Our Community Chimes In

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Welcome! The Journal of Graduate Librarianship’s Practitioner Panel allows us to hear directly from the graduate librarian community via social media, where we regularly post questions and invite your comments on practical issues relating to graduate librarianship. To join the conversation and share your comments about community topics, please follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, or X (formerly Twitter)—or keep an eye on the JGL website, where we also post all Practitioner Panel questions.

In this first edition we’re highlighting comments we received in response to questions about what graduate librarians are listening to or reading to inform their work; favorite things about graduate librarianship; and primary types of outreach used for graduate engagement. (Some responses have been very lightly edited for typos or clarity.) Many of the responses include resource recommendations, and we link to some additional resources about the topic that was on so many people’s minds: generative artificial intelligence (AI).

QUESTION 1: READING LISTS AND PODCAST QUEUES

The launch of generative AI tools like OpenAI’s ChatGPT, Google’s Bard, and Bing AI earlier this year sparked considerable interest and concern in higher education, leading many universities to establish policies about the use of AI. Teaching faculty and librarians quickly began learning more about the various AI tools and how to address student use of AI for course assignments and research. Interest in AI tools was also reflected in responses to our February Practitioner Panel question: **What have you read or listened to recently that has informed your work as a graduate librarian, and how?**

The community responded:
I have been reading articles and listening to podcasts related to artificial intelligence tools and how they might impact graduate librarianship and higher education more generally. I have curated a collection of resources related to AI in a LibGuide that is just in its beginning stage: https://guides.library.ttu.edu/artificialintelligencetools/home. Later this year I hope to offer a workshop on AI tools aimed at graduate students using the LibGuide content as a starting point.

–Brian Quinn, Texas Tech University

I have been reading and hearing a lot about ChatGPT and how it can have some benefit but certainly does not take the place of writing/citing. It can be another tool to use, though. I plan on testing it some more to see how it may benefit students.

–Marj Atkinson, Ask Marj LLC

Hard Fork, a NYTimes podcast. Since December, Hard Fork has closely covered the development of various tools that employ AI. The conversations are in-depth explorations of how the hosts’ “experiments” with the AI tools have gone. These experiments have helped me build an understanding of AI tools and how they can be integrated into graduate library instruction. My own experiments have included fact-checking reading lists, promotional materials for graduate workshops and tools to help students better understand papers.

–Matt Doyle, Fresno State

I’m currently listening to The Way of Chuang Tzu by Thomas Merton. Asian philosophy helps to center and remind me of the benefits of dealing with issues as they come. Organization and triage are some of the core principles I teach students, and I model what I believe. No one can accomplish anything when they’re freaked out, so it’s important for all of us to focus on the bigger picture, what’s important, and how we pace ourselves.

–Wendy Doucette, East Tennessee State University

I’ve been reading transcripts of focus groups my team held with graduate students about how they learn about academic publishing. One thing I didn’t expect from the students was how much they wanted to learn on this topic to centre their wellness and mental health concerns. Learning how to publish in your discipline can be very stressful and anxiety inducing, and students want their learning to acknowledge these concerns. I’m planning to integrate more space to share experiences and build compassionate spaces in my teaching on this topic as a result.

–Christie Hurrell, University of Calgary
Reyes, Hicks, and Maxon’s work on information literacy for Spanish-speaking graduate students [Reyes, B. M., Hicks, A., & Maxson, B. K. (2018). Information literacy practices of Spanish-speaking graduate students at the University of Kansas. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 18(3), 595–615. https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2018.0035] is an excellent demonstration of how information literacy is socially situated and context dependent. Students in the study described some of the challenges they face during their first year in a new program and their information-seeking strategies in response that the authors describe as “grasping at straws.” Students cast a wide net as they build an understanding of their field and respond to directions from faculty that provide little guidance, such as “look for a theory.” As they continue in their programs, students begin identifying clues to the value of particular sources in the context of their field, such as the repetition of key scholars’ names and the number of citations a source has received. Participants draw on their academic and professional communities to understand what sources of information to pursue and prioritize as they move towards their own area of research interest.

This research offers a clear example of the social nature of information literacy for graduate students; in addition to the technical aspects of locating sources of information, students use their relationships with others to help them build a map of the research in their field and how it will eventually relate to their own research projects. As a graduate librarian, I keep this in mind when meeting with students and describing the process of research as so much more than just locating and citing. Each search is an act of analysis, as students develop an understanding of what works are valued (or not) in their field, which sources are worth their precious and limited time, and how those works relate to one another. This approach to information in graduate work is not always clearly articulated, however, making it an important component of information literacy instruction for graduate students.

–Jess Hagman, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

I’ve been reading *Handbook of Research on Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers*, edited by Conra D. Gist and Travis J. Bristol—fascinating to learn about teachers of color and Indigenous teachers and their experiences in advocating for change in teaching work force and pedagogical practices in supporting students of color and Indigenous students. As a librarian supporting graduate students in education/preservice teachers, it’s giving me a lot of issues to think about, such
as research areas and praxis in education, and teacher advocacy work. Highly recommend!

–Raymond Pun, Adler Graduate School of Education

*Bringing the Neuroscience of Learning to Online Teaching: An Educator’s Handbook.* The book helps library instructors make the most of this opportunity by showing them how to use digital tools to differentiate learning, personalize learning, prioritize social-emotional skills, and inspire students to think more critically within one-shot instruction or within multiple instructional sessions.

–Amy Dye-Reeves, Texas Tech University


–Anonymous

In response to the overwhelming interest in AI, we rounded up some resources likely to interest graduate librarians:

**LibGuides**

- [LibGuides Community](https://community Springshare (search for ChatGPT, AI, etc.)
- [AI-Based Literature Review Tools](https://Texas A&M University Libraries
- [AI Tools & Resources](https://University of South Florida Libraries
- [Artificial Intelligence](https://Emory University Libraries
- [Artificial Intelligence & Chatbots](https://Columbia College Chicago Library
- [Artificial Intelligence & Higher Education](https://DePauw University Libraries
- [Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom](https://San Diego Mesa College Library
- [Generative Artificial Intelligence](https://UC San Diego Library
- [Using AI Tools in Your Research](https://Northwestern University Libraries
- [AI LibGuides](https://Florida International University Libraries

**Articles**

- [As AI Spreads, Experts Predict the Best and Worst Changes in Digital Life by 2035](https://Pew Research Center)
• **Bot or not? How to tell when you’re reading something written by AI**, Clare Duffy and Kenneth Uzquiano (CNN)

**Videos**

• **The Inside Story of ChatGPT’s Astonishing Potential** (TED Talk), Greg Brockman
• **Practical AI for Instructors and Students** (five-part course from Wharton Interactive), Ethan Mollick and Lilach Mollick

**QUESTION 2: A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS**

Supporting graduate students and their unique research needs is rewarding work! In response to our April Practitioner Panel question, librarians commented on many of the aspects they love about working with graduate students. We asked: **What is your favorite part of graduate librarianship?**

Respondents shared:

I really excel at unsticking the stuck, and as I’m sure most people will say, it’s fun working with live people. (There is zero fun in Zoom, but I try to wring out of it what I can.) I love the wild chase of sorting out projects, so any opportunity I have to get deep down into what people are doing to try to figure out their research from every angle, make up a project plan, and leave them in a frenzy of feeling like they’re now equipped and genuinely wanting to work on it is a happy day for me!

—Wendy Doucette, East Tennessee State University

Working with graduate students who are intellectually curious, intrinsically motivated, and engaged.

—Raymond Pun, Alder Graduate School of Education

The students! As someone who works with many doctoral students, it’s energizing to hear about their dissertation topics and help them with their literature searches. Especially when we create a search that’s bringing back resources they haven’t seen yet and they get really excited. Also, when I stop hearing from them because they’ve gained the skills to do the searching on their own—it feels great to know that they can move forward without multiple library interventions!

—Anonymous
Getting students to the “aha” moment and seeing them succeed in their projects, mainly through one-on-one interaction.

–Marj Atkinson, Ask Marj LLC

Graduate librarianship is a new specialization, which makes it easy to innovate and experiment with new programs and services that no one has tried yet. It’s a big blank canvas waiting to be filled with visions of what graduate librarianship could be. Doing pioneering work seems easier when you are one of the first and few have gone before you.

–Brian Quinn, Texas Tech University

My favorite part of graduate experience is learning from the life and professional experience of my students. In my current role, I work with a few post-professional doctoral programs, aimed at health professionals who are upskilling and advancing their careers. Their research projects are often informed by their work and professional knowledge, and the passion they have for the research as a result makes my job all the more fulfilling. The genuine excitement and interest the students have inspires me to do my best and reminds me why I became a librarian.

–CJ Garcia, A.T. Still University

The hyper-specific topics. Rather than have 80 students recurrently ask me the same question, I am presented with an incredible array of research topics and engaging challenges. I am never bored!

–Stephen Klein, CUNY Graduate Center

Graduate students often have a deep passion for their research projects—my favorite part of graduate librarianship is learning about their research interests and channeling that excitement into the ordinarily dull routine of reviewing the relevant literature. It’s always a great feeling to see our graduate students discover literature that speaks to their personal research interests.

–Roman Koshykar, Rochester Institute of Technology

I love the chance to really dive into more extensive research projects and establish a deeper relationship with students. I also really love supporting non-traditional and under-represented students, which you often see more of at the graduate level.

–Brianna Hughes, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Working with students who are motivated to take ownership of their own learning!

–Christie Hurrell, University of Calgary

We can expect that the questions are interesting and that those asking are appreciative of the help.

–Anonymous

Working with the students in my classroom instruction but also one-on-one in my office and being given the chance to get to know them better as people.

–Sarah Wade, Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine

Seeing the final scholarly projects, theses, and dissertations! So often when I work with graduate students, they are still wrestling with their research questions and searching the literature. It’s great to see the results of those struggles. (By extension, I love watching the students cross the stage at commencement!)

–Jolene Miller, University of Toledo

QUESTION 3: GETTING THE WORD OUT

Outreach is essential to connect with graduate students and programs. But since there is no one-size-fits-all approach, our June Practitioner Panel question asked: **What is the primary type (or types) of outreach you use to make graduate students or graduate programs aware of your services?**

Comments included:

Our graduate school sends out a weekly professional development events newsletter to graduate students, and all of the workshops that our library offers for graduate students are included. I serve as one of the newsletter editors.

–Brian Quinn, Texas Tech University

I email faculty before the start of each semester, outlining the services available. I contact the coordinator for graduate programs and ask to be included in the new student orientation. I reach out to faculty individually and ask to be “embedded” in their course in the learning management system.

–Anonymous
School liaisons (student services or/and faculty), Student Government Association, social media, electronic signage, library newsletter, Student Liaison Advisory Group, tabling.

–Anonymous

The types of outreach and my approach depend on the purposes and the audience. If I promote a new resource or a service, I email college administrators or coordinators who compile monthly newsletters for students or faculty. I also send my newsletter every term to the faculty. If I am building a relationship with college groups, I do it by serving on the college curriculum, research, and program committees. Suppose my goal is to design a new collaborative program or service. In that case, I contact people who can be instrumental or join the group working on solving a problem. For example, I took part in the college “Dissertation Taskforce,” and as a result, I am co-teaching new courses for students who are working on the dissertations.

–Dr. Olga Koz, Kennesaw State University

Web guides and YouTube video tutorials.

–Roman Koshykar, Rochester Institute of Technology

We use some of our programming as a way to let grad students know what we offer—for instance, we have a day-long symposium we do every other year about how to get published, and we use that to highlight some of our services by making sure we feature librarians on some panels and workshops. We’re really fortunate to have a good working relationship with our Graduate School and Graduate Student Association, so we rely on them a lot to send out email announcements. We also present at graduate orientations—both for all graduates and individual departments—and some programs have a weekly meeting for grad students where they learn about different topics, so we’ll work with graduate coordinators to present at those. A lot of this work is handled by individual liaison librarians, but some is coordinated by specific people.

–Teresa Schultz, University of Nevada, Reno

Library programming during a summer workshop for incoming graduate students (primarily BIPOC); general orientation for graduate students at beginning of year; webpage of library services and resources for graduate students; posts to Graduate School newsletter about new resources, workshops, etc.; orientations and instruction sessions for graduate students in my specific liaison departments.

–Brian Vetruba, University of Minnesota–Twin Cities
I’m mapped into the programs I work with, so students meet me early and typically in-person during orientation and their first class or two—which gives them a personal connection. Aside from this, I email the student ~2 a semester with reminders about my appointment link and where to find help on the program library guide, and remind them that they have access to all the librarians for help if I’m unavailable (we’re a small library); I email faculty once in the fall, spring, and summer (programs run all year). Aside from emailing them, I connect regularly with the faculty teaching the courses where I’m embedded to ensure the library intervention is still meeting learning outcomes.

—Anonymous

Personal Librarian program—We assign personal librarians to all new students. One librarian is personal librarian to the graduate students. His role as interlibrary loan librarian makes him the perfect fit.

—Diana Schaubhut, University of Holy Cross

Posting to the flatscreen outside the student services office. Fortnightly library newsletter. Email all faculty teaching 1st year professional development class to give instruction session. Tell students in every venue possible that we’re here to help and how they can get help.

—Emily Bergman, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Normally we used to keep Library Orientation and awareness drive for two months. Over and above that, we used to share emails and updates on Library Website.

—Dr. Mayank Trivedi, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Gujarat, India

Through contact with student-led organizations (Graduate Student Association), through general campus announcements and through a series of workshops targeted to graduate students.

—Anonymous

Tabling at various graduate school, Graduate Student Association (GSA), or similar events. I just created a LibGuide with resources for graduate students. We partner with the GSA to support their Graduate Student Writing Accountability Groups (WAGs). We offer a workshop series targeted specifically for graduate students. We are developing a graduate student only space in our library.

—Brianna Hughes, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Most of our graduate programs are fully online. We began a partnership in January 2023 with the Office of Graduate Programs to improve our outreach to students. They provide us with a list of students who have enrolled (divided by program) and our liaisons email each student, welcome them to their program and introduce ourselves as their librarian. We encourage them to contact us to book research appointments, library orientation, etc. We also hold 6 general library research orientations per academic year via Zoom, and these are promoted by the university on the graduate student portal as well as the library portal.

–Lisa Richter, Salve Regina University

Relationship building with our Graduate School is at the core of our outreach strategy to graduate students. This connection allows us to reach out on the email list they manage with newsletters targeted to graduate students and important announcements; share information with the community of graduate program directors; and partner for outreach events, e.g., Graduate School orientation, the annual research symposium, and graduate and professional student appreciation events. We also build our own (opt-in) email list as part of event registration for graduate-oriented events to promote the events and resources most important to graduate students and advanced researchers. Our list also comes with the benefit to segment messages, e.g., send messages relevant to specific programs to just those students. These tactics are replicated on a school or department level by individual liaison librarians, with the specifics varying depending on how the units communicate and engage with their graduate students.

–Bettina Peacemaker, Virginia Commonwealth University

I send out emails relating to events that are happening at the library and I try to come to faculty meetings during certain periods of the year to give an update on library happenings. Since my office is in a different building I also was trying for a while to do office hours in the lobby of the building that houses all of my liaison programs, but because my services weren’t being utilized I stopped. While everyone was virtual I was doing virtual office hours but that stopped once library employees were allowed back on campus and I could meet again with people in-person. Our main campus library has a pretty successful outreach program and I want to start doing some outreach on the health sciences campus as well; however, it has been hard to get anything started. I have had a number of ideas but nothing has come to fruition yet.

–Sarah Wade, Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine
Oh, y’know, the usual: email, library blog, social media, and in-person visits to orientations and other events. But one thing we’ve found is that it works well to start with a blog post. The blog post then serves as a fixed point with all the details, allowing us to be brief in our emails and social media posts, provided they link to the blog post.

–Jill Cirasella, CUNY Graduate Center

In June, we also asked: **How did you hear about the JGL Practitioner Panel?** Most respondents reported hearing about Practitioner Panel through ALA Connect (most notably, the ACRL Academic Library Services for Graduate Students Interest Group) or the GRADLIB listserv. (See below.) Others commented they learned about Practitioner Panel from the *JGL* website and internet searches. And we have small but growing followings on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, and X (formerly Twitter). *Wherever you interact with us, we’re so glad you’re there!*

If you have ideas for upcoming Practitioner Panel questions or suggestions for improving Practitioner Panel, please [share them via this form](#).

Of course, *JGL* is not the only venue for exchange among graduate librarians. Here are four additional ways to stay connected:

- **Attend:** [Transforming Libraries for Graduate Students conference](#)
- **Watch:** [Transforming Libraries for Graduate Students YouTube channel](#)
- **Subscribe:** [GRADLIB listserv](#)
- **Join:** [ACRL Academic Library Services for Graduate Students Interest Group](#)