

Academic Status of Librarians and its Impact on Salaries Yanli Li (Wilfrid Laurier University)

Academic status of librarians is recognition that their duties are integral to the academic mission of an institution. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has conducted a biennial Librarian Salary and Academic Status Survey (LSASS). Sixty-seven (67) universities and twenty-eight (28) colleges report in the 2014 LSASS which provides the best summary of academic status of librarians available. Academic status is described in terms of librarians' trade union status and structures of representation, collective agreement language, and terms of employment and teaching activities. A detailed analysis of the 2014 LSASS identifies three aspects of the academic status in which a relatively lower percentage of institutions report that they put it into practice. Specifically, 59% of the institutions report that their librarians participate on Board of Governors. Comparisons of contract language for librarians with that for teaching faculty show that half of the institutions indicate that they use "same or similar" contract language on scholarly publishing. As regards the terms of employment, 65% of the institutions have scholarly activities included in the terms of employment. This paper is intended to examine if academic status of librarians has significant impacts on librarians' salaries and provide implications on how to improve academic status of librarians in Canada.

Using the institutional data from LSASS for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the author conducts a multivariable regression analysis and the findings are as follows: Librarians participation on Board of Governors is proved positively related with librarians' salaries. Using similar collective agreement language on scholarly publishing as for faculty and inclusion of scholar activities in the terms of employment both increase librarian salaries, which however is not statistically significant. This means that in institutions where librarians are expected to be engaged in scholarship their average salaries are not necessarily higher than those of their peers in other institutions. This may partly explain why some librarians show less interest in research and scholarship. In addition, years of experience as an academic librarian and geographic regions of the institution also have significant effects on librarian salaries.

This study provides some implications on how to improve the academic status of librarians across Canada. Specifically, more institutions should strive to have librarians serve on the top level university governance body. Institutions may encourage librarians to conduct research by adopting a more rewarding scheme, for instance, increasing the base salary of a librarian who has an outstanding performance in research and scholarship.