

**COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS (LASC)  
ANNUAL REPORT  
AY 2021-2022**

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

In AY 2021-2022, LASC held a total of six 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](#).

**Areas of Focus**

LASC focused on six main issues this academic year:

1) *Library Staffing Issues*

In academic year 2020-2021, the campus administration went through a budget cut exercise. One aspect of that exercise was to consider cutting some staff positions. As a result, one staff position, a Night/Weekend Supervisor position, was cut from the Library. This action had a negative impact on the Library and its users as it caused a reduction of Library service hours. The Library was closed on Saturdays and had reduced hours on Sunday evenings throughout the academic year 2021-2022. LASC considers this to be an important equity issue for our students.

One of LASC’s goals this academic year was to advocate for increased budgets for Library collections, staffing, and operating costs. LASC argued that determining adequate budgets for the Library would substantially contribute to the university’s research goals.

Chair DePrano sent a memo to the Senate Chair, Graduate Council (GC), Undergraduate Council (UGC) and the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA) to make sure that committees were aware of the Library closures on Saturdays due to the budget cuts. Chair DePrano consulted with GC and UGC and reported that GC requested data related to the Library staffing issues and how they were affecting graduate students. The Library currently does not have a method of tracking this data. UGC fully supported LASC and offered to write a memo in support of the Library staffing memo.

EVC/Provost Camfield attended a LASC meeting and agreed that the Library is understaffed. He encouraged the Senate to continue collaborating with the administration through his office about the importance of Library resources. EVC/Provost Camfield emphasized that faculty researchers need access to the latest, cutting-edge research and to services that help them find and curate information. The narrative must shift from seeing

the Library as a place to store books to the Library as an active repository of knowledge that helps researchers curate big data sets and that assists researchers in accessing cutting-edge journals across every field, among many other important services. The Library also helps students develop information literacy. Librarians are the individuals working with our faculty and teaching students information literacy. EVC/Provost Camfield strongly encouraged LASC to continue to advocate for the Library and shape the narrative as to how a 21st century Library can help faculty, and graduate and undergraduate students.

Associate University Librarian for Library Operations Eric Scott attended a LASC meeting to report that the Night/Weekend Services Coordinator position has been requested for the fiscal year 2023. New positions of Resource Sharing Librarian, Archivist & Geospatial/Map Librarian, Information Literacy Librarian and Library Marketing & Outreach have been requested as well.

## 2) *Library Budget Cut Issues*

Last year, the campus administration went through a budget cut exercise. One aspect was to look at non-salary cut such as the collections budget. The Library experienced a 13% cut in their collections budget. The projected collections budget deficit for this year will be over \$346,994, with about \$200,000 restored with one-time funds from the Provost's office. However, the Library has cut subscriptions in order to fulfill the \$146,994 final collections budget cut.

Also, Librarian Li shared that there is a new Systemwide Integrated Library System (SILS) across all 10 campuses. The cost of this new system will be shared; the increased cost for UC Merced will take effect next year.

The University has agreed to provide a small warehouse space for archival materials, however there will be a charge. These costs have been added to the budget request.

The Library has submitted a budget request along with the academic plan phase three. CAPRA has reviewed all school and division budget requests and made recommendations to the Provost. This request has been submitted in April to the Chancellor. The three areas that are included in the Library's budget request has been the collections budget, staffing, and miscellaneous areas such as salary increase for students and space for archives.

## 3) Support the Library in Establishing a Sierra Nevada / Central Valley Research Archive

The Library worked on the NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants: Capital Projects entitled "Establishing a Sierra Nevada / Central Valley Research Archive.

Director of Strategic Initiatives, Archives & Special Collections Emily Lin consulted with LASC members regarding the proposal to establish a Sierra Nevada and Central Valley Research Archive. The focus of the proposal was to address the space issue in the Library. The emphasis behind the proposal was to renovate the space to accommodate more collections, preserve them in appropriate space, and to provide access to the physical collections.

The proposal suggested renovation of part of the Kolligian Library 4th floor space to turn it into an archive area. There are several archive collections that have been donated to the Library, however finding space for these collections continues to be a challenge. With the renovation of this space, the Library is hoping to accommodate future collections.

In partnership with the Center for the Humanities, the Library successfully received the \$750,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). This amount is to be matched by the Chancellor, and all together the amount will be 1.5 million dollars. These funds will support the vision of creating the Sierra Nevada Central Valley archive. NEH has sent out a press release with a list of this year's grant recipients which showed that UC Merced was the largest grant recipient in the state of California.

LASC is overjoyed that the Library and Centre for the Humanities NEH Challenge Grant was successful!

#### 4) *Open Access and Transformative Agreements*

The three main Open Access agreements are with Cambridge University Press, Elsevier, and Springer Nature. Between 40%-50% of UC-published articles are now being published through Open Access.

The agreement with Wiley is the eleventh transformative agreement between the UC and publishers. Wiley has proposed a pilot project with five of the UC campuses, one of which is UC Merced. This would be a one-year pilot agreement, similar to other agreements such as Elsevier and Cambridge. Reading fees will not be charged. This will be beneficial to graduate students.

One of the concerns of open access was that it is unclear how much support is offered when an author decides to publish in the open access journal. Due to the lack of awareness of open access, LASC brainstormed ways to communicate about OA with the faculty.

#### 5) *Library Budget and Space: Collections*

Providing collections that support scholarly and creative activity as well as student learning and success is a core Library mission.

The projected collections budget deficit this year was over \$300,000, which was based on the cut that was imposed on the Library (with \$200,000 replaced by one-time funds from the Provost's office). As a result, the Library made cancellations from the Wharton Research Data Service and The Journal of Visualized Experiments (Jove). The total savings from this cut was approximately \$132,000. The Library would like to work on a funding model that would help it cover all the increased costs and the cumulative deficit incurred in the past years. However, the administration has asked the Library to hold off on determining a Library budget model that would be based upon student, faculty FTE, and number of programs.

This academic year, LASC advocated for increased space for the Library for student study space, Library administration, digital projects, data management, geographic information system (GIS), archives, and special collections. Similarly, determining adequate space for the Library will support the university's research goals. Another similar goal was to promote the establishment of the Sierra Nevada / Central Valley Archival Hub. This archival hub will provide crucial research resources.

The Library does not have sufficient space for students to study and for staff offices and administrative processes. Late last spring, Chair DePrano drafted a memo on the proposed academic planning targets advocating for space, budget, and staffing.

- 6) Recognition of Library Staff and Librarians who worked onsite and in person during the pandemic

LASC sent a letter on April 27, 2022 to the Academic Senate Chair recognizing the 18 librarians and library staff who worked in person on campus during the pandemic. A statement of appreciation has also been drafted on behalf of LASC for inclusion in the campus "Monday Memo". The LASC chair also wrote a personal email to each of the 18 individuals thanking them for their impressive service to UC faculty and students during the pandemic.

### **Consultation with University Librarian**

LASC benefited from consultation and input from University Librarian Li on an array of topics, including updates on Sierra Nevada/Central Valley Research Archive at UC Merced, Elsevier, Library strategic planning, license negotiations status and open access, Library budget, Library collections, and Library space issues.

### **Review Items**

- 1) *Proposed Revisions to English Major and Minor (effective Fall 2023)*

LASC supported the proposed revisions to English Major and Minor. LASC noted that the Library was not consulted regarding two additional tracks of Literature and Environmental and Literature and Social Justice. Additional acquisitions, resources, or services might be needed to support these two new tracks. Also, consultation with the Library would give the Library the opportunity to introduce LLC faculty to resources that might benefit students completing these tracks such as the Lowe Photography Archive, the Cooperative Extension materials, and other unique archival collections that undergraduates could use for primary research.

2) *Presidential Policy on University of California Research Data*

LASC noted three concerns. First, the policy did not recognize that it is requiring UC researchers to act as archivists. Yet, archivists earn degrees in information science which trains them in records management, archives, and information governance. Most UC researchers do not have this training in records management, archives, and information management. Second, the Policy did not clarify where the financial resources will originate to hire additional librarians, archivists, and data managers at the California Digital Library (CDL) and campus libraries who will be needed in order to support this new Policy. In LASC's opinion this policy is an unfunded mandate on the California Digital Library (CDL) and the campus libraries. Third, while the Policy recognized that graduate students play a role in research, the Policy inadequately conceptualizes the potential roles graduate students might play in data generation, and the "mixed ownership" of data in a working laboratory in the real world.

3) Ernest & Julio Gallo School of Management Pre-proposal

The Revised Pre-Proposal for the Gallo School of Management (RPP) stated, "It will be important for the Library to have a sustainable funding model that is tied to growth in education and research on the campus" This was precisely LASC's area of concern.

LASC viewed the Gallo School Pre-Proposal within the context of the historical underfunding of the UC Merced Library and the budget cuts it has suffered for the last two years. These budget cuts have resulted in cuts to collections and to weekend closures, which are equity issues for our students. LASC is deeply concerned about the financial impact of the proposed Gallo School on existing academic units at UC Merced.

4) Campus-Wide Honors Program Proposal

LASC cautioned the proposal authors that the UC Merced University Library has been historically under-funded for the last decade. For the last two years, the University Library has experienced significant budget cuts which have led to the Library's closure on Saturdays, reduced Sunday hours, and over a \$300,000 cut in the collections budget.

Honors courses rightly require serious student research. LASC was concerned that introducing a research-intensive undergraduate program will increase requests for the following research services:

- 1) purchase requests for books, datasets, databases, and other collections resources
- 2) use of interlibrary loan services, which can have associated costs determined by the lending institution
- 3) use of research, instruction, geographic information system (GIS), and data curation consultation services

As these research resources and services cost money and require staff time, LASC was concerned that the Library may not have adequate financial and staff resources to assist students at the level of excellence that Librarians, Library leadership, and Library staff strive to provide. LASC concluded in strong support of the proposed university-wide Honors program.

### **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 University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications (UCOLASC) meetings included updates on: the California Digital Library (CDL), the Systemwide Integrated Library System, Licensing updates, Project Transform, Elsevier negotiations, DEI in scholarly communication, Open Educational Resources / Affordable Course Materials, and open access issues.

Respectfully submitted:

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

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Virginia Adán-Lifante (SSHA)

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

Haipeng Li, University Librarian

Elizabeth Salmon, Library Consultant

#### ***Staff***

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