The Role of the Academic Library in the Enhancement of the Overall Quality of the University's Distant Teaching/Learning and Research Environment

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The University of Cyprus - UCY

1. **Established in 1992**
    1. 8 faculties
    2. 800 staff members
    3. 7.000 students

2. **Internationally recognised teaching and research university**
    1. Shanghai List 601-700
    2. Times Higher Education 501-600

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The University of Cyprus Library

The biggest Library in Cyprus – A public academic/research library

- **New Library Building since 2018**

  Learning Resource Center – "Stelios Ioannou" Library

- **Fully automated operation**

- **42 staff members**

- **Extended working hours (24/7 reading areas)**

- **Collections**

  1. 600.000 printed monographs / journal volumes

  2. 600.00 Electronic books

  3. 30.000 Electronic/printed journal subscriptions

  4. Collection of rare books and archives

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National Lockdown Period (March - May 2020)

1. **University of Cyprus direct reactions**

    1. **On-line teaching** (Zoom & MS TEAMS) – from the next day

    2. **Working from home** (each member of the staff already had a corporate laptop)

    3. **Close collaboration** among all relevant stakeholders (government, university authorities, national health authorities, specialists, etc)

    In general the new and urgent situation was hard for all, but the academic community has been able to adapt effectively swiftly

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National Lockdown period (Mar-May 2020)

UCY Library's immediate response

1. **Offering fully digital services**
   1. **Access to its existed rich** electronic/digital **collection**
   2. **Continued support to users via various communication channels (**email, chat, Teams, tel.)
   3. **Increased use of Social Media,** Fb, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
   4. **Offered awareness** on Covid-19 Pandemic
   5. **Direct adjustment** to any Government/University guidelines
2. **Increasing scientific electronic content -** free trials, OA content, new subscriptions/purchases
3. **Completing special projects –** by utilizing the "work from home" reality

Our effort was to finding the best ways to meet the needs of employees and patrons, while ensuring that the library continues to successfully perform its role

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1st Post-Lockdown Period (May-June 2020)

1. **Physical Access to the Library**

    1. **Pick-up** point for Loans upon special appointment
    2. Applying all **hygienic measures** – including checking safe passes at the library entrance
    3. **Limited physical access** to external users
    4. Use of Borrowing/Returning and Sorting **automated systems**
    5. **Reduced number of seats** – social distancing
    6. **Open bookstacks**
    7. **Open reading areas**

UCY Library most probably was one of the very few libraries in Europe which has been closed only for 3 months, and unavoidably only during the Notional Lockdown Period

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Library's Support to Teaching and Research

1. **Dedicated reading area in the Library** for attending on-line lessons
1. **ILL services** for providing documents, either to users or to other libraries internationally
2. **Increased Information Literacy seminars** - with a an impressive high response from students
3. **Special purchases** related to specific teaching or research needs
4. **Suspended fees** for material return overdue

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Libraries' contribution to the Quality of Distance Teaching and Learning - 1

Advanced quality of SERVICES

1. **User oriented web page** design

2. **Expand** existing online services

3. **Instructions** in written and video format for users

4. **New remote services** provision, e.g. OA & DM Publishing

Advanced quality of CONTENT

1. Enhance digital teaching with **embedded Information Literacy Programmes** "Embedded Librarian"

2. **Digital Bibliographic Reference** Services and

3. **In-Depth research** support

4. **Digitalizing printed collection** upon request & copyrights

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Libraries' contribution to the Quality of Distance Teaching and Learning - 2

Advanced TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

1. **Integrated library systems** (BlackBoard, MOODLE, etc.)

Continuing PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. **ICT skills** and familiarity with new digital tools
2. **Involved in online** learning environments and tools
3. **Virtual professional** meeting skills
4. **Willingness to participate** and become part of the new solutions
5. **Inspiration and creativity** for new solutions

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Lessons Learned by Library Leadership

1. **Proactiveness and prompt actions** - Need to collaborate for a university contingency plan development
2. **Prioritizing and on going evaluation** of priorities
3. **Looking for opportunities** during or after a crisis
4. **Collaborations and sharing experiences** internally/externally
5. **Clear, direct and active communication**
6. **Strong on-line Library presence** for the community
7. **Accept the reality** and be positive
8. Building **resilience**
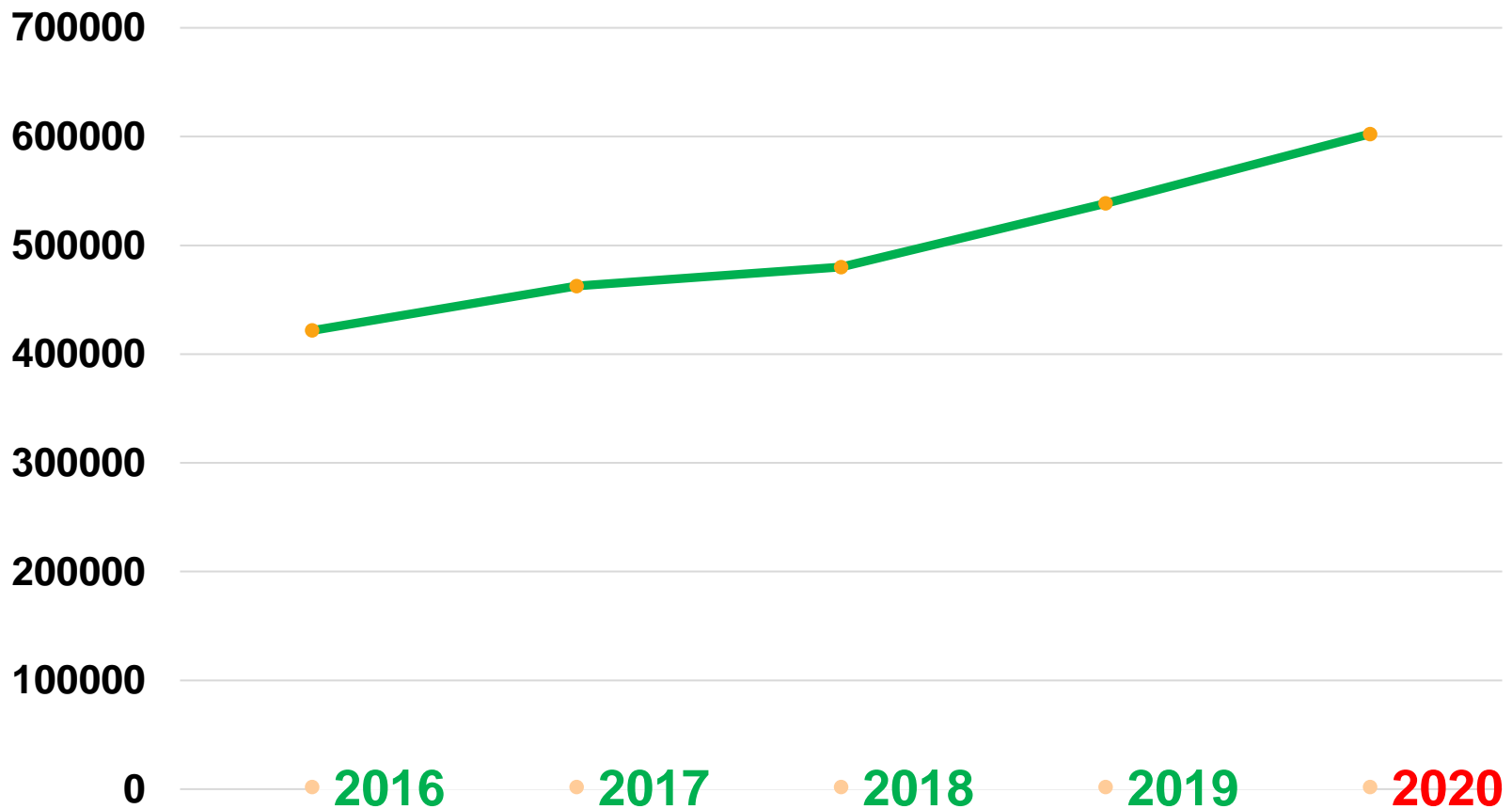
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THANK YOU!

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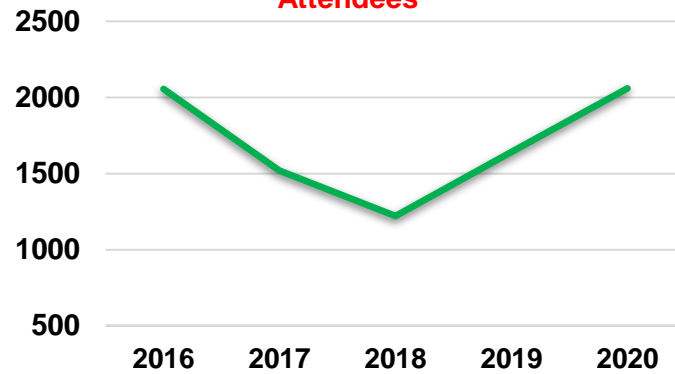University of Cyprus Library
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ELECTRONIC BOOKS COLLECTION

INFORMATION LITERACY
Attendees

LIBRARY VISITS