

# WVU LIBRARIES RESEARCH SERVICES COMMITTEE RESEARCH COMMONS VISION

December 18, 2017

## OVERVIEW

### 1. Project Background and Description

This report summarizes the work and planning recommendations of the WVU Libraries Research Services Committee regarding the development of a Research Commons for WVU.

Research Commons have become prevalent in academic libraries in the last decade. Although there are many models of operation, the centers typically offer central expertise, services and technology to provide support across disciplines. The centers often include dedicated spaces and cutting edge technology and provide support for high level research activities and digital scholarship.

In June 2016, Associate Dean Karen Diaz asked the committee to focus on the development of a vision for a Research Commons at WVU Libraries. The group was asked to work with campus partners to envision ways in which a research commons can support research and information needs across disciplines in an R1 institution. Areas to include in the vision were: a determination of services, potential partnerships, staffing needs, and high-level facility needs.

### 2. Environment Scan

The committee began its work by investigating how library research commons were organized at other institutions.

- **University of Washington** – The commons offered a variety of spaces, including booths and collaboration space. Services offered included poster design and data visualization, writing consultations for graduate students, and digital scholarship support. The planning committee at UW prepared a detailed report that provided an excellent model for WVU planning.
- **University of Tennessee** - The Commons at UTK provides services primarily for undergraduates, including tutoring, student success center, IT, and many other campus services. The **Scholar's Collaborative**, an aspect aimed at graduate students offered Open Access and digital publishing support, with an open-ended offer of support for “emerging forms of scholarship.” They also offer a wide variety of workshops on topics such as data management plans and designing posters/presentations.
- **North Carolina State University** offered a suite of services including measuring research impact, copyright, text mining, data, and citation management. They provided faculty research commons in two libraries, with seminar and collaboration rooms. These were open to faculty with swipe card access.
- The **University of Texas** offers a hub with 3 areas of service – research support, scholarly publishing, and spaces. The spaces include a data lab and a special space for graduate students with amenities including a kitchen.
- The **University of Maryland** offered limited spaces (a reading room and a GIS center) and, instead, emphasized services (such as data, text mining, and statistical consulting) and events. They are in partnership with the graduate school writing center.
- **American University** featured partnerships with other campus services to create a central place for services organized around the research process. Libraries joined IT, writing centers, and academic support to provide research assistance, technology support, professional communications, and statistical support.

- **Georgia State University** offers data services for data analysis tools, mapping & data visualization, and data management.
- **University of Illinois** offers support services for scholarly communications, copyright, multiple data services (analytics, visualization, discovery), institutional repository. They have a visiting HathiTrust humanities specialist and a resident librarian for data analytics. They offer workshops as well as consultations. All of this seems to be offered with minimal space and technology.

Many of the libraries we investigated have dedicated spaces that offer consultation rooms, classrooms, meeting space, collaboration space, and high-tech equipment to facilitate work. Some, however, offer a suite of services with minimal space devoted to the commons. Many host workshops and other events aimed at high-level researchers. The concept of a hub is central to most, providing shared resources and opportunities for novices to work with experts and disciplines to intermingle. Most offer services either exclusively to faculty and graduate students or targeted to them.

### 3. Campus Partner Conversations

The committee next drafted a mission statement and a series of questions to guide conversations with potential campus partners.

*WVU Libraries have a deep commitment to support research and scholarly communication. To further that commitment, the Libraries are currently developing a vision for an innovative library research commons which will not only consolidate existing library services but also identify new ways to enhance and support WVU research at a very high level.*

*As we look to the future we are engaging in conversation with some of our important stakeholders. We want to talk with you and hear your thoughts about research at WVU.*

#### Questions for stakeholder meetings:

- Are you thinking differently about research now that WVU has attained R1 status?
- What things are hard to get done?
- What are the obstacles to research/collaboration?
- What kind of guidance, programs, and resources do your graduate students need to become better researchers?
- Are there ways that your organization/department could collaborate or partner with the Research Commons?
- Do you have services or resources that you use to help your constituents w/research?
- Is there someone else you think we should talk with?
- Questions or concerns for us?

Committee members met with stakeholders or potential partners during the 2017 spring semester to pose these questions and to hold conversations about research needs. The stakeholders were: The Office of Graduate Education and Life, the Research Office, Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), the Launch Lab, The Honors College, the Health Sciences Center Research and Graduate Education Office, the Undergraduate Research Office, the GIS Technical Center, Information Technology Services Research Computing Group, the Office of International Students, and the Teaching and Learning Commons.

#### **Obstacles to Research or Needs uncovered during these conversations:**

- Lack of dedicated services & spaces for graduate level research
- Not enough interdisciplinary interactions for grad students
- More services and support needed for early stage projects
- Programs for non-native English speakers (writing emphasis)
- Better communication about new resources or services from the libraries
- Central database of researchers needed to foster collaboration

- Post-docs and international students fall between the cracks
- Grad students need statistics tutoring lab/dedicated tutoring for grad students
- Need for cohesive/coherent DM plan at WVU (ITS)

**Potential collaborations or partnerships suggested:**

- HPC partnership on data management
- Office of Research – coaching for successful proposals
- Office of Research - Pivot training (Pivot came up in multiple conversations.)
- Graduate Education & Life – very interested in partnering for a joint proposal to the provost
- GIS Center – short training courses

**Suggestions for Services:**

- Editorial services for grad students/early faculty who are non-native English speakers
- Training on Pivot
- IR should include research interests easily found by keyword to support collaboration
- Support for publication writing-- grads and early faculty don't know how to write, cite, avoid plagiarism
- Grad students need training in citation management tools

Since some of the themes of need expressed from multiple sources include a need for writing support and statistics tutoring, it is desirable to continue to build partnerships with campus entities such as the Eberly Speak Write Studio and the Statistics Department which offers consulting services.

## 4. Phased Plan

The Committee's vision of a research commons for WVU is a space and a suite of services that foster interdisciplinary connections and support graduate student and faculty research needs, with an emphasis on graduate students and early-career researchers. It will provide services based on library expertise and partnerships with campus connections. The physical spaces provided by the commons will be inviting, flexible, and scalable. Some of the elements we recommend currently exist in the Libraries and others, such as the new institutional repository, will be launched soon. Still others will require investment in additional library staff, professional development, equipment, and library renovations.

The committee recommends a three phase plan for launching a research commons at WVU.

### Phase 1

During Phase 1, the Libraries will formally adopt the name WVU Libraries Research Commons as the umbrella term and brand for the array of existing services that support graduate student and faculty research. The rebranding will include developing a web site for the services to provide a single comprehensive and coherent source for researchers to access services.

Existing Services to Include in the Research Commons Web Site include:

- Research consultations are offered by subject librarians to support both traditional and high-level needs of scholars and researchers, including systematic reviews, research impact metrics, citation management, literature reviews
- Consultations in specialized areas such as patent consultations, scholarly communications, grant seeking, and data services offered by referral.
  - Open Access Author Fund at Health Sciences Library
  - Foundation Grants Funding Information Center at Downtown Library
  - Patent and Trademark Resource Center at Evansdale Library
  - ICPSR membership for data curation and archiving

- Workshops
  - Software Carpentry Workshops offered in partnership with the Office of Research
  - Citation Management Tools offered at all libraries and for departments on demand
  - Grant-Seeking offered in partnership with the Office of Research
  - Technical writing offered in partnership with the Eberly Speak/Write Studio

#### Existing Technology & Spaces to include in the Research Commons Web Site

- Group study rooms and classrooms are available in all libraries
- Poster printing for academic presentations in all libraries
- Presentation practice rooms with the “one button studio” are available in Evansdale and Downtown Libraries.
- Equipment for digital projects is available for loan, including 360 cameras, digital recorders, document cameras, and data projectors available in Downtown Library.
- Library computers include productivity tools such as SPSS and Adobe
- Links to WVU campus resources such as software licenses and high-performance computing resources

During Phase 1 planning for the institutional repository will begin, and the scholarly communications librarian will work closely with subject librarians to engage with faculty to identify needs and priorities. Through the Engaged Librarian program we will provide development activities for library faculty to help integrate their work with the Research Commons. Work to identify and develop partnerships with additional campus centers such as the Office of Graduate Studies and Life, continues during this phase. Members of the current library faculty will undertake training in SPSS and Tableau to build capacity for support of statistical management of data and data visualization.

#### **Phase 2**

In Phase 2, The Research Commons will develop new services and expand capacity. The scholarly communications librarian and subject librarians will work to expand the institutional repository based on identified campus needs and to increase awareness of Research Commons services through engagement. Support for data services through use of statistical software applications and data visualization software will become available as librarians complete training for SPSS and Tableau. Supporting digital humanities, data management, use of statistical software applications, and research poster design through consultations and workshops will also become key functions of the Research Commons during Phase 2. The Research Commons will begin hosting events such as panels and speakers on topics related to research and scholarship and will serve as a central hub for discussions about these topics for the WVU community.

#### **Phase 3**

Phase 3 of the Research Commons will create new or renovate existing library spaces to create exciting areas for collaboration, outreach and research. This should include a variety of open and closed work spaces for graduate student and faculty collaboration. All spaces should be flexible to cater to as many user needs as possible and include a variety of individual, group, public and private spaces. Possible spaces and technology could include:

- Improved small and medium group collaboration spaces that will wirelessly connect to multiple personal devices and are equipped for video conferencing.
- A flexible event space that could be used for hosting speakers and panels, conferences or poster presentations.
- Improved classroom spaces.
- Video walls to highlight WVU research and data visualizations.
- Computers that will allow researchers to work on data analysis, visualizations, and other research. Specialized software for analyzing statistics, data visualization, GIS, digital humanities, open journal publication and multimedia creation should be included.
- A specific space just for graduate students.

- A maker space for researchers to design and prototype ideas.
- Augmented and virtual reality creation spaces.
- Multimedia production studio with green screen capabilities and post production workstations.

The Research Services Committee is a library-wide group charged with providing leadership in the provision and development of excellent research and reference services for the WVU community. The committee's focus has traditionally been on shared reference services through IM chat, skills development opportunities, and shared data collection.

Current committee members are: Susan Arnold, Barbara Hengemihle, Anna Crawford, Traci Mays, Matt Steele, Martha Yancey, Jessica Tapia, and Penny Pugh. Former members who contributed to this project were: Linda Blake, Kevin Fredette, Chanelle Pickens, and Marian Armour-Gemmen.