

I.2.5 Information Resources

Since the previous accreditation report in 2008, the Montana State University Library has co-located all of its architecture and arts resources and services into one central location. After extensive study and discussion between the Dean of the College of Arts and Architecture, the Dean of the Library, the Provost, and the President over a number of years, it was decided that the Library could provide better access and support of the Architecture and Arts programs by relocating the materials in the Creative Arts Library a short walk away in Renne Library, the main, and only other library on campus. This move also freed up space which was needed for handicap-accessible architecture studios.

The previous Creative Arts Library (CAL) had a number of issues of concern. Its security system broke and was not repairable, and a replacement system would have cost over ten thousand dollars. In the mean time, items could be taken from the Library with no record of their removal. Some architecture material and materials in other, related areas, such as civil engineering, construction management, and landscape architecture, were located in Renne Library, so not all areas of interest for researchers were in a single location. Also, the CAL was staffed primarily by student assistants with some staff assistance. The new arrangement puts Architecture students and faculty in a single location for assistance and access to materials with help from expert librarians in finding information.

Description of the institutional context and administrative structure of the library and visual resources:

The MSU Library is an equal academic unit to the other colleges reporting to the Provost. The Library organization consists of a Dean, an Associate Dean, and eight teams with 18 faculty librarians, 2 professional staff, 32 classified staff, and 22 part-time student assistants. It receives annual funding for its collections with a slight increase to maintain collections with inflationary costs. The Library is a member of many national organizations and collaborates with other academic institutions to provide access to a wide-variety of information resources.

The Library has an assigned Library Faculty member to liaise with the School of Architecture, Jim Thull. He has served as liaison to the School since his arrival in 2005. This long-standing relationship means that Jim is keenly aware of the research and curriculum in Architecture. He recommends materials to add to the collection based on this knowledge and regularly fields and meets requests from faculty and students for the acquisition of specific information sources.

The Library is open seven days a week throughout each semester and has expanded its open hours since the last accreditation. During the regular school year, the building opens weekdays at 7am and is open until 2am and is also open on weekends. The online Library resources are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Description of the content, extent and formats represented in the current collection including number of titles and subject areas represented:

The Library has increased its holdings in the architecture subject area since the last accreditation report to meet the needs of the program. It subscribes to a number of databases, including:

- Avery Index
- Building Green
- MAD-CAD
- Lynda.com
- ProQuest Dissertations and Theses: Full-Text
- ARTstor
- Art Abstracts
- JSTOR
- Springer E-books
- Bibliography of the History of Art

In 2008, the Library held 8614 books, videos, drawings, and other materials in the architecture subject area. As of July 2013, there are now 9287 materials. There are 161 journal subscriptions in the architecture field (versus 115 in 2008) and 30 titles from “Gardens, Landscape Architecture, and Parks” as classified in our journal system.

In addition to commercially acquired sources, the Library created a Montana Architectural Drawings database in 2005 which has citations of over 3,000 architectural drawing sets housed in the Montana State University Library Special Collections in Bozeman, Montana and the University of Montana Library Archives in Missoula, Montana. Users can search this database by building type, project title, date, city, architect, or address. Collections include drawings of businesses, churches, colleges, governments, hospitals, organizations, parks, residences, and schools. School of Architecture students and faculty have the benefit of broad information in the databases mentioned earlier as well as this Montana-specific database for research.

The degree to which information resources and services support the mission, planning, curriculum, and research specialties of the program:

Because Jim Thull is liaison to Architecture, he regularly interacts with faculty in Architecture to be aware of changes in the research in the School. Also, all new MSU faculty members have a pool of \$600 to support their incoming research agendas. Likewise, faculty, students, and staff can make requests for information resources at any time. The Library participates in worldwide interlibrary loaning and borrowing efforts, so the Library can provide access to information beyond its owned collections. A member of the Library faculty sits on the MSU curriculum committee so that the Library can anticipate and plan for any new courses or programs which will need support from the Library.

Students can contact the Library in a variety of ways for assistance. There are options to text, chat, email, text, telephone, or visit in-person with a librarian. The Research Assistance Program, or RAP, provides the opportunity to schedule an appointment about any research or information need whether about developing broad critical thinking skills with regard to information sources, or identifying materials for a specific assignment. Likewise, architecture faculty regularly arrange for a Librarian to visit their classes to demonstrate how to search Library databases, evaluate information, identify resources for research, etc.

The Library is an active participant in trying to change the tide of rising inflationary costs by encouraging open access initiatives, most recently through its provision of an Institutional Repository called ScholarWorks (scholarworks.montana.edu). This database is optimized for indexing in search engines, such as Google and Google Scholar. All MSU theses and dissertations are a part of ScholarWorks and are thus very findable by the general public within weeks of graduation.

Assessment of the quality, currency, suitability, range, and quantity of resources in all formats, (traditional/print and electronic):

The Library works with a book distributor to be notified about publications in areas which support all of the research and teaching at Montana State University, including architecture. It is now venturing into a program that will offer links to e-books for Library users from its Website that will not be purchased until the item is opened and used for a certain length of time. This "Demand-Driven Acquisitions" will allow the Library to have materials ready at an instant for users and will provide more data on the types of information needed by users. The Library also regularly reviews circulation data of physical materials and usage data of online resources to help inform purchase and subscription decisions.

The nature of publishing is that materials continue to move from print publication to electronic. Journals were at the forefront of this transition and books have seen increasing shifts in this area. Because of the visual nature of architecture materials, the Library has maintained a large physical collection, while balancing that with substantial offerings of electronic material so that users can access quality information from anywhere with an internet connection. All MSU students, faculty, and staff can access the Library's electronic subscriptions seamlessly on-campus, and with a login using their MSU ID number from off-campus.

In 2011, the Library received a large donation of architecture and art books from an individual's personal collection. Many of these were large-format books which the Library already had in its collection, but the Library's copies were in poor condition from high-use. These items were replaced with the excellent-condition gift materials which greatly improved the offerings in the physical collection. Similarly, we regularly review our print collections for updated editions, unused materials, items and poor condition and update the collection, as appropriate.

Demonstrated sufficient funding to enable continuous collection growth:

The Library receives reliable funding from the University each year. Because of the Institution's commitment to maintaining needed information sources, it has included inflationary costs each year in its funding allocation. The Library is an active participant in trying to change the tide of rising inflationary costs by encouraging open access initiatives, most recently through its provision of its Institutional Repository, ScholarWorks.

The Library Dean is required to sign off on any new programs, minors, or majors so the Library can make sure there is sufficient funding and resources to meet any new curricular needs.

Growth of collections is steady, but space limitations do require that collections are culled for unused materials to keep collections manageable and useful.

Any significant problem that affects the operation or services of the libraries, visual resources collections, and other information resource facilities:

While there is demand for the Library building to be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, there is not funding available for such hours. The expansion to earlier and later opening and closing hours, respectively, has been quite popular with students. Also, there is a limit to the amount of space to house collections. The Library is investigating options for off-site storage and retrieval of materials so that spaces in the building can be used for collaborative learning. The Library does not collect information in slide form except as appropriate for Special Collections. ARTStor has a large image collection available through the Library's subscription.