

Putting Work Life Balance into Practice: Policy Implications for Academic Librarians

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During the past ten years, both anecdotal and evidence-based research has suggested that the professional culture within the United States (US) is changing to reflect a society that desires greater equity between professional and personal responsibilities. These demands for greater equity grew from the desires of generations of American workers seeking more time for themselves. Whether organizations want to attribute this to the increasing number of dual-career households, or the shifting values of Millennials entering the workforce, it is an issue that those involved with talent acquisition and the retention should view as a concern for the future. More specifically, they should consider how current policies create or reduce work-life conflict (WLC). Emile Durkheim's theory on the division of social labor suggests that individuals need equity and separation between work and other aspects of their lives, and when work-related responsibilities become extensive they cause conflict in other areas of the individuals' lives.¹ To counter this conflict, individuals attempt to achieve better work-life balance (WLB), the equal distribution of one's personal and professional responsibilities.² Achieving the ideal balance is a growing concern for many working adults and the organizations for which they work.

Well-known companies in the private sector such as Google and Facebook have already started to make WLB focused policy changes that take into account many of their employees' personal obligations.³ For example, Google adopted a policy that allows employees to leave their devices at home so that they can disconnect from the workplace.⁴ In 2014 Google went a step further by expanding its maternity leave time from 12 to 18 weeks, which had the positive impact of retaining more women in the workplace.⁵ Similarly, higher education institutions, such as Duke and Yale Universities, have also begun to modify their policies to assist faculty and staff with balancing personal and professional responsibilities while adding benefits designed to assist faculty and staff with achieving greater WLB.⁶

Both private corporations and higher education institutions recognize that personal success is essential to workplace success,⁷ but for higher education institutions the bulk of their attention is focused on teaching faculty with little regard to academic librarians. The differences between academic librarians and teaching faculty are worthy of distinction, consideration, and advocacy in policy development at the administrative level of higher education institutions. Academic librarians, like teaching faculty and others in the workforce, often face work-related stressors that may lead to low levels of job satisfaction, lack of motivation, and decreased retention.⁸ They are tasked with managing high levels of change, increasing work responsibilities, and intensifying academic expectations while also dealing with their families and other personal commitments. However, librarians are unique because often they do not benefit from the same independence and autonomy in their work schedules that many teaching faculty members have. This is problematic because many university policies designed to assist faculty members in achieving their ideal WLB are not applicable to the way academic librarians work. For example, many librarians work a 12-month contract with limited leave, while most faculty members work between 9 and 10 months a year.

As a result, this study (as a part of a larger study that explores WLB for academic librarians working in urban settings) highlights the implications of policy development in academic libraries that might assist with a myriad of workforce issues, including motivation, job satisfaction, recruitment, and retention as an issue for academic library leadership. The larger study, *Living for the City: Issues of Work-life Balance for Urban Academic Librarians*, focused on WLB for academic librarians working in urban settings (urban is defined as cities with populations greater than 500,000). The results showed that many of the factors that impacted ideal WLB such as cost of living, location, and commute times were largely aggravated by the university practices that did not take into account the uniqueness of librarians as a distinct workforce population. By separating and exploring policies and programs that deter or support greater WLB for academic librarians, this study hopes to prompt library leaders to evaluate existing policies and update or create new policies that successfully support WLB in the 21st century academic library.

Literature Review

Work-life balance is a broad topic that overlaps many human resource issues, such as recruitment, retention, advancement, turnover, job satisfaction, and employee motivation. As a result, this study centers on programs that either lead to, or detract from, ideal WLB. Because WLB as a topic has grown in scope in both popular and evidence-based literature, it is not possible to examine all of the literature in this article. As a result, the focus is on scholarship concerning strategies that have supported or hindered WLB within the past ten years, a period marking the resurgence of the topic due to the revolutionary private sector programs at tech companies such as Google and Yahoo.

Family, Medical, and Leave Act

At an early stage in developing WLB programs, corporate employers recognized that to remain competitive in a dual-career world they must offer some WLB incentives to attract highly qualified individuals. Some examples included extended vacation time, telecommuting, and parental leave.⁹ Around the same time, the federal government began enacting rights that afforded protection for those employees that needed to balance work and personal commitments. Perhaps the most popular of these legislative acts is the Family, Medical, and Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). FMLA leave provides certain employees with 12 months unpaid leave for a variety of reasons including personal medical, childcare, and care for sick relatives.¹⁰ It is the primary federally protected tool available to employees in support of WLB, yet many are penalized for taking this time and the courts have often sided with employers in cases of penalty or discrimination.¹¹ For example, Webber's (2016) analysis of the application of these policies found that though FMLA leave is effective in providing job security for employees overall, it fails to protect women that would like to work through their pregnancy, or employees that would like to modify their schedule without taking leave.¹² Despite its legislative aims, there are still further challenges in seeking FMLA protection for LGBTQ families, with ongoing disputes at the state level and among individual employers.

Support at the Organizational Level

Policies such as FMLA are enforced and expanded at the university level to offer greater WLB. Studies show that though institutions have adopted more plans that support WLB, research institutions were more likely to offer programs that went beyond the basics of FMLA leave.¹³ These institutions are more likely to provide support such as tenure-clock extension,

reduced workload, and paid parental leave. This demonstrates that more higher education institutions, especially those categorized as research institutions, see the value in investing in supporting greater faculty WLB, with the understanding that the return on investment equals reduced turnover, increased funding, and scholarship.¹⁴ Organizations such as the [American Association of University Professors \(AAUP\)](#)¹⁵ and [The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's Workplace, Workforce, and Working Families](#) program provide funding for projects that address issues related to balancing the personal and professional commitments of those employed in higher education and corporate organizations. Some examples of the projects supported by the Sloan Foundation follow:¹⁶

- The University of Michigan's Center for the Education of Women focuses on work-family policies for tenure-track faculty and non-tenure track faculty
- Duke University allows faculty to work reduced hours to handle family obligations
- University of California at Berkeley (UC-Berkeley) provides "family friendly toolkits" available online
- University of California Davis (UC-Davis) promotes educational campaigns to advertise existing programs available for faculty parents

Similar programs include the [The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education Survey \(COACHE\)](#). COACHE analyzes faculty job satisfaction by conducting surveys used to measure the impact of personal and family policies, and benchmark faculty satisfaction in areas such as mentoring, nature of work, and departmental engagement for universities. An array of higher education institutions in a range of locations from large cities such as UC-Davis, and those in smaller rural areas, such as Sewanee: The University of the South participate. The findings suggest that while the faculty are generally satisfied with their institution's policies and benefits, such as "stop-the-clock" policies, they found that their institutions lack in support for those taking care of elders and other family members.¹⁷ The attention garnered by these programs has resulted in a wider practice of personal accommodations in support of WLB. Some common practices are described below:

Flexible Schedules

While faculty in general are pleased with the flexibility of academic work, many are working about 50 hours a week,¹⁸ with some spending as many as 66 hours devoted to work each week.¹⁹ Wadsworth and Facer (2016) found in their research on alternative work schedules that flexible schedules overwhelmingly receive the most positive feedback from employees.²⁰ In addition, having flexibility in workplace responsibilities also provides faculty with a more positive opinion of their work and their WLB.²¹ One provocative suggestion for workplace flexibility beyond scheduling is to allow librarians to choose a specialty within the library, which might affect the individual happiness of each employee, hopefully leading to an overall improvement in performance.²²

Workplace Support

Workplace practices that support WLB can be found on campuses across the country. For example, at two COACHE participating institutions, UC-Berkeley and Northeastern University, there are webpages dedicated to WLB for the institutions' faculty and staff, including breastfeeding support groups, an elder care support network, an occupational health program, and other forms of support for employees.²³ Meanwhile, highly competitive private sector companies have responded to demands by publicly supporting WLB. Following Google's lead on extending parental leave, Netflix followed in 2015 by offering employees "unlimited" paid

leave during the child's first year because the company recognized the value of WLB to employee performance.²⁴

Together with flexible schedules and duties, many employees also envision a workplace that provides support for childcare, yet one study estimates that only 7% of private-sector workers have access to on-site childcare, and only 3% receive employer-funded childcare.²⁵ One rare program within higher education is offered at Northeastern University, where faculty members are eligible for scholarships that cover childcare costs.²⁶ The debate continues regarding federal provisions for childcare in the US, while in countries such as France and the United Kingdom, working parents receive generous financial support for childcare regardless of industry.²⁷

Stopping the Clock and Sabbaticals

Another popular policy that the AAUP recognizes as advantageous to WLB is the ability to stop the tenure clock. AAUP suggests that faculty should be allowed to stop the clock in the event of childbearing, or having to care of an ailing family member.²⁸ The literature also supports stopping the clock in addition to other programs as a WLB-focused strategy.²⁹ However, while those that take advantage of stop the clock policies may be more likely to earn tenure they are also more likely to earn less money in the long term, which reflects faults in the program.³⁰ Another suggestion for balancing scholarly requirements, namely taking sabbatical leave to relieve WLB tensions, seems to be an enticing option, yet Flaspohler's (2009) study of librarian sabbatical leaves found that only 65% of those eligible had actually utilized this time.³¹

The bulk of the policies and strategies mentioned above are difficult to actualize in library settings. The few studies that discuss librarians' ideal WLB deal with the issues broadly, and are concerned with job satisfaction, work schedules, and the intersection of gender and tenure.³² While these articles address the general WLB issues for academics, they fail to discuss which policies, if any, promote or deter WLB particularly for academic librarians. This study attempts to close the gap in the literature by querying academic librarians about the policies they find most helpful, most supportive, and most attractive in terms of their own WLB. Specifically this query focused on the experiences of librarians who serve in urban settings, to understand both the individual and group impact of setting and work. This study applies both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. By using both methods, the researchers anticipated being able to compare individual experiences to collective responses while gaining greater understanding of individual lived experiences that impact WLB.

Methodology

The mixed-method survey was conducted between March 1, 2017 and May 26, 2017. In addition to standardized responses the survey also captured assessment in the "Other" field. Data were collected using a web-based survey distributed to listservs managed by academic librarians. Although this study focused only on urban academic librarians, the implications for the findings of this study can be applied to the larger library community. Survey questions varied from basic information on salary and career duration, to more specific information regarding their satisfaction with workplace procedures. Of particular interest were two questions: 1) would a lack of WLB would cause you to consider leaving your current institution? And 2) are you satisfied with the policies provided by your current institution?

Demographics

The majority of respondents were white (79%, $n=247$), 83% ($n=260$) of respondents were women, and 61% ($n=191$) were married. 39% ($n=97$) of respondents have worked ten years or more post-MLS, and 44% ($n=136$) make \$50,000 - \$74,999 per year (see Table 1).

Table 1. Demographics

Characteristic	Values	%	$n=$
Age $n=314$	24 or younger	1	3
	25-34	31	97
	35-44	32	99
	45-54	19	61
	55-64	11	33
	65 or older	7	21
Race/Ethnicity $n=311$	White	79	247
	Black or African-American	10	30
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0
	Asian	4	11
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0
	Hispanic	3	9
	Multiple	3	10
	Other	1	4
Marital Status $n=315$	Married	61	191
	Widowed	1	2
	Divorced	5	16
	Separated	0	0
	In a Domestic Partnership or Civil Union	4	12
	Single, but cohabitating with a significant other	10	30
	Single, never married	19	59

	Prefer not to say	0	1
	Not Listed	1	4
Gender	Female	82	260
<i>n</i> =316	Male	16	51
	Gender Variant/Non-Conforming	1	2
	Non-Binary	0	1
	Prefer not to say	1	2
Year(s) in Profession	less than 1 year	3	8
<i>n</i> =250	1-5 years	28	71
	5-10 years	30	74
	More than 10 years	39	97
Annual Salary	Less than \$34,999	3	8
<i>n</i> =311	\$35,000 - \$49,999	18	55
	\$50,000 - \$74,999	44	136
	\$75,000 - \$99,999	28	88
	\$100,000 - \$124,999	5	16
	\$125,000 - \$149,999	3	8
	\$150,000 or more	0	0

Results

When asked about workplace barriers to achieving an ideal WLB, respondents reported a variety of responses with 47% (*n*=126) indicating that workload was a hindrance while 40% (*n*=109) identified policies at their institution as playing a big part. 26% (*n*=68) felt that schedule flexibility affected WLB, and 25% (*n*=67) believed that management played a role in deterring an ideal WLB. 40% (*n*=106) of respondents felt that concerns about career success and recognition impacted their WLB (see Table 2). Individual responses included: “no telecommuting opportunities,” “concerns about the future of the university I work full time for,” “beginning of career=less flexibility,” “workload including publishing projects, civic engagement,” and “low pay, no union.”

Table 2. Workplace Barriers to WLB

n=266

Values	%	<i>n</i> =
Workload	47	126
Institutional or Departmental Culture	43	114
Concerns about Career Success and Recognition	40	106
Time Management	38	102
Lack of Institutional Support	30	81
Other	29	77
Lack of Schedule Flexibility (at work)	26	68
Management	25	67

Despite concerns about WLB, only 40% (*n*=110) of respondents would consider leaving their current position to achieve greater work life balance, and only 31 % (*n*=85) of respondents would consider leaving the profession as a whole to achieve a greater WLB. Relatedly, 52% (*n*=131) of librarians that responded to the survey felt that they were compensated adequately for their work (see Table 3).

Table 3. Library Faculty Opinions on WLB

Values	Agree %	n=	Disagree %	n=	Total n=
I am successful at meeting my personal responsibilities	79	210	21	56	266
I feel adequately compensated for my work	52	131	48	119	250
The promise of an ideal work-life balance factored into decision to take current position	51	137	49	136	273
There are policies at my institution that hinder my ability to achieve work-life balance	40	109	44	120	275
I have considered leaving my current position to achieve greater work-life balance	40	110	60	164	274
I have considered leaving the profession to achieve greater work-life balance	31	85	69	190	275

To achieve WLB, respondents utilized a variety of workplace strategies. Flexible scheduling was the most popular response with 47% ($n=128$) taking advantage of policy. While sabbatical was the least popular with only 7% ($n=18$) opting to indulge in this time for scholarship (see Table 4). Individual responses include: “reducing professional goals for my department due to resistance from library administration.”

Table 4. Strategies and Policies Used to Achieve WLB*n*=270

Values	%	<i>n</i>=
Vacation	78	211
Flexible work scheduling or telecommuting	47	128
Research leave	20	53
Decreasing workload	16	42
FMLA leave	14	37
Flexible Spending	14	37
Maternity/Paternity Leave	12	32
Requesting additional staff	11	31
Other	11	31
Educational assistance (such as discounted degree)	11	29
Financial assistance or advice (e.g. pre-tax savings, counseling or loans)	9	24
Childcare assistance (e.g. on campus daycare)	7	19
Sabbatical	7	18
Visiting health practitioner (e.g. home health aide)	3	8
Senior care centers	0	0

To maximize WLB outside of the workplace 75% (*n*=199) of respondents relied on a partner/or spouse for support, while 39% (*n*=103) relied on friends (see Table 5).

Table 5. Support Outside of the Workplace

N=266

Values	%	n=
Partner/Spouse	75	199
Friend(s)	39	103
Parent(s)/In-Law(s)	25	67
Professional Help (e.g. nanny)	13	35
N/A	12	33
Other	11	28
Neighbor(s)	6	17

Discussion

The results of this survey show that achieving ideal WLB for academic librarians is difficult. In fact, 40% of respondents felt that some practices at their institution hindered their ability to achieve WLB, while half of the respondents were unsure whether their organizations' policies hindered or helped in achieving ideal WLB. Further, some felt that their supervisor did not fully support them in schedule changes, providing additional staff, and adjusting workload. One standout response was that librarians tended to use vacation time for managing personal responsibilities such as having to take children to the doctor or other personal commitments. Using vacation time in this way reduced their ability to use that time for actual rest, relaxation, and other activities that help them to recharge and maintain high levels of work productivity. This is problematic because it illuminates the lack of clarity around what WLB is and how it is achieved. It also demonstrates that like professionals in other disciplines and sectors, librarians are not fully aware of the WLB guidelines of the institutions where they work. Further it is unclear from this study and the literature whether professionals in general, but particularly librarians, are able to apply the existing benefits to their lives in a way that will actually assist them with achieving their ideal WLB.

This study did find that the obstacles to achieving ideal WLB for academic librarians are consistent with the findings in the WLB literature in other professions. Librarians find their work schedules to be especially difficult and rely heavily on spousal support to be successful. They find that the policies in their workplace are not flexible enough and do not take into account the challenges that will arise for librarians in managing their personal responsibilities. There is also some indication from this sample that improved workplace rules designed to encourage a healthy WLB would have a significant impact on the lives and work of these scholars. Programs such as flexible and individualized scheduling, selective responsibilities in the workplace, and clear tenure and promotion policies, along with the freedom for employees to enter into these programs without fear of retaliation during the tenure and promotion process, would be examples of such support.

Conclusion

Library leaders should start to view the librarians in their organizations as a unique population of university faculty or staff, and advocate for flexible benefits that are customizable to support personal and professional success. The implications from this study suggest that librarians are unsure of how to effectively apply the tools necessary to achieve their ideal WLB. The dearth of library-related literature on the topic suggests that library associations, administrations, and librarians should start from the ground up by having conversations regarding the policies that exist how they can take advantage of them to achieve ideal WLB. There should also be more discussion related to those organizational practices that help and hinder the ability of these librarians to maintain a suitable balance between professional and personal responsibilities.

Library leaders looking to attract and retain librarians, particularly as more Millennials enter the workforce, might consider a policy review with the following recommendations in mind:

- Revisit current policies that address WLB and identify ones that are no longer applicable or outdated, and revise. The large number of librarians reporting the need for greater work schedule flexibility suggests it is a key area for focused improvement. For example, libraries might gauge whether their employee schedules could mirror public school schedules.
- Address the gaps in policies that both support and hinder ideal WLB that are highlighted in this study. For example, some study participants stated that they did not understand their institution's maternity leave policy or that no policy existed.
- Advocacy. Because there is limited discussion in the academic literature pertaining to WLB for librarians a chief take away is the need for greater advocacy. Greater discussion around how librarians can advocate for greater support in achieving WLB in their environments and the profession is needed.

Ultimately, academic librarians provide a unique service to their institutions yet receive little consideration acknowledging the added burdens of providing a public service in addition to teaching and scholarly roles. To develop and maintain a rich scholarly environment, more needs to be done to acknowledge the stresses of academic life in the library on the personal lives of faculty. Advocating within the administration and within individual departments for more recognition and support of this will create better conditions for academic librarians to flourish.

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Appendix: Survey Instrument

Books, Babies, Boomers in the Big City: Issues of Work-life Balance for Urban Librarians

Welcome to My Survey

You are being asked to volunteer in a research study called Books, Babies, & Boomers in the Big City: Issues of Work-Life Balance for Urban Librarians, conducted by Tamara Townsend, Assistant Professor, Library, Long Island University, and Kimberley Bugg, Assistant Professor, Library, City University of New York College of Technology. The purpose of the research is to explore how academic librarians 1) manage work-life balance and 2) execute workplace flexibility through benefits and policies in the context of an urban setting which likely adds additional challenges such as increased cost of living and longer commute times. For inclusion in this survey you self-identify as a librarian currently working for a college or university in a large urban city.

For the purposes of this study a librarian is someone with a Master's of Library Science degree from an accredited institution.

For the purposes of this study urban is defined as a setting with a population density of 500,000 or more people.

Consent

You will be asked to participate in an anonymous online survey that should take 10 minutes to complete. In order to protect your identity and respect your privacy the survey does not ask for your name, and every reasonable effort has been made to keep your responses confidential. We will not be able to identify you by your responses. Results will be reported only in the aggregate.

We anticipate that your participation in this study presents no greater risk than experienced during everyday use on the internet. If you are using a public computer or one that is accessible by other people, then clearing your cache may also help protect your privacy. While there is no direct benefit to you for participation in the study, it is reasonable to expect that the results may provide information of value for the field of librarianship. Data collected will be kept on file for further study.

If you have any questions or would like to speak with the principal investigator conducting this study, you may contact either Professor Tamara Townsend at 718.780.6015, or email at tamara.townsend@liu.edu or Professor Kimberley Bugg at 718.260.5131, or email at kbugg@citytech.cuny.edu. If you have questions concerning your rights as a subject, you may contact University Institutional Review Board Administrator, Ms. Patricia Harvey at 516.299.3591 or Eric Rodriguez at 718-260-4978.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Refusal to participate, or choosing to discontinue participation at any time will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

By advancing to the next screen, it indicates you have fully read the above text, have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures of this study, and your willingness to participate.

****PLEASE PRINT A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM FOR YOUR RECORDS****

1. Do you consent to participate in this survey?

Agree

Disagree

Demographics

2. To which gender group do you most identify?

Female

Male

Transgender Female

Transgender Male

Gender Variant/Non-Conforming

Prefer not to say

Not Listed:

3. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

Married

Widowed

Divorced

Separated

In a domestic partnership or civil union

Single, but cohabiting with a significant other

Single, never married

Prefer not to say

Not Listed:

4. To which group do you most identify?

White

Black or African-American

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Hispanic

Multiple

Other (please specify):

5. What is your age?

24 or younger

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65 or older

6. What is your annual salary?

Less than \$34,999

\$35,000 - \$49,999

\$50,000 - \$74,999

\$75,000 - \$99,999

\$100,000 - \$124,999

\$125,000 - \$149,999

\$150,000 or more

7. Do you rent or own the place where you live?

Own

Rent

Neither (please specify)

Work-life Balance

Work-life Balance is defined as a suitable balance between the responsibilities of work, and time devoted to personal or leisure activities

8. Did the promise of an ideal work-life balance factor into your decision to take your current position?

Yes

No

9. Please rate the following on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being strongly agree)

I am satisfied with my work-life balance

Living in an urban city impacts my ability to achieve a suitable work-life balance

There are challenges keeping me from achieving an ideal work life balance

These challenges have impacted my professional responsibilities

There are policies at my institution that hinder my ability to achieve work-life balance

The challenges that I experience in my work have caused me personal stress

10. What barriers keep you from achieving your ideal work-life balance (select all that apply)?

Institutional or departmental culture

Lack of institutional support

Management

Workload

Time management

Personal habits and lifestyle

Concerns about career success and recognition

Lack of schedule flexibility (at work)

Other (please specify):

11. What strategies or work policies do you use to overcome barriers to achieving your ideal work-life balance (select all that apply)?

Sabbatical

Research leave

Educational assistance (such as discounted degree)

Flexible work scheduling or telecommuting

Financial assistance or advice (e.g. pre-tax savings, counseling or loans)

FMLA leave

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Childcare assistance (e.g. on campus daycare)

Requesting additional staff

Decreasing workload

Vacation

Visiting health practitioner (e.g. home health aide)

Senior care centers

Flexible Spending

Other (please specify):

12. Have you considered leaving your position to achieve greater work-life balance?

Yes

No

13. Have you considered leaving the profession to achieve greater work life balance?

Yes

No

Personal Responsibilities

Primary caregiver is defined as someone who provides financial, emotional, physical and mental support to a child, spouse or partner, sibling, parent or grandparent, and non-relatives.

Personal Responsibilities

14. Are you the primary caregiver for an aging adult (over age 65)?

Yes

No

15. Are you the primary caregiver for a person with a physical, mental, or emotional condition?

Yes

No

16. Are you the primary caregiver for children under the age of 17? If so, How many children, by age?

Less than 1 year old

1 - 5 years old

6 - 12 years old

13 - 17 years old

17. Do you have any pets? If so, How many?

1

2-3

4-5

5 more

None

18. Do you belong to a civic, social, or other type of organization outside of work (e.g. Community groups, PTA)?

Yes

No

19. How many civic, social, or other types of organizations do you participate in outside of work?

One

2-3

4 -5

More than 5

None

20. How many hours per week do you devote to these responsibilities?

Less than 1 hour per week

1-5 hours per week

5 or more hours per week

N/A

21. Who do you rely on for support to help you meet your personal responsibilities (select all that apply)?

Partner/Spouse

Parent(s)/In-Law(s)

Neighbor(s)

Friend(s)

Professional Help (e.g. nanny)

N/A

Other (please specify):

22. In what ways do the individuals you mentioned above assist with your work-life balance (e.g. childcare)?

23. Would you consider yourself successful at meeting your personal responsibilities?

Yes

No

24. Do you believe that your financial compensation from work sufficiently supports your personal responsibilities?

Yes

No

Urban Living

For the purposes of this survey we define “urban” as a setting with a population density of 500,000 or more people.

25. How long is your daily commute (each way)?

Less than 30 minutes

30 minutes – 1 hour

1 – 2 hours

More than 2 hours

26. Do you commute into the city where you work?

Yes

No

27. What is your primary method of transportation?

Walk

Public transportation

Ride share

Private transportation (e.g. own car)

Other (please specify):

28. Please rate the following on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being strongly agree)

Location factored into your decision to take your current position

Your urban location has a positive impact on your ability to complete your professional responsibilities

Your urban location has a positive impact on your ability to complete your personal responsibilities?

A lack of work-life balance would cause you to leave your urban environment

Living in a non-urban environment would make it easier for you to achieve a suitable work-life balance

Housing and daily living costs in my city are excessive

Housing and daily living costs in my city negatively impact my work-life balance

29. What are the work-life balance advantages for living in a large urban city (list all)?

30. What are the work-life balance disadvantages for living in a large urban city (list all)?

Professional Responsibilities

Professional Responsibilities are those required to meet the obligations of your employment at an

academic library. Tenure and tenure track positions are those that require or encourage scholarly

publication, presentations, and other literature or professional service.

31. To which library department are you assigned?

Administration

Technical Services

Public Services

IT

Other (please specify):

32. Are you tenured or the equivalent?

Yes

No

33. Are you on the tenure track or its equivalent?

Yes

No

34. How many years have you worked as a librarian, post MLS?

Less than 1 year

1-5 years

5 -10 years

More than 10 years

35. How many years have you worked in your current position?

Less than 1 year

1-5 years

5 -10 years

More than 10 years

36. What factors impacted your decision to take this position (select all that apply)?

Location

Hours

Salary

Responsibilities

Colleagues

Institutional Reputation

Other (please specify):

37. How many professional organizations do you participate in (e.g. ACRL)?

1

2-3

4-5

More than 5

38. How many hours per week do you devote to these responsibilities?

Less than 1 hour per week

1-5 hours per week

5 or more hours per week

39. Do you consider yourself successful at meeting your career-related responsibilities?

Yes

No

40. Do you feel that you are adequately compensated for your work?

Yes

No

Stress & Burnout

41. A lack of work-life balance can lead to job-related burnout that can affect your mental and physical health. Have you experienced job-related burnout while in your current position?

Yes

No

42. Do you engage in any activities to assist with the management of stress due to a lack of work-life balance?

Yes

No

43. If so, what type of activities do you engage in to manage your stress (select all that apply)?

Exercise/Physical activity

Smile/ Laugh

Pray/Meditate

Social Support/Visiting friends

Take a break

Vacation

Disconnect from electronic devices

Hobbies

Other (please specify):

44. How many hours per week do you engage in stress reduction activities

Less than one hour per week

1-5 hours per week

5 or more hours per week

45. Are there any barriers that prevent you from seeking help with stress management (list all)?

46. Is there anything else you'd like to share about this topic?

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