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Mentoring Academic Librarians for Research Success

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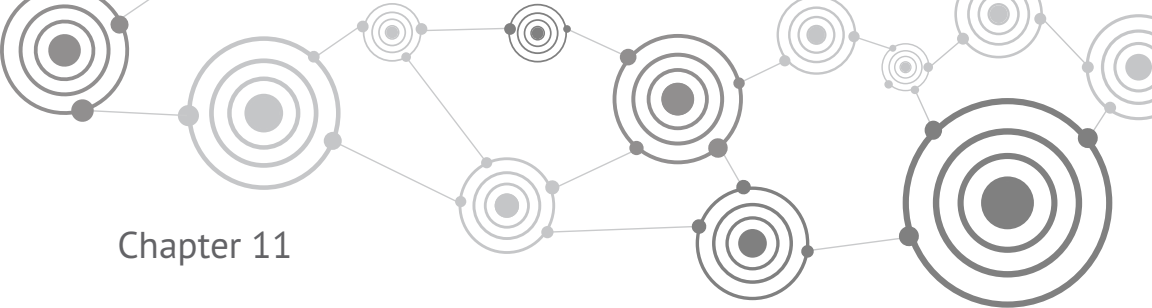
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Mentoring Academic Librarians for Research Success

Don P. Jason III, Marie R. Kennedy, and Kristine R. Brancolini

Introduction

Mentoring programs are widespread in academic libraries, preparing librarians for promotion, tenure, and overall job success. Many librarians are required to conduct research to meet the requirements of promotion, tenure, and annual merit increases. Over the past two decades, librarian-researchers have explored the many ways that institutions support librarian research. For a decade, two of the authors have been studying research productivity and research readiness among academic librarians. They found that although research mentoring is an effective research support in many professions, it has been underutilized and understudied among librarians.

This chapter describes the design and implementation of a formal research mentoring program within a continuing education program for academic librarians. The chapter explores ways in which this type of mentoring might be applied in a single-institution or a cross-institutional mentoring program. Formal one-on-one research-mentoring is one component of the Institute for

Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL, <https://library.lmu.edu/irdl>), a research development program for novice researchers who are academic librarians from all disciplines. The short-term goal of the IRDL mentoring program is to increase the probability that each IRDL scholar will complete their research project in one year. However, the benefits of formal research mentoring extend beyond the one-year experience of IRDL. Mentoring can develop the research confidence needed to build sustainable success as a librarian-researcher. In the first section of the chapter, the authors discuss the scholarly literature on research mentoring, the rationale for including research mentoring in the development of IRDL, the process of recruiting mentors and pairing them with scholars, and the administration of the program. In the second section, the authors discuss the evaluation of the program, tips for fostering a positive relationship between mentor and scholar, and recommendations for the design of a successful research mentoring program. The authors have appended the agreement that establishes expectations for scholars and their mentors at the outset of their relationship and the monthly writing prompts that facilitate communication between scholars and mentors and foster reflective practice. The authors believe that IRDL provides a unique opportunity to address some of the problems with mentoring that have been reported in the library literature. Their experiences can be applied in other settings, providing improved research mentoring and increased research success among academic librarians.

Context and History

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded two rounds of grant funding to Loyola Marymount University to develop and implement the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL). First funded in 2013, IRDL recruited a cohort of approximately twenty-two librarians for each of the next six years. Aspiring IRDL scholars apply to the institute with a research proposal and a statement from their library leadership that expresses explicit support for the scholar's participation in the summer workshop and year-long activities. Once selected, scholars travel to Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles for the nine-day Summer Institute. During the workshop, taught by two social science researchers, they complete an intensive course in research methods, data collection strategies, and data analysis. Informal research mentoring has been part of IRDL from the beginning. The scholars consult one-on-one with the IRDL faculty and program directors; scholars also coach and encourage one another. Scholars return to their home institutions and revise their

research proposals, ready to apply their new knowledge to their projects. Scholars complete their research projects over the course of one year. During this year, they have monthly check-ins with the IRDL program directors, members of their cohorts, and, since 2017, their mentors.

After three years of IMLS funding, the program directors applied for and received a second round of funding. The reimagined IRDL-2 added formal one-on-one mentoring, beginning after the Summer Institute in June and continuing until the following May. IRDL launched its formal Mentoring Program with the 2017 cohort. The mentoring program is designed to provide IRDL scholars with consistent expert support throughout their year-long projects. The mentors are experienced librarian-researchers who are paired with one or two IRDL scholars to provide flexible yet specific research support. Mentors support the research timelines of their scholars. They assist scholars with refining their research questions and revising their research methods. They also provide support for their scholar's literature review, IRB submission, data gathering, data analysis, research dissemination, and research presentation. Mentors schedule monthly check-in sessions with their scholars via phone or video conference. The check-in sessions are guided by monthly readings and by reflective writing prompts assigned by the IRDL program directors. Mentors participate in ongoing assessments and research related to the mentoring program, assisting the IRDL directors in further development of the program. Mentors receive an honorarium for their year-long commitment. The addition of research mentoring to IRDL and the specific elements of the mentoring program were influenced by the research literature on mentoring, with a focus on positive characteristics identified through empirical research.

Literature Review

In 2016, the program directors prepared to submit a second grant proposal to IRDL that would incorporate changes to increase the probability that IRDL scholars would be able to complete their research projects in one year. In their review of the literature related to research success factors, they discovered a recent content analysis of empirical studies that examined research success factors.¹ These authors found that research mentoring is a well-established research success factor in other practitioner-researcher professions, but it has not been studied extensively in the library and information science (LIS). Emerging evidence in LIS, however, aligns with findings related to research mentoring in other practitioner-researcher professions, like professional psychology² and

academic medicine.^{3,4} These studies found that mentoring increases research confidence and productivity. In the search for research success factors among academic librarians, the role of mentors has been touched upon but rarely studied in-depth.

Most studies of research mentoring in libraries have focused on librarians working in one or more member libraries of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). An influential article by Fennewald⁵ studied research success factors among the librarians at Pennsylvania State University, a notably research-intensive library system. He conducted in-depth interviews with thirty-eight librarian-researchers, tenured and on the tenure track, with an average of twelve years of experience and with eighty-eight publications among them. Fennewald's interviewees reported that the most significant factor in research productivity was "the collegial support conveyed in formal and informal mentoring." Sassen and Wahl surveyed deans and directors of ARL libraries and found that 91 percent of the responding libraries offer informal mentoring and 52 percent offer formal mentoring, but 72.9 percent responded that it should be available.⁶ Among ARL libraries, Smigielski, Laning, and Daniels found formal mentoring programs in 83 percent of libraries that grant tenure and 66.7 percent in those that do not; a formal mentoring program was the fourth most prevalent research productivity support among all respondents, following administrative funding (general), sabbaticals, and administrative funding for research or research-related travel.⁷ In the most focused study of research mentoring, Zhang, Deyoe, and Matveyeva conducted a study of the research mentoring program at Wichita State University Libraries and made recommendations for the development of an effective research mentoring program.⁸ However, there have been few empirical studies on the effects of mentoring on research productivity in academic libraries.

Two recent studies surveyed librarians beyond ARL libraries. In their own research, two of the authors surveyed academic librarians about their experiences with research and the provision of a variety of institutional supports, including formal and informal mentoring. They found that 40 percent reported the availability of informal research mentoring and 15 percent reported formal mentoring; research success was positively correlated with both types of mentoring.⁹ Ackerman, Hunter, and Wilkinson surveyed more than 200 tenure-track and recently tenured early-career academic librarians, with an emphasis on mentoring and writing groups as support mechanisms for scholarly research among early-career librarians. This recent article is the first study to focus on early-career librarians and their perceptions about the effectiveness of mentoring in various forms. Eighty-eight percent of respondents who had received formal research mentoring found it to be very or somewhat helpful.¹⁰ However,

respondents also had recommendations for improvements, which focused primarily on the qualities or expertise of their mentor. Some mentors lacked recent research experience or their experience was in a different subfield from the mentee. Some mentors did not provide specific research advice but only provided general “support,” similar to an informal mentor. Quite a few respondents called for more structure to the mentoring program, with regularly scheduled meetings and a mentor training program. The IRDL mentoring program addresses many of these complaints.

The literature also revealed some difficulties in creating and sustaining research-focused mentoring in academic libraries. The studies cited above were all conducted in academic libraries, examining within-library programs, where a more experienced librarian-researcher mentored a less experienced librarian at the same library. This situation can be beneficial to the novice researcher but presents challenges within a single institution. This is especially true for smaller institutions with few experienced researchers or when senior librarian-researchers are uninterested in mentoring or lack mentoring skills.¹¹ Junior librarians have reported reluctance to reveal deficiencies in their research skills to their colleagues.¹² While some librarians have turned to peer mentoring to address these challenges, another solution comes in the form of a formal research mentoring program that pairs librarians from different libraries.

The IRDL program directors realized that IRDL might offer distinct advantages to the scholars by offering one-on-one mentoring that draws upon the skills and expertise of librarian-researchers from across the country. They envisioned a formal program that matches mentors and scholars who are interested in working together for a fixed period of time—one year—on a single research project. The assignment would be clear and unambiguous to both mentors and scholars, with an achievable objective and a designated end date. Furthermore, the second round of IMLS funding would provide a testbed for studying research mentoring, isolated from broader academic librarian mentoring within their home institutions.

As a result of this research and with a desire to explore research mentoring as a support mechanism, the IRDL program directors incorporated research mentoring into the second phase of the project—IRDL-2, funded by the IMLS from 2016–2019. The goal was to increase the probability that each scholar would complete their project in one year by creating a research mentoring program with these characteristics:

- An LIS researcher with recent experience and an enthusiasm for research agrees to mentor one or two IRDL scholars for one year.
- Both parties agree to follow a structured program of engagement, with

regularly scheduled meetings and assigned activities.

- The scholar is given a choice of two mentors, chosen with the scholar's project and/or research methodology in mind.
- Mentors receive training and resources to guide their work with the scholars, including a self-assessment for culturally responsive mentoring (see Appendix 11B for a link to the self-assessment tool).
- The relationship is designed to be supportive to the scholar, encouraging open and honest discussion of the research project in a non-judgmental environment focused on improvement and overcoming obstacles as they arise.

Recruiting and Selecting Mentors

Mentors are recruited from the IRDL Advisory Board, previous IRDL cohorts, and through professional research networks. These professional research networks include librarians who are passionate about research. Many of these librarians are active in professional library associations or may have previously collaborated with IRDL advisory board members and program directors on research projects. The IRDL program directors and advisory board have generated a list of qualifications that have helped them identify potential mentors. These qualifications include the following:

- Strong candidates should have experience publishing a single-author article in a peer-reviewed journal or have led a research team that has published in a peer-reviewed journal.
- Mentors should be comfortable discussing options for research design, data gathering, data analysis, and writing up results.
- All mentors must have good communication skills.

While it is important for mentors to have the qualifications mentioned above, they also need to have the appropriate attitude for mentoring. Mentors should possess an enthusiasm for research and a commitment to developing research skills among librarians. Mentors also must be respectful of the scholar's project and understand that the final decision about the path of the research project (e.g., the selected methodology, sampling, and analysis plan) rests with the scholar. All mentors need to be approachable and responsive.

At the point of recruitment, the program directors share the Code of Mentorship and expectations for both the mentors and the scholars. It is noted that the mentors will receive an honorarium for their efforts in mentoring one or two scholars. The program directors request a curriculum vitae (CV) from each

potential mentor if they wish to have their name added to the pool to possibly be paired with a scholar.

Pairing Mentors with IRDL Scholars

Once the program directors have a pool of possible mentors, they begin the process of pairing. The directors make note of the job-related characteristics of both the mentors and the scholars. This allows the program directors to identify the functional area of the library in which the mentors and scholars are employed, their job duties and titles, and any exceptional position rank (e.g., director or department head). The directors also note the research histories of the mentors and scholars to identify possible thematic matches. With these characteristics in mind, the directors draft a spreadsheet to pair mentors and scholars. To offer scholars agency in the pairing with their mentor, the directors identify two possible mentors for each scholar.

The directors email each scholar with the names and CVs of two possible mentors, asking the scholar to identify the one with which they wish to be paired. Once identified, the directors reach out to the mentors to ask if they are willing to be a mentor to that scholar. Once confirmed, an introductory email is sent, with a prompt for how to begin the mentoring relationship.

Administration of the IRDL Mentorship Program

The Mentoring Program begins with an informal synchronous online meeting in the spring, prior to the Summer Workshop. This gives mentors time to mentally prepare for their upcoming mentoring experience. During the meeting, the program directors talk about the development of IRDL and the expectations for both the mentors and scholars. This virtual meeting is also a forum for mentors to share experiences from other mentoring programs they may have participated in during their academic and professional careers. This meeting is recorded (with embedded audio transcript) and shared among mentors.

The agenda for the Mentoring Program has monthly writing prompts, which are designed to promote discussion between the scholar and the mentor. The program directors send a monthly email with a reflective prompt for either the scholar to complete, for the mentor to complete, or for both to complete. The program directors suggest that the scholars and mentors share their reflections during their

monthly check-in meetings. The program directors have received positive feedback about having an assigned topic of discussion for their mentor-scholar check-in meetings. These assigned meeting topics alleviate any reticence in communication. The monthly reflective prompts are included in Appendix 11B of this chapter.

The program directors state during the orientation that they are interested in receiving both formal and informal feedback from mentors throughout their year-long commitment. The directors send emails throughout the year to check in with the mentors and to ask if they need help connecting with their scholars. Program directors serve as informal coaches for mentors. Mentors typically request assistance setting the frequency of their meetings with scholars. They want to meet frequently enough to be helpful but not so frequent that the meetings are a burden to themselves or a nuisance to their scholars. Throughout the year, the directors field communications from mentors requesting advice on how to encourage scholars who find their research time-challenged. Mentors also seek guidance on reassuring scholars who have had research protocols stray from their planned path.

The program directors also seek formal feedback through planned surveys twice a year. The first survey is administered in the fall and is designed to uncover any communication problems between mentors and scholars. The directors insert themselves into the relationship if there are any problems. Interventions may include emails or phone calls to check in with mentors and scholars. This early intervention is beneficial to both mentor and scholar. It solidifies the relationship and keeps the rest of the year productive. The second survey is administered at the end of the Mentor Program. This is a quality improvement survey that asks for suggestions. It also gauges the satisfaction level of the mentors participating in the program.

Communication Strategies: Building the Mentor-Scholar Relationship

Early in the relationship, the program directors ask the mentors and scholars to develop a communication pattern that works for them, adjusting it over time as their needs change. The program directors ask the mentors to begin the communication with the scholar by reaching out to them after the Summer Workshop is complete. During the initial communications, the goal is to work through practical considerations, such as establishing a meeting schedule. Most mentors and scholars have found that meeting monthly on a specific day of the week (a

recurring monthly appointment) is sufficient. At this point, they also agree upon the mode of communication. The mode selected should suit the style of the scholar and mentor, and the phone is most preferred. Meeting via video conferencing tools is also popular. Most pairs take loose minutes of the discussion using Google docs since those files can be collaboratively edited in real-time. Some scholars and mentors have created shared Dropbox folders so that they can put drafts of research protocols, interview guides, and manuscripts for review in one convenient online location.

As noted by one of our IRDL mentors, “Research is not a steady, linear process,” and it is the role of the mentor to provide consistency in communication, even when a scholar hits a bump in the research road. The scholars have often commented that they did not panic when something unexpected in their research happened because they knew they had an upcoming meeting scheduled with their mentor. The program directors have received frequent feedback from scholars regarding the impact mentors have had on their time management. Simply having the expectation of future meetings with their mentors kept the scholars focused and working to stay on track with their research plan.

The mentor-scholar relationship must be flexible. Unexpected events can happen during a scholar’s year-long IRDL program. For example, staffing needs at their home libraries may shift, suddenly burdening the scholar with new or more sophisticated job responsibilities. This may decrease the time they can spend on their research project. The personal life of a scholar may change over the year, too. Family commitments and home-life priorities may shift, preempting time for research. The mentor role becomes even more important during these times. The mentor provides support and reasonable accommodations for communication. Conversely, scholars must also be flexible and understanding. Mentors are subject to the same professional and personal life commitments that scholars experience. If either the mentor or the scholar feels particularly challenged in their communication, they reach out to the program directors for assistance.

Evaluating Mentor-Scholar Relationships and the IRDL Mentoring Program

The evaluation of IRDL mentor-scholar relationships and the program as a whole is an ongoing and iterative process. The evaluation is conducted through responses to monthly writing prompts, one-on-one communication with both

mentors and scholars, and administered separately, summative surveys for the scholars and mentors. Thus far, feedback from both mentors and scholars has been overwhelmingly positive.

One of the questions on the summative survey asks IRDL mentors to reflect on the mentoring experience they may have participated in previously in their academic or professional careers. The question then asks them to compare their IRDL Mentoring Program to this prior experience. Here are two IRDL mentors' responses:

My IRDL mentor experience is much better overall than other mentor/mentee experiences, especially in terms of the clear expectations and structure.” — IRDL mentor

I think the structure, guidance, and clarity of expectations are all quite clear—I really like the emails with the prompts and check-ins to help guide and remind me. — IRDL mentor

When asked, “What do you think was the most valuable contribution you made to your Scholar’s research project?” the mentors provided excellent feedback:

I think the most valuable contribution I made was keeping my mentee on track timewise. Her job didn’t require her to do research or publish. Therefore, it might have been easy for her to stop working on her project or to put it on hold for a few months. I think knowing that she had to meet with me monthly motivated her to keep working. She always came to the meetings with some progress to show. — IRDL mentor

I provided encouragement to keep it up even if progress is slow, and to know that there may be setbacks along the way. Research is not a steady, linear process even if we want it to be! — IRDL mentor

When the IRDL scholars were asked “What do you think was the most valuable contribution your Mentor made to your research project?” they also provided valuable feedback:

Lots of things! I really appreciated his willingness to pilot my survey questions, listen to my presentation, and talk through lots of decisions around survey design/data collection/data analysis/

publishing—his insight was always extremely helpful. Knowing that we were going to check in each month motivated me to think about my project in the context of the original timeline and get a little more granular—not just thinking about the big picture timeline but how all of those steps would actually be completed. I went back each month and edited the original timeline which also gave me a sense of how the research process can adapt and change based on other commitments etc. The most valuable contribution overall was the connection to a fantastic researcher-librarian who is doing work that I admire in an area that I'm excited to learn more about: this was lacking in my network and I'm so thankful to have met (my mentor) through IRDL! — IRDL scholar

My mentor was [a] consistent, knowledgeable, and available sounding board. — IRDL scholar

She was encouraging and helped me see the value of what I was doing even when I didn't see it. — IRDL scholar

Analysis of this qualitative data reveals that there are several key indicators of successful mentor-scholar relationships. Overall, the relationship must be built on a shared passion for research as well as personal compatibility. There must be open, respectful communication, clearly understood expectations, and dedication on both sides. There also needs to be a commitment to conducting and disseminating ethical, reliable, and valid research. The structured, formalized approach to research mentoring has been a successful model for the IRDL scholars and their mentors.

Tips for Success: Strategies for Making the Mentor-Scholar Relationship Work

The IRDL program directors have found that the best mentor-scholar outcomes occur when trust and safety are established from the onset of the mentor-scholar relationship. This allows both parties to share their research successes and failures as they occur. This takes a commitment from both the mentor and the scholar. The program directors offer specific suggestions for success:

- 1. Effective listening.** Both mentors and scholars must communicate frequently and effectively. A recommended strategy for active listening is a technique that involves questioning, paraphrasing, and summarizing. This repetitive approach allows for both parties to check comprehension and prevents messages from being distorted and misinterpreted.
- 2. Define roles, tasks, and commitments.** Scholars and mentors should communicate all duties, tasks, responsibilities, and commitments early on in the relationship. These duties need to be communicated orally and in writing so there is no confusion.
- 3. Appreciation for diversity.** IRDL embraces scholars and mentors of all backgrounds. The program celebrates librarians of all races, ages, religions, and gender expressions and welcomes people living with disabilities. The IRDL program directors recognize that diversity adds value to the program. In addition, IRDL welcomes the diversity of ideas and perspectives.
- 4. Transparent conflict management.** While infrequent, sometimes a disconnect forms in the mentor-scholar relationship. In these situations, it is best to bring the IRDL program directors in as mediators. Both parties should document concerns in writing. For example, if a scholar is a no-call, no-show for multiple check-in meetings, the mentor should document all attempts to communicate with the scholar and alert the program directors.
- 5. Periodic self-assessment.** The IRDL Mentoring Program has built-in self-assessment. While the monthly writing prompts guide conversations between mentors and scholars, they also serve as a vehicle for self-reflection and self-evaluation.
- 6. Programmatic assessment.** The IRDL program directors distribute separate online surveys to mentors and scholars twice a year. The results of these surveys answer questions such as: How are we doing? What could we do to make the relationship between mentors and scholars more productive?

Tips for the Design of a Formal Mentoring Program

The Institute for Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL) offered a novel opportunity for exploring the value of a formal research mentoring program

for librarians. Nurturing the interpersonal relationship between mentor and scholar has been critical to the success of the formal mentoring component of IRDL. However, the program directors have also noted some structural aspects that could be employed in other mentoring programs.

Use a written agreement. The written agreement between Mentor and Mentee establishes the parameters of the relationship and its duration. In the case of IRDL, the duration is determined by the overall program. In another context, an institutionally based mentoring program could establish a date when the formal relationship would be re-evaluated and either ended or extended. The endpoint could also be determined by progress on the specific research projects, which leads to the next point.

Focus on a specific research project. Each IRDL scholar comes into the program with a viable draft research proposal. During the Summer Workshop, they consult with the IRDL instructors and program directors to re-examine each component of their proposal and then revise it. The mentor-scholar relationship focuses on the implementation of this research project, with its various sequential steps. This is an important factor in the success of the mentoring program and could be easily incorporated into a single-institution program.

Offer flexible mentor pairing and choice. One of the shortcomings of single-institution research mentoring programs is the lack of a large pool of accomplished librarian-researchers available to serve as mentors. However, IRDL was created with an advisory board of researchers, and over time, many of the IRDL scholars have become accomplished researchers. Consequently, the program directors had a relatively large pool of possible mentors. Each scholar could be offered a choice of two mentors, based on information from their CV. While this might be difficult to implement in a single-institution mentoring program, it could be accomplished through a library system, such as those in large state university systems, through statewide consortia, or through state or national professional associations. Larger pools of mentors allow a mentee to select a mentor using their preferred selection criteria. These criteria may include the mentor's experience with a specific research method, academic discipline, professional background, or a combination of one or more factors.

Employ phone or video conferencing. Single-institution mentoring programs usually rely on face-to-face meetings supplemented with email communication. IRDL has demonstrated that a successful mentoring program can be conducted entirely remotely, either by phone or online, or a combination of the two. Sometimes mentors and scholars have lived and worked near one another, allowing for in-person meetings, or they have met at a conference attended by both parties. However, this is the exception rather than the rule, and positive

mentoring relationships have flourished entirely through phone calls and video conferencing. During the coronavirus crisis (COVID-19), we have all learned to be more adept at communicating using technology; mentoring could be one of the ways that synchronous video conferencing is employed more consistently in the future. Technologies for sharing documents supplement communication, enabling mentors and scholars to co-edit documents with ease.

Conclusion

The Institute for Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL) Mentoring Program provides IRDL scholars with more than a completed research project. It empowers scholars to expand their professional networks beyond their home institutions. The program provides scholars with a mentor who lends an external perspective to their projects. Beyond the focus on the scholar's research project, this mentor exposes the scholar to new research interests, recommends professional development opportunities, and provides career guidance. Most importantly, the mentor provides the scholar with a consistent affirmation of their status as a librarian-researcher. Although IRDL was created as part of a unique continuing education program for novice researchers, the authors believe that the IRDL formal research mentoring program could be replicated successfully in a single-institution mentoring program or in any number of cross-institutional settings. Research mentoring can be an impactful component in any program to develop accomplished academic librarian-researchers.

Appendix 11A

IRDL Mentoring Program Contract

To provide the IRDL Scholars with consistent expert support throughout their year-long project, we have designed this mentoring program, which pairs the novice with an experienced librarian-researcher.

To act as an IRDL Mentor you must possess the following:

Qualifications:

- A librarian-researcher, who has published a single-author article in a peer-reviewed journal or has led a research team that has published in a peer-reviewed journal
- Comfortable discussing options for research design, data gathering, data analysis, and writing up results
- Good communication skills

Attitude:

- Enthusiasm for research
- Committed to development of research skills among librarians
- Respectful of the Scholar's project; willing to make suggestions but recognizing that the final decision rests with the Scholar
- Approachable and responsive

Each Mentor will be paired with one or two IRDL Scholars and will provide ongoing support for them from June 2019-May 2020. We expect that the Mentor will participate in ongoing assessment and research related to the mentor program to assist the Project Directors in developing a sustainable model for mentoring novice librarian researchers. Each Mentor will receive a \$500 honorarium for one Scholar or a \$1000 honorarium for two Scholars for their efforts.

Mentors will support the timeline of their Scholars for each component of the research project that will be completed. These components are (based on post-IRDL research proposal):

- research question
- methods
- sampling
- literature review
- IRB submission

- data gathering
- analysis
- write-up/presentation

Mentors will schedule a monthly check-in session with their Scholars (timing and mechanism is up to you--phone, email, video chat, etc.) to provide support for pending deadlines or discussion about an agreed-upon topic. Reflective practice is embedded in this mentor program. Each Mentor and Scholar will be prompted throughout the year to respond to monthly readings and reflective writing prompts, some of which will be shared and some will be for personal reflection.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the program will be ongoing, through responses to monthly writing prompts, one-on-one communication with both the Mentor and Scholars, a series of personal network surveys over the course of the year, and a summative survey.

Features of the Successful Mentor-Scholar Relationship

The relationship is built on:

- Shared passion for research and personal compatibility
- Open, respectful communication, clearly understood expectations, and dedication on both sides
- Commitment to conducting and disseminating ethical, reliable, and valid research

Specific suggestions for success:

1. Each uses effective listening techniques: Questioning, paraphrasing, summarizing.
2. Roles and tasks are clear.
3. Appreciation of diversity.
4. Self-assesses periodically.
5. Attends to the process: How are we doing? What could we do to make the relationship more productive?

Code of Mentorship: Guidelines for Mentors

1. Guide one or two IRDL Scholars through their proposed research project.
2. Be prepared to provide timely feedback as the Scholars revise sections of the research proposal or begin conducting the research project.

3. Provide advice on finding resources on campus or through other means.
4. Provide advice on communicating with their supervisors about the project.
5. Model open thought about options for meeting the project goal; give encouragement and offer suggestions if project details must or should change.
6. Encourage an open exchange of ideas:
 - a. Critique written work
 - b. Provide feedback
 - c. Recognize when there are reasonable alternatives to reaching the project goal
7. Provide constructive feedback on manuscripts, grant proposals, and other scholarly products.
8. Participate in the evaluation of the Mentor-Scholar experience.

Code of Mentorship: Guidelines for IRDL Scholars

1. Set goals and take initiative in communicating your expectations to your Mentor.
2. Understand the expectations of your Mentor.
3. Clarify the nature of your relationship with your Mentor if necessary.
4. Discuss the timeline for your research project with your Mentor.
5. Be open and willing to accept feedback.
6. Seek advice in identifying sources of support, including both internal and external sources of funding.
7. Be conscientious in meeting milestones and benchmarks in the research plan.
8. Engage in candid self-assessment.
9. Ask for help when needed and accept feedback as given.
10. Participate in the evaluation of the Mentor-Scholar experience.

Appendix 11B

IRDL Reflection Prompts

To consistently engage in reflective practice, we ask that you respond to the following monthly prompts, as directed, either **SCHOLAR ONLY** (only the Scholar takes action), **MENTOR ONLY** (only the Mentor takes action), or **BOTH SCHOLAR AND MENTOR** (both the Scholar and Mentor take action):

1. June. Culturally responsive mentoring. MENTOR ONLY

Only the Mentor responds to the writing prompt this month. Please retain the results for personal reflection; sharing with the Scholar/Project Directors is not required.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54c6fd1be4b0f6cdd67c71db/t/5750b-218746fb9ef25046c84/1464906265333/Participant_workbook.pdf (permanent link at <https://perma.cc/435N-N28P>)

Writing prompt: Please complete pages 13-16 of the workbook.

2. July. Establish your relationship (a shared journal entry). BOTH SCHOLAR AND MENTOR

Please share a summary with your Mentor/Scholar and the Program Directors, via email.

Purpose: To frame a conversation between the Mentor-Scholar pair regarding roles, goals, and responsibilities of each.

These are topics to discuss during your first conversation:

- What do we expect of each other?
- How will we meet to review progress?
- Establish a meeting schedule.
- How should we share reflections? (identify a shared storage location)
- How shall we provide feedback to each other?
- How shall we discuss any unmet expectations?

3. August. Personal learning network. SCHOLAR ONLY

Only the Scholar responds to the writing prompt this month and shares responses with Mentor and the Program Directors, via email.

To view: Marie will send you two visualizations of your research networks (socio-graphs) from before and after the summer workshop.

To read: “Understanding Personal Learning Networks: Their Structure, Content and the Networking Skills Needed to Optimally Use Them” by Kamakshi Rajagopal, Desirée Joosten–ten Brinke, Jan Van Bruggen, and Peter B. Sloep, *First Monday*, Volume 17, Number 1-2 January 2012, <http://journals.uic.edu/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/3559/3131>.

Writing prompt: Respond to the following questions:

- Goals Statement: For your research project, what do you hope to accomplish within your personal learning network?
- Description Statement: What does your research network look like right now? What would you like it to look like in 6 months to 1 year?

Details:

- What kind of person would you enjoy working with?
- Who in your network brings what types of skill to the table?
- What mode of connecting works best for you?

Your individual network images (sociograms):

- What was it like to look at your network in this way? What did it make you think about?

4. September. Elevator speeches. SCHOLAR ONLY

Scholars will need some practice talking comfortably about their research process.

Writing prompt: Using SMART criteria, develop a 1- to 2-minute script about your research project.

Practice your script with your Mentor during this month.

5. October. Reflective practice in the research process. SCHOLAR ONLY

Only the Scholar responds to the writing prompt this month and shares responses with Mentor.

To view: Birch, Tobeylynn, “A Model for Reflective Practice in Libraries” (2015), http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/librarian_pubs/25.

Writing prompt: Select one of the steps and respond to the sample questions posed for each of the three dimensions. At this point in your research project you should be able to respond to the dimensions at

Step S1: Identify problem

Step 2: Review literature

Step 3: Define research question

Step 4: Design methodology.

Choose the step that most appeals to you! Just pick one step, you don't have to do more than that. The purpose is to get you to practice reflecting.

6. November. Critical examination of a peer-reviewed research article. BOTH SCHOLAR AND MENTOR

Please share your evaluation and thoughts about the process of using a checklist for critical reading of the scholarly literature with your Mentor/Scholar.

Writing prompt: Read (article TBD) and use the Critical Appraisal Checklist (<http://ebltoolkit.pbworks.com/f/EBLCriticalAppraisalChecklist.pdf>) to evaluate it.

7. December. No writing prompt this month.

8. January. Progress to date (a shared journal entry). BOTH SCHOLAR AND MENTOR

Please share your entry with your Mentor/Scholar and the Program Directors, via email.

Purpose: Pause to consider the current state of the research project and your Mentor-Scholar relationship. Does anything need to be adjusted?

Writing prompts:

1. Revisit the timeline you established for completing the components of your research project. Describe any needed changes to your timeline and what caused the need for change.
2. How is your Mentor-Scholar relationship progressing? Are there needs that have not yet been met? How might you go about addressing that? Can you identify things that are working well in the relationship? If so, tell us about them.

9. February. A question of “fit.” SCHOLAR ONLY

Only the Scholar responds to the writing prompt this month and shares responses with Mentor.

Writing prompt: Where does your research fit in with current concerns in librarianship/archives? Does it align with trends or challenge norms? Who is the audience you intend to engage with your research findings? How do you imagine the audience will respond?

10. March. No writing prompt this month.

11. April. Reflective practice in the research process. SCHOLAR ONLY

Only the Scholar responds to the writing prompt this month and shares responses with Mentor and Program Directors. Snippets of responses (unattributed) will be posted to the IRDL blog.

To read: Birch, Tobeylynn, “A Model for Reflective Practice in Libraries” (2015), http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/librarian_pubs/25.

Writing prompt: Respond to each dimension of Step 7 – Dissemination (page 23).

12. May. Advice to a future IRDL scholar. BOTH SCHOLAR AND MENTOR

Please share your entry with your Mentor/Scholar and the Program Directors, via email.

Writing prompt: Given what you have learned over the course of your IRDL experience, what advice/tips/guidance do you have to share with a future IRDL Scholar? (Your response will be given to a future Scholar)."

ENDNOTES

1. Kristin Hoffmann, Selinda Adelle Berg, and Denise Koufogiannakis, “Examining Success: Identifying Factors that Contribute to Research Productivity Across Librarianship and Other Disciplines,” *Library and Information Research* 38, no. 119 (2015), 13–28.
2. Ronald T. Brown, Brian P. Daly, and Frederick T. L. Leong, “Mentoring in Research: A Developmental Approach,” *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 40, no. 3 (2009), 306–13.
3. W. Levinson et al., “Mentors and Role Models for Women in Academic Medicine,” *The Western Journal of Medicine* 154, no. 4 (1991), 423–26.
4. A. Palepu et al., “Junior Faculty Members’ Mentoring Relationships and their Professional Development in U.S. Medical Schools,” *Academic Medicine: Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges* 73, no. 3 (1998), 318.
5. Joseph Fennewald, “Research Productivity among Librarians: Factors Leading to Publications at Penn State,” *College and Research Libraries* 69, no. 2 (2008), 104–16.
6. Catherine Sassen and Diane Wahl, “Fostering Research and Publication in Academic Libraries,” *College & Research Libraries* 75, no. 4 (2014), 458–91.
7. Elizabeth M. Smigielski, Melissa A. Laning, and Caroline M. Daniels, “Funding, Time, and Mentoring: A Study of Research and Publication Support Practices of ARL Member Libraries,” *Journal of Library Administration* 54, no. 4 (2014), 261–76.
8. Sha Li Zhang, Nancy Deyoe, and Susan J. Matveyeva, “From Scratch: Developing an Effective Mentoring Program,” *Chinese Librarianship: An International Electronic Journal* 29 (2007), 1–16.
9. Marie R. Kennedy and Kristine R. Brancolini, “Academic Librarian Research: An Update to a Survey of Attitudes, Involvement, and Perceived Capabilities,” *College & Research Libraries* 79, no. 6 (2018), 822–51.

10. Erin Ackerman, Jennifer Hunter, and Zara T. Wilkinson, "The Availability and Effectiveness of Research Supports for Early Career Academic Librarians," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 44, no. 5 (2018), 553–68.
11. Allison V. Level and Michelle Mach, "Peer Mentoring: One Institution's Approach to Mentoring Academic Librarians," *Library Management* 26, no. 6/7 (2005), 301–10.
12. Cynthia Tysick and Nancy Babb, "Perspectives on ... Writing Support for Junior Faculty Librarians: A Case Study," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 32, no. 1 (2006), 94–100.

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