

# Liaisons in Academic Libraries

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# Liaison Work

- Why this topic?
- Has implications for how we portray and provide value on campus
- Popular discussion topic
- Defining liaisons
- Assigned to be the primary contact for a specific group(s)
- May or may not be a disciplinary subject area (i.e. First Year programs).
- Likely has responsibilities in:
  - Outreach
  - Reference
  - Instruction
  - Collection development
  - And more

# In Library School

- Academic Libraries Track
  - Included a class on academic libraries, where one topic was liaisons
  - Classes on specific types of work liaisons engage in (i.e. reference, instruction, collection development, outreach/marketing, etc.)
- Assignment researching desired career path
  - I did mine on liaisons

# In Library School, Cont.

- Sheila Corrall
- Research interests included: library space assessments, reflective practice in info lit development, research support services in academic libraries, and the ‘evolving academic library specialists’
- Liz Lyon
- Research Data Management
  - Most of the research I am aware of comes from practitioners rather than library scholars.

# Recent Discussions

## [ARL Spec Kit 349 ARL Liaison Institute Conference Presentations](#)

- Examples: ALA 2018

Scholarly and professional literature

- [Example: Research Library June 2018 Issues](#)

[issue of](#)

Professional Blogs

- Example: Life

[Steve Cramer This Liaison](#)

Research Groups

- [Example: Ithaka S&R Study](#)

Themes Concern over workload – adding more but taking little away.

What are liaisons accomplishing, what do we want to be accomplishing, and can that be done with this model?

Team based approach?

# Functional Specialists (IL specifically)

Moving away from: traditional bibliographic instruction

Moving towards:

- embedded teaching models
- flipped classroom methods
- co-teaching

Expert Functional specialists

- helping instructors create assignments

Intermediary

- creating online learning objects

Can provide some support. Some liaisons.

- assessing IL
- curriculum mapping

Basic Any front-line staff. Needs to know a

- teaching subject-specific or standalone IL courses

soundbite and how and when to refer.

These are naturally more time intensive and less scalable.

Who needs to be an expert? How do you triage support?



# My Professional Experience

- In line with LIS curriculum and current research and professional literature
- Tension between point-of-need support and wanting to do ‘high impact’ things.
- The challenges feel more overwhelming now than they did.



# Liaison Librarian Job Postings

Using platform called Labor Insight by Burning Glass Technologies.

- July 1 2017-June 30 2018, Nationwide, Occupation of Librarian, Master's Required, working in Industry 6113: Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools, with the keyword liaison.
- 848 results

# Skills - Specialized

Teaching

6.1%

8.2% Information Literacy

40.6%

Library Instruction

31.3% Library

Resources

18.8% Staff Management

18.0% Budgeting

16.2% LibGuides

15.7% Project Management

14.2% Data Management

13.6% Metadata

10.7% Supervisory Skills

10.1% Social Media

10.1% Instructional Design

8.0% Customer Service

8.0% Library Research

7.4% Scheduling

6.6% Strategic Planning

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

# Skills - Baseline

Research

6.9%

3.5% Communication Skills

8.3% Teamwork/Collaboration

49.1% Creativity

39.5% Planning

27.1% Written Communication

25.4% Writing

21.2% Problem Solving

20.0% Organizational Skills

13.6% Building Effective Relationships

12.1% Energetic

9.9% Microsoft Office

9.6% Troubleshooting

9.0% Oral Communication

8.5% Presentation Skills

7.9% Microsoft Excel

7.4% Time Management

7.3% Detail Oriented

7.0% Online Research

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%