COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY & SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION (LASC)
ANNUAL REPORT
AY 2015-2016

To the Merced Division of the Academic Senate:

Academic Year (AY) 2015-2016 was the inaugural year of the Committee on Library & Scholarly Communication (LASC). The committee was empaneled as a result of the Committee on Research (COR) suggesting that Division Council take into consideration the recommendation of the AY 2013-2014 Senate-Administration Library Working Group that that library issues would be better served if they were placed under the purview of a separate, standing Senate committee such that exists on all other UC campuses. Following an approval vote by the Senate faculty in spring 2015, LASC was officially created as a standing committee. However, it was decided that LASC would not be represented on Division Council.

In AY 2015-2016, LASC held a total of 2 regularly scheduled in-person meetings in order to conduct business with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's Senate Bylaw **II.IV.4**. Some additional business was completed via electronic mail discussions.

Areas of Focus

In the first meeting of fall semester, LASC members outlined five areas for the committee to pursue throughout the academic year.

1) *Communication between faculty and the Library.* LASC discussed the best method of communication between faculty members, LASC, and the Library. Librarian Li holds meetings with faculty members and the Vice Provost for the Faculty (VPF) to engage faculty members and assess their needs. The Library worked on creating a liaison system, which is a communication structure for the Library similar to that of other academic libraries. LASC will seek to determine its role in this system, as the Senate committee tasked with making recommendations on matters concerning the role of the Library.

2) *Collection development and review.* The availability of print books and books for core fields was of great concern to LASC. LASC members, who represent varying fields, pointed out that the Library does not possess several core textbooks and resources

needed for STEM fields, specifically computer science. While students could purchase textbooks from the bookstore, this is often cost prohibitive. Moreover, students need access to a myriad of textbooks that are common in the field and not necessarily required by the UCM course in which they are enrolled. LASC agreed that the library should be equipped with books in core fields and it was suggested that graduate students and graduate group chairs submit their reading lists to the Library and the Library will make every effort to acquire the basics titles. The main obstacle is that the Library is operating under a minimal budget that has not grown commensurate with the increase in faculty and student numbers.

3) *Advocacy for Library budget.* LASC was made aware that the Library's budget has not increased over the past four years, despite the growth in student and faculty numbers. Compounding this problem is that several requested resources such as medical journals are quite costly and are unavailable as online packages.

In November 2016, LASC submitted a memo to the Senate Chair and Provost/EVC that stated the Library is an academic unit that is critical to supporting and advancing the learning, teaching and research needs of faculty and students; however, the current Library collections budget is not adequate to meet the diverse requirements for building comprehensive print and digital collections appropriate to all disciplines at the university, particularly considering the rapid growth of our faculty and student populations by 2020. Neither the Library nor faculty members are in a position to address inflation in scholarly information costs particularly inflation in the subscription costs of scholarly journals. For example, access to electronic books from certain academic presses has been curtailed due to price increases that cannot be supported given the current size of the Library collections budget. LASC emphasized that a reduction in available library materials will continue to impact negatively both undergraduate and graduate education and faculty research. LASC recommended that the Library be provided with annual funding to support research areas - within or across bylaw 55 units - for the purposes of allowing the Library to acquire print and digital resources in order to adequately support learning, teaching and research at our University.

In February 2016, VPF Camfield confirmed that LASC's memo was received and discussed at the Council of Deans. The Provost/EVC and deans agree that the Library's budget is an issue of paramount importance. To that end, Librarian Li and CIO

Kovalchick will be invited to a future Deans Council meeting to represent the Library. LASC was also informed that the Provost/EVC has consulted with Vice Chancellor for Budget and Planning Dan Feitelberg and the goal is to establish a long term model of budgeting so that it scales as the campus scales.

4) *Digital Publications and Data Archiving*

LASC's position was that if faculty members have to publish in open access journals, then faculty members must be provided funds to do so: some open access journals charge fees as high as $15,000 for publishing in their forums. While some faculty members in STEM fields can include this budget in their grant proposals to extramural funding agencies, faculty members in the humanities lack this opportunity. Another issue is that despite open access being implemented across the UC, faculty members still must publish in the traditional, core journals in their field for the prestige factor, as this is an important component of their academic personnel reviews. Indeed, publishing in these high quality venues, including those tied to professional associations, is sometimes critical for achieving promotion. LASC was informed that Vice Chancellor of Research & Economic Development Sam Traina agreed that the campus must set aside some funding to sustain faculty members who publish in open access journals. UC Berkeley conducted a study on open access costs and UCM will be able to access the data.

5) *2020 planning*

In keeping with its interest in advocating for the Library, LASC sought to determine whether Library space would be accounted for in the 2020 Project as additional space would be needed to increase the print collection. While exact specifics for the Library (e.g. square footage) in the 2020 Project are as yet unknown, the 2020 Project design teams are aware of the Library's needs and it is hoped that discussions will be held about a backfill plan after 2020 project planning is completed.

Librarian Li created a space task force to examine the space needs for the Library's role in supporting the teaching and research mission of the campus. The Library keeps statistics on daily library usage and is researching software that can help track student activities and types of usage. This will aid in the plan for determining future space needs so that students' research and study time can be more comfortable and efficient.

Consultation

Consultation with University Librarian
LASC benefited from consultation and input from University Librarian Haipeng Li who serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the committee. Librarian Li shared with LASC 1) the formulation of a strategic, long-term plan for the library which is scheduled to be finalized by summer 2016 and 2) a short-term planning proposal submitted to the Provost/EVC that included requests for funding to support new and existing faculty members and increased library staff support, and 3) new Library initiatives and innovations throughout the AY.

Consultation with CIO/AVC of IT
CIO Ann Kovalchick, an ex-officio, non-voting member of LASC, shared with the committee the structure of the IT Advisory Committee that governs IT and guides priorities, the IT workforce plan, and IT's efforts on cybersecurity.

Systemwide Review Items

- APM Revisions. LASC was identified by Division Council as the lead reviewer of the proposed revisions to APM 360 and 210-4 which included a new definition of the librarian series to reflect this role's changing responsibilities as well as instructions to review committees. LASC reviewed the proposed modifications per Division Council's request and endorsed them.
- UCOLASC updates. Chair Ryavec reported to LASC members on the main item of discussion at UCOLASC, specifically, open access and its effects on the campuses. Systemwide Senate Chair Dan Hare also attended UCOLASC meetings and provided an overview of the legislative process and the role of the systemwide Senate.

Respectfully submitted:

LASC members*:
Karl Ryavec, Chair (SSHA) – UCOLASC representative
Sholeh Quinn (SSHA) – UGC representative
Michael Scheibner (SNS) – COR representative

Victor Munoz (SOE) – GC representative

Ex officio, non-voting members:
Haipeng Li, University Librarian
Ann Kovalchick, Chief Information Officer and AVC of Information Technology

Student Representatives
Mina Naghshnejad, Graduate Student Representative
Andre Frise, Undergraduate Student Representative

Staff:
Simrin Takhar

*Professor William Shadish of SSHA, dec. March 2016, was the CAPRA representative on LASC.