

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521-0132

March 11, 2014

TO: José Wudka, Chair  
Academic Senate

FROM: Erica Edwards, Chair  
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: UCR Libraries Strategic Plan - Draft

In our February 26, 2014 meeting, the CHASS Executive Committee met to discuss the draft of the UCR Libraries Strategic Plan.

We applaud the Plan's broad vision and support its ambitious goals for growth. However, we would like to suggest that the Strategic Plan include more specific details about its plans for print book acquisition and indicate that its fiscal vision includes a sizeable budget for print manuscripts and materials.

The Plan proposes to "accelerate the research and teaching programs of the university" through digitization (which would presumably both make research available to our faculty in digital formats and encourage our faculty to make our research available through "new knowledge products." (See Strategic Goal 1: Research and Curation.) We are concerned that the focus on digital materials ignores how fundamentally our research in CHASS continues to depend on print materials such as scholarly monographs, musical scores, print journals, and rare books and manuscripts. For example, the Eaton Collection of Science Fiction and Fantasy is the largest publicly accessible collection of print materials in science fiction, fantasy, horror, and speculative fiction in the world, and it draws world-class students and faculty to our campus. One way to support access to important archives such as this one (Strategic Goal 3) might be to provide small travel grants, as many important repositories do, to researchers who wish to travel to Riverside for research in our special collections. We would like to see, that is, attention to how digitization *supplements* the acquisition of and access to print material rather than *replaces* such acquisition and access.

Our teaching and research depends on print materials, and we are alarmed that the library is already deaccessioning books and other printed materials. We often have trouble accessing the scholarly monographs that fuel our research in the humanities and social sciences without Interlibrary Loan, and we are concerned that the vision for digitization doesn't address current problems with access to

scholarly publications. For example, it is not rare for a humanities scholar to find that only one or two UC libraries hold a well-known and highly important monograph in one's field, and that this monograph is only available at UCR through ILL or by e-book. And the digital apparatus for e-book loans is unfeasible for the kind of research we do in the humanities and social sciences: loan periods are often as short as 24 hours; photocopies are disallowed; and cross-referencing footnotes is nearly impossible. In addition to our suggestion that the Strategic Plan place greater emphasis on its print collection, we would also suggest that the Plan provide a source for its claim that "95% of academic information is no longer encoded only or primarily available in physical formats" (see "Conclusion") and include information about how digital tools such as e-books might be refined in coming years.

Our research, teaching, and tenure and promotion in CHASS are heavily dependent on our library system. Not only do university libraries foster scholarly conversations in our disciplines by creating access to the work of scholars from other universities; they also create ways for our own scholarly monographs, journals, and other materials to circulate to the public. We would like to suggest that this important relationship between print materials and research in the humanities and social sciences be more clearly articulated in the UCR Libraries Strategic Plan.

Erica Edwards, Chair

UCR CHASS Executive Committee