



## **SURVEY RESULTS**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

A SPEC survey on liaison services in libraries that was conducted in 1992 concluded that, “Until recently the library collection has formed the focus of library activity. But as the physical collection becomes less central, the user is becoming the focus of library services. The role librarians are to have in this decentralized information environment could depend largely upon the effectiveness with which liaison librarians are able to monitor, anticipate, and respond to user’s information needs.”<sup>1</sup> Since then many changes have taken place in libraries and in society. Electronic communication and electronic publications have changed library patrons’ expectations and challenged libraries to provide access to a wide variety of materials while adjusting to their patrons’ constantly evolving information seeking behaviors and technological needs.

Since 1992, the definition of the liaison role also has changed. The 1992 RUSA guidelines for liaisons described the liaison role as primarily to gather information for collection development.<sup>2</sup> The 2001 guidelines have an expanded definition of liaison work that includes five components. Three components stress collection development and two emphasize purposes beyond collection development, namely public relations and communicating clientele needs to the library staff and governing body.<sup>3</sup> Now, librarians are taking on a number of new roles and responsibilities including partnering with faculty in the classroom, acting as academic

advisors and mentors, and providing computer software and hardware support.

### Background

This survey sought to identify the current roles of liaisons in ARL libraries and any changes in focus in their interactions with academic departments. It explored whether liaisons are being reactive to faculty and student needs, partners in providing teaching/library instruction, pioneers in the new electronic world or have limited involvement with the academic departments, and documented how libraries mix the activities of traditional liaison responsibilities with the new trends that are fostered by the evolving needs of today’s library patrons.

The survey was distributed to the 123 ARL member libraries in May 2007. Sixty-six libraries—63 academic and 3 non-academic—responded by the deadline for a 54% response rate. Only one of the academic libraries does not provide liaison services to academic departments in their university; these services are not applicable to the non-academic libraries. Twenty-nine of the responding libraries (49%) began offering liaison services before 1980. A number of respondents couldn’t provide an exact start date but made comments along the lines of, “as long as the library has been in existence” and “for decades.” Those who could provide a date show that a wave of new, or newly defined, programs has started each decade from the 1960s to today; the most recent program started in 2007.

## Liaison Assignments

For 44 respondents (75%), defining who liaisons are and what they do was determined through administrative decisions. However, a significant number of respondents stated that librarians' perceived needs of academic departments were a major factor in determining these services (33 responses or 60%). Formal and informal meetings and conversations with faculty members also played a role. In most of the responding libraries (52 or 85%), there is a liaison assigned to every department on campus. At the other nine, only a few departments have a liaison.

## Department Participation

Thirty-three respondents (61%) indicated that all departments on their campuses take advantage of services offered by library liaisons. The 24 respondents who indicated that only some departments take advantage of liaison services were asked to estimate the percentage of participating departments and to describe which departments those are. The majority report that participation falls between 75% and 90%; only two campuses have less than 60% departmental participation. The respondents listed a wide range of participating departments across disciplines. Many commented that participation level varies between departments since each department has different needs. A handful of respondents indicated that sciences are less active than social sciences and humanities, while one indicated that sciences are the most active.

All of the responding libraries are actively seeking ways to increase departmental participation and employ various strategies to achieve that goal. An analysis of respondents' comments show that library liaisons tend to target their services to teaching and research faculty more than undergraduates, but it appears difficult to get their foot in the door. Almost all of the libraries encourage liaisons to attend departmental meetings and, in addition to formal meetings, many organize social events for liaisons and departmental faculty. Most

respondents also indicated that they employ such promotion strategies as newsletters, e-mail, or presentations for key university committees to increase departmental participation. Six respondents indicated that they increased the presence of liaisons in academic units by providing liaisons with office spaces or office hours in academic departments. A few shared strategies that can help campus faculty become more active, such as inviting faculty to contribute to library publications, including faculty on library committees, and creating liaison advisory teams. One respondent commented that their librarians are "over-extended" and therefore expectations are carefully controlled. On most campuses however, liaisons constantly work to implement new services.

The survey asked which members of the department are eligible for liaison services. Responses indicate that liaison outreach is inclusive. Faculty of all types—teaching and research, adjunct and lecturer—are high on the eligibility list, followed closely by graduate teaching assistants and other graduate students. Roughly three-fourths of the respondents also include administrative staff and undergraduates. A few include the general public.

## Liaison Responsibility Assignment

Only five libraries report that most or all of their librarians are assigned as liaisons. The criteria for these liaisons are summed up by one respondent, "interest, subject knowledge, availability, instruction skills, public service ethic." When the liaison pool is narrowed to just *some* librarians, subject expertise is still the number one criteria and "Subject Librarian" appears to be synonymous with liaison. Those with collection development responsibilities also commonly act as liaisons, but the largest group to shoulder liaison responsibilities is the public service librarians. Other library professionals with liaison responsibilities include administrators, language specialists, and media specialists. Support staff liaisons typically have cataloging or service desk expertise.

### **Liaison's Department Assignment**

For the majority of librarians (80%), liaison activities are their primary responsibility, but for other professionals and library staff liaison activities are secondary to other responsibilities of their jobs. For the great majority of respondents, department assignments are based on the liaison's subject expertise (95%) or position in the library (69%). Some libraries also consider distribution of workload as a way to determine assignments. All of the responding libraries reported at least one liaison who serves more than one academic department. Although most libraries assign no more than four or five academic departments to any one liaison, four libraries indicated that more than fifteen departments were assigned to a liaison. In the 1992 SPEC survey the largest number of departments assigned to one liaison was 12; in this survey the largest number is thirty-one.

### **Liaison Services**

The survey asked what services liaisons provide to their academic departments. All respondents indicated that their liaisons offer departmental outreach and communicate department needs back to the library. All but a few also offer reference, collection development, and library instruction. A significant number provide scholarly communication education. Examples of other services include digital project support, individual consultations, advice on copyright, and exhibits, among others. Several respondents noted that not every librarian provided all of the services listed, though.

While types and number of services may differ from liaison to liaison, they all appear to use a wide range of methods to communicate what those services are to their departments. At the top of the list is sending information via e-mail. A close second is the in-person approach, such as attending departmental meetings, meeting with faculty individually, and orienting new faculty. Most post news on the library's homepage or newsletter, send promo-

tional materials to their departments, host special events, or use electronic discussion lists and blogs to communicate their services.

### **New Liaison Training**

Almost all of the libraries provide some form of training for new liaisons whether informal or formal, just an overview or more extensive, provided by a supervisor, peer, or an assigned mentor. Collection development is the most common aspect of the training that liaisons receive. Also common is training in reference, instruction, and outreach methods. A number of libraries provide introductions to the liaison's departments. Others schedule regular meetings of liaisons. More than a fifth of the comments indicate that the training for the liaison role is unstructured, but several are planning a more rigorous program.

### **Administration of Liaison Services**

Almost half of the respondents reported that their liaison services are self-administered by individual liaisons without a central coordinator or administrative body. About a quarter reported that liaisons are centrally administered, either by a coordinator, committee, or the library administration. In a few cases, two or more unit heads have joint responsibility. In other cases, administration varies by library or unit.

### **Evaluation of Liaison Services**

About half of the survey respondents report that there has been some sort of evaluation of their liaison services. The most common evaluation method is to track the number of instruction sessions and/or reference or research interviews. Some have conducted user surveys or interviewed members of their departments. A few have conducted focus groups. Several respondents mention the liaison's annual performance report as the main evaluation method; several others specify that they have used the LibQUAL+® user satisfaction survey.

## Challenges of Liaison Services

The survey asked respondents to describe up to three top challenges for their library liaisons. Responses cover a wide range of concerns. The most common challenge described is establishing and maintaining contact with faculty, especially when they seem time-pressured, uninterested, or unresponsive to outreach, are on campus only part-time, or think that library services compete with teaching time. Another challenge is time constraints on liaisons: they have competing responsibilities, are assigned too many departments or departments outside their area of expertise, or may struggle to keep up with new technology, new ideas, or changes in their departments. A third challenge can be described as communication: how to get the word out about liaison services to the right people when they are receptive to the message.

The 1992 SPEC survey included a similar question that asked, "What barriers to effective liaison work do librarians encounter at your institution." In both surveys, concerns about unreceptive faculty and about lack of time or expertise were indicated. Although the two surveys are not directly comparable because of differences in question wording and response presentation, it is notable that ten libraries in the 1992 survey marked over-demanding faculty as a challenge, but this concern was barely mentioned in the current survey.

## Conclusion

More than half of the academic ARL member libraries provide liaison services to departments at their universities. While only a few libraries assign liaison responsibilities to all librarians, the others have hired or trained a cadre of librarians and other staff who have the subject experience, social skills, and interest to make this their primary job responsibility. Most of these libraries assign a liaison to every department, though not every department takes advantage of the available services. Liaisons are using a variety of high-tech and in-person approaches to reach out to their departments. A large majority of the responding libraries provide liaison services

not just to tenured and tenure-track faculty but to students and others in the departments they serve. Most liaisons offer a range of services from collection development to reference and instruction to research support, digital project consulting, and more. Almost all of the libraries provide training for liaisons to ensure effective service, though only about half have formally evaluated their success.

There are many challenges to making a liaison program successful. Each library is in a different environment. Different departments have different needs. Many respondents noted that department-liaison relationships are dependent on a number of factors, including the ratio of liaisons to departments, the personal relationships that liaisons have established with faculty, students, and staff in their liaison departments, and the ability of the liaison to have time to devote to this job responsibility.

Just fifteen years ago, over-demanding faculty was a concern for some libraries and establishing and maintaining contact was a concern for others. Now, establishing and maintaining contact is a consistent concern. While many liaisons make establishing and maintaining contacts a priority, faculty deem library services a low priority in their daily lives. Getting the opportunity for instruction, helping students in their research, and integrating information literacy into the curriculum are some of the many challenges that face liaisons today.

## References

1. Latta, Gail F. *Liaison Services in ARL Libraries*. SPEC Kit 189. Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, November/December 1992.
2. Liaison with Users Committee. Collection Development and Evaluation Section. Reference and Adult Services Division. American Library Association. "RASD Guidelines for Liaison Work." *RQ* 32, no. 2 (1992): 198–204.
3. Liaison with Users Committee. Collection Development and Evaluation Section. Reference and User Services Association. "Guidelines for Liaison Work in Managing Collections and Services." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2001): 107–09.

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## SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

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The SPEC survey on Liaison Services was designed by **Susan Logue**, Associate Dean for Support Services, **John Ballestro**, Assistant Professor, **Andrea Imre**, Assistant Professor, and **Julie Arendt**, Assistant Professor at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. These results are based on data submitted by 66 of the 123 ARL member libraries (54%) by the deadline of June 13, 2007. The survey's introductory text and questions are reproduced below, followed by the response data and selected comments from the respondents.

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A SPEC survey on liaison services in libraries that was conducted in 1992 concluded that, "Until recently the library collection has formed the focus of library activity. But as the physical collection becomes less central, the user is becoming the focus of library services. The role librarians are to have in this decentralized information environment could depend largely upon the effectiveness with which liaison librarians are able to monitor, anticipate, and respond to user's information needs." Since then many changes have taken place in libraries and in society. Electronic communication and the wide range of electronic publications have changed our patrons' expectations and information needs. Libraries are facing an increased challenge as they try to provide access to a wide variety of materials while adjusting to their patrons' constantly evolving information seeking behaviors and technological needs. Librarians are taking on a number of new roles and responsibilities including partnering with faculty in the classroom, acting as academic advisors and mentors, and providing computer software and hardware support.

This survey seeks to identify the current roles of liaisons in ARL libraries and indicate any changes in the focus of librarians in their interactions with academic departments. We hope to discover whether liaisons are being reactive to faculty and student needs, partners in providing teaching/library instruction, pioneers in the new electronic world, or have limited involvement with the academic departments. We intend to document how libraries today mix the activities of traditional liaison responsibilities with the new trends that are fostered by the evolving needs of the library's patrons.

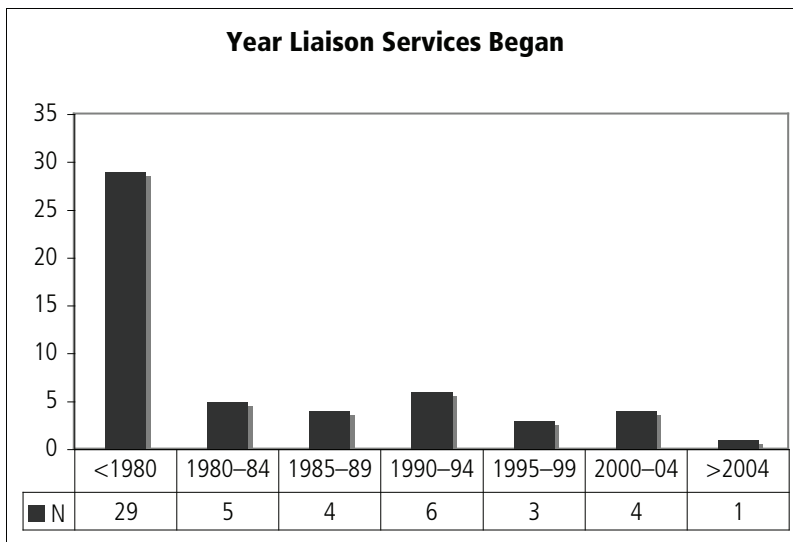
## BACKGROUND

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1. Does your library provide liaison services to academic departments in your university? N=66

<b>Yes</b>	62	94%
<b>No</b>	1	1%
<b>Not applicable, this library is not in an academic institution.</b>	3	5%

If yes, in what year did your library begin offering these services? N=59



### Selected Comments from Respondents

"Already existed in early 1970s."

"1996 starting with Science & Engineering."

"Always, although the nature of the service has evolved over time."

"At least 35 years ago, possibly."

"Early 1990s."

"Early 20th century."

"Generally, since the beginning."

"I don't know. These services were in place when I arrived in 2001. My sense is that they've been in place for decades."



"In the 31 years that I have worked here, we have offered some form of liaison services, so I am unsure what year this started. They have evolved over time."

"Informally, we have been doing this forever; branch and reference department librarians served as liaisons based on subject/discipline knowledge; in 1993, 'connection development,' our term for liaison work, was assigned to all the librarians in Subject Teams."

"It has always been integral to a collections librarian role."

"Late 1980s."

"Many years ago."

"Mid to late 1960s."

"Mid-1980s."

"Since services began here...probably 1701. The Library had a fundamental role in the history of the university."

"Sometime in the 1970s."

"Sometime prior to 1975; everyone who has worked here since then says the program was already in place."

"To my knowledge, as long as the library has been in existence there has been liaising with the departments."

"Too long ago to know."

## 2. How were the liaison roles determined? Check all that apply. N=59

Library administrative decision	44	75%
Librarian's perceived needs of academic department(s)	33	56%
Informal conversations with members of the academic department(s)	22	37%
Formal meetings with academic department groups	13	22%
Surveyed members of the academic department(s)	7	12%
Other, please specify	13	22%

"At this point, no one here knows what the history of the decision was. The university is 50 years old, and we've had liaison librarians for as long as any of us recall."

"Collection Development librarians liaise in areas related to collection development while education and instruction librarians liaise related to instructional areas."

"Departmental or program initiative."

"Historic practice set by earlier collection development assignments."

"I don't know. I was not here at the time. These services have been in place for decades." (Three other similar responses.)

"In response to outreach opportunities."

"Liaison responsibilities are linked mostly with subject responsibilities, therefore subject librarians who look after collection development, reference and instruction are liaisons for the corresponding department(s). In some cases (we have 18 libraries) or for some specific issues/projects, the head of the library will be the liaison and not the subject librarian."

"Team leaders of Collection Management, Research Services, and Instructional Services articulated liaison role in document."

"University library committee's advice and suggestions."

"We hire librarians to have general responsibilities as liaisons and then let each of them work out with their departments how large or small that role will be."

## LIAISON ASSIGNMENT

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3. Does the library assign a liaison to every academic department? N=61

<b>Yes, to every department</b>	52	85%
<b>No, to only some departments</b>	9	15%

## DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATION

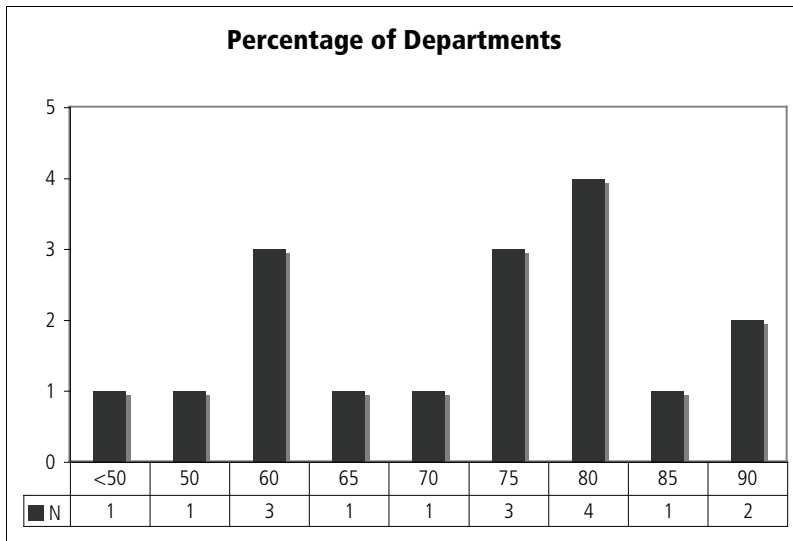
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4. Do all of these departments take advantage of the services provided by library liaisons? N=61

<b>Yes</b>	37	61%
<b>No</b>	24	39%

If no, please estimate the percentage of academic departments that actively participate in the library liaison activities and describe which departments those are.

**Percentage N=17**



**Departments N=21**

“A range of departments in sciences, (campus strength), social sciences, and humanities disciplines.”

“Across the board; no pattern among colleges. Some more interested in research support or collection development, others in instruction, etc.”

“All sciences and engineering, anthropology, English, history, schools of management, sociology, education, Latin American Institute, native American Studies, Chicano/Hispano/Mexicano studies, Architecture, Fine and performing arts.”

“All departments make some use of liaison service, although in some cases it is very basic, e.g., a request for purchase, but it can go right up to asking liaison to be part of a research team. There is a very wide range of involvement.”

“All departments receive at least minimal communication (1–2 times per year to the departmental rep) from the liaison. History, Chemistry, Entomology, and a couple of the Education departments seem to have strong ties with their liaisons and request services on a regular basis.”

“Almost all of the social science and humanities departments take advantage of the library’s liaisons with Art, Business, English, History, Political Science, and Geography being some of the most engaged.”

“Departments in all academic colleges (Architecture, Music, Engineering, Natural Science, Humanities, Social Sciences).”

“English, History, Art, Spanish, East Asian, biology, chemistry, geology, geography; music, philosophy, classics, religious studies; computer science, Italian, etc.”

“Environmental Sciences, Spanish and Portuguese, Religious Studies, Political Science, Asian American Studies, Women’s Studies, History, Black Studies, French, English.”

"For instruction: 35 departments; for collection development: 100%."

"For the two main libraries only (58%): Departments of Mathematics, Chemistry, Chemical and Biochemical Engineering, Mechanical and Materials Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Earth Sciences, Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Medical Biophysics, Pathology, Physiology & Pharmacology, Anesthesia, Medicine, Psychology, Schools of Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Kinesiology, Dentistry, Programs of Undergraduate Medical Education, Health Sciences The D.B. Weldon Library (80%): Departments of Anthropology, English, Film Studies, French, History, Geography, Library and Information Science, Management and Organization Studies, Media, Information and Technoculture, Modern Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Theory and Criticism, and Visual Arts."

"Generally, departments in the humanities and social sciences areas are more engaged than science and engineering. Regardless of a department's interest, our liaison's select and monitor collections, promote services, etc."

"Humanities, social sciences oriented departments; some of the undergraduate engineering."

"In excess of a hundred departments."

"It depends on how you define 'actively participate' and if you mean department-wide participation or selected faculty participation."

"Most department excepting some social sciences departments which interact little with their liaison librarians."

"Ninety percent of the departments in the Colleges of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education; most units in the College of Sciences; most units in the College of Agriculture and several in the College of Engineering; and Mines and Business."

"Nursing, Psychology, German, Social Work, Women's Studies, Art, Sociology, Business, Education, Chemistry, Communication Disorders, Engineering, Communication, Africana Studies, Film Studies, Music."

"Selected health sciences departments."

"The humanities, arts, and social sciences departments are the most active. Biological and physical science departments are moderately active, and engineering and business are the least active."

"Too many to list; we have ~70 librarians doing liaison work."

5. Is your library actively seeking ways to increase participation from academic departments?

N=60

<b>Yes</b>	60	100%
<b>No</b>	—	—

If yes, then how? Check all that apply. N=60

Encourage liaisons to attend department meetings	56	93%
Market liaison services	56	93%
Other, please specify	41	68%

"Annual faculty/library meeting."

"Collaboration with all faculty teaching in the First Year Experience programs, both Freshman Interest Groups and Freshman Seminars. Connect faculty to library's Media Services (including classroom support) and Center for Educational Technologies. Contact faculty regarding specific courses. Contact faculty regarding using multi-media such as videos/DVDs, art and music databases, etc. Contact faculty teaching courses that fulfill the multicultural requirement and sharing info about ethnic or international collections and databases. Special Collections identifying faculty whose courses use primary sources. Contact faculty regarding the library's undergraduate research award."

"Collection development librarians will be soliciting departmental content for the institutional repository. Instructional librarians are targeting specific departments and courses as well as Capstone seminars."

"College librarians."

"Conducting an assessment of liaison activities with the goal of enhancing effectiveness of our liaison program, e.g., setting standards, etc."

"Course pages, campus e-mail system, tailored Web sites, 1 on 1 consultations, partnerships with other campus groups, increase subject librarians (aka Liaisons) visibility through open houses and non-library office spaces."

"Create linkages with faculty through courseware services, such as Blackboard."

"E-mail communications; Informal meetings/conversations; Face-to-face meetings between heads of academic departments/programs and library instruction coordinator; Additional library instruction space created and equipped with appropriate technology; Look into new trends in software, such as clickers, to adapt to new ways of teaching and learning; Liaisons invited to events to which faculty are also invited, including members of the Faculty Senate Library and members of the library friends' group committee."

"E-mails to departments."

"Encourage department to invite liaison librarians to attend departmental meetings; contacting particular members of the departments."

"Getting on Departmental Seminar Schedules. Meeting with director's of Graduate Study. Working with honor's classes."

"Have faculty receptions in the libraries; work with department, curriculum committees."

"Have various social events with departments during which we remind faculty of the availability of the subject

specialist assigned to work with them. Also highlighted in correspondence generated to administrators. Web page listings of specialists by subject.”

“Increased emphasis on the role of the liaison in job descriptions and position announcements.”

“Making presentations at key university committee meetings.”

“Many liaison librarians do an annual report including information on their interactions with departments and use this to help set goals for the following year. Library administrators meet with deans and department chairs to market liaison services and to receive feedback on those services. The libraries’ Public Services Committee sponsors an annual ‘Library Liaison Summit’ where librarians share outreach strategies and learn from each other.”

“Market a variety of services to faculty, graduate students, and undergrads, especially honors seniors.”

“Market collections purchases and services to faculty.”

“Meet to determine individual, specialized needs. Collaborate on instruction, research; provide outpost assistance.”

“Meet & Greet, Dean’s Breakfast, new student welcome event ‘Ram Welcome.’”

“New liaison service models embedding liaisons into departments.”

“Offer to link to courseware. Involve faculty in assessing collections and potential databases. Invite faculty to be interviewed for library newsletter and online video. Invite faculty to contribute to library newsletter and blog. Have faculty serve on library search committees.”

“Office hours in academic units. Departmental newsletters and e-mail correspondence. Individual contacts with new grad students and faculty at the beginning of the academic year.”

“Office hours; partner with faculty to support teaching and learning.”

“Orientation for graduate students and faculty, office hours, course-related instruction, collaborate on instructional technology, digital projects.”

“Orientation to new faculty events. Participation in research days/university authors’ events. Co-sponsoring events/grants. University-Wide Orientation program for new faculty/staff. Branch level contacts. Course coordinators (assignments). Curriculum consultation forms (new programs, new courses, revised courses). Cold calling. Ongoing discussions by heads, liaison librarians. Note: Some branches/divisions are very active already.”

“Outreach through information literacy initiatives.”

“Participation by departments in the Institutional Repository; Collaboration on Information Literacy integration into the curriculum.”

“Personal contact; virtual contact; hosting meetings, programming, and more.”

“Receptions for faculty; liaison workshop; annual faculty letter; For Faculty Web page.”

“Redesigning Liaison program.”

"Redeveloping — as part of strategic planning — and thus strengthening the role of liaisons."

"Seek faculty participation on library strategic planning committees, library staff award committees, etc."

"Special programs and collaborations."

"Systematically contact new faculty and grad students; faculty and graduate student orientation meetings; actively building professional relationships with stakeholders; honoring the faculty program; encouraging departments to form library sub-committees."

"The library has a Promotion Committee that supports subject librarians' efforts to liaise with academic departments."

"We are constantly trying new and multiple ways to reach everyone in person and in every format and access point."

"We encourage liaisons to be in contact with department chairs and faculty members. Some liaisons also produce a newsletter for their departments."

"We have a Liaison Advisory Team and other library teams that host events for faculty and others on campus that raise the profile of the library and of liaison support, e.g., workshops on library support for e-learning."

"We include expectations for liaison services in the goals in the annual evaluations of liaison librarians."

"Work with new faculty on new faculty awards, personal contact."

### **Selected Comments from Respondents N=11**

"All departments are different. Liaisons always seek ways to increase communication and activities with departments, but the libraries as a whole do not have a collective strategy."

"Departmental participation varies significantly."

"Many of our librarians are over-extended and have been at practical limits for some time in the services that they can provide. Most of our liaisons deal with approximately 100 faculty and 1,000 students and have regular jobs in addition to being a liaison. Liaison expectations can be insatiable and new roles emerge constantly so we attempt to be careful in managing expectations."

"Outreach goes beyond the faculty departments to integration in programs such as First Year Experience, athletics, and student services such as residence halls."

"Participation levels vary among departments; the assigned liaison is always looking for ways to increase participation."

"Please note that liaison activities vary, and that liaison work is more direct in the libraries which are located within the departments and/or schools they serve: Law, Music, Architecture/Planning. Librarians in the Health Sciences and Arts & Sciences Libraries need to be more creative and proactive in developing ways to reach out."

"Reference will not be the major responsibility of liaisons, rather liaison, instruction, and outreach."

"Successful liaison work depends on a blend of the librarian and finding someone in a department that is interested. Activity waxes and wanes with personal relationships."

"Various liaison librarians are trying various means to profitably interact with their departments; this is up to the individual liaison librarian."

"We look for every opportunity to increase faculty and student awareness of what the library has to offer."

"We take a heavy collections-related approach to liaison activities based on feedback from faculty and assessed impact."

## LIAISON SERVICES ELIGIBILITY

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### 6. Which members of the department are eligible for liaison services? Check all that apply. N=61

Teaching/Research faculty	60	98%
Other faculty (Adjunct, term, non-tenure track, lecturer, etc.)	57	93%
Graduate teaching assistants	52	85%
Graduate students	50	82%
Administrative staff	47	77%
Undergraduate students	44	72%
Other, please specify	10	16%

"Anyone in the department who has an information need."

"General public in certain capacities."

"If by liaison services we include all user services (reference, instruction, etc.) and collection development issues with members of a department community, then all of the above are served."

"Not differentiated by affiliation with university."

"Other faculty: includes sessional instructors. Administrative staff: includes department staff, grad students as research assistants."

"Outreach to specific populations and interest groups; Friends of the Library."

"Students from other schools. General public (reference questions)."

"The focus of liaison is the faculty and grad students but administrative staff or undergraduate students would not be rebuffed."

"Visiting faculty and research fellows."

"Visiting scholars."



## LIAISON RESPONSIBILITY ASSIGNMENT

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7. Please indicate which library staff have been assigned liaison responsibilities. Check all that apply. N=61

All librarians	2	3%
Most librarians	3	5%
Some librarians	56	92%
Other professionals	13	21%
Support staff	12	20%
Other	4	7%

If most librarians are assigned liaison responsibility, please explain the selection criteria. N=3

"Interest; subject knowledge; availability; instruction skills; public service ethic."

"Those that do not have liaison areas are: technical services librarians; administrative librarians; special role librarians, e.g., government documents, e-learning, Web (those who are not responsible for collections)."

"Those who have the appropriate subject expertise. Of the 58 librarians, perhaps 5 do not have liaison responsibilities at this time."

If only some librarians are assigned liaison responsibility, please explain the selection criteria. N=56

"A. Position type. B. Departmental request. C. New service models."

"All librarians who have collection development responsibilities are liaisons. (Some librarians in technical services do not have liaison responsibilities.) Assistant Head, Access Services is liaison to campus bookstore."

"All librarians assigned to Subject Teams are also assigned liaison responsibilities."

"All librarians engaged in reference, instruction, and collection development activities in the main and branch libraries are involved in liaison responsibilities. Others are selected because they have experience or education that lends itself to specialization or they volunteer to participate and have the approval of their supervisor."

"All librarians in the Scholarly Resources Department are Subject Librarians. These individuals all have liaison responsibilities. There are librarians in other departments who do not have this responsibility."

"All public service librarians."

"All public service librarians have responsibility for collections, instruction, and reference in either an assigned subject area (relates to departmental or college assignment) or a functional area such as archives."

"As mentioned in question 2, subject librarians act as liaisons in most cases and for some issues/projects the head of the library will be the liaison."

"Based on collection development needs."

"Based on subject expertise, desires of the librarians, and department needs."

"Bibliographer responsibilities."

"Depends on whether that library provides services. In Arts and Science, all bibliographers and reference librarians have assignments."

"Former subject librarians has transmografied into liaison librarians."

"Generally librarians in Public Services or Collection Management Divisions, where faculty/student interaction is part of daily or regular activities. Some librarians in Technical Services also have very specific responsibilities for collection management."

"Integral to the role of the Research & Instructional Services Librarians with research, instruction, and collections responsibilities."

"Job descriptions for 'Research Librarian' positions specify liaison responsibilities, so librarians are hired and/or appointed to fulfill these duties. Research Librarians are responsible for reference, instruction, and collection development for one or more subject areas and they serve as liaisons to academic departments and research centers."

"Job duties of subject specialists (bibliographers) involve liaison relationships with the appropriate academic department(s)."

"Liaison librarians are hired expressly for that role."

"Liaison librarians are hired specifically to perform that function. Generally, selection is based on evidence of a wide range of skills."

"Liaison responsibilities are assigned to Information Services librarians, who have reference, instruction, and research support responsibilities."

"Librarians are assigned to match the subject areas that they do collection development."

"Librarians are hired with subject background and/or experience with the assigned user groups and with strong social skills."

"Librarians located in the Research and Education Division."

"Librarians should have subject, format, or language expertise."

"Librarians with collection development assignments in specific disciplines are assigned liaison responsibilities with corresponding academic departments/programs. Some librarians with collection development responsibilities are available for instruction for classes or individuals in corresponding academic departments/programs."

"Librarians with collection development responsibilities."

"Librarians with collection development responsibilities also have liaison responsibilities."

"Librarians with collection development responsibility."

"Librarians with extensive administrative or technical duties are not assigned liaison responsibility."

"Librarians with good communication skills, a knowledge of the library and its collections and services, a knowledge of publishing and technology trends, and a solid knowledge of national developments in higher education and the library profession."

"Librarians with liaison responsibilities are in the public services (reference, outreach, instruction) areas. Liaison responsibilities are usually determined by an individual's academic background and/or personal interests."

"Most department heads and some faculty are not assigned liaison responsibilities due to heavy workloads or expressed preferences."

"Only librarians (faculty and subject specialists) in our Research and Instruction Division are official liaisons; others may help out."

"Only those working in the health sciences libraries."

"People with subject selection responsibilities also have liaison responsibilities to the same departments."

"Primarily, librarians in the public services functional area only."

"Public services librarians do this work."

"Public services librarians, collection services, preservationists, and administrators."

"Public services librarians: reference librarians, branch librarians, special collections librarians, head of collection development."

"Selection depends on interest, willingness to serve and subject expertise. We allow staff members to be liaison assistants as their subject expertise and interest allows. They work with the liaisons in various roles."

"Some librarians: public service divisions/branches (reference/instruction/liaison)."

"Some positions, such as the Outreach/PR librarian, the Diversity Librarian, the Systems Librarians, etc., do not formally work with academic departments. They may, however, actively participate in outreach efforts to other campus units."

"Subject background if possible (or willingness to learn), awareness of issues in collection development and scholarly communication, interest in the assignment (this may be a partial assignment for a librarian with other duties), ability to communicate with faculty and students informally, in meetings and in classroom situations."

"Subject background."

"Subject expertise, level of interest, and to some extent whether primary assignment is in public services."

"Subject focus of collections, reference/instruction, or branch management role."

"Subject knowledge. Supervisors' assessment of candidate's potential to do well: ability to multitask, good communication skills, ability to learn on the job."

"Subject knowledge; desire to work with users (interest and willingness)."

"Subject librarians are by definition those with specialized subject expertise who are assigned liaison duties with one or more academic departments."

"Subject specialization acquired primarily through degree programs."

"Tenure-track librarians with public services responsibilities are included. (In addition to liaison services their other responsibilities include reference, instruction, and collection development.) The dean, associate deans, and most heads of departments are not assigned liaison tasks. Two catalogers with language expertise are assigned to the languages departments. Three special-collections librarians (about half) have liaison responsibilities."

"The collection managers (i.e., those assigned to select materials for the collection) are responsible for liaison to departments."

"There are only a very few librarians who do not have liaison responsibilities. Most do, so the term 'some' doesn't really capture it; we're much closer to 'all.' Also, the term 'some' suggests to me that there's some type of selection process involved, but that's not the case."

"These duties are included in the job description when they are hired."

"Those that have public service and subject specialization among their responsibilities. Generally, catalogers, preservationists, acquisitions experts and others working other than public services are not given such responsibilities, but this isn't always the case."

"We hire public services librarians to specifically serve in these roles. In general, we expect some in-depth knowledge of their subject, interpersonal skills and solid librarian skills."

**If other library professionals are assigned liaison responsibility, please list their position title(s).**

**N=13**

"Administrative staff, including associate deans, development office staff, and head of university copyright office (housed in libraries)."

"Administrators, some technologists."

"Cataloger."

"Cinema Studies and Media Services Specialist."

"Electronic services librarians."

"Film and Video Curator, Visual Resources Curator."

"I am assuming that you mean people in professional positions who lack an MLS. Subject Librarian; Digital Services and Technology Support; Reference Librarian; Director, Special Collections Library; Head, Scholar's Lab."

"Language cataloger."

"Language specialists (e.g., Asian languages); Library Manager, Geological Sciences Library."

"Manager."

"One faculty member from the Library and Information Science Program has liaison responsibilities for Foreign Languages."

"Some subject specialists are not librarians by training, but hold positions that function as liaisons to departments. Some systems specialists and catalogers in some departmental libraries are known as the library contacts for the academic departments their library serve."

"Two lecturers (non-tenure-track faculty rank) have liaison responsibilities."

**If support staff are assigned liaison responsibility, please list their position title(s). N=12**

"Catalog maintenance assistant."

"Cataloging Technician, Science library technician, Acquisitions technician."

"Certain functions, e.g., Interlibrary Loan, Media Bookings, Reserve Services, etc."

"In a few cases, support staff who are supervisors of subject-based branch libraries function as liaisons."

"Library Assistant IV."

"Library assistants and associate/professional staff, particularly at small campus libraries."

"Library Specialist I and Library Specialist II."

"Maps cataloger. Spanish bibliographer."

"Most of the support staff assigned liaison responsibilities would be Senior Reference/Collections Assistants."

"Paraprofessional service desk staff."

"Support staff oversee book/document delivery, including taking and verifying requests. A copy cataloger provides assistance in collection development for faculty in Chinese."

"Very selective responsibilities in our business information center."

**If another category of staff is assigned liaison responsibility, please describe that category. N=4**

"Assistant Head, Access Services—liaison to campus bookstore."

"CLIR Fellow."

"Heads for specific collection development/political assignments."

"Of course some librarians and library staff have close interaction with faculty and students without the formal liaison responsibilities since the services and resources they provide are not limited to particular academic departments: Head of Special Collections & Archives, Head of Education & Outreach, Research Librarians for Government Information, Reserves staff, Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery staff, Multimedia/Technology Center staff, etc."

## LIAISON'S DEPARTMENT ASSIGNMENT

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8. Please indicate whether liaison activities are a primary or secondary responsibility for each staff category. Check one category for each row. N=60

	N	Primary	Secondary
All librarians	2	1	1
Most librarians	3	2	1
Some librarians	55	45	10
Other professionals	11	4	7
Support staff	8	—	8
Other staff	2	1	1

9. How are a liaison's department assignment(s) determined? Check all that apply. N=61

Based on liaison's subject expertise	58	95%
Based on liaison's position	42	69%
Liaison self-selects the department(s)	16	26%
Distributed to equalize the ratio of faculty to liaisons	16	26%
Liaison follows an application process	6	10%
Other, please specify	17	28%

"Ability to work with users (interest and willingness)."

"As needs develop, sometimes it's just a necessary administrative decision."

"Based on best match with department's needs."

"Based on librarian's educational degrees."

"Based on the libraries' needs. Sometimes liaisons do not have subject expertise but must take responsibility for a subject anyway."

"Collection development and instruction responsibilities are included in the job descriptions for some librarians, primarily those in the Reference Department."

"Comments re above: Liaison's position — by function (ILL, Reserve, Media Bookings). Self-selects: usually within larger branches/divisions, e.g., librarian may offer to trade liaison assignments and/or offer to take on an assignment during a study leave or when a liaison gap develops (vacancy)."

"Expediency in some cases."

"Experience over time within the institution, i.e., historic precedent for the assignments."

"Liaisons developing collaborative relationships."

"Like subjects grouped with one person."

"Need to cover for a librarian leave."

"Often identified in the job description used in recruitment; may change occasionally as the library department adjusts staffing to meet its responsibilities and possible changes in staff resources [e.g., vacancies, extended leave]."

"Please note: for some librarians, this is a primary assignment, for others a secondary (with less time commitment)."

"Some assignments made when positions recruited for; others have been made from internal calls for interest, based on interest and expertise."

"The assignment is largely determined at the recruitment stage, i.e., we hire liaison librarians based on the need to replace someone who has left. Sometimes there is a juggling of responsibilities to accommodate changing circumstances or interests. This is always worked out in a collegial manner by the manager and the pool of librarians in question."

"Their knowledge of formats and languages. We recruit for open positions; self-selection is vetted by administration."

## 10. How many academic departments are assigned to a liaison? N=60

Some liaisons are assigned more than one department,

some are assigned only one 47 78%

All liaisons are assigned more than one department 13 22%

All liaisons are assigned only one department — —

If liaisons are assigned to more than one department, please indicate the minimum number and maximum number of departments that are assigned to any one liaison.

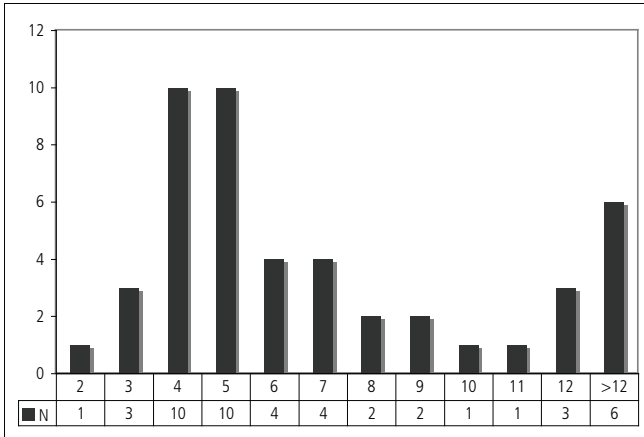
Fifty-two respondents provided a minimum number of departments per liaison that ranged from 1 to 3.

### Minimum Number of Departments N=52

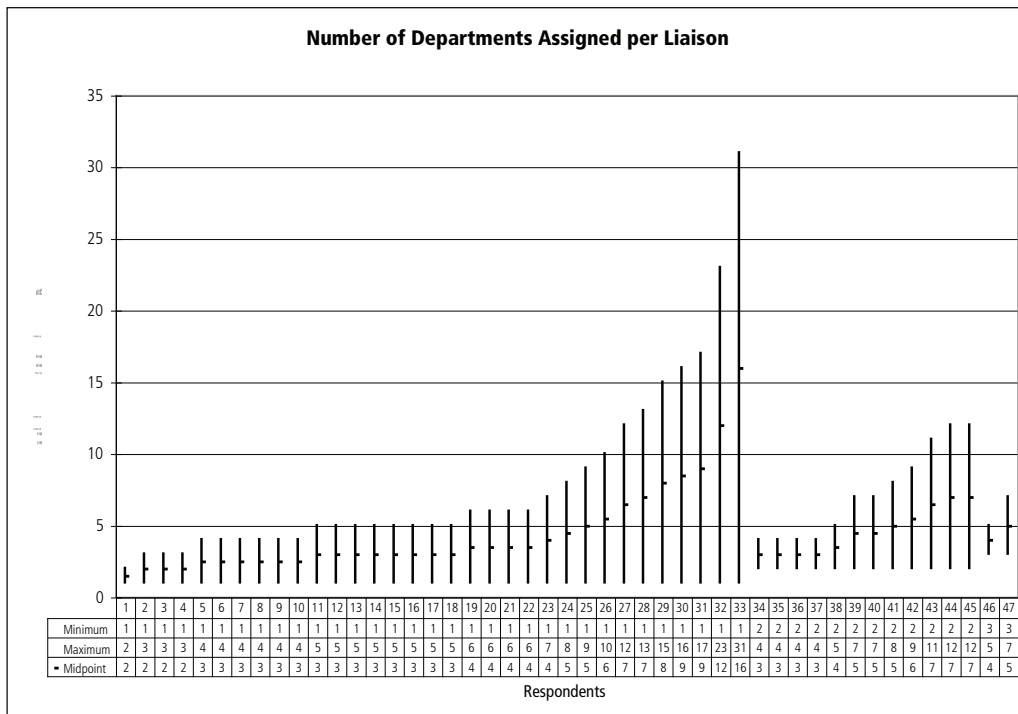
Respondents	N=38	N=12	N=2	Mean	Median	Std Dev
Departments	1	2	3	1.3	1	.54

Forty-seven respondents also provided a maximum number of departments per liaison that ranged from 2 to 31.

**Maximum Number of Departments N=47**



The graph below shows the minimum number of departments, maximum number of departments, and the midpoint for each of the 47 respondents who reported both numbers.



**Minimum / Maximum Range N=47**

	N	Maximum Range	Mean	Median	Std Dev
Minimum of 1	33	2–31	7.9	5	6.35
Minimum of 2	12	4–12	7.3	7	3.17
Minimum of 3	2	5–7	6.0	6	1.41



## LIAISON SERVICES

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### 11. What services do liaisons offer to their assigned department(s)? Check all that apply. N=61

Departmental outreach (Updating departments on new library services, resources, etc.)	61	100%
Communicating departmental needs to library	61	100%
Reference	60	98%
Collection development	60	98%
Integrating library instruction into the curriculum through collaboration with faculty	59	97%
Traditional bibliographic instruction	58	95%
Scholarly communication education	53	87%
Creating Web-based bibliographic instruction modules	52	85%
Other, please specify	19	31%

"Also curriculum development; note that not all liaisons perform offer all services listed."

"Attend faculty functions, host library functions, provide special technology services to faculty, assist with e-reserves, assist with publishing options, advise on copyright, etc."

"Communicating regarding Media Services (includes classroom technology) and Center for Educational Technology (includes Blackboard)."

"Digital project consulting; participate in recruitment & interviews of faculty; consult on instructional technology; instruction of for credit course."

"Digital projects; supporting speakers and other programs."

"EndNote bibliographic systems support."

"Exhibits and digital projects."

"Individual consultations."

"Just the beginning for Scholarly communication education and varies among our 18 libraries; education on some issues done through promoting our institutional repository."

"Library tours for new faculty members of consultations."

"Outreach may target specific groups, i.e., graduate students."

"Participating in faculty research teams; program planning/delivery, e.g., working with faculty or other

administrative units on campus to deliver services to off-campus locations.”

“Responding to questions as they arise; providing tours and demonstrations; investigating complaints and/or questions such as ones involving status of loans—sometimes required referral to appropriate persons/units elsewhere in the library.”

“Responsibilities and services vary among the units. Liaison librarians in the Health Sciences Library do not provide collection development services.”

“Scholarly communication education is anticipated, but is not yet common practice.”

“Some liaisons do all of this and some do only several of these activities.”

“Training research assistants, Accreditation procedures; Partnerships/collaboration (grants, co-teaching, co-programming); Special events, e.g., University Authors and Their Works; Assessments of students’ IT skills (Life Sciences).”

“We develop and maintain Web-based subject guides.”

“Work with administration in the colleges.”

**12. How do liaisons inform departments of services that they can offer? Check all that apply. N=61**

Send information via e-mail	59	97%
Attend departmental meetings	58	95%
Meet with faculty individually	58	95%
New faculty orientation	58	95%
News on library’s homepage	55	90%
Promotional flyers, brochures, etc. sent to department	45	74%
Special events such as technology fairs	42	69%
Library newsletter	38	62%
Electronic discussion lists	37	61%
Blogs	34	56%
Promotional flyers, brochures, etc. in library	33	54%
Ads or articles in campus newspaper	26	43%
Other, please specify	18	30%

"Annual letter to faculty; Web page 'For Faculty.'"

"Articles in academic department's newsletter."

"Attend social functions; many of the same also done with/for graduate students and administrative assistants within departments who in turn may forward the information."

"Attending university-wide orientations for new students (both graduate and undergraduate orientations); Giving library tours for faculty candidates and prospective students."

"Campus e-mail system; informal interactions such as attending receptions and having one-on-one meetings; Librarian in the Lobby service (hold office hours in department building lobby)."

"Collaborate with IT departments on various projects and services."

"Creates subject Web guides; camtasia presentations."

"Informal communications."

"Library Web site."

"'My Library' profiles."

"One or more of the checked items above are used by our libraries (varies across campus)."

"One-to-one contact, e.g., meeting over a cup of coffee, is one of most effective ways of reaching faculty and others."

"Social networking sites (MySpace, Facebook)."

"Some liaisons do all of this and some do only several of these activities."

"Some social interaction at library-sponsored events such as public lectures to which both liaisons and faculty are invited."

"Teaching Assistant Orientation sessions."

"Through workshops."

"Traditional bulletin boards; Webcasts; Librarians' teaching programs in TAG (Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth); Department social events; Special department programs, e.g., participating in Legal Research & Writing program; Senate (Librarians' rep to Senate); Senate Committees (Senate Curriculum Committee, Senate Teaching & Learning Committee). Note: Ads are infrequent — too costly — but were used to inform campus community about the LibQUAL+® survey."

## NEW LIAISON TRAINING

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### 13. Do new liaisons receive training related to their new responsibilities? N=59

<b>Yes</b>	55	93%
<b>No</b>	4	7%

#### If yes, please briefly describe the training liaisons receive. N=52

"All liaison librarians meet with and receive training for the Collection Development Coordinator and the Acquisitions Librarian. They also meet regularly with their department chair and discuss their liaison responsibilities."

"An overview of what is listed on the Web site and what some of their colleagues are doing."

"As part of their orientation to their unit, they will receive information about doing reference and collection development work. We also have in-house programs on best practices in outreach and liaison."

"Collection Development Librarian meets with the liaison and department."

"Collection development: one session introduction to basic activities and procedures; follow-ups as needed. Reference: Orientation and peer training. Instruction: Head of Instruction provides orientation and team teaching opportunities. When relevant workshops are available, off-campus training."

"Department head, Collection Development Coordinator, and colleagues provide training."

"Extensive background on the institution, the various systems needed to manage collection funds and order materials. Special features about the department's faculty/researchers and curriculum...and then all sorts of orientations to the library system and people important to know."

"For instruction, they observe other instruction librarians. For collection development librarians, they attend an orientation session when they first start."

"For new staff a basic introduction to the process; assistance with composing a 'welcome' e-mail for faculty and students; assistance with contacting appropriate administrators."

"Formal mentoring by an experienced liaison; collection development training; reference training; regular workshops; access to liaison working tools."

"Have a training manual. Are assigned a 'buddy' (another liaison) to go to in addition to supervisor, meets with all liaisons to learn how they do their work."

"If by training to the liaison responsibilities you mean training for all liaison services mentioned in question 11 (reference, instruction, etc.), yes they do receive training. There is no formal training though to communication strategies/culture with an academic department."

"Informal mentoring and one-on-one training."

"Informal mentoring on how to meet the expectations/goals in the performance evaluation. Discussions within

the discipline groups about liaison activities. Panel discussions (open to all) on liaison issues. Wiki where examples of messages and documents are posted."

"Informal training; are considering something more cohesive and consistent."

"Introduction to department chairs and some faculty. Introduction to collection development."

"It's informal, but we provide a general overview of the role and expectations of a liaison and discuss the best methods of connecting to a particular department and the various services offered."

"It's up to each of our libraries to provide this training. There is no standard across the libraries."

"Liaison handbook outlines responsibilities. New liaison meets with collection development staff for orientation to that particular work. Library has regular staff development sessions and liaison meetings for all liaisons."

"Liaisons received training from various library units when they assume collection development duties. Their colleagues also often assume the role of mentors to new collection managers."

"Meet with head of acquisitions and head of collection development for overview of policies and procedures and to receive training on vendor ordering databases (monographs and serials); meet with head of reference if reference librarian or with director of public services if branch or special collections librarian."

"Meet with the head of collection development and then are partnered with an experienced liaison as a mentor."

"Mentoring, sharing information. Discussions at division/branch level on service expectations, review of written communications, suggestions for opportunities, training in collection development, etc. On-campus courses offered by MOST (Central HR Organizational Development & Learning), TAG (Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth), other training/development opportunities At recruitment, library recruits for liaison knowledge/skills/behaviours."

"New librarians receive an orientation to the departments of responsibility as part of the complete training program. This includes tour(s) of the department(s) for which they will be liaison, introductions to faculty who have already been working with the previous liaison, and an overview of liaison activities that have already taken place. New liaisons spend time with a colleague who has previously worked in their subject area(s) to gain an understanding of the scope of the research and the culture of the department. They receive formal training in collections management. When possible mentoring of new liaison(s) is encouraged."

"One-on-one mentoring for liaison activities. Formal training for fund management and acquisitions."

"Opportunity to accompany an experienced librarian to presentations, meetings, etc.; Interactions with subject teams; Discussion of library's service philosophy, etc., with supervisor."

"Orientation to all library departments with a special focus on Acquisitions. Training in using the online catalog and interpreting order records. More in-depth training on selected areas such as approval plans depending on the liaison's needs."

"Overview includes info from appropriate tech services librarians, appropriate support staff, and sometimes prior liaisons."

"Overview of collection development procedures, scholarly communication issues, preservation issues, mentoring from experienced liaisons in ways to communicate with faculty and students, instruction training and team teaching, reference training, if necessary."

"Part of their collection development orientation."

"Peer training. They are paired with experienced colleagues for about a year."

"Provided by Collection Management Head."

"Senior subject librarians train new liaisons; sessions on fund management; sessions on new tools and e-resources."

"The heads are responsible for this activity. As well there is training in the form of workshops for collections work including assessments and other collections activities."

"The Reference Department provides training in reference and instruction; the Collection Development Department provides training in collection development. Liaison responsibilities are included as part of the training."

"There are training sessions for collection development responsibilities. Supervisors meet with the new liaisons about their responsibilities and experienced librarians serve as mentors."

"There is an orientation and subsequent mentoring of new liaisons."

"There would be training on things like selection/collections work for the department, but it's really more of a mentoring rather than training role, e.g., buddying up on instruction."

"They meet in small group training sessions with relevant library staff, currently this involves 13–14 sessions."

"This will be more systematic once we move to a major liaison restructuring."

"Training in functional responsibilities in collection management, research and instructional services; training in outreach techniques."

"Training is presently inadequate but there are plans for a more rigorous orientation and mentoring system."

"Training on liaison activities is provided as part of their collection development orientation. There is also ongoing discussion on enhancing their liaison skills in collection development, instruction, and reference."

"Training provided for acquisitions/collection development."

"Training varies by unit, but usually includes introductions to department chairs and/or deans, overviews of liaison services, meetings with other liaisons, and/or formal sessions with the liaison coordinator in the unit. Liaisons are also encouraged to attend centrally-provided training sessions offered by the university and the libraries to gain a better understanding of the organizational culture. Technology training is available locally (Educational Technology Center, a unit of the Libraries) and regionally."

"Training varies with 'home assignment,' but effort made to orient all liaisons to collection development policies, procedures, goals, etc. A training outline has been under development this past year."

"Training would begin with the librarian's supervisor, includes familiarity with both principles of liaison work and specific library procedures, and also involves learning from peers."

"Varies, depending on the librarian passing on the responsibilities."

"We create a training checklist that covers their duties as a subject librarians, including their outreach and liaison responsibilities to academic departments."

"We have a document called Subject Specialist Roles and Responsibilities that we created in 2006 that outlines the full range of liaison responsibilities. Informal training in collection development faculty liaison techniques, informal training regarding instruction outreach techniques, sharing between colleagues and discussion regarding liaison relationships at collection development meetings."

"We have just produced a manual for new liaison's use. They meet with collection development librarian and fellow liaisons."

"While not formal training, this is included as part of supervisor's direction/mentoring of new employees."

"Yes, but the training is not part of a formal program."

## ADMINISTRATION OF LIAISON SERVICES

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14. How are liaison services administered? Select the one choice below that best describes the situation in your library. N=61

Self-administered by each liaison	28	46%
Centrally administered by a liaison coordinator or manager	8	13%
Centrally administered by a liaison committee	5	8%
Centrally administered by library administration	3	5%
Other, please specify	17	29%

"Administered by two team leaders for Collection Management and Research and Instructional Services."

"Administration of liaison services varies by unit. The Libraries' Public Services Committee does not officially coordinate liaison services, but does provide a vehicle for system-wide efforts related to liaison services."

"Also have some overarching coordination and supervision from head of collection development, head of reference, and director of public services."

"Assignments of liaison librarians are by the University Librarian in consultation with the head of the librarian's home department."

"Centrally coordinated by several library managers (Reference, Collection Development, Branch Services, Instructional Media), but each liaison determines his or her own practices, which are tailored to meet the needs of specific departments/programs or individuals."

"Liaison services administration is shared by two administrators: the Assistant University Librarians for Public Services and Collection Development."

"Liaisons reports to Branch Directors but are supported by organization-wide Coordinators for Reference, Instructions & Info Literacy, Collections development, Web Management Committee, and Access Services."

"Monitored by department head or supervisor of each liaison, with some involvement from subject teams."

"Most of our liaison librarians work in one of two libraries. One of these is a library for the social sciences and humanities, another is for engineering, science, and math. We also have branch libraries specializing in maps and GIS, architecture, and optometry. Each branch has a liaison librarian who is also a manager of the branch. Those librarians who are not in branches report to a department head."

"One department coordinates activities for 'general collections' liaisons."

"Primarily at branch/unit level. Some special events may be coordinated centrally."

"Self-administered although goals are in their job descriptions and are therefore accountable (i.e., through gathering statistics on service interactions) to the Scholarly Resources Department. There is some coordination in the department to bring consistency, but there is a large variety of ways services are executed."

"Self-administered by each liaison and/or by each library, depending."

"Supervised by the Assistant Director for Collections and User Services."

"The Education and Instruction Coordinator coordinates instructional liaison. For collection development, Collection Development librarians have decided the extent of their liaison work in the past. In the future, there will be specific performance standards for this work."

"Varies by campus library and all fall within the first three choices."

"We have three 'clusters': humanities/social sciences, arts & media, sciences & education. Each of those has a coordinator."

## EVALUATION OF LIAISON SERVICES

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15. Has there been any formal evaluation of the effectiveness of liaison services? N=61

<b>Yes</b>	30	49%
<b>No</b>	31	51%



If yes, please indicate the method of evaluation. Check all that apply. N=36

Tracked number of instruction sessions	26	72%
Tracked number of reference/research interviews	24	67%
Conducted user surveys	16	44%
Interviewed members of department(s)	11	31%
Tracked number of department meetings attended by liaisons	7	19%
Conducted focus groups	7	19%
Other (please specify)	15	42%

"Although no assessment of the service as a whole, many of the methods noted above have been used by supervisors to evaluate performance for annual reviews."

"Annual survey of faculty library collections needs."

"Assessment study underway—no results yet."

"Each highly variable by library and/or discipline."

"For instruction, faculty were surveyed."

"Individual performance evaluations of progress on individual liaison goals; LibQUAL+® user survey."

"Individual performance is addressed as part of the annual performance appraisal process."

"Informal/ad hoc: Some liaison librarians meet with each department annually to discuss instruction program; feedback from faculty (under-served departments, perhaps); annual performance reviews; LibQUAL+® survey conducted Jan/Feb 2007 reveals successes/areas to work on."

"Liaisons prepare formal annual reports of their activities."

"LibQUAL+® 2002, 2005."

"Not specifically evaluated as a program, but related information gathered via triennial surveys."

"Note that these have been done only for some departments and irregularly."

"The Libraries have never formally evaluated liaison services but we do collect instruction and consultation statistics, and also include liaison services in annual goal-setting exercises (as mentioned earlier)."

"We get tons of positive feedback all over campus."

"While we do keep a record of things such as the number of instruction sessions and reference/research interviews, I don't think of those as evaluation since we're not benchmarking against anything."

## CHALLENGES OF LIAISON SERVICES

16. Please describe up to three top challenges for your library liaisons. N=59

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Academic faculty don't have much time to devote to interaction with the liaisons.	Keeping ahead of the technology curve so that we can be useful to faculty.	Anticipating changes in the discipline.
Affording enough suitable positions to distribute liaison duties to. Too few people for too many subject areas.	Increasing the liaisons' interest and skills in using social software, esp. for communication, and to continuously refresh Web-based information in their liaison areas.	Changing liaison attitudes to value outreach as much as reference and spend equal time at each.
Aligning library resources to effectively support the changing research and teaching needs of faculty (especially incoming faculty).	Faculty do not see liaisons as being intrinsic to the educational process, in part because we do not clearly communicate what we can offer.	Faculty perception that library services compete for teaching time and a lack of awareness of how liaisons can help faculty with time management by supporting student research needs.
Being recognized as a partner in the academic process and maintaining a consistent contact within a department.	Identifying the needs of departments.	Timing communications with faculty members to be optimally effective.
Change: the library collections and services continue to evolve, and the uses and demands faculty and students make on these services, and the expectations faculty and students have of liaisons continue to shift. There is a lot for liaisons to keep up with, in some senses they are victims of their own success.	Discovery: users don't know what libraries have, we make it difficult for users to figure out what we have, and we ourselves don't know what we have because our discovery tools are ineffectual. We need to make it easier for users to find what the library has and give users the tools they need to make use of these resources. Until we can do this, our liaisons will continually be put on the spot.	Budget: there is not enough money to meet user demands for resources.
Changing nature of scholarly communication and users' needs.	Time — keeping up with challenge #1 along with the other aspects of their positions as library faculty members.	Funding.
Clearly defining the roles of the liaisons.	Getting all liaisons to offer the same level of services.	Getting all academic departments to fully participate in the program.

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Communicating relevant information to faculty and students when they need it.	Determining the best way to get chairs, departmental library committees, and individual faculty to respond to our e-mail, newsletters, offers of assistance. Some academic units are much more responsive than others, and so it becomes a challenge for collection managers to develop useful relationships with the faculty.	
Defining scope of liaison role and core service expectations for liaisons.	Balancing liaison role with other professional responsibilities.	Getting 'attention' of liaison departments and faculty on a regular basis.
Departmental cultures vary widely. Liaisons must delve to determine the culture of the department and then develop services which work within that culture. Some departments, for example, do not want to receive regular communications from their liaisons and instead prefer to contact liaisons as needed.	Effectively marketing resources and services to constituents who are increasingly dispersed, and sometimes not physically present in departments. Departmental culture plays into this, as does the location of the library related to the department. Some librarians now offer onsite reference hours in departments to decrease this distance; this has been very successful.	Resource challenges related to supporting new programs. Some liaison librarians who are effectively integrated into departments/schools are in the conversations from the beginning, while others are not. Attempting to redirect already limited resources to support new programs — which often require large expenditures for startup — can be problematic. Some schools have begun offering startup funds for library materials, similar to startup resources for labs.
Discussing budget cuts.	Encouraging participation.	Introducing new services and information in new formats.
Encouraging departments and faculty to take full advantage of Library services.	Ensuring that other responsibilities of liaisons leave them sufficient time to establish and cultivate relationships with faculty and students.	Most liaisons handle multiple departments, and occasionally liaisons occasionally work with fields outside their area of principal expertise.
Encouraging faculty to remember to contact the liaison if there is a change in the curriculum or their research needs.	Working with the faculty to integrate information literacy into the curriculum.	Getting faculty to respond to outreach efforts.

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Ensure all faculty know of the liaison activities.	Continue to ensure that liaison personnel are included in department curriculum committee meetings.	Get them out of the library and in to the departments!...A challenge for management.
Establishing and maintaining communications with academic departments/programs.	Receiving feedback and input from faculty and students regarding the effectiveness of library services, including such matters as the library's web site and assessment of electronic resources that are on trial.	Designing services that respond to the needs of today's students, faculty, and researchers.
Finding adequate resources for both staffing, especially in terms of numbers, and collection development, where funding is inadequate to needs and existing funds are tired in serials bundles.	Defining our roles as liaisons vs traditional roles as subject librarians. This includes understanding and coming to terms with information-seeking behaviors of students: blogs, social networking, etc.	'Advertising' our services effectively, using both traditional subject librarian venues and newer venues and potential audiences.
Finding time.	Keeping up with wide and changing literatures.	Keeping up with changes in the departments or colleges.
Finding time to go beyond collection work and IL instruction for the department.	Communicating with and engaging the liaison unit.	Librarians overcoming their own shyness vis-a-vis faculty and not being able to meet demands.
Generating interest in the library and getting someone in the teaching department assigned to the library and getting them to respond.	Finding effective means of communication. Our Engineering Dean refused to have library info on their e-mail list!	Meeting the collection development needs with our limited budget.
Getting access to a venue where relevant issues might be discussed such as departmental meetings and departmental curriculum development committee meetings.	Getting time in the day to discuss issues with individual faculty and researchers who are very busy and have numerous pressing commitments.	Getting data from university sources that would inform liaison activities.
Getting constituency to listen; some actively resist.	Marketing our services and collections.	Workload factors—it takes a lot to make this work.
Getting departments to utilize liaison services.	Getting librarians to promote liaison services.	Finding effective ways to communicate with departments without becoming a pest or adding to information overload.
Getting faculty and student attention.	Broad scope of job.	Ever changing landscape in libraries.

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Getting teaching faculty to understand that students need more information literacy instruction than a one-shot during freshman year.	Getting teaching faculty to recognize us as partners in the instructional process.	To get faculty engaged in scholarly communication issues.
Getting the initial foot in the door with a department.	Not being overwhelmed with requests once faculty and students are aware.	Balancing liaison duties with other responsibilities.
How to reach part-time/adjunct faculty.	Effective ways to market liaison services.	Getting time with faculty (in courses, department meetings, individually).
Impressing upon faculty the value of teaching research skills to undergraduate students.	Marketing services to undergraduate students, who either don't see the need for assistance or are unaware of many of the services the library provides.	Outcomes assessment.
In many cases it is a challenge to reach faculty members, department chairs and uphold their attention with library issues because they are so busy and overloaded. Windows of opportunities are sometimes very small!	Part-time faculty members (sessional lecturers) are also a difficult group to reach because they don't have a 'permanent residence' on campus and don't necessarily attend departmental meetings.	
Information Technology is constantly changing the scholar's environment (both services & resources), so the liaison has to keep abreast of these changes and assist faculty and students in adapting, learning, and making the best use of these technological changes.	The interdisciplinary nature of academia has challenged many of the liaisons to broaden the scope of their knowledge base/subject expertise and interactions. Liaisons are working more collaboratively together to provide seamless support to users and to ensure that there are no gaps in emerging areas that might intersect.	Liaisons need to keep abreast of the issues and trends in scholarly communication in order to partner with faculty, to serve as a resource, and to participate in the ongoing dialogue on issues of mutual interest (copyright, open access, economics of scholarly communication, transformative models of scholarly publishing, etc.).
Keeping departments informed.	Getting feedback from departments.	Getting department faculty to request instruction sessions for their classes.
Keeping faculty aware of services.	Keeping up with all of the possible services that might be provided (particularly in Information Technology area).	Budget reductions and communication.

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Keeping up with and integrating all issues into the liaison role: collections, instruction, reference, educational technology, scholarly communication, media services, faculty research, trends in the discipline, etc.	Balancing the workload between all the aspects of being a liaison and doing collection development, reference, instruction, undergraduate outreach, scholarly communication, etc.	Each discipline/department has a different perspective on the how they perceive the library and therefore has different concerns and making sure the library is responsive to those needs. Interdisciplinary institutes are a growing and challenging additional area for liaisons.
Keeping up with technology.	Managing shrinking budget.	Meeting rising user expectations.
Lack of expertise in effective marketing on the part of librarians. Reluctance to engage in marketing activities on the part of librarians.	Lack of response to marketing activities on the part of the target groups.	Lack of physical proximity to academic departments. Size of the institution. The two smaller libraries that serve a smaller group seem to know their clientele better and have more interactions.
Lack of time to meet demand.	Some departments very active users of liaison services, others much less so — uneven.	
Librarians have multiple job responsibilities and limited time to devote to any one task. Liaison work requires a lot of effort to be effective.	Departmental acceptance of librarian participation in the department.	
Limited time, competing priorities.	Differential receptiveness among departments.	Scope of information that liaisons must know and keep up with.
Maintaining consistent and effective communications with faculty.	Persuading faculty of the importance of library services and support for their students.	Finding usable programs for large departments.
Maintaining department interest in library services.	Keeping librarian attention when department interest wanes.	
Marketing collections and services that will have the broadest impact and awareness.	Getting busy faculty to respond and engage.	Stopping some activities that are low-impact but time-consuming.
Meetings demands of teaching classes.	Improved collaboration between teaching faculty and library faculty.	Greater integration of information skills in curriculum.

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
New faculty/new department heads: getting on department agenda, meetings, providing continuity of awareness of library offerings/ programs and also providing opportunity to refresh instruction (new tools, new databases, etc. — in other words, once is not always enough).	Lead time for collection development, instruction, reference assignments. The Curriculum Consultation Form provides a vehicle for communication, but the forms are sometimes submitted to library for sign-off with insufficient lead time (however, the form is an important liaison tool).	Access to faculty: A. To gain access to classroom for information literacy instruction. B. Science research faculty are frequently disconnected 'physically' from the library — much of their research is conducted within their own offices/labs.
Reaching all faculty in a department, including getting a foot in the door.	Workload and time pressure limits time available for liaison activities.	
Reaching part-time faculty and part-time students.	As the main point of contact between the library and its users, advocating in the library for services and changes users want from other departments.	Having enough time to do liaison work plus everything else including collection development and assessment of the collection, committee work, etc.
Receiving ongoing, constructive feedback about services and initiatives.	Generating support for further developing, expanding services from academic faculty, with their specific input.	Being invited to departmental faculty meetings on a regular basis.
Scarcity of library resources, both staff time to cover numerous liaison duties and materials budget funds to acquire resources identified as useful by faculty members.	Obstacles to attracting the attention of busy faculty (and other campus researchers) about newly available library resources, so that those resources are used to their fullest extent.	Lack of faculty understanding about issues in scholarly communication, Open Access, copyright and licensing, and the financial factors that influence online scholarly publishing and its costs.
Some departments are more receptive than others to liaison librarians so a challenge is finding ways to work with those which are less receptive.	Getting opportunities to provide information literacy instruction, both in classrooms and online, for all students.	Having enough funding to purchase all of the information resources required by the discipline in question.
Some faculty departments are difficult to work with.		
Stiff competition for faculty attention.	Not enough liaisons to cover every department.	Limited subject expertise in some areas.

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Sustaining connections.	Managing expectations.	Time management.
The primary challenge our subject librarians face is the large number of faculty and departments to which they are assigned. The subject librarians typically don't have the time needed to give the personalized service desired.	The second challenge is gaining acceptance into the departments to which the subject librarians are assigned. Some faculty are busy and reluctant to meet with librarians or fail to see the relevance of the library.	The third challenge is managing time. Our subject librarians, in addition to liaison duties, also are responsible for a range of other functions: collection development and management, reference, instruction, scholarship and creative professional work, and management.
There is not enough money in the acquisitions budget to acquire all the materials the faculty and graduate students need.	We do not have enough staff to provide the type of in-depth assistance the faculty really need.	We need to promote services, but also need to stop short before creating demand we cannot meet.
Time and competing demands.		
Time and fragmentation due to multiple assignments.	Developing partnerships with faculty who have an antiquated view of libraries or who don't really care.	Continued development of expertise; keeping up with all they need to know.
Time available; need to prioritize and be selective about outreach efforts.	Uneven responsiveness from departments.	Difficulty in establishing good communication channels with the department and not being limited to working relationships with individual faculty.
Time for liaisons to perform liaison activities.	Funding for library materials.	Department's willingness to participate.
Time versus increased responsibilities.	Breadth of subject responsibility keeps increasing; our staff availability remains stable/stagnant.	Ageing population of liaisons, lacking technology skills needed to remain relevant to current faculty and students.
To get faculty to accept librarians into the departmental meetings.	To get faculty to allow librarians present information to their classes.	To be accepted as colleagues.
Willingness of departments to include the liaison in their faculty meetings or share departmental information.	Some liaisons are not comfortable with approaching departments.	Some liaisons feel that they are bibliographers and spend a good deal of time on collection building and the mechanics of getting materials.



## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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17. Please enter any additional information regarding liaison services at your library that may assist the authors in accurately analyzing the results of this survey. N=20

### Selected Comments from Respondents

"Question 4 Participation levels: some variation between faculties/departments: depends to some extent on faculty members' interest/awareness and, in the case of science/engineering, distance from library (physically) and the nature of the science research (often done from office/lab, rather than on library site). Increased activity: depends on sufficient staff resources."

"At one time selection responsibilities were considered the highest calling any librarian could have. That has, fortunately, changed in recent years, but the left over assumptions about the centrality of selection is still a barrier. In some areas it clearly is the center, but in the liaison-served departments it is not necessarily the most important element of library services."

"Currently experimenting with a team-based approach to organizing liaison activities and projects. This may lead to a different model of doing the work, one that would complement a self-managed or centrally managed approach."

"Each liaison arrangement with a faculty or department varies according to the librarian and the culture of the department. We have found that there is no one proscribed method to ensure effective liaison activity. I have noticed that with the increase in access to electronic resources, faculty are more 'in tune' with what the liaison librarian can do and see them more as partners in the process. Why this should be is beyond me!"

"Establishing and maintaining a liaison program is challenging but rewarding when the work pays off. The work of individual librarians may be acknowledged in published works or acknowledged by speakers at meetings and public events or in communications to the Director of Libraries from those who have benefited from liaison services."

"For some of our librarians liaison responsibilities are their primary responsibilities and these individuals typically have numerous assigned subject areas. Other librarians have only one assigned subject area and for these individuals liaison work is a secondary responsibility."

"Liaison (the process of advising researchers about choosing and using information resources) becomes more important in bibliographers' use of their time, as package subscription offers and approval plans take over more collection development decisions, and more freely available materials appear on the Web."

"Liaison service is a major part of most librarian's responsibilities. There is a Liaison Advisory Team that helps promote liaison service and support liaisons in their work, but actual management of the service is largely an individual professional task. The aim is to provide customized services tailored to the individual department/instructor."

"Library Instruction is a separate department here in addition to the reference operations at six different libraries. Some of the LI librarians have academic department liaison duties, but all have liaison responsibilities for various groups, such as transfer students, athletics, or the grad student association. Also, LI is the place

where the tutorials are built currently.”

“Our program began small in the late 1980s and gradually grew to encompass all departments by the mid-1990s. A liaison is essentially the librarian for that department and handles collection development, instruction, research consultations, and outreach to the academic department.”

“Some librarians have gotten space in departments to hold ‘office hours’ in the department for faculty, staff, and students.”

“Still a work in progress, with liaisons settling into their new roles.”

“Subject teams have liaisons from collection management, research & information services, and the branch libraries.”

“The liaison aspect of librarian’s jobs is increasingly going far beyond the traditional collection-focused perspective.”

“The library does not have specific positions designated as ‘liaison librarian.’ Different aspects of liaison work are performed by librarians in various ‘departments,’ e.g., ‘education and instruction,’ and collection development.”

“The promotion of liaison activities to our faculty and academic departments is a major strategic initiative for our library. Our subject librarians are a key component and central to the success of this strategy.”

“This area of library service is currently under review and transition in our library. For instance, we are looking at a more team-based approach to faculty outreach and liaison services.”

“This survey is focused on connecting with academic departments. We also do a great deal of outreach and liaison activity to other university entities including administrative units, pre-college students, dormitories, student groups, etc. For instance, our undergraduate services librarians have no formal connections to departments, but they, and many other liaisons, connect with these other entities on a regular basis. We have developed a staff interest group called the Liaison Forum. This group is coordinated by current liaisons, and develops programming and discussion opportunities pertaining to liaison activities.”

“We are currently in the process of an internal reorganization that will affect who or what department has overall responsibility for coordinating liaison services; thus some of the answers here may not reflect future activities.”

“We have 28 liaisons scattered throughout the organization. Our liaisons are subject librarians and collection managers as well as providing many other services.”

## RESPONDING INSTITUTIONS

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University at Albany, SUNY	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
University of Alberta	University of New Mexico
University of Arizona	New York Public Library
Boston College	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Brigham Young University	North Carolina State University
University of British Columbia	Northwestern University
Brown University	University of Notre Dame
University at Buffalo, SUNY	University of Oklahoma
University of California, Davis	University of Oregon
University of California, Irvine	University of Pennsylvania
University of California, San Diego	Pennsylvania State University
University of California, Santa Barbara	University of Pittsburgh
University of Chicago	Purdue University
University of Colorado at Boulder	Rice University
Colorado State University	Smithsonian Institution
University of Connecticut	University of Southern California
Cornell University	Southern Illinois University Carbondale
University of Delaware	Syracuse University
Emory University	University of Tennessee
George Washington University	University of Texas at Austin
University of Guelph	Texas A&M University
University of Houston	Vanderbilt University
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	University of Virginia
Indiana University Bloomington	Virginia Tech
Iowa State University	University of Washington
Johns Hopkins University	Washington State University
Kent State University	Washington University in St. Louis
University of Kentucky	University of Waterloo
Library of Congress	Wayne State University
University of Louisville	University of Western Ontario
University of Manitoba	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Michigan State University	Yale University
Université de Montréal	York University