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Standards for Libraries in Higher Education

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Standards for Libraries in Higher Education

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The Association of College and Research Libraries
A division of the American Library Association

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INTRODUCTION

The *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education* are designed to guide academic libraries in advancing and sustaining their role as partners in educating students, achieving their institutions' missions, and positioning libraries as leaders in assessment and continuous improvement on their campuses. Libraries must demonstrate their value and document their contributions to overall institutional effectiveness and be prepared to address changes in higher education, including accreditation and other accountability measures. These *Standards* were developed through study and consideration of issues and trends in libraries, higher education, and accrediting practices. The committee solicited input from librarians and library stakeholders at various types of institutions as well as drawing on research and best practices in the field.

The *Standards* articulate expectations for library contributions to institutional effectiveness. The *Standards* are structured to provide a comprehensive framework using an outcomes-based approach, with evidence collected in ways most appropriate for each institution.

Institutions are encouraged to use these *Standards* as they best apply to their local mission and vision. The committee endeavored to be as inclusive as possible, recognizing that each library is different and will adapt the *Standards* accordingly. For example, some libraries choose to look at the *Standards* in a cycle of assessment such as the cycle used to assess student learning, for example, identify one or two principles to assess per year. Others may use the *Standards* as part of their program review, providing structure to present evidence in a formal report.

Sources Consulted

The principles in this document reflect the core roles and contributions of libraries and were distilled from relevant higher education, accreditation, and professional documents. Professional sources consulted include the *ACRL Strategic Plan 2020*, the ALA *Library Bill of Rights* and *Code of Ethics*, the Association of Research Libraries' *Mission Statement and Guiding Principles*, ACRL's *Value of Academic Libraries* report, and previous ACRL standards.

Issues and trends in higher education have direct impact on the missions and outcomes of academic libraries and their institutions and require careful attention. Current concerns in higher education include increasing demands for accountability within the academy, expectation for outcomes-based assessment of learning and programs, efforts to increase retention and graduation rates, greater emphasis on student success, the acknowledged connection between student engagement and academic achievement, and the importance of pedagogical practices such as research and inquiry-based learning. Documents and publications from the Association of American Colleges & Universities, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities were consulted in the development of the *Standards*.

In updating the *Standards*, the committee consulted accrediting bodies, ACRL consultants who use the *Standards* for external review, the ACRL Standards Training Team, and the current ACRL Board of Directors, among others. During this period of discovery, trends emerged in the area of personnel, including reliance on student employees and the continuous evolution of librarian roles. A goal of the committee was to gain an understanding of how the *Standards* were being used in practice. As a result, the committee broadened the scope of some performance indicators dealing with technology and leadership to encourage applicability to more libraries. For ease of use, substantive changes were made to the appendices to provide a variety of contemporary examples for libraries to use as a starting point.

In the spring of 2010, the committee surveyed academic library directors who stressed the importance of relating library standards to accreditation criteria.[1] Members of accreditation review teams were also consulted to identify library characteristics within the context of institutional accreditation. Combining these results with concepts and specific language from regional accrediting agencies, the committee created a set of standards that provide libraries with a structure that fits in seamlessly with institution accreditation reports. Using the *Standards* helps libraries follow accreditation trends such as employing assessment results for continuous improvement, focusing on student success outcomes, benchmarking, and aligning library and institutional missions. During the 2017 revision process, members of accreditation review teams were also consulted to identify potential library contributions and expectations within the context of institutional accreditation.

Standards Structure

The core of the *Standards* is the section titled "Principles and Performance Indicators." *The nine principles and their related performance indicators are intended to be expectations—standards—that apply to all types of academic libraries.* Nonetheless, each library must respond to its unique user population and institutional environment.

Libraries are encouraged to use the following outcomes-based method to adopt the *Standards*:

1. align with the principles;
2. identify and select performance indicators that are congruent with their institution's mission and contribute to institutional effectiveness;
3. add performance indicators that apply to the specific library (for example, open access initiatives for research libraries, or workforce development support for community colleges);
4. develop user-centered, measurable outcomes that articulate specifically what the user is able to do as an outcome of the performance indicator;
5. conduct assessments that may be quantitative, qualitative, or both;
6. collect data from assessments that demonstrate degree of success; and
7. use assessment data for continuous improvement of library operations.

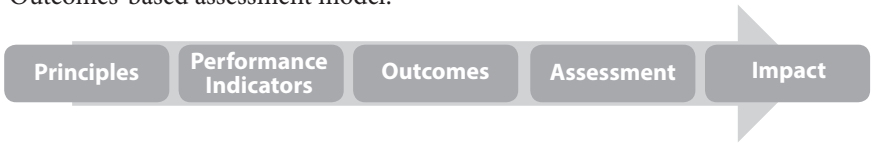
In some cases, gathering evidence will not require assessment. For example, the library might provide evidence that library staff have education and experience sufficient for their positions by compiling a list of staff members with titles, education, and relevant experience held.

In *all* cases, however, principles lead to performance, which requires evidence to measure success, impact, or value.

The two forms of the model are portrayed graphically below.

Evidence-based model:

Outcomes-based assessment model:



The *Standards* document provides examples of outcomes (Appendix 1) and metrics (Appendix 2). These are intended as possibilities only, rather than as checklists of requirements to be completed.

Like the performance indicators in the *Standards*, many of the sample outcomes could apply to any academic library. The sample outcomes and metrics are provided along with the standards to demonstrate a pattern and provide possible tools with which to construct measurable outcomes based on local factors.

ACRL defines outcomes as "the ways in which library users are changed as a result of their contact with the library's resources and programs."[2] *Thus, outcomes are user-centered, whereas performance indicators are library-centered.* Since outcomes are user-centered, it is recognized that they are not wholly under library control. Nonetheless, the outcome or impact of the library's actions is ultimately how the library must judge its success. Local outcomes and metrics should be tailored to the institutional mission, goals, and assessment practices.

Outcomes can be assessed by gathering and analyzing qualitative data, quantitative data, or both. For example, to assess whether students consider access to collections sufficient to support their educational needs, one might survey students and obtain quantitative data. The results might be a metric such as the percentage of students who are satisfied or very satisfied with collections support for their educational needs. Focus groups or interviews might be used to solicit qualitative feedback, such as comments. Assessment may involve using metrics to benchmark performance against that of peer institutions or track library performance over a period of time. For example, a ratio of volumes to combined total student FTE or head counts is a metric that could be compared with peers and considered when determining whether collections are sufficient to support students' educational needs. Choice of metrics, like choice of outcomes, will depend on the institution, the accreditation process, and the library-specific context. The power of metrics is in their interpretation and presentation. Outcomes, assessment, and evidence—all are elements of the continuous improvement cycle.

Adoption of the *Standards*

These standards were approved by the ACRL Standards Committee and the ACRL Board of Directors. They supersede the 2011 *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education* and all other previous versions of standards created by ACRL subsections. A complete history of the standards is available in Appendix 4: History of the Standards.

ACRL is committed to supporting effective use of the *Standards* and will offer professional development opportunities and training materials on the *Standards* to interested parties.

Notes

1. Patricia Iannuzzi and Jeanne M. Brown, "ACRL's Standards for Libraries in Higher Education: Academic Library Directors Weigh In," *C&RL News* 71, no. 9 (October 2010): 486–87.

2. Association of College and Research Libraries, *Task Force on Academic Library Outcomes Assessment Report* (Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 1998), http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/taskforceacademic.

PRINCIPLES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The standards consist of principles and performance indicators.

Principles

Institutional Effectiveness: Libraries define, develop, and measure outcomes that contribute to institutional effectiveness and apply findings for purposes of continuous improvement.

Professional Values: Libraries advance professional values of intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights and values, user privacy and confidentiality, collaboration, and user-centered service.

Educational Role: Libraries partner in the educational mission of the institution to develop and support information-literate learners who can discover, access, and use information effectively for academic success, research, and lifelong learning.

Discovery: Libraries enable users to discover information in all formats through effective use of technology and organization of knowledge.

Collections: Libraries provide access to collections sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, format, and currency to support the research and teaching missions of the institution.

Space: Libraries are the intellectual commons where users interact with ideas in both physical and virtual environments to expand learning and facilitate the creation of new knowledge.

Management/Administration/Leadership: Library leaders engage in internal and campus decision-making to inform resource allocation to meet the library's mission effectively and efficiently.

Personnel: Libraries provide sufficient number and quality of personnel to ensure excellence and to function successfully in an environment of continuous change.

External Relations: Libraries engage the campus and broader community through multiple strategies in order to advocate, educate, and promote their value.

Performance Indicators for Each Principle

1. **Institutional Effectiveness:** Libraries define, develop, and measure outcomes that contribute to institutional effectiveness and apply findings for purposes of continuous improvement.

    1.1 The library defines and measures outcomes in the context of institutional mission.

    1.2 The library develops outcomes that are aligned with institutional, departmental, and student affairs outcomes.

    1.3 The library develops outcomes that are aligned with accreditation guidelines for the institution.

    1.4 The library develops and maintains a body of evidence that demonstrates its impact in convincing ways.

    1.5 The library articulates how it contributes to student learning, collects evidence, documents successes, shares results, and makes improvements.

    1.6 The library contributes to student recruitment, retention, time to degree, and academic success.

    1.7 The library communicates with the campus community to highlight its value in the educational mission and in institutional effectiveness.

2. **Professional Values:** Libraries advance professional values of intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights and values, user privacy and confidentiality, collaboration, and user-centered service.

    2.1 The library resists all efforts to censor library resources.

    2.2 The library protects each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality.

    2.3 The library respects intellectual property rights and advocates for balance between the interests of information users and those of rights holders through policy and educational programming.

    2.4 The library supports academic integrity and deters plagiarism through policy and education.

    2.5 The library commits to a user-centered approach and demonstrates the centrality of users in all aspects of service design and delivery in the physical and virtual environments.

2.6 The library engages in collaborations both on campus and across institutional boundaries.

3. **Educational Role:** Libraries partner in the educational mission of the institution to develop and support information-literate learners who can discover, access, and use information effectively for academic success, research, and lifelong learning.

    3.1 Library personnel collaborate with faculty and others regarding ways to incorporate library collections and services into effective curricular and co-curricular experiences for students.

    3.2 Library personnel collaborate with faculty to embed information literacy learning outcomes into curricula, courses, and assignments.

    3.3 Library personnel model best pedagogical practices for classroom teaching, online tutorial design, and other educational practices.

    3.4 Library personnel provide appropriate and timely instruction in a variety of contexts and employ multiple learning platforms and pedagogies.

    3.5 Library personnel collaborate with campus partners to provide opportunities for faculty professional development.

    3.6 The library has the IT infrastructure to keep current with advances in teaching and learning technologies.

4. **Discovery:** Libraries enable users to discover information in all formats through effective use of technology and organization of knowledge.

    4.1 The library organizes information for effective discovery and access.

    4.2 The library integrates library resource access into institutional web and other information portals.

    4.3 The library develops resource guides to provide guidance and multiple points of entry to information.

    4.4 The library creates and maintains interfaces and system architectures that include all resources and facilitates access from preferred user starting points.

    4.5 The library has technological infrastructure that supports changing modes of information and resource discovery.

4.6 The library provides one-on-one assistance through multiple platforms to help users find information.

5. **Collections:** Libraries provide access to collections sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, format, and currency to support the research and teaching missions of the institution.

    5.1 The library provides access to collections aligned with areas of research, curricular foci, or institutional strengths.

    5.2 The library provides collections that incorporate resources in a variety of formats, accessible virtually and physically.

    5.3 The library builds and ensures access to unique materials, including digital collections.

    5.4 The library has the infrastructure to collect, organize, provide access to, disseminate, and preserve collections needed by users.

    5.5 The library educates users on issues related to economic and sustainable models of scholarly communication.

    5.6 The library ensures long-term access to the scholarly and cultural record.

6. **Space:** Libraries are the intellectual commons where users interact with ideas in both physical and virtual environments to expand learning and facilitate the creation of new knowledge.

    6.1 The library creates intuitive navigation that supports self-sufficient use of virtual and physical spaces.

    6.2 The library provides safe and secure physical and virtual environments conducive to study and research.

    6.3 The library has the IT infrastructure to provide reliable and robust virtual and physical environments needed for study and research.

    6.4 The library uses physical and virtual spaces as intellectual commons according to the library mission.

    6.5 The library designs pedagogical spaces to facilitate learning and the creation of new knowledge.

    6.6 The library's physical space features connectivity and up-to-date, adequate, well-maintained equipment and furnishings.

6.7 The library provides clean, inviting, and adequate space, conducive to study and research, with suitable environmental conditions and convenient hours for its services, personnel, resources, and collections.

6.8 The library's physical and virtual spaces are informed by users.

7. **Management/Administration/Leadership:** Library leaders engage in internal and campus decision-making to inform resource allocation to meet the library's mission effectively and efficiently.

7.1 The library's mission statement and goals align with and advance those developed by the institution.

7.2 Library personnel participate in campus decision-making needed for effective library management.

7.3 The library allocates human and financial resources effectively and efficiently to advance the library's mission.

7.4 The library's budget is sufficient to provide resources to meet the reasonable expectations of library users when balanced against other institutional needs.

7.5 The library partners with multiple institutions (e.g., via collections consortia) to increase cost-effectiveness and to expand access to collections.

7.6 The library plans based on data and outcomes assessment using a variety of methods both formal and informal.

7.7 The library communicates assessment results to library stakeholders.

7.8 Library personnel model a culture of continuous improvement.

7.9 The library has the IT infrastructure needed to collect, analyze, and use data and other assessments for continuous improvement.

8. **Personnel:** Libraries provide sufficient number and quality of personnel to ensure excellence and to function successfully in an environment of continuous change.

8.1 Library personnel are sufficient in quantity to meet the diverse teaching and research needs of faculty and students.

8.2 Library personnel have education and experience sufficient to their positions and the needs of the organization.

8.3 Library personnel demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional development, maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skills for themselves and their coworkers.

8.4 Library personnel contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

8.5 Library personnel are professionally competent, diverse, and empowered.

8.6 Library personnel keep current with library technology, applications, and infrastructure and participate in ongoing training.

8.7 Library personnel engage with library student employees to provide mentoring and work that enhances the students' overall academic experience.

8.8 Library personnel continuously examine and transform roles to meet the needs of the evolving organization.

9. **External Relations:** Libraries engage the campus and broader community through multiple strategies in order to advocate, educate, and promote their value.

9.1 The library contributes to external relations through communications, publications, events, and donor cultivation and stewardship.

9.2 The library communicates with the campus community in a timely way using a variety of methods and evaluates the communication for effectiveness.

9.3 Library personnel convey a consistent message about the library to expand user awareness of resources, services, and expertise.

APPENDIX 1
Sample Outcomes

This appendix provides sample outcomes for selected performance indicators. It is expected that each library will develop its own outcomes based on the mission and goals of the institution.

The *Standards* include performance indicators, which are intentionally library-centric. Outcomes, however, should be user-centric, preferably focusing on a specific population and articulating specifically what the user is able to do as an outcome of the performance indicator. All outcomes should be measurable, but the method of assessment selected—whether quantitative or qualitative—will vary by institution.

Here are examples of four possible outcomes for Performance Indicator 3.5, "Library personnel collaborate with campus partners to provide opportunities for faculty professional development."

- Faculty **integrate** collaboration with libraries into their best practices.
- Faculty **participate** in workshops and other professional opportunities provided by librarians in collaboration with other campus partners.
- Faculty **improve** their research-based assignments and lessons after applying knowledge and skills from professional development conducted by librarians.
- Campus partners **recognize** the value of collaborating with libraries to design faculty professional development opportunities.

The outcome examples provided follow a simple pattern: population, action (verb), object (what the population does). In the examples above, "faculty" is the population. The verb and the object vary (the verb is highlighted in bold). Bloom's taxonomy and the many elaborations on it are excellent sources of action verbs. Clemson's "Bloom's Taxonomy Action Verbs" is just one of many online lists of Bloom verbs.[1]

Note

1. Clemson University Office of Institutional Assessment, "Bloom's Taxonomy for Categorizing Learning Outcomes," accessed October 20, 2017, https://www.clemson.edu/cecas/about/assessment-and-planning/assets/blooms-taxonomy.pdf.

Additional Sample Outcomes

Principle 1. Institutional Effectiveness

Performance Indicator 1.6 The library contributes to student recruitment, retention, time to degree, and academic success.

Sample Outcomes

Students who use library services improve their academic performance.

Students describe the role of the library as influential in terms of their successful academic performance.

Performance Indicator 1.7 The library communicates with the campus community to highlight its value in the educational mission and in institutional effectiveness.

Sample Outcomes

The campus administration demonstrates library support through appropriate resource allocation.

The campus administration includes library-related success stories as part of the recruitment efforts.

Principle 2. Professional Values

Performance Indicator 2.4 The library supports academic integrity and deters plagiarism through policy and education.

Sample Outcome

Plagiarism cases decline in number after the library facilitates workshops about academic integrity.

Principle 3. Educational Role

Performance Indicator 3.1 Library personnel collaborate with faculty and others regarding ways to incorporate library collections and services into effective curricular and co-curricular experiences for students.

Sample Outcomes

Faculty seek the input of librarians on use of library resources in course and assignment development.

Students use library collections for both curricular and co-curricular information needs.

Faculty require students to use of a variety of sources from library databases.

Performance Indicator 3.2 Library personnel collaborate with faculty to embed information literacy learning outcomes into curricula, courses, and assignments.

Sample Outcomes

Faculty seek the input of librarians in developing information literacy learning outcomes for their courses and assignments.

Faculty introduce, reinforce, and scaffold learning of information literacy learning outcomes.

Faculty require increasingly sophisticated demonstration of information literacy learning outcomes as students proceed to graduation.

Faculty seek the input of librarians in evaluating the effectiveness of program curricula for teaching information literacy skills.

Students demonstrate proficiency in finding, evaluating, and using information.

Performance Indicator 3.3 Library personnel model best pedagogical practices for classroom teaching, online tutorial design, and other educational practices.

Sample Outcomes

Librarians design and administer information literacy instruction sessions that incorporate hands-on, active learning techniques.

Faculty seek advice from librarians regarding pedagogical practices.

Students and faculty indicate that the library tutorials are well-designed and effective teaching resources.

Principle 4. Discovery

Performance Indicator 4.4 The library creates and maintains interfaces and system architectures that include all resources and facilitates access from preferred user starting points.

Sample Outcomes

Faculty and students can access collections for educational and research needs from all user locations.

Users choose the library web interface as one of the first steps in their finding activities.

Users characterize the library interface as easy to find and intuitive to navigate.

Users integrate library interfaces and architectures into their daily search behaviors.

Users choose library interfaces to find materials for their information needs.

Users judge integration of library interfaces and resources found through the library as one reason for their success.

Performance Indicator 4.6 The library provides one-on-one assistance through multiple platforms to help users find information.

Sample Outcomes

Users enhance their research skills through one-on-one consultation with librarians.

Users expand the types of sources (e.g., multiple formats—books, journals, primary sources, etc.) consulted when doing research as a result of a one-on-one consultation with librarians.

Users readily transfer the skills learned through one-on-one consultation with a librarian to other research contexts.

Principle 5. Collections

Performance Indicator 5.1 The library provides access to collections aligned with areas of research, curricular foci, or institutional strengths.

Sample Outcomes

Faculty use resources to support their educational and research needs.

Faculty, students, and community users are satisfied with the collections provided by libraries for their educational, business, and research needs.

Students discover the appropriate library resources needed for their coursework.

Faculty locate data sets needed for their research.

Performance Indicator 5.5 The library educates users on issues related to economic and sustainable models of scholarly communication.

Sample Outcome

Faculty choose to deposit their scholarly work in the institutional repository.

Principle 6. Space

Performance Indicator 6.7 The library provides clean, inviting, and adequate space, conducive to study and research, with suitable environmental conditions and convenient hours for its services, personnel, resources, and collections.

Sample Outcome

Students recognize the library as a welcoming environment.

Principle 7. Management/Administration/Leadership

Performance Indicator 7.2 Library personnel participate in campus decision-making needed for effective library management.

Sample Outcome

Library administration participate on campus-wide decision-making committees.

Performance Indicator 7.7 The library communicates assessment result to library stakeholders.

Sample Outcome

Faculty include the library's assessment results in the program review process.

Principle 8. Personnel

Performance Indicator 8.1 Library personnel are sufficient in quantity to meet the diverse teaching and research needs of faculty and students.

Sample Outcome

Faculty and students consider library personnel sufficient in quantity to meet their research and instruction needs.

Performance Indicator 8.2 Library personnel have education and experience sufficient to their positions and the needs of the organization.

Sample Outcome

Faculty and students consider library personnel sufficient in quality to meet their research and instruction needs.

Performance Indicator 8.7 Library personnel engage with library student employees to provide mentoring and work that enhances the students' overall academic experience.

Sample Outcome

Student employees list library personnel as academic and employment references.

Performance Indicator 8.8 Library personnel continuously examine and transform roles to meet the needs of the evolving organization.

Sample Outcome

Personnel roles align with new library services.

Principle 9. External Relations

Performance Indicator 9.1 The library contributes to external relations through communications, publications, events, and donor cultivation and stewardship.

Sample Outcomes

The community demonstrates its appreciation of the library.

The community demonstrates active use of the library.

APPENDIX 2
Benchmarking and Peer Comparison

Use and Value of Institutional Peer Comparisons

Many academic institutions use benchmarks to identify their strengths and weaknesses in comparison to similar institutions. For example, benchmarking can be used to demonstrate whether an institution or its library is funded or staffed at levels comparable to similar institutions in a geographic area, with a similar enrollment, or with other related characteristics. An institution or library can use benchmarking to inform the strategies it develops to enhance its institutional quality and effectiveness.

Libraries are encouraged to use existing institutional peer groups, where available, for comparisons. This information may be available from the institution's registrar's office or office of institutional research. An institution may have two peer groups:

- An actual peer group provides comparable institutions.
- An aspirational peer group provides institutions that model what the institution aspires to be in the future.

If peer groups are not already established, a library is encouraged to consult with institutional leadership to develop one or more. Once a peer group has been determined, a library can identify specific data points on which to compare itself against its peers.

Professional associations, government agencies, and other organizations collect and provide access to academic library statistics that can be used for benchmarking. Examples include

- The Academic Library Component of the National Center for Educational Statistics' IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) survey is updated annually.[1] The Academic Library Component collects information on library resources, interlibrary loan services, and expenditures from academic libraries serving degree-granting, Title IV postsecondary institutions in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas.[2] The IPEDS "Use the Data" page provides a variety of tools and options for downloading, comparing, and analyzing data across institutions.[3]
- The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) conducts an annual survey of all types of academic libraries across the US. ACRL offers ACRL*Metrics*, a subscription online service providing access to ACRL and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) survey data from 2000 to present.[4]

- The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) collects annual statistics that describe the collections, expenditures, staffing, and service activities of more than 120 member libraries.[5] Staff members of ARL libraries can access ARL survey data via the ARL Statistics Analytics site; non-members can subscribe.[6]

The benchmarks that follow provide just a sample of the many ways libraries can leverage benchmarking to better understand their position in relation to their peers. It is important to remain aware of evolving definitions, terminology, and approaches related to library practices, all of which have the potential to impact benchmarking activities. Correct benchmarking is dependent on comparing "apples to apples," so the data points being compared must be the same. While some terms may seem similar, upon closer view they may be comparing different constructs and would contain responses to very different questions. For example, one survey may ask for head count and another for FTE. Another survey may consider holdings in terms of volumes and another in terms of titles. As surveys and definitions evolve, it is important to look carefully at the data points to ensure they are the same before benchmarking.

Principle 1: Institutional Effectiveness

- Number of degrees or other formal awards conferred.
- Graduation rates.
- Retention rates. *E.g.: fall-to-fall.*
- Library expenditures to institution expenditures percentages. *E.g.: Total library expenditures as percentage of total institution expenditures.*

Principle 2: Professional Values

- Number of seats librarians hold on campus committees.
- Number of workshops or library consultations offered on issues, such as copyright.

Principle 3: Educational Role

- Participants at group presentations. *E.g.: Per full-time undergraduate student. Per enrolled student.*
- Number of group presentations. *E.g.: Physical. Virtual.*
- NSSE "Experiences with Information Literacy" Topical Module Survey data. *E.g.: Number of respondents who responded "very much" or "quite a bit" to the NSSE Topical Module question "How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in using information correctly?" or CCSSE. E.g.: Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources (look for responses "very often" or "often").*
- Number of information literacy courses for credit. *E.g.: Required information literacy course for credit. Elective information literacy course for credit.*

- Number of repeat faculty requestors of instruction services. *E.g.: Percentage of instruction sessions conducted for repeat faculty requestors.*
- Percentage of faculty who requested instructional services in the past academic year.
- Number of information literacy sessions per instructional librarian.
- Number of courses in which librarians are embedded.

Principle 4: Discovery

- Number of reference questions (transactions). *E.g.: By week. By means of asking. By length of time to answer the question.*
- Ratio of reference transactions to student enrollment. *E.g.: Per full-time student. Per part-time student*.
- Local use of online guides.

Principle 5: Collections

- Total library materials expenditures per student. *E.g.: Per full-time undergraduate student. Per full-time graduate student*.
- Total library materials expenditures per faculty. *E.g.: Per full-time faculty. Per part-time faculty.*
- Number of titles (physical + electronic). *E.g.: Per full-time student. Per full-time faculty.*
- Total library materials expenditures percentages. *E.g.: Monograph expenditures as percentage of total library materials expenditures*.
- Materials expenditures to total library expenditures percentages. *E.g.: Total library materials expenditures as percentage of total library expenditures*.
- Collections use per student. *E.g.: Per undergraduate student. Per graduate student*.
- Interlibrary loan. *E.g.: Net lender versus net borrower*.
- Unique items through WorldCat Local.

Principle 6: Space

- Ratio of library seats to FTE student population.
- Type of learning spaces and accompanying technology available to user community.
- Number of hours open each week during academic sessions.
- Number of days open each fiscal year.
- Gate counts. *E.g.: Per FTE student. During extended hours of fall and spring semester*s.

Principle 7: Management/Administration/Leadership

- Cost per hour open.
- Library expenditures percentages. *E.g.: Salary and wages expenditures as percentage of total library expenditures. Materials expenditures as percentage of total library expenditures. Other operating expenditures as percentage of total library expenditures.*

- Total operating expenditures per student. *E.g.: Per full-time undergraduate student. Per full-time graduate student*.
- Total expenditures per faculty. *E.g.: Per full-time faculty. Per part-time faculty*.

Principle 8: Personnel

- Salary and wages expenditures. *E.g.: Per full-time student. Per undergraduate student. Per faculty. Of professional staff per enrolled student*.
- Enrolled students per full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. *E.g.: Full-time undergraduates per FTE staff. Full-time graduate students per FTE staff*.
- Staffing percentages. *E.g.: Percentage of professional staff out of total staff. Percentage of support staff out of total staff*.
- Salaries. *E.g.: Professional staff salaries. Support staff salaries. Total staff salaries*.
- Salaries as percentage of total library expenditures.
- Professional development funding. *E.g.: Per professional staff member*.
- Staff turnover rate.

Principle 9: External Relations

- Giving to the library. *E.g.: Annual gifts as percentage of total giving.*
- Number of community user library cards.
- Ratio of community attendees per public relations events conducted.
- Social media. *E.g.: Follower growth on Twitter. Number of interactions per Facebook post*.

Learn more about benchmarking in resources such as the following:

Atkinson, P. J. *Quality and the Academic Library: Reviewing, Assessing and Enhancing Service Provision*. Cambridge, MA: Chandos Publishing, an imprint of Elsevier, 2016.

Dugan, Robert E., Peter Hernon, and Danuta A. Nitecki. *Viewing Library Metrics from Different Perspectives: Inputs, Outputs, and Outcomes.* Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2009.

Hernon, Peter, Robert E. Dugan, and Joseph R. Matthews. *Managing with Data: Using ACRLMetrics and PLAmetrics.* Chicago: ALA Editions, 2015.

Kohn, Karen C. *Collection Evaluation in Academic Libraries: A Practical Guide for Librarians*. Vol. 16. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.

Lewin, Heather S., and Sarah M. Passonneau. "An Analysis of Academic Research Libraries Assessment Data: A Look at Professional Models and Benchmarking Data." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 38, no. 2 (March 2012): 85–93. Accessed April 13, 2017. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ960703.

Mitchell, Eleanor, and Peggy Seiden. *Reviewing the Academic Library: A Guide to Self-Study and External Review*. Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2015.

Notes

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APPENDIX 4
History of the Standards

These standards were approved by the ACRL Standards Committee on December 5, 2017, and the ACRL Board of Directors on February 12, 2018. They supersede all earlier separate library standards produced by the College Libraries Section (CLS), Community and Junior College Libraries Section (CJCLS), and University Libraries Section (ULS) of ACRL, as well as the 2004 *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education* and the 2011 *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education*.

The first edition of the college library standards was published in 1959; subsequent editions were published in 1975, 1986, 1995, 2000, and 2011. Standards for two-year institutions were first published in 1960 and revised in 1979, 1990, and 1994. Standards for university libraries were first issued in 1979 and revised in 1989. In 1998, on the recommendation of the Task Force on Academic Library Outcomes Assessment, the ACRL Board mandated that all future standards incorporate outcomes assessment. The 2000 edition of *Standards for College Libraries* was the first to incorporate outcomes assessment and was considered a model for the other two library standards.

Representatives from the standards committees of the CLS, CJCLS, and ULS sections met and eventually recommended that the new college library standards be adapted as a single comprehensive standard for use by all academic and technical libraries. ACRL formed a task force in 2002 to accomplish this task. In June 2004, the ACRL Standards and Accreditation Committee and the ACRL Board approved the 2004 document, and the three extant library standards were rescinded.

In 2009, then–ACRL President Lori Goetsch charged a task force to review and revise the standards. A survey of academic library directors was conducted in the spring of 2010. In March 2011, a draft of the standards was published on the ACRL website and made available for comments through a blog. A hearing at the ACRL 2011 Conference in April 2011 provided members with an additional opportunity to provide comments and feedback.

The 2011 *Standards* differed from previous versions by articulating expectations for library contributions to institutional effectiveness. Those *Standards* differed structurally by providing a comprehensive framework using an outcomes-based approach, with evidence collected in ways most appropriate for each institution.

The 2016 task force was charged to review the 2011 *Standards* as part of a typical five-year review cycle and was encouraged to examine changes in library services, operations, and technology in the intervening years. The committee approached the charge through surveys, an environmental scan, and a series of interviews. Four public hearings were held about the revision process—one at

ALA Midwinter 2017, a virtual open forum in May 2017, another at ALA Annual 2017, and a final virtual open forum in September 2017. These forums were held to encourage further comment and reaction.

The 2018 *Standards* differ from previous versions by broadening the scope of some performance indicators, especially those dealing with technology and management/administration in order to make the standards more readily applicable to all types of libraries. These standards also include substantive changes to the appendices to provide a variety of contemporary examples for libraries.

APPENDIX 5
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CITING THE STANDARDS

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