

D'Arcy Hutchings  
LS 508 – Exercise 2  
June 14, 2010

**To:** Dr. Joe Doe, Dean, School of Architecture  
**From:** D'Arcy Hutchings, Architecture Librarian  
**Subject:** Proposed Strategic Planning Process for the Architecture Library

As you know, the architecture library is well-loved and frequently used by our faculty and students (please refer to last year's report on library usage and LibQual survey results). You are also aware of the library's history, namely its sporadic growth and irregular development. It is my hope that we can pave a more solid path for the library's future. In order to ensure the library makes the best possible use of its resources and for the architecture library to remain relevant for our users, it is essential that we develop a strategic plan to guide us through the next five years. We must determine what we are doing well, where we need to improve, challenges we are facing now and in the future, and how we will meet those challenges. I propose that we spend the next year developing such a plan, with a preliminary draft completed within 9 months. Please consider joining me in supporting this project.

As you are aware through your involvement with the University's strategic planning process, I cannot undertake this task alone. Sue Harris, planning coordinator for the General Libraries on campus, has agreed to assist me in guiding the planning process, lending her expertise to ensure maximum efficiency of the process. I will use my research time (25%) to lead the process and will ultimately publish a paper on our experiences with the process. Some normal work time will also be used, but since we have completed processing this year's purchases, it will not be to the detriment of my other work. Our two student assistants will use their down time to assist with the project. Ideally, I would like to hire an additional student worker for a semester to assist with interviewing and other tasks. The library

would need additional funding for this employee. Lastly, I am in the process of applying for a grant through the University foundation to cover the costs of hiring someone to perform data analysis. I invite you to get involved in this project as well, in any way you are able.

I have already begun talking to various stakeholders regarding participation in this potential project, including individuals in my funding advisory group, faculty, students, and librarians from the General Libraries, and expect many eager volunteers. Most volunteers will be organized into three focus groups that will be asked to analyze our current environment and the foreseeable future. The field focus group will look at the architecture field as a whole and the local conditions, as well as identify community partners and competitors. The University focus group will look at where the library fits into the architecture department and the University as a whole. The internal focus group will look at the architecture library itself: our processes, staff, services, culture, systems, resources, policies, etc.

**Field Focus Group**

Local architects/firms  
Architecture faculty

**University Focus Group**

Architecture faculty  
Librarians from General Libraries  
Architecture students  
University administration

**Internal Focus Group**

Myself  
Current library employees  
Architecture faculty

In addition to these groups, conversation groups and interviews will be organized in order to talk to architecture department faculty, staff, and a sample of students one-on-one and in small groups. Results from the General Libraries' recent LibQual Survey that pertain to us will be consulted and an additional brief survey will be sent via email to all students enrolled in architecture classes to ensure we have the best possible assessment of our users' needs and desires. The library will need funding in order to provide coffee, drinks, donuts, and pizza for the volunteers serving on the various work groups.

After briefing those involved in the project, we will begin the planning process by doing a complete environmental assessment. Each focus group will look at its assigned area, identifying the library's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and potential threats. At the same time, surveys and interviews will be conducted. Once gathered, that data will be compiled and analyzed by our hired data

consultant. A close look at this data will further aid us in identifying our strengths and weaknesses, while showing us the direction our users would like us to head.

At this stage, the focus groups will be dissolved and a goals committee will be formed consisting of myself, Sue Harries, several architecture faculty members, and anyone from the focus groups who is interested in continuing the project. I welcome your involvement on this committee, though I understand if your present commitments make you unable to serve. The committee's first task will be to create a vision and mission statement for the architecture library. They will move on to look closely at the results of the environmental scan and assessment to determine appropriate goals and objectives. I will compile the committee's work into a draft that will be presented to you, our faculty, and any other interested parties for suggestions. After addressing the suggestions, the committee will finalize the plan document.

Please consider supporting this effort in any way you are able. Anything from simply providing verbal support to offering funding to offering your time and expertise would be greatly appreciated by all our library's users and supporters. I look forward to speaking with you to discuss and finalize the details of my plan so that we may begin the process immediately.