

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE

University of Iowa, 2026



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2026 SLIS SUCCESSES

The University of Iowa School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) has continued to experience **significant advancement** during the 2026-2027 academic year. Key developments include the achievement of international accreditation through the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), establishment of the SLIS-McGregor Project Partnership, including a $1.5 million dollar endowment for a community-based graduate assistantship in special collections and archives, expansion of undergraduate-to-graduate external partnerships, as well as scholarship that directly benefits the State of Iowa and beyond.

Our students and recent graduates continue to demonstrate the program's value through their impactful contributions to the field, and a **passionate commitment to community excellence**. SLIS students and alumni serve as catalysts for social change and information equity. Through their work in libraries, archives, and information organizations, they promote knowledge access, preserve cultural heritage, and strengthen democratic participation. Their stories are featured in this publication and on SLIS's social media accounts, where we have committed to amplifying their work. From Iowa school libraries to internationally recognized research centers, SLIS faculty, students, and graduates strengthen communities and expand access to knowledge. Here at SLIS we look forward to yet another year of preparing innovative, passionate, and community-minded information professionals who **advance the public good.**



"SLIS students and alumni serve as catalysts for social change and information equity."

Dr. Lucy Santos Green
SLIS Director, Professor

SLIS AT A GLANCE

The School of Library and Information Science (SLIS), housed within the Graduate College, has proudly offered the Master of Arts in Library and Information Science since 1967. A defining characteristic of SLIS is its commitment to librarianship as a dynamic and multifaceted profession that supports communities through libraries both as independent entities and within broader institutional frameworks.

SLIS's strategic alignment of instructional focus and programmatic growth underscores our **enduring commitment to advancing the field of library and information science through rigorous education, interdisciplinary innovation, and community-centered practice.**

SLIS prepares students for impactful careers across key sectors of the field, with particular emphasis on public libraries, school libraries with state certification, academic libraries, and special collections and archives. Its Certificate in Special Collections and Archives is led by two nationally recognized faculty members, Prof. Colleen Theisen, and Dr. Angela Fritz.

Our longstanding collaboration with the University of Iowa Center for the Book (UICB) enables us to offer a joint MA/MFA degree and a Certificate in Book Studies and Library and Information Science (BLIS), among other interdisciplinary programs. Our joint Ph.D. in English and MLIS, the only one of its kind in the nation, has already graduated new faculty and national leaders, while our presence in the Fulbright ecosystem continues to expand.

This fall SLIS added a second national distinction, becoming the first North American iSchool whose master's program is accredited by both ALA and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Programs (CILIP). This dual recognition affirms the international standing of our curriculum and gives students, whether they pursue careers in Iowa or abroad, access to a professional community and employer network that extends well beyond the United States.

Authored by Dr. Micah Bateman
and Dr. Iulian Vamanu



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SLIS UIOWA

Now in its fourth year, the School of Library and Information Sciences' Professional Development series, **Professional Growth Through Personal Engagement**, continues to foster meaningful connections across the LIS community. Each semester, the series connects students, alumni, faculty, and practitioners with leading scholars, civic leaders, and professional experts to explore timely and impactful topics. During the Fall 2026 semester, SLIS proudly hosted a dynamic lineup of distinguished speakers whose expertise spanned federal grant funding mechanisms, public libraries and health information, intellectual freedom, and the impact of strong prison library programs on pro-social behavioral development.

The series opened with Jill Connors-Joyner, Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Senior Grant Development Officer, who delivered a compelling presentation titled "**IMLS Funding Opportunities and Application Tips**." Her talk offered professional experience and insight into the IMLS grant application process, allowing students and colleagues to get their questions answered directly, and in time for this year's application cycle.

The 2026-2027 sessions feature a compelling slate of guest speakers, enriching the professional development of all attendees. All session recordings are available online.

2026-2027 Series Speakers



Jill Connors-Joyner
Institute of Museum and Library Services



Bobbi Newman
School of Library and Information Science
University of Iowa



Dr. Josh Coleman
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Arizona State University



Carolyn Martin
Health Sciences Library
University of Washington



Dr. Leah Buck
College of Nursing
University of Iowa



Jeanie Austin
School of Communication and Information
Rutgers University



Jen Jones
Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence at the University of Iowa



Chelsea Jordan-Makely
School of Library and Information Science
Simmons University



Charissa Brammer
Library Research Service
Colorado State Library



Kari Kozak
Engineering and Sciences Libraries
University of Iowa



Dr. Wade Bishop
School of Information Sciences
University of Tennessee Knoxville



Kate Robinson
IATUL & CILIP
University Librarian
University of Bath

The McGregor Project



Grace Whittaker
SLIS '25 Alumna

The University of Iowa (UI) School of Library and Information Science, in partnership with the McGregor Project, announced a new archival initiative to preserve and document the history of McGregor, Iowa, as the Mississippi River town enters a new chapter of revitalization. The five-year effort will organize, digitize and preserve historic photographs, letters, maps, business records and other materials that tell the story of the people, places and traditions that have shaped McGregor for nearly two centuries.

At the heart of the initiative is a community-based approach to preservation, with an archivist embedded in McGregor to work closely with existing local collections and those who know the town best. The project will be guided by the materials, stories and discoveries already rooted in the community, allowing McGregor's history to emerge organically through the people and records that have shaped it.

Through its partnership with UI's School of Library and Information Science (SLIS), The McGregor Project has brought on Iowa-based archivist Grace Whittaker, a graduate of SLIS, to help lead the initiative. During her time at Iowa, Whittaker studied under Dr. Angela Fritz, an archivist and scholar with more than 25 years of experience across archives, museums and special collections, including leadership roles with the National Archives and Records Administration and the University of Notre Dame, and Prof. Colleen Theisen, an experienced special collections curator and archivist who now coordinates SLIS's Certificate in Special Collections and Archives. Their mentorship, spanning archival preservation, digital stewardship, special collections and cultural heritage, helped shape the professional foundation Whittaker now brings to the McGregor initiative.

Whittaker will be based in the community as the project progresses, bringing that professional archival training together with an on-the-ground understanding of McGregor and its history. "As an Iowan, it's especially meaningful to be a part of this project and preserve the history of a community like McGregor," says Whittaker. "What makes this initiative so special is the opportunity to spend time in the town, listen to the people who know it best and work directly with the materials that have been part of the community for generations. That local perspective will be essential to building an archive that authentically reflects McGregor and makes its history accessible for years to come."

THE McGREGOR PROJECT

The McGregor Project Emblem

The McGregor Project



Grace's Office Building in McGregor, Iowa

Beginning in fall 2027, a SLIS graduate student will join the initiative through a two-year assistantship, working alongside Whittaker and supporting the ongoing review, organization and assessment of the collection while gaining hands-on experience in community-based archival preservation. The archive will ultimately live in a database designed to be publicly accessible both within McGregor and beyond, with Whittaker currently evaluating the platform and structure that will best support the collection.

While the project is initially focused on organizing and preserving materials already held within existing local collections, the team will also develop a formal collections policy outlining how additional materials may expand to include additional community partners and material, including oral histories and other records that further illuminate McGregor's story.

The work reflects a larger philosophy guiding The McGregor Project's broader vision to build upon the character, heritage and sense of place that already defines the town. Led by Jenifer and Jeff Westphal, founders of The McGregor Project, the plan is a multi-phased revitalization designed to strengthen McGregor as a vibrant, year-round destination while creating new opportunities for those who live, work and visit there. "McGregor history isn't separate from its future; it's what should inform it," said the Westphals. "As we invest in the town's next chapter, we want to understand and preserve the stories, people and traditions that made McGregor what it is today. This partnership with the University of Iowa gives us an opportunity to make sure that history remains visible, accessible and woven into the community."

Beyond McGregor, the initiative is intended to demonstrate how preservation can become an active part of a community's future. By pairing professional archival expertise with someone embedded locally and allowing the community and its existing materials to guide the process, The McGregor Project and the UI hope the initiative can offer an innovative framework for other small towns seeking to preserve their histories while planning for what comes next.

The archival initiative is part of The McGregor Project's broader multi-year investment in McGregor, which spans hospitality, retail, local housing and community spaces, with current plans encompassing 10 to 14 upgraded or restored buildings and areas throughout town. Work on the archival project is now underway, with the initial planning phase continuing through the end of 2026 and collection review and assessment beginning in January 2027. Additional details surrounding the archive, opportunities for community involvement and The McGregor Project's broader development plans will be announced in the coming months. For additional information, visit The McGregor Project.

Written by Mariah Bode, Curich Weiss Amplify

Co-Chairing RBMS 2026 in Milwaukee



Colleen Theisen
Associate Professor of Instruction

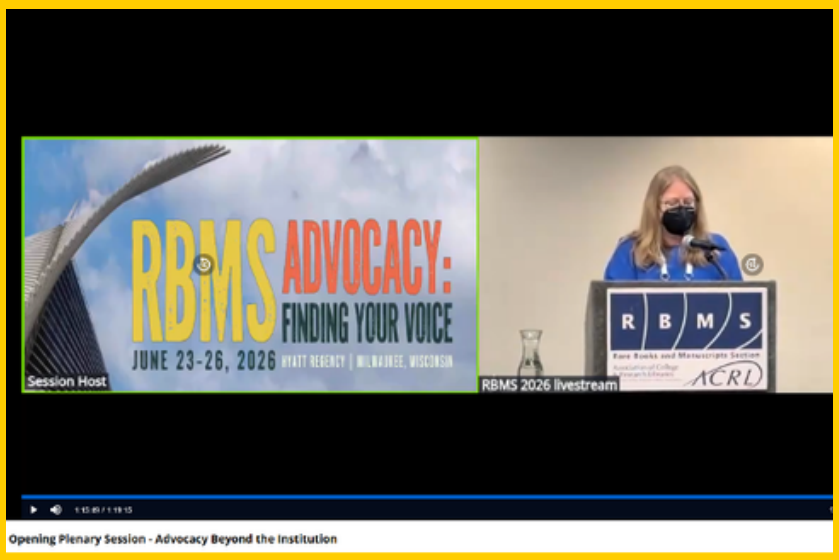
I served as co-chair of the 2026 Rare Books and Manuscripts (RBMS) Conference in Milwaukee alongside Margaret Gamm of the Library of Congress. It was one of the most significant and rewarding service projects I have undertaken. Over nearly a year, I worked closely with the planning committees and RBMS leadership to develop the call for proposals, assess program submissions, coordinate with prospective tour sites and local partners, manage logistics, and ensure that attendees had a meaningful experience. Much of this work happened behind the scenes and it ultimately helped the conference run smoothly as we welcomed 340 special collections librarians in person at the Hyatt Regency in Milwaukee and another 140 participants online.

Behind the scenes at Marquette University's J.R.R. Tolkien Collection with curator Dr. William Fliss



Leading up to the conference, I introduced a new virtual tour option to connect online participants with the host city. I traveled to Milwaukee a few weeks in advance and filmed two programs: a workshop presentation on artists' books with librarian Max Yela, celebrating his retirement from Special Collections at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, and a virtual tour of the J.R.R. Tolkien Collection at Marquette University. I had worked with Marquette to offer the Tolkien tour to in-person attendees as well, but it sold out within thirty minutes. Drawing on the virtual visit model I use in my online courses here at SLIS, I paired the video tour with a live Q&A so that online attendees, along with in-person attendees who weren't able secure tickets, could still take part in this exclusive event in another mode. I edited the videos and made them available in the conference app for attendees to watch in advance, followed by a live Q&A session during the conference where attendees could ask questions and interact directly with the curators of these key Milwaukee collections. RBMS plans to repeat this model in Reno in 2027 to connect online attendees with that city's key collections.

Serving as MC for the opening plenary session



During the conference, I served as MC and moderator for the plenary sessions, helping to create a cohesive experience throughout the event. I also worked closely with the team from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), of which RBMS is a section, to address questions and solve problems as they arose, including the moment on day two when Wi-Fi went down across the entire city of Milwaukee for a few hours!

A delectable pan of cheese curds, the signature Wisconsin favorite

One of the accomplishments I am most proud of is leading the conference fundraising effort, which raised $9,000 to support a special reception at the beautiful Milwaukee County Historical Society. The event gave attendees an opportunity to experience a unique local venue, network with colleagues, and enjoy a taste of Wisconsin's beloved cheese curds.



Wayback Colleen and Margaret at RBMS 2012



Margaret and I both attended RBMS for the first time in 2012 as scholarship recipients, so it was especially meaningful to have watched this community grow and change over the past fourteen years and to have had the opportunity to take a leadership role in planning the event that brings us all together each year.

- Colleen Theisen

Iowa Sings

SLIS Brings Music Therapy to Iowa's Public Libraries

A donor-funded partnership with the Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence and the School of Music positions Iowa's public libraries as trusted community partners in music-based wellness for older adults.

The School of Library and Information Science has joined the Barbara and Richard Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence (College of Nursing) and the School of Music's Music Therapy program to launch the Iowa Sings Initiative, a collaboration that brings music-based wellness programming for older adults into public libraries across the state.

Iowa Sings is supported by a generous commitment from the Jane H. Roth Csomay Center Special Projects Fund, a flexible resource for emerging initiatives that improve the lives of older adults. Among the fund's first priorities is the expansion of music-based interventions for individuals living with neurological conditions and their caregivers, with Iowa's library system serving as a network of trusted, welcoming community spaces. The effort also advances the goals of the Iowa Rural Health Initiative by extending university resources to communities throughout the state.

The initiative builds on Tremble Clefs Iowa, a therapeutic singing group for people with Parkinson's disease, their caregivers, and family members, facilitated by Dr. Abbey Dvorak, Associate Professor and Music Therapy Area Head. Dr. Dvorak, Dr. Harleah Buck, Sally Mathis Hartwig Professor in Gerontological Nursing and Director of the Csomay Center, Jen Jones, Csomay Outreach, Education, and Programming Coordinator, and Dr. Lucy Santos Green, SLIS Director and Professor, are now exploring how programs like Tremble Clefs Iowa can reach Iowans in rural and underserved communities through their local public library, with professional music therapists continuing to lead the work.

For Dr. Green, Iowa Sings is also personal. A former K-12 choir teacher, she volunteered alongside the music therapist at the James L. West Center for Dementia Care during her years teaching in Fort Worth ISD. That experience, and a professional path that bridges music education and librarianship, shape her commitment to placing music therapy within reach of older Iowans through their local library.



Dr. Lucy Santos Green
UIOWA SLIS



Dr. Abbey Dvorak
School of Music



Dr. Harleah Buck
College of Nursing



Jennifer Jones
College of Nursing

SLIS graduate students will work alongside music therapy students to develop educational templates and build a sustainable program structure, gaining hands-on experience in community engagement, program design, and interprofessional collaboration. The partnership also connects libraries and older adults with continuing education, aging, and caregiver resources; contributes to intergenerational learning; and creates programs that foster lifelong learning, social connection, and optimal aging.

"Iowa's public libraries are already where older adults gather to learn and connect. Iowa Sings builds on that trust, pairing the expertise of music therapists with librarians who know their communities."

IOWA
School of Library and Information Science

IOWA
College of Nursing
Barbara and Richard Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence

IOWA
Music

The partnership is already taking shape in the field. At the recent Iowa Library Association conference, members of the Csomay Center team joined SLIS in conversations with librarians from across the state about aging and lifelong learning programming, asking how the center can support Iowa's libraries. The Csomay Center also co-sponsored the SLIS alumni reception at the conference, an early step in building the relationships among librarians, music therapists, and gerontology researchers that will carry Iowa Sings forward.

Iowa Sings reflects SLIS's commitment to librarianship as community-centered practice. By positioning public librarians as trusted partners who open their doors, promote the program locally, and sing alongside their patrons, **the initiative offers a model for extending specialized university expertise to every corner of Iowa.**

Iowa Sings

SLIS Brings Music Therapy to Iowa's Public Libraries

2025-2026 FACULTY PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS



Micah Bateman
Assistant Professor

"Archiving Black Joy: Social Media, Digital Community, and the Literary Record of Marginalized Life," panel sponsored by The Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States, Modern Language Association, Los Angeles, CA, January 2027.

"Lyric Publics: Poetry as Signal in Platform Media," "Lyric Media" panel, Modern Language Association, Los Angeles, CA, January 2027.

"Improvisation After Ritual: Lyric Premediation and the Exhaustion of Political Response," American Studies Association, Chicago, IL, October 2026.

"**Leveraging Emerging Datasets for Critical Research on Books and Reader Communities**" pre-conference workshop, Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, Daejeon, South Korea, July 2026.

"**Toward a Ritual Analytics: Emergency Response, Cultural Circulation, and Care under Platform Capitalism**," Association for Computers and the Humanities, June 2026.

"AI in the Classroom" roundtable sponsored by the Digital Americanist Society, American Literature Association, Chicago, IL, May 2026.

"**Small Press Distribution Bestseller Lists, 2006-2023**." Post45 Data Collective. Emory University Center for Digital Scholarship, 2026.

Lyric Publics: *Poetry, Platforms, and the Crisis Canon*, upcoming book officially under contract with Stanford University Press.

Review of Char Adams, Black Owned: The Revolutionary Life of the Black Bookstore is anticipated to be published in Libraries: History, Culture, and Society, 11.1 (Spring 2027).

Modern Midwestern Education History: Resources, Challenges, and Research Pathways, is anticipated to be published in Middle West Review, 14. 1 (Fall 2027)

Review of Duggan, Mike. All Mapped Out: How Maps Shape Us. London: Reaktion Books, 2024 in Portolan (Fall 2026), 80-81.

"**Knit One Part at a Time**" *Modern Day Knitting* October 2, 2026.



Jennifer Burek Pierce
Professor



Iulian Vamanu
Associate Professor

"Zines, documentary governance, and the politics of the secondary." The 2026 Annual Meeting of the Document Academy (DOCAM), Swedish School of Library and Information Science University of Borås, Sweden, August 2026.

Best Paper Award: "**The Actuality of the Obsolete: Inscriptions, Traces, and the Documentary Life of Zines**." The 54th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Information Science (CAIS), June, 2026.

Walt Whitman in the Classroom: Teaching America's Poet, American Literarture Association, Chicago, IL, May 2026.

President of the **Whitman Studies Association** and **Walt Whitman Archive** Iowa Project Manager



Stephanie Blalock
Assistant Professor

2025-2026 FACULTY PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS



Dr. Angela Fritz
Assistant Professor

Fritz, Angela I., Pamela Campbell, and Rose Oliveira-Abbey. "Charting the Course: A Historical Analysis of Digital Archives Continuing Education, SAA's DAS Certificate, and the Contemporary Challenges of Digital Stewardship Competencies." American Archivist 89, no. 2 (2026). Upcoming.

"**'Learning in the Flow': AI Microskilling and Ethical Stewardship in GLAMs.**" Collections 22, no. 2 (2026): 117–29.

"**Finding Common Ground in GLAM: Ethical AI in Three Themes**" Collections 22, no. 2 (2026): 87–91.

Fritz, Angela I., guest editor. "**Ethical AI: Challenges and Opportunities for Collection Stewardship in GLAM**" Collections 22, no. 2 (2026).

Fritz, Angela I. "Trust Indicators in AI: Balancing Low-Barrier Practices with an Ethics of Care." Presentation, Annual Conference, Society of American Archivists (SAA), New Orleans, LA, July 30, 2026.

AI and Digital Leadership: Transforming Libraries, Archives, and Museums for the Future. Interview. New Books in Library Science Podcast, New Books Network (NBN), 2026.



Bobbi Newman
Associate Professor of Practice

Burnout and Psychological Safety: Intertwined Challenges in Library Management. In N. Keppler (Ed.), Librarianship Beyond the Textbook. Rowman & Littlefield, 2026.

The Case for a Professional Foundation in Librarianship. Inside Higher Ed. July 14, 2026.

The Case for a Professional Foundation in Librarianship, with Bobbi L. Newman and Sam Helmick, Episode 322, Circulating Ideas, September 16, 2026.

Building Equitable, Actionable Feedback Cultures. CORE, American Library Association, Webinar, November 2026.

Tending What's Next: From Overwhelm to Intentional, [Keynote] Back in Circulation Conference, Madison, WI, October 2026.

Write the Next Page Moving Forward, Intentionally, [Keynote] Upper Peninsula Region of Library Cooperation Annual Conference, MI, September, 2026.

"You're Not Just Tired: The 7 Types of Rest Library Workers Actually Need", American Library Association Conference, Chicago, IL, June 2026.

Overwhelm to Action: Prioritizing Purpose in a Demanding Library Landscape, Virginia Tech Libraries, May 2026



Lucy Santos Green
Director & Professor

Addressing the school librarianship knowledge gap on culturally responsive and impactful K-12 online learning through professional development. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science,* 2026.

We Need to Talk: The Future of Librarianship - Credentials, Curriculum, and Costs. Neapolitan Session, Charleston Hub Conference, Charleston, SC, November, 2026.



NEW BOOK PUBLICATION:
THE PUBLIC LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO ANSWERING HEALTH QUESTIONS

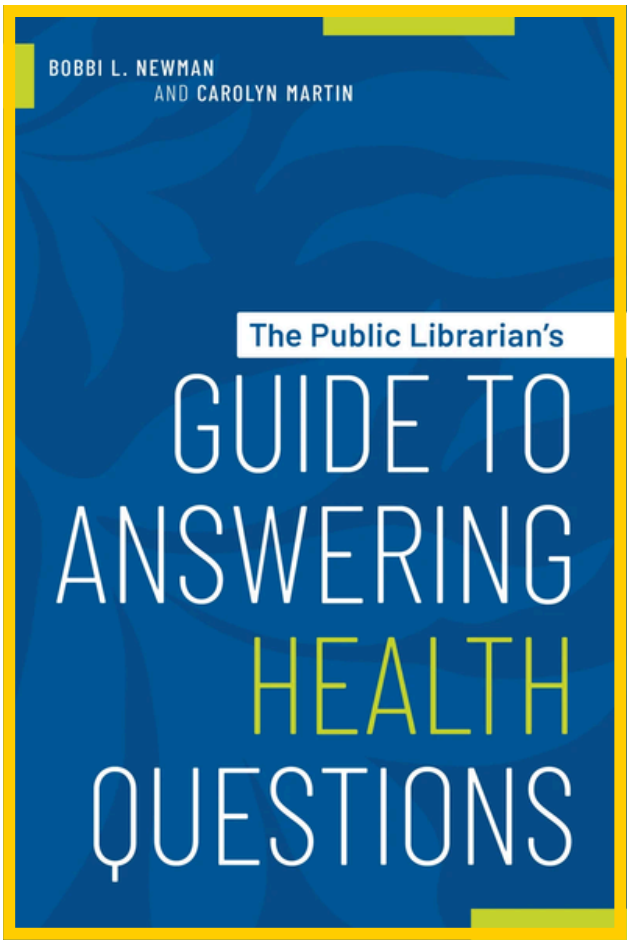
Bobbi L. Newman, MLIS

Associate Professor of Practice, Bobbi L. Newman, MLS, has published a new book with co-author, Carolyn Martin, MLS, AHIP, *The Public Librarian's Guide to Answering Health Questions*, with ALA Editions. This work draws on Newmna's nearly of decade of experience directing national engagement initiatives for public libraries with the Network of the National Library of Medicine. The book shows public librarians how to provide excellent health information service, with no medical background required.

Whether patrons are looking into a diagnosis, a medication, or something they came across online, health questions are an everyday part of library work. Newman and Martin's book offers the frameworks, tools, and reassurance librarians need to approach these conversations with confidence and clarity.

"After almost a decade of working in health information and public libraries, we wanted to put what we've learned into a resource librarians can turn to every day. In the age of misinformation and AI, that support is needed now more than ever."

Newman and Martin examine how librarians can evaluate health information, identify trustworthy, evidence-based sources, and build a reliable collection. Additionally, the work reassures readers that providing health information service doesn't require medical expertise. The book shows how librarians can apply their core skills in a health information context, with health reference interview scenarios, guidance on privacy and professional boundaries, and reflection prompts. A companion website provides checklists, tools, and additional resources for day-to-day use.



LISSO

Library and Information Science Student Organization



Andy Stewart
LISSO President



Nellie Morf
LISSO Secretary



Dani Youngberg
LISSO Treasurer



Vashti Torres
Distance Rep



Allie Honz
U2G Coordinator



Hemlock Stanier
LISSO Social Chair

FALL

- **LIS Student Social** — LISSO is hosting a catered lunch in the Main Library that brings SLIS students together, strengthens the community within the program, and establishes the organization as the hub for student engagement and leadership.
- **Mock Interviews** — LISSO is recruiting practicing librarians from the Iowa City area, the Iowa Library Association (ILA), and the SLIS alumni community to serve on interview panels, giving students realistic practice for the job market and direct connections to working professionals before they graduate.
- **Job Panel** — Students are assembling a panel of hiring professionals from public, academic, and government libraries to speak candidly about recruitment and the job market across sectors, equipping their peers with insider perspective on launching a career.

SPRING

- **LIS Collegiate Research Symposium —** LISSO is convening a multi-institution online research conference where MLIS students present their scholarship in a conference setting. Four student ALA chapters have joined University of Iowa (LISSO), with more to come: Emporia State University (SCALA), Simmons College (ALASC), Valdosta State University (SOLIS), and Wayne State University (ALASC). By organizing the symposium, SLIS students are building their scholarly communication skills while positioning LISSO as a national leader among student chapters.

Year-Round

- **Mentorship Program** — In partnership with the Iowa Library Association, LISSO is recruiting mentors from Iowa libraries and the SLIS alumni community and pairing them with current students and early-career librarians across the state, extending professional development well beyond the classroom and deepening SLIS ties to Iowa's library community.

MLIS & PHD STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Darryl Moton

Darryl expects to graduate from SLIS in December 2026. With the status of his Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Bahrain currently undetermined, he is preparing to finish and defend his Doctoral dissertation, "The Middle (Of) Passage: Racial Passing Narratives and the Construction of Whiteness," in Spring 2027. His joint program has enabled him to cast a wide net in the job market, helping him apply for everything from academic librarianship to professorships in multiple disciplines. He is extraordinarily grateful for the professional support SLIS faculty enthusiastically provide. His experience in SLIS has refined his teaching in new ways, particularly by making him more comfortable with technology.



Michelle Garcia

Michelle Garcia is a PhD-MLIS student currently working as a Graduate Research Assistant at the Iowa Women's Archives. Michelle's research examines the intersection of U.S. Latino literature and archives, focusing on life writing and oral histories as cultural artifacts shaped by migration, gender relations, and labor movements. As a SLIS student in the dual enrollment program, she is able to approach her work from an interdisciplinary standpoint that bridges literary scholarship, pedagogy, digital humanities, librarianship, and archival practice. This combined training informs her research and prepares her with the necessary skills to secure a tenure-track professorship in an academic library after graduation.

The University of Iowa offers a dual-degree program, combining an MA in Library and Information Science with a PhD in English, jointly administered by the Graduate College and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This interdisciplinary program prepares students for careers in academic libraries and cultural heritage institutions, while strengthening research and teaching skills in digital humanities and archival studies.

MLIS & PHD STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Casie Minot

As a 3rd year English Ph.D. student, Casie Shirley Minot joined the SLIS program because of her commitment to information access, undergraduate instruction, and the power of reading amongst historically marginalized communities. After graduation, she wishes to pursue university librarianship alongside scholarship and undergraduate English instruction. The dual enrollment program has been vital to pursuing this career path. Courses invested in reading culture have enriched her doctoral research into women's suffrage reading communities of the long nineteenth century, and core classes have started preparing her to fulfill the professional duties and responsibilities of librarianship.



Adelina Pineda Canganelli

Adelina Pineda Canganelli is a 4th year PhD student in English and a 2nd year MLIS student with a focus on Victorian studies, environmental humanities, and special collections & archives. Her research draws on foundational conservationists and nature writers of the 19th and early 20th centuries to examine how personal connections to the environment take shape, and how individuals can cultivate ecological consciousness and humility in their local surroundings. After graduation, she hopes to enter the special collections field in a publicly engaged role, ideally related to conservation research. Through the dual-enrollment program, she has gained the professional training and foundational knowledge that open a clear path to community-driven, publicly engaged work. As the Robert A. and Ruth Bywater Olson Graduate Assistant, Adelina has acquired hands-on experience in research, instruction, and curation, a strong skill set for future career opportunities. She is deeply grateful for the mentorship and opportunities she continues to find through SLIS.

The University of Iowa offers a dual-degree program, combining an MA in Library and Information Science with a PhD in English, jointly administered by the Graduate College and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This interdisciplinary program prepares students for careers in academic libraries and cultural heritage institutions, while strengthening research and teaching skills in digital humanities and archival studies.

MLIS & MFA STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Ollie Oliver

After graduation, Ollie looks forward to focusing on The Book Arts Tool Map, a digital map and website she created, built to connect book artists with niche machinery outside of academic institutions and facilitate resource sharing. She cites Kara Logsden's public library courses-- as well as information organization and community archives--for teaching her the logistical, metadata organization, and community orientated skills necessary for such a large project. In a professional capacity, she hopes to work in a graduate book arts studio or artist books special collection.

Maria Burns

Maria arrived at Ulowa with many career interests, and the dual MLIS/MFA in Book Arts program gives her room to pursue them all. The MLIS anchors her plans, preparing her for librarian positions, ideally in cataloguing. The Book Arts MFA adds a welcome second dimension: paired with her background in graphic design and digital print publication, it readies her for roles in large- and small-scale publishing. Holding two terminal degrees also opens the door to teaching library science, design, or book arts at the university level.



The University of Iowa offers a dual-degree program combining the MLIS with an MFA in Book Arts, jointly administered by the School of Library and Information Science and the UI Center for the Book, both housed in the Graduate College. This interdisciplinary program prepares students for careers in libraries, special collections, publishing, and cultural heritage institutions, pairing expertise in library and information science with hands-on practice in printing, papermaking, and bookbinding and with scholarly study of book history and the material book.

GA/RA SPOTLIGHT



Noelle Pinneo
Research Assistant for Drs. Bateman and Fritz

"My experience at SLIS has been very exciting as I've begun to see how my undergraduate interests in book history, special collections, and digital humanities can develop within the field of library and information science. As a graduate research assistant, I have the opportunity to work with SLIS faculty members, Dr. Micah Bateman and Dr. Angela Fritz, and to contribute to a variety of research projects. I especially enjoy work that brings together archival research, digital tools, and questions about how we preserve, describe, and provide access to cultural heritage materials. As I continue my time at SLIS, I'm excited to expand my research skills and learn from projects that use methods and approaches that are new to me."



Sophia Craig
Managing Editor of the Walt Whitman Quarterly Review

"It's hard to believe that I'm already at the tail-end of my time with the School of Library and Information Science. As I continue my role as Managing Editor for the Walt Whitman Quarterly Review, I feel incredibly grateful to work with and learn from the team behind the journal, especially Dr. Blalock. This upcoming year, I'm excited to dedicate more time to my passions: editing, writing, and crafting."

Andrea Leusink
Research Assistant with Dr. Fritz



"I am a second-year SLIS student and research graduate assistant working with Dr. Angela Fritz on her research about the historical use of early Artificial Intelligence within government institutions, such as the National Archives. This year I am excited to once again dive into historical research, especially on a topic that connects closely with my own research interests! During my time at SLIS, I have taken courses that have deepened my understanding of library and archival services while also strengthening my skills with both emerging and established technologies. SLIS also helped me secure a practicum this past summer with the Digitization Department at the University of Iowa Main Library, where I further developed my skills in digital preservation"

GA/RA SPOTLIGHT



Mallory Becker

Research Assistant with Dr. Vamanu and Prof. Newman

"I have enjoyed my experience at SLIS, and all of the staff and faculty have been very kind, welcoming, and supportive. It is rewarding to meet people who have such a driving passion for the field. I want to work in a public library setting after graduation, so I was enthusiastic for my research assistantship opportunity, which has given me insight into the field of public librarianship - specifically as places of resilience and how they advocate for community members by adapting to the needs of each and every person in the space and beyond."



Emerson Porter

Communications Graduate Assistant for Dr. Green

"My second year in SLIS has gotten off to a great start, and has included some phenomenal, new professional development. I'm grateful for the way that my GAship expands into my professional interests, including now working on the SLIS website, working on ad campaigns, and publishing this newsletter that you're now reading. While I am still primarily interested in public libraries, I know my gained experience in marketing and advertising won't go to waste. Getting to have such wonderful mentors, like Dr. Green and Katie McCullough, made working in academia, even at a distance, an incredible experience that I know I'll take with me on to whatever's next."

Dani Youngberg

Research Assistant for Profs. Biger, Theisen, and Dr. Vamanu

"I am a second year MLIS student with a focus in public libraries. I am particularly interested in collection development and technical services. So far, I've loved my experience here at SLIS. I have had great opportunities to learn and gain professional experience through my courses, practicum, and attending the ALA Conference this past summer. This year I'm a research assistant working on projects with Dr. Vamanu and Profs. Theisen and Biger. I am excited to continue gaining practical experience and learning new skills while working closely with the awesome faculty here at SLIS!"



Giving Back to IOWA
Returning to Our Roots

Highlighting Our Exceptional Academic Scholarship Students



Laura Rowley, Director of the Lodi Whittier Library

Laura Rowley is a first-semester online student from the Finger Lakes region of New York and director of the Lodi Whittier Library, a rural public library. She is pursuing the MLIS degree to provide more effective leadership, services, and resources to the Lodi Library community, and she aspires to join the network of rural public librarians across the country working to improve access to resources and funding. One topic Laura discovered in her first course, Libraries, Culture, and Society, is how librarians can adopt social work approaches and collaborate with social workers to support their patrons. The issue is especially relevant in rural areas, where social service agencies are often geographically inaccessible and public libraries step in to fill those needs. Laura is eager to continue researching this and other complex issues in contemporary librarianship. Laura's SLIS scholarship award has been invaluable, as rural libraries like hers generally operate with very limited funds, including for staff salaries and continuing education. This financial support allows her to focus on sharing what she learns directly with her library community through conversations with youth and teens, such as "What does our library mean to you?," and through new ideas for advancing equity and inclusion.



Brylee Hoeg, Engineering and Sciences Libraries

Currently in her first semester of the MLIS program, Brylee hopes to one day work in an academic library as an outreach and instruction librarian. She works as a Graduate Assistant for the Engineering and Sciences Libraries on campus. In her position she contributes to events and outreach, as well as creates and maintains exhibits and other projects within the library space. Receiving this scholarship has given Brylee more financial freedom and allowed her to spend more time putting focus on her classwork and projects.

MLIS Alumni SPOTLIGHT



Amber Neville, SLIS '06
Owner of Willow and Stock

Amber Neville is an Iowa City native and business owner, having founded Willow and Stock (a local flower shop) in 2017. She worked as a Research Librarian for twelve years, and believes that her time at SLIS and as a librarian prepared her for business ownership: "Every day at the shop brings something new - customer requests keep me on my toes creatively. My MLIS gave me the ability to run the business in an analytical way. I'm able to use the data and information we generate, in terms of profit, loss, margins, customer feedback, et cetera, to make improvements quickly and effectively." She believes that her skill in information gathering, along with her knowledge of local resources, gave her a real advantage in organizing the many requirements for opening a small business, and she credits SLIS with teaching her those skills.

Andi (Andrea) Beckendorf, SLIS '96
Professor of Library and Adjunct Faculty in Music at Luther College



Even before college, Andi Beckendorf knew she wanted to combine music and librarianship. Much of her career has focused on that combination, though, as she notes, "the serendipity of being able to combine the two things as a job came about purely by chance. I was in the right place at the right time and was able to demonstrate the atypical combination was an asset for the institution and for the students. The opportunity to do all of my graduate work at the University of Iowa played a large role in shaping future possibilities. In addition to my SLIS degree, I had work-study positions in the Rita Benton Music Library and in cataloging with Grace Fitzgerald, as well as the opportunity to do the MA and DMA in double bass performance and pedagogy with a world-renowned pedagogue (Diana Gannett). This may not have been possible anywhere else." Her favorite part of her current position is helping students with their research. Andi thanks her librarian colleagues at the University of Iowa, Katie Buehner, Melissa Moll, and Christine Bellomy: "There aren't many music librarians in Iowa, and I can always count on them for advice when I need it."

MLIS Alumni SPOTLIGHT



Veronica Ruse, SLIS ‘25
Residency and Academic Records Coordinator

Veronica Ruse serves as the Residency and Academic Records Coordinator in Ulowa’s Office of the Registrar. This month she will present “The Librarian Is In: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Registrar’s Office” at the 2026 Upper Midwest Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (UMACRAO) Annual Conference, exploring three foundational LIS concepts she applies to her registrar duties. Through the reference interview, she uses sense-making questions to uncover what a student truly needs and to help students and families navigate the complex criteria for in-state tuition. Through user experience design, she applies user-centered and digital accessibility frameworks to restructure and update the university’s Residency website. Through interdisciplinary information management, she demonstrates how data organization, metadata practices, and user service principles bridge traditional library science and academic data stewardship. Her session shows how readily SLIS skills transfer; she relies on them daily in her work with Ulowa students.

Cassandra Elton, SLIS ‘15
Founder of the Antelope Lending Library



Cassandra Elton founded the Antelope Lending Library while a student in SLIS, taking her nonprofit’s name from a required reading in one of her courses. She found that SLIS’ generalist approach to librarianship, along with her ability to dual-enroll in the MFA in Book Arts, gave her a broad foundation of both theoretical knowledge and hands-on practice that prepared her for her atypical path. Notably, the Antelope Lending Library runs Iowa’s first and only car seat share program. Cassandra and a coworker became certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians, and they now collect secondhand car seats, confirm each one is unexpired and free of recalls, make any needed repairs, and give the seats free of charge to families who need them. The Antelope Lending Library also teaches courses at libraries across the area, offering in-field professionals insight into current book repair techniques, how to establish a bookmobile, and locally available community resources.

SLIS and CILIP

By HAMZA MOHAMMED
Graduate College



“Iowa communities deserve library and information services that meet the strongest professional standards anywhere.”

New Accreditation Expands Opportunities for SLIS

SLIS has earned a second professional accreditation following an international review of its curriculum. The recognition brings students new opportunities to connect with employers and professional communities beyond the United States. SLIS is the first North American iSchool with a master’s program accredited by both the American Library Association and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). The recognition connects students to the UK’s professional body for librarians, information specialists, and knowledge managers, while they are still studying at Iowa.

A Credential Employers Understand

CILIP’s framework reaches beyond traditional LIS settings, serving as a benchmark for employment in international schools, global firms, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational research organizations. For students interested in those settings, recognition speaks to how their preparation relates to the work an organization needs done. SLIS’s journey through CILIP accreditation coincided with a broader examination of professional credentialing. Dr. Green, SLIS Director, spent much of the past year studying accreditation in LIS and other disciplines, considering what those judgements communicated about graduate education: “There is a live conversation about what a credential should certify, who should certify it, and how programs demonstrate quality. While that conversation continues, we wanted Iowa’s program examined from more than one vantage point.”

An Education Open to Examination

The CILIP review brought the substance of an Iowa education into focus, including the readings assigned in courses, the work students produce, and the opportunities they have to apply what they learn. Faculty documented their teaching against CILIP’s Professional Knowledge and Skills Base, which encompasses professional expertise, foundational skills, and ethics and values. CILIP emphasizes the balance between theory and practical skills, alongside the support students receive from faculty. In examining Iowa’s program, CILIP drew attention to the capstone portfolio and practicum, where students demonstrate and apply their preparation. CILIP’s review also examined how SLIS connects its curriculum to professional practice through its advisory committee and professional development lecture series. Beginning Spring 2027, SLIS students will study CILIP’s professional framework alongside ALA’s core competencies. Learning both will help them describe their preparation in terms used by different professional communities, connecting pedagogy to practice.

CILIP
Learning Partner
Accredited
2026-2029

Professional Connections Before Graduation

The accreditation took effect September 2026 and covers graduating classes beginning Spring 2027. Students can begin using new CILIP resources immediately through Iowa's Learning Partner status, which provides access to CILIP webinars, discounted student membership, and events involving international peers and institutions. "Our faculty can also take part in CILIP's Employer's Forum and Knowledge Exchange, an event that places learning providers in the same room as major UK and international employers," Green says. "That network is new to SLIS this year." Those opportunities are available to domestic and international students alike, and so their value does not depend on a decision to work overseas. Students pursuing careers in the United States can participate in the same professional learning and exchanges as classmates exploring positions abroad. For international students, returning home is one possible direction; remaining in the United States or pursuing work elsewhere are others. The resources give students access to a professional community beyond their immediate location as they consider those choices. For domestic students, these offer a way to explore international practice before deciding whether a career abroad is part of their plans.



An International Perspective, an Iowa Commitment

More than 85 percent of SLIS graduates remain in Iowa after graduation, working in libraries, schools, archives, and information roles across the state. For most students, an international review of their education will shape work done close to home. CILIP's Professional Knowledge and Skills Base will be part of that work. Because the framework describes professional practice in specific terms, students who learn it alongside ALA's core competencies can name the particular skills they developed at Iowa and connect each course, and each assignment, to the practical experience these support. A SLIS alum who is interviewing with a public library, a school district, or a corporate research unit can account for their preparation in detail, and an employer can see how that preparation fits the position.

The framework also places that preparation on a wider footing. The knowledge, sills, and professional values Iowa graduates bring to their first positions are tied to a professional foundation upheld by practitioners in many countries. When alumni make the case for a new service, collection, or program in their communities, they can point to professional expectations that reach well beyond any single organization or region. "That matters most for the graduates who stay," Green says. "Iowa communities deserve library and information services that meet the strongest professional standards anywhere, and our alumni now have a clear, detailed way to show what those standards are and how their work meets then. It also raises our own bar going forward." A student may arrive at Iowa without knowing where that education will eventually lead. The question of working abroad can remain open while they study, meet people in the profession, and discover the work they want to pursue. Wherever that work takes them, and for most it will be somewhere in Iowa, their preparation now meets a standard the profession recognizes around the world.

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