Western University

Western Libraries
Special Collections Librarian

Western Libraries is seeking an energetic and service oriented librarian for the position of Special Collections Librarian. Reporting to the University Archivist, the Special Collections Librarian is responsible for building, maintaining, and facilitating discovery of and access to all of Western Libraries’ rare book and rare print holdings and various other special collections, which range from medieval manuscripts and early music scores to contemporary comic books.

As part of the Archives and Special Collections Team, the Special Collections Librarian is responsible for acquisition and collection development, donor and vendor relations, reference service and research support, instruction design and delivery, physical and virtual exhibit design, promotion and outreach, preservation and conservation, and digitization initiatives. The Special Collections Librarian also provides leadership to and coordinates the work of staff and students who are assigned some level of responsibility for rare books, rare print materials, or other special collections responsibilities.

The focus of the Special Collections Librarian role is to support and actively engage with the other four core user functional teams (Collections Management, Discovery and Access; Research and Scholarly Communication; Teaching and Learning; and User Experience and Student Engagement) to integrate rare book and rare print holdings and other special collections into all aspects of the services of Western Libraries. To achieve this the Special Collections Librarian works proactively with key stakeholders to understand their needs; develop collegial partnerships both on and off campus; and develop a sense of shared accountability and common purpose in acquiring, preserving, and promoting awareness and use of special collections materials and services. The Special Collections Librarian also works closely with others within Western Libraries who have particular knowledge and expertise in areas represented in the holdings (e.g., 17th century English literature, antiquarian chamber music, 19th century Canadiana). The Special Collections Librarian is willing to try new things and examine new approaches; as such, the expectation is that the role is much more than that of a traditional collections librarian and bibliographer.

The Special Collections Librarian will:

- Develop rare book and rare print holdings and other special collections and acquire materials in areas of historic strength, emerging growth, and/or demonstrated research and teaching potential through donation and/or selective purchase (within available budget).
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with current and potential donors as well as dealers in rare materials to identify and acquire appropriate new collections or individual titles.
- Coordinate cataloging and description with Library Information Resources Management to support effective discovery and access.
- Provide reference assistance to general users, including identifying material of potential relevance.
- Provide in-depth research support to graduate students, faculty members, visiting researchers, and other scholars engaged in work using specific items or collections.
• Design, deliver, and assess instruction designed to integrate primary resources into coursework and research assignments in order to achieve identified learning outcomes.
• Design and implement physical and virtual exhibits to highlight various holdings.
• Promote awareness and use of rare books and rare print holdings and special collections by various means, including social media, and work with colleagues to highlight particular holdings to support outreach and fundraising and development activities.
• Promote the care and maintenance of all rare book and rare print holdings and special collections, including coordinating in-house preservation activities and conservation work undertaken by external service providers.
• Identify potential security threats and other concerns and take appropriate steps to mitigate their impact on individual items or collections.
• Plan and oversee the digitization of rare and unique items and collections and support digital scholarship projects and initiatives, working in cooperation with the Digitization and Digital Preservation Archivist/Librarian.
• Pursue funding opportunities to support acquisition and preservation of, and access to, rare book and rare print holdings and other special collections, in collaboration with others in Western Libraries.
• Represent Western Libraries and/or Archives and Special Collections at campus events and professional meetings and conferences.

Qualifications

This position is open to Western Libraries Members with a Continuing or Probationary Appointment. The successful candidate must have a Master’s degree in library and information science or equivalent from an ALA accredited institution.

Additional educational or professional development qualifications relating to rare books, rare print holdings, or other types of special collections are highly desired. Direct experience working with rare books, rare print holdings, or other types of special collections is preferred. Demonstrated formal or informal leadership experience is an asset.

The successful candidate will provide evidence of strong analytical and problem-solving skills, excellent organizational skills to set and balance priorities, manage competing deadlines, and take on multiple projects and responsibilities simultaneously. The candidate will provide evidence of the ability to think strategically and will have demonstrated the ability to work collaboratively with organizations and individuals. This role will require outstanding communication, collaboration, and interpersonal skills. The candidate will exhibit initiative, innovation, resourcefulness, and flexibility, and be able to develop relationships across Western Libraries and beyond, particularly with donors and researchers.

Environment

Western Libraries is undergoing a transformative organizational renewal that will enhance our capacity to contribute to student success and teaching and research excellence at Western. We anticipate our new functional teams will be in place for spring 2018. The Archives and Special Collections Team is committed to acquiring, preserving, and providing access to select rare and unique special collections and archives, in all media formats, in order to support the teaching and research missions of the University. It also supports the operations of the University by ensuring that University records of enduring value are preserved. While the primary focus is on facilitating advanced research by graduate
students, faculty members, and external scholars, as well as documenting the history of the University, it also engages with and welcome use of the rare and unique holdings by members of the broader heritage community.

**Application Procedures**

Interviews are anticipated to take place in January. Applicants invited for an interview will be asked to make a presentation to members of the Western Libraries community. Applicants are required to submit a covering letter, a curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information for three references, in electronic format by 15 January 2018 to:

**Office of the University Librarian**  
The University of Western Ontario  
Email: libarc@uwo.ca

Please quote reference #: SPECOL_012018  
Please submit your application package as a single electronic file (MS Word or pdf).  
Only applications received by email will be considered

Presentation Topic: Part of the role of the Special Collections Librarian is to support and actively engage with the other core user functional teams. If you are the successful candidate, which of the four would you make your first priority and how would you go about developing and sustaining this relationship?

Positions are subject to budget approval. Applicants should have fluent written and oral communication skills in English. The University invites applications from all qualified individuals. Western is committed to employment equity and diversity in the workplace and welcomes applications from women, members of racialized groups/visible minorities, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, and persons of any gender identity or gender expression.

In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities throughout the recruitment process. If you require accommodations for interviews or other meetings, please contact libarc@uwo.ca

**Posted on Faculty Relations website January 5-2018.**