



School of Information Studies

Guidelines for Graduate Student Internships

Approved 2015 by the SLIS Faculty
Revised 2021

Goals and Purpose of the Internship

The internship is a variable 1-3 credit course that requires 45 hours of work per credit per semester/term. It provides students with an opportunity to pursue an interest in a specific type of information agency or service under the guidance of a degreed and experienced information professional. It is especially recommended to students who lack practical experience in the field.

The internship should be mutually beneficial to both the student and the agency. It will be tailored to the needs and career objectives of the student as well as the needs of the agency and will provide an opportunity for the evaluation of both theory and practice.

Participants in the Internship

The internship advisor (the advisor) must be a School of Information Studies (the School) faculty member who specializes in the type of information agency or service in which the student is interested.

The internship supervisor (the supervisor) must possess an MLIS or equivalent degree and must have worked as an information professional for at least five years after earning the degree.

Prerequisites to the Internship

MLIS students must have completed at least 18 hours of graduate LIS courses before enrolling in an internship, including all of the core courses and any relevant elective(s). The advisor will determine whether the student has appropriate coursework for the proposed internship. Graduate certificate students should consult with their advisor on prerequisites.

Structure of the Internship

Every internship should involve at least two components: experience in the routine procedures of the information agency and the completion of a specific project(s). The amount of time allocated to each component will depend upon the needs and backgrounds of the student. The project(s) should involve planning, analysis, evaluation and assessment. It may be completed during the internship or be a portion of a larger project that will be continued by others after the internship has been completed.

Evaluation of the Internship

The advisor will determine the final grade for the internship. It will be based on interactions with the student and the supervisor throughout the experience, as well as documentation submitted by the student and supervisor. The internship is subject to the same evaluative criteria and rigor as other graduate courses.

If the supervisor is unable to complete the internship, the advisor will assist the student in completing the experience with another supervisor and/or at a different site.

Procedures/Documentation

Semester Prior to the Internship

Planning for the internship begins the semester prior to the internship. All documentation must be submitted by the end of the semester prior to the internship.

Step 1: Identify Advisor. The student's academic advisor is usually the advisor. In the case that the academic advisor is not available or appropriate to serve as the advisor, the academic advisor and the student will select a suitable substitute.

Step 2: Submit Application for Internship to the Advisor. Applications must be submitted by March 15 for Summer and Fall internships and October 15 for Spring internships. The advisor will approve and submit it to the School Office.

Step 3: Identify Potential Site(s) and Supervisor(s). It is the responsibility of the student to identify at least one appropriate site and supervisor and provide the advisor with the appropriate information for approval.

The internship may not take place in the same agency or a branch of the same agency in which the student is employed. It may not be supervised by the student's current supervisor, regardless of the site at which it takes place. It must provide the student with a new experience and new perspectives. [*Exception for Graduate Certificate in School Librarianship students who are working full-time as teachers: The internship may take place in your school library under the supervision of your school librarian, who must meet the criteria above.]

Before agreeing to supervise an internship, the supervisor should obtain any necessary permission from appropriate administrators at the internship site. The supervisor will not receive compensation from Louisiana State University for this voluntary professional commitment.

Step 4: Submit Internship Contract to the Advisor. After the advisor has approved the site and supervisor, the student and supervisor must sign the *Internship Contract* and the student must submit it to the advisor. The advisor will approve and submit to the School office. Contracts must be submitted by April 15 for Summer and Fall internships and November 15 for Spring internships.

Step 5: Student and Supervisor Complete and Submit Plan of Work. The student should prepare a resume of experience and education, including a list of courses completed and be prepared to discuss the objectives and goals of the internship. The student and supervisor will work together to complete a detailed *Plan of Work* which is mutually agreeable. The plan should include:

- The hours during which the student will work (if relevant)
- The proportion of time allocated to each component of the internship
- A planned weekly schedule of activities
- A description of the planned project(s)

The *Plan of Work* must be submitted to the advisor for approval no later than the last week of classes of the semester/term in which the application and contract were submitted. Copies will be provided to the student, supervisor, and the School Office.

Semester During which Internship is Completed

Completion of the Internship

The student will be responsible for completing the internship as described in the *Plan of Work*.

Documentation Submitted by Student

Log of work/reflective journal. The student will keep a log of the experience which will be submitted at the end of the internship. The log should include an introductory section that describes the environment in which the internship took place, descriptions of the activities completed, reflections on how the experience relates to expectations, and a summary of the student's perceptions of the value of the internship to the student's professional growth. It may include impressions of the practical applications of skills as related to the theoretical foundations of the profession, and questions and impressions regarding procedures, services and their evaluation. The log is a record of the student's growth and development, as well as practical experience.

Project report. The student will complete a written report summarizing the project. If the project results in any documentation, such as user's guides or training materials, it should be attached to the report.

Student Internship Evaluation Form. The student is responsible for completing a Student Internship Evaluation Form and providing a copy to the advisor and the School office.

Documentation Submitted by Supervisor

Supervisor Internship Evaluation Form. The supervisor is responsible for evaluating the student's performance using the Supervisor Internship Evaluation Form. The supervisor is responsible for distributing copies of the completed form to the student, the advisor, and the School Office during the last week of classes.