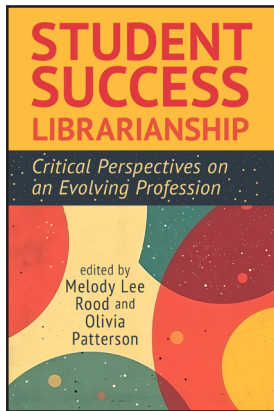


The book's emphasis on self-reflection and collaboration further strengthens its utility for busy practitioners. This volume may be particularly useful for those seeking to update their information literacy pedagogy to address the challenges of misinformation and algorithmic influence by meeting students where they are. Its insights into student dispositions and the practical applications of the Framework make it an insightful addition to the literature on information literacy instruction. — *Judy K. Davis, University of Southern California*

Student Success Librarianship: Critical Perspectives on an Evolving Profession, Melody Lee Rood, and Olivia Patterson eds., Association of College and Research Libraries, 2025. 232 pp. Softcover, \$88.00 (979-8-89255-619-4)



Student Success Librarianship: Critical Perspectives on an Evolving Profession, edited by Melody Lee Rood and Olivia Patterson, explores the role of student success librarians within academic libraries. As a newly hired student success librarian, I found it validating that many contributors grapple with defining and measuring student success. The question, “What does it mean to be a student success librarian?” would likely resonate with anyone in this or in a related role. The authors also highlight that there is a messiness in defining and articulating the work, which can lead to burnout from the ever-evolving nature of the role, along with the potential for performativity (Lai, 2025). Throughout this edited collection, the authors seek to validate the experience of student success librarians, acknowledging that it is “challenging to try and be

the face of the library and to be everywhere and do everything” (vi). No two librarians in this role will share the same experience, and the editors’ effort to center both the frustrations and triumphs at the start of the collection is a welcome start to the conversation. The volume is divided into three parts: theory, praxis, and research; readers will appreciate the roadmap included at the beginning of the volume, which provides an overview of the collection and a breakdown of each chapter.

Part I: Theory sets out to address the previously mentioned messiness that comes with the role and challenges definitions of success that can be too closely tied to metrics such as retention and graduation rates. Paul Lai discusses the quick fix mentality of the position that is sometimes used to try and reach all student populations, and how the position does not always look like traditional librarian work. Nate Floyd and Laura Birkenhauer also touch on how a lack of a clear definition of responsibilities makes it challenging for student success librarians to have their positions and objectives negotiated and evaluated. Despite these difficulties, student success librarianship has the potential to recognize the diverse needs of students with unique lived experiences. Within this section, contributors also explore the concept of boundary work to advocate for student success librarians exploring flexible limits to ensure that new participants, practices, and knowledge are valued and used to foster a sense of belonging. Authors in this section discuss the application of student success frameworks from “meeting the specific needs and goals of different student populations at a given institution” (32) to areas such as archives and special collections, where many students have previously not seen themselves represented. Finally, the authors advocate for sustainable and adaptive engagement practices that are grounded in self-care to foster relationships and belonging.

Part II: Praxis consists of case studies and reflections, offering real-world examples that readers will find useful and adaptable. As success can manifest differently at various institutions, this section showcases a diverse range of initiatives that focus on the whole student and address mental, physical, emotional, and social needs. Linking student success to “Maslow’s hierarchy of needs” (68), readers learn from María Evelia Emerson about various practical initiatives, such as a student food pantry, that aim to address the range of students’ needs. This section also outlines the importance of cross-campus collaboration for creating a variety of initiatives allowing all students to succeed. Building those relationships ensures that the library can draw on a wide range of expertise so that all students feel represented, supported, and are moving toward a shared vision of success.

Part III: Research presents studies that focus on the complexities of student success librarianship and examine how student success is understood and supported in academic libraries. Challenges faced when doing this type of work speak to the personal and unique perceptions that all students have of their own success. The authors in this section point out the gaps in LIS education when preparing to work with under-represented populations and offer insights into a more holistic approach to defining accomplishment. They again tackle the problem with creating a single, prescriptive definition of student success. Clear roles and support from administration are outlined as being crucial for these positions to ensure that they are valued, and the authors also highlight the strong importance of maintaining collaborative relationships across campus. A mixture of surveys, job-ad analyses, focus groups, and case studies offer feedback to understand both this position and its role in academic libraries.

The collection of articles in *Student Success Librarianship* emphasize the significant challenges student success librarians face, and the authors do a solid job of highlighting the many ups and downs that practitioners may face. The authors don’t shy away from mentioning that the role can be deemed as performative. There can be a high risk of burnout, leaving practitioners without sustained support from the institution, which can lead to projects being placed on the back burner or potential job cuts. However, authors do point out they feel there is a meaningful impact and take great pride in helping empower students to achieve both academic and personal success. They also acknowledge that the role is still being defined and will take ongoing efforts to align with various institutional goals while prioritizing the diverse and complex needs of students. This collection will be of interest to librarians at academic institutions working in student success positions and any librarian interested in outreach and engagement with students. — Kathleen James, *Student Success Librarian, University of Calgary*

Strengthening Library Ecosystems: Collaborate for Advocacy and Impact, Dorcas Hand, Sara Kelly Johns, Michelle Robertson, & Eryn Duffree, ALA Editions, 2024, 272p. Softcover, \$54.99. 9798892555722

Strengthening Library Ecosystems: Collaborate for Advocacy and Impact provides an important exploration of ecosystem framework in the context of library advocacy. It builds on a previous project stemming from ALA’s Ecosystem Task Force called *One Voice: The Toolkit*. This title explores the practical implementation of ecosystem strategies while also highlighting the resources developed by ALA and its affiliates that support library ecosystems. It is evident that the content presented was composed with an acute awareness of the current geopolitical landscape given the emphasis on the urgent need for advocacy efforts to protect the core values of libraries considering increasing attacks on intellectual freedom and civil liberties.