ILS Options for Smaller Law Libraries:
Which Integrated Library Systems are Being Used?

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Stuart has been a member of AALL for more than 30 years and currently works with firms of all sizes consulting on library operations, resources, and the adoption of digital resources.

This article looks at four ILSs that our colleagues are using to give an idea of what’s available and how they compare, with hopes of helping those looking for a new ILS.

In a recent project, a small firm needed a solution to manage its library. The MS Access database that provided catalog, serials, acquisitions, and patron management for the firm was built in the 1990s by the now-retired former librarian. Gone with that person was the expertise needed to maintain the database. EOS (Lucidea) and Sirsi/Dynix, each a top-shelf ILS solution for larger firms, were out of reach for this firm. Our initial research uncovered many ILSs on the market today offering an integrated catalog, serials, acquisitions, and circulation functions. To learn what systems—other than EOS (Lucidea) or Sirsi/Dynix—our colleagues were using, we conducted a quick survey of the PLLIP membership in December 2020.

There is perennial interest in this topic. A search of the law-lib archives surfaced the results of a like query from April 2020, and a similar query was posted on PLLIP in February 2021. Those results were shared with us, and we tabulated all of these survey responses into an un-scientific snapshot of what ILSs our colleagues report using in their firms. This provided more than a dozen options, so we focused on the top four, which accounted for the majority (62%) of the ILS mentions in the surveys.

To better understand what each of these solutions offered, we reviewed their websites along with any survey comments and received live (virtual) demos.

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TECHNICAL SERVICES
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From the Chair

Well, as the end of the year approaches, I can’t help but think of all we have gone through in the past 20 months or so. At the end of 2020, I know that we thought, phew, glad that year is over. And then, 2021. It has been a challenging time in history on all fronts: political, racial injustices, a pandemic, and, frankly, a lot of hate. I don’t know about you, but I am tired of living through history, and I am ready to have a little normalcy. That is why I will think positively that we are at least on our way back to whatever the new normal will be.

I know that many of us are still working from home or some hybrid, but in Texas, we have been back on campus full time since August. It has been a little strange since we are not allowed to mandate anything COVID, but I’d say my law school has done an outstanding job trying to keep us safe nonetheless. We had testing on campus; masks were highly suggested when in shared spaces, and we did have some incentive to vaccinate. If you can prove you were vaccinated, you did not have to test twice a week. I was like, sign me up! Although I would have done it anyway, I just received my third shot, or booster, whatever they call it! Our law school now has a vaccination rate in the 90s, making me feel a lot better. I hope all of you can get back on campus and stay safe whenever you come back.

So, what’s been going on with TS-SIS? Well, the first thing was that our ALA Liaisons terms were up, and we put out the call for the new 2021-2024 terms. Working with Larissa Sullivan, Chair of LSRD-SIS, we were lucky enough to get Ryan Tamares (CC:DA) and Cate Kellett (SAC) to sign up for another term. For the MAC liaisons, we decided to try something new. We thought we would have the first year be co-liaisons that would be shared by the outgoing liaison (Rachel Decker) and the new incoming liaison (Kate Peck). Then, the second year, the new liaison would serve solo. The final year would be co-liaisons again. So, it is still a three-year term, but every other year would be co-liaisons. The MARC Advisory Committee has decided to hold their meetings virtually for the unforeseeable future. Since there would be no need for funding the trip to attend the meeting in person, the co-liaison system could work. We will call this a beta test to see if it helps transition liaisons. I want to thank our members for volunteering to serve again and represent AALL on these very important ALA committees.

The Bylaws & Handbook Committee is currently working on updating the TS-SIS Handbook. We had a few sections that needed some editing and updating. We are also starting to update our Strategic Plan since the last one is very outdated. If you have any experience working on strategic plans or are interested in learning on-the-job creating strategic plans, please let me know right away. If you cannot help but have some knowledge that you would like to share, please shoot me an email or give me a call! I would love to hear from you!

The deadline to submit program proposals to the Annual Meeting Program Committee (AMPC) was November 30. We were very excited to have six wonderful programs to choose from!! The Executive Board submitted the top two choices before Thanksgiving. Please stay tuned for the announcement!

I hope everyone enjoys their holidays, and see you in 2022!!

Joan Stringfellow, TS-SIS Chair
Texas A&M University
In the past couple of months, the LSRD-SIS Executive Board has been productively involved in the work of our organization. One particular accomplishment deserves special recognition: the LSRD-SIS Membership Committee has been created!!

Our new Committee will be added shortly to the LSRD-SIS Committees section on our website, but meanwhile, take a sneak peek at our new Membership Committee, its mission, and responsibilities:

The LSRD-SIS Membership Committee

Mission
The mission of the LSRD-SIS Membership Committee is to recruit new members, retain existing members, encourage diversity, and raise awareness about the importance of diversity in the LSRD-SIS.

Committee Selection, Size, and Reporting
The Membership Committee shall be composed of a Chair and at least two members. The LSRD-SIS Chair appoints the Membership Committee Chair. As membership dues are submitted to and paid by the LSRD-SIS Treasurer/Secretary, the person in this role is always a member of the Committee. The Committee Chair reports to the LSRD-SIS Chair.

Duties and Responsibilities

- As a committee member, the Treasurer/Secretary submits a listing of new members to the Chair
- The Committee Chair welcomes new members via email by sending a Welcome Letter and introduces new members at meetings
- The Committee Chair provides the Membership Volunteer Form and the mission statement to new members
- The Committee Chair adds names of new members to the LSRD-SIS Community
- The Committee Chair provides the Membership Committee annual report to the LSRD-SIS Chair before the LSRD-SIS Business meeting held at the AALL Annual meetings
- The committee members analyze the membership interests and needs through the biannual survey conducted by the Vice-Chair to improve service and to meet the professional growth needs of the membership
- The committee members seek and identify new members at AALL functions, local chapter functions, and, whenever possible, library schools in their respective states
- The committee members contact lapsed members to encourage them to return by showing the value of being an LSRD-SIS member
Meetings

The Membership Committee meets throughout the year, as deemed necessary by the Chair, to hold business and promote collegiality and always meets once during the AALL Annual Meeting

Harvey Mackay said, “A great accomplishment shouldn't be the end of the road, just the starting point for the next leap forward.” Now that the creation of the Membership Committee has been accomplished, we are hoping you can get involved in the work of our new Committee, and I am calling for volunteers. It is a great privilege to serve as the inaugural Chair of a new committee! Please reach out to me @ lavsulli@iu.edu, if you want to serve as Chair or members of the LSRD-SIS Membership Committee.

By the time you read this column, the Education Committee will have decided on the 2022 AALL program proposal that the LSRD-SIS will sponsor. The Education Committee received several high-quality program proposals; it will be hard to choose a winner! Through no one's fault, it so happened that the LSRD-SIS Education Committee did not have a liaison to the AALL Annual Meeting Program Committee (AMPC). I am pleased to announce that Rachel Evans, University of Georgia Alexander Campbell King Law Library, will serve as our new liaison to the AALL AMPC. Rachel, thank you for volunteering to help connect AMPC with our Special Interest Sections this year! Rachel’s responsibilities include facilitating communication between AMPC and LSRD-SIS members. Additionally, she will act as the point of contact for SIS leadership and education committees regarding SIS-sponsored programs at AMPC22.

In closing, on behalf of the Executive Board, I’d like to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season and express our sincere appreciation for your hard work and loyalty throughout the year. Make sure to add volunteering for our wonderful section as one of your New Year’s resolutions!

Larissa Sullivant, LSRD-SIS Chair
Indiana University

The good news is that all of the services previewed offer solid solutions with strong track records. All are cloud-based and offer integrated serials, catalog/OPAC, and circulation functions, including barcoding and RFID capabilities. Mobile access options are standard with these services, and they all support the ability to import data in the typical range of file types. Even basic ILSs are quite powerful these days.

The most recommended ILS from the surveys is LibraryWorld. LibraryWorld is more of a do-it-yourself, bare-bones tool than the other options. However, users seem largely satisfied with the catalog, serials, and circulation functions it offers. Although one survey comment noted “a few issues with their serials, but love the price tag.” LibraryWorld is inexpensive, popular with public law libraries but lacks acquisitions and expense management modules.

One survey respondent reported using LibraryWorld with Excel to manage these functions in tandem. Another of the tradeoffs for LibraryWorld’s low price is a lower level of personal customer service, relying instead on user guides and self-help tools for getting set up and running. Even creating an account can be done without contacting anyone at LibraryWorld directly.

The other three services we looked at, HOLMES, SIMA Camelot, and Softlink Liberty, integrate acquisitions and expense management functions into the mix. They offer highly customizable data structures and graphic presentations. The ability to upload and store documents is a useful feature offered by all three, allowing invoices and contracts to be digitized, linked to appropriate records, and searched within the system. OPACs can host dynamic feeds if desired. The holy grail of automated check-in and routing of digital serials remains elusive, though each service reports some facility for auto-forwarding email subscriptions.

The flexibility of these systems can be either a blessing or a curse. As one survey commenter put it, “Other products that I have previously looked at were totally customizable, meaning that you had to specify everything. As a solo librarian, that’s not something I wanted to do.” HOLMES, SIMA, and Softlink offer higher levels of customer service and personal support, which can be especially valuable during setup and launch.

Among the aspects that distinguish each of these three is that U.K.-based Softlink is a considerably larger operation than those producing HOLMES and SIMA Camelot, which are based on the east coast of the U.S. HOLMES and SIMA Camelot were developed by law librarians, for law libraries, and have loyal customers of long-standing. HOLMES and SIMA have made new features, e.g., HOLMES’ reference tracking module or SIMA’s project management module, available as part of their basic subscription packages. Softlink offers additional features functionality through a separate research management system, ‘Illumin,’ that comes with its own cost. ‘Illumin’ offers reference tracking and knowledge management functions. Softlink Liberty also offers more developed analytics than the other two and touts 24-hour customer service. Interesting factoid: Softlink Liberty is used by Thomson Reuters internally.

Pricing: A big part of LibraryWorld’s appeal is transparent and low pricing at “$495 yearly per library.” The tradeoff lacks acquisitions/expense management functions and personalized customer service. HOLMES, SIMA, and Softlink offer pricing based on variables such as the number of administrative users, which modules are being licensed, and any conversion or start-up fees (to set up databases, import existing data, train users, etc.). For the basics, plan on budgeting something in the range of $2,500 to $5,000 to get started with a small operation.

Integrated library systems are a well-established technology, and there are many good options on the market today that offer excellent functionality at reasonable prices for smaller law libraries.
The Top Four ILS Solutions

**LibraryWorld**
- Basic integrated serials, catalog/OPAC, circulation/barcode, reporting, patron management functions
- Most popular in law library surveys
- Popular with public law libraries (likely due to low price); website law library testimonials nearly all public law libraries.
- Mobile & OPAC Apps
- Imports data using MARC records and plain text files
- Offers a range of set reports
- Inexpensive
- Lacks acquisitions/expense management capabilities
- Limited customer service
- Based in CA

**HOLMES**
- Offers integrated serials, acquisitions, catalog/OPAC, circulation/barcode, and reporting capabilities
- Provides reference tracking & contract/documents storage functions
- Includes password management tool for managing department’s passwords (not a firm-wide password management tool)
- Mobile & OPAC Apps
- Import data using standard file types
- Platform: Quickbase
- Based in NJ

**SIMA/Camelot**
- Offers integrated catalog/OPAC, serials, accounting, circulation functions
- Recently added ILL and Project Management modules
- Includes contract/document storage capability
- Mobile & OPAC Apps
- Federated search across all modules
- Used by LLSDC for union catalog
- Import data using standard file types
- Platform: AST
- Based in VA

**Softlink Liberty**
- Offers integrated acquisitions, circulation, catalog/OPAC, serials, and patron management functions
- Mobile & OPAC Apps
- ILL management feature
- SSO and federated search
- Advanced analytics
- Import data using standard file types
- Reference tracking and KM functions are available via ‘Illumin,’ a separate service
- 24-hour support
- Platform: Java with SQL database
- UK-based (global company)
It does not seem possible, but Fall Semester 2021 is nearly over. Since we are back to being fully in-seat, our students have returned to the law library for study and research. Now that finals are coming, more and more students are showing up to study for their exams, bringing their casebooks, study aids, laptops, and exam anxiety. This has led me to start thinking about building up our resources on wellness, stress management, and mindfulness.

Like most law libraries, our Collection Development policy is focused on collecting KF materials, although we will add resources in other ranges if they have academic or scholarly importance to our patron base. Arguably, resources on wellness and stress management fall within the category of “academic or scholarly importance,” especially if these resources can assist in improving the quality of our students’ academic performance. Law school will always be stressful, but I believe that the law library can play a role in providing a place for students to recalibrate, regroup, and find their focus.

One area I have investigated collecting is our library’s non-traditional study materials: resources that aid in our students’ comfort and improve their overall environment. For this, I looked at how other libraries added non-traditional study materials. For example, in 2014, the Yale Law Library announced the addition of portable standing desks. Law libraries have also offered seat cushions and blankets for checkout. However, the pièce de résistance is the Arthur J. Morris Law Library’s Klaus Reading Room massage chair. Personally speaking, I think that I would need to test that chair at least once a day to make sure it was in proper working condition!

As awesome as it would be to have a massage chair, resources on wellness, stress management, and mindfulness do not need to be non-traditional. For those who may not have the space or the budget for these items, several law libraries have curated some excellent LibGuides with information about books written specifically for law students’ mental health, open-access resources that students can use for meditation and relaxation, and even coloring books and other stress busters. I have found these LibGuides to be a great starting place for selecting wellness, stress management, and mindfulness resources. A short sample of these LibGuides is listed below. Here’s to a low-stress finals run!

- **Stress Busters**: Alexander Campbell King Law Library, University of Georgia
- **Stress Relief Guide**: Barry University Law Library
- **Stressbusters! Wellness**: Brooklyn Law School
- **Wellness Resources for Law Students**: Donald Pray Law Library Wellness Collection Resources, University of Oklahoma
- **Stress Busters**: Hugh F. MacMillian Law Library, Emory Law
- **How to survive law school without losing your mind**: Illinois College of Law Library
- **Mindfulness**: Loyola Law School Law Library
- **Mindfulness**: University of Richmond Law Library

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**Adrienne DeWitt**
Campbell University

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 Conducting a Diversity Audit

What is a Diversity Audit?

The issue of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in law libraries has been discussed for at least the last decade but has become a regular part of our social consciousness in recent years. AALL and other library organizations have recognized the importance of DEI with many resources and initiatives for librarians wanting to address this topic at their workplace (AALL 2021). The recommendations in this article draw from a practice developed by teen librarian Karen Jensen to make her collection more representative of her community and the world at large.

A diversity audit is an opportunity to examine who is represented in your library collection. It is “an inventory…to determine the amount of diversity within the collection” (Jensen 2017). In the context of a library collection, diversity can mean resources that reflect the experiences, points of view, or voices from marginalized or under-represented groups writing about their own experiences. Representation can also include intersectional resources, whose subjects or authors belong to more than one under-represented or marginalized group.

Representation can span a number of categories, which can have many areas of overlap. The list below comes from the University of Michigan on their DEI LibGuide (University of Michigan Law Library 2021):

- Ability, Disability, and Ableism
- Activism
- Age, Aging, and Ageism
- Country of Origin, Immigration, and Nativism
- DEI in Higher Education and Other Institutions
- Faith, Religious Identity, Secular Worldview, and Sectarianism
- General DEI Resources
- Incarceration
- Indigenous Peoples
- Intersectionality
- LGBTQIA+ and Heterosexism
- Mental and Physical Health
- Race, Ethnicity, and Racism
- Sex, Gender, Gender Identity, and Gender Discrimination
- Socioeconomic Status and Classism
- Veterans, the Military Experience, and Anti-Military Bias

Why Conduct a Diversity Audit?

The goal of a diversity audit “is to provide a well-balanced collection that can be both a mirror (reflect a reader’s experience) and a window (so readers can experience different experiences and points of view).” Conducting a diversity audit can provide information to make more informed collection development decisions, enhance collection policies, and improve procedures for selecting new resources. Commitment to diversity may also be an institutional goal, and conducting a diversity audit can be a tangible way of aligning the services and resources provided by the library to that goal.
Complete a Diversity Audit in 4 Steps:

1) Research Your Community

Your service community can be the users of your library collection, your institution or company members, or the population in your geographic location. You will want to think about what types of diversity you want to assess and how to find statistical information about those different categories. The U.S. Census Bureau provides statistics for all states and counties. You could use the ABA 509 Disclosure to gather information about race and ethnicity at your institution. You may also have national or local organizations that track statistics about specific groups, such as the Williams Institute at UCLA, which focuses on LGBT people in the United States.

2) Gather Data About Your Collection

There are many different ways to gather data about your collection, but I will detail two below. The first is to audit existing materials through a conventional collection inventory. The second is to audit each new acquisition over a set amount of time.

Collection Inventory Method

Jensen advises using a representative sample of the collection instead of auditing the entire collection (which could be nearly impossible for extremely large libraries). To start, run a shelf-list, and export the relevant metadata for each title (title, author, publication date, subject, etc.) to Excel. In the subsequent columns, label each header with the element you are looking for (e.g., Black/African American, Asian American, LatinX, Native American, LGBTQ, Disability, etc.). Code each title (row) with the element(s) that apply with a tally or an X. It may be helpful to have more than one person consult each title and code(s) to help eliminate bias or blind spots.

Book Acquisition Method

This method should be conducted over a specific period, such as one year. It starts with an Excel spreadsheet formatted like the inventory method. The first few columns will contain the relevant metadata (title, author, publication date, subject, etc.). In the subsequent columns, label each header with the element you are looking for (e.g., Black/African American, Asian American, LatinX, Native American, LGBTQ, Disability, etc.). As new items are purchased, add them to the spreadsheet, and code each row with the element(s) that apply with a tally or an X. Alternatively, you could run a list of recent acquisitions within the agreed-upon period.

3) Analyze and Compare Your Data Sets

To analyze the data, you will divide the number of titles in a category with the total number of titles analyzed to determine a **percentage of collection represented by that category**. You can extrapolate this number to determine representation across whole or parts of your collection. Over-representation may look like a category that 18% of your user community identifies as yet is represented in 80% of the titles. This may be an imbalance that you want to be conscious of when selecting new resources or identifying titles for weeding. Another important identifier from this dataset will be gaps that exist. For example, you may discover that 8% of your user community has zero representative resources.

Jensen rightly points out that “not all representation is good representation.” There are a few things to consider in analyzing your data: Internalized bias and privilege can affect how titles are coded and can result in not being considered or appropriately tallied. A misunderstanding or ignorance of tropes and stereotypes can also inadvertently code harmful titles as ones that are “representative.” Care should be taken to make sure the sample of the collection is randomized, the categories that you want to audit are well understood by everyone involved in the process, and that the content of the items being audited is coded appropriately.
4) Take Action

Once you have some data, you can share this information with administrators, managers, or selectors at your institution. The data may reveal areas of the collection that require weeding or expose areas where more careful and considerate selection is needed. You may also use this data to improve collecting goals, policies, or procedures for library staff. The process of conducting a diversity audit may show that additional DEI training for library staff is desired or needed. It will take your library one step closer to being truly representative of your entire community, no matter the outcome.

References


Lessons Learned from a Triple Disaster

The last column I wrote was about working on a disaster plan for my institution. It seemed very fortuitous that just after completing that column, the FDLP Academy put on a webinar entitled Triple Disaster: Lessons learned from Hurricane Maria, the Southern Puerto Rico Earthquakes of 2020, and COVID-19. Jane Canfield, Coordinator of Federal Documents at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, gave the presentation, and a recording is accessible here: https://www.fdlp.gov/triple-disaster-lessons-learned-from-hurricane-maria-the-southern-puerto-rico-earthquakes-of-2020-and-covid-19. I signed up for this program looking for tips and advice for how to approach updating a local disaster plan, and it included a lot of valuable information to move my planning process forward.

Speaker Jane Canfield began with the following quotation from Dr. Christopher Barton and Dr. Stuart Nishenko of the U.S. Geological Survey: “Events such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and tornadoes are natural disasters because they negatively impact society, and so they must be measured and understood in human-related terms.” This accurately describes the approach to this presentation and addresses what I feel is a striking component of it: the first half addressed caring for the wellbeing of the people associated with the institution, as well as the people in the community, before dealing with the practicalities of caring for a collection in the second half. Ms. Canfield included personal pictures and discussed the impact these disasters had on her community before delving into the lessons her organization learned. I think this underscores so much of what everyone has been through in the last two years. Not only are we still experiencing the effects of a global pandemic, but the United States, as well as much of the world, has also been confronted with natural disasters on a monumental scale. Libraries are in many ways the center of a community, and Ms. Canfield’s initial focus in this presentation is a reminder that part of the thought process with disaster planning should be to prioritize the needs of your employees and patrons, even when they have little relation to the materials your library manages.
Now to speak directly to the title of “lessons learned,” I will work through each of the six topics discussed individually. The first lesson is that nothing can prepare you for some disasters, especially those that result in widespread damage. In looking at some of the maps shared early in the presentation, we should all feel confident that we have the potential for some major disaster to impact us. While we can prepare for a disaster on some level, the most catastrophic disasters may still leave us feeling helpless.

The second takeaway is that all institutions should have a disaster policy that specifically addresses their location and collection needs. The disaster policy at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico Libraries before 2020 was that they follow the disaster policy of the university. What they determined in 2020 was that the university’s disaster policy said nothing about the library. Thus, not only is it important to have a disaster policy, but it’s also crucial to understand the relationship of your library’s disaster policy with that of the larger institution.

The third takeaway is that some disasters might have a wide enough impact that there might not be a library that can take over the functions yours serves within your community. This is especially relevant to depository libraries, though something relatable to any library as we frequently direct users to other branches or institutions if we’re unable to meet a specific need. It can also dramatically impact services, such as interlibrary loans and couriers, further impacting geographically isolated users.

The fourth takeaway is to define the types of emergencies that could happen in your area and to define responses based on the potential severity of the emergency. There’s a very different response for a category 1 hurricane compared to a category 5, and you need to have enough nuance in your disaster plan to address the entire scope of scenarios. We can now also add planning for situations that result in your building and materials being off-limits for an extended time, such as what happened to so many of us early last year.. If any of us, few would have contemplated including this particular scenario in a disaster plan before 2020.

The fifth takeaway is to look at the disaster policy, as well as your insurance policy, to ensure that all of your collections are covered. While Ms. Canfield explicitly addresses the inclusion of government documents within this policy, it’s also a good idea to do an annual update to any insurance policies to include gifts and other materials that you may not have purchased. In the event of a major gift, insurance policies should be updated in a timelier manner than waiting for an end-of-year assessment. This will ensure that your insurance coverage is as current as possible in the event of a disaster.

The final lesson Ms. Canfield shares are locating, downloading, and printing contact information for FEMA and other local disaster-related agencies before you are in a situation requiring them. Keep this information in a physical format as well as a digital format, and ensure it is easy to grab and take with you in the event of an emergency. While the content may vary depending on the potential disasters in your area, it is valuable information to share with your colleagues and make available outside of the library.

Ms. Canfield circles back around to the human element at the close of her session. She addresses some of the conversations among the staff in her library after these disasters and the COVID-related shutdown. She noted how crucial it was to have access to lists of locations and contacts to get medical and mental health assistance. And not only is this something that your staff should have, but a resource that you should share among your patron base in digital and analog formats. If you don’t have the time to watch the webinar using the above link, do download the slides, as the last section is a list of resources for how to prepare for, and make it through, a variety of disasters.
Let’s Start at the Very Beginning, Part 2  

Paula Seeger  
Fox Rothschild, LLP

In the last issue, I revealed part one of the poll results about how we define serials and what kind of skills are needed to work with serials. First, a reminder about the setup: The Technical Services Special Interest Section was polled starting July 12, 2021 (with a reminder sent July 29), closing August 15. There were 58 responses. For this issue, we will focus on the questions regarding skills needed for serials work.

Poll Results

Before identifying the skills needed, I asked, “If you went to library school (or had other library-related education), did you learn anything specific about serials?” The results showed that most respondents had some exposure to “serials” in their formal education:

- 51.7% - Yes, part of a general class on cataloging, indexing, or other technical services-related courses
- 22.4% - No
- 17.2% - I don’t remember
- 5.2% - NA. I have not taken any formal library-related courses
- 3.4% - Yes, part of a different course

Next, I posed two questions regarding skills: 1) technical skills and 2) other skills learned through professional development (skills that seem to need continuous development). Here is a summary of the responses to “What technical skills do you think are valuable for a serials staff worker to have or develop? ”

- Understanding of “serials,” including:
  - Identifying what they are, how they are used and updated, and how they differ from other types of materials
  - How they are cataloged
  - CONSER (Cooperative ONline SERials) familiarity
  - Rules
  - Publication guidelines, prediction, patterns, date ranges
  - Ability to work with and understand MARC records in general and within your system

- Understanding your specific integrated library system (ILS)/other platforms, including:
  - How technical services’ work affects the public catalog and the ability to explain the back-end work to non-technical staff
  - Serials-specific ILS commands and processes
  - Systems functionality and how to work in batches, as well as how other modules affect serials (acquisitions, cataloging)
- Excel skills
- Understanding electronic resource management, including:
  - Coding, XML
  - Manipulating databases
  - Authentication, proxy settings
- Familiarity with multiple languages
- Familiarity with the binding process
- Familiarity with accounting, budgets, statistics
- How to work with vendors, understanding how publishing works and how it’s funded
- Other skills:
  - Communication
  - Attention to detail, organization skills, accuracy
  - Flexibility
  - Critical thinking, curiosity, problem-solving, flexible thinking
  - Investigative skills, knowing whom to contact, searching for more information through American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) or North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG)

Here is a summary of the responses to the question, “Regarding professional development, what skills need constant development (either technical or ‘soft’ skills, such as interpersonal communication)?”

- Communication skills, including:
  - Willingness to share, consult, ask questions, ask for help
  - Communication with vendors and publishers
  - Communication with researchers and reference staff
- Problem-solving, self-starting investigations, how to troubleshoot common tech problems
- Emotional intelligence, cultural awareness (especially with a chance to practice what you learn)
- Attention to detail, time management, patience
- Computer/digital literacy, Excel skills development
- Foreign languages
- Intricacies of the ILS/platform functionality and changes (especially with a brand-new platform being implemented)
- Changes to serials or cataloging modules or processes, such as format changes/Open Access, publishing trends and changes, or bibliographic changes
- Law-specific training on serials
- Serials publishing industry, understanding legal publishing, learning about society/publisher funding
- Learning about the serials collection in your library
• How to conduct a reference interview
• Customer service, both internal and external
• Leadership or project management skills development
• Networking opportunities
  • Colleagues within your library, institution, mentoring
  • In your field: conferences, AALL, NASIG

What can we conclude about skills needed for serials work?
• While the majority indicated receiving some formal education about “serials,” is this still a topic included in library school curricula, or is it now something primarily taught on the job instead?
• There is a broad mix of skills needed for working with serials, with many variations based on the type of library/other settings.
• The specific technical skills mentioned most by respondents were skills needed to interact with an ILS, especially when platforms change, and tasks within the serials or cataloging modules, such as catching and cataloging format changes or troubleshooting print and electronic resources
• The “soft” skills that are most desirable include communication skills, attention to detail, and networking, emphasizing interactions with colleagues, vendors, and the publishing industry.

These responses indicate a need to stay abreast of an ever-changing field and its processes and collaborate and keep learning throughout the many phases of a career involving serials.

Resources to Note
Here is a quick note about a resource I discovered among the many blog topics produced by the Law Librarians of Congress (LLOC). If you haven’t read the main blog “In Custodia Legis” https://blogs.loc.gov/law/about/, please take a fresh look at it. I am always impressed by the variety of topics covered, both from a practical research point of view as well as how they share a trove of highlights from their vast collection.

Of note to the serials world: if you search within the blog for “Serial Set,” you will find occasional posts regarding serials and government documents. Specifically, posts are about hidden gems within those volumes, depicting aspects of the United States over time, such as National Parks maps, NASA project details, or are tied to virtual Smithsonian or other institutional exhibitions, commemorations, or topics that are in the news or current legislation. Images are digitized within the collection, and the results are usually posted in this blog. One post that caught my eye was about Birds and the Law: https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2021/09/from-the-serial-set-birds-and-the-law/

Call to Connect
If I have presented anything in this column that has piqued your interest, fired you up, or just made you wonder, please connect with me at pseeger@foxrrotschild.com. I look forward to hearing from you.
There are no serials title changes.

The following is a list of serials cessations:

*Columbia Journal of Asian Law*
**Ceased in print with:** v. 33 (2020)
(OCoLC 36361813)
Continued online at [https://cjal.columbia.edu/](https://cjal.columbia.edu/)
(OCoLC 51869436)

*Dalhousie Law Journal*
**Ceased in print with:** v. 43, no. 1 (2020)
(OCoLC 1697289)
Continued online at [https://www.dal.ca/faculty/law/research/publications/dalhousie-law-journal.html](https://www.dal.ca/faculty/law/research/publications/dalhousie-law-journal.html)
(OCoLC 60622264)

*Federal State Court Directory*
**Ceased with:** 2021
(OCoLC 71756852)

*Legal Education Review*
**Ceased in print with:** v. 29 (2019)
(OCoLC 19659528)
Continued online at [https://ler.scholasticahq.com/issues](https://ler.scholasticahq.com/issues)
(OCoLC 60616097)

*Mitchell Hamline Law Review*
**Ceased in print with:** v. 45, no. 2 (2019)
(OCoLC 945580567)
Continued online at [https://open.mitchellhamline.edu/mhlr/](https://open.mitchellhamline.edu/mhlr/)
(OCoLC 948313876)

*State Legislative Sourcebook*
**Ceased with:** 2021
(OCoLC 13051608)

*State Rankings: A Statistical View of America*
**Ceased with:** 2020
(OCoLC 234583622)
Establishing or renaming riots, massacres, and major racial incidents takes up much of this month’s new and revised headings list. The “Elaine Race Riot, Elaine, Ark., 1919” is now “Elaine Massacre, Elaine, Ark., 1919,” and its broader heading “Massacres—Arkansas” accompanies it. We may now use “Houston Race Riot, Houston, Tex., 1917” (it involved an uprising of black soldiers) and “Charleston Workhouse Slave Rebellion, Charleston, S.C., 1849.” A more recent event, January 6, 2021, protests and riots at the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., are now covered by “Capitol Riot, Washington, D.C., 2021,” and the broader terms “Riots—Washington (D.C.)” and “Sieges—Washington (D.C.).” Overseas, we have the “Srebrenica Massacre, Srebrenica, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, 1995,” a reminder of the very brutal war waged there. Not quite a riot is the “Anti-vaccination movement” and those with “Vaccine hesitancy.”

In the area of strictly legal headings, “Adoption (Canon law)--Coptic Church” and “Traffic stops (Law enforcement)” appeared, as did “Racism in law enforcement,” which was proposed earlier but not adopted. The former heading “Dachau Trial, Dachau, Germany, 1946” is now “Dachau Trials, Dachau, Germany, 1945-1947.” “Water crimes” may be used for environmental crimes involving water. The entire heading needs to be read. It is not about piracy. “Statehood (American politics)--Law and legislation” refers presumably to adding more states to the United States. “Ghost guns” are homemade, untraceable guns made from kits or 3D printers. “Grenfell Tower (London, England)” is the site of a disastrous 2017 fire and a continuing inquiry. The “School-to-prison pipeline” has elicited much comment. It is related to two existing headings, “Imprisonment” and “Racism in schools.” The new heading “Indigenous children--Government policy” describes a subject with a long and painful history. New headings from the pre-Civil War period include “Slave marriage,” “Slave auctions,” and “Slave markets,” the latter heading denoting the locations of the auctions. “Interracial adoption” is controversial in some quarters.

A few odds and ends. “Cyberinfrastructure--Security measures” will prove useful. “Anarchafeminism” sounds interesting, as does “Food supply and war.” The term “Disability culture” has as a broader term “Subculture” and merits reading before usage. “African Americans—Migrations” is the subject of many books, including Isabel Wilkerson’s 2010 book, The Warmth of Other Suns. The heading “Parents of gender-nonconforming children” is available, as are “Teenage superheroes” and “Women antiheroes.”

Recent Genre/form headings of interest include “Editorials,” “Television commentaries,” and “Television criticism and reviews.”

Here is a brief note from our keep-your-fingers-crossed department. Revision of the heading “Illegal aliens” is in the works. It is to be replaced by “Noncitizens” and “Illegal immigration.” If these are established, we will have much subject authority file work ahead of us. We can watch for reactions from Congress. The Tennessee representative who first objected to this change is now a senator.
The Library of Congress recently updated the interface for its Classification Web product (https://www.blogger.com/u/1/blog/post/edit/3377524512929073807/1635734736907318909). For those of us in libraries that use LC Classification and subject headings, Classification Web has long been a valuable tool for quickly researching and assigning call numbers and subjects. It's more frequently updated and infinitely more convenient for users than the printed schedules of yesterday. In addition, to call numbers and subject headings, Classification Web contains several other controlled vocabularies as well as the name authority file. As someone who used to use the printed volumes, I greatly appreciated the office real estate I reclaimed when this all went online. While Classification Web has always contained a vast amount of useful and timely information, it has not always been easy to navigate. There have been incremental changes to the interface over the years, but the latest upgrade, to Classification Web 4, promises to be the most substantial improvement yet. How does it fare?

For one thing, Classification Web 4 has a cleaner, more modern look and feel than previous versions. The official announcement claims it "incorporates modern web navigation techniques and a responsive design that runs on a wide range of hardware from desktop computers to tablets and smartphones." I found this to be true. It immediately looked more streamlined from previous versions. The display is reminiscent of a mobile app, even on a desktop computer. The now-familiar “hamburger button” (https://www.blogger.com/u/1/blog/post/edit/3377524512929073807/1635734736907318909) in the upper left screen corner offers quick access to all the searchable collections as well as user and account settings.

Once logged in, the browse and search options offer different experiences to meet a wide range of user navigation to the desired information. I rely more on browsing than searching, and the predictive text makes browsing easier. It's a welcome addition to the functionality of Classification Web. I also found that the drop-down menus make navigating the system much easier.

Search results, to my eye, seem to be better spaced and easier to read. One feature of the interface that, thankfully, did not change is how clicking on search results opens new tabs. This makes comparing results and returning to the original search a breeze and has long been one of my favorite aspects of Classification Web.

Overall, I found the changes in Classification Web 4 to be much needed and very welcome improvements over previous versions of the interface. I'm glad to see that this tool that I've relied on for years is continuing to be developed and adapted for new platforms.
In February 2021, I was generously awarded a TS-SIS Education Grant to attend the 2021 AALL Management Institute. The virtual Institute offered an interesting and important opportunity to engage away from the work-from-home monotony that most experienced in the first half of 2021.

The Institute was held virtually March 23-24, 2021, and moderated by Jessica Swenson (Employee Learning Programs Manager in Learning and Talent Development at UW-Madison). She presented the first session on Management and Leadership Approaches in Remote and Hybrid Environments. Jessica did a fantastic job presenting this timely topic, especially encouraging everyone to participate and stay engaged. She did this by using the “annotate” feature on Zoom, which allowed participants to write on her slides. She would put up a largely blank screen, and participants could write their responses anonymously on the screen for everyone to see. I thought this was particularly effective and allowed everyone’s opinion to be recognized.

As a group, we considered how the shift to remote or hybrid work affected the leadership and/or management principles valued in our organization. Some of the takeaways included: a need for flexible options post-pandemic, space for self-care and a better work-life balance, increasing need for communication, a greater acknowledgment of people’s resilience and ability to rise to a challenge, and appreciating that Zoom allows us to see each other in a more personal way than before. We all concluded that managing a remote work environment is new and different for many people. As we have adapted and changed our management approach, we also must expect that the shift back to “normal” will be a murky, difficult process.

We also participated in a session on Understanding and Transforming Organizational Culture by the esteemed Maureen Sullivan. She is a powerful and knowledgeable speaker, and her expertise on the topic was incredibly valuable. We took part in several exercises evaluating and dissecting the culture at our respective institutions. I especially felt empowered by the part of her presentation on transformational change. The Covid-19 pandemic, I believe, can serve as a meaningful catalyst of change for managers who are willing to seize the opportunity and do the work.

Most of day two was an important presentation on Overcoming Implicit Bias, Identity Anxiety, And Stereotype Threat from the Perception Institute (www.perception.org). I have attended several sessions on implicit bias, but this one focused on navigating identity differences, overcoming bias in decision-making, and planning and resetting when we have witnessed or delivered harm to someone else. Some interventions they suggest in our journeys of “de-biasing” include connecting with others over differences instead of seeking sameness and slowing down decision-making to be deliberate and mindful to avoid reliance on unconscious processing.

The presenters wrapped up the day with a session on constructive conversations and personal development planning. As we learned, constructive conversations move from a battle of messages, where each person attempts to prove they are right, to a learning conversation where participants take an attitude of curiosity and understanding. As a manager, having tools for better communication and feedback will certainly help me in the performance evaluation process, among many other situations. I appreciated the wrap-up time for reflection and goal setting at the end. I was able to take the tools we learned and commit to myself to use them in my professional development journey.

I want to express my sincere thanks to the TS-SIS Awards Committee for making this possible.
Funding Research Opportunities Grant (FROG) Announcement

Hop to it!!

Please see the following research opportunity, and Don’t forget the FROG!

It’s Quick, It’s Easy, and Your Research Will Benefit Your Technical Services Colleagues.

The AALL LSRD-SIS and TS-SIS FROG (Funding Research Opportunities Grant) Committee is always accepting applications.

The FROG provides support for law librarians to perform research or assessment projects which will enhance our profession. FROG is open to all AALL members and must show evidence that their research will benefit technical services law librarianship. The LSRD/TS FROG Committee will award up to $1,000 in grants in a single year.

“AALL’s Strategic Plan envisions that AALL and its members will be the recognized authority in all aspects of legal information. AALL’s Research Agenda seeks to make that vision a reality by stimulating a diverse range of scholarship related to and supportive of the profession of law librarianship.” -- AALL Research Agenda 2013-2016.

For other research topic ideas, visit the FROG website and AALL’s Research Agenda page.

For more information on the grant and the application process, visit Grant Guidelines.

If you have any further questions, please email Jessie Tam at jessie.tam@mdcourts.gov, FROG Committee Chair.

TSLL EDITORIAL POLICY

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