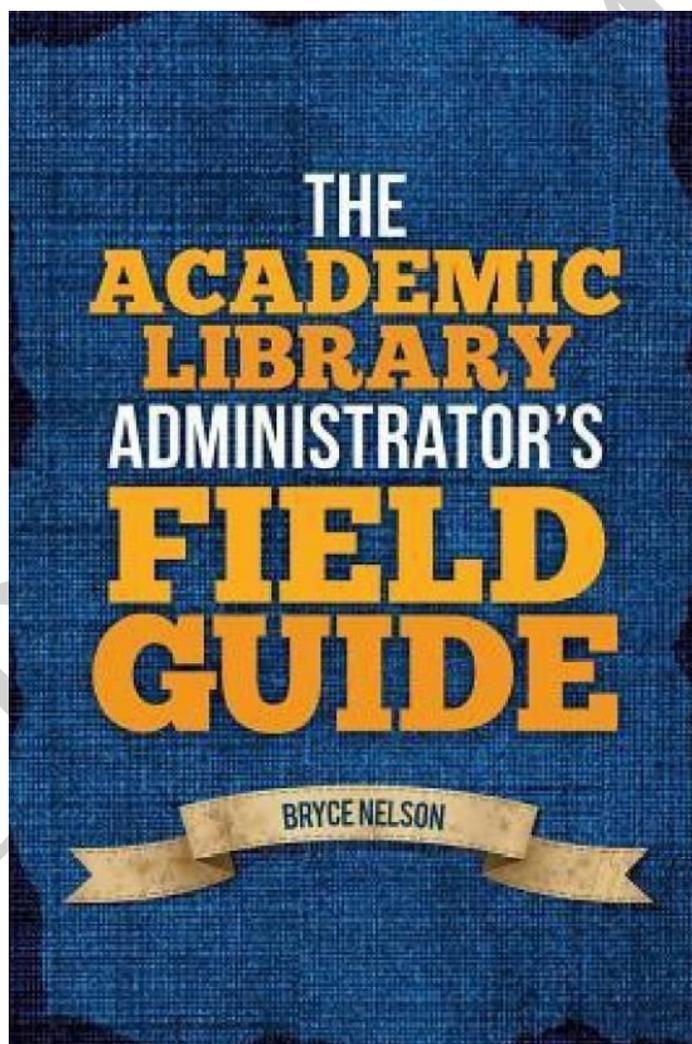


***BOOK REVIEW***

**By Vrushali S. Kulkarni**

**The Academic Library Administrator's Field Guide. By Bryce Nelson.**  
Chicago: ALA, 2014. 224 p. \$70 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1223-2).



The Academic Library Administrator's Field Guide is authored by **Dr. Bryce Nelson**. He was University Librarian at Seattle Pacific University and Director of the libraries for the Seattle Public Schools. He is affiliate faculty at the University of Washington's Information School and Seattle Pacific University's School of Education.

Library administration is a learned skill. The Academic Library Administrator's Field Guide, is an excellent resource for newcomers and more experienced hands as well.

In the daily administration of an academic library, you need quick advice on the topic at hand. Author Bryce Nelson, an experienced library administrator in academic library settings, has packed quite a bit of useful and thought-provoking information and advice into a small package. The book is organized in three sections. The first is about the Academic Librarian's role in positioning the library as a core part of the institution. They must be effective among other campus administrators. The next section is about managing staff effectively. Librarians must be competent managers of library staff. When the tasks in these sections are done well, then there is a higher chance of the success with the tasks in the third section, i.e. providing effective library services.

In the beginning of this book, author has stated the various definitions and their roles that are further used in the book as standard terms. Overall, there are thirty chapters. Each topic is presented in a standard format: **assertion** (a one-sentence summary allowing you to rapidly scan the book and find what you need), **commentary** (This section in each chapter offer observations and interpretation, with abundant examples of useful advice), **application** (examples of good practices), and **reading** (reference to books, articles, websites and blogs that may be useful for further research on the Chapter's topic. This structure helps the reader in finding out needed information easily and quickly within each section.

When you're on the job you can use this guide for ready-to-use guidance on the full range of administrator responsibilities, such as

- How to think and act wisely
- Preparing staff for safety and security procedures
- Influencing student and faculty's perception of the library as a basic component of education
- Promoting librarians' professional identity as teachers
- Communicating effectively, from email messages to meetings
- Assessment and systematic collection of data

Unique feature of this book is that, the chapters need not be read sequentially nor does the book need to be read cover by cover. As its name suggests, individual chapter is best read when there is a need for information on that topic.

The author's own professional experience is discussed in his inclusion of some topics rarely featured in these types of guides, especially in the section dealing with staff management. For example, the chapter on "**tone**" discusses the need to encourage library staff for work well done and to promote a positive tone in order to make the library desirable and productive place to work. Another is the chapter titled "**Professional Development**", which presents importance of working together with continuously updating new skills and content. This chapter gives list of **Daily Reading** content that Librarians must check. In seventh chapter, he reinforces that faculty are gatekeepers for students use of library. In 8th chapter, it provides guidance on planning for safety and security in case of any unexpected events. In 3rd section of providing effective library services, it covers many important aspects such as use of Information and communication technology in library services, open access to information, **Intellectual property** and many more. As Nelson states in his introduction, the book is meant to be "an overview for busy leaders 'in the field' who realistically don't have much time to read, think, and talk about their work". For those times when Librarians do have extra time to read and reflect, the "Reading"

feature in each chapter offers quite useful lists of relevant and more comprehensive books, standards, guidelines, reports, websites, and journal articles.

This book is a field guide for academic librarians at any level of experience. After reading this book, new librarians can develop their library from scratch in a good manner using this book's recipe. Experienced Librarians might review their current scenario and use this guide differently. This book is also useful for higher authorities of any academic institution, as it also guides about responsibilities of Director, i.e. Head of institution. Primarily focused towards academic librarians, this book offers more general management information useful for library professionals in other institutions as well. Nevertheless, this book can be inspirational model so as how to write a book in systematic way. To summarize, this book is the best book I have read ever in the field of library science.

**Bio**

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