

Rebecca Culbertson

SERIALS CATALOGING 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 Michigan (1963)

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?

Yes

Do you have another advanced degree(s) in addition to any MLIS?

No

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

Yes, cataloging

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?

- Providing integrated resource bibliographic records for new incoming CDL databases
- Providing bibliographic records for requested open access journals and open access collections
- Keeping up with new changes in the ever-changing cataloging rules
- Creating and reviewing name authority records for the Library of Congress Name Authority File
- Serials are ever changing, so managing to reflect changes in the records is an important aspect of my job

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

- Be a constant learner--you'll need it as the field of cataloging is constantly changing
- Cataloging requires attention to detail
- Be willing to teach the craft of cataloging

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

I like cataloging because it is such a combination of balancing change and existing rule application.

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

The content of the materials that I catalog is always interesting (and elevating!).

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

Mentoring for sure. The Librarian at my undergraduate college took me under his wing. In return for me volunteering at the Circulation Desk checking out books, every Tuesday night he would spend an hour with me just talking about the many aspects of librarianship. Once I hit Technical Services, I knew that was it. I worked in the University of Michigan Library Catalog Dept. and was hired as a cataloger right after graduation.

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

Go to conferences, network, and be willing to volunteer until you get that first professional library position.

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Please contact me to further discuss my work or background.
rculbertson@ucsd.edu