SYSTEMWIDE LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY INFORMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
LIBRARY PLANNING TASK FORCE

January 28, 2011
10:00 – 11:30 a.m. (PST)

MEETING NOTES

Attending: Lucas (chair); Cogswell; Farley (consultant); Miller; Schneider; Schottlaender; Waters; Wolpert

Absent: Doyle; Greenstein; Meyer

Support: Lawrence (staff)

1. Objectives for today's meeting

Lucas indicated that, given the limited time and quantity of material, the objective of the Task Force was to review the current document revisions in sequence in order to capture essential changes that might be required.

2. Review of new and revised documents
    a. Budget Scenarios, v.1 (NEW); created to put all budgeting assumptions and projections in one place; replaces Appendix A of Action Memo 2.

This document (1) adds estimates of the effect of the cuts announced in the 2011-12 Governor's Budget, which was published after the TF's January 5-6 meeting, and (2) extracts the estimates from Action Memo 2 to place them in a document that can be modified as required and referenced by other TF working documents. While budget estimates will be refined as new and better information becomes available, these refinements will not materially affect our basic analysis (although it will be important to craft the Interim Report so as to avoid unproductive debate about the specific numbers). The TF noted that while possible increases in student fees were incapable of erasing the budget gap, it was recommended that the document express the effect of fee increases in a generic way (e.g., for every 1% increase in fees, the gap would be reduced by $xx) rather than postulating a specific level of fee increase. It was noted that some state university systems have student fees for library services, and in general they receives less political resistance from students; this point will be added to Action Memorandum 6, "Revenue Enhancement and Cost Recovery."

    b. Action Memorandum 1, v.4, "Management of Existing Print Collections," distributed by email 1/18, revised in response to comments.

No revisions were suggested.

    c. Action Memorandum 2, v.5, "Managing Collection Growth," distributed by email 1/18, revised in response to comments.

Minor editorial changes were recommended. Cogswell expressed appreciation for the nuance implied by the phrase (p. 3) "Task Force commends attention to the following strategies," in contrast to "The Task Force recommends …."

Lawrence introduced the discussion by observing that this revision represented a shift in thinking toward a portfolio of shared services to be evaluated and rebalanced on constant basis, offering a more integrated view of existing and new services that were responsive both to budgetary challenges and changes in scholarly methods. This perspective also helps with consideration of governance issues, by acknowledging that shared services are and will be distributed and administered across the system, not just in one place.

Schottlaender noted that this perspective resonated for him, as he was currently grappling with a significant planned cut to the UCSD library budget, and finds that it is more effective to plan and defend service investments when these are spread across and affect multiple libraries. In consideration of these remarks and the new budget estimates discussed in item 2.a. above, it was important for the TF to concentrate on the services described as Types 1 and 2 in this AM, services that save space and money.

There was some discussion of the feasibility of the kinds of cost-benefit assessment suggested by the "Review of existing systemwide services" section of AM3. In discussion it was agreed that:
- Many benefits are not quantifiable in dollar terms, but an assessment of benefits is nonetheless necessary and feasible.
- These questions have never been asked for most existing systemwide services, and these considerations must be introduced into our planning. Not all questions necessarily need to be asked and answered for each service.
- Every systemwide service should have a value proposition associated with it that transcends simply being a systemwide service; don't just assume that it's good just because it's systemwide.

Lawrence will recast this language to incorporate these points.

Lawrence noted that the Academic Senate's University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (UCOLASC) had unintentionally been omitted from the description of the current governance structure; this oversight will be corrected in the next draft. In response to discussion, he noted that the draft intentionally addressed the question at the level of functions rather than structure; there may be several structural solutions that can provide these functions, and staff did not want to predispose the discussion toward a particular result.

Concern was expressed that this AM did not specify an action for the University to take in response to the governance challenges. Schottlaender and Miller noted that the Council of University Librarians is not well positioned to provide this range of functions: ULs operate as a collective without a leader, just a convener, and owing to their campus level responsibilities face a conflict of interest when systemwide initiatives may come at the expense of their own campus. An executive function is needed at the systemwide level, but Greenstein's Office of Academic Planning, Programs and Coordination is not entirely credible in this role inasmuch as the funding to support new shared service initiatives resides on the campuses. The CDL, as a partner of the campus libraries and one of several providers of systemwide services, is also not well positioned to provide the governance and executive functions required.

The Task Force concluded that campus provosts must have trust in and ownership of this governance function, as they will be responsible on their campuses to align support for systemwide strategies and provide and defend the investments required to support systemwide services.

The Systemwide Library and Scholarly Information Advisory Committee (SLASIAC) has the right membership but doesn't have the time or resources to carry out all the suggested governance functions or execute systemwide plans, policies and oversight. The Shared Library Facilities Board may be a better model, with a governing board supported by an operations committee.

It was also noted that the existing structure, with a variety of purpose-built committees, doesn't have a comprehensive view and seems very complex; the TF should give consideration to streamlining and simplifying the structure. Also, if the collections and service changes developed in response to current conditions are intended to be permanent, the governance and coordinating structure should reflect what we need to do now and in the future. A new structure with a new name signals that there is a change in the way the libraries, the provosts, and the faculty, think about provision of library services.

There was general consensus that (1) the Task Force could charge the University Provost to work with the Council of Vice Chancellors and other stakeholders to develop a specific governance and executive structure embodying these functions, and (2) the Task Force members should consider these matters further and send comments to Lucas, Greenstein and Lawrence.

     f. Action Memorandum 5, v.1 (NEW), "UC and the System of Scholarly Publishing." Developed in response to discussion at 1/5-6 meeting; incorporates material on scholarly publishing removed from Action Memo 2.

The faculty members of the Task Force were generally happy with this revision. It was suggested that the libraries could do more to inform the faculty about the specific costs they incur in providing access to scholarly publications.

     g. Action Memorandum 6, v.1 (NEW), "Revenue Enhancement and Cost Recovery." Developed in response to discussion at 1/5-6 meeting.

It was agreed that the first bullet in the list of suggested strategies should be generalized and made as expansive as possible (i.e., not limited to support for systemwide services or specific areas of interest), that the second point (recovery of costs to external constituencies) should be elevated to the first position, and that the "HathiTrust" point was (a) not about revenue generation and (b) well covered elsewhere, and should be deleted.

     h. Principles, v.3, distributed by email 1/18, no substantive comments received to date.

Waters remains concerned about the complexity and conflation of concepts in the current language of Principle 2, and will send suggested revisions.

3. Next steps

The timetable previously distributed by Lawrence was discussed. Plans were discussed for the upcoming joint meeting of the Council of University Librarians and UCOLASC (February 16). It was reported that Greenstein's office had discussed the work of the TF with Provost Pitts, and was seeking to have him make the initial presentation at the joint CoUL/UCOLASC meeting (N.B. as of 2/1/11, Provost Pitts' schedule will not permit his attendance); Greenstein will coordinate with Schneider and Miller in advance with regard to materials, scheduling and participation. It was also noted that Lucas will make a

presentation to the Spring Assembly of the Librarians' Association of UC (LAUC) on March 10; both Miller and Schottlaender will be in attendance and can assist as required.

In response to a discussion about framing the Action Memos with information about the current environment for academic libraries, Lawrence indicated that the current portfolio of AMs would most likely be used as sources for specific sections of the TF's Interim Report, which would also include the kind of general background discussed today.

In view of the upcoming milestones set out in the schedule and the likely need for the Task Force to have an opportunity to discuss its draft Interim Report, it was agreed to schedule another conference call in late February or early March; this can be canceled if it proves unnecessary.