

August 28, 2009

TO: John Huntington, Chair
Senate Committee on Educational Policy

FROM: Midge Grosch, Director
Programs and Academic Assessment

I am submitting for review and action by the Senate Committee on Educational Policy the attached ***Request to Establish a Library and Information Science (LIB) Course Subject (Rubric)***.

The proposal was approved by the Library's Executive Committee on February 18, 2009 and by the Graduate College Executive Committee on August 28, 2009.

Cc: M. Case

Title: Establishment of a Library and Information Science (LIB) Course Subject (Rubric)

Sponsor: University Library

Description:

The University Library seeks to respond to the request of Undergraduate Student Government to increase research opportunities for undergraduates by creating a 399 Research Experience course. The research experience course is designed to give undergraduates an opportunity to conduct research under the direction of a faculty member. As proposed, students would take the research experience course as an elective for one to three credit hours with a maximum of six hours credited towards graduation.

Library faculty who have expressed interest in participating would direct research on topics like use of digital information in scholarship, data curation, scholarly and electronic publishing, bibliographic and citation analysis, web usability, information literacy, user behavior, and evidence-based medicine. Thus, a student might analyze statistics that show use of electronic journals in different disciplines, might conduct focus groups and analyze data on how cyberinfrastructure and e-science are transforming their home discipline, develop surveys to determine the social and technical barriers to sharing and reusing scientific data, or conduct observations of user behavior in the research process.

Currently, the Library does not have a course subject under which to offer courses. To establish a library research course, therefore, the Library is requesting the creation of an LIB course subject.

With an LIB subject in place, the Library is interested in eventually developing individual credit courses on information literacy, critical appraisal, and cross-disciplinary informatics that would advance objectives of general education, especially thinking independently, understanding and critically evaluating information, and analyzing and evaluating arguments.

Justification:

The University Library is well known as a unit that provides information resources and services in support of teaching, research, and service at UIC. Less recognized is that the Library is a college established by the statutes and has an academic mission with its own faculty and by-laws. The University Library has 41 faculty, 15 of whom are tenured. Each semester librarians lecture in a number of courses about finding and evaluating information needed by students in those courses. Additionally, over the years, a few librarians have taught entire courses: for example, a section of HON 105, Communication in the Digital Age I: Scholarly Communication, and of HON 201, Nerves of Government, IPHS 420: Resource Data Bases in Public Health, and, in the College of Medicine at Peoria, Survey of Medical Informatics, ELEC 156.

The UIC Library faculty are among the most productive in library research in the U.S. The two most recent studies of productivity in refereed journals ranked UIC Library

faculty in the top five among all research libraries. The publications of UIC librarians are heavily cited and used by instructors in library science master's and Ph.D. programs. Establishment of an LIB subject and creation of LIB 399 would enable undergraduates interested in library topics to conduct research under the direction of some of the leading researchers in the field. It would also allow the library to develop other courses that would improve students' skills in the use of information and address selected topics in library and information science, such as scholarly communication.

E-research, cyberinfrastructure, computational thinking, and long-term access to digital research data are increasingly important for researchers, disciplines, and research funding agencies. Academic libraries have been identified by NSF as critical to providing long-term preservation and access to the products of computationally intensive research. Academic library faculty members have the expertise to help train current and future generations of researchers and consumers of research in best practices for data management and in techniques for locating and evaluating the products of e-research.

We have shared the plan to establish the new subject with units that have course subjects with similar wording and none of the units have raised concerns. These include:

- Information and Decision Sciences, CBA – Chris Westland
- Computer Science, Engineering – Bob Sloan
- Communication, LAS – Zizi Papacharissi

Catalog Statement:

No specific catalog statement at this time. LIB 399 or any individual course would appear in the catalogs.

Minority Impact Statement: Does not apply.

Budgetary and Staff Implications:

We anticipate that supervision of students in LIB 399 would entail an increase in work for a small number of library faculty each semester. Compensation, from internal reallocation, will be awarded to participating faculty.

Library Support:

Library resources currently adequately support areas of research by library faculty and student projects would be in the same areas, so no new resources are needed.

Space Implications: None

Unit approval date: The proposal was developed by the Library's Executive Committee with the enthusiastic support of and input from the Library faculty. The Final Proposal was approved by the Executive Committee on February 18, 2009.

Contact Person(s): Mary M. Case, University Librarian

Proposed Effective Date: Spring 2010