



# POC in LIS Cohorts

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Melanie Dixon<sup>2</sup>, & Niki Kirkpatrick<sup>2</sup>

Affiliations:

1 University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Health Sciences Library

2 University of Tennessee, Knoxville, University Libraries

# Moderator

Aidy Weeks



she/ her/ hers/ ella

Assistant Professor, Interim Director, GME  
Liaison Librarian & Collections Manager



# UNLV Presenters



Ruby Nugent



Pronouns: she / her / ella

Assistant Professor, Dental Medicine  
Liaison/Biomedical Science Education Librarian

Mayra Corn



Pronouns: she / her / ella

Assistant Professor, Undergraduate Medical  
Education Liaison Librarian & Technology Manager

# UTK Presenters



Melanie Dixon



she / her / hers

Assistant Professor & Health Sciences Librarian

Niki Kirkpatrick



she / her / hers

Assistant Professor & Health Sciences Librarian



# UNLV Land Acknowledgement



"The University of Nevada, Las Vegas wishes to acknowledge and honor the Indigenous communities of this region, and recognize that the university is situated on the traditional homelands of the Nuwuvi, Southern Paiute People. We offer gratitude for the land itself, for those who have stewarded it for generations, and for the opportunity to study, learn, work, and be in community with this land. We encourage everyone in this space to engage in continued learning about the Indigenous peoples who work and live on this land since time immemorial, including the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe and the Moapa Band of Paiutes, and about the historical and present realities of colonialism."

# UTK Land Acknowledgement

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“The University of Tennessee, Knoxville would like to acknowledge that the land on which we live and work is part of the traditional territory of the Tsalagi peoples (now Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians), Tsoyahá peoples (Yuchi, Muscogee Creek), and Shawnee peoples.”

For more information, please visit the following resources:

- <https://ebci.com/> - Official website of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- <https://www.cherokee.org/> - Cherokee Nation
- <https://www.muscogeenation.com/> - The Muscogee Nation
- <https://www.shawnee-nsn.gov/> - Shawnee Tribe



# Mental Health Acknowledgement

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The events over the last year and a half have inflicted heavy tolls on individuals and families, particularly those who represent the BIPOC community. The panelists of this session thank you for choosing to engage in this conference while continuing to actively heal from the trauma and stress that has been inflicted on you and those around you.

We hope that by participating in this event it will allow you the opportunity to open your mind, body, and heart to reframing the narrative and continue your incredible efforts towards building something better for both our personal and professional communities.





# Padlet / Q&A

As part of this presentation, we are using a Padlet.

Please add any thoughts and or ideas in the Padlet and we will highlight them at the end of the presentation.

<https://tinyurl.com/3j86b8d4>

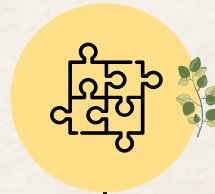


# Learning Outcomes



## Case Studies

Learn about different types of POC in LIS cohorts



## Resources

Identify methods to locate cohorts within your network



## Methods

Identify the steps to establish your own cohort

# Presentation Agenda

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Understanding  
Cohorts

01



UNLV Cohort

02



UTK Cohort

03



Demystifying  
Cohorts

04







01

# Understanding Cohorts

Definitions, Importance, & Types





# What is a Cohort?





# Cohorts Defined

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According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, there are several definitions for what makes a cohort.

- The first definition is that of a **“companion or colleague”**.
- The second definition is that of a **“band or group”** and we’d like to propose the cohorts we’re describing fall right in between.

These definitions are helpful because they allow for flexibility in the different ways someone can approach forming a cohort. Many cohorts are based upon shared experiences or interests.

# Importance of Cohorts

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## Networking

Creates built in support and connections across departments, institutions, professional organizations

## Deeper Discussions

Allows to engage in meaningful, relatable conversations and validate shared experiences

## Interpersonal Relationships

Smaller group model contributes to building social and communication skills that fosters trust, honesty, and respect

## Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

Individual knowledge, experience levels, and skills provide an opportunity to lift others up

## Power Dynamics

Program planning and decision making can be influenced by collective input and understanding

## Leadership

Team building and collaborative mindset to contribute to individual and group success





# Different Types of Cohorts

## Formal

**Formal Cohorts** are typically structured or associated with a program with a mission they seek to accomplish.

The proceedings of a formal cohort tend to be structured or planned out.

## Informal

**Informal Cohorts** are groupings of individuals with a shared: interest(s), goals, or affinity/intersectionality.

These cohorts are less structured and tend to be casual.

# Formal Cohorts

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## Knowledge River

<https://ischool.arizona.edu/knowledge-river>

**Knowledge River** supports the education, recruitment, and retention of information professionals dedicated to serving the needs of BIPOC communities.



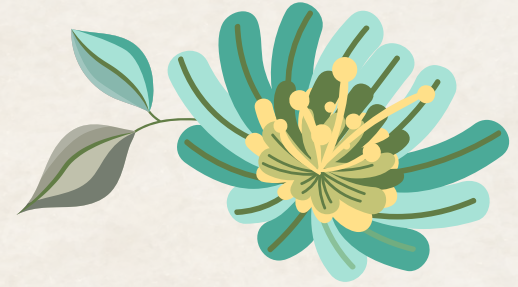
## Spectrum Scholars

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/spectrum>

**ALA Spectrum** is a scholarship program that recruits BIPOC LIS students to assist them with navigate the profession and their studies.



# Informal Cohorts



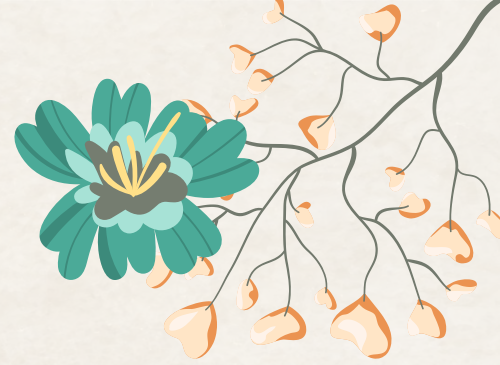
## Peer Mentorship

African American Medical Librarian Alliance's Chat 'N Chew



## Affinity Groups

Black Library Workers Group at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville



# Hybrid Cohorts





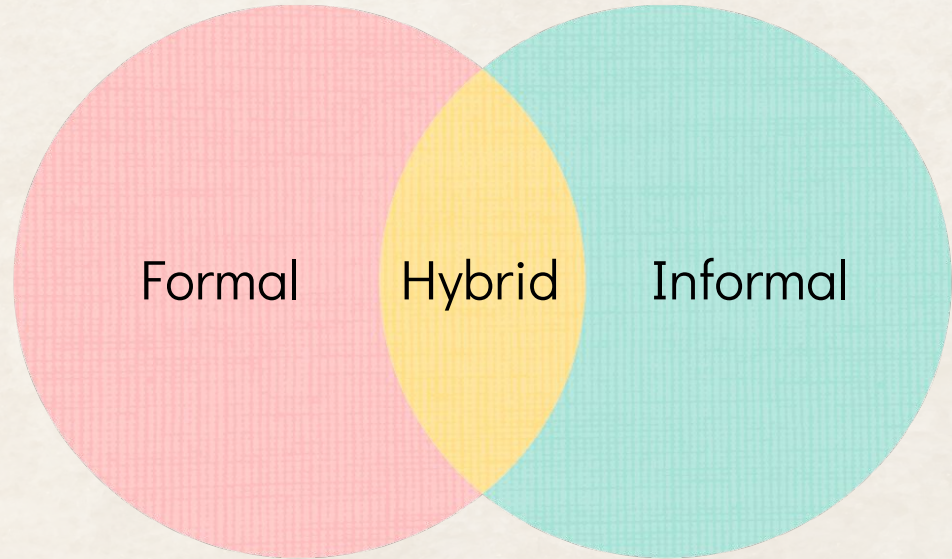
# Hybrid Cohort



**Hybrid Cohorts** represents a convergence of formal and informal components.

They often share a formal goal, however are able to be structured casually or are flexible in nature and formation.

Depending on the needs and circumstances of its members, hybrid cohorts may constantly change.



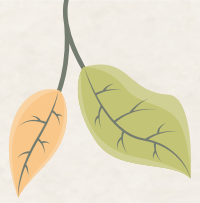


# UNLV Cohort

Health Sciences Library  
Liaisons





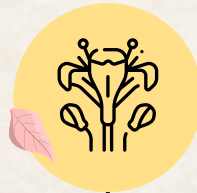


# Cohorts formed at UNLV



## Starting Together

Aidy - July 2019 Ruby  
- July 2019 Mayra -  
March 2020



## Intersections

A cohort within a cohort:  
Shared UNLV Library  
tenure track  
peer-to-peer mentoring  
model



## A New Team

UME Team formed  
in Spring 2021 Mayra  
- technology/research Ruby -  
instruction/cultural humility  
How we stay connected as a team



# Support and Collaboration UNLV

*“Forming a positive support network also helps to combat isolationism and provide a sounding board for questioning microaggressions.*

*As an informal cohort of three Latinx librarians, we’ve created a safe space supported by our shared backgrounds and commonalities. One where we can seek each other’s guidance, insight and solidarity in the tenure-track process and as new academic librarians.”*

***Nuestra Comunidad: Themes and Shared Experiences in a Latinx Librarian Cohort, WOC+LIS, June 2020***



Librarianship in the time of Covid:  
The Pandemic Factor



Scholarship

- AAMLA Webinars
- Covid-19 Response Article
- Nuestra Comunidad WOC+LIS Blog



Mental Health

- Check-in Meetings
- Social Gatherings



Social (In)Justice in Health Sciences

- MLA Latinx Caucus Projects, Letters of solidarity, editorials





**UTK Cohort**

**Health Sciences Liaison Team**

# UTK Cohort Journey



- **October 2013:** Melanie hired as librarian at for-profit institution.

- **December 2013:** Niki hired as Library Assistant at same institution.



- **March 2015:** Melanie hired as a temporary Health Sciences Librarian for UTK; hired permanently for position in 2016.

- **October 2016:** Niki hired as a Commons Librarian (formerly known as a Public Services Librarian).



- **May 2019:** Niki hired as a Health Sciences Librarian.

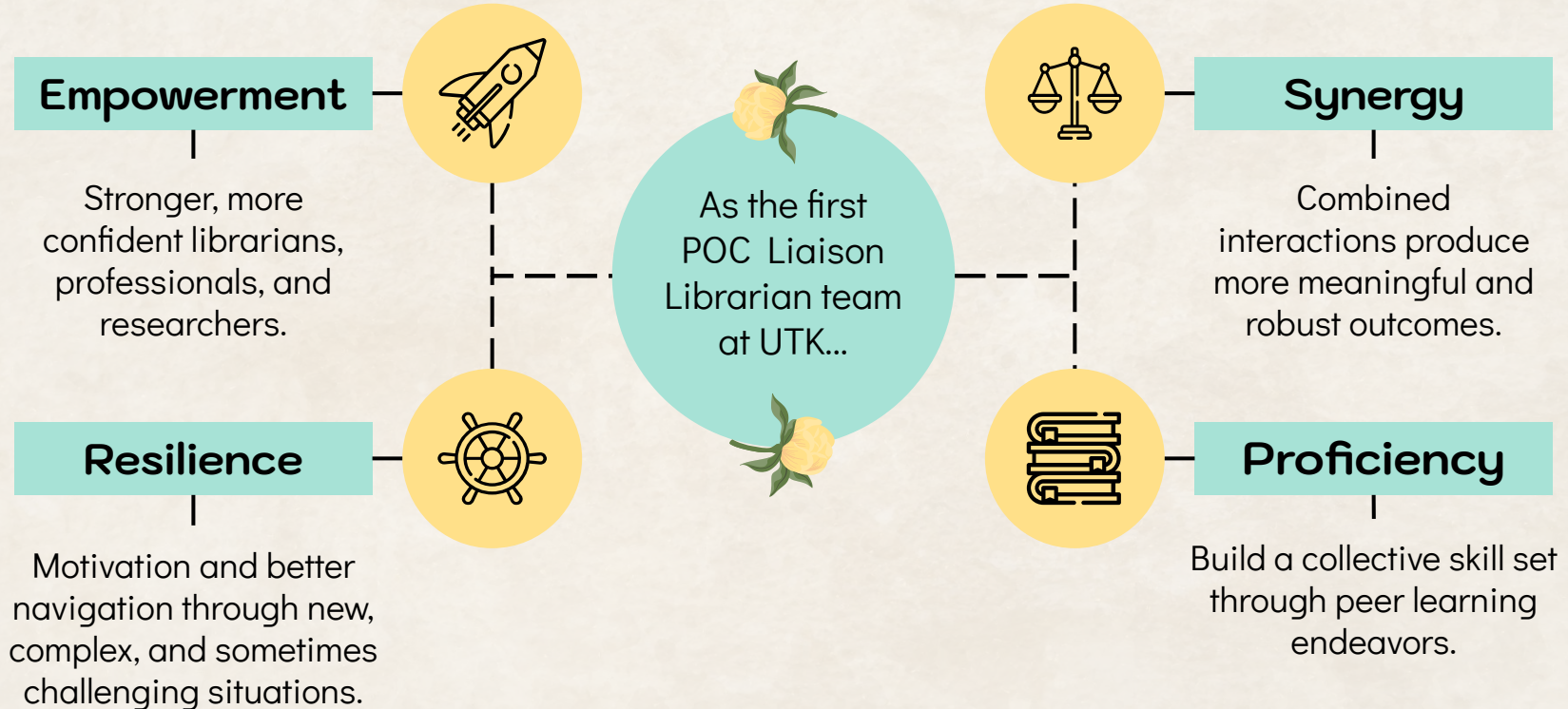
- **May 2019:** We became the new Health Sciences Liaison Team for Audiology & Speech Pathology, Nursing, Nutrition, and Public Health.







# UTK Cohort Experience





# Demystifying Cohorts

And a Call to Action








# Demystifying Cohorts

You may already be part of a cohort and not even know it



**Cohorts** can be made up of 2 individuals, dozens of people, or several groups part of a large organization

**Cohorts** “happen” for a reason - often out of need. It is a natural response to come together for support and friendship

**Cohorts** allow an environment where members obtain knowledge, put it into practice, receive feedback, and reflect on their work in a positive and empowering way

**Cohorts** develop organically or are created purposefully, can meet in person or virtually

**Cohorts** provide spaces where you can feel safe taking risks, expressing your thoughts, have difficult conversations, and build confidence

# A Call to Action

As BIPOC librarians, we recognize our professional journey looks and feels different than that of our white colleagues. We aspire to:

- **Treat ourselves gently, allowing for grace and self care, and taking the time needed to heal and grow as professionals and humans**
- **Empower ourselves and others to seek out the support needed to successfully navigate librarianship**
- **Inspire each other to find or create cohorts that provide the space to raise our voices as individuals and as a community**







Q / A



Question and Answer Discussion

# Resources

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Interested in learning how to create or participate in cohorts? Check out these resources!

## Affinity Library Groups:

- American Indian Library Association (AILA)
- Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA)
- Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA)
- Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA)
- REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking
- Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC)



**We Here:** a supportive community for BIPOC library and archive workers

- <https://www.wehere.space/>
- Twitter: @librarieswehere
- Instagram: @librarieswehere
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/librarieswehere/>

**Renewers:** Promoting Civility and Self-Care in the Workplace

- <https://renewerslis.wordpress.com/>
- Twitter: @RenewersLIS
- Instagram: @RenewersLIS
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2063958813847917/>



# Resources...continued

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Interested in learning how to create or participate in cohorts? Check out these resources!

## LibVoices Podcast:

- <https://anchor.fm/libvoices>
- Twitter: @LibVoic
- Instagram: @LibVoices

## mindfulinlis:

- Twitter: @mindfulinlis
- Instagram: @mindfulinlis

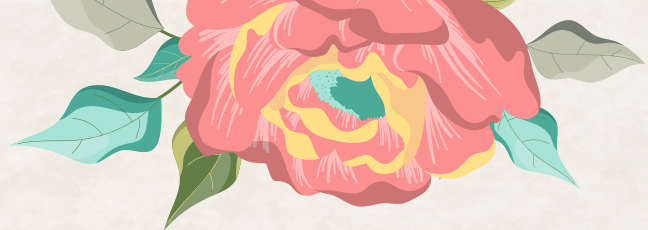
## Urban LIB ROOM:

- <https://anchor.fm/natalie-walker7>
- Instagram: @urbanlibroom

## Health Sciences Library Workers:

### Medical Library Association Affinity Caucuses:

- AAMLA Caucus
- Asian Diaspora Coalition of Medical Librarians Caucus
- Latinx Caucus:  
<https://www.mlanet.org/page/caucus-latinx>
- Social Justice Caucus...
- Accessibility & Disability Caucus...





# Thank you!

For any questions related to this presentation,  
please email [hslibs@utk.edu](mailto:hslibs@utk.edu)

**CREDITS:** Presentation template is available at  
Slidesgo using icons from Flaticon.  
Photo by [Colin Maynard](#) on [Unsplash](#)



# POCinLIS Cohorts

## Session Links

<https://tinyurl.com/pocinliscohorts>

### **Slide #6: UTK Land Acknowledgement**

For more information, please visit the following resources for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee Nation, Muscogee Nation, and Shawnee Tribe:

Official website of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

<https://ebci.com/>

Cherokee Nation

<https://www.cherokee.org/>

The Muscogee Nation

<https://www.muscogeenation.com/>

Shawnee Tribe

<https://www.shawnee-nsn.gov/>

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### **Slide #8: Padlet and Q&A**

Padlet: <https://tinyurl.com/3j86b8d4>

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### **Slide #16: Formal Cohorts**

Knowledge River

<https://ischool.arizona.edu/knowledge-river>

ALA Spectrum Scholars

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/spectrum>

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### **Slide #22: Support and Collaboration UNLV**

Nuestra Comunidad: Themes and Shared Experiences in a Latinx Librarian Cohort (articles)

<https://www.wocandlib.org/features?month=06-2020>

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### **Slide #29: Q&A Discussion**

Padlet: <https://tinyurl.com/3j86b8d4>

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### **Slide # 30: Resources**

American Indian Library Association (AILA)

<https://ailanet.org/>

Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA)

<http://www.apalaweb.org/>

Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA)

<http://www.bcala.org/>

Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA)

<http://www.cala-web.org/>

REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking

<https://www.reforma.org/>

Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC)

<http://www.jclcinc.org/>

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We Here:

<https://www.wehere.space/>

Twitter: @librarieswehere

Instagram: @librarieswehere

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/librarieswehere/>

Renewers:

<https://renewerslis.wordpress.com/>

Twitter: @RenewersLIS

Instagram: @RenewersLIS

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2063958813847917/>

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### **Slide #31: Resources continued**

LibVoices Podcast:

<https://anchor.fm/libvoices>

Twitter: @LibVoic

Instagram: @LibVoices

Mindfulinlis:



Twitter: @mindfulinlis  
Instagram: @mindfulinlis

Urban LIB ROOM:  
<https://anchor.fm/natalie-walker7>  
Instagram: @urbanlibroom  
Health Sciences Library Workers:

Medical Library Association Affinity Caucuses:

AAMLA Caucus  
<https://www.mlanet.org/page/caucus-aamla>  
<https://sites.google.com/view/aamla-mla/home>

Asian Diaspora Coalition of Medical Librarians Caucus  
<https://www.mlanet.org/page/asian-diaspora-coalition-of-medical-librarians-caucus>.

Latinx Caucus  
<https://www.mlanet.org/page/caucus-latinx>

Social Justice & Health Disparities Caucus  
<https://www.mlanet.org/page/section-landing-social-justice-section>

Accessibility & Disability Caucus  
<https://www.mlanet.org/page/accessibility-and-disability-caucus>

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**Slide #32 : Thank You!**

Email:  
[hslibs@utk.edu](mailto:hslibs@utk.edu)

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