

Listen to Librarians: Highlighted Core Competencies for Librarianship from the Perspectives of Working Librarians

Yuerong Hu, Melissa G. Ocepek, John Stephen Downie, and Lecia Barker

Librarianship is constantly confronted with unexpected and quickly evolving socio-technical challenges, yet the documents that define the core professional competencies for librarians are infrequently updated. Based upon survey responses collected from 383 working librarians located in the United States, we describe a set of gaps between current competency guidelines and current library realities with regard to practice, management, communication, career development, relations, and personal attributes. We argue that professional library organizations, educators, and policy-makers could formulate more relevant and impactful core competency documents by deliberately integrating the on-the-ground insights of librarians' lived experience.

Introduction

Librarianship and librarians have been constantly challenged by societal changes and technological developments,¹ which have been significantly accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Libraries have been taking unprecedented action to resume ordinary services through this sustained crisis,² such as holding virtual reference and programming, offering curbside services, and providing online access to copyrighted materials. As pandemics have changed and shaped our social world throughout human history, new skills and processes are required for libraries to continue to serve their communities. This year has highlighted the news for emerging skill sets that had never been embedded in LIS competencies before, and corresponding action needs to be deployed to incorporate them. It makes us think about what core competencies LIS students should acquire to prepare for ongoing transitions as well as incoming challenges. To answer this question, we started by consulting existing North American librarian core competencies documents (standards, frameworks, statements, guidelines, and so on) and research articles. Two

* Yuerong Hu is a doctoral student in the School of Information Sciences at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; email: yuerong2@illinois.edu. Melissa G. Ocepek is Assistant Professor in the School of Information Sciences at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; email: mgocepek@illinois.edu. John Stephen Downie is Professor and Associate Dean for Research in the School of Information Sciences at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; email: jdownie@illinois.edu. Lecia Barker is Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies and Associate Professor in the College of Media, Communication and Information at University of Colorado Boulder; email: lecia.barker@colorado.edu. ©2022 Yuerong Hu, Melissa G. Ocepek, John Stephen Downie, and Lecia Barker, Attribution-NonCommercial (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) CC BY-NC.

problems arose from our preliminary investigation. First, the formal documents have not been frequently updated to accommodate rising trends.³ Second, while LIS students and working professionals are profoundly influenced by these documents, through our literature review, we've rarely seen the role that their on-the-ground voices played in instigating or reshaping the standards. To bridge this emerging gap between demanding competencies on site and the acknowledged ones on record, it is important to listen to the voices of the practitioners.

Driven by the aforementioned initiatives, we investigated pre-existing but unexamined survey responses collected from 383 librarians based in the United States.⁴ These librarians spontaneously spoke of favorable but underdeveloped core competencies for librarianship when asked about their advice for future LIS professionals interested in their positions. In this paper, we present their empirical insights for the following constituencies: 1) for LIS organizations and policymakers to better craft core competencies documents; 2) for library administrators and staff to plan future recruitment and on-the-job training; and 3) for LIS program educators and students to better equip future librarians. In the following sections, we first introduce our literature review findings. Next, we introduce the research design and the data analysis procedure. Then we profile the respondents and present their opinions. Finally, we discuss our findings and make suggestions for future library stakeholders.

Literature Review

Competencies include skills, knowledge, abilities, and personal characteristics that individuals can acquire through education and training to define their occupational identity and conduct their professional practice.⁵ Prior research into librarians' competencies has been centered on "core competencies," which was a concept originally developed for studying companies' competitiveness in the early 1990s.⁶ This term quickly gained popularity in many areas, LIS included, for its feasibility in discussing professional competencies at both institutional and personal levels. However, the topics under the umbrella of librarians' core competencies are nothing novel; they have been deeply rooted in the historical discourse in library science core curriculum for nearly a century.⁷ In the late twentieth century, although there had existed several library science school standards and curriculum guidelines put forward by organizations such as The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and American Library Association (ALA),⁸ almost no consensus had been reached on the core curricula or accreditation standards due to two facts: first, the dynamic sociotechnical environment made the core competencies changeable; second, without any mechanism to ensure that consensus would be broadly accepted and applied, agreements on core competencies failed to make a difference in practice.⁹ For instance, ALA's *Standards for Accreditation 1972* was only a passing reference without any elaboration or enforcement.¹⁰ Consequently, library schools nationwide were still developing curricula on their own.¹¹

ALA started to specify core competencies for graduates of ALA-accredited programs in the late 1990s. A draft statement on core competencies created by four ALA task forces came out in 2001, however, then it languished for years before a new group took up the job.¹² In 2008, under the charge of Leslie Burger (the 2006–2007 president of ALA) and with extensive consultation among various bodies, the ALA Executive Board approved the Core Competencies of Librarianship Statement (hereinafter ALACC), which finalized many earlier years of work.¹³ This statement defined "the basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from ALA-accredited master's programs in library and information studies" and was officially adopted

as policy by the ALA Council in 2009.¹⁴ Since ALA has become the creator and evaluator of accreditation standards for library education in the United States, this statement has made a tremendous impact on the curricula of all the ALA-accredited programs in the United States.¹⁵ Meanwhile, other LIS professional associations have also released their statements of knowledge and competencies for specific tracks of librarianship as supplements,¹⁶ as presented in table 1. For instance, the Association for College and Research Libraries, as an important division of ALA, have released and updated many guidelines, standards, and frameworks specifically devoted to academic librarianship.

Associated Organization	Name of Document	First and Latest Formal Release
Map & Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT)	Map, GIS, and Cataloging / Metadata Librarian Core Competencies	2008 and 2018
Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE)	ALISE Ethics Guidelines Statement	First published in 2010
Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)	Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL Librarians	First published in 2010
Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA)	Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff	1981 and 2010
Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC)	Competencies for Federal Librarians	2008 and 2011
Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)	ACRL Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries	First published in 2012

Nevertheless, many core competencies documents were publicly released almost a decade ago, while others have only been updated irregularly. As time went by, there emerged increasing discussions on the comprehensiveness and timeliness of these documents. Such discussions primarily covered two topics: 1) assessment of existing documents;¹⁷ and 2) proposals of emerging core competencies.¹⁸ Most findings were based on literature review and content analysis, with information extracted from the following sources: 1) core competencies documents;¹⁹ 2) LIS program catalogs and curriculum;²⁰ 3) job advertisements and position announcements;²¹ and 4) data directly collected from librarians, educators, and LIS students.²² For instance, scholars considered it a *“surprising omission”* that marketing was not explicitly mentioned in the ALACC.²³ They argued that marketing skills should be included along with advocacy because libraries had to demonstrate their worth to *“compete for scarce financial resources”* in the current fiscal environment.²⁴ Other frequently advocated competencies involved the following areas: 1) communication and management;²⁵ 2) advanced customer services;²⁶ 3) digital literacy and computational skills;²⁷ and 4) selected personal characteristics and elusive soft skills.²⁸ While there remain certain ambiguity and controversy over the definitions and scope of core competencies,²⁹ at the center of all discussions lies what it takes to be a competent librarian.

While we highly appreciate prior studies, we noticed two methodological features shared by most empirical research that might lead to certain limitations. First, data collection pre-

dominantly relied on structured interviews and close-ended questions that were rooted in pre-existing competencies documents.³⁰ Second, data analyses were often based on content analysis of categorical and numerical data, even when there was qualitative data collected.³¹ While such methods make the research operationalizable, they might subtly orient the respondents toward certain perspectives. Besides, hypothesis testing and statistical significance under quantitative research could be inadequate for generating new ideas or developing a deeper understanding.³² Therefore, we believed a less directive and more holistic approach would make a good supplement to the existing empirical studies. For instance, open-ended questions without any predetermined set of choices would encourage the free flow of thoughts and narratives, particularly for sensitive topics, unexpected issues, and reasons behind the answers.³³ Compatible with such a data collection approach, qualitative analysis of content will allow the researchers to work in an interpretive paradigm, code for consensus, and leverage their domain knowledge for data analysis. For instance, while categories under quantitative content analysis have to be mutually exclusive to follow certain statistical assumptions, qualitative analysis of content allows using multiple categories simultaneously.³⁴

Research Design and Methods

Based on the findings aforementioned, our research aimed at identifying and presenting the most demanding core competencies from working librarians' perspectives, especially those that have been underdeveloped in existing documents but spontaneously advocated by the practitioners. For eliciting ground truth and gaining a more nuanced understanding of desirable core competencies on-site, we conducted a qualitative analysis of content on 383 librarians' responses to the following open-ended question: *"What advice, if any, would you provide to a degree program that educates future librarians who want to do the kind of library work you do?"* These responses were collected from a pre-existing survey participated by 759 librarianship professionals (mostly librarians). This librarianship survey was part of a large survey that included eight tracks for different information professionals to explore their opinions on LIS education through the lens of their varied roles. With approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Texas at Austin, all survey respondents were recruited through two nonprobability sampling methods: convenience sampling and snowball sampling. The convenience sampling began with email invitations sent to 2,631 registered alumni who graduated from a LIS school in the US with an MLIS, MSIS, or PhD degree from the early 1950s to 2013. This alumni group was contacted for convenience sampling because the survey conductors were affiliated with this school at that time. Snowball sampling was conducted by inviting the respondents to share the link with other relevant LIS professionals whom they believed would be interested in this survey. Some survey data have already led to several published papers regarding the relationship between LIS education and specific kinds of information work.³⁵ However, since the survey data collected was large and heterogenous, there remained a subset of responses from 759 librarians unexamined. Among these 759 librarians, 383 respondents answered the aforementioned open-ended question that was the focus of this study. Except for the two respondents who declined to provide alumni information, 223 of these respondents (58% of 383) identified themselves as alumni of the same LIS school, while 158 respondents (41% of 383) denied their alumni affiliations with this school. Although the original open-ended question did not specify librarians' core competencies, respondents spontaneously talked about core competencies, along with their education experience and concerns about library realities.³⁶

Considering how the emergent feedback might answer our proposed questions and fill the gap we identified in the literature review, we analyzed these responses and uncovered six groups of desirable core competencies. Two rounds of coding were conducted. First, two researchers coded these responses independently using a web application for qualitative and mixed analysis called Dedoose.³⁷ Each response was annotated with words and phrases that were regarded as good summaries of its content according to each coder's familiarity with librarianship and LIS education. Many identical codes and intercode relationships about librarians' core competencies emerged from the comparison of the two independent codebooks. Based on such coding consensus observed, a new codebook was created and applied to the second round of coding. All the codes and intercode relationships adopted were examined and organized based on their topics and thematic relations to best preserve and reflect the respondents' authentic understanding. It is to be noted that the core competencies codes were neither mutually exclusive nor collectively exhaustive. As there were many different competencies and so much overlap between them, it was difficult and unnecessary to cover everything or separate highly correlated competencies into isolated buckets. This was another reason why qualitative analysis of content was chosen over quantitative content analysis. Given this codebook, each response was annotated with at least one code by the two researchers respectively. Then the two coding results were discussed and merged into one. In terms of criteria for coding evaluation, as an interpretive method, qualitative analysis of content differs from the traditional quantitative content analysis.³⁸ Instead of calculating the intercoder reliability, the credibility of this analysis was based on precise coding definitions, comprehensive expertise of the coders, and clear coding procedures, which were all strictly followed and applied in this coding process.

Respondent Profiles

Table 2 provides an overview of the respondent profiles. They worked in a wide variety of library types: public libraries (38%, $n = 147$), academic or higher education libraries (35%, $n = 133$), school libraries (12%, $n = 46$), hospital and health libraries (9%, $n = 35$), government libraries (4%, $n = 17$), law libraries (2%, $n = 9$), corporate libraries (2%, $n = 7$) and other nonprofit libraries such as the art museum library and the synagogue library (2%, $n = 7$). Geographically, they worked in urban (56%, $n = 214$), suburban (32%, $n = 123$), rural (7%, $n = 26$) and other areas (5%, $n = 20$). Some respondents held more than one position or worked for multiple libraries simultaneously. For working experience, 227 respondents (59%) were very experienced librarians who have been working for more than 10 years, of which 173 (45%) people had been library professionals for more than 15 years. Fifty-six (15%) respondents had been librarians for 5–10 years and 95 (25%) librarians had been working for less than 5 years. The following titles were included: 1) various tracks of librarians (64%, $n = 247$); 2) administration and management positions (27%, $n = 104$); and 3) research and academic positions (7%, $n = 25$). These librarians were highly educated, especially in LIS. More than 90 percent ($n = 306$) of the 339 respondents with education information provided had at least one master's degree, of which 300 respondents earned their master's degree in LIS. Other degrees held by our respondents include Juris Doctor degree ($n = 9$), PhD in LIS ($n = 3$) and humanities ($n = 1$), and MS in humanities ($n = 31$), education ($n = 13$), law ($n = 9$), natural science and technology ($n = 4$), and other social sciences ($n = 10$). In short, the respondents were predominantly experienced and well-educated librarians coming from diverse positions and educational backgrounds, which provides various perspectives on librarians' competencies. The average length of their responses is 41 words, while the longest response was 264 words.

TABLE 2
Respondent Profiles

Respondent Profiles (n = 383)		
Types of Libraries	Count	Percentage
public libraries	147	38%
academic or higher education libraries	133	35%
school libraries	46	12%
hospital and health libraries	35	9%
government libraries	17	4%
law libraries	9	2%
corporate libraries	7	2%
other nonprofit libraries	7	2%
Geographical Distribution		
	Count	Percentage
urban	214	56%
suburban	123	32%
rural	26	7%
other areas	20	5%
Library Working Experience		
	Count	Percentage
more than 15 years	173	45%
10 to 15 years	54	14%
5 to 10 years	56	15%
less than 5 years	95	25%
N/A	5	1%
Job Titles		
	Count	Percentage
various specializations of librarians	247	64%
administrative and management positions	104	27%
faculty, research, and professional positions	25	7%
N/A	7	2%
<p>Notes: Some respondents work on multiple positions at the same time so the percentages for "Types of Libraries" added up to over 100%. "N/A" means the answer to this question was not available (not answered or answered with "not applicable" and the like).</p>		

Findings

Coding Overview

The final codebook was composed of 33 codes in 9 categories. Table 3 summarized the coding outcomes and figure 1 showed the co-occurrence of each two groups of codes. Co-occurrence happens when two different groups of codes are applied to the same response simultaneously, which indicates their proximity or correlation. Mapping co-occurrence of all coded competencies shows us their overall interaction in the context of the responses. In figure 1,

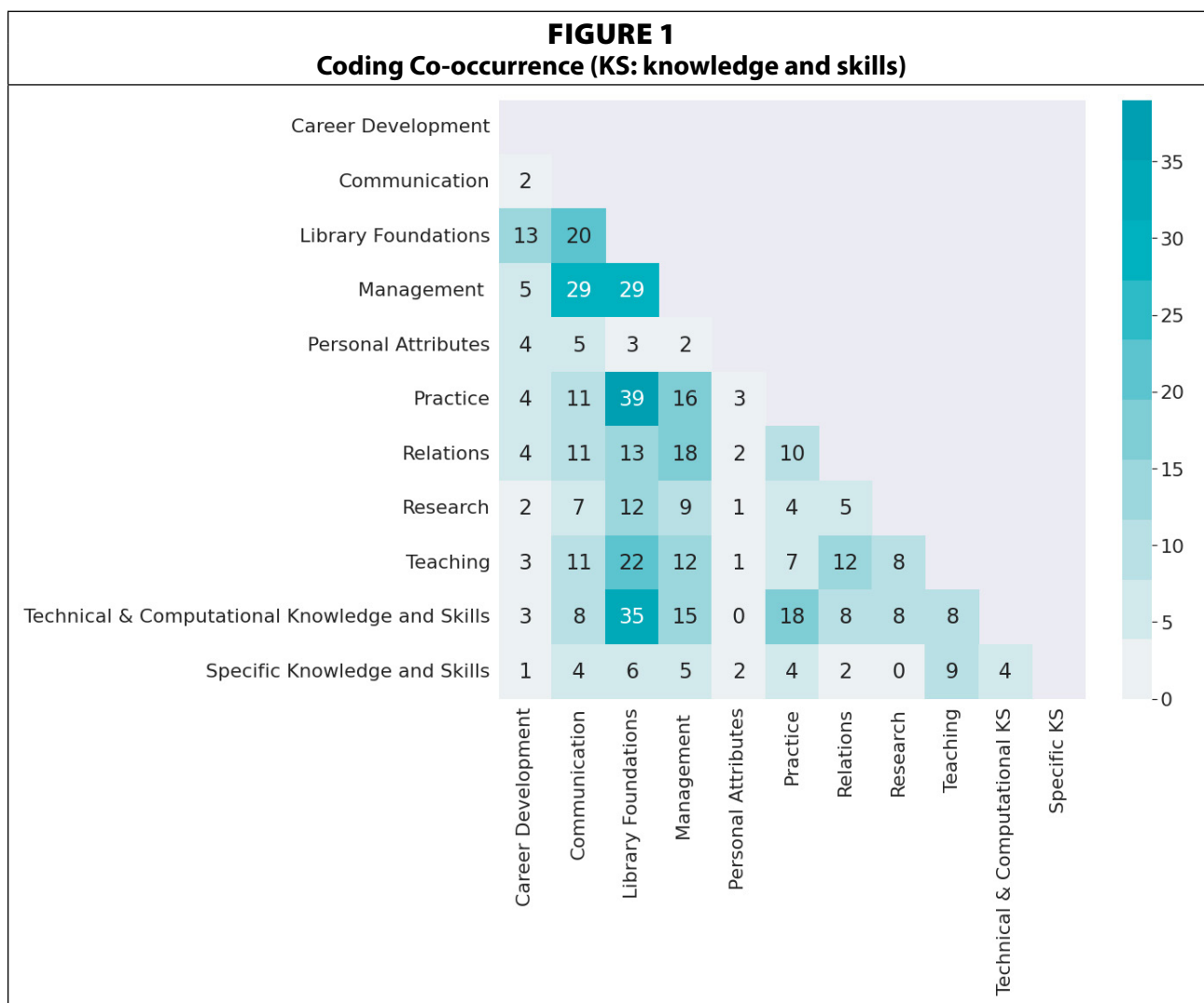
the number in each colored block indicates the number of times the two codes co-occurred in all the responses while the corresponding textual variables on this colored block's x-axis (the horizontal line) and y-axis (the vertical line) tell what the two codes are. The color of the block represents the relative frequency of the paired codes' co-occurrence: the darker colors indicate that the paired codes were brought up together more frequently, while the lighter colors suggest less co-occurrence. For instance, we can tell from the darkest block in figure 1 that "Library Foundations" co-occurred with the codes of "Practice" in 39 responses, which suggests a strong correlation between these two groups of competencies at work from the respondents' perspectives. In comparison, the blocks with the lightest colors and numbers under 3 suggest that the respondents rarely discussed the corresponding competencies at the same time. For instance, no one discussed "Personal Attributes" together with "Technical and Computational Knowledge and Skills." Furthermore, we compared and aligned our codes with ALACC published in 2009, as it was one of the most influential core competencies standards in North America (see appendix for alignment details).³⁹ Two clusters of codes emerged from the alignment. The first cluster of competencies was emphasized by both ALACC and the respondents, including "Library Foundations," "Specific Knowledge and Skills," and "Technical and Computational Knowledge and Skills." Meanwhile, the second cluster of competencies was advocated by working libraries but marginalized or overlooked in ALACC. Since the first cluster of competencies has been well established and extensively studied, we excluded them from further analysis. In contrast, we focused on the six groups of competencies in the second cluster. The following paragraphs presented our analysis and findings of each group.

TABLE 3
Survey Coding Summary

Survey coding summary based on responses to "What advice, if any, would you provide to a degree program that educates future librarians who want to do the kind of library work you do?"			
Survey Codes		Times Coded and Their Percentage (n = 383)	
		Count	Percentage
1. Library Foundations			
1.1	knowledge and skills for various librarianships	82	21%
1.2	customer service	27	7%
1.3	curriculum/coursework/program	17	4%
1.4	library values, ethics and history	8	2%
Subtotal		134	35%
2. Practice			
2.1	experience	77	20%
2.2	real-life issues	27	7%
2.3	soft skills	22	6%
Subtotal		126	33%
3. Management			
3.1	advertising, marketing, and advocacy	32	8%
3.2	budget management and fundraising	32	8%
3.3	leadership and people management	28	7%

TABLE 3
Survey Coding Summary

Survey coding summary based on responses to "What advice, if any, would you provide to a degree program that educates future librarians who want to do the kind of library work you do?"			
Survey Codes		Times Coded and Their Percentage (n = 383)	
		Count	Percentage
3.4	administration and organization	24	6%
3.5	strategic planning	5	1%
Subtotal		121	32%
4. Specific Knowledge and Skills			
4.1	instruction	25	7%
4.2	knowledge and skills for children and adolescent	23	6%
4.3	programming (for events)	19	5%
4.4	research methods	19	5%
4.5	scholarly communication	11	3%
4.6	other specific qualifications	9	2%
4.7	pedagogy	6	2%
4.8	health and medical knowledge	6	2%
Subtotal		118	31%
5. Technical and Computational Knowledge and Skills			
5.1	computer skills and literacy	44	11%
5.2	library system, tools, and resources	24	6%
5.3	information and data management	20	5%
Subtotal		88	23%
6. Communication			
6.1	diplomacy skills	25	7%
6.2	oral and written skills	17	4%
6.3	presentations and public speaking	11	3%
6.4	empathy training	8	2%
Subtotal		61	16%
7. Career Development			
7.1	job market	21	5%
7.2	change management	18	5%
7.3	continuing education/lifelong learning	14	4%
Subtotal		53	14%
8. Relations			
8.1	community collaboration	28	7%
8.2	networking and outreach	12	3%
Subtotal		40	10%
9. Personal attributes			
Subtotal		15	4%



Practice

As 126 (33%) respondents emphasized, practice (practicum, internship, on-site independent studies, volunteering, and so on) bridged the gap between students' expectations and the realities. It gave students what they could hardly acquire through school education, including hands-on opportunities, real-life experience, and practical soft skills. Besides, it was also vital for leveraging other core competencies by transforming their theoretical knowledge to applicable skills. First, 77 respondents stressed the necessity of gaining hands-on experience for getting professionally employed. For a job candidate, *"The degree gets a candidate in the door for the initial interview, but once actually in the interview what matters is the real experience"* (Respondent 54). The respondents who identified themselves as library administrators claimed that *"When hiring we never ask new graduates about their coursework or review transcripts. We ask about their real work experiences in libraries"* (Respondent 127). Practice also enabled students to have a try on their careers of interest and decide whether they would fit into a position or not. For instance, Respondent 377 suggested that students aiming for children librarian positions should *"volunteer with different organizations who serve children to ensure that you want to work with children and to get a feel for the range of children you may serve."*

Second, 27 respondents talked about how practice prepared librarians for handling real-life issues. Some respondents recalled their lack of practice at school and how overwhelmed

they were when they encountered such situations on-site. Respondent 229 insisted that in the future LIS educators should *"Make sure that future librarians are warned about disruptive, violent, or ill patrons"* because *"Dealing with the public can be stressful. I wish I had know [sic] when I began my career."* Respondent 101 added that topics on *"how to recognize and dodge patron interactions that cross the line into the too-personal zone"* would be very useful to know how to handle. Sometimes, the situations that arose at libraries could be so intense that they caused safety emergencies. Respondent 266 reported that *"issues in violence and safety have become a recent concern in my library so right now"* and Respondent 143 demanded *"a self-defense course"* as part of LIS curriculum for students thinking about public librarianship. Third, we received substantial feedback on insufficient education and training on practical aspects of librarianship. Some respondents vehemently complained about the *"useless theory"* in their class. For instance, Respondent 245 commented that *"there's so little in the curriculum that reflects what I actually need to do every day with respect to cataloging, managing our ILS, and related stuff."* Respondent 318 said that *"I talked a lot of theory and slung around all kinds of ideas and concepts in MLIS, and none of it helped me do the actual, in the trenches job, solo."* Last but not least, 22 respondents praised practice for cultivating their *"soft skills,"* which involved a variety of topics. Since these responses overlapped tremendously with other groups of codes, we elaborated on them in the following sections.

Management

Management competencies were highlighted by 121 (32%) respondents. They believed all librarians, even *"front line staff,"* should try to *"understand the big picture of libraries with an administrative perspective"* (Respondent 290). Respondent 144 said that *"Most librarians will become managers at some point in their career and few are good at it naturally."* Nevertheless, *"So many librarians lack management skills yet are required to supervise or run departments"* (Respondent 288). Various management competencies were brought up by the respondents. First, 32 respondents emphasized financial skills including budgeting, fundraising, and purchase decision making. They pictured two contrary and complementary scenarios: libraries with limited budgets and libraries with sufficient budgets. For the former, librarians must *"plan programs efficiently and creatively"* (Respondent 207) within *"tiny budgets"* (Respondent 1). For the latter where libraries' budgets were sufficient, LIS students were advised to sharpen their financial skills because *"Future librarians will manage multi-million dollar organizations; they need to learn how to manage them effectively"* (Respondent 141). In either case, librarians were expected to *"evaluate thoroughly the products of vendors"* and *"be alert to the changes in publishing models"* to get the best price for library acquisition (Respondent 166). According to our respondents, budget difficulties observed at some libraries were quite severe and were pushing potential librarians away. For example, Respondent 316 suggested LIS students should *"steer clear of rural libraries in conservative states and communities.... local and state funding at risk."*

Second, 32 respondents promoted marketing skills to *"publicize and market library services to the community"* (Respondent 243) as well as *"measure and articulate library value to funders and stakeholders"* (Respondent 348). Respondents particularly underlined the necessity of adopting new tools and *"non-traditional ways"* (Respondent 222) for marketing, such as *"using new media to reach the underserved patron"* (Respondent 248). Also, librarians needed to take the initiative to reach out to potential patrons: *"Don't expect patrons to come to the library for assistance"* (Respondent 222). Third, 28 respondents advocated leadership and people management for

“motivating employees, maintaining a positive professional environment, coaching, providing constructive feedback to staff” and “leading from anywhere in the organization as well as from a leadership position” (Respondent 348). However, such competencies came through practice. As Respondent 189 put forward, *“It’s difficult to train for management/leadership because it’s often years before one is able to put any of the training into practice.”* Respondent 224 echoed that, in terms of people management, librarians often *“just have to learn as we go.”* To merge such competencies gap, both formal coursework on leadership development, staff supervision, human resources, and on-the-job training for truly understanding *“the big picture”* of the organization were recommended (Respondents 290 and 365). Fourth, general administration and organization competencies were recommended by 24 respondents for grasping and adapting to the organizational contexts of the libraries, such as *“how to read an organization—how does it function? how do you function within it? What autonomy do you have or not? Where and why”* (Respondent 206). Five respondents underpinned strategic planning skills to *“position the library well in the community”* (Respondent 76) and to empower the librarians.

Communication

Four competencies for communication were underscored by 61 (16%) respondents: 1) diplomacy skills; 2) oral and written skills; 3) presentations and public speaking skills; and 4) empathy training. First, 25 respondents highlighted diplomacy skills for formal and administrative communication with funders and decision-makers. According to them, real-world administrative conversations could be difficult. Respondent 17 claimed that *“The hardest challenge is explaining what I actually do to higher-ups ... who think my job is to sit behind a desk reading a novel all day.”* Respondent 337 shared the same feelings:

Tell your students that they and the library itself will be disrespected and dismissed. The people above you (city/county/state officials, college/university/k–12 administrators) will reduce your budget and ask why anyone needs a library when you have a Kindle/Nook/the Internet. Your students will need to work with these people and change their minds.

Therefore, diplomacy skills were proposed for the following actions: 1) *“communicating the importance of libraries to the governing bodies”* (Respondent 35) and 2) *“dealing with bureaucracies and difficult systems”* for policy changes (Respondent 73). Future librarians were advised to *“learn about the politics of the job, and how to effectively tell your library’s story including effectively using and presenting data—such as with infographics ... to develop programming and gain support”* (Respondent 198).

Seventeen respondents emphasized presentation and public speaking skills, while 11 respondents advocated oral and written communication skills. While these skills might be considered very basic qualifications, they have not been as widely valued and acquired as expected. For instance, Respondent 148 recalled that *“When I was at the iSchool, everyone complained about all the group work and presentations”* and Respondent 80 said that *“I run into fellow professionals who misuse apostrophes, can’t spell very well and have either poor typing skills or poor writing skills such that their email messages are barely intelligible.”* Our respondents reiterated the importance of writing and speaking proficiency such as *“being able to spell and punctuate sentences correctly, as well as use appropriate vocabulary and phrasing”* (Respondent 80). In addition, it was essential for librarians to relate to and communicate with various patrons and co-workers

at their educational levels and in their language both orally and verbally. For instance, they should know *“how to recognize and remove jargon from your vocabulary in patron situations”* and *“keep ‘plethora’ out of conversations with patrons new to the English language”* (Respondent 101). Respondent 152 shared an example in the context of an academic health sciences library, where *“You don’t have to have a science background to do what I do, but you must be able to speak the language and be curious about the subjects your users are studying/researching.”* Finally, empathy training was proposed by 8 respondents, especially for public librarians who constantly worked with difficult patrons. As Respondent 299 told us, *“Empathy training and people management skills are incredibly important for public librarians... We need patience and understanding in order to provide the best possible service to the public.”* However, the respondents also confirmed that empathy was *“something that is not easy to teach but should come from within, based on life experiences”* (Respondent 80). Therefore, they recommended both supporting coursework (such as psychology) and on-site practice for empathy training.

Career Development

According to 53 (14%) respondents, career development competencies are crucial for librarians to get professionally employed and maintain competitiveness in the long run. There were three core competencies: 1) a good understanding of the LIS job realities; 2) change management skills; and 3) lifelong learning. First, 21 respondents expressed deep concerns about the decreasing LIS job opportunities and gloomy job prospects. They warned the students not to *“be lulled by the liberal atmosphere of your school and professors”* (Respondent 64) and not to expect a job offer right after graduation because the positions were very limited. Respondent 150 even claimed, *“Frankly, I would steer people to other professions, not libraries.”* In addition to limited jobs, LIS positions were also precarious because its *“values, working conditions, and even reasons for being, are often challenged by the market, by politicians, by administrators, citizens”* (Respondent 145).

Consequently, 18 respondents highlighted change management, which we found extremely relevant under current COVID circumstances. Librarianship is an ever-changing occupation where a considerable amount of learning takes place on the job. As Respondent 30 suggested, *“Be prepared for change. It is amazing how much my job has changed and librarianship has changed since I graduated.”* Furthermore, a few respondents put forward *“crisis management”* for unexpected emergencies: *“As a public librarian in a large urban environment, the primary thing I feel I am missing in my education is crisis management”* (Respondent 14). To keep pace with the current issues and rising trends, lifelong learning was advocated by 14 respondents for maintaining competitiveness. Meanwhile, both LIS educators and students should stick to the core values and unique visions of LIS to preserve the best of this profession. As Respondent 352 appealed, *“Try to keep up with the changes but don’t lose sight of core values: free access to info, promoting love of reading, developing reading readiness skills in young children.”*

Relations

Forty (10%) respondents acclaimed relational competencies as the key for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of both interpersonal and organizational relationships. As Respondent 153 brought forward, *“LIS students may not be aware that all types of librarians work with persons external to the library (vendors, community/university partners, etc.)”* However, since interpersonal relations with patrons and colleagues were covered in the aforementioned discussions (such as diplomatic skills), to avoid repetition, the following discussion on relational

competencies was focused on organizational relations in two aspects: community collaboration (28 responses) and networking and outreach (12 responses). The first argument was that fulfilling libraries' commitments to the communities would not only benefit the communities but also expand the libraries' patron base and help them establish partnerships with new individuals and institutions. For instance, according to the respondents who were school/academic/higher education librarians, good relations with the schools and college departments brought more people to the libraries to work on-site and even volunteer for specialized projects of their interest. Moreover, community collaboration remarkably strengthened the library's image in the eyes of the funders. As Respondent 151 declared, *"the people that I've been able to establish relationships with are my champions. They use the library more and can speak to upper administration about why the library is important."* To form good relational competencies, librarians had to understand the community in depth: *"Not simply demographics, but what is important to the people they serve, how they see themselves, and what they aspire to"* (Respondent 297), including the community's issues, structure, culture, language, and so on. Only if librarians understood how to create materials that patrons would desire and attend, would they achieve effective community engagement and extensive networking through programming. To make this happen, courses on public relations and cross-cultural communication were recommended.

Personal Attributes

Fifteen (4%) respondents brought up personal attributes as both favorable individual characteristics and occupational competencies. Respondent 267 believed that *"Personality counts. You need to be a people person, not a BOOK person."* Respondent 58 explained, *"At root we are working with people and if you cannot manage those relationships you won't be able to conduct an effective reference interview or assess user needs or successfully argue your case with city hall."* According to our respondents, many people came to libraries to seek person-to-person contact, and librarians were expected to provide that instead of just referring people to some online source. Respondent 162 argued, *"If you are not enthusiastic about being a servant of the people, then do not become a librarian."* These respondents encouraged the LIS students who were less sociable to develop people-centered skills to facilitate interpersonal communication and collaboration. As Respondent 148 concluded, *"A lot of librarians are socially awkward, but I don't think that's an excuse."* Along with being sociable, staying patient, kind, and positive were also regarded as desirable personal attributes for librarians. Besides, flexibility and adaptability were considered significant for navigating career developments (Respondents 6 and 24). To foster and reinforce such competencies, LIS students were advised to *"take as broad a range of courses as you can"* (Respondent 8) and get *"a good overview of the various types of library systems and how they work"* (Respondent 45). Respondent 187, who had been on various librarian tracks for more than 40 years, encouraged the students to *"be open to learning, absorb as much as possible, and see where it takes you."*

Discussion

This study contributed to the continuing dialogue of core competencies in three ways. First, it differed from many prior empirical studies by focusing on qualitative analysis of emergent feedback.⁴⁰ Correspondingly, it highlighted practitioners' opinions about desirable competencies that had not been formally laid out in existing documents or had been deficiently emphasized in academic discussions. For instance, strategic and diplomatic skills for dealing

with supervisors, external funders, and bureaucracies were rarely examined before, but they were underlined by many respondents. Second, the respondents spontaneously endorsed many existing proposals.⁴¹ Third, our qualitative analysis connected multiple competencies that previously were examined individually and shed light on how to bridge them together in future studies. For instance, our analysis showed a couple things: 1) how practice played an indispensable role in cultivating a realistic mindset and hands-on skill for all the other groups of competencies; and 2) how communication, relations, and management competencies work together as for good interpersonal skills.

Meanwhile, there were also a few limitations to be noted. The first potential problem lay in the way the open-ended question was originally asked, as “core competencies” was not specified. However, it was also the openness and inclusiveness of this question that led us to our emergent observations.⁴² Second, while the respondents were from diverse backgrounds and different generations, many of them were alumni of the same LIS school. Therefore, the respondents who answered this open-ended question might hold different characteristics from those who did not.⁴³ Third, skeptical readers might question our broad definition of “core competencies.” We were aware that some qualities we addressed were arguably considered beyond the scope of core competencies, such as personal attributes.⁴⁴ We retained such inclusiveness for accommodating all opinions emerging from our respondents’ insights, even the controversial ones.

While COVID-19 was the significant background when we drafted this paper, we were not writing this paper as a response to challenges posted by COVID-19; instead, we anticipated visions beyond. For sure, many unprecedented challenges were caused by the peculiarities of such a global pandemic; however, recurring difficulties and unexpected crises constantly happen despite their sizes and forms. For instance, libraries have gone through natural disasters and budget crises,⁴⁵ sheltered people from gunshots,⁴⁶ and fought with social problems on-site in the last two decades.⁴⁷ Libraries not only have to survive these iterative, transformational, or catastrophic cases, they also have to grow and thrive.⁴⁸ With quarantine and social distancing, librarians might have to reassure people that libraries are safe and welcoming spaces for the community and restore patrons’ interest in visiting libraries in person, given the accelerated shift to online access and virtual reference. Even in the post-COVID times and in the further future, there would still be a long way for library professionals to go with uncertainty, changes, and challenges due to the problems we have witnessed during the pandemic: social injustice, digital divide, job loss, public health concerns, and so on. To stay competitive, it is important to plan for the worst while hoping for the best. Therefore, as suggested by both scholars and our respondents,⁴⁹ librarians should equip themselves with change and crisis management, critical and reflective thinking, strategic planning, and life-long learning to evolve with this challenging profession.

Conclusion

The present study analyzed the survey responses collected from 383 working librarians to elicit the most demanding but less emphasized core competencies for practitioners. Competences in six areas emerged from their responses: practice, management, communication, career development, relations, and personal attributes. We urge LIS organizations and policymakers to consider accommodating these competencies to frame more up-to-date and on-the-ground core

competencies documents. Library administrators and strategic planning committees could also consider revising their institutional core competencies frameworks and recruitment strategies on a regular and consistent basis to ensure their documentation matches the lived experience of working librarians and their patrons' needs. Notwithstanding the time and administrative costs of such organizational adoption, we suggested current LIS students take the initiative to directly engage with these core competencies in consultation with their program advisors. LIS educators should also infuse these emergent suggestions into program curricula, to help future librarians acquire as much realistic understanding and hands-on skills as possible. For scholars and researchers, our research indicates that, in addition to structured interviews and guided surveys, open-ended questions and unfiltered conversations can be resourceful ways of collecting librarians' real-life experiences and nuanced thoughts. Therefore, we recommend diversifying research methods to leverage librarians' insights on the ground for revising librarians' core competencies.

All in all, the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic remind us vividly that librarianship is an ever-evolving and challenging profession where perennially revisiting and updating librarians' core competencies documents are necessary for librarians to maintain their competitiveness. Emergent insights from our respondents also call for a consistent revision and updating of core competencies documents for librarians to acquire long-term and transferable skills, especially for resilience against crisis-ridden challenges. The development of librarians' core competencies requires enduring and joint efforts, particularly focused on bottom-up participation of working librarians. Through listening to what they are faced with and incorporating what they need, we shall be in a better position to handle current problems and future challenges.

Acknowledgments

We wish to express our gratitude to all the survey respondents for their time and insights. We want to thank the committee of the School of Information at University of Texas at Austin for their strong support. We also want to thank our reviewers and colleagues at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign for their insightful comments and suggestions. Finally, we would like to thank our editors and reviewers for their critical and insightful feedback!

APPENDIX. Alignment of Our Codebook and ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship (ALACC)

Survey Codes	Times Coded	ALACC Code Paired	ALACC Code Group
1. Library Foundations	Subtotal: 134		
knowledge and skills for various librarianships	82	1E, 2A to 2D, 3A to 3C	1. Foundations of the Profession; 2. Information Resources; 3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information
customer service	27	5A, 5B, 5C	5. Reference and User Services
curriculum/coursework/program	17	Not pairable	Not pairable
library values, ethics, and history	8	1A, 1B, 1G	1. Foundations of the Profession
2. Practice	Subtotal: 126		
experience	77	1I	1. Foundations of the Profession
real-life issues	27		
soft skills	22		
3. Management	Subtotal: 121		
advertising, marketing, and advocacy	32	1H, 5E	1. Foundations of the Profession; 5. Reference and User Services
budget management and fundraising	32	8A	8. Administration and Management
leadership and people management	28	8B	
administration and organization	24	8B, 8C	
strategic planning	5	8C	
4. Specific Knowledge and Skills	Subtotal: 118		
knowledge and skills for children and adolescent	23	1K	1. Foundations of the Profession
other specific qualifications	9		
health and medical knowledge	6		
research methods	19	6A to 6C	6. Research
scholarly communication	11		
instruction	25	7B	7. Continuing Education and Life-long Learning
programming (for events)	19	7C	
pedagogy	6	7D	
5. Technical and Computational Knowledge and Skills	Subtotal: 88		
computer skills and literacy	44	4A to 4D	4. Technological Knowledge and Skills
library system, tools, and resources	24		
information and data management	20		

Survey Codes	Times Coded	ALACC Code Paired	ALACC Code Group
6. Communication	Subtotal: 61		
diplomacy skills	25	5C, 5E, 5F	5. Reference and User Services
oral and written skills	17	1J	1. Foundations of the Profession
presentations and public speaking	11		
empathy training	8		
7. Career Development	Subtotal: 53		
job market	21	1F	1. Foundations of the Profession
change management	18		
continuing education/lifelong learning	14	7A	7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning
8. Relations	Subtotal: 40		
community collaboration	28	8D, 8E	8. Administration and Management
networking and outreach	12		
9. Personal attributes	15	Not pairable	Not pairable

Notes

1. Isto Huvila et al., "What Is Librarian 2.0: New Competencies or Interactive Relations? A Library Professional Viewpoint," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 45, no. 3 (September 2013): 198–205; Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), *Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL Librarians* (2010), www.carl-abrc.ca/doc/core_comp_profile-e.pdf; Michael Gorman, *Our Enduring Values Revisited: Librarianship in an Ever-changing World* (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2015); A. Ducas, N. Michaud-Oystryk, and M. Speare, "Reinventing Ourselves: New and Emerging Roles of Academic Librarians in Canadian Research-intensive Universities," *College & Research Libraries* 81, no. 1 (2020): 43–65; Brad Warren, "Developing a Practical Approach to Change," *College & Research Libraries* 81, no. 1 (2020): 2–7.

2. "Now and Next: What a Post-COVID World May Bring for Libraries," IFLA Library Policy and Advocacy Blog, <https://blogs.ifla.org/lpa/2020/04/06/now-and-next-what-a-post-covid-world-may-bring-for-libraries/> [accessed 18 April 2021]; Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "First This, Now That: A Look at 10-Day Trends in Academic Library Response to COVID19" (last modified March 24, 2020) <https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/first-this-now-that-a-look-at-10-day-trends-in-academic-library-response-to-covid19/> [accessed 18 April 2021]; Natalie Fulkerson, Sandra McIntyre, and Melissa Stewart, "HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service: Reaping the Rewards of Long-term Collaboration," *Collaborative Librarianship* 12, no. 2 (2020): 187–92.

3. Laura Saunders, "Core Knowledge and Specialized Skills in Academic Libraries," *College & Research Libraries* 81, no. 2 (2020): 288–311.

4. Rachel N. Simons, Melissa G. Ocepek, and Lecia J. Barker, "Teaching Tweeting: Recommendations for Teaching Social Media Work in LIS and MSIS Programs," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 57, no. 1 (2016): 21–30; Sarah Buchanan et al., "Surveying Archivists and Their Work toward Advocacy and Management, or Enterprise Archiving," *American Archivist* 80, no. 2 (2017): 268–95; Sarah A. Buchanan et al., "Survey Research on Tasks and Competencies to Inform Records Management Education," *Records Management Journal* (2017); Yuerong Hu et al., "The Real Library World Is Dirty and You Don't Learn That at All in Schools," *iConference 2020 Proceedings* (2020).

5. Huvila et al., "What Is Librarian 2.0"; CARL, *Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL Librarians*; American Library Association (ALA), *ALA's Core Competencies of Librarianship*, <http://www.ala.org/education-careers/sites/ala.org/educationcareers/files/content/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf>

[accessed 20 April 2021] (After we submitted this paper, ALA published an updated ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship Draft Version for public review and feedback. We have compared the most recent information in this Draft 2021 ALA Core Competences [ALA keeps using this spelling] with the ALA Core Competences of Librarianship published in 2009 as well as the arguments we made in this paper. Our findings and proposals remain valid and valuable); Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC), FLICC Competencies for Federal Librarians, https://www.loc.gov/flicc/publications/Lib_Compt/2011/2011Competencies.pdf [accessed 20 April 2021]; Sajjad ur Rehman, Shaheen Majid, and Ahamd Bakeri Abu Baker, "Competency Definition and Validation for Library and Information Professionals in Malaysia," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* (1998): 100–17.

6. Gary Hamel and Coimbatore K. Prahalad, "The Core Competence of the Corporation," *Harvard Business Review* 68, no. 3 (1990): 79–91.

7. Boyd Keith Swigger, *The MLS Project: An Assessment after Sixty Years* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010).

8. Guy A. Marco, "The Demise of the American Core Curriculum," *Libri* 44, no. 3 (1994): 175–89; Renée McKinney, "Draft Proposed ALA Core Competencies Compared to ALA: Accredited, Candidate, and Precandidate Program Curricula: A Preliminary Analysis," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 47, no. 1 (2006): 52–77.

9. Gorman, *Our Enduring Values Revisited*.

10. Marco, "The Demise of the American Core Curriculum."

11. Marco, "The Demise of the American Core Curriculum."

12. Swigger, *The MLS Project*.

13. Swigger, *The MLS Project*; Gayle Bogel, "School Librarian's Bill of Responsibilities and the ALA Core Competences," *Knowledge Quest* 38, no. 2 (2009): 64–68.

14. ALA, ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship.

15. Bradley Wade Bishop, Adrienne W. Cadle, and Tony H. Grubestic, "Job Analyses of Emerging Information Professions: A Survey Validation of Core Competencies to Inform Curricula," *Library Quarterly* 85, no. 1 (2015): 64–84.

16. CARL, Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL Librarians; FLICC, FLICC Competencies for Federal Librarians; Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE), ALISE Ethics Guidelines Statement, https://www.alise.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=31 [accessed 20 April 2021]; Map & Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT), Map, GIS and Cataloging / Metadata Librarian Core Competencies, <https://www.ala.org/rt/sites/ala.org/rt/files/content/publicationsab/MAGERTCoreComp2008.pdf> [accessed 5 November 2021]; MAGIRT, Core Competencies for Map, GIS and Cartographic Cataloging/Metadata Librarians, <https://connect.ala.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=da9e23f5-0ce9-7e61-f913-32a7fd0dcf5c&forceDialog=0> [accessed 5 November 2021]; Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), "Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff," www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines/yacompetencies [accessed 20 April 2021]; ACRL, ACRL Standards, Guidelines, and Frameworks: Alphabetical List, www.ala.org/acrl/standards/alphabetical [accessed 20 April 2021].

17. Bishop, Cadle, and Grubestic, "Job Analyses of Emerging Information Professions"; Karl Pettitt, "Educating Librarians: Applying the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Apprenticeship Model to the Education of Librarians," in *Re-Envisioning the MLS: Perspectives on the Future of Library and Information Science Education*, eds. Johnna Percell et al. (Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018), 123–51, <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0065-28302018000044B008>; Jason Martin, "What Do Academic Librarians Value in a Leader? Reflections on Past Positive Library Leaders and a Consideration of Future Library Leaders," *College & Research Libraries* 79, no. 6 (2018): 799–821; Youngok Choi and Edie Rasmussen, "What Qualifications and Skills Are Important for Digital Librarian Positions in Academic Libraries? A Job Advertisement Analysis," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35, no. 5 (2009): 457–67.

18. Huvila et al., "What Is Librarian 2.0?"; Choi and Rasmussen, "What Qualifications and Skills Are Important for Digital Librarian Positions in Academic Libraries?"; Rahim Shahbazi and Aziz Hedayati, "Identifying Digital Librarian Competencies According to the Analysis of Newly Emerging IT-based LIS Jobs in 2013," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 42, no. 5 (2016): 542–50; Anne E.C. Norman, "Librarians' Leadership for Lifelong Learning," *Public Library Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (2012): 91–140; Craig Finlay, Andrew Tsou, and Cassidy Sugimoto, "Scholarly Communication as a Core Competency: Prevalence, Activities, and Concepts of Scholarly Communication Librarianship as Shown Through Job Advertisements," *Journal of Librarianship & Scholarly Communication* 3, no. 1 (2015): eP1236, <https://doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.1236>; Angela Dresselhaus, "Opportunities beyond Electronic Resource Management: An Extension of the Core Competencies for Electronic Resources Librarians to Digital Scholarship and Scholarly Communications," *Serials Librarian* 68, no. 1/4 (2015): 361–69; Brent D. Currier, Rafia Mirza, and Jeff Downing, "They Think All of This Is New: Leveraging Librarians' Project Management Skills

for the Digital Humanities," *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 24, no. 2/4 (2017): 270–89; Laura Saunders, "Identifying Core Reference Competencies from an Employers' Perspective: Implications for Instruction," *College & Research Libraries* 73, no. 4 (2012): 390–404; D. Fife and M.N. Stephens, "Swiss Army Degree: Library and Information Science," in *Re-Envisioning the MLS: Perspectives on the Future of Library and Information Science Education*, eds. Johnna Percell et al. (Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018), 139–48, <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0065-28302018000044B008>.

19. Pettitt, "Educating Librarians"; Dresselhaus, "Opportunities beyond Electronic Resource Management."

20. McKinney, "Draft Proposed ALA Core Competencies Compared to ALA"; Vandana Singh and Bharat Mehra, "Strengths and Weaknesses of the Information Technology Curriculum in Library and Information Science Graduate Programs," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 45, no. 3 (2013): 219–31.

21. McKinney, "Draft Proposed ALA Core Competencies Compared to ALA"; Choi and Rasmussen, "A Job Advertisement Analysis"; Shahbazi and Hedayati, "Identifying Digital Librarian Competencies"; Finlay, Tsou, and Sugimoto, "Scholarly Communication as a Core Competency."

22. Huvila et al., "What Is Librarian 2.0?"; Bishop, Cadle, and Grubestic, "Job Analyses of Emerging Information Professions"; Saunders, "Identifying Core Reference Competencies from an Employers' Perspective"; Fife and Stephens, "Swiss Army Degree"; Camille V.L. Thomas and Richard J. Urban, "What Do Data Librarians Think of the MLIS Professionals' Perceptions of Knowledge Transfer, Trends, and Challenges?" *College & Research Libraries* 79, no. 3 (2018): 401–23.

23. Pettitt, "Educating Librarians."

24. Pettitt, "Educating Librarians."

25. Saunders, "Core Knowledge and Specialized Skills in Academic Libraries"; Martin, "What Do Academic Librarians Value in a Leader?"; Shahbazi and Hedayati, "Identifying Digital Librarian Competencies"; Currier, Mirza, and Downing, "They Think All of This Is New"; Fife and Stephens, "Swiss Army Degree"; Gabrielle K.W. Wong, "A Tool for Academic Libraries to Prioritize Leadership Competencies," *College & Research Libraries* 80, no. 5 (2019): 597–617; Wanda V. Dole, "What's All This I Hear about Core Competencies for Library Planning and Assessment?" *Journal of Library Administration* 53, no. 7/8 (2013): 472–81.

26. Finlay, Tsou, and Sugimoto, "Scholarly Communication as a Core Competency"; Currier, Mirza, and Downing, "They Think All of This Is New"; William Fisher, "Core Competencies for the Acquisitions Librarian," *Library Collections, Acquisitions, and Technical Services* 25, no. 2 (2001): 179–90.

27. Choi and Rasmussen, "What Qualifications and Skills Are Important for Digital Librarian Positions in Academic Libraries?"; Shahbazi and Hedayati, "Identifying Digital Librarian Competencies"; Thomas and Urban, "What Do Data Librarians Think of the MLIS Professionals' Perceptions of Knowledge Transfer, Trends, and Challenges?"

28. Lindsay Gypin, "Soft Skills: Hard to Teach? On Self-direction, Flexibility, and Other Things You Didn't Learn in Library School" (last modified January 27, 2019), <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/soft-skills-hard-teach/> [accessed 20 April 2021]; Jeanine M. Williamson and John W. Lounsbury, "Distinctive 16 PF Personality Traits of Librarians," *Journal of Library Administration* 56, no. 2 (2016): 124–43.

29. Dole, "What's All This I Hear about Core Competencies for Library Planning and Assessment?"

30. Saunders, "Core Knowledge and Specialized Skills in Academic Libraries"; Bishop, Cadle, and Grubestic, "Job Analyses of Emerging Information Professions"; Choi and Rasmussen, "What Qualifications and Skills Are Important for Digital Librarian Positions in Academic Libraries?"; Saunders, "Identifying Core Reference Competencies from an Employers' Perspective."

31. Saunders, "Core Knowledge and Specialized Skills in Academic Libraries"; Bishop, Cadle, and Grubestic, "Job Analyses of Emerging Information Professions"; Choi and Rasmussen, "What Qualifications and Skills Are Important for Digital Librarian Positions in Academic Libraries?"; Saunders, "Identifying Core Reference Competencies from an Employers' Perspective"; Thomas and Urban, "What Do Data Librarians Think of the MLIS Professionals' Perceptions of Knowledge Transfer, Trends, and Challenges?"

32. Martin, "What Do Academic Librarians Value in a Leader?"

33. *Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science*, ed. Barbara M. Wildemuth (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016).

34. Renata Tesch, *Qualitative Research: Analysis Types and Software* (Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, 2013).

35. Simons, Ocepek, and Barker, "Teaching Tweeting"; Buchanan et al., "Surveying Archivists and Their Work toward Advocacy and Management, or Enterprise Archiving"; Buchanan et al., "Survey Research on Tasks and Competencies to Inform Records Management Education."

36. Hu et al., "The Real Library World Is Dirty and You Don't Learn That at All in Schools."

37. "Band," Dedoose, <https://www.dedoose.com/> [accessed 20 April 2021].

38. Wildemuth, *Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science*.

39. June Lester and Connie Van Fleet, "Use of Professional Competencies and Standards Documents for Curriculum Planning in Schools of Library and Information Studies Education," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* (2008): 43–69.
40. Martin, "What Do Academic Librarians Value in a Leader?"
41. Saunders, "Core Knowledge and Specialized Skills in Academic Libraries"; Pettitt, "Educating Librarians"; Norman, "Librarians' Leadership for Lifelong Learning"; Dole, "What's All This I Hear about Core Competencies for Library Planning and Assessment?"
42. Martin, "What Do Academic Librarians Value in a Leader?"; Wildemuth, *Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science*.
43. Wong, "A Tool for Academic Libraries to Prioritize Leadership Competencies."
44. Dole, "What's All This I Hear about Core Competencies for Library Planning and Assessment?"
45. Warren, "Developing a Practical Approach to Change"; Rebecca Hamilton, "The State Library of Louisiana and Public Libraries' Response to Hurricanes: Issues, Strategies, and Lessons," *Public Library Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (2011): 40–53; George M. Eberhart, "Hurricane Harvey and Libraries Recovery and Assistance Are Ongoing" (last modified September 6, 2017) <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/hurricane-harvey-libraries/> [accessed 20 April 2021].
46. Kelsey Lupo Mazmanyman, "Student Perceptions of the Library during Times of Terror: Exploratory Research Surveying Students Affected by the October 1 Shooting and Their Impressions of Safety in the Academic Library Community," *College & Research Libraries* 81, no. 1 (2020): 109–21.
47. Hu et al., "The Real Library World Is Dirty and You Don't Learn That at All in Schools."
48. Warren, "Developing a Practical Approach to Change."
49. Warren, "Developing a Practical Approach to Change"; Saunders, "Core Knowledge and Specialized Skills in Academic Libraries."