The External Review Process

The NMSU Library has been given the opportunity to participate in an external review to obtain advice from a three member team of library leaders from other universities. Overall, the purpose of the review will be to support the NMSU Library in meeting present challenges and pursuing strategic directions for the next several years.

Dr. Joan Giesecke, Dean of Libraries at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will lead the external review team. Nancy Eaton, Dean Emeritus of University Libraries and Scholarly Communications at the Pennsylvania State University, and Olivia Madison, Dean of the Library at Iowa State University, are the other team members. The review process will include a review of documentation as well as a site visit to the NMSU Las Cruces campus which will occur April 17-20, 2011.

In preparation for the team’s visit, NMSU Library staff will prepare a background report, which will include: organizational information; a “State of the Library” report on strategic directions; a summary of strengths and challenges; and a set of questions for the team to address. In addition, the NMSU Library will provide a set of supporting documents via an electronic resource room: http://lib.nmsu.edu/externalreview. Library staff will work with Dr. Bobbie Derlin, Associate Provost and Dean, College of Extended Learning, and the external review team to structure the campus visit, which will include meetings with both library and campus constituencies.

Following the campus visit, the external review team will provide a written report with their recommendations for the NMSU Library during summer 2011.
NMSU Library Background Report & Resource Room

The NMSU Library has prepared a three-part report:

I. Background information—provides a brief history and profile information for New Mexico State University and the NMSU Library. Includes a review of issues affecting higher education in the state of New Mexico.

II. The State of the NMSU Library—reviews the NMSU Library’s mission, vision, and values and provides updates on the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan, including progress and challenges.

III. Meeting Future Challenges—addresses emerging issues and opportunities, strengths, and challenges as the NMSU Library looks toward the next multi-year planning process. This section includes focus questions for the external review team.

The report draws from a variety of sources, which are described at the end of the document. Sources that are included in the resource room are identified with RR. The section concerning NMSU makes extensive use of text from the university’s 2008 Self-Study report for the Higher Learning Commission.
Section I. Background

Higher Education in the State of New Mexico

New Mexico has 24 public postsecondary institutions serving a state population of 2,067,432 (2010 Census). Enrollment in higher education has grown over the past decade, particularly since the establishment of the Legislative Lottery Scholarship in 1996 and its reform in 2007. This program provides considerable tuition benefits to eligible New Mexico students who enroll in the state’s public colleges and universities.

Higher education receives allocations totaling about 15% of the state’s general appropriations; however, like many other states, New Mexico’s colleges and universities are currently experiencing a decrease in state support. Between 2008-9 and 2009-10, state appropriations for higher education dropped 11.7%, the fifth largest decrease in the country. Although tuition at NMSU compares favorably to surrounding states, affordability of higher education is a concern. Per capita income in New Mexico falls below the national average and the state has the fourth highest rate of poverty in the country. 25% of the state’s children under age 18 live in poverty.

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education’s Measuring Up 2008: the National Report Card on Higher Education report found New Mexico’s weakest areas to be educational preparation (D-), completion (D+), and affordability (F). Eighth graders, and particularly low-income students, perform very poorly on national assessments, with only 17-18% scoring at or above proficient in reading, writing, math and science. Only 84% of young adults in the state earn a high school diploma or equivalent, well below the national average. Students also struggle with college completion. New Mexico is one of the lowest performing states in the number of first-time full-time students who complete a bachelor’s degree within six years after entering college (42%), with a 9% gap between whites and other racial/ethnic groups in graduation rates at four-year institutions. New Mexican families must devote a significant percentage (21%) of family income in order to attend public four-year institutions in the state, which is where 93% of New Mexico college students are enrolled. New Mexico’s strongest grade was participation (B-), due to the high percentage of adults between the ages of 25-49 who are enrolled in college-level education or training.

In 2010, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED) issued the State Master Plan for Higher Education: Building New Mexico’s Future. Among other recommendations, the plan urges the state to revise the funding formula, which currently ties allocations to enrollment growth. The only way for an institution to receive “growth dollars” is to perpetually increase credit hour generation by a certain percentage and there is concern that this has led to a proliferation of academic programs, some of which duplicate existing offerings. Decreased state revenue has also resulted in higher tuition and students at four-year institutions have faced a larger burden due to the higher cost of credit hours at those institutions. For many years, the state’s universities have sought a revised formula. It remains to be seen whether an alternative will emerge in 2011.
NMSU History and Profile

New Mexico State University is the state’s only land-grant university, serving the educational needs of New Mexico’s diverse population through comprehensive programs of education, research, extension education, and public service. The NMSU System consists of a comprehensive, doctoral level university in Las Cruces and four community colleges: NMSU Alamogordo, NMSU Carlsbad, NMSU Doña Ana and NMSU Grants.

In 1889, the New Mexico territorial legislature designated Las Cruces as the site for a land-grant agricultural college and experiment station. Las Cruces College assumed this role and became New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, the first degree-granting institution in the territory. In 1960, the institution was re-named New Mexico State University in recognition of the growth and diversity of programs offered.

NMSU’s main campus has been regionally accredited since 1926 and it has held preliminary to full accreditation status at the doctoral level since 1963. The university is governed by a five-person Board of Regents, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the state senate.

NMSU Las Cruces is classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a doctoral comprehensive high-level research university and is one of 52 institutions in the United States to be designated a Space Grant College. During its most recent review by NASA, NMSU was one of only 12 space grant programs in the country to receive an excellent rating. NMSU is a minority institution under USDOED Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965, CFDA# 84.031S, and is an active member of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). NMSU is in a unique position among the nation’s higher education institutions, as the only land-grant institution classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a doctoral university with high research activity that is also ranked in the top 100 universities and colleges on research and development by the National Science Foundation (2006), while being classified as Hispanic-Serving.

The main campus sits on a 900-acre campus and enrolls 18,552 students from all 50 states and from 71 nations. As of fall 2010, regular faculty members number 732 and staff 3,181. NMSU offers 86 baccalaureate degree programs, 52 master’s degree programs, and 21 doctoral programs. The university has a strong distance education program, offering 8 bachelor-level, 13 masters-level, and 3 doctoral degree programs through the Blackboard learning management system and other technologies. Six other site-based programs are offered at locations throughout the state.

Current Issues at NMSU

Administrative Changes

NMSU leadership has undergone many changes in the past decade. Since 2000, the university has had seven presidents and seven provosts. President Barbara Couture and Executive Vice President
and Provost Wendy Wilkins both arrived in 2010. Of the nine college deans serving in fall 2010, four have had less than two years of experience serving in that capacity. Many areas are currently being reorganized and searches are underway for key administrative leadership positions including the Vice President for Student Success, Vice President for Administration and Finance, and the Director of Institutional Research.

**Assessment**

NMSU has placed increased emphasis on the assessment of student learning outcomes through its participation in the Higher Learning Commission’s Assessment Academy and its appointment of a Director of Assessment. The University Outcomes Assessment Council oversees the activities and initiatives of student learning assessment reporting on campus via focused committees. These committees direct assessment of general education, the baccalaureate experience, academic programs, and student learning support services.

**Community Colleges**

In the state of New Mexico, the creation of community colleges as “branch” campuses was authorized under New Mexico legislative statute in the 1970s. The only four-year institutions in the state with multiple campuses are NMSU, the University of New Mexico, and Eastern New Mexico University. Each campus has its own local advisory board, with the Boards of Regents of the institution acting as the overarching governing body. The community college campuses within the NMSU System are funded separately through a state formula and manage their own budgets. In 2004, the NMSU Regents eliminated use of the term “branch” to identify NMSU two-year community colleges. There are now four community college campuses including NMSU Alamogordo, NMSU Carlsbad, NMSU Doña Ana, and NMSU Grants. This was a major change reflecting the recognition that NMSU and all of its campuses work together as “One University”. As pressure to increase credit hours intensifies, there has been more conversation about “swirling” or managing students who move back and forth between NMSU’s two-year campuses and the main campus in Las Cruces as they pursue their degrees. Another recent administrative reporting change was that all community college presidents now directly report to the NMSU President instead of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

**First Year Experience**

Since fall 2005, a wide array of faculty and staff have been working to provide entering students with a solid foundation with which to launch their futures. The efforts began with a self-study guided by the Foundations of Excellence® in the First College Year. The substantive report included ten Priority Action Items to guide the entire experience of NMSU’s first-year undergraduate students. To date, three of the Action Items have begun. A first-year philosophy has been created, the first-year assessment plan has been developed, and a plan for administrative guidance has been proposed. Plans are progressing for implementation of the remaining items as NMSU continues to create a quality first-year experience for undergraduate students.

**New Academic Programs**

Since 2006, a number of new degree programs have been proposed and approved, including 4 new bachelor’s degrees, 4 new master’s programs, and 6 new doctoral programs. A number of these programs correspond to the university’s research clusters and/or other strategic goals (e.g., MS and PhD in Water Science and Management, MA and PhD in Aerospace Engineering, PhD in Economic Development). Many of these programs have resulted in proposals to the legislature for funding, though funding has not been sustained. Approximately half of all academic programs on campus undergo a
program review process. These are programs which have accreditation review requirements. None of the other academic programs have a program review process. The Executive Vice President and Provost has recently initiated the planning process to establish academic program review for all programs on campus.

**Research Specializations/Research Clusters**

NMSU was one of the first universities in the country to adopt the concept of “Research Clusters” to enhance its value within the state and the nation. NMSU has established five Research Clusters to take advantage of strategic opportunities that build on institutional strengths and respond to local, regional, and national needs. The Clusters encompass interdisciplinary work involving the university’s six colleges and independent research units including the Water Resources Research Institute and the Physical Sciences Laboratory.

**Strategic Planning and Goals**

Living the Vision (LTV), NMSU’s strategic goals document, was established in 2005. The plan describes a vision of NMSU as a premier institution as compared to its peers. LTV uses specific performance measures to evaluate the university’s progress in meeting goals related to teaching quality, faculty quality, research productivity, and economic benefit to the state. The overall vision is for NMSU to place within the top quartile of defined peer institutions for these categories by 2020.

In 2010, President Couture defined a New Era of Excellence through Partnership, which links university success to partnerships with the state of New Mexico, friends and alumni, businesses and industries, public schools and fellow colleges. The president identified seven areas (Goals for Success) for institutional focus.

More recently President Couture has announced a new strategic planning initiative, Building the Vision (BTV), which, when in place, will be the new strategic planning framework for New Mexico State University.

**NMSU Library History and Profile**

**Early Years through Mid-Century**

The Library began through barter. Prior to the establishment of the Agricultural College, the Las Cruces College received an Encyclopedia Britannica set valued at $112, which was donated by a father in exchange for his children’s tuition. President Hiram Hadley added this title to the Webster’s Dictionary and Johnston’s Encyclopedia volumes that he purchased after assuming the presidency of the new Agricultural College, which opened to students in January 1890. The resourceful President Hadley soon found another opportunity to further build library collections, using $600 in unexpended federal funds to purchase several hundred of the “best books” offered by an Ohio bookseller, thus forming the core collection.

These fruitful beginnings continued throughout the first fifty years of the Library’s history, a period marked
by efforts to build and catalog collections, relocations to ever larger facilities, and increased use by
students and faculty, all under the guidance of a series of industrious librarians, many of whom held
additional duties, including registrar and bell ringer—the latter serving to summon the campus to each
new class period. During this time, the Library began building a number of collections, including
federal government resources offered through the Federal Depository Library Program (1907), United
States and state experiment station publications, technical reports and standards, and special collec-
tions. At various points it was claimed that the Library held the largest collection in the Southwest.

By the 1950s, the expanded collections and services had exceeded available facilities in Young Hall.
In June 1953, a new library building was constructed, providing more than 50,000 square feet of floor
space over four floors. The brochure prepared for the Library’s dedication boasted of the breadth of
the collections, including 82,000 cataloged books and bound periodicals; 120,000 United States and
New Mexico documents; 5,000 unbound magazines; agricultural experiment station and extension
service publications from each state, the Federal government, and many foreign countries; and several
special collections and certain subject fields of strong concentration. The spirit of thrift behind the
building was noted with pride: “The largest building with the fewest frills for the least money was the
ideal which guided the planners from the first drawings to the finished product.” The library building
was later named Branson Hall, in honor of John W. Branson, who served as NMSU’s president from
1949 to 1955.

Mid-Century Forward: Growth and Challenges
The NMSU Library continued to grow and to add services and collections, as well as venture into automation. In
1974, the NMSU Library began using OCLC, one of the
first libraries in the Southwest to do so. The online catalog
grew public in 1986.

Problems with funding, collections, facilities, and organi-
zational climate and practices were identified in numer-
ous external and internal reports of the 1960s-1990s. The
NMSU Library was identified as an area of concern by the
North Central Association teams of 1978, 1988, and 1998,
in particular in the areas of funding and space. The NMSU
Library underwent external reviews in 1966 and 1985, the
latter of which led to a self-study under the Association of
Research Libraries Academic Library Development Plan
program.

In 1992, the New Library was dedicated. The building was the result of an intensive campaign to ob-
tain $11.1 million in general obligation bond funding, which was approved by New Mexico voters in
1988. Four years later, the three-story building was completed. It had been hoped that the new facility
would be large enough to house all library collections, services, and study space, but this proved too
costly. In the end, arts, humanities, and social sciences collections were moved to the New Library
while agriculture, business, science, and engineering collections remained in Branson. In 2000, the
New Library was re-named in honor of Herb and Joan Zuhl, who donated generously to the NMSU
Library as well as to other campus projects. The Zuhl’s extensive collection of petrified wood, fossils,
and minerals is displayed throughout Zuhl Library and at other locations on campus.
The Past Decade
Dr. Elizabeth Titus joined the NMSU Library as Dean in 2000 and began working with all library departments to identify opportunities for greater efficiency. Nearly all departments were reorganized during this period and many physical service points were centralized. Administrative functions were centralized. General reference collections and services were centralized in Zuhl Library in 2003-04 and the scope of the circulation desks in both buildings expanded from information desks (2004) to multi-purpose service desks (2010). Archives & Special Collections were organizationally centralized and service areas merged into a common research reading room in 2004. Access Services incorporated copy services and periodicals services into its Service Desks in 2010.

Collection processing was another emphasis during this period: gifts and repairs backlogs were eliminated and access to archival and special collections was substantially expanded. Behind the scenes, the NMSU Library implemented several acquisitions and cataloging efficiencies: EDI invoicing for serials (2001) and monographs (2004), automated statistical gathering (2004), ERMS and COUNTER (2009) and increased contributions to national level resource sharing through participation in a NACO funnel project and loading print and electronic serials holdings into OCLC.


Workplace initiatives have included an expansion of policy development with opportunity for staff feedback, significant revisions to promotion and tenure policies, the development of reward programs (e.g., bonus awards, research support) that have been a model for other units on campus, flexible scheduling for staff, and increased support for faculty mentoring (RR).

In an effort to make salaries more competitive, the Dean worked with the NMSU Library’s faculty to convert most faculty positions to a 9-month contract, while retaining their 12-month salaries, in 2001. Department heads were paid to work the additional three months and faculty who worked summer terms were compensated for working summers above and beyond their 9 month contracts. In addition, over multiple years the NMSU Library used internal funds to improve exempt and non-exempt staff salaries. In 2005, NMSU began a salary adjustment and reclassification pilot program called Broadbanding with the intent of simplifying classifications and improving staff salaries to make them market competitive. Although the campus program was not officially adopted, the NMSU Library took the opportunity to move staff salaries closer to market at that point.

Since the mid-1990s, the NMSU Library has raised more than $1,100,000 in grant and gift awards resulting from successful written proposals. The awards have provided external support for many projects beneficial to library users and the larger community. Large grant-funded projects include:
Preserving the History of New Mexico Agriculture and Life ($97,755) - National Endowment for the Humanities/U.S. Agricultural Information Network; Border Health Information and Education Network ($204,000) - National Library of Medicine; and Title V Electronic Classroom ($217,032) - U.S. Dept. of Education, Title V, Strengthening Institutions (partnered with the lead agency, the NMSU College of Engineering).

NMSU has a centralized/decentralized model for fundraising efforts. The Library Development Officer works collaboratively within this setting. For the last decade, the NMSU Library has centralized all fundraising efforts for the NMSU Library under Library Administration. Under the Library Development Officer, a team approach is used to cultivate and steward donors. The NMSU Library has been very successful in building the number of endowments, increasing the principal on endowments, increasing the number of planned gifts, soliciting current use funds, building and maintaining donor relationships, moving donors to new levels of giving, creating partnerships across campus to strengthen giving opportunities, acquiring major gift collections, and thinking outside of the box on events and marketing pieces. Two major naming opportunities at the NMSU Library are: the naming of the Zuhl Library, which included a major planned gift and the gift of a unique geological collection of fossils and minerals; and the naming of the Caroline E. Stras Research Room along with the creation of a significant endowment to support women’s studies collections in the NMSU Library. The NMSU Library has recently initiated the Honor with Books Program, raised funds to complete a major digitization project, and is in the 3rd year of a 2 Million Volumes by 2012 Campaign. The NMSU Library is currently in a partnership on a multi-million dollar proposal and, in addition, is involved with “asks” for two major political papers collections. The NMSU Library not only raises funds to support projects that could not otherwise advance, but it has developed a strong gifts-in-kind giving culture.

The NMSU Library currently offers monographic collections of more than 1.8 million volumes and provides access to a multitude of digital resources designed to support teaching, learning, and research. Library facilities offer newly renovated work/study areas with access to a wide range of resources, including networked computers, laser printers and copiers, media playback equipment, laptop checkouts, wireless Internet access, as well as adaptive software for persons with disabilities. Sustainability has also been an emphasis of recent facilities projects. The NMSU Library has capitalized on its prime physical location and extensive building hours to partner with other campus groups offering student services. In 2006, the NMSU Library worked with the campus Writing Center to expand writing consultation services during evenings and weekends. In 2008, the Division of Student Success opened an office on the second floor of Zuhl Library that offers services including drop-in tutoring, advising, and financial planning. In 2010, the NMSU Library partnered with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to offer short-term laptop loans. Library staff are currently working with NMSU’s Office of Facilities and Services on a Mitigation Plan to address overloading of floors in both buildings and seek solutions that ensure preservation of quality space for both users and collections.
The NMSU Library has consistently worked with the university community to align collections with curricular and research programs. A 2003-4 project invited proposals from campus researchers to enrich or build collections using $588,000 in funding approved by New Mexico voters through a general obligation bond. Close to 50 proposals were received and 90% were totally or partially funded. Since 2006, the NMSU Library has prepared collection analysis reports for any newly proposed academic degree programs. In 2007, the NMSU Library worked with the campus community to align the serials collection with current research and curricular needs. One outcome of this project was the addition of 70 much-needed titles to the Library’s collection. Another 2007 collection funding project supported $230,000 in new digital collections, making possible the acquisition of critical titles in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. During the 27% materials budget reduction of 2010 (RR), the NMSU Library worked with campus liaisons to minimize the loss of access to heavily-used titles, although this was not always possible. The NMSU Library offers information delivery services designed to expand access to information resources and to ensure quick and user-friendly delivery of information. A newly launched service, Request It!, allows a user to electronically submit requests. The NMSU Library then retrieves and delivers materials to on-campus, off-campus, and distance education sites regardless of whether the material is owned locally or at other libraries. Delivery of materials is done electronically when possible.

The NMSU Library has compared data with its peer group for a number of years, using the National Center for Education Statistics/Academic Libraries Survey (ALS) data (RR). The NMSU Library also routinely submits reports on its assessment projects to the campus Outcomes Assessment Committee (RR).

Section II. The State of the NMSU Library – Strategic Planning Update

In 2007, Dean Titus initiated a new multi-year planning process for 2009-2012. The Dean first held small group meetings with Las Cruces-based library faculty and staff to seek input on strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improving the NMSU Library. In addition, she established two task forces to begin work on the planning process. The Mission Task Force was charged to review the NMSU Library’s existing mission documents—statements of mission, vision, and values—and to make recommendations for any changes (RR). The Retreat Task Force was charged to plan a retreat for all library staff. In February 2008, approximately 70 NMSU library faculty and staff—including staff from each NMSU campus—gathered to discuss ideas for advancing the NMSU Library towards the new vision. Discussion items from the all-staff retreat as well as the small group meetings formed the foundation of the current three-year plan (RR).

A summary of progress towards the plan’s vision and goals beginning in 2008, as well as identification of ongoing challenges, follows.
Vision: Facilitate a creative and supportive environment for intellectual inquiry.

- Goal: Redesign public spaces in both libraries to better address library user needs.

**Progress/Challenges:**

- **Redesign of Public Spaces:** In fall 2008 the NMSU Library began a project to redesign public spaces in both buildings. A planning group undertook a mixed methods study to learn more about current use of library space as well as user suggestions and priorities for “ideal” library space. The results were used to guide renovations to both buildings. First floor areas in Branson and Zuhl were re-painted and re-carpeted. New furnishings were added to improve group and individual work space. Computing access was increased with a greater number of computers reserved for NMSU users and expanded wireless access. Lesser-used collections (microforms, paper indexes) were centralized and relocated to optimize first floor areas for library users. Broken and excess furniture was removed from upper floors and remaining furniture was reconfigured to better define quiet/individual and group study areas. Signage in both library buildings was replaced. Follow-up assessments conducted in fall 2009 found widespread user satisfaction with the changes as well as areas where additional improvements could be made (RR). As of fall 2010, gate counts show that building use is up 13% in Zuhl and 21% in Branson. The new LabStats software package, implemented campus-wide in 2010, shows that library computing areas are among the most heavily used “lab” spaces on campus.

- **Significant Floor Load Problems in Both Library Buildings:** In 2009, the NMSU Library sought assistance from NMSU’s Office of Facilities and Services (OFS) to obtain structural assessments of the library’s two buildings. The engineering firm Bohannan-Huston was hired to conduct a study of floor load in Branson Library, which was completed in early 2010. The study noted that “the majority of Branson Library is likely currently loaded at or near its capacity. It is not recommended that additional stacks be added, except on the ground floor in locations that are not directly above the underground utility tunnels.” In response to concerns raised by library staff, OFS staff also reviewed Zuhl Library and determined that collection areas were loaded at or beyond capacity. Library staff immediately began working with OFS staff on...
a mitigation plan (RR) to address the floor load issues in both buildings. These plans include recommendations on relocating collections, de-selection of print materials and/or conversion from print to electronic formats. Library buildings are heavily used by students and expansion of shelving into public areas is a disappointing prospect. The NMSU Library is in the process of creating an on-site storage area in the east side of the 1st floor of Branson Library, which will provide 13,236 linear feet of shelving as a short-term measure (est. 5 years), but a long-term capital project plan is needed to address off-site storage of current and future collections.

➢ Goal: Improve the funding structure for the Library, one that adequately responds to the need to keep salaries competitive and keep up with inflation.

Progress/Challenges:

➢ **Salary Study Brings Library Salaries Closer to Market:** Since 2008, NMSU has worked with the Mercer Group to redesign the classification system for the entire university system and improve salaries. In fall 2008, the faculty salary study was completed and a formula for allocating salary increases was recommended. In total, 945 NMSU faculty members across all campuses were part of the Compensation Study. Of that number, 848 (90%) received an increase, including 20% of library faculty positions. The staff classification and compensation study was largely completed in fall 2010. Classifications were remapped and equity adjustments were made for targeted employee groups. Although not all increases brought salaries to market level, the gap has been narrowed. Compensation levels for all entry level staff positions within a classification category were adjusted in 2011 to be “at market.”

➢ **Proposal for New Student Fee:** In February 2011, the NMSU Library proposed a new student library fee of $40 per semester per student effective July 1, 2011 (RR). If approved, the fee could provide approximately $742,000 per semester (based on fall 2010 enrollment) and would fund new services or enhancements to existing services, improve library spaces used by students, support the purchase of equipment used by students, and purchase library resources supporting student information needs. A Student Library Fee Advisory Committee would advise the Dean of the Library on use of student fee revenues, which would be based on feedback from student groups.

➢ **Materials Budget Reductions:** In 2010, the NMSU Library experienced a $575,000 reduction (27%) of the materials budget (RR). A combination of forces—loss of revenue for library endowments, a 50% reduction in indirect cost funding for the NMSU Library, decreases in state funding for higher education, and ongoing price increases for materials—factored into budget challenges. In spring 2010, the NMSU Library launched a large scale materials reduction project to identify cancellations in recurring cost lines. The project resulted in cancellations of 723 print and electronic journals, databases, standing orders, and microforms. As part of the process, the NMSU Library broke its package licenses with its largest publishers: Elsevier,
Springer, and Wiley. The NMSU Library gained the ability to control its remaining title lists and thus respond to future reductions, but absorbed a loss of an additional 1,300+ titles that were part of these large packages. Due to the successful passage of a general obligation bond in fall 2010, the NMSU Library faces a much smaller materials budget cut ($232,000) in 2011, but that relief is temporary. As the gap between the materials costs and funding continues to grow, the NMSU Library must plan for ongoing reductions.

- **Operating Budget Reductions:** In 2010, the NMSU Library took a $193,311 cut (6.57%) to its operating budget as part of a campus-wide administrative budget reduction. The reductions affected staff positions, student labor, travel, bindery operations, supplies, and systems budgets.

  - **Goal:** Assess and reorganize services to better meet the needs of the library’s users.

  **Progress/Challenges:**

  - **Adjusted Building and Service Hours:** The NMSU Library has made several adjustments to building and service desk hours since 2008. Many changes were implemented for the 2010 summer session after reviewing data on university course offerings, building use and service desk trends. Archives & Special Collections piloted a new model of offering service by appointment only during the summer session.

  - **Centralization of Federal and State Documents and Maps Collections on 1st Floor, Branson:** This move has not only assisted the NMSU Library with floor load problems, but has also made it possible to bring together complementary collections and provide improved services for those collections. The government documents and maps unit now has a more visible reference presence.

  - **Reorganization of Periodicals Collections/Services:** Over the years, the NMSU Library’s collection of print periodicals has decreased in size as more electronic journals have become available. In 2010, the current periodicals collection was relocated to a smaller space on the first floor of Branson Library, adjacent to the Service Desk. In addition, to gain greater operational efficiency, the Periodical Services Desk functions were integrated into the Branson Service Desk.

  - **Reorganization of Copy Services:** In 2010, the Copy Center in Zuhl was eliminated and all services (copy requests, checking/stocking copiers and printers, vending) are now handled at the Zuhl Service Desk. This has expanded the hours of service for users. It has also been possible to repurpose the former Copy Center office space to house scanning equipment for Information Delivery Services.
Goal: Create and foster seamless library services for NMSU library users by working with library partners. [One University, One Library]

Progress/Challenges:

- **NMSU Libraries Join in Partnership:** The LibSys5 partnership was established in 2008 as a means to identify and address individual and over-arching library development needs leading to improved services and system-wide support. LibSys5 is led by the library directors of the four community colleges, the library deans, and the department head of Access Services, who serves as the Community College Library Liaison. Administratively and fiscally the libraries remain independent from each other (RR).

- **Community College Library Records in Catalog:** The online catalog was expanded to include all NMSU libraries. Records for NMSU Doña Ana and NMSU Alamogordo had been added to the catalog in 1994 and 1996, respectively. Records for NMSU Carlsbad and NMSU Grants were added and the circulation module was implemented for both campuses in 2008.

- **Intercampus Borrowing and Lending:** Request It! information delivery services were created, significantly improving intercampus borrowing and lending through customized ILLiad functionality within the shared OPAC (2010). The campuses are interested in streamlining processes by becoming ILLiad satellite sites, although there are recurring cost concerns.

- **Expanding Course Material Delivery:** NMSU Las Cruces collaborated with NMSU Grants to videostream course materials via DocuTek (electronic reserves system) and Blackboard. DocuTek is also available to the other campuses when they wish to use it for electronic reserves.

- **The Physical Distances Between Campuses:** This challenge is currently being addressed through videoconferencing and by scheduling meetings at venues such as the NMLA annual conference; however, more face-to-face time with more staff participants would be beneficial.

- **Cataloging Concerns:** Currently, cataloging is done at each campus. While some campuses have staff members who possess relatively high levels of expertise, they realize that this may not always be the case. The ability to provide adequate training and maintain the quality of cataloging records contributed to the shared catalog are concerns. At least two of the library directors have expressed interest in investigating “outsourcing” of more technical services functions to the Las Cruces campus.

- **Purchasing and Licensing Issues:** One of the anticipated benefits of the LibSys5 partnership is an ability to centralize the purchase of materials to realize a cost savings and to improve efficiency. However, there are organizational barriers as the libraries are separate administrative and fiscal entities.

Other significant initiatives that have facilitated a creative and supportive environment for inquiry:

- **LibGuides:** In an effort to improve the quality of assistance offered to online researchers, Library staff began converting a series of outdated web pages to a standard research guide.
template using LibGuides software in 2008. As of 2011, 179 LibGuides have been published. Guides cover a range of topics, but most are course or assignment guides. The NMSU Library’s best practices for implementing LibGuides were published in the spring issue of the Journal of Library Administration.

- **OneSearch Federated Search Tool:** In 2008, the NMSU Library introduced its new federated search tool, OneSearch. Intended to support research discovery, OneSearch simultaneously searches across the NMSU Library’s 165+ databases, the online catalog, and selected websites. OneSearch is popular with users—more than 70,000 searches were conducted in fall 2010 alone. A library faculty team is currently studying the use of OneSearch by NMSU graduate students.

Vision: Act as a creative and dynamic partner in the educational process.

- **Goal:** Broaden the library instruction base to respond to the need for information-literate users at all levels.

**Progress/Challenges:**

- **Revived and Expanded Workshop Series:** In 2008, the NMSU Library revived its Workshop Series, focusing on citation management as well as a variety of sessions for graduate students (e.g., disciplinary research skills, thesis/dissertation preparation). The workshops maintain a modest but sustained attendance and have proven especially useful in helping the NMSU Library connect with graduate student researchers.

- **Expanded Library Participation in other Campus Workshops:** Library staff are teaching more sessions for other campus workshop series, including the Graduate School (Avoiding Plagiarism; Copyright, Fair Use, & You; Graduate Student Orientation), Teaching Academy (Bringing the Library to Your Students; Copyright, Fair Use, & You; Designing and Managing Research Assignments), Online Course Improvement Program (Copyright/Fair Use), Institute for Technology Assisted Learning (Copyright & Fair Use; Using Library E-Resources), and Writing Across the Curriculum (Information Literacy Across the Curriculum).

- **Copyright Initiative:** Library staff have worked with General Counsel, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and others to develop a guide to copyright and fair use issues for the campus community: [http://copyright.nmsu.edu](http://copyright.nmsu.edu). A library copyright team offers copyright email assistance as well as workshops and consultations.

- **Library Credit Course Administration:** In 2010, the NMSU Library worked to address several concerns with its credit courses. Prior problems with receipt of course administration documents have been resolved; issues still remain on where the assignment of delivery of credits is recorded.
New Library Course Offerings and Improved Course Promotion: In fall 2009, the NMSU Library sought to expand course offerings as well as improve the promotion of library courses. One strategy was to pursue cross-listed courses. This strategy was used with the new course, LIB307/HIST307-History of the Book in the West: From Scroll to Scrolling, both to improve the visibility of the course as well as provide flexibility in terms of the assignment of student credit hours (SCH), which are assigned to the instructor’s home department/college and may thus go to either the NMSU Library or the History department. The NMSU Library also advocated to centralize listings for the university’s growing number of mid-semester courses and took advantage of the new structure to promote LIB101-Introduction to Research.

New Mid-Semester Course: In fall 2010, the NMSU Library piloted LIB101-Introduction to Research, a new one-credit mid-semester course. The first section was offered as an online course. Mid-semester courses are an important part of NMSU’s strategy to help retain students as they work towards degree completion. By offering the courses at the midpoint of the semester, students who have had to drop other classes are able to add new ones, maintain their full-time status and financial aid, and strengthen their skills. Two offerings of LIB101 are planned for fall 2011.

Project Information Literacy: In 2010, five hundred NMSU students participated in a nationwide survey designed by Project Information Literacy to investigate how students use, evaluate, and integrate research sources they use for course-related and everyday life research. As part of the partnership, we now have access to the individual responses from NMSU students, who made up approximately five per cent of the nationwide sample. By identifying specific research-skills characteristics of our student population, we can improve our one-shot instruction and other instructional interactions with students to better meet their changing information consumption styles.

Collaborations with the University Writing Program: NMSU is establishing a Rubric for the Baccalaureate Experience that outlines student progress in eleven areas including Information Literacy. Combining the ENGL 111 Learning Objectives and the Baccalaureate Experience Information Literacy objectives, a process was developed for assessing ENGL 111 students’ information evaluation skills. Student work was then analyzed leading to improvements in the partnership between the NMSU Library and this course. Additionally, the NMSU Library Instruction Program is expanding its coordinated outreach to the campus writing program by increasing its presence to 200-level writing courses through course-specific LibGuides and hands-on instruction.

Goal: Provide staff development programs in new technologies in order to provide staff with the skills required for 21st century academic libraries.

Progress/Challenges:

- E-Casting Initiatives: Since 2008, NMSU Library staff members have been investigating new
technologies for outreach with a focus on streaming audio/video. In 2009, training and peer review for independent e-cast projects was initiated and 15 staff members representing all library departments participated. A library presence with ITunes University and YouTube has also been established. The NMSU Library launched its book review podcast series in spring 2011 and has now dedicated a section of the website to support future e-cast projects (RR).

- **Staff Workshop Series:** In 2009, a new series of workshops, marketed primarily to library faculty and staff was piloted. The series has provided a way for staff to showcase their skills and knowledge. Although not intended as a technology training series, many sessions involve tools and skills needed for “21st century academic libraries” such as EndNote Web, The Library and Second Life, Web 2.0 Productivity Tools, MovieMaker, Mendeley, What the Heck is RDA Anyway? and OneSearch from a Graduate Student’s Perspective.

- **Video and Tutorial Production:** Several library staff members have become proficient at video production. Using library-purchased equipment, peer training and support, and taking advantage of the NMSU Library’s large screen monitors and website, staff have reached out to constituencies through the use of short films which promote NMSU Library collections and services. Some of the short films created cover censorship and banned books, general obligation bonds for libraries, and introductions to the NMSU Library. Instructional videos covering common questions (finding an article from a citation, finding music scores in the catalog) as well as assignment strategies for large classes have also been completed.

**Vision:** Play a leadership role in providing access to the university’s intellectual capital.

- **Goal:** Develop balanced collections to meet the university curriculum’s changing needs [two million volumes by 2012]

**Progress/Challenges:**

- **2 Million by 2012 Campaign:** The NMSU Library’s 2 Million by 2012 campaign has been a donor-driven effort to fund monographic purchases in areas that correspond to existing or emerging collection strengths, e.g., water resources, land and range management, and border issues. Increasingly, private funds are being used for purchase of library materials that do not have recurring cost obligations. Maintaining an adequately funded library materials budget that is responsive to the need to provide content in a variety of formats will be an ongoing challenge for the foreseeable future.

- **New Academic Program Reports:** Since 2006, the NMSU Library has prepared collection/service analysis reports for academic programs that have been proposed at NMSU. The reports include a review of the library collections available to support the program (funding, monographs, serials, related collections), and a comparison of NMSU collections with those available at institutions with similar programs as identified by the program proposal. Recommendations for start-up and ongoing funding to support collection development for the program are included when appropriate. To date, these reports have recommended approximately
$302,000 to provide resources for new programs, but there has been only one case where
any funding was made available. In 2008 and 2009, the NMSU Library allocated one-time
funds to strengthen monographic collections for several programs where those collections
were found to be inadequate (e.g., M.A., Border & Latin American Studies; Ph.D., Nursing
Practice), but collection weaknesses for many of these subject areas have not been addressed
(RR).

- **Information Access Strategies:** Like academic libraries everywhere, the NMSU Library
  is challenged to determine the best mix of strategies (locally owned and controlled content,
  information delivery, pay per view, fee based services) for providing affordable and timely
  access to information. During the 2011 materials budget reduction, library staff worked with
  academic departments and with vendors to retain access to those titles that were both high use
  as well as important to teaching and research programs whenever possible. A large number
  of lesser used titles, along with some heavily-used titles, are now only available through the
  NMSU Library’s Information Delivery Services. A modest pay-per-view program for Scienc-
  eDirect titles was begun in 2010.

- **Patron Driven Acquisitions Projects:** The NMSU Library has implemented several patron-
  driven acquisition projects in the past five years, including a 2009 project to coordinate rapid
  purchase of books ordered via Interlibrary Loan, allocating $50,000 in direct response to user
  requests. The NMSU Library continues to explore the place of patron-driven acquisitions
  within the collection development program.

- **Retrospective Conversion Projects:** Expanding access to existing collections via retrospec-
  tive cataloging projects is a common library goal. In 2005, the NMSU Library concluded
  two such projects: federal documents from 1976 to 1993 were incorporated into the online
  catalog and the twenty year project to convert the shelflist was completed. The inclusion of
  the Carlsbad and Grants campus holdings was accomplished in 2008 and the final conversion
  of federal documents (pre-1976) was begun in 2010.

- **Managing Duplicate Formats in the Print Collection:** The NMSU Library initiated several
  collection management projects in 2010-11, including withdrawing multiple copies of low-
  use monographs as well as withdrawing paper indexes/abstracts that are largely duplicated in
  online form (RR).

➢ **Goal:** Develop a comprehensive digital initiatives program to make the NMSU Library’s
  extensive resources visible to virtual users.

*Progress/Challenges:*

- **Personnel:** In 2008, the NMSU Library developed the position and hired its first Metadata
  Librarian. Organizationally, the Associate Dean is responsible for coordinating the overall
  management of NMSU Library digital initiatives.

- **Digital Projects Work Group:** In 2010, a Digital Projects Work Group was charged to
  recommend an organizational structure and working procedures to help the NMSU Library
  build integrated and sustainable digital projects. The group’s recommendations resulted in the
  NMSU Library’s 2010 purchase of CONTENTdm, OCLC’s digital collection management
software program. In addition, the NMSU Library developed a process for proposing new digital projects. To date, three digitization projects are in various stages of development including the Rio Grande Collections Information File, NMSU Course Catalogs, and Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) map collections (RR).

- **Round-Up Digitization Project**: In 2010, the NMSU Library completed a multi-year project to digitize NMSU’s student-run newspaper *The Round Up* and its predecessor *The New Mexico Collegian* covering the period 1893-1999. The project was supported by a grant from the New Mexico Historical Records Advisory Board, NMSU alumni, NMSU’s Student Association (ASNMSU), and library funds.

- **Statewide Digital Project for New Mexico Centennial**: In 2009, the NMSU Library provided more than 1,000 images and metadata to the Celebrating New Mexico Statehood Project, a statewide project coordinated by the University of New Mexico in recognition of the state’s centennial in 2012.

- **Border Archives Collection**: Over the last few years, the NMSU Library has focused on building the depth of its border archives collection. Through private donations, collections which have a content emphasis on border issues have been acquired and processed. These collections reflect the unique nature of the border region and complement university teaching and research programs.

- **Political Papers Archive**: The NMSU Library has placed a greater emphasis on building the content depth of its political papers archives. Within the last five years, the NMSU Library has acquired the political papers of the Honorable Pete V. Domenici, United State Senator, and the Honorable Garrey Carruthers, Governor of New Mexico. The NMSU Library currently has formal proposals for the political papers of two other major political leaders of New Mexico. The NMSU Library has added a Political Papers Archivist and support staff to process these collections. In addition, in partnership with the College of Business, the NMSU Library has a major gift proposal under consideration to support the construction of a multi-function building that will house a public policy institute and archive facility.
Vision: Heighten the NMSU Library’s outreach and engagement programs for New Mexico’s citizens and borderland residents.

Goal: Develop a comprehensive outreach program for the NMSU Library to promote lifelong learning and strengthen resource sharing among New Mexico academic libraries.

Progress/Challenges:

- **Community Outreach:** As a land grant institution the NMSU Library and its staff have made a strong commitment to providing outstanding outreach and engagement programs for the campus and community. Some recent activities include:
  
  **Banned Books Week**—promoting awareness of censorship and celebrating the freedom to read through read-aloud programs, exhibits, and video.
  
  **Chile Lovers Gala**—celebrating New Mexico’s favorite food with a lecture, chile products tasting party, and book signing in partnership with NMSU’s Chile Pepper Institute.
  
  **D.B. Jett Readings and Remembrances**—homecoming program and fund-raiser held in partnership with the College of Engineering.
  
  **El dió de los niños/El dió de los libros**—programs for the campus and community promoting children and literacy.
  
  **Government Documents Centennial**—celebrating the 100th anniversary of NMSU’s membership in the Federal Depository Library program with lectures, exhibits, and outreach to school groups.
  
  **Soul of a People and New Deal Arts**—ALA/NEH program commemorating the 75th anniversary of the New Deal, which also included a celebration of New Deal art as well as the Federal Writer’s Project. Programs included a “Great Depression Era Road Show” as well as lectures, photo exhibits, development of a bilingual tour guide to New Deal art in southern New Mexico, and film screenings.
  
  **Year of Science**—marking the international Year of Science celebration with programs on biodiversity and conservation, geosciences and planet Earth, and Charles Darwin and evolution.
Section III. Next Steps: Meeting Future Challenges

The NMSU Library’s current strategic plan ends in 2012 and preparations will soon begin for the next 3-year plan. Below is a list of what library staff see as emerging issues and opportunities. Also presented is an assessment of the strengths and challenges the NMSU Library brings to bear on those issues and opportunities. Finally, staff have prepared a list of questions on which feedback from the review team is requested. Many of these questions concern getting “from where we are to where we need to be” and are meant to provide focus and suggest strategies for optimally utilizing energy and resources as the NMSU Library looks toward the future.

Emerging Issues & Opportunities:

Campus/State Level
University administrative structures and planning directions will take time to stabilize and solidify. It will take some time to achieve clarity regarding institutional priorities, as well as to put people and processes in place to deal with critical and substantive campus issues. Fiscal uncertainty will continue at both the campus and state levels and decisions will have to be made about priorities as well as areas that will be de-emphasized or discontinued. The challenge is to achieve “right sizing” within the university while the state has a growth-based funding model in place.

National/Professional Level
The NMSU Library must continue to respond to rapid changes in technology, scholarly communication, and higher education that affect academic research libraries in the state and nation. The impact of downward and sustained economic trends will be transformational for all types of libraries nationwide.

Strengths:

Active Role in the University: The NMSU Library has been an active and respected contributor to many strategic programs on campus, including accreditation, assessment, the First Year Experience, the Faculty Senate, General Education, and the Teaching Academy. Library faculty and staff represent the NMSU Library on numerous campus councils, boards, and committees.

Engaged and Collegial Workforce: The NMSU Library has an excellent and dedicated staff who are respected by those they serve and who work well together. There is a beneficial balance of staff members who are new, at mid-career, and highly experienced. Staff members at all levels are engaged within the NMSU Library, on campus, in the community, and within their respective professional organizations.

Experience Seeking New Revenue Streams: The NMSU Library has consciously and consistently worked to identify and obtain alternative revenue streams to maintain fiscal viability. NMSU is the only higher education institution in the state of New Mexico to direct 2.5% of all research overhead/indirect costs to its library. The NMSU Library has built and grown its endowments and current use accounts from private donations, and actively seeks funds for specific projects from foundations and grants. Most recently, the NMSU Library has proposed a student library fee.

Stewardship of Institutional Memory: The NMSU Library played a major support role during NMSU’s 2008 Self-Study process by building the university’s virtual resource room for the Higher
Learning Commission accreditation team. Other activities, from strengthening University Archives to digitizing the *Round-Up*, have given staff experience in finding, organizing, and providing access to university records, which will be beneficial as the NMSU Library seeks to identify future areas of emphasis for digital projects involving university records.

**Strong Tradition of Community Engagement and Outreach:** The NMSU Library has successfully implemented a number of outreach programs, some in partnership with others on campus and some with community partners. The experience and talents that staff members have developed in this area strengthen the NMSU Library’s overall ability to contribute to this aspect of NMSU’s land grant mission.

**Challenges:**

**Business Agreements and Partnerships:** Nothing is free. The challenge is to ensure the wise use of resources in an ever changing business environment. The NMSU Library seeks to focus on the question: *What are the best agreements we can make to support our mission whether it be with a specific vendor, a consortium, a service provider, or a company?* Whatever pathways are chosen, the question and challenge becomes: *At what cost? and For those costs, what are the benefits?* Two task forces have just completed a review of options for consortia and courier services, both of which represent challenging areas for academic libraries in the state of New Mexico since the base of research libraries is small (RR). In FY12, the NMSU Library will assess the current approval plan.

**Moving Beyond Crisis Budget Management:** For the past several years, two of the university’s major priorities have been fiscal restraint and budget reductions. The significant and constantly shifting financial challenges have driven the NMSU Library’s focus as well. A major challenge is to balance the need to think futuristically and strategically focus on future goals while at the same time deal with unprecedented fiscal challenges.

**Space Constraints:** The problem is not new. The NMSU Library does not have space to house its current collections or to meet future collection growth needs. The issue is exacerbated by this fact: the NMSU Library has exceeded the floor load capacity in both library buildings. Specifically, an engineering study has indicated structural stress on all upper floors of Branson Library. A mitigation plan has been developed and library staff have initiated a number of ongoing, multi-year collection management strategies to address needs for the next 2-3 years (RR). Institutional agreement on the long term solutions is needed, as well as the identification of funding to implement the solutions. The NMSU Library is working towards this goal with the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

**Workplace Morale:** Although the NMSU Library highly values and recognizes the skills, talents, potential, and individuality of its staff, continuing to achieve high levels of workplace morale is of growing concern. The number of years with no salary increases, coupled with an increase in employee contributions toward health care and retirement creates morale issues.
Questions for the External Review Team:

Based on the External Review Team’s review of resource materials, insights gained during the site visit, and knowledge of issues affecting academic libraries, library staff would welcome general recommendations on how to move forward strategically. In addition, recommendations and insights on the following questions are appreciated:

Building Understanding of User Needs: The NMSU Library has been undertaken a variety of targeted studies to identify and respond to user perspectives, particularly students. Are there recommendations on ways to improve upon or expand these efforts?

Optimizing Staff Resources: One of the NMSU Library’s current goals is to prepare staff for the challenges of 21st century libraries. What opportunities and challenges do you see in this area?

Improving the Funding Structure: The NMSU Library has various funding streams, e.g., private funds, research funds, General Obligation Bonds, Instruction & General funds, Building Repair & Renewal Funds, and Equipment Funds. Given the current environment, what is your assessment of this library’s and NMSU’s fiscal state and recommendations on fiscal strategies?

Planning for Future Space Needs: Based on your site visit and the documentation regarding space needs, can you give us additional insights on directions we might take?

Other Issues: Are there issues that you believe should be explored and addressed that have not yet been raised as part of this process?
Sources

RR = document available in resource room: [http://lib.nmsu.edu/externalreview](http://lib.nmsu.edu/externalreview)

Section I. Background Information

**Higher Education in the State of New Mexico**

Chronicle of Higher Education. *Almanac 2010-11*

New Mexico Higher Education Department. *State Master Plan for Higher Education*

National Center for Public Policy and Education. *Measuring Up 2008: The State Report Card on Higher Education*

**NMSU History and Profile/Current Issues**

Much of the text for this section is taken directly from NMSU’s Self-Study Report for the Higher Learning Commission, 2008.

Information for a few sections (Living the Vision, Goals for Success, Research Clusters) has come from source documents posted on the university website. RR

Student and faculty data is from two university publications: *New Mexico State University Fall 2010 Factbook - Las Cruces Campus* and *NMSU at a Glance*. RR

**NMSU Library History and Profile**

Wilson, C. *The First Fifty Years of the New Mexico State University Library, 1889-1939.*

Kropp, S. *That All May Learn: New Mexico State University 1888-1964.*

Various articles from the Round-Up and other library-related clippings from the NMSU Library’s Hobson-Huntinger University Archives.


Annual Reports of the NMSU Library Departments RR, NMSU Library newsletter articles and news releases.

**Section II. The State of the NMSU Library**

Strategic Planning Retreat documents RR

*New Mexico State University Library 2009-2012 Strategic Plan* RR

Annual reports of NMSU Library Departments RR

Various NMSU Library task force reports and related documents RR