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Support for Research and Service in Florida Academic Libraries

by

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Abstract

Following a 2003 survey that benchmarked the research and publication activities of Florida librarians, administrative support for these efforts was investigated. Library administrators were asked to identify various types and funding levels of travel and research assistance. Results suggest that Florida librarians receive support comparable to national and regional trends.

Introduction

Faculty status and the research productivity of librarians comprise a significant portion of the academic library literature. As early as 1911, Columbia University accorded its librarians faculty status.¹ Robert Downs, a pioneer in the faculty status issue, encouraged academic librarians in 1957 to work for professional achievements on the same levels as the teaching faculty.² The faculty debate gained momentum with the 1971 adoption of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) *Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians*.³ These standards set forth criteria for providing the same rights and privileges to library faculty as those already enjoyed by the teaching faculty.

But are librarians really receiving the same privileges and support for research that teaching faculty receive? Research support is not inexpensive. Kingma and McCombs endeavored to put a dollar figure on the opportunity cost of faculty status for librarians. Looking beyond the actual costs of travel and directed research funds, the authors attempted to calculate the costs of intangibles such as the time it takes library faculty to pursue their own research or the time spent peer reviewing others' scholarship.⁴

Havener and Stolt analyzed publications of academic librarians in Oklahoma for the year 1990. They found that librarians working at institutions that supported research had much better publication records than those employed at institutions that did not provide support for research.⁵

Although many articles have been written on this topic since publication of the 1971 *Standards*, the large majority of the studies concentrate on the pros and cons of faculty status for librarians. During the fall of 2003, the authors conducted a web survey of academic librarians in Florida. The goal of this survey was to establish benchmarks for research productivity and professional development activities and explore the relationships of those activities to tenure and promotion or to professional development.⁶ The perception of many of the responding librarians was that expectations were continually increasing for research productivity. The results of the survey led the authors to investigate if academic institutions were providing support commensurate with the demand for greater professional productivity. Are academic librarians getting the time and funding needed to realistically conduct scholarly research? What methods, beyond release time and research funds, have institutions developed to help their librarians succeed in publishing?

Havener and Worrell point out that some national studies or surveys that concentrate on Association of Research Libraries (ARL) institutions may not give a complete picture of the status of academic librarians since these studies are skewed towards larger, research-oriented institutions. They advocate the need for more state-level studies.⁷ This project surveyed library administrators in academic institutions throughout Florida to document the level of support available for research and professional activities of librarians. Because research support may be expensive, reasonable benchmarks for this area are needed. Reporting on the level of research

assistance in Florida may also aid institutions here and elsewhere in evaluating, implementing, and/or maintaining support programs for research and scholarly activities conducted by academic librarians.

Literature Review

Relatively little has been published on the availability of support for research, travel, release time, and sabbaticals. Many of the studies that have been conducted are dated or are concentrated on ARL libraries.⁸ Libraries in the southeastern United States have also been studied in some detail.⁹ In 1958, Boughter compared sabbatical opportunities for library faculty to the opportunities for teaching faculty at the same institutions.¹⁰ Several other authors have found that sabbaticals were offered at some institutions but not always at the same levels as those allowed for teaching faculty.¹¹ In addition, while extended leave time may be available in theory, some librarians feel that staffing shortages within the library make taking a sabbatical unrealistic.¹²

In 1966, ARL library directors were already expressing concern over how to balance time for research while still retaining good service to the public.¹³ A few studies have looked at the amount of time per week that librarians and teaching faculty allocate to research activities.¹⁴ As might be expected, studies of teaching faculty indicate that much of their research is conducted during the summer when teaching loads are normally lighter.¹⁵ Librarians on twelve month contracts don't have summer research options. Although librarians often express frustration over the lack of flexibility within their work schedule, making it difficult to fit in focused research time, similar concerns are expressed by teaching faculty, particularly those with heavy teaching loads at predominantly undergraduate institutions.¹⁶ Sharobeam and Howard contend that sporadic attempts at research can be costly—both for the time needed to reorganize the

researcher's thoughts but also in potential loss of readership if a topic is no longer timely.¹⁷

While many academic institutions expect their faculty to apply for external funding for their research, some colleges and universities also provide small internal grants to researchers. Several studies indicate that librarians do qualify to request research funding from their institutions but with varying levels of success. A survey of librarians and teaching faculty in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin colleges and universities reported that although librarians were allowed to apply for research funds, they did not receive the same level of support as the teaching faculty.¹⁸ The research status of the institution may also play a role in support for research. In 1996, Leysen and Black surveyed library administrators at Carnegie Research I and II institutions¹⁹ finding that institutional funding was available for the majority of the librarians who had faculty status with publishing as a requirement for tenure.²⁰

Funding for travel may be another important component of research support. Not only do librarians gain new insights by attending and presenting at professional conferences, some types of research may require traveling to gather data, to learn new procedures or systems, or to gain access to unique collections. Henry and Neville's survey of Florida academic librarians found that slightly more than half of the respondents received full travel support for their professional activities. Only a small number claimed that they did not have any travel funding available to them.²¹ Blomberg and Chapman's 1989 study of ARL libraries provides very specific details on what aspects of travel (lodging, conference registration, etc.) were most likely to be funded.²² In the same year, Cramer analyzed how travel funds were obtained at ARL libraries.²³

Professional associations' conferences and publications provide mechanisms for the exchange of ideas and for the creation of new research. Unfortunately, it is not

unusual to hear librarians claim that the membership fees of state, regional, and national associations prohibit them from joining or require them to be very selective about the number of associations that they join. In fact, editorials by library professionals and minutes from library associations document concerns over the rising cost of membership dues and conference attendance and the impact these increases may have on newer and lower-paid librarians.²⁴ A few institutions are supporting librarian's participation in professional associations by reimbursing them for their membership dues.²⁵

Research time, travel, and financial support are all standard methods for supporting research at academic institutions. Several libraries have tried additional approaches for increasing the research productivity of their librarians through the creation of more flexible work schedules, formal or informal mentoring, or the creation of research committees.

Methodology

This study expands on the research support issues that were discussed in a 2003 survey of Florida academic librarians.²⁶ Survey questions were sent to library administrators at academic institutions in Florida and addressed specific details on research time, funding, and support available to librarians at their institutions. Florida libraries were selected for this survey to provide direct comparisons with the authors' previous survey. Professional leave times (sabbaticals, release time, etc.) were defined in the survey in order to facilitate the analysis of the results and comparisons to other data. The survey examined what types of travel are funded, the sources of those funds, and how the funds are approved. Finally, participants were asked about creative methods that they may have found to help librarians be more productive in their research efforts. The

authors created the survey instrument (included in Appendix 1) from prior surveys reported in the literature and from gaps in the library knowledge that were identified.²⁷

Library administrators' names were collected from institutional web sites or from *The American Library Directory*.²⁸ If institutions had regional campuses with separate, identifiable library administrators, they were sent a separate survey. Administrators were asked to respond to the survey personally or to give it to another library administrator who might be more suited to answer the questions. Participants were also given the opportunity to make additional comments. Several professional colleagues reviewed the survey for clarity and ease of use prior to distribution. The University of South Florida Institutional Research Board ensured that human research and anonymity issues were acceptable.

Surveys were mailed to ninety-two library directors in early May 2005. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was included for ease of return. After approximately three weeks, reminder notices were sent to institutions that had not responded. A final e-mail reminder was sent to non-respondents in June 2005. Survey responses were recorded in a database for analysis. Institutions were coded by Carnegie Classification in order to organize the institutions by type and to provide direct comparisons with the authors' previous survey.²⁹

Results

Although sixty-nine administrators responded in some way to the survey, the data from sixty-five were usable for a response rate of 71 %. The distribution of responding institutions according to Carnegie classification and the initial total population is very similar (Table 1). In the discussion that follows, sample sizes are included and percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 1
Carnegie Classification of Florida SACS Accredited Institutions*

	Number of institutions in original population	Percent within Carnegie Class responding to survey
Associate Colleges	38	61% (n=23)
Baccalaureate Colleges- General	9	56% (n=5)
Baccalaureate Colleges- Liberal Arts	3	67% (n=2)
Master's Colleges and Universities I	15	87% (n=13)
Master's Colleges and Universities II	2	50% (n=1)
Doctoral/Research Universities-Intensive	6	100% (n=6)
Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive	13	85% (n=11)
Specialized Institutions	5	60% (n=3)
Other-unable to classify	1	100% (n=1)
Total institutions in this study	92	

*Based on the category definitions listed in the *2000 Carnegie Classification*. Available: <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/Classification/CIHE2000/defNotes/Definitions.htm> Accessed September 22, 2005.

Demographics

Seventy-five percent (49 of 65) of the librarians at the responding institutions have faculty status while 20% (13 of 65) are considered professionals. These percentages are consistent across Carnegie classification and comply with the 2003 Florida survey

(faculty 73%, professional 17%).³⁰ While only 29% (19 of 65) of the total academic libraries survey are covered by some kind of union contract or bargaining agreement; a higher percentage of doctoral institutions (47%, 8 of 17) reported having bargaining agreements.

Table 2 illustrates the availability of promotion or tenure with 43% (n=28) of the libraries offering promotion, tenure and/or dual tracks to faculty at baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral institutions. An additional twenty institutions (31%) offer a continuing contract or a contract with advancement opportunities. Requirements for advancement vary considerably and may include research, teaching, service, and/or continuing education achievements. Thirteen (20%) of the library institutions have professionals who are not eligible for either promotion, tenure, or other continuing contracts.

Table 2
Eligibility for Promotion or Tenure

	Number of responses (n=65)	% of responses
Promotion and tenure	7	11%
Promotion only	17	26%
Dual tracks: both tenure track and promotion only tracks available	4	6%
Continuing contract	11	17%
Continuing contract and promotion	9	14%
Not eligible for promotion or tenure	13	20%
Other	4	6%
Total	65	100%

The library administrators were asked to indicate if they felt that promotion and/or tenure requirements had become more rigorous, less difficult, or stayed about the same during the last five years. Forty-nine percent believe the criteria for advancement are more rigorous, only 5% felt the process was less rigorous and 42% replied that the criteria were the same or had no opinion. In 2003, a similar question was asked of practicing academic librarians in Florida. At that time librarians on tenure tracks (83%) or on promotion-only tracks (65%) definitely felt the requirements had become more demanding.³¹ Although the administrators at tenure-track institutions agreed with their library faculty that the emphasis on publishing was increasing, the administrators at promotion-earning institutions were not as convinced with only 41% of those administrators claiming a greater emphasis on publishing (Table 3).

The current survey also examined the chain of command in tenure and promotion processes. The procedure at 66% (33 of 50) of the institutions requires multiple stages of approval. Not unexpectedly, approvals by a library supervisor/director and/or the institution's administration are the two most common steps 66% (33 of 50) in the process. A peer review committee is used by 54% (27 of 50) of the organizations.

Travel

The majority of organizations (95%, 60 of 63) provide some level of travel support. Fifty-one percent reported that the level of support has remained constant over the last five years while 37% have received an increase in support. As seen in Table 4, doctoral and baccalaureate libraries have seen the largest increases. The approval process for travel benefits varies; in 87% (52 of 60) of the libraries, the library Dean or Director approves the request, while 32% (19 of 60) of the organizations employ a multiple step approval process. A campus-wide administrative body participates in the process at

Table 3
Perceptions of Respondents of the Emphasis on Publishing for Promotion and Tenure*
Comparisons of 2003 and 2005 Survey Data

	Greater Emphasis	Lesser Emphasis	No change in Emphasis	No Opinion on Emphasis	Emphasis Not Applicable to Circumstances
2005 Tenure-track (Baccalaureate, Master's or Doctoral) (total responses=10)	100% (n=10)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)
2003 Tenure-track (Baccalaureate, Master's or Doctoral) (total responses=36)	83% (n=30)	8% (n=3)	8% (n=3)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)
2005 Promotion-earning (all institutions) (total responses=17)	41% (n=7)	12% (n=2)	35% (n=6)	12% (n=2)	0% (n=0)
2003 Promotion-earning (all institutions) (total responses=69)	65% (n=45)	25% (n=17)	6% (n=4)	3% (n=2)	1% (n=1)
2005 Tenure/Continuing Contract (Community Colleges) (total responses=13)	23% (n=3)	0% (n=0)	38% (n=5)	38% (n=5)	0% (n=0)
2003 Tenure/Continuing Contract (Community Colleges) (total responses=31)	23% (n=7)	39% (n=12)	10% (n=3)	6% (n=2)	23% (n=7)
2005 Total Institutions (total responses=45)**	44% (n=20)	4% (n=2)	24% (n=11)	18% (n=8)	9% (n=4)
2003 Total Institutions (total responses=136)	60% (n=82)	24% (n=32)	7% (n=10)	3% (n=4)	6% (n=8)

Because of rounding, not all totals = 100%

* 2003 figures are from, Henry & Neville, JAL 2004, Table 5, p. 438.

**Total responses include institutions that are not eligible for tenure, promotion, or continuing contract.

Table 4
Level of Travel Funding Over the Past 5 Years*

	Funding Increased During the Past 5 Years	Funding Decreased During the Past 5 Years	Funding Stayed About the Same During the Past 5 Years
Doctoral/Research: Extensive and Intensive (total responses=17)	53% (n=9)	24% (n=4)	24% (n=4)
Master's Colleges and Universities I and II (total responses=12)	25% (n=3)	8% (n=1)	67% (n=8)
Baccalaureate Colleges: General and Liberal Arts (total responses=6)	50% (n=3)	0% (n=0)	50% (n=3)
Associate Colleges (total responses=20)	30% (n=6)	10% (n=2)	60% (n=12)
Specialized Institutions (total responses=4)	25% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	75% (n=3)
Total Responses (n=59)	37% (n=22)	12% (n=7)	51% (n=30)

*Because of rounding, not all totals = 100%

thirteen (22%) organizations (n=60). The chain of command during the approval process may also reflect the organizational structure of the institution and the library's place within that hierarchy. Only twelve (18%) administrators addressed the question about the library's role on an institution-wide travel committee. Five of those (42%) indicated that the library may participate on such a committee. The lack of response to this question may be more indicative of the lack of that kind of committee in the organization rather than the fact that librarians may not participate. The finding here is more encouraging than the response to a similar question asked of academic librarians in Alabama. Darby and Weatherford reported that while 60% of the

Alabama respondents were eligible for travel funding at the institutional level, 71% of them did not have a library representative on the campus committee that decided travel allocations.³²

Massman found that librarians in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin were more likely to receive travel funds than the teaching faculty.³³ A study of academic library directors in North Carolina showed that 51% of their librarians had the same access to travel funds as their research faculty.³⁴

Non-union academic institutions (71%, 46 of 65) exceed union members (29%, 19 of 65) in Florida. Spang and Kane's 1997 study of 201 academic librarians seems to indicate that librarians who are not affiliated with a union may have a slightly better opportunity to procure travel funding than those in unionized positions.³⁵ In contrast, the Florida study discovered unionized libraries having a slight advantage over the non-unionized libraries (Table 5) and a much higher level of travel support overall.

Table 5
Comparison of Research Support for Unionized versus Non-unionized Libraries

	Research Required	Availability of Sabbaticals	Availability of Travel Funds	Availability of Research Funds
Unionized Libraries	44% (7 of 16)	89% (17 of 19)	100% (18 of 18)	89% (17 of 19)
Non-unionized Libraries	20% (9 of 46)	52% (23 of 44)	93% (42 of 45)	44% (19 of 43)

Table 6 describes eligibility for travel funds. Although 98% of the full-time librarians may apply for funding, a substantial difference is seen with part-time librarians where only 37% are allowed to request travel funds. A similar trend is seen with regard to paraprofessionals; 86% of the permanent paraprofessionals have access to travel funds while only 25% of the part-time staff have this benefit. It is interesting to note that temporary librarians are eligible for travel funding at more than 10% of the Florida organizations. The survey also indicated that other

Florida library employees, such as development officers, students, or other personnel services (OPS) employees may also have this privilege. Although a 1989 study of ARL institutions found similar results for the full-time librarians with 99% eligible for travel funds, that study reported higher levels of funding for part-time (70%) and temporary librarians (38%). Sixty-eight percent of the paraprofessionals in the ARL study were eligible for funding.³⁶

Table 6
Eligibility for Travel Funding

	Total Responses (n=63)	Percent of Responses
Full-time Librarians	62	98%
Part-time Librarians	23	37%
Temporary Librarians	7	11%
Permanent Paraprofessional Staff	54	86%
Part-time Paraprofessional Staff	16	25%
Temporary Paraprofessional Staff	2	3%
Other	7	11%

Tables 7 and 8 present the ranking criteria for travel funding. As expected, those librarians presenting at either national or state conferences received the highest priority for funding. Serving on committees in the state or national professional associations ranked next, averaging 61% in the “high priority” category. Several administrators remarked that relevance to job duties and value to the organization were important factors considered as well. In this study, librarians with fewer years in rank have a modest advantage in funding decisions over those with seniority status. Blomberg and Chapman found a greater disparity in their 1989 survey of ARL Libraries with 27% of new or recently hired librarians receiving special consideration for travel funding compared to only 4% of the more experienced librarians. Library administrators in Florida receive the highest funding priority at 40%, similar to the 33% level of funding for ARL administrators in the 1989 study.³⁷

Table 7
Travel Funding Considerations Based on Reason for Attendance

	High Priority	Considered	Low Priority	Not Considered
Librarians presenting at a national library workshop or conference (total responses =62)	89% (n=55)	8% (n=5)	0% (n=0)	3% (n=2)
Librarians presenting at a state or regional library workshop or conference (total responses =62)	81% (n=50)	16% (n=10)	0% (n=0)	3% (n=2)
Librarians presenting at a non-library association conference or workshop (total responses =63)	48% (n=30)	37% (n=23)	6% (n=4)	10% (n=6)
Committee members attending national library association committee meetings (total responses =62)	61% (n=38)	24% (n=15)	8% (n=5)	6% (n=4)
Committee members attending state or regional library association committee meetings (total responses =62)	60% (n=37)	34% (n=21)	2% (n=1)	5% (n=3)
Committee members attending non-library association committee meeting (total responses=62)	27% (n=17)	35% (n=22)	26% (n=16)	11% (n=7)
Members of an association attending a national library conference or workshop (total responses =63)	44% (n=28)	48% (n=30)	5% (n=3)	3% (n=2)
Members of an association attending a state or regional library conference or workshop (total responses =63)	48% (n=30)	48% (n=30)	2% (n=1)	3% (n=2)
Non-members of an association attending a national library conference or workshop (total responses =63)	8% (n=5)	38% (n=24)	40% (n=25)	14% (n=9)
Non-members of an association attending a state or regional library conference or workshop (total responses =63)	10% (n=6)	44% (n=28)	32% (n=20)	14% (n=9)
Attendance at a non-library association conference or workshop (total responses =62)	6% (n=4)	42% (n=26)	40% (n=25)	11% (n=7)

*Because of rounding, not all totals = 100%

Table 8
Travel Funding Considerations Based on Rank or Service

	High Priority	Considered	Low Priority	Not Considered
Length of service at the library (total responses=58)	7% (n=4)	29% (n=17)	24% (n=14)	40% (n=23)
First-come, first-serve basis (total responses =59)	20% (n=12)	27% (n=16)	22% (n=13)	31% (n=18)
Senior librarians (tenured or at associate or full professor level) (total responses =59)	17% (n=10)	41% (n=24)	14% (n=8)	29% (n=17)
Newer librarians (untenured or still eligible for promotion) (total responses =59)	22% (n=13)	51% (n=30)	7% (n=4)	20% (n=12)
Library Administrators (Deans, Directors, or Department Heads) (total responses =60)	40% (n=24)	38% (n=23)	2% (n=1)	20% (n=12)

Because of rounding, not all totals = 100%

The survey identified several sources of travel funds; the most prevalent being a direct line in the library budget. Financial support was also available from library discretionary funds and campus-wide travel sources. Forty-one percent of the libraries in this study receive funding from more than one source. Table 9 illustrates the variety of funding resources available. Cramer's ARL survey found that most (70%) of his respondents funded travel from the library's own budget.³⁸

Table 9
Sources of Travel Funds

	Total Responses (n=63)	Percent of Responses
Direct line item in the library budget	44	70%
Discretionary funds from the library budget	17	27%
Campus travel funds	21	33%
Endowments	5	8%
Other*	8	13%
Multiple sources available	26	41%

*other sources include grants and college professional development funds

Few of the Florida academic libraries claimed to have written travel policies (15 of 58, 26%), yet 90% of the ARL libraries surveyed in a 1989 study had written policies.³⁹ Forty-six percent (27 of 59) of the Florida librarians are required to give a report after travel has been completed. Additionally, respondents commented that although not required, many libraries informally share information gleaned from their travel with others at staff meetings, brown bags, and other venues. International travel funding requests are allowed at 44% (26 of 59) of the organizations. Several respondents provided additional insights. International travel appears to be rare and permission may require additional authority. Others explain that travel funding may be available in conjunction with other projects and/or organizations.

Reimbursement of specific types of travel expenses was also explored. Although more than 80% of the administrators try to reimburse the full cost of most expenses, several commented that it depended on the details of each trip. In the 2003 Florida study, full travel support was reported by 54% of the total librarians.⁴⁰ A 1982 study of southeastern academic libraries reported full travel funding at 31% of the institutions.⁴¹ Although there is a desire to cover the full cost, the reality is that the funds often don't stretch that far. For example, conference registrations vary considerably as do hotel rates and air fares. The majority of administrators reimburse meals on a per diem schedule. A small number (17%, 10 of 59) reported distributing specific allocations to staff to use as needed. The allocation amounts ranged from \$350 up to \$3000 per year. Table 10 provides a more detailed analysis of reimbursement costs.

Research time

Although research is not required by 70% of the organizations, a breakdown by Carnegie classification indicates that 65% of the doctoral institutions expect research yet only 44% actually include a research component in a job assignment. Table 11 provides a breakdown of

research requirements by Carnegie Class. Only 16% (10 of 64) of the total institutions officially include research in their job assignments. There do not appear to be substantial differences between the assignment of time allotted to librarians when analyzed according to rank or area of specialization (Table 12).

Table 10
Breakdown of Travel Reimbursement Costs

	Full Cost	Partial Cost or Per Diem
Hotel (total responses=54)	87% (n=47)	13% (n=7)
Air Transportation (total responses =54)	87% (n=47)	13% (n=7)
Rental Car (total responses =50)	82% (n=41)	18% (n=9)
Mileage (total responses =53)	79% (n=42)	21% (n=11)
Conference Registration (total responses =54)	89% (n=48)	11% (n=6)
Meals (total responses =51)	41% (n=21)	59% (n=30)

In this study, release time was defined as a set number of hours of release from other professional duties, desk time, and meetings to work on research projects aimed at eventual publication. Surprisingly, regularly assigned formal release time from normal work hours is not prevalent; only 12% of all the organizations reported this as an available option (Table 13). Of those for whom formal release time is granted, the numbers of hours available ranged from two to five hours a week. Several comments indicate that, for librarians that are allowed to do research during work hours; time management is discretionary. Although few Florida librarians receive regularly scheduled release time, the situation may be better than in Tennessee where Rogers' study noted that 10% of the respondents actually feared reprimands if they worked on

research projects during work time.⁴² The current Florida situation for all academic institutions varies only slightly from the data collected during Rayman and Goudy's 1980 survey of ARL library directors. They found that 10% of the respondents were given specific release time and an additional 41% could apply for release time to work on publications.⁴³ However, when comparing the ARL results with only the doctoral/research libraries in Florida, a greater number of Florida librarians (23%) were eligible for specific release time. In addition, the majority of the Florida research librarians (87%) could apply for informal or irregular release time. Irregular release time is possible at 48% of all of the responding libraries.

Table 11
Research Requirements by Carnegie Class

	Research Required	Research Included in Official Job Assignment
Doctoral/Research: Extensive and Intensive	65% (11 of 17)	44% (7 of 16)
Master's Colleges and Universities I and II	36% (5 of 14)	21% (3 of 14)
Baccalaureate Colleges: General and Liberal Arts	14% (1 of 7)	0% (0 of 7)
Associate Colleges	0% (0 of 21)	0% (0 of 23)
Specialized Institutions	0% (0 of 4)	0% (0 of 4)
Total Responses	30% (19 of 63)	16% (10 of 64)

Overall, flex time appears to be only slightly more available than regular release time with 26% of the libraries offering this benefit. However, in this instance, the doctoral institutions did fare better with 67% reporting that flex time is an option at their organizations. Although the

median number of hours librarians were required to be present in the library was 36 hours, one library reported as few as five hours and several reported that librarians needed to be present for forty hours per week.

Table 12
Approximate Research Time Assignments by Rank and Specialization

	1-5 %	5-10 %	10-20 %	More than 20 %
Administrators (total responses=9)	56% (n=5)	22% (n=2)	22% (n=2)	0% (n=0)
Senior Librarians (Associate or Full Professor) (total responses =12)	25% (n=3)	42% (n=5)	25% (n=3)	8% (n=1)
Newer Librarians (Instructor or Assistant Professor) (total responses =12)	25% (n=3)	42% (n=5)	25% (n=3)	8% (n=1)
Other Rank (total responses =2)	0% (n=0)	50% (n=1)	50% (n=1)	0% (n=0)
Technical Service (total responses =10)	30% (n=3)	40% (n=4)	30% (n=3)	0% (n=0)
Public Service (total responses =11)	27% (n=3)	36% (n=4)	27% (n=3)	10% (n=1)
Archivist (total responses =6)	33% (n=2)	17% (n=1)	50% (n=3)	0% (n=0)
Other Specialization (total responses =4)	0% (n=0)	25% (n=1)	50% (n=2)	25% (n=1)

For the purposes of this study a sabbatical was defined as a lengthy (one semester to one year) professional development leave at full or half pay to enhance a faculty member's career and to increase their value to the institution through opportunities for research-related travel, study, writing, or other experiences of professional value. Sixty-three percent of the administrators indicated that their librarians were eligible for sabbaticals (Table 13). While 82%

of the associate colleges allow librarians to participate, only 59% of the doctoral / research institutions allow librarians into the sabbatical program. An early telephone survey of Florida academic librarians, at institutions offering bachelor's degrees or above, indicates that a larger number of librarians may have been eligible for sabbaticals than this study shows.⁴⁴

Table 13
Time Allowed for Research

	Eligible for Regular Release Time	Flexible Schedule Permitted	Informal or Irregular Release Time Available	Eligible for Sabbaticals
Doctoral/Research: Extensive and Intensive	23% (3 of 13)	67% (10 of 15)	87% (13 of 15)	59% (10 of 17)
Master's Colleges and Universities I and II	21% (3 of 14)	14% (2 of 14)	43% (6 of 14)	64% (9 of 14)
Baccalaureate Colleges: General and Liberal Arts	0% (0 of 7)	0% (0 of 7)	43% (3 of 7)	43% (3 of 7)
Associate Colleges	5% (1 of 22)	12% (2 of 17)	25% (4 of 16)	82% (18 of 22)
Specialized Institutions	0% (0 of 4)	25% (1 of 4)	25% (1 of 4)	0% (0 of 3)
Total Institutions	12% (7 of 60)	26% (15 of 57)	48% (27 of 56)	63% (40 of 63)

The current Florida opportunities are slightly more promising than those reported by Boughter back in 1958. In her study of academic institutions in West Virginia and surrounding areas, only 47% of the respondents indicated the eligibility for sabbatical leaves for librarians even though 56% of them were at institutions that allowed sabbaticals for their regular teaching faculty.⁴⁵ Fifty-nine percent of the respondents to a 1997 survey of small- and medium-sized

libraries had access to sabbatical opportunities of the same length as those of the teaching faculty at their institutions.⁴⁶ Gaskell and Morrill had similar findings in their 2000 survey of college librarians where 56% were at institutions that offered sabbaticals to librarians. Most sabbaticals in their study were for six months.⁴⁷ In contrast, only 10% of the librarians surveyed in the 1994 Tennessee study were eligible for one year sabbaticals and only 9% of the respondents were allowed one semester faculty development leaves.⁴⁸ A large study of California academic librarians found that some librarians joined unions because of the role that the union had played in providing them with better access to sabbaticals and to ten-month contracts.⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, Spang and Kane found that unionized librarians might have a slight advantage with regard to access to sabbaticals and professional development leaves.⁵⁰ This study implies a much larger advantage for unionized Florida librarians with 89% of the unionized librarians eligible for sabbaticals compared to 52% of the unaffiliated librarians (Table 5).

Time for research may not have to be as constraining as it seems at first glance. Robert Sewell provides a number of useful suggestions on ways that research time might be incorporated into the librarian's work load while still maintaining good service. He provides examples of library faculty who, with the approval of their supervisor, are setting their own work schedules rather than strictly adhering to the standard work week.⁵¹ Librarians at Western Illinois University have also experimented with providing greater scheduling flexibility that is more in line with their teaching faculty colleagues.⁵²

Research funding

Thirty-six organizations (56%, n=64) permit libraries to apply for internal funding of some type. Table 14 illustrates the variety of funding available. The majority of the research support comes from either institutional grants (66%) and/or discretionary funds (24%) from the library. No Florida library administrator indicated that research funds were a direct line item in

the library budget. The overall Florida figure compares favorably with the 1980 survey of ARL libraries where 51% were able to apply for institutional funding for research and only 26% did not have any options for research funding.⁵³ A greater number of the Florida librarians (44%, 28 of 64) however are without any funding options. Doctoral /research (71%, 12 of 17) and master's college librarians (64%, 9 of 14) in Florida have more access to funds than their colleagues. Surprisingly, two of the doctoral institutions reported that, while research is required, the librarians are not eligible for internal funding. The current overall figure from Florida appears lower than those responding to DePew's early study of Florida academic librarians;⁵⁴ however, funding availability among unionized Florida libraries now is much higher (89%) than non-unionized (Table 5). A 1984 non-ARL libraries survey reported that 65% could apply for university-level funding although, interestingly, only 19% reported that internal library funds were available.⁵⁵ A 1991 study of academic librarians in Oklahoma reported that 65.9% of the respondents to their survey had some kind of financial assistance available from their institution.⁵⁶ Leysen and Black found that institutional funding was available for 88% of the librarians at Carnegie Research I and II institutions where the librarians had faculty status with publishing as a requirement for tenure.⁵⁷

Table 14
Sources of Funding for Research

	Total Responses (n=41)	Percent of Responses
Direct Line in the Library Budget	0	0%
Discretionary Funds from the Library Budget	10	24%
Institutional Internal Seed Grants	27	66%
Other	4	10%
Multiple Sources Available	3	7%

Table 15 presents the types of support available to Florida academic librarians for research. Not surprisingly, support for equipment, software, photocopying, and mailing appears to be the most prevalent. Funds for any type of compensation (small gifts for survey or focus group volunteers) are available for some but are not nearly as common.

Table 15
Types of Research Funding Support Available

	Funding May be Available on Request
Equipment (total responses=41)	85% (n=35)
Software (total responses =39)	79% (n=31)
Clerical support for typing, grant administration, etc. (total responses =40)	43% (n=17)
Photocopying supplies (total responses =40)	85% (n=34)
Mailing supplies/postage (total responses =39)	72% (n=28)
Student or graduate assistant help (total responses =38)	50% (n=19)
Money for buying small gifts to compensate volunteers that respond to focus groups, surveys, etc. (total responses =38)	24% (n=9)

Research guidance

The availability of mentoring or other types of research guidance was also investigated by the survey (Table 16). Informal mentoring was the most often cited (53%) form of support. Formal mentoring is unusual in Florida academic libraries. Even among the doctoral research institutions, only 18% in this category have a formal mentoring program. Informal mentoring,

however, takes place much more often in doctoral libraries (82%) than it does in masters, baccalaureate, or associate institutions. Associate and baccalaureate college libraries report far less guidance of any kind than the other types of Carnegie institutions.

Cosgriff's 1986 survey of ARL libraries reported that 87.2% of the respondents did *not* have a research committee to support librarians in their research efforts.⁵⁸ This study found a similar situation where only 10% of the Florida institutions have established a research committee for their librarians. However, librarians at Auburn University provide strong evidence of the value of their Library Research Advisory Committee. The Auburn committee provides reviews and editorial guidance for research proposals. They also sponsor workshops, purchase computer equipment and software to help with research activities, and communicate information about research opportunities that may be relevant to their librarians. Since the committee was established in 1987, the Auburn librarians' scholarly productivity has increased by nearly 90%.⁵⁹

Membership in professional organizations

Florida library administrators were asked to rank the importance of memberships in professional associations with regard to tenure or promotion advances (Table 17). Overall, very few institutions require membership in a national organization although 57% recommend affiliation (required, strongly recommended, or considered) for tenure and promotion purposes. Membership dues may be a financial constraint for individual librarians. Although fifteen libraries reported that they do pay the full amount of fees for membership in a library association, responsibility for payment falls to the individual librarian in the majority (74%) (Table 18). This appears to be similar to other academic libraries as indicated by a 2002 survey of academic librarians in Alabama where 77% were not reimbursed for membership dues in professional organizations.⁶⁰

Table 16
Types of Research Guidance Available

	Formal Mentoring	Informal Mentoring	Library Research Committee	No Specific Guidance Provided
Doctoral/Research: Extensive and Intensive	18% (3 of 17)	82% (14 of 17)	24% (4 of 17)	18% (3 of 17)
Master's Colleges and Universities I and II	14% (2 of 14)	57% (8 of 14)	0% (0 of 14)	43% (6 of 14)
Baccalaureate Colleges: General and Liberal Arts	0% (0 of 6)	33% (2 of 6)	17% (1 of 6)	83% (5 of 6)
Associate Colleges	0% (0 of 17)	29% (5 of 17)	6% (1 of 17)	72% (13 of 18)
Specialized Institutions	0% (0 of 4)	50% (2 of 4)	0% (0 of 4)	100% (3 of 3)
Total Institutions	9% (5 of 58)	53% (31 of 58)	10% (6 of 58)	52% (30 of 58)

This is quite a contrast to the situation for public librarians in Florida. An August 2005 survey learned that 79% of public library directors in Florida receive statewide membership dues from their institution. In addition, the survey found that 43% of public librarians and 19% of public library staff in Florida have their state membership fees covered by their institutions.⁶¹

Table 17
Consideration of Membership in Professional Organizations in Relation to
Promotion and/or Tenure Decisions

	Required	Strongly Considered	Considered	Not Required	Not Applicable
Membership in a National Library Association (total responses=61)	7% (n=4)	34% (n=21)	16% (n=10)	41% (n=25)	2% (n=1)
Membership in the State Library Association (total responses=60)	0% (n=0)	18% (n=11)	27% (n=16)	53% (n=32)	2% (n=1)
Membership in a Regional or Local Library Organization (total responses=61)	0% (n=0)	15% (n=9)	33% (n=20)	51% (n=31)	2% (n=1)
Membership in a Non-library Professional Organization (total responses=61)	0% (n=0)	7% (n=4)	39% (n=24)	52% (n=32)	2% (n=1)

Because of rounding, not all totals = 100%

Table 18
Payment of Library Association Membership Fees
(n=62)

	Responses	Percent of Responses
Institution Pays for Full Library Association Membership	15	24%
Institution Pays for Partial Library Association Membership	1	2%
Individual is Personally Responsible for All Library Association Membership Fees	46	74%

Conclusions

Overall, Florida library administrations appear to support travel for research and professional development in a manner similar to their regional colleagues. However, while full-time professionals are supported at a level on a par with ARL institutions, part-time librarians and paraprofessional staff receive considerably less support. This study also indicates that incorporating a formal research requirement into a job assignment does not necessarily ensure support for that assignment.

Although aware that the day-to-day activities must be covered, academic librarians who are required to do research, publish, and/or pursue other scholarly activities find that adequate time for these activities remains a critical issue. As a participant in an earlier study noted, “librarians can’t publish effectively in a ‘time clock’ environment.”⁶² Creative solutions to work schedule problems such as those described in studies by Goudy and Sewell need to become the norm rather than the exception.⁶³

Although release time for Florida librarians compares well with data reported from the ARL and non-ARL library surveys, adopting more flexibility in the scheduling of routine library duties may help reduce the level of stress associated with research. Likewise, research funding is comparable to other studies.

Formal mentoring is minimal. Although this study does not explore reasons behind this finding, formal mentoring may place difficult time constraints on participants and thus make the program hard to maintain. On the other hand, informal mentoring, as one might expect in a collegial academic environment, is quite common.

Support for research is critical if librarians are to be taken seriously as scholars, and studies have shown that productivity increases when librarians are given this support. Havener and Stolt found that 53.8% of the librarians who were working at institutions with research support published during the year 1990, while only 19.5% published if they were working without institutional support.⁶⁴ The research advisory committee approach described by Auburn University may be the type of program worth considering to boost productivity and share the responsibility of mentoring.⁶⁵

While the lack of association membership compensation and other types of research support may place an expensive burden on the individual professional, librarians continue to debate institutional versus personal responsibilities related to financial obligations for professional development.⁶⁶

If librarians need to negotiate for better support for research, what is the best method? In this study, unionization does seem to confer a strong advantage to librarians in terms of sabbaticals and research funding. Unionization may empower librarians to seek additional benefits such as formalizing research time into job assignments. Very

little has been written about the possible advantages of unionization for librarians and this is an area that would benefit from additional research.

Additional regional studies and updates of national surveys would be beneficial at this point. To succeed in their research efforts, librarians should be proactive, exploring all financial avenues available to them such as institutional research support and external funding opportunities. Librarians should actively request, and productively use, time for research. The challenge that Payne and Wagner issued back in 1984 still stands, "...now it is time to leave the library walls and exploit all sources available to teaching faculty."⁶⁷

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Appendix I: Survey Instrument

Institution:

General information

1. Are most librarians at your institution considered:

- ☐ Faculty
- ☐ Professional staff, not faculty
- ☐ Other (please describe)

2. Are librarians at your library covered by a union contract?

- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
- Comments?

3. Are your librarians eligible for:

- ☐ Promotion
(defined in this survey as a rank upgrade with pay raise based on quality of professional activities [including research and service] as judged by a committee of peers, campus administrators, or external reviewers)
- ☐ Promotion and tenure
(defined in this survey as a permanent employment contract awarded for successful achievements in research, teaching, and service)
- ☐ Continuing contract
(defined in this survey as a permanent or long-term [multiyear] contract based on professional performance and years of service but not necessarily related to scholarship or publishing achievements)
- ☐ Continuing contract and promotion
- ☐ Not eligible for promotion or tenure
- ☐ Other (please describe)

4. If librarians at your institution are eligible for promotion and/or tenure based on publishing and professional service, *in your opinion*, which statement would be most accurate?

- ☐ At my institution, promotion and tenure requirements have become less rigorous within the last five years
- ☐ At my institution, promotion and tenure requirements have become more rigorous within the last five years
- ☐ At my institution, promotion and tenure requirements have stayed about the same in the last five years
- ☐ I have no opinion on this matter

5. Who decides on librarian promotion/tenure at your institution? Please check all that apply:

- ☐ Library supervisor/director
- ☐ Peer review committee
- ☐ Institution-wide review committee
- ☐ Institutional administration (Provost, President, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please describe)

Comments?

Travel

NOTE: for the purposes of the survey, travel will be defined as attendance at professional conferences and workshops for personal professional development, professional association committee meetings, and research presentations (including invited presentations, panel sessions, and poster sessions.) **Required administrative attendance as an official representative of the library should not be included in your response.**

1. Does your library provide travel support for your librarians to attend professional meetings and conferences for personal professional development?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (please move to the next section regarding research support, page 4)

2. In your opinion, has travel funding at your library:

- ☐ Increased during the last 5 years
- ☐ Decreased during the last 5 years
- ☐ Stayed fairly constant during the last 5 years

Comments?

3. Who determines how travel funds will be allocated (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Library Dean/Director or other library administrator
- ☐ Librarian's direct supervisor
- ☐ Library travel committee
- ☐ Academic Dean or Provost (outside of the library)
- ☐ Institutional travel committee
- ☐ Other (please describe)

4. If travel funding comes from an institutional travel committee does the library have representation on that committee?

- ☐ Yes, the library is guaranteed a spot on the institutional travel committee
- ☐ Yes, librarians are eligible to be elected to the institutional travel committee
- ☐ No

5. Who is eligible for travel funds (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Full-time library faculty/professional librarians
- ☐ Part-time library faculty/professional librarians
- ☐ Temporary library faculty/professional librarians
- ☐ Permanent paraprofessional staff
- ☐ Part-time paraprofessional staff

- ☐ Temporary paraprofessional staff
- ☐ Other (please describe)

6. Please rank the following special criteria by priority as they would apply to your institution. Please label each item as:

- H Given high priority in funding decisions**
- M Considered in funding decisions**
- L Given low priority in funding decisions**
- N Not considered at all in funding decisions**

- ___ Members of an association attending a national library conference or workshop
- ___ Members of an association attending a state or regional library conference or workshop
- ___ Non-members of an association attending a national library conference or workshop
- ___ Non-members of an association attending a state or regional library conference or workshop
- ___ Attendance at a non-library association conference or workshop
- ___ Committee members attending national library association committee meetings
- ___ Committee members attending state or regional library association committee meetings
- ___ Committee members attending non-library association committee meeting
- ___ Librarians presenting at a national library workshop or conference
- ___ Librarians presenting at a state or regional library workshop or conference
- ___ Librarians presenting at a non-library association conference or workshop

Please rank the following additional criteria by priority as they would apply to your institution. Please label each item as:

- H Given high priority in funding decisions**
- M Considered in funding decisions**
- L Given low priority in funding decisions**
- N Not considered at all in funding decisions**

- ___ Length of service at the library
- ___ First-come, first-serve basis
- ___ Senior librarians (tenured or at associate or full professor level)
- ___ Newer librarians (untentured or still eligible for promotion)
- ___ Library Administrators (Deans, Directors, or Department Heads)
- ___ Other (please describe)

Additional comments regarding criteria for travel funding decisions?

7. How is travel support funded (please check all that apply)

- ☐ Direct line item for travel in library budget
- ☐ Discretionary funds from library budget
- ☐ Campus travel funds
- ☐ Endowments
- ☐ Other (please describe)

8. Does your library have a written policy on travel allocations?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. **What travel expenses are funded (please check all that apply):**
Hotel	☐ Full cost	☐ Partial cost
Air transportation	☐ Full cost	☐ Partial cost
Rental car	☐ Full cost	☐ Partial cost
Mileage	☐ Full cost	☐ Partial cost
Conference registration	☐ Full cost	☐ Partial cost
Meals	☐ Full cost	☐ Per diem
Other (please describe)		
Comments?		
10. **Does your library provide a specific travel allocation for each librarian?**
- ☐ Yes, each librarian receives up to \$_____ per year OR \$_____ every ____ years
- ☐ No
11. **Does your library provide travel funding for international travel?**
- ☐ Yes, (please describe)
- ☐ No
12. **After returning from a conference or workshop, are librarians required to report their findings/information learned to the administration or present to the library staff?**
- ☐ Yes, (please describe)
- ☐ No

Additional comments regarding travel support in general?

Research Support

1. **Are librarians at your institution required to undertake formal research/scholarship (professional presentations, published books and/or refereed journal articles) in order to obtain promotion and/or tenure?**
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
2. **Are librarians at your library officially assigned a research component as part of their professional job assignment?**
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please indicate the approximate amount of time they would be allocated for research out of their total job assignment.

By rank:

Administrators:

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

Senior librarians (associate and full professors or library equivalents) :

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

Newer librarians (instructors and assistant professors or library equivalents)

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

Other (please describe):

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

By specialization:

Technical service librarians:

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

Public service librarians:

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

Archivists:

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

Other (please describe):

☐ 1-5% ☐ 5-10% ☐ 10-20% ☐ more than 20%

3. Release time for research:

Are most librarians at your institution allocated regular weekly research time (a set number of hours of release from other professional duties, desk time, and meetings to work on research projects aimed at eventual publication)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comments?

If yes, approximately how much time is allocated each week?

_____ hours per week

Are librarians at your institutions allowed to work a flexible schedule (work at home or at an off-campus location as part of a normal 35-40 hour work week so they can devote uninterrupted time to research)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, approximately how many hours per week is each librarian expected to be present in the library to attend to public service tasks, faculty liaison work, etc?

_____ (minimum) hours per week

Are librarians at your institution allowed informal release time of a short duration (1 day to several weeks) on an irregular basis to devote time to research activities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Are librarians at your institution eligible for sabbaticals?

Sabbaticals are defined in this survey as a lengthy (one semester to one year) professional development leave at full or half pay to enhance a faculty member's career and to increase their value to the institution through opportunities for research-related travel, study, writing, or other experiences of professional value.

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Research funding:

Other than travel are librarians at your institution eligible to apply for internal funding to directly support their research?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If internal funding for research is available, how is it funded?

- ☐ Direct line for research support in library budget
- ☐ Discretionary funds from library budget
- ☐ Librarians may apply for institutional internal research/seed grants
- ☐ Other (please describe)

6. What additional kinds of support for research are available? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Equipment
- ☐ Software
- ☐ Clerical support for typing, grant administration, etc.
- ☐ Photocopying supplies
- ☐ Mailing supplies/postage
- ☐ Student or graduate assistant help
- ☐ Money for buying small gifts to compensate volunteers that respond to focus groups, surveys, etc.
- ☐ Other (please describe)

7. Do you provide guidance for library faculty researchers? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Formal mentoring
- ☐ Informal mentoring
- ☐ Library research committee to brainstorm ideas, share expertise, etc.
- ☐ Personnel with grant-writing/research proposal expertise to help apply for funding, assist with IRB certification, and/or help with submission of manuscripts.
- ☐ Other (please describe)
- ☐ No specific guidance provided

If a grant specialist is available, is this a library funded position or are librarians eligible to use institutional grant expertise?

- ☐ Library funded position
- ☐ Institutional research office funded position
- ☐ Other, please describe:

Membership in Professional Associations
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1. Is membership in professional associations considered for library promotion and/or tenure at your institution?

Membership in national associations (ALA, SLA, MLA, etc):

☐Required ☐Strongly recommended ☐Considered ☐Not required
 Membership in the Florida Library Association:
☐Required ☐Strongly recommended ☐Considered ☐Not required
 Membership in regional or local library associations:
☐Required ☐Strongly recommended ☐Considered ☐Not required
 Membership in non-library associations:
☐Required ☐Strongly recommended ☐Considered ☐Not required

2. Does your library contribute to personal membership fees for professional associations?

- ☐ Yes, library pays full membership dues, for one or more library-related associations per year
- ☐ Yes, library pays full membership dues, for one or more non-library professional associations per year
- ☐ Yes, library pays partial membership dues for library-related associations up to \$_____ per year
- ☐ Yes, library pays partial membership dues for non-library professional associations up to \$_____ per year
- ☐ No, librarians are personally responsible for any and all professional membership dues.
- ☐ Other _____