March 30, 2015

SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE
ACADEMIC SENATE

Dear Committee Members:

I greatly appreciate your early and active engagement in the FY16 budget process in support of the Library. The campus shares your commitment to supporting a truly world class research library at UC Berkeley and has backed up that shared commitment with significant funding increases. Unfortunately, however, our financial circumstances are such that no part of campus can be completely immune from the budgetary challenges we’re currently facing.

The FY16 budget instructions to Deans, Vice Chancellors, Vice Provosts, Directors and the University Librarian asks for proposals that reduce campus support to functional areas not central to their strategic plans, using a planning target range between 2-4%. Once all budget submissions have been reviewed later in the spring, we will make decisions about which of those plans to implement. We will be able to provide some strategic shielding from this and other budgetary measures outlined in the letter, but we do genuinely need to meet significant savings for the campus as a whole and every exception granted in one area increases pressure on other areas of the budget.

I believe it is too early to say that the proposed reduction to the Library would be catastrophic, cause a decline in ranking or portend a damaging retreat of commitment from the campus. These budget reductions are meant to result in moderate actions to control costs by doing less – by de-prioritizing activities and reducing the scope of what we are doing.

I am encouraged by your ongoing support to the Library and ask for your help in exploring what moderate actions can be taken to arrive at the targeted savings. I will be looking to the University Librarian to present a budget reduction strategy during the spring budget discussions that protects the important priorities listed in your memorandum.

Sincerely,

Claude Steele
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

cc: University Librarian Tom Leonard
    Associate Vice Chancellor and CFO Rosemarie Rae
    Assistant Vice Chancellor, Financial Planning & Analysis Laurent Heller
    Associate EVCP and Chief of Staff Phyllis Hoffman
    Director of the Campus Operating Budget Jon Bain-Chekai