DRAFT v.3
Cornell University Library
Alumni Outreach Task Force

Preliminary report
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Executive Summary
Alumni expectations for access to quality databases and information services after graduation are increasing and vary by discipline/college. As the economy struggles to recover from the recent recession, new graduates are particularly vulnerable to a loss of library access and quickly learn that the richness of information available to them as Cornell students is not replicated in their post-student worlds. To help our alumni with this transition, it is recommended that CUL borrow the best ideas from current alumni information programs and proactively provide enhanced access to our thousands of graduates. Achieving this may require a number of financial models—negotiating alumni access to some databases at reduced or no cost to the library (and providing assistance to alumni using those databases), different tiers of access for different types of alumni, subscription by alumni, and partnering or having a partner such as Alumni Relations and Career Services fund access to specific databases.

Technical Challenges to Alumni Access
An overview of alumni access to databases from 2010 is attached as Appendix I.

Alumni access to databases would require technical solutions to a variety of account maintenance, security, and permissions issues. CIT’s netid system doesn’t currently have the gradations of authentication required—for instance, it can’t identify alumni by year or even alumni by department/school. Such information has to be entered by staff. The gatekeeper role is a substantial investment of staff time as the case of Johnson and alumni access to its specialized databases demonstrates. For the pilot discussed below, the Veterinary School is exploring a registration system. Another technical challenge with alumni access is security violations. For the current Cornell community, these situations are handled by CIT who contacts the student or in some cases faculty advisors. How would security violations be handled with alumni?

Review of Peer Institution Alumni Access
We reviewed the offerings of alumni resources from our peer institutions—12 alumni access websites as well as a survey of library development officers at 15 institutions. We focused on general offerings to all alumni as opposed to any programs aimed at specific colleges or programs within institutions. Details of universities surveyed are in Appendices II and III.

While there were a range of offerings from no access (MIT, Yale, University of Chicago), to somewhat more developed resources (Columbia and Johns Hopkins) the general approach for most schools was to offer either the Proquest or the EBSCO alumni packages, Project Muse which is available to alumni at no extra cost, and RefWorks. This is similar to the current situation at Cornell. Many institutions also provided links to a curated list of freely available resources such as local digital collections, HathiTrust, PubMed and others. For the schools that offered more access the most notable additions were JSTOR, Annual Reviews, Factiva, IEEEXplore, ACM Portal, and Gale Virtual Reference Library.
The survey of library development officers done by Jennifer Sawyer also looked at the ways in which alumni resources are funded. A few are funded or co-funded by the libraries but the vast majority are funded by the various university alumni associations and access is often tied to alumni dues. In the few cases where fees were charged directly to alumni for access it was found that not enough alumni took advantage of the offer and there was disappointment in the general nature of the resources and the fact that they did not get access to the full range of library resources. (See Appendix III for details)

Feedback from CU Alumni
Anecdotal evidence confirms that recent graduates from across Cornell seek information access during the “gap years,” the post-graduation period, as they seek employment, finalize career plans, and work to establish themselves in their chosen professions. Many of our alumni move abroad and have even more challenging information access situations when outside the United States.

Maureen attended the Student Library Advisory Council in March to hear feedback from current students on what they thought would be most useful to them when they graduate. Below are the responses.

What resources would be most useful to you as alumni?
- Career resources such as Vault Guides or other resources for recruitment purposes are most valuable.
- For Vet those who go into practice instead of further schooling right away would find it very helpful to have access to practitioner resources. Most Vet grads already sign up for the service Vet Information Network at $700 per year which provides support for practitioners through online help and sets of case study/practitioner resources.
- Humanities grad student said having access to JSTOR, Proquest, History Cooperative and Web of Science would have been the most useful for her particularly in the first year or two after graduating.
- Science students mentioned access to BIOSIS, ScienceDirect and Web of Science as the most useful resources.
- Students may join the society of the discipline they are in and will already get access to some journals and resources in their field through membership, so those aren’t necessarily the best resources for the library to pursue.

Ideas for models of access
Students recognize the issues of vendors not wanting to damage their markets by giving alumni access when they could be selling access through the companies they end up working for. These soon-to-be alumni had suggestions about how to meet the needs of both publishers and alumni:
- Focus on the gap years between graduating and starting their careers, which these students agreed was the most needed time for these resources.
- Allow access for not-for-profit or self-employed alumni at reduced cost or free.
- Create niche groups of resources that cater to specific groups. What is useful for humanities not necessarily for business or science.
- Give alumni a budget for access. Example, the ability to download a certain number of articles in a year.
- Allow some access for free but charge for premium or specialized access.

**Need for Enhanced Access for Professional Alumni**

MBA alumni and Veterinary alumni have been most vocal about their information needs.

MBA students have been requesting alumni assistance for years, most notably after 9/11. The financial services slump that followed 9/11 was unprecedented in recent hiring history, and Management Library staff provided numerous alumni information referrals during the tough times that followed; they also partnered with the Johnson School's Career Services Office to lead workshops for recent alumni. Business school rankings depend in part on student evaluations, and MBAs are aware of services available at peer schools; historically, the Johnson School did not compete with peers who offered a range of alumni databases, but in 2009 Johnson purchased access to two of the core databases that now comprise Cornell's alumni resources (Business Source and Academic Source).

The College of Veterinary Medicine has a strong interest to provide access to electronic journals to their alumni. The Associate Dean for Veterinary Education, Dr. Lorin Warnick conducts annual surveys of DVM student one year after graduation and for those who graduated five years ago. A consistent plea from these graduates is for access to scientific journals in electronic format.

Services are available to graduates through the library website at [http://www.vet.cornell.edu/library/services/](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/library/services/) which include fee-based services, free web-based resources, and information about online sources for accessing veterinary books and conference proceedings. Information is also available on the website about links to veterinary journals indexed in PubMed MEDLINE which includes information about free open access journals. Practicing veterinarians must remain current with medical literature and trends. Professional in human medicine do have access to medical library support through the National Library of Medicine’s (NLM) National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) program, but no analogous service is available for Veterinarians. Negotiating access to appropriate journals for alumni in the gap years is highly desirable.
Task Force Recommendations:

Gather usage statistics and alumni editions of databases
Where possible gather, track, and analyze usage statistics of alumni editions so that we can better understand usage and needs.

Maintain and update peer benchmarks every other year
Decide on a group of 10-12 peers (candidates are listed in Appendices II and III) and regularly review and evaluate ourselves against them in terms of alumni databases and services.

Survey alumni
Alumni were surveyed about their information needs approximately 12 years ago. The Library should conduct a survey of alumni to assess current needs. Since surveys are by nature a promotion tool, the survey should be careful not to promise too much. We might follow the example of the Veterinary School which has a cover letter explaining what they can and cannot do. The goal of the survey should be to understand needs and anticipated needs. The survey should be brief, perhaps a maximum of five questions and might include ranking currently offered databases, identifying subject areas of interest, (for instance, science, business, humanities), the reasons for research (such as volunteer/non-profit work, professional work, personal, or career development), and whether/how frequent the library website is visited and/or resources have been requested since graduating from Cornell. Jennifer Sawyer, director of library alumni affairs and development, will work with Zsuzsa Koltay’s team to develop the survey.

Communicate better with alumni
The Alumni Access Task Force recognizes that the Library does offer resources to alumni, but very few alumni seem to be aware of this. The Task Force and Library Communications should work together to determine how best to communicate to the alumni about what the Library does have to offer. Members would work with Gwen Glazer to develop stories for the various Cornell publications to promote what we do offer to alumni.

All libraries should work to promote alumni access year-long, not just during Reunion and the graduation period.

Take a tiered approach and set priorities
A tiered approach is needed for the different groups of alumni—“gap years,” professional schools, and the largest group, alumni who don’t fall into the other groups. We recommend CUL prioritize its resources and funds.

Collaborate with campus partners
We suggest that CUL work with other campus entities such as Alumni Affairs, Career Services, the Colleges, the Graduate School, etc. to leverage expertise, share funding, and raise alumni awareness of all campus services.
**Undertake a Veterinary pilot project**

A pilot project is underway to identify Veterinary journal titles that would be most desirable to recent alumni and explore access to these journals with the appropriate publishers. A meeting has been scheduled with Erla Heyns, Susanne Whitaker, Bill Kara, Jesse Koennecke, Mary Ochs and Dr. Lorin Warnick, Associate Dean for Veterinary Education to discuss the goal of providing alumni access and to brainstorm potential ways to create a plan for this. Several goals to explore are: to create a subscription service for alumni who graduated in the past five years; to provide the relevant veterinary journal titles to these alumni; to work with an outside vendor or an appropriate Cornell service provider to act as a retailer and will manage the website and subscription service.

The pilot will lead to a better understanding of a host of technical issues such as permissions, authentication, security violations.

**Update, maintain, and enhance the Library Services for Alumni site**

The current page [http://alumni.library.cornell.edu/askalibrarian.html](http://alumni.library.cornell.edu/askalibrarian.html) is essential for keeping alumni and staff informed. It should be reviewed, assessed and tested for usability. With the growth of content, the page needs to become a site and be linked to other library and campus web pages for alumni. Updating is currently handled efficiently by staff in Library Alumni Relations, but a redesign may require more resources. Ideally we would like to have the website enhanced by Jan. 2012 as the charge indicates but constraints on staff time or competing priorities may make that unrealistic. In the future suggestions for new content would need to be evaluated. We recommend that an existing group take over curation. The most appropriate candidates include CDExec, DRC, or PSEC.

**Immediately give alumni access to databases which have no additional cost to the library**

Project Muse was made available in March 2011. We’re currently working to make Annual Reviews available.

**Librarians should discuss access for alumni with vendors**

We recommend that when librarians talk to vendors they should discuss the possibility of alumni access. ERM should also ask about providing access for alumni during negotiations for purchasing new databases or renewing licenses for existing ones as part of their routine procedures. Occasionally we expect to be pleasantly surprised by alumni access at little or no additional cost. Simply asking the question will serve as a reminder to vendors that CUL seeks to provide alumni with more access.
Appendix I

Alumni Access to E-Resources  -- A brief overview  (submitted by Bill Kara, Nov. 1, 2010)

Cornell University, similar to other colleges and universities, offers services, including some
library services, to alumni.  This is compatible not only with goals for fostering and maintaining
ongoing ties with its graduates, but also is in support of life-long learning and providing Cornell
graduates with resources to support them in their new endeavors.

Nearly all CUL’s online resources which are not available to the broader public are licensed to
“current faculty, staff and students”.  Since alumni would fall outside of this definition, they
are rarely included in the definition of the Cornell user community.  This is not surprising given
the complexities of pricing and licensing issues and is comparable to licensing at other
institutions.  With difficulties posed for including the Weill Cornell Medical College in all our
licensing and us in theirs, over 6,000 new graduates each year would even more significantly
broaden the scope and size of the Cornell community for licensed electronic resources.  In the
academic year 2009/2010, 6,619 degrees were conferred (3,696 baccalaureate degrees and
2,923 master’s, doctoral, professional degrees).  Additionally, licensed resources are usually
restricted to educational and research purposes and any for-profit or commercial use is clearly
excluded.  Even if access were expanded to include alumni, graduates now employed in their
fields should not use Cornell licensed resources for those purposes unless permitted in the
expanded licensing.

Options, however, for alumni access to licensed e-resources do exist.  In CUL’s current services
for alumni (http://alumni.library.cornell.edu/askalibrarian.html), a few resources are listed
(noticeably fewer than comparable institutions).  These include two EBSCOhost databases
specifically marketed to universities for alumni access. Other universities have developed online
collections for their alumni, but in different ways.  Different targeted alumni services (and
access) might be offered, for example, to graduates of their business schools.  Such targeted
alumni services could also be developed, maintained and funded by the school rather than the
library.

Identification of resources:
In scanning the lists of resources available to alumni at peer business schools, Angela Horne
identified over 20 different online products.  For example, the University of Michigan offers a
suite of resources available to the alumni of their business school and some to the broader UM
alumni population.  Of these titles, CUL maintains some active subscriptions, but certainly not
to all.  Looking at universities’ online lists for alumni access which are not restricted to a subset
of the graduates, there are certainly other titles.  The lists include titles which are specifically
marketed to universities for their alumni communities, titles which might require an additional
payment to expand access to alumni and selected titles which are publically accessible (and
usually identified as such).  On these lists of resources there are a couple which require no
special licensing or payment, for example, titles from OECD and Project Muse.  Even for these,
however, we have no well-established procedures for identifying, selecting and, if desired,
adding access through Cornell’s Library Services for Alumni.  There are also licensing issues to
consider, not all licenses signed by Cornell departments and schools meet the Library’s licensing policies.

Targeted Alumni Support:
Apart from general collections available to alumni or collections available to some segments of the alumni community such as business school graduates, would there be opportunities to develop focused alumni collections for other segments of the post-graduate Cornell community? This, similar to other alumni services would bring up a variety of account maintenance and permissions issues. Using the Veterinary School graduates as an example, could a library-supported program (perhaps in conjunction with the College of Veterinary Medicine) be developed that would support access to literature in their field for 2-3 years after graduation?

Four publishers, Elsevier, Wiley, Springer and Oxford UP, were contacted. None of these publishers currently have any provisions for alumni access. However, there was no outright rejection for exploring the possibilities for a well-defined, “limited” or “structured” approach. If the Library or University is able to manage the appropriate credentials, Elsevier mentioned the possibility of establishing a “prepaid account …to support article download needs of these students.” Springer mentioned concerns regarding for profit/commercial use, but they and OUP expressed the possibility to discuss it further. It would be an innovative program, certainly targeting a group of professional school graduates in the immediate years post-graduation. It would require negotiations with individual publishers and data providers, there would likely be limitations on use, require a commitment to maintain diverse permissions and keep them up-to-date, and would most likely require additional funds for a providing access to a larger community of users.

From exploring several peer institutions’ online sites for their alumni services, Cornell is not a leader, certainly not in the number and variety of online licensed resources to which their alumni have access.

Recommendations:
1. Investigate peer institutions’ current resources available to alumni.
2. Using these titles as a basis, for desired (and selected) titles investigate the pricing and licensing requirements.
3. Develop a collection policy for the Library Services for Alumni, including appropriate funding to support the building and maintenance of that collection. Assign selection responsibility to that collection (or targeted collections).
4. Develop a more streamlined procedure for identifying and adding resources for alumni access.
5. If more innovative programs are desired, for example, supporting graduates of targeted programs in the first 2-3 years after graduation, develop a more defined plan to discuss with appropriate publishers and information providers.
Appendix II

List of university alumni access websites surveyed
3/10/2011
Maureen Morris

Moderate Access:

Columbia Alumni Access - [https://alumni-friends.library.columbia.edu/eresources.html](https://alumni-friends.library.columbia.edu/eresources.html)

John's Hopkins - [http://alumni.jhu.edu](http://alumni.jhu.edu)

Standard Access: (comparable to Cornell)

Harvard - [http://www.gse.harvard.edu/library/services/alumni/index.html](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/library/services/alumni/index.html)

Georgetown - [http://www.library.georgetown.edu/alumni/full-text](http://www.library.georgetown.edu/alumni/full-text)

Brown - [http://alumni.brown.edu/services/library/](http://alumni.brown.edu/services/library/)

Illinois - [http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/alumni.html](http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/alumni.html)

Penn State - [http://alumni.libraries.psu.edu/members.html](http://alumni.libraries.psu.edu/members.html)

NYU - [http://library.nyu.edu/alumni/eresources.html](http://library.nyu.edu/alumni/eresources.html)

None:

MIT - [http://libraries.mit.edu/groups/alumni/databases.html](http://libraries.mit.edu/groups/alumni/databases.html)

Yale - [http://www.library.yale.edu/circ/alumni_eresources.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/circ/alumni_eresources.html)

U. of Chicago: [http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/using/access/alumni.html](http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/using/access/alumni.html)
Appendix II

Survey of Library Development Officers
Alumni Access to Databases
Jennifer Sawyer
3/2/2011

**MIT**
We offer access in our library facilities (which are open to the public) and using one of our computers, to the bulk of our electronic resources (approximately 80% of them). Only active members of the community (e.g. current student, staff, faculty or researcher with an active network login) can access any digital collections from a personal computer, on or off campus.

I get this question a lot from alumni. If you come up with a magic solution, let me know!

**Harvard**
Harvard's policy is similar to MIT. We offer access to all electronic resources from our computers used within the library buildings to anyone with access to the library (students, faculty, staff, visiting scholars). Alumni are allowed free access 6 days per year. If they want additional access or borrowing privileges they must purchase it annually. Only people with a Harvard ID can access digital resources remotely. A few programs like RefWorks are free to everyone.

Like Steven, I get the question about alumni access often, especially from seniors who realize that their access will be cut off when they graduate. All of them are willing to pay an annual fee, but the library administration operates on the "you can't have it unless we can give it to you for free" model, and won't consider charging. Harvard Business School has a different approach. Membership in the HBS alumni association ($250 per year) includes access library resources including to electronic databases (good stuff, like Hoovers).

Of course the collections that we have digitized through our Open Collections and other programs are accessible to everyone (they are all in the public domain).

**Duke University**
Any patron can access databases from within the libraries. For alumni, we've created the Alumni Portal, listed at the bottom of the main page of our website (library.duke.edu) along with all the other libraries around campus. Once alums authenticate, they have access to a variety of services (see below)..................

**Online Databases**
The Duke University Libraries and the Duke University Alumni Association provide access to a set of online resources to all Duke alumni. To access these databases, register with the Duke Alumni Directory. Then click on "Research Resources." If you have questions about these resources, you may use the chat box to get real-time assistance from reference librarians.
The following selected online resources are available for Duke University alumni:

- **ATLA Religion Database**
- **EBSCO Academic Search Alumni Edition**
- **JSTOR**
- **ProQuest ABI/Inform Complete**
- **RefWorks**

These databases may be accessed off-campus by Duke alumni who are using them for personal, non-commercial use. Use of these resources for commercial gain is not permitted.

We've entered relationships with each of the providers, most of whom offer an alumni version of their resources at a reduced cost. At least for now, we are paying the fees for that.

**University of Texas at Austin**
Alumni can only access a select group of materials that is purchased by our alumni organization. Of course, they have to be paid members of the alumni organization. UT Libraries does not provide alumni access to electronic scholarly materials. Here is the link to the alumni organization's website for more information: [http://www.texasexes.org/get-informed/library-access.aspx](http://www.texasexes.org/get-informed/library-access.aspx).

**UCLA**
We did provide access to ProQuest for alumni and friends to donors who gave $250+ annually to the Library. It was not successful; folks who signed up were disappointed by the limited ProQuest package. We then turned it over to the UCLA Alumni Assn to market to alums. We provided the access so we could “capture” the names and email addresses of those alums who signed up. We then solicited them through our annual fund and they were, by far, one of the lowest producing segments. We finally gave all the responsibility to the Alumni Assn. We do not take names, give passwords, or capture the data for future solicitations. Really, there was no benefit to the Library.

However, I heard that Duke does provide access to JSTOR and some other databases. Here is some information that was sent to us by one of their librarians:

The total cost is not that high: $12,580 annually, but these alumni access fees were negotiated as add-ons to current subscriptions and not sold separately, also our total FTE is rather low (12,000).

We are looking at adding Project Muse which we were told that we could add for no added cost as long as our subscription remains current.

**JSTOR $3000**
Academic Search Premier Alumni access $7500 ABI/inform $130 ATLA $1950
UCSD
At UC San Diego, we also provided access to ProQuest to both the (now defunct) Friends of the UCSD Libraries and the UCSD Alumni Association (we each paid $2,000 a year in licensing fees). Both the Libraries and the UCSD-AA found that the number of users on didn’t warrant the cost, so discontinued this last year. Using Amy’s model, we also sent direct mail to the Alumni list, but this didn’t pull for us either. The Alumni Association isn’t offering any off-site electronic services to its constituency at the moment.

University of Florida at Gainesville
UF did provide access to EBSCO’s products: Academic Premier Alumni Edition, Business Sources Complete Alumni Edition. These two products are purchased by the UF Alumni Association. The Association signed a three-year contract. Now, the Alumni Association is going to provide JSTOR as a pilot project from JSTOR. We are very pleased to have this opportunity of building partnership with UF Alumni Association. The Association uses these products as perks to recruit high level of alumni members and new members. As Amy stated that the benefits received is to capture the names and email addresses because the library development office staff create the user profile including USER ID and Password. These names normally we do not have way to approach them. Now, many of them have become our library friends and received electronic invitation to library lecture series and events.

Johns Hopkins University
JHU provides its alumni with a separate online alumni library called Hopkins KnowledgeNET, in a partnership between the libraries and the Alumni Relations department. The databases are licensed specifically for alumni. Dues paying members of the alumni association have access to Hopkins KnowledgeNET, which includes the following databases:
ProQuest (Alumni editions of ABI/INFORM, Research Library and ProQuest Medical Library)
Grove Music Online (from Oxford Music Online)
The database subscriptions are paid for by Alumni Relations.

University of Virginia
At the University of Virginia, the Central Development’s Office of Engagement pays for the databases which are available to all alumni who have a free HoosOnline account. We use HoosOnline (a system managed by the alumni Association) to authenticate valid users.

A public services librarian helps by:
• gathering usage statistics,
• selecting the databases/vendor and working with our Acquisitions Department to work out the licensing agreement
• answering questions from users
• working with our reference staff to answer questions from users that may come to them instead of to me (I worked with the Office of Engagement to set up a library account for database access for our staff)
• liaison with vendor
Right now we are with EBSCO and information for alumni, including FAQs, is available at http://www2.lib.virginia.edu/alumni/

Notre Dame
We provide CareerShift for our alums; the cost is shared between the Hesburgh Libraries, the Career Center, and the Mendoza College of Business. We also provide the Gale career database, that has two prices, one for our usual clientele, and another for an alumni client.

Penn State
Our Alumni Library is a partnership between the Alumni Association and the Libraries. It's actually very robust and does include ProQuest and JSTOR. We also advertise the Library in the Alumni Association materials and magazine. We get great feedback. In order to access it, you must a dues paying member of the Alumni Association.

University of Illinois - Urbana
The Library shares the cost of the alumni version of Proquest with our Alumni Association. I don’t know the cost as we get it as part of a bundle via a contract negotiated by one of our librarians who specializes in driving hard bargains and negotiating the tangled web of state requirements for purchasing contracts. Our current contract expires in FY 2012. So far no word if the Alumni Association wants to continue with the product and the current arrangement.

When the product was first offered it was a big hit with the alumni until they realized that they couldn’t get their favorite professional journals on it. Some expected it to have “Everything” on it, not realizing that there are thousands of databases and that it is impossible to have one comprehensive database. Recently, the questions have subsided, but at first I spent a lot of time explaining to unhappy alumni why they couldn’t have full access to everything on the Library’s website. Even the folks at the Alumni Association didn’t understand the concept. Apparently, they thought Proquest would be an entry into all of our offerings. It has taken a lot of education to help people understand that online databases are not actually owned by the Library. The assignment of passwords and management of the use of the database is strictly up to the Alumni Association. The Library’s only role is to provide the platform for the database as well as reference services to those who need help using it. Overall, it has been a good partnership.

We have a very robust site on our Library front page which explains the privileges we can offer to alumni. http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/alumni.html

Our Library Friends website has a question and answer site about electronic databases that I developed several years ago. Although I tweak the content from time to time—the questions and the answers seem to be the same. http://www.library.illinois.edu/friends/e-resources.html

North Carolina State University
We do allow alumni, as well as others, access to our collection (physical and electronic). You can read more about it here: https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/giving/givingform/give.php?gift=fol

Dartmouth
Dartmouth offers alumni lifetime borrowing privileges and remote and campus access to electronic resources. Below is a link to more info. The Alumni Digital Library link leads to a FAQ page with more detail about what alumni can access remotely. I hope this is helpful.


**Penn**

We offer free access to e-resources in the Library.

See [http://www.library.upenn.edu/access/alumni/](http://www.library.upenn.edu/access/alumni/)

We are working on a plan to start offering access to e-resources remotely, possibly for an annual membership fee.