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Reaching Out to the Underserved: More Than Thirty Years of Outreach Job Ads

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Reaching Out to the Under Served: More than 30 Years of Outreach Job Ads

ABSTRACT

Content of outreach position announcements posted in College and Research Libraries News *from 1970 through 2004 were examined. Ads fell within three broad groups: distance education, multicultural services, and specialized. Overall, outreach positions have been on the rise with the exception of multicultural services librarian positions which have not increased at a stable rate.*

INTRODUCTION

One of the significant challenges facing academic libraries today is the need to reach a diverse user population including, but not limited to, potential students, enrolled students both on- and off-campus, faculty and staff, students of color, international students, students/employees with disabilities, and community members. Added to this challenge are the realities of shrinking budgets, rising tuition costs, and more pressure to think of creative ways to market ourselves. Some academic libraries have developed outreach positions as one strategy to respond to these challenges.

This study examines job announcements for outreach positions in academic libraries posted in *College and Research Libraries News* (*C&RL News*) from January 1970 through December 2004. One reason for examining the evolution of academic library outreach positions is to determine if libraries are contributing to the need for academia as a whole to serve a diverse student body and, in addition, to serve the larger community.

Academic libraries can and should play a key role in their institutional outreach mission by offering "outward" reaching programs and initiatives to these diverse groups.

Bowling Green State University was one of the first academic institutions to employ a First Year Experience Librarian (responsible for outreach to potential students and first year students) and, for more than a decade, has employed a Multicultural Services Librarian. Because of these positions, the authors were motivated to investigate the extent and variety of outreach positions within academic libraries in the United States.

The primary objectives were to

1. Determine how the number of advertisements for outreach positions has changed during the past thirty years.

2. Determine how position titles have changed.

3. Identify the skills and knowledge required.

4. Identify the duties and responsibilities.

5. Determine how salaries have changed.

BACKGROUND

The word "outreach" used within an academic library context can mean many different things. Lynn Westbrook and Robert Waldman assert that, in the 1960's, libraries used the term outreach to refer to any service other than the core service of reference. Due to the increased interest in bibliographic instruction, libraries began to include the provision of bibliographic instruction outside of the library within their definition of outreach. In

1993, the term was used in libraries to denote any service that was provided outside of the library. (1) More recently, Tina Schneider wrote that community outreach programs for the non-university community "demonstrated a library's (or librarian's) creativity, initiative, and sense of how best to present itself to those outside of an academic institution." (2) She compiled a list of common community outreach partners, such as public health practitioners, local organizations, and small business centers. (3)

The context in which the current study was conducted is best stated by Wendi Arant and Pixey Anne Mosley in the introduction to a special issue of *Research Librarian* devoted to outreach services. They defined outreach as "the act of extending services, benefits, etc., to a wider section of the population." (4) That section of the population could be a segment of the traditional campus community of faculty, staff, and/or students. It could also be a segment of the community outside of academia, whether local, regional, national or international. It could even be a virtual community. Using Arant and Mosley's definition, the authors examined announcements for outreach positions that extended services to any of these constituencies. The authors did not consider position descriptions emphasizing fund raising, development, access services activities, or bibliographic/instruction liaison programs.

Although outreach activities have been a part of library services for many years, there have been relatively few academic library positions in which a significant portion of the librarian's time was spent on outreach. The authors were looking for evidence that

librarians' job descriptions changed in response to an increasing emphasis within the profession on the need for outreach activities during a 30 year period.

The authors speculated that this evidence might come from examining position descriptions which were primarily devoted to service to an underserved constituency, such as multicultural students or distance education students. One motive for increased attention to a constituency is to contribute to the recruitment and retention mission of the university. Universities have increasingly attracted a diverse student body, but they have been challenged to respond differently as the retention of multicultural students lags behind the retention of white students. Additionally, some universities have increased the number and variety of distance course offerings because of the potential increase in the size of the student body.

It was further reasoned by the authors that evidence might also come from position descriptions devoted, at least in part, to serving and attracting potential students. Libraries have provided library instruction presentations to high school classes for many years. These presentations can be beneficial to the students and the university on multiple levels. First and foremost, students will feel more confident and assured if they have had some pre-college experience navigating an academic library. The outreach potential of the campus visit can be enhanced by a tour of campus, lunch in the student union, and perhaps even a visit to the student recreation center for some fun. Though this would take some leadership and coordination with several campus units, the library plays a key role in being the initial reason for a campus visit. This partnership among campus units meets

one central outreach mission of the campus—to recruit students. John Cosgrove compiled a list of goals of instruction to high school students, which included:

- "Improving relations between the college and the local community"

- "Enhancing the public image of the college"

- "Providing a recruitment opportunity for the college"

- "Promoting higher education" (5)

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several articles in the literature pertaining to library outreach in which the services that libraries offer are described, but the authors were unable to identify an analysis or discussion of the evolution of outreach job advertisements or requirements in the profession over an extended period of time. The articles published in a special issue of *Reference Librarian,* "Outreach Services in Academic and Special Libraries," are mostly case studies at particular institutions with the exception of Tina Schneider's article.(6) Schneider provides a variety of institution specific examples of how academic libraries respond to the need for outreach in the context of "whether a need is expressed from outside the academy, whether they see their mission as an invitation to pursue an action on their own accord, or whether they construct a form of outreach in response to a specific problem or crisis." (7)

A special issue of *Reference Librarian*, "Library Outreach, Partnerships, and Distance Education: Reference Librarian at the Gateway," contained articles related to specific aspects of outreach services such as providing access to persons with disabilities or

reference services to remote users.(8) However, this special issue did not include an analysis of position descriptions.

In 1998, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) published the results of a survey on outreach and extension services. The purpose of the survey was to determine the level of library involvement with outreach, the types of outreach services and user populations, and the impact of outreach on the library. Outreach in the context of the ARL study was defined as "the provision of library services to clientele outside the university community, including both affiliated and unaffiliated remote users, and the service contributions provided by individual librarians outside the realm of their regular teaching, research, and job responsibilities." (9) The survey was distributed to 121 ARL libraries; and, of the 61 respondents, only 11 were not involved in extension/outreach services. The types of outreach services in the ARL study included reference services in the form of online database access, distance education services, academic partnerships, locally produced digital collections, consulting, service to professional organizations, and continuing education. (10)

In 1988, Colleen Power surveyed American college and university libraries involved in distance education. Thirty-eight of the respondents (36.9%) designated a librarian to work with distance students. (11) Of the 114 libraries that indicated their institution offered distance classes, 65 answered the question, "How many librarians are assigned to deal with your off campus students?" Eighteen of these libraries (33.1%) had assigned more than one librarian to serve off-campus students. An additional 26 (40%) had

assigned .51 to 1.0 librarians to serve off-campus students. (12) An Association of

Research Libraries survey published in 1996 asked, "Who coordinates library services

with remote sites?" Fifteen libraries (30%) responded that either an "extended campus

librarian" or "extension library services or distance education coordinator" coordinated

these services. (13)

The authors also reviewed methodologies used by other researchers who examined

academic librarian positions advertised during a specified period of time to determine

what to look for in the position descriptions. (14)

METHODOLOGY

This study examines position announcements posted in *C&RL News* from January 1970

through December 2004. The authors did not attempt to include data from every

conceivable source, but chose a source with wide readership that provided a

representative sample of positions advertised nationally over a long enough period of

time to conduct a longitudinal analysis. Since its inception in 1939, *C&RL News*, a

publication of the Association of College and Research Libraries, has reached a broad

academic library audience (currently 12,000 subscribers). (15)

The authors examined advertisements for eight- to twelve-month outreach positions at

academic libraries, excluding duplicate advertisements. The authors selected

advertisements that indicated significant responsibility for service to a well-defined,

broad constituency of potential library users not related to a particular academic discipline or subject area.

Content analysis of the advertisements included the following elements:

- Position title

- Job responsibilities

- Required knowledge and skills

- Preferred knowledge and skills

- Groups to whom outreach was provided

- Required degrees and training

- Preferred degrees and training

- Minimum salary

- Faculty status

- Geographic location by state

- Reporting line

- Experience required

RESULTS

The authors identified no outreach positions among the position announcements from January 1970 through December 1974. After gathering all relevant position advertisements, the authors sorted them into categories. The 115 outreach positions in this sample fell within three broad groups: 78 distance education (outreach to remote users), 17 multicultural services (outreach to ethnic and racial minority groups), and 20

specialized outreach (outreach to unique communities that require specialized collections or services).

General findings

The authors found first time occurrences related to the integration of technology in the library profession worth noting. The first outreach position to require computer skills appeared in an advertisement for a multicultural services librarian in 1982. It requested, "Experience with either online searching or bibliographic instruction, especially the latter." (16) Experience with CD-ROMs was first required in 1988. Skill in using the Internet was first preferred in 1994, and in using the Web in 1995. The first position announcement to specify knowledge of HTML and the ability to construct Web pages appeared in 1996. Additionally, the type of computer skills required or preferred has changed over time. Distance education librarian positions now are more likely to require knowledge or experience with HTML or web page creation, while multicultural services librarian positions require skill in database searching.

Distance Education Librarian Results

The Association of College and Research Libraries has promulgated guidelines for library services to distance education faculty and staff since 1963. These were most recently updated in 2004. (17) The Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services, approved in 2004, includes the statement that, "Members of the distance learning community are entitled to library services and resources equivalent to those provided for students and faculty in traditional campus settings." (18) The guidelines state that the college or

university offering the distance courses is responsible for assigning adequate personnel to provide library services, including a librarian-administrator and additional professional and/or support staff. (19)   The professional association support to establish these guidelines sets a context for the analysis of the distance education position descriptions included in this study, especially in recent years.

Number of Position Advertisements. There were no position advertisements for distance education librarians in *C&RL News* between 1970 and 1979. The first ad appeared in January 1980 with the title, "Librarian, External Degree Program." Between January 1980 and December 2004, there were 78 advertisements for distance education librarians. Although the number of ads in any year was never more than eight, Figure 1 shows that there is a growing demand for distance education librarians in college and university libraries. The four years with the greatest number of distance education librarian advertisements were 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

(Insert Figure 1)

Position Title. There is no consensus about what title should be given to a librarian who serves distance education faculty and students. The most commonly occurring phrases in the titles of these position advertisements were "Distance Education" or "Distance Learning," which accounted for 27 of the position titles (35%). Many position titles included a variation of one of these phrases: "off-campus education," "extended campus," "extension services," "instructional outreach," or "remote services."

The word "distance" has become a common term in many recent position titles. Titles for

positions advertised in 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 include: Social Sciences/Distance

Education Librarian; Remote Services Librarian; Distance Education Librarian (four

positions); Distance Learning Librarian (two positions); Distance Learning Coordinator;

Distance Services Librarian; Faculty Librarian/Learning Consultants; Instructional

Services/Distance Education; Distance Education Position; Outreach Services Librarian;

Education Liaison/Remote Services Librarian; Distance Education Coordinator; Online

Librarian, Extended Collections Services Librarian; Librarian III, Distance Education;

Public Services Librarian/Interlibrary Loan Distance Learner Services Coordinator;

Remote Reference Specialist; Librarian for Extended Education; Reference and

Electronic Services Librarian; Health Sciences/Distributed Education Librarian; and

Remote Services Online Reference/Instruction Librarian.

Knowledge, Skills, and Experience Required or Preferred. The most commonly identified

knowledge, skill, or experience for distance education librarian positions was use of

computers (72%). Also identified were communication skills (63%), professional

experience (60%), library user education (53%), and reference (47%) as illustrated in

Table 1.

Of special interest is that, unlike the other announcements examined in this study, 18 of

these announcements (23%) included the statement that the library required or preferred a

librarian with a flexible schedule, and 16 (21%) required or preferred a librarian willing

to travel. Only 18 of the positions (23%) required or preferred experience in distance

librarianship.

(Insert Table 1)

Degree Requirement. All but five of the seventy-eight distance education position

advertisements required an ALA-accredited M.L.S. or equivalent. Eleven ads stated the

requirement or preference for a candidate with an additional advanced degree. Three of

these ads noted that an additional degree was required for tenure and promotion. Another

ad required that by the sixth year of employment a second master's degree or sixth year

certificate be earned.

Although the position advertisements that asked for an additional advanced degree were

spread out over the entire time period included in this study, the desire for the additional

degree was more commonly listed between 1998 and 2003.

Position Responsibilities. Responsibilities most commonly listed in the advertisements

included management, reference, library instruction, or computer skills. Some positions

involved collection development, promotion of library resources, supervision, document

delivery, or travel.

(Insert Table 2)

Responsibility for the use or design of Internet resources did not appear in position

advertisements until November 1996. Of the 47 distance librarian positions published

between November 1996 and December 2004, 25 (53%) included use or design of

Internet resources as a responsibility.

Salary. Only 53 (68%) of the position advertisements for distance education librarians

listed a salary. Based on the available data, salaries clearly rose as shown in Table 3. (20)

The authors examined salary data for entry-level positions published annually in *Library*

Journal as a possible comparison with the salary data for these positions. However,

because not all position descriptions included a minimum salary and because the

minimum salaries for distance librarian positions were so variable in any given year, a

comparison with the data from *Library Journal* seemed to be of little value.

(Insert Table 3)

Geographic Location. Libraries in twenty-nine states posted distance education positions,

with the greatest concentration of postings in Michigan (13 positions), Texas (8

positions), and California (6 positions).

Multicultural Services Librarian Results

Multicultural services librarian positions are one way in which the academic library can

contribute to the university's need to retain their minority student population.

Isabel Espinal, of the American Library Association's Office of Literacy and Outreach

Services, provided a definition for multicultural outreach at ALA's Annual Conference in

2002, "activities or organizational efforts to reach out to distinct cultural groups on your

campus who are not part of U.S. mainstream or dominant culture." (21)

Universities have made significant improvements in their ability to attract a minority

population, but retention has lagged. (22) In addition, academic libraries continue to

include diversity as a strategic goal. A minority outreach program is one proof that the

library values diversity and supports the university commitment to recruit and retain

minority students. (23) Multicultural services librarians also have the potential to play a

dual role. In addition to helping make a diverse student body feel more comfortable using

library services and collections, they may serve as role models to attract minorities to

become librarians. (24)

In his article describing the University of California at Santa Cruz's efforts to hire a

multicultural services librarian, Allan J. Dyson described his impressions of minority

students at a meeting called to demand better services from their university, "I had the

feeling these were students who, despite our best intentions, did not feel very welcome in

our library, let alone know how to exploit its resources." (25) After nine years (1979 to

1988) of failed attempts to hire a minority librarian, the Library changed its hiring

strategy. They eliminated the requirement for academic library experience, substituting

an emphasis on outreach skills. The committee searched for, and found, techniques to

speed up the recruitment process and were finally successful in hiring a multicultural

services librarian. (26) Although the experience of just one institution's failed attempts to hire a quality multicultural services librarian, it provides a potential explanation for the surprisingly low number of multicultural position descriptions present in the current study.

In 1994, Rush Miller described the efforts of Bowling Green State University's Libraries to enhance the library's commitment to serving multicultural students and faculty, and "to enrich the educational experiences of majority students with an appreciation for and an understanding of other cultures." This commitment included hiring an intern who was an African American student in the Wayne State University library science program. The intern was later hired as a Multicultural Services Librarian. (27) Other libraries may have also filled their need for a librarian to serve an increasingly diverse user population first by recruiting a minority intern and then successfully retaining the services of that intern in a full-time, permanent position.

Number of Position Advertisements. The first position advertisement for a multicultural services librarian during the period covered by this study appeared in January 1975 for a "Minority Programs Librarian." Of the seventeen advertisements, the largest number in any year was four, which occurred in 1988. There were noticeable gaps in years during which no ads appeared: 1977-1981 (five years); 1983-1987 (five years); and 1996-1999 (four years).

(Insert Figure 2)

Position Title. Thirteen of the position titles (76%) reflected outreach to a variety of

ethnicities (e.g., Ethnic Services Librarian, Multicultural Librarian, Diversity Librarian),

and four (24%) reflected outreach to a specific ethnic group (e.g., Chicano/Latino

Services Coordinator).

Knowledge, Skills, and Experience Required or Preferred. The most frequently required

knowledge, skills, or experience for the multicultural services librarian positions were

service to diverse populations and oral and written communication skills (eleven) (65%).

Eight of the position descriptions (47%) listed some type of computer skill. When

considering both required and preferred qualifications, service to diverse populations and

computer skills were listed most frequently (twelve) (71%).

(Insert Table 4)

Degree Requirement. All of the position announcements required an ALA-accredited

M.L.S. Only one announcement listed an advanced degree in a related field as highly

desirable.

Position Responsibilities. Responsibilities most commonly listed included reference

service, library instruction, and collection development. Six of the positions (35%) were

responsible for outreach program development or coordination. Five (29%) included

liaison responsibility with an academic department, faculty member, or student

organizations. Not until 1988, in three of the four ads for that year, did any state the

responsibility for online or database searching. None of the position descriptions

included supervisory duties.

(Insert Table 5)

Salary. As with the distance education librarian positions, not all multicultural service

librarian position announcements included a minimum salary. As would be expected, the

salaries generally increased chronologically.

(Insert Table 6)

Geographic Location. Of the seventeen position advertisements, ten (59%) were from the

state of California. In 1988, the year with the highest number of postings (four), all were

from California.

Specialized Outreach Results

The twenty positions in this group represented service to a variety of populations, as

reflected in the position titles, although the use of the word "outreach" was common in

many:

Access and Outreach Services Librarian

Assistant Electronic Public Information Librarian

Corporate Services Librarian

Education and Exhibit Coordinator

Education Reference/Outreach Librarian

First Year Experience Librarian

Instructional Outreach Librarian

Instructional/Outreach Services Coordinator (Biomedical Library)

Instructional Services/Outreach Librarian, Government Documents & Maps

Marketing Coordinator/Information and Education Services Librarian

Outreach/Community Resources Librarian

Outreach Librarian

Outreach Services Librarian

Outreach Services Manager

Public and Outreach Services Coordinator (two positions)

Reference and Instruction Librarian and Coordinator of Public Relations and Outreach

Reference Librarian - Outreach Specialist

Reference/Outreach Librarian

Social Sciences/Outreach Librarian

The authors treated this specialized outreach group differently than the other categories because each of these positions served the needs of a specific population, either on- or off-campus. Additionally, some of these positions used outreach as a strategy for promoting the library.

Several institutions made a special effort to reach out to the external community. Arizona

State University created a Corporate Services Librarian position to serve business clients.

This innovative position was responsible for developing a fee-based document delivery

and information service program to be supported by the income it generated. (28) The

Outreach/Community Resources Librarian at San Diego State University was responsible

for enhancing "connections to the university's internal and external communities," and

evaluating improvements or new connections that could be made "with academic

departments, research centers and institutes, student organizations, the university's

service learning and outreach programs, international and distance education efforts, and

selected San Diego community organizations." (29)

The emphasis for many of the specialized outreach positions was to promote or market

the library, or perform other public relations functions. For example, the ad for a

Reference and Instruction Librarian and Coordinator of Public Relations and Outreach at

Indiana University South Bend, stated responsibility for "providing leadership in

planning, implementing, and maintaining an effective library public relations (PR)

program that creatively promotes the use of the library to the campus and broader

community; …writing and producing effective and visually identifiable library

newsletters, press releases, brochures, and other promotional documents… work[ing]

with PR committee to plan speaker series and library participation in campus events."

(30) The Education and Exhibit Coordinator at the UCLA Biomedical Library was

responsible for providing training and promotional programs to a regional library network

through scheduling and coordinating exhibits, providing presentations and training,

developing instructional and informational materials, promoting resources and programs,

and providing referrals. Additional responsibilities included contribution to a regional

newsletter, web site and other appropriate media for promotional efforts. (31)

Some positions combined promotional efforts with subject liaison responsibilities. The

Education Reference/Outreach Librarian at Manhattanville College was expected to

coordinate and promote guest speakers, public events, library exhibits, the newsletter, and

the annual book fair while also serving as the subject liaison with the College of

Education. (32) The Marketing Coordinator/Information and Education Services

Librarian at the Dartmouth Biomedical Libraries was responsible for "promoting the

Libraries' resources and services, editing the Biomedical Libraries Newsletter and other

publications, and coordinating a Librarian Liaison Program." (33)

Finally, some of these specialized outreach positions provided services to one or more

defined populations. Bowling Green State University in Ohio advertised the First Year

Experience Librarian position, with responsibility for creating programs and services that

would "recruit and retain a highly prepared first-year student population." (34) Similarly,

the Reference Librarian – Outreach Specialist at New Mexico State University developed

"outreach services to those with special needs, such as persons of minority backgrounds,

persons with disabilities, and returning students." (35) New Mexico State University also

advertised for a Social Sciences/Outreach Librarian to provide outreach to ethnic, foreign,

first-year, returning, non-traditional, and students with disabilities.(36) The Access and

Outreach Services Librarian at the University of Utah was responsible for offering

"services to special groups, including readers with disabilities, and students and faculty

involved in distance learning programs." (37)

Advertisements for these specialized outreach positions first appeared in 1981. More

announcements appeared in 1986, 1989, 1990 (two), 1992, 1993 (three), 1997, 1998

(two), 1999 (two), 2000, 2001(three), 2002, 2003, and 2004 (two). An ALA-accredited

M.L.S. was not required or preferred for three of the 22 specialized outreach positions.

Only five advertisements included subject liaison responsibilities, with even fewer (three)

requesting supervisory skills. However, eleven positions specified a need for

administrative skills. Computer skills were mentioned in 18 position descriptions (82%),

reference skills in 17 (77%), and instruction in 16 (73%). Collection development

appeared in nine descriptions (41%).

DISCUSSION

The following discussion addresses the five objectives presented at the beginning of this

article.

Determine how the number of advertisements for outreach positions has changed

during the past thirty years.

This study shows that the number of ads for distance education librarians increased most

significantly and consistently during recent years, with the greatest number occurring in

four of the five most recent years. This would make sense given that more of our users

expect resources to be available online, 24/7, and remotely, expectations that directly

reflect the job responsibilities of distance librarians. Also supportive of this steady

increase in position announcements is Caspers' conclusion that "Outreach is integral to

the success of distance education library services. From the initial stages of the design of

services through their marketing, delivery, evaluation and improvement, broad and

continuous communication efforts on the part of librarians engaged with distance

education is crucial." (38) Clearly this statement supports the notion of having positions

in libraries exclusively devoted to this population.

By contrast, this study shows a decrease in recent years in the number of ads for

multicultural services librarians. The largest number of advertisements (four) occurred in

1988, with large gaps in recent years, when no positions were advertised. A possible

explanation for the surge of postings in 1988 may be that academic libraries responded to

the emphasis on minority recruitment and marketing strategies in discussions and open

hearings held among American Library Association committees and task forces from

1985 through 1987. (39) Another possibility is that other libraries experienced similar

recruiting difficulties to those described by Dyson and concluded that they were unable to

attract a multicultural services librarian. (40)

Because advertisements for particular specialized outreach librarian positions did not

reappear in later years, the question arises as to whether these positions are designed to be

long-term or to address a specific need during a specific period of time. Further

investigation into the genesis and evolution of these positions may lead to an explanation

for the one-time-only appearance of these ads.

The increase or decrease in the number of announcements for any of these outreach

categories may be due to an increase or decrease in the number of positions, but could

equally be the result of other causes, including internal changes in personnel or in the

reassignment of these duties. Because no earlier data was found on the number of

outreach positions, or of positions in any of these categories, a current survey would not

resolve the question of whether the number of these positions have increased or decreased

over time.

Determine how position titles have changed.

Position titles for distance education librarian positions varied considerably. The term

"distance" was frequently used, particularly in recent years. However, other words or

phrases, such as "off-campus," "extended campus," "external degree," or "remote

services" librarian were used.

The authors found similar inconsistency in titles for multicultural services librarian

position announcements. Terms used other than "multicultural" included "minority

programs," "ethnic studies," or "diversity." Additionally, some position titles reflected

service to a specific racial or ethnic population. The lack of more inclusive wording in

these position titles was surprising to the authors. The authors expected to see more

position titles that used "diversity" to reflect the variety of subgroups on college

campuses beyond race and ethnicity.

Unlike the distance education and multicultural services positions, specialized outreach

positions serve a variety of user populations, and therefore had no standardized titles.

Identify the skills, knowledge, duties, and responsibilities required.

Even though all of the positions examined in this study reach out to a specific user

population, there are characteristics that distinguish each of the two major groups of

positions identified in this study. Previous professional experience, supervisory skills,

willingness to travel, and flexible schedule characterize position descriptions for the

distance education group. The emphases for distance education librarian responsibilities

were reference and management. What the authors expected to find in the distance

education position descriptions was more emphasis on strong public service abilities, a

strong understanding of teaching online, and greater emphasis on reference

responsibilities. The descriptions appeared to focus more on the ability to use technology

than the fundamentals of the deliverables—reference and instruction. Supervisory skills

for these positions were also necessary for many libraries.

When comparing distance education librarian position descriptions with multicultural

librarian position descriptions in this study, it may be suggested that the ads for

multicultural services positions were typical of entry level positions in the academic

library profession. For example, supervisory skills were not required for multicultural

services librarian positions at all, while 17 (22%) position descriptions for distance

education librarians specifically mentioned this skill. None of the multicultural services

librarian position descriptions required or preferred previous work experience, while 47

(60%) of the distance librarian position descriptions made specific mention of this.

Service to diverse populations and communication skills characterized position

descriptions for multicultural services librarians. Only one position description listed an

advanced degree as desirable. Ads for multicultural services librarians were more likely

to include collection development responsibilities than those for distance education

librarians. Emphasis was placed on program development, bibliographic preparation, and

subject liaison responsibilities for multicultural services librarian positions. The lack of

supervisory or administrative responsibilities seems most problematic with these position

descriptions. Without those responsibilities, it may be difficult for the multicultural

services librarian to move into a higher level administration position. Another potential

problem is the practice of assigning responsibility to a single person for outreach to all

under-served populations, while it would take several people to successfully accomplish

quality outreach to the growing variety of populations included in the definition of

diversity. As Elaine El-Khawas points out, "the dimensions of diversity are more

complex today than several decades ago, but probably will develop further in the future."

(41)

In spite of the variance in position descriptions for the specialized outreach section of this

study, some patterns are worth noting. The number of position descriptions that did not

require or prefer an MLS degree is proportionally higher in the specialized outreach group

than in the distance or multicultural services groups. The data also reflects a higher

emphasis on administrative skills than on supervisory skills, which implies the

importance for persons in this type of position to be able to manage projects, but not

necessarily employees. Advertisements for specialized outreach positions predominantly

listed responsibility for public relations and promotional programs and activities. The fact

that this group required an MLS least frequently points to the notion that different skills

are becoming more desirable.

As expected in any announcements for any academic librarian job**,** recent ads for

positions in all three groups were more likely to require computer skills or experience

than they were 30 years ago. This trend in increasing reliance on computers in academic

libraries is consistent with that found by Yuan Zhou, who wrote, "When comparing the

current work environment for academic librarians to that of two decades ago, one finds

that among the numerous changes that have occurred, the most visible is perhaps the

steady increase in computerization of library services." (42)

Determine how salaries have changed.

By comparison, the salaries for the multicultural services librarian positions were

substantially lower than those for the distance education librarian positions in any given

year. One explanation for this disparity can be found by looking at the data for previous

experience required. A wide range of previous experience was required or preferred in

many of the distance education librarian position announcements, whereas previous

experience was never mentioned in those for the multicultural services librarian. Another

possible explanation is that many distance education positions required management or

supervisory experience and/or skills, which might result in a higher salary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION

As would be expected, the authors discovered that the number of outreach position

advertisements generally increased during the period under study. This supports Arant

and Mosely's assertion that "…outreach is a concept that is gaining more and more

significance in libraries…" (43) Despite this predictable increase, the total number of

outreach positions advertised was relatively small for a 35 year period. Did academic

libraries incorporate outreach responsibilities into existing positions? Were internships

created that evolved into permanent positions that were never advertised? Were libraries

successful in hiring outreach librarians, and then retained those librarians, making it

unnecessary to advertise the position again?

Additionally, the variance in the number of positions posted for each category in given

years deserves further study in order to determine reasons for trends. For example, in

1988, the majority of positions posted were Multicultural Services Librarian positions;

from 2000 to 2004, Distance Education Librarian positions dominated the postings.

Further research may answer the questions this study raises: Why is there a peak in

multicultural services librarian position announcements in 1988, and so few of these

positions advertised recently? Does this reflect the actual number of multicultural

services librarian positions or are these positions being advertised elsewhere, or filled

through internships?

Based on the number of distance education position descriptions and specialized outreach

position descriptions in recent years, there are indications that these types of positions

have a future in the library profession. In looking at advertisements for multicultural

services librarian positions advertised in *C&RL News*, such a prediction can not be made

with confidence. In fact, the analysis of this type of position in particular, though

inconclusive, is alarming enough to warrant further study. One way to research the

longevity of the multicultural services librarian position is to build upon this study by

investigating the current status of the multicultural positions identified in this study.

As a final note, even though the total number of outreach positions found were fewer than

expected, the authors can conclude that the number of position announcements for

outreach librarians is growing overall, and growing at a more rapid rate in recent years.

Although many academic libraries are experiencing budgetary problems, it is crucial that

libraries think creatively when drafting new positions. An innovative position that

directly relates to recruitment and retention of students is more likely to enhance the

overall mission of the academy and impress university administrators.   Evaluating the

significance of an outreach program at Oakland University, Elizabeth W. Kraemer and

her co-authors wrote, "Continued marketing of library services to all student populations

will surely strengthen in time, and this will make outreach efforts more valuable and far-

reaching. When university enrollment is rising and retention is key, the library plays a

vital role. Kresge Library is already at the physical center of the Oakland University

campus. Through progressive outreach programs, librarians will promote the library as

the academic center as well." (44)

Though libraries are inherently service-oriented, it is important that libraries pay attention

to the latest initiatives on college campuses, such as the recent push by legislators for

public universities to give back to the community in the way of scholarship, service and

teaching. This scholarship of engagement movement hinges on the ability of universities

to reach out to the community in which they reside and contribute to educational reform,

economic development, and the quality of life. In describing the scholarship of

engagement, Kelly Ward writes of "a new vision for colleges and universities: an engaged

campus that is committed to its students and faculty and fulfilling its traditional role in

teaching and training students and citizens, but also newly committed to serving the

communities and constituencies that surround and support it." (45) Academic library

outreach can play a significant role in contributing to the campus and library goal of

engagement with their internal and external communities. As Tamera Lee and Claudine

Jenda assert, "Through outreach programs and services, libraries are assisting their

universities in educating the larger community about the practical benefits of the

university to society." (46) The library should be no exception to connecting its campus

and local community with its rich resources, special collections, and qualified human

expertise.

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233.

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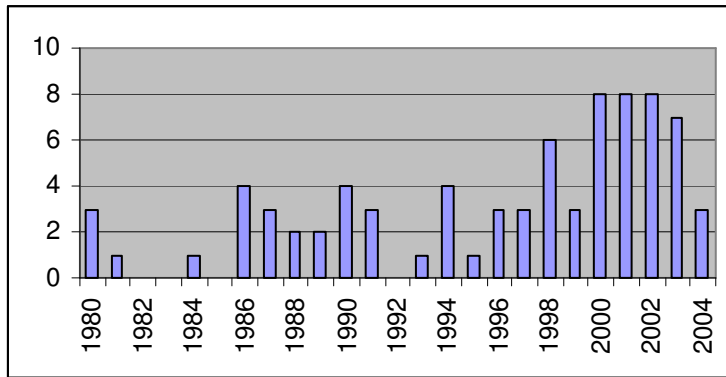
Tables and Illustrations

Fig. 1. Number of distance education librarian advertisements in *C&RL News*.
n=78

Table 1
Knowledge, Skills, and Experience for Distance Education Librarians in C&RL News
n=78

Knowledge, Skills, Experience	Required	Preferred	Total
Computer skills	48	8	56 (72%)
Communication skills	47	2	49 (63%)
Professional experience	41	6	47 (60%)
Unspecified	6	3	
1 year	6		
1-2 years		3	
2 years	16		
3 years	7		
4 years	1		
5 years	4		
6 years	0		
7 years	1		
Library User Education	33	8	41 (53%)
Reference	23	14	37 (47%)
Flexible schedule	17	1	18 (23%)
Distance education experience	10	8	18 (23%)
Willingness to travel	14	2	16 (21%)
Team orientation	9	3	12 (15%)
Supervisory experience	6	4	10 (13%)

Table 2
Position Responsibilities for Distance Education Librarians
n=78

Position Responsibilities	Number of Position Advertisements	
Management	61	(78%)
Reference service	59	(76%)
Library instruction	54	(69%)
Computer skills	44	(56%)
Collection development	26	(33%)
Supervision	17	(22%)
Promotion/marketing	17	(22%)
Document Delivery	15	(19%)
Travel	11	(14%)

Table 3
Minimum Salaries for Distance Education Librarians
n=78

Year	Minimum Salaries for Each Position, When Available
1980	$14,800; 21,864
1981	$15,700
1984	$20,000
1986	$25,000; 23,700; 19,825; 19,825
1987	$22,543; 18,000; 23,509
1988	$19,000; 21,076*
1989	$19,700; 28,225
1990	$30,000; 26,600; 37,500
1991	$23,967; 30,000; 30,000
1994	$26,714*; 33,000; 35,413*; 25,000
1995	$25,500
1996	$33,000
1997	$36,000; 28,000
1998	$28,500; 50,000; 35,394
1999	$30,000; 35,434; 27,000
2000	$34,000; 35,434; 38,000; 32,176; 42,500
2001	$46,488; 48,156; 36,000; 40,095; 48,156
2002	$36,000; 28,000; 32,404; 41,300
2003	$40,000; 43,354
2004	$42,500; 45,720

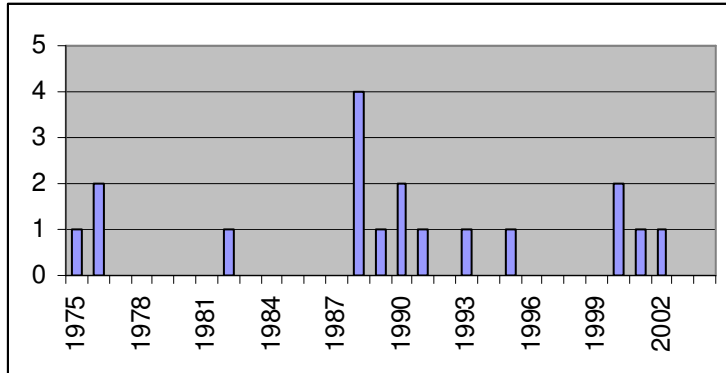An asterisk (*) identifies salaries for nine-month positions.

Fig. 2. Number of multicultural services librarian advertisements in *C&RL News*.
n=17

Table 4
Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes for Multicultural Services Librarians
n=17

Knowledge, Skills, Attributes	Required	Preferred	Total
Work with/Service to Diverse Populations	11	1	12 (71%)
Computer Skills	8	4	12 (71%)
Communication (Oral and Written) Skills	11		11 (65%)
Program Development/Management	6	1	7 (41%)
Subject Knowledge	5	2	7 (41%)
Public Service (Commitment to)	6		6 (35%)
Library Instruction/Education	3	3	6 (35%)
Interpersonal Skills	5		5 (29%)
Collection Development/Management	3	1	4 (24%)
Reference Service	2	2	4 (24%)
Work Independently	4		4 (24%)
Work as Team Member	3		3 (18%)

Table 5
Position Responsibilities for Multicultural Services Librarians
n=17

Position Responsibility	Number of Position Advertisements
Reference Service	17 (100%)
Library Instruction	9 (53%)
Collection Development/Materials Selection	7 (41%)
Program Development	6 (35%)
Liaison Responsibility	5 (29%)
Bibliography Preparation	4 (24%)
Database/Online Searching	4 (24%)

Table 6
Minimum Salaries for Multicultural Services Librarians
n=17

Year	Minimum Salaries for Each Position, When Available
1978	$9,360
1979	$10,500; 12,312
1982	$15,000
1988	$25,380; 25,380; 28,884
1989	$26,136
1990	$26,136; 32,000
1991	$28,668
1993	$31,152
1995	$29,532
2000	$30,000; 46,488