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The New Face of Library Public Services

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The New Face of Library Public Services

Jocelyn Tipton joins library in newly created position

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New to the state and University of Mississippi, Jocelyn Tipton brings her 20 years of library experience to the position of assistant dean of public services in library administration.

The position was recently created to help coordinate the efforts of the public service departments within the library, which include Instruction and Outreach, Information Services, Access Services, Interlibrary Loan, Web Services and the Science Library.

Tipton, who began June 1, seeks to improve interaction with library patrons and make public services, or the “face” of the library, a priority.

One of her goals is to find innovative ways to integrate the library into courses and students’ lives.

“The UM libraries are continuously adding resources, collections, and offering new services, and it may be difficult for students and faculty to keep up,” Tipton said.

Tipton would like to increase marketing and outreach efforts so that people take advantage of the library’s offerings.

“I want people to have a good experience when using the library, whether using the services provided in the building or online,” she said.

Prior to accepting this position, Tipton was head of reference services at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Ill. Her other employment included a number of public service positions at Ivy League research institutions such as Yale and Johns Hopkins.

Growing up in Westminster, Md., Tipton worked at the local public library as a teen. She obtained a bachelor’s degree in political science with a minor in secondary education from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College), a master’s degree in library science from the University of Maryland at College Park and a master’s of political science at Eastern Illinois University.

She said she saw in Ole Miss an opportunity to bring all of her experiences to a leadership role and guide the direction of a library.

“Jocelyn brings to this position a wealth of public service experience at several universities,” said Julia Rholes, dean of libraries. “With this background and knowledge, she can really help us grow and improve our library services and collections.”

While working with political resources and students in the Government Documents Library at Johns Hopkins University, Tipton said she learned that she loved not only working with students but also impacting their overall learning experience.

“I enjoy the research process, which is a daunting task for many students,” she said. “With the right skills and tools that transfer across a number of classes, anyone can be successful and enjoy learning.”

Tipton also said she believes that her experience as a faculty member (she taught Intro to International Relations and a few graduate courses in library science) made her a better librarian and manager.

“Usually, librarians only interact with students for one assignment or for a short period of time. By experiencing the classroom setting, I got a better sense of what the students bring to the table,” said Tipton. “I was also able to understand the needs of faculty and what tools the library could provide to make them better instructors.”

In addition to her activities within the library, Tipton said she would like to get involved with some of the

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broader university committees.

She lives in Oxford with her husband, Philip Tracey, and both enjoy spending time outdoors with their two dogs.

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