

# The University of Southern Mississippi

## Detailed Assessment Report

As of: 9/14/2017 01:44 PM CDT

**2016-2017 Archives and Special Collections Graduate Certificate\*\***  
(Includes those Action Plans with Budget Amounts marked One-Time, Recurring, No Request.)

### Mission / Purpose

This certificate provides the opportunity to add a credential to allow an individual to prepare for a career in Archives and Special Collections.

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

#### **SLO 1: Professional practice and training experiences**

Students will gain professional practice and training experiences including organization, arrangement, preservation, and digitization, in a real-world environment by completing 150 hours of supervised practicum work in an archive or special collection.

#### Related Measures:

##### **M 1: Practicum evaluation**

The on-site practicum supervisor will evaluate the student's work using a practicum evaluation rubric.

Source of Evidence: Standardized test of subject matter knowledge

##### **Target:**

Using the practicum evaluation rubric, 90% of students will be rated satisfactory or excellent.

##### **Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

(online, n=6) - No practicum was completed in fall 2016. Spring 2017: 100% (2/2) of student practica were rated satisfactory or excellent using the practicum evaluation rubric. Summer 2017: (100% (4/4) of student practica were rated satisfactory or excellent using the practicum evaluation rubric. Total: 100% (6/6) of student practica were rated satisfactory or excellent using the practicum evaluation rubric.

##### **M 2: Practicum journal**

Student's reflective practicum journal will be evaluated by the faculty practicum adviser using the reflective journal rubric.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

##### **Target:**

Using the reflective journal rubric, 90% of students will be rated satisfactory or excellent.

##### **Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

(online, n=6) No practicum was completed in fall 2016. Spring 2017: 100%

(2/2) of practicum journals were rated satisfactory or excellent using the reflective journal rubric. Summer 2017: (100% (4/4) of practicum journals were rated satisfactory or excellent using the reflective journal rubric. Total: 100% (6/6) of practicum journals were rated satisfactory or excellent using the reflective journal rubric.

### **SLO 2: Archival research paper**

The archival research paper and literature review will be assessed using the archival paper rubric.

#### **Related Measures:**

### **M 3: Archival research paper**

The archival research paper and literature review will be assessed using the archival paper rubric.

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

#### **Target:**

Using the archival paper writing rubric, 90% of students will be rated satisfactory or excellent.

#### **Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

(online, n=6) No practicum was completed in fall 2016. Spring 2017: 100% (2/2) archival papers were rated satisfactory or excellent using the archival paper writing rubric. Summer 2017: (100% (4/4) archival papers were rated satisfactory or excellent using the archival paper writing rubric. Total: 100% (6/6) of archival papers were rated satisfactory or excellent using the archival paper writing rubric.

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

### **Review of other archival programs and courses**

A review of other graduate archival programs was completed to determine need for modification/update of courses or course content or development of new courses. The review indicated some course titles and descriptions should be updated to reflect updated content and current professional terminology.

**Established in Cycle:** 2015-2016

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

## **Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers**

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

Since the archival certificate is not required but is an option for students interested in working as an archivist or special collections librarian, students earning the certificate are dedicated scholars and willing to work 150 practicum hours in an archive or special collection in addition to their other classes. The practicum reflective journal allows students to relate hands-on archival activities and experiences to theory and best practices learned in classes. The archival research paper requires engagement in

research related to an archival topic and includes a review of related literature. Nine students earned the archival certificate in 2016-2017; two of those students participated in British Studies study-abroad class and wrote their archival papers on topics related to a British archive or special collection. Several students' archival research papers have been published (<http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w146169/mentorpubs.htm>). Several of the students earning an archival certificate with their MLIS degree are now working in archival or special collections-related positions, Leslie was hired by the site where she completed the practicum, Iron Mountain Digital Archive; Lauren is now a metadata specialist at George Mason University; Jennifer is a systems librarian at Lawrence Livermore National Lab; Amanda, a special librarian/archivist at New Orleans City Archives and Special Collections; and Carlie was just hired by the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

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

The archival practicum is typically a rich experience but it is important for the practicum faculty advisor to read the students' journal entries each week in order to monitor the progress of the practicum and to ensure that the practicum experience is a rich and varied one. On-site practicum supervisors evaluate students work at the mid-point and at the end of the semester. The evaluation is done on a rating scale (quantitative measure) and includes a space for the supervisor's comments (qualitative measure). The practicum supervisors' evaluation is an important measure that indicates whether there are issues or content that should be addressed in the archival courses.

## Annual Report Section Responses

**Program Summary. Summarize highlights of the past year for this particular academic program. Provide context to an outside reviewer.**

The School of Library and Information Science offers an 18-credit hour Graduate Certificate in Archives and Special Collections to prepare students for careers in archives and related fields such as special collections or cultural repositories. It combines online courses related to archival history, theory, methods, organization, and ethics, with an archival practicum, which can be arranged at an archive or special collection near the student. The certificate may be earned with a MLIS degree, a related graduate degree or may be earned post-master's certificate for those holding a MLIS or other graduate degree from a related field (non-MLIS students are required to take LIS 505 as a prerequisite). <http://www.usm.edu/library-information-science/graduate-certificate-archives-and-special-collections>

**Continuous Improvement Initiatives. Any department-level or program-level action plans for improvement that are not necessarily tied to a specific student learning outcome or program objective should be described in this field.**

The archival practicum is evaluated by the on-site practicum supervisor, a professional archivist or special librarian who provides a mid-term and final practicum evaluation. The evaluation is both quantitative using a rating scale and qualitative (a space for comments). These evaluations are submitted to and reviewed by the faculty practicum advisor as a way to determine the quality of the practicum experience. In 2016-17, SLIS faculty completed evaluating the content and learning objectives for the certificate courses using "Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies" by the Society of American Archivists as well as a comparison of SLIS archival certificate program requirements and courses to other ALA-Accredited programs. The result was a revision of archival course titles and descriptions to reflect updated course content and to conform to current professional terminology.

**Closing the Loop. Summarize the results of previous action plan implementation. Provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results.**

As a result of the research and evaluation of the archival certificate program and courses, several archival course titles were revised: LIS 506. Advanced Cataloging was revised to LIS 506. Cataloging Multimedia Objects LIS 631. History of Libraries was revised to LIS 631. History of Libraries and Librarianship LIS 645. Digital Libraries was revised to LIS 645. Digital Preservation LIS 646. Special Collections and Archives was revised to LIS 646. Introduction to Archival Theory and Practice LIS 652. Metadata was revised to LIS 652. Metadata for Digital Collections. These revisions were approved by the SLIS Curriculum Committee, College Curriculum Committee, Graduate Council, and the Provost. In response to feedback in focus groups for a list of practicum opportunities, a database of SLIS graduates, their position, email address, and work locations is being compiled and continuously updated. SLIS graduates are not the only professional librarians and archivists who can serve as practicum supervisors but many graduates have served as practicum supervisors and they are wonderful mentors. Information from this database is used to update the SLIS alum listserv, where program updates and practicum site information and requests can be posted.

**Technology Use Part 1. State/explain the role of technology in the discipline and outcomes related to technology.**

Technologies required for various archival-related courses that enhance student learning include: - Web 2.0 applications: blogs, wikis, etc., HTML coding and xml coding to create a digital online collection, and ContentDM online archival cataloging application to create metadata for a digital collection. Students are encouraged to include a digitization component in their archival practicum as that is a valued experience in the archival field.

**Technology Use Part 2. Develop a narrative to support Technology Use Part 1 by providing program assessment results (if applicable), examples of technology being used to enhance student learning, examples of technology being used to meet program objectives/outcomes, and examples of providing access to and training in the use of technology.**

Examples of technologies that provide valuable training and hands-on experiences are the creation of a webpage using HTML coding, creation of an online digital collection using xml coding, and creation of metadata records using ContentDM online archival cataloging application. Students are encouraged to attend DigiDay workshops for students at the McCain Digital Laboratory to gain some hands-on digitization experience and to include a digitization component to their archival practicum experience. As one example, a recent graduate was hired as a metadata specialist at George Mason University based on her coursework experience in digital cataloging and creating metadata.