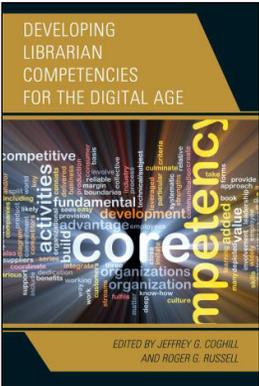


Book Reviews



Developing Librarian Competencies for the Digital Age. Jeffrey G. Coghill and Roger G. Russell, eds. Lanham, Md.: Roman & Littlefield, 2017. 180p. Paper, \$41.00 (ISBN 978-1-4422-6444-1).



Developing Librarian Competencies for the Digital Age presents an overview of issues librarians face as the world has shifted to a more digital-centric approach and provides suggestions of areas in which librarians should hone their skills to meet the changing demands of their customers. Edited by Jeffrey G. Coghill, outreach librarian and the director of Eastern AHEC Library Services, and Roger G. Russell, assistant director for user services, both of East Carolina University’s William E. Laupus Health Sciences Library, this book was written to dive into new trends in librarianship. It counsels readers on how to gain expertise in a field that is increasingly evolving due to the impact of technology on how it meets its core function of service.

Coghill and Russell’s book has chapters specifically dedicated to different aspects of librarianship, including public services, technical services, and librarian education. Each begins by providing an overview of some of the historical developments of its area. The first chapter is a short, general introduction by the editors discussing the history of librarianship as a profession, with a focus on the evolution of library services as technology has become increasingly embedded into daily life. The book then moves to chapters that are task-based, focusing on specific roles librarians fill in libraries.

The first chapter is by Joseph Thomas and Yunting Fu and focuses on collection development and the drastic shift that has happened as libraries have moved toward collecting in ever more digital formats. One of the key points addressed in this chapter is a reminder to readers about the importance of preservation as librarians are increasingly leasing content via digital platforms as opposed to purchasing materials outright. The collection development argument about the merits of collecting in print versus digital formats is familiar; however, the chapter is clearly written and provides a concise summary for those who may be new to the topic or those who are looking for a clear overview of the subject.

The book then moves to a chapter titled “Organization of Knowledge and Information” by Sarah W. Sutton and Mira E. Greene. It is very refreshing to see a chapter focused on the evolution of cataloging in a digital environment, as so often books such as these focus almost exclusively on the areas typically referred to as public services. Sutton and Greene’s chapter serves as an excellent primer on the subject, including discussion of the desire to move to a library catalog that is more open to web discovery via linked data and BibFrame.

Two chapters that focus on communication/marketing and reference and user services complete the section of the book that focuses on librarian roles. These chapters address the role of librarians in public-facing positions and address librarians in a wide variety of settings, including academic, school, health science, and public libraries. The chapters look carefully at how evolving technology can be used to support these important services.

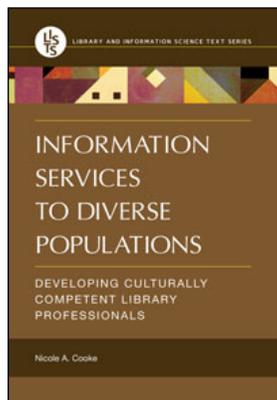
The second half of the book is focused on broader themes of librarianship including librarians serving as researchers, supporting online education services, and core competencies of librarianship. These chapters taken as a group emphasize future directions for librarians and provide some excellent ideas on how librarians can further hone their skills and continue contributing in their various environments.

The final chapter of the book is written by Anna Ercoli Schnitzer and Merle Rosenzweig and discusses how customers or patrons of the library view it. It then delves into the challenging question of what users want to see in the library of the future. Like several of the earlier chapters, this one also includes points of concern for public libraries, as well as academic and medical libraries.

The book index is regrettably limited and biographies are lacking for the contributors, although contact information is available for each author. A short biography of each of the editors is, however, included. All of the chapters include extensive notes and include a “future competencies” section that highlights how those involved (or looking to get involved) in this aspect of librarianship can develop their skills further in this area. While the book is text-heavy with only two figures included, this is not to the detriment of the volume. A very brief appendix with five websites to find more information about librarian competencies is also provided. This volume is part of a series of titles published in conjunction with the Medical Library Association that is geared toward health sciences librarians and professionals. That being said, while one chapter is focused specifically on health sciences library management, the topics addressed in this book are of interest to a broader audience. While many of the examples included in this volume focus on resources specific to those in the medical field, readers from other areas of librarianship may also benefit from reading this book.

Developing Librarian Competencies for the Digital Age is a valuable resource for librarians who are looking to stay informed, and it provides an excellent overview of different aspects of librarianship for those who may be looking to gain more information about areas outside their expertise. It touches on many of the key issues facing librarians today and works to help the reader to find ways to stay current in the profession. —*Lisa M. McFall, Hamilton College*

Nicole A. Cooke. *Information Services to Diverse Populations: Developing Culturally Competent Library Professionals*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Libraries Unlimited, 2017. 166p. Paper, \$65.00 (ISBN 978-1-4408-3460-8). LC 60-31669.



Information Services to Diverse Populations is designed to provide a foundational understanding of diversity issues for LIS graduate students, but it can also serve as an important resource for current library professionals who may not have had an opportunity to study diversity and social justice issues. The book primarily focuses on developing cultural competencies in library practice and is suitable for all library staff, not only those occupying patron-facing positions. Developing inclusive library services and support for diversity across all library organizations should be a primary goal of all information professionals, and this book is able to provide a strong foundation for developing organizational empathy, creating the foundation for accessible and equitable services, and establishing libraries that are actively welcoming to all patrons.