Academic year 2009-2010 Graduate Studies Committee (hereafter referred to as GSC) Charge:

The Graduate Studies Committee is a standing committee of the School of Library and Information Studies. The Graduate Studies Committee serves in an advisory capacity for matters pertaining to the administration of the two master’s degree programs of the School, the MLIS and MSKM, and makes recommendations to the Director and the faculty relative to the consideration of new policy and to the interpretation and implementation of existing policies. In particular, the Committee is charged with the following:

- oversight of the School’s summative academic evaluation options:
  1. conducting the comprehensive examination, serving as the official comprehensive examination committee for the purpose of certifying results, ongoing review and revision of the comprehensives handbook, and aggregated analysis of results of the examination results for use in program improvement and planning
  2. oversight of the portfolio process, including establishing deadlines for portfolio submission and presentation, ongoing review and revision of the portfolio handbook, assessment of the efficacy of the portfolio process as an end of program assessment
  3. oversight of the thesis process, including ongoing review and revision of the thesis handbook
- monitoring of the School’s retention policies, hearing of appeals to retention requirements, and recommendations to the Director for exceptions
- consideration of petitions for waiver of program requirements and recommendations to the Director for waivers
- monitoring of the School’s end of program assessment process and ongoing assessment of the systematic use of the assessment data for program improvement and planning
Membership: 4 SLIS faculty members, 3 SLIS graduate students

For 2009/2010, the Graduate Studies Committee was specifically requested to accomplish the following.

- complete examination of the current comprehensive examination format (open book questions with take-home format vs. a closed set of questions that are timed and proctored on-site)

- investigate possibilities for providing end of program assessment orientation presentations online. It is suggested that the Committee monitor the directions that the College is moving to provide lectures online.

The GSC added an additional item to the requested actions:

- review the Data Gathering forms and data collected. Develop a protocol for analyzing and utilizing the data gathered from both students and faculty on the Data Gathering forms.

The following sections outline activities engaged in and outcomes and recommendations of these activities related to both the Charge and to the specific requests of the GSC for the Academic year 2009-2010.

Activities Related to the Charge:

Charge Item 1: oversight of the School’s summative academic evaluation options:
conducting the comprehensive examination, serving as the official comprehensive examination committee for the purpose of certifying results, ongoing review and revision of the comprehensives handbook, and aggregated analysis of results of the examination results for use in program improvement and planning

Activity: The members of the GSC organized and conducted two End of Program Orientation Sessions for the students at the Norman and Tulsa campuses. One session was presented in the Fall 2009 and the second in Spring 2010. Both were well attended. During the second session (Spring 2010) a test of audio/video equipment was conducted to determine the best method(s) to capture these sessions to put online.

Recommendation: See Requested Item #2 below.

Activity: The members of the GSC and SLIS faculty, along with the assistance of Maggie Ryan, Janie Allen, and Jenifer Fryar, developed question sets, organized and conducted two comprehensive examination sessions for the students at the Norman and Tulsa campuses. One session was presented in the Fall 2009 and the second in Spring 2010. In Fall 2009, 19 students took the comprehensive exam. In Spring 2010, 34 students took the comprehensive exam.
Activity: GSC faculty members began implementing a new process for the development of the comprehensive examination question sets. Faculty members of the GSC reviewed the existing comps question bank, along with new questions received by SLIS faculty members, and compiled a shortened list of comps questions for consideration by the SLIS faculty.

Recommendation: We recommend that the 2010-2011 GSC continue the development of the new comprehensive examination question set process and formalize it for SLIS faculty.

Charge Item 2: oversight of the portfolio process, including establishing deadlines for portfolio submission and presentation, ongoing review and revision of the portfolio handbook, assessment of the efficacy of the portfolio process as an end of program assessment
monitoring of the School’s end of program assessment process and ongoing assessment of the systematic use of the assessment data for program improvement and planning

Activity: In the course of planning the End of Program Assessment Orientation sessions, by attending portfolio sessions, and from suggestions from the faculty, the GSC faculty members noted that the handbooks for both the portfolio and comprehensive examinations are in need of some minor updates.

Recommendation: As these issues were raised late in the term, the GSC is recommending that the review of said handbooks and subsequent updates to the handbooks be undertaken by the GSC in the coming year.

Charge Items 3 and 4: monitoring of the School’s retention policies, hearing of appeals to retention requirements, and recommendations to the Director for exceptions
consideration of petitions for waiver of program requirements and recommendations to the Director for waivers

Activities: The Committee made recommendations to the Director regarding the following student appeals and/or petitions for waivers:

- petition to reconsider the rejection of student's Admission to Candidacy form and allow the 9 hours of credit earned between the years 2003 and 2004 to count toward the degree. These 9 hours were outside of the 5 year limit for attaining the degree (recommended);
- an extension of an additional 1.5 years to complete the MLIS degree be granted to a student with extraordinary circumstances (recommended);
- petition for readmission to the MLIS program offered by SLIS. Student was withdrawn from the program for receiving nine credit hours of a grade of C or lower (not recommended);
- petition to transfer in 6 nonSLIS/nonOU course hours from another ALA accredited LIS program (University of North Texas) (recommended)
Activities Related to the Specific Requests to the GSC:

Requested Item 1: *complete examination of the current comprehensive examination format (open book questions with take-home format vs. a closed set of questions that are timed and proctored on-site)*

Activities: GSC members have completed several activities related to this request as follows:

- review of LIS and other disciplines' literature related to end of program assessment options used and evaluation thereof. Very few resources report on this issue and no research studies/reports on decision-making related to end of program assessment options were found by the GSC. We recommend that the next GSC continue this literature review.

- informal interviews with students who completed the comprehensive exam in Fall 2009. Ruth Neal, one of the student representatives on the GSC conducted informal interviews (on her own volition) with students. Unfortunately the data gathered by Ms. Neal was not captured in writing and only reported verbally to the GSC. A request of this report has been made to Ms. Neal. It is, however, a recommendation that the 2010-2011 GSC continue this activity by developing a more formal mechanism to capture this information from students.

- In relation to the previous item, the GSC has begun investigating ways to use the data from the Data Gathering forms to inform our activities related to this requested item. The current method of gathering data, via the Data Gathering forms, is voluntary and sparse, and to the knowledge of the current GSC and past GSC faculty members, these forms and the data captured therein have not been reviewed or the data analyzed.

- formal survey instrument and study proposal is currently under development by the GSC to be administered to faculty and administrative staff members responsible for end of program assessment options at all ALA accredited LIS schools in the U.S. and Canada. The questionnaire will be presented to the faculty in May 2010 and piloted by SLIS faculty at the beginning of the Fall 2010 semester. Once approved by SLIS faculty and IRB approval is received, the survey will be conducted with the LIS schools.

Recommendation: The GSC members recommend that these activities be continued by the 2010-2011 GSC.

Requested Item 2: *investigate possibilities for providing end of program assessment orientation presentations online. It is suggested that the Committee monitor the directions that the College is moving to provide lectures online. Note: the GSC expanded this request to include additional teaching-related activities that could be provided online by SLIS faculty.*

Activities: GSC members have completed several activities related to this request as follows:
During the End of Program Assessment Orientation (Spring 2010) a test of audio/video equipment was conducted to determine the best method(s) to capture these sessions to put online. It was determined that current equipment owned by SLIS is not adequate for either the capture or provision of these sessions online.

In preparation of developing a College of Arts & Sciences Technology Grant, GSC members have been brainstorming other teaching-related uses for requested technologies. We have also been conducting research into
  - which technologies to use,
  - available resources available within and to SLIS, and
  - surveying how other units of the College and other units on the Norman, Tulsa, and Health Sciences campuses are using and capturing teaching activities and making them available online.

Outcome: Dr. Brown has requested the funds to purchase the needed technology as part of her start-up package for the directorship. Information gathered by the GSC will be used to inform the purchase of the equipment for Norman and Tulsa using money from the College.

Requested Item 3 (added by GSC): review the Data Gathering forms and data collected. Develop a protocol for analyzing and utilizing the data gathered from both students and faculty on the Data Gathering forms.

Activity: The GSC has been working with Maggie Ryan to compile a complete set of the Data Gathering forms received from both faculty and students. We have data from Fall 2006 – Spring 2010. The GSC has been reviewing the forms (questions asked) and has plans to develop a spreadsheet to organize the data gathered.

Recommendation: The GSC members recommend that these activities be continued by the 2010-2011 GSC.

In summary, the 2009-2010 GSC has made significant progress towards the items requested of the Committee this year. We recommend that the following be continued by the 2010-2011 GSC:

- develop process for compiling comprehensive examination question set by the GSC and formalize it for SLIS faculty
- review and update End of Program Assessment option handbooks (Comprehensive Exams, Portfolios, and Thesis handbooks)
- investigate ways to use the data from the Data Gathering forms to inform SLIS End of Program Assessment options and curriculum planning activities
- work with the SLIS Director to purchase the technologies needed to capture and make available online End of Program Assessment orientation sessions and related materials (e.g., sample portfolios)
- continue all activities related to evaluation of delivery and form of comprehensive exams