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Jack M. Maness  
*University of Denver*

John Culshaw  
*University of Colorado, Boulder*

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## Reorganizing for Transformational Change: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Research Library at a Flagship Public University

Jack M. Maness  
John Culshaw

### Institutional Context

Colorado is undoubtedly an educated state. When the economic recession began in 2008, 36.5% of Colorado residents 25 years and older had a college degree, a percentage second only to Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> And while Colorado has somewhat average high school graduation and college matriculation rates, it has an above average college enrollment of 25-49 year-olds and import-to-export ratio of high school seniors attending its colleges and universities, meaning many college degrees are awarded in Colorado every year. The state spends what higher education revenue it has efficiently: in 2010, 2.9 degrees were awarded per every \$100,000 of revenue (the national average is 1.9).<sup>2</sup> These are encouraging data, as projections show Colorado ranking fourth in the nation in percentage of jobs requiring post-secondary education (67%) by 2018.<sup>3</sup>

Funding for higher education in Colorado, however, is incongruous with these data. When the Libraries began reorganizing in 2010, only 3.9% of the state's higher education research and development expenditures were sourced by state and local governments.<sup>4</sup> From 2002-2010, per-student state funding of the state's two largest public universities declined 48%, ranking it last in the nation in 2012.<sup>5</sup> At the University of Colorado Boulder (UCB), the decline has been even more precipitous: a drop of 61%.<sup>6</sup>

Although most, if not all of these trends, are mirrored in most states and their flagship universities (per-student state funding has declined 20% on average since 2000, while enrollment has increased 13%<sup>7</sup>), the problems are pronounced in Colorado, and the financial challenges they pose are considerable. Libraries are particularly vulnerable in this regard since they do not generate revenue (i.e., credit hours) but are largely funded through general state funds. The unfortunate fact is that the challenges faced at UCB may be harbingers for similar institutions.

Unsurprisingly, funding of the Libraries at UCB defines the bottom-third of our peer group. Our FY12 total expenditures were just over \$21M, ranking 11th of 15 in our Association of American Universities (AAU) peer group (public institutions without medical schools)<sup>8</sup>, some \$8.26M short of the median. Expenditures for collections access were \$10.65M, again, 11th of 15 and \$1.6M below the median. Salaries and wages totaled just under \$9M, 10th of 15 of our peers and \$2.45M short of the median. In operating expenditures we fall to 13th, spending \$1.45M, 51% of the median of \$2.88M and 26% of what first-ranked Texas A&M spends.

When compared to average peer-group expenditures, our expenditures are \$2.46M below average in collections access, \$5.3M below in salaries and wages, and \$1.9M below in

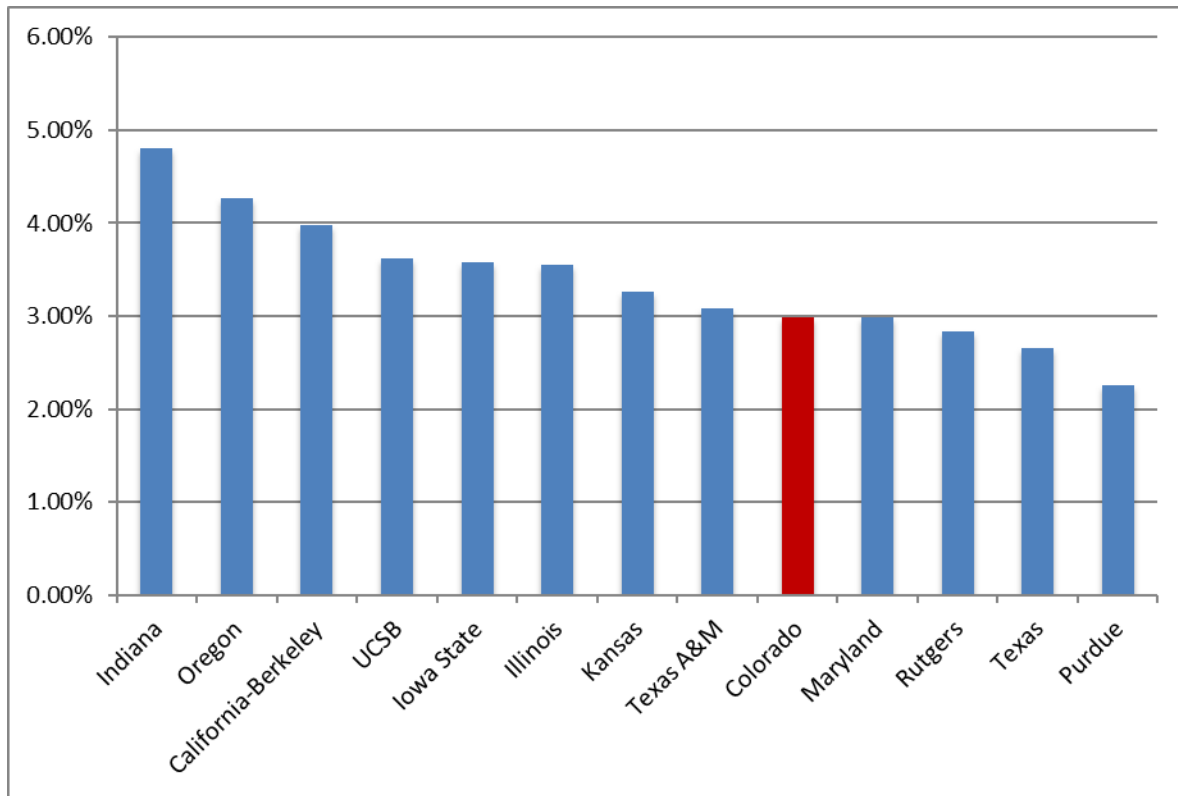
operations, for a total of \$9.76M below average library expenditures. Figure 1 displays these comparisons.

**Figure 1: FY12 Library Expenditures by Category<sup>9</sup>**



To further contextualize these data, Figure 2 provides a comparison of libraries expenditures as a percentage of FY12 campus expenditures on instruction, research, and public service, revealing that UCB ranks in a tie for 9th of the 13 peer institutions for which such data are available.

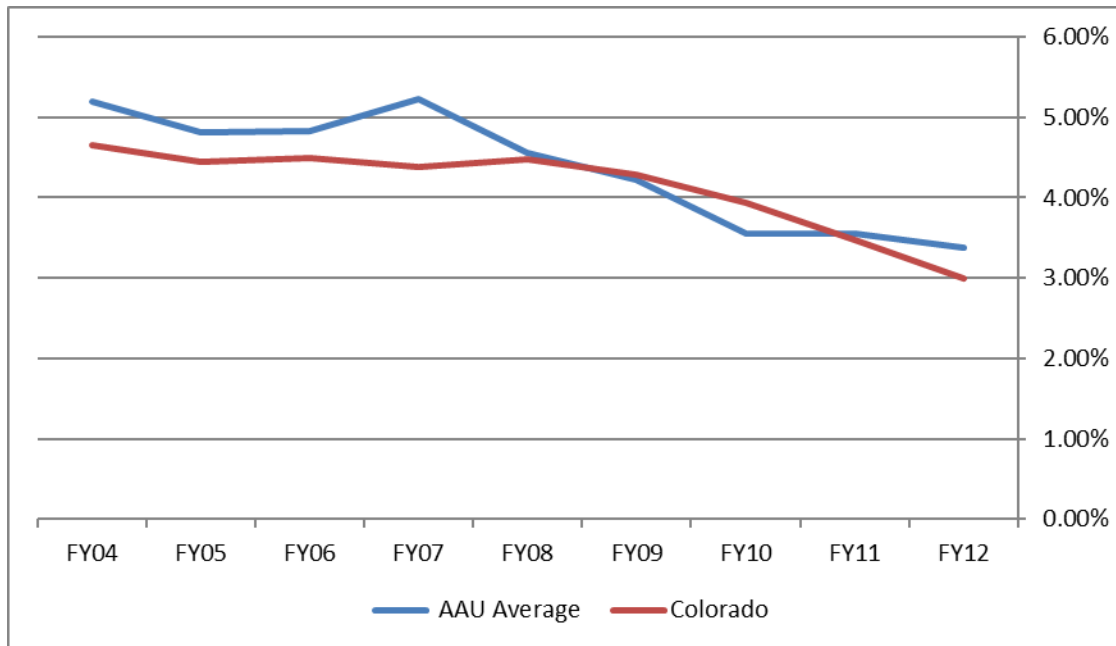
**Figure 2: FY12 Library Expenditures as Percentage of Campus Expenditures on Instruction, Research, and Public Service<sup>10</sup>**



Just under 3% of UCB's FY12 expenditures on research, instruction, and public service were dedicated to the Libraries, some \$9.4M less than the average for these 13 institutions.

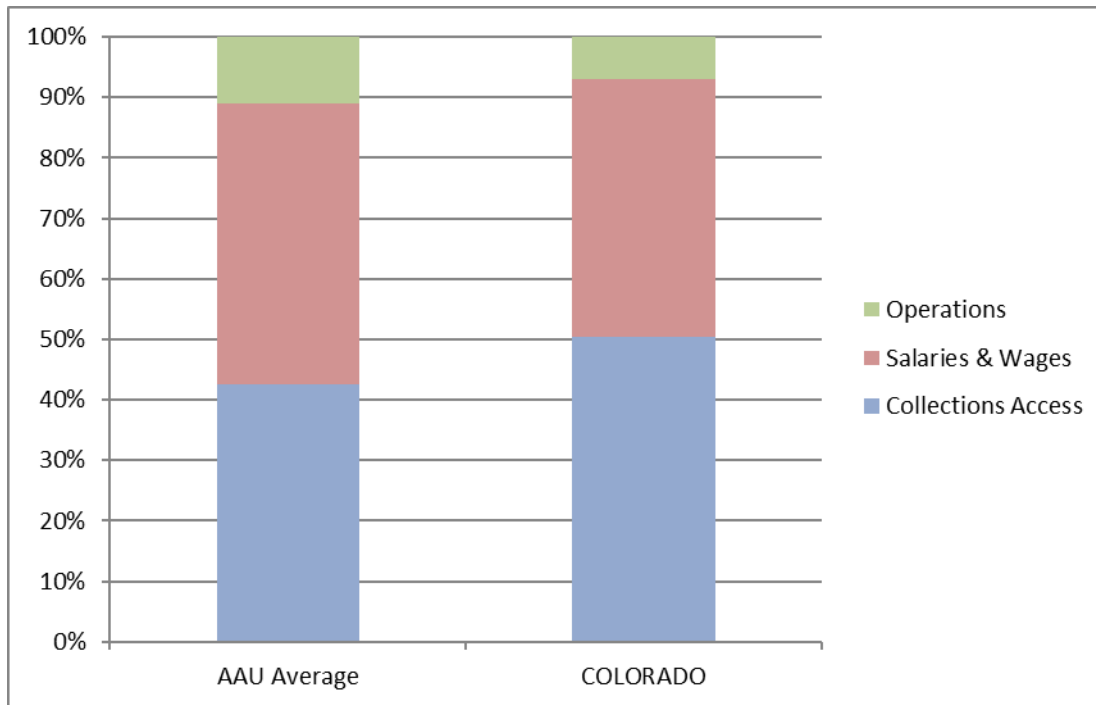
As shown in Figure 3, this pattern has persisted for many years. Average rates of library expenditures across these 13 institutions have declined, but UCB has remained significantly below the average for most years (the exception being a temporary span of years following the Great Recession).

**Figure 3: FY12 Library Expenditures as Percentage of Campus Expenditures on Instruction, Research, and Public Service<sup>11</sup>**



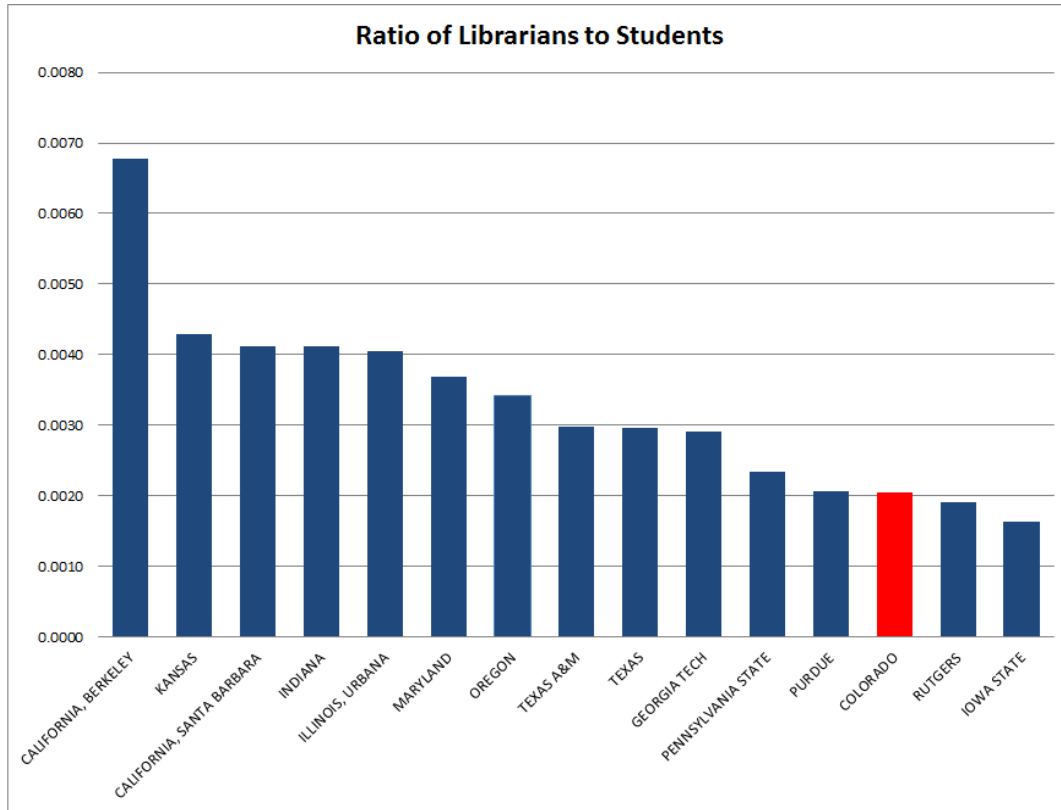
The UCB Libraries is further challenged in that its distributions of these expenditures are disproportionate to those of our peers. At UCB, fully half are dedicated to collections access while the average proportion in our AAU peer group is 43% (see Figure 4)

**Figure 4: FY12 Average Library Expenditures by Category, Expressed as Percentage of Total Expenditures<sup>12</sup>**



These disproportions amount to millions of dollars. They challenge us the most in the \$5.3M below-average shortfall in salaries and wages. As Figure 5 shows, we have a relatively low ratio of librarians to students (13th of 15 in our AAU peer group [0.0020]) and librarians to faculty (11th of 15 [0.044]). As libraries transform, we believe our people—our staff's expertise, our library faculty's research informing the transformation--act as catalysts in ways that that collections simply cannot, and our reorganization seeks to leverage that expertise.

**Figure 5: FY12 Ratio of Professional Librarians to Students<sup>13</sup>**



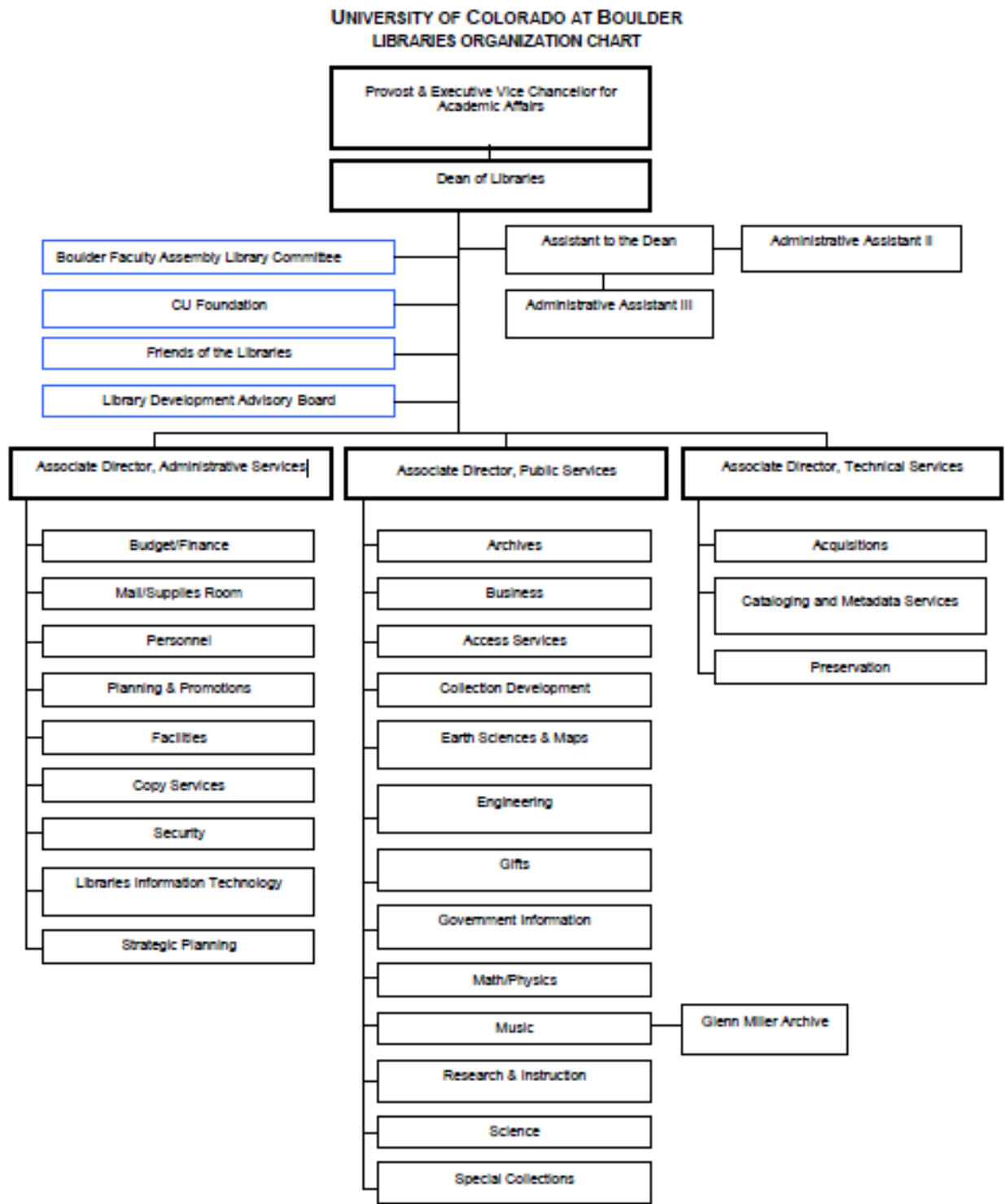
In addition to the \$5.3M below average expenditure in salaries and wages, UCB Libraries is an additional \$1.9M below peer-group averages in operating expenditures. This poses significant challenges. Operating expenditures necessary for the technical infrastructure needed to support digital scholarship, for example, or capital investments such as remodeling or fully renovating libraries as spaces, and similar items, are simply not available. Considered in concert with our salary and wage challenges, these two challenges demand the need for a more cost-effective, responsive organization.

### **The Libraries' "traditional structure"**

Like many research libraries, the UCB Libraries was organizationally structured around three major pillars of library operations prior to 2010: technical services, public services, and administrative services. Each of these divisions was managed by an associate director (AD), who reported to the dean and in sum comprised the Libraries Administrative Cabinet (Cabinet). Each AD supervised several department heads. Librarians at UCB have full faculty status and rank; some staff are professional university staff, and some are classified staff within the State of Colorado personnel system.



Figure 6: Organizational Chart Prior to 2010 Restructuring



The structure depicted in Figure 6 worked well for many years. Library operations had clear boundaries among and between these divisions, and the Cabinet was able to make decisions regarding strategic directions, operational priorities, policy, and personnel that were well-informed by these directors of operations. Nearly every decision relating to library operations was channeled through this group—from building hours to personnel issues to travel requests. Over time, however, the Cabinet seemed to lose its focus and got caught up in trivial matters as opposed to strategic direction. This practice became frustrating in a time when the organization—and its senior leadership in particular—needed to be swifter and more flexible.

The next level of leadership was the Libraries Council. Formed in the late 1980s, this group was established to recommend policy to the Cabinet. It was comprised of all department heads (around 20 individuals) plus the members of the Administrative Cabinet. In its early years, it oversaw a broad set of policies that were vetted, approved, and eventually published in a paper *Administrative Policy Manual*. Over time, and particularly after electronic communication tools permeated the workplace, this function began to diminish. Although the Council acted as a valuable information and best practice sharing body, members felt they lost a voice in the overall management of the organization.

Besides these formal governance bodies, the divisional associate directors hosted regular meetings with their department heads and entire directorates. These, too, were about information sharing and communication. But, over time, all these meetings became repetitious and were seen as holding the organization back rather than moving it forward. The effectiveness of senior management was also questioned.

This structure remained in place with little change for two decades and by 2010 resulted in a “silo effect.” The three divisions began to operate somewhat independently of one another, and sometimes, through a lack of understanding of the work, mission, and needs of one another, competed with one another. In addition, by 2010 two factors provided significant need to shuffle departments and divisions via a complete structural reorganization.

First, the move to digital and electronic collection development that had begun in the 1990s, and the resulting impact on all operations—metadata, acquisitions, cataloging, reference, instruction, etc.—necessitated a more interdependent and cross-divisional and -departmental decision making process. Through an informal review of the literature and a brainstorming process, the Cabinet identified these major trends in research libraries as those that would drive the reorganization efforts:

*The need to reorganize collection development operations away from a philosophy of just-in-case acquisitions, to a philosophy of just-in-time acquisitions, driven by patron demand;*

*The need to reframe the library budget, based on reallocation and reinvestment;*

*Changes in higher education and the need for diverse skill sets among library faculty;*

*Demand for more accountability, assessment, and demonstrable value to the institution;*

*Allocation of more fiscal resources to the digitization of unique collections;*

*New service demands related to mobile technology;*

*Even more collaboration both within and beyond the institution;*

*Responsibility to lead campus efforts and services related to scholarly communication and intellectual property;*

*The continuing demand for more technological applications related to library operations;*

*A redefinition of the research library as physical space is repurposed, and virtual space expands.*

Second, the Great Recession of the late 2000s had a direct impact on the Libraries. As part of balancing the budget, the campus made the decision to take away all positions that were vacant due to retirement. As a result, Libraries lost 2.5 faculty (librarian) lines; one of them was an associate director position. Other cuts also impacted the Libraries' information resources budget.

## Process

### *Forming a Planning Team*

Following the groundwork laid by the Libraries Cabinet, in November of 2010 a Reorganization Planning Team (RPT) was formed with the charge of making recommendations for a new organizational structure for the University Libraries. The RPT was directed to explore structures that would be practical and flexible. In addition, the team was asked to seek out assistance and input from the Libraries faculty and staff at large. Because it had been so long since the last reorganization effort, the Cabinet assumed the process would be carried out in phases and that the RPT would not oversee the actual implementation of the plan. This was intended to be a four-month planning process. The team included the Cabinet and an additional five members intended to be a representative sample of the organization's constituencies: faculty and staff at various levels working in all three divisions.

Since the timeframe was limited, the Libraries Cabinet drafted initial ground-rules for the RPT's work:

### **Reorganization Ground Rules**

*Confidentiality – work will be shared with the Libraries as a whole when ready*

*Avoid equating functions with people*

*Respect all opinions*

*Participate*

*Planning Group NOT Implementation Group*

*Suspend disbelief*

*List of issues not inclusive*

*Focus on big picture—avoid temptation to focus on micro issues*

*Don't take things personally*

*Many models in other libraries—likely no perfect model to fit us*

To help focus the work, the Cabinet also proposed issues that should or should not be considered in the process. Issues such as departments and leadership models, reporting lines, and committee structure were open for reconsideration; but long-term facilities plans, faculty status, and the state personnel system were not to be part of the reorganization.

The Libraries Dean also contextualized the work of the RPT within the campus overall structural, financial, and strategic environments—how the Libraries fits in with the larger mission, administrative structure, and finances of the campus. A review of the three priorities of the 2010-2013 Libraries Strategic Plan<sup>14</sup> was also undertaken, particularly the priority to maintain an “Optimal Organizational Structure”:

*The Libraries organizational structure supports mutual respect and collegiality among a diverse faculty and staff, and promotes excellence in communication, leadership, creativity, and innovation.*

*Goal 1*

*Structure the organization to respond to change by collaborating internally, with colleagues beyond the campus, and with our clients.*

*Goal 2*

*Empower Libraries faculty and staff with the tools, skills, knowledge, encouragement and support they need to contribute fully to the goals and objectives of the Libraries.*

### *Setting the Stage*

In order to further set the process into a broad perspective contextualized in the larger research university environment and a long view with decades of change in mind (both for the RPT and for the organization as a whole), RPT decided to both review peer organizational structures and host discussions centered around a set of scenarios regarding the future research university recently published by the Association of Research Libraries.<sup>15</sup> The RPT used the set of peer organizations defined by the campus. Peer organizations were chosen as similarly-sized and/or with similar missions such as the libraries at the Universities of Arizona, Oregon, Kansas, and Nebraska; Iowa and Michigan State Universities; Purdue University, Georgia Tech, and several University of California schools, such as Davis, Irvine, and Santa Barbara. RPT discussed what they perceived as particularly exciting or innovative structures at these libraries.

Discussion then began on the ARL 2030 Scenarios Set. These bold documents were the result of an ARL effort to encourage its member libraries and others to incorporate visioning and environmental scanning into their strategic planning activities. The ARL project developed four possible scenarios of the research environment in 2030 and then challenged libraries to answer the question, “how do we transform our organization(s) to create differential value for future users (individuals, institutions, and beyond), given the external dynamics redefining the research environment over the next 20 years?”<sup>16</sup>

In order to engage the organization more broadly and as a way to get all Libraries employees thinking about the future of the research library and in fact the entire research enterprise, the RPT hosted two workshops centered on these scenarios. Attendees were divided into four table discussions based on one scenario each. They then reported summaries of their discussions to the larger group. The larger group then discussed the implications for libraries suggested by each scenario.

The documents resulting from the discussion tables and minutes produced as a part of the larger discussion, along with the ground rules, trends, and institutional context provided by the dean, informed the RPT as it began to consider the appropriate homes/structures for organizational tasks and responsibilities.

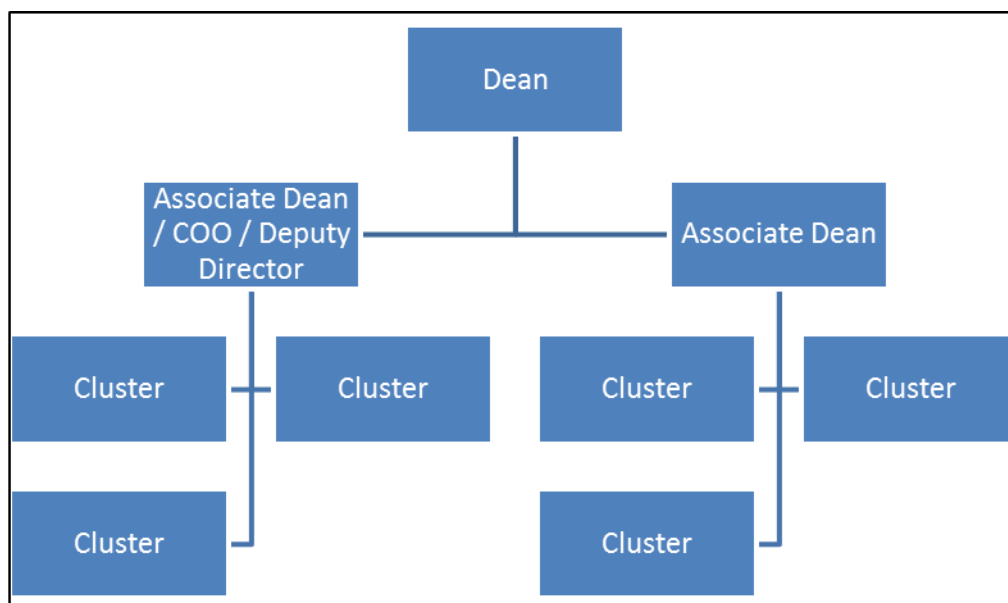
### *Management Layers*

One of the earliest decisions the RPT made concerned a new structure and model for management layers in the organization. The RPT supported the dean's recommendation to form an "Executive Committee" composed of the dean and two associate deans. One of the associate directors was planning to retire. The responsibilities within that directorate would be reassigned to the other associate deans. The RPT also supported the Dean's recommendation to change the titles of his senior leadership team from "associate director" to "associate dean." One of the associate deans would be titled "Senior Associate Dean" and would act as a Chief Operating Officer, vested with "hiring authority" responsibilities in the absence of the dean. This model, consistent with that of other schools and colleges, also satisfied the campus desire to see a line of succession in the unit. Given the number of employees in the Libraries, the RPT agreed that the organization could be guided effectively by a three-member executive committee. Salary savings from the soon-to-be-vacated associate director line could support operations in other parts of the organization.

In addition, the critical uncertainties underscored by the *ARL Scenarios* emphasized the need for a more flexible, team-based structure that could make quicker, more-informed decisions. This structure needed to include an operational decision-making group that would be much smaller than the 20-plus member Council but larger and more in touch with operations than the four-member Cabinet. The primary goal in forming such a management layer was to assign authority at the level at which decisions most needed to be made. Members of this management layer would focus on the greater good of the entire organization and the team rather than on the success of their own operational units. This would represent a significant mindset change for these leaders who previously focused on advocating solely for their own units.

The RPT proposed that this yet-to-be determined operational management layer, plus the Executive Committee, would comprise the "Management Team" (MT) represented in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Early Conceptual Representation of the “Management Team”**



The RPT, then, ostensibly decided to adopt a “team-based” managerial structure and approach, a model that is becoming increasingly prevalent. A team in this respect is defined as having members that “are mutually accountable for achieving the team's results. That is, if the team achieves the results, all members of the team have succeeded; if the team fails to achieve the results, then all members of the team have failed.”<sup>17</sup> This model would create a system of “interdependence [wherein] members of a team work together to achieve results that cannot be achieved if members work entirely independently.”<sup>18</sup> This Management Team would also use principles of “shared leadership,” which can simply mean that “recognized authority within the team exists, but it is based on whatever expertise is needed at the time, not on someone's position in the organization.”<sup>19</sup>

Shared leadership is closely related to concepts such as “servant” and “post-heroic leadership,” and there are ample arguments in organizational development and leadership studies for it. Crevani, et. al. (2004) categorize these arguments as coming from several perspectives:

- 1) that of the individual (“shared leadership as a way of enhancing the lives of those who work in managerial positions”);
- 2) co-workers (“shared leadership as a way of enhancing the correspondence between employee expectations and actual organizational practices”);
- 3) the organization (“shared leadership as a way of enhancing leadership effectiveness”);
- 4) and the larger society (“shared leadership as a way of maintaining and increasing the legitimacy of leadership and management”).<sup>20</sup>

Versions of teams and shared leadership are becoming more common in academic libraries.<sup>21</sup> Libraries engage increasingly in “knowledge work—work that requires significant investment in, and voluntary contribution of, intellectual capital by skilled professionals,” and “shared

leadership may provide the means to navigate the rapidly changing waters of a highly complex industry more effectively.”<sup>22</sup> The conceptual model adopted by the RPT would be fundamentally a hybrid model, incorporating aspects of both vertical and shared leadership, and it should be noted that in this model “the role of the vertical leader is critical to the ongoing success of the shared-leadership approach to knowledge work.”<sup>23</sup>

These management models and approach, adopted early in the process, informed the work of the RPT as it began reconstructing operations.

### *Clustering of Activities*

The stage set, the RPT initiated an exercise of listing all the major activities undertaken in the Libraries (circulation, instruction, reference, cataloging, integrated library system operations, digitization, workstation support, etc.). Each activity was written on a post-it note color coded to its current organizational home. Differently colored post-it notes represented different departments and units. This allowed the team to see easily and visually where activities were assigned in the current organization. Next the RPT engaged in an activity to rearrange and aggregate individual tasks into “clusters” of functional similarity regardless of current departmental structure. Some activities were clustered together as they always had been. For example, computer workstation support and server maintenance, both part of the current Libraries Information Technology Department, were paired in the same cluster in this exercise. In other situations, new aggregations of activities were noted, such as website usability testing being related to instruction and reference or interlibrary loan borrowing being related to acquisitions activities. The post-it note clusters of operationally-similar activities often included notes of several different colors which was an indication to the team of the depth of change needed from the current organizational structure. It also became clear that no matter the hierarchical or reporting line home of an activity, an interdependent, shared-leadership model for many activities would be necessary.

On first draft, the seven clusters shown in Table 1 were identified, with many activities still “out of cluster.”

**Table 1: Clusters and Initially Assigned Activities**

<b>Cluster</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1	<i>Business services &amp; facilities (e.g., accounting, emergency planning, human resources)</i>
2	<i>Research services (e.g., Departmental/school/college relations, faculty rights &amp; responsibilities, instruction)</i>
3	<i>Circulation and Information Commons (e.g., article paging and scanning, billing and fines, laptop checkout)</i>
4	<i>Collection management (materials and access budget, acquisitions, approval profiling)</i>
5	<i>Resource description (e.g., NACO, BIBCO, OCLC support)</i>
6	<i>Special collections (e.g., preservation of special materials, archives, environmental monitoring)</i>
7	<i>IT infrastructure (Desktop hardware/peripherals/applications support, software licensing)</i>

Some notable activities, such as the management of branch libraries, were not assigned a cluster during the first stage of development due to their having similarities with many clusters. Over the course of the next two meetings, totaling six hours, various activities were reassigned to other clusters (for example, music resources cataloging spent time in clusters 5 and 6), and some clusters were re-thought entirely. The technique of using post-it notes make this process easy to facilitate, plus members always knew where an activity started out due to the color-coding.

Once the clusters seemed relatively stable, team members were divided into smaller groups of twos and threes to further develop each cluster. They were to consider the integrity of these activities being structurally housed together, recommend possible changes, give the cluster a “high level description” (similar to a mission statement) and describe how the cluster might be internally organized. The smaller teams reported back to the RPT and refinements to the structure were made.

The biggest change at this stage came to the research services cluster. Influenced by subject librarian re-envisioning in other libraries, such as at Duke University,<sup>24</sup> the RPT had decided that subject librarians would maintain their multifaceted duties in the “traditional tripartite model of collections, reference, and instruction”<sup>25</sup> as opposed to other alternatives (such as centralizing some in Cluster 4), but recognized that emerging work in scholarly communications, research data services, digital scholarship tools, instructional design, and other areas were also necessary additional aspects to this work (the “subject librarian *plus*”<sup>26</sup>). These traditional and emergent functions would be proportioned in differing degrees, however, within an individual’s portfolio, depending on the liaison’s students’ and faculties’ disciplinary work: “[t]he subject librarian role is configured based on the needs of the library and the university; it is not a matter of personal preference.”<sup>27</sup> The RPT also recognized that having only one member of the MT responsible for operational priorities in this large and important body of work for the organization was not an optimal configuration for strategic decision-making. Instruction is one of the Libraries



strong suits, for example: over the last five years we have provided over 4,400 instruction sessions to over 86,000 attendees; our ratio of instruction sessions per librarian is 3rd in our AAU peer group, at 14.4 sessions per librarian per year. We are also third in numbers of students taught per librarian, at 301, and in a 2013 survey of students, 82% indicated these sessions were “somewhat important,” “very important,” or “absolutely necessary.”<sup>28</sup> Liaison work is just too important for one manager to oversee.

Given this, the RPT decided to split the cluster into disciplinary foci: one for sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); one for social sciences; and one for the humanities. These three clusters would assess user information needs and develop appropriate services and collections to meet those needs. Embedding themselves in disciplinary communities, liaisons use the library as destination, its web presence, and emerging opportunities for the library to create cross-campus synergies and work toward fundamental change in scholarly communication. This structure also closely resembled the campus’s discipline-based organization.

The RPT recognized that liaison librarians in these areas frequently share best-practices in pedagogy, collection development, and other skill sets. They also work closely with archives and special collections on many projects, and need to both influence and have deep understandings about decisions in areas related to activities in collection development, cataloging, web-design, etc. The RPT thus decided to build cross-cluster teams into the structure to support this wide range of activities that require the input and support of so many. Using language and priorities outlined in the 2010-2013 strategic plan, these structures would bring the same concept of team-based and shared-leadership practices to other layers of the organization.

**Figure 8: Disciplinary Clusters and their Cross-Functional Teams**

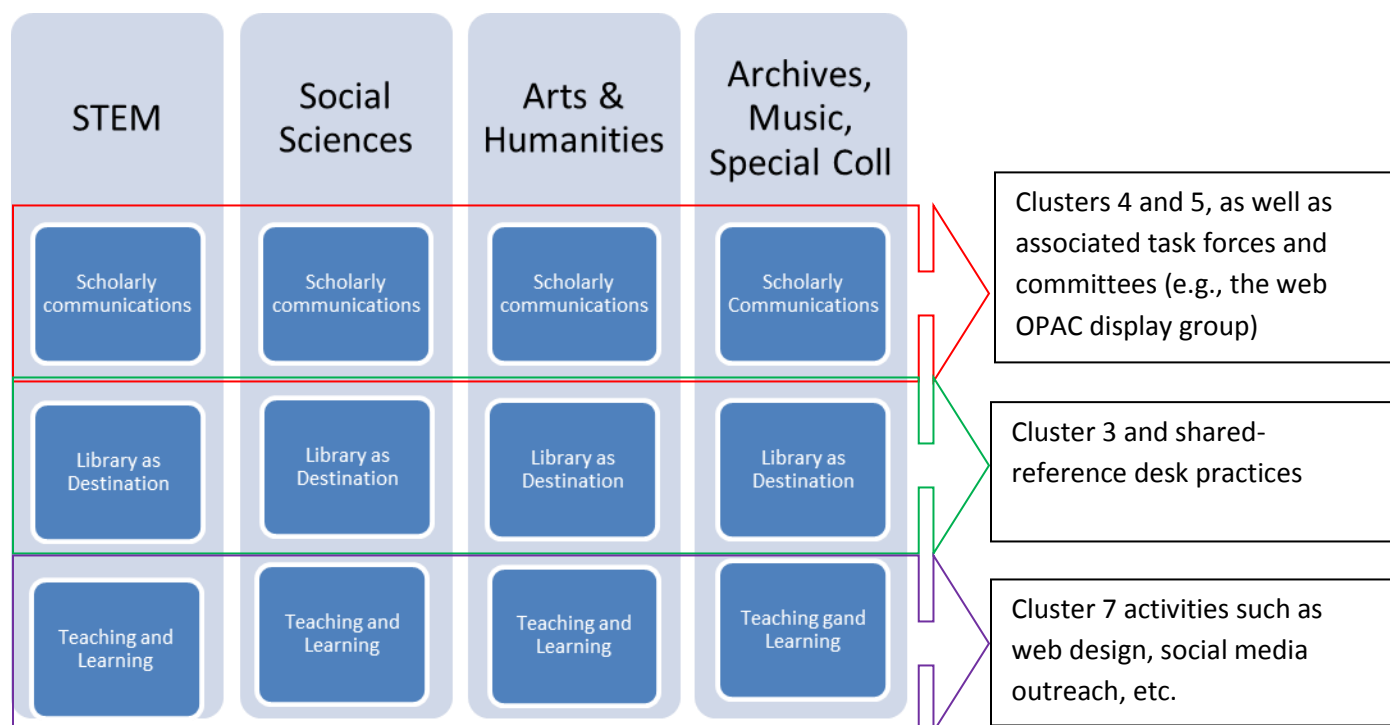
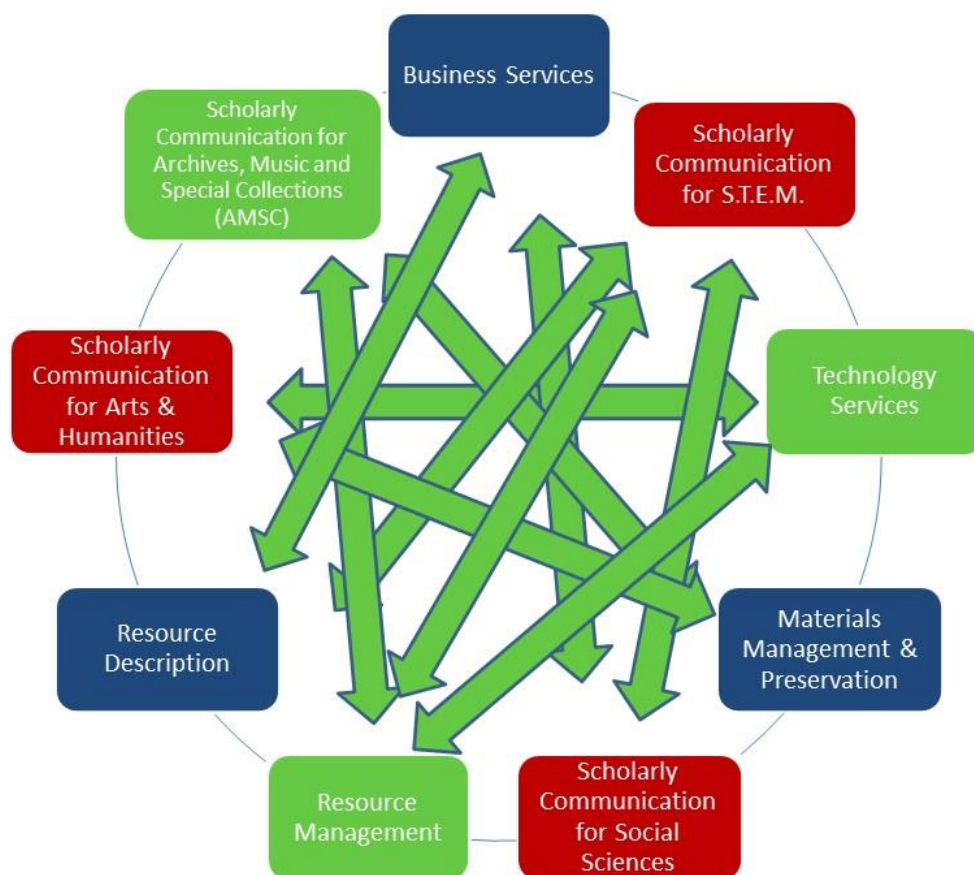


Figure 8 depicts the original vision, which was that each librarian reporting within these clusters would continue to serve as liaison to disciplines or other entities, but one member from each cluster would act as the department’s point person for areas of functional expertise, including instruction, collection development, and scholarly communications. This model would also help encourage people within the organization to remain focused on process (providing a full suite of library services to a department’s faculty and students) and not solely a single function (providing reference), something that successful team-based organizations typically do.<sup>29</sup> The end result of these cross-functional teams was somewhat different, having changed through later implementation phases.

Nevertheless, the RPT proposed the overall organizational structure incorporate something like the “lattice” framework shown in Figure 9, a highly integrated and interdependent structure based on teams and shared leadership. The intent was to “recognize that everyone can contribute—and not only within the confines of the box they occupy on the organizational chart.”<sup>30</sup>

**Figure 9: Conceptual Lattice Framework for Cluster Interdependency**



The RPT presented this framework for a new structure at the Spring All Libraries meeting in April 2011 and collated feedback from the meeting, emails, personal communications, and an online feedback form. These materials were handed over to the Implementation Team, and the RPT disbanded.

### *Implementation*

Immediately following the work of the RPT, the Executive Committee formed a larger Implementation Team (I-Team) in order to advise the Executive Committee on implementing the organizational framework identified by the Reorganization Planning Team. This proposed framework consisted of the dean and two associate deans as an Executive Committee and a Management Team made up of the leaders of the clusters of related functional units and the Executive Committee. The I-Team was given approximately six months to further evaluate the proposed cluster groupings and recommend specific phases and timing of reorganization. The I-Team was briefed by members of the RPT and the Executive Committee as to the nature of the work thus far and quickly divided itself into twos and threes to meet with the units and

departments proposed to join new clusters. In these meetings the practicability and relative strengths and weakness of the unit's new cluster affiliation was discussed as well as any suggested moves to other clusters. Based on these discussions the small groups of I-Team members reported back to the entire team their recommendations for refinements or changes to the proposed groupings. Several changes were made (e.g., the Norlin Commons was moved from the technology cluster to the social sciences cluster to further support the Commons student service mission), and some positions and activities were moved out of their current units. Clusters were renamed to the more familiar term "departments."

The I-Team also decided to further flesh out the concept of cross-departmental teams (an example provided in Figure 10). Several were proposed and were dubbed "working groups." For example, the working group on "library as place" would be charged with making decisions regarding physical spaces, including the staffing and assessment of desks, outreach via in-library publications, displays, etc.. A teaching and learning working group would coordinate and support instruction activities across the Libraries. Working groups on collections, resource description (cataloging and metadata), and technology were also proposed.

**Figure 10: Sample Conceptual Representation of a Working Group**



Coordination of the working groups was conceived as a permanent duty written into an individual's job responsibilities. Other members would be ad-hoc, rotating, or standing memberships. Working groups would ensure consistency in services across the Libraries and its locations, the sharing of best practices, provide opportunities for leadership and contribution

outside one's unit, and enable decision-making authority to occur at the level of operational expertise.

It was recognized by the I-Team that the working groups could lead to some confusion in authority. One member expressed the concern they would become "shadow departments." Indeed, ambiguity in decision-making in team-based organizations can arise when there is, as there would be in this case, "coexistence of a team-based design and a functional organization, with the hierarchy of both the function and the team systems representing a different potential locus of authority and escalation path for particular decisions."<sup>31</sup> Bringing clarity to this ambiguity was a known issue early in the process.

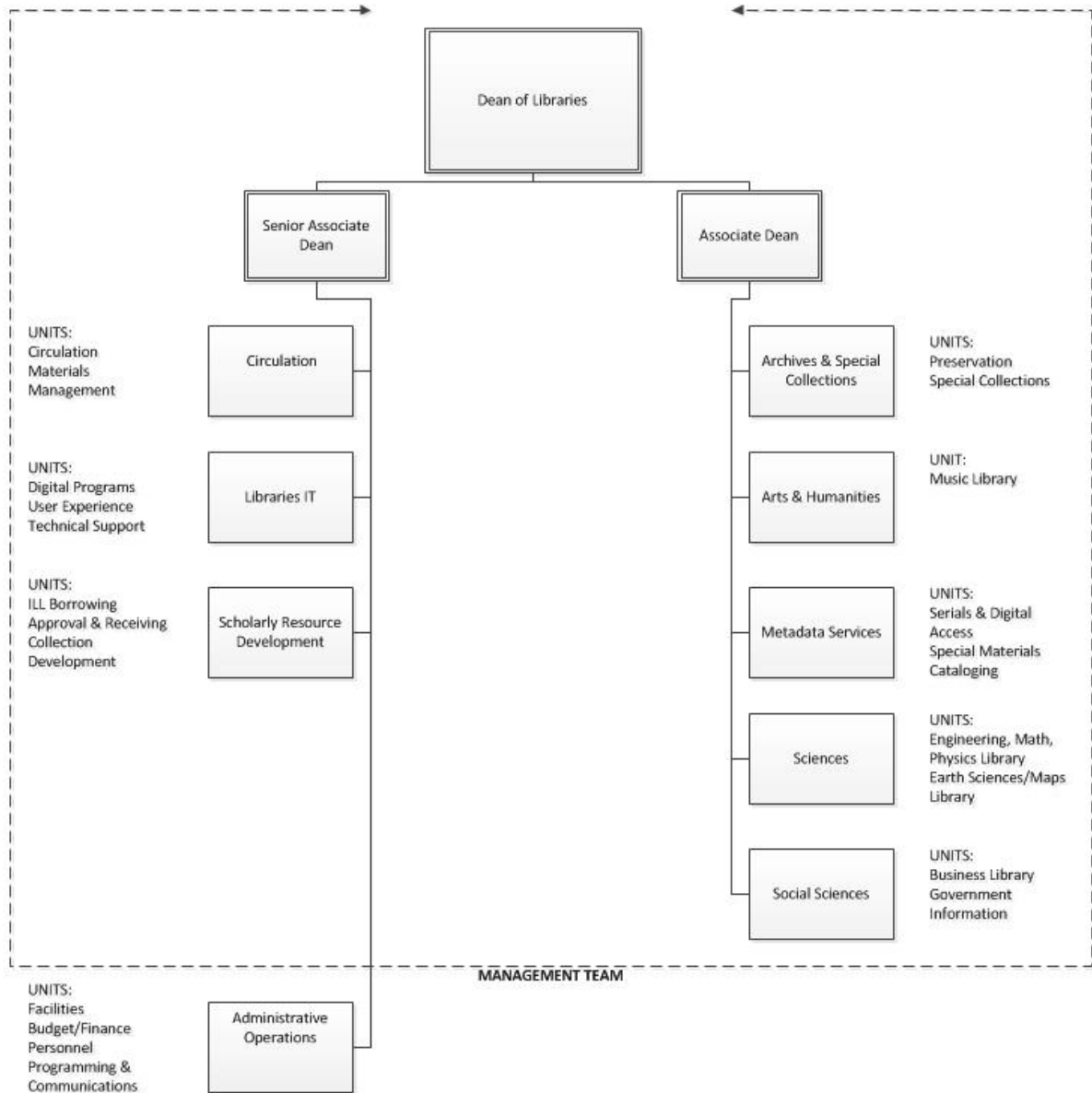
Finally, the Executive Committee was tasked with sorting out opposing plans presented by the facilitators and with drafting a final organizational chart.

## **Results**

### *The Management Team*

The Executive Committee decided on an organizational structure that included eight departments (see Figure 11), each department managed by a director. Department directors and the Executive Committee would comprise the Management Team.

**Figure 11: New Organizational Structure of the Libraries**



This shared leadership model supports distinct administrative/management roles with operational and assessment issues belonging at the Management Team table and personnel authority and fiscal affairs with the Executive Committee (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Different Roles of Administrative and Management Roles**

Management Team	Executive Committee
Set policy	Salary decisions (faculty and staff)
Strategic directions and planning	Fiscal affairs (budget specifics, travel spending, etc.)
Operational decision making authority (e.g., hours)	Quick turnaround items (e.g., fast decision required by campus)
Set operational priorities (e.g. digitization)	Emergency situations
Parent body to cross-departmental working groups	Confidential matters (e.g. personnel)
Advise Executive Team on personnel deployment, recruitment plans, budget requests, etc.	Personnel authority (deployment, final hiring decisions, corrective/disciplinary issues, etc.)
	Liaison to Faculty Personnel Committee

Choosing members of the Management Team involved both appointments and competitive internal searches. For departments that did not undergo as much change as some and for which an experienced manager was already in place, the current manager was appointed by the Executive Committee. For others, an internal search process chaired by the associate deans determined the leadership..

Once fully populated, the Team held a day and a half retreat in March of 2012. The agenda was designed with two primary goals: team building and improving communication. The retreat, led by a team composed of campus and outside facilitators, included a Real Colors exercise (a personality instrument designed to build understanding of individuals’ strengths); a workshop on organizational change led by a professor of management; a goal and norm setting process, and even an outing to a local ice rink to participate in a “learn to curl” session. One significant outcome of this experience was the establishment of norms. Organizational norms are expected attitudes and behaviors, which can be formal or informal, that typify culture and are usually enforced by members of an organization. The Management Team agreed on these norms for its work:

- Empower faculty/staff by giving them opportunities (maximize their potential)*
- Look at the BIG picture*
- Make and communicate a plan for how a decision gets made*
- (Enroll) Engage every voice (color) in the communication*
- Allow radical change to be discussed; discuss the undiscussable*

*Speak up in a positive way when troubled*  
*Assume everyone wants the organization to succeed*  
*Establish clear goals (short and long term); articulate the vision and mission of the*  
*Libraries; define organization goals clearly*  
*Balance advocacy and inquiry*

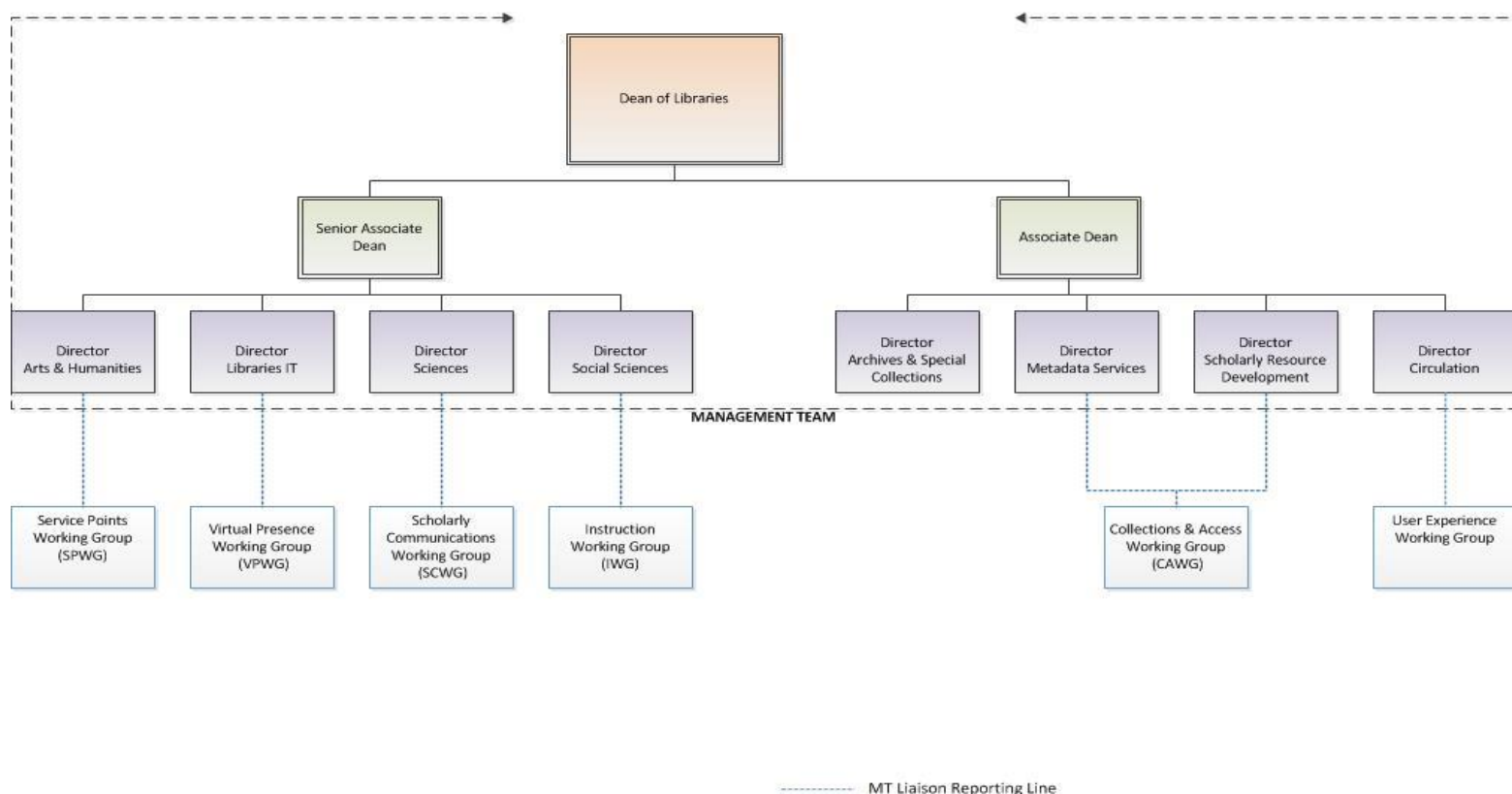
After the team was created and its expectations set, the first few months of the new organization was dedicated to restructuring within departments and analyzing staff positions to determine if they were appropriately classed in the state's personnel system. Department directors presented how they would prefer to organize "units" within departments as well as what positions he/she felt needed to be reassigned or promoted. Several unit head positions were created and filled with either promoted staff or faculty.

### *Working Groups*

While creating units and reassigning members within them, the Management Team also embarked on developing the cross-departmental structures that both the RPT and the I-Team recommended. These structures were envisioned as cross-functional groups designed to ensure broad participation in decisions. Six were created, and a Management Team member was assigned to each as a liaison (see Figure 12).



**Figure 12: Management Team and Working Groups**



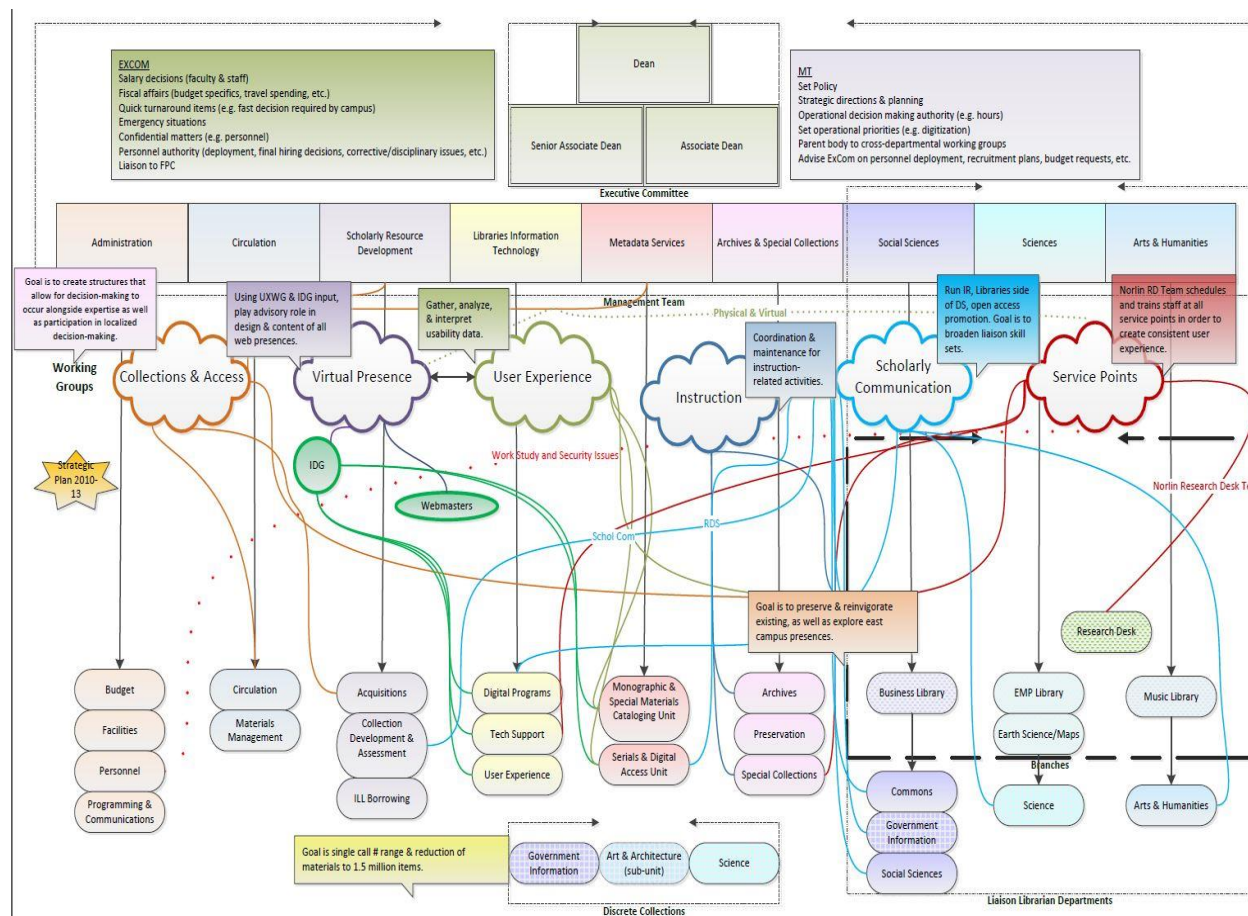
Each working group is expected to carry out operations in a specific sphere of responsibility and is comprised of individuals from appropriate departments based on skills, abilities, and interests that align with the group’s charge. For example, the Scholarly Communications Working Group is charged with fostering and promoting an integrative and scalable approach to scholarly communications issues within the Libraries, campus, and CU System. This includes identifying strategic directions and collaborating within the Libraries and with other entities to implement programs and services. Since its inception, examples of this working group’s responsibilities have included coordination of campus-wide open access events as well as oversight of a process to choose a new institutional repository platform. The Service Points Working Group is responsible for user experience as related to services provided at public desks both in person and via other methods such as email and instant messaging. The group is responsible for

overseeing staffing and scheduling as well as developing a more consistent suite of services to be deployed across the Libraries. This group, too, has been very successful and since its creation has analyzed walk-in traffic data, revised Libraries hours, and has created a set of standard expectations and training for student employees staffing service desks.

The core-operations function of the working groups is intended to sustain and build upon our overarching goal to have a porous (vs. rigid/hardened) organizational structure. For example, rather than change the overall organizational framework, working groups should be flexible and fluid as services, operations, and technologies arise and change. Working groups exist simultaneous to hierarchical departmental reporting lines and at times have required significant clarification and reiteration. Questions of authority and compensation have been challenging in the new structure. Efforts to formalize assignment of responsibility, while still remaining flexible and to establish guidelines on how members and leaders of working groups should be evaluated or given credit for their work in these structures have helped the Libraries, at least in part, overcome these challenges.

In an organizational structure intended to build and acknowledge interdependency, collaboration, and participatory leadership, said challenges are to be expected or even embraced as opportunities while the organizational culture develops. This is especially true because the organizational changes implemented thus far represent a radical departure from the previous operating model. It is very complex, with information flowing between and among departments, units, and working groups. Attempts to show these relationships, and how they align with strategic directions, are equally complex (see Figure 13). Such complexity, however, has been shown to be a necessary environmental factor to enabling team-work and shared leadership.<sup>32</sup>

**Figure 13: Information Flow among All Libraries Teams**



**Progress to Date**

Since 2012 several intended outcomes have been accomplished. The Libraries now operates with two associate deans instead of three, a cost-savings at the administrative level. Operational and strategic decisions are now handled by an eleven-member management team, which better represents the entirety of the organization, rather than a four-person Cabinet. On-demand acquisitions, digitization efforts, and the diversification of skill-sets across all departments have been made more possible. This team also advises the Executive Committee on personnel deployment and fiscal matters: to date, 58 promotions and/or reallocations of university/classified staff positions have been completed, including some that have been promoted more than once, and three are currently in process. For a university/classified staff of approximately 115, this investment has been quite significant. In addition, several Libraries faculty members have been promoted to unit-head positions, and some vacancies have been moved among departments. All of these efforts increase and duly recognize leadership at all levels.

Working groups have contributed significantly in core operations, including bringing consistent hours and training to service points, assessment data-gathering for instruction and reference,

the selection of a new institutional repository platform, and even significant progress toward a campus open-access mandate.

Continuing efforts include a new strategic planning process, a managerial focus on values and ethics based decision making, faculty and staff development, and other long-term planning efforts. A formal assessment of the new organizational structure is a possible topic for future research.

## Lessons Learned

Reorganization efforts are disruptive and stressful. Changes in duties, status, and perception can be difficult challenges for employees, supervisors, and managers alike. But economic pressures, changes in user behavior, and trends in management practices oftentimes necessitate organizational change. While these dynamics appear to be a part of the future for all libraries, at the University of Colorado Boulder, they have been pronounced. Creating smaller yet more nimble management layers that are able to adapt to changing user needs and make decisions for the organization as a whole is intended to minimize future large-scale disruptions.

## Conclusion

As a whole, the organizational models of research libraries looked very similar in the past, but today's models vary widely. Influenced by campus priorities and library strengths, the Libraries at the University of Colorado Boulder implemented a team-based, participatory structure that emphasizes shared-leadership. Throughout the process, we maintained the goal of building a framework that would be malleable over time, thus allowing for continual improvement and minimizing the potential for future large-scale restructuring. Reviews of compensation and evaluation systems, re-shuffling of units, clarification of working group and departmental charges, and efforts to facilitate team building and long-term visioning continue. As our organization evolves and matures, we hope to see change not as something to be feared but rather the result of working in a valued profession that is itself adapting to revolutions in higher education, funding models, and scholarly communication patterns. This outlook is crucial to long-term success in our mission of providing information resources and services to students, faculty, and others.

**Jack Maness** ([jack.maness@colorado.edu](mailto:jack.maness@colorado.edu)) is an Associate Professor and Director of the Sciences Department in the University Libraries at the University of Colorado Boulder.

**John Culshaw** ([john-culshaw@uiowa.edu](mailto:john-culshaw@uiowa.edu)) is University Librarian at the University of Iowa. Before going to Iowa in 2013, Culshaw spent nearly 22 years at the University of Colorado Boulder, most recently serving as Professor and Senior Associate Dean of Libraries.

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

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