

# What Drives and Guides Us

The Importance of Developing a Personal Philosophy of Librarianship

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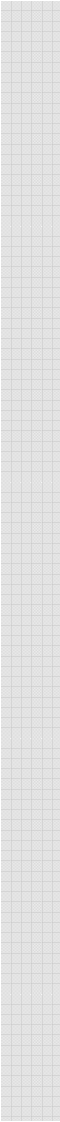
Gregg-Graniteville Library  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AIKEN


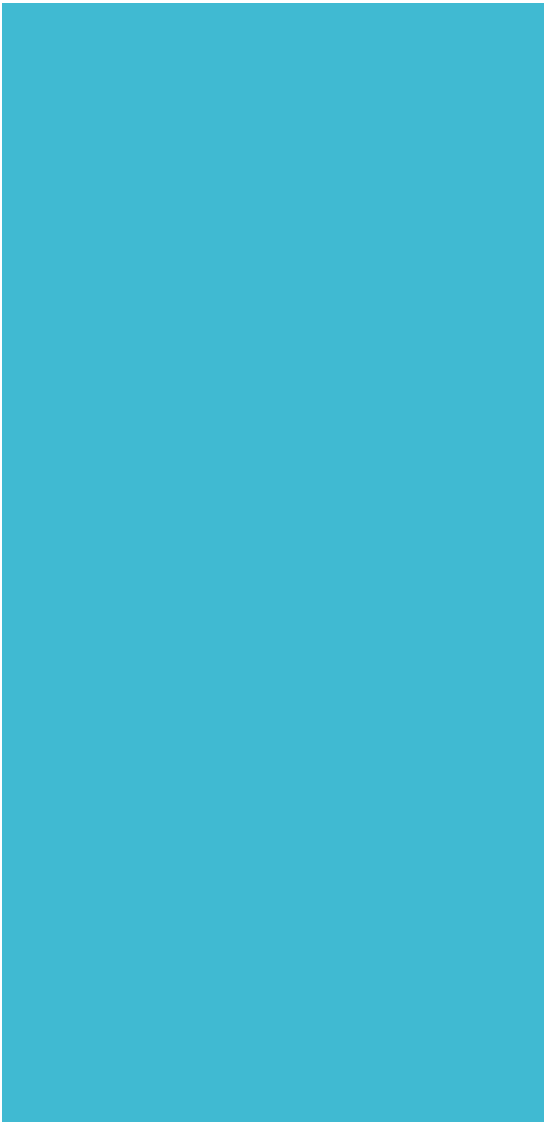


Inspiration

## Common Interview Questions & Presentation Topics

- Where do you see the library in 5/10/20 years?
- Where do you see reference services in 5/10 years?
- What role does the library play in a public liberal arts university?

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- 
- Discussion of trends
  - External, removed from candidate



What is your philosophy of librarianship?

## Looking for...

- Evidence of thoughtfulness about the work they do
- An understanding of their role within the institution and communities they serve
- An idea of their priorities

Instead, we  
got...

- Providing access to information
- Meeting patrons' information needs
- Providing excellent customer service



What is it?



## What is it?

“A *Statement of Philosophy of Academic Librarianship* presents a capsule summary of your understanding of the value and purpose of your role as an academic librarian in a research university.”

### USC Libraries

Defining Excellence in Academic Librarianship at USC (DEAL at USC): Your Philosophy of Librarianship

<http://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=235091&p=1560270>

Why is it  
important?

“The values inherent in a conscious philosophy provide direction for the actions and decisions of daily work and the formulation of long-term goals and objectives.”

Engle, M. O. (1986). Librarianship as a calling: The philosophy of college librarianship. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 12(1), 30-32.



# National Digital Library

- 5 million images in 5 years
  - Provides criteria by which to evaluate workflow and new initiatives

Dalbello, M. (2005). A phenomenological study of an emergent national digital library, part I: Theory and methodological framework. *Library Quarterly*, 75(4), 391-420.

## Identifying Our Values

According to Engle (1986), “to be aware of our values we must periodically ask some basic questions” (p. 30).




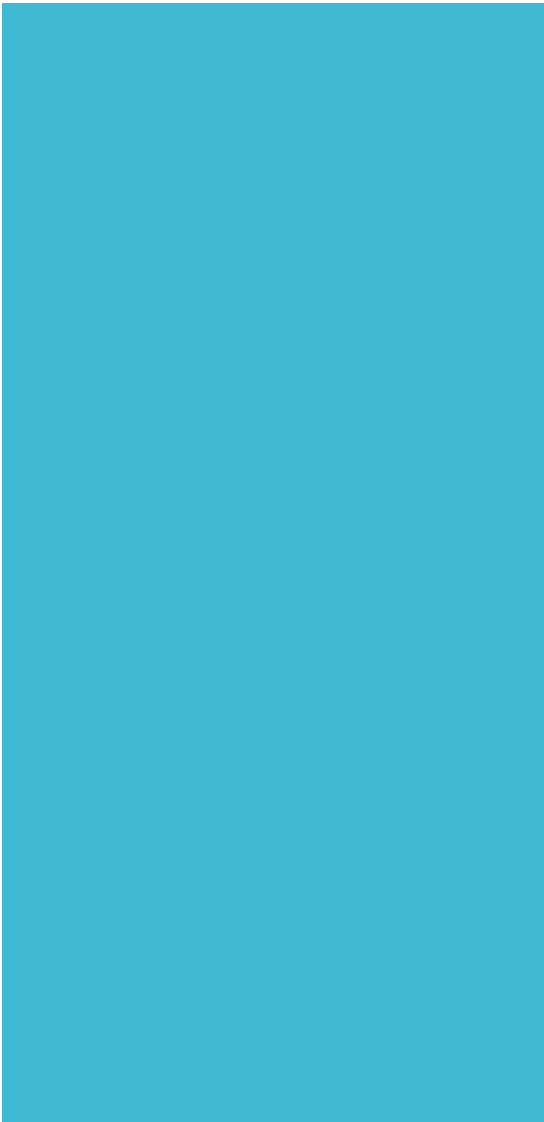
“What is the nature of our work in  
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(Engle, 1986, p. 30)



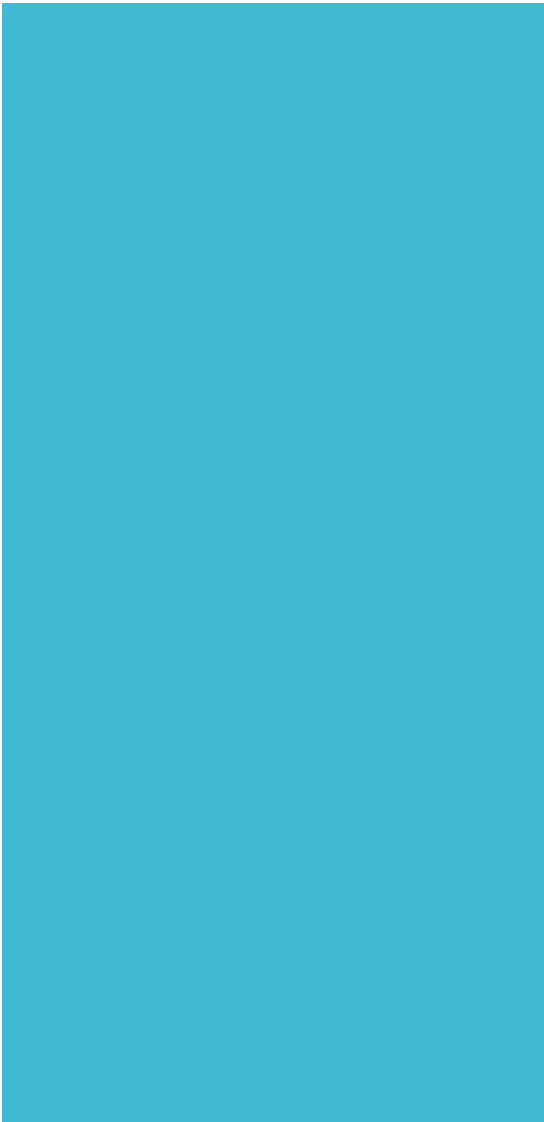
“What is the definition and meaning  
of our work for us personally?”

(Engle, 1986, p. 30)



“Upon what assumptions and values are our current actions based?”

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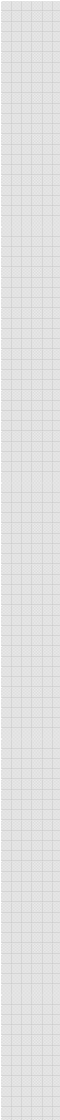

“Do our actions really reflect what we think important and desirable?”

(Engle, 1986, p. 30)



# My Philosophy

The purpose of an academic library is to help students to become more sophisticated information consumers



“What is the nature of our work in our primary community and in society as a whole?”

(Engle, 1986, p. 30)

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- What are we doing?
- Instruction
- Reference
- Create resources (libguides, handouts, etc...)
- Research skills, Critical thinking skills, Info Lit
- Learning Commons--Library space & resources

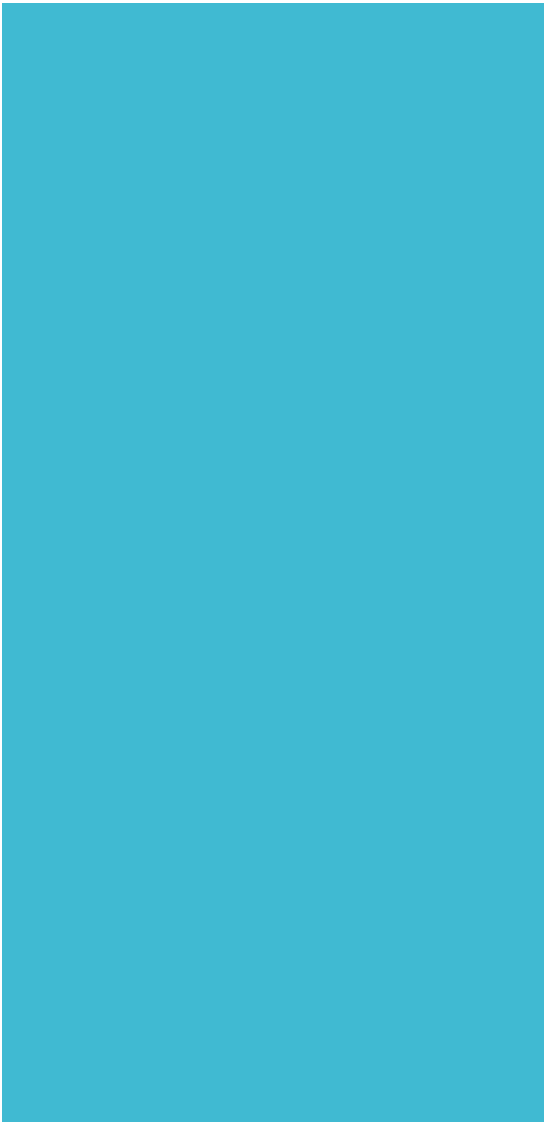


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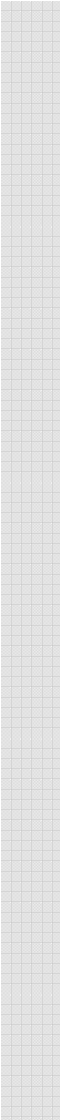

- Why are we (individuals) doing it?
  - Not just facilitate access, but teach students how to access and evaluate for themselves
  - Preparing them for an unpredictable workforce and information landscape
  - Rejection of “customer service”
  - Civic engagement
- 



“Upon what assumptions and values are our current actions based?”

(Engle, 1986, p. 30)

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- How does it fit with the values of the profession?
  - Intellectual freedom
  - Necessary to create engaged and informed citizens for a thriving democracy
  - Look at ALA Code of Ethics, Core Values statements; ACRL Framework, etc...
- 



“Do our actions really reflect what we think important and desirable?”

(Engle, 1986, p. 30)

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- The assessment piece
- Are we doing what we say we're doing?
- Are we successful?
- How do we know?
- Where do we need to grow/improve?

## Another example...

Librarianship is a noble calling...

- A library is the cornerstone of a society whose ideals foster the open exchange of ideas and access to information.
- Librarians occupy an important standing in society for they are caretakers of and mediators with the cultural, literary, and historical material that finds a home in the library.
- The library is a place for books.

Meehan, W. F. Towards a philosophy of librarianship.  
*Kentucky Libraries*, 71(2), 6-7.

## Find Other Examples

- Our Philosophies of Librarianship

<http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2012/editorial-our-philosophies-of-librarianship/>

- My Philosophy of Librarianship, Wilkinson

<https://senseandreference.wordpress.com/2015/03/17/my-philosophy-of-librarianship/>

- Philosophy of Librarianship, Burkhardt

<http://andyburkhardt.com/2008/01/26/philosophy-of-librarianship/>

- Philosophy of Librarianship, Dunn

<https://susanedunn.com/2013/03/30/philosophy-statement/>

The Library is not a Collection of Books, Bennett

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFGCB51xb6U>

## Resources for Librarianship

- ALA Code of Ethics: <http://www.ala.org/tools/ethics>
- ALA Core Values of Librarianship: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>
- Library Bill of Rights: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- ACRL Framework for Information Literacy: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>
- Ranganathan's Five Laws of Librarianship (USC): <http://librarysciencedegree.usc.edu/resources/infographics/dr-s-r-ranganathans-five-laws-of-library-science/>



Questions?

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