# So You Think You Won't Be A Supervisor?

SIG Sponsor:

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## ABSTRACT

Collaboration between faculty, faculty practitioners, and practitioners enhances teaching and research opportunities, provides more hands-on learning opportunities, and improves the knowledge and experience of all of those involved. Students benefit from learning about real world scenarios to couple with theoretical knowledge. Such experience improves student outcomes and informs their professionalism. Practitioners bring value added to the department with real-time information on new practices, trends, and solutions. Administrations recognize this value added and are striving to foster more inclusivity. Collaboration builds more resiliency into LIS programs and encourages the development of new leaders in our classrooms.

Most LIS programs include a management course and usually required. Anecdotally many students react to the course with a distain or non-preference for supervisory work and self-identify as not expecting to move into management or supervision. Many course designs include an assignment meant to have students interact with practicing library supervisors or managers in order to learn through that lens.

This panel will encourage participants to think critically about the role of practitioners in LIS education, with a particular emphasis on preparing students for future roles in administration. Practitioners, whether as adjunct faculty, guest speakers, or full-time lecturers, bring greater emphasis to the lived experiences of the field to the classroom. This blend of current research with current experience offers a more holistic program to the student. Both administrators and accrediting agencies recognize the depth this blend brings to departments as evidenced by shifting attitudes and the development of greater support.

This panel will discuss:

- Resilience and leadership in action
- The concept of capacity and the impact on leadership effectiveness
- Discussion of data collected from current practitioners through interviews conducted by current LIS students under the guidance of practitioner educators
- Exploration of resilience and leadership in library administrations during the challenges of COVID (2020-2022)

A common fear from new LIS students taking a management course seems to be how they define their own resiliency in the face of conflict or problem solving and adjuncts who have field experience can provide insights that theory cannot. Discuss points for the panel for discussion are:

- Sharing experiences of conflict or problem resolution
- Sharing feelings of inadequacy on handling situations and how to overcome those feelings
- Discussing possible solutions including resources or strategies for moving forward

Another concern expressed by LIS students is over their capacity to provide and/or meet the demands of leadership and management of a group of others. In the classroom setting this can enable discussions of skills and techniques such as delegation, communication and establishing accountability. The panel discussion will vet out experiences adjunct instructors have with these kind of classroom conversations to share best practices on demonstrating competence to students in this regard.

In the presenter's teaching experience, a common assignment is for students to conduct an interview with a library leader/manager, write a paper on the experiences and participate in class discussion. Assignments from 4 classes across 3 semesters were analyzed for commonalities. These results are summarized below:

**Results From Class Interview Papers:**

*Qualitative Analysis Overview – Managerial Papers*

*Keywords, themes and additional interesting context*

- *Keywords*
    - *Adjust/carry on*
    - *Curbside pickup (112 direct references throughout all papers)*
    - *Radical [change]*
    - *Programs – virtual*
    - *Responsiveness*
- *Themes*
    - *New territory*
    - *Discussed problems & developed game plan*
    - *Overwhelmed/engrossed in workload*
    - *Virtual/working from home*
    - *Hindsight - more tech access for patrons needed*
    - *Technology use increase*
    - *Miscommunications/misunderstandings*
    - *Risk/compliance*

*Other interesting context items*

*Atlas.ti was used to review mentions of budget change. Categorized as 'budget - neutral', 'budget-reduced' and 'budget-increased.' More mentions of neutral then reduced, no mentions of increase.*

*Budget decrease:*

- *Hiring freezes*
    - *Staffing issues – determining between "essential" and "non-essential"*
    - *Cancelled interlibrary loans and OCLC requests*
    - *Cancellation of guest speakers/programs*
    - *Issues with e-book purchases*

*Notes:*

*In future, will budgets be planned with pandemic clause in place?*

*No pandemic plan still – struggling day to day continues*

The panel will use data from this analysis to encourage discuss over the issues vetted out from these class assignments, for both exploration of management skills and best practices for the issues identified. Once again, practitioner experience is expected to influence the discussion around supervisor values.

This panel will encourage participants to think critically about the role of practitioners in LIS education, with a particular emphasis on preparing students for future roles in administration.

**REFERENCES**

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**ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

Education; Administration; Academic Libraries

**AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

Practitioners; Adjunct; Collaboration; Management; Leadership