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**Mastering the Solo Juggling Act: A Library Manager's Reflections on Access Services,
Tenure, and Liaising for Academic Disciplines**

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Abstract

Solo tenure-track librarians in academia must discover the key to mastering the fine art of multitasking to execute concepts of seamless user experiences. This article covers notable practices and principles of Solo tenure-track librarians in academia, specifically at the City University of New York, including overseeing a library division, satisfying provisions of the academic triad (excellence in teaching, service, and creative scholarship), and liaising various academic disciplines. Solos appointed to oversee a library division coordinate every aspect of access service (stacks maintenance, facilities management, user experience, etc.) in addition to being director. Directing a specialized library unit accompanies public-facing expectations of access and being an effective advocate and dynamic partner with all stakeholders. The purpose is to highlight the importance and value of Solo librarianship in higher education and their impactful contributions to the student body, faculty, and administrators alike. Though not intended to be exhaustive, the review of library literature serves as a practical guide to others in similar circumstances. The author's reflections introduce a deeper understanding of supportive organizational structures and the interdependence of building a collaborative team to provide intentional user-focused library services, promote literacy, and efficient operation across all service points.

Keywords: Solo librarianship, Academic Libraries, leadership, Tenure & Promotion Review, Management, Supervision, User-Services

Mastering the Solo Juggling Act

Murray (2018) succinctly stated that in specialized branches of academic libraries, “it is clear that [‘Solo’] or one person, usually a professional librarian, is in charge of facilities, collection, budgets, and personnel” (p. 184). In higher education, Solo tenure-track librarians must supervise and coordinate daily operations of service areas and balance demands of the academic tripod (research, teaching, and service), while liaising for specialized academic disciplines. Being charged with library leadership roles entails actively engaging in the advancement, interpretation, and administration of library policies, procedures, workflow, challenges and activities. For instance, City University of New York (CUNY) full-time tenure-track faculty librarians are required to meet demanding research/publication standards for tenure and promotion, alongside the challenges of day-to-day work in varied settings. Silva, Galbraith, & Groesbeck (2017) indicated “the tension between service and research in an academic library comes to a head over the question of tenure—a hotly debated topic within the realm of research libraries” (p. 428). The responsibilities of a sole professional librarian can range from access services (circulation and reserve), reference, research and instruction, cataloging, collection development, budget planning, staff management, among emergent situations that may arise. Notwithstanding library operations, “academic librarians with faculty status are characterized at a disadvantage in producing research because of the daily responsibilities related to their positions” (Wyss, 2010, p. 383). These duties also involve understanding the interdependence of building relationships to improve customer service and making the library run efficiently. Susan Dimattia (2000) so succinctly stated, “because of the fast-paced nature of our business, change is the main driver of all we do” (p.40). The author describes a librarian’s role as information broker between navigating information landscapes and supplying end users with resources (Dimattia,

2000). One Person Librarians (OPL) require ongoing advocacy to build connections with user populations to maintain relevance in a continuously changing information environment (Hornung, 2015).

OPLs proactively collaborate, advocate, and market services to demonstrate their value to students, faculty, staff, and college communities. The pace of information needs is constantly evolving, thus, having appropriately trained support-staff affords the librarian the opportunity to work more effectively. OPLs transform library access management by developing an outstanding cross-functional staff (team) that forge productive face-to-face interactions and relationships with the user community in academia. Regardless of position or title, Solo librarians bring innovative approaches to enlisting and cultivating support staff in connecting with user population upon entering the library. An OPL or Solo librarian wears numerous managerial hats that from time to time, are shared first-hand with support staff including overseeing circulation, course reserve, collection maintenance and weeding, retrieve and delivery of materials, and billing/fining transaction. In most cases, OPLs adapt well to simultaneously juggling numerous responsibilities. Solo division leaders also bear the responsibilities of monitoring the library facility's access, safety, maintenance, as well as addressing any impromptu requests related to access services issues. However, some leaders underestimate the importance of time and stress management. Part of the problem is learning how to delegate workload to use time efficiently to get the job done.

In support of evolving research, teaching, learning, and technology, Solo librarians help delineate new paradigms in liaison librarianship by offering their expertise to shape and deliver instruction and content development. In a post-digital era, libraries in academia face the challenges of remaining vital in a continuously changing environment. As change agents, Solo

librarians maintain pace with shifts in information services and provide end-user guidance during transition while maintaining core responsibilities (Murray, 2018). Teaching and learning styles change, and as information gatekeepers, a librarian's duties are continuously evolving. This digital era has transformed the role of libraries and is a driving force in librarians building digital literacy to support the changing landscape of academic programs. Beyond gathering books and disseminating information, librarians focus on embedding digital competencies to provide innovative, value-added services for students and researchers in the academic community. Solo librarianship requires the mastery of countless skills and abilities to meet these expanding needs. Currently, digital technology affects nearly everything done in the library profession. Ideally, embedding Solo librarians within a curriculum enables close coordination and partnerships with teaching faculty and promotes academic success. The creation of faculty-librarian partnerships connects students to relevant resources. This article will provide notable principles of Solo librarianship in academia including challenges of heading a library division, fulfilling requirements of the academic tripod (scholarship, teaching, and service), and liaising various academic disciplines. It also broadly examines the experience of work-life circumstances, which focus on the demands of overseeing a CUNY library division while attempting to accomplish tenure through the development of balanced productivity. This review of library literature is not intended to be exhaustive but rather indicative of serving as a living document that will help guide efforts of others in similar positions.

CUNY Libraries: Background and Brief History

Founded in 1847, the City University of New York (CUNY)—the largest urban public higher education system in New York and one of the largest in the United States plays a vital role in educating, training, and creating professional opportunities for New York's working

class. In 1938, the City University of New York libraries secured academic department status for supporting broad curricula within the institution (PSC, Library Faculty Committee, 2013). In 1946, CUNY librarians gained instructional status and in 1965, librarians achieved professorial ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor in accordance with advanced graduate education in library science (Munch, 2002; Drobnicki, 2014). CUNY faculty librarians also gained rights, benefits, and privileges that are commensurate with those of instructional faculty. Silva, Galbraith, and Groesbeck (2017) indicated faculty librarian appointments follow the same protocol established for instructional professorial members. Yet, their article also mentioned a long history of issues arising for this service profession partly based on inconsistent institutional research support and leave for librarians.

Librarian Faculty Status and Rank

Faculty and academic status in the review of literature is extensive and, in several instances, opinions are widely varied. Nevertheless, it documents the efforts aimed at academic librarians achieving faculty rank status, and tenure, though not all educational institutions offer faculty status to their librarians (ALA, ACRL Standards, 2017).

As stated in the ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science, faculty status is “an official recognition by an institution of postsecondary education that librarians are part of the instructional and research staff by conferment of ranks and titles identical to those of faculty, and commensurate benefits, privileges, rights, and responsibilities,” contrary to academic status which “identifies librarians as instructional and research staff, without entitlement to ranks, titles, and commensurate benefits identical to those of instructional faculty” (ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science. ALA 2013, p.109, p.4)

Since the mid-fifties, instructional status for library faculty has remained a matter of debate in numerous literatures from scholars in the field either advocating, critiquing, or opposing decisions. Kingma and McCombs (1995) argued that granting librarian faculty status represented taking valuable time away from librarians performing duties to pursue sabbatical and research interests, placing patrons, the department, and institution at a disadvantage. Cronin (2001) declared similar sentiments stating the “obsession with [library faculty] status merely detracts from customer service and weakens the profession’s public image” (p.144). Moreover, the author contended, “good librarians are good librarians, with or without faculty status, and it will not compensate for mediocre professional skills, nor materially improve the application” of preexisting sharpened abilities (Cronin, 2001). Hoggan (2003) pointed out many in the field “associate [library faculty status] with better job satisfaction, improved status, higher salaries,” along with access to conferences, and increased professional development opportunities (p. 431). However, critics like Cronin have found that librarians encounter constraints of conducting research and publishing, which takes away from “librarianship duties,” as well as personal time (Alsop & Bordonaro 2007 p. 10). Overall, most of the literature indicated that achieving librarian faculty status provides higher wages and enhances their professorial profile, prominence, visibility, and position in academia.

Academic Library Hierarchical Structure

University libraries and librarians are indispensable allies to teaching, learning, research, and continue to be essential facilitators in guiding students to achieve academic success. Solo academic librarians play numerous vital roles and undertake many obligations as they navigate through pedagogical environments in continuous flux. According to the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) (2014) *Standards for Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians and*

Coordinators, “the teaching librarian works with students as coach, guide, and mentor as students navigate through this complex information ecosystem at different stages of their personal and cognitive development.” Faculty librarian obligations continue to be multifaceted in roles of instructor, colleague, mentor, supervisor, and coordinator, as they build connections and engage stakeholders—students, faculty, administrators, and visitors. Yet, they must also set aside time for individual growth which increases prospects of achieving tenure. Solo tenure-track librarians oversee daily operational services, fulfill individual needs on shrinking or stagnant budgets, all while forging and juggling professional growth to secure tenure and promotion.

In CUNY, Chief Librarians generally report directly to their designated college Provost within the university. The Chief librarian is the department’s lead administrator, overseeing the development and implementation of an environment that fosters intellectual excellence and policies consistent with the University-wide and college-wide mission. It is, therefore, equivalent to a dean’s position. Reporting directly to the Chief librarian are Division Chiefs (Solo librarians) composed of various separate specialized units within the department, together with full-time (non-professional) classified staff (CUNY Office and Administrative Assistants, Higher Education Series), and part-time staff (Interns, College Assistants, Student Aides, and Work-Study). Solo division librarians are responsible for a particular area of expertise including the management, delegation and/or assignment of duties for non-professional staff. Furthermore, leading, strategizing, and communicating effectively with your library team are fundamental to leadership and management success.

According to Murray (2018), information professionals in a small special library need leadership and management skills just as much as his or her counterparts in larger libraries, but the emphasis and the way these skills are applied will differ. The library department performs

different functions to promote excellence in life-long learning, discovery, and engagement to satisfy the needs of the user community. Even though there are differences within each division, all libraries serve collaborative and interdisciplinary environments that enrich student intellectual learning and physical access to educational resources, services, and technologies. Balanced library organizational structures in academia establish productive interactions between internal and external environments to create impactful influence on division autonomy within division library units.

Leadership in Divisional Structure

Although achieving tenure is a prerequisite for tenure-track positions, primary responsibilities for the Solo librarian running a division are provisions of excellent services and efficient operation of all access service points. These include oversight of staff, collection development and management, circulation and reference services, IT support, and facility operations. The supervision and training of full-time and part-time library staff is a continuous and progressive process that goes beyond their job description. As library director or division chief, one must maintain flexibility and be forward-thinking in sharing the values of diverse and equitable environments predicated on collaborative teamwork. This can be accomplished by further engaging staff in fostering excellent customer service, as well as professional development that provides a sense of autonomy to build new skill sets and increase proficiency at work.

Know It All! And Do It All!

Essential aspects of Solo supervisory roles within academic libraries encompass commitments to strengthening library users' learning and success by applying best practices with regards to accessibility, usability, and information infrastructure. Duties further include

obligations of information literacy instruction and collection management based on specialty, interest, or needs of the department. From the researcher's perspective knowing it all, and doing it all are common misconceptions of library services, as she is certain that at one point or another during her career trajectory, 'know-it-all, and do-it-all' sounds all too familiar, or it feels like it. For tenure-track librarians in academia, everything appears to be their specialty, as they are thrown into the midst of educating the next generation. Solo librarians quickly learn the ability to juggle multiple constituencies and priorities, especially when serving the library system and overseeing their assigned specialized division. As liaison, librarians foresee building a reciprocal communication bridge between the library and their respective departments in support of instruction, developing the collection, and research ventures. How do Solo librarians maintain balance, when they are pulled in different directions and are frequently getting competing agendas from faculty, students, staff, and administrators? Though generally working with a limited number of staff, Solo library heads create a network through effective communication and cooperation from available frontline employees both classified and part-time staff. One key factor of multi-tasking is learning not to do all the work alone, but rather getting assistance from support staff. Classified and part-time staff, including students from the CUNY Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (GSLIS) who may not have the formal library background, yet they contribute an array of skills and creativity as they gain professional development.

Transparency and Autonomy

Strong library stewardship empowers and embraces autonomous working relationships, while positioning clear and productive boundaries between division chief and workers. Patillo, Moran, & Morgan (2009) stated that "as traditional models of library services continue to be transformed, library managers need to maintain an understanding of the needs of their staff for

growth, independence, and challenging work” (p. 277). Being an effective manager entails much more than delegating job responsibilities to subordinates, it requires teamwork, leading by example, active listening, mutual respect, and communication. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) state leadership is “the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation” (p. 83). Leaders need to provide employees with plenty of latitude, build confidence, expand their knowledge base, and develop productive workflows. Moran (1995) stated “leaders do not stand behind a group to push or prod, but they place themselves before the group as they facilitate progress and inspire the group to accomplish the organizational aims” (p. 6). Furthermore, according to the author, leading is based on “situational theories,” and as such “effective leaders will adapt their style of leadership behavior to the needs of the follower and situation” (Moran 1995, p. 17). As unit head, Solo librarians can positively motivate classified and part-time employees to perform beyond desired worker expectations to reach objectives and align with the overall mission of the college. Possessing strong interpersonal skills, working collaboratively, communicating effectively and prioritizing day-to-day work assignments as a team effort can aid Solo librarians in making the workplace a stimulating and positive learning environment even during conflict resolution for everyone involved.

Communication

Academic libraries serve college and university communities to satisfy user-focused information needs and provide academic, research and technical supportive environments that align with the mission of the institution. To accomplish these efforts, a Solo unit librarian will delegate, supervise, train, and lead staff in everyday functions to meet the college/university mission. Library support staff contribute wide-ranging and diverse abilities to meet the needs of

the ever-changing nature of library services. Under the direction of the Solo librarian, full-time employees carry out primary responsibilities related to library operations, including frontline circulation, part-time staff training, acquisitions policies, such as office, recordkeeping, and telephone procedures. Creating and maintaining an effective line of communication with all library staff regardless of title, position, or rank provides a sense of belonging, community, and generates a positive working environment. Ammons-Stephens et al. (2009) identify interpersonal effectiveness based on six broad leadership competencies that initiate a conducive work environment focused on respect, productivity, and inspiration. Accordingly, the Tufts Organizational and Leadership Competencies (n.d.) model indicates communicating a persuasive concept that “creates plans and initiatives that ensure the understanding and commitment of others to achieve the vision” (Tufts Organizational 2020). Ammons-Stephens et al. also indicated that, “excellent communication skills, accountability, cultural sensitivity, and effective team building are necessary for success” (Ammons-Stephens et al., 2009). One method of doing this is by keeping support staff apprised of work-related policies that may affect their workflow, engaging their input, and actively listening to their concerns. According to a study by Chow and Rich (2013) there are four major factors identified by library administrators as ideal qualities across different types of libraries: empathy, vision, communication, and flexibility” (p. 5). The authors concluded that library leaders “must also be willing to listen and network with others, maintain open lines of communication, and have strong presentation, writing, and listening skills” (Chow and Rich, p.6).

It is paramount for a Solo librarian to establish clear and mutual expectations, active communication, create an environment for employees to develop, discover and exercise leadership abilities. Personnel miscommunication, conflict, and divergent views are

counterproductive to any organization. As frontline service managers, Solo unit leaders must actively engage in developing, interpreting, and enforcing internal library policies and procedures for a progressive workflow. By maintaining the ability to mediate internal or patron disputes related to access service policies and procedures, Solo librarians can resolve challenges, and address immediate concerns. The Library Leadership and Management Association's (LLAMA) foundational competencies suggest that "leaders support differences of opinions, and help individuals resolve conflict in a constructive manner... encouraging communication, collaboration, and compromise" (ALA, LLAMA, 2020). Library employees desire to be heard, respected, and anticipate involvement in the day-to-day decision-making. Rosener et al, (2019) point out that "by investing in personal and workplace-wide [interpersonal communication] development, organizations can take small steps to mediate conversations and check for understanding so as to avoid unnecessary conflict" (para. 33).

Generally, library employees desire the latitude, autonomy, and authority to problem-solve without feeling stifled by management. Although ultimate responsibility for the specialized library lies with the Solo division chief, librarians cannot successfully accomplish this without staff commitment or buy-in. Similarly, the internet-based Community Toolbox, a public resource of the University of Kansas suggests that "leaders have to set a very high standard of real openness and respect if they expect others to follow" (ctb.ku.edu). As division chief, the Solo librarian leads the support staff in creating a collaborative culture of trust, transparency, and autonomy to further integrate and strengthen job performance. Division chiefs, supervisors, managers play a critical role in setting a baseline for open dialog by practicing and serving as models for library employees. By maintaining consistency in actively listening to library

employees, a Solo division chief provides an environment of understanding and sense of belonging.

Tenure/Promotion: Overview and Perspective

CUNY actions of tenure and promotion are governed by the University's bylaws, the collective bargaining agreement with Professional Staff Congress PSC/CUNY, as well as college and university policies (City College of New York, Academic Affairs, 2020). Specific criteria for awarding tenure to academic librarians varies by educational institution; however, CUNY provisions require efficiency and effectiveness in librarianship, instruction (information literacy, reference service, and individual research consultation), publishing creative work and scholarly performance, and service to internal and external affiliates. Much like instructional faculty, CUNY (tenure-track) librarians are assessed by "the triad of excellence in teaching, service and scholarship" and show evidence of librarianship excellence (Munch).

There are various stages of review during the seven-year tenure-clock process that all tenure-track disciplinary faculty members must undergo. CUNY appointed tenure-track librarians are given this probationary period to establish substantial achievement trajectories in their academic performance. Tenure-track library professorial ranks are as follows: assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor, excluding instructor title, who must first obtain their second postsecondary degree. Prospects of tenure are required to contribute to the library profession by publishing scholarly literature, engaging in professional development and service activities including committee-work, mentoring, partnerships, and collaboration.

Professional Development

As a continuously evolving profession, faculty librarianship urges ongoing career development, and continuing education that play an integral role in achieving scholarly material

to present and/or publish. Tenure-track faculty librarians assume the responsibilities of career development that foster professional growth and cross-disciplinary collaborations via job-related meetings, workshops, and conferences. Generally, those on track for tenure receive funding or stipends to cover partial or all costs to attend conferences and presentations. However, being a Solo unit leader of a library division accompanies responsibilities for the frontline workers, stakeholders, and department—which require significant dedication, and little flexibility for career development. Kendrick et al. (2013) reveal “increasingly tight budgets, stagnant salaries, small staff, and lack of access to current technologies may prevent active academic librarians... from fully participating in professional development” (p. 38). The authors conducted an exploratory study which identified “putting a strain on [library] staff” and on other librarians undertaking the course workload, as barriers to continuing professional development (CPD) and training for Solo academic librarians (Kendrick, Leaver, & Tritt 2013, p.42). Solo librarians must leverage meeting expectations of job-related professional development activities and time taken away from primary responsibilities of running a library division. Developing an entrusted network and building relationships with part-time and full-time staff is essential to running a smooth library operation.

McKinney and Gooden (2007) stated, “mentoring is an important component of professional development that occurs formally and informally throughout one’s career.” Pairing library faculty mentors with GSLIS student mentees offers exciting opportunities of forming long-standing professional and educational support systems. Morano (2015) suggested, “library school graduates... face challenges when it comes to competing with more experienced professionals and acquiring the necessary skills being asked by employers” (para. 1). A Solo librarian can accomplish several outcomes by soliciting currently enrolled GSLIS students, like

helping candidates be job market ready, improving recruitment efforts, and getting insights on the latest library resource students are utilizing in their programs.

Generally, students in the academic program begin with little to no library work experience. Working under the Solo librarian's tutelage is an ideal opportunity for library students to master all the fundamental skills necessary to excel in the profession. These skills include, but are not limited to conducting reference interviews, gaining expertise in the library's integrated system and collection development, co-teaching information literacy sessions, partaking in departmental meetings, and professional development. Morano further noted that "temporary positions [as these] are short-term and help develop a career". Providing GSLIS students with mentorship/job opportunities can enlighten their perspective on academic librarianship, the research and tenure process, and all it has to offer. These opportunities create avenues of gaining professional development experience, collegial networking, and establishing additional mentorship possibilities

Librarianship/Instruction

Solo librarians focus their expertise on information literacy that support curricula and guide students in disseminating knowledge and developing critical thinking skills for academic success. As indicated by the ACRL Frameworks for Information Literacy for Higher Education (2016), "librarians have a greater responsibility in identifying core ideas within their own knowledge domain that can extend learning for students, in creating a new cohesive curriculum for information literacy, and in collaborating more extensively with faculty." Partnering collaboratively with teaching faculty helps position a librarian's role in advancing the university's mission, values, and goals. As the only subject specialist, the librarian partners with instructional faculty members to deliver subject specific information literacy sessions or one-shot

instruction which are more generalized. Solo subject specialists generally teach 15-20 information literacy sessions in a postsecondary semester and each is tailored for the individual needs of the course. The librarian also contributes to teaching library users strategic information literacy skills via in-person and online professional reference services including creating online research guides, and web-based tutorials.

Scholarly Research

Library faculty with tenure expectations must demonstrate a significant and notable contribution to the library profession, department, and institution. The Solo librarian must also balance their work schedule to generate progressive research activities that develop into peer-reviewed scholarly/creative published works. Published scholarly activities include but are not limited to articles in scholarly or specialized journals, book chapters in academic or professional books, books from scholarly presses, among others. The Solo librarian must produce official documentation and a consistent pattern of scholarly activity every twelve to eighteen months from the time of appointment through final tenure review. Although maintaining an active research agenda to achieve tenure and promotion is of utmost importance, library faculty have ambivalent attitudes regarding prioritizing scholarly work, when job responsibilities are primarily service and user focused.

Service

There are professional service expectations for tenure-track library faculty that require devoting time to serving on department, college, and/or university-wide governance and search committees. It is crucial for Solo librarians to proactively advocate their value and services to partake in opportunities of committee work. Engaging in internal and external professional

service obligations beyond the university such as library or academic organizations are crucial to receiving a long-term institutional contract.

Management of Work/Life Balance

Balancing care for a loved one and maintaining a full workload can prove to be a challenge when practicing acts of personal wellness and self-care. Early and Nelson (2019) indicated simultaneously experiencing academic-life and family-life are “both all-consuming and challenging responsibilities, as it often feels like a nonstop 24-hour a day job” (para. 3). Through effective planning and management, work/life balance can provide a virtuosity of symmetry among your employment obligations and family-members seeking your attention. Aside from teaching information literacy in a given subject and dedicating several hours per week at the reference desk, tenure-track librarians get assigned liaison work (multiple subjects), that at times, are not their field of expertise. According to Contrada (2019) low budgets and staff shortages are a primary reason why “librarian duties are not always clear cut” and teaching unfamiliar subjects “often requires extra prep work” with research in a given subject (p. 13).

Recommendations

In light of the circumstances, this article draws on the multiple responsibilities and professional experiences of a Solo tenure-track librarian as faculty and administrator. Nevertheless, the focal points offer a glimpse of full-time library professorial titles within the City University of New York; the following recommendations may be implemented in similar academic environments.

- Encourage full time and part-time staff to perform collectively as a team; however, have the capabilities and forethought to work independently. Additionally, prompting library staff to openly ask for advice or direction from the division chief when needed is ideal.

- Think and work smarter, not harder by planning, scheduling, and organizing in advance to avoid academic burnout!
- Learn the art of Saying NO, politely... This has taken the author some time to figure out, especially during her first year of appointment. However, learn to adhere to your planned schedule, and accommodate faculty and student needs around it.
- Create a support system through internal and external collaborations, professional development, and networking.
- Invest in building library staff knowledge-base and skill-sets to prepare them for leadership roles and execute additional responsibilities in absence of the Solo librarian.
- Engage library staff and end users in day-to-day library operations and events.
- Promote and embrace diverse viewpoints from all stakeholders to strengthen organizational culture.
- Maintain a productive and open line of communication with all interested parties.
- Shake off periodic feelings of insecurity and isolation; lean on immediate staff and colleagues, who may be going through a similar experience.

Author's Perspective

The Architecture Library is one of seven branches of the City College Libraries at the City College of New York (CCNY), one of the most culturally diverse academic institutions of the City University of New York (CUNY). As division Chief of the Architecture Library, this researcher is responsible for the training and support of frontline service staff, collection management, teaching bibliographic instruction, developing relationships with students, faculty, and staff across the college community, and overseeing the daily physical conditions of the library. In this role, she values the importance of fostering inclusion and contributing to

supportive work environments to encourage individual strengths and overall productivity. She also serves as primary subject liaison librarian for the School of Architecture, Masters in Sustainability Program, and the Accessibility Center. The author developed a team of full-time and part-time staff across disciplines/titles to perform all administrative and circulation functions by creating best practices that meet the needs of library users. Additionally, building effective communication and interdepartmental partnerships are essential components of strengthening services, policies, and procedures to meet the individual information needs of the library, and its constituents. It is essential to develop inclusive frameworks that serve mutual interests in promoting excellence, creativity, and leadership within the college community. Leading effective library access service points requires the forethought of periodic assessments, specifying work priorities and actionable goals, maintaining reciprocal communication, and offering continuous professional development for frontline employees across all levels.

Active engagement and continuous dialogue with library staff regarding best practices is fundamental to the work of being a Solo librarian, supervisor, mentor, guide, and liaison. The author has successfully supervised and mentored GSLIS students, who are looking to find full-term positions in academic and/or public libraries. Taking an interest in hiring students who are pursuing a library profession has proved to be an excellent way of selecting someone that is completely invested in learning every aspect of academic library operations, and the intricacies of being faculty and administrator in academia. The author's stance is to positively impact the user experience by collaborating with students, staff, and faculty along their path to personal and professional development. While the author's duties as librarian are focused on building collections for the various programs, providing excellent service remains significant, as we are facilitators, who only change the way users view information, but also aspire to enhance their

lives. The collaborative observations may be applicable to similar academic institutions that are considering transformative outreach initiatives in hiring students in library and information sciences.

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