Gorgas Music Library, providing students and faculty with sound-proof space for making instrument and voice recordings.

The public meeting space formerly known as Gorgas 205 has been renamed, renovated, and expanded to twice its original size. The new space can be used as a single large space, or two separate smaller spaces. The technology in these spaces has been updated to include two large digital displays with integrated public address systems. Digital displays on the first floor of Gorgas Library have also been updated.

With help from UA's Office of Information Technology (OIT), network infrastructure in all library facilities has been upgraded. Wireless connectivity has been expanded, with dozens of Wi-Fi access points installed throughout library facilities. UL's Area Computing Services (ACS) has also deployed several novel software and hardware solutions that improve internal, as well as public-facing, technology management workflows. A new imaging platform has been deployed to more efficiently manage the operation, maintenance, and support for PC and Mac computer systems for both public library users and library personnel.

2.4 Create a web presence that allows users to engage with library services, spaces, and data in innovative ways.

Web Technologies and Development (WTD) are engaged in an ongoing process of website maintenance and improvement with an eye toward seamlessly connecting

library users with library resources. Importantly, these activities are informed by direct feedback from library users and internal library stakeholders via multiple assessment pathways (e.g., surveys, user testing, collaborative planning, etc.). The library website's "one-search" box and bento-style results page are designed to provide an efficient discovery pathway for novice and experienced users alike. Since its initial rollout, the related functionality has been enhanced to provide users with access to a wider variety of materials from a wider variety of sources.

Behind the scenes, WTD has migrated from Drupal to WordPress CMS as its content management system of choice. This change has simplified the content management of the library's various web properties—providing content editors with a more modern, easy-to-use editing interface. WTD continues to work closely with the library's public service personnel to refine and expand the use of Springshare's LibApps suite. This expansion is providing library users with a modernized library web experience that includes enhancements for room booking, real-time event calendar access, research guide access, and ask-a-librarian services.

University Libraries has deployed multiple software solutions that streamline collections management processes, while also improving the user's ability to discover and access library collections. Deployment of the Full Text Finder (FTF) electronic resource management system has resulted in significant annual savings, when compared with the system previously in use. Additional benefits include a suite of tools providing seamless interoperability with the range of electronic resources managed by University Libraries, as well as administrative display where all contract and content management (i.e., resource access and web-linking) functionality can be accessed in a single location.

Deployment of the digital collection management system ContentDM has helped to improve web-based discovery and browsability of digitized archival materials managed by Special Collections. For archival materials not yet digitized, deployment of the ArchivesSpace archival management tool is allowing University Libraries to provide its users with web-based access to archival finding aids that enhance discoverability of special collections.

2.5 Improve user experience with web interfaces and platforms, with special attention to accessibility issues for users with disabilities.

Ensuring a high-quality user experience for library web interfaces and platforms requires an ongoing and holistic monitoring and maintenance program. For University Libraries, the foundation for this program is in-house training for all personnel involved in the creation of web content. Personnel in Web Technologies & Development (WTD) work behind the scenes to ensure they are well versed in WCAG 2.0 web accessibility compliance standards. On the public side of library services, liaison librarians also receive training to ensure accessibility compliance for the LibGuides and other web-based digital learning content they create and manage.

University Libraries regularly conducts usability testing for its website and web-based learning modules. These tests help the library to better understand the changing needs of its users and ensure its web properties are intuitive to navigate and utilize. The library's website acts as a portal to myriad third-party e-resources (e.g., e-books, journal platforms, databases, and digital collections). In support of accessibility monitoring for these resources, personnel in Resource Acquisition & Discovery (RAD) provide liaison librarians with vendor-supplied voluntary product accessibility templates (VPATs) that explain how information and communication technology (ICT) products such as software, hardware, electronic content, and support documentation conform to established accessibility standards. When possible, the library is also taking advantage of accessibility services/programs offered through its content providers. For example, University Libraries has implemented the HathiTrust Accessible Text Request Service, which provides visually impaired library users with full-text access to any title in the entire HathiTrust collection. These digitized works have underlying digital text associated with them, which can be accessed by screen reading technologies.

Goal 3: Support and engage in the research lifecycle across campus through the development of relevant resources and services.

University Libraries is committed to supporting student and faculty researchers by cultivating, and providing access to, the highest quality research collections available. Through its information services, University Libraries aids novice and experienced researchers alike. University Libraries provides walk-in or appointment-based research support covering a wide range of need. This can entail helping a student refine the question/topic that's guiding their research, or providing data management planning advice to grant-funded faculty researchers. Employing personnel versed in scholarly communications, data management, research methods, data analysis/visualization, media production, any other key areas of research support ensures the library is present throughout the research lifecycle.

3.1 Provide leadership and support in the creation and use of digital scholarship, including data mining, visualization, digital humanities, and rights management.

Throughout the course of this strategic plan, University Libraries has made a concerted effort to expand its support for digital scholarship and data-intensive research. Large, highly specialized projects benefit from expertise provided by the Alabama Digital Humanities Center (ADHC) and the Sanford Media Center (SMC). The recently established UA Institutional Repository (IR) provides additional consultative support on matters of digital rights management and open access publication.

ADHC personnel work directly with researchers to develop, plan, and implement a variety of digital projects in the humanities and beyond. In response to the University Libraries Strategic Plan, the ADHC has expanded its support of digital scholarship to include web hosting—with well over half of the digital projects made accessible through the ADHC website being hosted an ADHC-managed server. The ADHC also provides students and faculty with access to specialty software and equipment.

More general research support requests are served by point-of-need reference and instructional services provided by liaison librarians who specialize in a variety of data-intensive workflows, methods, and tools. In 2017, the position of Data Services Librarian was established to help lead a concerted push to expand and better coordinate data services support throughout University Libraries. The Dean of Libraries also created the library's Data Services Taskforce (DST) to promote library-wide development of data services support. Since its inception, this group has collaborated to develop a holistic, cross-departmental approach to data services support that represents a pronounced expansion of library support for academic research leveraging the latest technological advancements.

University Libraries has worked directly with information vendors to ensure data mining activities are available across numerous journal platforms and databases. A workflow connecting liaison librarians with the Data Services Librarian, and personnel in Resource Acquisition & Discovery (RAD), has been devised to bolster library services in this growing area of research. Along these same lines, the library now provides active support for ORCID ID and the CrossRef API, which enable researchers to programmatically access a variety of research source metadata as well as full-text scholarly content. This allows student and faculty researchers to build and analyze these data using specialty software and machine learning algorithms.

3.2 Collect, preserve, and promote campus scholarship by capturing scholarly output in an Institutional Repository.

University Libraries established the UA Institutional Repository (IR) in early 2017. The position of Institutional Repository Librarian was created and filled, and the open source repository software DSpace was chosen to support these efforts. An initial project focused on loading 2,236 electronic theses and dissertations written by UA students. The IR has since built upon these efforts through collaboration with Special Collections and Annex Services to digitally capture and ingest older, tangible print dissertations and theses held in the University Libraries collection.

The increasing value of the IR to the UA research community depends heavily upon the continued growth of its holdings. For this reason, workflows have been established to identify existing scholarly content for ingestion, as well as promote future deposit activities by active UA researchers. The IR provides ongoing training to liaison librarians—providing them with the information needed to effectively promote IR deposit activities and use of the IR's resources in their respective areas of academic support.

3.3 Expand and promote high quality resources and collections that support curricular and research needs, including existing data sets.

University Libraries has expanded its collections to include numerous e-resources that cater to data-intensive coursework and research. Fifty-one of the library's 500 databases provide users with access to a wide array of data sets. While some of these data are geared toward supporting the work of seasoned researchers, some are created with the student researcher in mind. For example, SAGE Research

Methods Online provides students with information on a wide variety of research methods, as well as the data sets required to practice the various related statistical analyses linked with those methods. Another resource, SimplyAnalytics, gives novice researchers the ability to explore data science techniques used by researchers and industry to create interactive visualizations and graphical analyses of geo-coded data.

For more advanced researchers, resources like the Roper Center iPoll and the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) provide access to ready-made data sets. In addition, JSTORLabs and the HathiTrust Research Center provide researchers with access to tens of millions of bibliographic data points that are API-accessible—allowing library users to utilize data science techniques to programmatically harvest and analyze these data in support of their research. Liaison librarians, and other subject specialists within the library, promote library data sources in multiple ways. As mentioned under Goal 1.3, implementation of Springshare's A-Z List provides users with intuitive and effective discovery of related library resources (by keyword, subject, or content type). In addition, research guides, along with offerings of hands-on research workshops and information literacy sessions, provide both students and faculty with opportunities to learn and try various resources with an expert on hand to answer their questions.

To expand discovery and access to unique collections, Special Collections has worked with Resource Acquisition & Discovery (RAD) to devise a collaborative workflow that's generating descriptive metadata and catalog records for a collection of over 1,200 historical pamphlets held in the A.S. Williams Americana Collection. In addition, 20 photographic albums and 950 images have been appraised, arranged, described, and rehoused to improved organizational and preservation standards. To ensure seamless web-based access to materials in the University Archives, high-use record groups have been identified as targets for an ongoing digitization effort that is now in progress.

3.4 Expand data management services as funded research expands on campus.

University Libraries is bolstering existing support for data management planning through an expansion of point-of-need services, the creation of web-based research guides, web hosting of digital scholarship, and active outreach to strategically targeted research communities. These efforts are led by personnel associated the Alabama Digital Humanities Center (ADHC), the Institutional Repository (IR), as well as several liaison and subject-specialist librarians throughout University Libraries.

University Libraries has identified several tools/resources for which active service support will be provided. Importantly, these tools/resources provide research solutions pertinent throughout the research lifecycle. For general data management planning in support of sponsored research, the library focuses its recommendations and service efforts on the open-source DMPtool. This tool provides cost-free support for writing data management plans that meet requirements for a variety of federal and private funding sources.

The library's service support for another open-source tool, Open Science Framework (OSF), provides a data management solution for active research projects. OSF provides researchers with a collaborative research workspace where data can be stored and shared as needed. OSF also provides researchers with the ability to create the digital object identifiers (DOIs) required for federal research grant compliance. For more specialized needs, the library offers consultative support for a host of other electronic lab notebook (ELN) solutions, which provide functionality similar to OSF.

The library's purchase of a new server for the ADHC supports the Center's provision of ongoing web hosting services for digital research projects. Out of the 40 projects current accessible through the ADHC website, 25 are hosted on the ADHC web server. For research projects that are no longer active, the IR provides long-term storage services and web hosting that makes theses, dissertations, published articles, and data sets discoverable via the UA website. Regular metadata indexing for IR holdings by entities such as Google make these works by UA researchers more widely discoverable to global communities.

3.5 Develop strategic collection policy to support innovative selection and acquisition of library materials and resources.

For general library collections, several new tools and workflows have been developed and deployed in support of a streamlined, data-informed approach to collection development. Throughout the duration of this strategic plan, efforts have been made to take greater advantage of bibliometric analyses of library collections. To that end, Resource Acquisition & Discovery (RAD) has implemented an internal reporting dashboard that provides intuitive, point-of-need access to a variety of basic bibliographic data and analyses. In addition, deployment of the EBSCO Usage Consolidation product has streamlined the process of gathering usage data for over 200,000 e-serial titles managed by University Libraries. Importantly, access to these data provides University Libraries with a means of analyzing cost and use in a manner that informs better collections decisions.

University Libraries has implemented an extensive demand driven acquisitions (DDA) program that provides library users with a means to participate directly in the selection of new e-book titles. This novel approach to collection development provides users with full-text access to thousands of e-book titles not yet purchased by University Libraries. It is then, through need-based interaction with these titles, that purchases are made. For users, the DDA program provides seamless full-text access to a wide variety of newer content that would otherwise be unavailable without significant front-end investment. For the library, the DDA program ensures the library is paying for content that best fits local user need—resulting in a dramatically lower cost-per-use figure for e-book titles that are purchased.

New collection development guidelines have been established for Special Collections. To create room for future growth in collections, several space

reclamation projects were devised and initiated. Duplicate book titles within the Alabama Collection were identified and deaccessioned. Additional space was freed up through the deaccessioning of temporary records within University Archives, as well as historical accounting records that have exceeded parameters of an established retention schedule.

New selection guidelines have been implemented for federal depository collections housed by University Libraries. As a regional federal depository, University Libraries receives all federal government publications produced by the Government Publishing Office (GPO) and other federal agencies. To ensure continued sustainability in the storage of these collections, duplicate formats have been de-selected. Where possible, lesser-used storage-intensive serial titles are now received in microfiche rather than print. Finally, an extensive project to identify superseded documents in the collection resulted in the removal of over 3,000 volumes—freeing up approximately 800 linear feet of shelf space for incoming materials.

3.6 Expand instruction and support of technology tools to support research and scholarship.

University Libraries has redesigned services and expanded offerings that make technology tools easier to learn about and access. Services for the circulation location in the Gorgas Music Library have been combined with the Main Circulation Desk in Gorgas Library. This ensures that physical media (e.g., CDs, DVDs, etc.) are now available during all library business hours. Valuable space once used for the low-traffic Music Library circulation location has been reallocated to the Alabama Digital Humanities Center (ADHC) for office spaces.

Specialized equipment that has traditionally circulated through the Sanford Media Center (SMC) has also been relocated to the Main Circulation Desk. As is the case with tangible media, this change ensures that equipment is available during all library business hours. The process for accessing the equipment is also made more efficient for the user, as the Main Circulation Desk is more extensively staffed than the SMC. These changes have also allowed SMC personnel to reallocate their efforts toward point-of-need media support services and media literacy instruction.

A new web-based visual catalog for the library's equipment offerings was launched in 2018. Laptops, along with other specialty equipment, have been made available through a new online reservation system. This system provides calendar-based availability information for equipment and streamlines the overall process for reserving and accessing these resources. Based on user feedback, University Libraries piloted a 72-hour laptop checkout program. This program showed successful outcomes and was expanded to all library locations.

University Libraries has expanded technology instruction through point-of-need support, the creation of online research guides, and the hosting of in-person workshops. The ADHC, SMC, and Data Services unit provide point-of-need service support for a wide range of technology-supported scholarship. The SMC

provides instructional support for media-intensive courses throughout the university, while the ADHC and Data Services provide more generalized workshops covering a variety of topics in the area of digital scholarship and data-intensive research techniques and tools.

Goal 4: Develop, enhance, and sustain a skilled and engaged workforce that can succeed in a changing environment while providing excellent experiences for library users.

The organization and inner workings of a large, multi-branch research library are more complex than many realize. It is important that the structure, personnel, and reporting lines of the library be developed and managed in a strategic manner that ensures ongoing operational effectiveness. Throughout the course of implementing this strategic plan, University Libraries has dedicated considerable energy to modernizing its organizational profile, as well as developing several new areas of professional practice that promote an expansion of library services in exciting new directions that better serve the research needs of 21st century scholars.

> ### *4.1 Assess the organizational structure and implement changes that address staffing, skills, and emerging needs to promote a successful learning and research environment.*
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> University Libraries has carried out an extensive review of its organizational structure and open positions—a process that has continued as positions become newly vacant. In early 2019, a new Associate Dean for Research & User Services was appointed to lead a newly reorganized grouping of library units/departments including: Circulation Services, Gorgas Information Services, Branch Library Services, and Annex Services. As mentioned under Goal 3.6, circulation services in Gorgas Library have been consolidated to a single service location. Library personnel have also completed a long-term project to modernize, standardize, and consolidate circulation guidelines across all library branches. This reduces unnecessary procedural complexity while bolstering the sustainability of service offerings.
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> Reorganization within University Libraries has allowed for the expansion and refinement of multiple services. Instruction and outreach to academic departments has been strengthened through the establishment of a library liaison program in 2017. This modern approach to information services promotes greater standardization of high-impact, value-additive services across our multi-branch system. Internally, this service model has led to increased levels of cross-departmental communication. Monthly meetings of liaisons provide an opportunity to share examples of successful outreach and service initiatives, as well as brainstorm on existing challenges. A summer training program where liaisons lead their colleagues in skills development workshops is promoting continual professional growth and deeper understandings of the wide variety of research needs present in UA's continually evolving research environment.
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> As technology pushes libraries to evolve, the creation of new workflows, and the organizational units/departments that oversee them, has led to the emergence of

functional siloes that can hamper organizational effectiveness. To help deconstruct these siloes in favor of a more holistic approach to technical services within University Libraries, a reorganization of reporting lines is promoting greater efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out the behind-the-scenes work that is crucial to organizational success. The formerly separate departments overseeing cataloging, acquisitions, e-resources management, and library systems have been merged to create a new department—Resource Acquisitions & Discovery (RAD).

The department formerly known as Web Services has been re-imagined as Web Technologies & Development (WTD). With this change in name, comes the recognition of the complexity of maintaining a growing network of highly customized web properties that serve a variety of functions and audiences. Under its new structure and mission, WTD supports ongoing development and maintenance for: library web properties, multiple servers that support those properties, third-party content management and discovery solutions (e.g., Springshare's LibApps, EBSCO Discovery Service, and WordPress CMS), as well as forward-looking development of stand-alone software applications.

The department for Assessment & Government Information (AGI) was established in 2017 and combines the existing Government Documents unit, which manages on-site federal depository operations, with newly established units overseeing organizational assessment and data services. The roles of Assessment Librarian, Data Services Librarian, and Head of AGI, represent three new tenure-track positions assigned to this department. Through this department's creation, University Libraries demonstrates a commitment to both long-standing and newly emerging library functions. UA has operated as a federal depository site since 1860 and will continue to faithfully maintain and provide access to its extensive and historically significant depository collection. With the creation of the Assessment Librarian position, University Libraries signals its recognition of the importance of the type of informed decision-making made possible through an ongoing program of organizational assessment.

The creation of multiple new tenure-track librarian positions demonstrates the library's commitment to continued expansion of services in support of technology-infused and data-intensive modes of research that continue to emerge and evolve at top research institutions. The Digital Humanities Librarian oversees the Alabama Digital Humanities Center (ADHC) in its provision of support services for digital scholarship, while the Data Services Librarian provides point-of-need support for data-intensive research projects involving the use of specialty software for data analysis/visualization or data mining activities.

The Coordinator of Creative Media & Instructional Design Librarian leads the SMC, an instructional design librarian, and multiple SMC staff and student workers, in the provision of multimedia support services and the promotion of media literacy more broadly. To promote greater consistency in information and media support services, the Samford Media Center (SMC) has been repositioned to fall under the same supervision/reporting line of Gorgas Information Services.

4.2 *Promote better communication across the University Libraries via formal and informal gatherings to share information.*

To improve communications throughout University Libraries, a concerted effort has been made to increase the number of opportunities for library personnel to gather and interact in both formal and informal settings. Formal gatherings focus on inter-departmental information sharing and strategic planning. Meetings of the Libraries Executive Committee (LEC) allow the Dean of Libraries to seek council and gather consensus amongst his leadership team. These meetings are supplemented by the Dean's monthly meeting with library department heads and coordinators, as well as meetings with the wider faculty body, that ensure open and effective communication regarding the most pressing and far-reaching library issues and projects. Biennial library-wide breakfast meetings provide an opportunity to highlight organizational successes, as well as engage all library personnel in discussions regarding strategic planning.

The ability for University Libraries to provide effective support for student and faculty researchers requires librarians to stay abreast of the latest developments in information and research technologies. With this in mind, a training program has been established whereby liaison librarians take turns leading their peers in weekly workshops throughout the summer months. Each of these workshops focuses on a different tool or technique unique to the workshop leader's expertise.

Annual tenure workshops are held to ensure tenure-track library faculty, including those who have been newly onboarded, are aware of all requirements surrounding tenure and promotion. In support of continued productivity and effectiveness in the pursuit of tenure and promotion, regular research writing sessions are hosted by the Senior Associate Dean. During these sessions, faculty can share and workshop research ideas or simply write while in the company of their colleagues who are also engaged in research writing.

While formal meetings provide an opportunity for organizational planning and the strengthening of cross-departmental communications, informal gatherings provide an opportunity to forge the personal relationships that can make an organization greater than the sum of its parts. In addition to holiday and retirement celebrations, each fall the dean hosts receptions for both faculty and staff. The dean has also established a new annual celebration for newly tenured faculty across all academic departments. These informal gatherings provide an opportunity to decompress and celebrate a job well done with food, drink, and comradery.

4.3 Encourage participation in wellness and work-life balance initiatives.

University Libraries actively promotes University wellness programs (e.g., WellBama) and activities (e.g., Couch to 5k). HR point persons within the library regularly announce these events to library personnel via email. Participation is encouraged and actively supported via the creation of workplace teams, as well as through accommodations that make event attendance possible during regular work hours.

In addition to events mentioned under Goal 4.2, University Libraries has hosted a variety of speakers and recreational events. This includes guest lectures on a variety of topics, as well as several stress management training sessions, new faculty meet and greets, and a variety of events that focus on strengthening

mindfulness through yoga practice. For library personnel, the Senior Associate Dean offers lunchtime relax and release yoga sessions.

Goal 5: Support a diverse and inclusive environment by providing resources, services, and spaces that promote the varied needs of the faculty, staff, and student body.

As an organization concerned with promoting the betterment of local and global communities through the provision of impactful information resources and services, University Libraries recognizes the importance of its support for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Through implementation of its Strategic Plan, University Libraries has taken a holistic approach to supporting UA's commitment to the promotion of DEI within the campus community and beyond. This approach has four areas of focus, including: internal training for library personnel, improving accessibility of the library's virtual and physical spaces, increased outreach and support for at-risk and underserved campus communities, as well as an increased focus on the promotion of collections that highlight matters of social justice or the cultural and intellectual contributions of traditionally marginalized communities.

> *5.1 Curate exhibits and explore opportunities for public programs and events that are of interest to a broader community.*

> University Libraries is a longtime supporter of the University's Safe Zone program, which promotes equity and inclusion for LGBTQIA+ individuals and their allies. Safe Zone regularly holds training sessions in the library, which are well-attended by newly onboarded faculty and staff from the library and other campus areas. Other DEI training provided to library personnel include sessions related to service animal support, website accessibility standards, inclusive instructional practice, as well as identifying and preventing workplace discrimination and harassment.

> As mentioned under Goal 2.2, University Libraries has recently completed the first phase of an extensive renovation to the Gorgas Library facility. As part of this renovation, all restrooms have been completely remodeled and made ADA compliant. A fully ADA-compliant elevator has also been constructed. As mentioned under Goal 2.5, University Libraries is also committed to ensuring its virtual spaces are fully accessible. All library web properties, including the library's main website and all peripheral research guides and digital learning objects, are evaluated on an ongoing basis with an eye towards adhering to WCAG 2.0 accessibility standards.

> The library's liaison program has expanded its outreach to the Capstone Center for Student Success. Through this effort, University Libraries ensures library support for a variety of important UA support programs that include the Alabama REACH Program, First Generation Scholarships Program, and the Student Supports Services TRIO Program. Liaison librarians have received training to incorporate accessibility into their classroom teaching practices, and the library's instructional request form has been updated to promote communication between librarians and course instructors regarding any accessibility-related accommodations that may be necessary during instructional sessions.

In 2017, liaison librarians provided extensive curricular support for Dr. John Giggie's history course entitled "Southern Memory: Lynching in the South." Through library instruction, reference support, and collections, students were able to effectively collaborate with the Equal Justice Initiative to identify 10 Tuscaloosa County lynching victims killed between 1884 and 1933. This research led to the placement of a historical marker in downtown Tuscaloosa that details these racial crimes and their victims.

In the area of content provision, Special Collections has focused efforts on several projects that highlight traditionally marginalized communities. These efforts make tangible collections more discoverable and accessible via digitization, the creation of detailed finding aids, and the curation of special displays and web portals that highlight these collections and the diversity of human experience they represent. Special Collections curated the exhibit "Natives and Newcomers: A Hidden History," which examines cultural interchange between European Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans. Newly created web research portals provide expanded access to collections related to the African American experience relative to Slavery, Abolition, Emancipation, and life during the Jim Crow era. Special Collections has provided research consultation and images for an exhibit on the 125th anniversary of *Women at UA*, as well as launched an LGBTQAI+ digital exhibit, *Empowering Voices*, providing digital access to the Alabama Forum newsletter, the Billy Jack Gaither Collection, the Hoole Library Alabama Collection, the Miller-Stephens GLBTQ UA Student Organization Collection, the Tuscaloosa Lesbian Coalition Records, the Wade Hall Papers, and the West Alabama AIDS Outreach Records.

In addition to collections that serve and highlight the experiences of diverse communities, UA Libraries is proud to regularly host a variety of DEI-related events. Academic Affairs has sponsored multiple classroom diversity and inclusion workshops in the library. The College of Communication and Information Sciences has held both the Discerning Diverse Voices Research Symposium, as well as a series of diversity advocate training sessions, in library facilities. UA Libraries has also hosted several lectures, including: *Exploring Diversity in Children's Poetry*, *Quarantining and Disciplining Black Bodies and Black Freedom in the Civil War*, and *The Life and Legacy of B.B. King: A Mississippi* Blues.