Report on the External Periodic Review of the UC Merced Library
University of California Merced, Merced, CA

Executive Summary

Overview
This Report on the External Periodic Review of the UC Merced Library is a result of off-site study of multiple documents, a review of the Library’s electronic resources, and a one and one-half day site visit by the External Review Committee made up of two librarians, two faculty members, one graduate student, and one undergraduate student.

During the site visit, the External Review Committee interviewed many different individuals and groups on campus to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness and success of the Library. There is much to commend the Library for as a result of those conversations and the direct observations of the Committee.

The framework for this Report stems from the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards for Libraries in Higher Education.¹ We have used the Standards to help organize the areas of review into meaningful contexts. One of these Standards relates to Management and Budget and another relates to Personnel. This Report recommends additional staff and budget among other recommendations. We point this out here to be clear that these recommendations are not lightly made. Under other circumstances in a different institution, we would likely not be advocating for more staff and a larger budget. We do so in this Report based on what we believe is critical to the success of the University itself. The Library is crucial to UC Merced’s Vision for 2025 and to many of the nearer term strategic goals of the University. To serve its key role it needs to continue to be supported.

Strengths
The Library is, indeed, an impressive and agile organization with a profound commitment to the University itself and a sense of partnership and collaboration that is unusual in degree. During our site-visit and interviews with individuals and groups from across campus, we observed the following overarching strengths of the Library:

• An outward focused organizational culture
• An inventive, highly flexible, knowledgeable, and committed staff
• Effective stewardship and leadership
• Extraordinary collaborative spirit

• A welcoming space and attitude

Areas of Potential and Growth
The Library has done a magnificent job of “starting up” from scratch. In seven years, this Library has accomplished what many established university libraries have yet to accomplish – a tribute to the leadership interim University Librarian Donald Barclay (and his predecessor) provides. As with any organization, there remain areas of potential and possible growth. Among these are:

Growing with the campus – as the student body grows and as more programs are added, the Library must also grow to keep pace with the University and to support learning, teaching, and research. Over the next two-three years, meeting this growth will require:

• Several more positions at the professional level
• Several more positions at the library assistant level
• An increase in the Library’s operating budget to support growth of programs
• Attending to specific issues posed by the nature of the Kolligian Library Building

Data assets – the University appears to be serious about preserving and sharing its research data – a commendable goal. To fully embrace and accomplish this goal, however, the data curation program of the Library needs a better infrastructure than currently exists. Principal among the immediate needs are:

• An increase in network capacity with planned growth over the next three years
• An increase in storage capacity with planned growth over the next five-ten years

Leadership and stewardship – the Library has been led for three years by an interim Library Director. We recommend that the University move forward with appointing a permanent Library Director.

Proven campus leadership and collaboration – the Library’s stellar track record in working with others on campus in a highly collaborative manner is a major strength. We recommend that the Library’s leadership be included at the highest level of decision-making at the University. The Library is central to many of the institution’s strategic goals and plans and Library leaders would be useful in discussions related to those goals and plans.

We submit the following report in accordance with the University’s Periodic Review Process.

Respectfully submitted on April 25, 2013 by the External Periodic Review Committee:
Ms. Elizabeth Cowell, UC, Santa Cruz Library
Mr. Gregory Dachner, UC Merced Undergraduate Senior Student
Ms. Kathryn J. Deiss, chair, ACRL
Mr. Paul Gibbons, UC Merced Faculty
Dr. Anne Kelley, UC Merced Faculty
Ms. gayle k. yamada, UC Merced Graduate Student
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Introduction

The University of California, Merced (UC Merced) requires all units to undertake a periodic self-review process to assess progress toward goals, adherence to mission, general unit effectiveness, alignment with University mission and goals, and impact on student learning and faculty research. An integral and required aspect of the periodic review process is the external review. The UC Merced Library is the subject of this external review report.

UC Merced appointed a team of six individuals external to the Library to conduct the external review: two UC Merced faculty members, a graduate student, an undergraduate student, an administrator from a different UC campus library, and a library consultant versed in external review processes and in the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards for Libraries in Higher Education.²

The present report provides the External Review Committee’s observations on various aspects of the Library’s strengths and potential and provides recommendations for further growth, development, and effectiveness. (see Appendix A for a summary of recommendations)

Methodology

Members of the External Review Committee used a combination of methods to understand and review the Library in the most complete way possible. Prior to our day and a half on-site visit, interim University Librarian Donald Barclay provided a wide variety of documents relevant to the state of the Library. We studied Annual Reports, strategic plans, comparative statistics relative to other peer institutions, budget data, staffing data, reviewed the Library website and the electronic collections and resources served up to constituents from that site, and looked at the benefits resulting from participation in consortial partnerships. During the February 26-27, 2013 on-site visit, External Review Committee members interviewed administrators, Senate and non-Senate faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, librarians and staff at all levels, UC Merced IT personnel, the UC Merced Institutional Planning and Analysis representatives,

and Center for Research on Teaching Excellence representatives. In addition, we reviewed the physical facility. This report will address the following areas based on the ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education: Institutional Effectiveness, Educational Role, Discovery, Collections, Space, Management/Administration, Personnel, and External Relations. This report addresses each of these areas in turn beginning with the Principle of each of the Standards for context. In addition to considering effective library practices and standards, we kept in mind the unique young history, culture, and mission of the University of California, Merced.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

*Principle: Libraries define, develop, and measure outcomes that contribute to institutional effectiveness and apply findings for purposes of continuous improvement.*

The UC Merced Library established itself as a willing partner and collaborator with other units on campus from the very birth of the University.

The Library leadership and staff embrace the work of assessment and have been effectively establishing performance outcomes and measurements to show progress and impact. This Library’s performance outcomes and transparency of process would be the envy of many a university library struggling to learn about assessment, organizational impact, and outcomes-oriented work.

The interim University Librarian and librarians have taken a pro-active, student-centered approach to setting their own strategic goals but are keenly aware of the institutional context and the opportunities to make a difference through working with other units outside the Library. Examples were brought forth by numerous groups interviewed during the external review process. These included, among many other examples, being applauded for stepping up to work with the Center for Research on Teaching Excellence (CRTE) on numerous occasions such as working on an experimental incubator classroom, collaborating with the Merritt Writing Program in teaching students and assessing student success and learning, implementing the e-Scholarship site for the Office of the Chancellor via a CDL service, playing a leadership role in helping faculty in the sciences comply with federal regulations regarding open research, and archiving the assessment work of other units on campus.

Such is the confidence in the Library’s understanding of assessment that the director of Institutional Planning and Analysis expects librarians to assist in the future WASC accreditation preparation; specifically, librarians are expected to play a significant role in helping describe and design the assessment of information literacy competencies which figure largely in the revised WASC criteria.  

Aside from the work the Library does in partnership with other units on campus, the University Librarian and librarians work to understand the impact of their own teaching and research

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3 Note: The ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education used to frame this report were authored primarily by Patricia Iannuzzi, Dean of Libraries, University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) on behalf of ACRL. Dean Iannuzzi is also a trainer of external reviewers for WASC on the topic of information literacy and on outcomes-based assessment.
assistance and support on those they provide these services to – students, faculty, and lecturers.

**Recommendations:**

1. We support the Library’s intention to add a staff member focused on programmatic assessment (a position that could be combined with other administrative needs of the Library as described in the Library’s Strategic Agenda). Academic libraries nationwide are devoting positions and significant efforts to the work of assessment. (See also *Personnel* section below).
2. The Library should be considered when any new campus-wide initiative is being started. As a core service and demonstrated partner, the Library can help the University best if it has a seat at a high level decision-making table, such as the Chancellor’s cabinet.
3. The Library should be part of discussions regarding any enterprise level technology systems that will affect services to students and faculty.

**Professional Values**

*Principle:* Libraries advance professional values of intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights and values, user privacy and confidentiality, collaboration, and user-centered service.

Without reservation, the External Review Committee notes the strength of the Library’s staff and particularly its professional staff of librarians. These individuals understand the intricacies of copyright, intellectual freedom, and user privacy. As noted above, this Library staff is extraordinarily user-focused whether serving students, Senate and non-Senate faculty, or administrators. Faculty mentioned the beneficial nature of the librarians’ help when working on federal compliance regulations related to federally-funded research having to be made publicly available. The critical role of serving as the University’s intellectual commons entails a deep understanding of the changing nature of scholarly communication. The External Review Committee was impressed with how much the small professional staff of the Library is accomplishing with limited resources.

**Educational Role**

*Principle:* Libraries partner in the educational mission of the institution to develop and support information-literate learners who can discover, access, and use information effectively for academic success, research, and lifelong learning.

Without professional librarians, the rich collections and resources of an academic library can be under-utilized and wasted. Over the past decade there has been a renewed realization that professional mediation between the world’s burgeoning information resources and student and faculty needs is critical for academic and research success.

The interim University Librarian and the front-line librarians as well as other professional staff are actively engaged in providing information literacy services to students by collaborating with Senate and non-Senate faculty. And as described above under *Institutional Effectiveness*, the librarians are contributing to the success of learning programs in centers such as the CRTE
through teaching faculty and lecturers about open access, digital collections, trends in scholarly communication, and much more.

Librarians have actively sought to understand the student demographics and to design services to meet the needs of this diverse student body. An innovative approach we were very impressed with is the roving peer-to-peer assistance program. This service shows a remarkable awareness of and respect for the undergraduate students as well as an awareness of the current research on student academic success and retention. It is one example among many related to innovative service design; and one that can serve as a model for other academic libraries and institutional units.

Indeed, education is at the core of the Library’s mission. Because of this, the External Review Committee was surprised to find so much of this work done by so very few people. While impressive, this will not be scalable or sustainable into the future. In fact, the staffing of the Library is a concern across the board. This issue is covered in greater detail below under Personnel.

Recommendations:

1. Where appropriate, repurpose in-person workshops as podcasts or videos delivered through the Library’s excellent website.
2. While we do not support what we understand will be proposed by several humanities/social sciences faculty members to create a bibliographer/reference librarian position, we understand that this proposal is motivated by some unmet need. In part this is related to print collection strength and in part to a perception that the librarians do not do reference work. Reference and research assistance has changed in the past decade and it is not the norm nor is it desirable to have librarians sitting at a desk waiting for someone to approach them. We support the concept of roving peer to peer assistance and librarians conducting research consultation as is currently the case. Additionally, we recommend moving the roving peer to peer service into classrooms or training graduate students to provide research assistance.
3. Continue to market instructional services to all departments; some faculty were not as aware of others about these services.
4. Design services for transfer students. We heard from faculty, staff, and students that transfer students do not have the benefit of the Library’s instruction as first-year students do.

Discovery Principle: Libraries enable users to discover information in all formats through effective use of technology and organization of knowledge.

No matter how rich or adequate a library’s collections are, if students and faculty cannot easily access these resources (and the university’s substantial investment in them) they are of marginal value. How accessible are the collections to UC Merced students and faculty?

The single most important portal for access to a library’s information resources is its website. In
the digital era the website is the “face” of the library. Included in the website is the Library’s catalog of its holdings and the gateway to its services. How effective are the Library’s web pages? We discovered that faculty and students largely understand and can use the Library’s website. It is clear as well as rich in resources for students and faculty alike. Proprietary vendor names such as EBSCO still befuddle undergraduate students; however, they reported feeling comfortable approaching Library staff when unsure of a resource.

Faculty, lecturers, and graduate students spoke highly of the Library’s Interlibrary Loan services which are critical to a young and growing campus such as UC Merced’s with a purposefully smaller print collection.

The Library has been creative in helping “explain” services to users. The innovative iPod Touch Tour is an example of this creativity and user-orientation.

The Library has been effective in leading open access and digitization activities on campus. Initiatives such as the digitization grant received from the Institute of Museum and Library Services early on and the creation of open access theses and dissertations are a service to the University and to scholars beyond the University community.

There are clearly many strengths to which to point. We would like to place a special focus in this section, however, on the data assets and data curation issues we learned about during the site visit. The UC Merced Library’s current Strategic Agenda mentions the Library having a data curation clearinghouse within the next two to three years. While there is a knowledgeable librarian designated to do data curation, there is not infrastructure capacity for this individual to actually accomplish this work. We believe that data curation will be impossible without the University making a significant investment in network strength and robustness. With a 1 gigabit pipeline – as is currently the case – the Library cannot begin to do anything serious in the important area of data curation. In addition to the minimal network capacity, there is no significant data storage capacity on campus. This must also be addressed on campus as a campus-wide issue. Given its stature as the “first university of the 21st Century,” we see the clear potential for doing the work of data curation in the most professional way if only the University can provide the infrastructure. We note that even the smallest of the other UC campuses has membership in Internet 2 which allows for access to more robust network capacity. Internet 2 may not be a community that UC Merced is ready for now, but there should be conversations about this in relation to strategic directions of the University. The Library would be a central user of Internet 2 when and if UC Merced joins.

Recommendations:

1. The University needs to find resources to increase the network strength into and out of the Library and the University. In our interviews with administrators and faculty, the Library was seen as the expert on issues of data curation. However, without the network capacity this expertise is not utilized nor will data curation needs be met. A possible plan for staging this is to increase the network capacity over the course of three years: 3 gigabits in one year, 5 gigabits in the second year, and 10 gigabits in the third year. Alternatively, this growth could be planned over a greater span of years. We
recommend that planning for network enhancement be discussed with the new CIO as promptly as possible and that the interim University Librarian and Digital Curation Librarian be part of these conversations.

2. All other UC system campuses are members of the Internet 2 community. While UC Merced is young in its research program and output, membership in Internet 2 may be something for which the University will want the new CIO to begin planning. Internet 2 network capacity would greatly enhance the institution’s ability to manage research data and for the Library to engage in true data curation in the future. In our interviews with administrators and faculty, the Library was seen as the expert on issues of data curation. We mention this with the understanding that there are significant costs, administrative issues, and complexities in planning to bring the Internet 2 network to the campus and also that this may not be an immediate need but one for which the University will need a plan.

3. Ensure robust data storage on campus. This becomes a bit less critical if the network can carry big data to off-site storage. However, the University is young and should be agile enough to create storage and network capacity to manage at least some part of its own data assets.

4. Once the new CIO is in place, there should be a rigorous discussion about where technology support and Library systems support overlap and where there needs to be consolidation and service commitment made. For instance, if the thinking is that there should be more support from campus IT – more centralization of IT support – then there need to be explicit service commitments on the part of the CIO related to this support. This has not been the case until now. Service has been weak and thus, the Library has actually built somewhat of a redundant system support of its own – often serving campus IT rather than the other way around.

5. Partner with the California Digital Library and leverage system-wide services where possible to provide more robust digital management services to the campus.

Collections
Principle: Libraries provide access to collections sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, format, and currency to support the research and teaching missions of the institution.

Most university libraries are increasing their investments in electronic resources and continuing to negotiate hard for reasonable license terms on those resources. Print resources continue to be necessary for a variety of disciplines. This is the case at UC Merced as well. The Library has invested intelligently and extensively in digital resources while maintaining a smaller print collection.

UC Merced’s Library has made good decisions regarding the electronic collections, including purchasing all periodicals in electronic format from the beginning of the institution’s founding. Though it must be pointed out that while some of these resources are purchased through the University of California or other joint purchasing entity, UC Merced pays for its share. The misconception that we often find on campuses is that electronic means free and that could not
be further from the truth. The Library will continue to need funds allocated to electronic collection building.

While electronic resources appear to be serving the sciences, there were definite concerns about the collection in the area of the humanities and social sciences. While the Library cannot reasonably support every discipline in complete depth, there appears to be a need for a stronger print collection for the humanities and social sciences. A proactive stance on this is critical to avoid having the Library respond to outmoded ways of thinking about what libraries are and what librarians do.

We heard from different constituents that the print collections are not adequate for the current curriculum needs. The allocation for print materials should be increased to accommodate the growing student body. Assignments have required that students use print materials and these must be adequate in number, subject, and level to serve student needs appropriately.

The topic of text books and the possibility of putting costly text books on print reserve came up when we spoke with undergraduate students and faculty. While not a standard operating procedure for many libraries including UC Merced’s, this appears to be a deep need in the UC Merced student population, so it may be worth considering.

Recommendations

1. Develop a “library impact statement” that details the core disciplinary needs in terms of the literature/resources needed for every new academic program and ladder-rank faculty hire. This should be completed by the division or department beginning the new program and should be vetted by the chief academic officer with the University Librarian and the Head of Collection Services.
2. Related to the first recommendation, we recommend that, for each new academic program, there be “start-up” funds for library materials/resources.
3. Use the Resources for College Libraries⁴ tool to assess print collection strength in humanities and social sciences.
4. Consider a small print reserves service. The purpose and need is two-fold: faculty indicated that, on occasion, having a print format of a particular resource is important (as opposed to a digital source) and that it would be very useful to their teaching if they could offer students print Supplemental Course Resources in addition to the digital SCR in the CROPS system. The second reason for this recommendation is that both faculty and students agreed that a small textbook collection in the Supplemental Course Materials would be optimal. The textbook cost issue is a significant one for the student demographic served by UC Merced. While we understand the forward thinking nature of the Library’s original decision to have a digital reserves system only, we feel this recommendation deserves some consideration. We are also aware of the current policy

⁴ Resources for College Libraries is a collection development tool created by ACRL Choice and R.R Bowker. This resource provides bibliographic information for core print and electronic collections in all disciplines. See: http://www.bowker.com/en-US/products/rcl/
regarding not purchasing textbooks but think this is very important to revisit and consider.

5. Have the faculty scan their Supplemental Course Resources content directly into the UCMCROPS system thereby releasing valuable staff time which could be reallocated to a more pressing area of library services.

**Space**

**Principle:** Libraries are the intellectual commons where users interact with ideas in both physical and virtual environments to expand learning and facilitate the creation of new knowledge.

The academic library’s physical space remains important in spite of the intensive use of electronic resources. In fact, most premier academic libraries in the United States and Canada are spending more time and energy studying and redesigning their physical spaces to reflect modern-day study and research practices and behaviors.

Over the past decade, many academic libraries have experienced a decline in the number of students and faculty using the physical library. In many others, however, the number of users has gone up. Often the difference is the design and appeal of the physical space. The UC Merced Library building sees a significant amount of daily and evening traffic.

The Kolligian Library Building is a new and very attractive building with much natural light and what would appear to be a good deal of user and collection space – though there is more need than capacity for users. The strengths of this library space are that it is open and generous in spirit, user technology needs are well forecasted (although there is room for growth in that area), and there is adequate space for the present print collections.

The need for a quiet study area was expressed by all constituencies with which the External Review Committee spoke. The architecture of the library that is responsible for a modern, open feeling is also the reason for a very high noise level. Building materials such as concrete and glass bounce noise up the open stairwell. While there are some quiet spaces, students felt there simply are not enough places to get away from noise.

Crucially, the Library is also reaching capacity limits as the student enrollment trajectory rises dramatically. The Library building is at 85-90% capacity during finals, and this is only going to become more difficult as the student population grows towards the 2020 goal of 10,000 enrolled students. There is a concomitant problem in sustaining this growth on the wireless network. A strong look at the building and student behaviors and use of the space is necessary. These are problems that cannot entirely be resolved by asking the Library staff to be creative. More people in a space simply equals more people needing more space. The problems of seating space, quiet space, and a robust enough wireless network are the main issues that need to be addressed.

**Recommendations**

1. Reclaim Library space currently being used by other offices and functions or begin planning for expansion of the Library to accommodate the growth of student and faculty
populations. While we realize that there are other building priorities currently, planning for a new wing or expansion of the Library will take time. We see this planning as taking place over the next five to ten years.

2. Establish a quiet study space or spaces elsewhere on campus. This quiet study space should be accessible during the non-operational hours of the Library. We envision this study space to be operated by the UC Merced Library, and with minimal-level resources there, including computers with all library electronic resources and potentially with some part-time reference and research assistance.

3. Conduct a seating analysis and planning assessment to begin to creatively address the seating limitation problem. While an additional quiet study space may be useful in this regard, even that may not sustain needs in the coming decade given campus growth.

4. Add textile sound-deadening art to walls; such hangings may help stop sound bouncing to some degree. One relatively simple and inexpensive aid could be the stapling or gluing of carpet remnants to the bottoms of chairs and tables and stairs. These carpet samples or remnants are relatively economical. While this does meddle with the integrity of the original furniture, it has been shown to help in other buildings with high traffic and noise levels.

5. Establish a stronger network and wireless network in the building. (see also Discovery above)

6. There appears to be an intermittent issue related to the remotely controlled door locks and lights in the Library building. Due to radically different needs and hours from other parts of the campus, the Library should be given control of its door locks and lighting.

**Management/Administration**

*Principle: Libraries engage in continuous planning and assessment to inform resource allocation and to meet their mission effectively and efficiently.*

The Library currently does not have a permanent University Librarian. Donald Barclay has been serving as interim University Librarian for two years. While we and those whom we interviewed believe his leadership to be excellent and admirable, it is difficult for an interim University Librarian to fully advocate for the Library with less than complete authority and commitment from the institution. The interim position also interferes with establishing a very strong advocate role external to the Library (both on campus and within the UC system and beyond). Not having a permanent University Librarian may also interfere with the successful application for grants. Many granting institutions want to see commitment from the institution and a permanent University Librarian would show this.

In spite of this, the interim University Librarian and staff are laudably conducting outcomes based assessment insofar as is possible to do given the small and thinly spread staff (see Personnel below).

**Budget**

We highlight the Library budget under *Management/Administration* because of what we perceive to be a very serious – we would even say the most significant – problem facing the Library today: a drastically inadequate budget for current operations, demands, and growth.
This problem is going to become even more severe and could well hamper the institutional aspirations to grow its research and graduate programs at the same time as it grows, exponentially, its undergraduate population. The Library budget is, in 2013, almost precisely as it was at the beginning of its existence seven years ago. While it is understood that the University of California system at large as well as California itself have suffered extreme fiscal distress, it is thoroughly unrealistic to demand increased services, programmatic innovation, support for research, growth of information resources, development of a robust data curation program, and higher graduation levels for undergraduates with a flat Library budget. The growth of the student body in the past six years alone is daunting when one considers that each of those undergraduate and graduate students require assistance, instruction, and resources from the Library. In addition, there is the problem of the afore-mentioned collection support for new academic programs and faculty.

The Library funding issue is a University issue, not simply a Library issue. To reach the institutional goal of 10,000 enrolled students by 2020 and to successfully pursue a research intensive ranking, the Library budget must be enhanced significantly. Recurring funding for several badly needed positions and for collections and user space is crucial.

**Recommendations:**

1. Move forward to appoint a permanent University Librarian.
2. Increase the Library budget relative to student growth and strategic goals of UC Merced.
3. Establish a Library Advisory Committee, composed of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, that can advocate for the Library; this Committee could even be charged with creating external fund development strategies.

**Personnel**

*Principle:* Libraries provide sufficient number and quality of personnel to ensure excellence and to function successfully in an environment of continuous change.

As noted throughout this report, the Library is accomplishing remarkable things with a very small staff. The number of instruction sessions, the variety of innovative programs, the strong outreach and collaborative efforts with other units on campus, all take personnel resources. Staff members described themselves as empowered to create and innovate, and to be nimble in the face of change. This empowered staff is a significant strength of the Library and of the University, and every effort should be made to ensure that they are recognized and given opportunities for growth.

The current staff is working hard – perhaps over-working to the point of burn-out – because individually and collectively they are committed to the ideals of the UC Merced campus. Admirable though this may be, continuing demands with little influx of resources will affect the Library’s ability to continue to innovate and create at the level desired by all Library staff members as well as by the University administration.

One of the laudable hallmarks of the Library is its very lean and nimble structure and staffing. The External Review Committee wishes to emphasize that, in its opinion, there are limits that
even the most innovative staff members reach when faced with a campus growing by leaps and bounds.

**Recommendations:**

1. Add a minimum of two professional positions to the staff: one of these positions needs to be allocated to outreach and student engagement and another should be devoted to programmatic assessment (as described in the *Institutional Effectiveness* section above).
2. Add a minimum of two library career staff positions: one night/weekend supervisor which is critical to safety and supervision of student staff and another devoted to electronic resources management.
3. Encourage and fund professional development at the national level as well as at the state level.

**External Relations**

*Principle:* Libraries engage the campus and broader community through multiple strategies in order to advocate, educate, and promote their value.

During our site visit interviews, the Library was repeatedly commended for its very effective outreach to the campus community and beyond. The lack of territoriality and organizational “ego” shown by the Library is remarkable, indeed. This behavior and leadership should be recognized and rewarded by including the Library interim director and staff in campus-wide decision-making.

The Library is seen as conducting outreach services that ultimately support not only students and faculty but also administrative units on campus. The uniformly positive perception of the Library by administrators demonstrated the integral way in which the Library performs as a part of the University. The Library is seen as non-territorial and open in its dealings with others on campus.

The centrality of this particular Library to the success of the academic enterprise at UC Merced cannot be overstated. Perhaps more than in most institutions, the Library is critical to the recruitment, retention, and graduation of students as well as to the growing research initiatives on campus.
Conclusion
The UC Merced Library has innovation and flexibility in its DNA. As part of a very young institution, the Library embraces a “start up” mindset. This means that assumptions that are givens in other institutions’ libraries are pushed against, that outmoded concepts are simply side-stepped, and that figuring out new ways of doing things is the norm. This has been an enormous boon to the UC Merced institution as a whole as librarians, new faculty, lecturers, undergraduate and graduate students collectively created the “new.”

The nature of organizational culture is that as an organization matures, flexibility and free-wheeling innovation often become more difficult. Policy and procedure can overtake the “start up” mindset and maintaining can become more important than creating. While this is a drastic statement to make, we make it to point up that the Library has the spirit and mindset, and, critically, the key people to continue to foster innovation and to support the growth trajectory of UC Merced. However, this spirit and these mental models will suffer if there is not some substantial fresh commitment and recognition, on the part of the University, of the Library’s centrality to the success of the unique enterprise that is UC Merced.

Respectfully submitted by the External Periodic Review Committee:

Ms. Elizabeth Cowell
Mr. Gregory Dachner
Ms. Kathryn J. Deiss, chair
Mr. Paul Gibbons
Dr. Anne Kelley
Ms. Gayle K. Yamada

April 25, 2013
Appendix A – Recommendations

**Institutional Effectiveness**

1. We support the Library’s intention to add a staff member focused on programmatic assessment (a position that could be combined with other administrative needs of the Library as described in the Library’s Strategic Agenda). Academic libraries nationwide are devoting positions and significant efforts to the work of assessment. (See also Personnel section below).
2. The Library should be considered when any new campus-wide initiative is being started. As a core service and demonstrated partner, the Library can help the University best if it has a seat at a high level decision-making table, such as the Chancellor’s cabinet.
3. The Library should be part of discussions regarding any enterprise level technology systems that will affect services to students and faculty.

**Educational Role**

1. Where appropriate, repurpose in-person workshops as podcasts or videos delivered through the Library’s website.
2. While we do not support what we understand will be proposed by several humanities/social sciences faculty members to create a bibliographer/reference librarian position, we understand that this proposal is motivated by some unmet need. In part this is related to print collection strength and in part to a perception that the librarians do not do reference work. Reference and research assistance has changed in the past decade and it is not the norm nor is it desirable to have librarians sitting at a desk waiting for someone to approach them. We support the concept of roving peer to peer assistance and librarians conducting research consultation as is currently the case. Additionally, we recommend moving the roving peer to peer service into classrooms or training graduate students to provide research assistance.
3. Continue to market instructional services to all departments; some faculty were not as aware of others about these services.
4. Design services for transfer students. We heard from faculty, staff, and students that transfer students do not have the benefit of the Library’s instruction as first-year students do.

**Discovery**

1. The University needs to find resources to increase the network strength into and out of the Library and the University. In our interviews with administrators and faculty, the Library was seen as the expert on issues of data curation. However, without the network capacity this expertise is not utilized nor will data curation needs be met. A possible plan
for staging this is to increase the network capacity over the course of three years: 3 gigabits in one year, 5 gigabits in the second year, and 10 gigabits in the third year. Alternatively, this growth could be planned over a greater span of years. We recommend that planning for network enhancement be discussed with the new CIO as promptly as possible and that the interim University Librarian and Digital Curation Librarian be part of these conversations.

2. All other UC system campuses are members of the Internet 2 community. While UC Merced is young in its research program and output, membership in Internet 2 may be something for which the University will want the new CIO to begin planning. Internet 2 network capacity would greatly enhance the institution’s ability to manage research data and for the Library to engage in true data curation in the future. In our interviews with administrators and faculty, the Library was seen as the expert on issues of data curation. We mention this with the understanding that there are significant costs, administrative issues, and complexities in planning to bring the Internet 2 network to the campus and also that this may not be an immediate need but one for which the University will need a plan.

3. Ensure robust data storage on campus. This becomes a bit less critical if the network can carry big data to off-site storage. However, the University is young and should be agile enough to create storage and network capacity to manage at least some part of its own data assets.

4. Once the new CIO is in place, there should be a rigorous discussion about where technology support and Library systems support overlap and where there needs to be consolidation and service commitment made. For instance, if the thinking is that there should be more support from campus IT – more centralization of IT support – then there need to be explicit service commitments on the part of the CIO related to this support. This has not been the case until now. Service has been weak and thus, the Library has actually built somewhat of a redundant system support of its own – often serving campus IT rather than the other way around.

5. Partner with the California Digital Library and leverage system-wide services where possible to provide more robust digital management services to the campus.

**Collections**

1. Develop a “library impact statement” that details the core disciplinary needs in terms of the literature/resources needed for every new academic program and ladder-rank faculty hire. This should be completed by the division or department beginning the new program and should be vetted by the chief academic officer with the University Librarian and the Head of Collection Services.

2. Related to the first recommendation, we recommend that, for each new academic program, there be “start-up” funds for library materials/resources.
3. Use the *Resources for College Libraries*\(^5\) tool to assess print collection strength in humanities and social sciences.

4. Consider a small print reserves service. The purpose and need is two-fold: faculty indicated that, on occasion, having a print format of a particular resource is important (as opposed to a digital source) and that it would be very useful to their teaching if they could offer students print Supplemental Course Resources in addition to the digital SCR in the CROPS system. The second reason for this recommendation is that both faculty and students agreed that a small textbook collection in the Supplemental Course Materials would be optimal. The textbook cost issue is a significant one for the student demographic served by UC Merced. While we understand the forward thinking nature of the Library’s original decision to have a digital reserves system only, we feel this recommendation deserves some consideration. We are also aware of the current policy regarding not purchasing textbooks but think this is very important to revisit and consider.

5. Have the faculty scan their Supplemental Course Resources content directly into the UCMCROPS system thereby releasing valuable staff time which could be reallocated to a more pressing area of library services.

**Space**

1. Reclaim Library space currently being used by other offices and functions or begin planning for expansion of the Library to accommodate the growth of student and faculty populations. While we realize that there are other building priorities currently, planning for a new wing or expansion of the Library will take time. We see this planning as taking place over the next five to ten years.

2. Establish a quiet study space or spaces elsewhere on campus. This quiet study space should be accessible during the non-operational hours of the Library. We envision this study space to be operated by the UC Merced Library, and with minimal-level resources there, including computers with all library electronic resources and potentially with some part-time reference and research assistance.

3. Conduct a seating analysis and planning assessment to begin to creatively address the seating limitation problem. While an additional quiet study space may be useful in this regard, even that may not sustain needs in the coming decade given campus growth.

4. Add textile sound-deadening art to walls, such as, hangings, may help stop sound bouncing to some degree. One relatively simple and inexpensive aid could be the stapling or gluing of carpet remnants to the bottoms of chairs and tables and stairs. These carpet samples or remnants are relatively economical. While this does meddle with the integrity of the original furniture, it has been shown to help in other buildings with high traffic and noise levels.

5. Establish a stronger network and wireless network in the building. (see also Discovery above)

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\(^5\) Resources for College Libraries is a collection development tool created by ACRL Choice and R.R Bowker. This resource provides bibliographic information for core print and electronic collections in all disciplines. See: http://www.bowker.com/en-US/products/rcl/
6. There appears to be an intermittent issue related to the remotely controlled door locks and lights in the Library building. Due to radically different needs and hours from other parts of the campus, perhaps the Library should be given control of its door locks and lighting.

Management/Administration & Budget

1. Move forward to appoint a permanent University Librarian.
2. Increase the Library budget relative to student growth and strategic goals of UC Merced.
3. Establish a Library Advisory Committee, composed of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, that can advocate for the Library; this Committee could even be charged with creating external fund development strategies.

Personnel

1. Add a minimum of two professional positions to the staff: one of these positions needs to be allocated to outreach and student engagement and another should be devoted to programmatic assessment (as described in the Institutional Effectiveness section above).
2. Add a minimum of two library career staff positions: one night/weekend supervisor which is critical to safety and supervision of student staff and another devoted to electronic resources management.
3. Encourage and fund professional development at the national level as well as at the state level.