

# STATE OF THE UIUC LIBRARY

Paula Kaufman

University Librarian

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Good morning. I'm happy to see so many of you here this morning at what I plan to be an annual event. I think it's important every once in a while for us to step back and look at how things have gone as well as to focus on what's ahead.

It's been quite a year, hasn't it? We survived what thankfully was the unrealized Y2K meltdown without many problems, at least that we know of yet. It was a year of hard challenges, a year of hard work, and a year filled with a few frustrations; but mostly it's been a year of fulfillment and fun for me, and I hope for you, too. We've certainly all been very very busy and we have much to be satisfied about. Not everything has gotten done, and some dreams remain unfulfilled. But I think we've made a good start together. I'm so proud to be part of this wonderful Library and I'm so very grateful to each of you for your support.

Last year I spoke with you just 3 hours after my arrival. It's now 1 year and 3 hours since I officially began my appointment and I want to take a little time this morning to reflect on what's happened during the past year, on how much we've accomplished, and on what lies ahead for us.

Last year I spoke with you about how I viewed my role as University Librarian. One of the things I talked about was ensuring that we share a vision of the future. After a year of talking and listening to you, it's apparent to me that we do, but that we haven't yet articulated it plainly to ourselves, to the community of scholars we serve, and to the world. Here's my version of what you've all said:

As a major university treasure and as the third largest academic library in North America, the UIUC Library is a vital partner in the education, research, and service missions of the University, and an indispensable part of the system of scholarly communication. We envision a future in which our community of scholars can access and use the information they require when and where they want it and in the format most appropriate to their need. A future in which the information contents remain available to them in perpetuity, regardless of format. A future in which our community of scholars will be able to ask for and receive all of the services they need from us any time and any place, delivered efficiently and pleasantly. A future in which our faculty and students will be as information fluent as they are reading and writing literate and computer competent. And a future in which our physical and virtual facilities are pleasant, up-to-date, and responsive to our patrons' needs. We aim for excellence in providing rich information resources, quality services, and an environment conducive to learning and research.

Our vision also includes recognition of UIUC as the unquestioned library leader in Illinois, in this country, and throughout the world based on our extraordinary research collections, our even more extraordinary employees, the high quality of our services, our effective development and use of digital library technologies, and our tradition of sharing our resources with others.

Our vision requires that we will be known as a good place to work, a library that invests in training and supporting its employees, and a library that expects and receives the very best from them at all times. And we will be recognized as a library that listens -- listens to our users and listens to our employees, and is guided by what we hear.

To achieve our vision the Library must be flexible and adaptable, a dynamically evolving organism, an integral part of the research and learning enterprise at UIUC and beyond. A library that values service, quality, diversity, collaboration, and academic freedom, and a library noted for risk-taking, innovation, and entrepreneurialism as well as for holding dear and conserving the values and riches of the present and the past.

It's a compelling vision. But, as you've heard me say before, visions without actions are just hallucinations. Visions without actions are just hallucinations. So, I now want to spend a few minutes first talking about the actions we've taken this year to help realize our vision, and then moving on to what lies ahead.

This year, we've all spent considerable time listening to one another, thinking, and planning - and acting on what we heard in a measured way. The Library produced a fine strategic plan, one that set out six goals that form the basis of realizing our shared vision, along with some ways in which to move towards achieving that vision. Those goals are to provide exceptional services; to build on, preserve, and extend our preeminent collections; to equip UIUC graduates to be life-long learners; to recruit and develop the best faculty and staff available; to provide excellent library facilities, and to build on our traditional role as a leading research library. We've spent two recent mornings in

retreat, concentrating on specific ways in which to improve services for our users, and you've already seen some of the ideas from those retreats put into action.

Thanks to a budget that didn't entirely meet our expectations but that was nonetheless generous in light of all the demands on the University's budget, we were able to increase spending on our collections, improve our operating budget a bit, and add a few staff and faculty positions. But, much more to be funding is still needed if we're to realize our vision fully.

One of the Library's defining characteristics is our extensive system of departmental libraries that provide specialized resources and services in a wide variety of disciplines and subjects. In the past, this feature has led to some fragmentation of focus and energy. To realize our vision, however, it is essential that we view the Library as a single organism of which the individual units are a critical component. I think we're making progress in thinking of the Library with a capital L.

We're also making progress in increasing our focus on services to lift it towards the level of focus we now place on our collections without diminishing that focus. The User Education Committee has made strides in providing a wide variety of offerings to help the students, faculty, and others who use the library become more information fluent. We've made requesting materials through interlibrary loan easier and faster. The new Newsroom in the Communications Library represents an innovative approach to providing access to 21<sup>st</sup>-century resources. And, we're piloting a welcome desk in the Main Library and doing many of those important little things every day that Stew Leonard counts as the key to his customer service success.

We've made notable progress in other areas as well. We celebrated the Reston collection, mounted a major exhibit to highlight our Lincoln holdings, received such important gifts as a rare atlas and a massive collection of corporate reports, and acquired hundreds of thousands of objects, physical and digital, through purchases and gifts. Our book sales netted significant funds to be used for the collections while giving our students and faculty an opportunity to build their personal collections at affordable prices.

Now that Cindy Kelly is on board, we are revitalizing our human resources operations. Some modest training efforts are underway, with many more to come. And with a full complement of staff in the Library Development Office, we've begun to increase both fund-raising and communications activities.

Input and communications to and from our users are important keys to our success. This year I established the University Librarian's Student Advisory Committee (with the unwieldy acronym ULSAC), with undergraduate and graduate student representatives from all colleges and schools on campus. I meet with the group monthly. I've also met individually with every dean, twice, and with many department heads and faculty members. And I've met with most of you in unit, department, or division meetings and other venues. Karen Schmidt and Sue Searing once again surveyed our users, and those results will be forthcoming soon for us to act on. On the communications front, we held the first in what will be an on-going series of campus discussions about scholarly communications issues. The *Compendium*, the Library's newsletter for faculty, made its debut this Spring. And *FriendScript* is back on schedule again. Those of you who pay attention to *eweek* know that we've increased our presence there, too; you've seen a steady flow of notices about Library

services. And if you read the *DI*, *Inside Illinois*, or *the News-Gazette* you've seen an increase in their coverage of our activities and services.

We've also tried hard this year to deal with some of our space and physical facility issues. We're buying a passel of ergonomic furniture and starting to address all those things requested in last year's annual reports. I know that progress is slow and frustrating, but hopefully you and our users will start seeing things change.

So, what's ahead? What's changing? What's in store for us in the coming year?

Clearly, demands for our services and collections are increasing and will continue to intensify. Despite, or perhaps because of the increasing pervasiveness of the Web, UIUC students, faculty, and others need the Library's collections and services more than ever; those who use the Library want more and more -- more help, access to more information, more instruction, and more guidance. Our search for the AUL for Services is moving nicely through the recruiting stage and I look forward to being able to interview candidates soon. Once on board, the person in that position will be responsible for coordinating our old and new service offerings and looking for ways in which to improve their delivery.

Demands for collection materials will also continue to increase, and for materials in all formats. We'll continue to struggle to provide everything everyone wants either onsite or through our ever-improving interlibrary loan services. But, as you know, there continues to be dissatisfaction and distrust about the way in which our collection funds are allocated among the various

disciplines. This is not an uncommon situation in contemporary academic libraries, large and small, and one major reason is that there's simply not enough money to meet all needs. Also, very few libraries have changed their tradition-based distribution systems that have been in place for decades; our 60%/40% distribution system for new collections funds has been groundbreaking, but it needs more refinement and it doesn't address the historic biases of base funds distributions. For example, nearly everyone who wants a digital work wants the printed equivalent to be here, too. Pressures abound. So, what's a Library to do?

Thanks to suggestions and pressure from the teaching faculty, through the Mengler Report process, the Senate Committee on the Library, and the work of the Campus Library Policy Committee, we're actually venturing where others fear to tread. Provost Herman has appointed the Library Allocation Steering Committee to develop new approaches and models for distributing collection funds. Our colleague libraries are watching us with much interest, some envy, and much trepidation. You'll soon be seeing information about open meetings in which faculty will have an opportunity to provide their perspectives, and I encourage you all to attend. There are many good faculty helping with the project, which is being chaired by Alex Scheeline from Chemistry. So, stay tuned for an interesting ride!

All of these demands and changes put pressure on all of you. Here are some of the things we'll be concentrating on to try to make things better. First, I hope you all know by now of my commitment to training and development. We'll continue to offer a range of training sessions, including help in using the tools you need to do your job. Later this fall and winter, the Association of Research Libraries will offer several customized training sessions that focus on such topics as managing change and running effective meetings. Some of the attendees will be offering similar sessions for people who can't be accommodated at the earlier meetings. Cindy will also be arranging for a series of training sessions designed for supervisors. And now that Cindy is here, we look forward to seeing more consistent application of our personnel policies. I also look forward to the initiation of the new employee awards program the Administrative Council approved this year.

Still in the realm of personnel, we must continue to improve the ways in which we recruit new faculty and staff. We've really been fortunate to hire a group of very good new folks this year, but it's getting harder and harder. The area unemployment rate is very low and relatively fewer new library school graduates want to work in academic libraries; already-employed librarians seem less eager than ever to move from their current jobs, and although life here is very good indeed, this isn't Chicago or Atlanta. Of course, it isn't California with its high cost of living, either! So, we'll be working very hard to show our GAs and other GSLIS students that academic librarianship is a great career and we'll be raising our profile in the local, regional and professional press to convey to potential employees just what a great place this is. Be on the lookout, too, for a new look to our presence at Quad Day and other similar campus activities. We intend to reflect the high quality of our services and

collections by the ways in which we present them to students and faculty at these campus-wide events.

I know that I don't have to tell you that some of our physical facilities are not in very good shape or that we're out of space in many places. Here's what's ahead that I think will make things better. First, we'll be moving into the new ACES Library next spring, with the official dedication ceremony next October at Foundation Weekend. We're also very close to getting approval for a remote high density storage library, which will be located on the edge of campus. Architects are still doing their costing work, so we don't yet know exactly how much capacity we can afford to build right now, which means that the facility will be done modularly. When fully developed, the site will hold about 8 million volumes. If things go according to schedule, we'll be opening the facility about two years from now, after which we'll have space in the bookstacks into which we can move things out of some of your terribly overcrowded department libraries. The Main Library reconfiguration project lumbers along, slowly, but it's moving. We're also in the process of hiring architects to give us advice about how to make improvements to the Main Library's second floor, the Undergraduate Library, and two typical department libraries - Physics and Ricker. And, we're continuing to address various conditions in various places and to shift spaces around where we can. Look, for example, for the Mortenson Center to move to the lower level of the Undergraduate Library later this month, bringing the Mortenson staff together for the first time and freeing space in the Main Library. But I don't want to mislead you - the enormity of our physical facilities problems will require many years to fix.

When I think about space in the Main Library I always think about those old card catalogs, and then about the online catalog. So, a few words are in order about both. As you know, ILCSO is in the process of preparing a request for proposals for a replacement system that it hopes to be installing in the summer of 2002. I know that many of you are eager to provide input into the process, and we'll make those opportunities as we can. We must remember, however, that this is a system being purchased by a consortium and that there are only a few vendors capable of delivering a system that can meet our priorities and needs. Of course, this year we're in the process of installing III's Millennium system for acquisitions and serials, and you should see some significant improvements in those functions within the next year or two.

Speaking of ILCSO, I know that many of you are heavily involved both in the system assessment work and in a variety of other committees. But our voice has been largely absent from the policy tables. I intend for that to change. I've been fortunate enough to have just been elected to the new Governing Board and I am not at all reticent about articulating our needs.

Well, what about those old card catalogs? Most of you know better than I how much of the information contained on those old cards isn't yet in our online catalog data base. Annie Copeland is leading a task force charged to develop and recommend a set of phased plans for converting serials information. It's going to be costly and undoubtedly it will be many years before we can say we've achieved that goal, let alone conversion of all of our records. But we will make progress. Thanks to the work of the Catalog Processing Task Force, and the will of the Administrative Council, we're a lot closer than we were a year ago to making our cataloging operations more efficient and hopefully we'll

soon have two additional original catalogers on board to help make the process better. Barb Henigman has just assessed our current cataloging background and her report will be discussed and acted on by the Administrative Council in another week or so.

Old cards, old books. It's been many years since we've had a comprehensive preservation program. But, that's about to change. We've just completed interviews with three strong candidates to develop and head a new program, and with luck in recruiting our first choice, we should have someone here in just a few months. With financial support from the Mellon Foundation, this person will plan and undertake a program that will include training staff and users in how to handle materials and assess their conditions, surveying our preservation needs and developing priorities and methods for meeting them, and investigating the best use of old and new reformatting technologies. There's enough work to do to keep us busy for decades!

New technologies surround us, sometimes overwhelm us, and often help us find new ways to deliver services and information content. Digitizing print and other format-based materials and acquiring materials that are born-digital is critically important to providing access to scholarly resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As the newest member of the Digital Library Federation, we'll be working with DLF members on issues ranging from metadata and data harvesting to authorization and authentication methodologies. We're leading the CIC's exploration of the possibility of serving as a pilot site for regional electronic serials archiving, working hard on crossref and other hyperlinking projects, and continuing to exploit the testbed developed under the NSF-funded digital libraries grant and continuing ever since. Having finally received clearance from University Counsel, who had to consider some copyright issues,

the Music Library is venturing into the world of streamed audio and the Undergraduate Library is undertaking an e-reserves project. And there are too many other good projects to detail here. Under Tim Cole's leadership, the Library Information Technology Committee is developing plans for our coordinated digital Library efforts - that's Library with a capital L - and inventorying our current activities in this area so that we're all aware of who's doing what.

Our communications efforts will continue to accelerate. Look for articles about us in the national professional press as well as locally. We're currently tooting our horns nationally about Marianna Choldin's most recent honor; she's only the third person to be awarded Russia's prestigious Pushkin Medal for contributions to Russia in the sphere of Russian culture and education. The Scholarly Communications Committee is planning a number of discussion on campus, and the Forum on the Future that Greg Youngen and Karen Schmidt are planning should help tackle some thorny problems and raise our visibility on campus and nationwide.

Heavens, we have so many exciting things underway and so much more to tackle. Where's the money going to come from? I will, of course, with the help of the budget planning group and our new budget process, be requesting large sums from the University, and making passionate pleas in all the appropriate venues. But, relying on state funds will never be enough. Thanks to the encouragement and support of the Chancellor and the Provost, and with blessings from the Foundation, Lyn Jones and I are currently drawing up preliminary plans for a Library fund-raising campaign. If all goes well, it will be launched next September and help us raise new funds so we can best

achieve the vision we have of providing excellent service and collection resources to all of our users.

Enough. There's a lot more on our plate, but I don't want to take the time we could spend socializing with one another to recite more long lists.

A year ago we each had very high expectations of one another. You, for the most part have not disappointed me, and I hope that I, for the most part, have not disappointed you. I think it's fair to say that it's a busy time but a fulfilling time. I'm so glad to be here with you, and I wish you all a good year ahead!