

Introduction to the CETUS Publication Series

Prepared by Kenneth Crews, February 2011

Three extensive and diverse university systems combined their efforts in the mid-1990s to address a series of common issues, mostly centered on policies and planning for the transition to digital media and communications that was then occurring in higher education. The university systems were California State University, the State University of New York, and City University of New York. The project adopted the title “Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems” and was generally known as “CETUS.”

Faculty members, administrators, and librarians from the three universities met regularly over a period of about three years, and a major outcome was the drafting and publication of the following four manuals:

Fair Use of Copyrighted Works: A Crucial Element in Educating America. Seal Beach, CA: Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems, 1995, 34 pp.

Ownership of New Works at the University: Unbundling of Rights and the Pursuit of Higher Learning. Seal Beach, CA: Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems, 1997, 32 pp.

Information Resources and Library Services for Distance Learners: A Framework for Quality. Seal Beach, CA: Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems, 1997, 39 pp.

The Academic Library in the Information Age: Changing Roles. Seal Beach, CA: Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems, 1997, 18 pp.

Kenneth Crews, currently at Columbia University, served as a consultant to CETUS and as a member of the advisory board. He wrote much of the legal analysis included in the foregoing publications on fair use, ownership, and distance learning. These projects were widely distributed and posted on a website. They met a clear demand for helpful information about copyright and information policy, and the publications were frequently included on reading lists and websites at many colleges and universities throughout the country. Many elements of the copyright materials were subsequently updated and incorporated into a formal policy issued in 2003 for the entire California State University system:
http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/Reports/Intellectual_Prop_Final.pdf.

Much more information about the project was available on the CETUS website, which was abandoned many years ago. Fortunately, the original site (www.cetus.org) was archived and is now available on the “Way Back Machine” at www.archive.org. In order to assure their continued accessibility, the four publications are now made available on Academic Commons at Columbia University:
<http://academiccommons.columbia.edu>.

Discussion Series

**The Academic Library
in the
Information Age:
*Changing Roles***



C.E.T.U.S.

**Consortium for Educational Technology
for University Systems**

California State University
State University of New York
City University of New York

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This publication is a project of the CSU-SUNY-CUNY Joint Committee, under sponsorship of the Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems (C.E.T.U.S.) and is comprised of faculty and staff from the three systems.

Electronic versions of this publication, and of other Joint Committee projects, are available on the home page of the Consortium for Educational Technology for University Systems: <http://www.cetus.org>.

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The following publications are part of a series intended to stimulate thinking and discussion in the academic community and do not represent official policies of CSU, SUNY and CUNY:

- *The Academic Library in the Information Age: Changing Roles*
- *Fair Use of Copyrighted Works:
A Crucial Element in Educating America*
- *Information Resources and Library Services for Distance Learners:
A Framework for Quality*
- *Ownership of New Works at the University:
Unbundling of Rights and the Pursuit of Higher Learning*

“ Events within and outside higher education are changing our fundamental conceptions of the library, as well as the very nature of the content and methodologies of learning sponsored by the institution. These changes could catapult the library into a central role within the teaching/learning enterprise if appropriate adaptations are made; if not, they could further remove the library from the institutional center. ”

“ Forging faculty/librarian partnerships will require new roles for librarians and a level of leadership and initiative that has not traditionally been asserted or recognized within the institution beyond the orb of the library itself. Librarians will need to become and be seen by members of the faculty and administration as educational leaders and innovators, and not just as custodians of the institution's print media. ”

—Ralph A. Wolff
Executive Director
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Introduction

If information technology is to inform necessary change in the academy, change might best begin in the most central of higher education's information enterprises, its libraries. Libraries are familiar and respected partners in the educational process and as such can influence and encourage the necessary transformation of other campus entities.

With this in mind, the California State University (CSU), the State University of New York (SUNY), and the City University of New York (CUNY) encouraged the preparation of a statement on the new and evolving roles for librarians in the information age. In developing such a document, the Working Group on the Changing Role of Library Staff of the Joint Committee found that it could best speak to the changes in the work of librarians by also addressing equally important alterations in what other library personnel do, as well as the implications of these new roles for major stakeholders in the academy.

Three-Fold Purpose

This booklet addresses three important areas. First, expectations for the academic library in today's information age. It seemed critical to examine requirements for the library itself, before exploring what would be needed from its staff. Second, an array of new functions and partnerships for library staff that flow from changes to the university and the library. A group of illustrative scenarios suggest some of the roles library staff will assume in the information age. Third, the implications that these changes within the library will have for all parts of the academy. What will the changes mean for students, faculty, academic administrators, technical staff, and library staff themselves?

Seeking New Partnerships in the Information Age

This booklet is intended to be read, discussed—even debated—by all members of the academic community. Far from being narrowly aimed at librarians in the three sponsoring educational systems, it is meant to better the academic process in the broadest possible fashion by encouraging academic administrators, faculty, librarians, and information professionals everywhere to work together to redefine the university for the information age.

Table of Contents

SECTION 1 The Academic Library in the Information Age

SECTION 2 The Changing Role of Library Staff

SECTION 3 Changing Roles: Illustrative Scenarios

SECTION 4 Implications of These Changing Roles

SECTION 1

The Academic Library in the Information Age

“For more than 500 years, the bulk of human knowledge and information has been stored as paper documents . . . Paper will be with us indefinitely, but its importance as a means of finding, preserving, and distributing information is already diminishing.” Bill Gates

The library is concept, as well as place—it is function, not form alone.

The university is in a state of transformation. In the future, it will be less place-dependent and more distributed than the present academy. The student body will be more diverse, and learning more student-centered. Approaches to teaching and learning are also changing, both in the traditional classroom and through distance education. New models are emerging in which students combine conventional classroom experience with a range of learning experiences independent of time and location.

The library is concept, as well as place—it is function, not form alone. The library is unique in society in that it not only selects, organizes, stores, and retrieves information, it also subsidizes access, protects intellectual freedom, and provides direct assistance and instruction to its users.

For all these reasons, the library of the future will continue to emphasize selecting, accessing, and subsidizing information resources. Of equal importance will be teaching students and faculty to identify, locate, and evaluate information, wherever individuals or resources may reside. Librarians will assist faculty and students as they teach and learn, whether locally or at a distance.

The values and services supported by libraries for centuries will continue.

What Will the Library of the Future Look Like?

With change dramatically impacting higher education—change that focuses on an enabling array of technologies and networks to advance teaching, learning, and research—this vision encompasses a new library that blends the best traditions of the past—those of structure, service, and subsidy—with an electronic or “virtual library,” one which transcends time and place.

The values and services supported by libraries for centuries will continue. These include ownership of some collections, access to others, the organization of resources, and assistance to users, including responses to specific information needs and questions, information guidance, and formal instruction. These services call for the capabilities of an array of professionals, specialists, and other staff in a library which may have a physical location or exist “without walls.”

The Library of the Future Will Offer: Structure

In the future, the academic library will offer collections in all formats, as well as networked information services.

Carefully selected and well-organized collections in all formats

Networked electronic information resources

Materials for self-paced learning

Programs that support new ways of teaching and delivering information resources

A commitment to preservation and access for print, electronic, and other formats

An infrastructure that supports instruction of all types of users in meeting their information needs

The new academic library will be creative, flexible, and closely allied with the academic disciplines.

The library is an integral part of the campus that will be profoundly affected by the changes in the academy itself.

Service

Creative and flexible approaches that focus on service

A culture that embraces experimentation and aligns itself with academic disciplines

Skilled staff able to provide service in a technology-intensive environment

Librarians who participate actively in the teaching and learning activities of the university

Collaborative relationships in both public and private settings, from the local and regional to the state, national, and international levels

Subsidy

Equitable access to information

Funding support from a variety of sources: local, state, federal, corporate, foundation, and individual donors

A focus on partnerships for grant preparation, fund raising, program planning, and demonstration projects

Despite its central academic importance, the library is not an independent entity. Rather, it is an integral part of the campus that will be profoundly affected by changes in the academy itself. Thus it is important that the library, while implementing and managing internal change, continue to look outward at the university as a whole. Here, it will find the signs that suggest its evolving future.

SECTION 2

The Changing Role of Library Staff

“The future belongs to neither the conduit or content players, but those who control the filtering, searching and sense-making tools we will rely on to navigate through the expanses of cyberspace.” Paul Saffo

Many aspects of the information age and the modern university are transforming the role of librarians and other library staff. The most compelling of these includes the publishing explosion, the introduction of many competitors for traditional print formats, and new tools for information access. There is a real sense of the diminishing importance of physical “place” in teaching and research; increasingly, the modern academic environment is a distributed one, as evidenced by the widespread use of new information delivery models and strong interest in distance learning. The distinction between locally owned information and that which resides elsewhere is diminishing, as the library strives to provide material quickly and easily, in formats that are convenient to use.

Collaborating broadly with other information professionals and faculty, the librarian is evolving from an information organizer and provider seated at a desk, to an active participant in the campus’s instructional and research process. Today’s principal service emphasis is teaching faculty and students how to structure research questions, access information and select resources, wherever these are found and in whatever formats they exist.

In an age of great change in information formats, delivery models, and technologies, an important new role emerges for the academic librarian. Indeed, librarians are ideally positioned to serve as leaders on their campuses during this period of transformation, facilitating the introduction of new technologies for learning, teaching, and research. At the same time the function of librarians is both changing and becoming more central, the work of other library staff will also alter and grow in importance.

Librarians have the opportunity to redefine how information and instruction are communicated to students and faculty.

The Role of the Librarian

New telecommunications technologies offer librarians opportunities to redefine how information and associated instruction are communicated to students and faculty. As information systems increase in complexity and new resources continue to spring up, librarians are becoming indispensable counselors in the electronic environment. They are called upon to assist faculty and students in identifying and evaluating many sources, and to serve as true advisors and teachers rather than as custodians of collections.

Today's educational milieu enables the librarian and the user to work together, wherever each may be located; physical proximity is no longer essential. It is equally unnecessary for the librarian to reside only in the library building; he or she can become as "distributed" as modern electronic information and work with faculty and students in their own spaces.

Changing technologies and formats are also recasting the roles of librarians who collect, organize, and conserve information resources. Electronic collections will require new procedures for selecting and cataloging, and librarians will confront critical new preservation and archiving challenges. Some tasks associated with print publications will disappear, allowing more time to be redirected to the instructional aspects of the librarian's changing role.

Information professionals will teach, consult, create, select, organize, and preserve.

The role of the librarian is becoming more like that of classroom faculty, in that it is increasingly discipline-based and instructional. This evolving role includes:

- Partnering with discipline faculty and other specialists for delivery of information and instruction

- Designing instructional programs for information access

- Teaching students and faculty how to access information, whatever its format or location, and how to evaluate what they find

Serving as consultants on information resources, issues, and problems
Developing and implementing information policy
Creating information access tools
Selecting, organizing, and preserving information in all formats
Serving as leaders and facilitators in introducing information technologies and ensuring their effective use

The Role of Other Library Staff

An important adjunct to the enhanced role of the librarian is the changing role of other library staff: professional, technical, and support personnel. As librarians concentrate their efforts on designing and implementing services, paraprofessionals and staff specializing in particular functions will assume the responsibility for the delivery of these services. These staff can take on greater accountability for the day-to-day operations of the library, freeing librarians for the new assignments outlined above.

Paraprofessionals and other staff can play important new roles in many areas of the library. They will manage units (for example, circulation, reserves, interlibrary loan) made up of other supporting staff, assuming increased supervisory and budgeting responsibility. Wherever business skills are needed (acquisitions, fiscal management) they also can be effective administrators. Similarly, positions common to other types of organizations (human resources, systems) will be filled with professionals for whom a graduate degree in librarianship may not be necessary.

The role of the library staff is indeed altering, driven by new information delivery models and the campus's growing emphasis on decentralization. The illustrative scenarios that follow offer examples of some of the new duties librarians and other staff will assume as a result of these changes.

The roles of other library staff are also undergoing important change.

SECTION 3

Changing Roles: Illustrative Scenarios

"If you want to innovate, to change an enterprise or society, it takes people willing to do what's not expected." Jean Riboud

The university is changing, and the library is changing with it. These scenarios suggest some of the roles library staff will assume in the information age—indeed, some of these roles are already being performed today. The scenarios are not prescriptive nor is it likely that all of them will occur in any one setting. Rather, they represent a selection of responsibilities and assignments library staff are likely to embrace in the near future. They offer a vision of a profession in the act of transformation; at the same time, they are meant to spark the imaginations of all members of the academic community about the changing role of those who work in libraries.

Partnering with Discipline Faculty and Other Specialists

- A librarian with a subject specialty in education team-teaches a research methods course with a member of the School of Education's faculty. The course includes both print and electronic information resources. The electronic sources reside on the library's local area network, on the World Wide Web, and at a variety of remote sites.
- The Computer and Information Science (CIS) Department offers its students the opportunity to do credit-bearing internships. Working with faculty in this department, the head of the library's systems unit and other library managers develop a series of internships for CIS students. Students complete internships that include both hardware and software projects. Together, discipline faculty, the supervisor, and the student evaluate the success of the internship.

Librarians will partner closely with both discipline faculty and technical staff.

- Two campuses within a university system offer undergraduate degrees in sociology. Neither offers a graduate program and neither college's library has a specialist in the discipline. The two faculties and their administrations decide to partner, and share a new position for a librarian specializing in this subject area.
- The library staffs an office in the physical sciences building with librarians having appropriate subject specialties. There, librarians work closely with classroom faculty to develop effective resource-based assignments, select materials, and identify and provide access to "virtual" resources. They help students learn to use a range of information resources, develop appropriate strategies for their research projects, and acquire a better understanding of how knowledge is structured in the physical sciences.

Designing Instructional Programs

- Working with academic computing staff, the library designs a series of short courses in Internet and Web resources. Librarians and academic computing staff share in the teaching of these classes.
- Librarians work with high school teachers to develop competencies for graduating seniors in information retrieval and evaluation. Systems staff enable a connection from the high school library to the academic library's network. This training and support allows the school to produce better prepared graduates who will become the college's entering freshmen.
- The college plans to offer an undergraduate degree via the Internet. Working with faculty who will teach in the program, librarians design an online interactive library instruction component. This module teaches students how to use physical collections, materials delivered via the Internet that support their courses, and general World Wide Web resources.

Teaching Information Access and Evaluation

Information professionals will work with students and faculty in many different milieus.

- The reference staff introduce a satellite service in the student union building during peak hours. From a prominently located site equipped with Web access and a small ready reference collection, they answer questions using both Internet and print sources, teach drop-in classes in information access, and schedule appointments for more in-depth research needs.
- Complementing its traditional on-site services, the library introduces an information out-reach program. Staff assist faculty and students in their offices and classrooms. The new program offers users several options: appointments for one-on-one training in faculty offices; informal classes taught in departmental computer laboratories; and formal classes delivered in electronic classrooms in academic buildings. The type of instruction ranges from “get acquainted with your PC” to in-depth research consultations.
- A librarian with a specialty in the performing arts and faculty from the Theater Department collaborate to develop a specialized information competency component which will become part of the entry-to-the-major course.
- Supporting staff are paired with librarians on the reference desk. They assist students and faculty with the products located on the local area network, the electronic catalog, and directional or simple information requests.

Consulting on Information Issues and Resources

Librarians will consult on a variety of information issues.

- The Geology Department is uncertain about how to address a number of issues relating to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) materials; these include both software and archiving questions. Two faculty members work with their subject specialist and the head of the library's systems unit, to develop appropriate policies and procedures.
- The History Department has heard of a new electronic indexing and abstracting service for history materials. It is unsure what this product is called, how much it costs, what formats it comes in, and how it is accessed. A faculty member is asked to confer with the subject bibliographer in the library and develop some recommendations. The department's liaison to the library confers with the history subject specialist to examine and evaluate the resource in light of the department's program.
- The Health Sciences Department plans to introduce a new master's-level program in health care administration. The library's journal collection is inadequate to support this program. The librarian responsible for life sciences, familiar with resources in all formats, provides advice about the best solution. After discussion with the health sciences faculty, the librarian recommends that the library acquire a full-text electronic product, subsidize commercial document supply services to these students, and purchase access cards to a nearby medical library for their use.

In the future, the academy will require greater assistance from librarians in developing information policy.

Developing and Implementing Information Policy

- Spurred by changes in federal legislation that place restrictions on the use and transmission of information on the Internet, the university consults with librarians on the issues and formulates a policy.
- The campus forms a committee to develop a policy on appropriate uses of its campus network. Along with discipline faculty, librarians are asked to participate to ensure that intellectual freedom principles are protected.
- The college plans to strengthen its enrollment by developing a number of new programs with local high schools. A librarian is asked to join the development team, with a view to the implications for library access and associated services.

Librarians will also create information access tools.

Creating Information Access Tools

- A university system's biological sciences librarians team with a computer programmer to design a system that emulates the responses and guidance a librarian might give to queries in this discipline. The software provides users with around-the-clock basic assistance in biology, psychology, and the health sciences. It is particularly useful to students and faculty whose campuses do not have librarians with these specialties.
- A team of librarians and staff from the computer center develop the library content for information kiosks to be placed throughout the campus. The librarians provide the necessary knowledge of how information and associated library services are structured; the computing staff provide the programming.

- The college's School of Nursing has mounted a distance learning program. Librarians support its students in several ways. World Wide Web pages include full-text "reserve" materials. Reference service is available while the library is open via an 800 number; e-mail reference service is also provided. Commercially supplied documents are delivered to students' e-mail accounts or residences.
- The library's Archives and Special Collections unit has digitized all its finding aids, placing them on a Web page. Library staff also have digitized those parts of the archives that are most heavily used. These are available via the campus network.

Selecting, Organizing, and Preserving Information

The traditional tasks of selecting, organizing, and preserving will not disappear.

- Librarians who organize information in the library's online catalog begin to include a broad range of rapidly developing new information resources. Any special instruction needed for access (for example, links to Web sites) is provided as part of the catalog record.
- Collection development librarians select materials in all formats, consulting with the appropriate discipline faculty. They also are responsible for identifying relevant Internet and Web resources and "bookmarking" or linking these for easy access.
- The library decides to order all new monographs from a vendor who can supply them fully processed and shelf-ready. This decision frees support staff and professionals, enabling each category of staff to spend more time working directly with students and faculty.
- Two libraries, neither large enough to support a full-time preservation administrator, jointly appoint a librarian who divides her time between them.

Librarians will serve as leaders in the adoption of new information technologies in teaching and learning.

Introducing and Ensuring the Effective Use of Information Technologies

- The library surveys faculty about their information technology skills and needs. It groups and studies responses by department. The appropriate subject specialist then works with discipline based faculty to map out suitable training and acquisition programs.
- The library asks each academic department to choose a technical representative, a faculty or staff member who will serve as the library's entree into the department for conveying information about new information technologies, soliciting details about faculty and student needs, sharing news about training opportunities, and so forth. These partners meet periodically for planning and updates.
- A college concludes that peer training and teaching is an effective approach to faculty development to strengthen the use of technology for instruction and research. It decides to transfer responsibility for the academic computing program to the library, centering responsibility for teaching information technologies in an academic unit.

SECTION 4

Implications of Changing Roles

“It is easier to act yourself into a new way of thinking than to think yourself into a new way of acting.” Michael Pascale

While this document focuses on librarians and other library staff, the new roles suggested here have implications that reach beyond the library to other parts of the college and university. What will changes in the work and roles of library staff mean for academic administrators, discipline faculty, technical staff, students, and library staff themselves? The effects will not be slight, and it will be important for the campus to consider and plan for them in the near future.

Students

The library staff's changing role will benefit students through a stronger emphasis on teaching information access and evaluation skills, and librarians' increased involvement in developing information competencies. Students will acquire better information skills, greater confidence, and the ability to transfer what they have learned to their post-graduate lives. Stronger critical thinking skills should be another important outcome.

Students also will have opportunities of a different sort, as the library makes fuller, more effective use of its workforce. Students will find the library offers new job opportunities, many of which provide valuable technical training. They may find themselves doing peer training, working in the faculty development program, earning credits through internships in the library, and using the disciplinary knowledge gained in their major courses of study.

At the same time, lines between personnel categories may begin to blur. How will the requirement for and duties of various types of

*Discipline faculty
and librarians will
find many new
collaborative
opportunities.*

library staff be differentiated? Which assignments will require a graduate degree in library science, and for which will other types of terminal degrees be adequate? Will some or all librarians also need advanced degree training in an academic discipline?

The administration will find itself hiring staff whose skills and backgrounds are more varied and/or more specialized than in the past. The institution's organizational structure may also change, particularly as differences between library and computing jobs begin to soften. Even the physical structure of the campus may alter, as an increasingly distributed environment suggests that the uses of library space be reexamined.

Discipline Faculty

The new paradigms suggested for librarians and other library staff present discipline faculty with a number of fresh and attractive collaborative opportunities. Librarians with corresponding subject specialties will partner with faculty in course design, teaching, and mentoring students. An expanded array of library services will offer faculty opportunities to learn new information access, management, and evaluation skills.

The growing emphasis on subject and technical specialties for librarians, including interdisciplinary approaches, will ensure greater levels of assistance for faculty in dealing with information access issues, resulting in stronger support for their research and teaching.

College and University Administrators

Library staffs' changing roles present significant issues for college and university administrators. At the most basic level, administrators will begin to view the university differently as groups of academic professionals collaborate in teams to perform integrated functions, replacing the

New roles for library staff mean greater investments in staff development.

traditional compartmentalization of discipline faculty, librarians, and systems staff. College and university administrators will have to involve library staff in developing information policy and planning for information technologies. New organizational and reporting relationships may also emerge.

The administration will find it necessary to invest much more heavily in staff development; in many cases, staff will require significant levels of new training to prepare them for their changing roles. The university may well find that its current personnel structure is no longer adequate to support the varied roles the new library will demand. New position descriptions and classifications will be mandated, and new compensation issues could well emerge.

Librarians

Significant staff development needs will arise from the enhanced roles projected for librarians. Interdisciplinary approaches, as well as traditional subject specialties, will become increasingly important and will require both formal and informal learning opportunities. Instructional skills will also increase in importance.

Enhanced technical skills will be required for accessing and manipulating information that exists in digital form. And, it would be difficult to overestimate the importance of keeping current with trends and issues in the rapidly changing information technology environment.

New roles mean new modes of thought; librarians will be called upon to think differently about their assignments in both the library and the broader academic community. They will set aside certain activities, in some cases passing these to other staff, and take up new ones. They will develop closer relationships with discipline faculty and with technical staff assigned to other campus units, familiarizing themselves with each group's goals, culture, and curriculum.

Library staff will work more closely with technical staff affiliated with other parts of the university.

Other Information Professionals

Academic computing and media personnel, and technical staff affiliated with schools and academic departments, will work more closely with library staff, partnering with them for a variety of instructional and informational design and delivery projects. In some institutions, information professionals who once worked in separate settings may find themselves or their units assembled with library staff. Whatever the organizational structure, the changing university environment will require computing and media units to develop solid, productive associations with the library.

Other Library Staff

Paraprofessional, technical, and supporting staff will require solid training in general management skills such as hiring, supervision, budgeting, and working with the public as librarians focus on developing and implementing services and programs and transfer much of the day-to-day operational responsibility for the library. In areas where work once done by librarians is now the province of paraprofessional or technical personnel, staff may require significant levels of new training. These staff will require enhanced technical and communication skills. They, too, will need to be current in their knowledge of information trends and issues.

To equip themselves for these new and enhanced roles, paraprofessional, technical, and support staff must develop a much greater understanding of library policy and planning in preparation for the new levels of responsibility they will assume.

Academic libraries are not independent entities. Changes in the library have many powerful implications for the coming educational revolution. A natural outcome of rethinking library activities and redesigning the work of library staffs is the need for new training and development opportunities. This booklet is intended to stir thought in the library and throughout

the university about what some of those possibilities might be, and how best to provide them.

The CSU-CUNY-SUNY systems of higher education expect that the booklet will be a stimulus for dialogue and discussion about changes in the university and the academic library. We envision this document as a catalyst for exploring the ways in which librarians and faculty can work together more closely to effect and support these anticipated changes. We see it as an agent for building new library and librarian partnerships on and off campus.

Questionnaire

Please take a minute to let us know what you think about this booklet. Either tear out and answer or respond on our web site at: [<http://www.cetus.org>]

Name of booklet _____

Your name _____

Professional title _____

Type of institution: University
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1.0 Briefly describe how you used this booklet.

2.0 Was it helpful to you? Yes No

2.1 Explain how it was helpful to you.

3.0 Was it helpful to your organization? Yes No

3.1 Explain how it was helpful to your organization.

4.0 Suggestions:

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