SUNYergy
SUNY Libraries Working Together

SUNY*Connect* Advances!

Cover Story

2004: Year of the University Press

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What should be the future direction for SUNY*Connect*? Are there additional shared services that would benefit the SUNY library community? How should the SUNY*Connect* financial plan be altered to handle new services and to provide the greatest "bang for the buck"?

It is a time of transition for SUNY*Connect*. And this is set within a familiar context of change and budgetary shortfalls for SUNY libraries.

The SUNY*Connect* Advisory Council Retreat (October 28-29, 2004) discussed these and other questions:

> To envision the SUNY*Connect* project and related library operations for the next 2-5 years and beyond. Looking at both the current environment and future trends, we hope to develop a planning framework which can be developed into the next SUNY*Connect* planning document which would be used to both define and develop the SUNY*Connect* project over the next five years. It will be important to set and prioritize goals that are feasible and yet forward-looking. Invited guests included the SUNY Council of Library Directors (SCLD) Executive Board.

In addition, the SUNY library directors were asked for their input via an online survey forum. It is expected that this forum will also be used to get responses from the entire SUNY library community. The survey's overview states:

"The SUNY*Connect* initiative has it roots in the SCLD Annual meeting of 1997 when then Stony Brook Library Director Joseph Branin was asked to produce a plan for the 'SUNY Virtual Library.' The plan called for lobbying for additional state funds to increase access to electronic content, implement a standard library management system with a union catalog and patron initiated borrowing, deploy a delivery system to move items throughout the state, and build regional storage facilities to ease the space constraints in our libraries.

> "The degree of success in achieving each of the goals has varied. We have secured some new additional funds from SUNY System Administration, but have not been successful in receiving more money from the State in these difficult budget times. Implementation of Aleph will be complete by the end of 2005, and we are hopeful that the Union Catalog and patron borrowing will be available within the same time frame. The delivery system is in place through a contract with Nylink. We have increased access to electronic resources but not to the extent hoped for, and while we have completed a study indicating our need for storage facilities we have been unsuccessful in acquiring capital funds to build them or operating funds to staff and maintain them.
>
> "Much has changed since 1997 and we need to work together to set the strategic directions for the future of SUNY*Connect* and SUNY Libraries. The SUNY*Connect* Advisory Council will be holding a Planning Retreat in October. Our hope is that the meeting will allow us to enhance our current vision for SUNY*Connect* and SUNY library collaboration that can be presented to library directors at the SCLD Annual Meeting in April of 2005 and to the SUNY Librarians Association in May 2005.
>
> "In order to assist the SAC representatives in their deliberations, we are asking for your vision on the need or desirability for shared library services and facilities over the next several years. Your participation in this request for input on strategic directions for the SUNY*Connect* Advisory Council will significantly aid the development of future planning for shared services and collections within the SUNY community."

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