

LIS 690 Frequently Asked Questions: Students

What is an LIS 690 Internship?

An internship is an opportunity for LIS students to work under professional library staff supervision as an integral member of a functioning information team. Supervisors are encouraged to include interns in staff meetings and other activities to help the intern gain hands-on experience in the information environment. Internships are particularly valuable for those who do not have experience working in libraries, as employers often look for people with hands-on/internship experience.

Who oversees my internship?

Student interns will work under the direct supervision of a professional holding an appropriate terminal degree (normally an MLS, MLIS, MLISc, or equivalent). Specific responsibilities will differ for each internship. However, duties should be at the level appropriate for a graduate student preparing for a professional library career.

What are the prerequisites?

Applicants must be classified LIS students and for most positions, require advanced standing, i.e., beyond the first semester of study. Students must have also successfully completed LIS 601 prior to an internship. Other courses may be required by the internship site, such as LIS 602 and LIS 605. Check the specific internship's entry on the Internships page at the LIS website for any additional requirements.

How do I apply?

There are a few steps involved:

Step 1: The LIS 690 Internship Coordinator schedules an informational orientation session each fall and spring. This is a mandatory orientation for all students considering an internship for the upcoming semester. It is critical that interested students attend this meeting. Students then complete an application form. The form and information about available internships may be found on the Internships page at the LIS website.

Students should familiarize themselves with the list of available internships and discuss them with their faculty advisor. Your advisor will approve your choice if you meet the requirements by signing the Student's Application Form.

Step 2: Students contact the internship supervisor to ask for an interview. If a student is accepted as an intern, the supervisor signs the student's Application Form.

Step 3: The completed application form, with all signatures, should be left in the mailbox of the LIS 690 Internship Coordinator, who will sign the form and request a registration approval code so the student can register for the LIS 690 course.

How many hours are required?

Interns are responsible for completing 150 contact hours per semester, not counting class meetings. This averages 10 hours per week, but schedules may be adjusted for each position and student. Although starting before the beginning of a semester is not encouraged, it is permitted under special circumstances with approval from the Internship Coordinator.

Are there other requirements?

Yes, at the beginning of the semester all internship students must attend an orientation. Students must also prepare a mid-term progress report, a final written report, and an evaluation of the supervising librarian. The LIS 690 Internship Coordinator will conduct an onsite visit around the eighth week to discuss your progress with you and your internship supervisor. In addition, students make an oral presentation at the exit seminar, usually scheduled around the end of the semester. At the orientation seminar, the LIS 690 Internship Coordinator shares more details on these requirements. In order to receive credit, the intern needs to successfully fulfill all requirements established by both the LIS 690 Internship Coordinator and the internship supervisor.

How am I evaluated?

Interns receive written evaluations from their supervising librarians. Supervising librarians should meet in person with the intern to go over this evaluation.

Will I also evaluate the internship and internship supervisor?

Interns must complete a written evaluation of their supervising librarians, but a face-to-face meeting is optional. A copy of the form evaluating the supervising librarian will be forwarded to the librarian.

Do I receive a letter grade?

Students register for LIS 690 as credit/no credit (CR/NC), and will not receive a letter grade for the course. The course does count toward the 39 credits required for graduation but is not included in the cumulative grade point average.

How many credit hours will I receive for an internship?

Upon successful completion of LIS 690, interns will receive 3 credits. Students can take up to two LIS 690s for credit if those internships take place in different semesters. Note: Students may not take LIS 690 (Library Internship Program) and LIS 696 (Practicum in School Librarianship) courses in the same semester.

Can I get paid for an LIS 690 internship?

The LIS program does not take an official position on payment of 690 interns. This issue is between the intern and the internship site. Be aware however, that LIS does not condone the use of unpaid LIS 690 interns to replace paid positions. Please review the [US Department of Labor Internship Factsheet](#) for additional information regarding internships under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

When can I take an internship?

Internships are only available during the fall and spring semesters. Summer internships are not available.

Can I take an LIS 690 Internship at the place I already work?

In general, the answer is no; however, exceptions are made if you can demonstrate to your faculty advisor and the LIS 690 Internship Coordinator that you will have a specific new learning experience outside your current job duties. Please ask your supervisor to submit a copy of your current job description along with the LIS 690 Internship Proposal Form.

I live on a neighbor island, how can I take an LIS 690 Internship?

We have a few internships options for neighbor island students. Since we don't list many internships outside of O'ahu, we encourage neighbor island students to contact a professional librarian and ask him/her if they would be willing to offer you an internship. If they agree, they must complete an Internship Proposal Form.

This form has an earlier deadline than the student application in the semester preceding your internship. Potential supervisors should refer to a separate set of FAQs for Supervisors, and the LIS 690 syllabus; both of which are located on the Internship page at the LIS website.

Since it is sometimes difficult to fly to Honolulu for the orientation sessions and exit presentation, it is possible to request an alternative, such as participating via webcast. Please contact the LIS 690 Internship Coordinator at least one week in advance to request this accommodation.

Can I take two internships in one semester?

No.

Can I do an internship over two semesters?

Yes, you can do it over the fall and spring semesters. This is an especially good option for students who work full time. Please talk with Dr. Asato for details.

Can I repeat an internship at the same site?

The LIS Program encourages students to sample a variety of workplace environments, but will make exceptions if a student and internship supervisor propose a completely different internship experience.

If I have any more questions, to whom do I talk?

If you have any questions about the program, contact the LIS 690 Internship Coordinator, Dr. Noriko Asato by email at: asaton@hawaii.edu.

Revised: 2023 June 1