



**INSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS**

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**US AIR FORCE ACADEMY**

## **Library of the Future**

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and  
The Library of the Future Committee**

**Institute for Information Technology Applications  
United States Air Force Academy  
Colorado**

**IITA Research Publication  
Technical Report Series 09-1**

**May 2009**

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# Report Documentation Page

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE <b>MAY 2009</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2009 to 00-00-2009</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Library of the Future Committee</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>Institute for Information Technology Applications, United States Air Force Academy, CO</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

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# The Library of the Future

## **Introduction and Background**

The US Air Force Academy library was occupied in 1958. Subsequently, additions to the collections now occupy space that was designed for another purpose and thereby have reduced the open and study areas. In order to maintain access to the materials, innovative solutions will be required. Digitizing materials, using compact shelving, and possible underground storage of lesser used, but important volumes, may be considered.

## **Objectives**

The library study was undertaken to develop ways to improve the quality of usage by the cadet and faculty clients, and in so doing, to incorporate the learning objectives set by the Dean of Faculty (DF). A phased approach to incorporating goals was also devised to mitigate the disruption of construction and also to allow for concurrent assessment of changes before expensive structural modifications are made.

## **Study Approach**

The proposal for the study was two-pronged consisting of an exhaustive literature search on libraries and their purpose as well as multiple site visits to the best, comparable civilian and military institutions. Libraries in the modern age are more than repositories for published works and study cubicles for scholars. They have become learning centers with multi-media capabilities. Therefore, rather than withering, usage in modern libraries has exploded. (See Appendix)

During site visits, consultations with the heads of libraries and staff were conducted leading to the reasoning for the changes that had been incorporated in renovations or why certain features were not changed.

Further research was carried out through discussions with USAFA cadets, faculty and library staff. Academic department and agency heads as well as USAFA IT experts contributed ideas. The backbone of the study was the Academic Working Group, composed of representatives from several departments who individually researched assigned areas bringing their reports to regular organization meetings.

Discussions were also held with USAFA Civil Engineering regarding possible architectural changes. USAFA has been designated as an historical site which limits opportunities for change.

## **Literature Review and Research discoveries**

The literature review and research emphasized the necessity of broadening the role of the library from an information repository to that of a learning center. The concept was to transition from an area of stored information to a gateway that also would include the latest information technology (IT able to retrieve the stored information. Additionally, centers of learning, writing, speech presentations, and related areas critical to processing information would be integrated into the library's composition.

## **Discoveries from Site Visits**

Site visits demonstrated the use of current technology innovations applied in several ways that supported creativity for the student clients. For example, a learning center was composed of a variety of resources designed to enhance learning and collaboration. For example, most learning centers contain sharable computers, group study rooms, integrated audio/visual equipment for making and practicing presentations, as well as social areas such as coffee and snack shops. There were also integrated support services in a single location where students could receive assistance in locating reference materials and

learn how to access them for themselves. In some cases, there were media centers where students could employ a variety of media—sound, video, and other types of media in composing presentations and reports. A multiplicity of types of group study centers varying from space for 2-4 persons to rooms for larger groups was found in several visited libraries. The latest technology was integrated into these areas providing superior support for collaboration activities.

### **Framing the Situation**

The study has attempted to align objectives with the USAFA Strategic Plan as well as the DF plan for Learning Outcomes.

The following elements are in the Strategic Plan:

“Instill a culture of learning...” (Objective 5.2)

“Enhance USAFA’s reputation as a valuable national resource/treasure...and a respected academic institution” (Objective 2.4)

“Expand exposure and involvement of faculty and staff in developing the USAFA outcomes in our cadets” (Objective 6.1)

“... information technology infrastructure needs immediate attention...to support USAFA’s needs for leading edge Information Technology (IT) capabilities” (p.5)

Elements of the plan for Learning Outcomes are listed below; the underlined outcomes can be well supported by the library of the future:

#### **RESPONSIBILITY OUTCOMES**

- Ethical Reasoning and Action
- Respect for Human Dignity
- Service to the Nation
- Lifelong Development & Contributions
- Intercultural Competence

#### **SKILLS OUTCOMES**

- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Decision Making
- Stamina
- Courage
- Discipline
- Teamwork

#### **KNOWLEDGE OUTCOMES**

- Heritage and Application of Air, Space and Cyberspace Power
- Nat’l Security & Full Spectrum of Joint & Coalition Warfare
- Civic, Cultural and International Environments
- Ethics & the Foundations of Character
- Principles of Science and the Scientific Method
- Principles of Engineering & the Application of Technology

## **The Vision for the Future**

It is imperative to update and enhance the library's ability to support a "culture of learning" by increasing access to the current collections of print, archival materials, and special collections, and to provide a capacity for materials. Further, it is critical to renovate in such a manner to allow for future expansion to include advances in electronic and digital media and information technology. In order to provide the education suitable for the cadet clients, the library learning center will also need to support the USAFA Learning "Skills" Outcomes.

## **Design Recommendations**

1. Establish a world-class digital interface to allow access from both inside and outside the physical library to holdings and other resources.
2. Improve support for group study including the evening tutoring center
3. Exploit inspirational views and create inspirational space for quiet study
4. Improve lighting—mix overhead, natural, table top lighting for the optimum reading/viewing capability
5. Enhance and integrate support for electronic media
  - Both access via IT and content as well as support from library personnel
  - Technology should be ubiquitous but discrete without a sea of computers
6. Set up a Communication Skills Center
  - Oral presentation rehearsal studio
  - Writing center
  - Multimedia center
  - Print / copy / scanning center
7. Improve functional arrangements for all library and other staff housed in the library including both work space and office space
8. Create warm, welcoming environment with a coffee bar, color, and comfortable furniture

## **Recommended Phased Approach**

- Apply academic library "best practices" to fit the specific needs of USAFA
- Develop design alternatives and recommendations
- Collaborate with USAFA Team to identify preferred alternative
- Present final design recommendation

Phase 1— hire an academic library architect to develop a master plan based upon committee's vision statement and design recommendations. Possible options:

Space limited to present library footprint  
Present library input + "Academic Services area" (DFR) + DFPY on first floor  
Present library + first and second floor on north end of Fairchild (including DFP, DFMI)  
Expand Fairchild building envelope

### **Phase 2**

Use gift or non-milcon funds to pilot key features that align with the master plan.

### **Phase 3**

Refine the design based on feedback and assessment of Phase 1.  
Execute a Military Construction (MILCON) major remodel/expansion project and a Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (SRM) major repair/renovation expansion project.

# Appendix

## Selected Site Visits



### Group Study Room - USMA



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



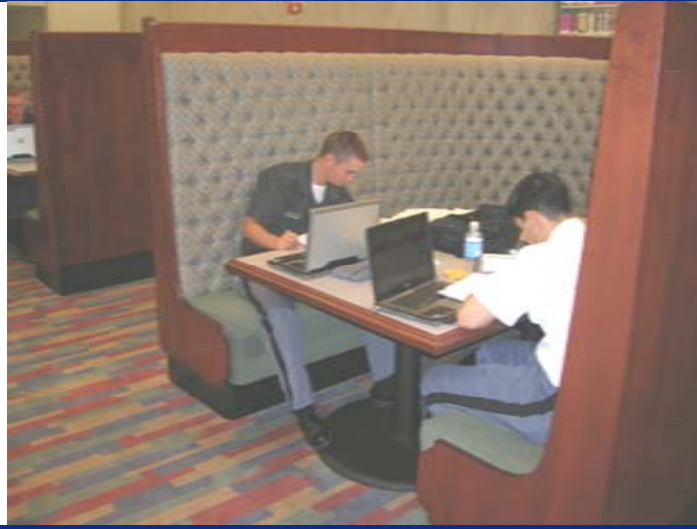
### “Collaborative Learning” Room with IT – Emory



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Group study booths - USMA



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Group work area for papers and presentations - Emory



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*





## Supporting “information literacy”



- Provide right type of help near “point of need”.
- Both information access and content

Furman University

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Communication Skills Center



Colorado College

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Oral Presentation Rehearsal Studio - Ga Tech



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Oral Presentation Rehearsal Studio - Ga Tech



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Supporting a “culture of learning”

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- Inspirational space
- Inspirational views
- Adequate lighting
- Comfortable furniture
- Info Technology



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*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



Inspirational space  
for quiet study with great lighting and  
comfortable furniture

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USMA Jefferson Hall

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*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



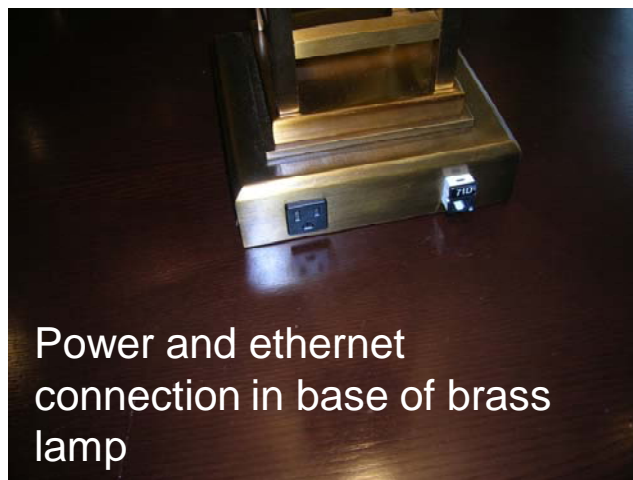
## Highlight inspirational views



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Technology “ubiquitous but discrete”



Also wireless throughout



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Multimedia studio



Video editing at Georgia Tech

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Copy Center - free scanning to pdf's



Clemson University

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## Group study whiteboard good but “Smartboard” better



- IT can enhance collaboration
- “Silicon chalk”

NYU

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## “Collaborative Computing Center” – GA Tech



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



# “Info Commons” with IT help desk



The Queue



Help desk

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



# Library plays central role in supporting “information literacy”



Columbia University



2<sup>nd</sup> floor directory

- Computer Lab
- Center for New Media in Teaching and Learning
- Information Resources Training Center and Lab
- Copying Center
- Media Center
- Coffee Bar

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



**Oral presentation rehearsal studio (every classroom – common hardware interface and AV control) - Emory**



*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



**Coffee shop! Warm, inviting, appropriate social space**



Drinks with lids allowed in library – damage has gone down because drinks are no longer hidden

*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



## ***ABOUT THE INSTITUTE***

The Institute for Information Technology Applications (IITA) was formed in 1998 to provide a means to research and investigate new applications of information technology. The Institute encourages research in education and applications of the technology to Air Force problems that have a policy, management, or military importance. Research grants enhance professional development of researchers by providing opportunities to work on actual problems and to develop a professional network.

IITA coordinates a multidisciplinary approach to research that incorporates a wide variety of skills with cost-effective methods to achieve significant results. Proposals from the military and academic communities may be submitted at any time since awards are made on a rolling basis. Researchers have access to a highly flexible laboratory with broad bandwidth and diverse computing platforms.

To explore multifaceted topics, the Institute hosts single-theme conferences to encourage debate and discussion on issues facing the academic and military components of the nation. More narrowly focused workshops encourage policy discussion and potential solutions. IITA distributes conference proceedings and other publications nation-wide to those interested or affected by the subject matter.