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The Academic Librarian as Blended Professional: Reassessing and Redefining the Role

Michael Perini

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The Academic Librarian as Blended Professional employs a model that allows for individual and managerial reconceptualization of the librarian's role, also helping to mitigate obstacles to professional development both internal and external to the library.

Using traditional and personal narrative, the book extends Whitchurch’s blended professional model, designed to consider the merging of academicians’ roles across several spheres of professional and academic influence in a higher education setting, to academic librarians.

The book is significant due to its use of higher education theory to examine the professional identity of academic librarians and the issues impacting librarian professional development. The work offers a constructive, replicable research design appropriate for the analysis of librarians in other academic settings, providing additional insights into how these professionals might perceive their roles within the larger context of a higher education environment.

Following the application of the blended professional model, this book contends that academic librarians have similar roles concerning research, instruction, and service when compared to an institution’s tenure-track faculty. The scope of professional productivity and the expectation of the librarians, though, are much less regimented. Consequently, the academic librarians find themselves in a tenuous working space where their blended role is inhibited by real and perceived barriers.

- Uses a model from the discipline of higher education in order to better conceptualize and understand the academic librarian's role in the institution
- Allows for the analysis and understanding of the librarian's identity and role in a context familiar to those outside of the academic library system
- Provides a unique understanding of both the library system and its librarians, explaining the nuances of the greater higher education collective

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