

## Standard IV: Students

### Introduction

Clarion's MSLS students benefit from a rich history of multi-format course delivery, including the launching of a fully online master's degree in 2003. Since that time, student interest in the fully online degree has outstripped that of resident or distance options, leading to the decision to provide our MSLS degree exclusively in the online format starting in the fall of 2012. It is notable that Clarion historically was one of the leaders among ALA-accredited programs to provide online options to its students, therefore its choice to provide exclusively online coursework further demonstrates the faculty and college's vision to provide innovative paths for student educational goals in today's changing society. While Clarion's MSLS program still fulfills local and regional needs, it also provides education to students across the United States, Canada, and even in international settings, whose life and work situations favor an online, asynchronous teaching and learning environment.

Clarion online education for our MSLS students centers on the needs of each individual in fulfilling career goals. With multiple student organization options, excellent advising, university-wide online education support systems, and a university-wide focus on authentic learning, Clarion students are faring well in achieving both their educational goals and desired job outcomes. The latest two *Library Journal* annual placement surveys show recent Clarion graduates with gainful employment reported at an annual average salary of \$43,000 and \$52,000 (Allard, 2016 and 2015). Clarion graduates obtain jobs in a wide variety of libraries and other information settings. In response to student and faculty interest in local collection curation, the program's addition of coursework to support work with family collections across a variety of information settings further fulfills our student expectations for a flexible information career path. The addition of a capstone experience requirement for graduation, beginning with students who matriculated in 2012, advances Clarion student chances for successful obtainment of career goals.

### Standard IV.1: Program Recruitment

IV.1 The program formulates recruitment, admission, retention, financial aid, career services, and other academic and administrative policies for students that are consistent with the program's mission and program goals and objectives. These policies include the needs and values of the constituencies served by the program. The program has policies to recruit and retain students who reflect the diversity of North America's communities. The composition of the student body is such that it fosters a learning environment consistent with the program's mission and program goals and objectives.

Clarion DILS faculty work closely with Clarion Online and graduate programs for recruitment. In terms of recruitment planning, the department chair regularly attends meetings regarding university-wide recruitment measures and provides input as to the unique needs of the MSLS program. A key element of recruitment is Clarion's ALA accredited status and discovery through the corresponding web link on the ALA site. Additional departmental recruitment activities include DILS faculty representation at library related conferences, speaking engagements, and participation in targeted organizations. Recruitment is a university collaborative process. Examples of this collaboration during the past seven years include revamping of the university web page, marketing efforts, such as the [branding of the university](#).

Because the Clarion MSLS is now fully online, recruitment materials found on the Clarion Online webpage are of particular importance to student discovery of the program. The site offers information on the specific programs, with direct links to the application site. An information request form is clearly situated on the "contact us" page. [Clarion Online's](#) full-time director plays an integral role in connecting interested students with departments. Once students enter their application information, the [Office of Graduate Admissions](#) undertakes the role of processing their requests, communicating frequently with the department chair and secretary with any questions that arise from the applicants. The department secretary is also an important team member in this process, answering many phone calls each week from prospective students who want additional information or clarification about specifics of the program.

In addition to traditional recruitment materials online, efforts to attract viable candidates to the DILS MSLS program occurs in venues that reflect the constituencies served by the program, such as the annual Pennsylvania Library Association meeting and the annual Association of Rural and Small Libraries Association. It is highly unusual and reflective of the DILS faculty commitment to personal connections with their students that our faculty all participate in these recruiting events, working for hours at the Clarion booth in the exhibits hall, handing out brochures and information on the program, discussing individual career and educational goals with attendees, and distributing alumni surveys to those who stop by to visit with their former professors and advisers. Clarion faculty personally participate in these professional conference events in order to maintain ties with alumni, get a sense of field trends, discuss job openings with current library directors, and to understand the goals and needs of those interested in pursuing an MSLS. These conversations with our constituents provide good information for faculty discussions about curriculum, student support, and overall program goals. Additionally, the department maintains an online BSLS degree program with a concentration in library and information studies that works well for those students who need to finish their bachelor's degree before they can proceed to the master's degree. Recruiting events allow for detailed discussions of individual needs and interests.

Overall numbers in the MSLS program have risen and then declined over the past seven years, mirroring overall trends in colleges and universities, as seen in Table 4.1.

Table VI.1 Enrollments, 2011–2016 (ALA Trend Summary)

Report Year	Total (Head Count) Master's Students	Minority Enrollments	Percent of student body
2010	434	22	5
2011	509	27	5
2012	476	25	5
2013	400	23	6
2014	367	27	7
2015	325	22	7
2016	338	41	8

The university's commitment to diversity in the student body is reflected in clear and fairly-applied admissions policies, recruitment, scholarship, and retention support through the administrative offices of Social Equity, Disability and Financial Aid. (look at student affairs compare to lower in document add here or there as needed) The university Office of Social Equity maintains a [Strategic Equity Diversity Plan](#), which clearly articulates the need for diversity in the student body. This policy demonstrates the university's commitment to recruiting and retention for diversity and creating a diverse campus climate. Rates of minority students who self-identified during the admissions process show gradual growth from 2010 of 5% of the total student population to 7 %, seen in Table 4.1.

The fostering of student success and work of retention begins immediately upon admission into the program with a welcome letter from the chair of the department containing important links to departmental and support services information (See Appendix ). As the advising process is particularly important in an online environment, students are also provided the name of their advisor in their welcome materials and are encouraged to contact them directly. It is notable that advisor holds are placed on student accounts to prohibit registration without consultation. This process provides students, especially distance students, needed interaction with their advisers with regard to course selection and the creation of their program of study. Advisers assist students in selecting courses in a logical sequence to ensure a timely completion of the degree. Students are also aided by continuous access to information on their registration status and program goals. Students may access this information by viewing their degree audit online. The audit shows:

- specific core requirements for the MSLS degree

- the overall number of required credits for the MSLS degree
- student progress towards the core requirements
- courses and credits completed by the student
- grades attained in completed courses
- courses in which the student is enrolled or registered
- total number of attained credits

In addition to the guidance provided students in the advising process, orientations have been an important vehicle for providing students a context for their Clarion graduate experience. Students entering the program are required to participate in a two-week online orientation that provides information about how to access all online resources, including the D2L course sites. The orientation is run by a facilitator who interacts with the students. Faculty members are introduced in short recordings so students have a visual for each of their full-time faculty professors and advisers. Orientation assignments teach students to locate basic information for successful online work, such as access to program information, disability support services, and library services. Student awareness of interaction in the online environment is stressed through discussions of proper etiquette during interactions with others online. The orientation is designed for students who may not understand how to access lectures or submit assignments online.

Clarion's tuition rates fit the model of a state university with a goal of wide-spread access to education. Tuition is set by the PASSHE. A number of financial aid options are offered to students, including interest-free monthly payment plans. Graduate students have a variety of other financial aid options, including the Federal Stafford Loan and the Federal Graduate Plus Loan programs. The department additionally provides scholarships to select students in the program. These scholarships are determined by criteria specific to each award. Students may find information on these scholarships on the university web site. Members of the department's Awards Committee review the applications according to selection criteria each spring and award the scholarships. In addition, several scholarships are available to either part-time or full-time students range in amounts from \$600 to \$1,000, clearly located on the university's [financial aid webpage](#).

- *The Charles R. Flack Scholarship in Library Science* is available to full-time graduate students in the department who have completed at least one semester of graduate study and who have earned at least nine graduate credits. The scholarship is intended to give personal encouragement and financial support to a promising student who seeks a career in librarianship.

- *The Ahmad F. M. Gamaluddin Scholarship in Library Science* is available both full and part-time graduate students who have completed nine credit hours and is focused on students who have demonstrable serious interest in international/multicultural librarianship. The scholarship is competitive and takes into account QPA and other factors demonstrating merit.

- *The Elizabeth A. Rupert Graduate Scholarship in Library Science* is available to full-time graduate students who have completed nine semester hours. Students need a faculty nomination and are judged on achievement in coursework (especially QPA) and contributions to the activities of the department.
- *The Helen Ferry Shields Scholarship* is awarded to a student intending to enter the graduate program in library science, with priority for a returning or non-traditional student.
- *The H. W. Wilson Scholarship* is a full tuition scholarship available to a full or part-time student. Selection is based upon professional potential and a written statement by the applicant.

In addition to these scholarships, DILS can provide some students with hourly wages for office work. Though students are fully online in terms of their coursework, several each year opt to come to Clarion to live and be near the professors and the department. In those cases, students may apply for on-campus work.

Additional academic policies provide students the tools and information they need to succeed as graduate students. These include policies in the graduate catalog covering such details as course withdrawals, the Student Rights, Regulations, and Procedures Handbook, which compiles information directly related to online students. An example of drawing student attention to these various policies is the matriculation letter sent to all of our students. Also, mandated information to be included on all syllabi includes links to various student policies. Some of the most important policies are linked individually on the [Academic Policies](#) page. The [Graduate Catalog](#) is available in its most current version as a PDF on the “Course Schedule” page of the Registrar’s site. In addition, students will find much information in the following resources:

- [Resources for Current Online Students](#)
- [Student Rights, Regulations, & Procedures Handbook](#)

## Standard IV.2: Accessible Information

IV.2 Current, accurate, and easily accessible information about the program is available to students and the general public. This information includes documentation of progress toward achievement of program goals and objectives, descriptions of curricula, information on faculty, admission requirements, availability of financial aid, criteria for evaluating student performance, assistance with placement, and other policies and procedures. The program demonstrates that it has procedures to support these policies.

Current, accurate information is clearly accessible on a public website. Information regarding the department, including strategic planning goals and objectives are lined to the [department homepage](#). The accreditation link provides documentation on assessments that are conducted by the department.

The department home page additionally provides the following pages:

- [Faculty profiles](#)
- [Course cycles](#) to assist students in planning their full course trajectory:
- Information on current [MSLS concentrations](#):
- Information on [capstones, careers in library science, news of alumni](#), and links to the specific program requirements for each degree offered by the department:

More detailed information about the MSLS degree is found on the university's "[degrees and programs](#)." The MSLS description is provided, along with linked documents for program requirements, a mapping of the degree course requirements, and the DILS Program outcomes utilized in university-wide assessment. Links from the DILS program page to the "catalog and class schedules" provides easy access to course descriptions of all classes and pdfs of current and upcoming course schedules.

Clarion University, as a part of the larger PASSHE system, has invested considerable time and money into the support of an online information system for registration and student records that provides registered students with current information on courses, grades, and registration. Here students may look up course information, such as pre-requisites, advisor information, access to any issues on their financial or academic account that might affect their registration, and their entire degree plan, filled in with the courses they have taken or are in the process of taking. Students may email their advisors easily from this system.

Prospective students and the public easily may find information specifically on the MSLS degree and on student life by accessing the [Clarion Online home page](#). Here students may access

- Online programs and courses offered
- Information on Tuition and Fees
- Success Stories of students who studied online at Clarion
- A "Contact Us" page
- A list of upcoming courses
- An "Online Learning Readiness Survey"
- A chart of authorization for online programs. Clarion's DILS is authorized to recruit and educate students in all 50 states.
- Resources for current online students, with links to needed tools for email, online course access, career services, technology requirements, health and wellness resources, and the library.

Student responses to the Exit Survey (Aggregated data, 2012-15) demonstrate their ability to locate important information about the program on the Clarion University website:

Question 21: Information about the program's goals and objectives was accessible.	#	%	Top 2 categories #	Top 2 %
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%		
Disagree	1	1.89%		
Neutral	2	3.77%		
<b>Agree</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41.51%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>90.57%</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>49.06%</b>		
No Opinion	2	3.77%		
Totals	53	100.00%		

Question 22: Information about financial aid was accessible.	#	%	Top 2 categories #	Top 2 %
Strongly Disagree	1	1.89%		
Disagree	2	3.77%		
Neutral	9	16.98%		
<b>Agree</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>43.40%</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>73.58%</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>30.19%</b>		
No Opinion	2	3.77%		
Totals	53	100.00%		

Question 23: Information about departmental policies and procedures (e.g., advising, internship, etc.) was accessible.	#	%	Top 2 categories #	Top 2 %
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%		
Disagree	7	13.21%		
Neutral	2	3.77%		
<b>Agree</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58.49%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>90.57%</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24.53%</b>		
No Opinion	2	0.00%		
Totals	53	100.00%		

### Standard IV.3: Admissions

IV.3 Standards for admission are applied consistently. Students admitted to the program have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; the policies and procedures for waiving any admission standard or academic prerequisite are University

of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science 136 stated clearly and applied consistently. Assessment of an application is based on a combined evaluation of academic, intellectual, and other qualifications as they relate to the constituencies served by the program, the program's goals and objectives, and the career objectives of the individual. Within the framework of institutional policy and programs, the admission policy for the program ensures that applicants possess sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to enable successful completion of the program and subsequent contribution to the field.

Applicants to the MSLS program at Clarion University are evaluated consistently through adherence to a published set of admission criteria. These criteria reflect university commitment to acceptance of candidates based on qualifications and regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity. According to the 2016-17 [Graduate Catalog](#), students desiring admission into the MSLS program must meet the following requirements:

1. an overall GPA for the baccalaureate degree of at least 3.00 on a 4.00 scale; or
2. a 3.00 GPA for the last 60 credits of the baccalaureate degree with an overall quality-point average of at least 2.75; or
3. a 2.75 to 2.99 overall GPA for the baccalaureate degree with a score of at least 412 on the Miller Analogies Test or a combined score of at least 300 on the quantitative and verbal sections of the Graduate Record Examination or new test equivalent; or
4. a graduate degree in another discipline with an overall GPA of at least 3.00.

International students are required to achieve a minimum score of 550 on the TOEFL.

Student applicant files are reviewed by Graduate Studies for completion on a rolling basis and forwarded to DILS for review by the chair. If the student meets the stated admissions standards, he or she is recommended to Graduate Studies for full admission for the next open semester (fall, spring or summer) or for the semester indicated by the student in the application. The student receives the formal letter of admission from the assistant vice-president for Academic Affairs, welcoming the student to the program and identifies the student's major adviser. In cases where an applicant does not meet minimum test or QPA requirements, a student may be admitted on a provisional basis. Full details can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#). Factors taken into consideration include field experience, individual recommendation letters, or other indications that the student will be successful in a graduate setting. Decisions on provisional cases are made by the department chair.

Admitted students may decrease the required number of credits at Clarion through the following methods. A maximum of six graduate semester hours may be transferred in one of the following ways:

Acceptable graduate credits in library science completed at Clarion University as a non-degree student or at another institution with an ALA-accredited program may be transferred and applied toward the master's degree, with the approval of the department. The student is responsible for filing an official graduate transcript of any work presented for transfer credit with the chair of DILS.

Graduate credit in related disciplines may be transferred upon prior approval by adviser and chair. This flexibility provides students the option to create a more inter-disciplinary course of study tailored to their professional interests and needs. Additionally, DILS successfully applied for the right to accept up to six credits of coursework previously obtained during graduate studies in an applicable program to our program requirements, even if the credits were used in the awarding of a previous degree. The petition was approved by the university to allow for this possibility in cases where warranted, which provides students additional flexibility in their programs.

#### **Standard IV.4: Program of Study**

IV.4 Students construct a coherent plan of study that allows individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of requirements established by the program. Students receive systematic, multifaceted evaluation of their achievements. Students have access to continuing opportunities for guidance, counseling, and placement assistance.

Students are able to construct a coherent plan of study through several mechanisms. The department provides career path information designed to direct a student's elective choices toward specific career goals. In the general MSLS degree, six courses are designated requirements, while the remaining six elective courses can be chosen to craft a coherent course of study toward the attainment of specific career aspirations. Suggested elective groupings can be found on the Clarion website, under specific career paths in information technology, government librarianship, technical services, academic librarianship, adult services in public libraries, children and youth services in public libraries, and courses to assist Pennsylvania certified teachers in adding school library media certification to their credentials. Clarion offers a full suite of courses to support these [suggested career paths](#).

In addition to suggested groupings of courses, the department maintains two formal concentrations, which appear on the transcript of any student who declares the concentration and who completes all of the required courses on the concentration

checksheet. Specific [requirements for concentrations](#) can be located on the department webpage.

Clarion University's MSLS in School Library Media concentration consists of courses that prepare students to be school librarians, but Clarion University does not grant actual school library media certification. A student wishing to obtain Pennsylvania Library Science Certification for K-12 who holds a valid Pennsylvania teaching certificate can complete the MSLS School Library Media and then check with the Pennsylvania Department of Education for additional certification requirements. Students from other states should check with their state department of education to determine certification requirements.

Clarion University's MSLS in local and archival studies concentration emerged in response to student interest and faculty expertise in the area of local studies librarianship. The courses provide students with a skill set necessary for work in information environments dealing with local and archival documents such as libraries, archives, historical societies, etc. Students master skills in the areas of: management of collections, information technology, and digital resources. Students will be qualified for public library local history/genealogy positions, academic library reference and archives positions, and local special collection management positions in settings outside of libraries.

In addition, strong advising of students provides the primary support for decision-making with regard to a coherent program of study. In the online environment, student advising is vitally important, a fact recognized by the department's policy to post advising holds on every student's account each semester. These holds insure that the student must communicate with the adviser before being allowed to register. Advising meetings may occur by email, by phone, Skype, or chat. Additionally, some advisers may occasionally provide information to groups of students, such as those in cohorts, in a recorded format, in order to prepare the students for the individual advising sessions. Several department members have produced an advising newsletter to all students that provides reminders and information on specific courses for the upcoming advising period.

Upon acceptance into the MSLS program, students are assigned an adviser. All advisers are regular, full-time faculty in DILS. Most assignments are on a systemic rotation to maintain consistent numbers of advisees among all faculty. Some assignments, however, such as those for local and archival studies, are made based on the faculty who are leading the concentration. Additionally, because students may discover that there is a faculty member with a research or teaching specialty of interest, any student may request a specific adviser at any time during the program and he or she may change advisers multiple times to allow them to pursue their evolving interests in the field.

Student responses to the Exit Survey (Aggregated data, 2012-15) demonstrate the success of advising to implement a coherent program of study:

Question 10: Working with my adviser helped me to create a coherent program of study.	#	%	Top 2 categories #	Top 2 %
Strongly Disagree	1	1.89%		
Disagree	1	1.89%		
Neutral	3	5.66%		
<b>Agree</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41.51%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>81.13%</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>49.06%</b>		
No Opinion	0	0.00%		
Totals	54	100.00%		

A required portion of the academic advising is a review of the student's progress toward completion of the MSLS competencies as delineated in the MSLS instrument. These competencies are based on ALA student outcomes, which serve as a reminder of important content and skills students should master before leaving the program. The coherent program of study is well supported here by the body of professionals who in essence created a guide to those desiring to excel in the library and information field. Blending of the fundamental skills and content areas designated in the MSLS with specific career goals produces balanced courses of study that maximize each individual student's potential.

Career goals are also discussed in the introductory course to the program, LS504 to allow students early consideration of the development of a coherent plan of study. Additionally, the MSLS is conducted to incoming students in their LS 504 course (the follow-up MSLS is given in the capstone course). The department recently voted to require students take LS 504 as their first course in their program in order to insure a solid foundation for their studies, including the creation of a coherent plan of study for their degree.

The department aims to produce successful graduates who are developed and assessed as individual learners, as functional individuals within a professional forum, and as competent and productive professionals working in the library field and related information fields upon completion of the degree. Each of these areas requires different attention to development and assessment. As individual learners, the assessment of student achievement comes primarily in the classroom setting. Standard departmental policies provide a structure for individual achievement. A student receiving more than one "C" course grade (or lower) is disqualified as a candidate in the degree program. He or she may return to the program with special permission from the dean of the College of Business Administration and Information Sciences. The department's Student Affairs Committee makes recommendations regarding readmission in such cases. Students who are readmitted are required to retake one of the "C" courses.

Within each classroom setting, students are assessed according to the criteria appropriate for the subject being taught. Clarion affirms the intellectual freedom of faculty to develop their own course materials; consequently, the professional expertise of the faculty member determines the appropriate assessment activities for the subject content of the course. Faculty discussions and the mentoring of new and part-time faculty concerning course development continually stress the importance of using a variety of assessments to accommodate different learning styles, the relation of group work to the development of professional competencies, and the refinement of effective oral and written communication abilities. Specific assessment approaches include grading of participation, presentations using technology, such as narrated PowerPoint, questions sets/summaries, and group work. Examinations, particularly final examinations, have been used consistently as an assessment technique in Clarion courses. Course specific authentic assessments also allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of core content. Assignment guidelines and rubrics are used by many professors to communicate expectations on assignments. While this practice points to the strengths and weaknesses in grasping course content, it also gives students the ability to self-assess their work as it is developed.

### **Standard IV.5: Student Involvement**

IV.5 The program provides an environment that fosters student participation in the definition and determination of the total learning experience. Students are provided with opportunities to:

IV.5.1 Participate in the formulation, modification, and implementation of policies affecting academic and student affairs.

IV.5.2 Participate in Research

Graduate students at Clarion University of PA are provided opportunities at the university level to participate in research. Both on campus and online students are eligible to apply for research project funding in coordination with faculty members. Graduate students also present their findings at the annual Clarion University Academic Excellence series. In the last seven years, a number of DILS students have presented at the forum.

As a capstone options, DILS graduate students may choose to pursue specialized research. If they choose this capstone option, they are required to take LS 550: Introduction to Research Methods in Library Sciences, followed by their capstone course. Students craft a research proposal in LS 550, which is implemented in LS 600. Those who choose human subjects research are required to obtain IRB permission

before commencing their research. Many students choose this option for their capstone. A list of capstone research topics can be found on the DILS accreditation page. Send an email asking for examples.

Faculty members in DILS encourage graduate students to submit their graduate research for review to the scholarly journal, *Current Studies in Librarianship*, designed for graduate student research in library science. DILS jointly publishes the journal with the Office of Graduate Programs, under the co-editorship of faculty in DILS. Indexed by LISA and Library Literature and Information Science, the journal provides opportunities for Clarion and graduate students in library science from other programs to submit their scholarly research for blind peer review and possible publication. Many Clarion DILS students have submitted work that was accepted and published in the journal.

#### V.5.3 Receive academic and career advisement and consultation

As noted above, academic advisement plays an integral role in the development of our students' programs of study. The university has invested in significant software to support academic advisement. Improvements to this system over the past seven years are notable, including:

- Addition of online degree audits to track student progress (visible to both students and advisors)
- Creation of note fields for advising notes online
- Creation of online application for graduation function through the advising software, with visible tracking of approvals
- More detailed documentation of transfer credits
- Unofficial transcripts that are downloadable to students from their advising portal
- Online drop and add a class functions controlled by students

The DILS mission statement "Prepares students for proactive engagement in the information professions" is exemplified in the support the university provides students through career counseling and guidance. Career Services has a program called CUMentor which guides students through the job search process and includes activities on resume writing, interviews, finding a mentor and other related topics. Our students have access to a dedicated Career Services staff person and access to the full range of [CUMentor initiatives](#), including the development of a professional resume, videos on successful preparation for job and internship interviews, and many other resources. Students may access the [Career Services page](#) on the web to view these materials or they also may contact the Career Services office.

#### V.5.4 Receive support services as needed

The [Clarion Online](#) web page introduces our online graduate students to a wealth of resources in various areas of support:

- The library provides a full-time distance librarian who has extensive experience in delivering resources, tutorials, reference consultations, and special assistance to online students. These services are detailed here <http://www.clarion.edu/libraries/services/for-clarion-online-students.html> and include extensive ILL support, including priority mailing of books to home addresses, numbers for telephone reference support toll-free, and an introductory video for online students. Many courses are supported through the interaction of the distance librarian in the classroom environment. The distance librarian provides taped information for specific bibliographic topics, general information literacy sessions for the beginning graduate student, and support for individual classroom assignments. Fully versed in online content management systems, the librarian is able to tape lectures, narrate PowerPoints, and demonstrate specific steps in online searching to the students.
- The [Online Writing Center](#) provides support to distance students who need help with papers. The site provides information on citation, academic honesty, and a phone number to call for scheduling an appointment.
- The [Office of Disability Support Services](#) provides access services to all online students who have documented disabilities. The office works closely with faculty to provide information about required accommodations for disabled students. Disability support for online students is specifically addressed on the homepage of the support office.
- The [Student Financial Aid Services site](#) provides videos, pdfs, and web-based information on grants, loans, scholarships and other topics related to student financial need.
- [Wellness services](#) are provided for online students, including:
  - CUtalk Online provides phone and email access for students to discuss health and stress concerns.
  - Telehealth enables veterans and students in the military to connect with a VA representative to schedule counseling services. The service is free and confidential.

#### V.5.5 Form student organizations

Clarion Online students are encouraged to join student organizations. DILS students participate in a number of recognized Clarion University student groups, often as student chapters of larger state and national professional organizations. Often these groups participate in spring break activities, that bring together online and on campus students. Trips that were organized over the past seven years include the New York Public Library and other New York sites, the National Library of Medicine, Library of

Congress, and other DC sites and trips to Pittsburgh to the SLA meetings. Extensive documentation of trip preparations can be found on the [ALA student Facebook page](#).

The following student groups have been active during the period under review:

- American Library Association
- Special Libraries Association
- Pennsylvania School Librarians Association
- Lambda Sigma

Student meetings traditionally were held on campus, but as the numbers of online students increased, meetings incorporated online meeting forums through Skype, email, and online course sites. As the graduate program has moved fully online, DILS faculty are transitioning to a new model of student organizations, emphasizing:

- The importance of student participation in professional organizations that are local to the student. They are introduced to this idea in their introductory course, LS 504 and encouraged strongly to join a local affiliate.
- The development of a local and archival student cohort group that provides activities, a web presence, and networking opportunities for students in that cohort.

Students selected based on merit and other criteria are invited to join two honorary fraternities, Phi Kappa Phi and Beta Phi Mu. Students who choose to join are recognized in Clarion University ceremonies.

### **Standard IV.6: Student Evaluation and Program Development**

V. 6 The program applies the results of evaluation of student achievement to program development. Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of the degree to which a program's academic and administrative policies and activities regarding students are accomplishing its objectives. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, staff, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

DILS faculty is dedicated to student success; therefore, student achievement is at the forefront of curriculum development. Evaluation and assessment of student achievement take place in the online classroom; and it is framed and outlined in each course syllabi. Clarion University establishes a [university-wide policy for course syllabi](#), which establishes the following requirements for student learning outcomes:

- At least three student outcomes are expected for a 3-credit course.

- Learning outcomes should be stated using action verbs that focus on the acquisition of knowledge, utilization of skills, demonstration of personal/social responsibility, and/or the integration of learning.
- The method(s) of assessing achievement of the learning outcomes must also be included for each learning outcome. As an example, a learning outcome and assessment might be stated, “Students will be able to write effective reports in the style and format consistent with the discipline. This outcome will be assessed through the draft and final written reports required in the course.”

Having the syllabi policy informs the students what the learning objectives are and how they are going to be assessed. It also promotes and facilitates the development of innovative assignments and coursework as well as curriculum development and change. During the Fall and Spring retreat the faculty identifies areas of weaknesses and strengths and deliberates on strategies on how to improve student learning. The recommended strategies might be the development of new learning objectives and methods of assessments or the transformation of current courses or development of new ones. It is crucial to indicate that in this systematic process of program enhancing students participate by attending both retreats and by examining the data collected in the MSLS and exit surveys. The table below illustrates the process:

Table IV.2 Student Achievement Assessment Data

Stakeholders	Venue	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
Faculty Students	Fall and Spring retreat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty deliberation</li> <li>• Student participation and testimonies</li> <li>• MSLS survey</li> <li>• Exit survey</li> <li>• Capstone artifacts</li> <li>• Syllabi</li> <li>• Alumni</li> <li>• Employer</li> </ul>	Recommendations Actions Decisions	Curriculum development and change

This systematic process of student achievement assessment provides a solid foundation for program enrichment; the other piece of the puzzle that evidences the success of the program is exemplified by the number of graduates that are employed in Pennsylvania and adjacent states. The [Alumni Survey of 2015-2016](#) shows that 82.02% of those taking the survey were working as library professionals; of the group that answered that they were not, 42.42% had other jobs, such as working for a vendor, working for a library software company or left to start their own business; 18 participants

selected that they couldn't find a job. Another interesting indicator is Q8: How long did it take you to secure your first position after graduation? 32.14 of participants responded immediately and 30.95 responded within six months and a year. Q9 of the survey addressed satisfaction with present career and academic situation, 77.71% of the participants responded, "yes" to that question. The alumni survey then shows that graduates of the program are successfully advancing careers in their chosen field.

The [Employer Survey 2015-2016](#) illustrates an overwhelming favorable opinion of the program graduates. Two items, however, indicate the need to make a greater effort: 1. Interpersonal and communication skills (Q5, strong=80%; weak=20%); 2. The ability to develop and evaluate a library budget (Q8, strong=111.11%, competent= 67.67% and weak= 22.22%). The DILS faculty reviewed both surveys (Fall retreat 2016) and recommended that action should be taken to address these areas in the following required courses: LS500 Information sources and services, LS504 Introduction to the information professions, and LS534 Administration and management of libraries. For the DILS faculty, the goal is to increase the percentage of satisfaction of alumni and employers; therefore curriculum development and change is a crucial component of systematic planning and program reviewed.

### Standard IV.7: Learning Outcomes

IV.7 The program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of student learning outcomes, using appropriate direct and indirect measures as well as individual student learning, using appropriate direct and indirect measures.

DLIS faculty reviews and assesses the curriculum systematically in the fall and spring retreat. Recommendations are made to the curriculum committee for **curriculum** development and change. The recommendations from the retreats are based on the evidence capture as indirect and direct assessment as well as awards, scholarships, and interactions with stakeholders. The following table shows types of evidence that are used to ground the decision-making process.

Table IV.3 Evidence to Ground Decision Making Process

Student learning assessments		Other evidence
Indirect assessment	Direct assessment	
Entrance survey, deployed LS504, D2L	Reflection paper, capstone LS570	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scholarships</li> <li>● Awards</li> <li>● Successful completion of</li> </ul>
Multi-subject learning survey	Research paper/project,	

(MSLS), deployed LS504, D2L	capstone LS600	course curricula <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders interaction at regional and national conferences</li> </ul>
Exit survey, deployed in capstone, either LS570 or LS600, D2L	Site supervisor assessment, capstone LS570	
Multi-subject learning survey (MSLS), deployed in capstone, either LS570 or LS600, D2L	Coursework evaluations, grades	
Alumni and employer surveys		

The following exemplifies and evidences the ongoing decision making process and the data to substantiate the evaluation of student learning outcomes. There are two main events during the academic year where faculty, students and other stakeholders meet to review and analyze direct and indirect measures of student learning. These two events take place at the beginning of the fall and spring semester of each year.

Recommendations, decisions and actions emanate from these meetings to improve to student learning. The following table summarizes assessment and recommendations. After the table, the evidence is presented in full.

Table IV.4 Assessment and Achievement Recommendations, Actions and Decisions

<b>Assessment Method</b>	<b>Recommendations, Actions, Decisions</b>
<b>Indirect assessment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS)</li> <li><b>Category 2:</b> Information resources</li> <li><b>Category 3:</b> Organization of information</li> <li><b>Category 4:</b> Information technology</li> </ul>	<b>Category 2:</b> Information resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue efforts to strengthen the learning objectives in LS500 and LS504</li> <li>Develop an advanced resource course</li> </ul> <b>Category 3:</b> Organization of information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of LS505 Organization of Information</li> </ul> <b>Category 4:</b> Information technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue efforts to enhanced technology skills in core curricula, especially in LS573</li> </ul>
<b>Direct assessments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection paper, capstone LS570</li> <li>Research paper/project, capstone LS600</li> </ul>	<b>Reflection paper, capstone LS570:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase and improve advising to the students</li> </ul> <b>Apprenticeship areas:</b> Discussion and feedback is needed from the stakeholders to reach a conclusion. <b>Research paper/project, capstone LS600:</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to strengthen the research skills of the students are being made in the pre-requisite course LS550 Research in librarianship. Faculty discussed the need to direct and guide the development of the research proposals to make them more achievable in LS600.</li> </ul>
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Presentation of evidence of appropriate indirect and direct measure of student learning

Description of the Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS)

The assessment instrument MSLS was developed by two faculty members of the DILS and first published in 2015; and later in 2016 (Harhai & Krueger, 2015; 2016). The table below shows the instrument categories and the number of items survey in each one. For more information on this instrument see:

Harhai, M. K., & Krueger, J. M. (2015). Developing competency-based assessment for library professionals. *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice*, 3(1), 1-15. , and Harhai, M. K., & Krueger, J. M. (2016). Competency-based professional development, *Journal of Library Administration*, 56:8, 939-956.

Table IV. 5 Multi Subject Learning Survey Items

<b>Category</b>	
1. Foundational principles of librarianship (FP)	9 items
2. Information resources (IR)	3 items
3. Organization of information (OI)	3 items
4. Information technology (IT)	3 items
5. Reference (Ref)	7 items
6. Research (Res)	2 items
7. Lifelong learning (LL)	3 items
8. Administration (Admin)	5 items

Example of Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS) comparison results for the academic year 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016 for the following learning objectives. Full results can be found on the DILS [accreditation webpage](#). In this case, the areas or categories are: information resources, organization of information and information technology. The responses to the items have been aggregated in ESC (Expert, very strong, competent) and WNA (Weak, very weak, no ability).

Category 2 assesses the following DLIS learning objective: “Create, select, acquire, manage, and maintain the information environment by analyzing how users seek out information.” Data is presented for from 2012 to 2016; as it can be observed the number

of respondents have grown from 3 in the year 2012-2013 to 76 for 2015-2016. This increase in responses is due to a systematic deployment of the survey instrument during the capstone courses LS570 and LS600. For the three items in category 2, the percentage of ESC ranges from 83.3% to 96.0% -year 2102-2013 is not being considered for these examples-. In this case, one can argue that learning objective under assessment meets the standard because there have been an effort to increase content and skill teaching on information resources in LS500, and LS504; it was also recommended the development of an advance resource course.

<b>Category 2: Information resources</b>	2012-2013 n=3	2013-2014 n=6	2014 - 2015 n=73	2015-2106 n=76
10. My ability to evaluate, recommend and apply policies and procedures for identifying and selecting library materials in all formats.	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 83.3% WNA= 16.6%	ESC= 87.6% WNA= 12.3%	ESC= 98.6% WNA= 1.3%
11. My ability to understand the collection development and acquisition processes and policies for a library.	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 83.3% WNA= 16.6%	ESC= 86.3% WNA= 13.6%	ESC= 93.4% WNA= 6.5%
12. My ability to define criteria and establish procedures to evaluate library materials for retention, replacement, conservation, preservation, duplication or deselection.	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 83.3% WNA= 16.6%	ESC= 83.5% WNA= 16.4%	ESC= 96.0% WNA= 3.9%

Category 3 assesses the following DLIS learning objective: “Demonstrate and be able to explain the principles of organizing recorded information by exploring both past and present theories of organizing and representing recorded information and by understanding and applying the standards of organizing recorded information in libraries and information centers.” For the three items in category 2, the percentage of ESC ranges from 66.6% for item 14 in the year 2013-2014 to 92.1% in 2015-2016. The DILS developed the course LS505 Organization of Information in spring 2014 to improve student learning and the data shows a very significant increase.

<b>Category 3: Organization of information</b>	2012-2013 n=3	2013-2014 n=6	2014-2015, n=73	2015-2016 n=76
13. My ability to apply relevant national and international bibliographic control standards to	ESC= 100.0 %	ESC= 83.3%	ESC= 68.4%	ESC= 85.5%

organize materials and resources at a level appropriate for the library and the materials.		WNA= 16.6%	WNA= 31.5%	WNA= 14.4%
14. My ability to pursue knowledge of current library trends and innovations; identify how they may impact bibliographic control and resource management and how they may be applied locally.	ESC= 100.0 %	ESC= 66.6%	ESC= 89.0%	ESC= 92.1%
		WNA= 33.3%	WNA= 10.9%	WNA= 7.8%
15. My ability to understand the general structure, relationships and relative importance of organization of information principles, systems and software.	ESC= 100.0 %	ESC= 83.3%	ESC= 93.1%	ESC= 100.0%
		WNA= 16.6%	WNA= 6.8%	

Category 4 assesses the following DLIS learning objective: “Identify, explain, use and critically evaluate both current and emerging information technologies in libraries and information centers.” In this case, the MSLS survey instrument shows that the ESC range 93.1% and 100.0% in all items. It was recommended the strengthened of content teaching and skill practice in LS573.

It is important to note; however, that more granularity is achieved when the responses (Expert, very strong, competent, Weak, very weak, no ability) are considered individually; therefore, during the fall and spring retreats faculty examines the data carefully and individually. Another exercise that takes place in faculty retreat is to compare the entrance and exit, and the MSLS entrance and exit surveys. In the case of the MSLS surveys a test is run to compare means.

<b>Category 4: Information technology</b>	2012-2013 n=3	2013-2014 n=6	2014-2015, 2015, n=73	2015-2016 n=76
16. My ability to assess technology trends that will affect the library and its users and advise all appropriate stakeholders in the organization.	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 94.6% WNA= 5.3%	ESC= 98.6% WNA= 1.3%
17. My ability to articulate and apply library policies on privacy, intellectual freedom, filtering and other professional ethical codes as they relate to technology access and use.	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 95.8% WNA= 4.1%	ESC= 100.0%

18. My ability to investigate and analyze community needs to meet current and future technology trends.	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 100.0%	ESC= 93.1% WNA= 6.8%	ESC= 97.3% WNA= 2.6%
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Assessment Reflection paper, capstone LS570 for the academic year 2015-2016. For more information, see the DILS [accreditation webpage](#).

The reflection paper is based on the capstone LS570 apprenticeship; data from the reflection paper, feedback from employers and alumni indicates that this experience is vital for the professional development of the DILS graduate students. There are recorded instances where DILS students are offered jobs after the apprenticeship is over and the academic program has concluded. The table indicates that in the three components of the rubric meets or exceeds the standard. The component "DILS learning objectives" is divided almost evenly between exceeds with 53.4% and meets 43.1% presents, which seems to indicate that faculty needs to increase and improve advising to the students in general and to the apprenticeship students in particular. This topic was discussed in the fall retreat to assure that faculty emphasizes and accentuates the American Library Association Core Competencies and DILS program goal and learning objectives.

Rubric standards	Exceeds	Meets	Does not meet
Experiences & accomplishments	88.6%	10.2%	1.1%
Apprenticeship learning objectives	88.6%	9.1%	2.2%
DILS learning objectives	53.4%	43.1%	3.4%

Assessment of the reflection paper, capstone LS570 for the academic year 2015-2016, apprenticeship areas

The table below shows in what areas DILS students completed their apprenticeship. Collection development, programming and outreach were the main areas with 32.9%, 23.4% and 18.3% respectively. This indicates that students want to gain experience on these areas, and that the libraries offering the apprenticeship need to staff these areas. Discussion and feedback is needed from the stakeholders to reach a conclusion. This example illustrates the importance of gathering and analyzing data to develop Clarion University, MSLS program degree.

Apprenticeship areas	%
Collection development	32.9%
Programming	23.4%
Outreach/marketing/social	18.3%

media	
Archival studies/special collections	11.3%
Information literacy	4.4%
Professional development	4.4%
Other areas	5.1%

Assessment of the research paper/project, capstone LS600 for the academic year 2015-2016, for more information go to the the DILS accreditation webpage.

The analysis of the LS600 artifacts for the year 2015-2016 demonstrated that only 80.0% were meeting or exceeding the rubric standards, while 20.0% did not. Efforts to strengthen the research skills of the students are being made in the pre-requisite course LS550 Research in librarianship. Faculty discussed the need to direct and guide the development of the research proposals to make them more achievable in LS600.

Rubric standards	Exceeds	Meets	Does not meet
Research methodology Literature review Presentation of results and conclusions	76.6%	3.3%	20.0%

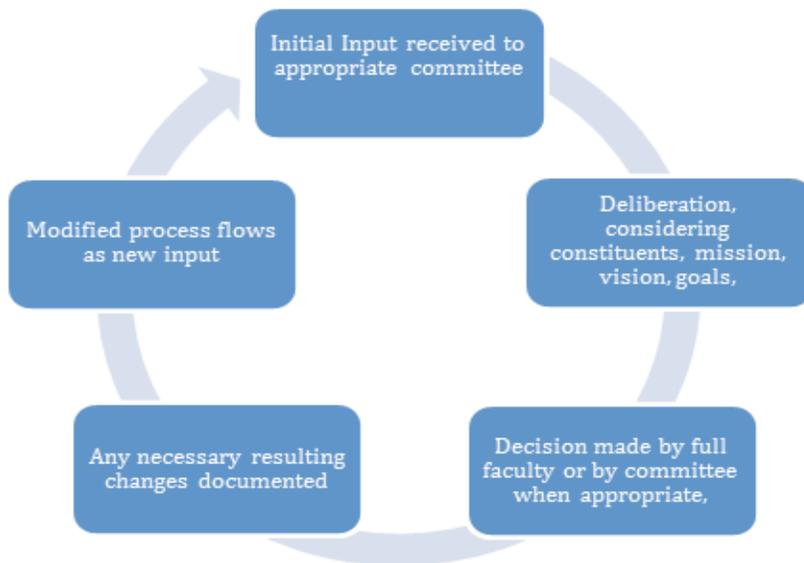
### Standard IV.8: Evaluation and Future Planning

IV.7 .8 The program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation of student learning outcomes and individual student learning are systematically used to improve the program and to plan for the future.

As seen above, the evaluation of student learning outcomes and individual student learning are systematically reviewed at departmental meetings and in the fall and spring departmental retreats. Data specific to student outcomes reviewed in these regular meetings include entrance and exit surveys, capstone artifact assessment results, capstone topics chosen, alumni surveys, employer surveys, and MSLS survey results. This data is used in discussions of departmental directions, curriculum, hiring, advising, and implementation of capstone and other assessment measures. The changes made at these retreats are noted in departmental minutes, CCPS curriculum documents, and policy materials for the department.

Following the model presented in chapter one for how DILS closes the loop on evaluation and assessment, several examples will be presented here showing how the

evaluation of student services and student learning outcomes have been addressed in a systematic manner for ongoing planning and improvement.



### Student groups:

Student groups have flourished at Clarion, especially the student organizations affiliated with the American Library Association, the Special Libraries Association, the Pennsylvania Student Library Association, and Lambda Sigma. With the transition to fully online education, these groups continue to meet successfully in an online environment, however, some considerations of how best to serve our students with regard to these groups have been raised.

1. Input: Student issues are presented at the fall retreat or at department meetings. Specific input over the last three years has been concern about decreasing participation in the online student groups, due to schedule challenges. Since far fewer students reside on campus, the built-in convenience of an evening meeting on site is no longer an advantage. Students live in different time zones and have full-time jobs and families.

2. Deliberation: Various faculty members who have led these groups brainstormed ideas. Student representatives at the retreats were asked for their input. Student leaders were consulted.

3. Decision: DILS faculty recommended that faculty teaching LS 504, the introductory course to the profession, should highly encourage joining national chapters of professional organizations closest to their interests, such as ALA, SLA, and SAA, and that faculty should additionally encourage students to join and take part in regional affiliate groups for these organizations. Further, the student online chapters will be continued, as they still provide many students an avenue to professional organization participation.

A second avenue of student group participation was discussed and it was decided to approve initiation of a student cohort, which is an online student interest group, called the Local and Archival Cohort. Any student with interests local studies librarianship, genealogy/family history, archives, special collections and other related fields would be invited to participate. A faculty member would take responsibility for organizing the group, but it would be student led to a large degree.

4. Documentation: This is recorded in the minutes of the DILS faculty meetings and retreats.

5. New Input: Faculty overseeing the cohort will report on numbers and activities after. In 2017, it was reported by Dr. Clark that the cohort students created a FB page at the end of the spring term of 2017 and that they are planning a speaker series. Other elements planned are: using the site for job announcements, using the site to share professional development opportunities, discussing professional conference activities of members, posting internship information, networking with alumni, and submitting short biographies of current student members.

#### Student advising: LS570 reflection paper data

1. Input: Reviewing the data from the reflection paper LS570 capstone apprenticeship for the year 2015-2016. The component "DILS learning objectives" is divided almost evenly between exceeds with 53.4% and meets with 43.1%.

Rubric standards	Exceeds	Meets	Does not meet
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Experiences & accomplishments	8 8.6%	0.2%	1.1%
Apprenticeship learning objectives	8 8.6%	.1%	2.2%
DILS learning objectives	5 3.4%	3.1%	3.4%

2. Deliberation: Faculty considered and discusses the findings in the 2015-2016 data presented.
3. Decision: Faculty needs to increase and improve advising to the students in general and to the apprenticeship students in particular, especially in regards to the Department learning objectives
4. Documentation: The deliberation and decisions took place during the 2016 retreat where the data was presented.
5. New input: Systematic review of data is needed to conclude if increasing and improving advising have resulted in a higher percentage in the “exceeds” column.

Internship areas: LS570 reflection paper data

1. Input: Reviewing data extracted from LS570 reflection papers shows in what librarianship areas Clarion MSLS students are completing their apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship areas	
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Collection development	2.9%
Programming	3.4%
Outreach/marketing/social media	8.3%
Archival studies/special collections	1.3%
Information literacy	.4%
Professional development	.4%
Other areas	.1%

2. Deliberation: Faculty considered and discusses the findings in the 2015-2016 data presented.
3. Decision: It was concluded that more data was necessary to explain the apprenticeship concentration in the following areas: collection development, programming and outreach/marketing/social media. Discussion and feedback is needed from the stakeholders to reach a conclusion.
4. Documentation: The deliberation and decisions took place during the 2016 retreat where the data was presented.
5. New input: Systematic review of data is needed which will include feedback from shareholders in order to impact curricular change.

Research in librarianship: rubric standards

1. Input: Analyses of data extracted from the LS600. The analyzes of the LS600 artifacts for the year 2015-2016 demonstrated that only 80.0% were meeting or exceeding the rubric standards, while 20.0% did not.

Rubric standards	Exceeds	Meets	Does not meet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Research methodology</li> <li>· Literature review</li> <li>· Presentation of results and conclusions</li> </ul>	66.7%	13.3%	20.0%

2. Deliberation: Faculty considered and discusses the findings in the 2015-2016 data presented.
3. Decision: Efforts to strengthen the research skills of the students are being made in the pre-requisite course LS550 Research in librarianship. Faculty discussed the need to direct and guide the development of the research proposals to make them more achievable in LS600.
4. Documentation: The deliberation and decisions took place during the 2016 retreat where the data was presented.
5. New input: Systematic review of data is needed in the coming years to evaluate the efforts being made in LS550 Research in librarianship in order to direct and guide the development of the research proposals

Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS): LS505 Organization of Information

1. Input: Analysis of data of Category 3 assesses the following DLIS learning objective: “Demonstrate and be able to explain the principles of organizing recorded information by exploring both past and present theories of organizing and representing recorded information and by understanding and applying the standards of organizing recorded information in libraries and information centers” from the Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS).

Category 3: Organization of information	2012-2013 n=3	2013-2014 n=6	2014-2015, n=73	2015-2016 n=76
13. My ability to apply relevant national and international bibliographic control standards to organize materials and resources at a level appropriate for the library and the materials.	SC= 100.0%	SC= 83.3% NA= 16.6%	SC= 68.4% NA= 31.5%	SC= 85.5% NA= 14.4%
14. My ability to pursue knowledge of current library trends and innovations; identify how they may impact bibliographic control and resource management and how they may be applied locally.	SC= 100.0%	SC= 66.6% NA= 33.3%	SC= 89.0% NA= 10.9%	SC= 92.1% NA= 7.8%
15. My ability to understand the general structure, relationships and relative importance of organization of information principles, systems and software.	SC= 100.0%	SC= 83.3% NA= 16.6%	SC= 93.1% NA= 6.8%	SC= 100.0%
<b>*The responses to the items have</b>				

<p><b>been aggregated in ESC (Expert, very strong, competent) and WNA (Weak, very weak, no ability).</b></p>				
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2. Deliberation: A trend of improving numbers of ESC was discuss in items 13, 14, and 15; which demonstrate the effectiveness of the development and implementation of LS505 Organization of Information in the 2014 Spring.
3. Decision: To explore further the effectiveness of core and electives courses and to develop new tools of data gathering and analysis to complement the Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS).
4. Documentation: The deliberation and decisions took place during the 2016 retreat where the data was presented.
5. New input: Data from the systematic review of the Multi-Subject Learning survey (MSLS) and from new data gathering tools will be used to assess core and electives courses in the program.