Like our universities themselves, libraries are at the center of our shared humanity where we continuously create knowledge, cataloging our successive ideas in order to evolve our thinking about the world.”

There Are No Great Universities Without Great Libraries

A great university is so many things. It is a white football helmet emblazoned with a burnt orange longhorn silhouette; it is a breakthrough discovery in the laboratory, or an “a ha!” moment in the classroom, where outstanding students encounter some of the world’s greatest teachers. And it is a university’s libraries and special collections.

In the waning days of 1956, Harry Huntt Ransom stood before the Philosophical Society of Texas and painted a compelling vision:

"I propose that there be established in Texas … a center of cultural compass, a research center to be the Bibliotheque Nationale of the only state that started as an independent nation."

As a faculty member, dean, vice president, provost, president of his University of Texas and then
as chancellor of the University of Texas System, Harry Ransom propelled his vision forward.

Today, alone among the colleges and universities of the American heartland, our University has earned standing among the 25 most prominent global universities according to the annual rankings of the Times (London). It is a distinction we share with iconic global institutions: Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and Yale. From a starting point in Austin, Texas, a scholar will travel hundreds of miles before reaching the campus of similarly regarded public research university peers such as Michigan, Cal Berkeley, or UNC Chapel Hill.

Great universities share many characteristics in common, of course: great students, great faculty, great libraries. There are no great universities without great libraries. On the Austin campus, students and researchers have access to ten million printed volumes as well as a boundless electronic universe of scholarship. The holdings of the University of Texas at Austin Libraries place it among the half dozen largest in the Western Hemisphere. The Benson Latin American Collection, the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, and the Briscoe Center for American History are magnets that attract users from all around the world. Together, those collections nurture and sustain teaching, learning, and research at the highest level. They, and the skilled staff who build and interpret them, help to define the greatness of the University of Texas at Austin.

But greatness requires investment and cost. Libraries confront the same fiscal pressures as the laboratory and the classroom. For a great university, global publishing practices and a rapidly expanding information universe make it increasingly difficult to fill the market basket with the scholarly resources that fuel teaching, learning, and research. And beyond the traditional marketplace where publishers hawk their wares—the books, journals, and databases that fill our shelves and servers—looms a massive, spiraling digital galaxy of information that transcends and dwarfs the world of Professor Ransom’s time. For the world’s great universities, these realities demand an investment in libraries that is daunting in its scale.

Today, when research universities confront rising costs, competing priorities, and limiting economic and public policy constraints, it is an open question whether all the great universities will be able to sustain the library investments that have defined them. Indeed, just recently, the libraries of a great university whose history extends to the early years of our nation, was dropped from the ranks of an important library organization because of declining investments. Could that fate await the University of Texas at Austin?

Not if our vast community of Texas alumni understand and embrace the pivotal role of libraries in advancing the teaching, learning, and research missions of their university. Not if all of us do a better job of communicating to the citizens of Texas the vision offered up by Professor Ransom half a century ago—that these collections, these libraries are among the most important and durable assets of our state.

Like our universities themselves, libraries are at the center of our shared humanity where we continuously create knowledge, cataloging our successive ideas in order to evolve our thinking about the world. In the long eras of cuneiform, papyrus, and parchment, information was scarce, and librarians played an important role in the acquisition and preservation of the slowly accumulating knowledge corpus. With the help of modern technologies, from printing press to integrated circuits, knowledge has increased exponentially. For the citizen today, information is overabundant and librarians play an expanded role as navigators, enabling critical inquiry so that the citizen can effectively deflect the irrelevant and misleading, select-
ing only the vital information needed for his or her purposes.

And even in a boundless galaxy of electronic information, the physical library retains its centrality on the university campus. We must all understand that teaching, learning, and research are activities that still take place. It is as much the case today, as when President James Garfield in a dinner before alumni of William College, said that a university could be defined as their beloved president, “Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other.” Innovations in electronic communications and online collaboration enrich both the individual experience and the learning commons that the library has become.

Now as before, students, teachers, and researchers require physical library spaces and the knowledgeable library experts found there in order to succeed in their work. In an evolving technological sphere, librarians constantly innovate strategies to support the knowledge resources of the modern university.

So, the question is not whether the library is sine qua non to the future health of our research university but, rather, how we will sustain this vital aspect of our social structure in the face of rapid technological and fiscal disruptions. How do we sustain the basket of scholarly resources whose prices escalate at a rate faster than almost every other item in the marketplace, including energy and health care? How do we preserve the printed record of the twentieth century as newspapers and corporations close their print archives and turn to us to preserve that record of our common past? How do we identify, access, yet and curate that spiraling galaxy of data in the information universe? How do we renovate and sustain our library facilities to cope with the advent of new learning technologies and new learning behaviors?

In times of fiscal constraint, innovation, collaboration and partnerships have been part of the answer. As we transform our spaces to accommodate new learning styles and technologies, we have constructed three new off-site library repositories—two of them joint projects with Texas A&M University—in which lowest demand items are stored in secure archival environments.

We are never content with “good enough” and harness the technologies to discover and develop new relevancies. Our Human Rights Documentation Initiative, built in collaboration with governments and non-governmental organizations and subvened by funding partners—serves as the safe and accessible digital archival alternative to vulnerable and fragile physical archives located elsewhere, as in Rwanda and Guatemala. We are partners in digitally preserving the first texts published in the Western Hemisphere through the Primeros Libros project. And we have helped to create the Texas Digital Library—a consortium of Texas colleges and universities working together to bring university research to all the citizens of our state and the world. Supporters of our university have helped bring to our campus such treasures as the Woodward-Bernstein Papers of the Watergate era and the Natchez Trace Collection.

We will succeed by responding to the needs for even greater efficiencies through innovation and technology-enhanced workflows. We will advance by articulating a clearer message to the citizens of Texas of the assets that our University and our libraries represent to them. We will look forward to the day when the understanding of the citizenry of the University as public good is reflected in state policy and legislative support. And we will prosper as the Longhorn nation hears, embraces, and supports the essential and multifaceted roles libraries play in the standing and success of the University of Texas. We must be vigorous in our efforts, and we must succeed. Our great university needs its great libraries. And our great state needs both.
Think Space

Do you remember your days as a UT student, when visiting a campus library gave you the ideal surroundings to think, learn, and be inspired? Or perhaps when, as a postgraduate scholar, you practically lived in the library because it held the keys to your quest for knowledge? Or maybe you are a faculty member today, drawing on the vast resources of the University of Texas Libraries to help your students grasp the material you’re teaching.

The University of Texas Libraries doesn’t just house books. It is home to all kinds of information fundamental to learning and discovery. We are a top-tier academic research library system that collects, preserves and makes accessible the core information resources used by the faculty, researchers, students, independent scholars and public at The University of Texas at Austin.

The result of more than a century of commitment to building and sustaining one of the great collections of the world, the Libraries boasts more than 10 million volumes. This incredible resource supports the research and instructional needs of one of the nation’s top research universities and ensures the its status as a custodian of knowledge and culture. Without the Libraries, the university simply would not have the standing it does today.

Today’s UT Libraries: Innovative, Collaborative, and More Relevant than Ever

While collection size is an important measure of any library, we all know the world is changing rapidly, and the world of information even more rapidly. In order to best serve our users, we need spaces that meet modern needs. Most of the space the Libraries inhabits was constructed prior to the development of the Internet and personal technology tools.

That is why we seek to revamp our learning spaces over the next five years: to match the remarkable breadth of our resources and the expertise of our librarians — key to the success of our students and faculty — with facilities that are equally outstanding.
The exceptional scholars and future leaders who make up our student body deserve facilities that will adequately prepare them for tomorrow's challenges. Today's students meet in groups to learn and to work collaboratively on projects assisted by rapidly expanding technology. Along with traditional written classwork, modern assignments often include the creation of digital materials and multi-media presentations. Students and faculty alike seek videoconference rooms to take their research and collaborations beyond our walls. We would also like to offer data visualization labs to help scholars analyze their increasingly large amounts of data.

In short, the University Libraries must keep up. We urgently need your help to advance with the changing landscape of higher education and embody the dynamic ambition of the university we serve. We not only aspire to have a learning and study environment attuned to our users' contemporary needs; we must offer facilities and programs wholly directed at helping them succeed in whatever area of research they are in.

A New Space for a Changing World: The Learning Commons

To improve student success, retention, and graduation rates, UT Libraries plans to create a Learning Commons in our main library, the Perry-Castañeda Library (PCL). This advanced new space will connect students with campus experts in research, writing, speech, and digital media technology, and will also provide a venue for individual and multidisciplinary inquiry and creation. Make no mistake, it's not about new furniture; it's about creating a stimulating, supportive environment that enhances student and faculty success.

With the Learning Commons and other proposed enhancements in our branch libraries, we recognize what needs to be done to meet our vision, but traditional funding sources — appropriations from the Texas Legislature and revenue from the Permanent University Fund — are proving to be inadequate. Given today's financial realities, they are likely to remain flat at best.

The fact is, we can no longer rely solely on shrinking state support to fully fund the needs of our students, faculty, and researchers. Your support and involvement are crucial.

Our goal — our duty — is to offer a modern academic library for students, researchers, and the entire UT Austin community. If we are to build on the Libraries' rich history and remain key to the university's success, we must continue to enhance our learning and discovery spaces to meet society's evolving needs. Your investment will help make that happen, now and into the future.

Please call Gregory Perrin, Assistant Director for Development at 512-495-4349 or via email at perrin@austin.utexas.edu.

The Fred L. Thomson Memorial Practice Room

The University of Texas Libraries recently received a generous gift from Mike Thomson in memory of his father, Fred L. Thomson. Mike's father lived in Austin and attended UT in the 1950s. He was a regular visitor to PCL, so family felt it appropriate to perpetuate Fred Thomson's legacy through the naming of a space in the library. Mike's daughter currently attends UT.

The Fred L. Thomson Memorial Presentation Practice Room (PCL 5.110) was completed over the summer, with the installation of new carpet, furniture, updated technology and a plaque to commemorate Fred Thomson. On Thursday, December 5, several members of the Thomson family visited the university to view the memorial space and share lunch with Director Fred Heath.

This initiative is the product of UT Libraries having a positive long-lasting impact on a life and we are honored to have this space for our patrons for years to come.
Small Gifts, Big Difference

When it comes to benefiting students and research, donations don’t have to be big to have a big impact. In the last year, UT Libraries has received 200 gifts between $1-100 adding up to a total of over $8,000. The Perry-Castaneda Library (PCL) Map Collection receives many of these donations.

The map room at PCL houses a collection of more than 250,000 maps covering all areas of the world. Atlases, travel guides, gazetteers, United States Geological Surveys, navigation charts, international and world maps and travel maps are accessible during regular library hours. In addition, more than 50,000 of these maps have been digitized and are available to view online for free.

So, why would one use the PCL Map Collection when there is access to Google Maps? Google Maps doesn’t have maps that provide extensive historical data, and while the internet giant does curate crisis maps in the wake of natural disasters, they don’t host maps of areas in conflict which have frequently been referenced by non-governmental organizations and even the United Nations. And while Google only began collecting data and providing its services in 2004, the PCL Map Collection has been digitizing maps and providing free access to them since the late 1990s.

“Not being able to find what you are looking for on the Internet is shocking,” reference librarian Katherine Strickland explained. The PCL Map Collection prides itself on acquiring maps of areas in conflict, and reference librarians have a keen eye when searching for printed maps that would help compile demographic research.

The PCL Map Collection receives over 20,000 visits per day on its website, making it one of the most accessed websites on the University campus, rivaling some of the most visited websites on campus like the University of Texas homepage.
“People use our maps online all the time,” Katherine explained. While the maps are free to access and many of them are free to use they are not free to digitize and maintain. To better assess the costs associated with digitizing maps, let’s outline the process by which materials are obtained by the Libraries.

Libraries collections are either acquired or donated, and the purchase of materials, specifically maps, can range from single-digit figures to thousands of dollars.

“We recently purchased a set of Russian Syria maps that are close-up and large-scale for $4,000,” Strickland explains. “We’re the only library in the United States that owns these maps and we’re digitizing them so that more people will have access.”

Few people realize the scope of costs associated with donating materials to the Libraries, because the majority of those costs are related to processing the materials after they’ve been donated. For instance, the cost of processing a medium-size box of donated items is about $100. Funds are used to hire graduate research assistants to physically move materials, assess them for damage, inspect for pests, quarantine contaminated items, catalog usable items and then place them in either a collection or surplus. The complexity of the process is aimed at maintaining the quality resources of a top-tier research library by thoroughly vetting all items prior to adding them to the collections.

When maps are to be digitized and put online, background costs can run up to $15 for processing, dependent on a number of factors including the size and condition of a map, image processing and formatting the images to specifications for the Libraries website. And the ongoing cost of storing and maintaining all map files on university servers is $5,000 a year, a figure that will only increase as the map collection continues to grow online.

In short, a $5 donation can help digitize one map in great condition. Four people who donate between $25 and $50 can assist in the acquisition of a map or resource used to further research, and 130 people who donate $100 can help fund a graduate assistant position to help process maps and other resources that are donated to the Libraries.

The Libraries is dedicated to serving its students, faculty, and researchers, but that service comes at a cost. Every gift matters, and even small gifts add up quickly and help in a meaningful way. And without the resources necessary to process and digitize our resources, the campus community — and the rest of the world — will not have access to the information they need for the next great development that benefits us all.

Natalie Moore is the Development Associate for the UT Libraries.

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Library Alums

Working in the library is like no other job on campus. Student workers participate in ways integral to the operation of the University of Texas Libraries, both behind the scenes and as frontline staffers answering questions and helping their fellow students to achieve academic success.

And if you worked in the library while enrolled at UT, we want to know.

The Libraries is assembling a group of former students who share the common experience of having worked in the libraries during their time at UT. In much the same way that individual colleges on campus have communities of shared experience, this community will be known as Library Alumni.

No matter what library branch you worked in as an undergraduate or graduate student, you are a Library alumnus, and we hope you will join your fellow Library Alumni in advocating for future Longhorns to share in the same enriching experience you had.

The Libraries are planning several events for 2014, including a reunion reception and an event at the ALA Annual Conference. If you would like to become a member of the Library Alumni, please email your contact information to Natalie Moore at nmoore@austin.utexas.edu so that you will be included in future messages about events and news.

And Hook ‘em, Horns!
Council Member Gives Back for UT, Libraries Experience

When it came time to pursue a degree, Carlton Smith saw only one option: The University of Texas at Austin. It took just a few months for Carl to find the Perry-Castañeda Library (PCL) once he was on UT’s campus. He lived right across the street, in Jester Center Dormitory, and the library offered the perfect retreat to study for his classes. Carl was pursuing a degree in finance until his senior year when someone told him, “Anything a financial advisor can do an accountant can do better.”

Carl graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a double major in finance and accounting in 1990. He worked as a joint interest accountant in Houston’s oil and gas industry for seven years prior to transitioning to the insurance industry in 1998.

“UT had a pretty dramatic impact on my life,” Carl explained, so joining UT Libraries Advisory Council was a logical move. As a double major, Carl said he spent a lot of time in the PCL, but through his involvement with UT Libraries Advisory Council, Carl has learned even more about the importance of libraries and how they impact student success in the digital age.

When asked why, as such a young alum, he had decided to include UT Libraries in his estate planning, Carl responded, “I work in insurance, so to me, it made sense to make the University [Libraries] a beneficiary of one of my life insurance policies.”

Carl is a native Houstonian, certified public accountant, and owner of Smith Insurance and Financial Services. An avid reader, he is also passionate about the reforestation of Houston, necessitated by the dual disasters of Hurricane Ike in 2008 and the great drought of 2011. Other interests include fitness, gardening, Longhorn sports, and yoga.

If you have included the University of Texas Libraries in your estate plan, please let us know; or if you need information about gift planning, please contact Gregory Perrin at 512-455-4349 or perrin@austin.utexas.edu.
KUT Acquisition Boosts Fine Arts Music Collection

Thousands of vintage and rare vinyl records and tens of thousands of compact discs have found a new home at the Fine Arts Library at The University of Texas at Austin as part of the largest single infusion of resources in the library’s history.

Students, faculty, researchers and other patrons will soon have access to a music collection significantly larger than previously available thanks to the acquisition of physical collections from KUT Public Media.

The collection is estimated at more than 60,000 music CDs and over 4000 vinyl LPs representing over 50 years of accumulation by the station. Both categories include a mix of singles (including promotional and demonstration copies), albums and multi-disk collections. A portion of the vinyl LPs are believed to be valuable collector’s items, which include rare or signed works with notes from the artist.

“Given the commercial imperative of the music business, it’s unlikely that most of these recordings are going to be reissued in any form, so it is doubly important that we hold onto this collection for posterity,” explains music librarian David Hunter. “It’s also valuable documentation as a snapshot of an entire era in the history of a cherished cultural institution.”

When KUTX 98.9, KUT’s music service, moved into the KUT Public Media Studios, there was not enough space in the building to accommodate such a large physical collection. In addition, the music staff had spent more than a year digitizing the station’s music library for easier access. It was time to offload this long-accumulated physical collection.

Continued on page 9
“The collection represents the eclectic nature of KUT – and now KUTX – with discs ranging from the famous – Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Dave Brubeck, The Band, Townes Van Zandt – to the obscure – The Soviet Army Chorus and Edinburgh City Police Pipe Band,” said Hawk Mendenhall, associate general manager and director of broadcast and content at KUT Public Media.

Hunter estimates that processing the collection will take 2-4 years, dependent upon available resources.

The addition of the KUT materials expands the Fine Arts Library’s Historical Music Recordings Collection (HMRC), one of the largest archives of audio recordings in the nation, increasing its volume of approximately 200,000 items in all formats by significantly over 25%.

“This truly is the archive of Austin’s music, born, bred and adopted,” says the Fine Arts Library’s head librarian Laura Schwartz. “And we will preserve it for all of Austin to fully access. How cool is that?”

If you are interested in making a gift towards the processing and preservation of the KUT Music Collection, please contact Dr. David Hunter at 512-495-4475 or david.hunter@austin.utexas.edu

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**The Libraries at Work**

As an added benefit to working at The University of Texas at Austin, staff have access to the vast resources of one of the top ten public research libraries in the United States… and all within a stone’s throw.

- Borrowing privileges at 10 library branches with a collection of 10 million volumes
- Remote and local access to expansive selection of subscription electronic resources
- Access to rare and unique materials in Libraries’ special collections, including the Alexander Architectural Archive and the Benson Latin American Collection
- Interlibrary loan service
- Access to expansive audiovisual collections, including movies and over 30,000 audio recordings from the Fine Arts Library
- Online renewal
- Onsite expertise of professional librarians and bibliographers
- Campus delivery for convenient pick-up at a selected branch

For complete details, please visit [http://lib.utexas.edu/services/staff](http://lib.utexas.edu/services/staff)
Fall Events Benefit from Added Expertise, Spirit(s)

As the Libraries have conceived more and better ways of reaching out to various segments of the public, there became an obvious need for someone to manage the array of events occurring both in our spaces around campus, and through our collaborations with campus partners.

Late last spring our relief arrived in the form of an expatriate from the McCombs School of Business.

Jason Sick joined the Libraries in April, coming from McCombs where he served as Special Programs Coordinator and was responsible for planning that school’s extensive student outreach initiatives. With six years’ worth of experience working at UT, Jason made a quick impression on Libraries efforts, handling 25 Libraries events of various scope and size and setting up an events management tool that helped to keep a bevy of fall events on track.

Our lunchtime lecture series Research + Pizza — which features research presentations by faculty from across the university — provided three distinct examples of important work taking place at UT. Assistant professor in the Department of Psychology Paige Harden used research revolving around developmental psychopathology to discuss factors on teen sexuality, while Fine Arts professor John Clarke had his colorful personality in tow to talk about his work in the shadow of Vesuvius excavating historic Roman ruins near Pompeii. The School of Architecture’s Robert Young, whose work on the Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon has garnered national praise, rounded out the semester with a discussion of his research into sustainable growth in metropolitan areas, and how his previous efforts might translate to similar endeavors at The University of Texas at Austin.

Science Study Break continued its popular run with a pair of compelling programs. Dr. Russell Poldrack of the Imaging Research Center
used his own experiences in self-analysis, to discuss research ethics and auto experimentation in science, as depicted in movies like *The Fly, Spider-man* and *X-Men*. Boldrack has just completed the massive data-gathering phase of a project, having spent every Tuesday for the last year undergoing a battery of surveys, medical tests — including bloodwork and an MRI — at the IRC with the goal of better understanding the human brain by gaining a comprehensive understanding of his own. Meanwhile, Dr. Wilson Geisler, who is Director of the Center for Perceptual Systems used his work in the field of image processing to critique the authenticity of forensic imaging as portrayed in television shows like *The Good Wife, Castle, Luther* and almost every other modern detective drama that has aired. Geisler’s research into animal and human visual systems at the CPS resulted in the development of a website where users can “de-noise” images for free, allowing their enlargement without a loss of picture quality.

In recognition of Banned Books Week, English Literature and Women’s & Gender Studies Librarian Kristen Hogan teamed up with colleagues in the Department of English to produce an outstanding panel discussion on censorship in Texas. Maley Thompson of the Department of English moderated the discussion among five distinguished panelists: Donnis Baggett, The Texas Press Association; Acacia O’Connor, The National Coalition Against Censorship; Scott Medlock, The Texas Civil Rights Project; Lilia Rosas, Red Salmon Press & Resistencia Bookstore; and Rocío Villalobos, MonkeyWrench Books, Multicultural Engagement Center & Rise Up!Levanta Texas.

The full panel discussion can be viewed on the UT Libraries YouTube channel at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xeT8uCAgydM

The Fine Arts Library launched a faculty-curated film series with a Senegalese feature about the horrific practice of female circumcision in sub-Saharan African countries. Dr. Fehintola Mosadomi, Assistant Professor of Middle Eastern Studies and of African and African Diaspora Studies, introduced the film *Moolaadé* (2004) and fielded questions from the audience following the screening.

And rounding out a semester of new ventures, the Libraries kicked off a series to feature the expansive maps collections of the university, highlighted by “You Are Here: ¡Viva Tequila!” with author Lucinda Hutson (*Viva Tequila! Cocktails, Cooking, and Other Agave Adventures*, UT Press) who provided an animated talk about the history of the region and the rise of Mexico’s most notable contribution to the world of distilled spirits, and shared personal anecdotes and recipes from her travels. Attendees had the opportunity to view historical maps of Mexico — including rare examples of hand-drawn Relaciones Geográficas from the Benson’s collections — to help place the story of tequila into geographical context, while also participating in a modest tequila tasting provided by Dulce Vida Tequila and Wahaka Mezcal.
Reaching Out. The University of Texas Libraries hosted a number of events both in and beyond Austin this year. Taking the Libraries show on the road, Director Fred Heath and staff visited alumni groups in Houston, San Antonio and Chicago. The Libraries Tailgaters returned to the plaza for several home football games and had some great interactions with past, present and future Longhorns. And fortune provided for Austin author (and subsequent addition to the Libraries Advisory Council) Sarah Bird to speak at our annual Distinguished Author Dinner in October. If you are interested in upcoming library events, please sign up for the libraries e-newsletter by sending your name and email to Natalie Moore at nmoore@austin.utexas.edu.
UT Libraries Joins HathiTrust

The University of Texas Libraries has become the most recent member of HathiTrust, a collaborative of major academic research libraries working to preserve and provide access to the published corpus in digital form.

The HathiTrust repository was established in 2008, built upon digital content from research libraries culled from the Google Books project — in which the Libraries were a partner — and the Internet Archive initiative, as well as content digitized through partner projects. To date, over 80 partner institutions have contributed more than 10 million volumes to the digital library.

In becoming a partner in the project, the UT Libraries will gain access to over three and a half million public domain items contained in the digital library, allowing students, faculty, researchers and The University of Texas at Austin community to perform full-text searches of the complete HathiTrust catalog, download content that is in the public domain and create personal virtual libraries of electronic titles. It also provides visually-impaired users at member institutions full access to the entire digital library for use with assistive technology.

As a trusted repository, HathiTrust serves a dual role. It guarantees the long-term preservation of the materials it holds, providing the expert curation and consistent access associated with research libraries. And as a service for partners and a public good, HathiTrust offers persistent access to the digital collections. This includes viewing, downloading and searching access to public domain volumes, and searching access to volumes still in copyright.

Specialized features are also available that facilitate access by persons with print disabilities and that allow users to gather subsets of the digital library into "collections" that can be searched and browsed.

HathiTrust was named for the Hindi word for elephant, hathi, symbolic of the qualities of memory, wisdom, and strength evoked by elephants, as well as the huge undertaking of assembling the digital collections of libraries in the United States and beyond. HathiTrust is funded by the partner libraries and governed by members of the libraries through an Executive Committee and a Strategic Advisory Board.

“This is a tremendous outcome for the entire university community,” says Libraries director Dr. Fred Heath. “By joining with this extraordinary group of academic research institutions, we’re not only strengthening our own collections for our users, but we are helping to secure the human record for future generations.”
Information Literacy Across the 12-13 Divide

“What skills do college professors think first-year students lack?”

That question posed by Gonzales High School librarian Eve Waddell was one of the primary focal points for a recent summit hosted by the University of Texas Libraries.

Organized by Library Instruction Services (LIS), the Libraries’ “Information Literacy Summit” brought together ten secondary education librarians from across the state with librarians at The University of Texas at Austin with the aim of addressing issues of student preparedness in the transition from high school to college.

The one-day summit occurred on June 14 and was funded through an Imagination & Innovation grant program established to surface fresh ideas from Libraries’ staff that would contribute to organizational advancement.

One of the summit’s architects, First Year Experience Librarian Cindy Fisher, sees first-hand the impediments that some freshmen face when they arrive on campus and face a much different learning scenario and higher expectations than they acclimated to in high school. “There’s a palpable anxiety for some new arrivals to campus. Negotiating the vast resources available at the university level can be a daunting prospect, and new students quickly realize that research strategies that were acceptable in high school are inadequate for college.”

“If there is a way to help prepare students before they arrive at UT, we thought this would be one way to help develop it.”

By creating vertical relationships and engaging in discussion with their high school colleagues, the university librarians have been able to discover where gaps in understanding might exist, and work to build solutions that, in turn, could help with the university’s initiative to improve four-year graduation rates.

“Our main motivation is to create deeper information literacy skills that could be scaffolded across institutional goals,” says Fisher. “We teach because we want our students to learn and think critically so they can live up to the promise of changing the world.”

Participants in the summit were chosen through an application process that was announced in early spring. Those accepted received travel and lodging stipends, and were awarded continuing education units for the professional development opportunity.

LIS librarians spend much of their time constructing strategies for addressing a problem that has been exacerbated by the development of the web. Information literacy is defined as “… the ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand,” and the proliferation of information — good, bad and ugly — has created an even greater need to train students in best practices for navigating the vast universe of content available to them.
1978 called.

They want their study carrels back.

Help UT Libraries transform spaces and inspire learning.

Give now.

www.lib.utexas.edu/development/thinkspace