

## Consortium Library—UAA Administrative Review Questionnaire – (2/25/20)

### **1) What are the core functions of your unit that are funded in Fund 1 (i.e. Fund 104110)? (Bullet point list is preferred. No more than one-page, please.)**

The mission of the Consortium Library is at the heart of UAA's mission which is *to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression*. The core functions of the Consortium Library are identified in its mission statement.

*The mission of the Consortium Library is to provide and maintain collections and resources that support the educational and research programs of the University of Alaska Anchorage and Alaska Pacific University. The library provides information services for the benefit of the university and research communities and the residents of the State of Alaska. The Consortium Library evaluates, acquires, organizes, disseminates, and preserves knowledge and information. The library emphasizes access to information and instruction on the knowledgeable use of information services.*

The Consortium Library is organized around its core functions with each department an integral part in fulfilling its mission of supporting UAA's educational and research programs.

#### **Core Library Functions:**

- Oversee the evaluation and acquisition of knowledge and information, resource preservation, and access to online information resources. Collaborate with university faculty when identifying appropriate information resources supporting curriculum and research programs.
- Provide discovery services and access to library resources for the UAA community, both onsite and online, through quality cataloging. Maintain the university's institutional repository (Scholarworks@UA), which houses scholarly output of UAA.
- Disseminate information and knowledge by checking out materials and computers to UAA library users, by maintaining onsite reference and research collections and by providing safe and secure areas for individual and group learning. Provide a core interlibrary loan function for obtaining materials not currently held by the Consortium Library and for lending materials to other libraries.
- Provide the infrastructure for online access to print and digital collections, and support for the library's core systems for acquiring, processing, cataloging and checking out materials. Support the library's discovery service, its website and intranet, and the Alaska Library Catalog.
- Provide library instruction and research services for UAA's academic and research programs. Conduct hundreds of library sessions in teaching information literacy concepts to thousands of students each year. Contribute to UAA's Textbook Affordability and Open Educational Resources efforts.
- Acquire, preserve and provide access to regional historical materials used by students, faculty and researchers. Serve as the official repository for many permanent records created by UAA offices and departments.

---Contract with Alaska's health care providers in urban and rural areas, offering specialized resources and needed information services. Negotiate licensing for statewide library programs for the benefit of students, faculty, researchers, and residents in Alaska.

**2) If one or more of these functions was reduced or discontinued, what would be the impact on: (Not all elements may be relevant for your unit. Only address relevant items.)**

- a. More students persisting and completing educational goals?**
- b. Supporting overall student, faculty and staff success in meeting UAA's mission?**
- c. Impacts to UAA's reputation, and ability to attract and retain students and/or external support?**

After 15 years of stable budgets and sustained growth, the landscape radically shifted in FY15 as budget reductions were implemented and the library was cut by \$448,430 in general funds. This reduction was followed by larger budget cuts of \$602,423 in FY16 and \$741,320 in FY17. For the next two years the general fund reductions were much lower with \$80,471 cut in FY18 and "only" \$38,518 in FY19. The total reduction in general funds of \$1,911,162 represents an overall budget cut of nearly 25%. To compound the situation, university libraries pay higher institutional rates than individuals for journal subscriptions and online resources. Even though the Board of Regents have included a fixed cost increase in their prior budget requests for the UA libraries, the fixed cost increases were not funded by the state. The lack of inflationary budget adjustments represents a loss of purchasing power for the library of at least \$500,000.

As noted in the last NWCCU accreditation report for UAA,

*Over the past 5 years, the library has seen budget reductions by nearly \$2 million dollars, which is significant when one considers that during the same period, library inflation on periodicals and databases averaged about 6% per year. This declining resource base is being felt by faculty and graduate students, as evidenced by the data collected in the 2017 LibQUAL+ survey that identified dissatisfaction with adequate library resources.*

**Concern:** *Reduced funding for the consortium library has affected the library's ability to support faculty, staff and students in the areas of teaching and learning as well as research and scholarship.*

As of February 2020, the Consortium Library has 8 fewer librarian and archivist positions and 5 fewer staff from a total of 55 positions in FY15 representing a reduction of 24% in staffing. The library's acquisitions budget has been cut by approximately \$600,000 or 28.5%, which represents a significant loss of access to current information through discontinuing the licensing for more than 50 research databases and by dropping subscriptions to hundreds of journals.

With fewer service hours, fewer librarians and staff, and with reduced access to current information and materials, the budget cuts have limited the library's ability to help students persist and complete their educational goals. The budget cuts have damaged the library's ability to support UAA's mission and to support faculty, staff and students in the areas of

teaching and learning. Reducing the capacity of the library negatively impacts UAA's reputation, its ability to attract and retain students and outstanding faculty, and UAA's success rate in securing external funds.

*I believe that the library should be open later. 8pm on Friday and Saturday should be extended.*-  
-undergraduate student

The evidence is visible. The library building's scheduled hours and staffing at the Research Assistance Desk have been reduced while UAA students are requesting more night hours. The Archives and Special Collections Department is open only three days a week instead of five, limiting the availability of the historical collections for research and study. The library has a significant backlog of uncataloged materials (both purchased and donated) due to a lack of qualified staff to catalog these materials. Without access to current materials, UAA's researchers are at a disadvantage in securing external funding and in keeping up on new developments in their field. A comprehensive university is only as good as its library.

*My only complaint, and I cannot fault the library staff for this in any way, is the lack of electronic resources, particularly journal access. I realize this is a budget related item, and that the library is doing a good job under the constraints it faces. I have no complaints about the staff, and praise for my subject librarian and very high praise for ILL.* --LibQUAL survey--faculty member

### **3) Identify measures and targets used to monitor the impact of functions on each of the above (not all elements may be relevant for your unit, only address relevant items).**

The primary assessment tool used by the library every three years is the LibQUAL survey which is a nationally normed library survey administered by the Association of Research Libraries that measures user perceptions and library effectiveness in three areas of library services: library as place, impact of service, and information control. After six years of steady improvements from 2008 to 2014 as measured by the triennial LibQUAL survey, the last survey conducted in the fall of 2017 documents a decline in the library's capacity to provide the materials needed by the university faculty and graduate students to do their work. The library also employs other assessment and evaluation methods for surveying specific areas or to gain current opinions about the library's collections and services. The library's assessment methods are used regularly in allocating limited funding for improving the study areas or for adding resources.

For more details, click on "About the Library" on the library home page and then click on "Assessment."

*I have noticed a significant and unfortunate deterioration in available resources due to financial cutbacks that are reducing physical acquisitions and access to electronic databases. The staff are doing the best they can under the circumstances, but the diminishment in resources is impacting the ability of the library to serve its vital role.* --LibQUAL survey--faculty member

There is also a correlation between library instruction and student success. A multi-year study conducted at the University of North Carolina Charlotte looked at the impact of the library on GPA, credit completion, and graduation. In looking at the impact on all undergraduate students, their regression models predicted improvement of student GPA as a result of interactions with the library. Library instruction as well as the use of library resources (collections and databases), computers, and study areas all contribute to these results. In looking at how students used the library, they found that students who were provided with library instruction were much more likely to use all that the library has to offer (collections, databases, archives, computers, research services, and study spaces). For students who received library instruction and made significant use of the library, the regression models showed a 5.6% variance in GPA for the aggregated undergraduate population and a 6.6% variance for those who were enrolled as first-year first-time students.

This research and other similar studies emphasize the value of library instruction in contributing to student success. The Consortium Library's instruction sessions both online and in the classroom engage nearly 3500 students each year across a wide range of disciplines. The library also assists with student recruitment in working with student groups brought to the campus by UAA's Alaska Natives Studies and Alaska Native Student Services and by providing library instruction to a variety of off campus programs including South High's AP capstone program, West High's International Baccalaureate program, and the ASD summer bridging program. Further budget reductions will erode this level of student instruction and support.

*Anytime I have had a class and a librarian has come in to speak, they have always been very helpful. They answer any questions you may have and provide the students with as much information as they can. I also enjoy the library rooms. I use them all the time with groups of people to study and get work done. --undergraduate student*

*I want to take the opportunity to quickly say how much I appreciated your presentation to my HNRS A292 class today. It was exactly, well more than what I expected. You covered all the essential elements of using the library resources to conduct a research project, even many that I was not aware we had. Your additional insights into using these tools were a bonus that will make using these resources even easier. Aside from the technical aspects of the workshop such as showing the students how to navigate the library search engines, your specific additional content and links you provided for my students were wonderful. And, you managed to keep them engaged and asking questions as you went along, which is feat all to itself. Since these were lower division honors students, some reasonable level of motivation and experience could be expected, but I was very pleased that you correctly judged their skill levels and could target your presentation appropriately. Thanks again for the absolutely wonderful workshop and I am planning to make it a part of my future classes. --faculty member*

*I was so happy with our field trip to the UAA Consortium Library last January and our students are very interested in making the trip again this year - we have about 26 returning students and 17 new students to our AP Capstone program here at South High School. We were hoping for*

*the same time frame as last year. We both think that the format presented last year was perfect for our students - AP Seminar students doing preliminary research on a handful of topics, and AP Research students delving deep into research on individualized topics - and would love a similar presentation if you are available for us to visit this year. –South High School teacher*

#### **4) What improvements have been achieved over the last five years?**

A major accomplishment for the library was to manage its significant budget reductions in a responsible and transparent manner that enabled the library to maintain core library and instruction services for UAA students and to continue online access to essential ebooks and full text journal collections. UAA faculty and students continue to have access to selected high-quality scholarly information and research publications 24 hours per day, seven days per week. During FY19, more than 449,000 full text articles and ebooks were retrieved, representing more than \$5,390,000 worth of materials. Such access will be impossible to maintain if the library's budget is reduced further.

Based on the library's assessment and evaluation activities, the library made improvements to the building and to its services. The most visible one is the north entrance, which provides a second more secure and convenient entry into the library and connects to the campus spine. The north entrance is very popular. In support of student success, the library made it easier to schedule appointments for research assistance with the librarians and added chat and text services. Responding to student needs, the library added more study rooms, upgraded the research computers, purchased new scanners, installed food vending machines, added more outlets and USB charging stations, and made available laptops, calculators, and headphones for checkout. The Consortium Library is fully engaged with UAA's Online Educational Resources (OER) and Textbook Affordability initiatives. The card access system for late night study has been quite successful in offering a safe and secure learning space on campus. The library has evolved into the primary location for issuing WolfCards on campus, being an ideal location for this service with its evening and weekend hours. With a gate count of more than 11,500 visitors during a typical week, the library is the central place for learning and discovery on the UAA campus nearly every day of the year.

*The architecture is gorgeous and it offers a clean and free place to study.--student*

The library improved access to the librarians, resources and services via Blackboard and also extensively upgraded the library's online self-help guides. It continued to expand the resources in UA's institutional repository, Scholarworks@UA, and it took over the management of Alaska's Digital Archives. Along with the Alaska Library Catalog, these discovery systems are core platforms in providing access to course resources, university research and publications, and historical collections. With \$300,000 in funding from the Atwood Foundation, the *Anchorage Times* newspaper was converted to a digital edition covering its entire publication history from 1916 -1992. The digital edition is very much appreciated by researchers and used on a regular basis. Funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Tower Endowment has allowed the Archives faculty to create statewide guides to archival holdings on

topics relevant to research interests at UAA, while funding from the Council on Library and Information Resources supported the department's preservation work. External funding from the National Library of Medicine and the University of Washington's regional medical network has supported outreach efforts by the Alaska Medical Library to conduct instructional sessions at clinics and public libraries in rural Alaska.

*I think the library is already doing a great job at providing amazing help and amazing resources. I really want to thank the librarians for all the hard work they do.—distance education undergraduate student*

With \$380,000 awarded by the Rasmuson Foundation, the library accomplished the largest system migration in the state's history by merging numerous library systems. As a leader in statewide library programs, the Consortium Library forged new partnerships over the past few years in expanding the Alaska Library Catalog (ALC) beyond Anchorage. It now extends out to 87 participating libraries serving both rural and urban areas and covering 92% of the state's population. The ALC is a unique partnership involving UAF, UAS, and UAA libraries, most of the major public libraries, several school districts, museums and specialized libraries in Alaska. Besides the Consortium Library, the UAA collections in Native Student Services, Career Exploration and Services, and at all of the UAA community campuses are cataloged in the ALC. This shared statewide library catalog has more than 5.6 million items and 259,000 registered borrowers. The expanded system provides more resources to more students and residents while reducing the annual operating costs by more than \$100,000 among the participating libraries. Library users from their homes, schools, and libraries can request materials from their local collections, as well as from the combined holdings represented in the ALC. During FY19, 3.6 million items circulated from the ALC libraries.

*The best part of joining the ALC is the quick access to materials for our customers/community. The impressive system support and lower costs come in a close second--*  
Alaska library director

##### **5) What efforts have your unit made to improve efficiencies and reduce costs? What was the result?**

The library is aggressive in negotiating licensing for online collections, library system software, and discounts on books and films, library supplies and equipment. Such negotiations often include other libraries in Alaska to secure lower unit costs. The overall results are lower annual increases, additional content, and significant savings on purchases for library specific supplies and equipment. The library's strategic partnerships with UAF, UAS, and other public and special libraries in Alaska have resulted in significant reductions in annual costs by replacing local or regional systems with the statewide Alaska Library Catalog. By moving the Alaska Digital Archives to a remote hosting service, the end user experience was significantly improved and more than \$50,000 dollars were saved in local staffing, which reduced the annual costs for UAA, UAF and the Alaska State Library. The Consortium Library also benefits directly from its work

with the Alaska State Library and the Alaska Resources Library and Information Services (ARLIS) by gaining access to statewide online resources at no annual cost to UAA.

*As a graduate student in the MBA program, I'm writing to express my appreciation for the research assistance I recently received through Inter-Library Loan services. Within two days of making a request for a rather obscure journal article, I received a perfectly legible and easily accessible pdf file of it this morning. The ILL services, delivered in this way, is such a valuable aid in conducting academic research and I would like to compliment those who make it possible. Please feel free to share my sentiments with the Library staff or others who might like to know the value of these types of support services for our university.*

The library's selective hiring freeze was put in place in September 2014 because of budget reductions and in order to retain a balance between the library's collection development budget and its staffing costs. The hiring freeze has resulted in eliminating eight library faculty positions and five staff positions representing a total of \$1,224,439 in wages and benefits.

This hiring practice left the library trying to do its best with less. The remaining library faculty positions have distributed amongst themselves the instruction and collection development areas (e.g., engineering, nursing, CTC) that were left vacant when their colleagues retired or resigned. The staffing levels of the library are now very thin and often only one person is left to cover multiple subject disciplines or core job responsibilities.

**6) List and briefly describe any current or proposed Board of Regents Policy, State or Federal mandates, or laws that require the continuation of your core function(s).**

The library's mission is at the core of UAA's mission which was approved by the Board of Regents. (Policy 01.01) As a US government depository, the library is required to provide access to government documents and information. There are prescribed standards for library services as required by NWCCU and UAA's specialized program accreditations. Many of these specialized accreditations require within the self-study information about library services and resources specifically related to that program. The library is a requirement in every accreditation report.

*I'd like to take a moment to thank you for assisting the Human Services Department with our national accreditation. After the Library tour they also toured the LRC. Their comments were incredibly positive about the tour with you at the Library and how much you knew about Human Services. They indicated that the level of resources available to students, the amount of help available and the beautiful setting was a treasured resource. They were so totally impressed by the tour. So thank you again for being available to showcase our department and the Library. You did a great job!*

UA's records retention schedules, approved by the Board of Regents, designate the library's Archives and Special Collections Department as the official repository for most permanent

records created at UAA. There are obligations in current agreements with Alaska Pacific University, federal and state agencies, international and statewide networks, libraries, museums, schools, and health care providers. There is also the need to have reciprocal borrowing agreements in place to support the interlibrary loan service.

**7) Potential cuts: Please describe any function reductions or eliminations that are feasible without significantly affecting UAA's mission fulfillment or its compliance mandates? Are any functions within your unit are duplicated elsewhere at UAA? Is there an opportunity for efficiency to be created by partnering or combining functions? Please describe the opportunities you identify within your unit and include the approximate dollar values and savings that would result.**

Further reductions or eliminations will do even more damage to the library's core services affecting its ability to support student success and UAA's institutional and specialized program accreditations. The library hiring freeze will continue however this option will be impossible to maintain for certain key positions where there is no longer any depth of coverage for specific skills or to cover core job responsibilities. The library is unique in its mission and in the services it provides and there should be no duplication in library functions elsewhere on the Anchorage campus. The library will continue to seek new strategic partners on campus, in Alaska and across the country, wherever there is an opportunity to improve library services to the UAA community.

*I simply couldn't do my job without the library and the librarians, nor could my students. I appreciate you guys every day! --faculty member*

Submitted by

Stephen Rollins  
Dean, Consortium Library

sjrollins@alaska.edu