**Lunch with LAUC-I**
**November 12, 2003**
**Discussion Notes**

## Topic: What It Means to be a Professional

- Expectations:
  - Of colleagues as "professionals"
  - How to communicate to librarians new to UCI
- Unspoken ethos - widely shared* (some articulated, some not)
- Professionals have less clear expectations of inputs/outputs
  - Less defined/definite – more freedom
  - Leeway to pursue opportunities
- * What is professionalism?
  - Service orientation
  - Open access to information, empowerment
  - Preservation of information to assure access
  - Broad curiosity, wide knowledge ~ bring to whatever doing and able to pass on to others
  - What makes librarians unique? Different from "para-professionals"
  - Perceived constraints of professionalism
  - **Academic** professionals/librarians; makes a difference
- 2 ways to view –
  1. "Professionalism" dress, etc.
  2. Training, code of ethics
- More obligation to
  1. Think broadly (e.g., Entire library)
  2. Fulfill responsibilities within broader guidelines, set own goals and processes
  3. More latitude and more responsibility to get job done and manage own work and workflow
- Personal fulfillment and investment dimension
- Pride in work
- Institutional expectations - different levels of autonomy and decision-making credentialing – library degree, etc. = met minimum level of recognition as "professional"
- "Professional approach" = take job seriously
- "Self-regulating"
- Librarian's position in UC resides in person not job (unlike staff) – activities on the job and in the profession
- Librarians have job/position responsibilities but not tied to specific hours – work when job requires (except where work demands require specific hours)
- External perceptions of librarians work day/week eg. faculty do not always understand we work evenings, weekends, other hours
- Important to convey service orientation, values
- Commitment to constructive dialogue

- Trust in all directions
- do we desire "codification" of expectations?
- Shared activities/knowledge ~ eg. Post CVs on LAUC-I web site
- ACRL document re Academic Librarian – suggest we review collectively and link to webpage?
- Respect important ~ eg. criticismof others' activities often a problem and double-standards all over
- What are expectations from unit heads, supervisors, department heads, etc.??
- Change over time – different levels/expectations now as management or line librarians; librarians newly out of library school have different sense, eg. Asking about hours, etc.
- We are not talking the same language now; might be good to codify expectations??
- Attitude towards what you do irrespective of hours set or not and how what you do reflects/impacts others
- Try to reach common understandings
- Collegiality especially when there is a problem to address
    - Separate personal from professional
    - Issues to move work of organization forward
- Bottom line trust and respect
- Ability to challenge and discuss professional issues, engage in dialogue
- Have lots of structure and constraints on time; try to manage what's left
- Modeling professional behavior
- What are Department Head responsibilities??  Needs broader identification/ communication
- Shared responsibility to model professional behavior – important that this come from peers
- Not something imposed on you; something you articulate and formulate over time; changes with experience, new knowledge and relationships/interaction
- Commitment
- Would be a nightmare to try to codify – need to all contribute to building a culture of professionalism
- What about corrective action?
- Have no idea of responsibilities of department heads
- Find a constructive solution; ask
- What are expectations among librarians as peers versus between supervisor and librarian
- Propose scenario-based discussion regarding professionalism
- Conflict avoidance but better to try to talk about with parties involved
- Meaningful to have constructive input come from a peer
- Scenarios provide ways to think about in advance, consider strategies, discuss problematic situations in external way; taking out of personal realm; provides tools