

Strategic Planning Report: Life Sciences Division

| submitted by Erin E. Kerby | | April 15, 2019



I ILLINOIS LIBRARY

Introduction

The Life Sciences Division consists of two physical units: Funk ACES, which functions as a hub library for the division and for the University Library, and the Veterinary Medicine Library. The division provides services and support to a wide range of patrons, including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and academic professionals (see Appendix A), as well as local community members and residents from across the state.

Funk ACES (also known as Funk Library and Funk ACES Library) supports the research of and provides extensive print and online collections for numerous campus units, including the: College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES), School of Integrative Biology (IB), School of Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB), Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Department of Landscape Architecture, Prairie Research Institute (PRI), and Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB). It also is home to the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center (ACDC), which contains more than 45,000 agricultural communications documents from 212 countries. This unique collection was developed and is maintained by individuals from the University of Illinois Agricultural Communications Program and the University Library for use by students, teachers, researchers, professional communicators and others interested in communications related broadly to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural affairs.

The collection and the services of the Veterinary Medicine Library (Vet Med) are primarily intended to support the teaching, research, and public service activities of the College of Veterinary Medicine as well as those in related departments across campus. Support is provided in the form of acquisition of books, journals, and other relevant resources on veterinary and animal science, reference and research support services, and consultation and instruction on the effective access and management of

information. The Library also assists practicing veterinarians and veterinary researchers who have limited access to specialized resources. In accordance with the mission of the University and the Library, the Veterinary Medicine Library also serves the information needs of the individuals in the State of Illinois through various mechanisms.

Strengths

People

- The division is incredibly collaborative and communicative, with engaged and enthusiastic employees at all levels. Our ability to work well together fosters a supportive work environment and promotes good communication.
- Our staff are highly service-oriented, and our librarians have user-focused research agendas. We collaborate on collection development, outreach, events, and nearly every aspect of our library service.
- We have strong collaborative relationships with other divisions and services in the Library, as evidenced by our representation on committees, working groups, and task forces. We make a deliberate effort to bridge to other people, units, services in the Library and bring those things back to the division.

Expertise

- The librarians and staff within the Life Sciences Division have a broad and extensive range of subject and functional expertise, and many have undergraduate and graduate degrees in the life sciences, health sciences, and agriculture sciences.
- Many of the librarians and staff in this division have worked in, or even headed, other science libraries on campus and participated in a shift from a departmental library service model to a hub service model.
- LSD librarians are very knowledgeable about and involved in data services. Our division has very close connections to the Research Data Service.
- The division strives to provide an excellent pre-professional experience for graduate assistants, who provide operational coverage for Funk ACES and Vet Med and are involved in a wide variety of projects.

Spaces

- The division has carefully and thoughtfully stewarded our physical spaces to best meet the needs of both users and the Library, as evidenced by the recent renovation of the Veterinary Medicine Library and impending renovation of the Funk ACES office area.

- The division provides users with quiet and welcoming spaces for study and collaboration. Funk ACES in particular is a popular space for these activities.

Opportunities (and Challenges)

Ongoing

- Leverage existing funding to support assessment and research on library use and users.
- Ensure researchers and department administrators understand the library's role in teaching and research, and in particular, access to online content.
- Keep liaison librarian and departmental relationships strong and productive.
- Explore and develop instructional opportunities related to our subject and functional expertise.

Next 1-3 years

- Increased visibility of librarians – The Library's website is the face of the Library to many patrons, but currently, physical spaces are more prominent than librarians on the website. This makes it extremely challenging for patrons to connect with librarians, both on a functional level and from a psychological standpoint. Some efforts are currently underway, with LSD librarians providing input, that will hopefully begin to address this issue.
- Expand librarian office space – Librarian office space was not thoroughly considered as libraries were closed and incorporated into Funk ACES. Renovation plans are currently underway that will hopefully allow us to begin to address this issue, but it is critical that we have the spaces we need to collaborate effectively.
- Increased engagement and outreach – The division is very enthusiastic about and committed to engagement with and outreach to the units we serve, but our time and resources are limited. Our new Public Services and Engagement Librarian position will allow us to make significant progress in this area.
- Optimize the collection footprint – Parts of the collection in Funk ACES have never been evaluated for transfer to Oak Street or Main Stacks, so we still have a sizable collection footprint. Transfers of this nature are now restricted due to the Library Building Project, so we are exploring other avenues for reducing our collection footprint (e.g., BTAA Shared Print Repository, better utilizing our compact stacks). By reducing our collection footprint, we will be able to increase patron seating and consider innovative uses for our space.
- Leverage endowment funds – the ability to use endowment funds for subscriptions makes those funds exponentially more supportive of researchers.

Next 3-7 years

- Classroom 509 in Funk ACES – The classroom layout is less than ideal, and the classroom does not meet modern expectations (e.g., few outlets for personal laptops). If this classroom was renovated, it could become a great space for library instruction, workshops, and events. In Fall 2018, librarians contacted Funk ACES to inquire about hosting a data carpentry workshop and a hack-a-thon in 509, but both looked elsewhere when 509 didn't meet their needs. (See Appendix B)
- University of Illinois Extension – We haven't had a meaningful connection to Extension in recent years. In Fall 2018, some connections were established through two library sessions for Extension educators, so we will continue to foster this nascent relationship. A strong connection to Extension could lead to an increase the division's public engagement.
- Re-evaluate the Veterinary Medicine Library service model – Results from the College of Veterinary Medicine's 2020 AVMA accreditation will provide an opportunity to evaluate and realign the self-service model currently in place in the Veterinary Medicine Library, whereby many of the basic services are unmediated.
- Impact from the Main Library and UGL building project – we expect traffic to increase in Funk ACES as this project ramps up, as well as more limited support for collection management while the focus is necessarily on collections in the Main Library.
- Digital initiatives – identify digital initiatives and plan for their impact on outreach and engagement, physical spaces, and collection management strategies.

Aspirations

The Life Sciences Division aspires to:

- Strengthen and enhance existing connections to the colleges, units, and departments we serve.
- Build and strengthen connections to the local community, in keeping with the university's land grant mission and extension services.
- Have Funk ACES serve as a dynamic destination that draws in users for services and events.

Results

Scholarship, discovery, and innovation

- Continue development of and increase awareness of research data services.
- Enhance institute partnerships with IGB, Beckman, the DPI and others in areas where contributions can impact project successes.

- By making our vision and service clear to the units we serve we will become a source of service for these patrons and advance their efforts in research and scholarship.

Transformative learning experiences

- Provide exceptional pre-professional experiences for Graduate Assistants (iSchool graduate students).
- Explore options for turning Funk ACES room 509 into a functional, flexible, and modern learning space.
- Provide spaces, services, and a culture that welcome diversity and promote inclusion.
- Participate in University Library efforts related to learning outcomes assessment.
- The more that patrons are engaged in our space and existing services, the better we can assess those services, continue to shape and adapt our resources to patron needs, and better enhance innovation and academic achievement.

Societal impact

- Support and collaborate with University of Illinois Extension to reach a broad audience in the local community and across the state.
- Leverage collections and subject expertise to enhance local, inter-institutional, and global interdisciplinary projects.
- The more welcoming and open we become, the more the Life Sciences Division will support the University's goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Resources and strategic investment

- Carefully steward our state, endowment and gift funds to create world-class collections and services.
- Leverage the division's new initiatives and activities to generate excitement and promote investment in additional resources.

Appendix: Division Work Overview

Appendix A

Number (FTE) of Faculty & APs Served, 2017-2018

	Schools of Molecular and Cellular Biology and Integrative Biology	ACES	Veterinary Medicine	Prairie Research Institute	IGB	Landscape Architecture	Urban & Regional Planning	Totals
Tenure System Faculty	92	185	50	0	1	8	10	346
Specialized Faculty and Academic Professionals	47	182	80	129	35	5	4	482

Budgets, ICR, and Grant Monies

	Schools of Molecular and Cellular Biology and Integrative Biology	ACES	Veterinary Medicine	Prairie Research Institute	IGB	Landscape Architecture	Urban & Regional Planning	Totals
Orig State/Tuition Bdgt (000), 2017-2018	17,326	43,839	22,814	15,703	3,652	860	1,191	105385
ICR Generated (000), 2016-2017	8,934	9,037	1,040	7,872	5,523	1,794	86	34286
Principal Investigators, 2016-2017	93	257	59	145	8	5	9	576
Sponsored Research (000), 2016-2017	25,493	31,192	3,332	26,725	23,137	194	276	110349

Enrollment and Degrees

	Schools of Molecular and Cellular Biology and Integrative Biology	ACES	Veterinary Medicine	Prairie Research Institute	IGB	Landscape Architecture	Urban & Regional Planning	Totals
All Undergraduates, 2017-2018	1,568	2578	N/A	N/A	N/A	53	82	4281
All Graduate & Professional, 2017-2018	396	684	609	N/A	N/A	58	76	1823
Degrees Granted, 2016-2017	595	923	139	N/A	N/A	40	63	1760
Doctoral Degrees Granted, 2016-2017	60	56	4	N/A	N/A	2	6	128
Total IUs Offered, 2016-2017	62,738	91,174	22,251	N/A	N/A	4,041	5,865	186069

Appendix B

Usage of Funk ACES Room 509

Year	Number of classes taught
2013	66
2014	70
2015	64
2016	77
2017	63
2018	25