

library systems, and such places as the Folger and the Newberry.

The proposal has generated some interest on the part of Congress and it now becomes a matter of proposing statutory language that makes the right institutions eligible. Definitions have to be written with some eye to political realities and plain old good will. For instance, there are no ARL libraries in Montana, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Mississippi, which will dampen the interest of Senators Mansfield, Montoya, McClellan, and Stennis—all key members of the Senate appropriations committee. So perhaps eligibility has to include, let us say, the biggest academic library in any state or the largest public library. The difficulty is to avoid sounding elitist or pedantic while making the intent of the legislation perfectly clear.

In the coming months representatives of ACRL will be working with the ALA Washington Office and ARL to come up with wording that meets the needs of research libraries.

One thing is important to remember. Nobody gets a dime just for being eligible. But if more libraries are eligible, more people are out there lobbying for money for this program. The real need is to design a program that will actually get funded and do some good for the scholarships, authors, and students who use our research libraries.

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The editors have received the following letter supporting the ACRL Board of Directors policy statement on the M.L.S. degree:

Dear Editor:

I fully endorse the decision of the ACRL Board of Directors to declare the master's degree in library science the appropriate terminal degree for professional librarians. Additional degrees in other subject matters may enhance the librarian's value in specialized fields, but unless we want to become bibliographic assistants to authorities in other fields we must assert our independence and strive for excellence in our own area. We should be proud to be generalists because we form the information link between the various disciplines and our task is to bring them together. We help the information seeker to formulate the questions to be answered and either supply the necessary information or show the paths to it regardless of the form in which the information may be recorded. We also facilitate contact between the information seekers and those knowledgeable in that field for discussion and answers. Often directional and routine and superficial reference questions would lead to deeper research and better understanding if they were handled by competent reference librarians instead of nonprofessional assistants. Academic libraries have never recognized limitations or classifications as finite and therefore have always paid attention to the needs for individual instruction. The drive of librarians for full faculty status should be based on the importance of librarians to academic development toward excellence at our institution and on the importance of our contribution to the intellectual development of each individual in our academic community who cares to take advantage of our services. Librarians have a unique opportunity to emphasize the interrelationship of the various disciplines and to act as catalysts for identification with our academic institutions, and thus become indispensable governance participants.

Sincerely,
Leo R. Rift
College Librarian
Ithaca College
Ithaca, New York