Southern Connecticut State University

College of Education

Department of Information and Library Science

**ILS 582 Library Science Internship**

**Guidelines**

**INTRODUCTION**

A professional field experience (internship) is central to the program for all MLIS students. If a student has not previously worked in a library or archives, this experience will allow them to apply what she or he learned in the classroom in a practical manner. For students who presently work or have worked in a library or archives, this will provide a well-rounded experience that can add value to their résumé. Students with library or archives experience are strongly advised to seek an internship that will broaden their experience, such as in a different type of library or in a specialized unit of a library. Students who choose to branch out into new areas are encouraged to complete relevant courses before the internship or work with SCSU faculty to provide some form of alternative academic training.

This internship provides experiential learning that contributes to creating and strengthening the “serving to learn and learning to serve” ethic that reflects the core responsibilities of the library and information science professions (ALA, 2006). Internships as academic service learning provide experiences that are intentional in their purpose to mutually benefit the provider and the recipient of the service, as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring (ALISE, 1990; Furco, 1996).

The goal of the ILS program is to provide a rich research-based learning experience that links theory to practice, promotes ethical development as professionals, as well as ensuring hands-on experience in libraries and information agencies (Cooper, 2013; Nutefall, 2012).

**REQUIREMENTS**

Students applying for the internship program must:

* Must be matriculated into the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program
* Have completed fifteen credits towards the MLIS degree
* Follow any special procedures as specified by the host institution, such as completing background checks and fingerprinting for school library placements

**PROCEDURE AND POLICIES**

An internship assignment requires a minimum of 150 hours. Often this requirement is carried out as a regularly scheduled number of hours each week of the semester, but other scheduling is permitted if both the student and site supervisor agree. Most of the internship will be comprise of professional experience in a library, archives, or other information institution, while about one-fifth (30 hours) will consist of academic experience.

A student may complete their agreed upon hours and assignment during the semester in which they are registered for the ILS 582 course, or may extend the hours to a second semester with the permission of their academic advisor and the site supervisor.

An internship experience cannot be completed in the same organization in which a student is currently, or was formerly, employed. The academic advisor and the instructor of the course will make the decision regarding the appropriateness of a field study placement.

The site supervisor at the host institution must be professionally qualified, possessing an MLIS or MLS degree or other relevant credentials.

The internship coordinator is responsible for reviewing the site supervisor’s qualifications and determining if her or his background and capabilities are appropriate in relationship to the student’s goals. Additionally, the internship coordinator will make an informed evaluation as to the ability of the potential site and supervisor to provide a professional-level educational experience for the student, considering such factors as the supervisor’s expressed intentions for the student, the supervisor’s workload, and the supervisor’s autonomy within the workplace environment. The academic advisor will ensure that the site supervisor understands that the student is there to learn as well as work.

**Steps to arranging an internship:**

1. The student must contact the internship coordinator the semester *before* enrolling in the course.
2. The internship coordinator will provide appropriate internship documentation.
3. The student reviews internship requirements.
4. The student selects potential internship locations, *understanding that they may not get their first choice.*
5. **With internship coordinator approval**, the student contacts the potential location and confirms availability of internship position.
6. If a position is available, the student will provide internship guidelines and documents to their potential site supervisor or relevant HR contact.
7. The student will arrange an interview with the library or archives supervisor.
8. If both the student and potential site supervisor agree on the placement, the student will fill out the Internship Application form and submit to the internship coordinator.
9. The internship coordinator will contact the potential site and confirm acceptance and provide formal documentation as a sponsoring institution and confirm student schedule.
10. The student will register for ILS 582.
11. The internship coordinator will be responsible for university supervision and will work with the student and site supervisor to select readings that will help enhance the student’s knowledge for their relevant site.
12. The internship coordinator or supervising faculty will visit and observe the intern during the semester. In certain instances, discussed below, the “visit” may occur in an online format.

**EVALUATION**

A Pass/Fail grade will be issued for successfully completed internships.

The following documents must be submitted to the internship coordinator at the completion of the internship course to receive a grade:

* Completed Evaluation Form or Evaluation Letter from the site supervisor
* Journal entries from throughout the semester, documenting the student’s experience
* Summary and reflection of the internship experience, in the form of an 12-15 page academic paper
* Samples and evidence of work accomplished

**References**

American Library Association. (2006). *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.* American Library Association, July 7, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics> (Accessed January 27, 2017)

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Cooper, L. (2013). Student reflections on an LIS internship from a service learning perspective supporting multiple learning theories. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 54(4).

Furco, A. (1996) Service-Learning: A Balanced Approach to Experiential Education. *Expanding Boundaries: Service and Learning*. Washington DC: Corporation for National Service, 2-6.

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