

3.8.1

Library and Other Learning Resources: Learning/information resources

The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission.

Judgment

☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable

Narrative

Note: Text for all linked documents below can be increased/decreased for ease of reading by pressing your keyboard's Ctrl key while rotating the mouse wheel.

Angelo State University's commitment to providing facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support the institution's teaching, research, and service mission is reflected in the mission statement of the Porter Henderson Library, which reads in part: "In consultation with the university community, the library builds, organizes, and maintains collections and services while cooperating with other libraries to meet the university's curriculum and research needs." To ensure ongoing alignment of the library's mission and activities with the institutional mission, the library participates in the annual planning process by submitting annual goals and objectives through the Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) system, which is used to coordinate institutional effectiveness and strategic planning processes for the campus. Objectives of the library's annual plan align with the master goals and academic goals defined in the institution-wide strategic plan, Vision 2020 July 2010 Update, as demonstrated by the following examples from the Porter Henderson Library Annual Plan, FY 2012.

Note: Vision 2020 July 2010 Update was the latest version available when the library's annual plan was formulated. Links for the first page of the Academic Goals section and Master Goals section are provided. The entire document can be scrolled from either starting place.

- Goal 1, Objective 1: To help with retention and improve student success rates, continue to evaluate library usage and satisfaction with services through user surveys (Vision 2020 master goals 3 and 7, academic goal 5).
- Goal 1, Objective 2: Implement assessment of student learning of library skills in lower-level division bibliographic instruction sessions (Vision 2020 master goals 3 and 7, academic goals 3 and 5)
- Goal 1, Objective 9: Meet or exceed the national averages and those for a selected group of stretch peer institutions on "total staff per 1,000 FTE students" and "librarians and other professional staff per 1,000 FTE students" (Vision 2020 master goals 1, 3, 5, and 7; academic goals 3 and 5).

Success in meeting these objectives is evaluated as part of the institutional effectiveness process, and outcomes are documented in the library's annual SPOL report. The library's most recent SPOL report is provided as supporting documentation in the response for Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3, Institutional effectiveness: academic and student support services.

LIBRARY FACILITIES

The Porter Henderson Library occupies the basement, first floor, and second floor of the library building. The third floor is dedicated to non-library functions and that floor has separate entrances and its own elevator. The library maintains two climate-controlled storage rooms on the third floor. The library's special collections unit (West Texas Collection) is on the second floor of the University Center, which is just west of the library building.

Total square footage for the three floors of library space exceeds 80,000 square feet. The basement houses the Media Collection with its storage, curriculum-processing, viewing, and staff work areas. Additional services and collections on this floor include the Government Documents Collection and its associated staff office, the cartographic collection, stack space for current issues and bound copies of serial publications, microform materials and equipment, and the Juvenile and Curriculum Collections. Two group-study rooms and eleven faculty carrels are available on this floor. Other tables and study carrels are available for individual use (Library Floor Plan—Basement).

The first floor was recently remodeled to create the Learning Commons and provide a collaborative learning environment. Amenities include study booths, reading nooks, a variety of seating, numerous flat screen display panels, the Information Literacy Corner, a café (Common Grounds), the Practice Room, Research Assistance Desk, Circulation Desk, exhibit space, and networked PCs. The Learning Commons is a joint project with Information Technology. IT staff maintains the Technical Assistance Desk as a service point in the Learning Commons. At this service point, library users may check out laptops, power cords, cables, and headphones and may obtain assistance with technical questions, including those related to accessing the university's network, using software packages, and resolving password issues. The library's Technical Services Department and staff offices are also on this floor (Library Floor Plan—First Floor).

The circulating book collections are located on the second floor, as is the director's office suite. The floor also has three group-study rooms and four faculty carrels. Along the east wall is the quiet study room, which offers couches, individual work carrels, and a few reading chairs for study. A reading den with couches, easy chairs, and tables overlooking the café entrance to the library is located on the west side of the floor. The reading den also houses the New Books, Best Sellers, and Paperback Collections. The Remote Circulating Collection is a closed-stack space on the second floor. Users needing items out of this collection ask for them at the Circulation Desk. The Center for Innovation in Teaching and Research also has an office on the floor (Library Floor Plan—Second Floor).

The two storage rooms on the third floor provide space for rare books, items too fragile for the stacks, reference item storage, government document storage, periodical storage, manuscript collections, and other similar items. One room (3,500 square feet) is designated for materials from the library. The other room (2,500 square feet) is designated for materials from the West Texas Collection. Both rooms accommodate shelving that is ten feet high, sturdy enough for heavy loads, and large enough for oversized materials. Each room has its own air conditioning unit for climate control and preservation. Users needing items out of these two rooms ask for them at the Circulation Desk. Generally, items requested are available the same day.

On the three floors of the library, 476 seats are available. Students and other users of the library have access to 36 networked desktop computers. In spring 2012, the library added 8 more networked computers in the Learning Commons. Several of the desktop PCs and furniture for them are ADA compliant. In addition to the networked computers, the Information Technology service point in the Learning Commons has 52 laptops available for checkout. These devices can connect to the university's network via the robust Wi-Fi environment throughout the three floors of the library. The laptops have essentially the same software packages as the traditional desktop PCs located in the library and in the main computer lab on campus. All of the PCs (desktops and laptops) in the library connect to one of three high-capacity printers and to the one color printer located in the Learning Commons. Additional technology available in the Learning Commons includes three flat-bed scanners and two digital scanners/senders. Three dedicated RamCat (online catalog) terminals are located on the second floor, and three more dedicated RamCat terminals are in the basement. The Learning Commons has three additional desktop PCs available for general public use that connect to the Internet and the library's homepage, allowing access to RamCat, a subset of online databases available for general use, and government documents. A similar general-public-use desktop PC is available in the basement located near the Government Documents Collection. Traditional photocopy machines are available in the Learning Commons, as are spaces for working on poster presentations.

The West Texas Collection occupies 10,022 square feet on the second floor of the University Center. This unit has a main reading room with compact shelving and exhibit spaces, microform storage and viewing room, workroom, and a climate-controlled storage space for materials, collections, and the University Archives. Together, the main reading room and the microforms room have 54 seats and tables available for users to work with materials in the collection. Users of this collection have access to three desktop PCs with capabilities similar to those available for general use in the library.

LEARNING/INFORMATION RESOURCES

As the university's programs and offerings evolve, the library monitors its collections to ensure access to needed information resources with an increasing emphasis on electronic access to information. Details about the library's collection and collection-development policies and procedures are provided in Core Requirement 2.9, Learning resources and services.

One of the ways the library ensures that its facilities, resources, and services meet the needs of its users is by conducting surveys of ASU students and faculty. Results of the student satisfaction survey of 2011 and the faculty satisfaction survey of 2012 indicate that the primary users of the library are satisfied with available resources and services (see the Conclusion in the Library Customer Satisfaction and Renovation Perception Survey and Results, 2011 and Chart 5 in the Faculty Satisfaction Survey and Results, 2012). In addition, the library has recently presented evidence of more than adequate resources to meet or exceed accreditation standards for new programs and for programs up for accreditation review by relevant professional associations (see Core Requirement 2.9 for additional information). With representation on each of the college curriculum committees as well as the University Curriculum Committee, the Academic Affairs Council, and the Distance Education Council, the library is well positioned to be aware of and ensure appropriate support for any new program developments on the campus.

LIBRARY SERVICES

By providing high quality reference and library-instruction services, the library plays a key role in helping faculty members impart vital information-literacy skills to ASU students, enabling them to be successful throughout their careers. This commitment to preparing students for productive careers is an important element of the university's and library's mission statements. Detailed information about the library's information literacy programs is provided in Comprehensive Standard 3.8.2, Instruction of library use. In summary, ASU librarians provide instruction and support through formal library instruction sessions as well as at a traditional in-library service point (the Research Assistance Desk), via phone and email, and, in conjunction with colleagues at other institutions, through the 24-hour reference service called AskAcademic. The library's website also has several online tutorials for both general and subject-specific instruction for using the library and its resources. The ASU librarians and professional staff of the West Texas Collection work together as a team to cover all subject areas and research requests from ASU and local users. (For information about the library staff, please see Comprehensive Standard 3.8.3, Qualified staff.)

The Circulation Desk, as part of the Learning Commons, provides not only circulation services but also course reserves, general information/directional assistance, reference services in the absence of staffing at the Research Assistance Desk, and other general assistance for a total of 109 hours per week during the long semesters. Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Learning Commons expanded its hours and now remains open an additional 28 hours per week; it is open continuously from 1:00 p.m. on Sunday to 9:00 p.m. on Friday, including those weekday hours from 2:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. when the main library is closed. During those hours, the Circulation Desk is staffed by student assistants who provide directional and information assistance only. The Research Assistance Desk is staffed 69 hours per week in the long semesters. Through the campus proxy server, distance learning students and students living away from campus are able to easily connect to RamPort to access all of the library's electronic information resources, and information concerning access to library resources and services for distance learning students is provided on the Library Resources for Distance Education Students web page.

For the convenience of ASU users, the library provides interlibrary loan (ILL) services and utilizes the latest in scanners and software to speed the delivery of digitized information to any requestors. In addition, the Technology Assistance Desk in the Learning Commons, which is staffed by Information Technology personnel, provides easy access to laptop computers and peripheral devices. The IT staff also help users with hardware and application software assistance. For more information regarding these and other library services, please see Core Requirement 2.9, Learning resources and services.

ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AND LEARNING / INFORMATION RESOURCES

Through a regular program of user-satisfaction surveys, the library ensures timely responses to any noted deficiencies in the quality of its facilities, services, and resources. The remodeling project and creation of the Learning Commons, for example, was a direct result of users' dissatisfaction with a 40-year-old facility with outdated furniture, décor, and layout. The responses recorded in the 2011 student satisfaction survey provide ample evidence that the new Learning Commons meets and exceeds students' expectations for

21st-century library services and resources (see the Enhancements section of the Library Customer Satisfaction and Renovation Perception Survey and Results, 2011). The spring 2012 survey of faculty members provides useful comparisons with student responses relating to the Learning Commons (see Renovations in the Faculty Satisfaction Survey and Results, 2012).

In addition to formal user-satisfaction surveys, the library also receives suggestions and comments via a traditional comment/suggestion box and via direct telephone and email messages. In all cases, the library director or other designated library personnel answers the comments and suggestions. The responses are then posted in a notebook near the comment/suggestion box, and such feedback is included in the library's ongoing planning and assessment processes. For more information regarding these processes and additional measures of the adequacy of library facilities, resources, and services, please see Core Requirement 2.9, Learning resources and services.