Reinventing the Library

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What Brought Staff to the Ombudsman’s Office at the University of California Berkeley in 2011

- Respect/Civility
- Workload
- Discrimination
The major barrier to library collaboration is:

- Library staff (37%)
- Faculty (23%)
- Budgetary constraints (20%)
- Law/Policy makers (14%)
- University administration (6%)

Results of informal audience responses from ARL May 2009 Membership Meeting.
Virtue or Vice?

“The librarians and academic information staff members of universities are critically important to the quality of these institutions. They are, in many way, custodians of culture.”

“Shared Services” and “Organizational Simplification” are changing our picture of Libraries.
This is yesterday’s organizational chart
“Org Charts”

- Are as old as the first public libraries.
- Have evolved as organizations attempted new things.
- Are giving us new directions as consultants seek greater efficiencies.
Tools: Spider charts graphically represent large org charts on a single page

Number of supervised direct reports
- No supervised direct reports
- ≤ 3 direct reports
- ≤ 5 direct reports
- > 5 direct reports
- Out-of-scope

How to read this chart:
- Unit leader is shaded bubble in the center
- Each concentric circle represents an organizational layer (e.g., distance from the unit leader)
- Each shaded bubble represents a position based on headcount (not FTE)
- Color of the shaded bubble indicates span of control (see legend) and scope

Spider charts for each unit and major sub-unit to be provided
My first "Spider Chart"
Preliminary thoughts on what will be required to realize opportunities

- Leadership must set tone and commit to promoting change
- Campus community must understand case for change and actively support the change effort
- Ownership for initiatives must be clear and owners must be held accountable for ensuring success
- Resources must be appropriately allocated to the change initiatives
- Incentives must be aligned with desired behaviors and there must be consequences to deter undesired behaviors
- The right people with the right skills must be in place, with sufficient hiring and training to support successful implementation
- Metrics to track progress must be defined in advance and agreed by key campus stakeholders
- Momentum must be maintained by celebrating ‘quick wins’
Tactics: Opportunity to surface suggestions, contingencies and requirements

Some organizational changes may require additional actions outside of organizational design:

- **Reduce work**
  - Invest in *systems and technology*
  - Redesign processes
  - Change policy to impact how work is currently done

- **Build additional capacity**
  - Hire *different/specialized talent*
  - Invest in *employee training*
  - Share activities and resources across units

We are asking each unit leader to surface ideas and identify opportunities to enable organizational changes
Themes the OE team has heard on drivers of inefficiency

**Examples we heard**

| Complexity       | “There are multiple approvals required for every sign off”  
                    | “We need to track fund source for every activity” |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Fragmentation    | “We have numerous student services organizations spread out under five Vice Chancellors” |
| Redundancy       | “There is duplication of effort as HR people in each department have to figure out how to do the same work” |
| Lack of standardization | “There are 1000+ people who prepare purchase orders and each department has their own process” |
| Lack of automation | “Many people fill out time sheets with pen and paper” |
| Unneeded hierarchy | “We have to reduce the number of supervisors – staff are incented to become supervisors to get paid better” |
| Misaligned incentives | “Individuals optimize locally at the expense of the University”  
                        | “Departments are not billed for the energy they consume”  
                        | “There’s no funding strategy for common goods” |
Welcome Fresh Views

“For more than four decades, Frederick Wiseman has used a lightweight camera and portable sound equipment to study human behavior in all its contradictory and unpredictable manifestations, particularly in institutional or regimented situations where authority creates an imbalance of power, or where democracy is at work.”

Museum of Modern Art, New York
Frederick Wiseman’s “Welfare” (1974)
Why should we be less exposed?
Self-Study is the Prerequisite to Change

• No “buy-in” without staff seeing for themselves that change is needed.
• “Outsiders” can only do so much to meet your goals.
• “Insiders” can head off disappointments that consultants and observers will miss.
• Change needs champions and sponsors on the inside of the organization.
Some Early Insights from Self-Study Teams

• Think of Librarians as triple performers:
  – the *selector* of what we should buy, license or take as a gift
  – the *liaison* with programs that most often use these materials in teaching and research
  – the *instructor* in the many ways we interact with advanced users (including deep reference questions)

• Librarian portfolios can be re-fashioned to have these broader spans. Intellectually this will take Librarians across traditional disciplines and into emerging fields.
Teams of library professionals can form more functional and supportive communities if we recognize what holds us back:

• Management assignments burden too many of these professionals.

• In some cases, stand-alone libraries have become silos that constrain rather than supply talent.
Ask Users for their Priorities

The Library has an urgent need for your opinion on how we should change the services we offer and balance this with investments in collections.

Your response will tell us about what should matter most when we ask libraries to help create, share, and preserve the work of the academy. The answers to these questions will guide face-to-face discussions with faculty and students and shape the plan we choose.

If you have ideas or concerns beyond what you tell us in the survey, please share these by sending an email to future@library.berkeley.edu

As background we offer a short Executive Summary of our self-study of Library Services as well as full access to the more than 200 pages of this work:

http://lib.berkeley.edu/AboutLibrary/re_envision.html
During May 2012, more than 4,000 users took the Berkeley Library survey.

- The Survey was conducted by Hart Associates, a national polling firm.
- The Survey was on-line, not person-to-person.
- The Survey was immediately controversial, especially among faculty.
The most controversial question we asked:

Which of the following time slots would you MOST prefer to be able to access Berkeley’s libraries in-person?

- Midnight to 6am
- 6am to Noon
- Noon to 6pm
- 6pm to Midnight
Some questions were simply a reality check, to confirm assumptions.

- The Survey explored some issues we were not sure about.
- We asked some questions twice, before and after giving more information on how libraries operate.
- The Survey led our users to set priorities and even to make very hard choices.
Which three or four of the following do you think contribute most to making a library truly great?

(Please select up to 4 items)

1. High-quality print and digital collections—e.g., books, maps, and journals
2. A location that is close by and easily accessible
3. A librarian who is directly associated and knowledgeable about my academic department or major
4. A location that provides comfortable and sufficient places to read and study
5. Librarians who can efficiently connect me with the resources I need
6. Librarians with subject and/or language expertise selecting materials for the collection
7. Librarians who provide instruction on how to use library collections and services
8. Hours that accommodate my schedule
9. Other (please specify)
Thinking about the Library’s collections, do you: strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following?

• High-quality library collections are essential for my research
• I prefer digital collections to print collections for journals
• I prefer digital collections to print collections for books
• I have no problem borrowing materials from other libraries if materials are not locally held
• The Library should use collections funds to digitize print materials, even if it means buying less materials
UC Berkeley’s existing library service model consists of many independent libraries of varying sizes. Currently, Berkeley strives to offer a full range of services in all locations regardless of size, staffing, or level of use. But that service model has become unsustainable due to the following reasons:

- Budget cuts that have reduced library staff by 20% over the last four years
- Digital content that has transformed how information is accessed for many academic disciplines
- Changing user behaviors call for longer and later hours, group workspace, and virtual services
- The only way to maintain all current locations and existing services would be to spend substantially less money on collections.

Would you support or oppose spending substantially less money on collections to maintain all current locations and existing services?
In the long run, a new library service model will benefit the campus. The Library has not changed its service model in over 30 years. Rethinking the model will allow the Library to be responsive to changing needs of academic disciplines and provide more flexibility to develop enhanced services such as:

- Providing longer hours that better match user needs
- Collecting and supporting new formats (e.g. geospatial, new media, scientific data)
- Curating and preserving digital collections
- Providing more spaces for quiet and group study space
- Increased digitization of selected print materials
Thinking about everything you’ve read, which one of the following do you think should be the highest spending priority, recognizing that all three may be very important?

(I) Maintaining high-quality collections

(II) Maintaining the current number of locations and service points

(III) Maintaining a well-qualified staff with subject and language expertise
Make every effort to keep morale up in a library you are changing.
Celebrate while you change
Questions? email: TomL@Berkeley.edu