

## IV. STUDENTS

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## IV. STUDENTS

### Introduction

Graduate enrollment at the University of Kentucky fall semester 2003 is 6,163, 17.6% of reported fall enrollment of 35,052 and up 3.1% from fall 2002 graduate enrollment of 5,977. In 1993, the university's strategic plan established the goal of increasing the number of graduate degrees awarded annually to 1,200 by 1998. That goal was achieved in AY 1994-95, when 1,294 graduate degrees were awarded. The number remained above 1,200 every year thereafter until AY 2001-02, when it dipped to 1,140. In AY 2002-03 the number of graduate degrees awarded again surpassed 1,200, when it was 1,269. The data in table IV-1, below, make clear the school's contribution to this success.

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### Recruitment, Admission, Financial Aid, Placement

*IV.1 The school formulates recruitment, admission, financial aid, placement, and other academic and administrative policies for students that are consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives; the policies reflect the needs and values of the constituencies served by a program. The school has policies to recruit and retain a multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual student body from a variety of backgrounds. The composition of the student body is such that it fosters a learning environment consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.*

### Recruiting Graduate Students at the University of Kentucky

In our 1997 *Program Presentation* we commented on a report to the UK President by the Committee on Graduate Education, which was released in August of the preceding year. In its report the committee pointed out that resources had not quite kept pace with the expansion of graduate education. The committee recommended several changes in policy that would improve graduate education at UK. In our *Program Presentation* we stated:

Several of the recommendations of the Committee on Graduate Education, if carried out, would help the school fulfill its mission. In particular, the type of statute in place in nearby states (e.g., Ohio, Indiana, Iowa), allowing graduate assistants (GAs) to be immediately eligible for in-state tuition rates, may be considered for adoption by the Kentucky Legislature. Should this come to pass, recruitment of top out-of-state students would be easier for all UK departments.

Other recommendations under consideration by the President include summer support for GAs and fellowship recipients (currently absent), the availability of in-state tuition scholarships for GAs (currently available only to Teaching Assistants), and improved fellowship stipends.

Although the kind of legislation referred to above still does not exist in Kentucky, nevertheless the Graduate School awards a scholarship for the out-of-state portion of tuition to a non-Kentucky resident who receives a graduate assistantship. Moreover, several years ago the Graduate School Dean instituted the Kentucky Graduate Scholarships, which enable out-of-state students who meet the GPA requirement to attend graduate school at UK and pay in-state tuition. This is not limited to those with graduate assis-

tantships. Information on the Graduate School Web site about the Kentucky Graduate Scholarships states:

### **Kentucky Graduate Scholarships**

*A merit scholarship opportunity for **non-resident** applicants to the University of Kentucky Graduate School*

All new non-resident students enrolled in a University of Kentucky graduate degree program are eligible for tuition scholarships based on their prior academic performance. These scholarships will allow the candidate to attend the University of Kentucky at the in-state tuition rate.

In order to be eligible for the scholarship, the applicant must have achieved:

- an earned bachelor's degree, with an undergraduate grade point average of 3.25 or higher on a 4.00 scale.
- a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.25 on any prior graduate work.

All non-resident applicants for admission (including international applicants) to the University of Kentucky Graduate School will be automatically considered for this award; no separate scholarship application is required.

As for other recommendations by the Committee on Graduate Education, we are pleased to report:

- Students enrolled in the school who have graduate assistantships or certain fellowships are supported during the summer, if their assignment includes summer (graduate assistantships) or if they will engage in course work and/or research during summer (certain fellowships).
- Students in the school's master's program who have graduate assistantships receive in-state tuition scholarships.
- Fellowship stipends have been increased.

## **Recruiting Graduate Students at the School of Library and Information Science**

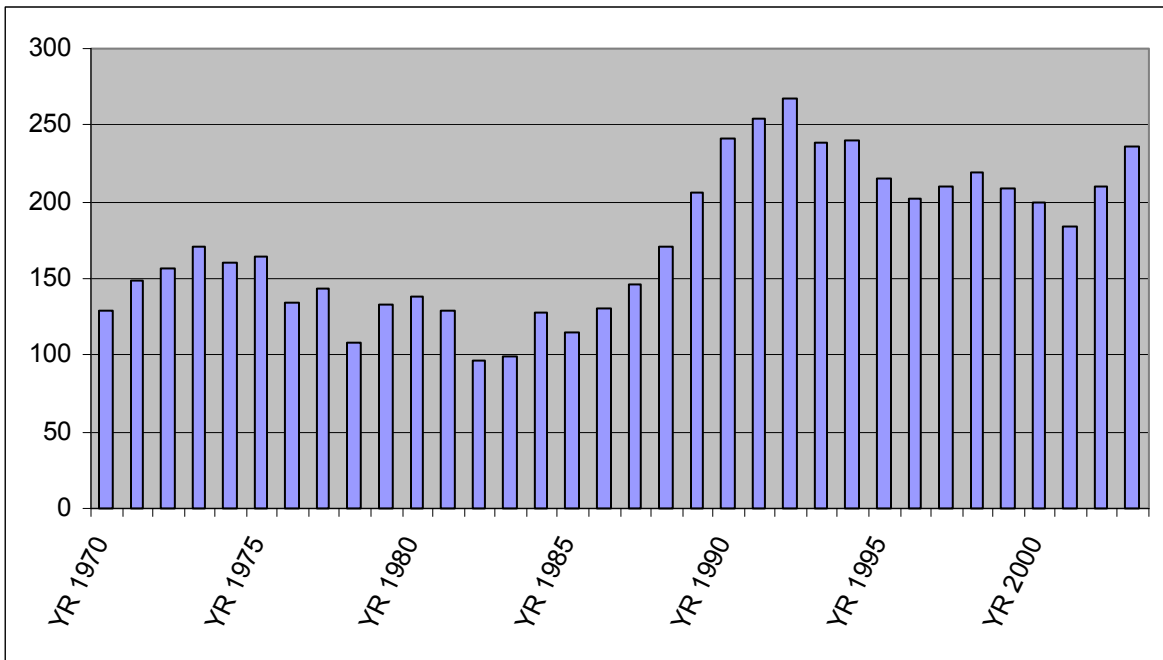
### **General Recruitment**

Because of the strong enrollment in recent years, although we have engaged in general recruitment, we have not made it a priority. Below, we discuss specific recruitment, which has been and remains a priority, and whose goal has been and continues to be increased diversity of our student body. In those recruiting efforts, we recognize that increased recruitment for diversity does not necessitate the decrease of traditional white student population. However, we believe that a more diverse student body based on race, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, and social/economic status will enrich the learning environment for all students.

A table in the earlier *Program Presentation* showed fall enrollment for the period 1970-1996. We are pleased to report that, after dipping below 200 in fall 2000 and 2001, strong enrollment continues, as the data in table IV-1 show.

**Table IV-1 Enrollment, Fall Semester, 1970-2003  
(Head Count)**

Year Enrlmnt	Year Enrlmnt	Year Enrlmnt	Year Enrlmnt	Year Enrlmnt	Year Enrlmnt	Year Enrlmnt
1970 129	1975 164	1980 138	1985 115	1990 241	1995 215	2000 199
1971 149	1976 134	1981 129	1986 130	1991 255	1996 202	2001 184
1972 156	1977 144	1982 97	1987 146	1992 267	1997 210	2002 210
1973 171	1978 108	1983 99	1988 171	1993 239	1998 219	2003 236
1974 161	1979 133	1984 128	1989 206	1994 240	1999 209	



In our 1997 *Program Presentation*, we stated that, with the then-current level of resources, optimum enrollment was 180-220. We believe this is still appropriate. This figure is based on the understanding that a student faculty ratio of between 18:1 and 22:1 is ideal for creating a learning environment conducive for direct student-faculty interaction. We want to point out that even the fall 2001 enrollment of 184 was within the range of optimum enrollment, given the current level of resources, and that fall 2003 enrollment of 236 is beyond the range of optimum enrollment.

## Specific Recruitment

Kentucky's populations of ethnic minorities are somewhat smaller than the national averages: 7.3 percent African American, 1.5 percent Hispanic, 0.7 percent Asian, and 0.2 percent American Indian and Alaska Native, according to the 2000 Census. It is reasonable to want the student body of the school to approximate the percentage of ethnic minorities in the state, but this has not been the case in Kentucky. In the fall 2003 semester, African American enrollment was just 3.0 percent (7 of 236 students) and Hispanic was 0.8 percent (2 of 236). There was one Asian student; no other ethnic minority students were enrolled.

Clearly, this is not adequate in terms of African American enrollments. (Until the recent growth among Hispanic population, we have focused on recruitment of African American students.) To address this problem, we have undertaken a series of strategies, which we discuss below. However, it appears the school is doing well in comparison with a number of other schools of library and information studies, many of which have much larger populations of African Americans to serve and also to recruit from in their respective states. The figures in the following table show the proportions of African American recruitment within neighboring states and regions, as well as within Kentucky.

**Table IV-2 Ratio % African American Enrollment  
To % African American State Population,  
Kentucky vs. Neighboring Regional schools**

<b>Fall '00 African American Enrollment in Master Prgrm</b>	<b>African Amer Populatn as Percent of State*</b>	<b>Ratio of Enrollment to State Population**</b>
Louisiana 13.6% (22 of 162)	32.5%	1:2.4
Alabama 7.8% (13 of 167)	26.0%	1:3.3
Kent State 3.4% (17 of 504)	11.5%	1:3.4
Indiana 2.4% (11 of 453)	8.4%	1:3.5
Maryland 7.9% (24 of 305)	27.9%	1:3.5
<b>Kentucky 2% (4 of 199)</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>1:3.6</b>
Illinois 4% (15 of 375)	15.1%	1:3.8
Catholic/DC 11.3% (27 of 239)	60.0%	1:5.3
Chapel Hill 4% (8 of 196)	21.6%	1:5.4
Tennessee 3% (6 of 200)	16.4%	1:5.5
*Data are from ALISE Statistical Report 2001 and U.S. Census for 2000.		
**% African American Enrollment : % African American State Population		

While such comparisons are not meant to justify current low enrollments of African Americans, they do indicate the school would need little improvement to be among the very top schools in the table on this indicator. In fact, **if we use African American enrollment fall 2003, which is seven of 236 students, the percent of African American enrollment is 3.0 and the ratio, using 2000 population, is 1:2.4.** This ratio perhaps would rank Kentucky as the most successful regional program in attracting African Americans.

## **A Series of Strategies**

### **Turning to Library Directors**

The school has tried a series of strategies in an effort to recruit African Americans. In one strategy, the school made a relatively large-scale effort to enlist the help of library directors. In 1996-97 directors of libraries at public and private colleges and universities in Kentucky and West Virginia were asked to assist in identifying students who might wish to pursue a career in library and information science, and in asking the library directors we emphasized the need to increase African American representation throughout the library profession. Also, the directors of selected public libraries were asked to assist in identifying individuals who might wish to pursue a career in library and information science. The public libraries were chosen from among those serving larger cities in Kentucky, contiguous states, and the Southeast. Because many who apply to the school are employed in libraries, often while undergraduates and in other cases as staff members of public libraries, we hoped that seeking the assistance of academic and public library directors to recruit African American students to the school, in the manner we used during 1996-67, would turn out to be a successful strategy. It did not.

### **Using Advertisements in Student Newspapers**

Subsequently, we placed display advertisements in a number of college and university student newspapers in an effort to reach undergraduates at those institutions. Although the advertisements did not seek to recruit African Americans only, nevertheless we attempted to make clear in the advertisements that we invited inquires or applications from African Americans in particular. The strategy was used two consecutive fall semesters, and did not produce significant results.

### **Visiting Campuses**

Next, we decided that a representative of the school would visit college and university campuses, to participate in "career fairs." The first such visit took place at Berea College fall 2001. With the experience gained at the Berea "career fair," during summer 2002 18 colleges and universities were identified and each was asked for information about "career fairs" or, absent such an event, about the possibility of visiting the campus to talk with interested students. Some of the schools responded promptly, some responded eventually, some not at all; and during AY 2002-2003 a representative of the school visited 11 campuses. During summer 2003 there was a second attempt to reach some of the schools that had not responded to the prior inquiry, and during AY 2003-2004 a representative of the school will visit 10 campuses.

### **Developing Minority Internships**

We are putting in place another strategy that we believe will improve our ability to recruit minorities in general and African Americans in particular. For many years the school and Lexington Public Library jointly administered an internship at the library, which each year enabled a student enrolled in the school's master's program to earn valuable work experience at the library. While taking classes full-time, the student worked 15 hours per week at the library and was paid an attractive stipend. Several years ago representatives of the school and of the library realized they shared a goal, to attract more minorities to the profession. As a result, the internship is now open only to members of the federally recognized ethnic

minority groups (Hispanic, Black/non-Hispanic, Puerto Rican, American Indian, Asian-Pacific Islander, or Mexican American). The first such intern, a young woman whose heritage includes American Indian ancestry, was chosen for AY 2002-2003. Soon thereafter a second applicant to the master's program, an African American woman, was identified as a person especially well suited to the internship, and Lexington Public Library found the funds to support two interns. Following the graduation of the first minority intern at the library, we identified another applicant to the master's program, a woman of Hispanic ancestry, who would make an excellent candidate for an internship, and she was appointed an intern at the time she enrolled in the master's program fall 2003.

There are now minority internships at three of the libraries at the University of Louisville (William F. Ekstrom Library [main library], Louis D. Brandeis School of Law Library, and Kornhauser Health Sciences Library) which are open to those enrolled in our master's program. Moreover, we have worked with the Associate Provost for Library Services at Northern Kentucky University to create a minority internship at NKU's Steely Library beginning fall 2004. Even in the aggregate, these internships will not increase substantially the number of minorities among the school's students. In addition, so far efforts have failed to produce minority internships at two institutions that should be good candidates for such a program, Kentucky State university and Louisville Free Public Library. Still, the minority internships hold out the promise of a successful strategy.

## **Admission Policy**

The school's policy for regular admission appears on page eight of our *Bulletin*.<sup>1</sup> It reads:

The school's budget and number of faculty limit enrollment, and meeting the GPA and GRE criteria (see below) does not guarantee admission. Admission decisions are competitive, based on (i) analysis of a variety of relevant factors regarding the applicant and (ii) enrollment in the master's program, which determines the number of applicants who can be admitted. The goal of the admission criteria is to enable the school to estimate the applicant's potential as a graduate student and information professional.

### **Primary factors; GPA and GRE Criteria**

Three primary factors are considered in deciding whether to admit an applicant to the school: (1) a **bachelor's degree** from an accredited institution; (2) an undergraduate **grade point average** of 2.75 or higher, and a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on any prior graduate work, in both cases on a scale with A = 4.0; (3) **Graduate Record Examination scores**, (a) on the **General Test taken before October 1, 2002**, of 450 or higher on the verbal section *and* of 400 or higher on the quantitative section *or* on the analytical section; (b) on the **General Test taken on or after October 1, 2002**, of 450 or higher on the verbal section *and* of 400 or higher on the quantitative section *or* 4.0 on the analytical writing section. Other factors, which are also considered in the admission decision, include personal references, personal interviews, work experience, academic background, other graduate work, progressive academic improvement, and the cultural and geographic origin of the applicant. Applicants for whom English is not the native language must achieve a minimum TOEFL score of

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<sup>1</sup> On page eight we also provide information about provisional admission, post-baccalaureate status, and undergraduates.

550 (paper based test) or 213 (computer based test).

School faculty expect all students to acquire certain computer competencies upon entering the program, or at the latest by the end of the second semester of the program, and be able to use: micro-computer operating systems, word processing software, spreadsheet applications, database management software, and electronic mail.

We believe the admission policy is consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives, and that it reflects the needs and values of the constituencies served by the program. Details on admission criteria are given later in this section of the *Program Presentation*.

## **Financial Aid**

We direct any applicant to or student enrolled in the school's program who inquires about student loans to the university's Office of Student Financial Aid. We discuss forms of financial aid that are available either directly or indirectly through the school – fellowships, scholarships, assistantships, internships – on page seven of our *Bulletin*.

## **Fellowships and Scholarships**

Numerous fellowships and a smaller number of scholarships are available from or through the Graduate School. Typically, an academic unit must nominate an individual for any of the Graduate School fellowships or scholarships, although a few allow self-nomination or application. The Graduate School establishes criteria for nomination, and competition is keen for most awards. The criteria for nomination for the most generous awards – e.g., Multi-Year and Presidential Fellowships – include undergraduate and, if relevant, graduate grade point average, as well as scores on the Graduate Record Examination. There are nomination deadlines. The Graduate School does an excellent job of getting information to programs well in advance of deadlines, and at a meeting on September 12, 2003, distributed information about graduate fellowships for 2004-2005.

As the information in table IV-3 shows, the school has done well in the competition for such awards. As one example, the most generous Graduate School fellowship is the **Multi-Year Fellowship**, which pays all tuition and provides a stipend of \$15,000 and is available only to entering graduate students. A program may nominate only two entering students, and both of the school's nominees for 2003-2004 were awarded Multi-Year Fellowships. It is worth noting that among all school students in this academic year, 14 qualified to be nominated for the Multi-Year Fellowship. The two who were nominated were awarded the fellowship over doctoral students from other units.

**Table IV-3 Students Enrolled in Master's Program Holding Fellowships and Scholarships,  
Academic Year 2002-2003 and Fall Semester 2003  
(Excludes Scholarships that Accompany Assistantships, Reported Separately)**

<b>Fall 2002 through Summer 2003</b>		<b>F a l l 2 0 0 3 *</b>	
<b>Award &amp; Recipient**</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Award &amp; Recipient</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Multi-Year Fellowship***</b>		<b>Multi-Year Fellowship***</b>	
A	\$26,293	L	\$19,687
<b>Quality Achievement Award</b>		M	\$19,687
A	\$3,000	<b>Quality Achievement Award</b>	
<b>Academic Excellence Scholarship</b>		L	\$3,000
B	\$4,075	M	\$3,000
C	\$4,075	<b>Academic Excellence Scholarship</b>	
<b>Lyman T Johnson Fellowship</b>		N	\$4,687
D	\$8,646	O	\$4,687
E	\$8,646	<b>Lyman T Johnson Fellowship</b>	
<b>Millennium Award</b>		P	\$14,687
F	\$500	Q	\$8,987
G	\$500	R	\$8,987
H	\$500	<b>Millennium Award</b>	
I	\$1,000	S	\$2,000
J	\$1,000	T	\$2,000
<b>Hallie Day Blackburn Scholarship</b>		<b>Hallie Day Blackburn Scholarship</b>	
K	\$3,000	U	\$3,000
***\$15,000 + tuition		*Awards made fall 2003 for 2003-2004.	
**Names of the students are available to COA visitors if desired.			

The school awards the **Hallie Day Blackburn Scholarship**. The Scholarship was made possible by the generous gift of Ms Hallie Day Blackburn, who, for a number of years, worked at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA). Mrs. Blackburn, who died in August 2003, at age 96, was a native Kentuckian and a graduate of the University of Kentucky, where she worked in the library while a student. In 1929 Mrs. Blackburn graduated from the library school at Pratt Institute. She retired from KDLA in 1977 as a State Library Supervisor with responsibility for forty counties in central, eastern, and southeastern Kentucky. Mrs. Blackburn's principal objective in endowing the Scholarship was "to improve public libraries in Kentucky by providing financial aid for persons interested in becoming professional public librarians." Selection of each recipient is made by a scholarship committee appointed by the school's director, as provided for in the terms of the agreement with Ms Blackburn.

### **Lyman T. Johnson Fellowships**

The Graduate School has available Lyman T. Johnson Academic Year Fellowships, and information is available about the fellowships on the Graduate School home page:

**Applicants must be:**

1. A member of a federally recognized ethnic minority group (Hispanic, Black/ non-Hispanic, Puerto Rican, American Indian, Asian-Pacific Islander, or Mexican American).
2. U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
3. Admitted to the Graduate School in a degree-granting program; post-baccalaureate students are not eligible.
4. Offered matching funds, either a TA, RA, GA or fellowship, from the graduate program, the department or the college up to \$15,000 a year. The department or college must also match one-half the tuition and student health insurance. The optimum matching arrangement for the student is 50 percent funding from the program and 50 percent funding from the Graduate School during the same year.

Lyman T Johnson Fellowships are the principal financial inducement the school has in its efforts to recruit minorities to its student body. However, the fact that the fellowships are matching funds, requiring the academic unit to make an award to the applicant before a fellowship is awarded, limits the school's ability to take advantage of the program. The school simply does not have the money. In addition, the requirement recently introduced that the academic unit not only make an award to the applicant but also pay one-half of the tuition and student health insurance fee further reduces the ability of the school to take advantage of Lyman T Johnson Fellowships. Indeed, only the willingness of the Graduate School to treat, as the school's award, the stipend paid by a library makes possible certain of the minority internships that the school sees as an important part of its efforts to increase the diversity of its students.

In our previous *Program Presentation*, we stated that the school would establish an endowment fund for scholarships, using proceeds from the annual "phonathon." We are pleased to report that two endowment funds have been established. They are the Library Science Alumni Endowed Scholarship Fund and the Library and Information Science RCTFII Endowed Graduate Fellowship Fund.

A number of our students have also received scholarship from external sources, including two SLA scholarships, one ALA Spectrum Scholarship, and one IFLA Rovelstad Scholarship for International Librarianship.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate Assistantships are financial aid awards that require service. The period of service had been typically 15 hours per week. However, beginning with AY 2003-2004 University Libraries requires the school's students who have graduate assistantships in any of the libraries to provide 20 hours of service per week. Unfortunately, there has been a significant decrease in the number of graduate assistantships in University Libraries. In the 1997 *Program Presentation* we reported there were 20 graduate assistantships in University Libraries. Fall semester 2003 there are only nine. The decrease has not been limited to University Libraries. There had been graduate assistantships at the Kentucky Department for Libraries

and Archives, as many as four some years and three or two in other years, depending on KDLA's budget. Fall semester 2003 there are no graduate assistantships at KDLA. However, we are pleased to report a gratifying development, the creation of a Graduate Library Assistantship in Stealy Library at Northern Kentucky University, to begin fall semester 2004, for a student enrolled in our master's program. Table IV-4 presents information about the school's students who were awarded graduate assistantships for AY 2002-2003 and about those students who were awarded graduate assistantships fall semester 2003 for AY 2003-2004

**Table IV-4 Students Enrolled in Master's Program Holding Graduate Assistantships  
Academic Year 2002-2003 and Fall Semester 2003  
(Amount Comprises Stipend + Tuition Scholarship)**

Fall 2002 through Summer 2003		F a l l 2 0 0 3 *	
Student**	Amount	Student	Amount
A	\$5,372	Q	\$12,657
B	\$8,320	A	\$8,207
C	\$4,618	R	\$7,574
D	\$9,535	S	\$12,657
E	\$9,535	T	\$11,967
F	\$8,625	D	\$5,204
G	\$4,312	E	\$5,204
H	\$8,170	U	\$12,657
I	\$8,625	V	\$12,657
J	\$8,850	W	\$8,557
K	\$3,838	X	\$7,574
L	\$4,618	Y	\$12,657
M	\$9,535	M	\$11,277
N	\$9,535		
O	\$4,325		
P	\$9,080	*Awards made fall 2003 for 2003-2004.	
**Names of students are available to COA visitors if desired.			

The decrease in the number of graduate assistantships, which we referred to in the preceding paragraph, is due to the unintended consequences of a Graduate School policy. It had been the case that the Graduate School awarded a scholarship, for the out-of-state portion of tuition, to a non-Kentucky resident who was awarded a graduate assistantship. This made the graduate assistantship a means to recruit students, especially those from out-of-state. The school could award a student with a graduate assistantship a scholarship for the in-state tuition, but it was not required to do so. However, several years ago the Graduate School announced that, in an effort to enhance UK's ability to recruit graduate students, all graduate students who held a teaching, research, or graduate assistantship would have the student health insurance fee and in-state tuition paid. This had been the case for those with TAs, and it was the case for those RAs working on grants that included an amount for such payments. However, under the new policy, the

Graduate School would pay the student health insurance fee for and award an in-state tuition scholarship to any student with an assistantship that did not include funding for the insurance fee and tuition. After a couple of years the Graduate School required the unit where the Assistantship-holder was assigned to pay the student health insurance fee, and after another year the graduate school mandated that the academic unit, rather than the graduate school, pay the in-state tuition.

Under the new policy, University Libraries was required to pay the student health insurance fee for any of the school's students who held graduate assistantships in campus libraries. University Libraries responded by reducing the number of graduate assistantships. When the second of the mandated payments went into effect – that the academic unit pay the in-state tuition – the Graduate School announced there would be a transition to the policy's full implementation. Academic units were allocated so many in-state tuition scholarships to award, with the Graduate School providing the funding. The school was allocated 15 in-state tuition scholarships. They could be awarded only to our students who held Assistantships. At the same time the Graduate School announced that the following academic year each unit would be required to pay the in-state tuition of any student with a graduate assistantship, with the money to come from the unit. When the school informed the Graduate School the consequences of the mandated payment of in-state tuition would be to reduce substantially or even end the graduate assistantship program, the Graduate School agreed to award the school 10 in-state tuition scholarships for AY 2002-2003. The Graduate School has allocated the same number of in-state tuition scholarships to the school for AY 2003-2004, but has made it clear that whether to allocate any in-state tuition scholarships to the school will be decided on a year-to-year basis.

## **Graduate Internships**

The Graduate School requirement that we pay the in-state tuition of any of our students who have graduate assistantships has brought about an inevitable decline in their number. As one response, we have introduced graduate internships, as a way for some of our students to have paid, part-time placements in university Libraries and elsewhere without our incurring the obligation to pay in-state tuition. We know from experience that students value such placements not only for their compensation but also for their experience and that students believe the ability to refer to a graduate assistantship or Graduate Internship on the resume enhances prospects for the first professional position following graduation. We are certain that, although of course a student would prefer to have her/his in-state tuition paid, if the choices are either to have a paid part-time position in which the student must pay the tuition or to have no such position, students would choose the former. We hope, through graduate internships, to give them that choice.

## **Placement**

In the 1997 *Program Presentation*, we wrote:

There was a time, not so many years ago, when recruiters would visit the school to talk to its graduates and to those about to graduate. The Columbus, Ohio, Metropolitan Library sent representatives on several occasions, as did the Saint Louis Public Library and The Free Library of Philadelphia. OCLC once sent an individual to recruit. However, when funding for many public libraries became problematic a few years ago, such recruiting visits were halted and have not been resumed.

Although recruiting visits have not returned to the numbers we had in mind when we wrote that paragraph, nevertheless in recent years the Public Library of Nashville and Davidson County has visited the school to recruit, and the Louisville Free Public Library has sent recruiters to campus once or twice each year. Representatives of Louisville Free Public Library recruited at the school on November 10, 2003.

In the relatively short time since the 1997 *Program Presentation*, the Internet has transformed the way libraries and other information agencies go about filling positions, as it has transformed so many other aspects of our personal and professional lives. The school continues to receive printed position notices from academic, public, school, and special libraries; and it makes the notices available to students and graduates by means of a bulletin board. However, the volume of printed position notices is down noticeably from what it once was, as institutions have taken advantage of the efficiency of online notices.

The school is committed to increasing its efforts to monitor the progress of its graduates in their initial job search. However, complete and accurate data regarding graduate placement status are difficult to obtain. In the past, reliance has been on verbal requests to those about to graduate that they keep the school informed of their job search effort and eventual success. That approach by the school has produced disappointing results, and the school has replaced it with a system in which, at established intervals following graduation, each recent graduate will be sent a written request to report on her/his job-search success. An addressed postcard to reply will accompany the written request.

The best data we have regarding current placement success is from the survey conducted in summer and spring of 1996. Graduates of the years 1994-96 were the subject of a survey regarding both their experience in the MSLS program, and their current employment. Among graduates who responded to the more specific form included with the second wave questionnaire (n=65), 26% were employed in academic libraries, 23% in public, 17% in school libraries, 14% in special libraries and "other type" of employment 15%. Only five percent of the sample were unemployed; we do not know whether some of these were by choice.

For all respondents, starting salaries had a mean of \$25,300 and a median of \$25,000; calculated on the basis of full-time employment, the mean salary becomes \$28,800 and the median salary is \$28,000. On the low side of the continuum, ten of the salaries reported were under \$20,000 (seven of those being part-time), and 14 salaries of \$30,000 and more were reported (the highest three being \$42,000, \$43,000 and \$54,000).

Of the 74 graduates from 2002-2003 class, we were able to track down the employment status of 60 students. Among them 15 are employed in academic libraries, 13 are in public libraries, 17 are school/media specialists, 12 are in special libraries. One student entered the doctoral program in UK's College of Communications and Information Studies. Only two graduates are identified as unemployed.

Thus, we know that our graduates are finding jobs and where they are doing so. By comparing salary data with that from the annual survey by *Library Journal*, we know that starting salaries for our recent graduates are comparable to those offered to graduates of other library and information studies programs in the Southeastern states.

## Student Retention and Graduation

In order to assess graduation rates in our program, we examined a cohort of 93 students who entered the master's program in the three semesters of 1997-1998 (fall 1997; spring and summer 1998). At least six (and possible several more) of the students who "started" during that period had no intention of completing the program; those students were taking library and information science courses under the old rules for school media certification, under which only 12-15 hours of library and information science courses were required. Subtracting those six cases, we find that 78.4 percent graduated within a five-year period (i.e., by August 2002). Of the 87 admitted to the master's program, 18 (20.7%) did not complete the program. One is currently enrolled in another program. It is likely that a few of the other 17 students will someday reapply for admission, based on our experience with students who drop out of the program.

While a loss of nearly 21 percent of students is not good, it is similar to the historical average of completion rates in the school; in a cohort of students from 1992-93, for example, 19 percent failed to complete the degree. The records of those students who fail to complete the degree program will be looked at more closely to see if there is a discernible pattern. A table of retention and graduation data among students who entered the program in 1997-1998 is available to members of the External Review Panel.

## Information about the School and Its Program

*IV.2 Current, accurate, and easily accessible information on the school and its program is available to students and the general public. This information includes announcements of program goals and objectives, descriptions of curricula, information on faculty, admission requirements, availability of financial aid, criteria for evaluating student performance, assistance with placement, and other policies and procedures. The school demonstrates that it has procedures to support these policies.*

## Responding to a Request for Information

Although the school still receives written requests for information about its master's program, we receive far more phone, e-mail, and in-person requests. Potential students can also request information on the school Web site. This allows those who don't have e-mail still to send requests electronically with little effort. Regardless of how a request reaches us, the person who makes the request is sent or given:

- the school's *Bulletin*;
- the Graduate School application.<sup>2</sup>

The *Bulletin* contains, in addition to information about the program and the University of Kentucky:

- the application to the School of Library and Information Science;
- the recommendation form (in triplicate) that may be used as an alternative to a letter of recommendation;
- the application for a graduate assistant and internship.

The school offers courses off-campus at Northern Kentucky University, and frequently requests for information about the school and its master's program reach the Graduate Center at NKU. In such cases the Graduate Center provides the person the school's *Bulletin* and the Graduate School application. The NKU Graduate Center passes along the person's name and postal address to the school's Assistant Direc-

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<sup>2</sup> A person may apply to the Graduate School via the Web site or a paper application.

tor, who sends the person a personal letter and the brochure, *Distance Learning Degree Program at Northern Kentucky University*.

The letter from the Assistant Director not only personalizes the reply but also invites the person to communicate with him if the person has questions not answered in the material provided. To make it easier for the person to reach the Assistant Director, the letter includes his phone number and e-mail address. If, in the initial telephone or written request for information, the person who makes the request asks one or more questions that are answered in the material being sent, the Assistant Director in his letter directs the individual to the answers. If the person asks one or more questions that the Assistant Director knows are not answered in the material, then the Assistant Director answers the question(s) in the letter.

### ***Bulletin* as a Source of Information**

The school *Bulletin*, which is available in paper format as well as on the school Web site, is a convenient and popular source of easily accessible information about the school and its program. In the interest of currency and accuracy, an edition of the *Bulletin* is issued annually, and each edition incorporates appropriate changes. The *Bulletin* contains a clear statement of program mission, goals and instructional objectives. Descriptions of curricula are included, as is information about regular and part-time faculty. Admission requirements are clearly stated. Information about financial aid, other than student loans, is provided in the *Bulletin*.

### **Web Site as a Source of Information**

The school has what we believe to be an excellent Web site,<sup>3</sup> which offers advantages over printed material. The Web site has:

- more extensive information than does our printed material;
- more current information than does our printed material;
- numerous links to other information;
- all application forms in PDF format;
- the *Bulletin* in digital format.

We know that many people get information about the school and its program from the Web site, and yet each year we mail hundreds of our *Bulletin* to people who ask for it. We know that people learn about our program from fellow employees, many of whom are alumni. And still others learn about the program through campus visits. In an effort to determine how people learn of us, and to get an idea of the relative importance of the various ways, we have added a section near the end of our application that we hope will provide us with such information.

There is a section of the Web site devoted to student interests

**<http://www.uky.edu/CommInfoStudies/SLIS/students.htm>**

This page contains information about student organizations, student awards that one can strive for, a student-written "Guide to UK and Lexington," and job-seeking help.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/CIS/SLIS/>

## **Electronic Discussion List**

The school has created and maintains an electronic e-mail discussion list (SLIS listserv list) that all students are required to join.

<http://www.uky.edu/CommInfoStudies/SLIS/listserv.htm>

The listserv is intended to meet several goals:

- to provide a channel for distributing timely and important announcements to students about the program;
- to provide a forum for discussion of issues and topics of interest to the school community;
- to create a sense of "virtual community" among students, faculty, and interested alumni, that allows students to get to know faculty and other students regardless of their location.

This idea of a virtual community seems to be increasingly important as more of the program is offered in distance-learning or online formats. While many of these students may not need to come to campus for regular classes, there is still an opportunity for them to feel more a part of the community of the school via the listserv.

## **Criteria for Evaluating Student Performance**

Criteria for evaluating student performance are course-specific and are a part of the syllabus that the instructor prepares for a course. Moreover, grading is discussed in the guide that has been prepared for adjunct faculty.

Both regular and part-time faculty are given feedback regarding their grading practices, if they are thought to contribute to grade inflation. Recent overall averages for school classes have been in the range of 3.6-3.8, on a 4-point scale.

School instructors continue to provide explicit feedback on student work, both in terms of written comments and in the form of "plus-minus" grades, though the Registrar recognizes only "whole" letter grades. We believe that the availability of plus-minus grading would moderate the grade point averages received by school students and improve the credibility of that particular feedback mechanism for evaluating student performance. The director will continue to provide feedback regarding grade point averages to monitor the effects of the system of grading.

Instructors teaching Internet courses on Blackboard have further advantages of making online grading available on Blackboard allowing students instant access to their grade books.

As part of the graduation requirement, students take the final examination during their last semester in which students are to choose among five questions three to answer in essay question format. Examples of the questions and model answers are available on school Web site for students. In addition to the requirement of writing in the final examination, the university encourages instructors to integrate writing in their courses. In addition to term papers and projects, several instructors also integrate listserv participation into course teaching.

## Applying Admission Standards Consistently

*IV.3 Standards for admission are applied consistently. Students admitted to a program have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; the policies and procedures for waiving any admission standard or academic prerequisite are stated clearly and applied consistently. Assessment of an application is based on a combined evaluation of academic, intellectual, and other qualifications as they relate to the constituencies served by a program, a program's goals and objectives, and the career objectives of the individual. Within the framework of institutional policy and programs, the admission policy for a program ensures that applicants possess sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to enable (successful) completion of a program and subsequent contribution to the field.*

### Three Primary Factors

We strive to apply our admission standards not only consistently but also reasonably and judiciously, and always in a way that we could explain if called upon to do so. As the *Bulletin* makes clear, "Three primary factors are considered in deciding whether to admit an applicant to the school." The three have to do with:

- baccalaureate degree;
- grade point average;
- graduate record examination scores.

In what follows, we discuss each of the "primary factors."

#### Primary Factor 1: Baccalaureate Degree Required

Among the primary admission factors, the easiest to apply is the requirement that the applicant have "a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution." An individual who wishes to enter a graduate program at the University of Kentucky must apply not only to the program but also to the Graduate School. The Graduate School determines that an applicant has a baccalaureate degree and that it is from an accredited institution.<sup>4</sup> However, a senior in the University of Kentucky lacking no more than six credit hours for graduation and having an undergraduate grade point average of at least 2.75 may be admitted provisionally to a graduate program. In that case, requirements for the undergraduate degree must be completed during the semester in which the student is permitted to register for part-time graduate work.<sup>5</sup>

For international applicants, the Graduate School *Bulletin* states:

Applicants must have excellent grades and rank in the top quarter of their classes. To be considered for entry as a graduate student, an applicant must hold a four-year bachelor's degree. (**Indian students:** a first-class record is normally expected although high second-class holders in non-science areas may be considered if they can offer further evidence of having been in at least the top 10 percent of their graduating class.)<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Of course, it often is the case that a person applies to a UK graduate program while still an undergraduate. If such an applicant is admitted, the person must complete the undergraduate program before being permitted to register for graduate courses at UK. The UK Graduate School monitors this.

<sup>5</sup> *Graduate School Web Bulletin*, Fall 2003, <http://www.rgs.uky.edu/gsbulletin/current/bulletin.html>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

The requirement that a person admitted to the school's master's program have "a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution" loses its meaning in the context of international applicants. Whereas U.S. institutions are accredited by one of the regional bodies (e.g., the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools), only a very few universities outside the U.S. are so accredited. Most other countries have a national agency (e.g., ministry of education) that allows universities in that nation to confer degrees, and the names of universities that have been authorized to confer degrees appear in materials on file at the Graduate School.<sup>7</sup> The Graduate School is responsible for determining equivalency of a baccalaureate degree for international students.

## **Primary Factor 2: Undergraduate Grade Point Average of 2.75**

Applying the second primary admission factor, which has to do with grade point average, is not as straightforward as applying the requirement that the applicant have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. The first admission factor is unambiguous. It could be argued that the second admission factor – a grade point average of 2.75 or higher on undergraduate work, and a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on any prior graduate work – is also unambiguous.<sup>8</sup> That is not the case. Among applicants, the nature of the course work that is distilled to a single, three-digit number varies greatly. At one end of the spectrum is the 22-year-old applicant who is in her 8<sup>th</sup> and final semester as an undergraduate, has spent her undergraduate career at a single institution, has performed consistently from first term through 7<sup>th</sup>, and has a cumulative GPA that comfortably exceeds our criterion of 2.75.

At the other end of the spectrum is the 45-year-old applicant who entered the state university right out of high school, had no interest in academics but unbounded commitment to social life, earned grades that reflected her priorities, and dropped out after two years with a GPA that, when years later she returned to college and hoped to improve it, was her personal proof of Newton's first law of motion – the so called Law of Inertia. She earned a baccalaureate degree, with a GPA of 3.45 on the work she did when she returned. However, in calculating an applicant's GPA, the UK Graduate School treats all work of equal value, with the result the woman's overall grade point average is 2.65, below the required 2.75.

Actually, both of those hypothetical (but not unusual) situations would be easy admission decisions. We could describe other hypothetical (but also not unusual) situations, with undergraduate performance and GPAs that would be equally easy rejection decisions. But some applications are not easy admission or rejection decisions, and in such cases judgment is called for and experience is relied on. Fortunately, we have an alternative to categorical admission or rejection in the form of **provisional admission**, and although for years we used it infrequently, in recent years, with Graduate School encouragement, we have used it occasionally.

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<sup>7</sup> Information provided by Ms Judith Gardner, University of Kentucky Graduate School.

<sup>8</sup> Although grade point averages are to be on a scale with A = 4.0 or converted to such a scale, in fact we work with transcripts from non-U.S. institutions that report grades in percentage; and every once in a while a transcript from a U.S. institution does not use the typical letter-grading system. We do not refuse to consider an applicant simply due to one of these situations.

### Primary Factor 3: Graduate Record Examination Scores

Applying the third standard, which has to do with results on the GRE General Test, also is not the straightforward undertaking that the use of numerical scores might suggest. Before elaborating, however, we want to trace the evolution of the school's use of the GRE General Test as a primary admission factor.

Prior to January 1998, the admission standard was a score of 900 on the combined results of the verbal and quantitative tests. However, at the December 1996 school souncil meeting, the faculty voted to enact a new GRE admission standard, effective January 1998. There were two changes:

1. we would no longer combine test results;
2. we would consider results on the verbal test and on either the quantitative or analytical test.

There were two reasons for the change.

1. It brought our practice in line with advice from the Educational Testing Service and the UK Graduate School against combining test scores.
2. It precluded the possibility that an applicant achieved the required combined score of 900 by virtue of a very high quantitative test result compensating for a low verbal score. (The reverse – a very high verbal score compensating for a low quantitative score – was of course also possible but was not a significant concern to us; see following discussion.)

As we explained in the 1997 *Program Presentation*:

Since few quantitative skills are required by the current curriculum, and yet librarians must have adequate language skills, the faculty decided to emphasize the verbal GRE score. It was thought that either strong analytical or quantitative abilities would be a secondary indicator, therefore the new GRE standard was stated as follows: a score of 450 or higher on the verbal test *and* a score of 400 or higher on the quantitative test *or* on the analytical test.

That remained the GRE admission standard until Educational Testing Service changed the GRE General Test, effective October 1, 2002, when an analytical writing section replaced the analytical section.<sup>9</sup> As we state in the current edition of our *Bulletin*, we will accept the results on either GRE General Test, that taken before October 1, 2002, or that taken on the current General Test. In considering an application, we continue to make use of the score on the verbal section and on either the quantitative or the analytical writing section, on which our criterion is 4.0.

For us to adhere inflexibly to the standard for the GRE would be nearly as serious a mistake as it would be to apply the standard capriciously. Two applicants with 430 verbal scores fail equally to meet our admission standard. However, if one of those applicants has an undergraduate grade point average of 2.80 and the other an undergraduate grade point average of 3.40, then applying the GRE standard in a thoughtful way very likely would lead to a decision to reject the former applicant, whose UGPA exceeds the 2.75 UGPA criterion by only .05, and to a decision to admit the latter applicant. What of two applicants with identical UGPAs and GRE verbal scores, 3.00 and 430, but greatly differing analytical writing scores, 4.0 versus 6.0? And what of an applicant whose GRE scores, if considered in isolation or even in the context of her UGPA, would lead to a decision to reject, but whose admission would further the school's desire to have a more diverse student body?

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.gre.org/writdir.html>

## **Other Factors Considered in the Admission Decision**

We make clear, in the *Bulletin*, that although three factors are primary in considering an application, nevertheless there are other factors:

Other factors, which are also considered in the admission decision, include personal references, personal interviews, work experience, academic background, other graduate work, progressive academic improvement, and the cultural and geographic origin of the applicant. Applicants for whom English is not the native language must achieve a minimum TOEFL score of 550 (paper based test) or 213 (computer based test).

Although the factors fall into two categories, one of which comprises the primary factors, nevertheless we strive to apply our admission standards not only consistently but also reasonably and judiciously and always in a way that we could explain if called upon to do so. We are keenly aware that admission decisions determine the composition of the student body, influence the make-up of the profession, and bear on the futures of the applicants. Great responsibility accompanies admission decisions; and we believe the record of admission-decisions, as illustrated in table IV-5, demonstrates that, in making such decisions, we are sensitive to this responsibility.

**Table IV-5 Students Granted Provisional Admission in Master's-Degree Program<sup>10</sup>**

Student*	Admitted Term	Reason <sup>11</sup>	Met Condition	
			Yes	No
A	fall 2002	low <sup>12</sup> UGPA	X	
B	fall 2001	low UGPA	X	
C	fall 2003	low UGPA		
D	fall 2002	low UGPA	X	
E	sprg 2003 <sup>13</sup>	low UGPA		
F	sprg 2002 <sup>14</sup>	low UGPA, GRE	X	
G	fall 2002	hadn't taken GRE	X	
H	sprg 2003	hadn't taken GRE	did not enroll	
I	fall 2002	C grade in graduate crse	X	
J	fall 2002	low UGPA, GRE	X	
K	sprg 2003	hadn't taken GRE	X	
L	sprg 2002	low UGPA	X	
M	sprg 2003	low UGPA	X	
N	sprg 2003 <sup>15</sup>	low UGPA		
O	fall 2003	low UGPA		
P	sprg 1999	low GRE		X <sup>16</sup>
Q	fall 2002	low GRE	X	
R	fall 2002	low UGPA	X	
S	fall 2003	low GRE		

\*Names of the students are available to COA visitors if desired.

<sup>10</sup> Where provisional admission reflects either low GPA or low GRE, the condition set by the Graduate School is that the student not get a grade lower than B in the first nine hours, regardless of GPA on those nine hours. Provisional status is granted for one semester. However, if the student takes fewer than nine hours in that semester, the program has the option of asking that provisional status be extended.

<sup>11</sup> The reason why provisional admission, rather than regular admission, was recommended.

<sup>12</sup> "low" refers to a situation in which UGPA or GRE is below the published admission criterion.

<sup>13</sup> Through summer 2003 student has completed only six hours and thus provisional status extended through fall.

<sup>14</sup> Student was in post-baccalaureate status during provisional status, per recommendation of admission committee.

<sup>15</sup> Student took only six hours and was granted one-semester extension of provisional admission.

<sup>16</sup> Student received a C grade in first nine hours and was dismissed from the master's program.

## **Coherent Programs of Study**

*IV.4 Students 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. Students receive systematic, multifaceted evaluation of their achievements. Students have access to continuing opportunities for guidance, counseling, and placement assistance.*

## **Coherent Programs; Individual Needs**

In developing a curriculum and in establishing master's-program requirements, a balance must be struck between breadth and depth. With the curriculum, there must be sufficient variety of courses to provide not only for the extent of student interests but also for the extent of employer needs; and there must be sufficient depth of courses to permit students to acquire knowledge that is more than introductory. Similarly with program requirements, there must be a balance between required courses, that are introductory, and elective courses, that allow students to acquire skills and pursue interests to a greater depth.

We believe that in developing the curriculum and in establishing master's-program requirements, we have achieved the necessary balance. As one and a very important result, students have the opportunity to construct coherent programs of study that allow the students to meet their individual needs, goals, and aspirations. The rapid increase in number of courses delivered via the Internet during recent years evidences our ongoing efforts to address individual needs among students.

## **Systematic, Multifaceted Evaluation**

As discussed under "Criteria for Evaluating Student Performance" (see page 17), students receive grades based on comparison to the learning objectives stated in school course syllabi. The grade point averages are geared to norms within the college and university; and faculty, especially part-time faculty, regularly receive feedback about grade point averages in the school.

Students are evaluated in a variety of ways besides grades. These include conferences with course faculty and with faculty advisers, evaluations by employers while in either Professional Field Experience<sup>17</sup> (formal evaluations) or graduate assistantships (informal); and the interactions they have with professionals through the local chapters of professional associations like ALA and SLA.

## **Guidance and Counseling**

In the 1997 *Program Presentation*, we wrote:

The subject of guidance and counseling calls to mind the adage that one can lead a horse to water but cannot make the horse drink. The school believes in the importance of faculty guidance and counseling of its students, but there is reason to believe not all of its students share that belief. At each period of faculty advising prior to registration, there are students who do not take advantage of what the school believes to be an important ingredient in constructing a coherent program of study.

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<sup>17</sup> Course LIS 675 Professional Field Experience enables a student to gain experience and three hours of credit toward the degree by serving a structured internship under the guidance of a placement supervisor, who completes a written evaluation at the end of the 140-hour placement.

Moreover, the ability of students to decide not to take advantage of advising was increased several years ago when the university introduced telephone registration, which eliminated the requirement that a student present an advisor's signature prior to the student's being permitted to register.

We stated that reduced student participation in advising, but our belief in the importance of advising and counseling, prompted the school to introduce a half-day orientation prior to the start of the fall semester, which all students entering the master's program that fall are expected to attend. The orientation begins with a general session in the morning, after which students meet individually with advisors. The orientation proved to be very successful. We have continued it and have introduced a similar orientation in January for students entering the program that spring semester. We have not introduced an orientation for those entering the program the summer term, but we invite them to attend the orientation that August.

### **Placement Assistance**

We continue the job-listing bulletin board that we referred to in the 1997 *Program Presentation*, but there has been a decline in employers' use of paper job notices, as those seeking to fill positions have taken advantage of the speed and efficiency of electronic means to distribute information. The director, assistant director, and faculty continue to be available to advise on job-search strategies and to review and comment on resumes and cover letters. Since the 1997 *Program Presentation*, the university's Career Center<sup>18</sup> has moved from the building in which it had a small amount of space into its own new, attractive, and well-appointed building. The move has allowed the Career Center to expand services to UK students. Although it's likely the services are more popular among undergraduates, nevertheless they are available to graduate students. We make our students aware of and encourage them to take advantage of the services.

In addition to maintaining a job-listing bulletin board, we also maintain a job-listing Web page within the school's Web site to provide access to the large number of announcements that come only in electronic format. It is at:

**<http://www.uky.edu/CommInfoStudies/SLIS/students/index.html>**

There is also a general resource meta-site of other job listing web locations at

**<http://www.uky.edu/CommInfoStudies/SLIS/jobs.htm>**

### **An Environment that Fosters Student Participation**

*IV.5 The school provides an environment that fosters student participation in the definition and determination of the total learning experience. Students are provided with opportunities to form student organizations and to participate in the formulation, modification, and implementation of policies affecting academic and student affairs.*

There are many opportunities for students to participate in learning activities. For example, there is regular student representation on the school council, and ad-hoc committees often have student representatives. University of Kentucky personnel procedures call for a formal student report on faculty considered for promotion, and candidates for faculty positions meet with students during a visit to campus.

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/CareerCenter/>

LISSO, the Library and Information Science Student Organization, established in 1982, provides a means for students to gain experience in running an organization and to demonstrate leadership ability. LISSO elects four officers each year. It holds regular meetings, arranges for speakers, and organizes social events.

The school has active student chapters of ALA (advised by Professor Jeng), SLA (advised by Professor Miller), and ASIST (advised by Professor Case). The chapters organize activities throughout the academic year, and many of the activities bring students together with those already in careers in library and information science, providing students with a part of their preparation for such careers that cannot be gained in the classroom and laying the foundation for their passage into the profession.

Participation is not confined to local events. Some students have been able to travel to distant conferences through funding provided by alumni. Students have participated in the annual conferences of ALA, MLA the Southeastern Library Association, the Kentucky School Media Association and the Kentucky Library Association, to name a few of the regular events. The school makes available funds to support student conference attendance whenever possible.

With an online degree program in the planning and the increased number of students taking online courses via Internet Blackboard, we will explore ways to ensure direct and open communication among students and between students and faculty.

## **Evaluation of Student Achievement Influences Program Development**

*IV.6 The school applies the results of evaluation of student achievement to program development. Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of the degree to which a program's academic and administrative policies and activities regarding students are accomplishing its objectives. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, staff, and others are involved in the evaluation process.*

Both individual courses and faculty receive formal evaluations that subsequently influence program development. The completion rates for the degree, as well as time-to-degree, have remained relatively steady in recent years; these can be an indicator of several factors, including course scheduling, course quality, and student needs; coupled with the exit surveys completed by graduating students, these data tell us how relevant and up-to-date the courses are. All of this information is shared with faculty committees, including those for curriculum, and planning and evaluation. Recommendations for change in the curriculum are considered in the school council meetings held approximately ten times during the academic year.

## **Recommendations**

Continue efforts to recruit African American students.

Utilize instructional sites more effectively in Louisville, the Kentucky city with the largest concentration of African American population.

Improve graduate assistantship stipends.

Use graduate internships as a way to increase the number of students receiving financial support.

Track cohort in the online degree program.

Track student placements more effectively.\*

\*A survey of recent graduates conducted during summer of 1996 gave the school its first comprehensive data about placement. This mechanism of feedback will be institutionalized in regular surveys of recent graduates, as described above. We will consider creating an alumni database to gather information about the placement status of our graduates, to be maintained by office staff. We will also consider using one of the two printed newsletters each year to seek placement information in the form of a short survey on a post card with postage in place.

## Appendix: Letter to Graduates for Placement and Salary Survey

Dear ,

Each year, the October 15 issue of *Library Journal* reports the results of a **placement and salary survey** that is based on information obtained in a questionnaire completed by those who graduated the prior year. All information is treated confidentially and anonymously, and only aggregate data are published. Our participation has been spotty, but I hope to change that. Of course, we can participate fully only if you and other 2001 graduates participate. Because the survey is important, I hope you will do so, by the **July 15 deadline**.

A Web-based method for collecting data is used to allow those who collect the data to move the information directly into a database. The goal, of course, is to save a great deal of data-entry and prevent errors that take place during that process. Here is information I was provided:

All information is treated confidentially and anonymously. Only aggregate data is published. For previous reports see the October 15th issue of *Library Journal* in past years (November 1st issue for 1991 only).

**Instructions for the electronic form: The Student Survey:** The heart of the survey is the form for responses from the graduates. Your students will find the web-based forms for this survey at <http://www.cas.usf.edu/~tterrell/LJsurvey/ljsurvey.html>. Cookies protect each session-this restrict[s] any attempts to "stack" the survey and it limits one response per session only. Once the session/browser is closed, responses can continue on the same machine.

Each school has a separate password for the survey to protect the integrity of data. Furthermore, each school can then distribute the URL and the password for completion of the survey.

Note: case is important with the passwords-all are lowercase.

the **password** is currently **ukygrad**

If you have a problem please let me know, and if I can't help I'll find someone who can. I can be reached at [carrigan@uky.edu](mailto:carrigan@uky.edu) I'll be in Ireland June 21-July 2, and if you have a problem during that time you might get in touch with Tom Terrell, the faculty member at the university of South Florida who is coordinating data-gathering. He can be reached at [tterrell@chuma1.cas.usf.edu](mailto:tterrell@chuma1.cas.usf.edu)

Thanks, very much, for your help with this important undertaking.

By the way, if you have something to report to the school newsletter, please send it to me via e-mail.

I hope all is well with you, and I'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes,

Dennis P. Carrigan  
Assistant Director