

**Simmons College
Graduate School of Library and
Information Science**

**Internship in Library & Information Science
LIS 501
Spring, 2013
Room: L007**

Instructor: Mary Wilkins Jordan mary.wilkinsjordan@simmons.edu

Course description

The internship is approximately 150 hours of field experience that represents an important learning experience for the student. As a 3-credit course, it has a significant hands-on learning component. Through discussion with key personnel in the organization and working under professional librarian supervision the student gains hands-on experience in the information environment. Prerequisites: Completion of at least 18 credits of which 15 hours are the core courses.

The Internship Class will consist of three individual parts: 120 hours of work at the host location, nine hours of in-class meeting (three sessions), and weekly online discussion assignments. These pieces are assembled together to give interns an opportunity to work in an LIS organization suited to their skills and interests, but also to give them a connection to Simmons and the community of interns as they venture into the profession.

Course information

We will meet as a group three times during this semester. Students will set up work schedules with their host organizations, but it is generally anticipated they will work approximately ten hours per week for 12 weeks. This should give you plenty of time to finish your hours, and to take a short break, have time to get sick, etc. without any problems. You need to work with your host institution and supervisor to be sure you are meeting all your goals on time.

Each week we do not meet in person, there will be a discussion topic online. You will work together with a few others to put up meaningful and interesting discussion/projects/other material online for your peers. Posting a short reading is also a good thing (there can be multiple short readings – see the Assignments page for more info on the details).

Students are expected to contribute thoughtful comments to each topic after reading the material for the week. “Thoughtful comments” are multiple sentences, none of which consist of ideas such as “Yeah,” or “Me too,” or “You jerk!” At least one comment is required for each discussion topic, but students are encouraged to discuss as much as they wish on each topic. Sharing ideas and experiences will help everyone learn more about working in a professional position. Our goal is to

develop online thinking and writing skills, so please discourse at the graduate level: refrain from online-chat-style abbreviations, capitalize words appropriately, avoid discussing plans for the weekend – unless they involve internship-related topics.

There will be an additional discussion set up on the course website for general discussion or internship questions. These questions may be answered by the instructor or by other internship students. Part of the value of this online discussion forum is to share ideas with each other, and build connections with other student interns who will be professional colleagues after graduation.

At any time during the semester you can post questions to the general discussion on the class Moodle site, for the class or instructor to answer. If you have a question, it is likely someone else will have the same one – or will benefit from learning the answer to something they had not yet considered. And you can always email me with other questions.

The idea behind everything we will do this semester is to emerge from the class with practical work experience from the internship at the host institution, as well as a good understanding of some basic work ideas which will help you to be successful in your professional life.

Email

All emails from class will be sent to your Simmons email account. If you do not want to go to that account, make sure you forward it to your preferred email account so you do not miss out on anything! If I have not responded to you in 48 hours, try using your Simmons account (if you did not originally) to ensure you do not get accidentally shuffled into the spam filter, and send me another email!! I'm never deliberately avoiding email, but I do get swamped in it sometimes and lose track – so check back with me!

Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and anticipate that you will need a reasonable accommodation in this class, it is important that you contact the Director of the Academic Support Center, at 617-521-2471 early in the semester.

If you have a permanent or temporary disability which will affect your time in this class, contact the Disabilities Service office to request the necessary accommodations:

<http://www.simmons.edu/offices/disability/>. You need to do this every semester during your time at Simmons College.

Office Hours

We have a lot of ground to cover this semester, and I want to be sure no one gets lost during the semester. If you are feeling uncertain, or want clarification on assignments or readings, or if you just want to chat about Internship “stuff” contact me!

My office is P-205C. My regular office hours are on Tuesdays, 10:00 to noon, but we can set up other times if this does not work for your schedule. I am often hanging around my office, so feel free to drop by anytime – if I am around I am happy to talk about Internships.

You can also feel free to email me as much as you need to, and I will almost always respond to you within 48 hours. If you have sent me an email and I have not responded in that time, go ahead and email me again – you may have been lost in the system. But never fear, we will get you back to smooth sailing again!

Honor Code

Everyone in the class is joining our profession, and there are ethics and rules to be followed. Particularly in this class, upholding standards of ethics and professional responsibility are important for students.

See the information on the website: <http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/honor.php/>

Grading Policy

Assignments, presentations, and class participation will be graded on the following scale:

- A 95-100%
- A- 92-94%
- B+ 88-91%
- B 87% to 84%
- B- 83% to 80%
- C+ 79% to 78%
- C 77% to 74%
- C- 73% to 70%
- D 69% to 60%
- F 59% to 0%

See Assignment sheet for assignments and points available for each individual assignment. Grades will be available on the Moodle page soon after I have finished with your assignments. The points available for each assignment and the entire class are also on Moodle. I do not want you to focus too much on the grades (unless you are having a lot of trouble) – learning the material is more important. But, you will be able to track your progress as we move through the semester.

I am here to help you learn, and I will be happy to work with you to be sure you are getting everything you can out of this class!

Course Schedule

Each week that we do not meet in person, there will be discussion on the Moodle website for class. Read the reading and add to the discussion. Share your ideas, other good resources we could consult, to enhance the discussion – and to help you work on your professional skills.

Our weeks will run from Thursday 12:01am through Wednesday night at 11:59pm.
All discussion and work on an online topic is due by the end of our week.

January 17: First In-Person Class Meeting

In this session we will discuss some of the basics of the class (structure, evaluation), look at the different internship, and go through information on workplace standards and etiquette.

Jan 24: Interviewing

Why focus on this: Knowing how to interview well will help to set you apart from the other candidates, and set you up for success on the job.

Possible Discussion Topics: What has worked well for you with interviews? Have any questions really thrown you? What do you think the interviewer is really looking for when talking to you? What questions would you select if you were interviewing a new employee?

Jan 31: Dress for Success

Why focus on this: Appearances matter at work. You want to be “you” but you also want to be employed, so thinking about your wardrobe choices. In the LIS field, we are not as fashion-forward as the art world or as rigid as the banking industry, but you want to look like a professional while working.

Possible Discussion Topics: Why would you want to follow other people’s wardrobe choices? How will you determine what is appropriate for work in your individual institution? Should interns dress like students or like professionals above their pay grade?

Feb 7: Career Planning

Why focus on this: This is a broad field, filled with many possible jobs after graduation, so thinking about some of your choices now will help you to focus in on the best jobs for you. Additionally, the current economic situation means there will be a lot of changes to the field, some of which will require everyone to be flexible and nimble in dealing with job hunting and retaining those jobs.

Possible Discussion Topics: Why did you come to the LIS program? Do you have a direction you want to take professionally? How will you make choices about your career path? What obstacles or advantages do you see for yourself?

Feb 14: Conflict Management

Why focus on this: No matter how wonderful a workplace, conflict will happen. Developing some strategies to use will help you to deal with it constructively.

Possible Discussion Topics: What kinds of conflicts have you seen in your workplaces? How has it been resolved? How well did it work? What kinds of suggestions have you developed for dealing with conflict?

Feb 21: Teamwork

Why focus on this: When you work in a professional environment in LIS, you will often be working together with other librarians, paraprofessionals, support staff, other community members, etc. While some people are nervous about this, understanding some basic strategies to help build good teams and function effectively on them can help you to be successful at work.

Possible Discussion Topics: What are some of the best teams you have seen at work? What kinds of teams have you seen with problems? Did you see a way you could have resolved the problem? What kinds of teams are you on now? How well are they functioning?

Feb 28: Creativity at Work

Why focus on this: With the pace of change moving so quickly now in the LIS profession, it is more important than ever to be creative, flexible, and nimble in the workplace to be successful and to keep moving through your career. Your job will continue to evolve, and creativity will help you to stay with it and to be ready to move on to the next opportunity when you are ready.

Possible Discussion Topics: How do you see yourself able to be creative in your internship? What opportunities for creativity and flexibility do you see in your dream job? What kind of role does flexibility play in your workplace – encouraged or not? If you were the manager, how would you encourage your staff to be creative at work?

March 7: In-Person Class Meeting

In this session we will meet to report in on internship goals, discuss plans for proceeding to the end of the semester, and discuss any issues arising during the internships.

March 11 – 16 Spring Break! Celebrate! Relax! (And, if you have not already done so – hone your resume and send out applications!)

March 21: Social Networking

Why focus on this: This has become a very popular topic in the online world, with the rise of Facebook, My Space, Twitter, Linked-in, YouTube, etc. And these are important systems to be familiar with as you enter an information field and may be expected to represent yourself and your organization on them. But the old-fashioned kind of networking – in-person communicating with people in the profession – will also be important for you. Talking with others, making connections with them, and continuing that through your career, will be enormously beneficial to you, to your organization, and can help to build the profession as a whole.

Possible Discussion Topics: How do you connect with people now? How do you see other professionals at work connecting with others – or failing to do so? What kinds of skills do you see as important to start developing now, while you are still in school, that will help you to be good at networking in your career?

March 28: Stress in the workplace

Why focus on this: Stress is a part of life, and it seems to be an increasing part of working in the LIS profession. Burnout is a problem for people who are under stress for long periods of time, and it is very difficult to come back from that once someone burns out at work. Building some skills to be ready for stressors which are likely to occur will help you to handle the stress and to overcome problems before they cause trouble for you.

Possible Discussion Topics: Looking around your workplace, do you see people who are stressed? How do you handle stress at work and at school and at home? With a greater possibility of work on a nearly 24/7 schedule thanks to increased reliance on technology, how do you see yourself managing your life to keep things in balance?

Apr 4: Advocacy

Why focus on this: It is no secret that many libraries are in trouble, with job losses and libraries closing all around the country. Without a greater emphasis on advocacy, including letting people know what kind of importance the LIS professionals provide to their community, the LIS profession will not be able to recover. Additionally, it will be important for you to be an advocate for yourself and for your job as you build your career.

Possible Discussion Topics: What kind of advocacy do you see at work? What opportunities do you see to advocate for your organization that might be missed? What new things would you like to try to advocate to your community? As a job seeker, how do you see yourself best able to advocate for yourself in the job hunt process?

Apr 11: Catching Up

This week everyone will spend time getting caught up on any hours you may need at your host institution and preparing your final report and presentation. If you want to meet with me to discuss your presentation in advance, we can set up a time this week.

Apr 18: Final In-Person Class Meeting

In this session we will meet to hear final reports on internship goals and you will present your poster in our formal presentation session.

April 25: Final official day of class

Ideally, you have wrapped up your hours, and have reminded your supervisor to turn in your evaluation so you are able to spend the final few days working on your job hunting! But you have this time to finish your hours here if you need it. ALL HOURS MUST BE FINISHED BY APRIL 25, and your paperwork must be submitted by this day.

Assignments

The work for this class is set up to help you get the most out of your work experience at your host institution, and to build some skills which you can use to be successful in your professional lives. The focus of the class is developing skills and building professional relationships both at your host organization and with others in the class.

You will be on your own for much of the work – either in your workplace and online. So it will be important for you to keep yourself on schedule to ensure you can finish up everything required in this class in one semester. To help you keep on schedule, there will be weekly topics and discussions for you to participate in to help consider useful ideas and build professional skills.

To ensure you get value from your internship, you will set goals for yourself and will report in on your progress toward those goals.

Grades will be posted weekly to the class Moodle site so you can always track your grade during the semester. Grades are moderately important as a way to ensure you are doing the best work you can accomplish, but the focus for you this semester should be to build and hone your professional skills.

Setting Semester Goals: 10 points

- Due one week after the first in-person class, each student will develop three goals they wish to achieve during the semester as they carry out their internship.

Mid-semester Report: 10 points

- Due one week after the mid-semester in-person class, write up a one to two page report on your progress toward your three internship goals.

Final Report: 15 points

- Due at the final in-person class, each student will submit a two page final report on the achievement (or not) of your semester goals. Although it is not required that all goals be accomplished, detailed reports on why they did nor did not happen.

Final Poster: 20 points

- Everyone will create a poster for the final in-person class. Half the class will present in the first half of class, the other half in the second half. Outside people will be invited in to admire your posters – please feel free to invite your supervisor, co-workers, friends, family, cherished strangers, etc. We will discuss poster creation in class. If you want to print it yourself that is fine (some of you will be at host locations where they print posters for academic events); I can print it for you on campus – but I need it **AT LEAST** one week before class.

Weekly Reading and Discussion: 5 points per week (excluding in-class meeting weeks)

- Read the given article, or find another resource on the topic to share with the class. Each week there will be a separate discussion section for the topic of the week; you will post at least one thoughtful comment on our topic each week – but more will also be fine. You are also encourage to read and respond to ideas shared by other students

- Each week will begin on Thursday at 12:01am and will end on the following Wednesday night at 11:59pm. At least one comment must be posted during that time to count for a grade. You may read and comment in advance, but they will only be graded during the assigned week. You may also go back and add comments to a prior week to help share information with the class, but it will not be graded.

Group Discussion Leading: 10 points

- Everyone will join a team to lead a topic for one week. For this task you will work together to come up with a short reading for the class (you can assign more than one reading if you cannot narrow it down to one – but keep the amount of reading under control). I want the group to do things to keep the presentation interesting and engaging! Think about ways to grab the attention of your audience and make them WANT to learn more about and discuss your topic! I'm strongly encouraging competition between groups, as each week's group strives to be more interesting and have more "Wow!" factor than prior groups.
- Every individual will fill out and send me an evaluation of the group as a whole and what each person contributed to the overall performance of the group. (I know group work can be hard, and online work can be hard – but you will be working remotely with people during your career, so I want to give you this chance to consider some strategies and work out some ideas.

Supervisor Report: 50 points

- Your supervisor at your host institution will fill out a final report at the end of the semester to report on your semester's performance as an intern and a professional in the workplace. You will be provided with a copy of the blank report at the beginning of the semester, so you will know what criteria you will be judged. You will also be provided with a copy of the supervisor's final report on your work during the semester.