DIGITAL RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

"We lead in effective uses of digital resources and technologies for teaching and learning."

FINAL REPORT
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ST. OLAF COLLEGE LIBRARY

STATEMENT OF NEED

Two sweeping transformations connect the five recommendations that follow. The first is that our patrons are not merely consumers of information but are creators of and contributors to it, active participants in the production and circulation of knowledge.[1] While this has always been the case, easier access to digital tools and online networks enable our patrons to realize and disseminate their ideas on a previously unattainable scale. This transformation requires us to rethink everything, from reconfiguring our spaces to accommodate our patrons' technology needs to determining the digital skills we need to teach and to be taught ourselves. The second idea that informs these recommendations – that the roles of librarian and technologist are converging – is both an inevitable consequence of the upsurge in digital creation and a necessary condition for fostering digital literacy among our patrons. To successfully support digital resources for research, teaching, and learning, we will have to strengthen our collaborative work with instructional technologists. The recommendations that follow propose ways of cultivating that collaboration as the most effective means of supporting our patrons' technological needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ESTABLISH A CENTRALIZED, FLEXIBLE SUITE OF SPACES TO SUPPORT DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP.

A major goal of the Digital Humanities (DH) Team is to leverage the resources and skills acquired during the "Digital Humanities on the Hill" grant period to create an engaging and sustainable service model to support digital work. In the next three to four years, the DH Team will evolve into the "DS Team," providing support for digital scholarship beyond DH. Librarians and instructional technologists will play increasingly convergent roles in integrating digital tools and content into all areas of research, teaching, and learning. As our services evolve and expand, so should our spaces. Because of its geographic and intellectual centrality to the campus, Rolvaag Memorial Library is an ideal location to house the spaces that support digital scholarship. These spaces should:

- include an expanded Media Lab, a classroom, a conference/seminar room, various workspaces for smaller groups, and a "white space" (a gallery space to display digital art and scholarship, to hold small events, and to socialize);
- be managed by the DH Team;
- be open to all members of the St. Olaf community during library hours;
- be integrated into any "learning commons" model that may emerge as part of future library renovations.

2. CREATE SPACES WITHIN THE LIBRARY EQUIPPED WITH TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF.

Our conversations with students have indicated that they primarily value the library not for its collections or services but for its workspaces: in fact, students report that they often develop strong affinities with particular spaces or types of spaces in the library. Currently, many of these spaces lack the equipment and network capabilities necessary to support collaborative assignments, multimedia projects, and other types of digital work. Likewise, library staff require meeting spaces designed to accommodate videoconferencing and other forms of online collaboration. Research and instruction (R&I) librarians are also adopting new technologies to

enhance their instruction and are more frequently partnering with instructional technologists to teach digital tools, changes which require flexible and technologically robust classrooms. To accommodate these diverse technological needs, future library renovations should include:

- a variety of spaces (including study rooms, meeting rooms, private study spaces, and public spaces) available to all library patrons that offer technologies for collaborative work and digital creation;
- at least two flexible, multipurpose classrooms equipped with the technology necessary to support workshops and training, library instruction, digital presentations, and active learning environments.
- infrastructure to support the proliferation of digital devices and network dependence among our patrons, including robust Wi-Fi connectivity and easy access to outlets and charging stations.

3. CONTINUE TO DEVELOP DEEP AND SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGISTS AND RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION LIBRARIANS.

Instructional technologists and R&I librarians have enjoyed a fruitful collaboration, strengthened during the past year by the work of the DH Team. Successful collaboration can be conceptualized as a continuum that begins with initial contact and a common goal and culminates in deep collaboration, a "convergence" that aligns the visions and integrates the operations of the collaborators.[2] While the DH Team is approaching that convergence, the instructional technology and R&I groups need to develop substantive collaborations that support digital research, teaching, and learning beyond DH. To create and sustain these collaborations, instructional technologists and R&I librarians should:

- institute regular joint meetings;
- explore new opportunities to coordinate operations in support of digital scholarship and digital literacy instruction;
- develop an outreach strategy that highlights the ways in which the collaboration will enhance services for students and faculty.

4. LEAD STUDENTS AND FACULTY IN ACQUIRING DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS; TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND LEARNING PRACTICES; AND A CRITICAL AWARENESS OF THE WAYS THEY PRODUCE, CIRCULATE, AND CONSUME INFORMATION.

A primary goal of the college's strategic plan is to "advance the employment and post-graduate study outcomes of St. Olaf students."[3] R&I librarians can help achieve this goal by supplementing the existing information literacy program with an instructional framework that 1) encourages students to effectively use digital tools in their creative and scholarly work; 2) foregrounds the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed and responsible use of technology in academia or the workplace; and 3) improves students' digital literacy by improving the "digital fluency" of faculty.[4] The framework should capitalize on the ongoing collaboration between librarians and instructional technologists; it should also relate digital literacy to the threshold concepts provisionally identified in the ACRL's draft *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, none of which can be understood independently of technology.[5] To effectively integrate digital literacy into library instruction, R&I librarians should:

- acquire technological competencies that will enhance their teaching and complement the needs of students and faculty in their assigned departments[6];
- partner with instructional technologists to develop instruction sessions and learning objects that fruitfully combine information literacy with digital skills training;
- partner with faculty to develop applications of digital tools and approaches to digital literacy that are course-specific, disciplinarily-informed, and critically-aware;
- pursue external funding to support a more systematic exploration of digital literacy.

5. ENSURE THAT DIGITAL CONTENT AND SERVICES ARE ACCESSIBILITY-COMPLIANT.

Academic libraries have a legal and ethical responsibility to make digital content and services accessible to their patrons. Recent lawsuits underscore that institutions often overlook accessibility compliance when adopting electronic resources or creating digital content, a disservice that both erodes our mission and exposes us to unnecessary risk. To lead in the area of accessibility, the Library should convene a task force in partnership with Instructional Technology, Student Accessibility Services, and other campus stakeholders to:

- assess the availability and efficacy of the library's assistive technologies;
- evaluate the accessibility of the library's digital resources, including the library's website, electronic resources, online learning objects, and other text-based and audiovisual content;
- investigate the necessity and feasibility of including in all contracts for licensed content and proprietary software a clause requiring licensors 1) to demonstrate compliance with ADA accessibility standards; and 2) to permit St. Olaf College, as the licensee, to copy, modify, or otherwise manipulate digital content in order to make it accessible to authorized users.[7]

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[1] For more on "students as creators," see Larry Johnson, et al., *NMC Horizon Report: 2014 Higher Education Edition* (Austin, TX: New Media Consortium, 2014), 14-15. http://www.nmc.org/pdf/2014-nmc-horizon-report-he-EN.pdf

[2] Valerie Horton, "Going 'All-in' for Deep Collaboration," *Collaborative Librarianship* 5.2 (2013): 65-69. http://collaborativelibrarianship.org/index.php/jocl/article/view/244/196

[3] "The 2011 Strategic Plan, St. Olaf College." http://wp.stolaf.edu/president/files/2012/10/strategicplan.pdf

[4] On the "low digital fluency of faculty," see Johnson, et al., *NMC Horizon Report*, 22-23.

[5] As of April 30, 2014, there are five proposed threshold concepts in the draft framework: 1) Scholarship is a conversation; 2) Research as inquiry; 3) Format as process; 4) Authority is constructed and contextual; and 5) Searching is strategic. See Craig Gibson, et al., draft of the *ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, parts 1 and 2 (Chicago: Association for College and Research Libraries, 2014). http:// acrl.ala.org/ilstandards/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Framework-for-IL-for-HE-Draft-1-Part-1.pdf and http://acrl.ala.org/ilstandards/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Framework-for-IL-for-HE-Draft-1-Part-2.pdf

[6] For an overview of technological competencies that librarians in the UK identified as essential to their current and future work, see Mary Auckland, *Re-skilling for Research: An Investigation into the Role and Skills of Subject and Liaison Librarians Required to Effectively Support the Evolving Information Needs of Researchers*. (London: Research Libraries UK, 2012). http://www.rluk.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/RLUK-Re-skilling.pdf

[7] A recent ARL report on library services for patrons with print disabilities includes a model license requiring compliance with ADA accessibility standards:

> Licensor shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), by supporting assistive software or devices such as large-print interfaces, text-to-speech output, refreshable braille displays, voice-activated input, and alternate keyboard or pointer interfaces in a manner consistent with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines published by the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative. Licensor shall provide Licensee current completed Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) to detail compliance with the federal Section 508 standards. In the event that the Licensed Materials are not Accessibility compliant, the Licensee may demand that the Licensor promptly make modifications that will make the Licensed Materials Accessibility compliant; in addition, in such an event, the Licensee shall have right to modify or copy the Licensed Materials in order to make it useable for Authorized Users. (Mary Case, et al., "Services to Patrons with Print Disabilities," *Research Library Issues* 281 [December 2012], 29. http://publications.arl.org/rli281/)