Fellowships: Making the most of student-library relationships

Meet the Library Fellows!

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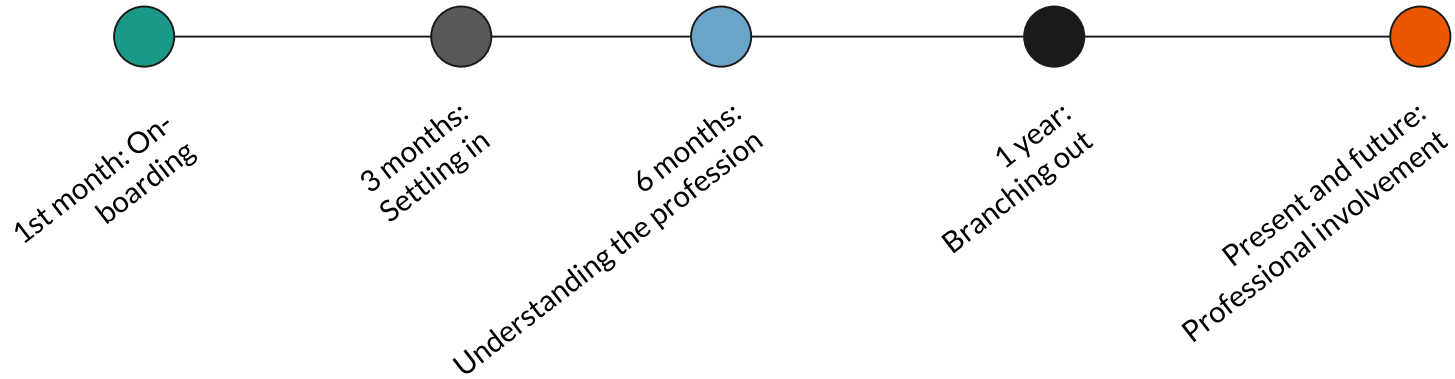
What's a fellowship?

It is:

- Graduate-level position
- Space for questions and growth
- Opportunity for mentorship
- Arena for professional development

It is NOT:

- Student worker

Our journey as fellows

1st month: On-boarding

3 months: Settling in

6 months: Understanding the profession

1 year: Branching out

Present and future: Professional involvement

What is one thing you would like to add/grow/expand in your own library?

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A library fellow could help with that!

Benefits for Libraries

Completing Projects

- Remember all those things you just mentioned? A Fellow can help with that!

- Students do really great work and bring new ideas into the workspace

  - Seriously, students do REALLY great work, (Keyes & Dworak, 2017)
- Harsh reality - Libraries are understaffed, and graduate students are more affordable that full time staff

Fellows Provide Unique Perspectives

- New ideas from a new generation of Librarians

- Students ask questions and challenge the status quo

- Symbiotic learning experience - Current employees can learn from Fellows, just as Fellows are

  learning from the current employees

Mentorship Benefits Everyone

- Mentorship sets the fellowship apart from other graduate students positions

- Lacy & Copeland (2013) discovered huge benefits not only for the LIS students being mentored,

  but also for the Librarian mentors themselves, including:

    - a strengthened commitment to the profession,

    - a better understanding of their own work,

    - and the ability to stay more current than usual within their areas of practice. (p. 142).

Benefits for Students

Meaningful Experience

- Employers expect experience

- Fair number of entry-level jobs, but more

  experience preferred (Tewell, 2012)

- Fight imposter syndrome!

Practical applications of theory

- Theory makes more sense when you see the end result

- Contextualizing concepts from the classroom

Exploring interests

- What type of librarianship am I interested in?

- What options are there?

- What is the right fit for me?

- Can I try a few things out?

Networking and mentoring

- Dedicated support and guidance

- Learn from other professionals

- Potential references for the future

What can I do to implement a similar program at my library?

Make it **real & applicable.**

Make the work **diverse.**

Make the experience **worthwhile.**

Questions?

References

Keyes, K., & Dworak, E. (2017). Staffing chat reference with undergraduate student assistants at an academic library: A standards-based assessment. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 43*(6), 469-478. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2017.09.001

Lacy, M., & Copeland, A. (2013). The role of mentorship programs in LIS education and in professional development. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science, 54*(2), 135-146. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/43686941

Tewell, E. C. (2012). Employment opportunities for new Academic librarians: Assessing the availability of entry level jobs. *Libraries and the Academy 12*(4), 407-423. Retrieved from https://muse.jhu.edu/article/487362/