ECU MLS Advisory Board Meeting  
April 20, 2013  
2409 Joyner Library

Present: Jan Lewis, Kevin Vickers, Kristin Johnson, John Harer, Becky Callison, Susan Simpson, Jami Jones, Gail Munde, David Trudeau, Marian McLawhorn, Rita Van Duinen (via Centra)

Absent: Vivian Mott, Keen Gravely, Johanna Gerakios, Amy Mitchell

Harer welcomed Advisory Board members and thanked them for the feedback, advice and support they have given to the MLS program at ECU.

Faculty News

- Dr. Patrick Valentine has resigned, effective at the conclusion of the Spring 2013 semester. Until ECU has a budget for the next fiscal year, no decisions will be made by the Provost regarding permission to fill vacant positions.

- Dr. Jami Jones and Dr. Barbara Marson made an invited presentation at ALA midwinter to describe the development of the ECU MLS program’s successful report to AASL/NCATE. Dr. Jones noted that because ECU had submitted the first report using 2010 AASL Standards, and because the report had been developed collaboratively, there was great interest in the presentation. In most cases, AASL/NCATE reporting is done by a single person, but Drs. Jones, Dotson and Marson authored the ECU report as a team. ECU’s complete report is available for examination at the NCATE website http://www.ncate.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=LiHGs3fb6NQ%3d&tabid=459 As a result of the report, ECU’s program was granted full national recognition.

- Dr. Munde’s promotion and tenure application was approved during the Spring 2013 semester. Dr. Dotson’s promotion and tenure application will be reviewed during the 2013-2014 academic year. If successful, then all program faculty who are tenure-eligible will have tenure.

- From June 22-26, Drs. Sua and Jami Jones will attend a Project Enable workshop at Syracuse University. Project Enable is funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and is a train-the-trainer offering that teaches K-12 school personnel, including librarians, to serve students with all types of disabilities. As part of their obligation as workshop participants, Drs. Sua and Jones will offer Project Enable training to NC school librarians after they return from training.

- Several faculty who have recently published books or articles were noted, along with faculty works-in-progress.
• Dr. Harer took this opportunity to note that Mr. Trudeau was running for Vice-President of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Roundtable and encouraged all to vote for him. Currently, Mr. Trudeau chairs the NCLA Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Program News

Dr. Harer provided the following program update

• The “076-only” course of study, which allowed students to take 33 semester hours of the MLS program’s required 39 hours has been discontinued and is no longer offered. This course of study led to NC Department of Public Instruction licensure as a school media coordinator (076) and was available to students with a current A teaching license. The reason for discontinuation of this non-degree offering is because the Graduate School requires students to be admitted to the MLS program at or before the completion of nine semester hours. Students who wished to delay or avoid applying for admission to the Graduate School, but who later decided to complete the MLS, were unable to apply all their semester hours toward the degree.

• The MLS program no longer admits students for the summer term. New students will be admitted for fall and spring semesters only.

• There will be a student and alumni forum this summer. This is an opportunity for students and alumni to comment on issues, make recommendations, and provide feedback to the program. Last year’s forum was held in July and facilitated by Alan Bailey, a Joyner Library Associate Professor. Notes from the forum are available at the program website.

• The program is still having some difficulty making changes to the website, which is subject to the College of Education (COE) uniform template and to server access restrictions. The COE has decided to revise the template and the Dean intends to hire a web designer.

• ECU anticipates an additional budget cut in fiscal 2013-2014 of up to six percent. The COE has made plans for incremental cuts up to six percent in advance of legislation. The MLS program will not suffer if the cut is three to four percent, but any greater reduction is likely to mean that the vacancy created by Dr. Valentine’s resignation will go unfilled. With a new Governor and new legislature, nothing is certain. ECU doesn’t expect to have a certified budget until July. McLawhorn offered some friendly advice to everyone who works in a public capacity, and it was to get to know your legislators. She suggested that having a history with the legislator made communication more meaningful when constituents contacted them for help or to enlist their support.

• Unfortunately, ECU’s application to the Institute for Museum and Library Services to fund a project to recruit and educate 45 school librarians to work in rural and underserved counties in eastern North Carolina went unfunded. UNC-Greensboro and UNC-Chapel
Hill library programs received project funding, so federal support for library education programs will be coming into the state.

- ECU’s ALA site visit will be October 13-15, 2013. During the evaluation panel’s visit, panel members will want to meet and talk with representatives of all stakeholder groups. We plan to arrange several opportunities to meet with evaluation panel members, both face-to-face and through Centra or Skype.

- The merger of the Department of Library Science and the Department of Business and Information Technologies Education into the Department of Information and Library Science has been approved by the Chancellor, and Harer expects the leadership structure to be in place by fall.

McLawhorn asked if the program offered a special focus for community college librarians, since community colleges were not facing such deep cuts as UNC system schools. Harer outlined the MLS plus Community College Teaching Certificate option, which allows academic library pathway students the option to take three elective courses offered by another department within the COE, the Department of Higher, Adult and Continuing Education. Munde noted that the first person to select this option would graduate in May and already has a job as a community college librarian. Trudeau said that the program should promote and advertise this option, and that ECU needs to be more visible. He thinks there are many opportunities for the program in this area, and believes that community colleges would offer a stable employer base.

Van Duinen noted that she was working with a team from UNC-Greensboro to apply for a planning grant to develop a curriculum for community college librarians. Presently they are working on a DACUM, which is an occupational analysis method from which curricula can be derived.

Harer distributed a handout documenting graduate enrollment for the Fall 2012 semester and a plot of 2006-2012 enrollment trends comparing Library Science to three other top COE graduate degree programs. All program enrollments have decreased over these years. The MLS program continues to be the largest master’s program offered within the COE.

Jones distributed a list of issues developed by the MLS program Curriculum Committee, which met throughout the academic year to examine the School Library Pathway, and distilled the top 12 issues for consideration by program faculty as bases for change. They were

1. Integrate more technology into courses
2. Integrate a variety of collaborative opportunities
3. Consider diversity from a differentiation perspective
4. Focus throughout the curriculum on standards (Common Core, NC Essential Standards, and other professional association standards applicable to Academic and Public Library Pathways)
5. Revise LIBS 6018 Collection Development
6. Adjust age levels for literature courses; LIBS 6135 Materials for Children to grades PK-5, and LIBS 6137 Materials for Young Adults (grades 6-12)
7. Redevelop LIBS 6133 Materials for Early Childhood and consider as a possible required course for the Public Library Pathway
8. Add appropriate foundational, theoretical, and practice-based readings to courses
9. Ensure courses require students to collaborate
10. Make fewer, but deeper and more complex assignments
11. Add additional focus on diversity and global awareness
12. Consider way to include additional electives in the School Library Pathway without increasing course requirements

Jones added an additional suggestion of her own, which was to develop a course focusing in more depth on inquiry and creativity. Inquiry is addressed in LIBS 6144 Instructional Strategies and Leadership for School Media Specialists, but additional practice may be in order.

The Board examined several table and charts pulled from the Program Presentation draft from each Standard and responded with questions and suggestions.

A discussion ensued on the commonalities, similarities and significant challenges shared by public libraries and school libraries. Callison noted that public libraries were being encouraged to take on broader responsibilities within their communities, e.g., family and early literacy, without additional funding. Simpson commented on the technology item (item 1. above), and suggested that it may be more useful to teach the planning and evaluation skills necessary to select, acquire and implement library technology than to teach specific library technologies. Specific library technologies are fluid, but students should have a basic understanding of contemporary technologies, digitization and RFID, for example. They don’t have to understand the deep technical aspects, but they should be familiar with them from broad perspectives.

Lewis suggested that grant and proposal writing were important skills for students, given the increasingly broad missions libraries were undertaking without the benefits of funding.

Vickers suggested that in addition to a map illustrating the location of program students included in the Program Presentation draft, a map be developed and included to illustrate placements after graduation. Van Duinen asked if the program would be having a booth at NCLA, and Harer responded affirmatively.

Harer discussed the program’s recruitment plan and recruiting activities during the past year. Simpson suggested that program personnel develop strong ties with the NC Public Library Directors Association, as the membership is constituted largely of public library hiring managers.

Munde offered print copies of the compiled draft Program Presentation (4.19.2013) to Advisory Board members who might be interested in making additional comments at a later time. Simpson, Callison, Trudeau and Vickers received copies, and Munde said she would send a Word file of the draft to all Board members. She noted that Gerakios and Gravely had submitted their comments and suggestions earlier, and they were much appreciated.

A discussion followed regarding the program offering short courses for school librarians to earn CEUs toward the continuing education requirements for licensure renewal. For example, topics
could be on inquiry or introduction to technologies or computer applications. The program has access to BITE computer labs in the Bate Building, so there is the potential for hands-on workshops.

Harer reminded the Board that there would be a summer forum for students and alumni, and invited Advisory Board members to attend. Date, time and place will be announced. He thanked the Board members for their support and participation.

The date of the October Advisory Board meeting will be announced later. We will take care not to conflict with the NCLA annual conference, which will be October 15-18.