

University of South Carolina Union

Act 629 – Summary Reports on Institutional Effectiveness
Fiscal Year 2008-2009

Reporting requirements for the 2009 Summary Report for Institutional Effectiveness were waived by [Budget Proviso 89.121](#), as passed by the General Assembly and sent to the Governor. Although USC Union did not submit the official Summary Report for Institutional Effectiveness to the Commission of Higher Education, we voluntarily continued our institutional assessment efforts as they are critical to effective planning and program improvement.

This report describes USC Union's assessment of library resources.

DEFINITION:

Library Mission Statement

The mission of the USC Union Library is to support the educational goals of the campus while adhering to the overall academic mission of the University. The library accomplishes its mission in the following ways: by building and maintaining comprehensive collections of resources that support the academic offerings of the curriculum available to USC union's students, faculty, staff, and other patrons throughout Union County and the immediate area; by instructing students and library patrons in effective methods to locate and retrieve the information they seek; and by utilizing the most advanced technologies available to provide additional access to information needed to successfully meet the academic needs of USC Union and its community.

INDICATORS:

Quality of Facility, Staff, and Hours of Operation

Size and Quality of Collection

Access to Associated Collections

Collection development

Other library services

Usage

Satisfaction with Service

ASSESSMENT METHODS:

Comparisons of appropriate local statistics to national small college standards

Patron surveys

ASSESSMENT RESULTS:

The USC Union library has been located on the ground floor of the Central Building since its renovation in 1981. According to accepted standards for colleges enrolling fewer than 200 FTE students, our library space meets basic standards. The library maintains A/V equipment such as overhead projectors, a television with DVD and video cassette players, and audio cassette players. USC Union also helps maintain the library at the Laurens County Higher Education Center. In both Union and Laurens, students can gain access to the Millennium catalog at <http://libcat.csd.sc.edu/search/> and the databases at <http://uscunion.sc.edu/library/electronicdatabaselist.html>.

Quality of Facility, Staff, and Hours of Operation

The library is staffed by one professional librarian, who has been with USC Union since 2006, and by one full-time Library Technical Assistant III. These two permanent staff members are assisted by a varying number of student assistants. The USC Union librarian holds the Master of Library Science degree from

the University of South Carolina, earned in 2001. The American Library Association considers the MLS the terminal degree for the field.

According to the ACRL standards, staffing requirements should meet the minimum of three technicians for an FTE range of 1000-2999 students. The USC Union library employs one full-time library technical assistant, whose primary responsibilities include circulation, interlibrary loan, helping supervise the work-study students, and providing reference help when the librarian is not available.

Size and Quality of Collection

The collection consists of 31,866 volumes both circulating and reference. This is supplemented by Electronic Books numbering 19,204, Audio Visual totaling 417. We have 39 databases in addition to the 35 DISCUS databases.

Access to Associated Collections

The Union library ensures that it is available to all faculty members and enrolled students by operating 47.5 hours per week at the Union campus. The library is open Monday-Thursday 8:30 am – 7:00 pm and Friday 8:30 am – 12:00 pm. The Laurens County Higher Education Center library is open Monday – Thursday 8:00 am – 8:00 pm and Friday 8:00 am – 12:00pm. The staff secretary has been trained by the librarian to check out books, make photocopies from reference materials, and to search the various electronic databases, which include the Millennium online catalog and the Electronic databases. The USCU librarian also makes periodic trips during the semester for onsite reference consultation and assistance. An 800-telephone number is available for out-of-town students to contact the librarian or other library staff in Union, and electronic mail addresses are posted on the USC Union web page.

The library has access to a wide variety of collections to supplement our own. Using PASCAL Delivers, students, faculty and staff may order books from 56 libraries throughout South Carolina. Items are delivered within 24-48 hours, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Inter-library Loan requests may be submitted to any academic or public library in the country. Delivery may take up to 2 weeks. The KUDZU catalog allows users to search the holdings for 19 of the Association of Southeastern Research (ASERL) Libraries, connecting more than 300,000 students and faculty to more than 30 million volumes. Delivery may take up to 2 weeks.

Collection Development

The library houses 31,000 books, subscriptions to 29 periodicals and standing orders, and provides full access to the Internet and the Infotrac Basic periodical database, as well as the Electronic Databases. These learning resources are adequate to the purpose of the institution. The ACRL standards recommend that for an FTE student population of 1000 to 2999, a minimum collection of 40,000 volumes is required. The USC Union library has approximately 31,000 volumes which meets the criterion for its average FTE population of 200. Approximately 1,000 volumes are available at the Laurens County Higher Education Center for student use.

USC Union provides access to a collection of basic reference resources both in Union and Laurens that meets standard bibliographies. This collection is planned to serve primarily the first two years of baccalaureate course work, but subject coverage is augmented by evaluation of circulation statistics, interlibrary loan and PASCAL requests, and faculty input. The library also provides access to more specialized resources on the main campus via electronic reference requests and interlibrary loan. Beyond books and periodicals, the Union collection also includes most standard formats, including audio/visual media and equipment, electronic journals, and newspapers. Educational films and videos are available for the use of local professors from the Film Library on the Columbia campus, and they can be identified and received within a very few days using the Internet and email. The Laurens County Higher Education Center collection concentrates on book materials that directly reflect the courses offered there each semester, along with a small reference collection as well as reserve materials. Holdings from the Union library are relocated to the Laurens site on a semester basis upon request from local instructors.

Kudzu Libraries, and the interlibrary loan service is available for students, faculty, staff, and alumni to obtain materials that are not available at Union or Laurens. PASCAL Delivers is available to current students, faculty and staff to request books from campuses throughout the state. Students are taught orientation sessions in the library, and by invitation of faculty members, in classrooms methods to expand the online catalog to locate additional material if they cannot find enough information in Union. The USC Union library also meets the ACRL standards in the provision of basic LRC services and activities. By these standards, a minimum of 16 basic library services are required for an institution our size, and 28 ranks as excellent. USC Union provides 18 services, including acquisition and processing of print, non-print; audiovisual equipment services; audiovisual equipment distribution, and maintenance. An automated online catalog with public access; Electronic Databases which expand the print collection, bibliographic instruction; circulation of print and nonprint materials; interlibrary borrowing and lending; inventory of audiovisual equipment; computers for student use; reference services both in the library and by email; campus mail service, and reserve book service. In the provision of additional services above the basic level, the library is open to the general public on a regular basis, and Internet service is available to the public when not being used by students. The library is responsible for providing the student, faculty, staff, and public patron identification cards.

Collection development is shared by the librarian and the faculty. All teaching faculty recommend materials in their area, and these requests are honored to the extent of available funding. The librarian is responsible for developing the reference collection, as well as for covering gaps in the collection not covered by the resident faculty. Trade publications, book reviews in journals, titles available in the University System, and faculty resources are utilized for the collection development process. A collection development policy is in place, and can be found in the library's public services manual. Electronic database resources have been added in consortium with the other USC campuses as well as through statewide consortiums.

Accepted standards suggest that at least 6% of the campus budget be used for the library. This figure has varied between 5.3% and 6.1% over the last eight years, with an average of 5.7%

Other Library Services

The USC Union library provides ongoing orientation programs at both the Union and Laurens sites. These programs include live lectures and demonstrations using the multimedia cart or the Smart Classroom, bibliographies, handouts, and library tours. In University 101 an exercise introduces students to the library by "walking" them through searching for information on a topic, generally something timely or popular. Brief instructions on library use are included in the "Student Privileges at the University of South Carolina Union Library" brochure, which is handed out at orientation sessions. All ENGL 101 and 102 courses have a library orientation. More complete library information pamphlets have been devised for Union and Laurens students, which include basic information about the types of materials available, how to access this information via Millennium in the library or from home, and how to obtain information via the Internet or interlibrary loan. Millennium guides and interlibrary loan forms and pamphlets are available at the Information Desk in the main aisle of the library. An introduction to subject-specific reference materials, such as for sociology and biology, and more in-depth Millennium searching are made available upon request of the professor.

A Library Café was added in fall semester 2008 offering hot and cold drinks and snacks at reasonable price for students. A table in the café with chairs is also available for students to enjoy their food and drink as well as for studying. Patronage of the café has been much greater than projected and has led to an increase in overall usage of the library.

Usage

Non-Personnel Based Services

Percentage of Survey Respondents Who...	2008 Library Survey	2009 Library Survey
Used the library	95	93
Used the library website	73	82
Used internet databases	82	81
Used online catalog	62	63
Used reference collection	59	57
Used periodicals	55	48
Used A/V equipment	23	23
Used ILL Express	40	25
Used the library copier	50	62
Used the library computers	86	91
Used the library for study	73	71

Personnel-Based Services

Percentage of Survey Respondents Who...	2008 Library Survey	2009 Library Survey
Asked the staff for help	90	88
Asked by staff if help was needed	86	93
Made requests or suggestions to staff	41	43

Satisfaction with Service

Non-Personnel Based Services

Percentage of Survey Respondents Who Were Satisfied or Very Satisfied With...	2008 Library Survey	2009 Library Survey
Library website	71	82
Internet databases	77	78
Online catalog	68	84
Reference collection	73	64
Periodicals	55	51
Library computers	68	78
Library study environment	77	87
Library cleanliness	86	96

Personnel-Based Services

Percentage of Survey Respondents Who Were Satisfied or Very Satisfied With...	2008 Library Survey	2009 Library Survey
Library hours	73	91
Staff courtesy	95	96
Staff personal service	95	91
Properly shelved materials	86	94

USE OF ASSESSMENT FINDINGS:

The size of the library is adequate for the current enrollment. If there is sustained growth, a larger library will be needed, and the current [strategic plan](#) considers this need. A multipurpose classroom/library building is being planned for the future. A new building is also needed to full eliminate mold and mildew damage on books, a continuing problem in the current library but one that the staff has made tremendous inroads in curbing in the last year.

Library usage points to an increase in the use of and satisfaction with online resources and a corresponding decrease in the use of and satisfaction with "hard copy" print materials. This trend is expected to continue with print materials becoming less relevant to the needs of the students served at USC Union. Future library budgets should reflect these trends and the bulk of monies should be spent to expand online resources.

The USC Union library maintains a high degree of patron satisfaction with its resources and services. With the hiring of a new library staff in the last year, this is expected to continue.