**Report from**

**the Joint Academic Senate/Provost Libraries Committee**

**to**

**the Academic Senate**

**May 2010**

The Joint Academic Senate/Provost Libraries Committee met four times during the 2009/2010 academic year.

A wide range of topics was discussed including the implementation of the Libraries’ current strategic plan, the development of the next strategic plan (2011-2014), the development of the USC Digital Library, the Libraries’ improvement in advancement related activities and the number of significant improvements made to the Libraries’ array of public services.

The re-opening of the reference desk in the LA Times Reference Room in Doheny Library sparked a huge increase in reference service. This experience is unlike that experienced at other academic research libraries that are closing their reference desks and relying on electronic means of providing reference support to students and faculty. While USC also provides reference help electronically, staffed reference desk service is experiencing a drastic increase across the libraries.

The need for the Library’s budget (especially its allocation for acquisitions) to increase to be comparable with USC’s peer institutions was discussed. It was noted that the Libraries’ acquisitions budget is approximately 30% lower than that of its peers and is severely constraining the Libraries’ ability to continue to support existing programs of scholarship and research let alone develop new collections to support emerging areas.

The quality of the Libraries’ facilities – especially those housing rare and special materials and archives – was also reviewed. East Library is designated as unfit for human habitation yet many of the University’s (not just the Libraries’) special materials (Shoah records, USC records, donated archival collections) are housed there. The Committee received a preliminary report from the Dean on the architectural feasibility study approved by the Provost’s Office to construct an automated storage and retrieval system on the UPC that would provide archival quality space for rare and special materials. The proposed system would have a capacity of 800,000 – 900,000 cubic feet, allowing sufficient space for all the collections now located in East Library and the CAL building to be moved; the system would also provide at least 10 years of growth capacity.

The Committee reviewed the Libraries’ plans to upgrade three of its branches to improve the quality of user space: the Accounting Library (funded by the Marshall School of Business); the establishment of a Learning Commons on the first floor of the Science & Engineering Library; and the development of a GIS Lab in concert with SPPD in the VKC Library. Compact shelving will be installed in Science & Engineering and VKC libraries as part of these renovations to provide much-needed space for the print collection.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Kevin Starr

Chair, Joint Provost/Academic Senate Committee on the Libraries

May 30, 2010