

# The Mission of an Undergraduate Library (Model Statement)

## FOREWORD

At the 1978 Midwinter Meeting of the ACRL Undergraduate Librarians Discussion Group (UGL), a group of librarians expressed interest in writing a model statement that would define the scope and articulate the UGL purpose in the academic library.

For the past year and a half the members of the group have met, corresponded, and worked on improving successive drafts of a mission statement. They have tried to address the key factors in the establishment of the UGL and develop a service philosophy that reflects the specific needs and the major components of an undergraduate library operation.

Librarians may use the model mission statement for comparison with their local statements, as evidence to support the purpose of the UGL, and as a starting point for continued definition and advocacy of the UGL at local and national levels. With these ends in mind, the study group has kept the text general. It has tried to provide distinctions unique to the UGL while encouraging breadth in interpretation to suit local situations.

The study group included Lan Dyson (Santa Cruz, California), Monty Maxwell (Bloomington, Indiana), Linda Phillips (Knoxville, Tennessee), Jay Poole (Austin, Texas), Tim Richards (Ann Arbor, Michigan), Liz Salzer (Stanford), Donna Senzig (Madison, Wisconsin), and Yorum Szekely (Cornell).

"The Mission of an Undergraduate Library" (Model Statement) is here reprinted for the information of ACRL members.

## THE MISSION OF AN UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARY (MODEL STATEMENT)

The purpose of the undergraduate library is to take primary responsibility for meeting the library needs of undergraduate students in a large university environment. The nature of the environment, the specific needs of undergraduates, and the kinds of staff and services required to effectively meet those needs are more fully described in the following paragraphs.

### *Environment*

The library systems of large universities generally consist of several major departmental libraries plus numerous special libraries and reading rooms spread over a large campus area. The materials collection of the library system is mea-

sured in millions of volumes. Each library within the system concentrates on the needs of the members of a specific department or field of study, and the quality of the library is defined in terms of the strengths of the research collection. Specialized services are often provided for those doing research, such as computerized searching of commercial resource data bases. The staff members of the libraries are selected for their ability to provide graduate-level reference services, to organize complex collections, and to select the often esoteric materials needed in a research library. In-depth subject knowledge and managerial skills are also frequently required.

### *Users*

Into this research-oriented setting are placed large numbers of undergraduate students who come to the university with varying levels of experience and ability in using libraries. As a group most entering freshmen share the following characteristics:

1. They do not yet have the sophisticated research skills needed during their college careers.
2. They are intimidated by the complexity and size of a large library system.
3. They are reluctant to ask for assistance in the use of a library.
4. They are unaware of the many services and resources which are available in university libraries.

The needs of academic library users are on a spectrum, with study space, instruction in basic research tools, and reserve books at one end, and primary source materials and special bibliographic services at the other end. All of the community may need something from anywhere on the spectrum: a faculty member may want to look at a basic work, and an occasional undergraduate may be writing a paper that requires access to archival materials. But the concentration of needs of the undergraduate is at one end of the spectrum, and the concentration of needs of the advanced graduate student or researcher is at the other end. It is at the former end of the spectrum that the undergraduate library focuses.

### *Information Services*

An undergraduate library with a collection of the size and nature required to meet undergraduate needs is not easy to use. The identification of materials wanted is always confusing and often incomprehensible until the user is actually shown how the system works. Teaching students how to

use a library is therefore a basic service provided by the staff of the undergraduate library. The teaching programs of undergraduate libraries are varied. They include teaching by personal contact and through the preparation of printed materials and audio-visual programs. They include formal library programs, team-teaching with instructors in their classes and/or classrooms, and informal, unstructured contacts with students. The programs generally include three types of activities: reference and referral, orientation, and bibliographic instruction.

Reference encounters with undergraduates often result not only in answering specific questions, but also in personalized instruction in the methods of identifying and retrieving library materials. Supplemental to this personal contact is the provision of bibliographies, booklists, and other aids designed to introduce undergraduates to the materials available in the library and to guide them in finding the materials. The reference service provided by undergraduate librarians is also a referral service. Referrals might assist an undergraduate in becoming aware of other campus and community libraries and information centers, as well as of personal supportive services, including academic, financial, health, and counseling services.

Orientation activities acquaint undergraduates with the facilities and services of the library. They include activities such as the distribution of maps and informational materials that describe the library system and the resources and services of the individual libraries within it, staff-conducted tours for groups, printed and audio-visual self-guided tours, and information desks. Orientation may also include public relations activities that help students become aware of the services and resources of the library.

Bibliographic instruction programs should improve the ability of students to make effective use of the library collections, services, and staff and increase their ability to become independent library users. A wide range of programs may be offered including self-instructional point-of-use programs in the library, lectures to classes, workshops, term paper clinics, and for-credit courses in library research using workbooks, tests, and evaluations.

Reference service, bibliographic instruction, and orientation activities are appropriate for all levels and types of library users. The undergraduate librarian focuses on two problems that are particularly common to undergraduates—finding the materials they need, and knowing when to ask for help and having the confidence to do so. Undergraduate libraries provide a laboratory in which to teach students how to use a library. The experience of using an undergraduate library is preparation for using all libraries, preparation not merely for graduate work and research, but also for learning to use information sources that will

be needed by undergraduates for the rest of their lives as citizens, as consumers, in their professions, and for their recreational interests.

### *Collection*

The subject scope of the undergraduate library will primarily support the teaching curriculum. A given undergraduate library would operate at one of the following collecting levels: (1) at the level of freshman and sophomore classes; (2) at all levels of undergraduate classwork; (3) at all levels except in those disciplines supported by specialized subject libraries, in which cases bibliographic support by the undergraduate library will be at the freshman and sophomore level. Since many undergraduate courses require large numbers of students to read the same library materials, direct curriculum support will be provided through reserve collections and through purchase of multiple copies of items with high demand.

The undergraduate library will provide not only the best materials of historical or research value (which might be duplicated in other libraries on campus) but also overviews of a subject, jargon-free explanations of a field, and introductory materials. Research reports and other items restricted to a very narrow subject area are less frequently of interest to undergraduates and will be purchased very selectively. The undergraduate library's collection of periodical reference material will concentrate on the more general periodical indexes, since these are most heavily used by undergraduates; the periodical collections should emphasize the titles covered by these indexes. Media collections in various audio-visual formats and ephemeral materials such as pamphlet and clipping files may also be provided as additional resources for effective undergraduate research.

Undergraduates select from a wide variety of courses and are therefore looking for library materials on a wide variety of subjects in order to meet course requirements. The subject range of the undergraduate library will be of sufficient comprehensiveness and depth so that, in general, the undergraduate will have a single starting point from which to find the basic information needed for papers, speeches, projects, etc. More advanced needs of undergraduates will be met by specific referral to graduate collections.

The information needs of undergraduates extend beyond the requirements of the curriculum. Undergraduate students are vitally interested in current events and in the current state of the world. The development of cultural and recreational interests is also an important part of the life of an individual, and the undergraduate years are a time of exploring the wide range of activities and opportunities available. The library experience of undergraduates should encourage them to seek materials in these areas. The collections of the undergraduate library will therefore be developed to meet these needs, since this is

as important to undergraduate education and to the mission of the university as is the support of formal classroom instruction.

### *Staff*

The staff members of the undergraduate library must have certain abilities in addition to their bibliographic and library skills. The ability to teach on a one-to-one basis is essential for all staff who interact with students. Undergraduate librarians need lecture and workshop skills if the instructional program of the library is to be successful. In addition, they should be able to interact with faculty in promoting effective use of library resources in relation to classroom activities. The ability to cooperate with staff of other libraries and resource centers is also needed.

Above all, the staff of an undergraduate library must have sympathy for undergraduates, an understanding of the pressures of campus life, and a concern for undergraduate needs and problems. Such sympathy will enable the library staff to treat undergraduates with respect, to make them feel comfortable in the library, and to encourage them to ask for help. Only this personal interaction with students will humanize their library contacts, open paths of communication for their growth in using libraries, and increase their respect for libraries.

### *Study Facilities*

The environment of the undergraduate library should encourage the use of the library and its resources. The hours of operation must accommodate a range of student requirements based on class times, work commitments, and varied social habits. Many undergraduates live in environ-

ments which are not conducive to study; others simply prefer to study at a library. The undergraduate library should provide sufficient study spaces, based on the size of the student population, in a variety of seating to accommodate student needs and habits, e.g., quiet study of own materials, study with access to library resources, limited group study, and informal interaction.

### *Development*

As undergraduate education changes, so must undergraduate library service. The undergraduate library must be innovative and experimental, alert to changing undergraduate needs, and must often adopt non-traditional library methodology. Current areas of development might include:

- Continuing exploration of effective use of library materials (including audio-visual materials) in classroom teaching
- Programs of bibliographic instruction
- Service to special groups, e.g., the physically handicapped and visually impaired or the international student
- Computer technology for use in creating bibliographic catalogs of library materials and for bibliographic searching of commercial data bases
- Cooperative programs with other campus units, such as tutoring and counseling services

Developments in some of these areas may be at the library system level, rather than exclusively within the undergraduate library. However, it is the responsibility of the undergraduate library staff to shape these developments to meet the needs and problems of undergraduates. ■■

*Editor's Note: ACRL members may order single copies of the Mission Statement by sending a self-addressed label and \$.30 in postage to the ACRL office. Nonmembers should include \$1 with their order.*



*Retired Librarian of Congress, L. Quincy Mumford answers librarians' questions about the new*

## CUMULATIVE TITLE INDEX TO THE CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1978

*the unique 132 volume, single-alphabet listing of virtually every work classified by LC since 1897.*

**Background:** Librarians have been asking penetrating questions about the *Cumulative Title Index to the Classified Collections of the Library of Congress* (TLC) ever since it was first announced. We distilled what we believed to be the most significant of these questions and discussed them with retired Librarian of Congress Dr. L. Quincy Mumford, whose 21 year regime (1954-1974) witnessed such relevant landmarks as the beginning of MARC and the introduction of the Shared Cataloging Program. Here are some of the questions and his answers.

**Carrollton:** Dr. Mumford, just why is title access so important?

**Mumford:** Well, in the case of the Title Index to the LC Collections, its greatest value probably lies in its most obvious use. When only titles are known to a searcher, TLC will show: authors' names (and the years of publication), which lead to National Union Catalog entries; precise LC Classification Numbers, which lead to specific card images on the LC Shelflist microforms, and LC Card Numbers for ordering from the Cataloging Distribution Service. In the case of the Shelflist, of course, searches for the precise Class Number should be made in TLC even if the author is known as well as the title.

In addition to this primary use, I should like to comment on the recent trend by acquisitions departments to set up their records by title in order to enjoy faster and more precise access than is provided in main entry catalogs (especially when corporate authors and other problem authors are involved)

The Catalog Management Division of the Library of Congress converted its own Process Information File from a main entry to title arrangement about eight years ago, and I understand that their searching efficiency increased substantially after that change.

In short, librarians have long needed a definitive, single-alphabet title index to the Library's huge retrospective collection of the world's literature, and there is no doubt in my mind that this 132 volume set is going to fill that need.

**Carrollton:** Now that we've established the importance of title access, let's explore just how many and what kinds of titles are in the Classified Collections.

**Mumford:** Essentially, these contain all of the materials (both monographs and serials) which have ever been cataloged and classified by the Library of Congress since the adoption of its Classification System in 1897. As of January 1979, these totaled approximately 6.5 million titles. About one million (or 18 percent) of these records are included in the MARC (MACHine Readable Catalog) data base which was established in 1968.

**Carrollton:** In view of the fact that access to the MARC data base is already available to libraries in a wide variety of segments and formats — and as it amounts to only one-sixth of the Library's collection — would you describe for us just what records make up the *non-MARC* portion of TLC?

**Mumford:** Yes. The more than 5½ million *non-MARC* entries in TLC will include the following:

- English Language works cataloged before 1968.

- French Language works cataloged before 1973.
- German, Spanish and Portuguese Language works cataloged before 1975.
- Materials in the other Roman-alphabet languages cataloged before 1976, and
- Transliterated non-Roman alphabet materials cataloged by LC through 1978.

Because of these delays in entering the Roman-alphabet non-English-Language materials, it is estimated that more than half of the one million records prepared during the 12 years of the Library's Shared Cataloging Program have not entered the MARC data base.

A small number of exceptions to the above listing are represented by the Library's highly selective RECON (RETrospective CONVersion) Program which after several years has only just reached its 150,000th record (most of which covered 1968 and 1969 English Language reprints).

Actually, it has been the Library's long range emphasis on collecting and cataloging non-U.S. materials which has led it well beyond the role of a "national library" to its preeminence as a "library to the world." This emphasis is illustrated by the fact

that in the last ten years, only 37 percent of the books processed by LC were in English (and, of course, a large number of these were of non-U.S. origin).

**Carrollton:** Well, that pretty well takes care of TLC's coverage of the non-MARC records. Now let's talk about OCLC. Several librarians have asked what benefits they would get from the Title

Index that they would not already be getting as OCLC participants.

**Mumford:** First, of course, is the matter of coverage. Because of the overwhelming size, longevity and international scope of LC's holdings, the great majority of records in its classified collections have *not* been included in MARC, OCLC, or any other data bases.

Actually, there's no way of knowing exactly how many records are in the LC Classified Collections that are not in OCLC. We know how many records LC has sent to OCLC (over one million MARC records) but we do not know how many non-duplicate retrospective LC records have been put into the data base by OCLC participants. In spite of the large numbers of records cited by OCLC, after one deducts the MARC input, non-print materials, duplicate records, local publications, and other non-LC materials, the number of retrospective non-MARC LC records entered by OCLC participants should be relatively small. Based on conversations with LC catalogers and others, however, my outside guess would be that some 1.5

This sample illustrates the multilingual character of the Index.

AMERIKA

Amerika cithi. Misra. Ramarani. Japan. 1968. E169.02.M49.  
70-911289\*  
Amerika daigaku meguri. Maeda. Yoichi. Japan. 1961. LA227.2.M25.  
79-808479\*  
Amerika Dashichi Kantai. Imai. Kesaharu. Japan. 1973. VA63.S48.I4.  
73-805940\*  
Amerika daitoryo seido ron. Utsunomiya. Shizuo. Japan. 1974.  
JK511.U87.75-801808

Amerika e no rienjo. Goto. Tsutomu. Japan. 1956. DS832.7A6G6.  
72-806670\*  
Amerika en de presidentsverkiezing. Mandere. Henri. Charles Jacob  
van der The Hague. 1952. JK524.M3.55-23423.  
Amerika en internationale samenwerking. Lippman. Walter. New  
York. 1945. E744.L561  
Amerika—en ny civilisat  
E169.1.P48.37-19238  
Amerika en wij. Lefevre. Theo. Lier. 1968. E169.12.L4.79-394452  
Amerika en wij. Vlekke. Bernard Hubertus Maria. Roermond. 1948.  
E169.1.V58.49-27176

65% of actual size

Each entry contains Title, Author, complete LC Class Number, Year of Publication and LC Card Number. Non-English-Language entries also include place of publication. MARC and Romanized entries are identified.

Mumford (Continued)

million unique non-MARC LC records may have been added by OCLC participating libraries.

*This, of course, leaves 4 million non-MARC records in the Classified Collections that are not in the OCLC data base.*

The main reasons for the relative lack of OCLC overlap, as indicated above, are the size and international nature of the Library of Congress holdings when compared to those of even the largest of the OCLC participants.

COMPARISONS OF HOLDINGS

The overwhelming relative strengths of the LC collections in specific subject areas are best illustrated in the biennial report, *Titles Classified by the Library of Congress Classification: National Shelflist Count* (published by the University of California at Berkeley under the auspices of the organization of "Chief Collection Development Officers of Large Research Libraries"). This study compares the holdings of LC to those of 27 major U.S. research libraries in individual LC Classification Schedules.

The 1977 edition of this report shows that the Library of Congress' holdings are often two or more times as large as those of second-place libraries in a wide variety of significant subject areas, including: American History (Classes E-F), Social Sciences (H-Hx), Language & Literature (P-Pz), Technology (T-Tx), and Bibliography and Library Science (Z).

In a telephone survey conducted by Carrollton Press during September, 1979, of the 20 largest members of the Association of Research Libraries, it was learned that although 16 of them are currently OCLC participants, none submit significant numbers of retrospective LC records to OCLC. (A possible exception to this is the University of Texas, which has sent OCLC approximately 20,000 retrospective records to date.)

LC CLASSIFICATION NUMBER CHANGES

Tens of thousands of LC Classification-Number

changes will have been picked up and printed in TLC. In many cases where participating OCLC libraries derive their cataloging data from old LC printed cards it would be beneficial if they would consult TLC entries before they contribute retrospective cataloging to the OCLC data base.

Access to up-to-date LC Classification numbers, of course, will also be extremely important to libraries converting from Dewey to the LC Classification system. Moreover, OCLC participants can refer to TLC to find LC Class Numbers for those OCLC records which show only Dewey call numbers.

**Carrollton:** Dr. Mumford, you've demonstrated the usefulness and unique coverage of the *LC Title Index*. But the set is expensive (even with our pre-publication prices and extended payment plans). How can librarians justify its cost?

**Mumford:** I think the cost effectiveness of the set is best illustrated by the fact that for a one-time expenditure which is less than the year's salary of a cataloger, TLC will go on year after year saving time and money for a library's Reference, Acquisitions and Cataloging Departments — and do so during those future years when inflation will have increased staff salaries and other costs.

**"For a one-time expenditure which is less than a year's salary of a cataloger, TLC will go on, year after year; saving time and money for a library's Reference, Acquisitions, and Cataloging Departments."**

Looking at it another way, TLC records cost only \$1.78 per thousand at the pre-publication price — and even less if paid in advance. The arguments for

ordering the set now and paying in advance also seem impressive to me. Those libraries which ordered Mansell's *Pre-1956 Imprints* edition of the *National Union Catalog* when it was first announced paid less than half of today's price for that set. Also, the 10% prepayment discount on the Title Index amounts to a healthy \$1,143. It is therefore obviously advantageous for libraries to get their orders on record now at the pre-publication price. That way, they'll be certain to get the "Z" volumes at the same price they paid for the "A" volumes.

To: Carrollton Press, Inc., 1911 Ft. Myer Drive  
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