

ing toward special projects. At some institutions, the salary savings could be used for other purposes, such as pay raises.

A less obvious advantage is morale. These new schedules are certainly a boost for those who got them, but there is also much less pressure on the other faculty to work during the summer months.

Disadvantages of the new schedule

Coverage is the biggest disadvantage. If your spring and fall coverage would suffer or if the loads on remaining faculty would be too heavy, then this schedule cannot be attempted. By staggering the new schedules, we are only down one person in fall and spring. Faculty will be working more reference desk hours during those semesters, although this increase is relatively small compared to the increase in reference desk hours the summer employees will work. On an annual basis, they will be working many more reference hours than their traditionally scheduled colleagues. However, these hours traditionally receive fewer questions than fall and spring reference hours.

Another disadvantage is missing committee meetings and having fewer opportunities to interact with colleagues. Membership on campus and statewide committees is expected of faculty, and a good solution to this situation has not been worked out, but committee sharing may be a possibility for some committees.

For those faculty on the traditional schedule, there may be a perception of fewer overload opportunities (thus less salary), due to the lack of need for summer reference desk coverage. In the past, a faculty member could combine a special project with reference work. Since reference coverage was always needed, this approach to summer projects was typical. Now, with coverage no longer the issue, the project is paramount. This shift may move more of the overload to departments that are project-oriented, like cataloging.

Conclusion

Overall, we believe this program will be beneficial to our library. It gives us consistent coverage at the reference desk for all future summers. Originally, only one position was going to have the shifted schedule, but a second employee lobbied the admin-

istration on the benefits of two employees. One faculty member could not work all of the hours on the reference desk, so recruiting as in past years would have had to continue, but two faculty members could handle all of the hours.

Perfect timing

The timing of our decision seems fortuitous. With our schedules and contracts in place for the upcoming year, we learned that the university is changing the way overload is distributed.

Departments will no longer have their own pool of money. Instead, the university will pool all the overload, and each faculty member in each department will have to compete for that money. This would have been disastrous for the library, but by changing our schedules now to ensure necessary coverage of the reference desk in the summer, we headed off being forced into making essentially the same changes next year.

While the outcome of a forced change may have been the same, it would not have been as happy as our voluntary program. ■

Letter to the editor

Orchids to *C&RL News* for publishing Scott R. DiMarco's piece "I know that's what it said, but it's not what we want" (June 2000), and orchids to Scott for mentioning my particular pet peeve as tip #1. A perfectly appalling percentage of ads in our profession don't give any hint about the salary range proposed. It's very frustrating for job-hunters, and it probably prevents some good matches from finding each other without waste of time.

Onions to the copy editor who passed "Awareness of current academic trends that effect library operations" (p. 504). That should be "affect." "Effect" for completive, "affect" for incremental. Usages are slipping all around us, but let's hold the line on that one for a bit longer, if we can.

Great piece, though. I hope HR officers read it, and mend their ways.
—*Christopher H. Walker, Indiana University, e-mail: chwalker@indiana.edu*