

Action Plan for Library Science Program

Sam Houston State University

Purpose: This action plan has been developed as a response to the External Review’s program strengths and recommendations.

Recommendation: *In order to recruit and retain qualified students, the department would benefit from increased scholarship awards and funding opportunities for students. This statement is made on the basis of student and faculty interviews as well as a review of the data. Many students are first-generation college students and financial assistance is crucial and necessary to complete the program.*

Goal: Increase scholarship awards and funding opportunities for library science graduate students.

Action Steps	Responsibilities	Timeline	Resources	Potential Barriers	Communications Plan
Step 1: Identify library science endowments that may have the scholarship funding dates adjusted to allow for graduate students who enroll in the summer to be eligible for applying and receiving an award.	Dr. Holly Weimar Ms. Rebecca Lewis Ms. Darlene Andrews, Director of Donor Relations	Completed	Ten library science scholarships/endowments	None	Dr. Holly Weimar Ms. Rebecca Lewis Ms. Darlene Andrews
Step 2: Contact donors regarding the adjustment of terms for distribution of scholarship funds	Ms. Darlene Andrews	August 31, 2014	A. Contracts B. Current contact information	Donors may not be amenable to changes	Ms. Darlene Andrews contacting and negotiating with donors regarding changes
Step 3: Approval of changes that are made to terms for distribution of scholarship funds	Donor Chair of Department College of Education, Dean Vice President for University of Advancement University President	October 31, 2014	None	None	Donor, Chair of Department, College of Education, Dean Vice President for University of Advancement, And University President must sign off on the renegotiated contract

Evidence of Success: Scholarships applications will be accepted by the following due dates: February 1st for the fall and spring, May 1st for the summer. Review of the applications will be made by the library science faculty members and take place after the due dates. Awards will be distributed the identified semesters after the applications have been made.

Evaluation Process: Students who were previously identified as ineligible for scholarships due to their start in the library science program and to the length of the library science program (generally 18 months) will be eligible to apply for and to receive scholarship funding during their studies in the program. In the past, the ineligible students have been identified primarily as those who begin their studies in Summer I. However, all library science students will be eligible to apply for and be the recipients of library science scholarships.

Recommendation: *SHSU experienced a dramatic increase in enrollment in the 2011-12 year due to the support of an Institute of Museum and Library [Services] grant. The University offered scholarship funding to the prospective students who were not offered the IMLS funds. The average number of students almost tripled in the 2010-11 year contrasted with the 2012-13 year. The MLS department may continue to pursue other funding sources for students; however, many grant sources are decreasing nationally. Therefore, for continued growth in recruitment, it is recommended that the University assist the department with funding opportunities for students.*

Goal: The University will assist the library science department with funding opportunities for students.

Action Steps	Responsibilities	Timeline	Resources	Potential Barriers	Communications Plan
Request additional funding for scholarships for library science students	Dr. Holly Weimar	Completed	A. Graduate Studies B. College of Education	None	Library Science Faculty Members

Evidence of Success: Graduate Studies has earmarked \$10,000 in scholarships for library science graduate students. In addition, the College of Education has earmarked \$10,000 in scholarships for library science graduate students. The total is \$20,000 for the 2014-2015 academic year.

Evaluation Process: Determine whether there is an increase or decrease in enrollment. Interview or survey scholarship recipients regarding how the scholarship funding supported their enrollment in the library science program.

Recommendation: *Funds for graduate level assistants would benefit the program. The department is as productive as it can be with its size. Graduate assistants would aid productivity and would enable faculty to pursue increased publishing and presentation opportunities, thereby allowing them to better compete with larger institutions such as UT, TWU and Texas A & M. Graduate assistants could be helpful in tasks such as tracking students through the program, completing paperwork and helping with Bookfest. Although undergraduate students have been utilized in the past, graduate students prove to be more mature, reliable and professional.*

Goal: Add a graduate assistant to the department staff.

Action Steps	Responsibilities	Timeline	Resources	Potential Barriers	Communications Plan
Step 1: Request for the support of hiring 2 graduate assistants	Dr. Holly Weimar	July 31, 2014	2015-2016 Budget Allocation	None	College of Education Dean and the Office of Graduate Studies concerning the strategic plan for 2015-2016
Step 2: Generate a job application with description of duties and dedicated time requirement	Dr. Holly Weimar Ms. Rebecca Lewis	September 15, 2014	None	None	Human Resources will communicate the hourly wage and other necessary information for the position
Step 3: Review applications and conduct interviews	Library Science department	August 1, 2015	None	None	Ms. Rebecca Lewis will contact applicants to set up interviews.
Step 4: Hire the selected graduate assistants	Library Science department	Start date: September 1, 2015	None	None	Human Resources will process. Dr. Holly Weimar will communicate with the selected applicant that the decision to hire has been made.

Evidence of Success: Two graduate assistants are hired.

Evaluation Process: The workload for identified projects will be lessened for either faculty members and/or the secretary.

Recommendation: *The department would benefit from having the newest technology available in a timely manner for students to use in the K-12 schools. In a technology-driven profession, it is essential that students possess skills that will be competitive in the marketplace. When interns go to complete hours with their placement schools, they need to be proficient in the same current technologies that the schools are utilizing.*

Goal: The department will update the technologies it has on hand. Library Science faculty will update their technology skills to reflect the skills needed by school librarians.

Action Steps	Responsibilities	Timeline	Resources	Potential Barriers	Communications Plan
Step 1: Graduate Studies has designated \$5,000 of HEAF funds for this technology project.	Dr. Kandi Tayebi	Completed	HEAF Funds	None	N/A
Step 2: A designated faculty member will solicit input from faculty members and library science graduate students and recent graduates about which technologies are most essential for school librarians	Dr. Teri Lesesne	September 15, 2014	Survey Monkey	None	Dr. Teri Lesesne will share the link to the survey through the library science program's listserv where students and graduates participate (over 1,200 members). The survey will be sent out to the listserv once per week beginning in August and continue into September. Responses will be collected on September 15, 2014.
Step 3: Identify needs related to the technologies on hand and faculty members' technology skills	Library Science faculty	October 14, 2014	None	None	Library Science faculty members will review the survey results at a faculty meeting to determine needs.
Step 4: The Library Science department will seek experts to train them in technologies	Library Science faculty	October 31, 2014	TBD	None	Library Science faculty members will identify experts and set up training

with which they might be unfamiliar					
Step 5: As budget permits, the Library Science department will purchase equipment and technology for optional workshops that will be offered to students and graduates seeking professional development	Library Science department	TBD	TBD	None	Library Science faculty members will demonstrate their expertise through conducting professional development opportunities and workshops for students and graduates

Evidence of Success: Faculty members will be able to conduct professional development and workshops for students and graduates of the library science program. In addition, other education professionals may benefit from these opportunities as well.

Evaluation Process: After professional development and workshops are completed a follow up survey of attendees will be administered regarding their evaluation of the session and its relevance to their professional work.

Recommendation: *With a current faculty member approaching retirement, it will be crucial to provide funds for a competitive salary. To remain competitive, higher educational institutions must hire faculty members who shine in their fields, not only professors who are academically sound but possess dedication to the University, to the profession, and to the students.*

Goal: The department will hire a faculty member for a competitive salary.

Completed: As of June 10, 2014, Dr. Julie Marie Frye accepted the tenure-track faculty position that was vacated by the retirement of Dr. Rosemary Chance. A competitive salary was agreed upon for hire.

Recommendation: *Consider the feasibility of utilizing two diverse age levels in the Internship course. For example, students might complete some hours in the elementary setting and some hours in the secondary setting. Logistics may prevent this but it can be valuable for candidates to gain experience in two widely different grade levels. It may be that students could accomplish working with a range of age levels in other assignments. However, candidates would have the opportunity to see a school library media center that serves two very dissimilar populations.*

Goal: School library internship will be divided between grades K-5 setting and grades 6-12 setting so that graduate students who are interns will have K-12 experiences prior to completion of the library science program.

Action Steps	Responsibilities	Timeline	Resources	Potential Barriers	Communications Plan
The internship policy will be adjusted so that students have a primary and a secondary placement. The primary placement will be with an experienced supervising librarian who oversees the intern for the greatest number of hours. The secondary placement will require at least 10 – 30 hours of intern work.	Internship Coordinator	Spring 2015	Primary and secondary placements	Interns locating a secondary placement due to their work requirements and physical location to other schools that may be used for the secondary placement	The internship coordinator will revise the Internship Handbook to reflect the new requirement, and communicate to graduate students about the new requirement and what they need to do

Evidence of Success: Interns have two placements: one in a K-5 setting and another in a 6-12 setting.

Evaluation Process: The journals completed by interns will identify the hours accumulated in the two different settings. The supervising professor and internship coordinator will verify the number of hours completed in each setting follows the new policy.