

## Guest Opinions



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### **UC Librarians: Able to evolve or stuck in a rut?**

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Something big happened quietly to UCSD librarians. We learned last quarter that we were no longer eligible to hold concurrent appointments as non-salaried lecturers. The impact is that we may no longer independently teach a course that we had taught for 30 years.

At UCSD, Contemporary Issues 50, Information and Academic Libraries, was approved in March 1975 by the Committee on Educational Policy (Subcommittee on Undergraduate Courses) of the UCSD Academic Senate. On the Request for Course Approval Undergraduate form it states, “Librarians will receive lecturer appointments.” Librarians held concurrent appointments as non-salaried lecturers in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program of Muir College to enable them to serve as the “instructor of record” with “independent responsibility for conducting approved regular University courses for campus credit” (per Regulations of the Academic Senate of the University of California, Part III, Title III, Chapter 2 #750).

As I understand it, what happened in fall 2004 was a result of recent collective bargaining agreements with Non-Senate Instructors Unit 18. The primary issue seems to be Unit 18’s collection of agency fees. Agency fees are only generated by paid positions; the practice of appointing individuals who hold full-time non-teaching appointments as non-salaried lecturers has ended. A consequence of this change is that some staff, researchers and librarians may no longer hold concurrent appointments as non-salaried lecturers. I also understand that at UCSD in particular Unit 18 staff has been particularly vigilant about finding non-salaried concurrent appointments and converting them to paid lecturer appointments or eliminating them. Well, all that is now water under the bridge.

However, my investigation of how this change happened led me to wonder about UC librarians and instructional services in general. The University of California, Academic Personnel Manual APM Sections 201-4, 360-4, and 360-10 define professional services provided to the University by librarians and criteria by which librarians are evaluated: “selection and development of resources; bibliographic control of collections and their organization for use; reference and advisory services; development and application of specialized information systems; library administration and management; and research where necessary or desirable in relation to the foregoing”. These policies lack language to support the role of librarians as providers of instructional services.

According to LAUC, the first 25 Years, in 1974 the subject of Librarians being accorded teaching responsibilities was raised. At that time, it was determined that the discussion of librarians as “officers of instruction” (per Regulations of the Academic Senate of the University of California, Part III, Title III, Chapter 2 #750) needed to

begin with the Office of the President. There is no evidence that LAUC pursued that line of inquiry. As a result it appears that administrative level discussions stopped.

However, the reality is that UC librarians have been providing instructional services and including those activities in their reviews for advancement in the Librarian series since the mid-1970's. The most common types of librarian instruction responsibilities are listed below. These examples come from across the UC system but not all types are found on all campuses.

### **Instruction Opportunities for Librarians**

- Guest Instructors. Librarian instructs one-time or multiple sessions on research methodologies to students enrolled in a credit bearing course that is being offered by an academic department.
- Co-instruction. Librarian works with a member of the faculty in the Professorial series, or equivalent titles, who is the instructor of record with officer of instruction responsibilities.
- Credit Courses. A librarian has a split appointment (nn% appointment in librarian series and zz% appointment as paid lecturer) to enable him/her to teach a credit course.

Split series appointments are necessary exist for two reasons. One, at UC, librarians are not eligible to teach credit course just by virtue of their academic title. The Librarian series is not an Instructional Title per UCSD Policy & Procedure Manual—Personnel Academic Section 230-20. VII.A. Instructional Title. Nor is Librarian an equivalent title per APM Section 115, “Equivalent” Titles and Ranks.

Two, librarians may no longer hold concurrent appointments as non-salaried lecturers to teach credit courses. Librarians **must** hold paid lecturer positions to teach credit courses. Only Instruction and Research (I&R aka academic) departments may establish paid lecturer appointments. The library is not an I&R department.

As I understand it, there are two ways to fund a split series appointment. One, the I&R/academic department agrees to pay the lecturer portion of the librarian's salary. Two, the library agrees to designate what would be the lecturer portion of the librarian's salary to the I&R/academic department for the I&R/academic department to pay the librarian.

At UCSD for a two-credit course the split series appointment would look something like this:

83% Librarian series appointment under the auspices of the Library  
(if represented, pay Unit 17 fees based on % of appointment)

17% Lecturer appointment under the auspices of an academic dept.  
(pay Unit 18 fees based on% of appointment)

(The 17% to teach a 2-credit course is based on a .5 workload value which is assigned by the academic department)

### **Implications for Instruction Librarians**

UC libraries now hire librarians as exclusively instruction librarians with minimal or no reference or collection development responsibilities. The UCLA Library has just appointed a new Associate University Librarian for Research and *Instructional Services*. UC librarians are committing significant time and energy to establishing information literacy programs within UC. Librarians serve on the front lines. They see that students must contend with the ever-increasing availability of digitized information. They lament students' heavy and misdirected reliance on web search engines to find scholarly peer reviewed literature. They wince at the increased unintended plagiarism that the ease of cutting and pasting text provides. And they can help. The move toward integration of information literacy programs with other UC academic programs rests on policy level acknowledgment of and support for instruction service as a distinct core professional service that librarians provide.

## **Implications for Evaluation of Instruction Librarians**

In terms of evaluation, historically librarians have subsumed the instruction services they provide under Reference and Advisory Service. Today many appointees to the Librarian series would argue that instruction service has outgrown its step-child status to reference service and is distinct and separate service from Reference and Advisory Services and is among the core professional services that they provide to the University.

It is common practice for librarians to report instruction activities when undergoing evaluation for advancement in the Librarian series. However, as the APM is now written, it is unclear under what UC policy purview this is legitimately done. Without formal policy basis for considering instruction responsibilities as a core professional service, there is no clear foundation upon which to include evaluation of instruction in the librarian peer review process. How do the review criteria apply to Instruction Coordinators, Assistant Department Heads for Instruction, and Instruction Librarians when instructional services are subsumed under Reference and Advisory Services? What would happen should CAPAs and ULs challenge the inclusion of instructional services rendered by librarians?

### **Mired in or moving forward?**

The temptation, in the face of overwhelming daily workload pressure, is to let sleeping dogs lie. Things work well enough, don't they? However, we must ask ourselves what is the result of inaction in the face of awareness? No growth and transformation as professionals. Pioneers in the early years of LAUC pressed for change and achieved significant strides in transforming the role of librarians and librarianship within UC. We follow an honorable path by pursuing further change as the profession evolves.

It is time for LAUC to work in concert with the University Librarians, UCOP, and the union as appropriate, to decide that instructional service is mature enough to stand on its own merits rather than remain subordinated, assumed yet unspoken, under the auspices of Reference and Advisory Services. And then to act upon that decision by revising the APM to simply reflect what is already in practice. Make Instruction Service separate but equal to Reference and Advisory Services.

Send comments regarding this site to [Frank Lester](#), LAUC Web Manager. Last updated: 03/12/2013