

Standards for college libraries, 1995 edition

*Final version approved by the ACRL
Board and the ALA Standards
Committee, February 1995*

Foreword

These standards are intended to apply to libraries supporting academic programs at the bachelor's and master's degree levels. The 1995 edition retains the quantitative approach of the earlier editions. Smaller institutions or those with a strong media services component may find parts of the "Standards for community, junior, and technical college learning resources programs" useful. Larger institutions or those seeking a more process-oriented approach to standards may find sections of the "Standards for University Libraries" helpful. The "Standards for College Libraries" are based historically on practices found at institutions where libraries are providing effective support for the curriculum and for the scholarly and creative accomplishments of students and faculty (Kaser, 1982).

The 1995 edition of the standards has the following sections:

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DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE STANDARDS

The first edition of the "Standards for College Libraries" was published in 1959. Subsequent editions were published in 1975 and 1986. The standards are the particular responsibility of the College Libraries Section Standards Committee, a standing committee of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) which is a division of the American Library Association (ALA).

The College Libraries Section Standards Committee is charged with the responsibility of ongoing review of the standards, consultation with the profession on their development and evaluation, and revision as needed. To that end, the committee conducted a national survey in 1991, and the results were reported in the May 1993 issue of *College & Research Libraries* (Walch, 1993). Hearings were held at the 1992 ACRL conference in Salt Lake City, and at the June 1994 ALA conference in Miami. The final version of the 1995 edition was approved by the College Libraries Section Executive Committee, the ACRL Standards and Accreditation Committee, the ALA Standards Committee, and the ACRL Executive Board of Directors at the 1995 Mid-winter Meeting.

INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are operating in the midst of extraordinary change in the scholarly communication system. The cost of the traditional system based on paper publication formats is

professional competencies. Participation in library and other professional activities on and off campus is also necessary to further personal development.

4.2 Librarians shall be organized as a separate academic unit such as a department or a school. They shall administer themselves in accord with ACRL's "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians" and institutional policies and guidelines.

Commentary. Librarians comprise the faculty of the library and should organize, administer, and govern themselves accordingly. The status, responsibilities, prerequisites, and governance of the library faculty shall be fully organized and supported by the parent institution.

4.3 The number of librarians required shall be determined by a formula (see Formula B) and shall further take into consideration the goals and services of the library, programs, degrees offered, institutional enrollment, size of faculty and staff, and auxiliary programs.

Commentary. Formula B is based on student enrollment, collection size, and annual change in size of the collection. Other factors to be considered in determining staff size are services and programs, degrees offered, size of faculty and staff, and auxiliary programs. Examples of services and programs include reference and information services, bibliographic instruction, computer-based services, collection development, and collection organization. In addition, auxiliary programs, e.g., extension, community, and continuing education, as well as size and configuration of facilities and hours of service, are factors to be considered for determining adequate staff size.

4.4 The support staff and student assistants shall be assigned responsibilities appropriate to their qualification, training, experience, and capabilities. The support staff shall be no less than 65% of the total library staff, not including student assistants.

Commentary. Full-time and part-time support staff carry out a wide variety of paraprofessional, technical, and clerical responsibilities. A productive working relationship between librarians and support staff is an essential ingredient in the successful operation of the library. In addition, student assistants provide

meaningful support in accomplishing many library tasks.

4.5 Library policies and procedures concerning staff shall be in accord with institutional guidelines and sound personnel management.

Commentary. The staff represents one of the library's most important assets in support of the instructional program of the college. Its management must be based upon sound, contemporary practices and procedures consistent with the goals and purposes of the institution, including the following:

1. Recruitment methods should be based upon a careful definition of positions to be filled and objective evaluation of credentials and qualification.

2. Written procedures should be developed in accordance with ACRL and institutional guidelines, and followed in matters of appointment, promotion, tenure, dismissal, and appeal.

3. Every staff member should be informed in writing as to the scope of his/her responsibilities.

4. Rates of pay and benefits of library staff should be equivalent to other positions on campus requiring comparable backgrounds.

5. There should be a structured program for orientation and training of new staff members, and career development should be provided for all staff.

6. Supervisory staff should be selected on a basis of job knowledge, experience, and human relations skills.

7. Procedures should be maintained for periodic review of staff performance and for recognition of achievement. See relevant ACRL documents listed in the bibliography.

Standard 5: Services

5. The library shall establish, promote, and maintain a range and quality of services that will support the academic program of the institution and encourage optimal library use.

Commentary. The primary purpose of college library service is to promote and support the academic program of the parent institution. Services should be developed for and made available to all members of the academic community, including persons with disabilities and nontraditional students. The successful fulfillment of this purpose will require that librarians work closely with classroom faculty to gain from them a clear understanding of their educational objectives and teaching methods and

to communicate to them an understanding of the services and resources which the library can offer. While research skills and ease of access to materials will both serve and encourage library use, the primary motivation for students to use the library originates with the instructional methods used in the classroom. Thus, close cooperation between librarians and classroom faculty is essential. Such cooperation must result from planned and structured activity and requires that librarians participate in the academic planning councils of the institution. They should assist classroom faculty in appraising the actual and potential library resources available, work closely with them in

developing library services to support their instructional activities, and keep them informed of library capabilities.

5.1 The library shall provide information and instruction to the user through a variety of techniques to meet differing needs. These shall include but not be limited to a variety of professional reference services, and bibliographic instruction programs designed to teach users how to take full advantage of the resources available to them.

Commentary. A fundamental responsibility of a college library is to provide instruction in the most effective and efficient use of its

Formula B: Librarians

For each 500, or fraction thereof, FTE students up to 10,000	1 librarian
For each 1,000 or fraction thereof, FTE students above 10,000	1 librarian
For each 100,000 volumes, or fraction thereof, in the collection	1 librarian
For each 5,000 volumes, or fraction thereof, added and/or withdrawn per year	1 librarian

Enrollment, collection size, and growth of collection determine the number of librarians required by the college. These figures are to be calculated cumulatively. Libraries which provide 90-100% of these formula requirements can, provided they are supported by sufficient other staff members as described in Standard 4.4, consider themselves at the A level in terms of staff size; those that provide 75-89% of these requirements may rate themselves as B; those 60-74% of requirements qualify for a C; and those with 50-59% requirement warrant a D. This formula does not include campuswide media, archives, or academic computing services when administered by the library. Those units require additional personnel.

Supplemental staffing factors to be considered

Organizational and Institutional

The individual library's organization and institutional factors also influence its staffing needs. Additional factors to be considered are as follows:

Library

- Services and programs
- Size and configuration of facilities
- Hours of services

Examples of services and programs

- Reference and Information
- Bibliographic Instruction
- Computer Based Services
- Collection development
- Collection organization
- Archives
- Audiovisual services

Institutional

- Degrees offered
- Size of faculty and staff
- Auxilliary programs

Examples of institutional factors

- Undergraduate programs
 - graduate programs
 - Research
 - Community
 - Continuing education
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