Public Services Diagonal Slice Group

The Public Services Diagonal Slice group met throughout the Fall 2012 semester to brainstorm ideas that would improve public services to the Oviatt Library's patrons throughout the library. In some senses, we took a traditional look at public services, while in other cases we took a broader view of what constituted "public services." We had the benefit of working with committee members who all actively work with the public and were thus thoroughly aware of the different issues we encounter on a day to day basis. We also sent a brief survey to the various service desk supervisors throughout the library (as our committee did not have representation from all the service desks, nor were all the members supervisors) to get a better idea of the kinds of issues and complaints they deal with from the public.

Some of the things we brainstormed about at the beginning of our meetings have already come to fruition, such as extended hours for Special Collections and Archives. We included what we wrote up anyway, as it was done before it was implemented.

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Library Hours

Current Hours

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Open	12:00 PM	7:45 AM	7:45 AM	7:45 AM	7:45 AM	7:45 AM	11:00 AM
Closed	8:00 PM	12:00 AM	12:00 AM	12:00 AM	12:00 AM	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
TOTAL HOURS (88.5 Hrs)	8	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	9.3	6

Recommended Hours

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Open	11:00 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	10:00 AM
Closed	8:00 PM	11:00 PM	11:00 PM	11:00 PM	11:00 PM	6:00 PM	5:00 PM
TOTAL HOURS (88.5 Hrs)	9	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	10.5	7

The library is currently opened 88.5 hours a week. Based on our observations, we would like to recommend a change in library hours to best accommodate our patrons. The library hours have undergone changes through the last few years, from opening up earlier in the weekends to later in the evening. These changes, however, have always been on an experimental basis. While we recognize that many changes in the past were made based on budgetary realities, we believe we should try to create a standard schedule for future semesters. For the proper changes to occur however, it is crucial for us to find a minimal base number of patrons in the library. This number would represent what the library believes is a sufficient amount of patrons to justify the building to be open.

Currently, for the spring 2013 semester, service areas have been tasked with keeping an hourly log of patrons within their respective departments. We believe the reflected data will support our proposal for the changes in library hours. We strongly consider this change as necessary and will maximize our ability to provide services to our library community. While our recommendations could be disproven by the results of this task, we would at least be able to receive tangible data that will allow us to make some changes for the future. Once this data has been gathered, it will also contribute to helping make a decision on creating a policy to use a minimal base number for all library hours.

With these changes in mind, and results from the task, we would also like to take a look at how we can develop a standardized final exams schedule. In just the last few years, the library finals schedule has changed dramatically; from having all floors always open to only one floor during certain hours, having no 24 hour days to having up to 4, and even changes with how early the extended hour days should begin and when to end. Although we have kept record of past counts for usage of the library during final exam weeks, we don't believe we have yet reached an optimal schedule or system that is best for our students. Once the library has reached a decision on its minimal base number, not only will we be able to move around the semester schedule, but we should also reach a more efficient finals schedule.

Printing

The Public Services Diagonal Slice group whole-heartedly endorses the recommendations of the Technology Strategic Planning group:

> *"Examine current public print system:*
> *Provide wireless printing from students own devices*
> *Consider moving from the current debit card system to account-based, or utilizing a campus 'one-card' – either approach is complex and has significant challenges"*

To weigh the complexity of using an account-based or campus one card solution, we examined the copy and print services offered at other CSU libraries. Nearly all of them offer such a solution, as shown in the table below. This implies that while transitioning may be complicated, the subsequent implementation should be feasible.

Services	CSUF	SDSU	CSULB	CSUN
Printing – B&W	$0.10/page	$0.10/page	$0.10/page	$0.10/page
Printing - color	$0.50/page	$0.65/page	$1.50/page	$0.50/page
Scanning	Free	Free	Free	$1.00/page
Wireless printing	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Use ID card to pay	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Add to card w/credit card	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Change machines	Yes	Yes	No	No

West Coast Copy is inconvenient and expensive. The outdated technology WCC offers makes the library look outdated, and their needlessly complicated purchasing process implies to students that the library is needlessly complicated.

The hours West Coast Copy keeps are much too short to meet the needs of users. When WCC is closed, patrons are unable to scan, fax, or print in color at all. Oviatt staff are obliged to meet patrons' other needs, including explaining how to print, changing bills, and keeping the printers running – all while WCC keeps the income from this work.

Moreover, WCC is often unstaffed even during the hours they claim to be open, as sometimes noted in LibAnswers. In one particularly glaring instance when WCC was unstaffed during its purported hours, a Circulation staff member telephoned the proprietor, who refused to either come in that day or schedule another employee.

When the WCC is staffed, both patrons and librarians have complained about the noise level of their lengthy telephone calls.

Recommendations, from highest to lowest priority

1) **Students should be able to access the twenty pages per day of free printing provided by the University Student Union** here in the library. Reference librarians frequently refer students to the simpler, free printing at the USU labs, driving users away from the library – exactly the opposite of our goals.
a.   Failing that, students should at least be able to retrieve the print jobs from the printer by their login, rather than by the number of the printer they were using. Having to note the number of their terminal to retrieve the print job is one more needlessly complex step: explaining it chews up the time of staff and reference librarians, and annoys students.

2) **Copy and print services should accept both credit/debit cards and campus cash cards**, as they do at most other CSUs. This would save the students money (the cost of the

WCC card) as well as time spent figuring out the card vending machines.

a.   Failing that, there should at least be a bill changing machine available. Even patrons who do have cash on hand often don't have the exact one dollar bill that West Coast Copy currently requires, and the hours they staff are too short to meet all the needs for change in person. Often this means that patrons ask for smaller bills at the circulation desk, in which case Oviatt staff provides the service and West Coast Copy keeps the proceeds.

3) **Scanning should be free and self-service**, or at least as inexpensive and simple as printing and photocopying. Currently, scanning costs ten times as much as printing, despite the fact that it consumes neither paper nor toner. Presumably, this cost is so high because West Coast Copy requires that staff scan items for users, which only makes matters worse by limiting the hours scanning is available. Up-to-date photocopiers would give users the option of scanning items and sending them to a USB drive or email address. This would save users money and conserve paper.

4) **CSUN students, staff, and faculty should be able to print wirelessly** from their own devices. For patrons using their own devices, this would streamline their library experience; for patrons relying on library computers, this would ease the demand for library computers at peak times.

5) **West Coast Copy should be obligated to expand their hours to match the library's hours**, if Oviatt chooses to retain their services at all.

6) **Consider setting aside 2 or 3 computers as express printing stations**, with a forced log off after ten minutes. The USU computer labs do this as well.

Cross training among Oviatt Library departments

The Public Services Diagonal Slice group whole-heartedly endorses the recommendations of the Technical Services Strategic Planning group, to "ensure continuing education on the latest developments of librarianship for staff" and "share new department services with the entire library (e.g. LibAnswers)" by librarian presentations, workshops, and technology training. We also propose a reciprocal training across public service departments.

The diversity of departments in the library means that there are often many services available in one department that are not duplicated elsewhere. Patrons may not be familiar with where these services are located, or the full extent of what is offered.

Unique services include:
· Microform machines in RPM
· Electronic delivery in ILL
· Rare books in Special Collections
· DVDs/CDs loan periods in Music & Media
· Guest privileges in circulation.
· Headphone checkout in Collaboratory
· Camcorder checkout (limited to students in certain course) in TCC

Patrons come to the library with different expectations than those of us who work here. They do not necessarily distinguish between the different departments throughout the library. As such, they often seek out the information and ask for directions at the "wrong" service desk because it happens to be the nearest one to them. The Oviatt is a large building, but patrons are likely to see it as one cohesive unit, as opposed to separate, distinct departments. It is our job to make the library easier for the patron to use, not more difficult.

When patrons inquire at the "wrong" service desk, library employees should nonetheless be able to quickly and correctly refer the patron to where they are going, or even provide them with the information they need. When patrons are directed to the wrong desk, or provided with misinformation about a particular desk's services, this reflects poorly on the library in general and is a waste of time for the patron.

This group strongly recommends a more rigorous program of cross training for all library employees. This could take many forms (from "site" visits at each department, to town hall like events, to online videos, guides and tutorials), but most importantly it should be ongoing, and every staff member, student employee, and librarian should participate in this on a yearly basis, at least, if not at the start of every semester. This will ensure that any changes that occur throughout a particular semester, will be addressed and acknowledged in the next semester. Student workers will either participate directly in these training sessions, or be trained by their supervisor, who in turn participated directly.

With adequate cross training for all employees (students, staff, and librarians), the library can direct patrons to correct departments , answer basic questions even if they pertain to a different service area, and inform them of basic services of those departments. This allows the library to operate as a cohesive unit while still maintaining separation of services to focus on specific areas within their departments. It also reflects well on the library being a fully functioning unit of the university.

Proposal to implement badges for student workers

Many student workers spend the bulk of their time on the library floor, shelving books, cleaning, or tending to other tasks in the stacks. These students come into contact with patrons on a regular basis and may present an untapped resource for improving customer service. Student patrons may come into the library for a variety of reasons – to study, to do research, to participate in group activities, or simply for a comfortable place to relax. In many cases, students may feel more comfortable asking questions of those they perceive as their peers, rather than approaching librarians or staff with questions. This seems to be especially true when asking directional questions, questions about computer or equipment assistance, employment, complaints, or library policies and procedures.

The ALA Library Wiki notes that John Stanley (2005) offered tips for improved customer services (p. 31). He cited research which found that people who wore name badges were perceived to provide better customer service. Similar results were reported in "To name or not to name—that is the question," by Carl Clayton (1992). Survey respondents agreed that the wearing of name badges: indicated a friendlier approach; indicated a professional

approach; differentiated staff from customers or patrons; enabled feedback on service provided, and: should be worn by all serving the public (pp. 398-99). In short, a badge signals that it is part of one's job to be accessible and approachable for service. It is recommended that student workers who come into contact with patrons on a regular basis wear a badge which identifies them as such.

However, as the ALA Library also notes, the matter of badges is a balancing of customer service and security on the one hand and personal privacy on the other. The matter of security becomes even more important within the context of student workers, for whom we have a duty and responsibility to ensure their safety. *Library Security Guidelines* (2010) is the latest in a series of documents derived from a 1989 document produced by the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) and revised under the auspices of the Safety and Security of Library Buildings Committee of the Buildings and Equipment Section of the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA), a division of the American Library Association. Section 7.4 of the Library Security Guidelines suggests that staff wear "a symbol of authorized access with some visible form of identity such as a nameplate, emblem, uniform, or badge to reassure patrons of a staff presence and discourage patrons from imitating the work privileges and behaviors of staff" (online).

In an effort to improve customer service, it is recommended that we implement the wearing of badges by student workers. However, because we have a duty to protect and ensure their safety, it is also recommended that badges not include the students' names. Rather, this badge might consist of a familiar icon which symbolizes the Oviatt Library, or simply state, "Student Worker".

American Library Association Library (2012). Professional Tips Wiki. Retrieved from http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php/Main_Page

American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), Safety and Security of Library Buildings Committee of the Buildings and Equipment Section, Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA), American Library Association (2010). Library Security Guidelines. Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/llama/sites/ala.org.llama/files/content/publications/LibrarySecurityGuide.pdf

Clayton, Carl (June 1992). To name or not to name – that is the question. *Los Angeles Record, 94*(6), pp..98-99.

Stanley, John (December 2005). Step four: Journey of trust. *inCite 26*(12), p. 31.

Enhanced customer service training

Student employees are often the first (and only) employees that our patrons will talk to in the library. As such, they need to be trained properly to handle this. We talked about departmental cross training above, but we believe their training should go further. Students need to be able to answer whatever questions come to them, but they also need to be properly trained on how to work with the public. Currently new students in the fall receive

brief customer service training, but students who begin throughout the year do not. This should be rectified. The training should also be more in depth and should include some kind of test at the end. We also believe that once isn't enough. All student employees could benefit from a refresher every year. Student employees should be encouraged to participate in the training, to explore the various departments in the library, and build upon their knowledge of library services. Student employees should only be allowed to wear the Oviatt badges once they have completed and passed the yearly customer service training.

Visitor Logins

Last summer, the Oviatt Library radically changed the way its patrons can access most computers throughout the library. Logins are now required on most computers. We left several computers available as "visitor stations" on each floor. For the most part, this has been a success. The login computers in the Reference Room are overwhelmingly being used by students now.

The visitor stations have been less successful. Currently, there is no limit on how many hours someone can spend on the visitor stations. They are very popular among non-CSUN patrons, but often are used for hours on end by a single patron. The reference desk often receives complaints that there are no visitor stations available throughout the library. Often this complaint comes from high school students who want to do research at our library.

We recommend instating limits on visitor stations. This would require creating login accounts for any non-CSUN patron who wants to use a computer. Each non-CSUN patron would be allowed 2 hours of computer usage per day (at the visitor stations only). This would free up computers and allow more non-CSUN patrons to make use of them, while limiting the ability of patrons to monopolize a station for an entire day. We recognize this may require an investment of both time and money, but fully believe that this investment will be worth it.

Some CSU campus libraries already implement some type of guest computing system, including the following:

CSU, Bakersfield: http://www.csub.edu/library/policies/computerdatabase.shtml
Humboldt State University: http://library.humboldt.edu/infoservices/CIU.html
CSU, Long Beach: http://www.csulb.edu/library/guide/computing.html#guest
CSU, San Bernardino: http://www.lib.csusb.edu/services/computingPolicy.html
SDSU: http://library.sdsu.edu/computing
San Francisco State University: http://www.library.sfsu.edu/services/computers/guest.html

Friends of the Library

Saturday afternoon at the library, a parent with a teenager visits to check out a few books on California Missions. The parent would like to join Friends of the Library and leave with a few books for their teen. This parent is not able to sign-up on-site and is instead required to complete a form online requesting an application to be mailed to their home. They leave without any books at all.

The membership process for Friends of the Library involves several steps and time, preventing members from joining on the day of their visit. Many of the inquiries for Friends of the Library occur on weekends and weeknights. These are parents taking their children or teens to the Oviatt to check out a book for project that is not available at their local public library. Or a teacher preparing assignments for the next week, or a business owner conducting research for a special project. While students, faculty, and staff are the primary users of the Oviatt Library, the role of community users via the Friends of the Library program could be enhanced and developed by improved processes and services.

Currently, the interested Friends member must submit a request for an application and won't receive their card for at least a few weeks. For community members that would like to support the library through a Friends membership vs. driving to the Central Branch of Los Angeles Public Library or requesting materials via their local branch's interlibrary loan, an on-site membership process would enhance public service, highlight the library's ability to change with the needs of community, and raise more funds for the Friends of the Library.

Scenario 1
Online membership application with an option to pay via credit card or paypal. The existing membership application process could be available for those that do not want to pay online. *This is the ideal membership option, but the group realizes that there are potential administrative issues with credit card payments to the library.*

Scenario 2
Membership application fee paid on-site paid with cash and a proof of address from an adult over the age of 18. This would be a similar model that the public libraries require for proof of address (utility bill, driver's license, etc). Payments and applications would be collected at the Circulation Desk during the library's business hours. Other ideas were a rush fee for on-site membership or a limit on the number of books that can be checked out until the member's billing address can be confirmed.

Other Ideas for the Future

Wi-Fi
Understanding that there are limitations with licenses to digital content (article databases, ebooks, etc) along with an increased need for network security at CSUN, there is still a large demand and expectation that a Friends of the Library membership or Alumni membership will include wi-fi access for portable devices (laptops, smartphones, etc). The group discussed the possibility of partnering with the Alumni Office to establish a separate wi-fi network for visitors that support the Friends and/or Alumni Association. The purpose

of the Wi-Fi network would be to provide supporters of the institution with access to productivity tools that they use for the school work or research. While article databases and ebooks would be excluded because of licensing, Friends and Alumni would be able to use the library materials and space with access to Wi-Fi.   Many businesses offer wi-fi with reduced network speeds, i.e. Amtrak trains provides commuters with access to Wi-Fi, but restricts streaming video and music access.

Friends of the Oviatt Library have proved to be a great support and source of community strength. In the future, the Friends of the Library group will continue to be important to the mission of the Oviatt Library as a resource for the campus, but also for the San Fernando Valley Community. Many library friend groups provide tiered membership to encourage membership from recent college graduates to lifelong members.

Extended hours in Special Collections and Archives

A draft proposal to extend the hours of operation in Special Collections and Archives was submitted to Ellen Jarosz, Special Collections and Archives Librarian, on October 24th, 2012. Following revisions, Ellen took this proposal to Marianne, who presented it to EG. While this proposal was originally created as part of the Public Services Diagonal Slice document, the new policy has already been actualized.

Proposal to Revise Special Collections and Archives Department Hours
The Special Collections and Archives Reading Room is currently open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The campus community and other researchers have indicated they find it difficult to access Special Collections and Archives materials during these hours, due to class and work obligations, commuting time, and for other reasons.

In order to better meet our users' needs and encourage the use of Special Collections and Archives materials, it is proposed that Special Collections and Archives revise its service hours. In both of the proposed scenarios, SC/A opens an hour later, at 10:00 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m., the rationale being that the Reading Room is typically slower in the early morning hours. This will also mitigate any budget impact these evening or weekend hours would have.

Both of these scenarios were developed in consultation with the Special Collections and Archives librarian, who supports the implementation of either strategy.

Scenario #1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Closed	10:00-4:30	10:00-7:30	10:00-7:30	10:00-4:30	10:00-4:30	Closed

In Scenario #1, Faculty, staff, and project archivists will rotate later shifts to accommodate SC/A reference desk services. A student assistant will also work a later shift in order to page materials from SC/A stacks or AS/RS. This scenario poses no additional costs.

Scenario #2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Closed	10:00-4:30	10:00-4:30	10:00-4:30	10:00-4:30	10:00-4:30	12:00-4:00

In Scenario #2, Faculty, staff, and project archivists will rotate working a half day on Saturday, taking a half day off during the week that they are scheduled on Saturday. A student assistant will work on Saturday from 12:00-4:00 p.m. This scenario is potentially less expensive to staff than our current schedule.