

## **Adult Reader's Advisory Services Competency Set Portfolio Development Suggestions March 22, 2011**

In recent years, Reader's Advisory services have expanded from assisting library users with identifying books to read to assisting users with identifying materials for viewing and listening. These services consist of recommending titles of potential interest to the user that match the user's interests and experience as well as promoting the collection.

These Portfolio Development Suggestions (PDS) includes examples of possible activities you might use to demonstrate your achievements for each competency in this set. These activities or activities that you design yourself will be the primary documentation of your achievements for your online portfolio.

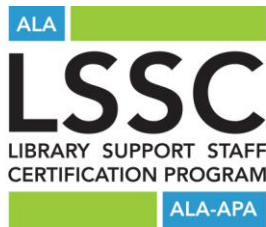
You might recognize some of these activities as experiences you have already had at work. You may also choose to use these as ideas for new self-directed learning projects and ways to demonstrate what you learned.

These are ONLY examples to help you get started thinking about both what experiences you already have related to specific competencies and what new learning you may want to pursue. While you may choose to use some of these suggestions for your Adult Reader's Advisory Services portfolio, you may also choose other relevant activities from your experience or new learning activities to demonstrate your proficiency in each competency.

The goal is to demonstrate that you have achieved the competencies. Your documentation may be a written narrative, a video, an audio recording or digitized copies of documents you have already prepared in your work experience. You may submit these documents in any format that can be uploaded into your online portfolio. Remember to make a clear link between the competency and the document so that evaluators will know what competency you are demonstrating. When appropriate, you may also apply documentation for one competency to another competency. If so, indicate that in your portfolio.

### Helpful Hints

In order to complete some of the activities you may need to conduct research. This research may be from print resources, web resources, visits to and observations of other libraries and interviews with library staff or library users. If you need to conduct



research to complete one of the activities listed below, be sure to cite the resources that you consulted and your personal opinion of what you learned.

Some of the PDSs ask for a bibliography. Usually a bibliography should include notations that are both descriptive and evaluative. Descriptive means your notation briefly describes what is relevant; evaluative means your opinion about what you read.

In some cases, we suggest that you compare and contrast what happens in at least two libraries or other settings. Compare and contrast means that you identify the similarities and differences between the way different libraries or other settings operate. If you currently work in a library, you may use that library as one of the examples. You may use the same type of library for comparison (public OR academic) or different types of libraries (public AND academic). Unless the suggested activity specifically indicates that you should look for examples in BOTH public and academic libraries, you may choose which types you would like to compare and contrast. You can discover how other libraries operate by conducting online research or by visiting another library and interviewing its staff.

You may also be asked to analyze or describe “your community.” Community is a broad term that could mean the community served by a public library or the higher education community served by an academic library.

### In Summary

In summary, in order to submit this competency set as completed, you are expected to demonstrate that you have achieved each of the 13 individual competencies in the Adult Reader’s Advisory Services competency set. However, you are NOT expected to complete all of the examples listed with each competency.

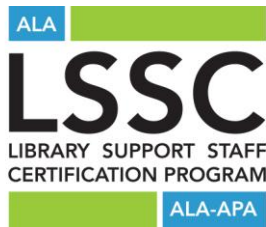
Good luck as you achieve this competency set.

### Library Support Staff will know:

**Competency 1. The library’s collection and where to locate materials by type and genre.**

### Portfolio Development Suggestions

1.1 Prepare an annotated floor plan of the library’s collection, noting the location of various formats and genres such as books on CD, musical CDs, DVDs, Mysteries, Science Fiction, Biography, etc. Briefly describe the type of materials in each



collection. Prepare examples of end-of-range signs, labels and/or images to identify collection areas for users.

1.2 Film a short video tour of the collections, record an audio tour or write a narrative for a guided tour to be conducted by another staff person or a library user. The narrative would describe a self-guided tour from the entrance in which each collection area is located (for example, “On your left, just past the Circulation Desk, is the visual media collection including films and television programs in DVD and VHS formats.”)

1.3 Visit other libraries and retail book stores to compare and contrast signage. Write about the similarities and differences in the displays. What techniques might retail stores adopt from the library’s displays and what techniques might libraries adopt from retail stores?

**Competency 2. A general familiarity with popular and classic fiction, including a knowledge of authors, various fiction genres, and popular, current non-fiction.**

#### Portfolio Development Suggestions

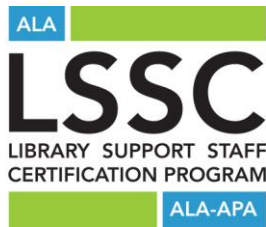
2.1 Prepare five (5) briefly annotated booklists (bibliographies) with brief notations of at least ten (10) titles on each list. The lists should represent popular or classic genres and include at least one list of current non-fiction titles. Discuss the criteria you used to choose the topics of the booklists and the books you included.

2.2 Prepare a brochure or poster featuring at least seven (7) categories of fiction, as well as the category of current non-fiction. Compile a list of eight author names in each category. Indicate why you chose the authors you included. Indicate any resources you used in making your selection.

**Competency 3. A general familiarity with popular and classical music, including a general knowledge of performers and composers.**

#### Portfolio Development Suggestions

3.1 Prepare three (3) music lists (discographies) with brief notations of at least ten (10) titles on each list, representing three different styles of popular music (for example, Rock, Country, Folk, etc) and two (2) lists with brief notations of classical music, representing two different eras of music (Renaissance, 20<sup>th</sup> Century, etc) or music from two different countries or music of two different compositional forms (for example, symphonies, concertos, etc.). Indicate why you chose these genres and how



they relate to the community you serve. Indicate any music resources you used in making your choices.

3.2 Prepare six (6) lists (discographies) with brief notations of at least six (6) titles on each list of recordings by a particular performer or performing group. Three of the lists should represent popular performers and three classical performers, performing groups or composers. Indicate why you chose each performer or group and how they relate to the community you serve.

**Competency 4. A general familiarity with a variety of films, including a general knowledge of directors and actors in different film and media genres.**

#### Portfolio Development Suggestions

4.1 Prepare five (5) lists of films (filmographies) with brief notations of films, each representing a different film genre, with at least ten (10) titles on each list. Indicate the criteria you used to choose the 5 genres and the films you included on each. Indicate any film resources you used.

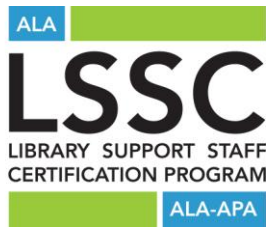
4.2 Prepare six (6) lists of films (filmographies) of films with at least six (6) titles on each list of films by a particular director or featuring a certain lead actor or actress. Three of the lists should represent directors and three should represent particular lead actors or actresses. Indicate why you chose each director and actor/actress and how they relate to the community you serve. Indicate any film resources you used.

**Competency 5. Online and print readers' advisory tools and reviewing sources.**

#### Portfolio Development Suggestions

5.1 Select three (3) online and three (3) print readers' advisory tools and/or reviewing sources and describe for each how they can be used in general and how you have used them to assist persons in selecting something to read or finding out more about an author or his/her work. For what type of question or situation is each tool especially helpful?

5.2 On the Internet, there are interactive sites and blogs that ask for user reviews and ratings of books and other media. Find such a site, preferably one used by people in your area, and read through the contributions. Pick five titles and compare the reviews/comments of the titles by contributors to reviews of the same titles in a professionally published source (print or online). What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to commentary and recommendation? Whose opinion would you be more likely to accept? Why?



**Competency 6. Formats appropriate for persons with disabilities affecting vision, hearing, or understanding.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

6.1 Describe how you would approach making recommendations of library materials for a person of limited vision, a person who is severely hearing-impaired and a person with a mental impairment such as Down Syndrome. What questions would you ask to determine their abilities and interests? What formats would you recommend? Where would you find materials in appropriate formats if nothing is available in your library?

6.2 Describe how you would approach making recommendations of library materials for a person with learning disabilities or very low reading level. What questions would you ask to determine their abilities and interests? What formats would you recommend? Where would you find materials at appropriate reading levels for them?

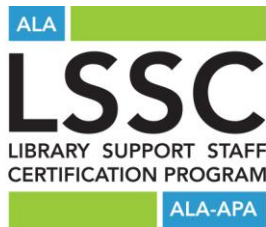
**Competency 7. Use online and print readers' advisory tools and reviewing sources.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

7.1 For six (6) fiction titles, locate reviews in at least three different resources, including both print and online resources. Do the same for six (6) film titles and for six (6) musical recordings. Which is more authoritative? Which makes you want to read the book (see the film or hear the music)? Why? Based on the reviews, would you buy the title for your library's collection? Why or why not?

7.2 Select at least five titles that would help the person asking the questions below. What questions would you ask to determine what they want? Explain where you got the recommendations you give and why you made the choices you made.

- a) "I just read the best book by Ray Bradbury; can you recommend other authors I would like as much?"
- b) "I just read the best book that had a librarian as a detective. Can you recommend other books by other authors where the librarian solves the mystery?"
- c) "I really like romance books but I don't want any graphic sex or dirty words. Can you recommend some authors for me?"
- d) "I like fiction set in exotic locations such as the Middle East. Can you suggest some authors or titles?"



**Competency 8. Briefly and succinctly describe the plot of a book, film, or other media and its appeal.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

8.1 Write six (6) brief synopses of books and three (3) brief synopses of films, including mention of titles of similar appeal, if possible.

8.2 Give an example of a particular audience in your community (for example, a service club such as Rotary or Kiwanis, a senior activity center, a PTA group, etc.) and prepare a program of book/media talks for a twenty minute presentation.

8.3 Video or audio tape or provide a script of a book talk that you give for adults covering at least 5 books. In your presentation indicate why you chose these books, describe the plot in an entertaining way and engage the audience in a discussion of other books in the same genres.

**Competency 9. Determine users' interests and make connections between their interests and similar works.**

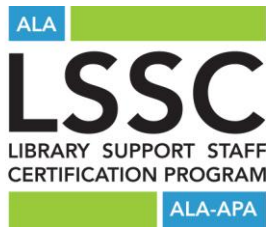
Portfolio Development Suggestions

9.1 When someone asks, "What would you recommend for me to read (or listen or view)?" what questions would you ask to determine their interests? Give at least five examples.

9.2 For fans of six (6) different popular authors, make a list of at least five other books by different authors that might appeal to the reader (for example, Stephen King, Robert Ludlum, Danielle Steele, etc) and explain why the titles might appeal (for example, similar plot, setting, type of character, etc).

9.3 For fans of six (6) different popular films of the last three years, make a list of at least five earlier film titles that might appeal to the viewer and explain why the titles might appeal.

9.4 Pick a controversial topic on which you have a strong opinion. Suppose you were asked for recommendations of books to read that come from the opposite viewpoint. Identify five quality resources in support of the position opposite to your own and indicate why you chose these resources and the source of the resources.



**Competency 10. Make recommendations without judgment regarding reading, listening, or viewing preferences.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

10.1 What is your favorite type of reading? Make five recommendations of titles in each of three different genres (for example, if you like mysteries, recommend titles in fantasy, adventure and romance), giving brief information about each title.

10.2 What is your favorite type of music? If you like jazz, select three different genres of music (for example classical, blue grass or opera) and make five recommendations of musical artists in these genres. Give brief information about each artist and why they are significant to that genre.

10.3 What is your favorite type of film? If you like romances, select three different genres of film (for example, cartoons, mysteries or action) and make five recommendations of the best films that represent that genre. Give brief information about each film, the genre it represents and why it is considered one of the best representatives of that genre.

10.4 Imagine that a library user asks for recommendations for books on a topic about which you have strong negative opinions and feelings. What techniques would you use to deal with your feelings and opinions and remain non-judgmental with the user? Discuss your ideas with other staff and share your revised techniques.

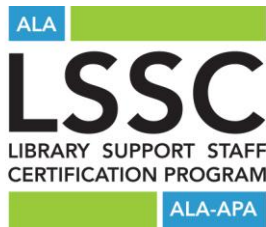
**Competency 11. Assist users with finding specific titles in their preferred format.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

11.1 Give three (3) examples of a multi-format title (for example, print, large print, audio book on CD, downloadable format) and explain how you would determine the user's preference, how you would help them identify the preferred format in the library catalog and how you would help them obtain the title. You could prepare this in writing or have someone make a video of you negotiating the transaction.

11.2 Write a guide explaining how a new library user would find titles in preferred formats using the online catalog or other guides in the library. What do the codes, terms, acronyms, locations, etc., mean?

**Competency 12. Assist in developing, promoting and implementing programs based on the library collections, such as book discussions, summer reading programs,**



film, and media programs.

### Portfolio Development Suggestions

12.1 Describe three (3) examples of a book discussion, summer reading program and/or film program that you developed for a library audience. What techniques did you use to help to promote the library collection? How do you know whether the program was a successful promotion?

12.2 Video or audio tape or provide a script of a program that you planned or helped plan. Evaluate the program and indicate what you would do differently next time.

12.3 Find and critique three online book discussion groups or a library website promoting one of these types of programs. What do the programs have in common and how do they differ? To whom would the online programs and promotions be appealing?

12.4 Find the events calendar or interview staff from three libraries about their programming based on their library's collections. How do they select a program? How and where do they advertise? What programs were most popular, and why do the staff feel they were successful?

**Competency 13. Assist in compiling resource lists and displays of books, recordings, films, and media by genre, historical period, subject, author, composer, or director.**

### Portfolio Development Suggestions

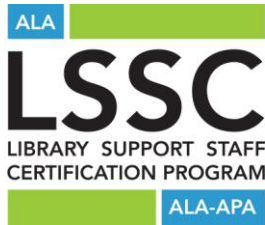
Currently under review.

**Competency 14. Suggest additions to the collection based on trends in materials requested and borrowed.**

### Portfolio Development Suggestions

14.1 Based on statistics for the past three years, which Fiction genre (ie Mystery, Romance, Science Fiction, Western, Chick Lit, or Graphic Novels) is most popular at your library? Suggest five titles to be added in each of the most popular two genres.

14.2 Based on statistics for the past three years, who are three of the most popular Fiction authors at your library? . Select two new titles for the collection that might appeal to readers of each of the three authors ( 6 titles in all). Indicate the tools you used to make your selections.



14.3 Review the reserve list for DVD's and non-fiction for the past six months and identify the top three most requested titles. If you had money to purchase 10 additional items in the format, would you purchase added copies of the requested items, new titles or a combination? Defend your selections.