MCCLPHEI
Massachusetts Commonwealth Consortium of Libraries of Public Higher Education Institutions

Long Range Plan
Fiscal Years 2006-2010

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MCCLPHEI
Massachusetts Conference of Chief Librarians of Public Higher Educational Institutions

Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

The Massachusetts Conference of Chief Librarians of Public Higher Educational Institutions (MCCLPHEI) advances the intellectual, cultural, and educational opportunities for our students, faculty, and all other citizens of the Commonwealth and provides collective advocacy for strong fiscal resources to serve the information needs of public academic library users.

Background information

History

The Massachusetts Conference of Chief Librarians of Public Higher Educational Institutions originated in 1968 as an informal advisory group to the Board of Higher Education for the purpose of coordinating the expenditure of eleven million dollars on a six-year Books for College Libraries project. Since 1974, MCCLPHEI has become an advocacy group for library funding; represented the Commonwealth's public higher educational institutions in broader cooperative efforts at the state and regional levels; promoted professional standards for academic library services, collected and distributed library data using IPEDS data definitions, and implemented resource sharing in the electronic age.

Description

The Membership has consisted of one representative from each of the public higher educational institutions in Massachusetts. This representative has been the Chief Librarian or the duly appointed alternate. There are usually five regular membership meetings a year, one of which is the Annual Conference. Yearly membership fees, currently $500, support the operations of the Organization. Officers include President, Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and three members-at-large representing each of the three segments (Universities, State Colleges and Community Colleges). These officers manage the affairs of the Organization, set the legislative strategy and perform all other duties necessary to carry out the objectives of the Organization. There are four standing committees: Executive, Standards, Program, and Nominating. Bylaws of the organization are regularly reviewed. Ad-Hoc committees are appointed as needed.
Over the past twenty years, the public higher education campuses have been confronted by a succession of deep reductions in the support they receive from the state. Between 2001 and 2004 the campuses lost approximately 32.6% of their state support, adjusted for inflation, according to the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation. Institutions did their best to generate other sources of revenue, but not all could keep pace. State funding for the Educational Reference Materials (ERM) Fund, which had significantly augmented the library budgets of MCCLPHEI member libraries, was eliminated in steps beginning in FY02, with a complete phase out of the state’s contribution by FY04. Colleges and universities have responded individually to this loss of funding. There is currently no standard allocation for the community, state college or university libraries. Some of the member institutions report being better off financially now that they are funded via the college budget, while others report declines in the overall library budget.

In 2004, the twenty-nine colleges of the Massachusetts public higher education system served 263,000 students enrolled in credit courses. 92% of undergraduate students and 72% of graduate students are from Massachusetts. Students of color represent 21% of the system’s undergraduate enrollment and 12% of graduate students are female. One year after graduation, over 90% of state and community college graduates and over 79% of University graduates are working or furthering their education in the Commonwealth. Enrollment in non-credit workforce development courses at community colleges was at an eight-year high in fiscal year 2004, with 77,625 enrolled statewide. Public higher education systems provide employment for over 29,000 residents throughout the Commonwealth.

In 2004, the combined book collections of the public higher education libraries totaled more than seven and one half million volumes. Expenditures for books totaled more than three million dollars, down more than one million dollars from FY 2000 expenditures. Collectively, the libraries currently subscribe to approximately one hundred and forty thousand paper journals and a multitude of electronic databases. Expenditures for journals and serials declined in the community and state colleges from FY 2000 to FY 2004; however, the university libraries’ expenditures increased by twenty five percent. Overall staffing levels at all segments declined from 2000 to 2004, with the greatest losses being suffered at the state colleges.

As the membership looks forward to 2006, the state budget situation appears to be more promising. A recent Senate Task Force Report (April 2005) estimates that the public college system is under funded by $400 million and calls for a package that includes capital spending and setting up a rainy day fund. Individual campuses are looking to improve library facilities and staffing levels. MCCLPHEI members, both individually and collectively, are working together to advocate for funding. With loss of ERM funding and individual members involved in a number of different networks, member priorities have shifted somewhat. As the membership looks ahead, we are identifying top priorities for the organization. A focus of our planning efforts is to answer the question “What are the most important services MCCLPHEI can provide to its members?”
Needs Assessment Process

In September, 2003, at a members’ meeting held at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, MCCLPHEI members began strategic planning. Members worked in teams to identify the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).

In October, 2004, the MCCLPHEI Executive Board organized a follow-up planning retreat to focus on priorities and to strengthen the cooperative nature of the organization. In a preliminary meeting, the Board met with the NELINET facilitator Diane Baden to discuss activities already undertaken in this process, to provide requested documentation, and to plan a full-day meeting.

In November, 2004, members spent a full day at Nelinet in a retreat facilitated by Diane Baden and Anja Smit. Participants included MCCLPHEI library directors or a designee from each institution. The session began with a review and discussion of the organization’s mission, vision, and values and a look at the 2003 SWOT. Members were asked to answer the question “What is the most important role MCCLPHEI can play for you?” The group developed and agreed on success metrics (benchmarks) for the action plan. In the afternoon planning session, participants identified goals and implementation steps for the organization five years out, as well as more immediate one to two year goals.

Assessment of Member Needs
As a result of the planning process, MCCLPHEI members identified the following member needs to be addressed over the next five years:

- Increase visibility and develop a MCCLPHEI “group-identity” in Massachusetts
- Enhance cost sharing and resource sharing among member libraries
- Expand staff development opportunities for all levels of library staff
- Work collaboratively with key stakeholders to increase funding for electronic resources
- Collect and share member library comparative data
- Expand networking opportunities among member libraries

When developing and evaluating future goals and activities, members agreed to work with some basic principles set forth as success metrics.

Success Metrics

Reinforces value of MCCLPHEI as stated in Mission and Vision
Offers something for everyone (but not necessarily everything for everyone)
Doesn’t duplicate what others are doing, or provides value if done by MCCLPHEI
Builds on strengths and opportunities (MCCLPHEI can do this better)
Balances other activities:
  ease or effort to accomplish/cost or benefit to accomplish
Aims high but provides benefits out of the process even if goal is not met (e.g., may not receive a grant, but establish new relationship and find other ways to cooperate)
Vision

When the membership looks forward five years, they see a dynamic MCCLPHEI as follows:

MCCLPHEI will be the preeminent cooperative element in public education in the Commonwealth, consisting of individual library directors who will work aggressively toward the common goals of service and education for our users.

Our collections, both conventional and electronic, will be large, excellent, and responsive to the needs of our users, with resource sharing delivered seamlessly through electronic connectivity.

MCCLPHEI's collective purchasing power will bring prices of products within the reach of each library, through successful negotiations and partnerships with vendors and computing centers.

We will be cutting-edge professionals in the forefront of professional advancement by attracting the finest professionals and providing professional development opportunities.

We will provide leadership through cooperation to achieve optimal access to information for all citizens of the Commonwealth, preparing users to acquire and use information to improve their quality of life and to enter the global job market.

Values

Participation in MCCLPHEI by member libraries is guided by a set of values that emphasize the importance of publicly funded higher education as an investment in the future of the citizens of the Commonwealth. Values agreed on by the members are as follows:

- We believe libraries are essential to an educated citizenry and a democratic society.
- We believe library collections are permanent resources and provide a cultural legacy for the citizens of the Commonwealth.
- We believe access to information in a range of formats is critical to the missions of our institutions.
- We believe libraries provide information and knowledge to our constituents.
- We believe all students in public higher education are patrons of our institutions.
- We believe the users of MCCLPHEI libraries deserve quality services and collections.
- We believe collaboration and sharing strengthen our ability to obtain and provide resources.
**Strengths**

Members cited MCCLPHEI’s history of cooperation across all segments—universities, state colleges and community colleges—as a major strength. In their advocacy for public higher education, members share a common focus—the needs of public higher education students and the role of public higher education libraries in serving those needs.

MCCLPHEI benefits from the collective knowledge and unique strengths of member colleges as they share ideas, resources, and perspectives. Formal and informal meetings and the MCCPLHEI listserv allow members to engage in dialog about issues of mutual concern. The membership recently provided feedback to NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) on the rewrite of Standard 7: *Library and Information Resources*.

Member libraries also share information about personnel, library policies, procedures, and best practices in all areas. Staff development and training, both of library directors and staff, has been a focus of MCCLPHEI. In addition to the annual summer conference for library directors that focused on developing technologies, the organization sponsored a winter library instruction roundtable for reference staff and a spring training session on copyright presented by Copyright Clearance Center. MCCLPHEI also organized and moderated a session on copyright for the Massachusetts Colleges Online Conference held in Bridgewater in June 2005.

Member libraries support an ongoing dialog with electronic providers and vendors and examine and share pricing practices. Group purchasing power has allowed the group to subscribe to electronic information resources at significantly discounted rates. MCCLPHEI has also developed an efficient process for negotiating and administering database licenses.

**Weaknesses**

Overlapping consortial boundaries have always provided a challenge to MCCLPHEI. Members participate in library systems in various geographic regions and belong to different consortia that operate a variety of library management systems. The state and community colleges are governed by the Board of Higher Education (BHE) and the universities report to the President of the University of Massachusetts. Individual campus CEO’s have concerns about librarians seeking funding that may be in direct competition with securing funds for the campus as a whole.

All MCCLPHEI staff functions, both administrative and technical, have been provided on a voluntary basis from among the member libraries and member libraries are generally chronically understaffed. There is no administrative staff to coordinate all of the MCCLPHEI activities.

Unique needs and missions; structural, financial, and advocacy differences; and competition between groups has undermined group identity. The staffing deficit, coupled
with a lack of fiscal resources, has resulted in reaction, not pro-action; and talk, not action. Not enough time has been devoted to developing a group identity, marketing MCCLPHEI’s resources, and advocating on a state level to achieve political clout.

Opportunities

MCCLPHEI has the opportunity to become a more strategically valuable organization by expanding its roles as a knowledge community and a resource sharing community.

As vehicles for library cooperation and the sharing of information, both the listserv and regular members’ meetings offer opportunities for knowledge exchange in staffing, technology, best practice in managing libraries and collections, and statistical information. With the magnitude of growth in the distance education arena, possibilities for the expansion of digital resources and services for the MCCLPHEI student community should be investigated. As a result of the winter reference retreat, MCCLPHEI reference librarians produced an online tutorial for *Academic Search Premier* and have plans to develop more tutorials in areas such as nursing. Joint ventures with other organizations and geographical opportunities in distinct areas of the Commonwealth should also be studied.

Cost-sharing and enhanced resource sharing are clear benefits for MCCLPHEI member libraries. The database committee and individual member libraries continue to recommend and investigate new products. The ability to negotiate with information vendors such as EBSCO allows member libraries to extend access to electronic information resources to their respective clienteles in their library buildings, across their campuses and to their online students in the most cost-effective way possible. In 2004-2005, both the university libraries and the state and community colleges developed comprehensive lists of member subscriptions that should be studied and compared in anticipation of greater benefits and cooperation. The membership should investigate grant funding as well as possible joint ventures with other organizations that address issues of system-wide concern.

Threats

The greatest threat to MCCLPHEI member libraries continues to be the uncertainty of funding for collections, buildings and staffing. Public higher education libraries lack the capital to fully develop new technologies. With no or slow growth in the budget, libraries can take on new services only if old ones are abandoned or altered.

Competition is also a threat—competition from networks, consortia, private colleges, and the Internet. Google, Amazon, and other self-service, web-based consumer sites are major players shaping the "info sphere" in which Libraries function.

Lack of library identity and lack of awareness of individual library strengths are viewed by members as areas of concern. The organization and member libraries need to be more aggressive in marketing themselves to their clientele and funding authorities. They need
to market the value of library as “place” in the “virtual” library era. Members talked about producing an annual report of MCCLPHEI achievements that could be shared with member colleges and funding authorities.

Goals and Objectives

I. Promote collaborative projects in order to effectively develop and share resources among member libraries

A. Collaborate on the review, negotiation and purchase of electronic databases
B. Create a collection of statewide electronic resources for public higher education
   1. Collaborate with UMASS Online and MCO (Mass Colleges Online) and/or other organizations
   2. Collaborate with MBLC (Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners), BHE (Board of Higher Education), and UMASS (University of Massachusetts) to explore options for state funding
C. Establish mechanism for exchanging gifts and surplus collections
D. Expand cooperative development of services to support distance education

II. Support the ongoing professional and staff development of member libraries

A. Survey membership to identify professional and staff development needs on an annual basis
B. Develop a listserv for member library reference staff and other staff groups as needed
C. Develop and disseminate a set of staff competencies and best practices among member libraries
D. Support meetings for library staff members in reference, circulation, technical services and other areas of interest

III. Collect, share, and report comparative data to assess services and collections

A. Collect and distribute annual IPEDs (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data for the National Center for Education Statistics) data for comparison
B. Explore funding sources or partial subsidy of LibQUAL survey for interested members
C. Compile and distribute comparative budget information to member colleges, BHE and UMASS
D. Prepare an annual report on the state of higher education libraries in Massachusetts
E. Utilize standards from organizations such as ACRL to prepare comparative data for member libraries
IV. Develop statewide recognition as the voice of public higher education libraries

A. Develop an advocate network that promotes the value of libraries in public higher education
B. Investigate employing staff to work on MCCLPHEI initiatives
C. Distribute MCCLPHEI annual report to college presidents, BHE, University of Massachusetts Chancellors and Central Administration
D. Identify MCCLPHEI services through branding (“Brought to you by”)
E. Invite area leaders in technology, business, etc., to meetings and discussions to promote public higher education and library resources

V. Identify and advocate for issues relating to libraries in public higher education

A. Document library standards to support funding requests
   1. Staffing standards
   2. Funding standards
   3. Facilities standards
B. Document increased library support for distance learning services
C. Work with NEASC to develop standards for libraries (Standard 7)
D. Promote the statewide, cross-type nature of MCCLPHEI throughout the Commonwealth (i.e. Romney administration, legislature, BHE, UMASS Chancellors Office)

VI. Expand opportunities for networking and peer support among library directors

A. Continue to organize and convene annual summer conference
B. Cooperatively update and revise existing reports and shared public relations materials
C. Maintain active listserv for communication among library directors and professional staff
D. Designate a portion of each general members meeting for open forum/active sharing
E. Establish subcommittees and task forces with clear charges, timelines and reporting requirements
Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2007

I. Promote collaborative projects in order to effectively develop and share resources among member libraries

A. Database committee will represent member library issues to vendors to provide feedback and suggest product improvements (October- December 2006)
B. Directors and reference staff will identify new database products and introduce them to members (October-December 2006)
C. Sub-committee will review interlibrary borrowing policies and procedures among member libraries (October- December 2006)
D. Pilot development of a nursing/medical on-line tutorial (CINAHL-Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health) that can be shared by member libraries (January 2007-April 2007)
E. Create a subcommittee to explore development of distance education services (September 2006)

II. Support the ongoing professional and staff development of member libraries

A. Executive committee will explore external funding sources for staff development (October 2006)
B. Executive committee will investigate partnering with MLA for “academic” track at annual conference (October 2006)
C. Sponsor roundtable meetings during winter break and after spring semester for library staff on identified issues (January 2007 and June 2007)
D. Participate as an active member in New England ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries) (on-going)

III. Collect, share, and report comparative data to assess services and collections

A. The MCCLPHEI Treasurer will compile and distribute annual statistics from individual member libraries IPEDS (February 2007)
B. The Community and State Colleges Directors will investigate possible cost savings via their comprehensive list of database subscriptions (October-December 2006)
C. The University Directors will investigate possible cost savings via their comprehensive list of database subscriptions (October -December 2006)
D. Member libraries will collect and distribute data on library staffing, salaries, paper and electronic collections (October 2006-April 2007)
E. Investigate and support member participation in LibQual and other assessment tools (October-December 2006)
IV. Identify and advocate for issues relating to libraries in public higher education

A. Prepare promotional materials to be shared by member colleges and the legislature (February - March 2007)
B. Become a more active presence in legislative actions and at the State House (January - May 2007)
C. Send MCCLPHEI representatives to key meetings of the Board of Higher Education and the University Presidents (September 2006-June 2007)

V. Develop statewide recognition as the voice of public higher education libraries

A. Develop strategic partnerships/work collaboratively with state and regional agencies (ongoing)
B. Work with key stakeholders (e.g. MBLC, MLA) in an effort to increase state funding (ongoing)
C. Produce annual report and distribute to key stakeholders (June 2007)
D. Identify and advocate for issues relating to libraries in public higher education (ongoing)
E. MCCLPHEI president will keep membership informed about legislative actions and opportunities that involve member libraries (ongoing)

VI. Expand opportunities for networking and peer support among library directors

A. Program committee will survey membership to develop theme for annual summer conference (October 2006)
B. Update the MCCLPHEI web site to include links to online tutorials and other shared resources (October 2006)
C. Foster communication among member through electronic discussions (ongoing)
The MCCLPHEI Executive Board thanks individual library directors and library staff who contributed to the plan.
MCCLPHEI Member Institutions

Berkshire Community College
Bridgewater State College
Bristol Community College
Bunker Hill Community College
Cape Cod Community College
Fitchburg State College
Framingham State College
Greenfield Community College
Holyoke Community College
Massachusetts Bay Community College
Massachusetts College of Art
Massachusetts Maritime
Massasoit Community College
Middlesex Community College
Mount Wachusett Community College
Massachusetts College of Art
North Shore Community College Library
Northern Essex Community College
Quinsigamond Community College
Roxbury Community College
Salem State College Library
Springfield Technical Community College
University of Massachusetts/Amherst
University of Massachusetts/Boston
University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth
University of Massachusetts/Lowell
University of Massachusetts/Worcester
Westfield State College
Worcester State College