The rapid increase in student enrollment brought about revolutionary changes to higher education during the 1960s. Student enrollment increased 114% in ten years, from 4 million from 1960 to nearly 8.6 million by 1970. The number of academic librarians also increased by 97% from approximately 9,000 in 1960 to 17,695 by 1970. Junior college (community college) enrollments also grew as did the number of junior colleges. In 1960, there were 515 two-year institutions and by 1969, there were 577, an increase of 12%.

Although many junior colleges were established in an effort to meet the demand for expanded facilities, their libraries were almost nonexistent or greatly in need of federal government aid. College and university libraries saw dramatic increases in their budgets and collections. In 1960, college and university libraries collectively held 177 million volumes and by 1969 their holdings had increased 86% to 328.6 million volumes.

In 1960, college and university libraries had total operating expenditures of $137.2 million and by 1969 that number had increased to $584.8 million, a 326% increase. Libraries were also experiencing an upward spiral of inflation as the consumer price index jumped from 1.5% in 1960 to 5.5% in 1969.

By 1960, ACRL had redefined its relationship to ALA and was ready to focus on meeting the needs of its members and the profession. In the early 1960s, the ACRL Board of Directors approved changes to the ACRL Constitution and Bylaws to better align with the Constitution and Bylaws of ALA. In 1962 President Ralph E. Ellsworth appointed a Special Committee on the ACRL Program to examine existing ACRL activities with a view to developing plans that would advance the objectives of ACRL.

One of the recommendations was to establish a standing Planning and Action Committee to evaluate all ACRL activities
and programs and recommend strategies for effective action. President Neal Harlow believed ACRL "must continually question its objectives and procedures, build in machinery for review and revision." A significant organizational change took place from 1966 to 1967, when the role of the Planning and Action Committee shifted to long-range planning and organizational assessment.

ACRL representatives took an active role in shaping federal legislation affecting academic libraries, especially the proposed Higher Education Act of 1965. As President Edmon Low, "the indefatigable leader in federal legislative battles," observed in 1961:

A major activity of ACRL during 1960 has been the promotion of Federal legislation for grants in aid to college and university libraries for the acquisition of books and periodicals. This activity has effectively demonstrated the Division's ability to work to good purpose through the reorganized ALA . . . in this effort we found the highest regard among both House and Senate members for the ALA as a whole and the purpose for which it stands.

In 1967, the ACRL Committee on Legislation was asked by the Board of Directors to "take a direct and active role in formulating objectives and in planning legislative action at the national level."

As the number of academic libraries grew, so did ACRL membership. In 1960 ACRL had 7,370 members, and 13,654 by the end of the decade. The Junior College Libraries Section was particularly active during the 1960s, working with the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) to implement of the ALA “Standards for Junior College Libraries.” The section worked closely with ALA and AAJC on a number of revisions to the 1960 standards, which led to the “AAJC-ACRL Guidelines for Two-Year College Library Learning Resource Centers” in 1971. The section’s proposal for a junior college information center was funded with a grant of $15,000 from the ALA Goals Award in 1967, and the center opened at ALA in March 1968. Another proposal by the section for a demonstration junior college library project was supported by a grant of $5,000 from the ACRL Committee on Grants.

During the 1960s, ACRL awarded close to $700,000 to more than 500 academic libraries to support collection development, research, equipment purchases, and improvements to library service. Funds were donated largely by the United States Steel Foundation as well as IBM, Remington Rand, and the National Biscuit Company Foundation. ACRL also expanded its publishing program to include College & Research Libraries News (a monthly magazine first published in March 1966), and CHOICE (first published in Middletown, Connecticut, on March 1, 1964), which became known as "one of the country’s leading book review media for libraries."

Notes


16. ACRL, 163.

17. Edmon Low, 112-114.


20. ACRL, 163.


27. ACRL, 1967.


Notes

