

## Theme II: Recruitment, Training, Mentoring

Area and international studies librarians have a diverse combination of qualifications: they need to combine deep subject background with knowledge of library processes/workflows, an awareness of the ongoing changes in research libraries, and, increasingly, they need to be tech-savvy. They must be competent collection managers with strong language abilities and subject expertise in their disciplines. For some areas, libraries find it increasingly difficult to recruit librarians with the right combination of desired skills and backgrounds. And yet, as the need for "global competencies" and internationalization on our campuses increases, area studies librarians will continue to play a major role in developing and shaping collections, and in being partners in the research and teaching mission of our institutions.

We ask the participants to consider these issues in their responses:

- What kind of training will produce the kind of area librarian described above? For the past 10+ years, libraries, foundations, and library schools have tried to address this question in a variety of ways, through different models. Having observed and worked with these models, we are at a point where we can assess not only their effectiveness, but also future needs. Do we need more training fellowships, such as the Mellon Fellowships, CLIR Fellowships, etc.? Do we need different models of fellowships and what would these be?
- A survey undertaken by ALA's International Relations Committee/ Eurasia and Central Asia Subcommittee demonstrates that many schools don't offer special courses on area studies. How can LIS curricula prepare professional area studies librarians? How can library schools and libraries collaborate in the training of area studies librarians? Should there be area studies programs or specific courses in library schools? How can this be accomplished in light of the relatively low enrollments of students interested in area studies librarianship at any given time?
- What kinds of qualifications are libraries looking for when they recruit area studies librarians, and are these expectations realistic? Is the perception of job duties the same among librarians, library administrators, and faculty? Is the MLS degree required or do libraries value subject background more highly? At the 1995 conference on "The Future of Area Librarianship" in Bloomington, an analysis of a survey from 187 area studies librarians was presented, and it is reported that participants expressed an interest in having more detailed information about the nature of job duties for area librarians (see Jesus Alonso-Regalado and Mary K. Van Ullen 2009). Has the time come for a detailed, empirical study and analysis of job responsibilities for area studies librarians?