OhioLINK Update
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Need for OhioLINK Grows Even As Future Clouds

In 2004, the Ohio Library and Information Network filled more borrowing requests for library materials (692,400), delivered more full-text documents (14.5 million) and provided more research resources and services to a greater number of users than ever before in its 12-year existence. Yet even as OhioLINK's cost-effectiveness and use continue to rise, budget woes have forced the program to cut information resources in 2005.

What's the Problem?

Since 1992, OhioLINK has been the worldwide model for creating a highly efficient, collaborative higher education library system that stimulates scientific and medical research, improves health care with access to the latest medical research, and attracts high-quality faculty and students. OhioLINK has improved the quality of Ohio's universities and colleges and has enhanced Ohio's competitiveness for a knowledge based economy.

"Being a member of OhioLINK has revolutionized our library," Paul O. Jenkins, director of library services at the College of Mount St. Joseph, said. "With basically the same budget as we had in 1996, the year we joined the consortium, we are now able to offer our students and faculty electronic access to the full text of more than ten times the number of journals that we owned in print that year."

Without the statewide collaboration of higher education institutions and the Ohio Board of Regents, the dramatic expansion in access to research and instructional information resources would not have been economically possible. Now researchers and students alike will feel the impact of cutbacks to OhioLINK and higher education funding.

OhioLINK funding is part of the state appropriation for higher education. State support of Ohio higher education in fiscal year 2004 decreased 9% per student compared to FY1990 when adjusted for inflation.

OhioLINK's funding also has been reduced. Combined capital and operating funding for OhioLINK peaked in fiscal year 2001 at $11.3 million. Since FY2002, combined funding has been flat at about $11.0 million. With the latest FY2005-2006 capital bill and the projected FY2006-2007 state operating budget, combined annual funding will remain just under $11 million.

Consequently, OhioLINK is facing an anticipated annual shortfall of more than $1 million versus projected needs. The program cannot maintain the current rich set of scholarly electronic journals and databases, let alone build vital new services, with continued flat funding.

"The vast majority of OhioLINK monies are used to purchase content, including electronic journals, databases, e-books and digital media," Tom Sanville, OhioLINK's executive director, explained. "By pooling OhioLINK and higher education library resources we have created a world-class set of research materials that individual libraries could not afford on their own. However, reduced OhioLINK funding lessens our ability to contribute to a competitive Ohio economy."

During the past several years of flat funding, OhioLINK has used reserve funds and increased contributions from member institutions to avoid losing any resources. Unfortunately, those strategies are no longer possible because local library budgets across the state are also facing limitations. We have reached the point where service cuts are unavoidable.

What Cuts Have Been Made?

In order to combat the funding shortfall, OhioLINK has cut subscriptions to 490 electronic journals for 2005 and will institute a membership fee for the first time in its 12-year history. The fee will be assessed beginning in July and will raise $200,000 annually. Cutting 490 of the least used titles from Blackwell Publishing and Springer will save $288,000 annually. The cut titles represent all academic disciplines and four percent of the annual downloads from active titles.

While the cut journals represent a small fraction of the 6,100 total journal titles available in the OhioLINK Electronic Journal Center, their loss is certainly felt by the scholars that relied on them.

"Recently, I had a paper accepted in the prestigious Journal of Classification, which is rated in the top 10 in impact factor among all mathematics journals. To my complete shock, when I went to view the journal online, I found that the journal subscription was cancelled in 2005," Maria L. Rizzo, assistant professor of mathematics at Ohio University, said. "It is almost impossible to believe that...we can conduct research without access to these most important journals. No reviewer will accept a paper when the author is years out of date."

Mortimer Martin Guiney, professor of French and chair of the department of modern languages and literatures at Kenyon College, concurs, "It is in the nature of advanced research that progress in the field is made when an individual reads an article

continued on page 2

Need for OhioLINK Grows *(continued from page 1)*

that maybe only a handful of other people have read."

OhioLINK also plans to cut database expenses of $100,000 or more this year, depending on the amount of the next operating appropriation. Cancellation of another 800 or more electronic journal titles is expected for 2006. In addition, there will be no new funds to purchase new content OhioLINK users need and want to support their research.

"Far from being willing to see access to [OhioLINK] resources contract, I'm hoping for an expansion in their availability," Martin Wainwright, associate professor of history and director of the World Civilizations program at the University of Akron, said.

OhioLINK's funding shortfall will also force libraries to provide their users with fewer resources at a greater cost.

"OhioLINK has repeatedly demonstrated that by purchasing content for statewide use, users get access to more content for less money," Sanville explained. "Conversely, if OhioLINK funding for a resource is cut, libraries must purchase the resource individually or access is lost. Since library budgets are also limited, local purchase may not be possible."

"As one of the smaller public academic libraries in Ohio, Cleveland State University Library could never supply its faculty and students with the quality and quantity of resources it has now, without the support of OhioLINK," Glenda Thornton, director of the Cleveland State University Library, said.

What Can Users Do?

Miriamne Krummel, assistant professor of English at the University of Dayton, and other OhioLINK users are speaking out about the real impact to the quality of research and higher education statewide if OhioLINK funding continues to be inadequate.

"Without OhioLINK my teaching and research methods would be greatly impaired," Krummel said. "I use OhioLINK to prepare my lectures so that I can provide students with current information in the field. I also advise my students to turn to OhioLINK when they sit down to start the research for their papers."

"OhioLINK is an indispensable resource and without it I would not be able to apply the latest discoveries in biochemistry, biotechnology and other scientific fields," Max Funk, a chemistry professor at the University of Toledo, said. "Loss of access to the cutting-edge information available through OhioLINK would hinder my capability to be an effective educator and researcher as well as our ability to attract the most promising scholars to Ohio."

Kent State University graduate student Leann Kucharski agrees that OhioLINK is vital to enticing scholars. "OhioLINK is the main reason I chose to pursue a master's degree in Ohio," she said. "Without OhioLINK my research would not be as comprehensive and it would take weeks, not days."

"OhioLINK is especially critical for folks like me who live in the poorest, most rural areas of the state where access to resources is limited," Candee Basford, a Southern State Community College student, said.

In response to OhioLINK's call for support, users have contacted their legislators and expressed support for OhioLINK, informed friends and colleagues of OhioLINK's funding situation, posted links to the Support OhioLINK Web site, and passed resolutions from faculty and student senate groups.

> ***"Unfortunately, OhioLINK will be faced with the recurring problem of not being able to keep the current array of library resources... until our funding increases."***

"It's critical that users continue to contact their legislators and explain why OhioLINK is vital to their education, teaching and research," Sanville said. "Unfortunately, OhioLINK will be faced with the recurring problem of not being able to keep the current array of library resources, let alone add resources in underrepresented areas, until our funding increases."

OhioLINK users are urged to visit *www.ohiolink.edu/supportohiolink* and take action to eliminate further cuts.

A Look at OhioLINK and Higher Education Finances

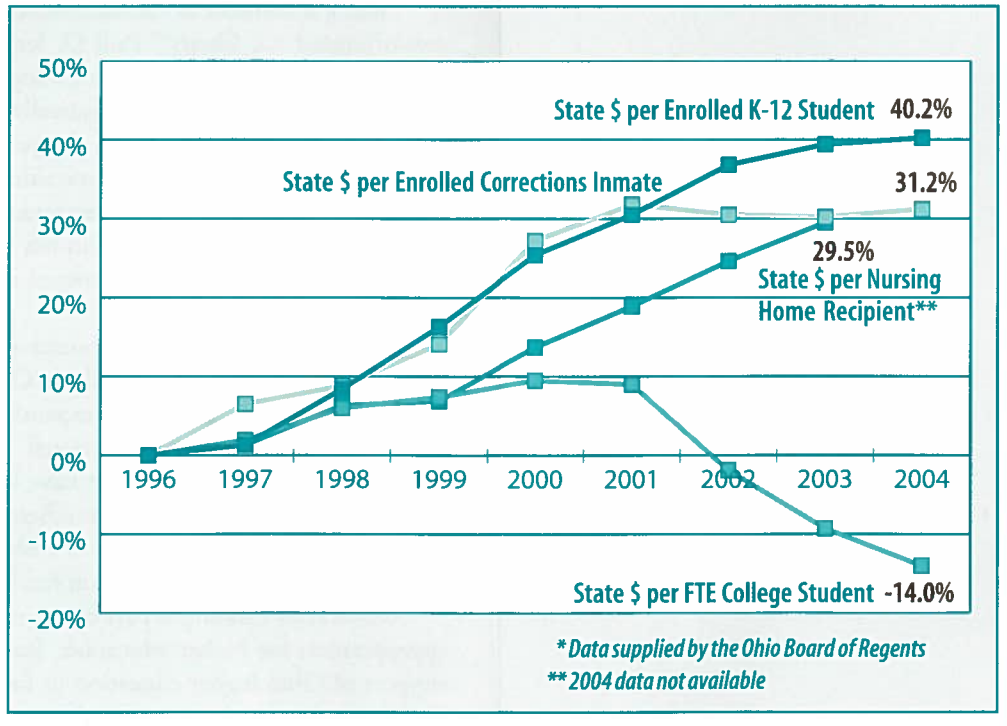
Figure 1

Putting Funds to Work:
Growth in Services Provided Versus Growth in Appropriations

	1994	2004	% Increase
E-Journal Articles Downloaded	206,000	11,242,000	5357%
Filled Interlibrary Loans	61,170	691,370	1030%
Total Searches	2,661, 500	28,624,500	976%
Databases	18	132	633%
Library Catalog Holdings	7,000,000	26,770,900	282%
Library Catalog Master Records	2,760,000	9,259,000	235%
Total Digital Media Downloads	0	241,540	N/A
Institutions Served	28	85	204%
Combined Appropriations (Operating & Capital)	$5,180,000	$10,960,000	112%

Figure 2

Changes in State Of Ohio Funding for Higher Education Versus Other Key Agencies Since FY 1996 *
(Constant 1996 Dollars, Adjusted for CPI Inflation)



** Data supplied by the Ohio Board of Regents*
*** 2004 data not available*

OhioLINK News In Brief...

Westerville Public Library Shares Books Via OhioLINK

This month Westerville Public Library will become the second public library to participate in the Ohio Library and Information Network's online borrowing system during a one-year pilot project.

Records for the Westerville Public Library's 200,000 items are currently available in the OhioLINK Library Catalog. Beginning April 11, OhioLINK users will be able to request books online from the Westerville Public Library's collection and may choose to pick up their requested materials at the Westerville Public Library or any other participating OhioLINK library.

This is OhioLINK's second pilot project to share library materials with a public library. The first pilot, with Cuyahoga County Public Library, began in August 2004. Next fall, OhioLINK will begin a similar one-year pilot program with the Upper Arlington High School Library. The pilot will give high school students the chance to access scholarly materials from all 85 OhioLINK libraries.

Clifford Lynch Honored with Voinovich Award

The Ohio Board of Regents presented the second George V. Voinovich Award for Information Innovation to Clifford Lynch, executive director of the Coalition for Networked Information, for his contributions in the use of information technology and networked information for the advancement of scholarship, librarianship, and intellectual productivity. The award was presented on March 7 during the Ohio Digital Commons for Education 2005 Conference.

The award, created in 2002 by the Ohio Board of Regents in recognition of OhioLINK's ten years of service, is named for Ohio's Senator George V. Voinovich. As Ohio governor, Voinovich spearheaded approval of initial major funding for OhioLINK. The award recognizes an individual who develops and champions solutions to the problem of connecting people and information effectively and efficiently.

Two Institutions Join OhioLINK ETD Center

Kent State University and Marietta College have joined the OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center. The ETD Center is an online database of graduate theses and dissertations and undergraduate honors theses from participating Ohio colleges and universities. Any OhioLINK member institution may join and freely submit theses and dissertations to the database.

The OhioLINK ETD Center currently contains more than 5,600 electronic theses and dissertations from 13 institutions, which are accessible to anyone worldwide. The full-text is available for 85% of the included documents. For more information, visit *www.ohiolink.edu/etd*.

Read More News Online at *http://olc7.ohiolink.edu/whatsnew*

OhioLINK Member and Participating Institutions with Installation Dates

Antioch College, 1999
Ashland University, 1999
The Athenaeum of Ohio, 1999
Baldwin-Wallace College, 1999
Belmont Technical College, 1995
Bluffton University, 1999
Bowling Green State University, 1992
Capital University, 1996
Case Western Reserve University, 1992
Cedarville University, 1996
Central Ohio Technical College, 1994
Central State University, 1992
Cincinnati Christian University, 1999
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, 1995
Clark State Community College, 1995
The Cleveland Clinic, 2002
Cleveland State University, 1994
College of Mount St. Joseph, 1996
The College of Wooster, 1996
Columbus College of Art & Design, 2000
Columbus State Community College, 1994
Cuyahoga Community College, 1994
Defiance College, 1999
Denison University, 1996
Edison Community College, 1995
Franciscan University of Steubenville, 1999
Franklin University, 2002
Heidelberg College, 1999
Hiram College, 1997
Hocking College, 1995
Jefferson Community College, 1995
John Carroll University, 1998
Kent State University, 1994
Kenyon College, 1996
Lakeland Community College, 1995
Lorain County Community College, 1995
Lourdes College, 2002
Malone College, 1999
Marietta College, 1999
Marion Technical College, 1994
Medical College of Ohio, 1993
Mercy College of Northwest Ohio, 2004
Miami University, 1992
Mount Carmel College of Nursing, 1999
Mount Union College, 1999
Mount Vernon Nazarene University, 1996
Muskingum College, 1999
Myers University, 2002
North Central State College, 1994
Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, 1993
Northwest State Community College, 1996
Notre Dame College, 1999
Oberlin College, 1995
Ohio Dominican University, 1997
Ohio Northern University, 1995
The Ohio State University, 1994
Ohio University, 1994
Ohio Wesleyan University, 1996
Otterbein College, 1999
Owens Community College, 1995
Rhodes State College, 1994
Shawnee State University, 1994
Sinclair Community College, 1994
Southern State Community College, 1994
Stark State College of Technology, 1994
State Library of Ohio, 1994
Terra Community College, 1995
Tiffin University, 1999
University of Akron, 1993
University of Cincinnati, 1992
University of Dayton, 1994
The University of Findlay, 1999
University of Rio Grande & RGCC, 1995
University of Toledo, 1994
Urbana University, 2000
Ursuline College, 1997
Walsh University, 2004
Washington State Community College, 1996
Wilberforce University, 1999
Wilmington College, 1999
Wittenberg University, 1997
Wright State University, 1992
Xavier University, 1996
Youngstown State University, 1993
Zane State College, 1994

OhioLINK Update

The *OhioLINK Update*, published semiannually, provides information on the developments of the OhioLINK program.

The Ohio Library and Information Network (OhioLINK) is a consortium of Ohio's college and university libraries and the State Library of Ohio. OhioLINK serves more than 600,000 students, faculty, staff and other researchers at 85 institutions.

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The *Update* is available in print and online at www.ohiolink.edu/about/publications.
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