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10-2021

## **Meeting the Challenge: Preparing for a Graduate Assistant**

Melissa Brooks

Diana Simpson

Chase Johnson

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# *Preparing for a Graduate Assistant*

*Diana Simpson, Cataloging Librarian  
Chase Johnson, Acquisitions Supervisor  
Melissa Brooks, Head of Technical Services*



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# Agenda for Talk

- About Technical Services
- The Idea
- Beginning
- Preparation & Implementation
- Future






# About USM Technical Services

## Current Department Structure

- Department Head
- 2 Faculty librarians (1 vacancy)
- 1 Acquisitions Supervisor
- 2 Acquisitions Staff
- 3 Cataloging Staff
- 1 Preservation Specialist

## Current work

- Acquisitions
  - Original and Copy Cataloging
  - Database and Collection Maintenance
  - Electronic Resources
- 

# The Idea



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# Graduate Assistant –WHY?

- ALA – SLIS Program
- Train Future Technical Services Librarians
- Higher Level Learning
- Great Opportunity for a Graduate Student



# Challenges

- First Departmental Student in Many Years
- New Head of Technical Services and Cataloging Librarian
- Retiring Cataloging Librarian
- Preparation



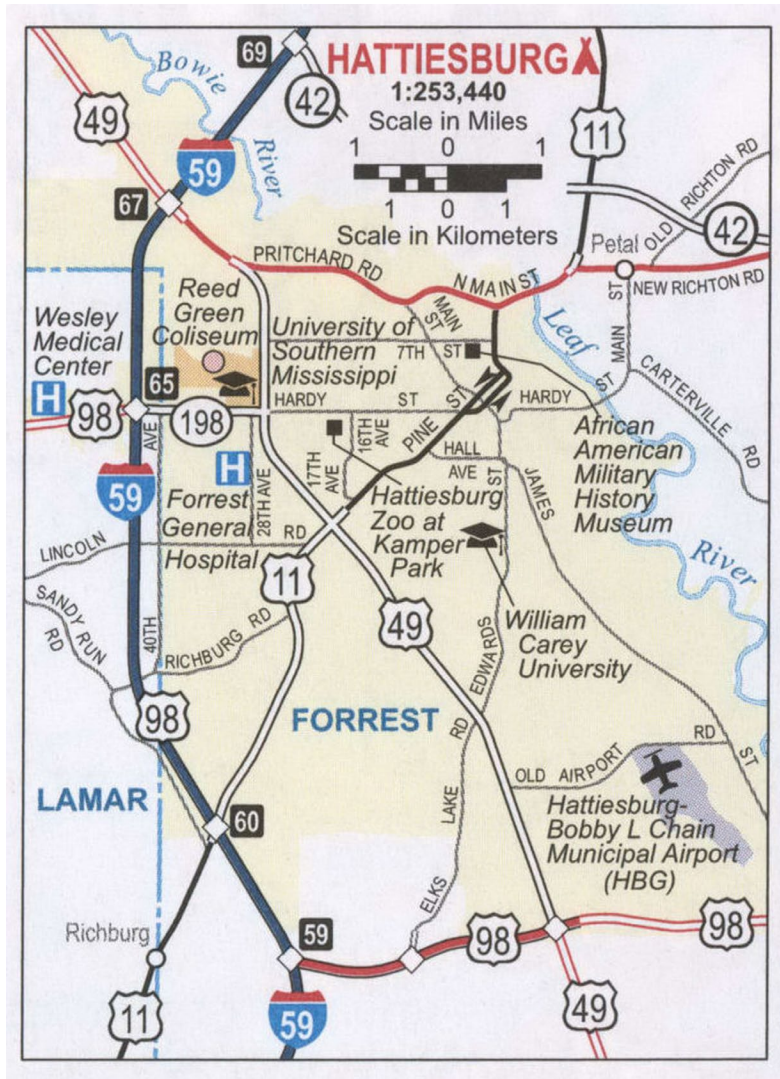
# Beginning



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# Where to Start???



# The Ideas



# Position Description

As a member of the USM Technical Services Unit, the Graduate Assistant works as needed by the unit in the areas of acquisitions, cataloging, electronic resources management, and preservation & processing within the ExLibris Alma library services platform. Work assignments will rotate among these areas throughout the year as needed by the unit and to give the Graduate Assistant opportunities to learn about technical services work in an academic library.



# Advertising and Interviewing

- Advertising
  - Created the Job Ad
  - Posted position to SLIS Listserv
  - Asked for Resumes
- Interviewing
  - Conducted Interviews (via Zoom)
  - Chose Motivation Based Questions



# After the Interview

- Choosing the Candidate
  - Committee Met and Ranked Each Applicant
  - Discussed Pros and Cons
- Selected a Candidate
- Communicated to All Applicants the Hiring Decision



# Preparation & Implementation



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# Planning for Modules

- Acquisitions
- Cataloging
- Electronic Resources Management
- Processing & Repair
- Database Maintenance



# Module Rotation

## List of what want to cover in each module

1. Cataloging Basics
  - a. Understanding MARC
  - b. Understanding RDA
  - c. Relationship between I
  - d. Descriptive Cataloging
  - e. Local Practice
2. Cataloging Advanced
  - a. Subject Analysis
  - b. Classification
  - c. Serials Cataloging
3. Cataloging Special Formats
  - a. Music
  - b. AV



### 2. Acquisitions (Oct. 1-Nov.1) - Deadline Sept. 1

- a. Alma Training
- b. Budgeting
- c. Ordering
- d. Receiving

The module should be complete with Trello documentation by Sept. 1, 2021

### 3. Cataloging Advanced 1 (Nov. 1 -Jan.31)- With Break

- a. Alma - Training
- b. Subject Analysis
- c. Classification

Timeline based on peak workflows / building knowledge





# Logistical Planning

Workspace  
Office / Desk

Equipment  
Computer / Printer / Scanner

Software installed  
Permissions

Office supplies



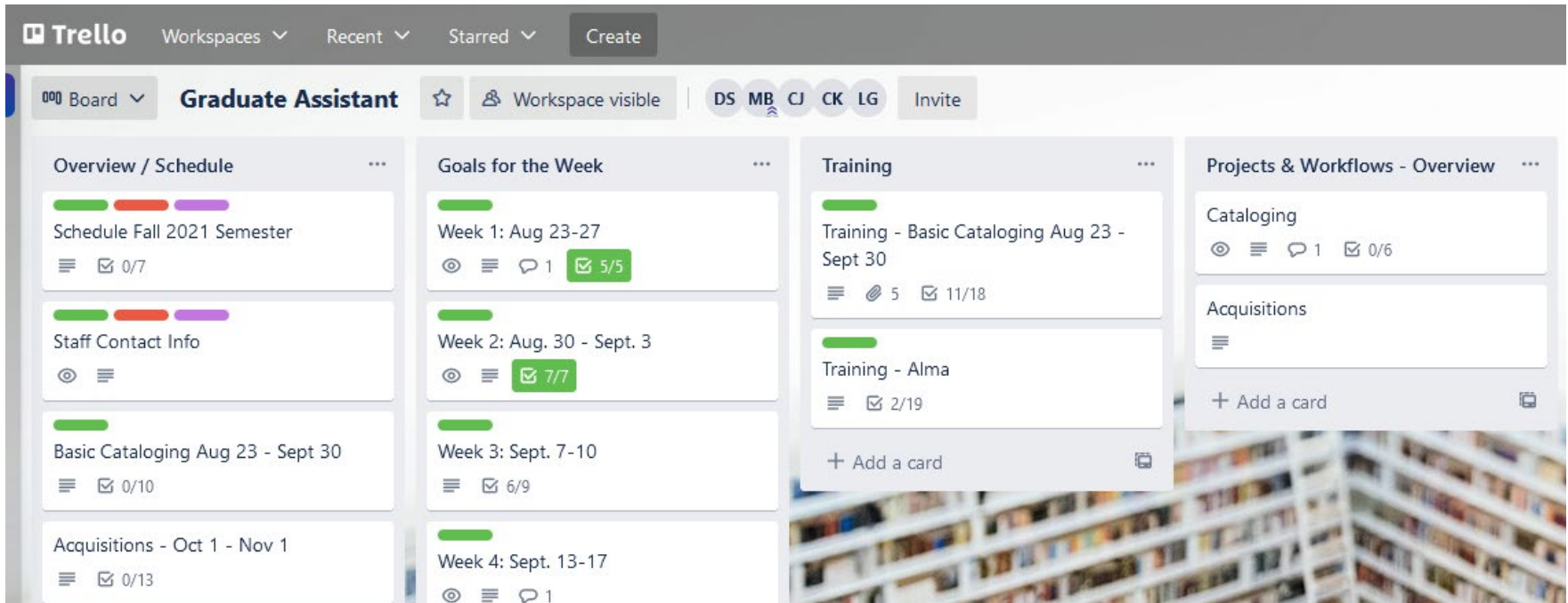
# Training Plan

- Topics
- Time frames
- Sequence
- Methods
- Resources



# Trello for project management

Tool for organizing module sequence, schedules, training plans



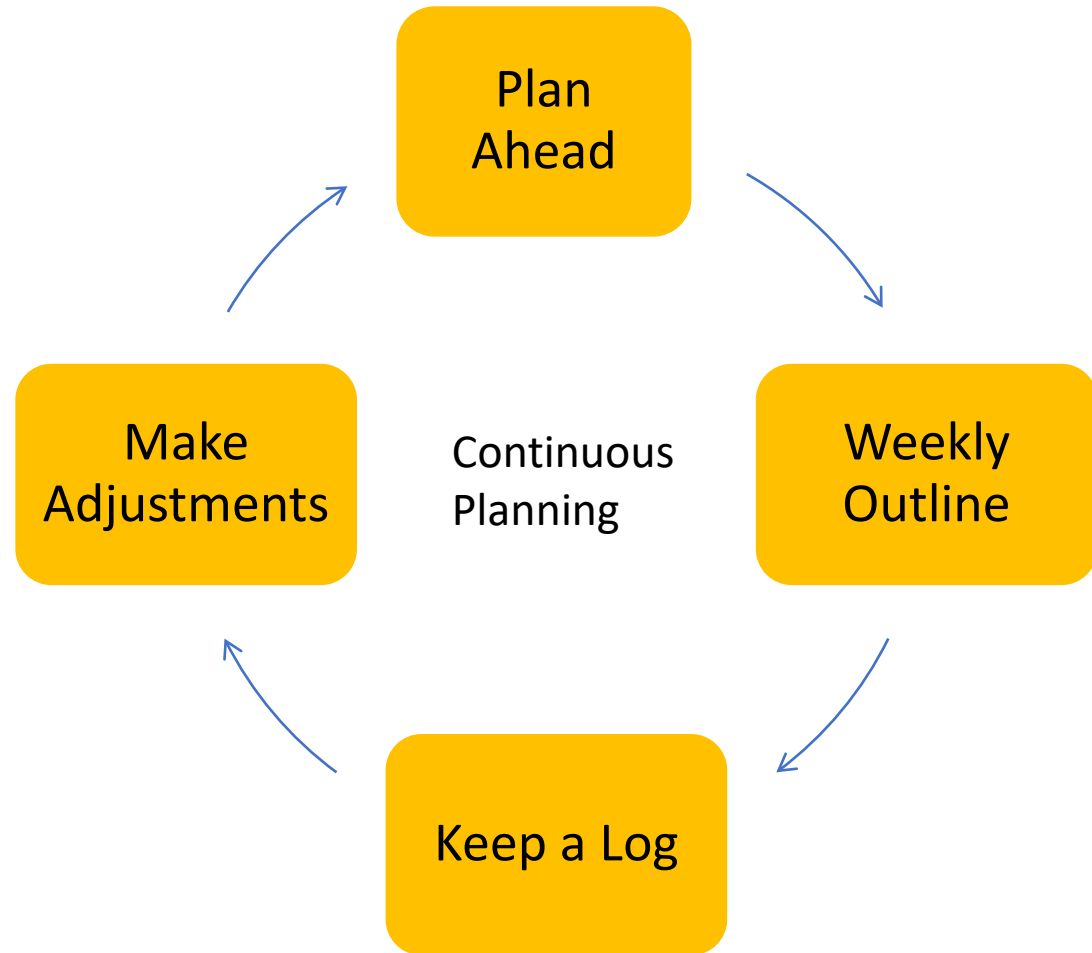
# Trello

for project management

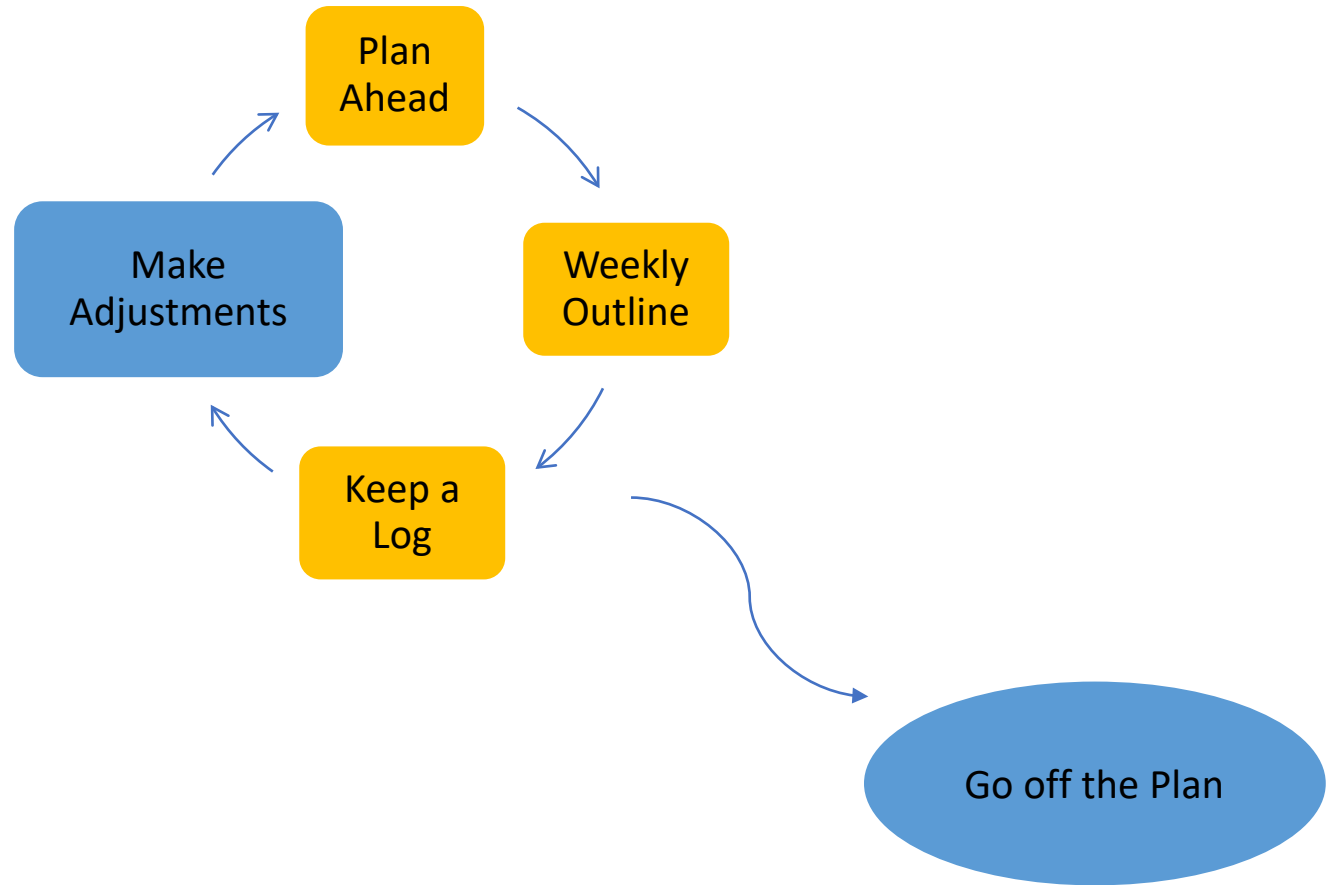
- Checklists
- Links to Resources
- Projects to work on
- Future Plans

The screenshot displays a Trello card interface. At the top, the card is titled "Week 1: Aug 23-27" and is located in a list named "Goals for the Week". Below the title, there is a "LABELS" section with a green "To Complete" label and a plus sign to add more. A "Description" section is visible with the text "Week 1 Goals - Getting Started" and an "Edit" button. The main part of the card is a checklist titled "Week 1 Goals" with a progress bar at 100%. The checklist items are: "Tour of dept / meet staff", "Student GA paperwork", "Settle into workspace / technology set up / access logins, etc.", "Communication plan — how we will communicate — email / messaging / zoom or Teams, etc.", and "Start Cataloging Basics training". Below the checklist is an "Add an item" button. At the bottom, there is an "Activity" section showing a comment from "Diana Simpson" on August 6 at 2:50 PM, listing tasks: "Alma login / permissions", "OCLC Connexion client install / login", and "Logins for ClassWeb, RDA Toolkit, Cataloger's Desktop".

# OK, so now that we're "organized" ...



# Continuous Planning



# Future



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# Next Steps

- Changing Modules/Rotations
- Transferring Skills





# End Goals

- Experience All of Technical Services
- Prep. for Future Endeavors
  - Resume Building
  - Interview Practice
  - Networking



# What We Learned

- Be Flexible
- Repetition is Invaluable
- Be Fluid
- Be Supportive
- Everyone Learns at Their Own Pace
- You Can't Cover Everything in One Day



# Evaluation

- Self-Evaluation
- Post Project (GA) Review
  - Good
  - Bad
  - What We Can Do BETTER
- Graduate Assistant Feedback
  - Formal
  - Informal



# Questions?

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