

I. DEPARTMENT: Research and Instructional Services

II. POSITION: Research and Instructional Services Assistant

III. CLASSIFICATION: Library Assistant II

IV. NAME OF INCUMBENT: Vacant

V. POSITION NO.: 001501

VI. JOB PURPOSE:

One of several members of the team of faculty and staff in the Research and Instructional Services (RIS) Department responsible for providing direct user assistance to those using the collections and services of the University Libraries. The person in this position provides general guidance and assistance in person, by telephone, and online. They assist Libraries users in finding, using, evaluating, and interpreting information. They assist with maintaining and updating digital learning objects that support Libraries users. They are also cross trained in the full range of services provided by the department including tasks/special projects in the Instructional Services section of the department. The specific duties, tasks, responsibilities, and assigned work location of this position are subject to change as technology advances and the needs and interests of the University Libraries and the University of Memphis evolve over time..

VII. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Provides direct user assistance at the Research Assistance Desk (RAD) and online as scheduled.
 - a. Participates in staffing the RAD and the online Chat rotation as scheduled - possibly including evenings and some weekends for up to 20 hours per week.
 - b. Assists Libraries users with searching print and online resources, including the online catalog, microforms, and electronic resources.
 - c. Conducts reference interviews in person, on the telephone, and Springshare to accurately assess user needs.
 - d. Devises search strategies to enable users to find needed information.
 - e. Assists Libraries users with locating books, periodicals, microforms, and other materials in the collections.
 - f. Instructs Libraries users in the use of printers/scanners, microform readers, copy machines and other devices in use in the library.
 - g. Refers Libraries users to other Libraries departments or information resources as appropriate to meet information needs (e.g., Circulation, Interlibrary Loan, Government Publications, WorldCat).
 - h. Maintains high level of awareness of new information resources including databases and web resources.
 - i. Assists Libraries users in learning about Libraries resources and services for independent use and research by providing informal instruction in the use of such resources.

- j. Maintain knowledge of, abide by, and assist in implementing official University Libraries policies with an awareness of current issues relating to RAD policies and procedures.
- B. Assists with maintaining and updating digital learning objects (DLOs) that support Libraries users (Research Guides, instructional videos, Canvas Modules, FAQs, etc.).
 - a. Collaborates with others to review existing DLOs.
 - b. Contributes significantly to maintaining and updating DLOs.
 - c. Assists in the creation of instructional videos including screen recordings, closed captions, and basic editing.
- C. Participates in fulfilling the full range of duties and responsibilities that contribute to the continuity and success of the RIS Department.
 - a. Receives cross-training in key tasks in all functional areas of the department in order to be able to fill in for other staff during absences or other times, as needed.
 - b. Orders supplies and maintains the supply inventory for the department.
 - c. Participates in department-wide projects and activities, including collection maintenance.
- D. Participates in collection management and maintenance activities as needed for collections as needed for collections managed by RIS Department.
 - a. Shelves materials needing to be returned to the collections.
 - b. Assists with shifting the collections as needed to make space for additions or to facilitate user access.
 - c. Helps with inventory and processing of materials coming into or leaving the collections (withdrawals, transfers, new volumes) and other duties as assigned.
 - d. Supports the maintenance of the department's service and collection management statistics.
- E. Maintains proficiency in areas of expertise and responsibility.
 - a. Participates in individual and group meetings related to the work of the RIS Department or the University Libraries.
 - b. Participates in appropriate training sessions offered for University Libraries faculty and staff.
 - c. Participates in appropriate training sessions offered by the University's Information Technology Services, Human Resources, or other groups on campus.
 - d. Participates in appropriate professional development activities and organizations.
- F. Performs other duties as assigned.
 - a. Serves on Libraries' committees and task forces as appropriate or assigned.
 - b. Assists with maintaining equipment needed to view, print, or make use of the resources housed in the department.
 - c. Takes appropriate steps to initiate service for equipment.
 - d. Undertakes special assignments or projects assigned by the immediate supervisor or the Dean/Executive Director of University Libraries.
 - e. Manages scheduling, agendas, and minutes for assigned meetings.

- f. Maintains the RAD area (re-supplying, signage, etc.) as needed.

VIII. DIRECTION RECEIVED

Reports to the Head of Research and Instructional Services Department.

IX. DIRECTION GIVEN

Supervises student employees assigned to the department, volunteers, or interns. Trains and supervises other staff and students, as directed by the unit supervisor or designee.

X. JOB SPECIFICATIONS

Requires a bachelor's degree and at least one year of relevant experience. An appropriate combination of education and experience might substitute for the required degree.

XI. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

This is a full-time permanent position requiring a 37.5-hour work week. The primary work schedule for this position is Monday through Friday 9:30am – 6:00pm with some flexibility for remote work and schedule modifications. During academic breaks and interim periods when the University Libraries maintains a shorter schedule, the work schedule for this position will be modified to fit within the shortened schedule.

XII. REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND CHARACTERISTICS

- A. Experience assisting users in a customer-service environment, preferably in an academic library.
- B. Familiarity with a variety of print and electronic reference tools, including web-based resources.
- C. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- D. Good interpersonal skills that will support courteous and professional interactions with Libraries' users and coworkers from diverse backgrounds.
- E. Knowledge of general Libraries' procedures and policies.
- F. Skill in understanding, interpreting, and accurately following directions whether given verbally or in writing.
- G. Experience using computers and appropriate software such as database/word processing/spreadsheet/web authoring software in a work setting.
- H. Good judgment and good problem-solving skills.
- I. Willingness to learn and subsequently implement new tasks and skills.
- J. Ability to work independently and collaboratively, and accept responsibility for work to be done.
- K. Ability to maintain a positive attitude while coping with organizational change.
- L. Ability to recognize the limits of the authority of this position and know when to appropriately refer matters to a higher authority.

XIII. WORKING CONDITIONS

The Research and Instructional Services Department provides one of the first points of contact between the Libraries and users in this technologically oriented research library. The position has an extensive public service component: While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required to communicate with multiple diverse constituents through written verbal, and auditory communication. The employee must be able to

perceive written, digital, and auditory information. The employee must be able to independently navigate the campus and manipulate objects within the office space. The employee must be able to bend, stoop, and reach, and may be required/asked to lift up to 30 pounds and push and/or pull wheeled book trucks full of books and weighing up to 300 pounds when full. The employee might be required to climb ladders or work around or under furnishings and equipment to perform routine and ameliorative maintenance. Reasonable and appropriate accommodations may be requested.

Updated: June 2024; September 2025