

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
January 23 – 26, 2013  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Discussion: Guidelines for Recruiting and Appointing  
Interns to Council-Appointed Groups  
(Prepared by Danna Bell-Russell and Donna McCrea)**

**BACKGROUND**

Interns are appointed to Council-appointed groups (committees, boards, working groups, and task forces) to provide research or other assistance in support of the group's tasks or project(s). The internship experience provides the intern with an opportunity to become more actively involved in SAA and in the profession as a whole. SAA benefits from the experience and perspective of newer members of the profession.

Intern appointments have been made by the Vice President / President-Elect but historically there has not been an official call for interns. Some interns have been selected because their skills and abilities were personally known to the chair of a Council-appointed group, and some have been selected from a pool created by the Vice President / President-Elect's annual "Call for Volunteers."

In October 2012 Danna Bell-Russell and Donna McCrea began a discussion on the Council listserv about creating formal guidelines for recruiting and appointing interns to Council-appointed groups. It was determined that the discussion should continue in person at the January 2013 meeting.

**DISCUSSION**

The process for recruitment and selection of interns for Council-appointed groups should be more transparent. To make it more transparent it should also be more formal. There are both pros and cons to creating guidelines that formalize the eligibility, recruitment, and selection of interns.

**Pros**

- Formalizing the role of interns, qualifications to be an intern, and the expectations of interns will be useful to both potential interns and group chairs seeking interns.

- Transparency around the procedures for recruiting and selecting interns can lead to a larger number of potential interns.

### **Cons**

- Formalizing recruitment and selection process could draw out the time between a committee chair's request for an intern and the actual appointment to a point that would not be useful to a committee chair seeking assistance with a project, or to an intern whose schedule and eligibility may allow for participation on year but not the next.
- Having a formal process for recruiting and selecting interns will lead to having more applicants than positions, just as there are always more volunteers for groups than there are seats available. Turning away intern applicants may lead to frustration on the part of these applicants.

### **Points Raised Via the October Discussion and Presumed Acceptable**

- Interns are appointed by the Vice President/President-Elect.
- Chairs of Council-appointed groups that are interested in adding an intern must officially request one of the Vice President/President Elect.
- Because internships are intended to be opportunities for development, interns should 1) be students who are currently enrolled in a master's or PhD program with an archives component or focus and/or 2) have less than 3 years of experience in the archives profession.
- Interns are considered *ex officio* members of the Council-appointed group. They are encouraged to contribute to the work of the group and be an active participant in group meetings, but they do not have an official vote.
- Interns should expect to attend the Annual Meeting during their appointment(s).
- Interns are appointed for one year and may be re-appointed at the request of the group Chair for one additional year. (See below for a discussion about the appointment start date.)

### **Discussion Points Raised But Not Resolved**

- By what date do committee chairs need to request an intern?
- If it does not make sense to include the call for interns in the regular Call for Volunteers because it draws the process out too long, would it be possible to solicit applications in April with a quick turnaround to appointment?

- If the intern appointment is intended to run from close of one Annual Meeting to the close of the next Annual Meeting, could an intern be appointed mid-year?
- How should intern applications be submitted? Can we use the same Call for Volunteers process even if we use a different timeline?

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:**

**Should the SAA Council adopt formal guidelines for recruiting and appointing interns to Council-appointed groups? If so, what should these guidelines include?**

**Fiscal Impact:** Interns are expected to attend the meetings of the Council-appointed group during the term of their appointment. This would include mid-year meetings. Because the expense of mid-year meetings is covered by SAA for group members, the same expenses would be covered for interns. Consequently, depending on the number of interns and the number of groups holding mid-year meetings, the expense could range annually from \$0 to \$1,500. This expense has been covered for some interns in the past.