

Unit Plan for Assessing and Improving Student Learning in Degree Programs

Unit: Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Unit Head: John M. Unsworth

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SECTION 1: PAST ASSESSMENT RESULTS

2001 – GSLIS launches K-12 certification in conjunction with the Master of Science in Library and Information Science (MS LIS)

2002 – First LEEP Retreat on online education conducted to consider effective practice; the Retreat resulted in an Anthology, *Learning, Culture and Community in Online Education: Research and Practice*, with several faculty and PhD student contributors

http://people.lis.uiuc.edu/%7Ehaythorn/books/toc_lcc.html

2002 – Continuing Professional Development Director position created and program launched <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/cpd/>

2002 – Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) becomes available via LEEP online option

2002 – LEEP receives positive review from Graduate College Committee on Extended Education and External Degrees (CEEED; 5 year term)

2003 – LEEP courses become available for *community credit* (non-degree)

2004 – MS LIS Fridays Only scheduling option phased out

2004 – New PhD program model launched

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/phd/phd-phases.html>

2004 – GSLIS practicum course (currently LIS 591) expanded to include online community discussion and support during placement

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/courses/practicum/>

2004 – Annual alumni and employer survey piloted

2005 – GSLIS co-founds Web-based Information Science Education (WISE;

<http://www.wiseeducation.org>) consortium, a multi-institutional cooperative committed to quality online education

2005 – Professional re-accreditation through the American Library Association (7 year term)

2005 – GSLIS becomes charter member of i-Schools

<http://www.ischools.org/oc/index.html>

2005 – Based on program growth, K-12 Certification Coordinator position created

2005 – GSLIS faculty establish seven MS LIS curricular clusters to aid in guiding program planning

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/courses/curriculum.html>

2005 – GSLIS launches MS LIS specialization in community informatics

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms/cic.html>

2006 – GSLIS develops Strategic Plan

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/about/strategic-plan.html>

2006 – GSLIS LEEP in-house learning management system (LMS) retired; replaced with Moodle (<http://moodle.org/>) and supplemental tools

2006 – CAS digital libraries (CAS DL) concentration established

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/cas-dl.html>

2006 – GSLIS concentration of campus-wide MS in Bioinformatics (MS Bioinformatics) established

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms-bioinformatics.html>

2007 – GSLIS launches Alternative Spring Break to provide students with an intensive professional placement option

2007 – GSLIS launches Graduate Certificate in Special Collections

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/mbms/certificate.html>

2007 – GSLIS launches MS LIS specialization in data curation

http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms/data_curation.html

2007 – GSLIS launches MS LIS specialization in community college librarianship in conjunction with Network of Illinois Learning Resources in Community Colleges (NILRC)

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms/community-college.html>

2007 – GSLIS co-founds the Illinois Informatics Institute

<https://www.informatics.uiuc.edu/display/HOME/About+Us>

2007 – GSLIS pilots online course evaluations for all courses (online and on-campus)

2007 – LEEP receives positive review from CEEED (5 year term)

2008 – GSLIS undergraduate minor in Information Technology Studies becomes part of an interdisciplinary campus Informatics Minor

2008 – GSLIS launches PhD specialization in Information in Society

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/phd/infosociety>

2008 – Second LEEP Retreat on online education planned for August

SECTION 2: REVISED ASSESSMENT PLAN

(a) PROCESS:

GSLIS Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Rae-Anne Montague, coordinated the revision of the assessment plan through:

1. attendance at campus workshops on assessment;
2. review of the former plan and program changes;
3. review of current processes and areas of emphasis discussed in School committee meetings and included in program data and documentation;
4. consultation with faculty and integration of input on outcomes and measurements.

(b) STUDENT OUTCOMES:

Student outcomes for each degree program (below) are grounded in the School's mission to foster a learning environment emphasizing research, practice, and service, specifically:

- Graduate education for leaders in research and practice in the fields of library and information science;
- Groundbreaking research to advance preservation of and access to information in both traditional and digital libraries and in the many settings outside of libraries where large amounts of critical information are collected;
- Useful service to librarians and other information service providers, as well as to the citizens of Illinois.

[\(http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/about/overview/\)](http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/about/overview/)

1. MS LIS students are prepared to pursue careers as beginning librarians and information professionals. Students have opportunities to **explore** a spectrum of library and information science topics (e.g.- information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management); **develop** critical thinking skills; **consider** and/or **create** tools and techniques to advance contemporary practice; and **forge** a commitment to high standards of conduct and service.
2. CAS students develop individualized programs to **refresh** and **update** knowledge and skills achieved through MS LIS studies; **gain** greater specialization in their professional area; or **redirect** their careers from one area to another.
3. PhD students are prepared to be outstanding scholars. Students are guided to **develop** general and specialized disciplinary knowledge and skills in order to **conduct** independent and exemplary research in the LIS field. Depending on professional aspirations, doctoral students may also seek to **build** additional knowledge and skills for teaching and/or assuming leadership roles in administrative contexts (e.g., higher education, industry, etc.).
4. MS Bioinformatics students have opportunities to **develop** multidisciplinary skills to enable them to pursue careers **creating** and **managing** information systems for the biological community. They **consider** a broad spectrum of scientific domains including molecular biology, environmental ecology, and biomedicine.

(c) MEASURES AND METHODS USED TO MEASURE OUTCOMES:

Students pursuing studies at GSLIS have diverse experience and interests. Courses are the basic building blocks used by students to develop competencies for the MS and CAS. PhD has additional research-based components. Generally speaking, GSLIS uses a flexible curriculum model to allow students to explore topics in LIS and develop competencies that build on existing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. As outlined below, each program includes required and elective courses. Specializations within programs have additional requirements.

1. MS LIS*

- LIS 501: Information Organization and Access
- LIS 502: Libraries, Information, and Society

MS LIS Community College

- LIS 501, 502 + designated courses. See:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms/community-college.html>

MS LIS Community Informatics

- LIS 501, 502 + designated courses. See:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms/cic.html>

MS LIS Data Curation

- LIS 501, 502 + designated courses. See:

http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms/data_curation.html

MS LIS K12

- LIS 501, 502 + designated courses. See:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/k12/>

MS LIS Special Collections

- LIS 501, 502 + designated courses. See:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/mbms/certificate.html>

* In addition to required courses, students without prior professional experience are encouraged to pursue a 100-hour practicum placement. See:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/courses/practicum>

2. CAS

- LIS 593: CAS Project

CAS DL

- LIS 593 + designated courses. See:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/cas-dl.html>

3. PhD

- LIS 590HF: History and Foundations of LIS
- 2 research methods courses
- Field Exam
- Dissertation (including preliminary and final exams)

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/phd/phd-phases.html>

PhD Information in Society

- PhD requirements + LIS 590IS: Information in Society

4. MS Bioinformatics

- 1 approved course from each of 3 core areas (Biology, Computer Science, and Fundamental Bioinformatics)
- 1 approved course from 3 areas of specialization in GSLIS. See: <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/ms-bioinformatics.html>

Course Development and Review

GSLIS Instructional Technology and Design Office staff (ITD; <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/itd/>) support faculty in designing, developing, and delivering courses.

Students are encouraged to actively collaborate and contribute in class discussions. Faculty uses a variety of strategies to evaluate specific competencies articulated in course objectives including papers, presentations, individual and group projects, portfolios, observations, and exams.

Each semester, students have opportunities to provide feedback on courses course evaluations (ICES; <https://ices.cte.uiuc.edu/>). ICES Online now includes a global item "How much have you learned in this course?" The data for global items on ICES for all courses are released for review by the Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Programs, so courses falling short in achieving learning outcomes, as judged by the students, can be targeted for improvement. Additionally, in order to understand potential gaps in program planning and course delivery strategies, course attrition statistics are monitored.

Curriculum Development and Review

Course offerings are coordinated by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs in consultation with Curriculum Cluster Chairs (<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/people/committees.html>). Offerings are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee (MS and CAS) and Doctoral Studies Committee (PhD).

Students have opportunities to explore curricular options through one-on-one and group consultations with advisors at orientation and prior to registration periods each semester. Additionally, they have access to extensive online resources including program guides (shown above) and recent syllabi.

Extracurricular Engagement

In addition to coursework, students consult with advisors and peer leaders to consider options for building competencies through extracurricular opportunities, including:

- Graduate Assistantships
- Internships
- Alternative Spring Break placements
- Participating in student chapters of professional associations
- Attendance at school and campus workshops on technology, research, etc.
- Serving on School and other campus committees
- Seeking mentoring and informational interviews with alumni
- Involvement in School research groups
- Giving presentations at the School and external venues

Through participation in these activities, students develop leadership experience and skills, which they can apply in subsequent professional roles.

General Development and Review

Students have ongoing opportunities to provide feedback directly during regularly scheduled and/or as-needed consultations with the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, and the Dean; and via advising meetings and online forums. Students may also share input by proxy through elected student representatives to the Curriculum Committee, Doctoral Studies Committee, and monthly faculty meetings.

Student retention is evaluated each semester. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs reviews cases of students unable to maintain continuous registration, and, if feasible, students are counseled on options for reentry.

In preparation for faculty retreats (e.g., 2002 and 2008 LEEP Retreats), students are invited to share insights on effective practice as well as areas for improvement through focus groups, surveys, etc. Students also provide feedback on their course and program-level experiences through interviews and surveys used for external review by the American Library Association and the UIUC CEEED.

Alumni are surveyed approximately 6 months after graduation and asked to share input on the program and transition to employment experience. They are also invited to ask their employers to complete a survey about their staffing experience.

SECTION 3: PLANS FOR USING RESULTS

(a) PLANS:

GSLIS aspires to foster a model of continuous quality improvement by providing both regular and extraordinary opportunities to incorporate insights from all constituents into course, extracurricular, and program evaluations and planning. This is based on building and maintaining open channels of communication and forums for dialogue. Plans are developed to coincide with academic cycles (orientation, completion of required courses, advising prior to registration periods, annual reviews of progress, etc.). GSLIS seeks to capture, consider, share, and incorporate information to enable students to build competencies and thrive during all stages of their program. Although tools and techniques to accomplish this are evolving, much information supporting this process is now made accessible online through list serves, wikis, the School website and/or the password-protected Intranet.

(b) TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Ongoing; progress intervals vary from >1/week to annually depending on the issue(s) under consideration.