



KEY DIRECTIONS REPORT 2018-2023

VISION & MISSION

VISION: The Geoffrey R. Weller Library is integral to the University of Northern British Columbia's success and aspires to be an outstanding research library.

MISSION: The Geoffrey R. Weller Library's mission is to be the centre of intellectual life for the University of Northern British Columbia. The Library welcomes all UNBC's communities to access information, exchange diverse opinions, work collaboratively, conduct research, learn, teach, and pursue intellectual growth.

In an exercise to develop a five year plan, the Library identified six key areas for development over the five year period of 2018 to 2023:

RESEARCH

TEACHING &
LEARNING

DECOLONIZING &
INDIGENIZATION

TECHNOLOGY

OUR PEOPLE

OUR COMMUNITY

This report provides an update on the Key Actions outlined in the Key Directions report.

RESEARCH

The unique research needs of UNBC faculty and students require a responsive research-intensive library. The Geoffrey R. Weller Library engages in research and provides a welcoming environment that ensures access to information resources and services.

KEY DIRECTIONS

Enhance the Geoffrey R. Weller Library's capacity to support the research endeavours at the University.

Enable access to, and dissemination of, UNBC's unique research in an Open Access environment to support and enable the creation of new knowledge and to facilitate and foster an open exchange of ideas.

KEY ACTIONS

Collections

- Continue to build state-of-the-art, high-impact multidisciplinary collections in print and electronic formats
- Continue to digitize our unique holdings to build a strong digital collection

Archives

- Continue to build the Northern BC Archives & Special Collections (NBCA) to make UNBC a research destination for scholars interested in the North
- Continue to build and provide online access to the unique resources housed in the NBCA

Institutional Repository

- Continue to build a strong UNBC Institutional Repository to increase the dissemination and impact of faculty, graduate, and undergraduate research
- Enable and support processes for managing and preserving UNBC theses and dissertations

Data Stewardship

- Continue to support the management, preservation, and dissemination of UNBC research data by engaging key stakeholders and building a strong infrastructure to support UNBC researchers at all stages of the research data lifecycle

Scholarly Communication

- Support and advocate for institution-wide discussions on scholarly communication topics
- Advocate for Open Access and alternative publishing to be recognized in tenure and promotion discussions

Culture of Research

- Create a Culture of Research in the Library by encouraging and supporting Librarians and Archivists to develop research interests and to build collaborative research relationships
- Align the Library's initiatives with UNBC's Strategic Research Action Plan

RESEARCH

OUTCOMES

- To maintain high-impact and state-of-the-art collections, weeding of obsolete materials is required. Both the library and archives have engaged in regular weeding projects of a multitude of materials since 2020.
- The Metadata Librarian worked with Professor Angèle Smith to create a capstone reader for an Anthropology course in 2023. This now serves as an example of Open Educational Resources of student material utilized as a curricular resource in future courses.
- Targeted sessions were offered to students on the publication with a focus on Open Access, Article Process Costs, and dissemination of research.
- In that in collaboration with the Office of Research and Innovation we supported an institutional data repository via Borealis.
- The Acquisitions Department surpassed its goal of supporting Open Access with 1% of the budget. We currently are supporting Open Access with greater than 2% of the acquisitions budget. This is a significant step forward in supporting Open Access publishing at UNBC.
- Since 2018, Northern BC Archives has acquired 192 new archival collections and made 111.4 metres of archival material fully accessible (that's about 16 bays of library shelving of unique research material like manuscripts, correspondence, diaries, photographs, maps, audio recordings, and more).

TEACHING & LEARNING

The Geoffrey R. Weller Library is committed to building collaborative relationships to enhance the quality and impact of program delivery. The Library provides integrated information literacy instruction informed by a liaison model and a strong teaching framework.

KEY DIRECTIONS

Build long-standing and collaborative relationships with academic areas involving a tailored, relationship-centred approach.

Integrate instruction into curriculum to support all UNBC students in meeting information literacy objectives.

Ensure equitable access to resources, services, and instruction across geographic locations.

KEY ACTIONS

Liaison Model

Develop a liaison model that:

- Builds subject area expertise
- Fosters relationships with faculty within the academic program
- Tailors the teaching framework to each academic program
- Addresses issues of equity with the Regional Programs

Teaching Framework

Establish a teaching framework that includes:

- Relationship building with programs and departments
- In-class instruction (in-person and virtual)
- Information literacy assessment
- Evaluation of instruction
- Fostering a community of shared practices and experiences in teaching
- Look for opportunities to map information literacy curriculum within degree programs
- Ensure librarians/archivists have adequate access to resources within budgetary restraints to support the teaching model informed by student needs

TEACHING & LEARNING

OUTCOMES

- The librarians and archivists explored the landscape of liaison models across academic libraries. The final report was utilized to revision the liaison model at UNBC to ensure it met the needs of the new Five Faculties.
 - Librarians and archivists realigned their liaison areas to ensure that all programs were covered in the Five Faculty model.
 - Librarians and archivists are now voting members of faculty councils for their liaison areas.
- A teaching framework was meaningfully considered through the following actions:
 - Librarians and archivists shared their methods of incorporating the threshold concepts of the Association of College & Research Libraries Information Literacy Framework.
 - The Information Literacy Framework's threshold concepts were scaffolded across curriculum in programs where is was deemed to be appropriate.
 - The framework has been built into information literacy curriculum for some of the largest first year courses: ENGL 170; CHEM 120; and BIOL 102.
 - Curriculum mapping for information literacy has been done for some degree programs, such as POLS, SOCW and Nursing.
- NBCA facilitated a grant for a UBC iSchool graduate student to work on a project.
- NBCA has supervised five archival internships with undergraduate students in the History and Anthropology programs.
- The NBCA created a project that involves the creation of Education Kits for SD57 students. This was funded by an external donor and is currently in development.

DECOLONIZING & INDIGENIZATION

Indigenous students, communities, priorities, and concerns have been a defining characteristic of UNBC since its founding. The Geoffrey R. Weller Library aspires to honour and uphold the voices and contributions of our Indigenous communities by supporting the University's efforts to decolonize and indigenize the academy

KEY DIRECTIONS

To build a respectful and inclusive environment that supports diverse ways of knowing and learning.

To uphold and affirm the decolonization and indigenization initiatives of the University.

To identify and begin to mitigate colonial constructs existent within current Library culture and practice.

To include local and regional Indigenous voices in Library programming and initiatives.

KEY ACTIONS

- “Build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect”(1) through the development of innovative and respectful programming initiatives.
- Engage in dialogue with Indigenous students and instructors to develop a plan to ensure current services and resources meet their needs.
- Actively liaise with First Nations Studies instructors to further support their pedagogical objectives.
- Identify alternative library classification systems, which more respectfully and holistically support the identification of Indigenous-related library resources.
- Continue to support outreach initiatives of the First Nations Centre related to literacy, knowledge-sharing, cultural expression and celebration.
- Support and engage with institutional efforts to indigenize the University.

1. UNBC. “ACADEMIC ACTION PLAN – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS, V. JUNE 28, 2017 1.7 ENDORSED BY SENATE”, 2017.

DECOLONIZING & INDIGENIZATION

OUTCOMES

- The NBCA staff have been involved in University's Indigenous artwork commission project which saw the installation of "Reconciling Light" by Simon Daniel James.
- The NBCA continued to work with First Nations to develop and revisit MOU agreements regarding storage and data management of materials. In regard to digitization, NBCA provided training and consultation.
 - The Witsuwit'en Language and Culture Society added material to the current MOU agreement. The material was then returned to the community for digitization.
 - The NBCA provided the Lake Babine Nation Directors a tour of the vault and workspace, gave a presentation on data management, and another on the Lake Babine Nation materials currently held at the NBCA under a MOU storage and access agreement. NBCA met with members of the Lake Babine Digital Legacy Team to provide advice into their digitization work plan.
 - At the request of the office of the Executive Director of Lake Babine Nation, the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council archivist and NBCA provided an on-site Digitization Training Workshop for fifteen Band Office employees.
- The NBCA assisted in location of Tsek'ehne language resources within NBCA holdings as offered through UNBC course curriculum and via community connections.
- NBCA installed Taoutil Thomas's Bear clan blanket and square drum into the exhibit case at the Nadleh Whut'en band office.
- NBCA developed a "statement on language in archival descriptions" see: <https://search.nbca.unbc.ca/index.php/statement-on-language-in-archival-descriptions> which has been referred to as a model by several Canadian archival scholars/professionals.
- Library employees had the opportunity to take the *4 Seasons of Reconciliation* course in 2020/2021 through Continuing Studies.
- In consultation with the First Nations Centre, it was identified that having a libguide on Allyship would benefit students and the Data Services Librarian created this resource guide: <https://libguides.unbc.ca/ally>.
- In 2023, all staff were invited to attend a Land Acknowledgement workshop hosted online by the Saskatchewan Library Association.

TECHNOLOGY

A strong information access framework is crucial in meeting the research and academic needs of our library users in both the physical and digital space.

KEY DIRECTIONS

Maintain and grow a robust library information technology infrastructure to provide equitable access to information resources.

Maintain and grow robust library information technology services in support of research, teaching and learning at the University.

KEY ACTIONS

- Collaborate and integrate with Information Technology Services and other departments at the University to better serve our users.
- Increase efficiency of the library's technology infrastructure and services to meet the needs of library priorities.
- Improve the library's web services to better serve our users.
- Create a preservation program for the digital holdings of the Geoffrey R. Weller Library and Northern BC Archives.
- Support technology learning opportunities for library faculty and staff.

TECHNOLOGY

OUTCOMES

- A dedicated team of library staff and librarians went through the RFP process to identify a new integrated library system (ILS) and an interlibrary loan (ILL) system in 2022. After broad university and library consultation, the library signed with OCLC's WorldShare Management System (WMS) for our ILS and Tipasa for our ILL system.
 - OCLC's WMS went live May 1st, 2023. This new system has improved our processes and practices to allow us to focus on the users of the library.
 - Tipasa went live June 1st, 2023. The Geoffrey R. Weller Library is the first post-secondary library to implement Tipasa in BC. This ILL system brings us in line with other institutions utilizing systems to facilitate and coordinate the sharing of library material between other institutions and students, faculty and/or staff.
- The Geoffrey R. Weller Library has built a collaborative relationship with the Communications Office and IT to migrate the library's website to a new instance of Drupal. The migration and update is set to begin in 2024.
- In partnership with ITS, we developed a new Library Desktop Support Analyst position that supports the library but resides within ITS, resulting in better collaboration, communication, and improved service outcomes.
- In 2020, UNBC Library adopted Microsoft Teams and Zoom, vastly increasing the efficiency in how staff communicate and collaborate
- NBCA developed an entirely new website in 2019.

OUR COMMUNITY

The Geoffrey R. Weller Library is an integral part of the University community. We strive to be an innovative partner and enabler of learning, research and knowledge creation. Our community engagement reaches beyond the University through local, national, and international partnerships.

KEY DIRECTIONS

- Foster and maintain our collaborations with University, local, and Indigenous communities.
- Advance strong provincial, national, and international partnerships to ensure effective and prudent use of resources.
- Contribute positively to the community of academic and research libraries.

KEY ACTIONS

- Build and maintain strong relationships with University partners to ensure integrated and seamless academic support services
- Continue to build partnerships with other academic research libraries
- Build and maintain strong relationships with student organizations on campus and UNBC Alumni
- Engage in dialogue with regional students and instructors to develop a plan to ensure current services and resources meet their needs
- Make our unique Northern BC content openly accessible to the world
- Build and maintain relationships with local libraries and cultural institutions

OUR COMMUNITY

OUTCOMES

- In 2021, the library underwent a renovation of the first floor to develop a Learning Commons model. The renovation saw the space become a collaborative and modern student study space. The Learning Commons officially opened in March 2022 and continues to be an active place for student collaboration, study, and socializing. This initiative includes the Geoffrey R. Weller Library, the Academic Success Centre, Student Life, and the Access Resource Centre. Each of these units share the commitment to excellence in student engagement and seek to collaborate to increase inclusivity, efficiency, effectiveness, and value to the campus community.
- The NBCA continued to build a relationship with the Prince George Public Library. Through this relationship, the PGPL transferred several items to the NBCA Special Collections, include a very significant transfer of Prince George Directories. This collection is frequently utilized by UNBC researchers and the public at the NBCA.
- The library participates in the newly formed Directors of Northern Post-Secondary Libraries group that works to support and collaborate on initiatives relevant to our local contexts.
- The University Librarian continues to meet with student representatives and is an invited member of the NUGSS and NBCGSS regular Check-in meetings.
- The library continues to engage with community partners working in the non-profit and charity sectors to support and enhance their research by providing access to scholarly materials normally housed behind a paywall. This unique program is an example of how academic libraries can work collaboratively to build partnerships, while raising awareness about the importance of equitable access to information. Coordinated through the library at SFU, the Community Scholars Program is supported in partnership with the libraries at UNBC, UBC, VIU, UFV, and KPU.
- NBCA provided a grant funded speaker series called the *Archival Connections Speakers Series*.
- NBCA organized a BC Heritage Emergency Response Network (HERN) workshop in July 2022 to which all regional heritage organizations were invited. In addition, the NBCA also developed a draft regional HERN agreement which would see regional heritage organizations provide employee assistance to staff in the event of a collections disaster.

OUR PEOPLE

The staff are the strength of the Geoffrey R. Weller Library. Supporting our staff and work culture is paramount to our success as an institution.

KEY DIRECTIONS

- Maintain and promote an open, respectful, healthy, and collegial work culture.
- Foster leadership, professional growth and respect for diversity.

KEY ACTIONS

- Develop a strong library organizational structure that meets the needs of the University.
- Improve communication by encouraging exchange of ideas and team interaction.
- Continue to support staff learning, development, and growth.

OUR PEOPLE

OUTCOMES

- The Technical Services Department revised their Library Technical Assistant model to achieve the following:
 - Creating redundancies.
 - Building in surge capacity.
- Internal communication had been improved with the following initiatives:
 - Microsoft Teams has provided the Library with various ways of communicating beyond in-person and email.
 - Bi-weekly staff meetings.