Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020
Cunningham Architecture Library_Oklahoma State University

OUR MISSION

The primary purpose of the Cunningham Architecture Library is to support the curricular needs of the School of Architecture by providing innovative, effective and accessible resources, spaces and services to foster research, scholarship and education in the field of architecture.

OUR VISION

In partnership with the School of Architecture, the Cunningham Architecture Library aspires to be the most vibrant learning environment for the study and teaching of architecture in the state; to be the premier repository of materials related to Oklahoma architecture; and support the SOA’s efforts to become nationally recognized for its outstanding professionally focused programs.

The Library will continue to expand its collections in breadth and form; it will actively promote its resources and implement the latest technologies to make them more accessible. The Library will be actively engaged in instruction and offer an array of services that support information literacy and lifelong learning.

Within the SOA community, the Library will complement the Studio and the Classroom as spaces that foster curiosity, collaboration, and creative interaction. The Library’s physical and virtual spaces will respond to the changing needs of its users, multiply the ways in which people pursue inquiry and enrich the SOA experience.

CONTEXT/ RATIONALE

As technological advances continue to influence contemporary life, technology implementation in higher education is dramatically altering teaching and learning. Course management software, for instance, is re-defining class interactions by moving resources and assignments online. At the same time, developing information literacy skills continues to be a concern in higher education, especially as millennial students spend a significant amount of time on the Web. Students need increasingly complex skills to complete assignments including critical thinking; writing; seeking and assimilating information; speaking persuasively and effectively; working in teams; and using a variety of technological programs and tools. Academic libraries will be instrumental in creating environments where students can find the right help and tools to succeed in assignments that require these types of skills.
Technological advances have heavily influenced research practice as well, for both students and faculty. With the advent and growth of online formats, substantial research in most fields can be conducted at any hour and from any location. A pervasive challenge facing libraries in academic settings is balancing the need for virtual collections against the ongoing need for physical collections in many disciplines. Also balancing the need for space to house those collections against growing demand for places in which students can do the required research and collaboration is a challenge.

Over the last decade, research indexes have migrated to the online environment, followed by scholarly journals and an increasing number of books and periodicals. Demand and use of electronic books is expected to grow as digital information distribution matures. Faculty and students will continue to gravitate to Google and other online resources to initiate their research. Academic libraries must look for ways to connect these users seamlessly to library resources and collections.

In the past, academic libraries determined their worth through a variety of quantitative measures, such as how many volumes are in the collection, how much money is devoted to collection building, or how much space is allocated for student use. More recently, as there has been a shift in accreditation criteria towards more outcomes-based measures, libraries are being challenged to support the institution’s mission of teaching and learning in new ways, and in particular, to demonstrate how they contribute to student learning outcomes.

Academic libraries will be increasingly defined by the quality of their unique collections rather than the quantity of their general collections (published books and journals that are typically held by many libraries). The notion of collection development will expand beyond the purchase of content to the creation and curation of content.

Two emerging trends—toward digitizing and displaying unique content on the web and incorporating primary source material into the university curriculum—will accelerate and will allow academic libraries to increase their exposure and the value of their “brand” in the wider community. The Special Collections and University Archives Division (SCUA) of the OSU Library has already begun to capitalize on these trends, by focusing attention on unique collections of manuscripts and papers of prominent individuals and organizations, photographs, maps, audio recordings, oral histories and ephemera.

STRATEGIC GOALS

COLLECTIONS

1.1 ARCHIVE

Develop an archival component of the Cunningham Architecture Library that will provide for the acquisition, storage, cataloging, and preservation of architectural drawings, models, and other project documentation by Oklahoma architects and other architecture professionals with relevant ties to the university and the state. This component will also provide for the access and use of these materials for the purpose of research and scholarly activity by OSU students, faculty, staff and other qualified individuals.

1.2 ORAL HISTORY
Collaborate with the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program to create an oral history project focusing on architects who have ties to OSU, roots in Oklahoma or who have practiced in the state over the years. The project would build a collection of primary-source research materials that could be used to inspire current and future architecture students and to give historical and cultural context to the field as it exists today.

The Oklahoma Oral History Research Program would develop a personalized, topical approach to the interviews, and the resulting materials would be processed for maximum accessibility and utility in an online platform. The Library is excited about the possibility of collaborating with the School of Architecture to explore how we can collect the stories and words of important or significant practitioners and then incorporate those into the curriculum and learning experiences.

1.3 MATERIALS LIBRARY

Create a materials library at the SOA that is the state’s largest resource for sustainable, innovative and advanced materials for both students and professionals. Now more than ever, architects must have access to the best and latest materials intelligence. In order for our students to be successful in tomorrow’s professional practice, their materials knowledge must begin with hands-on experience while at school. Greater knowledge and hands-experience will enhance classroom learning, promote discovery, creativity and innovation and most importantly emphasize the essential link between materials and design.

OUTREACH AND MARKETING

Engage with our users through communication strategies that make resources and services more visible, more used, and better attuned to user needs. Recent feedback from listening sessions/surveys of SOA students indicates that users do not take full advantage of our services simply because they are unaware of them. We must increase our marketing efforts by taking full advantage of the expertise of the Library Communications staff while customizing messages for the SOA community based on their specific needs. Suggested strategies include:

Apply for a marketing student intern who will assist in developing a complete marketing plan for the Architecture Library

Install a large monitor at the Architecture Library entrance. Apply for a graphic design student intern to assist in developing digital content advertising new resources, as well as Architecture Library and SOA events.

Develop a simple, reusable one-page template to spotlight new and existing library resources. It must be graphically sophisticated, both to appeal to potential users and in keeping with the design values of the SOA

Collaborate with SOA faculty to develop a robust presence in D2L (course management system) that highlights specific library resources applicable to specific courses and assignments.