

II. CURRICULUM

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II. CURRICULUM

Introduction

The program of professional education delivered by the School of Library and Information Science comprises two master's degrees: (1) Master of Science in Library Science, and (2) Master of Arts. Almost all of the students enrolled in the master's degree program (more than 95%) select the M.S.L.S. degree. Details regarding specific academic degree requirements may be found in the school's *Bulletin*.¹

Structure of Master's Program

II.1 The curriculum is based on goals and objectives and evolves in response to a systematic planning process. Within this general framework, the curriculum provides, through a variety of educational experiences, for the study of theory, principles, practice, and values necessary for the provision of service in libraries and information agencies and in other contexts.

The master's program is structured in a way that ensures all students acquire a basic understanding of both theoretical and practical issues underlying the information profession. In addition, the program allows students to select seven courses that provide specialized knowledge and skills that effectively support their individual professional interests and goals. Within the master's program, there are eight identified academic tracks or areas of study: (1) academic libraries; (2) public libraries; (3) school media libraries; (4) special libraries; (5) health information services; (6) technical services; (7) public services; and (8) information technology. The curriculum offers students who select any of the above academic programs a broad array of courses that support their individual needs and program expectations. A Course-Program Matrix (see table II-1) is available to guide faculty and students in the design of individualized programs of study.

While eight instructional tracks are available, in practice 80-90 percent of the students design programs of study taking "type of library" as a primary professional focus. Many students then take a secondary program focus of public services, technical services, or information technology. Historically, a little more than one-third of all students have chosen school media libraries as their program focus, with academic, public, and special libraries each accounting for approximately 20 percent of the students. Because of the number of school media library positions in Kentucky (about 1,100), it is likely that continuing demand for professionals, and the introduction of the Internet-based master's program, will result in rapid growth in the number of students interested in school media libraries over the next five years.

II.4 The curriculum provides the opportunity for students to construct coherent programs of study that allow individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of program requirements established by the school and that will foster development of the competencies necessary for productive careers. The curriculum includes as appropriate cooperative degree programs, interdisciplinary coursework and research, experiential opportunities, and other similar activities. Course content and sequence relationships within the curriculum are evident.

II.5 When a program includes study of services and activities in specialized fields, these specialized learning experiences are built upon a general foundation of library and information studies. The design of specialized learning experiences takes into account the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations.

¹ University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. *Bulletin*, 2003-2004.

Table II-1 Course – Program Matrix* – August 2003

Courses	Academic Libraries	Public Libraries	School Media Libraries	Special Libraries	Health Information Services	Technical Services	Public Services	Information Technology
LIS510		X	X				X	
LIS514		X	X				X	
LIS600	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
LIS601	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
LIS602	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
LIS603	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
LIS605	X	X		X	X		X	X
LIS608	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
LIS609	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
LIS611		X	X				X	
LIS613		X	X				X	
LIS622	X	X		X	X		X	
LIS623	X	X		X			X	
LIS624	X	X		X	X		X	
LIS625	X	X		X	X			
LIS630	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LIS636	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LIS637	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LIS638	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LIS640	X			X	X		X	X
LIS641	X			X			X	X
LIS643	X			X			X	X
LIS644			X					
LIS645		X					X	X
LIS646	X						X	X
LIS647			X					
LIS650	X					X		X
LIS653	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
LIS655	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
LIS656	X	X		X		X		X
LIS659	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
LIS668	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LIS675	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
LIS676			X					
LIS690 (A)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
LIS690 (B)			X					X
LIS690 (C)				X	X			X
LIS690 (D)				X	X			X
LIS695	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

*Students must complete four required core courses, LIS600, LIS601, LIS602, LIS603, and a technology course from a second group of four courses, LIS636, LIS637, LIS638, LIS668.
LIS690 is the special topics course. In recent years we have offered these:
(A) Advanced Online (B) School Media Technology (C) Special Libraries (D) Introduction to Medical Informatics.

With the advice of faculty advisors, most students build programs of study that comprise the four required core courses,² one technology course (most commonly LIS636), and a selection of seven elective courses (two of which may be taken in a cognate area outside library and information science). As can be seen in table II-1, the Course-Program Matrix, the elective courses provide students with considerable flexibility in the development of programs of study. These individual programs are designed to provide a coherent program of study that reflects the needs, goals and professional aspirations of a student and satisfies the expected basic competencies needed for productive careers as information professionals. Students interested in school media libraries have substantially fewer electives in their academic programs, because their programs are more prescribed by certification requirements.³

Curriculum

II.2 The curriculum is concerned with recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use. The curriculum of library and information studies encompasses information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management.

II.3 The curriculum

II.3.1 fosters development of library and information professionals who will assume an assertive role in providing services

II.3.2 emphasizes an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields

II.3.3 integrates the theory, application, and use of technology

II.3.4 responds to the needs of a rapidly changing multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual society including the needs of underserved groups

II.3.5 responds to the needs of a rapidly changing technological and global society

II.3.6 provides direction for future development of the field

II.3.7 promotes commitment to continuous professional growth.

² The terms “core courses” and “required courses” are synonymous.

³ University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. *Certification Requirements and Advising Worksheets of School Media Libraries Program*. 2003.

Table II-2 Instructional Objectives – Course Matrix – August 2003

Upon completion of the master’s program in library and information science, graduates will:	High Focus (two or more class sessions)	Moderate Focus (at least one class session)
1. Understand the processes associated with the production, distribution, organization, preservation, retrieval and use of information in society.	604, 600, 601, 602, 609, 622, 623, 624, 630, 637, 638, 643, 653, 655, 656, 659, 690AOL	636, 640, 641, 645, 646, 690SL
2. Understand general principles, values and ethical standards underlying the provision of information services in a variety of settings.	510, 600, 601, 602, 603, 605, 611, 613, 638, 643	514, 609, 640, 641. 644, 645, 647, 690SMT, 690SL
3. Recognize the responsibilities of the library and information profession in a culturally diverse, technological and global society.	600, 611, 636, 638	514, 601, 603, 609, 622, 623, 624, 640, 641. 644, 645, 646, 647, 653, 659, 690SMT, 690SL
4. Critically analyze and evaluate professional issues and problems in an appropriate operational or historical context.	604, 609, 611, 636, 637, 638, 655, 656, 690AOL	600, 602, 603, 622, 630, 641, 643, 644, 645. 646, 647, 653, 659, 668, 690SL
5. Be familiar with information policies and information-related laws that influence the delivery of information resources throughout society.	600, 605, 609	601, 603, 611, 622, 623, 624, 638, 641, 643, 645, 659, 690SMT, 690AOL, 690SL
6. Understand the nature of information, information needs, information seeking behavior and information use in society.	514, 600, 602, 608, 609, 622, 625, 630, 637, 638, 640, 641, 643, 644, 645, 646. 659, 690AOL, 690SL	601, 611, 647, 668
7. Be able to develop, manage and effectively use information systems, sources and services to serve clients.	601, 602, 622, 623, 624, 625, 630, 636, 637, 638, 640, 641, 643, 645, 646, 668, 690AOL, 690SL	655, 656, 690SMT
8. Understand, and effectively use, information technology.	601, 622, 623, 624, 630, 636, 637, 638, 647, 656, 668, 690SMT, 690MI, 690AOL	510, 514, 603, 609, 611, 613, 625, 640, 641, 644, 645, 653, 690SL
9. Understand the role of research in the profession, and be able to interpret and apply research results in practice.	600, 608	603, 611, 622, 623, 624, 625, 640,641, 646, 645, 653, 668, 690MI
10. Be familiar with the functions of management in organizations, and be able to apply management concepts and methods in effective problem solving and decision-making.	603	602, 609, 640, 641, 643, 644, 645, 646, 690SL
11. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication.	510, 514, 600,602, 603, 604, 611, 613, 625, 630, 637, 640, 641, 643, 644, 647, 656, 659, 668, 676, 690S,	638, 653, 690SMT
690SL= Special Libraries and Information Centers; 690SMT=school media Technology; 690AOL=Advanced Online Information Systems; 690MI=Introduction to Medical Informatics		

Instructors were asked to indicate the extent to which individual courses, that they teach, included either a high focus or a moderate focus on one or more of the instructional objectives. As is evident from table II-2, all of the instructional objectives receive considerable coverage with the curriculum. One area of some concern of the faculty related to the topic of the management of libraries and information agencies, and a review of the matrix indicated that there is substantial coverage of the topic in a core course devoted to the subject and all of the “type of library” courses, one of which is almost certainly taken by all students. Another area of some concern was that of information needs, seeking and use. In our last curriculum review it was decided to drop a course devoted to information needs and seeking, and to distribute the subjects throughout the curriculum. Content relating to the systematic study of information needs, seeking and use was to be included in the Research Methods courses (608); content relating to general information needs, seeking and use was to be included in at least two of the required courses (600 and 601); content relating to the information needs, seeking and use by specific groups was to be included in two different “types” courses (type of literature courses – 510, 514, 610, 611, 622, 623, 624 – and type of library courses – 640, 641, 644, 645, 646, 690 Special Libraries). The curriculum review and resulting changes appear to have achieved the desired coverage.

Curriculum Development Processes

II.7 The curriculum is continually reviewed and receptive to innovation; its evaluation is used for ongoing appraisal, to make improvements, and to plan for the future. Evaluation of the curriculum includes assessment of students' achievements and their subsequent accomplishments. Evaluation involves those served by the program: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.

Over the last decade the curriculum has been consciously developed in a way that (1) implements the instructional objectives of the master’s program, (2) offers students a reasonable selection of courses allowing them to design individualized programs of study, and (3) limits the development of highly specialized courses that serve a relatively small number of students and apply to a limited number of program tracks. The latter requirement seeks to ensure that the limited faculty resources of the school are used both efficiently and effectively in the delivery of instruction and balanced with the school’s research and service goals.

Since 1996 the school has engaged in a process of curriculum development that has resulted in a broad range of changes in the curriculum. All curriculum issues were considered in the context of the goals and instructional objectives and involved the participation of faculty, staff, students and alumni/professionals. Most of these changes were first considered by the curriculum committee, which then forwarded its recommendation to the school council for deliberation and action. Specific curriculum activities and their results are briefly described below:

1997/98, Cataloging and classification series was reviewed and three cataloging and classification classes (LIS550, Introduction to Cataloging and Classification, LIS655, Subject Cataloging and Classification, and LIS656, Descriptive Cataloging) were merged into two classes (LIS655, Organization of Knowledge I and LIS656, Organization of Knowledge II).

1998/99, Technology series was reviewed with one course added to the curriculum (LIS638, Internet Technologies and Information Services).

1998/99, Added an information technology requirement to the master's program consisting of one 3-credit course taken from four technology-based courses: LIS636, Microcomputers in Libraries and Information Centers, LIS637, Information Technology, LIS638, Internet Technologies and Information Services, or LIS668, Information Systems Design.

2000/2001, Completed a comprehensive review of curriculum resulting in 21 courses remaining unchanged; four courses added, six courses dropped, two courses merged, seven courses restructured, and 13 courses having prerequisites changed. LIS630, Online Information Systems and Services, had its prerequisites changed and the course was restructured. However, the changes have not been implemented.⁴

2001, curriculum committee reviewed a proposal to require that an advanced technology course be taken by all students to complete the school's technology requirement. For most of our students, the proposal would have resulted in requiring them to take two technology courses (LIS636 and one of the advanced technology courses LIS637, LIS638, or LIS668). After some discussion, the proposal was rejected by the curriculum committee because of the lack of faculty to deliver the high number of technology-related classes that would have resulted from implementing the proposal.

Curriculum Collaboration

As a result of the participation of several faculty members in the Communication-Journalism-Telecommunication (CJT) Graduate program, during 2002/03 six LIS courses were cross-listed with CJT. They are: LIS605, Information Policy and Technology Regulation; LIS637, Information Technology; LIS638, Internet Technologies for Information Services; LIS640, Health Sciences Libraries; LIS668, Information Systems Design, and LIS690, Special Topics in Library and Information Science: Introduction to Medical Informatics. This collaboration is intended to significantly expand the information technology courses available in the CJT master's and doctoral programs.

Another important form of collaboration relates to the school's provision of a large number of literature classes (LIS510, Children's Literature & Related Materials; LIS514, Literature & Related Media for Young Adults) as a service to the teacher preparation program of the College of Education and a service to the College of Agriculture's Family Studies program. Over the course of a year the school teaches 7-10 classes (almost all LIS510) that enroll 25 in each section. Since the mid-1990s these classes have been, almost exclusively, taught by part-time instructors, who are experienced school media Librarians. While we have been fortunate to have the services of excellent part-time instructors for these courses, we believe that a significant number of these classes should be taught by a full-time faculty member who could also be expected to coordinate the teaching of these classes. Unfortunately, the school does not have the resources to hire the needed full-time faculty member without seriously impacting its ability to deliver its master's program to its graduate students, and the university has been unwilling to provide funding for an additional faculty line.

Finally, a school faculty member has developed, in collaboration with the Medical Center's College of Allied Health, a Web-based Introduction to Medical Informatics (LIS690) that is taught annually.

⁴ University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Actions and Faculty Responsibilities Regarding Implementing Curriculum Decisions of April 27, 2001.

Curriculum - Possible Future Developments

Three curriculum developments are currently in various stages of consideration. The first development involves the possible use of the existing M.A. degree as a vehicle for delivering a separate degree program in Information Technology. As conceived, the degree would have a strong academic orientation (consistent with the intent of the M.A. degree) and probably would be longer in duration than the existing 36-hour master's degree in Library and Information Science. Future development of this program will depend on the availability of full-time faculty members who could contribute to it.

A second development relates to the CJT doctoral program. While several school faculty members are members of the CJT graduate faculty, and several library and information science students have entered the CJT doctoral program (with one graduated), the CJT program does not currently provide a strong focus for our students. With the cross-listing of a series of the school's information technology courses in the CJT graduate program we hope that eventually an information systems track (or something similar) would evolve that would be more relevant to the career interests of library and information science students.

A final curriculum development that is being considered by the school is an undergraduate degree in information studies. In spring 2003 the school submitted a proposal for funding an undergraduate program to the Institute for Museum and Library Services. The proposal was not funded, but the school remains interested in the possibility of introducing an undergraduate degree program sometime in the future. Part of the school's strategic plan includes the development of a full-range of academic degrees, from the baccalaureate to the Ph.D. degree, over the next 10-20 years.

Instruction - General

II.6 The curriculum, regardless of forms or locations of delivery selected by the school, conforms to the requirements of these Standards.

Since the last accreditation review, in 1997, headcount enrollment in the master's program has ranged from a low of 184 in fall 2001 to a high of 236 in fall 2003. Of the 236 students currently enrolled in the program, 163 (69%) are on the Lexington campus, 33 (14%) on our Louisville campus, and 40 (17%) on the Northern Kentucky campus. The number of students enrolled on the Louisville and Northern campuses has not changed significantly over the last two years. Since the mid-1990's 75-80 students have graduated from the master's program annually.

The university's state-wide mission, combined with the fact that the school's master's program is the only professional program in the Commonwealth that is accredited by the American Library Association, strongly influences the structure of our program of library and information studies education. The master's program has included a distance-learning component since the early 1970s. Currently, instruction is delivered on-site at three locations: (1) the primary instructional site at the University of Kentucky at Lexington; (2) an off-campus instructional site at Northern Kentucky University at Highland Heights, Kentucky, and (3) an off-campus instructional site at Louisville, Kentucky.

Course descriptions are on the school's web site at (<http://www.uky.edu/CIS/SLIS/bulletin.htm#courses>) and course outlines at (<http://www.uky.edu/CIS/SLIS/syllabi.htm>)

Instruction - Availability of Classes

The current master's curriculum comprises 42 courses. Most are taught on a regular basis (at least annually), and many are taught in multiple sections over the course of a year. Concerning the curriculum: 19 courses are taught by full-time faculty only; 13 courses are taught by part-time faculty only; four courses are taught by both full-time and part-time faculty; and three courses are taught by full-time and part-time faculty jointly. At this time, five courses are not scheduled to be taught. However, their status may change depending on student demands and the availability of either full-time or part-time instructors.

The schedule of offering courses, included among source documents, comprises only individual courses that are scheduled to be taught on the Lexington campus and thus is only a partial schedule. It does not detail which courses will be taught in the school's distance learning program, although some of the courses in the schedule will be Internet-based and thus available to students enrolled in the distance learning program as well as those on the Lexington campus.

Because most of our students are employed either part-time or full-time, a considerable effort is made to ensure that a broad range of courses is available to students during the evenings, weekends and summers. Typically 2-3 classes are taught each evening, Monday through Thursday, and in recent years 1-2 classes have been offered on Saturday as well. While a broad array of classes, relevant to students interested in school media libraries, is available during the summer term, it has been more difficult to deliver a comparable range of classes for students who have other professional interests. Nevertheless, in combination with classes that are available through our Distance Learning Program, over a two-year period of study, students are able to get the classes that they need to complete a strong program of professional education. Students can inform themselves regarding the future availability of individual classes, for scheduling purposes, through reference to the school's regular class schedules, its schedule of offering courses for the Lexington campus, and its schedule of classes to be offered through the distance-learning program. The latter two schedules of classes may be found in source document 12.

Instruction - Part-time Instructors

Part-time instructors represent an important component of the teaching faculty. However, with the exception of the summer term, when a part-time faculty member teaches LIS 601, part-time faculty typically do not teach the required core courses. All part-time instructors must possess the master's degree in library and information science, demonstrate a significant record of professional achievement, and must be approved by the Graduate School as an instructor of graduate-level courses. Part-time instructors allow the school to offer students a breadth and depth to the curriculum that would be otherwise impossible without significantly distorting the school's research and service responsibilities. Especially important is the informed, and frequently specialized, professional orientation that part-time instructors bring to courses that they teach. The school relies exclusively on part-time instructors to teach 13 courses. If it could not draw upon this unique instructional resource, it would be impossible to deliver the existing curriculum without adding several additional full-time faculty, some with highly specialized expertise – a highly unlikely prospect given economic conditions in the State and the university. Part-time instructors bring to the classroom not only special expertise but also a special service orientation and enthusiasm for the profession. Course evaluations show that students typically rate part-time instructors as the best instructors that they have encountered in the master's program.

Instruction - Size of Classes

While it is impossible to arrive at any absolute judgments regarding the quality of instruction that is available in the master's program, class size is one indirect indicator of instructional quality. Small classes allow instructors considerable flexibility regarding instructional strategies and they allow substantial student-faculty interaction. In contrast, large classes frequently mean that the most effective instructional strategy must be compromised to accommodate the large numbers of students; with some kinds of assignments (e.g., extensive papers, development of practical skills, seminar method, etc.) avoided because of the scheduling or evaluation demands they impose. This is especially true in professional programs where the development of practical skills, as well as the acquisition of knowledge, is an important part of professional education. Enrollment data for classes since 1996 are available in source document seven and analyzed in tables II-3 and II-4.

Table II-3 Lexington Campus Courses Average Enrollment 1996-2002

Class Enrollment	Number of Classes	Percentage of Classes
20-25	6	16%
15-19	11	31%
10-14	11	31%
<10	8	22%

Table II-4 Distance Learning Courses Average Enrollment 1996-2002

Class Enrollment	Number of Classes	Percentage of Classes
26-30	3	12%
20-25	5	20%
15-19	7	28%
10-14	8	32%
<10	2	8%

Instruction - Distance Learning

A distance-learning program has been an important part of the School of Library and Information Science since the early 1970s. The primary purpose of the program is to provide students, who cannot commute or relocate to Lexington for 1-2 years of graduate study, with improved access to the school's master's program in library and information science.

For 30 years almost all of the classes in the school's distance-learning program have been taught either by full-time faculty who travel to the remote sites (e.g., Northern Kentucky University, the University of Louisville, Ashland Community College, Elizabethtown Community College), or by on-site library/information professionals who are employed by the school as part-time instructors. More than 90 percent of the distance-learning classes delivered by the school during this 30-year period were taught at Northern Kentucky University. On at least three occasions since the mid-1970s, most recently in fall 1999, the school initiated a series of off-campus classes at the University of Louisville. In addition, occasionally classes have been taught at other locations in the state (e.g., Ashland, Elizabethtown, Nicholasville, Frankfort).

Enrollment in the distance master's program has varied widely from a low of 25-30 students (early 1970s through the mid-1980s) to a high of 110 students (early 1990s). The significant increase in enrollment, from the mid-1980s to the early-1990s, was largely a result of more and different classes being taught at the NKU site. Enrollment in the distance master's program during spring 2002 was 78 (45 students at Northern Kentucky and 33 at Louisville). For a variety of reasons (e.g., Kent State University's delivery of a web-based program to Southern Ohio, the reduction in the number and variety of classes taught at the Northern campus), the number of students enrolled in our distance-learning program at Northern Kentucky has declined (from 70-80 students to 30-35 students over the last five years). Enrollment in our Louisville distance-learning program appears to have stabilized at 30-40 students.

Over the last four academic years our distance learning program has delivered an average of 7.3 on-site classes per year at Northern Kentucky and 2.3 on-site classes to the Louisville campus. In addition, the school has also provided an average of 6.0 classes per year to multiple locations, typically using compressed video and the Internet for instructional delivery. In 1999/2000, three of the distance learning classes were compressed video or Internet-based. Two years later (2002/2003), the number of classes had increased to 11, with nine being Internet-based. The Louisville Campus program, which had been inactive for several years, was re-started in fall 1999 by the director, to respond to the request of the public, school, and academic library communities of greater Louisville. Over the last four years, there has been a conscious shift in our distance-learning program from a strategy of relying heavily on part-time instructors to teach on-site classes, to a strategy that relies much more on using full-time faculty to teach classes that are delivered via the Internet. Four years ago, 70-80 percent of our distance-learning program was taught by part-time instructors; during 2002-2003, that percentage dropped to a more reasonable 50 percent.

Until recently, students enrolled in our distance learning program were required to take at least 25% of their master's program on the Lexington campus. In 2002 the school decided to implement an off-campus degree program that would allow students to complete their 36-hour master's program through our distance-learning program, without requiring them to take classes on the Lexington campus. The Graduate School has since reviewed and approved the proposed off-campus degree program. The school's proposal for the off-campus degree program, and the principles and assumptions underlying our distance learning program, may be found as source documents four and five.

During fall 2002, the school council decided that an Internet-based master's program should be implemented by the 2005/2006 academic year. Implementation of the program will allow the school to address four important goals: (1) it will greatly increase student accessibility to the master's program

(especially prospective public and school media librarians, many working full-time, who are scattered throughout the Commonwealth and find it difficult to travel to one of the three existing instructional locations); (2) it will greatly increase the participation of full-time faculty in the distance learning program because it will not require extensive faculty travel to the off-campus sites; (3) it will reduce our reliance on part-time, on-site faculty to deliver much of the distance learning program, and (4) it will allow the school to compete more effectively with other online master's programs in general and with a Florida State University Internet-based master's program in particular, that was introduced to Kentucky in 2002 by the Kentucky Virtual University.

With the implementation of an Internet-based master's program in fall 2005, it is intended that most, if not all, of on-site instruction at Northern Kentucky and Louisville will be discontinued, and that most of the instruction available in our distance learning program will be technology-based (primarily Internet-based) and delivered by full-time faculty.

While the primary benefit of the distance learning program is that it provides many students improved access to our master's program in library and information science, the distance program also produces a substantial income stream that the school has used to: (1) fund distance learning instruction; (2) fund part-time instruction on the Lexington campus; and (3) supplement travel and other activities important to the master's program. Currently, the school receives \$250 for each graduate student enrolled in every distance learning class. In 1998/99, 343 students generated an income of \$85,750 and in 1999/2000, 380 students generated an income of \$95,000.

Instruction - Experiential Opportunities

Professional Field Experience (LIS675) and **School Media Practicum** (LIS676) represent opportunities for experiential education within the curriculum. In both cases, students gain significant entry-level professional experience in operating information environments, most frequently libraries. The direct supervision of participating students is accomplished by practicing professionals and the courses are coordinated/managed by full-time faculty. LIS675 is an elective course and LIS676 is a course that is required of all students seeking certification as a school media librarian. Additional details regarding the structure and requirements of LIS675 and LIS676 may be found in source document six.

Assessment of Curriculum

Student Rating of Classes

A major issue relating to curriculum assessment is the issue of comparability of classes taught by full-time and part-time instructors and the comparability of classes taught on the Lexington campus with those taught in our distance-learning program. Summary data of student ratings of class value and instructor quality, for fall 2002 and spring 2003, are available as source document eight. The data are analyzed below.

As is evident from the data, students rate the value of classes, and instructor quality, in classes taught by part-time instructors (on the average) somewhat higher than they do classes taught by full-time instructors. At the same time, there appears to be no difference regarding how students rate the value of classes or the quality of instructors in distance learning classes as compared with Lexington campus classes.

Overall, student evaluations of class value and instructor quality are quite positive, rating almost all classes above 3.0 (only three classes during 2002/2003 fell below the good rating of 3.0 for class value and four classes for instructor quality). Course evaluations' mean ratings of the value of the classes and instructor quality are very good to excellent for almost all classes.

At this time we are unable to compare student perceptions of traditional, face-to-face, classes with classes that are distributed via the Internet over the last several years. Comparisons are not possible because students taking a class via the Internet are frequently located at some distance, and administering the class evaluation was complicated with low response rates. At the same time, instructors using the Internet felt that the traditional class evaluation instrument was not designed to evaluate online classes. During the last year the Distance Learning Program and the Teaching and Academic Support Center have developed two evaluative instruments for Internet-based classes:

formative evaluation: <http://www.uktasc.com/demo/formative.php>
 and summative evaluation: <http://www.uktasc.com/demo/summative.php>

It now appears that a satisfactory instrument is available that is comparable to the traditional form and includes the two primary data elements that are used to evaluate classes (i.e., value of the course, quality of teaching). These forms should be adopted by the school to ensure that all classes are evaluated on a regular basis.

Table II-5 Student Ratings of Class Value and Instructor Quality, Fall 2002-Spring 2003
Four point scale: 1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=excellent (N=49)

	Percent rating class value higher than 3.0	Mean rating of class value	Percent rating instructor quality higher than 3.0	Mean rating of instructor quality
Classes taught by full-time faculty (n=28)	26 of 28 93%	3.4	25 of 28 93%	3.3
Classes taught by part-time instructors (n=21)	20 of 21 95%	3.6	20 of 21 95%	3.6
Classes taught on Lexington campus (n=35)	33 of 35 94%	3.5	32 of 35 92%	3.5
Classes taught in Distance Learning (n=14)	13 of 14 93%	3.5	13 of 14 93%	3.5
Overall mean ratings for all classes (N=49)		3.5		3.5

As table II-6 shows, course evaluations of the school (typically 3.4-3.5 for course value and quality of teaching) are slightly higher than those for the College of Communications and Information Studies as a whole (typically 3.3-3.4) and those for all Lexington campus classes (typically 3.2-3.3).⁵

Table II-6 Course Evaluation Summaries, Fall Semester, 1997-2002

Fall Semester	Lexington Campus	College of Communications and Information Studies	School of Library and Information Studies
1997			
Overall value of the course	3.2	3.3	3.4
Overall quality of teaching	3.3	3.4	3.3
1998			
Overall value of the course	3.2	3.3	3.4
Overall quality of teaching	3.3	3.4	3.5
1999			
Overall value of the course	3.2	3.3	3.5
Overall quality of teaching	3.3	3.4	3.5
2000			
Overall value of the course	3.2	3.3	3.4
Overall quality of teaching	3.3	3.4	3.4
2001			
Overall value of the course	3.2	3.3	3.3
Overall quality of teaching	3.3	3.4	3.4
2002			
Overall value of the course	3.2	3.3	3.4
Overall quality of teaching	3.3	3.4	3.4

We are reluctant to draw any conclusions from the data since both the course evaluation data for the college and the Lexington campus include large populations of undergraduates and non-majors, while that of the school is based almost exclusively on graduate students enrolled in our master's program, except for LIS510, Children's Literature and Related Materials, which includes large numbers of upper-division Education majors.

While the school is most interested in comparing the perceived quality of technology-based classes with those taught in the traditional classroom setting, we have only recently begun more general use of Web-based instruction, and we do not feel that sufficient time has elapsed to achieve a reasonable assessment. Faculty members are only beginning to familiarize themselves with the technology (both its strengths and limitations). The Distance Learning Program at the university has developed a class evaluation instrument that parallels the university's standard instrument that has been used for many years to evaluate classes.

Student Performance

If the curriculum is the means by which the school accomplishes its instructional goals and objectives, additional data that can be helpful in understanding how the curriculum contributes to the accomplishment of our goals and instructional objectives can be found in measures of student academic performance.

⁵ University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Surveys of Graduating Students, 2000-2003.

Student grade point averages by semester, the cumulative grade points of individual graduating students, and student performance on the final examination, summarized in tables II-7, II-8, and II-9, indicate a positive, and high, level of academic achievement by students in the master's program. The grade point averages by semester vary from 3.4 to 3.8 but in most cases it is 3.7 or 3.8; More than 80 percent of our master's students graduate with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher; and over the last three years 248 of 259 students taking the final examination passed on their first attempt (a pass rate of 96%).

Table II-7 Grade Point Averages by Semester, December 1998-May 2003

Semester	Grade Point Averages
December 1998	3.7
May 1999	3.7
August 1999	3.7
December 1999	3.8
May 2000	3.7
August 2000	3.4
December 2000	3.6
May 2001	3.7
August 2001	3.8
December 2001	3.7
May 2002	3.7
August 2002	3.8
December 2002	3.8
May 2003	3.6

Table II-8 Cumulative Grade Points for Individual Graduates

Individual Grade Point Averages	Graduates, August 2001-May 2002 (n=67)	Graduates, August 2002-May 2003 (n=64)
4.0	13 (19%)	13 (20%)
3.9	15 (22%)	15 (23%)
3.8	11 (16%)	9 (14%)
3.7	6 (9%)	6(9%)
3.6	5 (7%)	4 (6%)
3.5	7 (10%)	7 (11%)
3.4	3 (4%)	3 (5%)
3.3	5 (7%)	5 (8%)
3.2	1 (1%)	1 (2%)
3.1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3.0	1 (1%)	1 (2%)

The final examination is required of all students in the master's program. The examination consists of five general questions relating to important or significant developments or issues in the field of library and information science. The questions are designed to encourage students to integrate professional knowledge and skills derived from their overall learning experience and then coherently discuss the developments or issues as indicated. Students must respond to three of the five questions and the pass/failure decision of the faculty is based on an overall evaluation of the student's examination. The students have four hours to complete the examination. As seen in table II-9, over the last three years more than 90% of the students taking the required final examination passed the examination on their first attempt. Of the eleven people who failed the examination on their first attempt, all but one passed the examination on their second, and final, attempt. The observed final examination success rate seems to indicate that the curriculum is adequately preparing students to perform well on the kinds of questions included in the final examination.

Table II-9 Student Performance on the final examination, 2002-2003

Semester	Number of Student Taking Examination	Number of Student Passing Examination	Percentage of Students Passing Examination
Spring 2000	34	31	91
Summer 2000	19	19	100
Fall 2000	29	29	100
Spring 2001	32	32	100
Summer 2001	20	19	95
Fall 2001	20	19	95
Spring 2002	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Summer 2002	20	20	100
Fall 2002	27	23	85
Spring 2003	29	29	100
Summer 2003	29	27	93

Although all of these measures of student performance indicate high academic achievement, which supports the view that the curriculum supports the accomplishment of our instructional goals and objectives, nevertheless these measures may also reflect some level of grade inflation that has occurred throughout higher education over the last forty years.

Evaluations by Graduating Students

Over the last three years graduating students have been surveyed regarding their perceptions of their professional capabilities. The surveys were distributed to the students following their final examination. Typically, the school graduates 75-80 students each year, and thus the number of surveys that are available represent a response rate of something less than 50 percent. In addition, the statements in table II-10 that are in bold do not represent current instructional objectives and those not in bold can only be said to partially represent existing instructional objectives. Thus, it is not possible to use the results of the existing surveys to judge the extent to which graduating students feel they have accomplished existing instructional objectives. Percentages in table II-10 denote the percent of the surveyed students who answered four or five on a 5-point semantic differential ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Clearly, graduating students have a strongly positive view of their capabilities regarding the statements presented in the survey. Whether or not graduating students would have the same feeling regarding our existing instructional objectives cannot be determined from the existing surveys.

Table II-10 Perceived Capabilities of Graduating Students, 2000-2002

After completing the master's program, I believe that I...	2000 N= 33	2001 N= 42	2002 N= 31
understand the historical development of libraries and information agencies.	79%	86%	84%
am aware of the social and ethical aspects of information services.	85%	93%	87%
understand how information agencies identify, select, and acquire information.	82%	83%	90%
am familiar with the organizing principles of classification systems and databases.	73%	79%	71%
understand how to describe and organize information resources.	70%	86%	77%
am familiar with basic reference services.	82%	86%	84%
am familiar with specialized reference sources in the environment in which I intend to work.	73%	76%	90%
am able to apply basic management concepts and methods to make decisions and solve problems.	76%	64%	84%
understand how research in LIS relates to professional goals and practice	67%	79%	81%
understand how to evaluate user satisfaction with an information service.	73%	79%	81%
am comfortable with the use of computers and network technologies.	70%	76%	84%
am able to provide basic technical guidance for using computer systems.	76%	83%	81%
can be the intermediary between end-users and electronic resources.	73%	81%	90%
am prepared to enter professional practice.	76%	86%	87%

If one of the purposes of the survey of graduating students is to help the school understand the extent to which our students feel that they have accomplished existing instructional objectives, then the school needs to do three things: (1) the questions in the survey need to be stated as current instructional objectives; (2) the survey itself needs to be distributed three times a year, with some attempt made to secure a higher response rate; and (3) the response scale should be changed to a Likert-type scale that will allow easier interpretation of results.

Evaluations by Employers

Our survey of employers is conducted in two parts, one seeking responses from principals regarding their assessment of graduates in the school media library program, the other seeking responses from directors of libraries for all other graduates. It is intended that the **Survey of Employers** and the **Survey of Alumni** will be distributed in alternate years. Employer responses for the 2003 surveys are available as source document 10.

In group one, surveys were sent to selected principals (N=20) who employed graduates of our school media libraries program from 2001-2003. We received a 50 percent return rate for this survey, and responses indicated the following: 75 percent of the principals rated our school media graduates four and five (high degree) on all questions referencing the instructional program, resource collection, and use of technology; highest rankings assigned by the principals were given to exhibiting ethical behavior; 50 percent of school media graduates rank moderate degrees of collaboration with teachers.

As a result of the survey of principals, LIS644 and LIS647 have been modified to include a greater emphasis on collaboration with the school community. As a result of these changes, we expect principals to rate future graduates higher as regards collaboration.

Twenty-five surveys were distributed to known employers of other graduates (employed by academic, public and special libraries) with a 50 percent response rate. One-hundred percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with nine of 16 statements based generally on instructional objectives including: historical development; ethics; information processing; organization of information; reference sources and services; library databases; research; general preparation. Two of the 13 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with regard to four areas including: basic management concepts; evaluating user satisfaction; basic technical guidance, and communication skills.

In both the survey of principals and the survey of other employers, the “not observed” response was rather frequent. This is probably because many of the questions related to very specific capabilities, as reflected in instructional objectives, and it is likely that the employers simply did not have an opportunity to judge the employee in those terms. Perhaps, when surveying employers in the future, the focus of the questions should be on a limited number of relatively general characteristics of employees rather than relying on the survey of employers to judge the extent to which the graduates have accomplished specific instructional objectives.

Overall, the survey of employers indicates satisfaction with graduates’ capabilities. However, given the relatively low number of responses, some effort needs to be made to determine if it is possible to expand the populations of employers surveyed. At the same time, the issue of the high number of “not observed” would suggest that the survey of employers needs to be refined to focus on more general characteristics or capabilities of graduates that employers could reasonably be expected to judge.

Faculty Assessment of Mission, Goals and Objectives Accomplishment

The full-time faculty members of the school are the best prepared to offer a considered judgment regarding the extent to which the school is accomplishing its mission, goals and instructional objectives. Although their judgments must be tempered by the potential bias that they bring to the process,

nevertheless faculty members are responsible for establishing the mission, goals and instructional objectives; they are responsible for developing the curriculum and academic programs to accomplish the goals and objectives; they are, in large part, responsible for ensuring that the goals and objectives are accomplished; and they are generally familiar with the programs and activities of the school. The curriculum committee asked the full-time faculty members to offer their judgments regarding the extent to which the school is achieving its mission, goals and instructional objectives. We identified each of our mission and goal statements and asked faculty to rate the extent to which they believe each is being accomplished. As regards our instructional objectives, we asked them to indicate the extent to which each of the instructional objectives is achieved by our instructional programs over the 36-hour master's program. Survey responses may be found as source document 10.

Levels of accomplishment were defined on a five-point scale ranging from low to high. Faculty members were asked to circle the **number** that reflects their judgment regarding the extent to which the indicated mission, goal or instructional objective is **currently** accomplished. The results of the survey are summarized and discussed below.

Mission of the School

The mission of the school is to extend and enhance the quality of information service in a culturally diverse, technological, and global society by:

1	2	3	4	5
Accomplished at Low Level		Accomplished at Moderate Level		Accomplished at High Level

1. Educating persons for professional positions in information institutions and settings: **4.6**
[REDACTED]

2. Advancing the state of knowledge of information studies through research and development: **3.4**
[REDACTED]

3. Providing assistance in the development of information technologies and services: **3.2**
[REDACTED]

4. Providing intellectual and professional leadership in ethical, political and social areas that pertain to information in contemporary society: **3.6**
[REDACTED]

5. Preparing students for advanced study: **3.4**
[REDACTED]

In the area of instruction, faculty members feel that the instructional mission relating to professional education (1 above) is accomplished at a high level, while preparing students for advanced study is accomplished at a moderate level. Accomplishment of the research and scholarship mission (2 above) and the service mission (3 and four above) are defined at a moderate level by the faculty. Given that the University of Kentucky seeks to establish itself as a premier research university, and the significant resources devoted to research and scholarship in faculty distributions of effort, the school needs to determine if its research and scholarship mission is being accomplished only at a moderate level or if the level of accomplishment is misperceived by the faculty.

Goals of the School

1	2	3	4	5
Accomplished at Low Level		Accomplished at Moderate Level		Accomplished at High Level

1. To provide a strong and flexible educational program that is responsive to the immediate and long-range needs of students, the profession, and those the profession serves: **4.0**
[REDACTED]

2. To attract and admit a diverse student body whose members give evidence of possessing qualities requisite for academic achievement and significant contribution to the profession: **3.1**
[REDACTED]

3. To provide an educational environment that fosters effective teaching and learning: **4.0**
[REDACTED]

4. To produce competent information professionals who can facilitate the flow of information in a rapidly changing society: **4.8**
[REDACTED]

5. To contribute to the advancement of theory and practice through systematic and continuing research and publication: **3.9**
[REDACTED]

6. To provide continuing education opportunities that assist information professionals in maintaining their professional competence, and responding effectively to the information needs of the clients they serve: **2.3**
[REDACTED]

7. To contribute to professional practice and the activities of professional organizations through continuing professional service: **3.7**
[REDACTED]

8. To recruit, develop, support and retain faculty and staff that possess the qualities requisite for significant contribution to the school and to the profession: **3.6**
[REDACTED]

9. To develop and maintain collaborative relationships with individuals and units within the college and university to further the mission of the school: **3.0**
[REDACTED]

10. To develop and maintain a program of financial and other support that will supplement the financial support provided by the university in order to advance the school's mission: **3.1**
[REDACTED]

In terms of the goals, faculty members perceive all as being accomplished at a moderate to high level, except for its continuing education goal (6 above). The delivery of a significant program of continuing education has been a consistent issue for many years. The school offers a broad array of instructional programs at the master's level, consuming 50-60 percent of its full-time faculty resources. In addition, the research and scholarship mission consumes, for all but special title faculty (there are two in the school), 30-40 percent of their distributions of effort. Only 5-10 percent of a regular title series faculty's DOE is given to service. That service includes institutional service, service to the professional community in the form of working with information agencies and organizations, and professional association activities,

leaving very little time for the development of continuing education programs for information professionals. Because of the priorities of the university, the college and the school, this distribution of effort for regular title faculty is not likely to change in the future. Two special title faculty members give a significant part of their distribution of effort to service, and while they do develop and deliver some continuing education programs, most of their service contributions are of an administrative nature (one manages computer resources and the other manages the large number of students enrolled in the school media Library program). Beyond the service goal, it appears that faculty members feel some attention might be given to improving the quality of the student body, expanding collaborative relationships within the university, and expanding financial support that is available to students and the general academic programs.

Instructional Objectives of the Master's Program

Upon completion of the master's program in library and information science, graduates will:

1	2	3	4	5
Accomplished at Low Level		Accomplished at Moderate Level		Accomplished at High Level

1. Understand the processes associated with the production, distribution, organization, preservation, retrieval and use of information in society: **4.3**
 [REDACTED]

2. Understand the general principles, values and ethical standards underlying the provision of information services in a variety of settings: **4.9**
 [REDACTED]

3. Recognize the responsibilities of the library and information profession in a culturally diverse, technological, and global society: **4.4**
 [REDACTED]

4. Critically analyze and evaluate professional issues and problems in an appropriate operational or historical context: **3.9**
 [REDACTED]

5. Be familiar with information policies and information-related laws that influence the delivery of information resources throughout society: **3.2**
 [REDACTED]

6. Understand the nature of information, information needs, information seeking behavior and information use in society: **4.3**
 [REDACTED]

7. Be able to develop, manage and effectively use information systems, sources and services to serve clients: **4.3**
 [REDACTED]

8. Understand, and effectively use, information technology: **4.0**
 [REDACTED]

9. Understand the role of research in the profession and be able to interpret and apply research results in practice: **3.6**
 [REDACTED]

10. Be familiar with the functions of management in organizations, and be able to apply management concepts and methods in effective problem solving and decision-making: **3.5**

11. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication: **3.3**

Faculty members indicate that they believe all the instructional objectives of the school are accomplished at a moderate to high level. The high rating that faculty members give to the accomplishment of the instructional objectives is consistent with their high ratings of the accomplishment of the educational mission (4.6) and instruction-related goals (4.0-4.8).

Recommendations

Finalize changes that were proposed in LIS630 during our 2001 curriculum review and submit them to the school council and the graduate faculty for their review and action.

Seek to acquire an additional faculty line that would be devoted to children's literature and related information resources and services.

Establish an explicit linkage between the questions asked on the survey of graduating students and faculty about accomplishment of the instructional goals (i.e., the questions on the survey should be stated in terms of the instructional objectives). In addition, change the scale used to rate student perceptions to a Likert-type scale (e.g., strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, undecided) that would help with the interpretation of student responses since they represent ordinal responses.

Ensure that the survey of graduating students is distributed three times a year and seek to achieve a higher response rate than that achieved to date.

Evaluate all classes using either the traditional survey instrument or the recently developed online instrument that is intended for use with web-based classes.

Collect and maintain current data relating to predefined key indicators that parallel the key indicators used by the university in its planning and evaluation activities, in order to support the planning and evaluation process

Develop a strategy for acquiring placement information that offers the possibility of providing more complete and accurate information about placement.

Change the schedule of offering courses to cover a two-year period only and expand it to include courses that will be available in the distance-learning program as well as on the Lexington campus.

Supporting Documents for II. Curriculum

1. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. *Bulletin, 2003-2004*.
2. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. *Certification Requirements and Advising Worksheets of School Media Libraries Program*. 2003.
3. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Actions and Faculty Responsibilities Regarding Implementing Curriculum Decisions of April 27, 2001.
4. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Off-Campus Degree Program Proposal. 2002.
5. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Some Principles and Assumptions of the Distance Learning Program. Adopted by the school council, May 3, 2002. two pp.
6. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Guidelines for Professional Field Experience (LIS675 and LIS676). Spring 2003.
7. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Courses Offered by the SLIS by Enrollment, 1996-2002, Lexington and Off-Campus.
8. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Student Ratings of Class Value and Instructor Quality, Fall 2002 and Spring 2003.
9. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Surveys of Graduating Students, 2000-2003.
10. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Surveys of Employers, 2002-2003.
11. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Survey of Full-Time Faculty Relating to Accomplishment of Mission, Goals and Instructional Objectives. September 15, 2003.
12. University of Kentucky. School of Library and Information Science. Schedule for Offering Courses, Lexington Campus; Courses Available Through Distance Learning Program. Fall 2003.