

# Fearlessly Forward

# Applied Research Librarianship

Panel Discussion

Library Research & Innovative Practice Forum

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# The Topic: *Applied* Research Librarians with Faculty Status

Problem:  
Otherness/Proxy  
Demoralization, Inequity, and  
Exclusion

Solution:  
Similarities / Agency  
Solidarity, Equity, and Inclusion

# Background and Foundations

## Readings

The librarians are not okay?

talk by A. H. Petersen at the  
Conference on Academic Library  
Management in May 2022

Librarianship "a passion job that  
is feminized and, by extension,  
devalued"--AH Petersen

"There is a historical and lingering understanding of these jobs as jobs that you would do for free you are often treated as if you are doing the labor for free. The work is feminized, so it's low-paid; the work is low-paid, so it's feminized."

## Readings

Academic librarianship : anchoring  
the profession in contribution,  
scholarship, and service

M. Simons (2021). Lanham: Rowman  
& Littlefield.



A proposal to create “professorships  
of books and reading”--*Public Libraries in  
the United States of America* (1876) US Bureau  
of Education

“Librarians shall have the rank of professor, the assistant librarian that of associate professor and the supervisors shall rank as assistant professors and bibliographers as instructors.”

(1911 – Columbia University Trustees)

"A review of academic librarianship literature makes clear that perceptions and stereotypes play a role in the questions that swirl around faculty status for librarians."

-- M. Simons (2021)

## Gendered Female Profession

An example of the gendered female profession:  
“scholar-librarian/librarian-assistant” model.

Early 20th century response to complexity and growth of academic libraries, a prestigious position for well-paid male library directors appointed from the "real faculty" policing the work of female librarians with “nominal faculty status,” i.e., the title without all of the accompanying privileges

--M. Biggs (1981). *Sources of Tension and Conflict between Librarians and Faculty*.

*Benefits* afforded most often to tenure-track academic faculty: higher salaries, sabbaticals, retirement benefits, vacation time, *funding and support for professional and research activities*, and the stability of tenure

## Readings

Texas A&M considers making  
sweeping changes to library

J. Moody (May 2022). Inside  
Higher Education.

"A plan to restructure Texas A&M's 10 libraries would force librarians to relinquish tenure or move to another academic department to keep it. The university has yet to explain its rationale for the changes."

-- J. Moody (2022)

# What do we mean when we talk about Research?

HOME > RESOURCES

## Resources

### Research Administration

See Research Administration  
Information and Resources

### Research Development

See Research Development  
Information and Resources

### Research Compliance

Access Resources such as  
IRB, Animal Care, Export  
Control, Conflict of  
Interest...

### Proposals

See Proposals Resources

### Funding

See Funding Resources

### Sponsored Programs Accounting and Compliance

Sponsored Programs  
Accounting and Compliance

### Innovation

Learn about Innovation at  
UMD

### Discovery District

Learn about the Discovery  
District

### Maryland Small Business Development Center

Learn about the Maryland  
Small Business  
Development Center



## Librarians are Instructional Faculty

The National Science Foundation (NSF) employs the term “informal learning” to describe learning and engagement that occurs outside formal classroom settings, i.e. those which link student engagement to academic content without some of the constraints of time and the course curriculum.

Informal Learning  
provides an experiential base and  
motivation for further  
activity and subsequent learning.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) builds libraries' capacity of all types and disciplines to be more effective learning institutions, reach diverse and underserved audiences, and work in partnership with other educational organizations.

# Some examples of Applied Research Methods in Informal Learning Settings

## Action research

philosophy/methodology seeking transformative change through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research, which are linked together by critical reflection.

Experiential Learning  
annotated bibliography  
tagging, ontologies, argument  
prototyping (maker-spaces)  
pricing and sourcing materials

Located at the intersection of structural and systemic failures, there are still strategies that can make the profession more resilient, less fragile, and more sustainable.

--AH Petersen

# What Are We Doing?

- New Position
- Stronger Partnership with the Division of Research
- Membership on the Research Council
- Brain Trust Strategic Initiative



# What Needs to be Done?

- Stronger partnerships/collaborations
- Stronger support for grants/proposal writing  
budgeting, cost sharing
- Enhanced support for library  
faculty/mentoring
- Enhanced use of Faculty Success
- Big Picture: Need improved integration into  
campus research enterprise and beyond

Thank you!