
GW Libraries **VISION**

The GW Libraries are a catalyst, a spark to generate new ideas and new possibilities. Responsive to the changing landscape of information, and sensitive both to traditional and emergent modes of communication, we bring together diverse constituents of faculty, students, and staff in a highly collaborative, dynamic, and deeply engaged intellectual community. As part of the larger George Washington University, we are a nexus where exciting things happen, where change happens, where growth happens.

Fundamental to our vision is that the Libraries sustain and expand our intellectual partnerships with faculty and students across and beyond the university. To that end, our objectives include the following:

- **Provide leadership on scholarly communication for the university.**
- **Be the nexus for cross-disciplinary collaboration on campus.**
- **Building upon our demonstrated commitment to innovative pedagogy, develop methods for expanding the reach of research instruction across the curriculum, being responsive to the needs of GW's diverse student body.**
- **Through tools, spaces, consultation, and collaboration, help the GW community explore, create, and discover information in new ways.**
- **Build robust and unique specialized collections to attract world class scholars.**

The George Washington University's Strategic Plan

VISION 2021

The George Washington University will enter its third century in 2021. Our strategic plan for the period leading up to this milestone reflects our aspirations to provide a unique, rigorous education to every one of our students and to secure our position as one of the world's premier research universities.

The George Washington University's Strategic Plan, *Vision 2021*, presents an aggressive, bold and ambitious strategy and the GW Libraries are key to ensuring the success of the university in achieving its aspirations.

Vision 2021 calls for actions that build on four major themes uniting activities across the entire university:

THESE THEMES ARE:			
			
Innovation through CROSS-DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION	GLOBALIZATION	GOVERNANCE & POLICY	CITIZENSHIP & LEADERSHIP

As a part of the greater university, the Libraries' strategic plan is in clear alignment with and support of *Vision 2021*. The libraries will successfully contribute to the *Vision 2021* education, research and service goals across each of its four broad themes.

The appropriate icon(s) for the four major themes are identified with each goal in the Libraries' plan to show how it clearly aligns with *Vision 2021*.

GW Libraries

STRATEGIC PLAN

Research libraries have always been recognized as vital organizations in supporting the research, teaching, learning and outreach needs of their communities. As stewards of the human record, libraries are responsible for generating, making accessible, and preserving new knowledge and understanding over time. Shepherding users through the information lifecycle, from creation and dissemination, to discovery and preservation of knowledge, librarians are key collaborators throughout their campus community and with their counterparts worldwide. The George Washington University's Strategic Plan, *Vision 2021*, presents an aggressive, bold and ambitious strategy that will enhance the university's position as one of the world's great educational institutions. GW Libraries are key to ensuring the success of the university in achieving its aspirations.

The GW Libraries Strategic Plan identifies the following five objectives that direct our services and activities in realizing the *Vision 2021* plan:

- Provide leadership on scholarly communication for the university.
- Be the nexus for cross-disciplinary collaboration on campus.
- Building upon our demonstrated commitment to innovative pedagogy, develop methods for extending the reach of research instruction across the curriculum, being responsive to the needs of GW's diverse student body.
- Through tools, spaces, consultation, and collaboration, help the GW community explore, create, and discover information in new ways.
- Build robust and unique specialized collections to attract world-class scholars.

These objectives will enable the libraries to successfully contribute to the *Vision 2021* education, research and service goals across its four broad themes of innovation through cross-disciplinary collaboration, globalization, governance & policy, and citizenship & leadership. These themes are identified throughout the libraries' plan to clearly align with *Vision 2021*.

This vision and strategic plan represent a new direction for the libraries with an emphasis on collaboration, leadership and flexibility. To achieve the goals set out in this plan, **GW Libraries must become an agile, innovative, and sustainable organization.** We recognize that the change called for in this plan begins within our own organization, thus the GW Libraries will:

Actively recruit and retain a diverse workforce with desired expertise and demonstrated leadership.

People are the most important resource the libraries have to offer. An exemplary, engaged workforce begins with an efficient process for attracting and retaining talent. We will focus on a skills-based method for selecting candidates and always be aware of internal talent ready to take on new roles.

Provide support for librarians and staff to enable them to grow and welcome change.

The GW Libraries are committed to supporting professional growth by providing formal and informal opportunities for training, allowing staff to stay nimble and responsive by constantly developing new skills. Staff members will be supported in and encouraged to explore new skills and ideas and contribute by sharing lessons learned. The libraries will concentrate on breaking down traditional silos to create cultures and facilities that inspire collaboration, creativity, and contemplation.

Foster leadership at all levels of the organization.

All librarians and staff members will demonstrate leadership and accountability in every aspect of their work and recognize their responsibility as library ambassadors. To share our skills and aid in growth, everyone will be encouraged to seek out role models and opportunities for mentoring. The libraries will reward an entrepreneurial spirit and encourage appropriate risk-taking. As leaders are developed and nurtured in the GW Libraries, they will take on leadership roles in relevant professional organizations (e.g. ARL, DLF, CLIR, Code4Lib, ACRL, LITA, ALCTS, Internet Archive, SAA, AFP, etc.), positioning us at the vanguard of national conversations on information policy, scholarly communication and access to information.

Objective 1:**Provide leadership on scholarly communication for the university.**

Every aspect of the information lifecycle has undergone an undeniable shift over the past 20 years with the advent of the Internet. Knowledge creation, discovery, validation, dissemination, reuse, and long-term curation are all impacted by ongoing changes in technology and policy. Every stage of this lifecycle affects the education, research, teaching and service missions of the university. GW Libraries will be the predominant leader on campus for providing the knowledge and services necessary to navigate the challenges at every stage throughout the information lifecycle.

In support of this objective, the GW Libraries will:

Provide education about intellectual property issues and information policies, including copyright.


Copyright and other information policies have, over time, become increasingly complex, especially with more and more international collaborations. GW Libraries will support the community in navigating varying disciplinary and international norms and policies that impact the use and dissemination of information. We will favor licenses with publishers that enable the broadest possible access.

Lead the campus conversation in information policy.


Open access to information enables broader dissemination and awareness of research results, but may often conflict with needs to ensure privacy, security or desires for profitability. GW Libraries will be a part of the national conversation about the changing implications of copyright, open access, fair use and other information policies. This will enable effective support for the GW community through appropriate advocacy and education about how information can be used and disseminated.

Support public scholarly communication.


The GW Libraries are committed to providing the community with publishing resources, including guidance around open access, copyright, how-to guides for publishing and other relevant resources. We will support the dissemination of research and scholarship by GW authors and recognize their successes in publishing.

Collaborate across campus to provide expertise and support for the research data lifecycle.


Data curation and preservation are an integral part of research. Funding agencies and publishers increasingly require researchers to publish data with research results to ensure replicability and transparency. GW Libraries will partner with our community to provide education about data management, assist with preparing data management plans for grants, and identify appropriate repositories for preserving the research data long term.

Objective 2:**Be the nexus for cross-disciplinary collaboration on campus.**

As the university increases its activities in cross-disciplinary research, it is important that knowledge and resources are available to support appropriate information discovery and effective, timely dissemination of results. As the natural crossroads of the university, the libraries are positioned to be a catalyst in encouraging new explorations through partnerships between researchers. Staff members of the GW libraries interact with the community across all disciplines, thus are uniquely positioned to facilitate discussions and explorations between various members of the community whose research interests may intersect in new and interesting ways.

In support of this objective, the GW Libraries will:

Cultivate relationships across the university to foster cross-disciplinary research.

The GW Libraries will create opportunities for interdisciplinary research conversations and interactions where the community can learn more about the interesting work being done across disciplines. Through our interactions with faculty, students, and other partners across campus, we will facilitate collaborations in research, teaching, and learning.

Assist scholars with navigating the challenges of cross-disciplinary research.

As partners in the research lifecycle, the GW Libraries will provide support in identifying grant funding opportunities; establish methods for developing collections that are sensitive and responsive to cross-disciplinary research needs; work with scholars to identify appropriate venues for publishing their research; and help with successful peer review, publication, and dissemination of new research.

Objective 3:**Building upon our demonstrated commitment to innovative pedagogy, develop methods for expanding the reach of research instruction across the curriculum, being responsive to the needs of GW's diverse student body.**

Through an innovative, long-term partnership with the University Writing Program, the GW Libraries are recognized as exemplary in information literacy education. Instruction is a key component of the libraries' mission. To continue this tradition of excellence, the libraries must explore new ways of providing instruction to support graduate and undergraduate learners, both on campus and off, while continuing to foster the art of the question.

In support of this objective, the GW Libraries will:

Engage with new and established curriculum and programs.

The libraries stand in a unique position within the university – at a central intersection of diverse disciplines and schools. As the university undertakes a comprehensive curricular review, the GW Libraries are logical partners for the assessment of current, and the development of new, curriculum and programs.

Provide instruction and support for communication and technical skills development.

While GW schools provide excellent instruction in their specific discipline, more and more students need access to advanced communication and technical skills instruction (e.g. in multimedia design, programming languages, data analysis, manipulation, and visualization) that does not fit neatly into an area of study. We will provide leadership in support of instruction for these necessary skills, ensuring that students meet rigorous academic standards. GW Libraries will collaborate with other units across campus to identify and help fill the gaps between the schools, minimizing duplication of effort.

Provide multiple approaches for optimal instruction.

Given the University's diverse and changing student body and increasing emphasis on distance and online learning, the GW Libraries must explore new methods of providing instruction to ensure sustainability of quality in response to evolving needs and demands. We will proactively assess best approaches for providing instruction for each learning situation.

Objective 4:

Through tools, spaces, consultation, and collaboration, help the GW community explore, create, and discover information in new ways.

The Internet changes not only how we access information, but how we interact with each other. Previously, information resources were scarce and largely housed in the library. With fewer distractions, this created an environment where the community went to the library for access to and assistance with discovering knowledge. In today's environment, there are many demands placed on people's attention and the library occupies a position in the middle of a vast range of information resources that can be accessed across the globe. Recognizing this shift, the way the library functions must now reflect the ways in which our community works with information.

In support of this objective, the GW Libraries will:

Provide users with the best means to discover, access, and interact with the most relevant information.



Information isn't useful if it can't be found and accessed. In addition to continuing trends of excellence in information discovery, whether through our virtual interfaces or with hands-on assistance of library staff, the GW Libraries will lead faculty and students to better understand and present their data through relevant information discovery tools such as visualization through graphs and geospatial presentations, text mining, and topic modeling.

Pursue a flexible and responsive approach to provide library spaces that meet our community's changing needs.



The GW Libraries will undertake a comprehensive space study to inform future plans and budgets for modification of library spaces. We will invite feedback from stakeholders to make sure we are responding to evolving student, faculty, and staff expectations.

Strengthen connections with other libraries and similar institutions to provide the best resources and services for the GW community.



It is through partnership and collaboration among peer institutions that we can most efficiently leverage limited resources. To this end, the libraries will increase collaborations, across campus and with other WRMC libraries, while continuing to build relationships with other DC cultural institutions. We will also develop partnerships with national and international institutions for specific priorities or projects.

Partner with researchers in grant-seeking opportunities.



Research doesn't happen without funding and the GW Libraries are the ideal partner to help researchers seeking grants identify and strengthen the information components. We will utilize our connections and resources to assist researchers to identify potential grant partners across the university and beyond, including project staff, and community organizations. We will coordinate with the Office of the Vice President for Research in disseminating funding opportunities while also assisting researchers in locating complementary research, strategizing project scope, and thinking through publication opportunities. We will enhance the existing project development process, including harnessing existing talent in our workforce and across the university to contribute tangibly to application preparation and budget development phases. Finally, we will collaborate across campus to support the long term sustainability of data and research results.

Objective 5:

Build robust and unique specialized collections to attract world class scholars.

In our changing information landscape the mere size of a collection is no longer a mark of excellence. What makes a university library competitive and attractive to scholars is its specialized collections, which provide rare and unique content to support patrons' needs along with tools and partnerships to enhance the value of that content.

In support of this objective, the GW Libraries will:

Build our specialized collections and provide broad access to these materials by deepening collaboration across communities and identifying opportunities for growth.



Expanding and enriching our specialized collections continues to be a priority. GW Libraries will encourage collaborations that allow us to make tactical choices, taking advantage of meaningful opportunities for collection growth. We will collaborate with our peer institutions and colleagues, while also pursuing independent endeavors to enhance our collections. Opportunities will be evaluated in the context of what makes GW special and what we are uniquely positioned to do.

Promote the unique materials of our specialized collections, recognizing that they are a core component of GW Libraries.



Our specialized collections are a distinctive element that shape the identity of the GW Libraries and GW. Access to rare and interesting materials, including primary source documents, gives students and faculty an opportunity to approach research from new perspectives. The GW Libraries are committed to working with our community to make them aware of our collections. The staff of our specialized collections provide deep knowledge of the holdings, creating opportunities for collaboration in their use of these resources. We will work with faculty to integrate these resources into the curriculum where appropriate and encourage student research.

Preserve our resources for long-term availability.



Rare and unique materials are especially vulnerable to loss, thus preservation of these resources must be a priority. The GW Libraries will preserve its resources in accordance with best practices and evolving standards. We will curate, archive, and preserve print, digital, and media content in addition to ephemera. We will continue our commitment to digitizing materials in important and in-demand collections and making them available online to scholars worldwide.