

Program Assessment Plan
Division of Library and Information Science
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Summary

The assessment plan establishes a framework of measures for the ongoing review of MS LIS program. Direct measures (e.g. e-portfolios and course artifact assessment) and indirect measures (e.g. alumni two-year-out survey, annual student survey, and career outcomes survey) are incorporated. The plan recognizes the valuable contributions of program constituents (i.e. students, alumni, and employers) towards program improvement and includes all constituents in one or more measures.

DLIS has an advisory board consisting of alumni, employers, students, and faculty. The advisory board meets annually, advises DLIS on program changes and monitors program assessment. A planning committee consisting of seven board members meets two months prior to the annual meeting to determine the agenda. This document consists of a timeline of assessment administration, descriptions of each measure and the advisory board, and the annual reporting requirements.

Program Mission and Vision

The program's vision statement guides all decision-making. The vision is of an evolving, quality program for information professionals which recognizes and adapts to change and is in tune with the marketplace.

Program Vision Statement. Offer a quality program for information professionals that is informed continuously by developments in the information and communication technologies and provides graduates with the skills needed in the job market of today, and in the future. (revised May 2015)

The program's mission statement states that education, research, and service are the keys to realizing this vision.

Program Mission Statement. Consistent with St. John's University's Vincentian mission, the program is designed to prepare innovative critical thinkers to become ethical leaders in the information professions. (revised September 2017)

Program Goals and Learning Outcomes¹

Preamble

The DLIS Program Goals are informed by ALA’s Core Competencies for Librarianship (2023)² as well as the history and theoretical ideals that underpin the profession. The MSLS Program is also designed to hone and develop competencies in technological skills and professional development. Every effort is made to stay current on relevant technologies as well as the course delivery and assessment platforms. In this fully online graduate program, students are also provided opportunities to experiment, explore, and work with a variety of cutting-edge tools, technologies, communication/presentation software and platforms, which are relevant to the profession.

As with technology, an understanding of the value and need for professional development is also embedded throughout the program. Faculty continually challenge students to think about how they will keep up with the changes that impact the profession, especially in regard to technology, given the rate at which new ones are developed and others become obsolete. The program also facilitates the development of a broad range of professional skills, knowledge, and abilities that all information professionals need, regardless of their area of specialization.

Program Goal 1: Foundations of the Profession

Objective: development of an understanding of the foundations of the profession.

This goal is specifically concerned with the early development and evolution of information as a discipline, libraries, and librarianship as a profession – as well as the concepts and issues that still underpin why we do what we do today. Therefore, the ethics, values, and foundational principles that guide the library profession are also of concern. Library professionals, regardless of their specific title and/or role, should also have an understanding of:

- a) Information in society – i.e., what happens when the creation, distribution, and manipulation of information become the most significant economic and cultural activity
- b) The role of libraries in society
- c) The laws that relate to the profession, such as copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, equal rights (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act), open access, and intellectual property

¹ Revised October 16, 2022

² ALA Core Competencies

https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/2022%20ALA%20Core%20Competencies%20of%20Librarianship_FINAL.pdf

- d) The social, public, information, economic, and cultural policies, and trends, that are relevant to the library and information professions at all levels (i.e., local, regional, national, and international)

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this goal should not focus on the history or foundations of one area of specialization/study, such as Archives or Youth Services. The focus should more broadly be focused on the issues/theories that underpin the history and development of information as a discipline, the library as an institution, or librarianship as a profession.

Program Goal 2: Information Resources

Objective: development of an understanding of information resources.

This goal is concerned with the use, management, organization, and evaluation of print, digital, and emerging formats and genres of information resources – as well as how these may intersect with and reflect the diverse and cultural needs of information communities. This includes an understanding of the policies, technologies, sources, systems, concepts, and issues that support information access and retrieval, which are central to the provision of reference services and collection development/management. Library professionals, regardless of their specific title and/or role, should also have an understanding of:

- a) The lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information - through all stages of use
- b) Collection management from evaluation to preservation and other curative practices
- c) The issues and principles related to the acquisition, selection, purchasing, processing, storage, and de-selection of materials
- d) Emerging information resources and be able to describe and work with a variety of these resources

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this area should focus on issues/skills related to information resources in any of the varying capacities discussed above and showcase the ability to describe and work with a variety of information resources, regardless of one's area of specialization.

Program Goal 3: Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information

Objective: Development of the ability needed to evaluate, describe, analyze, and organize recorded knowledge and information.

This goal is specifically concerned with the principles, methods, tools, and goals of organizing and representing information and knowledge across cultures and identities. This includes an understanding of the ways in which culture influences the collection and description of recorded knowledge and information. Library professionals, regardless of their specific title and/or role, should be able to:

- a) Understand the principles, systems, trends, and goals involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information
- b) Implement the developmental, descriptive, analytical, and evaluative skills needed to organize recorded knowledge and information
- c) Maintain the systems of cataloging, collection, metadata, indexing, and classification standards and structures, and implement methods used to apply, create, and discover recorded knowledge and information, and the weaknesses and strengths of these systems
- d) Recognize the ways that cultural biases impact and influence the collection and description of recorded knowledge and information

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this area should focus on issues/skills related to the organization of recorded knowledge and information in any of the varying capacities discussed above and showcase the ability to implement methods used to apply, create, and discover recorded knowledge and information - regardless of one's area of specialization.

Program Goal 4: Reference and User Services

Objective: development of the skills and abilities needed to provide ethical reference and user services as stipulated in the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers.

This goal is concerned with the underlying techniques used to locate, retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by varying user populations and information environments. Skills required to satisfy this goal include the ability to apply the methods and practices necessary to provide consultation, mediation, instruction, and guidance in using recorded knowledge and information. This is particularly relevant during the reference interview process, where problem-solving skills can also be beneficial in determining informational needs. Library professionals, regardless of their specific title and/or role, should also be able to:

- a) Implement principles, concepts, and techniques for understanding and assessing the information needs of a community and understand the ways the library can assist and collaborate in meeting those needs
- b) Engage in evaluation and assessment of programs, services, and partnerships, with input from the community being served
- c) Practice cultural humility while planning, offering, and evaluating library reference and user services
- d) Apply the RUSA Behavioral Competencies in the ethical practice of reference and user services

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this area should focus on issues/skills related to the reference and user services in any of the varying capacities discussed above and

demonstrate the ability to evaluate and assess programs, services, and partnerships, with input from the community being served - regardless of one's area of specialization.

Program Goal 5: Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Objective: development of the ability to discover, interpret, and generate research that supports the library, the profession, and/or personal professional development.

This goal is primarily concerned with the ability to discover, engage with, and synthesize existing research from the field in order to align relevant findings with one's own professional development and/or institutional needs. The focus is on cultivating research skills demonstrating the *application of research methods*, and an understanding of methods of data analysis and application of research tools. Relevant findings should also align with one's own professional development and/or institutional needs. Library professionals, regardless of their specific title and/or role, should also:

- a) Understand how professional and cultural values may influence research at any stage as well as the barriers that impact access to research
- b) Recognize the ethical and appropriate *application of key research methods*, techniques, and designs in the field, including the generation, analysis, evaluation, and presentation of data, and the utilization of research tools
- c) Understand the tension between research and its application to professional practice
- d) Understand the importance of engaging in the research foundations and scholarly communications that will enable continued professional development, knowledge, and sharing

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this area should focus on issues/skills related to the research and evidence-based practice in any of the varying capacities discussed above, while demonstrating an understanding of the ethical and appropriate application of key research methods, techniques, and designs to practice - regardless of one's area of specialization.

Program Goal 6: Management and Administration

Objective: development of the ability to apply the principles of management and administration across all aspects of the information setting to ensure that it meets the needs of the community.

This goal is concerned with the principles of effective and just supervisory practices, human resource management, training and development, fiduciary planning and oversight, as well as the assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes. Library professionals, regardless of their specific title and/or role, should also be able to:

- a) Develop and support diverse and equitable partnerships, collaborations, networks,

- and other structures with all collaborative partners, consortia, and within communities served
- b) Employ the concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods of principled, transformational, and change management leadership, in addition to other leadership philosophies
- c) Effectively plan, manage, implement, and close projects using the concepts of leadership methods
- d) Participate in strategic communication with colleagues throughout the organization and the community

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this area should focus on issues/skills related to the management and administration of libraries and library services in any of the varying capacities discussed above. They should also showcase the ability to apply the concepts behind, and methods for, the management, administration, assessment, and evaluation of library services and their outcomes - regardless of one's area of specialization.

Program Goal 7: Social Justice

Definition: The ALA Core Competencies (2021) define social justice as both a process and a goal that includes the knowledge and skills necessary for library professionals to create library collections, services, programs, as well as the management of facilities and personnel, which foster equitable access to, and participation of, all people to utilize the library.

Objectives: to facilitate an understanding of past and current inequities within libraries and foster the capacity to address issues of oppression, privilege, and power within our libraries and between the library and its community.

This goal is concerned with issues regarding social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism that professionals often face in libraries. Satisfying this goal requires an understanding of one's own cultural identity, including positionality related to power, privilege, and oppression, and an awareness of how that influences the ways in which they interact within the community and among decision makers. This also includes the ability to recognize, challenge, and change practices, services, and programs that have traditionally replicated dominant as well as marginalized systems. Other actionable behaviors that support competency in this area, which library professionals, regardless of their specific title/role, should aim to accomplish:

- a) Work toward an organizational climate that encourages, supports, assesses, and rewards work that promotes social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion
- b) Incorporate social justice and inclusion through outreach and partnership with diverse groups and communities in order to expand inclusive collections, staff, programs, and services
- c) Equitably distributing library staff, collections, and facility resources among all user groups
- d) Seeking ongoing professional development opportunities to raise awareness and

develop strategies that address issues of power, privilege, and oppression

Artifacts selected to demonstrate competency in this area should focus on the actionable behaviors and issues relating to social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism in the field, as described above - regardless of one's area of specialization.

Academic Year Timeline of Assessment Measures

Month of Assessment or Meeting	Measure	Constituency
August	E-Portfolio Reviews	Graduating students
	Course Artifact Assessment	Faculty
September	New Student Survey	Students entering the program
December	E-Portfolio Reviews	Graduating students
	Course Artifact Assessment	Faculty
January	New Student Survey	Students entering the program
	Exit Survey	Graduating students
March	Annual Student Survey	Students
	Advisory Board Planning Meeting	Alumni, employers, and faculty
April	Alumni Two-Year-Out Survey	Alumni
	Career Outcomes Survey	Alumni
May	E-Portfolio Reviews	Graduating students
	Advisory Board	Alumni, employers, faculty, and students
	Exit Survey	Graduating students
	Employer Survey (biennial)	Employers
June	Course Artifact Assessment	Faculty

Indirect Measures

Alumni Two-Year-Out Survey

The alumni survey is distributed to alumni two years after graduation for their feedback on the quality of the MS LIS program, the preparation received for their career, and suggestions for improving the program. The design of the survey closely follows that of the exit survey administered to students upon graduation. The survey asks alumni to reflect on their respective programs of study and answer questions covering five areas: program, interactions with students and faculty, teaching, courses offered, and resources.

Annual Student Survey

The annual student survey seeks student feedback in five categories: program, faculty, administration, field experience, and facilities.

Career Outcomes Survey

The career outcomes survey is administered annually by St. John's University's Career Services Center. The result of this survey measures how well the program prepares graduates for the job market. The survey collects data on whether graduates are employed and/or furthering their education.

Employer Survey

The employer survey is administered to employers in the LIS field every two years. This survey focuses on three areas: general skills, specialized skills, and, for those employing St. John's graduates, how they compare with graduates from other LIS Schools.

Exit Survey

The exit survey is administered to graduating students and seeks their input on the program and instruction. The exit survey asks students to reflect on their programs of study and answer questions covering five areas: program, interactions with students and faculty, teaching, course offerings, and resources.

Internship Evaluations

At the completion of an internship student and host site supervisor each complete evaluations. The student evaluates the internship experience in terms of his/her expectations as described in the Internship Agreement. The supervisor evaluates the student's performance in meeting the objectives as described in the Internship Agreement.

New Student Survey

The new student survey is administered at the start of the summer, fall, spring terms. This survey gathers information on the students' choice of St. John's, their professional goals, and their feedback on the new student orientation. The orientation is held one the first day of each term. This information is used to improve recruiting strategies for the MS LIS program, and to improve the new student orientation.

Direct Measures

Course Artifact Assessment

Course-artifact assessment is an ongoing effort to ensure that courses contribute as expected towards students' achieving the program learning outcomes. Each course in the program relates to one or more outcomes, which are specified in the course syllabi. The course instructor selects one course artifact (assignment/s or project) which can serve as a measure of learning the related outcome/s. The instructor reviews the class' performance on the artifact and describes any needed modifications to improve the course. Over four years every course in the program is reviewed. Two student artifacts are included with each review for illustration of student performance and assessment.

E-Portfolio

Students submit an e-portfolio in the last semester of coursework, or the semester immediately following, as the end of program assessment.. The principal body of the e-portfolio is the Program Goals section in which students provide evidence from their coursework of satisfying each of the eight program goals of the MS LIS program. Students write a reflection for each goal which describes the manner in which the artifact satisfies the respective goal, the lessons learned, and any changes in approach or content if they were to repeat the assignment. E-portfolios are submitted three times each year coinciding with summer, fall, and spring graduation cycle. Each e-portfolio is reviewed by two DLIS faculty. If the two reviewers differ with regards to a satisfactory outcome, a third faculty member reviews the e-portfolio to break the tie.

Advisory Board

The DLIS Advisory Board meets each May. The membership consists of all program constituents –students, faculty, alumni, and employers. A committee of board members, called the Planning Board, meets in March to set the agenda for meeting. The meeting is chaired by the DLIS Director and is generally structured as follows:

1. Welcome and introduction - strategic priorities and their implementation, enrollment, and program updates
2. Breakout session for small group discussion
3. General discussion with the entire board

Reporting

The Director summarizes the results of the aforementioned measures and prepares a report to the faculty on an annual basis. The report also includes a summary of the annual advisory board meeting. This assessment report and the results from the implementation of the previous year’s action items are the basis for modifying the strategic priorities and proposing new action items. The proposed strategic priorities and action items for the coming academic year, and the assessment report are reviewed at the first faculty meeting in September. After approval by the faculty, the revised strategic priorities and the assessment report are distributed to the advisory board.

Reporting Timeline

Month	Action or Meeting
May	Advisory Board Meeting, closing the year’s assessment calendar
June	Assessment Report completed and distributed to the faculty
September	First faculty meeting of the academic year; discussion of the assessment report and proposed changes to the current strategic priorities and action items
October	Distribution revised strategic priorities and the assessment report to the advisory board