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Job Searches in Liaison Departments: Opportunities for Outreach and Inreach

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Job Searches in Liaison Departments: Opportunities for Outreach and Inreach

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Just the facts

- In 2013, Virginia's Bureau of Capital Outlay Management approved funding for a **new library building** on the Monroe Park Campus of VCU.
- Construction coincided with an **increased level of library liaison outreach**, and it stimulated a new level of general library activity and visibility that has persisted.
- In 2013, I received a **request from a liaison department** engaged in hiring to “schedule some time for [candidates] to come by the library and see what great resources the library has for teaching ... and also for their research.”
- Tours for **7 sets of interviews, 2 liaison departments**.
- **3-6 library departments** involved per interview, depending on position and staff availability.

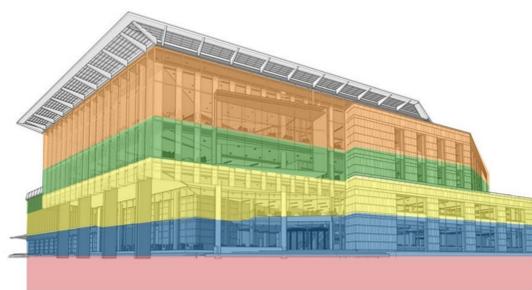


Meeting the library

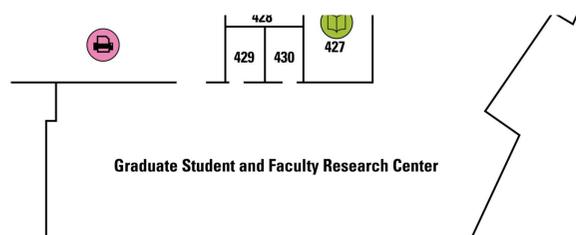
Full building tour

Cabell Library floor maps

Exterior Lower Level First Floor Second Floor Third Floor Fourth Floor



Areas and services relevant to position



Adjust and improvise



The library meets itself

Departments collaborating



Candidate and liaison department feedback

“The visit to the library was excellent! You and your colleagues did such a thorough job with the presentation that I don't have any questions at this point. It was a pleasure meeting you and I hope to work with you in the future.”

“These trips to the library were a great hit with our candidates and if it's OK with you, we'll continue scheduling you (or the person you name in your stead) for these interviews.”

“Your involvement helped make each candidate's visit to VCU a success, and helped provide an understanding of available resources on Monroe Park Campus.”

“Thank you for taking time from your day to give me a tour of the VCU library facility. It is enormous and probably my most valuable ally and aid as I hopefully step into research and teaching at VCU”

The moral of the story

- The interview process provides further opportunities to **teach faculty patrons about the library**.
- Arranging to meet with library staff **highlights shared goals and concerns** for specific patron populations.
- Successful completion of candidates' library tours **paves the way for future collaboration**—externally with liaison departments and internally among library units.
- Introducing job candidates to the library, its services, and its collections **promotes the library beyond campus**.

For your nightstand

- No library literature treats this topic. More generally:
- Silver, I. (2014). Outreach activities for librarian liaisons. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 54(2), 8-14.
- Cooke, L., Norris, M., Busby, N., Page, T., Franklin, G., Gadd, E., & Young, H. (2011). Evaluating the impact of academic liaison librarians on their user community: A review and case study. *New Review Of Academic Librarianship*, 17(1), 5-30. doi:10.1080/13614533.2011.539096
- Orange, D., & Lang, E. (2016, April). *Life Cycle of Faculty-Librarian Relationships: Building, Maintaining, and Restoring Trust*. Poster session presented at the Annual Conference of the Wisconsin Association of Academic Librarians, Oshkosh, WI.

Filling up the dance card

- **Contact from liaison department:** search chair, department chair, or administrative assistant.
- Establish **tour timing and logistics**.
- Identify **potential library needs** for successful candidate.
 - Teaching or research interests?
 - New library resources or services?
- Identify **staff responsible** for meeting candidates' needs.
- Arrange **tour path to make optimal use of time**, meet all relevant staff members.
- Circulate **candidate application materials**, if available.
- Confirm **staff availability** day before tour.
- Review **key library information:** hours, gate count, etc.
- **Welcome** candidate.
 - Provide library **promotional materials and contact information** for any follow-up questions.
 - Confirm **mobility needs:** e.g. stairs vs. elevator.
 - Storage of **candidate belongings** during tour.
- **Improvise** as needed, and **end promptly**.

Gratitude

- **VCU Libraries**, for supporting this work and presentation.
- My supervisor, **Bettina Peacemaker**, for encouraging me to consider the impact of this aspect of liaisonship.
- VCU Libraries faculty and staff who have talked with job candidates in the humanities, including (but not limited to) **John Birch, Ray Bonis, Nell Chenault, Wesley Chenault, Kevin Farley, Yuki Hibben, Ken Hopson, Cindy Jackson, Eric Johnson, Libby McDaniel, Laura Muskavitch, Kelsey Sheaffer, and John Ulmschneider**.



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