

# Strategic Planning Report: Social Sciences Division

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## Introduction

The Social Sciences Division (SSD) is largely comprised of the Communication Library and the Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library. In combination, the user population served by SSD encompasses the College of Applied Health Sciences, the College of Media, the College of Education, the iSchool, the School of Social Work, the School of Labor and Employment Relations, and nine departments and programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The current composition of librarians in the division is at two thirds strength with a current program of hiring to fill positions that are currently empty.

## Strengths

### Collections

- Many unique collections such as: Memory Arts and Mandeville Occult Sciences
- World class collections such as: Children's Literature and Speech and Hearing Science Test Instruments

### Expertise

- Experts in not just subject specialties but also in specific research methods like systematic reviews

### Service

- Strong service ethic involving timely assistance to patrons, thoughtful collection development, and creative programming
- Strong relationships with colleges, departments, faculty, and students through focused outreach

# Opportunities (and Challenges)

## Opportunities

- Hiring new personnel, especial for the Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library, based on not just current needs but also anticipated needs
- Improving collection access through a variety of ways including hours, policy revisions, online access to materials, and continued revision of the library website
- Diversity: We have many opportunities to make our workforce and collections more reflective of the community that we serve

## Challenges

- Diversity: While there is training on diversity and inclusion issues, they aren't mandatory and there is little discussion around issues of systemic racism, ableism, genderism, ageism, and misogyny
- Funding for collections and other resources especially in light of a stagnant state budget allocation for several years
- Adequate staffing to keep reference and circulation desks staffed, libraries open, and for completion of projects
- Adequate space for continued collection growth, special projects, and student study needs

# Aspirations

## Funding

- To have funding to recover collections and journal subscriptions that were constrained because of the recent budget crisis

## Public Relations

- Our constituents need to be more aware of our strengths and challenges
- Outreach continues to be a major concern in terms of letting our user populations know what the collections, skills, and services that the libraries have; this includes not just campus constituents but also the community (e.g., outreach to teachers, social workers, counselors, and others who might use collections and services)
- Having a unified Library-wide advertising and outreach plan would go a long way in boosting awareness to campus and to the community of the resources the libraries have and the value we bring

- An awareness campaign of the research that library employees do would help contextualize and cement relationships and library value around campus

## **Diversity**

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Healthy library work culture and climate

## **Results**

### **Scholarship, Discovery, & Innovation**

- Hire and retain diverse faculty and staff to enhance the capabilities of the Social Sciences Division to better foster interdisciplinarity among constituent groups. (A.I.)
- Continue to develop unique collections and build upon the collections that are already present. (B.I.)
- Build collections in conjunction with other health/medical librarians and develop outreach initiatives to support the National Cancer Institute. (E.III.)

### **Transformative Learning Experiences**

- Continue to develop collections that foster all aspects of student health and wellbeing. (B.)
- Utilize data (collections, reference desks, etc.) to refine services to better suit the needs of patrons. (B.)
- Continue to develop engaging, inclusive, and diverse exhibits and programs in library spaces (D. I.)

### **Societal Impact**

- Continue to collaborate with other units to develop unique experiences, programs, and exhibits that highlights the synergy that comes from interdisciplinary collaboration. (D.)
- Improve and increase communications strategies to highlight the robust assets, both human and material, that the Social Science Division has. (I.)

### **Resources & Strategic Investment**

- Foster a diverse and inclusive workforce through diversity and anti-bias training that embraces difference. (D. V.)