

Career Employee Program
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE LIBRARIES
Some Guidelines

Pre-Approval

CEP participants should get the pre-approval of the entire Board before embarking on any task intended to fulfill one of the competencies. The best way to avoid misunderstandings is to draw up a contract between the participant and the Board, explicitly stating a task that all agree fulfills the requirements. A Pre-Approval Form has been designed for this purpose. Participants will turn in a form for each competency to their mentors.

Each contract could be a simple statement, such as “Will attend TLA Annual Conference, Chattanooga, April 2007. Am serving on the Program Planning Committee (Jane Doe, Chair). Will submit a log of my program planning activities.”

Or: “Supervising staff is an important part of my job. I feel that, as a supervisor, I could benefit from the SOAR program offered by UT’s Human Resources. Although it is not ‘library-specific,’ it is directly relevant to my job. Therefore, I propose to the Board that my completion of the SOAR program fulfill half of competency #2.”

CEP Board Responsibilities

Using the Pre-Approval Form, and other supporting documentation if necessary, the CEP Board will sign-off on the task before the fact and will sign-off again after all parts of the task have been completed, signifying that, for instance, half of competency #2 has been completed. The point is not to hold you to an iron-clad contract from which you could never deviate, but rather to have you articulate an idea and be assured that the proposed task fulfills one of the five competencies. It is imperative to have approval before beginning work on a competency.

The Board might suggest that you modify the proposed task. For instance, in addition to attending a selected workshop, you may be asked to hold a brown bag presentation for library staff on what was learned in the workshop. There’s always room for negotiation. You and the Board may devise some other combination of tasks to fulfill the spirit of the target competency.

Each candidate will be paired with a mentor from the Board. Your mentor will be available to help you determine whether a program or course meets eligibility requirements, to answer questions or clarify the Board’s thinking.

Guidelines for the Five Competencies

1. Complete two undergraduate SIS classes (for instance, SIS 101 and SIS 102) or, with Board approval, SIS graduate classes.

Courses must be taken for credit. Submit a copy of the final grade from cpo.utk.edu within a month of completion of the course. Any School of Information Sciences classes or a cross-listed class from the College of Communications approved by the board, would fulfill this competency.

2. Complete two training workshops. One must be library-specific. Each workshop must be a minimum of 4 hours and approved in advance by the Board.

Examples: SOLINET or library association pre-conference workshops.

Submit a one-page report within two weeks of completing the workshop.

The Board strongly recommends completion of two library-specific workshops (like SOLINET workshops or ALA/ workshops (like SOLINET workshops or ALA/ TLA pre-conference workshops). However, a more generalized workshop may fulfill one-half of this competency if it is related to the participant's job. When you submit a Pre-Approval Form for other job-related workshops, state your goal in taking the workshop and describe how the workshop fulfills that goal.

Ideally the workshop should be challenging and hands-on. If the hands-on component is not present, you may be asked to submit additional work, such as giving a brown bag presentation or posting a report on SharePoint.

Apply well in advance of a conference or workshop. Get approval for attendance and staff development travel funds.

Be creative! Did you know that the Office of Information Technology offers computer-assisted instruction in various topics that can be completed via the Web?

3. Attend two library conference and participate as a volunteer planner or worker.

Within two weeks following the conference, submit a one-page written report to the Board outlining your participation and summarizing sessions you attended and your work assignment.

If you want to be a planner/worker, then contact a conference officer and become an official member with active involvement in the work of the committee. If you're not familiar with the functioning of professional conferences, talk with your mentor.

4. Serve on two standing committees, either library or university which are active and meet regularly..

Submit a one-page written report telling what contributions you made to the work of the committee. The chair of the committee should submit a letter to the Board verifying that you have been an active participant of the group. Time spent on committee work is considered released time.

As with each of the competencies, you must get pre-approval from the CEP Board. Don't assume your committee assignment fulfills the requirement; submit a Pre-Approval Form.

5. Complete two significant library-related projects approved by the Review Board.

For example, prepare papers, articles, publish book reviews, make presentations. Any task fulfilling these competencies must demonstrate a sufficient degree of scholarship. Publishing an article or book review implies editorial review and a quality product. A short article in a library publication or a book review is not the equivalent of a research article. You may be asked to submit a number of shorter articles to fulfill the equivalent of a research article. Submit your proposals; you may modify them and negotiate to reach an acceptable level to fulfill the requirements.

Another option is a formal "poster session" at an ALA or TLA annual conference. These always require submitting an abstract for acceptance long in advance of the conference.

(You should realize that the conference program director will accept some proposals and reject others. Submitting an abstract is no guarantee of acceptance.)

Not everyone wants to write an article or publish a book review. However, any task that is intended to fulfill this competency must show a sufficient degree of scholarship.

Submit your proposed project to the Board. You may be asked to modify or expand the project. Be prepared to produce further work to satisfy the requirements of this competency.

Be prepared to work on this and all other competencies (except committee work) outside your normal work hours. This applies to the entire CEP program. “Career development” implies that participants will exceed the normal expectations of the job.

Conclusion

All of us participating in the Career Employee Program have a responsibility to make this a stellar program. Participants must demonstrate initiative, scholarship, and interest in the profession.

Remember that you can do this one step at a time—one contract per SIS class you plan to take, etc. And don’t forget that your mentor is available to help. Good luck!

CEP Board
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