SUMMARY OF THE ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATION TIME SURVEY
ADMINISTERED BY THE RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

As a result of an inquiry about the availability of research funding for AP-led research to the RPC in the spring of 2013, the RPC discussed the question with the Executive Committee and was tasked with issuing a survey to determine what the actual need was and to return to EC with recommendations. The goals of the survey were to determine how many APs were using Investigation Time, the products of those endeavors, and what support was already in place versus the perceived additional needs. The resulting survey was posted from November 8 – 22, 2013. An invitation to participate was sent out to 66 academic professionals, whose NetIDs were provided by Library Human Resources. Eighteen (18) responses were collected, resulting in a response rate of 27%.

In summary, the RPC was surprised that several APs noted that they had not previously known about investigation time, which indicates a need for better communications and employee orientation (both APs and their supervisors). However, the majority of respondents reported using Investigation Time and even more plan to use it in the future, often resulting in academic publications/presentations. Most respondents would appreciate more support for their research with the most need for additional funding for travel and training beyond what is already provided by the Library. Several did note using the Academic Professional Development Fund as an additional funding resource, while others noted that they were fortunate to get departmental funding and support within their unit. What the results of the survey do not illuminate, unfortunately, are how many APs are using investigation time to promote unit/departmental goals versus individual research endeavors.

The goal of Investigation Time is different than that of faculty research, and unlike faculty research, it is not a requirement for retention. Investigation Time is intended to support Academic Professionals' efforts to further their professional expertise through training, to initiate a project that might or might not result in a practical application to their unit or the overall library organization, or through research. Further, the Investigation Time guideline specifies that the amount of time someone devotes to this effort can range between 5-10%, and it needs to be determined in consultation with the individual's supervisor. While the RPC notes that not all Academic Professionals are required to do research, the products of AP research have made substantive impact on the LIS field, and have been of practical value to Library programs and services. From that standpoint, RPC feels it is important for the Library to provide support for AP research activities.

Recommendations:

Based on the responses to the survey, the RPC believes AP research enriches the organization and the field and that a several steps should be considered:

- Create a webpage for resources for APs in the Library, pointing them to the Guidelines for Investigation Time, the Academic Professional Development Fund, and other resources specifically directed at APs. This could be linked off of the RPC webpage and updated by the committee.
- Add a statement regarding investigation time on all new AP job descriptions. Suggested language is as follows, "Academic Professional employees are encouraged to use "investigation time" to pursue areas of interest, not directly in support of an immediate program need, in accordance with

the University Library's policy on Investigation Time for Academic Professional Employees <http://www.library.illinois.edu/administration/human/resources/investigationtime.html>. Some investigations originating in this manner may evolve into regular work assignments or production activities."

- Either within or outside of RPC oversight, money should be allocated to fund applications for investigation time projects in need of external funding (exact parameters of what could be funded to be determined by the EC or RPC or other group), we recommend a startup allocation of $10,000 to pilot this initiative successfully. If RPC is selected to administer this, we suggest that an AP be added to the RPC membership.
- Encourage mentoring relationships, partnerships, and networking between APs and/or between APs and faculty by exploring the creation of separate group or further integrating APs into an existing research support group.

A summary of the complete responses is provided, below.

Question 1: Have you or do you presently carry out *Investigation Time* (as defined by the Guidelines for Investigation Time, http://www.library.illinois.edu/export/committee/exec/supplement/S2009-2010/Guideline_for_Investigation_Time_-_Generalized_and_Revised_2.doc) as part of your appointment?

I have used *Investigation Time* in the past, but I am not currently using it.	11%
I am currently using *Investigation Time* for the first time.	17%
I have used *Investigation Time* in the past, and I am currently using it.	**39%**
I have not used *Investigation Time* in the past, nor do I currently	28%

Question 2: Do you plan to or would you like to carry out investigation time, as defined above, in the future?

Yes	**83%**
No	6%
Not applicable	6%

Question 3: Do you or will you use investigation time for research with a goal of publication or presentation (or in other ways adding to the broader knowledge of the profession?)

I have either published or made a conference presentation based on my Investigation Time research, and I intend to do so in the future.	**39%**
I have not published or made a conference presentation based on my Investigation Time research, but I intend to do so in the future.	28%
I have not published or made a conference presentation based on my Investigation Time research, and I do not intend to do so in the future.	17%

Not applicable   11%

Question 4: What sources of research support and funding do you have now, or have you obtained in the past 5 years? (open ended response, 12 responses)

Academic Professional Development Fund (Campus) (4) 33%
My Library unit/department/supervisor (3) 25%
Federal Grant Funding (2) 17%
Library Innovation Grant (1) 8%

Question 5: Does your research require support beyond the resources available to you in your professional role?

Yes	**67%**
No	11%
Not applicable	17%

Question 6: If yes, what types of additional support do you require to carry out research that result in publication and/or presentations at professional conferences?

Travel funding	**44%**
Additional released time beyond the "up to 10%" Investigation time	**44%**
Training in research approaches	**44%**
Materials/Technology	39%
Funding for staff to help carry out research	28%
Not applicable	17%
Other	4 responses

- Increased staffing in the unit to cover work I won't be able to perform while investigating.
- Mentoring from or partnering with faculty or others already engaged in research projects
- Money for training above what I am currently allocated.
- Information on publications or helpful resources to newbies

Question 7: What would that added resource(s) enable you to do?

Many of the responses to this question actually belied more of a need for professional development than research support, though the lines between the two are often blurred (open-ended response, 11 responses)

Attend conferences (4) 36%
Professional development/workshop attendance (4) 36%

Generally be more productive with research/publishing/grants/standards output (3) 27%
Travel to other venues for in-person research (2) 18%
Staff support for release time (2) 18%
Publication assistance (editing, etc) (1) 9%
Staff support for research assistance (1) 9%
Printing handouts/poster s (1) 9%

Question 8: Any additional comments or thoughts you would like to add for our consideration? (open ended response, 10 responses)

Appreciation for having travel and research support (3) 30%
Unclear what investigation time is and how to use it (3) 30%
Need for research resources (website or other) (2) 20%
Need for training on statistics/data mining (1) 10%
Need more professional development support, not research for publication (1) 10%
Need funds to purchase study materials and pay for certification exams (1) 10%
Would like research to be more integrated into daily work (1) 10%
Need more than 10% allocation (1) 10%