

LIS 690 Frequently Asked Questions: Supervisors

What is LIS 690?

The University of Hawaii Library and Information Science Program's LIS 690 Library Internship course is a three-credit course designed for advanced students pursuing the MLISc degree to obtain practical pre-professional field experience to augment their academic coursework.

Students register for LIS 690 as a regular course, and pay the appropriate tuition for the course. Students are to put in 150 hours during the length of the semester. Students are not given a letter grade for the course, but instead register with the credit/no credit option.

Who can sponsor an intern?

Established libraries (or departments within a library), archives or information resource centers in all areas except school libraries (for which a separate practicum course is available) may submit proposals. The student's immediate supervisor must hold an MLS or equivalent degree. Participants need not belong to the University of Hawaii system.

How may we apply?

The Internship Proposal Form is available online at <http://www.hawaii.edu/lis/courses/internships/>. These forms should be filled out for each internship position proposed. The proposal will be reviewed by the LIS 690 Coordinator Dr. Noriko Asato (808-956-5810, asaton@hawaii.edu), and, if appropriate, will be made available to students during the designated application period. Following early deadlines to turn in new proposals to LIS ensures that each proposal is properly reviewed and approved, prior to the open application period for students: Fall semester: February; Spring semester: September. LIS retains the right to not accept a proposal if it is not deemed appropriate for the requirements of the Program. Internship sites wishing to have more than one intern must be able to guarantee adequate training and supervision. All applicants will be notified by the LIS 690 Coordinator on the status of their submissions.

How long is an internship?

Fall and spring semesters are the same length at about four months each. Students are required to put in 150 hours, an average of 10 hours a week. Although starting before the beginning of a semester is not encouraged, those who wish to have the internship begin prior to the first day of the semester should consult with the LIS 690 Coordinator. LIS 690 is not scheduled for the summer session due to its intensive schedule (three weeks vs. four months).

How are students selected for the internships?

Several months prior to registration for the upcoming semester, LIS conducts a preparatory orientation for prospective interns, and provides application forms for LIS 690. The form is available at the LIS website online at <http://www.hawaii.edu/lis/courses/internships/>. Students can study the internships available at the same site and indicate up to three internship positions they desire (in order of preference). These forms must be completed by the student, signed by the student's LIS faculty advisor, signed by the supervising librarian, and then turned in to the LIS 690 Coordinator.

Each internship-supervising librarian is responsible for contacting the student(s) promptly for an interview. This should be similar to a job interview, although perhaps not as formal. Needs of the student as well as the internship site should be assessed, to see if a good match can be established. A final decision on student selection is due roughly a week prior to the student's designated registration period. The supervising librarian must sign the student's application form, which the student returns to the LIS 690 Coordinator.

What are the training and work expectations?

Librarians are expected to provide professional training, guidance and supervision. Interns should be encouraged to contribute to the internship site in a meaningful way (e.g., providing them with a semester long project to write a procedure manual, in addition to putting in time at the reference desk, etc.), treated as a junior professional, and should be encouraged to attend staff/faculty meetings as an active member of the team. Work expected will vary greatly depending on the internship. However it should be at the appropriate level of a graduate student preparing for a professional library career.

Librarians may stipulate what types of coursework is required (and/or desired) to successfully complete the internship (e.g., basic reference, basic cataloging, databases, etc.) in the Internship Proposal Form. The student's application form will provide a list of courses the student has taken. During the initial interview, let the student know your expectations, so to avoid a mismatch. If the student cannot meet basic expectations of an internship, the LIS 690 Coordinator should be consulted early enough in the semester to determine the best course of action.

Note: Librarians who have many projects/priorities and who might not have sufficient time to assist interns should not participate in LIS 690 until they can make a strong commitment to assist the students.

How are students evaluated?

Supervisors do not give letter grades to interns. Instead, supervisors complete a student evaluation form near the end of the term (a mid-term evaluation may be provided but is not required). The forms are to be completed during a face-to-face session with the student intern. The librarian and student may retain copies of the evaluation form(s); however, the original must be submitted to the LIS 690 Coordinator. The final evaluation form is due during the week of final exams, so that the intern can receive the appropriate academic credit for the semester.

How are supervising librarians evaluated?

Students are to complete a supervising librarian's evaluation form at the end of the semester. These need not be completed in a face-to-face environment; however, copies are sent to the supervisor for his/her record. An exceptionally weak evaluation from a student may result in that particular internship proposal being placed in the inactive file until such time that the problem areas can be addressed and remedied.

Are there other requirements?

The Internship Coordinator will conduct an onsite visit around the eighth week to discuss the intern's progress. This meeting should be with both the intern and the internship supervisor.