

WISPALS Initiatives – History and Outputs

2016-2024

BACKGROUND

From 2016 – 2020 WISPALS Executive Committee undertook a process to identify strategic initiatives for the coming calendar year. This was done at their annual membership meetings in August in order for the initiatives to begin the following January. In 2020, the group decided to change the timeline for initiatives to better align with their fiscal year, July - June. This moved the annual membership meetings to the spring and extended the 2020 initiatives until Spring of 2021.

In 2022, the consortium refocused the annual initiatives process. All future work and initiatives of WISPALS aim to fulfill the developed [recommendations for future work](#). Its primary goals are to ensure that all consortium members are knowledgeable about what projects are being completed, have an opportunity to participate at a level that is appropriate for them, that projects have articulated and timely outcomes, and ensure that member library staffing time is only used when necessary.

2023-2024 ACTIVITIES & OUTPUTS

1. Create opportunities for WISPALS Member Library staff to connect

- a. A conversation at the 2023 WISPALS Annual Meeting revealed that the dissolution of the subcommittees left little opportunity for library staff not on the Executive Committee to connect and use one another as a resource. In response, space was created on the consortium's shared Basecamp, and an invitation was sent for member staff to introduce themselves and share a little bit about themselves.

2. Explore ILS platform options

- a. In June of 2023, WISPALS created and shared an RFI with several vendors. All vendors responded, and demonstrations were scheduled for the fall of 2023 through Spring of 2024. In the spring of 2024, the group worked toward finalizing a decision for a new ILS contract.

3. Align Annual Report structure with larger goals for member technical colleges.

- a. To better allow WISPALS member libraries to showcase their value to their institutions, the WISPALS Annual Report was restructured to include sections that speak to larger goals common to Wisconsin's technical college goals, such as Supporting Students and Faculty, Student Affordability, Equitable Service, and Student and Faculty Success.

2022-2023 INITIATIVES & ACTIVITIES

1. Simplify WISPALS Projects

Activities include:

- a. Project Managers will create a project planning template that includes a checklist and details about how it follows the principles above. This template will help guide decision-making on which projects are taken on and provide assessment guidelines for measuring the success of each project.
- b. Project Managers will create space and time for project ideas to be shared, during Executive Committee meetings and on Basecamp with broader WISPALS library staff.

- c. Standing meetings of the three standing subcommittees - Instructional Services, User Services, and Technical Services - are eliminated. This simplifies the work of WISPALS and also responds to the lack of recent participation on those subcommittees.
- d. The FUN Workgroup will be disbanded following the completion of these activities:
 - Packaging the surveys that have already been run in such a way that member colleges can individually use them at their institutions on their own timeline and/or platform.
 - If needed, the creation of a process to document the steps taken with previous surveys to run them and report results.
- e. Project Managers and the Executive Committee will spend the majority of the next two years' time and effort, beyond the day-to-day management of the consortia, on exploring ILS options for the new contract, beginning in 2025 on this ILS Exploration Timeline.
- f. Project Managers will ensure that information shared about and between WISPALS members is clear, organized, and accessible.
 - Restructure Annual Report around general technical college goals and add previous outcomes from WISPALS section (using Initiatives History document)
 - Restructure shared documents and resources for access.

2022-2023 OUTPUTS

1. Simplify WISPALS Projects

- a. The project managers created a [project planning template](#) to help guide decision-making on which projects are taken on as well as provide assessment guidelines for measuring the success of each project.
- b. Project managers, in collaboration with the WISPALS Chair, provided a call for project suggestions on Basecamp and during the WISPALS Annual Meeting
- c. A standing agenda topic for communicating problems and ideas is a standard on the Executive Committee meeting agendas.
- d. The standing meetings of the Instructional Services, Technical Services, and User Services subcommittees have been canceled. The subcommittees will remain as ad hoc and their Basecamps remain open and available to facilitate information sharing as needed.
- e. The FUN Workgroup was also put on hiatus until needed. They [compiled all questions](#) used in the faculty surveys, as well as templated messaging to use with the surveys, so individual colleges can run the surveys on their own schedule. The survey questions can be shared with peer organizations.
- f. An [RFI](#) has been created for the 2025 ILS exploration.
- g. Project Managers cleaned up and reorganized the WISPALS Basecamps, including the Shared Resource Library, to make their contents more searchable and accessible. A table of content of [all WISPALS resources](#) was also created.

2021-2022 INITIATIVES & ACTIVITIES

1. WISPALS members will collaborate to advocate for affordable higher education and open educational resources.

Activities include:

- a. Increase knowledge and involvement in curriculum development and modification for OER adoption
 - b. Share knowledge about effective communication of OER program impact and success
- 2. WISPALS members will collaborate to ensure that the member libraries serve students and faculty equitably.**
- Activities include:
- a. Develop a process to create and manage a student advisory board.
 - b. Develop a process to create and manage a policy think tank.
 - c. Collaboratively identify and share community resources.
 - d. Gather input and share ideas to increase student usage and engagement
- 3. WISPALS members will collaborate to ensure that member libraries are student-focused in their services and collection.**
- Activities include:
- a. Share best practices and learn more about assessing the library’s impact on student success
 - b. Help WISPALS libraries develop textbook collections for student use

2021-2022 OUTPUTS

1. The project managers worked on infrastructure, via Basecamp, to aggregate and share best practices from individual WISPALS colleges that have had success in becoming involved in curriculum development and modification. The OER resources currently created and those being worked on were moved into already-existing infrastructure to improve access to WISPALS members. The Instructional Services Committee worked to identify OER learning opportunities to share with interested WISPALS participants. Interviews were held with WISPALS colleges about their efforts to communicate the impact of their OER and affordability programs on the student experience. The interview responses were compiled into [this report](#).
2. Several activities were undertaken to help ensure students and faculty are served equitably including the following:
 - a. The User Services group has worked to develop [a worksheet to guide libraries](#) in the development of a student advisory board as well as a call for volunteers, a list of library-related resources and services for the board to review and consider, an inventory of technology available to students, and worked to identify ways students access resources for the board to evaluate.
 - b. Working with the Executive Committee, tips on [policy think tanks](#) focusing on changing policies with an equity lens to help reduce barriers were gathered. In addition, a list of [community partnerships, resources, and services](#) currently within WISPALS institutions was compiled.
 - c. Working with the Executive Committee, the User Services Committee has worked on a [user and non-user survey](#) to administer to students to better understand the library needs of students. Survey questions that libraries can use to administer a survey to both user and non-users of the library were created as well as promotional materials for libraries to use.
 - d. The Faculty User Needs Workgroup has focused their work on reaching out to faculty in individual program areas. They have developed and deployed surveys and focus groups to help improve services to:
 - i. Business (October 2021)
 - ii. Allied Health (October 2021)

- iii. Adult Education / ELL (December 2021 - Feb 2022)
 - iv. Agriculture / Natural Resources (Feb - March 2022)
 - v. Paralegal / Public Safety (March - April 2022)
3. The Instructional Services Committee shared the work they have done to assess the impacts of library instruction and information literacy. In particular, librarians at Gateway Technical College shared their experience with [Project Outcome](#). The Tech Services Committee compiled [barriers and tips on developing textbook collections](#).

2019-2021 INITIATIVES & ACTIVITIES

1. **Advocacy & Visibility: Awareness of Library Services and Underuse: Tailoring Library Services to Campus Department Needs.**

WISPALS will work together to develop tools and best practices for advocacy and visibility and best practices for increasing library use by campus departments. Though the work will be done as a consortium, it will be tailored so each member can raise the awareness of their library's services as appropriate.

Activities include:

- a. Create a list of talking points.
 - b. Create a list of consortium data points.
 - c. Highlight and promote the social aspects of the library.
 - d. Create and share passive programming kits.
 - e. Put all gathered information into a bank of resources (data points, elevator speeches, highlights).
- ### 2. **Explore ways to more fully engage in ILS sharing including the possibility of sharing bibliographic records.**
- a. Create a workgroup to investigate sharing of bibliographic records.
 - b. Identify benefits and barriers to sharing.
 - c. Create dummy records (both physical and electronic) to examine, test, and evaluate.
 - d. Create recommendations on sharing either or both electronic and physical bibliographic records.
- ### 3. **Sharing Electronic Resources**
- Building on previous work that resulted in a rubric on streaming nursing video products, this initiative will:*
- a. Recruit a small group to help plan and carry out activities.
 - b. Coordinate comparative trials of nursing streaming video products, involving library staff and faculty; use current process and rubric for evaluation of those resources.
 - c. Refine product evaluation rubric and process.
 - d. Recommend nursing streaming video product(s) to the WISPALS Executive Committee for consideration of cooperative purchasing or as shared electronic content.
 - e. Determine other program areas common among many or all WISPALS members that are served by e-resources for investigation using the evaluation rubric and process.
 - f. Investigate, identify and propose solutions to barriers to sharing electronic resources, beyond shared purchases, through sharing personal experience and information gathering from other WISPALS member colleges.
- ### 4. **Staff and Professional Development**

WISPALS will share more information with one another about and from professional development events, including conferences, workshops, and online trainings. These events may be appropriate for directors, managers, and professional staff.

2019-2021 OUTPUTS

1. A project plan was created using the User Services Committee to implement the Advocacy initiatives. Workshops were held to identify resources. Project managers researched, compiled, and edited resources into one source [found here](#). This work is ongoing.
2. An ILS sharing plan was created and implemented which included:
 - a. Identifying goals and potential outcomes.
 - b. Reviewing the OverDrive records pilot initiative and what was learned and not learned.
 - c. Identifying bibliographic sharing concerns and questions.
 - d. Creating both shared physical and electronic resource bibliographic records for review, testing, and evaluation.
 - e. Identifying dealbreakers for moving forward.
 - f. Creating a [recommendation](#).
3. The Cooperative Purchasing group worked to understand the needs of faculty from various common program areas across WISPALS campuses in a series of surveys and focus groups.
4. Project managers drafted and sent a monthly message to WISPALS Executive Committee with a reminder to share learning events they know about or have attended. Project managers researched and created a Basecamp calendar of conferences and online trainings, including dates, locations, and cost, that may be of interest to the group.

2018-2019 INITIATIVES & ACTIVITIES

1. **Utilize OER Basecamp for sharing information.**
 - a. Open up OER Basecamp to all interested to facilitate the sharing of information about events and resources related to OER.
2. **Utilize Instructional Services Committee for "on-demand" instructional support.**
 - a. Explore ways for the members of the Committee to serve as support to other WISPALS colleges and library staff to provide resources and suggestions for instructional service problems and questions.
3. **Evaluate Credo's Instruct InfoLit Module.**
 - a. Create a report of the Instructional Services Committee's experience so far, including challenges, benefits, and evaluation of the product for other WISPALS members.
4. **Accessibility and equity in instructional services.**
 - a. Research existing efforts and best practices involving inclusive teaching practices and instructional accessibility and sharing that research with all WISPALS members.
5. **Develop and implement Authority Control project.**
 - a. Research authority control vendors and implement an initial and ongoing cleanup project.
6. **Review functions in Sierra to determine potential agenda topics and training sessions.**
 - a. Explore the various functions within Sierra as Technical and User Services Committee meeting agenda topics. Experts from the Technical and User Services Committees could share their knowledge in specific areas with members as virtual mini-training sessions at or outside of Committee meetings.
7. **Investigate options for the future of the shared ILS and shared bibliographic records.**
 - a. Develop a workgroup with one member from every college.

- b. Explore ILS options and obtain quotes and demonstrations from vendors.
- 8. Pilot sharing of cataloging of electronic resources**
 - a. Identify a resource to share such as Films on Demand.
 - b. Create a plan around the sharing of the resource including how holdings are added and updates are made.
- 9. Monitor UW pilot of shared cataloging.**
 - a. UW System is undertaking a pilot of shared cataloging, with centralized staff providing cataloging services for two institutions (UW-Stout and UW-Whitewater). Project managers would check in with UW System on a quarterly basis and report progress of the pilot.
- 10. Staff retention strategies**
 - a. Create a plan for developing shared knowledge around staff retention. This plan could include developing methods for sharing strategies for staff retention and a plan for group training.

2018-2019 OUTPUTS

1. Project Managers add WISPALS members to Basecamp on request.
2. Project managers actively shared out Instructional Services Committee members are on demand for instructional support and committee members respond to requests from the WISPALS Community.
3. Instructors shared experiences and presented them to the Instructional Services Committee. The evaluation is shared in Basecamp.
4. WISPALS members were recruited to present accessibility resources to Instructional Services Committee. The resources are shared in Basecamp.
5. Several authority vendors were identified; quotes were gathered and presentations were held. Marcive was chosen as the vendor. Project managers load monthly updates received from Marcive. This is ongoing.
6. Quarterly training opportunities were created on the following identified topics:
 - a. Serials
 - b. Reports and Statistics
 - c. Advanced Create Lists
 - d. Short sessions on: Media Management, Adjustments in Acquisitions, Global Updating and Creating Macros in Sierra.
7. A workgroup was developed to review the current ILS, the needs of WISPALS and other potential ILS vendors. Vendors were identified, quotes were obtained and presentations were held. Project managers were able to secure a 10% reduction in annual maintenance for current ILS.
8. A pilot plan was created for sharing of electronic resources. The vendor, OverDrive, was identified. Project managers removed duplicates in Sierra and load new OverDrive records as they become available. Records are modified to include all participating libraries' holdings information. This project is on-going.
9. The UW- Pilot of shared cataloging between UW-Stout and UW Whitewater was monitored. The pilot has concluded and the centralized cataloging service will not continue as piloted. However, the pilot set up a process and discovered challenges (such as a financial structure and setting appropriate expectations) that one of the campuses could use in order to offer the service to other campuses. At least 3 campuses have expressed some level of interest in doing that.
10. Project managers established staff retention repository/guidelines for information to collect. Opportunities for staff are shared out monthly on Basecamp.

2017-2018 INITIATIVES & ACTIVITIES

- 1. Explore ways for WISPALS members to participate in or promote the use of open textbooks and /or other open educational resources.**
 - a. Create a workgroup to focus on OER.
 - b. Connect with WLA and other institutions to ascertain interest outside of just WISPALS.
- 2. Explore options for non-member technical colleges or other academic libraries to participate in or collaborate with WISPALS.**
 - a. Create options for collaboration with Non-WISPALS Technical College for the consortium to review.
- 3. Explore the “one library” model as it has been implemented in Wisconsin and how it could be beneficial to WISPALS.**
 - a. Create a workgroup to explore the model.
- 4. Increase the participation of user committees in information gathering and sharing for WISPALS.**
- 5. Investigate strategic cooperative purchases for WISPALS members.**
 - a. Create a workgroup to explore strategic cooperative purchases.
- 6. Transition work of WISPALS Executive Committee fully into Basecamp.**

2017-2018 OUTPUTS

1. An OER workgroup was formed. The group also worked with WLA and created a WLA Special Interest Group.
2. Researched and create options for collaboration with non-WISPALS members which included the following.
 - a. Informal conversations – inviting non-members to a WISPALS meeting once per year.
 - b. Conversations around specific topics with the intent of developing partnerships for projects.
 - c. Ongoing participation in topical committees.
 - d. Extending new cooperative purchasing projects to non-members.

WISPALS made the decision to hold informal conversations at their annual membership meeting and invite non-WISPAL members to attend.
3. A One-Library workgroup was created. The group researched and met with UW institutions. The following recommendations were made:
 - a. Investigate with OCLC on sharing on EZ-proxy platform for authentication.
 - b. Investigate sharing of physical collections.
 - c. Investigate sharing of bibliographic records.
 - d. Explore potential pilot for shared cataloging and technical services roles.
4. Evaluated user committees for effectiveness and to help guide the future of the committees.
5. A Cooperative Purchasing workgroup was formed. They surveyed WISPALS to understand current cooperative purchasing landscape and needs. It was identified that there were commonalities in need or interest among the member colleges in resource content and format.
6. All documents and resources were moved into Basecamp. Scheduling function and message boards were implemented for communication.

2016-2017 INITIATIVES & ACTIVITIES

1. **Streamline the information sharing environment among WISPALS members.**

The group discussed the current information sharing environment and determined that it would be more useful if all information sharing could take place in a single environment or as few environments as possible.

- a. Inventory current information sharing environment to determine what information is being shared through what channels.
- b. Determine needs for a new information sharing environment.
- c. Research potential environments and costs and present to Executive Committee for decision.

2. **Develop a repository of information literacy resources and curriculum.**

This initiative will be used as a pilot for the newly created information sharing environment as described above.

- a. Create infrastructure within the chosen environment for information literacy information exchange.
- b. Work with 2-3 WISPALS members to pilot use of the environment and to develop procedures and processes to encourage participation.
- c. Solicit information literacy resources from all WISPALS members.
- d. Evaluate pilot environment to determine next steps.

3. **Create a catalog of good examples of create list reports.**

Because this initiative is dependent on the above initiatives, the work will begin after those two initiatives have been completed.

- a. Create infrastructure within the chosen environment for catalog.
- b. Solicit good examples of create list reports from all WISPALS members.

4. **Develop and implement a plan to create ILS training videos and to add more visuals to documentation.**

The ultimate outcome of this initiative, additional videos and more visual documentation, will be dependent on the first two initiatives because the products will be stored within the new environment. However, some background work can be done concurrently with the first two initiatives.

- a. Determine high priority areas for training videos and additional visual documentation.
- b. Develop plan for creating materials based on identified priorities.
- c. Implement plan and create new materials.

5. **Develop more opportunities for in-person best practice sharing/annual forums for specific roles related to the ILS.**

- a. Create overall plan (what roles, frequency of meeting, responsibilities for convening groups, etc.) for Executive Committee discussion and review.

6. **Continue work on outstanding ILS issues and implementation.**

The group identified some outstanding ILS issues that merited additional efforts in the coming year:

- *Remove the ability to see other college's patron information.*
 - *Implement Knowledgebase.*
- a. Advocate to ILL about the necessity of removing the ability to see other college's patron information and share results with Executive Committee.
 - b. Develop and implement plan for implementing the knowledgebase.

2016-2017 OUTPUTS

1. Researched, recommended and implemented a communication and resource sharing environment, Basecamp.
2. A resource library was created and implemented within Basecamp.
3. Worked with committees to compile resources and examples of reports and added resources to the Resource Library. This is ongoing.
4. A quarterly training plan was created and implemented based on identified high priority areas.
5. Created three distinct, ongoing user committees, Instructional Services, Technical Services and User Services committees.
6. Moved interested libraries from CASE to Knowledgebase for coverage loads.