

Salary and Job Placement

The availability of full-time professional positions at competitive salary levels is key to the success of recruitment and retention strategies. An ALA Committee on recruitment of public librarians recognized salary and starting salary rates as fundamental quantitative gauges of economic health and direction of the profession of public librarian. Respondents to CLA's Human Resources and Succession Planning questionnaire identified budget limitations and salary levels/expectations as two of the most pressing problems impacting their success in recruitment and retention of librarians. A review of compensation data and MIS graduate job placement provides insight into the recruitment of qualified librarians.

Salary

- Regarding the earnings of librarians, HRDC observed, "... the average earnings are among the lowest for professional occupations but are comparable to those for other occupations in the art, culture, recreation and sport sectors."^{vii}
 - In Canada the average beginning salary for those with 1 - 5 years experience was \$44,700 in 2000.^{vii} The annual salary at the entry step for TPL librarians in 2000 ranged from \$36,782 to \$46,410 and the range at the top step was \$43,225 to \$53,617. In 2003, the range at the entry step is at \$40,294 to \$51,178, and the range at the top step is \$47,338 to \$58,731, pending the outcome of wage rate and job classification harmonization.
 - The University of Toronto, Faculty of Information Studies' (FIS) *Annual Placement and Salary Survey* of graduates for 2001 indicates that the average salary for new graduates was \$46,203 as compared to an average of \$50,678 in 2000.^{viii}
- The median salary for librarians in Canada lags behind that of the U.S and is depreciated further by Canada's higher inflation rates. The percentage increase in the median salary for information professionals in Canada from 2000 to 2001 was 2.4%, while in the United States a stronger increase of 3.75% was reported. During this period the inflation rate for Canada was 3.6% whereas in the United States it stood at 3.3%.
- The average salaries paid to new graduates finding positions in the high-tech area increased significantly from 1998 to 1999 by 19.6%. However, in 2000 the change in average salary was negligible and the stagnation may have been attributable to the economic slowdown experienced in the dot-com industries. There was a slight bounce back in 2001 when the average salary of \$70,130 was up 6.9% from \$65,591 in 2000.

Job Placement

- Overall in 2001, ALA reported that the highest placement for graduates was in public libraries (32 %). The second highest placement was in college and university libraries (29%) followed by elementary and secondary school libraries (19%) and special libraries (8.8%).^{ix}
- Libraries continued to attract the highest proportion of graduates from the University of Toronto's, FIS program in 2001. Of the survey respondents, 40% reported finding employment in libraries. The second largest group of new graduates, equaling 25%, found employment in the computer industry. FIS placement figures for 2001 showed a slight drop from 2000, in 2001 a total of 88% of graduates reported working as information professionals as compared to 93% in 2000. Of this group, 79% found full-time professional positions compared with 55% in 1998. Karen Melville, the Faculty's Director of Professional Development, indicates that in 1985, job placement was split by thirds among public, academic, and special libraries. In 1999, Ms. Melville reported that only one graduate moved into a public library, and between 15% and 20% were not working in libraries at all.^x At McGill University, 35% of recent job placements were to the non-traditional sector; 10 years ago, the level was approximately 15%.
- Of the FIS graduates in 2001, 46% found their first professional position before graduation. Another 23% found placement in less than 3 months after graduation and 12% took 3 - 6 months to find professional positions. Another 19% of graduates had secured a professional position before entering FIS that they would return to following completion of their MIS.
- In 2001, 55% of FIS graduates found permanent full-time positions, an increase of 10% from 2000, 15% were in temporary full-time (contract) positions and another 18% were employed in part-time positions.

Given the high rate of graduates finding full-time permanent positions, the ability to offer MIS graduates full-time employment is another factor impacting on the success of recruitment. The majority of newly hired TPL librarians move into part-time positions. In 2002, TPL recruited externally a total of 6 librarians to fill permanent full-time vacancies and 14 librarians to fill permanent part-time openings. In addition, seven temporary full-time and ten temporary part-time librarians were hired externally. These figures show a significant increase in external hiring when compared to 2000 when TPL had no full-time librarian vacancies available to external recruits and hired 11 librarians to fill permanent part-time vacancies.

The higher salaries paid in the non-traditional positions may make it difficult for libraries to compete with the private IT sector for graduates. On this topic, former Vancouver Public Library Director, Madge Alto commented, "I would be very surprised if library boards had the flexibility to raise salaries beyond what their municipal masters allow."^{xii}