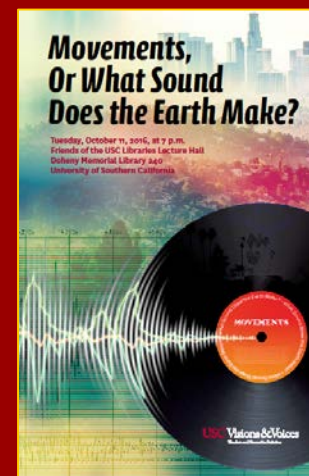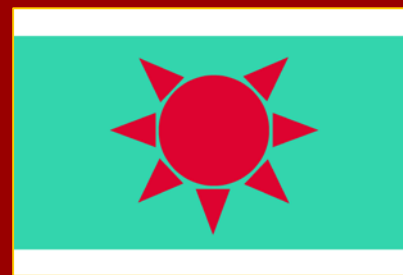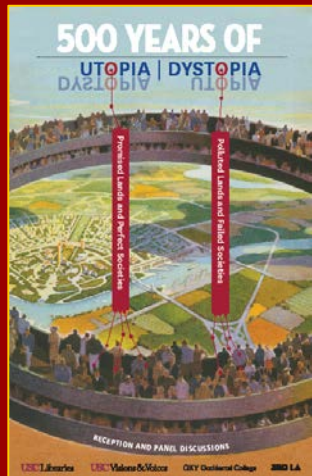# Polymathy, Utopia, and Data Art
In Support of USC's Strategic Vision   PRRLA 2016 Melbourne

Catherine Quinlan
Dean of the USC Libraries

Hugh McHarg
Associate Dean for Programs and Planning

Outline

PRRLA theme: From vision to reality—libraries as strategic assets for research, teaching, and learning

Particularly relevant sub-themes:

Collaborations related to improving teaching and learning

External initiatives aimed at helping institutions achieve strategic visions

1. Strategy and organization   Catherine Quinlan

2. Programs and impact   Hugh McHarg

Timing and Context

Confluence of events:

- New provost with new priorities

  - Access and opportunity

  - The value of a USC education

  - Becoming truly global

  - Intractable challenges and transdisciplinary solutions

Timing and Context

Confluence of events :

- Administrative review of the libraries

- Association of College and Research Libraries Framework for Information Literacy

  - Authority is constructed and contextual
  - Information creation as a process
  - Information has value

  - Research as inquiry
  - Scholarship as conversation
  - Searching as strategic exploration

Strategic Planning

2011 values

- Service Excellence
- Integrity
- Scholarly Inquiry
- Innovation
- Effective Communication
- Social Responsibility
- Library as Place

2016 values

- **Inquiry**. We make possible consequential discoveries, creative pursuits, and access to knowledge as a matter of intellectual and social responsibility.
- **Ingenuity**. Through experimentation and informed risk-taking, we make tangible advancements and solve substantive problems.
- **Integrity**. We act with professionalism, accountability, transparency, and respect for diversity of peoples, ideas, and ways of knowing.
- **Inclusiveness**. We work with kindness, cultural awareness, and a collaborative impulse to develop increasingly meaningful sites of reflection and engagement with and for our community.

Strategic Planning

2016 thematic goals

- Exceptional, integrated, and consequential engagement with intellectual and creative communities

- Enterprising, focused, and inspiring leadership on campus, locally, regionally, and globally

- Sustainable, meaningful, and focused capacity for individual and organizational achievement
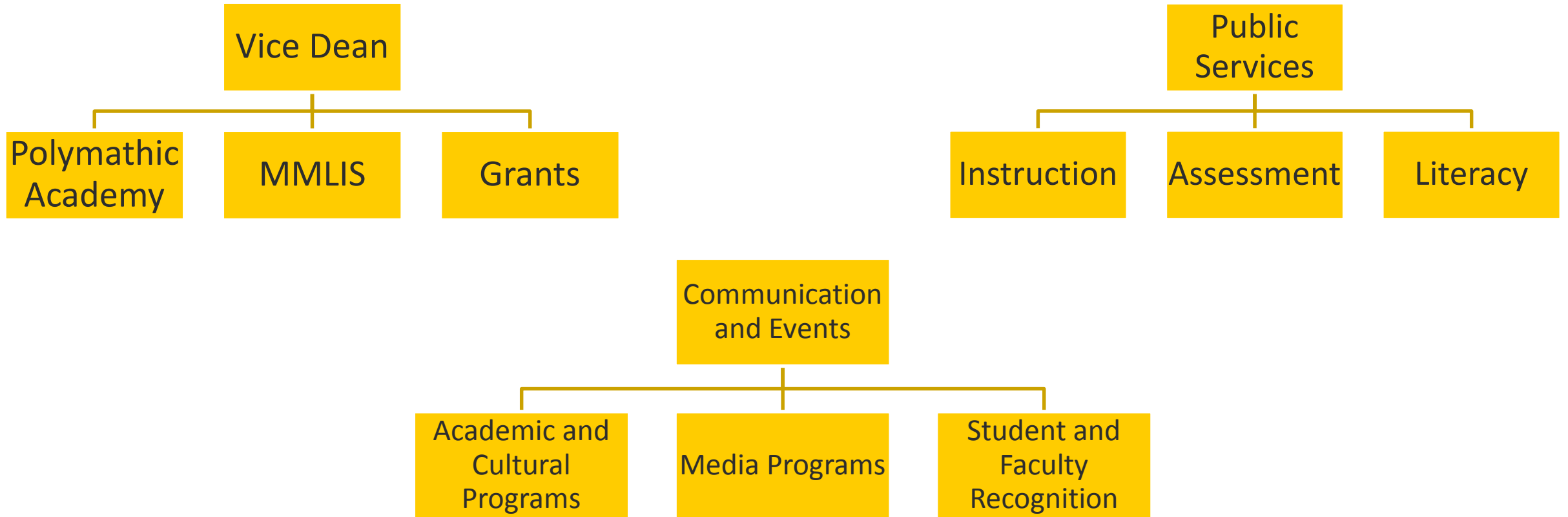
USC Libraries Center for Advanced Study

- The history and culture of Los Angeles, California, and the American West

- Film, music, and popular culture, particularly motion picture and television heritage

- Holocaust, genocide studies, and exile studies

- LGBTQ studies

- East Asian history and culture, and its influence in North America
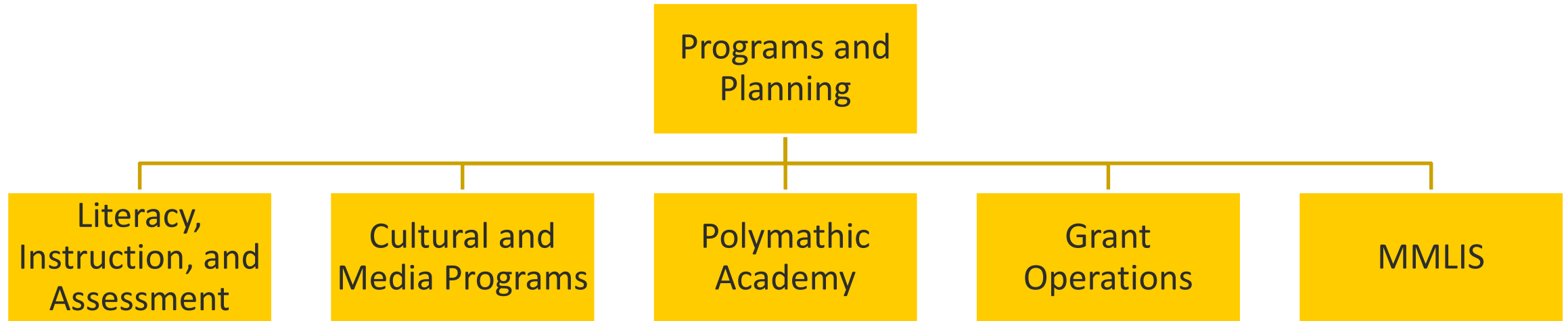
Selected Goals of the Reorganization

- Unify operations with organization-wide impact in a single department

- Integrate instruction and information literacy principles throughout library programs

- Apply current thinking on multiple literacies and assessment strategies

- More deeply integrate library instruction into curricular programs

- Better support the provost's priorities

Before

Vice Dean
- Polymathic Academy
- MMLIS
- Grants

Public Services
- Instruction
- Assessment
- Literacy

Communication and Events
- Academic and Cultural Programs
- Media Programs
- Student and Faculty Recognition

After

Programs and Planning
- Literacy, Instruction, and Assessment
- Cultural and Media Programs
- Polymathic Academy
- Grant Operations
- MMLIS

Programming as Unifying Platform

- Provost's priorities—access and opportunity
  - Freshman, first-generation college attendees, academic achievement recognition programs
- Unique contribution of the library
  - Specialists in literacy and instructional design; academic and public programs; media programs
- Demonstrable, promotable, and scalable
  - Reproducible in the schools; contributes to high-profile programs as well as classroom work

Provost's Priorities: Access and Opportunity

- First-generation university students: USC Bovard Scholars and the libraries

We prepare our scholars to:

Gain admission to top-tier universities

Navigate the complex admissions and financial aid process

Explore potential careers and ignite professional passions

Connect occupational goals to academic pursuits

Feel at home on a college campus through a three-week, immersive residential experience on USC's campus

Learn test-taking strategies and boost their entrance exam scores

Understand tools and resources available on a college campus that support success.
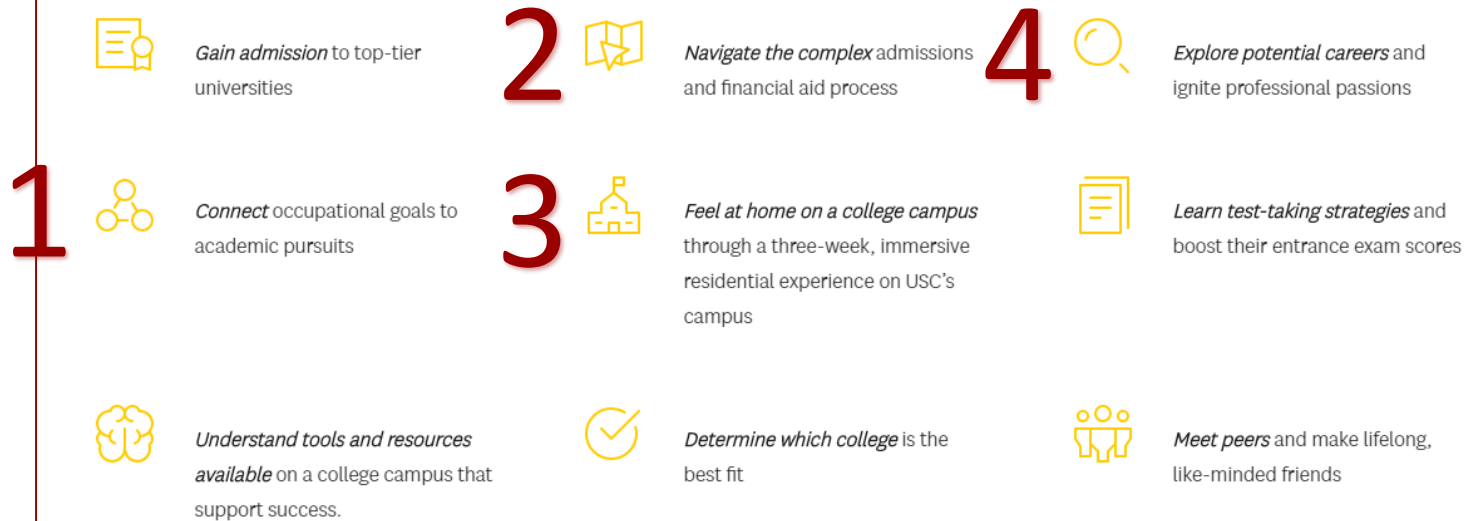
Determine which college is the best fit

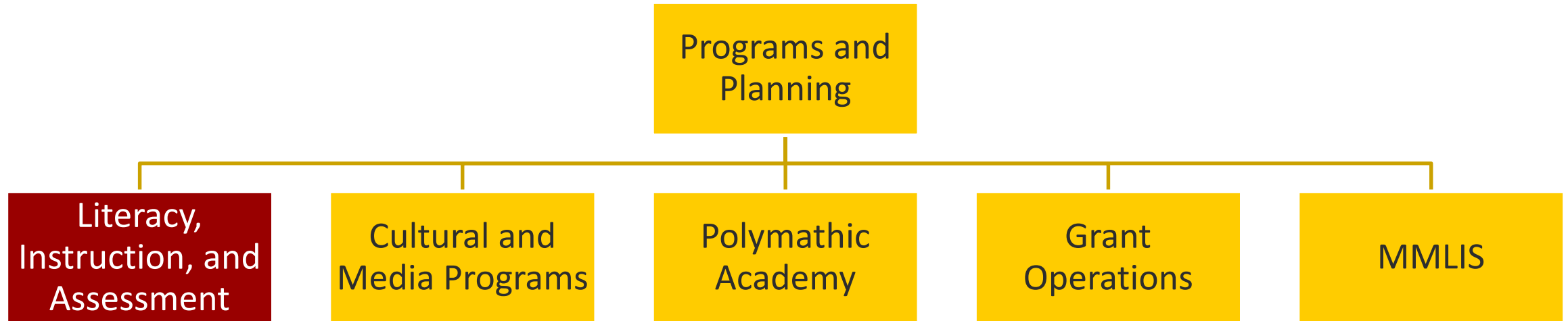*Meet peers* and make lifelong, like-minded friends

Provost's Priorities: Access and Opportunity

- First-generation university students: USC Bovard Scholars and the libraries
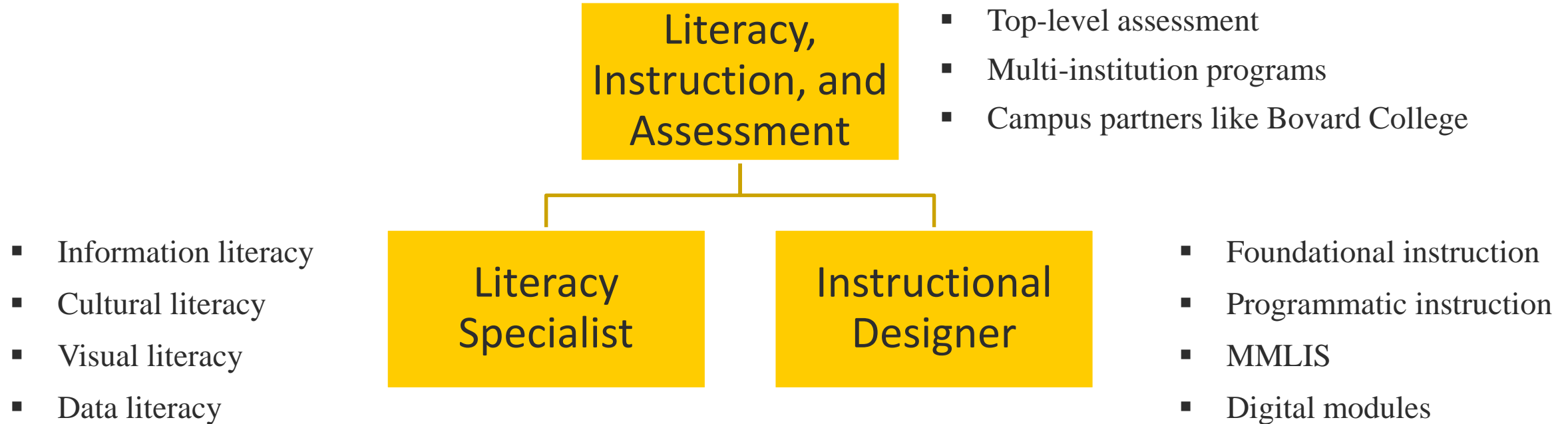
Unique Contribution of the Library

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                        Programs and
                          Planning
           ┌────────────────┼──────────────┬──────────────┐
  Literacy,        Cultural and      Polymathic        Grant
Instruction, and   Media Programs     Academy        Operations      MMLIS
 Assessment
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Unique Contribution of the Library

Literacy, Instruction, and Assessment

- Top-level assessment
- Multi-institution programs
- Campus partners like Bovard College

Literacy Specialist

- Information literacy
- Cultural literacy
- Visual literacy
- Data literacy

Instructional Designer

- Foundational instruction
- Programmatic instruction
- MMLIS
- Digital modules

Unique Contribution of the Library

- General education curriculum modules

  - Humanistic inquiry, social analysis, citizenship in a diverse world

- Grants to faculty in support of collaborative assignment and syllabus design

- Assessment attached to literacy outcomes and ACRL framework—not just numbers of students

- Addresses a faculty-identified need: large percentage say students need more help determining information authority

Provost's Priorities: Access and Opportunity
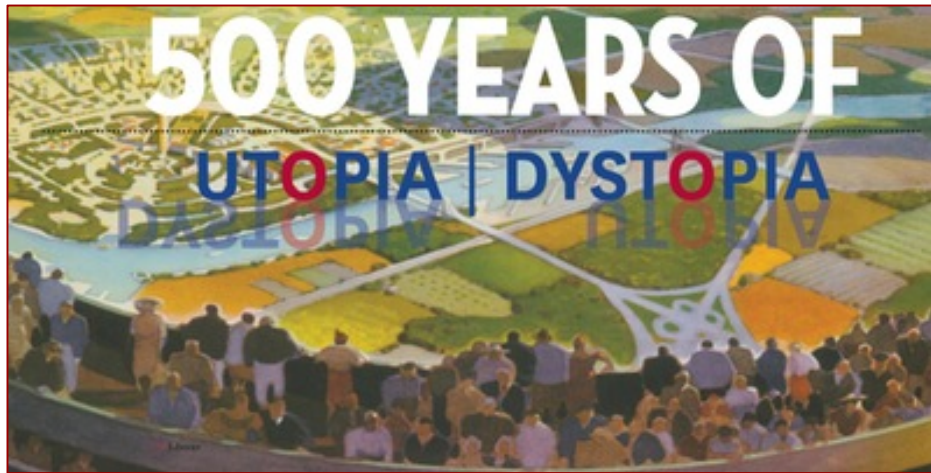
- Freshmen: 500 Years of *Utopia*

Provost's Priorities: Access and Opportunity

- Freshmen: 500 Years of *Utopia*
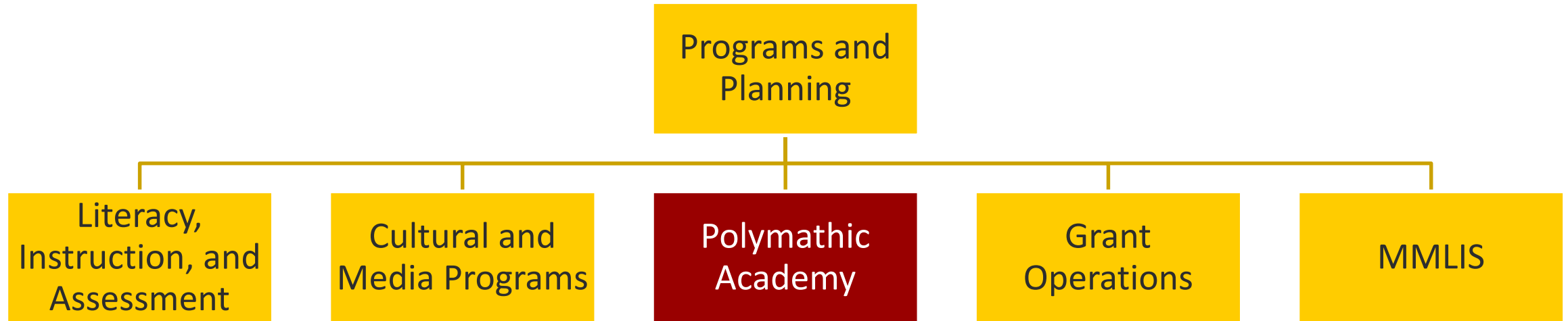
Unique Contribution of the Library

- Informs academic and public programming
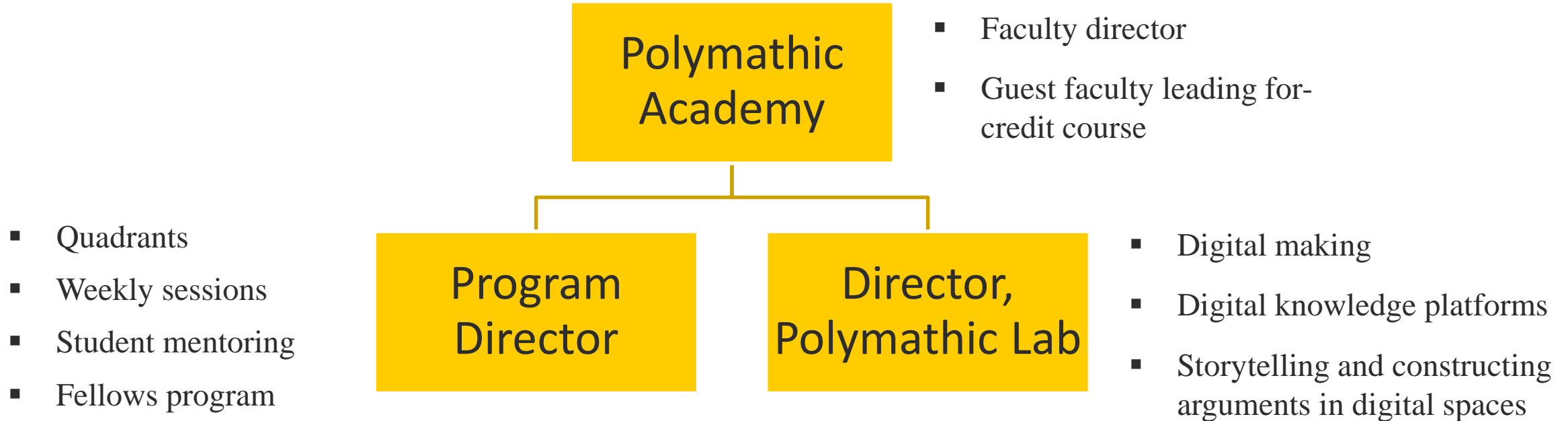- Utopia—exhibition documents student work and links to our collections

- Evolution of utopia as place, idea, and practice
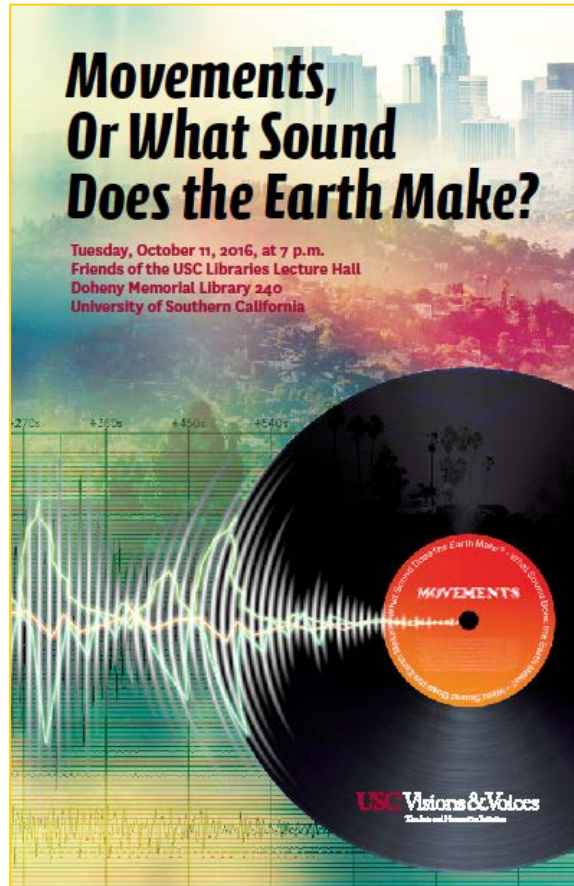- Perspectives of governance, design, and creative representation
- Grant-funded programs

Harman Academy for Polymathic Study

Harman Academy for Polymathic Study

- Faculty director
- Guest faculty leading for-credit course

Polymathic Academy

- Quadrants
- Weekly sessions
- Student mentoring
- Fellows program

Program Director

Director, Polymathic Lab

- Digital making
- Digital knowledge platforms
- Storytelling and constructing arguments in digital spaces

Data + Art: What Sound Does the Earth Make?

- An experiment in sonifying data

- USC music and communication faculty

- USC geophysicists

- United States Geological Survey scientists

- https://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/music/

Questions