

## **The Academic Librarian in the University of California**

Librarians at the University of California are academic employees who perform one or more of the basic functions outlined in the University's Academic Personnel Manual[1] at a professional level. They utilize the theoretical framework and practical methodology learned in graduate professional and academic study to further the instructional, research, and public service goals of the University. Librarians analyze curricula, research programs, and public service projects on their campuses and acquire and organize library materials to support them. They teach the bibliographic structure of fields of knowledge and the means of access to information for all levels of users. Librarians are the active links between individuals and the information resources, including published materials, they need to fulfill their goals at the University. Librarians contribute their expertise to the development of systems and networks designed both to increase the efficiency of local library operations and to facilitate resource sharing on regional and national bases. Through responsible management of library resources and facilities as well as programmatic planning and problem analysis, they strive to ensure the effectiveness of the University's libraries in the complex changing environment of higher education.

Individually, librarians have assignments in functional areas of library operations that require a theoretical and broad-based understanding of the role of the library in supporting University programs. However, they are not limited to performing a specific set of tasks in a restricted area. Librarians assume a leadership role within the University's libraries by defining goals and objectives and by participating in the development of plans for their implementation. They play a major role in shaping library services, policies, and procedures through program planning and evaluation.

The role of librarians within the University of California system is defined both by the professional elements of librarianship and by the status of librarians as academic employees of the University. Librarianship as a profession is characterized by those attributes identified in accepted and tested definitions of a professional.[2] As academic employees of the University, librarians are responsible for participating in professional activities outside the library, for University and public service, and for research and other creative activity.[3] At both the campus and the Universitywide levels, librarians participate in committees, task forces, and other groups designed to maintain University standards of excellence. They are expected to contribute to the advancement of their profession and to

maintain professional involvements outside their immediate working environment. Knowledge initially gained through professional education is expanded through participation in the activities of local, regional, state, national, and international professional associations, through additional academic course work, and through reading professional literature. Professional growth and development is a requirement for retention and advancement in the Librarian series in the University of California.

Librarians at the University of California have a collective responsibility through the Librarians Association of the University of California (LAUC), to advise University officials on professional and governance matters of concern to all librarians, including operations and policies of the libraries, professional standards, rights, privileges, and obligations of members of the librarian series of the University, planning, evaluation, and implementation of programs, services, or technological changes in the libraries of the University. [4] This organization, which is officially recognized by the University, is active both on the statewide and campus levels. One of its most important functions is to provide a peer review system to maintain high standards of performance for all University of California librarians.

For appointment to the Librarian series in the University of California, individuals are required to have the specialized education represented by the Masters degree in librarianship (or its equivalent); many also have earned advanced degrees in other academic fields.

[1] University of California. Academic Personnel Manual. Section 360-4

[2] U.S. Labor Management Relations Act (29 USC 152 (12(a) 1976); also incorporated into the California Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (CAL. GOVT. CODE 3562 (00)(1))

[3] University of California. Academic Personnel Manual, Sections 360-10 (b) and 210-4 (a-d)

[4] Librarians Association of the University of California. Bylaws, Article II, Section 1.

*Originally adopted in January, 1983. Revised version incorporating 1988 revisions to LAUC Bylaws (footnote #4) adopted November, 1989. Issued February, 1990.*