

Layers of Advocacy: How Librarians Everywhere Can Make a Difference and Lessons for LIS Education

A.J. Million^a, Kristine N. Stewart^b, Kim M. Thomson^c, Heather Braum^c, Travis L. Wagner^c,
Denice Adkins^d, Lauren Smith^e

^aUniversity of Michigan, USA

^bZayed University, UAE

^cUniversity of South Carolina, USA

^dUniversity of Missouri, USA

^eUniversity of Edinburgh, UK

millioaj@umich.edu, kristine.stewart@zu.ac.ae, kthompso@mailbox.sc.edu,
hbraum@email.sc.edu, wagnertl@email.sc.edu, adkinsde@missouri.edu, lauren.smith@ed.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

Lobbying and advocacy are critical to the success of libraries, because they play a key role in communicating to decision-makers and communities why libraries are essential resources in an information-driven society. However, despite the importance of lobbying and advocacy to the profession, it is not always clear how library schools should teach about this aspect of librarianship. Taking an international, comparative approach, this panel discusses the complexities associated with lobbying and advocacy, as well as some challenges faced by LIS educators when teaching about the topic.

To make teaching about lobbying and advocacy in LIS easier, six panelists with experience in a range of political, social, and cultural contexts will talk about issues such as: levels of government where lobbying takes place; varying definitions of advocacy, especially across countries with different traditions of librarianship; and the time frame in which lobbying and advocacy efforts take place. Panelist presentations will emphasize “lessons learned” that can be used to teach LIS students how to cultivate support for libraries. Using panelist presentations as a starting point, this panel will include a follow-up discussion about teaching advocacy in LIS.

A primary goal of this panel is to identify powerful content for LIS curricula and instructional approaches that can support more effective advocacy. We will conclude by opening the door to audience participation with the purpose of integrating new ideas into the discussion.

TOPICS

education programs/schools; political economy of the information society; curriculum