

EXTERNAL REVIEW PANEL REPORT

on

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE'S DEGREE**

of

Master of Science (MS)

November 8, 2004

Introduction

On 1-5 October 2004 the external review panel (ERP) acting on behalf of the ALA/COA visited the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS). Prior to the visit, data in the School's *Program Presentation* (hereinafter referred to as PP) was supplemented with answers to questions posed by the ERP in a response dated 24 September 2004 (hereinafter referred to as Answers). On site, the panel examined documentation referenced in the PP and additional data assembled at the panel's request; held one meeting with faculty and four with students (two with Fridays Only students, one with student leaders, one with on-campus students); met with Dean John Unsworth and Associate Dean Linda Smith; interviewed all members of the full-time faculty available; visited their classes as available during the visit; met with University administrators, including Interim Chancellor Richard Herman, Interim Provost Jesse Delia, Dean of the Graduate College Richard Wheeler and Associate Dean Karen Carney, University Librarian Paula Kaufman, LIS Librarian Sue Searing, Academic Outreach Librarian Patricia Cardenas, Academic Outreach staff Faye Lesht and Erika Albin, and Center for Teaching Excellence staff Cheryl Bullock and Dean Papajohn; interviewed GSLIS Associate Dean Ken Spelke and IT User Services staff Martin Wolske; GSLIS Assistant Deans Susan Barrick, Curt McKay, Dale Silver, and Marlo Welshons; GSLIS office staff Dorlene Clark, Carol DeVoss, Sally Eakin, Lila Evans, Suzi Harmon, Kathy Painter, Karen Smith, and Valerie Youngen; and LEEP staff Rae-Anne Montague, Jill Gengler, and Matt Beth; talked with a group of approximately 25 alumni and employers; observed the GSLIS quarters and equipment; and held an exit interview with Dr. Delia, Dr. Unsworth, and Dr. Smith. In addition, information through email surveys and phone interviews was received from 3 faculty members absent during the visit, 12 adjunct faculty members, 23 LEEP students, and 11 additional alumni and employers. Prior to the visit, panel members observed 16 LEEP classes and reviewed web sites referenced in the PP. This report notes facts, strengths, and concerns identified by the panel.

All members of the UIUC and GSLIS administration, faculty, and staff and the students, alumni, and employers the panel met with or contacted via email or phone were cooperative in responding to

questions and to requests for information. The panel appreciated the assistance and candor of all those involved and the gracious reception and support afforded the panel during the visit.

Standard I. Mission, Goals and Objectives

The mission of the School (PP 5), as stated on the “Welcome” page of the School’s web site, is to provide

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

Upon initiating the search for the new dean and at the request of the search firm being used, a more detailed mission statement was developed (PP 6-7) and was distributed and discussed at the faculty meeting of October 2001, but no further review appears to have occurred. The new statement is not given a prominent position on the GSLIS web site or distributed in the information packets sent to prospective students. This new statement is an expansion of the older mission statement and focuses on achieving excellence in teaching, research, and service. It stresses an “MS curriculum that reflects a philosophy that ‘library’ and ‘information science’ should be held together” and the importance of building “learning communities of students at a distance and applying new techniques to teaching on-campus courses.”

The program objectives, which articulate the intent of the first article in the mission statement, include “teaching graduates to anticipate social and technological changes, and promote change to advance the profession; fostering critical thinking about literature and research in LIS and related fields; encouraging commitment to high standards of practice, conduct, responsibility, and service; and preparing for evaluation and development of services” (PP 9). These objectives address the key areas enumerated in Standard I (PP 9), although the objectives are not stated in terms of the educational results to be achieved.

Faculty have been systematically engaged in the planning process and evidence supporting this is in the PP, in faculty meeting minutes, in notes of the diets that take place at the Dean's home, and the August faculty retreat notes. However, it is not clear that the various groups served by GSLIS had an opportunity to participate in the planning process and in review and evaluation of the mission statement and program objectives. While students are represented at the faculty meetings, other constituencies, such as alumni, are offered opportunity for comment on the mission and program objectives after their review by faculty. There is no evidence that these opportunities result in any revision to the GSLIS mission statement. The Alumni Association Board is not involved with planning and evaluation, and there are no formal advisory groups for GSLIS (Answers [2]).

In its deliberations COA may wish to give attention to how the School will address planning and evaluation activities in a holistic, systematic manner, increasing involvement of alumni, employers, students, and other constituencies in a more formalized way, with results used for program enhancement and planning for the future. Although there are opportunities for input, especially for students, input from alumni and employers is informal and not fully incorporated in such a way that "evaluation of program goals and objectives involves those served: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents" (*Standards10*). The School has multiple opportunities for growth and new initiatives and directions (digital libraries, online communities, informatics, new degree programs) as indicated in the topics discussed in the faculty diets and in the GSLIS Annual Report (PP 7; Annual Report GSLIS January 28, 2004, 5-8). COA may wish to give attention to how the School determines choices and the impact on the MS program of new directions undertaken.

Standard II. Curriculum

The curriculum of the MS program is provided in three delivery options: face-to-face on-campus courses scheduled at various times of day; face-to-face on-campus courses scheduled on Fridays Only (FO); and the distance education LEEP program that begins with a concentrated on-campus experience followed by the remainder of the courses in combined synchronous and asynchronous online delivery, with brief on-campus time for each course. The two required courses (6 hours) in the 40-hour degree are

taught by full-time faculty (except in summer) in all three delivery options, sometimes with assistance from adjunct faculty or teaching assistants. The broad range of electives available for master's credit (23 courses at the 400 level, 82 at the 500 level plus 3 individualized options, listed online in *GSLIS Course Catalog*) enables students, who praise the program's flexibility, to tailor their program of study to meet career goals. Courses to be offered in the LEEP and FO options are determined by student interest and faculty availability (Answers [3]). The majority of electives are not available on a regularly scheduled, predetermined basis: 8 (35%) of the 400 level courses and 20 (24%) of the 500 level are available at least annually. The rest are "occasionally" offered (*GSLIS Course Catalog*). Twelve master's courses have not been offered in recent years ("Current Distribution of Faculty Across Courses").

The curriculum is structured in four areas, two of which are divided into sub-areas (3 in one, 4 in the other). The PP does not describe exactly how the four curriculum areas (PP 12) map to the aspects of curriculum articulated in Standard II, although the descriptions indicate inclusion of most of these areas. The core courses are designed to meet the curriculum objectives as outlined in the PP (12). While students acknowledge the need for these required courses, those interviewed believe they could be more relevant to all sectors of the profession (student interviews). Courses belonging to each area are identified ("Suggested Curricula for Areas of Concentration"), assisting in providing structure to the curriculum and giving guidance to students in constructing coherent programs of study; however, some students in on-campus, FO, and LEEP options express need for more guidance in making curriculum choices and more advance knowledge of when specific courses will be available.

Syllabi, which together with supporting course materials are available online, are kept up to date, show recent revision, and reflect creative and varied assignments. They also indicate use of the research literature, inclusion of research concepts, and integration throughout the curriculum of technology at application and use levels and to some extent theory. Diversity, the influence of the technological and global nature of society on changes in information needs, future development, and commitment to professional growth are emphasized to varying degrees in the curriculum. Specific courses provide more in-depth attention to these aspects (PP 13-14). There is at present no specific, systematic process used to

ensure the inclusion of attention to these curriculum aspects across courses, although the Curriculum Committee has monitoring responsibility for the curriculum as a whole. Many of the courses that address more forward looking areas of the field, as well as some standard, traditional areas, have been offered under the LIS 590 Advanced Problems rubric and are not yet incorporated as regular curriculum offerings. At present the *Course Catalog* lists 50 such courses. Four courses were approved for addition as regular courses in 2004, and the PP (21) notes plans to incorporate more. There is no set schedule for doing so, but the Dean has requested that attention to review and consolidation of 590 courses be a priority (Answers [16]) and the Curriculum Committee is addressing the issue (faculty interviews and Curriculum Committee minutes).

Program requirements and curriculum structure provide opportunity for students to address individual needs through inclusion of courses from other UIUC departments, practica, independent study, and thesis option (PP 14-16). It is clear from supporting documents that these options, particularly the latter three, are available regardless of delivery option. There are no cooperative degree options offered. There is no capstone course, comprehensive exam, or other end of program assessment.

Students are encouraged to consult with their academic advisor in constructing their program of study (PP 15). There is not a mechanism in place to ensure this, although LEEP course selection is monitored through a process of in-house registration (Answers [12]), in part to control class size and access. Availability of more structured advising for students who need it would assist in program choice. The School is aware of the need to strengthen this aspect of program planning and is seeking to do so through provision of additional advising tools (PP 15). However, those tools available need further clarification to ensure coherence between the recommendations based on the curriculum areas (“Suggested Curricular Areas for Concentration”) and suggestions provided in advising materials such as the student worksheet for course selection (“What Courses Do I Take”).

The School offers one formal specialization, the combined MS in LIS/K-12 Library Information Specialist Certification Program, which in a 64-semester-hour program provides both the MS degree and the requirements for certification in Illinois as a K-12 Library Information Specialist. Participants meet

the same degree requirements as other MS students, with additional course and practicum hours required for certification. This specialization has approximately 40 students and a growing enrollment (Jenkins interview).

While requirements for admission to and completion of the degree program are the same regardless of enrollment option, there are some differences in scope and availability of the curriculum, as well as difference in faculty profile. The curriculum includes 82 separate courses at the master's or 500 level, another 3 individualized options, plus another 23 400-level available to master's students (*Course Catalog*). Over the past 4 years, 97 separate courses have been offered that could be taken by master's students. Of these, 87.6% were available in regular campus delivery, 44.3% in LEEP mode, and 28.9% in the FO option (derived from Answers Appendix 1). In courses available to master's students in fall 2004, full-time tenure stream faculty teach 20% of the 5 FO classes, 27.8% of the 18 LEEP courses, and 39.1% of the 23 on-campus courses (derived from "Fall 2004: Week at a glance" and information provided on site). As the PP notes, the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty is at present lower than in previous years and overall is lower in the LEEP and FO options (PP 26-27). The plurality of courses taught exclusively by full-time faculty available to master's students are Advanced Problems (590) or Advanced Special Topics (490) courses, as shown by the table below (based on Answers Appendix I).

COURSE DISTRIBUTION BY INSTRUCTOR					
	FT faculty Only	FT and others	GSLIS staff/emeriti	Adjuncts/Ph.D. Students	Not taught
400 level courses	9	4	5	3	2
500 level courses	27	15	12	26	10
590/490 courses	29	6	8	18	10
Doctoral seminars	15		2		2

The School has conducted on-going and specific evaluation of the LEEP option to ensure the comparability of that delivery format to the on-campus program (PP 68-72). The Fridays Only program has not been separately evaluated. However, due to decreasing demand and the migration of FO

enrollment to the LEEP Program, the faculty has decided to phase out Fridays Only but will work to provide more individually tailored options for part-time students (Smith/Unsworth interview).

The Curriculum Committee has jurisdiction over curriculum matters, including the development of new courses. Examination of Committee minutes for the past year indicates receptivity to change and innovation in the curriculum: new courses proposed by faculty (including adjunct faculty) are readily approved for offering under the special topics rubric, and faculty review such courses for continuation after the first offering. Discussion of changes needed to provide for new areas is evident. Further evidence of innovation is found in the design of the award-winning LEEP program (PP 61), which has extended availability of the master's program to students in 45 states and 15 countries (PP 69), and, by all accounts, is enriching the on-campus program through influence in instructional design and incorporation of technology. The School and faculty are to be commended for their efforts in development of this delivery option, the careful assessment and evaluation of the success of this design, and attention to integration with the campus program. Full integration of the LEEP option to the course level, which is contemplated, will ensure access for LEEP students to the full range of the curriculum. In addition, the School is expanding curriculum options through participation in the Web-based Information Science Education (WISE) consortium, another curricular innovation, which also has extensive evaluation components built into the design (Answers [4-5]).

There is no systematic process of review and revision of the curriculum as a whole. The faculty has not done overall curriculum revision, although a review was conducted in 1999 (Answers [4]). There are no plans for a systematic process for overall curriculum evaluation that involves the constituents of the program, but input is solicited on concentrations. Information from the newly instituted employment survey will be used in course development (Answers [4, 16]); employer and alumni surveys are projected (Answers [16]). The need for systematic planning and evaluation in the curriculum area is consistent with the need to address this aspect overall. Such an approach would assure that the curriculum accurately represents the intellectual footprint of the program.

Standard III. Faculty

GSLIS currently has 20 tenured or tenure-track faculty members, 18 with full-time appointments and 2 with split appointments in the Institute of Communications Research in the College of Communications (PP 23, Smith email memo 9/26/04). Of the 20, 9 are professors, 9 associate professors, and 2 assistant professors. All are members of the Graduate Faculty. Seven full-time faculty members, including the Dean, have joint appointments in other campus departments (PP 23), illustrating both their intellectually diverse backgrounds and their integration with faculty in disciplines beyond LIS.

All faculty members serve as advisors and teach in the master's program and all but four have taught in the LEEP program (a requirement for new hires). Within the School, faculty members serve on one or more of the 9 committees, act as liaison to other groups, and serve as advisors to student chapters of ALA, ASIST, and SLA ("Committees Academic Year 2004-2005").

The School is able to attract a number of experienced and well qualified information professionals to teach on a part-time basis who are hired based on "domain expertise and teaching ability" (PP 24). Further, many are alumni of the MS program. Some come from the local area, and others, teaching in the LEEP program, are geographically dispersed but on campus for the on-campus component of their LEEP courses. Many teach specialized courses available both on campus and through LEEP. The recent part-time faculty includes 5 emeritus faculty, 4 visiting faculty, 8 academic professional staff, 8 doctoral students, 11 UIUC staff or library faculty, and 44 adjunct faculty members (PP 24-26). The percent of MS courses taught by part-time faculty over the last 10 terms has ranged from a high of 91% in Summer 2003 to a low of 60% in Fall 2001 (PP 27). In general the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty in the FO and LEEP options is lower than on campus, but overall is low enough to raise concern (including student comments) about the balance between full- and part-time faculty, especially in terms when faculty are given time away from teaching for sabbaticals or to carry out funded research.

All of the tenure stream faculty have an earned doctorate in LIS or a related field from 16 different universities (PP 32). They are active in their professional organizations locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally.

While the School has actively sought faculty applicants with multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual backgrounds and has been able to successfully recruit from Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, currently only one full-time faculty member, an Hispanic, is from an ethnically diverse background. Thus, despite efforts to recruit and retain faculty from under-represented groups, the full-time faculty, although almost evenly divided in terms of gender, is nearly homogenous in terms of ethnicity (PP 28). A greater diversity exists, but is still limited, among the part-time faculty, where a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds are represented among 5 (6%) of the total of 83 part-time faculty (PP 77, Answers [7]). Opportunities are available for using the University's Targets of Opportunity for Recruiting Members of Underrepresented Groups to recruit a more diverse faculty, which the School identifies as an area needing improvement (PP 77).

The School has clear, uniform policies relating to faculty, available on the web site of the University or in the School's guidelines and procedures. In keeping with the high expectations for research, teaching, and service in the GSLIS promotion and tenure guidelines (PP 27), the regular faculty members are extremely active in research and publication. They are aided in these efforts by two GSLIS units, the Library Research Center (LRC) and the Information Systems Research Laboratory (ISRL). Faculty members have received major grants from federal agencies and foundations; 94.1% serve as principal investigators (PP 30), and they serve in research related roles in professional associations.

Each full-time faculty member teaches two courses (PP 33) in fall and spring semesters with the option of teaching for additional compensation in summer sessions, although few teach in summer. Some faculty members receive reduced loads because of their administrative assignments. The number with reduced loads (PP 77) combined with the number on sabbatical is partly responsible for the high percentage of courses taught by adjuncts, even on campus. The School has identified this situation as one of concern (PP 76-77).

A systematic process is in place to evaluate teaching effectiveness, using Instructor and Course Evaluation (ICES) or Evaluation Online (EON) forms developed by the Center for Teaching Excellence (PP 29). GSLIS, working with the University Library, has established an Alliance for Teaching

Excellence to enhance abilities for teaching. The faculty members are good teachers, as evidenced by their teaching evaluations. Students recognize and appreciate the quality of teaching delivered both by the full-time and adjunct faculty, and quality teaching is characteristic across delivery options (student interviews). Further, alumni, students, and employers report that courses provided by full-time and part-time faculty are up-to-date and meet the needs of professionals entering the LIS field.

Faculty research areas of interest range widely and are characterized by interdisciplinarity, collaboration, participation in cross-campus initiatives, and responsiveness to the research needs of the field. The publication records of faculty are impressive, some extending to 15 pages in their vitae. Faculty are to be commended on their publishing records.

The School provides new faculty members with graduate assistants to help with establishing their research, considered by new faculty as a great benefit (faculty interviews). Others may negotiate for assistance, if they do not have assistants on research funding. The availability of this type of assistance is attributed as a factor in the amount of funded research awarded GSLIS. Junior faculty are given a semester off from teaching to build their research record (PP 33).

Faculty members are assigned students as advisees and are responsive to students through e-mail and telephone. Faculty report appropriate distribution of the various faculty responsibilities; and, in general, faculty report satisfaction with the level of support provided (faculty interviews). Full-time faculty members who teach in the LEEP program were given reduced teaching loads to prepare courses and when teaching LEEP courses for the first time. The GSLIS Instructional Technology and Design Office provides one-on-one as well as follow-up sessions to help all faculty in the program, both full- and part-time. Interviews with LEEP faculty members, full- and part-time, indicate that GSLIS technical staff members provide a great deal of assistance in the development of these courses; and students appreciate the way LEEP technology accommodates different teaching styles.

Overall, the faculty represent good, innovative, creative teachers who are collegial and supportive of one another. They have excellent research records and their external grants record is impressive.

GSLIS faculty members have been recognized for their excellence through awards from professional associations.

Standard IV. Students

GSLIS recruitment, admission, financial aid, and placement policies are consistent with its overall mission, program goals, and objectives as articulated at the GSLIS web site. The MS degree program objectives appear in the printed recruitment brochures, as well as at the web site, under “Program Overview” (PP 9). The web site has helpful components such as a “Checklist of Admissions Materials,” a list of deadlines, an Advising FAQ, and information about the curriculum. Students are also referred to other sources at UIUC and nationally for supplemental information. Overall, the application process is straightforward, and students praise GSLIS administrators and staff for their prompt attention to questions that arise during the process. In some instances, it has made the critical difference to students in determining their final choice among competing institutions (student interviews). In selecting GSLIS, students also cite its outstanding reputation and national rank, the availability of graduate assistantships and practica, its wide-ranging and flexible program of study, program size, and mix of practice and theory (student interviews).

The composition of the student body fosters a positive learning environment in which collaboration is often integral to the coursework. Both on-campus and LEEP students cite their peer cohort as a great strength of the program. There is a high degree of interaction among students as made evident through course observation on-site and via LEEP. LEEP students view the on-campus “boot camp” as critical to their future “bonding.” Students continue to network with each other after the program (alumni interviews and LEEP survey).

GSLIS minimal admission requirements conform to those of UIUC’s Graduate College. Although there was a slight dip in applications in Summer II/Fall 2004 among on-campus and LEEP applicants (reflecting both institutional trends and a sharp increase in out-of-state tuition), both programs have attracted larger applicant pools, increasing 30% and 54% respectively from 2000 to 2003-04. Meanwhile, Fridays Only (FO) applicants have dwindled to only 15 in Summer II/Fall 2004. These low

numbers coupled with the availability of other full- and part-time options on-campus and via LEEP provide ample justification for the recently announced phasing out of this scheduling option. Virtually all applicants meet the 3.0 GPA undergraduate degree requirement, with only 21 students required to take the GRE (10 on campus, 8 LEEP, and 3 Fridays Only) for the period from fall 2002 through fall 2004 (Answers [9]). The average GPA of admitted students for the same period was 3.47 or higher for all three scheduling options (Campus profile data and Answers [9]). The program has recently replaced the standard, personal and applicant statements for admission to the Graduate College with two required essays. The essays are geared toward assessing the applicant's writing and critical thinking skills as well as determining the applicant's grasp of the profession (PP 41). Admissions are increasingly competitive: around 53% to 68% of students were admitted in Summer/Fall 2004. Matriculated students range from 64% to 78% (on-campus) and 73.5% to over 95% (LEEP) in recent years (Answers [10]). The program's target enrollment is now about 50%-50%, on-campus and LEEP students, with a total annual new student population of about 220 (Answers [10-11] and information provided on-site).

Only a handful of students are admitted on a limited basis (5% or less); these decisions are contingent upon review by the Graduate College (PP 42). In the last five years, there have only been three instances where students have been dropped due to low GPAs. Retention in all enrollment options is around 95%, evidence that policies and procedures are successful in admitting students who can successfully complete the program. Most on-campus students graduate in 3.5 terms, FO in 5 terms, and LEEP in 5 to 5.5 terms (Answers [9]).

Assistant Dean McKay regularly participates in multicultural career fairs to recruit minorities into the profession and GSLIS, also enlisting GSLIS alumni and current students in these efforts (PP 39). GSLIS grants all Spectrum Scholarship winners a tuition waiver. The minority student population was at its highest level in the past eight years in 2003: 13.1% (PP 39). Despite the increase in numbers of minority students, however, the percent they comprise of the total population is less than 2 percentage points higher than in 1996. International students represent an increasing proportion of the total student population, from the 5% range in the mid to late 1990s, with an increase to around 7% from 2000-2002,

and most recently, a jump to 9.7% in 2003 (PP 39). The overall current student population is 74% female; LEEP students' average age is 37.8 compared to 31.8 years for on-campus students (information provided on-site).

Key factors in assessing student applicants, according to members of the Admissions Committee, include ability to succeed academically, propensity for and understanding of the profession coupled with relevant experience, ethnic diversity, and diversity of fields of interest. There is no attempt to shape the composition of the student body other than to select the "best and the brightest," aiming to assess if they will "make a difference" to the profession and striving to achieve a cohort that will engender a productive learning environment (faculty and administrators' interviews).

The availability of financial aid in the form of a limited number of fellowships and scholarships (all merit-based) and 144 graduate assistantships (PP 54) with in-state tuition waivers support the School's efforts to attract the "best and brightest." Students praise the program's responsiveness to their particular needs and cite examples of individualized responses to need (student interviews). LEEP students do not have access to the GA positions. However, a LEEP student recently initiated a LEEP Scholarship, which GSLIS hopes to build into an endowment fund of sufficient size to yield an annual scholarship (*GSLIS Alumni Newsletter 2003-2004* 16).

Students have a great deal of latitude in constructing a program of study suited to their particular needs and aspirations. Many students cite the ability to design their own program of study as a great advantage. They can obtain guidance in course selection from their faculty advisors, from other faculty, from "course previews," and, in the case of LEEP students, from mid-semester "live" sessions with the Associate Dean. There is also a web-accessible worksheet to guide course selection. Some students interviewed on-site and surveyed via LEEP expressed the need for more consistent advising practices by faculty. Students often rely on the advice of other students and alumni in course selection. The GSLIS web site provides the complete course schedule for a given term, and the "Advising Guide" on the web lists courses with their prerequisites. However, students would like more advance notice of course options so they can plan a coherent program of study (student interviews and LEEP survey). Evaluation

of student performance is restricted to individual course performance as outlined by the instructor in course syllabi. A review of syllabi indicates diverse, innovative, and appropriate forms of student evaluation.

There are several mechanisms for identifying potential employers, especially sponsored by GSLIS, including web-based Job Boards and an e-mentoring network. Student associations sponsor a series of placement workshops in collaboration with GSLIS administrators. Some students expressed the desirability of more centralized placement materials and services.

There are active student chapters of five primary professional organizations, ALA, ACRL, ASIST, SAA, and SLA, which host free workshops, lectures, field trips, and social events. Student leaders receive strong support from their faculty advisors and GSLIS, including \$500 per organization in financial assistance. LEEP students have recently connected to live meetings of the ASIST Chapter using the LEEP technology. Student leaders participate in orientation activities for LEEP and on-campus students. On-campus students participate actively in the Information Professionals for Social Justice group (PP 44-45). Students who present papers at conferences receive travel subsidies from GSLIS.

An elected MS student attends faculty meetings (without vote), an elected MS student serves on the Curriculum Committee (with vote), and there is a representative to the GSLIS Alumni Association Board. Students are represented at periodic retreats where more in-depth analysis is undertaken, such as the August 2002 LEEP retreat. In addition, several Bulletin Boards are open to all students and foster the exchange of ideas, giving students the opportunity for on-going programmatic input (PP 45). The Dean has a monthly meeting with the students in the campus program, and the Dean and Associate Dean have “Live with John” and “Live with Linda” sessions for students in the LEEP program. Student leaders firmly believe that they have considerable influence in decisions regarding GSLIS curriculum, policies, and other aspects of student life. Students gave repeated examples of responsiveness to their concerns from the Dean, individual faculty, and GSLIS staff (student interviews and LEEP survey).

The recently instituted placement survey and projected surveys of alumni and employers (Answers [16]) will be useful to the School in evaluating policies and activities regarding students. The

COA may wish to give ongoing attention to the implementation of these additional evaluation processes and their use.

Standard V. Administration and Financial Support

From evidence available, it appears that the School has adequate administrative support (PP 49-52) and receives adequate financial support to accomplish its mission (PP 52-53). The School is addressing an outstanding debt and state revenue declines with increased tuition revenues from increased enrollments in LEEP, a new fundraising campaign, and new grants and contracts. In addition, the Dean negotiated for debt relief and debt restructuring.

The School is well represented at the University level and is an active member of the University community (PP 46-48). The Dean reports to the Provost and sits on the Council of Deans and Directors. Faculty serve on campus-wide committees including the University Senate, Campus Budget Oversight Committee, and University Educational Technologies Board, among other Graduate College and University committees. Most importantly, faculty served on the search committee that brought in John Unsworth as the new dean. Faculty participate in interdisciplinary research with faculty from other units including the University Library and Electrical and Computer Engineering, among others.

To help with the School's support, Dean Unsworth has built a larger administrative team, which now includes two associate deans (academic programs, information technology and research) and four assistant deans (development and alumni relations, publications and communications, student affairs, academic affairs) with responsibilities adequately split between the seven members of the team. The School has benefited from the continued service of Linda Smith as Associate Dean during Leigh Estabrook's tenure as Dean, as the Interim Dean, and service as Associate Dean since John Unsworth's appointment.

There is a main office staff of 10, IT staff of 7, instructional technology and design staff of 2, and affiliated staff and graduate assistants to support the program. The IT staff has recently been consolidated and now reports to the new Associate Dean for Information Technology and Research. The instructional

technology and design staff, the LEEP Coordinator, and affiliated graduate assistants support the LEEP program.

The committee structure to assist in School governance provides multiple opportunities for faculty and administrative staff involvement (PP 52, 54). There is an executive committee consisting of three elected faculty, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, and the Dean that assists with School budget decisions (PP 54). School governance also includes a Curriculum Committee, Admissions Committee, IT Advisory Committee, and Doctoral Studies Committee, as well as faculty representatives to the University Senate and advisors for the various student groups. There are also other committees/service assignments not part of the PP narrative, including Promotions and Tenure Review, School Media, Publications, and Center for Children's Books Advisory Committees; liaisons to the Alumni Association, the Library, the Mortensen Center, and the Teaching Alliance; coordinators for School Media, the undergraduate minor, and Bioinformatics; and a PhD Job Market Advisor.

The budget of the School has grown considerably from \$1.3 million in FY1998 to \$4.0 million in FY2004 (PP 53). Financial challenges include a School building debt, decreases in state funding, and declines in donations and funded research; however, the School is addressing these fiscal challenges. Increases in LEEP enrollments have offset declines in state support; the Dean was able to secure \$500,000 in debt relief and restructuring; the School will be starting a new \$7,000,000 fundraising campaign to be completed by 2010; and the School recently received research funding from NSF, IMLS, and the Mellon Foundation. State funding is less likely to increase to prior levels. However, in addition to the resources provided to the new dean and for the development of LEEP, continuing University support is evident in the approval of 2 faculty searches this year and partial funding for an additional development staff member. Financial support for campus students is considerable; almost all campus students receive an assistantship, most in the University Library (PP 54), with the University Library paying the students' wages while the School provides the tuition waiver. The tuition for these students is not included in the School's budget, but there is an opportunity cost of students on tuition assistance who would otherwise pay tuition. This cost is being examined by the School.

Faculty receive sabbatical leaves; teaching grants; and \$1,000 a year in travel support, plus untenured faculty are able to receive an additional two conference trips each year paid for by the University and tenured faculty are able to receive one additional conference trip each year from the University (faculty interviews). Faculty receive additional resources to support their research and travel from a significant number of grant and contract awards. New policies for adjunct faculty compensation have been developed to equalize compensation (PP 54), and adjunct faculty also are eligible for faculty travel support.

Review and revision of administrative policies and financial support occurred with the arrival of a new dean, in part in the faculty diets and in faculty meetings. Now that initial changes have occurred, the COA may wish to give attention to how the School incorporates ongoing review and planning in these areas in a systematic manner.

Standard VI. Physical Resources and Facilities

The GSLIS occupies its own attractive and functional building, a former fraternity house purchased in partnership with the Illinois Library Computer Systems Office (ILCSO), initially occupied in 1994 and significantly expanded in 2001 to its present 51,568 gross sq. ft. in four levels of usable space. The facility has two designated classrooms; a 120-seat auditorium and one large meeting room with kitchen facilities, both available as classrooms; a computer lab (shared with ILCSO), also available for classes; two seminar rooms used for small group gatherings; the Learning Resources Lab (LRL), which along with the Center for Children's Books is located on the lowest level; faculty offices; administrative offices; and research lab space (on-site tour, PP 55). The LEEP studio and LEEP administration and development offices are also located in the facility. The building is undergoing a re-wiring project, upgrading phone lines and existing data lines. Several servers, located in a variety of small rooms, will be relocated to one larger room adequate to keep all of the equipment together. Approximately 80% of the building has a wireless network (on-site tour).

The multi-level facility promotes both functional use of space and a learning environment through the co-location of faculty, deans, and instructional staff offices with classroom areas, enabling

students easily to visit with faculty, instructional staff, or technology staff. The classrooms, auditorium, meeting room, and training lab are equipped with LCD projectors and other equipment and provide the location for 90% of GSLIS classes. In addition, there is a break area for students: a lounge and small kitchen.

The LRL computer lab, for use only by GSLIS students and open approximately 50 hours per week, Sunday through Friday, provides 20 PC's with appropriate software and Internet access. Graphic applications and equipment provide students with a means for production. Equipment, such as headphones, laptops, digital cameras, CD players and TV/VCR/DVD combination players, scanners, and projectors, are available for students to use. A photocopier and two laser printers are located at the rear of the lab. Lab hours vary; it is staffed by GSLIS student volunteers, who in return for assisting in the lab are given access to the facility 24/7 to work on their own projects.

The main building of the University Library, six blocks from the GSLIS facility, contains 5.5 million volumes and over 4,000 serials, while the Library as a whole holds more than 10 million volumes. The LIS Library is located on the third floor and features 27,000 books and 500 serials specific to LIS. The overall LIS collections budget is allocated at 75% serials (\$53,667) and 25% monographs (\$16,658). According to LIS Librarian Sue Searing, the budget is sufficient to purchase all relevant monographs in English and is supplemented by two centrally funded approval plans. In addition, a central fund covers several major LIS databases as well as expensive full-text serials databases. Internet access is provided to the University Library online catalog (including holdings of the LIS Library), to all online serials and e-books, for reserve and interlibrary loan requests, and for renewal of checked out items. LIS Library e-reserve service provides equal access to course support materials for students in all delivery modes. UIUC students and faculty also have access to books in more than 60 ILCSO member libraries around the state.

Additional resource support for LEEP students is offered through Academic Outreach Library Services, which provides free 48-hour response time document delivery services to LEEP students. The LEEP students are active users of the service: although constituting only 20% of registered users, they account for 65% of requests (Searing and Cardenas interviews).

Results of the first survey of GSLIS students, undertaken as part of a new University Library three-year review cycle, indicates general satisfaction with library services and collections with the minor exception of hours, a complaint that has been partially addressed with one-time funds from the Provost (PP 59; Searing interview). Students in all delivery options, as well as part-time faculty members, praise the technology assistance provided, both for LEEP and on-campus courses. As one student characterized it, the technical support provided to the program is considered “a class act.” Both the University Library and the GSLIS building are accessible, and accommodations have been made previously for a vision-impaired student and a hearing-impaired student to participate in LEEP classes.

Summary

The UIUC MS program is characterized by strong students of high quality in all delivery options and a strong faculty who are good, innovative, and creative teachers, responsive to student interests and concerns; have excellent records in research and external grants; and are well integrated into campus activities through collaboration with other campus faculty in interdisciplinary projects and involvement in the life and governance of the University. The program provides flexibility for students that allows tailoring to student individual needs, and the LEEP delivery option has enriched the on-campus program through enhanced use of technology and the enrichment of the learning environment provided by the diversity of experience that LEEP students bring to their classes. Physical resources and facilities are excellent and characterized by outstanding technical support. The collegial nature of the School and the strong leadership of the three recent deans generate a sense of optimism and energy, which, bolstered by good University support, augers well for the continued success of the program.

The challenges faced by GSLIS, and areas the COA may wish to consider, are closely related and, for the most part, have been identified by the School in the PP. First, there is a challenge in addressing planning and evaluation activities in a more holistic, systematic manner, with results used for program enhancement and planning for the future, in processes that will increase involvement of alumni, employers, students, and other constituencies in a more formalized manner. In the area of curriculum, overall curriculum monitoring, regularization of the many Advanced Problems courses, and provision of

more advance information to students on course availability are opportunities for enhancement to ensure that students can construct coherent programs of study. The full integration of LEEP at the course level to ensure access for LEEP students to the full range of the curriculum and the availability of more structured advising are further challenges. In the area of faculty, the two major challenges are to increase the ethnic diversity of both tenure stream and part-time faculty and to determine the appropriate balance between full-time and adjunct faculty, so as to ensure use of tenure stream faculty in core areas across the curriculum and use of adjuncts as complementary or supplementary to enrich the program.