

**Prospect 2005**  
**University of Wollongong Library**  
**Strategic Vision**  
**1995 to 2005**

**University of Wollongong Library**  
**1995**

# Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>VISION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AIMS OF THE PROSPECT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ACHIEVEMENTS 1990 - 1995</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>GOALS 1995 - 2005</b>	
<b>Information Resources</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Client Service</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Organisational Structure</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Performance Evaluation</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>LIBRARY VALUES</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>THE UNIVERSITY CONTEXT</b>	<b>26</b>

# Introduction

In 1990, the Library published a vision for the future which emphasised the pivotal role which information would have in the emerging *new order* scholarly environment. The process of developing a vision, and its enunciation as *Prospect 2001*, was time-consuming but it has had a number of long lasting benefits. It contributed toward a re-evaluation of the role and purpose of the Library and provided the basis on which planning has occurred. While management decision-making retained an *ex tempore* characteristic, *Prospect 2001* provided a focus for planning especially resource allocation.

Development of *Prospect 2001* commenced in mid-1986 when a program was instituted to realign the attitudes of senior Library staff about the role of the Library, their role as leaders and their need to develop sophisticated management and personnel skills as well as professional competency. Senior staff were exposed to a wide range of experiences designed to provide them with opportunities to develop new skills and attitudes. From 1988, the development program was expanded to include all members of the Library staff.

A major initiative of the past four years has been to re-focus all aspects of the Library as an organisation. There has been a gradual move from an hierarchical management structure to one which emphasises participation through self-managing teams. This has provided staff with greater opportunity to participate in decision making affecting their areas of work. The process has been accompanied by a lessening of the distinctions between the various departments and divisions of the Library and a re-appraisal of the ways in which functions are performed.

Significant outcomes which have been achieved include: a more positive perception of the Library; flexibility and effectiveness of staff resources; introduction of networked information; development of staff skills; promotion of information literacy and the improvement of service provision in terms of quality and equity of access. The Library has been a major contributor to the University's Continuous Improvement Program and has developed internal mechanisms which will ensure that commitment to quality and excellence remain central to the purpose of the Library.

The quality of the collections has been the subject of criticism ever since the University was founded. Compared with the number of volumes contained in other similar Australian universities, the collection does not appear large. However, it has been developed to reflect closely the needs of the University, and has not grown by the indiscriminate accumulation of donated volumes. Emphasis on electronic publications, particularly indexing and abstracting services, has enabled the support of more diverse research interests than could have been achieved by the purchase of print publications.

*Prospect 2005* represents the extension of the Library vision for the period 1995 - 2005 and was developed after extensive consultation within the Library and throughout the University. It takes account of the University's forward plan - *Towards 2000* - and of discernible trends in higher education, information technology and scholarly communication. It seeks to provide a framework for strategic planning based on forward thinking which is not unduly dominated by traditional attitudes to libraries, information and scholarship. *Prospect 2005* recognises that the future information environment will be largely unpredictable and somewhat volatile. The ultimate purpose of *Prospect 2005* is to enhance the ability of the Library to react to changing circumstances in ways which enable the University to achieve its objectives, provide the best possible support for learning and research, use resources to the maximum effect and take the best advantage of new technologies.

**John Shipp**  
University Librarian

# Vision

*Irrespective of the nature or location of the sources, the Library will provide a range of services and technologies which facilitate access, retrieval and interpretation of knowledge and, where possible, will make access independent of the Library building.*

The vision represents the overall, long-term objective of the Library and provides the focus for future strategic and functional planning. It should be interpreted in the context of the Library's mission:

Quality information services for research, teaching and learning

Major outcomes of the vision will include:

- ◇ providing access to information resources which are necessary and appropriate to the learning, research and administrative needs of the University;
- ◇ providing facilities which, as far as possible, permit access to information from locations other than the Library building;
- ◇ meeting the individual needs of scholars in ways which are timely and cost-effective;
- ◇ providing core essential facilities as part of the free services available to all members of the University;
- ◇ providing a range of services which extend or add value to core services and for which full or partial cost recovery is made;
- ◇ participating in a range of cooperative and other arrangements to extend access to scholarly information in the most cost-effective manner;
- ◇ taking a leading role in the teaching of information literacy.

There is no doubt that print publications will continue to be produced well into the future and that they will be an important, if not dominant, format for some purposes. There is a need, however, to plan for a new scholarly environment in which information will be delivered increasingly in digital format and accessed from work stations connected to communication networks and often quite remote from the University. How quickly and comprehensively this will occur will be dependent on a number of factors including:

- ◇ commercial attractiveness to publishers;
- ◇ rate at which publishers can re-engineer their production processes;
- ◇ access to appropriate computing, communication and network facilities by users at a reasonable cost;
- ◇ ability of individuals to use networked information effectively;
- ◇ acceptance by the scholarly community and its integration into learning and research activities;
- ◇ demand by users;
- ◇ willingness of institutions to invest in and promote new formats;
- ◇ changes in the ownership and control of intellectual property;
- ◇ establishment of satisfactory mechanisms to ensure long-term access.

No-one can predict accurately what will occur and there have been many prophesied revolutions in information delivery, such as microfilm, which have failed to have significant effect. Electronic formats, however, offer the opportunity of making information available more widely and

independently of the physical library. Members of the University will be able to access resources from their homes or offices at times which suit themselves and to manipulate the data more easily. This will assist the University to meet its objectives related to more flexible learning.

# Aims of the Prospect

The *Prospect* is a visionary statement which provides a framework around which more specific planning can be structured. The specific aims and objectives, accompanied by target achievement dates and evaluation criteria, are contained in the annual strategic plans. Within *Prospect 2001*, a number of conditions were identified which needed to be present if the totality of the vision was to be attained. These conditions remain relevant to *Prospect 2005*:

<b><i>significant changes in institutional attitudes and/or procedures including</i></b>
~ encouragement of calculated risk-taking and innovation
~ recognition of information as an essential commodity which requires appropriate budgetary provision
~ acceptance of the University's obligation to provide sufficient library resources to support teaching programs and a recognition that any proliferation of new courses without accompanying resources will result in minimal Library support
~ recognition that Library support for research will become increasingly shallow if resource deployment is not limited to priority programs
~ acceptance by academic staff that scholarly communication is changing
~ recognition that whilst cooperation between libraries will improve access, it will not necessarily result in reduced overall costs
<b><i>development of a clear strategy for the implementation and use of information technology throughout the University</i></b>
~ provision of a reliable and pervasive campus network
~ development of support systems which assist members of the University to use technology
~ low-cost connection to, and use of, national and international networks
<b><i>considerable investment in the information superstructure</i></b>
~ implementation of training programs for information literacy skills
~ development of Library staff resources
~ provision of equipment and buildings necessary to keep pace with collection growth, technological developments and to meet demands for a wider range of services

Key assumptions which have underpinned the planning and activities undertaken since the publication of *Prospect 2001* included recognising that:

- ◇ the University does not have, and is unlikely to have, the resources to develop and maintain a traditional research library characterised by extensive collections of print publications;
- ◇ improving access to the collection and other information resources through efficient support services is as important as acquiring books and serials;
- ◇ information literacy is an essential adjunct of scholarship;
- ◇ the University's income may not continue to expand relative to its obligations;
- ◇ computing and communication technologies will change the ways in which information is created, stored, accessed and used;
- ◇ the rate of change in the information environment will be rapid, unpredictable and indefinite;

## **Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision**

- ◇ the necessary investments in staff and technology may involve some calculated risk taking;
- ◇ the Library will have to take a leading role in the introduction of information technology and in promoting changes in the scholarly information environment.

To meet the specific goals implicit in *Prospect 2001*, the Library embarked on a program which sought to effect change in seven areas:

### **Information Resources**

- Improving the quality of the collection used by course work students
- Targeting the collections relating to specific research areas
- Establishing the position of Research Services Librarian to complement the work of faculty librarians
- Creating campus network access to:
  - University of Wollongong Library catalogue
  - catalogues of other research libraries
  - journal abstracts
  - databases on CDROM
- Providing online reference assistance
- Negotiating greater and more effective cooperation with other libraries and information service providers

### **Client Services**

- Permitting online request of interlibrary loans by academic staff
- Enabling online reservation of loan items by Library clients
- Delivering journal articles to personal electronic mail boxes
- Attaining automatic reciprocal borrowing rights for students and staff at all Australian tertiary institutions

### **Leadership**

- Reinforcing the role of the Library as a key contributor to the achievements of the University's aims and objectives
- Promoting information literacy as a key competency of University of Wollongong graduates
- Taking an active role in key information organisations, particularly the Council of Australian University Librarians and the AVCC Standing Committee on Information Resources

### **Staff**

- Encouraging staff to develop a flexible approach to change, expand their skills and participate in decision making
- Increasing the number of para professional staff employed
- ensure that all appointments are by merit and in accordance with Equal Opportunity legislation

### **Infrastructure**

## **Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision**

- Implementing an automated library system which permits access to a wide range of information resources
- Maintaining Library buildings as pleasant environments conducive to study

### **Organisational Structures**

- Implementing a less hierarchical management structure
- Providing a culture within the Library which values individual contributions and abilities, encourages calculated risk-taking and promotes innovation

### **Performance Evaluation**

- Providing members of the University with opportunities to comment on Library performance
- Establishing mechanisms for continuous improvement and evaluation

# Achievements 1990 - 1995

Significant progress has been achieved toward the fulfilment of goals identified in *Prospect 2001*. A number of goals have been attained, some are in the process of achievement and the strategies for others have been put in place. In some cases, changing circumstances have required different goals to be identified and progress on some goals has been impeded by external factors beyond the control of either the Library or the University.

## Information Resources

- ◇ expenditure on multiple copies of undergraduate text material has been increased partly from Quality Funds and partly in lieu of a more diverse development of the monograph collection;
- ◇ approximately 55% of book vote expenditure is directed toward research activities;
- ◇ Quality Funds were used to improve research holdings in 1993 and 1994;
- ◇ Research Services Librarian appointed April 1992;
- ◇ about 9% of the annual book budget is spent on electronic information;
- ◇ use of electronic technology has been restricted largely to providing access to bibliographic products such as abstracts and indexes. This has provided increased awareness of literature citations but has not necessarily improved access to the actual documents. The Library has more than 40 CD ROM databases which largely replace reference publications previously purchased in print;
- ◇ the dominance of CD ROM technology, which uses the DOS operating system, has helped to popularise the use of electronic information but it has impeded wide-area network access. The Library has installed a UNIX server which enables campus network access to selected databases from work stations using a variety of operating systems;
- ◇ electronic publication of full-text material has tended to use bit-mapped imaging and CD ROM storage technologies. This combination has made wide area networking of the data virtually impractical. The Library has two services which have a total of 470 journals but they can be accessed only in the Library from two dedicated terminals;
- ◇ access to remote databases using the Internet has been supported by grants from the National Priority (Reserve) Fund. The Library is part of a consortium providing access to the Current Contents and Australian Bureau of Statistics databases. Trial access to the full-text databases, ABI/Inform and Expanded Academic Index, commenced in July 1995;
- ◇ Law Library established 1990;
- ◇ reference collection evaluated and upgraded.

## Client Service

- ◇ online request of interlibrary loans cannot be achieved until changes occur to legal requirements which require individuals to sign every request form personally;
- ◇ online reservation of loan items by Library clients achieved;
- ◇ delivery of journal articles to personal electronic mail boxes prevented by restrictions imposed by copyright owners;
- ◇ reciprocal borrowing rights secured with all institutions except universities in metropolitan Sydney;
- ◇ four faculty librarians completed Introduction to Tertiary Teaching course to improve their instructional skills;
- ◇ improvement of staffing levels during evening and weekend opening hours;
- ◇ standardisation of publications produced by the Library;

## Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision

- ◇ establishment of library service for Berry campus students in association with Shoalhaven City Council Library;
- ◇ provision of reader education classes on Saturday mornings.

### Staff

- ◇ Library Staff Performance Management Program replaced in 1990 by University-wide Annual Evaluation and Development Review;
- ◇ Staff Development Committee reviewed and replaced by Staff Training and Development Committee in 1990;
- ◇ introduction of program for staff multi skilling in 1991;
- ◇ quality teams established to investigate and improve key services;
- ◇ improved selection and career development processes which satisfy Equal Opportunity legislation;
- ◇ Staff Development Officer appointed 1993.

### Leadership

- ◇ information literacy a requirement for graduation;
- ◇ increase in the number of subjects which include an information literacy skills component;
- ◇ Library staff involved in teaching of ARTS 101 : Analysis Research and Technical Skills in the Arts;
- ◇ Information Literacy Forum held annually with academic staff;
- ◇ provision of AARNet training in conjunction with Information Technology Services;
- ◇ University Librarian elected president of Council of Australian University Librarian, member of AVCC Standing Committee on Information Resources, DEET Working Party on Research Library Infrastructure;
- ◇ Deputy University Librarian coordinated the Benchmarking Enquiries and Service Team which spanned the University Administration, Library and Union, and was a member of the University Council and the General Staff Development Advisory Committee;
- ◇ Library coordinated \$400,000 cooperative grant to provide AARNet access to the *Current Contents* database for all Australian universities;
- ◇ Library an Australian test site for electronic periodical ordering with B H Blackwell Ltd;
- ◇ first Australian library to implement the ARIEL document delivery software.

### Infrastructure

- ◇ Library automated system replaced January 1995;
- ◇ CD ROM network installed, 1990 and Database Room re-equipped in 1994;
- ◇ layout of Curriculum Resources Centre revised and improved;
- ◇ foyer of main Library upgraded;
- ◇ reserve collection room re-configured.

### Organisational Structure

- ◇ number of para professional (HEW 3) positions increased;
- ◇ staff with para professional qualification appointed to supervisory positions;
- ◇ introduction of team-based work groups in 1991;
- ◇ Middle Management Team established to provide cross-Library forum for supervisory staff to contribute to policy development and planning;

- ◇ Book and serial ordering and cataloguing reorganised to take advantage of new automated system.

### **Performance Evaluation**

- ◇ suggestion boxes placed at all service desks in 1995;
- ◇ online comments facility incorporated in Library system during 1995;
- ◇ Quality and Service Excellence program introduced 1994;
- ◇ Client Satisfaction survey conducted, 1995.

# **Issues for the Future**

Historically, libraries have had an hegemony as repositories of knowledge. The advent of the printing press, and the subsequent development of the publishing industry, facilitated the replication and distribution of knowledge. This fostered a belief that it was possible and desirable for university library collections to contain all of the works published in the disciplines in which the institution had an interest. It is on this premise that the great research libraries were founded.

The achievement of the all-encompassing, self-sufficient library was probably never practical and has certainly been unattainable over the last fifty years. The proliferation of research and the increasing cost of acquiring and accommodating publications, have militated against the development of research library collections. Expectations that these difficulties will be overcome by electronic publication are unlikely to be met.

The university library of the foreseeable future will continue to rely heavily on printed publications, especially for the support of course work and for research dependent on historical sources. Increasingly, electronic publication will be the preferred means of accessing a wide range of information. New formats will eliminate some of the restrictions on physical access to information but it will introduce other constraints which may well limit the effective utilisation of the technology.

Limiting factors will include copyright, communication technologies, information licence charges, equipment cost and attitudes to information services. In the past, libraries provided services which were aimed at meeting their custodial objectives and concentrated less on the actual needs of their clients. Reassessing the purpose and function of the Library may well result in a set of objectives and priorities which are at odds with the view of libraries possessed by many in the University community.

Areas in which reassessment will be required include:

- physical facilities,
- equipment and communications,
- the nature, availability and flexibility of financial resources,
- the type of people employed,
- nature of services offered,
- the way in which information is stored,
- the role of the library in the publication process,
- the manner in which knowledge is used and synthesised,
- understanding the expectations of users, and
- developing mechanisms for the continual assessment of effectiveness.

For university libraries, in particular, the future will require a more active role in accessing information and presenting it in forms which meet the needs of individuals rather than providing the generic services which have predominated in the past. This implies the provision of services which may be independent of the time of request and the geographical location or status of the requester.

During the past six years, the University of Wollongong Library has undergone considerable and radical change in order to take best advantage of the information environment and to provide services which assist the University to achieve its objectives particularly those related to the quality of learning, teaching and research outcomes. Recognising the inevitability of change, the Library has moved to assume a significant role in the teaching of information literacy skills and in assisting its clients to navigate the international web of information networks. Efforts have been made to ensure that the Library has a flexible approach to change, dynamic leadership, appreciates the contribution of individual staff members and responds to the demands of its clients.

Some of the trends which may impact on the Library during the period to 2005 include:

- increased accountability of all universities
- greater competition between universities for funding and students
- introduction of fees for all courses
- necessity for universities to review and justify all activities
- demands for more flexible learning and work environments
- static or contracting University budget
- inability of the University to support all research interests
- identification of some staff, departments or universities as 'teaching only'
- expectation that teaching and learning can be undertaken remotely
- demand for network access to library resources
- inability to replace equipment to match changes in technology
- lack of space available for book collection growth.

# Development Principles

In view of these prognostications, the University has endorsed general principles which will underpin the strategies developed for the fulfilment of the Library vision.

## *DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES*

- ◇ development of collections, access to information and the provision of client services are of equal importance.
- ◇ appropriateness of format should determine how the book vote is used. This will involve determining whether to purchase for inclusion in the collections, license access to an electronic database, borrow from another library or purchase a single document for the sole use of an individual.
- ◇ Library priorities for the deployment of resources will be:
  - 1 course work
  - 2 general reference
  - 3 research institutes
  - 4 research centres
  - 5 research groups
  - 6 individual research
- ◇ the University cannot acquire all publications and access to some resources,

## Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision

particularly those required by priority groups 3 - 6, may be on a fee-for-service basis.

- ◇ where possible, indexing and abstracting publications should be acquired in electronic format and made available remotely via the campus network.
- ◇ networked electronic services which provide the full text of publications should be acquired in preference to citation databases.
- ◇ information literacy should be a competency possessed by every graduate.
- ◇ Library staff have a role in the teaching of information skills.
- ◇ cooperation with other libraries and information service providers is a valid strategy for providing more cost-benefit access to some resources but is not without cost.
- ◇ staff resources constitute a major investment which should be enhanced by training, development programs and appropriate retention mechanisms.
- ◇ effective future access to networked, electronic publishing will require concomitant investment in communication and computing infrastructure.
- ◇ electronic publication will not eliminate print publication and unless alternate strategies are employed, there will be a need for an extension to the Library building by 2000.

# Goals 1995 - 2005

## *INFORMATION RESOURCES GOALS 1995 - 2005*

- ◇ implement a collection development plan which aligns acquisitions with University priorities especially those enunciated in Faculty Plans and the Research Management Plan;
- ◇ continue the purchase of print publications especially those which are in high demand for teaching, are the most appropriate format for the information, or for which long-term preservation cannot be guaranteed by other means;
- ◇ acquire those electronic publications which can be networked easily, provide better access than print publications, are not available in print, provide enhanced features;
- ◇ lobby for faculty planning to include realistic assessments of the library and information resource implications associated with teaching and research programs;
- ◇ increase the involvement of Library staff in University planning especially in course development and information resource planning;
- ◇ implement an electronic reserve with access via the campus network;
- ◇ determine the extent of the Library's involvement in electronic publishing;
- ◇ improve awareness and knowledge of collections, document delivery services and database access to ensure the most effective use is made of all information resources.

Books and serials in print format will continue to be available and acquired by university libraries well into the next century. For the foreseeable future libraries will have to maintain their existing collection of books and serials as it is unlikely that the majority of these items will be transferred to electronic formats. For some libraries, particularly the older research libraries, there will be a continuing archival function for print materials. There will be an increasing need to devote resources to the physical conservation of the formats on which the information is stored whether it is paper-based or some alternate media.

Increasingly, however, multimedia formats will predominate and there may be greater emphasis on accessing information as required rather than purchase in anticipation of use. Few, if any, universities will adopt the access model exclusively. A variety of factors including cost, effectiveness of delivery mechanisms and convenience will affect acquisition decisions irrespective of whether print, electronic or some other media is involved. Items which are in high demand are likely to be purchased by the institution to facilitate access and for cost effectiveness. High cost/low use items may well be accessed as required from an external supplier which may be another library or a commercial vendor.

There will be increasing challenges to the *fair dealing* provisions of the copyright legislation which will result in radical changes to the way in which libraries cooperate. With more information being available electronically, copyright owners will attempt to safeguard their intellectual property and technological means will be at their disposal to control access more effectively than with print publications. This will require libraries to enter into a variety of contractual arrangements and require new approaches to funding and fee-for-service.

Australian libraries have a long history of cooperation and have used interlibrary loan as an adjunct to collection development. In recent years they have sought to make better use of their resources by cooperative mechanisms such as the Distributed National Collection, improved document delivery and consortium purchase of databases. The future cost effectiveness of these access mechanisms may be

## Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision

affected by copyright owners levying transaction based charges. Changes are occurring already and at least one publisher has attempted to charge higher serial subscriptions if its publications are to be subject to photocopying or interloan. Producers of databases on CDROM already license their products according to access and charge higher if network or multi-institutional access is required.

Growth in the volume of information available and its dispersion across the Internet increases difficulties associated with the identification and use of appropriate material. While libraries have always had an educative role, information literacy skills will be recognised as an essential attribute for effective scholarship. Ideally, subject curricula should encompass such skills so that individuals gain competencies appropriate to their needs. The teaching of information literacy skills may be handled differently across the University but the Library should have a dynamic role in ensuring that all members of the University have the necessary skills. Relevant members of the Library staff will need to possess teaching and curriculum skills and to be recognised by the academic community as colleagues in the learning process.

### *CLIENT SERVICE GOALS 1995 - 2005*

- ◇ determine the type, level and extent of facilities which sections of the University community can expect as basic, free-to-the-user services provided by the Library;
- ◇ provide a range of fee based services which provide access to information resources and facilities not funded by the University;
- ◇ implement improved services to off-campus students;
- ◇ negotiate with other universities to improve services including interlibrary loan, reciprocal borrowing, consortium purchases;
- ◇ maintain continuous improvement programs including those associated with service delivery, collections and staffing;
- ◇ provide a range of services which facilitate access by clients with special needs;
- ◇ develop standards relating to the extent and quality of each service.

The inevitable move toward charging for individual services will be accompanied by increased awareness by clients of their rights. As more students self-fund their education, they will expect services which meet their individual needs. Should these not be available from the library, or be provided inadequately, clients will have financial and technical opportunity to use other information services.

Libraries will need to specify not only their services but also the quality of delivery which clients can expect to receive. The publication of these service contracts and the implementation of quality assurance measures will be essential. It is not inconceivable that future clients of the Library may require the University to be more accountable for the quality of services which impact on their learning or research outcomes. It will be necessary to institute safeguards to ensure that members of the University are not prevented from assessing essential information resources due to their inability to pay.

It will be necessary also to provide a range of services and facilities which reduce the access barriers confronting Library clients with special needs. The Library has a good record of meeting these needs as they have arisen but a more systematic approach may be necessary in the future to complement the University's objectives of improved equity of access. In part technology may provide solutions but staff-based services will be the most appropriate in many circumstances.

***LEADERSHIP GOALS 1995 - 2005***

- ◇ promote the inclusion of information skills in subject curricula;
- ◇ extend the participation of Library staff in the teaching of information literacy skills;
- ◇ provide opportunities for academic staff to maintain levels of information literacy consistent with their individual needs;
- ◇ identify and encourage Library staff members with leadership potential;
- ◇ continue to influence change in scholarly communication through membership and leadership of relevant organisations;
- ◇ gain national recognition of the leadership role and achievements of the Library and its staff.

An important contributor to the continuing effectiveness of the Library will be leadership both in terms of the extent to which the Library as an organisation is able to influence changes in the scholarly communication process, and the extent to which supervisory and managerial staff within the Library are able to effect changes in the deployment of resources and in the behaviour of other staff members. Realisation of the Library's vision will require the employment of staff possessed of leadership as well as managerial skills. It will require also that the Library develop strategies for influencing attitudes and practices affecting the creation, storage and use of scholarly information.

### **The Library as a Leader**

By itself, the Library cannot expect to wield much influence or leadership in the scholarly communication environment. In tandem with other organisations, however, the Library can contribute to changes particularly those associated with the shift toward electronic publication. Within the University, the Library can be expected to provide the vision and leadership which will enable effective decision-making on matters including investment in library collections and services, information skills required by scholars, and publishing trends which will impact on the University's activities.

Over the past three years, the Library has used its membership of a variety of library organisations as a means of influencing the external environment. The main organisation through which the Library has sought to provide leadership has been the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) of which the University Librarian has been president since 1992. In conjunction with the Standing Committee on Information Resources established by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, CAUL has been involved with a number of projects concerned with database access, electronic publishing and the national information infrastructure. The aim of these projects has been to sponsor activities which are of benefit to all universities with the intention of effecting system-wide improvement.

To date, the most successful of the projects has been the database access program which has coordinated trials of a number of databases using AARNet as the communication medium. The effect of the trials has been to permit all universities to experiment with network access to a range of databases and to evaluate their suitability without cost. This has provided universities with time to negotiate financial support for products to which they want continuing access. As a result of the trials, knowledge and use of networked information has increased and universities have been able to negotiate consortium purchase of products at a lower cost than they could have achieved individually.

### **Staff Members as Leaders**

Too often in the past, technical skill and managerial ability rather than leadership capacity have been the criteria for appointment to senior library positions. While knowledge of library practices and the ability to manage them effectively remain important, increasingly the success and quality of a library

## Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision

requires dynamic and visionary leaders who have the ability to communicate that vision to others and to gain their continuing commitment to its achievement. Leadership qualities are not the sole preserve of the senior management but must be present throughout the organisation and represented in every team. Staff recruitment and development procedures must take account of the need for leadership skills and ability.

While leadership is essential, it must have direction and focus. The formulation of a broad vision for the Library and the development of implementation strategies are essential. Library staff members already have considerable experience in effective strategic planning and possesses an overall vision of its future role and function.

### *STAFF GOALS 1995 - 2005*

- ◇ continue to improve human resource management including career development, equity considerations and skills development;
- ◇ refine performance management systems to incorporate team and organisational performance;
- ◇ ensure that staff skills match organisational responsibilities and accountabilities;
- ◇ encourage high staff commitment, productivity and morale in a rewarding and effective organisational environment which is conducive to innovation;
- ◇ contribute to the achievement of the University's equity objectives by the refinement of existing management practices;
- ◇ develop a staff plan which incorporates recruitment, remuneration, qualifications and skill requirements for each level.

Greater use of technology for creating, storing and accessing information will require library staff to possess a wide range of skills and capacities. Qualities which may become increasingly desirable include attitudinal flexibility, enhanced communication skills, computer literacy and organisational ability. All staff members will be expected to be committed to the agreed values which guide the Library as an organisation (page 24).

Staff at all levels will be expected to possess higher skill levels than may be currently required and to upgrade their skills constantly. To facilitate changing requirements, contract employment may become standard and the retention of staff who lack the necessary skills, attitudes or ability may be economically difficult if not impossible. Staff, however, will have a right through enterprise bargaining to opportunities to increase their competency through skill training and career development. The Library has had a long-term commitment to staff development and activities are guided by a Staff Training and Development Committee. This commitment was demonstrated in 1993, when an existing Library position was used to create the position of Staff Development Officer.

The nature of library staffing may well change significantly. With the introduction of a team based approach, staff members will be expected to possess competencies which will enable them to perform a wide range of duties. For each classification, competencies will be specified and staff expected to perform related duties anywhere in the Library not just within a particular department or section. Job classifications will be subject to continual change as the result of further award restructuring, greater multi skilling, and changes in the perception of the skills required and in the technologies employed.

Other changes in work practices are likely to be necessary and desirable. Greater dependence on communications technology and access to information resources independent of the physical library will give rise to demands for different services. Library clients will expect to be able to access information resources from their homes or work places, and to do so at times which suit them.

Just as they expect to be able to receive assistance when they are in the library building, so they will have an expectation of help when they are accessing remotely. This will require greater inter-relation

with Information Technology Services which may involve the establishment of a joint service to assist scholars access electronic information remotely.

In conjunction with evolving community attitudes to equity, employment and the rights of workers, changes in the information environment may increase the viability of staff working from their own homes and having working hours which are more attuned to their lifestyles. The concept of an electronic reference desk staffed twenty-four hours a day, and of some technical services being performed remote from the library building, may not be unrealisable in the future.

Ultimately, the move to teams may change employment selection criteria. Formal qualifications are expected to remain significant indicators of participation in a learning process but the capacity to apply the knowledge acquired and the ability to renew that knowledge will become more important. In some instances, personal qualities such as leadership ability may well be more valued by the organisation than formal qualifications. Increasingly, the provision of staff development opportunities will need to be aligned closely with the outcomes expected of the teams.

### ***INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS 1995 - 2005***

- ◇ in conjunction with Information Technology Services, develop network access to as many external library collections and facilities as possible using mechanisms such as the Campus Wide Information Service;
- ◇ advocate that the University's access to communications and computing infrastructure, both internal and external, be maintained at levels which enable maximum effective use of information in electronic format;
- ◇ seek an extension to the Library building for the storage of print collections, services and for study places;
- ◇ implement programs which ensure the timely and adequate maintenance and/or replacement of buildings, equipment, furniture and fittings;
- ◇ plan for the provision of library services to students at the Shoalhaven campus.

Greater use of, and dependence on, computer and communications technologies will necessitate access to pervasive and reliable network connections which have transmission capacities appropriate to the requirements imposed by the type of information being accessed. This implies considerable investment by universities not only in the initial acquisition of computer, information and communication technologies but also in their regular replacement as obsolescence occurs.

Having embarked on a strategy which is reliant on electronic access, it must be realised that provision of appropriate technology is essential not only to the effective provision of services by the Library, but also to the efficiency with which scholars are able to access those services. At the least, this means that:

- every member of the University staff must be provided with appropriate personal computing facilities which are connected to the campus network,
- students must have appropriate access to networked computing facilities,
- the University must maintain links of sufficient capacity with other networks to allow the unhindered transmission of data,
- there must be sufficient facilities for remote access, at an equitable cost, to the available services, and
- strategic planning for information services must occur at an institutional level.

The printed book will not be replaced entirely by electronic publication. For at least the next decade, and probably longer, the Library will continue to acquire books and serials in paper format and will expand its collections of other formats such as video and sound recordings. Even with an increased

## Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision

proportion of available funds being devoted to electronic publications, there will be a need for additional space in which to store traditional collections.

Quite apart from book storage, the Library must provide reader seating. There are currently 900 places in the Library which results in one seat for every 10 EFTSU. The national average is 1 place per 9 EFTSU. It would be undesirable to reduce the number of places and there is a need to increase the provision by the addition of work stations for the use of multimedia.

On current acquisition projections, the existing building will be fully utilised for book storage by 1999. In 1988, stage three of the main Library building was completed. At that time, it was expected that the additional space would provide for collection growth over ten to twelve years. Soon after completion, 560 square metres of the unallocated space was used to accommodate computer laboratories, the Learning Development Centre and Campus Personal Computing.

The remaining unallocated space, which was reserved for collection growth, was occupied in 1991 by the Law Library. Despite the allocation of all available space difficulties are experienced in the Law Library which has less than two years allowance for collection growth and which has inadequate space for staff and for services such as database searching.

The construction of an Information Technology building may release up to 300 square metres of space by the relocation of the computing laboratories and Campus Personal Computing. Even if the entire space could be used for shelving, it would allow for only two years collection growth.

Despite increased use of electronic publications, print publications will continue to be acquired and will have to be housed. Unless additional space is available for book storage, alternate strategies will have to be implemented which may involve:

- discarding at a rate to match acquisition
- reducing reader seating
- relegating items to off-campus storage
- eliminating the current serials display

Each of these strategies will affect the quality of services and support available to the University community.

### ***ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE GOALS 1995 - 2005***

- ◇ refine the organisational structure so that it is team-based, flexible and client-focused with a decreased reliance on hierarchically-based functional divisions;
- ◇ continue to improve the information systems associated with the efficient deployment and management of Library resources;
- ◇ continue to use total quality management and other appropriate methodologies;
- ◇ develop closer links with other units of the University involved in the provision of information-related services;
- ◇ encourage the University community to be more involved in, and committed to, the Library planning process.

In the past, power and decision-making in libraries tended to be based on formal qualifications, competency in technical processes and the restriction of access to information according to position in the hierarchy. As organisations, they were stable but sometimes incapable of reacting appropriately to changing circumstances particularly when rapid response was required. Within the organisation, there was often considerable emphasis on precedent and an expectation that promotion through the hierarchy would be accompanied by increased wisdom that approximated infallibility as the apex was approached. Certainly, there was little expectation that staff members would participate in problem-solving beyond their specified job responsibilities.

## Prospect 2005 - University of Wollongong Library Strategic Vision

Unlike many organisations, most libraries have had a long-term exposure to technological change and have been more receptive to innovation than their parent organisations. However, although automation of library processes commenced in the 1970s, it was a gradual process which was accompanied more by the modification than the transformation of organisational structures. In the last few years, however, the pace of change has been more rapid and librarians have recognised that radical and pervasive alteration of processes, structures and attitudes is essential to cope with emerging conditions.

At the University of Wollongong, the redefinition of the Library commenced in 1986. In the early years, the focus was on ensuring that staff had the skills and attitudes necessary to cope with change. The structure of the Library remained a traditional hierarchy based on two functional divisions - information and technical services - each with their constituent departments.

In 1988, the University began the installation of a campus network. Use of the campus-wide email system and the Internet provided staff at all levels with access to a wide variety of information, enabled participation in discussion groups and provided opportunities for the establishment of personal networks of contacts and information sources. This democratisation of access to information challenged the existing organisational structure and some senior librarians found the loss of their knowledge hegemony threatening and were unable to adapt to a more participatory management style.

To cope effectively with the new information environment, the Library sought to develop an organisational culture which valued, and took advantage of, the skills and contributions of individual staff members. Since 1990, considerable effort has been devoted to transforming the organisational structure and broadening the decision-making process. Integral to this activity has been a focus on client needs and services rather than on the functions associated with the acquisition and control of information resources. The team approach has been introduced gradually to accompany the rate at which staff have acquired the requisite skills and attitudes.

The process has involved the empowerment of teams to take decisions and recognition by team members that they are responsible for the decisions which they take. The first self-managing team was introduced in 1992 and the concept was extended to all other areas in the ensuing years. The philosophy has been applied not only to functional processes but also to cross-Library activities associated with the improvement of services. The teams do not work in a vacuum nor as totally independent units. They operate within an agreed framework which includes the strategic programs of the University and the Library and an awareness of resource constraints. Just as individuals are part of the team, so the various teams interrelate to ensure the consistent achievement of the Library's aims.

A new organisational model was developed by the Deputy University Librarian, Felicity McGregor, to reflect the interdependence of activities and organisational functions within the context of service to the University. While some elements of the hierarchical structure remain, increased emphasis is placed on decision-making and problem-solving by the various teams rather than by individuals. In the model, the functional processes are represented in dark blue and underpin the activities of the teams. The Executive Team acts as a linch-pin and ensures that Library activities are in accordance with the needs and policy of the University and that resources are used effectively.

General advice on the operation and development of services is provided by the Management Advisory Team consists of all senior staff plus a representative of professional and supervisory staff. Individual members of both the Executive and Management Advisory Teams participate in the Quality Teams or serve on Standing Committees.

A number of Quality Teams co-exist at any one time and are established for a limited time to address specific issues affecting Library services. Issues addressed by the teams include the re-shelving of books and access to electronic information. Team membership includes a sponsor from the Management Advisory Team and staff from across the Library. Standing Committees are constituted for on-going activities such as staff training and development, and reference services.

Continued refinement of the team approach will be necessary in the future as will the development of the relationship between units which provide related services to the University. In some universities the library, computing services and media production have been amalgamated to meet institution-specific needs. The new arrangements are often justified in terms of the dependence by the units on common technologies. This view fails to appreciate that for libraries, these technologies are merely

part of an infrastructure which is used by every part of the university. While libraries and computing services have some synergy of purpose, their organisational purposes are different. Computing services are concerned essentially with providing the means of capturing, storing and transmitting data whereas libraries are concerned primarily with providing services associated with the intellectual uses of the information much of which has no relationship to computing. Nevertheless, there are some areas of overlap and it is essential that the various units involved in the provision of related services develop strategic directions which are complementary and which they negotiate as a group. Units which have a interrelationship with the Library include the Information Technology Services, Educational Media Services and central administration.

***PERFORMANCE EVALUATION GOALS 1995 - 2005***

- ◇ implement further measurement and review of all services and activities;
- ◇ develop and implement 'best practice' standards for key services;
- ◇ extend mechanisms for the receipt of feedback from Library clients;
- ◇ identify institutions with which to benchmark services;
- ◇ attain recognition as a *quality* organisation;
- ◇ conduct investigations on the use of Library resources and relate the outcomes to budget allocations;
- ◇ provide training for selected Library staff in evaluation mechanisms including statistical analysis.

While members of the Library staff have undertaken *ad hoc* research on a number of issues relating to client satisfaction, performance indicators and related topics, rarely have the results been published. This reflects the low priority given to applied research as a function of Library staff. There is a need, however, to investigate Library activities and performance especially improvement in service provision and identification of the needs of clients and how they utilise collections and services. In the future, it is likely that the Library will have to document its achievements and justify its activities more scrupulously than in the past. This will necessitate the development of formal applied research projects and publication of the outcomes. This will require resources which may be derived from various sources including University teaching improvement funds, external competitive grants and the re-alignment of the Library's budget.

# Library Values

In pursuit of its objectives, the Library is guided by the following values which were developed by staff members in 1995 after extensive deliberation.

**CLIENT FOCUS**

**Providing consistent, flexible, quality service;  
feedback sought and used in planning;  
recognition and support of both internal and  
external clients**

<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>Supporting the teaching and research aims of the University through commitment to scholarship and intellectual enquiry; providing equitable access to resources and services; promoting information literacy</b>
<b>PLANNING</b>	<b>Anticipating change; involvement of staff and clients; calculated risk taking and innovation, action oriented; results emphasised</b>
<b>COOPERATION</b>	<b>Pursuing strategic alliances with other groups, both on and off campus, to benefit clients</b>
<b>CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>Ensuring excellence through improved processes and procedures based on the collection, review and analysis of data</b>
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>Recognising achievement, initiative and creativity; equitable access to training and development; opportunity for career development; support; fairness; valuing of differences; commitment</b>
<b>TEAMWORK</b>	<b>Sharing responsibility; involvement; open feedback and communication; participation in problem solving and decision making</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>Implementing new ideas; innovation; calculated risk-taking; cooperation with and support of other information providers</b>

# The University Context

Wollongong is located on the coast of Australia approximately 80 km (60 miles) south of Sydney. The limits of the city are defined by the sea on the eastern side and by a high escarpment which arcs westerly from the north to the south. Initially, the main industry was agriculture but from the mid-1850's, coal mines were developed along the escarpment. After World War One, the manufacture of iron and steel became increasingly dominant until decline of the industry in the 1980's. The city has a population of more than 182,000 and an economy based on a mix of industries among which the University is a major employer.

In 1951 a Division of the New South Wales University of Technology was established in a building of the Wollongong Technical College. Initial courses concentrated on the applied sciences, particularly those relating to the local steel and coal mining industries. A 99 hectare (245 acre) campus at North Wollongong was developed from 1961 for the re-named Wollongong University College. Following relocation to the new site, the variety and number of courses was expanded by the addition of humanities and social sciences. The nexus with the University of New South Wales was severed in 1975 when the University of Wollongong became an autonomous institution.

At the commencement of the 1995 academic year, the University enrolled 12,160 students in nine faculties: Arts, Commerce, Creative Arts, Education, Engineering, Health and Behavioural Sciences, Informatics, Law and Science. Postgraduate students comprise approximately 20% of the student body and the University draws a significant proportion of its students from other countries.

In addition to the main campus, the University conducts classes at Berry 40 km south of Wollongong. Additional teaching facilities are located in Sydney and the University operates the Institute for Australian Studies in Dubai. In 1994, the University established a consortium of Australian universities to provide graduate training by distance education. The PAGE (Graduate and Profession Education) consortium operates in association with the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) which televises its courses.

The University has as its mission:

to produce graduates and research of international distinction especially  
in the development, critical evaluation and application of science and  
technology for industry, commerce and society

A prime objective of the University is *to be established in the top ten Australian universities, known for the excellence of its teaching, research and international programs by the Year 2000*. Attainment of this objective and of the mission is well underway and the achievement has been recognised by the Quality Assurance Program conducted by the Australian Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Integral to the success of the University is the quality of services supporting teaching, learning and research. This includes the University Library whose collections comprise over 500,000 printed volumes as well as a wide range of information in other formats. In addition to published materials, the Library has an archives collection which concentrates on business history, environmental issues and left-wing politics.

The collections are housed in the Main Library and in the Curriculum Resources Centre both of which are located on the Wollongong Campus. Approximately seventy staff members at the Wollongong campus provide a wide range of services including support for students enrolled in PAGE courses. Students at the Berry campus have access to a small collection accommodated in the Shoalhaven City Library at Nowra. The Institute for Australian Studies operates its own library in Dubai. Dial-in facilities are provided to the Library catalogue and to a growing number of citation and full-text databases.

