

# School of Library and Information Science Handbook

Fall 2021

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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.

## Goals

The School of Library and Information Science offers a graduate-level program of preparation for careers in all types of libraries and information centers that:

1. provides students with a strong, well-rounded education through a curriculum that reflects the profession's immediate and long-range needs and prepares students to be leaders in a changing field.
2. sustains an environment supportive of students, faculty members, and staff from all segments of a multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual society.
3. promotes excellence in research contributions to the base of theoretical and practical knowledge in library and information science.
4. helps students develop an understanding of how to meet the varied and changing information needs of individuals and groups in a global society.
5. provides public service through continuing education programs, consulting services for library and information centers, and participation in professional organizations.
6. encourages students, faculty members, and alumni to shape the future of the profession by filling key roles in organizations involved in all aspects of the information cycle.

## Program Outcomes

1. Foundations of the Profession:
  - Students understand and incorporate historical values of librarianship
  - Students understand and can differentiate between different types of libraries and their missions and values
  - Students understand the role of professionals in society
  - Students understand policies and their value for guiding information organizations
2. Information Resources:
  - Students understand and can apply basic principles of collection management
  - Students understand the difference between “owning” resources and providing “access” to resources.
  - Students can articulate advantages and disadvantages to both approaches.
  - Students recognize the concept of information as a commodity and how value affects perceptions of information resources
3. Organization and Access:
  - Students understand the concepts underlying classification and organizations
  - Students demonstrate the ability to use the major systems of organization to retrieve information
  - Students understand the primary concepts in electronic searching

4. Information Technology:
  - Students have attained a proficiency in computer and data literacy
  - Students understand the principles of networked information systems
  - Students recognize and understand emerging concepts in Information Technology
5. User Services:
  - Students can recognize and apply appropriate service models in context
  - Students can serve as information mediators for library patrons when appropriate
  - Students understand the principles underlying public services
  - Students are information literate and can facilitate information literacy with the public
6. Learning Organizations:
  - Students understand that learning and literacy occur in contexts
  - Students understand that learning is an ongoing professional responsibility
  - Students will demonstrate and gain proficiency in giving presentations and teaching
  - Students will understand the process of learning assessment for ongoing organizational improvement
7. Managed Organizations
  - Students understand a variety of organizational models for institutions
  - Students can develop and understand personnel policies and practices
  - Students understand and can participate in and direct programmatic assessment
  - Students understand principles of leadership

## **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 9 semester hours per semester 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 an 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 synchronously, most often 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 s.h. 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***

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

- An internet connection broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE)
- Speakers and a built-in microphone or USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth
- A webcam or HD webcam - built-in or USB plug-in
- Or, a HD cam or HD camcorder with video capture card

Detailed information on supported operating systems, tablet and mobile devices, 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](#).

## ***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 1/4 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 office](#) 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](#) and below.

- Academic Librarianship
- Archives and Special Collections
- Digital Humanities Librarianship – MA + PDH Certificate
- Information Processes
- MA + BLIS Certificate
- MA + Informatics Certificate
- Medical Librarianship
- Public Librarianship
- Special Collections Librarianship Certificate
- Teacher Librarian – MA and School Media Certification
- Youth Services

### **Public Digital Humanities Certificate:**

Digital humanities can be defined as the use of computing technologies and digital methods to address traditional questions in the humanities. Students will develop a background in digital humanities work and also be introduced to the model of collaboration in the humanities. Students will learn about the “life cycle” of digital projects and how to manage projects at various stages of development. The certificate requires a total of 12 semester hours. More information can be found at [PDH Certificate at Iowa](#).

### **Informatics Certificate:**

The Graduate College offers the Certificate in Informatics, which requires 18-21 semester hours of credit depending on the subprogram selected. The subprograms, including bioinformatics, geoinformatics, health informatics, and information science, are open to SLIS students in good standing who wish to complement their own disciplinary studies with foundational and applied knowledge in informatics. Library and information science students working toward the Informatics certificate complete core courses and approved electives. For more information and instructions on how to apply visit <http://informatics.grad.uiowa.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply>.

### **Law Librarianship:**

SLIS has established a formal joint master's degree program (M.A./J.D.) with the College of Law. 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](#).

## **M.A. and Certificate in Book Studies:**

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](#).

## **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 and other joint degrees and certificates.

The 15 s.h. Special Collections Librarianship Certificate includes 12 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. This form can be found on the SLIS website. For more information, please contact [Professor Lindsay Mattock](#).

## **Teacher Librarian 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 in order 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 [Christine Kolarik](#), Program Coordinator.

## **M.A. in LIS and MFA 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 s.h. 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](#) and details on applying to the program at [Application to the Joint SLIS MA/UICB Certificate](#).

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. Additionally, SLIS students may work with SLIS and a second academic unit to create an interdisciplinary Ph.D. Please contact the [SLIS program office](#) 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.
- For applicants whose native language is not English and who do not hold a degree from a U.S. college or university, a score of 550 or higher on the paper-based (213 on the computer-based or 81 on the Internet based) Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). All students submitting IELTS scores must earn a minimum score of 7.0, with no subscore lower than 6.0, and must take the on-campus English Proficiency Evaluation prior to registration. For more information about English proficiency testing, please visit the Graduate College webpage: [English for International Students](#)

Application details and forms for SLIS admission can be found at [Graduate Admissions](#).

**Conditional Admission:** Students who have been admitted conditionally to the M.A. program must earn regular status before registering for a third session. 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 they are 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*

Up to 12 semester hours of transfer credits from another institution 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 his or her program. The transfer credit form can be found on the [SLIS website](#).

### *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. Please send your request for transfer credit to the Committee as early as possible.

**Note:** Committee members often are not in town in summer or between semesters and, hence, may not be able to review requests at that time.

## Student Policies

### *Academic Progress*

#### SLIS Grading Policy 2021-2022

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 and/or the program director 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, registration will be revoked for the upcoming semester. If the cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 after completing an additional 9 s.h. of graduate credit, the student will be restored to good standing. If the GPA falls below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters (18 s.h. 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 each of the required courses** and a **C or higher in their 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).

#### **Incomplete Grades**

An I or Incomplete Grade will only be used in extenuating circumstances when a student cannot complete their course work in a given semester due to illness, accident, or some other situation beyond a student's control. It is the student's responsibility to speak with their instructor about the need for an Incomplete Grade as soon as possible. After the student and instructor have determined that an Incomplete is appropriate for the student's circumstances, the student must work with the course instructor and the SLIS Program Coordinator to develop a timeline for finishing their work. Per the 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.

## ***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.

Please put your name and address on all assignments. This will assist faculty in returning items to you safely.

## ***Faculty Advisors***

Incoming 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. The School administration and faculty take a personal interest in each student and are eager to help.

## ***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](#).

All SLIS students are responsible for knowing the Graduate College policies called [Manual of Rules and Regulations](#).

## ***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](#).

## **Student Organizations**

### ***Library and Information Science Student Organization (LISSO)***

The Library and Information Science Student Organization (LISSO) 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. Standing committees include: Curriculum Committee, Committee for SLIS Spaces, *B Sides*, and Graduate Student Senate Representatives. 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](#) 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) 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 counter top appliances are available in the kitchen (Room 3079) for 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 food out on the counter top opened. 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 LISSO's SLIS spaces committee.

## ***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 number on the locker with the SLIS office. 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), and the Technology Classroom (Room 3092) 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 LIST: All current student and graduates. This listing is for a wide range of events or items of interest to the library community. Removal from this list is by request.
- 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](#) 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***

Department funds may be awarded for conferences/events 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](#).

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

## **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](#), 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.

## ***Independent Study***

An independent study course (SLIS:6570) is intended to provide the student with specific knowledge and competency that is compatible with his or her career plans and professional development goals and 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 may be limited. (Note: Each semester hour of credit should represent 3 hours a week of work during the term.) Students will work with the 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](#). A copy of the approved plan should be submitted to SLIS [program administrator](#) for the student's file. More information about SLIS Academic Policies is available on the SLIS website.

## ***Distance Education***

SLIS Students may enroll with the option of taking courses either onsite or distance. Students who are registered with an "online" plan of study may not take more than 5 s.h. of coursework onsite without affecting their registration status. For more information about our distance option please contact the [program administrator](#).

## Outline for Plan of Study

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

The 36 hours of graduate credit required include 15 hours earned in five required introductory-level courses, and 21 hours in additional SLIS coursework.

Please note that courses required for graduate students pursuing the MA in LIS with teacher librarian certification are determined by the Iowa Board of Education Examiners (BOEE) and may differ from the traditional plan of study outlined in this section.

The SLIS curriculum is structured in two categories:

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

- Cultural Foundations (SLIS:5010)
- Computing Foundations (SLIS:5020)
- Conceptual Foundations (SLIS:5030)
- Information and Inquiry (SLIS:6115)
- Evidence Based Practice in LIS (SLIS: 6110) OR Management, Teams, and Leadership (SLIS:6170)

### 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.

With approval from the curriculum committee and advisor, alternative elective courses may be approved for a plan of study. The process for approval requires a completed UI Transfer Credit Request, which can be found at on the SLIS website. For more information please contact the [SLIS Program Office](#).

## 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: Career Development Portfolio
- Option B: Master's Thesis on a research interest of the student's choosing

### *Option A: Career Development Portfolio*

The Career Development Portfolio is typically completed during your final term. It may, however, be done in the previous semester if you will have completed 30 semester hours and all required courses by the end of that term. Please make sure to check that you have completed these requirements by reviewing the appropriate [MA charts on the SLIS website](#). It is important to make sure that the semester hours reflect the number of credit hours offered when you took the course.

### Career Development Portfolio Instructions and Schedule

Your final term of study at SLIS also marks the beginning of your search for your first professional position post-MA. As the final requirement for your degree, you will build a Career Development Portfolio that will help you to reflect on your career goals and develop the application materials that you will submit to your potential employers during your job search over the upcoming months.

## Career Development Portfolio Documents

To meet the requirements for graduation you must submit all the required 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](#), section X. J). Please see the detailed steps below.

Steps include:

### 1. Career Development Portfolio Submission

*Students intending to pursue a Doctoral Degree after graduation will be allowed to submit their CV and other pertinent application materials in lieu of a career development portfolio.*

Upload your Career Development Portfolio **as a single .pdf document** by the stated deadline. Your Portfolio must include:

- 2 current position advertisements
- 2 resumes
- 2 cover letters
- 1 career development plan

### 2. Faculty Review

Following the submission of your Portfolio, each student will be assigned to a faculty member who will serve as the Portfolio Advisor (this may or may not be the same faculty member assigned as your academic advisor). The Portfolio Advisor will contact you and work with you to revise and develop your application materials. It is your responsibility to make an appointment with your assigned advisor by the posted deadline for Portfolio Review.

## ***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:

- Cultural Foundations (SLIS:5010)
- Computing Foundations (SLIS:5020)
- Conceptual Foundations (SLIS:5030)
- Evidence Based Practice in LIS (SLIS:6110) OR Organizational Management (SLIS:6170)
- Information and Inquiry (SLIS: 6115)

*Students who decide to write a Master's Thesis are required to follow the format and style guidelines as set forth in the [Graduate College Thesis Manual](#), at <https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/theses-and-dissertations>*

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.

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](#).

## Graduation

Students must register through MyUI indicating the session they intend to graduate. Deadlines for registration are listed on the [Office of Registrar 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.