

To: Jennifer Reiswig, LAUC President

From: LAUC Ad Hoc Committee on Librarian Instructional Roles

Date: May 16, 2006

Subject: FINAL REPORT

In 2004, Terry Huwe, LAUC President, charged an [ad hoc committee](#) to investigate the instructional roles of librarians at the University of California.

It is clear that the UC Libraries and LAUC consider instruction an important function, and are interested in understanding, improving and promoting the instruction that librarians provide. In 1974 LAUC appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Library and Bibliographic Instruction whose final report was entitled "Librarians as Teachers." The report's recommendations included: having libraries recognized as academic departments, having librarians teach courses using their academic titles as librarians, and having these academic titles qualify them to serve as Officers of Instruction. At the time the issue of becoming an academic department was too complex to tackle and the Academic Senate reacted negatively to librarians as Officers of Instruction. Even though the recommendations were not pursued, librarians continued to provide instruction. Indeed one of today's most prestigious national professional awards for instructional accomplishment is named for [UCLA librarian Miriam Dudley](#) .

Among the UC Libraries and LAUC there is an increased interest in the expansion of library or bibliographic instruction programs into information literacy programs. To express this focus, at its 2002 Spring Assembly LAUC passed the [Resolution on Information Literacy](#) . Later in 2002, it established a task force on information literacy with a one-year term, to fulfill one part of the [resolution's directive](#) .

In 2003, in response to enduring and expanding focus on information literacy, the University Librarians asked their advisory group, SOPAG, to constitute an [Information Literacy Common Interest Group \(IL CIG\)](#) which reports through HOPS. The IL CIG produced [The Google Generation: Recommendations for Incorporating Information Literacy into the UC Experience](#). The IL CIG took on the LAUC Information Literacy Task Force's web site when the task force's term expired, and established other web sites to keep the university and others informed of current IL activities and endeavors at UC:

[Information Literacy: What the UC Libraries Are Doing](#)

[Information Literacy: UC Initiatives in Context](#)

[Information Literacy: Campus Initiatives and Contacts](#)

The HOPS IL CIG is in the planning stages for a system-wide information literacy workshop to be held in August 2006 entitled, [Infusing Information Literacy throughout the UCs: Programmatic Considerations and Practical Approaches](#) .

In the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, the profession articulated, defined, and embraced an approach to library or bibliographic instruction entitled [information literacy](#) . The evolution of the concepts and terminology is further amplified by the changes at some campuses in the breadth of librarians' instructional activities. Librarians may not only be teaching formal information literacy classes (for credit or not), but they are also serving as instructors and team-teachers within writing programs and a smattering of academic departments, and their teaching may go beyond just research and information skills to discipline-specific concepts that affect research and scholarly communication in that field. This is in addition to frequent guest lectures and interactive instruction "one-shot" sessions and workshops that librarians teach to specific classes or groups, not to mention the many paper, multimedia, Internet and [blended](#) forms of

instruction librarians continue to develop and make available to their users. The transition in concepts and terminology that resulted from the profession's adoption of information literacy is noted here because it may have had an impact on how respondents interpreted the terminology used for survey questions.

However one names the program and regardless of the type of teaching, it is undeniable that UC librarians have a tradition of instruction that dates back many decades, and that their teaching role and scope are expanding. It is also clear that, while instruction is at the core of the University, it is only one part of the workload of many UC librarians. In 2004, thirty years after the initial LAUC ad hoc committee on teaching, and two years after LAUC established its first Information Literacy task force, LAUC appointed another ad hoc committee to look into the instructional roles of UC Librarians. There were a number of questions for which we sought answers.

What portion of UC librarians' workload do instruction and instruction-related activities represent?

Is this workload specialized, significant, and large enough that system-wide policy change, such as expanding the official UC description of a librarian's duties and performance criteria (APM 360-4 and APM 210-4), is warranted to overtly reflect the instructional aspect of their professional responsibilities?

Are the instructional duties of librarians handled differently at various campuses in terms of relationships with academic faculty, librarian peer review, release time, personnel policies and other matters, and do any of these differences warrant further system wide attention?

To further explore these questions, the committee conducted an IRB-exempt [online survey](#) between February and March 2006. As there was no clear or efficient way to identify and target a subset of librarians who have instruction as part of their duties, the survey url was distributed through LAUC system-wide and divisional email lists which include ULs, AULs, and appointees to the Librarian series. 158 surveys were used for the current report, yielding an overall response rate of 30%. According to current survey research a survey must have a good response rate to produce accurate, useful results. For a survey that is administered online a 30% [return rate](#) may be considered average.

Summary

The survey asked questions about what kinds of instruction librarians did (single or multiple guest lecture, credit courses, etc.), who they instructed (undergraduates, graduates, professional school students, etc.), and how much time they spent on instruction and instruction-related activities. The survey excluded consideration of term paper consultations and interactions at the reference desk or through other forms of reference, like one-on-one consultations, online chat, email, or phone reference. Survey results show that:

80% of instruction provided by survey responders was in the context of single guest sessions about library resources to lower- and upper-division undergraduates, graduate students, and professional school students.

80% of respondents spent from .5 to 4 hours per week actually teaching. Comments indicated that: these sessions are provided on request at the discretion of individual faculty members and, requests for instruction are unpredictable and sporadic throughout any given term. Teaching time varied greatly depending on the week of the quarter or semester, and from year-to-year. (111 usable responses out of 130 responses)

72% of respondents spent from 1 to 10 hours per week on all other instruction-related activities, with 42% spending between 1 and 4 hours per week on these activities. Comments indicated that it was difficult to put their work into a "typical" weekly timeframe, as their time commitment varied greatly depending on the week and the quarter. Preparation time also varied greatly depending upon whether the session was for a course that

was new to the librarian, or whether it was a repeat session that just required updating, or the complexity of the course or the instruction needed. (112 usable responses out of 128 responses)

There was evidence in the survey that respondents did not understand under which criteria they should report their instructional activity.

How does librarian instructional workload compare to that of UC ladder rank faculty and other instructional titles? While a direct comparison in terms of counting numbers and percentages is not available, University of California [Undergraduate Instruction and Faculty Teaching Activities 2001](#) provides comprehensive documentation for that year. There are variations by discipline, but a typical teaching workload is between four and six courses per academic year. Two other informative reports are the result of the [Task Force on Faculty Instructional Activities \(July 2003\)](#), *Describing and Reporting Faculty Instructional Activities* and *Faculty Instructional Responsibilities: Guidelines for Departmental Policies*. A recent study by the [U. S. Department of Education](#) reports that full-time faculty and instructional staff at public doctoral institutions spent an average of 50% of their average fifty-five-hour work week in teaching-related activities, with eight hours per week in classroom time.

When viewing librarian instructional workload in the same context as faculty instructional workload (e.g., scheduled quarter/semester classroom hours, grading papers, creating syllabi, office hours) there was little evidence of parallels or equivalencies, in terms of a pattern of routine, predictable or stable classroom hours, and all of the other instruction-related activities that are taken into account for faculty and other instructional titles. Evidence of this sort would indicate that instruction is as much a portion of a librarian's workload as other professional librarian workloads such as cataloging, acquisitions, or reference service. Instruction that emanates from the library about library resources, information researching, critical thinking, and learning to learn about these topics, is, by history and practice, considered a facet of the reference and advisory service workload and as such is accounted for in APM 360-4c as a professional service provided by libraries to the university. Evidence does not yet support instruction as an independent professional specialization.

Recommendations

1. The committee recommends that LAUC should not pursue advocating system-wide policy change with regard to modifying the language of APM 360-4c to include the word "instruction" nor did the committee see evidence, based on the survey results, of a compelling argument to pursue review of applicable sections of the APM with an eye to designating the Librarian series as an Instructional Title. And finally, we recommend not pursuing reconsideration of establishing the Library as an Instruction and Research Department, as the results of this survey offer no evidence to support this effort at this time.
2. The committee recommends that LAUC advises each Division to have clear instructions in peer review documentation about where within the APM 210-4 criteria to report instructional activities. Ideally, these instructions should be consistent across divisions; however the committee acknowledges that divisional variations may make consistency impractical.
3. The committee recommends that LAUC suggest that the HOPS IL CIG review and improve the survey instrument upon which this report is based and conduct a survey of librarian instruction activities on an ongoing basis. The survey instrument would benefit from more study and review by a question design expert. The terminology for describing instruction and different kinds of instructional settings vary from campus-to-campus and so it was difficult to interpret the results. The survey instrument could also be revised to capture more thoroughly the workload impact of the kinds of activities that this survey instrument specifically excluded, such as one-on-one interactions at the reference desk and elsewhere—e.g., term paper consultations, research appointments, research consultations or other one-on-one consultations.

4. The committee recommends that LAUC suggest that the HOPS IL CIG examine the UCLA Library Summary of Instructional Activities (SAI) database to determine whether and how to expand it so that it might serve all UC campuses, for various purposes: tracking contacts regarding various types of instruction; as a means of gathering and reporting statistics on numbers of instructional activities, numbers of learners reached, departments and other groups reached, numbers and types of instructional materials developed or utilized, and more as a clearinghouse of instructional materials that could be shared among UC librarians.
5. The committee recommends that LAUC suggest that the HOPS IL CIG investigate the issue of how to develop or provide more training and other resources and support for librarian instructors.

Respectfully submitted by:

Peg Durkin, LAUC-D

Esther Grassian, LAUC-LA

Pat Hathaway, Library Human Resources, LA

Kari Lucas, LAUC-SD, Chair Sarah

Pritchard, UL, UCSC