Required Information

The name of the unit organized and maintained by East Carolina University (ECU) for the purpose of graduate education in library and information studies is the Department of Interdisciplinary Professions. The Department is one of six organized within the College of Education (COE), and the Department is organized into four program units: Adult Education, Counselor Education, Business and Information Technologies Education, and Library Science. Each program unit is led by a Program Coordinator. Within the Department are five graduate degree programs: MAEd in Adult Education, MS in Counselor Education, MAEd in Career and Technical Education, MS in Information Technologies, and Master of Library Science (MLS). Two undergraduate programs are offered within the Department, by the business and information technologies program, the BSBE in Information Technology and BSBE in Business and Marketing Education.

The MLS program is a 39 semester-hour course of study which prepares library professionals to serve, lead, and partner in their communities, and is seeking initial accreditation by the American Library Association Committee on Accreditation.

The Chief Executive Officer of ECU is Chancellor Steven C. Ballard. The Chief Academic Officer is Interim Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Ronald L. Mitchelson. The Dean of the College of Education is Linda A. Patriarca. The Interim Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Professions is Vivian W. Mott. The MLS Program Coordinator is John B. Harer.

The name of the regional accrediting agency is the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS) and ECU's accreditation was reaffirmed in 2013.

The Program Presentation was prepared using the ALA-COA Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies (2008) and Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3) (2012). Information about ECU in the following “Overview of the University” section of this report was derived from the University's SACS-COC Summary Form and the ECU Fact Book 2013-2014. The complete ECU Program Presentation, including supporting materials, is available online.

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1 This COE organizational chart does not reflect the recent restructuring from seven departments to six departments.
Overview of the University

ECU, as a public doctoral degree granting institution, is committed to its mission, which is

To be a national model for student success, public service and regional transformation, ECU

- Uses innovative learning strategies and delivery methods to maximize access;
- Prepares students with the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society;
- Develops tomorrow’s leaders to serve and inspire positive change;
- Discovers new knowledge and innovations to support a thriving future for eastern North Carolina and beyond;
- Transforms health care, promotes wellness, and reduces health disparities; and
- Improves quality of life through cultural enrichment, academics, the arts, and athletics.

The university is the third largest in the University of North Carolina (UNC), which consists of the state's sixteen degree-granting public institutions. ECU is accredited by SACS to award baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees and is designated as an academic health center by the Association of American Health Centers. Governed by its own Board of Trustees, which is responsible to the UNC Board of Governors, ECU offers 75 departmental certificates, 102 baccalaureate degree programs, 77 master's degree programs, two specialist degree programs, four first professional programs, and 16 doctoral programs in our professional colleges, the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Dental Medicine, and the Brody School of Medicine. It confers more than 5,800 degrees annually, and it has more than 123,000 alumni. ECU has a work force of 5,600, a faculty numbering more than 2,000, and a budget of more than $795 million. The campus is committed to planned enrollment growth of no more than one percent annually in the coming decade; its physical growth is guided by the university’s master plan, which was approved in 2011.

ECU is located in the coastal region of North Carolina in Greenville, a rapidly growing city of more than 84,000 persons in Pitt County (population 168,148); it serves a large rural area. Of the 27,000-plus students enrolled at the university, 26% are minorities and 71% are white non-Hispanics. Twenty-one percent of all students are enrolled in distance education courses only. With a mission of teaching, research, and service, ECU is a dynamic institution connecting people and ideas, finding solutions to problems, and seeking the challenges of the future.
ECU maintains east and west Greenville campus locations; the health sciences campus and the research campus to the west, near the medical district of Greenville, and the main campus to the east. There are eight SACS-approved off-campus instructional sites, seven of which are North Carolina community college campuses.

ECU is organized into 13 colleges, including the

- College of Allied Health Sciences
- Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business
- School of Dental Medicine
- College of Education
- College of Fine Arts and Communication
- The Graduate School
- College of Health and Human Performance
- Honors College (does not award degrees)
- College of Human Ecology
- College of Nursing
- The Brody School of Medicine
- College of Engineering and Technology

University Faculty

ECU employs 2,043 full-time, part-time, and temporary faculty members, 47% of whom are women, and 13% of whom are ethnic minorities. Fifty-one percent of faculty members are under the age of 50, and the average age of faculty members of all ranks is 50. The average salary for all ranks of faculty (excluding the Schools of Medicine and Dentistry) is $72,203. Of all full- and part-time teaching faculty, 43% have tenure, 20% are on tenure track, and 37% are fixed-term, non-tenure-track faculty.

ECU maintains a strong, long-standing, shared governance structure. In its 50th year, the Faculty Senate is the legislative, advisory, and primary faculty governance body for faculty representation at ECU. This body provides the means by which faculty are able to fulfill their responsibilities with respect to academic and educational policies and other affairs.

ECU expects members of the faculty to have knowledge of subject matter commensurate with their teaching assignment, to maintain awareness of developments in their disciplines, and to communicate to students their knowledge and interest in the discipline. Faculty members encourage students in responsible and careful inquiry, in appreciation of the interrelation of various disciplines, and in recognition of the uses of learning and the value of the educated mind. Effective teaching and advising are considered essential within the College of Education (COE), and for reappointment, tenure and promotion, documentation of effective
teaching must reflect the high opinion of students and peer observers. Faculty members’ teaching supports the communication of current knowledge and understanding of their disciplines. In addition, faculty members must develop carefully prepared course syllabi according to a standardized syllabus model and appropriate instructional materials, and take an active role in curriculum and program development and advising.

Faculty scholarship is expected to reflect the high professional standards incumbent upon those who enjoy full academic freedom, and such activities are measured by standards of quality, not merely by quantity. Within the COE, research and/or creative activity must include evidence of refereed publication and/or other appropriate products specific to the particular discipline, and faculty members must indicate a clear research, publication, or creative agenda in the particular discipline.

Service is considered an important aspect of academic performance, and must demonstrate involvement in the faculty member’s professional discipline through work with associations, editorial boards, community organizations, or other professional groups. Equally important is service to COE and ECU through membership and leadership on campus committees, and public schools or other appropriate organizations.

University Students

Total headcount enrollment at ECU is 26,887, including both on-campus and distance education students. Of 21,508 undergraduate students, 87% attend on campus, and 13% are distance education students; 86% attend full time, and 14% attend part time. Of 4,902 graduate students, 45% attend on campus, and 55% are distance education students; 41% attend full time, and 59% attend part time. Ethnic minorities make up 24% of the undergraduate students, and 16% of graduate students. Fifty-nine percent of undergraduates are women, and 67% of graduate students are women.

The College of Education

COE leads North Carolina in the production of new education professionals, and its graduates continue to have the highest employment rate in North Carolina schools. COE consists of six academic departments that offer seventeen undergraduate degree programs, twenty-two graduate degree programs, six programs for advanced certification, and the EdD program in educational leadership. In 2013-2014, COE had the largest number of graduate students at ECU (994) and the MLS program had the largest number of graduate students (177) in the COE.

The mission of the COE is the preparation of professional educators and allied practitioners, including professionals in business information systems, counseling, electronic media, and librarianship. Significant to this mission is a strong
commitment to three important related areas, all of which are realized through partnerships and other endeavors. These three areas are

- the encouragement and nurturing of professional growth for educators and allied practitioners at all levels and in all areas of the educational endeavor
- a continuing emphasis on and support for scholarship and research/creative activity
- and service in all areas of professional education.

Critical to such commitment is the promotion of effective teaching; staff participation in the improvement of schools; and, in concert with other state agencies, the development and creation of educational policy for North Carolina. The COE’s conceptual framework represents the vision that drives the work of all administrators, faculty, and candidates. Through our commitment to excellence through partnership, our efforts to prepare reflective education professionals dedicated to democratic principles and practices, including the empowerment of all learners in all aspects of educational decision-making, define the core of this vision. The conceptual framework is responsive to the changing needs in education and allows for adjustments in the unit’s priorities without altering the entire framework. Current priorities include enhanced emphasis on the areas of diversity, assessment, technology, and research.

The essence of COE’s conceptual framework is

- Empowering all learners, and empowering these learners to play meaningful roles in the ongoing processes of democracy, and to support the role of public education in support of democratic principles and practices.
- Emphasizing aspects of educational decision-making to establish COE’s influence beyond the preparation of education professionals to include influencing the practices in the field, the continuing professional development of beginning and career educators, and the policies that are adopted at local, state, and national levels.
- Preparing reflective education professionals
- Achieving excellence through partnerships
- Setting priorities that include the development of candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions in the areas of diversity, assessment, and technology, and promotion of COE faculty responsibility to conduct, disseminate and apply the results of clinical research.

The Graduate School

The Graduate School is a unit within the ECU Division of Research and Graduate Studies, and its mission is

Creating and sustaining excellence in East Carolina University’s graduate programs, ensuring high-quality educational experiences and
professional development for all of its graduate students, facilitating strategic development of graduate programs in selected areas of strength, and complimenting the University’s discovery (defined as research, scholarship, artistry, and other forms of creativity), outreach/service, and undergraduate teaching programs.

The Graduate Council consists of elected, ex-officio, and appointed faculty members representing graduate programs in all Divisions. The Graduate Council is responsible for consideration, debate, and voting on all graduate academic policies, and upon recommendation of the Graduate Curriculum Committee, graduate curriculum and degree programs.

The Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) consists of one tenured graduate or associate graduate faculty member from each College, including the Brody School of Medicine, who have been nominated through a process established by their respective School or College.

Among other responsibilities, the GCC approves the membership of the Committee, reviews and develops Graduate School policies, including requirements for admission, retention of students, permissible course loads, transfer credit, grading, thesis and dissertation requirements and examinations, and standards for graduate faculty appointment.

The GCC reviews proposals for new graduate programs, certificates, concentrations, degree title changes, moving or discontinuing graduate programs, certificates or concentrations, and proposals for new and revised graduate courses, degree-related catalog changes, and requests to delete, bank, and unbank graduate courses.

Brief History of the Master of Library Science (MLS) Program

For 75 years, ECU has recognized the importance of library science as an essential disciplinary offering. The present MLS program has undergone numerous changes, and the changes reflect the institution’s history, priorities, and successive administrations; the history and composition of library science faculties across the years; and the changing nature of the profession. The MLS program’s long history demonstrates a steadfast commitment to library education, the capacity to withstand and embrace change, and more recently, the capability to make sustained improvements in program quality based on assessments of evidence.

Beginning in 1939, the then East Carolina College’s Library Science Program, located in the Library Services Division of Joyner Library, was authorized to offer undergraduate courses in library science leading to state certification for school librarians. In 1970, the MLS program was approved at ECU, and the first students were admitted. In the far past, the MLS program has been structured within the Library Services Division of Joyner Library, and later within the College of Arts and
The MLS program has been structured within the College of Education since 1992.

The ECU MLS program has never flagged in its efforts to achieve ALA accreditation, and made prior unsuccessful attempts in 1976, 1987, and 1991. In 2005, the MLS program was granted pre-candidacy status, and since that time the program has submitted annual status reports. In 2008, after an unsuccessful attempt to achieve candidacy status, the MLS program was granted a three-year extension of its pre-candidacy status. In 2011, the MLS program achieved candidacy status. The tenacity of the MLS program, over time and across successive faculty bodies in seeking accreditation, is a measure of its commitment, and not a measure of its failure.

Preparation of the Program Presentation

The self-study process leading to the production of the eventual Program Presentation began in 2010 with the development of the 2011 Application for Candidacy. At that time, the MLS program faculty established a schedule of regular meetings to plan for continued data collection, assessment, and development activities necessary to produce the Program Presentation.

In September 2012, the Plan for Program Presentation was reviewed by the program’s consultant, Dr. June Lester prior to review by Dr. Linda Lillard, Chair of the External Review Panel for ECU’s visit, and Karen O’Brien, director of ALA’s Office for Accreditation. With continuing assistance from Dr. Lester, a final draft of the Program Presentation was submitted in June 2013. After consultation with panel members, Dr. Lillard and Ms. O’Brien recommended the site visit scheduled for October 2013 be rescheduled for October 2014 in order for the program to have a full academic year in which to document administrative changes resulting from the program’s restructuring within the COE.

During the 2013-2014 academic year, MLS program faculty revised and updated the 2013 draft for Standards each faculty member had previously written. Dr. Munde agreed to revise Standard I; Dr. Harer agreed to revise Standard II; Drs. Dotson, J. Jones, and Sua agreed to revise Standard III; Dr. Marson agreed to revise Standard IV; Dr. Yontz agreed to revise Standard V, and Dr. A. Jones agreed to revise Standard VI. Dr. Munde agreed to serve as compiler, and Dr. A. Jones agreed to serve as copy editor.

Beginning in Fall 2013, faculty met periodically to report on progress and to review and comment on revisions of their sections of the 2013 Program Presentation. The 2014 Program Presentation was compiled and sent to an external editor in April 2014 for review to improve readability and clarity. Faculty met for day-long meetings to read through the draft Program Presentation on May 12 and 19, 2014. Dr. Harer provided close oversight to the faculty throughout the final draft revision process.