New Libraries for a New Millennium: Challenges and Opportunities

R. Bruce Miller and Paul Adalian are men who clearly enjoy challenges and, even more, the opportunities provided in starting new academic libraries. Mr. Miller is the founding university librarian at the University of California (UC), Merced, and Mr. Adalian, the founding university librarian at California State University (CSU), Channel Islands.

Background

UC Merced is the 10th and newest University of California campus and CSU Channel Islands the 23rd California State University campus. UC Merced is the first new University of California campus started since the mid-1960s. The town of Merced bills itself as the gateway to Yosemite and currently consists of about 63,000 people. In starting a campus, the University of California does not seem to follow the model used by the California State University system of having one campus help to spawn a new campus until the growth of an area's population warrants the addition of another campus. UC Merced is building not only a wholly new university, but also a planned community able to house 30,000 people near campus. The new community will be comprised of many who will work at and attend the university.

For many years, California State University, Northridge has had a small Ventura branch campus serving residents of Ventura County with a small library attached. The Ventura Branch and library have moved from its previous campus in the city of Ventura to the new CSU Channel Islands campus. Once CSUN's Ventura campus enrollment reached a level that could sustain a 4-year university, early in 2002, it officially became CSU Channel Islands. The new school just welcomed its first freshmen class this fall. Campus enrollment stands at 2,270, but that number includes over 1,300 CSU Northridge students attending CSU Channel Islands as a satellite campus. When the first 4-year class graduates in 2007, CSUCI expects more than 4,000 students to be enrolled. By 2025, enrollment is expected to reach capacity and serve more than 15,000 full-time equivalent students.

Early Beginnings

When Mr. Miller arrived at UC Merced very early in 2001, the only other UC Merced employees were the chancellor, some university advancement and communications employees, and a few others. He was hired just as the hiring of the academic staff started. The budget for the University Library was still a huge unknown at the time, but Miller did know that whatever the budget, it would not be enough for everything that might be needed down the line. When asked why the position interested him, he replied, "Being part of the founding team for UC Merced offered a unique opportunity to help create a world-
class research university and a research library for the 21st century founded on the best practices of the profession and enabled by emerging technology. Imagine having the chance to start a socially responsible, much-needed, cutting-edge business with a backlog of customers and the State of California as the provider of venture capital. How could you turn down such an opportunity?"

Preliminary planning and focus groups about what the library would need preceded Mr. Miller's arrival at UC Merced, with money already allocated for a library building. Currently scheduled to open in the fall of 2004, the library will be one of the first three buildings constructed on the UC Merced campus. The contract for the construction has been awarded and the construction will begin soon. The library will house physical collections and information resources to serve the needs of the first American research university to be built this century. Even though it has no large physical collection yet, the library is operating as if on the scale of American research libraries (ARL) library. "The library will be both a building and a service. The building will house the enterprise that acquires, organizes, and delivers information resources in support of student and faculty research and study. Library resources and services will be available in the building as well from computers connected to the campus network and to the Internet."

When Paul Adalian started as the founding university librarian at CSU Channel Islands in June 2002, he was much more fortunate in terms of resources already on board. Since the CSU Northridge library had built a small academic library collection over the years, many of the books needed for a college library were already in the collection. Several years before Adalian's hiring, the Channel Islands campus had received several million dollars to build its collection. Dean Susan C. Curzon of CSU Northridge's Library and Dean Rod Hersberger of CSU Bakersfield's Library were hired as consultants to CSU Channel Islands to help start the planning and purchasing of materials for the library. Yankee Book Peder, a library bookseller, was contracted to ensure the library bought appropriate books, which were sent to a contract cataloger for addition to the OCLC database. CSU Northridge's library had also hired part-time librarians for the Channel Islands library. Consequently, Mr. Adalian already had a significant collection and staff when he arrived at CSU Channel Islands, but that didn't mean that he didn't have much to do.

**Visions**

Before coming to UC Merced, Mr. Miller had worked as the head of Technical Services at UC San Diego, so he understood the University of California system. Miller believes, however, that he needs to gather seminal works for his university library—both in print and digital. His library and Carnegie-Mellon University are working together on what is being called the "Million Books Project." UC Merced will work on acquiring copyright permission, while Carnegie Mellon will digitize those books on the list of books for college libraries. He believes this will add between 65,000 to 75,000 books to the electronic shelves of the library.

Miller says he realized that although there is not as much money as there should be for the collection, this is an opportunity rather than a problem. He can't create the library in a conventional way, so he is rethinking everything. He believes that UC Merced will be an equal peer with the other nine UC campuses and thinks that libraries are on a very important cusp in electronic information delivery. Five years ago, he says, it would not have been possible to truly have a library based largely on electronic information, but today, much more has become available electronically. He is focusing on the University of California, one university, one library model. He views his library as part of the entire University of California collection, and as such, he expects to get materials delivered to his library in a day from wherever it might reside in the UC system. He does not plan to have any print subscriptions, other than a few popular titles, but rather to rely entirely on electronic versions of journals to deliver access. Part of this is necessitated by the small staff the library has at present and will have until the California budget situation gets better, but he has no intention of ever adding long runs of periodicals. In this way, he plans to save on binding and handling costs. Currently, the library staff consists of Miller, a head of Technical Services, a head of Public Services, a digital assets librarian, and his assistant.

Miller does recognize that some basic materials will need to be on the shelves, even if not necessarily on opening day. This is perhaps the biggest impact the huge California budget deficit will have on the library, but items users need will arrive within 24 hours through the University of California's intracampus daily deliveries. Miller explains:

Some library resources will be in physical packages that sit on shelves: books, paper archives, sound recordings, maps, photographs, and much more. Others will be in digital packages, such as online journal articles, data sets, and geographic information systems. With the integration of the physical and the digital to create a 21st-century library for UC Merced, the library will also be a vibrant place for learning and collaboration. While there, students and faculty will receive the highest-quality support for their information resource needs, and they will become prepared to make the fullest use of the library's digital content and services from their personal com-
puters when they are in their dorms, labs, offices, and homes.

The UC Merced library will not only borrow from other UC libraries, it hopes to give back valuable digital content. Not only will the library have the 65,000 to 75,000 digital books for college libraries by 2007, but it has a grant to create digital assets on Japanese art as well as much support and a significant number of gifts and loans from the San Joaquin Valley community to digitize family assets, such as diaries and important papers about the community and its citizens, including a Japanese internment camp newsletter.

With his limited staff, Miller is looking at different ways to deliver instruction and reference service since he lacks the staff to teach each class how to use resources. He is looking at online tutorials and electronic reference as necessities rather than options. He is combining an information desk for the library with one for all student services. He is also consolidating circulation, reference, and document delivery. Patrons will do self-checkout. The new library will only have about 180,000 square feet, which, by traditional ARL standards, is pretty small. However, because UC Merced will not be adding print journals, he thinks the campus will not outgrow the library for the foreseeable future.

The library will incorporate a lot of places for students to not only have study space, but to also use computers. Miller plans to make the library as inviting, friendly, and welcoming as possible to ensure that even though electronic delivery of services may eliminate the necessity for students to come to the library as often as before, the students will still want to come. The library will try to do more partnerships with other academic institutions such as CSU Fresno and CSU Stanislaus. Mr. Miller is trying to get away from some of the University of California insularity within the UC system.

At CSU Channel Islands, Mr. Adalian immediately went about hiring a permanent staff. He has already hired a head of Reference and a head of Technical Services, both of whom started in the middle of 2003. Mr. Adalian was the assistant dean for Information and Instruction at California Polytechnic, San Luis Obispo. He expects a staff dedicated to working hard and making a difference for students. In looking for a library software system to best suit his library's needs, he recently purchased the Endeavor software, currently scheduled for delivery early in 2004. The final responsibility CSU Northridge will have for CSU Channel Islands is to ensure that the CSU Channel Island records get transferred to the new Endeavor software and taken off the CSU Northridge database.

CSU Channel Islands library construction of the new library and media center will begin in February 2004 and is scheduled for completion is 2006. The building is designed to be a campus landmark. Award-winning architect Norman Foster did the design. Adalian favored the plans already in the works for the new building before he arrived, but he did have more rooms set aside in the new library for students, student clubs, and activities, as well as areas both for quiet individual study and for more group study and participation. Like the rest of the campus, the library is partially a remodel, rather than completely new construction. The new library will have two very different and distinct parts. The old hospital's medical facility was a U-shaped facility; it will be completely renovated and become part of the new library, but completely new space will be built up within the U of the old building connecting to the older facility. The structure integration will not be seamless. Users will pass through a hall to the new building.

Mr. Adalian made working with the 30 founding faculty at CSU Channel Islands a top priority, a priority he extends to his permanent staff. He and his staff are working closely with the founding faculty and eventually the other new faculty. Since the budget has gotten tighter, he also wants to work with the faculty to ensure that the library has the instructional materials that the faculty needs. Adalian was able to license the Saskia Digital images for art objects, buying the rights in perpetuity and creating a customizable, Oracle, Web-based database that allows professors to save their commentary about the work of art with the image so students can review professorial commentary. He is working closely with all the faculty, not only in art, but in biology, chemistry, and environmental sciences, to handle lots of different types of images. Since the library and university are still
relatively small, some services can be offered that might not be possible in a larger organization. At the end of finals last spring, the library hosted a Finnish Finals Finale and was able to serve everyone in the library Finnish coffee cakes. The staff is also trying to develop the library as the cultural center of the campus.

Fundraising has become an increasing part in the life of a university librarian these days. Administrations mandate it, as they realize that less and less is being supported by the community have been surprisingly rewarded, not only by wonderful monetary donations, but also by gifts to the university that in some cases greatly increase the university’s special collections and digital assets.

Conclusion and Trends

Although both of these libraries have very different early beginnings, it is quite clear that a new paradigm for modern academic libraries is emerging, one very different from the academic libraries of the past. No longer do academic librarians buy a book just in case someone someday might want it. There is no more money for that, nor will that era likely ever return, even when budget situations get better. We have crossed into a new era of “just in time” document delivery, not “just in case” acquisitions. The belief that libraries need only promise to deliver items when needed dominates even librarians claiming and thinking of their new facilities as ARL research libraries.

Traditional print journals seem no longer to matter, as libraries stretched for space and staff realize that electronic journals do not require staff to check them in, nor staff to send them to bindery; neither do pages ever get ripped and torn from their electronic bindings. And the print function on a browser can take the place of tired copiers. While CSU Channel Islands had a small book collection built over many years by CSU Northridge, UC Merced did not, substituting a partnership with Carnegie Mellon University to digitize and get copyright permission for the use of the Books for College Libraries collection and providing access to digital versions by 2007.

In another striking trend, though eliminating the need for students and faculty to come physically into the library, these new head librarians are doing more and more to ensure visits to the library for a variety of traditional and not so traditional reasons. The library will still be a quiet place to study, but, in some cases, it will also be a place to drink lattes and talk with friends, to study in a group study room, and to meet with fellow club members for student body activities or for instruction in how to do research. For whatever reasons, social or cultural, the library is increasingly recognized as a hub and an important research and cultural core of the university. Both Mr. Miller and Mr. Adalian set the needs of students and faculty as their number-one priorities and want to work very closely with the faculty to ensure their collections meet students’ needs.

Another trend is sadly clear as well. State universities can no longer count on money sufficient to run everything anymore. State university libraries must build their own endowments in order to continue to fund what used to come from the state. In many cases, fundraising and outreach to the community results not only in donations to the library, but also to the additional benefit of access to some wonderful collections, including diaries, local history, old photographs of families and the community. Libraries are turning these into digital assets that will undoubtedly be of great interest to members of the community and historians, as well as strengthening ties to local historical associations and community groups.

In talking to both Mr. Adalian and Mr. Miller, you get a strong sense of their dedication and their leadership in building a staff truly dedicated to the customers. The librarians they hire must be involved and engaged to meet the needs of students and faculty. Only by helping students and faculty succeed can the libraries truly succeed. These librarians see themselves as core and the key to success for students and the faculty and ultimately for the institutions they serve.

For more information on these campuses, check out these Web sites: http://www.ucmerced.edu/lib/ and http://www.csuci.edu/aboutus.htm.