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OPPORTUNITY

Academic libraries can provide additional **experiential learning opportunities** on their campuses AND provide undergraduates with early exposure to the library profession by offering **for-credit undergraduate library internships**. Interns may come from any discipline in which the internship is accepted as a course credit toward the fulfillment of their undergraduate degree.



The focus is on engaging students in librarian-like work in order for them to experience the profession. Interns are not student assistants.

BENEFITS OF AN INTERNSHIP

- **Students** gain experiential learning, credit toward their degree, and exposure to librarianship before applying for graduate school.
- The **library** raises its profile by contributing to the academic mission of the university, potentially helping channel students into the profession, and engaging librarians in credit-based teaching.
- The **university** benefits by having an additional offering in its suite of experiential learning opportunities.

COURSE CREDIT RATHER THAN CASH

In an academic internship students earn credit rather than money. The library does not have to secure funding, and credits earned count toward a student's undergraduate degree. The internship is integrated seamlessly into the academic career of students, counting for a single class (3 credit units at the U of S).



ACADEMIC UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARY INTERNSHIPS AT THE U OF S

The background work is complete, and we expect to offer our first undergraduate library internship in January 2017.

Administrative Structure:

- The Library partnered with the College of Arts and Science (A&S) to house the internship since we cannot offer credit-based programming. The course credit will **count toward undergraduate A&S degrees**.
- The administrative **infrastructure** is provided by A&S, where the course is approved, advertised, and administered
- One librarian will be the **course instructor** who oversees the course itself, the planning and registration permissions, the seminar component, and assessment for all interns.
- Other librarians will serve as **workplace supervisors** and will oversee the experiential component for individual interns in coordination with the course instructor.
- The internship lasts for **one term**, and we plan to offer it every January.

Student experience:

- The internship is **for undergrads in A&S** who have completed at least 60 credit units (so they should be in at least 3rd year).
- **2-5 students** will be accepted every time the internship is offered.
- As an academic internship, there is a **work experience** component (70 hours of appropriate librarian-like work overseen by the workplace supervisor) and a 2-hour **weekly seminar** focused on current issues, librarian roles, etc.
- Students will attend **seminars**, prepare **assignments**, and complete **work experience** projects throughout the term. They will be assigned a numerical **final grade** which will appear on their transcript.

TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Establish **Buy-in**

- ✓ Ensure you have the support of your library (time, resources, space).
- ✓ Ensure that your library and colleagues understand the goals and structure of the internship, and how they can participate as workplace supervisors. Plan to hold information sessions, share progress, answer questions etc.
- ✓ Identify any necessary partners outside of the library and share your idea to ensure your course will be counted toward meeting the program requirements for the undergraduates for whom it is intended.
- ✓ Ensure that your work assignment includes teaching the course.

Meet **Deadlines**

- ✓ Begin planning well in advance to learn your local bureaucratic processes and to meet annual or monthly external deadlines for submitting a syllabus, having courses approved and added to the course calendar etc.
- ✓ Ensure that your course is approved and included in the university's course listings for the term it will be offered.
- ✓ Talk to interested workplace supervisors to identify potential work projects for interns before registration opens.
- ✓ Prepare your selection criteria and be ready to meet/interview potential interns when registration opens.

Make **Prep Materials**

- ✓ Design the course and syllabus, using any required templates and taking advantage of workshops offered by your teaching and learning centre to develop necessary skills.
- ✓ Prepare materials to assist workplace supervisors in their role (statement of goals and other details, learning contract template, work experience assessment guide).

ASK YOURSELF THESE PRE-PLANNING QUESTIONS



Assess institutional support and readiness by asking these questions:

- ✓ Can you identify supporters for this initiative outside of the library (i.e. Department Heads, administrators, other faculty)?
- ✓ Is your library allowed/positioned to offer credit-based programming? If not who can you partner with to house your internship?
- ✓ Will your library commit to provide a librarian with the time to teach a course?
- ✓ Will other librarians be interested in supervising the work experience component for your interns, and how will this work be assigned?
- ✓ How will librarians at your institution be recognized and rewarded for teaching a course or serving as workplace supervisors? For example, will this work be recognized within your tenure, promotion, and merit processes?



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Poster available at
<http://hdl.handle.net/10388/7072>
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