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THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

ANINAW SUPPLEMENT ISSUE

DALUB-AKLAT

THE 2025 UP LIBRARIANS CONFERENCE

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SEMI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION

Back in July 29-30, 2019, the UP Libraries community came together for a milestone event, the very first UP Libraries Conference, held at the David M. Consunji Theater in the Institute of Civil Engineering, UP Diliman. With the theme Setting the Knowledge Trail Ablaze: Reshaping the Future of UP Libraries, the event gathered librarians and administrators from across the UP System to reflect on past achievements, assess current performance, and chart strategic directions moving forward. The two-day conference and planning workshop, graced by then-UP President Danilo L. Concepcion and other distinguished guests, served as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and policy harmonization, anchored in the goal of meeting the evolving information needs of the UP community.

Six years since the last conference, the university has experienced a turbulent period which ushered in a movement driven by solutions, evidence, and best practices. As the conference is set to return this year, the theme Transformative Education Through Smart and Innovative Libraries, underpins the critical role of libraries in designing impactful programs which transcends any perceived limit in support of higher education. Dalub-Aklat: The 2025 UP Librarians Conference continues to reaffirm and acknowledge that each UP librarian and staff is an expert in their own right, unquestionably worthy of upholding honor, excellence, and service.

Dalub-aklat, a term rooted on two Filipino words, dalubhasa and aklat, superficially describes a person equipped with the necessary competencies to efficiently manage libraries and its wide array of functions. Coined by renowned librarian, historian, and scholar, Dr. Isagani R. Medina, Dalub-aklat aptly encapsulates the resiliency and ingenuity of Filipino librarians in their pursuit of excellence through the timely delivery of information resources and programs for the community whom they serve.

This year's conference theme spotlights the role of UP Libraries in driving transformative education through the advancement of academic integrity, public service, equity, and accessibility, aligned with the core values of honor, excellence, and service.
The conference explores how smart and dynamic libraries champion critical thinking, professional development, and social responsibility. It calls on UP librarians to embrace this change by reimagining libraries as inclusive learning environments powered by innovation, collaboration, and expertise and grounded in meaningful learning experiences that inspire action, ignite purpose, and build empowered communities.

The Heart of Learning — UP Libraries and the Evolving Landscape of Higher Education

Ma. Theresa T. Payongayong, *AVP for Academic Affairs (Curriculum and Instruction)*

INTRODUCTION

The evolving role of higher education has shifted from a teacher-centered model to a learner-centered paradigm. There is a need for inclusive, responsive, and future-ready academic environments, with libraries positioned as pivotal hubs in this transformation. Educators were challenged to reimagine responsibilities in shaping inclusive, responsive, and future-ready learning environments.

FROM TEACHER-CENTERED TO LEARNER-CENTERED PARADIGMS

The transition from a traditional, teacher-oriented approach to a progressive, student-centered model was traced. In the former, faculty were regarded as the primary source of knowledge, while students were passive recipients. Classrooms were structured around competition, with faculty exercising authority and control, sorting students by performance, and focusing on content mastery within rigid disciplinary boundaries. Relationships between students and faculty were often impersonal, and the assumption prevailed that any subject expert could teach effectively. Learning was largely passive, and instructional quality was equated with the prestige of academic offerings.

In contrast, the student-centered paradigm redefines education as a collaborative and dynamic process. Students are active participants—co-constructors of knowledge who engage in discovery, transformation, and self-directed learning. Critical and creative thinking, exploration of diverse perspectives, and intellectual risk-taking are encouraged, with faculty serving as facilitators rather than lecturers. This approach prioritizes personal connections and mental well-being, fostering meaningful relationships among students and between students and faculty. Collaborative learning, teamwork, and the integration of transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives are emphasized. Responsibility and authority in the learning process are shared, creating a more democratic and empowering educational experience. The paradigm promotes a flexible, growth-oriented mindset where learning is integrative, interactive, collaborative, experimental, agile, and enhanced by technology.

INSTITUTIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

To frame institutional self-assessment, several key questions were posed:

- Where does the University stand now?
- How does the University respond to the evolving roles of education?
- How far has progress been made in preparing for the future of higher education?
- Is priority given to improving the quality of learning over simply enhancing the quality of instruction?
- How should teaching and learning be structured—by covering content, or by achieving specific learning outcomes?
- What is the nature of faculty roles—designers of learning methods and environments, or primarily lecturers?

CURRENT CONTEXT

The present moment was described as a liminal one—a generative space between the familiar past and the possible future. Within the UP System, this transitional phase is marked by tension between established norms and the demands of learner-driven education. Institutional success, once defined by faculty prestige and academic offerings, must now be measured by the quality of student learning and engagement.

This shift affirms the mission to nurture graduates who are not only academically competent but also socially responsible, critically reflective, and community-oriented. The goal is to produce lifelong learners—adaptive, ethical individuals equipped to address real-world challenges. This vision aligns with UP's commitment to developing Iskolars ng Bayan who contribute meaningfully to national development.

REDEFINING FACULTY ROLES

The transformation calls for a redefinition of faculty roles. Educators must evolve from content experts to facilitators and designers of inclusive, engaging learning environments. The task is to guide inquiry, encourage reflection, and support collaboration. Academic freedom is reinforced not just as a right, but as a responsibility to innovate and engage in evidence-informed pedagogy.

THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES

Central to this transformation are the libraries—once quiet repositories of books, now reimagined as dynamic learning hubs. Their evolving role includes supporting lifelong and self-directed learning, bridging educational disparities, fostering community engagement, and serving as essential support for educators. The rhetorical question was posed: "Can a university exist without a library? Certainly not!"—an affirmation of the library's indispensable role in shaping the future of learning.

The moment was emphasized as liminal—between the known past and the possible future. This in-between phase is not merely transitional but generative, inviting reimagination of the entire educational enterprise. In this context, the University must lead in actualizing a learner-centered paradigm that empowers students, democratizes knowledge, and reaffirms education as a tool for liberation.

CONCLUSION

The academic community must boldly navigate this transformative moment. The future of higher education is not distant—it is unfolding now. Institutions must align philosophies and practices with the imperative to foster deep, inclusive, and meaningful learning. In doing so, UP honors its mandate as a public university: to develop critical, compassionate, and competent citizens capable of building a just and humane society.

Understanding the Library's Evolving Role as a Facilitator of Transformative Learning Experiences

Peter Sy, *UP Vice President for Digital Transformation*

The ancient lighthouse of Alexandria served as a beacon for ships and vessels contributing to the growth of human knowledge. Books and important documents were deposited for archiving in the Library of Alexandria, symbolizing the library's role as a custodian of knowledge.

The digital transformation program is envisioned as a modern lighthouse guiding the practice of curation and archiving, and the Library is central to curating human knowledge, particularly records and research.

There is a persistent digital divide in terms of access, including the lack of computers for learning activities and poor internet connectivity. In the midst of the explosion in human knowledge, many resources remain inaccessible due to barriers. Without addressing this divide, libraries cannot deliver equitable and engaging learning experiences. Research by Lagas and Isip (2023) noted that digitization programs in Philippine libraries are often reactive and short-term, triggered by crises such as the pandemic. These efforts typically focus on scanning materials and distributing them via email or cloud storage, with little thought to sustainability. Institutional repositories are frequently neglected, risking the long-term value of digitization.

In comparison, Singapore's National Library Board launched mobile services and volunteer outreach to underserved communities, including a mobile library reaching orphanages and special education schools. LA County Library deployed bookmobiles and maker mobiles offering free educational services. Programs such as Worldreader Kids used mobile phones to support early learning in India and refugee communities. The Citizen Archivist project engaged the public in describing archival materials to enhance access and engagement. These examples demonstrated that impact does not require expensive infrastructure, and that libraries must prioritize strategic digital transformation and service delivery over physical expansion.

There is a need for library schools to go beyond basic ICT courses to prepare graduates in digitization preservation, technical standards, and systems. Studies by David and Alayon (2016)

echoed the call for more qualified library and information professionals. Librarians are increasingly expected to guide students through AI literacy, digital scholarship, and misinformation management, moving beyond traditional reference roles.

Despite this evolving role, Philippine libraries remain perceived as repositories of books and academic resources. They are usually understaffed and underfunded, with budgets just enough to cover utilities, basic IT maintenance, and subscriptions—barely sufficient to support staff upskilling or professional development. This lack of investment perpetuates a cycle where libraries are unable to innovate and transform, even when there is a clear need to support transformative learning. Institutional priorities compound the problem, with administrations favoring visible infrastructure such as academic buildings and sports facilities, while libraries receive minimal upgrades. Proposals for digital scholarship centers, librarian management systems, or AI-driven services are often dismissed as outside the library's scope. Faculty may continue to view librarians as custodians rather than collaborators in teaching information literacy or integrating digital tools, blocking progress even when librarians are ready to lead change.

Libraries also have a role in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. However, most librarians are only vaguely familiar with the SDGs, and institutions rarely allocate time or resources for professional development. With thin staffing and high workloads, growth becomes a luxury rather than a priority. Evidence shows that students who receive library instruction—learning to find, evaluate, and use information—perform better academically. There is a high correlation between achievement and library service, reinforcing the library's central role in education.

The e-Padaloy initiative by the University of the Philippines was cited as a resource sharing and allocation project aimed at providing access to online databases subscribed by the University Library. Through this initiative, access was extended beyond the UP community to the benefit of select state universities and colleges.

Without sustained and strategic financial investment, the library's capacity to acquire necessary technologies, develop innovative programs, attract and retain skilled personnel, and maintain cutting-edge resources will remain severely constrained. This directly impacts its ability to evolve into a true hub for transformative learning experiences. The conclusion urged institutions to invest in impact over infrastructure. Strategies such as embedded librarian programs, mobile outreach, digital integration, and staff development address the digital divide more effectively than building expansion. These approaches yield measurable improvements in learning and research, especially vital in resource-constrained settings like the Philippines. To realize full potential, Philippine libraries must shed outdated perceptions and chronic underfunding. They must be recognized not merely as storage spaces but as catalysts for transformative learning, ready to help students thrive in a digital, knowledge-driven world.

The Evolving Library Landscape and Emerging Roles of Library Professionals

Dr. Rhea Rowena U. Apolinario, Dean, UP School of Library and Information Studies

THE LIBRARY'S TRANSFORMATION

Libraries have undergone a metamorphosis, driven by technological advancements and shifting societal needs. Libraries used to be quiet sanctuaries created for the preservation and organization of printed materials. Today, libraries are now modern knowledge hubs initiated by technological advancements and changing community needs. For instance, the information seeking behavior of users has changed among Gen X, Y, and Z individuals which necessitated adaptability. Further, the role of librarians has evolved significantly over time. From being mere custodians of books, librarians have become catalysts of knowledge, assuming active roles as agents of change within their communities.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Historically, ancient libraries, such as the Library of Ashurbanipal in Nineveh in the 7th century BCE which housed clay tablets including the famous Epic of Gilgamesh; the Great Library of Alexandria in Egypt in the 3rd century BCE; and the 10th-century libraries of Spain, were exclusively accessible to scholars and royalty. Their primary purpose was the preservation of knowledge for the intellectual elite which reflects how control of information has historically been intertwined with power structures. In contrast, modern libraries embody ideals of universal access.

Initially, the function of libraries centered on the storage of books, as reflected in the Latin roots liber (book) and libraria. However, with the rise of public and academic institutions, the purpose of libraries expanded beyond mere preservation. Monastic libraries played a crucial role in preserving ancient knowledge through the copying of manuscripts, while university libraries supported academic communities and facilitated the dissemination of ideas during the Renaissance. With the eventual democratization of knowledge in the 17th and 18th centuries, lending and subscriptions libraries pushed for steps toward broader access to information. The Carnegie Libraries in Indiana serves as a prime example.

Ultimately, the primary function of libraries has evolved from knowledge preservation and elite access to manuscript copying, to the democratization of access through lending, to universal public access and literacy promotion, and later to efficient information organiza-

tion and distribution, culminating today in digital access, collaborative learning, and knowledge creation.

EMERGING LIBRARY ROLES

In today's context, libraries function as vital community hubs and "third places," a concept articulated by Ray Oldenburg, where people converge, collaborate, study, create, and connect. Thus, rather than attempting to collect everything, the role of libraries is really more knowing the needs of individuals and communities. For instance, not everyone can afford access to adequate space for learning, creativity, or reflection. This should lead libraries to intentionally build inclusive spaces such as makerspaces, innovation hubs, collaborative environments, and research commons that support hands-on learning and knowledge creation.

Beyond academic and creative functions, modern libraries should also promote digital inclusion, health and wellness centers, and even social support services, as seen in institutions like the Quezon City Public Library. Through these initiatives, libraries actively bridge various societal divides by promoting equity, diversity, inclusivity, and access. Transformative learning programs supported by organizations and institutions such as the American Library Association, the San Diego Public Library, and library makerspaces in Chattanooga further demonstrate how libraries have evolved into crucial environments that empower individuals and strengthen communities.

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS

The skills and competencies required of library professionals have also evolved over time. These are the following:

1. Digital skills and AI literacy. Library professionals should possess digital asset management and preservation skills, digital literacy and AI literacy, as necessitated by today's digital world.
2. Pedagogical/instructional skills. Library professionals should also function as educators by teaching information literacy and research skills, conducting workshops, and serving as guides through the complexities of the digital information environment.
3. Community engagement. Library professionals should also contribute to their communities through active facilitation and outreach, addressing community challenges.
4. Adaptability. Librarians should be able to adapt quickly to technological changes and evolving user needs.
5. Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving. Library professionals should apply analytical rigor to evaluate information needs and develop effective solutions.
6. Ethical Leadership. Library professionals should be guided by a strong ethical compass, upholding integrity, privacy, and equity.

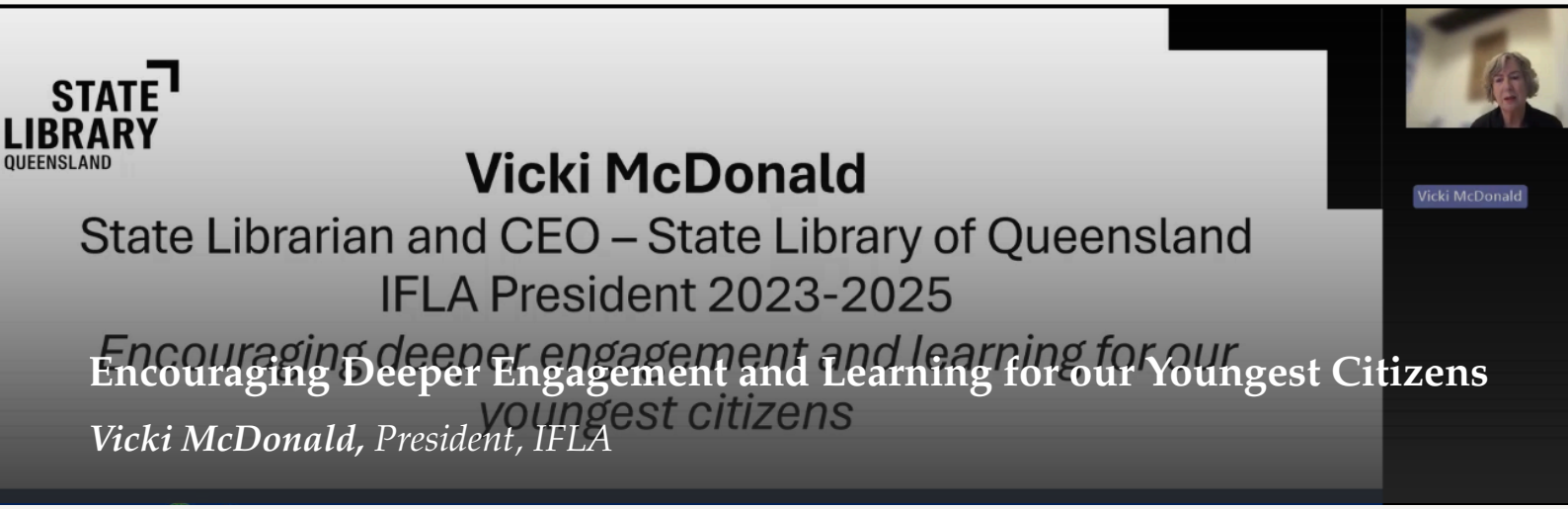
Interpersonal and Communication Skills. Library professionals should communicate clearly, collaborate effectively, and engage diverse users.

Further, library professionals should be guided by the professional standards stated in the National Competency-Based Standards for Filipino Library and Information Science Professionals (NCBSFLISP), which emphasizes domain-based librarianship competencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To continuously improve library services, it is recommended that libraries do the following:

1. Encourage library professionals to undergo continuous professional development to ensure lifelong learning, especially with the fast pace of change;
2. Invest in digital infrastructure to provide efficient and smart service;
3. Transform as an innovation ecosystem, not just a one-space;
4. Foster human-centered service; and,
5. Conduct relentless research and continuous assessment.



Encouraging Deeper Engagement and Learning for our Youngest Citizens

Vicki McDonald, *President, IFLA*

Libraries are rich learning environments that provide opportunities for children and families to explore, imagine, and understand the world around them. The State Library of Queensland (SLQ) is the leading reference and research library in Queensland which extends services to children, families, young people, students, teachers, and the public. It is responsible for collecting and preserving a comprehensive collection of Queensland's cultural and documentary heritage, providing free access to information for all Queenslanders and for the advancement of public libraries across the State.

Its vision is to become a library of influence, inspiring and connecting people through knowledge, storytelling and creativity. Aligned with the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly with Goal 3 on ensuring good health and promoting wellbeing for all at all ages, and Goal 4 on ensuring equitable and quality education and promoting lifelong opportunities for all, the SLQ provides crucial support to Queensland children, families and public libraries, especially in promoting children's wellbeing and championing childhood. Further, it adopts a human rights approach to ensure no one is left behind, promoting digital inclusion as well as gender equality and women's empowerment.

In terms of its programs and partnerships involving children and families, the SLQ seeks to uphold the rights of children as grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, including but not limited to the right to play, create, learn and participate. We are committed to enriching experiences and spaces, particularly the provision of high-quality child-centred spaces. We have "The Corner", the SLQ's dedicated space for children and families. We also have programs that foster self-expression, exploration and learning, and that support the needs and interests of families, carers and educators. These are designed and delivered in collaboration with diverse partners to reflect the rich diversity of Queensland communities.

We also value collecting, caring for, listening to and amplifying children's voices. As stated by Dr. Barbara Piscitell AM, "Children's views are rarely considered during times of crisis, yet children often have deep insights into current events and the world around them." We

acknowledge children's contribution to our shared understanding and experience of the world and view their stories as central to Queensland's cultural and documentary memory

Critical to reaching Queensland families is our partnership with local governments to deliver First 5 Forever, a place-based family-centred program delivered in over 325 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres across the state. First 5 Forever supports each family on their child's journey through the first 5 years of life in safe, child-focused spaces, providing free playful experiences and rich resources. Library spaces, programs and partnerships allow families to embrace everyday moments to talk, read, sing, and play, building a strong foundation for their child's learning, growth, and wellbeing. As a library of influence, our onsite, online and regional programs and partnerships drive innovation and realise our ambition for Queensland families to live in child-friendly communities around the State.
We have also implemented the following projects and programs:

1. Curriculum Connect. This provides free, classroom-ready teaching resources linked to the curriculum and state library collections. Teachers can easily download, reuse, and adapt these resources in just a few clicks. Parents and caregivers can also access trusted, curriculum-aligned materials to support their child's learning and success. It also allows class visits to the State Library and gives students hands-on access to diverse collections, with materials tailored to specific year levels and subjects such as History, Social Sciences, Visual Arts, Design, Science, and English. Further, it provides professional development for teachers, specifically free sessions throughout the Queensland school term time.
2. Curriculum Connect Symposium 2025. The SLQ invited keynote speakers and expert presenters who discussed the complexities of the digital age and explored practical tools for fostering critical thinking and resilience in the face of misinformation and AI-generated content. Amidst the changing landscape of education, equipping students with critical thinking skills has never been more crucial, particularly in helping them discern credible sources, question information, and navigate challenges like
3. misinformation, fake news, and the influence of AI.

Now and for their Futures. The SLQ joined with the Queensland Brain Institute in hosting a national forum to explore the impact public libraries can have in supporting strong foundations in the early years. The forum brought together 80 sector leaders, researchers, practitioners and philanthropies from across Australia in their shared commitment to prioritising the early years. Interdisciplinary conversation, bold ambition and radical sharing across the two-day forum will help drive impact nationwide, so every child has the strongest foundation to thrive.

Integrating Transformative Knowledge and Skills in Real-Life Librarians–Libraries Situations: The UPLB Experience

Dr. Mary Ann M. Ingua, University Librarian, UP Los Banos

When I assumed the post of University Librarian of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in November 2021, I recognized that we were entering a moment of deep transition—not only in technology but also in mindset. Between November 2021 and June 2025, our library community embarked on what I call a transformative journey: a collective rethinking of how we integrate knowledge, values, and practical skills into the very fabric of our day-to-day library work.

Our story at the UPLB Library is not just about adopting new systems. It is, above all, about people—about librarians and staff developing transformational skills and cultivating the courage to see themselves as active partners in knowledge creation, digital inclusion, and lifelong learning.

RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND

For decades, libraries have been evolving from passive information providers into dynamic contributors to knowledge creation and lifelong learning. In UPLB, we confronted this shift both strategically and culturally. We did not only upgrade our platforms; we focused on transforming the mindset and leadership style of our librarians and staff. We wanted every librarian to be a change agent—someone who connects information with transformation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Our direction was shaped by a set of theoretical and professional frameworks that grounded our work in both academic rigor and practical action. We drew on Knowles' Adult Learning Theory to understand how professionals learn best; the ACRL Information Literacy Framework to anchor our instruction in critical thinking; and the ADDIE Instructional Design Model to ensure our programs were well-planned and evaluated. We also integrated ideas from digital librarianship and participatory, transformational leadership, believing that sustainable change begins with shared purpose.

METHODOLOGY

To study and evaluate our experience, we relied mainly on our internal accomplishment reports from January 2022 to June 2025. Using a descriptive-evaluative case study approach

allowed us to capture the context, challenges, and complexity of our transformation. Through thematic analysis, we identified recurring themes—adult learning, ICT competencies, participatory leadership—and strengthened validity through triangulation.

In reviewing our core programs, such as InfoSkilled and InfoPower, we used Knowles' and ACRL's frameworks to align our learning outcomes with key concepts like Searching as Strategic Exploration and Information Has Value. We also revisited the literature on adult education, information literacy, digital librarianship, and leadership to keep our reflections grounded in scholarship.

KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. InfoSkilled: Building Lifelong Learners

Our rebranded flagship information literacy program, InfoSkilled, was designed to empower students and researchers to become discerning users of information. Through this program, we trained more than 4,090 undergraduate and graduate students in skills such as evaluating sources, citing ethically, and navigating complex databases.

What makes InfoSkilled transformative is that it operationalizes the ACRL's framework into our local academic culture—helping our learners see information as contextual, authority as constructed, and searching as an act of critical inquiry.

2. InfoPower: Sharing Knowledge, Empowering Roles

InfoPower—formerly the Faculty, REPS, and Admin Staff Training Series—was our professional learning initiative aimed at building a culture of evidence-based decision-making and collaboration. We trained 1,609 participants, emphasizing inclusivity and cross-functional learning.

In InfoPower, librarians became not only instructors but knowledge partners of faculty, REPS, and administrative personnel. It symbolized our belief that libraries thrive when everyone in the institution shares responsibility for learning.

3. Digital Transformation: Systems that Empower

Our digital transformation centered on three systems that define UPLB's transition toward a smart, knowledge-driven academic library:

- *University Knowledge and Digital Repository (UKDR)*

This repository democratized access to research by hosting theses, dissertations, reports, and journals freely available to local and global users. Our access logs confirm that researchers from around the world now consult UPLB scholarship through UKDR—a milestone in open access.

- *Koha Open Source Integrated Library System*

Our home-built, open-source ILS, developed in close collaboration with our lone IT staff, offers full customization suited to UPLB's context—integrating circulation, cataloging, reporting, and future-ready features such as RFID and digital payment support.

- *OpenAthens*

Through Single-Sign-On access, OpenAthens has become our gateway to knowledge transformation, enabling on- and off-campus users to access databases, e-books, and journals seamlessly. From 2022 to June 2025, we recorded over 305,000 authentications—clear evidence of growing engagement with our e-resources.

4. Staff Transformation: Coaching, Mentoring, and the SMART People Framework

At the heart of our journey lies our people. We strengthened our in-house training, mentoring, and coaching mechanisms under a model we call the SMART People Framework —S for Strategic, M for Motivated, A for Agile, R for Resilient, and T for Transformative.

This framework, grounded in collaborative systems thinking and transformational learning theory, now informs our HR performance evaluations, mentoring initiatives, organizational planning, and inter-unit collaborations. It reminds us that the success of digital transformation ultimately depends on human transformation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transformational knowledge is not merely about new technologies or infrastructures—it is about *empowering people*.

Our experience at UPLB taught us that when librarians are inspired, trained, and trusted, transformation becomes inevitable.

To sustain this momentum, I recommend the following:

1. Institutionalize the SMART People Framework in HR training and planning.
2. Expand InfoPower to integrate digital wellness and AI fluency.
3. Sustain capacity-building in metadata, UX design, and AI readiness.
4. Share our model through publications, partnerships, and benchmarking activities.

In essence, transformation begins with the self. When librarians transform the way they think and lead, libraries naturally evolve into vibrant, learning-centered spaces that empower communities. This, I believe, is the enduring legacy of our journey at UPLB.

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Designing Library Spaces that Promote Collaboration, Creativity, and Learning: the UPCOE Library Experience

Sharon Maria S. Esposo-Betan, *Head Librarian, College of Engineering Libraries*

The libraries today are moving beyond traditional roles to become vibrant spaces for exploration, innovation, and meaningful engagement. The development of the College of Engineering's Learning Commons, a two-storey building constructed over nine years, embodies this transition, from its conceptual planning to its completion.

The library's active involvement in the design and planning of the Learning Commons is essential to its overall success and functionality. Specific features, such as high ceilings, all-glass panels, a long staircase, and an off-white palette accented with beechwood, were deliberately incorporated to address design aspects that were lacking in the College of Engineering Libraries 1 and 2.

DESIGN OF LEARNING COMMONS SPACES

Visitors entering the Learning Commons are welcomed by the aroma of coffee from the Al-Fresco Library Café, where the furniture is deliberately selected to create an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere. The entrance lounge is furnished with durable, waterproof outdoor furniture. Inside, a hotel-like ambiance greets visitors, enhanced by the welcoming design of the information desk. A designated events, exhibit, and atrium area is located near the entrance. Large pillars in this space were maximized by incorporating modular and circular seating.

A lounge area is situated opposite the Gallery, which displays portraits of the past and current college deans. Behind this display is another gallery featuring notable works of the faculty. The study area follows an open-space concept, with no partitions. The flexible area allows students to work freely in their preferred manner, while the reconfigurable learning space features leather sofas, movable tables, and soundproof partitions. The facility is also designed for inclusivity, featuring ramps, an elevator for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), and a gender-neutral/PWD restroom. Small details such as movable signage, electrical outlets integrated into furniture, digital displays, and sticker boards for announcements significantly enhance the usability of the spaces. Collaborative workstations and charging stations are furnished with five hexagonal tables.

The Learning Commons features a MakerSpace/Creative Studio equipped with 3D printers. Dedicated spaces for faculty include a teleconferencing room fitted with smartboards for meetings, as well as three faculty co-working spaces that can be converted into small conference rooms. Additionally, there are six undergraduate discussion rooms and two graduate discussion rooms, all secured with RFID-controlled doors to ensure exclusive access for College of Engineering students. A standout feature of the Learning Commons is the Faculty and Staff Wellness Room, furnished with wellness chairs and a pantry with a coffee machine, microwave, and oven toaster. Students can also use designated wellness chairs, which are available for a fee based on usage time.

Adapting to Changing Learning Behaviors and Technology Advancement
Changing user learning behaviors and rapid technological advancements necessitate the evolution of library spaces. Libraries must adapt to the lifestyle of students. A library should serve as the students' "third place", a home away from home that offers a space for communication, discussion, and relaxation. It should encourage users to stay longer and return frequently by incorporating innovative, functional, aesthetically pleasing, and user-centered design elements that are honest and durable. Additionally, the integration of AI technologies into libraries is essential to meet modern demands.

CREATING AN INSPIRING LIBRARY SPACE

Here are the factors that contribute to creating an inspiring library space:

- Design objectives
- Key functional areas
- User-centered design
- Space planning and layout
- Technology integration
- Sustainability and green design
- Accessibility and inclusivity

Libraries must establish clear design objectives that prioritize user support for learning and research, flexibility, accessibility, inclusivity, and community engagement. Key functional areas should be identified and aligned with user needs. To ensure a user-centered design, a needs assessment, participatory design process, and observation of user behavior patterns are essential for optimizing layout and furniture placement. Space planning should carefully consider zoning, flow, furniture, lighting, and acoustics. Integration of technology, including connectivity, digital tools, self-service systems, and digital literacy labs, is critical for creating smart and innovative library environments. Furthermore, libraries can adopt sustainable and green design principles by evaluating energy efficiency, material choices, and natural elements. It is also recommended to consider sustainability certifications such as BERDE or LEED. Above all, libraries must be accessible and inclusive by complying with building codes and promoting inclusive design, equitable technology access, and cultural sensitivity.

The Learning Commons features a MakerSpace/Creative Studio equipped with 3D printers. Dedicated spaces for faculty include a teleconferencing room fitted with smartboards for meetings, as well as three faculty co-working spaces that can be converted into small conference rooms. Additionally, there are six undergraduate discussion rooms and two graduate discussion rooms, all secured with RFID-controlled doors to ensure exclusive access for College of Engineering students. A standout feature of the Learning Commons is the Faculty and Staff Wellness Room, furnished with wellness chairs and a pantry with a coffee machine, microwave, and oven toaster. Students can also use designated wellness chairs, which are available for a fee based on usage time.

Adapting to Changing Learning Behaviors and Technology Advancement
Changing user learning behaviors and rapid technological advancements necessitate the evolution of library spaces. Libraries must adapt to the lifestyle of students. A library should serve as the students' "third place", a home away from home that offers a space for communication, discussion, and relaxation. It should encourage users to stay longer and return frequently by incorporating innovative, functional, aesthetically pleasing, and user-centered design elements that are honest and durable. Additionally, the integration of AI technologies into libraries is essential to meet modern demands.

CREATING AN INSPIRING LIBRARY SPACE
Here are the factors that contribute to creating an inspiring library space:

- Design objectives
- Key functional areas
- User-centered design
- Space planning and layout
- Technology integration
- Sustainability and green design
- Accessibility and inclusivity

Libraries must establish clear design objectives that prioritize user support for learning and research, flexibility, accessibility, inclusivity, and community engagement. Key functional areas should be identified and aligned with user needs. To ensure a user-centered design, a needs assessment, participatory design process, and observation of user behavior patterns are essential for optimizing layout and furniture placement. Space planning should carefully consider zoning, flow, furniture, lighting, and acoustics. Integration of technology, including connectivity, digital tools, self-service systems, and digital literacy labs, is critical for creating smart and innovative library environments. Furthermore, libraries can adopt sustainable and green design principles by evaluating energy efficiency, material choices, and natural elements. It is also recommended to consider sustainability certifications such as BERDE or LEED. Above all, libraries must be accessible and inclusive by complying with building codes and promoting inclusive design, equitable technology access, and cultural sensitivity.

Institutional Branding

Marc J. San Valentin, UP College of Fine Arts

Branding is defined as a vision that drives the creation of products and services under a name, while identity is the key belief underpinning the core values of an institution. Branding is the process of creating a unique, or in many cases, a consistent name for a product.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF BRANDING

The origins of branding can be traced back to ancient practices associated with property and ownership. Evidence suggests that as early as 2000 BCE, farmers branded their livestock by marking them with fire or carvings for identification. In modern times, fire branding has largely been replaced by cold branding, which involves discoloring the animal's hide using liquid nitrogen. Unfortunately, during the period of the American slave trade, slaves were branded as they were treated as property. Beyond marking property, branding has also been used as a form of body modification.

By 221 BCE, seals bearing Chinese characters were employed to indicate the identity or provenance of documents, artworks, contracts, and similar items. In 13th-century Europe, merchants used distinctive marks to signify the origin and quality of their goods, which were typically applied to dry goods, paper, and metal objects. For precious metals such as gold and silver, hallmarks were used to certify purity and origin, as exemplified by photographic plates from the 19th century.

BRANDING AND ADVERTISING

Many people use the terms branding and advertising interchangeably. However, branding is a marketing strategy that imparts meaning to specific companies, products, or services. It influences consumers' perceptions and helps them identify a particular firm, product, or brand. In contrast, advertising is a marketing strategy that involves paid communication to promote a product. Simply put, branding is a considerate intent, a strategy to establish a positive contribution, and at the same time, it is a measure to protect the integrity of an institution.

Branding protects the name and core values of an institution. Without such protection, brands risk unauthorized use, which can dilute their meaning and reputation. To build a strong brand, an institution must consider its origins and values to establish a clear personality, ensuring that its products and services align with the brand. This coherence contributes to brand equity, a marketing concept that describes the added value derived from consumers' perceptions of the brand beyond the products themselves.

BRAND EQUITY

Brand equity can be evaluated through seven dimensions of consumer perception: awareness, familiarity, image and personality, associations, availability, preference, and loyalty. Effectively developed brand equity adds significant value, allowing institutions to extend their influence into new products or services under the same brand.

BRAND ANATOMY/ELEMENTS OF VISUAL IDENTITY

There are four key elements of visual identity: (1) the logo, representing the institution's core values; (2) typography or typeface, defining the style of lettering; (3) the color palette, distinguishing the institution; and (4) iconography. For UP, the seal is the official logo. The value of the seal is higher than the logo. The Oblation statue serves as the iconography, alongside institutional colors and typefaces.

UP VISUAL IDENTITY GUIDEBOOK

Developed in 2017, the UP Visual Identity Guidebook established branding guidelines focusing on the seal, the Oblation, institutional colors, and official typeface. This initiative began during my brief stint as Director of the UPD Office for Initiatives in Culture and the Arts (OICA).

Rather than redesigning, the team decided to clean up the seal since it did not satisfy the main criteria, which is the radical shift from existing institutional core values. Many organizations revise their logos to align with evolving identities. The logo is the representation of an institution and of an idea. UP seal stands for the logo, which is the meaning of the University. The team traced the seal's origins, finding design parallels with seals used by U.S. government departments such as the Air Force, Labor, and Commerce, though no actual documents confirmed these connections.

The Oblation, as described in the dissertation of the late Professor Reuben Cañete, is a cultural symbol of UP, instantly recognizable and signifying that one is in the University upon seeing it. The Oblation embodies the core values of the university. Although it is a three-dimensional sculpture, the team converted the Oblation into a silhouette for use in visual materials. To remove geographic specificity, they eliminated a small but distinctive detail, which is the protruding rock that specifically identifies UP Diliman. This modification anonymizes the location, allowing the silhouette to be used more broadly across all UP campuses.

As per Article 466 of the Revised Code of the University, UP's official colors are UP maroon and forest green. The 2017 guidebook specifies process color and RGB equivalents for consistent reproduction.

To further unify the University's visual identity, it was decided to design the University's own typeface named "Padayon". This was a passion project by Assistant Professor Joy Ilagan, a seasoned graphic designer and a type designer in Fine Arts. After creating the typeface, it was applied to the seal and to the other materials that were produced.

Sub-branding is creating another brand, enabling academic units or affiliated entities to create distinctive identities. An example is the fist logo of the UP Maroons.

SMART Libraries and Transformative Education: Emerging Technologies Shaping the Future of Academic Libraries

Dr. Reinald Adrian D. Pugoy, UP Open University

At the heart of discussion was the concept of SMART library, an integrated system that harmonizes technology and human-centered service design to deliver personalized, adaptive, and efficient library services. The foundation of SMART libraries rests upon three fundamental pillars: Technology-centric, People-centric, and Service-centric design.

The first two—technology and people—serve as the integral components to achieving the service-centric nature of SMART libraries. This highlights that SMART libraries are not solely about adopting advanced tools but also about reimagining the way we access, experience, and engage with knowledge.

To illustrate this transformation, three key emerging technologies were highlighted as the shaping forces in the future of libraries. Virtual Reality (VR) which is primarily concerned with technology that immerses users in a fully digital environment through specialized headsets, Augmented Reality (AR) that overlays digital content onto the real world, thereby enhancing real-world experiences of its users, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) that enables computers to perform tasks requiring human intelligence.

AI was described as the process of replicating human knowledge, made possible through AI models and computer programs programmed to learn from vast amounts of data. Within library contexts, these technologies open remarkable possibilities, such as immersive exploration that allows students to virtually travel through time and space, visit ancient libraries, and explore historical landmarks. These tools could also function as advanced book locators, providing detailed information about materials, or as language aids to support multilingual users. Such innovations can free library staff from routine inquiries, enabling them to focus on more complex tasks. For AI in particular, several practical uses are 24/7 chatbots integrated into library services, automated cataloging powered by natural language processing and machine learning, and book recommendation systems tailored to user needs.

Yet, alongside these opportunities come challenges. The adoption of such technologies often encounters budget constraints and accessibility issues, especially when reliant on strong internet connectivity and devices not widely owned, such as AR-capable smartphones. With

AI, additional concerns include hallucination, wherein the system generates plausible yet incorrect information, the potential for bias and discrimination, and significant data privacy risks.

To address these complexities, a set of strategic and human-centered roles was proposed to guide librarians in the age of AI and other emerging technologies. As an AI literacy advocate, librarians are entrusted with promoting the responsible use of AI tools, encourage critical thinking on AI-generated outputs, and ensuring thoughtful integration of AI into library services. On the other hand, AR/VR experience facilitators are entrusted to guide users with the responsible use of immersive technologies to ensure safe and inclusive access to AR/VR resources. Lastly, Ethical technology integrators possess the crucial role of selecting and overseeing the implementation of emerging technologies with careful attention to privacy, transparency, and user trust.

To operationalize these ideas, the 5E Framework to SMART Library Innovation was introduced. The framework is a set of five practical action verbs to guide cost-conscious, sustainable, and effective adoption of technology in libraries: Explore. Enhance, Engage, Experiment, and Equip. Explore emphasizes on trying free or low-risk tools to test ideas without heavy investment (e.g., Adobe Aero, AR.js, using 1–2 VR headsets for a virtual tour, launching a simple chatbot). Enhance suggests that libraries build on existing resources, such as turning posters into interactive guides or using current FAQs for chatbot training. Engage intends to involve internal talent in co-creation, collaborating with faculty, students, on-the-job trainees, and other UP System libraries. Experiment showcases the importance of piloting small-scale or low-stakes use cases to evaluate their impact and feasibility. Ultimately, Equip seeks to build internal capacity by training a small core team.

An example of these principles in action is the UPOU Immersive Open Pedagogies (IOP) Program, which was established to systematically enhance the impact of immersive technologies and open pedagogies through organized activities and partnerships. Another featured initiative was Openg Chatbot, UPOU's AI-powered chatbot developed to support MODeL user.

In summary, the lack of human alignment will doom technology adoption and that technology without a strategy is merely decoration. Tools, no matter how advanced, must be meaningfully integrated into library workflows, staff capacity, and user habits to prevent it being underutilized and ultimately ineffective.

During the open forum, Asst. Prof. Dorado asked if the University has any plans to provide the necessary computational resources to enable libraries to fully leverage AI technologies. The discussion acknowledged the difficulties of advancing with such technologies and offered three possible approaches: outsourcing AI computational requirements to external

servers, seeking assistance from UP Data Commons, which provides computational hardware and software, and exploring another platform that also offers server access (the specific name was unclear in the audio).

Through this exchange, the session concluded not only with insights but also with renewed sense of purpose: recognizing that the libraries of the future are not just about SMART technologies, but about SMART strategies, SMART people, and SMARTer service to the academic community.

Integrating AI and VR into UP Library Services

Asst. Prof. Dan Anthony A. Dorado, UP School of Library and Information Studies

CATALOGING AND METADATA

AI excels at classification and can automate metadata extraction for books, articles, and images, thereby reducing manual data entry. Drawing from the experiences of other constituent universities that have struggled with cataloging, he noted that AI could greatly assist in completing their databases. While AI will not be perfect, it can handle as much as 80% of the metadata work, such as dates, titles, and authors. This leaves catalogers to focus on reviewing and ensuring quality control. AI is an assistant cataloger, not a replacement, and that professional judgment remains essential. AI may suggest subject terms, but catalogers must verify their accuracy and relevance for local users.

DIGITAL PRESERVATION

AI can help identify and tag significant or at-risk files, automate transcription and metadata creation for archival materials, and flag obsolete formats for conversion.

REFERENCE AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

Building on the insights shared by Dr. Pugoy in his earlier lecture, AI tools can answer routine queries, such as library hours or policies, direct users to databases and guides, and provide 24/7 assistance to reduce repetitive workloads. This allows librarians to focus on complex tasks requiring specialized expertise. Chatbots will not replace librarians, as they cannot handle nuanced research questions. Instead, librarians should determine which materials to feed into AI models so that chatbots can draw from authoritative resources.

Moreover, the more frequently a chatbot is used. The better it becomes at understanding the nuances of user information needs, provided that its development is continually guided and supervised by library staff.

USER EXPERIENCE

AI offers a range of possibilities for enhancing the overall library user experience. Among these are:

1. Personalized recommendations for books and articles based on borrowing history. For example, the system could suggest new titles aligned with a user's past interests, regardless of language, as AI can locate and process multilingual resources.
2. Smarter search and discovery tools to improve resource accessibility.
3. Multilingual virtual assistance to help users engage with resources in different languages.

It is essential, however, that these AI-driven services uphold the core values of librarianship, particularly privacy, transparency and user consent. Libraries must clearly communicate how AI systems handle user data and ensure that users understand what information is collected, how it is used, and for what purpose. It is recommended that users be given the choice to enable or disable personalized features, maintaining control over their own data.

In discussing immersive educational technology, Virtual Reality (VR) can transform academic libraries into dynamic learning environments. These could include virtual tours, simulations, field trips, or subject-based explorations in areas such as history or science. Such experiences can foster deeper engagement and empathy. For example, a VR simulation depicting life during the Martial Law era, followed by reflective activities, can provide students with a powerful, experiential learning opportunity.

When implementing VR programs in libraries, several considerations must be addressed:

1. Hardware and space: Some VR experiences require large physical areas to be fully immersive.
2. Content curation: Identify the materials needed to accurately recreate scenes or environments.
3. Hygiene and safety: Implement cleaning protocols for equipment due to close physical use.
4. Staff training and support: Ensure trained librarians or staff are available to assist users during VR sessions.

OPERATIONS AND SYSTEM

AI can support the management of library operations and systems by forecasting demand and resource needs to optimize collection development and service allocation, automating quality checks and error correction to maintain accuracy in records and processes, and enabling data-driven decision-making to guide policy and strategic planning.

Integrating AI into daily operations will inevitably reshape workflows. Library staff will increasingly focus on supervising AI-driven processes, interpreting data insights, and undertaking strategic tasks that require human expertise. Therefore, investment in staff training and continuous professional development is crucial, particularly in cultivating AI literacy to ensure that librarians can effectively manage and maximize these tools.

STAFF TRAINING AND SKILLS

Comprehensive staff training should encompass a basic understanding of AI and data analytics, hands-on experience with VR hardware, and a strong grounding in ethics, data privacy, bias, and transparency. Continuous learning through workshops, collaborations, and peer networks will sustain these competencies.

There is a framework we can use for measuring AI literacy across five dimensions:

1. Understanding AI and Data
2. Critical Thinking and Judgment
3. Ethical and Responsible Use
4. Human-Centricity, Emotional Intelligence, and Creativity
5. Domain Expertise

AI literacy needs vary between roles. For instance, faculty have different needs and requirements compared to administrative staff and REPS.

Nonetheless, several challenges of incorporating AI into library operations must be acknowledged. These include metadata errors and bias or incompleteness in AI-generated data, which can compromise catalog accuracy. Data privacy concerns remain significant, underscoring the need for oversight by well-seasoned, experienced catalogers to ensure quality control and adherence to standards. Over-reliance on AI automation poses additional risks, including potential compromise of authenticity in preserved materials and bias in what AI deems worthy for retention. Moreover, implementation costs may hinder adoption, particularly for libraries operating with limited resources.

In conclusion, library professionals with a genuine interest in AI are encouraged to begin learning and exploring the technology. There are beginner-friendly AI tools and platforms (e.g. Consensus, Rabbit, Quillbot, and CopyAI) that can support daily library tasks. As library professionals, we must remain at the forefront of technological change while safeguarding our professional principles. Ultimately, AI adoption in libraries should always be ethical, transparent, and user-centered, reflecting the enduring values of the library profession.

Toward SMART UP Libraries: Leveraging smart technologies to enhance learning and automate core services

Chito N. Angeles, Head, Information Technology Division, University Library Diliman

SMART Libraries represent the convergence of technology integration, user-centered design, innovative facilities and services, and data-driven insights, transforming them into evolving learning ecosystems that anticipate and respond to user needs. By leveraging Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, Controlled Digital Lending (CDL), and other self-service innovations, libraries evolve from traditional repositories into dynamic, technology-enabled environments that simplify operations, expand access, and personalize the user experience.

KEY CONCEPTS OF SMART LIBRARIES

SMART libraries are built on four interconnected pillars that, in concert, define their transformation into evolving learning ecosystems.

Technology integration assures that different systems and tools, such as RFID, Digital Rights Management (DRM), CDL, Library Services Platform (LSP), and web services Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), work seamlessly to improve resource management, streamline library operations, and enable interoperability across platforms. This integration provides the technical foundation that allows libraries to deliver services efficiently and at scale.

User-Centered Design (UCD) prioritizes users' behaviors, needs, emotions, and experiences in the development of library services. UCD principles help SMART libraries build intuitive, inclusive spaces that boost engagement and accessibility. These environments emphasize functionality alongside meaningful interactions, empowering users in their learning.

Innovative library facilities and services transform libraries into more accessible, flexible, user-driven spaces. Self-service infrastructure, such as RFID-enabled kiosks, book drops, mobile payment systems, laptop lending kiosks, and automated printing, photocopying, or scanning stations, empowers users with privacy, autonomy, and convenience. These new methods reduce queues and alleviate staff workload, making libraries easier to access and responsive toward diverse communities.

Data-driven insights provide the evidence base for continuous improvement. By collecting and analyzing user data, libraries can arrive at informed decisions about collection development, space utilization, engagement strategies, and operational efficiency.

SMART TECHNOLOGIES IN UP LIBRARIES

In UP Libraries, smart technologies, facilities, and services are already being implemented as of this writing. RFID-enabled self-check kiosks and book drops support contactless transactions and reduce staff workload; Aklat-taan, a learning spaces reservation application currently implemented in the UP Diliman Main Library, promotes efficient management of learning spaces; and the book reservation function of Buklod (UP's Library Services Platform) boosts user experience and provides fair access to library resources.

These SMART services are made possible through API integrations, making sure that smart technologies are not isolated tools but part of a connected, interoperable ecosystem.

Other API-based implementations in Buklod include: Search and Retrieve via URL (SRU) for federated catalog access and seamless copy cataloging; RFID integration to streamline circulation, decrease labor costs through self-check systems, and support access control and attendance monitoring with patron verification system and barrier gates; Cover image services powered by OpenLibrary.org; User profile retrieval from CRS, SAIS, and Talaan for account management and eligibility verification; and Cloud-based integrations with Google Drive for file-sharing and media streaming, as well as Google Books for content previews. Together, these integrations demonstrate how APIs enable scalable and user-centered services that evolve traditional library functions into smart, connected experiences for learners and researchers.

CONTROLLED DIGITAL LENDING (CDL)

As users increasingly favor digital formats, CDL provides a framework for libraries to extend lending services into the digital environment, grounded in fair use principles. CDL expands access for people with disabilities and those in remote areas while ensuring compliance with copyright law.

To implement CDL, the following core principles must be met:

- A library must own a legal copy of the physical book.
- Lending a digital copy is limited to a single user at a time and within the 'owned to loaned' ratio.
- Technical measures, such as DRM, are in place to prevent unauthorized reproduction and redistribution. DRM technologies and protocols are used in CDL to enable encryption, access control, and license enforcement.

CDL can further expand access to library collections by facilitating the loan of serials, audiovisual materials, archival resources, and other items previously available only for in-library use. Moreover, CDL can serve as a mechanism for resource sharing across library networks.

CDL IMPLEMENTATION IN UP LIBRARIES

UP Libraries may adopt CDL through two solutions:

- Google Drive + AppScript DRM - a low-cost approach using file-sharing through Google Drive with access expiration and restrictions on download, print, and copy set via customized AppScript code. The limitation of this approach is that files larger than 100 MB cannot be displayed or streamed in web browsers without first being downloaded.
- Licensed Content Protection (LCP) - an interoperable DRM system supporting EPUB, PDF, audiobooks, and visual narratives. It offers offline access and automatic renewals, but requires annual certification fees.

However, the full implementation and adoption of this technology in the UP Libraries requires policy revisions, coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for funding, and collaboration with the Filipinas Copyright Licensing Society, Inc. (FILCOLS) for copyright licensing.

LAUNCHING OF *SURI*

SURI, a newly developed patron verification system integrated with Buklod, exemplifies UP Libraries' commitment to low-cost innovation. Derived from the Filipino word meaning "to examine" or "to check", SURI uses contactless RFID technology to verify patron identity before granting access to learning spaces, facilities, and resources. Beyond authentication, it can also monitor foot traffic and collect statistical data for service optimization and resource planning. Deployment is cost-effective, requiring only a computer and RFID reader, and it can seamlessly integrate with existing barrier gates. SURI demonstrates how smart technologies can improve security, analytics, and user experience without a considerable financial burden.

Nurturing Change Makers: Best Practices From SMU Libraries

Shameem Nilofar, University Librarian, Singapore Management University

SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY (SMU)

In 1997, the Singapore International Academic Advisory Panel identified that there was a critical shortage of approximately 7,000 more graduates to support the country's growing knowledge base and economy. In response to this call, the Singapore Management University was formally established in 1998. As the third university established after the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU), SMU focused on offering management education. From welcoming its first cohort of 300 students in 2000, SMU now comprises eight schools on business, accountancy, economics, computing and information systems, law, social sciences, the College of Integrative Studies, and graduate research studies.

THE SMU DNA

SMU aspires to be Asia's premier global city university. Currently, SMU is ranked 19th globally as the best young university. To achieve its mission, SMU is guided by its core DNA: authentic, change-maker, trailblazing, innovative, multi-faceted, and purposeful. These are the values and characteristics that shape and guide SMU's programs and activities, including its library services.

SMU LIBRARIES

There are two libraries in SMU: the Li Ka-shing Library, opened in 2006, and Kwak Ek Chu Law Library, opened in 2017. These libraries provide a total of 2,300 seats, with over 70,000 print volumes, 30,000 books, 766,000+ ebooks, 127,000+ electronic journals, 188 electronic databases, and 54,000+ titles of streaming media.

Over the years, there has been a shift from collecting print to digital resources. This is a strategy not only to adapt to new technology and to provide access to information, but to anticipate what the students will need in the changing landscape and to help them make sense of the abundance of information available to them.

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

To support the University's mission, the SMU Libraries started to create strategies not only to address what the students need, but to develop learning spaces, experiences, and opportuni-

ties to develop and nurture change makers and trailblazers. Providing service to over 13,000 students, the SMU Libraries are challenged to rethink their approach as co-creators of their learning experiences and help them create impact.

Key strategy #1: Empowering students to co-create innovative solutions
This strategy empowers the students by creating opportunities to be co-creators of solutions to address the challenge of building better engagement with the library. The SMU Libraries developed a program, "*By Students, For Students: Transforming Our Library Instruction*", that allows the student innovators to recreate and take charge of providing library instructions to fellow students. The students create the contents, conduct sessions, and address problems that only fellow students can understand and solve.

To further understand the needs and experiences of the students, the SMU Libraries launched another program called "*Mapping student journey: in their own voices*". More than just a focus group, this program is an opportunity to listen and learn from the students' shared experiences to improve the Libraries' support services. With these programs, the students become active agents of their own learning environment through the Libraries.

Key strategy # 2: Creating safe spaces for learning & exploration
SMU's framework for the use of AI in education aligns with Singapore's National AI strategy, emphasizing that AI literacy is not an option, but a necessity. It's not just about equipping users with the technical skills but also teaching them the ethical and responsible use of AI.

The SMU Libraries provided learning support and implemented an AI hackathon as a safe space for students to experiment, fail, learn, and innovate with AI tools. The librarians also provided workshops on the effective use of AI tools and research, offered comprehensive learning support and access to research software like SPSS, SASS, Stata, and other AI tools, leading up to this hackathon. The aim is not only to teach AI, but more importantly, to be responsible, critical, and ethical users of these tools. Encourage the use of technology as a tool for experimentation and discovery while upholding academic integrity.

Key strategy #3: Creating an understanding & appreciation of different perspectives
The challenge is to develop opportunities for cultural, social, and disciplinary appreciation in a competitive academic environment. The *Artists in Residency* program aims to bring in artists to the Libraries as a space and opportunity for expression beyond the academic discourse. There are artists who worked with the faculty from the School of Law to understand and articulate technology and creative expression. Another exhibition was by a student from the College of Integrative Studies who translated her senior thesis into an art exhibition. This program provided an opportunity for students to transform their academic work into creative expression and engage in art in their own learning environment.

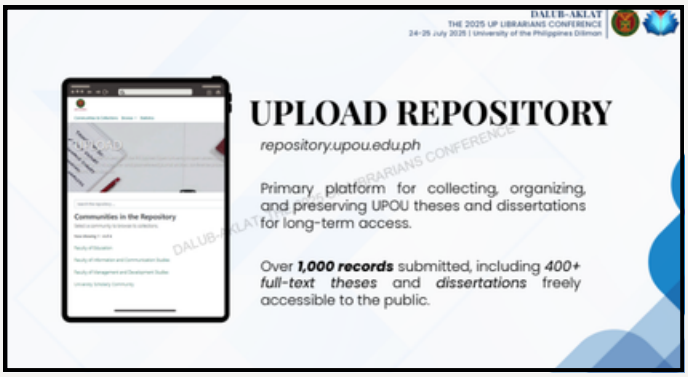
Key strategy #4: Just letting them know we care

The simplest strategy sometimes has the most profound effect. During exam periods where students experience all forms of stress, SMU Libraries provide support through its exam angels and staff members who offer encouragement and show the students that they are present and care for them. Comfort spaces where they can play games and provide temporary stress relief are also available.

At the core of these four strategies are the students. Nurturing change makers is not just about providing the information and resources that they need. It is about creating safe spaces where opportunities and experiences are created to develop a whole person who is innovative, resilient, collaborative, and committed to making a positive impact. Educators and librarians have the opportunity and responsibility to prepare students, not only to survive challenges, but to turn these challenges into opportunities for positive change.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, OPEN UNIVERSITY

State of the University Libraries



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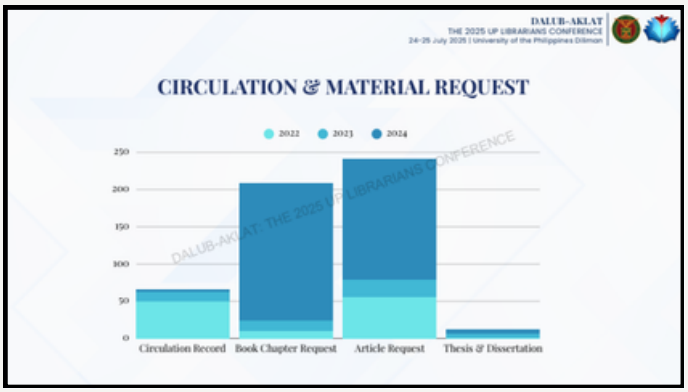
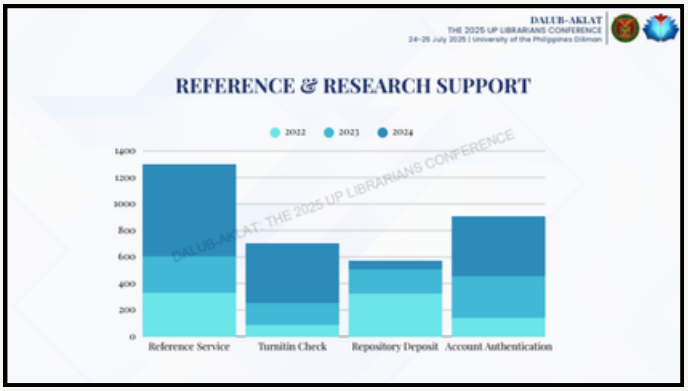
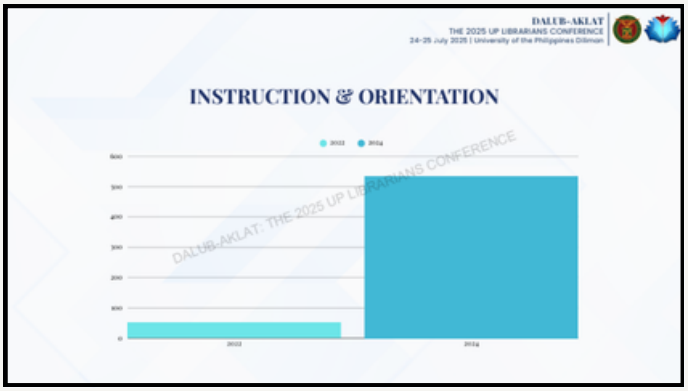
State of the University Libraries







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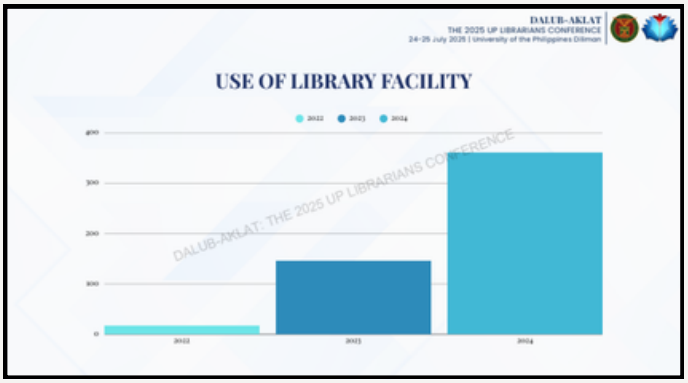
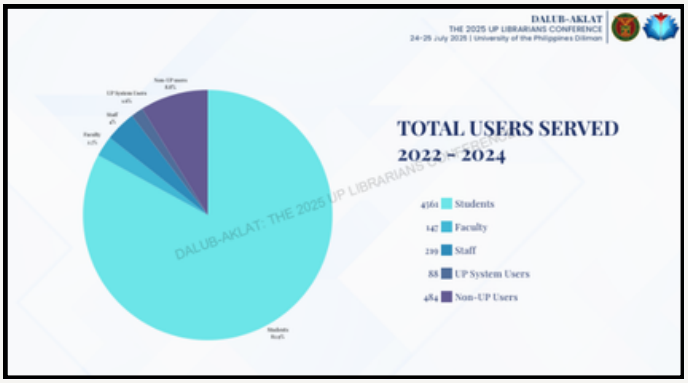
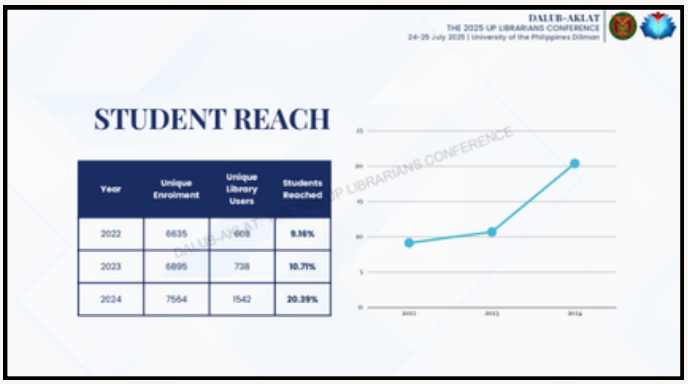
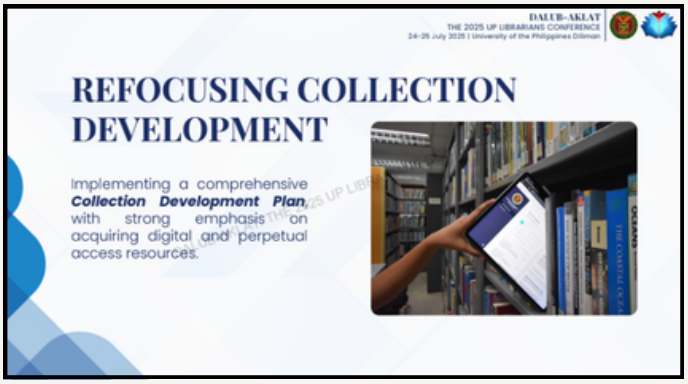
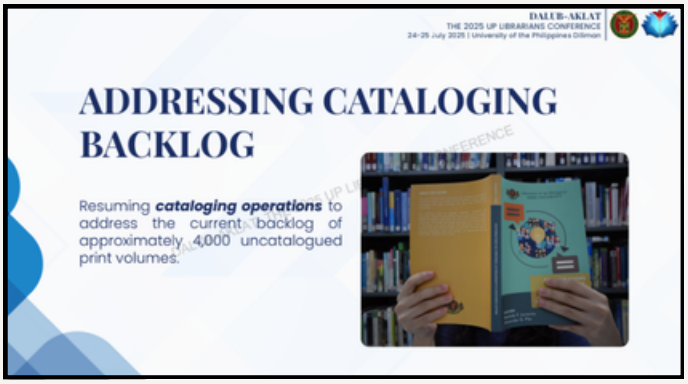
State of the University Libraries

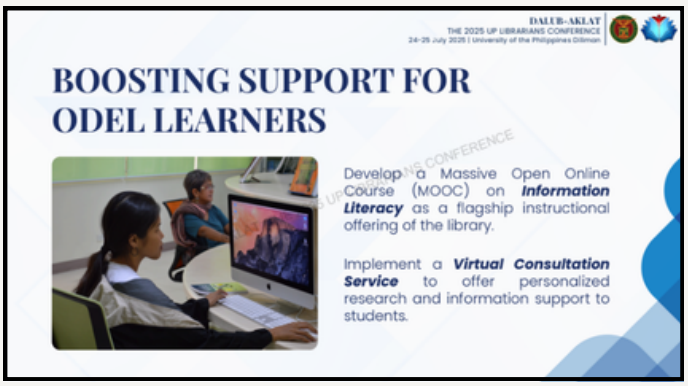


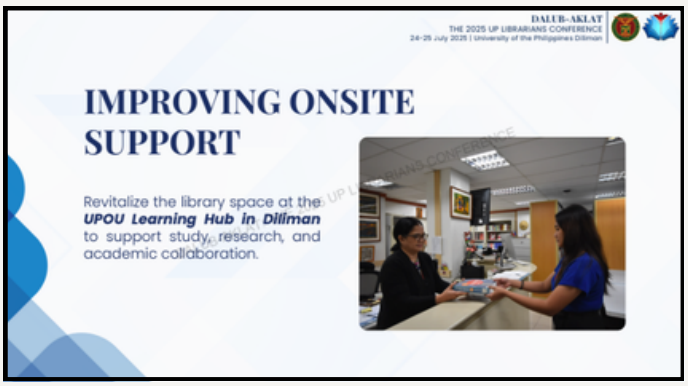










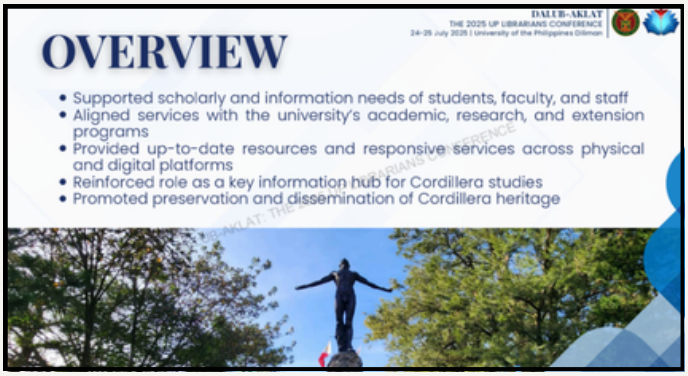


UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, OPEN UNIVERSITY (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP BAGUIO

State of the University Libraries



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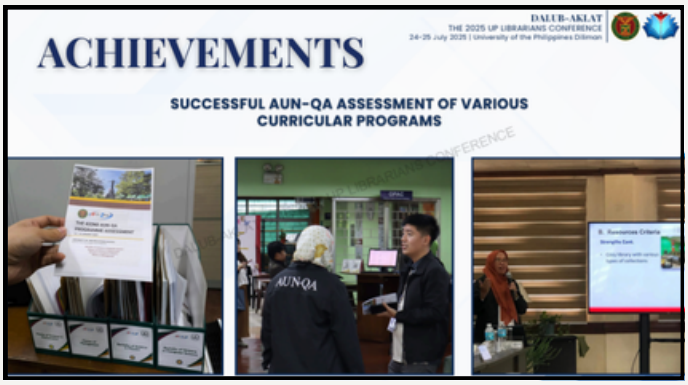
State of the University Libraries



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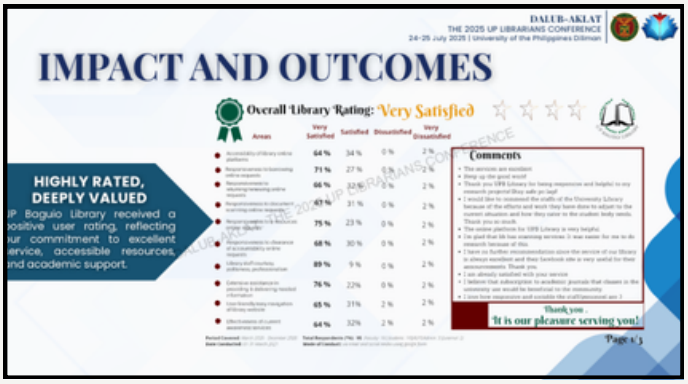
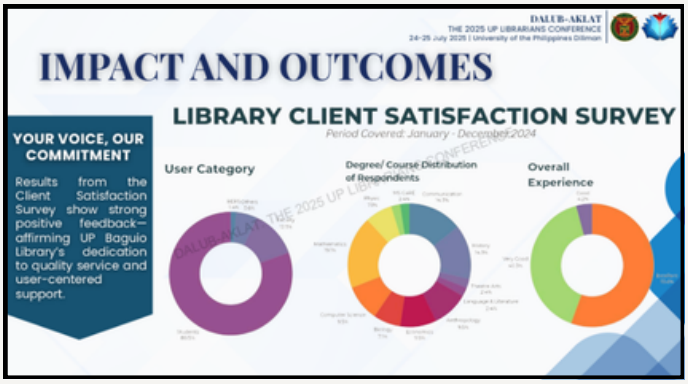
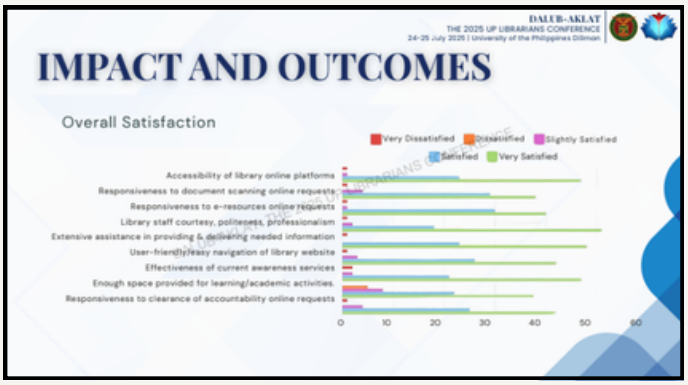
State of the University Libraries







UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, TACLOBAN

State of the University Libraries

UP TACLOBAN COLLEGE LIBRARY

FLORABEL M. FUMAR-BANARES
Head Librarian
24 JULY 2025

OVERVIEW

Role: Provide assistance to the college in the academic support aspect

Focus: Continue to improve our facility to create a safe and productive space for students, faculty, staff, and community to use.

Activities & Programs:

1. Information Literacy Initiatives
2. Service Delivery Enhancement
3. Collection Promotion and Marketing
4. Infrastructure Development

KEY INITIATIVES

1. Information Literacy Initiatives
2. Service Delivery Enhancement
3. Collection Promotion and Marketing
4. Infrastructure Development

KEY INITIATIVES

1. Information literacy initiatives
   - Freshmen orientation on library resources
     - Launched a new Facebook page
   - Continually updates website (Google site)
   - Installed MAC computer as digital info and promo monitor
   - Created locator charts on shelves for easier navigation

KEY INITIATIVES

2. Service Delivery Enhancement
   - Set up Nap Area for user wellness
   - Introduced digital barcodes for easier access
   - Launched Document Delivery Service

KEY INITIATIVES

1. Information literacy initiatives

KEY INITIATIVES

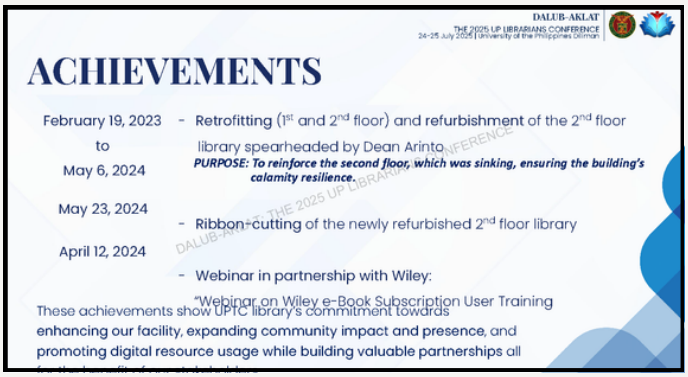
2. Service Delivery Enhancement

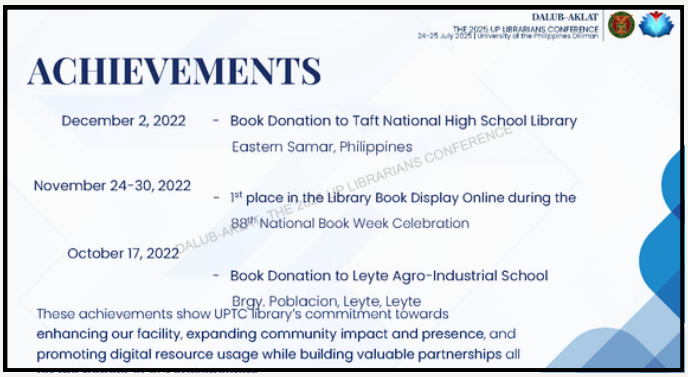
KEY INITIATIVES

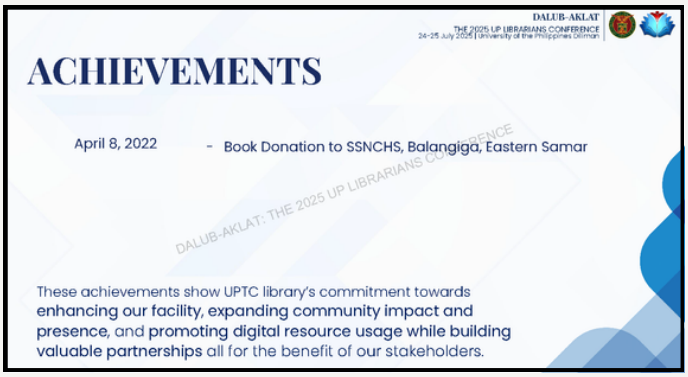
3. Collection Promotion and Marketing
   - Themed displays for Valentine's, Halloween, and Yolanda Commemoration
   - Wiley webinar collaboration
4. Infrastructure Development
   - Retrofitting (1st and 2nd floor) and Refurbishment (2nd floor)

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP TACLOBAN (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries



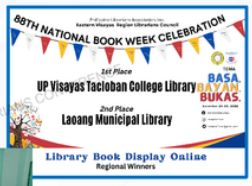




UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, TACLOBAN (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries

ACHIEVEMENTS



CHALLENGES

1. Library Space
2. Technology & Equipment
3. Staffing & Resources
4. User Experience & Services

CHALLENGES

1. Library Space

- Limited library space, sitting capacity, outlets, and outlets
- Ease of access of elderly and PWDS to the library
- Cybernook and the lounge area were removed
- Physically taxing from the repeated relocation of working areas

February 19, 2023 – Relocated to 3rd floor library
May 11, 2023 - Went back to 2nd floor library for the UPCAT
October 18, 2023 - Went back to 3rd floor library for the refurbishment
May 6, 2024 - Finally returned to the 2nd floor

CHALLENGES

2. Technology & Equipment

- Lack of equipment (printers, computers, marketing equipment such as TV, projector, etc.)
- Security gate and RFID for all students
- E-Resource marketing (low usage due to lack of promotion)

CHALLENGES

3. Staffing & Resources

- Overlapping responsibilities/Juggling multiple roles due to lack of personnel
- Purchase of books (slow process)
- Foreign serials, not yet searchable in Buklod and Tuklas

CHALLENGES

4. User Experience & Services

- Lack of individual table
- No available Discussion room
- Improvised Courtesy shelf for student bags

CHALLENGES

Moved to 2nd floor for the UPCAT.

Finally moved back to the 2nd floor.

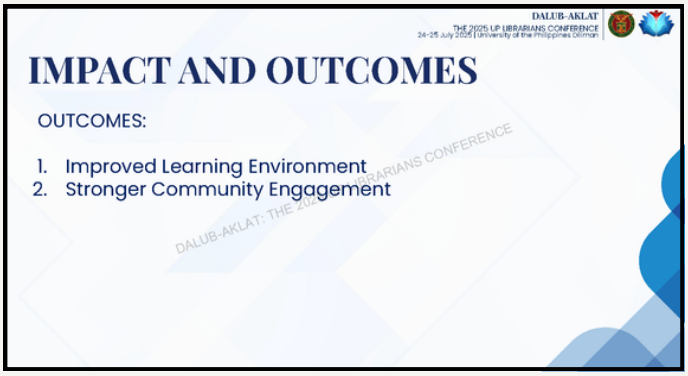
IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

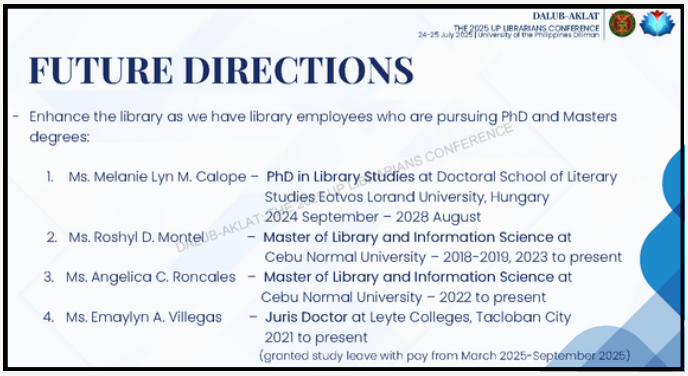
IMPACT:

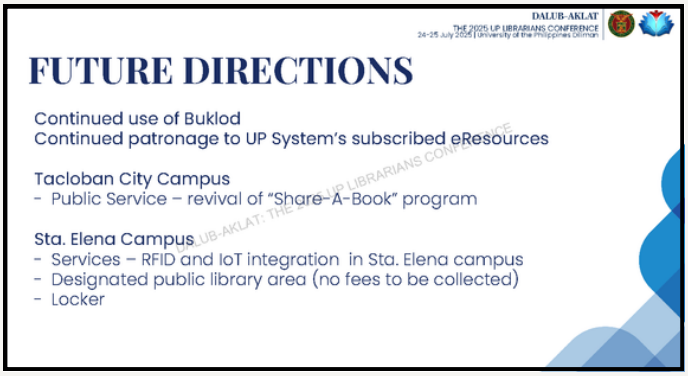
- For Students: Continued improvements to the physical space and additional services helped create a safe, engaging, and productive study environment for students.
- For Faculty & Researchers: Improved access to academic materials, supporting research and teaching.
- For Partner Communities: Book donations to public schools promoted literacy and supported under-resourced educational systems.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP TACLOBAN (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries





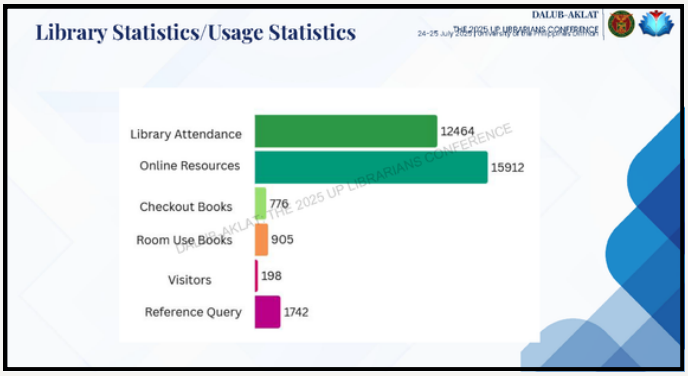


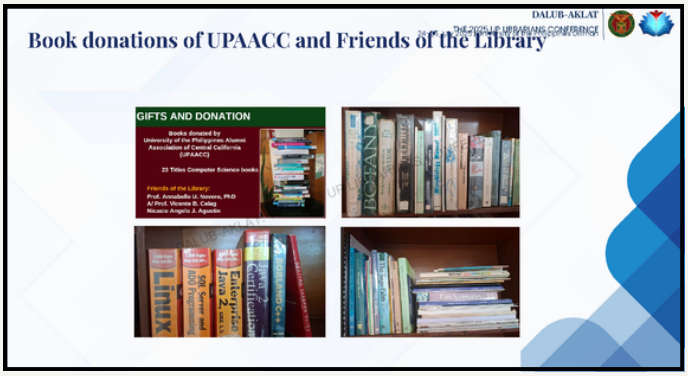
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, MINDANAO

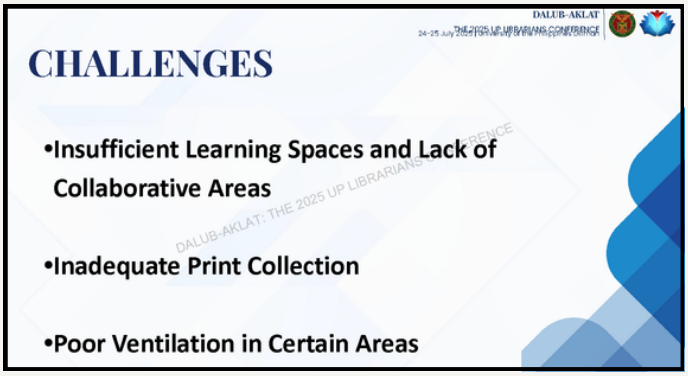
State of the University Libraries

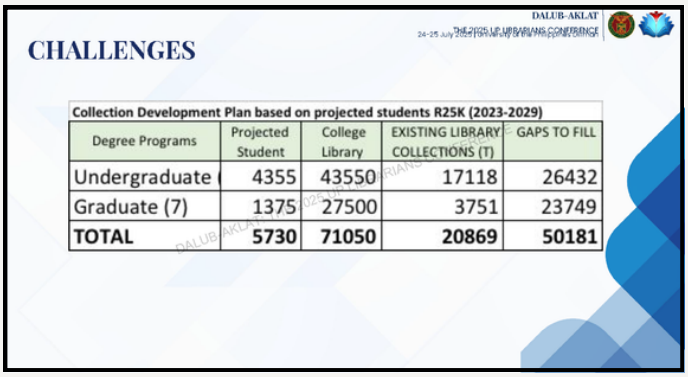
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP MINDANAO (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries



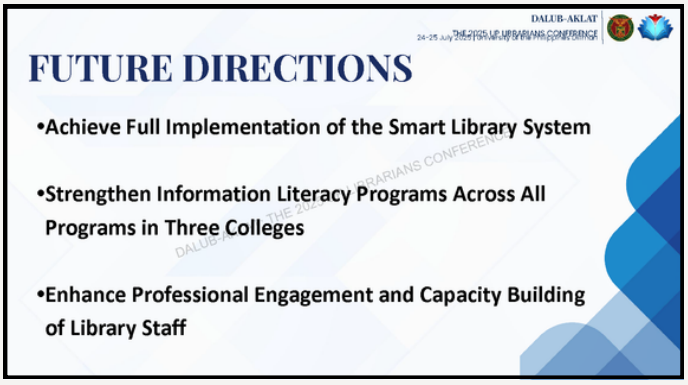


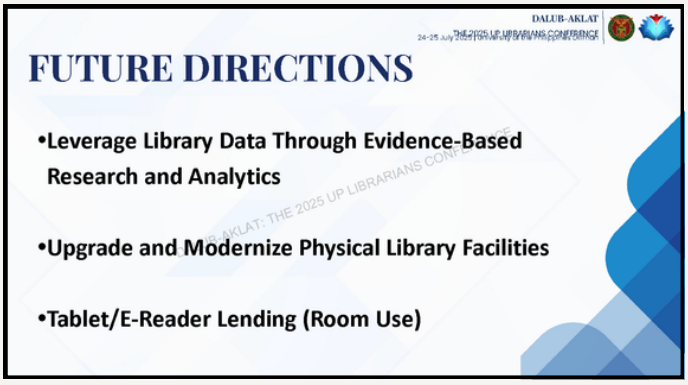




UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP MINDANAO (Cont'd.)

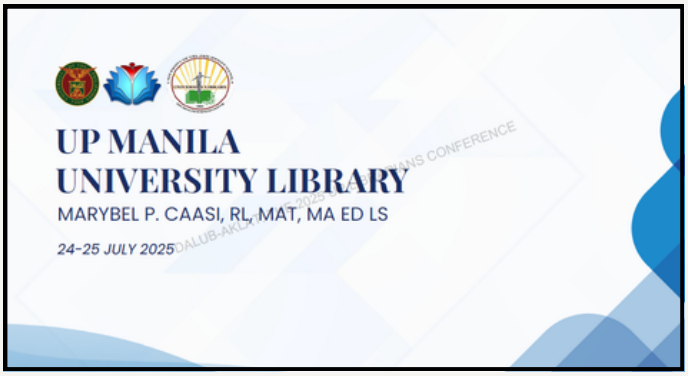
State of the University Libraries

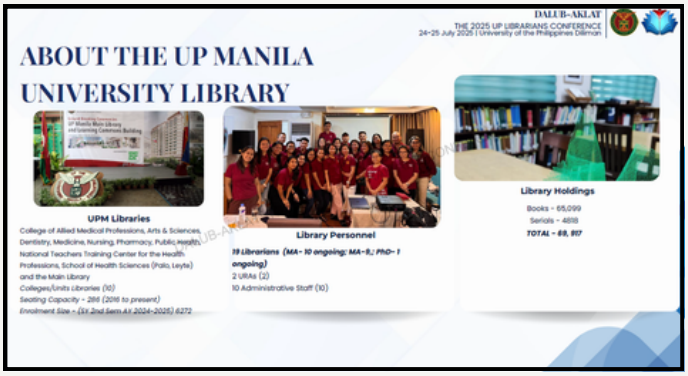


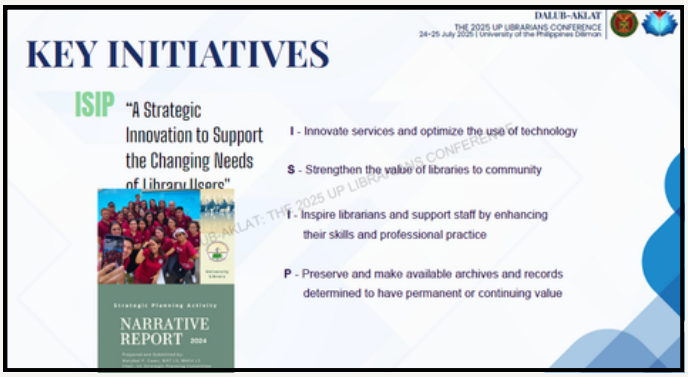


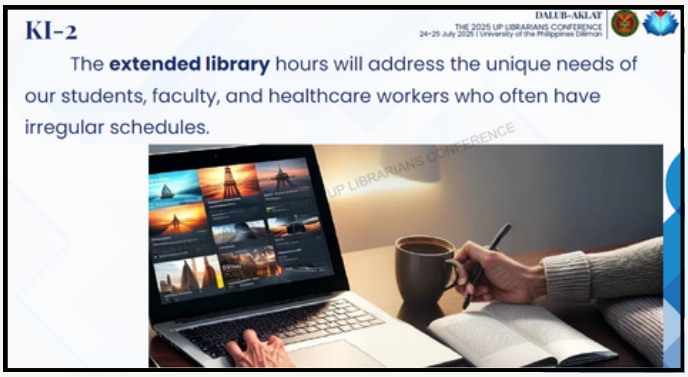
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP MANILA

State of the University Libraries







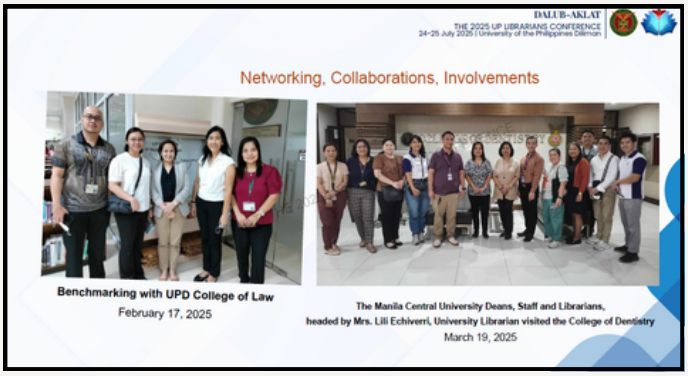


UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP MANILA (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP MANILA (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries



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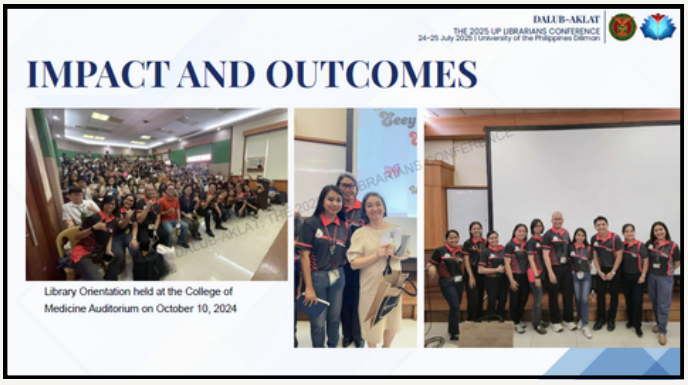
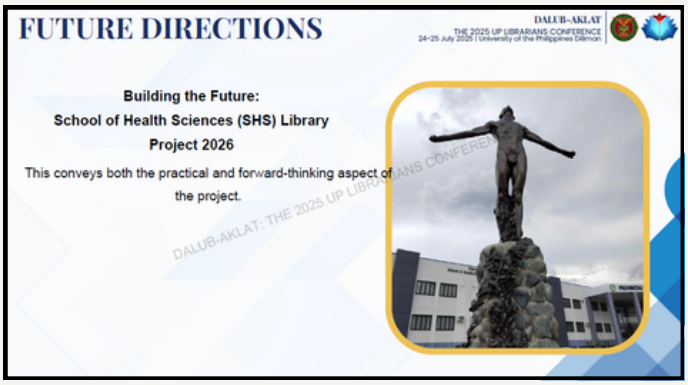
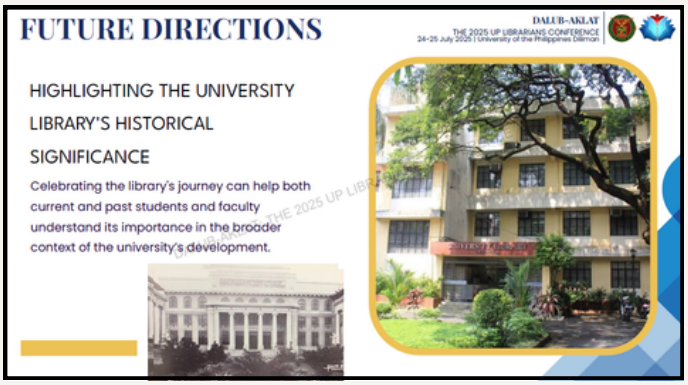
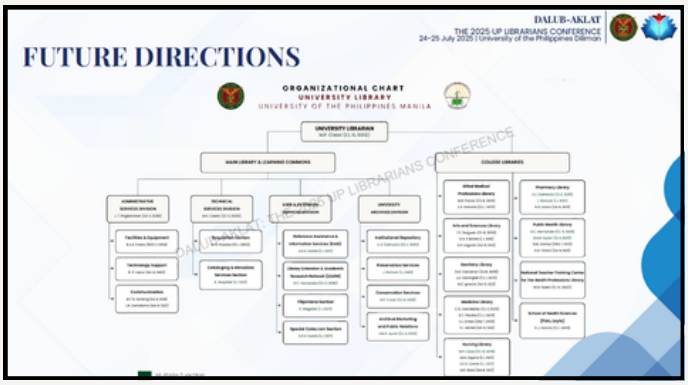
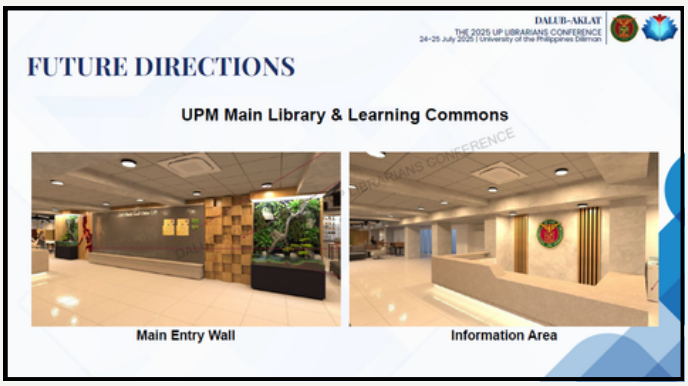
State of the University Libraries











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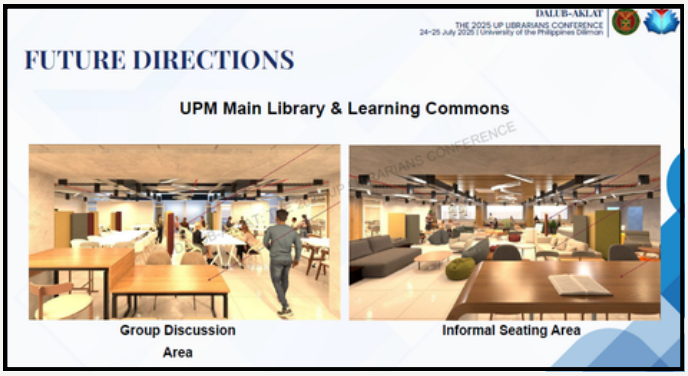
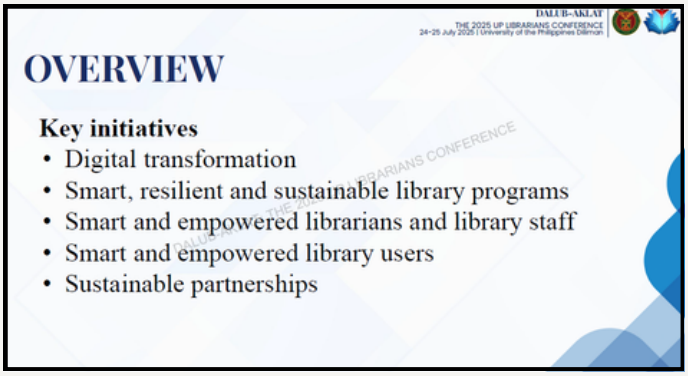
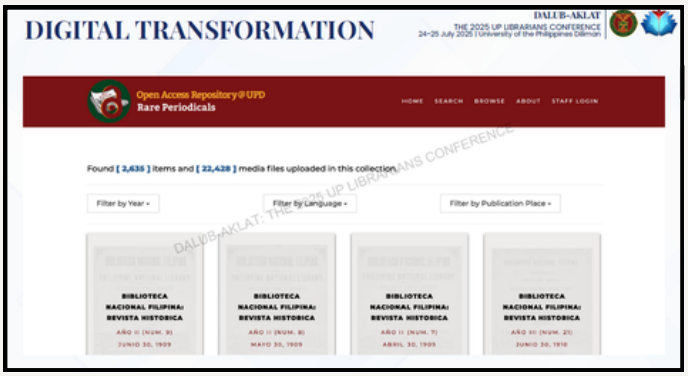
State of the University Libraries

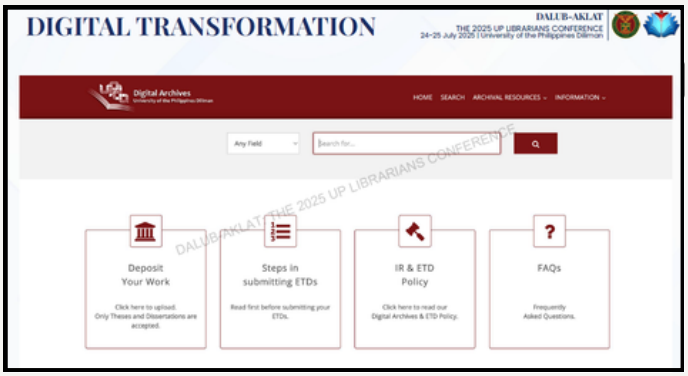


UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP DILIMAN

State of the University Libraries







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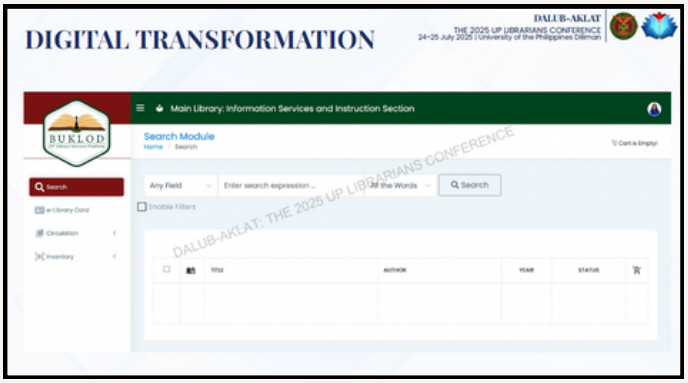
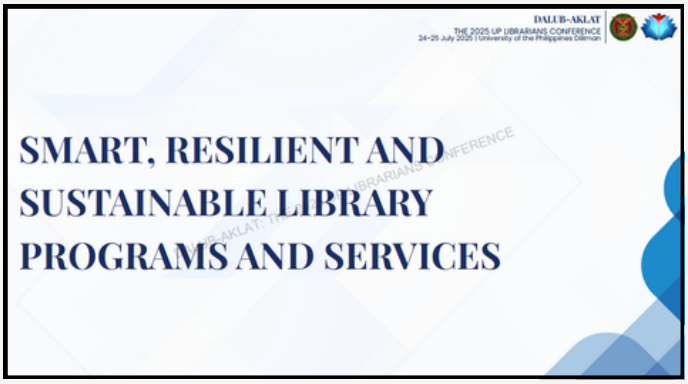
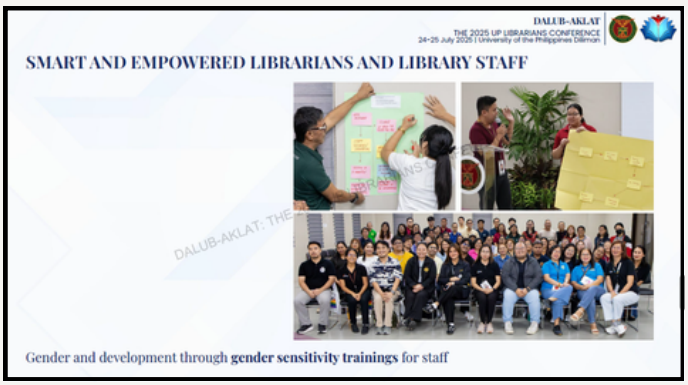
State of the University Libraries

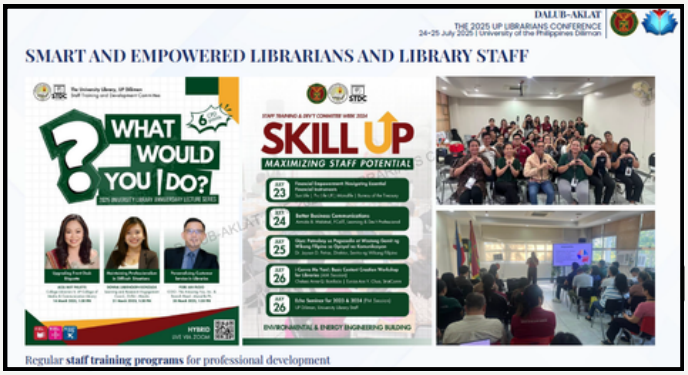


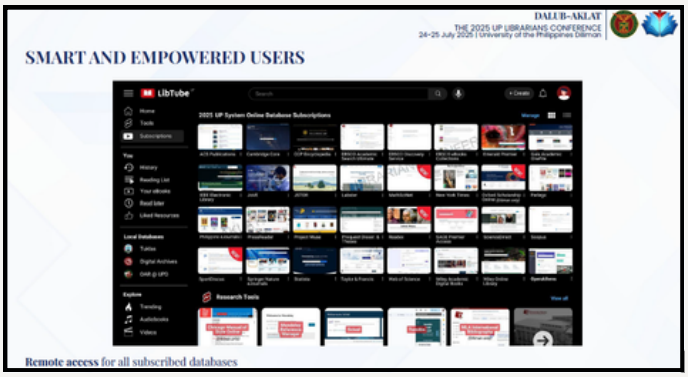




UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP DILIMAN (Cont'd.)

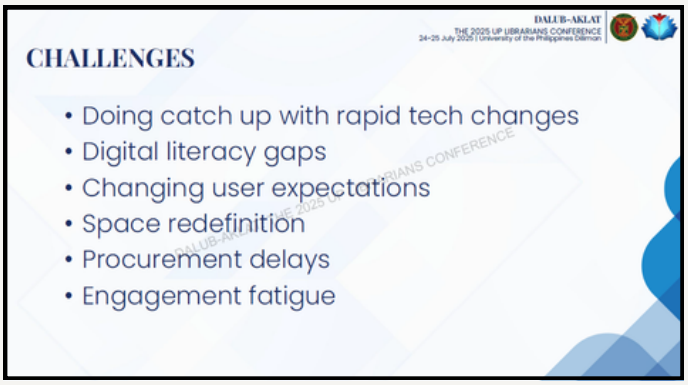
State of the University Libraries

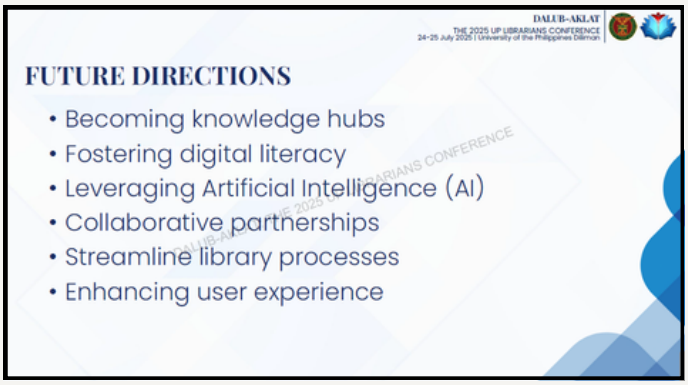




UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP DILIMAN (Cont'd.)

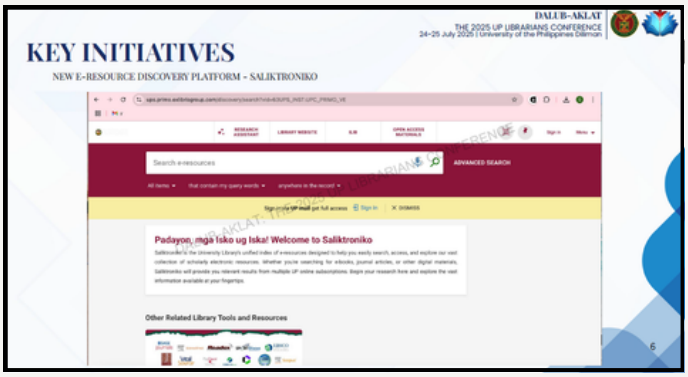
State of the University Libraries





UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP CEBU

State of the University Libraries



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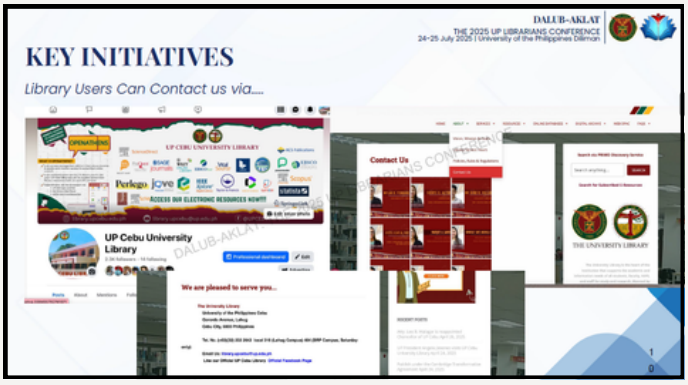
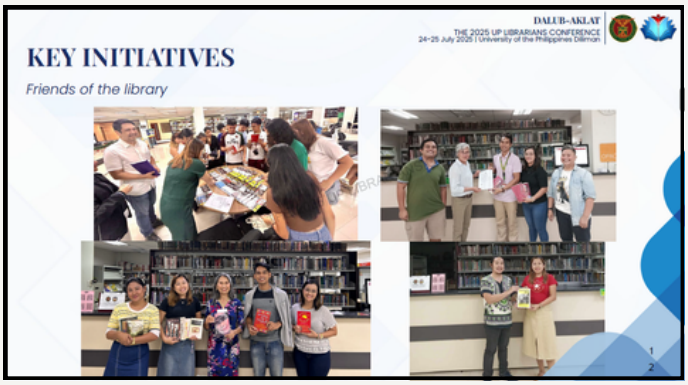
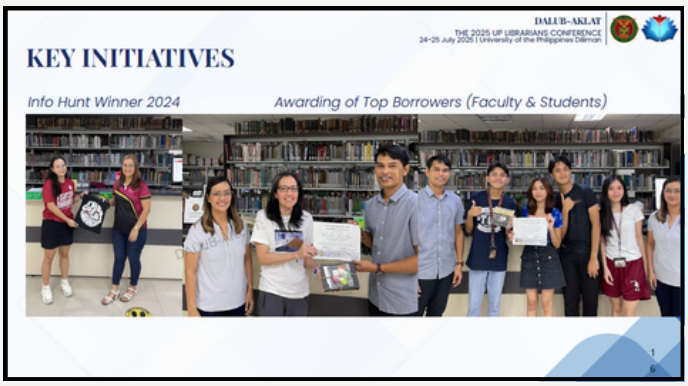
State of the University Libraries

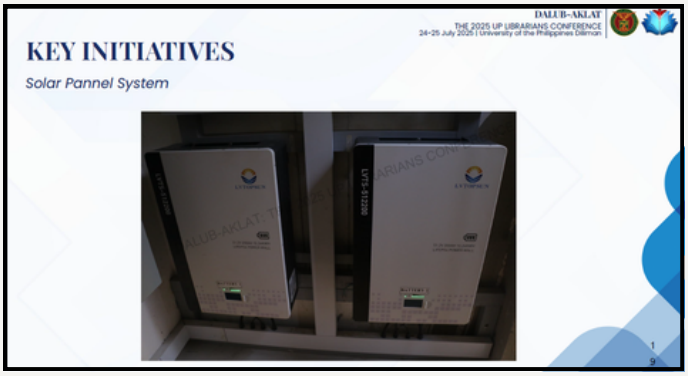


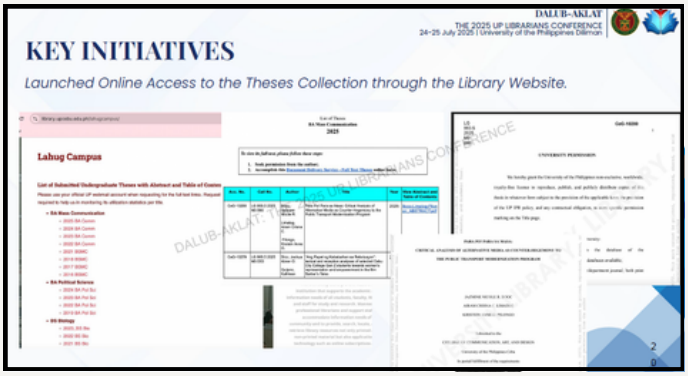


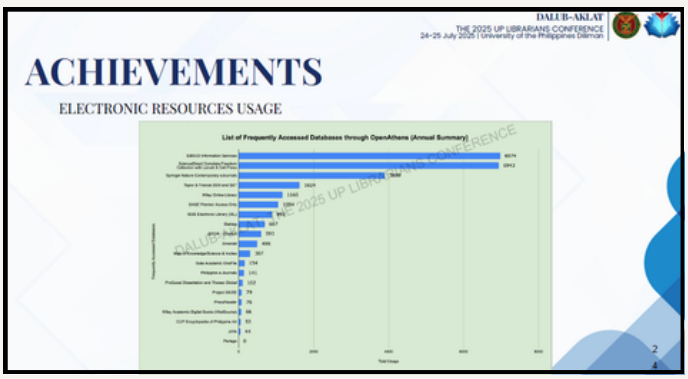


UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP CEBU (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries







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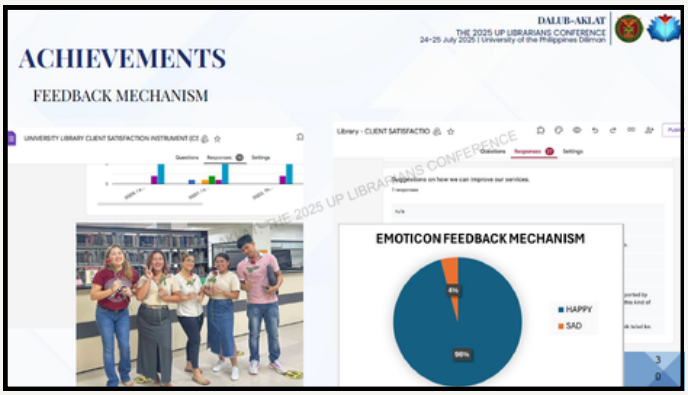
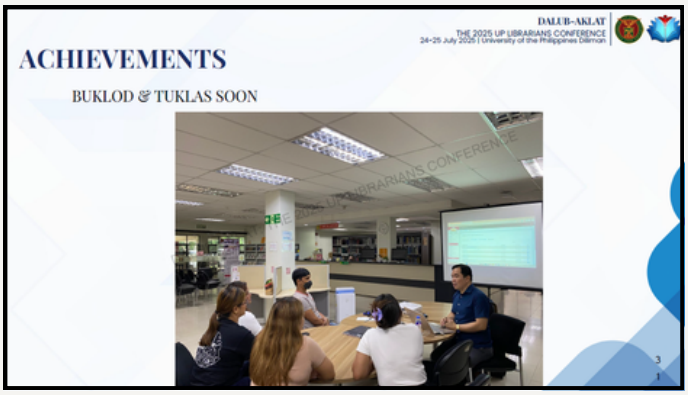
State of the University Libraries





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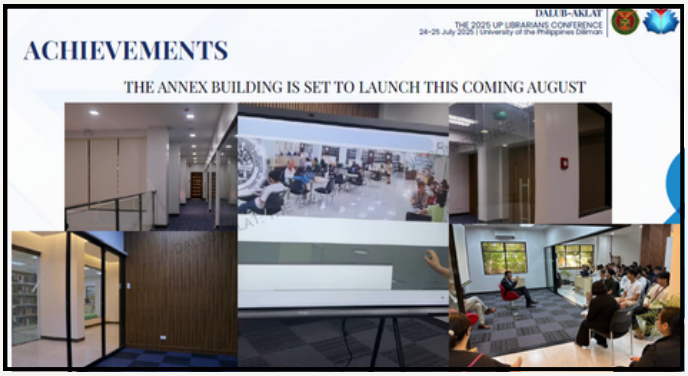
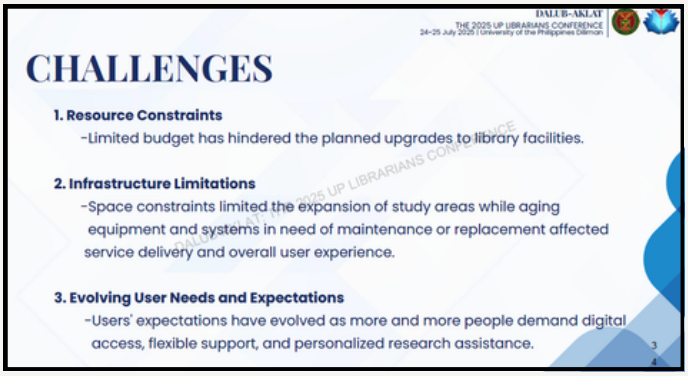
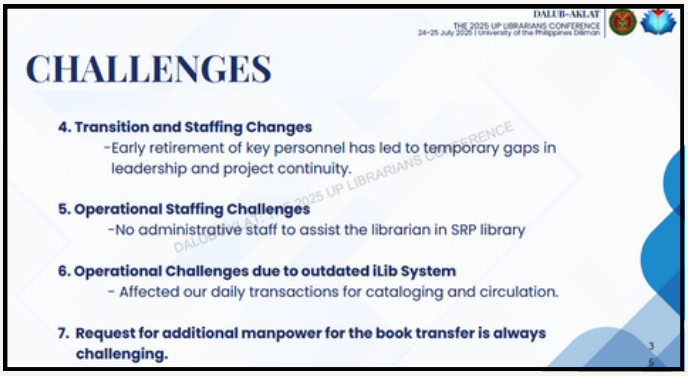
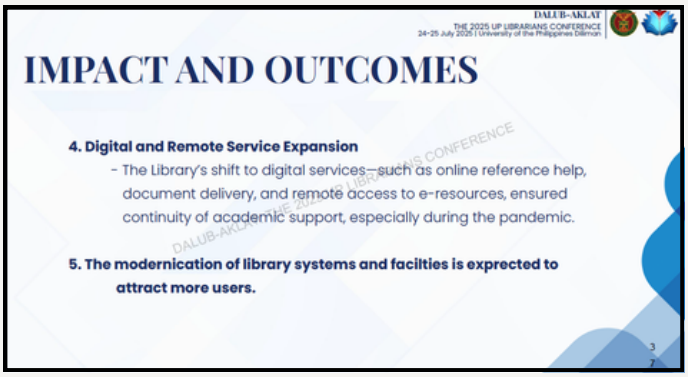
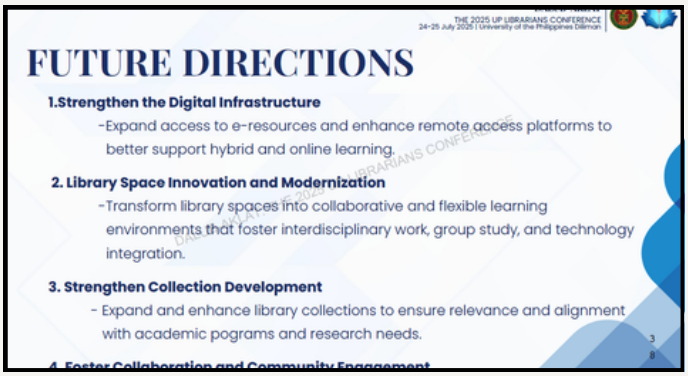
State of the University Libraries

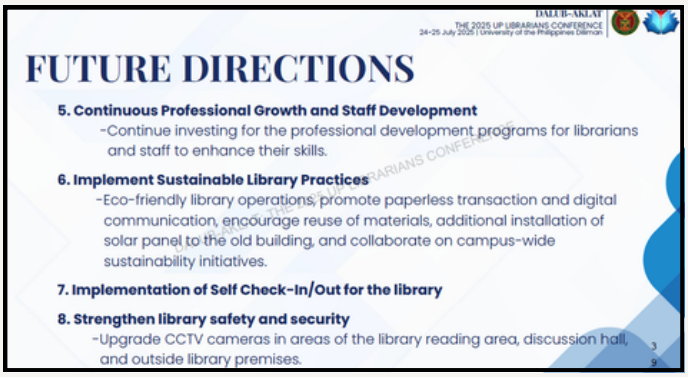












UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP LOS BAÑOS

State of the University Libraries

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP LOS BAÑOS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP LOS BAÑOS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries

ACHIEVEMENTS

RECOGNITION

Mr. Edwardo S. Barrera, Jr.
Outstanding Office Staff
2024 Honor Awards Program

InfoSkilled Program
Outstanding Library Program of the Year Award
PAARL

Dr. Mary Ann M. Ingua
SATKAL Woman Librarian Award 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS

SERVICE EXPANSION

ALIVErary BOOKS

ACHIEVEMENTS

SERVICE EXPANSION

Library Exhibits

Library of Things

Library Newsletter

University Library Brand Book

CHALLENGES

- Operational constraints
  - Extended library hours placed additional pressure on staff scheduling and workload management.
- Infrastructure interruptions
- Balancing physical and digital services
  - Expanding digital platforms (e.g., OpenAthens, Zoom-based trainings) while sustaining in-person services stretched available resources.

CHALLENGES

Mitigation Measures

- Advance notifications for closures and extended hours via FB & internal channels
- Staff workshop to standardize workplans for efficiency

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

Improved access & engagement
- Extended hours boosted academic productivity
- FoodBox initiative supported student wellbeing and focus

Enhanced research competencies
- Students and faculty trained on citation tools and database searching strategies, leading to more efficient academic outputs

Cultural enrichment
- Heritage events promoted campus-wide cultural awareness and institutional pride

Digital adoption
- Wider access to ebooks, ejournals, and databases
- Online platforms and communications expanded outreach and inclusion

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Spatial redesign
- Re-imagining library spaces into collaborative zones, group study rooms, and activity pods with sustainable, flexible furnishings.

Hybrid service expansion
- Continued InfoSkilled trainings via Zoom and F2F;
- promote green library practices,
- engage in local and international training exchanges and volunteer programs

Infrastructure & sustainability
- Purchase of eco-friendly, flexible furniture; optimized lighting & energy usage, and upgrade of automated security systems, loan and returning of books

Partnerships & outreach
- Expand immersion programs for local schools; foster international-cultural exchanges and digital resource collaborations.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

NEW LIBRARY BUILDING

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS

State of the University Libraries

UP Visayas

University Library

Analiza S. Galang-Linatigo

24 JULY 2025

OVERVIEW

- This reports highlights the new library building
- Presentation of the building's current status (i.e. physical structure and condition)

OVERVIEW

Discussion will also focus on:

- Current resources and services of the library
- Institutional Repository
- Development Plans

The New Library Building

Library Opening

May 26, 2025

The New Library Building

The library's exterior is cement finished.

The New Library Building

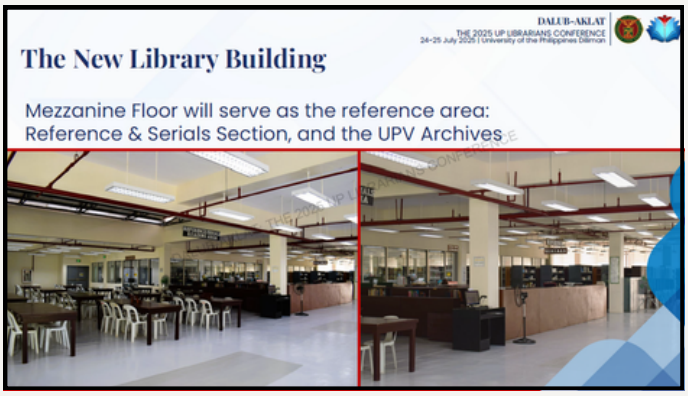
Interior is furnished in a simple yet functional manner, designed to ensure comfort and suitability for library users

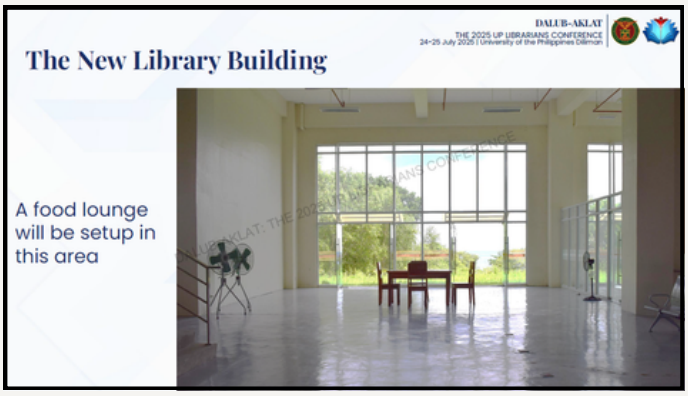
The New Library Building

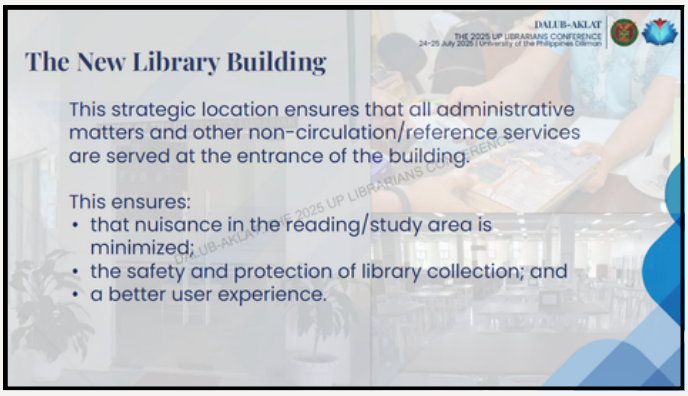
Ground Floor serves as the main Circulation area hosting the CAS, CFOS, and SOTECH collection

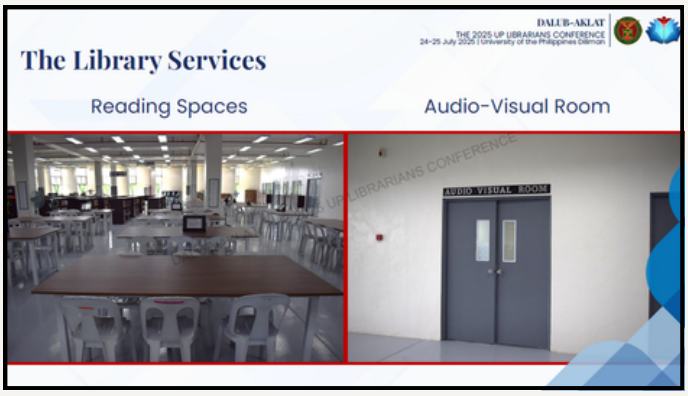
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

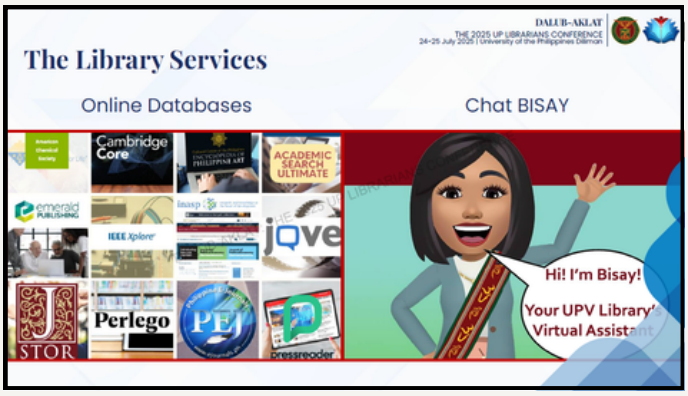
State of the University Libraries





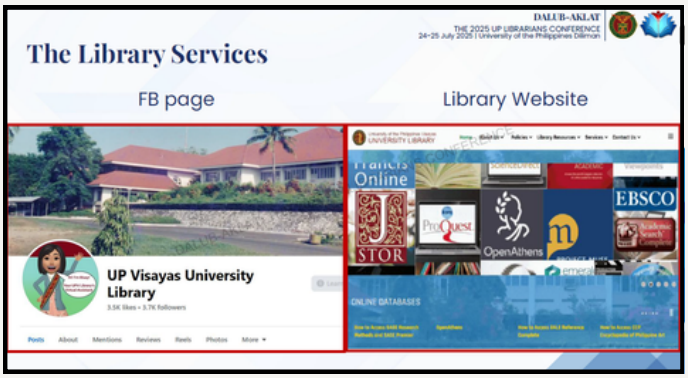


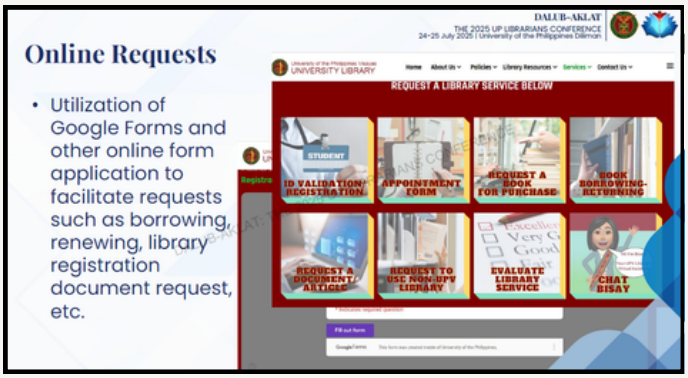


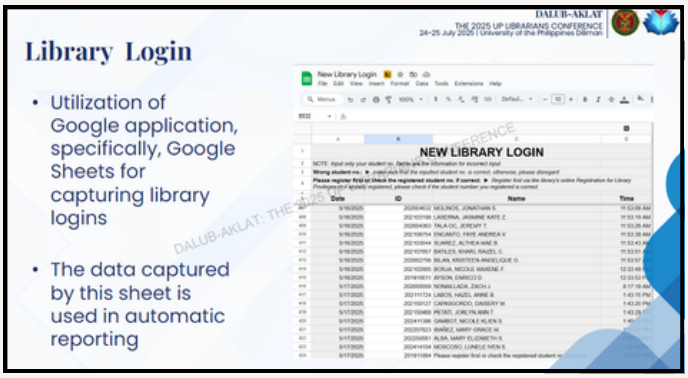


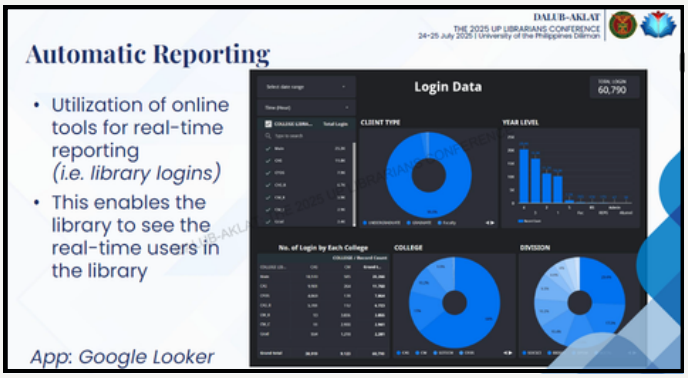
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries









UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries

The New Services

GAD Integrated Area

This is in support to the provisions of Gender and Development (GAD) area per building.

Quite and Discussion Rooms

Provision of Quite and Discussion Rooms for users who wants to study quietly or wants to discuss.

Learning Spaces

Provision of temporary learning/public spaces for socialization and collaboration.

Fiction Area

Setup of a mini-Fiction Area for bookworms.

Digital Repository Room

The setup of the digitization area intended for the Institutional Repository and other digitization process

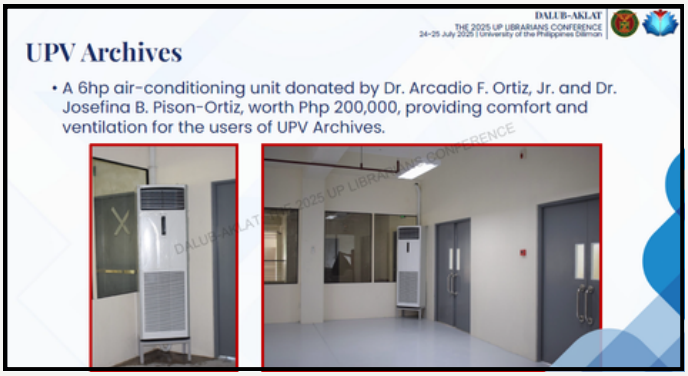
DONATIONS

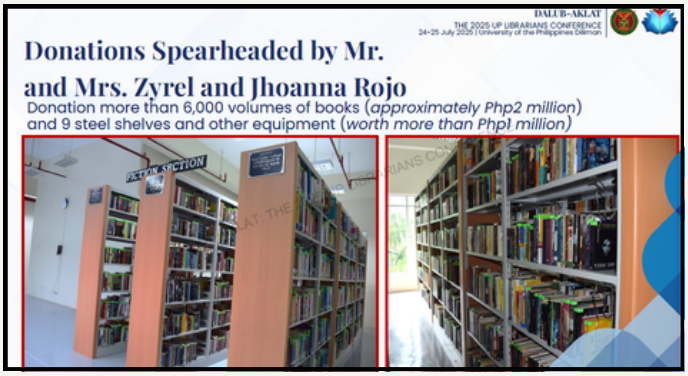
UPV Archives

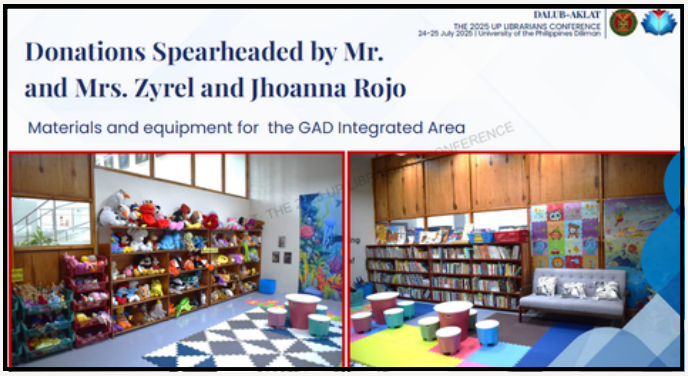
- Setup of UPV Archives - donated by the University of the Philippines Medical Alumni Society in America (UPMASA)
- Worth 1.2 million pesos

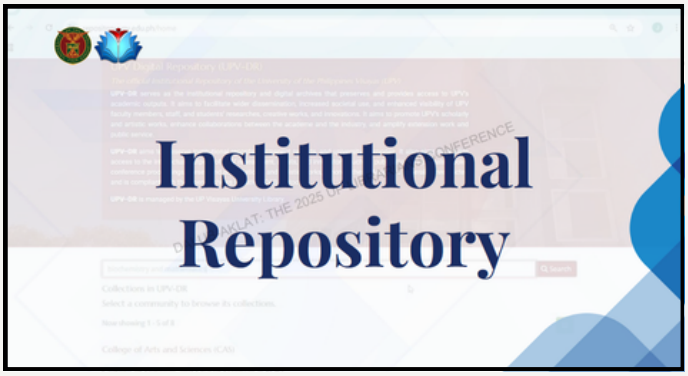
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

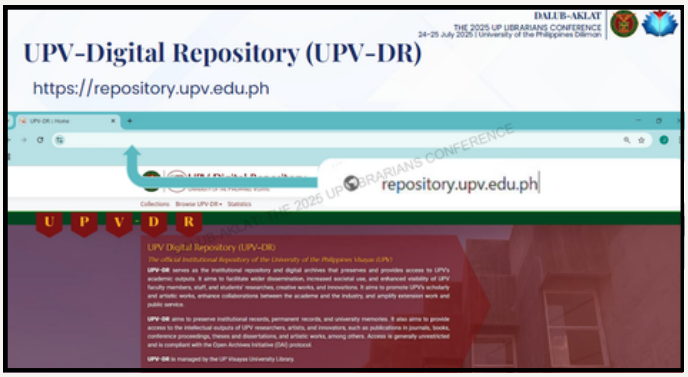
State of the University Libraries

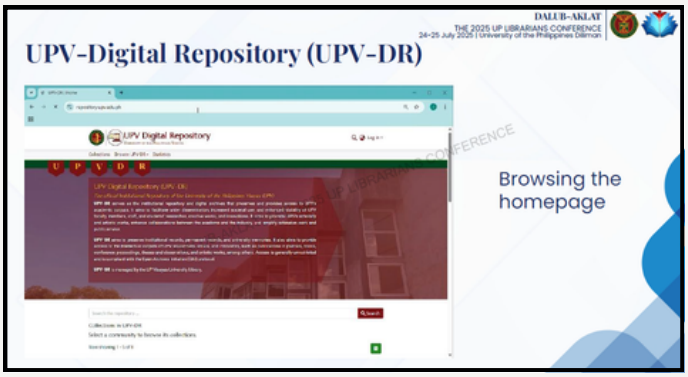


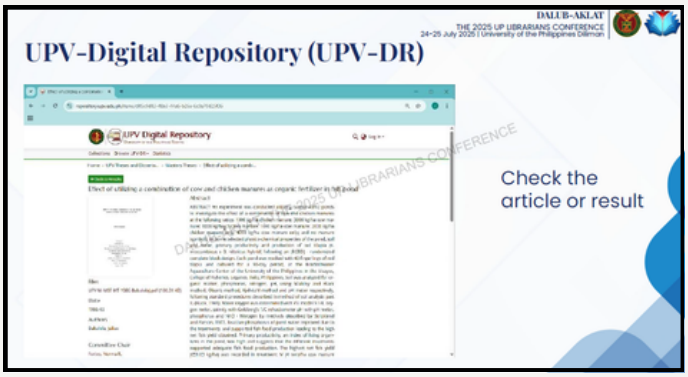






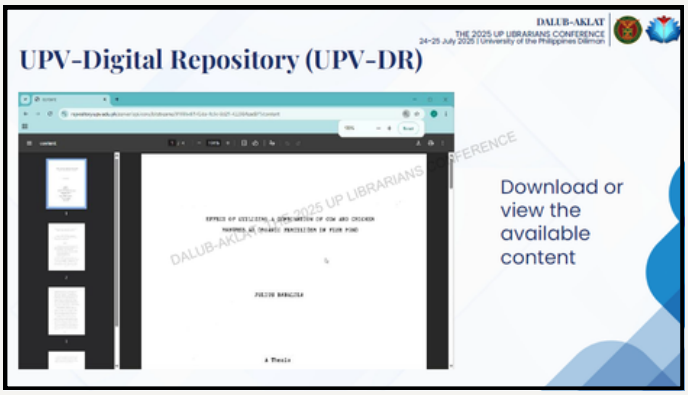


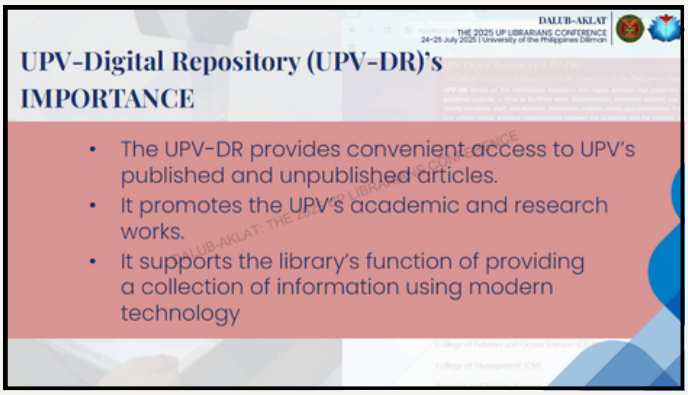


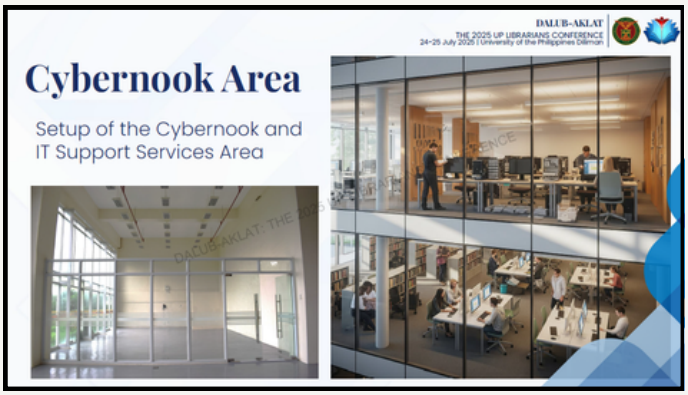


UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries







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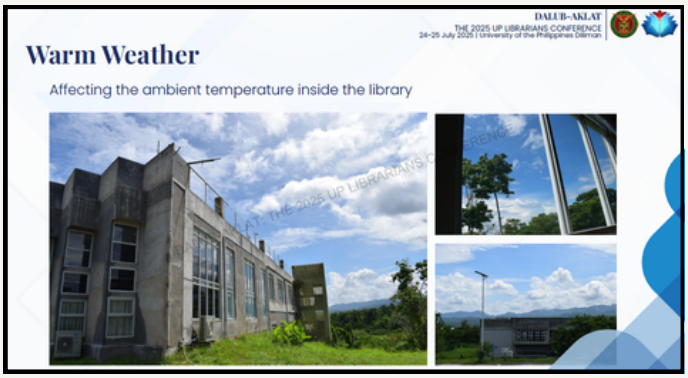
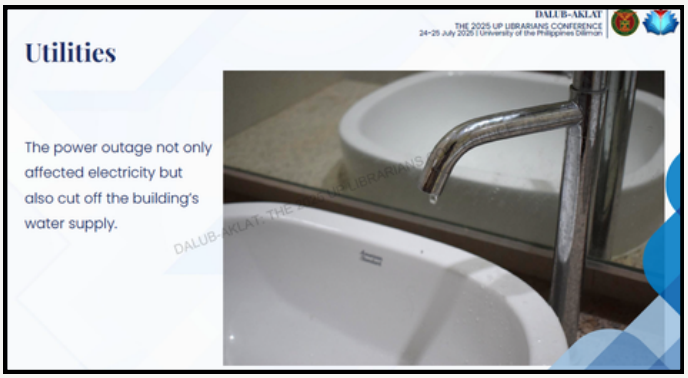
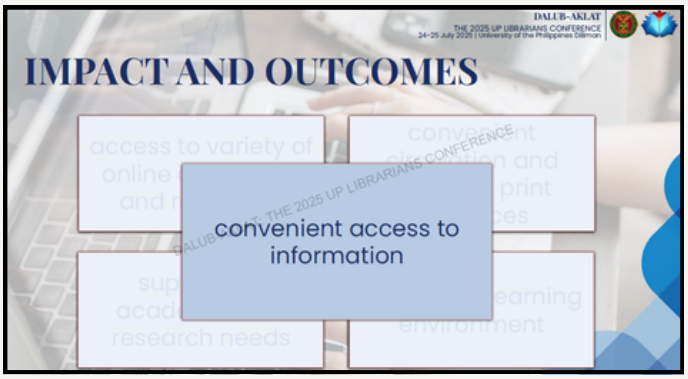
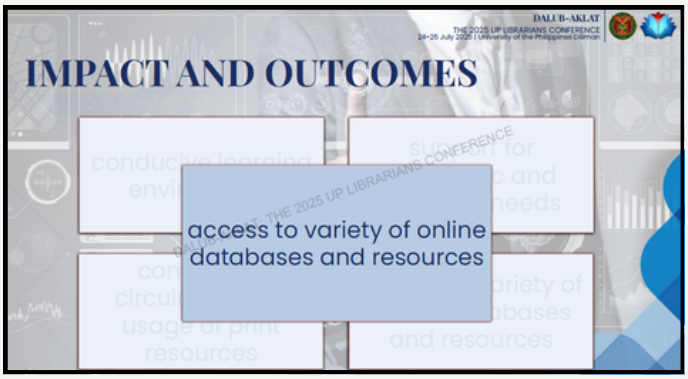
State of the University Libraries



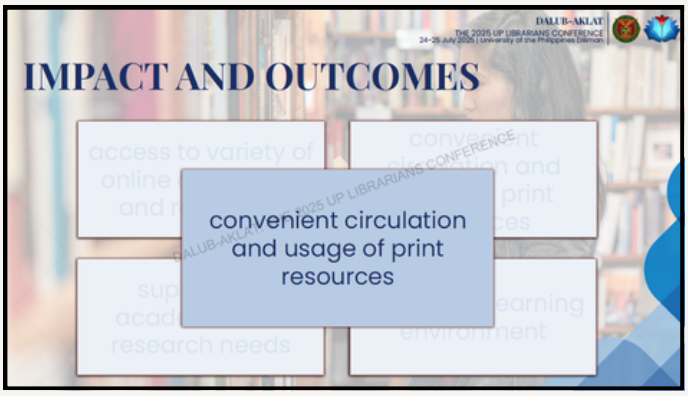


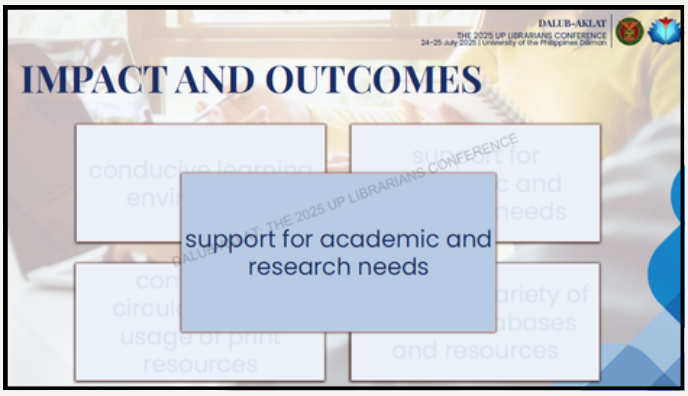


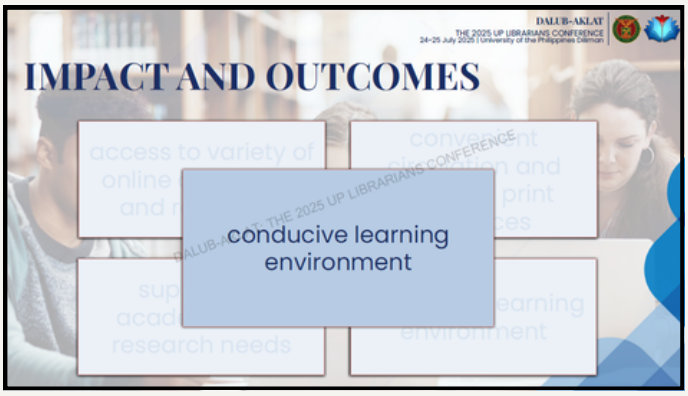


UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries





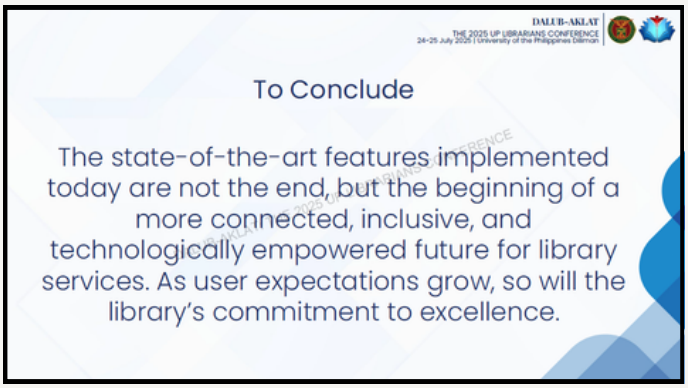


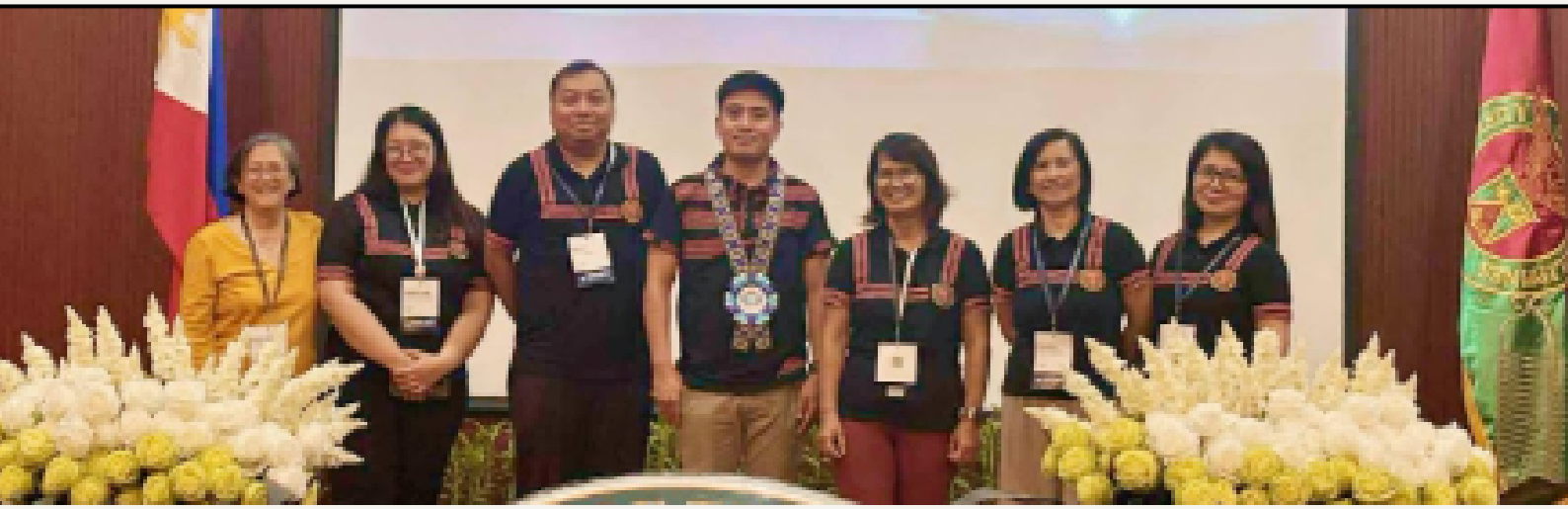
Comments/Feedbacks

- *The librarians are very accommodating and kind. Thank you so much po!*
- *The staff were accommodating and the transition was smooth.*
- *Thank you for the assistance. I hope the UPV administration will provide the library and archives with better [financial] support to enable it to operate more fully, even more comfortably.*
- *Big thanks to the staff (Mr. Paguntalan) for being super accommodation and efficient! You made the process so smooth and hassle-free. Your promt assistance is truly appreciated!*
- *The transaction was smooth, and the staff was very accommodating and considerate of my concerns.*

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, UP VISAYAS (Cont'd.)

State of the University Libraries





Dalub-Aklat 2025: Reflections from UP Baguio Librarians

Eufemia A. Terre, OIC Head, University Library, UP Baguio

Five librarians namely Amelia Cendana, Julieta Dela Pena, Christian Jade Garcia, Rojan Paleng, Eufemia Terre, Cristina Villanueva and Bryan Galera, an Administrative Staff of the University of the Philippines Baguio Library had the opportunity to participate in *Dalub-Aklat: The 2025 UP Librarians Conference*, held on July 24-25, 2025 at the Institute of Biology Auditorium in UP Diliman. For us, as librarians from a small campus and a small library, this gathering was both meaningful and affirming.

The conference opened with updates from UP's different constituent universities. These presentations offered valuable perspectives on the current state of libraries across the UP System. Listening to these reports reminded us that, while our contexts may differ in scale and resources, we share common goals, challenges, and aspirations in supporting teaching, learning, and research.

The first session, which focused on the evolving role of the library as a facilitator of transformative learning, resonated strongly with us. It encouraged reflection on our own practices and reinforced the idea that libraries, regardless of size, can make a meaningful impact through thoughtful services, responsive programs, and a genuine commitment to our users.

Equally important was the opportunity to engage with fellow librarians from other UP units. For a small campus like UP Baguio, the chance to connect, exchange insights, and learn from colleagues across the system is invaluable. These interactions strengthened our sense of belonging to the wider UP library community and affirmed that our experiences and contributions matter.

Overall, our participation in Dalub-Aklat 2025 was a positive and enriching experience. It renewed our motivation and provided fresh perspectives that we bring back to our work in UP Baguio. The conference reminded us that even as a small library, we play an important role in advancing a future-ready and learner-centered UP.

Dalub-Aklat 2025 Reflections from UP Cebu

University Library, UP Cebu

For us, the library personnel of UP Cebu, Daluk-Aklat was a reminder of what we do, it was more than just a conference. The gathering affirmed that libraries are indeed the heart of the university's academic life, especially with the rapid change of technology and the evolving user needs and modes of learning.

We were inspired by how the conference framed the library personnel as educators, collaborators, and innovators—not just merely custodians of books. As the smart and innovative libraries were emphasized, we continue to balance our services with digital transformation and user-centered approaches. The conference also inspired us to think creatively on how our spaces, resources, and activities can be of better support to the research needs of our users, including their well-being.

Moreover, Dalub-Aklat strengthened our sense of belonging to a wider UP library community. Exchanging experiences with library personnel from other constituent universities reminded us that many of our challenges and success stories can be shared—and that we can learn from one another.

For us at UP Cebu University Library, we returned with renewed motivation to make our services more valuable—inclusive, visible, and responsive to the needs of our library users and the UP Cebu community.

Lastly, Dalub-Aklat was both a call of action and a celebration of our profession. It reminded us that our core mission remains despite the rapid change of technologies: to connect, support, and help in shaping a more informed and empowered community, not just UP Cebu.

Sama-sama sa Pagbabago: The UP Manila Journey to Dalub-Aklat

Alfred E. Dalmacio, RL, MLIS, University Library, UP Manila

The UP Manila delegation had a distinguished presence at the conference, headed by Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Bernadette Heizel M. Reyes and University Librarian Ms. Marybel P. Caasi, who was both a speaker and a moderator, together with a committed delegation of Head Librarians, Ms. Gina Canceran (Dentistry), Ms. Carla G. Demabildo (Medicine), Mr. Alfred Dalmacio (Pharmacy), Ms. Rea Joy Garcia (SHS Palo, Leyte), Ms. Dhomilyn C. Hernandez (Public Health), and Ms. Marlene Patron (CAMP), with crucial support from other librarians, Mr. Jay-Ar Romulo (Pharmacy) and Ms. Maira M. Aquino (Nursing), and Mr. Julius Carangian (Dentistry), who served as one of the Masters of Ceremonies for the event.

SEAMLESS ORGANIZATION AND HOSPITALITY

The commitment of the Organizing Committee was apparent even before we stepped into the venue. They were proactive and diligent in providing updates through a dedicated group chat and maintained an official event website that kept participants well-informed. Their hospitality became even more evident onsite. From the seamless entry process to the helpful assistance inside the auditorium, and even their cheerful response to our request for assistance in taking group photos. The organizers were less like venue staff and more like an extension of our own helpful colleagues.

INNOVATION AND INTERACTION: EXHIBITS AND SPEAKERS

The Supplier's Exhibit was a valuable opportunity for us to discover new services for our respective colleges. Each supplier booth had interactive activities that promoted hands-on engagement. This was complemented by a stellar lineup of local and international speakers. Listening to these speakers share their insights and visions for the future of the library experience was both inspiring and empowering, giving us the knowledge to provide more efficient and effective services for our stakeholders.

SOCIALIZATION AND BENCHMARKING

The conference provided our team with one of its most meaningful experiences when we had the chance to interact with librarians from other Constituent Universities. The venue served as an ideal platform for our benchmarking activities because we could share our best practices while discussing our common challenges. The experience brought personal happiness when we encountered former classmates who now work at different UP libraries.

Dedication in Action: UP Visayas Librarians Brave Storms to Join Dalub-Aklat 2025

University Library, UP Visayas

Librarians and staff from the University of the Philippines Visayas (UPV) joined colleagues from across the UP System at Dalub-Aklat: The 2025 UP Librarians Conference, held 24-25 January 2025, at the Institute of Biology Auditorium in University of the Philippines Diliman.

Carrying the theme "Advancing Transformative Education Through Smart and Innovative Libraries," the two-day gathering underscored the evolving role of UP Libraries in fostering transformative learning, public service, equity, and accessibility—principles anchored in the University's enduring ideals of honor, excellence, and service.

Leading the UPV delegation was University Librarian Analiza S. Galang-Linaugo. She was joined by Anna Lisa M. Erazo (College of Arts and Sciences Library), Elsa S. Surmieda (College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences Library), Prosamel N. Salcedo (Graduate Library), Ma. Yvonne E. Genciane (UPV Archives), Rosemarie M. Canson (Acquisition and Electronic Services), and Gem Burneth E. Lacambra (Institutional Repository). Library staff members Jason S. Sedantes, Sophia B. Diasanta, and Salvacion F. Ojera also took part in the conference.

Their participation came despite formidable challenges. With three typhoons threatening parts of the country, flight cancellations and flooding disrupted travel schedules. Nevertheless, the delegation safely arrived at Ninoy Aquino International Airport and proceeded to their accommodations, demonstrating a strong commitment to professional development and institutional representation.

Inclement weather, however, forced the cancellation of scheduled benchmarking visits to the UP Diliman College of Engineering Library, the National Library of the Philippines, and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Library.

The conference proper opened with presentations from constituent university libraries across the UP System. Each unit shared innovations, milestones, programs, and current developments, offering a comprehensive view of how libraries are adapting to changing academic landscapes. The exchange allowed participants to identify best practices and explore collaborative opportunities.

Galang-Linaugo presented the accomplishments of the UPV University Library, highlighting its recent transfer to a new library building, expanded learning spaces, digital initiatives, and forward-looking plans. She also addressed challenges encountered during the transition and outlined strategies aimed at strengthening services and accessibility.

On the second day, discussions turned to the future of library design and service delivery. Resource speakers emphasized the importance of creating inclusive, technology-enabled learning environments that promote comfort and collaboration. Sessions explored modern library architecture, digitization, automation, and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance user experience and operational efficiency.

For the UPV delegates, Dalub-Aklat 2025 served as both a platform for knowledge exchange and a reaffirmation of the library's vital role in higher education. Despite adverse weather conditions, the delegation returned home equipped with fresh insights and practical strategies to further improve services in their respective units.

Their journey reflected more than attendance at a professional gathering—it embodied dedication in action, as UPV librarians continue to advance innovative, accessible, and transformative library services for the academic community.

Retro Rewind: Dalub-Aklat After Dark

J.A. Domingo, Dalub-Aklat Fellowship Committee

Bell-bottoms, bright prints, and big retro energy filled the room as the Fellowship Night brought the Dalub-Aklat: The 2025 UP Librarians Conference to life. Led by the ever-dynamic Fellowship Committee—Anthony Atibagos (Chair), Anthony Atuel (Co-Chair), and members Crizell Joy Garcia-Atuel, Jo-Anne Domingo, Mary Jane Camacho, and Marzo Meco Alfonso—the night was a full-on throwback party librarians won't soon forget.

From the moment participants walked in, it was clear: everyone understood the assignment. Neon outfits, vintage glam, and playful accessories turned the venue into a time machine. Cameras flashed, laughter echoed, and the vibe was unmistakably groovy.

The show kicked off with a crowd-pleasing duet of "Mamma Mia" by Jo-Anne Domingo and Mary Jane Camacho—instantly setting the tone for a sing-along evening. An OPM classics medley followed, with each committee member taking the mic, and brought amusement to the audience, as one member belted her heart out, despite not reaching the right notes. When "Chiquitita" began, the committee members staged a hilarious mini-skit, with Co-Chair Anthony Atuel acting as an overly dramatic conductor who theatrically cued everyone—except Chair Anthony Atibagos. Each time the Chair was about to sing, he was playfully skipped, much to the audience's delight. When he finally got the mic, he simply said, "Thank you!"—sending the room into roaring laughter.

The Best Dressed segment turned into a mini runway showdown, complete with witty ramp walks and playful gimmicks. Winners were crowned based on the loudest cheers, making the audience just as competitive as the contestants.

Adding to the excitement was the Sagwanan 2025 Exhibit Raffle Draw, sponsored by participating suppliers namely, CE Logic, Emerald Insight, Springer Nature, Statista, Clarivate , LibTech Source Philippines, Megatexts, Forefront Book Co., Inc., Gale Academic, Cambridge, Sage, IEEE, Jove, ACS, EBSCO, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Academic Paradigm Inc., and Pressreader. Two mobile phones, two smart watches, wireless earphones, tumblers, Starbucks gift cards, USB flash drives, and Grab e-vouchers found very happy new owners.

Despite the rainy weather, the night wrapped up around 8:00 PM with glowing smiles, happy winners, and a room full of librarians who proved they can party—retro style.

CONFERENCE LOGO

The unfolded pages of the book represent the unrestrained potential of the UP System's eight (8) Constituent University Libraries and one (1) autonomous unit in addressing the challenges of the 21st Century.

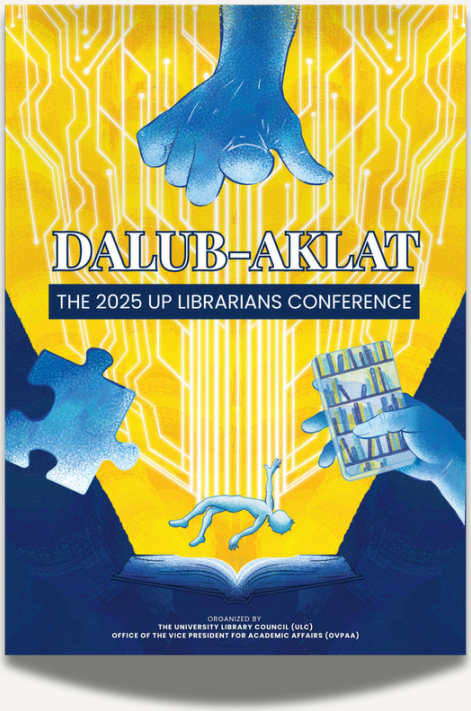
Placed at the middle of the book is a rendition of Guillermo Tolentino's Oblation, an epitome of self-sacrifice in the name of nation building. Akin to a book spine, it binds and anchors each university library on the ideals of Honor, Excellence, and Service.

Hues of the color blue signifies the successful adoption of technology within the libraries while the color maroon manifests the university's visual identity.

CONFERENCE POSTER

For the University Library's 2025 Library Conference, innovation and technology take center stage in visual design. Blue grounds the tone with a sense of professionalism, trust, and forward-thinking, while yellow brings a touch of creativity, warmth, and possibility. Together, they symbolize the balance between structure and imagination—the spirit of digital progress and the evolving identity of smart, innovative libraries. Idealized within the foreground is a visual representation of a librarian transcending their limitations and expectations through the perceptive use of technology.

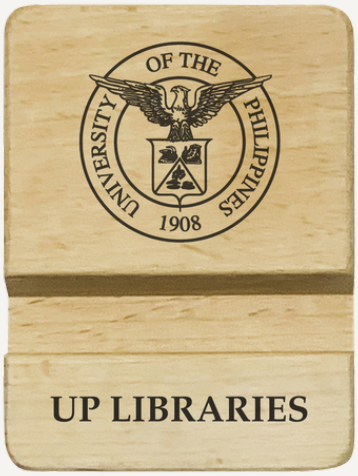
Each visual element tells a story of how technology is empowering learners, expanding access, and igniting transformation. The design captures the movement from tradition to innovation, from potential to progress, through the lens of transformative education.



Dalub-Aklat Kit

Reversible Lanyard

Phone holder



Conference ID

Memo Pad

Tote Bag

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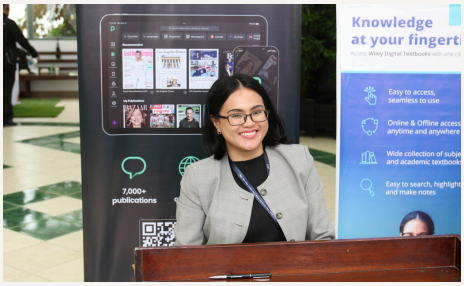

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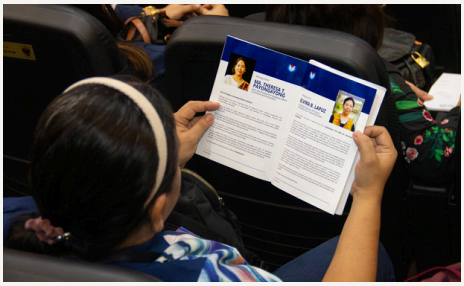
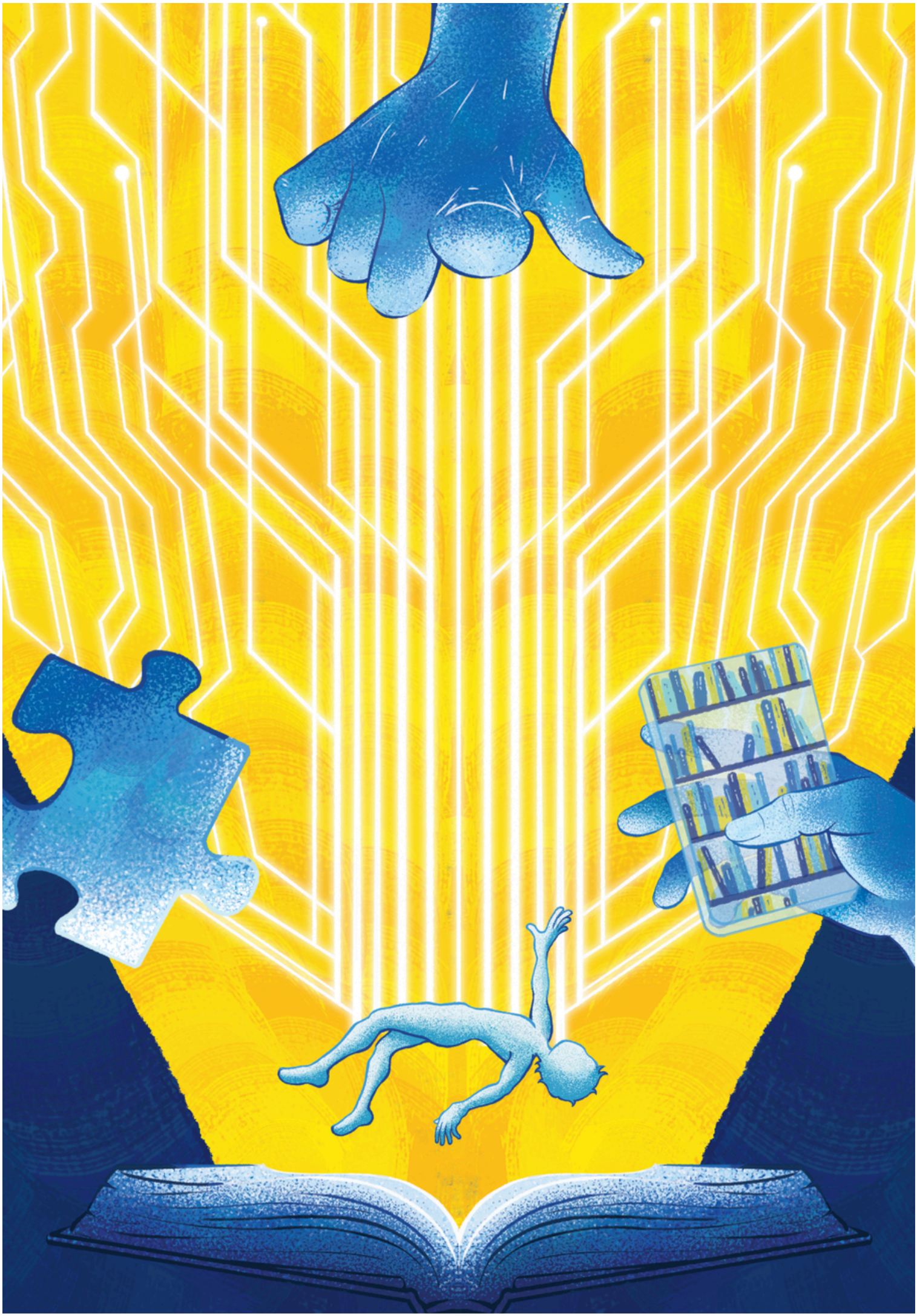
DALUB-AKLAT PHOTO GALLERY