

The University Library in the Self Survey Program of  
the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Inc.

米国南部大学等基準協会の自己調査制度と大学図書館

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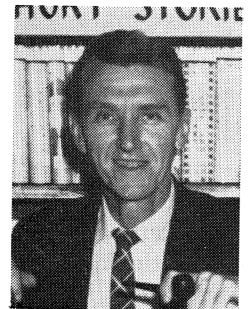
要 旨

南部大学等基準協会は米国の6つの地域基準協会の1つであり、その認定業務の一環として大学の調査を行ってきたが、1955年から大学の自己調査をも認定資料に含めるようになった。自己調査は大学が協会の許可を得て行うもので、調査が完了すると自己調査報告書は協会の実地視察団員に送られ、その後実地視察団は現地に赴き、教授団、当局者、図書館員等に面接し、自己調査の精度を評価した後、勧告書を作成する。

**図書館** 自己調査において、大学図書館は重要なポイントであり、通常図書館調査小委員会が設けられ、その報告はほとんど例外なく自己調査報告書の中の1章を形成する。またカリキュラム、大学院課程、研究、財政などに関する小委員会もそれぞれの調査報告の中で図書館について言及している。この基準協会の図書館自己調査は元来この地域の基準協会の制度に基づくものであるが、一般の図書館調査にも適用することが出来よう。

たいていの図書館は、いつも何らかの自己調査、将来計画をしているものである。また年次報告、その他の図書館の報告は図書館の通常業務の一部として数多く作られている。しかし基準協会と言う自己調査とは全学的調査であり、正確を期して長所短所を合わせて摘出しなければならない。原動力となるのは学長であって、もろもろの問題に関連して図書館調査を行う目的をはっきり学長が述べることは図書館にとっても、図書館調査小委員会にとっても大いに役立つものである。図書館調査小委員会はたいてい何人かの教員と館長がメンバーになるが、問題が重大である場合には、評議員、理事者、教授団、校友、図書館側というような構成メンバーになることもある。データが集められ評価が済むと、勧告書が作られる。調査報告書の内容については、協会の自己調査手引書に書かれているが、要は自館の状況に適合した内容を盛るべきである。

**調査対象** 総合的調査がよいか、それともその館の当面している最も重要な問題だけに絞るべきかは問題のあるところである。総合調査ならば、普通、図書館の目的、経営管理組織、図書館資料、目録分類、施設、人事、サービス、財政というように広範にわたっているが、勧告の焦点がぼけてしまう傾向が見られる。調査を重点的に絞った場合は、最も重要な問題点をはっきりすることが多い。



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自己調査の際に最も重要なことは、図書館とその大学の学事の関係と図書館の蔵書評価の2つである。図書館の技術面も調査しなければならないが、余りそのような部門に拘泥すべきでない。具体的に言えば、次のような事項は問題としなければならないものである。図書委員会の活動、理事会、評議員会、カリキュラム委員会、大学院研究科委員会、施設新築委員会等に図書館を重視させるための大学当局の施策、学生の図書館利用。学生に対する強力な図書館利用教育の推進。学部学生、大学院学生のための蔵書の評価。図書館資料の増加。学部学科の研究資料不足の対策。このような問題は必ずしも簡単に解決するとは限らない。又調査データからの解釈が難しい場合もある。図書利用に関する統計数値の意味も難解であり、蔵書の質を評価することも難問である。しかしこのような問題も、ある程度正しく実体を把握する方法もある。

**自己調査の価値** 自己調査の価値は、後に今一度自己調査をして勧告に沿ってどれだけ改善したかを検討しなければ、はっきりとわからないかもしれない。ただ、自己調査実施中に問題が摘出され、改善費も余り多く必要としないときには、ただちに改善しうる場合も多々ある。調査をしているうちに教員や当局者が図書館をよく理解し、図書館の方針を強く支持するようになることもしばしばあるし、また自己調査の結果として図書館員が行くべき方向をはっきり知ようになるが、これらは大きな収穫である。もし勧告された事項が改善されないまま放置されていけば、自己調査の勧告書を学長、評議員会、図書委員会、教授団、図書館職員などに対して有効に利用し、改善促進の具に供することも出来る。

(T.S.)

The Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Inc., one of six regional accrediting agencies in the United States above state level, is a voluntary association whose principal purpose is to evaluate and improve the educational program and facilities of its member institutions.<sup>1)</sup> For many years the Southern Association has had an evaluation program as a part of its accrediting procedures, but in 1955 this program was extended to include an institutional self survey and periodic visitation by a committee representing the Association.<sup>2)</sup> The procedure may be described briefly as follows: The university requests permission of the Association to begin its self survey and suggests beginning and terminal dates. Following approval of the request and a preliminary visit by the Executive Secretary of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association, the university is ready to begin. The procedure is kept flexible so that the university will not be restricted in its approach to self evaluation. For example, it may be most practical to organize the self survey so that the principal responsibility falls on the various schools; however, no matter what the organizational

structure, there will be problems involving the whole university which will require university-wide committees. The *Manual* of the Association offers a suggested "content of self study,"<sup>3)</sup> but the university is not expected to follow it rigidly. If it wishes the university may bring in outside consultants in the preparation of its self survey. Through the gathering of data, discussion of new as well as old problems, and challenging accepted practices and assumptions, the self survey can be the catalytic agent leading to new and improved plans on the part of the institution itself.

When completed, copies of the self survey report are sent to members of a visiting team which has been appointed to represent the Association for an on-the-spot inspection of the university. The Chairman of the visiting team spends a few days on the campus in advance of the committee's arrival. Shortly thereafter the visiting team goes to the university, interviews faculty, administrators and librarians, appraises the completeness and quality of the self survey, and summarizes its suggestions and recommendations in a report. A final

edition of the report is filed with the Southern Association, and the Association, in turn, makes copies available to the institution.

### The Library

The university library has an important place in the accreditation self survey. Normally, a sub-committee is assigned the responsibility for fact-finding and analysis in regard to library matters. With few exceptions, the results are set forth in a separate chapter in the survey report. The library may also be mentioned by other sub-committee reports dealing with such matters as the curricula, graduate work, finances and research. The purpose of this paper is to suggest some of the requirements<sup>4)</sup> of the library section of the self survey and the results that can be expected from it. While the observations refer to the library survey in the regional accreditation program, they probably apply equally as well to any type of library survey.

In an informal way most libraries are continuously engaged in self study and future projections. Annual reports, special reports, and other types of information about the library are made in great number as a part of the regular routine of the library's operation. These are initiated by the librarian and are more or less taken for granted. The self survey in the accreditation program is an all-university requirement, designed to be definite and factual and to reveal weaknesses as well as strength. The impetus must come from the conviction, by those who administer the university and by the faculty, that the library is of great importance in the total enterprise. No one has as good a rostrum for making this clear as the president. Changes in instruction and research require a continuing re-examination of the implications for library resources, needs and services. Consider, for example, the impact of the new technology on library operations and informational services. There are also old problems as well as new, which have long remained unsolved. The president's statement on the purpose of the library survey in relation to these problems helps to give the library,

and the sub-committee concerned with the library, a sense of direction and confidence in the preparation of their assignment.

In most cases faculty members and the librarian serve on the sub-committee charged with the study of the library, although in some institutions this task has been assigned to the regular library committee. When it is considered that the library serves the whole university and not some part or parts thereof, and that the solutions to its problems affect other units of the university and involve major expenditures, a strong case may be made for having representatives from the board of trustees, administration, faculty, alumni, and the library, on the library study committee. Members of the library staff will collect the essential information. The trustees, administration, and faculty may be expected to play an important role in its analysis and evaluation and in the projection of plans for future development.

When the information has been collected and evaluated and recommendations have been formulated, the results are incorporated into a written report, which should be straightforward, clear and concise. It should avoid self-glorification, complacency, and querulousness. The statistical information necessary for gaining an over-all view of library holdings, finances, and use should be presented completely, compactly, and in orderly fashion. Recommendations should be consolidated or, at least, be clearly pointed up. Although suggestions are made regarding the content of the survey in the Southern Association *Manual*, it is expected that each library will use judgment in fitting the pattern to its own situation.

### What Should Be Studied ?

The question naturally arises whether it is better to make a comprehensive survey of library operations or to single out a few of the most important problems facing the individual library, whether to use a shotgun or a rifle. A comprehensive survey usually covers the objectives of the library, administrative organization, resources, cataloging and classification,

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physical facilities, personnel, readers' services and finances. Curiously enough, there is a certain quality of uniformity and solemnity about many comprehensive surveys. Consciously or unconsciously they appear to avoid any but the most restrained and cautious recommendations. The sheer bulk of the material tends to make them unmanageable. A more limited survey will probably identify the most important problems facing the library and center the collection of information and analysis on these topics. There are plausible arguments for adopting both approaches; the decision is one which must, on the whole, be left to the individual library.

Two of the most important problems with which a self survey should concern itself are the relationship of the library to the academic life of the university and the evaluation of the book collection. No doubt the self survey will have to deal with such grim subjects as the cataloging backlog, classification revision, and the shortcomings of the physical plant and equipment, but it should not devote itself exclusively to technique. For the kind of survey that is meaningful, the activities of the library cannot be abstracted from the attitude of the university toward the library, and the library's own attitude toward itself and its position in the university, nor can any library be evaluated which does not take fully into account its stock in trade: books, journals, and other library materials. To put it more specifically, these are some of the questions which must be asked and answered: How active is the library committee? What administrative measures has the university taken to insure that the library has been extensively and directly included in the deliberations of those administrative and policy-making boards, councils, or committees responsible for curricula, the projection of graduate work, and the planning of new buildings? How much do students really use the library? Has the university properly extended itself to give the essential library instruction which will enable students to develop independent study habits and self-reliance? How adequate qualitatively is the book collection in

support of undergraduate and graduate programs? Has the growth of the collection kept pace with the proliferation of specialized courses and sponsored research which inevitably requires library resources? Would it be sounder procedure for departments to try harder to cut their pattern of research to match the cloth of present library holdings?

These kinds of questions perhaps may lend themselves to critical discussion in verbal rather than written argument. If there are, for example, unfortunate rifts in relations between administrative and library officials, it is unlikely that the survey report will deal frankly with the question of the relation of the librarian to administrative and policy-making bodies. Yet the librarian needs to assess his own position in the administrative structure and find out what he can and cannot do. The self survey offers this opportunity. There may be no easy answer to this kind of problem, but a solution should be dispassionately explored. One deterrent to dealing with real problems in the self survey is the difficulty of getting information that is usable in meaningful interpretation. For example, the question of library use is extremely important, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to give meaning to the regularly recorded statistics of library use. The number of two week and reserve book loans represent only a partial picture of the volume of business during a given year. The picture may be extended by comparing the circulation figures of the current year with those of the past five years. This is about as far as the library normally goes in interpreting statistics in its annual report. A "spot" test, covering even as brief a period as one day, however, provides a statistical basis for generalizing about total library use that is lacking in the data most libraries can afford to keep regularly. Such a test may reveal the count of persons coming to the library by class level (freshmen, sophomores, etc.), the number of loans made to borrowers, the number and types of materials used within the library, and the reasons why students came to the library. Such a test does not explain the uses made of books, or why one book was preferred to another,

but it does afford a clue to the total volume of library use, the kinds of library materials used, and the nature or type of library use.

To take another example from the more difficult types of questions posed at the beginning of this section, there is hardly a word about the quality of book collections in many of the self surveys. The librarian and reference staff may do an effective job of checking the reference and current periodical collections against standard lists, but faculty appraisal of the subject collections in the various teaching disciplines is frequently nothing more than an editorial exercise. A penetrating appraisal of the book collections requires extensive checking of bibliographies in the various subject fields and an equally thorough review of the lacunae by the faculty. Such an evaluation takes time, and few faculty members have the time or care to take the time to do the job thoroughly. However, between a thoroughgoing analysis and a superficial examination of the shelves, it is possible to seek a middle position which combines the librarian's appraisal of the reference and current periodical collections with the faculty member's knowledge of the subject book holdings in his own particular field. The latter may be obtained from each department as part of the overall departmental survey. Attention could be directed toward the adequacy of current periodicals in the departmental field, the adequacy of the departmental book fund allocation to keep abreast of current needs, the existence of important gaps in the collection in fields covered by the department, and so forth. Enough evidence of this kind from each of the departments could provide the basis for a reasonably sound generalization on the condition of the book collection.

#### Value of the Self Survey

What has the self survey in the regional accreditation program accomplished for the university library? It is not easy to answer such a question. Perhaps the only way to answer it is to wait for the second round of self surveys and then to see how much has been accomplished by way of carrying out the

recommendations contained in the first.<sup>5)</sup>

One immediate service is that many universities discover ways and means of improving their libraries in the course of making the self survey and then proceed to resolve them immediately. For the most part the changes that are made do not involve any great expenditure of money. A responsible library committee is set up to give assistance and support to the librarian. An existing committee is stimulated to formulate a long range book selection policy which will guide the library in developing preeminence in two or three subject fields. The faculty is made aware that whereas it makes demands upon the library for prompt service, it often neglects the librarian's requests to order books before making assignments or to turn in second-hand book catalog orders promptly. In short, the self survey process reveals weaknesses which will be met immediately, not with more money only, but with faculty consultation, new ideas on library methods, and better communications.

None of these changes is too significant, but it is well known that the library staff and faculty are so immersed in problems of organization and teaching in day to day work that without the self survey they would be neglected.

The most significant achievement comes from the participation of faculty and administrators in the study of the inside workings of the library. Perhaps for the first time they have been set to hard thinking about their libraries. Accustomed to using the library as a student or teacher or administrator, they have taken for granted that the operation of the library purrs along more or less automatically. Now, perhaps for the first time, they learn why the catalog department needs persons who are well trained in languages and bibliography, why managerial skills are needed to apply modern production methods to acquisition and circulation procedures, and why reference and subject specialists are needed to assist faculty and research workers. Fortunately for scholarship, the administrators and faculty concerned with the library self survey often become strong supporters of the library. They take back with

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them a better conception of the library and its potentialities for the university as a whole as well as for their individual teaching.

Perhaps the best product of the self survey may be within the library itself. Each librarian who takes part in a survey, whether as a member of the self survey committee, as a consultant, or simply as one who has participated in collecting and interpreting information, finds ways in which his own efforts can contribute to the greatest good for the library. The self survey helps to give him a sense of direction. By focusing attention on the broader issues as well as procedures, it helps to relate the individual librarian's work to the objectives of the library. The librarian finds new lines of communication with the faculty and administration, and he is encouraged and stimulated to do a better job.

The self survey report is an instrument to be used. Its recommendations should be kept before the university president, the board of

trustees, the library committee, the faculty, and the library staff. If problems remain unsolved they should be followed up in an effort to secure results.

- 1) Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. *Proceedings of the sixty-seventh annual meeting* (Dallas, Texas, 1962), p. 205.
- 2) Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. *Proceedings of the sixty-second annual meeting* (Richmond, Virginia, 1957), p. 143.
- 3) Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Commission on Colleges and Universities. *Manual for the institutional self-study and periodic visitation program* (The Association, 1960), p. 1-2.
- 4) No full exposition of methodology is intended since it is covered in Morris A. Gelfand's "Techniques of Library Evaluators in the Middle States Association," *College and Research Libraries*, 19 (July, 1958), p. 305-20.
- 5) The Southern Association accreditation program calls for a self survey every ten years.