
Job Description: Student Technical Assistant

Date Revised	December 2, 2008
By	Neil Carlson, Assistant Director James Penning, Director Amanda Stek, Research Associate
Responsible To	Research Associate, Center for Social Research

Purpose

Technical assistants perform database and web application project development, maintenance, support and training tasks for the Center for Social Research and its clients. The Center is committed to providing student employees with academic, professional and technical training, significant responsibility, and a congenial team atmosphere.

Skills and Qualifications

Required abilities and dispositions:

- Strong personal motivation, self-management, and detail-orientation; ability to take responsibility in meeting deadlines and making progress without direct supervision.
- Ability to share responsibilities and rewards with a networked team of coworkers, including off-campus clients and Calvin faculty, staff, and fellow students.
- Advanced computer programming and design skills, especially in database design (Microsoft Access, MySQL and others), reporting and visual presentation.
- Substantial web application development experience with PHP/MySQL is so strongly preferred as to be essentially required. However, an applicant with related experience (such as Ruby on Rails or Microsoft .NET technologies) may be qualified.
- Capacity and interest in learning new software and work routines quickly, under the mentorship of CSR staff; flexibility in responding to new projects and tasks as they arise.
- Strong spoken and written communications skills. Employee must be articulate and tactful, ready to work directly and frequently with clients.

Other desirable abilities and dispositions:

- Vocational interest in social-scientific work (surveys, interviews, other social data collection and analysis)
- Classroom training and/or practical experience in social research methods
- Understanding of the effect of various human-computer interaction modes on the integrity and validity of collected data and desired inferences from that data.

Responsibilities

- Handle and protect confidential and sensitive data with integrity.
- Cooperate with CSR staff and Calvin IT staff to plan, develop and maintain local databases, web applications on Calvin's PHP/MySQL platform, and other software systems.
- Increase personal understanding of social research implications and integrate these concerns into programming and design work.
- Participate in and help enhance CSR's strategic, project management and self-evaluation processes.

Position Details

- Campus wage level II (see the Classification section of the Student Employment Manual, <http://www.calvin.edu/admin/jobshop/manual.htm#classification>); starting wage based on experience.
- Generally flexible hours, 10-20 per week, with at least 5 hours weekly at a fixed, regular time in our workroom (Raybrook Building 2041; Suite 103).
 - http://www.calvin.edu/weblogs/csr/new_home_for_the_csr
- Homework and personal time are permissible in the lab within reason, so long as you do not interfere with CSR projects or disturb other personnel.
- Please apply online at <http://www.calvin.edu/admin/csr/jobs>.