RHODES UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (RUL)

STRATEGIC PLAN

2013 – 2015

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

INTRODUCTION: The Rhodes University Library (RUL), http://www.ru.ac.za/library/, has evolved into an attractive, well-resourced and popular facility that is designed to actively promote and support the research, teaching and learning endeavours of the University. The RUL, aligned to the RU faculties, provides customised services and products to undergraduates, post-graduates, staff, alumni and visiting scholars of each faculty. This is enhanced by the Learning Commons, Post Graduate Commons and Research Commons, which are dedicated spaces for undergraduate, Honours, Masters & PhD students respectively. All services are designed towards providing on & off-site access to global information and knowledge. The RUL is committed to building, maintaining and facilitating access to balanced and relevant information & knowledge collections in print and electronic formats; providing the necessary equipment and technologies to access and use all types of information; and facilitating access to national and international collections through inter-lending and reciprocal agreements.

STAFF PROFILE: The RUL has a full time staff complement of 39, comprising of 24 professional staff, 15 support staff and 67 hourly staff members.

	Male	Female	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Professional Staff	2	22	9	0	1	15
Support Staff	4	11	5	3	1	6

The minimum qualification for a librarian is the 4-year B.Bibl or B.Inf (Hons) or a Bachelor's degree + the PGDipLIS. All professional staff meet this requirement, with 4 staff members currently studying towards a Masters' degree. Assistant Librarians are expected to be in possession of or completing a Bachelors' degree – currently 2 staff members are working towards the B.Inf degree; and other support staff are expected to have a matric as a minimum requirement.

Several opportunities and initiatives have enabled RUL staff to learn new skills and develop an understanding of organisational, management and leadership issues within the academic library context. These include:

- Research Libraries Consortium (RLC) – as a member of this Carnegie Corporation funded project, all RUL librarians were able to attend a 2-week residential Research Academy which was designed to introduce librarians to the research imperatives of South Africa, researcher needs, research styles and methodologies. Five librarians were subsequently selected to attend a 3-month study programme in the USA which exposed them to current trends and developments in academic & research librarianship, new technologies, strategic leadership of academic libraries, library design

and programmes at leading American research intensive universities. Two senior librarians were also selected to attend the 2-week residential Executive Management Academy which exposed them to management and strategic organisational development of academic libraries.

- Three staff members were also selected to attend the 2-week residential Carnegie Library Leadership Academy which exposed them to leadership theory & practice, personal leadership styles, strategy theory & development, ethical leadership, marketing & communications, mobile technologies, organisational dynamics and culture.

In addition to the above every effort is made to identify and support the attendance of staff at national workshops and conferences so that they keep abreast of current trends and developments in academic librarianship. Some of these include:

- Attendance at several digitisation workshops to enable the Principal Librarian: Digital Services to understand the strategic importance of digital collections; and the organisation and management of institutional repositories. The impact hereof is visible on the quality and standard of the Rhodes eResearch Repository, http://eprints.ru.ac.za/
- Attendance at a new technologies symposium for academic librarians which included a focus on social media, mobile technologies, and e-books in the academic environment

Internal continuing professional development (CPD) programmes give staff the opportunity to determine their own learning needs and ways of sharing their skills and expertise with others. Staff are also encouraged to involve themselves in the profession so that through this networking and engagement they are able to add value to their own professional growth, responsibilities and the RUL.

The initial transition to the current practice model is now consolidating into a strong professional environment that is attuned to the needs of its stakeholders and the realisation of its value to the academic endeavours of the University.

GOALS AND STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS:

The following purpose statement, strategic focus areas and culture statement were determined collectively by the RUL staff emanating from discussions at the Strategic & Organisational Culture Workshop held on June 14-15 2012. This exercise proved to be an invaluable experience for the staff, who by taking ownership of the subsequent development of the strategic focus areas and the organisational culture statement, were able to articulate their thoughts, concerns, aspirations and expectations of their organisation.

Purpose Statement: *The Rhodes University Library is committed to the pursuit of knowledge by connecting people to resources that contribute to the intellectual development of future responsible citizens*

Overarching Goal: *"To develop and maintain efficient, reliable and responsive library and scholarly communication services that promote, support and enhance the research, teaching and learning endeavours of Rhodes University."*

Goals	Strategic Objectives	Strategies	Indicators of success or otherwise
POSITION THE LIBRARY IN THE INTELLECTUAL MIDST OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY	• Enrich University life through programmes and activities that highlight the Library' core values, contributions and connections to learning and discovery	• Develop and implement a marketing and communications strategy • Expand the Library' faculty liaison programme as a key communication channel with academic programmes. • Promote the Library' values of service, scholarship, respect, and the provision of diverse resources, and stimulating places as a foundation for University life. • Engage the university community in dialogue about the future of Library • Promote our physical facilities as discovery and learning centres for the University community. • Communicate the Library's achievements, value and impact	• The Library is accepted as a partner to the academic endeavour • Faculty representation on Library Committees and engagement is pro-active
	• Lead University involvement in information policy and scholarly communication issues	• Champion open access publishing, intellectual freedom and access to information. • Develop a plan, together with the Research Office, for engaging the RU community in	o RU is a signatory to the Berlin Declaration o Open Access Week is included in the RU calendar

		discussions and action concerning a range of scholarly communication issues with the most current being open access and data management.	
DYNAMIC USER SERVICES TO ADVANCE THE RU RESEARCH, TEACHING AND LEARNING ENDEAVOURS	• Provide access to appropriate, authoritative & relevant resources and services at the point of need and in the users' environment	• Environmental scanning of best practices, emerging trends and technologies • Strengthen existing delivery services (physical, electronic and digital), while integrating new technologies, tools and services for information discovery and delivery • Collection Development in accordance with the research and teaching imperatives and funding • Consolidate collections to enhance discovery, delivery, and access, reflecting the ever increasing growth of multidisciplinary research and learning.	• Information Resources budgets are optimally used to ensure access to the best resources available • The RUL collections are dynamic and reflective of all schools of thought
	• Enhance the learning experience of undergraduate students	• Personal Librarian programme – facilitate access to and familiarity with the library and information environment • Prepare students for lifelong learning by promoting critical inquiry and information literacy through regular training interventions and innovative learning media. • Innovations to support undergraduate learning experience such as collaborative learning platforms and dedicated spaces	• Undergraduates are equipped with appropriate and necessary skills to be information literate and lifelong learners
	• Active support for the teaching and research endeavours of the University	• Embedded librarianship - increase involvement of faculty librarians in research processes and activities of academic departments • Implement ideas and innovations learnt during the Research Libraries Consortium (RLC) project, as well as evaluation recommendations • Investigate tools and initiatives to enhance the visibility of RU research	• The Institutional Repository, ReRR, is a primary platform for research visibility • Librarians are included in research related and curriculum development discussions

	• Library as Place	• Review and repurpose existing spaces towards more productive and engaging library spaces	• The demand for the Information Commons, Post-Graduate Commons and Research Commons continue as intellectual environments in support of learning and research
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	• Develop a dynamic organisational culture	• Initiate dialogue amongst staff • Support a culture of diversity awareness • Support experimentation and innovation where staff are encouraged to think "outside the box"	• Organisational culture statement is adopted by all
	• Develop as a learning organisation that entrenches the "One organisation, many leaders" concept	• Identify training and development needs based on skills sets aligned to the institutional strategies/priorities • Introduce innovative ways for staff to learn and use new technologies • Encourage and support research skills including writing, presentations and scholarship • Encourage Library staff to play leadership roles and contribute to advancing the Library and learning • Review and redefine job profiles to reflect changes in academic librarianship and new skills sets	• Staff Development Strategy is in place • Increased funding to support professional development activities • RUL staff are involved in regional and national initiatives
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	• Develop an e-Environment in support of learning, teaching & research through new technology-based services and internal processes.	• Embrace appropriate technologies for optimal productivity and access to information & knowledge with specific focus on: e-Resources, discovery & search tools; Open Scholarship (eTDs, research articles); the Rhodes eResearch Repository; Mobile technologies and services; Digitisation & preservation; Library website; & Web 2.0 tools	An overarching E-Strategy is in place that informs new services and training opportunities

LIBRARY CULTURE: *Rhodes University Library aspires to a shared culture, 'A way of being both in mind and in action' In support of a positive academic outcome for the Rhodes University community, while also creating a positive work environment for all.*

The Rhodes University Library takes the South African Constitution as its guiding principle for the provision of library services. The library thus strives to promote human dignity, equality, non-racialism, and non-sexism in the library workplace and when providing information and research services to its users.

Moreover the library supports the university in its vision of being an outstanding internationally respected academic institution which proudly affirms its African identity and which is committed to democratic ideals, academic freedom, rigorous scholarship, sound moral values and social responsibility.

The library endeavours to strategically support both the national constitution and the university's vision by aiming to be an excellent internationally-respected academic library through the provision of ready access to information resources, and by aiding in equipping people for lifelong learning. The library is committed to quality user-focused service, fairness, innovation, professional integrity and social responsibility.

Our Environmental Culture: We aspire to have a professional environment which is both nurturing and supportive, and where learning and sharing can take place. We acknowledge that all users and staff need to experience a comfortable and safe environment which is sensitive to their needs. The library needs to be an 'attractive space' which stimulates creativity and motivation. The library environment also needs to be characterised by openness, communication and teamwork. We aim to foster an environment of intellectual freedom which is free of bias, and actively encourage a culture of learning in an environment of communication and debate. We recognise and accept the multiculturalism of our society and aim for services and collections which reflect this. The library strives to be environmentally responsible via resource efficient work and building practices.

Our Value Culture: We wish to exhibit respect in the workplace and allow for freedom of expression and inclusion of all individuals. We recognise the diversity of people, and the need to acknowledge and meet the needs of each individual.

Our Service Culture: Our aim is to provide a dynamic library and information service which meets the needs of our users, including the disabled, effectively and efficiently in a manner which is both friendly and affirmative. We also aim to have services and collections which are appropriate and extensive, while also being innovative, up to date and inspiring. We strive towards building and maintaining a reputation of excellence for academic librarianship at Rhodes and beyond.

Our People Culture: We would like staff to show mutual respect of one another and of the users, including being accepting and supportive of others. We acknowledge the contribution of others and give recognition where it is deserved. We expect library staff to manage themselves in a professional manner and to be proactive in the workplace. We encourage the development of personal and career development skills, including excellent interpersonal skills. We value staff who are motivated, have high morale and who are passionate about their work. We aim to be change agents in the academic library profession, embracing change where necessary in support of the university's vision of academic excellence.

Our Governance Culture*:* A shared vision and shared goals contribute to the unity and success of the library. Effective communication channels and a management characterised by stability, accountability, and continuity all contribute to good governance. The individual staff member is encouraged to take ownership, while also sharing the joint responsibility of library service provision. The library aims to anticipate the environment in a proactive manner, and be both adaptable and able to find solutions, and embrace change when needed. The library aspires to visionary leadership and participatory management, with staff contributing at all levels and to their maximum capacity.

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