UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA   ACADEMIC SENATE –MERCED DIVISION

COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS (LASC)
ANNUAL REPORT
AY 2022-2023

TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

In AY 2022-2023, 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 Budget Cut Issues*

   The Library's budget has been underfunded for many years, and often is not prioritized. LASC has worked hard to educate and spread awareness of what the Library has to offer, and how crucial the Library is to supporting campus research and instruction. LASC has spread awareness by including detailed information in the LASC White Paper. By informing the campus community, LASC hopes that the Library budget will be considered and prioritized.

   In the LASC White Paper (addressed below), LASC argued that determining adequate budgets for the Library would substantially contribute to the university's research and instruction goals. The Library's budget supports salaries and benefits for staff, information resources for students and faculty, and operations. One of LASC's goals this academic year was to advocate for increased budgets for Library collections, staffing, and operating costs. LASC argued in the White Paper that determining adequate budgets for the UCM Library would substantially contribute to the university's research and instruction goals.

   The Library submitted a budget request for the fiscal year 2023–2024. University Librarian Li shared that the budget proposal included requests for new Library staffing positions, as the Library plans to expand their services, such as providing new collections and data services to students and faculty. As new programs are being introduced to the university, it is necessary to have experts that can better assist students and faculty for these new programs.

2) *Open Access and Transformative Agreements Retreat*

During LASC meetings in the Fall, members discussed ways to promote Open Access Publishing and Transformative Agreements to our campus faculty and graduate students. As a first step, LASC held the Open Access (OA) Ambassadors Retreat in the beginning of the Spring semester with Library liaisons and led by Mark Clemente of the California Digital Library (CDL). The goal was for LASC members to become faculty experts about Open Access Publishing and Transformative Agreements so that LASC members could explain the UC Transformative Agreements to our UC Merced faculty and graduate students. Another objective of the workshop was to brainstorm ways to present the information to faculty and graduate students, and to prepare to make visitations to department faculty meetings. LASC members were able to address any questions or concerns about open access, transformative agreements, and the multi-payer model. LASC members discussed recommendations for the future for ways to run this program at UC Merced and at other UC campuses.

3) *Communicating Open Access and Transformative Agreements to Campus Faculty*

To advance a transition from a subscription-based publishing to open access (OA) publishing, the UC Libraries and CDL have been negotiating transformative agreements with publishers and academic societies. Open Access publishing increases the visibility and influence of a researcher's work and improves access to scholarly publications for all readers whether advantaged or disadvantaged, both nationally and internationally.

Following the Open Access (OA) Ambassadors Retreat in Spring 2023, LASC members visited faculty department meetings to share their knowledge on open access and transformative agreements. LASC members presented at the: Life and Environmental Sciences, Applied Mathematics, Political Sciences, GAMWS, LLC, Anthropology and Heritage Studies faculty department meetings. LASC also made a presentation to the Interdisciplinary Humanities graduate students. Jim Dooley also presented at MCB. LASC is also scheduled to present at the Economics faculty department meeting in Fall 2023. There are also plans to present to the Physics and Chemistry departments in the Fall.

UC Libraries, including the UC Merced Library have an opportunity to increase open access publishing options for faculty and graduate students at a reasonable cost. UC Libraries simultaneously improve access to scholarly publications for all readers whether advantaged or disadvantaged, both nationally and internationally. With a sustainable budgetary model and allocation, the UC Merced Library will be able to fully participate in this important transition to open access publishing through transformative agreements, making UC Merced research widely available to scholars and the public. LASC can contribute to this process by continuing to educate UC Merced faculty and graduate students.

4) Drafting the LASC White Paper

The LASC White Paper was written by Sara Davidson Squibb, AUL for Research & Engagement; Maria DePrano, chair of the UC Merced Academic Senate Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (LASC); and Eric Scott, AUL for Library Operations. The LASC White Paper demonstrates that the UC Merced Library is an important resource for the university's missions of research, teaching, learning, and service. It explains the Library's services, impact, patrons, resources, space, and finances. The LASC White Paper describes how the Library's services crucially contribution to the achievement of the campus' strategic planning goals. For UC Merced to efficiently and economically grow the key R1 metrics (research and development expenditures; number of doctoral graduates; and number of post-doctoral research staff), partnership with the UC Merced Library is necessary. The Library provides numerous activities and services that support and promote the UC Merced Strategic Planning Goals, which were designed to grow the three key R1 metrics.

Throughout the academic year 2022–2023, LASC discussed the LASC White Paper. Chair DePrano shared the areas of focus with members, which were collections data, space, differential costs for supporting various types of disciplines, projected costs to provide support for data curation, staffing, educational enterprise, and graduate needs.

The Library services addressed in the LASC White Paper are listed below followed by the campus strategic planning goal supported and promoted by that Library service.

1. Library Collections – Expand the public and scholarly influence of the campus's research at regional, national, and international levels.
2. Library Data Management for Faculty and the DMP Tool – Grow UC-quality research and creative activities by strengthening the infrastructure for extramural funding.
3. Library Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Center / Geospatial Consulting – Increase the contributions of students and staff to research and creative activities.
4. Library Instruction for Information Literacy and Reference Consultations – Grow and diversify UC-quality educational opportunities for undergraduate/graduate students and the public.
5. Library Coding and Data Science Education for Graduate Students – Broaden and deepen students' academic, personal, and career-related experience and preparation.
6. Library Zero Cost Course Materials (ZCCM) – Increase degree completion rates, while maintaining equity in achievement. Pursuing OER and use of Library resources ensures that students are treated equitably and are not disadvantaged in their pursuit of a degree.
7. Library Student Employment, Library Student Internships, Library Student Fellowships – Grow academic and administrative staff demographic composition to

be more representative of the state, as research shows that students succeed when they can see themselves in the institution.

8. Library Spaces – Transform campus culture by ensuring that all members of the community thrive as their authentic selves through equitable and inclusive structures, policies, and practices.

9. Library's Open Access Transformative Agreements – Build the collective capacity to remove structural barriers negatively impacting success through equity-informed administrative and educational decision-making.

10. Library Archives, Special Collections, and Exhibitions – Deepen the collective appreciation for diversity by developing a more robust international perspective.

The LASC White Paper demonstrates that the Library is an extraordinary resource for the campus through initiatives, such as data carpentry & regional archival collections. Recommendations have been provided in the LASC White Paper to better support the Library's needs so that the Library can provide crucial support to the UC Merced community as it grows to R1 status.

5) *Promote Affordable Course Materials (ACM) / Zero Cost Course Materials (ZCCM) / Open Educational Resources (OER)*

The UC Merced California Public Interest Group (CALPIRG) survey on college students and the costs of higher education found that 11% of UC Merced students are more likely than the national average to decide against buying or renting textbooks as they were too expensive.

The Library's Zero-Cost Course Materials (ZCCM) Grant was a mini-grant program run with CETL from 2018–2021 to reduce negative student outcomes associated with textbook costs. The mini-grant program supported faculty and instructors' adoption of zero-cost course materials using open educational resources (OER) and/or available library collections. A renewed program is running from 2022–2025 to continue to help with textbook costs. With funding, the Library could dedicate an Assistant/Associate Librarian position to focus on open access & digital publishing initiatives. The Library wants to fully participate in any upcoming OER or low-cost systemwide efforts in support of UC Merced students' success.

These zero cost course materials aim to increase degree completion rates while maintaining equity in achievement. Open Educational Resources (OER) and library resources ensures that our students are treated equitably and are not disadvantaged in their pursuit of a degree.

LASC consulted with VPDUE Sarah Frey regarding OER materials at our October 17, 2022 meeting.

6) *Promote DEI in Scholarly Communications by Advertising the Office of Scholarly Communications (OSC) DEI Website With Faculty*

The University of California's Office of Scholarly Communication (part of CDL) provides resources to help the UC community with the challenges of sharing and publishing research. One issue they address is the lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion in scholarly communication. The goal is to create a more fair and equal environment for sharing knowledge.

A new DEI web-based resource on the CDL OSC website focuses on promoting diversity and fairness in journal publishing, but they recognize that there are broader problems in scholarly communication, like access to funding, tenure practices, research evaluation, and monograph publishing.

The resource offers guidance for different roles, such as peer reviewers, authors, publishers, and libraries, on how they can support researchers from marginalized communities. Some researchers may have more influence to drive change, while others might find it harder, so it's important to find support and take care while advocating for positive changes. LASC discussed the new CDL OSC DEI resources as part of our UCOLASC meeting updates.

7) *Author Rights Retention in OA Publishing*

Chair DePrano attended a Divisional Council meeting to address author rights retention in OA publishing. Under U.S. copyright law, employers usually have ownership of works created by their employees during their employment. However, the UC Copyright Ownership Policy grants UC authors (faculty and students) ownership of their works, with some exceptions. In the past, journal publishers required authors to transfer all copyrights for publication, leading to a subscription-based model where the publishers profited significantly from access to the works. UC faculty created an open access policy with two main goals: 1) Share our work with the world for free, and 2) Keep ownership of our copyrights.

Chair DePrano has informed Divisional Council members on the different types of Creative Commons (CC) licenses and problems with publisher's License-to-Publish agreements. Creative Commons (CC) Licenses only limit what people who use the work can do under the license. They don't restrict what the person who created the work (the rights holder) can do. We have learned that publishers are using "License to Publish" agreements to seize back author rights when authors select the CC-BY-NC and CC-BY-NC-ND license agreements. These "License to Publish" agreements are subverting the intentions of CC-BY-NC and CC-BY-NC-ND license agreements. The California Digital Library (CDL) is working to fix the problem.

Consultation with University Librarian and other Librarians

LASC benefited from consultation and input from University Librarian Li on an array of topics, including updates on the Library strategic planning, license negotiations status and open access, Library budget, Library collections, Library space issues, and the exclusion of the Library from the Indirect Cost Recovery Policy (IDRC).

LASC was updated on the progress and challenges facing the establishment of the Sierra Nevada/Central Valley Research Archive and Special Collections at the UC Merced Library at our November 14, 2022 meeting.

Campus Review Items

- LASC reviewed and commented on:
    - Creation of a Philosophy Department
    - Policy on the Establishment and Review of Centers
    - Proposed B.S. Program in Biochemical and Biomolecular Engineering
    - Proposed B.S. Program in Chemical Engineering
    - Aerospace Engineering Minor Proposal
    - Electrical Engineering Department Proposal
    - Revised Proposal for a Master's in Data Science and Analytics (MDSA)
    - SSHA B.S. Degree in Public Health
    - B.S. Degree or Minor in Data Science and Computing (SNS)
    - SSHA B.A. Degree and Minor in Environmental Humanities
    - SSHA Cognitive & Information Sciences Honors Program
    - B.A. Degree in Data Science and Analytics

Systemwide Review Items

- LASC reviewed and commented on:
    - Second Draft of the Presidential Policy on Abusive Conduct in the Workplace
    - New Presidential Policy on Anti-Discrimination
    - Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-43 Purchases of Goods and Services; Supply Chain Management
    - Best Practices for Using Chat in Virtual Academic Senate Meetings

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), Author copyright and License-to-publish issues, DEI in scholarly communication, Open Educational Resources / Affordable Course Materials, and open access issues.

Respectfully submitted:

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