

## Background

In January 2012, the American Library Association's Emerging Leaders Project Team C, under the aegis of the ACRL Instruction Section (ACRL IS), set out to determine the needs of librarians engaged in online learning activities.

We were charged with:

- (1) assessing the needs of librarians seeking to further develop their online teaching skills;
- (2) exploring the options of creating a new Instruction Section committee or expanding the charge of an existing committee;
- (3) determining and evaluating resources and best practices for online information literacy instruction; and
- (4) advising ACRL-IS as to the types of resources that would be useful as professional development tools as well as the best way to deliver this information.

## Methodology

A 12-question survey looking at the professional development needs of librarians engaging in online instruction was sent to subscribers of 18 listservs between April 23, 2012 and May 11, 2012. 760 participants completed the survey.

We sought to identify the tools librarians use in online instruction, current and future challenges facing online instruction librarians, their professional development needs, and demographic information of our participants.

## Meta



2012 Emerging Leaders Team C

**Team Members:**  
 Andy Herzog, University of Texas at Arlington  
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# Professional Development Needs of Online Instruction Librarians

## Findings

## Librarians lack adequate time and institutional support

“Administrators often see online courses as an ATM— it’s where the money is, I keep being told— yet they don’t put the resources into making it sound, pedagogically and logistically, because they don’t understand how much more time/energy it takes to teach well online.”

“Just keeping things up to date is an enormous task, let alone developing new tools for online instruction.”

## Librarians want more pedagogical and instructional design training

**“I think the key element is confidence in creating and using the resources available (or creating new ones), which means a thorough training.”**

“Having known some actual instructional designers, I see a total lack of expertise in this area within the profession of librarianship.”

**"I don't believe librarians, unless they were teachers, have all the tools to even understand what effective pedagogy looks like."**

## Many librarians lack the confidence necessary to provide online instruction

“I have no formalized education training, so I, at times, feel unsure of my ability to convey information effectively and meet learning standards put into place by organizations such as ACRL.”

## Recommendations

**We recommend** that the ACRL Board of Directors appoint an Online Instruction Task Force to implement more unified and concrete measures to provide assistance and support to online instruction librarians.

**We recommend** that this task force be, in part, composed of representatives from existing ACRL-IS committees. These stakeholders may include PRIMO, Instructional Technologies, and Teaching Methods, as well as the Committee Assessment Task Force, Discussion Group Steering Committee, and Professional Education Committee.

**We recommend** that the ACRL-IS task force focuses on providing support in the following four areas:

## » Training

Develop low-cost courses in technology, instructional design, and pedagogy in both synchronous and asynchronous formats.

## »» Tools

Create best practices publications, online toolkits, and a repository of sample activities and tutorials, with special regard for assessment.

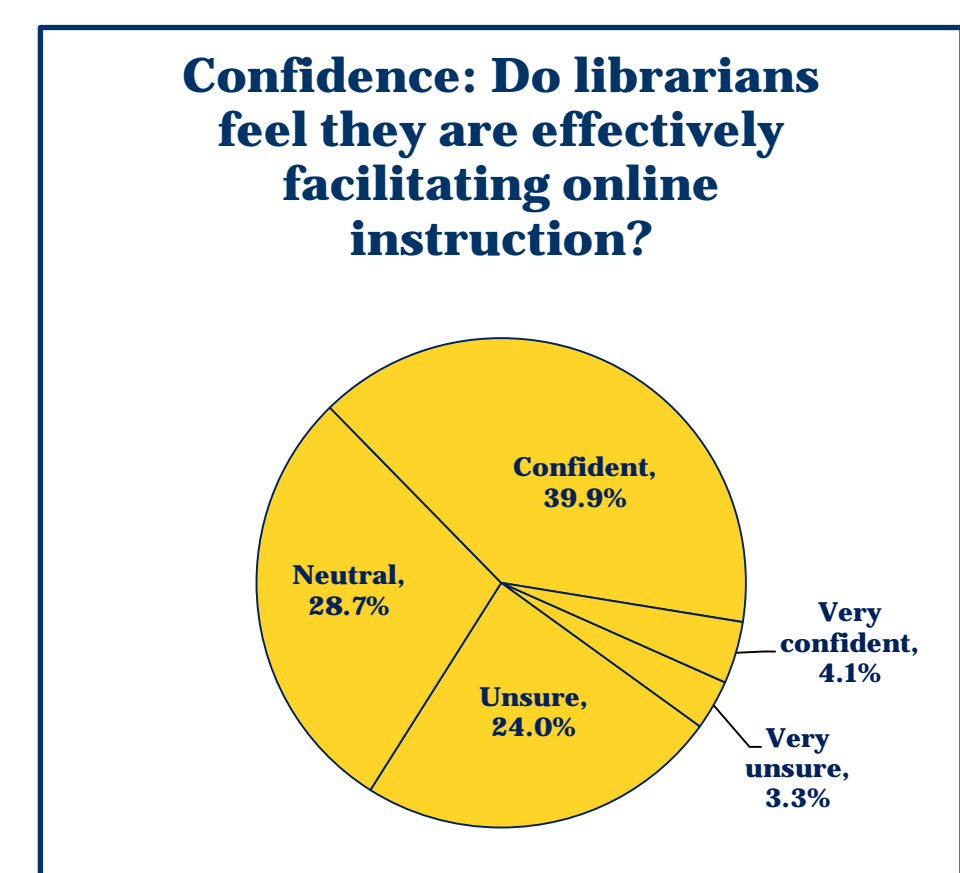
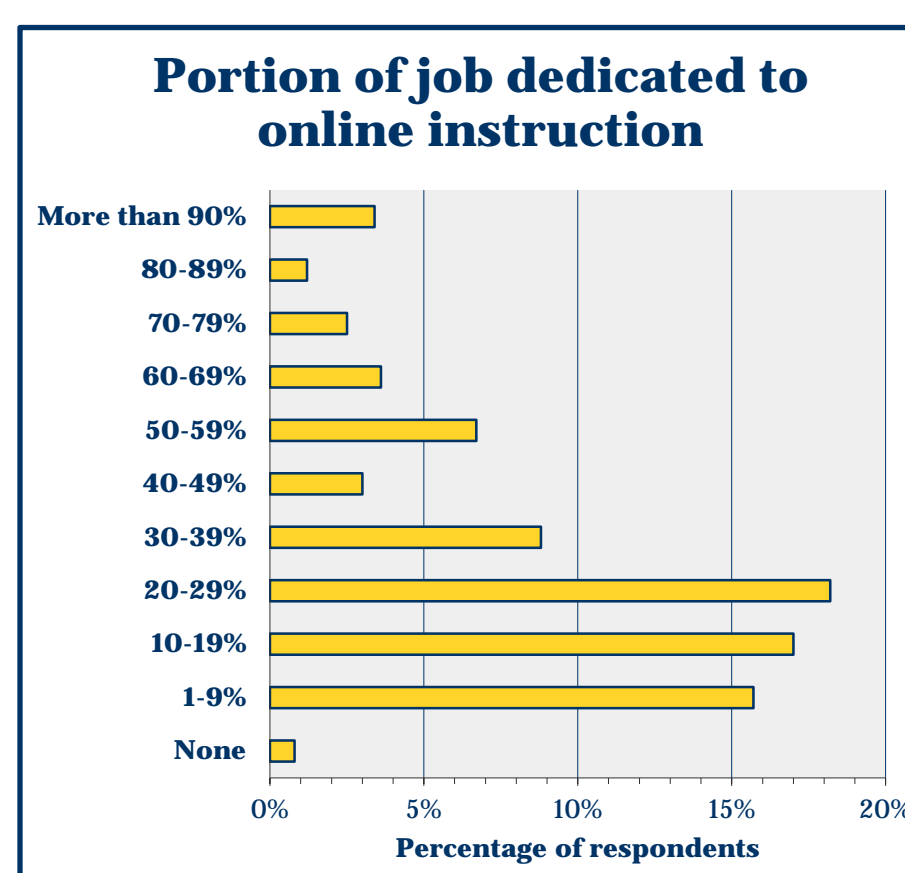
## » Advocacy

Promote the creation of new positions, develop talking points for administrators, and support scholarly research related to online instruction.

## »» Communication

**Facilitate communication, develop virtual learning networks, and establish a network of online instruction experts.**

## Challenges



## Needs

