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### Recommended Citation

Hackstadt, Angela, "Leadership, Development, and Expertise: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Scholarly Communication Librarian Position Announcements" (2020). *University Libraries Faculty Scholarship*. 135. [https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/ulib\\_fac\\_scholar/135](https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/ulib_fac_scholar/135)

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# JLSC

ISSN 2162-3309 | JLSC is published by the Pacific University Libraries | <http://jisc-pub.org>

**Volume 8, General Issue (2020)**

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Hackstadt, A. (2020). Leadership, Development, and Expertise: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Scholarly Communication Librarian Position Announcements. *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication*, 8(General Issue), eP2376. <https://doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.2376>

### **External Data or Supplements:**

Hackstadt, A. (2020). Data from: Leadership, Development, and Expertise: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Scholarly Communication Librarian Position Announcements. <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/YIXNPG>, Harvard Dataverse.

This article underwent fully-anonymous peer review in accordance with JLSC's peer review policy.



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# Leadership, Development, and Expertise: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Scholarly Communication Librarian Position Announcements

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**INTRODUCTION** In 2012, the Association of Research Libraries reported that 95% of libraries identified their libraries as leaders of scholarly communication efforts on campus. While academic librarians have long been responsible for SC issues, institutions have explicitly tasked positions with these responsibilities increasingly over time. This qualitative analysis of position announcements focuses on the ways libraries expect these librarians to engage with SC issues and responsibilities, rather than describing the prevalence of SC-related functions. Specifically, this study asks the following questions: (1) How do administrators communicate leadership expectations of SC librarian roles through job advertisements? (2) In what ways could these leadership expectations be challenging or problematic for SC librarians in non-administrator positions? **METHODS** This study is a qualitative content analysis of scholarly communication librarian position announcements posted to ALA JobList between January 1, 2016, and July 31, 2019. The advertisements are predominantly from North American academic libraries. Qualitative content analysis is systematic but allows for flexibility of interpretation in describing themes and categories. The coding scheme developed over multiple readings of the data and the author identified categories through the process of subsumption. **RESULTS & DISCUSSION** Prevalent themes in position announcements include leadership, expertise, and development. Leadership responsibilities appear as management duties or, often in non-administrator positions, as an expectation to take initiative or be an exemplar. SC librarians are expected to be experts, often as the library's campus liaison or as educators in a variety of SC issues. They may also be tasked with developing institutional repositories or SC programs, though it is not always clear in the advertisement what support is available. These themes are discussed in terms of the SC librarian as a boundary spanning role. Boundary spanners are positions within an organization that communicate with the outside environment. They may also serve as filters for information coming into the organization or facilitate communication between departments or units in an organization. **CONCLUSION** In SC librarian job advertisements, positional authority is often absent from positions that have a responsibility to lead or develop SC efforts, programs, or initiatives. Non-experts may bestow some level of authority to experts. However, leadership and development tasks may prove difficult for a SC librarian who lacks the ability to make decisions or organizational changes. Suggestions for institutions and potential further research are discussed.

Received: 03/31/2020 Accepted: 07/02/2020

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## IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Libraries should clarify leadership, development, and expertise responsibilities in job descriptions for non-administrator positions.
2. Institutions should be prepared to describe to candidates how they delegate authority and support innovation, development, and leadership in scholarly communication.
3. The concept of the boundary spanning role is appropriate to explore the responsibilities of the scholarly communication librarian.
4. Future research avenues include emergent leadership in scholarly communication librarianship, expertise and authority, and the experiences of librarians who fill these positions.

## INTRODUCTION

The scholarly communication (SC) librarian emerged as a new position in 2011 (Triumph & Beile, 2015, p. 735). Since then, the number of librarian positions that focus on SC responsibilities has increased, as well as the number of positions that refer directly to SC in the job title. In 2012, the Association of Research Libraries reported that 95% of libraries identified their libraries as leaders of scholarly communication efforts on campus. While academic librarians have long been responsible for SC issues, institutions have explicitly tasked positions with these responsibilities increasingly over time. By 2014, 11% of job postings at academic libraries contained a reference to SC (Finlay, Tsou, & Sugimoto, 2015, p. 18) and the number of jobs that refer to SC, digital or electronic resources, licensing, and repositories has steadily increased (Kawooya, Veverka, & Lipinski, 2015, p. 345).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the text of job advertisements for SC librarians posted on ALA JobList between January 2016 and July 2019 to identify common themes in the way hiring institutions describe the ideal SC librarian. This qualitative analysis of position announcements focuses on the ways libraries expect these librarians to engage with SC issues and responsibilities, rather than describing the prevalence of SC-related functions. It aims to raise questions about the library's first impression to applicants and set up future research to determine if there is a disconnect between the promise and the reality. Specifically, this study asks the following questions:

Q1: How do administrators communicate leadership expectations of SC librarian roles through job advertisements?

Q2: In what ways could these leadership expectations be challenging or problematic for SC librarians in non-administrator positions?

Focusing the study on positions that specify SC in the job title brings to the fore those libraries that stake some claim to SC leadership for their campuses. To answer the first question, this study examines the descriptions of the people that library administrators hope will do these jobs. Leadership, development, and expertise are referenced in lists of responsibilities and desired qualifications for SC librarians, all of which imply that these librarians will also have the authority to make decisions or implement changes at these institutions. The advertisements describe an expectation to lead and effect change but do not necessarily say anything about the power to do so.

This study addresses the second questions in two ways. First, issues related to leadership and authority are discussed, as well as the importance of situating these open positions within their libraries. Second, this study briefly discusses the SC librarian as a boundary spanning role. Boundary roles, or boundary spanners, are positions that act as external representatives of an organization or as a filter for information coming into an organization (Aldrich & Herker, 1977, p. 218). This study expands on the currently limited discussion of boundary roles in the library literature by focusing on challenges that people serving in such roles may encounter with regard to leadership, development, and expertise.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous analyses of job advertisements demonstrate an increase in new and changing roles in librarianship as well as emerging organizational trends. Triumph and Beile (2015) compared 2011 job advertisements to previous studies to determine the overall state of the library job market. Studies of job advertisements also focus on specific roles, such as youth services librarians (Adkins, 2004); instructional design librarians (Shank, 2006); Latin American and Caribbean Studies librarians (Alonso-Regalado & Van Ullen, 2009); digital librarians (Choi & Rasmussen, 2009); instruction librarians (Gold & Grotti, 2013); head of technical services positions (Zhu, 2009); serials librarians (Getsay & Rudowsky, 2013); catalogers (Dieckman, 2018; Hall-Ellis, 2008); and copyright librarians (Kawooya et al., 2015). Such studies may also be skills-specific, as in digital curation (Kim et al., 2013) or metadata (Hall-Ellis, 2015); or they may be publication-specific, such as Wu and Li's study of reference librarian positions posted in *Journal of the Medical Library Association* (2008). Analyses of job announcements may also be bound by geography, as in a study of job postings by higher education institutions in United Arab Emirates (Kaba, 2017); an evaluation of job titles in Sindh Province, Pakistan (Mustafa & Ansari, 2012); or to review library information studies and information management curricula in Australia (Wise, Henninger, & Kennan, 2011).

Prior research has analyzed job announcements for SC positions in libraries. Finlay et al (2015) reviewed job postings in academic libraries to determine the prevalence of SC responsibilities and skills and to learn which positions include them. Xia and Li (2015) ana-

lyzed the qualifications and responsibilities of SC librarians to identify the trajectories of SC responsibilities in librarian positions. Kawooya et al studied advertisements for copyright librarian positions and noted a strong connection between these positions and SC (2015, p. 345).

SC issues impact researchers across the institution. Considering the skills and experience of librarians in curation, metadata, and preservation (Xia & Li, 2015, p. 20), the library is a natural fit for leading the way in meeting the SC needs of the campus. Indeed, libraries are already providing services that fall under the SC umbrella, such as research data management, copyright, and measuring research impact (Mears & Bandy, 2017, p. 147). SC efforts, whether the responsibility of an individual or a team, depend upon collaboration between library departments (Radom, Feltner-Reichert, & Stringer-Stanback, 2012, p. 13; Xia & Li, 2015, p. 19).

Early research in boundary roles, or boundary spanning roles, focused on commercial research and development (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Tushman, 1977) but the concept is applicable to any organization that requires communication with the external environment. In library literature, boundary spanning has been identified as a way to facilitate understanding between library units and other departments (Humphreys, 2018) and suggested as a model to facilitate communication between cultural domains to create a global digital public library (Mason, 2005, 2010). The literature in related fields of knowledge or information management and information technology focus on communication across boundaries in various professional settings (Han, Datta, Joshi, & Chi, 2017; Hustad & Bechina, 2012; Van Osch & Steinfield, 2016; Weedman, 1992).

## **METHOD**

### **Qualitative Content Analysis**

Qualitative content analysis refers to the systematic analysis of texts, including the format of delivery. It seeks to describe categories and themes, though the method does allow for more interpretation than quantitative content analysis (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, pp. 86–88; Schreier, 2014, p. 181). In conducting qualitative content analysis, the researcher codes the chosen text using a coding framework developed in conjunction with a reading of the text. This is often an iterative process, as new connections and themes emerge with subsequent readings (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 259; Schreier, 2014, p. 171; White & Marsh, 2006, p. 33). Schreier (2014) points out that while the method is systematic, it is “flexible in that the coding frame should always be matched to the material” (p. 171). Categories in the coding scheme consist of subcategories, identified through a data-driven way such as subsumption. The process of subsumption involves reading through the text and, upon encountering a relevant concept, either “subsuming” the concept under the appropriate subcategory or cre-

ating a new subcategory, then continuing the process until no new concepts can be found (Schreier 2014, p. 176).

NVivo was used to code the text. Job advertisements were first reviewed for job title and institution location. Next, responsibilities were coded as SC-related or administrative; qualifications were coded by degree requirements, then by desired SC-related skills and experience. The repetition of words and phrases related to leadership was perceived during these initial rounds of coding, so the search function of the software was utilized to search for “lead\*” and synonyms. Subsequent readings of the text allowed for reviewing these words and phrases in context. The coding scheme further developed to incorporate statements about expertise and development.

As texts, position announcements vary in length and organization, as library staff who write them are subject to different institutional requirements and practices. Some libraries hire advertising agencies to post position announcements on employment sites on the library’s behalf. An ad agency can save the hiring institution time and money by streamlining the posting, troubleshooting, and billing processes (Gunning, 2019). NVivo allows for coding a large collection of the same, yet different, individual texts by identifying commonly used words and concepts and allowing the researcher to view those in context.

This study focuses on themes that overlap and repeat, often in a single position announcement. The purpose of qualitative content analysis is to raise “awareness and theoretical sensitivity but does not claim to demonstrate transferability” (Drisko & Maschi 2015, p. 98). The aim of this study is to assess the meaning and context of the concepts rather than quantify them.

## **DATA**

Position announcements have been established as an appropriate subject of study. They are useful for assessing employers’ expectations of roles and functions in the library (Wise et al., 2011, p. 269; Wu & Li, 2008, p. 378; Xia & Li, 2015, p. 17; Zhu, 2009, p. 124). Job advertisements can also help researchers understand the current state of library practices and identify trends (Alonso-Regalado & Van Ullen, 2009, p. 140; Xia & Li, 2015, p. 17).

The dataset is comprised of 100 position announcements for jobs in academic libraries posted between January 1, 2016 and July 31, 2019. ALA JobList provided all job advertisements yielded in a keyword search for “scholarly communication\*” submitted during the relevant period. In the event an institution reposted a position with the same title within a 12-month period, the announcement appears only once in the dataset unless the institution made changes to the position’s responsibilities or qualifications. For the purpose of this study, an advertisement must include a robust description of a position’s responsibilities, qualifications, or both to be included.

**LIMITATIONS**

This study is limited in scope due to the source of data. Postings are from libraries that pay to advertise job openings in ALA JobList and are predominantly from the United States. Ninety-eight advertisements are from institutions in the U.S., one from Canada, and one from Hong Kong. The top U.S. states represented in the dataset are California, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Texas. The data used in this study does not include internal job postings or advertisements submitted to publications or listservs by special library or archives associations, print sources, or other sources of academic library jobs. This study also does not explore whether institutions filled these positions.

Position titles do not always reflect day-to-day responsibilities, so limiting the data to positions with the phrase “scholarly communication” in the job title may have excluded positions that perform a high degree of scholarly communication activities.

**RESULTS**

**Job Titles**

Nearly half of the job titles in the dataset refer only to SC, for example Scholarly Communication Librarian, Head of Scholarly Communication, Director of Scholarly Communication, or Scholarly Communication Officer. The remaining job titles include an additional component that refers to a library department or some other duties of the position. (See Table 1: Job Titles)

| Job Title Components                | Number of Postings* |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Scholarly Communication (SC) only   | 48                  |
| SC & Collections                    | 11                  |
| SC & Research                       | 9                   |
| SC & Copyright or Licensing         | 6                   |
| SC & a specific academic subject    | 6                   |
| SC & Data                           | 5                   |
| SC & Digital                        | 4                   |
| SC & Reference                      | 4                   |
| SC & Publishing                     | 2                   |
| SC & Open Education Resources (OER) | 2                   |
| SC & Instruction                    | 2                   |
| SC & _____                          | 4**                 |

**Table 1.** Job Titles

\*Some job titles include more than one additional component, e.g. Associate Dean for Research, Collections and Scholarly Communications

\*\* One instance of each: Access Services; Assessment; Electronic Resources; Systems



These job titles demonstrate the breadth of SC-related functions and align with previously identified relationships between SC and collections (Finlay et al, 2015, p. 20), open access, digital publishing, and legal issues associated with research and publication (Xia & Li, 2015, p. 18). Literature on institutional repository (IR) workflows describe obtaining information about self-archiving rights or publishers' copyright policies as a significant responsibility of the IR team (Hazzard & Towery, 2017; Hanlon & Ramirez, 2011, p. 693; Madsen & Oleen, 2013). Six advertisements reviewed in this study listed a Juris Doctorate as a preferred qualification beyond an ALA-accredited MLS for SC librarian positions.

Only two positions designate Open Educational Resources (OER) in the job title but 20 job descriptions describe responsibilities for or desired qualifications in OER. The responsibilities range from promoting OER, to educating others in their use, to developing OER programs. There is also a relationship between copyright and OER in job descriptions. Two SC and copyright librarian positions specifically refer to OER while the others describe general research, publishing, and use issues.

## **COMMUNICATING LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES**

The 2012 ARL SPEC Kit states that most of the respondents to their survey claimed that their libraries were responsible for scholarly communication leadership efforts, but these leadership claims are qualified. Respondents mitigated statements with explanations that leadership duties span departments or by mentions of contributors from outside the library (Radom et al., 2012, pp. 11–12). This study demonstrates that the expectation of the library to lead SC efforts persists, with leadership responsibilities frequently appearing in advertisements for SC librarian positions. Leadership, development, and expertise are discussed individually but these themes often overlap in job descriptions.

This study explores two meanings of leadership. First, references to leading, guiding, or managing were reviewed for more nuanced meaning to determine what kind of leadership activity the advertisement describes. In some postings, these statements describe managerial or administrative functions such as leading a unit, program, or department. In other postings, “lead” has a broader meaning and suggests the incumbent will take some initiative or be an exemplar, but not necessarily a manager. Second, a distinction is made between administrator and non-administrator positions. Wong (2017) describes two categories of leadership present in libraries: assigned leadership, found at any level from leading a committee to mid-management to higher administrative positions, and emergent leadership, which are jobs held by those who have leadership responsibilities but do not have titled roles (p. 154). U.S. institutions commonly use titles such as Dean, Associate Dean, or University Librarian to indicate a higher administrative position. Still other postings indicate a managerial role by referring to a position as a Director, Head, or

Lead. In this study, roles with these titles are considered assigned leaders. Positions that do not indicate administrator or manager roles by title, or do not clearly define such in the job's duties, are considered non-administrator roles for this study. Where an advertisement makes statements of leadership responsibilities for non-administrators, these jobs align with Wong's emergent leadership.

## MANAGEMENT

The literature demonstrates a trend in libraries to delegate SC responsibilities and leadership to administrative roles (Finlay et al., 2015, p. 19), such as mid-level administrators, assistant deans, or associate deans with additional responsibilities in budgeting and planning (Xia & Li, 2015, p. 18). The theme of leadership as a function of management appears in both administrator and non-administrator positions.

The inclusion of "scholarly communication\*" in a job title does not necessarily indicate a high level of engagement with SC responsibilities (Finlay et al, 2015, p. 10). In the present dataset, assigned leadership positions with a strong focus on SC responsibilities tend to be mid-level management roles, such as manager, head, lead, or director. Mid-level management positions also tend to highlight a specific SC issue in the job title, such as data, copyright, or digital scholarship. The exception is a job description for an Access Services and Scholarly Communication Librarian. This position has management, hiring, and supervisory responsibilities and tasks the librarian with copyright-related duties.

Higher-level administrative jobs have fewer SC-specific tasks and are responsible for overseeing a range of services and departments. These advertisements briefly refer to scholarly communication in relation to managing, leading, planning, or developing programs or initiatives.

Leading, in the sense of managing people, is a common responsibility for upper- and mid-level administrator positions. However, the responsibility to manage a thing, such as a repository, could fall to non-administrator positions as well:

"[O]verseeing the management of [institutional repository]."

"The Librarian manages and develops [the institutional repository] ... and other scholarly digital content."

"Manages the Libraries' institutional repository."

Institutional repository responsibilities appeared in positions with collections responsibilities, indicating that institutions were incorporating SC duties into positions that did not originally include them (Finlay et al, 2015, p. 20). Institutions now expect SC librarians to take on the role of institutional repository manager.

## INITIATIVE

It is important that a library director act as a spokesperson who can communicate the library's role in SC (Radom et al, 2012, p. 14). This study indicates that the responsibility to represent SC on behalf of the library now falls to the SC librarian, regardless of position level. Non-administrator positions include responsibilities to lead SC outreach:

“...lead efforts to educate and advise the campus community on issues of open access....”

“...lead efforts to design and deliver systematic and sustainable approaches to scholarly communication outreach.”

“...lead and coordinate outreach efforts to raise awareness and educate the University on trends and issues in the areas of scholarly communication, open access, open education resources, copyright, and fair use.”

SC librarians are also responsible for leading outreach efforts within the library, for instance coordinating, educating, and training subject liaisons or other library staff on SC issues:

“Assume the leadership role...in coordinating and educating liaisons and staff....”

“...leads education and outreach to faculty and provides guidance to library colleagues and others on issues relevant to the evolving scholarly publishing landscape....”

## EXPERTISE

Hiring institutions expect the SC librarian to serve as an expert on SC issues for the library and the campus. Job descriptions state the librarian will serve as a resource in SC, whether as simply a “resource,” a “campus resource,” or the “primary resource.” Some ads describe the SC librarian as the “expert” or “point of contact.”

Some postings list specific areas in which the librarian will provide expertise:

“Serves as the university's primary resource on fair use and other copyright issues....”

“The ideal candidate will provide expertise on open access, open education, copyright, fair use, author rights, and ongoing developments in scholarly communication.”

Some state that the librarian will be the expert in SC in general:

“...serves as the local expert concerning the evolving scholarly communications ecosystem....”

“Provide expertise in scholarly communications and publishing.”

Where institutions describe expertise in desired qualifications, they seek proficiency in software applications or IR platforms. Otherwise, hiring libraries imply desired expertise through other statements. Regarding actual experience in SC issues, advertisements for administrator positions seek those who have experience in outreach, education, or programming, particularly in developing and implementing such efforts:

“...demonstrated experience providing instruction, consultation, and programming on scholarly communication, copyright, fair use, and intellectual property topics.”

“Experience developing outreach materials and services, such as publications, training materials, workshops, conferences, and other tools relevant to scholarly communication.”

In non-administrator positions, libraries seek applicants who can effectively instruct others in SC issues:

“Experience communicating and conducting outreach about scholarly communication issues to a variety of stakeholders.”

“Communicate scholarly communication issues in a balanced way that can be adjusted to a wide range of audiences across the disciplines.”

“Demonstrated knowledge of and ability to effectively articulate complex concepts, such as copyright, fair use, authors’ rights, and open access as they relate to the academic endeavor.”

“Demonstrated knowledge of Institutional Repositories and the ability to communicate their benefits and address issues related to their use.”

## DEVELOPMENT

The responsibility to develop also appears in SC librarian position announcements. SC librarians may develop institutional repositories, outreach, services, or partnerships. The use of “digital” in SC librarian ads “suggests that librarians have responded to the argument that digital libraries should play a greater role in SC, perhaps due in part to their potential for interacting with and facilitating the ‘social life’ of documents,” (Finlay et al, 2015, p. 20). Job postings from 2007 through 2008 tended to focus on digital content development for institutional repositories and called upon the librarian to help deposit content, for example, by developing procedures and workflows (Xia and Li, 2015, p. 18). Regardless of position

level, SC librarians may find themselves responsible for developing a SC program:

“Develop a comprehensive scholarly communications program.”

“Develop a successful scholarly communications program.”

“Lead the development of a scholarly communication program....”

“...the scholarly communication librarian sets the vision for the growth and development of scholarly communication efforts....”

Whether SC infrastructure exists at an institution is not always easily discernable from a job advertisement alone, so it is not always obvious if the SC librarian will be building a program from scratch or expanding something already in place. Some institutions describe development responsibilities in terms of creating, growing, or expanding. A responsibility to “expand the SC program” or “grow the institutional repository” implies that a program or an IR is present. By contrast, “creating” an IR or a SC program implies the librarian will be responsible for bringing these things into existence.

## DISCUSSION

### Job Titles

While many librarians engage with SC issues, the focus on this particular title is important. Job titles contribute to the way individuals define themselves professionally and communicate their professional identity to others (Neary, 2019, pp. 14–15). A job title that communicates a person’s position, duties, and expertise influences the construction of professional identity, whether to express technological expertise (Braun, 2002, p. 46) or to identify oneself as a trained educator (Franklin, 2009, p. 17). Outsiders’ perceptions of a job title can lead to conversations about changing, or abandoning, certain titles altogether. Private law firm librarians have discussed the possibility of dropping the word “librarian” from their titles due to misconceptions: “For example, the possibility of a client objecting to a charge for librarian time is an issue unique to us. We are also vulnerable to misperceptions within the firm due to desire to cut costs” (Hallows & Bowersox, 2014, p. 12). Administrators may use job titles to communicate their expectations of a position. For instance, companies that rebrand their human resources managers as vibe managers do so, not only to create a certain kind of atmosphere for other employees, but also to express a vision for the role. Fred Bateman, the first CEO to recruit a vibe manager, explains, “Adding vibe to their responsibilities gives them something more meaningful and gives their job more respect. It’s not just answering phones or planning parties, they have to be thoughtful about it” (Anand & Oberai, 2018, p. 12).

Academic libraries communicate a commitment to take an active role in SC by naming positions and departments as such. However, SC as an indicator of actual responsibilities may not be informative or useful to professional identity construction because SC-related issues,

needs, and practices are numerous. Institutions may choose to specify certain duties in the job title, such as copyright, licensing, data, or publishing, which are themselves SC-related areas. Further research into the effectiveness of SC librarian job titles in conveying responsibilities or expertise to other library staff or to those outside of the profession is necessary.

### **Leadership and Authority**

Emergent leadership is an expectation indicated in SC librarian position announcements. Because these librarians are not administrators or leaders by title, it is worthwhile to explore the potential gaps between the amount of responsibility and amount of authority these positions have. Leadership is further complicated by gender and racial stereotypes. Librarianship in the U.S. overall is over 80% white and over 80% female (Librarians, n.d.). Men are disproportionately promoted to administrator positions (Newman, 2018; Olin & Millet, 2015). Where women hold assigned leadership roles, they are expected to lead in a gendered way (Olin & Millet, 2015). Epps (2008) reports that African American women who work as academic library deans or directors feel they have to work harder and are held to a higher standard than white librarians (p. 262), and interviewees felt they needed to cultivate certain attributes that white librarians do not, such as negotiating and persuading or “hav[ing] a thick skin” (Epps, 2008, p. 267). Women and Black librarians in assigned leadership roles have to navigate gendered and racialized expectations of superiors and staff. It would be expected, then, that women and minority librarians in emergent leadership roles would encounter the same, if not worse, problems in carrying out responsibilities to lead or develop ambiguously defined projects or initiatives. It would be useful to learn more about the experiences of SC librarians who have leadership responsibilities without accompanying positional authority, especially those tasked with developing and implementing new programs and services.

### **Place in the Institution**

It is important that job advertisements situate positions in the organizational structure and clarify what, if any, existing SC infrastructure is in place. For example, literature on IR workflow development describes the work as a team effort (Hanlon & Ramirez, 2011; Hazzard & Towery, 2017; Madsen & Oleen, 2013; Marsh, Wackerman, & Stubbs, 2017). Job postings should describe to the candidate any existing SC infrastructure already in place, such as an existing IR or SC department. Noting the titles of the supervisor and other engaged library staff can help an applicant envision how the position fits into the library’s reporting structure and the support network in place.

This is especially important for new SC librarian positions. There are six references in the dataset to either a new SC librarian position or a new department in which the position is located. Readers should not take this to mean that only six new SC positions or depart-

ments have been created since 2016. Some institutions may choose not to disclose that a position or department is new.

Most of the positions reviewed for this study are non-administrative positions, indicating institutions have opted to create new positions specifically to handle SC tasks. Institutions indicate a position or department is new to convey progress, excitement, or importance. One institution describes the creation of the new SC librarian position in terms of the university's adoption of a new open access policy. Another institution describes a newly created SC librarian position as a "critical partner" who will work to increase the exposure of the university's scholarly output, as well as "develop related services in the area of research metrics and reputation management." A third new SC librarian position has a broader focus than the previous two, serving to "expand and manage the Library's scholarly communications services."

The focus of each position varies but all three positions have a few things in common. All of the new positions are responsible for engaging with their campus communities and collaborating with other librarians or campus stakeholders. Each of these new positions touch on recurring themes found in the dataset across all positions, namely leadership, expertise, and development.

### **Boundary Roles and Innovation**

Aldrich and Herker (1977) explain that boundary roles serve information processing and external representation functions of an organization (218). These roles interact with the outside environment by filtering and disseminating incoming information or by communicating information to those outside the organization. "To be effective, libraries must bridge internal silos and reach across borders within the larger institutions that they serve, as well as with outside groups, disciplines, and organizations" (Humphreys, 2018, p. 521). For instance, reference, instruction, or subject librarians connect patrons to services, resources, and information available through their libraries. By doing this work, librarians serve the external representation function of boundary spanning by representing the organization to the outside environment, transmitting information to stakeholders, and making the organization visible (Aldrich & Harker, 1977, p. 220-221). Boundary spanners also simplify complex outside information and relate it to the organization in order demonstrate its value to organizational survival (Aldrich & Harker, 1977, p. 219). Librarians do this by communicating professional trends or best practices, as well as patron requests, needs, or habits, through the organizational hierarchy to effect policy and procedural changes to ensure the library remains relevant to its community.

Themes present in SC librarian job postings demonstrate the boundary spanning nature of these roles. The leadership, expertise, and development responsibilities in these ads speak

to the necessity of effective communication between the organization and the external environment (Tushman, 1977, p. 589). These themes intersect in some way with outreach, instruction, or collaboration with stakeholders outside of the library. For example, Xia and Li (2015) observed a trend in SC librarian responsibilities for digital content development: they point out that responsibilities for digital content development has moved over time from depositing content into institutional repositories, to legal issues of electronic content—including educating patrons about copyright and related issues—to policy development, and finally to collaboration with colleagues (pp. 18–19). This trend is evident in the present study in the duty to manage an institutional repository. The result of this IR work is the deposit of content, but this functional aspect is not always explicit in the positions' duties. The management of a repository, whether by an administrator or non-administrator, tends to focus on outreach, policy development, and collaboration with others within and outside of the library. In this capacity, SC librarians are both library representatives to the campus and they facilitate the flow of information from the campus to the library.

Expertise can be a source of authority for roles that do not have formal authority (Spekman, 1979, p. 116). Since 2010, positions increasingly call upon SC librarians to communicate with library users about copyright, intellectual property, fair use, and the public domain (Xia and Li, 2015, p. 19). Libraries commonly offer copyright and authors' rights education and support services (Radom et al, 2012, p. 13; Mears & Bandy, 2017, p. 146). As libraries have taken on a greater role in digital content creation and management, librarians are required to have more knowledge of copyright issues (Kawooya et al, 2015, p. 341). The responsibilities of copyright librarians often overlap with SC issues and there are "strong positive trends towards hiring copyright or scholarly communication librarians with copyright and related matters as their primary charge," (Kawooya et al, 2015, p. 348). This highlights uncertainty between the organization and the external environment, and the expert allays this uncertainty through the ability to filter and translate information, leading to the organization's dependency on the expert (Spekman, 1979, p. 113). The library depends on the copyright expert to translate the complexities of copyright in a way that non-experts can understand. "It is notable that librarians very often serve as copyright educators even though only about a quarter of library scholarly communication leaders have law degrees or have participated in some form of copyright training," (Radom et al, 2012, p. 13). A Juris Doctor (J.D.) is the most commonly sought degree beyond an ALA-accredited MLS for SC librarian positions. Expertise in OA, IR, scholarly publishing, and SC in general are also highly desirable.

In seeking librarians who are qualified to teach others about SC issues, a library describes the way the role's expertise will manifest and benefit the community. When the SC librarian is expected to be the organization's expert, non-experts may bestow authority to the SC librarian. Further research into the relationship between authority and SC librarians as experts is needed.



Regardless of job title, SC work is boundary-spanning work. Library staff across units and with different duties or areas of expertise must be able to communicate and work together to be effective in delivering SC services, programs, or initiatives. Because so many roles contribute to SC work, “job titles and descriptions, time allocations, salaries, and status can vary greatly among those who do this work, resulting in challenges for both managers who try to lead people who do not report to them and for workers who do not feel acknowledged” (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2019, p. 12). Exploring SC leadership through the lens of boundary spanning roles will be beneficial to understanding how library units interact, understand one another, and contribute to the institution’s SC mission. It will also bring attention to positions that do this work, no matter the job title.

## CONCLUSION

Graduates of ALA-accredited Master of Library and Information Studies programs are expected to know and use “The concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods for principled, transformational leadership” (American Library Association, 2009, p. 5). In a growing field like SC, it is no surprise that institutions expect SC librarians to be leaders. If the descriptions of SC as “evolving” or “rapidly changing” found in SC librarian position announcements are to be taken as accurate, then it must be acknowledged that the scholarly publishing environment, including publishing practices and the needs of researchers, will change faster than library policies and procedures.

In SC librarian job ads, the authority to manage or administer is often absent from positions that have a responsibility to lead or develop SC efforts, programs, or initiatives. “The goal of leadership without authority is to get others to willingly cooperate and engage, rather than following directives because you’re the boss” (Goman, 2017). Librarians who have responsibilities to lead, develop, or implement programs, policies, or procedures but do not have positional authority may still exhibit their leadership potential by being proactive, taking initiative, and communicating with their superiors. However, those with positional authority—the assigned leaders—must be able to delegate the authority to make decisions and provide necessary support for these emergent leaders.

Are the librarians who fill these jobs with leadership, development, or expertise responsibilities authorized to make decisions or take actions to meet immediate user needs in the absence of policy? How much support will they have in effecting policy change to keep up with environmental changes? The success of the SC librarian in leading change or developing new programs will depend on the organizational culture, which cannot be fully discerned from a job advertisement. Libraries should avoid using coded language in SC librarian job advertisements that may discourage women and minorities from seeking leadership and instead, use gender-neutral language that signifies support of innovation and critical viewpoints. Hiring institutions should also be prepared to describe to candidates current SC initiatives and ex-

pectations for innovation; existing collaborations, whether stable or in need of improvement; and examples of other successful programs developed by others at the institution.

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