

Penny Coppernoll-Blach

PHARMACY & NURSING
LIBRARIAN

Led by the LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee, Librarian Profiles offer background information and career-related advice from UC San Diego librarians to MLIS students and graduates.

Which institution did you earn your MLIS or other graduate degree?

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Do you currently or did you ever hold a professional library position related to the focus you pursued in graduate school?

Yes

Did you have work experience at any level in a library of any type prior to attending library school?

No

Do you have another advanced degree, or training, in addition to your MLIS?

Postgraduate Training Program for Science Librarians, University of Tennessee Medical Units, Memphis. Funded by National Library of Medicine Trainee Grant. One-year internship program in clinical librarianship.

Did you focus on a particular area of librarianship while earning your MLIS?

Yes, Biomedical Information

Beyond the MLIS, do you feel that any additional advanced degree is essential to success in your current position?

No

What are some of your current tasks and responsibilities?

- Serve as the liaison to the Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences (SSPPS)
- Serve as Personal Librarian for 240 Pharmacy graduate students
- Give orientations to the Library for new Pharmacy student classes
- Teach workshops at SSPPS courses, such as the Drug Information course
- Work at the Reference Assistance Desk, online chat hours, help with undergraduate writing classes, and general reference questions

What are some skills or core competencies you feel are essential to success in your current position?

- Database searching skills
- LibGuides authorship and updating
- Reference interviewing skills

What do you like best about being a librarian or about your current role or responsibilities?

I enjoy being the liaison to a professional school, such as the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. I need to keep up with all the databases that UCSD licenses, and I help out with so many different types of activities and audiences. It is never the same day twice.

What do you like best about working in an academic or university setting?

I like the scholarship and research needs of the academic setting. I get different types of questions from each of my groups (Pharmacy and Nursing), and I am always available to help with more detailed assignments (such as Systematic Reviews requests).

What is something that you think contributed to you getting your first professional job following graduate school for your MLIS?

I was able to get my first professional job at the University of Illinois Medical Center, possibly because I had completed my MLIS at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and completed the second year of advanced librarianship.

What is your advice to MLIS students seeking or entering their first professional library position?

Be flexible about the first professional position that you are offered, as it is always challenging to get that first offer.

last updated Sept. 2022

Please contact me to further discuss my work or background.

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