



May 30, 2025

Colin Williams
Digital, Instructional & Information Technology Librarian
Long Beach City College
1305 E. Pacific Coast Highway
Long Beach, CA 90806

Dear Mr. Williams

Subject: **Summary of Key Findings for Proposed Bachelor's Degree in Library Science**

The Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) has completed a labor market analysis in support of Long Beach City College's application to offer a bachelor's degree in Library Science. This letter summarizes the key findings from our report and is organized to address the primary questions of workforce need, wage potential, and employer preferences for candidates with a baccalaureate degree.

- **Typical Entry Level Education Requirements**

The target occupations for this program typically require a master's degree for entry (*librarians and media collections specialists & archivists*). At the surface level, this appears to be a poor match for a proposed program at the baccalaureate level, but keep in mind that this is 'typical' for a reason and not a universally agreed-upon requirement. Further, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) bases this on national-level employer survey data, so this may not be representative of California employers, and even further, employers in Los Angeles County. With all of that said, in this case we leaned heavily on educational requirements from job postings to see determine if there is a need for this type of program at the baccalaureate level. Our statewide job posting query revealed that 27% of all related job postings in California were seeking candidates with a bachelor's degree, which could indicate a potential niche need for a training program of this kind at the baccalaureate level.

- **Evidence of a Regional Supply-Demand Gap for Workers with Baccalaureate Degrees**

With no related average annual bachelor's degrees issued in the county, 88 master's degrees issued, and 357 projected annual job openings for library science occupations through 2032, the potential supply gap at this level of education is 269 unfilled jobs in LA County. In California, 1,394 library science jobs are projected to be available annually, but only 34 annual bachelor's awards and 767 master's degrees conferred in related programs. Therefore, there is a statewide projected workforce shortage of 593 unfilled annual job openings for library science occupations. These regional and statewide potential workforce gaps are certainly a cause for conversation and planning among education and training providers, not only to



determine how to best close to this supply-demand gap, but what level of education is most appropriate to do so.

- **Evidence that Employers Are Willing to Pay Baccalaureate Degree Holders a Regional Living Wage**

Based on our wage analysis, workers with a baccalaureate degree in Library Science are likely to earn a wage that meets or exceeds the regional living wage standard. Specifically, data indicate that the 25th percentile salary for entry-level *librarians and media collections specialists*' positions is \$34.64 per hour, or just over \$72,000 annually assuming full-time employment, which compares favorably to the regional living wage benchmark of \$24.03 per hour required for a single adult with no children, and about five dollars below the \$39.67 per hour for a single adult with one child. *Archivists* routinely earn less than the regional average across all occupations in LA County at all percentile levels.

- **Evidence that Employers Are Willing to Pay Baccalaureate Degree Holders More than Those with an Associate Degree or No Postsecondary Degree**

The analysis reveals a clear wage difference for individuals holding a baccalaureate degree compared to those with an associate degree or no postsecondary education. On average, job postings and salary data show that employers seeking candidates with a bachelor's degree for library science occupations are advertising annual salaries that are more than \$23,000 higher per year than those seeking candidates with a high school diploma or associate degree. This wage differential underscores the added value of a baccalaureate degree in this field. This gap from sub-baccalaureate education levels to a bachelor's degree is three times greater than the gap for higher levels of education, with employers advertising salaries that are only \$7,700 more for candidates with a master's degree, Ph.D. or professional degree when compared to those seeking candidates with a bachelor's degree.

- **Evidence that Employers Prefer Candidates with the Proposed Baccalaureate Degree**

The majority of employer postings were seeking candidates with a master's degree, Ph.D., or professional degree (49% of total), demonstrating that employers posting job ads prefer candidates with advanced degrees for these jobs. However, our analysis did reveal a potential niche need for candidates with a bachelor's degree as 27% of all statewide job postings were seeking candidates at this level of education. Since there are no existing baccalaureate-level library science programs in Los Angeles County, these employers are seeking candidates with bachelor's degrees in English, Journalism, Communication, and other fields such as Marketing. An argument could be made that these employers would prefer bachelor-level candidates with an educational background more closely aligned with the duties of these library science jobs, but this requires further research (such as an employer survey) to determine.



In summary, the labor market data indicate a small, niche, but potential regional supply-demand gap for workers with baccalaureate degrees in Library Science since projected job openings outpace the supply of related degrees awarded in this area by a substantial margin, and employers are willing to offer competitive wages that meet the regional living wage. Additionally, there is evidence of a wage premium for baccalaureate degree holders compared to those with an associate degree or no postsecondary education.

But due to the fact that the typical entry level education level for these target occupations is a master's degree, and that this metric is supported by nearly half of California job postings seeking candidates with this level of education or higher, the LA COE recommends further research and support for this program; including surveys, interviews, or focus groups with regional employers, consultation with LBCC's existing industry council, and in this particular case, input from the American Library Association (ALA) would be monumental as they are currently only accrediting training programs at the master's level. If they were to come forward and make a public statement that a bachelor's degree in library science is not only needed to support employer demand, but that they would be willing to accredit this level of program, the LA COE would endorse this program from a labor market perspective without hesitation.

Please find the full labor market report attached for a detailed review of the data and analysis. Should you have any questions or need further clarification, feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Luke Meyer".

Luke Meyer
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