Off to work we go
MLIS co-op students in UWL
Cataloguing Department

Zsuzsanna Lancsak, MLIS

TUG Conference 2013
Waterloo, Ont.
UWL Cataloguing Department’s challenges

- Backlog
- Staff retirement
- 3 vacant positions
- Hiring freeze
- Full time contract librarian
- Co-op student
Hiring of co-op student is good for

The student

✓ Gives future librarians experience with cataloguing and metadata
✓ Experience in a wide variety of tasks (i.e. cataloguing and info desk)
✓ Experience in academic environment
✓ Taste of real life
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The Department
✓ Knowing abilities when hiring and what level of knowledge to expect
✓ Assistance during vacation period
✓ Assistance at all level of cataloguing as the position moves through training
✓ Frees up librarians from less challenging work
The hiring process

• The Department sends the job description to FIMS
• Students apply
• Resumes and cover letters sent to the Department
• Selecting students for the interview
• Setting up the interviews (in person)
• Determining rankings
Job posting

University of Waterloo Library
Cataloguing Department
University of Waterloo Library

Description:
The University of Waterloo Library is seeking one MLIS/MLS co-op student to fill a position for 8 months in the Cataloguing Department of the University of Waterloo.

Duties:
The incumbent will locate bibliographic records for print and electronic resources and upgrade those records to current cataloguing standards. The incumbent will also remove outdated authority records from the cataloguing database and update headings in associated bibliographic records as required. Responsibilities will also include updating files of bibliographic records for electronic resources to be loaded into the library catalogue. The incumbent will also provide reference service to library patrons at one of the the information desks in the last four months of the placement.

Qualifications or Requirements:
- Knowledge of Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, LCSH and MARC record structures.
- Knowledge of ILS software.
- Preference will be given to applicants who successfully completed at least one cataloguing elective.
- Ability to work effectively, independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to work quickly with a high degree of accuracy and independence.
- Ability to work with increasingly complex and frequently changing technology.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.

Coop Work Period:

Address Applications to:
Susan Lancsak
Cataloguing and Metadata Librarian
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue W
Waterloo ON N2L 3G1
zlancsak@uwaterloo.ca
During the interview concentrating on:

- Cataloguing experience, if any
- Transferable skills
- Academic environment
- Reference/customer service experience
- Team work/independent work
- Concentration/repetitive tasks
- Expectations
- Questions asked by the applicant
Welcoming email

It is a pleasure to inform you that you have been accepted as the co-op student at the University of Waterloo Library’s Cataloguing Department.

Your first day of work is Tuesday, September 4th, 2012. The Cataloguing Department is located on the third floor of the Dana Porter Library. Here is the floor plan of the third floor. I can meet you at the main entrance to the library. For your information here are the directions to the main campus: http://uwaterloo.ca/about/how-find-us/maps-and-directions and here is the campus map. Porter Library’s building code is LIB.

Our employees enjoy generous flexible working hours. The Cataloguing Department opens at 7:30 am and one can stay as late as 7:30 pm. Some people start at 7:30, some around 8:00, and some even later. The important thing is that you work 35 hrs. per week. More details will be provided on your first day. After you have settled in the Department we will ask you about your preferred working hours. I usually start between 8:00 and 8:30 but can be flexible to accommodate your working hours at the beginning of your term. Please let me know about your arrival time on the first day.

For starting up there will be some formalities. You have to provide your Social Insurance Number, a void cheque for the electronic transfer of your salary. You also have to fill out a standard form for HR (birthday, address, etc.). Please make sure that you have all this information on your first day. This will speed up the setting up your Waterloo email and getting your login information to your work station.

If you plan to live in Waterloo or Kitchener during your co-op term this link might provide a starting point to your search for accommodation: http://www.och.uwaterloo.ca/

Your first four months will be spent in the Cataloguing Department. You will be trained to perform certain tasks re cataloguing of printed and electronic resources and authority work as well. In January 2013 you will be trained to provide reference services on the information desk while continuing your cataloguing duties.

If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Congratulations, on your co-op placement! The Department is looking forward to having you,
Welcoming to the workplace

- First day:
  - Supervisor meets the student
  - Introduction to co-workers
  - Showing around in the Cataloguing Department (workstation, fire extinguisher, sign-in sheets, etc.)
  - Showing around in Porter Library
  - Visiting Human Resources
  - Training starts
Welcoming to the workplace (continued)

- First week:
  - Training continues (ongoing)
  - Human Resources completes the file of the student
  - Working through new hires checklist:
    - IST sets up email and ensures access to all the necessary programs and software
    - Completing compulsory training (safety, workplace violence, AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act))
Balance for the student

Investment

✓ Interrupting studies
✓ Longer study period
✓ Moving
✓ Getting used to new environment
✓ Increased work load
Balance for the student

**Investment**
- ✔ Interrupting studies
- ✔ Longer study period
- ✔ Moving
- ✔ Getting used to new environment
- ✔ Increased work load

**Return**
- ✔ Gaining experience in
  - ✔ Academic setting
  - ✔ Real time work
  - ✔ Professional expectations
  - ✔ Interactions with colleagues
- ✔ New skills
- ✔ Improved resume
- ✔ References
- ✔ Networking
Balance for the Department

Investment

✓ Hiring process
✓ **Training** (most intensive at the beginning of the term)
✓ Revision and corrections
✓ Reporting
✓ Mentoring
Balance for the Department

Investment
- Hiring process
- Training (most intensive at the beginning of the term)
- Revision and corrections
- Reporting
- Mentoring

Return
- New temporary employee
- Relief for cataloguers
- Getting to know a new generation of librarians
- Constant update of training practices
- Mentoring experience
# Productivity of co-op students

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Is this mentoring? 
Oh, yeah!

✓ Face-to-face between instructor and student 
✓ Institutional mentoring 
✓ During a specific period of time that can extend beyond the co-op term 
✓ Formal and informal discussions 
✓ Challenging the student 
✓ Feedback (ad hoc and formal) 
✓ Career advice (if sought)
Should your dept. accept co-op students?

• Do you need them?
• What can they contribute?
• What can you offer?
• Are you ready to devote staff time and effort?
• If the answer is yes, then plan your program well
Should you mentor?

- Do you possess **special knowledge** worth to share?
- Are you **willing**?
- Are you a **responsible** person?
- Do you have the **personality**?

If you say yes to all this questions, then go ahead. **It will make you feel good**
Thank you!

Questions?