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The mission of the School of Library and Information Science is to prepare qualified individuals for professional roles in libraries, archives, and other information environments with appropriate knowledge and skills to serve the information needs of their communities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The University of Southern Mississippi School of Library and Information Science (SLIS). Of the fifty-nine library and information science programs currently accredited by the American Library Association (ALA) in the United States and Canada, SLIS is one of only twenty offered completely online and is the only ALA-accredited program in the state of Mississippi. Information on accreditation can be found in Appendix A.

SLIS has been meeting the challenge of providing quality education to students in remote areas since its inception—first through travel to remote sites, then through Interactive Video Network, and later through the Internet. In 1999, SLIS offered the first fully online course ever at the university, and in 2002 the MLIS program was the first degree program at USM offered completely online. This program will prepare you for the many opportunities and challenges of working in libraries or other information fields.
This document summarizes some of the important procedures and regulations that will govern your activities as you proceed toward your master of library and information science degree. Please retain this Graduate Handbook for future reference. The material in this handbook is not intended to substitute or otherwise modify the regulations in the current Graduate Bulletin or in other official University documents. This document supplements and explains general University and Departmental-level requirements as they apply specifically to the graduate program in Library and Information Science. If you find any portion to be unclear, or if you believe there are other topics that should be included, please contact the director.

Even though some of the information found in this Graduate Handbook can be found online and on our Web site, we felt that it was important enough to include the information here as well. It is important that you read through the entire handbook, including the appendices, as they highlight the following SLIS information: Programs of Study (Appendix B)—including school licensure and graduate certificates; Course Scheduling, Master’s Project Committee, and Credit Transfer from Other Institutions (Appendix C); Graduation Information (Appendix D); Graduate Assistantships (Appendix E); Scholarship Information (Appendix F); SLIS Community (Appendix G)—including listservs and student and professional associations. In addition to information specific to the School of Library and Information Science and our discipline, there is information in the appendices that address more general helpful information on topics such as coursework (Appendix H), and being a successful graduate student (Appendix I).
II. CONTACT INFORMATION: School, Faculty, & Staff

General Contact Information:
SLIS offices: **SLIS@usm.edu**
SLIS office phone: 601-266-4228
SLIS Fax: 601-266-5774
[http://www.usm.edu/library-information-science](http://www.usm.edu/library-information-science)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Mrs. Rowell</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Karen.Rowell@usm.edu">Karen.Rowell@usm.edu</a>; 601-266-4510</td>
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</table>
III. **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & REQUIREMENTS**

A. You will be asked to read this Handbook in the first weeks of your enrollment in LIS 500, and to sign a form to indicate that you have read it and have had the opportunity to ask questions about its contents. The most recent copy of the Handbook can be downloaded from the SLIS Web site (www.usm.edu/slis/). Notices of updates are sent out on the schools list-serv.

B. It is strongly recommended that you permanently retain copies of course syllabi, assignments and papers. These may be helpful when seeking employment and during your enrollment for the Master’s Project LIS 695, which requires that you pass a comprehensive exam based upon the core classes. Retaining all of your notes and assignments will assist you with the exam. Past issues of *The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate Bulletin* are available online through the Registrar’s Web site.

C. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with all university calendars for advising and registration, bill payment, dropping classes, and other procedures of the university. While we will attempt to make timely announcements to remind you of deadlines, it is your responsibility to comply with the university calendar and deadlines. All university calendars are posted on the Registrar’s Web site at http://www.usm.edu/registrar. Knowing these dates is paramount to staying in good academic standing if you need to withdraw from a course or the University.

D. Additionally, you should be aware of the information found on the Graduate School’s Web page at http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school - this Web site contains deadlines for admission applications, graduation deadlines, dates for registration, as well as links to various forms and information including funding resources, graduate appeals and grievance process, handbooks, organizations, research approval, tuition & fees, and the Graduate Student Research Symposium. The Graduate School is located in McCain Library; phone numbers are 601-266-4369 and 601-266-5138 (Fax). The email address is graduateschool@usm.edu

E. **Research and Scholarly Integrity Training** must be completed by all graduate
students the first semester they are enrolled in graduate school. In SLIS, students typically complete this training in LIS 500. The RSI (formerly RCR) policy and training information are found on the Graduate School Web page – www.usm.edu/graduate-school - contact the Dean of the Graduate School if you have any questions regarding the policy or training information. See the current graduate bulletin for details.

F. It is your responsibility to keep your information up-to-date in S.O.A.R. (info.usm.edu/soar/). Additionally, it is helpful to inform SLIS of any changes in your name, USM or personal email, physical address, phone number, or your enrollment plans. If you have a secondary, personal email that you would like to include, please be sure to add it to your information form in LIS 500. You should send such information to slis@usm.edu.

G. It is your responsibility to be familiar with and understand the Southern Miss Academic Honesty policy. It is found in the USM Graduate Bulletin (http://www.usm.edu/registrar/publications/) and in Appendix J. After reading and understanding the policy, students must return the signed portion of the policy within three weeks of the first semester as a student. Plagiarism may result in an F in the course. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and self-plagiarism.

H. Students are responsible for reading syllabus content and becoming familiar with EACH course’s policies and procedures. If a student has questions about the syllabus, these should be addressed to the course instructor. You are responsible for communicating directly with the instructors. Please be aware that due to the volume of email received, you may need to follow-up directly with the professor before taking further steps. If you are having difficulty contacting an instructor via your eagles.usm.edu email, call the SLIS office, (601-266-5459 or 601-266-4228) or use EXTERNAL email to contact Adrienne.Patterson@usm.edu, who can help resolve any technical issues that may be involved and will report any academic issues to the director. If an instructor has not responded to an email within four (4) class days (do not count weekends or holidays) resend the email; if no response, then contact Adrienne.Patteson@usm.edu or slis@usm.edu.

I. Incompletes are granted at the discretion of the instructor. To remove an Incomplete, students must complete and submit the assignments the instructor has
informed them of within the timeframe established by the instructor or set as the limit by the University.

J. You are responsible for knowing and following the attendance policy for the virtual classrooms. Failure to participate or missing virtual classroom meetings will result in a lower grade. Extraordinary circumstances will be adjudicated by the instructor and/or the director.

K. Writing and speaking skills of a graduate level are expected. For assistance, even at a distance, please visit the Writing Center (http://www.usm.edu/writing-center) or the Speaking Center (http://www.usm.edu/speaking-center).
IV. TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION

A. The University of Southern Mississippi requires that faculty use official channels of communication. Examples include your official USM email, Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate, and the SLIS listserv.

B. EMAIL eagles.usm.edu: The University provides students with an email account. You are required to use your Southern Miss email when communicating with faculty. If you opt to forward your eagles mail to a personal account, you are responsible for insuring that it is working. Faculty will send announcements, notices, and instructions via your eagles.usm.edu. You are responsible for any information sent to your eagles.usm.edu address. Email sent through the online course sites is automatically sent to your USM eagles.usm.edu email address only. It is recommended that you check this email daily—if not multiple times a day.

C. lisnews@usm.edu: This is a list server established to keep students informed. You must be subscribed to this list server. All announcements to the general student body of the program and often to specific classes will be posted through the lisnews list server. Subscribe to lisnews

http://mailman.usm.edu/mailman/listinfo/lisnews

D. Blackboard: Blackboard is the learning platform that is used for class. It can potentially be used for but not limited to the following: discussion boards, assignment submission, wikis, blogs, YouTube videos, journals, and internal messaging. Blackboard has a feature that allows you to get notifications to your phone or social media account. This is optional and requires signing up for it through Blackboard.

E. Blackboard Collaborate: Blackboard Collaborate is the online classroom where the SLIS synchronous courses take place. This environment allows for chat, audio, and video features. It works best with a headset but a computer with good speakers and built-in microphone can be sufficient. The most common issues with accessing Blackboard Collaborate are pop-up blockers, out-of-date java, and/or browser selection.
F. **Internet Connection:** It is important that you have a quality Internet connection. It is the student’s responsibility to have and maintain sufficient Internet connectivity.
V. UNIVERSITY AND SLIS POLICIES

A. Academic Advising: Advising may be accomplished via email, and is required before you will be able to enroll in any courses. Your advisor is listed in SOAR. At the request of previous students and upon extensive discussion and study among the faculty and curriculum committee, specific guidelines have been established related to advising and taking classes online. Suggested plans of study can be found along with information about Supplemental Endorsement School Licensure and Certificate programs in Appendix B.

1) Students entering any MLIS program will enroll in LIS 500: LIS Orientation (1 credit hour) as their first course, or as one of the first courses of the first semester. Students should take the 500 level core courses (LIS 501, LIS 505 Cataloging and Classification, and LIS 511 Collection Development and Management) in the first semesters (but may also take an elective if approved by an advisor).

2) Students may not enroll in either LIS 651 or LIS 668 until they complete LIS 501, 505 and 511 with a grade of B or better.

4) Students may not enroll in LIS 651 and LIS 668 during the same semester.

5) Graduate students may not enroll in more than 9 credit hours without permission from the director.

6) Whenever a student is admitted as a conditional student they are required to earn a 3.0 GPA for the first nine hours taken to remove the conditional status.

7) Students are required to earn a B or better in LIS 501, 505, and 511. Students are only allowed one C and only one grade can be replaced on the transcript. Students who receive a C in an additional course must retake the course to obtain a B or better, whether or not the grade can be replaced on the transcript. If a student’s cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student will have only one probationary semester of enrollment to raise their GPA to 3.0.
Students who fail to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 during the probationary semester will be dismissed from the program.

8) Students may not enroll in LIS 695 Master’s Research Project, until all core courses (LIS 501, 505, 511, 605, 636, 651, 668) are successfully completed and three (3) authorized electives are successfully completed. Additional information can be found online.

A SLIS Faculty Council decides all admissions, yearly student evaluations, and curriculum changes. Disciplinary concerns involving students originate with individual faculty and are addressed first by the director, who may elect to be advised by the SLIS Faculty Council and then by the college and university as appropriate according to college and university policy. Disciplinary concerns involving faculty originate with the student, staff or faculty member involved and proceed to the director or dean, and then to the college and university as appropriate according to college and university policy. Concerns involving discrimination of any kind may begin with the director or proceed directly to the dean of the college or to the university’s affirmative action officer.

B. Continuous Enrollment Policy: Students who have enrolled in LIS 695, Master’s Project, but do not complete the project in one semester must enroll in a minimum of one hour of coursework, usually LIS 697 if you are not taking other graduate classes, each semester after the first enrollment until the master’s project is accepted for a grade. If you fail to enroll for the appropriate hours, you will be discontinued from Southern Miss and will need to reapply for admission to the program. See the Graduate Bulletin for further information.

C. Southern Miss Office for Disability Accommodations: The primary function and mission of the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) is to provide those services necessary to assure equal educational opportunity to all students pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Accommodations for disabilities cannot be made by instructors unless they receive instructions to do so from USM’s ODA. If you feel that you have a disability that qualifies for accommodations under Section 504 or the ADA, please
call (601) 266-5024  http://www.usm.edu/oda The Office for Disability Accommodations also works with students taking online classes. For more information, see  http://www.usm.edu/oda/online.php

D. **University Grievance Policy:** Your right to resolve grievances with the University is affirmed, and specific appeal procedures have been established to assure timely and appropriate consideration of each grievance. Student grievances generally originate at the school level, and the resolution of grievances is sought within the school. In the case of SLIS, the grievance procedure would begin with the director. If the grievance involves the director, the student should initiate the grievance with the dean of the College of Education and Psychology. The grievance should be made known with a written letter signed by student within ten (10) working days of the occurrence.  
http://www.usm.edu/graduateschool/grievance.php

E. **USM Sexual Harassment Policy:** To foster an environment of respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the University community, Southern Miss is committed to maintaining working and learning environments free of sexual harassment. It is the policy of the University that no member of its community shall sexually harass another. Any employee or student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action which may include termination. Sexual harassment is illegal under federal law. See the current graduate bulletin for further details.  
http://catalog.usm.edu/

F. **Grade Review Policy:** The instructor (defined as one who has the responsibility for a course) has the authority in his or her class over all matters affecting the conduct of the class, including the assignment of grades. Student performance should be evaluated according to academic criteria made available to all students within the first two weeks of each semester. Grades are not to be determined in an arbitrary or capricious manner. When a student disagrees with the final grade given by an instructor, fair play requires the opportunity for an orderly appellate procedure. A student must initiate the appeal procedure within 30 school days (excluding Saturday, Sunday, and official student holidays) of the beginning of the semester subsequent to the one in which the grade was awarded, or 120 calendar days after the issuance of Spring semester grades, should the student not be
enrolled during the summer term. The procedure assures due process for both the instructor and student. For policies and procedures governing grade review, contact the Office of the Provost. See the graduate bulletin for further details.

http://catalog.usm.edu/

G. **Records Access Policy:** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, or the Buckley Amendment, deals with the subject of access to educational records, and it requires institutions to establish policies, which set forth the procedure by which these records are to be reviewed or inspected. University policy in this matter is specified in the current **USM Graduate Bulletin.**

H. **Program Probation Policy:** A student may be placed on program probation for unsatisfactory academic progress or for unsatisfactory performance in practicum placements, internship placements, and/or professional or ethical violations or concerns. When a student is placed on probation, the basis for the probation, the term of the probationary period, and the conditions that must be met in order to be removed from probationary status will be specified in writing. Academic probation is documented by grade, and the student is responsible for addressing grade issues. Failure to meet the conditions of probation will result in termination from the program. If a student believes that the probationary status is not justified, or that the conditions of the probation are unreasonable, the student may appeal in writing to the director within 10 working days.

A student placed on probation must, in consultation with their major professor, submit a remediation plan to the SLIS Faculty Council. The council can recommend acceptance, denial, or modification of the plan. A remediation plan must be accepted by the Faculty Council in the semester immediately following the semester in which the grade (or action) that resulted in probation was assigned, or a Termination Review by the Faculty Council will commence. The purpose of the Termination Review is to review the student’s progress in the program and, if the council determines that the student should be terminated from the program, will so recommend to the director of the school.

Students placed on probation will remain on probation for a minimum of one semester. Students placed on probation for unacceptable grades must successfully
remediate the unacceptable grade and meet the requirements of their remediation plan, without incurring any additional complaints or problems, in order for probationary status to be removed.

I. **Policy for Facilitating Progress when Experiencing Difficulty in the Program:** When a student experiences difficulties in the program, several steps may be taken. These include, but are not limited to: (a) reducing the student’s course load, (b) approving a request for a semester leave-of-absence, (c) referring a student to remediation courses, and (d) requiring repeating courses.

J. **Institutional Review Board:** The Southern Miss **Human Subjects Protection Review Committee** must review and approve all research conducted using human subjects such as interviews and surveys. The USM **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee** must review and approve all research using non-human subjects. Approval for research involving human or non-human subjects must be obtained **prior** to the beginning of data collection. The appropriate approval forms may be obtained from The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board (IRB) at [http://www.usm.edu/irb/](http://www.usm.edu/irb/). Regulations are discussed in detail in LIS 668 Research Methods in LIS.

K. **SLIS Grievance Policy:** The student’s first course of action is to contact the professor of record for grievances that do not fall into categories covered by other policies (see D, E, and F). If resolution does not happen at the course-level, please contact the SLIS director.
VI. CONCLUSION

Throughout your program in library and information science, SLIS faculty and staff will strive to assist in development of competencies that will serve you as an information professional. You should familiarize yourself with the Mission and Goals posted on the SLIS Web site. In addition to the resources highlighted in this Graduate Handbook, there are many services and organizations at Southern Miss designed to address the needs of students, faculty, staff, their families, and friends. The Division of Student Affairs can assist you in locating the particular resource to fit your need. These resources include Admissions, Career Services, Counseling Center, Dean of Students, Disability Accommodations, Financial Aid, Health Services, Parking Management, Registrar, and University Police in Hattiesburg. Phone (601) 266-5020.

http://www.usm.edu/studentaffairs/.

A Final Request

Please keep your contact information current with the School and the Southern Miss Alumni Office after you graduate. The School occasionally finds it necessary to contact graduates, and it is important that we have up-to-date contact information. Please complete the form at the end of this document for the School and also be sure to join the Southern Miss Alumni Association at http://southernmissalumni.com
Appendix A: Accreditation

The American Library Association (ALA) Office for Accreditation (OA) is responsible for the accreditation of schools of library and information science at the Master’s level [http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/home](http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/home). The ALA maintains a directory of accredited master's programs [http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/directory](http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/directory). Like other accrediting programs, the American Library Association exists to establish and maintain standards of quality so that graduates from accredited programs will be prepared in a consistent and predictable way as they enter the profession.

The MLIS program at The University of Southern Mississippi is accredited by the American Library Association (ALA), the only program in the state of Mississippi to hold this distinction. Licensure of the school librarian is recognized by the state of Mississippi. The curriculum for the School Librarian master's program has been approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the American Library Association (ALA). The University of Southern Mississippi is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).


Additional accrediting information, like frequently asked questions, the history and the process, can be found at [http://www.ala.org/groups/committees/ala/ala-coa](http://www.ala.org/groups/committees/ala/ala-coa). The Standards of Accreditation can be viewed at [http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards](http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards).
Appendix B: Program of Study

Master’s Core Courses
LIS 500 LIS Orientation (beginning in fall 2012)
LIS 501 Reference and Information Sources
LIS 505 Cataloging and Classification
LIS 511 Collection Development and Management
LIS 605 Library Management
LIS 636 Foundations of Librarianship
LIS 651 Fundamentals of Information Science
LIS 668 LIS Research Methods
LIS 695 Master’s Research Project

Electives (15 hours) with at least 3 hours at the 600 level

LIS 500 should be completed in the first semester of enrollment.
LIS 501, 505, and 511 should be completed within the first year of enrollment and must be completed prior to enrolling in LIS 651 or LIS 668. LIS 651 and LIS 668 cannot be taken during the same semester.

Prior to admission to LIS 695, all other core courses must be completed.

Only grades of “A”, “A-”, “B+”, and “B” are considered acceptable for graduate courses. “B-” or “C” grades will have a negative impact on GPA and may result in the student being placed on probation. Grades of “D” or “F” are considered failing grades. Failure to maintain a 3.0 grade point average will result in probation and may lead to dismissal from the program.
Southern Miss SLIS
MLIS Degree Requirements, Electives

Core Courses (40 hours – 25 required, 15 elective*)
LIS 500 – LIS Orientation (1 hour)
LIS 501 – Reference and Information Sources
LIS 505 – Cataloging and Classification
LIS 511 – Collection Development and Management
LIS 605 – Library Management
LIS 636 – Foundations of Librarianship
LIS 651 – Fundamentals of Information Science
LIS 668 – LIS Research Methods
LIS 695 – Master’s Research Project

*One 3-hour elective must be a technology course:
LIS 516, LIS 557, or LIS 558
LIS 689: Library Practicum is strongly recommended for those with no library experience.

Required Electives for MLIS with School Library Licensure (15 hours)
LIS 508 – School Libraries
LIS 516 – Technology in the School Library
LIS 607 – School Library and the Curriculum
Choose two of the following:
LIS 517 – Literature and Related Media for Children
LIS 518 – Literature and Related Media for Adolescents
LIS 590 – Library Instruction

Graduate Certificate in Archives & Special Collections (18 hours)
LIS 646 – Special Collections and Archives
LIS 647 – Introduction to Archival Organization
LIS 648 – Archival Practicum
LIS 645 – Digital Libraries
LIS 652 – Metadata
Electives (choose one):
LIS 506 – Advanced Cataloging and Classification
LIS 533 – History of the Book
LIS 580 – British Studies
LIS 631 – History of Libraries
LIS 634 – History of Children’s Literature
LIS 692 – Special Problems (on an approved archival topic such as genealogy)

Note: Only 12 hours of electives can count for both a certificate and an MLIS; students who wish to earn both an MLIS and the archival certificate must take two extra electives, such as the archival electives above and/or:
LIS 640 – Academic Libraries
LIS 656 – Online Information Retrieval
LIS 664 – Government Documents

Graduate Certificate in Youth Services & Literature (15 hours)
LIS 517 – Literature & Related Media for Children
LIS 518 – Literature & Related Media for Young Adults
LIS 519 – Programs and Services for Youth

Electives (choose two; one must be 600-level or higher): LIS 528 – Storytelling
LIS 590 – Library Instruction
LIS 629 – Studies in Children’s Literature
LIS 634 – History of Children’s Literature
LIS 670 – Topics in Library Services: Information-Seeking Behavior of Youth
Multicultural Resources for Youth, Graphic Novels, Manga
FAM 650 – Family Life Cycle Development
FAM 652 – Advanced Child Development
CIE 768 – Children’s Literature for the Early Years

Note: Only 12 hours of electives can count for both a certificate and an MLIS; students who wish to earn both MLIS and youth services certificate must take one extra elective.
Degree Track Elective Recommendations

Public Librarianship
LIS 517 – Literature & Related Media for Children
LIS 518 – Literature & Related Media for Young Adults
LIS 519 – Programs and Services for Youth
LIS 540 – Information Ethics
LIS 545 – Sources of Info for Multicultural Society
LIS 590 – Library Instruction
LIS 641 – Public Libraries
LIS 670 – Topics in Services to Library Clientele
LIS 689 – Practicum (in public library)

Academic Librarianship
LIS 506 – Advanced Cataloging
LIS 540 – Information Ethics
LIS 590 – Library Instruction
LIS 640 – Academic Libraries
LIS 656 – Online Information Retrieval
LIS 664 – Government Documents
LIS 645 – Digital Libraries
LIS 652 – Metadata
LIS 689 – Practicum (in academic library)

Special Librarianship
LIS 506 – Advanced Cataloging
LIS 642 – Special Librarianship
LIS 646 – Special Collections and Archives
LIS 590 – Library Instruction
LIS 656 – Online Information Retrieval
LIS 664 – Government Documents
LIS 645 – Digital Libraries
LIS 689 – Practicum (in a special library)
**Technical Services**

LIS 506 – Advanced Cataloging
LIS 654 – e-Resources Management
LIS 655 – Technical Services
LIS 656 – Online Information Retrieval
LIS 645 – Digital Libraries
LIS 652 – Metadata
LIS 689 – Practicum (in technical services)
APPENDIX C

Course Scheduling

Please remember that not all graduate courses are offered every semester. Furthermore, personnel changes and other scheduling considerations sometimes require modifications to the timetable of classes. It is important that you consult with your faculty advisor in order to plan a schedule that will satisfy your program of study. The Class Schedule Guide is published each year by the Office of the Registrar. http://www.usm.edu/registrar/class-schedule-guide In addition, the SLIS schedule is published on our Web page.

Master’s Project Committee

Your master’s project work will be supervised by two readers: the director of the program and another SLIS faculty member. The student selects the secondary reader based on the faculty member’s specialty area and personally requests that the faculty member serve. The student must have the permission of the professor and the director of the school prior to beginning any research.

Transfer of Graduate Courses from Other Institutions

If you believe that a required core course taken at another ALA-accredited institution is equivalent to one required for the MLIS you may request it be considered for transfer by providing the school with a copy of the transcript on which the course grade appears, a copy of the course syllabus, and any other materials that will be helpful in determining whether the course in question is equivalent to the one required at USM. The material will be furnished to the USM instructor who normally teaches the course who will then make a recommendation to the director and the Faculty Council regarding course equivalence. The Faculty Council will review this recommendation for possible approval.

As many as six (6) semester hours of graduate credit from other accredited institutions may be transferred to your program at USM. Such coursework must meet requirements of the time limitations that the University allows for the degree. Only courses with a grade of B or better will be considered for transfer. Transferred courses must be approved by the director and USM faculty of record.
APPENDIX D

Pre-Graduation Procedures and the Graduate School

Please carefully read the version of the Graduate Bulletin that governs your academic career (usually the Bulletin for the year that you entered the program) for relevant regulations, guidelines, and deadlines at least one year before your anticipated graduation.

Documents to be Filed in the Office of Graduate School

The Plan of Study Form is a form detailing the coursework completed to fulfill master’s degree requirements. This form must be submitted by the end of the first semester of enrollment in the program. The student is responsible for knowing the degree requirements and submitting revised plans of study as needed.

Application for Degree and Audit – This form is a request to obtain the master’s degree. On or before the deadline in the semester before you wish to graduate with the master’s degree, you must submit a signed, completed application for degree to the graduate degree auditor. The degree auditor will verify your application and notify you and your advisor of any problems. If you will not graduate in the semester for which you applied, you must notify the graduate degree auditor and submit a deferment form. See the Graduate School Web page, http://www.usm.edu/graduateschool/app_degree.php

It is your responsibility to ensure that all of the necessary paperwork is on file and up-to-date at the Office of Graduate School.

Graduate Degree Auditors

The Graduate School degree auditors are housed in the Graduate School in McCain Library. As you prepare your degree applications for review, please note the following:

1. Master’s project credit remains an E grade until the project is complete and the grade reported. A letter grade will be awarded.

2. Courses carrying the numbers 697/797 (Independent Study) do NOT count toward
the master’s degree.

4. Only six hours of transfer work is allowed toward the master’s degree.

5. A GPA of B (3.0) or better is required for graduate degrees by the time you complete the course-hour requirements for the degree.

6. An I (Incomplete) is allowed to remain on the record for one semester only. After that semester, it becomes an F unless the grade is changed by the instructor of that course.
APPENDIX E: Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistants receive a stipend through the school. It is a competitive process. If you accept one of these appointments, you will commit to work 20 hours per week on the Hattiesburg campus. In almost all cases, students will participate in activities that will enhance their training and professional development. Only students that are able to provide campus-based work will be considered for graduate assistantships. Please read the following information carefully.

A. GAs must earn a grade of B (3.0) or better in every course each semester, and must perform work assignments in a satisfactory manner in order to maintain a graduate assistantship. Any student who receives a disciplinary action will not be eligible to continue as a graduate assistant.

B. Graduate assistants must maintain a twelve (12) credit hour course load during the fall and spring semesters; course load varies in summer. Courses taken as audit do not count toward these hours. Summer funding is not always available to those who are funded by a graduate assistantship.

C. The general tuition is covered by the University if you hold a graduate assistantship. This tuition scholarship does not cover fees; fees are not waived.

D. All students in the graduate program are encouraged to submit the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)" at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Contact the Office of Financial Aid, (601) 266-4774 http://www.usm.edu/financialaid/
APPENDIX F: Scholarships

**Molline Mayfield Keyes Scholarship:** The purpose of this fund is to award a scholarship to graduate students majoring in Library Science with a minimum 3.5 grade point average in the senior year of their bachelor's degree and a 3.0 grade point average throughout their master's degree. The recipients shall be residents of the state of Mississippi. Preference shall be given to students with need. If a student with financial need cannot be identified, the financial need criterion may be waived.

**School of Library and Information Science Annual Scholarship:** This scholarship shall be awarded to a graduate student with financial need and a minimum 3.0 GPA in the School of Library and Information Science. The student must have completed a minimum of 9 credit hours of graduate work in the School of Library and Information Science at Southern Miss. The recipient does not have to be a resident of the state of Mississippi.

All library and information science students should consult the American Library Association [http://www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org) and their state library association for current information about available scholarships. Additional information can be found on our Web site at [http://www.usm.edu/library-information-science/non-departmental-scholarship-information](http://www.usm.edu/library-information-science/non-departmental-scholarship-information)
Appendix G: School of Library and Information Science Community

Lisnews: SLIS Student Electronic Mailing List

All SLIS students must subscribe to the SLIS student electronic mailing list, lisnews@usm.edu via https://mailman.usm.edu/mailman/listinfo/lisnews

Other noteworthy information:

- If you would like to post to lisnews, send the message to lisnews@usm.edu. Remember that this message will be sent to everyone on the listserv.
- When you receive a message from lisnews and choose to reply to the person sending the message, do NOT click the reply option. Instead, compose a new email message to be sent to that person's individual email address.
- Students are prohibited from using this listserv to send personal messages.
- If you wish to remove yourself from this mailing list after graduating, fill out the form for unsubscribing (located under "Lisnews Subscribers").
- If you would like to contact the owner of the list, if you have trouble unsubscribing, or if you have questions about the list itself, send email to slis@usm.edu

LISSA: Library and Information Science Student Association

LISSA is an official student chapter of the American Library Association (ALA). All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the School of Library and Information Science. LISSA is active in several areas, including volunteer support of the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival, a community-service activity, hosting speakers on professional development, and providing activities for social interaction between students and faculty. LISSA meets at least twice a semester a time convenient to the officers, and includes virtual attendance. Meetings are open to all students and all are encouraged to attend. If you have questions, contact the LISSA faculty advisor: xinyu.yu@usm.edu.

SMSA: Southern Miss Student Archivists
SMSA is affiliated with the Society of Mississippi Archivists (SMA) and follows the guidelines of the Society of American Archivists (SAA). Any student interested in archives and/or special collections may request to join SMSA and will be added to the student roster and the SMSA listserv. SMSA encourages and promotes activities related to archival education such as sponsorship of students to attend workshops and archival conferences. To join SMSA, contact the faculty advisor: matthew.griffis@usm.edu.

**SLIS Alumni Association**

The SLIS Alumni Association consists of graduates who support the education and professional mission of the school. While much informal networking takes place at conventions such as the Mississippi Library Association, more formal events, including the Alumni Breakfast at MLA, have become a tradition.

**Beta Phi Mu**

SLIS is the home of the Beta Psi Chapter of Beta Phi Mu ([http://www.beta-phi-mu.org/](http://www.beta-phi-mu.org/)) the international honor society for library and information science. Founded in 1945 by the Alpha Chapter at the University of Illinois, it has become the standard alumni organization promoting scholarship, leadership, and service in the information professions.

**The University of Southern Mississippi Alumni Association**

The University of Southern Mississippi has a very active and visible alumni association ([http://www.southernmissalumni.com](http://www.southernmissalumni.com)). The university alumni association maintains links between Southern Miss and its graduates and friends by facilitating communication, sponsoring events, networking alumni employers and new university graduates, and supporting the university's mission of outreach and education.

**Professional Affiliations**

If you live in Mississippi, we urge you to join the Mississippi Library Association, [www.misslib.org](http://www.misslib.org). We recommend graduate students affiliate with their state or regional
library association and join the American Library Association (ALA) [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org). Some organizations may provide reduced rates for student membership. If you have a special interest, you should join other professional organizations or round tables. You should also check for listserv and discussion boards. This appendix includes selected national and international organizations for your consideration. Professional organizations offer a wide range of opportunities and information, as well as help engage the discipline in discourse to promote continuous learning and advancement.

Professional organizations are important in every field. It is the responsibility of professional organizations to perform the following tasks:

- Maintain standards, both technical and social.
- Maintain a body of knowledge, the "professional literature" found in scholarly journals and conference proceedings.
- Reward members or sanction them for professional misdeeds.
- Maintain a political voice (lobby) to further the goals and values of the profession or discipline.
- Control education leading to the profession or discipline through accreditation.
- Networking; posting of employment/position announcements.

Below is a list of important professional organizations for Library and Information Science and related fields. This is not an exhaustive list. Each state has its own library association and other related organizations benefit the profession. Check for your state library association information on the Web.

American Library Association (ALA)      [http://www.ala.org/](http://www.ala.org/)
Mississippi Library Association (MLA)  [http://www.misslib.org/](http://www.misslib.org/)
Special Libraries Association (SLA)    [http://www.sla.org/](http://www.sla.org/)
American Association of School Librarians (AASL)  [http://www.ala.org/aasl](http://www.ala.org/aasl)
Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)  [http://www.ala.org/acrl](http://www.ala.org/acrl)
Public Library Association (PLA)        [http://www.ala.org/ala//pla/pla.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/pla/pla.cfm)
American Society of Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) [http://www.asis.org/](http://www.asis.org/)
Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE)  [http://www.alise.org/](http://www.alise.org/)
APPENDIX H: Coursework

Online Courses

Courses that are offered entirely online require self-discipline, communication, and some different activities than the traditional face-to-face classes.

We have the following suggestions to succeed in the online environment:
1. Check each course at least daily for changes or supplemental information.
2. Keep a copy of all assignments and your related work for each course.
3. Complete all work on time and communicate with your professor if there are any problems or issues.
4. Begin to prepare your assignments and exams ahead of time and review the instructions before submitting. Do not assume your computer or the server will operate when you need them – test your computer regularly.
5. Do not wait until just before class to enter the virtual classroom – that takes time under the best circumstances. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT.

Practicum

A library and/or archival practicum is strongly recommended for students who have little or no experience in the type of library or archive in which they would like to work. For 3 credit hours, a student is required to complete 150 hours of practicum work. Students locate a library or archive near them with a professional librarian or archivist who is willing to serve as an on-site practicum supervisor. The student and on-site supervisor sign a practicum agreement form, which is submitted for approval by the faculty practicum advisor at the beginning of the semester, along with a list of tasks and activities to be accomplished.

Research

All of your graduate courses in SLIS will involve a component of research and writing so that you will more fully develop your critical analysis and problem-solving skills to prepare you to design a master’s research project, the capstone product of your program. Being able to plan, organize, conduct, and report research is a critical professional skill. The
same tools that help you to complete a significant research project will aid you in preparing plans for program development, budget justifications, grant proposals, and reports for governing or funding bodies. Implicit in the ability to report research, request funding, or respond to community inquiries is the capacity to write clearly using standard formal language.
APPENDIX I: How to Be a Successful Graduate Student

1. Librarianship itself is a dynamic, evolving and adaptive field based upon the premises of a service profession. Having the appropriate attitudes; respectfulness, conscientiousness, openness to diversity and different ideas, will go a long way toward the process of learning the knowledge base and preparing you for your selected field. Respect for others’ views and ideas as you communicate with colleagues, faculty and staff of SLIS will enable you to have the most productive experiences and preparation for a successful career. Keep in mind that you have responsibilities as a student, and as a future professional, you should always be conscious of the role you play in obtaining an education.

2. Thomas Benton (pseudonym) http://chronicle.com/article/The-5-Virtues-of-Successful/5060/ listed the five virtues of successful graduate students, and although his comments were directed toward doctoral students, many hold true for Master’s level work:

**Networking Ability** - social networking is necessary, even for the most individualistic activities.

**Discipline** – work on your studies every day if possible. Be aware of assignment due dates and be ready to submit the assignment on time or request an extension if you are unable to meet the due date.

**Mental Health** - Benton writes “Graduate school can be characterized by intellectual confusion, a lack of social support, and intense feelings of powerlessness and even worthlessness. It can be more like a shark tank than a symposium. You will probably find for the first time in your life that you are not the smartest person in the room. The best method of relieving stress is to keep a sense of perspective; try to have a meaningful life outside of the profession. Guard your health: Eat a balanced diet; get enough sleep and exercise, and make friends with people who are not academics.”

**Flexibility** – as you ponder your job prospects, be open to change in terms of library type or location, or if you like one type of venue as your ‘stage’, develop a sense of where you might practice. Similarly, be willing to change topics and go back to the drawing-board if a project or career path becomes too cumbersome.
**Patience** – demonstrate patience in all of the above four virtues.

Attend each class session and be prepared with questions or comments (you are expected to contribute to each session) and remember to enjoy the experience, as it is not often that we choose what we would like to learn and benefit from the interaction of peers, particularly in such online learning environments. Never underestimate the power of demonstrating a willingness to learn or your responsibility in this process.

3. Pay close attention to feedback on assignments, which is given to help students improve their work. At the graduate level, it is expected that students will learn from the feedback given on assignments so mistakes are not repeated and there is improvement and refinement of writing.

4. Use Cook Library resources to prepare your assignments. Use the online catalog and databases, your textbooks, additional scholarly articles and lecture notes. Learn to browse as you read. Search the online databases, but review how to search each database before embarking, so you create an internal map or storyboard of how to search. The Southern Miss library has a Web page with links to services specifically for distance education/online students.

   [http://www.lib.usm.edu/services/distance_education.html](http://www.lib.usm.edu/services/distance_education.html)

5. If you are fortunate enough to live near Cook Library (or any library!), enter and walk the shelves. Take down a book from the shelves and page through it. Think of finding information “serendipitously” - it will enrich you intellectually as well as help you to further develop critical thinking skills.

6. Ask questions if you do not understand a procedure or assignment. You can do this in virtual classroom sessions or email.

7. Collaboration is a key component of modern work, you will be required to participate in group projects, and will be held responsible for your contribution to these groups.
Take such projects for what they are, a taste of reality. The complexity of our work and society demands that we work together to accomplish tasks. If you expect others to help you be successful, then you must help them be successful.

8. Last, but not least, (and this is self-evident) we read, we write and we work with readers and writers, so being well-read is part of the ethos of librarianship. Read everything you can in the course of your day (and listen to audio books). Information literacy cannot exist without readers, viewers, listeners and creators.

9. Remember your ultimate goal, to obtain an education to be a productive member of society. Try not to value grades for their own sake. Maintain intellectual curiosity and your sense of humor.

10. Remember, everyone at SLIS wants you to succeed in your academic program. Your contributions make this possible.
APPENDIX J: Academic Code of Honor

The academic Code of Honor is based on mutual respect and academic honesty as articulated in the Creed at Southern Miss.

The Creed at Southern Miss

I belong to a community of scholars at The University of Southern Mississippi.

I will demonstrate integrity and determination in all academic pursuits.

I will appreciate the value of differences among people, customs and viewpoints and oppose hatred, bigotry and bias toward others.

I will exhibit behavior and choose language that demonstrates respect for fellow members of the Southern Miss community.

I will respect others by honoring their rights, privacy and belongings.

I will value human dignity in my academic, social and employment settings.

I commit to exhibiting civil behavior, demonstrating responsible citizenry, and doing my part to achieve a positive and secure living and learning environment for all.

Academic Honesty Graduate Bulletin (http://www.usm.edu/registrar/publications/):

When cheating is discovered, the faculty member may give the student an F on the work involved or in the course. If further disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, the undergraduate student should be reported to the dean of students. A graduate student should be reported to the dean of the Graduate School.

In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the code of student conduct and may be grounds for probation, suspension, expulsion, or all three. Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by The University of Southern Mississippi.
**Plagiarism**

A. Plagiarism is scholarly theft, and it is defined as the unacknowledged use of secondary sources. More specifically, any written or oral presentation in which the writer or speaker does not distinguish clearly between original and borrowed material constitutes plagiarism.

B. Because students, as scholars, must make frequent use of the concepts and the facts developed by other scholars, plagiarism is not the mere use of another’s facts and ideas. However, it is plagiarism when students present the work of other scholars as if it were their own work.

1. Referring to commonly-known facts is not plagiarism.
2. Students may refer in their own words to generally known and widely accepted ideas or theories without fear of plagiarism as long as they do not copy the plan or organizational scheme used by another scholar.

C. Plagiarism is committed in a number of ways:

1. Reproducing another author’s writing as if it were one’s own;
2. Paraphrasing another author’s work without citing the original;
3. Borrowing from another author’s ideas, even though those ideas are reworded, without giving credit; and
4. Copying another author’s organization without giving credit.

D. Plagiarism is avoided when students give credit (footnotes or another documentation forms) to the source in the following instances:

1. When quoting directly from someone else’s writing (a direct quotation must always be enclosed in quotation marks);
2. When paraphrasing someone else’s writing (to paraphrase means to restate a passage from someone else’s writing in one’s own words); or
3. When following the outline or structure of another author’s argument, explanation, or theory, even though the material is summarized in one’s own words.

E. When in doubt about how widely known ideas are, observe these steps:
   1. Ask your instructor.
   2. Document the source.

F. Plagiarism is a serious offense. An act of plagiarism may lead to a failing grade on the work and in the course, as well as sanctions that may be imposed by the department, the Graduate School, and the University.

The School of Library and Information Science considers the submission of a single paper or assignment to two different courses to be academic dishonesty unless receiving prior approval from SLIS faculty. Any paper or assignment determined by faculty to have been used in another course, or having been submitted to more than one course without permission will receive a failing grade. If you are unsure about the appropriateness of submitting an assignment, contact your instructor.

Students should note that the instructor may assign an F for the course if the academic honesty or plagiarism regulations are violated.

Students must send the instructor the email given below stating that they understand the University’s academic honesty policies and that if they do not uphold the standards of academic honesty, the instructor will enforce all applicable punishment.
I, ___(insert full name and student id #)____ understand and accept Southern Miss’ academic honesty policies stating that if I do not uphold the standards of academic honesty, the instructor will enforce all applicable punishment, which may include expulsion from the university, a failing course grade, or a failing assignment grade or other sanctions. In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the Code of Student Conduct and may be grounds for probation, suspension, and/or expulsion. Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by The University of Southern Mississippi.

Signed (Your full name and the date)