Stacks Services Planning Team

The Main Book Stacks have served their role admirably. As a repository for shelved volumes, the six additions ingested content until they burst at the seams, spilling volumes into the aisles and obstructing users as much as aiding them in discovering content. Over the last four years, the University has invested considerable resources in improving that environment – processing tens-of-thousands of volumes for Oak St., installing fire suppression to protect the 5.5 million volumes remaining in the Stacks (as well as their users), investing time to reconceptualize the Stacks, and shifting millions of volumes. Yet, the Stacks remain crowded, uninviting to users, and difficult to access – an obstruction to hidden treasures.

The 21st Century Library is and, for the immediate future, will remain a hybrid – an environment in which both print and digital content will be necessary for the type of scholarship pursued at a research institution. As part of the University’s broad educational mission, the University Library should endeavor to provide an environment in which students and scholars can become engage both print and digital information in a manner that does not disadvantage them when compared to peers at other institutions. That requires providing an environment in which individual and group study, browsing, and solitary contemplation are encouraged and supported for scholars, faculty, and undergraduate, graduate, and non-traditional students.

Charge

The Stacks Services Planning Team will provide leadership for the implementation of improvements to user service environment in the Main Library Book Stacks that can be accomplished within a three to five year timeline. Building upon existing recommendations to open the Stacks to undergrads (2000) and reorganize the Stacks (2005) and taking into account Shepley-Bulfinch’s Conceptual Framework Report (2006) and the progress of the Main/Undergrad Library Feasibility Study, the planning team will:

1) Identify those remaining activities in the Final Report of the Bookstacks Reorganization Task Force Report that should be implemented in order to develop an environment conducive to the maintenance of a “browsing collection”;
2) Develop detailed cost estimates for projects that can be completed within a three-year timeline;
3) Develop implementation plans for short-term projects scoped to fit within a twelve to eighteen month timeline, medium-term projects that will fit within a three to five year timeline and longer-term projects that dovetail with the directions outlined by the Main/Undergrad Feasibility Study;
4) Define a detailed collection profile for the Main Library Book Stacks with the Office of Collections and members of the library faculty with collection development responsibilities that accounts for the needs of semi-rare items currently housed in the Main Stacks as well as any items that may require transfer to more secure storage;
5) Identify and develop projects related to improving user services in the Book Stacks;
6) Examine the security and life-safety issues requiring resolution before offering broader access;
7) Examine the existing user criteria for the Stacks and either reaffirm or revise the profile for access;
8) Reexamine the Stacks entrance and develop detailed implementation plans for a reconceptualized entrance and service model.
9) Determine the most appropriate process for implementing the recommended changes, finalize budgets for recommended sub-projects, develop an implementation timeline, and recommend an implementation team.
Membership

(Chair)
Alvan Bregman
Mary Burkee
Karen Hogenboom
Larry Miller
Chris Quinn
Diane Schmidt