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University of California
Systemwide Library Planning

DISCUSSION PAPER

Sustaining and Expanding the Shared Print+Digital Library Collection of the University of California

Shared Collections as a UC Library Strategy

At the time of the establishment of the University of California's Library Planning and Action Initiative (LPAI) in September 1996, the UC Libraries were afflicted, along with their peer institutions, with an endemic and growing structural problem: continuing price increases for library material greatly exceeded available new State funding to cover the increased costs, resulting in deterioration in the ability of campus collections to support existing and planned academic programs and enrollments.

Recognizing that the situation they addressed was not sustainable, and that there was little likelihood of securing the funding necessary to provide adequate library collections developed by traditional means, the LPAI Advisory Task Force recommended three basic strategies for dealing with the structural problem:

- As a long-term strategy, encourage fundamental changes in the structure and economics of scholarly publishing by supporting technology-based innovations in scholarly communication.
- In the medium term, rely on increased sharing of collections and the enormous leverage of a shared digital collection (economy of scale, Universitywide negotiating leverage, avoidance of duplication of effort and expense) to moderate the effects of ongoing price increases.
- Establish the California Digital Library to serve a leadership role in:
 - Employing technology to organize and implement the collaborative development of the shared digital collection and provide the tools needed by faculty and students to gain access to the shared Universitywide collection in both print and digital form.
 - Hosting and supporting scholar-led innovations in scholarly communication.
 - Using Universitywide leverage to influence the publishing marketplace to adopt business models that are sustainable for research institutions over the long term and promote the migration from print to print+digital collections meeting the requirements of authoritativeness and archival durability that are hallmarks of academic research libraries.

To this end, the LPAI recommended a three-pronged approach to development of UC library collections:

- Support robust campus collections
- Support sharing of resources among campuses
- Build a shared Universitywide digital collection through the California Digital Library

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In the *Regents' Budget for Current Operations* for 1999-2000, the University put forward a Library Budget Initiative that embodied the LPAI's recommendations. This budget plan anticipated requesting new State funds for library collections in the following categories:

- \$4 million per year for four years (\$16 million) to partially restore documented shortfalls in funding needed to support adequate campus library collections
- \$1 million per year for four years (\$4 million) to support expanded sharing of library resources among campuses.
- \$2.5 million per year for three years (\$7.5 million) to support building of the shared digital collection for the CDL (in addition to the \$3 million provided by the State and \$1 million by the University to support the establishment of the CDL and its initial collections).

As a result of these initiatives, the University has been able to maintain and improve the quality of library collections and services in all three areas addressed in the Library Budget Initiative.

- Campus collections. During the last three fiscal years (1998-99 through 2000-01) the State has provided \$6.96 million in new permanent funding and \$14 million in one-time funding to support campus library collections. An additional \$8 million in permanent funds is anticipated in the coming two fiscal years, according to the Library Budget Plan. This funding has arrested the deterioration in the quality of campus library collections and allowed the campuses to sustain an average net acquisition rate of 700,000 bound volumes per year, about equal to the average annual growth rate during the 1980's.
- Resource sharing. During the last three fiscal years, \$1.74 million in permanent funds has been provided by the State to support resource sharing programs. An additional \$1-2 million in permanent funds is anticipated in the coming two fiscal years, according to the Library Budget Plan. Using these funds, the CDL has developed and continuously expanded the *Request* service to support the efficient sharing of print collections among all UC campuses. Enhancement plans for 2000-01 and 2001-02 include acquisition of request management software to further improve and streamline *Request* service and implementation of a service for electronic delivery of journal article requests using Web technology. A program for shared cataloging of digital library resources was established, and is being expanded to include cataloging of government publications. Funding has been provided from this program to meet price increase needs to sustain the Shared Collections and Access program, to fully fund commercial overnight delivery of document requests among campuses, and to support relevant Universitywide library staff training activities. Total lending/borrowing within UC peaked in 1996-97 at 135,000 transactions and has remained steady since. However, lending and borrowing of returnables, which peaked in 1996-97 at 68,600 items and then declined to about 61,000 items in 1998-99, rose in 1999-2000 to nearly the previous peak level, while non-returnable transactions (photocopies), which rose to a maximum of 67,500 items in 1997-98, has since steadily declined to a level of about 63,000 items in 1999-2000. Of more long-term significance, the *Request* service accounts for an increasing proportion of these transactions. Between February and December 1999, for example, *Request* transactions grew from 13 percent to 38 percent of all intercampus loan requests.

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- Shared digital collections. During the last three fiscal years, the State has provided \$7 million in permanent funds and the University has provided \$1 million in permanent and \$0.5 million in one-time funds to support the development of the shared digital collection through the California Digital Library. In addition, the University has provided \$1.002 million to support new methods of scholarly communication through the CDL's *eScholarship* program. Since the CDL officially opened in January, 1999, the CDL has grown to include over 5,500 journal titles, more than 200 citation and abstract databases, and almost 40 online reference texts and datasets. The online finding aids of the Online Archive of California have grown substantially over this period, and OAC has begun to provide access to substantial primary-source digital collections, such as the Japanese-American Relocation Digital Archive. The prototype version of *Counting California* was released in January, 2002, and planning is underway to expand the scope of our digital government information collections. Available data indicates that in 1999-2000, over 26 million searches were conducted through the CDL, and over 700,000 digital journal articles were viewed during 1999. By comparison, reported circulation of campus library materials totaled about 5.5 million items in 1999-2000. It is estimated that, in its first two years of operation, the CDL has made available access to shared digital materials that would have cost the campuses more than \$4 million in additional funds if they had acted independently to provide the same level of access. This estimate excludes the benefits to individuals, academic departments, and other campus organizations that may have cancelled their non-Library subscriptions to journals in favor of no-cost access to the shared digital collection.

Challenges in Sustaining and Expanding the Shared Collection

As the end of the time horizon for the Library Budget Initiative comes into view, the University is faced with the challenge of planning to sustain and expand its shared collections in the event that new State funds are not provided for this purpose. Failure to rise to this challenge means that within a short time campus libraries may once again be faced with the historic and unsustainable structural problem of supporting growing campus enrollments and programs and funding hyper-inflation in the costs of materials with budgets that cannot grow quickly enough to meet the need.

This challenge is characterized by three general issues:

- The shared digital collection is carefully planned and coordinated in consultation with the campuses, but prospects for continued growth are constrained by the limited prospects for new State funds. Additional growth, both in size and diversity of content, will increasingly depend on ongoing additional investment of campus resources, accompanied by redirection of existing CDL resources to permit continued innovation and experimentation. Prospects for additional campus investments in the shared digital collection are in turn shaped by the availability of campus resources, competing local priorities for the use of these resources, and intercampus differences in the size and growth of the resource pool.
- Campus print collections are developed to meet local (campus) needs and support each campus' academic program. While the University Libraries have undertaken significant efforts to coordinate acquisition decisions and acquire material on a shared basis (e.g., the Shared Collections and Access program from the mid-1970s through the early 1990s, the

Collection Development Committee's Mini-SCAP acquisitions program, and the coordinating activities of the Bibliographer Groups under CDC leadership), these efforts have generally operated at the margins of campus-based collection development. Unlike the shared digital collection, mechanisms to effect large-scale coordination of investment decisions, leverage Universitywide investment, avoid unnecessary duplication, or ensure that investment decisions are informed by Universitywide as well as local campus needs have been limited in their scope and effectiveness.

- Independent campus investments in digital resources generally do not contribute at all to the shared collection, as the ability to share these is usually constrained by license provisions.

As examples of these general issues, several specific problems have come to light as a result of the University's experience in developing its shared collection.

- Tensions arising between the desire of campuses to immediately satisfy the expressed needs of faculty and students to acquire specific materials in digital or print formats and the collective desire to adhere to Universitywide licensing and acquisitions principles intended to influence the marketplace in directions that offer long-term advantages (e.g., sustainability, perpetual ownership and access, complete and authoritative content) to the University. For example:
 - Independent campus investments in popular and widely-held journals in digital format (e.g., Nature) that may not meet established criteria for Universitywide shared digital collections, such as pricing, pathways for migration from print to digital, access for all faculty, students and staff, completeness of content, or perpetual license and access.
 - Campus purchase of new print or print+digital subscriptions to journals already available within the University in digital or print (e.g., via Request) format but not yet licensed for the shared digital collection, which undermines the collective negotiating position of the University.
- The complexity of the University's co-investment model for digital collections and its interaction with varied and changing business models for licensing of digital resources (see *Shared Digital Collections: The Role of Co-Investment*, California Digital Library, March 28, 2000, attached). Specific challenges include:
 1. Devising co-investment models, heretofore based largely on historic campus print acquisitions, as pricing moves to electronic only.
 2. Faculty and student expectations that digital resources will be available systemwide, when many are not.
 3. Devising co-investment models that can simultaneously sustain digital collections of published material and provide support for the ongoing creation of collections of digital primary source materials.