To: LAUC-B 2016 Task Force on the Professional Status of Librarians at Berkeley
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From: I-Wei Wang, ExComm Chair 2015-16

Re: Task Force Charge

Date: July 13, 2016

Charge:
- Investigate the status of professional librarianship at UC Berkeley in light of recent hiring practices in the Librarian series and work assignment practices, with a focus on technical services.
- Prepare a report to ExComm outlining emerging trends in hiring practices and work assignments in library organizations at this campus and at selected peer institutions within and outside the UC system.
- Propose actions ExComm or other standing committees of LAUC-B can take to support the professional status of librarian.
- Identify issues for further exploration, including recommendations as to other areas of librarianship that should be examined in a similar manner.

Possible tasks:
The following are examples of investigative tasks that ExComm believes might be helpful. The list is not meant to be exhaustive; nor are all of the tasks required to be performed, but rather are meant to be illustrative.
- Literature review
- Review of library position announcements in and out of the Librarian series during the past 5 years at UCB and/or other UC campuses
- Comparison to position announcements at other peer institutions
- Confidential interviews with selected incumbents in Librarian series and Library Professional IV positions at UC Berkeley

Background:
The Executive Committee of LAUC-B has learned of concerns regarding erosion of the Librarian series, and, consistent with its duties and responsibilities to advise on such matters, appoints this task force to investigate and analyze the factual situation.

Specifically, LAUC-B members have commented, and an informal inquiry and discussion by ExComm have focused on:
- Listing non-Librarian series positions to perform job functions appropriate to professional librarians who are subject to peer review and have access to professional development opportunities, advancement opportunities, and other privileges and responsibilities pertaining to the Librarian series
- Evolution of job functions - due to reorganization, attrition, or other trends - resulting in non-Librarian series personnel taking on job functions as described above
• Listing Librarian series positions but not including an MLIS or equivalent degree as a basic, or even other, required qualification

These practices have been observed in both technical and public services departments and in different units of the University and Affiliated Libraries. These practices raise concerns about:

• the quality of training and professional development opportunities, and resultant impact on quality of services provided;
• the "scope creep" in non-professional positions and its impact on
  o professional standards, rights, privileges, and obligations of Librarian series
  o quality of library services;
• the national reputation of UC Berkeley libraries and librarians and their standing as leaders in the profession;
• the retention and career advancement of librarians and non-librarians, and resultant impact on quality of services provided;
• the impact on the relationship between Librarian series and non-series personnel;
• The impact on morale and professional development opportunities of Librarian series professionals.

Although issues impacting the professional status of the Librarian series have been identified in several areas, Ex Comm believes that a detailed investigation of all potentially impacted areas is not feasible at this time, and therefore has asked the task force to start with an examination and analysis of the technical services area.

Timeframe: submit report to ExComm by October 15, 2016.