

Creating a Student SIG Branch at your University

What:

The Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL) welcomed a new Special Interest Group (SIG) in November of 2012 called the Student SIG. A SIG is a group of CALL members who share interest and/or experience in a particular subject. In this case, Student SIG members are committed to discussing the ongoing matters relevant to student CALL members and potential student CALL members. The SIG is open to any member who has a particular interest in CALL's student membership, whether it is a student member themselves or a professional who wants to promote their chosen career to students.

The Student SIG branches exist for student members to promote law librarianship and CALL at their respective universities. These student organized and run groups will all be officially recognized by CALL's Student SIG and will contribute to the ongoing purpose of the Student SIG. Students who create these branches at their universities will be expected to organize tours, workshops, presentations and other innovative activities that serve to promote law librarianship and CALL to other students. You will encourage CALL membership but not required it from the students who participate in your Student SIG branch events.

There are currently only two Student SIG branches, one at Dalhousie University and one at Western University. The respective contacts for each group will be listed at the end of this document.

Why:

- Creating a student organization at your school shows that you have leadership skills, motivation and a good work ethic. These qualities are highly valued by future employers.
- You will be providing another resource for students who are unsure of what to do with their Information Studies degrees or for students who are open to a wide array of career opportunities.
- Since you will be organizing activities that involve professionals, such as tours or presentations, you will get to network with lots of different people in the legal information field, as well as provide professional networking services for your fellow students.
- Your school will remember the efforts you made during your time with the program and you will make a lasting impression within your program.
- As a leader of a Student SIG branch, your name and work will become recognizable amongst other CALL members. This can open doors to professional contacts and career opportunities.

How:

1. Speak to an associate dean or a director in your program about your aims to create a CALL Student SIG Branch. Prepare a statement on who the group would be for, what they would do, the benefits, and how you see the group adding value to the program.
2. Find out from them what you need to do in order to create a new student group. For example you may need:
 - Approval from your student council
 - A faculty advisor - If your program offers a legal libraries course, that course's professors would be the best option for a faculty advisor
3. If necessary, partner with another established student group, such as the Special Libraries Association (SLA)
 - Western's Student SIG Branch operates under the SLA Student Chapter umbrella
 - Dalhousie's Student SIG branch operates independently but collaborates with SLA on activities/initiatives involving law libraries.
4. Once your branch is approved, create a presence in social media:
 - Blog, Facebook, Twitter: These will help you promote your events and any CALL news to your fellow students
5. Organize an information session
 - Invite speakers in your area (or use Skype!) who are from the legal information management field to present on what it is like to be a law librarian, career opportunities and the benefits of belonging to CALL. Make sure people know that the session is an open invitation to anyone, not just CALL members
 - It is best to hold these sessions during the beginning of the year, when students are new and are not sure what they want to do with their degrees yet.
6. Throughout the year, continue to organize events such as tours, presentations, workshops, job shadowing and more.
 - Focus on career development, which is where students' interests generally lie.
 - Partner with your program's legal information lecturer, and offer the students taking the legal information course participation marks for attending your group's events and activities.
 - If your school doesn't offer a legal information course, what better way to make your mark than to petition for the creation of one! Talk to your school's Curriculum & Continuing Education Committee and put forth your petition for a class in legal information management.

For any other questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact:

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- **Sarah Richmond**
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