Proposal

Certificate in Public Library Leadership

Submitted to the
Faculty Council, Faculty of Information
Approved by the Executive Committee on behalf of Faculty Council on January 31, 2012

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The Need

Research and discussion on the future of human resources in Canadian librarianship has confirmed a need for targeted leadership development opportunities. The relevant research includes the “8R’s report”: *The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries*. This was affirmed at the 2008 National Summit on Human Resources, convened by the Canadian Library Association, in partnership with the graduate LIS schools, associations across the country, and employers. Demographic analysis shows aging leadership ranks, with particularly high rates of retirement expected in the next five years. The highly effective Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute (NELI), held every 18 months since 1994, provides an intensive leadership development and mentorship experience for information professionals with 2-7 years of professional practice. However, there has been much less concentrated opportunity for experienced LIS professionals with some management experience to prepare for senior library leadership roles.

Background

The Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC), consisting of the chief executive officers of the 37 public libraries serving urban populations greater than 100,000, has noted the research and the challenges of succession management at a time of great current and anticipated change. Together these libraries serve the large and growing majority of Canadian residents who live in urban communities and employ the majority of public librarians in Canada.

**In response to these challenges, CULC supports the creation of an accelerated program, combining mentorship, study, and engagement in communities of practice, for public library managers who have demonstrated potential to assume senior positions. CULC has invited the iSchool Institute to collaborate in this program as the academic partner.** The CULC-supported program is modeled in part on two successful initiatives in the US that were created to meet similar needs (the Association of Research Libraries/Research Library Leadership Fellows Program and the Urban Libraries Council Executive Leadership Institute).

An Advisory Team (current membership listed below) has produced a proposal outlining objectives, components, roles and responsibilities, and financial considerations. CULC has kept its members apprised of these developments and, pending approval of this proposal by the iSchool Faculty Council, is ready to recruit the initial cohort (maximum 20 participants) into the program in Spring 2012. This cohort is expected to take 18 months to complete the initial program, after which the program will be reviewed and its future considered by the partners.

Audience

The program is designed to meet the needs of experienced librarians who have graduated from accredited LIS programs, are currently in public library leadership roles and, in the judgment of
their institutions, have demonstrated potential to assume senior positions in urban public libraries. These are leaders who would benefit from focused study, mentorship, and peer networks and discussions. Generally, their years of experience place them outside the catchment of Northern Exposure to Leadership (two to seven years of professional practice).

Program Outcome Objectives

By the end of the program participants will be able to:

- Reflect constructively on the nature of leadership and the role of leaders in the building of organizational capacity and resilience;
- Understand the role of leaders in shaping and engaging teams that advance institutional vision and mission and the knowledge to use that understanding effectively;
- Identify key concepts, directions, and expert resources in finance, human resources, facilities, collections, partnerships, community development, and technology;
- Develop and manage effective relationships and collaborations with boards and governments;
- Develop and manage relationships and partnerships with staff, community, partners, and members, and foster appreciation of value, benefits and risks of strategic initiatives;
- Identify and understand their personal leadership strengths, their growth and mentoring needs, and their potential and responsibility to mentor others;
- Knowledgeably engage in communities of practice with other professionals and research leaders.

Program

The program consists of (1) site visits (intensive 1.5 day “learning lab” sessions, hosted by exemplary libraries, in which leaders and participants focus on themes and case studies); (2) .5 day in-class sessions provided by the iSchool Institute, presented at the sites or by video, and supported by online resources; and (3) back-at-office assignments and peer networking between face-to-face sessions. Participants will also complete readings and create portfolios relevant to the site visits and in-class instruction. Each participant will complete four of the six site visits (10 hours each x 4 visits) and all six academic instructional units (total of 24 hours), for a total of 64 hours. The site visit hosts, who have been recruited by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council, are committed to a substantial in-kind contribution to the success of this program.

Student Assessment
Students will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis by the iSchool Institute instructors on the basis of assigned reports relevant to the site visit and instruction themes (50%) and the portfolios they compile as they proceed through the program (50%). Site visit hosts have input to the assessment, but the final decision is that of the iSchool instructor.

Appeals Procedures

The existing appeal procedures of the iSchool Institute will be in effect.

Current Program Advisory Team

Ken Roberts, Chief Librarian, Hamilton Public Library  
Sandra Singh, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library  
Wendy Newman, Senior Fellow, University of Toronto iSchool  
Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, CULC/CBUC  
Rebecca Raven, Director of Public Service, Hamilton Public Library  
Lita Barrie, Chief Librarian, Grimsby Public Library

Courses and Instructors

The courses are aligned with the Site Visit themes. They draw on research and case studies to focus on the planning, financial and other leadership responsibilities of senior level positions in a rapidly-changing environment. Instructors will be drawn from the ranks of acknowledged leaders in the sector, as is typical of iSchool Institute courses. Altogether 24 hours of instruction (4 hours per topic), in addition to assigned readings and peer discussion, are represented in the following courses:

- **Leadership in technology visioning, collaboration, and implementation.** (Includes environmental scanning; selected legal and regulatory issues in licensing and other contractual arrangements; technology in strategic planning; emerging service design issues; development of sectoral and other relevant collaborations)

- **Leadership based on personal strengths.** (Includes identification of unique personal strengths; principles for investing in other’s strengths; recruitment and development of effective teams)

- **Issues in human resource development.** (Includes issues and trends in collective bargaining; selected legal and regulatory topics; issues in succession management)

- **Governance and government relations.** (Includes recruitment and development of library boards; key relationships with municipal governments; government relations in provincial and federal jurisdictions)
Issues in finance. (Includes key issues in municipal operating and capital budgets; budget planning, preparation, communication, and negotiation; capital facilities planning)

Partnerships, collaborations, and advocacy. (Includes identification and development of key partnership opportunities within communities; strategic collaborations to advance mission and equity; evidence-based advocacy)

Site Visit Component (for information)

For the inaugural cohort, beginning in Spring 2012, the following site visits are already planned. Their location are at or near the sites of major planned conferences will pair the leadership program with relevant conference sessions and iSchool Institute instruction for an intensive learning experience, in addition to maximizing the impact of participants’ travel and accommodation budgets. In addition, at one of the conferences, a country-wide panel of chief librarians will meet with participants, providing additional cases worthy of study and ensuring representative regional content.

Washington (DC) Public Library
Ottawa Public Library
Markham Public Library
Hamilton Public Library
Toronto Public Library
Additional site TBA

Validity

This program is consistent with best practice in leadership development programs, according to two principals of the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL). The CCL conducted the evaluation of the Urban Libraries Council’s Executive Leadership Institute Development noted above and reported this experience in “Evaluating leadership development” by Emily Hoole and Jennifer Martineau, in ASTD Handbook for Measuring and Evaluating Training, by Patricia Pulliam Phillips. 2010. (p. 321-336).

According to Hoole and Martineau, the ten best practices in leadership development programs are:

- Clearly articulated program goals linked to business needs
- Extra developmental attention and resources for high-potential leaders
- Careful selection of participants based on criteria to ensure that the program is a good fit for the participants
- Program design that integrates general principles of adult learning and the particular needs of the target audience
o Frameworks that provide participants with an understanding of the components of effective leadership (for example, competency models, leadership behaviors)
o Reliance on challenging experiences and relationships as major drivers of learning, supported by opportunities for feedback and reflection
o Strategies to transfer learning to the back-home context
o Accountability for development
o Evaluation and continuous improvement of the initiative
o An organizational context that supports the program

Additional program details are in the document entitled Public Library Leadership Fellows Program, prepared by the Advisory Team.