



January 31, 2020

Director Jan Lewis
Joyner Library
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27858

Dear Director Lewis:

Please accept this letter requesting an advancement in title to Library Associate Professor. Below I will briefly outline the commitment I have demonstrated to librarianship, to service, and to research and creative output on behalf of Joyner Library. During my time here I have grown tremendously, and I am grateful for the opportunities the library have provided me. The many conferences where I have learned and shared, the support with software and equipment needs, and the range of responsibilities I have been entrusted with have all improved my work and my capacity for new challenges. The last six and half years I have worked at Joyner Library have been some of my most rewarding and productive, and I look forward to more years in service to the students and faculty of ECU.

Librarianship

Librarianship wears many hats, especially in an active and engaged Research & Instructional Services department. Teaching is one of those hats. As a library instructor, I have taught well over 300 library instruction sessions and promoted library services and information literacy concepts in dozens of presentations to groups across and beyond campus. My teaching has changed in many ways during my time at Joyner Library, and my practices have evolved. Partway through my career at Joyner, the Framework for Information Literacy was published by ACRL, and it had a large impact on my understanding of information literacy and the role of the library in promoting its concepts. The Framework above all acknowledges that information literacy is not a simple set of learning outcomes or a checklist for library instructors. Instead it sees information literacy in more distributed terms. For example, the authority of an information source is context and discipline dependent. The practical result of this is that authority is best defined not solely in library instruction with a “CRAPP” test, but rather in collaboration with disciplinary faculty, who have special knowledge of what authorities look like in their field. This requires a kind of conversation and engagement with faculty we may not be accustomed to. To varying degrees each of the Frames is collaborative. The idea that everything is bibliographic in libraries—that the tools are mostly the same across subject area—feels less true today. Disciplinary expertise and familiarity with disciplinary conventions are critical. Instructional librarians may not need second degrees in a field to be effective, but

they do need to engage in conversation with those faculty. Information literacy is thus a deeply collaborative project.

That revelation informed my work on a grant-funded project I and Meghan Wanucha Smith led during the 2018-2019 academic year. We developed a program to improve information literacy outcomes in the classroom by teaming up with teaching faculty to revise an information literacy-based assignment. Across three OFE workshop sessions, we presented the Framework for Information Literacy and led conversations about how those concepts fit in with their own personal and disciplinary perspectives. We worked with ten faculty in one-on-one consultations to affect some kind of change in their students' work. The program was a success. In all cases the participants improved an assignment and scheduled a library session. In most cases we provided additional support as well. With one faculty member, we developed Blackboard-based materials to support his research assignment and added assignment-relevant content to his program's libguide. Another faculty requested multiple instruction sessions and an entirely new libguide aligned with her syllabus.

The primary department I serve with library instruction is Composition/Writing Foundations. The instructors of ENGL 1100 and 2201 are primarily fixed term faculty and graduate teaching assistants. While some of these terrific instructors are mainstays, many teach for only a year or two before moving on. This provides an outreach challenge, as Joyner must always be reintroducing its services to a new group of instructors. Alternately, it provides a rolling opportunity for change and growth. To meet the information literacy needs of this department, we begin each semester with an email to the instructors. A regularly updated Composition/Writing Foundations instructor guide on library services and resources is shared. It markets instruction, the Book-a-Librarian consultation service, the contact information of our subject liaison teaching librarians, and an overview of our resources. I also meet with the full faculty once a year and provide a library tour for the new graduate teaching assistants. In addition, we maintain a robust libguide for both ENGL 1100 and 2201 and have developed tutorials and Blackboard and Canvas modules that align with their assignments and outcomes. I also provide training on basic research skills to the employees of the Writing Center, some of who move on to teach composition later in their graduate programs.

Service

University service is both a responsibility within the framework of shared governance at ECU and an opportunity to establish useful relationships with colleagues from other parts of campus. I have sought out opportunities to serve, mindful that those relationships with teaching faculty are essential to the library's success, to building credibility with colleagues, and to accomplishing the library's mission of providing information literacy instruction to our students.

As member of the Admissions and Retention Committee, I have had the opportunity to participate

in conversations about academic integrity, plagiarism, affordable textbooks, and a range of other issues with faculty across campus. In that role I have promoted the library's work developing plagiarism modules and its work saving students money on their textbooks. Similarly, as a member of the Pirate Read Committee, I have participated in conversations about the experiences of our students and how best to engage them. Over the past summer I collaborated with other campus units like the Office of Student Transition, the Sustainability office, and the English department on content for our Pirate Read libguide. This guide incorporated themes identified by the English department, linked to thematically relevant library resources, and gathered related campus events in a single location.

As a member of the QEP Steering Committee, I communicated changes to the Composition/Writing Foundations program with library instructors, drafted new outcomes for Composition/Writing Foundations library instruction, and revised libguides and handouts. More broadly, the work of the QEP Steering Committee offered opportunities for conversation with faculty about their own work incorporating changes and grappling with new assignments and student learning objectives. Other campus service includes my recent work with the Adobe Initiative. Those conversations have contributed to embedding information literacy concepts like the ethical use of information firmly into the planning process. While much work remains undone, the outline of a strong program incorporating COAD multimedia assignments, Pirate Read assignments, and library support is in place. Such a collaboration makes the work of the faculty a bit easier, promotes the library as an authority, and better educates our students on the information literacy concepts core to the library's mission.

Service within the library is both an opportunity to learn about the work of other departments in the building and a chance to contribute to larger projects and conversations. My time as chair of the Operations Procedure Review Committee greatly improved my knowledge of the library's procedures and allowed me to contribute to them. During my tenure we reviewed new procedures, revised existing procedures, met regularly, and provided an annual report on our work. While serving on the Marketing Committee I wrote several articles for newsletters and Annual Reports. As EHRA President I planned and managed orderly regular meetings and votes; I also called special meetings as appropriate. As a Faculty Senator representing the faculty of Joyner Library, I have attended meetings, voted in the interests of the library, and communicated conversations, resolutions, and announcements from Senate meetings to my colleagues.

The work of the Faculty Personnel Committee is especially important to me. In a library split between tenured and fixed-term faculty, the opportunity for confusion and misunderstandings exists. Ensuring that colleagues have the correct information in a timely way and that our code aligns with practice is important to a process that keeps the confidence of the library faculty. I have endeavored to be a calm, methodical, and engaged presence on the committee, using that service to further build confidence in the hiring and subsequent appointment process. I have also served on

hiring committees as a PC representative.

Service to libraries more broadly is an important way to share best practices and maintain a healthy profession. In 2010 I served on the NCLA BIG committee, planning events like an Unconference and contributing a presentation to an online one day event. In support of a ULAC initiative, I worked with two librarians from UNCW to develop a “Best Practices in Information Literacy” repository. We held an online conference call with librarians from across the state, developed an interface and a “criteria for inclusion” document, and solicited sample documents from participating campuses. Sadly the project stalled when a host for the repository could not be found. I have presented at conferences to share Joyner’s work with colleagues at the state and national level, and have served on a panel of North Carolina academic librarians to an audience of high school librarians on college-level research expectations.

Research & Creative Activity

Presentation to colleagues have been my main contribution in this category. I have presented at LOEX and multiple times at NCLA-supported conferences. I have presented on tutorial creation tools at conferences and by webinar. Sharing innovative use for affordable software with other librarians is important, as so many tutorials and learning objects are developed with only local resources in mind. The less we as librarians need to reinvent the wheel in order to produce quality tutorials the better.

When RIS received 30 iPads for use in our instruction classrooms but had no clear sense of how to integrate them into instruction, I determined to put them to effective use. I wanted to capitalize on their unique features, rather than integrating them as less-effective laptop substitutes. My initial attempts develop a photo-based tour were not successful enough to implement. After attending an OFE presentation on Livecode application building software, I spend several months developing a homegrown iPad app called Snap6. The work proved difficult, requiring that I learn to code in Livecode and to deploy the app to devices, but the result was a COAD-based assignment that both engaged our students, provided them with the opportunity to make their own mental maps of the building, and assessed their ability to identify important locations around the building. I presented the app and app-creation process in a couple of presentations and posters, including a talk at a LOEX conference. As it has aged, we are currently exploring alternatives to SNAP6, and this year have moved to a new activity called PIC6, developed in collaboration with Matt Whaley using Metaverse software.

More recently I noticed a lack of quality medium-length readings on information literacy suitable for instructors who wished to integrate readings on information literacy into classroom discussions. In collaboration with Katy Webb, I put together a general practical guide to basic library concepts called Information Literacy Concepts. The contents were based on experiences answering questions

from students and knowledge of the sorts of assignments they'll be expected to complete. This small book is informed by the Framework for Information Literacy and is freely available in a number of repositories. Since it was released, I have received positive feedback from instructors nationally who have incorporated readings from it into their classes. My hope is to update the work in the near future with activities and a richer set of discussion prompts.

Most recently I presented twice with Meghan Wanucha Smith on our LSTA grant-funded project working with campus faculty on their information literacy-based assignments. This letter began with a brief reflection on how the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy has impacted my understanding of a reference librarian's work. Reporting out to other librarians on the Framework Project to share lessons learned will hopefully inspire other librarians as they incorporate the collaborative nature of the Framework into their own practices.

In all of my roles serving at Joyner Library I have sought to promote the library, its service, and its collections to the best of my ability. Please accept this portfolio, including my CV, my annual reports, my evaluations, and a sampling of my research and creative output as evidence of this, and thank you for your consideration.

Best,

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