Biola Library Three-Year Review

And Comparison with Nine Peer and Benchmark Institutions

Prepared in response to a request from Provost Deborah Taylor for more information as part of the Biola University Prioritization Review Project

2017-2018

Submitted by

Gregg S. Geary, Dean of the Library

With the assistance of:

Patricia L. Pike, Vice Provost for Academic Administration

Sue Whitehead, Associate Dean of the Library

Jeremy Labosier, Assistant Dean of the Library

Eileen Walraven, Technical Services Librarian
I. Introduction

This three-year report builds upon the Annual Reports that were begun in 2012 and 2013. This report begins in January 2014 with the start of new leadership under Dr. Gregg S. Geary, the new Dean of the Library. This report will present both data and narrative that will provide context as to the role of the Library on the Biola campus, establish its values and mission, and report on both its accomplishments and activities during the review period while comparing its standing with nine (9) other peer and benchmark institutions.

II. Context

Biola University is a leading private Evangelical Christian university located in La Mirada, California. The school was established in 1908 as the Bible Institute of Los Angeles and is now known solely by its acronym, Biola. In its over one hundred year history Biola has grown to a university of 150 distinct programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels offered in eight schools. The student population now tops over 6,100 FTE.

The Biola Library is the central hub of information for curricular support, learning, and research at all levels of the Biola Community and visiting scholars. The current Library facility was built in 2001. Its forward-thinking design provides a bright, inviting, and comfortable environment for study, research, and the exchange of ideas. This report seeks to build upon the firm foundation established by the founders of Biola and expanded by the faithful stewardship of Biola’s past and current leaders. The goal of this report is to ensure that Biola University maintains collections and services that increase Biola’s competitive advantage among faith-based institutions of higher education. The Biola Library seeks to be a major contributing factor in making Biola University the destination of choice for those seeking an academically robust, Biblically-centered, center of research and learning. In pursuit of this goal the report below will demonstrate how the Biola Library also advances the aspirations of the President and Provost with specific regard to:

a) leading in Biblically integrated education,
b) attracting and developing outstanding Christian scholars,
c) extend our educational reach throughout the world,
d) ensure the affordability of a Biola education.
III. Values and Mission

Biola Library faculty and staff worked throughout the spring of 2014 to identify its values and create a brief defining values statement. These values were the product of months of discussions examining our library’s work and mission along with the Biola’s University Plan "A Soul of Conviction, a Voice of Courage 2012-2022."

The result of these discussions produced three key values, namely service, stewardship, and scholarship, which are now posted on our website and inform all we do. Our Library website states: The Biola University Library is committed to outstanding SERVICE to our users, responsible STEWARDSHIP of our resources, and an enduring support of SCHOLARSHIP.

The mission of the Library is to provide access to knowledge and information to serve the research, teaching, and learning needs of the university community; to facilitate the integration of on-campus and online curricula with relevant resources and robust library services; and to support the university mission by fostering biblically-centered scholarship.

Working within the values and mission stated above, the Dean of the Library and his Leadership Team seek to apply the following operational principles:

1. Biola Library will be user centric in all decision making. It is all about our users (customer/patron); their needs and their satisfaction must be at the core of our thinking.
2. Remain optimistic but maintain vigilance and a sense of urgency regarding competitive forces in the information profession and the academic landscape.
3. Remain innovative and flexible; change processes whenever needed to ensure maximum efficiencies. We own the processes, they do not own us; so if they do not work to provide the best customer experience we change them until they do.
4. Strive for high-quality, high-velocity, data-based decision making. While some in the academy believe that an academic environment is progressive and forward-thinking it is, in fact, one of the most slowly evolving enterprises in our free-market system. The Biola Library seeks to change that paradigm and will strive to attack problems directly and quickly and implement innovative change as rapidly as prudently possible.
IV. Budget and Expenses

A February 2012 article in *Inside Higher Ed* indicated that tracking Library budgets as a percentage of a college or university’s total budget started in 1966. At that time the average Library budget was 2.8% of a college or university’s total budget. It peaked in 1974 when the percentage hit 3.8%. In 1982 it was 3.7%. As of 2009 the percentage had dropped to approximately 2.0%. The Biola Library’s budget seems to mirror this trend; our Library budget increased from 2% to 2.3% for 2 years (2013 and 2014) and then dropped back to 2% of the University’s total annual budget.

As this report will demonstrate, the Biola Library is within the national norm for Library costs as a percentage of our institutional budget and is at or slightly below the operating cost of our comparison institutions. We will continue to contain costs as much as possible while providing maximum value to our patrons. The goal of this strategy is to keep the cost of a Biola education affordable while also attracting and developing outstanding Christian scholars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Adopted Budget</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>$3,038,216.00</td>
<td>$1,350,841.35</td>
<td>$1,407,541.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>$3,123,239.00</td>
<td>$1,444,378.71</td>
<td>$1,361,188.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>$3,107,845.00</td>
<td>$1,400,469.19</td>
<td>$1,356,505.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>$3,165,830.00</td>
<td>$1,353,015.69</td>
<td>$1,434,984.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>$3,163,406.00</td>
<td>$1,407,541.85</td>
<td>$1,338,063.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Accomplishments Since 2014

a. **Reclassification of Dewey decimal collection (2012-17).** The Library completed a major reclassification project that converted 133,000 volumes from the old Dewey decimal system to our current Library of Congress system. The entire collection was shifted to interfile the newly classified materials. In all over 240,000 items were handled to complete the project. This makes it much easier for our patrons to find and use materials since all materials are now in one contiguous classification system, providing better **service.** This project was cited as an accreditation requirement by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

b. **Library Liaison Program (2014-15).** The Library Liaison Program was implemented to improve customer service to faculty constituencies and increase their voice in purchasing decisions. This improves **scholarship** by more closely monitoring purchases to match curricular and research needs of the Biola Faculty. It improves **service** by building stronger links between the Library and instructional faculty and increasing their voice in the collection development process. It improves **stewardship** by decreasing costs through more careful and prudent purchasing decisions. Within just two years of deployment, our 2016 user survey found that 52% of respondents knew who the Library Liaison was for their discipline. In 2017 the Liaison assignments were revised so that a Librarian was deployed to each School in the University.

c. **Installed compact shelving (2014-16).** The Library used both contingency funds and regular Library budgeted funds to purchase and install high-density compact shelving units. This greatly enhanced our ability to reduce the floorspace used for book storage by nearly half while expanding the space available for patron services such as the Tech Commons and the future creation of a Music and Arts space on the Lower Level of the Library. By finding a different vendor and installer (R & J Retrieval) rather than the local vendor previously used (McMurray Stern) the Library saved over $200,000 on the entire project. This demonstrates the Library’s good **stewardship** by achieving desired outcomes at reduced cost.

d. **Created half-time position for Building and Safety Coordinator (2015).** Due to the high number of patrons visits each year and the expanding hours of operation, the Dean of the Library and Library Faculty recognized the need for greater support in the areas of space management and safety. The Library serves a large population of users (see gate count chart below) for over 100 hours each week of every academic year. The Library remains open until 1:00 a.m. during regular semesters and until 3:00 a.m. during finals. The utilization of space for various study and
learning environments is critical to the successful implementation of our mission. Therefore, our staff and faculty pay much more attention to building space utilization, furnishings, and safety than would be common for other academic units. In 2015 we were granted a half-time position to fill the role of Building and Safety Supervisor. The incumbent in this position, whose service includes some nights and weekends, has been wildly successful in fulfilling this role. He works closely with Biola Security and provides extensive training for all Library student workers and full-time employees. He coordinates building-wide emergency response for the ten (10) distinct units which occupy the various tenant offices in the library including the Heritage Café, the Writing Center, the Learning Center, Tech Commons, and the Center for Faculty Development. He ensures that the Library can respond in a coordinated manner to emergencies which may present themselves. Since starting this position the Library has participated in two active shooter drills in cooperation with Campus Security and neighboring law enforcement personnel. In addition, the library has numerous building and maintenance projects ongoing at any one time. The Building and Safety Supervisor coordinates and monitors all these projects and reports regularly to the Dean to keep them moving forward. He is vigilant in trimming costs by finding high value yet less costly alternatives for items such as furniture, whiteboards, and computer equipment. He also writes programs to automate many routine operations resulting in more efficient operation and reduced workload. The half-time Building and Safety Supervisor has made marked improvements in our service to our patrons and in stewardship of resources.

e. **Lynda.com Purchase (2015).** The Library partnered with Biola IT to purchase access to a much requested, but costly ($36,000 per year), digital resource, lynda.com. This valuable eLearning resource supports staff development as well as aiding faculty by providing rich video content to support curricular development and design. In addition, students are able to use its many high-quality training and instructional videos to independently enhance their computer or technology skills, create an eportfolio, or explore a favorite interest such as photography, sound engineering, art, sculpture and thousands of other subjects lynda.com provides. This increases the Library’s service by providing the entire campus with a high-value digital resource. The amazingly high usage of this product (over 61,000 uses in 2017) demonstrates good stewardship because, despite the high cost of the product, the cost per use is averaging less than $2 which is considered an excellent return on investment.

f. **Institutional Repository (2016).** The Library created an institutional repository (IR) in the form of Biola Digital Commons using a platform developed by BePress Inc. The IR enhances scholarship by increasing the visibility of our Biola intellectual
content, it increases **service** by expanding the accessibility of our unique and distinctive collections, and it increases **stewardship** by enhancing our impact worldwide in a sustainable and cost-effective manner.

i. Digital Commons @ Biola, sometimes referred to as the institutional repository, is a collection of digital content and services designed to capture and showcase all scholarly output by the Biola University community.

ii. Contents of the Biola Digital Commons currently include:
   1. Biola Archives and Special Collections
      a. Biola Hour Radio broadcasts
      b. The King’s Business 1910-1971
      c. Louis T. Talbot Archive
   2. Conservatory of Music
      a. Pressler Collection - Videos of master classes with artist-in-residence Manahem Pressler.
   3. Cook School of Intercultural Studies
      a. International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching

For more details regarding the Digital Commons@Biola see appendix.

**g. Eliminated Media Services (2016-17).** Following an early retirement and a resignation in Media Services the Library re-evaluated the Media Services operation and developed a new strategy to deliver media equipment to patrons. The Library transitioned some of its media loan operation to the newly-created Tech Commons in partnership with Biola Information Technology (IT). This major operational change increases **service** to our patrons by providing more highly-trained computer and technical support to patrons at a more convenient location and for additional hours (after the Metzger IT helpdesk operation is closed for the day). It demonstrates good **stewardship** through improved efficiency by streamlining operations and eliminating redundancies, eliminating a full-time position, and transferring a second full-time position to Library Technical Services where it is more needed and useful.

**h. Developed Information Literacy Program (2016).** In response to the new Biola core requirement for information literacy the Library hired a new Information Literacy Librarian. This new Information Literacy Librarian has developed a new program to expand our capacity to meet faculty and student instructional needs. Instructional Librarians now undergo monthly training workshops to increase their classroom effectiveness and provide information literacy instruction in an engaging, efficient manner. This greatly enhances the Library’s **service** value to students and
faculty. We hope this will begin to bring our number of instructional sessions up to meet or exceed those of our peer institutions (see chart below for comparison of number of instructional sessions with peer institutions).

i. **Expanded Library Hours (2016).** The Library has expanded the hours of operation to over 100 hours per week beginning in Fall 2016. This was done at no additional cost to the operating budget. This move responded to frequent patron requests to expand our hours of operation. This move also makes Biola more competitive with other colleges and universities in southern California libraries that provide similar hours of operation. Our ability to expand services while working within budget is an example of the Library's dedication to good stewardship of resources.

j. **Eliminated duplicate databases (2016-17).** The Technical Services Department made a careful review of our aggregate databases to reduce duplication of journals from various vendors. This time-consuming manual review process produced a list of duplications that totaled over $21,000. These duplicates were canceled resulting in significant cost savings. This demonstrates the Library's good stewardship by achieving desired outcomes at reduced cost.

k. **Implemented Discovery Tool, Ebsco Discovery Service (EDS) (2016).** A discovery service is a product designed to provide a “Google”-like single-search experience of the world of library electronic resources, including the library online catalog, databases, ejournals, digital collections, and more. It is substantially different from our Biola Library Catalog; in addition to accessing our print collection, the discovery tool accesses the wealth of the digital assets the Library provides (e.g. databases and article level access to over seventy million full-text journal articles). This investment improves service to our users by making our digital content more discoverable and thus enhances scholarship. By improving the access and use of our digital content the discovery tool brings down the cost-per-use of many of our databases making them more cost effective which demonstrates the Library's stewardship of its resources.

l. **User Survey (2016).** A detailed user survey was conducted in 2016 yielding important assessment information regarding the Library's many services and products. High rates of satisfaction were reported in all areas of service with an overall satisfaction rating of 4.29 out of 5. Respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the library building and facilities (4.31), library services (4.29), and library collections (4.03). Details regarding the Biola Library Services User Survey are provided below in section VI.
m. **Inventory of Collection (2017)**. We began a complete inventory of the Biola Library collection in 2017. This involves checking every record in our catalog with every physical item in the Library. Automating most of the process using the Sierra catalog software and portable barcode scanners reduced labor costs. This enables us to ensure the accuracy of our online records, locate missing or mishelved items, and remove old records when no holdings are found, providing improved service to our patrons and good stewardship of our resources.

n. **Revised Library Faculty Rank and Promotion structure (2017)**. In order to attract high-quality Library Professionals we revised the Rank and Promotion document that had not been updated since 1993. This makes Biola Library competitive with other schools and outlines a clear path for advancement predicated on evidence of scholarly and professional achievement. As the charts of comparable schools in section VI indicates, Biola Library staffing cost are still slightly below the median staffing cost for our peer and benchmark institutions.

VI. Review of Library

Subsequent to the Prioritization Project decision process, the Provost asked the Biola Library to provide a review of the Library: How well it functions, its use of resources, and how it stands relative to peer institutions. In order to provide a multi-dimensional perspective of the Biola Library, the review included both the Users Survey 2016 and a comparison of data from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for 2016, the most recent data available from these national sources.

a. **User Survey 2016: an internal review of user satisfaction**

As a 5-year follow-up to a user survey completed in 2011, a Biola Library Survey Task Force conducted a survey in 2016 to accumulate data from patrons related to their perceptions of various resources and services. Below are excerpts for key data points from the Biola Library User Survey 2016. The full report, including the methodology for the survey and its analysis, is available upon request.
i. Circulation and Course Reserves (p. 15)

Regarding Circulation and Course Reserves, the highest level of agreement, with an average rating of 4.23, was for the statement, "Staff members are professional." The statement "Electronic course reserves are easy to access" had the lowest level of agreement (3.95), though it also had the highest level of respondents who selected “N/A” (29%). A high number of respondents also selected “N/A” for statements regarding the self-check machine, renewals, and course reserves. Graduate students, staff, and faculty may not have need for services such as course reserves, which could explain the high percentage of “N/A” responses.

![Rating Average Chart]

Source: 2016 User Survey, pg. 15.

ii. Reference Services (p. 16-17)

Participants were given a description of Reference Services and asked about the customer service skills and abilities of staff members. All statements received a mean score above 4, indicating that the majority of respondents were highly satisfied. A substantial number of respondents selected “N/A” in response to whether reference staff are able to help them with their assignments (35%) or find information relevant to their research (29%). These findings may indicate that some respondents were unaware of these services, though it could also be likely that some users, such as faculty and staff, did not need to use these services.
Participants were also asked how they prefer to contact a librarian when they need research help. When comparing the results of this question with the way in which respondents access the library, it is apparent that users prefer to contact a librarian in the same ways they prefer to access the library in general. The majority of users reported they prefer to contact a librarian in-person at the Reference Desk (68%), and 22% of users said they prefer email. Few users prefer to contact a librarian through the phone (6%), by making an appointment (6%), or through text messaging (2%). Graduate students have a slight preference for contacting a librarian through a chat service rather than through email. It should be noted that more than a quarter of respondents reported they did not need to contact a librarian (26%) with undergraduate students comprising the largest user group not needing this service. These findings may suggest that students are unclear as to what comprises research help.
iii. Library Website (p. 21-22)

Participants were given the opportunity to mark their top five reasons for visiting the library website. Respondents most often chose use of library databases (75%), use of the library catalog (68%), checking library hours (54%), reserving group study rooms (36%), and renewing books or media items (30%).
iv. Faculty Satisfaction (p. 25)

In 2011, faculty were asked about their satisfaction with a variety of library services. Results of the 2016 survey indicate improvement in all areas previously mentioned. Comparing the data between the two years (2011; 2016), most faculty agree the library has a straightforward procedure for placing materials on Course Reserves (3.90; 4.14). Faculty also reported that they know how to request items to be purchased for the collection (3.53; 4.03), the library has the resources necessary to support their teaching objectives (3.88; 4.04), and they were familiar with the process of requesting a library instruction session (3.33; 3.53). Three additional questions asked in the 2016 survey revealed that faculty understand the role of librarians in assisting with the research process (3.84), agree the library has the resources necessary to support their research (3.68), and agree that librarians can assist with creating assignments that develop information literacy skills (3.60). We are pleased with these results which seem to validate the success of the Library Liaison Program discussed in section V.b. above.
v. Library Contribution (p. 27-28)

Respondents were asked to rate the contributions the Library makes in various areas, with 1 indicating a minor contribution and 5 indicating a major contribution. “Finding relevant information for your research” and “Overall academic success” were the most highly rated statements, with the Biola Library providing an average contribution of 4.13 and 4.03, respectively. The Library also provided some contribution to respondents keeping current in their fields (3.50) and their curriculum and teaching objectives (3.22). The Library made minor contributions to respondents’ spiritual growth (2.87) or decisions to attend or work for Biola (2.70).
Faculty reported the Library contributed to finding information for their research (3.92) and keeping current in their field (3.64). Staff had the strongest agreement that the Library made contributions to their overall academic success (4.24) and their spiritual growth and development (3.18).

Of all respondent groups, the Library had the strongest overall impact on graduate students. 55% of graduate students reported that the Library made major contributions to finding relevant information for their research and over 70% reported a strong contribution (ratings of 4 or 5) to both keeping current in their field and overall academic success. The Library had a major contribution to 11% of graduate students’ decision to attend Biola, and 33% reported that the Library significantly contributes to their spiritual growth or development.

Selected comments:

“I feel that the Biola Library makes significant contribution to people’s impression about Biola University.”

“Honestly, the library is my favourite thing about Biola University! And I think a library ought to be the beating heart of an academic institution, so thanks Biola, for doing a good job!”
“Having beautiful, clean, comfortable spaces for quiet individual work, reflection, writing, and reading has made an incredible impact on my spiritual growth. The vast and substantial online access to library resources is something I am also very very grateful for—it makes high quality research possible even amidst a very demanding graduate”

vi. Overall Satisfaction (p. 30)

High rates of satisfaction were reported in all areas of service with an overall satisfaction rating of 4.29. Respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the library building and facilities (4.31), library services (4.29), and library collections (4.03).

The high satisfaction rates presented by this survey are important because they demonstrate the exceptional value the Biola Library brings to the academic environment on campus. Keeping and maintaining this high value is crucial to attracting and developing outstanding Christian scholars.
b. Comparison of Libraries 2016: an external review of our costs and services

In order to respond to the Vice President’s request for more information regarding the Library following the Prioritization Project, the Biola Library prepared a comparison of peer and benchmark institutions using data from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). A group of nine (9) other libraries was selected, including several from the comparison group indicated as standard by Biola Institutional Research office, several from the CCCU, and several from Southern California.

Schools Included in this Study

- Azusa Pacific University (CA)
- Barry University (FL)
- Biola University (CA)
- California Baptist University (CA)
- Chapman University (CA)
- Florida Institute of Technology (FL)
- Pepperdine University (CA)
- Regent University (VA)
- Saint John Fisher College (NY)
- Wheaton College (IL)

i. Enrollment

These libraries were charted in order by the size of enrollment for each school in 2016, the most recent year for which national data are available. Biola's enrollment (6,222) fell just below the average ($M = 7,206$) in this group. This “enrollment order” is the order used in all subsequent charts.

Source: ACRL Metrics Database.
The distribution of Graduate and Undergraduate students in each school has potential to affect how libraries are used and funded in a university, so these data were also charted. Biola enrolled a distribution of graduate and undergraduate students that was just under average for this group (Biola G 32% - UG 68%; Average G 37% - UG 63%). Wheaton (16%), California Baptist (22%), and Chapman (23%) enrolled much lower than average proportions of graduate students; Azusa (41%) and Florida Tech (42%) somewhat higher than average proportions of graduate students. Barry (52%), Pepperdine (54%), and Regent (60%) had much higher proportions of graduate students, with over half of their student body in graduate programs.

The distribution of students taking online courses is another factor of interest. Online students still need to access library resources, but they tend to need digital resources and online services rather than physical (hard copy) resources and in-person services. ACRL did not supply these data. However, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) does indicate the number of students who take no online courses, the number who take some online courses, and the number who take all online courses.
The IPEDS data result in somewhat different enrollment totals compared to the ACRL data. This might relate to when the enrollment figures are determined. Enrollment data collected at different times during a semester will be variously affected by both late enrollment and withdrawal decisions by students. As the differences of total enrollment recorded by IPEDS and ACRL are relatively small, this is the likeliest explanation for these differences.

Using the IPEDS data that we have, it is clear that most of this comparison group are libraries serving campus-based patrons. The average proportion of students who do not take any online courses is 76%. Biola (85%) and Azusa (79%) both approximate this average. Wheaton (100%), Chapman (99%), and Saint John Fisher (96%) are even more strongly campus oriented. California Baptist and Regent are more oriented toward online coursework. California Baptist serves a student body that is almost half online (46%), and Regent serves a student body that is predominantly online (86%).

The data points in the charts below were selected to demonstrate two key major library functions, collections and services. These two primary components are essential in determining a library’s value. An academic library, such as Biola University Library, is a fairly large and complex organization seeking to meet a broad spectrum of user demands. The charts below will help to identify and measure some of these complex activities.

As indicated above, the order from left to right on the x-axis of the charts is the same for all of the displays. If enrollment is a heavily weighing factor in library costs, circulation, and service usage, the orderly descending pattern from left to right seen in the first chart would...
be reflected in charts below. Generally speaking the reflected pattern is not there, or is only a distant echo. The lack of reflected pattern indicates that libraries are, indeed, complex and affected by more than the size of the university that houses them.

Another way to consider the pressure of enrollment size on a library is to compare the gate counts — the count generated by a person moving through the turnstile or scanning their ID card to indicate entrance to the library facility. The annual gate counts for the 10 libraries do reflect the general decrease from left to right across the chart. However, it is not as regular a pattern as is predicted by the enrollments.

![Annual Gate Count for 2016](image)

Azusa (1,158K) and Chapman (983K) had the highest gate counts but both campuses have two or more library facilities. Biola (514K), Pepperdine (512K) and Florida Tech (497K) each exceeded the average ($M = 481K$). California Baptist did not report gate count. Barry University (73K) reported the lowest gate count. Regent’s low gate count is likely related to the fact that 66% of its students take only online courses; Barry’s low gate count does not reflect the 7K students taking only campus courses.

Another way to view these gate counts is to divide them by the student enrollment total. This provides a very rough view of the number of visits per student. It is very rough, because patrons other than students also enter the library facility across the year. So this measure reflects the number of visits per student but not the number of visits by each student. Average gate count per student for this group of libraries was 67. Chapman (118) and Azusa (116) were highest but it should be noted that both Chapman and Azusa have two separate library buildings, and these numbers indicate counts for both locations. Wheaton (85) and Biola (83) were above average; Barry (8) and Regent (17) were lowest.
in visits per student. So the numbers indicate that Biola patrons use their library facility at above average rates both in terms of raw count and in terms of visits per student.

This data point is important in that, unlike all the other transactional data that follow, it provides a clearer picture of the use of the Library building rather than the use of a specific product or service. Biola Library seeks to be a hub of activity for the Biola campus where students do much more than borrow books, and the gate count captures some of this activity. In addition to engaging the Library collection students come to the Library to work in groups, attend presentations, lectures, events, exhibits, and engage with other services offered in the Library such as the Writing Center, Learning Center, Tech Commons, and the Test Proctoring Center.

ii. Total Expenses

Below is a comparison of the total expenses for 2016 in each library. The segments of each bar depict the expenses for (a) materials and services — lowest segment, (b) operations and maintenance — small middle segment, and (c) personnel salary and wages — top segment. Average for total expenses was approximately $3M. Biola total expenses ($3.1M) reflected the average very closely.

California Baptist total expenses ($1.5M) were the lowest with Barry University ($1.7M) and Saint John Fisher College ($1.9M) reporting similar totals. Libraries approximating the average, along with Biola, were Regent ($2.6M), Wheaton ($2.9M), and Florida Tech ($3.3M). Highest spenders were Chapman ($4.9M), Azusa ($4.5M), and Pepperdine ($4.3M).
For the most part, the amount each library expended on materials and services closely approximated the amount the same library spent on personnel. Azusa and Florida Tech are outliers to this generalization. Azusa allocated 62% of its expenses to personnel; Florida Tech allocated 60% of its expenses to materials. Biola balanced these two types of expense most closely, spending 46.5% of its total on each type.

Each of the libraries spent less than 10% of their total on operations and maintenance. The average percentage of total for the group was 7%. Biola allocated 7% of its expenses to operations and maintenance.

iii. Expenses per FTE Student

Even though total expenses for the libraries seems not to be highly reflective of enrollment numbers, expenditures per student full-time equivalent (FTE) is of interest. Comparison between 2014 and 2016 provides some perspective of how these schools are responding to the current economic context.
The fact that expenditure per FTE student varied widely across schools is one reason that there is little relationship between total expenditure and size of enrollment. Average expenditure per FTE student in 2014 was $493. Wheaton made an unusual increase in expenditure per FTE student in 2016 that is not explained in available data. Excluding Wheaton, the average expenditure per FTE student in 2016 was $516.

Most of the libraries increased their expenditures per FTE student between 2014 and 2016. Again excluding Wheaton, the increase averaged $78 per FTE student. Only California Baptist, Regent, and Biola decreased their expenditure per FTE student in this time. In 2014 Biola’s expenditure per FTE student was about $100 above average for the group. In 2016 Biola’s expenditure per FTE student approximated the average (-$9) having come down by $89 per FTE student.

iv. Materials Expenses

Materials expenditures per FTE student in 2016 also varied widely. Biola’s materials expenditures per FTE student ($235) closely approximated the average for the group ($236). California Baptist was an outlier on the low end ($87 per FTE student); Wheaton was an outlier on the high end ($478 per FTE student).

Note: Chapman reported $637 per FTE student in 2013, yet did not report data in 2014.

Source: ACRL Metrics Database.
Personnel expenditures per FTE student would have closely reflected the materials expenditures, as these two types of expenditures roughly mirrored each other in the various schools.

v. Staffing

Data provided a view of the configuration of personnel in three pertinent categories. Professional staff are library faculty who are usually full-time employees and hold relevant credentials such as a graduate degree in library science. In the chart below, professional staff are indicated in the lowest segment of the stacked bar. Other paid staff are full-time or part-time employees who are usually classified wage earners paid by the hour. These employees are indicated in the middle segment of the bars. Every academic library tends to also hire students — both to extend the work of other staff across the many hours libraries operate and to provide students with valuable work experience. Students are indicated in the top segment of the bars.
Data for this display are measured in full-time equivalent (FTE) employees for each of the 3 groups. Azusa reported the largest staff (61 FTE employees); California Baptist reported the smallest staff (15 FTE employees). Biola recorded 38; the average across schools was 35.

Among its FTE staffing, Biola had the lowest proportion of professional staff (29%; $M = 47.5\%$). Professional staff will generally be paid at a higher rate and receive more costly benefits. Therefore, a lower proportion of professional staff might be considered a cost saving. At some point, there will be a negative impact of not having enough professional staff to appropriately serve the academic needs of the institution. So this factor must be balanced for the specific library and its services. Biola patrons have indicated a positive perception of Biola’s staff, as indicated in the user survey. Biola and California Baptist recorded the highest proportional use of students (Biola: 43%; CalBaptist: 43%; $M = 27\%$). The proportion of classified wage personnel at Biola (28%) was approximately average for the group (25%).
vi. Holdings

The Library holdings chart provides a snapshot of the current monographic collections and their modality (print and digital) that the Library provides to all its patrons. Average holdings for this group totaled 535K. Florida Tech (860K), Biola (681K) and Wheaton (649K) hold the largest collections; Saint John Fisher (309K) and California Baptist (325K) hold the smallest collections in this group.

Ebooks being most accessible to students and faculty of online courses makes the proportion of the collection in this digital format relevant. Florida Tech (85%) and Biola (67%) had the highest percentages of digital books in their collections; average for the group approached half (48%); Regent (18%), Azusa (24%), and Wheaton (27%) had the lowest percentages of digital books.

While size of collections was formerly the primary measure of comparison for Libraries this is no longer the case. Although collection size still has some currency, the transactional activities discussed below are more telling with regard to the actual value these collections bring to the university. The holdings statement presented here, however, does tell us about the standing of our collection versus our comparison institutions. The chart shows that Biola has significantly more digital holdings (ebooks) than physical holdings. This is the product of years of development as the Library made a strategic decision nearly ten (10) years ago to collect heavily in electronic resources that would support digital learning and extend Biola’s educational reach throughout the world. Only two other schools, Florida Institute of Technology, and Barry University, compare with Biola’s forward-looking digital collection development.
vii. Circulation

In order to gain perspective of the use of the library by the university's community, several standard sets of data were collected: (a) Circulation of physical items, digital items, and journals, (b) number of data bases, (c) reference transactions, (d) instructional presentations, and (e) interlibrary loan. Since hours of operation tend to be an ongoing discussion between libraries and their patrons, a comparison of these data is included in this report.

Azusa and Biola circulated remarkably high numbers of physical items (75K and 73K, respectively). Biola’s circulation is even more remarkable when taking into account the relative size of its enrollment. Barry University and Wheaton saw the next level of circulation activity with just under 50K items. Pepperdine and Regent each circulated just under 30K items. The others ranged between 6K and 13K in circulation of physical items. Average circulation was about 34K, but an average is not particularly meaningful when variance is this wide.

If digital circulation is added to the picture, Florida Tech becomes a high outlier with 121K total items circulated. Azusa did not report digital circulation. Biola had the next highest number of total items circulated (137K) and circulated remarkably more than the average for the group \( (M = 99K) \)
Journals are generally not included in the reported circulation figures, because journals are not circulated. However, they constitute an important facet of the library resources made available to patrons. Biola started moving from physical journals to digital journals back around 2009. In 2016, Biola maintained fewer physical journal titles (377) than several of the other libraries, which ranged from 1.6K to 50K titles. Libraries holding physical journal numbers similar to Biola included California Baptist (220), Saint John Fisher (370), Wheaton (389), and Pepperdine (411).

Biola’s digital journal resources (61K) were about average and similar in number to Chapman (68K), Pepperdine (61K), and Florida Tech (57K). Barry and Regent outstripped the others in this group with 133K and 113K digital journal titles respectively.
Digital journal (or E-Journal) use by Biola patrons (257K) was still somewhat low relative to the comparison group average (422K). This use indicator will likely increase in the near future as Biola continues to develop online programs and recruits online students. Also, further expansion of the science, technology and health programs will put pressure toward increasing both the number of digital journal titles and the use of these digital journals.
viii. Databases

The number of databases used by this group of libraries averaged 186, with Regent being exceptionally high on this resource, which may reflect the larger proportion of online students they serve. Biola, with 147, had fewer databases than average, though it did have what might be considered a “normative” number of databases. As Biola plans to expand online programs and online student body, this number will need to increase in the near future so that we can assure our online students and their faculty appropriate electronic academic resources.

ix. Reference Transactions

Reference transactions often indicate the level of individualized help, guidance, and instruction provided by professional library faculty. Biola provided the highest number of reference transactions (6,676). Average reference transactions for the group of libraries was 3,854. This indicates that the Biola community actively seeks input from the library reference staff. This aligns with the 2016 User Survey results that reports 69% of respondents preferred to get research help in-person at a reference desk as opposed to all other modalities. Biola’s service orientation is especially evident in these data.
There is something of an inverse relationship between instruction presentations and reference transactions. Biola was high on reference transactions, but low on instruction presentations (Biola 79; $M = 242$). The library staff members have begun to work toward increasing this latter number. Biola’s reference transaction number may be high in part because our patrons need the individualized interaction due to the sparse availability of instruction presentations to groups. It will be interesting to see how these numbers adjust to future increase in instruction presentations offered by library faculty.
xi. Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary loan statistics are an important indicator of two key factors, research activity and strength of collections. People seriously engaged in research often find the need to access materials from other institutions, and when a collection has robust intellectual content its holdings tend to be sought out by others. Wheaton (27K) and Azusa (25K) were by far the most active borrowers from other libraries using interlibrary loan. Pepperdine and Biola were the next most active with approximately 8K borrowing activities, while other libraries reported fewer borrowing activities.

Wheaton (15K), Biola (12K), and Azusa (11K) were the 3 most active loaning libraries in this group. It is interesting that Biola tends to loan more resources than patrons borrow from others. This indicates that our library serves as an important resource among our sister institutions, and the collection appears to serve the Biola patrons well.

![Interlibrary Loan Activities for 2016](image)

Note: California Baptist did not report data for 2016.  
Source: ACRL Metrics Database.

xii. Hours of Operation

Student patrons have frequently asked Biola library to stay open for more hours per week. Several years ago, the library decreased the number of open hours to save on costs. However, the patrons expressed distress with that change. Therefore, Biola library increased the number of open hours to more closely reflect our sister institutions. Biola library was open 105 hours per week compared to the average for this group, which was 107 hours per week.
The library staff members make these decisions with as much data as possible relating to library use as well as patron request. If the library is open more early morning hours (i.e., after midnight) but use is very low, the schedule will be changed based on the data. The hours recorded in the chart reflect standard hours. Most university libraries, including Biola library, will often extend hours of operation during exam weeks (Biola Library remains open until 3:00 a.m. during finals week) or shorten the hours during periods of low student activity.

None of the comparison libraries are open all the time (24 hours per day, 7 days per week; 24 x 7 = 168). All libraries must select a schedule that works for their patrons. Biola library tries to contain costs while serving the Biola community well by maintaining open hours during times that some reasonable number of patrons are likely to use the library.

Note: Chapman and Saint John Fisher did not report data for 2011.

Source: ACRL Metrics Database.

VII. Conclusions

In general, the review including both the user survey and the comparison with other schools indicates that Biola Library functions well in the perspective of its users and aligns well with its peers. Although costs may be a little higher than average while enrollment is a little lower than average, the costs are likely reflective of the very high rates of interaction Biola has within its community — seen in gate counts, circulation, and reference transactions. Expenditures are moderate for Biola’s aspiration to be a premier Christian institution of higher education and one that attracts the best and brightest Christian scholars to its faculty.
In the near future, the library plans to expand the number of instructional presentations and the number of databases in order to serve more students and faculty. As we seek to build more online programs and recruit significant growth in online student numbers, we will need to expand databases and other electronic resources as well as to provide services to the new online students and their faculty.

A major concern with library expenditures is inflation for library materials and databases which, sadly, has consistently run significantly above the inflation rate for the consumer price index (CPI). For example, according to Library Journal, 4/15/2017, Vol. 142 Issue 7, the projected inflation rate for serials in 2018-19 is approximately 6%. This is similar to the past several years. The latest figures for the book inflation rate (2015-16) also show it was above the CPI but at a more modest rate of 3.4%. By comparison, the CPI inflation rate hit a high in 2016 and 2017 of only 2.5%. The persistently higher inflation rate for library materials, especially journals, compounds the damage caused by any cuts in the Library budget. Because of the damaging effect of serials inflation, the Library has traditionally been asked for the projected serials inflation rate and the budget allocation adjusted accordingly. The past two years of budget cuts have negated these adjustments.

The Biola Library has experienced a decrease of expenditures amounting to $89 per FTE student in the past 2 years. Decreasing expenditures further can be done if we cut into our collections, electronic resource subscriptions, and the services provided to the Biola students and faculty. However, these are the resources that Biola Library patrons indicate that they value. Moreover, the Library is currently seeking to meet new demands that include expanding our STEM resources to support the new School of Science, Technology and Health. Library resources in these STEM disciplines traditionally cost more than similar information resources in other fields. In tandem with this need the Library is also currently seeking to create a new Biola Academic Research Center to support a more robust research culture on campus. This would focus on scholarly communication and support faculty research, grant writing as well as upper-level undergraduate and graduate research. We believe this strategic goal is key to advancing the University aspiration to attract and develop outstanding Christian scholars. The Library has yet to factor in the impact of the new School of Cinema and Media Arts. Considering these pressures on our existing funds any decreases will reduce the quality of Biola’s academic resources in ways that could easily negatively impact recruitment of both faculty and students — especially graduate students and online students. Therefore we cannot recommend this as a forward-looking plan.

We do seek Biola’s overall well-being and hope to support the academic vision into the future. The Library has one recommendation, that we contract with a consultant or group of experts to review our current public services functions, especially our reference and
access services. We are considering consolidating operations in these areas to reduce costs and renovating the entry spaces to make the Library more welcoming and inviting. Since this is a major change we believe external input would be prudent for this specific project.

Should there be other questions about the value Biola Library brings to the campus or how it compares to our peer institutions, we will be happy to provide further information.
Appendix: Institutional Repository

The institutional repository, digitalcommons.biola.edu, launched on September 23, 2016. In the first year, the digital repository made available archival and special collections. The second year of operation brought a focus on increasing the visibility and impact of research and scholarship by Biola faculty, students and staff.

Current holdings in the institutional repository now total 2,238 items:
- 1 peer reviewed open access journal
- 139 faculty books/book chapters links
- King’s Business Magazine and Biola Broadcaster Magazine
- Missionary films (mp4)
- Hunan Bible Institute – documents, film, photos
- Menahem Pressler Piano Master Classes (mp4)
- Biola Radio Hour messages, Charles Feinberg messages (mp3)
- Biola Radio Hour publications
- Louis Talbot – photos, publications

Usage Statistics:
- 97,868 page views;
- 3,960 media plays;
- 1,540 full-text downloads;
- Worldwide readership in the U.S. (749 reads), Japan (545 reads) and 39 other countries
Readership Activity Map snapshot for Digital Commons@Biola covering 9/2016-1/2018