

Helping Archives and Preservation Students Connect the Dots ... Exploring the Role of Internships and Active Learning Experiences in Achieving Program Learning Objectives at Kent State University

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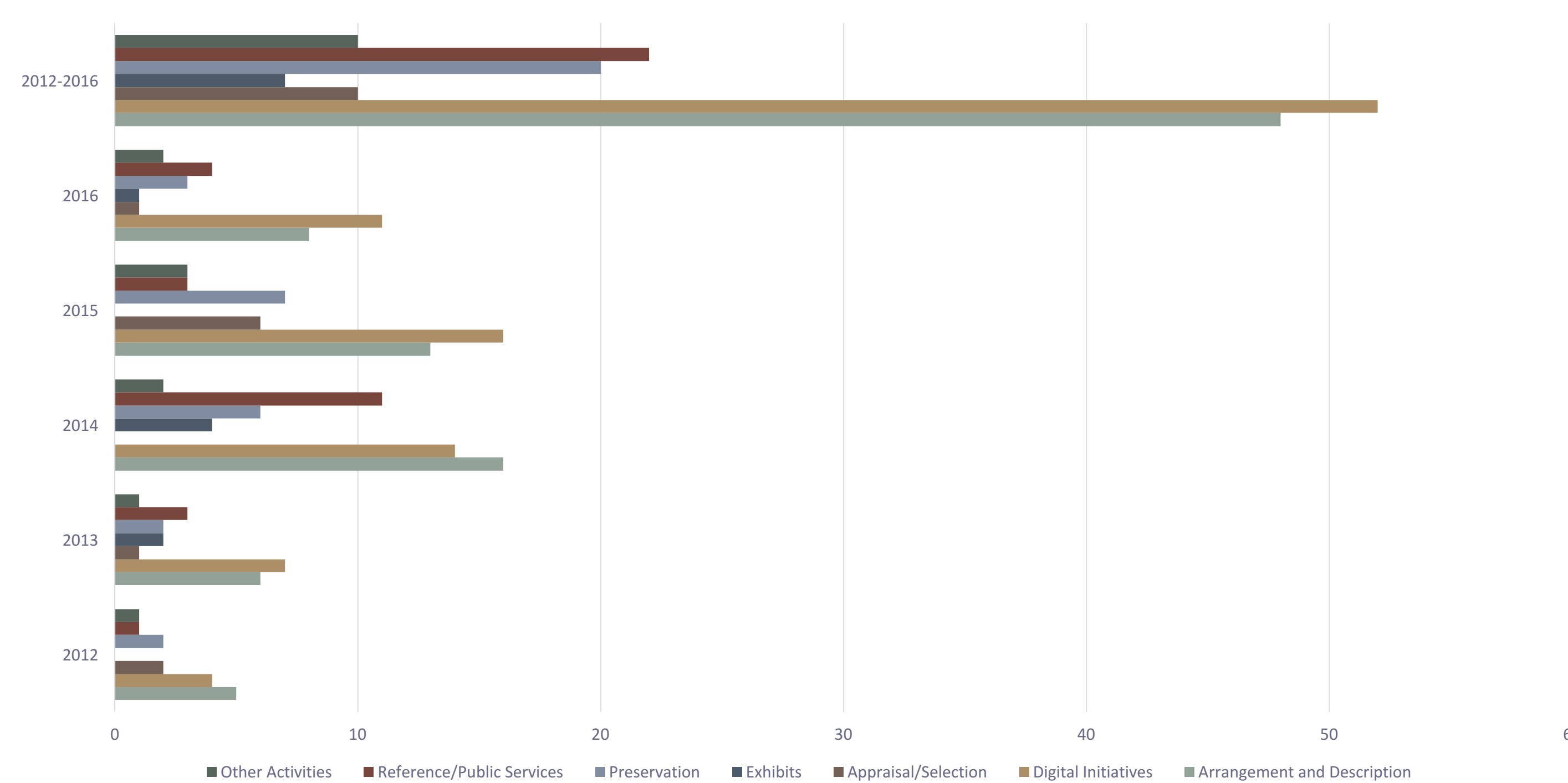
ABSTRACT

The aims of the archives and digital preservation specializations of the MLIS degree program at the School of Library and Information Science of Kent State University are to enable archival studies students to become competent practitioners by integrating foundational knowledge with core competencies. In the archives and digital preservation areas, Kent State faculty members work with professional archivists and librarians to shape student learning experiences. The goal is to provide students with experiential learning opportunities that will help them acquire entry-level proficiency in key archival functions such as description and arrangement, digital initiatives work, appraisal, preservation, reference, and public service work. Evidence of their proficiency in these areas will be documented in their program portfolio, which is a new capstone requirement that will document their achievements in the MLIS program.

This poster aims to provide an overview of the actual and potential experiential activities for Kent State archives students, which can be found as part of class and program requirements, as well as in internship settings. Society of Ohio Archivists members can learn about the importance of site supervisors and mentors in this process and how they can take a more active role in helping Kent State students "connect the dots" between the classroom and professional archival environments.

RECENT ARCHIVAL INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES, 2012-2016 (N=65)

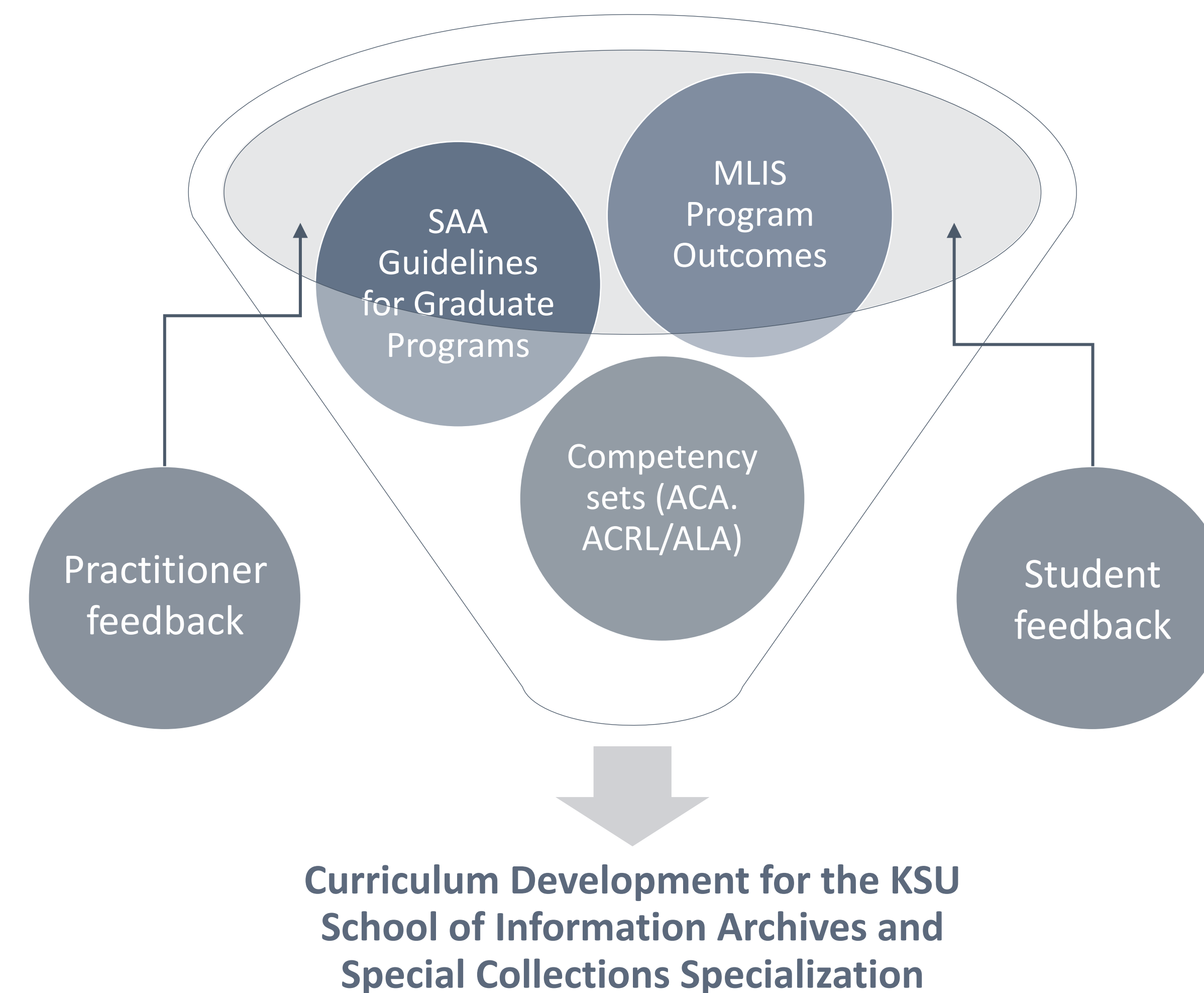
A Snapshot of Activities for Kent State MLIS Archival Internships, 2012-2016 (N=65)



KSU SCHOOL OF INFORMATION'S MLIS PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Apply the field's foundational theories, principles, values, ethics, and skills to everyday practice.
- Critique and synthesize research and identify appropriate research methodologies to solve problems in the field.
- Analyze and engage in the changing cultural, educational, and social roles and responsibilities of librarians/information professionals and the environments they work in within the global society.
- Identify and evaluate systems and technologies in order to implement improvements and innovations relevant to a particular information context.
- Identify needs and connect individuals and communities with information that engages and empowers them.

CORE INGREDIENTS FOR CREATING A CURRICULUM FOR EMERGING ARCHIVAL PROFESSIONALS



AN EXAMPLE OF HOW EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CAN SUPPORT MLIS LEARNING OUTCOMES

MLIS Learning Outcome:

"Apply the field's foundational theories, principles, values, ethics, and skills to everyday practice."

Course Learning Outcome (taken from syllabus for a digital preservation course:

"Reflect upon the various criteria that may affect selection of objects or records for digital reformatting or long-term preservation"

Assignment Learning Outcome (taken from assignment for digital preservation course focused on selection for digitization:

"Identify and apply the important criteria that may affect selection of objects or records for digital reformatting or long-term preservation for a given collection of archival material."

Experiential activity:

Work with a partner institution to identify items for digitization according to criteria that student helps to develop (with staff person at organization)

WAYS FOR ARCHIVES AND PRESERVATION PROFESSIONALS TO PARTICIPATE IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- Host a volunteer day or hack day for students living in your area if you have a large project that needs many hands. Faculty can connect you with local students who are eager to help you and get additional experience.
- Consider becoming a mentor for a local student in your area. Faculty will be happy to help you make connections with interested students.
- Develop internship opportunities for students at your archive
- Supervise interns at your archive to help students gain practical experience
 - Degree of supervision will vary from student to student. Be sure to be honest with yourself and the student about the amount of supervision and mentoring that you can provide her or him.
 - Particular needs include experiences in appraisal, outreach, reference, digital preservation and curation (in addition to processing and digitization work).
- Work with course instructors to provide hands-on activities as part of course requirements.
- Develop and teach an online course or workshop for the School of Information that includes experiential components.
 - Faculty members and course designers will be happy to work with interested archivists who would like to develop a new course.
 - We also have opportunities to teach existing courses in archives and preservation that may require less preparation of materials.

OUR NEXT STEPS IN INTEGRATING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT KSU

- Ensure that new portfolio requirements ask students to highlight how experiential learning aided in achieving MLIS program learning outcomes and archives learning outcomes.
- Develop competency checklists for archival internships that will help supervisors and students communicate about needed skill sets that the student can and/or should work on.
 - Internships should aim for a balance of depth and breadth in assigned activities.
 - Internships can be tailored for particular student needs.
- Explore more formal mentoring and networking programs with institutions that host KSU interns.

RELATED SOURCES

- Academy of Certified Archivists, Role Delineation Statement (2014), <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/get-certified/role-delineation-statement/>
- Association of College and Research Libraries, Guidelines: Competencies for Special Collections Professionals (rev. 2017), <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/comp4specollect>
- Jeannette A. Bastian and Donna Webber, *Archival Internships: A Guide for Faculty, Supervisors and Students* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2008).
- Kent State University School of Information, "Mission and Accreditation," <https://www.kent.edu/sl/is/mission-accreditation>
- Society of American Archivists, Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (2016), <http://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/graduate/gpas>