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2014 IATUL Proceedings

Jun 5th, 12:00 AM

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Erin L. Ellis
University of Kansas Main Campus, elliser@iu.edu

Brian Rosenblum
University of Kansas Main Campus

John Stratton
University of Kansas Main Campus

Kathleen Ames-Stratton
University of Kansas Main Campus

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Erin L. Ellis
Brian Rosenblum
John Stratton
Kathleen Ames-Stratton
University of Kansas, United States
Author Contact: eellis@ku.edu

Abstract:
Seeking to more effectively respond to campus initiatives and user expectations, the University of Kansas (KU) Libraries underwent a process of significant organizational review and transformation. Guided by a purposeful, open process, a diverse and representative group was elected to serve on the Libraries Organizational Review Team (ORT) to assess the existing organizational structure, determine major functions and cross-functional areas therein, and identify new and vital activities and positions essential for achieving our strategic priorities. Recognizing, too, the trends and challenges occurring within higher education and academic libraries, ORT sought to redefine professional roles and functions to strategically position the Libraries for the future.

Utilizing peer institutional research, library literature and reports, and focus groups with each library unit, the team ultimately recommended a significant overhaul of the Libraries' organizational structure. Broadly, the recommendation was for an adaptive and agile structure that is more responsive to university priorities, technological developments, and resource constraints. Specifically, ORT recommended a structure driven by contemporary user expectations and supportive of new modes of scholarly communication, new pedagogical methods, and data management. The recommended organizational design is fluid and user-focused with an emphasis on integrating into the academic life of scholars and students.

This paper will report on the purposeful 'grassroots' approach undertaken by the team and its creative processes of organizational review. Additionally, the authors will present ORT's final recommendations, as well as the rationale thereof. Finally, the authors will illustrate the new organizational model and analyze the efficacy and challenges of the reorganization.

Keywords: academic libraries, reorganization, organizational review, organizational transformation, organizational model, organization structure

Introduction

Like all academic libraries, the University of Kansas (KU) Libraries finds itself in an ongoing effort to understand the evolving needs of scholars, students, and teachers in an academic environment that is undergoing rapid change, and to use its professional expertise to both adapt to and influence developments in that environment. The emergence of digital technologies and global information networks is profoundly transforming the nature of teaching, learning, research, and publishing within higher education and the academic community. Some of the important developments of recent years include: the emergence of new modes of publishing and scholarly communication, including open access and Internet-based publishing; the growing importance of data management and curation as part of the research process; the emergence of digital humanities and its associated scholarly products, tools and methodologies; the development of globally-networked research communities; and new pedagogical methods, including flipped classrooms, online and distance learning, experiential and project-based learning, and student-centered research (No Brief Candle, 2008; New Roles for New Times, 2013).

Libraries are situated at the nexus of these activities, and they have responded to these developments by expanding existing roles or taking on new roles needed to support research and learning in this evolving landscape. These new (or newly expanded) roles include:
- providing greater stewardship of (and promoting visibility and access to) locally-produced scholarship by developing and managing institutional repositories, launching digital publishing programs for monographs and journals, supporting open access policies and promoting user-friendly rights practices;
- working with researchers throughout the entire research lifecycle, including advising on rights issues, helping create and implement data management plans, and providing guidance on digital research tools and methodologies; and
- engaging more deeply in curriculum development efforts, implementing new kinds of instruction and delivery mechanisms to support new pedagogical techniques.

While these roles align well with the general mission and objectives of academic libraries, implementing them still presents a number of practical challenges. Because some of these roles are new, there are not always established best practices or organizational models to follow in developing new services or resources. Additionally, many of these roles entail acquiring new skills or knowledge, or require collaboration across traditionally defined library units that are not used to or well-positioned to work closely together. Add to this the astonishing speed with which our scholarly communication environment is changing; the stagnant or declining budget situations of most academic libraries; and the need to continue to support core library activities in the areas of collections, instruction, preservation, and access; and it becomes even more evident why this is a challenging time for libraries. These challenges are putting stresses on library organizational structures that are typically constructed around well-defined, standardized functions, and not designed for rapid change, reconfiguration, or easy adoption of new roles.

Over the past decade, KU Libraries has been engaged in a number of initiatives in these new areas, with periodic efforts to create new job descriptions and realign units. In general, this has been done in a strategic, but small-scale, incremental fashion, and we have faced many of those challenges noted above. However, in the summer of 2012 the Libraries had a rare opportunity to rethink the entire library organization--from the bottom up and from the top down—with the formation of the Libraries' Organizational Review Team (ORT). This paper will describe the formation of ORT, the campus-level initiatives happening at the University of Kansas which led to its formation, and the processes and methods that ORT used to gather and analyze data and make recommendations. We will discuss some of the specific recommendations ORT made, but we will primarily focus on the strategies and processes used by the team.

Changes Across KU
In April 2011, the University hired a consulting firm (Huron) to conduct an "intensive review of how we do business at KU." The review became collectively known as *Changing for Excellence* (Changing for Excellence: Being good stewards of scare resources, http://www.chancellor.ku.edu/changing-excellence**)** and the challenge to KU was to ensure that "we devote every dollar possible to teaching, discovery and public service," which meant the university had to "transform the way we operate."

The Huron review was undertaken to coincide purposefully with the University's strategic planning efforts. The plan, *Bold Aspirations 2012-2017* describes how resources gleaned in part by the Huron review will be used to advance priorities. Thus, *Changing for Excellence*, focusing on efficiencies, and *Bold Aspirations*, advancing strategic priorities for the next few years, are inexorably linked together. *Bold Aspirations* contains several goals, but those that impact the KU Libraries the most are these:
- Goal 1: Strengthen recruitment, teaching, and mentoring to prepare undergraduate (focus on students);
- Goal 3: Driving Discovery and Innovation (focus on research);
- Goal 4: Engaging Scholarship for Public Impact (serving Kansas).

These particular goals were seen as important to aligning and advancing the mission of the Libraries within the context of the wider institutional mission. Subsequently, the Libraries' strategic planning efforts, and our work toward reforming the organizational structure within the Libraries, were designed to dovetail with these goals.

Changes within the KU Libraries
Within this larger institutional framework, KU Libraries created a strategic plan that places an enhanced focus on users. Entitled *KU Libraries S*trategic Directions, 2012-2017, the plan also states several factors influencing the future of research libraries, including "transformations in technology, increased focus on outcome-based educational initiatives, budgetary issues caused by rising costs and reduced revenues, and the shifting processes of research and scholarly communication." These factors demand that research libraries "allow for agility to be responsive to emerging needs" (KU Libraries, Strategic Directions, 2012-2017). In essence, the Libraries began to consider ways to address internal needs and efficiencies in line with campus-wide strategic and organizational initiatives, and to ensure the organization was poised to address larger changes in scholarly research, teaching, and librarianship practices.
Within the Libraries strategic plan, two specific goals are designed to focus efforts on users:
- Goal 1: Integrate information literacy, research skills and information resources into the curriculum to enhance critical thinking, academic success and lifelong learning.
- Goal 2: Advance scholarship through proactive engagement in research and scholarly communication.

These specific strategic goals intersect with *Bold Aspirations* by focusing the Libraries on active and purposeful integration into teaching and learning activities, scholarship and research efforts, and funding and support of faculty research as broadly as possible.

Organizational Review Team (ORT)
While the University was focused on developing an institutional strategic plan, the KU Libraries engaged the service of two consultants for an internal study of the libraries and its work within the wider university environment. Many of the consultants' observations directly influenced the creation of the Libraries Organizational Review Team (ORT). For example, their recommendations called upon the Libraries to evaluate its current structure and determine whether it needed "refinement, clarification, or alignment in the context of University emergent priorities and directions" (Lougee and Luce, 2011). The consultants' report noted they "perceived organizational silos challenging communication and creating impediments for collaboration across divisions of the libraries." These "silos inhibit the organizational system of the KU Libraries to fully leverage all its human knowledge expertise." The consultants recommended the Libraries "build cross-cutting work systems focused on end-to-end processes that deliver valued output for [their] customers." While the consultants' report spoke to a host of other pressing issues, it was clear from their perspective that the organization needed to meaningfully assess itself in terms of structure, leadership, and collaboration.

In summer 2012, the Dean of Libraries convened ORT. The Dean noted that three driving forces would inform ORT's work: *Bold Aspirations*, *Changing for Excellence,* and our users. ORT was also to be mindful of the libraries' own strategic plan. Interested in an open and representative approach to this organizational review, the Dean initiated a nomination process by which all library faculty and staff could express interest in election to ORT.   This team was to be comprised of those who would represent ideas from across the spectrum of the organization. No external consultants were hired to conduct this work, nor was the work driven exclusively by the Libraries administration. Instead, ORT was a kind of "bottom-up" effort, one purposefully designed to include all levels of staff working together to maximize the knowledge and expertise of the individual members of the team. Membership of the team was defined to include the Libraries' Human Resources (HR) Director, and nine library faculty and staff members: three University Support Staff, three Unclassified Professional Staff and three faculty members. All members of the library organization, no matter their position, were free to vote for three members from each rank.

Getting Started and Project Structure

Following the election, ORT commenced its work with a nine-month deadline. Leadership of ORT took the shape of a co-chair model between the HR Director and a libraries faculty member. In addition to the ten official members, a Learning and Development Manager from University Human Resources joined the group in the fall as an internal consultant on process matters. This individual, a trained facilitator, had extensive experience with KU Libraries staff and was familiar with the nature of library work and library culture. Her experience in conducting organizational studies and group facilitation was instrumental in developing ORT processes for gathering and sorting data. The Libraries Dean also attended many ORT meetings as her schedule permitted. Charges to the team were as follows:

- Assess the current organizational structure
- Identify existing major functions and cross-function areas therein
- Identify new and vital positions or functional areas as required by the strategic plan
- Make recommendations to the dean

In order to meet the charge to "assess the current organizational structure," ORT began by conducting a loosely structured SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of the libraries' structure and processes. The importance of transparency became apparent quickly, and to that end, ORT created a website to document resources, methodology, and feedback. A confidential e-mail account was also established and circulated throughout the Libraries to provide an avenue for staff who wanted to share thoughts exclusively with ORT members. In short, ORT sought a process that was equitable, accessible, and inclusive of all library staff.

ORT Processes and Activities

As noted above, the organizational restructuring effort within the Libraries was designed to be one that emanated "from the ground up" and as inclusive of all staff as possible. The election of ORT members from all levels of the library made this a unique approach to begin with. In addition, most of the process-related tools developed by ORT were created and applied so that a majority of Libraries staff had an opportunity to participate in the process. Further, the processes used by ORT to gather data allowed for a wide and deep amount of information to be collected. For example, ORT members, guided by the internal facilitator, designed focus groups and trained volunteer facilitators in a process that ensured a consistent method of information gathering. A team of three people from ORT led each focus group that included a lead facilitator, a supporting facilitator, and a scribe—all of whom were familiar with the tools and processes necessary to conduct the session.

In order to best manage the amount of information that would be generated by its activities, the team decided to utilize an "Affinity Diagram" to manage the information collected. Affinity Diagrams are data analysis tools frequently employed in organizational development initiatives. This process was used to generate, organize, and consolidate information during and after each focus group session. Given the sheer size and complexity of ORT's charge, this was quite useful in focusing members on the essential elements of the charge and built consensus within the team.

To meet the charges of "identify existing major functions and cross-functional areas therein" and "identify new and vital positions or functional areas required by the strategic plan," ORT conducted four major data gathering exercises with KU Libraries staff.

1. Inventories (functional responsibilities of each existing unit)

ORT requested that each unit/department fill out a standardized inventory form listing each area's major activities, the "flow" of those activities through the unit (origin and destination), whether or not the activity was completely internally, and the users served as a result. In all, 26 inventories were collected.

2. Focus groups

Over 20 focus groups were conducted with departments or unit/work groups, affording every staff member an opportunity to attend. Facilitators led participants through several set questions during the sessions. We also asked each unit about processes that needed to continue unabated within the organization, but did not specifically relate to the strategic plan. Where possible, participants were asked to match all of their major activities to goals and/or strategies of the Libraries strategic plan.

3. A "Design your Own Organizational Chart" event
In November 2012, the Libraries Assessment Council assisted ORT by organizing a series of events inviting staff to submit their own organizational charts in any way they deemed appropriate (e.g., a traditional organizational chart, a diagram, or a narrative format).

4. Survey of supervisors
ORT e-mailed supervisors a survey asking questions about trends rather than specific unit functions. This strategy was followed to seek a clearer sense of current trends that might impact future activities of operational units.

Analysis of Activities
After the data was collected, ORT began the task of analysis to find common themes and to note outliers. Each activity's data was then compared to the Libraries Strategic Plan to see if/where it most likely fit as the organization moved forward.   ORT considered each of these activities as work progressed:

> **Inventories**: ORT analyzed data listed in the inventories, grouping each function item into one of 18 major function categories. As with focus group notes, the major functions were mapped to the strategic plan in an effort to cross-check and be as comprehensive as possible.

> **Focus group data**: Focus group responses to questions were mapped to the specific goals and more granular strategies of the Libraries Strategic Plan. ORT members engaged in numerous discussions related to this data and much of it resulted in specific recommendations provided in the final report.

> **"Design Your Own Organizational Chart"** Submissions were compiled and managed by the Libraries Assessment Council, and ORT analysis was conducted by targeting common themes among all submissions.

> **Supervisor surveys:** Survey responses were compiled by question. Sets of responses were then divided up among ORT members so that two or more members examined each set. Group discussion allowed all to take note of common themes and compelling insights.

> **Status of strategic plan action items:** Relying upon the expertise of ORT members' familiarity with individual areas of the strategic plan, each strategic action item was evaluated to determine whether it was a new or in-process activity, as well as whether it had adequate or inadequate resources.

Finally, ORT worked through mind-mapping sessions to compare these data to potential organizational structures being considered. In fact, based on the mind maps team members created, ORT devised a new organization chart to graphically depict just how the organization would appear (KU Libraries Organizational Structure, 2013).

Implementation Process
In March 2013, the team submitted their final report and recommendations to the Dean of Libraries. The majority of recommendations in ORT's final report refer to two new divisions within the Libraries: a Content Discovery and Access division and a Research and Learning division. Members of ORT reimagined how several traditional library services and functions could

and should operate with a user-focus in mind, particularly in regards to collection development, reference, instruction, and outreach activities; or, those activities most traditionally associated with subject librarian liaison responsibilities. Key to this new vision of the Libraries was the concept of a consultation model. After her review, the Dean of Libraries made decisions regarding the information and recommendations within the report.

Content Discovery and Access
ORT noted trends in library literature that point to the need for active collaboration to occur among library units with complementary goals and functions. This kind of collaboration was identified as a challenge within the KU Libraries by our internal consultants, and by many focus group participants who spoke to the problem of 'silos' in the organization. In order to best encourage a collaborative and coordinated model that addressed point-of-need support and services, ORT recommended the following departments comprise a Content Discovery and Access division that included Public Operations, Technical Operations, Distinctive Collections, and Exhibits and Outreach. These departments respond to users' information discovery and access needs.

Within Public Operations, our circulation, interlibrary loan, and access services would operate, along with traditional reference service. Including reference service in a Public Operations department (within a Content Discovery and Access division) was a rather bold recommendation and several factors figured into that recommendation. First, concerns were expressed in focus groups about the reference model and the 'sitting and waiting' nature of this service. In the past, this type of "ready for action" and "structured idleness" was a necessary component of the reference desk (Lathrop, 1993). Second, many colleagues bemoaned the nature of questions at the reference desk and wondered whether librarians could be deployed in other ways to engage in more proactive, research and learning support efforts. Finally, since the physical setup at our main libraries encourages a combined, collaborative approach, ORT recommended folding circulation, access, and reference services into one department. Further, ORT recommended a phased departure of professional librarians from working the reference desk. This frees librarians to work more purposefully with users across campus and develop more meaningful relationships that embed library and research support into campus initiatives. The Dean took most recommendations related to this Division. Areas that are still under consideration as implementation continues include how to refer advanced and subject-based questions with librarians off the desk, and what online resources we may use or develop to assist reference staff.

In the Technical Operations department, we made a somewhat radical recommendation to combine traditional collection development tasks with operations of cataloging, acquisitions, and licensing. The rationale for grouping these departments together is that they have a shared purpose in providing content, and access to that content, to users. ORT believed that the close alignment of these units and departments would result in better coordination of work and an improved user experience with the Libraries' discovery and access services. Acknowledging that the subject-based liaison model did not operate with a standard set of responsibilities among all librarians, and that this resulted in inconsistent and uneven attention to the main areas of responsibilities (i.e., some librarians focused more intently on collection activities, others on instruction activities), ORT recommended that collection development tasks be handled by a smaller, yet more focused, group of librarians who were not responsible for additional activities in the Libraries. The Dean of Libraries took the latter part of this recommendation, renaming the unit Content Development, but ultimately did not align Content Development with operations of cataloging, acquisitions, and licensing.

The implementation of this smaller, more focused unit has been contentious due to a number of factors. First, three librarians who are in the midst of phased retirement were placed within this unit. Secondly, there is a sense among some librarians that collection development work is being marginalized and is being cut out of the Libraries future and strategic directions. Questions abound regarding how positions will be filled after retirements, how the work of collection maintenance and development will be handled by such a small unit, and how subject expertise can or will be utilized

beyond this unit. Presently, these questions are being considered and remain a challenge in the progress of our transition.

Research and Learning Division
Another noteworthy recommendation was to create a division that integrates most instruction and research support services into one division. In our previous structure, the traditional liaison model called upon individual librarians to participate in library instruction, outreach, reference, and collection development work. Most librarians reported to either the Collection Development department or the Instruction department. In parallel, a smaller, separate set of librarians worked on scholarly communication, digital humanities, and data/GIS initiatives and reported through the Libraries Center for Digital Scholarship. The Research and Learning Division (R&L) was conceived to integrate many of these activities (with the exception of reference and collection development) in order to better exemplify the interrelationship of instruction and research-focused support. Research and learning activities are not independent and distinct activities, but two interrelated aspects of the larger scholarly enterprise. Further, the R&L Division was recommended so that more meaningful engagement might occur with our students, scholars, and citizens. Integrating purposefully into the workflows of users' research, teaching, and learning efforts requires a model of engagement (Williams, 2009) – a model not fully expressed in our previous traditional liaison model. Ultimately, the Libraries Dean took many of the ORT recommendations in forming this Division and its attendant Centers.

The R&L Division was envisioned to be organized around user groups (i.e., Centers for undergraduates, graduates, faculty, community members). ORT believed this arrangement presented a number of advantages. Academic institutions largely distinguish among undergraduates, graduates, and faculty in nearly every respect. Members of ORT agreed that there is a reason for those distinctions: each user group possesses distinct characteristics, skills, and needs. The ORT report also asserted that such a user-based model of engagement would enable the Libraries to be more agile and more responsive to rapidly evolving expectations, research processes, and pedagogical practices. Indeed, this focus would bring our users to the fore of our attention in new and innovate ways and situate the Libraries to best demonstrate the value and contribution we make the academic experiences of our users.

Cross-Functional Initiatives
Recommendations related to these Divisions were also an effort to make the most of our human resources and eliminate areas of duplication. Utilizing a team-approach to the Libraries major strategic and ongoing initiatives ensures that we take advantage of natural strengths while not continually adding new or additional expectations to individual librarians. A significant recommendation from ORT was to form cross-functional teams to address library functions and services related to both our core activities and our strategic priorities, especially those functions that affected or crossed organizational units. This team approach enables the Libraries to draw on the resources and expertise of units throughout the organization, provide additional opportunities for leadership, and provide a model that is flexible and agile, allowing teams to be reconfigured, formed, or disbanded as short- or long-term priorities evolve, and more quickly adjust to user needs or internal staffing changes.

ORT's initial recommendation was to form teams in such areas as First Year Experience, Online & Distance Learning, and Digital Publishing. In actual implementation, however, the teams (now called CFIs--cross-functional initiatives) took on a slightly different form, and the model for these groups continues to evolve. Some of the successful results so far from the CFI model have been:
- The ability to focus staff more specifically on initiatives like scholarly communication, data support services, and grants
- The ability to involve more library staff in several strategic initiatives
- The flexibility of the model – the nature of the CFIs promotes quick formation, reconfiguration, and disbandment as work evolves

The CFI implementation has presented some challenges as well. There are varying views of the CFIs among staff and among units, particularly concerning whether contributions to a CFI constitute service to the organization or are professional responsibilities (ORT recommended they be a part of professional responsibilities). Additionally collaboration and coordination between CFIs with overlapping or related charges has proven a challenge. There is potential for some of the CFIs to merge in order to best reach common goals. Finally, there were ten CFIs created in the initial implementation. What has emerged as a result is an uneven level of participation across the CFIs with an already limited overall staff. This summer we will be assessing and reconfiguring the CFI-model to address these challenges. One of the benefits of our flexible, agile model is that it allows us to do this in a relatively quick manner with minimal disruption to ongoing work.

Administrative Functions
New positions for leadership emerged as a result of this restructuring. Representing each of the Libraries' Divisions is an Assistant Dean who serves on the Dean's Cabinet. In response to focus groups feedback and the "Design Your Own Organizational Chart" exercise, ORT recommended a new position of Chief Operating Officer (COO). This position would oversee nearly all administrative areas of the libraries and would leave the Dean of Libraries free to engage in a stronger external focus for fundraising and relationship building. Along with representing the Dean on campus and within the Libraries, defining and prioritizing library work, and supervising all Assistant Deans, this position would address the critical need for balanced and coordinated leadership at the administrative level. Feedback from library colleagues indicated a sense of disorganization and a lack of unity from the then-Dean's Council. In order to align and unify this critical leadership team, the COO would develop and implement a shared, core internal vision for the organization and ensure coordination among the administrative cabinet. Due to a number of factors, the Dean appointed two then-Assistant Deans to fill this position as co-Associate Deans on an interim basis. A search to permanently fill this position will begin this fall.

Recommendations for new positions
One of ORT's activities was to identify and prioritize vital positions that were needed to advance the Libraries strategic plan and support *Bold Aspirations*. ORT presented recommendations by way of prioritized tiers. Since the ORT report, several of these positions have been filled or are currently in a search phase. These include: Data Librarian, Metadata Librarian, Assistant to the Associate Dean, and Communications Coordinator.

Implementation Successes and Challenges
In the year that has passed since our reorganization began, several reports, white papers, and research articles have emerged in the library literature on the topics of liaison work, subject librarians, and future roles of academic libraries. Much of this content has affirmed that KU Libraries is moving in a good direction, albeit, in a distinct and innovative way. There appears to be no other academic library in the US that is organized quite like us. Without a model to emulate and learn from, we are very much building this structure from the ground up. Some challenges have already been mentioned: the transition to a smaller more focused Content Development unit and transitioning professional librarians off the reference desk. Other challenges include making a transition to a more scalable and sustainable instruction model and the transition to a user-focused, consultative model of service and support.

Another major challenge has been the lack of a formal transition plan, particularly for former liaison librarians. Over the last year, some former liaisons have retained duties associated with that previous model, while also trying to begin new duties and embrace new roles in the new structure. As these new duties and roles have become more readily apparent, it has become easier to see how former duties may transition to others, be retained in some way, or may simply stop being performed. This is currently being addressed at the individual level between supervisors, former liaisons, and assistant deans. Additionally, a subgroup of assistant deans is leading a task force to tackle the last of the challenges that remain in terms of the future of subject expertise and how the consultant model will actually work in practice.

However, despite these significant challenges, our reorganization has yielded some significant successes.

- The Libraries established a new Organizational Development unit that emphasizes strengths and skills building, leadership development, and human resource support.
- A new Division, Innovation and Strategy, that is responsible for trend monitoring, coordinating assessment activities, and grants.
- A considerable increase in collaboration within the new Research and Learning Division that combines the expertise and skills of library instructors and librarians with digital scholarship and scholarly communication capabilities.

Conclusion

The Organizational Review Team was dismissed in March 2013 after nine months of intensive work. Since that time, ORT members have reflected on the open and unrestricted leave that was granted in tackling their charges, as well as the inclusive approaches to the process they undertook. The time and freedom to give such intensive attention to organizational structures and operations was an opportunity that does not come along often. Some of our recommendations represented a bold break from traditional librarian functions and a structure that had "focused largely on capturing the end products of scholarship and a bibliographer model designed to fulfill that goal" (Williams, 2009). These recommendations, though, are well-supported, emerging from the numerous activities and methods undertaken by ORT to gather feedback and input. Through a distinct 'bottom-up' approach, intended to be transparent and inclusive, ORT was able to gather a wide and deep amount of data from library staff across all units in the organization, as well as from the professional literature and efforts of some of our peer institutions. KU Libraries is now positioned to collaborate and communicate better across units and divisions for an improved user experience. As we continue to progress through our transition, KU Libraries has seen several areas of success, met with several challenges, and continues to identify areas of need, development, and adjustment.

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