Reimagining Academic Libraries
Florida Education Facilities Planners Association
Summer Conference
Facilitators

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“The entire library should be the information commons”

-Gene Ruffin,
Dean of Libraries,
Georgia Gwinnett College
Learning Objectives

• Identify Changing Programmatic Requirements for new Information Commons and Academic Libraries

• Define Success Criteria for Modern Academic Libraries

• Review solutions that Address Changing Environments and Enhance Collaborative Learning
CHANGING PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS
History – From Town Commons to Info Commons
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A Place for Connecting People with Information
Programmatic Trends

• Campus libraries are busy centers of activity, competing with Student Centers for the center of campus community
Programmatic Trends

- They must also offer individual or group scholarship – allowing one to be alone in public
Programmatic Trends

Begin a Dialogue with Others

Pope John Paul II has called religions so that the member’s differences and discords be transcended by common humanitarian goals. In this sense, religions are to be seen as a panorama of eleven religious traditions, each a pristine vision of the way humankind should relate to its creator and fellow man. Chosen from the multitude of religions, each represents a long-established religious tradition with millions of followers.

There are many hundreds of religions, ranging from small, locally-endemic religions to the world religions with millions of followers. Each religious tradition has its own way of explaining the world and the place of humans within it. Religion is a system of belief and, more fundamentally, a way of life that directs the beliefs and practices of its adherents. Religion is a system of symbols and narratives that provide insights and meanings for both individual and social life. It provides a framework for understanding the world and one’s place within it.

Religion is not just a matter of faith, but also of action. It is a way of life, a way of thinking, and a way of acting. Religion provides the means to make sense of the world, to understand the world, and to act in the world. Religion is a way of life, a way of thinking, and a way of acting. Religion provides the means to make sense of the world, to understand the world, and to act in the world.

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Programmatic Trends

• Greater activity takes place in learning commons and group learning areas
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  • Core technology infrastructure needs are addressed for growth
Programmatic Trends

• Flexibility to address changing needs through space design and furniture
Programmatic Trends

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DEFINING SUCCESS CRITERIA
Design is a Process for making “Dreams” come True
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The Dream is a “Vision” of new Library that all users imagine
Design is a Process for making “Dreams” come True

The Dream is a “Vision” of new Library that all users imagine

Who are “The Users”?  
- The Library Administration  
- The Library Staff  
- The Campus Administration  
- The Faculty  
- The Students  
- The Financiers  
- The Campus Architects  
- The Facilities Staff
Success Criteria – Understanding The Vision

Imagine We’re three years in the Future, the Library is Open and a Huge Success. Why?
Success Criteria – Understanding The Vision

Imagine We’re three years in the Future, the Library is Open and a Huge Success. Why?

- We really understood what “student life” is all about and provided a variety of great places for the students to gather and learn, in teams and individually.

- The spirit of the information commons is pervasive throughout the library.

- The Building really fits into the site and compliments the campus green, there’s great synergy between the outdoor places and the indoor spaces.

- It represents all the great things about the institution.

- It’s helped us attract new students and faculty and is a great welcome center for recruiting ….. the parents of the students love it too.

- We got the most out of every dollar we invested and still have places to grow and expand (value).
Success Criteria

- The way the library responds to the rest of the Campus is remarkable
- It’s so comfortable, the way the sunlight works, the colors are beautiful and it’s flexible for the students
- The faculty loves to use the variety of special classrooms
- Set a new iconic image for the campus
- It’s so energy efficient and easy to maintain (durable) we really are the campus of tomorrow
Putting it together.....

- Group Exercise
The Library of the Future
An Architecture of Interaction
(Information Commons)
The Information Commons

Success Criteria?
The Service Points

Success Criteria?
The Collections

Success Criteria?
The Study Areas

Success Criteria?
The Classrooms / Special Services
Success Criteria?
The Café

Success Criteria?
The Staff Areas

Success Criteria?
The Library of the Future
An Architecture of Interaction
With Energized Edges
The Library of the Future
An Architecture of Interaction
With Energized Edges
Re-imagining – you’re the Futurist

- Architects will continue to design great libraries
- People will continue to learn thru exchanges of info and ideas
- The Information Commons will remain the hub of the exchange

What will change?
- Services?
- Technology?
- Support spaces?
- Archives?

How will these changes affect the areas that support the info commons?
Define Success Criteria

- Classroom / Special Services
- Study Areas
- Collections
- Café / Relaxation
- Service Points / Circulation
- Staff Areas
Define Success Criteria – *Notes from Group Exercise:*

- **Classroom / Special Services**
  - Learning commons to have subject specific areas and integrated disciplines
  - One place – no stigma, high performers and laggars learning together
  - General technology classrooms that are used by multiple disciplines
  - Experimental Zone for teaching and learning
  - Cross trained personnel for student success and retention
  - "Genius" bar approach
Define Success Criteria – *Notes from Group Exercise:*

- **Study Areas**
  - *Spaces are flexible*
  - *Student controlled / focused*
  - *Furniture – casters / ability to rearrange pieces – include tables*
  - *Ample table space for devices*
  - *Variety of spaces – small, large, open, enclosed*
  - *Ease of connectivity*
  - *Comfort*
  - *Operating hours – accessible at all hours*
  - *Every surface as a tablet*
  - *Distinguish social from study*
Define Success Criteria – **Notes from Group Exercise:**

- **Collections**
  - Rare book access / storage
  - Documents of successful alumni
  - Museum / artifacts – cultural connections
  - Electronic data center
  - Memorabilia
  - Hyper wall – imagery of books / collections
  - Technology and ergonomics – balanced
  - Collections = access to information
  - Level of accessibility will measure success
  - Automated retrieval
  - Hard copies organized by discipline
Define Success Criteria – **Notes from Group Exercise:**

- Café / Relaxation
  - Blended – food as allure
  - Conversation around the kitchen table = hearth
  - Extended time in building = student success / retention
  - Blurring alone / together
  - Permeability
  - Create identity – cultural experience
  - Activity to keep attention
CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS - COLLABORATION
Case Study – Georgia Gwinnett College
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Key Features of Academic Library of the Future

• Computers/Technology
• Books
• Collaborative/team study
• A variety of study “positions”
• Refreshment “cafe”
• Multi-media production studios
• Presentation practice theaters
• Evolving/changing space Resources
• The teachers are “live”
What’s Next? - Technology

- Technology Infrastructure backbone throughout
- High-tech robotic book handling systems
- Multiple computer-rich collaborative study spaces
- Computer-friendly lighting systems
- Computer and patron-friendly temperature and thermal conditions
- “Freedom” of internet access, with age-governed security overview
- Computer-literate “help desk(s)”
- Self checkout stations
- Access to “coffee shop” atmosphere . . . a community “living room”
- Computer training classrooms and seminar rooms
- Technology and collection should appeal to all ages
- Flexibility, Flexibility, Flexibility
What’s Next??

The Information Commons will remain the center of the “exchange.”

How we Interact to Exchange Information and Ideas will always change?

A hundred year building today requires FLEXIBILITY for tomorrow.
What’s Next?
What's Next?
What's Next?
What’s Next?
What’s Next?
“The academic library is also a space of learning where friendships begin, where careers are decided, and where lasting memories are made.”

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