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| School of Library and Information Science Handbook |
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| Fall 2023 |

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# Description and Mission

The School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) offers a graduate-level program of professional and academic preparation for careers in libraries and information centers. The program is accredited by the American Library Association (ALA), the next review will be spring 2024. In concert with the mission of the University of Iowa (UI), the School seeks excellence in its education of future library and information professionals, its contribution to the knowledge base of library and information science, and its service to the School's local, regional, national, and international constituencies.   
  
Library and information professionals serve the needs of their own constituencies – children and teachers, members of academic communities, employees of profit and nonprofit organizations, and the public at large – ranging from information poor to information rich. They work in the contexts of such issues as information and communication technology, public and private information policy, managerial policy, and regional, national, and international economics.

SLIS inspires and connect creative information professionals to support equitable cultural institutions and knowledge-sharing practices.

The School of Library and Information Science at UI is a leader in curation, creation, and connection of communities. Through our engagement in education, service, and scholarship, we will empower library and information professionals and promote the creation of responsible and informed seekers of knowledge.

Since our inception over 50 years ago, SLIS has evolved into an interdisciplinary program that supports and encourages work across disciplines from the arts and humanities to the social sciences and beyond. Our work calls attention to the integral role that information access plays in equity, diversity, and inclusion. We teach and adhere to the Library Bill of Rights. Through our education, service, and scholarship, we intend to create and perpetuate the fundamentals of our democracy through equitable access to information for all.

# Goals and Program Objectives

1. Gateway Knowledge

Students will understand the historical, social, cultural, and civic contexts of various library and information service roles in the United States, and students will internalize key values of the profession such as intellectual freedom, information equality, and community wellbeing. Students will also learn best practices in professional communication and development.

2. Information Resources

Students will understand the lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information from creation to use and the best practices for developing collections—including acquisition, selection, purchasing, processing, storage, and de-selection—with special attention to emerging formats and genres of information resources.

3. Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education

Students will understand that lifelong learning and continuing education are organizational goals for libraries and information centers to provide as well as professional goals for library and information workers to seek out. Students will understand best practices for professional development and best practices for teaching and learning in libraries and information centers.

4. Management and Administration

Students will understand best practices for project and team management, strategic planning and communication, organizational workflows and assessment, library advocacy and development, and community partnerships and engagement.

5. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information

Students will understand how to evaluate, represent, and organize information and knowledge across cultures and communities as well as how to devise, maintain, and use systems of organization in both physical and digital environments toward efficient discovery and retrieval by diverse users.

6. Reference and User Services

Students will understand the techniques for discovering, retrieving, evaluating, and synthesizing information from diverse sources, and students will understand methods for learning and describing the information needs of various users and communities and how libraries and information centers can work with these communities toward meeting their needs.

7. Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Students will understand the methods of intervention-oriented research and assessment methods in libraries and information centers, and students will recognize, evaluate, and apply the different types of evidence that information professionals use to measure the success of services, practices, and facilities.

8. Information Equity

Students will understand that a central value of libraries and information centers is to mitigate information inequality, and students will endeavor to improve library and information practices through informed, respectful, and inclusive interventions that recognize and centralize social difference across race, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion, age, education, literacy, and other vectors.

9. Technological Knowledge and Skills

Students will understand and identify the technological infrastructure that enables library and information services, and students will be able to evaluate existing and emerging technologies toward inclusive and effective practice.

# Master of Arts in Library and Information Science

The school offers a 36-semester hour graduate program that allows students to gain an understanding of principles of the library and information science profession with an emphasis on cutting-edge technological concerns. This is a two-year program with both an online and onsite option. Students should plan on taking 6 semester hours per semester, if summer semesters are included, or 9 semester hours per semester if only fall and spring semesters are included, to complete the degree on schedule. Course offerings are designed to allow you to meet degree requirements on this timeframe. Students may take no more than 12 semester hours per semester without explicit approval from their assigned SLIS advisor.

## Online MA in LIS

Virtual students have the same option as onsite students, choosing courses offered both during the day and late afternoon. Our classes are offered both asynchronously and synchronously, with synchronous courses typically offered one day a week for 2.5 hours. Please note that students who are registered with an online plan of study may not take more than 5 semester hours of coursework onsite without affecting their registration status.

## Academic resources

Our virtual students have full access to the same advising support as our campus students, including both an academic and administrative advisor, as well as inner library loan privileges.

## Technical requirements

Synchronous SLIS courses use video conferencing software to connect students and classrooms. In general, the following are minimum system requirements:

* An internet connection broadband wired or wireless (3G, 4G/LTE, 5G) [also required for asynchronous courses]
* Speakers and a built-in microphone or USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth
* A webcam or HD webcam - built-in or USB plug-in

Detailed information on supported operating systems, tablet and mobile devises, and browsers; processors and RAM requirements; high DPI support bandwidth requirements; bandwidth requirements; HD camera suggestions; USB speakerphone and microphone; and other peripherals can be found on the [Zoom support website.](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-Requirements-for-PC-Mac-and-Linux)

## Joint Degrees

If a SLIS student is pursuing an approved joint degree program, some credits can be shared when one master’s degree requires, or both master’s degrees require, more than 30 semester hours of graduate credit. *No more than ¼ of the credits necessary for one degree may be composed of coursework taken for the other degree, and there must still be a minimum combined total of 60 semester hours of graduate credit.*

Please contact the [SLIS Program Administrator](mailto:katie-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=Joint%20Degrees) for more information on joint degree opportunities.

## Specializations

Students who are interested in pursuing specialized areas of librarianship may want to consider the following choices. More detail can be found at our [website](https://www.slis.uiowa.edu/) and below.

* Academic Librarianship
* MA + BLIS Certificate
* Public Librarianship
* Special Collections Librarianship Certificate
* Archives
* School Library Media Certification
* Youth Services

### Law Librarianship:

SLIS has established a formal joint master's degree program (M.A./J.D.) with the [College of Law](http://www.law.uiowa.edu/). Applicants must be accepted by both programs simultaneously. Students in the joint program will take law courses their first year and begin taking SLIS courses in their second year. Elective courses are also available for those wishing to specialize in Law Librarianship but who do not wish to pursue the J.D. For more information, please contact the [SLIS program office](mailto:katie-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=Law%20Librarianship).

### [M.A. and Certificate in Book Studies](http://book.grad.uiowa.edu/programs/graduate/joint-slis):

The Book Studies and Library and Information Science Studies program (BLIS) enables students to earn a master's degree in library and information science and a certificate in book arts and book studies. The program requires admission to both the School of Library and Information Science and the Center for the Book (UICB) certificate program. The joint M.A./Center for the Book Certificate prepares students for careers in Special Collections librarianship while training them in the production and legacy of the book as a physical artifact. The combined program is a 51-semester hour degree. Students must take at least 27 hours of SLIS courses and 15 hours of book arts studies and technologies courses. The remaining 9 hours may be taken in either SLIS or the UICB, or from another unit (provided these remaining semester hours meet the approval of SLIS or UICB advisors). Information on the Graduate Certificate can be found at [Center for the Book](http://book.grad.uiowa.edu/programs/graduate/certificate).

### Special Collections Librarianship Certificate:

The Special Collections Librarianship Certificate is designed to meet the Society of American Archivists’ (SAA) Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies. Students interested in working in special collections, archives, manuscript repositories, and other organizations that preserve primary source materials may complete the certificate to have this specialization reflected on their transcript. The certificate may be completed by any student currently enrolled in the MA in Library and Information Science and earned alongside the UICB Book Studies certificate or other joint degrees and certificates.

The 15 semester hours Special Collections Librarianship Certificate includes 9 credits of required coursework that introduces students to the core theories supporting the collection and management of rare books, archival records, and manuscripts. The elective course allows students to further, specialize and focus on archival work, rare books, or digital curation and preservation and prepares students for the diverse range of careers in libraries, archives, special collections, and manuscript repositories.

Interested students must complete the Special Collections Librarianship Certificate Plan of Study before the beginning of their second semester in the SLIS program. This form can be found on the SLIS website. For more information, please contact the [Special Collections Certificate Coordinator](mailto:colleen-theisen@uiowa.edu?subject=Special%20Collections%20Certificate).

### [School Library Media Certification](http://slis.grad.uiowa.edu/programs_degrees/school-media-certification):

The University of Iowa offers a state-approved program leading to endorsement as a teacher librarian (K-12). This program includes the teacher librarian certification in addition to the accredited MA LIS degree.

Students who are interested in school librarianship but do not have an Iowa teaching license may take an additional 30 semester hours through the College of Education to qualify for the teaching license. Licensed teachers who would like to pursue school librarianship may apply to earn the M.A. in Library and Information Science and the teacher librarian endorsement.

The teacher librarian program requires 36 semester hours of coursework completed over six semesters, including two summer sessions. This program is offered via distance education. For more information contact the [Teacher Librarianship Program Coordinator](mailto:jacqueline-biger@uiowa.edu).

### **M.A. in LIS and M.F.A. in the UI Center for the Book:**

SLIS also offers a joint Master of Arts in the School of Library and Information Science with a Master of Fine Arts in the Center for the Book. This joint program allows students with strong interests in the book arts, book history, and material book studies to also gain expertise in library and information science. The tandem degrees provide librarians and book artists with credentials reflecting a depth of skills and knowledge that have been used to secure positions in special collections libraries and archives. The combined degree requires a total of 81 semester hours of credit across the two programs including at minimum 24 hours of SLIS courses and 51 hours of book arts, studies, and technologies courses. The remaining 6 hours may be taken in either SLIS or the UICB. Information on the combined MA/MFA can be found at [Center for the Book](https://book.grad.uiowa.edu/programs/graduate/mfa-ma) and details on applying to the program at [Application to the Joint SLIS MA/UICB Certificate.](https://book.grad.uiowa.edu/programs/admissions/joint-slis)

Students interested in a career in librarianship with a more general interest in the physical book should consider the BLIS program.

### Interdisciplinary Ph.D.:

Students who are enrolled in a Ph.D. program in another academic unit may apply to pursue a joint interdisciplinary Ph.D. through the School of Library and Information Science and their current academic unit. Interested students should obtain consent from the School of Library and Information Science and their home program or department. Please contact the [SLIS Program Administrator](mailto:katie-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=Interdisciplinary%20PhD%20Program) for more details.

# Admissions

Minimum eligibility requirements for admission to the SLIS program include:

* A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
* Applicants whose native language is not English and who do not hold a degree from a U.S. college or university must also meet the [UI Graduate College English Proficiency Requirements](https://grad.admissions.uiowa.edu/english-proficiency-requirements).

Application details and forms for SLIS admission can be found at [Graduate Admissions](https://grad.admissions.uiowa.edu/academics/library-and-information-science-ma).

**Conditional Admission:** Students who have been admitted conditionally to the M.A. program must earn regular status before registering for a third semester. Terms for achieving regular status will be clearly presented to the student at the time of conditional admission.

## Residency Requirements

The M.A. in Library and Information Science requires 36 semester hours of graduate credit. At least 24 semester hours must be completed under the auspices of the University of Iowa after formal admission to the degree program.

## Deferment

Occasionally, students admitted to the program may request to defer their matriculation for up to one year. During the spring admissions cycle, deferred students will be contacted to confirm their enrollment; a commitment for fall enrollment is required by February 1. If a student is not able to commit at that time, their deferral will be revoked, and their seat given to another incoming student. To be admitted, they will then need to reapply to the program.

## Transfer Credits

Multiple entities govern requests to apply non-SLIS courses to a degree or certificate offered by SLIS; broadly, we use the terms transfer credits and course substitution to describe this set of practices. Transfer credits are ones that come from outside the university, while course substitution seeks to apply non SLIS/cross-listed courses to the SLIS degree. These policies pertain to transfer credits not governed by formal dual-degree programs with SLIS or by Regents policy on transfer credits between State of Iowa Universities.

Depending on where the potential transfer courses were taken, different entities set policy that SLIS uses to evaluate a request for transfer credit. Note, however, that UI Graduate College policy limits the accumulation of non-UI credits toward UI degrees, so that a student must choose which courses they seek to transfer. Programmatically, SLIS sees requests for transfer credits for core courses as exceptional, rather than routine. Because SLIS core courses correspond to program outcomes and ALA requirements for accreditation, transfer requests must demonstrate that the external course has the same outcomes. Thus, transfer requests for core courses will only be considered when a similar course from a peer institution is sought. Under most circumstances, transfer credits can only be sought for elective hours.

No more than 12 semester hours of transfer credits from another institution, or 9 s.h. from a concurrent UIowa graduate program, may be accepted toward the M.A. in Library and Information Science. Approval is granted by the Curriculum Committee on a course-by-course basis. The student applying for the transfer of credits must fill out the appropriate request form, provide copies of the syllabus and course description, and provide a written rationale to explain how the course goals and content are applicable to their program.

The following conditions govern applications for transfer credit for courses from outside UI:

* Only documented U2G students can apply courses that count toward their bachelor’s degree to a UI graduate degree.
* Due to the Regents reciprocity agreement, courses from Iowa State University and The University of Northern Iowa will be reviewed in the same manner as courses taken at the University of Iowa outside of SLIS; that is, they are substitutions rather than transfer credits.
* Like most of its peer programs, SLIS does not accept performance classes, or ones where performance is required, rather than academic research, writing, and programming, for transfer credit toward the degree.
* Transfer credits will not be awarded for courses in which students earn lower than 3.0 or its equivalent on another point scale.

*Procedural Directions:*

* For enrolled SLIS student requests for approval of transfer credit must be submitted no later than October 1 of each academic year.
* Requests for course substitution or transfer credits from prospective or pre-matriculated students should be sent to the SLIS graduate coordinator for distribution to the SLIS Curriculum Committee no later than March 15. Note: This is also the secondary deadline for students who miss the Oct. 1 deadline.
* Students or prospective students seeking credit for courses earned will need to provide unofficial transcripts to demonstrate that SLIS’s acceptance of these credits conforms to Graduate College policy that does not allow credits earned toward an undergraduate degree to be applied to graduate degrees at UI;
* Requests for course substitutions from students already enrolled in SLIS should be submitted to students’ faculty advisors;
* The transfer credit form can be found on the [SLIS website](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms);
* Students seeking credit for UI classes taken outside of UI will submit the required materials to the [SLIS Program Administrator](mailto:katie-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=Credit%20Transfer%20Application) in the SLIS office via email, who distributes the request to the SLIS Curriculum Committee;

*Other State of Iowa Universities*Due to the reciprocity agreement, courses from Iowa State University and The University of Northern Iowa will be reviewed in the same manner as courses taken at the University of Iowa outside of SLIS.  
  
*Prior Approval*  
To be sure that transfer credit will count toward the M.A. degree, students should receive the approval of the Curriculum Committee **prior to taking the course in question**. The Committee reviews requests, on an as-needed basis, during fall and spring semesters only. Please send your request for transfer credit to the [SLIS Program Administrator](mailto:katie-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=Transfer%20Credit%20Request) as early as possible.

# Student Policies

## Graduate Assistantships

There are a limited number of graduate assistantships available for SLIS students, and applicants are automatically considered for these if they have applied by the February 1 deadline each year. There are also a limited number of graduate assistantships available elsewhere on campus. Students can access these opportunities via the UIowa Jobs page, and any student is welcome to apply and accept any offered assistantships.

If you are offered a SLIS graduate assistantship, pending job review, you are guaranteed the appointment while you enrolled in SLIS courses counting toward a SLIS degree. The appointment is not guaranteed after SLIS degree requirements are met, even if you are enrolled and completing requirements for another UIowa program.

## Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to adhere to the SLIS Professional Dispositions throughout their time in the program and in any setting where students represent the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Iowa, including practicum appointments and professional conferences. Any infraction against the professional dispositions expectations will be documented in the student’s file and could result in consequences ranging from limited opportunities for SLIS funding, removal from graduate assistant or practicum appointments to dismissal from the program.

**I. Professional Dispositions in Integrity**

1. *Professionalism*: Punctuality, Attendance

2. *Professionalism*: Ethical Behavior (e.g., honesty, confidentiality, adherence to [University of Iowa Code of Student Life](https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life))

3. *Interactions with Peers, Faculty, and Staff* (e.g., communicates professionally and appropriately in all modalities)

**II. Professional Dispositions in Work Ethic**

4. *Class Participation* (e.g., engaged, enthusiastic, timely, communicative)

5. *Preparation* (e.g., carefully prepares materials & course assignments in a timely way)

6. *Self-assessment/Reflection* (e.g., sets goals for self-improvement as a reflective practitioner, responds productively to suggestions from others)

**III. Professional Dispositions in Ethics**

7. *Adheres to the ALA Code of Ethics* and demonstrates a professional commitment to its tenets (e.g., the inherent dignity and rights of all people)

8. *Support of learning experiences for all* (e.g., contributes to a positive classroom environment through respectful discourse, is considerate of instructor time and availability, respects instructor expertise, shares resources with classmates)

**IX. Professional Dispositions in Collegiality**

9. *Collaboration with other professionals* (e.g., regular communication with peers, faculty, administration, and others as needed; positive, respectful, and flexible)

10. *Initiative and resourcefulness* (e.g., takes initiative in obtaining resources, readily assists, anticipates needs)

## Academic Progress

**SLIS Grading Policy 2023-2024**

Graduate students completing the MA in Library and Information Science must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 in the courses earned towards their MA degree. A student whose GPA falls below 3.00 during any semester must meet with their academic advisor to discuss their plan for progressing in the program. The student will also be placed on academic probation and notified in writing. If students fail to meet with their advisor, their registration authorization will be put on hold for the upcoming semester. If the cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 after completing an additional 9 semester hours of graduate credit, the student will be restored to good standing. If the GPA falls below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters (18 semester hours of coursework), the student may be dismissed from the program.

In addition to maintaining a 3.0 GPA, SLIS students must earn a **B- or higher in all SLIS core courses** and a **C or higher in SLIS program of study elective courses**. Courses may be repeated one time if a student receives a grade below the stated threshold. If the second completion does not result in a minimum qualifying grade, the student will likely be ineligible to complete the MA in LIS at the University of Iowa.

The following grades do not carry graduate credit for any course in the MA in LIS program: C-, D+, D, D-, F, I (incomplete), AUU (audit unsuccessful), AUS (audit successful), and U (unsatisfactory).

The University of Iowa Graduate College does NOT offer a second-grade option. This means that if a student is required to retake a course due to a grade below either departmental or collegiate standards, the first grade received will not be replaced and will still impact the student’s overall GPA.

**Incomplete Grades**

An I or Incomplete Grade will only be used when a student cannot complete their course work due to illness, accident, or other extenuating circumstances beyond a student’s control. Incomplete Grade Requests must be reviewed and approved by the SLIS Director, as well as the course instructor. To request an incomplete please complete the following:

* Speak with your course instructor as soon as possible, instructor agreement must be obtained;
* Collect any supporting documentation that you would like to submit with your request (e.g. medical note);
* Complete and submit an [Incomplete Grade Request](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms) form along with any additional documentation to the [SLIS Program Administrator](mailto:katie-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=Incomplete%20Grade%20Request).

After the student submits a request, the SLIS Director will review to determine if an Incomplete is appropriate. If the request is approved, the student must work with the course instructor and the SLIS Program Administrator to develop a timeline for finishing their work. Per Graduate College policy, an Incomplete grade will automatically convert to an F at the end of the next academic semester (fall or spring), if the coursework has not been completed. No work will be accepted after the automatic grade conversion, and the course will have to be repeated for credit.

## Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation in SLIS courses are norms of learning in this program. When a student misses class, they miss vital parts of their development as a professional. While class sessions are conducted using various modalities, sites, and pedagogies, the value of asking questions, encountering others’ ideas, and interacting with a community of learners and experts is vital to SLIS student learning and growth as a professional. These kinds of dynamic and participatory processes are part of how information science professionals function in a field where technologies and social changes shape a need for continuous learning, even after completing a degree. Students are expected to engage with course-based learning activities throughout the semester, regardless of course modality. This includes being an attentive and engaged learner, whether in a synchronous or asynchronous learning environment.

If a student cannot attend class because of illness or an emergency, they should notify their instructor in advance if possible, or as soon after as practicable. As a rule, students should not expect to miss more than two class sessions during a semester without jeopardizing their ability to earn credit for the course. Students should keep pace with asynchronous courses by meeting the weekly deadlines set out by the instructor and syllabus. If there are deadlines that a student must miss because of an illness or an emergency, refer to the notification policy about absences. While asynchronous courses are designed to accommodate flexible learning arrangements directed by personal and professional schedules, engagement with course materials according with instructor expectations is required.

Instructors will stipulate specific consequences for missed course sessions and late work, but students should expect that either missing class sessions or failing to participate will lower their final course grade. Please carefully review individual course syllabi for policies and penalties for missed class sessions for each course. Faculty will communicate with you about classes and assignments via University of Iowa email, which you must check to stay current with your classes.

## Communication between Faculty and Students

**The University of Iowa and SLIS faculty and staff expect to be able to reach students at their official uiowa.edu email address.** **Please do not forward your uiowa.edu email to a personal box, as there are errors in this process.** All university-wide and departmental mass mailings are sent to your University of Iowa alias address, jane-doe@uiowa.edu.

Students may contact SLIS faculty by phone or e-mail; however, please be aware that faculty response to e-mail will vary depending on the faculty member’s schedule and whether they are in town.

## SLIS Netiquette Policy

*Netiquette* refers to online communication guidelines that can also be effective in face-to-face classrooms and work spaces. Communicating effectively online includes, but is not limited to, the following principles:

1. **Be friendly, positive, and self-reflective.** When people cannot see you and do not know you, their feelings can be hurt if you are not careful about how you express yourself. Think before you write. This is especially true when you feel a critique is necessary. Reread what you have written to be sure it is thoughtful and collegial before posting.
2. **Be respectful of others’ views and opinions.** Do not attack or insult others. This can decrease people’s willingness to share different points of view. Be sensitive to the fact that online participants represent a wide variety of different political and religious beliefs, as well as cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Disagreeing is fine and can even be productive but remember that you should aim for rational discourse.
3. **Use professional language and titles.** Do not use slang or profane words in an online environment, even if they are words you consider "not so bad," as they are unacceptable in a professional environment. Do not refer to your professor by their first name, unless they indicate that it is acceptable to do so. Also, do not use caps lock when writing, as it will insinuate yelling.
4. **Use effective communication.** This takes practice and requires thoughtful writing. Try to always speak and write clearly. Define your words when necessary, especially if you use professional or theoretical terms that others may not share. Correct a misunderstanding right away. Likewise, be mindful of how the words you use, and joking might be misunderstood.  Checking for correct usage can help to prevent inadvertent misunderstandings.
5. **Maintain your professionalism.** Avoid emoticons and text message abbreviations. They may be regarded as too casual for the online education and/or professional environment.
6. **Ask for clarification.** If you are unsure of the instructor's directions or are having difficulty in interpreting a person's ideas, ask for clarity.  A simple way to do this is to say (or write), "I did not understand…." Acknowledging the responsibility for resolving a misunderstanding requires dialogue.

Adapted with Permission from [Columbus State University Center for Online Learning](https://www.columbusstate.edu/online-learning/standards/netiquette-guidelines.php)

Approved and adopted 9 May 2023 by UI SLIS Faculty

## SLIS Advising

Incoming students will be initially advised by the SLIS Program Administrator during the first semester in the program. During this time, students will be given an initial plan of study addressing SLIS Core Requirements. Requests to deviate from the initial plan of study must be approved by the SLIS Program Administrator. At the beginning of the second semester, students are assigned a faculty advisor who can guide the student in the selection and sequence of courses, in clarifying professional goals, and in other matters. If a student wishes to change advisors for any reason, they may discuss it with the program administrator or director. Students enrolled in the Undergraduate to Graduate track, the Special Collections Certificate, or the Teacher Librarianship Program, are assigned to program leads as their advisors as a condition of participation in those programs of study.

## Leaves of Absence

Students admitted to the School of Library and Information Science are expected to enroll continuously on a full-time or part-time basis until they complete the degree. A student considering a leave of absence should consult with their faculty advisor before interrupting the program.

If a student's enrollment is interrupted for any reason such that they are not enrolled for three consecutive academic sessions (including the spring, summer, and fall sessions but excluding the winter session) the student must apply for readmission. Please see the readmission policy below.

## Readmission to the SLIS Program

If the applicant reapplies within 24 months of their last registration date:

* Applicants are required to submit a statement of development and activity since they left the program as well as their future goals relevant to the degree.
* Applicants will be readmitted under the curriculum in effect when they originally entered the program but must adhere to the current grade policy.

If the reapplication is made more than 24 months since their last registration date:

* Applicants are required to submit a full application including Statement of Purpose, CV/Resume, and three letters of recommendation.
* Applicants will enter the program under the current curriculum as well as being required to adhere to the current grade policy.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each fall the Dean of Students issues their comprehensive guide to student right and responsibilities called: [Policies and Regulations Affecting Students](https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/).

All SLIS students are responsible for knowing the Graduate College policies called [Manual of Rules and Regulations](https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/academics/rules-and-deadlines/manual).

SLIS students are also responsible for knowing the [SLIS policies and required forms](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-policy-faqs).

## Plagiarism

The University of Iowa has very strict policies about academic integrity, and plagiarism is a serious matter governed by the Graduate College. The Online Oxford English Dictionary defines "plagiarize" as follows, "to take and use as one's own (the thoughts, writings, or inventions of another person); to copy (literary work or ideas) improperly or without acknowledgement; (occas.) to pass off as one's own the thoughts or work of (another)."

It is your responsibility to understand what plagiarism is and know how to avoid it. If you have any questions regarding your actions, consult with your course instructor and/or read Section F at the following link, Section F titled: [Plagiarism by Graduate Students.](https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal)

# Student Organizations

## [Library and Information Science Student Organization (LISSO)](http://slis.grad.uiowa.edu/lisso/about-lisso)

The Library and Information Science Student Organization (LISSO) is the American Library Association student chapter at the University of Iowa and is comprised of all students currently enrolled in the program. LISSO's Executive Committee includes the president, secretary, treasurer, social chair, distance student representative, and faculty advisor as member ex-officio The executive board reserves the right to set up committees as necessary to aid in their functions. Offices are held for one full academic year. Nominations are accepted one month before elections.

## Honor Society

The Beta Beta Theta Chapter of Beta Phi Mu, the international honor society for library and information science, is located at the University of Iowa. Each year new members are chosen from the top 25 percent of the preceding year's graduating classes. To be eligible for membership, graduates must achieve a GPA of at least 3.75, demonstrate professional promise, and be recommended by the faculty.

## Librarians for Social Justice – Iowa City Chapter

Librarians for Social Justice is a student group that focuses on the many social justice issues librarians face in the workplace today. From information access and banned books, to services to underrepresented populations, this group tackles it all. It’s important to note that this group is not only a discussion group, but also a group of action, which works with book clubs, advocacy, and fundraising. The group participates in long-term volunteer projects in the community and identifies fundraising efforts to focus on as well.

# Student Facilities and Information

## Important Dates and Deadlines

The UI Register’s website offers an [Academic Calendar](https://registrar.uiowa.edu/academic-calendar) with deadlines by semester. This calendar provides valuable information about registration for courses, deadlines for adding or dropping a course without penalty, and other significant deadlines.

## Gunther Commons

The Gunther Commons (Room 3085 LIB) is a collaborative space for group meetings and technology access. Access is restricted to current SLIS students. Please contact the SLIS office with any technology problems or concerns.

## Kitchen

A refrigerator, microwaves, and other countertop appliances are available in the kitchen (Room 3079 LIB) for SLIS student and faculty use. Food and drink may be prepared and stored in this room. Covered drinks are allowed. Please do not leave food in the refrigerator for more than a week. Also do not leave open food containers out on the countertop. It’s advised to keep shared food in a tin or take the food with you when you leave. It is the responsibility of students to keep the space clean after use. Failure to clean up after use will end the privilege of kitchen use. Concerns regarding the kitchen may be directed to SLIS office.

## Lockers

Ninety lockers are provided for SLIS student use. To claim a locker, choose any available one, provide it with a lock, and register the locker number with the [SLIS Program Coordinator](mailto:kate-woods@uiowa.edu?subject=SLIS%20Lockers). Locks should be removed, and lockers should be cleaned out at the time of graduation.

## Meeting/Study Spaces

In addition to Gunther Commons and the study area at the end of the west hall, the Seminar Room (Room 3082 LIB), and the Technology Classroom (Room 3092 LIB) are accessible to students when there are no classes scheduled in those rooms. The seminar room is set up for distance meetings/interviews and can be used for such when the room is not scheduled for other approved use. Contact the SLIS office, 335-5707, to reserve the room for a group or distance meeting.

## SLIS Mailing Lists

Students are automatically added to the following four electronic mailing lists:

* SLIS Current Students: All current students. This listing is for office communication regarding deadlines and other relevant information. Removal from this list is automatic upon graduation.
* SLIS Jobs: Listing that is devoted to job openings that the office receives via email. Also included are jobs listed from the Iowa State Library Association web site. Students are added to this list during the fall of their first year, using their university email. If you want to remain on the list after graduation, it’s recommended to provide the SLIS office with your personal email address. Removal from this list is by request.
* LISSO mailing list: All current students can choose to be enrolled in this LIST. Please email the [LISSO president](mailto:carlisle-isley@uiowa.edu?subject=LISSO%20Mailing%20List) to get on the list. Messages will be sent from LISSO officers regarding upcoming events and items of interest. Removal from this list is automatic upon graduation.

## Travel and Other Student Funding Opportunities

Students may apply for Department travel funds to help with conferences/events costs where the student is presenting either a paper or poster. Applications may be submitted each semester and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The amount and availability of funding is subject to change. Submit a completed SLIS Student Application for Travel Funds to the SLIS Office, 3087 LIB. This form is available on [our website](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms).

Students are encouraged to seek out other funding opportunities through the [Graduate Student Senate (GSS)](https://gss.grad.uiowa.edu/funding/gss-travel-funds), which provides travel assistance for graduate students presenting research at conferences and other academic gatherings, and the [Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)](https://gpsg.uiowa.edu/grants-for-students/#travel), which offers grants for students to use to travel, conduct research, or conduct a service project.

All SLIS students who receive SLIS departmental travel funding must document their professional activities:

* + Pictures taken during presentations;
  + Pictures with presentation materials;
  + A brief write-up describing the event attended, the student’s responsibilities and activities, titles of any works/presentations shared (can be submitted as an email to Dr. Green).

Travel funding will be distributed once these items are submitted to SLIS. Students will also be expected to share their experiences for distribution in the SLIS newsletter and on SLIS social media and will be contacted throughout the semester for this information.

# Registration for Courses

Following their first semester, students will meet with their academic advisors each semester to discuss registration for the upcoming term. The advisor then will authorize their advisees to register. Students may not carry more than 12 semester hours within a regular academic semester. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the academic advisor.   
  
*Early registration* is designed to help students enrolled in the MA program get into courses before non-degree students who are interested in taking a SLIS class. Please be aware that many classes tend to fill quickly, so the sooner you register on [MyUI](https://myui.uiowa.edu/), the better your chances of enrolling in the classes you need or want. If you have problems registering, for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible so we can try to assist you.

*Required Courses* are listed in the Core section of the M.A. curriculum chart. These courses are typically completed during your first year in the program.

## Prerequisites

In some instances, prerequisites may be waived. If you are interested in taking a course and haven’t met the prerequisites, please talk to your faculty advisor.

## Practicum in LIS

Practica focus on the practical application of theory and helps students gain experience in LIS work. Students enroll in the SLIS Practicum class, receive academic credit, and work with a faculty member to identify opportunities for working in libraries and other organizations. Students set professional and personal goals, complete 120 hours of work, and participate in classroom conversations. Students must complete the [Proposal for Practicum in Libraries and Information Centers form](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms) two weeks before the beginning of the semester. For more information, contact the [SLIS Practicum Coordinator](mailto:kara-logsden@uiowa.edu?subject=Practicum%20Centers%20Form).

## Independent Study

An independent study course is intended to provide the student with specific knowledge and competency that is not available through any other University course offering or mechanism. Careful planning in arranging independent study is necessary since faculty time to oversee such projects is not financially compensated and is severely limited. Students will work with their chosen faculty member to develop a formal proposal to include the following: statement of purpose, goals, and objectives; bibliography; schedule of topics, activities, meeting times with instructor; description of outcome product. This form is found on the [SLIS website](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms). The proposal must be submitted to the [SLIS Director](mailto:lucilia-green@uiowa.edu?subject=Independent%20Study) for review and approval. Please note that approvals for independent studies are rare and will not be approved as a program of study correction mechanism.

# SLIS Curriculum

The Master of Arts in Library and Information Science requires 36 semester hours of graduate study with a grade point average of 3.0 or above, and the successful completion of a Professional Portfolio. A thesis option, in lieu of a portfolio, is available for students who wish to gain more research experience and is recommended for those who intend to pursue doctoral study.

The SLIS curriculum is structured in two categories:

**1. Core (15 semester hours):**

* Libraries, Culture, and Society (SLIS:5010)
* Information Organization (SLIS:5030)
* Information and Inquiry (SLIS:6115)
* Management, Teams, and Leadership (SLIS:6170)
* And one of the following computing courses:
  + Foundations of Computing (SLIS:5010)
  + Digital Environments (SLIS:6140)
  + Metadata Theories and Applications (SLIS:6335)
  + Media Production Workshop (SLIS:6040)

**2. Electives (21 semester hours)**

The remaining 21 semester hours of courses are selected based on the student’s interest, enabling concentration in areas that most pertain to their professional goals. For sample programs of study, please visit the [SLIS website](https://slis.uiowa.edu/prospective-students/specializations-and-areas-professional-practice).

With approval from the curriculum committee and advisor, alternative elective courses may be added to a plan of study. The process for approval requires a completed UI Transfer Credit Request, which can be found at on the [SLIS website](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms). For more information, please contact the [SLIS Program Administrator](mailto:katoe-mccullough@uiowa.edu?subject=UI%20Transfer%20Credit%20Request)

# M.A. Degree Completion Options

Any student may elect to complete the requirements for the Master of Arts in Library and Information Science with either of the following research culminations:

* [Option A](#_Option_A:_Poster): Professional Portfolio
* [Option B](#_Option_B:_Master’s): Master's Thesis on a research interest of the student's choosing

## Option A: Professional Portfolio

The professional portfolio documents a SLIS student’s study and understanding of the American Library Association’s [Core Educational Competencies](https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences). Students should start collecting materials for their professional portfolio as soon as they begin SLIS coursework. The portfolio must be submitted during the student’s last semester in the program and must receive a passing evaluation by SLIS faculty for the student to qualify for graduation from the program. The portfolio review is triggered by submission of the [SLIS Intent to Graduate Form](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/student-forms), which will be requested at the beginning of the student’s final semester (fall or spring) in the program. Summer graduates will submit this form in the spring prior to the final summer session. Details on the professional portfolio and associated learning activities can be found on the [SLIS website](https://slis.uiowa.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree). Please note: To meet the requirements for graduation you must submit all the required professional portfolio materials, meet with your faculty advisor, and complete any required revisions by the stated deadlines. Failure to satisfy these requirements will result in a delay in your graduation ([Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College](https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-x-masters-degrees), section X. J).

## Option B: Master’s Thesis

A graduating student may opt to write a thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master of Arts in Library and Information Science. Preparation of a thesis (SLIS:6580) carries 6 semester hours of credit and has the following prerequisites:

* Libraries, Culture, and Society (SLIS:5010)
* Information Organization (SLIS:5030)
* Management, Teams, and Leadership (SLIS:6170))
* Information and Inquiry (SLIS: 6115)
* And the computing requirement

*Students who decide to write a Master’s Thesis are required to follow the* [*format and style guidelines as set forth by the Graduate College*](https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/thesis-and-dissertation)*.*

The thesis option requires the following:

* 1. The student identifies a thesis advisor and two thesis committee members. It is recommended that this step take place no later than two semesters prior to the thesis defense. The committee must be approved by the program director and the Graduate College. One committee member may come from a relevant department outside of SLIS. Two members must be tenure track faculty from within the SLIS department, including the thesis advisor.
  2. The student develops the research problem, completes a comprehensive literature review, and proposes a method for study with advice and counsel from the thesis advisor, and in consultation with the other committee members. The proposal is to be written using the following format (headings): Research Problem, Literature Review, Proposed Methodology.
  3. Upon recommendation of the thesis advisor, the student arranges a meeting of the thesis committee to review the proposal. Copies of the proposal are to be delivered to the committee members no less than one (1) week before the proposal meeting.
  4. The purpose of the proposal meeting is for the committee to make suggestions and recommendations to the student for the study. The student is responsible for recording the suggestions and recommendations of committee members.
  5. After the proposal meeting, the student and thesis advisor confer and review the outcome of the proposal meeting.
  6. The student carries out the study, conferring with the thesis advisor and other committee members as they deem necessary.
  7. Once the major portion of the research has been completed (for example, the data has been collected), the student composes the thesis document, including the information written for the proposal, as well as the results and conclusions of the study.
  8. The advisor reviews the thesis and determines its readiness for defense.
  9. Once the thesis has been approved for submission, the student delivers the thesis to all members of the committee no less than five (5) working days before the defense.
  10. The student is responsible for convening the defense meeting with their thesis committee.
  11. After the defense, the student makes any necessary corrections. The student’s thesis advisor is responsible for ensuring that any required revisions are completed.
  12. Once the thesis has been corrected and signatures are obtained from all committee members, the student deposits the finished work in the Graduate College Office.
  13. A thesis can pass with no less than a 2/3 vote by the committee.

Dates for preliminary and final deposit of a thesis are a part of the University’s Official Calendar and must be adhered to. The student is responsible to meet all thesis deadlines outlined by the [University’s Official Calendar](http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/Calendars/AcademicDeadlines/tabid/67/Default.aspx).

# Graduation

Students must register through MyUI indicating the session they intend to graduate. Deadlines for registration are listed on the [Office of Registrar Calendar](https://registrar.uiowa.edu/academic-calendar).

The Graduate College holds commencement ceremonies in the fall, winter, and spring. No commencement is held in the summer session. Students who complete their degree requirements in the summer may choose to walk in the preceding spring commencement. For more information regarding this please contact the Graduate College.

If a student is participating early in a commencement ceremony, their name will not appear in the commencement program until they have submitted an application for degree for the semester in which they will have successfully completed all degree requirements. Summer graduates’ names appear in the Fall program. Late student applications may result in exclusion of the student name in the commencement program.