Navigating Academic Waters
As a Newly Minted Librarian

Presenters: Jennifer Roy & Rebecca Kasperavicius
Outline

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● Getting Started
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● Getting Involved
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● Takeaways
Interviews

- Interview Panel
  - Manager, Librarian, HR Rep
- Mock Instruction Session
  - Information provided in HR’s invitation to interview
- Example Question
  - What are some key factors to consider or tools you might use with respect to Collection Development?
  - What particular skills / experience can you bring that other applicants may not have?
  - Provide us with an example of a difficult situation and how you dealt with it.
### TABLE 3
Difference From Expectations Open-Ended Question: Major Themes

- More flexibility/independence
- Greater variety of job responsibilities/tasks
- Bureaucracy, slow pace of change
- Negative workplace environment (politics, not collegial)
- Collegial workplace
- Busier/heavier workload
- Faculty and student attitudes to the library
- Difficult school-to-work transition
- Lack of training and time to learn
Getting Started
Familiarize Yourself with Important Documents

- Letter of appointment
  - Make sure you understand everything
  - Ask questions
- Collective agreement
  - Academic career: responsibilities, duties, and workload
  - Working conditions: academic freedom
  - Leaves: absences, vacation, etc.
  - Also a good idea to read definitions
  - Over time be sure to read over the sections on promotion and tenure (as applicable)
Get to Know Your Institution

- What makes your institution unique?
  - How is it organized?
  - What are the directions or goals (strategic plans)
- Policies
  - Institutional
  - Library specific
- Benefits of a small institution
  - Engage with more aspects of librarianship
  - Familiarity with other staff and their roles
Managing your Workload
Professional Librarianship/Responsibilities

- **Liaison Librarian**
  - Primary contact for department and program Faculty for information and questions relating to library collections, reference services, and instructional support.

- **Collection Development/ Management**
  - Build and maintain library collections guided by institutional policies and practices.

- **Instruction**
  - Educate library users how to locate and evaluate information using library resources.

- **Donations**
  - Accept and assess monograph donations for potential inclusion in the collection.
Professional Librarianship/Responsibilities

● E-Resources
  ○ Negotiate with consortia for access to consortial resources
    ■ Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL)
    ■ Ontario Colleges Library Service (OCLS)
    ■ Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN)
  ○ Negotiate with vendors of commercial information services for access to their products and services
  ○ Work with vendor and university IT departments to configure and maintain user access

● Reference Services
  ○ Assist library users in the location and use of library materials, tools, and services through face-to-face interactions at the Info Desk, research appointments, by phone, and e-mail.
Scholarly Activity

Examples of avenues for new academic librarian to publish (Flatley and Weber, 2004):

- Book reviews
- Bibliographies
- Articles in professional newsletters
- Presentations, talks, poster sessions, etc.
- Non-peer reviewed journals
Scholarly Activity

- Strategies to get started (Wilkinson, 2013):
  - Collaboration
    - Helps to reduce workload
  - Research to practice
    - Merge research work with library work
  - Time management:
    - Working in flexible smaller chunks of time can be more easily managed
Governance

- Department level:
  - Taking part in the governance and administration of the library
  - Ex. Library Council or equivalent, department meetings, committees, etc.

- Institution level:
  - Taking on roles that contribute to the governance and administration of the institution
  - Ex. Council for French Programs, LURF Evaluation Committee
Mentorship

● Formal
  ○ "Relationships [that are often organized] by administration with the expectation that both mentees and mentors will participate" (Harrington and Marshall, 2014, p. 763).

● Informal
  ○ "An independent activity initiated by a mentor, the person who acts as a guide, adviser, and provider of support, or by the mentee, the person who receives guidance, advice, and support" (Harrington and Marshall, 2014, p. 763).

● Different mentors for different roles

● Various methods
  ■ Oral (instructional/directional)
  ■ Documents/documentation left by your predecessor
  ■ Action based (pay attention to how certain colleagues perform in the workplace and either parrot or avoid those behaviours)
Getting Involved
Professional Development

- Webinars
  - Enroll
  - Deliver
- Continue your education
  - Graduate courses
    - Stats
    - Research methods
- Get involved in professional organizations
  - Committees
  - Task Groups
- Conferences
  - Attend
  - Convene
  - Present
Volunteer/Outreach

- When you participate and make yourself available, doors will open!
  - Faculty book launch
  - Public lectures
  - Vocational panel
  - Wikipedia Edit-a-thon

- Stay connected -- remember to give back!
  - Assist students completing their MLIS
    - Offer mentorship by answering any questions they may have
    - Connect them with people and/or resources
    - Remember those who supported you during this transition -- emulate that and be a good role-model (these people will be your colleagues in the field!)
Takeaways

- Be prepared
- Be flexible
- Challenge yourself/push your comfort zone(s)
- Help is available
- Always keep learning!
Questions?


