

Salaries, Work Week, Vacations, Benefits, And Privileges of College Librarians

THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE of this study was to obtain information about vacations of professional staff members of colleges comparable in size to the West Virginia state colleges. The only recent article on vacations listed in *Library Literature*¹ deals with colleges larger than most of the West Virginia colleges. The statistics published annually in *CRL* do not include the length of the vacation periods. Also, because of the confidential nature of the information, statistics submitted for publication may not be representative of the group.

Salaries and the length of the work week have an obvious relation to vacations. The other items in this study were included because they have a bearing on the status of the college librarian.

Questionnaires were sent to all colleges accredited by the North Central Association having enrollments between 500 and 2000. Questionnaires were also sent to all other accredited colleges of the same size in states bordering on West Virginia and to all West Virginia colleges, except West Virginia University, regardless of size or accreditation. *The World Almanac* 1956 was used for enrollment figures.

Of 217 questionnaires mailed, 153 were returned and 150 (69 per cent) were filled out. Eighty-four were from private colleges, 64 from state colleges, and 2 from municipal colleges. The in-

¹ Robert H. Muller, "Work Week, Vacations, and Salaries in Medium-Sized Universities and Colleges," *CRL*, XV (1954), 84-86.

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formation given covers the same period as that covered by the statistics printed in *CRL* for January, 1957, but only 80 of the 150 colleges responding were included in the ACRL report.

Only 67 of the private colleges and 55 of the state and municipal colleges gave information about salaries. In the private colleges the salary of the head librarian ranges from \$2730 to \$7500 with a mean of \$4868 and a median of \$4867. Head librarians fare much better in publicly supported colleges with a range of \$3700 to \$9220, a mean of \$5784, and a median of \$5490. The actual gap between salaries in private and publicly supported colleges may be even greater than the figures indicate because most of the latter not submitting data about salaries have high salary scales.

Salaries of assistant librarians in private colleges range from \$1700 to \$5500 with a mean of \$3908 and a median of \$4050. In state and municipal colleges the range is from \$3200 to \$6240, the mean \$4852, and the median \$4851.

Unfortunately in many institutions salaries of librarians are not comparable to those of other faculty members with equal training and experience. Professional library staff members in only 53 (63 per cent) of the private colleges and 43 (64 per cent) of the state and municipal colleges are paid on the same basis as that of other faculty members. Ten other private colleges and 4 state colleges pay the head librarian and, in some instances the assistant librarian, on the same basis but discriminate against other professional staff members.

The working hours per year range from 1240 to 2400 in the private colleges and from 1160 to 2333 in state and municipal colleges. The medians are 1773 and 1751 respectively, somewhat higher than the ACRL figures. The means are 1778 for private colleges and 1742 for those which are publicly supported.

The statistics indicate that higher salaries are often linked with shorter work years. On the other hand, the lowest salaries may accompany either a very short or a very long work year.

The range of hourly rates in private colleges is \$1.25 to \$4.54 for head librarians and \$.83 to \$3.49 for assistant librarians. Rates in publicly supported colleges range from \$1.72 to \$5.66 for the head and \$1.71 to \$4.06 for the assistant librarian. Medians are \$2.80 and \$2.31 for the former and \$3.22 and \$2.74 for the latter. The hourly rate of pay in the publicly supported colleges would have been higher if a number of state colleges with high salary scales had submitted salary data.

The length of the work week varies from 35 hours to 48 hours. Sixty-four (42 per cent) of all the colleges reported a 40-hour week, and in 126 (83.5 per cent) the staff works 40 hours or less per week.

Figures for vacations include school recesses such as Christmas and Easter if librarians do not have to work during these periods, but do not include legal holidays and other special days. The number of individual days reported varies from 0 to 25. Most of the colleges which reported fewer than 8 holidays have longer vacation periods including most of the legal holidays. Many of the 23 colleges reporting more than 8 holidays have short vacation periods, and it appears that school recesses were in some instances reported as holidays rather than as vacations.

Only 22 of the 150 colleges indicated

less than 4 weeks of vacation. In this study all time off, other than individual holidays, has been treated as vacation even though librarians employed for less than 12 months may not so consider it. Six colleges have 3 weeks and 16 have approximately 2 weeks. Of 9 state colleges having only 2 weeks vacation, 6 are in West Virginia.

The most common vacation period is 4 weeks or 1 month with 28 private colleges and 12 publicly supported colleges (26.6 per cent of the total number) reporting one or the other.

Eighty-eight institutions, 60 per cent of the state and municipal colleges and 57 per cent of the private colleges, give more than 1 month of vacation. The longest vacation periods are 17 weeks for private colleges and 14 weeks for state colleges. In addition, 2 private colleges and 12 state colleges reported school vacations, and 11 state colleges have school vacations plus extra pay for summer sessions.

All colleges reporting sick leave for faculty members make it available to professional members of the library staff. Three having sick leave only for nonprofessional library personnel do not have sick leave for faculty members. Although 83 of the 150 respondents checked "Yes" and 64 checked "No," many of the latter indicated that salaries are paid during illness. In fact, in many of the colleges without sick leave plans the library staff receives more generous treatment than is provided by colleges with formal plans.

Some of the colleges checking "Yes" might be regarded as not having formal plans, for 22 stated that there is no time specified, 7 indicated only that the sick leave allowance is "generous" or "liberal," and 14 indicated that each case is considered individually. Seven colleges reported that the amount of sick leave granted varies with the length of service. Of the colleges reporting a definite pe-

riod, the amount of leave ranges from 5 days to 6 months. In order of rank the most common sick leave periods are: 15 days (18 colleges), 12 days (9 colleges), 30 days (8 colleges), 12 days (9 colleges), 14 days (6 colleges), and 40 days (6 colleges).

The following quotations are taken from questionnaires which indicated that the college has no sick leave plan: (1) "very liberal practice"; (2) "have granted as much as 2 months a year"; (3) "as much as necessary"; (4) "when you're sick you don't work"; (5) "each case considered individually"; (6) "no limit"; (7) "anything within reason."

Thirty-eight respondents checked "Yes" and 41 checked "No" in response to the question, "Is sick leave cumulative?" Most of the questionnaires on which neither was checked are those of institutions which have no sick leave or no formal plan. The total amount staff members are allowed to cumulate ranges from 20 to 180 days. The most frequently reported are 100 days (8 colleges) and 90 days (7 colleges).

Seventy-seven of the 84 private colleges and 59 of the 66 publicly supported colleges have retirement plans which include professional members of the library staff. Seventy-eight of the former and 35 of the latter also have social security. In 68 private colleges and 41 state and municipal colleges professional members of the library staff are covered by a college-sponsored group insurance plan.

One hundred eight of the 150 colleges in the study make some contribution to insurance and retirement plans for members of the library staff. Thirty-one failed to answer the question. Some stated that the college contributes only to social security or to social security and retirement. Three colleges pay the entire cost of health insurance for their employees. Two others pay 50 and 60

per cent respectively of the cost of health insurance in addition to a contribution to retirement of 5 per cent of the employee's salary. Most of the percentages contributed by the colleges are under 10 per cent, the most frequently mentioned being 5 per cent (29 colleges).

Fifty-six per cent of the colleges indicated provisions for sabbatical leave, but librarians are included in only 47 per cent. Discrimination against the library staff regarding sabbatical leave exists mainly in private colleges. The librarian of one publicly supported institution stated that the college has a sabbatical leave plan but that librarians are not eligible. Three others were not sure, but thought that requests would be granted on the same basis as those of other faculty members. In 2 state colleges only the head librarian is eligible.

Almost all head librarians have the same privileges of attendance and voting at faculty meetings as other faculty members. In the private colleges only 1 librarian reported not having the same privileges; 1 stated that the question is being reconsidered, and 1 did not answer. One state college does not grant these privileges to the head librarian, and 1 which gives the head librarian the same privileges as others who do not teach failed to state what these privileges are. Fifteen of the private colleges do not extend these to other professional members of the library staff, and 6 limit them to the assistant librarian. Only 3 state colleges report that no other professional staff members may attend faculty meetings and vote, but another limits this participation to "all who have faculty status."

Although library salaries are still not comparable to faculty salaries in many institutions, it appears that improvement in the academic qualifications of librarians has brought an improvement in status.