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Lisa Becksford
Virginia Tech, lisab5@vt.edu

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Instruction Librarians' Perceptions of the Faculty–Librarian Relationship

Lisa Becksford, Virginia Tech

Abstract

This study investigates instruction librarians' perceptions of their relationships with teaching faculty. Respondents to a survey of U.S. instruction librarians indicated that they tended to agree that their teaching was valued and they had autonomy in what they taught. However, the often one-time nature of library instruction limited their effectiveness as teachers, and respondents felt that faculty did not view librarians' teaching as equivalent to their own. Respondents also reported a disconnect between their professional identities and others' viewpoints, describing having their teaching role minimized or misunderstood by others, especially faculty. Additionally, a relationship was found between some aspects of librarians' perceptions of the faculty–librarian relationship and three separate factors: formal, non-library teaching experience; length of time as an instruction librarian; and librarians' amount of teaching. This research sheds light on the complexities of this important relationship and helps instruction librarians understand how others' views impact their professional identities.

Keywords: instruction librarianship, faculty–librarian relationship, librarian perceptions

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Instruction Librarians' Perceptions of the Faculty–Librarian Relationship

Academic instruction librarians' relationship with teaching faculty is, in many ways, one of the most important campus relationships that these librarians have. Instruction librarians' expertise in information literacy (IL) makes them well suited to teaching IL to students, and as instruction librarians' experience attests, library instruction is most effective when connected to class assignments. Thus, faculty usually collaborate with librarians to integrate IL into their classes, and instruction librarians in turn often rely on faculty in order to reach students and do their jobs effectively (Carlson & Miller, 1984; Meulemans & Carr, 2013). Because this key relationship can affect so many aspects of an instruction librarian's job, it's important to understand instruction librarians' perceptions of their relationships with teaching faculty. This article, which presents the results of an online survey of U.S. instruction librarians, explores the relationship between instruction librarians and teaching faculty by learning about instruction librarians' perceptions of the faculty–librarian relationship and identifying potential factors contributing to these perceptions. It addresses the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do instruction librarians perceive the relationship they have with teaching faculty at their institutions?
- RQ2: Is there a relationship between formal, non-library teaching experience and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?
- RQ3: Is there a relationship between training in pedagogy and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?
- RQ4: Is there a relationship between length of time as an instruction librarian and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?
- RQ5: Is there a relationship between the amount of teaching (measured by the number of one-shot instruction sessions in an academic year) and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?

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Literature Review

Faculty Perceptions and Misconceptions of Librarians

One way to study the faculty–librarian relationship is to explore faculty's perceptions of the library and librarians, which historically have not matched librarians' self-perceptions. Budd and Coutant (1981) and Cook (1981) found that faculty view the library's collection as essential to their research and tend to discount librarians' contributions to student instruction. Divay et al. (1987), in their survey of faculty at the University of Manitoba, discovered that faculty knew little about what librarians actually do, questioned the need to employ so many librarians, and thought of the library simply as a book collection. Similar misconceptions were found at both small private institutions (Oberg et al., 1989) and larger universities (Ivey, 1994). Other research has looked at faculty perceptions of liaison programs. Yang (2000) found that faculty at Texas A&M had generally positive views of their liaison and valued their work with collections and their communications about the library. However, over one-third viewed liaisons' library instruction as unimportant, and nearly the same number were unaware that library instruction was available. Similarly, Cooke et al. (2011) found that while liaisons' contributions were valued, faculty were generally unaware of the full range of support they could offer, including library instruction. Arendt and Lotts (2012) discovered that faculty did not always even realize that they had a library liaison. However, more recent research seems to indicate that faculty have gained a better understanding of how librarians can impact student learning; as Kelly (2019) observed, "as perceived librarian contact increased, so did faculty's perceptions of librarians' contributions to students' research skills" (p. 231). Fagan et al. (2022) found that faculty valued librarians' expertise, particularly where librarians' work intersected with theirs, while skills in teaching and pedagogy, though seen as important, were valued somewhat less so than librarian expertise was.

Librarian Perspectives

While studies of librarians' attitudes towards faculty are less common, the literature shows that librarians are both aware of and affected by faculty's misconceptions. Additionally, there is a disconnect between how librarians see themselves and how faculty see librarians. As Given and Julien (2005) concluded, "faculty do not understand librarians as librarians understand themselves" (p. 34). This conclusion was echoed by Meulemans and Carr (2013), who noted that faculty's "understanding of the teacher–librarian's role is far different than"

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librarians' (p. 81). Similarly, Fagan et al. (2021) found that librarians felt that faculty did not view librarians as teachers; additionally, librarians viewed "themselves as critically important yet underappreciated" because they, in contrast to faculty and students, can see how their work impacts the entire university (p. 2). Feldman and Sciammarella (2000), in a study that surveyed faculty and librarians at the same institution, found that while 90% of faculty claimed familiarity with the library and its resources, 94% of librarians said that faculty were unaware of the research tools available at the library for their students. The authors saw the source of the conflict on both sides: in their perceptions of each other, "neither group has the complete picture" (p. 493). This incomplete faculty understanding of what librarians do can have a significant impact on librarians, particularly instruction librarians. As Davis (2007) found, many instruction librarians experience teaching anxiety, and the physical and emotional aspects of this anxiety are exacerbated by concerns over faculty perceptions. Furthermore, interactions with faculty are so important to successful library instruction that they can sometimes take precedence over student learning as a way of gauging the success of instruction (Julien & Pecoskie, 2009).

Librarians' Changing Roles

Faculty understanding of the role of libraries and librarians is complicated by the transformation of academic librarians' role in recent decades. Rodwell and Fairbairn (2008) saw the changing liaison role as academic libraries' effort to enhance their institutional relevance, with liaisons becoming "an equal professional partner in the research, teaching and learning functions" of their institutions (p. 120). Goetsch (2008) cited changes in technology and user needs as the impetus for academic libraries to transform existing positions and create new ones. These changing roles for librarians do more than just help librarians keep their place in higher education; as Schlak (2016) posited, "engagement with faculty through liaison services is an important mechanism for elevating the library and the librarian to a level where interactions around faculty scholarship and pedagogy as well as student learning become possible" (p. 415). Bibliographic instruction and IL instruction have also developed out of larger changes to academic libraries and were not only a natural outgrowth of the development of librarianship as a profession but also a way to legitimize librarians' role in the university and meet a central need of students and faculty (Hopkins, 1982; O'Connor, 2009).

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Library Instruction as a Source of Conflict and Collaboration

Library instruction is a rich source of potential collaboration as well as a potential source of conflict between faculty and librarians. A lack of effective collaboration directly impacts a program-integrated instruction program's success and librarians' ability to reach students (Baker, 1989; Carlson & Miller, 1984; Julien & Pecoskie, 2009; Perez-Stable et al., 2020). Part of the challenge in developing a successful faculty–librarian relationship is differing views of the importance of IL instruction; faculty who do not view it as essential for their students and do not see librarians as the ones best suited to teach it will not invite librarians to teach in their classes (Ducas & Michaud-Oystryk, 2003; McCarthy, 1985; Schulte & Sherwill-Navarro, 2009). When faculty do integrate librarian-led IL instruction into their classes, the potential for conflict increases: Alwan et al. (2018) found evidence of status-based microaggressions of teaching faculty towards librarians, with teaching faculty often seeing academic librarians as subordinate.

Despite this potential for conflict and ineffective collaborative relationships, successful faculty–librarian instructional collaborations do occur and are widely documented in the literature. Such collaborations have been detailed in a wide variety of disciplines: first-year writing (Barratt et al., 2009; Shields, 2014), first-year engineering (Callison et al., 2005), education (Bhavnagri & Bielat, 2005; Brown & Duke, 2005; Colantonio-Yurko et al., 2020; Lampert, 2005), pharmacy (Lapidus, 2007), and liberal studies (Toth, 2005), among others. These collaborations represent what Bruce (2001) called "integral involvement in the teaching and learning function of the university" (p. 107). Other scholars have sought to describe what makes a successful faculty–librarian partnership, finding that effective communication and trust were key (Díaz & Mandernach, 2017; Phelps & Campbell, 2012), as was relationship-building (Colantonio-Yurko et al., 2020).

This paper fills a gap in the literature by examining the ways that instruction librarians perceive their relationship with teaching faculty and the factors that may contribute to this perception. While there have been a number of studies of faculty perceptions of librarians and descriptions of successful collaborations, how librarians perceive their relationship with faculty has received less attention. Because a successful faculty–librarian relationship is so important to effective IL instruction, the nuances of this relationship are worth exploring to improve both collaboration and professional relationships between teaching faculty and instruction librarians.

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Methods

In order to address the research questions listed above, the author developed an online survey using Qualtrics. The questions were predominantly multiple choice, with one free-response question (see Appendix A). After receiving an IRB exemption for the study, the author sent a survey invitation to the American Library Association's Information Literacy Instruction Discussion List (ILI-L) in October 2019. The survey remained open for a two-and-a-half-week period, with a reminder email sent to the same listserv 12 days after the first email. To be eligible to participate in the survey, participants needed to hold a Master of Library Science degree or equivalent, work in an academic library, and have teaching responsibilities. The study population was limited to the United States in order to ensure a level of consistency in librarians' working environments. In addition to collecting data addressing the research questions of this study, the survey included questions exploring instruction librarians' perceptions of themselves as teachers; those results are reported in a separate article (Becksford, 2022).

Jamovi, an open-source statistical software, was used to conduct statistical analyses, and Google Sheets was used to code the responses to the free-response question using inductive coding. In order to reduce the risk of single-coder bias, a second person coded a randomly-chosen subset of the responses (approximately 20%) using the codebook developed by the author. Differences in assigned codes were discussed in order to reach a consensus, and the author re-coded the full set of responses after consensus was reached.

Limitations

There are several limitations in the design of this study. One is that only instruction librarians were surveyed and not teaching faculty, so only librarians' perspectives on the faculty–librarian relationship are represented. Additionally, the survey was distributed only to one listserv, albeit a major one to which many instruction librarians subscribed, resulting in a relatively small sample size compared to the potential number of instruction librarians who likely fit the survey criteria. Because the sample was a purposive sample, conclusions cannot be made about all librarians. For these reasons, the study is best seen as an exploratory study.

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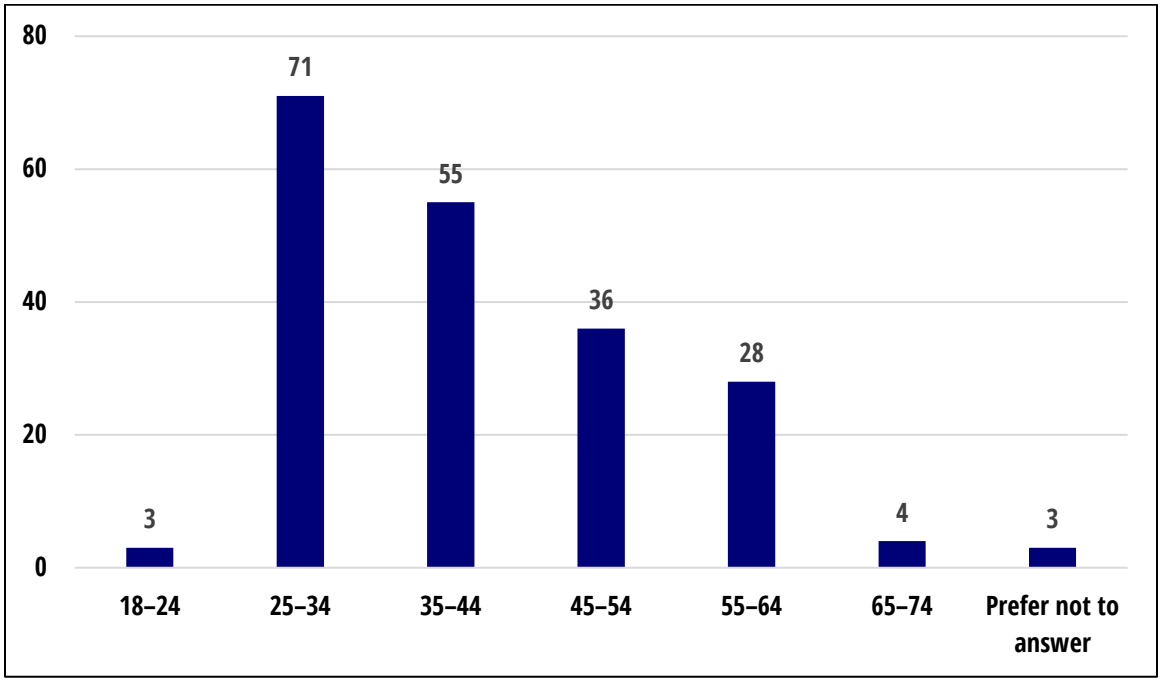
Results

Respondent Demographics

A total of 209 respondents answered at least one question, but because respondents did not have to answer every question, and some questions were shown only in response to other questions, the number of respondents to individual questions varied. Of the 200 respondents who answered the question, 83.5% (*n* = 167) identified as female/feminine, 13% (*n* = 26) identified as male/masculine, 1.5% (*n* = 3) preferred to self-describe, and 2% (*n* = 4) preferred not to answer. The most represented age range was 25 to 34, comprising 35.5% (*n* = 71) of 200 responses to the question (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Respondents' Age in Years (*n* = 200)



Respondents also represented a wide range of institutions. Of 200 respondents, 69% (*n* = 138) worked at public institutions, and 31% (*n* = 62) worked at private, not-for-profit institutions. Doctoral institutions were most commonly represented, with 44.5% (*n* = 90) working at this type of institution (see Figure 2).

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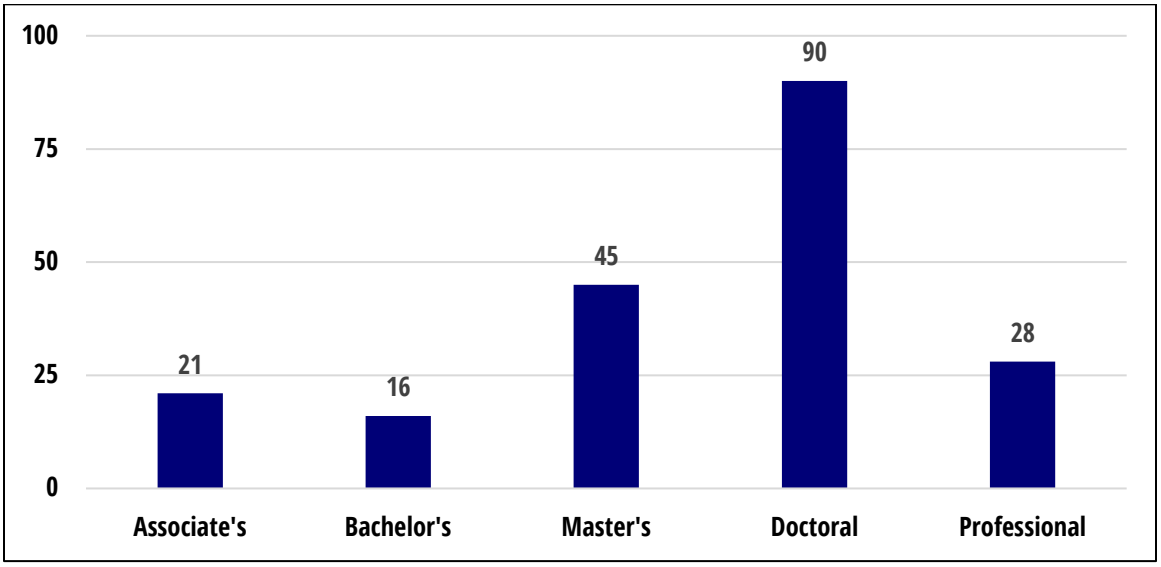
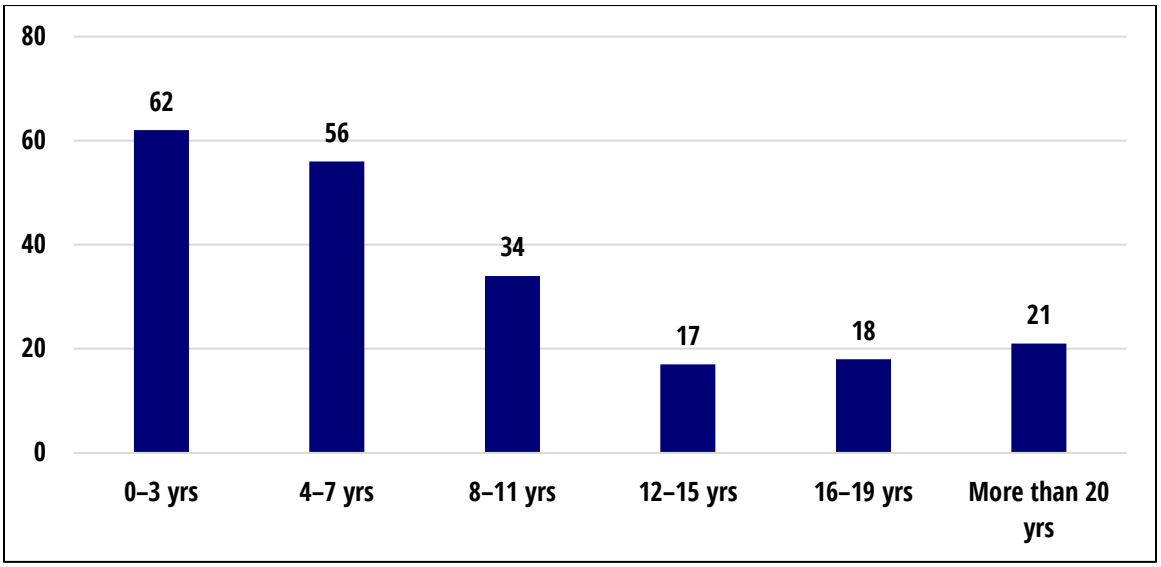
Figure 2: Highest Degree Granted at Institution (*n* = 200)



A majority of the 200 respondents (68%, *n* = 136) who answered the question about status were faculty, while 27.5% (*n* = 55) were staff. An additional 4.5% (*n* = 9) selected "Other," commenting that either they were administrators outside of faculty or staff rank or were considered faculty in some contexts and staff in others. A majority of 208 respondents (56.7%, *n* = 118) to the question about length of time in library instruction had 0 to 7 years' experience (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Length of Time Working Professionally in Library Instruction (*n* = 208)



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RQ1: How do instruction librarians perceive the relationship they have with teaching faculty at their institutions?

In order to understand instruction librarians' perceptions of their relationship with teaching faculty, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements about their relationship with teaching faculty by dragging an indicator along a scale; the scale ranged from 0 to 100, with 100 indicating complete agreement, 50 indicating neither agreement nor disagreement, and 0 indicating complete disagreement. The survey defined teaching faculty as "instructors within a discipline with whom you work, such as a first-year writing instructor for whose class you teach an information literacy session." The full results can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Level of Agreement with Statements Regarding Relationship with Teaching Faculty

Statement	Mean	*n*
When I work with teaching faculty at my institution, I have autonomy in what I teach.	63.68	201
I work with teaching faculty to create lesson plans and curriculum.	49.25	191
Others at my institution value my teaching.	66.97	199
When I teach one-shot sessions, my status as a guest limits my effectiveness as a teacher.	58.72	194
Other teachers at my institution view my teaching as equivalent to theirs.	36.6	189
Teaching faculty understand the role that teaching plays in my job.	40.89	187
The teaching faculty that I work with view me as a fellow teacher.	50.58	187

Although no statement garnered a particularly high mean response, respondents generally tended to agree that they have autonomy in what they teach and that their teaching was valued at their institutions. However, they indicated that their teaching role is not understood by teaching faculty, nor do others view their teaching as equivalent to theirs. Furthermore, being a guest in others' classrooms limited their effectiveness as teachers, and they neither agreed nor disagreed that they collaborate with teaching faculty on lesson plans and curriculum. One limitation to interpreting this question's responses was the use of an indicator bar rather than a Likert scale; while the indicator bar was chosen because it generated a precise number indicating agreement or disagreement, the question's wording may have led to confusion regarding the ability to indicate disagreement, possibly resulting in responses clustered around the midpoint of the scale. For this reason, the results of this

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question and other analysis based on it should be viewed as explorations into instruction librarians' perceptions of the faculty–librarian relationship that require further research to confirm.

In addition to the statements above, respondents were also asked if they had ever experienced a conflict between their understanding of their professional identity and how others see them. Of 201 respondents, 70.6% (n = 142) said yes, and they then had the option to answer a free-response question asking them to describe an example of this conflict. While the question was intended to tease out the difference between one's self-view and others' perceptions, the word "conflict" may have introduced bias by encouraging respondents to recount only a negative experience. Additionally, respondents were not asked to share any positive experiences of working with teaching faculty that would have provided a more balanced depiction. Furthermore, while the author sought to reduce bias by having a colleague code a randomly-chosen subset of the responses, having only one person create the codebook may have led to the creation of negative codes only, particularly given the way this question was asked. See Appendix B for quotations from responses that provide examples and further details for each code; these examples and details help to provide evidence and explanation for the codes chosen.

In 126 responses, four overall themes emerged: misunderstanding, minimizing, conflict, and positive experiences (see Appendix B for details and representative quotes). (An individual response could receive more than one code.) The most common theme was misunderstanding. Respondents mentioned that others misunderstand their professional identity, most commonly demonstrating a complete lack of awareness of librarians' teaching role (23.8%, n = 30). Many teaching faculty have no idea that some librarians teach and no concept of what librarians would even teach.

Respondents also reported misunderstandings regarding librarians' status as faculty or staff (18.2%, n = 23). Many respondents noted that they were classified as faculty, yet other faculty assumed that they were staff or felt that librarians did not deserve faculty status. Respondents reported being excluded from faculty committees, facing issues with tenure or promotion, or being told by other faculty that librarians could not be faculty because they did not teach. Several respondents noted that as faculty, they participated in activities typically associated with being a faculty member, such as publishing, teaching, and governance, yet they were still viewed and treated as support staff on their campuses.

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In addition to this confusion over status, several respondents cited librarian stereotypes as a source of conflicting viewpoints over librarians' roles (14.2%, $n = 18$). Librarians' jobs were perceived to be limited to purchasing, checking out, or shelving books. Additionally, 3.1% ($n = 4$) reported being told by others that librarians simply read all day.

Several (11.3%, $n = 14$) respondents also reported that others view library instruction as only presentations or database demonstrations. While some aspects of library instruction may incorporate database demonstrations, and faculty likely mean no malice when referring to library instruction as a presentation, this view of what librarians can offer to faculty and their students is limiting, and it suggests that instruction librarians do not have the pedagogical expertise to develop learning experiences beyond presentations and that students only need to know how to search databases.

An additional theme found was one of minimization. In contrast to a lack of awareness of the librarian's teaching role, 16.6% ($n = 21$) of respondents noted that faculty were aware of the librarian's teaching role yet minimized its importance or the time that librarians dedicated to teaching. In many ways, this minimization may be more disheartening than a complete lack of awareness, particularly when instruction librarians' teaching is viewed as a less important part of their job. Teaching faculty were not the only ones reported to minimize the teaching role; 4.7% ($n = 6$) of respondents described an experience in which other librarians minimized their teaching role. Considering this minimizing and misunderstanding, it's unsurprising that 7.1% ($n = 9$) of respondents reported an experience that showed that faculty view librarians as subordinate. This dynamic is problematic whether librarians are faculty or staff.

Two less prominent themes present in the responses were instances of both general conflict and positive experiences with faculty. Respondents described rude faculty behavior, faculty micromanaging library instruction, scheduling issues, and having their qualifications questioned, often in conjunction with the minimization or misunderstanding described above. Finally, a few respondents did note positive experiences. Faculty perceptions can change as relationships are built and faculty see what librarians are capable of, as 3.9% ($n = 5$) noted.

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RQ2: Is there a relationship between formal, non-library teaching experience and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?

Respondents were asked whether they had formal, non-library teaching experience prior to becoming a librarian. Of 206 respondents, 56.3% (n = 116) had no such experience. Of respondents who did, 23.8% (n = 49) had experience in higher education, 18% (n = 37) had experience in K–12, 4.4% (n = 9) had experience in a corporate setting, and 7.2% (n = 15) had some other type of experience, with community experience being the most common indicated (participants could select more than one answer, so the total percentages are greater than 100%). To learn if there was any relationship between prior teaching experience and perceptions of the faculty–librarian relationship, responses to the question were consolidated to create two groups: those with prior teaching experience and those without. Student's t-test, which determines whether the difference between two groups' means is statistically significant (Vogt, 2005b), was used to see if there was a relationship between prior teaching experience and agreement with the statements regarding respondents' perceptions of their relationship with teaching faculty (see Table 1). Significance was found at the p <.05 level for three statements: "When I work with teaching faculty at my institution, I have autonomy in what I teach," "Other teachers at my institution view my teaching as equivalent to theirs," and "The teaching faculty that I work with view me as a fellow teacher." Prior teaching experience likely leads to more confidence in one's role as an instruction librarian as well as a more developed teacher identity. Although this study examined librarians' perceptions of how others see them and did not ask faculty how they view librarians, it's possible this increased confidence in one's role and identity may affect not only one's self-conception but also others' perceptions. A librarian who is confident in their role as a teacher may be more likely to be seen as a teacher by others.

RQ3: Is there a relationship between training in pedagogy and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?

Respondents were also asked whether they have had any formal training in pedagogy and what type of training they'd had. Of 207 respondents, only 22.7% (n = 47) said that they did not have any training in pedagogy. Of those who did, 60.3% (n = 125) had professional development, 27.5% (n = 57) had graduate coursework in education but no graduate degree, 11.1% (n = 23) had a graduate degree in education, 8.2% (n = 17) had undergraduate coursework in education but no graduate degree, and 7.2% (n = 15) had an undergraduate degree in education. Though in the free-response question several respondents described a

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faculty assumption that librarians must be unfamiliar with pedagogy (see Appendix B), this finding shows that, on the contrary, many librarians are knowledgeable about pedagogy. Although the question asked about graduate coursework in education, the fact that librarians were not specifically asked about pedagogy training they may have received in library school is a limitation to interpreting the results of this question.

To see if there was a relationship between pedagogy training and perceptions of the relationship with teaching faculty, the results for the question were consolidated into two groups: those with pedagogy training and those without. Using Student's *t*-test, no statistically significant relationship was found.

RQ4: Is there a relationship between the length of time as an instruction librarian and the perception of the relationship with teaching faculty?

Spearman's rho, which is used to determine whether two ordinal variables have a statistically significant relationship (Vogt, 2005a) was used to learn if there was a relationship between the length of time as an instruction librarian (see Figure 3) and librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty (see Table 1). A relationship was found for two statements: "Teaching faculty understand the role that teaching plays in my job," at the $p < .05$ level, and "The teaching faculty that I work with view me as a fellow teacher," at the $p < .01$ level. As a librarian progresses in their career, they are likely to grow in confidence in their role and be better able to convey their role to others. They may also have been able to develop long-term, collaborative relationships with faculty that would encourage faculty to view instruction librarians as fellow teachers and to understand their teaching role.

RQ5: Is there a relationship between the amount of teaching (measured by the number of instruction sessions in an academic year) and instruction librarians' perception of their relationship with teaching faculty?

Respondents were asked about the types of library teaching they had done in the last academic year. Of 208 respondents, 98% ($n = 204$) taught one-shot sessions, 67.3% ($n = 140$) taught multiple sessions for a single class, 23.6% ($n = 49$) taught credit-bearing courses, and 55.8% ($n = 116$) taught standalone sessions not connected to a class (participants could select multiple responses, so the total percentages are greater than 100%). Those who indicated that they taught one-shots, multiple sessions for a single class, or standalone sessions were asked how many sessions they taught in the last academic year (see Figure 4).

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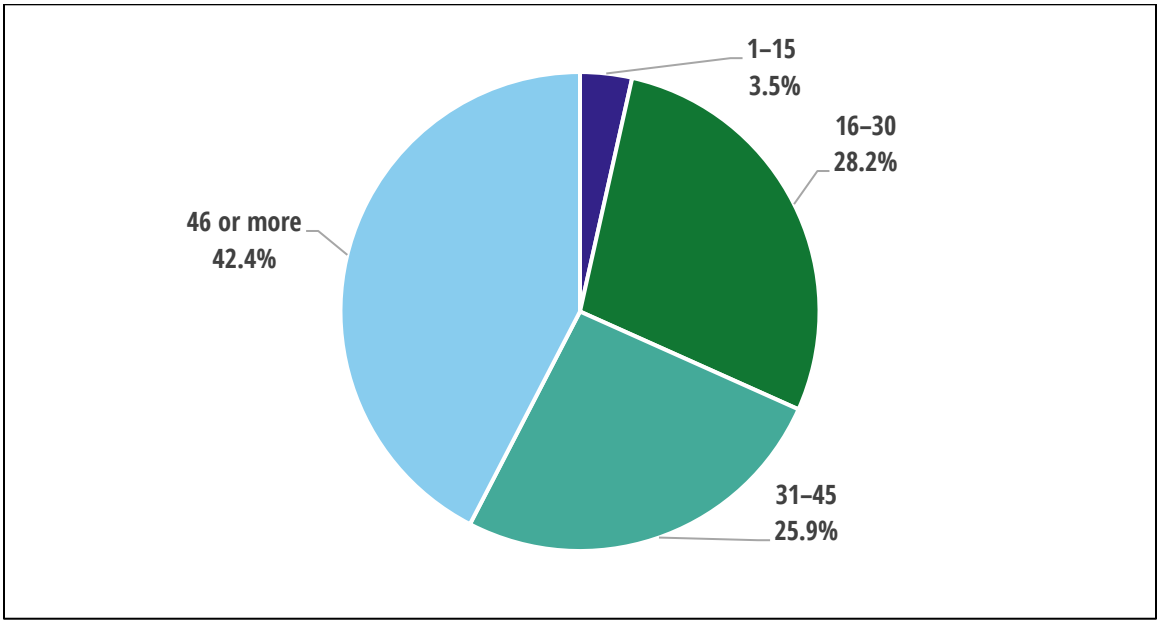
Figure 4: Number of Sessions Taught (*n* = 85)



To see if there was a relationship between the number of sessions taught and perceptions of the relationship with teaching faculty, Spearman's rho was used. A relationship was found for three statements: "When I work with teaching faculty at my institution, I have autonomy in what I teach" and "Teaching faculty understand the role that teaching plays in my job," both at the $p < .01$ level; and "Others at my institution value my teaching," at the $p < .05$ level. Librarians who teach a large number of classes, as many respondents indicated that they do, are likely to interact with a greater number of faculty, and teaching a large number of classes may indicate an institution that values the library and library instruction. If so, faculty would be more likely to value librarians' teaching and understand its role in librarians' jobs.

Discussion

The findings of this study, particularly those gleaned from the free-response question, are likely not surprising to many instruction librarians. While many instruction librarians, including the author, certainly enjoy collaborative partnerships and collegial relationships with teaching faculty, discrepancies still abound between librarians' own professional identity and their perceptions of the way that others view them. While the wording of the free-response question likely limited the possibility that respondents would describe positive interactions with faculty, the negative experiences described by the respondents are troubling.

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This study focused only on instruction librarians' perceptions of the faculty–librarian relationship and did not ask faculty their opinions of librarians, and further research into faculty perceptions of librarians is necessary to confirm the accuracy of librarians' perceptions of their relationships with faculty. However, the results of this study do seem to support the findings of previous research on the faculty–librarian relationship, such as the perception that faculty are likely unaware of the range of librarians' potential contributions to their students' education (Cooke et al., 2011; Schulte & Sherwill-Navarro, 2009) and that librarians often sense an imbalance of power in their relationships with faculty (Julien & Pecoskie, 2009). Furthermore, in several articles across the 20th century, faculty describing their ideal interactions with librarians painted a picture of a librarian ready to serve them at a moment's notice (Barzun, 1946; Blackburn, 1968; Stahl, 1997; Wilkins, 1934). More recently, Alwan et al. (2018) found that the perception of librarians as subordinate to faculty is still prevalent.

The results of this study also suggest that librarians feel that other faculty and campus administrators often do not treat librarian faculty as equals, even though many librarians have faculty status. While faculty status for librarians was a major point of discussion from the 1960s to the 1980s (Biggs, 1981; Blackburn, 1968; DePriest, 1973; Gore, 1966), it is now common among academic librarians and has been cited as a potential way to improve faculty–librarian relationships by fully incorporating librarians into the life of the institution (American Library Association, 2012; DePriest, 1973; Galbraith et al., 2016; Weng & Murray, 2020). However, as Galbraith et al. (2016) noted, faculty status alone cannot guarantee that librarians will be treated as faculty peers. While the body of literature describing successful faculty–librarian collaborations indicates that there is potential for positive, mutually-beneficial relationships, the findings from this study suggest that, as librarians see it, we are not there yet.

Conclusion

For instruction librarians, working with faculty is essential, especially regarding course-integrated instruction. Even with the possibility that growing as a librarian may change one's relationship with faculty, a poor relationship with faculty can make an instruction librarian's job unnecessarily difficult, and librarians should not be asked to endure being treated poorly or having their instructional role continually minimized or misunderstood. In addition to further research looking at faculty perceptions to confirm librarians'

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perceptions of the relationship, future research could examine successful faculty–librarian relationships and seek to understand the factors that make these relationships effective, building on the work of Phelps & Campbell (2012) and Díaz & Mandernach (2017). Two findings—that a longer time as an instruction librarian is related to perceptions of being viewed as a fellow teacher and of faculty understanding the role teaching plays in an instruction librarian's job—could be used as a starting point to examine mature librarians' perceptions of how their relationship to faculty has changed over time. In addition, because librarianship has long been a feminized profession, while higher education faculty are often male, the impact of gender on the faculty–librarian relationship deserves further study.

It is difficult to change campus climates or institutional cultures that don't acknowledge or value librarians' instructional contributions. However, improved communication is often cited as an important tool in helping others understand librarians' roles (Arendt & Lotts, 2012; Díaz & Mandernach, 2017; Phelps & Campbell, 2012). Therefore, library administrators, and not just instruction librarians, need to understand the role instruction librarians play in supporting an institution's educational mission and be able to communicate that role to others on campus, thus increasing others' understanding of instruction librarians' ability to play a key role in students' education.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Thank you for your interest in the following survey, which examines instruction librarians' self-perceptions of their teacher identity and the factors which may contribute to their views. For the purposes of this study, **teaching includes** leading instruction for a class (either in-person or online), teaching a credit-bearing class (either in-person or online), or leading a standalone workshop (either in-person or online). It **excludes** one-on-one instruction at the reference desk or in a consultation.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may exit the survey at any time. All responses will be kept anonymous. Data generated from the information you provide in this survey may be shared with the research community (most likely in digital form via the internet) to advance scholarly knowledge and may also be used in presentations and research papers.

This study is reviewed by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board. You may communicate with them at [redacted] or [redacted] if:

- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team to provide feedback about this research.

You may also contact Lisa Becksford, Principal Investigator, at [author email].

Completing the survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

After you complete the survey, you will have the opportunity to provide your email address if you wish to receive a report of the survey's findings. This step is entirely optional, and your email address will not be connected to survey results.

The target population for this survey is librarians currently employed at an institute of higher education in the United States who have completed their MLIS or equivalent and teach as part of their current work in libraries.

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By agreeing to participate in this survey, you acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older.

1) I confirm that I meet the criteria for the target population of this survey: I am currently employed at an institute of higher education in the United States, I have completed my MLIS or equivalent, I teach as part of my current work in libraries.

    - o Yes
    - o No

If no: Skip to end of survey

2) I agree to participate in this survey.

    - o Yes
    - o No

If no: Skip to end of survey

3) Is teaching part of your primary job responsibilities?

    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o I'm not sure.

4) Does your current job title contain any of the words or phrases below? Select all that apply.

    - ☐ Instruction or instructional
    - ☐ Teaching
    - ☐ Learning
    - ☐ Information literacy
    - ☐ None of the above

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5) In total, how long have you worked professionally **in instruction** in academic libraries? Include part-time professional work but not internships, graduate assistantships, or student worker positions.

- o 0–3 years
- o 4–7 years
- o 8–11 years
- o 12–15 years
- o 16–19 years
- o More than 20 years

The following questions ask about your teaching work.

6) In the academic year that just ended (include fall, spring, and summer, as applicable), what kinds of library teaching did you do? Select all that apply.

- ☐ One-time session for individual class ("one-shot")
- ☐ Multiple sessions for the same class
- ☐ Credit-bearing course for which you are the instructor of record
- ☐ Session not connected to a class
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Display Question 7 if Q6 choices count is greater than or equal to 2.

7) Considering your overall teaching work over the course of the last academic year, what one type of teaching would you say that you did most frequently?

- o One-time session for individual class ("one-shot")
- o Multiple sessions for the same class
- o Credit-bearing course for which you are the instructor of record
- o Session not connected to a class
- o Other (please specify)

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8) In which modes do you deliver instruction? Select all that apply.

   - ☐ In person
   - ☐ Online
   - ☐ Hybrid (a combination of in-person and online instruction for a single session or course)

Display Question 9 if Q6 answer choices "one-time session for individual class ("one-shot")," "multiple sessions for the same class," and/or "session not connected to a class" selected.

9) Think back to the academic year that most recently ended (include fall, spring, and summer, as applicable). **Approximately** how many sessions, both in-person and online, did you teach? Include one-shots, multiple sessions for the same class, and sessions not connected to a class, but **exclude** any credit-bearing courses for which you were the instructor of record.

   - o 1–15
   - o 16–30
   - o 31–45
   - o 46 or more
   - o I'm not sure.

Display Question 10 if Q6 answer choice "credit bearing course for which you are the instructor of record" selected.

10) In the academic year that most recently ended, how many **sections** of a credit-bearing course did you teach, either online or in person?

   - o 1
   - o 2
   - o 3
   - o 4
   - o 5 or more

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The following questions ask about your training in pedagogy and other teaching experience you may have had. For the purposes of this survey, pedagogy refers to the methods and principles of teaching.

11) Do you have any formal training in pedagogy? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Yes, undergraduate coursework in education, but not an undergraduate degree
- ☐ Yes, undergraduate degree in education
- ☐ Yes, graduate coursework in education, but not a graduate degree
- ☐ Yes, graduate degree in education
- ☐ Yes, professional development in pedagogy
- ☐ No

12) Over the course of your time teaching in academic libraries, what kinds of **teaching-related** professional development opportunities have you participated in? Select all that apply.

- ☐ An ACRL Immersion program related to instruction
- ☐ A workshop related to library instruction
- ☐ A workshop related to teaching **but not specific to library instruction**
- ☐ A webinar related to library instruction
- ☐ A webinar related to teaching **but not specific to library instruction**
- ☐ Library conference related to instruction (such as LOEX)
- ☐ Conference related to teaching **but not specific to library instruction**
- ☐ Reading journal articles or books related to teaching
- ☐ Teaching observations
- ☐ Facilitated discussions about pedagogy
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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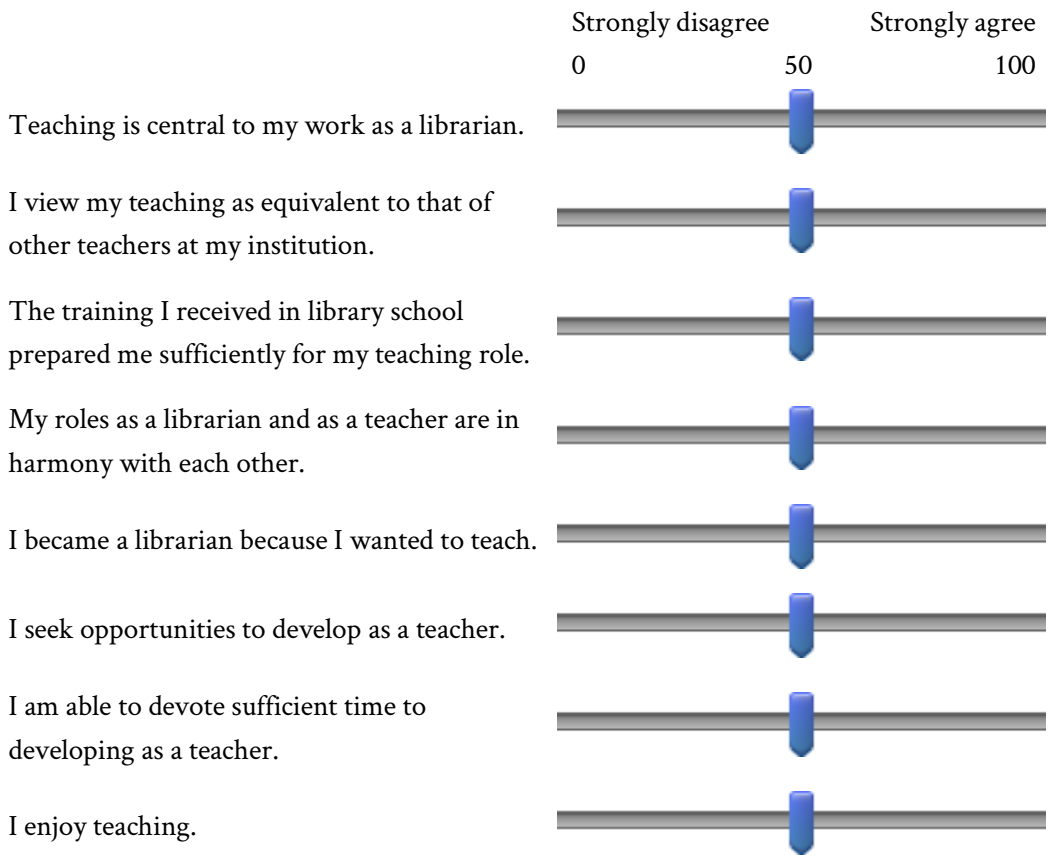
13) Did you have formal, non-library teaching experience before you became a librarian? Select all that apply. Formal teaching experience **includes** both paid and unpaid instructional work but **excludes** one-on-one instruction such as tutoring.

- ☐ Yes, in K–12 setting
- ☐ Yes, in higher education
- ☐ Yes, in a corporate setting
- ☐ Yes, in another setting (please specify)
- ☐ No

The questions below ask about your perceptions of yourself as a teacher.

14) Drag the slider bar to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.



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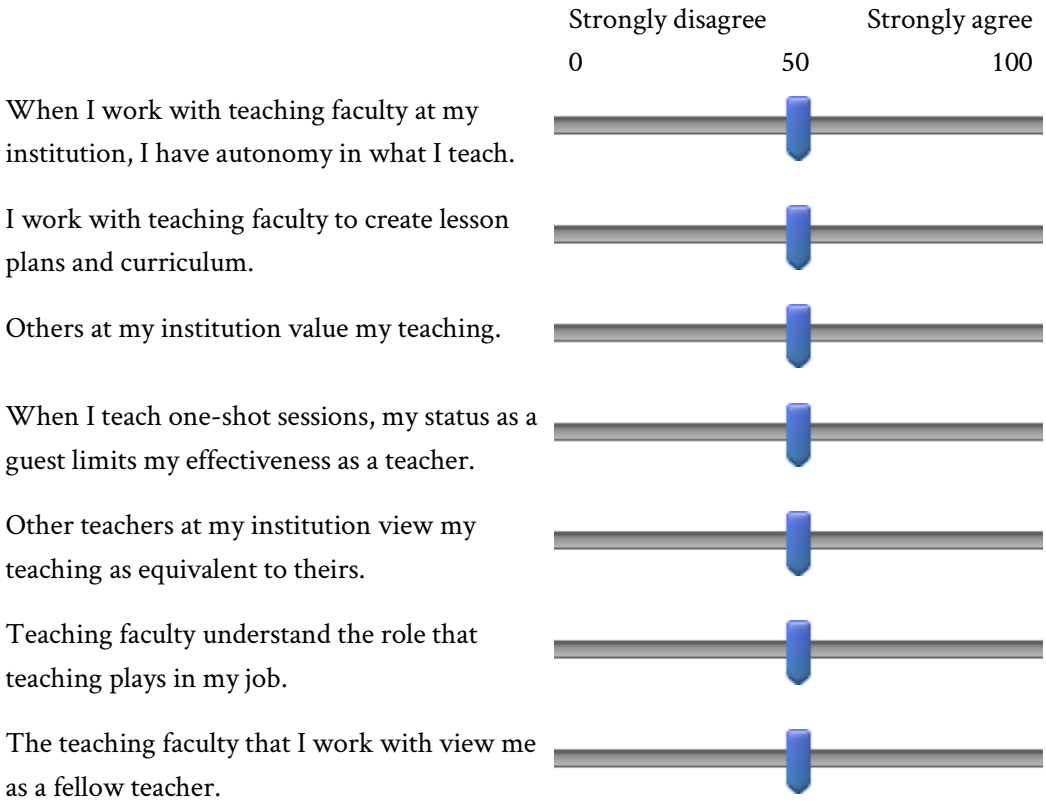
The questions below ask about your interactions with others as part of your teaching role. "Teaching faculty" refers to instructors within a discipline with whom you work, such as a first-year writing instructor for whose class you teach an information literacy session.

15) Drag the slider bar to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.



16) Have you ever experienced a conflict between your understanding of your professional identity and how others see you?

- o Yes
- o No

If yes, display Q17.

If no, display Q18.

17) Please describe an experience that demonstrates this conflict. (free response)

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The questions below ask about your institution and your status within it.

18) What is the nature of your employment at your institution?

- Faculty (tenured, tenure track, or equivalent)
- Faculty (non-tenure track)
- Faculty, limited-term (such as library fellow or resident)
- Staff
- Other (please specify)

19) At what type of academic institution do you work?

- Private, not-for-profit
- Public
- For-profit
- Other (please specify)

20) What is the highest degree granted at your institution?

- Associate's (AA, AS, etc.)
- Bachelor's (BA, BS, etc.)
- Master's (MA, MS, etc.)
- Doctoral (PhD, EdD, etc.)
- Professional (JD, MD, PharmD, etc.)
- Other (please specify)

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The final questions collect demographic information.

21) What is your gender identity?

- Female/Feminine
- Male/Masculine
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to answer

22) What is your age?

- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55–64
- 65–74
- 75 years or older
- Prefer not to answer

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Appendix B: Themes, Codes, and Their Frequency in Free-Response Question (*n* = 126)

	n	%	Representative Quote
Theme: Misunderstanding			
Lack of awareness of librarian teaching role	30	23.8%	"Teaching does not really seem to coincide with their view of me."
Misunderstanding librarian status (faculty or staff)	23	18.2%	"The librarians at my institution have full faculty status. Teaching faculty often do not know/understand/accept our status."
Librarian stereotypes	18	14.2%	"[People think that] librarians are sitting around all day guarding books and searching databases."
Library instruction is presentation/database demo	14	11.3%	"Folks usually ask me to 'present' about the library and they expect me to demonstrate tools."
Librarian as babysitter	6	4.7%	"A very few instructors have wanted me to teach on a day they would not be in class, rather as a class-sitting service."
Ongoing need to explain role to others	6	4.7%	"I have to explain what I do to almost everyone that isn't a librarian."
Assumption that librarians don't know pedagogy	6	4.7%	"Teaching faculty have expressed surprise at my knowledge of pedagogy and instructional design."
Low expectations	5	3.9%	"Students always thank us so profusely it makes me think they really have low expectations."
Librarians read books all day	4	3.1%	"People often think all I do is read books all day!"
Library as a resource repository only	3	2.3%	"[Faculty] tend to view libraries as static repositories of resources."
Faculty overestimate librarians' subject expertise	3	2.3%	"I felt as though my role as subject area liaison was misinterpreted to mean equal with their level of subject expertise."
Unclear librarian professional identity	3	2.3%	"I am constantly searching for a professional identity and feel lost often."
Theme: Minimizing			
Faculty minimize librarian's teaching role	21	16.6%	"Some professors see me as only someone who can offer a tour or demo of a database and not someone who actually plans lessons or cares about instructional design."
Faculty view librarians as subordinate	9	7.1%	"I have certainly had jobs where particularly teaching faculty have clearly not viewed me as a peer."
Other librarians minimize librarian's teaching role	6	4.7%	"My librarian colleagues do not teach and view me primarily as a librarian and my teaching role as secondary."
Faculty undervalue librarian expertise	2	1.5%	"[Faculty] don't seem to value my expertise or knowledge or the teaching that I do."

	n	%	Representative Quote
Theme: Conflict			
Rudeness	7	5.5%	"Told by administration that librarians do not teach, but are more of a glorified google."
Faculty micromanage library instruction	6	4.7%	"I have had instructors who have take [sic] over my instruction and turned the class session into a lecture hall for their research experiences."
Faculty dismissive	6	4.7%	"When I tried to explain the challenges of using JSTOR at that level, he dismissed my concerns."
Librarian qualifications	5	3.9%	"I once had a faculty member ask me how I was qualified to guest lecture in her class."
Scheduling issues	4	3.2%	"Faculty often don't get back to me until the last minute when I am trying to plan a session for their class."
Faculty teach information literacy on own	3	2.3%	"I have experienced three instances of having faculty ask to be "prepped" on our database resources, the ACRL Framework, plagiarism, and/or copyright so that they could provide instruction for their students."
Institutional culture	3	2.3%	"There was a significant institutional culture that divided faculty and staff."
Librarian motivated by concern for students	3	2.3%	"I think any way I can get a chance to speak to students is good."
Lack of communication	3	2.3%	"This is due to a lack of effective communication on both parts."
Theme: Positive Experiences			
Faculty perceptions change	5	3.9%	"Once they see us in action, they are fine."
Confidence in role growing with experience	1	0.70%	"The longer I work in the profession the more comfortable I feel pushing back on this idea."
Some faculty do understand teaching role	1	0.70%	"I don't feel this conflict when I work with the faculty in my subject area."

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