

# HOW TO COVER A SYSTEMS LIBRARIAN SABBATICAL AND OTHER GAPS IN COVERAGE: DOING TEMPORARY WORK FOR OTHER INSTITUTIONS IN 2022

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SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

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# HOW THIS MIGHT BE RELEVANT TO YOU & YOUR INSTITUTION

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- Our experience won't just apply to systems librarian sabbaticals
- You may also need to cover:
  - Medical leave or personal leaves
  - Family care
  - Parental leaves
  - Gaps in employment

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## WHO WE ARE: CHRISTINA

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- Christina Hennessey
- Systems Librarian at California State University, Northridge
- Alma/Primo administrator
- Library faculty
- Worked in libraries for 22 years
- In California State system since 2018



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## WHO WE ARE: KAREN

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- Karen G. Schneider
- Dean of the Library, Jean and Charles Schulz Information Center, at Sonoma State University
- Over 30 years of library experience: academic, public, special, consortia, and vendors
- Member of the California State University Council of Library Deans



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# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



- 23 campuses, one “Chancellor’s Office”
- Largest four-year public university system in the United States. 477k students
- Northridge in “Southern California,” part of the City of Los Angeles. 39k students
- Sonoma in “Northern California,” 400 miles (645 km) north of Northridge, 8k students
- Shared Alma/Primo since 2017 (ULMS, or Unified Library Management Systems)



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## HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?

- In Cal State Slack channels
- May 2021 posting by Laura Krier, Sonoma State librarian:

CalState Libraries ▾

Slack Connect

*Is anyone in the CSU interested in a little additional work as a paid consultant to Sonoma State for Alma-related issues? I'm going on sabbatical in Spring 2022, and while I'm working to train a crew of folks at SSU to handle issues that arise, an interest has been expressed in paying someone in the CSU to serve as a backup and support consultant for our local folks. The dean has confirmed that we have some funding for this, so I'm reaching out to see if there's interest. It's a little vague at this point what it will entail, and I'd happily work with someone in the fall to fine-tune expectations.*

- I expressed my interest
- Ask your chair and your Dean

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## FALL 2021 PLANNING

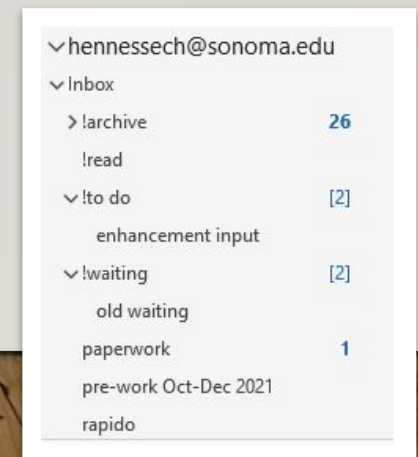
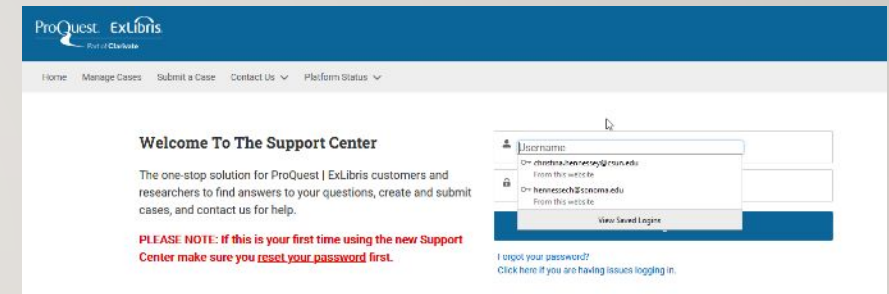
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- Not much happened (for me) until August 2021
- Plans to have two long meetings in Fall 2021 for training/questions
- An offer in September 2021
- Paid in addition to my Northridge paycheck
- Online position only - led to contradictory emails from HR that I needed to show up on my first day or be fired
- Plan to be hired, fired, and rehired in January 2022

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## PRE-SABBATICAL WORK IN FALL 2021

- Access to system early
- All the logons and accounts I would need
- Sonoma email access
- I had a huge list of questions prepared for each meeting
- Meeting in December included meeting all the people at Sonoma I would be working with
- Honest details about the department & library personnel





## 9 JANUARY 2022-MAY 2022: SABBATICAL COVERAGE

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- Weekly meetings with Technical Services, also all-library meetings and library technology meetings
- Was added to appropriate listservs, not just in library but Sonoma faculty lists and all-staff
- Didn't contact Laura (or copy her on things)

Tech Services meeting agenda



mary.wegmann@sonoma.edu

To

Hi tech services!

Happy New Year! I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our meeting tomorrow. I started an agenda/mi


In addition to welcoming Christina and introducing ourselves, I thought it would be good to share what we are doing and what you have on your plate this semester. Let me know if you have anything to add to the agenda.

# EXAMPLES OF WORK COVERED

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- Concerns a project like Primo VE might come up (such as Rapido)
- Regular systems questions and problems
- “How do you do this at Northridge?”
- CSU-wide changes or requests
- Spreadsheet of work
- Spreadsheet of system changes

[ulms-techservices] Local Fields in Primo VE - Updates by March 30, 2022

 Brinna Pam Anan <bpanan@cpp.edu>  
To: Technical Services communication for ULMS project

 You replied to this message on 2/8/2022 10:24 AM.

Hi all,

The [ULMS Resource Management Functional Committee](#) would like your help! We are asking all campuses to inform or update us of any [Local Fields](#) you are using in your Primo VE instances.

Please review [this list](#) at Confluence and send any Local Fields and Definitions to Pam, RMFC Chair, at [bpanan@cpp.edu](mailto:bpanan@cpp.edu) by Wednesday, March 30, 2022.

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,  
Pam



# WHAT MADE THIS WORK

- Trust at both campuses based on experience working with each other
- Structure of ULMS, Slack, CSU listservs
- We had remote work experience already
- Time-tracking experience (Toggl)
- Completely focused on systems support for this position and not other faculty duties
- Keeping up with local/campus news



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# THINGS WE DIDN'T PLAN FOR OR EXPECT...

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- Needed more communication to Sonoma staff that I was being PAID for this work
- Not sure if I should tell my Northridge colleagues?
- Personnel changes/announcements in CSU & Sonoma
- Communication about CSU-wide issues



## 13 WHAT DID I GET OUT OF IT (PROFESSIONALLY)?

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- Jump start in my career and energy
- Learning another system was exciting
- Troubleshooting problems in one site was easier with a second site to test on
- Good ideas of what needs to be done for my own future sabbaticals (or long leaves)

## 14 The Dean's View

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- The inevitable roadblocks were surmountable, with persistence and patience
- The pre-work we contracted for prior to the sabbatical semester was a wise investment
- The Library embraced Christina, who was a faithful participant in library meetings and activities and has an outgoing personality
- This model could work for other types of support in “one-deep” positions

## 15 Power of 23

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- The move to a 23-library shared system in 2017 greatly increased the likelihood that in 2021 SSU could find temporary Ex Libris support within the CSU
- Increased synergy/relationships among CSU campuses help strengthen the neural network of the CSU Libraries as a system
- Preexisting relationships among the 23 peer deans “grease the wheels” for these types of coverage opportunities

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## PRESENTATIONS LEAD TO OPPORTUNITIES

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- I did a version of this presentation in mid-June 2022 for all the Cal State Library Deans
- TEN MINUTES after the presentation, another CSU had asked me if I was interested in doing some temporary work for them...starting in three weeks!
- Started temporary work for Chico State in July 2022





# 17 HOW THE EXPERIENCE AT CHICO STATE HAS BEEN DIFFERENT (SO FAR)

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- Didn't get the pre-work time – meant the first few weeks were very busy with learning curve
- Covering not just a sabbatical but a failed search – a long gap in systems coverage
- Rapido was in place but needed work
- Different setup with payment – paid at the end of the contract instead of monthly
- More people working physically in library in Fall 2022 vs. Spring 2022

## GOING FORWARD

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- Thank you to all the library Deans for making this possible!
- I think this can work for other institutions with coverage gaps in the right situation & personnel
- Nice new relationship between institutions
- More temporary work?

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# QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR EXPERIENCE? DO YOU HAVE SOME SIMILAR EXPERIENCES TO SHARE?

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