

The UGLS Library Resident Program

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Everyone knows that the impact of computer technology goes beyond simply maintaining hardware or understanding software. This is especially true in libraries. Yet it's usually the trials and tribulations of maintaining the hardware and training staff in the use of new software that leads to change.

Undergraduate Library Services has had a staff member whose primary responsibilities revolved around information technology since 1987. In the beginning this was a support staff position. Over the years, the responsibilities of this position grew to include not only hardware/software maintenance and full participation in reference services and instructional services, but also web development. It seemed obvious that if a Librarian position could not be created, that the position be at minimum upgraded to the PA category, and this became so in 1994. The last person to hold this position was Jon Hansen. When Jon left IU in June 1998 we reviewed the position description and responsibilities and took the opportunity to look at this position in a different way. Ideally, we wanted someone with the latest technology skills and a background or class work in web development. We also needed someone who was grounded in the more "traditional" library skills such as reference service and who was interested in working with an undergraduate clientele. Another concern was the fact that recent IUL staff cutbacks meant we were not able to offer job opportunities to recent IU-SLIS graduates.

We contacted SLIS Assistant Dean Mary Krutulis with a proposal to establish a Library Resident Program. This would be a two-year, non-renewable position that would be paid at the Assistant Librarian level. IUL would fund the position at the same levels it had for the original PA position and SLIS would contribute enough to raise the salary to the Assistant Librarian level. SLIS agreed to the program, their only stipulation was that the position be restricted to recent (within the last year) graduates of their MLS/MIS program.

A job description was formalized and the Residency Program was publicized to all SLIS students and recent graduates. We were impressed with the quality of the applicant pool. Jean Su was hired and began work in UGLS as the first Library Resident in October 1998.



Jean Su

The partnership between SLIS and UGLS has been a win-win situation. UGLS has on staff someone with technical and web development skills at a level that we would not have been able to attract without the contribution from SLIS. SLIS was able to place a recent graduate in an entry-level position that provides valuable experience in web development and technology as well as reference and instructional services in an academic library setting.

With ever tightening personnel budgets, we need to find new ways meet institutional needs and to provide new librarians with the opportunity to explore career paths. Creative partnering with other campus units is one way to meet this challenge.

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