
GRADUATE INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

2016- 2017

LIS 690 Internship

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of library and information studies, the association of Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) defines an internship (field experience) as "learning by experience in a professional work setting." ALISE sees development of new information professionals as a partnership effort shared by schools, the organizations that host such professionals-in-training, and the interns themselves.

One of the goals of the Palmer School's Master's degree program is to educate and prepare students who will be knowledgeable, skilled, and committed members of the library and information science profession. Another is to provide a strong, relevant curriculum through which students develop the abilities for leadership and service in the field. This is consistent with the mission of LIU, which stresses the importance of experience-enriched learning.

The long list of sites that have hosted Palmer School students includes: New York Public Library, The American Museum of Natural History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Baldwin Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library, East Hampton Library, Frick Collection, Brooklyn Historical Society, The Center for Fiction, Ehrman Medical Library (NYU School of Medicine), Friends Academy, Great Neck South Middle School, John Jay High School, Columbia University, LIU, Adelphi University, Museum of the City of New York, the New-York Historical Society, American Foundation for the Blind, and the Conjuring Arts Research Center, to name just a few.

2. GENERAL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The internship is intended to provide students with a professional experience that demonstrates the nature of the responsibilities and roles of librarians and archivists. The intention of this internship is for students to apply the theory and knowledge they have gained through their coursework. Students will be eligible to begin this internship when the following courses have been completed: LIS 510, 511, 512, and 514, and when they have earned a total of 27 credits.

Internship, LIS 690, requires a total of 120 hours of supervised work in a library, museum, corporate, cultural, archives, or other appropriate setting. The class associated with the internship meets a total of three times. The internship course requires completion of work in the field along with written assignments.

The Learning Contract helps guide the focus of the internship and forms a three-way partnership among students, site supervisors who are practicing librarians or archivists, and Palmer School faculty. Site selection is the responsibility of the intern, with the guidance of a faculty advisor, and it is expected that sites are chosen the semester prior to registering for LIS 690. If a student needs suggestions for sites, s/he should contact the Director of Internships. However, ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to ascertain that the site s/he selects is one that will offer a quality learning experience in an appropriate environment. Internship faculty will assess the intern's performance in consultation with the site supervisor.

Initial site selection is done by students in the semester before the one in which they take the course. Selection of a site is done under the guidance of a Faculty Advisor. The Internship classes are taught by Instructors who are either full-time or adjunct faculty members. They meet with the students three times during the semester as a group and monitor their progress as Interns.

INTERN CHARACTERISTICS

Students should plan to do their internships at sites that match their career interests and where they can use their academic backgrounds. Interns in the Palmer School program must meet the following criteria:

- * Maintain a 3.0 Grade Point Average or above;
- * Are in their last semester or have completed at least 27 out of 36 credits in the M.S. program, including the four core classes (LIS 510, 511, 512, and 514) (Exceptions may be made in special cases.)
- * Meet any special host site requirements, such as citizenship, security requirements, educational level and/or standing, and course requirements.
- * Successfully apply to the site and complete an interview with the site representatives.

3. GETTING STARTED

Unless you are familiar with the site at which you will be doing your internship, the following may be helpful in getting adjusted...

First Impressions:

Be on time and adhere to schedules. Dress professionally, but with some sensitivity to the organization's dress codes, even if they are not written. At some sites, suits will be expected, while at others, the professionals may be less formally dressed. If you are not sure how formal your attire should be, ask your Site Supervisor.

Fitting In:

You may or may not have your own "space" whether it is an office, a cubicle, or a desk.

Since Interns are generally taken on with a view to helping educate future professionals, you may be viewed as both a blessing and a burden by staff at the site.

To make your experience useful for everyone concerned, you can help by asking questions and going the extra mile from time to time.

Orientation:

You may be given an orientation that will include a tour, talks about policies, and other information you will need to know. This should familiarize you with the environment of the organization where you are doing your internship and help you to adapt to it.

If you are not given a formal orientation, you should ask your Site Supervisor to spend a little time with you so you understand the organization as a whole.

You might ask for information about working hours, how work and units are organized, and who you can ask questions of should your Site Supervisor not be available.

4: EXPECTATIONS

Objectives for an internship cannot be fulfilled unless all parties understand the purpose and nature of the experience. This includes the student, the School's faculty, and the Supervisor at the site that hosts an intern.

Students while interning are expected to:

- * learn about the field and apply the theory that has been acquired through formal courses;
- * respect and adhere to the Learning Contract;
- * have a clear definition of their project(s) and responsibilities during the internship;
- * be given information and instruction about the organization in which they are doing their internship, along with their role in it;
- * understand and fit into the host site's organization and environment;
- * be able to do the projects that are assigned;
- * be treated as a professional and a colleague;
- * conduct themselves in a professional and a productive manner;
- * be responsible, have a good attitude and be interested in learning;
- * be responsive and display initiative.

The Palmer School faculty expectation is that:

- * students will make arrangements for doing an internship one semester prior to the one in which it is actually done;
- * students will take responsibility for selecting the site, applying to the site, and arranging an interview, subject to Advisor's approval;
- * students will read the syllabus for their internship (see Appendix A or B), complete the Learning Contract (see appendix C) and negotiate the necessary approvals;

- * students will keep in touch with their Advisor and the Instructor, especially if there is a change in the status of the Learning Contract or other problems;
- * assignments will be turned in on time;
- * interns will attend and participate in the three scheduled class meetings.

Site Supervisors are expected to:

- * provide an appropriate introduction to the organization and the intern's role in it;
- * respect and adhere to the Learning Contract;
- * treat an intern as a professional;
- * provide adequate instruction about specific tasks and procedures;
- * treat the internship as an opportunity to participate in the educational process.

Internship students are strongly encouraged to contact LIU's Career Services office and to take advantage of all they have to offer. Their services include job search counseling, résumé reviews and access to OptimalResume, mock interviews, and JobNet, which is an online job database for LIU students and alumni. For further information, contact LIU Career Services at 516 299-2251 or check their website <http://liu.edu/CWPost/StudentLife/CareerSrv.aspx> .

“The future of work consists of learning a living”

Marshall McLuhan, 1911-1980

5. THE LIS 690 INTERNSHIP

The Palmer School's LIS 690 Internship class covers internships at all library and information center sites except for School Media Centers. Sites can include academic (college or university) libraries, public libraries, special libraries, law libraries, medical libraries, libraries within companies, archives, museums, and historical societies.

The Palmer School maintains a list of sites that have hosted Palmer Interns in the past, as well as current internship opportunities each semester. Students may also apply at sites which have not previously hosted Palmer School interns, under the guidance and with the assistance of the Coordinator of Internships. Students are responsible for setting up their own internships, and this should be done during the semester prior to the one in which they take the LIS 690 class and do their internship hours. It can take some time to set up an internship, so students are strongly encouraged to start planning and applying early. Securing an internship is in some ways like finding a job and serves as a rehearsal for the job search: the student must apply, submit a resume, and be interviewed.

The LIS 690 class is graded on a PASS/FAIL basis and meets face-to-face three times during the semester. The rest of the students' time for the internship is spent at the site (120 hours) and working on written assignments.

Site Supervisors must be Master's degree-holding Librarians or Certified Archivists (for students who are working towards the Certificate of Advanced Study in Archives and Records Management in addition to the M.S., the Site Supervisor must be a Certified Archivist).

Learning Contract/Internship Form--

The Learning Contract is the most important document connected with an internship. It will guide your experience and define the expectations that you, the Palmer School, and the Site Supervisor have for the duration of your internship. It will define a common understanding of your internship. It should be discussed first with your Faculty Advisor or the Director of Internships, and then with the Site Supervisor once a site has accepted your application.

Résumé--

During the semester in which you choose your internship site and experience, a résumé should be prepared and submitted to the host site(s) that interest you. It is advisable that the Coordinator of Internships review the résumé, along with any site(s) and project(s) that interest you. When you are ready to approach a site, the usual way to do so is to contact the site and submit your résumé with a cover letter indicating your interest.

Student Evaluation Form--

At the end of the internship you will be asked to fill out a [Student Evaluation](#) form about your experience and the host site. This form should be completed and returned to your Internship class instructor. This information will not be used in establishing whether you pass or fail. It will remain confidential, and will be used by the School to monitor sites and the experiences they provide for graduate interns.

How Your Internship Is Assessed--

As part of the Learning Contract you will have selected various means by which your internship can be evaluated. During the first class meeting of LIS 690, if not before, the Instructor of the LIS 690 section in which you are registered should be given a copy of the Learning Contract previously approved by your Faculty Advisor or the Coordinator of Internships. The Instructor of LIS 690 will be deciding upon a PASS/FAIL on the basis of the Learning Contract, written assignments, class discussion and participation, and the Site Supervisor's evaluation of your internship.

Site Supervisor's Paperwork--

Before the end of your internship, the Site Supervisor is asked to prepare a [Supervisor's Evaluation](#) of you as an intern that is submitted to the Palmer School. Please note: this is a confidential form and should be scanned, sent or faxed by the Site Supervisor him/herself (please see instructions at bottom of evaluation form).

You may make an appointment with the Director of the Palmer School for a verbal summary of this evaluation if the Site Supervisor has not shared it with you.

6. LIS 690 INTERNSHIP SYLLABUS, LEARNING CONTRACT, AND EVALUATION FORMS

- The syllabus for the Internship class, LIS 690 is linked [here](#). Please review the syllabus so you have an understanding of what we expect from you.
- The [Learning Contract](#) will guide your experience and should be carefully constructed with input from your site supervisor.
- The [Student's Evaluation](#) of the internship is an important piece of information for Palmer and it is helpful to you as you consider your experience.
- Your site supervisor will evaluate you based upon this [Evaluation](#) form. Please review it prior to starting at the site so you are fully aware of what will be assessed at the end of your time there.

7. IN CASE OF PROBLEMS

If a problem arises during your internship, you have several resources that you can contact -- first, the Instructor for the LIS 690 class. Alternately, your Faculty Advisor, the Coordinator of Internships, the Director of the School Media Program and/or the Director of the Palmer School may be contacted depending on the nature of the problem. Normally, the instructor will work with you and your supervising professional to resolve the problem. Below are some situations that may arise, and how they can best be handled.

Absences and Medical Leaves --

Interns should contact the Site Supervisor and instructor for LIS 690 or 691 as soon as possible if an absence due to illness or emergency is necessary.

If the absence is the result of a work-related injury or illness, the student should also report the illness or injury to the Site Supervisor and ask for guidance in adhering to the host site's regulations.

If the absence is long enough that the required hours of work cannot be completed within the semester, interns must obtain approval from the LIS 690/691 instructor and the supervising professional to complete requirements in the subsequent semester and get an Incomplete for the course.

Holidays –

The University's calendar is not necessarily followed at an internship site. You should adhere to the holidays and schedule of the host organization and ignore things like spring break at the University. Special time off should be arranged with the Site Supervisor.

Change in Status --

If there is significant change in the nature of your work/project and it deviates from the Learning Contract, (e.g., doing non-professional tasks, or being assigned to different departments), you should speak with your LIS 690/691 instructor.

Interpersonal Relations --

In the rare situation where interpersonal conflict occurs at the internship site, you should first discuss it with the Site Supervisor. If this does not resolve the problem, or if the problem is with the Site Supervisor him/herself, speak to your LIS 690/691 instructor as quickly as possible.

Legal Issues --

Most internships will be unpaid. (U.S. Department of Labor, Fact Sheet #71:

Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>.)

Those fortunate enough to be offered paid internships can expect to have income tax, Social Security and other deductions taken from their pay. Financial aid, graduate assistantships etc. may be affected by paid internships, so these interns must report the number of hours worked to the School's Academic Counselor and/or the Associate Dean.

International students (F-1 visas) should check with the International Student Advisor about their eligibility for paid internships.

The University's policies on sexual harassment and discrimination (also in the Student Handbook) are explicit and must be adhered to by faculty, students, and supervising professionals. They can be found on LIU's Human Resources website:

<http://www.liu.edu/Human-Resources/Human-Resources-Policies/Anti-Harrassment-Discrimination-Policy>

Non-Resident Interns –

Students with F-1 visa status can be placed in internships, provided that the assignments are part of the program of classroom study and integrated with a structured and supervised off-campus experience. Host sites have the right to reject interns who are not permanent residents or U.S. citizens if security so warrants. International students (F-1 visas) may have restrictions placed on their acceptance of paid internships.

If there is any question at all about an international student doing an internship, the instructor/faculty advisor should contact the International Student Services Office at (516) 299-1451.

8. KEY NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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