

Standards for University Libraries

The following tables present data obtained on behalf of the Association of Research Libraries.

INTEREST IN AND DEMAND for library standards have long been characteristic of American librarianship. During the past decade, and in a few instances earlier, statements of standards have been developed for public, school, college, junior college, state, and special libraries.

Rather oddly, however, the United States has developed no code of standards for university libraries. The Canadians and the British have been more daring; the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries in 1965 issued a *Guide to Canadian University Library Standards*, and in 1967 a subcommittee of the British Standing Conference on National and University Libraries issued a statement on standards for university libraries. Neither the Canadian nor British codes are exactly applicable to conditions in the United States, though they contain useful suggestions.

Why, considering the fact that the need for a generally acceptable statement of standards for university libraries has long been recognized, has little progress been made? To many, the practical difficulties have appeared insurmountable, chiefly because of the diversity of institutions. The "institutional environment" and "mission" of individu-

al universities vary greatly and standards applicable to comprehensive universities may be invalid for specialized institutions. A basic dilemma is the lack of definition of the term "university" itself. The annual compilation of enrollment statistics in the nation's colleges and universities, published in *School and Society*, includes about 160 institutions under the heading of "Universities and Large Institutions of Complex Organization," though many others are labeled "universities," perhaps for prestige purposes or with hopes for the future.

It is readily apparent, therefore, that any attempt to set up criteria applicable to old, well established private universities, large general state universities, former state and teachers colleges, and the many new "instant" universities is full of pitfalls and complications.

A factor not to be overlooked is the fear, especially among librarians of major institutions, that minimum standards may come to be regarded by university administrators and control boards as maximum standards, thereby impeding the growth of a given library. The same criticism could be made, of course, of public, college, and other library standards. There can be little doubt, however, that the overall effect of standards has been to upgrade libraries, providing substandard institutions with yardsticks by which to measure their deficiencies.

An urgent reason for developing university library standards is that any failure on our part to take action will result in having the job taken away from us.

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TABLE 1
FINANCES: TOTAL LIBRARY BUDGET, 1968-69; AVERAGE ANNUAL EXPENDITURES, 1965-68

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Library budget, 1968-69	50	147,464,633	2,949,293	970,835	1,918,357	2,529,461	3,770,971	8,500,000
Library expenditures, 1967-68	50	141,258,935	2,825,179	1,213,743	1,727,075	2,452,836	3,547,627	8,545,393
Average annual library expenditures, 1965-68	50	122,076,147	2,441,523	1,055,368	1,500,000	2,023,594	2,932,465	7,605,880

TABLE 2
RELATIONSHIP OF TOTAL LIBRARY EXPENDITURES TO TOTAL UNIVERSITY EXPENDITURES FOR GENERAL AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES, 1967-68

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Total library expenditures, 1967-68	50	141,258,935	2,825,179	1,213,743	1,727,075	2,452,836	3,547,627	8,545,393
University general and educational expenditures, 1967-68	50	4,019,632,084	80,392,641	18,140,016	50,652,000	66,492,520	118,044,290	170,757,773
Library's percentage	50		3.5	1.6	2.8	3.6	4.8	8.6

TABLE 3
RELATIONSHIP OF TOTAL LIBRARY EXPENDITURES TO SALARIES AND WAGES; BOOKS, PERIODICALS AND BINDING; GENERAL EXPENSES, 1967-68

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Total library expenditures, 1967-68	50	141,258,935	2,825,179	1,213,743	1,727,075	2,452,836	3,547,627	8,545,393
Salaries and wages	50	80,832,234	1,616,645	681,019	978,685	1,300,033	1,969,416	4,987,358
Percent, salaries and wages	50		57.2	43.6	53.5	56.0	61.8	67.8
Books, periodicals, and binding	50	47,685,800	953,716	391,241	600,983	835,357	1,239,112	2,175,961
Percent, books, periodicals, and binding	50		33.8	21.2	29.4	36.5	40.3	50.0
General expense	50	10,149,072	202,981	52,295	95,425	149,103	245,363	1,055,988
Percent, general expense	50		7.2	2.5	4.7	5.5	13.5	28.5

TABLE 4
STUDENT PER CAPITA EXPENDITURES FOR BOOKS, PERIODICALS, AND BINDING,
AND FOR TOTAL LIBRARY EXPENDITURES

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Total enrollment (FTE)	50	994,740	19,895	4,719	11,840	16,775	28,369	48,285
Total library expenditures	50	141,258,935	2,825,179	1,213,743	1,727,075	2,452,836	3,547,627	8,545,393
Per capita, total library expenditures	50		142.01	54.77	99.34	128.07	236.90	568.56
Expenditures for books, periodicals, binding	50	47,685,800	953,716	391,241	600,983	835,357	1,239,112	2,175,961
Per capita for books, periodicals, binding	50		47.94	20.39	35.40	46.61	70.13	224.54

TABLE 5
RESOURCES: VOLUMES, VOLUMES ADDED, CURRENT
PERIODICALS, AND MICROFORMS

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Total volumes, June 30, 1968	50	99,459,415	1,989,188	890,666	1,164,142	1,456,684	2,103,723	7,920,387
Gross no. of vols. added (3 year average)	46	4,767,687	103,645	37,268	69,001	79,867	130,523	254,311
Net no. of vols. added (3 year average)	49	4,566,297	93,190	11,182	64,296	75,652	119,773	251,540
Current periodicals received	47	692,543	14,735	5,649	9,100	11,050	17,049	50,055
No. of microforms	47	15,957,577	339,523	7,641	160,392	349,423	455,498	924,704
Microfilm reels	44	1,228,543	27,921	2,452	13,947	22,930	41,632	101,396
Microfiche, microcards, microprint	43	13,693,569	318,455	5,189	170,686	320,918	439,060	907,531

TABLE 6
RELATIONSHIP OF ENROLLMENT TO NUMBER OF VOLUMES
AND TO NUMBER OF CURRENT JOURNALS

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Enrollment	50	994,740	19,895	4,719	11,840	16,775	28,369	48,285
No. of vols.	50	99,459,415	1,989,188	890,666	1,164,142	1,456,684	2,103,723	7,920,387
Vols. per student	50		99.99	30.35	60.07	83.56	143.76	665.29
No. of current periodicals	47	692,543	14,734	5,649	9,100	11,050	17,049	50,055
Enrollment	47	959,314	20,411	4,719	13,299	16,903	28,651	48,285
Periodicals per student	47		.72	.24	.46	.68	1.33	4.59

TABLE 7
PERSONNEL

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Professional staff	50	4,439	88.8	33	56	73	99	227
Nonprofessional staff	50	7,681	153.6	58	98	119	199	426
Total staff	50	12,120	242.4	98	154	184.5	297	653
Percent professional	50		36.6	26.7	33.1	37.6	42.0	51.3
Hourly wages	49	6,680,305	136,332	29,164	72,068	113,000	193,351	446,628
Work hours/week professionals	50	1,922	38.44	35	37.5	39.0	40.0	40
Work hours/week clerical	49	1,894	38.66	35	37.5	40.0	40.0	40

TABLE 8
RELATIONSHIP OF TOTAL STAFF AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF TO ENROLLMENT

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Enrollment	50	994,740	19,895	4,719	11,840	16,775	28,369	48,285
Professional staff	50	4,439	88.8	33	56	73.0	99	227
Enrollment/professional staff	50		224.09	41.64	158.36	225.24	362.96	675.72
Total staff	50	12,120	242.40	98	154	184.5	297	653
Enrollment/total staff	50		82.07	16.42	49.05	89.05	133.98	275.14

TABLE 9
RELATIONSHIP OF NUMBER OF SEATS FOR READERS TO TOTAL ENROLLMENT

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Enrollment	50	994,740	19,895	4,719	11,840	16,775	28,369	48,285
Enrollment	49	986,745	20,138	4,719	12,570	16,903	28,510	48,285
Number of seats	49	162,074	3,308	955	2,276	3,000	4,391	7,808
Seats/enrollment (percent)	49		16	05	12	16	26	62
Students per seat	49		6.09	1.60	3.84	6.15	8.41	20.65

TABLE 10
RELATIONSHIP OF THE AREA OF SHELVING FOR BOOKS TO THE TOTAL
VOLUMES HELD IN THE LIBRARY

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
No. of vols.	50	99,459,415	1,989,188	890,666	1,164,142	1,456,684	2,103,723	7,920,387
No. of vols.	37	74,389,379	2,010,524	890,666	1,178,048	1,445,229	2,357,148	7,920,387
Book shelving area	37	5,609,643	151,612	24,070	82,278	121,582	215,729	523,068
Vols. per square foot	37		13.26	7.42	9.70	13.70	16.81	49.95

TABLE 11
RELATIONSHIP OF AREA ASSIGNED TO STAFF TO THE TOTAL AREA
OF THE LIBRARY, AND NUMBER OF SQUARE FEET PER STAFF MEMBER

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Staff area	34	1,144,798	33,671	8,800	18,310	29,328	44,191	91,287
No. of staff members	34	8,343	245.38	98	162	185	293	653
Square feet per staff member	34		137.22	22.72	97.21	146.68	179.76	328.76

TABLE 12
SPACE: AIR-CONDITIONED AND CARPETED

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Air-conditioned space	35	8,345,073	238,430	29,732	128,250	204,600	363,563	510,000
Carpeted area	33	829,513	25,136	300	6,234	13,478	48,308	86,818

TABLE 13
CIRCULATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Recorded general circulation	43	24,150,549	561,641	127,723	284,658	464,153	697,013	2,395,029
Recorded reserve circulation	40	8,462,190	211,555	15,369	59,714	166,569	342,623	647,860
Recorded general and reserve circulation	45	38,360,615	852,458	193,043	502,269	760,779	1,156,456	2,517,704
No. of hours open per week	50	4,877.25	97.55	74	89.5	100.0	106	121.5

TABLE 14
STUDENT PER CAPITA CIRCULATION—SUMMARY

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Total enrollment	50	994,740	19,894	4,719	11,840	16,775	28,369	48,285
Total enrollment	43	834,806	19,414	4,719	8,811	16,393	28,651	48,285
General circulation	43	24,150,549	561,641	127,723	284,658	464,153	697,013	2,395,029
Student per capita general circulation	43		28.93	4.31	14.44	28.31	55.73	82.98
Total enrollment	45	897,499	19,944	4,719	10,065	16,393	28,510	48,285
General and reserve circulation	45	38,360,615	852,458	193,043	502,269	760,779	1,156,456	2,517,704
Student per capita general and reserve circulation	45		42.74	9.55	26.43	39.41	70.49	109.18

TABLE 15
SUMMARY DATA ON LAW LIBRARIES

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Enrollment (FTE)	30	17,248	574.93	296	363	501	607	1,707
Faculty (FTE)	30	944.88	31.50	13.0	21.0	27.15	40.0	72.0
Vols.	30	6,158,704	205,290	53,273	97,676	162,570	202,300	1,132,935
Vols. per student	30		357.07	130	180	325	410	843
Current journals	30	54,196	1,806.53	300	520	996	2,000	7,500
Journals per student	30		3.14	0.6	1.3	2.5	3.8	10.5
Professional staff	30	188.45	6.28	1.75	3.5	5.25	8.0	21.1
Nonprofessional staff	30	268.10	8.94	1.00	3.00	5.75	13.00	38.9
Total staff	30	456.55	15.22	4.00	7.00	11.25	20.00	56.5
Students per staff member	30		37.78	15	30	46	75	111
Expenditures for books	30	2,179,245	72,642	27,000	42,225	72,099	91,896	183,009
Book expenditures per student	30		126.35	42.49	96.42	118.86	171.74	314.49
Salary expenditures	30	3,139,581	104,653	25,198	41,763	68,139	156,111	393,386
Salary expenditures per student	30		182.03	69.16	90.67	137.34	252.47	419.89
Hours of opening per week	29	2,852.25	98.35	67.00	89.75	98.00	104.75	168.00

TABLE 16
SUMMARY DATA ON MEDICAL LIBRARIES

	No. of Libs.	Total Amount	Average	Range Low	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Range High
Enrollment (FTE)	25	21,607	864.28	32	468	628.00	1,055	2,712
Faculty (FTE)	24	11,880	495.00	30	209	342	525	2,379
Vols.	25	3,505,042	140,202	15,378	77,267	106,623	176,870	437,550
Vols. per student	25		162.22	18.2	86.6	160.6	316.7	880.1
Current journals	25	52,692	2,107.68	226	1,414	1,825	2,550	6,275
Journals per student	25		2.44	0.3	1.2	2.5	5.35	61
Professional staff	25	182.75	7.31	1.00	4.5	6	8.5	29.5
Nonprofessional staff	25	328.80	13.15	1.00	7.5	11	15.6	58.2
Total staff	25	511.55	20.46	3.50	13.5	17.0	22.5	87.7
Students per staff member	25		42.24	2.0	21.6	41.5	82.7	241.7
Expenditures for books	25	1,572,427	62,897	12,525	39,868	57,377	83,372	195,551
Book expenditure per student	25		72.77	5.42	38.57	86.36	135.28	2,812.50
Salary expenditure	25	3,244,308	129,772	15,000	82,923	101,802	141,336	550,289
Salary expenditure per student	25		150.15	17.73	83.08	161.29	320.26	3,212.50
Hours of opening/week	24	2,325.25	96.89	81.50	89.25	95	104	118.00

Already the vacuum is beginning to be filled by such agencies as the U.S. Office of Education, state boards of higher education, state departments of education, and administrators of individual institutions. The consequences, if the trend continues, can only be chaos.

In recognition of the lack and in response to a widely expressed need, the Association of College and Research Libraries and the Association of Research Libraries joined in 1968 in appointing a Committee on University Library Standards, to deal with various aspects of university library operation and administration.

The Joint Committee's original intention was to adopt a strictly pragmatic approach to its assignment. Instead of attempting to formulate a statement of ideal standards, it was agreed that there should be developed a series of "Criteria for Excellence for University Libraries," based on the best current practices. The criteria would be drawn from facts collected from the leading American university libraries. It was recognized, at the same time, that further research would be required before valid standards could be established.

As a control group, fifty university libraries in the United States and Canada were selected. The libraries chosen are primarily those institutions belonging to the Association of American Universities (or more specifically the Association of Graduate Schools in the AAU), supplemented by several top ARL libraries to bring the total number to fifty. The entire group cooperated in supplying data under seven categories: resources, personnel, finances, space, public service, administration, and professional school libraries. The present article summarizes the data collected, prior to any attempt to develop standards, because it is believed that the statistical information in itself is valuable.

The preceding tables are based on far more detailed figures for individual li-

braries contained in a near-print report issued for limited distribution by the Association of Research Libraries.

If one is willing to concede that the fifty universities represented in the preceding tables do indeed possess the most distinguished libraries to be found in American institutions of higher education, an examination of their current status is relevant to the study of standards. Any university library, if it wishes, can compare itself with the selected fifty on such bases as financial support, resources of various types, personnel, space, and aspects of public service. For

the purpose, averages, medians, or quartile figures may be used.

For practical application in an individual library, accordingly, the tabular data may assist the librarian in determining the proper distribution of his budget, the ratio of professional to non-professional staff, the size of the book collection, space relationships, hours of service, and a variety of additional aspects of library management—enabling him to compare his own situation with institutions he considers his peers or whose eminence he desires to attain or to emulate. ■ ■