

Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
School of Library and Information Science
Master's Program in Library Science
Certificate Program in Advanced Studies in Library Science

Assessment Measures

The School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) reviews its vision, core values, mission, goals, competencies, and program objectives yearly. The competencies inform the program objectives which form the foundation for the school's planning efforts and include assessment, evaluation, and use of the results for program improvement. The planning framework and milestones for continuous improvement are codified in the school's *Working Plan* (available in the SLIS Program Presentation for the American Library Association (ALA) professional accreditation.). The *Working Plan* specifies SLIS's assessment, evaluation and program improvement milestones to ensure SLIS is responsive to its stakeholders and meets the needs of its constituents. The *Working Plan* is reviewed yearly and is revised every three (3) years. In order to determine if SLIS is achieving its stated competencies (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) and program objectives (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.), the school's faculty evaluates the assessment measures against the program objectives and competencies and make adjustments for program improvement as indicated in the assessment findings and stakeholder feedback.

SLIS uses the following measures to assess student learning outcomes:

1. Admission statistics
2. Student technology readiness surveys
3. Pass rates and analysis of student performance on the comprehensive examination
4. Practicum supervisor ratings of student performance in SLIS practicum courses (i.e., LSC 906 and LSC 908)
5. School Library Media Candidate Survey
6. Grade distributions for the four, core courses (551, 553, 555 and 557)
7. Surveys of employers, alumni, and current students administered periodically
8. Data analysis of graduation rates

SLIS program objectives, derived from the competencies (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.), specify the desired educational outcomes of its master's degree program. The objectives reflect a program that is grounded in the philosophy, principles, and values of the Catholic University of America (CUA), the field of library and information science. SLIS program objectives provide a framework for systematic evaluation and revision of the curriculum and the program. As part of the School's planning and evaluation process, the SLIS faculty is continually reviewing the goals and objectives of SLIS's courses to assess how well they contribute to the achievement of program objectives. The course assessment process starts with the core courses and over the next three years, will continuously extend to a review of the entire curriculum to ensure systematic achievement of the program objectives throughout the degree program.

The SLIS faculty regularly gathers feedback from SLIS stakeholders, and from student achievement measures, as a means to continually improve pedagogical practice. Learning outcomes are measured by reviewing results of SLIS’s course assessments which include the SLIS technology survey (Appendix A) and the student technology readiness survey (Appendix B), pass rates and analysis of student performance on the comprehensive examination (Appendix C), practicum supervisor ratings of student performance in SLIS practicum courses (i.e., LSC 906 and LSC 908) and, grade distributions for the four, core courses (551, 553, 555 and 557) (Appendix D). The achievement of the SLIS competencies and program objectives is evaluated through the admission statistics, end-of-semester course evaluations, outcomes analysis of the comprehensive exams and stakeholder surveys.

Faculty members review their success in achieving their stated learning outcomes for their courses by analyzing student achievement within individual courses. This is an organic process which involves reviewing the learning objectives for each course assessment measure and comparing these to the composite of student submissions for each assessment. Faculty also analyzes how the students evaluate the course at the end of each semester (Table I). The faculty as a whole also reviews course grade distributions for the four, core courses and discusses the results of student (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) and alumni (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) and employer (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) survey data to evaluate how effectively SLIS is attaining its stated student learning outcomes and achieving its program objectives. Table I provides information from the faculty analysis of the course evaluations for the previous three years, 2006 to 2008.

Table I Overall Course Evaluation, 2006-2008

Year/Semester	CUA average	SLIS On-Campus Average	SLIS Off-Campus Average
2006 Sp.	8	8	8.6
2006 Sum.	8.5	8.7	8.9
2006 Fall	7.9	8.1	8.3
2007 Sp.	7.9	7.9	8
2007 Sum.	8.2	8.5	8.5
2007 Fall	7.9	8.4	8.2
2008 Sp.	7.8	8.2	8.6
2008 Sum.	8.6	8.7	n/a
MEAN	8.1	8.3	8.4

Note: 10 point scale where 1 = lowest and 10 = highest

SLIS faculty members evaluate their teaching performance against the CUA-wide faculty average, the difference in evaluation averages across course sections taught by an individual faculty member, and by comparing courses by location, i.e., on or off campus. The faculty then reviews the written comments and uses them for information on how to improve the course delivery and respond to student issues or concerns. The outcome of these faculty self-analyses is a plan for individual improvement and as a means to improve faculty evaluations continuously. The evaluations are also used as a tool to examine the program’s success in achieving stated learning outcomes across sections, at various locations where the courses are offered, and as an element of evaluating how

well SLIS is achieving its stated program objectives. The analysis from Table I above shows that on average off campus courses receive higher evaluations than on-campus courses. Further, on average, SLIS faculty members are at or above the mean in their student evaluation scores when compared to CUA faculty averages.

Since SLIS has a program that is offered both on and off-campus, and has a significant number of part-time faculty it is important when evaluating the course evaluation averages that the results of the evaluations are generally high, are fairly consistent across on and off campus sites where courses are offered, across part-time and full-time faculty, and meet or exceed the mean for CUA. The Dean consults with each of the full-time faculty regarding his/her evaluations each semester. If a faculty member's evaluation is below the mean for CUA, the Dean and the faculty member discuss how to improve practice and better achieve the course objectives. This self-reflective process is part of the Dean's monthly meeting discussions with the SLIS full-time faculty and forms a core element of continuous teaching improvement process for the program.

In addition, when a part-time faculty member has two semesters where s/he is below the mean, the Dean develops a plan for improving the faculty member's performance. In the event that the evaluations remain consistently below the mean for three semesters, the part-time faculty member is re-evaluated to determine if s/he should remain teaching for the program.

The curriculum committee establishes the milestones for achieving student learning outcomes and these milestones are detailed in the *SLIS Working Plan* (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). The Curriculum Committee discusses the milestones for the school in the *Working Plan* and uses the results from the various outcome measures to determine next steps for improving in the curriculum. Section II of the *Working Plan* highlights actions and plans for the curriculum committee to ensure SLIS meets its stated learning outcomes. The Curriculum Committee and the school's Faculty Committee, both of which include the entire full-time faculty, continuously review the assessment measures that SLIS has in place to achieve its program objectives and determines next steps to ensure the school continually improves its ability to serve its stakeholders and provide a quality education.

Assessment Findings

1. Admission statistics

The review of an applicant to SLIS is a holistic approach that includes their GPA, GRE, their past performance in other environments, their stated goals, and the recommendations of their references to evaluate the potential student's readiness to achieve a degree of learning equal to that presented in the program objectives. SLIS continually reviews its admission statistics as part of its efforts toward program improvement. In particular, SLIS looks for patterns in its admission statistics that demonstrate that students being admitted into SLIS are prepared for graduate study and the selectivity of our admissions process remains relatively stable each academic year. Selectivity is one measure of SLIS's achievement of its program objectives and a measure of its success in meeting the standard set forth by its professional accrediting body, the American Library Association (ALA). The ALA student standard requires that SLIS demonstrate that its admission policies are consistent with its mission and program objectives. Further, that the program demonstrate that its admission policies ensures that applicants possess sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to enable successful completion of the program. Selectivity is one element of

SLIS's assessment data to demonstrate that its program accepts students with sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to successfully complete the degree program. Table II provides data on SLIS's admissions and selectivity. As Table II shows, SLIS's selectivity has remained relatively constant and it accepts between 70 to 90% of applicants to the program.

Table II: SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE: APPLICATION STATISTICS (Fall 2003 through Fall 2008)

APPLICATIONS

	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
Master's	155	177	187	155	159	136
Certificate	4	7	3	3	1	2
Non-Degree	7	7	5	6	3	13
TOTAL	166	191	195	164	163	151

ADMISSIONS

	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
Master's	126	142	146	133	115	117
Certificate	2	4	3	1	1	
Non-Degree	6	2	3	6	2	11
TOTAL	134	148	152	140	118	128

SELECTIVITY

	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
Master's	81.29%	80.23%	78.07%	85.81%	72.33%	86.03%
Certificate	50.00%	57.14%	100.00%	33.33%	100.00%	0.00%
Non-Degree	85.71%	28.57%	60.00%	100.00%	66.67%	84.62%
TOTAL	80.72%	77.49%	77.95%	85.37%	72.39%	84.77%

SLIS also examines its ethnicity data in its admissions to ensure it is achieving its program objectives and meeting ALA's standards regarding the continuous monitoring and current and future planning to improve the multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual diversity of the student body. As Table III shows, the ethnic diversity of SLIS's students has increased over the last five years and has kept pace with the make-up of the other graduate and undergraduate students on the CUA campus. Table IV provides a comparison of SLIS's student body and those of other, similar programs at CUA.

Table III: Ethnicity Data on SLIS Enrollment, Fall 2007

Total	Asian American	American African	Hispanic American	Caucasian	Foreign	Unknown
224	7	20	12	145	5	35

Table IV: Ethnicity of SLIS as it compares to all CUA graduate students and CUA undergraduate students, fall 2008

Fall 2008	Undergraduate	Graduate	Law	Total	Library
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					Science
Foreign	100	267	5	372	5
African American	158	177	47	382	20
Native American	9	3	6	18	0
Asian American	105	98	85	288	11
Hispanic American	226	91	39	356	6
White/Caucasian	2,282	1,107	544	3,933	127
Unknown	589	580	187	1,356	47
TOTAL	3,469	2,323	913	6,705	216
% of ethnic minorities	17.2%*	27.4%*	20%*	21%*	19.4%*

*Does not include White/Caucasian or Unknown categories

As Table IV shows, SLIS's percentage of minority students is consistent with the university as a whole, the graduate school, and a similar professional program, the Law School. SLIS seeks to have a healthy diversity in its student body and monitors its admission statistics to ensure its student population is reflective of the university's student body and as similar to society as a whole as possible. SLIS collects admissions ethnicity data each year to examine its success in achieving its program objectives and as a measure of its success in achieving its ALA standards for professional accreditation.

SLIS's admissions policies (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) are aligned with and support SLIS's mission and program objectives and are aligned with those for CUA. As stated in the *Working Plan* (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.), SLIS has undertaken the task of reviewing all of its academic and administrative policies, including admissions policies, to ensure currency and accuracy within each and consistency across all SLIS and CUA policies. The SLIS Strategic Planning Committee has developed a plan for reviewing and revising SLIS policies, gaining approval of revisions through the SLIS Faculty Committee and implementing approved changes. This plan is reviewed on an annual basis.

SLIS accepts applications for students as degree-seeking, non-degree seeking and post-master's certificates. Applications for degree-seeking status are the majority of those received, with recent years seeing an increase in the non-degree applications and a decrease in the applications for those individuals seeking a post-master's certificate (Table II, above).

Our current admission policies provide for the needs of our students by allowing a multiplicity of supporting data, both qualitative and quantitative, to base our decisions upon including: three references, a personal statement drafted by the applicant, grade point average (GPA), Graduation Record Examination, and undergraduate school transcripts.

The Admissions Committee will interview applicants if there are inconsistencies in the application package and at the request of the applicant. Applicants whose application does not demonstrate readiness to become a degree-seeking student in the program have the opportunity to apply for non-degree seeking student status to directly demonstrate their ability. When demonstrated, non-degree

seeking students may use the non-degree work as the basis for a follow-up application for degree-seeking status. The possibility of the credits earned in the non-degree seeking status being included toward fulfillment of the degree requirements is based upon the grades earned.

Retention of qualified students is enhanced by careful advising. Applicants admitted to the program are provided with a full-time faculty member in their letter of acceptance as their academic advisor who prepares a program of study with the advisee. Each student is regularly encouraged to keep in contact with their advisor as each advisor is encouraged to remain in contact with their advisees to review and evaluate the program of study. The advisor/advisee relationship encouraged greater student success, ensures goals are met as the students complete their coursework towards the degree, and prepares students for the job search process. The Assistant Dean supports the advisors and the students by monitoring student progress and grades to ensure students are demonstrating academic success. Students are required to maintain a 3.0 (B) grade point average throughout the program. If a student earns one grade of “C” s/he is placed on academic probation. Students who earn two grades of “C” are dismissed from the program. Retention rates may be seen in Appendix E.

Grade Point Average (GPA) and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores

SLIS also examines the grade point average (GPA) and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores for incoming students as another measure of student preparedness and as a another measure of SLIS selectivity. GPA is a more consistent measure of student preparedness because the GRE score is voluntary for admission to SLIS and typically, only students who are interested in university scholarships provide a GRE score. At the same time, reviewing the scores over a period of years provides data for SLIS to evaluate how well its students are prepared for graduate study. Admission policies in SLIS require that students have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 to be admitted to the program.

The GPA data demonstrate that the students admitted to SLIS have a consistently increasing undergraduate GPA and the admitted and matriculated students had a consistent GPA at or above 3.3. The GRE data also shows consistent performance by admitted and matriculated SLIS students and the scores continue to be strong in the 500 and 600 range. These data, when examined with the selectivity data provided in Table II (above), assist SLIS’s faculty to measure how well our students are prepared for graduate study. Further, the GPA and GRE scores provide information on the extent to which undergraduate GPA and GRE scores impact students’ academic performance in SLIS.

**TABLE V: SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
MASTER'S LEVEL: AVERAGE UNDERGRADUATE GPA AND GRE
Fall 2004 through Fall 2008**

	Admitted Students							
	Admitted	Undergraduate GPA		GRE				
		N	GPA	N	Verbal	Quant.	Analy.	Writ.
Fall 2004	142	68	3.28	74	597	590	566	4.8
Fall 2005	146	30	3.44	72	605	596	643	4.8
Fall 2006	133	82	3.36	66	602	596	690	4.6

Fall 2007	115	80	3.38	51	595	601	603	4.6
Fall 2008	117	92	3.37	50	592	557	480	4.5

New Enrollment								
	Enrolled	Undergraduate GPA		N	Verbal	GRE		
		N	GPA			Quant.	Analy.	Writ.
Fall 2004	100	45	3.25	47	588	578	626	4.7
Fall 2005	84	23	3.40	32	602	575	633	4.6
Fall 2006	69	44	3.29	26	607	590	680	4.6
Fall 2007	63	48	3.37	24	592	589	290	4.5
Fall 2008	62	49	3.31	21	619	543	*	4.2

* For confidentiality reasons, scores are not reported when there are less than two students.

2. SLIS technology surveys

SLIS has milestones in its *Working Plan* to continually improve student preparedness for technology-focused courses in the SLIS curriculum and ensure that it achieves its stated program objective to provide a technology-rich educational environment and ensure students have achieved technology fluency in the program upon graduation. Toward this effort, SLIS has two instruments it uses to evaluate its curriculum and for the purpose of curricular improvement. The first is the SLIS technology survey of current students and alumni. The second is a student technology readiness survey administered when students attend the SLIS student orientation or before they complete the first two weeks of their first semester.

The SLIS Technology Survey

The SLIS technology survey examines the perceptions of SLIS students and alumni regarding their level of information technology (IT) fluency and knowledge of the IT concepts and skills taught in the SLIS curriculum. A set of competencies were derived from the National Research Council's report, *Being Fluent with Information Technology* (FIT), along with professional competencies identified by LIS organizations, and the literature on LIS education to form the basis for the survey and as a foundation for evaluating SLIS's success in preparing SLIS graduates in technology fluency.

The technology examines how well SLIS is preparing our students with the general competencies described in the FIT report and specific skills referenced in the SLA and other competency documents. The survey is designed to answer the following research questions:

- a. What technology skills, knowledge and abilities do SLIS students and alumni perceive they develop from the program?
- b. What technology skills, knowledge and abilities do SLIS students and alumni perceive as being important for their careers?
- c. What technology-related parts of the program do SLIS students and alumni think need to be improved?

Four types of data are collected – demographics, information technology concepts, general information technology skills and LIS-specific information technology skills. These data and the analysis for the most recent survey are provided in Appendix A.

The survey results from the SLIS Technology Survey provide SLIS with information on areas where it is doing well and highlights areas for improvement. The most recent survey aggregate analysis suggests that a number of essential IT concepts and foundational skills are well-rated, while highlighting specific areas for improvement:

- a. General skills for reasoning about, working with and managing IT
- b. Collaborative work with IT
- c. Designing, creating and managing digital forms of information such as databases, web sites, portals, and digital finding aids
- d. Modeling and abstraction (which is an important skill for all of the above)
- e. User-created content
- f. Networking

Although students appear to appreciate the importance of the majority of items in the survey, the results suggest two topics for which the program needs to better articulate the importance and relevance to the LIS professional:

- a. Modeling and abstraction
- b. Design, implement and manipulate databases

The study also provided actionable information that SLIS has applied to inform curricular changes and strategic planning:

- a. Explicitly incorporate a technological review step into the process for developing or revising courses, concentrations, and tracks. The six areas highlighted for improvement should be specifically addressed during these activities to ensure that appropriate concepts and competencies are addressed.
- b. Ensure that a variety of technology courses are offered each year and provide additional co-curricular opportunities for students to develop technology competencies. This could include extending the technology workshops currently offered, developing additional internship and practicum opportunities, and enhancing the work-study opportunities for SLIS lab assistants.
- c. Develop advising materials for faculty and students to ensure that faculty can effectively advise students of the value of technology courses and students can make wise choices when selecting courses. This includes identifying a technology concentration to illustrate how the technology courses combine to develop professionally relevant IT competencies.
- d. Incorporate technology requirements besides LSC 555 (curricular or co-curricular) to ensure that all students develop IT competencies appropriate for LIS professionals before graduating from the program.
- e. Students should be specifically advised to take all core courses early in the program. SLIS may want to consider adding a requirement (which could be waived by the advisor) to ensure that core classes are completed within the first 6

classes.

This survey study provides baseline data for future evaluations and is repeated every three years to assess changes in student perceptions as the technology aspects of the curriculum are revised. The *SLIS Working Plan* provides the milestones for implementing the recommendations of the most recent technology survey and the schedule for conducting the survey on a periodic basis for program evaluation and improvement.

Student Technology Readiness Survey

In spring 2008, SLIS developed a set of technology competencies for incoming students (Appendix F). To determine student mastery of the competences upon matriculation, SLIS faculty developed a student questionnaire (Appendix G) which is designed to determine student technology readiness, and measure student mastery of the basic technology competencies. The survey is administered at each SLIS new student orientation. Based on responses, students are advised whether or not they need to take additional technology workshops, available through SLIS, to ensure they meet minimum technology readiness requirements for the SLIS core courses.

Through the efforts of the SLIS Technology Committee to align curricular and co-curricular offerings, the program offers a series of workshops that are specifically timed to be offered when they provide the most meaningful support for the technology-heavy courses in SLIS (LSC 555, 772, and 776). The purpose of offering the workshops with the courses is to provide basic technology skill development in essential areas for SLIS students to improve their technology skills and assist them to succeed in the required technology courses in the SLIS curriculum. The workshop content and offerings are aligned with the foundational for-credit technology courses to reinforce, strengthen, and support SLIS students in each section of the course to attain mastery of basic concepts and to help SLIS achieve its goal to provide SLIS students with technology fluency.

The survey results are also analyzed to determine the overall level of student technology readiness. The curriculum committee uses these data to inform curriculum development and revision, assist SLIS in determining what non-credit workshops to offer that will be most beneficial for entering SLIS students, and to identify and address gaps in student knowledge of technology concepts to improve technology fluency in the core courses and at the upper level to ensure basic student technology fluency upon graduation. The survey is administered every semester to new students.

2. Pass rates and analysis of student performance on the comprehensive examination

The SLIS curriculum requires students to take a comprehensive examination that serves as a capstone event. The examination is held on the CUA campus in fall, spring and summer semesters, over two days specifically reserved on the University's academic calendar for this purpose. The examination is entirely a written examination; there are five questions each day, from which a student selects two to answer. Examination questions are devised by a faculty committee and edited and finalized by the entire SLIS faculty.

Two faculty members grade each question. If the two graders determine that a student's answer does not pass, a second round of reading occurs, during which the marginal answers are reviewed by the entire faculty and a vote is taken after discussion of the answer. Students who do not pass the examination have one more opportunity to retake the examination and additional time. To help

students prepare a comprehensive exam, the school offers a workshop each semester and comprehensive exam documents online at <http://slis.cua.edu/courses/comps/index.cfm>. The workshop includes the presentation of the comprehensive evaluation rubric. This rubric is presented to the students to help them understand the purposes of the comprehensive examination and aid their preparation for this cumulative examination.

The pass/fail rate of the SLIS comprehensive exam provides the faculty with an effective means of evaluating the overall effectiveness of the program's ability to achieve the desired student outcomes and meet its program objectives. This exam results provide valuable feedback on how well the students are able to articulate the core concepts of this program. Since 2005, students have boasted a 90% pass rate. Since 2007, that rate has improved to 95% (Table VI).

Analysis of the pass-fail ratio of comprehensive exam results provides broad-based information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of achieving the school's learning outcomes and program objectives. The high success rate of 90%, shown in Table V, directly demonstrates consistent teaching and learning across the School's multiple forms of course delivery and class locations. Details of analysis of questions and answering patterns of comprehensive examination are available in Appendix C.

Table VI Comprehensive Exam Pass Results

	Summer 2005	Fall 2005	Spring 2006	Summer 2006	Fall 2006
#.Examinees	33	22	38	36	26
# Passes	29	17	34	34	22
% Passes	87.9	77.3	89.5	94.4	84.6

	Spring 2007	Summer 2007	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Summer 2008
#.Examinees	50	41	28	42	20
# Passes	44	39	26	40	19
% Passes	88.0	95.1	92.9	95.2	95.0

Comprehensive Examination Rubric

In addition to the pass fail rates, the SLIS faculty also developed a comprehensive examination rubric, tied to the school's program objectives, that was approved for a pilot initiative in fall, 2008. The comprehensive examination rubric is another mechanism for analyzing student learning outcomes, and measuring the extent to which SLIS has achieved its program objectives through student mastery of the concepts embodied in the program objectives. Appendix G provides the comprehensive examination rubric which was approved by the SLIS faculty for use in the pilot study.

The revised comprehensive examination rubric, which will be revised and finalized in 2009, provides a means to enhance inter-rater reliability, provides an additional tool for faculty to use to discuss the process for grading the comprehensive examinations and in the future, may be used to provide an additional study tool for SLIS students to use when they prepare for the comprehensive

examination. Further, once complete and in use, the comprehensive examination rubric will identify areas of strength and weakness in student performance on the comprehensive examination to help the SLIS curriculum committee to make changes within the curriculum to enhance student learning in any areas identified as being weaker on the aggregate scores on the rubric.

3. Practicum supervisor ratings of student performance in SLIS practicum courses (i.e., LSC 906 and LSC 908)

906

Students in 906: Practicum directly apply their knowledge and skills attained in course work in the SLIS program in a professional working environment under the direction, guidance and support of a professional librarian. They demonstrate ability to apply the concepts and theories associated with library science while articulating their understanding and personal assessment of their ideas and projects in a reflective journal. As the culminating requirement of the practicum coursework, candidates demonstrate mastery of all of the program objectives through an observation of their participation in a library project or presentation observed by the practicum coordinator for 906. The practicum covers the entirety of theoretical and practical knowledge expected and described in the master's degree program objectives for SLIS.

Students may participate in 906 after completing three of SLIS's four, core courses: 551, 553, 555 and students must also consult with his/her advisor prior to participating in practicum and obtain the permission of Practicum Coordinator prior to participating in a practicum experience.

The grade distribution data provides information on the success of practicum and how well it is achieving its stated goals (Appendix H). Between 2003 to 2006, 96% of the students enrolled in 906 (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) successfully completed the practicum with a passing grade on a pass/fail grading system. During this time, 4% of the students enrolled in 906 withdrew from the course. The data provide evidence that the practicum experience is extremely successful and provides an experience that is extremely positive in the view of participants. The course is consistently rated quite high. Further, it provides an integrative experience that is extremely important toward achieving SLIS's stated goals and program objectives.

The SLIS faculty regularly reviews and compares the data on the practicum experience to ensure the educational experience is consistent and provides the necessary opportunity to apply theory to practice. Further, to demonstrate that SLIS is committed to its stated goal of preparing students for professional practice and provides students with an experience where they can develop and refine their professional skills.

The 906: Practicum course is aligned with the SLIS competencies and program objectives and provides evidence that SLIS is successfully achieving the American Library Association standards for accredited schools.

908

Students in 908 demonstrate direct, working evidence of their knowledge and skills of the field of library and information science in the K-12 school environment. They demonstrate ability to

apply the concepts and theories associated with school media centers while articulating their understanding and personal assessment of their ideas, project and lesson plans in a reflective journal. As the culminating requirement of the school library media specialist coursework, candidates demonstrate mastery of all of the program objectives. The practicum covers the entirety of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge expected and delineated in the master's degree program objectives.

Between 2003-2008, all students enrolled in 908 successfully completed the practicum with a passing grade on a pass/fail grading system (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.).

Since 2003, 100% of the candidates for the school library media specialist certification have passed the practicum course, 908: School Library Media Practicum. The connection of the 908 course objectives to the SLIS program objectives, as aligned with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) standards, indicate the students who have completed the program do so having mastered the content areas of the four standards as required by AASL for successful professional practice. The candidates' success in completing 908 successfully and the high numbers of individuals successfully achieving specialist certification is another element of SLIS's outcomes assessment plan to demonstrate its achievement of its stated learning outcomes and preparing students for successful practice.

4. School Library Media Candidate Survey

SLIS has a yearly survey of candidates from the school library media program (available in the American Association of School Librarians Accreditation report). The survey results need to indicate that at least 50% of candidates moderately agree, agree, or strongly agree that they mastered the areas covered in the survey for the four (4) American Association for School Librarians (AASL) standards for SLIS to consider the standard to have been met successfully. The majority of questions have agreement that is above 60% of respondents. The 2008 survey results do not have any questions on the survey that were below 50% agreement. Therefore, SLIS considers the standards to have been met at the acceptable, or target, level for AASL accreditation as evidenced by the survey responses. The frequencies for the responses to the latest survey are included in Appendix I. The survey results indicate that students have met the standards, and achieved the target for some of the standards, for each of the four standards as required by AASL.

5. Grade distributions for the four, core courses (551, 553, 555 and 557)

SLIS reviews the aggregate grade distributions for each of the four (4) core courses in the SLIS curriculum on a yearly basis. The grade distributions, in combination with the analyses of student evaluations for the four, core courses, provide SLIS several data points to use to analyze student learning outcomes and to ensure the quality of education is consistent across locations and course formats. The entirety of the student population in SLIS is required to take the four, core courses regardless of their track or course of study. As a consequence, the four, core courses form the foundational educational experience that all SLIS students are required to take. In addition, these courses are important because they form the foundation for SLIS students for the mid- and upper-level courses in the SLIS curriculum. Further, the SLIS faculty has noted that there is a correlation between student success on the comprehensive examination, as demonstrated in the comprehensive examination analysis, and academic performance in the four, core courses. Therefore, SLIS

monitors the grade distributions for these four courses carefully to, 1) identify any issues in performance early in the program, 2) as a means to ensure consistency in quality and, 3) to examine whether grading practices are consistent across site and format.

The course distribution data for the four core courses, 551, 553, 555 and 557 is provided in Appendix D. As the data show, the grading distributions are consistent across locations, LSC representing the on-campus section and CLSC representing the off-campus location, and in general, the final grade is consistent regardless of the number of students in the course at any one time. When unusual changes occur in the course distributions, the courses are analyzed for discrepancies and the reasons for these discrepancies is identified and addressed. The faculty uses these data to evaluate the consistency of grading practices across the faculty and as a means to evaluate the student readiness for upper level study. In addition, these data provide information on the aggregate opinion across all sections of a course concerning the instructor and the course to provide data to compare to the grades to see if there is any correlation. And, over time, how the ratings compare for the course, whether they remain consistent, improve or decline. In addition, there are a greater proportion of lower grades in 555 and 557 sections which is another area the faculty discuss to determine what the reasons are for this occurrence and whether it merits future action by the curriculum committee.

The grade distributions are also important to evaluate whether changes to the curriculum have an impact on the grade distributions and student perception of the course and the faculty member. The faculty did a revision of the core courses in 2007-2008. The grade distribution data will help to evaluate the extent to which the course revisions, based on actual grades and stakeholder feedback about the course, reflects the changes and improves or causes a decline in grades or opinions regarding the course and instructor. These data will be reviewed for that purpose and to ensure the revisions are having the desired effect and improving the learning outcomes and student preparedness for upper level courses in SLIS.

6. Surveys of employers, alumni, and current students administered periodically

In order to evaluate how well SLIS has achieved its program objectives, and to evaluate SLIS's success in helping students achieve the stated learning outcomes for the degree, SLIS conducts periodic surveys of students, alumni and employers on a three year basis. The most recent surveys were distributed in 2007 and 2008 to provide comparative data for the previous surveys from 2005 and to coincide with the upcoming professional accreditation visit from the American Library Association.

SLIS uses its program objectives as a baseline for developing the questions for the three surveys. The survey instruments are available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.. The survey results are compared to the previous surveys of the same stakeholder group and analyses are generated to provide a means to discuss the survey responses and the recommendations from the analytic reports generated by the survey responses.

The school's Strategic Planning Committee reviews the results and makes recommendations to the school's curriculum committee for improvements or changes to the curriculum as recommended by these survey data. The curriculum committee decides what changes or improvements to make and they are added to the school's *Working Plan* with milestones and outcomes to ensure the changes are implemented and systematically evaluated.

Surveys of students, employers, and alumni in spring 2008 found that the SLIS curriculum was perceived very positively, and the scores had improved in all aspects compared to the survey results in 2004 (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). According to the results of the latest alumni survey, four-fifths of the respondents “agree” that SLIS’ core courses gave them a solid foundation in library and information science; their overall education at SLIS was good; and their Master of Science in Library Science (MSLS) degree prepared them well for their current career. The majority of the alumni who responded to the survey are currently employed as professionals in academic, public, government, school or law libraries.

Table VII shows employer as compared to alumni perceptions of SLIS students’ preparation for professional practice upon completion of the degree and entering the workforce. The areas where alumni and employers were queried relate to SLIS’s program objectives and stated competencies and assist SLIS to continually assess its success in achieving its stated objectives and competencies as perceived by its stakeholders.

TABLE VII. 2008 Employer and Alumni Perceptions of Preparation by Area after Completing the MSLS Degree

Area	Especially Well/Adequately Prepared by Employer/Alumni	Not Adequately/Not Prepared by Employer/Alumni
a. Providing information sources and services. Retrieving, evaluating, and synthesizing information and providing guidance to patrons in the use of resources (e.g., reference, user services)	63.8%/93.2%	---/2.6%
b. Managing information organizations and services. Knowledge of how change occurs, oral and written communication skills, and promoting services (e.g., planning, budgeting, supervising, and marketing)	44.7%/73.1%	10.6%/20%
c. Evaluating and selecting collection resources (e.g., collection development; resource building)	51.1%/79.9%	2.1%/15%
d. Providing access to information(e.g., organizing, storing, retrieving, delivering information and knowledge organization)	51.4%/89.3%	4.2%/6.8%
e. Using information systems and technologies (e.g., use of computers, design and analysis of information systems, evaluation of information systems and technologies, implications of information technologies for users and technological knowledge)	53.2%/66.2%	10.6% 26.5%

f. Understanding information policy and ethics, values, and foundation principles of information professionals	51%/93.6%	8.6%/2.2%
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Table VII shows that employer respondents have a lesser opinion of student preparation than the alumni respondents. SLIS uses these data to examine employer and alumni views further and as a means to identify areas that employers expressed as areas of concern.

These data, when all three surveys are reviewed together, provide information for the Strategic Planning Committee and the Curriculum Committee to use to improve the SLIS curriculum to ensure it reflects the needs of SLIS’s stakeholders and is aware of their views as revision and improvement is planned and executed.

Surveys of students and alumni in spring 2008 found that the SLIS curriculum was perceived very positively, most especially the students’ perception of practicum. The scores achieved in 2008 demonstrate improvement in all aspects when compared to the survey results of 2004 (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.).

The results of the student and alumni surveys (Table VIII) that focus on technological education and resources for learning demonstrate support for the perception that SLIS support on technology has improved. Supporting evidence is also found in the 2008 Employer survey which shows that more than half of the survey participants perceived that SLIS graduates were especially well/adequately prepared to use information systems and technologies.

Table VIII Survey Results on Technological Assessment for Curriculum

Note: 6 point scale where 1= strongly disagree and 6= strongly agree

Question (Year)	Student	Alumni
Computing resources in Marist Hall are appropriate for my learning (2004)	3.86	3.46
Computing resources in Marist Hall are appropriate for my learning (2008)	5.27	4.93
The SLIS curriculum provides/provided me with a solid understanding of information technology issues in the LIS field (2008)	4.66	4.61

7. Data analysis of graduation rates

Evidence of the School’s success in achieving our program objectives and fostering a learning environment that results in successful student learning outcomes is also achieved evaluating the number of students who successfully achieve all of the degree requirements and graduate. Reviewing the data for the last five years, the data show that SLIS has graduated an average of 77 students per year, roughly one third of the students enrolled at any one time (Table IX).

Table IX: Student Enrollments and Degree Completion 2005 – 2009

School Year	Enrollment	Total Graduates	% Graduated
2004-2005	251	85	34%
2005-2006	251	80	32%
2006-2007	248	95	38%
2007-2008	224	103	46%
2008-2009	216	TBD	

Further, Table IX shows that student graduation rates are continually increasing. The average SLIS student takes longer to achieve the degree because the majority of SLIS graduates are studying part-time. Therefore, SLIS evaluates its graduation success after three to five years for SLIS students as data show that approximately 91% of students have graduated by the end of their fourth year of study. SLIS continually reviews and analyzes graduation rates as a measure of its success in achieving its program objectives through ensuring student success in the SLIS program Appendix E.

Supporting Documentation for SLIS's Assessment Measures

Comprehensive Examinations

Students in the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at the Catholic University of America (CUA), take the comprehensive examination in their last semester of coursework or soon thereafter within two years. There are no directly applicable professional licensure exams related to the MSLS (see the SLIS ALA Program Presentation for specific focus on the School Library Media Specialist certification). The comprehensive examination is a written examination that requires students to demonstrate mastery of the content knowledge required for professional practice in the field of library and information science. The comprehensive examination questions are developed based on the School's program objectives which are derived from the American Library Association's standards for accreditation for programs offering the master's of science in library science (MSLS). The document mapping the SLIS program objectives to the ALA standards demonstrates the relationship between the two and is provided in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.. The rubric (Appendix G) for grading the comprehensive examination answers measures student performance in five areas:

1. Conceptual knowledge (tied to demonstrating mastery of the program objectives)
2. Reflective application (integration of theory and practice)
3. Accuracy of information
4. Organization and presentation
5. Mechanics of writing

Students provide evidence of knowledge and skills of the field of library and information science through their written responses to the comprehensive examination questions. Students articulate conceptual understanding as evidenced through their writing that provides their knowledge of theoretical concepts, references to the literature, their ability to demonstrate reflective application of theory to practice in their answers and through the use of examples gained during internships, field work or through their employment in the field. The comprehensive examination is a culminating requirement of the program and requires candidates to demonstrate mastery of the entirety of the standards through the candidate's answers. Since 2005, 90% of the students sitting for the comprehensive exam have passed the exam (Table VI). The questions cover the entirety of theoretical and practical knowledge expected and delineated in the master's degree's program objectives. Analysis of the comprehensive exam from 2005-2008 is provided in Appendix C. This analysis of the exam includes the ration of passing evaluations vs. failing evaluations, the distribution of the questions in terms of SLIS' six competency areas, answering patterns in terms of SLIS' six competency areas and inclusion of the questions over this period of term divided into three categories – most answered, least answered and questions whose exam taker responses were graded “marginal” in the first round of answer evaluation which caused the answers to be evaluated a second time as per the evaluation procedure.

School Library Media Track

The School of Library and Information Science has four core courses required of all students as part of the MSLS degree program (551, 553, 555, 557) with eight required courses for the School Library Media Specialist Certification as part of the MSLS. Of the eight courses for the School

Library Media Specialist Certification, two are considered to have the greatest specific relevance to the certification (813 and 908).

- 551 Organization of Information
 - 553 Information Sources and Services
 - 555 Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers
 - 557 Libraries and Information in Society
-
- 813 The School Library Media Center
 - 908 School Library Media Practicum

Course Discussion

The School of Library and Information Science analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in the four core courses for a five-year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007).

Core Courses

- 551 Organization of Information
- 553 Information Sources and Services
- 555 Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers
- 557 Libraries and Information in Society

The grades demonstrate the extent to which SLIS candidates demonstrate mastery of the course objectives which are derived from the SLIS program objectives

551: Organization of Information

Students in 551 are expected to demonstrate understanding of the basic principles of organizing and representing information for facilitating access based on users' information needs. As a core course, 551 addresses how recorded knowledge can be organized and structured, and ways of providing access to the intellectual works. Topics include defining information; describing and indexing intellectual works; current approaches, standards, tools, and systems in use for information organization; and relationship of information organization to information access.

The grades for 551 are provided in Appendix D. This course is regularly reviewed by the faculty to ensure consistency in grading and use of rubrics.

553: Information Sources and Services

Students in 553 build a strong foundation in the fundamental terminology, concepts, and practices of library public services as well as the skills to deliver them effectively to a variety of information users and within a variety of settings. As a core course, 553, emphasizes the philosophy of reference service, appropriate communications skills for use in instructional settings and reference interviews, standard evaluative criteria for determining fitness of sources to meet information needs, proficient retrieval of information from print and electronic reference sources, policies and procedures for the provision of

reference service, and the role of reference and information service departments within an organization.

The grades for 553 are provided in Appendix D. This course is regularly reviewed by the faculty to ensure consistency in grading and use of rubrics.

555: Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers

Students in 555 are expected to understand and articulate the evolving role of information systems in the storage and retrieval of information. As a core course, 555 focuses on the exploration of how information technology in libraries, archives and information centers, and on the World Wide Web facilitates interaction with information with emphasis on introducing students to applicable theory, principles, and standards; exploration of the capabilities and functions of several classes of information systems, including established technology like integrated library systems (ILS) and databases as well as evolving social and collaborative environments; essential technology elements (hardware, software, networking, etc.); practical information technology skills used by information professionals, such as working with databases and creating and publishing web pages; and the promotion of critical thinking, problem solving and collaborative teamwork abilities for working with information technology.

The grades for 555 are provided in Appendix D. This course is regularly reviewed by the faculty to ensure consistency in grading and use of rubrics.

557: Libraries and Information in Society

Students in 557 are introduced to the nature of information, the role of libraries, and the profession of librarianship in contemporary society. As a core course, 557 incorporates historical developments, current trends, and the outlook for the future. Emphasis is on the values, principles, legal, and ethical responsibilities of the profession. The course builds a foundation for each student's ongoing professional development and leadership.

The grades for 557 are provided in Appendix D. This course is regularly reviewed by the faculty to ensure consistency in grading and use of rubrics.

Table X: 551 Course Evaluations Fall, 2004-Fall, 2008

Year/Semester	CUA average	SLIS Average		551	
		On-campus	Off-campus	On-campus	Off-campus
2004 Fall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Spring	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Fall	7.9	8.1	7.9	5.2	5.7

2006 Spring	8.0	8.0	8.6	5.9	9.3
2006 Summer	8.5	8.7	8.9	9.5	8.8
2006 Fall	7.9	8.1	n/a	7.9	n/a
2007 Spring	7.9	7.9	n/a	7.3	n/a
2007 Summer	8.2	8.5	n/a	5.5	n/a
2007 Fall	7.9	8.4	8.2	8.0	8.4
2008 Spring	7.8	8.2	n/a	7.4	n/a
2008 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
MEAN	8.0	8.2	8.4	7.1	8.0

Note: 10 point scale where 1 = lowest and 10 = highest

Table XI: 553 Course Evaluations Fall, 2004-Fall, 2008

Year/Semester	CUA average	SLIS On-Campus & Off-Campus Average		553	
		On-campus	Off-campus	On-campus	Off-campus
2004 Fall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Spring	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Fall	7.9	8.1	n/a	8.9	n/a
2006 Spring	8.0	8.0	8.6	8.1	7.4
2006 Summer	8.5	n/a	8.9	n/a	9.4
2006 Fall	7.9	8.1	8.3	8.7	7.7
2007 Spring	7.9	7.9	8.0	6.9	8.3
2007 Summer	8.2	8.5	n/a	8.0	n/a
2007 Fall	7.9	8.4	8.2	8.0	9.7
2008 Spring	7.8	8.2	n/a	8.9	n/a
2008 Summer	8.6	8.8	n/a	9.3	n/a
MEAN	8.1	8.2	8.4	8.4	8.5

Note: 10 point scale where 1 = lowest and 10 = highest

Table XII: 555 Course Evaluations Fall, 2004-Fall, 2008

Year/Semester	CUA average	SLIS Average		555	
		On-campus	Off-campus	On-campus	Off-campus
2004 Fall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Spring	8.0	n/a	9.0	n/a	9.0
2005 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Fall	7.9	8.1	7.9	7.7	7.0
2006 Spring	8.0	8.0	8.6	8.3	8.1

2006 Summer	8.5	8.7	n/a	8.6	n/a
2006 Fall	7.9	8.1	n/a	7.8	n/a
2007 Spring	7.9	7.9	8.0	7.2	8.5
2007 Summer	8.2	8.5	n/a	6.7	n/a
2007 Fall	7.9	8.4	n/a	5.0	n/a
2008 Spring	7.8	8.2	8.6	8.2	6.5
2008 Summer	8.6	8.8	n/a	8.2	n/a
MEAN	8.1	8.3	8.4	7.5	7.8

Note: 10 point scale where 1 = lowest and 10 = highest

Table XIII: 557 Course Evaluations Fall, 2004-Fall, 2008

Year/Semester	CUA average	SLIS Average		557	
		On-campus	Off-campus	On-campus	Off-campus
2004 Fall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Spring	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Fall	7.9	8.1	7.9	9.2	10.0
2006 Spring	8.0	8.0	8.6	7.4	8.6
2006 Summer	8.5	8.7	8.9	9.3	9.3
2006 Fall	7.9	8.1	8.3	8.7	9.3
2007 Spring	7.9	7.9	8.0	8.5	9.7
2007 Summer	8.2	8.5	n/a	8.9	n/a
2007 Fall	7.9	8.4	n/a	8.5	n/a
2008 Spring	7.8	n/a	8.6	n/a	8.2
2008 Summer	8.6	8.8	n/a	8.5	n/a
MEAN	8.1	8.3	8.4	8.6	9.2

Note: 10 point scale where 1 = lowest and 10 = highest

School Library Media Specialist Certification

813: The School Library Media Center

Students in 813 are expected to demonstrate a theoretical understanding of the philosophy, objectives, staff, organization and management, collection, facilities, budgets, and services of school library media centers. As the foundation for 908: School Library Media Practicum, 813 provides the initial opportunity to present and receive evaluation through the essay provided as a result of the information literacy assignment. Students who successfully complete this course are prepared for the applied environment of the practicum course.

The grades for 813 are provided in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.. Since fall, 2003 the grade distribution for 813 has steadily increased. This course is regularly reviewed by the faculty to ensure consistency in grading and use of rubrics.

908: School Library Media Practicum

Students in 908 demonstrate direct, working evidence of their knowledge and skills of the field of library and information science in the K-12 school environment. They demonstrate ability to apply the concepts and theories associated with school media centers while articulating their understanding and personal assessment of their ideas, project and lesson plans in a reflective journal. As the culminating requirement of the school library media specialist coursework, candidates demonstrate mastery of all of the program objectives. The practicum covers the entirety of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge expected and delineated in the master’s degree program objectives.

Between 2003-2008, all students enrolled in 908 successfully completed the practicum with a passing grade on a pass/fail grading system.

Since 2003, 100% of the candidates for the school library media specialist certification have passed the practicum course, 908: School Library Media Practicum. The connection of the 908 course objectives to the SLIS program objectives, as aligned with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) standards, indicate the students who have completed the program do so having mastered the content areas of the four standards as required by AASL for successful professional practice.

School Library Media Candidate Survey

SLIS has instituted a yearly survey of candidates from the school library media program. The survey results need to indicate that at least 50% of candidates moderately agree, agree, or strongly agree that they mastered the areas covered in the survey for the four AASL standards for SLIS to consider the standard to be met. The majority of questions have agreement that is above 60% of respondents. The 2008 survey results do not have any questions on the survey that were below 50% agreement. Therefore, SLIS considers the standards to have been met at the acceptable, or target, level as evidenced by the survey responses. The frequencies for the responses to the latest survey are included in Appendix J. The survey results indicate that students have met the standards, and achieved the target for some of the standards, for each of the four standards as required by AASL.

Table XIV: Course evaluations for 813 and 908

Year/Semester	CUA average	SLIS On-Campus & Off-Campus Average		813		908	
		On-	Off-	On-	Off-	On-	Off-

		campus	campus	campus	campus	campus	campus
2004 Fall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Spring	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005 Fall	7.9	8.1	7.9	9.6	n/a	7.3	n/a
2006 Spring	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006 Fall	7.9	8.1	n/a	7.7	n/a	5.0	n/a
2007 Spring	7.9	7.9	8.0	n/a	n/a	7.0	n/a
2007 Summer	8.2	8.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	10.0	n/a
2007 Fall	7.9	8.4	8.2	7.8	7.1	n/a	n/a
2008 Spring	7.8	n/a	8.6	n/a	10.0	n/a	n/a
2008 Summer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
MEAN	7.9	8.2	8.2	8.4	8.6	7.3	n/a

Note: 10 point scale where 1 = lowest and 10 = highest

Progression Data (Attachment B, etc.)

Comment on Enrollment

SLIS monitors the composition of its student body, watching for opportunities to foster learning environments that complement the School’s mission, goals and program objectives. Our admission criterion ensures a student body with the potential for meaningful engagement with the subject discipline.

The students attending SLIS come from all over the world. In the fall of 2007, example presented in Table XV, the program had students from China, Germany, France, India and South Korea.

Table XIV: ALISE Country of Origin Data on SLIS Student Enrollment, Fall 2007

Total International Students	China	Germany	France	India	South Korea
5	1	1	1	1	1

The majority of the School’s students are residents of the District of Columbia and the two surrounding states of Virginia and Maryland (Table XV).

Table XVI: ALISE Geographic Data on SLIS Enrollment, Fall 2007

Total	In District of Columbia	Out of District of Columbia
224	42	182

Students span a range of ethnic backgrounds, including Asian American, African American and Hispanic American (Table XVI).

Table XVII: ALISE Ethnicity Data on SLIS Enrollment, Fall 2007

Total	Asian American	African American	Hispanic American	White	Foreign	Unknown
224	7	20	12	145	5	35

Table XIX: ALISE Age Data on SLIS Student Enrollment, Fall 2007

Total	20 – 24	25 – 29	30 – 34	35 – 39	40 – 44	45 – 49	50 – 54	> 54
224	26	63	37	34	20	23	14	7

Between 2002 and 2007, the majority of SLIS' students have been between the ages of 21 to 40 and enrolled as part-time students (see the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). The School's enrollment, during this same period, has represented 5% of the total undergraduate and graduate enrollment at CUA and 11% of the total graduate enrollment (see the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.).

SLIS has maintained a healthy percentage of admissions to applications since 2003. In 2003 81% of the applicants were admitted while in 2008 85% of the applicants were admitted (Table XX). For further detail please consult Table XXI.

Table XX: Percentage of admissions to SLIS program compared to applicants by year.

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Percentage	81%	77%	78%	85%	72%	85%

Table XXI: SLIS Student Applications vs. Admissions (2003-2008)
APPLICATIONS

	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
Master's	155	177	187	155	159	136
Certificate	4	7	3	3	1	2
Non-Degree	7	7	5	6	3	13
TOTAL	166	191	195	164	163	151

ADMISSIONS

	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
Master's	126	142	146	133	115	117
Certificate	2	4	3	1	1	
Non-Degree	6	2	3	6	2	11
TOTAL	134	148	152	140	118	128

SLIS offers opportunities to those seeking to earn a Master's in Library Science, a Post-Master's Certificate, and/or the opportunity to attend the School but do not wish to pursue a degree program, instead wishing to follow courses independently. This results in a high percentage of student in SLIS being part-time students (Table XXII).

Table XXII: Statistical Profile of SLIS as of fall, 2008

	2004 -2005	2006 – 2007	2007 - 2008
Full-time enrollment	29	36	24
Part-time enrollment	222	212	192
Total enrollment	251	248	216
Summer headcount	184	191	190
Degrees granted (MSLS)	80	95	103

Curricular Improvements

SLIS curriculum evolves in response to systematic review and planning. This section highlights recent changes to the curriculum and describes a few of the milestones targeted for 2009.

Full-time faculty members serve on the School’s Curriculum Committee and oversee the development and revision of the curriculum. The Committee meets weekly and uses SLIS goals and objectives as the framework to assess proposed curricula changes. Top priority items, such as course number changes and core course reviews, are addressed immediately, while other items are scheduled for achievement in the next three years. The Curriculum Committee uses the SLIS *Working Plan* to keep track of milestones to be achieved. An Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from employers and alumni assists SLIS with its strategic planning. The School shares its planning documents with the Advisory Committee and seeks input and advice to meet the needs of students, employers, and society. The Advisory Committee meets quarterly.

The SLIS curriculum consists of four core courses (12 total credits) that lay the foundation in the six competency areas for students. These required core courses are

LSC 551: Organization of Information (Competency area: Information organization)

LSC 553: Information Sources and Services (Competency areas: Resources and Services)

LSC 555: Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers (Competency area: Technologies)

LSC 557: Libraries and Information in Society (Competency areas: Professional identity and Management)

In addition, SLIS offers mid-level courses that provide knowledge and skills applicable in a variety of information environments. It also provides advanced and specialized courses for students to pursue special areas of interests. The following section highlights recent important curricula developments.

Course Description Updates

The curriculum of SLIS has evolved since the 1980s, with new courses added over time. In fall 2008, the faculty revised all course descriptions to reflect the current coverage. The updated version of the *Course Catalog* is posted on the SLIS Web site at <http://slis.cua.edu/courses/courses.cfm>.

Course Sequence and Curriculum Structure

To help students develop coherent programs of study, the Curriculum Committee has aligned the courses along the six competency areas and renumbered many courses to make the curriculum structure more explicit. SLIS faculty also designed a *Student Advising Handbook* and Advising Checklist (see the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) so that advisors may work more effectively with students. The course structure and new numbering system were presented at the fall 2008 faculty meeting to obtain feedback from adjunct faculty. SLIS also presented this information to continuing students in fall 2008. To prepare for full implementation of the new course numbering system in fall 2009, SLIS will provide a briefing for all students in spring 2009. The information will also be posted on the SLIS Web site.

Four tables present the course sequence and curriculum structure (see Tables XXIIIa-d). Core courses are in the 5x# sequence, mid-level courses in the 6x# sequence, advanced courses in the 7x# sequence, and specialized courses that focus on competencies in specific information environments are in the 8x# sequence. The second digit (x) denotes the competency area. New course numbers are in bold italics.

Table XXIIIa Competency: Information Organization (x = 0 – 1)

5x#	6x#	7x#	8x#
551	603 Technical services 606 Cataloging and classification 610 Internet searches & Web design 615 Organization of Internet resources 616 Indexing & abstracting	713 Adv. cataloging	

Table XXIIIb Competencies: Services & Resources (x = 3 – 4)

5x#	6x#	7x#	8x#
553	631 Storytelling 632 Advanced Information Sources and Services 633 On-Line Information Retrieval 634 Humanities Information 635 Use and Users of Libraries and Information 636 Social Science Information 637 Government Information	731 Media services 733 Adv. online retrieval 735 Adult services 747 Special collections	832 Rare book librarianship 833 Music librarianship 834 Art & museum librarianship 835 Sch. Med. Center 837 Health Sci. librarianship 839 Legal lit.

638 Science and Technology Information 639 Business Information 641 Collection Development 643 Oral History 644 Information Literacy 646 Archives Management 647 Preservation	840 Adv. Legal research 844 Music bibliography 845 Religious archives 846 Children’s lit. 847 Media for children 848 Media for adolescents 849 Health Sci. lit
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Table XXIIIc Competency: Technologies (x = 5 – 6)

5x#	6x#	7x#	8x#
555	652 Foundations of Digital Libraries 654 Database Management 656 Computer Networking	752 Multimedia production & design 754 Web applications 756 System analysis 757 Lib. Automation	

Table XXIIIId Competency: Professional Identity & Management (x = 7 – 8)

5x#	6x#	7x#	8x#
557	670 History of the book 672 Management 675 Research methods	771 Library evaluation 773 Intellectual property	881 College & university libraries 885 Public libraries 886 Law librarianship 887 Federal libraries 888 Special libraries

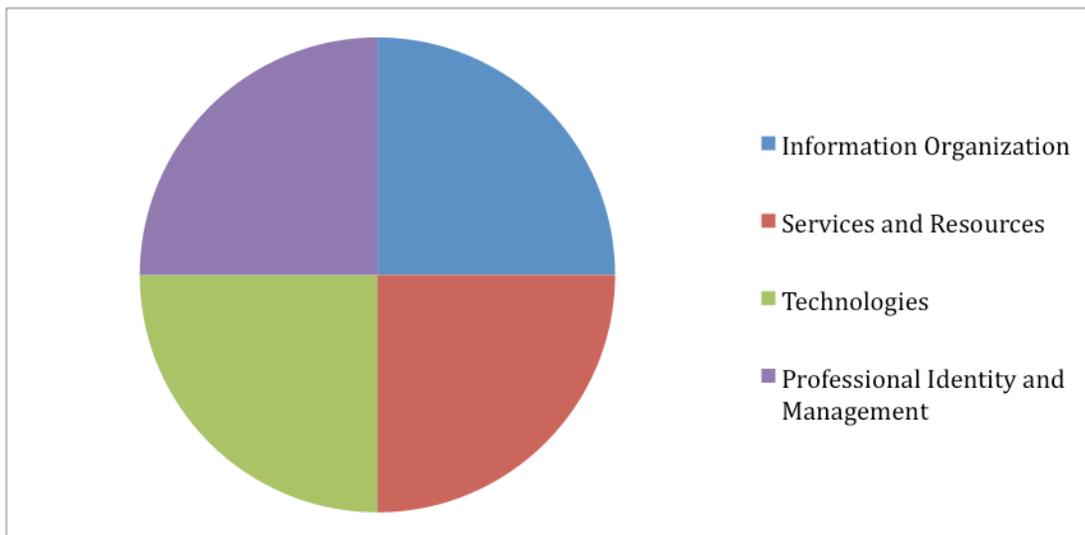
Generalist Course of Study

In 2007 the Curriculum Committee identified several mid-level courses as highly recommended courses because they cover knowledge and skills that are applicable in diverse information environments and library settings. To prepare graduates to be well rounded information professionals, in fall 2008 SLIS faculty identified eight mid-level courses in the six competency areas and combined them with the four core courses to form a “Generalist Course of Study.” This plan of study was shared with adjunct faculty members at the fall 2008 faculty meeting. It was supported by the entire faculty and has been placed on the SLIS Web site for the SLIS community. SLIS has made a commitment to offer these courses regularly to support students interested in this course of study (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). Table XXIV presents courses recommended for this course of study, and Figure I illustrates the distribution of these courses by the competency areas.

Table XXIV Generalist Course of Study (12 courses, 36 credits)

Competencies	Courses
Information Organization	551 Organization of Information 606 Cataloging and Classification 610 Internet Searches & Web Design
Resources and Services	553 Information Sources & Services 608 Collection Development 730 Use and Users of Libraries and Information
Technology	555 Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers 712 Foundations of Digital Libraries 740 Database Management
Professional Identity & Management	557 Libraries and Information in Society 607 Management 745 Research Methods in Library and Information Science

Figure I Distribution of Generalist Courses by Competency Areas



Area of Specialization (Track) and Courses of Study

Besides the Generalist Course of Study SLIS students have opportunities to obtain in-depth knowledge in specific areas to prepare for selected careers. School Library Media is a popular area of specialization (track) at SLIS. The track is designed to prepare students to take leadership roles as school library media specialists and to have sufficient knowledge of all aspects of the school library media center and its role within a school. Graduates of this track are expected to be versatile and technology savvy. This track of study attracts a large number of students from Virginia, Washington, DC, and Maryland.

While SLIS emphasizes the Generalist Course of Study, the curriculum also supports Courses of Study in seven areas: Cultural Heritage Information Management, Digital Libraries, Information Architecture, Information Organization, Law Librarianship, Services for Children, and User Services. The Curriculum Committee approved these courses of study in fall 2008. All courses of study build on the foundation laid by the four core courses and combine them with electives to help students develop competencies in their chosen area of concentration. For each course of study the faculty draws on the competencies recommended by affiliated professional organizations (if applicable) to identify competencies needed by professionals in an area of concentration. The Course of Study for Law Librarianship examples demonstrate competencies that map closely to the competency recommendations of the American Association of Law Librarians and may be found in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation. Courses are then selected to help students develop these competencies. Information sheets on courses of study are posted on the SLIS Web site to help students with program planning.

Innovative Programming Efforts

The 2008 surveys of students and alumni (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) found a strong interest in more variety and flexibility in course delivery format. In response to such needs, SLIS has provided innovative solutions. Since 2004 SLIS has offered week-long institutes in the summer session on topics such as Federal Library Resources for students to learn these subjects in a compressed and intense format. In the summer of 2008 four institutes were offered on Federal Library Resources, Intellectual Property Issues, Art and Museum Librarianship, and Organization of Internet Resources.

SLIS has also increased the offerings of courses in blended format (online courses complemented by several face-to-face meetings) since 2005, making it possible for students in far-flung areas of Maryland and Virginia to take SLIS courses. In fall 2008 SLIS piloted the Weekend College (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) to ensure that courses in support of the School Library Media track are accessible to students in that track.

Review of Core Courses

To ensure that the SLIS curriculum is responsive to the needs of users in a rapidly changing technological and global society, the school has developed a curriculum review plan and documented it in the SLIS *Working Plan* (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). Using the program objectives as the framework for evaluation, SLIS faculty will finish reviewing core courses in fall 2008 and will review mid-level and higher level courses in 2009. Since program evaluation is continuous and iterative, the *Working Plan* enables the faculty to keep track of milestones and other changes for the next three years.

The objective of reviewing core courses is to ensure that the courses (1) lay the foundation for achieving program objectives, (2) are up to date and appropriate in scope, and (3) make use of appropriate information technologies to provide students with a solid information technology foundation for their careers (see Core Course Review Guidelines available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). Full-time faculty are leading the reviews and working closely with adjunct faculty members of the core courses.

In spring 2009, the school will adopt a course chair system to ensure regular and efficient review of all core courses. A full-time faculty member will be designated as the course chair for each core to ensure consistency in course content, objectives, course delivery, and evaluation, regardless of format or course location.

Since the arrival of Dean Kelley in fall 2007, there is a renewed commitment to systematically developing technology competencies in students. To ensure that SLIS continues to be responsive to technological changes, the SLIS Technology Committee has developed a Technology Strategic Plan that has been integrated into the school's strategic planning document (see *SLIS Working Plan* in the SLS ALA Program Presentation.). In addition, SLIS has surveyed students and alumni about their perceptions of the curriculum's coverage of technology concepts and skills (see Technology Survey summary report for detail Appendix A). In reviewing core technology course, LSC 555: Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers, SLIS plans to pay particular attention to its coverage of current technologies and how it relates to and supports other courses in the curriculum.

Consistency of Quality Across Formats and Locations

SLIS strives to enhance the flexibility of the curriculum by offering courses at different locations and in different formats. SLIS courses are available in different locations on campus and at off-site locations (Library of Congress, Northern Virginia, Loudoun County, and Richmond, VA) and in different formats (face-to-face class meetings with online course enhancements through a management tool such as Blackboard, and an online-blended format with two or three in-person meetings) by full-time and adjunct faculty. The School also offers week-long intensive courses during the summer session. In addition to offering courses in these compressed formats, the SLIS faculty has also been consistently applying alternative formats, in particular, offering courses in a blended format of distance learning supported by in-person class meetings. The evolution to more blended courses comes at the request of SLIS students who express a desire for greater flexibility, from the SLIS Advisory Committee members, and in response to SLIS survey results. The 2008 SLIS student survey (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation) included the following recommendation (based on student responses)

A DE plan is needed to examine how to provide alternative course delivery formats and also to determine how to build and support instruction at distant locations, such as Richmond, Virginia.

SLIS faculty had anticipated this recommendation based on input from the SLIS Advisory Committee who also suggested that the school examine alternative formats as a means to meet student needs, ensure the program continues to be successful, and for planning purposes to develop the program over the next three years.

Based on feedback from SLIS stakeholders, the SLIS faculty has been experimenting with various levels of blended learning approaches to gauge student acceptance and ensure rigor is maintained. The typical example of blended learning at SLIS is the combination of technology-based materials and face-to-face sessions used together to present content. The faculty decided in 2007 based on student feedback to our initial online course offerings, to continue with a blended approach, and incorporate more synchronous technologies into our course delivery (such as MIV), rather than evolve to an entirely asynchronous model. Currently, SLIS is experimenting *Marratech* to offer synchronous online sessions with CLSC 551 Organization of Information, LSC555 Information Systems in Libraries and Information Centers, and CLSC 606 Cataloging and Classification. Developing new delivery formats and exploring the integration of new technologies for teaching and learning are in the *SLIS Working Plan* which guides future development of distance delivery formats for SLIS courses over the next three years.

Survey results from students and alumni in 2004 and 2008 demonstrate that SLIS Web-based courses have been improved (Table XXV).

Table XXV: Comparison of the 2004 and 2008 Survey Results on SLIS Web-based courses

	Student survey	Alumni survey
2004	3.2	3.88
2008	5.03	4.33

Note: 6-point scale where 1= strongly disagree and 6= strongly agree

In addition to the efforts to address student needs for flexibility, as the percentage of part-time students continues to rise within the SLIS student body, SLIS also piloted a weekend college approach for the school library media track. The launch occurred in spring, 2007 and was designed to ensure that any student pursuing the school library media track would be able to complete the entirety of the degree participating in courses within the track attending classes only on weekends. This approach was piloted to determine the level of student acceptance, whether this approach would serve SLIS's school library media students, and to shift the time students spent in class to days that would not conflict with work schedules. The initial pilot was well received and students' provided positive feedback on the pilot. This format is currently being offered and further enhances SLIS's flexible course delivery to accommodate the needs of part-time, working adults.

Ensuring consistency in teaching and learning:

In spring 2008, the SLIS faculty identified sample outcomes measures for core courses to assess the achievement of course and program objectives. In fall 2008 the Curriculum Committee approved core course review procedure and process (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) to guide the review of core courses. These reviews will be completed by December 2008, with revisions to be implemented in spring 2009. Outcomes measures for the core courses will then be collected and analyzed to determine if the measures are appropriate.

In order to ensure consistent teaching and learning across course delivery formats and class locations, the Curriculum Committee will implement a course chair system (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) for the core courses in spring 2009. The course chair, a lead teaching faculty member, will work with all instructors for the core courses to ensure the relevancy and currency of the course content, mentor new instructors, coordinate the delivery of the course at all sites, and monitor student learning (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation) illustrates the workflow of a course chair system and a responsible body for each core course. The Curriculum Committee will revise and update the policy for systematic curriculum and program evaluation in fall 2009 as part of the SLIS *Working Plan* milestones.

Curriculum Review Based on Student Outcomes

The curriculum committee establishes the milestones for achieving student learning outcomes and these milestones are detailed in the *Working Plan*. The Curriculum Committee determines the milestones for the School by reviewing the results from the various outcome measures in use in SLIS. The *Working Plan* details the areas of focus for student learning outcomes assessment for the curriculum over the next three years. Table XXVI highlights actions and plans of the curriculum committee from the *Working Plan*.

Table XXVI: Relevant section of SLIS Working Plan Relative to the Curriculum

Objective and Milestones	Timeline	Who	Outcome Measures
<p><i>8. Implement a systematic process for assessing incoming students' technology knowledge and skills and providing the resources and support to fill gaps (TSP, 4/22, Obj. 2.2)</i></p> <p>a. Develop baseline technology requirements</p> <p>b. Develop diagnostic assessment mechanism</p> <p>c. Enhance existing face-to-face (lab-based) workshops to systematically address baseline technology requirements</p> <p>d. Add a formal prerequisite to LSC 555 and incorporate into advising handbook</p> <p>e. Provide online resources for students who prefer a self-paced approach</p> <p>f. Ensure baseline workshops are offered throughout D.C. and Virginia on a regular basis</p> <p>g. Evaluate program</p>	<p>a. Fall 2008</p> <p>b. Spring 2009</p> <p>c. Spring 2009</p> <p>d. Spring 2009</p> <p>e. Fall 2009</p> <p>f. Spring 2010</p> <p>g. 2011</p>	<p>Curriculum Committee with support from Tech Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey • Diagnostic assessment data (aggregated) • Workshop surveys • Workshop schedules and enrollment

Curriculum Review and Plan:

The SLIS curriculum is reviewed systematically to ensure its quality and responsiveness to changes in the LIS field and society in general. The review is performed on a three-year cycle, as stated in the *SLIS Working Plan*: core courses review during 2008, mid-level courses review during 2009 – 2010 and upper courses review during 2010 – 2011. Throughout the three-year span, the faculty continually reviews the entirety of the SLIS curriculum, identifies needed improvements and develops measures to address the needed improvements.

In fall 2008, four subcommittees of the Curriculum Committee reviewed the four core course for their objectives, content and use of technologies. The objective was to offer core courses that cover appropriate topics and latest development, make strategic use of technologies, and have valid outcomes measures to help the School assess student learning. In addition, the subcommittees identified sample outcomes measures for each core course.

Curriculum Updates

The SLIS curriculum has been updated in terms of course description and prerequisites. In spring and fall 2008, the Curriculum Committee reviewed and updated course descriptions and prerequisites based on students' achievements and course relationships. In fall 2008, the Curriculum Committee approved a new course numbering system to show coherent relationship of course content and sequential relationship. This new numbering system will be implemented from fall 2009.

Input from SLIS Constituents:

SLIS continually seeks input and feedback from constituents in order to review and evaluate the curriculum. One source of input from students comes from course evaluation administered at the end of the term for each course. If the course is offered online, the evaluation is done online. If the course is offered in a classroom, the evaluation is done on paper during the time frame specified by the University for distributing the course evaluation. Table I compares the overall course evaluation among CUA courses, SLIS on-campus courses and SLIS off-campus courses. As shown, SLIS course evaluation averages higher than CUA course evaluation.

The Committee seeks feedback from students, alumni, and employers to determine how well SLIS achieves its program objectives. Surveys of students (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) and alumni (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) in spring 2008 found that the SLIS curriculum was perceived very positively, and the scores had improved in all aspects compared to the survey results in 2004 (available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.). It is worth noting that students' perception of practicum and the computing resources available in the School was very high. The Strategic Planning Committee will reflect on the survey findings and recommend actions to the faculty. Curriculum-related action items will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and incorporated into the *SLIS Working Plan*. SLIS will survey students, alumni and employers every three years to ensure our curriculum is responsive to the needs of our constituents and to the needs of a changing society.

Technological Assessment of Curriculum: The Curriculum Committee obtained results from the surveys (student, alumni, and employer surveys are available in the SLIS ALA Program Presentation.) regarding technological education and resources for learning. As shown in Table XXIX perception on SLIS support on technology has been improved. Also, the 2008 Employer survey shows a positive result that more than half of the survey participants perceived that SLIS graduates especially well/adequately prepared for using information systems and technologies (See 2008 Employer Survey Report).

Table XXIX Survey Results on Technological Assessment for Curriculum

Question (Year)	Student	Alumni
Computing resources in Marist Hall are appropriate for my learning (2004)	3.86	3.46
Computing resources in Marist Hall are appropriate for my learning (2008)	5.27	4.93
The SLIS curriculum provides/provided me with a solid understanding of information technology issues in the LIS field (2008)	4.66	4.61

Note: 6 point scale where 1= strongly disagree and 6= strongly agree

In 2008, the Technology Committee also surveyed students, alumni, and other stakeholders, to assess that the technology needs for learning and practice were being met. The entire survey findings will be examined to assess the effectiveness of the technology education within the SLIS curriculum. Since technology is highly important to information professionals in the 21st century, the School will conduct a technology survey of students and faculty annually to monitor its progress in this particular area.

