

Humanities and Interdisciplinary Scholars' Collaboratory Strategy and Planning Group

VISION

The University Library has an opportunity to build on the successes of our growing programs in the Scholarly Commons and digital humanities by creating a hub for digitally-intensive scholarship, collaboration and events where scholars can discover, create and share knowledge in a high-traffic area on the 2nd floor of the Main Library (see figure).

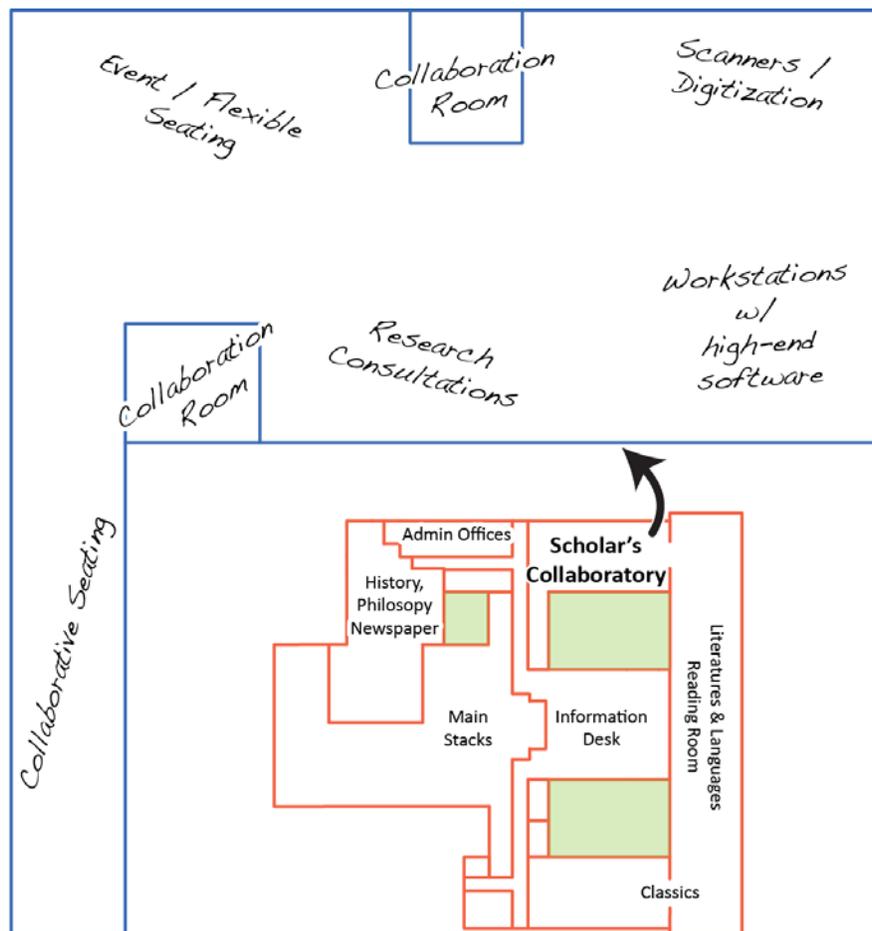
Our **vision** is to create a digital scholarship “collaboratory” in 220 Library with inviting and flexible spaces promoting disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary collaboration in the humanities, social sciences, and related disciplines. The Library’s Scholarly Commons portfolio of programs will move from the third floor to this space, and will form the foundation upon which the Library intends to build new services and programs, in concert with other units in the Library and on campus. The focal point of this collaboratory will be access to a network of experts from within the Library as well as partner programs on campus, state-of-the-art tools and technologies, and collections that together create a powerful environment for scholarship. This is an exciting opportunity to transform a prime location in the emerging humanities “neighborhood” on the 2nd floor of the Main Library from backroom operations into a destination for scholars. Essential elements of this vision include:

- Open spaces with flexible furniture that can be reconfigured for seminars, events, and community gatherings as well as group study and collaboration. This lively, collaborative atmosphere will complement the quiet, “alone-together” seating in the adjacent Reading Room (200 Library);
- Access to research infrastructure, including technology enriched space and tools for faculty, researchers, graduate, and undergraduate students to discover, create and share digital scholarship;
- Individual and group research consultations with experts and an expansion of other Scholarly Commons services, including research- and learning-focused programs and partnerships with scholars, colleges, departments, and other units on campus.

This vision is inspired, in part, by directions suggested by recent campus interdisciplinary working groups, as well as an evolving landscape of spaces and services across the Library, including:

- The call to create a “common campus space, physical and metaphysical, where we can regularly encounter each other to generate and exchange creative, dynamic and innovative new knowledge in ways that catalyze our diverse efforts” in the *Report of the Interdisciplinary Working Group of the Humanities* (http://research.illinois.edu/files/upload/humanities_report_final_2015.pdf). Specifically, the University Library sees an opportunity to create a nexus for scholars to discover, create and share knowledge in a central campus location long known as the “Laboratory of the Humanities” that complements and extends the reach of IPRH’s event spaces in Levis Faculty Center (including a robust videoconferencing connection between the Library and IPRH).

- The interdisciplinary, data-driven paradigm described in the final report of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Interdisciplinary Working Group ([https://research.illinois.edu/sites/research.illinois.edu/files/upload/sbsiwg - final report.pdf](https://research.illinois.edu/sites/research.illinois.edu/files/upload/sbsiwg_-_final_report.pdf)) which proposes creating interdisciplinary research groups on topics like behavior change, the impact of technology on society, and human sociogenomics, and establishing a research incubator to support grants in these areas. Interdisciplinary social science research requires library involvement above and beyond the support that researchers can generally expect from the library affiliated with their departments and the University Library has the potential to further develop its role as a nexus for interdisciplinary digital scholarship by further developing the programs established in the Scholarly Commons.
- Existing Library and campus collaborations that focus on the integration of digital content and expertise into research and learning in areas such as digital humanities, and the rich potential for future synergies, for example, with the Campus Design Center. We see the potential to transform the 220 space into a “hub” of expertise that is focused on supporting and furthering interdisciplinary digital scholarship across a broad range of individual researchers and groups on campus. A first step in that transformation is to re-situate the programs of the Scholarly Commons in the 220 space, and develop a vision for further integrating those programs with Library services and expertise in the humanities, social sciences, and interdisciplinary areas, as well as related programs in the Library’s Offices of User Services and Research.



With this context to guide us, the University Library, in consultation with the campus, seeks to create a collaboratory for learning and research that draws on the strengths of Library collections and subject liaison expertise and integrates related campus services to become an environment that develops and celebrates the rich scholarship of the humanities, social sciences, and related interdisciplinary communities. This Strategy and Planning Group will engage the Library and campus in brainstorming the ideas and strategy for developing this new construct.

CHARGE AND PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The Strategy and Planning group is comprised of librarians from each of the humanities, social science, and international and area studies libraries in the Main Library, the Scholarly Commons and Research and Information Services, as well as representation from Research Data Services and Scholarly Communication and Publishing.

Building on the vision outline above, this group is being asked to:

- Identify the services and programs that position the Scholarly Commons to position both existing and new digital scholarship services and programs in the Room 220 space, working in partnership with humanities, social science, and related disciplines. *The vision should focus on articulating service programs with a minimal or no resident staff footprint.*
 - Consider opportunities to further develop high-impact services like research consultations, instruction and scholarly support services related to scholarly communications and publishing, copyright and intellectual property, geospatial information, numeric and textual data use, visualization, digital humanities, digitization, usability, research data use, management, and curation.
 - Create spaces that foster and encourage team-based consultations and collaboration among librarians as well as researchers.
 - Identify the programmatic, space, and staffing needs involved in transitioning the Scholarly Commons and related programs from their current location in Room 306 to Room 220 (i.e., establish a service footprint in Room 220; initiate planning for Scholarly Commons and other Office of Research staff re-location needs).
- Recommend opportunities to deepen and expand specialized support for digitally intensive scholarship and the robust discovery and use of content and collections that supports individual research and classroom learning, both onsite and digitally.
 - Consider ways to expand programs in partnership with campus, integrate digital scholarship programs into humanities, social science, and interdisciplinary campus programs, and deepen connections throughout the Library focused on creating, managing, using, sharing and publishing research information.
 - Discuss and incorporate the recommendations and perspectives from the Library's Digital Humanities Assessment Task Force and identify inspirational models of digital scholarship centers from other institutions.
- Engage faculty, students, and administrators across campus in idea generation and promotion of this developing vision through events and conversations that are widely publicized within the campus community.

Timeline

- **August 2016 - March 2017**

Deliverables

- **December 1, 2016 Preliminary report:** This report articulates a cohesive vision for interdisciplinary scholarly services, access to content, and expertise in the Main Library that enhances the work of scholars in a range of disciplines including the humanities, arts, and social sciences. The vision should put forward recommendations that form a foundation for more specific development in the following areas:
 - Ideas for developing complementary and well-integrated approaches to delivering specialized research consultations and on-demand reference services developed as a collaboration among faculty and professionals in the Scholarly Commons, Research and Information Services and the Reference Management Team.
 - Articulation of the “philosophical core” of proposed programs and space planning, drawing on ideas generated from the group’s environmental landscape survey of inspirational models of digital scholarship from other institutions and input from Illinois scholars.
- **March 1, 2017 Final report:** The final report is intended to build on the vision articulated in the preliminary report, with recommendations for programming in spaces, and implementation of specific services and activities.
 - Programmatic requirements for spaces that support collaborative work, consultations, events and gatherings.
 - Recommendations for integrating the Scholarly Commons programs and services into the humanities neighborhood on the 2nd floor of the Main Library.
 - Incorporate inputs and feedback gathered from units, research centers and faculty.
 - Outlines best practices and inspirational models in programming and design from other digital scholarship centers based on research and site visits.

Proposed Membership:

Head, Literatures and Languages Library

Harriett Green, English & Digital Humanities Librarian - Co-Chair

Digital Scholarship Liaison and Instruction Librarian

Karen Hogenboom, Head, Scholarly Commons - Co-Chair

Interim Head, Research and Information Services (pending appointment of permanent head)

Head, History, Philosophy & Newspaper Librarian

Head, International and Area Studies Library

Social Sciences Research Services Librarian

GIS specialist

Research Data Curator

Submitted to the Library Executive Committee 31 May 2016; revised and resubmitted 16 July 2016. Drafted by by JoAnn Jacoby and Beth Namachchivaya with input from Harriett Green and Karen Hogenboom.