Standard I: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

I.1 A school's mission and program goals are pursued, and its program objectives achieved, through implementation of an ongoing, broad-based, systematic planning process that involves the constituency that a program seeks to serve. Consistent with the values of the parent institution and the culture and mission of the school, program goals and objectives foster quality education.

... A school's mission and program goals are pursued, and its program objectives achieved, through implementation of an ongoing, broad-based, systematic planning process that involves the constituency that a program seeks to serve ...

The Master of Library Science (MLS) program's mission, goals and objectives reflect the missions of East Carolina University (ECU) and the College of Education (COE). The MLS program “prepares library professionals to serve, lead, and partner in their communities.” The MLS program’s goals are

1. To teach the principles, practices and technologies of library science
2. To prepare professionals to meet the information needs of individuals and groups in a global society
3. To engage continuously in scholarship and service
4. To impart the values of service, leadership, and partnership with communities and the profession as a whole

MLS program goals were reviewed last in 2011 and an additional goal (3), “to engage continuously in scholarship and service,” was proposed by the faculty to expand the existing MLS program goals to four. The addition brought the MLS program goals into closer alignment with ECU’s mission to discover “new knowledge and innovations to support a thriving future for eastern North Carolina and beyond” and COE’s mission of “continuing emphasis on and support for scholarship and research/creative activity.” This goal applies to tenured and tenure-track program faculty in addition to their teaching and service responsibilities and reinforces the MLS program’s alignment with COE and ECU goals. At the request of faculty, the proposed new goal statement was posted to the program’s website for comment, was presented to the MLS Program Advisory Board for review, and was approved by the MLS program faculty.

The mission and goals of the MLS program are nested closely within the ECU and COE mission statements. ECU is committed to preparing “students with the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society, and the COE forwards this mission through the “preparation of professional educators and allied practitioners.” The MLS program prepares “library professionals to serve, lead, and partner in their communities” so that they may “meet the information needs of individuals and groups in a global society.”
ECU aspires to develop “tomorrow’s leaders to serve and inspire positive change” and the MLS program is designed to produce influential library professionals by “impart[ing] the values of service, leadership, and partnership with communities and the profession as a whole.”

MLS program objectives (from 2009 through summer 2014) were:

1. Obtain and apply an understanding of the foundations of library science from contemporary professional standards used to resolve ethical and legal issues.
2. Investigate library problems through analysis and synthesis of professional library literature.
3. Use reference and information resources in a variety of formats to promote information literacy.
4. Select, acquire, develop and manage collections to meet the lifelong learning needs of diverse groups in various library settings.
5. Apply appropriate standards and guidelines for the organization of library materials and resources.
6. Plan, organize, staff, direct, and budget library programs to meet information, instructional, and recreational needs.
7. Apply appropriate technologies to support or enhance library functions and processes.
8. Instruct individually, and in collaboration with other information professionals/educators, diverse user groups to access effectively and efficiently the resources and services available to them in a variety of library settings.
9. Obtain practical experience in professional roles for which students are preparing.

These program objectives were reviewed and revised in Fall 2009 after a year-long process, and revised again in Spring 2014 following a planning cycle adopted in 2009.

The MLS program has continued to make progress during the period of candidacy, and engages in systematic and continuous planning through periodic faculty planning and curriculum meetings, monthly program business meetings, and monthly departmental meetings. Within the context of the institution, planning decisions consider the results of faculty assessment of student proficiency, surveys of students at the point of graduation, surveys of alumni and their employers, on-site student forums, assessments of students’ completed portfolios, and input from the program’s external Advisory Board.

Figure I.1 illustrates data collection activities during the past five years and Figure I.2 illustrates data collection activities projected for the coming five years. Data collection efforts increased during the past three years with the addition of
periodic Student Curriculum Surveys, Alumni and Employer Surveys, an annual Student Forum, and the assistance of an MLS Program Advisory Board.

Figure I.3 illustrates planning actions undertaken during the past six years and Figure I.4 presents planning actions planning actions projected for the next five years. Developing a planning system and implementing a schedule of specific activities have been challenging to the faculty, but are now firmly established. During the periods of precandidacy and candidacy, the faculty assumed complete responsibility for collaborative planning, and the ALA accreditation process has provided a useful structure for program-wide planning and implementation. Establishing and maintaining a schedule of periodic faculty planning meetings allowed the adoption of a five-year cycle of regular planning events. The basic approach is that every five years, the results of regular assessments will be compiled and used during a year-long process to review and revise program mission, goals, and objectives. From this comprehensive perspective, curriculum and individual course changes are then made through the COE and Graduate School approval processes. Subsequent years of the planning cycle will be used to make smaller adjustments to courses based on annual assessment results. Periodic faculty planning meetings will continue, and meeting topics will continue to rotate through the six ALA-COA Standards for Accreditation.

Based on assessment data, and resulting from the review of mission, goals and objectives during academic year 2013-2014, faculty proposed and approved revisions to the program objectives to clarify concepts and adopt more consistent language. Revised program objectives were presented to the MLS Program Advisory Board on April 26, 2013, and effective Fall 2014, the MLS program objectives became

1. Understand and apply the foundations of library science from contemporary professional standards used to resolve ethical and legal issues
2. Analyze, evaluate and synthesize research literature in library and information science and design basic practitioner research
3. Use reference and information resources in a variety of formats to promote information literacy
4. Select, acquire, develop and manage collections to meet the lifelong learning needs of diverse groups in various formats and library settings
5. Understand and apply appropriate concepts and guidelines for the organization and discoverability of library materials and resources
6. Understand and apply the principles of management, leadership and advocacy to direct and advance library programs
7. Understand and apply appropriate technologies to support or enhance library functions and processes
8. Instruct individually, and in collaboration with others, diverse user groups to access library resources and services
9. Obtain practical experience in professional roles for which students are preparing

Revised language was developed to expand and clarify the intended objective and in many cases reflected changes already made to related courses. Changes were also made to use consistent taxonomy language. Conceptual changes were made to program objectives 2, 5, and 6.

An explanation of the data, discussions, decisions, and implementation follows. Revisions to program objectives were approved by the faculty in April 2014 as part of the five-year review of program mission, goals and objectives.

**Program objectives 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9**

Overall, these 2009 program objectives were considered sound, but some needed word-smithing to reflect levels of the intellectual processes described in Bloom’s Taxonomy consistently throughout the objectives. For example, program objective 1 was formerly “Obtain and apply an understanding …” and was revised to read “Understand and apply.” To “obtain an understanding” seemed to indicate some mysterious process, i.e., some way other than instruction and study. According to Bloom’s Taxonomy, understanding something is prerequisite to applying an understanding of something, so the revised wording is more straightforward and correct. This principle also was applied to program objective 7 by changing the wording from “apply appropriate technologies” to “understand and apply appropriate technologies.” Program objective 3 was not changed, but the associated course was moved from Tier II to Tier I in the sequence, and the sequence change is explained below in the discussion of major changes to program objective 2. The word “formats” was included in program objective 4 to emphasize an approach to collection development that includes multiple existing and emerging electronic formats, and it reflects the revised content of the associated course. These changes were made as a result of faculty decisions based on a refreshed understanding of Bloom’s Taxonomy and incremental changes in associated courses made across the last two years.

Program objective 8 was cluttered with modifying words and phrases and was streamlined. The MLS Program Advisory Board had suggested that the syntax made it difficult to understand the statement, e.g., were students expected to become competent in the librarians’ role as instructor/teacher as individuals and also as partners or team members in collaboration with other librarians and educators? Restricting instructional collaboration to “other information professionals/educators” might be seen as limiting opportunities for collaborative information literacy and library instruction efforts, so the wording was changed to “in collaboration with others.” The modifiers “effectively and efficiently” were eliminated because the most effective methods of access, search, discovery and learning may not always be the most efficient methods, and effectiveness and efficiency would be difficult to measure. The phrase “available to them in a variety of library settings” was deleted because it might appear to limit the usefulness of instruction to library settings,
rather than to instruct information users to become independent learners, and be interpreted as suppressing the importance of inquiry-based teaching and learning.

No change was made to program objective 9.

Program objectives 2, 5, and 6

In these cases, changes were considered major and related to assessment data, student and alumni input, and advice from the MLS Program Advisory Board. Major changes were made to program objectives 2, 5 and 6, and were approved by the faculty in April 2014 as part of the five-year review of program mission, goals and objectives.

Program Objective 2

This program objective was changed from “Investigate library programs through analysis and synthesis of professional library literature” to “analyze, evaluate and synthesize research literature in library and information science and design basic practitioner research.”

Program objective 2 was revised to include specific descriptors used in Bloom’s Taxonomy and to reflect a complete revision of the associated course. Changes to the course and were based on ratings from the Student Opinion of Instruction Student Survey (SOIS), comments from the Student Perception of Teaching Survey (SPOTS) after it replaced the SOIS, responses to a 2011 Student and Alumni Curriculum Survey, comments made at the 2012 Student Forum, and additional input from the Program Advisory Board in 2012. Sources of evidence providing impetus for the change are detailed below.

During the 2010-2011 year, students’ perceptions reported via the SOIS surveys were that LIBS 6012 required higher levels of work and was of greater difficulty than other required courses in the program. Course workload was estimated by students as an average of 6.04 (7 being “very demanding”) and the difficulty of course content as an average of 5.75 (7 being “very difficult”). Student comments emphasized that in addition to a heavy workload (more than 700 pages of reading and 12 graded assignments), the terminology and topics were inordinately challenging, and the relative weighting of assignments seemed unfair. The 2010-2011 proficiency rate on the course artifact was 86%; considerably lower than the proficiency rates for other course artifacts.

In fall 2011, an online curriculum survey was sent program students and alumni, and comment responses (N=102) indicated that LIBS 6012 was one of two courses they considered to provide “the least important and useful information for [their] chosen career path.”
During a discussion of the 2011 curriculum survey, the MLS Program Advisory Board suggested that the course was placed too early in the sequence, and asked if it was possible to let students take LIBS 6014 Introduction to Reference or LIBS 6135 Materials for Children in Tier I. They noted that students may not understand why learning to do research was important, and that the course was too difficult.

During the Summer 2012 Student and Alumni Forum, attendees were asked which courses they thought needed to be changed, and noted that assignment weightings for LIBS 6012 were disproportionate to amount of work required.

Having such clear and consistent data from multiple sources (faculty, students, alumni and the Program Advisory Board), Drs. Al Jones and Gail Munde co-taught the course in Spring 2013, and from their combined perspectives, revised the course up to the limit requiring ECU Graduate Curriculum Committee approval, and their revised course was piloted in Fall 2013. A final and more extensive course revision proposal (including course name change and revised learning objectives) was prepared in Spring 2014 and moved through the course revision approval process through the College of Education Graduate Curriculum Committee. In Fall 2014, the revision proposal will be on the ECU Graduate Curriculum Committee’s agenda for approval. The course was moved to Tier II and replaced in Tier I by LIBS 6014 Introduction to Reference in Fall 2014.

Program Objective 5

Program objective 5 was changed from “apply appropriate standards and guidelines for the organization of library materials and resources” to “understand and apply appropriate concepts and guidelines for the organization and discoverability of library materials and resources.” The associated course is LIBS 6026 Organization of Information in Libraries.

In fall 2011, an online curriculum survey was sent program students and alumni, and comment responses indicated that LIBS 6026 was the other of two courses (LIBS 6012 and LIBS 6026) they considered to provide “the least important and useful information for [their] chosen career path.” Student comments indicate that many students, especially school library pathway students, did not consider traditional cataloging and classification as relevant skills, and did not believe they were useful because “no one needs to do their own cataloging anymore.”

During a discussion of the 2011 curriculum survey, the MLS Program Advisory Board, members suggested that students didn’t seem to understand why cataloging was important beyond the ability to produce a catalog record. Perhaps they do not realize that understanding how materials are organized and how to interpret a catalog record for a patron was a basis of public service work, and that the focus of the course be broadened to include newer systems of discovery and methods of classification.
During the Summer 2012 Student and Alumni forum, students indicated that they believed they need to learn how to organize materials, but not how to do original cataloging.

Among the final recommendations of the 2012-2013 MLS Program Curriculum Committee was to remove LIBS 6026 as a required course, making it an elective course.

Faculty discussed the possibility at a planning workshop in July 2013 and declined to make LIBS 6026 an elective, but made a number of suggestions to improve the course. In January 2014, the 2013-2014 Curriculum Committee asked that its previous recommendation be withdrawn.

During the previous two years (2012-2014), as the conversation developed, a number of changes had been made to LIBS 6026, and the course was revised to address rationales for understanding the usefulness catalog record:, including recorded lectures and blog prompts on organizational systems as discovery tools, on the implications of social bookmarking on controlled vocabularies, including “cloud” tagging; and the evolution of subject headings as a reflection of changes in terminology and political and social conditions.

Program Objective 6

Program objective 6 was changed from “plan, organize, staff, direct, and budget library programs to meet information, instructional and recreational needs” to “understand and apply the principles of management, leadership and advocacy to direct and advance library programs.” This change reflects redirection and changes made to the associated course, LIBS 6031 Library Administration and Management, since 2009.

The earlier program objective was based on specific management functions normally considered the responsibilities of library directors and supervisory personnel, and did not reflect concepts and dispositions required for entry-level positions. Students were largely satisfied with the course, but frequently mentioned that the required texts were not relevant to their needs, nor were the readings always connected to the assignments. Students’ negative comments on SOIS surveys from 2009-2011 were about the textbooks.

In Fall 2012, both textbooks were dropped and replaced with required readings from the journal literature in library science and business management and associated with each assignment. Ten very specific assignments were replaced by five broader and more conceptual assignments that emphasized 1) understanding the social and economic environment in which libraries operate, 2) developing a personal leadership philosophy, 3) understanding library budgets in context of the larger organization and community and in comparison to libraries of similar type and
size, 4) developing a plan for an outcome-based evaluation of a library’s effectiveness, and 5) compiling an executive presentation to communicate course content to library constituents.

The focus of the course shifted from students preparing many assignments rooted in traditional management and administrative functions (planning, staffing, organizing, directing and budgeting) which are not always equally relevant to management effectiveness, to emphasizing more flexible and applicable concepts (recognizing that libraries live in complex environments and are subject to rapid change, initiating the leadership development of every student; considering that budget allocations are affected by the communication and advocacy skills of the library leader, and demonstrating the library’s value to users with data and other evidence).

The second issue that precipitated revising program objective 6 was the discrepancy between alumni and their employers’ evaluation of how well graduates had met the program objective (proficiency ratings of 93% and 91% respectively) and the instructors’ evaluation of the course artifact (96% proficiency). It is possible that the reason for the discrepancy was because the incorrect and outdated program objective was presented in the alumni and employer surveys. Future results of the alumni and employer surveys will be reviewed to determine if the discrepancy was due to survey takers responding the outdated program objective, or whether further review and revision of the course is necessary.

Faculty members share responsibility for assessment and reporting activities both at the program and College levels.

- Summer Student Forums (Dr. Harer)
- Alumni & Employer Surveys (Dr. Munde)
- Analysis of Graduate Exit Surveys provided by the ECU Office of Institutional Planning & Assessment (Dr. Munde)
- SPOTS faculty reports (individual faculty)
- Inputting artifact evaluations to the Taskstream system (individual faculty)
- Taskstream coordination and management reporting (Dr. Marson)
- Internship Supervisor Evaluations (Dr. Dotson)
- MLS Program Advisory Board (Dr. Harer)
- COE SACS Assessment Reporting (Dr. Marson files reports with Dr. Diana Lys, the COE Director of Assessment)
- ALA/AASL reporting and review (Drs. J. Jones, Marson, and Dotson)
- ALISE statistical reporting (Dr. Harer)

MLS program faculty members meet periodically to review assessment data and constituent input to identify and solve immediate problems, and to establish longer-term goals for program improvement. Because of the relatively small number of program faculty, and their preference for regular and frequent interaction, periodic meetings have been more effective than annual planning retreats or than attempting
to combine faculty business meetings with planning discussions. Planning meetings are organized to address the requirements of one or more of the ALA/COA Standards for Accreditation.

Minutes of the planning meetings are posted to the program website. Meeting topics are normally scheduled in advance for the academic year, but if discussion is not completed during the two-hour meeting period, discussion is extended into the next meeting period, and the scheduled topic is moved forward to the next meeting.

During the academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, faculty planning meetings concentrated on Standards I, II and IV (Mission, Goals, and Objectives; Curriculum; Students) because they were areas faculty have highest control and to which faculty could respond quickly in order to 1) re-envision and implement change to improve overall program quality and effectiveness, drive curriculum and course content changes, and 3) increase student headcount and credit hour production, which have declined annually since their peak year in 2009-2010. During 2013-2014, the focus of planning meetings centered on Standard V to address the merger of program units into a new department; first, merging the former Department of Library Science and Department of Business and Information Technologies Education into the Department of Information and Library Science, and later in the year, planning to incorporate programs in Adult Education and Counselor Education to form the Department of Interdisciplinary Professions.

Recurring planning themes during the past two years have included student assessment, student recruitment, student advising, curriculum, and integrating opportunities to involve stakeholders in program design and decision making.

Twice a year, members of the MLS Program Advisory Board (Appendix I.A) meet to receive an update on program progress and advise the Program Coordinator on matters related to mission, goals, and objectives and provide input for curriculum and course improvement. The Board includes representatives from types of libraries served (public, school, community college, university), a fellow library educator, the current President of the program’s ALA Student Chapter, program alumni, and a community representative. The 12 members represent the constituencies the program seeks to serve: two members are alumni, one member is a current student (ex officio, ALA Student Chapter President), two members are public librarians, two members are academic librarians, two members are school librarians, one member is a library educator, one member represents the COE, and one member represents the at-large public community. Minutes of the MLS Program Advisory Board meetings are published at the program website.

The MLS program maintains a standing Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee consists of three program faculty members, one of whom serves as chair. The Curriculum Committee examines the curriculum and individual courses, and makes recommendations to the faculty for further consideration.
Program faculty may also make recommendations to the Committee for further consideration. The Curriculum Committee reviews and makes recommendations for new course and course revision proposals submitted by program faculty. A more detailed explanation of Curriculum Committee operations is included in Standard II.1 and II.7.

Below are examples of decisions made during the past three years by program faculty as a result of these planning activities

**Standard I: Mission, Goals, and Objectives**

- To replace annual planning retreats with more frequent faculty planning meetings on a permanent basis (August 2011)
- To revise MLS Program Goals (January 2012)
- To create MLS Program Advisory Board (January 2012)
- To initiate an alumni/employer survey (October 2012)
- To conduct an annual student forum (May 2012)
- To review program objectives (July 2013)
- To revise program objectives (April 2014)

**Standard II: Curriculum**

- To conduct a student/alumni curriculum survey (November 2011)
- To make specific changes to courses as result of student curriculum survey, Advisory Board advice, previous student evaluation of teaching results, and portfolio assessments (May 9, 2012)
- To discontinue the option for students to enroll in a licensure-only program (NC State licensure 076) (October 2012)
- To revise the Tier structure and submit course revision proposals to GCC for **LIBS 6012 Analyzing and Synthesizing Professional Library Information** and **6014 Introduction to Reference**; to begin the GCC process for revision of **LIBS 6018 Collection Development**, to request new course approval for **LIBS 6903 Special Topics: Electronic Materials** and **LIBS 6903 Special Topics: Library Services to Diverse and Special Populations**; and to study possible revisions to **LIBS 6133 Materials for Early Childhood**, **LIBS 6135 Materials for Children** and **LIBS 6137 Materials for Young Adults** (January 2014)

**Standard III: Faculty**

- To recruit a new faculty member who would serve as Teaching Professor and Advising Coordinator (Summer 2012)

**Standard IV: Students**
• To increase recruitment efforts (August 2013)
• To initiate program Facebook presence (August 2013)
• To forward proposal for Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian funding (2012 [unfunded], and again in 2013 [funded])
• To redesign the advising process; hire a faculty advising coordinator and redistribute advising load (April 2012)
• To retire the home-grown Student Evaluation Tracking System (SETS) and implement the Taskstream Assessment System for incoming students (Fall 2011) and transition all students to Taskstream by May 2013
• To conduct interviews with students applying for admission by exception when the Admissions Committee had questions about the applicant’s materials

Standard V: Administration and Financial Support

• To request revisions to the COE Unit Code of Operations that would administratively merge the Department of Library Science and the Department of Business and Information Technologies into a single department, the Department of Information and Library Science (February 2013)
• To request revisions to the COE Unit Code of Operations that would administratively merge the COE Counselor Education and Adult Education programs with Department of Information and Library Science to become the Department of Interdisciplinary Professions (February 2014)

Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities

• To move program and faculty offices from the Umstead Building to the Ragsdale Building (May 2011)

… Consistent with the values of the parent institution and the culture and mission of the school, program goals and objectives foster quality education.

MLS program goals and objectives foster quality education by setting forth clear statements of the requirements of preparation for entry to the profession and expectations of ECU, the COE, and the MLS program faculty. Program objectives describe the essential nature of librarianship and the basic knowledge, competences, and experience required for entry to the profession. Taken together, the MLS program mission, goals, and objectives foster quality education by presenting a cohesive, well-integrated set of requirements that describe the basic character of librarianship as a collaborative, outwardly focused, service profession. Program objectives describe higher-order learning and require demonstrated mastery of the common understandings and the general body of knowledge required for entry into the profession.
The MLS program is located within the COE, which is one of eight colleges within the Division of Academic Affairs\(^1\), and its Dean reports directly to the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor.

The mission of ECU is to be a national model for 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 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:

1. The encouragement and nurturing of professional growth for educators and allied practitioners at all levels and in all areas of the educational endeavor
2. A continuing emphasis on and support for scholarship and research/creativity activity
3. Service in all areas of professional education

I.2 Program objectives are stated in terms of educational results to be achieved and reflect

I.2.1 the essential character of the field of library and information studies; that is, recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use, encompassing information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management.

\(^1\) This organizational chart for the ECU Division of Academic Affairs does not reflect the recent appointment of Dr. Ronald L. Mitchelson as Interim Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor.
In order to graduate, students are expected to demonstrate mastery of nine **MLS program objectives**. Mastery is demonstrated by scoring “proficient” or “above proficient” on selected course products called “artifacts,” contributed as students progress through the course of study, and graduates’ outcome performance is later evaluated by alumni and their employers. Students contribute one instructor-identified artifact from each program course to an electronic portfolio system called Taskstream. Artifacts are scored by the instructor using individually designed rubrics, and final scores are automatically calculated and recorded in the Taskstream portfolio system.

**Examples of student artifacts** are available and the password has been sent separately. Although some of the examples provided are non-artifact course assignments, all courses listed include one or more examples of the course artifact. Student work samples of course artifacts are identified and marked with their associated program objective.

Administrative password access to all course artifacts submitted by all students, and assistance in searching Taskstream student portfolios will be provided to ERP members on-site. Dr. Marson, the MLS Program Taskstream administrator, has access to all student course artifacts and can create various management reports. Individual faculty members have access only to those artifacts for which they serve(d) as the evaluator.

Table I.1 provides an overview of MLS program objectives met by required program courses, individual learning objectives for each required course, and alignments to Standards 1.2.2-1.2.9.

### I.2.2 the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field

MLS program objective 1 is “Obtain and apply an understanding of the foundations of library science from contemporary professional standards used to resolve ethical and legal issues.” The first course students are permitted to take is **LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies** in which students study the development and functions of libraries and information centers, professional practice and ethics, and current issues and trends, and write as the capstone assignment a research paper on a legal or ethical issue significant to their library setting of interest. In **LIBS 6012 Analyzing and Synthesizing Professional Library Information**, students complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training module for **Social/Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel** to gain an understanding of ethical principles related to research involving human subjects. In **LIBS 6018 Collection Development**, students read and write simulated policy statements related to privacy, appropriate use, intellectual freedom, copyright, and diversity in developing collection development. In addition, students may also take an elective course, **LIBS 6735 Seminar on Intellectual Freedom**. At the end of the program, students compose statements of their
individual philosophies of librarianship as an assignment in **LIBS 6991 Internship: Seminar**.

**I.2.3 appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations**

MLS program objective 9 is “Obtain practical experience in professional roles for which students are preparing,” and the final course in the program sequence is **LIBS 6991 Internship: Seminar** (110 hours of observation and practical experience in the library setting for which students are preparing). Depending upon students’ career interests, they are also required to take one or more advanced courses specialized by setting, i.e., School Library students must take **LIBS 6142 Instructional Foundations of the School Library Media Program** (educational standards, models of information literacy, assessment, and their impact on student achievement) and **6144 Instructional Strategies and Leadership for School Media Specialists** (strategies for education, collaboration, leadership and assessment). Public Library students must take **LIBS 7050 Seminar on Public Libraries** (characteristics, operations, and problems of public libraries) as a required course. Academic Library students must take **LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries** (issues and trends in community college, college and university libraries).

Throughout these courses and during the internship experience, students study key documents of relevant professional associations, including standards for professional specialization. These standards for professional specialization include:

1. **ALA Core Competences of Librarianship** (2009)
2. ALA/American Association of School Librarians, **Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians** (2010)
3. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, **School Library Media Coordinators Standards** (2013)

**Appendix I.B** provides a list of program objectives, courses associated with each program objective, and elements of the four sets of standards addressed in the courses. **Appendix I.C** provides Taskstream course artifact scoring rubrics aligning the evaluation criteria to elements of the four sets of standards.

**I.2.4 the value of teaching and service to the advancement of the field**

MLS program objective 3 is “use reference and information resources in a variety of formats to promote information literacy.” Objective 8 is “instruct individually, and in collaboration with other information professionals/educators, diverse user groups to access effectively and efficiently the resources and services available to them in a variety of library settings.” Developing students who consider teaching integral to, and inseparable from, librarianship is a major emphasis of the
program. Program faculty model librarianship as a service profession through both their teaching and their professional service activities.

Within this context, two specific applications of teaching are emphasized: 1) developing and delivering information literacy instruction to users as part of a program of total library service, and 2) developing and delivering professional development programs for peers. The importance of the librarian’s dual role as teacher is reflected in Objective 8: “Instruct individually, and in collaboration with other information professionals/educators, diverse user groups to access effectively and efficiently the resources and services available to them in a variety of library settings.”

Preparation for teaching information literacy skills is embedded throughout the program in assignments completed for LIBS 6012 Analyzing and Synthesizing Professional Library Information (students study Khulthau’s Information Search Process), LIBS 6026 Organization of Information in Libraries (students prepare an instructional presentation for library users to develop access skills), LIBS 6137 Materials for Young Adults (students prepare a booktalk presentation incorporating three distinct teaching styles), LIBS 6142 Instructional Foundations of the School Library Media Program (students compare and contrast three models for approaching information literacy instruction), LIBS 6144 Instructional Strategies and Leadership for School Librarians (students ask essential questions and apply information literacy skills to implement units of inquiry), LIBS 7050 Seminar on Public Libraries (students develop strategies to approach instruction for information and computer literacy integrated within reference services, and as a stand-alone service), and LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries (students prepare an instructional presentation to teach basic search skills to college undergraduates).

Preparation for developing and delivering professional education opportunities for peers is embedded in LIBS 6042 Technology for Library Services (students prepare a multi-media instructional presentation for peers to develop technology skills), and LIBS 6991 Internship: Seminar (students prepare an instructional plan and presentation for peers to develop library utilization or technology skills).

Development of a strong professional service ethic is an expectation of the profession and is emphasized throughout the program, beginning with the first course, LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies (assignment to introduce library professional associations), and continues in LIBS 6031 Library Administration and Management (readings on leadership as a lifelong professional commitment), LIBS 6042 Technology for Library Services (requires participation in professional association listservs), and LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries (students prepare a five-year career plan that includes institutional and professional service). Given the economic and racial demographics of eastern North
Carolina, **LIBS 6991 Internship Seminar** can be considered service learning, as many placements are in rural, underserved, and diverse communities.

When students are admitted to the program, they become members of ECU’s ALA Student Chapter. Every winter, the student membership coordinates a service project—a new and used book drive. Materials collected are distributed to all types of non-profit community organizations in eastern North Carolina, e.g., early childhood programs and day care centers, public schools in high-poverty areas, and women’s and children’s shelters. MLS faculty members also participate in the book drive and have contributed 20-30 new books to the drive each year for the past seven years. Since 2006, program students have collected and distributed almost 14,000 new and gently used books within their communities.

**I.2.5 the importance of research to the advancement of the field’s knowledge base**

Program objective 2 is “investigate library problems through analysis and synthesis of professional library literature.” The foundation of a graduate professional education is a thorough understanding of the essential research findings in librarianship and closely related disciplines. Students are challenged to become intelligent finders, consumers, and producers of knowledge throughout their coursework. In four required courses taken by every student (**LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies, LIBS 6012 Analyzing and Synthesizing Professional Library Information, LIBS 6026 Organization of Information in Libraries** and **LIBS 6031 Library Administration and Management**) and five specialized advanced courses (**LIBS 6137 Materials for Young Adults, LIBS 6142 Instructional Foundations of the School Library Media Program, LIBS 6144 Instructional Strategies and Leadership for School Media Specialists, LIBS 7050 Seminar on Public Libraries** and **LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries**) students read extensively on topics including national information policy, information literacy, quantitative and qualitative research methods, principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research, evaluation of conventional and unconventional information sources, library program design, assessment and evaluation, and professional identity and ethics. Assigned readings are a mix of milestone and current and research articles in the field, and most courses require and recommend textbooks.

**I.2.6 the importance of contributions of library and information studies to other fields of knowledge**

Two program objectives relate to the importance of library and information studies to other fields of knowledge. Program objective 1 is “obtain and apply an understanding of the foundations of library science from contemporary professional standards used to resolve ethical and legal issues.” The role identity of prospective librarians must include an understanding of how library and information professionals have helped to create knowledge bases and means of discovery and
access to knowledge in all disciplines. This concept of professional identity is emphasized in **LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies**, in which students are asked to describe their initial views on the role of libraries and librarians by answering a set of directed questions. Program objective 5 is “apply appropriate standards and guidelines for the organization of library materials and resources.” In **LIBS 6026 Organization of Information in Libraries**, students go beyond basic principles of cataloging to reach an understanding of how organization of information impacts discovery and access to information in all fields of study. In **LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries**, students read and discuss the librarian’s direct and influential role in creating and managing various streams of scholarly communication.

In addition, students may choose from elective courses that build upon librarians’ contributions to interdisciplinary efforts, or that touch on cognate fields. **LIBS 6125 Genealogy for Librarians** discusses the contributions of librarians to developing and managing genealogical collections and services, and **LIBS 6220 History of Books and Libraries** discusses the origin and development of libraries as institutions of learning and research central to all learning enterprises.

**I.2.7 the importance of contributions of other fields of knowledge to library and information studies**

MLS program objective 6, “plan, organize, staff, direct and budget library programs to meet informational, instructional and recreational needs” and MLS program objective 8 “instruct individually, and in collaboration with other information professionals/educators, diverse user groups to access effectively and efficiently the resources and services available to them in a variety of library settings” emphasize the importance of related fields of study, primarily business management and education. Throughout the program, students read broadly from the literatures of business management and leadership, curriculum and instruction, higher education, educational theory and policy, cognitive development, instructional technology, and instructional development. Readings include qualitative and quantitative research reports, policy statements and commissioned studies, and full-length monographs considered important in other disciplines, but which have direct application to library service.

With prior approval, students choose one or more elective courses in related disciplines offered outside the program. Students often enroll in electives within the COE, and faculty advisors recommend a list of about 30 courses to students. From this list, students frequently select the courses **EDTC 6010 Introduction to Instructional Technology**, **EDTC 6020 Principles of Instructional Design**, **EDUC 6001 Introduction in Differences in Human Learning in Schools**, and **ADED 6307 Proposal Writing for Grants and Contracts** as electives.

**I.2.8 the role of library and information services in a diverse global society, including the role of serving the needs of underserved groups**
Two MLS program objectives focus on these aspects of libraries’ collections and services. Objective 4 is “select, acquire, develop and manage collections to meet the lifelong learning needs of diverse groups in various library settings.” Objective 8 is “instruct individually, and in collaboration with other information professionals/educators, diverse user groups to access effectively and efficiently the resources and services available to them in a variety of library settings.”

Collections courses are particularly sensitive to the library needs of diverse and global populations, as well as underserved groups. For example, LIBS 6018 Collection Development requires students to do a community analysis for the type of library in which they are interested in working (school, public, or academic), and this analysis must go beyond demographics to an understanding of community cultures. LIBS 6135 Materials for Children includes a unit on selecting materials to ensure that school and public library collections reflect the needs and interests of the diverse and global communities they serve. In LIBS 6144 Instructional Strategies and Leadership for School Media Specialists, required readings include Gloria Ladson-Billings’s signal work on culturally responsive teaching, The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African-American Children.

Courses which specifically focus on these groups include LIBS 6903 Special Topics: Library Services to Diverse and Special Populations, which is slated to replace the older course, LIBS 6557 Library Services to Diverse Populations.

I.2.9 the role of library and information services in a rapidly changing technological society

MLS program objective 7 is “apply appropriate technologies to support or enhance library functions and processes.” The role of libraries in a rapidly changing environment is presented throughout the program as an active, rather than passive role; that is, libraries are not only subject to rapid change, but have enormous potential to drive change for the public good. In order to develop librarians who are adept at using change, there are assignments embedded in courses that aim to engage students in creating the future, as well as responding to the changing environment. Required courses for all three pathways include some aspect of identifying, applying, and evaluating library and educational applications of technology. Other courses approach theoretical or strategic issues regarding fundamental or disruptive changes in technology.

LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies, LIBS 6031 Library Administration and Management, and LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries all contain assignments that address the future of libraries through required reading and writing projects that ask students to respond to or create future scenarios for the library as a new enterprise. Other courses include readings, assignments, or projects that address, for example, the global impact of digital libraries, social networking and social tagging, the rise of e-books, and the survival prospects for
traditional libraries. **LIBS 6042 Technology for Library Services** includes various components dealing with the impact of technology on libraries and access to services. Assignments include aspects of social networking, digital libraries, the use of e-books in libraries, and integrated library systems.

The eight core courses every student must take are:

- LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies
- LIBS 6012 Analyzing and Synthesizing Professional Library Information
- LIBS 6042 Technology for Library Services
- LIBS 6014 Introduction to Reference
- LIBS 6026 Organization of Information in Libraries
- LIBS 6031 Library Administration and Management
- LIBS 6018 Collection Development
- LIBS 6991 Internship: Seminar

In addition to the eight core courses, students seeking North Carolina licensure as a School Library Media Coordinators must take four required pathway courses:

- LIBS 6135 Materials for Children
- LIBS 6137 Materials for Young Adults
- LIBS 6142 Instructional Foundations of the School Library Media Program
- LIBS 6144 Instructional Strategies and Leadership for School Library Media Specialists

In addition to the eight core courses, students with an interest in working in public libraries must take one pathway required course:

- LIBS 7050 Seminar on Public Libraries

In addition to the eight core courses, students with an interest in working in academic libraries must take two required pathway courses:

- LIBS 6810 Academic Libraries
- LIBS 6972 Research Methods in Library and Information Studies

Students must take **LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies** during their first program semester and Dr. Sua, the Program Advising Coordinator directs every student to enroll in LIBS 6010 in her welcome letter. She also sends every student a program checksheet that indicates LIBS 6010 as the first course in the sequence. Since LIBS 6010 is a prerequisite for every other course in the program, the Registrar’s enrollment system blocks new students from enrolling in any other course until they have enrolled in LIBS 6010. Students may then self-enroll in an additional Tier I course(s) during their first semester if they wish.
1.2.10 the needs of the constituencies that a program seeks to serve.

The constituencies served by the MLS program include program students, program alumni, and their employers in K-12 schools, public libraries, and post-secondary educational institutions; administrators in the COE and ECU; and the at-large publics served by ECU and its graduates. The constituencies served are current North Carolina residents or former student residents who have moved out of the state during the course of their studies. In the Fall of 2013, 177 students were enrolled in MLS courses; 170 resided in North Carolina, two resided in South Carolina, and five had military resident status.

The geographic distribution of the Fall 2013 student body within North Carolina is illustrated below.

Eastern North Carolina consists of the 44 counties east of Interstate Highway 95 that make up the state’s coastal plain region. ECU is located in Pitt County in the north central part of the region. Fifty-five percent of program students enrolled in Fall 2013 resided in eastern North Carolina counties, 27% resided in other rural and poor counties in North Carolina, and 18% resided in urban/suburban North Carolina counties.

Eighty-two percent of students enrolled in Fall 2013 resided one of the 63 rural counties in North Carolina, many with higher poverty rates than the state average of 18%. Of the 44 counties in eastern North Carolina, ten demonstrate what the federal government describes as “persistent poverty.” The highest county-level poverty rate, 35%, is Robeson County, which ranks as the poorest county in the state and as one of the poorest in the nation.

The remaining 18% of the student body resided in urban/suburban and wealthier counties, including Wake County, where Raleigh is located; Mecklenburg County, where Charlotte is located; Union County, which is an extension of the
Charlotte metropolitan statistical area; and Cleveland County, which is within commuting distance to both Charlotte and Greenville-Spartanburg, South Carolina.

The Fall 2013 student body was 7% male and 93% female. Twenty-two percent were under the age of 30, 32% were 30-39, 32% were 40-49, and 14% were 50 or older. Eight percent were Asian, Native American or Black/African-American; 89% were white, and 3% were of unknown race or ethnicity.

Methods used to determine the needs of these constituent groups and to solicit their feedback include

**Students**
- Student Perceptions of Teaching Survey (each semester)
- Membership on MLS Program Advisory Board (continuous)
- Graduate Exit Survey (each semester, compiled annually)
- Curriculum Survey (periodic)
- Student portfolio assessment (continuous, cumulative)
- ALA Student Chapter (continuous)
- Receptions/events at North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) conferences (annual) and North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) conferences (biennial)
- Annual student forums

**Alumni**
- Alumni survey (annual)
- Membership on MLS Program Advisory Board (continuous)
- Receptions/events at NCSLMA conferences (annual) and NCLA conferences (biennial)

**Employers**
- Employer survey (annual)
- Membership on MLS Program Advisory Board (continuous)
- Internship Site Supervisors Evaluation (every semester/term)

**COE/ECU**
- Feedback from Department Chair, Program Coordinator, and COE Dean’s Advisory Council (monthly)
- Feedback from the Chair on MLS program annual reports
- Feedback from COE and ECU on MLS annual
program reports for SACS

At-large publics
• Feedback on AASL/NCAATE/CAEP reports
• Feedback from the Director, ALA Office of Accreditation and the Chair of the External Review Panel
• MLS Program Advisory Board (continuous)

The College of Education (COE) Dean’s Advisory Council is a standing committee composed of one voting faculty member elected from each department in the COE and the department chair from each department. Ex-officio members without vote include COE administrators. The Chair of the Dean’s Advisory Council is a faculty member elected by the faculty representatives on the Advisory Council from the elected membership of the committee. The Dean’s Advisory Council reviews and makes recommendations concerning COE policy, reviews and makes recommendations for long-range development for COE, assists in the information management of COE, and makes recommendations on budgeting matters.

Historically, the MLS program has been a major provider of highly qualified librarians to the largest library employer group in North Carolina--school libraries. School librarians represent 55% of credentialed librarians working in the state. The MLS program will continue to develop its capabilities for the preparation of highly qualified public and academic librarians, as well as continue to produce highly qualified school media coordinators.

I.3 Within the context of these Standards each program is judged on the degree to which it attains its objectives. In accord with the mission of the school, clearly defined, publicly stated, and regularly reviewed program goals and objectives form the essential frame of reference for meaningful external and internal evaluation. The evaluation of program goals and objectives involves those served: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.

Table I.2 illustrates the MLS program objectives aligned to required course artifacts and evidence used to evaluate how well students have met program objectives. Both direct forms of evidence (course artifacts and evaluations) and indirect forms of evidence (surveys) are used to evaluate student achievement of program objectives. Source documents and reports used to compile Table I.2

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2 Based on data taken from: NCES Table 6. Number and percentage distribution of different types of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff at academic libraries, by state/jurisdiction: Fall 2012; NCDPI Statistical Profile, Table 16 - STATE SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FULL-TIME PERSONNEL, 2013-2014; and Statistical Report of North Carolina Public Libraries 2012-2013, Table 2 Library Staff. In all three source documents, “credentialed” librarians include employees working in professional positions as librarians who are graduates of ALA-accredited and non-ALA-accredited programs leading to a master’s degree in librarianship.
include: Appendix I.D Faculty Assessment of Course Artifacts (Fall 2011-Fall 2013), Appendix I.E Internship Site Supervisors’ Evaluations (Spring 2012-Fall 2013), Appendix I.F Alumni Survey Results (Fall 2011-Fall 2013), Appendix I.G Employer Survey Results (Spring 2010-Spring 2013) and Appendix I.H Graduate Exit Survey Results (2011-2012 and 2012-2013).

MLS program faculty, internship site supervisors, program alumni, and their employers indicate high satisfaction with students’ demonstrated mastery of program objectives and overall preparation for librarianship, and in most cases, there is high agreement among these groups. In addition, alumni and employers indicate that students developed desirable work dispositions during the program, such as collaboration, flexibility, leadership, and engagement in continuous professional development. An analysis of the supporting evidence gathered from these constituent groups suggests areas of excellence and areas for improvement.

Areas of excellence

Several comprehensive indicators of student success have increased across the past two years. Internship Supervisors’ ratings of their ECU student interns as “good” or “excellent” on five of six selected items from the internship evaluation have increased during the reporting period. The only item for which the percentage of student interns rated as “good” or “excellent” decreased was “general effectiveness in working with library users,” and the decrease was one percentage point (from 98% to 97%). The seventh item, the percentage of internship site supervisors who said they would hire their intern, increased from 95 to 97.

On two alumni surveys administered by the program to students who graduated during the periods Fall 2011-Summer 2012 and Fall 2012-Fall 2013, the percentage of respondents who reported they were “very well prepared” by the program increased significantly across the nine program objectives and four dispositions from the earlier academic year to the later academic year. The average increase in alumni who reported they were “very well prepared” increased an average of 15% across the nine program objectives and 20% across the four dispositions. Highest increases were for Program objectives 4 (collection development) at 29% and 5 (organization of information) at 26%. These increases may be due to revisions within associated courses. The disposition with the highest increase (26%) was “Engage in continuous professional development.” This may be due to increased emphasis on continuous learning as integral to professional competency throughout the program of study.

On the 2012-2013 ECU Graduate Exit Survey, MLS program students reported higher rates of satisfaction than graduate students in all ECU graduate programs on 34 of 37 items. The percentage of MLS graduating students rating instruction and instructional support services as “excellent” or “good” averaged five percent higher than graduate students in all ECU graduate programs. The largest discrepancy was on the question, “If you could start over again, would you still
choose to enroll in this program?” Ninety-seven percent of MLS students responded affirmatively, while only 80% of graduate students in all ECU graduate programs responded affirmatively.

The three items for which MLS program students did not rate services higher than of graduate students in all ECU graduate programs were: The help desk was available when needed (Technology Services); Evaluation of financial aid staff responsiveness (Financial Aid Office); and Problem solving skills (Knowledge, Skills and Personal Growth). Because MLS students are online students, it may be understandable that they are less satisfied with ECU offices that are centered at walk-in locations on campus because online students rely more on telephone and online service delivery than they would walk-in locations. Lower satisfaction with the technology help desk could be due to a 2012-2013 reduction in weekend online help desk hours, which were then promptly restored in 2013-2014 academic year. MLS students reported the development of their problem solving skills to be slightly less than students in all ECU graduate programs (at 94.7% compared to 94.8% who said “somewhat” or “very much”). Although the difference is slight, improvement in this area is within the program’s span of control and will be addressed.

Areas for improvement

Evidence collected from three groups (faculty, program alumni, and their employers) who provide evaluations directly aligned to program objectives indicates some discrepancies, and highlights areas for continued improvement. Discrepancies among groups were noted for courses associated with program objectives 1, 5 and 6.

Program objective 1 is “Obtain and apply an understanding of the foundations of library science from contemporary professional standards used to resolve ethical and legal issues” and is associated with the first course in the MLS program, LIBS 6010 Foundations of Library and Information Studies. The course artifact is a research paper on a student-selected legal or ethical issue facing librarians. The paper must be formatted according to the APA Manual of Style, and students appear to have difficulty in learning the mechanics of, or adapting to APA from another style manual. To address this deficiency, the scoring rubric was rebalanced to lower the weight for this criterion in the total overall score from 25% to 20%, and additional instruction, resources, and aids to using APA style were added to the course. Faculty discussed these changes to the artifact scoring rubric during a curriculum workshop on May 9, 2012, and there were no objections. It also made sense to believe that the first course in the program introduced students to the degree of rigor required by graduate study and that there was some leveling effect. Proficiency rates on this artifact have improved over time from a recorded low of 88.5% in Fall 2010 to 92% in Fall 2011 and later, but still remain lower than most. This means 8% of artifacts were considered “below proficient” by the course instructor. Groups aside from faculty (program alumni, and employers) indicated higher evaluations along this program objective.
Program objective 5 is “apply appropriate standards and guidelines for the organization of library materials and resources” and the associated course is **6026** **Organization of Information in Libraries.** The course artifact is an evaluation of an integrated library system (ILS) application and analysis of ILS history and future. Proficiency rates on this artifact are 86%, which means that 14% were considered “below proficient” by the course instructor. Groups aside from faculty (program alumni, and employers) indicated significantly higher evaluations along this program objective. The course instructor notes that students’ scores are lower on the artifact criterion “writing style,” which decreases overall proficiency, and to remedy this, the instructions have been revised to include more detailed expectations, and artifact drafts are now mandatory, rather than voluntary. The artifact has been revised to broaden the topic perspective and a revised artifact scoring rubric has been established in the Taskstream portfolio system.

Program objective 6 received lower agreement by alumni and employer groups than by faculty. Program Object 6 is “plan, organize, staff, direct, and budget library programs to meet informational, instructional, and recreational needs” and the associated course is **LIBS 6031 Library Administration and Management.** The course artifact is an executive presentation to constituents of the student’s library setting of interest. Proficiency rates on this artifact were 96%, meaning only 4% of artifacts were considered “below proficient” by the instructor. However, alumni and employers reported lower evaluations of 93% and 91% respectively. The course has been revised over past years to emphasize administration and management as a collaborative activity and incorporate the increasing role of advocacy as a management priority, which subsumes the management functions of budgeting and staffing. To better reflect the conceptual processes of library management and administration covered in the course, the statement of program objective 6 has been revised to “understand and apply the principles of management, leadership and advocacy to direct and advance library programs.” If this change to program objective 6, and a subsequent change to the employer and alumni survey items clarifying the intention of the objective does not improve agreement, then course content and instruction will be reexamined for potential improvements.