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From communication to collaboration: developing the spectrum of activities for effective shared services at the University of California

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“Why is collaboration so difficult?” a library director once asked aloud among a group of library leaders. While the keys to successful collaboration may seem elusive, it is clear that libraries in the twenty-first century cannot exist as islands unto themselves. If collaboration is viewed as “building a collective capacity to respond to turbulent conditions” (Gray, 1996, p. 58), such as “rapid economic and technological change,” “competitive pressures,” and declining organizational growth (p. 59) then it is an essential strategy for academic libraries facing a storm of factors: the exponential growth in volume of information; volatile increases in costs of information resources; shifts in information consumer practices and expectations; and “absolute declines in the dollars allocated” to library budgets (Lowry, 2013, p. 11).

Capacity building, however, is a process that requires vision and effort over the long haul and is not in itself a tangible product easily pointed to as a successful outcome of collaboration. For collaboration to be sustained, participants need to realize the value, at a personal level as well as at an organizational level (Cropper, 1996). The other challenge is identifying or forging what is “collective”: while many institutions attempt to identify with peer institutions and forge reciprocal relationships with those of equivalent rank and stature, no organization exists that is a replica of another in terms of values, culture, form and functions. Indeed, one of the benefits of collaboration is diversification of the resources and knowledge available to an organization. While it may be easier to associate with an organization with similar qualities, transformation and learning among members of an organization may be gained through engagement with one that is different.

While the University of California (UC) may be viewed as a system, each of its ten campuses distinguishes itself as a research institution in its own light. Each campus has its own library—or system of libraries depending on the size and history of the campus—that operates independently within the context of its campus, even though the UC libraries have also had a history of working together. The ten campus university librarians and the executive director of the California Digital Library (CDL, sometimes referred to as the “eleventh library”) compose a Council of University Librarians that governs system-wide library services and initiatives. Under the Council of ULs, an advisory structure of standing groups composed of leaders and experts from the ten campus libraries and the CDL work together to develop, implement, and manage shared programs and services.

In 2009, the Council of University Librarians launched the Next-Generation Technical Services (NGTS) initiative, the purpose of which was to “move technical services operations to the network level” (NGTS Charge, 2009, p. 1). The initiative undertook a reexamination of the work required to acquire, organize, describe, preserve, and make available information resources to users, in order to make the best use of available tools and resources, as well as to respond to external pressures to demonstrate operational efficiency. Given the scale and complexity of the UC system and its libraries, the NGTS initiative offers a case study of approaches to the challenges of multi-institutional or “mega-“ collaboration.

Background and History of UC Libraries Collaboration

Collectively, UC serves 244,000 students, has over 200,000 faculty and staff, and over one and a half million living alumni. Over 500 miles separate the northernmost campus at Davis from the southernmost at San Diego. Established over the course of over 125 years, from the opening of the first campus at Berkeley after the signing of the state’s Organic Act in 1868, to the newest campus at Merced in 2005, each UC campus and library has been shaped by its own unique history.

The 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education designated UC as the “primary state-supported academic agency for research,” as differentiated from the California State University (CSU) system and the California Community Colleges system (Coons et al., p. 3). According to the Master Plan, the UC system offers admission to the top one-eighth of the statewide high school graduating class. Each of the UC campuses, with the exception of UC San Francisco and its focus on medicine, are comprehensive research universities that offer baccalaureate through doctoral degrees. While all fall under the umbrella of one UC Office of the President, each of the campuses has its own chancellor, provost, academic senate, and governance structure, as well as systems and operations. All have earned Carnegie Research Very High classification, with the exception of Merced, which is on track to reach Carnegie High within its second decade. The libraries, in turn, reflect the stature of their campuses and have each developed distinction. Seven of the UC campus libraries are members of the Association of Research Libraries. The combined collections of the UC libraries represent the largest academic library in the world.

Collaboration: A Response to Turbulent Conditions

While the California Master Plan represented a commitment to higher education for all of the state’s residents, variability in enrollments and in the state’s financial health have presented challenges to the ability of its higher education systems to fulfill those commitments. Over the last decade in particular, the University of California experienced a steady reduction in state funding support. In the four-year period between 2008-2012, state funding for UC dropped by nearly \$900 million, or about twenty-seven percent. A 2010 report by the UC Commission on the Future laid out the challenging fiscal context under which the university operates. The Commission projected an additional five billion dollars in the University’s core expenditures over the next decade given inflationary cost increases; retiree pension and health benefits; the need to close competitive salary gaps; improving and maintaining the student-faculty ratio and quality of instruction; graduate student

support; and critical investments in infrastructure. The University has pursued a range of strategies to contain costs by streamlining and pursuing “Working Smarter” initiatives, as well as seek ways to advocate for and obtain additional funding support. In the period since 2008, campus library funding cuts averaged 20%; some of the libraries have been reduced in size by twenty-five percent and continue to face reductions over the next six years.

In times of expansion and contraction, greater attention has been paid to a “systemwide” perspective on library planning and operations. In the early 1970s, as the country experienced an economic downturn and as the census indicated slower projected enrollments than had been anticipated, the state’s Department of Finance issued a report on the University of California libraries and urged that more should be done to “to improve interlibrary cooperation and coordination within the UC system,” in particular in the acquisition and use of collections (as cited in Office of the Executive Director of Universitywide Planning, 1977, p. 19). In response, the University launched a series of systemwide library planning efforts, culminating in a 1977 report, “The University of California Libraries, A Plan for Development 1978-1988,” produced by the Office of the Executive Director of Universitywide Library Planning (commonly referred to as the Salmon plan), and endorsed by then UC President Saxon. According to the 1977 report, one of the foundational “bases” of library planning established by an earlier task force (1974) stated that “the library holdings of all the campuses should be considered as a single University collection rather than nine separate collections” (p. 21). The Salmon plan further articulated a new approach to library development that prioritized timely access to materials based on user needs, as well as improvements to the identification, location, and delivery of library materials through implementation of a unified system of bibliographic information for the complete UC collection, over the “traditional acquisitions approach” of developing locally-owned collections that were self-sufficient in addressing user needs.

In the subsequent decade, many of the recommendations of the plan were implemented, including the Melvyl electronic union catalog for UC, the establishment of the Northern and

Southern Regional Library Facilities, and improvements in the delivery of interlibrary loan materials. In the mid-1990s, the University of California Digital Library Executive Working Group, citing challenges of a financial crisis as well as the “compounding differential between needs and capacities” for the libraries (p. 1), presented a proposal that established the California Digital Library to manage and deliver shared digital information resources and services for the system, including licensed e-resources, archiving of digital collections generated by the campus libraries, the union catalog (Melvyl) and the interlibrary loan/document delivery management system. Each of the campuses support CDL operations through funding models and the system as a whole realizes significant benefits from consortial negotiations on electronic resources as well as other shared services. Yet despite declarations of “One University, One Library,” each of the libraries, including the CDL, asserts its own identity and distinction. In contrast to a consortium where each of the members pool resources to form an alliance, with a governance structure and typically a central office to support the consortium, the CDL does not serve as a coordinating central office, nor does it report to the Council of University Librarians as a governing board. It was established as a “co-library” and as a unit under the UC Office of the President, and thus is subject to the directions and budgetary conditions under that office. The groups that exist are advisory and there are no fiduciary arrangements, apart from the pooling of resources to fund shared resources or operations, that make one directly accountable to another. Cooperation among the ten campus libraries is out of no formal mandate, agreement, or requirement, but out of recognition of its value and benefit.

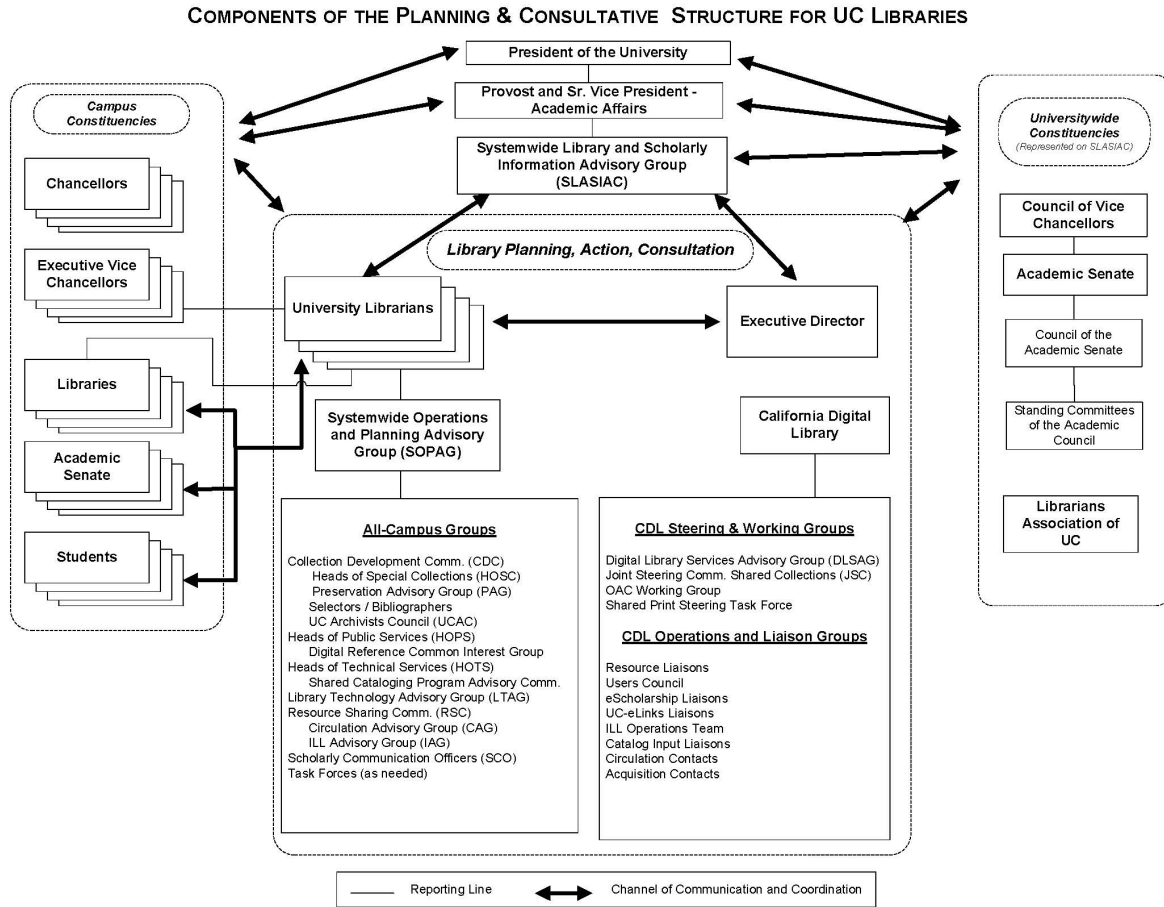


Figure 1. The UC Libraries Advisory Structure in 2009. Under the Council of University Librarians (ten University Librarians and the Executive Director of CDL), one associate UL- or deputy UL-level representative from each of the eleven Libraries was selected to serve on SOPAG to reflect diversity of expertise (public services, collections, technical services, etc.) and provide strategic planning and oversight for library operations. The all-campus groups, typically unit heads from each of the eleven, reported to and had liaison members on SOPAG.

Impetus for Next-Generation Technical Services

An autonomous approach to acquiring and managing collections on the campuses, as well as challenges to integration and a more holistic approach persisted. Three decades after the Salmon plan, the Bibliographic Services Task Force (2005), charged by the UC Libraries' Systemwide Operations and Planning Advisory Group (SOPAG) to rethink bibliographic services, echoed many of the statements in the 1977 report:

Within Library workflows and systems too much effort is going into maintaining and integrating a fragmented infrastructure. We need to look seriously at opportunities to centralize and/or better coordinate services and data, while maintaining appropriate local control, as a way of reducing effort and complexity and of redirecting resources to focus on improving the user experience. (p. 2)

As a result of the Task Force's recommendations, the UC libraries embarked on the development of a "Next-Generation Melvyl" OPAC to improve the user's search and retrieval experience. The report reiterated the desirability of a single data store for bibliographic records on which discovery and presentation services could be architected. The Task Force recommended that "University of California cataloging should be viewed as a single enterprise" and "move beyond a practice of shared cataloging to a practice of integrated cataloging" (p. 21). In the ensuing three years, the Next-Generation Melvyl initiative focused on the development of the front-end public access interface. In 2008, however, the Systemwide Operations and Planning Advisory Group prepared a discussion paper to take up once again the recommendations of an integrated approach to cataloging by considering the benefits of "Adopting UC wide Collaborative Approaches to Technical Services" (Declerk and Yokote, 2008). The paper pointed out the success of the Shared Acquisitions and Shared Cataloging Programs, which support consortial licensing and cataloging of electronic resources, in achieving reduced costs per record for campuses and timely delivery of records to local campus integrated library systems as well as Melvyl. The group posed the question of whether collaboration could be expanded to technical services functions, perhaps with centers of specialization for acquisitions and cataloging of specific languages, formats, or subjects.

In response to the discussion paper, in January 2009, the Council of University Librarians issued the charge to develop "Next-Generation Technical Services." Initially, four groups were formed with content experts from across the system to address technical service models around "broadly defined information resource types":

- 1) commonly held content in Roman script;
- 2) commonly held content in non-Roman script;
- 3) unique collections; and
- 4) twenty-first century emerging resources.

The teams were tasked to propose one to three transformative models that would incorporate values and principles outlined in a scope statement, including:

- speed up processing and eliminate redundant work;
- free up resources to focus on unique resources;
- start with basic description and allow for continuous improvements; and
- measure success by users' ease of access.

A governance structure consisted of 1) an executive team of three university librarians, the executive director of the CDL, and the chair of the steering committee (an associate university librarian of collection services); and 2) a five-member steering committee composed of representatives from four of the campuses and CDL who were assigned as liaisons to the teams. The charge for the steering team was to develop a framework for the next three to five years, identify areas to be addressed, and implement “low hanging fruit.”

Over the course of a half year, the four teams conducted environmental scans and extensive surveys, developed a wide range of recommendations for near-term and long-term goals, and submitted these to the Next Generation Technical Services Executive Team (2010). Some were explicit, such as the recommendations to “implement a consortial integrated library system” and to “implement shelfready services systemwide.” Others were stated in broader terms, such “expand technical services to support shared collections and collections management,” as well as “determine what ‘good enough’ means for cataloging.” The teams identified the need to develop coordinated management or delivery of specific types of content, such as “a systemwide government documents

collection;” print serials; harvested websites; and electronic theses and dissertations. The recommendations surfaced issues about the complexities of working with different campus financial systems and practices, and the need to facilitate intercampus transactions; questions about collocation of expertise and work; and emerging areas such as research data curation and support for born-digital materials that had yet to be addressed by systemwide strategies. Among the information gathered in this phase was the finding, based on self-reporting by campus units, of over 71,605 linear feet of collective unprocessed manuscript and archival collections.

From Issues to Action

The executive team, upon review and discussion of the reports of the four teams, identified four areas of priority as “issues that must be resolved first in order to move us along” and as having the most potential to transform operations:

- 1) a financial infrastructure that facilitates intercampus business transactions;
- 2) enterprise-level technical services and operational infrastructure;
- 3) new modes for access to special collections, archives, and digital formats; and
- 4) strategies for re-visioning collection development for the twenty-first century.

The NGTS Next Steps document (2010) speaks to the tension between a desire to uncover the underlying issues to be addressed for “transformation” rather than leap to specific solutions such as a consortial ILS, and the desire for specific action plans. The executive team formed three new teams, charged to address the first three areas in a proposal with “estimates of transition costs, timelines, an outline of points of effectiveness, and an assessment of benefits.” A kick-off planning meeting was held with all three task groups along with members of the executive and steering teams participating. A consultant was engaged to lead the groups in developing a better understanding of team dynamics and approaches to managing projects, as well as an understanding of “transformational change.”

In this second phase, teams grappled with the challenge of honing in on what actions would address the roots of, for example, the 100,000 volume backlog and the thirteen-plus miles of unprocessed and inaccessible archival collections. How could increased capacity be found (or freed) to address burgeoning new areas and forms of information? What would transform practices and yet could be cast in concrete and realistic terms? Pressures to produce actionable yet “transformative” recommendations were palpable: in August 2010 the Executive Vice President and Provost of the University charged a task force composed of UC faculty, administrators, university librarians and external members to deliver recommended strategies for library services in response to environmental changes and fiscal constraints, with a “focus on the efficiencies that can be gained in library operations areas” (Systemwide Library and Scholarly Information Advisory Committee Library Planning Task Force, 2011, p. 5). Campus library leadership, however, desired self-determination of any proposed changes to UC Libraries operations.

Given three months’ time, the three NGTS Phase 2 teams delivered over twenty recommendations that addressed the Libraries’ financial, technical services, and digital library infrastructures and approach. Of those, the Council of University Librarians selected ten as “high priority” and “pursue now” (2010, December 14):

- 1) Move to a deposit account to reduce the number of recharges for shared acquisitions;
- 2) Implement systemwide shelf-ready recommendations ;
- 3) Implement a “good enough” record for UCI;
- 4) Expand and adjust Shared Cataloging Program;
- 5) Develop a systemwide model for collections staffing;
- 6) Implement “More Product, Less Process” tactics for processing archival collections;
- 7) Support systemwide use of the Archivists’ Toolkit (and transition to ArchivesSpace);
- 8) Systematically and efficiently digitize high-use, high-priority collections for access;
- 9) Implement a systemwide solution for creating and managing digital objects; and

10) Using the University of California Curation Center (UC3) micro-services as the foundation, develop and implement the infrastructure to manage (preserve) unique digital assets.

Some of the recommendations were identified to be “immediately actionable, if not already underway,” whereas others to require further examination, though they were likely critical for achieving longer term goals. Among the more radical actions that were not selected for immediate pursuit were: 1) the recommendation to fund commonly held collections and technical services from a central source; 2) central funding, negotiation, and acquisition of collections related tools and services; 3) adoption of a cloud-based systemwide ILS; 4) implementation of a single database of record; and 5) implementation of UC-wide collection services centers.

The Enterprise Collection Services report included comment that some of the recommendations would require upfront investments, but advised that such outlays be considered necessary in order to realize long-term gains in efficiency. The Council of University Librarians did not accompany their decision to move forward on selected priorities with any explicit outlay of funds or commitment of resources, and this is indicative of the challenges and constraints for collaborative initiatives. Whether due to the realities of financial pressures or budget constraints that inhibit ready allocation of funds to new purposes, or to other factors, the Council placed many of the recommendations under further consideration. The Council asked the Systemwide Operations and Planning Advisory Group, the group at the top of the totem in the University Librarians’ advisory structure, to develop a plan for implementation and to include coordination with related processes and initiatives already underway.

Implementation: Principles, Project Management, Communication

The transition of direct oversight of the initiative back under SOPAG was a way to bring parallel, related efforts under one umbrella and to be more explicit about coordination and

consultation among existing all-campus advisory groups (groups with representation from each of the campuses, CDL, and the Librarians Association of the University of California). Under the all-campus structure, the Collection Development Committee, composed of collection development officers from each of the campuses, had issued a concept paper in 2009 that endorsed a system-wide view of “The University of California Library Collection” for the twenty-first century: that the diverse library and archival collections of the campuses be viewed as building blocks of a cohesive, integrated, shareable collection. As a subsequent step towards realizing that vision, the committee had initiated planning for a prospective “shared monographs” program (2010). Additionally, a SOPAG “Shared Print in Place” task force (2010-2011) had developed recommendations for the actions, policies, and infrastructure required to support shared print collections, held on-site at campus libraries with a commitment to retention, as a foundation for coordinated collection development. During the period that Next-Generation Technical Services had developed as an initiative, a Digital Library Services task force, appointed by SOPAG, had delivered recommendations on the user services, technical, and organizational infrastructure needed to support digital library building for a UC Digital Collection. The challenge SOPAG faced was coordinating decisions about next steps and outcomes among these various initiatives.

To manage implementation, SOPAG devised a plan (2011, April 21, p. 1) with guiding principles and a structure that aimed to be both nimble and cognizant of the need for consultation and deliberate communication with stakeholders. The principles acknowledged that “transformation is an evolving, phased process, with occasional big leaps” but that “quick wins early and often are essential” for building and sustaining momentum. They underscored the focus on implementation and action over study, but also the strategic value of cost savings and cost avoidance. Finally, they laid out the importance of leveraging local experts for system-wide benefit; consistent and timely communication; as well as continuous vetting, assessment, and adjustments to approach.

Building upon these concepts, SOPAG explicitly incorporated project management support by tapping project management expertise identified in the system via a SOPAG Project Management Working Group, and appointed a project manager and a communications manager from within the system to be assigned to the implementation initiative. The chair of the NGTS steering committee, three SOPAG members, the NGTS project manager, and the communications manager formed a new NGTS management team to oversee the implementation. The members of this management team reflected expertise from significant involvement in the preceding phases of NGTS as well as liaison relationships with the all-campus groups, including the Collection Development Committee, Heads of Public Services, Heads of Technical Services, the Library Technology Advisory Group, and the Resource Sharing Committee. The ten priorities were re-grouped into seven charges:

- 1) Build the system-wide infrastructure to support digitized and born-digital collections
- 2) Transform cataloging practices
 - Define UC cataloging record standards
 - Implement consortial shelf-ready program
- 3) Accelerate processing of archival and manuscript collections
 - Deploy Archivists' Toolkit system-wide
 - Define minimal collection record specification
 - Implement More Product Less Process practices
- 4) Simplify the recharge process
- 5) Maximize the effectiveness of Shared Cataloging
- 6) Develop system-wide collections services staffing
 - Inventory existing shared staffing agreements and projects
 - Identify current and projected campus staffing needs
 - Inventory existing and needed tools in support of technical services operations

- Eliminate current backlogs
- 7) Develop a system-wide view of collections and transform collection development practices
- Track shared collection development commitments
 - Recommend strategies for collecting traditional and non-traditional collections with a system-wide and multi-campus approach
 - Redefine the roles and responsibilities of UC bibliographers

Departing from the past practice of forming groups with representation from each of the campuses, the NGTS management team assigned a project team to each of the seven priorities comprised of three members: a member of SOPAG who served as the team's sponsor and two domain experts from within the system. These teams were called "POT"s for "Power of Three" and represented the view that a small team without all-campus representation could be empowered to act in the interests of the system as a whole. The teams were further empowered to tap experts distributed throughout the system to form "lightning teams," or short-term task groups charged to tackle specific deliverables, such as gathering information, conducting pilots, or accomplishing other discrete tasks with quicker turnaround times. In addition to the three members, each of the teams was assigned a project manager who, with advice from and coordination with the other POT project managers and the overall NGTS project manager as the Project Management Working Group, assisted the team in defining and tracking tasks and deliverables; provided status reporting to the NGTS management team; assisted in addressing resource needs and risks; and inventoried project assets.

The NGTS management team defined charges for each of the Power of Three groups that explicitly outlined near term and longer term deliverables; assumptions to be tested; and expected coordination and consultation with groups that might influence the work or serve as sources of expertise to be tapped. The Project Management Working Group assisted the teams in translating

these charges into specific work plans with tasks, timelines, and assigned lightning teams. The communications manager developed a communications plan to provide regular reporting both up to the Council of University Librarians and outward throughout the UC Libraries. In addition to a presentation outlining the framework, goals, and implementation plan for NGTS which SOPAG members delivered on their campuses, the communications manager created a Tumblr blog with a Twitter feed as well as a monthly e-newsletter compiled from progress updates from the POTs to provide consistent communication on the progress of the initiative to the UC Libraries community. The management team reframed the initiative as having four broad goals, with the work of the POTs underpinning each (2011, p. 1):

1. Cooperative Collection Development (POT 7)

Develop a system-wide view of collections that would allow libraries to develop richer collections and to leverage selector expertise. Consider and propose actions that balance increased efficiencies of centralized collection development with more diverse multi-campus collection development.

2. Collaborative Technical Services (POT 2, 5, 6)

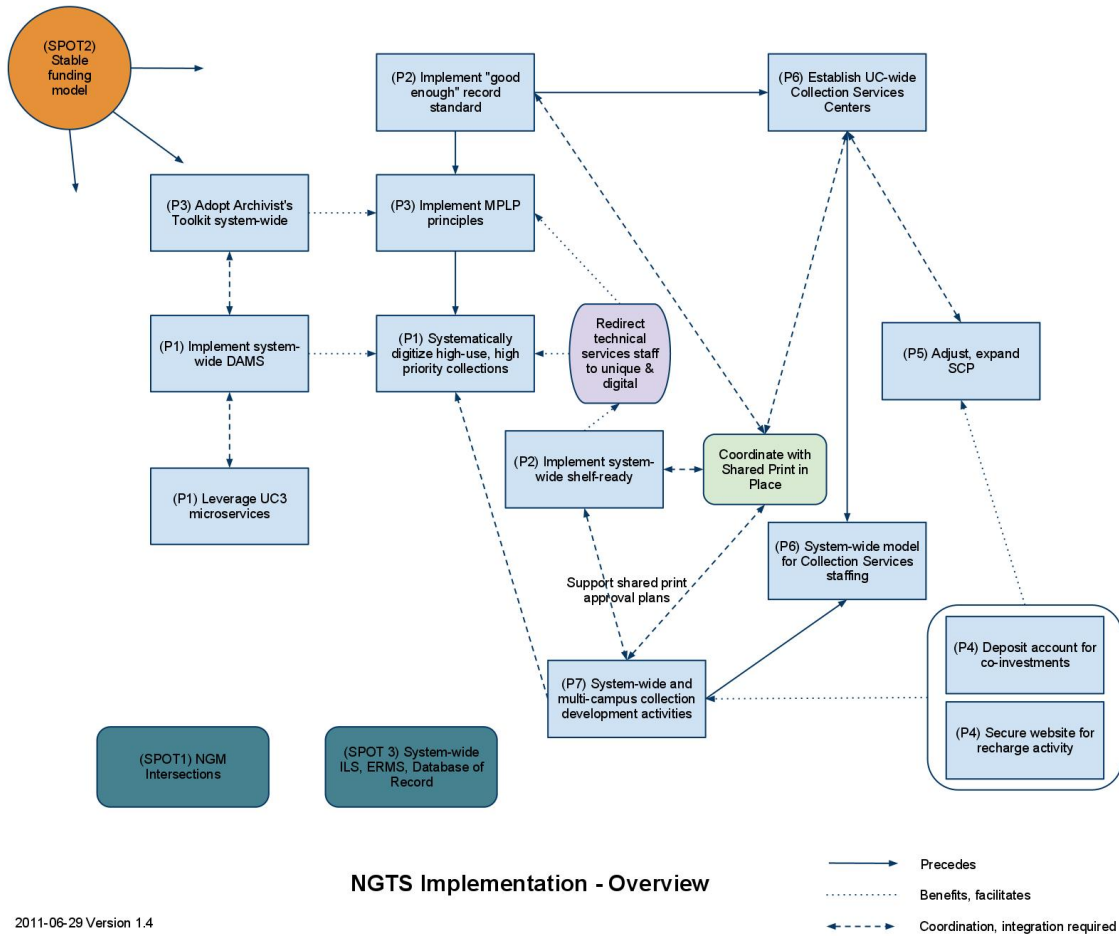
Develop the standards, policies, and practices (addressing technical issues, human resources, and other factors) that will move UC libraries toward integrated technical services expertise and operations.

3. Collaborative Digital Initiatives (POT 1, 3)

Develop policies and practices and implement the technology infrastructure to provide for collaborative UC digital services.

4. Financial and Technical infrastructure (POT 4)

Develop a fiscal framework for system-wide collaboration. Implement an integrated technical infrastructure to facilitate these collaborations.



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Figure 2. An early diagram maps out the relationships and interdependencies among the NGTS project teams.

In addition, SOPAG decided to assign three of its own members each to three additional teams to 1) develop a framework for stable funding model(s) for shared activities (depicted as a sun shining down on the various NGTS initiatives in Figure 2); 2) track intersections with ongoing development of Next-Generation Melvyl and its transition to a “production” service; and 3) monitor developments in the larger environment in terms of shared integrated library systems and resource management systems in order to provide information to the Council of ULs for evaluating the feasibility of pursuing one or both possibilities.

Outcomes

What did NGTS accomplish? The concrete outcomes include:

- 1) UC Cataloging Record Standards
- 2) UC Guidelines for efficient processing of archival and manuscript collections
- 3) Implementation of Archivists' Toolkit/ArchivesSpace archives information management system
- 4) Commitment to the development of a shared digital assets management system and UC digital collection
- 5) Pilot that demonstrated, with additional resource commitments, that shared cataloging workflows could be extended to another campus
- 6) Pilot that demonstrated cataloging of audio CDs at one campus could be cost-effective
- 7) Assessment that a consortial shelf-ready agreement would result in minimal cost savings
- 8) Articulation of the changing role of UC bibliographers and staffing models on the campuses

One of the early wins was the adoption by all of the campuses of a common practice for financial recharges for shared acquisitions, which resulted in a reduction in the number of transactions at that level. The investigation into business practices also resulted in a common understanding that “scheduled recharges” was a more accurate term than “deposit account” at conveying what the process was to business officers across the campuses.

Much of the early work accomplished was establishing a common vocabulary around technical services and shared best practices. Establishing and vetting a UC cataloging standard was viewed as a fundamental building block for other steps such as negotiating a consortial contract for a shelf-ready approval plan, or establishing cooperative cataloging models for monographs and other formats. The *UC Guidelines for Efficient Processing of Archival and Manuscript Collections* is an

important tool for training and supporting librarians and archivists in addressing and eliminating backlogs. UC Irvine completed a project, applying the guidelines, to surface 219 previously hidden collections to the public.

In other areas, however, the teams tested assumptions and surfaced deeper challenges to implementing the recommended changes in practices. For example, one was the assumption that stopping the distribution of records to each of the campuses by the Shared Cataloging Program for inclusion in their local catalogs and relying on the central catalog, Melvyl, alone would result in substantial efficiency. Instead, the project team found that the cost of distribution was not substantial and that the program was already a highly efficient operation. The costs were offset by the value and benefits some of the campuses held in retaining their local catalogs, including better discovery and the ability to generate ILL revenue. While expanding Shared Cataloging would be highly valuable, and a pilot proved that workflows could be expanded at an additional campus, doing so would require an influx of resources and would not be accomplished by eliminating any duplicative work or uncovering efficiencies. In the end, the recommendation to negotiate a single shelf-ready contract for the system was not deemed to produce significant cost savings to be worth the effort. Nearly all of the campuses had already moved to such a plan (or to demand-driven acquisition models such as at Santa Cruz) and the costs and likelihood of coordinating common shelf-ready specifications did not make a compelling case for a single vendor contract for all of the campuses.

A fundamental premise perhaps not fully recognized or considered behind the Next-Generation Technical Services initiative was that efficiencies could be realized at the campus level which would result in benefits to the system as a whole, or vice versa. The simple assumption that stopping a particular activity or practice at the campus level would free up resources to take on new or different things as a system has not been proven. In reality, the situation is much more complicated. For example, some campuses had already made investments in infrastructure or had local resources at hand to support an archival information management system and digital asset

management, and did not see value in adopting a centrally hosted system. For others, a centrally hosted system and the implementation of a shared digital asset management system has presented substantially enhanced capacity. The implementation has proceeded taking into account that the ten campuses have different needs and despite the varying levels of participation or adoption of common infrastructure.

Indeed, NGTS has demonstrated that “enhanced capacity” given the diverse, individual contexts of each of the campuses, means different things for each library. The Power of Three group charged with redefining the role of the UC bibliographer found

considerable anecdotal evidence that, in addition and in response to the above quantifiable differences, each campus has its own strengths, needs and style. With varying library priorities, policies, practices and visions for the future[,] ten different UC library cultures have evolved. When it comes to collection building and management practices, this framework makes consensus across all campuses challenging and perhaps impossible to achieve, though multi-campus approaches and partnerships are both possible and desirable when mutually beneficial agreements can be identified, ratified, and supported. (Appel, M. et al., 2013, p. 9)

While reduction in backlogs was established early on as one of the aims for NGTS, and while evidence gathered demonstrated there could be cost-effective ways of accomplishing this reduction, ultimately the decision whether or not to act was a local campus decision, and was not often viewed as a priority at the local level compared to other needs. Championing a system-wide view of collections is a challenge when campuses remain immediately responsive to and focus their accountability on the needs of local users. Due to the budget reductions the campus libraries have faced, many proposed actions or decision points to proceed that required an upfront investment of resources by the campuses have met with pause or no action.

Two keywords used to frame the goals of Next-Generation were “efficiency” and “effectiveness,” and many of the objectives were framed around streamlining, reducing duplicate effort, and cost avoidance. Historically, calls to collaborate and establish streamlined or integrated approaches to library collection development and management have occurred as institutions have faced crises or significant constraints. Yet this may be setting up a false expectation for the outcomes of collaboration. In “Collaboration and Collaborative Advantage,” Huxham (1996) lays out the case that “collaboration is inherently more time-consuming—and hence resource-consuming and costly—than non-collaborative activities” due to the time investments required for establishing trust and mutual understanding, the “sheer logistics” of working with members physically remote from one another, coping with accountability issues, and negotiating conflicting organizational priorities (p. 6). All of these challenges and needs have been manifest in UC libraries collaborative efforts, and the significant investment of time and effort required in establishing the framework, structures, relationships, and processes for communication and collaboration throughout the development of Next-Generation Technical Services is clearly evident. Rather than expecting collaboration to result in cost avoidance or cost savings, a more realistic expectation may be of redirecting resources to new or different sets of activities.

The Collaboration Continuum

Collaboration has been described as a spectrum of activities or a continuum of phases, and such a framework can be useful in understanding approaches to collaboration. Himmelman (1993) has articulated four levels of engagement:

- *networking* – exchanging information for mutual benefit;
- *coordination* – exchanging information and altering activities for mutual benefit and common purpose;

- *cooperation* – exchanging information, altering activities, and sharing resources for mutual benefit and common purpose;
- *collaboration* – exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources and enhancing the capacity of another for mutual benefit and common purpose.

At one end of the spectrum are loose networks, or a focus on information exchange; at the other end, organizations have formed a shared vision and work together on implementing that vision. Austin (2000) frames collaboration as a three-stage continuum: the first is philanthropic, where organizations offer resources (time, expertise, goods, etc.) with a very limited or minimal investment; the second is transactional, where organizations exchange resources through specific activities; the third is integrative, where “missions, people, and activities begin to experience more collective action and organizational integration” (p. 26). Gray (1989) identifies a general sequence of three phases in the process of forming a collaboration: 1) a problem-setting phase; 2) a direction-setting phase; and 3) an implementation phase.

Viewing collaboration in terms of stages enables one to identify the activities to promote and the steps to be taken to facilitate collaboration. If the end goal is collective action to fulfill a shared vision, then deliberate effort in laying a foundation through information exchange, dialogue, and consistent communication is needed. “Philanthropic” offers of time, expertise, or resources build good will and trust among members, which then allow organizations to consider what resources they may be able to offer in an exchange, in more specific, formal or structured ways. As organizations realize mutual benefit through these activities and recognize that continued involvement is in their self-interest, they are willing to take on more risk by altering what they do and becoming more integrated with the other organization(s)—that is, giving up a level of autonomy and self-determination in order to work towards a common purpose.

The development of the Next-Generation Technical Services initiative can be roughly mapped to Gray's three stages of problem-setting (Stage 1), direction-setting (Stage 2), and implementation, although it may be argued that problem-setting and direction-setting were iterative or continued to recur with refinements. It may also be observed that the initiative largely focused on networking, coordination, and to an extent, cooperation, but that it sunsetted before the "enhanced capacity" envisioned at the outset has been realized.

Yet the creation of deeper networks of information exchange is perhaps one of the most valuable outcomes of NGTS. An estimated one hundred-forty librarians out of roughly 470 in the system were involved at some point, at some level, in NGTS. As people were tapped because of their domain or functional expertise, rather than for their level in their organization, many cross-campus, cross-functional relationships were established. This approach greatly influenced the restructuring of the UC Libraries Advisory Structure that occurred in 2013. Strategic groups formed around three areas of emphases, 1) Scholarly Research & Communication, 2) Access, Discovery & Infrastructure, and 3) Collection Building & Management, all have cross-functional representation as well as all-campus representation to provide strategic directions and operational oversight for shared services. The new structure also encourages the formation of Common Knowledge Groups to foster innovation, the generation of new services, and collaboration through information exchange. The project management and communications approaches applied through NGTS have also been incorporated in system-wide work. The lessons learned in terms of how to work together, and what is required to address the challenges of multi-institutional collaboration, have laid the groundwork for developing new partnerships and new roles ahead.

Timeline

- 2008 Discussion paper released: “Adopting UC wide Collaborative Approaches to Technical Services”
- 2009 Teams charged to address technical services models for four broad information resource types
- 2010 Three task groups charged to address 1) financial infrastructure 2) enterprise-level collections management 3) new modes of access to special collections, archives, and digital formats
- 2011 Implementation phase of recommendations launched with new governance
- Created glossary of terms for collection services operations
- 2012
- Deposit system for CDL co-investments adopted; “Library Financial Data Best Practices” developed
 - UC Bibliographic Standards defined
 - Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries issued
 - Existing shared staffing agreements and projects surfaced
- 2013
- Launch of pilot projects to 1) investigate consortial shelf-ready contract; 2) consolidate cataloging of non-print format (audio cd); 3) extend Shared Cataloging Program workflow to UCI
 - Launch of UC Libraries Digital Collection implementation project
- Launch of new UC Libraries advisory structure; NGTS management team sunsets
- 2014
- Pilot projects conclude
 - UC Libraries Digital Asset Management System “open for business”

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