3.8.1

The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission.
(Learning/information resources)

USC provides access to several physical library facilities: eight through the University Libraries, a law library, a medical library, and four located on the regional campuses. Since the Compliance Certification Report was compiled, the Hollings Special Collections Library has been completed. The main library, the Thomas Cooper Library, is open to the university community 24/7. An examination of the websites of these libraries provides evidence that the facilities are supporting a range of services appropriate for a research institution, for specific disciplines/professions, or for a regional campus.

In addition to the assistance provided in the physical facilities, users have virtual access to numerous services: an online catalog; the ability to make requests, holds, and renewals for collection resources; the option to page materials; the opportunity to consult with reference personnel (see 3.8.2 for a more detailed summary of these services); delivery to faculty; and interlibrary loan. Distance education students have comparable access to collections and services to that available to students on campus. The Libraries plays an active role in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), ASERL (Association of Southeastern Libraries), and PASCAL (Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries)-an involvement that helps maintain an awareness of current trends in service delivery.

The Libraries' collection stands at more than 3.2 million volumes and approximately 29,500 serial titles; the library also serves as a regional depository for federal government documents. The Libraries' special collections are particularly noteworthy, and an active digitization program is in place to make portions of the collection more accessible (see 2.9 for a more detailed summary of collections).

The Libraries has administered the ARL LibQUAL survey several times and consults frequently with faculty about collections and instructional services. Users are encouraged to make suggestions about the library; examples of changes instituted as a result of users' suggestions include 24/7 hours, the acquisition of more laptops for the laptop loan service, and the establishment of quiet zones within facilities. The Libraries has formed an Assessment Information Team and consulted with experts from ARL about how best to structure assessment efforts. An assessment plan is now in place to guide future efforts.

The *Blueprint for Service Excellence at* USC refers to the fact that heavy use of the facilities inevitably results in wear and tear. Statistics provide evidence that the facilities are heavily used. Future priorities for the Libraries involve dedicating funds for routine maintenance, planning a renovation of the main library, building more storage space at the annex, and establishing additional areas to foster collaborative learning environments.