PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE RETENTION OF RETROSPECTIVE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS COLLECTIONS WITHIN THE UC LIBRARIES

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Government publications represent one of the major intellectual assets of the UC Library System and given the special space issues involved on local campuses and within the Northern and Southern Regional Library Facilities, this proposal recommends that the time has come for the UC Libraries to develop a comprehensive plan for how its significant investment in retrospective collections of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) will/should be managed, preserved, deselected and retained. Most of the UC libraries have participated in the FDLP as selectives since the early 1960s; with Berkeley becoming a selective as early as 1884. The UC Libraries have also maintained a system for the collection and management of state and local documents which has not been reviewed in a number of years.

These collections continue to be invaluable intellectual assets for data not easily available elsewhere and as primary sources of information for both historic and current research. Additionally, as a land grant and public research university, the world class library system of UC has a major role to play in ensuring secure access to the publication output of the FDLP as well as those of local, national, and international government agencies. Since the mid 1990s, federal and state government agencies have progressively migrated to a digital publishing and distribution environment. However, enormous challenges continue to exist as how best to manage, retain, preserve, and make accessible the retrospective print formats in view of the relatively unstable digital transition and until low cost large scale digital projects can be securely implemented and funded for the retrospective collections in the FDLP program.

One of the Key recommendations of the NGTS Enterprise Level Collection Management Services Task Force final report released on September 22, 2010:

While this goal may be too broad, we see merit in ensuring that UC has a collection of retrospective publications from the major federal agencies and local California agencies, at a minimum.

There are several premises of NGTS report that require further investigation/clarification:

The space savings from reducing duplicate print holdings in the UC libraries is becoming a reality, and is already in progress on several campuses, and has much potential for FDLP materials, if done in accordance with an organized plan. A major concern is that there is no coordination of this effort, so that the UC scholarly community may be left with significant gaps in FDLP holdings as each campus assumes another will maintain the most valuable parts of their collection. Future digitization efforts will include many more government documents than those already digitized, but in the meantime the UC Libraries should ensure that we have in place a well considered and comprehensive plan for access to and preservation of a retrospective print UC collection. It is clear from various studies that resolution to these concerns on a national
scale will not be found singlehandedly, within individual regional and selective depository systems, within the State of California, nor in any states that have seriously analyzed the issues given the scale of the costs involved in producing cataloging records and space constraints. It is also clear that the California State Library does not have the resources to satisfactorily address the issues. Many states have concluded that just one copy in the regional state library is not enough. Nor can sole reliance be placed on the Superintendent of Documents Office in how to best address the issues of local and regional access to the pre-1976 retrospective collections of the FDLP collections. The University of California should, therefore, take the lead to work internally and collaboratively with the State Library in addressing the challenge of managed access to and preservation of these resources.

Several models could be explored by the UC system:

- Considering to collaborative retention among the 10 UC campuses or interested campuses
- Considering establishing selected centers of excellence among the 10 campuses of UC
- Considering establishing centers of excellence by working with the state library and the 10 campuses of UC Working with the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries and/or other research libraries of the West to develop a multi-state model for retention of retrospective FPLP collections.

A review of the experience of several collective/collaborative plans that are ongoing or in the development stage would serve the UCs well:

- The concept of Centers of Excellence model in the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) proposal for management and disposition of federal depository library collections:
  


- Ithaka S+R FDLP Modeling site: [http://fdlpmodeling.net/](http://fdlpmodeling.net/)

To address these concerns, we recommend that the CoUL charge SOPAG to appoint a Government Information Librarians Committee or Task Force from appropriate Bibliographer groups to develop a plan that will ensure a comprehensive retrospective collection of U.S. government information within the UC system. This would include publications in the RLFs as well as those that currently remain housed in the campus libraries. We recommend that two ULs with the interest, time, and commitment to undertake this task be appointed to co-chair the Task Force or Committee to facilitate administrative input into the fiscal and spatial implications of the plan; or two ULs to serve as consultants or ex-officio members of the Task Force. We further recommend that as a component of the analysis and plan the Task Force also be charged to review the current UC plan for state government publications to determine the efficacy and merits of the current system of collecting and archiving those resources.

Benefits that would accrue to the UC system:

- Space planning
- Planned preservation of the key retrospective collections
- *Facilitating digitization planning significant contribution to enhancing the information environment of the State of California as a land-grant and public research university?
- Contribution to collaborative efforts among major research libraries to preserving research and cultural heritage on a national scale