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ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS' VIEWS OF THE CHAIR'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROLE

Dana W. R. Boden

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, dboden1@unl.edu

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Dana W. R. Boden

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Office phone: 402 472-4412

Fax: 402 472-7005

dboden@unlnotes.unl.edu

Dana W. R. Boden is an Associate Professor, and has been a Subject Specialist Liaison Librarian at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln over 20 years. As liaison to five departments in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, as well as the Research and Extension Centers, her responsibilities include reference, collection development, and library instruction. She received her B.S. in Agriculture and M.A. in Education from Western Kentucky University; M.S.L.S. from the University of Kentucky; and Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS' VIEWS OF THE
CHAIR'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROLE

DANA W. R. BODEN

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INTRODUCTION

Academic librarians are well aware of the disparity within our ranks regarding our status. Our rank, status, title and standing within the institutions we serve vary. There is ongoing debate among ourselves regarding whether it is best to be in tenure-leading positions (Murray-Rust, 2005), or not burdened with the requirements (Carver, 2005). Individual views on the track academic librarians' careers should follow sometimes even change over time (Hill, 2005). Holding faculty status does not always mean the same thing from one institution to another (Cary, 2001). New hires are now given choices regarding their type of appointment at some institutions (Ruess, 2004). Even the Association of Research Libraries, in their annual survey, notes: "Since the criteria for determining professional status vary among libraries, there is no attempt to define the term "professional." Each library should report ... those staff members it considers professional(s)..." (Kyrillidou & Young, 2005a & 2005b).

"Professional academic librarians" were welcomed into membership in the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in 1956. It was not until 1971 that the Association of College and Research Libraries membership officially approved Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians (McAnally, 1975), with two revisions since (Krompart, 1994). The Standards address areas recognizable to any faculty member: professional responsibilities; governance (library, college, and university); compensation;

tenure and promotion; sabbatical and other research leaves; research and development funds; and academic freedom (ACRL Committee on the Status of Academic Librarians, 2001).

Today, faculty status is still not a given for librarians in higher education. In fact, among the Carnegie research institutions just over half have faculty status for their librarians. The professional librarians at a large majority of the remaining institutions have what is termed academic status (Leysen & Black, 1998; Lowry, 1993). The ACRL approved Guidelines for Academic Status for College and University Libraries in 1990. Included in the nine guidelines are recommendations for involvement in governance, research and professional activities, and protection of academic freedom (Kroll, 1994). Whether recognized with faculty or academic status, university librarians are expected to be involved in continuing professional development.

Still we are aware of our uniqueness among our university colleagues. Women account for almost twice the percentage of library faculty members at U.S. Association of Research Libraries University Libraries (63.85%), (Kyrillidou & Young, 2005a), as compared to the percentage of all faculty at doctoral-level institutions (33%) (Curtis, 2004). A large majority of university library faculty positions require the Master of Library Science degree from an institution accredited by the American Library Association, thus most university library faculty share this disciplinary background (Lowry, 1993). Also, most of us came,

and continue to come, through the program for the degree as non-traditional students, over 30 years of age (ALISE, 1991-2003). The disciplines represented by our other degree(s), however, are widely varied. Unlike teaching faculty in other departments across campus, we are usually employed on a twelve month basis. Yet, as with any tenure track position, participation in professional development activities is a requirement to meet the criteria for a successful bid for continuous appointment (tenure) and/or promotion (Leysen & Black, 1998; Lowry, 1993). With our varied backgrounds, and life experiences, many come to librarianship having already been in the workforce and feel independent and confident in our own abilities.

The profession of librarianship is not focused simply in the academic realm, which likely contributes to the contradictory views of just what is and should be our role in the academy. Our colleagues in other types of libraries, while not focused on the requirements of obtaining tenure, and the myriad of activities that demands, share our commitment to service. The organization of many libraries, no matter the type, often means supervision and management of personnel, from students to volunteers to staff to fellow professionals, is required of many the librarian. Our focus on assisting our patrons in searching the literature has meant we are most comfortable reviewing the information available to us and synthesizing it for application to our situations. Yet much of the literature we look to for guidance and application is broad-based and widely-

focused from the public, business world, rather than where our operations and career choice have actually placed us – on campus, in the academic setting, in professional library faculty positions.

ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

The department chair position has long been recognized as an important one in post-secondary institutions (Heimler, 1967). For decades research has been focused on department chairs, their role and functions. A role in faculty development has been a constant for chairs; however, the types of activities and depth the role involved has evolved.

A review of the literature attests to faculty development continuing to be a concern of the academic community. Times of retrenchment and increasing numbers of mid-career faculty have brought times of reflection and increased research on effective faculty development. In the early literature faculty development was viewed almost exclusively in terms of how it could improve teaching (Group for Human Development in Higher Education, 1974; Bergquist & Phillips, 1975). Also, it was commonly considered the responsibility of each individual faculty member, while the chair should assist and support their efforts (Gaff, 1975). In the mid-1980s Eble & McKeachie's (1985) report on the Bush Foundation Faculty Development Project showed balance between faculty and administrative support was the key to successful faculty development and encouraged further research.

The research has focused not only on the department chair's perceptions of their role, but from several levels: those of the chairs themselves (Creswell et al, 1990; Gmelch & Miskin, 1993, 1995; Jennerich, 1981; Kremer-Hayon & Avitzhak, 1986; Lee, 1985; McLaughlin et al, 1975; Miles, 1983; Mitchell, 1986; Roach, 1976; Seagren et al, 1994; Smart, 1976; Wilhite, 1987); the faculty members' views (Daly & Townsend, 1992, 1994; Gordon et al, 1991; Hirokawa et al, 1989; Knight & Holen, 1985; Moses, 1985; Neumann & Neumann, 1983; Watson, 1979, 1986); those of the chairperson's administrative supervisor -- usually a dean (Jeffrey, 1985; Moxley & Olson, 1990); and across all three levels ((Cohen et al, 1981; Falk, 1979; Jones & Holdaway, 1995; Kenny, 1982; Leaming, 1998; Siever et al, 1972; Smith, 1972; Weinberg, 1984; Whitt, 1991).

Many works cover the chairperson's entire responsibilities, but a recurrent theme presented in the literature has been the department chair's role in enhancing faculty development (Eble, 1990; Gmelch & Miskin, 1995; Leaming, 1998; McKeachie, 1990; Seagren, Creswell, & Wheeler, 1993; Tucker, 1992) or acting in a leadership role, which includes faculty professional development (Knight & Trowler, 2001; Lucas & Associates, 2000; McLaughlin et al., 1975). These works are chapters on the department chair's faculty development role, or monographs that address the overall role of the department chair, while including faculty development. There has also been research (Creswell & Brown, 1992; Seagren, Wheeler, Mitchell, & Creswell, 1986; Wilhite, 1990), literature review

(Scott, 1990), and administrator opinion articles (Sorcinelli, 1990; Thompson, 1990; Wheeler, 1992) specifically addressing the chair's role in faculty development.

The faculty development role has sometimes been viewed as one activity, and sometimes multiple activities, in which a department chair may engage. The terms used for the role vary through the literature. Jennerich (1981) referred to the role as "leadership ability." "Leadership role" is the term used by McLaughlin et al. (1975). Smart (1976) and Hirokawa et al. (1989) use "faculty development." Moses (1985) refers to "encouragement" and Eble (1986) describes a role of chairs as "ingenious providers of motivation, support, and encouragement [for faculty]." Bland and Schmitz (1988, 1990a, 1990b) refer to a responsibility for taking on "faculty vitality", while Hecht et al. (1999) identified the role of a "purposeful, facilitative leader." Others perceived leadership as the overarching function of the chair, which takes into account all the skills, competencies, functions, roles, or activities undertaken to guide the department's way (Coats et al, 1996; Gordon et al., 1991; Mitchell, 1986).

Specific actions chairs may use in their role in faculty leadership or development have also been identified over the years. Some of these include: "place faculty on committees" (Weinberg, 1984); "encourages faculty to participate in conventions, conferences, professional associations, etc."; "reports departmental accomplishments to [the] dean or immediate supervisor" (Smith,

1972); "commending achievement" (Moses, 1985); "delegates authority" (Kremer-Hayon and Avi-Itzhak, 1986); and "develop the potential of . . . junior faculty" (McLaughlin et al., 1975).

Creswell et al. (1990) identified three levels of faculty which may need assistance: newer faculty members need assistance toward successful tenure and promotion hearings; mid-career faculty members sometimes require assistance to maintain professional involvement; and senior faculty may need assistance to give new life to their careers. Some authors have addressed specific career stages of faculty professional development needs. Boice (1992, 2000) and Bensimon et al. (2000) focused on new faculty. Baldwin (1990) and Lucas & Associates (2000) note differing requirements of faculty at various points throughout their professional life. An example is the need for "nurturing faculty vitality" of post-tenure faculty (Licata, 2000).

Over the years the emphases have expanded and shifted with the times and interests on campuses, but the department chair continues to be viewed as a mid-level administrator in a position to act as a leader, encouraging or assisting faculty members, in professional development and growth. The literature has supported the premise that the chair's role in faculty development, and as a leader, can be influential in the life of a faculty member. The chair is situated strategically to assist faculty in their development, growth, and progress professionally. As the administrative middle manager the chair is naturally seen as in a leader position to

influence subordinates. As the faculty member interacts with the chair of their department, roles are communicated and practices are observed. The faculty member's perceptions of the department chair's professional development role and leadership practices determine their professional relationship, which in turn can impact the career or, at least institutional, success of the faculty member.

Department Chairs in Academic Libraries

While research and literature exist on faculty perceptions of the chair's role in academic departments in various institution types across the United States and Canada, little research has addressed faculty perceptions of the department chair's role in non-teaching departments at the university level. The general literature on department chairs or faculty development almost never gives any indication that library personnel were considered, or included, in the research. Boice (1992) was a unique exception and also collaborated with librarians on research regarding library faculty and teaching faculty demands on scholarship (Boice et al, 1987). In his book on new faculty professional development he recognized the crucial role of department chairs in the success of faculty. He addressed the work to a broad audience, but chairs were listed as “first and foremost (p. xii).” He noticed libraries within the university setting include members who have faculty status, but do not teach courses on a regular basis, and observed faculty in other departments on campus may not even be aware if librarians have faculty status. His experience with researching new library faculty

led him to remark that they, “more than any group ... suffered from unclear expectations” (Boice, 1992, p. 276).

Differences in the organizational setup of libraries may have delayed the focus of research from turning toward department chairs. Chief librarians at universities in the first half of the twentieth century tended to be quite autocratic, blocking the library from arranging itself along the lines of a more democratic organization similar to its teaching counterparts (McAnally, 1975). As a result, much of the research on leadership in academic libraries has been focused on the library deans or directors, not department chairs. At the same time, as has been observed, the need for support personnel to perform a myriad of duties in academic libraries has meant that librarians in their very first professional position may be called upon to be a supervisor of support staff or student workers (Bailey, 1976). The result has been literature focused on supervision of personnel and often based on a business management background. Specific department chair concerns, especially as related to leading faculty, have been addressed only in a limited manner. Excellent examples of this are the editions of *Practical Help for New Supervisors* prepared by the Supervisory Skills Committee, Personnel Administration Section, Library Administration and Management Association of the American Library Association (Giesecke 1992, 1997). Those, as well as several others (Evans & Ward, 2003; Giesecke, 2001; Giesecke & McNeil, 2005; Gordon, 2005; Pugh, 2005) take a broad approach, across types of libraries.

While they provide helpful advice, and some focus is put on professionals and their development, three of the five are based on information and synthesis of previous literature (Giesecke; Giesecke & McNeil; Pugh), another on the authors' "management experiences ... rooted in research" (Evans & Ward, p. vii) and the last on unscientific web surveys of "self-described library managers" and library staff (Gordon).

Among those broad-based works that do focus on the academic library setting, the authors in Mech & McCabe (1998) tend to view development as a part of leadership, with little actual text committed to how that occurs, or what is, or should be, involved. As the title states, Simmons-Welburn & McNeil's (2004) work addresses human resource management, so again the needs specifically of professionals are not a major emphasis.

Even the literature regarding academic librarians at the department chair level varies on the title given their position. Examples are department chair, department head, division head, division chair, team leader, unit leader, middle manager, or supervisor.

Utilization of research instruments to determine library leadership or faculty development practices is limited. Such research specifically on department chairs in the academic library setting is an even smaller subset. Research on these library middle managers did not begin until the late 1960s (Bailey, 1987). Similar to the broader department chair literature, the main focus

of the research and literature has been the chairs themselves or the views of higher administrators. The perceptions of faculty in university library departments regarding the department chair have not been well documented. Most publications regarding the subjects have been either based on data gathering that used a researcher-developed instrument, surveys of the existing literature, or were basically opinion pieces.

The predominance of library literature that focused on descriptions and applications with little actually of a research nature was noted by Plate (1970). He utilized a short questionnaire and interviews of middle managers in Association of Research Libraries (ARL) to find they felt professional development of those they supervised was not their responsibility, but the responsibility of the individuals themselves. Parallel to that finding, Stone (1969) surveyed “professional librarians” of which, approximately one half were in academic libraries, finding that while “the ultimate responsibility for continuing education was placed by the librarians on the individual (p.192)”, the results urging administrator support for professional development included the observation “supervisors should be rewarded or promoted on the basis of how well they promote professional growth of those under them (p.175).”

Research on perceptions of middle managers and their superiors have included Bailey’s (1978, 1981) interviews of middle managers and administrators in libraries of five ARL member institutions and Mitchell’s (1989) survey of

academic library department heads and their immediate supervisors in 137 academic libraries, using Fiedler's Contingency Model of Leadership Effectiveness.

Several studies regarding library leadership have used the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire - Form XII (LBDQ-XII), developed at Ohio State University, or a modified version. It examined the style of leadership as perceived by the supervisor and subordinate groups. The supervisor completed the instrument regarding them self, while a selected number of subordinates completed it regarding the supervisor. Research on libraries in institutions of higher education included Sparks (1976), Comes (1978), and Olive (1991). Sparks utilized the instrument for a very limited study of one academic library supervisor and fifteen subordinates. Comes targeted the directors at twenty-four institutions and eight subordinates who held supervisory responsibilities. Olive surveyed public services and technical services department heads, and their subordinates, both professional and non-professional, in private Liberal Arts I institution libraries.

Focusing research on the middle managers, Person (1980) used both questionnaires and interviews and included nine large academic libraries in the Great Lakes states in her research of managerial role concepts in academic and public libraries. Interestingly, the public library managers perceived themselves having higher levels of involvement in internally oriented roles such as "leader"

than did their academic library counterparts, who gave higher ratings to their involvement in externally directed areas.

Bailey & Murphy (1989) researched the "management competencies" of middle managers in eleven large ARL libraries in the Midwest, asking three managers with average performance records and three superior performers, at each institution, "to narrate three positive and three negative experiences in which they had utilized management principles." They then compared their findings to the academic portion of an earlier study. While the categories assigned differed between the two studies, they were similar and the results of both indicated an emphasis on staffing and personnel management, which included subcategories for motivation and staff development.

Heads of cataloging and heads of reference departments in over one hundred ARL libraries were surveyed by Wittenbach et al (1992) regarding management education and training. Their results showed few institutions required management training when hiring department chairs, or ongoing training for the chairs.

While looking at differences among the genders, Voelck (2003) interviewed "academic library middle managers", in Michigan. Regarding their self-described "management style" and utilization of thirty-six management traits, she found females saw themselves as more approachable, accessible and cooperative than their male counterparts.

Kazlauskas (1993) specifically researched library faculty perceptions regarding department chairs' leadership practices. Surveying both non-supervisory and supervisory academic librarians regarding their supervisors, she excluded only the library directors. The research was limited to institutions in one state university system.

Bailey (1987) highlighted the need for more research regarding the leadership in library/information services, which chairs as middle managers, may provide. Sullivan (1992) observed the transition of the focus of participants in the Association of Research Libraries' Office of Management Services Library Management Skills Institute from the 1980s to the 1990s. Participants' focus shifted from management for the sake of advancement and higher salaries, to the desire to be effective as leaders in their new role. With the myriad of changes taking place in academic libraries the role of the department head has been going through a time of transition (Bloss and Lanier, 1997). As we prepare for the transition of thousands of librarians to retirement (Curran, 2003), it is appropriate to look at the role our middle managers may play in the professional development, and vicariously the retention, within our ranks.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How the chair's role in enhancing the professional activities of faculty is perceived can have a profound effect upon the professional development of faculty. This is especially true of junior, not-yet-tenured faculty. Bensimon, et al.

(2000) noted graduate programs (even doctoral programs) often do not do a good job of preparing or “socializing” students for the step into faculty positions and the accompanying requirements. Women and minorities are notably more vulnerable to this phenomenon. Beyond being a profession with a high percentage of women, Black & Leysen (2002) pointed to the brevity of the program of study for the M.L.S., and the lack of requirements for a research thesis, as factors making academic librarians even less prepared for their faculty roles. If these new library faculty members perceive the chair's role as one of a leader in assisting them, but the assistance is not forthcoming, the lack of leadership may lead to unfavorable tenure and promotion decisions for the junior faculty.

As noted earlier, academic library middle managers and the librarians themselves, have in the past considered professional development an individual responsibility. Mitchell (1986) reported the teaching department chairs in her initial sample indicated they believed the broader role of faculty development was "the professional obligation of the faculty themselves." More recently, McNeil (2004) broke development into three forms: staff development, “an organizational responsibility”; professional development, “a personal responsibility”; and career development, “the responsibility of both the individual and the library organization”.

To determine perceptions regarding the department chair's role in

enhancing the professional activities of faculty as held by not-yet-tenured, library faculty the question formulated for this research was: From the perspective of not-yet-tenured, library faculty members, what are the methods department chairs should use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty?

METHODS

A survey instrument was developed which listed twenty-seven methods department chairs may use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty. For the purpose of this study "enhancing the professional activities of faculty" referred to activities, programs, and procedures which assist faculty in gaining knowledge, training, skills, attitudes, and insights that improve their ability to be more effective in their professional lives (Tucker, 1992, p. 267-8; Wilhite, 1987, p.6). The twenty-seven methods were derived from studying the works of Boden (1994), Creswell and Brown (1992), Mitchell (1986), and Wilhite (1987). All of these works used qualitative research methods. All except Boden were studies of department chairpersons' perceptions. Boden's grounded theory study was of library faculty.

The survey instrument was distributed to all not-yet-tenured library faculty members at a land grant university in the midwestern United States. This audience was chosen due to their meeting the criteria set out in the "Research Question" section and their accessibility to the researcher.

The survey instrument included demographic information regarding the

respondents' gender, libraries department, years in the profession, years at the present institution, and educational level completed. Respondents were requested to rate each of the twenty-seven methods a department chair might use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty based on a five-point scale. On the scale "1" indicated the respondent felt the method was "unimportant," while a "5" indicated the method was "very important" (see Appendix A).

Each of the twenty-seven method statements was coded according to categories identified by Creswell (1991) as "practices chairs engage in in assisting faculty in their growth and development" (see Appendix B). This was done to assist any future comparisons of these methods for enhancing professional activities of non-teaching faculty to broader methods for enhancing faculty growth and development of teaching faculty.

The survey was distributed to nineteen not-yet-tenured faculty members along with a cover letter requesting the faculty member's assistance in the research. Respondents were given one week to complete and return the survey. Just prior to the deadline an electronic mail message was sent to all possible respondents, thanking them for their response and reminding those who had not yet returned the survey that they still could. This action did not result in any additional surveys being returned. Sixteen of the nineteen distributed surveys were returned for an 84% return rate. The return rate by department varied from 67% to 100% (see Appendix C). Other tables in Appendix C show the other

demographic information collected.

RESULTS

The data were first analyzed to determine the perceived importance the junior library faculty placed on each of the twenty-seven methods chairs may use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty. Appendix D presents the rankings and mean scores of the items from the highest to the lowest ranked, or the items perceived as most important to least important. The category code is also listed for each statement. Five statements had means above four. The methods perceived as most important were, "Provide resources to support professional activities of faculty," "Foster a professional atmosphere, open to ideas and innovation, without fear of failure or punishment," "Provide ongoing feedback to faculty regarding their professional performance," "Acknowledge, compliment, and provide positive reinforcement for good performance and accomplishments," and "Act as an advocate for resources with the dean's office and higher administration." One method emerged prominently as perceived as least important in the role of the department chair in enhancing the professional activities of faculty. That method was "Spend time with faculty informally in social settings." The rating was only 1.6875, with all other methods rated at least one full point higher. Two other methods were rated below three. They were, "Encourage faculty to collaborate with, or assist, the department head, or a senior faculty member, on a project," and "Provide regular meetings for groups of

faculty to discuss ways to enhance faculty growth and development." The other nineteen statements received ratings between 3.0 and 3.94. The overall mean for all responses was 3.539.

Next, an analysis of the range of scores assigned to each method was done. Four of the top five ranked statements had no scores of "1" assigned to them. In fact, for those four statements, a total of only two "2s" were assigned. The lowest ranked statement received no scores above "3," and almost half the respondents, seven of sixteen, gave it the lowest rating of "1," or "unimportant." All but five of the other twenty-two statements received scores ranging from either "1" to "4," or "1" to "5." Four of those five other statements were in the top nine rated statements; however, they were subject to one outlier which gave a "1" rating, while the rest rated the method from "3" to "5."

Category Codes

In reviewing the category codes for each method statement, as it relates to the ranking of the statement, some interesting findings came to light. Four of five statements with category codes of "001," identifying method statements where chairs would be "helping faculty develop and refine skills," were rated near the bottom on importance. The four statements were in the bottom third of the rankings. The respondents in this research obviously see these methods as less important than many of the other methods chairs may use to enhance the professional activities of faculty. The means for the items, however, were

between 3.0 and 3.3 indicating faculty in this research did feel the items were moderately important. One statement in this category code was ranked in the top ten. That method statement was "Lead by example -- provide a role model" and had a mean score of 3.75. So the non-teaching faculty involved in this research, split the category on the basis of the individual method identified.

Splitting the statements, related to particular category codes, into different levels of importance, was the general rule with the results of this survey.

Category code "002," "helping faculty relate to the organizational environment," with nine statements, finds three in the top third of the rankings, two in the middle third, and the remaining four statements in the bottom third of the rankings.

Taking a look at the statements themselves it seems the respondents perceive the chair's role more as one of an advocate promoting a professional atmosphere and encouraging and publicizing faculty activities. Less important are activities as an intermediary, or methods to promote interaction between colleagues.

Category code "004" for "relating to faculty personally" also shows a split in the rankings of the six method statements. Two are in the top third, three in the middle third, and the remaining statement is the lowest ranked item in the survey. Considering the statements in the top two-thirds with a mean of 3.3 or higher, we find the respondents desire a chair that is a good communicator. According to the statements the chair should give positive reinforcement, keep faculty informed, be available, be a good listener, and show an interest in each faculty member. An

activity the faculty in this research did not consider part of the role of the chair was informal social interaction with faculty.

The "003" category code for "helping faculty in an administrative capacity" received more consistent rankings. All seven statements are in the top two-thirds of the rankings, with means of 3.4 or above. The respondents obviously see providing resources, time, and input regarding professional performance, goals, organizational expectations, and progress toward tenure and promotion, and sharing responsibilities, as important methods chairs should use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty.

Relationship to Existing Literature

The findings of this study were generally consistent with what was expected. Library faculty members, like their teaching counterparts, are most interested in growing professionally and obtaining tenure and promotion. Their perceptions of the role of the department chair are hopeful statements of a desire for support from the chairperson in obtaining those goals. Resources, academic freedom, feedback, positive reinforcement, supportive communication, and assistance are all high priorities as faculty look at actions they hope their department chair will undertake to help them enhance their professional activities.

Several activities chairs may undertake to enhance faculty members' professional activities are identified in the literature and were outlined earlier here. The respondents to this survey supported the importance of these functions

of the chair as well. Most notably activities, noted in the literature for years, which respondents for this research ranked in the top third, were "encourages faculty to participate in conventions, conferences, professional associations, etc." (Smith, 1972), "commending achievement" (Moses, 1985), and "maintaining a spirit of inquiry and academic freedom" (McLaughlin et al., 1975). The statements on the survey corresponding to these were numbers seven, eight, and twenty-three.

The most interesting aspects of the results of this research project were the three lowest rated method statements. The existing literature suggests the chair should have a role in assisting faculty with collaborating with senior faculty, or with the chair, on research projects, proposal development, publications, and the like (Creswell and Brown, 1992; Mitchell, 1986, p. 136; Seagren et al., 1986; Wilhite, 1987, p. 93). Yet, this group of respondents gave that method of enhancing the professional activities of faculty a rating placing it twenty-fifth of the twenty-seven methods, and a mean noting the method as less than moderately important. Perhaps this is due simply to the perception that other methods are of higher importance or, as some of the literature has suggested; perhaps these library faculty members consider this sort of activity their own individual responsibility.

The twenty-sixth rated of the twenty-seven method statements involved providing regular meetings for faculty to discuss ways to enhance faculty growth

and development. This relates to the concept of the department as a "community of scholars" (Seagren et al., 1986). Considering the context of the university libraries at the institution at the time of the survey, giving such a low rating to the possibility of more meetings may be understandable. The public services division was undergoing a multi-part analysis, while technical services were analyzing workflow issues, all in preparation for the Academic Program Review. Many meetings were being held and had been being held for several months. More meetings, no matter how desirable their purpose, may have been perceived as undesirable.

The lowest ranked method a chair might use to enhance the professional activities of faculty, "Spend time with faculty informally in social settings", received a mean score indicating the method was not even "slightly important." Some research on chairs' perceptions of their role have noted chairs perceive part of their role as handling social events for the department (Mitchell, 1986, p. 138) or informally spending time with faculty as part of an encouraging role (Creswell and Brown, 1992). Bensimon et al (2000, p. 49-50) noted how welcoming social gatherings, and just being individually introduced to colleagues, can be for new faculty. It seems the library faculty respondents to this survey perceived little need or desire for chairs to fulfill such a role.

SUMMARY

Much research exists regarding perceptions of the overall role of the

department chair. Research has been done on academic, teaching department chairs from the perspectives of the chairs themselves, higher administrators, and faculty. More recently, research has been done on chairs' perceptions of their role in faculty growth and professional development. This research project sought to strike out in a new area in two ways: 1) the research addressed faculty perceptions of the chair's role in faculty development; and 2) the faculty members studied were in non-teaching departments in a university library setting. Also, the survey subjects were junior, not-yet-tenured, library faculty members. Because faculty development often includes a teaching component, the title for the role studied was changed to "enhancing the professional activities of faculty" and a definition developed for that role.

A survey instrument designed for the study included five questions of a demographic nature, and twenty-seven statements of methods department chairs may use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty. Respondents rated each statement on a five-point scale.

The respondents to the survey indicated most methods outlined in the qualitative research on chairs' perceptions of the chairperson's role in faculty development, are also considered by library faculty to be moderately to very important in enhancing their professional activities.

Thoughts and Recommendations

As academic libraries look toward the future and the transition to new

generations of library professionals, recruitment, socialization, acculturation, retention, development, support, and continuing revitalization will remain important. Academic library department chairs will play an important role in just how smooth that transition will be. This research has shown junior, not-yet-tenured library faculty members believe their chairs have a role in enhancing their professional development activities.

Further research regarding library faculty/ academic librarians', academic library department chairs', and top academic library administrators' (deans or directors) perceptions of the department chair's role in professional development is needed. Perceptions of faculty beyond the junior, not-yet-tenured should be researched. Perceptions across other levels of post-secondary institutions, across different types and sizes of institutions and libraries, should be researched as well. Research regarding possible effects of differences in the professional librarian's status on the perceptions of the professional development role of the department chair should be undertaken. For academic library department chairs to function well in support of their faculty's development activities, they must have the support of the library administration. Determination of academic library administrators' views, as well as those of the chairs themselves, regarding appropriate activities of middle level managers' in support of their faculty will advance understanding between the groups.

Over the years library literature has contained several articles regarding

mentoring. Articles regarding mentoring have focused on mentoring to develop leaders in the ranks (Cargill, 1989), chairs or higher administrators mentoring their supervisees (Fulton, 1990) or information from leaders on the mentors who impacted them (McNeer, 1988; Sheldon, 1991). More recently there has been a shift toward general articles, or sections of articles, on mentoring with a broader focus on supporting junior faculty, guiding career development, encouraging less experienced colleagues, advising down the tenure track, retaining competent librarians, and leaders will emerge (Keyse et al, 2003; Martorana et al, 2004; Mavrillac, 2005; Mosley, 2005; Tysick & Babb, 2006).

While many have asserted the mentor should not be the mentee's supervisor, there are cases of success in opposition to that rule, including this author. In several cases recommendations for support of mentoring includes provision of funding, travel, and release time (Keyse et al). Often it is the chairperson who informs, encourages, or plans with the faculty member regarding the activity and approves, or recommends, such activities to the higher administration. This research survey included such actions, as well as others developed from the broad department chair literature, in the twenty-seven statements of methods department chairs may use in enhancing the professional activities of faculty.

Chairs of teaching departments have been accepted as in a position to assist their faculty's development. Perceptions of the chair's role from the

faculty's, the chair's and higher administrators' viewpoints, and across a variety of institutional settings, have been the subject of research for decades. This research expanded the small amount of similar research that has begun regarding department chairs in academic libraries. The academic library department chairs must act as more than managers and supervisors of personnel. Library faculty, like their teaching department counterparts, should be able to view their chair as interested in the development of their faculty. The department chairs must step up and not leave their faculty to fend for themselves in these important matters. Rather, they should communicate expectations, actively mentor, and take a leadership role to support not only new faculty, but all faculty members in their department, and provide the best opportunity for their institutional success and continued professional growth throughout their careers. Professionals striving to meet the ever-changing information needs of their colleagues across the academic community deserve nothing less.

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Appendix A

Survey of Faculty Perceptions of the Role of the Department Head in Enhancing the Professional Activities of Faculty

Demographic Information:

Please mark the correct answer with an "X".

- a. Your gender: (1) Female _____ (2) Male _____
- b. Your department:
- (1) Reference Services _____
 - (2) Branch Services _____
 - (3) General Services _____
 - (4) Cataloging _____
 - (5) Serials Cataloging _____
- c. Years in the library profession:
- (1) 1 – 3 _____
 - (2) 4 – 5 _____
 - (3) 6 – 10 _____
 - (4) 11 – 15 _____
 - (5) 16 + _____
- d. Time at Institution:
- (1) Up to 1 year _____
 - (2) 1 to 2 years _____
 - (3) 2 to 3 years _____
 - (4) 3 to 4 years _____
 - (5) 4 to 5 years _____
 - (6) More than 5 years _____
- e. Education completed:
- (1) MLS _____
 - (2) MLS and additional coursework _____
 - (3) MLS and second Masters degree _____
 - (4) MLS, 2nd Masters and additional coursework _____

Scale: 1 – Unimportant to 5 – Very Important

7.	Encourage participation in professional peer groups at the local, state, regional, national level (committees, conferences, publishing, research, etc.) (002)	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Acknowledge, compliment, and provide positive reinforcement for good performance and accomplishments. (004)	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Publicize faculty accomplishments to administrators, fellow faculty, and peer groups. (002)	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Lead by example – provide a role model. (001)	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Delegate responsibility for projects to faculty to provide growth through more and more responsible activities. (003)	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Act as an advocate by assisting faculty in getting involved in professional organizations and activities (name dropping, nominating, recommending, etc.) (002)	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Share advice, wisdom, experience, and expertise regarding carrying out professional activities. (001)	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Communicate the professional expectations of the organization (department, unit, institution) to the faculty. (003)	1	2	3	4	5

Scale: 1 – Unimportant to 5 – Very Important

15.	Help relieve pressures and stress by reducing workload to provide time for faculty to initiate research and serve on visible committees. (0033)	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Encourage faculty to collaborate with, or assist, the department head, or a senior faculty member, on a project. (002)	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Assist faculty, in setting realistic, professional goals and priorities. (0031)	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Refer faculty to workshops, centers, or training courses for improving, or providing support for, their capabilities for growth and development. (001)	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Show a personal, individual interest in faculty member's growth and development activities. (004)	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Provide regular meetings for groups of faculty to discuss ways to enhance faculty growth and development. (002)	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Encourage faculty participation in campus-wide activities and committees. (002)	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Be a good listener. (004)	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Foster a professional atmosphere, open to ideas and innovation without fear of failure or punishment. (002)	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Act as an advocate for resources with the dean's office and higher administration. (002)	1	2	3	4	5

Scale: 1 – Unimportant to 5 – Very Important

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25. | Help faculty to identify an area of expertise. (001) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. | Spend time with faculty informally In social settings. (004) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. | Support in-house staff development activities (instruction, training, workshops, presentations, etc.) (001) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Thank You for completing this survey. Please fold it with the address out, staple it, and place it in the Libraries delivery.

Remember to return the completed survey by the date requested.

THANK YOU!

Appendix B

Content Analysis Project *Findings*
Categories

Codes, Categories, and Illustrations – Practices Chairs Engage in in Assisting Faculty in Their Growth and Development

- 001 Helping faculty develop and refine skills.
- in teaching (modeling, mentoring, critiquing teaching)
 - in research (modeling, help choose areas, create teams, specialities)
 - through staff development activities (in-house training, speakers, meetings, attend workshops)
- 002 Helping faculty relate to the organizational environment
- Advocate and promote the needs of faculty: externally, enhance faculty leadership (national visibility, professional associations, off campus networks) and internally, with individuals on campus, mediate for faculty with deans
 - the interpersonal environment (faculty to faculty, faculty to staff)
 - the departmental environment (atmosphere, openness, friendliness)
- 003 Helping faculty in an administrative capacity
- 0031 – Evaluating faculty performance (related to the department and institution – set goals, prioritize goals; related to the individual – goal planning, student evaluations, annual appraisals, feedback; related to faculty careers – promotion and tenure)
- 0032 – Planning the long-range needs of the department: departmental/ institutional planning
-goal setting, evaluation, prioritization; individual planning (goal setting, evaluation)
- 0033 – Schedule adjustments in assignments (released time workloads and assignments)
- 0034 – Providing material and financial resources (funds – travel, secretarial assistance, in-house, outside); equipment (laboratory, computers, materials) information (grants opportunity flyers, journals)

Appendix C

Table C - 1 Return rate by Department

Department	A	B	C	D	E
Total distributed	8	3	2	4	2
# of respondents	7	2	2	3	2
Percentage	87.5	66.7	100	75	100

Table C - 2 Gender of Respondents

Gender	Males	Females
# of respondents	6	10

Table C - 3 Years in the Profession

Years in Profession	1-3	4-5	6-10	11-15	16+
# of respondents	5	2	2	4	3

Table C - 4 Years at Present Institution

Years at Institution	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5+
# of respondents	2	3	4	4	1	2

Table C - 5 Educational Level of Respondents

Education	MLS	MLS+	2nd Masters	2nd Masters+
# of respondents	2	9	3	2

Appendix D

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Category Code</u>
1	Provide resources to support professional activities of faculty	4.625	0034
2	Foster a professional atmosphere, open to ideas and innovation without fear of failure or punishment.	4.25	002
3	Provide ongoing feedback to faculty regarding their professional performance.	4.125	0031
4a	Acknowledge, compliment, and provide positive reinforcement for good performance and accomplishments.	4.0625	004
4b	Act as an advocate for resources with the dean's office and higher administration.	4.0625	002
6a	Encourage participation in professional peer groups at the local, state, regional, national level.	3.9375	002
6b	Help relieve pressures and stress by reducing workload to provide time for faculty to initiate research and serve on visible committees.	3.9375	0033
8	Monitor faculty progress toward tenure and promotion	3.875	0031
9	Keep faculty informed of opportunities to participate in professional activities.	3.8125	004
10a	Lead by example -- provide a role model.	3.75	001
10b	Communicate the professional expectations of the organization to the faculty.	3.75	003

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Category Code</u>
12a	Delegate responsibility for projects to faculty to provide growth through more and more responsible activities.	3.6875	003
12b	Act as an advocate by assisting faculty in getting involved in professional organizations and activities.	3.6875	002
14a	Maintain an "open door policy" so faculty can speak with her/him at any time.	3.625	004
14b	Be a good listener.	3.625	004
16	Publicize faculty accomplishments to administrators, fellow faculty, and peer groups.	3.5625	002
17	Assist faculty in setting realistic, professional goals and priorities.	3.4375	0031
18	Show a personal, individual interest in faculty member's growth and development activities.	3.375	004
19a	Act as an intermediary for the faculty with the dean's office and higher administration.	3.25	002
19b	Share advice, wisdom, experience, and expertise regarding carrying out professional activities.	3.25	001
19c	Encourage faculty participation in campus-wide activities and committees.	3.25	002
22	Support in-house staff development activities.	3.125	001
23a	Refer faculty to workshops, centers, or training courses for improving, or providing support for, their capability for growth and development.	3.0625	001

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Category Code</u>
23b	Help faculty to identify an area of expertise.	3.0625	001
25	Encourage faculty to collaborate with, or assist, the department head, or a senior faculty member, on a project.	2.9375	002
26	Provide regular meetings for groups of faculty to discuss ways to enhance faculty growth and development.	2.75	002
27	Spend time with faculty informally in social settings.	1.6875	004