

Thinking Boldly! College and University Library Mission Statements as Roadsigns to the Future

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Abstract

The future of libraries as both a physical and a virtual place is integral to the success of academic institutions. While speculation about the future viability of libraries is evident, it has been difficult to identify the directions libraries intend to go. New roles for academic librarians have been suggested in the literature, however, it has not been clear if these roles connect with expressed library mission and vision. In this study of California academic library mission statements, a content analysis of language reveals that the future academic library will blend traditional professional practice with an increased external response to the larger institution and community. Roadsigns for the future are suggested by a close examination of fifty-eight formal statements of purpose. These academic libraries describe through expressed language how multidimensional and complex the future is being defined. While boldness and imagination is evident, the research suggests that continuous revision and refinement of focus is needed.

Introduction

Within institutions of higher education, academic libraries stand as physical--and at the same time virtual--places for learning. Libraries contribute to learning in many ways: by the intelligent collection and arrangement of resources, through the teaching of how knowledge is organized, and in the creation of environments which foster reading, inquiry, and critical thinking. Yet, the role and function of an academic library within a college or university is not often understood.

The impact of technology and social change in the last several decades has affected institutions of higher education. Allen Veaner described the nature of change for academic libraries "in a transformational age" by summarizing factors which have impacted colleges and universities.⁽¹⁾ Examples are the impact of television and computers on communication and productivity; the impact of national public policy on governance and legislation; and the impact of economic shifts due to a declining tax base. An increasingly diverse population suggests rethinking the ways curricula are taught where language and cultural experience vary.

These technological, economical, and social factors are external to campus environments, yet they influence expectations regarding the value of a college degree. Academic libraries are a part of the perceived value of a college education so it would follow that the nature of future library planning is critical to institutional mission and success.

We are able to describe the nature of change in our institutions and libraries, but seem less prepared to describe how we intend to respond to that change. Sheila Creth suggests that the challenge of responding to change is not technical but rather personal; the roles and responsibilities of academic librarians need redefinition, and that knowledge, skills, and attitudes have to be reconsidered and reconstructed to meet future needs.(2) Librarians who are "bold and imaginative", in Creth's view, are needed to transform future academic libraries. To what degree are academic librarians thinking boldly and imaginatively?

Approaching a new century is a symbolic time where reflecting on the past, examining the present, and envisioning the future is evident. Thinking about the future is appropriate for institutions of higher education so that educational programming is adapted or transformed to provide a relevant learning experience useful in a changing and complex world. If the work of academic librarians contributes to the educational mission of an institution, how is it defined and what will it look like in the future? How do academic librarians see their roles in the 21st century? What values will shape directions for the future?

The purpose of this research project was to study how academic libraries describe their present and future contributions to college and university education so as to "chart" directions for the library of the next century. Choosing our future requires an examination of where we are, and where we intend to go. This study examines a sample of California college and university library mission statements as formal expressions of purpose and intended direction. Content analysis was employed to determine in what ways college and university library mission statements suggest or imply future roles for academic librarians, and future directions for the organizations they serve.

Why Study Mission Statements?

Usually derived from planning, the mission statement has been identified by researchers and practitioners as the most common form of communication to express organizational purpose, vision, and values. Mission statements are thought to be an essential component of forward-looking organizations.(3) While organizational purpose, vision, and values may be articulated in other internal documentation, the mission statement appears to offer the most succinct summary of mission and future forecasting. Research also suggests that the lack of a mission statement may indicate organizational ineffectiveness.(4) Patricia Jones and Larry Kahaner note in their compilation of 50 Corporate Mission Statements that Hit the Mark:

...mission statements were not just concepts and philosophies...[they] were well-thought out ideas that had helped [the companies] meet and exceed their financial dreams, treat their employees well, break free of a crisis, and stake out a piece of "the right thing to do". They were road maps for the high road.(5)

Academic libraries have initiated planning processes which yield mission statements, goals and objectives, long range budgets, and other documents which describe intended future direction. While not the definitive authority for library vision, academic library mission statements suggest current emphasis in purpose and the scenarios being contemplated for the future.

The Study

As previously noted by the author, research was conducted in 1995 to study California university, college, and specialized institutional library mission statements to examine stated mission (purpose), vision, and values language. A research sample was analyzed for language content as follows:

The mission statements of four year college, university, and specialized institutions of higher education were solicited. Two year institutions were not included in the study. Of the one hundred four (104) mission statements requested, sixty-five (65) libraries responded. Fifty-eight (58) mission statements were received with seven respondents indicating that no mission statement existed for their organizations.(6)

Table 1 notes the distribution of mission statements received by institutional category. Sixteen (16) university library mission statements were received, nine from research universities and seven from doctoral granting universities. Thirty-two (32) college library mission statements were received, twenty-three (23) from masters granting colleges and nine from baccalaureate granting colleges. Ten (10) specialized institutional library mission statements were received. (See Appendix A for Carnegie Classification institutional definitions.)

TABLE 1
RESEARCH SAMPLE
California College and University Library Mission Statements Studied (N=58)

CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION	Universities Total	Universities Subtotal	Colleges Total	Colleges Subtotal	Specialized Institutions Total
Research	9				
Research I		9			
Research II		0			
Doctoral	7				
Doctoral I		2			
Doctoral II		5			
Masters			23		
Masters I				20	
Masters II				3	
Baccalaureate			9		
Baccalaureate I				4	
Baccalaureate II				5	
Specialized - Religious					1
Specialized - Art & Design					2
Specialized - Health					1
Specialized - Other					6
TOTALS	N=16	N=16	N=32	N=32	N=32

Requests For Missions Statements in 1995 = 104

Number of Responses = 65 (7 Libraries indicated no mission statement existed)

Percent of Sample = 62.5%

The method of the study was to identify language, in phrases, which conveyed distinct ideas or concepts expressing library purpose (or mission)*, vision, and values as stated in the fifty-eight (58) mission statements received. Each distinct idea was noted, and the number of mission statements in which that idea was found was tallied. Because mission statements do not define terms, judgment was used to categorize language when variations in wording was evident.

* Purpose rather than mission is used throughout the paper so as not to be confused with mission statement.

Results

Tables 2 and 3 present the language used to express purpose and vision in fifty-eight (58) California academic library mission statements by type of institution, e.g. university, college, or specialized institutions. (Specialized institutions participated in the sample where they were identified as colleges or universities offering baccalaureate, masters, or doctoral degrees in a single discipline.) The frequency of mention and the percentage of institutional category is indicated. Tables 2, 3, and 4 rank language in descending order by frequency across all three library types. Since mission statements express any number of ideas, the analysis of language provides a generalized picture of what academic libraries are stating about purpose and vision.

TABLE 2.

Language Expressing Purpose In All California Library Mission Statements Sampled

Language Used	Universities	Universities	Colleges	Colleges	Specialized	Specialized
	(N=16): Number	(N=16): Percent	(N=32): Number	(N=32): Percent	Institutions (N=10): Number	Institutions (N=10): Percent
Supports Curriculum	9	57	14	44	4	40
Provides Access	7	44	15	47	5	50
Teaches Information Skills	5	31	13	41	2	20
Improves Institutional Outcomes	6	38	10	31	4	40
Serves as Gateway to Global Information	7	44	9	28	2	20
Integrates Print & Electronic Resources	2	13	12	38	4	40
Develops Collections	4	25	10	31	3	30
Facilitates Learning	5	31	10	31	2	20
Supports Research	9	57	5	16	1	10

Provides Physical Environment	5	31	5	16	2	20
Contributes to Quality of Campus Life	2	13	8	25	1	10
Develops Partnerships in Resource Sharing	3	19	5	16	2	20
Provides Students Personalized Attention in Complex Information World	1	6	6	19	0	0
Provides Continuing Education for Staff	1	6	4	13	0	0
Provides Cost Effective Service for Institution	2	13	2	6	0	0
Serves as Community Resource	1	6	1	3	2	20
Prepares Students for Changing Workplace	0	0	2	6	0	0

TABLE 3
Language Expressing Vision In All California Library Mission Statements Sampled

Language Used	Universities (N=16): Number	Universities (N=16): Percent	Colleges (N=32): Number	Colleges (N=32): Percent	Specialized Institutions (N=10): Number	Specialized Institutions (N=10): Percent
Intellectual/Knowledge Center	7	44	11	34	2	20
Major Contributor to Information Literacy	4	25	9	28	1	10
Electronic Locus/Virtual Library	3	19	5	16	1	10
Empower Students in Information Age	2	13	6	19	0	0
Cultural Resource Center	1	6	4	13	1	10
Sociocultural Responsiveness	3	19	2	6	1	10
Locus for Knowledge Management	2	13	4	13	0	0

Produce Leaders for Next Century	3	19	2	6	0	0
Teaching Library	1	6	4	13	0	0
Connector/Bridge to Distance Learning		0	2	6	2	20
Library Without Walls (Integrate Library Resources with other Campus Resources)	3	19	0	0	0	0

Table 4 provides a summary of the five most frequently noted expressions of purpose and vision for comparison across institutional categories. Values language referenced from another study by the author is also included. For purposes of organization, concepts mentioned in an equal number of mission statements which are also mentioned by other institutional categories were included in Table 4. In sum, Table 4 serves as a superficial index to the language most frequently expressed while the other tables provide the complete listing of language expressed by number and frequency.

TABLE 4
Summary of Frequently Expressed Purpose, Vision, and Value Language in California Library Mission Statements

Language Context	Universities	Colleges	Specialized Institutions
PURPOSE	Supports Research	Provides Access	Provides Access
	Supports Curriculum	Supports Curriculum	Supports Curriculum
	Provides Access	Teaches Information Skills	Improve Institutional Outcomes
	Gateway to Global Information	Integrates Print and Electronic Resources	Integrates Print and Electronic Resources
	Improves Institutional Outcomes	Improves Institutional Outcomes	Develops Collections
VISION	Intellectual/Knowledge Center	Intellectual/Knowledge Center	Intellectual/Knowledge Center
	Contributes to Information Literacy	Contributes to Information Literacy	Bridge to Distance Learning
	Electronic Locus/Virtual Library	Empower Students in Information Age	Contributes to Information Literacy
	Sociocultural Responsiveness	Electronic Locus/Virtual Library	Electronic Locus/Virtual Library
	Produces Leaders	Cultural Resource Center	Cultural Resource Center

VALUES 4	Quality/Excellence (Teaching/Service)	Lifelong Learning	Lifelong Learning
	Lifelong Learning	Diversity	Quality/Excellence (Teaching/Service)
	Public Service/Common Good	Quality/Excellence (Teaching/Service)	Effective Use of Resources
	Critical Thinking	Innovation	Adult Learning
	Scholarship	Public Service/ Common Good	Diversity

Analysis of Language Expressing Library Purpose

General Observations

When analyzing the language content across the university, college, and specialized institutional library mission statements as illustrated in Table 4, supporting the curriculum, providing access, and improving institutional outcomes are the purposes expressed 40% or greater by the three institutional types. (However, beyond these three stated purposes a wide variety of language was used yielding no clear pattern of frequency or ranking across the three institutional categories.) College and specialized institutional libraries both identify integrates print and electronic resources as one of the top five stated purposes as indicated by 38% and 40% of the respective samples. The remaining most frequently mentioned purposes noted in Table 4 occur as distinct emphasis for each of the institutional categories. For example, support of research and gateway to global information are frequently expressed purposes found in university library mission statements, but not found as frequently in those for colleges and specialized institutional libraries. The teaching of information skills was noted as a frequently mentioned expression of purpose for college libraries only. Specialized institutional libraries frequently included develops collections in their mission statements not so frequently noted by university or college libraries.

While analysis is offered below for each institutional library category, some generalizations are suggested when comparing use of purpose language across the three library types. It would appear that for all academic libraries studied, the historical and time-honored support of the curriculum remains a fundamental element of library mission. Providing the campus access to resources also remains a core purpose. Interestingly, the study revealed that for all libraries regardless of size and institutional mission a relationship to larger organizational outcomes is stated as an explicit library purpose. That this is stated so frequently, and by each type of academic library, strongly suggests that academic librarians intend a more externally focused role in the future.

In general, all three academic library categories frequently use language in mission statements which on the whole stresses a program-based connection to the educational environment, i.e. supporting curriculum and outcomes, rather than a traditional resource-based connection, i.e. developing collections. While the development of collections was expressed in seventeen of the fifty-eight mission statements studied, its prominence as a critical and overarching library mission appears diminished.

Since integrating print and electronic resources was mentioned frequently, the role of technology was noted in the study as a fundamental aspect of library mission in all three institutional categories. For university libraries, serving as a gateway to global information was noted among the top five most frequently

mentioned technology related purposes. These factors combined with the frequent occurrence of providing access suggests that academic libraries have identified a more external (networked) focus in their relationship to resources than the more traditional internal (repository) focus.

TABLE 2.1
Language Expressing Purpose in California University Library
Mission Statements (N=16)

Language Used	Number	Percent
Supports Research	9	57
Supports Curriculum	9	57
Promotes Access	7	44
Serves as Gateway to Global Information	7	44
Improves Institutional Outcomes	6	38
Facilitates Learning	5	31
Provides Physical Environment	5	31
Teaches Information Skills	5	31
Develops Collections	4	25
Develops Partnerships in Resource Sharing	3	19
Integrates Print & Electronic Resources	2	13
Contributes to Quality of Campus Life	2	13
Provides Cost Effective Service for Institution	2	13
Provides Students Personalized Attention in Complex Information World	1	6
Provides Continuing Education for Staff	1	6
Serves as Community Resource	1	6
Prepares Students for Changing Workplace	0	0

University Libraries

Table 2.1 provides the frequency of language used to express purpose as studied in sixteen university library mission statements. The largest number of university library mission statements, fifty-seven percent (57%), emphasized both support of research and the support of curriculum. These factors are consistent with the institutional research mission. However, it was interesting to note that the purpose expressed as develops collections, once a prime university library mission, was only mentioned in four of the sixteen university library mission statements, or 24% of the sample. Rated higher were the concepts of facilitates learning, teaches information skills, and providing a physical environment.

TABLE 2.2
Language Expressing Purpose in California College Library
Mission Statements (N=32)

Language Used	Number	Percent
Provides Access	15	47
Supports Curriculum	14	44
Teaches Information Skills	13	41
Integrates Print & Electronic Resources	12	38
Improves Institutional Outcomes	10	31
Develops Collections	10	31
Facilitates Learning	10	31
Serves as Gateway to Global Information	9	28
Contributes to Quality of Campus Life	8	25
Provides Students Personalized Attention in Complex Information World	6	19
Supports Research	5	16
Provides Physical Environment	5	16
Develops Partnerships in Resource Sharing	5	16
Provides Continuing Education for Staff	4	13
Provides Cost Effective Service for Institution	2	6
Prepares Students for Changing Workplace	2	6
Serves as Community Resource	1	3

College Libraries

Table 2.2 provides the frequency of language used to express purpose as studied in thirty-two (32) college library mission statements. College libraries represented the largest response rate in the research study, twice the response from university libraries, and three times the response from specialized institutional libraries. The high response rate from college libraries may indicate an increasing use of mission statements to communicate the distinct mission and values of college education as compared to university education.

Consistent with the teaching mission of colleges, over 40% of the mission statements from this institutional category stressed supports curriculum and the teaching of information skills in addition to the basic core purpose of providing access. Providing students personalized attention in an information age, mentioned by 19% of the college mission statements, was expressed more frequently than noted for university or specialized libraries. This appears consistent with college marketing of their commitment to provide students more one on one attention within a smaller, less complex institution. Not as consistent, however, is the observation that college library mission statements did not mention provision of physical environment as often as did university or specialized institutional libraries. The notion of place (e.g. location, size, beauty, or

safety of a campus) is usually associated with how an institution characterizes the learning environment it provides. The infrequent mention of physical place in colleges appears not to promote this institutional characteristic.

TABLE 2.3
Language Expressing Purpose in California Specialized
Institutional Libraries Mission Statements (N=10)

Language Used	Number	Percent
Provides Access	5	50
Supports Curriculum	4	40
Improves Institutional Outcomes	4	40
Integrates Print & Electronic Resources	4	40
Develops Collections	3	30
Teaches Information Skills	2	20
Serves as Gateway to Global Information	2	20
Facilitates Learning	2	20
Provides Physical Environment	2	20
Develops Partnerships in Resource Sharing	2	20
Serves as Community Resource	2	20
Supports Research	1	10
Contributes to Quality of Campus Life	1	10
Provides Students Personalized Attention in Complex Information World	0	0
Provides Continuing Education for Staff	0	0
Provides Cost Effective Service for Institution	0	0
Prepares Students for Changing Workplace	0	0

Specialized Institutional Libraries

Table 2.3 provides the frequency of language used to express purpose as studied in ten (10) specialized institutional library mission statements. With institutional mission emphasis on baccalaureate through doctoral degrees in a single discipline, the frequently stated purposes of integrates print and electronic resources and develops collections may suggest a continuing need to remain resource conscious. Like the college library, a specialized institutional library can not benefit from the resources of a larger institutional system. Mission statement emphasis for this institutional category on developing partnerships and gateway to global information suggests the importance of sharing resources.

While university and college library mission statements expressed all but one of the same stated purposes by varying frequency, it was interesting to note that the specialized libraries sampled did not mention several concepts expressed in the other two institutional categories: provide students with personalized attention in an information age, continuing education for staff, provide cost effective service, and prepare students for a changing workplace. The independent culture and graduate level focus of these institutions may explain why particular attention to students and staff were not highlighted. The lack of mention of preparing students for a changing workplace was surprising in that these institutions value lifelong and adult learning as noted in Table 4.

Analysis of Language Expressing Library Vision

General Observations

The examination of library mission statements sampled reveal forward-looking visions of the future where both academic and technologic roles are implied. The language expressed in these mission statements offer "roadsigns" for charting future directions for academic libraries.

The most striking observation in reviewing mission statement language is the occurrence across all three institutional categories of the vision of future libraries as intellectual/knowledge centers. This vision is broad and universal in its nature, consistent with the purpose language expressing the importance of connection to curriculum and institutional outcomes. The library as cultural resource center was also mentioned by some college, university, and specialized libraries. It is interesting to note that library as information center--a vision of the 1990s--was not mentioned in the sample. Clearly, the academic library of the next century is imagined to play a role beyond the providing information and resources.

As was noted in the analysis of purpose language, vision language also expressed that the future library would be shaped by technology. All three institutional categories referred to their library's future as electronic locus or virtual library and major contributor to information literacy. Specialized institutions expressed a particular emphasis in a vision of the library as connector or bridge to distance learning. While the development of academic programs based on distance learning technology is evident in many institutions, for specialized institutions that predominantly serve working adults this vision is especially relevant.

Finally, the examination of mission statement language for vision yielded indicators showing intentions to connect the library to the greater community. This was particularly true for the language used in university library mission statements where sociocultural responsiveness and contributions toward producing leaders for the next century were frequently mentioned. The notion of empowering students for an information age noted above falls into this generalization as an additional example of how academic libraries imagine their role in shaping future generations of students.

TABLE 3.1
Language Expressing Vision in California University Library
Mission Statements (N=16)

Language Used	Number	Percent
Intellectual/Knowledge Center	7	44
Major Contributor to Information Literacy	4	25
Electronic Locus/Virtual Library	3	19

Sociocultural Responsiveness	3	19
Produce Leaders for Next Century	3	19
Library Without Walls (Integrate Library Resources with other Campus Resources)	3	19
Empower Student in Information Age	2	13
Locus for Knowledge management	2	13
Cultural Resource Center	1	6
Teaching Library	1	6
Connector/Bridge to Distance Learning	0	0

University Libraries

Table 3.1 provides the frequency of language used to express vision as studied in sixteen (16) university library mission statements. The future university library as intellectual/knowledge center was noted in 44% of the sample. Playing a role as major contributor to information literacy was the second most frequently mentioned expression of vision, or 25% of the sample. However, the concept of teaching library, a futures-based vision developed initially by university libraries during the past decade, was only mentioned in one university library mission statement. Because connection to institutional outcomes emerged as an important element of university library mission, this vision language may indicate that the library's role in information literacy may take on a broader curricular emphasis within the institution rather than continue as a characteristic of traditional library instruction.

Of the six out of fifty-eight (58) library mission statements which mentioned sociocultural responsiveness, university libraries had the highest percent of frequency, or 19% of the sample. With this same percent of frequency, university libraries also noted their contribution to producing leaders for the next century. These indicators of future emphasis may be closely associated with university commitment to serving the public, and contributing to the common good.

TABLE 3.2
Language Expressing Vision in California College Library
Mission Statements (N=32)

Language Used	Number	Number
Intellectual/Knowledge Center	11	34
Major Contributor to Information Literacy	9	28
Empower Student in Information Age	6	19
Electronic Locus/Virtual Library	5	16
Cultural Resource Center	4	13
Locus for Knowledge management	4	13
Teaching Library	4	13
Sociocultural Responsiveness	2	6

Produce Leaders for Next Century	2	6
Connector/Bridge to Distance Learning	2	6
Library Without Walls (Integrate Library Resources with other Campus Resources)	0	0

College Libraries

Table 3.2 provides the frequency of language used to express vision as studied in thirty-two (32) college library mission statements. As with university libraries, college libraries stress a future vision of intellectual/knowledge center, not the current trend of the teaching center. This suggests that college libraries, like university libraries, are perhaps thinking more broadly and institutionally. While colleges are best described as having teaching missions, only 13% of the college library sample mentioned the teaching library concept as compared to the 34% which mention the intellectual/knowledge center.

A new road sign for future library directions emerged in the vision language expressed as library as cultural resource center. College library mission statements included this concept in the top five frequently expressed vision language where this concept was mentioned only once by university and specialized institutional libraries respectively.

Technology is a solid element of future directions for college libraries. Specifically, to empower students in an information age and the library as electronic locus/virtual library received frequent mention (19% and 16% of the sample respectively).

TABLE 3.3
Language Expressing Vision in California Specialized Institution Library Mission Statements (N=10)

Language Used	Number	Percent
Intellectual/Knowledge Center	2	20
Connector/Bridge to Distance Learning	1	10
Major Contributor to Information Literacy	2	20
Electronic Locus/Virtual Library	1	10
Cultural Resource Center	1	10
Sociocultural Responsiveness	1	10
Empower Student in Information Age	0	0
Locus for Knowledge management	0	0
Teaching Library	0	0
Produce Leaders for Next Century	0	0
Library Without Walls (Integrate Library Resources with other Campus Resources)	0	0

Specialized Institutional Libraries

Table 3.3 provides the frequency of language used to express vision as studied in ten (10) specialized institutional library mission statements. The library as intellectual/knowledge center and the library as connector/bridge to distance learning received the highest frequency of mention, or 20% of the sample for both concepts. Cultural resource center, contributor to information literacy, electronic locus/virtual library, and sociocultural responsiveness were each mentioned once for this institutional category. Table 3.3 illustrates how several expressions of vision language were not mentioned by specialized institutional libraries at all. With this modest sample size, it appeared that specialized institutional library mission statements do not express as many distinct vision concepts as those found for college and university libraries.

Library Values

The relationship of the values expressed in library mission statements to institutional distinctiveness has been discussed by the author in a separate publication using this same sample of California academic libraries.

When examining these college and university library mission statements for values language in the aggregate, libraries as organizations appear to have a rich and complex array of values or beliefs which inform their structures. However, when mission statements are examined by institutional category, or institution by institution, it is less clear how mention of certain values communicate a particular philosophy about its unique "theory of the business".(7)

Table 4 summarizes the most frequently mentioned values organized by institutional type. Lifelong learning, and quality service and teaching are identified by all three institutional categories as key values for their libraries. Diversity was frequently mentioned as a core value for college and specialized institutional libraries, but not for university libraries. Beyond these similarities, values expressed as critical thinking, innovation, and effective use of resources occur respective to one institutional category.

Implied Roles for Academic Librarians

Academic librarians have described through mission statements how their libraries contribute to the colleges or universities they serve. But because these mission statements illustrate the many and varied roles that librarians play, and the many services that libraries provide, a critical role for academic librarians is to more effectively define, synthesize, and communicate library purpose and vision in the context of institutional mission and culture.

Envisioning a future where librarians are active participants in the life of their campus, the nature and the value of how library programming makes a significant contribution to student learning must be articulated and understood. Without understanding, academic libraries will continue to be challenged by limited resources and political influence to garner the support required to attain the best in vision and future achievements.

As noted in this study, contribution to institutional outcomes is a clear choice in future library directions. This would imply that librarians need to be knowledgeable about institutional outcomes, and be responsible for integrating this knowledge into learning outcomes which mutually serves classroom and library programming. Linkage to institutional outcomes also suggests a rethinking of skill-based assessment to knowledge-based assessment.

The implication for the role of academic librarians where libraries become more program than resource based suggests that librarians need to be more active players in curriculum development, faculty collaboration, and institutional planning. This suggests a de-emphasis on collections expertise and an emphasis on curriculum expertise. Strengthening knowledge and skill in the art of teaching and pedagogy would position librarians to carry out future focus.

Roadsigns for the Future

his study of California academic library mission statements revealed that purpose, vision, and values language reflects the multifaceted and multidimensional nature of libraries. The libraries studied provided a picture of blended purpose: commitment to internally-focused professional practice related to the organization of information and collections, and an externally-focused response to the larger institution and community. While a clear and definitive path to the future was not presented by one institutional category or across all three, the study suggests that many emphases have emerged for library futures:

- active participation in the intellectual life of the institution;
- increased connection to successful learning outcomes;
- explicit contribution to student education;
- commitment to information technologies which enhance study, teaching, and research;
- development of programs consistent with institutional and professional values; and,
- renaissance of library as cultural center.

Conclusion

The future of the library as both a physical and a virtual place is integral to the success of academic institutions. While speculation about the future viability of libraries is evident in the literature, the popular press, and in informal conversations at professional meetings, it has been difficult to identify future library scenarios as intended or planned.

Future directions for academic libraries as summarized above answer Sheila Creth's question posed earlier: librarians are thinking boldly and imaginatively. Library purpose and vision have been expressed in this study as dynamic and outwardly focused. Academic librarians are thinking of the future in new and exciting ways. The array of concepts described in these mission statements demonstrates the complexity of the roles libraries play on college and university campuses. So does it also demonstrate the need for continuous revision and refinement of focus.

Appendix A. Definitions of Institutional Categories

(from A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 1994 edition, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.)

Research Universities I

Offer full range of baccalaureate programs; committed to graduate education through the doctorate; give high priority to research; fifty or more doctoral degrees awarded per year; receive \$40 million or more in federal support per year.

Research Universities II

Offer full range of baccalaureate programs; committed to graduate education through the doctorate; give high priority to research; fifty or more doctoral degrees awarded per year; receive \$15.5 to \$40 million in federal support per year.

Doctoral Universities I

Offer full range of baccalaureate programs; committed to graduate education through doctorate; at least forty doctoral degrees awarded per year, in five or more disciplines.

Doctoral Universities II

Offer full range of baccalaureate programs; committed to graduate education through doctorate; at least ten doctoral degrees awarded per year, in three or more disciplines, or, twenty or more doctoral degrees in one or more disciplines awarded per year.

Master's (Comprehensive) Colleges & Universities I

Offer full range of baccalaureate programs; committed to graduate education through the master's degree; forty or more master's degrees awarded in three or more disciplines per year.

Master's (Comprehensive) Colleges & Universities II

Offer full range of baccalaureate programs; committed to graduate education through the master's degree; twenty or more master's degrees awarded in one or more disciplines per year.

Baccalaureate (Liberal Arts) Colleges I

Primarily undergraduate colleges with emphasis on baccalaureate degree programs; forty percent or more of baccalaureate degrees are awarded in the liberal arts fields; restrictive in admissions.

Baccalaureate Colleges II

Primarily undergraduate colleges with emphasis on baccalaureate degree programs; less than forty percent of baccalaureate degrees are awarded in the liberal arts fields; less restrictive in admissions.

Specialized Institutions

Offer baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degree programs; fifty percent or more degrees awarded in single discipline; common discipline specializations are fields of religion and theology, medicine, other health, engineering and technology, art, music, and design, law; other specializations.

NOTES

1. Allen B. Veaner, *Academic Librarianship in a Transformational Age: Program, Politics, and Personnel* (Boston, Massachusetts: G.K. Hall & Co., 1990).
2. Sheila Creth, "A Changing Profession: Central Roles for Academic Librarians", in *Advances in Librarianship*, ed. by Irene Godden (San Diego, Ca.: Academic Press, 1995), 19:85-98.
3. Sharon Nelton, "Put Your Purpose in Writing", *Nation's Business*, 82 (Feb. 1994): 61-64.
4. R.Duane Ireland and Michael A. Hitt, "Mission Statements: Importance, Challenge, and Recommendations for Development", *Business Horizons*, 35 (Mar.-June 1992):34-39.
5. Patricia Jones and Larry Kahaner, *Say It and Live It: the 50 Corporate Mission Statements that Hit the Mark* (New York, N.Y.: Currency/Doubleday, 1995).

6. Stephanie Rogers Bangert, "Values in California College and University Mission Statements: A Search for Distinctive Beliefs, Meaning, and Organizational Culture", accepted for publication in *Advances in Librarianship*, ed. by Irene Godden (San Diego, Ca.: Academic Press, 1997).
7. Ibid.