

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Bob Tyler, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee

DATE OF MEETING: December 20, 2012

SUBJECT: **Establishment of C-EBLIP: Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice as a Type A Centre in the University Library**

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the establishment of the Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-EBLIP) as a Type A Centre in the University Library, effective December 20, 2012.

PURPOSE:

The Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-EBLIP) will serve as a nexus for library faculty as researchers and practitioners.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

The Centre arises from the institutional goal of supporting the academic and service missions of the University Library. The Library has an emerging national and international reputation as a leader in research in the field of librarianship. The Centre will enhance the Library's growing reputation by fostering the research efforts of librarians and informing their professional practice.

CONSULTATION:

The Centres Subcommittee considered the proposed Centre on October 9, 2012. Recommendations included a sharper focus for the Centre and the highlighting of opportunities for additional funding. The Planning and Priorities Committee considered the Centre at its meeting on November 21, 2012, and enthusiastically supported the proposal.

SUMMARY:

The Planning and Priorities Committee supports the establishment of the Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice as a Type A, as it will advance the Library's research goals by supporting librarians as researchers and evidence-based practitioners.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposal to establish C-EBLIP: Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice

The Centres Policy and Guidelines may be found at:

www.usask.ca/university_secretary/policies/research/8_23.php

1. Name of Centre

The Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-EBLIP)

2. Type of Centre

Type A

3. Academic Plan

Background and Context

The University Library is a non-departmentalized college with a faculty complement of 41: 27 librarians¹ with tenure and 14 librarians in the pre-tenured group. In 2006, the Library was recognized as having both a service mission and an academic mission. This development saw the hiring of the first Dean of the Library; a first for not only in the University Library but also across Canada, which led to local and national implications. There is now a trend of having a Dean of the Library, with the University of Toronto, McGill, and Simon Fraser University following suit in Canada. Under Dean Williamson's leadership, a strategic plan was developed for the University Library which included the mandate to develop and intensify research among Library faculty members. Throughout IP2 and continuing on in IP3, the Library has been progressing a range of programs and activities in order to bring this intensification to fruition.

For librarians, research as faculty members is often tied to the practice of professional skills. A librarian's research may be in

- applied scholarship - investigating the practice from within librarianship such as application of a new technology, management practices, the development of information delivery methods and services, application of teaching methods, or development of standards for organizing information and library resources.
- subject scholarship - research in the literature of specific disciplines resulting in the publication of bibliographies, resource lists, internet site evaluations, translations, books, articles, etc.
- theoretical/policy scholarship - exploration of issues leading to the development of theory, policy and standards of practice for the library community. For example: copyright for digital resources, electronic licensing agreements, equity and sustainability of information access.

Librarians at the University Library conduct research in various areas of specialization such as evidence based library and information practice, health sciences, information seeking behaviour, open access and scholarly communication, digital preservation and curation, library leadership, change management, and more. Librarians are encouraged to submit their research to the University Library's eCommons@usask, <http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/7> .

The University Library is a member of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) and the American Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Dean Williamson's active involvement in these and other high level organizations ensures that the University Library has a high profile nationally and

¹ Throughout the document the term librarian includes the University archivists.

internationally. In December of 2011, the University Library was awarded the 7th International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice conference (EBLIP7). This biennial conference has been held in Sheffield, UK; Edmonton, AB; Brisbane, Australia; Chapel Hill-Durham, NC, USA; Stockholm, Sweden; and Manchester, UK. The University Library was successful against an application from Sao Paulo, Brazil and will host this international conference from July 15-18, 2013 on campus. Proposed C-EBLIP Director Virginia Wilson is developing an international reputation in evidence based library and information practice (EBLIP). There are already other librarians in the University Library who are interested in EBLIP and interest is spreading across the collegium. The proposed Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice is strategically the next step in research development and intensification in the University Library. C-EBLIP will provide research support for University Library faculty members, participate in generating changes to the internal research culture in the Library, and give the Library a clearer external profile and a contact point for possible local, national, and international research partnerships. C-EBLIP would be the first research centre of its kind in Canada.

Vision: The Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice is the nexus for research at the University Library, and it is devoted to the idea that practitioner-researchers make a vital contribution to the University Library, the University of Saskatchewan, and the field and discipline of librarianship.

Mission: To support librarians as researchers and evidence based practitioners, to raise the profile of librarians as researchers on campus and beyond, and to enhance the University Library's national and international reputation as a research organization.

Goals and Objectives

The proposed Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice takes as its context evidence based library and information practice. EBLIP is a way of practicing librarianship, offering both a conceptual framework and practical tools. EBLIP in a nutshell is essentially this: finding the best available research evidence and using it in a practice situation to inform decision making, policy, procedures, etc. Additionally, EBLIP encourages librarians to conduct their own research studies if the evidence is not available, and to add to the body of Library and Information Science (LIS) evidence by publishing or other means of dissemination. However, the idea is not to use research evidence to the exclusion of knowledge gained over the span of a professional career, discussions with colleagues, or common sense. Instead, the idea is to draw on research in addition to these methods of undertaking professional practice – it can provide a part of the picture that may have been missing until now. Librarians have a history and heritage in the nature of their practice of supporting others' research efforts. It is time for the librarians at the University Library to acknowledge our own engagement in research. C-EBLIP will provide structure for this.

A focused research centre will be an invaluable locus for the continued development of the University Library's research culture. The Library has been building a culture of research for the past several years. Current activities such as the Dean's Research Lecture Series, the Dean's Research and Innovation Fund, and the Researcher-in-Residence Program, as well as Dean Williamson's own robust record of research, speak to her commitment to the development of a research culture. Librarians as faculty members have a mandate to develop programs of research in order to meet the standards for tenure and promotion, and to contribute as active University citizens in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. A formalized Centre will focus on research and librarians conducting research, not only

for the attainment of tenure and promotion, but also to contribute to the field of librarianship. U of S librarians as faculty members are in a unique position to be able to add value to the body of LIS evidence. To approach the conducting of research and the dissemination of research outputs from the support and reinforcement of a formalized centre will be beneficial to individual librarians as well as the University Library's research culture. Now is the time to create such a structure in order to support librarians at all levels of their careers and to more closely align the University Library in terms of research with the University of Saskatchewan's Third Integrated Plan (IP-3).

C-EBLIP resonates with the University of Saskatchewan's IP-3, *Promise and Potential*. This plan reemphasizes the University's commitment to research. The section of the plan entitled "Knowledge Creation: Innovation and Impact" states that "over this planning cycle, we will establish a pervasive culture of research and scholarship throughout the institution". To do this, "every faculty member must contribute to the research, scholarly, and artistic mission of our university and our faculty need to do so in ways which are at least comparable to those of colleagues at our peer universities". The plan strongly states that "we cannot have segments of our institution act as bystanders to our research mission". The creation of C-EBLIP will help ensure that the University Library is even more strongly aligned with the University's integrated plan, a plan that calls for action: "Colleges and schools will create and implement research plans which align with institutional goals of pre-eminence and impact, which emphasize strengths both complementary to and independent of the signature areas of research, which describe strategies for increasing the productivity of faculty, and which provide for coordination of effort associated with research, scholarly, and artistic work throughout the university". Librarians at the University Library are contributing to the University through research in many different ways. By directing our efforts through the Centre, we can intensify our own research endeavors, maximize the impact of our research, and increase the profiles of our researchers.

C-EBLIP falls under Strategy 2 in the *University Library's Strategic Plan: Researcher, Scholar, Practitioner Strategy*. This strategy aims to intensify librarians' research activities. As it states in the *University Library Plan for the Third Planning Cycle, 2012-2016*, new initiatives include "exploration of the establishment of a Centre for Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice (Type A Centre) within the University Library as the focus for the research activities of librarians as scholars and researchers. Establishing a Type A Centre would require university approval, but can be realized using existing library resources." These resources include funding already in place for several activities already occurring in the library as well as physical space such as an existing allocated office for the research-in-residence program and the librarians' research office. These physical spaces will become aligned with C-EBLIP and provide the shop front. No additional costs will be involved as these facilities are already established.

The University Library is acknowledged to have the most rigorous and demanding standards for tenure and promotion in Canada. Our librarians are rising to this challenge by conducting high level research, presenting at national and international conferences, and publishing in scholarly journals. According to a recent survey undertaken by Schrader, Shiri, and Williamson, "Two-thirds of participating [University Library] librarians said they were involved in research at the time of the survey, and more than 90% indicated plans within the next year or two to complete a research project and share findings through

publication or conference presentations”². C-EBLIP will offer a means to showcase this research activity, as well as provide an internal infrastructure to keep the research culture dynamic and flexible within the University Library and the larger campus community.

C-EBLIP is a financially and physically sustainable endeavour. Several of the activities (see below) which will be under the umbrella of the Centre are already funded and occurring. As well, one of the goals of C-EBLIP is to attain more robust research funding, both as a Centre and across the University Library collegium. As the Centre grows and develops, aiding the University Library in becoming a greater force in research, external funding will be sought. With anticipated research partnerships and larger research projects, funding momentum will be generated, which will enhance the initial funding provided by the University Library. In particular, SSHRC grant funding is a concrete goal for C-EBLIP. In terms of being physically sustainable, the University Library will dedicate space to the Centre for C-EBLIP activities and to serve as a tangible contact point for Centre business.

C-EBLIP will be essentially comprised of three parts: existing activities, librarians as researchers, and using evidence in practice:

Existing activities

- This year (2012) will mark the 7th offering in the Dean’s Research Lecture Series. The inaugural Dean’s Research Lecture was held in 2006 to recognize librarians as researchers and to help raise the profile of research in library and information science. These well-received lectures are open to the campus community.

Past lectures:

2011: Dr. Ingrid Parent, President of the International Federation of Library Associations and University Librarian at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Parent spoke about international librarianship, partnership, and the role of professional associations.

2010: Dr. James G. Neal, Vice-President for Information Services, and University Librarian at Columbia University, New York.

2009: Dr. David Wiley, Associate Professor, Brigham Young University. Dr. Wiley spoke about trends in scholarly communication and open access.

2008: Mr. Ian E. Wilson, Librarian and Archivist of Canada. Mr. Wilson delved into the convergence between archives and libraries.

2007: Dr. Jean-Claude Guedon, from the Université de Montréal held in conjunction with Congress 2007. Dr. Guedon spoke about intellectual property and copyright.

2006: Mr. Ernie Ingles, Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian at the University of Alberta and recipient of the 2006 Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) Award for

² Schraeder, A.M, Shiri, A, & Williamson, V. (2012). Assessment of the Research Learning Needs of University of Saskatchewan Librarians: A Case Study. *College & Research Libraries* 73(2), 147-163.

Distinguished Service to Research Librarianship. Mr. Ingles spoke about research in librarianship.

- The Dean's Research and Innovation Fund is intended to provide financial support to conduct research or pilot/implement innovative projects within the library. Librarians can apply for funding at any time. So far, six librarians/librarian partnerships have been awarded funding since 2007.
- The Researcher-in-Residence Program is designed to aid in the enrichment and development of research at the University Library by providing space and various types of support for a visiting professional (educator or practitioner) with the expectation that the professional will interact with librarians regarding research activities.

Librarians as researchers

There are many possibilities for C-EBLIP to support and showcase librarians as researchers. In July 2013, the 7th International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice conference (EBLIP7) will be held at the University Library on the U of S campus. This biennial conference has grown out of an interest in evidence based practice—using the best available evidence including published research evidence to inform practice and aid in decision-making. On the “off” years of the EBLIP conference series, C-EBLIP could hold events on a provincial or even national level such as workshops on methodologies, seminars focusing on research, and research colloquia. Additionally, the University Library was involved in the creation and launch of the inaugural Canadian Association of Research Libraries Librarians' Research Institute (CARL LRI) held in June 2012 in Windsor, ON. The University Library has just been given the nod to host the second CARL LRI in conjunction with the University of Regina in June 2013. This unique institute goes beyond skills based courses as it presents an intensive workshop designed to help Canadian librarians hone and further their research skills and in doing so help to build and develop a Canadian library research culture.

Using evidence in practice

As mentioned above, evidence based practice is an increasing trend in librarianship. Librarians, administrators, and managers consult not only the body of LIS research, but also research in the areas of business, marketing, education, and the social sciences to assist with decision-making, policy, and practice situations. C-EBLIP will be able to assist librarians in undertaking evidence based practice by offering resources and instruction for evidence based library and information practice basics such as critical appraisal, research methods, and research dissemination. Learning to become active and effective evidence based practitioners not only helps librarians in their work, it also allows librarians to connect with other disciplines who also engage in evidence based practice such as health sciences, education, and business.

Impact and Relationships

The focal point of C-EBLIP will be research: using research evidence in practice, conducting research as faculty, disseminating research, and learning from the research of others. To have a physical and academic space devoted to librarians and our research will serve several functions:

- Research support – Collegial support systems are important when building a program of research; planned and coordinated research offerings such as workshops, seminars, and colloquia will help to create and maintain skills, enthusiasm, and expertise; research support funding will help in practical terms to progress research projects to completion.
- Mentorship – Informal collegial mentorship plays a strong role in the University Library. Having this informal mentorship focus on research will be beneficial to our new librarians as well as those who are expanding their programs of research, and those with robust research experience and a desire to pass along that knowledge.
- Potential for collaboration – This potential is twofold: it brings together librarians from across the University Library system in a way that is not normally seen in day to day work activities. With seven branch libraries and other library units, librarians are physically spread across campus. Opportunities to come together to discuss, conduct, and learn about research are not as abundant as they might be. C-EBLIP will serve as a meeting area and focal point for librarians to explore potential partnerships and to learn together. As well, having a formal Centre will enable potential partners from across the University campus to find us if they believe one or more librarians can play a role in research in other disciplines.
- A means to promote what librarians can offer the campus community in terms of research from the academic side (our academic mission) in addition to what we can offer campus from the research assistance side (our service mission).
- A higher research profile locally, nationally, and internationally.

Scholarly Work

The University Library is one of the leading academic libraries in Canada in the areas of scholarly work and evidence based library and information practice. With our burgeoning internal culture of research, our rigorous standards for tenure and promotion, and our presence on the international EBLIP stage, the University Library is distinctively situated to become a leader in librarian practitioner-research and EBLIP. C-EBLIP affiliation will be open to all librarians employed by the University Library. As faculty, librarians are mandated to conduct research; therefore, the Centre would be beneficial to these scholars as a resource and a meeting place. Evidence based library and information practice is an area of growing interest to many faculty members in the University Library. These librarians would find the Centre a place to explore EBLIP as a conceptual and practical activity. Members of the international EBLIP community, who will be on campus in July 2013, will be introduced to C-EBLIP and it is conceivable that research partnerships between University of Saskatchewan librarians and the larger EBLIP community could be formed. While it is unknown at this time exactly how these relationships will form, the possibilities are endless and exciting when it comes to building relationships from within C-EBLIP.

4. Proponents

Dean Vicki Williamson, University Library, University of Saskatchewan, Librarian IV

Ken Ladd, Associate Dean, University Library, University of Saskatchewan, Librarian IV

Frank Winter, University Library, University of Saskatchewan, Librarian IV

Jill Crawley-Low, Assistant Dean, Services to Libraries, University Library, U of S, Librarian IV

Lyn Currie, Head, Education Library, University of Saskatchewan, Librarian IV

Charlene Sorensen, Head, Description and Discovery, University Library, U of S, Librarian III
Virginia Wilson, University Library, University of Saskatchewan, Librarian III
DeDe Dawson, University Library, U of S, Librarian I
Maha Kumaran, SHIRP Librarian, U of S, Librarian I
Sara Mueller, Research Facilitator, University Library, U of S (currently on maternity leave)
Carolyn Pytlyk, Research Facilitator, University Library, U of S

Consultations

Consultations were undertaken with the following individuals and groups:

- Jim Basinger, Associate Vice-President Research, University of Saskatchewan
- Vicki Williamson, Dean, University Library, University of Saskatchewan
- Cecilia Reynolds, Dean, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
- David J. Parkinson, Vice-Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts, University of Saskatchewan
- Ken Coates, Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan
- Len Findlay, Humanities Research Unit, College of Arts and Science
- Jason Disano, Director, Social Sciences Research Laboratories, University of Saskatchewan
- Librarians Forum, University Library
- Pre-Tenured Librarians Group, University Library
- Denise Koufogiannakis, University of Alberta
- Sandra Calver, coordinator, University Governance, University of Saskatchewan

Librarians Forum and the Pre-Tenured Librarians Group are groups within the University Library. The former is comprised of all University librarians, and it meets to share research, information, collegial discussion, and issues pertinent to information management. The latter is comprised of librarians going through the tenure process, and provides support for that process. Denise Koufogiannakis is one of EBLIP's leading researchers. She was also one of the founders of the open access journal, *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* (<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/>) which is in its 7th year of publishing.

5. Centre Management

Administration of the Centre will be undertaken by a Director (Virginia Wilson) who will have this role as part of her assigned duties at the University Library. The Dean of the Library, Dr. Vicki Williamson, will be administratively accountable for the Centre. The Director will report annually to the Dean on the activities, accomplishments, finances and budget of the Centre.

Contact: Virginia Wilson virginia.wilson@usask.ca

6. Resources and Budget

A substantial segment of the following itemization of resources is a consolidation of resources that are existing expenditures.

C-EBLIP	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<u>Revenues</u>	Amount	Amount	Amount
Dean's Lecture Series & Dean's Research & Innovation Fund	9,000	9,000	9,000
Biennial Event	0	10,000	0
Smaller Event	3,000	0	3,000
One-time costs	10,625		
Office supplies	430	430	430
Total Revenues	23,055	19,430	12,430

Expenses

Events

Dean's Lecture Series & Dean's Research & Innovation Fund	9,000	9,000	9,000
Biennial Event	0	10,000	0
Smaller Event	3,000	0	3,000
Subtotal	12,000	19,000	12,000

Office supplies

Paper	60	60	60
Labels	70	70	70
Printer toner cartridges	200	200	200
Miscellaneous	100	100	100
Subtotal	430	430	430

One Time Costs

Marketing/Promotion	10,000
Scanner/photocopier/printer	300
Label Maker	200
Stapler-heavy duty	75
Stapler-light duty	30
Tape dispenser	20
Subtotal	10,625

Total Expenses	23,055	19,430	12,430
Net Revenues (Expenses)	0	0	0
Residual Funds (Deficit) - Opening Balance	0	0	
Net Operations	0	0	0
Residual Funds (Deficit) - Ending Balance	0	0	0

7. Support

In the consultation process undertaken for this application, consultees were unanimously supportive of a Type A centre focused on research and evidence based practice in the University Library. A wide and varied group of people across campus were informed about the proposed centre and asked for advice and feedback, which was generously given. Attached are letters of support from:

Vicki Williamson, Dean, University Library, University of Saskatchewan

Cecilia Reynolds, Dean, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan

David Parkinson, Vice-Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts, University of Saskatchewan

Ken Coates, Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan

Len Findlay, Humanities Research Unit, University of Saskatchewan

Margaret Haines, University Librarian, Carleton University

Alvin Schrader, University of Alberta

Denise Koufogiannakis, University of Alberta

Gwen Ebbett, Chair of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), Research Libraries Committee.

8. Governance

Under the leadership of the Centre Director and with the advice of Dean Williamson, any events undertaken by C-EBLIP will be planned and carried out by member librarians. It is envisioned that the Centre will provide the structure for collaborative efforts in building events such as workshops, seminars, and colloquia. The Centre Director will be the contact person for all Centre business.

9. Systematic Assessment

The Centre will be subject to systematic review as specified in the University of Saskatchewan *Policy on Centres*. The operations of C-EBLIP will be reviewed in the context of the University integrated planning process. The University Library's Strategic Plan is reviewed yearly and the assessment of the C-EBLIP will fall within this timeline. The University Library has set up an in-house systematic program of assessment which cycles through reviews. A Centre review will be built into this program. The review will be co-ordinated by Dean Williamson, who is administratively responsible for the work of the Centre.



TO: Bob Tyler, Planning and Priorities Committee
FROM: Dr. Vicki Williamson, Dean – University Library
CC: Virginia Wilson, Liaison Librarian
DATE: October 22, 2012
SUBJECT: Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-BLIP)

In my capacity as Dean of the University Library I am delighted to write in strong support of the application for the establishment of a Type A centre within the University Library – the Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-EBLIP).

There is much to be said in positive support of this move, at this time. However, I feel the various letters of support provided with the application speak well to all the points. Virginia Wilson has led efforts to establish C-EBLIP and I commend her for her efforts. The centre's establishment will be a first for the University of Saskatchewan and for research libraries in Canada and this, in and of itself, speaks to our vision as leaders and innovators.

The financial requirements of the centre are modest as many activities already in place will be 'folded-in' to the centre's programs and activities. Consequently, I believe the University Library can sustain the centre, even in tight economic times.

The establishment of the centre will go a long way in helping faculty within the University Library achieve the expectations outlined in the University Library Draft Planning Parameters for IP3 – namely that library faculty will be able to point to increased research intensiveness, including contributions to tri-council funded research.

I am very happy to provide any further information, if required.

Regards,



Dr. Vicki Williamson, Dean
University Library

October 25, 2012

Dr. Vicki Williamson
University Library Dean's Office
Room 156, Murray Building
3 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5A4

Dear Dr. Williamson:

I spoke to Virginia Wilson about the proposed new Centre, and I am delighted to learn of this initiative and am pleased to provide a very enthusiastic endorsement. The University of Saskatchewan's professional librarians have had a long and distinguished history as scholars and leaders in professional practice. It is clear that this Centre will do at least two important things:

1. Support the research and professional engagement of USask's librarians, enabling them to participate at the highest academic levels in their field.
2. Provide an important point of contact between the librarians and other USask faculty members, particularly those interested in connected library usage with classroom instruction or examining aspects of professional library use.

As you well know, the shift toward evidence-based practice is pervasive in public and professional affairs. This dynamic shift highlights an obvious, but often-ignored fact: that we can use advanced research to make more effective use of public funds and public resources, in this instance the library holdings and professional time of the University's librarians. In many fields, from health care to investments in scientific research, evidence-based practice has mobilized the research community to work with professionals, policy-makers and governments to improve the effectiveness of our activities. One can only be truly excited about the prospect of this approach being applied systematically to the engagement of our librarians with the teachers and researchers at the university and more broadly within society.

I am pleased to support the C-EBLIP initiative and know that I will make extensive use of this Centre as it comes into operation. There are so many questions that require urgent attention, including the high school-university transition for new students in terms of their familiarity with libraries, students' and researchers' ability to do proper digital research, and more effective measures for integrating library use into undergraduate instruction. Add to this the additional challenge of promoting library usage among residents of rural and remote communities, and one sees the enormous potential of evidence-based approaches to librarianship.

University of Saskatchewan Campus – 101 Diefenbaker Place, Saskatoon, SK Canada S7N 5B8

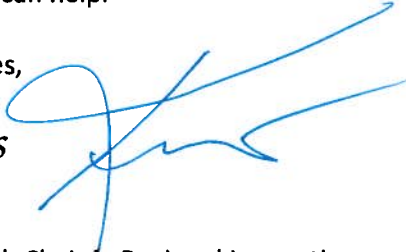
The Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, with campuses at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, is an interdisciplinary centre for public policy research, teaching, outreach and training.

JOHNSON
SHOYAMA
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC POLICY

I am sure that the university community as a whole will see the many benefits of this initiative and will support the Library's efforts to promote the professional development and engagement of our professional librarians. Please let me know how I can help.

With best wishes,

Ken Coates



Ken Coates
Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation
Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy
Room 181 -- 101 Diefenbaker Place
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 5B8

✓ c.c. Bob Tyler
Chair
Planning and Priorities Committee of University Council



UNIVERSITY OF
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College of Education

▣ Dean

28 Campus Drive Saskatoon SK S7N 0X1 Canada
Telephone: (306) 966-7647 Facsimile: (306) 966-7624

October 22, 2012

Dean Vicki Williamson:

I write this letter in support of the proposal for a Type A Centre in the Library with the title of "Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice".

I have met with proponents for this Centre and believe that it is something that will foster improved research productivity not only within the Library but also across the campus. It is highly likely that many research proposals would be enriched by including a person connected with this Centre as part of their research team. It would also be possible that researchers could consult with members of this Centre regarding possible innovative ideas regarding knowledge transfer and dissemination techniques for the findings of research projects that go beyond the ordinary routes. The proposed Centre could strongly contribute to IP3 in the area of Knowledge Creation and also in terms of community engagement.

The College of Education currently shares a research facilitator with the College of Law and the Library. This fact, and the establishment of this Centre, align well with our intentions as a University to be more collaborative across our colleges and units into the future. Recent success in terms of Tri-Council funding attainment in the College of Education means that we are well positioned to foster such collaboration and help it benefit all participants.

I strongly endorse this proposal for a Type A Centre.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cecilia Reynolds".

Cecilia Reynolds

From: Parkinson, David [djp027@campus.usask.ca]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2012 8:20 AM
To: Wilson, Virginia
Cc: Tyler, Robert; Williamson, Vicki
Subject: C-EBLIP: letter of support

Virginia Wilson
Librarian
University Library
University of Saskatchewan

Dear Virginia,

Thank you for sending me a draft of your application for a Type A Centre, the Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-EBLIP). I apologize for the lateness of this letter of support. My slowness to write to you about your timely, tidy, project is due entirely to the welter of demands at this desk and should not be taken to indicate any lack of enthusiasm or support. On the contrary, I consider your proposal to make the logical next step in the development of the University Library as a site of research, a development that is distinguishing the University of Saskatchewan and advancing this University's focus on research productivity. A Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice will stimulate collaborative scholarship amongst librarians and enhance their capacity to work alongside faculty colleagues in the advancement of recognized, funded research. With this nationally unique Centre in place, the articulation and achievement of goals in the attainment of Tri-Council funding will, I anticipate, rise at the University Library. Already I am anticipating excellent outcomes in substance, import, and recognition, in the way the Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice will provide librarians the means to connect with researchers and artists working in the humanities and fine arts, and especially through the Interdisciplinary Centre for Culture and Creativity and the Digital Research Centre.

Congratulations on a finely thought-through, cogent proposal. You have provided an extremely exciting prospect for the advancement of research, scholarship, and artistic work at our University.

With my good wishes,

David

David J. Parkinson
Vice-Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts
College of Arts and Science
University of Saskatchewan



**Canadian Association
of Research Libraries**

**Association des bibliothèques
de recherche du Canada**

November 1, 2012

Dr. Vicki Williamson
Dean
University of Saskatchewan Library
University of Saskatchewan
Murray Building
3 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5A4

Dear Vicki,

On behalf of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries' (CARL) Research Libraries Committee (RLC), I am very pleased to provide this letter in support of the University of Saskatchewan Library's application for the *Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*.

You have been an active member of the Research Libraries Committee since its inauguration in 2009, and prior to that as Chair of CARL's Library Education Working Group. Your support and commitment to the field of academic librarianship is unwavering and your willingness to promote research skills and opportunities to practising librarians has not gone unnoticed.

Your sponsorship and role in the Planning Committee for CARL's inaugural Librarian's Research Institute was instrumental in its resounding success. Your offer to host the second LRI is another clear indication of your strong support for practicing librarians to undertake research that will benefit our profession and thus our students and faculty.

Through many facets you have built considerable support for academic librarians and research, and the development of Canada's first *Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* is another shining example of your innovative approaches to building a research community and I have no doubt the *Centre* will be a success under your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G Ebbett", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Gwendolyn Ebbett
Chair, CARL Research Libraries Committee and
Dean, University of Windsor Library

cc. Thomas Hickerson, President, Canadian Association of Research Libraries
Brent Roe, Executive Director, Canadian Association of Research Libraries
Bob Tyler, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee of University Council, University of Saskatchewan





UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Planning and Priorities Committee
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, SK

October 10, 2012

Dear members of the Planning and Priorities Committee,

I am writing in support of the proposal by the University of Saskatchewan Library system to develop a Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice.

Evidence based library and information practice (EBLIP) has been a growing movement amongst academic librarians since 1997. Canadian librarians have been leaders in this field, including starting the international journal, *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, which has a registered readership of more than 3000 worldwide and is hosted by the University of Alberta Libraries. Librarians at the University of Saskatchewan have been very involved with EBLIP, particularly Virginia Wilson, proposed Director of the Centre. She is very knowledgeable about the field and is also hosting the 7th International EBLIP conference in July 2013.

Once established, the Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice will be the first of its kind anywhere in the world, and will again highlight Canada as a leader in the international EBLIP movement. The development of such a Centre will obviously provide much support to local librarians, but it will also be a model for librarians around the world. I know that Virginia Wilson and others at the University of Saskatchewan will share their knowledge in managing this type of Centre and this will allow others to learn and develop similar programs. The Centre will be very beneficial for the use of research evidence in decision making within the profession of librarianship. I foresee both support tools as well as research studies coming out of the Centre, and both being widely shared within the library and information science community. The Centre would likely attract many librarians who would like to study and learn from the model and will provide many opportunities for national and international collaboration.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Denise Koufogiannakis

Denise Koufogiannakis

University of Alberta Libraries

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15 October, 2012

Dr. Vicki Williamson, Dean,

University of Saskatchewan Library,

Room 156 MMB

Dear Dean Williamson:

It is a pleasure to write in support of the proposal to establish a Type A Research Centre in the area of Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice. This strikes me as a well considered and timely initiative. The financial implications are minimal. However, the potential benefits for all members of the University are significant.

The timing of this proposal fits well with the emphases and objectives of IP-3, with the maturation of the Library as a college with academic and research as well as invaluable service dimensions to its operations. The proposal is consistent, too, with the hosting here of a major international conference in this area of information science in 2013. Moreover, any affirmation of the importance of evidence to policy development and implementation is welcome at a time when evidence seems inadequately valued at the national level, and when digitization threatens to function as a pretext for downsizing and deskilling professional librarians. In my role as Chair of the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee of CAUT, I have taken an active part in the ongoing CAUT campaign to save Libraries and Archives Canada from damaging cuts. At the same time, as President of Academy One of the Royal Society of Canada, I have developed and acquired approval for an RSC Expert Panel on The Status and Future of Libraries and Archives in Canada, a Panel that will begin its work in 2013. Through these two lenses I perceive the proposed C-EBLIP as a constructive and savvy response to diminishing resources and rising expectations.

This proposal lets a significant cohort of our faculty know that they are valued as researchers and expected to perform at a high standard both within their disciplinary and subject milieu and in developing partnerships with other units on campus. The potential for such collaborations is great, because of the continuing centrality of the Library to so much of what we do as teachers and researchers, and because there are already strong and durable relations between many faculty and the Library. What this proposal bids fair to do, is to build on these strengths in a time when recent and

emergent technologies have unleashed unhelpful waves of techno-triumphalism and ill concealed Luddism. Our Library has for the most part navigated these waters shrewdly and patiently. Its current proposal speaks well for its sense of responsibility as well as opportunity, and I hope it secures approval from PPCC and Council itself.

Yours sincerely,

Len Findlay

L. M. Findlay M.A. D.Phil. D.Litt. F.R.S.C.

Distinguished Chair, Department of English,

Director, Humanities Research Unit

✓ cc. Professor Robert Tyler, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee of Council

cc. Virginia Wilson, Librarian, Room 361 North Wing, MMB



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1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6
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October 15, 2012

Dr. Vicki Williamson
Dean, University Library
University of Saskatchewan
Room 156 Murray Building
3 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK
S7N 5A4

Dear Dr. Williamson,

RE: Proposal to Establish a Type A Centre, University of Saskatchewan

I am very pleased to provide a letter of support for your proposal to establish a Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice at the University of Saskatchewan.

As you know, I have long championed an evidence-based approach in libraries since becoming aware of evidence-based medicine in the early 1990's. I promoted this within the National Health Service in the UK both in my role as NHS Library Adviser and later as Director of R&D for the South East Region. There were two reasons for this – I saw the key role that librarians could play in supporting the discovery and appraisal of evidence for health practitioners and, equally important, I felt that the adoption of the evidence-based approach could significantly improve the practice of librarianship, whatever the sector. I was involved in the very first Evidence-Based Librarianship conference in Sheffield in 2001 and have been on the international editorial panel for these biennial conferences ever since.

In comparison to other disciplines such as education, the adoption of evidence-based practice in librarianship and information science has been uneven across and within sectors. Despite positive developments such as the biennial conferences and the online journal based at the University of Alberta, take-up of the methodology has been rather slow despite the evidence of the value of this approach. The biennial conferences and related courses are still attended primarily by the “converted” in the health sector, followed by those in the academic sector and hardly at all by librarians in other sectors such as public libraries. This is despite evidence-based practice and research skills appearing in most lists of professional skills produced by professional bodies or associations. I attribute this slow adoption to a lack of time and skill among the working practitioners to conduct research or search for appropriate evidence and also to a lack of preparation for new practitioners in their information studies programs. It is probably also due to the fragmentation of the body of research literature in our field.

My view is that in order to make librarianship more evidence-based, we need to have more research centres which encourage research, document and promote the value of the EBLIP approach, and provide training for librarians in adopting appropriate methodologies both in relation to research and in relation to systematic reviews of relevant research. It is important that librarians are thoroughly familiar with these methods not only for their own research but to become successful co-investigators with faculty in other disciplines. If I had to pick one centre in Canada where I thought such as centre would succeed, it would be Saskatchewan for the following reasons:

The University of Saskatchewan Library has had a longstanding culture of research among librarians and rigorous requirements for scholarly activity in order to achieve tenure and promotion for librarians. Your librarians, particularly Virginia Wilson and Lyn Currie, have been involved in the EBLIP conferences as presenters and authors and recently, you have been given the honour of hosting the 7th EBLIP conference in 2013. You, Vicki, have been a leader in Canada in promoting research skills for academic librarians and in encouraging national associations such as CARL to fund research and to develop and launch a research institute. You have been the first in Canada to establish a Dean's Research Lecture Series, as well as a research and innovation fund and a researcher in residence program. For all these reasons, I believe that a Type A Centre would be sustainable at your university and through this Centre, academic research in librarianship and information management will be improved and expanded in Canada. I am sure that this Centre will draw many librarians to your Library and hopefully students in library and information programs to do internships focusing on research and evidence-based practice.

In summary, I want to say that I wholeheartedly support your proposal and am very excited about the prospect of such a centre being established in Canada. This will be a huge benefit to our profession as we address how we increase our contribution to research and scholarship in Canada.

With best wishes for your application,

Margaret

Margaret Haines
University Librarian and Chair of OCUL



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

October 15, 2012

Dr. Vicki Williamson, Dean
University Library
University of Saskatchewan

Dear Dr. Williamson,

I am writing in support of the proposal to establish The Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (C-EBLIP) as a "Type A Centre" at the University of Saskatchewan.

The Centre is proposed as a key next step in strengthening the University Library's commitment both to its academic research mission and to its service mission. The Centre is intended as a nucleus for enhancing evidence based professional practice and intensifying the University Library's culture of research and scholarship. Three broad pillars of systematic supports are identified as the proposed Centre's core mandate: librarians as researchers; librarians as evidence based practitioners; and institutional research initiatives.

My credentials for speaking with confidence about the value and benefits of the proposed Centre include the following roles and experience: former professor of library and information studies specializing in research methodology at the University of Alberta; former director of the School of Library and Information Studies at that institution; current research mentor to University of Alberta librarians; recently, external reviewer of the "research landscape" in the University Library at the University of Saskatchewan; and published author and conference speaker on the research knowledge needs of academic librarians, and on the myriad factors facilitating the development of an academic library research culture.

In my view, supporting and enhancing the research expertise and experience embraced by the cohort of scholar librarians at the University of Saskatchewan, together with the project of reconceptualizing academic library practice as empirically based decision and policy making, are both essential and urgent needs, not only at the local institutional level but at the broader level of academic librarianship as well.

Institutional and professional supports for enhancing the research skills and understandings of academic librarians, and for facilitating a strong collegial culture of research dynamics, have been recognized and affirmed in recent major studies and through several continuing education initiatives undertaken by academic library associations both here at home and in the U.S.

These needs issue from a set of special historical circumstances surrounding the emerging model of librarians as researcher-practitioners, or scholar-librarians, that sets them apart from academic

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faculty colleagues in very nearly every other university unit, namely, that the Master's degree in library and information studies (MLIS) is not a research degree. It is a graduate-professional degree program, almost uniformly course-based, and with no research component other than an introductory course in social science research, if the programs even have that; in fact, the most recent survey revealed that only half of the accredited MLIS programs in the U.S. and Canada had a required introductory course in research methods, and four U.S. schools did not even offer it as an elective (Schrader 2003), echoing a pattern that has not changed in several decades. (As an aside, I am happy to note that all of the eight accredited Canadian programs require such an introductory course.)

Broadly speaking, if the obvious must be stated, one introductory course provides an inadequate pedagogic foundation for research and scholarly success in academia, and while curricular advocacy in MLIS programs is highly desirable, it would not in any event address the needs of current academic librarians or of those coming on stream in the next few years; graduate program curricular transformation can only be conceived as a long-term project beyond the immediate scope of the proposed Centre.

Moreover, until quite recently, the practitioner service model (which still predominates in other library sectors) has overshadowed the research culture model in academic librarianship. The result has been that few academic librarians have undergone the intensive research learning experience considered the norm for other faculty researchers, namely, the time-honoured doctoral level research apprenticeship model that dominates academic cultures.

The consequence is that a culture of research engagement and knowledge creation within academic librarianship as a profession is only gradually gaining prominence. Hence, to align themselves with the knowledge-intensive mission of a parent institution such as the University of Saskatchewan, librarians as faculty must confront the challenges involved in producing and disseminating both scholarly and applied research knowledge, as well as the complexities involved in applying empirical (and professional) evidence to the institutional service mission.

The key challenge at the present time is the research skills gap between expectations for the production of scholarly knowledge and the levels of competencies possessed by the vast majority of academic librarians, including the University of Saskatchewan cohort. With the exception of recent studies by Fox (2007a; 2007b), Fennewald (2008), Kennedy and Brancolini (2012), and Schrader, Shiri, and Williamson (2012), descriptive data on research competencies and competency gaps are not widely reported, nor are methodologies for capturing and articulating deeper insights into prevailing attitudes and perspectives regarding the research and scholarship enterprise.

It is within this context that the proposal for a Centre presents itself as visionary in strategic leadership for research enhancement and in sustained research engagement as a core professional and institutional value.

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The proposed Centre is ideally situated to address the challenges of developing and facilitating a broader culture of sustained research collegiality within and beyond the University of Saskatchewan. The practice of academic research and research leadership involves the many interconnected challenges of foundational competence, tacit knowledge gained through the experience of academic research apprenticeship, continuous learning about critical bodies of research literature, broad collegiality and networking for research awareness and peer dialogue, beneficial research productivity, and, with rare exceptions, extensive institutional investment.

The proposed Centre speaks to these interdependent challenges by planning for skills based workshops, acting as a central resource for mentorship and collegiality, building on and sustaining personal learning and research support networks, showcasing the research productivity of the cohort of University of Saskatchewan librarians, hosting national and international conferences, workshops, seminars, and events, and fostering longer-term collegial relationships not only locally and nationally but internationally as well.

Moreover, the Centre is envisaged as the infrastructure support for many current initiatives such as the Dean's research lecture series, the Dean's research and innovation fund, the researcher-in-residence program, and other events and activities.

Strong evidence of the University Library's success to date in developing a high national and international research profile are two prestigious affirmations: being awarded the 7th International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice Biennial Conference (EBLIP7) to be held in July 2013, and playing host to the 2nd annual Librarians' Research Institute sponsored by the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) in conjunction with the University of Regina to be held in June 2013. University Library Dean Vicki Williamson and Librarian Virginia Wilson also played key roles in the creation and launch of the inaugural CARL Institute this past June 2012.

It is my assessment that the proposed Centre is exemplary in design and presentation. The statement of need is clear, the policy mandate of the Centre (vision, mission, goals and objectives) is well articulated, impacts and relationships are clearly identified, regular assessment and review plans are presented, and attention to sustainability is addressed through plans for Centre management, research funding, and research partnerships.

The University Library's proposed Centre would constitute the first research infrastructure of its kind in Canada and one of a very few in the U.S. and in the academic library world at large. This is an exciting prospect for the University of Saskatchewan that is sure to enhance the University Library's local, national, and international reputation as a research organization with an intensifying research culture of dynamic collegiality.

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I believe this Centre is urgently needed, and the co-presenters University Library Dean Vicki Williamson and Librarian Virginia Wilson are well situated by virtue of knowledge, expertise, and experience to lead it.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alvin M. Schrader".

Alvin M. Schrader, PhD

Research Mentor, University of Alberta Libraries
Former Director, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta
Professor Emeritus, University of Alberta

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