Guideline 690 - Unpaid Workers

Volunteers & Interns

As indicated elsewhere in this manual of Library guidelines, operation of a university library is especially labor intensive. Essential, core functions required to offer basic services are executed by staff and student assistants. However, the UMBC Library also actively utilizes the services of volunteers and interns in order to better fulfill the Library's mission.

While work done in and for the Library by workers receiving no monetary remuneration incurs no cash outlay on the part of the Library, such work is not "free" because all Library work must be properly organized by staff. The investment of Library staff time in supervising unpaid work must realize a clear net gain to the Library. If it does not, the arrangement by which the work is being done can be renegotiated or terminated.

A. Volunteers

Members of the community can make valuable contributions of time and talent to the Library's programs. Through appropriate means including newsletters, newspaper articles or ads, other contacts with organized groups or individuals, the Director of the Library and Library Unit Heads should solicit persons to volunteer to perform needed and appropriate work in the Library.

B. Interns

A special category of unpaid volunteer is the intern who performs unpaid Library work, but is remunerated with academic credit or résumé experience. As with other volunteers, unit heads are responsible for recruiting their own interns from area library schools, history departments, etc. Care should be taken to explain that performance of volunteer work or internship in particular does not imply any promise or commitment by the University to future employment or special consideration in future Library staff recruitment.

Further Procedures

1. In order to track work done for the Library by volunteers, and to have at least minimal records of such work for insurance purposes, subsequent recommendations or letters of appreciation, etc., Unit Heads who recruit volunteer workers or interns must have the volunteer or intern complete a Volunteer/Intern Information form (Appendix A - See Library Administration) and forward it to the Library Administrative Office. Interns should also submit a résumé if available. Additionally, unit heads should also submit a statement to the Library Administrative Office addressing the scope of the work to be done by the volunteer/intern.

2. Unpaid work should ordinarily be scheduled by the unit head and volunteer/intern to include a minimum of 5 hours worked per week, unless otherwise arranged, with a commitment to some specific length of service or otherwise scheduled as needed to complete some special project. Inability to adhere to work schedule may result in termination by the unit head of the work arrangement.

3. Unit heads supervising volunteers or interns must track hours of work performed. For convenience in doing so, a Volunteer/Intern timesheet (Appendix B) may be used. Timekeeping records for volunteers and interns should be sent at the end of each semester to the Director of the Library with a brief evaluative report of the work accomplished, its value to the Library, etc. These will be used by the Director of the Library to prepare letters or certificates of appreciation as appropriate.

4. Persons performing more than 5 hours per week unpaid work may request that the Director of the Library waive special borrower registration fees in order that they may enjoy special borrowers' privileges while working at the UMBC Library.

5. Volunteers/Interns may request campus parking accommodations, when performing scheduled library work, to be provided by the library.

References: Library unit head meeting minutes 9/28/92
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