CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR MUSIC LIBRARIANSHIP: A DELPHI STUDY

Research question
The researcher utilized the resources and individuals available to develop a curriculum with a specialization in music librarianship within a Masters of Library and Information Science program.

Research Methods
With minimal current research available, this study utilized a Delphi Method to gain insight and feedback on the current state of music library offerings. The Delphi method is a structured communication technique which relies on a panel of experts which will allow open communication between the researcher and professionals in the music library industry to develop a well-rounded curriculum for students interested in music librarianship. The panel responded to ten prompts over the course of two rounds in which the researcher provided an anonymous summary of panel member’s feedback from the previous round as well as the reasons they provided for their critiques. The panel of experts in this study included music librarians currently working in academic, archive, and performance library settings. The researcher was looking for professionals working in differing settings to create a well rounded education of aspiring music librarians. The researcher will develop, along with extensive literature review, a curriculum outline for a music librarianship specialization within an accredited MLIS program.

Importance of Music Library Education
The coursework involved in obtaining a Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS) is often geared towards the main areas of study: academic, archives and public librarianship. Few MLIS programs offer courses for various types of special libraries, but rarely are courses offered in music librarianship. The Music Library Association states in their Core Competencies as well as their mission statement that music librarians are to be highly educated and trained in music as well as library science. Although the core competencies for music librarianship have been clearly stated on behalf of the Music Library Association, the implementation of them in the MLIS education is lacking. The present research, the curriculum development for music librarianship is investigated by means of a Delphi Study. It is hypothesized that current curriculum development for other special libraries can be modified to meet the needs of performance and academic music librarians.

Proposed Course Work
- MLIS Required Courses
- Practicum in Music Librarianship
- Music Library Foundations
- Music Reference
- Music Cataloging
- Music Library Management
- Music Archiving and Preservation
- Collection Development for Music Materials

Delphi Supported Course Work
- MLIS Required Courses
- Practicum in Music Librarianship
- Music Library Foundations
- Music Reference
- Music Cataloging
- Introduction to Archives and Preservation

Full Conclusions
The Delphi supported the overall need for specialized education in Music Librarianship. By creating a structured curriculum, the present state of the music library can be tailored to industry wide standards rather than individual preference. The curriculum would be most beneficial at one or two universities with a combination of a strong library science program, an active school of music, and staff with the passion for the career and who are willing to educate.

The career of the music librarian is dependent on both the concepts taught in an MLIS program and the specialized education of the professional musician; it is the time to move forward and start to create and implement said curriculum in order to properly educate and ensure the future of music librarianship.

References:

Johanna Groh, MLIS MM
University of Denver

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Delphi Supported Course Work

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