UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
University Library

University Library Assessment Program:
Making the Most of Library Statistics
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3. Performance Indicators and Benchmarking

Key performance indicators in the Achievement Record gauge progress toward strategic goals in the four core areas of the University Library Strategic Plan.
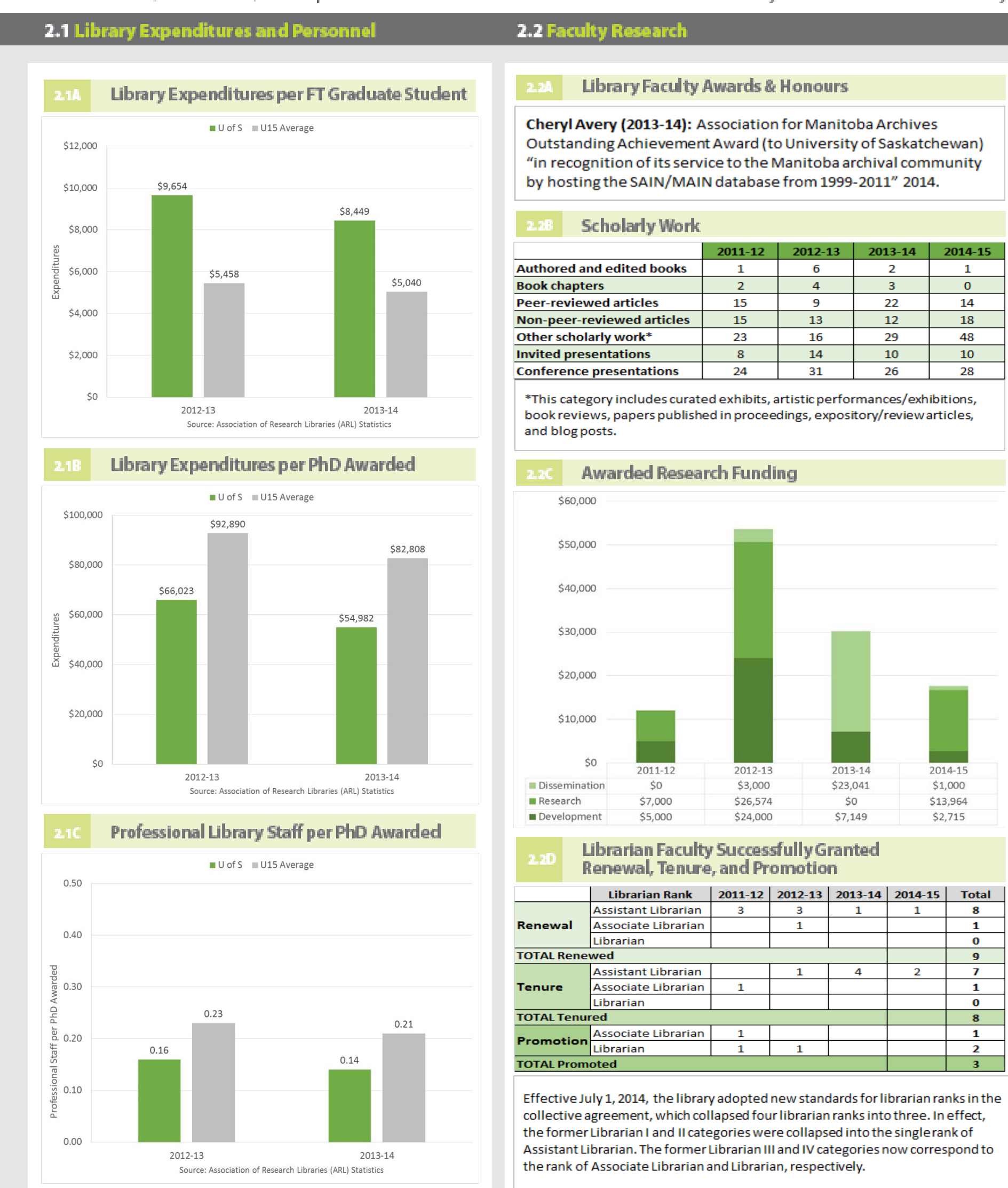
1. Learner and Teacher
We will transform our services, collections, and facilities to contribute to the success of our learners and teachers and the library as a learning organization.

For a complete analysis of 2012-13 and 2013-14 ARL statistics for the U of S versus U15 peer group, see summary reports available at http://library.usask.ca/info/assessment.php

2. Researcher, Scholar, Practitioner
We will transform our services, collections, and facilities to contribute to the success of researchers, scholars, and practitioners. As librarians we will intensify our research activity.
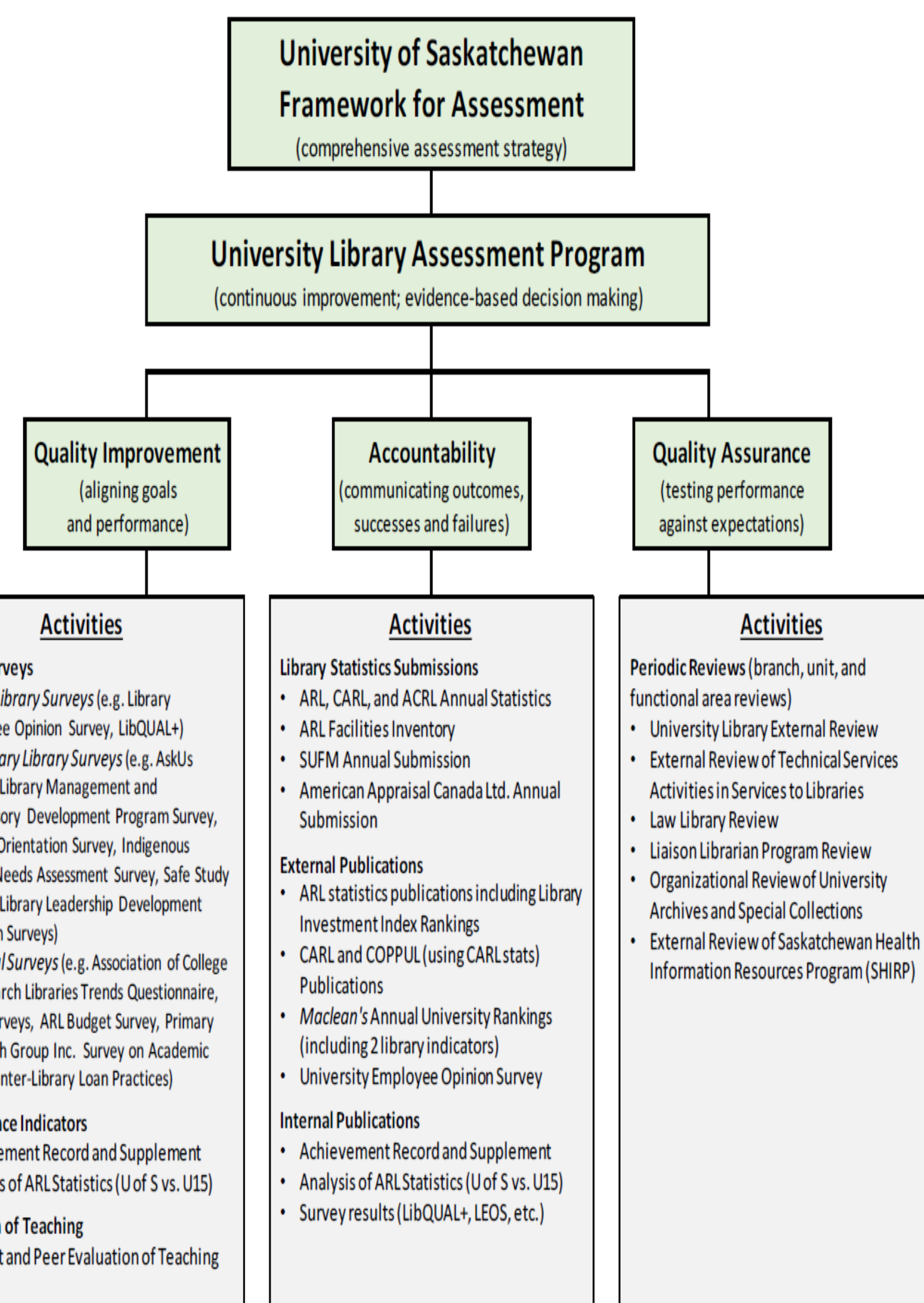

Effective July 1, 2014, the library adopted new standards for librarian ranks in the collective agreement, which collapsed four librarian ranks into three. In effect, the former Librarian I and II categories were collapsed into the single rank of Assistant Librarian. The former Librarian III and IV categories now correspond to the rank of Associate Librarian and Librarian, respectively.

University Library Assessment Program

University Library Assessment Program developed within context of strategic plan
- Reflects progress toward achievement of mission, vision, and core strategies
- Demonstrates commitment to evidence-based decision making
- Tracks progress over time and benchmarks with select group of 15 research-intensive universities in Canada (U15)

Linked to University's Framework for Assessment (3 broad purposes):
1. Quality Improvement
2. Accountability
3. Quality Assurance

University of Saskatchewan Framework for Assessment (comprehensive assessment strategy)

University Library Assessment Program (continuous improvement; evidence-based decision making)

Quality Improvement (aligning goals and performance)

Accountability (communicating outcomes, successes and failures)

Quality Assurance (testing performance against expectations)

Four elements make up the University Library Assessment Program:
1. Library Data and Statistics (see below)
2. Library Surveys (see below)
3. Performance Indicators and Benchmarking (see both side panels)
4. Other Assessment Related Activities:
   Peer and student evaluation of teaching, periodic reviews, and provision of data to colleges for accreditation purposes.
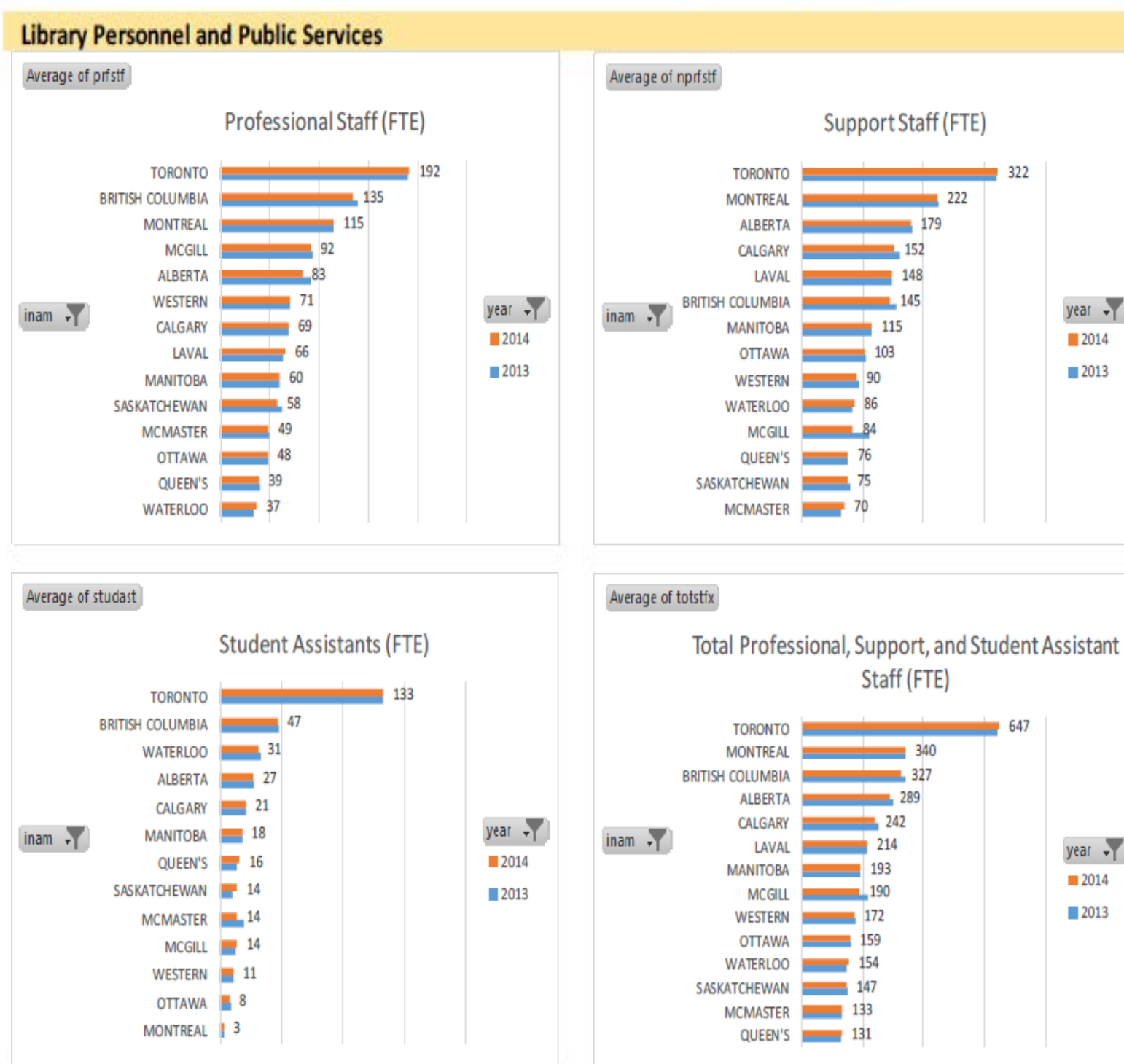
University Library Assessment Program assesses quality and effectiveness of library operations and programs.

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1. Library Data and Statistics: Annual analysis of ARL published statistics

Appendix A: ARL Indicators – U of S versus U15 average (2009-10 to 2013-14)
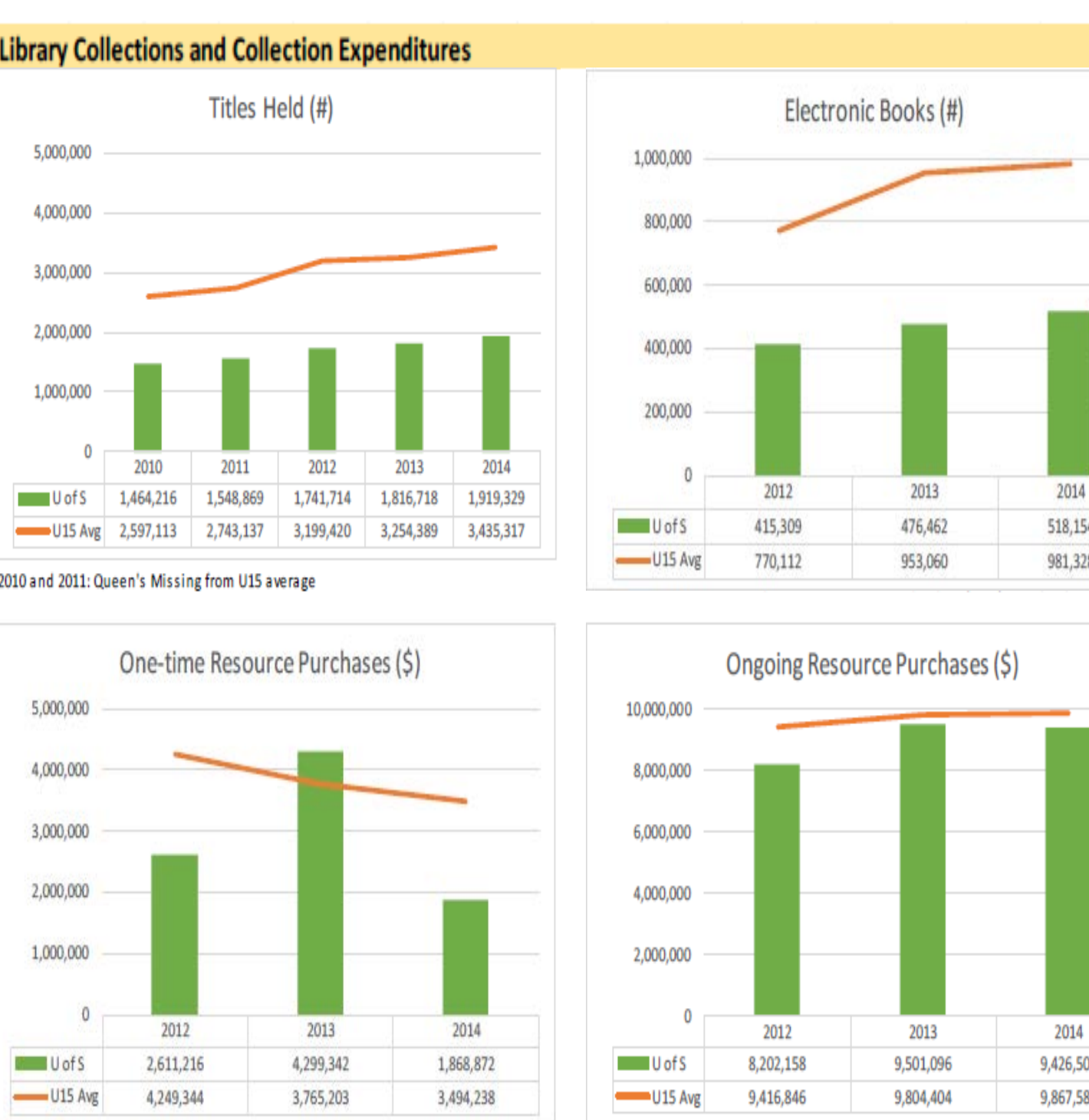
Appendix B: ARL Indicators – U of S results/ranking among U15 (2012-13 & 2013-14)

Reports based on annual ARL published statistics analyze average U15 results compared to U of S for all ARL indicators.

These reports provide key metrics and benchmarks for the U of S and demonstrate our commitment to move beyond simply submitting annual statistics to using published results to determine trends over time and benchmark to our U15 peers.

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2. Library Surveys: E.g. Library Employee Opinion Survey (LEOS)

Effective planning and coordination of library surveys involves careful design and administration of surveys, appropriate analysis and interpretation of results, identification of recommendations, and communication back to stakeholders.

Results from major surveys are tracked over time and used to determine areas for action which informs our planning.
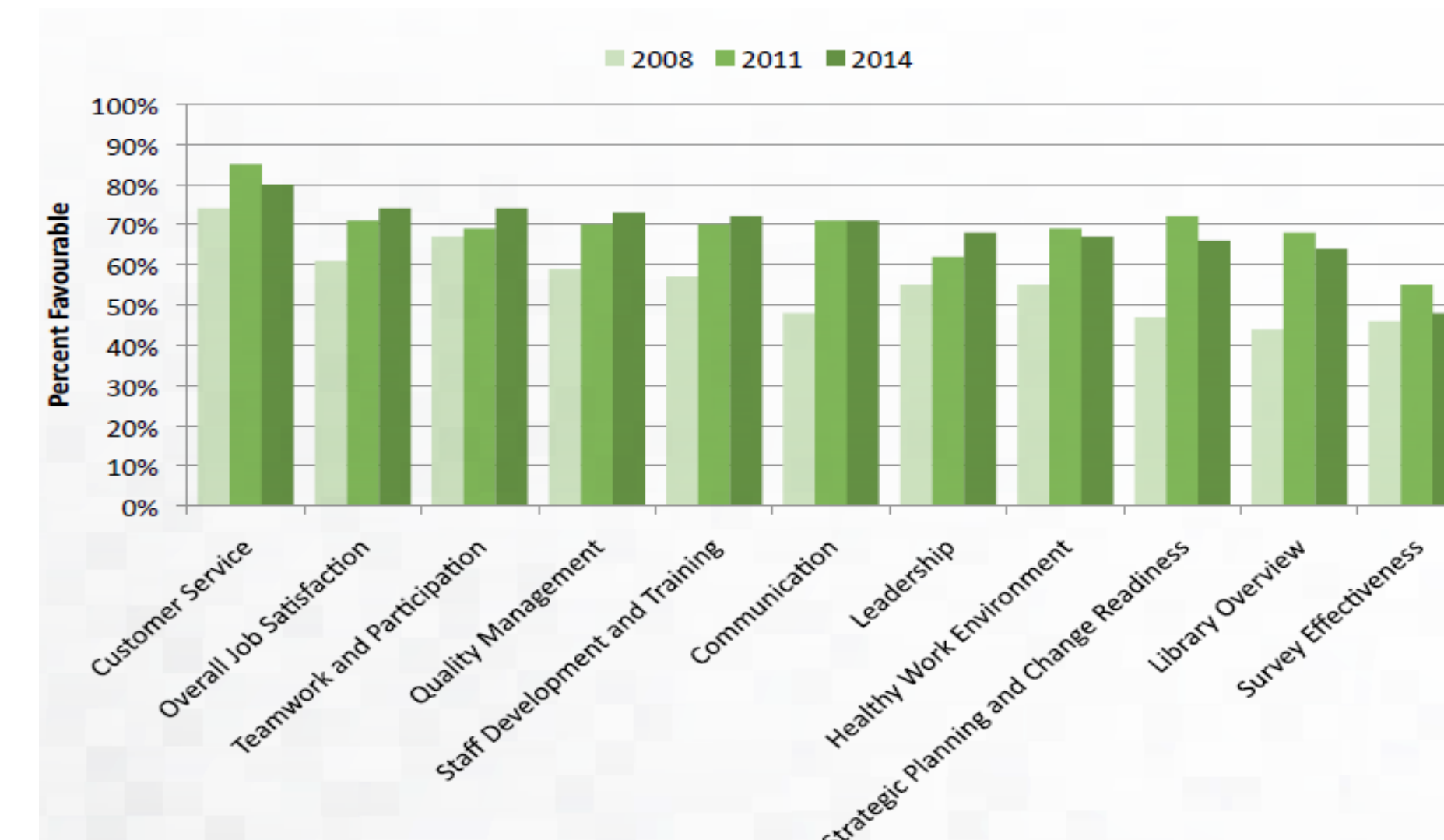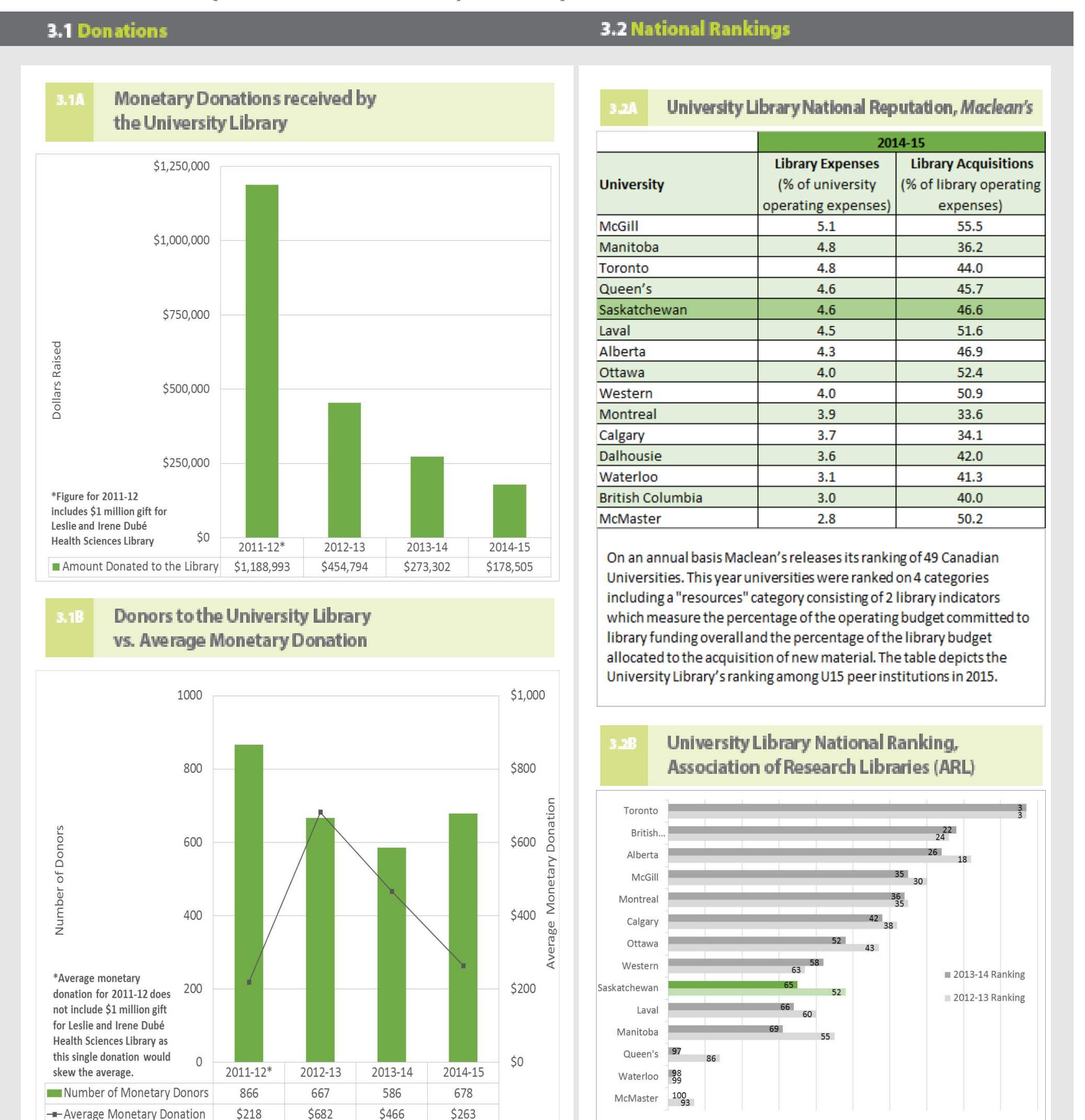

LEOS is an assessment tool that provides the library with valuable information that informs planning and the library's approach to transformative change. In 2014, University Library employees completed LEOS for the fourth time providing feedback on eleven different dimensions. This graph illustrates the University Library results for each dimension in 2008, 2011, and 2014.

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3. Performance Indicators and Benchmarking

The Achievement Record tracks progress over time and, where possible, benchmarks to a select group of fifteen research-intensive universities in Canada – "the U15".

3. Relationships and Engagement
We will build and strengthen relationships and connections within the library, within the university, and beyond.

On an annual basis Maclean's releases its ranking of 49 Canadian Universities. This year our universities were ranked on 4 categories including a "resources" category consisting of 2 library indicators which measure the percentage of the operating budget committed to library funding overall and the percentage of the library budget allocated to the acquisition of new material. The table depicts the University Library's ranking among U15 peer institutions in 2015.

4. Employee Engagement and Operational Effectiveness
We will continuously improve by developing and implementing innovative solutions to advance: our learner and teacher strategy, our researcher, scholar, and practitioner strategy, and our relationships and engagement strategy.