The TLS Job Search Playbook: Tools for Mentors and Supervisors Supporting MLIS Students in the Job Search Process

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go.umd.edu/LRIPFplaybook

Agenda

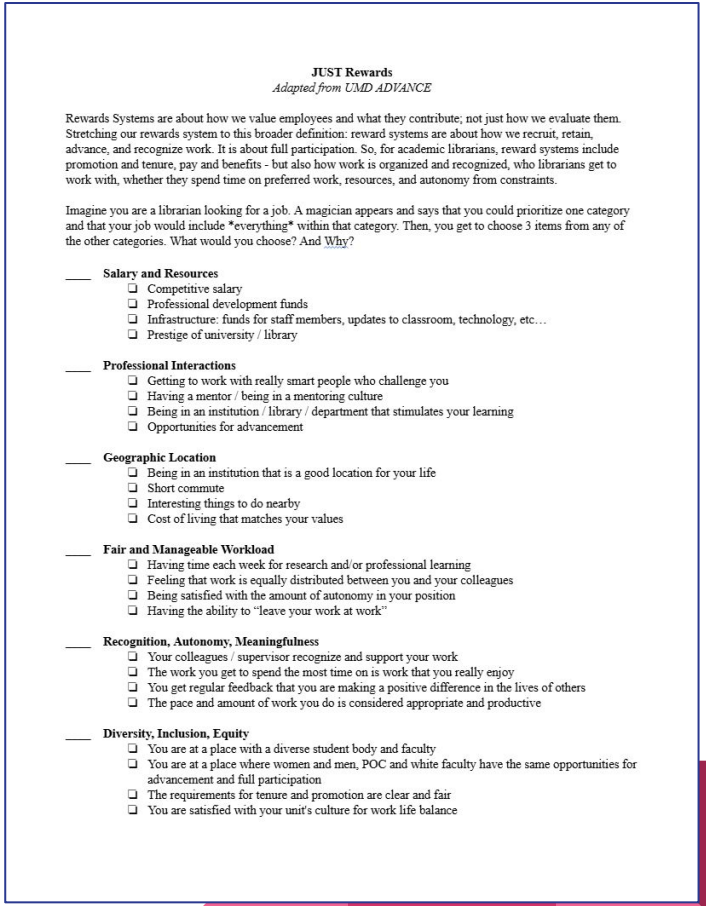
- Job Search Support Process
  - Job Ads
  - CVs
  - Cover Letters
  - Interviews
  - Open Forums/Job Talks
- Tips for MLIS Students
- Tips for Mentors and Supervisors
- Acknowledgements

Job Search Support Process

1. Finding & Selecting Job Ads
2. Turning Resumes into CVs
3. Writing Cover Letters
4. Preparing for Interviews
5. Open Forums & Job Talks

Finding and Selecting Job Ads

- Deciding their priorities for the job search
  - JUST Rewards Worksheet
- Where to look for job ads?
  - Professional organizations' job boards
    - ALA JobList
    - INALJ
    - ArchivesGig
  - Local/regional associations' job boards
    - Maryland Library Association Jobline
  - Aggregator sites
    - HigherEd Jobs
    - InsideHigherEd Careers
    - Chronicle Jobs



JUST Rewards

Adapted from UMD ADVANCE

Rewards Systems are about how we value employees and what they contribute; not just how we evaluate them. Stretching our rewards system to this broader definition: reward systems are about how we recruit, retain, advance, and recognize work. It is about full participation. So, for academic librarians, reward systems include promotion and tenure, pay and benefits - but also how work is organized and recognized, who librarians get to work with, whether they spend time on preferred work, resources, and autonomy from constraints.

Imagine you are a librarian looking for a job. A magician appears and says that you could prioritize one category and that your job would include *everything* within that category. Then, you get to choose 3 items from any of the other categories. What would you choose? And Why?

___ **Salary and Resources**
- ❑ Competitive salary
- ❑ Professional development funds
- ❑ Infrastructure: funds for staff members, updates to classroom, technology, etc…
- ❑ Prestige of university / library

___ **Professional Interactions**
- ❑ Getting to work with really smart people who challenge you
- ❑ Having a mentor / being in a mentoring culture
- ❑ Being in an institution / library / department that stimulates your learning
- ❑ Opportunities for advancement

___ **Geographic Location**
- ❑ Being in an institution that is a good location for your life
- ❑ Short commute
- ❑ Interesting things to do nearby
- ❑ Cost of living that matches your values

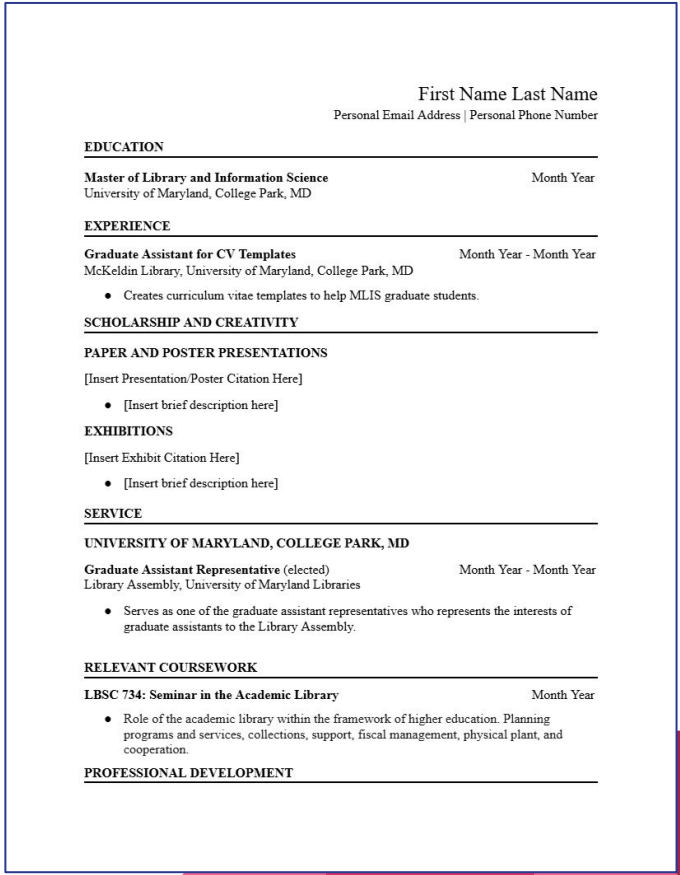
___ **Fair and Manageable Workload**
- ❑ Having time each week for research and/or professional learning
- ❑ Feeling that work is equally distributed between you and your colleagues
- ❑ Being satisfied with the amount of autonomy in your position
- ❑ Having the ability to "leave your work at work"

___ **Recognition, Autonomy, Meaningfulness**
- ❑ Your colleagues / supervisor recognize and support your work
- ❑ The work you get to spend the most time on is work that you really enjoy
- ❑ You get regular feedback that you are making a positive difference in the lives of others
- ❑ The pace and amount of work you do is considered appropriate and productive

___ **Diversity, Inclusion, Equity**
- ❑ You are at a place with a diverse student body and faculty
- ❑ You are at a place where women and men, POC and white faculty have the same opportunities for advancement and full participation
- ❑ The requirements for tenure and promotion are clear and fair
- ❑ You are satisfied with your unit's culture for work life balance

Turning Resumes into CVs

- Encourage students who are not yet on the job market to start a CV!
- Attend webinars/workshops to learn skills
  - UMD: UMD Libraries Fearless Teaching Institute, TLTC, UMD DIT
  - Beyond UMD: LILi, ACRL Presents, InfoBase, Carterette Series Webinars, LIS Pedagogy Chat, METRO
- Resources
  - Cooking up something great: A recipe for academic library CV content and structure by Megan E. Welsh, Courtney McDonald, & Jennifer E. Knievel (College & Research Libraries News, 2023)
  - CV Template for MLIS Students



First Name Last Name
Personal Email Address | Personal Phone Number

EDUCATION

Master of Library and Information Science Month Year
University of Maryland, College Park, MD

EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant for CV Templates Month Year - Month Year
McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park, MD

- Creates curriculum vitae templates to help MLIS graduate students.

SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVITY

PAPER AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

[Insert Presentation/Poster Citation Here]

- [Insert brief description here]

EXHIBITIONS

[Insert Exhibit Citation Here]

- [Insert brief description here]

SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK, MD

Graduate Assistant Representative (elected) Month Year - Month Year
Library Assembly, University of Maryland Libraries

- Serves as one of the graduate assistant representatives who represents the interests of graduate assistants to the Library Assembly.

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

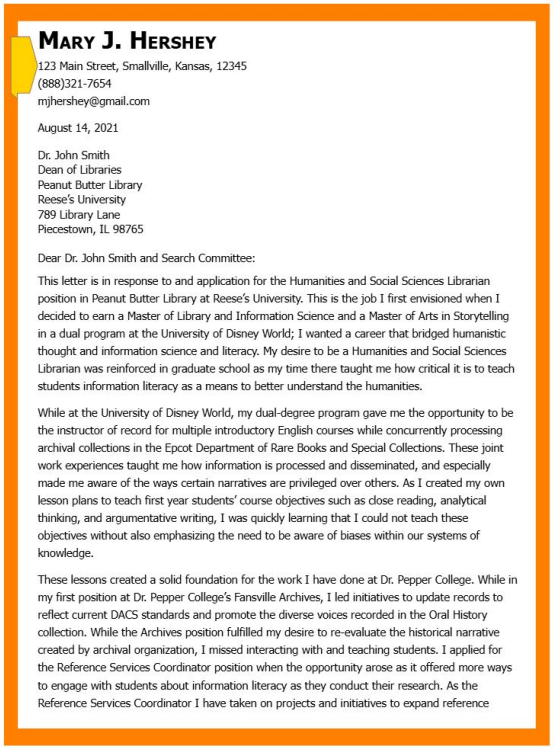
LBSC 734: Seminar in the Academic Library Month Year

- Role of the academic library within the framework of higher education. Planning programs and services, collections, support, fiscal management, physical plant, and cooperation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Writing Cover Letters

- Teaching the vocabulary of cover letters (& CVs!)
  - Utilize the language found in the job ad
  - Learn about industry-specific lingo by reading guidelines from professional organizations
    - Guidelines, Standards, and Frameworks - Listing By Topic | Association of College and Research Libraries
- Resources
  - Sample Cover Letter (created by Emily Cranwell Deinert)
  - Sarah Clinton-McCausland's Advice for Writing Cover Letters
  - Cover Letter Survey from Hiring Librarians



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Dr. John Smith
Dean of Libraries
Peanut Butter Library
Reese's University
789 Library Lane
Piecestown, IL 98765

Dear Dr. John Smith and Search Committee:

This letter is in response to and application for the Humanities and Social Sciences Librarian position in Peanut Butter Library at Reese's University. This is the job I first envisioned when I decided to earn a Master of Library and Information Science and a Master of Arts in Storytelling in a dual program at the University of Disney World; I wanted a career that bridged humanistic thought and information science and literacy. My desire to be a Humanities and Social Sciences Librarian was reinforced in graduate school as my time there taught me how critical it is to teach students information literacy as a means to better understand the humanities.

While at the University of Disney World, my dual-degree program gave me the opportunity to be the instructor of record for multiple introductory English courses while concurrently processing archival collections in the Epcot Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. These joint work experiences taught me how information is processed and disseminated, and especially made me aware of the ways certain narratives are privileged over others. As I created my own lesson plans to teach first year students' course objectives such as close reading, analytical thinking, and argumentative writing, I was quickly learning that I could not teach these objectives without also emphasizing the need to be aware of biases within our systems of knowledge.

These lessons created a solid foundation for the work I have done at Dr. Pepper College. While in my first position at Dr. Pepper College's Fansville Archives, I led initiatives to update records to reflect current DACS standards and promote the diverse voices recorded in the Oral History collection. While the Archives position fulfilled my desire to re-evaluate the historical narrative created by archival organization, I missed interacting with and teaching students. I applied for the Reference Services Coordinator position when the opportunity arose as it offered more ways to engage with students about information literacy as they conduct their research. As the Reference Services Coordinator I have taken on projects and initiatives to expand reference

Preparing for Interviews

- General advice for students
  - Do your research on the institution
  - Make sure to answer all parts of the interview questions
  - Come prepared with questions to ask the interviewers
- Resources
  - Hiring Librarians' Interview Question Spreadsheet
  - Sarah Clinton-McCausland's Advice for Interviews
  - ALA Interviewing Resources

Open Forums & Job Talks

- Encourage students to watch UMD Libraries Open Forums (when possible)
- Creating slide decks
  - Utilize universities' brand kits to make slide decks (ex. UMD Brand Kit)
  - For slide templates: Slides Carnival and SlidesGo
  - For free images, try Unsplash, Pixaby, and Pexels
- Resources
  - Example Open Forum Presentation (from Lexi Kadis)
  - Sample Open Forum Prompts (curated by Amber Pierdinock-Weed)

General Advice for MLIS Students on the Job Market

- Throw a lot of darts and cast a wide net
  - The job search is a numbers game, the more you apply to, the better your chances
  - Your job search should be wide, in terms of types of jobs, geographic areas, etc.
- The earlier you start the job search the better
  - Academic library job searches can take months, so we recommend starting to apply for jobs by the end of the fall semester/start of the spring semester in advance of a springtime graduation.

General Advice for Mentors and Supervisors

- Acknowledge the emotional labor and time commitments of guiding students through the job search process
- Know that you cannot provide all the solutions
- Rely on your colleagues to share resources and advice for mentoring MLIS students

Acknowledgements

Thank you to these librarians for contributing their knowledge and resources to this presentation!

- Sarah Clinton-McCausland
  - “Sarah's LIS Job Search Tips” - go.umd.edu/LISjobtips
- Emily Cranwell Deinert
  - Sample Cover Letter
- Rachel Gammons
- Amber Pierdinock-Weed
- Ben Shaw

Thank You!