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Features

377 Toward Inclusive Library Instruction
Guidelines for Integrating Inclusive Practices
Kanu A. Nagra

383 Finding the Power in Mini
Rethinking Library Tutorials with Microlearning
Kathryn Senn, Samantha Peter, Shannon M. Smith, Elena Payne, and Aralynn Juarez

389 THE WAY I SEE IT
Adapting to How Students Learn
Rethinking Information Literacy Instruction in the Age of Short-Form Content
Katie Heeren

391 ACRL Board of Directors' Actions
Highlights of the Board's 2025-2026 Meetings

396 The Ten Treasures
Structuring a Course Using Ten Primary Sources from Special Collections
Pamela A. Jackson

402 ACADEMIC LIBRARY WORKERS IN CONVERSATION
From the Classroom to the Field
A Year of Exploring Why We Choose Librarianship
Tia Phillip, Caitlin Perkins, and Daniel Burnett

406 THE WAY I SEE IT
Rank, Promotion, and Tenure in the Library
How Criteria and Process (Still) Favor Reference and Instruction Work
Nina McHale

Departments

373 News from the Field
409 Grants and Acquisitions



This month's cover features an undated photograph of two unidentified students in the North Park College Wallgren Library in Chicago. The image is part of North Park University's Historical Photograph Collection, a digital collection hosted by CARLI, which provides access to more than 30,000 photographs documenting the history of North Park University and the Evangelical Covenant Church from 1885 to the present.

The collection is maintained by the F. M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections, home to the Covenant Archives and Historical Library, the North Park University Archives, and the Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago. Learn more at https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collection/npu_hpc.

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2026 Leab Awards Recipients Announced

ACRL is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 Katharine Kyes Leab and Daniel J. Leab *American Book Prices Current* Exhibition Catalog Awards. These annual awards recognize excellence in the production of catalogs and brochures that accompany exhibitions of library and archival materials, as well as for electronic exhibitions of such materials. The Leab Awards are administered by the Exhibition Awards Committee of the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS), whose operating expenses are covered by a generous endowment from Katharine Kyes Leab and Daniel J. Leab, former editors of *American Book Prices Current*.

This year, Leab Award recipients were determined by popular vote from ACRL and RBMS members. A listing of the 2026 Leab Award recipients is below, and all of ACRL's past Leab Award recipients are listed on the ACRL Leab Awards website at https://www.ala.org/acrl/awards/publicationawards/leabawards.

Print Catalog Awards

Best in Show Print Catalog Category: **Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto** in Toronto, Ontario for *Women on the Move: An Exhibition of Travel Books* curated by David Fernández, Ksenya Kiebuzinski, and Elizabeth Ridolfo

Excellence in Content Print Catalog Category: **The Morgan Library & Museum** in New York, New York and **DelMonico Books** for *Belle da Costa Greene: A Librarian's Legacy* edited by Erica Ciallela and Philip S. Palmer with contributions by Colin B. Bailey, Juliana Amorim Goskes, Araceli Bremauntz-Enriquez, Julia S. Charles-Linen, Rhonda Evans, Anne-Marie Eze, Daria Rose Foner, Jiemi Gao, Gail Levin, Deborah Parker, Deborah Willis, and Tamar Evangelestia-Dougherty

Excellence in Description Print Catalog Category: **Oak Knoll Press** in New Castle, Delaware for *Imaginary Books: Lost, Unfinished, and Fictive Works Found Only in Other Books* by Reid Byers

Innovation in Audience Engagement Print Catalog Category: **Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto** in Toronto, Ontario for *Women on the Move: An Exhibition of Travel Books* curated by David Fernández, Ksenya Kiebuzinski, and Elizabeth Ridolfo

Innovation in Design Print Catalog Category: **Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign** in Urbana, Illinois for *"We Are Each Other's Harvest": Gwendolyn Brooks and the Formation of Black Literary Canon* by Cait Coker, designed by Chloe Ottenhoff

Innovation in Inclusion and Representation Print Catalog Category: **Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign** in Urbana, Illinois for *"We Are Each Other's Harvest": Gwendolyn Brooks and the Formation of Black Literary Canon* by Cait Coker, designed by Chloe Ottenhoff

Innovation in Production Print Catalog Category: **Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto** in Toronto, Ontario for *Women on the Move: An Exhibition of Travel Books* curated by David Fernández, Ksenya Kiebuzinski, and Elizabeth Ridolfo

Digital Catalog Awards

Best in Show Digital Catalog Category: **Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine at the University of Minnesota** in Minneapolis, Minnesota for "Disembodied Reembodied" by Jenny Schmid, Emily Beck, Jaime Konerman-Sease, and Lois Hendrickson

Excellence in Content Digital Catalog Category: **Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History** in Atlanta, Georgia, for "Softness Was Always Ours: A Tender Tribute to Black Women and Girls" curated by Jami Adkins Murphy

Excellence in Description Digital Catalog Category: **Oskar Diethelm Library, Weill Cornell Medical College** in New York, New York for "Psychiatry, Insanity, and Religion in the Trial of Charles Guiteau" curated by Nick Brenner and Nicole Topich

Innovation in Audience Engagement Digital Catalog Category: **Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History** in Atlanta, Georgia for "Softness Was Always Ours: A Tender Tribute to Black Women and Girls" curated by Jami Adkins Murphy

Innovation in Design Digital Catalog Category: **Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine at the University of Minnesota** in Minneapolis, Minnesota for "Disembodied Reembodied" by Jenny Schmid, Emily Beck, Jaime Konerman-Sease, and Lois Hendrickson

Innovation in Inclusion and Representation Digital Catalog Category: **Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine at the University of Minnesota** in Minneapolis, Minnesota for "Disembodied Reembodied" by Jenny Schmid, Emily Beck, Jaime Konerman-Sease, and Lois Hendrickson

AUPresses Welcomes Two New Members

The Association of University Presses (AUPresses) recently welcomed the LSE Press as a Regular Member to its global community of more than 160 publishers committed to the highest caliber of research-based scholarship. Founded in 2018 as a fully open access university press at the London School of Economics and Political Science, LSE Press is a champion of the value of the social sciences in addressing contemporary global challenges. It currently has twenty-six book titles in print and supports five journals, including *LSE Public Policy Review* and the *Journal of Long-Term Care*.

A new university press also joined the association as an Introductory Member. The George Washington University Press is a teaching press managed and staffed by students under the direction of the university's Graduate Program in Publishing faculty. It will publish peer-reviewed, open-access books and journals aligned with the university's mission, as well as open educational resources, open-access journals, technical reports, and conference reports for the university's faculty and students. Learn more at https://aupresses.org/news/aupresses-welcomes-new-members-august2026/.

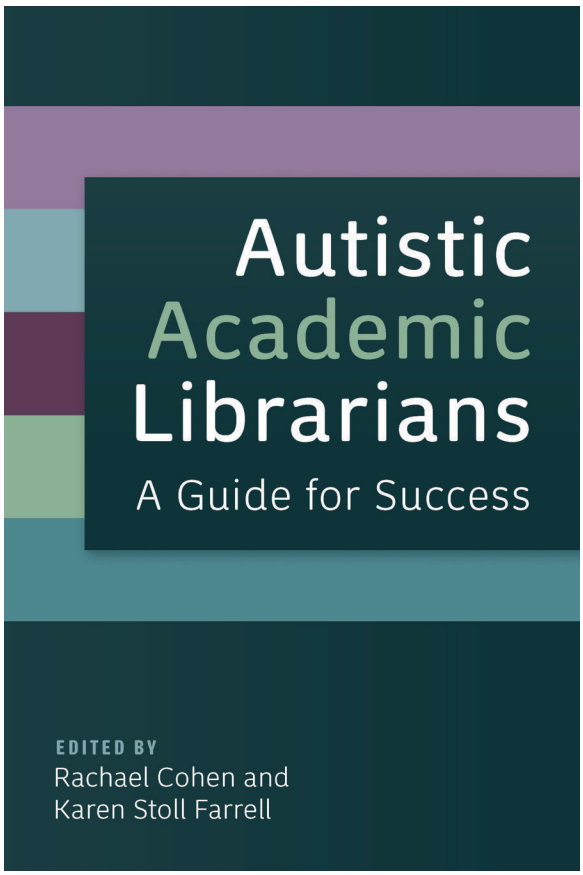
GPO Launches Annual Reports Collection

The US Government Publishing Office (GPO) has launched a new Annual Reports collection on GovInfo, the one-stop site for authentic, published information for all three branches of the Federal Government. This release will make it easier to find and search for Annual Reports published by Federal agencies. GovInfo's Annual Reports collection provides access to more than 700 annual reports from hundreds of Federal agencies and Government organizations, spanning more than 165 years—from the 19th century to the

present. The Annual Reports collection comprises publications from other GovInfo collections that are grouped together based on metadata. The current collection includes content from Congressionally Mandated Reports, GOVPUB, and Serial Set collections. Publications from Congressional Committee Prints, Congressional Documents, and GPO collections will be added in upcoming releases. The new collection is available to the public at no cost at https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/annualrep.

New from ACRL – Autistic Academic Librarians: A Guide for Success

ACRL announces the publication of *Autistic Academic Librarians: A Guide for Success*, edited by Rachael Cohen and Karen Stoll Farrell, offering actionable recommendations for both autistic librarians and libraries that seek to foster an inclusive and supportive environment.



As our understanding of autism continues to evolve, it is crucial that we engage in open dialogue and collaborative efforts to ensure that everyone, regardless of their neurological makeup, can thrive in academic settings. Together we can work toward creating environments that are not only supportive but also recognize and empower the unique strengths that autistic individuals bring to the workplace.

Autistic Academic Librarians: A Guide for Success aims to illuminate the diverse experiences of autistic individuals within the academic library profession while fostering a sense of community and understanding. Chapters are presented in pairs, with one chapter offering a personal narrative from an autistic librarian and the other academic literature and research findings. These pairs cover challenges for LIS students, success in the library workplace as a new professional, middle management, and the tenure process.

Autistic Academic Librarians offers effective strategies for achieving success and fulfillment in librarianship, emphasizing both personal and professional growth. It also addresses the systemic changes necessary for cultivating inclusive libraries that benefit all library workers.

Autistic Academic Librarians: A Guide for Success is available for purchase in print through the ALA Online Store and Amazon.com; as an ebook through the ALA Online Store; via EBSCO and other institutional ebook vendors; and by telephone order at (866) 746-7252 in the US or (770) 442-8633 for international customers.

JSTOR Digital Stewardship Services Secures Funding to Expand Public Access to Distinctive Collections

With support from the Mellon Foundation, JSTOR Digital Stewardship Services is launching a new initiative to help libraries and archives create a more public future for their

distinctive collections by supporting a fuller pathway from digitization to long-term impact. Launched just over a year ago, JSTOR Stewardship is a digital collections platform designed to help institutions increase the impact of distinctive materials. Today, more than 350 institutions participate in JSTOR Stewardship, including over 50 charter members helping shape tools and practices to accelerate impact responsibly. Together, the Stewardship community makes a growing corpus of over 3 million items openly available on JSTOR.

The new initiative will further advance this work and purpose. Through it, new and existing JSTOR Stewardship charter participants can receive direct funding support for digitization and then use the full Stewardship infrastructure to move materials into broader discovery and use by processing materials at scale with JSTOR Seeklight and publishing openly on JSTOR, where collections become discoverable in a widely used research and teaching environment. Learn more at https://about.jstor.org/news/jstor-stewardship-secures-funding-for-digitization-and-access/.

Springer Nature, OpenEvidence Announce Subscription Agreement

Springer Nature and OpenEvidence have announced a subscription agreement that brings peer-reviewed content from Springer Nature into OpenEvidence, where physicians can retrieve and cite it during patient care. This agreement took effect August 5, 2026, and forms part of Springer Nature's community-led ARC3 framework. Clinicians and healthcare professionals need quick and easy access to the very latest trusted insights to help inform their decisions. Complete details are available at https://www.openevidence.com/announcements/springer-nature-and-openevidence-announce-agreement-to-maximise-exposure-of-trusted-findings-on-openevidence-platform.

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Kanu A. Nagra

Toward Inclusive Library Instruction

Guidelines for Integrating Inclusive Practices

Inclusion involves engaging all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, challenges, or disabilities.[1] As higher education institutions continue to prioritize equity, diversity, and inclusion, academic libraries play a critical role in advancing these values through their instructional practices. By designing learning experiences that are accessible and responsive to diverse needs, libraries can help ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to succeed.

Recent developments in accessibility policy in the United States provide additional impetus for this work and reinforce its broader societal relevance. The US Department of Justice has revised the compliance deadlines for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II web accessibility rule for covered state and local government entities.[2] Under the revised timeline, entities serving populations of 50,000 or more must comply by April 26, 2027, whereas smaller entities and special district governments have until April 26, 2028. These requirements mandate that covered public entities ensure their websites, web content, and mobile applications conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standards. For libraries, this federal mandate highlights the need to embed accessibility into all aspects of service delivery. Accessibility should not be treated as an afterthought but rather as a foundational element of library services, resources, and learning experiences.

These developments represent more than a compliance obligation; rather they provide an opportunity for libraries to reimagine instruction in ways that are intentionally inclusive, learner centered, and responsive to diverse learning needs. By embracing this moment, libraries can model best practices, promote equitable access, and reaffirm their essential role as champions of student success and academic excellence

WCAG 2.1, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), defines accessibility through four principles—perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust—and with three levels of conformance—Level A (lowest), Level AA (intermediate), and Level AAA (highest).[3] Level AA serves as the standard required under the federal rule. These guidelines inform the design of accessible online learning objects, including PDFs, videos, multimedia, infographics, research guides, slide decks, and interactive tutorials hosted on library websites.[4] By adhering to WCAG standards, libraries can ensure that instructional materials are accessible to all learners while demonstrating a commitment to inclusive and equitable education.

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Steps Toward Inclusive Library Instruction

Library instruction has evolved beyond traditional one-shot sessions toward more integrated, collaborative, and multimodal teaching approaches. In this context, inclusion must be understood as both a pedagogical commitment and an operational framework.[5] Instructional materials, delivery methods, and learning environments should be designed to reduce barriers and maximize access for all learners, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, first-generation students, and those from historically underrepresented backgrounds.

A key framework for achieving this goal is Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which emphasizes providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and action/expression. Applying UDL principles in library instruction encourages flexibility in teaching methods, supports varied learning preferences, and promotes deeper student engagement.[6] For example, offering content in multiple formats (text, audio, video), incorporating interactive elements, and allowing students different ways to demonstrate learning can significantly enhance accessibility and participation.

Central to this work is the intentional selection and creation of inherently accessible instructional materials. Libraries must ensure that digital resources, research guides, tutorials, and handouts meet accessibility standards, including proper document structure, alt text, captioned media, screen-reader compatibility, and high-contrast visual design.[7] Print materials and physical learning spaces should also be evaluated through an inclusive lens to ensure equitable access and usability conducive to diverse needs.

Sustaining inclusive instruction requires ongoing assessment and refinement.[8] Libraries should engage in continuous improvement through usability testing, accessibility audits, and student feedback to identify gaps and implement enhancements. Collaboration with campus partners, including accessibility services, instructional design units, and teaching and learning centers, further strengthens these efforts by integrating interdisciplinary expertise into the design and delivery of library instruction in multiple modalities.

Taken together, these approaches position inclusion as an embedded practice rather than an add-on. Libraries serve as inclusive learning environments that advance student success while modeling accessible, equitable, and culturally responsive teaching.[9] To achieve lasting impact, a clear set of guidelines is needed, one that advances a multifaceted approach integrating cultural awareness, inclusive programming, targeted diversity initiatives, and continuous evaluation.[10]

Guidelines for Inclusive Practices in Library Instruction

To move from principle to practice, library instruction teams can adopt the following guidelines as a flexible approach. These strategies are designed to be adaptable to institutional contexts and scalable across different instructional formats and delivery modalities. The recommendations presented here are grounded in the author's professional experience in library instruction and informed by ongoing informal conversations and practice-based knowledge shared among instructional librarians.

1. Align with Institutional Policies and Strategic Priorities

Library instruction should be informed by a careful review of institutional policies on accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Library instructional approaches can be intentionally

aligned with these frameworks, supported by locally developed guidelines or toolkits that promote inclusive teaching across in-person, hybrid, and online formats. Inclusive library instruction practices can also enhance the college experience and student success initiatives, including first-year experience programs, retention and progression frameworks, college readiness pathways, developmental education pathways, honors education, and institutional support structures designed to advance student learning and success.

2. Strengthen Engagement with Accessibility and Disability Support Services
Libraries should develop sustained collaborations with campus accessibility and disability support offices to ensure alignment with applicable legal frameworks and current ADA requirements. Such partnerships enable librarians to design instruction that is accessible by default, including lecture plans, learning materials, and assessment approaches. This collaboration also supports proactive identification of accommodation needs and timely instructional adjustments that enhance equitable access for all learners.

3. Integrate Inclusive Instructional Design and Blended Learning Principles
Work closely with instructional designers and e-learning specialists to incorporate UDL principles into instruction. Librarians can implement blended learning approaches such as flipped classroom models, where students review tutorials, videos, database demonstrations, or anticipation guides before instruction sessions. Preclass activities may include comparing search engines and library databases, learning research vocabulary, and exploring research topics in advance. These approaches provide students with multiple pathways to engage with content and support diverse learning preferences.

Another approach is visual instructional strategies that can improve comprehension and engagement for many learners. Librarians should introduce concept-mapping and mind-mapping tools that help students identify broader and narrower topics, related concepts, synonyms, and controlled vocabulary. These visual approaches support research skill development, simplify complex information, and assist multilingual learners in understanding unfamiliar concepts and terminology.

4. Partner with the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship
Libraries can enhance the quality and impact of instruction by engaging with campus resources dedicated to teaching excellence. Participation in faculty development initiatives, instructional workshops, and pedagogical communities provides opportunities to explore emerging teaching practices, refine instructional approaches, and strengthen student-centered learning. These efforts help librarians continuously adapt their teaching to meet the evolving needs of diverse learners.

5. Ensure Compliance of Instructional Technologies and Resources
Evaluate all instructional technologies, databases, software, and digital platforms for accessibility compliance. Libraries must request and review Accessibility Conformance Reports (ACRs) and Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPAT®)[11] from vendors to ensure alignment with Section 508 and WCAG standards.[12] Accessibility considerations should be incorporated into both new procurements and renewal processes.

6. Promote Accessibility as a Core Library Value in E-Resources and Services

Libraries actively demonstrate and promote the accessibility features available within library databases and digital resources. During instruction sessions, librarians highlight built-in artificial intelligence (AI) assistants, translation tools, transcripts for audio and video content, high-contrast display options, text magnification and scaling tools, accessible PDF and HTML formats, alternative text (alt text) for images and figures, captioning features, keyboard navigation support, and audio or text-to-speech functions. These features support multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and individuals with diverse learning preferences. Promoting these tools increases awareness of inclusive resources while advancing equitable access to information.

7. Design-Accessible Instructional Materials and Digital Learning Resources

Accessibility should be integrated into instructional design from the beginning rather than treated as a retroactive addition. This includes readable typefaces, sufficient color contrast, clearly structured content, and alternative text for images and other visual elements. Multimedia resources incorporate captions and transcripts to support multiple modes of access and comprehension, and built-in accessibility tools assist in identifying and addressing design issues.

These principles extend beyond individual documents to the broader ecosystem of library instructional materials, including research guides, tutorials, learning modules, open educational resources (OER), library websites, and digital learning platforms. Applying universal design principles across these formats promotes consistency, usability, and equitable access to learning experiences for all users.

8. Build Inclusive Learning Environments in Physical and Virtual Spaces

Effective learning environments accommodate diverse learner needs through flexibility, usability, and accessibility. In physical instructional spaces, this includes adaptable layouts with movable furniture, height-adjustable workstations, clear visual signage with strong contrast, and emergency information presented in accessible formats.

In digital contexts, learning platforms should prioritize intuitive structure, consistent navigation, and compatibility with assistive technologies to ensure equitable access for all users. Across both settings, instructional spaces should be intentionally designed to support collaborative and participatory learning approaches, including small-group work, peer discussion strategies such as think–pair–share, role-based activities, and other interactive pedagogical methods that promote active engagement.

9. Cultivate Learner-Centered Engagement and Responsive Dialogue

Meaningful learning experiences depend on communication approaches that encourage participation, reduce barriers, and support diverse ways of processing information. Library instructors should present information in a clear, organized, and approachable manner by using concise language, logical content structure, and multiple formats for presenting information. Creating opportunities for learners to share personal preferences related to communication and interaction can help foster a respectful and supportive instructional climate.

Instructional dialogue recognizes that learners require different amounts of time to process information, formulate responses, and engage in discussion. Visual representations,

demonstrations, and alternative explanations further support understanding and participation. Rather than relying solely on yes-or-no comprehension checks, librarians encourage learners to explain concepts in their own words, apply ideas to examples, or demonstrate understanding through active engagement. This approach emphasizes mastery of research skills while acknowledging diverse learning needs.

10. Strengthen Student Success through Cultural Partnerships

Libraries can advance inclusive learning by collaborating with academic departments, student organizations, and global cultural heritage groups in the institution to create educational experiences that reflect diverse perspectives, identities, and knowledge traditions. These partnerships may support workshops, exhibits, discussion forums, film screenings, and instructional programs that promote intercultural understanding and global awareness. Aligning library outreach with cultural heritage celebrations and campuswide diversity initiatives can further increase engagement, enhance the visibility of library resources and services, and foster a stronger sense of belonging among students.

11. Proactively Identify Accessibility Needs and Gather Learners Feedback

Libraries can implement structured processes to identify accessibility requirements prior to instructional sessions. This may include targeted questions in instruction request forms or coordination with faculty to understand student accommodation needs. Another key component involves providing clear, advance information about session activities, learning expectations, and available support options, enabling learners to prepare effectively and engage fully in instruction.

12. Sustain Continuous Improvement, Evaluation, and Innovation in Inclusive Instruction

Inclusive teaching is an evolving practice that depends on ongoing learning, reflective practice, and systematic improvement. Librarians engage in sustained professional development addressing accessibility, inclusive pedagogy, emerging technologies, and research-informed instructional strategies. Regular review processes—such as student usability testing, feedback analysis, accessibility evaluations, and learning outcome assessments—help identify gaps and guide refinements. Integrating evidence-based assessment with iterative innovation enables libraries to continuously enhance instructional quality and better support the success of diverse learners.

Conclusion

The inclusive instruction guidelines provided in this paper highlight a practical roadmap for embedding inclusion into library instruction. By taking a proactive, collaborative, and learner-centered approach, libraries can strengthen instructional practices to better serve all users. As a result, libraries can not only meet compliance requirements but also deepen their role as essential partners in advancing equitable access to knowledge and supporting student success within increasingly diverse academic communities and in broader societal contexts.

Notes

1. Fred Inglis and Lesley Aers, "Inclusion," *Key Concepts in Education* (Sage UK, 2008), https://access.infobase.com/article/2509428-inclusion?aid=102774.

2. US Department of Justice, "Extension of Compliance Dates for Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability; Accessibility of Web Information and Services of State and Local Government Entities," *Federal Register* 91, no. 76 (2026), https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/04/20/2026-07663/extension-of-compliance-dates-for-nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-disability-accessibility-of-web.

3. World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1," accessed June 10, 2026, https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/.

4. Michael Chee, Zia Davidian, and Kari D. Weaver, "More to Do Than Can Ever Be Done: Reconciling Library Online Learning Objects with WCAG 2.1 Standards for Accessibility," *Journal of Web Librarianship* 16, no. 2 (2022): 87–119, https://doi-org.bmcc.ezproxy.cuny.edu/10.1080/19322909.2022.2062521.

5. Janet Hopkins, "Extending Inclusive Learning: Library and Special Education Collaboration," *Library Media Connection* 23, no. 6 (2005): 17–19, https://cuny-bm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CUNY_BM/1v88od4/cdi_proquest_reports_198809948.

6. The National Disability Authority (NDA), "The 7 Principles of Universal Design," last modified January 1, 2026, accessed March 23, 2026, https://universaldesign.ie/about-universal-design/the-7-principles.

7. Barbara M. Pope and Gloria F. Creed-Dikeogu, "Increasing Accessibility to Academic Library Services with Alt Text, Color Contrast, Captioning, and Transcripts in YouTube Tutorials," *Kansas Library Association College & University Libraries Section Proceedings* 12, no. 1 (2022): 1–7, https://doi-org.bmcc.ezproxy.cuny.edu/10.4148/2160-942X.1085.

8. Kavita Rao, Patricia Edelen-Smith, and Cat-Uyen Wailehua, "Universal Design for Online Courses: Applying Principles to Pedagogy," *Open Learning* 30, no. 1 (2015): 35–52, https://doi-org.bmcc.ezproxy.cuny.edu/10.1080/02680513.2014.991300.

9. Amanda L. Folk, "Reframing Information Literacy as Academic Cultural Capital: A Critical and Equity-Based Foundation for Practice, Assessment, and Scholarship." *College & Research Libraries* 80, no. 5 (2019): 658–73, https://doi-org.bmcc.ezproxy.cuny.edu/10.5860/crl.80.5.658.

10. Nasim Yazdani, "A Pedagogy of Care in Academic Libraries: A Framework to Increase Underrepresented Communities' Sense of Belonging and Engagement," *Journal of the Australian Library & Information Association* 73, no. 4 (2024): 505–28, https://doi-org.bmcc.ezproxy.cuny.edu/10.1080/24750158.2024.2391224.

11. Information Technology Industry Council, "VPAT® (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template)," accessed June 10, 2026, https://www.itic.org/policy/accessibility/vpat.

12. The US General Services Administration, "Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act," Section508.gov, accessed June 10, 2026, https://www.section508.gov/.

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Finding the Power in Mini

Rethinking Library Tutorials with Microlearning

We have all been there where we create tutorials in a variety of formats (e.g., videos, LibWizard Tutorials, embedded tutorials) and students simply do not engage with them. This is where the University of Wyoming (UW) Libraries was in spring 2024, asking ourselves how we could better engage and support students with our tutorials and guides. While attending an Open Educational Resources Conference in Cork, Ireland, we learned about microlearning—the idea of bite-sized tutorials rather than typical tutorials or short courses. When we turned to the library literature for guidance, we found very little information about microlearning courses. We have all heard the statistics of videos eight to ten minutes or less[1]—and one Microsoft study even claims humans pay attention for only eight seconds.[2]

Microlearning was established to combat struggles with workplace training within the private sector by breaking down concepts into bite-size pieces. Further micro-content makes it even easier to integrate these short learning bursts into our daily activities.[3] One study found when comparing two classrooms—one utilizing microlearning and the other traditional learning—the former showed 18% better knowledge retention.[4] Such studies demonstrate that microlearning can be effective, but how do we apply these concepts to libraries? In this article, we'll discuss the approach we took at UW to begin implementing these strategies in our library instruction.

Background and Definitions

For our purposes, when we speak about microlearning tutorials, we mean a micro, or short, tutorial that is a smaller chunk of information in an accessible format (e.g., mobile-friendly) for students. These might include short videos, screenshots, or step-by-step instructions, ranging from seven to ten slides max. This differs from our traditional tutorial model, where each one took students two to five minutes to navigate the content. Instead, these microlearning tutorials are meant to take much less time to view.

The only detailed, library-focused microlearning article resource we discovered was a 2022 *Library Technology Reports* edition by Yvonne Mery, who argues that microlearning tutorials can be effective tools for academic libraries to combat short attention spans but not for all information literacy instruction. Instead, they are better suited for discrete skills like search strategies.[5] Otherwise the literature in libraries focuses more on mini and micro-courses than this microlearning tutorials model. For example, one group designed microlearning

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and micro-credentialing modules for business information literacy skills[6] and a blog post focused on microlearning for professional development in libraries.[7]

When considering the impact of tutorials on student success and engagement, studies have focused on the effectiveness of tutorials versus videos, often finding mixed results. A 2017 study by Qianjin Zhang and Kari Kozak found no difference in comprehension from guide-on-the-side versus video tutorials, but when asked, 58% of students preferred guide-on-the-side as opposed to 32% for video tutorials.[8] Similarly, a library-focused study evaluated the difference between screencast and web-based tutorials, finding students performed better with static information rather than the screencast approach.[9]

After investigation, the UW Libraries made the decision to adapt our existing tutorials and videos to adapt to the microlearning model, and we began the search for a fitting platform. Criteria for a platform included accessibility, user experience, flexibility in format type, cost, and student data privacy. One of the biggest factors was finding a tool that did not require students to log in or gather student data. Similarly we looked for a tool that was both mobile- and browser-friendly and that incorporated accessibility-friendly practices. Another feature that became appealing after browsing options was artificial intelligence (AI) integration within the tool. We landed on CoAssemble,[10] a more cost-effective option to meet our needs.

How We're Doing It

We were primarily interested in developing asynchronous content that could be easily digested and shared at point of need to support student learning outcomes. This interest was heightened because we recently migrated to a new integrated library system and discovery layer, and many of our existing video tutorials were immediately out of date. Our perspective is less that these microlearning options will replace video tutorials or library guides; rather they work in tandem and provide more bite-sized ways for students to get started on a learning pathway. UW Libraries are supporters of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and believe providing options for student engagement is important.[11] Since we have a peer mentor (or library coach) program, we thought involving this team would be a meaningful way to support implementation of microlearning. With two peer mentors at different stages in their educational journey, we hoped the student perspective in tutorial creation would make them more useful, especially for our undergraduate student population.

Peer mentors began by exploring the CoAssemble tool and sharing their questions with their supervisors to seek support. They were initially tasked with taking a video tutorial they had developed and thinking through how they might share about the same topic in a micro format. This proved to be a useful starting place as it prompted good conversations among the team about the core message to be delivered, the tone to strike, and the best way to break down a more in-depth learning object. The questions the peer mentors shared helped us understand early on what types of structure may help support the process of creating these microlearning objects and prompted us to develop a style guide document (see the supplemental files available with this article online). In addition, a library staff member worked closely with our branding guidelines[12] for the library to create a variety of "templates" to utilize for our microlearning purposes. These intro and concluding images (Figures 1 and 2) function as templates and live within our account, along with test microlearning samples, so anyone in the library can see what the design options are.

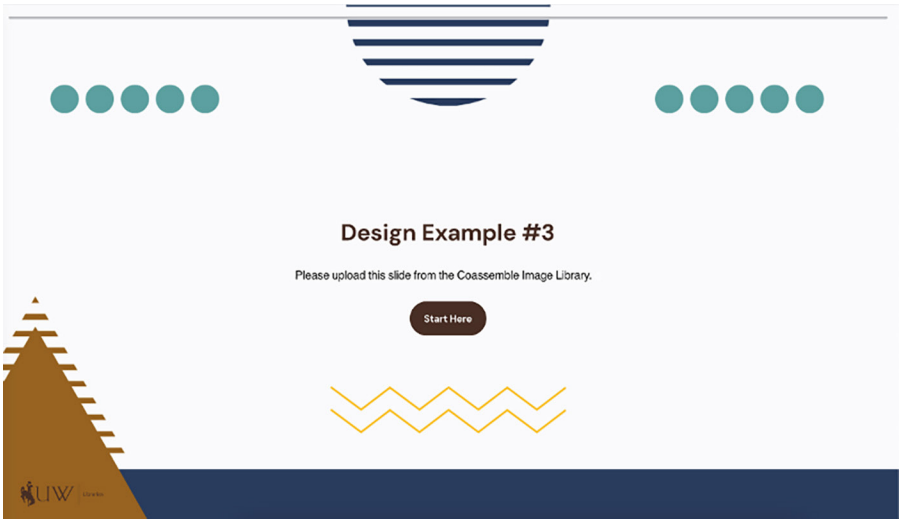


Figure 1: Introduction slide for template #3 featuring UW Libraries branding colors and fonts.

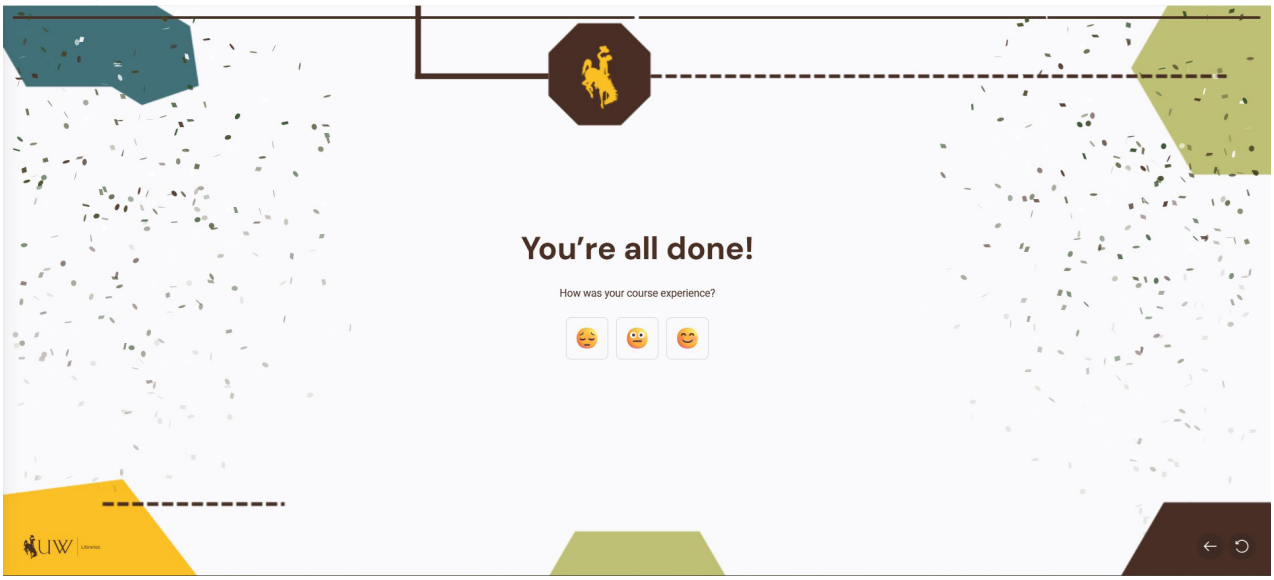


Figure 2: Concluding slide for template #1 featuring UW Libraries branding colors and fonts and CoAssemble assessment.

This choice delivers a more cohesive experience for our users and aligns content with our libraries' marketing team.

Audio Recording Space: A Specific Example

One example of micro-tutorials in action is improving the instructions for using Studio Coe.[13] Studio Coe is the UW Libraries digital multimedia lab, where students, staff, and faculty can get support for audio-video recording and editing, graphic design, and virtual reality. The lab hosts the libraries' audio recording space and oversees a video recording lab. While some of our patrons may have experience with recording and editing audio using their phones or USB microphones and their laptop, they may not be comfortable navigating a professional audio recording setup.

Historically, the audio recording booth had a set of paper instructions taped to the wall that guided users through the process of turning on the Focusrite Scarlett 18i8 audio interface and discussed how to correctly configure the microphones to enable recording. These paper

instructions were outdated with small text and screenshots that were difficult to read. They were also mounted in an inconvenient spot—on the wall opposite from where the audio interface and microphones were placed. This required users to move back and forth or have another person read the instructions to them.

CoAssemble's tutorials allow for cleaner presentation of this information compared to the paper instructions. By having a readily available QR code beside the audio interface, patrons may follow each step in the setup process at their own pace. The platform has also allowed for the expansion of the instructions to include navigating the playback controls, saving a project, and exporting a project as an audio file. CoAssemble also allows us to update any instructions as hardware and/or software inevitably changes.

While these updates have made the setup process more user-friendly, they are not without their challenges. Due to isolating specific pieces of information on the computer's desktop and in Adobe Audition, the dimensions of the screenshots vary wildly. Although these images are easily legible in the desktop version, they can be difficult to read in the mobile format. Fortunately, users can zoom in on these images to get a clearer view of the information presented. Studio Coe currently mitigates this by providing on-demand verbal instructions to patrons. Despite this challenge, Studio Coe plans to implement additional microlearning tutorials to facilitate ease of use for both patrons and staff. The next tutorials will support use of the One Button Studio and our reservable technology kits. These modules can be used both as training for Studio Coe's student workers and as follow-ups for class visits, empowering students to utilize additional resources to aid in the completion of their projects.

Peer Mentors: A Student Perspective

As noted earlier, creating effective microlearning comes with challenges, especially when you consider balancing visuals, content, and ease of use on different devices. Another challenge was how to best format these mini-tutorials. Getting the balance right between text and visuals can be what makes creating an aesthetically pleasing tutorial difficult. Peer mentors found that selecting the most important information to include was vital. If you are not conscious of accessible design, you may end up with a text-heavy tutorial that ultimately defeats the point of this format in which content is intended to be digestible and accessible. A visual with some explanatory text helps reduce the word count by minimizing the need to explain navigation elements of a digital resource.

Another challenge to microlearning is when you reference a related tool without explaining what that tool is or does. This runs the risk of confusing the viewer. Making a separate tutorial on that topic and linking it can be useful, but that could result in the viewer not finishing the tutorial if you must add links to every slide. This approach would remove the simplicity and speed for getting the information to the viewer if they needed to view several tutorials. Figuring out how to navigate a large audience's literacy of library terms is at the core of this issue. There is the option to add a slide to the tutorial itself explaining what the tool is, but this would increase the length of the tutorial, which isn't optimal. Designing a tutorial that gives the audience their desired information without being redundant is the goal. Assuming that someone searching for information on a niche topic already knows the basics may be the right approach. Balancing what to explain and when to link to another tutorial can be challenging depending on the topic and its complexity.

As with all media we create, our goal is to bridge the gap between technical jargon and the general public's knowledge. The informal nature of microlearning tutorials allows us to adopt a more conversational approach when discussing library topics. Between the learning curve of video production and time spent rerecording and editing, microlearning tutorials are much easier to create. The format of microlearning tutorials also caters to the changing media consumption of younger generations. Short-form entertainment—think TikTok or Instagram Reels—is the media format traditional students are used to consuming. By providing information in a familiar way, we believe we are able to engage with students more effectively.

The versatility of microlearning tutorials also expands access to information. They can be used as QR codes in public spaces where people might need an answer to a question or at specific places within the library website and online course shells. This variety of presentation mediums increases the number of ways we can raise awareness of library resources. The availability of a quick link to information saves resources for answering more in-depth questions by library staff. From verbal communication in person to videos or text-based media (like microlearning tutorials), having a variety of ways to share media gives people the option to choose the method that works best for them.

Conclusions, Lessons Learned, and Future Growth

An aspect of implementing microlearning tutorials has been the shift from two- to five-minute tutorials that can go more in depth on a topic to a more-focused approach. With our peer mentors, we have found it most effective to make space for scaffolding conversations to understand the goal of each microlearning tutorial individually. The conversations have taken more time than we may have anticipated investing but have helped establish better scope for each tutorial and inspired some additional workflow adjustments, like the script we now use as a guide for our student workers (see the supplemental files available with this article online).

The content contained in a microlearning tutorial may be more focused, but this also means we are able to provide more detailed information than we can capture in a video tutorial (e.g., live links, zoomed-in screenshots, step-by-step processes). Despite the challenges, this format has also allowed us to incorporate instruction in new ways. This past year the student success librarian and first-year engagement librarian incorporated a selection of microlearning tutorials as follow-up to our typical English 1010 one-shot sessions. They were chosen to reinforce content that had already been introduced such as Getting started with QuickSearch and Want to meet with a Library Coach? These were shared with instructors via email and embedded in course shells across all English 1010 sections. Anecdotally this resulted in not only an uptick in our microlearning tutorial views but also more walk-in questions and scheduled consultations from students in these classes.

In the future, we anticipate embedding microlearning tutorials in other ways. This includes the use of more tutorials in our Personal Librarian Program, which sends emails directly to students of different populations on our campus. We initially tried this with a Wellness Wherever You Are tutorial for our distance campus Personal Librarian email but plan to expand this to future aspects of the Personal Librarian Program.

Incorporating this work into our peer mentor duties, alongside the support of staff and librarians, has centered the student voice in what we develop. This has been invaluable in terms of the topics we are covering and some suggestions on how they want to implement these tutorials throughout the library. This includes having a QR code in place at our catalog

computers in the stacks that point to our Finding a book on the Shelf microlearning object and a similar approach for guidance on using our KIC scanners. Expanding beyond what we initially considered the purpose of this platform is proving to be an opportunity to seek input from other library staff and librarians throughout our departments based on their expertise, which connects with our peer mentors.

As we have dug into the platform, we have realized there are more things we would like to see improved long term—for example, being able to easily make a new tutorial from a template, a better photo management system, and more. While some of these things might be addressed over time, we also accept the reality that not every tool will meet our every need. Sometimes we have to adapt to the tool too. We look forward to continuing to work with this format for our needs and the possibilities future tools may bring.

Notes

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Katie Heeren

Adapting to How Students Learn

Rethinking Information Literacy Instruction in the Age of Short-Form Content

I started my career in academic librarianship in August 2023, and from the start, I was immersed in teaching. In addition to conducting library instruction, I was assigned to teach a credit-bearing course on critical thinking in academic research. Since then, I have taught the course five times across modalities. While I expected to learn a great deal about pedagogy and information literacy, one of the most noticeable lessons has been about students themselves and how dramatically their relationships with information has changed.

There is no question that COVID-19 altered higher education. The years between 2020 and 2023 were defined by a necessary mindset of "do what you can." Flexibility was necessary, and academic standards began to shift to accommodate the disruption of the pandemic. As we move further from the height of the pandemic, however, we are beginning to see its long-term effects on today's college students.

Many current first-year college students were in middle school when their education was interrupted. This meant an accelerated disengagement from structured learning environments. Increasingly, I encounter students who view college merely as a requirement for a job. When higher education is perceived only as a means to obtain employment, it raises important questions for librarians: How invested are students in learning, and how does that affect our approach to teaching information literacy?

At the same time, students' information environments have changed drastically. The rise of TikTok and other short-form platforms have reshaped how an entire generation consumes and processes information. Long-form videos have been replaced with short clips that are often watched at accelerated speeds. This rapid content consumption undeniably reduces students' ability for deep processing; however, it also strengthens a different skill: the ability to communicate ideas quickly and efficiently. When you are constrained to a short time limit, you must make every second count.[1]

This shift matters for librarians because information literacy instruction depends on students' ability and willingness to engage. If an entire generation processes information more rapidly than before, how should we adapt our instruction for maximum impact? If students have shorter attention spans and exist in a constant state of mental stimulation, what does that mean for how we design instruction?

One answer, I believe, is embracing short-form content.

When I first started teaching credit-bearing online, I thought quality lecture videos needed to be lengthy, modeled after traditional class sessions. My initial lecture videos were forty-five minutes or longer. I quickly learned that students did not equate video length with quality. Instead, many saw the duration and immediately decided not to watch. Can I blame them?

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In subsequent semesters, I abandoned the idea that lectures needed to be lengthy to be effective. I shifted my focus to clarity and relevance, breaking the weekly content into smaller segments and using real-world examples to reinforce key concepts. Some weeks, my lecture videos were as short as eight minutes. The result was immediate and measurable. Where I once saw only a handful of views, my videos began receiving twenty-five to thirty-five views per week. Given my average class size was thirty-eight students, this felt like a significant success.

What surprised me most was that shorter videos did not reduce engagement with more complex material. During weeks that required deeper explanation, such as database searching, videos naturally ran longer, sometimes even forty minutes; however, the views did not decline. The difference was intentionality: students were more willing to engage with longer content when it felt necessary and purposeful.

This experience has reshaped how I think about information literacy instruction. Short-form content does not mean superficial instruction. Rather it challenges librarians to be more deliberate. What is essential? What can be demonstrated quickly? What benefits from being revisited in smaller pieces?

The implications extend beyond asynchronous instruction. In face-to-face classrooms, we may need to rethink pacing and structure. Should lessons be more microsegmented? Should we move more quickly to application rather than extended explanation? How does retention change when content is delivered in shorter, high-impact bursts?

These are not fully answered questions, and they should not be; however, ignoring shifts in how students process information risks widening the gap between instruction and engagement. Librarians have long excelled at meeting students where they are, whether through new technologies, instructional models, or outreach strategies. Adapting to short-form content is simply the next iteration of that work.

By embracing short-form content, librarians can model purposeful communication, respect students' cognitive bandwidth, and create learning experiences that resonate. The challenge before us is not whether students will change but rather whether we will.

Note

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ACRL Board of Directors' Actions

Highlights of the Board's 2025-2026 Meetings

For Winter 2026, the ACRL Board of Directors held a virtual meeting on January 29 and February 25. An informal virtual Board Update meeting was held on January 16. The Board also met virtually with the ACRL Budget and Finance Committee for a joint meeting on February 6. For the 2026 ALA Annual Conference, the ACRL Board met in person on June 27 and 28. The Board canceled the informal virtual Board Update meeting scheduled for June 9. Also, during the 2025-26 program year, the Board held virtual meetings on October 3 and April 30, as well as an in-person Strategic Planning Meeting held March 11-13 in Chicago.

During Winter 2026, the Board met virtually with the leaders of four of the five goal-area committees: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; New Roles and Changing Landscapes; Research and Scholarly Environment; Student Learning; and Value of Academic Libraires (written report) to assess progress on ACRL's strategic plan, the Plan for Excellence. At Annual, the Board met with three of the five goal-area committee leaders: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Research and Scholarly Environment (written report); Student Learning and Information Literacy; New Roles and Changing Landscapes; and Value of Academic Libraries (written report).

During Winter and Annual 2026, the Board met with ACRL's ALA Executive Board Liaison Nick Buron. The Board received an advocacy update from Lisa Varga, Associate Executive Director, Public Policy & Advocacy, ALA Public Policy and Advocacy (PPA) Office during Winter 2026. Amy Katzenberger, ALA Director of Development, gave an update on the 150th Anniversary Campaign during the Spring 2026 meeting.

Board members, whose service ended on June 30, 2026—Leo S. Lo, Walter Butler, Rebecca Miller Waltz—were recognized and thanked for their service.

The ACRL Board of Directors took the following actions during the 2025–26 program year. Each action is followed by the Board approval date.

Value of Academic Libraries

- Established the following communities of practice:
  - Assessment Interest Group (Annual 2026)

Research and Scholarly Environment

- Merged the Scholarly Communication, Copyright, and Research Assessment and Metrics Discussion Groups merge to become the Scholarly Communication, Copyright, and Bibliometrics Interest Group (Annual 2026).

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Approved $1,500 in budgeted expenses to support a Fall 2026 Resident Librarian Retreat (Winter 2026).

- Approved to use up to $10,000 from the FY26 TBD strategic initiatives budget to fund 50 ALA and ACRL memberships for BIPOC and library workers with disabilities (Winter 2026).
- Dissolved the following communities of practice:
  - Asian, African and Middle Eastern Studies Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
  - Library EDI Committees Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
  - Training & Equity in Library Work Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
- Renamed the ACRL Diversity Alliance Committee to the ACRL Residency Program Resource Committee (Annual 2026).

Enabling Programs and Services

Strategic goal areas will be supported by financial and operational planning and will guide the development and implementation of programs and services that target education, advocacy, and member engagement.



ACRL Board of Directors 2025-26 (l to r): Tarida Anantachai, Walter Butler, Leo Lo, Brad Warren, Rachel Minkin, and Teresa Anderson. Not pictured: Alexia Hudson-Ward, Kimberley Bugg, Amy Dye-Reeves, Andrea Falcone, Carrie Forbes, Rebecca Miller Waltz, and Millie Gonzalez.

Advocacy

- Approved for the ACRL External Liaisons Committee to award up to $2,000 per grant recipient to eligible ACRL Liaisons Assembly members (Spring 2026).

Education

- Approved Baltimore, Maryland, as the host city for the ACRL 2029 Conference, to be held April 10–13, 2029 (Winter 2026).
- Approved Columbus, Ohio, as the host city for the ACRL 2031 Conference, to be held March 18–21, 2031 (Spring 2026).
- Updated the Speaker Honoraria Policy to establish honoraria scales based on type of presentation to ensure better equity, transparency and consistency (Fall 2025).

Member Engagement

- Approved an updated charge and composition for the ACRL Appointments Committee (Annual 2026).
- Reduced the number of required Interest Group leaders from three to two leaders.
- Established the ACRL ANSS/Core M&C Committee on Cataloging: Anthropology, Sociology, and Criminology (Spring 2026)
- Established the ACRL External Liaisons Evaluation Task Force (Annual 2026).
- Established the following communities of practice:
  - First Year Experience Interest Group (Spring 2026)
  - Flourishing Discussion Group (Fall 2025)
  - Language and Linguistics Interest Group (Annual 2026)
  - Library Marketing and Outreach Interest Group (Annual 2026)
  - Privacy Literacy Interest Group (Annual 2026)
  - Sensory-Friendly Libraries Interest Group (Annual 2026)
- Renewed the following communities of practice:
  - Digital Badges Interest Group (Spring 2026)
  - History Librarians Interest Group (Spring 2026)
- Reestablished the Western NY/Ontario Chapter (Spring 2026).
- Merged the Leadership Discussion Group and Human Resources and Organizational Development Discussion Group to become the Leadership Interest Group (Annual 2026).
- Moved the Image Resources Discussion Group to become a discussion group within the ACRL Arts Section (Annual 2026).
- Dissolved the following communities of practice:
  - Flourishing in Academic Libraries Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
  - Heads of Public Services Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
  - Librarians from Very Small Academic Institutions Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
  - Librarianship in For-Profit Educational Institutions Discussion Group (Annual 2026)
  - Digital Badges Interest Group (Annual 2026)

Publications

- Appointed Diane Dias De Fazio as editor of *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* for a second three-year term beginning July 1, 2026 (Annual 2026).

- Approved the following:
  - AI Competencies for Academic Library Workers (Fall 2025)
  - Nursing Framework Companion Document (Winter 2026)
  - Statement on the Terminal Professional Degree for Academic Librarians (Annual 2026)
  - Standards for the Employment, Promotion, and Tenure of Academic Librarians (Annual 2026)
- Rescinded the following:
  - Statement on the Certification & Licensing of Academic Librarians (Annual 2026)
  - Statement on the Terminal Professional Degree for Academic Librarians (Annual 2026)
  - Standard for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians (Annual 2026)
  - Standards for Academic Librarians Without Faculty Status (Annual 2026)
  - Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians (Annual 2026)



ACRL Board of Directors 2026-27 - Front (l-r): Teresa Anderson, Alexia Hudson-Ward, Yasmeen Shorish, Brad Warren. Back (l-r): Tarida Anantachai, Rachel Minkin, Carrie Forbes, Amy Dye-Reeves, Andrea Falcone, Millie Gonzalez, Joe Mocnik. Not pictured: Kimberley Bugg, Eric Edwards, and Jill Sodt.

Operations

- Approved a four-year review cycle for the ACRL Awards Program, with staggered awards' reviews on years one to three and evaluation of the ACRL Awards Coordinating Committee's review process in year four. (Fall 2025).
- Extended the moratorium on establishing new awards through June 30, 2027. Beginning July 1, 2027, the ACRL Board may consider new awards that do not overlap with existing awards (Winter 2026).
- Approved that the Awards Coordinating Committee will revisit and review the process for establishing new ACRL awards in Fall 2026 (Winter 2026).
- Approved the 2025 ACRL Fall Board Virtual Meeting Minutes (Winter 2026).
- Approved a recommendation that the ALA Executive Board is to authorize Dina Tsourdinis, ALA Chief Financial Officer, and Denise Moritz, ALA Director of Financial Reporting and Compliance, to negotiate the sale of the Choice condominium located in Middletown, Connecticut (Fall 2025).
- Approved the Budget & Finance Committee recommendation to raise ACRL Individual Type I and Supporter membership dues by three dollars ($3.00) as permitted by the 2025 HEPI. The FY25 HEPI reported a 3.65% increase. This increase permits increasing the ACRL Individual Type I and Supporter dues rates for FY27 to $82 (Spring 2026).
- Approved the Budget & Finance Committee recommendation to reduce ACRL Individual Type II membership dues for FY27 to $56 (Spring 2026).
- Approved the ACRL Budget and Finance Committee's recommendation to increase student dues for FY27 to $10 (Spring 2026).
- Approved the ACRL Budget & Finance Committee's recommendation to approve FY26 budgets for ACRL and Choice (Fall 2025):
  - ACRL Revenues $2,204,799
  - ACRL Expenses $2,414,580
  - ACRL Net -$209,781
  - Choice Revenues $2,054,004
  - Choice Expenses $2,021,373
  - Choice Net $32,631
- Approved the ACRL Budget & Finance Committee's recommendation to approve FY27 budgets for ACRL and Choice (Annual 2026):
  - ACRL Revenues $3,656,426
  - ACRL Expenses $3,630,373
  - ACRL Net $26,053
  - Choice Revenues $2,017,004
  - Choice Expenses $1,979,024
  - Choice Net $37,980

Pamela A. Jackson

The Ten Treasures

Structuring a Course Using Ten Primary Sources from Special Collections

San Diego State University (SDSU) has become a vibrant hub for comics scholarship, thanks to the transformative role of its Special Collections & University Archives' Comic Arts Collection. What began as a modest assortment of comic books evolved into one of the largest academic comics collections in the United States, fueling innovative teaching, interdisciplinary research, and international collaboration. The collection not only inspired new curricula but also united librarians, historians, artists, and scholars around a shared commitment to exploring comics as powerful tools of cultural expression and historical inquiry. In fall 2025, this spirit of collaboration culminated in an experimental course on comics history structured around "Ten Treasures" from the collection.

A Collection Drives Change

When SDSU first began collecting comics, our holdings numbered just more than 3,000 single issues and graphic novels. Recognizing the region's deep connection to popular culture and the scholarly potential of comics, the university committed to building a major academic comics collection. Today, SDSU's Comic Arts Collection comprises more than 120,000 published comics, along with rare ephemera, zines, and archival materials.

University curricula often drive library collections. Librarians work to ensure collections map to curricular needs of students and research needs of faculty. In a rare twist, SDSU's Comic Arts Collection itself became the catalyst that inspired new courses, research initiatives, and collaborations across campus. Through outreach by librarians and early partnerships with faculty, the collection sparked a grassroots movement to integrate comics into teaching and scholarship. What began as informal conversations around a conference table evolved into a recognized Center for Comics Studies, bringing together more than forty-five faculty members from five academic colleges. This interdisciplinary group of humanists, educators, scientists, artists, and librarians has developed nearly twenty comics-focused courses in thirteen academic departments, demonstrating how a library collection can reshape an institution's intellectual landscape.

Visiting International Professors

In fall 2025, the Center for Comics Studies launched its inaugural Comics-Scholar-in-Residence and Comic-Artist-in-Residence programs. The initiative is designed to connect SDSU with leading voices in comics scholarship and creation. The first residents were Laurence Grove, director of the Stirling Maxwell Centre for the Study of Text/Image Cultures at the University of Glasgow, and artist Vin Deighan (known professionally as Frank

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Quitely), the award-winning Scottish comic book artist celebrated for his work on *All-Star Superman* and *We3*.

Together, Grove and Deighan team-taught a special section of History 157: Comics and History, a course exploring how stories told through sequential art illuminate cultural realities and aesthetics across time. As SDSU's Comic Arts Librarian, the visiting professors worked closely with me to design a semester long syllabus structured around ten key "treasures" from the SDSU Library's Comic Arts Collection. Each treasure served as the foundation for a week's study, connecting primary sources directly to classroom inquiry.

To accommodate both the scope of the materials and the realities of access, the course blended in-person and virtual components. While two sessions brought students into Special Collections to examine items firsthand, the remaining sessions featured digital surrogates and live virtual presentations. This hybrid approach allowed students to engage deeply with rare materials while maintaining the momentum of an interactive classroom experience.



Scottish comic artist Vin Deighan (aka Frank Quitely) discusses the form and style of his art with attendees.

The result was a dynamic, research-driven course that showcased how librarians, scholars, and artists can collaboratively design curriculum grounded in primary sources. The Ten Treasures model not only illuminated the evolution of comics as an art form but also demonstrated the educational value of SDSU's expanding Comic Arts Collection and the global partnerships it continues to inspire.

Grounding the Curriculum with Ten Treasures

Ahead of their arrival in the United States, the visiting professors outlined ten units for their course and shared their plans with me. I explored the primary source collection to identify materials that aligned with each unit's learning goals. Once the visitors reached campus, we met to review the options and select a treasure for each unit. This process created a deeply collaborative partnership that placed the library and its collections at the heart of the course. Further embedding the library in the curriculum, Treasure One was "The Collection Itself," emphasizing the intellectual and artistic goldmine available to students.

Considering the status of popular culture and the ongoing debate between high-brow and low-brow art, Treasure Two examined the works of Frank Quitely, most notably *All-Star Superman*. Quitely's work is significant not simply for its distinctive visual approach but also for how it demonstrates the narrative and artistic sophistication achievable within mainstream comics. His work challenges assumptions about the limitations of commercial superhero art by revealing how complex visual storytelling, thematic nuance, and formal experimentation can emerge from a so-called low-brow medium. Studying Quitely underscored for students how comics occupy a fluid space between mass entertainment and fine art, complicating rigid cultural hierarchies.



Treasure Three: Illuminated manuscript leaves on display at the Ten Treasures capstone event in fall 2025.

Treasure Three looked to illuminated manuscript leaves from the vault to examine the roots of sequential art. Examples from *St. Matthew's Gospel* (1400), a breviary (1430), the *French Book of Hours* (1470), and the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493) were studied to demonstrate early print production. Similarities to comics were seen in scribes using pencil lines to map out the page and then hand letter the text. They left room for illuminators to add illustrations and color. In later works, woodcuts were used to successfully integrate images into text.

The birth of the modern comic section was tackled using the oldest comic in the collection for Treasure Four: *The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck* (1849) by 19th-century Swiss cartoonist Rodolphe Töpffer. America's first serialized newspaper comic, *Obadiah Oldbuck,* was later collected into book form, becoming the first American comic book and a major inspiration for the genre. Students studied this early example of the medium and its innovative blend of image and text.

Treasure Five used illustrated children's books to explore how comics fit within the broader landscape of children's literature. The class considered this medium as both a precursor to and a parallel track alongside comic book production. *The Seven Lady Godivas* (1939) by Dr. Seuss offered students a recognizable author but a story few students had encountered. The work opened space for discussions about how illustrated books evolved alongside comics and where their forms overlap or diverge.

We settled on "Girls' Magazines" for Treasure Six to discuss the economics of comics production and how marketing became key to sales. Comic book tie-ins, crossovers, incentives, licensing franchises (like Disney), and target audiences have all driven what content is created by the US comic book industry. For example, in the 1940s, US comics began marketing specifically to girls. *Miss America* (1944) started as a bona fide comic and was changed to magazine format to entice girls with romance, fashion, and food, and comics such as *Nellie the Nurse* (1948) supported the post–World War II idea of women having careers—but only acceptable "pink collar" jobs that aligned with traditional femininity.

Treasure Seven was a first edition of psychiatrist Fredric Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954). In it, he warned that comic books were harming children and leading to juvenile delinquency. Despite his conclusions being deeply flawed, his opinions sparked a culture war that led to censorship in comics for decades. Shown alongside this first edition was a sampling of EC horror comics, which both Wertham and the US Congress targeted for censorship. This treasure allowed the class to consider the historical ramifications of censorship on comic book production and readership, as well as contemporary parallels to modern-day book-banning efforts.

To examine how underground comics and punk aesthetics represented alternative cultures, a full run of *RAW* magazine was selected as Treasure Eight. The Pulitzer Prize–winning comic *Maus* was originally published here in serialized format. *RAW* underscores the importance of alternative and underground comics through the humble origins of *Maus*, which first appeared not in a mainstream venue but rather serialized within the magazine's experimental pages. Its emergence from this independent, artist-driven context demonstrated how the underground comix tradition fostered groundbreaking work that might otherwise have been excluded from commercial publishing, ultimately proving that transformative literary art could grow from the margins.



Student views the first installment of the original serialized publication of Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer Prize–winning comic *Maus* in *RAW* magazine.

Graphic Memoir is a genre of comics that has grown exponentially since the 1970s. At the same time, creators often incorporate autobiographical elements into works of fiction. For this section, the class looked at examples of both fiction and memoir, with Treasure Nine settling on Chris Ware's *Building Stories* (2012). An unconventional comic, *Building Stories* is a boxed set of fourteen separate printed objects, challenging traditional ideas of what constitutes a "book" by allowing the reader to assemble the story in any order. Although not strictly autobiographical in a literal sense, *Building Stories* draws heavily on Ware's personal experiences, and the modular structure of the comic mirrors the fragmented, nonlinear nature of memory, giving the work a unique narrative depth and positioning it as one of the most innovative experiments in contemporary comics.

For Treasure Ten, we asked the students, "What is your favorite comics-related item from Special Collections? It can be something you saw on your visit, in the exhibit, or another item of which you're aware of in the collection. Give as much info as you can to help Pam, your librarian, find your treasure." Their selections included a "treasure chest" of primary sources too numerous to list here, but they demonstrated deep and thoughtful engagement with both the course content and the Comic Arts Collection.

Class Visits

While parts of the Ten Treasures course unfolded through digital access and virtual discussions, two in-person visits to SDSU's Special Collections & University Archives provided students with essential hands-on experiences. The first visit served as an introduction to the breadth and depth of the Comic Arts Collection. Materials were organized around the ten thematic sections of the course, offering students a comprehensive view of the collection's scope and helping them identify potential research materials for individual projects. This session encouraged students to see beyond the selected "treasures" and appreciate the expansive context from which they were drawn.

The second visit functioned as both a capstone experience and a public showcase. Open to the campus community, the public, and donors, the event displayed each of the Ten Treasures. Grove and Deighan delivered a public lecture, reflecting on the design and intent of the course and the pedagogical value of using primary sources in comics education. The session not only highlighted student engagement and faculty collaboration but also underscored the collection's role in advancing research, teaching, and outreach.

Through these visits, students gained a tangible understanding of the materiality of comics and the scholarly significance of archives. The experience demonstrated how direct interaction with primary sources can deepen learning, foster curiosity, and connect academic study to a broader cultural community.

Conclusion

The Ten Treasures course exemplified how a university collection can spark innovation, collaboration, and global engagement. What began as a small, specialized archive has become a dynamic force for curricular and cultural transformation at SDSU. By uniting librarians, faculty, artists, and students around the shared study of comics, SDSU has created a model for interdisciplinary teaching grounded in primary sources and creative inquiry.

The success of the Ten Treasures initiative lies not only in its imaginative structure but also in its outcomes, including enhanced student engagement, international collaboration, and

deeper appreciation for comics as historical and artistic texts. The program demonstrated how hybrid pedagogy—combining digital access with hands-on archival encounters—can make rare materials central to classroom learning.

Today the Comic Arts Collection and the Center for Comics Studies stand as hallmarks of SDSU's commitment to scholarly innovation and community engagement. The Ten Treasures course has proven that when librarians and faculty collaborate around shared resources and vision, a collection can do more than support research—it can inspire it.

Tia Phillip, Caitlin Perkins, and Daniel Burnett

From the Classroom to the Field

A Year of Exploring Why We Choose Librarianship

Academic Library Workers in Conversation is a *C&RL News* series focused on elevating the everyday conversations of library professionals. The wisdom of the watercooler has long been heralded, but this series hopes to go further by minimizing barriers to traditional publishing with an accessible format. In past issues, the topics were proposed by the authors. However, during 2026, this feature will focus on the authors' stories of librarianship. How they got here, why they stay, and even why they consider leaving or transitioning at times. During this time of great upheaval in higher education, exploring our many "whys" is a worthy venture. — *Dustin Fife, series editor*

Daniel Burnett (DB): Caitlin and Tia, as we are all current MLIS students, I think we can offer an interesting perspective on this series' overarching question of why we chose librarianship. Personally, my path to librarianship, archives, and an MLIS was not a traditional path, nor did I understand the importance of an MLIS degree or information science career. I chose to enter the LIS field after completing a consulting project for a nonprofit in Uganda during my graduate studies at Georgetown University. As part of that project, I helped train a natural language processing (NLP) model to identify grant opportunities. This sparked my interest in information, so I applied and was accepted to the Louisiana State University MLIS online program. Before beginning my program, I volunteered on projects involving nonprofit collections, botanical records, and Indigenous genealogical research. After beginning my coursework, I explored both archives and records management. While ultimately my MLIS concentration and graduate certificate are in archives, I implement records and information management principles in my work.

This is an important field to enter because information extends far beyond public perception. Archivists and information professionals work in preservation, conservation, disaster planning, genealogy, digital collections, restoration, consulting, and many other specialized areas. Although public institutions face political and financial challenges, there remains a growing need for information professionals in private organizations, nonprofits, businesses, cultural institutions, and communities.

Caitlin, why did you choose librarianship, and why now? Why do you think librarianship is still important, especially during this political climate?

Caitlin Perkins (CP): Thanks for starting us off, Daniel. Like you and many other librarians that I've heard from, I found my way into librarianship somewhat by accident. I have

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a research background in art history and previously worked in art museums doing museum education. In 2017, I had two part-time jobs on the same campus, one in the art museum and one in the library. I eventually shifted into full-time work at the library and decided pretty quickly to go back to graduate school for an MLIS. My prior experience completing a research-based art history MA has helped me understand patron needs at an academic library, and my background in patron engagement at museums maps well to public services librarianship.

I know we all regularly hear comments that question the continued relevance of libraries, so I agree with you that this is an interesting perspective that the three of us can bring to the conversation as current library school students.

TL;DR: Yes, we still need libraries!

The aspect of librarianship that I'm most passionate about is facilitating access to information, and I think this, along with information literacy, is especially crucial in today's information landscape. Knowing how to find and access information and then determine the accuracy or validity of that information is not something we inherently know how to do; it has to be learned. And librarians are the folks who are trained to teach that skill and guide people to the information they seek.

How about you, Tia? Why are you choosing to enter this field at this time?

Tia Phillip (TP): Thank you both for sharing your reasons for getting into librarianship. It sounds like we're all approaching this path from different angles, which is really exciting. For me, librarianship has been percolating in the back of my mind since I was a wee high school student volunteering at my local library. At first, I was doing it just to get the community service hours on my résumé to stand out on college applications, but when I started working at my college's library, the profession became clear. I took a minor detour into screenwriting, which is still a passion of mine, but I have returned to Library Land feeling now more than ever how vital information literacy and accessibility have to be.

I am choosing to enter the field at this time because I believe libraries, and what they stand for, are foundational pillars of a functioning democratic society. Not to get too "vocational awe"[1] about things (RIP Fobazi Ettarh), but as a soon-to-be librarian, I do feel a sense of responsibility to protect and advocate for knowledge acquisition, expansion, and epistemic justice.

Looking at the present and considering that all three of us are fledgling librarians, I'm curious—Daniel, how is LSU preparing you for the future of librarianship?

DB: Both of your journeys are amazing. To answer your question, LSU has prepared me for the future of librarianship by teaching me that the profession is inherently interdisciplinary. Modern librarians, archivists, and information professionals do much more than manage collections; they must also understand digital records, project management, preservation, community engagement, genealogy, outreach, and budgeting. Through my coursework and professional experiences, I have learned that success in the library and information science field often requires drawing upon knowledge and skills from many different disciplines.

One of the most valuable lessons I have gained at LSU is the importance of thinking beyond traditional boundaries. Whether working with digital records, preservation planning,

archival description, metadata, or community-based projects, I have found that information professionals frequently collaborate with individuals from fields such as information technology, law, business, education, history, and public administration. LSU has encouraged me to approach problems from multiple perspectives and to remain adaptable as the profession continues to evolve. As libraries and archives face new challenges related to technology, digital preservation, artificial intelligence (AI), and access to information, I believe the future of librarianship will require professionals who are flexible, curious, and willing to learn continuously.

So Caitlin, how is your MLIS program preparing you for the future of librarianship?

CP: That's a great point, Daniel. Librarians can end up working with or helping patrons in any discipline. I have been trying to cast a wide net with my course selection in my program to get a large variety of experiences and exposure to all these different areas of the LIS field. My program offers a lot of flexibility in this sense, with an impressive array of course offerings on rotation. I am in the online program and take classes part-time while I simultaneously work and parent. One of the best tips that my advisor recommended is that I try to add a one-credit class to each semester on top of the standard three-credit class, which has allowed me to dive into specific topics like grant writing, budgeting, special collections, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA.)

Something that I think UW–Madison excels at is having a faculty that is incredibly current in the LIS research. The program feels deeply relevant to the moment, and we are reading about and discussing the latest concerns, trends, and innovations in libraries, archives, and museums. This is crucial for LIS programs right now. We know how fast the information landscape shifts, and as up-and-coming librarians, we need to be prepared to enter the profession with the most-relevant knowledge and be ready to be innovators in the field.

I love that we can share perspectives from three different LIS programs where we are all at different stages in our degrees. Tia, how is San Jose State University preparing you to be a librarian in this day and age?

TP: You both have given me a lot to think about, so I must thank you for sharing. The adaptability and flexibility you mentioned, Daniel, is something that San Jose State University (SJSU) also encourages with its variety of pathways; and the present-day relevance that Caitlin pointed out is another component of SJSU's core curriculum. What I imagine is useful in each of our programs and what I find SJSU doing quite well is establishing a foundation of collaboration and teamwork. I am only a quarter of the way through my degree, but more than half of my classes have focused on group projects. While teamwork will be an applicable skill in nearly any profession, I believe librarianship requires an even more collaborative spirit as librarians are tasked with wearing a dozen hats at a time and tackling any number of projects at once. We serve the needs of our communities, and as our communities shift and change, so must our services and resources. These group projects are community-based learning opportunities that are pushing me to develop even stronger community-building skills at my current academic library job.

Now that we know how we're all being prepared in school, Daniel, what are some of the barriers and challenges you see for entering the field at this time?

DB: Well, living in Los Angeles, one of the greatest barriers I see to entering the library and archives profession is that the number of available positions is often outweighed by the number of qualified MLIS applicants, both nationally and internationally. In addition, many recent graduates are competing for entry-level positions with experienced professionals who are also applying for those same roles. Although this creates a highly competitive job market, one piece of advice that has stayed with me came from my Society of American Archivists (SAA) mentor: Apply for opportunities even if you do not meet every qualification because you never know which institution is willing to take a chance on you. That encouragement has motivated me to keep applying and growing professionally.

Caitlin, what barriers and challenges do you see to entering the library and information science profession at this time?

CP: Excellent advice, Daniel. And I completely agree—the availability of positions is probably the thing that I am most concerned about. This is particularly challenging for folks who, like me, are geographically bound for one reason or another and aren't able to apply for jobs outside their surrounding area. The other challenges that come to mind are the things that I know everyone is already talking about in their own libraries: how the rise of generative AI is changing patrons' information-seeking behaviors and the unrelenting budgetary headwinds in institutions of higher education. For these, I have no helpful advice except to remember that people will need librarians no matter how the landscape changes, so we will adapt to meet new information literacy opportunities as they arise.

What about you, Tia? What challenges in the LIS field do you see as a librarian-in-training? And if I can throw you a curveball in an attempt to send us out on a high note, is there anything about entering the field at this time that makes you feel hopeful?

TP: I like what your mentor shared, Daniel. And Caitlin, your point about generative AI is really important. What you both touched on—the seemingly ever-shrinking pool of opportunities and the financial limitations of this particular field—are absolutely things I worry about as well. To be honest, one of the challenges I foresee taking its toll on me—personally and professionally—is burnout. I give a lot of myself to this work because I am so deeply passionate about information literacy and accessibility, yet I know that it is an unsustainable practice. Thankfully, I am learning to fill my cup in other ways outside of work—going to karaoke, spending time with friends and family, learning new languages—and that is definitely helping me stave off that dreaded burnout.

That's an awesome final question, Caitlin, and I would be happy to answer it. My hope for entering the field at this time is that it feels like institutions are more open to experimentation and exploration than they have been in years past. It seems that there are opportunities to create the library ecosystems we want to work in—and that excites me and is one of the reasons I am choosing librarianship.

Note

1. Fobazi Ettarh, "Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves," *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*, 2018, https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2018/vocational-awe/.

Nina McHale

Rank, Promotion, and Tenure in the Library

How Criteria and Process (Still) Favor Reference and Instruction Work

In a The Way I See It essay in the July/August 2000 issue of *C&RL News*, Rodger C. Lewis briefly recounted the history of how librarians came to have tenure in the 1950s and 1960s. He noted that this movement was not without controversy, and that

> ...on many campuses there were a couple of interesting bumps on that road to a new identity: the teaching faculty began to feel threatened by the possibility of having to share whatever wealth and privilege there might be with a larger group, and they objected vociferously; the technical services librarians realized that the public service librarians, in their attempt to take on a new identity, were emphasizing their instructional contact with students and their assistance to professors at the expense of the clever people in the back room, so a break in the ranks occurred that threatened to derail the movement.[1]

Twenty-five years later, this rift between technical services and public services work is still visible in the context of how we evaluate ourselves. The primacy of public service experience in tenure and promotion (T&P) documentation and practices, particularly in reference and instruction, can create inequity.

To Lewis's point, teaching—even one-shot information literacy sessions—is the easiest analog between the work of faculty librarians to faculty colleagues in academic departments and, therefore, to the academic mission. Reference and instruction work has evolved over this period to include deeper and embedded interactions with faculty and students. However, the advent of the Internet caused tectonic shifts in technical services and library technology, resulting in a proliferation of many more types of faculty librarian positions that called for expertise in areas such as metadata creation and maintenance, digital asset management, electronic resources management, and web development and user experience. In my experience at multiple academic libraries with tenure-track and non-tenure-track promotion paths, the scope and scale of this growth have not been reflected in processes for evaluation, with the result of promotion criteria favoring reference and instruction librarians. Faculty librarians in technical services and technology have not had a scaffolding on which to fairly evaluate their work in a context that clearly describes their contributions to their libraries, their campuses, and the profession.

At two of these academic libraries with rank promotion paths, I noted that a contributing factor to this issue was the origin of the T&P documents: They were adapted directly from those in place for teaching faculty in the academic units rather than developed separately

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in the context and in support of faculty library work. In fact, the three broad categories of faculty librarian work were defined in T&P documents as "Teaching," "Research," and "Service." "Teaching" has since been changed to "Librarianship" at both libraries. This may seem trivial. However, as the head of the reference and instruction department, I realized the extent to which my colleagues in other departments did not see themselves in our promotion practices when a fellow department head told me that they "need[ed] to be a lot more like [me] and [my] team before [they could] go up for promotion." This colleague's breadth and depth of experience in technical services would have almost undoubtedly resulted in a successful promotion in rank, but they understandably lacked confidence in the process to fully account for their contributions. This was further compounded by the fact that the majority of the faculty—seven of fifteen total faculty lines—were in the reference and instruction department. The status quo served the majority for quite some time, but thankfully the faculty senate recently undertook a thorough review of the process with the intent of becoming more inclusive.

Finally, until very recently, our professional guidelines echoed this inequity. The legacy ACRL document A Standard for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians suggested "Additional evidence for promotion in rank," and first on the list of the evidence was: "Contributions to the educational mission of the institution: for example, teaching (not necessarily in a classroom); organization of workshops, institutes or similar meetings; public appearances in the interest of librarianship or information transfer. Assessment by students and professional colleagues may contribute to this evaluation."[2] The guidelines also include "Contributions to the advancement of the profession" and "Activities related to inquiry and research" as further evidence; however, "teaching" is the default example given. At the 2026 ALA Annual Conference, however, the ACRL Board of Directors approved the new ACRL Standards for the Employment, Promotion, and Tenure/Continuing Appointment of Academic Librarians, which consolidated the above-mentioned standard with two others.[3] This new, single standard is intended to apply a broader lens of equity toward all academic librarians, regardless of their faculty/tenure status and removed the "teaching-forward" language of the legacy standard.

This is a simple, yet serious, matter of equity. Academic libraries tend to have short internal career ladders, so a promotion in rank is often the best (or only) way to receive more than a moderate annual merit increase or a cost-of-living adjustment. Therefore, all library faculty need to feel actively seen throughout promotion activity. To this end, review your organization's tenure and promotion documentation and practices with a critical eye toward inclusion. Where and how is the word "teaching" used; is it disproportionately referenced? In rubrics and sample or supporting documents, are there a variety of detailed examples that are representative of faculty work across all units? Ensure engagement in tenure and promotion practices with all faculty librarians; does everyone see a clear path for their own success in the process? If you are invited to serve as an external reviewer for another institution, note and communicate any biases.

College campuses are inherently interdisciplinary spaces; a chemist and a sculptor must be able to confidently evaluate one another for rank promotion to work successfully and equitably across the institution. As faculty librarians, we do ourselves a collective disservice by not fully delineating the scope and scale of our own collective expertise and experience when we rely on analogs—i.e., teaching—and define ourselves against what we are not—teaching

faculty—rather than what and who we are. Faculty librarians all deserve supportive and inclusive tenure and promotion processes that value the entire spectrum of our contributions, skill, and expertise.

Notes

1. Rodger C. Lewis, "Publish or Perish: Looking at Tenure from the Other Side of the Street," *College & Research Libraries News* 61, no. 7 (2000): 606–08, https://crln.acrl.org/index.php/crlnews/article/view/20830/25553.

2. Association of College & Research Libraries, "A Standard for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians," April 2021, https://web.archive.org/web/20250324014708/https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/promotiontenure#appointment..

3. Association of College & Research Libraries, "ACRL Standards for the Employment, Promotion, and Tenure/Continuing Appointment of Academic Librarians," June 2026, https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/employment_promotion_tenure.

The Private Academic Library Network of Indiana recently awarded a $15,000 Library Innovation Grant to Saint Mary's College. This grant will support Cushwa-Leighton Library's project "Open Questions: Scholarship in the Age of Open Access," which will help faculty navigate Open Access publishing and build a sustainable culture of open scholarship. "Open Questions" responds to questions faculty regularly raise about Open Access publishing models, authors' rights, repository policies, article processing charges, and the role of artificial intelligence in scholarly dissemination. Over the 2026–27 academic year, the project will appoint two faculty fellows, deliver three faculty workshops, and grow participation in the college's Academic Repository.

Acquisitions

The Library of Congress has acquired the original artwork and related creative materials for two acclaimed graphic novels: *Naked City*, by award-winning artist Eric Drooker, and *A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge*, by journalist and cartoonist Josh Neufeld. Together the acquisitions enhance the library's significant collections documenting the evolution of graphic storytelling, visual journalism, and contemporary American life. Acquiring *Naked City* is especially noteworthy because it completes the library's holdings of the original artwork for Drooker's celebrated "City Trilogy." The library already preserves the artwork for the trilogy's first two volumes, *Flood* and *Blood Song*, offering researchers and visitors an opportunity to study Drooker's creative development and changes in graphic novel production across four decades. Published in 2024, *Naked City* follows a young female musician navigating life in New York City while pursuing artistic ambitions amid personal hardship and uncertainty. Like the earlier books in the trilogy, the city itself becomes a central character, offering a vivid portrait of urban life and creative communities.

The library also acquired original artwork and related materials for *A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge*, Neufeld's groundbreaking graphic account of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and its aftermath. First published as a webcomic in 2007, the work combines journalism and graphic storytelling to document the experiences of New Orleans residents before, during, and after one of the most consequential natural disasters in modern American history. *A.D.* draws on extensive interviews and firsthand observations to tell what Neufeld describes as a "people's history of Katrina," offering a perspective that captured ground-level experiences of resilience, displacement, and recovery, often absent from official accounts. The acquisition provides researchers valuable insight into how visual narratives can document contemporary events and preserve community memory.

The Hoover Institution Library & Archives has obtained the personal papers of Li Jianglin, a historian and renowned contemporary Tibetan scholar. Born into a Communist Chinese revolutionary family in 1956 in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, Li studied in the United States in the late 1980s, earning a master's degree in Jewish history from Brandeis University and a master's degree in librarianship from Queens College in New York. She began conducting independent research on Tibet in 2004. Over the following two decades, Li traveled often to India, Nepal, and ethnic Tibetan areas in the People's Republic of China to undertake

fieldwork. She also interviewed the Dalai Lama and other prestigious political and religious leaders in the Tibetan communities in exile on multiple occasions.

The Li Jianglin Papers include hundreds of hours of audio and video interviews, letters and correspondence with the Dalai Lama and other prominent Tibetan figures in China and in exile in India, research materials on the history and politics of Tibet, photographic images related to Li's multiple field trips to Dharamsala and Tibetan refugee camps across the Indian subcontinent, and artifacts and souvenirs given by the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government in exile.