

Librarians supporting professional master’s students in the social and policy sciences

Growth area in graduate education – do libraries need to do anything differently to support these programs?

Some characteristics of academic degrees and professional degrees
 What else? Do you agree? What are the implications for libraries and librarians?

Academic master’s degree	Professional master’s degree	Library/librarian implications
Prepares students for doctorate Career development inside academia	Prepares student for advanced professional or managerial responsibilities Career development outside of academia	
Development of knowledge-generation skills	Application of knowledge to real world problems	
Advanced research skills	Understand what good research looks like and how to do it, but not necessarily produce original academic research	
Students may be preparing for, or trying out the idea of doctorate	Considered a terminal degree for practitioners	
Theory development, intellectual growth as producer of knowledge	Advanced decision making and managerial and possibly policy analysis skills	
Usually discipline-based (an academic perspective)	Often professional-field based (public administration, business administration, social work, clinical psychology, criminal justice)	
Students may join program straight from undergraduate degree	Students may be mid-career with years of professional experience	
If career advances in academia, will continue to have access to scholarly literature	Practitioners may have limited access to scholarly literature	
Thesis or Capstone usually required	Possibly internship or practicum more important than thesis/capstone	
Learn research & reference management skills for scholarly work	Little emphasis put on helping students manage research & reference process	

