

Clarifying Statement on Faculty Involvement in Library Planning at the University of California

The SLASIAC Library Planning Task Force was convened in late September, 2010, by UC Santa Barbara Executive Vice Chancellor and SLASIAC Chair Gene Lucas. In order to act quickly and nimbly, membership was limited to ten people representing various perspectives from within UC and outside the University. Members included two faculty from different disciplines, two University Librarians, a campus Vice Chancellor for Resource Management, a campus Vice Chancellor for Information Technology, and two library experts from outside UC.

As the deliberations of the Task Force proceeded, it became increasingly evident that the immediate budgetary problems facing the UC libraries could not be readily untangled from the broader changes working their way through the academic library world in response to rapidly evolving information technologies, changing expectations of library users, and shifts in the fundamental practices of research and teaching. UC's response to these broader forces will necessarily develop and change over time, through close consultation among faculty, libraries, campus administrations, and peer institutions. Therefore, the Task Force shifted its discussion over time from preparation of specific recommendations to development of a communication and consultation process that would ensure effective representation of all the key stakeholders while ensuring effective decisions about immediate financial problems. Due to the pressure of time, however, the Task Force Interim Report may not have fully reflected the group's evolving view of the importance of the proposed process.

In responding to the comments received from the Academic Senate and others on the Interim Report, the Task Force would like to clarify that three major constituencies have vital roles to play in planning, policy, and funding for UC library services: the faculty, the libraries, and the Executive Vice Chancellors. All three are represented on the Systemwide Library and Scholarly Information Advisory Committee (SLASIAC), along with other major participants and advisors, including librarians (via the representation from the Librarians Association of UC), information technology officers, budget officers, and research officers. As described in Sections 5.4 and 6 of the Interim Report, SLASIAC plays a pivotal role in the communication and consultation process as one of the primary systemwide forums where the views of the principal stakeholders are brought together, and its roles and responsibilities have been clarified and strengthened in recognition of its central importance in this process.

As the Task Force considered the communication and consultation structures, it understandably looked to the areas that were most in need of clarification and strengthening. The Task Force understands that the faculty are strongly and deeply involved in decisions about library services at all levels, and therefore did not address faculty engagement at length or in great detail in its report.

To clarify, UC faculty currently engage in library planning in the following ways:

- On their respective campuses through their Divisional library committees, their University Librarian, and other Divisional committees (e.g., planning and budget, academic personnel) as required by specific issues.
- Systemwide through UCOLASC (which consults regularly with the Council of University Librarians, CoUL, and includes ex officio representation from the Council of University Librarians and LAUC), and through other systemwide Senate committees (e.g., Planning and Budget, Educational Policy, Academic Personnel, Research Policy) as required by specific issues.
- Systemwide through participation on SLASIAC, which includes representation from the Academic Council (typically the Chair or Vice Chair) and UCOLASC, as well as several at-large faculty appointed to represent various disciplinary perspectives; currently, six of 22 members of SLASIAC are UC faculty members.

Within the overall consultation and communication process recommended by the Task Force, the faculty can be expected to receive regular communication about proposed systemwide library plans, programs and priorities, and to have expanded opportunities to comment and help guide these initiatives.