Supporting MIT Library Internships
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Summary
Create a centralized process to recruit and manage internships across the MIT Libraries. The process will support new and pre-existing internship pipelines, assist staff with designing meaningful work experiences, and provide leadership/mentoring opportunities for those sponsoring interns. The program will target students participating in structured internship programs sponsored by Library and Information Science (LIS) schools and related professional programs. Specifically, our initial recruitment will be directed towards students in the Simmons School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) program.

Opportunity
There is a growing pool of library science students seeking practical work experience to supplement their academic coursework. In our own backyard we have students from the Simmons SLIS program who now have an opportunity to complete an internship as fulfillment of their capstone requirement. Our intent is to create structural support for internships and develop a relationship with the SLIS internship program. See Appendix I for a sampling of recent internship activities supported within the MIT Libraries.

In scope: Students in LIS, and similar professional programs, who are undertaking internships that contribute to their degree requirements. Out of scope: The Libraries will continue support other types of interactions with students and other visitors that fall outside of the scope of this program proposal. Examples include independent efforts by students to acquire pre-professional experience; casual employment, site visits and volunteers.

Current State
Over the years the MIT libraries have successfully sponsored interns who have worked in various departments across the library. The Institute Archives and Special Collections, and Curation and Preservation Services sponsored many of those internships. Lessons learned by staff from those two departments have been incorporated into this document.

Guiding Principles
• Interns are not intended to substitute for library staff.
• Goals for prospective interns should be in alignment with the MIT Libraries strategic efforts.
• When feasible our recruitment process should “cast a wide net” for inclusivity.
• The size of the internship cohort cannot exceed our organization’s capacity to match resources and subject expertise with interns.
• This program does not preclude prospective interns from contacting staff directly with internship proposals.
• The hosting department has the final say in the selection of the intern.

Program Details

Proposals: Proposals will be generated at the department level, and funneled up through the directorates to ensure that all required elements are included. The HR Administrator will coordinate the proposals submission and review process with the SLIS program.

Proposal elements (checklist):
✓ Sponsoring department
✓ Intern sponsor (supervisor)
✓ Description of project (summary of project)
✓ Scope of project (What’s included and what’s excluded)
✓ Measurable learning objective(s)
✓ Orientation and training needed
✓ Necessary tools to perform work
✓ Workspace and other logistical support
✓ Access to systems/accounts required
✓ Other resources necessary

Review of proposals
• The Internship Resource Group (IRG) will put out a call for proposals, and outline resources available to support proposal generation e.g., Consultation, brown bags, documentation etc.
• Proposals will be developed via departmental and directorate channels, with support as needed from IRG.
• Completed proposals will be forwarded to HR Administrator who will work with Simmons to manage the intern submission and review process.
• Prospective, interns and sponsors will work together to determine if and how the internship proceeds, prospective interns will initiate contact.
• Intern sponsors will notify HR when an intern has accepted an offer.

Staff Roles
Internship Resource Group - A 2-3-person group, initially including the HR administrator, will be formed for 2-3 recruitment cycles to:
• Document and improve internship policies and procedures.
• Host activities to help staff develop ideas, descriptions, and learning objectives, and orientate staff to the process of recruiting interns.
• Facilitate activities to support a cohort of interns.
• Share information about the new cohort of interns and their projects, upon the completion of the selection process.
• Evaluate program and make recommendations for ongoing support for internship activities.

**HR Administrator**

• Collects proposals for each recruitment cycle.
• Manages the intern submission and review process.
• Library Liaison for SLIS at the program-level.

**Intern Sponsors**

• Develop internship proposals outlining qualifications and initiate the internal departmental vetting process.
• Make offer and negotiate schedule with intern.
• Complete intern orientation checklist.
• Set goals and prioritize work assignments.
• Perform routine supervisory functions.
• Communicate with the intern’s faculty advisor as appropriate.
• Monitor student’s time, as sponsors will be required to sign a document confirming all hours worked.
• Submit an evaluation of the student’s performance upon the conclusion of the internship.

**Resources for Sponsors and Interns**

• Internship Resource Group (wiki in development)
• Intern Orientation Checklist
• Simmons Internship Handbook
• Guide to informal Mentoring

**Actions**

✓ Share proposal with stakeholders for comment. Make appropriate refinements.
✓ Submit to AD for Administration consideration and advancement
✓ If accepted AD for Admin will take to STC for an initial reaction
✓ If STC gives the nod proposal will go to LC for discussion
□ If LC signs off on proposal it goes back to STC for final approval [in process]
□ Group [BW will create and populate wiki]
□ SLIS check-in
□ Form resource group
Promote program within Libraries. – Target Fall 2015 for arrival of first program cohort.

Appendixes

I. Sampling of internships supported within the MIT Libraries

This is a partial inventory of known internship and volunteer activities supported within the MIT Libraries in recent years. Members of LC should feel free to add to or correct entries.

• **IASC:** For the past 35 years the Institute Archives and Special Collections (IASC) have successfully managed one or two interns per year from Simmons College SLIS Archives classes. Although, Simmons College has been the primary source of their interns, IASC have also had interns from the Archives and History Program of UMass/Boston; and the University of British Columbia, Graduate School.

• **CPS Curation and Preservation Services:** have hosted interns since 2012, focusing on research data and based in Wunsch. According to Nancy, future interns would be in the Digital Sustainability Lab.

• **Program for Information Science:** Has hosted Simmons Interns and volunteers and contributors from other programs.

• **OSPCL Office of Scholarly Publishing, Copyright, and Licensing:** Has hosted Simmons interns and volunteers.

• **AKDC (Aga Khan Documentation Center:** Has hosted a variety of visitors from a variety of academic programs ranging from high school to post graduate studies who have worked with AKDC collections.

• **RDSWG:** Research Data Services Working Group: Has hosted Simmons interns recently.

• **IBG Interdisciplinary Biosciences Group:** Has hosted interns from several LIS programs.

• Additionally there has been a hodgepodge of departments across MIT Libraries that have taken in interns over the years.

• **CSM Collections Strategy and Management:** Has hosted a volunteer to work on uncataloged collections in LSA.

II. Background

INTERNSHIP - According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) an internship is defined by the following criteria:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is routine feedback by an experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

III. Simmons documentation
Simmons Internship Handbook
LIS 501 Time Sheet
LIS 501 Final Evaluation