

Library Support for Distance Learning

Statement of Purpose

Library resources and services must meet the needs of all faculty, staff and students regardless of where they are located. The Kares Library's faculty and staff strive to ensure the delivery of equal Library services to everyone on campus, off campus, and online.

ALA/ACRL Standards

The American Library Association's Association of College and Research Libraries has created a document that guides the principles and services offered to distance learners. This document states, "All students, faculty members, administrators, staff members, or any other members of an institution of higher education are entitled to the library services and resources of that institution, including direct communication with the appropriate library personnel, regardless of where they are physically located in relation to the campus; where they attend class in relation to the institution's main campus; or the modality by which they take courses."

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesdistancelearning#library>

The Standards for Distance Learning Library Services notes the financial support, additional investment, technical infrastructure, and written agreements of the institution are essential to provide these services. It also notes essential requirements for the library are the availability for all users, academic excellence, direct human access, instruction, strategic planning, and outcomes assessment. The following services while not exhaustive are considered essential by the Standards:

- research and consultation services including interaction as an embedded librarian;
- online instructional and informational services in formats accessible to the greatest number of people, including those with disabilities;
- reliable, rapid, secure access to online resources;
- a library user instruction program designed to instill independent and effective information and digital literacy skills, while specifically meeting the learner support needs of the distance learning community;
- reciprocal or contractual borrowing, or interlibrary loan services in accordance with both Section 108, Reproductions by Libraries and Archives, of the Copyright Law and using a broad application of Section 107, Fair Use;
- access to reserve and other instructional materials in accordance with Section 107, Fair Use, and Section 110, Exemptions for Certain Performances and Displays;
- reliance upon copyright training and legal counsel;
- institutional support for librarians providing clearance/compliance on copyright issues;
- recognition of the importance of copyright for institutional administrators;
- adequate service hours for optimum user access;
- promotion of library services to the distance learning community, including documented and updated policies, management of information resources, and regulations and procedures for systematic development;
- marketing of distance learning library services directly to distance learners;



- prompt delivery to users of items obtained from the institution's collections, or through interlibrary loan agreement via courier or electronic delivery system;
- point-of-use assistance with and instruction in the use of print and non-print media and equipment;
- provision of appropriate open access publications.

Athens State Services

Due to the number of unique environments where educational opportunities are offered at Athens State University (on campus, off campus, blended, and online), Library services are made available no matter where the "classroom" may be.

To meet the essential services outline above the Athens State Library has implemented the following services:

- The library building is open M-Th 8am-9pm, Fri 8am-5pm, and Sun 1pm-9pm. During these hours the SpringShare LibAnswers services is operational to answer distance patron questions.
- Reference services including in person consultations, short instructional/information conversations and assistance with resources are coordinated via the LibAnswers software, which is available during all operating hours of the library. (Note: LibAnswer service is closed 15 minutes before the closing of the building)
 - Provides point of use instruction and availability of a librarian for all who visit the website.
 - In person appointments are made with specific librarians as necessary
 - Embedded Librarians also provide reference services through BlackBoard
- The library utilizes SpringShare LibGuides to provide electronic information and training to all constituents.
- The Library has reciprocal borrowing agreements with multiple universities across Alabama. The agreement agrees to allow students access to buildings, reference services, and checkout of materials from the institutions.
- Library instruction is available via multiple methods including a 1-credit course, Library Help desk service, reference services, embedded services, and LibGuides. The librarians are also available via phone, email, Blackboard discussion lists, by appointment, and by chat.
- The library collections include databases containing articles, books, and media. The library utilizes a proxy server to ensure reliable, rapid, secure access to all material. When problems arise the librarians work with the University's IT department to resolve issues.
 - The library also utilizes the Alabama Virtual Library (AVL) as an option for students and community members.
- The Library utilizes OCLC for Interlibrary Loan (ILL). The Library utilizes a courier service for off campus centers and other Alabama schools and US Mail for schools outside of Alabama and home delivery. Requests for ILL are done online through a webform.
- Physical Reserves are processed by the Library Help Desk staff, while electronic Reserves are typically linked via Blackboard per course. If a distance student needs to utilize a Physical Reserve material the material is either mailed to the patron via ILL or digitally scanned and emailed.
- Promotion of Library services happens on campus, on site, and on-line. The Library works with the Marketing department to ensure a unified appearance and message in all marketing. The



Library utilizes Facebook and Instagram and the Archives utilizes Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Documentation & Assessment

The documentation created and assessed by the library include but are not limited to:

- user guides and other library instructional materials;
- statements of mission and purpose, policies, regulations, and procedures;
- statistics on library use;
- statistics on collections;
- facilities assessment measures;
- collections assessment measures;
- needs and outcomes assessment measures;
- data on staff and work assignments;
- institutional and internal organization charts;
- comprehensive budget(s);
- professional personnel vitae;
- position descriptions for all personnel;
- formal, written agreements;
- library evaluation studies or documents;
- involvement in curriculum development and planning

Works Consulted

“Standards for Distance Learning Library Services.” Approved by the board of Directors, ACRL, July 1, 2008. Revised June 2016. <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesdistancelearning>