The University of Oklahoma
School of Library and Information Studies

Responses to the CDRP Recommendations
September 24, 2009
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Recommendations

• Advising & Mentoring

  § Consider a formal mentoring program for students, possibly using social networking software to facilitate this program.

  **Response:** SLIS will work with the School’s Alumni Association to assess the availability of alumni who would be interested in mentoring current students; support the interaction of CAS leadership scholars with SLIS undergraduates; encourage the SLIS student organization to engage in an Internet presence; continue to support faculty-supervised semester internships in various library and information agencies.

  § Encourage cohort groups in both Norman and Tulsa.

  **Response:** SLIS has had 27 students (from Norman and Tulsa) with complete financial support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) complete the MLIS degree while being members of one of three cohorts, each cohort entering the program in consecutive semesters. In 2009, the School has received another such grant that will establish two cohorts of students (also with complete financial support from the IMLS).

  § Follow up on the mentoring and advising for students enrolled in the school library media program, with particular attention focused on the complex state certification requirements.

  **Response:** This recommendation was made by the visiting ALA accreditation review panel in 2007 when all 27 students in the three cohorts were earning school library media (SLM) certification. The pressures on advising in this area lessened after their portfolio defenses and upon their graduation. Also, the School has now provided more web-based and detailed information regarding requirements for SLM certification (http://www.ou.edu/cas/slis/NewSite/PDFs/PPGs/SLM%202009.PDF).

  § Devise mechanisms by which full time faculty members become more involved with advising and interacting with undergraduate students outside of classroom.

  **Response:** BAIS students are assigned a faculty adviser who must be consulted before BAIS students receive permission to enroll in SLIS
courses, and SLIS faculty provide two group meetings to discuss enrollment options with BAIS students before enrollment begins each fall and spring semester. Further, SLIS faculty members serve as faculty supervisors for every BAIS student’s required internship, making at least two site visits per semester internship. SLIS also fully supports the College of Arts and Sciences’ Student Advisory Council by meeting five times per year with the SLIS Student Advisory Councils to address their concerns and to provide updates on SLIS endeavors.

- **Consider infusing the curriculum further with ICT (Information and Communication Technology) courses.**

**Response:** This recommendation requires ongoing innovation, adaptation, and application. SLIS recognizes that technological progress is a social experience as is learning. In 2008/2009, the School had several endeavors that illustrate its capacity for utilizing information and communication technologies within the curriculum. In that academic year, SLIS brought up the course Information and Communication Technology, which, having been a success in the spring and summer, has been put forward for University approval as a guided elective in the area of technology. The School has also been awarded an IMLS grant ($490,000) to fund the books, tuition, fees, and the purchase of laptops for 15 students who will pursue the MLIS degree in two cohorts (one admitted in Spring 2010 and one in Fall 2010). These two cohorts will be preparing for careers as academic librarians. The conferencing software Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro will be a primary tool for the cohorts, and it has also been purchased within the department to support online instruction. The collateral use of technology across the curriculum is a basic principle of teaching and learning within SLIS, and the application of technology in all SLIS courses is tracked by the Curriculum Committee.

- **Consider posting undergraduate student advising procedures on the SLIS website.**

**Response:** SLIS provides and will continue to maintain web-based BAIS program information, including: 1. The student guide to the BAIS program
   (http://www.ou.edu/cas/slis/NewSite/Programs/BAIS/BAIS_Degree_Requ.html)

2. A specific link to the advising procedures
   (http://www.ou.edu/cas/slis/NewSite/Programs/Advise_Planning.html).

SLIS is also evaluating the development of a D2L site to be accessed by students who seek information about advising procedures, related materials, and a FAQ list and by students who seek access to communication technologies that facilitate interactions among students and faculty.
• Enrollment & Diversity

- Continue to strategize ways to increase enrollment in BAIS program.

Response: The BAIS LIS 2003 Introduction to Information Studies has been approved as a general education course (Core Area III: Social Science), an opportunity for increasing enrollment but, more importantly, also an opportunity for acquainting undergraduates with the field of information studies as a consideration for a University major and as the foundation of diverse careers.

- Develop marketing strategy for the new BAIS program, including exploring diverse modes of curriculum delivery.

The BAIS is offered as an online program. SLIS has promoted the BAIS degree program with brochures (attached) mailed to counselors in Oklahoma high schools and to community colleges (as well as two north Texas community colleges).

- Consider using the advisory group to help promote the program and recruit students.

Response: SLIS will work with the advisory groups to promote the program and to recruit students.

- Consider new strategies for stabilizing the number of summer school course offerings in the graduate program.

Response: SLIS recently has been and will continue to offer required courses (taught by regular faculty only) in fall and spring semesters; the summer program will largely be composed of online elective courses, taught by regular (as they wish to do so) and adjunct faculty. SLIS has a two-year revolving course schedule (attached) to ensure timely offering of courses.

- Continue to strategize ways to increase student diversity in all degree programs and develop a diversity program to improve the environment of the school, making it more welcome to students of color.

Response: SLIS will continue to recruit a diverse student body. The undergraduate program is noted to have the largest percentage of Native American students enrolled in a BAIS program in the U.S. And, recruitment for diversity in the graduate programs is an ongoing effort that has been increased in the past year by SLIS faculty attending career fairs at regional Oklahoma universities (specifically, Northeastern State University, Langston University, and Southeastern State University, which has a 30% enrollment of Native American students). SLIS also recruits in
partnership with the American Library Association’s Spectrum Scholarship, and SLIS scholarship applications and notices, including federally funded fellowship opportunities, encourage applications from diverse communities. The SLIS website and other promotional venues will be reviewed to ensure they are welcoming to diverse students (e.g., photographs of students of color and of multicultural activities). Further, the School has long had a diverse faculty that, for example, currently includes (among its 13 faculty members) American Indian, African American, Middle Eastern, and Asian representation.

- Explore cooperation opportunities with other university units to facilitate curricular growth and development.

Response: SLIS will continue to spend time and effort in this endeavor through
1. The ongoing development of the BAIS as a 120-hour interdisciplinary program, which for any student may include on up to 102 hours offered outside the School (“Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Information Studies” attached).
2. Requested changes in the BAIS program that will allow the flexibility for new course opportunities and partnerships across the University without formal approval by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.
3. Review of possible elective courses outside the department for inclusion in graduate students’ programs of study. Such recommended courses are listed and maintained in the specialized program guides on the SLIS website (http://www.ou.edu/cas/slis/NewSite/Programs/MLIS/MLIS_tracks.html).

SLIS will also seek to expand the SLIS faculty’s recent interdisciplinary partnerships with faculty from diverse units, including Native American Studies (2 faculty members), the Center for Risk and Crisis Management, the College of Education, Public Health (OUHSC), African American Studies, Urban Planning, and Telecommunications.

- Faculty

  - Faculty members should increase their research productivity in terms of the number of refereed publications and the pursuit of funded research. They should continue the strong faculty mentoring program that was developed, particularly as it relates to scholarly activities.

Response: The School will continue to track faculty research productivity (especially, in regard to the number of refereed articles published and well placed), to encourage faculty, and to reward successes in their research productivity and funded research. The School also will continue to employ and to evaluate its mentoring process.
- Continue to focus on improving Tulsa-Norman relations where possible.

**Response:** SLIS will continue to focus on improving Tulsa-Norman relations where possible (e.g., working toward common goals within the School, College, and University and encouraging partnerships among the faculty).

- Encourage faculty to make use of the Masters of Science in Knowledge Management outlets and contacts to pursue interdisciplinary research/funding opportunities.

**Response:** The School will encourage faculty to make use of MSKM outlets and contacts to pursue interdisciplinary research and funding.

- Continue the focus on Native American students. [It is the SLIS faculty’s understanding that the review panel approved “Native American agenda” in place of “Native American students.”]

**Response:** The School’s Native American agenda, includes research, teaching, and service, and the School views that agenda as part of the School’s shared mission with the University to serve the state of Oklahoma.

- Address salary inversion and compression among faculty when funding becomes available.

**Response:** SLIS must advocate for equitable salaries within OU, especially among the upper ranks where inversion and compression are significant problems in regard to faculty morale and retention.

- **Planning & Assessment**

  - Use the assessment information to improve the programs.

**Response:** SLIS will maintain its scheduled collection and analysis of evaluation data, applied by the faculty through the School’s committee structure to improve the undergraduate and graduate programs.

**Consider capturing student exit interview data as part of overall assessment plan.**

**Response:** As part of its overall assessment plan, SLIS will continue to collect, analyze, and apply exit interview data from graduating students who are in their last semester.

- Consider developing a new comprehensive long-range strategic plan that identifies goals, sets objectives for meeting these goals, and provides the framework for assessing progress in each of three areas of education, research, and service.
Response: SLIS will develop a new comprehensive long-range (five-year) strategic plan.

- Continue with thoughtful analysis on starting a new Ph.D. program. Scholarship and research funding will need to increase before a Ph.D. program can be started. As one of the external reviewers suggested, the development of a Ph.D. program should be given low priority.

Response: SLIS views the development of a Ph.D. program as a product of sustained growth in faculty research funding and productivity and a supportive environment (scholarly, collaborative, and interdisciplinary).