

## Detailed Assessment Report

As of: 11/11/2014 02:21 PM EDT

### 2013-2014 Library and Information Science MLIS\*\*

(Includes those Action Plans with Budget Amounts marked One-Time, Recurring, No Request.)

### Mission / Purpose

The School of Library and Information Science is committed to preparing its students for careers as library and information science professionals by offering a curriculum that is grounded in the traditional knowledge and skill areas of library and information science as well as focused on the diverse challenges of the future. The program embraces the philosophy that library and other information professionals must be prepared to participate in leadership roles for their profession and communities of service, be able to adapt to dynamic work environments and engage in life-long learning. The preparation of such individuals involves two fundamental elements; preparing candidates with the necessary intellectual and technical abilities to serve in the field of library and information science, and providing candidates with the appropriate perspectives of ethical responsibility and respect for diversity.

### Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

#### **SLO 1: Knowledge of and Commitment to ethical practices**

To foster and promote among master's degree candidates a knowledge of and commitment to ethical practice on the part of library and information professionals.

#### Related Measures:

##### **M 1: Interpreting the Library Bill of Rights**

Discuss and defend the articles of the Library Bill of Rights. Students write a scholarly essay with a minimum of 1500 words after reviewing the Library Bill of Rights and associated interpretations provided by the ALA. The students focus on evaluation of library collections, censorship and Recommendations for Challenged Materials. They must then locate an actual challenge or attempt to censor library materials (or restrict access) and explain how each of these sections relates to the challenge, or should have related to the challenge. The report is assessed using the writing rubric and assesses content based on the presence and quality of 1) An overview of the situation and material that was challenged (based on the documentation) and of the ALA stance on the issues (based upon the web pages and the documentation). 2) The completeness of the discussion of the implications for collection development or access with attention to a) if the challenge stands, and b) if the challenge fails. The last element assessed is the discussion of the implications for the larger community, schools, families, etc. a) if the challenge stands, and b) if the challenge fails. (This measure was formerly in LIS 511. In the 2013-14 academic year it was moved to LIS 636 in accordance with an action plan.)

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of students will achieve satisfactory ranking on the rubrics for interpreting the Library Bill of Rights.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

96% (47/49) students (combined, summer, fall and spring) achieved satisfactory or excellent ranking on the rubrics for interpreting the Library Bill of Rights.. Six (100%) licensure students achieved satisfactory. Forty-one out of forty-three (95%) non-licensure students achieved satisfactory or excellent: 2 students did not turn in papers.

**M 2:Develop balanced collection policies**

Develop policies for providing libraries and information centers with a variety of viewpoints through a balanced selection of materials and services and fostering the patron's right to read. As a team, students write a collection development policy with a minimum of 2000 words. The collection development policy is for a hypothetical library and must provide information about the following: 1. Overview a. Mission Statement b. Community Profile c. Patrons Needs Assessment 2. Goals a. By subject area or category b. By format 3. Selection Process a. Who selects? b. How are materials selected? c. Selection sources? 4. Miscellaneous Issues a. Gifts b. De-selection and Discards c. Evaluation d. Censorship issues e. Complaints f. Copyright 5. Provide citations for all sources consulted. [LIS 511]

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of students (groups) should achieve satisfactory ranking according to the rubrics for the collection development policies.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

Overall target for 2013-2014 (combined summer, fall, spring) was MET with 96% (46/48, n=48) students achieving satisfactory or excellent ranking according to the rubrics for the collection development policies. Nine out of ten (90%) of licensure students achieved satisfactory or excellent.. Thirty-eight out of thirty-nine (97%) non-licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory.

**SLO 2:Knowledge of the basic tenets of reference, collection development and cataloging**

Master's degree candidates demonstrate knowledge of the tenets of reference through participation in the resolution of patrons' information problems, recognition of collection development/management of materials and information, management of libraries and other information agencies, and apply concepts and practices of original cataloging. Candidates identify library and information science problems in the context of the mission of their parent institution and demonstrate creativity and initiative in their solution.

**Related Measures:****M 3:Application of the information process: reference support**

Demonstrate the role of the library and of the librarian in the information process: Students analyze advanced hypothetical reference questions, identify key concepts for searching reference materials, identify and evaluate possible useful sources, and evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of that information.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of students will achieve satisfactory ranking against the reference question rubric.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET 2013-2014 MET. 95% (45/47) of students (combined summer, fall, spring) achieved excellent or satisfactory ranking against the reference question rubric. Seven out of seven (100%) licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory. Thirty-eight out of forty (95%) non-licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory.

**M 4:Procedures and policy for collections**

Identify and develop procedures and policies for analyzing needs and providing a collection and services to meet those needs.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of the students achieve satisfactory rankings against the community analysis rubric. Students analyze a community setting to develop the information necessary to establish appropriate service and collection policies and write a community analysis report. The community analysis requires 1) a description of the library, 2) details of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the library patrons and of the community it serves, 3) specific details of any focused service or community needs, 4) explanation of the sources of the data collected.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET MET. 85% (46/54) (combined summer, fall, spring) achieved satisfactory ranking against the community analysis rubric. Nine out of nine (100%) licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory. Thirty-seven out of forty-five (82%) non-licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory.

**M 5:Cataloging: Organization and services**

Demonstrate ability to organize materials and services so that they are readily accessible to the public being served by a library or information center.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of students will achieve satisfactory performance of organizational activities related to the assignment rubrics

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET MET: 97% (38/39) (combined summer, fall, spring) achieved satisfactory or excellent performance of organizational activities related to the assignment rubrics. Two out of two (100%) licensure students achieved a rating of excellent or satisfactory. Thirty-six out of thirty-seven (97%) non-licensure students achieved a rating of excellent or satisfactory.

**M 12:Reference Interview Process**

Students model the reference interview process including selecting resources and finding answers through video roleplaying. Source of Evidence(s): Written assignment(s), scored by a rubric; students are evaluated on a rubric in three ways- group, self, and instructor.

Source of Evidence: Video or audio tape (music, counseling, art)

**Target:**

85% of students will achieve satisfactory ranking against the reference question rubric.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET 2013-2014 MET 89% (50/56) (combined summer, fall, spring) students achieved satisfactory ranking against the reference question rubric. Twelve out of thirteen (92%) licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory. Thirty-eight out of forty-three (88%) non-licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory.

**SLO 3: Professionalism**

Master's degree candidates understand and appreciate the importance of professional organizations, continuing education, the evolution of libraries, and the library profession in the context of social and cultural diversities.

**Related Measures:**

**M 6: Management of libraries and other information centers**

Recognize, develop, evaluate, and discuss the elements of management theory, including goal setting, budget and fiscal management, collection management, program planning, implementation, and evaluation. Through professional readings and written analysis students will develop an understanding of the philosophy and principles of contemporary management theories, specifically their relevance to the management of libraries and other information centers.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

90% of students will achieve satisfactory ratings against the rubrics for written analyses of articles from the professional management literature.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET MET 97% (29/30) (combined summer, fall, spring) achieved satisfactory or excellent ranking against the rubrics for written analyses of articles from the professional management literature. Five out of five (100%) licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory ratings. Twenty-four out of twenty-five (96%) non-licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory ratings.

**M 7: Professional concepts**

Students examine and discuss the impact of the Library Bill of Rights and its significance to the past, present and future of library and information science to define a political image of librarianship in relation to censorship, filtering, the freedom of information and services to communities. Assessment considers the completeness of the discussion of the concept definition related to censorship and The Library Bill of Rights; issues including filtering, freedom of information access, and service to

communities will be addressed.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of students' analysis of the impact of the Library Bill of Rights on librarianship will rank satisfactory on the rubrics.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET for 2013-2014 was met. 90% (48/53) (combined summer, fall spring) of students' analysis of the impact of the Library Bill of Rights on librarianship will rank satisfactory on the rubrics. Eight out of eight (100%) licensure students achieved satisfactory or excellent. Forty out of forty-five (89%) non-licensure students achieved satisfactory or excellent. .

**SLO 4:Research foundations**

Master's degree candidates demonstrate an understanding of scientific research, its role in building a knowledge base in library and information science, and demonstrate knowledge about research methods applicable to library and information studies and the ability to identify and apply appropriate research methodology to specific problems in library and information science.

**Related Measures:**

**M 8:Essential research**

Students demonstrate an ability to identify and apply appropriate research methodology to specific problems in library and information science.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

85% of students achieve satisfactory ranking against the research proposal rubric.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET 2013-2014 MET 100% (5353) (combined summer, fall, spring) achieved excellent or satisfactory ranking against the research proposal rubric. Ten out of ten (100%) licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory ranking. Forty-three out of forty-three (100%) non-licensure students achieved excellent or satisfactory ranking.

**M 9:Master's research project**

Students demonstrate an understanding of the process and role of research in the field of library and information science through the completion of a quality research document appropriate to the field. The process includes submission of a proposal beyond the research proposal for the LIS 668 Research Methods course, and requires all the elements of a research article. Evaluation of the capstone Master's Project is by a student selected committee against the proposal and project rubric, and the student's own proposal design. Rubrics are scaled as good (clarity in presentation and compliance with good research approach), requires improvement (less clarity in presentation and compliance with good research approach), or unacceptable (unacceptable presentation, lack of good research approach).

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

**Target:**

95% of students achieve satisfactory against the rubric for the Master's Project as determined by at least two faculty evaluators.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET 2013-2014 MET 100% (58/58) (combined summer, fall, spring) achieved satisfactory or excellent ranking against the rubric for the Master's Project as determined by at least two faculty members.. Eight out of eight (100%) licensure students were rated satisfactory or excellent. Fifty out of fifty (100%) non-licensure students were rated satisfactory or excellent.

**SLO 5:Technology literacy**

Candidates develop an awareness of the effects of technology on all library and information centers' operations, the uses of technology in management, public access, and instruction, and participate in technology applications to advance their skills and experiences.

**Related Measures:****M 10:Technology and organizations**

Candidates analyze new developments in information technologies and the ways in which these impact provision and usage of information on the part of professionals and patrons and demonstrate an understanding of the effects of technology on communication and organizational structures.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

**Target:**

90% of students should achieve a satisfactory rating based on the rubrics for analysis and reporting on professional reading and research activities in LIS 651 Introduction to Information Science assignments. Assessment requires students demonstrate an ability to analyze, evaluate, and compare published reports of research studies in library and information science and in disciplines other than library and information science.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

OVERALL TARGET 2013-2014 MET 91% (43/47) (combined summer, fall, spring) students achieved a satisfactory rating based on the rubrics for analysis and reporting on professional reading and and research activities in LIS 651 Introduction to Information Science assignments. Five out of eight (62%) licensure students were rated as satisfactory or excellent. Thirty-eight out of thirty-nine (97%) non-licensure students were rated as satisfactory or excellent.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

For full information, see the *Details of Action Plans* section of this report.

**M10 re-evaluate course syllabi for clarity of instruction and rubric construction**

*Established in Cycle:* 2010-2011

LIS 651 Introduction to Information Science involves multiple topics including readings and assignments covering the historical ...

**M 11:Technology tool assessment**

Students utilize a variety of essential technologies to develop technology literacy appropriate to the library information science field.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

**Target:**

90% of students will demonstrate satisfactory technological literacy through their use of a variety of current technologies, such as search engines, websites/webquests, pathfinders, blogs, wikis, task software such as Catalogers Desktop, ClassWeb, WebDewey, RDA toolkit, Lexis-Nexis, Credo, DIALOG, presentation software, wordprocessors, spreadsheets and other course identified software with satisfactory performance as measured on assignment rubrics. This target is assessed in LIS 516 Technology in the School Library, LIS 557 Computer Application in Libraries, and LIS 558 Internet Resources. All students must take one of these courses as an elective.

**Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

2013-14 Target MET. 100% (61/61) students (combined LIS 516, 557, 558) demonstrated satisfactory technological literacy through their use of a variety of current technologies as measured on assignment rubrics. Eight out of eight licensure students demonstrated satisfactory technological literacy. Fifty-three out of fifty-three (100%) non-licensure students demonstrated satisfactory technological literacy. Sixteen out of sixteen students (100%) in LIS 516 (fall 2013) demonstrated satisfactory technological literacy through construction of a webquest. Of those, seven were licensure and nine were non-licensure. Twenty-two out of twenty-two students (100%) in LIS 557 (fall 2013) demonstrated satisfactory technological literacy through construction of an electronic portfolio. There were no licensure students in the class. Twenty-three out of twenty-three students (100%) in LIS 558 (spring 2014) demonstrated satisfactory technological literacy through construction of an electronic portfolio. Of those, there was one licensure student and twenty-two non-licensure students.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

For full information, see the *Details of Action Plans* section of this report.

**Addressing an implementation failure**

*Established in Cycle: 2010-2011*

No data was collected from the courses specific to technology use during this cycle. Faculty are currently identifying specific ...

**M11 Improve assessment alignment between assignments**

*Established in Cycle: 2013-2014*

Data gathered from three different courses. Review syllabi, assignments, and rubrics to ensure alignment of assessment coverage.

**M 12:Reference Interview Process**

Students model the reference interview process including selecting resources and finding answers through video roleplaying. Source of Evidence(s): Written assignment(s), scored by a rubric; students are evaluated on a rubric in three ways-group, self, and instructor.

Source of Evidence: Video or audio tape (music, counseling, art)

## Other Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

### **O/O 6:Retention and Graduation**

Students admitted to the library and information science master's program will progress through the program and graduate.

#### Related Measures:

##### **M 13:Retention**

70% of the students admitted to the library and information science master's program will be retained in the program. Retention will be measured by data from Institutional Research and/or data from PeopleSoft.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

#### **Target:**

70% of students will be retained in the program as measured by Institutional Research data and/or data from PeopleSoft.

#### **Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

78% (289/370; n=370) of students were retained in the program as measured by data from PeopleSoft. This finding was obtained by looking at students admitted since fall of 2008 and tracking graduation, active, dismissal and discontinued students. Students who graduated or are currently active in the program were considered to be retained.

#### Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

For full information, see the *Details of Action Plans* section of this report.

##### **Retention**

*Established in Cycle:* 2013-2014

Students who fail to register will be contacted to ascertain reasons and see if intervention is possible.

##### **M 14:Graduation**

90% of the students who graduated from the Library and Information Science master's program will graduate within three years as determined by data from Institutional Research or data from PeopleSoft.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

#### **Target:**

90% of the students who graduated from the Library and Information Science master's program will graduate within three years as determined by data from Institutional Research or data from SOAR.

#### **Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

95% (186/194) of the students who graduated from the Library and Information Science

master's program did so within three years as determined by data from PeopleSoft. These students were tracked by looking at admitted students who graduated since fall of 2008.

### **Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

#### **M10 re-evaluate course syllabi for clarity of instruction and rubric construction**

LIS 651 Introduction to Information Science involves multiple topics including readings and assignments covering the historical development of technology and its impact on library and information science. Students read, analyze related historical research in the areas of communications, electronics, computer science and other allied disciplines that contribute to the modern library and information science center and its mission. Students also create literature reviews, and research proposals based on these readings. Faculty have determined the course needs to be re-evaluated to determine whether the content is too concentrated for one course, or if the instructions and rubrics are insufficient to support the students.

**Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011  
**Implementation Status:** In-Progress  
**Priority:** High

#### **Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Technology and organizations | **Outcome/Objective:** Technology literacy

**Implementation Description:** curriculum committee will review the syllabus and all documents of the last reporting cycle to determine the appropriate course of action. At the same time student progress in the current offering will be very carefully monitored for symptoms of correctable issues.

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/29/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** Curriculum Committee and LIS 651 teaching faculty

#### **Curriculum Review**

Faculty will undertake a comprehensive curriculum review during the 2014-15 academic year. Current outcomes and measures will be reviewed for current relevancy and correct course placement.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty  
**Additional Resources Requested:** None

#### **Decide whether to add exit survey data as an outcome/measure**

The department has begun to systematically give an exit survey and consideration will be given during this cycle as to whether that data should be incorporated as part of the formal assessment system.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty  
**Additional Resources Requested:** None

**M11 Improve assessment alignment between assignments**

Data gathered from three different courses. Review syllabi, assignments, and rubrics to ensure alignment of assessment coverage.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Technology tool assessment | **Outcome/Objective:** Technology literacy

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/31/2015  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty teaching LIS 516, 557, 558  
**Additional Resources Requested:** None

**Retention**

Students who fail to register will be contacted to ascertain reasons and see if intervention is possible.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Retention | **Outcome/Objective:** Retention and Graduation

**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty advisors.

**Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers**

**What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?**

For the most part the students are demonstrating superior skills in meeting the outcomes/objectives of the program. Failure to achieve at least satisfactory on the student's part is generally due to either not completing the assignment or failing to follow assignment instructions. After analyzing last year's results it was determined that the performance target in the three introductory courses would be lowered to 85%. With that in place, there is a tiered performance target system with assessments in the three beginning courses being at 85%, the next four required course assessments being at 90% and the assessment in the capstone

course being at 95%. This change was decided upon because of the challenging material in the beginning courses and the adjustment that students often need to make to balance courses, especially online courses, jobs, and family responsibilities. These three courses are the foundation for the program and outcomes 1 and 2 have at least one measure in one or more of those courses. Last year some assessments with the corresponding assignments were moved to different courses and this has proved successful and relieved some of the assessment burden on particular courses, especially LIS 511. After two years of failure to collect data for M11, it was determined that data would be collected in a combination of three courses, LIS 516, 557 and 558, and that was done during this cycle. All students must take one of these three courses as an elective so all students will be assessed. Retention and graduation rates were added to the assessments. Both the retention and graduation targets were met. However, recruitment, retention, and graduation remains a priority for the department.

**What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?**

The introductory courses were given standardized performance targets of 85% and performance at the new levels will be monitored over the next several cycles. At least in the first year this has proved to be successful. Additionally, as courses are often rotated among faculty, when a new faculty member teaches a course, it will be emphasized what the assessment for the course is and that the rubric and assessments be consistent. M11 was implemented this year for the first time in several years because of previous failure to collect data. The target was rewritten and assigned to three elective classes; all students are required to take at least one of those three electives. Additional work will be done during the coming year to standardize the assessment assignment among the three classes but the initial outcome this year was positive. A comprehensive curriculum review is planned for the 2014-15 academic year and this may result in some changes to outcomes/objectives and/or measures. We have begun to collect systematic data through an exit survey and consideration will be given to incorporating that data as a measure for one or more outcomes. An assessment was added for retention and graduation data. Although the targets were met continued attention will be given tracking and mentoring matriculated students to encourage retention and move students through to graduation. Faculty has discussed and will continue to focus on possible barriers for students to enter and remain in the program. Recruitment has been and remains a priority

## Annual Report Section Responses

### **Program Summary**

The Master's of Library and Information Science program is accredited by the American Library Association, and is the only such program in the state of Mississippi, as well as one of only 62 ALA accredited Master's programs in North America. The School of Library and Information Science at The University of Southern Mississippi is one of approximately 20 American Library Association accredited programs that offer a fully online master's degree. The MLIS program produces professionals for all areas of the library/information fields; academic, public, school, archives, and special libraries all hire our graduates. Students from across the nation, including Hawaii and Alaska, participate in our MLIS program; we also have provided classes for students residing in Peru, Belize, India, England, Germany, Japan, the Virgin Islands, as well as other countries. We offer an online supplemental school library media specialist endorsement non-degree program that also attracts students from other states and other countries. In 2009-2010 we proposed and had approved a Graduate Certificate in Archives and Special Collections, which has attracted new students as well as alums. Four students successfully completed the certificate in 2013-14. The newer Youth Services and Literature certificate produced four completers during the 2013-14 year. The MLIS is one of the most frequently awarded master's

degrees at The University of Southern Mississippi. Master student enrollment during 2013-14 was 142 in spring 2013, 113 in summer 2013 and 143 in fall 2013. Spring 2014 was not available at this writing. Our graduates have gone on to earn doctoral degrees in programs at Urbana-Champaign Illinois, Rutgers, Simmons, University of Mississippi, Alabama, and others. The School has sponsored and directed the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival for the last 47 years. The festival attracts national attention and participants to the university for the Southern Mississippi Silver Medallion awarded annually for the last 46 years. The 2012 winner was author and poet Jane Yolen, 2013 was Jon Scieszka, and the 2014 winner was Christopher Paul Curtis; all are recipients of multiple literary awards. They joined a long list of authors, illustrators and storytellers honored to receive the Medallion. In 2012, the Erza Jack Keats Book Awards were moved from the New York Public Library to the Festival for annual presentation. The festival is one of the features of The University of Southern Mississippi that is nationally recognized in conjunction with the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection. The School of Library and Information Science has been a leader in the development and offering of online courses since offering the first online courses in 1995. The MLIS was the first approved online Master's degree program at The University of Southern Mississippi (2002). SLIS faculty members have participated in the pilots for WebCT, Horizon Wimba, Collaborate Live Classroom, and Podcasting and continue to be active in testing new technology appropriate for our field. Our courses include aspects of Web and Library 2.0, social media, wikis, blogs, globs, social networking, and the evolving information technologies. The field of library and information science is a dynamic and evolving collection of many disciplines. Our students are prepared to work and excel in diverse venues, limited only by the imagination of the student. Our faculty have expertise in public, school, special and academic libraries as well as archives, museums, telecommunications, information science theory, digitization, records management, distance education and much more. The School of Library and Information Science engages in an ongoing self-review of all aspects of the program. As an American Library Association accredited program we report on our enrollments, student composition, activities, and budgets annually, and prepare a biennial overview report. We are conscious of the character and quality of our program as a component of retaining accreditation and presenting The University of Southern Mississippi in the best light. We underwent our seven year accreditation review in February 2012 and received the full 7 year continuing accreditation until 2019. ALA accreditation is essentially a continuous process, but the seven year review involves a focused campus visit by an assessment team composed of practitioners, educators and administrators in our disciplines. The standards of our accreditation cover the I Mission, Goals and Objectives of the program, II Curriculum, III Faculty, IV Students, V Administrative and Financial Support, and finally VI the Physical Resources and Facilities.

### **Continuous Improvement Initiatives**

The entire assessment process must be handled as a continuous improvement initiative. We are striving to align all of our assessments with our mission, goals and objectives as linked to the American Library Association's core competencies. We had hoped to accomplish this alignment in this cycle, but it will take several cycles to fully implement that redesign. Significant progress has been made, but we are still aligning courses and competencies. Additionally, one new faculty member was added during this past cycle and brings a new area of expertise which will allow SLIS to offer new courses and highlight their talent. A comprehensive planning and review process for the department has been initiated and is envisioned to take several years. The focus for 2014-15 will be a complete curriculum review to pinpoint duplication, ensure coverage of needed material, and focus on embedded technologies. Recruitment, retention, and graduation remain priorities for the department.

### **Closing the Loop**

Since library and information science has very dynamic evolving technology systems and structures, e.g., blogs, wikis, gaming, social media etc., we need to continuously monitor and appropriately increase technology engagement in the courses for the students. The Curriculum Committee has recently reviewed the technology implemented in each course and selected a common assignment in three courses to serve as the assignment for M11. The faculty will be reviewing courses and assignments this next cycle to identify if there are more appropriate courses and assessments to use as measures as well as to improve the quality of the program by avoiding duplication and ensuring coverage. Data were gathered during this cycle for M11 for the first time in three years and the assessment will be refined further during the coming cycle. Target percentages for those assessments falling in the three beginning courses were revised to 85% to reflect the subject matter difficulty and issues that students sometimes have in learning to balance work, family and school, especially online courses, as they begin a graduate program. Target percentages rise to 90% and finally to 95% as students progress through the program. This change was addressed in several action plans that were finalized during this cycle. Measure 1, Library Bill of Rights analysis, was moved to a different course in accordance with an action plan for this cycle. This relieved the assessment burden on LIS 511 Collection Development and the M1 assessment fit equally well in the other course. The master's project timeline has been monitored, as per an action plan, and an effort has been made to allow students more time to incorporate changes from proposal to draft to final paper. The assessment target was met in all sections during this cycle. Retention and graduation rates were added as assessments for the first time. Initial targets were met but recruitment, retention, and graduation remain a priority for the department. During the coming cycle a comprehensive curriculum review is planned which may result in changes to outcomes, assessments, etc., depending on findings by the faculty.