REGULAR FEATURES

2 From the University Librarian
4 Faculty Q&A
2 Reference & Research Advisory Services Director
3 Collection Consolidation Update
5 Library Research Prize Winners
6 Faculty Survey Feedback
I’m pleased to join the staff of the UC San Diego Library in welcoming you all to campus for the 2014-15 academic year. This year, the Library is embarking on the last year of our three-year effort to consolidate print collections in the Geisel and Biomedical Library Buildings. Our guiding principle now and throughout this process has been to retain on campus those print materials that are most actively used and needed by faculty to support current instruction and research.

Most recently, a great deal of this work has involved the removal of duplicate runs of journals from our former branch libraries. Starting winter quarter, we shall be focusing our efforts on transferring very low use, pre-1990 bound journals in the humanities and social sciences to our Miramar Road Storage Annex. We have benefited greatly from faculty input throughout our multi-year consolidation effort and we continue to look forward to that input, including requests that particular titles remain onsite. For more details about this, please consult the article included in this issue.

Last year marked our first official year as the “Library” and not the “Libraries.” Consequently, we have been busy building a solid, service-based organization, and reassigning and hiring qualified staff to populate and manage our new service programs. In this issue, we have a profile of one of our new program directors, Victoria Chu, who was recently hired to direct the Library’s Reference & Research Advisory Services. I am delighted to have Victoria guiding this program, and hope that some of you will have the good fortune to work with Victoria and to benefit from her program’s services.

Finally, this issue of Faculty File includes a short article on the Library’s faculty survey, which hit your collective email boxes in the spring. We are grateful to those of you who took the time to participate, and we look forward to sharing with you our analysis of the survey results and our initial thinking on how the Library will utilize them to enhance services for faculty.

All my best for an enjoyable and productive quarter.

Brian E. C. Schottlaender
The Audrey Geisel University Librarian

Victoria Chu is New Reference Head

Whether it’s a face to face consultation, responding to a text request, or an offsite pop-up “service” on campus, librarian Victoria Chu is very clear about one thing—library services must be offered wherever library users happen to be. In April 2014, Victoria Chu was appointed to serve as the Director of the Library’s Reference & Research Advisory Services (RRAS) Program, which provides reference expertise to faculty, students, staff, and other Library users. Under Chu’s guidance, RRAS is providing specialized, point-of-need assistance to meet library users’ reference and information demands. According to Chu, RRAS services range from one-on-one, customized research assistance, to the provision of innovative reference services that leverage technology to meet user needs from a variety of access points.

“From a strategic perspective, I think it’s important that we structure information services to be where our users are,” said Chu. “The more in-depth consultations that librarians offer are aimed at strengthening information seeking, evaluating, and organizing skills that are the base of the scholarly process. With faculty, this might mean meeting their immediate reference needs so they can, for example, complete a manuscript or grant application. With students, it might mean encouraging self-directed inquiry and enabling them to become effective and efficient information consumers.”

Popular Library services such as Ask a Librarian email, chat, and text reference, will continue
Over the last year, the Library has continued to work on integrating the print materials from our former libraries in the Geisel and Biomedical Library Buildings. As many of you know, that effort began in the summer of 2011, when the Library embarked on a multi-year effort to accommodate our smaller campus footprint. Most recently, a great deal of this work has involved the removal of duplicate runs of journals from the formerly separate collections, and determining the shelf space that will be needed to accommodate ongoing growth of the print collections.

Our principal goal in this effort has been to retain—in the Geisel and Biomedical Library Buildings—the materials that are most actively used by our faculty and students in support of instruction and research.

This year, our efforts are focused on freeing up space for future growth in the Geisel Library building. In order to accomplish this, we are planning to move pre-1990 bound print journal volumes in the humanities and social sciences to the Miramar Road Storage Annex. In 2012, we moved pre-1990 print journal volumes in the sciences to the Annex. We estimate that this effort will allow us to maintain the book collections currently housed in Geisel and will provide us with 4-5 years of space for future growth of monograph collections in most subject areas.

Later this year, we will begin transferring the pre-1990 volumes—approximately 12,000 print journal titles in the general humanities and social sciences—to the Miramar Road Storage Annex. We expect to have this transfer of materials completed by summer 2015. Once at the Annex, these volumes may be requested online, or articles can be scanned and made available via email, within one business day.

The pre-1990 journal volumes were selected for this move after we analyzed usage statistics of the print journals. This analysis confirmed that older print journal volumes—with a usage rate of less than 3%—are the Library's largest category of low-use materials. If you have feedback about these materials, please feel free to provide us with your concerns at: http://libraries.ucsd.edu/collections/consolidation/consolidation-qa-feedback.html

UPDATE on Collection Consolidation Efforts

Chu, who holds Master's degrees in Information Studies and East Asian Studies from the University of Toronto, has served as the Library's Chinese Studies Librarian since 2005. In that capacity, she has provided oversight for the development and management of Chinese and English language scholarly collections in Chinese Studies—in all formats—working closely with faculty and academic departments to assess evolving service and research collection needs. She has also been responsible for the coordination and review of resource licensing efforts, including the negotiation of terms for digital resources. Prior to joining the UC San Diego Library in 2005, Chu served as the East Asian Studies librarian at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

From a strategic perspective, I think it’s important that we structure information services to be where our users are. The more in-depth consultations that librarians offer are aimed at strengthening information seeking, evaluating, and organizing skills that are the base of the scholarly process.
Allan Timmermann, a professor of finance at UC San Diego, is holder of the Atkinson/Epstein Chair at the Rady School of Management. He is also on the faculty in the Department of Economics, which he joined in 1994. Timmermann is well-known for his contributions to the fields of financial economics and econometrics, an area of strong expertise for UC San Diego. His research utilizes methods from time-series analysis to investigate topics in finance, such as the predictability of stock returns, the effect of investors’ learning on the dynamics of stock prices, and the ability to extract the performance of fund managers. In addition to publishing numerous articles related to his research in economics and finance journals, Timmermann has been highly rated for his teaching, and has received awards for his teaching at the Rady School, where he teaches classes on investments and finance to MBA students. He also taught classes to undergraduate economics students on financial decisions, financial insurance, and economics and business forecasting. Timmermann, who received his Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge and his MS in Economics from the London School of Economics, has also consulted for a variety of international banks and investment institutions, including the European Central Bank, the Federal Reserve Board, and the International Monetary Fund.

Q. As a professor of finance at the Rady School, you provided extremely helpful guidance to UC San Diego librarians in determining what business and finance resources the new school would need. How are Rady School students using Library resources now?
A. Many of our students work full-time and travel extensively and so have less time to visit the Library in person or even work there. The Library’s emphasis on electronic resources come in extremely handy for such students who benefit from having electronic access to journal articles, readers and data resources. Many of our students also undertake project work and over the years they have made good use of the Library’s data bases such as Datastream, Compustat, the Wharton Research Data Service (WRDS) and Global Financial Data.

Q. Your research has been largely based on econometric time series. Could you tell us a bit about your work and what you are currently working on?
A. I have always been fascinated with the art and science of building good forecasting models. Some variables are easy to model and forecast in the short run because they are highly persistent — think of the unemployment rate, Treasury bond yields, or even inflation. Other variables are very difficult to predict — e.g., returns on a stock market portfolio — and so require very different techniques. The big data revolution has brought new possibilities and challenges — how do we identify the most important predictor variables from a list of possibly thousands of potential predictor variables in situations without much historical information? One topic that currently fascinates me is how predictability of some variables can be “local” in nature — predictable patterns come and go due to market participants’ behavior — and how to design methods for detecting such patterns of predictability.

I’m also working on understanding how ‘bank runs’ evolve by studying daily data on money market mutual funds during crises, such as the meltdown following the default of Lehman Brothers on Monday, September 15, 2008. Using daily data, we can observe almost in “real time” how some funds experienced massive withdrawals, while others did not seem to be nearly as strongly affected by the market turmoil.

I’m also working on completing a book on economic forecasting, with a colleague in the economics department at UCSD. The book covers both classical and recent forecasting techniques, tries to show which techniques work well for different forecasting problems, and explains the reasons why some techniques work in certain situations and fail in others.

Q. How do you utilize Library resources and services in your work? What resources do you use in the areas of economic forecasting and financial economics?
A. Having electronic access to journals through JSTOR and the publishers’ web sites is a huge advantage that I use more or less on a daily basis. I also make good use of data from the same sources that my students have access to — principally WRDS, Compustat, Datastream and Global Financial database. I am certainly also aware of the quality of the Library’s book collections, and have benefited from the quality of the science and engineering book collections on many occasions. Getting access through the interlibrary loan system to a book from 1920 that came with fold-out charts and lots of dust was a pretty neat experience.

Q. Do you have a favorite Library resource that you can tell us about?
A. Electronic access to journals has to rank at the very top. Having easy electronic access to the journal articles and working papers that we cite in the book on economic forecasting is a huge time convenience.

Q. What book is currently on your nightstand?
Earlier this year, four UC San Diego undergraduates were recognized by the Library for the outstanding research skills they demonstrated while utilizing Library resources for their research projects. The annual competition—a partnership between the UC San Diego Library, Student Affairs, and the UC San Diego Alumni Association—provides the winning students with cash prizes.

To be considered for the Undergraduate Library Research Prize, students must be nominated by faculty members and must participate in either the annual UC San Diego Undergraduate Research Conference held in the spring or in other university programs that foster and recognize student research and scholarship. The Undergraduate Research Conference is one of three major undergraduate scholarly meetings held each year that afford students from all academic disciplines the opportunity to present findings of research conducted under the guidance of UC San Diego faculty members.

“The purpose of this prize is to encourage and recognize outstanding research skills, which include the ability to navigate and tap into a wide range of digital and physical library resources,” said University Librarian Brian Schottlaender. “Teaching our students how to conduct academic research is a high priority for us at the Library. We want students to learn that solid academic research does not happen without careful, studious, and strategic library research. Our winners this year have clearly learned that important lesson. I’m very pleased that we can continue to support and recognize—with our partners in Student Affairs and Alumni Affairs—these achievements.”

This year’s winners included Jessica Knapp, a fourth-year Social Anthropology student, who received First Prize and won a $1000 award in the Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities category. Jessica, whose faculty sponsor was anthropologist Susanne Brenner, completed a research project on “The Effects of Mental Illness on the Javanese Family.” Jessica’s original research focused on the connections between mental health and family and gender roles within Javanese society. Because very little research had been done in blending these two topics, Jessica actually contributed new knowledge in this field. Her research included a combination of training with Melanesian Studies librarian Kathy Creely and exploration of a variety of specialized resources, including Ethnographic...
Last spring, all UC San Diego faculty were encouraged to participate in an online survey to provide the Library with valuable feedback on the impact of digital technologies on faculty research, teaching, and publishing, and on Library services provided to faculty and students. We received survey responses from 266 faculty members, with the following response rates for the various academic areas: Social Sciences (24.7%); Health Sciences/Medicine (24%); Arts & Humanities (23%); Physical Sciences (11.3%); Engineering (7%); Marine Sciences/Oceanography (6.5%); and Biological Sciences (5.4%).

The survey information collected will be very important as the Library refines and develops current and future library services following response rates for the various academic areas: Social Sciences (24.7%); Health Sciences/Medicine (24%); Arts & Humanities (23%); Physical Sciences (11.3%); Engineering (7%); Marine Sciences/Oceanography (6.5%); and Biological Sciences (5.4%).

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