3.8.3 Qualified staff

3.8.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff - with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources - to accomplish the mission of the institution.

Judgment of Compliance

In Compliance

Narrative

Qualified staff provide learning/information services and resources at a number of locations on the campus of The University of Alabama (UA) and via distance delivery to accomplish the University’s mission “to advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the State, the nation, and the world through the creation, translation, and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research, and service.”

Mission

The UA Libraries mission and core functions [1] support the mission and goals of the University. Qualified staff enable UA Libraries to deliver the information, technology, and services required to provide the quality of teaching, research, and service the University desires. To do so, the UA Library staff are of sufficient quality and quantity to:

- provide 24/7 access to digital resources
- provide access to unique collections through special collections and digital collections
- provide instruction for research and use of resources
- demonstrate excellent stewardship of financial resources to provide access to information resources
- provide a variety of spaces for individual and group study
- provide 24/5 access in Rodgers Library during the academic year and 24/7 access in Rodgers and Gorgas Libraries during study week and final exams
- collaborate with other units on campus to promote research skills and strategies
- provide access to academic software and technology to support the academic mission

UA Libraries Organization

UA Libraries [2] includes five branches on its Tuscaloosa campus:
- Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library (main library, humanities and social sciences)
- Angelo Bruno Business Library (business)
- McLure Library (education)
- Eric & Sarah Rodgers Library for Science and Engineering (science and engineering)
- Special Collections (W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library and the A.S. Williams III Americana Collection).

UA Libraries also maintains an Annex Facility for remote storage.

There are additional libraries and reading rooms under separate administration on campus. These independent libraries and reading rooms with administrators are:

- Bounds Law Library (School of Law)
- Health Sciences Library (College of Community Health Sciences)
- Map Library & Place Names Research Center (Department of Geography in College of Arts and Sciences)
- William E. Winters Communications Reading Room (College of Communication & Information Services)
- Social Work Reading Room (School of Social Work)
- Frances S. Summersell Library (Women’s Resource Center, Division of Student Affairs)

The majority of faculty and staff reside in Gorgas Library and provide support services for the five branches of UA Libraries. (e.g., ordering, processing, cataloging, Web services, interlibrary loan, human resources and the business office) Gorgas Library also houses the UA Libraries administrative offices, the Writing Center, and the Center for Academic Success to provide additional services for library.

In total, the University’s on-campus libraries employ 91 FTE professional staff and faculty, 72 FTE support staff, and 45 FTE students. Of those numbers, Bounds Law Library employs 16 FTE professional and support staff. The Health Sciences Library employs five FTE faculty and support staff. The Map Library & Place Names Research Center employs one FTE professional staff, the Communications reading Room employs one FTE professional staff, and the Social Work Reading Room employs one FTE professional staff. Regular staff of the Women’s Resource Center serve the Frances S. Summersell Library.

According to the 2011–12 ARL Salary Survey, UA's librarians have an average of 15.1 years’ experience in libraries. The personnel in the University’s libraries hold degrees in library and information science or archives administration, and many hold additional graduate degrees.

**UA Library Roster**

The roster of University Libraries and separately administrated campus libraries faculty and librarians provides position titles, the name of the individual in the position, the department name, the individual’s library degree credentials, and a brief summary of the individual’s experience related to the position. The roster also provides access to the position job description and the individual’s resume. No individuals are included in the roster for the Map Library & Place Names Research Center or the Frances S. Summersell Library.
Qualified Faculty

The University Libraries and the independent, separately administered campus libraries and reading rooms carry out the mission by recruiting, hiring and retaining faculty and staff with appropriate degrees and skills. Faculty and professional librarian positions in the libraries require an appropriate terminal degree for employment, generally a master’s in library and information science from a library school accredited by the American Library Association. Candidates for positions are screened and reviewed for appropriate educational and work experiences prior to being interviewed and hired. Faculty and staff are reviewed annually through the University’s evaluation systems; the Faculty Activity Reporting (FAR) system for faculty, and the UA Performance Evaluation system for staff. The UA Faculty Handbook contains policies and guidelines on faculty evaluations. Performance reviews of all staff occur at the completion of an employee’s introductory period and annually thereafter. In order to assist in the ongoing evaluation process of staff employees, performance evaluation information is published on the HR website.

UA Libraries currently has 62 librarians holding either the master’s degree in Library and Information Sciences or appropriate degrees in other fields. Of that group:

- University Libraries employs 40 librarians with the appropriate master’s degrees and the independent libraries employ 15 librarians with appropriate master’s degrees. University Libraries also has nine librarians with doctorate degrees (six FTE librarians, two Council of Library and Information Resources (CLIR) fellows, one postdoctoral fellow in digital humanities), and 18 librarians who have a second or third master’s degree.

- Bounds Law Library employs 10 librarians with the appropriate master’s degree. Of that group, three librarians have a Ph.D. and four librarians hold the J.D. degree.

- The Health Sciences Library has three faculty librarians with the master’s degree in Library and Information Sciences.

- The librarian in the Map Library & Place Names Research Center also holds a master’s degree in geography in addition to the master’s degree in Library and Information Sciences.

- The librarian in the Winters Communications Reading Room also holds a Ph.D. in addition to the master’s degree in Library and Information Sciences.

- The Social Work Reading Room librarian has a master’s degree in Library and Information Sciences.

In recent years, UA Libraries realigned its administrative team to take advantage of administrative leadership and oversight of research and instruction services, technology planning, and digital student services. Four associate deans oversee areas in the Libraries:

- Research and Instruction
- Library Technology Planning and Policy
- Branch Libraries and Digital Student Services
- Special Collections

The Libraries added positions in digital services, Web services, and digital humanities, among other areas.
At UA, librarians hold rank and may earn tenure. Many of the UA librarians are tenured (27) or on tenure track (3). Tenure-track librarians at UA must meet UA Office of Academic Affairs criteria for promotion and tenure. The criteria expand the promotion and tenure criteria in the Faculty Handbook. These requirements include effective performance as a librarian, scholarly/professional contributions, and academic citizenship.

In 2010, the UA Libraries began hiring clinical faculty. These faculty members are non-tenure track but possess the skills required in the 21st century library. The dean, associate dean, and department head vet these renewable positions to meet needs of the library and the campus. Clinical faculty must demonstrate effective performance as a librarian, and are evaluated using the FAR system.

In the independent, separately administered campus libraries, librarians may be classified as faculty or professional staff. Librarians in the Bounds Law Library, the Map Library, the Communications Reading Room, and the Social Work Reading Room are classified as professional staff and must meet requirements for effective performance. Librarians in the Health Sciences Library are classified as faculty and must demonstrate effective performance and professional contribution.

UA Libraries added postdoctoral fellows in the past two years, specifically to work in special collections and digital humanities. In 2013, the Libraries submitted an application to the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) for two postdoctoral fellows to work in Special Collections. Two fellows with doctorates in English were hired and began work in July 2013 on two-year appointments. UA Libraries has also collaborated with the College of Arts & Sciences to fund a joint postdoctoral appointment in digital humanities. The first appointment was made in 2012 and a subsequent appointment was made in January 2014.

UA Libraries faculty submit annual performance reviews using the University-wide FAR system, which has a ranking grid of six performance levels. This system is separate from the tenure and promotion review for tenure-track faculty or renewal system for clinical faculty. UA Libraries submits certifying curriculum vitae to the University’s Office for Institutional Research & Assessment (OIRA) and demonstrate that faculty receive awards and grants, publish professionally, produce creative works, and teach as adjuncts at UA. Both tenure-track and clinical faculty are active scholars and researchers, contributing to the professional literature. Between AY 2010–2013, UA Libraries faculty members published a total of 60 articles. Ten book chapters appeared. The Music Librarian is also a composer and performed seven original compositions. Between AY 2010–2013, UA Libraries faculty delivered a total of 151 presentations at conferences. Many faculty members also serve on committees and hold leadership roles in professional organizations.

In addition to serving on University Libraries committees, working groups, and task forces, faculty and staff provide service to the University community through UA standing committees and other governance groups. Examples include Research Grants Committee, Campus Master Plan Committee, Campus Security and Safety Committee, and the Faculty Senate.

**Qualified Professional/Support Staff**

The libraries across the University employ 163 FTE professional/support staff members with education and qualifications that vary according to the requirements of the position. Specific job descriptions detail the appropriate qualifications for library professional and support staff. Only those persons who meet or exceed minimum qualifications are hired to fill positions in the libraries. The UA Department of Human Resources evaluates job descriptions for professional and support staff as the need arises to ensure each position is classified appropriately. In addition, the University Libraries conduct annual performance evaluations for professional and support staff based on UA’s Annual Employee Performance Evaluation Comprehensive Form.
Sufficient Number

The sufficiency of the number of library faculty and staff is evaluated by comparing UA Libraries with institutional peers. The first peer group consists of the other academic research libraries in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The second group that the UA Libraries uses as a benchmark is a subset of the ARL group, specifically, the 23 ARL libraries located in the southeastern United States. The comparisons with this smaller group are also based on statistics published by ARL. The ARL 2013 statistics, the most recent available, reflect totals from all campus libraries. In terms of staffing sufficiency, UA ranked 74th out of 115 in total staff among all ARL institutions. UA ranked 38th out of 68 among all ARL public institutions. Among public ARL libraries located in the southeastern United States, UA ranked 15th out of 23. These rankings reflect adequate staffing and a solid standing among ARL and southeastern ARL libraries. Total staffing FTE for all campus libraries as of November 2013 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/professional staff</th>
<th>91</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support staff</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student assistants</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Development

Participation in professional development and continuing education activities strengthens the abilities of all faculty and staff to provide quality library services that meet the information needs of members of the University community.

Faculty members participate in professional organizations at the state, regional and national level. To ensure that UA Libraries faculty and staff remain fully conversant with current trends in academic libraries, scholarly communication, and information technologies, faculty and staff are eligible to receive professional development funding to attend a broad range of mission-priority and function-specific conferences and training programs. In 2012 and 2013 those meetings included, but were not limited to, the American Library Association, North American Serials Interest Group, Virtual Reference Conference, Electronic Theses and Dissertations Conference, and Endeavor End User Conference, among others.

UA Libraries faculty also receive travel and support funding. Funds are primarily used to support travel to professional association meetings, such as meeting of the American Library Association and the Special Libraries Association, among others.

Staff development is an ongoing and multi-faceted program in all libraries. UA Libraries supports a progressive internal Job Family program which allows for growth within the hourly library support staff ranks. Staff must perform at a satisfactory level in their current position, complete designated class training modules, and demonstrate competence at a higher level of responsibility in the unit to attain promotion.

The Library Support Staff Association (LSSA) comprises all members of the classified staff. LSSA conducts activities to advance the performance and development of support staff, serves as a forum for expression of ideas, and serves as liaison with Libraries administration. For example, in 2013, LSSA held a Staff Summit on campus which included specialized training and panel discussions with 22 UA Libraries units participating. Also in 2013, two LSSA members presented a poster session at the Alabama Library Association Convention.

UA Libraries support an ongoing and robust in-house training program. Faculty and staff participate in face-to-face training provided by outside consultants as well as training offered by the University Human Resources Department. In addition, webinars are offered on a regular basis from national organizations, such as the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Center for Research Libraries, which provide training for a larger group of faculty and staff in one place. During 2012 and 2013 library employees attended in-house training and on-campus training sessions on Workplace Expectations, Speed of Trust, and Emergency Operation Procedures; general Library Forums; technology brown bag sessions; and on-campus training through HR on such topics as student supervision, Family Medical Leave, time management, supervisory skills, customer service, flow charting work processes, and computer skills.
In June 2012, UA Libraries participated in a strategic planning retreat led by Sue Baughman from ARL. Faculty and staff engaged in discussion about the future direction of the libraries for the next one to three years. Faculty and staff met several times since the initial retreat to update progress and revise plans based on new opportunities. [18]

In August 2013, UA Libraries co-sponsored THAT Camp, an “unconference” on the digital humanities. Participants spent two days discussing ideas and sharing experiences about technology and the humanities. [19]

UA is a member of a number of national associations, including the ARL, Center for Research Libraries, Educause, Coalition for Networked Information, Association for Southeastern Research Libraries, Network of Alabama Academic Libraries, OCLC, LYRASIS, and others. The libraries take full advantage of the various conferences, workshops, and training sessions organized and presented by these groups.

Awards and Recognitions

A number of venues allow recognition of faculty and staff excellence. Begun in 2000, UA Libraries’ Library Leadership Board Faculty and Staff Excellence Awards promote faculty and staff development by providing recognition for outstanding contributions to the Libraries. [20] Nominations in either category are encouraged and accepted annually from any UA Libraries employee. The Library Leadership Board funds the awards, and the Board’s Program Committee administers them. The Leadership Board is a University appointed lay board established to advance the cause of the Libraries in support of the University’s mission. [20] [21]

UA Libraries faculty, staff, and departments have also received University-wide Capstone Awards which honor exemplary performance, winning spirit, exceptional customer service, and enterprising ways. Awards received include the Minnie C. Miles Endowed Excellence Award, the Virgil Parks McKinley Employee Award, and the Sam S. May Commitment to Service Award. Faculty have received prestigious and competitive national awards as well. Faculty were selected for the Minnesota Institute for Early Career Librarians from Traditionally Underrepresented Groups, the ACRL Immersion Programs in Information Literacy, and the Archives Leadership Institute, and a Modern Language Association Bibliography Fellowship.

Summary

UA’s compliance with sufficient number of qualified staff is underscored by the University’s respectable standing in the overall staffing rankings of the ARL, as well as its standing among ARL public institutions and southeastern ARL institutions. Documentation demonstrates contemporary recruitment, position evaluation, and ongoing training and development practices. The quality of faculty, specifically, is validated by certifying curriculum vitae submitted to the University’s OIRA, by documented annual performance evaluations conducted through the University-wide Faculty Activity Report system, and by documentation highlighting faculty contributions to the profession.
1. University Libraries Mission Statement (PDF)
2. UA Libraries Homepage (HTML)
3. Department Head Ad (PDF)
4. Library Faculty FAR (PDF)
5. Library Staff Evaluation (PDF)
6. Policy and Guidelines on Faculty Evaluations (PDF)
   Full Document (PDF)
7. Performance Evaluation Guidelines (PDF)
8. Tenure List Nov 2013 (PDF)
9. Promotion & Tenure Criteria Approved 2011 (PDF)
10. CLIR Post Doc Ad CLIR Post Doc ad - Williams Collection 2–7–2014 (PDF)
11. Digital Humanities Ad (PDF)
12. Non-refereed Faculty Pubs (PDF)
13. Refereed Faculty Pubs (PDF)
14. Faculty Creative Activities (PDF)
15. Individual Faculty Accomplishments (PDF)
16. Job Family and Professional Development Training Sessions (PDF)
17. LSSA Staff Summit 2013 (PDF)
18. Alabama Retreat Plan (PDF)
19. THAT Camp 2013 (PDF)
20. LLB Award Winners (PDF)
21. Library Leadership Board (PDF)
   Full Document (PDF)