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## Distance Learning Librarians: Their Shared Vision

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### Scholarly Commons Citation

Casey, A.M. (2009). Distance learning librarians: Their shared vision. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*. 3(1), 3-22. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332900902794872>

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning* on 14 April, 2009, available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/15332900902794872>.

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## **Distance Learning**

According to the National Center for Education Statistics,<sup>1</sup> 56 percent of two- and four-year degree-granting institutions in the United States offered distance learning<sup>2</sup> courses in the 2000-2001 academic year. Such courses are delivered in a variety of ways (e.g., correspondence courses, face-to-face in distant locations, branch campuses, compressed video, interactive television [ITV], cable television, audiotapes, and Internet delivery). Distance learning requires a well-defined system of delivery and modified teaching techniques, and it reaches a multitude of audiences through a variety of print and technological means. It can take place synchronously or asynchronously.<sup>3</sup>

Students who enroll in distance learning courses tend to be more mature than the average undergraduate, need flexible programming to accommodate lives that often include families and jobs, are usually returning to school to complete a degree or retool their careers, and tend to be self-directed. Further, they seem to be "less concerned about titles and more concerned about what the instructor knows and wants to share with them."<sup>4</sup> According to the National Center for Education Statistics,<sup>5</sup> the majority of adults who reported using any type of distance education method in the 2004-2005 academic year were between

twenty-five and fifty-four years old, female, white, had some college education, and worked full time.

### **Library Services to Distance Learners**

Academic library services dedicated to distance learners have existed to some degree since correspondence courses first became available in the late nineteenth century. There was a rapid increase in the number of these services in the 1970s in response to the development of open universities in several countries, in the 1980s in response to the growth of distance programs in traditional colleges and universities,<sup>6</sup> and, after the 1990s in response to the growth of online education.

The first set of guidelines that covered the provision of library services to distance learners in the United States was approved by the Association of College and Research Libraries<sup>7</sup> (ACRL) in 1966, and published as *The Guidelines for Library Services to Extension Students*. These guidelines have been revised several times in the last forty years. The current version, *Standards for Distance Learning Library Services*,<sup>8</sup> defines distance learning library services and establishes that the term *distance learning* will be used in place of synonymous terms (e.g., off-campus, extended campus, distance education, distributed learning, and open learning). The Canadian Library Association<sup>9</sup> developed a similar set of guidelines in 1993, which were revised in 2000. The basic tenets of both the American and

Canadian sets of guidelines are that library resources and services must meet the needs of all students, faculty, and support personnel of the institution and that it is the responsibility of the originating institution to provide resources and services equivalent to those available in the library on campus. The term *equivalent* was chosen purposefully because traditional academic library services often do not fit the distance learning student very well. Librarians who serve this population have had to develop new methods that approximate what the on-campus library users receive, often with limited funding or institutional support.

Initially the institutional accrediting organizations in the United States did little to address library services tailored to the distance learning community. In a content analysis of the 1989 standards and the 1994 standards,<sup>10</sup> Gilmer found limited mention of distance learning library services in the earlier standards, but by 1994 each accrediting organization mentioned distance learning library services, and, for the most part, referred the readers to the ACRL guidelines. So by the mid 1990s, institutions offering courses at a distance were expected to provide equivalent library services to that remote community.

Prior to this time, however, many libraries had developed formal services to address the needs of distance learners at their institutions. Librarians gathered together to present

papers and discuss their experiences at the American Library Association conferences and the Off-Campus Library Services conferences from the 1980s onward. A formal discussion group for distance learning issues was created in 1981 as part of ACRL. Membership grew continuously throughout the 1980s and the discussion group became a formal section of ACRL in 1990.<sup>11</sup> The Off-Campus Library Services Conferences began in 1982 to provide a forum for practitioners and "to bring together for the first time at a national level those individuals who must work with one another to create and develop successful library programs for off-campus constituents."<sup>12</sup> The first conference, which hosted twenty-three presentations, was successful enough that conferences continue biennially.

Distance learning library services vary widely in response to the different types of distance learning programs at their originating institutions. Some are separate library departments with multiple librarians and staff, but the majority of them are small units. In the third edition of the *Off-Campus Library Services Directory*, 106 of the 161 U.S. and Canadian libraries responding reported that they operated with two or fewer librarians.<sup>13</sup> Typically, one distance learning librarian has the primary and often the sole responsibility for providing equivalent library services to the distance learners at his or her institution.

The adaptation of traditional academic library services to equivalent services for those off campus has changed considerably over time. In the 1970s and 1980s it was common for distance-learning librarians to offer reference via toll-free telephone and to travel to distance learning centers to provide library instruction classes. Students ordered library materials through a toll-free number and received them by mail or courier.<sup>14</sup> Examples of other typical services in this era include a library instruction class on videotape<sup>15</sup> or a small reference collection and a microfiche duplicate of the card catalog at a distance learning center.<sup>16</sup> As new technologies became available, distance learning librarians quickly adapted them to reach their user communities. Some examples include providing library instruction over ITV,<sup>17</sup> using networked computers at a distance learning center to provide reference assistance,<sup>18</sup> using blogs for library instruction,<sup>19</sup> developing Web pages that download effectively to handheld devices,<sup>20</sup> and using wiki spaces and eportfolios to build information literacy skills.<sup>21</sup>

One other important adaptation distance learning librarians have had to make is the role they play in making library services visible to their users. The campus library is normally a building that students and faculty can recognize and presumably they know that it contains some resources. To a distance learning student, the library is invisible until he or

she needs to use it. Distance learning librarians have had to market their services assiduously so that faculty and students know how to find them when they are needed. Marketing is an important part of a distance learning librarian's job and a constant topic of interest in the literature.<sup>22</sup>

### **Problem Statement**

Distance learning librarians provide library services to distance learning students and faculty. Those services, many of which were established before the Internet made remote access to services and collections relatively easy, are expected to be equivalent to those accessible on campus. To provide equivalent service to the distance learning user community, distance learning librarians may need a vision for those services, one shared by colleagues in the library, the teaching faculty, and the distance learning staff at their institutions. No study has investigated the development or implementation of a shared vision for distance learning library services. The purpose of this study is to fill that void by examining those visions that guide the planning and delivery of distance learning library services, exploring the components of those visions and who helped shape those visions, and determining whether there are differences in those visions by geographic region or institution type.

The need for adaptation or innovation in academic library services seems especially important in light of the constant change in the technology that supports the various ways in which information is delivered. The Internet has changed how post-secondary institutions offer courses and how academic libraries make resources available and issues such as the current state of scholarly publishing and the development of institutional repositories have raised the discussion of information resources to a new level. These changes in higher education may promote increased opportunity for collaboration with teaching faculty, instructional designers, and information technology staff to develop a shared vision of library and information services that better supports new instructional delivery and research methods. Identifying a model of a shared vision that guides the adaptation of traditional academic library services for the distance learner may provide inspiration for other academic librarians as they lead collaborative efforts to adapt library services to meet new user needs and provide increased access to information.

## **Literature Review**

### **Vision in the Scholarly Literature**

Vision, which is the mental image a leader has of a possible and desirable future state of the organization, is essential to leadership success because it sets the stage for



all of the roles the participants in the organization take to advance the organization's agenda.<sup>23</sup> Kouzes and Posner<sup>24</sup> write that vision expresses optimism and is about a strong desire to achieve something great. A vision focuses on the ideal, which stretches leaders to imagine possibilities, breakthroughs, and transformations. Kotter<sup>25</sup> states that vision clarifies the direction for change, motivates people to move in the right direction toward that change, and helps to coordinate the actions of different people.

Shared vision, which may originate with the personal vision of a leader, is an idea of a new version of the future that an organization or a group of people holds in common. Each member has his or her own personal vision of the ideal future, which together constitute the shared vision. Through it, a group can focus its energies on the achievement of the desired goal and work becomes part of pursuing a larger purpose.<sup>26</sup> Shared vision is a powerful concept that enables an organization to achieve a challenging goal through the buy-in of all of its members, who develop a shared sense of destiny,<sup>27</sup> and that fosters risk-taking and experimentation.<sup>28</sup> Shared vision is a component of leadership styles that encourage staff involvement and collaboration, such as transformational leadership, servant leadership and team leadership.

The concept of shared vision, which is a far more popular topic in the literature of education than it is in that of library and information science (LIS), is often the subject of studies related to the leadership of school principals and the effectiveness of elementary and secondary schools. Manasse, whose model of a school principal as a visionary leader has implications far beyond elementary and secondary education, states that vision is "the personal picture of a desired future the leader conveys to members of his or her organization. Once the organizational member 'buys into' the vision [that person joins the leader in turning the] shared vision into reality."<sup>29</sup>

Her model has four interacting components that are vital to demonstrating the role of vision in leadership:

1. Organizational vision, which is a systems perspective, encompasses an understanding of how separate elements within the organization interact and enables leaders to identify and develop human resources. It requires cognitive information skills such as information processing, data analysis, communication skills, and active learning. "Organizational vision enables organizational members to understand how any particular technical, educational, or product innovation will affect other elements in the system."<sup>30</sup>

2. Future vision, which requires both rational/analytical and intuitive processes, is a vision of the way the organization might be in the future. In future visioning a leader uses conceptual, imaginative, holistic, and intuitive creative processes to synthesize internal and external factors to create a vision of the future, and uses rational, analytical, and administrative processes to implement and monitor the vision. "Leaders use future vision to focus the attention of their organizations on accomplishing the possible rather than merely maintaining what exists."<sup>31</sup>
3. Personal vision enables leaders to identify their personal resources and involves a process of self-awareness through which they are able to work to their strengths and hire others to fill the gaps in their own cognitive, moral and experiential backgrounds. "Personal vision... requires both self-awareness and the ability to identify, mobilize and coordinate complementary skills and resources."<sup>32</sup>
4. Strategic vision, which incorporates the planning process, involves the manipulation of numbers and the articulation of goals in order to realize the vision. "Strategic vision involves connecting the reality of the present (organizational vision) to the

possibilities of the future (future vision) in a unique way (personal vision) that is appropriate for the organization and its leader."<sup>33</sup>

In this model, the first three components of organizational, future, and personal vision lead to strategic vision, from which the goals and objectives for the organization are set. This alignment of components places emphasis more on the structure of planning than on the vision. A revised version of the model is suggested that proposes two changes (see Figure 1).

1. The components are realigned so that strategic vision is drawn on the same level as the first three components rather than resulting from the three other components, as shown in Manasse's hierarchical model. This redrawing removes the emphasis from the structural part of the vision process.
2. A fifth component, community vision,<sup>34</sup> is added to place a stronger emphasis on the indicators of shared vision. This component encompasses the concepts of employee involvement in the planning process and buy-in to or ownership of institutional or departmental visions. Community vision is one that is adopted by staff in an organization through their desire to feel

connected to each other and the organization as well as their desire to work towards a common goal.<sup>35</sup>

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

### **Vision in LIS Literature**

Little exists in the LIS literature on the concept of vision in the planning of distance learning library services other than some descriptive articles, one of which documents the creation of a vision as part of strategic planning done by the distance learning librarians at National University.<sup>36</sup> Another article refers to the creation of a "vision team" at Regis University composed of librarians, administrators, and representatives from two colleges as well as the distance learning division. This team worked together to develop student support services for distance learning programs in conjunction with three other Colorado universities as part of a grant.<sup>37</sup> Burich<sup>38</sup> offers a checklist for initiating and leading change that includes a substantive section on creating and communicating a vision.

Much of the distance learning library literature is weighted toward practice and application<sup>39</sup> and often describes strategies that are a "result of individual institutions' creative solutions to local problems."<sup>40</sup> A common theme in this literature is the response of librarians to the rise of distance learning programs at their institutions and the resulting

demands on the library from nontraditional students. One can sometimes find in them language that hints at shared vision. In one such example, Jahnke writes,

As a director of the Learning Resources Center... I realized that all students needed to have pertinent library materials if they were to receive a quality education similar to that available on campus... I shared my concerns with my staff, and together we set out to convince administration that they need us.<sup>41</sup>

Vision as a component of leadership appears in the general LIS literature to a greater degree than in the distance learning library literature; however, the number of writings diminishes when the focus is on the concept of shared vision. Williams,<sup>42</sup> in her final column as outgoing President of the American Association of School Librarians, encourages young librarians to engage in leadership and training. She emphasizes the tie between leadership and shared vision: "Leadership is based on creating a shared vision for the organization, then on helping members learn what they need to realize the vision. Leadership focuses on the value of people, and emphasizes empowering people."

There is some literature that refers to shared vision in academic libraries. Sheldon<sup>43</sup> gives examples of shared visions among library leaders in the 1980s and writes that library

leaders possess the quality of vision to a great degree but do not tend to describe themselves as visionary. Riggs<sup>44</sup> stresses the importance of the library leader obtaining the loyalty and support of library staff before attempting to implement a vision. Studwell<sup>45</sup> discusses the importance of shared vision in building a foundation for change in libraries.

Shared vision played an important role in an organizational and philosophical shift from collection development to content management leadership at Brigham Young University in the 1990s. Librarians who selected material for the library were brought together in 1994 and asked to contribute to the development and implementation of a new organizational model for acquiring materials for the library. Fales<sup>46</sup> writes that this effort was successful due to collaborative visioning from the early planning stages.

The managers of the three college libraries in Brisbane, Australia, led a cross-campus group of staff in developing a new library after their colleges were combined in 1993.<sup>47</sup> The formation of the cross-campus groups created an opportunity for the development of a shared vision that had a number of benefits. Sullivan-Windle notes that, "As staff are actively involved from the grassroots in formulating a client-centered policy, they are keen to participate and 'own' the final decision."<sup>48</sup>

The administration at the University of Florida Health Science Center Libraries made a conscientious effort to develop and implement a new staff-driven strategic plan by involving participation from all levels of staff. The involvement of staff in this process encouraged them to buy into the development and implementation of the strategic plan.<sup>49</sup>

### **Procedures**

This study reviews planning documents for evidence of a shared vision in distance learning library services in North America, based on listings in the first edition of the *Off-Campus Library Services Directory*.<sup>50</sup> This edition identifies seventy-one libraries engaged in the provision of distance learning services prior to 1990. Of those listed, sixty-eight were based in the United States and the remaining three were located in Canada. Forty-four of these libraries continue to offer special library services to the distance learning community according to their institutional Web sites in July 2007.

Of these forty-four libraries, forty-two are based in the United States and two are located in Canada (see Table 1). Of the libraries in the United States, twenty-one are in the South, nine are in the West, nine are in the Midwest, and three are in the Northeast, according to the definition of a region as laid out by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.<sup>51</sup> Both Canadian libraries are in the western part of the country. Viewed from another



perspective, twenty-four of the libraries are at public colleges or universities and eighteen are at private colleges or universities, eleven of which are church-affiliated. In addition one library serves the distance learners at a consortium of four public colleges in Oklahoma, and one is the library at the Open University of Canada. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching<sup>52</sup> classifies two of the institutions as associate's degree-granting, three as bachelor's-granting, twenty-four as master's-granting and thirteen as doctoral/research universities. The Canadian universities and the Oklahoma consortium do not have Carnegie classifications. The *Off-Campus Library Services Directory* lists that twenty-three libraries started their distance services in the 1980s, thirteen in the 1970s, four in the 1960s, one in the 1950s, and one in the 1940s; two did not specify the year they began such services.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

## **Methodology**

In fall 2007, the investigator contacted librarians at the forty-four libraries and requested copies of relevant archival and current planning documents, which include vision and mission statements, goals and strategic planning documents and proposals, white papers, and justifications for implementing a distance learning library service. Content analysis, which is a

systematic investigation of a document for the appearance of words, phrases, and concepts, was used to search for particular themes and people involved in the planning process in the documents. That search relied on the components of shared vision from the visionary leader model (see Figure 1) combined with keywords descriptive of each (see Table 2), as well as evidence of the people who were involved in planning.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Through independent searches of relevant indices and dictionaries, two reference librarians from the investigator's home institution examined and certified as all-inclusive the list of keywords that are descriptive of the five components of the visionary leader model. Further, doctoral student colleagues also reviewed the list of keywords and their application to each of the visionary leader model components. Additionally, they were also given a portion of one document from one of the forty-four libraries and asked to code it. Several small inconsistencies between the coding instrument and the instructions were discovered and rectified. Two retired colleagues were given three documents and asked to code them. The results were compared with each other and to a third set coded by the investigator. The results were nearly identical, thus ensuring intercoder reliability. In addition, the

investigator coded the same content more than once, achieving similar results, in order to ensure stability.

### **Findings**

Librarians at thirty-four of the forty-four libraries responded to requests for information, for a response rate of 77.3 percent. Of those librarians who answered, twenty-five sent documents and the remaining nine reported that they had no information to send. The twenty-five libraries shared 164 documents with the researcher. In addition, one library administrator, who had founded her institution's distance learning library services, shared an oral history. Five of the documents were duplicates of others sent and were discarded. The investigator analyzed the content of the 160 remaining documents, including the transcript of the oral history. The 160 documents consist of four vision statements, eleven sets of goals, eleven mission statements, thirteen proposals, white papers or justifications, twenty-five strategic planning documents, and ninety-six other (library information guides for distance learners, memos, reports to administration, a small number of plans for distance learning units, and the transcript of the oral history).

### **Shared Vision**

The concept of strategic vision was the most common of the components appearing in the documents (see Table 3). Personal

vision is the next most frequent, followed by organizational vision, future vision, and community vision. Thirty-four of the documents contained none of the component terms. These, for the most part, were guides to the service for patrons or reports to administration. Forty-five of the documents contained one of the components, thirty-four had two, twenty-five included three components, fourteen contained four and seven documents had all five.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Strategic vision, the most commonly occurring component, sheds the least light on evidence of shared vision in any of the twenty-five distance learning library services that supplied documents. The terms associated with this component, such as mission, vision, goals and objectives, are embedded in many of the types of documents shared. The vision, mission, and goals statements tend to be general. They include such concepts as supporting the institutional mission, increasing the collections, offering more instruction, and improving services through technology. There is, however, one thread that repeats continuously in many of these documents, that is the goal of convincing the others in the institution who are developing distance learning programs to include the librarians in the planning process.

Organizational vision and future vision appear the next most frequently. They both occur in the same documents more often than not and almost the same number of times in all of the documents. While the terms that describe organizational vision relate to cooperation and collaboration, those that point to future vision include planning, innovation, and implementation. Frequently a document mentions the need for the library to collaborate or participate with distance learning staff, faculty, and other libraries in order to develop, improve, design, or plan library services for the distance learner.

The component of personal vision occurs less frequently than the three already discussed. It generally points to workforce planning or training of librarians or support staff to begin or supplement library services for distance learners. Archival documents often either describe a new librarian position created to serve distance learners or advocate for the hiring of such. In addition, several documents mention the need for training for library staff to work with the technology needed to provide services to the distance learning users.

In seven of the eight documents in which the component of community vision occurs, it is in combination with the other four components. In the eighth, only two of the other components are present. The term *shared vision* does not occur in any document related to a library service although it does appear in

an academic plan for an institutional distance learning program. In addition, a file copy of minutes of a planning meeting and a draft letter to students from the library administrator at another institution contains the term *shared goals*. In the context of the draft letter, the investigator inferred that the author was referring to a shared vision of a proposed distance learning library service among librarians at a main library and branch locations as well as students taking courses at the branch facility.

### **Shaping the Vision**

Academic librarians make up the largest group of people evident in these documents, and library administrators are the second largest (see Table 3). It is important to note that the distinction between librarian and library administrator was not always apparent, so the investigator assigned a member of library staff to the librarian category unless some designation of administrative office was evident.

Other groups of people who are mentioned in the documents are, in order of descending frequency, faculty, distance-learning staff, administrators outside the library, information technology staff, and other. The *other* category includes librarians from other institutions, such as public libraries, community colleges, and military bases with whom the academic

librarians collaborated on services. Student involvement is also counted in this category.

Twenty-four of the documents contained references to people in at least four of the groups. Most of those documents also had three or more of the components. The most common group combination consists of librarians, library administrators, distance learning staff, and faculty teaching in the distance learning programs.

Librarians, who constitute the largest group of people appearing in any of the documents, are often the only group mentioned in certain types of documents. This is especially true for library guides and goals documents. However, in many of the documents librarians express a desire to collaborate with faculty and distance learning staff in order to engage in the planning of distance learning programs, or they report on collaboration with other types of libraries to provide effective services to distance learners.

By far, library administrators shaped the foundation of the distance learning library services and engaged others in the process. In each of the seven documents that contain all five of the components, a library director or other administrator is present and appears to be the guiding hand behind the development of the library service as well as the person who reaches out to other members of the organization, such as the

distance learning division or the faculty, to collaborate. In particular, two of the institutions that provided a variety of documents rich in detail that included four or five of the components frequently are authored by or refer to the same library administrator at each institution. In addition, several documents which focused on the distance learning units rather than libraries reveal that some distance learning administrators were aware of the importance of developing specialized library services to their distance learners and included librarians in the planning of such services.

#### **Geographic Location and Institution Type**

The seven documents that contain all five components are from seven different libraries. Two are from the Northeast region, one each is from the Midwest and the West, and the remaining three are from the South. Three are classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2007) as master's-granting, two as doctoral/research, and one each as bachelor's-granting and associate's-granting. Four of the institutions are public and three are private. Two of the privates are church-affiliated and one of the public institutions is a community college.

One other item worth noting is that seven of the fourteen documents that list four of the five components are from two of the libraries that also supplied documents containing all five



components. The remaining seven documents that contain four of the components are from four different institutions. Three of these are in the South, one in the West and the other in Canada. Three are public and the two that are private are church-affiliated. Two of the U.S. institutions are classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching<sup>53</sup> as master's-granting and two as bachelor's-granting.

### **Discussion**

The fact that so small a number of documents contains the five components of the visionary leader model does not necessarily indicate the absence of shared vision in most of the participating distance learning library services. The surviving archival documents, or the current ones that librarians found to share, tend to be information guides for students or departmental progress reports. Librarians who had no information to send reported that if any such documents existed, they were most likely part of personal files and discarded when the founding librarians left.

From the many rich documents that were provided, there is clearly evidence of shared vision. The premise of the visionary leader model, as applied here, is that the concept of shared vision is present in distance learning library services which supplied documents that contain the five components of the model, organizational, future, personal, strategic, and

community vision. Since 7 of the 160 documents examined include them, one could conclude that this study has identified distance learning library services in which shared visions may have guided the planning and delivery of distance learning library services. In addition, since library administrators appear to play key roles in the planning as reported in those seven documents, the next assumption may be that library administrators were the primary shapers of such shared visions. Finally, since those seven documents come from libraries in each of the regions and from several institution types, the last conclusion could be that geography and institution type have no bearing on the development of such shared visions according to the visionary leader model.

One could also say that evidence of shared vision exists in these documents beyond the strict parameters of the model. Fourteen documents from six libraries contain four of the five components. The only one missing is community vision. Seven of these documents originated from two of the libraries that also supplied those containing the five components. Both clearly show evidence of shared vision as defined by the visionary leader model. The seven documents from these two institutions, which exhibit four of the components as well as at least four of the groups of people, may serve to strengthen the claim to shared

vision in these libraries by demonstrating that the concepts and collaboration did not simply occur accidentally in one document.

Of the remaining seven documents that contain four of the components, three are annual reports, three are strategic plans, and the seventh is a vision statement. Since these documents are in the nature of progress reports for the most part, one could assume that it would not be necessary to use terms that point to the community vision component, such as buy-in or ownership, although the concept of shared vision might exist in an organization where several groups are working together and exhibiting the other four components. Therefore, the fifth component of the visionary leader model, community vision, may not need to be evident in a document in order for the organization that supplied it to be guided by shared vision. The original model that serves as the basis for the visionary leader model did not list this fifth component but did assume its presence (Manasse 1985, 151). Perhaps it is not a necessary component of the model. Therefore, based on the results of this investigation, a revised model without the component of community vision might be more accurate (see Figure 2).

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

A final category of documents that have some interesting aspects are those that contain terms related to the concepts of organizational vision, personal vision, and sometimes strategic

vision, as well as evidence of collaboration on the part of the distance learning librarian with either distance learning staff, teaching faculty, or librarians from another institution. Most of these documents are written by the librarian tasked with supporting distance learners. The elements of strategic vision found in them are most often goals and objectives for implementing or improving services as well as annual reports chronicling achievements towards such goals. In them, one commonly finds references to the need for collaboration or partnerships (organizational vision) with faculty and other libraries in order to create or enhance (future vision) services to distance learners. In one example, individual distance learning librarians list personal goals (strategic vision) that include enhancing communication with the distance learning program centers and familiarizing themselves with syllabi in order to collaborate with faculty to tailor library services to instruction. This drive to be included in cooperative planning may have influenced the development of services at the point of delivery.

There are few, if any, references to buy-in (community vision) or workforce development (future vision) in this category of documents. This might be explained by the fact that frontline librarians do not have the authority to lead groups in developing a formal shared vision or in the hiring process.

However, they do have the power to form partnerships in the interest of developing the services for distance learners. By proactively engaging in these activities, it could be said that they are exhibiting a form of visionary leadership that guides development and planning at the level of direct service to the user. This *frontline visionary leadership* may well be as significant as the larger, more systemic visionary leadership exhibited by library administrators through the planning documents that contained at least four of the components of the visionary leader model. Frontline visionary leadership is indicated by the presence of the following three elements:

1. Organizational vision, which signifies partnerships, collaboration and cooperation;
2. Future vision, which indicates planning, improving, implementing, and enhancing;
3. At least one group of people other than librarians from the institution, such as faculty, distance-learning staff, or public librarians, with whom the librarians discuss forming collaborations.

Finally, there appears to be little evidence that the shared visions discovered in this study originated in a particular geographical region or a particular type of library. This may be due to the fact that geography and institution type make little difference or due to the fact that the sample size

was relatively small. The first edition of the *Off-Campus Library Services Directory*, which is the source of the list of libraries in Table 1, was compiled from surveys answered by distance learning librarians who had attended one conference and so may not be generalizable. In addition, many of the distance learning library services did not have archival documents at all or any documents that truly fit the parameters of this study.

### **Conclusion**

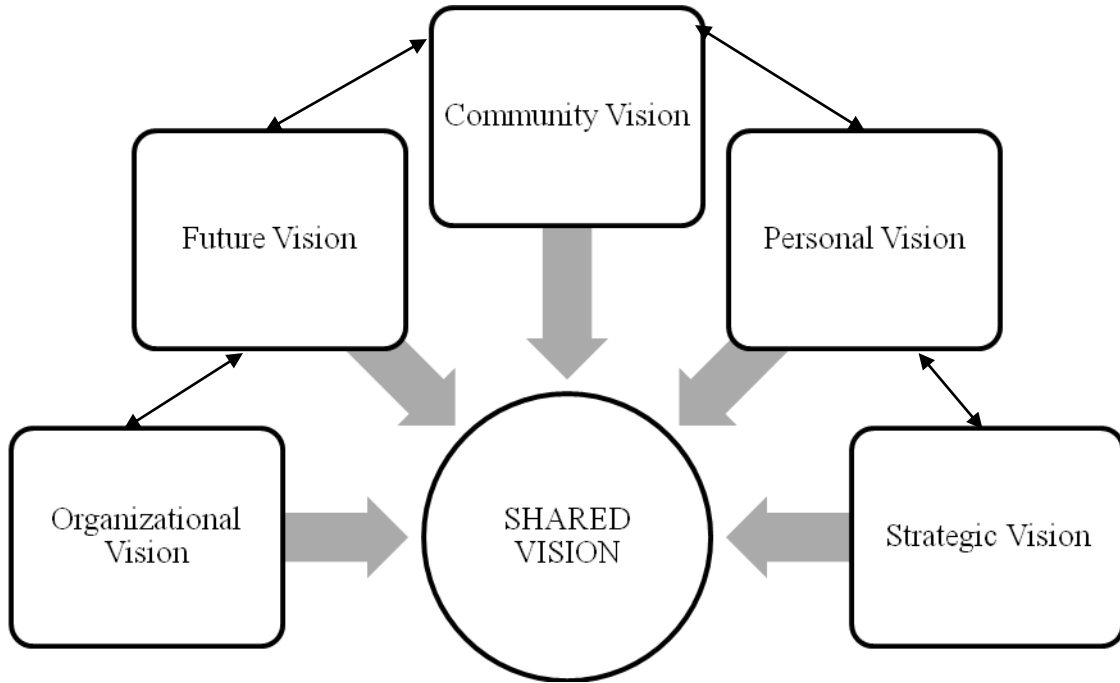
The adapted visionary leader model (figure 2) indicates that shared visions guide the development of distance learning library services. The documents included in this study reveal that this shared vision is inspired by library administrators at the organizational level and by frontline librarians at the level of direct service. The adapted visionary leader model, the components of which are found in several of the documents, demonstrates leadership by librarians who have a vision of a possible and desirable future state of library services for distance learners, even when they have no formal leadership or managerial responsibilities. By inspiring others to share this vision of a library for off-campus learners, they succeeded in recreating academic library services.

Shared vision is a component of leadership styles that foster collaboration and value the opinions of employees at every level of the organization, such as transformational

leadership, team leadership, and servant leadership. When distance learning librarians and administrators inspire groups consisting of librarians, faculty, distance learning staff, and others, to share in their vision of the future, they are able to lead a vital transformation of traditional library services in order to develop equivalent services for new groups of learners. This shared vision clarifies the direction for change, motivates the group to move together in the right direction, and helps to coordinate the actions of the group in order to achieve the new future.

Understanding the role that the inspiration of a shared vision has played in guiding the leadership of innovative distance learning library services may be of benefit to the library profession as a whole in this era of changing technology, funding, and priorities in higher education. Perhaps this model of shared vision can guide librarians who wish to take a stronger lead in the information world, whether or not they have formal and sole authority.

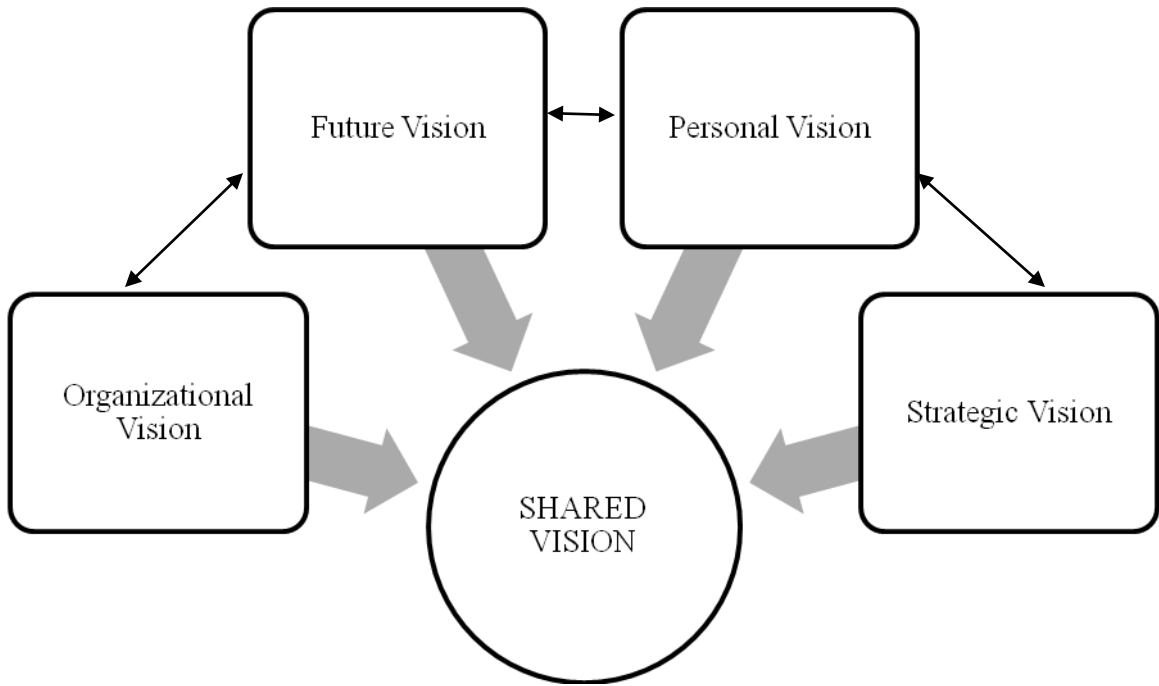
**Figure 1: Visionary Leader Model**



(Adapted from Manasse, 1985, p. 165).



**Figure 2: Visionary Leader Model (Adapted)**



**Table 1: Distance Learning Library Services**

<b>Name of Library</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Library Control</b>	<b>Carnegie Class<sup>54</sup></b>
Ardmore Higher Education Center	1982	West	Consortium	
Baker University	1989	Midwest	Private.	Bac/A&S
Barry University	1978	South	Church	DRU
Boise State University	1986	West	Public	Master's L
Cardinal Stritch College	1982	Midwest	Church	Master's L
Central Michigan University	1974	Midwest	Public	DRU
Community College of Vermont	1985	Northeast	Public	Assoc/Pub-R-L
DePaul University	1985	Midwest	Church	DRU
East Tennessee State University	1969	South	Public	DRU
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	1982	South	Private	Master's L
George Washington University	1965	South	Private	RU/H
Georgia College	1982	South	Public	Master's L
Gonzaga University	1988	West	Church	Master's L
Loma Linda University	1976	West	Church	Spec/Med
Mary Baldwin College	1983	South	Private	Master's S
Marymount University	N/A	South	Church	Master's L
Maysville Community College	1988	South	Public	Assoc/Pub-R-M
Mercer University	1987	South	Church	Master's L
Morehead State University	1978	South	Public	Master's L
National – Louis University	1979	Midwest	Private	Master's L
National University	1980	West	Private	Master's L
North Carolina Wesleyan College	1985	South	Church	Bac/Diverse
Northwestern State University	N/A	South	Public	Master's L
Saint Leo College – Florida	1974	South	Church	Master's M
Southwest Baptist University	1989	Midwest	Church	Master's L
Spring Arbor College	1983	Midwest	Church	Master's L
Troy State University – Florida Region	1978	South	Public	Master's L
University of Alabama	1978	South	Public	RU/H
University of Alaska	1980	West	Public	RU/H
University of Central Florida	1968	South	Public	RU/H
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	1940	Midwest	Public	RU/VH
University of Maine at Augusta	1989	Northeast	Public	Bac/Assoc
University of Maryland University College	1970's	South	Public	Master's L
University of Redlands	1985	West	Private	Master's L
University of Rhode Island	1967	Northeast	Public	RU/H
University of South Alabama	1985	South	Public	Master's L
University of Southern Mississippi	1971	South	Public	RU/H
University of Wyoming	1983	West	Public	RU/H
Valdosta State College	1970	South	Public	Master's L
Western Kentucky University	1987	South	Public	Master's L
Western Michigan University	1950	Midwest	Public	RU/H
Western Washington University	1970's	West	Public	Master's L
Athabasca University	1974	Canada	Open University	
University of Victoria	1980	Canada	Public	

**Table 2: Visionary Leader Model Component Keywords**

Organizational Vision	Cooperation, collaboration, collaborative, joint, participative, participatory, partnership, alliance, share
Future Vision	Future, innovation, revision, planning, planner, develop, improve, increase, enhance, implement, creation, design, proactive
Personal Vision	Strengths, challenges, workforce planning, hiring, recruiting, training
Strategic Vision	Vision, mission, goals, objectives, priorities, policies, strategic planning
Community Vision	Shared vision, staff involvement, own, ownership, buy-in, department-wide support

**Table 3: Occurrence of Components and Groups in Documents**

<b>Components</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Strategic Vision	84	Librarians	127
Personal Vision	76	Library Administrators	50
Organizational Vision	75	Faculty	42
Future Vision	39	Distance Learning Staff	39
Community Vision	8	Administrators (Institutional)	23
		Information Technology Staff	18
		Other	14

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, *Adult Education Participation in 2004-2005* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2006), available at [http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/adulted/tables/table\\_16.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/adulted/tables/table_16.asp) (accessed May 14, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Distance learning is a term that is used in some contexts to describe courses and programs conducted in an online format only. For this study, the term distance learning encompasses all higher-education instruction that takes place away from the traditional campus classroom setting, regardless of format.

<sup>3</sup> Barry W. Birnbaum, *Foundations and Practices in the Use of Distance Education* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>5</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, *Adult Education Participation*.

<sup>6</sup> Sheila Latham, "Sixty Years of Research on Off-Campus Library Services," in *The Fifth Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings*, ed. Carol J. Jacob (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 1991), 155-64.

<sup>7</sup> American Library Association, "Guidelines for Library Services to Extension Students," *ALA Bulletin* 61 (June 1967): 50-53.

<sup>8</sup> ACRL Distance Learning Section Guidelines Committee, "Standards for Distance Learning Library Services," *College and Research Libraries News* 69, no. 9 (2008): 558-69.

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Library Association, *Guidelines for Library Support of Distance and Distributed Learning in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 2000), available at [http://www.cla.ca/Content/NavigationMenu/Resources/PositionStatements/Guidelines\\_for\\_Libra.htm](http://www.cla.ca/Content/NavigationMenu/Resources/PositionStatements/Guidelines_for_Libra.htm) (accessed October 9, 2008).

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<sup>10</sup> Lois C. Gilmer, "Accreditation of Off-Campus Library Services: Comparative Study of the Regional Accreditation Agencies," in *The Seventh Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings*, ed. Carol J. Jacob (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 1995), 101-10.

<sup>11</sup> ACRL Distance Learning Section, *DLS Manual: History*, available at <http://caspien.switchinc.org/~distlearn/manual/hist.html> (accessed October 8, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Barton M. Lessin, "Foreword," in *The Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings*, ed. idem (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 1983), 2.

<sup>13</sup> Anne Marie Casey and Marissa R. Cachero, *Off-Campus Library Services Directory*, 3rd ed. (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> Sue P. Forrest, "Accent on Access: The Delivery of Library Services at the West Virginia Graduate School," in *Off-Campus Library Services*, ed. Lessin, 164-68.

<sup>15</sup> Jeneane Johanningmeier, "Video One," in *ibid.*, 59-64.

<sup>16</sup> Janice L. Peyton, "Evergreen Valley College Bibliographic Instruction at Off-Campus Sites," in *ibid.*, 174-81.

<sup>17</sup> Karen E. Jagers, "Plugging Library Services into Interactive Instructional Television (IITV) Classes at Northern Arizona University," in *Seventh Off-Campus Library Services Conference*, ed. Jacob, 197-203.

<sup>18</sup> Nathan D. Tinnin, Jonathan R. Buckstead, and Kyle Richardson, "Remote Reference by Microcomputer: Setup and Installation at Austin Community College," in *The Eighth Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings*, ed. Maryhelen Jones and P. Steven Thomas (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 1998), 299-312.

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<sup>19</sup> Priscilla Coulter and Lani Draper, "Blogging It into Them: Weblogs in Information Literacy Instruction," *Journal of Library Administration* 45, nos. 1-2 (2006): 101-15.

<sup>20</sup> Dana McFarland and Jessica Mussell, "Designing Library Services for the PDA," in *ibid.*, 301-14.

<sup>21</sup> Mona Florea, "Using WebCT, Wiki Spaces, and ePortfolios for Teaching and Building Information Literacy Skills," in *The Thirteenth Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings*, ed. Stephanie M. Mathson and Julie A. Garrison (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 2008), 115-28.

<sup>22</sup> Jeneane Johanningmeier, "Promotion and Purpose: Marketing the Off-Campus Library Program," in *Off-Campus Library Services*, ed. Lessin, 96-101; Linda L. Lillard, "Marketing Research Relationships to Promote Online Student Success," *Journal of Library Administration* 45, nos. 1-2 (2006): 267-77.

<sup>23</sup> Warren G. Bennis and Burt Nanus, *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985).

<sup>24</sup> James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

<sup>25</sup> John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 68-69.

<sup>26</sup> Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, rev. ed. (New York: Doubleday, 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Kouzes and Posner, *Leadership Challenge*.

<sup>28</sup> Senge, *Fifth Discipline*.

<sup>29</sup> A. Lorri Manasse, "Vision and Leadership: Paying Attention to Intention," *Peabody Journal of Education* 63, no. 1 (1985): 150-73, 151 (quotation).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>34</sup> This component includes the concepts that are often used to describe shared vision; however, the use of that phrase for the component as well as for the broad topic of this study might be confusing. Therefore, community vision is substituted for clarity.

<sup>35</sup> Senge, *Fifth Discipline*.

<sup>36</sup> Anne Marie Secord, Robin Lockerby, and Laura Roach, "Strategic Planning for Distance Learning Services," *Journal of Library Administration* 41, nos. 3-4 (2004): 407-11.

<sup>37</sup> Tom Riedel, "Ahead of the Game: Using Communications Software and Push Technology to Raise Student Awareness of Library Resources," in *ibid.*, 375-90.

<sup>38</sup> Nancy J. Burich, "Providing Leadership for Change in Distance Learning," *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning* 1, no. 2 (2004): 31-42.

<sup>39</sup> Alexander Slade and Marie Kascus, "An International Comparison of Library Services for Distance Learning," in *Eighth Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings*, ed. Jones and Thomas, 255-72.

<sup>40</sup> Marie Kascus and William Aguilar, "Providing Library Support to Off-Campus Programs," *College and Research Libraries* 49, no. 1 (1988): 29-37, 35 (quotation).

<sup>41</sup> Maude W. Jahnke, "Plans and Problems in Extending Library Services to Off-Site Locations," in *Off-Campus Library Services*, ed. Lessin, 38-42, 40 (quotation).

<sup>42</sup> J. Linda Williams, "Leadership: Shaping the Future of the Profession," *Knowledge Quest* 34, no. 5 (2006): 4-6, 4 (quotation).

<sup>43</sup> Brooke E. Sheldon, *Leaders in Libraries: Styles and Strategies for Success* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1991).



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<sup>44</sup> Donald E. Riggs, "Visionary Leadership," in *Leadership and Academic Libraries*, ed. Terrence F. Mech and Gerard B. McCabe (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 55-62.

<sup>45</sup> Roberta F. Studwell, "The Leader as Transformer," in *Leadership Roles for Librarians*, ed. Herbert E. Cihak and Joan S. Howland (Buffalo, NY: William S. Hein, 2002), 179-98.

<sup>46</sup> Susan L. Fales, "Content Management for the 21st Century: The Leaders' Role," *Journal of Library Administration* 28, no. 2 (1999): 41-56.

<sup>47</sup> Barbara Sullivan-Windle, "Cross-Campus Groups Lead the Development of Quality Client-focused Services at the Southbank Institute of TAFE Library," *Australian Academic and Research Libraries* 26, no. 3 (1995): 171-74.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>49</sup> Jennifer J. Kuntz et al., "Staff-Driven Strategic Planning: Learning from the Past, Embracing the Future," *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 91, no. 1 (2003): 79-83.

<sup>50</sup> Gloria Lebowitz and Kim E. Schultz, comp., *Off-Campus Library Services Directory* (Mt. Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 1990).

<sup>51</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Census Bureau Regions and Divisions with State FIPS Codes*, available at [http://www.census.gov/geo/www/us\\_regdiv.pdf](http://www.census.gov/geo/www/us_regdiv.pdf) (accessed October 17, 2008).

<sup>52</sup> The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Classifications: Lookup and Listings*, available at <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/index.asp?key=782> (accessed October 17, 2008).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Assoc/Pub-R-M = Associate's-Public Rural-serving Medium; Assoc/Pub-R-L = Associate's-Public Rural-serving Large; Bac/A&S = Baccalaureate Colleges-Arts & Sciences; Bac/Assoc = Baccalaureate/Associate's Colleges; Bac/Diverse =

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Baccalaureate Colleges—Diverse Fields; DRU = Doctoral/Research Universities;  
Master's L = Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs); Master's M  
= Master's Colleges and Universities (medium programs); Master's S = Master's  
Colleges and Universities (small programs); RU/H = Research Universities  
(high research activity); RU/VH = Research Universities (very high research  
activity); Spec/Med = Medical schools and medical centers.