

Libraries and Information Skills for Students:  
support through computing and information technology

General Libraries Vision Plan  
for Information Technology

1999-2000

Executive Summary

The General Libraries long-term goals for information technology are:

- Pursue a vigorous program of teaching essential information skills required for success in the electronic environment to the entire UT Austin community.
- Establish the information and computing technology infrastructure critical to support UT Austin digital library services.
- Enhance UT Library Online with significant electronic information resources and services for UT scholars.
- Promote resource sharing and continue collaborative programs at the national, regional, state, and campus level in support of distance information-based services.

In support of the first goal, a vigorous program of teaching essential information skills, and to better serve the needs of University students, the General Libraries proposes a project to replace the Undergraduate Library Electronic Information Center user workstations, proctor stations, and server with equipment comparable to that found in the Student Microcomputer Facility. The proposed project budget is \$101,000.

**General Libraries Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Recent Progress**

The General Libraries primary **mission** is to support and enhance the University's learning-centered educational, research, and public service activities by providing access to information and scholarly resources in support of scholarship by University students and faculty.

Long-term **goals** of the General Libraries Vision Plan for Information Technology complement those of the Long Range Planning for Information Technology Steering Committee:

- Pursue a vigorous program of teaching essential information skills required for success in the electronic environment to the entire UT Austin community.
- Establish the information and computing technology infrastructure critical to support UT Austin digital library services.
- Enhance UT Library Online with significant electronic information resources and services for UT scholars.
- Promote resource sharing and continue collaborative programs at the national, regional, state, and campus level in support of distance information-based services.

Recent accomplishments highlight significant **progress** towards realizing the General Libraries long-term goals:

- 881 library instruction sessions held with 17,000 attendees, a 21% increase in attendance over 1996/97.
- Heavy student use of Electronic Information Centers in the Undergraduate Library and PCL, with information specialists to provide assistance and instruction in information literacy.
- Successful opening of a similar Electronic Information Center in the Engineering Library with a focus on scientific and technical information resources.
- Enhanced user services in UT Library Online, including due-list, renewal, and recall.
- Installation of Pentium workstations throughout the acquisition and processing areas of the library to speed the availability of materials to library users and to increase staff efficiency.
- Significant recent electronic information resources added to UT Library Online include Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, electronic journals from Academic Press, philosophy and literary criticism full-text resources, and many similar services; 141 databases and 973 electronic journals are available through UT Library Online.

- Successful launch of the UT System Digital Library in May 1998, supporting both the UT TeleCampus and on-site users from UT component campuses.
- Continued responsibility for electronic information programs of TexShare, a statewide academic library resource sharing program of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

## Facilities, Staffing, and Other Infrastructure

### Facilities

General Libraries facilities as well as the Humanities Research Center, the Center for American History, and the Tarlton Law Library provide 115 UT Library Online Stations and 136 terminals to students, faculty, and staff for academic purposes. The general public may use these stations during posted hours in General Libraries facilities.

Three Electronic Information Centers, located in the Undergraduate Library, the Perry-Castañeda Library, and the Engineering Library, provide assistance from information specialists and access to specialized materials from 71 workstations.

Servers used to provide digital library services are located in the Perry-Castañeda Library and ACITS Network Operations Center. Online catalog and circulation services are supported on ACS' administrative mainframe computer. All General Libraries information technology staff are housed within General Libraries facilities, primarily in the Perry-Castañeda Library.

### Staffing

| Functional Responsibilities  | FTE Staff   |
|--|-------------|
|  |             |
| Online catalog, Circulation Services, ACS Liaison  | 5.0         |
| Design and Publication Services for UT Library Online, Research Web, TexShare Web, UT System Digital Library; Team Web; Special Information Projects; Vendor Liaison; ACITS Liaison; Licensing and Subscription Services | 6.0         |
| System Administration of General Libraries, UT System Digital Library, and TexShare services; General Libraries network design and operation; Access control   | 10.5        |
| Installation and maintenance of public and staff desktop platforms   | 4.0         |
| <b>Total FTE Staff</b>   | <b>25.5</b> |

## Academic Instructional Projects (ITAC Eligible)

### Project

#### Undergraduate Library Electronic Information Center Equipment Replacement

**Abstract:** Replace the Undergraduate Library Electronic Information Center user workstations, proctor stations, and server with equipment comparable to that found in the Student Microcomputer Facility.

**Description:** The Undergraduate Library Electronic Information Center (UGL EIC) is an extremely busy computer laboratory open to the entire University community. The facility is currently equipped with 18 Macintosh and 14 IBM-compatible PCs and is open for use 75 hours per week. The UGL EIC opened on September 21, 1996 and has recorded 179,501 logins and library staff has answered 23,736 help requests - large numbers for a facility of this size. Use of the facility has steadily increased since opening: logins increased 13% in 1997/98 and help requests have increased over 40% during the same time period.

While fulfilling vastly different missions, the UGL EIC was originally conceived to work in tandem with the Student Microcomputer Facility (SMF). Both labs are located in the Flawn Academic Center (FAC), utilize the LabMan lab management system developed by ACITS and validate users using ACITS IF accounting system. Both support electronic mail, Internet-related applications, troubleshooting for basic computing problems (formatting disks, scanning for viruses, etc.) and printing. The computer configurations in both facilities intentionally have a similar "look and feel" to create consistency for users, but while the SMF offers students productivity tools such as word processing, spreadsheet, and statistical applications, the support available in the UGL EIC focuses specifically on helping students complete their research using the Web-accessible resources available through UT Library, the General Libraries' CD-ROM network (only available in the Library), and the Internet. In the EIC, trained, experienced reference staff are available to help users navigate these resources and the absence of productivity tools increases workstation turnover. Thus more users are helped with substantially less wait time than in the SMF. The SMF replaces its equipment on a 3-year rolling basis and recently replaced its aging workstations with computers utilizing much faster processors and ZIP drives. We now have a situation where two labs meant to work in tandem have vastly different equipment resources, and students are often unable to bring work back and forth between the two because of the EIC's lack of certain equipment (i.e., ZIP drives).

**Audience:** University of Texas at Austin students and faculty

**Space:** Space is currently available in the Undergraduate Library, Electronic Information Center

**Budget:**

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 34 user workstations      | \$ 89,000 |
| 2 proctor stations        | \$ 6,000  |
| NT Server and peripherals | \$ 5,000  |
| Software                  | \$ 1,000  |
| Total                     | \$101,000 |

### **Administrative and Research Projects (Non-ITAC Eligible)**

#### **Project: Enhanced Access to UT Austin Library Holdings**

Goal: Purchase a standards-based, vendor supplied system to assure state-of-the art access to the library holdings of UT Austin, to effectively and efficiently operate UT Austin libraries, and to enable collaborative resource sharing and distance information access services

Budget: \$3.57 million (one-time)

Proposed Funding Source: UT System LERR funds

#### **Project: UT Austin Library Online Digital Library**

Goal: Continue development of UT Library Online (the UT Austin digital library initiative) within the distributed computing environment on the UT Austin campus and the UT System to provide state-of-the-art information and services for both UT Austin and UT System libraries and their users.

Budget: approximately \$750,000 annually

Proposed Funding Source: UT System LERR funds

#### **Project: UT System Digital Library**

Goal: Provide library services to UT TeleCampus and UT System component libraries for on-site and distant learners, access to commercial and local information resources, and training, planning, and consulting services.

Budget: approximately \$320,000 annually

Proposed Funding Source: UT System Administration assessment to component campuses

#### **Project: TexShare Technical Information Services**

Goal: Continue management of the TexShare technical information services for all libraries in the 140 institutions of higher education throughout the state, public, private and community colleges.

Budget: approximately \$269,000 annually

Proposed Funding Source: Texas State Library and Archives Commission

## **College Instructional Technology Funding Overview and Life Cycle Methodology**

### **Library Funding Overview (Academic and Administrative)**

Primary sources of funding for library information technology initiatives are the General Libraries regular budget, UT System LERR Program, UT System Administration, and external grants and contracts. The overall strategy is to provide similar services to various constituencies, thereby leveraging staff resources. The General Libraries regular budget supports 18.5 FTE staff, with an additional 7.4 FTE from alternate funding sources. Electronic information resources are funded by the General Libraries regular budget, the student library fee, and various revolving funds including library fines, lost book charges, and printer revenue.

### **Life Cycle Methodology (Academic and Administrative)**

Virtually all equipment (desktop, servers, and connectivity) is funded by one-time capital funds that are requested annually. As new desktop equipment is purchased, older equipment is provided to another staff member whose job duties can be effectively carried out on a less-powerful platform. To date, no sustainable funding mechanism to provide consistent life-cycle funding for information technology infrastructure has been identified.





## **Appendix 2**

### **Network Status**

All General Libraries facilities have UTNET access with the exception of the Library Storage Facility on the Pickle Research Campus. Plans currently under consideration to expand this facility will include connections to UTNET.

### **Library Instruction Facilities**

- PCL 1.124 Classroom style seating for 75, large screen display equipment
- PCL 4.102 Classroom style seating for 35; large screen display equipment
- EJC 1.304 Alec Center for Creativity; conference style seating for 20; large screen display equipment
- FAC 227 Hands-on facility shared with ACITS; 15 user Macintoshes and instructor station