

IPFW WALTER E. HELMKE LIBRARY



HELMKE LIBRARY FUNDING CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Summary of Concerns and Recommendations

In the last ten years the number of FTE students at IPFW has grown from 6,629 to 9,638 in 2009, a 45% increase. From 1999 to 2009, IPFW has added nine undergraduate programs and nine graduate programs. These include baccalaureate degrees in civil engineering, computer engineering, computer engineering technology, interior design, art education, theatre teaching, music education, hospitality management, and human services. Masters programs have been added in mathematics, sociological practice, speech language pathology, special education, engineering, organizational leadership and supervision, technology, public management, and nursing. The number of new buildings and building renovations has continued at a rapid pace.

While the campus has been growing exponentially, the IPFW library, responsible for serving the information needs of the entire campus, has seen little growth in personnel, funds for the collection, and in building infrastructure and facilities upgrades. A complex organization like an academic library cannot endure indefinitely with its resources stretched to the limit before it starts to unravel. Continued deficiencies in library funding at IPFW will result in the deterioration of library services, collections, and facilities.

Library Staffing Levels

Library staff are providing first-rate services including one-on-one research consultation on-demand and by appointment, outreach reference via Instant Messaging (IM), e-mail, and mobile services across campus, 24-hour access to electronic reserves, electronic academic journals and books, document delivery services, and unique local digital collections. Librarians with subject expertise are assigned to each department (except the College of ETCS) to assist students and faculty with research, provide information literacy instruction online and in conjunction with faculty in the classroom, assist with collection development, and provide data and analysis for program review, assessment, and accreditation. With the continued growth of the campus, library employees are now being asked to respond to the information needs generated by over 13,000 students, 1,600 faculty and staff in approximately 200 academic degree and certificate programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and faculty research level.

Recommendations

- ▶ *Planned steady growth in both library support staff and tenure-track librarians is needed for the library to continue providing quality service.*
- ▶ *Allocate the remaining \$150,000 increase targeted for library services in the 2001-2007 IPFW Strategic Plan to increase the number of librarians and staff support.*

Current Status

- ▶ IPFW library has just ten tenure-track librarians including the dean. Seven librarians are liaisons to approximately 200 academic programs in nine colleges, schools and divisions. In most cases one librarian is responsible for the research needs of over 1,000 majors (some almost 2,000 majors) and more than 50 faculty.
- ▶ The Association of College and Research Libraries' quantitative standards for academic library staffing indicate that IPFW, as a comprehensive Master's I university, should at minimum employ 29 librarians.

- ▶ Within IPFW's current set of peers, the library ranks last (12 out of 12) in total staff per student FTE. In a comparison of libraries within the IU regional campus system, IPFW library ranks last in total staff per student FTE.

Concerns

- ▶ Demands for more research assistance, information literacy instruction and assessment, longer library hours, and increased document delivery services.
- ▶ Danger of burnout, illness, and frustration in a dedicated staff.
- ▶ Recently the Computer Science program accreditation team reported only two recommendations for improvement, one of those was to hire a librarian liaison for the College of ETCS.

Library Collection

From 1999 to 2009, IPFW has added nine undergraduate programs and nine graduate programs. Each new program generates demand for additional materials. Graduate programs and programs that require accreditation are especially resource intense. Accreditation renewals in engineering, education, music, music therapy, nursing, chemistry, dental education, computer science, business, and public affairs all have library components that must show adequate resource support.

Recommendation

- ▶ *Allocate over the next four years the \$500,000 increase targeted in the 2008-2014 Strategic Plan to improve library collections and services.*

Current Status

- ▶ The average cost of library acquisitions has increased considerably. Since 1989, there has been an overall average book and e-book price increase of 55%. Reference book and e-book prices have increased 233% in that same time period (Choice, April 2009, p. 1456).
- ▶ The cost of scholarly journals has been increasing even more dramatically. The latest U.S. Periodicals Price Index provides data on periodical price increases compared to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI). The data show that U.S. serial prices continue to rise at approximately twice the rate of the HEPI and more than three times the rate of the CPI (U.S. Periodical Price Index, pg. 9, 2005).
- ▶ The Helmke Library materials budget has been virtually flat for 20 years. From 1999 to 2009 there has been only one significant increase in the materials budget and that was in the 2004-2005 fiscal year. The library received a \$100,000 increase in the materials budget (the 2001-2007 IPFW Strategic Plan targeted \$350,000 to improve library collections and services) which averaged over 11 years is less than a \$10,000/year increase to purchase library materials where costs have been rising at triple the rate of the Consumer Price Index.
- ▶ Comparisons with other Indiana University campus libraries show that the IPFW library materials budget at \$74.36 per student FTE is the lowest of all IU regional campuses.

- ▶ A comparison with IPFW's peer institutions for 2001-2007 showed that the IPFW library ranked last, 13 out of 13, in library materials expenditures per student FTE.
- ▶ Within the current set of peer institutions IPFW library ranks 6 out of 12 in library materials expenditures per student FTE. This change in rank is due to a variety of factors, including increases in endowment interest income and the nature of the new peer institutions.

Concerns

- ▶ Over the last five years, the library's materials expenditures have exceeded the university allocation for materials and the entire library endowment income. This deficit has been covered by gift funds that are almost exhausted.
- ▶ Endowment interest income is expected to decrease by 10-15% in the next few years due to the economic downturn. The fall 2009 interest income was 10% below that of fall 2008.
- ▶ This fiscal year, 2009-2010, the library cancelled databases and serials subscriptions totaling approximately \$40,000.
- ▶ The next round of cancellations, 2010-2011, will involve cuts to journals for which we will have no full-text access in any database. We have already received invoices for several large journal packages that include price increases of 11.6% (American Chemical Society); 7.5% (Wiley/Blackwell); and 6% (IEEE Explorer). The current library materials budget and endowment income will not cover these increases nor will Document Delivery Services be able to absorb the increased demand for articles in journals to which we can no longer afford to subscribe.

Library Building and Facilities

Campus investment in buildings, facilities, and renovations in the last 10 years has been outstanding. The Science Building opened in 1998, the Rhinehart Music Center in 2007, the Medical Education building in 2009, and the Student Services Complex begun this year will be completed in 2011-2012. Other campus structures such as Parking Garage #2, The Willis Family Bridge, Soccer Support Facility, Student Housing, and the new bridge to the Holiday Inn have also been completed. The library has not been included in this recent set of capital projects.

Recommendations

- ▶ *Fulfill Goal 1, Action Priority 5C. of the IPFW 2008-2014 Strategic Plan to "build a Learning Commons in Helmke Library."*
- ▶ *Complete other renovations needed throughout the 37 year old building, such as a makeover of the first floor, carpet on the third floor, compact shelving for the basement, electrical, lighting, and HVAC upgrades.*
- ▶ *Invest in new chairs, tables, and carrels for student use in the public spaces of the library.*

Current Status

- ▶ The library is overdue for an upgrade in its infrastructure. The Director of the Physical Plant has said

the library is structurally built to stand for a hundred years, but its infrastructure, electrical and HVAC, needs to be replaced every 30-35 years. The library is 37 years old and needs an upgrade.

- ▶ The Service Desk, the first thing you see when you walk into the building, is a hodge-podge of mismatched desks salvaged over the years.
- ▶ Much of the library's furniture (tables, chairs, and carrels) dates from opening day in 1972.
- ▶ Shelving has been assembled and disassembled many times to accommodate the growing collection and is showing the wear.
- ▶ Carpet on the third floor is the original 1972 carpet and is faded, stained, and fraying.

Concerns

- ▶ Library's HVAC is not energy efficient. It is difficult to regulate and often leaves employees and library users shivering from the cold.
- ▶ The 1972 library building was constructed years before computers became the dominant method for information discovery and delivery. Current library infrastructure cannot support the amount of computing planned for the second floor IPFW Learning Commons.
- ▶ Chairs in the public areas are not ergonomically conducive to study and tables are not suitable for the modern day laptop user.
- ▶ 37 year old carrels and tables fall apart if moved, a dangerous situation for students who often move furniture to suit their needs.
- ▶ In each of the last 10 years the library has welcomed approximately 300,000 users, in 2009 well over 300,000. It should be a focal point for campus pride, and a *recruiting tool for world-class faculty and students*, not shabby and careworn.

Conclusion

The university is now preparing its self-study for the 2010 North Central Association of Colleges and Schools reaccreditation application. The evaluation team for IPFW's last North Central accreditation in 2000 cautioned that the library's budget is supplemented by the income from an endowment, but that "the administration needs to ensure that the availability of endowment income does not become an excuse for lowering institutional support" (p. 38).

The library is at the heart of the university academically and physically. It provides innovative, state-of-the-art, essential, and relevant resources and services. It has been an outstanding steward of university funds, using limited resources to create a highly respected and valued asset for IPFW and the community. Imagine what could be done with a realization of the 2001-2007 and 2008-2014 IPFW Strategic Plans financial commitment beginning now and continuing over the next five years.