



Polk Promise:
2015-2018 update

Polk Promise: Strategic Update 2015-2018



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In 2014, Polk Library, along with sister libraries across UW System, undertook its third comprehensive survey of user perceptions of library quality as part of its commitment to continually assess and improve its services to the university community. Overall results of the LibQUAL+ survey were encouraging; the 1003 survey respondents' scores averaged 7.32 on a 1-9 scale across all core questions, an improvement among all three user groups since the previous (2008) survey. Polk staff followed its careful analysis of the survey with a day-long retreat to discuss the findings and to identify areas to improve, maintain or deemphasize. Polk Library leadership prioritized these ideas and presents them as a strategic update to its guiding document, the Polk Promise. The Polk Promise is the set of strategic goals that Polk considers its contract with its users.

The update includes action items (in red in the document) that Polk commits itself to pursue during the next three years. Throughout that period, the library will assess its progress in these actions as they will inform library divisions and individuals as they develop annual plans and goals.

Polk Promise

Polk Library will provide research and educational materials, customer services, information instruction and learning spaces to students, faculty, and staff in a modern, responsive and professional manner. To accomplish this, the library commits itself to 10 strategies.



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1 Develop and curate high quality resources that support student learning and faculty research by:

1.1 Curating a collection of current and historical materials in cooperation with UW System partners through purchase, lease, or loan;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Committing to a variety of formats and valuing digital formats such as e-journals, e-books and streaming video when possible.
- Renewing emphasis on the use of on-demand and just-in-time transactions to deliver materials.
- Restoring the purchasing power for educational and research resources by \$250,000 through the Shared Electronic Collections and UW Oshkosh resources.

1.2 Maintaining the unique Area Research Center partnership with the Wisconsin Historical Society that allows for local access to primary sources of regional, state and national significance;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Providing housing and services for the congressional papers of Representative Thomas Petri and cooperating with efforts to create a public policy research center.
- Planning for an expansion and improvement of the space for the University Archives and Area Research Center.



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2 Provide responsive service to students, faculty and staff by:

2.1 Ensuring high-quality services are available regardless of user type or location through in-house, remote and online means;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Wearing name tags so users can easily identify staff throughout the library.
- Providing customer service training for all library staff.

2.2 Committing to services tailored to individual user needs.

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Expanding individual and small group consulting services.
- Developing new models of reference service that transcend the librarian at the desk model.



3 Implement flexible information instruction programs that improve student information literacy and critical thinking skills by:

3.1 Prioritizing staffing to ensure that face-to-face and online instruction is available at times and locations that meet user needs;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Adding a new public service position that increases library support for information literacy and online learning.

3.2 Implementing new approaches to instruction as appropriate to course or degree needs.

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Expanding instruction into all relevant cohorts of the University Studies Program.
- Continuing the stress on conducting multiple sessions of instruction for a course and taking instruction to where students and faculty are.



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4 Create diverse learning environments that support user success by:

4.1 Developing “learning commons” spaces where users have access to differentiated seating, duplication equipment, computer workstations with standard applications and knowledgeable library staff;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Presenting a white paper to university administration outlining the major renovation needs of Polk Library that will best serve student needs. Based on LibQual+ data.
- Repurposing library space for student needs, specific collection growth and effective space utilization.

4.2 Creating separate group study spaces that support collaborative work in technologically-rich environments;

4.3 Providing quiet study spaces throughout the building where users can work alone with an expectation of silence;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Selecting a quiet study area and developing a detailed renovation plan based on LibQual+ data and seeking funding.



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Create diverse learning environments that support user success by:

4.4 Maintaining regular hours that meet most users' needs and extended hours when appropriate;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Working with OSA to evaluate library hours focusing on the best hours to be open rather than the expansion of total library open hours.

4.5 Providing convenient food and beverage retail space in cooperation with campus food service providers.

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Responding to reasonable requests such as making a microwave available to students any time the library is open.
- Evaluating the desirability of providing vending on other floors of the building.



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5 Foster a culture of assessment, improvement and innovation by:

5.1 Using analytics, use data, focus groups and usability studies to gather and analyze quantitative and qualitative data to continuously evaluate collections and services;

5.2 Developing multiple methods of engaging with the University community regarding library matters;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Starting a “library representatives” program to communicate better with academic departments and faculty.
- Engaging university administration and governance groups in a discussion about the results of the LibQual+ survey.

5.3 Prioritizing funds for the development of new services and products;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Finishing the withdrawal from the Federal Depository Library Program and reallocating resources and space to other needs.

5.4 Empowering staff to take risks and experiment with new approaches to library work;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Working with WiLS to provide a hosted service for QuizSmith that will allow libraries and other organizations to use the software without having in-house technical support or hosting.

5.5 Utilizing the best in innovative technologies and services provided openly by the library community.



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6 Enhance the discovery of library resources and services by:

6.1 Developing a website that meets or exceeds best practices of academic libraries in design, content and web-based services;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Migrating the website to the new content management system and evaluating best website strategies for design, content and web-based services.
- Redesigning Archives website to the library's current look and feel.

6.2 Positioning digital services in visible and convenient locations including mobile applications, course management systems, student portals, and academic department websites;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Rolling out academic department portlets.

6.3 Enhancing capabilities that permit searching across multiple information platforms;

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Providing continuous improvement of Primo searching.

6.4 Prioritizing staff to provide coordinated and proactive support for distance education students in cooperation with faculty.



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7 Engage with campus priorities to help UW Oshkosh innovate in its mission to provide “quality educational opportunities to the people of northeastern Wisconsin and beyond” by:

7.1 Contributing to the University Studies Program through information literacy education and curricular support;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Evaluating the use of ANVIL and student success in meeting USP learning outcomes.

7.2 Developing proactive support for distance education students and faculty;

7.3 Ensuring collections and services expand to support engineering technology, executive MBA and other future degree programs.



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8 Provide service to and cooperation with professional, campus and public communities by:

8.1 Maintaining the library's strong role in the Council of UW Libraries, UW System Archives Council, Fox Valley Library Council, Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS) and others;

8.2 Encouraging staff participation and leadership in the library profession through active roles in regional and national professional organizations;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Implement a new and more equitable travel fund request and approval process.

8.3 Sharing openly with the library community the tools and best practices developed in-house

8.4 Contributing staff to serve on a variety of University committees and groups;

8.5 Providing opportunities for the general public to better understand and make use of the library's collections, services and facilities.



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9 Develop a knowledgeable, dedicated and service-oriented staff by:

9.1 Hiring for the future needs of the library based on observed trends;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Reviewing all open positions related to the most significant needs of the library as a whole.

9.2 Enhancing professional development of staff through travel and educational support;

9.3 Maintaining a positive and collegial work environment;

9.4 Encouraging a culture of innovation and experimentation in library work.



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10 Ensure responsible stewardship of university resources by:

10.1 Collaborating with UW System partners to negotiate licenses to slow the rising cost of library materials and services;

2015-2018 Action Items

- Working with UWS libraries to fund a project to “grow applied research outside Madison.” Increase central funding for STEM resources through the shared electronic collection.

10.2 Enhancing collections through the resource sharing activities rather than purchase;

10.3 Mentoring and promoting employees when appropriate.

2015 - 2018 Action Items

- Beginning transition planning in anticipation of many staff retirements in the next 4-5 years.