



The Research Library as Academic Technology Leader Opportunities and Challenges Encountered During IT Consolidation and Integration

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University of Oregon Institutional Goals



- Excellence in academics and research
- Ensuring student access and success
- Ensuring a positive and productive student experience

IT plays critical role in accomplishing these goals

Libraries as IT-Intensive Leaders

- Historically:
 - Productive partnerships at times, e.g. EDUCAUSE, CNI, Frye Institute in US and Canada
 - Uneasy relationships at other times, e.g. rise of the CIO, library/IT mergers and de-mergers
- Now:
 - Technology ubiquitous, core to teaching, learning, and research strategies
 - Some library leaders run central IT units, but most have their own IT staffing and collaborate with central IT units
 - Many CIOs strengthening their portfolios and roles
 - More universities centralizing IT decision making and control of resources and staffing?

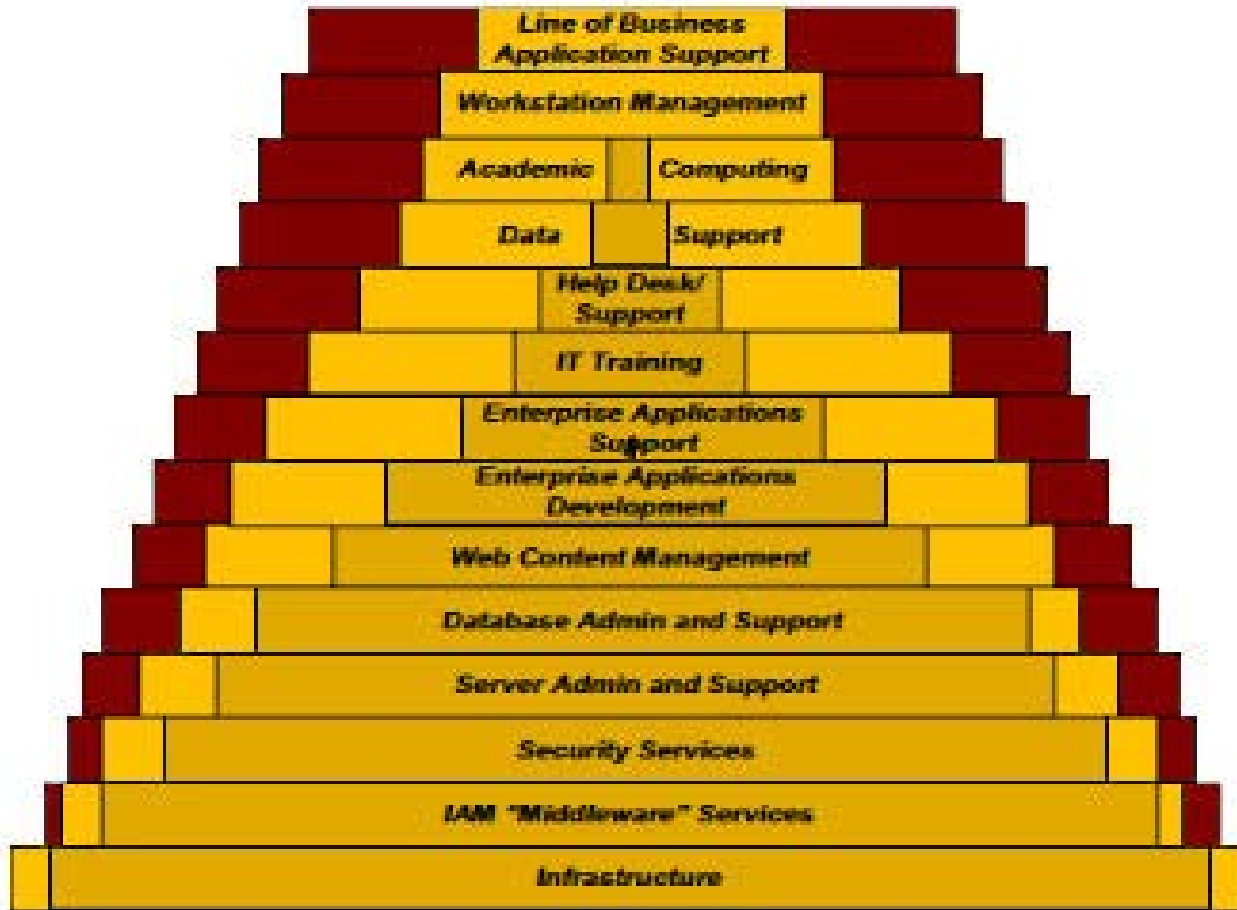
IT Consolidations - Examples

- **Washington U, St. Louis – “Shared IT Services”**
 - Focusing on “commodity services”
- **University of Illinois**
 - Focusing on “building capacity,” units being absorbed only on a voluntary basis
- **University of Iowa – “OneIT@Iowa”**
 - Library IT being affected in various ways
- **George Washington University**
 - Academic technologies moving to Libraries
- Others in PRRLA membership?

Central IT Units and the Library: Partners or Rivals, or Both?

- Do CIOs and consultants think about libraries as partners, or decentralized units working out of scope?
- Libraries generally want to partner with CIOs on infrastructure, i.e., storage, data centers, cloud-based solutions, etc.
- But most libraries need control over their own library systems platforms, library website, digital asset/content management systems, digital scholarship, learning commons, etc.
- In our case, library's academic technology portfolio of classroom technology, LMS, instructional design and classroom technologies functions were questioned

How many IT services should be centralized or distributed?



Model developed by Cornell University

IT Reorganization/Consolidation at UO

- IT strategic planning efforts began in 2015
 - UO asked: How is IT helping/hindering our ability to accomplish our institutional goals?
 - <http://provost.uoregon.edu/content/it-strategic-plan>
- Initially engaged two external consultants to inform decisions: Baker Tilly for IT risk assessment; Moran Technology Consulting for IT strategic planning
- Both consultants found similar themes during their work: UO was far too decentralized, needed to consolidate and rebalance IT assets/investments for cost efficiency, to remove redundancy, improve information security, etc.



Information Technology Vision

UO will strive to create a collaborative and secure IT environment that attracts and retains the best students, faculty and staff by providing a common foundation of anytime/anywhere technology access for all UO 'citizens' and that focuses on strategically funding targeted technology capabilities to support its learning and research goals.



To achieve this vision, the University of Oregon must:

- Ensure that a collaborative IT Governance Model is deployed that continually focuses on prioritizing, funding and driving community-valued IT services
- Recognize that having a secure and robust underlying technology infrastructure is critical to providing all other technology services
- Identify cross-campus core IT services that are more cost effectively provided in a centralized approach and use the potential savings to fund strategically targeted projects
- Mobilize collaborative cross-campus constituencies to identify and address common goals
- Streamline our administrative processes and systems to provide more seamless and automated service to all campus stakeholders
- Have consistent and strong executive support to ensure that the IT Strategic Plan is supported
- Excite students and faculty to leverage technology to improve learning and research outcomes

Why not rely more on the central IT unit?

“Academic technology's natural campus partners lie outside the [central] IT organization. From the perspective of its theoretical and historical foundations as well as its primary mission of instructional support, academic technology has more in common with the library, faculty development, and distance or continuing education than with IT departments supporting campus telecommunications, networks, and administrative computing.”

- Albright and Nworie (2008), “Rethinking Academic Technology,” *EDUCAUSE Quarterly*



Advocating for Library IT Capacity

- Libraries are *central*, serving all students, faculty, staff
- Focus and connection to academic mission as priority
- “Information science” as discipline; IT is core to that
- Existing liaison programs mean we have existing good relationships with faculty and academic departments
- Successful fundraising, raising dollars for IT-related needs and initiatives
- Library’s IT capacity is directly related to its future, ability to continue evolving and meeting users’ needs
- Some distributed IT functions improve innovation and academic excellence



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Library's Academic IT Leadership Recognized

Third consultant Harvey Blustain's report stated:

- “With its focus on technology for teaching and learning, the Library is a central IT organization. “
- “To begin consolidation, IT units in schools and colleges should be dissolved as independent units, with all staff moving organizationally to IS or the Library.”
- “The Library should be designated the campus lead for academic technologies. “
- “The Library is clearly the campus leader in academic technology, digital research data curation, preservation, management, and will gain more resources in the reorganization.”
- “IS and the Library should develop plans to absorb dozens of new staff.” Libraries was slated to receive 14 new IT positions/staff

Library IT Academic Technology

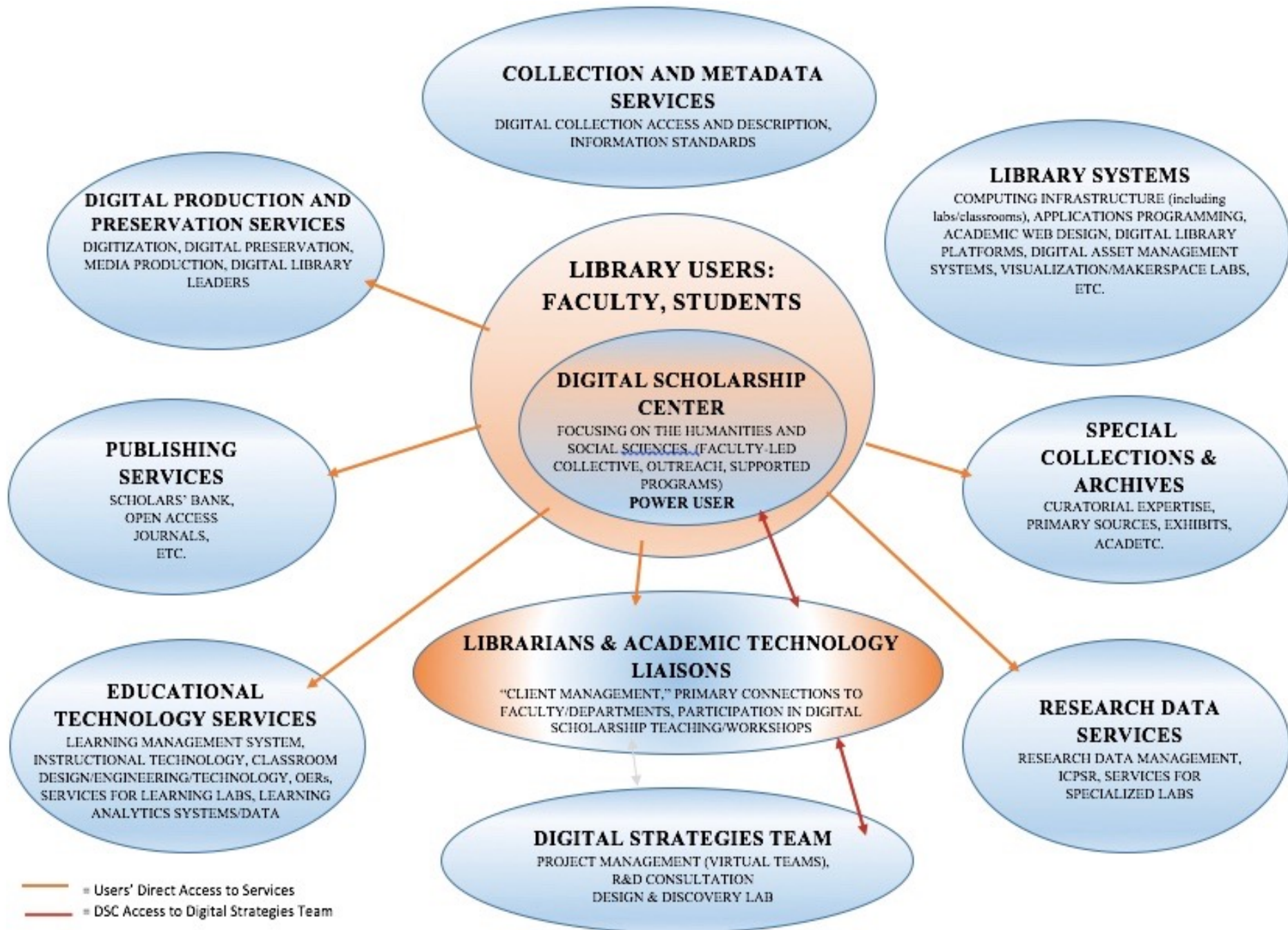
- **Academic technology:** “People come to academic technology from a broad range of disciplines and professional areas. ... This applied field includes elements of information science, information technology, and instructional technology. ...The term academic technology is used as an umbrella term to describe the design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for teaching and learning [and research?]*] in higher education.”

– Johnson & Lamp, 2003 - *time to add this for library role?



Expanding Academic Technologies

- Chief Academic Technology Officer (CATO)
- Major Library Systems and Interfaces
- Learning Management System and Services
- Classroom Technologies and Media Services
- Digital Scholarship Services / Digital Collections
- Research Data Management Services
- Public Computing and Technology Assistance
- Campus Pay-for-Printing Systems
- Hands-on Computing Labs



University of Oregon Libraries



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