

Integrated Programme Development a Tri-Lateral Statement of Intent

**For the Libraries of
The University of Guelph,
The University of Waterloo,
and
Wilfrid Laurier University**

February 22, 1995

As the 21st century draws nearer, academic libraries find themselves dealing on the one hand with an unprecedented proliferation of information in myriad formats, and on the other hand with significantly reduced financial resources. The latter drastically hampers the ability of the libraries to acquire the former. Partially counterbalancing these trends, modern technology facilitates access without ownership in a variety of ways and Libraries have become leaders in the development of innovative information sharing.

The University Librarians of the University of Guelph, the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University agree, in principle, that the three University libraries must work toward a seamlessly integrated programme of library collections and services. In keeping with this philosophy, further investigation will take place as follows:

1. Information Resources and Services.

a. Rationalized Collection Development

As a result of the increased costs of information resources, particularly scholarly journals, resource sharing is a very high priority for research libraries. Alternatives to local ownership and access must be planned and implemented to provide faculty and students with access to information in a timely, effective and efficient fashion.

A task group including members from all three libraries has been formed to address the issue of rationalized collection development. Initially, the programme will focus on shared academic programmes; however the plan is to broaden it to other aspects of collection development in the longer term.

b. Document Delivery and InterLibrary Loan

The three universities agree to plan and implement policies to maximize the ability of faculty and students to access the collections of all three institutions. To begin the process, an inter-institutional working group will be set into place, focussed on the development of a joint mission statement and service goals. It is anticipated that the detailed plan which follows will encompass improved physical transfer of materials (Interlibrary Loan), and the making available of information using various electronic means (Document Delivery).

The group will be established and will begin planning immediately. The Document Delivery/Interlibrary Loan librarians will undertake to put into operation the technical and resource requirements beginning in 1995.

c. Database Sharing

Recent and rapid proliferation of database resources and communication networks make local or regional cost sharing initiatives very attractive. The Universities agree to place a high priority on the setting into place of a common technical infrastructure to facilitate the efficient and effective sharing of data resources.

All three Libraries presently have some form of networked access to CD-ROM databases. A task force will be formed as soon as possible to assess the compatibility of these infrastructures and plan for technical integration.

A second working group of librarians will be created to investigate specific database needs and requirements. This group will identify and coordinate the joint acquisition of appropriate databases.

d. Networked Information Resources

The proliferation of electronic texts, data archives and information services demonstrates that electronic resources are becoming crucial to scholarly communications. The growth and pervasiveness of telecommunications (especially the Internet) provides a powerful, readily-available means to access and deliver these services and resources. In order to explore the potential for collaborative projects in this area, it is agreed that appropriate staff from each of the libraries will participate in key groups working with networked information.

2. Joint Storage Facility

Detailed plans for a joint storage facility were developed nearly three years ago. A warehouse facility within reasonable proximity of all three libraries will be built or acquired. Single copies of less-used materials will be stored, and will be available by courier delivery on a one-business-day turn-around. Materials in the storage facility will

be owned by the facility corporation which will be a subsidiary of all three universities. Patrons of all three libraries will have equal access to all resources in the storage facility, regardless of which library may have owned the material originally. Electronic access compatible with the electronic library systems on all three campuses will be in place.

A formal funding proposal sponsored by the three University Presidents is still under discussion with the Provincial government.

3. Integrated Library System

All three Libraries are at a critical point in the development of their respective integrated Library systems. There are significant advantages to the mounting of the same system in all three institutions. Preliminary enquiries would seem to imply that financial concessions are not necessarily readily available; however, this issue will be pursued further. Regardless of purchase cost benefits, easier development of access to the holdings of the proposed joint storage facility, and easier technological support for joint collection development and resource sharing are two of a number of areas where advantages would be gained and secondary cost savings realized.

Draft versions of any system specifications document produced by any of the three libraries will be offered to the other two for preliminary comment before distribution to potential vendors. Every effort will be made to identify the system configuration which best serves the needs of both the individual institution and the programme of cooperation.

University of Guelph	University of Waterloo	Wilfrid Laurier University
		
		