Overview

Three focus groups held during week of April 18th.

14 total participants: 10 current students; 4 alumni
- Three additional participants submitted responses via Qualtrics
Questions Asked

LIBS 6991/6992
1. What was your awareness of the internship process and internship opportunities?
2. What assistance did you have with finding your internship? And what assistance would you have wanted when identifying your internship?
3. From your perspective, what was the most important thing you learned from completing your internship?
4. Is there anything you expected to do during your internship that was not included?
5. For those who are currently working in library settings, how do you find yourself using what you learned during the completion of your internship?
6. Thinking about the internship structure overall, what worked well for the course? What didn’t work as well?

LIBS 6048
1. From your perspective, what was the most important thing you learned from LIBS 6048?
2. Is there anything you expected to learn in 6048 that was not addressed?
3. For those who are currently working in library settings, how do you find yourself using what you learned in 6048?
4. Thinking about the course structure overall, what worked well for the course? What didn’t work as well?
5. For those who are currently working in library settings, was there anything covered in the course that you do not find applicable to your current work?
LIBS 6991/6992
INTERNSHIP
Internship Awareness

- Aware and Responsible
- Aware but expected information prior to internship
- Difficulty in finding information other than hours
- Information gained from alumni
- Unaware of potential special rules
- Confusion about when to start
- Unsure of where to look

"I could not find and I don't know maybe that's something...I spent a lot of time looking for...what exactly am I doing throughout the course in addition to those 110 hour hours that I need to do...I didn't know much about...building the project that we do. I just really wasn't aware of searching. Luckily I had...found a couple of people in their internship so they could...let me know...I would have felt more comfortable going into it if I'd known exactly what I was getting into." (6992, Current student)

"I had the same experience about not knowing when to start looking for an internship because I wasn't in a school library at the time." (6991, Alum)
Assistance

• Would have liked additional assistance, though it was not necessarily expected
• Received assistance from alumni
• Received assistance from advisors
• Surprised that there was so little assistance for locating internships

“I don't feel like I necessarily had a lot of assistance, though it was not necessarily expected.

“I feel like I didn't have any assistance, but I feel like that was just put out there...like you need to find your internship...that's what it was stated as. So I didn't expect any, but it did feel a little weird...like, oh, my gosh, how do I...do that? Like, show up, knock on a door and say hi, which is kind of what I did, you know, with emailing people...” (6991, Current student)
Benefits – Most Important Thing

- Application of ALA competencies
- The Portfolio
- Being part of a PLC
- The two internship sites
- Article writing
- Mentorship
- Tangible work experiences
- Creating connections/future employment opportunities

“I think the most valuable of all of the skills I did was that... I really found value in that and I think it would be great to have it more fleshed out, more developed, I don’t know where that went from my class, but I really enjoyed that process and I think it’s great professionally, no matter which concentration you’re in, to have that professional writing experience for publication and to have that experience of—Yes, it’s published. No, it’s not published. What can I do, do I tweak it? And no was not always just a no. It’s a not right now sometimes. And that’s a wonderful thing, especially leaning forward into further academic study and furthering your career. I think it’s a great thing to set students up for the future.” (6991, Alum)

“The internship actually helped me with interviewing for jobs because I was interviewing for jobs in the system I was interning in, and so I knew what they were looking for. And I knew, like, I had just, I just finished interviewing, actually. So I already knew what summer reading was going to look like. And they had you prepare programs. And my site supervisor gave me the standard the system uses. So I was able to design my programs for the internship based off of the information she gave me already. So it gave me like an upper hand when I was interviewing for sure.” (6991, Alum)
I actually took the five week course in the summer for my whole internship. So that was like a whole thing and it was crazy. But I really appreciate...kind of let us start early beforehand to start getting our hours in and work on our project because we had like one big project, the artifact that we have to do. I feel like that worked well for me only because I started it early. The artifact was a lot of work and it was really good work and really valuable. But I think for a five week course, having other stuff to do on top of that wasn't great. You know, there's always discussion boards and things like that, and I understand that. But just having all of these things to do and I, I definitely couldn't have done it if I hadn't started my other stuff so early.” (6992, Alum)
Recommendations

• A pre-internship session the semester before the internship course
• A timeline of activities shared ahead to indicate when hours should start and class meeting times, etc.
• A database of internship opportunities
• A list of internship sites where alumni have completed internships and where students might be welcome; List of locations where alumni currently work and may welcome an intern
• Examples of e-mail text or phone script for contacting locations
• Update the FAQ document
• Don’t take another course at the same time
• Add article to 6992; Add CV completion as a requirement
Most Important: Learned/Completed

- Where to find reviews for books
- The community analysis
- Collection development librarian interview
- Specific collection evaluation and rebuilding techniques and resources
- Weeding
- Diversity Audit

“...rebuilding the collection...was very helpful for understanding why you get rid of certain books and to really think about...the background knowledge and then seeing it, like in real life was just very cool. And yeah, I think that was a really important thing to highlight in the course as well.” (Alum)

“...really taking time to evaluate and rebuild the collection in a better way allowed me in my role as a branch manager to build a better collection and to push for equity in collections across our...entire library system.” (Alum)
What Worked Well

- Final project scaffolding
- Formulaic course structure
- Assignment templates
- Overall structure

“Having the assignments broken down into smaller chunks was very helpful for time management in this course. The best thing though was receiving feedback on the "chunks" before putting it all together for a final grade. This gave me time to reflect on the feedback, learn from any mistakes and/or misconceptions, and make corrections before submitting the final project. I honestly can not think of anything that did not work well.”
What Didn’t Work as Well

• Final assignment time intensive
• Lack of pricing/budget information

“I felt like some of the sources, it was harder to find vendor information for academic librarian side of things. And so maybe I felt like it was more geared towards people who are in a public setting or in a school setting. A lot of the resources that we were given and I, I feel like I was given less direction on how to chase things down or like less was available in terms of like how much stuff cost. And so I had to just like make major guesses at things. So it didn't really feel…that part of it didn't feel realistic. I was super grateful for the whole experience overall. But in terms of like pricing materials and stuff, it all felt so theoretical and nebulous that it didn't really feel useful, that aspect of it.” (Alum)

“I would like to learn more about how budgets play a role in collection development. I recognize this is difficult because academic, school, and public libraries have vastly different budgets from each other and within their sectors as well. It might be interesting, though, to give a fictitious budget and see how that plays into our decisions on what should/can be purchased or not.”

“...there was a lot of work. And maybe it could have been paced a little better because I spent so much time on that class....it just seems like it took so much time and the feel like there were probably some things that could have been left out. But...I'm not saying it was a waste of time because it...definitely wasn't...I feel very confident in what I've learned. But it just seemed like a lot and there was some repetition in it.” (Current Student)
Applying What They’ve Learned

- Hands-on experience
- Cross over skills
- Weeding
- Community analysis
- Relationship building
- Facing challenges

“I did more activities on collection development in my internship than anything else…my site supervisor really gave me the opportunity to…weed a section of books and choose what to get rid of. And she even let me sit down on her computer and…put books in a cart to buy for the library…and…she gave me the school library journal, like the book list to look at…it was very similar to the assignment we did…it's definitely like this is what I learned in the course and it was just all coming back to me.” (Alum)

“…the librarian at my school has been phenomenal…[the county] just did a huge budget line item for all libraries to update their collections over the next two years…she's allowed me to go in with her and do the purchasing of new books using the actual collection development rebuilding plan that I made for the 6048 class. And so it was really beneficial to have learned what I did in that class for like which books to weed… I've seen the potential of how it could be useful in class based on just helping her kind of through the process…” (Current student)

“And the other thing is that just the lessons on how to face challenges, book challenges. And this is…a hot topic right now. It seems like…there's always an instance or another article about how books are being challenged and being able to have that collection development policy and have that material challenged policy and solid and ready to go if it does happen or when it does happen, because it's going to happen sooner or later.” (Current student)
Requested Skills or Information

• Collection development policies

“I thought we would get the opportunity to maybe analyze one or write one. I really could have...I really wanted more of that.”

“I think I agree that, I think that [reviewing collection development policies] would be interesting just to look at and pick out different pieces of. I think that would be pretty important to look at.”