

**COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS (LASC)  
ANNUAL REPORT  
AY 2019-2020**

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

In AY 2019-2020, LASC held a total of three 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.<sup>1</sup>

**Areas of Focus**

LASC focused on four main issues this academic year:

1) *Approval of Proposed Changes LASC Bylaws*

In the last academic year, Divisional Council endorsed LASC's proposed revisions to LASC's bylaws for campus review. The proposed revisions included change in the composition of the committee to being broadly representative of the schools from being composed of a representative each from the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA), the Committee on Research (COR), Undergraduate Council (UGC), and Graduate Council (GC); specifying the position of the vice chair; removing the Chief Information Officer (CIO) as an ex-officio member (at the CIO's request) and; revising Bylaw II.IV.4.B.2 addressing the committee's role in the Library's budget. The proposed bylaw revisions were issued for campus review in fall semester 2019. At the December 12, 2019 Meeting of the Division, the proposed revisions to the LASC bylaws were approved by vote of the Senate faculty. The new bylaws took effect in January 2020.

2) *Consultation with the Library During the Review of New Programs*

In previous academic years, LASC noted that when Schools submit proposals for the establishment of new undergraduate or graduate programs, the proposals often state that no Library resources would be required. It came to LASC's attention again that the Library is not consulted prior to the proposals' development. After new programs are approved, the Library's budget is negatively impacted, as they must locate new journals and books to support the new program. The library also sincerely endeavors to support all UC Merced programs successfully achieve their teaching and research goals. In a previous academic year, LASC requested to the-then Senate Chair that the process for the approval of new programs be revised to include Library consultation. The process was

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<sup>1</sup> LASC cancelled the fourth meeting scheduled for late spring 2020 semester because faculty members were overworked teaching remotely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

not revised. This academic year, LASC asserted its commitment to change the process to ensure that the Library is consulted prior to a proposal being submitted to the Senate.

LASC expressed their ongoing concern with meaningful integration of Library input into formal assessment of resource implications of proposals for new undergraduate programs, graduate programs, Organized Research Units (ORUs), or schools' proposals on the Library and to recommend two Senate actions to help alleviate such problems.

First, LASC strongly recommended that a mechanism be put in place for the UC Merced campus for consultation with the Library for proposals of new graduate programs, ORUs, and schools similar to that required by the UC Merced UGC. That is, every new program, ORU, or school program proposal should demonstrate and document early consultation with the Library as part of the review and approval process. This documentation should include a letter from the University Librarian summarizing the resource implications of the proposal and the Library's capacity to meet the program's scholarly and instructional needs.

Currently, only new undergraduate program proposals require consultation with the Library. UGC's "Review and Approval of Undergraduate Degree Programs" (Section II.4) requires that the Library be consulted, and that evidence of the consultation be presented in the program.

Conversely, no requirement for consultation with the Library is necessary for a proposal of new graduate programs, ORUs, or schools, although the CCGA Handbook does request that library resource implications be considered for graduate program proposal (Appendix B) and establishing ORUs (Appendix S). Since CCGA and by extension UC Merced's Graduate Council do not require Library consultation, program proposal authors do not do so.

Second, while LASC appreciated the UGC policy requiring consultation with the Library and demonstration of said consultation, this requirement did not seem to have been fulfilled. Thus, LASC recommended that the UGC requirement that the Library be consulted be documented in the proposal and that proposals lacking such documentation be rejected for Senate review until such consultation has been completed.

If these recommendations for undergraduate programs and new graduate programs, ORUs, and schools were instituted, Library resource needs and the success of the new programs -- and students in those programs -- would be more adequately assessed and support.

A follow-up meeting was held with the chairs of LASC, UGC, GC, and CAPRA in late April in which the participants agreed that the lack of consultation created budgetary problems with the library. The chairs of UGC and GC agreed that proposal templates, which will be finalized next academic year, will incorporate consultation with the library. The resource implications will be discussed in a CAPRA meeting next fall. LASC and

CAPRA will work together to find effective ways to approach resource allocation for the library in the future.

3) *Collaboration with Senate Committee on Research (COR) on OSTP Memo*

Chair DePrano informed LASC that the Executive Director of the California Digital Library reported about the Office of Science and Technology Publications (OSTP) at the White House Request for Information (RFI). The OSTP requested policy input on whether or not to remove the one-year embargo on publicly-funded research, thus creating a zero-embargo.

LASC and CoR collaborated on a memo to the OSTP to affirm that the public should have free and immediate access to peer-reviewed findings of publicly-funded research. Open access to scholarly research publications is a broadly held value at the UC. The memo stated that the UC Faculty have demonstrated our strong support of open access through our 2013 Academic Senate Open Access Policy. UC faculty lead our system's open access initiatives in partnership with the University Libraries and are critical leaders of UC's pursuit of open access transformation of scholarly publishing.

The memo added that LASC was in strong support of the reduction of the current twelve-month post-publication embargo period to a zero-embargo policy for author-accepted manuscripts. LASC also affirmed that such a policy represents a deliberate step forward in alignment with UC's mission to serve society and to provide long-term benefits through the transmission of research and knowledge.

LASC stressed in the memo that the financial onus of making articles open access should not be on the Principle Investigator's grant. LASC recommended that the federal granting agencies implement solutions such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has done with the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (H.R. 2764) in which electronic copies of peer-reviewed research and findings from NIH-funded research are deposited in open PubMed Central database.

LASC suggested in the memo that federal granting agencies could implement a "pay for publishing performance" program in which publishers should demonstrate to the funding agencies and public research institutions how effective they have been in disseminating research funded by the taxpayer. In other words, for federally funded research the federal funding agencies should pay the publishers to disseminate the research.

4) *Library Support for Research during the COVID-19 Pandemic*

LASC worked with the University Librarian and the UC Merced Library to address faculty concern about accessing library materials and Interlibrary Loan materials during the late spring and summer 2020 physical shutdown of the library and ILL due to the COVID-19 pandemic Shelter-in-Place order in spring 2020 and the continuing infection spread during summer 2020 in Merced county and California.

Initially in late May and early June 2020, LASC worked with the library to respond to specific questions from IH leadership regarding ILL book borrowing and E-book access. A memo explained that the ILL system across the nation and the world has been temporarily stopped because of the pandemic. E-book access is limited by specific contracts negotiated between campus libraries and publishers. Access to UC Merced library books was not possible at that time because library staff were not allowed into the library building.

At the UC Merced Townhall on July 9, 2020, IH faculty addressed access to the UC Merced Library collection, ILL books and materials, and E-book access. In response Library administration organized a meeting with select IH faculty members scheduled for July 29, 2020. The LASC chair emailed those select IH faculty members asking them what they specifically needed. The LASC chair also addressed IH faculty members and graduate students at a July 15, 2020 IH meeting asking what specific problems humanities scholars are having, so that the library can work to solve them. Library leadership (Haipeng Li, Donald Barclay, and Eric Scott) and the LASC chair met on July 17, 2020 to prepare for the Faculty Research Support Meeting to be held on July 29, 2020.

An email was also sent to the IH faculty and graduate students to notify them of solutions that already existed and to ask if there were additional issues. A few immediate solutions: 1) graduate students can email their oral exam reading lists to the Head of Collections, Jim Dooley, to see if the books could be purchased in order to expedite exam preparations; 2) digital ILL borrowing exists; 3) curbside pickup of UC Merced library collection materials started in late July.

The Faculty Research Support meeting was held on July 29, 2020. Haipeng Li began the meeting with an overview of campus reopening in terms of the Library. For instance, the Building Readiness Workgroup has finished preparing the Library to be reopened. But, the Emergency Operational Work Group is still working on operational aspects for the library. Meanwhile, the pandemic has worsened significantly in Merced county.

Faculty attending the meeting asked specific questions regarding E-book ILL borrowing; problems with E-book format; borrowing of ILL print materials; borrowing special collections materials; delivery of print materials via a driving service, or sending print materials via mail; and the use of UC campus libraries in other cities. Regarding E-book ILL borrowing faculty were asked to make purchase recommendations to Jim Dooley. The library has no control over E-book format. Borrowing ILL print material, however, is still not possible because of the pandemic. But, digitalization of chapters or essays in print materials in collections of other UC campus libraries is possible. Borrowing special collections material may also be possible or digitalization of a limited amount of a special collections item may be possible. Mail delivery of books may be possible and will be investigated.

**Consultation with University Librarian**

LASC benefited from consultation and input from Librarian Li on an array of topics including updates on Library periodic review, Library strategic planning, the Elsevier polling, Elsevier negotiations status and open access, the systemwide Integrated Library System, developing the Sierra Nevada / Central Valley Archival Hub in special collections, the development of a Special Collections facility, and Library processing needs.

The UC Merced Library also kindly provided three days of special Interlibrary Loan materials pickup during the Winter Intercession, when the library was technically closed, as requested by UC Merced faculty.

**Consultation with Librarian Elizabeth Salmon**

Librarian Elizabeth Salmon made a presentation about Zero Cost Course Materials initiative.

**Review Items**1) *Faculty Advisory Committee for IT Draft Charge*

LASC reviewed the draft charge for the proposed, faculty advisory IT committee. LASC supported the empaneling of such the committee, however, raised the following points:

LASC strongly agreed with Divisional Council that the increasing administrative burden on faculty members caused by using these various applications is unsustainable. However, it was unclear to LASC how much control IT had over the decision to implement the applications and whether the proposed faculty advisory committee for IT would help resolve the problem of the proliferation of new software applications. To the extent that the proposed advisory committee can guide the campus on these decisions, LASC recommended that decisions on the purchase of future software applications should occur within the context of integrated campus planning, such as acquiring software that has multiple uses.

Second, LASC was concerned that the campus is not appropriately taking into account the security implications surrounding the use and ownership of faculty, student, and campus data in the campus software applications. LASC hoped the faculty advisory committee will address this serious issue.

2) *Proposed MS Degree in Cognitive and Information Sciences*

LASC reviewed the proposal to create an M.S. degree in Cognitive and Information Sciences. The committee was unclear whether the Library was consulted to help the Department of Cognitive and Information Sciences determine whether current or future faculty hires will require additional library acquisitions. LASC strongly encourages such consultation. LASC also noted that the proposal did not appear to take into account

library staff resources needed to support information literacy and ensure graduate student success in this proposed degree.

3) *Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation*

In its memo to Divisional Council, LASC stated that the committee has no reason to believe that UC Merced is currently in possession of NAGPRA-eligible items; consequently, our campus does not have a standing committee dedicated to oversight of these items in the manner of other UC campuses. Moreover, LASC did not envision the need to empanel such a committee at UC Merced.

However, in the event that UC Merced may be in a position to potentially acquire NAGPRA-eligible items, our campus would greatly benefit from external expertise available at other UC campuses or from a systemwide committee. LASC therefore suggested that the Presidential Policy include a reciprocity provision that allows campuses like UC Merced who lack the administrative infrastructure to oversee proper disposition of NAGPRA-eligible items to be able to seek assistance from colleagues at other UCs.

4) *Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Copyright Ownership*

LASC acknowledged the complexity of the issue. In some research areas, students effectively work as research assistants in the context of a PI project (whether or not the project is explicitly funded by a sponsor). The fundamental intellectual contribution is the PI's and the students often work on development, such as experiments, simulations, etc.

### **Systemwide Updates**

LASC Chair DePrano represented the committee on the systemwide University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications (UCOLASC) and kept LASC informed of updates throughout the year. The main items of discussion at UCOLASC meetings included updates on Dryad, the Systemwide Integrated Library System, increased funding for Library collections, Elsevier negotiations, and open access issues. LASC Chair DePrano voted to endorse the Springer-Nature Open Access Agreement in an emergency UCOLASC meeting in Spring 2020. LASC Chair DePrano also voted to endorse restarting negotiations with Elsevier in an emergency UCOLASC meeting in Summer 2020.

Respectfully submitted:

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

Maria DePrano, Chair and GC representative (SSHA) – UCOLASC representative  
Kathleen Hull (SSHA) – CAPRA representative  
Miguel Carreira-Perpiñán (SoE) – CoR representative  
Rowena Grey (SSHA) – UGC representative

*Ex officio, non-voting members*

Haipeng Li, University Librarian

*Student Representative*

Farhana Sharmin, Graduate Student Representative

*Staff*

Simrin Takhar

Melanie Snyder