

# **LIBRARIANS AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS**

Collaboration  
and Innovation

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# Contents

Acknowledgments *vii*

Introduction *ix*

- 1 | The Changing Environment of Higher Education** 1  
*Joe Eshleman and Kristen Eshleman*
- 2 | Comparisons and Collaborations between  
the Professions** 25  
*Richard Moniz*
- 3 | Best Practices and Opportunities for Collaboration** 45  
*Richard Moniz*
- 4 | Collaborating to Accomplish Big Goals** 63  
*Joe Eshleman*
- 5 | Where Librarians and Instructional Designers Meet** 87  
*Joe Eshleman*
- 6 | Innovation and Cooperative Ventures** 107  
*Joe Eshleman and Kristen Eshleman*
- 7 | Digital Media in the Modern University** 145  
*Karen Mann*

**8 | Integrating the Library and the LMS 161**

*Karen Mann*

**9 | What's Next for Librarians and Instructional Designers? 181**

*Joe Eshleman*

About the Authors 187

Index 189

## Introduction

**L**earning in the digital age is a networked and participatory process. Therefore, supporting faculty members' and students' ability to master digital methods and tools increasingly requires thoughtful partnerships between librarians and instructional designers. As technology continues to influence the direction of higher education, each of these fields faces both challenges and opportunities. Those individuals who are able to keep up with the consistent change are at an advantage. More importantly, those who are open to collaborative opportunities become more valuable to their institutions as they build networks of relationships and shared skill sets. Due to the increased importance and influence of digital technologies and the move toward design thinking as a way to offer strategies and solutions, it is time for librarians and instructional designers to team up to show their value to their institutions.

It is the combined interest in design along with a deep understanding of information creation and use with a focus on technology that is so important here. The intent is not to develop a magic bullet that somehow solves all of the woes of higher education. It is instead the desire to bring together human resources with unique and helpful knowledge (and skill sets). They can become valuable assets in the move to the newer technology-driven types of teaching and learning that current and future students need. Note that although technology continues to influence education, our focus here is on the people (librarians, instructional designers, students) and the collaborative opportunities available to them. While awareness and understanding of how to use the tools offered by today's technology are of utmost importance, they do not supersede the need for relationship building.

Certain day-to-day realities, as we all know, have the potential to make good intentions fall by the wayside. "How can I begin working with a librarian or an instructional designer when that is not part of my job?" In some cases, the position of instructional designer may not even exist in a given workplace.

“Yes, this is a good idea, but what does it look like in reality on my campus?” These are good questions to ask as we search for creative but practical solutions. Creating a concrete plan for moving from a basic project in which a designer and a librarian work together to one that involves a team that influences and impacts campus decisions is a justified goal. Hopefully, in addition to the examples we provide, this book will also generate conversations that help to add new and improved strategies to our ideas.

To be clear, this book is a combined effort between librarians and instructional designers and in some ways does more to represent the goals within it than what has actually been written. Furthermore, within our own various institutions, we continue to work toward its loftier goals. That is to say that although we work in tandem with our own instructional designers and librarians (as the case may be), we have not yet been able to achieve the kind of interest or influence on our own campuses for which we strive. As a type of enthusiastic exhortation rather than an extensive review or an exhaustive reference, this book is meant to inspire librarians and instructional designers to get to know one another and then to work collaboratively. The group foundation of this effort (two librarians and two instructional designers/technologists) supports this notion. The main goal is to spark ideas for collaboration among those who have not yet done so and to open up avenues of opportunity for those who cannot find them in their environments.

Once more, in the implementation of these ideas, another common question is likely to arise: “How does a concrete collaborative relationship between librarians and instructional designers that influences administration on my campus work and what form would it take?” While we provide numerous examples of what has already been done, we also put forth theories and conjecture to encourage creative solutions on the part of readers. The goal at this point is not to give that question one distinct answer but, rather, to inspire more people to ask the question and to come up with answers that make sense for them and their institutions.

A renewed focus on the building of academic networks that can create strong bonds on campus needs to be discussed to improve higher education’s capability to move forward. As a way to think about how librarians are affected, Keith Webster, in a recent presentation titled “Leading the Library of the Future: W(h)ither Technical Services?,” points out:

- We operate in a networked world—local collections in themselves make learning and research incomplete.
- We should no longer focus on acquiring the products of scholarship; we must be embedded within scholarship.
- New methods of research—open science, digital humanities, etc.—reshape researchers’ needs and demands.
- How do we get there?<sup>1</sup>

One way to get there is to change the way we think about what librarians do and how our institutions think about librarians. We must also come to the realization that we cannot get there alone. Looking for those on campus to work with has frequently led us to view faculty as good partners, and this has provided for many fruitful collaborations. Still, such relationships have not created the elevated reputation or integration for librarians that we desire. We have much to offer our institutions that remains hidden below the surface. Although many partnerships with teaching faculty work well, there may be even more opportunities and situations in which librarians and instructional designers are better matched as peers. There are numerous cases where librarians and instructional designers have worked together in the past, yet the opportunity for more cross-pollination between these two campus roles has yet to be fully realized. This book recommends exploring those opportunities that may yield collaborations on campus. It places emphasis on making the effort to work with those in technology and design positions because these areas will continue to both impact and define higher education. Additionally, a focus on design allows us to reinvent roles and helps us to be prepared when considering ourselves as campus leaders.

Librarians can sometimes react negatively to joining (or even collaborating) with technologists on campus. Such efforts can be met with divided positions along the academia/technology line. It is not the goal of this book to take a position or to adhere to an agenda but merely to point out that technology and design thinking will continue to influence how teaching and learning take place. And it is imperative for librarians to move with the tide. Within this is the opportunity to learn, grow, and build relationships.

There continues to be a great deal of discussion about the future of higher education and how it is being impacted by technology. Educational technology, commonly shortened to edtech, has had an interesting relationship with academia, one that seems to be both altruistic and antagonistic at times. As a librarian, it is interesting to observe how libraries earlier went through a similar experience that is currently occurring within the broader arena of higher education. The questioning of value and the subsequent need to prove worth continue to occur. Whether technology (including educational technology) will be a partner or an imminent threat (or a mix of these) moving forward is a topic that is continually raised.

Librarians by now are well aware of how they are frequently viewed as obsolete and have grown accustomed to “value questioning” fatigue and the numerous countdowns to their demise. Yet they still remain generally optimistic. Many view this as a time for opportunity rather than buying into an end-time mentality. To move forward, there needs to be less attention given to the academia/technology divide and a greater effort toward combining skill sets to gain greater leverage and advantage. Often, librarians feel as though they need to develop all of these technology skills themselves and overlook

potential campus partners as a way to develop collaborative relationships and exchange ideas.

As libraries begin to move away from their legacy systems and branch out in many different directions and in creative ways, they are sending a message to their schools. The message is that there is value in the librarian's attentiveness to emerging trends and technologies, independent agency in openness, and freedom in flexibility. The collaborative initiatives that have occurred on our campuses span the entire spectrum, from informal discussions about new software to deep teaching partnerships within numerous learning spaces and in MOOCs (massive open online courses).

Although there is a history of departmental association with the campus information technology (generally referred to as IT) group, in this case, the authors desire to view the instructional designer and technologist as more separate entities connected to the library. There is a history of examination that strongly associates the role of instructional technologist with the campus IT department when collaborating with the library, and while there is no need to erase that history, a new perspective is needed.<sup>2</sup> Just as librarians have begun to focus more on teaching and learning, so have instructional designers been drawn to topics within librarianship. In fact, one of the main observations made when researching and writing this book is how these roles are influencing each other and slowly blending in interesting ways. A fervent goal of this book is also to inspire the recognition of the value of design thinking in any endeavor and to place focus on the ways in which design affects instruction.

An interesting parallel that affects both instructional technology and libraries is a minor predicament related to definitions, in particular on the library side with respect to library instruction. The term *information literacy* is now generally understood and accepted in higher education yet often needs to be further defined when mentioned to students or outside academia. In a similar way, *instructional technology and design* has grappled with defining itself. An excellent chronological summation of instructional technology's problem can be found in Robert A. Reiser's chapter "What Field Did You Say You Were In? Defining and Naming Our Field" in the textbook *Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology*.<sup>3</sup> Reiser points out that the definition of instructional technology has historically moved from one focused on media to one concerned with process. He suggests that *instructional design and technology* would be a more precise and inclusive term, and his desire to add design here fits in well with our thought process (see the sidebar for a discussion of terms used in this book).

An interesting examination of the two roles discussed in this book is "Identity Crisis: Librarian or Instructional Technologist?" by Ryan L. Sittler, which corresponds to a conclusion that was made by our group.<sup>4</sup> *Instructional technology* has various definitions, and this has led to confusion about what it actually means, particularly in relation to librarianship. Although it is easy to



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## AN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER BY ANY NAME IS STILL . . . WHAT?

As the pace of technology affects how words are invented, used, and changed, it can be difficult to settle on an appropriate term and feel comfortable knowing that the term is accurate and inclusive and will continue to refer to its original meaning in the future. Beginning work on this book as a team, we became confused about what consistent terms to use to describe the roles and positions to which we continually referred. We settled on using *instructional designer* as our most consistent term because one theme of this book is the importance of design. In some cases we used *instructional technologist* and just the title *designer* as well as others, but we felt as though the term *instructional designer* mapped most completely to our ideas. As an incomplete but hopefully clarifying way to help with this situation at the beginning of the book, here is a glossary with some additional references that may help readers to understand some of the terms we use.

**blended librarian:** “A position that combines the traditional aspects of librarianship with the technology skills of an information technologist; someone skilled with software and hardware. . . . To this mix, the Blended Librarian adds the instructional or educational technologist’s skills for curriculum design and the application of technology for student-centered learning.”<sup>a</sup>

**instruction librarian:** “(Associated with) instructional programs designed to teach library users how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively.”<sup>b</sup> Also, “any librarian with instruction responsibilities.”<sup>c</sup>

**instructional design/designer:** “The process by which instruction is improved through the analysis of learning needs and systematic development of learning materials. Instructional designers often use technology and multimedia as tools to enhance instruction.”<sup>d</sup> Also, “a process for systematically designing effective instructional materials and learning opportunities.”<sup>e</sup>

**instructional technology:** “[T]he theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning.”<sup>f</sup>

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a. Steven J. Bell and John D. Shank, *Academic Librarianship by Design: A Blended Librarian’s Guide to the Tools and Techniques* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2007).

b. Joan M. Reitz, *Dictionary for Library and Information Science* (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2004), 71.

c. Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), *Standards for Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians and Coordinators: A Practical Guide* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2008), 3, [www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/standards/profstandards.pdf](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/standards/profstandards.pdf).

d. Richard Culatta, “Instructional Design,” [InstructionalDesign.org](http://InstructionalDesign.org), accessed February 1, 2016, [www.instructionaldesign.org](http://www.instructionaldesign.org).

e. Association of College and Research Libraries, “Instructional Design for Librarians: The What, Why, and How of ID,” accessed February 1, 2016, [www.ala.org/acrl/conferences/instructionaldesign](http://www.ala.org/acrl/conferences/instructionaldesign).

f. Barbara B. Seels and Rita C. Richey, *Instructional Technology: The Definition and Domains of the Field* (Washington, DC: Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1994), 24.

get hung up on and confused about these titles, and there may even be cases within this book where the terms seem to be interchangeable, it is imperative for readers to recognize that strict adherence to one title or another may not occur consistently. This situation should not create pause. It is important to prioritize the exchange of ideas and develop a collaborative outlook as having greater significance than the unswerving use of a title. As stated by Shonn Haren in the comments section of the soul-searching article “Librarianship Doesn’t Need Professionals,” “I have had outlandishly dressed coworkers who were the soul of professionalism, and conservatively dressed coworkers who were utterly unprofessional and immature in the way they worked. In the end, the way we act and treat each other, not the way we look, determines what makes us professionals.”<sup>5</sup> In the same way, the way we work together should take precedence over what we are titled.

Chapter 1 of this book points out that as changes to higher education occur, there are opportunities for librarians and instructional designers to lead through their unique positions on campus. As professionals who work with faculty, students, and staff and who have a wide knowledge of curriculum and personnel, the people in these departments can offer distinctive services and perspectives on campus. They can offer even more when working together. The importance of the timing for these collaborations sets the tone and purpose for this book.

In chapter 2, we review instructional designer–librarian collaborations with an introduction to some of the history of their cooperative endeavors. Most importantly, we ground the discussion within the context of the overarching philosophies and goals that have historically influenced professionals in these fields.

In chapter 3, our focus is on potential best practices and opportunities for instructional designer–librarian collaborations. This section of the book also reviews in a general sense many of the emerging issues that are affecting higher education and, therefore, these two departments or areas. Topics such as combined meetings and messaging, cooperative workshops, assisting parent institutions with intellectual management and copyright issues, supporting faculty research, assisting with digital scholarship, and others are discussed.

Chapter 4 primarily focuses on the conceptual nature of how to collaborate and presents strategies for developing a collaborative mindset. It begins to point out ways to create an environment for collective action.

Chapter 5 offers an introduction to current topics affecting library instruction, particularly the relatively new *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and its associated threshold concepts.<sup>6</sup> The movement toward more online library instruction taught by instruction librarians and how it can be supported with good instructional design and help from instructional designers is a focus here.

An introduction to digital humanities and an outline of the foundations of the field appear in chapter 6. This chapter surveys opportunities within the digital humanities that invite collaboration among faculty, librarians, academic technologists, and, often, students. Following a detailed description of the roles of librarians and academic designers is a case study in collaboration at Davidson College. This case study outlines the work of each collaborator in relation to an evolving digital project that mirrors changes in technology and collaboration over more than a decade. Chapter 6 also explores MOOCs that continue to morph into related online learning models. Attempting to find a solid and consistent role in relation to MOOCs is a difficult task for librarians. Collaborating with instructional designers allows librarians to gain a better understanding of MOOC construction, design, goals, and responsibilities. A brief look at human-centered design closes this chapter.

Chapter 7 explores how digital media have helped to create a partnership between librarians and instructional designers due to the abundance of digital resources and tools available to faculty today. Whether professors are providing instruction in the digitally enhanced classroom or through online resources, such as a learning management system, they are able to seamlessly integrate media into the curriculum to enhance the student experience and increase learning. This chapter examines how librarians and instructional designers can work together to encourage, inform, train, and support both faculty and students in the use of available digital resources and equipment. Types of media discussed in this chapter include digital media, media databases, online media, public domain resources, and streaming media tools. Other topics mentioned include the embedded librarian, equipment, and copyright issues.

Chapter 8 puts forth the idea that librarians and instructional designers are natural allies in the effort to support the most ideal learning environments within the institutional learning management system (LMS). The LMS is generally the central purview of the instructional designer. This individual often has primary responsibility for preparing faculty to make the most of the multitude of features—everything from facilitating better online discussions to validating tests and quizzes. The librarian, however, often interfaces with the LMS from the perspective of providing research support. Librarians now have significant experience in this role through the implementation of embedded librarian programs and/or personal librarian programs. While both librarians and instructional designers often help the faculty individually, a more focused partnership could allow them to further assist instructors by linking to appropriate resources and designing those links in the most impactful ways. A number of creative opportunities exist for the collaborative development and presentation of tutorials, learning objects, and workshops for students and faculty as well as team-based interventions personalized for a given instructor.

Finally, chapter 9 concludes the book by attempting to answer this question: “What’s next for librarians and instructional designers?” This short chapter briefly explores the new roles that are developing from the intersection of librarianship and technology, for example, the instructional design librarian.

The EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) series “7 Things You Should Know About . . .” came out with “7 Things You Should Know About Leading Academic Transformation” in November 2015.<sup>7</sup> One of the questions asked in the document is, “What moves academic transformation forward?” And one of the answers given is, “Cross-Functional Teamwork.” The report states:

A hallmark of transformation is cross-functional teams. CIOs [chief information officers] need to be in conversation with CFOs [chief financial officers], provosts, presidents, faculty, instructional designers, enrollment, and financial aid. The conversations are often surprising and empowering, creating greater awareness of abilities to support one another. Effective leaders devote time and attention to making sure that cross-functional relationships are healthy and productive, and they prioritize the work of those teams.<sup>8</sup>

Note the importance of conversation and the inclusion of instructional designers in this suggestion and, unfortunately, the exclusion of librarians (they are not mentioned in the entire document).

On a more positive note, the New Media Consortium (NMC) teamed up with ELI to publish the *NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Higher Education Edition* in February 2016.<sup>9</sup> In it, “18 topics carefully selected by the 2016 Horizon Project Higher Education Expert Panel related to the educational applications of technology are examined, all of them areas very likely to impact technology planning and decision-making over the next five years (2016–2020).”<sup>10</sup> Libraries and librarians are mentioned here several times. The paragraph titled Leadership, under “Significant Challenges Impeding Technology Adoption in Higher Education,” makes a particularly important point:

Again, while all the identified challenges have leadership implications that are discussed in the following pages, two pose roadblocks to employing effective vision and leadership. There is a pressing but solvable need to improve digital literacy at institutions across the world. Fortunately, the presence of academic libraries on campus is opening up channels for students to gain confidence in using technologies for the express purpose of learning. The Association of College & Research Libraries’ Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education has established a set of interconnected core concepts to help campuses better organize ideas about information, research, and scholarship into a comprehensive whole.<sup>11</sup>

Once again, the driving force behind this librarian–instructional designer effort is to present ways to work together and to force a reconsideration of how these campus roles can provide much more for their institutions. Each has so much to offer the other, and at times it seems as if the only thing preventing them from sharing is ingrained culture. Initiating these relationships begins the same way all collaborative efforts do: “One of the most important steps information technologists and librarians can take is to learn more about the nature of each unit’s work.”<sup>12</sup> And most importantly, “librarians, instructional technologists, faculty, and students should not plod onward in isolation.”<sup>13</sup>

## NOTES

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2. Marvel Maring, “Webmasters Are from Mars, Instruction Librarians Are from Venus: Developing Effective and Productive Communication between Information Technology Departments and Reference/Instruction Librarians: How Instructional Design Collaborations Can Succeed,” in *Brick and Click Libraries: Proceedings of an Academic Library Symposium*, eds. Frank Baudino, Connie Jo Ury, and Sarah G. Park (Maryville, OH: Northwest Missouri State University, 2008), 70–76.
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4. Ryan L. Sittler, “Identity Crisis: Librarian or Instructional Technologist?” *Indiana Libraries* 30, no. 1 (2011): 8–14.
5. Madison Sullivan, “Librarianship Doesn’t Need Professionals,” *ACRLlog*, January 19, 2016, <http://acrlog.org/2016/01/19/professionalism>.
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9. L. Johnson, S. Adams Becker, M. Cummins, V. Estrada, A. Freeman, and C. Hall, *NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Higher Education Edition* (Austin, TX:

The New Media Consortium, 2016), <http://cdn.nmc.org/media/2016-nmc-horizon-report-he-EN.pdf>.

10. Ibid., 3.
11. Ibid., 20.
12. Maring, “Webmasters Are from Mars,” 72.
13. Bonnie W. Oldham and Diane Skorina, “Librarians and Instructional Technologists Collaborate,” *College and Research Libraries News* 70, no. 11 (2009): 634–37, <http://crln.acrl.org/content/70/11/634.full>.

# 1

## The Changing Environment of Higher Education

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**C**hanges within and outside higher education continue to occur, and these lead to new opportunities to address them. In a similar fashion to numerous industries, sectors, and services preceding it, higher education is in the midst of external pressures. Technological change is driving the need to adapt. As higher education moves to a more digital focus, this creates a situation in which added resources are needed in those areas that directly support digital initiatives. Because they have unique experience in this regard, librarians and instructional designers should be considered as valuable institutional resources to help guide this transformation.

### HOW HIGHER EDUCATION IS CHANGING

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In their report *Preparing for the Digital University: A Review of the History and Current State of Distance, Blended, and Online Learning*, George Siemens, Dragan Gašević, and Shane Dawson point out, “Higher education is changing. Central to this change is the transition from a physically based learning model to one that makes greater use of digital technologies.”<sup>1</sup> What do we

mean when we say that education is going digital? In an interesting response to this question, Clay Shirky, in his article “The Digital Revolution in Higher Education Has Already Happened. No One Noticed,” begins:

In the fall of 2012, the most recent semester with complete data in the U.S., four million undergraduates took at least one course online, out of sixteen million total, with growth up since then. Those numbers mean that more students now take a class online than attend a college with varsity football. More than twice as many now take a class online as live on campus. There are more undergraduates enrolled in an online class than there are graduate students enrolled in all Masters and Ph.D. programs combined. At the current rate of growth, half the country’s undergraduates will have at least one online class on their transcripts by the end of the decade. This is the new normal.<sup>2</sup>

This “new normal,” Shirky goes on to say, is defined by a higher education landscape that is composed of a much wider variety of students. They are taking more online classes than previous students had. Relaying the information from the study *Online College Students 2014: Comprehensive Data on Demands and Preferences*,<sup>3</sup> Shirky highlights the demographics of online students: “[H]alf are married, compared with fewer than one in five undergrads generally. Half also have children. (Student mothers outnumber student fathers 2 to 1.) Two in three work; two in five work full time. A third live in rural areas, a far bigger proportion than the general population. Four out of five are 25 or older.”<sup>4</sup> He concludes that a disconnect needs to be bridged between this group of students and antiquated ideas held by higher education administration. Shirky’s focus on who is using these digital technologies as they apply to online learning does not fully address the transitional view of Siemens, Gašević, and Dawson. But it does help to emphasize that the design of learning technologies needs to take into account this new and different user. This move to digital and a diverse set of students needs design thinkers to help craft ways in which an “old guard” higher education can reinvent itself and appeal to a broad range of people. The capabilities that instructional designers and librarians bring to this issue should be considered by leaders in higher education. Collaborative efforts by instructional designers and librarians could lead to positive solutions.

To reiterate, one critical point is not just the shift of focus on the digital but also the need for higher education to be more open and inclusive. Additionally, leaders within higher education need to reflect on the realization that the communities they serve consist of a wide mix of demographic backgrounds and cannot be considered to be of a certain type. Interestingly, libraries have been at the forefront of some of these issues. Most notably, they have dealt with the self-questioning of value and a renewed focus on community (that they serve and of which they are a part). Under scrutiny for their continued



purpose in a world where everything that was formerly on bookshelves is now considered to be at one's fingertips and faced with budgetary cuts and pressures, academic libraries (and librarians) have been questioned about their value for some time. As stated in the *Association of Research Libraries/Columbia University/Cornell University/University of Toronto Pilot Library Liaison Institute Final Report*, "Higher education and academic research libraries are changing with unprecedented speed. New methods of conducting and disseminating research, new pedagogies, increased public scrutiny, and financial pressure call for accountability and value-added impact."<sup>5</sup> Responding (or not responding) in different ways to these challenges, academic librarians had been confronted earlier with some of these same questions with which higher education currently grapples. And these inquiries will continue, led primarily by the leading question, "What is the value of libraries/higher education?" and closely followed by the introspective (and potentially stress-inducing) question, "What is the future of libraries/higher education?"

Understanding the community that they serve has been a consistent concern for librarians for quite some time. Although commonly associated with the public library mission, academic libraries have also seen value in understanding their community in its many forms (although perhaps never so adroitly as they do today). As stated in the Libraries' Strengths section of "Part 5: The Present and Future of Libraries" in the *Library Services in the Digital Age* Pew Research Center report, "One common theme was libraries' role as a community center, and their connection to patrons and other local institutions."<sup>6</sup> In a broader sense, academic librarians see their community as students foremost, yet faculty and staff are also part of the group they serve. Additionally, the library community of which they are part is now being evaluated more stringently (by librarians, especially in the efforts of critical librarianship), and a greater focus than ever before has been placed on having the library community reflect a broad mix of constituents in the same way in which Shirky points out that higher education needs to better reflect diverse populations. All of this reflection is timely and can ideally add purpose and value to larger communities.

As part of this self-evaluation of their own community and attempts to reach out to a vaster group of patrons, academic librarians are also realizing that they must physically "get out of the library" and connect to the many community partners available to them. This effort means that more libraries are seeing the value in cross-departmental and institutional collaboration. Keith Webster, in his presentation "Leading the Library of the Future: W(h)ither Technical Services?," lays out five generations of library focus: in the first generation, libraries were collection centric; they moved on to become client focused, then experience centered, and recently have been interested in the connected learning experience; now, in the current generation, libraries think about collaborative knowledge, media, and fabrication facilities—what

he refers to as the fifth generation.<sup>7</sup> Although the focus of his presentation is on technical services, Webster also includes “Bold Assertions” from Anne R. Kenney’s presentation about collaboration between libraries (“Approaching An Entity Crisis: Reconceiving Research Libraries in a Multi-institutional Context”).<sup>8</sup> In a series of slides from her presentation, Kenney first states, “Our history of collaboration may ironically make it more difficult to do radical collaboration,”<sup>9</sup> which could mean that venturing away from previously comfortable joint ventures may be difficult. (See chapter 4 for some discussion about radical collaboration.) Finally, she shows that an area ripe for collaboration is “The Power of Many.”<sup>10</sup> The power-of-many concept as envisioned here could involve supporting library enterprises that are concerned with promoting inclusion (critical librarianship) and cooperative ventures (cross-collaborative library initiatives).

When considered as potential agents of change on campus, it is the uncommon college or university that has librarians and instructional designers at the top of their lists. Reasons for this are given throughout this book. The primary one appears to be that librarians and instructional designers do little to position themselves as strong contributors to the direction that higher education must take (even in reference to their own expertise). Although it may at first sound difficult or not aligned to their general responsibilities, librarians and instructional designers need to consider themselves today as leaders on campus and act accordingly. Librarian staff and faculty in these roles have expertise dealing with digital networks and information use. In many cases, the reaction to this call for action is that day-to-day tasks or current institutional obligations do not allow for this type of leadership work. Yet, at minimum, shouldn’t daily discussions of the higher education situation take place as a first step? And these conversations between instructional designers and librarians need to begin now as a way to lead to collaboration, influence, and leadership.

This is not to say that there are no larger discussions around these points. The American Library Association (ALA) offers a “Library Leadership Training Resources” list on its website,<sup>11</sup> and articles such as “It Takes a University to Build a Library” by Dane Ward point out, “The world of libraries is changing rapidly, and those who lead them need to realize that they need the expertise of others on campus.”<sup>12</sup> The key point is that even more of this needs to occur, and quickly.

It is the rare librarian or instructional designer who would draw attention to the idea that he or she could be a leader in this arena. Despite this, it would appear that a college or university with administrative leaders who understand the continued importance of information use in the workplace would consider those on campus who work with information as valuable resources. Additionally, those who have experience designing instruction, especially those with an awareness of how to design online learning effectively, should be sought-after

sources for understanding how to move forward. Campus leaders would be making an insightful and prescient decision to use these human resources more efficiently. If we do live in a world that continues to value technological awareness, skillful use of information, and intuitive design talent, shouldn't more higher education leaders recognize the value of librarians and instructional designers for their students' futures (and even as allies in the evolution of the future of higher education)? Shouldn't those positions on campus that present themselves as information experts (librarians) and as possessing deep knowledge into the design of education (instructional designers) be those who are consulted on how to move forward? Or are we overestimating the worth and capability of these two positions?

Perhaps another way to view the positions (and roles) here is to take them out of the equation. It is possible that the roles and positions actually hinder the ability to consider librarians and instructional designers as primary resources for solutions to some of the problems plaguing higher education. Preconceived notions of what people in these positions do (and, even more, what they are interested in) can continue to keep librarians and instructional designers in subservient positions. It can be the case that decision makers on campus do not have a great awareness of what instructional designers do and they may harken back to their own collegiate experiences in the library or their own subjective understanding of the role of the librarian. Experienced instructional designers surely know how little the majority of those on their campus (including librarians) know about instructional design. These limited assessments may be responsible for a type of self-fulfilling environment for instructional designers and librarians, and it is up to them to break these systemic preconceptions by taking the initiative. There are numerous ways to do so outlined in this book, and one that continues to gain momentum is holding collaborative workshops with centers for teaching and learning on campus. In thinking about moving beyond preassigned positions, such aptitudes as enthusiasm, openness, and the desire to be forward thinking may be better criteria for considering whom to collaborate with than institutional roles. It may not always be the case that a title or job description can be changed easily, but changing one's mindset about seeking out whom to work with and looking beyond potential institutional limitations can be accomplished.

Connected to the idea of changing how to think about what librarians and instructional designers do is a consideration of the ways in which they are perceived. Although this concept may seem to initially present itself as a conundrum because the overall view of libraries is generally positive, librarians have a great deal of difficulty changing the stereotypes applied to them. Many of these appear innocuous at first but prove to be more damaging when examined closely. Chapters 4 and 6 provide a more detailed review of how librarians are perceived, but for now, it is worth noting that librarians are highly invested in moving toward becoming more illustrative of the changing

student dynamic that Shirky illuminates.<sup>13</sup> One example of this self-reflection that is indicative of the forward thinking associated with critical librarianship is the current interest in devoting efforts to grappling with the pervasiveness of the “whiteness” of librarians and, in conjunction, pushing for a greater representation within librarianship that aligns with those who use the library.<sup>14</sup> One aspect of critical librarianship is evaluating how libraries operate and focusing on analyzing how closely librarians are aligned to their stated values. Associated with this are efforts to give opportunities to librarians who are underrepresented, and this can be bolstered by hiring a more representative spectrum of librarians. This type of work could help to spread a better and more wide-ranging conception of what librarians do and what they are capable of doing because more representative and wider connections can take place, inside and outside of the library. Another pertinent issue in librarianship for quite some time has been how the profession is aging and losing touch with current ideas, although this can be somewhat of a sore spot within the profession. In a post about embracing “next-gen librarianship” from the blog *Library Lost and Found*, Ashley Maynor makes the case that stereotyping librarians by generations does not help and that, “[n]ot defined by birth year, next-generation is about a mindset, a disposition, and an outlook.”<sup>15</sup> (See chapter 4 for more on the importance of dispositions and mindsets.) All of this examination of roles and perceptions may appear to be off topic or impractical, yet it is crucial to understanding how one is viewed as an authentic librarian or as a potential collaborator or leader. Although instructional technologists do not openly grapple with these issues as often, these predicaments still apply to them in reference to leadership.

In the book *Transforming Our Image, Building Our Brand: The Education Advantage*, Valerie Gross conveys the idea that the educational role of librarians needs to be prominent in library mission statements.<sup>16</sup> Although her book is primarily intended to encourage public libraries to consider “replacing typical library terms and phrases with bold, compelling, and descriptive terminology that commands value and *that people understand*,”<sup>17</sup> this type of reinvention can also reinvigorate the perception of academic librarians. In a related case, in chapter 2 of *Proactive Marketing for the New and Experienced Library Director: Going beyond the Gate Count* by Dr. Melissa Goldsmith and Dr. Anthony Fonseca, titled “The Academic Library as an Educational System,” they offer this observation: “Currently administrators and academic library directors alike fail to recognize that the library is a unit much like other units on any campus, where teaching, learning, and life experiences occur, rather than a place where books (and their ideas) go to die.”<sup>18</sup> As mentioned previously, there is a great deal of emphasis on moving forward to recognize the importance of the librarian as educator and as a type of instructional designer. Yet, it would seem as if placing *all* of our chips in the “education basket” could limit academic librarians to some extent. This idea is addressed in detail in chapter 5

when considering the importance that academic libraries place on information literacy and library instruction.

How then should librarians and instructional designers present or position themselves in order to be considered prominent resources on campus for help with the issues more broadly affecting all of higher education? Noted writer/speaker and former president of ACRL Steven Bell can provide some insight on this issue. Bell points out that the nomenclature “library science” is both limiting and perhaps a misnomer for the degree librarians often achieve (Master of Library and Information Science). Shifting to the more apt “Master of Library Design” would be more applicable as librarians are currently much more focused on the design elements of the profession. As Bell states, “I’ve personally observed a growing trend in the library profession over the past few years that recognizes the value of design across many functional areas of librarianship, whether it’s instruction, signage, programming, assessment, or any number of services we offer our communities.”<sup>19</sup> Design is certainly “having a moment” in the library world, and it is interesting to think about the reasons for this. At its core, design is focused on helping to create products, experiences, and events (among many other creations) that appeal to a wide range of people and are useful and valuable to them. That is, design makes all of these things better. Similarly, Bell posits that the answer to what librarians do is related to people, not the production of things. He continues, “We make everyone else better. Whether it’s providing computer access in neighborhoods afflicted by the digital divide, providing education for children whose school library closed long ago, helping the unemployed find jobs, or enabling the illiterate to change their lives, librarians make things better.”<sup>20</sup> While it may be a stretch to say that librarians design people, those who are more conscious about design thinking might be willing to put it that way. This is one reason why thinking strictly in terms of education may be limiting. Awareness of design principles and elements helps one to both step back and evaluate and also allows for renewed re-creation, which is particularly important in a world of ever-changing technologies. Contemplating that one aspect of design is that it considers multiple perspectives, and that this in turn can help with community and collaboration, Bell emphasizes this with his many examples. Bell concludes, “Design may be the right path to a future where we get better and make the world a better place,”<sup>21</sup> thus inviting us to focus on this loftier angle and more inclusive goal.

## **WHY LIBRARIANS AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS SHOULD COLLABORATE**

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While the mainstream mission of higher education has been affected by technological and societal changes and one reaction to these upheavals has been

# Index

## A

- Academic Librarianship by Design: A Blended Librarian's Guide to the Tools and Techniques* (Bell and Shank), 89
- Accardi, Maria, 73
- The Accidental Instructional Designer* (Bean), 26
- ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries), 28, 32, 67, 69, 89, 92–93, 135, 173
- ACRLog, 72, 92, 94
- ALA (American Library Association), 4, 29, 35
- The Alchemy for Growth: Practical Insights for Building the Enduring Enterprise* (Baghai, Coley and White), 14
- Alexander, Bryan, 112, 116, 118
- Allen, Charles, 114
- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 38
- APIs (application programming interfaces), personal, 9–10
- Arizona State University's Institute for the Science of Teaching and Learning, 15
- Asana, 72
- Association of Research Libraries/Columbia University/Cornell University/University of Toronto Pilot Library Liaison Institute Final Report*, 3, 10
- The Atlas of New Librarianship* (Lankes), 75, 108

## B

- Bean, Cammy, 26, 27
- Bell, Steven, 7, 8–9, 65, 88, 89, 90
- Bergmann, Jonathan, 57
- best practices. *See also* opportunities for collaboration
- e-mail, 47–48
  - meetings, regular and combined, 46–47
  - messages to faculty, 47–49
  - overview, 45–46
  - workshops, creating and implementing shared, 49–50
- Bezemer, Jeff, 147
- bibliographic research, 118
- Birch, Dawn, 146, 147, 148
- Black, Elizabeth L., 164
- Blackboard, 39, 151, 152, 169–170
- Blackwell, Christopher, 117, 123
- Blankenship, Betsy, 166
- Blended Librarian* (blog), 98
- blended librarians, xiii, 8, 35–36, 89–90, 98
- “Blended Librarianship: [Re] Envisioning the Role of Librarian as Educator in the Digital Information Age” (Bell and Shank), 90
- Booth, Char, 91, 95
- Boylston, Susanna, 113, 114, 115, 121
- Brandeis University, 28
- Briggs, Sara, 138
- Brigham Young University, 9
- Brown, Karen, 67

Bryn Mawr College, 91  
 Bucknell University, 100–101  
 “Building a New Research-University System” (Cole), 78

## C

- Cain, Mark, 31  
 Carl A. Kroch Library (Cornell University), 77  
 Carnegie Mellon’s Open Learning Initiative, 13  
 case study on digital humanities, 112–124  
 challenges
  - in collaboration between librarians and instructional designers, 37–38
  - in use of LMS, 176–177
 Chandler, Amber, 68  
 changing environment of higher education  
 colibrarians, 17–18  
 collaboration between librarians and instructional designers, reasons for, 7–12  
 community served, understanding of, 1–4  
 design principles, awareness of, 7  
 design thinking, importance of, 12–13  
 digital environment, shift to, 1–2  
 digital learning, 13–17  
 innovation, 13–17  
 leadership by librarians and instructional designers, 4–5  
 open and inclusive, need for higher education to be more, 1–4, 14  
 overview, 1–7  
*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 33, 34  
 Church, Jonathan T., 38  
 Churchill, Suzanne, 113–123  
 Cisco, 147  
 CNI (Coalition for Networked Information), 37  
 Cole, Jonathan R., 78  
 colibrarians, 17–18  
 collaboration between librarians and instructional designers
  - ACRL *Framework* and, 93–99
  - challenges in, 37–38
  - critical information literacy and, 99–100
  - designing library instruction, approaches to, 90–92
  - digital media and
    - faculty consultations, 153–154
    - faculty training workshops and support, 154–155
    - open houses as tool for, 156
    - overview, 150–157
    - sharing information, 151–153
    - small-group discussions, 155–156
    - social media as tool for, 156
    - training for library staff, 154
  - early efforts, 37–39
  - opportunities for, 92–99
  - reasons for, 7–12
  - similarities and differences between librarians and instructional designers, 26–37
  - space sharing, 37–38
  - successful attempts, 37–39
  - through LMS, 39
 collaboration (generally)
  - advice on collaboration between libraries and information technology departments, 101
  - conversation and, 69–76
  - deep and radical, 76–79
  - developing a collaborative mindset, 67–69
  - digital humanities, collaborative nature of, 109
  - informal learning and, 75–76
  - Library Service Center (Georgia Tech Library and Emory University Libraries collaboration), 77
  - opportunities for collaboration
    - in digital media, 58–59
    - digital scholarship, 54–55
    - intellectual property and copyright, 52–53
    - LMS embedding for library-related instruction, 55–56
    - support for faculty research and teaching, 53
    - Syllabi Spa Day, 50–51
    - teaching information and digital literacy, 56–58
  - overview, 63–67
  - 2CUL partnership, 76–77
  - “Collaboration or Cooperation? Analyzing Small Group Interactions in

- Educational Environments”  
(Paulus), 67
- Columbia University, 76, 132
- community served, understanding of, 1–4
- Connect, Collaborate, and Communicate: A Report from the Value of Academic Libraries Summits* (Brown and Malenfant), 67
- “A Content Analysis of Library Vendor Privacy Policies: Do They Meet Our Standards?” (Magi), 10
- conversation, collaboration and, 69–76
- copyright and intellectual property
- digital media, 158
  - MOOCs, 131
  - opportunities for collaboration, 52–53
- Copyright for Academic Librarians and Professionals* (ALA), 52
- Cormier, Dave, 129
- Cornell University Library, 76, 77
- Course for Human-Centered Design (design kit), 137
- Cowan, Susanna M., 99
- coworking, 17–18
- Cramer, Steve, 30
- Credo’s Information Literacy Courseware, 56–57, 175–176
- critical design, 136
- critical information literacy, 99–100
- critical librarianship, 135–136
- CUNY Academic Commons wiki, 109
- D**
- Davidson, Cathy, 124
- Davidson College
- digital humanities case study, 112–124
  - MOOCs case study, 129–133
- Davis, Angiah, 28
- Davis, Rebecca Frost, 112, 116, 118
- Dawson, Shane, 1, 2
- de Jesus, Nina, 135
- Death by Meeting* (Lencioni), 46
- deep and radical collaboration, 76–79
- Demirel, A. Gönül, 48
- Dempsey, John V., 27
- Dempsey, Lorcan, 9
- design principles
- awareness of, 7
  - for UX (user experience), 13
- design thinking, 12–13, 134–138
- Design Thinking for Libraries (website), 137
- Designer Librarian* (blog), 71
- Designing Better Libraries* (blog), 138
- Designing Information Literacy Instruction: The Teaching Tripod Approach* (Kaplowitz), 91
- designing library instruction, approaches to, 90–92
- Dewald, Nancy H., 167
- Di Russo, Stefanie, 134
- differences and similarities between librarians and instructional designers, 26–37
- digital environment, shift to, 1–2
- digital humanities
- case study, 112–124
  - collaborative nature of, 109
  - librarians and, 16, 110–111
  - overview, 107–108
  - tutorials and guides for, 109
- “Digital Humanities: Home” LibGuide, 109
- Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 110
- digital learning, 13–17
- Digital Learning Research Network (University of Texas-Arlington), 14
- digital literacy, 56–58, 149
- digital media
- and collaboration between librarians and instructional designers
  - faculty consultations, 153–154
  - faculty training workshops and support, 154–155
  - open houses as tool for, 156
  - overview, 150
  - sharing information, 151–153
  - small-group discussions, 155–156
  - social media as tool for, 156
  - training for library staff, 154
- copyright issues, 158
- defined, 146
- equipment access for, 157
- multimedia used in teaching, 148–149
- multimodal learning and, 146–149
- opportunities for collaboration
- in, 58–59
- overview, 145–146
- resources available in academic libraries, 150
- technical support for, 157



digital scholarship and opportunities for collaboration, 54–55

“The Digital Revolution in Higher Education Has Already Happened. No One Noticed” (Shirky), 2

dispositions, 67–68

*Does Every Research Library Need a Digital Humanities Center?* (Schaffner and Erway), 111

Donovan, Carrie, 98, 99

Downes, Stephen, 129

Duke University, 171

Dweck, Carol, 68

## E

e-mail best practices, 47–48

early efforts of collaboration between librarians and instructional designers, 37–39

EDUCAUSE, 13, 31, 32, 33, 162

ELI (EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative), xvi

*Embedded Librarian: Innovative Strategies for Taking Knowledge Where It's Needed* (Shumaker), 55

embedded librarianship, 55–56, 153

Emerson College, 50

Emory University Libraries, 77

*Encoding Space: Shaping Learning Environments That Unlock Human Potential* (Mathews and Soistmann), 137

“Environmental Scan and Assessment of OERs, MOOCs and Libraries: What Effectiveness and Sustainability Means for Libraries’ Impact on Open Education” (Kazakoff-Lane), 127

equal access to information, 135

equipment access for digital media, 157

Erway, Ricky, 74, 111

Eshleman, Joe, 1, 87, 107, 181, 187

Eshleman, Kristen, 1, 107, 113–123, 188

Esposito, Joseph, 126

Etches, Amanda, 13, 137

Exline, Eleta, 39

## F

faculty

- best practices for messages to, 47–49
- consultations, digital media and collaborative, 153–154

- support for faculty research and teaching, 53
- training workshops and support, digital media and collaborative, 154–155

fair use doctrine, 52–53

Farkas, Meredith Gorran, 166

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), 166–167

Films on Demand, 152

Fisher, Rick, 164

Fitzpatrick, Kathleen, 121

*Five Ways Academic Libraries Support Higher Education's Reboot* (Bell), 65

*Flip Your Classroom: Reach Every Student in Every Class Every Day* (Bergmann and Sams), 57

flipping the classroom, 57–58

Fonseca, Anthony, 6

Formation by Design (Georgetown), 13

“45 Design Thinking Resources for Educators” (Briggs), 138

Foster, Connie D., 65

*Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education* (ACRL), 28, 67, 69, 89, 93–99, 135

Freedman, Marc, 182

Freeman, Valerie, 58

Freire, Paulo, 76, 100

Fribley, Karla, 50

*From Bricks to Clicks: The Potential of Data and Analytics in Higher Education*, 10

future of librarians and instructional designers, 181–184

## G

Garcia, Kenny, 136

Gardiner, Michael, 146, 147, 148

Gašević, Dragan, 1, 2

Gashurov, Irene, 79, 127

Georgetown's Formation by Design, 13

Georgia Perimeter College, 47

Georgia Tech Library, 77

Goldberg, David, 124

Goldsmith, Melissa, 6

Gross, Valerie, 6

## H

Hamilton, Buffy J., 70

Hamilton College, 70

Haren, Shonn, xiv  
 Harger, Elaine, 136  
 Heany, April, 164  
 Helmer, John, 78  
 Heppler, Jason, 108  
 Hess, Amanda Nichols, 95  
 Hicks, Deborah, 26  
 higher education, changing environment  
   of. *See* changing environment of  
   higher education  
 Hoffman, Frederick J., 114  
 Hollands, Fiona, 132  
 Horton, Valerie, 78  
 Houtman, Eveline, 94  
 Hovius, Amanda, 71  
 human-centered design, 134–138

## I

*I Think; I Design* (blog), 134  
 “Identity Crisis: Librarian or Instructional  
 Technologist?” (Sittler), xii  
 Ideo, 137  
 ILbD (Information Literacy by Design),  
 94–95  
 “In the Library in the Gym, Big Brother Is  
 Coming to Universities” (Swain), 10  
*In the Library with the Lead Pipe* (blog), 135  
*Index of Modernist Magazines* (open-access  
 bibliographic database) case study  
 conclusions from, 123–124  
 design, 114  
 implementation, 114–121  
 On Lines: The Web of Modernism  
 (1999) as phase 1 of  
 implementing, 114–116  
 Modernism, Magazines, and Media  
 (2012) as working model, 121–123  
 Modernism in Black and  
 White (2007) as phase 3 of  
 implementing, 118–121  
 overview, 112–113  
 partners, 113–114  
 The Web of Modernism (2004) as  
 phase 2 of implementing, 116–118  
 working model, 121–123  
 informal learning, collaboration and, 75–76  
 information literacy, 56–58, 94–95,  
 98–99, 173–176  
 “Information Literacy: The Battle We Won  
 That We Lost?” (Cowan), 99

“Information Literacy by Design:  
 Unlocking the Potential of the  
 ACRL Framework” (McMichael and  
 McGlynn), 94  
*Information Literacy Competency Standards  
 for Higher Education*, 28, 89, 93  
 information literacy designers, librarians  
 as, 98  
 innovation and collaboration  
 digital humanities, 107–125  
 human-centered design, 134–138  
 MOOCs and collaboration, 125–133  
 innovation in higher education, 13–17  
 Institute for the Science of Teaching  
 and Learning (Arizona State  
 University), 15  
 Institute of Educational Technology, 54  
 institutional repositories, 54  
 instruction librarian  
 collaboration between instructional  
 designers and, 91–92  
 defined, xiii, 88  
 overview, 88–90  
 role of, 92–93  
 instructional designers. *See also*  
 collaboration between librarians  
 and instructional designers  
 change in profession, 31  
 collaboration between instruction  
 librarian and, 91–92  
 defined, xiii  
 designing library instruction,  
 approaches to, 90–92  
 future of, 181–184  
 job summaries for, 32–34  
 leadership by, 4–5  
 librarians, similarities and  
 differences with, 26–37  
 overview, 27  
 perception of, 5–7  
 professional development, 31–32  
 role of, 5  
 technology changes influencing  
 approach of, 72  
 instructional technology, xiii  
 intellectual property and copyright  
 digital media, 158  
 MOOCs, 131  
 opportunities for collaboration, 52–53  
*Intellectual Property Strategy* (Palfrey), 52

- “Introducing Digital Humanities” (Jackson and McCollough), 109
- “Introduction to Instructional Design for Librarians” (course), 29
- “An Introduction to the Digital Humanities for Librarians” (webinar), 108–109
- “Is ‘Design Thinking’ the New Liberal Arts?” (Miller), 134
- “It Takes a University to Build a Library” (Ward), 4
- Izzo, Melissa, 49, 170
- J**
- Jackson, Korey, 109
- Jaguszewski, Janice M., 10, 66, 110
- Jenkins, Rob, 47–48
- Jensen, Lauren A., 174
- job summaries
- for instructional design librarian, 35–36
  - for instructional designers, 32–34
  - for librarians, 34–35
- Johnson & Wales University at Charlotte, 50, 51, 56, 58, 151, 169–170, 175–176
- Johnson & Wales University at Denver, 49, 154, 170
- Journal of Radical Librarianship*, 79
- K**
- Kaplowitz, Joan R., 91
- Kazakoff-Lane, Carmen, 127
- “Keeping Up with . . . Critical Librarianship” (Garcia), 135
- Kendrick, Curtis, 79, 127
- Kenney, Anne R., 4, 77
- Kenyon College, 70
- Kezar, Adrianna J., 65, 66
- Kim, Joshua, 11, 128
- Kirschenbaum, Matthew G., 108
- Knapp, Jeffrey A., 8
- Komlodi, Anita, 138
- Kuban, Adam J., 8
- L**
- Land, Ray, 93
- Langer, Ellen, 113
- Lankes, R. David, 75, 108
- Latham, Joyce, 37
- Lavagnino, Merri Beth, 37
- leadership
- by librarians and instructional designers, 4–5
  - strategies for librarians, 16–17
- “Leading the Library of the Future: W(h)ither Technical Services?” (Webster), x, 3
- learning analytics, 13–14
- learning object repository (LMS), 168
- Learning Times Network, 89
- LeBlanc, Robert E., 95
- Leeder, Chris, 172
- Lencioni, Patrick, 46
- Lester, Jaime, 65, 66
- Leveraging the Liaison Model: From Defining 21st Century Research Libraries to Implementing 21st Century Research Universities* (Kenney), 77
- liaisons, library, 10, 29–30, 34, 55, 109
- The Liaison Life* (Cramer), 30
- librarians. *See also* collaboration between librarians and instructional designers
- blended librarians, xiii, 8, 35–36, 89–90, 98
  - change in profession, 31
  - colibrarians, 17–18
  - designing library instruction, approaches to, 90–92
  - digital humanities and, 110–111
  - future of, 181–184
  - instructional designers, similarities and differences with, 26–37
  - job summaries for, 34–35
  - leadership by, 4–5
  - leadership strategies for, 16–17
  - perception of, 5–7, 72–73
  - professional development, 31–32
  - reinvention of, 182
  - role in LMS, 169–170
  - role of, 5
  - service as essence of librarianship, 26
  - technology and change in library profession, 181–182
- “Librarians and Scholars: Partners in Digital Humanities” (Alexander, Case, Downing, Gomis and Maslowski), 109

- “Librarians as Academic Leaders: Uniquely Qualified for the Job” (Sasso and Nolfi), 64
- “Librarians as Instructional Designers: Strategies for Engaging Conversations for Learning” (Hamilton), 70
- “Librarianship Doesn’t Need Professionals” (Sullivan), xiv, 72
- Library and Information Service (Kenyon College), 70
- Library and Information Technology Service (Hamilton College), 70
- Library Instruction Design: Learning from Google and Apple* (Su), 91
- library integration into LMS  
 macrolevel, 167–168, 176  
 microlevel, 168–173, 177  
 overview, 164–167
- Library Journal*, 79
- library liaisons, 10, 29–30, 34, 55, 109
- Library Lost and Found*, 6
- Library Service Center (Georgia Tech Library and Emory University Libraries collaboration), 77
- Library Services in the Digital Age* (Pew Research Center report), 3
- library staff training  
 digital media, 154  
 LMS, 177
- Libtech (University of Central Florida), 70
- Lippincott, Joan, 37
- Lippincott, Sharon, 46
- The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Hoffman, Allen and Ulrich), 114
- LMS (learning management systems)  
 collaboration through, 39, 55–56  
 embedded librarians and, 153  
 learning object repository, 168  
 library integration into  
 macrolevel, 167–168, 176  
 microlevel, 168–173, 177  
 overview, 164–167  
 meetings on, 47  
 overview, 161–164  
 sharing information to reduce issues with, 152  
 usage, 162–164
- “Locating the Library in Institutional Oppression” (Jesus), 135
- Lonn, Steven, 172
- M**
- macrolevel library integration into LMS, 167–168, 176
- Magi, Trina J., 10
- makerspaces, 16
- “Making a Difference: Moving Your Organization from Transactional to Transformational,” 100
- Malenfant, Kara J., 67
- Mann, Karen, 145, 161, 188
- Marchionini, Gary, 138
- Martin, Thomas R., 117, 123
- Mathews, Brian, 98, 99, 137
- Maynor, Ashley, 6
- McCollough, Aaron, 109
- McGann, Jerome, 113
- McGlynn, Liz, 94
- McKenzie, D. F., 118
- McKible, Adam, 113
- McMichael, Jonathan, 94
- McTighe, Jay, 94, 95
- meetings, best practices for regular and combined, 46–47
- Meetings: Do’s, Don’ts and Donuts* (Lippincott), 46
- Mery, Yvonne, 91
- messages to faculty, best practices for, 47–49
- Meyer, Jan, 93
- Michalko, James, 127
- Micho, Lori, 49
- microlevel library integration into LMS, 168–173, 177
- Miller, Peter N., 134
- Mintz, Steven, 130
- “The Mission of Librarians Is to Empower” (Tennant), 75
- MIT Media Lab, 17
- MIT OpenCourseWare project, 131
- MLA (Modern Language Association), 107
- Mod, Craig, 114
- Moniz, Richard, 45, 187–188
- Monmouth College, 174
- MOOCs (massive open online courses)  
 case study, 129–133

- MOOCs (cont.)  
 creativity and, 132  
 Davidson College and, 130  
 future of higher education  
 and, 130–131  
 goals for, 132–133  
 innovation and, 132  
 intellectual property and  
 copyright, 131  
 overview, 125–129  
 sharing ownership, 131  
 studies on, 132–133
- Moodle, 174
- Morris, Holly, 12
- Morris, Sean Michael, 137
- Morrisson, Mark, 114
- “Moving beyond the Org Chart: Library  
 and IT Collaboration for Course  
 Design and Support” (Kim, Ghezzi,  
 Helm, Barrett and Beahan), 92
- Mulligan, Laura MacLeod, 8
- multimedia used in teaching, 148–149
- multimodal learning, digital media and,  
 146–149
- Muñoz, Trevor, 110
- N**
- Nelson, Cary, 114
- Network Reshapes the Library: Lorcan  
 Dempsey on Libraries, Services, and  
 Networks* (Dempsey), 9
- New Roles for New Times: Transforming  
 Liaison Roles in Research Libraries*  
 (Jaguszewski and Williams), 10,  
 66, 110
- Newby, Jill, 91
- NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Higher  
 Education Edition*, xvi, 13
- NMC (New Media Consortium), xvi
- Noble, Cherrie, 98
- Nolfi, David A., 64, 66
- Northern Kentucky University, 167
- O**
- OCLC (Online Computer Library  
 Center), 74
- OERs (open educational resources), 127
- Ohio State University, 171–172
- OLC (Online Learning Consortium), 14
- Oldham, Bonnie W., 39
- Online by Design: The Essentials of Creating  
 Information Literacy Courses* (Mery  
 and Newby), 91
- Online College Students 2014:  
 Comprehensive Data on Demands and  
 Preferences*, 2
- Online Digital Pedagogy Lab, 137
- open access, 16
- open and inclusive, need for higher  
 education to be more, 1–4, 14
- open houses as tool to market digital  
 media availability, 156
- Open Learning Initiative (Carnegie  
 Mellon), 13
- opportunities for collaboration  
 in digital media, 58–59  
 digital scholarship, 54–55  
 intellectual property and  
 copyright, 52–53  
 between librarians and instructional  
 designers, 92–99
- LMS embedding for library-  
 related instruction, 55–56
- support for faculty research  
 and teaching, 53
- Syllabi Spa Day, 50–51
- teaching information and  
 digital literacy, 56–58
- Orbis Cascade Alliance, 78
- Organizing Higher Education for  
 Collaboration: A Guide for Campus  
 Leaders* (Kezar and Lester), 65
- P**
- Pagowsky, Nicole, 94
- Palfrey, John, 52
- Paulus, Trena M., 67
- Pentland, Alex, 17
- “The People in Digital Libraries:  
 Multifaceted Approaches to  
 Assessing Needs and Impact”  
 (Marchionini, Plaisant and  
 Komlodi), 138
- personal APIs (application programming  
 interfaces), 9–10
- personalization of learning, 14
- The Personal Librarian: Enhancing the  
 Student Experience* (Freeman), 58
- pilot programs for LMS, 177
- Pitts, Joelle, 95

- Plaisant, Catherine, 138  
 “Plugging the ‘Whole’: Librarians as Interdisciplinary Facilitators” (Knapp), 8  
 “Post-Artifact Books and Publishing” (Mod), 114  
 power-of-many concept, 4  
*Preparing for the Digital University: A Review of the History and Current State of Distance, Blended, and Online Learning* (Siemens, Gašević and Dawson), 1  
*Proactive Marketing for the New and Experienced Library Director: Going beyond the Gate Count* (Goldsmith and Fonseca), 6  
 professional development, 31–32  
 Project Information Literacy, 14
- Q**  
 Quillen, Carol, 130  
 Quintiliano, Barbara, 95
- R**  
 radical and deep collaboration, 76–79  
 “Radical Librarian-Technologists” (Schriner), 79  
 Radical Librarians Collective, 79  
 Ramsey, Stephen, 107  
 Ranganathan’s Laws of Library Science, 74, 182  
*Reflective Teaching, Effective Learning: Instructional Literacy for Library Educators* (Booth), 91  
 reinvention of librarians, 182  
 Reiser, Robert A., xii, 27  
 research guides, 169  
 resources  
   digital media resources available in academic libraries, 150  
   for human-centered design, 137–138
- S**  
 Salisbury, Allison Dulin, 132  
 Samland, Amanda, 49  
 Sample, Mark, 110  
 sample assignment on authority and expertise, 96–97  
 Sams, Aaron, 57  
 Sankey, Michael, 146, 147, 148  
 Sasso, Maureen Diana, 64, 66  
 Scanlon, Eileen, 54  
 Schaffner, Jennifer, 111  
 Schmidt, Aaron, 13, 137  
*The Scholarly Kitchen* (blog), 126  
*Scholarship, Libraries, Technology* (blog), 110  
 Schriner, John, 79  
 Senchyne, Jonathan, 108  
 “7 Things You Should Know About Leading Academic Transformation” (EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative), xvi  
 Shank, John D., 88, 89, 90, 167  
 sharing information, digital media and, 151–153  
 Shepley, Susan E., 68  
 “Shifting Our Focus, Evolving Our Practice: A Collaborative Conversation about the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education” (Witek, Theiss and Pitts), 95  
 Shirky, Clay, 2, 6, 11, 126  
 Shumaker, David, 55  
 Siemens, George, 1, 2, 15, 123, 129  
 similarities and differences between librarians and instructional designers, 26–37  
 Sittler, Ryan L., xii  
 Skorina, Diane, 39  
 Slack, 72  
 social media as tool to market digital media availability, 156  
 Soistmann, Leigh Ann, 137  
 Southern Illinois University, 37  
 space sharing, 37–38  
*Standards for Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians and Coordinators: A Practical Guide* (ACRL), 92  
 Starfish, 55–56  
 Stewart, Bonnie, 70, 75  
 Stommel, Jesse, 136  
 Su, Di, 91  
 successful attempts at collaboration between librarians and instructional designers, 37–39  
 Sullivan, Madison, 72–73  
 support for faculty research and teaching as opportunity for collaboration, 53

Swain, Harriet, 10  
 Swanson, Sara, 131  
 Syllabi Spa Day (example of successful collaboration), 50–51

## T

“Talking toward Techno-Pedagogy: IT and Librarian Collaboration—Rethinking Our Roles” (Boiselle, Fliss, Mestre and Zinn), 91  
 teaching information and digital literacy as opportunity for collaboration, 56–58  
 technical support for digital media, 157  
 Techno-Pedagogy: A Collaboration across Colleges and Constituencies, 38  
 technology and change in library profession, 181–182  
 Tennant, Roy, 75  
 Tercho, Karen, 97  
 Theiss, Danielle, 95  
*Think Global, Act Local—Library, Archive and Museum Collaboration* (Waibel and Erway), 74  
 “The 3 Things I’ll Say about EdTech in 2016” (Kim), 11  
 threshold concepts, 67, 93–94  
 Tirthali, Devayani, 133  
 Tor Project, 16  
 Tosuner-Fikes, Lebriz, 48  
 training for library staff  
   digital media, 154  
   LMS, 177  
*Transforming Our Image, Building Our Brand: The Education Advantage* (Gross), 6  
 Trello, 72  
*Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology* (Reiser and Dempsey), xii  
 tutorials and guides for digital humanities, 109  
 2CUL partnership, 76–77

## U

*Ubiquitous Librarian* (blog), 98  
 Ulrich, Carolyn F., 114

*Understanding by Design* (Wiggins and McTighe), 94, 95  
 Universal Design model, 147  
 University Innovation Alliance, 15  
 University of Buffalo, 167  
 University of Central Florida, 70  
 University of Delaware, 109  
 University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, 91  
 University of North Carolina, 55, 95, 171  
 University of Texas at Arlington, 14  
*Useful, Usable, Desirable: Applying User Experience Design to Your Library* (Schmidt and Etches), 13, 137  
 USER model, 91, 95  
 “Using Design Thinking in Higher Education” (Morris and Warman), 12  
 UX (user experience) design principles, 13

## V

Varner, Stewart, 110  
 Virtual Crash Course in Design Thinking, 138

## W

Waibel, Günter, 74  
 Ward, Dane, 4  
 Warman, Greg, 12  
 Webster, Keith, x, 3–4  
 Wertheimer, John, 118  
 “What Field Did You Say You Were In? Defining and Naming Our Field” (Reiser), xii  
 “What Growth, Innovation and Collaborative Mindsets Look Like for Students and Teachers” (Chandler), 68  
 What Is Digital Humanities? (website), 108  
 Wiggins, Grant, 94, 95  
 Williams, Karen, 10, 66, 110  
 Witek, Donna, 95  
 workshops, best practices for creating and implementing shared, 49–50  
 Wu, Kerry, 125