SMHS Library Resources
Introduction to our Strategic Plan

This strategic plan articulates the ways in which Library Resources will provide expertise in teaching critical information literacy, curating information sources, and prioritizing library services. Our goal is to provide partnership to support the needs of researchers, fulfill departmental learning goals, and meet or exceed accreditation standards for the programs of the UND School of Medicine & Health Sciences (SMHS) and the College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines (CNPD). Consultation with the SMHS and CNPD communities as well as program accreditation documents[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8] articulate the need for graduates to exhibit competency in critical information literacy, a facet of critical thinking, within their practice of life-long learning and pursuit of continuing excellence.

An increasing digital divide coupled with a rapidly shifting scholarly communication landscape increases the need for the awareness of the "systems of power that that shape the creation, distribution, reception [and equitable use]"[9] of information that critical information literacy affords. This is particularly true for healthcare practitioners who do not have access to subscription evidence databases, such as those in rural areas or areas of low socioeconomic status.[10,11,12] Additionally affected are populations such as Indigenous Peoples, whose ways of knowing have been historically excluded from the western and capitalist scholarly publishing system.

To meet this need for critical information literacy, all components of Library Resources must be strategically aligned. Therefore, the writing of this strategic plan was a collaborative effort involving all members of the Library Resources staff. Our process began with the iterative identification of departmental mission, vision, and values in conversation with our past departmental strategic plan[13] as well as the 2018 SMHS Strategic Plan[14], the 2017 One UND Strategic Plan[15], the 2023 UND LEADS Strategic Plan[16], and the Sixth[17] and Seventh SMHS Biennial Reports[18]. We also carried out a literature review of current best practices for strategic planning across disciplines and comparable libraries' strategic planning documentation. Concurrently, we surveyed our SMHS and CNPD community[19] and completed original research on health sciences librarian curriculum-mapping and integration practices globally[20,21,22,23]. Our finalized strategic plan reflects our commitment to empower evidence-based health care by facilitating curricula-embedded learning of critical information literacy competencies and skills. We ground this work in a foundation of theoretical knowledge and professional excellence interpreted through a mindset of sustainable professional and departmental growth.

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