ECU MLS Program Advisory Board Meeting  
November 04, 2017, 218A Ragsdale  
11:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: John Harer, Kaye Dotson, David Miller, John Dunning, Jan Lewis, Hugh Davis, Kevin Vickers, Amy Whitmer, Marian McLawhorn, Meredith Hill, Erin Gathercole, Michelle Osborne.

Board Members Absent: Susan Simpson, Joanne Gerakios, Keen Gravely, Deborah Parrisher

Faculty Members Present: Scott Glass, Elaine Yontz, Monica Colon-Aquirre

Harer thanked the Board for sharing their time and input. The program places high value on the inclusion of input from the professional community for program assessment and program improvement. He also thanked program faculty for their attendance. Harer introduced Program Chair, Scott Glass, Program Coordinator Kaye Dotson, new faculty member Monica Colon-Aquirre, faculty member Elaine Yontz, and ALA Student Chapter President John Dunning.

Board meeting times were discussed and it was decided that the Board would meet once a year in fall. Term limits were set at 2 years, terms to begin in fall 2017.

Harer shared updates and initiatives that have happened since the last board meeting. The program has been very active since accreditation. Recruitment has been an intensive and ongoing effort. Recruiting events were shared and discussed. Vickers suggested that NCCATS and NCTIES should be included. Dunning suggested that technology could be effectively used to distribute ads and gain visibility for the program. Other ideas were shared and noted for future planning.

There was some discussion of the Academic Common Market and tuition costs. McLawhorn asked that Harer send information to each member about the Academic Common Market so that they could each help in encouraging legislators to act on this issue and work to get funding back in place. Harer agreed to do that.

The NC-EDDS scholarship/IMLS fellowship has been fully funded and completed with 29 successful graduates. Other IMLS grants were submitted but not funded.

Dotson shared information on program global initiatives. Recently a study abroad to Portugal was offered in the 2017 summer session and another is planned to be offered in summer of 2018. An internship opportunity will be available for two students in either the public or academic library concentration during the first summer session of 2018 at the American Library in Paris. Plans are underway for other global interactions in support of Chancellor Cecil Staton’s push for global awareness.

Yontz, current Curriculum Committee Chair distributed a short survey, “Input to Inform Curriculum,” to gather input from the Board. Yontz also provided information of the status of planned curricular changes with the following overview:
Overview of Curricular Changes:

- Plan to develop Academic and Public Concentrations given to COA as part of successful accreditation decision;
- Original intention to remove stand-alone management course in favor of infusing management into other courses was reversed and requirement management course retained, when investigation confirmed this as necessary to insure that all MLS graduates are eligible for NC public librarian certification;
- Revised required course in Research Literacy approved via campus curricular process and implemented;
- Course numbers revised and approved to make course sequences more apparent to students and advisors;
- Course pre-requisites and co-requisites revised and approved to reflect current course sequence;
- Change of language from pathway to concentration, which allows concentrations to appear on transcripts;
- Replacement of course tiers with updated pre-requisite/co-requisite plan.
- Development of new courses in Digital Libraries and Information Literacy for academic concentration; in Advocacy for public concentration; in Diversity for all concentrations; revised Reference course for all concentrations.
- Items working their way through the approval process this AY: catalog approval of new courses and revised program requirements; revised course description and objectives for required Technology course to reflect current vocabulary and priorities.

Board members suggested a number of course topics that they believe to be helpful and questioned the possibility of creating or beginning to create these topics. Gathercole mentioned that advocacy and diversity were two topics of special need for public libraries. Yontz reported that there are currently courses underway on each of these topics. Miller suggested a 4th concentration of Special Libraries. Dunning suggested a special collections course could be developed. Hill supported Dunning’s suggestion and added the need is there as the jobs are available in this area.

Harer provided some background on the Archives track within the academic library concentration. The recommended track for students seeking an archives curriculum is to complete the academic library concentration with appropriate electives. Students have options for taking a course in archives and records management, including taking a relevant course at another library science program or the public history course offered by the ECU Department of History. The program has developed a course on archives but has not been able to offer it as yet due to low enrollment. Other relevant electives include (1) Digital Libraries, (2) Genealogy, (3) E-Resources.

Miller mentioned a need for a Marketing course or emphasis. Vicker suggested consideration for greater inclusion of Makerspaces in support of Stem. Lewis suggested Makerspaces as a possible course idea. Faculty shared that some of this is infused through the curriculum. Miller also brought up the need to put attention on Adult and Senior programming for public libraries.
Lewis and Gathercole questioned the area or course(s) where financial management is considered. Yontz offered background on that.

Harer also mentioned the WISE consortium as a possible source of expanded course information and access.

Information was shared about the course rotation.

Harer noted that students have begun to benefit from accreditation through expanded access to scholarships limited to students in ALA-accredited programs (appended), and from a gift of $15,000 from the HW Wilson Foundation, which was awarded to the program for scholarships in January 2016.

Harer noted that online informational meetings and orientations for prospective students have been offered, were well received, with plans to continue this avenue in the future.

Dunning, President of ECU’s ALA Student Chapter shared information about the Student Chapter annual book drive coming up in December and invited participation.

Harer also noted that alumni, employer, and exit surveys were planned to continue collection of needed data. Additionally a survey on sources of information about the program has been completed.

Harer thanked Board members for their comments and questions, and noted that their input would be taken seriously as we move forward.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30. The next meeting will be in October, 2018, the date to be announced.