Academic Librarianship

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Abstract
Academic librarianship is a fast-changing profession that reflects the transformation of academic libraries in the recent past. Although the primary responsibility of supporting the parent institution's teaching, learning, and research mission remains the same, the expertise and skills needed by academic librarians, their work environments, and the actual work they do have all undergone great changes. This entry will discuss the profession of academic librarianship and its history, literature, and associations and will provide information about academic librarians and their demographics, education, work responsibilities, work environments, and careers.

INTRODUCTION

Academic librarianship is the profession practiced by those working in libraries associated with institutions of higher education (also referred to as postsecondary or tertiary educational institutions) of various types and levels including community, technical and liberal arts colleges, universities, and professional schools. The primary responsibility of academic librarians is to support the teaching, learning, and research efforts of the parent institution's faculty and students. They fulfill this mission by working with faculty, staff, and students in finding the information they need and by selecting, acquiring, organizing, providing access to, and preserving the library's collection. In addition, some academic libraries, especially in publicly supported institutions, include service to the community as a part of their mission, and they provide at least limited services to individuals not formally affiliated with the institution.

HISTORY

Although universities have been in existence for nearly a 1000 years and most had libraries of some sort from early in their history, the medieval university predated the invention of the printing press, and early academic libraries were very small. Learning was by rote, and students had little need to consult materials in a library. During most of the early history of academic librarianship, the individuals in charge of these libraries were usually not full-time librarians, but scholars and bibliophiles who were given responsibility for the library and its contents as a part of their academic duties.

It was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that librarianship began to develop as a distinct profession with the establishment of professional organizations and the creation of specialized education for individuals who intended to become librarians. In the United States, this growth in the profession paralleled an increase in the number of libraries. After the American Civil War (1861–1865), there was an expansion of higher education resulting from the passage of the Morrill Act, which created the land grant universities and the influence of the German research universities, which led to the establishment of new research-based universities such as Johns Hopkins. Higher education began to change from a system focused primarily on the collegiate model of education of undergraduates to a university-based model where research was increasingly important. Universities established numerous graduate programs including those leading to the Ph.D. degree; in addition, many began specialized programs to educate professionals such as doctors and lawyers. As a result, academic libraries became a more integral part of higher education.

Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, higher education became increasingly inclusive and there were more women and minorities enrolled as students. However, it was not until the last half of the twentieth century that higher education in the United States experienced a phenomenal expansion in the number of students. The impact of the GI bill in the 1940s and the arrival of the Baby Boom generation to college beginning in the 1960s resulted in a massive enrollment growth that completely transformed the higher education landscape in the United States. In addition, the burgeoning of public two year junior or community colleges in the 1970s allowed even students who were financially or academically unable to attend four-year institutions to have access to higher education. The percentage of 18–24 years

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olds enrolled in institutions of higher education went from less than 10% in 1939 to over 40% in 1975.[1] This rapid expansion in higher education resulted in an increasing need for more academic librarians.

As a result of the information technology revolution that began in libraries in the 1970s academic libraries have undergone vast alterations, and in developed countries, most have made the transition from being repositories of print-based collections to serving as gateways to information and materials from any location across the world. As libraries have been transformed, so too have academic librarians who need to possess new expertise and skills to work in the complex, multifaceted, modern academic library. Academic librarians in the past worked with patrons and largely print-based collections housed within the confines of the library building. Today's academic librarians work with increasingly electronic-based collections, and they provide assistance to both patrons who come into the libraries and those who access the library's collections from afar. Academic librarians have moved from being keepers of collections to serving as links between individuals who need information and the vast resources of knowledge available in the new digital environment.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

Although academic libraries have embraced the new technologies, they are still highly labor-intensive organizations. Most of them devote over 50% of their budgets to personnel costs. In the United States, individuals who work in academic libraries are usually classified into two broad categories: Professional librarians are those librarians who have an ALA (American Libraries Association) accredited master's (M.L.S., M.L.I.S., or M.I.S.) degree from a library and information science (LIS) graduate program or an equivalent degree; employees without that credential are considered to be paraprofessional or support staff. According to the latest data,[2] approximately 100,000 people work in academic libraries in the United States. Of that number, 25,152 are professional librarians and the rest are paraprofessional or support staff. These individuals work in over 3500 institutions of higher education.

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP

No one source provides readily accessible statistics on academic libraries or librarians worldwide. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the International Federation of Library Associations have partnered to produce a survey containing information about libraries, but its results will not be available until 2008.[3] Although there are over 17,000 institutions of higher education across the world,[4] there do not appear to be any statistics that reveal how many academic librarians work in the libraries associated with these institutions. However, it is clear that as a result of the growing importance of the knowledge economy to national economies and development, there has been a growing interest in higher education and an attempt to improve its quality in nations all over the world. In an increasing number of countries, higher education has moved from being only for the elites and is now available to a much larger percentage of the population. In 2005, China graduated twice as many university graduates as the United States.[5] There are over 269,000 students enrolled at the National Autonomous University in Mexico, over 300,000 at the University of Delhi, and over 1 million at Anadolu University in Turkey.

Globalization has had a major impact on institutions of higher education, especially on the major research universities, which are now much homogenous than they were previously. There is an increased use of the English language for both teaching and research in universities around the world. The majority of scholarly publications are written in English. The universities in the European Union countries are "harmonizing" to establish common patterns of degree structures and course credits. Many universities send their faculty and students to work and study in other countries. Universities everywhere are looking to global "best practices" as they transform to prepare their graduates to meet the demands of the knowledge economy. Twenty-first century institutions of higher education, especially those that aspire to world-class status, will likely continue to grow more alike as the forces of globalization lead to standardizing curricula and degrees.[6]

Inevitably, academic libraries will change in response to the changes in their parent institutions, and perhaps over time they too will become more standardized. However, now, there are still many differences among academic libraries throughout the world. Because various countries have differences in the development and emphases of their institutions of higher education, there are still national differences in both those institutions and their libraries. Academic libraries vary in the types of staff they employ, in the services they offer, and in the roles they play within their parent institutions. Academic libraries across the world are making great leaps in providing materials and services to meet the needs of today's scholars, and they share many common approaches to librarianship. In many countries, however, smaller academic libraries in particular have not had the resources to modernize and provide access to the rapidly expanding electronic resources that are the lifeblood of the modern research library. The approach to librarianship found in this type of institution is very different than would be found in academic libraries that have more funding and access to modern technology. This type of library may also be innovating, but within the constraints of limited budgets and staff. Thus, despite the growing

similarity of institutions of higher education, academic librarians throughout the world still differ in the education they receive, the work they do, and their status within institutions of higher education. It is impossible to describe the state of academic librarianship throughout the world in a brief encyclopedia entry. As a result, this entry will focus primarily on academic librarianship within the United States, but will attempt to provide an international perspective when possible.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

As a group, academic librarians have some distinct demographic characteristics. The majority of academic librarians throughout the world are female. In the United States, in 2006, women comprised 84.2% of all librarians. The percentage of women in academic librarianship is lower than in the profession as a whole. For instance, in research libraries, 62.8% of the professional librarians are female. Like many other professions, academic librarianship is not as racially diversified as the U.S. population. In the large U.S. research universities that belong to the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), only 13.6% of the professional staff is nonwhite. The ARL professional staff is composed of 6% Asian/Pacific Islanders, 4.7% blacks or African-Americans, 2.67%, Latinos or Hispanics, and 0.3% American Indian/Alaskan natives.[7] In an attempt to increase the number of minorities in libraries, both libraries and LIS schools have tried a number of approaches. Some academic libraries have introduced undergraduate internship programs designed to bring more minorities into the profession. Others have established minority residency programs to attract new M.L.S. graduates. In addition, many libraries have instituted diversity plans to coordinate their efforts to produce a more varied workforce. LIS schools have attempted to diversify their enrollment by more active minority recruitment efforts and by offering special scholarships. The American Library Association has instituted the Spectrum Initiative to provide scholarships to African-American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American/Alaskan Native students in LIS graduate programs.

As a whole, academic librarians are older than the members of most other professions. The median age of U.S. librarians is 47, and 25% of today's librarians will be at least 65 by 2009; 58% by 2019. This statistic reflects the aging of the large cohort of librarians hired during the rapid growth of universities during the 1960s, the slower growth in higher education since that time, and the increasing use of paraprofessionals who now perform many of the tasks once assigned to professional librarians. It also indicates that for many, librarianship is a second profession, and new entrants to the field are usually older than entrants to most other professions.

Recently there has been a great deal of concern in the U.S. library world about the large number of librarians who are expected to retire within the next few years. The expected wave of retirements has generated interest in increasing the recruitment of new librarians to the field. There has been special interest in recruiting librarians who would bring greater diversity to the profession and who would have the needed skill sets to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century academic library. The U.S. federal government's Institution of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has provided federal funding to help recruit the next generation of librarians by increasing the number of students enrolled in accredited LIS programs. However, in librarianship as in all professions, workforce issues are complex and it is almost impossible to balance the number of openings with the number of new librarians entering the field. To date, the large shortage of librarians that had been anticipated has not occurred.

EDUCATION FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP

Preparation for working in early academic libraries was done through apprenticeship. Formal education for academic librarians is a relatively recent innovation. Now in most countries, academic librarians are prepared for the profession in specialized programs located in universities. The first formal education for professional librarianship in the United States began in 1887 at Columbia College. This program like so much else in U.S. librarianship was begun by Melvil Dewey.

Although in many countries education for academic librarianship is at the undergraduate level, since the 1950s, the terminal professional degree in librarianship in the United States has been a master's degree. Individuals, who wish to work in academic libraries as professionals, typically complete a one or two year master's degree from a program accredited by the ALA. These programs are located in nearly 60 universities in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. Students preparing for academic librarianship usually take at least some of the traditional courses in librarianship including cataloging, reference, collection development, and management. In addition, almost all take courses relating to information technology and the creation and use of electronic materials. Most of them also take at least one course that covers the environment of academic librarianship and higher education.

Some students begin preparing for a career in academic librarianship immediately after finishing their undergraduate programs, but for many others the pursuit of an M.L.S. degree comes after an initial period working in another profession. Many students enter the programs with other advanced degrees, including additional master, Ph.D., and professional degrees such as JDs. Some students enroll in the dual-degree programs offered by

many schools that combine LIS and another area such as music, art, law, or business and thus graduate with two master's degrees. Although very few libraries require more education than the M.L.S. degree for beginning librarians, there are a few libraries that do require a second master's degree for entry-level professionals and more that require librarians to acquire another master's degree within a set time period. In almost all cases, subject master's degrees and Ph.D. degrees are advantageous for academic librarians since these degrees give them not only more expertise to work with specific subject area materials but also provide more credibility for working with faculty who almost always have advanced degrees.

Although the ALA accredited M.L.S. degree is the most commonly accepted degree for librarians in the United States, many academic libraries also hire people with other specialized graduate degrees in areas such as computer science or law and these individuals are often considered "professionals" also. In most academic libraries from 50% to 75% of the employees are paraprofessionals or support staff. The education of these staff members varies greatly even within a single institution. Uniformly, members of the support staff have secondary educations, but many individuals working in these positions have bachelor's degrees and sometimes graduate degrees. Academic libraries have been very fortunate in being able to attract talented individuals to work in paraprofessional or support roles.

THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

Academic librarianship is seen as an attractive career choice for many because it is located within institutions of higher education, it provides a job with a variety of types of tasks and relative flexibility and it welcomes individuals from a wide array of backgrounds who are often able to utilize prior degrees and experiences in a new setting.

Within limits, professional academic librarians are allowed a great deal of autonomy within their jobs. In the past, most academic libraries were organized in a traditional hierarchical structure. The normal management style was authoritarian with orders being passed down from above using the "chain of command," and employees were expected to carry out the tasks demanded of them. Today, academic library directors both in the United States and other countries find authoritarian leadership styles to be less effective as academic librarians demand increased input into decision-making.

Shrinking budgets and increased competition have forced many academic libraries to reorganize and often downsize, which has often resulted in flatter organizations with fewer levels of hierarchy; the elimination of middle managers has necessitated workers taking more responsibility for their work. In many academic libraries, the responsibility and the authority that used to be the job of a middle manager have been delegated to a team instead. Teams are common in most academic libraries. Teams are found commonly in both large and small academic libraries. Librarians working in teams not only enjoy the increased autonomy that teams provide but are more likely to support any changes made since they played a part in planning and designing them.

Many academic librarians are allowed a great deal of flexibility in their work conditions. Some academic librarians, especially those with faculty status, work on 9- or 10-month appointments or have the chance to have sabbaticals to do research and publish. Many academic libraries offer professional librarians and support staff the opportunity to adapt their working hours to suit their personal needs, and many libraries offer flextime as a benefit to all employees although a certain number of staff members must be scheduled to work at specific times to ensure that public service desks can be staffed. In addition, some academic librarians are being allowed to do a portion of their jobs from their homes, and telecommuting is expected to become more common as academic librarians are able to use technology to perform their tasks without going to the library.

LIBRARIANSHIP: FUNCTIONS, SKILLS, TRAITS

Most academic librarians work in one of the three major areas found in almost all academic libraries: technical services, public services, or administration. As mentioned earlier, the primary responsibility for everyone working in the library is fulfilling the library's mission of supporting the institution's community, especially the teaching, learning, and research efforts of the faculty, students, and staff. To do this work, there are many necessary skills, some of which are specific to the functional area in which the individual works. In smaller academic libraries, there are fewer employees in each functional area, leading to less specialized job responsibilities. For example, in a small academic library, all librarians, regardless of what library department they work in, may be assigned the additional duty of serving as liaisons to one or more academic departments. This may mean that there is someone in cataloging serving as the liaison for the sciences and someone in reference serving as the liaison for the social sciences, arts, and humanities. In a large academic library, liaison work is often given only to individuals in public services, who are then focused on a single subject or department, serving for example, as the Pharmacy Librarian. Regardless of size of library, there are skills and traits demanded of all library professionals regardless of their functional area; among these are communication; technology skills; ability to change, learn and grow; collaboration, team work; and assessment.

Effective communication. While much library work is autonomous, little of it is done in isolation. Library

professionals are both recipients and distributors of information and there are more ways to communicate now than ever before. Teamwork and committee work, across library units and across campus, all lead to a need for effective communication skills.

Ability to use technology. Very little work is done in libraries without the help of technology, and the technology that is employed is constantly changing. At a minimum, employers expect employees to be computer literate and have the ability to use any variety of e-mail programs and word processing software. Library professionals are also expected to have Internet search skills and to be able to use many type of computer programs to support their work. Many librarians have very sophisticated knowledge of information technology and spend the majority of their time working with systems or online databases.

Ability to change, learn, and grow. Libraries are learning organizations, and as the organization adapts and changes, so too must the people who work in the organization.

Collaboration. Librarianship is a collegial profession. It fosters collaboration, both with library professionals and also with the library's stakeholders. Collaboration is important enough that it is included in the ALA Professional Competencies for Reference and User Services Librarians.[8] In addition, while once academic librarians remained within the library and library users came to them, now academic library services are available in person and virtually, as users expect electronic services not only in the library, but also wherever the users are located. In addition, the increasing popularity of distance education means that librarians serve many students who never come on campus. Distance education courses are offered in 62% of public and private postsecondary institutions.[9] Distance education has also led to a greater need to collaborate with patrons. Academic librarians are more likely than ever to consult with their patrons about what they need and then to collaborate with the patron to create and adapt the necessary collections and services that will support the individual patron's learning and research.

Team work. Teams are pervasive in academic libraries. In addition, libraries use committees to aid in decision-making and governance. Working in teams requires good communication skills, a willingness to listen, compromise, encourage, negotiate, and an ability to meet deadlines.

Assessment and evaluation. As it has become more essential to justify the expenditures needed to provide library services, academic libraries are being increasingly assessed and evaluated. This culture of assessment can be as part of a formal service assessment such as LibQual, an annual review, or a workflow analysis. As part of a culture of assessment, all employees are expected to critically analyze their work processes and results, especially as they affect customer service. Assessment and evaluation also appear within the context of action-based research. Action-based research calls for librarians to look at the evidence within a library and within the research of the profession and to then analyze the situation within the library, looking for continuous improvement, and quality enhancements for library services, products, and processes.

As libraries continue to change, so do the skills required of the people working in them. These skills include those that are required for marketing, leadership, and innovation.

Marketing. While this may be seen as a function of public services, marketing skills are needed by staff in all areas of a library. Marketing brings a unique perspective to libraries, looking at what the users need and matching those needs to the library's mission and goals. For this to happen, every employee should be aware of the library's mission and the users' perspectives and how they can be connected.

Leadership. Regardless of positional authority, librarianship requires individuals be willing and able to take a leadership role within their libraries, especially within teams, taskforces, committees, and within the profession. The leadership roles may be temporary and often may not involve a management role. As academic libraries adopt decentralized decision-making and flatter organizational structures, there will be more need for leaders at every level.

Innovation. As our organizations become more complex and as competition for patrons' attention becomes more intense, librarians must be able to respond proactively and creatively. In order for change to occur, academic libraries must support innovation and the librarians must be given time and resources to pursue their ideas. An indication of the desire for more innovative librarians is found in the many job ads for academic librarians that now state that the applicants should be creative, innovative, and technologically proficient.

Each position in a library requires a specific set of skills and knowledge base. To some extent, viewing the library by functional area (technical services, public services, and administration) illuminates a subset of necessary skills and knowledge.

Technical services typically includes cataloging, acquisitions, collection development, library systems, and information technology. One of the greatest changes in technical services is not the skills needed, but rather the personnel used. The work of technical services is increasingly being outsourced or assigned to support staff.[8] However, there are skills and knowledge particular to technical services operations, specifically project management and working knowledge of cataloging standards, metadata, scholarly communications, automation, database management, bibliographic control, library materials selection theory, negotiations, intellectual property, and licensing skills (for acquisitions).

Public or user services includes reference, instruction, outreach, circulation, security, and interlibrary loan. The knowledge necessary in these positions varies according to the particular position. Overall, however, anyone working in public services should have a passion for customer service. Depending on the position, the position may also require one or more of the following skills or abilities: instructional design; planning ability; presentation skills; knowledge of copyright law (interlibrary loan specialists and people working in reserves must understand copyright restrictions); subject expertise (reference librarians are often assigned one or more disciplines, for which they are expected to provide reference assistance, instruction, and collection development); ability to collaborate with users and colleagues; evaluate and assess services; and to integrate information literacy (IL) instruction in more places than in the one-shot instruction session. IL applies at the reference desk, as well as during library instruction sessions, in creating online tutorials, and by assisting faculty in writing assignments that are based on either the Association of College and Research Libraries IL standards or on local IL standards. This not only requires technical know-how, it requires an understanding of pedagogy and the research process. The ability to teach and conduct workshops is expected in most new hires in public services and is beginning to be seen in new hires in other areas of the library as well.

Library administration includes all the managerial activities associated with making the library function effectively. Administrators oversee operations and planning by responding to daily needs, interact with staff to ensure smooth daily operations, and develop, manage and implement the strategic plan of the library. Relevant skills include leadership; ability to develop and maintain the library budget; analyze trends for decision-making; advocate for the library; provide vision; understand the higher education processes, collaborate with other libraries and with other administrators; and communicate within and without the library. With increasing numbers of academic library administrators holding dean-level appointments within academic affairs units, top-level administrators are more involved in shaping and administering the academic programs and program directions of their host institution.

CAREER PATHS

Academic librarians are usually hired with the help of a search committee. The members of this committee, often assisted by staff from the library's personnel office, plan the search, write the job description, and advertise the position. Usually, professional positions are advertised nationally both in print publication and increasingly on list-servs and the library's own Web site. The members of the search committee review the applications, usually coordinate both telephone and on-site interviews, and make a recommendation to the library director about the candidates. Sometimes committee members are asked to select a top candidate whom they recommend to be hired and in other cases they are asked to rank order the top candidates and provide that ranking to the director. Ultimately, the decision about the individual hired is made by the library director. Support staff positions are usually advertised only locally. Sometimes search committees are used in the hiring of support staff; at other times, the library's personnel office does the hiring.

The vast majority of people working in academic libraries today are members of the Baby Boom generation who were born somewhere between 1946 and 1964. The Boomers were followed by a much smaller cohort, often called GenX, born between 1965 and 1978. Individuals belonging to GenY born between 1979 and 2000 are just beginning to be part of the library workforce. It is the GenY librarians who will be the academic librarians of the future. These librarians are said to have a preference for teamwork, experiential activities, and using technology. They are strong in multitasking, goal orientation, positive attitudes, and a collaborative style.[10] This is the first generation of new librarians who enter the academic library workplace as digital natives and not digital immigrants.

Although academic libraries have always employed people from different generations, the newer entrants into academic librarianship differ from their older colleagues in many ways. They are more diverse ethnically, they are less likely to work in the traditional areas of librarianship such as cataloging and more likely to work with digital technology. They are also less likely to have the traditional ALA accredited master's degree, but have some other professional qualification for their position. These younger librarians are disproportionately male and because so many of them work with information systems and computers, market competition for individuals with these skills has resulted in their often being paid more than many of their more senior colleagues.[11]

The career ladders in most libraries are somewhat flatter than they used to be as team-based organizations have eliminated the need for some midlevel managers. The career progression pattern that used to exist in most large libraries, of becoming a department head and then an assistant or associate director and finally a director, is thus not as commonly available as before. However, many of today's academic librarians look at careers differently than their predecessors did. There is a realization that not everyone wants to be a library director or a manager of any type. Different people have different aspirations. In addition, there is some evidence that there are differences among age cohorts and that the wants of Generations X and Y academic librarians may be different from those of the Baby Boomers. These younger employees do not identify job stability as an objective, and most expect to move and work at different institutions.

COMPENSATION AND UNIONIZATION

Librarianship has suffered, in terms of pay, from being considered a women's profession. The salaries paid to professional academic librarians have increased in recent years, especially as many of the lower level clerical responsibilities have been shifted to the support staff. However, salaries are still below those paid to most other professionals with a similar level of education and responsibilities in male-dominated professions such as engineering. According to the American Library Association-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA), in 2007, the mean salary for librarians with an ALA accredited degree working in an academic or public library increased 2.8% from 2006; the mean salary was $57,809 reflecting a $1,555 increase. The median salary of academic and public librarians was $53,000.[12] The salaries of librarians working in the large ARL research libraries were higher; the median reported in the 2006–2007 salary survey was $59,548, reflecting a 3.7% increase over the previous year.[13] The salaries of librarians working in academic libraries vary greatly by level of responsibility; however, the salaries paid to entry-level academic librarians are more comparable. *Library Journal* provides an annual report of salaries received by current graduates of accredited LIS schools in the United States. The median salary for graduates who took a job in an academic library in 2006 was $35,632.[14] The median salary of a new librarian at an ARL university library was $40,000.[13] Salaries in academic libraries are affected by the type of institution (public or private), the size of the parent institution, and the geographic location. Usually larger academic libraries pay more than smaller ones, and those located in high cost of living urban areas pay more than those situated in areas where the cost of living is less. In addition to salaries; the compensation of academic librarians includes not only federal- and state-mandated benefits, but also typically includes medical insurance, provisions for pensions, or other types of retirement accounts and a range of other benefits that vary by institution.

In the United States, academic librarianship has historically been a predominately female profession, but one where the majority of upper-level administrative positions were held by men. Since the passage of laws pertaining to equal opportunity and affirmative action, far more women have been able to advance in administrative rank and achieve higher salaries. In the past there were years where there were no female directors in the ARL libraries; in 2006 there were 64 women directors out of a total of 112. Women have also made similar progress in gaining top administrative positions in smaller academic libraries, and the gender gap appears to be narrowing. However average salaries of male academic librarians are still higher than those of female librarians. In the ARL libraries, the salary of female professionals is 95.69% that of males and the disparity in salaries exists at all levels from director downward.[15] The *Library Journal* survey of new graduates found that the salaries of females graduating with an M.L.S. degree in 2006 continued to lag behind those of males. Their salaries were approximately 6.5% lower than those of their male counterparts.[14]

The low salaries of academic librarians continue to be of concern especially at a time when the profession is trying to recruit new librarians to replace the Baby Boomers who will be retiring soon. The salaries of librarians have risen over the years, but they are still not high enough to compete with higher paying professions to attract entrants who have the technical skills to function in the complex information environment of academic libraries. In addition, because new librarians are often being hired at a higher salary than those who were hired a few years previously, there is a great deal of salary compression in many academic libraries and attention also needs to be paid to achieving salary equity for more experienced librarians.

In the United States, from the 1970s onward, there has been an accelerated movement toward unionization in various white-collar and professional jobs including librarianship. Although there are no exact figures available relating to academic librarianship, the most recent estimate is that approximately 30% of librarians work in unionized situations.[16] In most cases, professional librarians in academic libraries are placed in the same bargaining unit as college and university faculty members. Librarians who are unionized earn substantially more than those who are not; unionized librarians earn an average of 29% more and unionized library assistants earn an average of 35% more than their nonunionized counterparts.[17]

Low salaries for academic librarians are a concern in academic libraries everywhere. In some countries, it is especially difficult to recruit new librarians because the low pay discourages potential librarians from getting the education necessary to enter the profession or those who have the education use their degrees to pursue other activities. There is no easy solution but librarians are acutely aware of the problem and are working actively to increase salary levels.

EVALUATION, PROMOTION AND TENURE

Almost all academic librarians are evaluated in some fashion. In a few academic libraries, evaluations are pro forma, as there is little money in the budget to justify a full-blown review and there are no promotions to work toward. In others, there may be a formal review by the supervisor, which is sometimes combined with a peer review, and in others, the evaluation is the same sort of peer review used with teaching faculty. The type of evaluation employed is usually determined by the status of the librarians in the library, and this in itself is a very

complex topic. In some libraries, professional librarians are classified as professional staff, in other libraries they are classified as faculty, and in others, they may have some sort of hybrid status. Librarians at some institutions have faculty status, but not tenure-track positions, in others they have tenure-track positions but not faculty status, while at some institutions librarians have both faculty status and tenure-track positions. The models are many and various and it is difficult to generalize.

According to the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), "Librarians should have ranks equivalent to those of the faculty," but in reality, few librarians are in tenure-track positions.[18] In a survey of academic librarians at small- and medium-sized libraries, only 35% of the responding institutions reported that the librarians were eligible for tenure and that 61% of the librarians were eligible for promotion.[19] The statistics for tenure are higher at libraries that are members of the ARL. According to a survey of ARL libraries in 2006, 45% of the respondents were in tenure-track positions.[20]

In an academic library where the librarians are not eligible for tenure, the main qualification for promotion is job performance, with lesser attention paid to service to the profession and publications. In a tenured environment, especially where librarians have faculty status, evaluations are more complex, with performance on the job, in the profession, and scholarship all receiving attention. Librarians who have faculty status are usually expected to do research and publish and their evaluation often is very similar to that of a faculty member. One of the main advantages of faculty status is that it gives librarians a voice in their institution's governance, including providing the opportunity to serve in faculty senate and on academic committees. One of the disadvantages frequently associated with faculty status is this pressure to engage in research and publish. Since many academic librarians do not have a subject master's or a Ph.D. degree, they are sometimes not as familiar with research as their faculty counterparts and they also lack the flexibility in their jobs that classroom faculty have. In many instances, librarians are required to work at their "real" job 40 hours a week; any research/writing must be done on their own time. Service to the profession is another important aspect of evaluation. Professional service includes participation in professional associations, especially membership in associations' committees, editing a library publication, receiving a grant to do research for the benefit of the profession, and presenting at local, regional, and national conferences. In some libraries, especially if a union has successfully negotiated for it, tenure and promotion is similar to that of faculty. In general, the longer a librarian has been in the profession, the more the librarian is required to have done.

Typically, the review for tenure and promotion is done after 5–6 years of employment. The candidate is asked to provide materials such as a curriculum vitae, a narrative of his/her contributions to the institution and to the profession, and copies of published articles and other evidence of applied or creative scholarship. Other documentation such as letters of recommendation from external reviewers assessing the candidate's contribution to the profession, from supervisors, and from colleagues within the institution is gathered. Usually a committee of peers studies the materials submitted and makes a recommendation. The library director then decides to approve or disapprove the recommendation. In some institutions, the library director's recommendation is reviewed by the Human Resources Department, the institution's top administrator, and the Board of Trustees. In a union environment, the union may also review the University Librarian's decision, especially if it is contrary to the recommendation by the peer committee and may recommend a grievance procedure, but the final decision remains with the top administrator and the Board of Trustees.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Academic librarianship is a fast-changing profession and regardless of whether an individual is considered a professional or support staff, there is a need for continuing education throughout that individual's career. Continuing education can include additional training for the position that a librarian already holds as well as training for future opportunities. In libraries, continuing education is offered in various ways. Typically as specific needs are identified, selected groups of employees receive training in those topics. These training sessions may be conducted by a specialist within the institution or by an expert brought into the institution for this purpose. In addition, many training and educational programs exist outside the academic library. Attendance at local, regional, and national conferences and workshops provides opportunities for employee development and growth. In addition, more and more training is being offered by means of online courses or teleconferences. The need for continuing education has become more important as academic library operations have become more complex. Today's academic librarians realize that to advance in their profession they will have to continue to learn and develop professionally throughout their careers.

ASSOCIATIONS

Associations provide the opportunity for professionals to connect with colleagues across the nation, learn about trends, improve skills, and to find jobs. Professional associations also represent the profession to others by mounting national public relations campaigns or by lobbying on behalf of libraries and librarianship. There are several national and international associations for academic librarians, some of which focus on specific aspects of librarianship. Many U.S. academic librarians belong to

the ALA, and many are also members of the ACRL, which is a division of ALA. ACRL is the largest division of ALA with a total membership of over 13,000 individuals, most of whom work in academic libraries. ACRL provides a wide range of services and publications for its members. Other academic librarians depending on their interests may belong to the Special Libraries Association (SLA), Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries, Medical Library Association, Society of American Archivists, International Association of Music Libraries, Archives & Documentation Centers, American Theological Library Association, American Association of Community Colleges, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, state chapters of ALA, ACRL, and SLA, and academic divisions of state library associations. Other higher education organizations and discipline-specific organizations such as EDUCAUSE, the Association of American University Professors, the National Education Association, and the American Society for Engineering Education are open to participation from academic librarians.

LITERATURE

There is a rich body of literature on academic libraries. Perhaps because so many academic librarians have faculty status and are required to publish as part of their job responsibilities, there is more literature relating to academic libraries than any other type of library. This literature ranges from conference proceedings, white papers, and monographs to articles in journals, newsletters, and blogs. In the United States, ACRL is the major publisher in the field, publishing one of the major journals (*College and Research Libraries*), in addition to a number of other journals, monographic series, and reports. ARL also publishes a great deal relevant to large research libraries.

Several very influential journals are specifically targeted to academic librarians. In the United States, the most widely read research journals for academic librarianship are *College & Research Libraries*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, and *PORTAL: Libraries and the Academy*. Other important journals are *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *Reference Services Review*, and *Interlending & Document Supply*. Academic librarians also typically read journals relating to their specialized interests so journals such as *Library Administration and Management, RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage*, *Reference & User Services Quarterly* and *Information Technology and Libraries* are read by librarians with interests in those areas. Other publications include *Against the Grain* (useful for product reviews and information on the publishing industry), *College & Research Library News*, *D-Lib Magazine*, *and LOEX Quarterly* (library instruction and IL). However, the literature applicable to academic librarianship spans disciplines and many librarians regularly read the journals associated with a disciplinary area such as sociology or psychology. Literature in higher education is, of course, especially relevant to academic librarianship. Important publications include the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *T.H.E. Journal*, *Research in Higher Education*, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, and *Higher Education*.

Monographs are also important in academic librarianship. In addition to research monographs, there are others that provide practical help in managing a library. ARL regularly publishes information on library policies and practices in their SPEC Kits. Each Spec Kit is based on survey results of the member libraries and provides information about current practice in large research libraries. ACRL publishes a similar series called CLIP Notes that provide data and sample documents in specific areas that are of interest to college and small university libraries.

Not all of the literature in academic librarianship is confined to formal publications such as monographs, journals, and newsletters. Many librarians now use their own Web pages or blogs to share their research, report on trends, or express their thoughts and opinions on academic libraries and librarianship. Some of the Web sites and blogs are specific to a topic such as marketing academic libraries or digital libraries, while others are very general. Libraries and associations have entered the blogging world, for example, ACRL publishes the ACRLog.[21]

CONCLUSION

The continuing changes associated with teaching, learning, and research occurring in higher education provide academic librarians with an opportunity to rethink their profession and the libraries in which they work. The primary mission of academic librarians has always been to serve the teaching, learning, and research needs of faculty and students in institutions of higher education. Those institutions themselves are in the midst of great change and it is impossible to predict what colleges and universities will look like in the future. It is certain, however, that they will continue to be transformed as they adapt to the forces of technology, the growth of distance education, and demands from their stakeholders and society as a whole. In response to the transformation in their parent institutions, libraries will change also, and the academic librarian of tomorrow may be as different from those of today as today's librarians are from those who tended the collections in the early universities. However, as long as higher education continues to exist, it seems almost certain that there will be academic libraries and librarians there to support the needs of faculty and students. If sometime in the future, brick and mortar universities are abandoned and most of higher learning is done

via the Internet, academic libraries likely will also become virtual, with perhaps only a few continuing to hold paper archives. However, academic librarians would still be needed. Academic librarians of today need to face the challenge of looking toward the future and ensuring that the libraries in which they work will be able to meet the needs of the digital age and to provide services needed by both today's and tomorrow's users.

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