

**Consultancy for the Library
American University in Cairo**

Prepared by

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The Dean of the Libraries and Learning Technologies, American University of Cairo, initiated the consultancy for the Libraries. The visit, which occurred October 20-24, 2014 was set to respond to the Main Library Five Year review 2008-2013. The goals of the consultancy were to assess the Main Library's current activities and suggest future directions, providing feedback to the library on its performance as the main library for the University.

As consultants, we brought our own expertise and experiences to the AUC Library. Joan is Associate Director of the Coalition for Networked Information, and as such, visits and reviews many libraries as a part of her responsibilities. Susan was the College Librarian and Director of Library, Information and Technology Services at Mount Holyoke College and then Senior Advisor for library and technology services for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supported liberal arts colleges. Each of us has many years of experience working in and with libraries, both within the United States and abroad.

Accordingly, several questions guided our review:

- How well and in what ways is the library accomplishing its mission in support of the research and information needs of the University?
- What are the Library's strengths and areas that merit attention?
- What future directions or changes should the Library consider?

Description of Consultation Activities

As reviewers, we used two primary sources of Information. Before Dr. Lippincott visited and Ms. Perry Skyped in for interviews, we reviewed an extensive, self-study entitled *Main Library Five Year Review 2008-2013* excellently prepared by the Library staff, coordinated by the Library Director for Collections and approved and submitted by the Dean of Library Libraries and Learning Technologies. The review report outlined the activities of the Library during those five years, provided descriptions of the Library's programs and activities, staff qualifications, resources and collaborations, assessments of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and plans for the future. Supplementing this report, the consultants also read the recently issued draft *Our Community of Learning: A Strategic Plan for AUC at its Centennial*, issued on August 27, 2014 and reviewed the library's website. Once Joan arrived (Susan had been grounded by her doctor), she spent four full days conducting interviews to learn about the various components of the Library and perceptions of a good number of faculty and students concerning the Library's strengths, areas for improvement and future directions. Susan Skyped in for several of those interviews.

In general, we used these opportunities to be with many library staff members, senior staff, faculty and students to confirm observations and impressions. When we heard similar accounts of activities, services, impressions and reactions from more than one source, we gave more credence to the information. We have most confidence in accounts that recurred in multiple contexts, and our core observations are based on that kind of information, and on things we did not hear, also. While site visit interviews provided rich information and were marked by considerable openness and candor, the opinions of those interviewed cannot be said to be representative of every staff member, faculty member, student or administrator. Our visit affords perspectives against which other information can be tested for evidence of intensity of feelings of support, relative merit of stated goals, and commitment to serving the information and research instruction needs of students, faculty and the larger Cairo community.

Strengths of the Library

Despite at least three major upheavals (the move to New Cairo, the political changes in the country and now the need to make budget reductions), the AUC Library is heavily used and much appreciated by the students, faculty and the wider community, well managed at the Dean's and administrators' levels, and moving forward to make major changes such as the move to more electronic information and the development of a new library web site. The AUC library is the largest library in the area, with major holdings in both English and Arabic materials, and is heavily used by both the University community and researchers in the larger Cairo community, and the world. The library, its collections, and its staff are highly regarded in the region and in the international arena, with a strong service mentality and ability to professionally assist researchers. The librarians and staff, AUC faculty, and students take great

pride in the library. The AUC library draws many individuals in the region to use its collection and AUC librarians give frequent training and conference presentations to librarians in the region, to other AMICAL librarians, and to international audiences. The Library's location in Egypt and the Middle East make it a natural for attracting regional researchers, especially with recent events that continue to put the region at the forefront of international news. Some particular strengths of individual units and departments are described below.

Main Library Departments and Services

Library Automation Systems

The period examined in this consultancy included the move to the New Cairo campus, and Library Automation Systems had a major challenge in readying the technologies for the new library. The department implemented a new Library Information Technology System, which allowed them to install all needed computers and software before the new library opened. They also installed and tested the new campus networking and upgraded printing services. They installed and fully support OneSearch (Online Public Access Catalog) and the chat reference system to improve user service. The area seems to be following good modern library and information systems practices.

Since it is the role of LAS to provide state of the art and highly specialized library-related technologies, the department ensures that Main Library technical services are running smoothly and efficiently, and are fully aligned to meet current and future Library needs. These responsibilities carry over to greater Libraries and Learning Technologies (LLT) that is comprised of the Main Library, the Rare Books and Special Collections Library (RBSCL), Tahrir Library, and the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT).

Other daily LAS activities include providing support to the Serials and Continuing Resources department by identifying and repairing root causes of inaccessible online resources. These problems, often the result of vendor-related technical difficulties, may occur suddenly and require immediate attention to ensure uninterrupted service. The Main Library web page is also continually monitored and updated to ensure enhanced functionality and operation. LAS also supports ILLiad, the document delivery service that is the main portal for University patrons to place requests for chapters of books and periodical articles that cannot be acquired locally. ILLiad is continually upgraded with all new enhancements in order to be up to date with ever-changing requirements regarding document acquisition and exchange.

LAS has continually strived to ensure that the latest and best in academic library specific technology is available to AUC students and faculty. Although budget cuts have impeded this fundamental directive to some degree, the library likely retains its position as the most technologically advanced in the region.

Public Services

This unit is responsible for Circulation, Reserves, Document Delivery, Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery, External User Services, Research and Information Services and the Tahrir campus library. They have wisely restructured and therefore eliminated several other service areas, to wit, they merged Instruction Services into Research and Information Services, disbanded Media Services and the Law Library and merged those collections into the Main Library Collections, and moved Collection Development into Collections. This has improved efficiency and offered better service.

Several library users mentioned Document Delivery as particularly important to and appreciated by them. This service handles thousands of requests per year at no cost to faculty and students, with normally expeditious fulfillment.

The Research and Information Services area maintains a vigorous program of instruction that focuses on an introduction to research course, which is currently being revamped. Some course specific instruction as well as one-to-one research consultations are provided, both of which are standard library services. Assignment-specific library instruction presentations that are tailored to specific topics by faculty request, and presented by librarians in the classroom, are extremely popular and well-received.

The library has offered a semester long course for ten years and is in the process of revamping it. An important advantage for the library is that the course is seen as an integral part of the newly revamped university freshman year program. While all of the details are not yet completed, the library is working on some changes to the course, including incorporation of graduate students to handle some of the work and recording much of the session material. These recordings are to be used initially for graduate student assistant training, but it would be very useful to explore offering them (or some of the modules) as online education units for students. In discussion with the librarians, many suggested that a blended learning approach which may be defined as the augmentation of traditional classroom pedagogy with technology that allows for student driven learning, might work best for the course.

Walk-in service is provided by a Help Desk for general questions, a Research Desk for individual research assistance, an IT Desk for technical help, and Circulation/Reserves counter, all of which are located near the main entrance. In addition a chat reference service is offered 24X7 through participation in the OCLC based QuestionPoint international service. The staff are clearly committed to providing individual, personalized services to their user community.

Collections

Often visits by outside consultants result in providing an occasion for members of the library's community, particularly faculty, to complain about weaknesses in the library's collection of books and journals. At AUC, instead we heard almost continual praise for the collections, including support for electronic journals and e-books, recognition of the rich collection of materials in Arabic, and satisfaction with the range and quality of offerings. In tandem with the Main Library, the Rare Books and Special Collections Library holds primary source documents and rare materials in the areas of regional and Egyptian history. This complimentary relationship between the two libraries creates an exceptionally rich resource for undergraduate studies as well as graduate and faculty research.

Library users were fully satisfied with their ability to use the services of Document Delivery/Interlibrary Loan to fulfill their need for materials not in the local collection. As consultants, we conclude that the librarians working on collection development in a number of departments over the years have done a commendable job.

Collections consists of Acquisitions, Cataloging and Metadata, Collection Development, and Serials and Continuing resources.

Acquisitions places monograph and ebook orders and receives materials in a timely manner. They are also responsible for keeping abreast of vendors and maintaining approval plans. Negotiating licenses for digital materials has become an increasing responsibility of most academic library acquisitions departments, and this is also true at AUC. Staff have been able to negotiate highly favorable pricing for collections of materials through their participation in a variety of consortia. This results in both an excellent range of resources for the institution at relatively low prices.

The Cataloging and Metadata unit provides original cataloging for materials when required. They process and provide intellectual infrastructure and access to materials in all languages provided by both the Main Library and Rare Books and Special Collections. Statistics show that they handle a very impressive number of materials.

Collection Development subject specialists work with University departments to provide needed materials and to help students learn to use the collections for research. Librarians who have subject specialist responsibilities are drawn from many units in the library, including public services. As in many universities, the librarians here felt that their collection development and liaison services were uneven, both because of staff turnover and because of "inconsistent enthusiasm" within the group. This situation was somewhat remedied in 2013 with a reevaluation which helped them to more clearly define roles and responsibilities, including a broader set of duties as departmental liaisons. It would be a good idea to look at how this has worked within a couple of years.

The Serials and Continuing Resources department manages the full operation of print periodicals and electronic database resources. The department also facilitates access to individual electronic periodical subscriptions by ensuring the validity of URL links and ensures best subscription value through consortium agreements such as those with AMICAL and EULC (Egyptian Universities Libraries Consortium).

Center for Excellence for the Middle East and Arab Cultures

This is a network of faculty and staff with expertise in Middle Eastern Studies, including Egyptology and Coptic Studies, that is led by one individual with extensive expertise. This emphasis is a result of the Library's recognition that given the AUC's location and opportunities for being exceptional in certain select subject areas, it is only natural to build excellent information materials about the region. The Center is therefore less a physical location than a concept: that of adding exceptional materials in certain logical subject areas throughout the Libraries with the goal of achieving outstanding collections that will naturally attract researchers and the brightest of students.

These stellar collections regarding the society and culture of Egypt, and the greater region including all areas of Arab influence and culture such as Spain and North Africa, are invaluable to scholars throughout the world. This is a relatively new department that is working to assess, revise, and improve current collections. The Director has spearheaded efforts to reach out to faculty and assist in programs throughout the university and not just those with respect to the Middle East. He has also made presentations about such forward-looking, cost-effective ideas such as open access journals and the possibility of creating a web-based journal and other publications produced by Library faculty and staff, in areas in which the Libraries are very well equipped to make scholarly contributions.

The creation of this Center several years ago and its ongoing development was an important direction for the library. While the library must focus a reasonable amount of resources on somewhat generic academic services, it should and is also focusing some resources on programs of particular interest to AUC and its reputation as a scholarly international institution. This is an example of the library's responsiveness to the overall priorities of the university and its academic and research program.

The Center works closely with the collections and digitization efforts spearheaded by the RBSCL, and is hoping to create an editorial board for a new Main Library based open access journal. The Center also collaborates with other libraries, museums and special collections in the region. Furthermore, its contacts with regional scholars and persons of note have led to donations of important primary source archival and monograph materials.

Faculty and Staff Qualifications and Activity

Faculty librarians and staff are well qualified for their positions. Most faculty have multiple graduate degrees that ensure effective administration of the library. In addition they keep up with developments in the field and they actively participate in staff development and conference activities. Many of them present at international conferences, and from reviewer Perry's observation, their presentations are thoughtful and professional. With the need to reduce budgets over the next few years, the Library administration, along with Senior University administrators, need to pay particular attention to retaining well qualified and productive staff. It may become more difficult to fund staff for international travel and they may need to seek more opportunities to both participate in web-based professional development and deliver some of their own training and talks via the web. However, one staff member astutely remarked that it is useful to learn specific activities and developments (training) through online education, but an in-person conference enables AUC staff to compare their own approaches and experiences with others both in informal and formal ways, through networking opportunities and attendance at and presentation of programs.

Staff at all levels reported that they work as a team and that silos within the library have been broken down in recent years. This is a very positive development and will be even more essential if there are staff cuts.

A number of library faculty sit on School or university committees, which gives them personal contact with faculty and provides insight into new directions in research, teaching, and learning that are very valuable for the library. The librarians expressed interest in developing a more ongoing mechanism for sharing the information that they learn through their participation in university committee meetings.

The Main Library and Student Interaction

The Library is heavily used and much appreciated by students. Librarians, trained student employees and technology assistants are readily available to help with questions. Librarians work with faculty to provide in-class research instruction. The Learning Commons is particularly well used by undergraduate students and at semester peaks is regularly filled to capacity. When the library received increasing complaints about noise, both in the main floor Commons area and on other floors, a librarian led an initiative to work with students and staff to remedy the situation. With the reinforcement of quiet in designated areas and establishment of a Graduate Student Learning Commons, both undergraduates and graduate students now have quiet places for reflection and research.

We learned that at a recent President's budget hearing, a student made an impassioned plea that the library's funding not be cut since it is so integral to students' education at the university.

Main Library Resources and Collaborations

Facilities and Equipment

At AUC, a number of campus buildings close in late afternoon; the library is a place where students can work many hours of the day and into the evening. Students use the space for quiet study, for group work, and for quick stops during the day to print out materials or read an assignment. In the absence of a fully functioning Student Union, the Learning Commons is considered to be a social space where in-place technologies may be underutilized, but in consultant Lippincott's observation, a large majority of students, during several observation periods during the consultation, were doing academic work while they were also enjoying the company of fellow students. A much smaller percentage of students were purely socializing in the library. All of the students we talked with believe that it is very important to maintain the collaborative space in the Commons and to continue to support the technologies available there. Many of the students indicated that they would like to see a food and drink policy for the Learning Commons that limited the types of food that could be consumed there (snacks, not meals, would be permitted). They would also like to see a policy that requires individuals listening to audio on the computer or on their own devices to use headphones.

In the past year, a number of changes were made in library space to allow for efficiencies in staff work areas and to provide some additional spaces for services, including for CLT. One of these changes was the conversion of the old Law Library into a Graduate Commons area. These changes have been well conceived and very effective in accomplishing their goals.

The Library is well equipped with installed computers, software, and laptops for loan. Several study rooms are equipped with appropriate equipment. Printing facilities are available. Several people mentioned the need to move to self-service printers and there was some discussion about the possibility of having self-service printers maintained by an outside firm.

Administrative and Technical Resources

The Library is effectively and professionally managed by a Dean, faculty librarians and managerial staff. Specialized technical support is provided by the LAS department and collaborations regarding more general technology issues such as storage and web forms are maintained with University Academic Computing Technologies (UACT) and University Technology Infrastructure (UTI).

The library has been very agile in putting together data-driven documentation in response to university administrative requests for information on such things as journal subscriptions and staffing. This will continue to be important as the university goes through several years of an austerity budget.

Budget over the last five years

Since 2011, the Library budget has faced cuts that have impacted supplies, services, equipment and materials purchases. Two graduate programs have contributed to the Library's database resources. The recently announced rounds of cuts will most likely result in additional reductions, including reductions in staff.

Collaboration within AUC

Originally initiated by the Faculty Senate, the Libraries and Learning Technologies Advisory Committee, comprised of members from within the Library and from schools and departments across the university addresses issues that originate from students or faculty and assigns sub-committees to study and make recommendations regarding specific issues such as noise, assessment of the user experience, outreach and marketing strategies. The Dean of LLT also presents an annual report to this committee. This year's committee was particularly effective, with additional recommendations and assistance with budget, planning and e-resource allocation issues.

The Research and Information Services department collaborates with departments within and outside of the library. Members of the group, as well as other faculty librarians, serve on University and faculty committees. One of their most important collaborations is with the Rhetoric Department Instructors, where they work together to assure that students learn research skills, as well as about plagiarism and academic integrity.

The Library staff work with CLT to train graduate student workers for the Learning Commons.

The library, the Center of Excellence for the Middle East and Arab Cultures, and CLT collaborated on a very successful Open Access Day, which both heightened awareness of Open Access policies and increased the visibility on campus of the library and CLT's expertise in this area. The program received some outside grant funds.

The library collaborates with appropriate organizations in Egypt and throughout the world especially in areas such as resource sharing, licensing of electronic content, training, and professional development. Some of these organizations are Egyptian Universities Libraries Consortium (EULC), AMICAL, OCLC, MENA and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill.

Library faculty have long been part of the AUC Press “editorial board” and have assisted in selecting manuscripts appropriate for publication. Additionally, the library is working with AUC Press and the university bookstore on issues related to e-textbook production and licensing. The AUC Press director is appreciative of this interaction with the library. As a recent Faculty Senate resolution encourages wider adoption of e-textbooks, the library may find that its expertise with e-resources is useful to the university. This expertise will also be

useful as the library becomes involved with more online and digital publications such as open access or library-edited professional journals.

Assessment

Library staff conduct rigorous annual assessments, both internally and with international assessment tools, and is moving toward a calendar that will include much more frequent analysis . They compare themselves to peer institutions. They have used results to improve or modify services. They are reconstituting the assessment committee and will do some further assessment planning. In the Five Year Review report, the following were identified as desired outcomes for the library.

- Patrons will have access to reliable academic resources to support their curriculum and information needs and know how to use them effectively.
- Provide a well maintained, safe and functional environment conducive to learning and productivity.
- Library will manage its financial resources in an effective and efficient manner.
- Patrons will have access to required and needed resources quickly by reducing the time from request to accessibility.
- AUC's national and international presence is enhanced.
- Workforce is informed and motivated.

The reviewers feel that the Library is making progress in each of the six areas. As the library develops its next phase of assessment, it may need to review in what ways these outcomes can be measured through collection of quantitative and/or qualitative data.

Required Resources

The Library's aspirations for the future will most likely have to be tempered by the realities of upcoming budget reductions. If the aspirations are to be met, the staff will have to determine what it can quit doing, examine work flows to determine possible efficiencies, and actively apply for grants and other outside funding.

Challenges for the Library

Maintaining the current high level of staff morale, enthusiasm about their work, and cooperation among units may become more difficult as budget constraints and cutbacks result in diminished resources.

In recent years, the library experienced high turnover in library faculty due to a variety of unrelated personal circumstances. This has created expected continuity challenges, but current faculty, who are highly qualified and motivated, have nonetheless made great strides in closing associated gaps and are moving forward with a number of new initiatives.

Getting needed support for some technologies has been difficult for the library. They are currently facing problems with being allocated sufficient data storage space for digitized archival materials on campus servers. There seems to be no stated university policy for how such space is allocated, and with limited IT resources, it likely means that other departments and schools are facing similar constraints. This is something that needs to be addressed at the university administrative level.

Recommendations/Suggestions for the Library

Develop a coordinated planning and assessment process for the library. The library has done a considerable amount of planning and uses a wide variety of assessment measures at present. We suggest reorienting these activities around some very clear priorities, such as supporting student academic work and supporting faculty scholarship, with associated objectives for a period of time, for example one year. The library's plans should take into account both the directions identified in the university's strategic plan and the directions of the Schools within the university. The mode in which each of the library's objectives will be measured should also be addressed. For example, if an objective is to provide increased information literacy instruction for upper level courses in students' major fields, a target for the year could be set, an implementation strategy could be put into place, and then the achievements could be assessed at the conclusion of that year. This process could also be used to set priorities for the library and especially its use of resources (funds for such items as equipment as well as staff time) at this moment of cutbacks in funding. Overall, we encourage the library to look carefully at their planning to assure that it is guided by assessment and that it is understood and integrated into the work of the organization. We also encourage the library to make this a "lightweight" process, not spending so much time on the planning process that it takes too much time away from implementing day-to-day services of the library.

Coordinate and increase the promotion of library resources and services. Almost every North American academic library has the problem that only a small percentage of its primary users (faculty and students) are aware of the wide range of content, technologies, facilities, and services that the library offers. We strongly encourage the library to appoint one of its current

library faculty to take on coordinating responsibilities in this area. Responsibilities could include increasing promotion of library services through a variety of media, both onsite and through digital media (including social media), strengthening the library liaison role of library faculty, and offering special events in the library that would both foster a sense of community at AUC and provide educational and cultural opportunities in the library setting. We emphasize that the coordinator would not carry out all of these activities independently but would develop a plan, identify specific individuals and departments to involve, and work to implement promotional activities throughout the year.

Increase understanding of library technology needs by central IT and university financial officers. The library seeks to communicate its needs to the central IT organization, but with the many competing IT needs of units across campus, the library's voice may not always be heard or acknowledged. This may deteriorate with budget cuts. Some critical IT issues for the library will be to continue to upgrade the wireless capacity in the library as students bring more and more of their devices to use in their work and to have dependable support from IT assistants at the library Help Desk, which is open many hours of the day and heavily used by students in this popular location. The library and the central IT organization need to work together (and with other campus units) to improve collaboration and to press for ongoing replacement of equipment during the current constrained budget conditions. In a different arena involving technology, the library continues to press its case for the expenditure of funds for electronic resources but has been required to devote a large amount of staff time to some bureaucratic budget challenges from the central budget office. University policies need to be addressed in order to remedy this situation.

Library website redesign. The library is in the midst of a web redesign process, which is a positive step. They are making a number of improvements to the usability and usefulness of the library website in order to create a contemporary and dynamic resource. Before they complete their work, we encourage them to include more user feedback, especially from undergraduate students, in their analyses and design, and to make sure to coordinate their efforts on a regular basis with the university's office of communications. We also encourage them to think of ways to make the site more attractive visually, drawing users into the library's collections and services, and putting a more human face into the mix, for example videos of staff describing their specialties or services. In addition, the website should be configured (using responsive design or other principles) so that it is accessible on a wide variety of devices since the user community will check it from their mobile phones and tablets as well as from laptops and desktop computers. The library also needs to communicate with central IT or the university communications unit to find out how they are going to get statistical reports (analytics) from the new website.

Digitization program. The library's digitization unit, which is housed in RBSC and utilizes the Digital Archives and Research Repository (DARR), has produced some very valuable resources, but there is much more to be done and inadequate funds to move quickly. The library should continue to seek grant funding to assist with this important work. In addition, the library needs to think about priorities and new strategies, such as intentionally digitizing parts of significant collections, especially primary source materials, when resources are not yet available to digitize the full collection.

Service desks. At present there are three main service desks on the main floor of the library: Circulation/Reserves, Help, and Research. These desks are staffed by a range of staff including circulation and reserve full-time staff and students, students trained by university IT, students trained by CLT, students trained by the library, and library faculty. Most academic libraries have been experimenting with service desk configurations for a number of years, particularly as reference desk questions decline, as they have at AUC. The library should continue to explore and pilot new service desk configurations, closely monitoring what types of assistance students need, what kinds of cross-training can be provided to what types of staff, and what the level of use of services is at various points of the semester and at particular times of the day. The library needs to plan and assess its service model with a critical eye while maintaining its primary goal of providing personalized assistance to its user community.

Instruction program. The information literacy program is in transition at present, and this is a positive development because the changes take into account some new perspectives and needs in the institution. With some changes to the freshman year program in the university and a new requirement to complete the library course early in a student's program, the library faculty are piloting some new approaches, including training graduate assistants to help with instruction and developing online modules for training that might ultimately be used directly with the undergraduate students. The library should continue to experiment with the program and to consider how much of their instruction resource should be devoted to introductory level information literacy versus upper level undergraduate and graduate information literacy. The appointment of one individual to oversee graduate student instruction is a positive development, although it is important that this individual assists liaison librarians to work with their departments to develop appropriate instructional opportunities for graduate students that are discipline-oriented.

Graduate students. Although there is a Graduate Commons area on the 2nd floor, graduate students expressed a need for additional space configured in a way that they could store some materials and work in a space that would be consistently available in a quiet area. Progress has been made, but the library could explore some type of locked storage for the current graduate student Commons area. In addition, the graduate student carrels in noisier areas should perhaps be re-purposed.

Open Access. If the university wants to make a commitment to move towards Open Access policies for faculty publications, the library can develop an educational role, building on their successful Open Access Day, and working in partnership with CLT and the Access to Knowledge for Development Center. The university will need to develop some policies to address Open Access for research and educational materials and will need to address the issue of providing publication fees for faculty who publish in OA journals. In addition, the library can work with AUC Press to see if they are interested in publishing digital OA editions of their backlist and in potentially developing some OA educational materials.

Work flow analysis. As identified in the Five Year Review report, the library can strengthen internal procedures and processes to enable continuity between staff changes and invite

newcomers to share ideas. In addition, they can continue to develop better coordination of tasks through work flow analysis.

Staff training. Many staff at all levels of the library expressed interest and enthusiasm for more training. There is a high level of loyalty and commitment to AUC. With impending staff cuts, it may be important to provide more cross-training of staff. In addition, more in-house training opportunities (provided through the library or the university) may be one mechanism for keeping up the morale of staff. Staff planning retreats or workshops may also be a mechanism to keep staff involved during a time of change.

Building signage. Do a thorough review of signage in the library, updating signs to reflect changes that have been made in the use of some spaces, e.g. graduate quiet study room, and improving the location, visibility and professional appearance of signs. Incorporate some digital signage when the budget allows. Signs should also make clear where collaborative work is permitted, where quiet should be observed, and where eating and drinking are or are not allowed. Some of these signs already exist but should be evaluated for placement and consistency.

Photocopy service. The library should continue to explore alternatives to the current staff run photocopy service. There are major university administrative impediments to the library purchasing self-service copy machines, but the library should continue to press for changes including looking at other options such as leasing equipment, if possible. This could result in some staff reallocation and cost savings.

Concluding Comments

The reviewers find that the staff of the AUC Library have done an excellent job in maintaining the fine reputation of the library for its collection and services. They are keeping up with current library practice and are providing leadership to the library community in Egypt, through the AMICAL institutions, and beyond. We found a proud, loyal, innovative, and hard working staff who believe in serving their community's needs. Considering the kinds of major upheavals they have faced in their environment, they have done a particularly fine job of maintaining the standards of the library and have continued to move ahead into some new areas. In the coming period of budget austerity, every effort should be made by the university administration to maintain the standards of this valuable campus and community resource.