

## **Quality Assurance at the University of the Philippines Library System**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Quality assurance is defined as the totality of planned systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy the customer requirement (Glowacka, 2002). According to a vast majority of accrediting associations around the world, quality assurance is synonymous or equivalent to accreditation. The German Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation of the United States, with more than 60 American national, regional, and specialized accrediting organizations as members, and the Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities, use the two terms interchangeably. However, there are other countries that make a distinction between the two terms. They look at accreditation as something universities do themselves and to themselves; quality assurance is what an outside agency does (Cruz, 2005).

The University of the Philippines serves as the standard of higher education in the Philippines. It does not submit itself to outside agencies for accreditation. In the same manner, the University of the Philippines Library System does not have to go into accreditation for it to be recognized and operate as a partner in the pursuit of higher education. The UPDLS is the largest library system in the country not only of its vast and varied resources but also in the magnitude of its programs and services. However, the University and its colleges, offices, research and administrative units maintain some sort of quality assurance of their programs and services. It creates instruments for which its programs and services are evaluated. In effect the University practices quality assurance or accreditation upon itself.

In any service-oriented organization or even a profit-oriented business enterprise, quality assurance plays a vital role as it may make or unmake said organization or business enterprise. It is safe to say that the lack of quality assurance or absence of it in the delivery of services may render an organization useless and finally its demise.

The University of the Philippines Library System (UPLS) is no different from the above-mentioned organization or business enterprise. It needs to provide services that would meet its clientele satisfaction. Because the UPLS is a tax-supported institution, it is imperative that its services must meet the requirement of its academic clients. To ensure customer satisfaction and attract substantive financial support from government as well as private institutions and foundations, the UPLS applies quality assurance at all levels of its operations and services.

This paper presents the UPLS experience at ensuring quality assurance in its operations and services so that its academic customers' satisfaction is continuously met.

## II. RESOURCES AND SERVICES OF THE UPDLS

### **THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES**

The University of the Philippines (UP) is the premier state university of the Philippines. It was established in 1908 to provide advanced training in the arts and sciences. Throughout its history, UP has played a leading role in responding to the needs of the nation, stressing academic excellence and quality learning. This role finds expression in the University's principal functions: instruction, research and community service. It offers a wide variety of courses and has produced renowned experts in various academic fields. Many national leaders have graduated from the University. Regarded as the "bastion of freedom," it has produced intellectuals whose critical thinking continues to influence all walks of life. It enjoys international recognition for the academic and non-academic achievements of its students and faculty members.

After 97 years, UP has become a "multiversity." It has now established its presence in all major islands and groups of the archipelago through its seven autonomous units which have evolved into centers of excellence: **UP Diliman** (units for arts and sciences), **UP Manila** (health sciences), **UP Los Baños** (agricultural sciences), **UP Visayas** (fisheries and aquatic resources), **UP Mindanao** (environmental management), the **OPEN University** (distance education), and **UP Baguio** (arts and sciences)

### **THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LIBRARY SYSTEM (UPLS)**

The UPLS is a network of libraries located in seven campus universities, each of which has a Main Library managed by a University Librarian and several college or unit libraries staffed by professional librarians.

The UP System has a University Library Council composed of University Librarians, Vice-Chancellors for Academic Affairs and student representatives with the Vice-President for Academic Affairs as Chair, to coordinate library-related projects like its digitization, networking and inventory control, as well as to evaluate and implement policies referred to it by the policy-making bodies under it. Policies are decided by the President of the UP and approved by the UP Board of Regents before they are implemented. The Library Council acts as the policy-making body in the operation and maintenance of unified standards pursuant to the concept of a totality of library resources and services of a multi-campus university. It adopts rules and regulations for the university system-wide application, subject to the approval of the President of the university; establishes mechanisms for coordinating and implementing a library services network; and assists the President in the allocation of library grants and donations.

Each autonomous campus has a Library Board with faculty and student representatives, the University Librarian as Secretary and the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs as Chair to make policies on library collection development, library fees, staff welfare and development, services programs of the university library and others.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN LIBRARY SYSTEM (UPDLS)

### MISSION, VISION, GOALS

The UP Diliman University Library's mission is to provide library users the best possible access to information in support of instruction, research and extension; and the best possible information services through the use of new ICTs as applied to libraries.

Its vision is to be among the best academic libraries in the region in terms of library resources and quality of information services provided to users.

It has three goals, namely: strengthening library resources and services; automation of the Main and Unit Libraries; and Human Resources Development.

The UPDLS develops its resources and design its services based on these mission, vision, and goals.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE UPDLS

UP Diliman is the flagship campus of UP. The University Library UP Diliman has one Main Library and 33 College/Unit Libraries. The University Librarian supervises the Main Library and in coordination with the College Deans, the College/Unit Libraries as well. Each college has a Library-Faculty Committee with the following functions: 1. recommends the acquisition of books, periodicals and other library materials based on the needs of the College to ensure a well-balanced collections development program; 2. adopts policies consistent with university rules and regulations to meet the College's special need; 3. assists in acquiring additional library resources including funds, books, equipment, etc.; and 4. serves as a link between the library and the faculty and staff of the College.

### RESOURCES

Library resources consist of books, periodicals, non-print materials, including electronic resources on CD-ROM and online resources, and special local collections/materials, pamphlets, theses and dissertations, microforms, sound recordings, video recordings in beta, video home system (VHS), and CD-ROMs. Size of the collection for the entire UPDLS is 1,139,257 volumes of books and 29,461 serial titles broken down as follows:

Main Library	Book & Non-Book Materials	Serial Titles
Archives	39,800	789
Arts and Letters	52,463	784
Filipiniana Book	96,185	
Filipiniana Serials		4,904
Foreign serials		2,094
General Reference	35,655	377
Media Services	14,351	
Social Science	90,589	7,705
TOTAL	329,043	16,653

College/Unit Libraries

Archaeological Studies Program	1,175	1,077
Architecture	15,657	214
Asian Center	49,924	484
Asian Institute of Tourism	11,056	85
Business	33,927	504
Economics	87,830	547
Education	84,665	405
Engineering	69,032	1,917
Fine Art	9,580	99
Home Economics	32,487	392
Human Kinetics	8,055	104
Integrated School	30,758	44
Islamic Studies	3,551	104
Labor & Industrial Relations	10,934	509
Law	91,380	1,186
Library Science	12,376	413
Mass Communication	30,123	1,084
Music	38,409	109
Population Institute	5,181	208
Public Administration	49,924	363
Science	63,431	1,709
Social Work & Community Development	17,175	483
Statistics	12,191	81
Technology Management Center	1,185	12
Third World Studies Center	7,821	65
UP Pampanga	10,166	35
Urban & Regional Planning	22,221	575
Total	810,214	12,808
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,139,257</b>	<b>29,461</b>

The electronic journal subscriptions include Litfinder on literature, WestLaw on legal resources, Proquest Academic Research Library, IEEE/IElectronic Library, Ovid's Current Content, Search Science Direct, and Scopus on humanities, life, physical and social sciences. Also available via the Philippine e-Lib Project are the EBSCO Complete Academic Package covering 10 databases (Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, Biomedical Reference Collection, Computer Source, ERIC, Information Science and Technology Abstracts, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, Sociological Collection, Military and Government Collection, MAS Ultra, ACM Digital Library, AIP/APS Journals, Britannica Online, Compendex, IEEE Computer Society Digital Library, XreferPlus, ACS Journals, ASTM Standards Databases & Index, CAB Abstracts and Project Euclid. The UP Library home page is also linked to around 20 open access electronic journals and 4 electronic books.

The UPDLS homepage (<http://www.mainlib.upd.edu.ph>) not only provides links to these electronic journals but also provides access to the bibliographic resources of the UPDLS through its OPAC, including the Filipino language and Manuel A. Roxas Papers databases.

Altogether, the libraries of UP Diliman, which are strategically located in different parts of the campus, have a seating capacity of 3,000 readers at any given time.

The Main Library also houses a number of special collections namely: Women Studies Collection, Human Rights Papers (SELDA), UP Publications, Bicol, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Ilocano, Pampango and Tagalog Collections, Local History File, Picture File, Art Works such as paintings and sculpture, Government Documents, Seminar Papers and Filipiniana Articles in Foreign journals and Rare Filipiniana Books.

The Main Library of the University of the Philippines in Diliman is also the official archival agency of UP. Established in 1974, the University Archives and Records Depository houses University records of permanent value and personal papers of University administrators, faculty, and alumni. Foremost of these are the official records of the Board of Regents, Executive Committee, University Council, administrative officials of the university, individual records of Diliman colleges and units, official publications such UP Gazette, UP Newsletter, Philippine Collegian, reports of committees created by the UP President and Board of Regents, memorabilia, plaques, trophies, pins, posters, photographs and theses and dissertations of the colleges. On display at the Archives are contributions of the UP to the celebration of the Centennial of the Republic of the Philippines in 1989.

The Archives maintains computerized indexes to the Philippine Collegian, UP Gazette, and the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Regents for easy retrieval by officials, students and researchers. A Conservation Laboratory was set up in the Archives in 2000.

## **SERVICES**

Aside from the usual reference, circulation, cataloging, information and bibliographic and indexing services, the UPDLS offers a variety of other services, such as:

1. Binding, microfilming, digitizing and other preservation methods;
2. Computerized acquisitions;
3. Document delivery;
4. Exhibits;
5. E-mail, Internet access;
6. Inter-library-loans;
7. Institutional linkages;
8. Library orientation, tours, lectures and other education services;
9. Media services
10. Reader's advisory services
11. Referrals
12. Research and publications
13. Extension/Community services

The libraries are open Mondays through Saturdays. They are closed on Sundays and holidays. Due to demands from the UP community, the General Reference Section, Main Library has been kept open until midnight Mondays through Fridays since 2000. Use of the

OPAC, Internet and materials from other library sections are offered after 6:00 p.m. in the General Reference Section.

The UPDLS is also a major partner in the **Philippine eLib** project, a computerized resource that offers the following services:

1. Current awareness service;
2. Selective dissemination of information;
3. Full text downloading;
4. Literature searches;
5. Document delivery;
6. E-Journal subscription;
7. Mailing List; and
8. Rapid responsive and knowledgeable customer support (guaranteed 24 hours response time).

The computerized system used by the UPDLS is MAELISA, a system that can be customized to suit the requirements of the UPD libraries. The distinctive features of MAELISA which make it ideal for academic, special, medical, and research libraries, are as follows:

1. MARC compatibility which allows one to download or copy similarly machine-readable (MARC) records from databases, like OCLC' CATCD, ITS for Windows and Library of Congress Online Catalog for cataloging purposes;
2. Z39.50 compliant which allows worldwide search of databases with Z39.50 servers;
3. Automatic shelf-list Card Generation which can be saved to other formats like text, rtf or html;
4. Automatic overdue notification through SMS or Email for the delinquent borrowers;
5. Online Bulletin for posting and reading messages by library users;
6. Automatic Reservation of library materials directly from OPAC terminals or through the Internet;
7. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) to users regarding the availability of materials in their topic of interest through SMS or Email;
8. Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) services for inter-library loan, including photocopy requests;
9. Supports Multimedia Files which allows saving and viewing on images, sound and video clips in the database; and
10. Supports Linking to Online resources available in the Local Area Network or a UPL found in the World Wide Web.

### **III. QUALITY ASSURANCE AT THE UPDLS**

Standards for UPDLS operations, staff performance and services are drawn from policies and decisions arrived at by the University's policy-making bodies. At different levels of the hierarchy, policies are shaped and standards are set up to ensure quality of staff performance, resources, operations, and services of the UPDLS. This is a key feature of quality assurance as practiced at the UPDLS.

Consequently, the UPDLS developed instruments that reflect these policies. These are described below:

#### **UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ORGANIC ACT**

Adapted by the University Library Council of the UP System on its 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting, 22 February 1991, the University Library Organic Act and University Library Rules and Regulations indicate the various instrumentalities of the University Library and regulate the manner of their operation. They are the guidelines by which faculty members, researchers, students and the public in general may use the library facilities, and avail themselves of its services as effectively as possible in their endeavor to contribute to the world's fund of knowledge. This organic act was promulgated to realize the library's goal to truly serve the University of the Philippines in its pursuit of truth, knowledge and wisdom.

The organic act contains a preamble, a general policy statement and 10 articles, namely:

Article I	The University Library
Article II	The University Library Council
Article III	The University Library Board
Article IV	The University Librarian
Article V	The College Librarian
Article VI	The College Library Committee
Article VII	Resources
Article VIII	Book Fund and College Library Fund
Article IX	Users of the University Library
Article X	University Library Rules and Regulations

#### **ACQUISITION POLICIES AND MANUAL OF PROCEDURES**

The guidelines on acquisitions are subsumed under ten topics, namely:

1. Ordering. Certain requirements have to be met prior to processing of book orders coming from both the unit/college libraries and sections of the UP Main Library.
2. Verification of Allotment. This is done to ensure that allotments are available for the purchase of library materials.
3. Selection and Recommendation. The rules specify duplication policies for books and periodical subscription, limits on cost of books that may be purchased, etc.

4. **Canvass and Quotations.** Because the UPDLS is a government agency, canvassing and quotations of prices of books to be purchased must first be obtained from several book dealers prior to processing of payments of such library materials.
5. **Periodical Subscription.** Specifies the types of subscription allowable and sets the procedures to be followed for renewals, claims/receipt of missing issues, and cancellation of subscriptions.
6. **Accessioning and Bar Coding.** The rules under this heading include a mandatory accessioning of purchased library materials and the assignment of bar codes for each title/volume purchased. An accession inventory list is prepared not only for processing of payment purposes but also as a record keeping requirements of purchasing unit/college library/sections of the Main Library and the government auditing office assigned at the University of the Philippines Diliman.
7. **Currency Conversion.** Specifies the formula for the conversion rate to be used for the computation of the actual price of the materials for purchased.
8. **Processing of Invoice Payment.** Certain supporting documents have to be obtained prior to processing of payments. These documents include, among others, requisition issue voucher, inspection report, Commission on Audit acceptance report, letter order, accession inventory list, canvass/quotations, bank certification, photocopy of invoice or proof of payment, and certificate of sole/exclusive distributorship.
9. **Procedure for processing of payment for acquired library materials not chargeable against funds not administered by the UPDLS is also provided.**
10. **Communication.** Procedures for communicating problems concerning selection, ordering, payment, etc. are also specified in this acquisition policies and procedures.

### **RULES AND REGULATIONS ON READERS SERVICES**

Specified in the rules and regulations on readers services are the type of library users the UPDLS serves with corresponding library and borrowing privileges and charges for use of equipment. The rules also specify cost of fines for late return of circulation and reserve books and charges for lost books.

### **CATALOGING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The rules name the various tools used by the UPDLS to describe and classify library materials. Also provides specific guidelines in the cataloging and classification of special collections (e.g. Filipiniana), the establishment and maintenance of catalog records and files such as the union shelf-list, name, subject and series authority files. The guidelines also specifies the level of detail in bibliographic description, provision of analytics and choice and forms of headings for special and Filipiniana materials and specific rule deviations from the standard tools. The library's computerized catalog record is in MARC 21 format making it compliant with ISO 2709.



## **INDEXING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

One of the oldest but continuing services in the country is UPDLS' indexing services. Its product, the Index to Philippine Periodicals, is being subscribed to by hundreds of libraries and research centers in the country as well as abroad. It is available on CD-ROM and in print. The Bibliography and Indexing Section of the UPDLS Main Library developed a manual and procedures that follows many of the provisions as set forth in **ISO 999: Information and Documentation—Guidelines for the Content, Organization and Presentation of Indexes**, Second edition, 1996 and **ISO 5963 : Documentation—Methods for examining Documents, Determining their Subjects, and Selecting Index Terms**.

## **LIBRARY STAFF MANUAL**

Provides information and guidelines on the following:

1. Personnel Policies and Procedures from the Civil Service Memorandum Circulars, such as:
  - a. Recruitment and selection
  - b. Policy on government working hours
  - c. Position classification and pay plans
  - d. Promotions and performance evaluation
  - e. Personnel actions
  - f. Conduct and discipline
  - g. Complaints and grievances
2. Employee Benefits and Privileges
  - a. Leave of absence
  - b. General benefits
  - c. Benefits from the University
3. General Information and Other Matters
  - a. Special detail
  - b. Outside activities
  - c. Secondment
  - d. Teaching in other educational or training institutions
  - e. Limited practice of profession and management of private enterprises
  - f. Invitation to speak in other educational institutions
  - g. Reports and disclosures
  - h. Penalties

## **STANDARDS FOR LIBRARY STAFF SIZE**

The standards on staff size was set up to ensure that the University Library shall have adequate number and variety of staff to develop, organize and maintain the collection, and to provide reference and information services in support of the instructional, research and extension functions of the university.

The size of the library staff shall depend primarily on three factors: enrollment, collections size, and growth of the collection. Among other institutional and organizational factors to be considered are the library services and programs, as well as the academic degrees offered and the size of the faculty and staff.

The library personnel should consist of professional, clerical and administrative staff. The librarians should perform the core academic and professional functions of the library; collections development, reference services, and essential activities associated with bibliographic control of materials. A ratio of 2 support staff to 1 librarian should be provided. All categories of personnel should have appropriate education and experience as qualified in the description and classification of University Library positions.

The standards provide the following formula to arrive at a standard library staff size:

- a. Size of Enrollment. For each 500, or fraction thereof, FTE (full-time equivalent) students for the first 10,000, one librarian should be provided.
- b. Size of Collection. For each 50,000 volumes, or fraction thereof, in the collection, one librarian should be provided.
- c. Growth of Collection. For each 2,500 volumes, or fraction thereof, added per year, one librarian should be provided.
- d. Hours of Service. For every 18 hours, or fraction thereof, exceeding the regular 40 hours of library service per week, one librarian should be provided.
- e. Services and Programs. For every 250 usage per day for the computer, archives and A/V services, one librarian should be provided.
- f. Degrees Offered. For every five (5) graduate degree programs with at least 250 students, one librarian should be provided.
- g. Size and Configuration of Facilities. For every library occupying more than two (2) floors, or two (2) physically separate units, one librarian should be provided.
- h. Size of Faculty and Staff. For every 150 faculty and staff, one librarian should be provided.

The foregoing were been arrived at based on several existing standards developed by the following institutions and organizations, namely: Philippine Association of Academic and Research Libraries (PAARL), Philippine Association of Accrediting Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU), Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), British Library Association, Canadian Association of College and University Libraries, and the Australian University Commission.

### **STANDARDS FOR LIBRARY COLLECTIONS**

The library holdings shall be adequate to meet curricular, instructional, research and extension programs of the institution. The collection shall consist of up-to-date and relevant books, serials, pamphlets, documents and non-book materials. The provision of textbooks is not the responsibility of the library but multiple copies of frequently used materials shall be provided.

For books, a core collection of 10,000 well-selected titles is necessary for the college/unit to effectively support its educational programs. In addition to the core collection, ten (10) titles shall be provided for every undergraduate student and twenty (20) titles for every graduate student.

For periodicals, a core collection of current and relevant titles (local and foreign) shall be provided also. The recommended number of periodicals based on enrollment is as follows:

Enrollment	No. of Periodicals (Technical/Professional Journals)
Less than 1,000 students	50
1,001-3,000 students	75
Over 3,000 students	100

Additional titles based on major fields offered are to be provided as follows:

For every field of undergraduate concentration or major subject field, additional 3 titles should be provided.

For every field of graduate concentration, additional 6 titles should be provided.

For every field of graduate concentration, doctoral work or equivalent, additional 10 titles should be provided.

There should be a continuing and carefully planned program of selecting and procuring library materials. The faculty shall actively participate in the selection of print and non-print materials especially in the area of specialization. The library on the other hand, shall set up written policies and procedures to facilitate and effectively carry out the selection and acquisition activities.

### **STANDARDS FOR STAFF PERFORMANCE**

Staff performance is evaluated based on a standard set up by the University Library and approved by University authorities. Each task assigned to a staff is given a minimum value for which evaluation is based which may be either, poor, fair, satisfactory, very satisfactory, or outstanding. A separate instrument is administered every six months for librarians and research staff and administrative/clerical staff.

#### **IV. ENSURING QUALITY ASSURANCE AT THE UPDLS**

The UPDLS employs several monitoring instruments to ensure quality assurance of its resources, services and programs. These are described below:

##### **STAFF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

This is done twice a year to determine how staff members are able/unable to meet standard of satisfactory performance. The result of the evaluation is one of the measures by which library services are gauged. If there are more staff members whose work performances are evaluated above the standard, this may mean that services and implementation of library programs are also more than satisfactorily delivered.

##### **UNIVERSITY LIBRARY EXECUTIVE STAFF MEETING**

The University Library Executive Staff composed of the University Librarian as Presiding Officer and Heads of Sections at the Main Library and Head College Librarian of College Libraries as members, meet bi-monthly to discuss a variety of concerns and issues among them evaluation of implementation of library programs and delivery of services. It is also in these meetings that standards and procedures are reviewed and revised as needed. Individual library section or college library's problems are brought out and suggestions for their solutions are recommended. Where an issue/concern becomes too complex, a committee is set up to study/research on the matter.

##### **COLLECTION EVALUATION**

The strengths and weaknesses of the collection are continuously evaluated thru the college faculty library committees, head librarians and feedbacks from the library's academic clients. Inventory and de-selection are undergone at least once a year. The UPDLS also allows students of library and information science students as well as students of related fields to evaluate the UPDLS resources, programs and services thru research projects as requirements for their graduation.

##### **REPORTS**

Head librarians are required to submit annual reports and other reports as may be required by the University Librarian and University authorities. These reports quantify and qualify library's achievements and failures concerning collection development, service delivery, and programs implementation.

##### **FEEDBACKS**

Through the UPDLS OPAC's online bulletin (visitor's area: guest book and library forum) feedbacks concerning services, resources, programs and others are collated and given attention immediately. The e-mail is regularly checked for other feedbacks from the library's clients.

The foregoing shows that although the UPDLS does not seek accreditation, quality assurance is one of the features of its operations. Perhaps, many of the features of quality assurance are being observed by UPDLS. We have set our goals and formulated quality policy. We have ensured clear-cut quality management organization. The UPDLS conducts regular internal audit and identifies activities and responsibility in the delivery of

services. Most especially, the UPDLS has an organizational set up that ensures control of all processes from the top to the lowest level of management.

Since ISO 9000 is widely used to evaluate performances and services of many libraries throughout the world, we have to go over again its features and compare them to what we are doing. In the end, we may be able to improve our standards and raise them higher than ISO 9000.

## V. CONCLUSION

The principles of Quality Assurance frequently refer back to the library's mission and vision statements, goals, objectives and strategies. It requires that library's top management by word and deed, display commitment to continuous quality improvement. Most importantly, the quest for quality must be given meaning through actions. Advocates of Quality Assurance call for organization whose culture is quality-driven, customer oriented marked by teamwork, and avid about improvement. Transformation, however, comes from many directions and cannot be accomplished quickly, cheaply, or easily. While professional knowledge, standards, and codes which have been developed over decades cannot be disregarded or summarily thrown aside, it would probably benefit librarianship, and other professions as well, to create ongoing dialogue with our customers for the purpose of better understanding and anticipating their information needs (Barnard, 1994).

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