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Annual Report, 2001-2002

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Bates College Information and Library Services
Annual Report 2001-2002
September 27, 2002

This past year was the second full year of combined operations of library, archives, computing, telecommunications and media services for the College. Our work together builds on ten years of experience in budgeting and planning. This experience has helped the process of creating an integrated information technology and library operation relatively smooth compared to similar transitions in other colleges or universities. Above all, this transition has been facilitated by staff members in Information and Library Services (ILS) who have a deep understanding of the mission of the College, focus on the student and the computer or library user, and a have a deep commitment to excellence in providing these services.

Our goals are clear. During the course of the year, we reviewed the goals and objectives of the 1999 strategic plan for these services. We have accomplished most of the specific goals that the plan outlined, and for those that have not been accomplished, we have either modified our plans or determined that there are better ways to accomplish the goals. This review is not complete, since we determined that a full revision of the plan should be done at a time when an incoming President might have the opportunity to shape broad directions and comment on particular goals. Thus, completing the revision of our plans for the next three-year cycle is one of the major tasks for the coming year.

Contrary to national trends, use of Ladd Library and circulation of library materials continues to remain at very high levels. This is in part a feature of the Bates curriculum, which expects reading and active scholarship of students. The welcoming staff and comfortable building, and its location in the center of a residential campus also contribute to the Library's popularity. Like many library and technology organizations, we are just getting started on the task of measuring the increasing use of materials that are provided in electronic format. We know that useage is high, but as we see a decline in some use measures (such as requests for books and articles for Bates users via traditional interlibrary loan), we will want to know with more accuracy and consistency what the volume of other kinds of use is. Numbers of interactions continue to be high at all our service points, including Help Desk, Reference, Circulation, Audio/Video, and Archives/Special Collections.

A list of accomplishments and goals often does not capture either the magnitude or the importance of the tasks it outlines. Some of the things we have done have been transformational for the College; for example, the work we did in 1999-2000 to establish hardware and software standards for College-owned machines has made it possible to rely on e-mail attachments rather than paper copies for many kinds of correspondence. Our work to make electronic library materials available has had similar impact on the ease and speed of providing user access to scholarly literature. Some projects have been very visible and perhaps painful, such as the transition prior to January 2002 to a Banner graphical user interface that has required many offices on the campus to change their work routines in small and sometimes large ways. The partnership we created with the Office of College Relations to actively manage Web services has enabled us to make the Web a feature of the College to be proud of rather than a problem to be solved. In similar fashion, we expect that our efforts to create an academic technology unit and reassign staff to new roles that serve members of the faculty directly will have long term benefits both inside and outside the classroom.

We intend to provide information and technology support that fosters creativity and experimentation in the work of all Bates students, faculty and staff. We try not to experiment with our users, however, so we continue to stress reliability and quality control for all the services we provide. We welcome feedback so we can continue to improve these services.

Respectfully submitted,

Eugene L. Wiemers
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs,
  Director of Information Services and Librarian

Accomplishments 2001-2002

Library Services and Resource Development

- Reviewed current practices regarding retention and storage of bound journals, as well as preferences for electronic versus print subscriptions, and consulted with the Library Committee about this general direction. We developed new operational standards for subscriptions, emphasizing electronic access when appropriate to the discipline, and consulted with individual departments about their use of materials in various formats in order to make appropriate changes in subscriptions. We have made significant progress in both the acquisition and processing of electronic journals, and we have seen very high acceptance of them among the faculty in many disciplines.

- Completed analysis of options for offsite storage (in collaboration with Bowdoin and Colby) and prepared recommendations to CBB Deans for implementation in the next year. Also developed tracking for periodical volumes as we began to move bound volumes to storage. We are currently storing titles from JSTOR, the American Physical Society, and selected other publishers that provide full backfiles online.

- Continued systematic weeding. This will need to go on even after offsite storage becomes available in order to keep storage costs to a minimum.

- Improved library catalog by developing an automatic way to add catalog records for journals in Academic Search Premier, and installed Advanced Keyword Searching to improve precision and ease of searching. Finished retrospective conversion (recon) of catalog for LPs, essentially completing recon of our collections.

- "Food for Fines," implemented in November 2001, raised food for local food banks. This turned out to be a very popular program, with positive benefits for community and for the image of the Library. We'll extend this and publicize it more thoroughly in Fall 2002.

- Continued to improve processes for getting patron records into the Library database, processing student bills, and getting books returned from faculty and staff users.

- Increased use of Maine Info Net, which continues to provide better ways to deliver books to our users and to have an impact on our labor-intensive interlibrary loan operations. As we add more and more full text electronic files, we have made it much easier for our users to have access to needed materials. We continued to analyze staffing needs to make sure we can get the materials required for student and faculty research, and made needed changes.

- Inaugurated College Archives program in the Edmund S. Muskie Archives and Special Collections Library. Developed record series and processing standards, and began to process records. Major accomplishments include the acquisition and processing of President Harward's presidential records. Acquired and began processing the records of the Bates Dance Festival. Worked with the Muskie Foundation to identify additional projects of mutual interest, and long term ways to use the Web and other tools to promote scholarship related to Edmund S. Muskie and his activities. Worked with Bates faculty to promote curricular use of archives, manuscripts, rare books, and other original materials.

Faculty and Curriculum Support

- Strengthened support services for faculty, including adding full time position for foreign language technology and defining the work of existing staff members who support the faculty as "academic technology project managers," all through internal reorganization.

- Selected a Web course-management system (WebCT) and began implementation. Fall 2002 will be the pilot phase.

- Established classroom planning team including the Director of Academic Technology Services, the Registrar, the College Architect, and representatives of the Faculty. This team has become the focal point for classroom planning. Secured funding from campus sources and the Alden Trust to renovate and add technology to classrooms.

- Made significant upgrades to several computer labs, and added new computers in most computer labs in the summer of 2002.

- Began upgrade of sound systems in the Olin Concert Hall.

Banner, Help Desk and other College-Wide Services

- Completed upgrade to Banner 5.x and Oracle 8. This major undertaking was the focus of activity for most of the academic year. Work involved both changing the software, and coordinating with all College offices to modify their work flows to adapt to new software.

- Implemented Prospect Management Module in Development.

- Implemented changes in the College catalog to accommodate newly approved system to crosslist courses.

- Implemented Brio Enterprise for Developers, a report writing tool for Banner users.

- Implemented or began to implement new productivity tools: CBORD Menu Management in Dining and Maximo Facilities Management System in Physical Plant. Developed data interfaces for Magic Help Desk software and door key tracking system in Physical Plant.

- Redesigned and implemented a new Web-based course evaluation system, linked to Banner.

- Made significant steps to improve Help Desk services, with new software for call management, work orders, and client services. Developed a student help desk service and restructured student worker positions. This is a major continuing challenge, as many Bates students would clearly benefit from the experience and expertise they could gain as technology employees during their years at the College.

- Created evening and weekend Help Desk service, with students serving in peer-to-peer mode. This will be extended next year, and relocated to the Library for better access for students in the evening.

- Implemented a computer recycling program, in compliance with College goals, as well as state and Federal law related to computer disposal.

Web Services

- Continued to strengthen Web services and extend them throughout the campus. Accomplishments include a new Website template for academic departments and programs, online payment services, a modular Web event registration system, new Web forms systems for a number of administrative processes, and considerable deployment and development of X-Power sites. Completed the analysis of requirements and architecture for new ILS Web site, which will be deployed in 2002-2003.

Network, Infrastructure and Telecommunications Improvements

- Researched and implemented a second connection to the Internet, providing better load balancing, and a redundant link in case one of the services goes down. Added shaping technology to control the impact of peer-to-peer file sharing activity on academic uses.

- Developed and implemented a new voice mail system, and added new servers for several critical functions. Extended the storage array network to provide for additional secure network data storage.

- Investigated and deployed new security telephones, and played a leadership role in beginning the design and implementation of an electronic access control system for campus buildings.

- Extended open network jacks for students, faculty and staff, with "blue jack" services in the Library and in other academic buildings. Began production use of wireless technology in selected applications, including two sciences labs in Carnegie and in a mobile laptop cart to create a wireless lab for administrative training.

- Enhanced and extended dial-in capacity, especially for off-campus students, as we continue to encourage staff and faculty to use commercial Internet service providers.

ILS Administration and Management

- Developed broad-scale space plan for ILS, including consolidation or changing of service points and staff areas. Reviewed the plan with Library Committee and Information Services Advisory Committee. Developed implementation plan. We will need to complete this review in the Fall of 2002.

- Developed a new orientation program for ILS student workers, combining training in library and technology services. Also developed new orientation materials and presentation for new Bates employees.

- Made significant progress in reviewing and revising policies in critical areas. Developed draft Web policies and reviewed them with administrative staff. New Music and Arts Librarian reviewed copyright policies and procedures related to sound recordings and made necessary changes. The College's auditors continue to look for more elaborate disaster recovery/business continuity policies and procedures, an area in which we have made some progress. We have continuing need to develop copyright compliance policies, as well as instruction and guidance regarding fair use of copyrighted materials. We also need to revise our policies related to access to computing resources and retention of e-mail. Policy development is an area that needs some concentrated effort in the coming year.

- Continued to take every opportunity to examine how ILS management and staff do our work and what our staffing needs are. We created or redefined position descriptions in order to add a database analyst, a Web developer, a foreign language technology specialist, and several positions that support faculty members. We analyzed staffing needs and created a new position to manage classroom technologies and software, and reconfigured the leadership position for ILS instruction. We were able to redirect about ½ FTE to strengthen Help Desk services. We reduced student staffing in order to create permanent staff positions in Interlibrary Loan and Access Services, which will provide more consistent and more reliable service. We determined we could serve faculty and students better if we stopped selling computers directly, relying instead on Web links and published guidelines. We worked with Boise Cascade to provide routine printer supplies, also reducing the need to stock and ship inventory. We worked with the Campus Store to change photocopy machines to a card system compatible with the campus washing machines; this allowed us to virtually eliminate our staff effort in the Library devoted to counting and accounting for cash transactions. We also developed a self-help student network activation program (SNAP) for new and returning students. These two latter innovations have helped us dramatically reduce the frenzy of back-to-school activities, allowing us to concentrate on new services, new technology, orientation, and instruction.

CBB Consortial Activities

- Completed analysis of approach to CBB upgrade to Innovative Interface's Millennium software. We decided to use three new systems rather than a combined database and use Maine Info Net as the linking mechanism. Made a proposal to the Maine State Library for funding.

- Completed CBB information and technology grant-funded project, concentrating on completing the ISDN videoconference technology. This allows Bates people to videoconference out of state on a standard platform. Considerable effort needed to continue to promote and refine this service.

Goals 2002-2003

- Build on the organizational change that created academic technology project managers to make services to faculty members effective and vital to the work of the College.
  Implement WebCT and publicize its uses.
  Link WebCT to Banner.
  Complete design of Web sites for academic departments and programs.

- Develop multimedia production facilities to focus our efforts to help faculty, staff and students learn new complex technologies. Coordinate services in multimedia production area with services in foreign language technology lab, departmental labs, and general computing services so we users may make maximum use of new skills.

- Strengthen classroom technology and events support, and continue to equip and renovate classrooms.

- Continue to focus on delivering high quality, consistent, and user-oriented services.

- Implement ILLiad software to make interlibrary loan articles available on the Web.

- Implement processes and new productivity tools to support the efficient work of the College.
  Implement new voice mail system, and its associated Web services.
  Begin implementation of Banner Web for Employees, including time entry functions for hourly employees and budget management features.
  Select and begin implementation of College-wide events and rooms scheduling and booking system.
  Continue implementation of Maximo in Physical Plant.
  Expand training program for Brio.
  Continue to work on extending operational hours of Banner to meet needs of students, faculty and staff.
  Continue to look for online vendor to provide computing supplies on the Web for students.
  Evaluate issues related to the need to replace the telephone system.
  Complete funding plan for Innovative Interfaces Millennium system for the Library.
  Complete the project to automate authentication and management of user accounts.

- Implement College-wide building access control system and link it to Banner.

- Continue to extend Web services.
  Design and implement prospect tracking, application status and related services for prospective students.
  Implement new ILS Web site with self-help features.
  Bring "Web for" Banner modules under unified management and planning model.
  Continue to extend Web services for students.
  Extend Web event registration system and generalize for multiple department use.

- Implement ILS space plan
  Complete plans to locate groups logically for users and effectively for staff. Review plans. Implement.
  Complete Library renovation by adding new furniture and computer connections for users.
  Implement offsite storage plan for library materials.
  Extend electronic access to journals and other materials, and withdraw or store paper copies.

- Complete and publish the next iteration of Strategic Plan for Information and Library Services.

The George and Helen Ladd Library
Selected Use Measures

Legend:
- Monthly Gate Count
- Monthly Circulation
- Annual ILL Borrowing
- Monthly Reserve Circulation

The George and Helen Ladd Library
Circulation

Legend:
- Circulation
- Reserve Circulation
- Audio Circulation
- Audio Reserve Circulation
- Total ILL

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Information and Library Services
Help Desk Services
Inbound Calls
Totals by Month
(2001 - 2002)

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Information and Library Services
Help Desk Services
Inbound Calls
Totals by Day of Week
(2001 - 2002)