The Academic Librarian in the University of California

WE ARE PROFESSIONALS
Librarians at the University of California are a cohort of academics who share a professional identity informed by specialized theoretical and practical knowledge and skills, research agendas devoted to advancing our specialized knowledge, and an enduring ethical commitment to promote the mission and values of the University and its constituencies. UC librarians hold advanced degrees in the information sciences and other academic disciplines which allow us to exercise autonomy over and assume responsibility for our collective and individual work. We hold positions of leadership in the associations and organizations that maintain the standards of the profession and promote its achievements.

Our statewide association, Librarians Association of the University of California (LAUC), "is recognized as an official unit of the University. LAUC is authorized to serve in an advisory capacity to the University on professional and governance matters of concern to all librarians."[1] The UC Academic Personnel Manual defines librarians as "academic appointees who—in support of the University's educational, research, and public service missions—provide professional library services that facilitate the creation and transmission of knowledge."[2] Creation and transmission of knowledge entail its capture, organization, preservation, provision, and adaptation for future users, which makes UC librarians integral to a robust academic ecosystem.

WE SUPPORT THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION
UC librarians make fundamental contributions to the University's mission of teaching, research, and public service. We evaluate our performance according to these very criteria.[3] We also partner with and support the work of other academics in fulfilling the University's mission.

Librarians teach information literacy through "conceptual understandings that organize many other concepts and ideas about information, research, and scholarship into a coherent whole."[4] Our teaching is not restricted to the classroom; every interaction between a scholar and a librarian is an opportunity to cultivate research skills, effective learning, and informed decision making. Librarians teach students and researchers how to identify, select, and use traditional and innovative research tools for search and discovery, data visualization, text mining, and research management.

Librarians conduct original research.[5] We publish peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and books in diverse academic fields, and we engage in other scholarly activities. We collaborate with scholars and support their research, thereby contributing to the discovery of new knowledge. As catalogers, metadata professionals, and data managers, we formulate, disambiguate, analyze, classify, and encode published knowledge and data,[6] thereby assuring that researchers will identify and access relevant, useful sources.

Librarians advance the University's public service mission through the ongoing development and maintenance of a working repository of organized knowledge, which are traditional functions of a research library. By constructing and curating the library's unique, diverse, and specialized collections, UC librarians disseminate them to UC researchers and their public and industry partners, who promote the long-term societal benefits of California and the nation.

WE PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Change, driven by technology, the economy, politics, and new avenues of intellectual exploration, assures that academic librarians will need to keep pace with the evolution of the information ecosystem. A recent Horizon Report[7] indicates that academic and research libraries are actively innovating in response to a number of real challenges. These include, in the short term, researching data management and the user experience; in the mid-term, reconceptualizing patrons as innovators and rethinking library spaces; and over the long term, initiating cross-institutional collaboration and overcoming challenges to the preservation of the scholarly record. We are already acting on the report's 2017-2021 timeline by adopting big data and digital scholarship technologies, as well as cultivating our online presence and service platforms. We are thinking ahead to the emerging challenges posed by new technologies, formats, and types of information. Time and again, UC librarians have demonstrated that we are professionally committed to learning from and adapting to new developments and that we will continue to safeguard the core values of our profession while also adapting to future trends.

[1] University of California, Office of the President, Academic Personnel Manual, APM 360-Appendix B, https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-360.pdf (accessed July 8, 2019).

[2] University of California, Office of the President, Academic Personnel Manual, Appointment & Promotion, Librarian Series, APM 360-4, "Definition," https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-360.pdf (accessed July 8, 2019).

[3] University of California, Office of the President, Academic Personnel Manual, Appointment & Promotion, Librarian Series, APM 360-10, "Criteria," https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-360.pdf (accessed July 8, 2019).

[4] "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education," American Library Association, February 9, 2015, http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework (accessed July 8, 2019).

[5] Librarians Association of the University of California, Grant Recipients Table, https://lauc.ucop.edu/grant-recipients-table (accessed July 8, 2019). This table tracks several years' worth of LAUC Research Grant recipients, including the nature and status of their projects.

[6] Association for Library Collections & Technical Services, "Core Competencies for Cataloging and Metadata Professional Librarians," https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/7853 (accessed July 8, 2019).

[7] New Media Consortium, NMC Horizon Report: 2017 Library Edition, https://cdn.nmc.org/media/2017-nmc-horizon-report-library-EN.pdf (accessed July 8, 2019).

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