

Annual Report, 2023-24

LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee

Membership

Penny Coppernoll-Blach	2019-2025
KyMBERly Goodson	2021-2025, Chair 2024-2025
Reid Otsuji	2021-2025
Abby Pennington	2023-2025
Annelise Sklar	2022-2024, Chair 2023-2024
Natalie Tagge	2022-2024
Abby Pennington (ex officio) Graduate Internship Coordinator	2021-2025
Tim Chu (ex officio) Graduate Internship Coordinator	2020-present

Activities

The 2023-24 LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee activities were consistent with those of previous years. We continued to provide mentoring, information, and support to future librarians. We added 1 new committee member, met 8 times, and continued our Librarian Profiles project. We formally matched 4 mentees with mentors, coordinated pairings for virtual Career Chats between library school students and LAUC-SD members, and hosted an in-person “Speed Dating” Career Chats event for the UC San Diego community.

Mentor Program

The committee received 4 mentorship requests: 3 library employees and 1 SJSU student/2023 Career Chat participant. Each mentorship request was fulfilled by a LAUC-SD librarian.

Librarian Profiles

The Librarian Profiles project provides librarian advice and insight into various librarian roles for those who are interested in the profession. The Mentoring Committee public website currently hosts 15 [librarian profiles](#) and the committee will continue to solicit LAUC-SD membership participation in order to add new profiles in the future.

Career Chats

The committee continued its now annual tradition of virtual Career Chats for MLIS students and others interested in librarianship as a career. We advertised to the MLIS student listservs at USC, SJSU, and UCLA and received 81 mentee sign-ups that were matched to 33 participating librarians. We updated the registration forms to more accurately reflect areas of librarianship represented in LAUC-SD and attempted to streamline the communication process by sharing the matching spreadsheet directly with librarians instead of sending multiple emails to mentees and librarians with information about their matches. Librarians who met with their assigned MLIS students provided generally positive feedback, but unfortunately, many librarian emails to students were caught in SJSU's spam filter and approximately a quarter (22) of the students did not respond, identify a date, or attend their scheduled meeting. Next year's committee may want to investigate additional options to improve and coordinate communication and scheduling between the committee, librarians, and mentees.

#mlis_students Slack Channel

The #mlis_students Slack channel now has 28 members, 17 of which are LAUC-SD members or LES employees. Traffic has increased to a point where both librarians and MLIS students are using it to share information, advice, job postings, and other educational or professional opportunities.

Speed Dating Career Chats In-Person Event

The Library has many employees who are current MLIS students, recent MLIS graduates, or otherwise interested in pursuing a career in librarianship, so the Mentoring Committee wanted to provide an opportunity for these employees to learn more about other areas of the Library. The committee decided to revive the popular "speed dating" career chat activity featured in previous in-person Librarian Shadow Days so that these employees could meet and network with a large number of LAUC-SD librarian colleagues in one event. 28 people (13 librarians, 13 future librarians, and 2 LES staff) attended the Speed Dating Career Chats event on Wednesday, May 29. Feedback was generally positive, though more experienced employees found it less helpful than those newer to librarianship or their exploration thereof. Future event planners will want to ensure that 1) the room is configured in a setup such as a U that encourages attendees to all move in the same direction when it is time to switch pairings and 2) that attendees have time to eat some of the snacks before the activity begins.

Graduate Internship Program

Number of requests: 2

Number of placements: 1

As noted in the 2022-23 report, one intern was placed in Metadata Services in August 2023 and finished their internship in November 2023.

Due to the ongoing difficulty in finding programs and librarians willing to supervise interns, the committee decided to pause the internship program and updated the website accordingly. The Library's 2024-25 budget cuts and hiring pause, coupled with the long-standing overwork among most librarians, particularly following the pandemic, suggest that this situation may continue indefinitely. The committee had hoped to encourage more programs to proactively design internships using the Metadata Services plan as a model but acknowledges that developing and supervising meaningful and productive internships is time-consuming. AELS drafted an internship plan in late spring, but the program is currently unable to host an intern. The committee will continue to approach programs about designing internships that could be ready for students seeking them. We also continue to explore options with Library administration for paying interns, in addition to or as an alternative to providing course credit.

Other Activities

The committee chair was contacted a few times by LES to provide additional mentoring and career advice to employees with an interest in non-librarian advancement within the Library.

Horizon Issues

Library Budget

The LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee does not have a standard annual allocation and must request a budget from the University Librarian. The committee requested \$1200 to cover its anticipated programming in 2024-25, but as of this writing, does not know if it will be approved, as the Library is cutting programmatic and events budgets.

In light of the Library's financial mandate to "do less with less," along with ongoing, core vacancies in LAUC-SD librarian positions, the committee may want to focus its efforts on activities that will have the most impact on local UC San Diego employees and students interested in careers in librarianship.

Events

The committee's options for in-person events with refreshments will be constrained by available funding, and both in-person and virtual activities may be limited by the number of LAUC-SD

librarians who are willing and able to participate. The committee is currently developing a “PopTart Pop-Ins” pilot series of one-hour events/discussions for librarians to share their work and expertise with UC San Diego students and employees considering or pursuing the library profession.

Leadership

Thank you to Kymberly Goodson for serving as Mentoring Committee chair for the 2024-25 year.