

Disaster Research Center

Draft Strategic Plan

22/11/2007

Introduction

The Disaster Research Center, the first social science research center in the world devoted to the study of disasters, was established at Ohio State University in 1963 and moved to the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at the University of Delaware in 1985. The Center conducts field and survey research on group, organizational and community preparation for, response to, and recovery from natural and technological disasters and other community-wide crises. DRC researchers have carried out systematic studies on a broad range of disaster types, including hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, hazardous chemical incidents, and plane crashes. Staff have conducted nearly 600 field studies since the Center's inception, traveling to communities throughout the United States and to a number of foreign countries, including Mexico, Canada, Japan, Italy, and Turkey.

Recognizing the broader research interests in disasters across the campus and the interdisciplinary nature of the research, the center moved from the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice to the College of Arts and Science in the summer of 2006. Then in June 2007, the center again moved to report to Research and Graduate Studies in the Office of the Provost.

While much of the research at the DRC has been interdisciplinary, DRC is now embarking on a new era as the center builds on and maintains this foundation in social science and DRC also broadens its activities to embrace more explicitly interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and cross disciplinary research. This includes developing and supporting a new interdisciplinary graduate program in disasters, involving more faculty from other disciplines in the activities of the center, developing this strategic plan to chart our future, and launching a new website.

This strategic plan is intended to provide an agenda for activities at the Disaster Research Center (DRC) at University of Delaware over the next three to five years. Specific actions will be updated each year in response to changes in the environment and to reflect the year's accomplishments.

Overview

The plan is organized into four main themes: Research, Education and Mentoring, Outreach and Dissemination, and Administration. For each theme, a brief introduction describes relevant background, strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. The goal for each main theme is then presented, followed by general strategies and more specific actions required to accomplish the goal.

Research

DRC has a well established research tradition built on: DRC's foundation in the social sciences; a capacity for quick response field research; and a culture of collaboration between faculty, staff, graduate students and undergraduate students. Building on this rich history, the current climate provides a number of opportunities for

enhancing and broadening the existing program. In particular; the recognition of major research issues related disasters; the multidisciplinary funding climate; emerging collaborations between DRC and external agencies; the presence of many visiting scholars, also supported by the Office of the Vice-Provost for Academic and International Affairs; DRC's new university level administrative location under Research and Graduate Studies; and the many unfunded mandates related to disaster planning that have been imposed on governmental agencies, have created not only an increased demand for DRC's traditional expertise, but have also provided motivation to go beyond multidisciplinary work and develop a sustainable interdisciplinary program. In developing such an environment DRC plans to draw on the core research areas current DRC faculty engage in, all of which are prime for interdisciplinary collaboration. These core areas include:

- The identification of the social, physical and environmental factors/conditions that influence vulnerability and resiliency of social and physical systems
- Individual and collective threat perception and behavior
- Organizational and inter-organizational dynamics
- Development and disasters
- Social and political dynamics that enhance the development of public policy for disaster reduction
- Analysis and management of infrastructure systems

In developing and conducting research projects, DRC will aim to act as the catalyst for, provide administrative support for and serve as the intellectual home for interdisciplinary disaster related research focused on projects that are more fruitful than independent research on the same topic; that leverage the interests and capacities of other disciplines on campus; that balance quantitative and qualitative approaches to research; that demonstrate systems-level thinking; that employ the broadest possible set of methodologies and analytic techniques; and that nurture a culture that values the integration of disciplinary insights as well as the development of interdisciplinary thinking.

Goal: Conduct state-of-the-art inter-disciplinary research that contributes to theory, is relevant to practice, and is rooted in DRC's strong social science tradition.

Strategy 1.1: Develop funded research initiatives that build on core strengths by providing foci for obtaining research funding.

Action 1.1.1: Faculty Recruiting- Actively work with faculty from relevant departments and seek faculty hires that are consistent with the core areas identified above and the teaching needs of the proposed graduate program including:

- Emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery)
- Economics, finance and business
- International aspects of disasters
- Evacuation, supply chain management and logistics, or systems engineering

- Spatial analysis and geographic information systems
- Public health or epidemiology

Action 1.1.2: “Core” Research- Develop research projects and supporting efforts that focus on DRC’s core research areas. Some of these supporting mechanisms might include:

- Identifying and inviting potential guest speakers and visitors that work in the core areas
- Organizing conference sessions around core areas
- Writing working papers and white papers that outline DRC’s research needs, agenda, and opportunities.

Action 1.1.3: Funding - Target and cultivate funding sources interested in the core research areas including government agencies and foundations.

Action 1.1.4 Quick Response-: Assess the center’s capacity for doing quick response and develop a process that supports timely response and facilitates links to long-term research projects. The process should indicate which disasters DRC will respond to, how quickly to respond, who participates, how the activity is supported, and what follow up is needed.

Strategy 1.2: Foster funding relationships with diverse sources, including government, foundation, and other funding sources interested in these areas.

Action 1.2.1: Key Decision Makers - Identify key decision makers and bring them to campus for talks and visits.

Action 1.2.2: Disseminate- Send DRC research products to potential funding sources.

Action 1.2.3: Funding Agencies- Identify and visit relevant governmental and foundation funding agencies.

Strategy 1.3: Strengthen and capitalize on international research relationships that will enhance or broaden the often western/ U.S. based understandings of crisis events.

Action 1.3.1: International Collaboration- Continue to develop collaborative international research projects.

Action 1.3.2: International Opportunities- Develop a database of opportunities and funding sources for student and faculty international experiences.

Action 1.3.3: Exchange Programs- Explore the administrative and logistical issues related to formal international exchange programs.

Strategy 1.4: Recruit talented students to participate in research and nurture their academic development.

Action 1.4.1: Recruiting-Recruit graduate and undergraduate students to participate in research as research assistants and REU students by promoting opportunities both on and off campus.

Action 1.4.2: Training - Continue to provide professional training and development opportunities for graduates and undergraduates.

Action 1.4.3: Travel Support - Continue to provide travel support for graduate students to participate in field work and conferences.

Education and Mentoring

Students, staff, and faculty affiliated with DRC all play an important role in graduate and undergraduate education at the university. Faculty offer related classes, advise students (as academic advisors, and advisors for independent studies and research), serve on comprehensive exam and dissertation committees; faculty and staff offer professional training sessions for graduate and undergraduate students; and graduate students mentor undergraduates, serve as teaching assistants, and in some cases, such as in the REU program, teach classes. The Disaster Research Center has a history of engaging graduate and undergraduate students in research.

Although the Disaster Research Center does not admit students, offer classes, or award degrees, faculty teach classes as part of their responsibilities in their home departments, advise students and influence academic programs. DRC faculty members have also been active members of the university-wide committee to develop the interdisciplinary MS and PhD Program in Disaster Science and Management (Appendix A). The intent is that this new graduate program would be begin Fall 2009.

Goal: To train the next generation of disaster studies scholars and practitioners.

Strategy 2.1: Link scholarly thrusts at DRC to the university's broader educational activities.

Action 2.1.1: Use Research in Courses: Include recent research in relevant courses.

Action 2.1.2: Utilize New Technologies: Provide training on research tools as they become available.

Strategy 2.2: Promote disaster-related academic programs and courses at UD.

Action 2.2.1: Links to Course- Maintain links to relevant academic programs and courses on DRC's website.

Action 2.2.2: Promote UD Programs- Promote programs and courses at conferences with DRC brochures and posters.

Strategy 2.3: Provide graduate students a broad range of professional development opportunities.

Action 2.3.1: Field Experiences- Develop opportunities to enhance graduate training through field experiences.

Action 2.3.2: Internships- Standardize a process for identifying and providing access to internship opportunities.

Action 2.3.3: DEPI- Develop the Delaware Emergency Planning Initiative (DEPI)– an effort to train students in community planning for disasters and a mechanism for providing a service to local communities by helping the community develop a disaster response plan.

Action 2.3.4: Full Spectrum Participation- Ensure graduate students the opportunity to participate in all phases of research in order to develop the skills that are important for conducting research projects, such as: grant writing, developing research plans, implementing research plans, publishing research findings, and presenting findings at regional and national conferences. As they progress at DRC they should be given more research opportunities and responsibilities.

Action 2.3.5: Professional Networking- Help graduate students develop a strong network of contacts for future collaboration by:

- Supporting attendance at disaster-related meetings (such as the Natural Hazards Conference in Boulder) and at sessions at discipline-specific meetings.
- Continuing to involve graduate students in the REU program to provide an opportunity for practical experience teaching, and guiding research.
- Inviting speakers through the REU program invited speaker series and other mechanism.
- Developing a culture that encourages development of relationships between graduate students and faculty.
- Exposing them to scholars and students from a variety of disaster-related disciplines.

Action 2.3.6: Medical Model Mentorship- Offer opportunities for graduate students to act as both mentees of faculty members and mentors to undergraduate students.

Action 2.3.7: Student Teaching- Find ways to provide a range of student teaching opportunities for DRC Research Assistants.

Action 2.3.8: DRC Training Program- Continue the DRC training program that offers students sessions on techniques, skills, and issues related to professional development and task completion.

Strategy 2.4: Provide undergraduate student development opportunities.

Action 2.4.1: Involve Undergraduates- Involve undergraduate students in research. They should:

- Have opportunities to present aspects of their projects at regional and national conferences.
- Gain experience with both qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Be exposed to scholars and students from a variety of disaster-related disciplines.
- Work with graduate students and faculty members to develop research direction on existing projects or formulate new projects.

Action 2.4.2: Mentor Undergraduates- Mentor undergraduate students to help prepare them for graduate school programs or practice. They should:

- Be mentored by both faculty and graduate students.
- Network with disaster professionals and academic scholars within the field through the REU program.
- Participate in training series given by DRC (e.g., how to apply for graduate school, how to put together a curriculum vita, etc.)

Action 2.4.3: REU Program Continue and expand REU activities by exploring supplemental funding to increase the number of students and the scope of activities.

Strategy 2.5: Resolve issues related to student funding.

Action 2.5.1: Develop Funding Policy- Create and document a policy and strategy to address continuity of funding for qualified graduate students.

Action 2.5.2: Maintain Funding- Develop a funding continuity plan to minimize disruptions associated with moving a graduate student to a new project right before he or she is about to graduate.

Action 2.5.3: Develop Fellowships- Explore the development of a DRC fellowship to support graduate students' independent work.

Strategy 2.6: Recruit talented students to participate in research and nurture their academic development (See Strategy 1.4)

Outreach and Dissemination

DRC is well known in the academic community of disaster researchers. The center has also initiated links to Delaware communities and agencies (such as the Delaware Department of Transportation and the Department of Education) that play a role in disasters but are not recognized as the key players. The Resource Collection also serves as an important avenue for dissemination of information. A strategic plan addressing issues related to the Resource Collection is included in Appendix B.

Nevertheless, the activities of the center are not widely promoted on campus and DRC has not established strong connections to the federal agencies managing disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. DRC can take advantage of several opportunities to support outreach and communication including: increased activity with Student organizations such as the newly developed Earthquake Engineering Research

Institute (EERI) Student Chapter; the universities support systems for outreach efforts such as UDaily; existing publications, such as the annual report, and the presence of DRC faculty, staff and students at conferences and meetings.

Goal: Promote the activities of the center through outreach to communities, agencies, and non-profit groups, and proactively disseminate DRC research products and information about center activities.

Strategy 3.1: Promote DRC products, activities, and events on and off campus.

Action 3.1.1: Website- Establish and maintain an informative, current, and interesting website.

Action 3.1.2: Present Research- Continue to present research both on campus and at disaster-related conferences and workshops.

Action 3.1.3: Student Organizations- Collaborate with student organizations, e.g., to obtain funding to go to conferences, to conduct outreach to high schools, to participate in intra-university conferences (EERI student chapter).

Action 3.1.4: Publicize Events- Consistently post events and announcements on UDaily.

Action 3.1.5: University Meetings- Participate in University meetings related to DRC activities and Core research (e.g., the UD-GIS group).

Action 3.1.6: Publish Articles- Continue to publish articles related on DRC related research in both scholarly and professional journals. Target key theoretical and applied sources for information dissemination to maintain a balance of theory and practice.

Action 3.1.7: Editorial Boards- Serve on editorial boards of key journals, and develop proposals to edit special issues.

Strategy 3.2: Develop connections to agencies.

Action 3.2.1: Assist Practitioners Provide assistance to practitioners through the development of tools and policy recommendations.

Action 3.2.2: DEPI- Develop the Delaware Emergency Planning Initiative (DEPI) (same as Action 2.3.3).

Strategy 3.3: Develop a systematic approach to media relations.

Action 3.3.1: Fact Sheets - Develop DRC key fact sheets.

Action 3.3.2: Internal Substantive Experts- Develop list of DRC substantive expertise areas.

Action 3.3.3: External Substantive Experts- Develop external expertise list.

Strategy 3.4: Host regular DRC events.

Action 3.4.1: Salon- Arrange presentations by DRC visitors with interested related to the core areas.

Action 3.4.2: Conferences- Host regular DRC conferences focused on the core research areas.

Strategy 3.5: Develop mechanisms to attract and sustain interest and participation in the center across the campus.

Action 3.5.1: Friends List- Use the friends distribution list.

Action 3.5.2: U Daily- Post material (e.g., DRC related events and accomplishments) to U-Daily.

Action 3.5.3: Public Relations- Work with university's new public relations staff to promote the center.

Administration

DRC has historically relied on the dedication of individual full-time administrative staff. DRC has had the benefit of attracting strong personnel and as a result, it is often the case that staff members go above and beyond their assigned responsibilities to ensure that the center operates effectively.

Recent changes in DRC's reporting structure within the university have created ambiguity about the role of DRC in the university administration. There is limited redundancy in administrative capacity to accomplish mission critical tasks. The administrative implications of planned growth, a desire to approach new funding sources, and integration of multiple disciplines with differing cultures and expectations remain unclear.

Goal: To draw on the unique strengths and creativity of individuals who fill administrative roles, and to develop a system of policies, procedures, and structures that facilitate their activities.

Strategy 4.1: Create a DRC handbook.

Action 4.1.1: Define Roles- Define the rights and responsibilities of the various positions, such as, Director, core and affiliated faculty, Assistant to the Director, Resource Collection coordinator, post-doctoral scholars, limited term researchers, project coordinator, lead graduate student, DRC and affiliated graduate and undergraduate students.

Action 4.1.2: Continuity Planning- Identify critical processes and assign as secondary/surge responsibilities to existing staff.

Action 4.1.3: Structural Position in University Determine and chart the center's relationship to various support units (e.g., Research and Graduate Studies, Human Subjects, Budget, HR).

Action 4.1.4: SOP- Develop standard operating procedures, including timelines and an annual calendar, for key activities.

Action 4.1.5: New Funding- Develop training related to proposal submission and grant administration for new funding sources.

Action 4.1.6: Integrating Disciplines- Develop a plan to integrate disciplines that have not historically been involved into the center.

Strategy 4.2: Evaluate the need for increased IT support.

Action 4.2.1: IT Needs- Assess the demand for general IT support.

Action 4.2.2: Webpage Demand- Assess the scope of webpage maintenance demands.

Action 4.2.3: IT Funding- Explore a range of IT funding sources. Make recommendations regarding IT support that include the extent and nature of the support and possible sources of funding.

Strategy 4.3: Develop plans for administrative expansion to accompany center growth.

Action 4.3.1: Position Limits- Identify the practical limits of each position.

Action 4.3.2: Plan for Administrative Growth- Identify logical divisions of labor for future growth (e.g., Assistant to director may someday become two positions—grants manager and Administrative assistant).

Appendix A- MS and PhD Program in Disaster Science and Management

In the summer of 2006, Provost Rich established the Committee for a Graduate Program in Disaster Science and Management. The committee included Professors Dynes, Nigg, McNeil (chair) and Rodriguez and had representation from all Colleges in the University. A Program Policy Statement and formal proposal have been developed and will be presented to the Provost in December 2007.

The proposed Disaster Science and Management (DISA) program is an interdisciplinary course of study that teaches the theories, research methodologies, and policies informing efforts focused on emergency preparedness, mitigation, management, and response. The program builds on the unique strengths and international reputation of the Disaster Research Center (DRC) and related programs and research at the University of Delaware. The mission of the proposed program is to educate and promote interdisciplinary scholarship in Disaster Science and Management. This proposed program will offer Master's of Science and PhD degrees. The programs include a core curriculum, electives, and research.

The Master of Science in Disaster Science and Management requires 36 credits including 27 credits of graduate level coursework, 4 semesters of seminar (2 semesters at 1 credit per semester and 2 semesters as a listener), 1 credit of practicum, and 6 credits of thesis. The 27 credits of coursework are specified in the student's plan of study and must include the following:

Three core courses (9 credits):

DISA 650 – Introduction to Disasters/Historical Aspects of Disasters

POSC 656 – The Politics of Disaster/Public Policy Aspects of Disasters

DISA 651 – International Aspects of Disasters/Development/Comparative Analysis

Research/Methods/Analysis Courses (6 credits):

DISA 655 – Research Methods I: Analysis Tools: Qualitative Research

DISA 656 – Research Methods II: Analysis Tools: Quantitative Research

Public Policy and Organizational Decision Making (3 credits):

UAPP 819 – Management Decision Making for Public and Non-Profit Sectors (3 credits) or

MAST 663 – Decision Tools for Policy Analysis (3 credits)

DISA 680 Disaster Science and Management Seminar (1 credit)

Taken four semesters – two semesters for credit, two semesters as a listener

One-credit internship course in spring semester: (1 credit), followed by the summer internship

(no credit): Students could do internships with DEMA, FEMA, other DHS Offices, United Nations, USAID, etc. The practicum can also be substituted by a research project at DRC. Study abroad is also strongly encouraged.

Thesis (6 credits)

Elective Courses: (9 credits).

The Doctor of Philosophy in Disaster Science and Management requires 36 credits of graduate-level coursework beyond the master's degree and 9 credits of dissertation. Students are expected to choose a thematic area such as one of the following:

- Organizations, management, and leadership – focus on management and leadership in all phases of a disaster. Includes knowledge of institutional structures and tools to support decision making.
- Built and natural environment, and society – focus on the interfaces among the three infrastructures (built, natural and social) with an emphasis on the opportunities to control, influence, accommodate, and understand changes and needs during and after catastrophic events.
- Vulnerability and resilience – focus on how systems are impacted by and respond to catastrophic events. Includes how systems can be modified or adapted to reduce vulnerability and improve resilience.
- Policy and planning – focus on response to disasters including continuity of operations.
- Simulation and modeling – focus on decision support tools and the modeling of impacts to support disaster planning, mitigation, response, and recovery.
- Health systems leadership: public health disaster planning and response – focus on the role of health professionals and systems in planning for and responding to disasters.

The 36 credits of coursework are specified in the individual planned program of study, and must include the following:

At least 9 credits from a thematic area listed above
At least 6 credits of research methods (qualitative or quantitative):
DISA 655 – Research Methods I: Analysis Tools: Qualitative Research
DISA 656 – Research Methods II: Analysis Tools: Quantitative
ECON877 - Advanced Benefit-Cost Analysis
MAST664 - Decision Tools for Policy Analysis
ORES601 - Survey Operations Research I
ORES602 - Survey Operations Research II
ORES603 - Simulation Modeling and Analysis
ORES801 - Optimization Models and Methods
ORES802 - Operations Research Applications
POSC816 - Advanced Social Research for Political Science
STAT800 - Estimation and Statistical Inference I
UAPP 815 – Public Management Statistics
UAPP816 – Advanced Social Statistics
UAPP 827 - Program and Project Analysis (cost-benefit analysis).
9 credits of PhD Thesis in the thematic area
In addition students must register for and attend three semesters of seminar (DISA 680). Students are expected to participate in seminar as a listener for other semesters that they are on campus.

Electives are intended to enhance and broaden a student's scholarly involvement in the program. Students in the doctoral degree program are allowed to take a maximum of 6 credits of independent study (DISA 866) and a maximum of 9 credits of research (DISA 868). However, the combined number of credits from research and independent study courses may not exceed 12.

Appendix B- Disaster Research Center, University of Delaware E.L. Quarantelli Resource Collection Strategic Plan

Introduction

The E. L. Quarantelli Resource Collection at the Disaster Research Center (DRC) serves as a repository for materials relating to the field of disaster research produced by a wide range of institutions and researchers. The Center's collection contains the world's oldest and most complete set of documents on the social and behavioral aspects of disasters. One of the Collection's unique strengths is its highly specialized content that includes significant unpublished papers, conference presentations, older government reports, documents produced by obscure organizations and declassified information. The Collection now numbers more than 55,000 items and is open to both interested researchers and agencies involved in emergency management and related areas. The Center also produces its own book, monograph, and report series, copies of which can be found in the Collection. These, combined with copies of Preliminary Papers and articles produced by DRC staff members, total over 850 publications generated by DRC.

The Resource Collection also includes a number of Special Collections containing personal papers and writings from a number of renowned researchers in the field of disasters. This material is not currently catalogued and access is limited.

Users of the Resource Collection include University of Delaware faculty, undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of disciplines, graduate student and faculty researchers from colleges and universities both in the United States and internationally, as well as members of various disaster related fields such as emergency management, fire science, disaster planning and business continuity. In the past year, researchers have visited the Resource Collection from Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Scotland, and Sweden. In 2006, the Collection was accessed by 92 different UD students and foreign researchers who spent anywhere from a few days to a full academic year utilizing the Collection's resources.

DRC participates in the University of Delaware's Online Institutional Repository Project. The Online Institutional Repository Project began in 2004 with six pilot "communities" or participant groups, including DRC. Upon completion of a successful test pilot within the University, the web site for the University of Delaware's Institutional Repository went "live" to the international Internet community on April 18, 2005. DRC records within the Online Institutional Repository can be accessed at <http://dspace.udel.edu:8080/dspace/handle/19716/35>. The collection

includes papers written by a number of renowned researchers in the field of the social and behavioral aspects of disasters.

The Repository offers access to full text versions of original research documents as well as DRC Annual Reports. In addition to providing full text of the documents, the database allows for full text searching capabilities. As a result of participation in this project, research conducted by DRC staff over the years is made accessible to the rest of the disaster research community in an unprecedented way. Currently DRC has over 570 documents posted to the Repository. Future plans may include improved accounting methods to track the number of DRC documents that are accessed and by whom and from what locations throughout the world they are accessed.

The Resource Collection has one full time Library Coordinator and the support of an undergraduate student for 12-15 hours per week. Funding for personnel and material support for the Collection comes entirely from gifts. The Library Coordinator's daily duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Acts as liaison with Morris Library on all matters related to the Online Institutional Repository
- Coordinates and manages the assembly and production of DRC documents including the annual report, publicity brochures, etc.
- Coordinates the review process for the Preliminary Paper series
- Provides training on various aspects of and software programs related to the Resource Collection
- Serves as networking liaison to other disaster research related institutions and organizations
- Provides long distance research support to individuals unable to physically access the Resource Collection

Vision

The E.L. Quarantelli Resource Collection is a rich source of information, data, and published and unpublished social science research on disasters in a variety of media that can be accessed by researchers both within and external to University of Delaware.

Overview

To achieve this vision this plan outlines goals and the actions necessary in terms of:

1. Maintaining, upgrading and promoting the existing Collection including the Online Institutional Repository
2. Providing access to the Special Collections
3. Conserving and preserving the collection in general and materials of historical significance in particular
4. Developing and providing access to a database of disaster related research data referred to as the Disaster Database (DISDAT)

Goal- Maintain, upgrade, and promote the existing Collection including the Online Institutional Repository

Strategy 1.1: Maintain the existing Collection

Action 1.1.1: Regularly review collection materials for possible replacement, repair, etc.

Strategy 1.2: Promote the Collection both within the University of Delaware community and beyond

Action 1.2.1: Review and update Resource Collection web pages on a regular basis

Action 1.2.2: Review and update Resource Collection brochure on a regular basis

Action 1.2.3: Continue to offer training opportunities for students, staff and faculty

Action 1.2.4: Distribute Resource Collection brochure to Friends of DRC

Action 1.2.5: Establish and enhance contacts with other disaster related organizations to raise awareness of the Resource Collection

Strategy 1.3: To enhance the personnel support of the Resource Collection the following steps should be taken:

Action 1.3.1: Rewrite job description of the library coordinator to reflect the higher level of education and/or experience now required.

Action 1.3.2: Seek permanent funding for the position and work-study support.

Action 1.3.3: Opportunities should be sought for Resource Collection personnel development regarding all issues pertinent to the maintenance and further growth of the collection.

Strategy 1.4: As additional resources become available:

Action 1.4.1: Purchase, install and maintain software to support the Resource Collection catalog

Action 1.4.2: Plan for the maintenance and continuous upgrading of the

Action 1.4.3: Collection's computing equipment

Action 1.4.4: Develop a space plan

Action 1.4.5: Identify material shelved but not cataloged

Action 1.4.6: Clean up catalog records including errors and missing information

Strategy 1.5: Identify material in need of preservation

Action 1.5.1: Establish criteria for preservation identification process including current format, age of document, potential frequency of use, etc. to help identify priority projects and items

Action 1.5.2: Determine most suitable process of preservation (e.g. recopying documents onto acid free paper, converting to digital format, etc.)

Action 1.5.3: Continue to add records to the Online Institutional Repository

Action 1.5.4: Systematically identify eligible/suitable documents for inclusion in the Repository. Create records for new additions to expand Repository holdings

Strategy 1.6: Provide access to special collections

Action 1.6.1: Develop policies and procedures for Special Collections

Using the following questions, a process should be identified to process and manage the special collections that DRC receives from donating parties.

- What functions should they serve?

- What will it take to provide access to the materials included in the collection(s)?
- How will we manage access? What will be required of researchers requesting access?
- Set priorities – identify collections/materials that are most likely to be of the greatest use to the greatest number of researchers as well as collections most conducive to processing and access to determine which collections are handled first.
- What material will be accepted/sought for future inclusion in DRC Special Collections?

Strategy 1.7: Develop a plan for conservation and preservation of the Collection

Action 1.7.1: Identify and prioritize items that are vulnerable, of interest, and/or of greatest historical significance

Action 1.7.2: Identify potential funding sources

Action 1.7.3: Identify/define process and required resources to undertake preservation

Action 1.7.4: Submit funding proposals including an allowance for additional personnel to handle specialized/larger preservation/conservation projects such as materials included in the University Archives collection

Strategy 1.8: Develop a plan to provide access to research data referred to as DISDAT (Disaster Data). DRC is considering establishing a disaster related data repository and thereby providing broader access to research data similar to CPANDA (Cultural Policy & Arts National Data Archive) at Princeton (<http://www.cpanda.org/>) or ICPSR (Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research) at University of Michigan (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/>).

Action 1.8.1: Develop a vision of the repository

Action 1.8.2: Conduct a survey of potential users of the data to determine what kinds of data are most useful, likelihood that researchers would use this data, what online information is needed to help researchers understand what data is needed, possible barriers to exploring and using such a repository, and level of interest in DRC serving as a repository for data generated by other institutions.

Action 1.8.3: Conduct an assessment of what it would take to develop the repository

Action 1.8.4: Conduct a pilot study using DSPACE. The pilot will select one or two datasets collected by DRC and develop documentation and supporting materials that would be sufficient for researchers to assess the value of the dataset to a particular research topic. This would require

- Developing a structure for the information including a taxonomy to ensure consistent use of terminology both within DRC's own research system and the broader disaster research system.
- Identifying the data sets, survey instruments and other documents
- Developing a format and protocols

Action 1.8.4: Expand to other DRC data sets

Action 1.8.5: Expand to other data sets collected by researchers not affiliated with DRC

Action 1.8.6: Explore similar initiatives including administrative structure, privacy issues and funding

Action 1.8.7: Explore options for support and funding including:

- Foundation support
- Student internships

Priorities / Resources / Timeline

To best enhance the overall quality of the Resource Collection the following hierarchy of priority projects is recommended:

1. Seek permanent funding for the Collection
 - a. Develop detailed staffing plan Spring 08
 - b. Director works with University administration and development Spring 08
2. Convert the existing catalog database to a web based model to expand Collection access beyond the physical premises of DRC
 - a. Resources have been committed to purchase the software
 - b. Conversion is expected to be completed in calendar year 07
 - c. An initial training session is scheduled for fall and additional training will be conducted in the spring.
 - d. Web access will be provided in early 08
3. Undertake the Special Collection project to identify and organize contents of research value
 - a. Develop detailed plan by Summer 08
 - b. Complete preliminary screening by the end of calendar year 08
 - c. Identify possible financial and personnel resources by Summer 08
4. Establish DISDAT to enable researchers, both within and outside of the UD community, to make greater use of previously compiled disaster datasets
 - a. Develop a vision and proposals for the survey and pilot project Spring 08
 - b. Seek funding Summer 08
 - c. Complete pilot project Summer 09
 - d. Assess pilot and formulate future plan Fall 09

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