

COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION (LASC)  
ANNUAL REPORT  
AY 2024-2025

**TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE**

In AY 2024-2025, LASC held a total of eight regularly scheduled meetings in order to conduct business with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's [Senate Bylaw II.IV.4](#). Some business items were discussed and resolved via email.

**Areas of Focus**

*1) Open Access (OA) Ambassador Program: Presentations to Campus Faculty*

Open Access (OA) publishing removes paywalls, making research freely accessible to all. It also allows faculty to retain the copyright to their work. Transformative agreements offer several key benefits to faculty, including discounted rates and funding support for faculty who lack the resources or funds to publish their work as OA.

Promoting OA publishing and transformative agreements has been an ongoing goal for LASC in recent years. LASC presented key information to faculty at their departmental meetings on the UC's transformative agreements, with the help of library liaisons. The OA presentations highlighted the value and practicality of OA publishing and addressed common misconceptions around OA publishing and demonstrated the publishing process. By identifying common questions from faculty, LASC was able to understand the barriers to OA publishing and refine their presentations for the future.

In the 2023-24 academic year, several presentations have been made to the departments within the School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA) and the School of Natural Sciences (SNS). During AY 2024-2025, LASC focused on presenting to several departments within the School of Engineering (SOE). LASC presented to the following departments at their faculty departmental meetings: Management of Complex Systems (MCS); Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEE); Bioengineering (BioE); Mechanical Engineering (ME); and Psychological Sciences (PSY).

*2) Promoting Open Access (OA) and Transformative Agreements to Graduate Students*

LASC discussed several strategies for disseminating OA information to graduate students. These included prerecording OA presentations and distributing the presentation links in collaboration with the LASC Graduate Student Representative, as well as

creating infographics and other informational materials for Graduate Chairs to share with their students. Member Ojeda reached out to Graduate Division as well to discuss strategies. Promoting OA will be a key focus for LASC in the upcoming academic year.

3) *Addressed the Library's Budgetary Challenges to CAPRA*

One of LASC's key priorities was to help address the Library's budgetary challenges by spreading awareness of the Library's role in supporting the campus research and instruction. Early in the academic year, Chair Blois met with the Senate leadership, who suggested the possibility of presenting the Library's budget issues to the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA). Chair Blois and Associate University Librarian for Library Operations Scott attended the December 2, 2024 CAPRA meeting to provide a brief overview of the Library's budget. The presentation highlighted the budget deficits and their resulting impacts on the Library, and outlined the data-driven approach the Library took to address the budget deficits. Chair Blois and Associate University Librarian for Library Operations Scott emphasized that the Library's budget shortfalls were not temporary or due to one-time factors, but were a result of long-term, systemic issues in how the budget was allocated. Chair Blois continued to emphasize the system budget shortfall in her semester reports to DivCo.

### **Consultation with the University Librarian**

LASC benefited from consultation and input from University Librarian Li on the topics including updates on the Library's budget cut exercise, service hours, and cancellation of subscriptions.

LASC was updated on the progress and challenges around the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) project at the UC Merced Library throughout the academic year. The grant intended to establish a research archive with secure storage to house archival collections and spaces by renovating a part of the Library building. The Library currently does not have adequate storage facilities for its archives, and additional space is essential to support the growth of the Library's collections. The Library was preparing for construction as they had completed all the necessary design and architectural work. However, the grant that the UC Merced Library received from the NEH was terminated on April 1, 2025. The Library and UC Merced engaged with NEH regarding reimbursement of funds spent to date and also appealed the decision. The NEH grant was reinstated on July 3, 2025.

### **Campus Review Items**

- LASC reviewed and commented on:
  - Interim Policy on Expressive Activities and Assembly: Protests, Demonstrations, Non-University Speakers and Signage on Campus and in University Facilities
  - School of Engineering Electrical Engineering Minor Proposal
  - Accounting B.S. and Minor Proposal

- Business Administration B.A. and Minor Proposal
- Liberal Studies B.A. Proposal
- Life and Environmental Sciences (LES) Graduate Program Proposal

### **Systemwide Review Item**

- LASC reviewed and commented on:
  - Proposed Revisions to APM 360 – Appointment and Promotion, Librarian Series

### **Systemwide Updates**

LASC Chair Blois represented UCM at the systemwide University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (UCOLASC) and kept LASC informed of updates throughout the year. The main UCOLASC items included updates on the California Digital Library (CDL), Project Transform Work Group (PTWG), Journal Lookup Tool (JOLT), UC Publishing Services (UCPUBS) and advancing Open Access (OA) publication of UC-authored monographs.

Respectfully submitted:

#### ***LASC members***

Jessica Blois, Chair (SNS) – UCOLASC Representative  
Sholeh Quinn, Vice Chair (SSHA)  
Maria DePrano (SSHA)  
Jeffrey Jenkins (SOE)  
Christopher Ojeda (SSHA)

#### ***Ex-officio, non-voting members***

Haipeng Li, University Librarian  
Elizabeth McMunn-Tetangco, Library Consultant  
Leo Niehorster-Cook, Graduate Student Representative (Spring 2025)  
Sarina Rodriguez, Graduate Student Representative (Fall 2024)  
Claudia Johnson, Graduate Student Representative (Fall 2024)

#### ***Staff***

Sang Lee