

Running a Small Library

A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians®

Second Edition

Edited by John A. Moorman



Chicago 2015

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Contents

PREFACE	vii
Part I: Introducing the Small Library	
1. College Libraries, <i>by Cy Dillon</i>	3
2. Community College Libraries, <i>by Rodney Lippard</i>	15
3. Special Libraries, <i>by Richard E. Wallace, revised by Elizabeth Terry Long</i>	21
4. Public Libraries, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	33
5. School Libraries, <i>by Linda Williams</i>	43
Part II: Administration in the Small Library	
6. Budgeting, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	59
7. Policies and Procedures, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	67
8. Staffing, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	77
9. Planning, <i>by Nelson Worley, revised by John A. Moorman</i>	89
10. Buildings, <i>by Frederick A. Schlipf</i>	105
11. Governing Boards and Governmental Relations, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	129
12. Friends Groups and Foundations, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	137
13. Community Partnership Development, <i>by Janet L. Crowther and Barry Trott</i>	147
14. Development, <i>by Patty Purish O'Neill</i>	157
Part III: Public Services in the Small Library	
15. Adult Services, <i>by Alicia Willson-Metzger</i>	165
16. Youth and Young Adult Services, <i>by Noreen Bernstein and Jessica McMurray</i>	183
17. Digital Services, <i>by Barry Trott</i>	197
Part IV: Collection Development in the Small Library	
18. Selection, <i>by Barbara Riebe</i>	211
19. Ordering, <i>by Laura Morales</i>	219
20. Cataloging, <i>by Laura Morales</i>	225
21. Circulation, <i>by John A. Moorman</i>	231
22. Weeding, <i>by Barbara Riebe</i>	239

Part V: Computers and Automation

- 23. Personal Computers and In-House Networks, *by Karen C. Knox* 245
- 24. Integrated Library Systems, *by Karen C. Knox* 253

Running a Small Library Sourcebook

- SOURCE A: List of State Library Agencies 260
- SOURCE B: List of Book and Periodical Vendors 262
- SOURCE C: List of Library Furniture and Supply Vendors 264
- SOURCE D: List of Automation Vendors 265
- SOURCE E: Professional Organizations 266
- SOURCE F: Professional Statements 268

ABOUT THE EDITOR AND CONTRIBUTORS 269

INDEX 271

Preface

The goal of this edition is the same as that for the first edition. It is to provide assistance to those operating or working in small libraries, no matter the individuals served or the units with which they are affiliated. Service in small libraries remains a challenge. In an age of increasing technology, it is imperative that knowledge be continually upgraded, that all possible areas of cooperation be explored, and that funding be located to provide essential library services. *Running a Small Library: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians*, Second Edition, continues to provide practical guidance for the day-to-day and the out-of-the-ordinary services, activities, and issues facing the small library community in a rapidly changing world.

This is my second go-around as the book's editor and an author of some chapters. A great deal has changed since the first edition in 2006, particularly the advances in technology that have reached even the smallest of libraries. Access to new databases has been made available through institutional funding or through state library consortia that bring basic database access to even the smallest of public libraries. With new formats such as e-books and electronic publishing, meeting the expectations of small library users is an increasing challenge. This edition is designed to present both big-picture concepts as well as specific issues facing those responsible for operations, or interested in operations, in a small library. Individual chapter authors are recognized for their expertise in content areas as well as their long experience working in small libraries. Some are new to this edition and some are returning. Each chapter has received either a thorough update or is completely new for this edition. It is the intent and hope of each author that the advice, instruction, and experienced commentary will meet your needs and the needs of the community your library serves. The small library, no matter what community it serves, is the backbone of our information society and an essential component of a democratic society.

This second edition of *Running a Small Library* again covers six major areas: management, administration, public services, collection development, computers and automation, and sources for more information.

Part I, “Introducing the Small Library,” contains five chapters. Each chapter is devoted to the unique characteristics of library settings in college, community college, special, public, and school libraries. Chapter authors explore their service sectors from a variety of approaches, leaving you, the reader, with a better understanding of their libraries’ history and current state and the challenges facing them in the twenty-first century.

Part II, “Administration in the Small Library,” in nine chapters, delves into specific areas of importance to small library operations.

- Chapter 6, “Budgeting,” assists readers in creating a financial plan that works. From types of budgets to key financial considerations, this chapter provides valuable and often overlooked guidance.
- Chapter 7, “Policies and Procedures,” makes the creation of institutional regulations easier. It outlines necessary topics that must be covered and provides guidance for authoring effective statements.
- Chapter 8, “Staffing,” factors human elements into the management equation, describing how to create job descriptions, interview candidates, train staff, balance schedules, and supervise and evaluate workers.
- Chapter 9, “Planning,” shows why and how you should prepare for long- and short-term goals.
- Chapter 10, “Buildings,” covers how to plan, finance, construct, furnish, remodel, and maintain facilities.
- Chapter 11, “Governing Boards and Governmental Relations,” demonstrates both how these bodies work for you and how you work with them—from establishment to maintenance to assessment.
- Chapter 12, “Friends Groups and Foundations,” explains the differences between these two support bodies; walks readers through their formation; and provides guidance for setting bylaws, fund-raising, and keeping both groups active.
- Chapter 13, “Community Partnership Development,” presents solid advice for libraries looking to partner. In addition to model relationships, you will find management techniques and suggestions for maximizing the benefits to your institution.
- Chapter 14, “Development,” examines traditional models of fund-raising and what it takes to implement a comprehensive advancement program for the twenty-first century.

Part III, “Public Services in the Small Library,” brings together three chapters that offer guidance to individuals providing service to specific user communities and discuss the increasing role that digital materials play in daily library operations.

- Chapter 15, “Adult Services,” examines reference work, programming, readers’ advisory, displays, and outreach and how to work with individuals of all types in the provision of these services.
- Chapter 16, “Youth and Young Adult Services,” covers the history of youth and young adult services in public libraries, services offered by youth and young adult services staff, the importance of collection development, and library programming.
- Chapter 17, “Digital Services,” is a new addition to the book. It covers digital collections, programs, and services and how best to provide them to users in the small library.

Part IV, “Collection Development in the Small Library,” addresses the issues and topics related to your materials and collections.

- Chapter 18, “Selection,” covers the goal of selection, questions to be answered before the selection process begins, considerations to take into account when making a selection, handling controversial materials, selection resources, and funding your collection.
- Chapter 19, “Ordering,” covers each of the steps required to buy an item from a vendor and get it ready to be turned over to the catalogers for additional processing.
- Chapter 20, “Cataloging,” outlines the two systems of cataloging and subject headings and discusses item description, assigning subject headings, authority control, assigning classification numbers, and applying a local collection scheme.
- Chapter 21, “Circulation,” gives guidance on the process of loaning items to users and obtaining the return of those items.
- Chapter 22, “Weeding,” gives guidance for the process of removing materials no longer of interest or use from the collection.

Part V, “Computers and Automation,” consists of two chapters addressing the issues surrounding technology in the small library.

- Chapter 23, “Personal Computers and In-House Networks,” provides assistance in writing and using a technology plan and discusses the types of equipment you will need to manage in your library, key technology services to offer in your library, and supporting and securing technology resources.
- Chapter 24, “Integrated Library Systems,” covers the features of an integrated library system (ILS), integration with third-party products and the ILS, ILS vendors, and the future of the ILS.

The final section of the manual, “Running a Small Library Sourcebook,” provides lists of state library agencies, book and periodical vendors, library furniture and supply vendors, and automation vendors as well as

information on professional organizations and professional statements. This information will prove valuable as you seek further assistance on problems or concerns or increased knowledge on particular topics. The purpose of the second edition of *Running a Small Library* remains the same: to assist you in better serving your community—whether in the academic, public, special, or school setting—by providing a better understanding of the essential functions of a small library. I hope that this second edition will provide valuable assistance to all individuals involved in the operation and use of the small library.



Part I

Introducing the Small Library

College Libraries

Cy Dillon

1

In the early history of English-speaking North America, small academic libraries were both simple and similar, but the three and three-quarters centuries since the founding of Harvard have produced remarkable variety among libraries that serve the smaller institutions of higher education. Whether it was Harvard's library in the seventeenth century, centered on a gift of 300 books from John Harvard (Budd 1998), or the library at Hampden-Sydney in the eighteenth century, advertised proudly in the *Virginia Gazette* as having the "best Writers, both ancient and modern" (Brinkley 1994), the book collections were usually housed in one room under the care of a professor or the president. In the case of Hampden-Sydney, for instance, the first library was housed in one of the five rooms of the president's home (Brinkley 1994).

With a few exceptions, academic libraries remained small, with untrained staff, and were open relatively few hours per week until the 1890s (Valentine 2012). In the nineteenth century, this oversight was at times corrected by libraries purchased and maintained by debate societies at institutions such as the University of Alabama (Pace 2004) and the University of North Carolina, where two debate societies had a total of 8,800 books in their libraries by 1849 (Budd 1998). But by the twentieth century, the demand for library collections to support research and teaching increased to the point that libraries evolved in divergent forms to serve their institutions. This tendency toward diversity was accelerated by the development of technology to the point that today small college libraries can range in size from a multiple-story building of 100,000 square feet to a single room of less than 1,000 square feet. Buildings can be historic or quite contemporary, be devoted to only library resources, or contain everything from classrooms and counseling centers to coffee shops and computer labs. Print collections can range in size from more than a million volumes to a small reference section supported by a virtual library of e-books and electronic periodicals. Staff, of course, can range in number from dozens to one.

This variety makes writing a succinct definition difficult unless you simply say, "A small academic library is a library that serves a small college."

IN THIS CHAPTER

- ✓ Library Services
- ✓ Budgeting
- ✓ Statistics and Assessment
- ✓ Staffing
- ✓ Challenges
- ✓ Conclusion
- ✓ Further Reading
- ✓ References

One source that addresses the definition of “academic” in “academic library” comes from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES 2014):

An academic library is the library associated with a degree-granting institution of higher education. Academic libraries are identified by the post-secondary institution of which they are a part and provide all of the following:

1. An organized collection of printed or other materials or a combination thereof;
2. A staff trained to provide and interpret such materials as required to meet the informational, cultural, recreational, or educational needs of clientele;
3. An established schedule in which services of the staff are available to clientele; and
4. The physical facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule.

An example of what is generally considered to be the size of the student body for a small academic institution may be found in these guidelines written by the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS 2014). The ACLS defines these as “small”:

- Master’s Colleges and Universities I and II with FTE enrollments between 1,000 and 2,500.
- All Baccalaureate Colleges—Liberal Arts and General with FTE enrollments 1,000 or above.
- All Associate’s Colleges and Community Colleges with FTE enrollments between 2,500 and 10,000.

The ACLS defines the following as “very small”:

- Master’s Colleges and Universities I and II with FTE enrollments below 1,000.
- Baccalaureate Colleges—Liberal Arts and General with FTE enrollments below 1,000.
- All Associate’s Colleges and Community Colleges with FTE enrollments below 2,500.

Thus, leaving aside community colleges, 2,500 would seem to be the enrollment ceiling for small academic institutions, so, with the exception of relatively small community colleges, a small academic library serves a degree-granting institution of 2,500 or fewer FTE students.

Library Services

Every small academic library should offer a range of services that match the needs of the institution's academic program. The creation and revision of a mission statement for the library provide opportunities to make sure that the match of services to needs is appropriate and to plan for changing services as needs change. The library's mission should be in harmony with the overall mission of the institution. In 1999, the College Libraries Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) published a collection of academic library mission statements titled *Mission Statements for College Libraries* (Hastreiter, Cornelius, and Henderson 1999). This book reveals that libraries' explanations of their missions differ as dramatically as their buildings, collections, staffs, and services, but it is well worth consulting when it is time to revise the mission statement of any academic library.

One of the clearest and most direct of all the mission statements available comes from Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia (see sidebar). The categories of services this library asserts that it provides are typical of those at most small colleges: build an appropriate collection, give individual research help, offer bibliographic instruction tailored to the college, provide hardware and instruction for teaching and learning technologies, maintain a college archive, and create a space that promotes a variety of styles of learning.

Beginning with the collection, a set of policies should be in place to support the acquisition of carefully selected items from a number of media. Getting faculty to select books and make recommendations on subscriptions is ideal, but this approach usually has to be supplemented by selections made by the staff. Having general guidelines about how much to budget for each subject and how many items to attempt to add in a year helps keep acquisitions going according to plan. In addition to regular reviews of a library's acquisitions policy, it is a good practice to use products designed to evaluate collections when they are affordable. Until recently, commercially available lists of recommended materials for college libraries focused on print, books and journals, but software products such as Bowker's version of *Resources for College Libraries* are beginning to include electronic media evaluation as a service. As more extensive electronic resources become available, libraries will have to be sure that their collection development policies reflect the growing importance of those assets versus print materials. Do not give up on books, though. Most users prefer digital versions of journals, but undergraduate students are still most comfortable using books in their research, particularly humanities research.

Providing good individual help to all users is one of a small academic library's most important roles. A small campus atmosphere supports taking all the necessary time to be sure students and faculty get the help they need. The traditional approach to this service has been from behind a reference desk, but more and more libraries have switched to either roving reference staff or "one stop" service desks that answer basic questions and offer users individual appointments with reference librarians for more complex issues.

Sample Mission Statement

"At McGraw-Page Library we provide information services and spaces to foster learning communities at Randolph-Macon College. We do this by:

- selecting, acquiring, and making accessible information in diverse media,
- providing research assistance,
- integrating bibliographic instruction with the college curriculum,
- supporting a variety of educational technologies,
- keeping an historical record of Randolph-Macon College, and
- enhancing individual and shared intellectual work in a welcoming environment."

(McGraw-Page Library 2014)

The single desk also functions well to direct patrons to services such as technology help desks, media librarians, and writing centers. Other methods of individual help used in small college libraries include e-mail, chat reference, and even messages via Facebook. Whatever the context, the key to good individual reference service is matching the user with the right staff member to solve his or her specific problem.

Group bibliographic instruction, often as a meeting of a specific class, is one of the core services of an academic library. When possible, this instruction should be carefully coordinated with an assignment, so collaboration with faculty is essential. Some colleges have a required assignment in all freshman seminar or introductory composition classes, creating an excellent opportunity for librarians to be sure most students are exposed to basic research skills. An ideal structure within the curriculum for making information literacy a core academic skill might include a required short assignment to orient freshmen, a session on research papers for the second composition course, an introduction to research in a major focused on a selected assignment in foundation classes, and an intense session on information literacy in capstone classes. Convincing a whole faculty to support such a program is very difficult, but it makes a good target.

Small college libraries most often include a media library with hardware and software as well as at least one staff member with technology skills to support their use by both students and faculty. Of course, some campuses keep media services separate and some colleges are too small to support a media library, but directors should be prepared to supervise everything from a DVD collection and streaming video service to the college's learning management system. In many institutions, the library director or media librarian also has to manage classroom technology, and the technology required to deliver the library's content is also something that cannot be ignored. Libraries should be prepared for technology shifts such as the recent increase in demand for access to content on mobile devices.

College administrations usually assume that libraries conserve a wide variety of publications, documents, and media items that reflect the history of the institution. In many cases, these efforts are woefully underfunded, but the library should do what it can to maintain usable copies of items such as college newspapers and magazines, programs from graduation and other important events, historical photographs, trustee meeting minutes, presidential papers, and recordings of important speakers. The digital revolution is making this process less space intensive but not necessarily easier. In addition to maintaining an archive, most libraries will benefit from having their own digital repository as well as from locating some digital assets in resources such as the Internet Archive. Having the public access catalog link to digital files stored on a variety of servers is one strategy that improves access for most users.

While it is now possible to deliver information services to a small college with a "virtual" library, many institutions have recently increased emphasis on the value of library space as an individual and group learning

environment. Open, attractive space for study, working on computers, collaborating with or without technology, and doing research is an effective draw for students, and the current tendency is to move or condense print collections—particularly reference books—to create more space for students. As opposed to earlier generations who wanted privacy, current students usually want to see and be seen when they are in the library. They are also comfortable with seeing staff (though they do not necessarily want to interact), and it is important to have someone visible at the service point at all times. Twenty-first-century students also tend to expect the library to be open both late and early, and a ninety-hour or more weekly schedule has become the norm. Relatively few small college libraries maintain twenty-four-hour schedules, but some campuses have that tradition. Libraries also often house coffee shops, technology-rich classrooms, computer labs, editing studios, group study rooms, and writing centers, so it is clear that the library as a place will be important to small colleges for the foreseeable future.

Budgeting

Most small college library budgets can be managed with a bit of knowledge about fund accounting, an acquaintance with spreadsheets, attention to detail, and a simple pocket calculator. Funds usually come from four sources: the college's current budget, endowments, gifts, and grants.

Current funds will be divided into “lines” or amounts for specific expenses such as postage or electronic resources. Library staff should know their institution's policies about transferring money between lines, and they should be aware that all money allocated should be spent within the fiscal year. Good managers usually try to avoid saving a large sum in a line for a big-ticket purchase at the last minute. Current budgets are also subject to a process of requesting funds that will likely include providing reasons for the request in each line. This process is both reasonable and helpful in that it gives the library staff the opportunity to examine their priorities for spending money each year. Online resources, because their renewals fall at various times during the year, sometimes present budgeting problems. Libraries without a commercial product for managing database purchasing should keep a spreadsheet that records each resource, its date of renewal, the cost of the last subscription, and the funding source used each year.

As opposed to current funds, endowments provide funds from the earnings of investments, with the amount available for each year calculated by a formula consistent with college policies. This requires some caution in planning because the same fund will produce different amounts as the economy changes, but endowments have the advantage of allowing money to be held over in the account if it is not spent within a fiscal year. Thus, an endowment is suitable for saving funds for a large, one-time purchase. Endowments are also relatively reliable for recurring expenses such as book purchasing as long as the librarian is conservative in forecasting the funds

available for the next year. Because of the relative permanence and flexibility of endowments, libraries may designate gifts to endowments as their preferred form of donation.

Gifts may be unrestricted, that is, for use at the discretion of the library staff; they may be intended for a specific use with some flexibility, as in a donation to buy books in a designated subject; or they may be for a specific purpose or purchase. In all these cases, library staff should be careful that the donated funds are either funneled into library accounts or segregated into an account of their own. Otherwise, a gift meant to underwrite a specific library acquisition may end up in the institution's general fund.

Grants are usually received from government agencies or private foundations and often require a strict application process as well as being competitive with other applicants. Grants, which can be restricted to one fiscal year or spread over several, should be the subject of special care in the accounting process, as they often require very detailed reports. Many small colleges have grants officers who can assist librarians in designing and writing grant applications.

Statistics and Assessment

Once a library delineates its mission, the staff should take steps to ensure that their effectiveness in each area of service can be evaluated regularly. Gathering statistics on library activities is an important part of the assessment process because this enables a library to compare its efforts against past years and to look at them in the light of norms and benchmarks. Along with outcomes assessment results, such as those from information literacy surveys, these comparisons should be the subject of regular reviews, and as noted in the ACRL's (2011) *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education*, libraries should "use assessment data for continuous improvement of library operations" (6).

In addition to internal assessment, statistics are often reported annually to the institution's academic administration, and a variety of surveys and reports also require statistics from the library. Two that are among the most important are the NCES's biannual academic library survey and the ACRL's annual survey of statistics and trends (see sidebar). It is a good practice to save copies of both the NCES and the ACRL surveys. The results can help when the library's institution is up for reaccreditation by its regional accrediting agency. If your library produces an annual report for the administration, consider posting it each year as part of the library webpages. This makes statistics easy to find and is a way of communicating what the library has accomplished.

Academic libraries should have detailed assessment plans that include means of measuring student learning outcomes in information literacy. These outcomes are best explained in the ACRL's (2000) *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*. There are a number of

approaches to assessing students' information literacy, but pre- and post-testing with a nationally normed instrument is arguably the method most likely to be accepted by accreditors. Even this procedure, however, requires "closing the loop" by reviewing the results, noting where the students might improve, and devising strategies to foster that improvement. Thus, gathering statistics and carrying out assessment are important tools in the effective management of small academic libraries.

Staffing

The wealth of a good small academic library, never mind the building or the collection, lies in the skill and energy of its staff. Because numbers are limited, the staff in general, and the director in particular, must be versatile and focused on the service mission of the library. There is usually no place to hide a staff member whose abilities are below par. Most small college libraries have a director or dean, one or more professional librarians, various paraprofessionals, and student workers.

The director of a small academic library should fill a variety of roles requiring both versatility and persistence. Perhaps the most important role is leading the staff, working toward constant improvement in fulfilling the library's mission. Because the working environment in most libraries is relatively small, the director has the opportunity for daily observation of and communication with all the staff. In spite of this frequent contact, having regular planning and review meetings with the director and key colleagues is a good strategy in libraries with more than a few workers. It is most often the director's vision that drives positive change, even with a very talented staff, but the director should also help cultivate good ideas from other sources.

More roles for the director include guiding collection development and technological innovation, managing the physical facility, acquiring funding and managing the budget, hiring appropriate professionals and paraprofessionals, and participating in and taking advantage of consortia and other cooperative organizations. Directors must also maintain good relationships with a wide variety of constituencies, including the college administration, the faculty, the students, the trustees, the community, donors, alumni, and vendors. If that list is not imposing enough, add scholarly research and writing and the job seems to be too complex for anyone. Nevertheless, serving as the director of a small college library can be one of the most interesting and fulfilling positions on any campus.

Since most small college libraries employ more than one professional librarian, a person in this position can usually focus more closely on specific aspects of the library such as technical services, circulation and public services, or technology and media. Still, these librarians are usually expected to supervise paraprofessional and student staff and maintain relationships with most of the groups that concern the director. They may also be called upon to be engaged in the faculty governance process, and some institutions

Library Survey Reports

Among the most important statistical reports are the library section of the NCES's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, a federal report usually completed in the college's office of institutional research, and ACRL's annual Academic Library Trends and Statistics Survey. Some care is required to complete these instruments because the definitions for key terms can vary, and the directions that accompany each survey call for close reading. Results from the ACRL survey are published by the association in a variety of formats, described in detail on its website (www.ala.org/acrl/publications/trends). These results are an invaluable source for benchmarking and for identifying and understanding trends in academic libraries. Every academic library director should take advantage of them, especially since so much of the data is available free to survey participants.

Changing Standards in Information Literacy

The *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* are currently undergoing revision. For information on the new proposed *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, go to <http://acrl.ala.org/ilstandards>.

For Further Information

To learn more about the recruiting and hiring process, see the ACRL's "A Guideline for the Screening and Appointment of Academic Librarians Using a Search Committee" at www.ala.org/acrl/standards/screenapguide.

assign librarians as liaisons to departments or divisions. The importance of these professional positions, which often come with faculty status, means that hiring librarians is a process much like hiring a tenure-track professor.

Small college librarians should expect—and be expected—to participate in professional organizations and engage in research related to their work. This is especially important if they will be involved in the tenure and promotion process, but it has benefits for nonfaculty librarians as well. Directors must see themselves as mentors for their colleagues, encouraging their professional activities and trying to help them find funds for conferences and workshops. The rate of change in resources and processes is such that librarians never reach a point that they can permanently know what they need to know to perform their job. With the director's support, the close working relationships, and the variety of responsibilities required of all professionals, small libraries are a good place to begin a career as an academic librarian.

Paraprofessionals should also be hired with care. Their accuracy and reliability are essential to providing good library services, and the importance of the ability of public services paraprofessionals to interact well with library users cannot be overemphasized. The best collection can be rendered inconsequential by uncooperative or disagreeable staff at points of service. As opposed to professional librarians, in most cases, paraprofessionals can be recruited locally or regionally and vetted by a committee from within the library.

The director and professional librarians should be sure that the paraprofessional staff have ample opportunities to communicate both in terms of being informed of plans and projects and in terms of offering their own ideas about processes and policies. Often the most productive ideas come from the point at which the detail work is done. This communication should include frequent contact, clear explanation of expectations, regular evaluations, and occasional meetings of the whole staff.

Like librarians, paraprofessionals are well advised to participate in organizations such as state library associations and to take advantage of professional development opportunities. More ambitious staff will consider getting a library science degree, and the recent creation of quite a few quality online master's programs makes improving your status more attractive than in the past.

Small college librarians rely on student workers to complete many essential tasks and provide core services to users. This means that professional and paraprofessional staff have to be good trainers and supervisors, developing instructional programs for a variety of student positions. As with other classes of library workers, clear communication between the students and their supervisors is essential. The hiring, evaluation, and dismissal policies for students must be clear and consistently applied. If these requirements are met, students can be given much responsibility with very good results, providing the library with more workers than it could hire otherwise and allowing young people willing to work to help pay for their education.

Challenges

Most of the challenges that academic libraries face now are the result of the unprecedented rapidity of change in the character of their institutions, the demographics of the users they serve, the budget realities for their colleges, and the technology they use but do not really control. The procedures and strategies that developed during the many years that libraries served as repositories for print resources are no longer adequate in an environment rich in new problems and priorities. Clearly libraries are “at a critical time in the realm of library technologies, with many organizations working to break out of established conceptual, functional, and technological bounds” (Breeding 2013b, 18). But successful use of technology alone is not enough to ensure that a library will fulfill its mission. Librarians must examine all their practices and modify them as necessary to meet the demands of their users and the needs of their institutions.

As small colleges offer a wider variety of programs of study in multiple formats such as distance learning, branch campuses, shared facilities, and international programs, libraries are finding more efficient means of delivering the information students and faculty need. Obviously, digital information resources along with technology like discovery services, link resolvers, and automated interlibrary loan are all crucial in information delivery. Nevertheless, libraries also have to maintain inviting learning spaces, book collections, and a set of services that support the academic work of students and faculty. With more and more nontraditional students entering this wide variety of academic programs, libraries also face serving multiple generations with very diverse expectations about how they should be served. Thus, the same public services librarian who keeps up the library webpages, Facebook presence, and Twitter account may have to be able to teach a traditional bibliographic instruction session and answer traditional reference questions, and the technical services librarian might have to master batch downloading MARC records from multiple vendors and help standardize the metadata for the digital repository the same year he or she catalogs a set of centuries-old Latin books for special collections. Needless to say, all these activities have to be undertaken in an environment of flat, if not sinking, financial support for the library. Many small colleges are struggling with discount rates that make it very difficult to increase budgets; at the same time student demand for amenities is at an all-time high.

One of the most difficult current challenges is competing for the user’s attention. The Internet experience of students and faculty exposes them to resources that set “an almost unreachable bar for user experience and breadth of content” (Breeding 2013a, 18), but librarians have to convince users of the value of the resources and services their own technology offers. As more content becomes available on the web, e-books become easier to use, open access flourishes, and new forms of digital scholarly work become accepted, successful academic libraries “will need to: deconstruct legacy print collections; move from item-by-item book selection to purchase-on-demand

and subscriptions; manage the transition to open access journals; focus on curating unique items; and develop new mechanisms for funding national infrastructure” (Lewis 2013, 159). Clearly, collaboration, particularly shared systems and resources, is a strategy that no library will want to avoid in a situation that is at once demanding and potentially very rewarding.

Conclusion

The small academic library offers a dynamic working environment with an opportunity to fulfill a service mission while developing as a professional. Librarians are called upon to be versatile, innovative, collegial, and resourceful in a time of tumultuous change in most aspects of their work. A small campus offers the opportunity to work directly with students and faculty while making meaningful contributions to the evolution of the institution as you pursue a satisfying career.

Further Reading

In addition to journals focused on college libraries, such as *College and Research Libraries*, *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *Journal of Library Administration*, or *College and Undergraduate Libraries*, academic librarians should read the *Chronicle of Higher Education* regularly. It is important to keep in touch with developments in the college and university sphere because trends and issues for these institutions are bound to influence their libraries. The *Chronicle's* annual *Almanac of Higher Education* is a particularly useful source of statistics on the American academic scene.

In many cases, RSS feeds and electronic discussion lists are excellent means of keeping up with specific journals or entire fields of study, and their immediacy makes them hard to ignore. These resources are particularly good for following a specific area of research or keeping current with an organization. It is best to be selective about signing up, however, since having too much to select from can be a hindrance to productivity.

Academic librarians should be aware of the many publications of the ACRL, described at www.ala.org/acrl/publications. This page links to sources that range from journals to dozens of monographs on all aspects of academic librarianship. Some of these resources are open access, and some are for sale, but the quality is always good and the coverage broad. ACRL publications are especially good sources for widely accepted sets of standards for library practice (www.ala.org/acrl/standards).

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Index

A

A to Zoo: Subject Access to Children's Books
(Thomas and Lima), 185

Academic Library Trends and Statistics
Survey (ACRL), 9

academic/college libraries

- budgeting for, 7–8
- challenges for, 11–12
- circulation and, 232, 233
- definition of, 3–4
- governance of, 129
- history of, 3
- mission statement for, 5
- overview of, 3–4
- services of, 5–7
- staffing for, 9–10
- statistics and assessment of, 8–9
- strategic planning for, 90–92

See also community college libraries

accessibility, 19, 29–30, 197–198

accountability, 131, 134

acoustics, 113

acquisition. See collection development;
selection/acquisition

activities, planning and, 98, 100, 102

adult services

- displays, exhibits, and programs,
177–180
- outreach services, 180–181
- overview of, 165
- public libraries and, 37–38
- readers' advisory, 175–177
- reference work, 165–175

American Association of Community
Colleges (AACCC), 15

American Association of Law Libraries, 25

American Association of School
Librarians (AASL), 44–45, 50, 51*fig*

American Council of Learned Societies, 4

American Institute of Architects (AIA),
109

American Library Association (ALA), 44,
90, 202, 203, 212

annual fund campaigns, 158–159. See also
development; funding/fund-raising

architects, 108–109

Association for Educational
Communications and Technology
(AECT), 44–45

Association of College and Research
Libraries (ACRL), 5, 8, 12

Association of Independent Information
Professionals, 25

Association of Research Libraries (ARL),
92

atria, 122

audiobooks, 200, 204

authority control, 226

B

backups, 250

balustrades, 120

behavior policies, 170

bias, 211

bibliographic instruction, 6

Bibliostat, 95, 96–97

bidding process, 111

Bird, Nora J., 15

Bizzle, Ben, 206

blogs, 189

*Board of Education, Island Trees Union
Free School District no. 26 v. Pico*, 46

boards of trustees, 34, 138, 141, 143, 144.
See also governing entities

Bock, D. Joleen, 15–16

book challenges, 189–190

*Book Lust: Recommended Reading for
Every Mood, Moment, and Reason*
(Pearl), 176

book sales, 141

Booklist, 186

bookstores, local, 220

Breeding, Marshall, 257

budgeting

- for academic/college libraries, 7–8
- budget preparation, 61–62, 64
- budget report form, 65*fig*
- budget tracking, 65
- capital budgets, 59–60
- communication and, 61
- line item budget, 60, 63–64*fig*
- operating budgets, 60–61
- ordering and, 222
- overview of, 59
- performance budget, 61
- planning document and, 60
- program budget, 61
- for public libraries, 35–36
- software for, 59
- for special libraries, 25–26
- technology and, 246–247
- zero-based budget, 60

- budgeting (*cont.*)
See also development; funding/
 fund-raising
- building consultants, 108
- buildings
 basic requirements of, 111–116
 construction of, 110–111
 design problems and, 118–124
 effective floor plan for, 124–126
 finding site for, 109, 115
 funny-shaped, 121
 help with, 126
 interior contents and, 116–118
 money for, 110
 overview of, 105
 planning and constructing, 106–111
 remodeling (conversion), 109, 121–122
 snappy rules or, 125
- built-ins, 121
- C**
- cantilever shelving, 116
- capital budgets, 59–60
- carpeting, 113, 115, 122
- cataloging
 authority control and, 226
 classification numbers for, 226–228
 copy, 229
 descriptive, 225
 local collection scheme and, 228–229
 overview of, 225
 resources for, 226
 subject, 225–226
 by vendors, 221
 weeding and, 240
- catalogs
 enriching, 204–205
 integrated library system (ILS) and, 254,
 255–256
- ceiling height, 113
- ensorship, 46, 47–48, 212
- certification, 52
- challenges to items, 189–190. *See also*
 censorship; “objectionable” material;
 reconsideration policies
- chat reference, 173, 174, 202
- Chief Officers for State Library Agencies
 (COSLA), 96
- children’s services. *See* youth and young adult
 services
- Chronicle of Higher Education*, 12
- circulation
 academic/college libraries and, 232, 233
 audience and, 231–233
 external pickup and, 115
 integrated library system (ILS) and, 255
 overdue materials and, 234–235
 overview of, 231
 public libraries and, 36–37, 232–234
 return of materials, 114, 235–236
 school libraries and, 231–232
 self-checkout and, 249, 255
 special libraries and, 232
 technology and, 236–237
 time periods for, 233–234
- circulation space, 118
- city/county planning, 95
- classification numbers, 226–228
- collection development
 academic libraries and, 5
 cataloging, 225–230
 circulation, 231–237
 ordering, 219–223
 procedures manual for, 29
 public libraries and, 37
 selection, 211–217
 weeding, 239–241
 youth and, 185–190
See also selection/acquisition
- collections, digital. *See* digital and electronic
 resources
- combined public libraries, 34
- Common Core State Standards, 52
- communication
 board-director relationship and, 131, 134
 budgeting and, 61
 community college libraries and, 19, 20
 development and, 157–158
 staffing and, 9, 10
- community college libraries
 collaboration and, 19–20
 collections of, 18–19
 community and, 16–18
 overview of, 15–16
See also academic/college libraries
- community partnership development. *See*
 partnering
- competitive intelligence, 23
- computers
 floor plan and, 124
 overview of, 245
 for public, 248
 for staff, 247–248
See also technology
- contract employees, 24
- conversion projects, 109, 121–122
- cooperative agreements, 36, 256
- copy cataloging, 229
- copy machines, 248
- copyright, 28
- Core Collections*, 186
- crafts, 191
- Creating Policies for Results* (Nelson and
 Garcia), 94
- credit card accounts, 221
- CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern
 Libraries* (Larson), 188
- crowdfunding, 159
- Crumpton, Michael A., 15
- D**
- dangerous features, 120–121
- databases, 201, 204
- descriptive cataloging, 225
- development
 communications and, 157–158
 fund-raising and, 158–160
 overview of, 157
 stewardship and, 160–161
See also budgeting; funding/
 fund-raising
- Dewey Decimal System, 226–227
- digital and electronic resources
 cataloging, 204–205
 community college libraries and, 18
 special libraries and, 30
 transition to, 90–91
 types of, 198–202
- digital programming, 201–202
- digital services
 catalogs, 204–205
 collections for, 198–201
 online services, 202–203
 overview of, 197–198
 programming for, 201–202
 social media and, 205–206
 websites, 203–204
See also technology
- directors
 dismissing, 135
 evaluation of, 133–134/fig, 135
 Friends of the Library groups and, 138,
 141, 142, 144
 relationship with, 131
 role of, 130
- disciplinary actions, 86
- discovery services, 257
- displays and exhibits, 177–178
- documentation, staff dismissal and, 86
- donations/gifts, 8, 143, 159–160, 216–217.
See also development; endowments;
 funding/fund-raising; grants
- Dowd, Nancy, 206
- downloadable materials, 200
- E**
- e-books, 199, 204, 256. *See also* digital and
 electronic resources
- Edge initiative, 96, 97
- education, 35, 40
- electrical supply, 113

- electronic resources. *See* digital and electronic resources
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; 1965), 44
- e-mail, 248
- e-mail reference, 172–173
- emergent literacy, 190–192
- employment. *See* staff
- endowments, 7–8, 142, 160. *See also* development; donations/gifts; funding/fund-raising
- entrances and exits, 117, 118–119, 120
- evaluation
of directors, 133–134*fig*, 135
of governing entities, 132*fig*, 134–135
planning and, 102
of staff, 84–85
of technology plan, 247
- exhibits. *See* displays and exhibits
- exits and entrances, 117, 118–119, 120
- expansion, 115
- F**
- fairy tales, 184
- family literacy programs, 191–192
- Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS)
data collection, 96
- finances, 234
- fire exits, 117
- 501(c)(3) status, 137, 138, 143
- floor plans, 114
- floor strength, 112
- flooring, 113, 115, 122, 123
- format changes, 40
- foundations. *See* Library Foundations
- Friends of the Library groups
bylaws for, 138, 139–140*fig*
formation of, 137–138, 141
funding and, 35, 141–142, 144
overview of, 137
relationship with, 143–144
role of, 142
- From Distant Admirers to Library Lovers—
and Beyond*, 197
- funding/fund-raising
for buildings, 110
changes in, 90
for collection, 216–217
development and, 158–160
Friends of the Library groups and, 141–142, 144
partnering and, 152–153
for public libraries, 35–36
for school libraries, 50–52
selection and, 216–217
See also development; donations/gifts; endowments; grants
- furniture, 110, 116–117, 123, 264–265
- G**
- Genreflecting: A Guide to Reading Interests in Genre Fiction* (Orr and Herald), 177
- gift shops, 141–142
- gifts. *See* donations/gifts
- goals, planning and, 98, 100, 102
- Goodreads, 177
- Google Analytics, 203
- governing entities
evaluation of, 132*fig*, 134–135
partnering and, 152
policies and procedures and, 67–68
relationship with, 131, 134–135
role of, 130
types of, 129
See also boards of trustees
- governmental relations, 135–136
- grants, 8, 147, 153, 217. *See also* development; donations/gifts; funding/fund-raising
- ground breaking, 111
- H**
- Handbook for Community College Libraries* (Crumpton and Bird), 15
- hiring, 10, 77–81, 83
- homeless patrons, 169–170
- Horn Book Magazine, The*, 186
- How Americans Value Public Libraries in Their Communities* (Pew), 197
- humidity, 112–113
- HVAC systems, 112–113
- I**
- Illinois Library Association, 107
- Implementing for Results* (Nelson), 93
- information audit, 22
- information literacy, 6, 8–9, 49–50
- Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (ACRL), 8, 9
- Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (AASL and AECT), 45
- Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* (AASL and AECT), 45
- Innovative Approaches to Literacy program, 51
- Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), 96
- integrated library system (ILS)
future of, 257
important features of, 253–254
overview of, 253
staff infrastructure and, 247–248
third-party products and, 255–256
vendors for, 256–257
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (NCES), 9
- intellectual freedom, 45, 190
- interior contents, 116–118
- interlibrary loan (ILL), 37, 212
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS), 137, 138, 141, 143
- Internet connection, 247, 248
- Internet Public Library, 175
- Internet service providers (ISPs), 247
- interviewing
architects, 109
reference interviews, 165–173
for staff, 80*fig*, 81
- Island Trees* case, 46
- J**
- job descriptions, 77, 78–79*fig*, 81
- journals, special libraries and, 31
- K**
- King, David Lee, 202
- Kirkus Review*, 186
- Knapp School Libraries Project, 44
- knowledge management, 23
- L**
- language barriers, 168–169
- language of collections, multiple, 187–188
- learning standards, 50, 51*fig*
- lending. *See* circulation
- liaison programs, 19
- librarians, shortage of, 52
- “Library Bill of Rights,” 45, 212
- Library Catalogue as Social Space, The* (Tarulli), 205
- Library Foundations, 35, 142–144
- Library of Congress, 226
- Library of Congress Classification (LCC)
system, 227–228
- Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), 51
- library services platform, 257
- LibraryThing, 177
- lighting, 112, 113, 119, 121, 122, 125
- line item budget, 60, 63–64*fig*
- literacy programming, 190–192
- loan periods, 233–234. *See also* circulation
- local collection scheme, 228–229
- M**
- magazines, downloadable, 200
- maintenance, 115, 122–123
- makerspaces, 249–250
- management goals, 98
- Managing for Results* (Nelson, Altman, and Mayo), 94

MARC records, 204–205, 254
 marketing, 24
 materials checkout and return. *See* circulation
Media Programs: District and School (AASL and AECT), 44–45
 media services, college libraries and, 6
 Medical Library Association, 25
 mentally ill patrons, 169–170
 Middle States Association, 44
 mission statements, 5, 92, 97–98, 246
Mission Statements for College Libraries (ACRL), 5
 mold, 113
 motion sensors, 119
 music, downloadable, 200
 Music Library Association, 25

N

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 4, 8, 43, 96
 National Education Association (NEA), 44
 National Public Radio (NPR), 176
 National Summer Learning Association, 192
 networking, 25, 181
 networks, 247
New Planning for Results, The (Nelson), 93–94
 NoveList Select, 255–256

O

“objectionable” material, 213–215. *See also* challenges to items; reconsideration policies
 objectives, planning and, 98, 100, 102
 Olsen, Gary, 124
 online giving, 158, 159
 operating budgets, 60–61
 ordering
 add-ons, 221
 budgeting and, 222
 cancelled and back-ordered items, 222
 creating and submitting, 221
 deciding on vendor for, 219–220
 nature of material and, 219
 overview of, 219
 payment for, 220–221
 receiving, 222
 resources for, 220
 outreach services, 39, 180–181, 193
 overdue materials, 234–235, 255

P

parking, 114
 partnering
 challenges of, 152–153
 first steps toward, 154
 levels of, 148–149
 overview of, 147–148

realities of, 153–154
 scale of, 149, 151–152
 as strategic tool, 148–149
 Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL)
 model of, 148–149, 150, 151
 pathfinders, 171
 patrons, common challenges regarding, 168–172
 peer comparison, 95, 97
 performance budget, 61
 performance measures, 96
 personnel departments, 77, 86. *See also* staff
 phonathons, 159
 Pico, Stephen, 46
 planning
 aids for, 95–96
 approaches to, 90–92
 cycle of, 99–102
 evaluation and, 102
 implementation and, 102
 key components of, 97–99
 level of effort for, 98–99
 methodologies and resources for, 94–97
 models for, 92–94
 overview of, 89–90
 resources for, 97
 types of, 95
Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries (McClure et al.), 92–93
 planning document, budgeting and, 60
Planning for Results (Himmel and Wilson), 92–94
Planning Guide for the High School Library Program, A, 44
Planning Process, A, 92
Pocket Reference Manual for Public Library Trustees, A, 68, 69–70fig
 policies and procedures
 on behavior, 170
 development of, 67–68
 difference between, 74
 on displays, 178
 governing entities and, 67–68, 130
 overview of, 67
 reconsideration policies, 45–46, 214fig
 sample of, 71fig, 72fig, 73fig, 74fig
 for selection, 45–46
 special libraries and, 24
 suggestions for, 69–70fig
 writing, 68, 71–73
 population changes, 40
 pre-emergent literacy, 38
 prepaid accounts, 221
 previewing, 187
 printers, 248
 professional associations/organizations, 25, 266–268

professional development, 10
 professional statements, 268
 program budget, 61
 program rooms, 117
 programming
 for adults, 178–180
 digital, 201–202
 spaces needed for, 107–108
 for youth, 190–194
 public libraries
 budgeting for, 35–36
 challenges related to, 39–41
 circulation and, 232–234
 collaboration and, 19
 collection development and, 37
 combined, 34
 definition of, 33
 funding for, 35–36
 governance of, 34–35, 129
 services of, 36–39
 staffing and, 35
 technology and, 37–38, 39–40
 types of, 33–34
 Public Library Association (PLA), 90
 Public Library Data Service (PLDS), 97
 publishers, 220
Publishers Weekly, 186
 publishing, changes in, 90–91
 purchase orders, 221

R

radial stacks, 121
 Randolph-Macon College, 5
 readers' advisory, 175–177, 184–185, 189
 recall, 233
 reconsideration policies, 45–46, 214fig
 reference interviews
 common problems with, 168–172
 description of, 165–166
 in-person, 166–168
 virtual reference and, 172–173
 youth and, 185
 reference service
 college libraries and, 5–6
 overview of, 165–166
 public libraries and, 37–38
 reference interviews, 166–173
 resources for, 173–175
 virtual, 172–173
 youth and, 184–185, 189
 regional libraries, 33–34
 remodeling (conversion projects), 109, 121–122
 reporting lines, 23
 Request for Information (RFI) letters, 109
 research guides, 19
 restrooms, 117–118

return of materials, 114, 235–236. *See also*
 circulation
 ribbon cutting, 111

S

scenario planning, 95
Scenario Planning for Libraries (Giesecke), 95
 schematic designs, 109–110
 school boards, 47–48
 school libraries
 challenges related to, 48–53
 circulation and, 231–232
 collection management and, 45–48
 definition of, 43
 functions of, 46–47
 funding for, 50–52
 governance of, 43, 129
 history of, 44–45
 information literacy and, 49–50
 overview of, 43–44
 role of in instructional process, 49
 standards development and, 44–45
 technology and, 52–53
School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow
 (ALA), 44
School Library Journal, 49, 186
 seating, 116–117
 security, 113, 115–116, 120, 252
 selection/acquisition
 considerations for, 212
 funding and, 216–217
 “objectionable” material and, 213–215
 overview of, 211
 policies for, 5, 45–46
 procedures manual for, 29
 questions before beginning, 211–212
 resources for, 215–216
 for special libraries, 28–29
 for youth and young adults, 186–188
 self-checkout technology, 249, 255
 sequestration, 50–51
 service desks, 116
 service goals, 98
 services, building decisions and, 106–107
Serving Our Public (Illinois Library
 Association), 107
 shelving, 116, 236
 sight lines, 113–114, 116, 124
 site decisions, 109, 115
 social media, 157, 205–206, 249
 software
 for budget preparation, 59
 for public, 248
 for staff, 248
 solo librarians, 24
 spaces, building decisions and, 107–108,
 109–110, 112, 114, 116–118

special collections, 229
 special events, 160, 161
 special libraries
 accessibility and, 29–30
 acquisitions for, 28–29
 budgeting for, 25–26
 characteristics of, 21–22
 circulation and, 232
 electronic resources and, 30
 governance of, 129
 as organizational unit, 23–24
 overview of, 21–22
 policies/procedures for, 24
 staffing and, 24–25
 user services and, 26–27
 when to establish, 22
 Special Libraries Association (SLA), 24, 25
 St. Clair, Guy, 29
 stacks, radial, 121
 staff
 for academic/college libraries, 9–10
 communication and, 9, 10
 computers for, 247–248
 dismissing, 86
 evaluation of, 84–85
 hiring, 10, 77–81, 83
 new employee checklist for, 82*fig*, 83
 partnering and, 152, 153
 public libraries and, 35
 restrooms for, 118
 scheduling, 83
 software for, 248
 special libraries and, 24–25
 strategic planning and, 91
 student workers, 10
 supervising, 84
 technology infrastructure for, 247–248
 training, 83
 workrooms for, 118, 120
Staffing for Results (Mayo and Goodrich), 94
 stairs, 120–121
 standards development, 44–45, 50, 51*fig*
Standards for Libraries in Higher Education
 (ACRL), 8
Standards for School Library Media Programs
 (AASL and NEA-DAVI), 44
Standards for the 21st-Century Learner
 (AASL), 45
 standing order plans, 212
 state library agencies, 95–96, 260–262
State of America's Libraries 2014, The, 50
 statistical information, 96
 stewardship, 160–161
 storage, 116, 117, 118, 120, 123
 story time, 190–191
 Strategic and Competitive Intelligence
 Professionals, 25

strategic directions, 98, 100, 101*fig*
Strategic Planning for Results (Nelson), 93
 student workers, 10
 “Students’ Right to Read, The,” 45
 students’ rights, 47–48
 study rooms, 117
 subject cataloging, 225–226
 subject headings, 225–226
 subscriptions, 187
 summer reading programs, 38, 192
 support spaces, 118
 SWOT analysis, 100

T

Tarulli, Lauren, 205
 task lighting, 112, 119, 121. *See also* lighting
 technology
 challenges related to, 11
 circulation and, 236–237
 community college libraries and, 18–19
 infrastructure for, 247–248
 inventory of, 246
 key services, 248–249
 new services, 249–250
 public libraries and, 37–38, 39–40
 school libraries and, 52–53
 security and support for, 250
 youth programming and, 194
See also digital services
Technology for Results (Mayo), 94
 technology plans, 245–247
 teen services. *See* youth and young adult
 services
 telemarketing, 159
 telephone system, 248
 testing services, 16
 text (SMS) reference, 173, 202
 thank-you notes, 160–161
 training, 83
 trust, 131
 tutoring services, 16

U

Ulmschneider, John, 90–92
 Urban Libraries Council, 96
 user attention, 11–12
 user surveys, 22, 106–107

V

vendors
 automation, 265–266
 book and periodical, 262–263
 cataloging by, 221
 deciding on, 219–220
 furniture and supply, 264–265
 integrated library system (ILS) and,
 256–257

Index

video, streaming, 200
virtual reference, 172–173, 202–203
vision statements, 98
visioning, 93
Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA), 187
volunteer organizations, 35
VOYA (*Voice of Youth Advocates*), 39

W

water features, 120
wayfinding, 124
websites, 157–158, 203–204, 249
weeding, 29, 188–189, 239–241
What Do I Read Next? 176–177
wholesalers, 220

Williamsburg Health Foundation (WHF)
Partnership, 151
Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL)
model, 148–149, 150, 151, 201–202,
211, 214^{fig}
Williamson, Jon, 29
wireless access, 248
work schedules, 83
workrooms, 118
Wrightson, Denelle and John M., 113

Y

Year of Reading, A (Ellington and
Freimiller), 177
youth and young adult services

collection development and, 185–190
historical context for, 183–184
overview of, 183
programming for, 190–194
public libraries and, 38–39
readers' advisory, 184–185
reference service, 184–185

Z

zero-based budget, 60–61