



MICHIGAN ACADEMIC LIBRARY COUNCIL

ACADEMIC LIBRARY CASE STATEMENT

Revised and Final Version

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Endorsed by the MALC Deans & Directors

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Academic Library Case Statement: Introduction

This taskforce of the Michigan Academic Library Council was appointed to develop a case statement highlighting the value of academic libraries to the citizens of Michigan and the ways in which they contribute to economic development, education and literacy, and effective and efficient government. The purpose of this case statement is to add the academic library perspective to the overall library advocacy program being led by the Michigan Library Association. It will provide the talking points to be used by the Executive Director of MLA, Michigan librarians, and library advocates across the state so that they can speak with one well-informed voice to our state legislators. In order to present a strong and convincing case for increased support for all Michigan libraries, it is essential to speak with one voice and keep the focus of our message on how libraries benefit all Michigan residents.

Target Audience: Michigan Legislators and Academic Institutions

Academic Libraries are Critical to Creating a Strong Michigan

Academic Libraries and Economic Development

- “From my reference experiences I know we have assisted many community members who own businesses or are in the process of starting a business. These folks (young and older alike) have been directed to use some of our many print business resources such as business plans handbooks, books on buying a franchise, financing a small business, etc. Additionally, the 150+ business start-up guides (Entrepreneur Magazine) that we own continue to be used/copied from. Those start-up guides run the gamut- from starting an advertising agency to owning a wine/cheese shop. Those guides contain very good info on marketing, inventory, personnel, promotion, licenses & taxes, start-up costs, etc. I'd say that community college libraries offer and house a lot of resources that directly and indirectly affect the development of our state's economy.”¹
- “I know of someone who used the library last semester to develop a business plan to open a vegetarian restaurant in Benton Harbor.”²
- Academic libraries provide the necessary information and knowledge base required for students to be successful in higher education.
- Librarians collaborating with faculty teach students to conduct effective research and to analyze information whether it is online or in a variety of other formats. These life-long skills are critical to creating a vibrant workforce for Michigan businesses.
- The report “A New Agenda for a New Michigan” states: “The single most important thing policy makers can do for the economic success of Michigan and its regions is to ensure the long-term success of a vibrant and agile higher education system.”³
 - “For each dollar of state support, the [Michigan public] universities generated \$26 of economic impact.”⁴
 - “Business decision makers routinely cite the availability of a skilled workforce as the chief determinant of investment decisions, and communities whose residents have higher levels of education also have higher levels of economic growth.”⁵
 - “College educated workers tend to be paid 60% more than workers with only a high school degree. More surprising is the research finding that increasing the proportion of college graduates in a local economy will increase the wage rates of local residents other than those receiving more education.”⁶
 - Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that as educational levels increase, unemployment rates decrease. In 2003, the unemployment rate for those with a college degree was 3% vs. 8.5% for those with less than a high school diploma.⁷
 - Bill Gates has said: “There’s an almost perfect correlation between the number of jobs in a region and the strength of the universities.”⁸

Academic Libraries, Education and Literacy

- Libraries are an important consideration when students select a university or college.⁹
 - The **library ranked second** in terms of facilities important in the selection decision process; only facilities for the student’s major ranked higher. Libraries were ranked ahead of technology facilities, the student union center and even recreational facilities.
 - The library was also rated highly in terms of importance for retention. The study stated that four key areas (facilities in the student’s major, the **library**, classrooms and technology) rated high in importance and high in student satisfaction.
- In 2004, Michigan’s academic libraries reported conducting approximately 20,000 instructional sessions for an estimated 350,000 students, helping prepare them for life-long learning and a knowledge-based work world.
 - Students learn life-long skills that enable them to search and find authoritative information on the Internet and in the “deep web”, i.e. authoritative and reliable resources not freely available on the Internet.

- Michigan academic libraries answer more than 30,000 questions in an average week.
 - From a faculty member: In which journals, government documents, think tanks and private sources are we most likely to find comprehensive data on the monetary cost of disasters in the U.S., such as terrorist attacks, plane crashes, storms such as Katrina, heat waves, etc.?
 - From a grad student: My advising professor and I are working on a project to assess occupational segregation among Asian Americans, using U.S. census data from the past four decades (1960-2000). So far we have all the data tables we need except the 2000 data; where can we get the 2000 census data that specifically lists occupation by ethnicity?
 - From a patron: Where can I find a comparative list of the most highly-traveled or congested interstates (including beltways) in the U.S. for as recent a year as can be found?

Academic Libraries Contribute to Efficient and Effective Government

- Resource sharing and group purchasing of online content through the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) help libraries maximize their budgets and the taxpayers' investment.
 - MeL is the **Online Library** available anytime, anywhere at no cost for all Michigan residents.
- Libraries are great "equalizers" for economically disadvantaged and rural populations, providing information for all residents.
 - MeL meets these needs through resource sharing and group purchases of online content.
 - In 2006, MeL paid \$3.9 million for the online content/information provided to all residents, **saving the state \$193.4 million**, if every school, public, college and university had paid for this access; a huge saving by any standard.
 - Since 2000, **82.7 million articles have been viewed online or downloaded** by Michigan residents, representing an estimated \$248 million (\$3 per article).
 - Over 350,000 books, music, and other items were delivered to residents since January 2005, a **savings of \$23.9 million** for taxpayers.¹⁰
- Libraries collect, preserve, index, and provide access to authoritative information for residents and legislators.
 - MeL Michiganana began in 2003 with *The Making of Modern Michigan*, a rich digital collection on Michigan history for use in K-16 Michigan history modules. Academic and public libraries were joint partners in the creation of the collection.
- Resource-sharing among academic, public, school and business libraries helps achieve the Cherry Commission's recommendation to "Expand the role of higher education institutions in community development."¹¹
 - Most academic libraries allow anyone to walk in, conduct personal research, access subscription resources that would otherwise not be available to them, and check out materials.
 - For example, a senior citizen researching medical topics, a victim of downsizing exploring new employment possibilities, or a small business owner doing market research.
 - Many subscription resources are too expensive or specialized to be purchased for statewide use or for institutions with no courses in the topic, i.e. highly specialized online medical resources. Therefore local access via academic libraries is essential.

Academic Library as Place

- 550,000 persons visit Michigan academic libraries in a typical week; this would fill Spartan Stadium more than 7 times!
- In a typical month 11.7% of all Michigan households have someone who uses an academic library, which is higher than the national average of 10.3%.¹²
- At many universities, the library has the largest computer lab on campus and is the campus showplace for wireless access.

- A 2005 survey of students at the University of Michigan-Dearborn revealed that the top two reasons students come to the library are to seek information for research and to study in the building. For students visiting the library one or more times a week, study space was the top reason.
- A 2006 survey of college students found:¹³
 - 87% have visited a college library in person
 - 65% use their library at least monthly
 - Students confirmed that they used both their college and public libraries frequently

¹ Barbara Shipman, Librarian, Lansing Community College Library

² Anne Oyerly, Librarian, Andrews University James White Library

³ *A New Agenda for a New Michigan*. Michigan Future Inc., June 2006, p. 21

⁴ *The Economic Impact of Michigan's Public Universities*. Michigan Economic Development Corp., May 2002, p. 3

⁵ *Final Report of the Lt. Governor's Commission on Higher Education & Economic Growth*. Dec. 2004, p. 17

⁶ *Increasing the Economic Development Benefits of Higher Education in Michigan*. Upjohn Institute Staff Working Paper no. 04-106, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2004, p.3-4

⁷ Education levels and unemployment at end of 2003. Retrieved October 4, 2006, from Bureau of Labor Statistics website <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2004/apr/wk2/art02.htm>

⁸ *A New Agenda for a New Michigan*. Michigan Future Inc., June 2006, p. 21

⁹ *The Impact of Facilities on Recruitment and Retention of Students*. Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, 2006

¹⁰ Based on the 2005 average price of a book being \$68.20 as reported in *The Bowker Annual: Library and Trade Almanac, 2006* Information Today, Inc., 2006, p. 499

¹¹ *Final Report of the Lt. Governor's Commission on Higher Education & Economic Growth*. Dec. 2004, p. 4

¹² *Households' Use of Public and Other Types of Libraries: 2002*. National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Education, 2007, p. 9

¹³ *College Students' Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources: A Report to the Membership*. OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., 2006