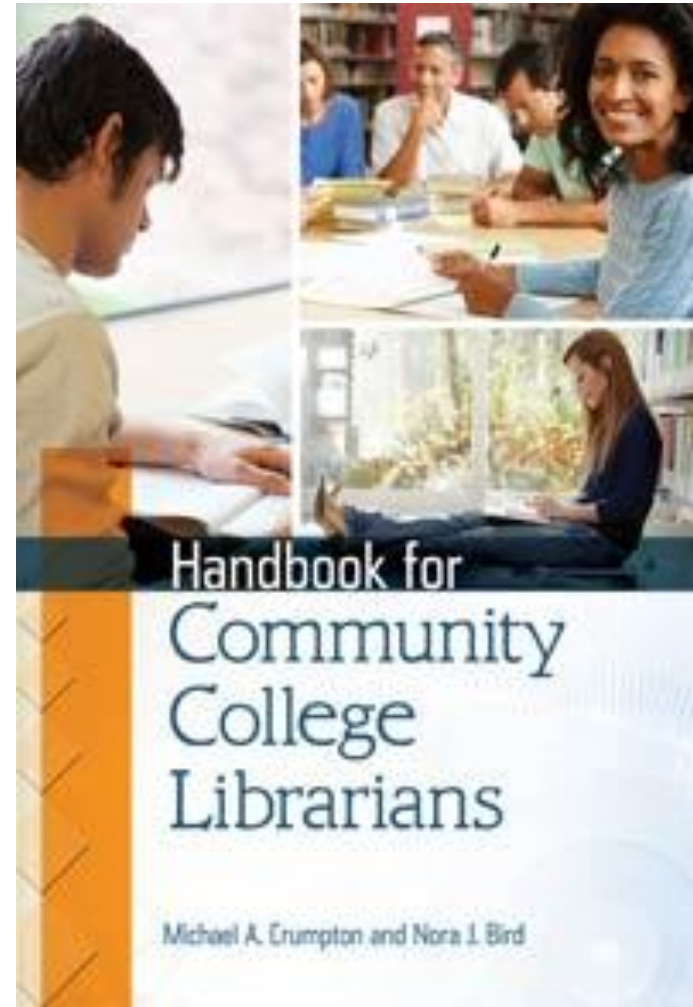


# “Enhancing Your Organization with Short-Term Staff”

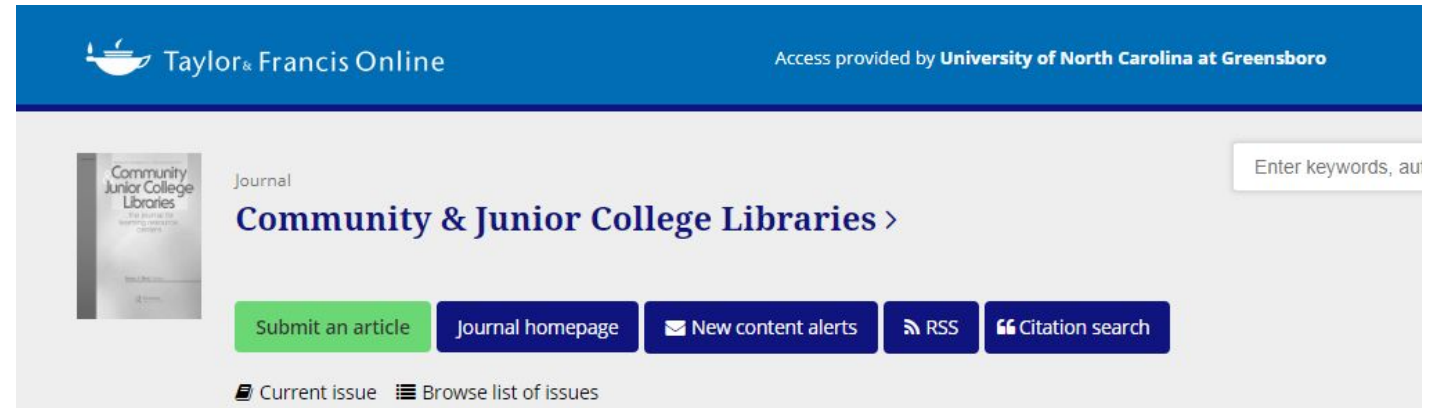
Dr. Nora Bird  
Michael Crumpton

# Together we've accomplished.....



## Dr. Nora Bird

Currently an Associate Professor, she has been with the UNCG Library and Information Studies faculty since 2007. Her teaching and research interests include: community college libraries, collections management, information seeking behavior, workplace information literacy, and communicating controversial science. She received her BA in Biology graduating cum laude at Boston University, her MS in Library and Information Science at Simmons College, and her PhD from Rutgers University School of Communication, Information and Library Studies.



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# Abstract

- This webinar will show how short-term workers can offer libraries much more than just a solution to being shorthanded. By expanding upon their recently book *Short-Term Staff, Long Term Benefits*, the presenters will address how library managers can work with a variety of short-term staffing arrangements like internships, grant personnel contracts and volunteers to create an organization that is continuously learning and growing. The webinar will include the description and recruitment of these positions and how to work with present staff members so that all employees can improve their skills. Academic, public and special collections will be addressed, as well as unique arrangements like virtual internships and working with doctoral students.

# The Need for Short-term hiring

- Economics dictate flexible arrangements
- Project based worked
- Broader array of resources
- Library specialization
- Skills and talent not currently present
- Ability to react quickly
- Expanding knowledge base

# Why?

- The rapidly evolving LIS workplace requires staff who are continuously learning
- Education is static but the workplace is dynamic
- A learning organization incorporates changes
- Learning is best done in context with experiential components



# Who?

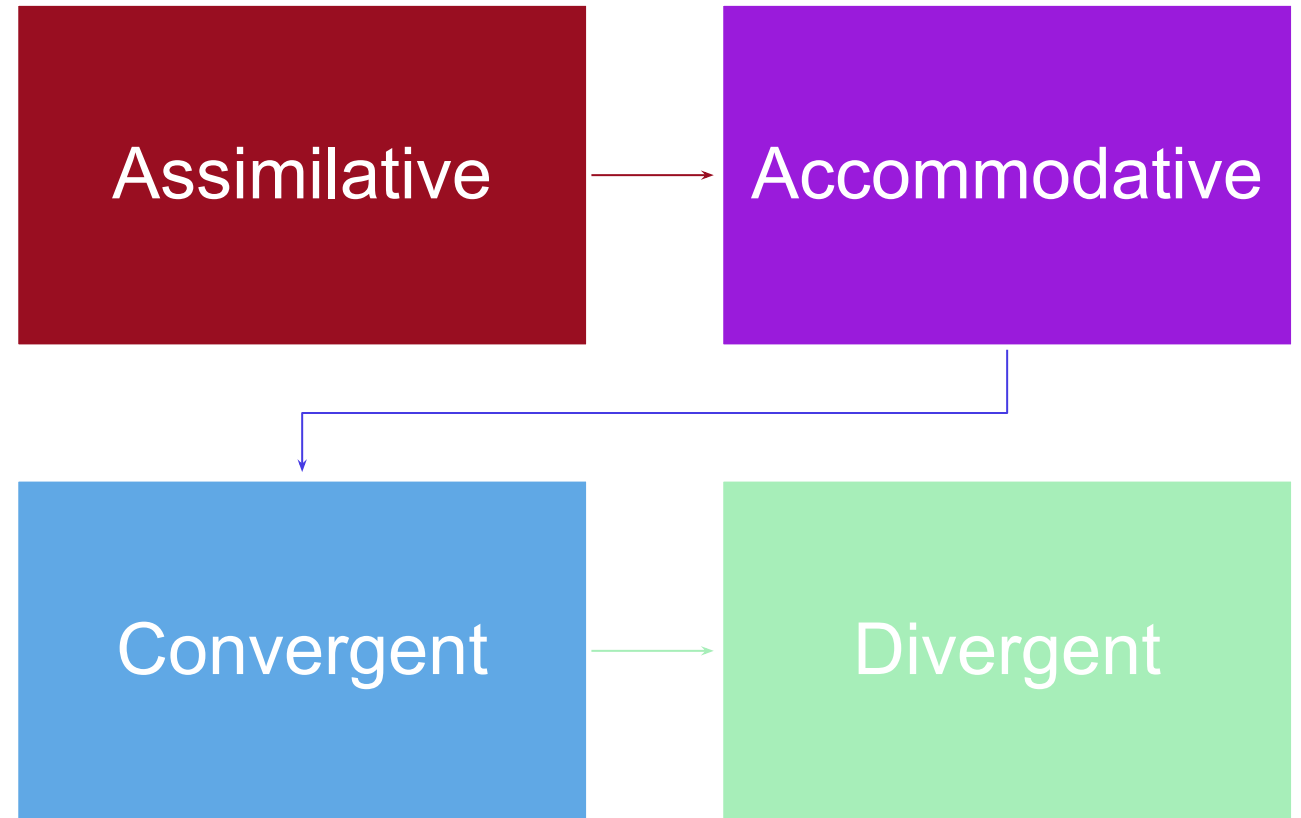
- Volunteers of all ages
- MLS Students
- Other Students – College, high school, doctoral
- Staff:
  - Grant-funded
  - Project oriented
  - Residents
  - Fellows



# Methods: Experiential Learning

- Described best by David A. Kolb.
- Most education is built on assimilative knowledge - learning from second-hand knowledge sources like books and other texts.
- Divergent knowledge acquisition promotes personal growth.

# Knowledge Acquisition Methods



# Example

- A supervisor or peer mentor works with a new volunteer to shelve a book.
- Have the new person reflect on the difficulty of that experience
- Have them offer alternatives to the standard practice and reflect on whether that is a better method.
- Often, it isn't but it provides a way for the person to learn why things are done in that way.
- Maybe there is a better way.

# Experience changes the brain

- MRI imagery has determined that permanent changes to the brain are made when a person works in a hands-on situation rather than simply hearing about it.

# Other learning forms and techniques

- Collaborative learning – well designed group learning can be beneficial
- Reflection – an essential piece of experiential learning is for the participants to reflect on the concrete experiences.
- Organizations must be designed around and prioritize learning
- Learning communities

# Credit-bearing experiences

- Course related projects
  - Library can learn if the project results are shared with library staff.
- Service learning
  - Library can gain insight into the communities - teens, community members, local college students who participate in service learning projects
- Practica or internships
  - Projects can benefit the library by being completed.
  - Library staff can learn about new theories and skills taught in MLS programs
- Student Jobs

# Designing a good experience

- Create institutional connections with multiple educational programs
  - MLS students may be living in your town
- Create a job description
- Designate a supervisor or someone who will solve problems



# Grant funded staff

- Understand the grant and institutional limitations
- Write a strong position description
  - Strengthening skills possessed by the current staff or needing different (updated) skills
- Prepare for integration with permanent staff and for learning opportunities to take place.

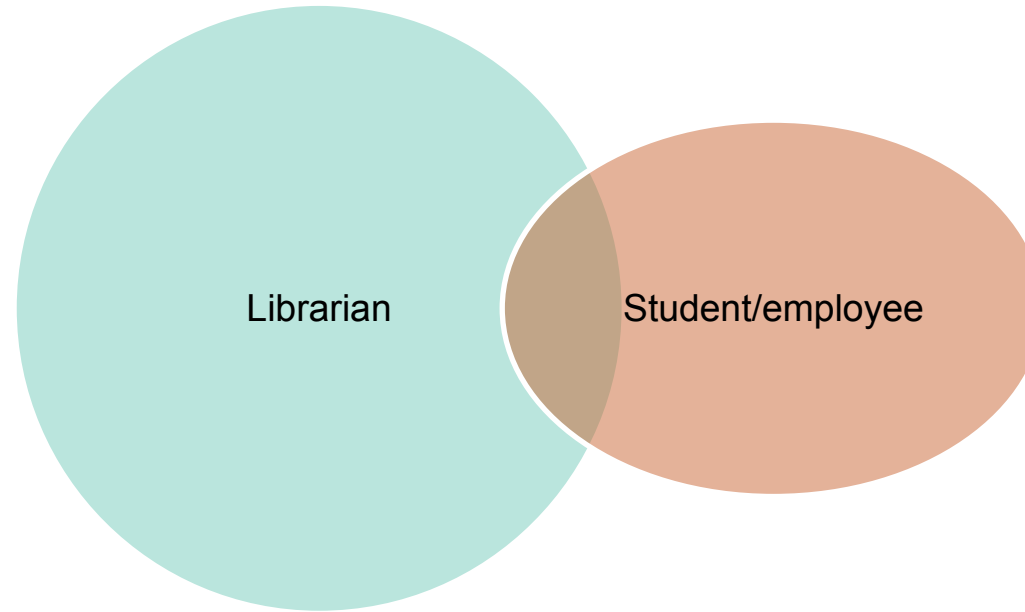
# Virtual Experiences

- Trend to expand use of interns
- Aligns with technologies
- Supports new service models
- Requires attention to detail, supervision, etc.
- Considerations of software and tech support
- Ability to assess performance

# Academic Libraries

- Practicum – working for class credit only. Usually project driven and goals satisfy curriculum
- Internships – student workers paid by the hour and task driven. Additional training and experience are provided by librarians.
- Graduate assistantship – Stipend plus tuition, work for the department as research assistants, etc.
- Part of multiple departments

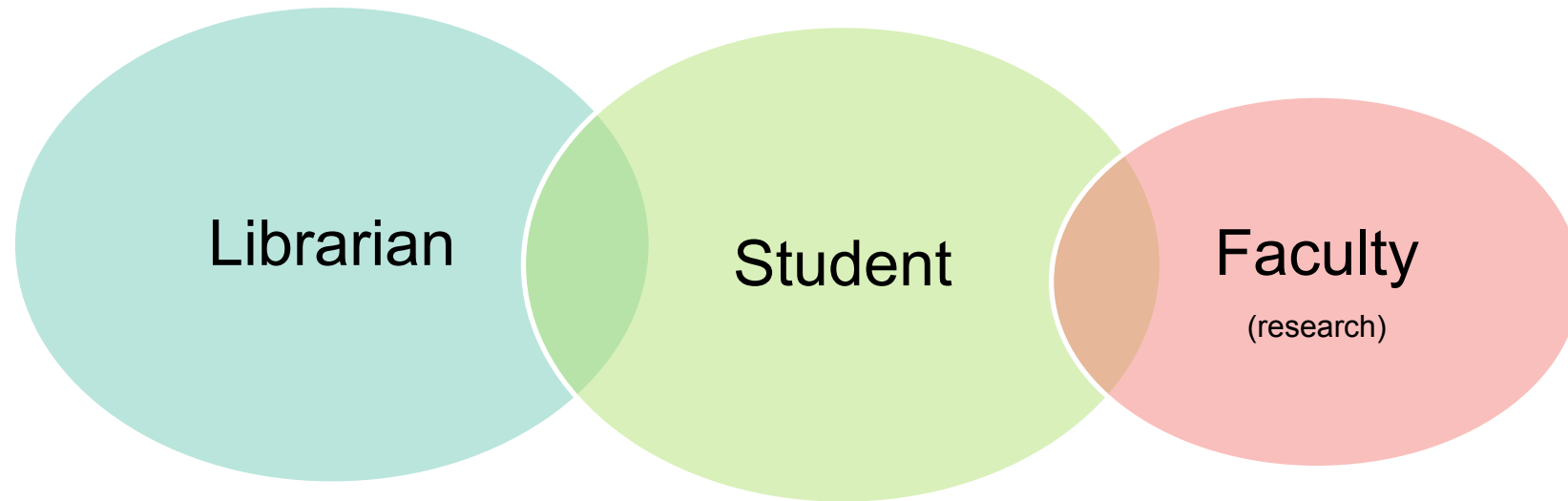
# Student Employee\* Model



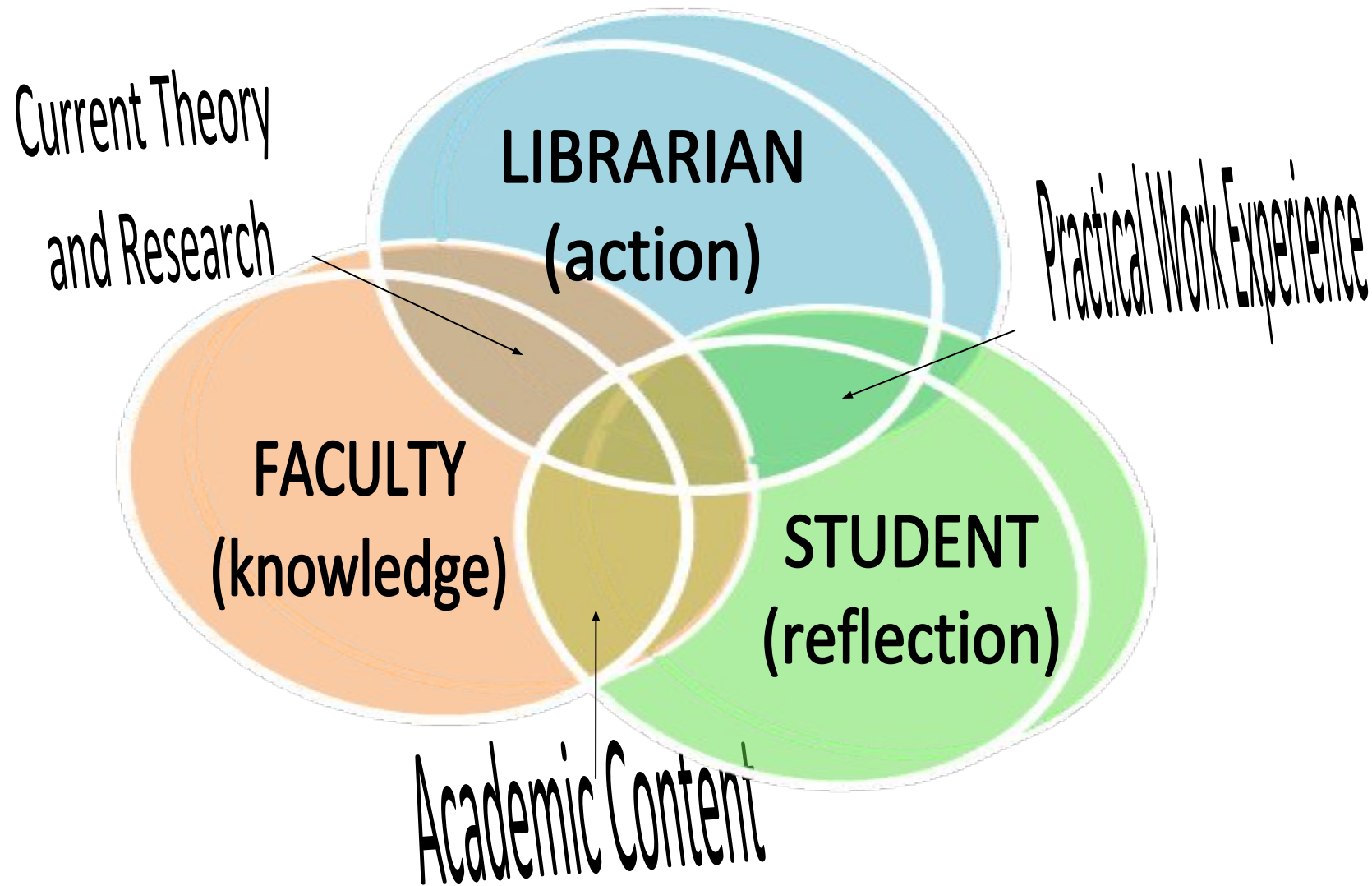
Learning goals defined by the practitioner

\*or students working while in school

# Traditional Model of Internship/Practica



Reflection on process is primarily done by the student



# Public Libraries

- Volunteers
  - Supporting collections and programs
  - Providing outreach and awareness
  - Best practices and coordination
  - Policies and guidelines
  - Recognition
- Interns
  - Difference for public libraries



# Residencies

- Diversity residencies
- Subject specific residencies
- Residency as apprenticeship
- Residents as peers
- Organizational benefits

# Specialty Departments

- Investment in program needs
- Organizational structure to manage multiple types
- Gaining buy-in
- Finding good matches
- Providing training
- Motivation and mentoring
- Ownership

# Wrap-up

- Benefits to short-term individuals
- Benefits to organization
- Importance of details
  - Policies
  - Insurance, legal issues
  - Documentation
- Organizational culture adaptation

# Additional Readings

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