LIS Pedagogy Chat is a discussion series for library and information science instructors. Our goal is to provide an informal space to ask questions and share ideas about online pedagogy, and to build a community of practice. Each session focuses on a different topic and features a short presentation on best practices followed by a facilitated discussion and a collaborative document of ideas to share. Slides and notes from each session are available in a shared folder. For more information, see https://www.lispedagogychat.org/

Connecting the Classroom to the Real World: Pedagogical Approaches to Prepare New Archivists

Date: November 18, 2022
Moderator: Sarah Pratt Martin

Link to [Slides](#)

Presentation

- Internships help students develop real-world archival skills, but not all students, especially those from marginalized backgrounds or those working full time or with existing student debt, are able to take unpaid/low pay internships; how can we provide real-world experiences as part of the course curriculum?
- Fieldwork is the intersection of theory and practice, students are able to practice what they are learning in class and create a tangible deliverable, strengthens their skills, supplements classroom learning
- Benefits
    - Students can apply the theory they are learning in classroom immediately, learn practical procedures
    - Explore possible career paths
    - Expand professional networks, gain mentors and references for job hunt
    - Prepares students for work world
- Negatives
    - Undervaluing of professional level work (esp if not compensated), time
    - Hours archives are open may not be compatible with hours students are available esp if they work full time
    - Rising cost of living and tuition
- See slides re: Ithaka S+R survey re: cost and debt of archival education
- Obstacles

- ○ Funding
- ○ State / federal laws re: compensation and academic credit
- ○ Student labor vs unionized responsibilities; may limit what students can do
- ○ Volunteer programs support archives, but need to distinguish what students earning degree do vs volunteers
- ○ Grant applications time consuming, uncertain funding
- There are both formal fellowship programs (well structured, financial support) and less formal opportunities
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
  - ○ What happens when not all students are compensated for their labor?
  - ○ (see slides for more)
- References on slides!

Discussion

- Employers value "real world" experience over skills learned in coursework, even if students have created projects showing they have the needed skills
- Example of program requiring that if students have a grad assistantship in a campus library, still need to take a separate internship (financial challenging if the internship is unpaid)
- Does a required internship make sense for LIS, when so many of our students are already working in libraries?
- Feels like one needs to be very reactive in curriculum development
  - ○ Struggle is so much to teach - some courses are an overview, but every week could be a full course
  - ○ Can leave a few TBD weeks at end of semester to address current issues
- Students are often looking for practical, hands-on experience, not just theory
- Do employers value portfolios?
  - ○ perhaps just examples of practical work, rather than a portfolio per se