



Valdosta State University

Director of Master of Library & Information Science Program

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September 20, 2013

Dr. Barbara B. Moran, Chair, ALA COA

Members, ALA COA

Dr. Diane Barlow, Chair, External Review Panel

Members, External Review Panel

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Valdosta State University Master of Library and Information Science Program submits herewith its 2013 Program Presentation in support of its reaccreditation by the American Library Association, Committee on Accreditation.

The VSU MLIS Program is an online program that offers the master's degree in library and information science. The Program offers no other degree. The Program seeks to educate entry-level librarians for the 21st century library.

The Program's students, alumni, stakeholders, and faculty look forward to the visit of the External Review Panel in November 2013.

Sincerely yours,

Wallace Koehler, PhD
Professor and Director

cc: Ms. Karen O'Brien, Director, ALA Office of Accreditation
Dr. William McKinney, President
Dr. David Danahar, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. James LaPlant, Interim Dean, Graduate School
Dr. Alan Bernstein, University Librarian



VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
Library & Information Science Program
Odum Library



Program Presentation
For Accreditation Review by
The American Library Association
November 2013

Table of Contents

Tables and Figures	iii
Appendices	v
Documents Available On-Site for the External Panel Review	ix
Acronyms	x
Required Information	xi
Declaration	xii
Introduction	1
Standard I: Mission, Goals and Objectives	3
Standard I.1	3
Standard I.2	6
Standard I.3	16
Standard II: Curriculum	19
Standard II.1	20
Standard II.2	29
Standard II.3	35
Standard II.4	37
Standard II.5	43
Standard II.6	44
Standard II.7	45
Standard III: Faculty	55
Standard III.1	55
Standard III.2	61
Standard III.3	64
Standard III.4	65
Standard III.5	68
Standard III.6	69
Standard III.7	72
Standard III.8	73
Standard IV: Students	77
Standard IV.1	77
Standard IV.2	88
Standard IV.3	89
Standard IV.4	95
Standard IV.5	99
Standard IV.6	100

Standard V: Administration and Financial Support	113
Standard V.1	113
Standard V.2	116
Standard V.3	118
Standard V.4	120
Standard V.5	122
Standard V.6	123
Standard V.7	124
Standard V.8	125
 Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities	 127
Standard VI.1	127
Standard VI.2	128
Standard VI.3	130
Standard VI.4	133
Standard VI.5	135
 Synthesis and Overview	 137

Tables and Figures

Standard I: Mission Goals and Objectives

Table I.1:	Selected VSU MLIS Educational Outcomes, 2006-2012: Competences _____	6
Table I.2:	Selected VSU MLIS Educational Outcomes, 2006-2012: Evaluation of Competences _____	7
Table I.3:	New MLIS Program Objectives, adopted Fall 2011 _____	8
Table I.4:	Alignment of Program Objectives with Student Learning Outcome Assessment Components _____	9

Standard II: Curriculum

Table II.1:	Alignment of Program Objectives with Student Learning Outcome Assessments _____	21
Table II.2:	Alignment of MLIS Program Objectives, Core Courses, and SLOAs to ALA Accreditation Standards and Core Competences _____	28
Table II.3:	Alignment of Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcome Assessments to Core Courses and Guided Electives _____	32
Table II.4:	Enrollment in Core Courses by Name and Number 2007- 2010 _____	38
Table II.5:	Enrollment in Core Courses by Name and Number 2011-2013 _____	39
Table II.6:	MLIS Program Curriculum Review History AY 2007-08 to AY 2012-13 _	46
Table II.7:	Cataloging Track Revision, effective Fall 2013 _____	47
Table II.8:	Special Topics courses offered AY 2007-08 to AY 2012-13 _____	49
Table II.9:	Capstone Exit Student Survey Responses, Fall 2012 and Summer 2013 _____	51
Table II.10:	Alumni Survey Responses, Spring 2012 _____	52

Standard III: Faculty

Table III.1:	Current Faculty Graduate Faculty Status _____	56
Table III.2:	Current Full-time Faculty with Year of Appointment, Rank, Degree, and Specialization _____	57
Table III.3:	Former Full-time Faculty with Years of Appointment, Rank and Degree __	57
Table III.4:	Current Faculty Scholarship Record from date of hire: 2007-2013 _____	58
Table III.5:	Former Faculty Scholarship Record: 2007 to Termination _____	58
Table III.6:	Full-time and Part-time Faculty Teaching by Academic Year _____	59
Table III.7:	Full-time and Part-time Faculty Teaching Core Courses by Academic Year	59
Table III.8:	MLIS Program Aggregated Student Opinion of Instruction Results, 2009 – 2013 _____	67
Table III.9:	Faculty Holding Advanced Degrees During the Accreditation Period _____	69
Table III.10:	MLIS Tenure and Promotion Actions 2007-2013 _____	74
Figure III.1	Full-time and Part-time Teaching Loads _____	60
Figure III.2	Full-time and Part-time Core Teaching Loads _____	60

Standard IV: Students

Table IV.1:	VSU MLIS Travel Related to Student Recruiting _____	78
Table IV.2:	Scholarships, Awards, and Financial Aid grants, Fall 2007 – Spring 2013 _	80
Table IV.3:	Employment classifications based on known active employment status ____	83
Table IV.4:	Ethnicity and gender classifications of MLIS candidates matriculated, Fall 2007 - Spring 2013 _____	84
Table IV.5:	Trend comparisons on VSU MLIS minority enrollment to other ALA-accredited programs _____	85
Table IV.6:	Age and gender classifications of matriculated MLIS candidates, Fall 2007- Spring 2013 _____	86
Table IV.7:	MLIS Enrollment Major Summary Report, Fall 2012 _____	88
Table IV.8:	Changes in documentation evaluated for admission to the MLIS Program _	90
Table IV.9:	Retention statistics represented by fall semesters, 2007-2012 _____	92
Table IV.10:	Aggregated retention and graduation data for matriculated MLIS candidates, AY 2007/2008-2012/2013 _____	93
Table IV.11:	Ethnicity and gender classifications of MLIS candidates graduated, Fall 2007 - Spring 2013 _____	93
Table IV.12:	Track enrollments, Spring 2007 – Spring 2013 _____	96
Table IV.13:	Alignment of Program Objectives with Student Learning Outcome Assessments _____	101
Table IV.14:	Data display used to pilot test the original 8-component rubric for SLOA 3 _____	103
Table IV.15:	Revised Data Display used to collect data for SLOA 3.0 _____	104
Table IV.16:	Data Display SLOA 2.3 _____	105
Table IV.17:	Data Display SLOA 4 _____	107
Table IV.18:	Status of Student Learning Outcome Assessments _____	108
Table IV.19:	Review Schedule of Student Learning Outcome Assessments _____	109
Figure IV.1	Geographic disbursement of VSU MLIS students, 2001-2013 _____	87
Figure IV.2	MLIS Degrees conferred by semester, Fall 2007-Summer 2013 _____	94

Standard V: Administration and Financial Support

Table V.1:	Arts and Science and Education Colleges Department Head Salaries in AY 2012-13 _____	119
Table V.2:	End-of-Year MLIS Budgets 2007-2012 _____	122
Table V.3:	Comparison of Selected Salaries AY 2012-13 _____	124

Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities

Table VI.1:	Odum Library Classrooms and Conference rooms _____	129
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Appendices

Standard I: Mission Goals and Objectives

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix I.A	The Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status
Appendix I.B	MLIS Program's Advisory Board and Accreditation Advisory Committee
Appendix I.C	Correspondence with Stakeholders
Appendix I.D	Video of 2012 VSU MLIS Stakeholders Meeting
Appendix I.E	MLIS Faculty Meeting Minutes
Appendix I.F	MLIS Faculty Annual Retreat Meeting Minutes
Appendix I.G.1-4	ALA COA Correspondence <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Letter of April 18, 20102. Letter of November 20, 20103. Letter of June 26, 20114. Letter of April 14, 2012
Appendix I.H.1-9	Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOAs) <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. SLOA 1.1 Applied Library Experience Notebook (ALEN)2. SLOA 1.2 Collection Development Project3. SLOA 2.1 Reference Transactions Assessment4. SLOA 2.2 Social Cataloging Technology Project5. SLOA 2.3 Career e-Portfolio Website6. SLOA 3 Research Proposal7. SLOA 4.1 MLIS Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment8. SLOA 4.2 Ethics Project Report9. SLOA 4.3 Career e-Portfolio
Appendix I.I	Georgia Public Library System IMLS Grant: Librarians Building Community
Appendix I.J	Stakeholder and Constituents Core Competencies Survey, April 2011
Appendix I.K	Alumni Program Effectiveness Survey, January 2012

Standard II: Curriculum

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix II.A	MLIS Course Rotation Spreadsheet 2007-2014
Appendix II.B.1-3	Curriculum Review Advisory Board Rosters <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Health Librarianship Advisory Board2. Youth Services Track Advisory Board3. Cataloging Track Advisory Board
Appendix II.C	Electives Course Enrollment Table
Appendix II.D	Ad Hoc Committee Report on MLIS 7000 Delivery Method
Appendix II.E	MLIS Curriculum Development: New Courses and Curriculum Reviews Summer 2005 - Summer 2013
Appendix II.F	MLIS 7800 Exit Survey
Appendix II.G	VSU MLIS Alumni Survey

Standard III: Faculty

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix III.A	Assistant Program Director Position Description
Appendix III.B.1-13	Faculty Curriculum Vitae <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Drouillard, Colette2. Gaumond, George R.3. Green, Ravonne A.4. Koehler, Wallace5. Meehan, William F., III6. Most, Linda R.7. Oguz, Fatih8. Ondrusek, Anita9. Ren, Xiaoi10. Slone, Debra11. Thiele, Harold12. Yang, Changwoo13. Yontz, Elaine
Appendix III.C.1-22	Part-Time Faculty Curriculum Vitae
Appendix III.D.1-2	MLIS Part-time Faculty 2007-2013 <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Names, Courses and Terms2. Names, Courses and Qualifications
Appendix III.E	Faculty Funding to Support Professional Development and Professional Travel by Calendar Year
Appendix III.F	Faculty Professional Development And Training
Appendix III.G	VSU Tenure and Promotion Policy
Appendix III.H.1-2	MLIS Tenure and Promotion Guidelines <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 20052. 2013
Appendix III.I	MLIS Position Postings, 2007-2013
Appendix III.J	Full-time Faculty Relevant Professional Experience
Appendix III.K	Faculty Professional Association Memberships, Offices, and Service, University and Departmental Service, 2007 - 2013
Appendix III.L.1-2	Online Lifeline Instructional Technology and eLearning Conference Planning Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 20122. 2013
Appendix III.M	Disaggregated SOI data for Summer 2009 through Summer 2013
Appendix III.N	Faculty Evaluation Model at Valdosta State University
Appendix III.O	Faculty Governance Model: Committee Chairs and Memberships 2007-2013
Appendix III.P	Full Time Faculty Teaching Rotation

Standard IV: Students

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix IV.A	Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Georgia
Appendix IV.B.1-5	MLIS Recruiting Materials <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Why Librarianship?2. Why VSU?3. General audience4. IMLS scholarship opportunity5. Health sciences librarianship track
Appendix IV.C.1-5	MLIS Scholarship Guidelines <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. H. W. Wilson grant2. MLIS Merit Scholarships3. ALA Student-to-Staff fellowship4. George Gaumond Award5. Georgia Library Association Hubbard and Charles Beard Scholarship Application
Appendix IV.D	Financials for the MLIS graduate assistantships by academic year
Appendix IV.E	TAP Student Analysis 2006-2013
Appendix IV.F	Award and Scholarship Report
Appendix IV.G	Fieldwork Sponsor Contact Chart
Appendix IV.H	Graduate Tracking Data Table
Appendix IV.I	MLIS employment data classified by library type
Appendix IV.J	MLIS employment data classified by year of graduation
Appendix IV.K	MLIS Employment Statistics Summary
Appendix IV.L	MLIS Student Data Classified by County
Appendix IV.M	Major Summary Report – LIS Enrollment - Fall 2012
Appendix IV.N	Report on Status of Students Accepted on Probationary Status
Appendix IV.O	Demographics on Graduation and Retention
Appendix IV.P	MLIS Degrees conferred by semester
Appendix IV.Q	Attrition Contact List with Responses Spring 2011
Appendix IV.R.1-2	Dean of Graduate School Student Letters <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Grade Warning Letter2. Grade Deficiency Points Warning Letter
Appendix IV.S	Students Graduated with Tracks Report
Appendix IV.T	New MLIS Student Orientation Evaluation Results <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Spring 20112. Fall 20113. Spring 20124. Fall 20125. Spring 2013
Appendix IV.U	The E-hiker's Survival Guide
Appendix IV.V	Advising Bulletin Archive
Appendix IV.W	LiveText SLOA 3 Rubric Reports for Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013
Appendix IV.X	Principles of visual design

Standard IV: Students

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix IV.Y.1-3	SLOA Rubric Review <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fall 2013 Revisions – SLOA Information and Rubrics2. SLOA Driven Action Plan, Fall 2013
Appendix IV.Z.1-4	SLOA Review Meeting Summaries <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. SLOA Review Meeting Aug7_20122. SLOA Review Meeting Dec10_20123. SLOA Review Meeting Feb14+18_20134. SLOA Review Meeting Aug21_2013
Appendix IV.AA	Stakeholder Surveys <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student Survey2. Alumni Survey3. Employer Survey

Standard V: Administration and Financial Support

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix V.A	Valdosta State University Organization Chart
Appendix V.B	Odum Library Organization Chart
Appendix V.C	University System of Georgia, New Program Proposal for Department of Library and Information Studies, 1999
Appendix V.D	2013 Faculty Competitive Scholarship Fund

Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Content of Appendix</u>
Appendix VI.A	Map of Valdosta State University Campus
Appendix VI.B.1-4	Maps of Odum Library <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fourth floor2. Second floor3. First floor
Appendix VI.C	Odum Library renovation plan
Appendix VI.D	MLIS New Student Orientation Programs
Appendix VI.E	MLIS Program technology equipment inventory
Appendix VI.F	Odum Library MLIS Collection Analysis
Appendix VI.G	Embedded Librarian in MLIS 7000 – D2L example

Documents Available On-Site for the External Review Panel

- Application Files
- Faculty Files
- Faculty Publications
- General Ledger
- Graduate Files
- MLIS Files
- MLIS Student Database (electronic access provided onsite)
- MLIS Student Placement Spreadsheet (electronic access provided onsite)
- MLIS Village (electronic access provided via D2L or onsite)
- Pilot test reports for Program Objective 3.0
- Search Files
- SOI data for semesters prior to Summer 2009
- Student Files
- VSU Budget Database DVD, 2013
- VSU Data Warehouse (electronic access provided onsite)
- VSU MLIS Program Facebook Page (electronic access provided onsite or with approval via “friend” request)
- VSU PeopleSoft Financials (electronic access provided on-site)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ALA	American Library Association
ALEN	Applied Library Experience Notebook (SLOA 1.1)
ALISE	Association for Library and Information Science Education
ASIST	American Society for Information Science & Technology
BOR	Board of Regents
CDP	Collection Development Project
COA	Committee on Accreditation
COE	ALA Committee on Education
D2L	Desire2Learn
ERP	External Review Panel
GaCOMO	Georgia Council of Media Organizations
GALILEO	Georgia Library Learning Online
GCSU	Georgia College & State University
GIL	GALILEO Interconnected Libraries
GKR	GALILEO Knowledge Repository
GLA	Georgia Library Association
GPLS	Georgia Public Library Service
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Organizations
ILL	Inter Library Loan
IMLS	Institute for Museum and Library Services
IT	Information Technology
LIS	Library and Information Science
LMS	Learning Management System
MGO	Mission, Goals and Objectives
MGSC	Middle Georgia State College
MLIS	Master of Library and Information Science
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PINES	Public Information Network for Electronic Services
PO	Program Objective
RUSA	Reference and User Services Association
SAA	Society of American Archivists
SEP Cycle	Systematic Evaluation and Planning Cycle
SLO	Student Learning Outcome
SLOA	Student Learning Outcome Assessment
SOI	Student Opinion of Instruction
T&P	Tenure and Promotion
the PLAN	The Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status (March 2012)
the Program	The Valdosta State University Library and Information Studies Program
USG	University System of Georgia
VPAA	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
VSU	Valdosta State University
YALSA	Young Adult Library Services Association

Required Information for the Program Presentation Valdosta State University

Declaration: See next page.

Full Name of the Unit:

Department of Library and Information Studies, Odum Library, Valdosta State University

Names and Titles of Dean and Director:

Dr. Alan M. Bernstein, University Librarian and Dean of the Library School, Odum Library

Dr. Wallace C. Koehler, Program Director, MLIS Program, Department of Library and Information Studies

Name of the Institution and Chief Executive and Academic Officers:

Dr. William J. McKinney, President, Valdosta State University

Dr. David C. Danahar, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Valdosta State University

The University Librarian and Dean of the Library School reports to Dr. Danahar
The Director of the Program (Dr. Koehler) reports to Dr. Bernstein

Name of Regional Accrediting Agency:

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council of Colleges (SACSCOC)
(Atlanta, GA)

Program Presented for Accreditation:

Master of Science Degree in Library and Information Science

The program to be considered for continuing accreditation is a thirty-nine semester hour graduate program that leads to the Master of Library and Information Science. Instruction is delivered online. The MLIS program will begin its 12th year in 2013, was fully accredited by the American Library Association in 2007, and placed on Conditional Accreditation in 2010. The program is placed administratively under the University Library and located physically in Valdosta State University's Odum Library.

DECLARATION
Valdosta State University
Master of Library and Information Science
Department of Library and Information Studies

The chief academic officer of the institution and the chief academic officer of the master's-level program in library and information studies declare that:

1. To the best of our knowledge, the institution and the academic unit offering the **Master of Library and Information Science** program for which accreditation by the American Library Association is sought, do not discriminate in recruitment, admissions, or financial aid of students or in the appointment, promotion, or pay of faculty and support staff because of age, ancestry, color, creed, disability, gender, individual lifestyle, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status" (cf. 2008 *Standards for Accreditation*).
2. We acknowledge and agree that a review of the **Master of Library and Information Science** program offered by the **Department of Information Studies at Valdosta State University** is **scheduled for a fall 2013 visit**, and we are familiar with and hereby agree to proceed according to the procedures established by the Committee on Accreditation and described in the document *Accreditation Process, Policies and Procedures (AP3)*.
3. To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in the accompanying Program Presentation is accurate and reliable with respect to the master's program in library and information studies for which accreditation is being sought and with respect to the institution that offers that program.

Chief academic officer of the institution (i.e., provost, vice president or academic affairs, etc.):

Print name: Dr. David C. Danahar

Title: Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Signed:  Dated: 9/17/13

Chief academic officer of the program (i.e., dean, director or chair, etc.)

Print name: Dr. Wallace C. Koehler

Title: Program Director, MLIS Program,
Department of Library and Information Studies

Signed:  Dated: 9/17/13

Introduction

The Valdosta State University (VSU) Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program, on behalf of and with the participation of its stakeholders, faculty, staff, students, and alumni, conveys its Program Presentation and first application for reaccreditation.

The MLIS Program was created in 1998 when the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG) approved VSU's application to create a Department of Library and Information Studies to offer a master's degree in library and information science. The department was created in part to fill the gap created by the closure of the library science program at Emory University in the early 1990s and the subsequent demand for a publicly supported MLIS program to serve the State of Georgia. The Department and, therefore, the Program was placed administratively under the University Librarian. The Program was located physically in VSU's Odum Library with the intent to deliver the majority of the curriculum to distance learners via the Internet.

The MLIS Program hired its first faculty member, an assistant professor, in 2000. It added two more associate professors in 2002. The Program admitted its first students in 2001. Of the twelve offered admission, nine matriculated. Between 2002 and 2007, the Program matriculated between 20 and 25 students each year. After receiving initial accreditation from the American Library Association (ALA) Committee on Accreditation (COA) in 2007, matriculations increased to about 50 students per semester. Because of its faculty and staff resource base, the Program found it necessary after 2009 to restrict the number of admissions offered to no more than 50 per semester. This has allowed students to progress through the Program without overwhelming available instructional resources.

The Program applied to ALA COA for precandidate status in 2001. In 2005, it was granted candidate status. In 2007, the Program was accredited. Between 2007 and 2010, the Program was brought to task by ALA COA for its inability to describe its systematic planning process. In 2010, the Program was placed on conditional accreditation status. In 2012, the Program submitted a report that described a comprehensive systemic planning process based on student learning outcome assessment. ALA COA accepted that 2012 report.

As the Program demonstrates throughout the Program Presentation and across the six Standards, the Program has integrated its commitment to planning based on direct student learning outcome assessments and an indirect assessment cycle. The Program has also implemented a systematic process whereby it reviews the outcomes of those assessments and amends its curriculum and practices in line with those outcomes.

Since 2007, the MLIS Program's faculty has increased from five to seven. Also, in 2007, the Program added a full-time secretary. The Program currently employs a part-time clerk paid under

and dedicated to an IMLS grant to train public librarians to serve as community builders. That grant terminates in March 2014.

The Program has employed part-time faculty to address demand for elective and core courses. Part-time faculty hold terminal degrees and expertise in the area in which they are asked to teach. The Program's dependence on part-time instructors has declined as the number of full-time faculty has increased and as the number of students in the Program has decreased.

The MLIS Program was established as a largely online program. In 2001, all courses except the introductory course MLIS 7000 Foundations and culminating course MLIS 7800 Capstone were offered over the Internet using a learning management system. MLIS 7800 was migrated to fully online in AY 2009-2010. MLIS 7000 became fully online in AY 2010-2011. New students were oriented to the Program before 2011 as a part of the Foundations course. The Program has since convened a two-day face-to-face orientation session in the week before the Fall and Spring semesters begin. Thus, by 2011, the MLIS Program became a fully online Program.

To offer its curriculum online, the Program relies on USG and VSU virtual and physical resources. All electronic resources, including the learning management system (now Desire2Learn), telephony, and the email system are provided by the USG and VSU. The Program relies on many electronic and physical library resources, including those offered by the USG. These resources are available to all students, no matter where they are located. VSU provides extensive assistance to the university community to set up and use the learning technologies.

There has been a steady increase in the number of Program graduates since 2007. Many of these graduates have found professional positions in Georgia and beyond. A number of the Program's graduates have attained leadership positions in academic and public libraries or in academe. Several have earned advanced degrees such as the PhD in library and information science.

The Program believes it is well positioned to continue to train and graduate professional entry-level librarians for the 21st century. Given its online presence and its attractive tuition rate, the VSU MLIS Program should continue to draw applicants from Georgia, North America, and beyond.

The VSU MLIS Program is pleased to submit this 2013 Program Presentation for consideration for reaccreditation by the American Library Association Committee on Accreditation and its External Review Panel.

The Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program (“Program”) addresses each of the six Standards in numerical order. The Program documents its discussion with evidence sources. The Program addresses outcomes of the assessment and evaluation process. Finally, each point of the Standards discussed is related to the Program’s Mission, Goals, and Objectives based on student learning outcomes assessments.

Standard I: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The mission of the Valdosta State University (VSU) MLIS Program is to educate entry level librarians for academic, public, and special libraries in Georgia and beyond. The Program has developed a set of student learning outcomes and an outcomes assessment mechanism to insure that the Program meets its expectations for its graduates and its stakeholders. Throughout 2011 and the first quarter of 2012, the MLIS Program worked diligently to formalize both direct and indirect measures to assess student learning outcomes. Those processes are described in the March 2012 *Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status* (Appendix I.A) accepted by the American Library Association (ALA) Committee on Accreditation (COA).

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.

The MLIS Program at VSU derives its [mission, goals, and objectives](#) (MGO) from those of its parent institutions, [Valdosta State University](#) and the [Board of Regents](#) (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG).

In addition, the needs of the library profession it serves and the missions, goals, and objectives of the professional organizations that represent the profession provide important guidance in the development of the MGO of the VSU MLIS Program. [The ALA Mission](#), [ALA COA Standards](#), and the [Core Competences of Librarianship](#) developed by the ALA Committee on Education (COE) play integral roles in the development of the Program’s MGO. The mission and competency statements of other professional organizations provide guidance in specific curricular areas. For example, the [Mission and Vision](#) of the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T) provides guidance in developing technology courses; the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) [Mission Statement](#) helps advise the Program’s Youth Services Librarianship track; and the [Mission and Goals](#) of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) mission have helped shape the archival courses the Program offers.

The Program examines its Mission, Goals, and Objectives. It demonstrates the creation, evaluation, and re-creation of those MGO's in the context of University System of Georgia and Valdosta State University guidance and regulations. The Program includes in its planning, evaluation procedures and MGOs a variety of stakeholders, including the Program's Advisory Board and the Advisory Accreditation Committee, made up of faculty, alumni, students, and librarians throughout the state (Appendix I.B). This is demonstrated in committee minutes and correspondence with stakeholders (Appendix I.C).

In fall 2012, the Program convened a general stakeholders meeting during the annual meeting of the Georgia Council of Media Organizations (GaCOMO) as recorded in Appendix I.D. GaCOMO is made up of three state-wide organizations: the Georgia Organization for Instructional Technology, the Georgia Library Association, and the Georgia Library Media Association. The stakeholders' meeting was advertised in the conference program and through the VSU MLIS student newsletter which is disseminated to all current students and alumni. Fourteen people plus the MLIS faculty and dean attended.

The MLIS Program communicates with its Advisory Board through e-mail and telephone. The Program asks its Board for comment and review. Examples of this are included in Appendix I.C. In addition, the Program meets with members of its Board annually at the GACOMO conference.

The VSU MLIS Program is also engaged at the departmental level in planning and assessment of its curriculum. The faculty meet at least monthly during fall and spring semesters to plan and evaluate its various functions and responsibilities (Appendix I.E). The Program has standing committees that have first responsibility for departmental governance (documented in Standard IV: Faculty). General direction and goals are considered during the Program's annual retreat each fall, usually in August (Appendix I.F). As part of a newly-adopted systematic planning cycle, the faculty review the results of student learning outcome assessments at the beginning of fall and spring semesters. Recommendations are generated to address weaknesses and to improve the quality of the curriculum and course delivery. This systematic review cycle is fully detailed under Standards II and IV.

The VSU MLIS Program has experimented with including student representatives on the various departmental committees. The Program has found that because of the highly distributed nature of its student body and because most students are employed and are unable to schedule the time to participate in virtual or physical meetings during the business day, active student participation in decision making and assessment is limited to service on ad hoc projects (e.g., review of the accreditation presentation).

Mission

The mission of Valdosta State University's Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program is to provide a quality publicly supported education for generalists and specialists in the library and information science fields with a primary focus to educate librarians for academic, public, and special libraries in Georgia.
(<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/program.shtml>)

It is also part of the mission to provide those students with sound, relevant, and current knowledge and skills. The mission of the Program is necessarily predicated upon the [mission of the University](#) and of the [University System of Georgia](#) (USG).

The faculty pursue the mission through dedication to excellence in teaching, service, and research. They perform the mission within the context defined by the University System of Georgia (USG), Valdosta State University, and the two accrediting agencies to which the MLIS Program is responsive. These two agencies are the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges](#) (SACSCOC) and the ALA.

All assessment methodologies, including student learning outcome assessments, are designed, developed, and tested to insure that the Program fulfills its mission. Assessments include an annual peer course review, assessment of courses and instructors by students in each course each semester, annual faculty and administrator review by department heads and deans, as well as student learning outcomes assessments by the faculty. Each of these assessments is reviewed by the faculty, the Program Director, and the University Librarian. Recommendations to improve student learning outcomes, teaching, curricula, and faculty skills are developed in periodic meetings of the faculty and in consultation with stakeholders. Each of these assessment processes will be described at the relevant Standard of this presentation. These assessments inform the MLIS Program, VSU, and others to the effectiveness of the Program in meeting the spirit of its Mission, Goals, and Objectives.

The VSU MLIS Program's mission, goals, and objectives are responsive to and congruent with the mission of the parent institution, particularly "its dedication to serving the region's heritage while developing programs and services to enhance its future." Librarianship has at its core both stewardship of cultural heritage and information access to promote wellbeing.

The Mission, Goals, and Objectives of the University and of the programs offered by the University have expanded from a regional focus on the southeastern counties of the state to a statewide focus on Georgia. The charge for the Master of Library and Information Science Program is congruent as the Program was conceived with a state-wide mandate.

Goals and Objectives

It is the goal of the VSU MLIS Program to meet the following standards as it educates librarians for academic, public, and special libraries primarily in Georgia. Although the Program has a Georgia-centric mission, that mission does not preclude acceptance of students from outside the state. As is shown at Standard IV.1.7, the MLIS Program has admitted and graduated a small number of students from outside Georgia since its inception. Since accreditation in 2007 and since the Program became fully online, applications from outside Georgia have grown as a percent of all applications. This growth in out-of-state applications is also a function of [VSU's very competitive tuition rate](#) for fully online degree graduate programs.

These goals, a continuing work in progress, were and continue to be developed through interaction with the VSU Administration, Program faculty, the Advisory Board (Appendix I.B), and with stakeholders. Through ongoing dialog, the Program demonstrates sensitivity to stakeholder needs and a willingness to revise the program to respond to those needs.

Program goals are two-fold:

1. To prepare library and information practitioners to be successful in entry-level positions in academic, public, and special libraries.
2. To make program-related decisions to improve the quality of graduate programs and better serve stakeholders through the ongoing, cyclical use of data gathered and analyzed via the assessment system.

1.2 Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes

The [VSU Graduate Catalog](#) publishes educational outcomes and examples of outcome assessments for each graduate program. From 2006-2007 until 2011-2012, the MLIS Program's educational outcomes were based on five competences (Table I.1); the Program's outcome assessments were based on evaluation methods as exemplified in five statements (Table I.2). The Program measured student achievement primarily through indirect evidence of the Program's success in terms of student GPAs, retention and graduation rates, securement of employment, and surveys.

Table I.1: Selected VSU MLIS Educational Outcomes, 2006-2012: Competences

Competence within the context of the MLIS Program will be defined, in part, on the degree candidate's ability to:
1. Utilize knowledge, ethics, skills, and service-oriented behaviors to facilitate information-seeking, in general, and to customize those professional attributes to the needs of one distinct library-type setting (public, academic, or special), in particular.
2. Apply principles of knowledge organization (including descriptive cataloging and subject-oriented classification schemes) in libraries and information centers.
3. Investigate authentic (real-world) professional scenarios through observations, interviews, surveys, fieldwork, or other means appropriate to experiencing library and information center operations first-hand,
4. Communicate ideas, proposals, rationales, findings, or problem solutions clearly and concisely to professors, colleagues, and classmates using modes, media, and technologies appropriate to the circumstances.
5. Devise management plans based upon institutional criteria associated with libraries and information centers in areas such as access, collections, personnel, acquisitions, programming, and technology.

Table I.2: Selected VSU MLIS Educational Outcomes, 2006-2012: Evaluation of Competences

Evaluation of an MLIS degree candidate's Competences will be based, in part, upon:
1. Completion of a professional portfolio, composed as a self-portrait of the author's achievement and potential. Individual portfolios are graded pass-fail in the MLIS Foundations course and serve as one cornerstone of the MLIS Capstone course.
2. Production of bibliographic descriptions of library materials based upon professional cataloging standards (e.g., Concise AACR2 and USMARC format). The instructor examines the relevancy of the data elements, the adherence of the description to formatting rules, and composition errors as part of the grading rubric.
3. Fulfillment of objectives related to supervised fieldwork. Objectives are based upon the student's goals and are mutually developed by the student, the site supervisor, and the evaluating professor.
4. Participation in electronic communications via asynchronous modes (discussion groups or email) and synchronous modes (chat sessions or teleconferencing) as assessed by effective conveyance of ideas (e.g., clarity and conciseness of language) and the effort exhibited (e.g., number of transactions or time online).
5. Authorship of documented papers written in a scholarly style and that meet specific course requirements.

Revisions to Mission, Goals and Objectives

In Fall 2009, the ALA COA rejected the VSU MLIS Biennial Report, and issued a letter (Appendix I.G.1) directing the Program to provide stronger evidence of systematic planning. The Program was placed on Conditional Accreditation status in November 2010 (Appendix I.G.2). This letter was followed by subsequent letters, ending with the COA directive in Summer 2011 (Appendix I.G.3), to provide evidence of programmatic planning centered on student learning outcomes.

Consequently, throughout Fall 2011, two assessment specialists from the University's College of Education and Human Services worked with the MLIS faculty to develop a plan for the removal of conditional accreditation status, involving the creation of a systematic evaluation and planning cycle for the Program built upon student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs). *The Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status* (PLAN) (Appendix I.A) was accepted in March 2012 (Appendix I.G.4) and the implementation of the PLAN began with the revision of the Program's goals as discussed in Standard I.1 and the development of student learning outcome (SLO)-centered program objectives (Table I.3). The revised program objectives replaced the educational outcomes that were in effect from 2006-2012.

Table I.3: New MLIS Program Objectives, adopted Fall 2011

Graduating students of the VSU MLIS program will demonstrate the ability to:
PO 1. Perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers by demonstrating skills in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Resources • Reference and User Services • Administration and Management • Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information
PO 2. Use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.
PO 3. Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.
PO 4. Demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists.

An Overview of the Planning Cycle

The model introduced in the PLAN takes the form of a Systematic Evaluation and Planning Cycle (SEP Cycle) which includes two ongoing cycles of data collection and analysis: the Direct Data Cycle and the Indirect Data Cycle. Each assessment cycle involves evaluation of the instruments used to gather data, an analysis of the data, and use of the data to make programmatic decisions that ensure action planning for continuous improvement. Findings from the application of these assessment cycles inform the Program as to its progress in meeting its second program goal: To make program-related decisions to improve the quality of graduate programs and better serve stakeholders through the ongoing, cyclical use of data gathered and analyzed via the assessment system. The SEP Cycle is fully explained in the PLAN and further discussed at Standard II.

The student learning outcomes (SLOs) established as a result of the PLAN were derived from the *ALA Core Competences of Librarianship*. The faculty developed a set of rubrics as scoring instruments (Appendix I.H.1-9) for those student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs). Selected SLOAs went into effect according to the schedule outlined in the PLAN (Appendix I.A, p. 8).

The PLAN also describes the use of both direct and indirect assessment cycles designed to assess Program performance via student learning outcomes and, hence, to demonstrate its ability to meet its mission and goals.

By Spring 2012, each new Program Objective (PO) had been fully integrated into a set of nine student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs) to be housed in the Program's six core courses and specified guided electives (Appendix I.H.1-9). Table I.4 shows how the student learning outcomes align with the new program objectives. Associated with each SLOA is a scoring rubric. For a full description of SLOAs, scoring rubrics, and their relationship, see Standard II, Section 1.1.

Table I.4: Alignment of Program Objectives with Student Learning Outcome Assessment Components

Program Objectives <i>Graduates of MLIS Program will:</i>	Direct Performance Assessment Components	Indirect Assessment Components
PO 1. Perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers by demonstrating skills in information resources; reference and user service; administration and management; organization of recorded knowledge and information.	SLOA* 1.1 Applied Library Experience Notebook (ALEN) SLOA 1.2 Collection Development Project	Student Survey (at program exit)
		Alumni Survey (1 year after graduation)
		Employer Survey (every 3 years)
PO 2. Use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.	SLOA 2.1 Social Cataloging Technology Project SLOA 2.2 Reference Transactions Assessment SLOA 2.3 Career e-Portfolio Website	Student Survey (at program exit)
		Alumni Survey (1 year after graduation)
		Employer Survey (every 3 years)
PO 3. Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.	SLOA 3 Research Proposal	Student Survey (at program exit)
		Alumni Survey (1 year after graduation)
		Employer (every 3 years) Survey
PO 4. Demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists.	SLOA 4.1 MLIS Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment SLOA 4.2 Ethics Project Report SLOA 4.3 Career e-Portfolio	Student Survey (at program exit)
		Alumni Survey (1 year after graduation)
		Employer Survey (every 3 years)

* The table in the March 1, 2012, PLAN uses the abbreviation PA (for Program Assessments). The term was changed to Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA) in all documents published since.

Source: [Plan for the Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status](#), p.4

Continuous Systematic Review of SLOAs

Since March 2012, the VSU MLIS Program has reviewed both the rubrics and the student learning outcome assessments evaluated by those rubrics. The Program performs this function at the beginning of each semester based on the SLOA results from the previous semester. For a full accounting of every stage in the review of the SLOAs to date, see Standard IV.6.2.

The faculty also addresses the application and implementation of the findings from the SLOA reviews as part of its annual planning during its August faculty retreat. These findings are used to inform faculty and to develop changes to the curriculum and to teaching methodologies to better meet the Program's Mission, Goals, and Objectives. (Appendix I.F)

1.2.1 ...and reflect 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

The four Program objectives reflect Standard I.2.1. The first two objectives specifically address recordable information and knowledge as well as services and technologies and related Standard I.2.1 clauses. The Program promotes Standard I.2.1 through its curricular offerings and through its research and planning; its Mission, Goals, and Objectives; and the expertise of the faculty.

As is discussed in Standard II.2:Curriculum, the MLIS Program has developed a set of core required courses that introduces students to the breadth of the library and information disciplines, with a concentration on librarianship. To that end, the Program defines itself as an “L” school. The Program reevaluates its core offerings on a cyclical basis. In 2012, it most recently completed an evaluation of its information organization requirement. The Program has a review of its technology related curriculum currently under consideration. This process is fully described at Standard II.

The Program has developed a set of electives that augment the core requirements and that expand the skills base of its students. Curricular review of tracks and electives is conducted with the same diligence as for the Program core. The Program’s electives cycles are discussed in detail in Standard II.

As is demonstrated at Standard III: Faculty, the MLIS Program carefully assesses the skills, training, and competencies of its faculty and applicants for faculty positions. The full-time faculty hold the PhD degree or equivalent. Part-time faculty hold, at a minimum, the MLIS or equivalent degree. Part-time faculty also have practical experience in the area of specialization in which they teach. All MLIS full-time and part-time faculty are appointed to the graduate faculty. Full-time and part-time faculty teach in those areas where they have expertise developed from experience, education, or research. The qualifications are described in Standard III: Faculty.

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

The MLIS Program’s fourth Program objective to “[d]emonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists” incorporates the purpose of Standard I.2.2. The concept of professionalism necessarily presupposes training and grasp of the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field. The Program has a strong commitment to the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field. This commitment is reflected in the Program’s MGO statements. The Program offers a specific course, MLIS 7650 Information and Ethics. One member of the faculty has published extensively on information ethics. He offers the course every other year. In addition, all incoming students are exposed to the philosophy and principles of LIS in the introductory course MLIS 7000 Foundations of Library and Information Science. Professional philosophy, principles, and ethics are infused throughout the Program’s other courses as well.

The Program assesses its success in inculcating student knowledge of the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field with its direct Student Learning Outcome Assessments 4.1 (Appendix I.H.7) and 4.2 (Appendix I.H.8). These assessments are evaluated twice a year by the faculty.

Changes to curricular offerings are considered and implemented where Program weaknesses are identified. These changes, when made, are evaluated at the next review session.

1.2.3 appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations

The Program demonstrates its familiarity with those principles; that it undertakes to incorporate those principles into its program particularly in areas of concern to the professional organizations; and that it is sensitive to both the spirit and letter of the appropriate principles. These [mission and principles statements](#) provide both general and specific guidance for curricular development. The ALA [Core Competences of Librarianship](#) and the ALA COA [Standards](#) have been incorporated in the development of all aspects of the Program, its decision making, and in its assessments, as documented at Standard II: Curriculum. Individual Core Competences and Standards are referenced in the Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix I.H.1-9) developed by the Program to assess its efforts. The Program has on its faculty members of a number of relevant professional organizations who integrate the principles that inform their specializations into their course content and teaching, as documented at Standard IV: Faculty.

1.2.4 the value of teaching and service to the advancement of the field

The value of teaching and service to the advancement of the field are inherent in the Program objectives. It is explicit in the third objective: Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers. The VSU MLIS Program faculty believe that teaching and service to the profession are at the heart of education. Teaching advances the profession by communicating established knowledge and values as well as introducing students to innovation and cutting-edge applications. Service serves a similar purpose for a wider audience. Service allows the faculty member to “teach by doing,” but also to “learn by doing.” VSU MLIS faculty service includes membership on library boards, consulting, outreach, membership on professional organization committees, and publication in the professional (as opposed to academic) literature. The Program documents its adherence through its practices and teaching philosophy. Faculty service detail is provided at Standard III: Faculty.

1.2.5 the importance of research to the advancement of the field's knowledge base

Research is of importance to the VSU MLIS Program and is privileged in the third of the Program’s objectives. The University and the Program emphasize the importance of research in their individual tenure and policy policies. Faculty research is documented under Standard III.

The importance of research is built into the curriculum. Students engage with published and original research throughout the curriculum. To promote their understanding of the research process, all students take MLIS 7700 Research Methods, a required core course. They are acquainted with quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The Program’s success in inculcating its students with an understanding of research methods and with an ability to evaluate the research findings of others is evaluated by Student Learning Outcomes Assessment 3 (Appendix I.H.6), housed in MLIS 7700. In addition, students are required to prepare and present original research in MLIS 7800 Capstone, the culminating course of the Program. The success of the Program in impressing on its students the value of research in the advancement of the field’s

knowledge base is further demonstrated by the student learning assessment outcomes following the MLIS 7800 course (Appendices I.H.5 and I.H.9). The Program requires its students to read and evaluate published research in almost all courses. The Program assesses its students' familiarity with the research literature and through those assessments; the Program is assessed as to its success in inculcating an appreciation for and application of research by its students and graduates in their professional practice. Examples of [student presentations](#), [student publications](#), participation in the VSU [Graduate Research Symposium](#) (2013, p.21; 2012, p.16; 2011, p.13; 2010, p.17; 2009, p.14) are provided here and further discussed at Standard IV.4.2.

The Program places importance on faculty scholarship and incorporates its own research to promote student learning. The faculty are actively involved in the LIS community at the local, state, national, and international levels (see Standard III). For example, the faculty have been members of committees of the Georgia Library Association, the American Library Association, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, and other professional associations. The faculty give papers at meetings of professional associations and other conferences, and the faculty publish in academic and professional journals.

In addition, the MLIS faculty serve on library boards, act as resource people for library schools including foreign schools, and other organizations, and serve on the editorial boards of numerous journals. Their participation reflects their interests in state-of-the-art and global concerns.

1.2.6 ...the importance of contributions of library and information studies to other fields of knowledge

The Program faculty believe that librarianship is a profession that supports and contributes to the information and other needs of patrons, clients, and customers. Library and information studies as a social science exploring individual and organizational information needs and behaviors has parallels in many other of the social and computer sciences. There is a great deal of cross-fertilization between LIS and other fields. Both the third and fourth Program objectives guide the Program and its faculty to nurture an appreciation of the importance of LIS scholarship to other disciplines in its students. The Program impresses upon its students the importance of cross-disciplinary work and the contributions the LIS field makes both to and in support of other disciplines.

The Program contributes to other fields of knowledge in a variety of ways. The Program has cross-listed courses with both the Departments of Public Administration and History in the VSU College of Arts and Sciences. The Program has developed a dual program with the VSU College of Education and Human Services that provides a mechanism for its students to attain school media certification in Georgia while earning the MLIS degree. Students from the VSU College of Education and Human Services take MLIS courses in children's literature. The MLIS Program has been developing memoranda of understanding (MOU) with the [public history program](#) at the University of West Georgia and the [Master of Archival Studies Program](#) at Clayton State University. These memoranda of understanding will promote course cross-listing in archival studies and related LIS courses. It implemented a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with

the [Georgia College & State University \(GCSU\) public history program](#), that lapsed when the implementing GCSU faculty member retired.

The VSU MLIS faculty have contributed to the literature in their various areas of expertise. Documentation of these contributions is provided at Standard III: Faculty.

1.2.7 ...the importance of contributions of other fields of knowledge to library and information studies

The VSU MLIS Program recognizes the importance of contributions from fields other than LIS. This recognition is implicit in the fourth Program objective, the demonstration of professionalism. The Program demonstrates this through its willingness to cross-list courses within the University or within the University System of Georgia. The Program incorporates literature from other fields into its readings lists. It learns from other faculty teaching, research, and service skills. Because LIS cuts across or supports many other fields, the faculty recognize that training in other disciplines is valuable.

The Program further recognizes the need to draw on the findings and theories of other disciplines to further and enhance its own. For example, computer scientists have advanced the understanding of automated information storage and retrieval systems through use of automated mark-up and indexing as well as advances in metadata and ontologies. The term “digital library” was first used in the computer sciences but the concepts have had an immense impact in LIS.

The Program’s recognition of the importance of other fields to library and information science is reflected in its curriculum. It has enrolled students from the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, College of Education and Human Services in the Program’s youth literature courses. It continues to explore other opportunities to develop linkages between departments, colleges and universities to further the multidisciplinary approach to LIS education.

The VSU MLIS Program has drawn upon the research of the education disciplines as it developed its student learning outcomes assessment process. The faculty was actively assisted by two members of the VSU College of Education and Human Services faculty who are highly experienced in educational assessment. Their contributions included considerable guidance from the education literature.

1.2.8 ...the role of library and information services in a diverse global society, including the role of serving the needs of underserved groups

As an integral part of its professionalism, the VSU MLIS faculty is concerned with acting responsibly in a multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual society and with educating its students to do so. To that end, the faculty work closely with international organizations, the Program has recruited and continues to recruit students from countries in development, and the Program seeks to attract students from varied backgrounds into its program. The Program provides evidence in this Program Presentation of its efforts to recruit underrepresented students and international students, to accommodate students with disabilities, and to develop relationships with library programs in other countries. The Program hosted a faculty member

from Uganda on a one-semester fellowship in Spring 2012, Dr. Isaac Kigongo-Bukenya, Vice Chancellor of [Mutessa I Royal University](#). It also hosted a Kenyan scholar, Dr. Edward Muya, chair, LIS Department, [Kenyatta University](#), in Spring 2013. Dr. Kigongo-Bukenya prepared an online presentation of public librarianship in Uganda for a special seminar on libraries building communities. Dr. Muya offered a similar talk on librarianship in Kenya for the MLIS 7800 course offered in Spring 2013. Both presentations are archived and are made available to all VSU MLIS students.

The MLIS Program director and scholars from the University of South Carolina have formed a partnership with Dr. Kigongo-Bukenya and later with Dr. Muya to promote cooperative teaching and research and an exchange of students and faculty between East Africa and the United States. To that end, VSU MLIS and Library faculty are working with Kenyatta University LIS and library faculty to pilot and assess training in embedded librarianship in Kenya. If successful, a wider application is planned in East Africa. In addition, Dr. Koehler served as external examiner to the LIS program at Makerere University in the early 2000's. He has recently been appointed as external examiner to the LIS program at Uganda Christian University.

Together with the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS), the MLIS Program is managing a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarians Program entitled *Librarians Building Community* (Appendix I.I) Awarded in 2009 for a 2010 start, the grant is designed to provide tuition, fees for books and materials, and a lap top computer to up to forty-five VSU MLIS students who focus on communities building through public libraries. The Program admitted three groups totaling 43 students from a pool of scholarship applicants from across Georgia. The pool of applicants reflected a balance of large urban areas, balanced urban and suburban areas, and rural areas. The last of the students is expected to graduate in May 2014 at the expiry of the grant. Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook, the University of South Florida, served as a consultant and presenter for scholarship courses. Dr. McCook is recognized as a leader in public librarianship and in the promotion of the “libraries build communities” movement.

The VSU MLIS Program has admitted a diverse set of students, as the data presented in Standard IV: Students indicate. The Program has sought to recruit minority students at universities and libraries with significant numbers of minority students and employees. The Program director has also addressed representatives of minority populations in Georgia to promote the library career among them.

The Program no longer recruits residential international students. Because the Program is entirely online, international students holding F- or J-visas cannot meet US Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations that at least half their academic hours be earned in face-to-face courses. The Program has admitted international students, most recently from Canada and China who intend to complete the Program online from their countries of citizenship.

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

More than a decade ago there was significant conversation in library and information science circles about the viability of the “brick and mortar” library in a digital environment. Everyone recognized that the info-sphere was in transition. It is recognized that change is inevitable. It is also recognized that the direction of change cannot be consistently anticipated. The need to recognize changing technology and LIS services is an important part of the Program’s second objective.

The VSU MLIS program recognizes the role of changing technology by offering courses that keep pace with that changing technology. To do so, the school must have access to state-of-the-art hardware and software as described at Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities. A course on Web metadata and ontologies (MLIS 7330 Metadata and Advanced Cataloging) has been and will continue to be offered. The Program also offers courses on indexing and abstracting and on advanced cataloging.

The VSU MLIS Program adapts to changing technology. For example, the recent implementation by the Library of Congress and others of Resource Description and Access (RDA) has had a major effect on cataloging and classification, just as Dublin Core and AACR2 did and before them DDC and Panizzi’s 91 Rules, and relevant course content has been updated accordingly. The ramifications of digital data and electronic databases have revolutionized the information disciplines and the Program’s courses reflect this revolution. LIS programs must necessarily train for the present and legacy systems as well as to prepare students for the future.

1.2.10 ...the needs of the constituencies that a program seeks to serve.

The Program’s systematic planning cycle includes periodic surveys of graduating students, alumni, library directors, and employers as indicated in Table I.4. The responses from these surveys are taken into account in revising courses and tracks. The Program conducted a major survey of its stakeholders and constituents in April 2011 (four years following initial accreditation) to identify and confirm the core competencies constituents felt should be emphasized in the curriculum and received 300 responses (Appendix I.J). The Program used the findings from this survey as the backbone for the development of the Program evaluation through Student Learning Outcomes Assessment process. The Program surveyed its alumni in January 2012 (ten years after the Program’s first students began their coursework) to acquire longitudinal data about the Program’s effectiveness in preparing its students for professional work and to obtain placement data. The 2012 survey received 101 responses (Appendix I.K). This survey affirmed that the Program is largely on track in preparing its graduates to work effectively in library and information centers, with 73% responding that they were currently employed in positions aligned with their MLIS degrees (during a down economic cycle). The Program also surveyed specialist stakeholders and constituents to inform curriculum review and revision, as described at Standard II: Curriculum.

The Program held its first town hall meeting with stakeholders and constituents in October 2012 to provide updated information on the Program’s status and to introduce the SLOA process. A

recording of that meeting is available at Appendix I.D. The second town hall meeting with stakeholders is scheduled for October 2013. It too will be video-recorded, and responses gathered from this forum will become part of the feedback upon which Program improvement will be based, in furtherance of Program Goal 2: *To make program-related decisions to improve the quality of the graduate, program, and better serve stakeholders through the ongoing cyclical use of data gathered and analyzed via the assessment system.*

To address the needs of different constituencies, the Program seeks to focus on areas of need. For example, the MLIS Program, together with the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) developed and is administering a grant to students under the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarians Grant as described above. These students are being prepared to use their educations to benefit the communities they will serve.

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.

The discussion above demonstrates the Program's adherence to its mission, goals, and objectives. The decision processes of the Program and of the University are done transparently. The outcomes of external and, where they do not conflict with privacy and other regulation, internal evaluation are made public through the Program's website and its reports.

The Program's objectives are also assessed in terms of student learning outcomes. In the weeks following each semester, the VSU MLIS faculty meets to review the student learning outcomes assessments of the previous semester. The faculty also considers the responses it might take to address any deficiencies that might be identified. The departmental Curriculum Committee and concerned faculty make recommendations to the faculty as a whole to implement any changes that might be identified. Using student learning outcomes, the faculty assesses the effectiveness of changes, if any. Further curricular changes may then be considered.

The Program objectives are recapitulated:

1. Perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers by demonstrating skills in
 - Information Resources
 - Reference and User Services
 - Administration and Management
 - Organization of Recorded Knowledge and information
2. Use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.
3. Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.
4. Demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists.

From its beginnings, the Program has consulted with its constituencies in the development of, evaluation of, and assessment of its objectives. For example, as it documented in its 2007 Application for Accreditation, the Program surveyed library directors across Georgia to ascertain skills needs and priorities. As early as 2002, the Program was informed by stakeholders that cataloging and management are skills they often found wanting in recent MLIS graduates. Subsequent surveys of library directors, employers, and VSU MLIS graduates demonstrated the need for enhanced existing and emergent technology skills to provide library services. Since 2007, the VSU MLIS Program has surveyed stakeholders to assess the need for curricular changes and modifications. The Program developed new Health Librarianship and Youth Services Librarianship tracks and amended its Cataloging and Classification track based in part on stakeholder feedback. The Program has grounded its curriculum in the skills and competencies needed by entry level professional librarians and information center workers as identified by its stakeholder and constituent surveys and in concert with the *ALA Standards* and the *Core Competences of Librarianship*.

Standard II: Curriculum

Overview

The Valdosta State University (VSU) Department of Library and Information Studies offers one degree, the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS), delivered fully over the Internet using the University's online learning management system (LMS) called BlazeVIEW. The system platform was Blackboard/WebCT/Vista until May 2013 and is now based on the Desire2Learn LMS platform.

The MLIS degree [Program of Study](#) requires the completion of 39 hours (13 courses). All students must complete a core of six courses (18 hours). The balance of the coursework (7 courses, 21 hours) is chosen from a wide range of elective courses organized into subject-oriented tracks. Students may choose to follow a track or to complete their studies with a variety of electives depending upon their work experience, needs, and professional interests. The MLIS program requires entering students to attend a face-to-face program orientation at the Valdosta campus prior to beginning their academic studies.

The core courses (3 hours each) include:

- MLIS 7000: Foundations of Library and Information Science
- MLIS 7100: Information Sources and Services
- MLIS 7200: Management of Libraries and Information Centers
- MLIS 7300: Organization of Information (Cataloging and Classification until Fall 2013)
- MLIS 7700: Research Methods
- MLIS 7800: Capstone
- Additionally, effective Fall 2013, all students must complete one Collection Development elective (choose from MLIS 7130, MLIS 7150, MLIS 7400, MLIS 7420, MLIS 7440)

The optional tracks include:

- Cataloging and Classification – 12 hours
- Health Sciences Librarianship – 15 hours
- Library Management – 12 hours
- Reference Sources and Services – 12 hours
- Technology – 15 hours
- Youth Services – 15 hours

The MLIS Program also offers an optional 51 hour [Dual Program of Study](#) for MLIS and concurrent Media Specialist Certification (State of Georgia) in partnership with the VSU College of Education and Human Services. Participation in the Dual Program is contingent on permission of the student's MLIS Program advisor and acceptance as a non-degree-seeking student in the College of Education and Human Services, Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology. Students earn both the MLIS degree and the Media Specialist Certification. The MLIS program provides 33 hours of LIS content including the MLIS Core courses listed above. The College of Education and Human Services provides 18 hours of required elective courses.

Students may request to [transfer credits from graduate courses](#) completed outside the VSU MLIS Program. Per the University's Graduate School and MLIS Program policies, students are allowed to transfer a maximum of nine credit hours from a completed graduate degree, or a maximum of six credits that cannot be older than seven years at the time of completion that did not apply to a completed degree. All requests for transfer of credit must be evaluated by the student's faculty advisor and approved by the Program Director and the Dean of the Graduate School.

All MLIS core courses are offered every fall and spring semester, and compressed versions of MLIS 7200, 7300, and 7800 are offered as student demand indicates in the eight week Summer II semester without any degradation of content. The MLIS Course Rotation Spreadsheet is available in Appendix II.A. Elective courses are offered on a rotating schedule developed by the MLIS Curriculum Committee with input from the MLIS faculty. The course rotation schedule follows a two-year cycle in which each elective is scheduled at least once within each two-year cycle. Some of the more popular electives are offered annually.

Graduation Requirements

All students who graduate from the MLIS Program demonstrate mastery of entry level professional knowledge and skills by:

- Completion of the degree with a GPA of 3.0 or better, and for students admitted from Fall 2011 forward, a grade of B or better in all core courses.¹
- Completion of the Capstone course requirements including a final paper, a conference-style presentation of the final paper, and a professional portfolio.

II.1 The curriculum is based on goals and objectives and evolves in response to a systematic planning process. Within this general framework, the curriculum provides, through a variety of educational experiences, for the study of theory, principles, practice, and values necessary for the provision of service in libraries and information agencies and in other contexts.

II.1.1 The curriculum is based on goals and objectives and evolves in response to a systematic planning process.

From AY 2006-07 to AY 2011-12 the MLIS Program's educational outcomes were based on five Competences and the Program's outcome assessments were based on evaluation methods as

¹ Should a student admitted to the Program in Fall 2011 or later earn a grade below a "B" in a core course the student is required to repeat the core course until a grade of "B" or better is earned in order to graduate from the Program. Should a student receive a grade below "B" in any course the Graduate School's Deficiency Points policy comes into effect. "Earning grades below "B" in graduate courses will result in the following consequences: Students admitted Fall 2011 and thereafter will be dismissed from the Graduate School if they accumulate three or more academic deficiency points unless otherwise indicated by individual program policy. A grade of "C" (although it may be credited toward a degree) equals one deficiency point. A grade of "D," "WF" or "F," or "U" (none of which will be credited toward a degree) equals two deficiency points. Candidates admitted PRIOR to Fall 2011 and receiving two grades below "C" ("D", "F", "WF", "U") will be dismissed from the program. One grade below a "C" results in a warning." (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/our-programs/retention-dismissal-readmission-policies.php>)

exemplified in five statements. These former objectives are presented at Standard I. A revision of the Program's objectives occurred in Fall 2011. The development of program-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) and measures to evaluate the Program's success in meeting its objectives as articulated in terms of student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs) followed suit. This model operationalizes the Program's new goals and helps the program measure its progress as it works to:

- Prepare library and information practitioners to be successful in entry-level professional positions in academic, public and special libraries.
- Use data gathered and analyzed through the assessment system to make program-related decisions.

The Program's success at meeting its objectives is measured through the application of the Student Learning Outcome Assessments and analysis of the findings from these assessments. How the revised Program Objectives (PO 1 through PO4) align with each SLOA is demonstrated in Table II.1. The SLOAs are then described in full immediately following Table II.1.

Table II.1: Alignment of Program Objectives with Student Learning Outcome Assessments.

Program Objectives <i>Graduates of MLIS Program will:</i>	Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOAs)
PO 1. Perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers by demonstrating skills in information resources; reference and user service; administration and management; organization of recorded knowledge and information.	SLOA 1.1 Applied Library Experience Notebook (ALEN) SLOA 1.2 Collection Development Project
PO 2. Use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.	SLOA 2.1 Reference Transactions Assessment SLOA 2.2 Social Cataloging Technology Project SLOA 2.3 Career e-Portfolio Website
PO 3. Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.	SLOA 3 Research Proposal
PO 4. Demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists.	SLOA 4.1 MLIS Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment SLOA 4.2 Ethics Project Report SLOA 4.3 Career e-Portfolio

Source: Plan for Removal of Conditional Status March 2012 (Appendix I.A, p. 4).²

² The table in Appendix I.A used the term Direct Performance Assessment Components, subsequently renamed Student Learning Outcome Assessment, and the prefix PA in the table, subsequently changed to SLOA.

Program Objectives

Achievement of the Program Objectives informs all decisions about the curriculum. The Program's success at achieving its objectives is measured through the analysis of aggregated student performance results in the Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOAs). The SLOAs are scored as Target, Acceptable, or Unacceptable, and these scores are derived from the summative elements of the assignment rubrics that are applied during course-level assessments of student learning. The scale is as follows:

- Target = 90% successful completion of relevant elements of course assignments
- Acceptable = 80% successful completion of relevant elements of course assignments
- Unacceptable = performance below 80% on relevant elements.

Program Objective 1

The Program's success at achieving Program Objective 1 is measured through analysis of student performance on all elements of the Applied Library Experience Notebook, or ALEN, (SLOA 1.1) and the Collection Development Project, or CDP (SLOA 1.2).

SLOA 1.1 requires students to prepare an **Applied Library Experience Notebook (ALEN)**.

The ALEN is a collection of four elements that document field work and simulations of field work conducted across four core courses in the MLIS Program. Successful completion of these four field experiences or simulations demonstrates the effectiveness of the program in preparing students to perform professional level work in libraries or information centers. The ALEN includes:

- Element 1: LIS Journals Analysis Project
- Element 2: Reference Consultation Project
- Element 3: Management Client Report
- Element 4: Original Cataloging Project

The work may be conducted in conjunction with working information professionals and is completed under the supervision of professors or course instructors.

In order to provide multiple and varied field experiences or simulations of field experiences, and to evaluate the way in which the mastery of elements is demonstrated, this assessment records program performance over time and across multiple core courses. The LIS Journals Analysis project is housed in MLIS 7000, The Reference Consultation Project is housed in MLIS 7100, the Management Client Report project is housed in MLIS 7200, and the Original Cataloging Project is housed in MLIS 7300. Complete course descriptions are provided at Standard II.2.1. (Appendix I.H.1)

SLOA 1.2 requires students to prepare a **Collection Development Project (CDP)**, a simulation exercise to evaluate and select materials for a subject area in a library. This project provides data on student performance of the administrative, services and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers. The CDP simulates the process of building a collection using core knowledge and skills that can be contextualized to a number of curricular areas. The assessment is housed in a series of Collection Development electives, one of which is required of all students who entered

the Program in Fall 2013 or later (students may choose from MLIS 7130, MLIS 7150, MLIS 7400, MLIS 7420, MLIS 7440). Course descriptions for these electives are provided at Standard II.2.1. (Appendix I.H.2)

Program Objective 2

The Program's success at achieving Program Objective 2 is measured through analysis of student performance on elements of the **Reference Transaction Assessment**, or RTA (SLOA 2.1); the **Social Cataloging Technology Project** (SLOA 2.2); and a **Career e-Portfolio Website** (SLOA 2.3).

SLOA 2.1 The Reference Transaction Assessment (RTA) is a simulation in which students receive questions typical of reference transactions that require online searches in order to locate answers. Students must prepare and post answers to hypothetical clients in a format consistent with an online question and answer service. Seeking information on these queries requires that students devise search strategies consistent with the way in which the electronic resources organize content. Students convert their answer documents to html format in order to submit the results of their information searches.

SLOA 2.1 is housed in MLIS 7100. It includes scoring that reflects the students' ability to understand and implement rapidly changing information access and organizational technologies and follow professional ethics and service norms in the context of the information delivery environment. (Appendix I.H.3)

SLOA 2.2 The Social Cataloging Technology Project; Librarians and information professionals are expected to modify and upload records into a database. In this assessment students are required to access remote databases, locate and examine a variety of records, appraise and modify selected records to conform to applicable standards, and integrate the corrected records into the catalog. Each student creates a personal library catalog by using and evaluating the assigned social technology cataloging tool, currently [LibraryThing](#).

SLOA 2.2 is housed in MLIS 7300. It includes scoring that reflects the students' ability to respond to the rapidly changing technological environment in which information is organized and made accessible. (Appendix I.H.4)

SLOA 2.3 Career e-Portfolio Website; Evaluation of students' ability to create an e-portfolio provides evidence of the Program's effectiveness in preparing its students to design and develop a digital product. Each student creates a web-based e-portfolio that includes multiple elements (e.g. introduction, hyperlinked table of contents, résumé, professional development plan, etc.).

SLOA 2.3 is housed in MLIS 7800. It includes scoring that reflects students' ability to use software products to present information in the online environment. (Appendix I.H.5)

The Program's success at achieving Program Objective 2 is measured through analysis of student performance in assessments 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.

Program Objective 3

The Program's success at achieving Program Objective 3 is measured through analysis of student performance on the preparation of a **Research Proposal** (SLOA 3).

SLOA 3, The Research Proposal, measures students' ability to (1) interpret and evaluate the research of others so that they may apply those findings in their professional practice; (2) maintain currency of knowledge of the field through their use of the professional literature; (3) contribute to the professional literature; and (4) perform research in furtherance of their duties. Introductory skills to conduct research as well as evaluate the research of others in multiple disciplines including library and information science are evaluated through the process of proposal development. The Research Proposal is a comprehensive task that demonstrates an important student learning outcome and measures Program Objective 3, the ability to integrate relevant research to enhance work in libraries and information centers. SLOA 3 is housed in MLIS 7700 Research Methods. (Appendix 1.H.6)

Program Objective 4

The Program's success at achieving Program Objective 4 is measured through analysis of student performance on the **Foundational Knowledge Assessment** (SLOA 4.1); the **Ethics Project Report** (SLOA 4.2); and the **Career E-Portfolio** (SLOA 4.3).

SLOA 4.1, The Foundational Knowledge Assessment, ensures that the Program's students receive broad exposure to the foundational concepts that inform the Library and Information Science (LIS) field during their first semester of study. Through the work informing this assessment students begin to construct a personal intellectual infrastructure that they will build on as they develop into LIS professionals.

SLOA 4.1 is housed in MLIS 7000, Foundations of Library and Information Science. In response to prompts assigned during the course, students write a series of essays addressing foundational concepts of the field. The essays serve to document the students' introduction to the field and their development of an initial theoretical framework they will build on during the balance of their LIS coursework. (Appendix I.H.7)

SLOA 4.2, The Ethics Project Report, assigned in the first semester of study, allows students to develop and demonstrate their understanding of the role of professional ethics in their careers, and provides them with an orientation to the ethical frameworks they will need to employ when making professional decisions. The report is developed as a group project, allowing students to learn the negotiating and collaborating skills they will need as working professionals. The project introduces students to the role of professional associations as the negotiators and keepers of codes of ethics for their members. The assessment measures the students' ability to work in groups to explore, analyze, and reflect upon the role of codes of ethics in professional practice. The report includes the

students' self-assessment of their ability to comply with codes of ethics that fall outside their personal belief systems. SLOA 4.2 is measured during MLIS 7000. (Appendix I.H.8)

SLOA 4.3, The Career E-Portfolio, the ultimate product for the MLIS degree, gives students an opportunity to present their synthesized knowledge, writing skills, and presentation skills; and to create a professional development plan. The demonstration of professionalism throughout the Career E-Portfolio is required for fulfillment of MLIS program requirements. SLOA 4.3 is measured during MLIS 7800, Capstone.

Elements of the e-portfolio include:

- Résumé or CV
- Professional Development Plan: Each student creates and records a personal plan for professional development. For students who need to seek employment, this will include a detailed job-hunting plan. For all students, this includes plans for solidifying and updating their professional knowledge in the two-year period following graduation.
- Reflective Essay: Each student prepares an essay that reflects on and evaluates his or her experience with the MLIS degree program. The essay includes the student's determination of strengths and weaknesses within the program.³
- Capstone Paper: Each student prepares a paper of publishable quality on a topic of the student's choice, with the topic subject to instructor approval.
- Capstone Presentation: Each student delivers a conference-style presentation in Wimba Classroom[®] about his/her capstone paper. Each student uses presentation software (e.g., PowerPoint[®]) to illustrate points and information.

(Appendix I.H.9)

Measures to Assure Alignment of Curriculum with Program Goals

Each of the four program objectives is assessed in terms of student learning outcomes as shown in Table II.1 and described above. These student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs) allow the MLIS Program to measure its success in developing students whose skills correspond to *ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship* (2009), and to the expectations for entry-level professionals who hold ALA accredited master's degrees as directed in the *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies* (2008). The curriculum is assessed based on the findings from this systematic assessment of student learning.

³ Ongoing systematic application of student learning outcomes assessments suggests that the Reflective Essay is not a summative element that helps measure the student's preparation for professional work. In August 2013 Program faculty reviewed the appropriateness of continuing to include the Reflective Essay as a portfolio element. The faculty agreed that the reflective essay would best be utilized as an assessment that exists outside the students' career e-Portfolios. Effective Fall 2013, the Reflective Essay is no longer included as an element of SLOA 4.3.

Curriculum Planning and Review Process

The Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee has responsibility for the development and review of the curriculum and reports to the faculty and to the Program Director, who assigns faculty to the scheduled courses each semester. The Curriculum Committee is chaired by a faculty member and the chair assignment is held for two to three years to ensure continuity of the work. The Curriculum Committee Chair maintains the course rotation schedule to ensure that the two year rotation is protected, thus allowing the majority of the students to earn their degrees within the suggested timeframe. This is detailed in the MLIS Course Rotation Schedule Spreadsheet 2007-2014 (Appendix II.A). The composition of the curriculum committee is intended to provide balance in representing facets of the curriculum and to support current priorities in curriculum development and review. The curriculum committee meets monthly, or as needed, during the academic year to conduct its work.

Curriculum Review

Curriculum reviews are conducted to make sure that course offerings remain aligned with (1) the Program's Goals and Objectives, (2) the findings from the systematic analysis of the Student Learning Outcome Assessments; and (3) the most current and relevant professional standards and outcomes measures. Under the general oversight of the Curriculum Committee, the faculty member responsible for guiding the review of a specific core course or track is the subject specialist for that area and convenes an advisory group of experts in the subject area including practitioners, faculty from other schools, and alumni while consulting relevant professional standards to determine the scope and content of the course, or the track and the courses it encompasses. One track or specific area of the curriculum is reviewed per year and the timing is aligned with the production of the *Graduate Catalog* for the coming year. Standard II.7 will provide a complete discussion of the systematic curriculum review process and detail the curriculum actions taken during the accreditation period.

Curriculum Review Advisory Boards rosters:

- Health Librarianship Advisory Board (Appendix II.B.1)
- Youth Services Track Advisory Board (Appendix II.B.2)
- Cataloging Track Advisory Board (Appendix II.B.3)

The faculty as a whole meets twice each year to review the outcomes from the application of the SLOA rubrics to assess how well the Program is meeting its objectives. Meetings are held in January to review fall semester outcomes and in August to review spring and summer semester outcomes. The SLOA review process was initiated with an analysis of Spring 2012 data. A full discussion of the findings resulting from the SLOA review process is provided at Standard IV: Students.

II.1.2 Within this general framework, the curriculum provides, through a variety of educational experiences, for the study of theory, principles, practice, and values necessary for the provision of service in libraries and information agencies and in other contexts.

The Core Curriculum

The Program requires all students to complete thirteen courses, to include six core courses and one collection development elective. The balance of a student's program of study is selected from a range of electives according to the student's interests and professional goals.

The core courses (3 hours each) include:

- MLIS 7000: Foundations of Library and Information Science
- MLIS 7100: Information Sources and Services
- MLIS 7200: Management of Libraries and Information Centers
- MLIS 7300: Organization of Information (Cataloging and Classification until Fall 2013)
- MLIS 7700: Research Methods
- MLIS 7800: Capstone
- Additionally, effective Fall 2013, all students must complete a student learning outcome assessment addressing collection development competence, housed in these courses: MLIS 7130, MLIS 7150, MLIS 7400, MLIS 7420, and MLIS 7440. Students must choose one and take it as a guided elective. Course descriptions available at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/courses.shtml> and at Standard II.2.1.

Each core course addresses different facets of the “basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies”⁴ Complete course descriptions and links to syllabi are provided at Standard II.2.1. Student mastery of the core competences of librarianship is measured through the series of Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOA), introduced above, which are housed across these six core courses and the guided elective.

The alignment of the contents of the core courses and the collection development elective with the *Competences of Librarianship* ensures that the program meets Standard II.1.2. Table II.2 maps the alignment of the core curriculum and the SLOAs to the Program Objectives, the Standards and the *Core Competences*.

⁴ ALA Core Competences of Librarianship (2009)
<http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf>

Table II.2: Alignment of MLIS Program Objectives, Core Courses, and SLOAs to ALA *Standards* and *Core Competences*

MLIS Program Objective	Performance Point housed in core course	Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA)	ALA Accreditation Standards	ALA Core Competences *
PO 1: Graduates of the MLIS Program will perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers by demonstrating skills in information resources, reference and user services, administration and management, and organization of recorded knowledge and information.	MLIS 7000: Journals Analysis	1.1 Applied Library Experience Notebook (ALEN)	II.1, II.2, II.3.1	1E, 2B, 6B, 6C, 1A, 1F, 2A, 5B, 5D, 1G, 1J
	MLIS 7100: Reference Consultation Project		II.1, II.2, II.3.1	5A, 5B, 5F 5C, 5D, 5E 1I, 4A, 7C, 1I
	MLIS 7200: Management Client Report		II.1, II.2, II.3.1	1J, 8C, 8D, 1E, 1F, 8C, 8D, 1I, 6B, 6C
	MLIS 7300: Original Cataloging Project		II.1, II.2, II.3.1	3A, 3B, 3C 1J
	Choice of Collection Development Electives (MLIS 7130, 7150, 7160, 7400, 7420, 7440): Collection Development Project	1.2 Collection Development Project (CDP)	II.1, II.2, II.3.1	1I, 1J, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 8A
MLIS Program Objective	Performance Point housed in core course <i>Technology applied to:</i>	Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA)	ALA Accreditation Standards	ALA Core Competences
PO 2: Graduates of the MLIS Program will use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.	MLIS 7100: Delivery of Resources	2.1 Reference Transactions Assessment	II 3.5	4A, 5G
	MLIS 7100: Ethics & Service Norms		II 3.5	4B, 5G
	MLIS 7100: Users With Exceptional Needs		II.3.4	4A, 4B, 5G
	MLIS 7100: Explaining Concepts		II. 3.3	4A, 5D, 5E, 5G
	MLIS 7300: Social Cataloging	2.2 Social Cataloging Technology Project	II.3.3, II.3.5	1J, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D
	MLIS 7800 Career e-Portfolio Website	2.3 Career e-Portfolio Website	I.2, I.2.9, II.3.2, II.3.3	1G, 1J, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D

MLIS Program Objective	Performance Point housed in core course	Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA)	ALA Accreditation Standards	ALA Core Competences
PO 3 Graduates of the MLIS Program will integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.	MLIS 7700: Research Proposal	3 Research Proposal	I.2.5, I.2.6, I.2.7, II.1, II.2, II.3.2, II.3.6, II.3.7	II, 6A, 6B, 6C, 8C, 7D
MLIS Program Objective	Performance Point housed in core course	Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA)	ALA Accreditation Standards	ALA Core Competences
PO 4: Graduates of the MLIS Program will demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists.	MLIS 7000: Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment	4.1 MLIS Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment	I.2.1-4, I.2.6-10, II.2, II.3.3-7	1A-1K, 3A, 4A-C, 5A, 8B
	MLIS 7000: Ethics Project Report	4.2 Ethics Project Report	I.2.1, I.2.2, II.3.7	1A-C, 1E-H, 1J-K, 7A, 8D, 8E
	MLIS 7800: Professional Development Plan	4.3 Career e-Portfolio	I.2.1, I.2.2, I.2.10, II.3.1, II.3.7	7A, 7B, 7D, 8C, 8D
	MLIS 7800: Capstone Paper		I.2.1, I.2.5, II.3.2	6A-C
	MLIS 7800: Reflective Essay		I.2.1, I.2.2	1A, 1H, 7A, 8E
	MLIS 7800: Resume		I.2.1	1J, 4A, 7A, 8B
	MLIS 7800: Capstone Presentation			

*ALA Core Competences of Librarianship

(2009) <http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf>

II.2 The curriculum is concerned with recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use. The curriculum of library and information studies encompasses information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management.

The MLIS Program curriculum addresses the two broad areas of *recordable information and knowledge* and *the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use* through its six core courses and one guided collection development elective. The Program's range of other electives covers the scope of the library and information studies curriculum as described at Standard II.2 and as contextualized to serve the needs of academic, public, and special libraries and information agencies. The curriculum also provides education in the use of technologies to

facilitate the management and use of libraries and information agencies. Students complete their core courses and choose to optionally follow a track or to select from a variety of electives to make up the balance of their programs of study.

II.2.1 The curriculum is concerned with recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use.

The Core Courses

The Program's six required core courses and the required collection development elective (21 hours) provide students with entry-level professional expertise as specified in the Program Objectives. Each core course addresses aspects of *ALA's Core Competences for Librarianship* (2009) as indicated in Table II.2. Together, the core courses introduce students to the world of professional librarianship as it "is concerned with recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use." Student learning outcomes for each course link to the program objectives, which derive from this standard, and are included in the course syllabi, linked with each course description below.

MLIS 7000: Foundations of Library and Information Science: An introduction to the library and information science field, its history, and future directions. The focus is on the history, concepts, and technological development of the discipline. Students will gain familiarity with library and information theory, the discipline and sub-disciplines within the information sciences, and ethical practices and standards. <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7000spr2013.pdf>

MLIS 7100: Information Sources and Services: Prerequisite or corequisite: MLIS 7000. An introduction to concepts and processes in reference and information science and to fundamental information sources and services provided by libraries and information organizations. An overview of the reference function includes the history and future of reference service, question negotiation, information needs analysis, effective research strategies, evaluation of information sources in various formats, and ethics of information services. <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7100spring2013.pdf>

MLIS 7200: Management of Libraries and Information Centers: Prerequisite or corequisite: MLIS 7000. An introduction to the functions of library management and its underlying theoretical concepts. This course provides an overview of the history of management, an introduction to management theory and functions, including planning, leading, organizing, staffing, controlling, budgeting, human resource issues, and an understanding of management as a system involving all staff. http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/MLIS7200_Syllabus_Spring2013.pdf

MLIS 7300: Organization of Information (until Fall 2013 Cataloging and Classification): Prerequisite or corequisite: MLIS 7000. An introduction to the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for organizing and retrieving information, including organizational systems objectives, structures, formats, standards, and vocabularies; choice and form of access

points; authority control; subject access; the impact of new technologies; and the information life cycle. <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7300spring2013.pdf>

MLIS 7700: Research Methods: Prerequisite: MLIS 7000. An introduction to the various approaches to social science research and research methods. Students will perform small-scale research projects and develop skills in the research uses of libraries and the needs of library patrons. <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7700spring2013.pdf>

MLIS 7800: Capstone: Taken during the final semester of study. Required for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MLIS degree. Emphasis will be on synthesis of knowledge, honing writing and presentation skills, and creating a professional development plan. <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7800springIB2013.pdf>

MLIS Guided Electives in Collection Development: Additionally, effective Fall 2013, all students must complete one guided elective that includes elements of collection development in the content. The most recent syllabus for each course is linked with the course descriptions. Not all electives are offered every year but students have enough choice available to meet the new Collection Development elective requirement in a timely fashion. Students may choose from among the following electives:

MLIS 7130: Humanities Information Services: Prerequisite: MLIS 7100 or consent of the instructor. Examination of processes and resources used to provide reference services in the humanities disciplines. The fields of art, communications, literature, languages, linguistics, music, philosophy, religion, and theatre will be considered.
<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7130fa2011.pdf>

MLIS 7150: Social Science Information Sources: Prerequisite: MLIS 7100 or consent of instructor. Examination of social science information domains and information resources, including the structures and bibliographies of the disciplines in electronic and print format. Various information formats are examined, and appropriate search and retrieval methods are explored.
<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7150spring2011.pdf>

MLIS 7400: Collection Development: Prerequisite or corequisite: MLIS 7000 or consent of instructor. Principles and processes for building and maintaining library and information center collections. Identification, evaluation, selection, acquisition, and preservation of materials in all formats will be emphasized. The contexts of all types of libraries, needs of diverse patrons, and legal and ethical issues will be considered.
<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7400fall2013.pdf>

MLIS 7420: Literature for Children: A study of the literature created for children in relation to their needs, interests, and abilities. Emphasis will be on the process of evaluation in order to meet the developmental, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of children.
<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7420fall2012.pdf>

MLIS 7440: Electronic Resources in Libraries: Prerequisite MLIS 7000 or consent of instructor. Policies and procedures for managing electronic information resources as part

of a library collection. Selection, budgeting, acquisitions, cataloging, assessment, copyright, licensing, and preservation are considered.

http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi/documents/mlis7440IAsummer2013_2013.pdf

Program Assessment expressed through Student Learning Outcomes

As specified in the March 2012 *Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status* (Appendix I.A), the Student Learning Outcome Assessments are being introduced and applied across all sections of the required courses and are being used to measure the Program's success in meeting its objectives as expressed in terms of student learning outcomes. These assessments help assure that the curriculum continues to be concerned with recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies that facilitate their management and use. A full discussion of the SLOA review process and a presentation of the findings to date are provided at Standard IV: Students.

Table II.3: Alignment of Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcome Assessments to Core Courses and Guided Electives

Core Course	Program Objectives Addressed	Student Learning Outcome Assessment housed in this course*
MLIS 7000	P.O. 1 P.O. 4	SLOA 1.1: Journals Analysis portion of the Applied Library Experience Notebook; SLOA 4.1: Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment; SLOA 4.2: Ethics Project Report
MLIS 7100	P.O. 1 P.O. 2	SLOA 1.1: Reference Consultation Project portion of the Applied Library Experience Notebook; SLOA 2.1: Reference Transactions Assessment, addressing Technology as applied to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Resources • Ethics & Norms of Service • Users with Exceptional Needs • Explaining Concepts
MLIS 7200	P.O. 1	SLOA 1.1: Management Client Report portion of Applied Library Experience Notebook
MLIS7300	P.O. 1 P.O. 2	SLOA 1.1: Original Cataloging Project portion of Applied Library Experience Notebook; SLOA 2.2: Social Cataloging Technology Project
MLIS 7700	P.O. 3	SLOA 3: Research Proposal
MLIS 7800	P.O. 2 P.O. 4	SLOA 2.3: Career e-Portfolio website SLOA 4.3: Career e-Portfolio contents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Plan • Capstone Paper • Reflective Essay • Evidence of effective communication
Collection Development Elective (choose from MLIS 7130, MLIS 7150, MLIS 7400, MLIS 7420, MLIS 7440)	P.O. 1	SLOA 1.2: Collection Development Project

*Full descriptions of the Student Learning Outcome Assessments are provided following Table II.1.

Course Electives

Students complete the remaining 18 credits of their programs of study by either choosing to follow one of six topical tracks of electives or by designing a personalized program of study in consultation with their advisors. The six topical tracks align with the broad areas of study identified in Standard II.2 to further address specialized aspects of recordable information and knowledge and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use. Students may include in their programs of study MLIS 7960 Supervised Fieldwork and/or MLIS 7950 Independent Study in Library and Information Science under the direction of a faculty member (discussed more fully under II.4). Full course lists for the updated tracks are found on the MLIS Program website at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/program.shtml>. The 2012-2013 *Graduate Catalog* presents the tracks as they were implemented during the accreditation period at <https://ww2.valdosta.edu/catalog/1213/grad/index.shtml>. The 2013-2014 *Graduate Catalog* reflects revisions made to the 2012-2013 *Catalog* to include the most recently updated descriptions of the program tracks as currently presented on the MLIS Program website.

II.2.2 The curriculum of library and information studies encompasses information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management.

In addition to addressing the foundational requirements for Library and Information Science curricula in the core courses, the Program offers elective courses that address a wide range of aspects of the knowledge and skills expected of entry-level LIS professional degree holders in a variety of subfields of LIS. The majority of the elective courses were developed to support the Program's focus on preparing students for entry-level professional work in academic and public libraries, special libraries and information centers. The alignment of the elective courses to the elements of Standard II.2.2 is documented in the description of the course numbering scheme presented next.

The MLIS program numbers its courses to indicate their alignment by topic though there is by necessity some break in the numbering as well as some overlap of courses across the different tracks. All core and elective course descriptions presented in numerical order are available at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/courses.shtml>

The course numbering system begins with MLIS 7000 – Foundations of Library and Information Science. This course stands alone in the 7000 series.

MLIS 7100- 71xx, are the numbers for courses addressing Information Sources and Services, and services to populations with special needs. This curriculum series includes subject reference courses and references services and skills courses.

- The Reference Sources and Services Track (12 hours), addresses the communication, identification, selection, retrieval and interpretation of recorded knowledge as applied to the information needs and characteristics of adult information seekers.

- The Health Sciences Librarianship Track (15 hours) addresses communication, identification, selection, retrieval and interpretation of recorded knowledge as applied to the health sciences domain of recorded knowledge. It is placed as a subset of 7100 series of courses.

MLIS 7200-72xx, are the numbers for courses addressing the management of libraries and information centers, the different types of libraries and information centers, and the specialized knowledge and skills library managers must develop.

- The Library Management Track (12 hours) encompasses the management of libraries and other information organizations, as well as the management of the people and processes the organizations employ.

MLIS 7300- 73xx, are the numbers for courses that focus on the organization of information, cataloging, classification, indexing and abstracting, and other related topics. All the courses in this series were reviewed and some were revised and renumbered in AY 2012-13.

- The Cataloging and Classification Track (12 hours) addresses skills and knowledge needed to manage the organization and description of recorded knowledge in information institutions.

MLIS 7400- 74xx, are the numbers for courses that focus on library and information center collection development and management in all settings and media, as well as information resources and programming for targeted populations. This series also includes all the courses that focus on resources, services and programming for children and young teens. The youth services courses were reviewed and expanded in AY 2011-2012.

- The Youth Services Track (15 hours) addresses communication, identification, selection, and retrieval and interpretation of recorded knowledge as applied to the information needs and developmental stages of children, adolescents and young adults.

MLIS 7500 – 75xx, are the numbers for courses that focus on information technologies as understood in the LIS discipline. Courses focus on automated systems as well as digital libraries and programming.

- The Technology Track (15 hours) addresses digital information management and knowledge creation, digital information storage and retrieval, and the application and management of the digital technologies used to implement these processes.

MLIS 7600 – 76xx is a seldom used range, currently identifying courses that focus on information policy and information and ethics.

MLIS 7700 – 77xx are the numbers for the required research methods course, and for courses focused on the management of archival and special collections and preservation of materials.

MLIS 7800, Capstone is the culminating course in the program. It is the only course currently numbered in the 7800 series.

MLIS 7900 – 79xx are the numbers for special topics courses not yet in permanent rotation in the curriculum, and for structured individual projects including directed independent studies and supervised fieldwork. Cross-listed courses between MLIS and History are numbered in this series. Any other cross-listed courses that may become part of the course rotation schedule would be listed here or in the appropriate number series.

II.3 The curriculum

II.3.1 ...fosters development of library and information professions who will assume an assertive role in providing services

II.3.2 ...emphasizes an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields;

II.3.3 ...integrates the theory, application and use of technology;

II.3.4 ...responds to the needs of a diverse society including the needs of underserved groups;

II.3.5 ...responds to the needs of a rapidly changing technological and global society;

II.3.6 ...provides direction for future development of the field;

II.3.7 ...promotes commitment to continuous professional growth.

II.3.1 ...fosters development of library and information professionals who will assume an assertive role in providing services

MLIS Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOAs) 1.1 and 1.2 provide direct evidence of the Program's students' readiness to assume an assertive role in providing services. These assessments are housed in four of the Program's core courses and in the required collection development elective. These assessments became effective for students admitted in Fall 2012 or later.

II.3.2 ...emphasizes an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields

MLIS Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOA) 3 and 4.1 provide direct evidence of the Program's emphasis on an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields. These assessments are housed in two of the Program's core courses. SLOA 3 is housed in MLIS 7700, Research Methods, and was the first assessment to be applied; it has been in place since Spring 2012. SLOA 4.1 is housed in MLIS 7000, Foundations of Library and Information Science, and became effective for students admitted in Fall 2012 or later.

II.3.3 ...integrates the theory, application, and use of technology

The MLIS Program's Objective 2 states that students will use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers. The curriculum integrates the

use of technology into all of its offerings and activities at multiple levels, but first by virtue of delivering all its coursework through an online digital platform. Student Learning Outcome Assessments 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 provide evidence of all students' exposure to the theory and application of technology and of their readiness to use technology in entry level professional work in libraries and information centers. These assessments are housed in three of the program's required core courses, MLIS 7100, MLIS 7300, and MLIS 7800. Students take these core courses at different stages of their academic programs, culminating their studies with MLIS 7800. Students who wish to focus their full program of study on technological aspects of library and information center work may also choose to follow the Program's technology track as they select their elective courses. Beta testing of SLOA 2.1 has been delayed due to changes in Program faculty. SLOA 2.2 has been Beta tested and will be fully applied beginning in the Fall 2013 semester. SLOA 2.3 was fully implemented in Spring 2013. Assessment results are presented at Standard IV: Students.

II.3.4 ...responds to the needs of a diverse society including the needs of underserved groups

The MLIS Program curriculum addresses the needs of a diverse society including the needs of underserved groups in multiple core courses. Assessing student response to these needs is an aspect of SLOA 2.1 and SLOA 4.1. SLOA 2.1 includes scoring that reflects students' ability to provide information services to users with exceptional needs. SLOA 4.1 includes scoring that assesses students' awareness of the information needs of different service populations and the diversity of the individuals who make up those populations, as well as an awareness of the impact of images and stereotypes of information professionals on the ability to provide information services to a varied and diverse clientele.

II.3.5 ...responds to the needs of a rapidly changing technological and global society

The MLIS Program curriculum is grounded in the professional standards that inform Library and Information Studies. As described at Standard II.7, the curriculum undergoes systematic review that relies on stakeholder input and reports of best practices from the field to inform revisions and maintain currency in response to the issues created by the rapidly changing technological and global society. The just completed revision of the core course in Cataloging and Classification to a course in the Organization of Information, and the revision of the entire Cataloging Track under the guidance of a variety of professional stakeholders to reflect the incorporation of the newest standards and practices is one example of the program's ability to respond to the rapidly changing technological and global society. More broadly, the needs of a rapidly changing technological and global society are addressed in multiple core courses. Assessing student awareness of and response to this rapid change is an aspect of three of the learning outcome assessments, SLOA 2.1, 2.2, and 4.1.

SLOA 2.1 includes scoring that reflects the students' ability to understand and implement rapidly changing information access and organizational technologies and follow professional ethics and service norms in the context of the information delivery environment. SLOA 2.2 includes scoring that reflects the students' ability to respond to the rapidly changing technological environment in which information is organized and made accessible. SLOA 4.1 measures

students' ability to integrate the foundational concepts of the LIS professions into their thinking. Included in this assessment is a requirement that students reflect on the rapid rate of change in the LIS professions and think proactively about what the future of the LIS professions will look like.

II.3.6 ...provides direction for future development of the field

The curriculum encourages students to explore trends in multiple aspects of the library and information professions within the context of the core courses described above. SLOA 3, The Research Proposal, prepares students to conduct original research in the course of their professional work. The Capstone paper element of SLOA 4.3 measures students' ability to act on their research proposals and explore original research questions of their choosing. Students are encouraged to prepare and submit the findings of their research for publication, thus contributing to the professional knowledge base and providing for the future development of the field.

II.3.7 ...promotes commitment to continuous professional growth.

The MLIS Program's Objective 4 states that students will demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists. The curriculum promotes a commitment to continuous professional growth throughout the core courses. For example, the entry-level Foundations course (MLIS 7000) explicitly addresses the role of professional organizations throughout a professional career as well as stressing the importance of continuing professional development. Students are encouraged to join professional organizations and attend and present at professional conferences during their studies. The Program formally assesses its ability to create this commitment to continuous professional growth among students using Student Learning Outcome Assessments 3, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 housed in MLIS 7000, 7700 and 7800.

SLOA 3 measures the first level of the students' commitment to continuous professional growth by assessing their abilities to maintain currency of knowledge of the field through the use of professional literature and to design original research projects in the course of their duties. SLOA 4.1 includes an essay in which students define professionalism based on course readings and apply their definitions to their personal career goals. SLOA 4.2 allows students to demonstrate their understanding of the role of professional ethics in their careers and provides them with an orientation to the ethical frameworks they will need to employ when making professional decisions. SLOA 4.3 documents the students' career e-portfolios, the ultimate product for the MLIS degree. It gives students an opportunity to present their synthesized knowledge, writing skills, and presentation skills, and to create a professional development plan.

II.4 The curriculum provides the opportunity for students to construct coherent programs of study that allow individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of program requirements established by the school and that will foster development of the competencies necessary for productive careers. The curriculum includes as appropriate cooperative degree programs, interdisciplinary coursework and research, experiential

opportunities, and other similar activities. Course content and sequence relationships within the curriculum are evident.

II.4.1 The curriculum provides the opportunity for students to construct coherent programs of study that allow individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of program requirements established by the school and that will foster development of the competencies necessary for productive careers.

The design of the MLIS curriculum ensures that students build their programs of study starting with a broad base of relevant knowledge and skills as guided by the *ALA Standards and Core Competences*. The MLIS Program draws upon the missions and standards of other professional organizations as well, as appropriate. The core courses are offered with enough frequency and with as many sections as needed such that students can complete prerequisites and subsequently enroll in electives in a timely manner. Responsive scheduling of core courses allows students to complete their degrees within six to eight semesters. Individual sections of core courses are capped at 25 students each. The scheduling frequency of the core courses and the number enrolled per semester is shown in Tables II.4 and II.5. The steady enrollment in the core courses shows that the courses the students need to build their programs of study are available when they need them.

Table II.4: Enrollment in Core Courses by Name and Number⁵ 2007- 2010

Course name	Fall 2007	Spr 2008	Su 2008	Fall 2008	Spr 2009	Su 2009	Fall 2009	Spr 2010	Su 2010
*MLIS 7000 - Foundations of Library and Information Science ⁶	52	46		37	34		54	66	
MLIS 7100 - Information Sources and Services	19	35		25	48		16	25	
MLIS 7200 - Management of Libraries and Information Centers ⁷	23		32	36	30		42	48	
MLIS 7300 - Cataloging/ Organization of Information		50		20	30	33	32	49	26
*MLIS 7700 - Research Methods ⁸	15			20	29		21	20	
MLIS 7800 - Capstone	3	6	8	11	16	16	27	26	16
*Because of the fall and spring admissions cycle MLIS 7000 is not offered in summer. MLIS 7700 is also not offered in summer because the structure of assignments requires more time than available during the summer.									

⁵ Course enrollment data is drawn from the University's Enrollment Management System (Banner). Summer core courses have been added as demand indicates and faculty availability allows.

⁶ The Program does not admit students for the summer semester. MLIS 7000 is required of newly admitted students in fall and spring semesters. Note that course enrollment numbers for MLIS 7000 do not reconcile completely with Program admission statistics as reported at Standard IV due to instances of accepted students delaying enrollment for a semester or the possibility of a student repeating the course due to unacceptable performance.

⁷ In AY 2007-08 MLIS 7200 and MLIS 7300 were offered in alternate semesters based on enrollment numbers.

⁸ MLIS 7700 is not offered in the summer due to the complexity of the material covered in the course.

Table II.5: Enrollment in Core Courses by Name and Number 2011-2013

Course Name	Fall 2010	Spr 2011	Sum 2011	Fall 2011	Spr 2012	Sum 2012	Fall 2012	Spr 2013	Sum 2013
MLIS 7000 - Foundations of Library and Information Science	73	46		38	32		31	46	
MLIS 7100 - Information Sources and Services	49	46	16	48	28	14	31	14	
MLIS 7200 - Management of Libraries and Information Centers	68	47	22	34	30	12	21	25	20
MLIS 7300 - Cataloging/ Organization of Information	44	54	13	40	22	21	19	23	9
MLIS 7700 - Research Methods	24	33		44	47		44	34	
MLIS 7800 - Capstone	11	20	22	25	32	26	30	33	15

The University requires that every student be advised every semester before registering for classes. The MLIS Program requires that all students consult with their advisors early in their academic careers to prepare a preliminary program of study and estimated schedule of completion for their coursework. Students have their first opportunity to meet their advisors and begin the consultation process during the face-to-face program orientation held at the start of the students' first semester of study. Students are introduced to the curriculum, the tracks, the course rotation schedule, and the academic planning aids the Program utilizes. The Program maintains an [Academic Advising webpage](#) with links to these advising resources. Students and advisors use these tools to help students plan coherent programs of study from the start of their academic programs.

Students are advised to take MLIS 7000, 7100, 7200, and 7300 (core courses) early in their studies so that they will complete any prerequisites they might need for specialized electives, thus allowing them to enroll in desired electives when they are next offered. Students are also generally advised to take MLIS 7300 (Cataloging/Organization of Information) before they take MLIS 7100 (Information Sources and Services) because the faculty feel students will do better learning to seek information if they first understand how it is organized. Before each semester, prior to registering for classes, students must contact their advisors to review their course selections and their progress in their academic programs. Once the student and the advisor have consulted and agreed upon the student's next steps, the advisor sets the student's account eligible to register for the coming semester. These consultations are typically conducted by e-mail or by telephone conversations and faculty members keep notes of these consultations in their personal advising files. It is important to note that once a faculty member has set a student's account eligible to register, the student may choose any course listed for which the pre-requisites are met. The faculty member does not have control over the student's actual course registration process.

Students' individual needs, goals, and aspirations are recognized in several ways. Over half of the student's program of study is composed of elective courses (21 hours of 39). In consultation with the advisor, the student may choose to follow a track of inter-related electives, or the

student may choose a more general course of study and select among the electives most relevant to the student's personal goals or aspirations. Up to nine hours of prior course work or relevant coursework taken at another institution during the time the student is enrolled in the Program may be transferred in to count towards the student's degree if approved by the advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School. Students may also pursue independent study and/or supervised fieldwork opportunities (described below) in order to further personalize their programs of study. Within the context of the core courses students are encouraged to use the required assignments to explore the aspect of the topic under consideration that interests them the most.

Students are advised to take MLIS 7700 Research Methods late in their programs of study so that they will be able to best use the course learning objectives to prepare to do research in their areas of greatest interest. If students have completed most of their electives before taking MLIS 7700 Research Methods they should have a strong sense of what research question they would like to develop during MLIS 7700 and then explore during MLIS 7800 (Capstone). Students take Capstone in their last semester of study. They are encouraged to use the Capstone paper requirement to explore research questions of personal and professional interest in order to demonstrate that they have developed the competencies necessary to begin productive professional careers.

Elective courses are developed to provide students with specialized learning opportunities so that they may tailor their programs of study to their individual goals and dreams. Elective courses are developed by interested faculty members who have subject area expertise, and the proposed syllabi are reviewed by the curriculum committee and the faculty as a whole before being voted on for addition to the curriculum. In every case, course content is grounded in the published competencies identified as necessary for entry level professionals in the various sub-fields of librarianship and its cognates. The faculty's areas of expertise are documented in Standard III.

The Program aspires to offer all elective courses on a two year cycle so that the majority of students may complete their programs of study within six to eight semesters either by following a track or by choosing electives relevant to their needs. A [Course Rotation Schedule](#) is released to students each semester in order to enable them to plan their program to meet their goals and needs. Where demand for a specific elective is high, the Program tries to offer that elective annually (Appendix II.C). The elective courses originally offered every other year and now offered annually in response to student demand and faculty assessment of the centrality of the course content include MLIS 7110 Online Searching, MLIS 7400 Collection Management, MLIS 7422 Programming for Children and Young Teens, MLIS 7430 Information Literacy, and MLIS 7570 Information Architecture (formerly MLIS 7370, number changed during revisions to Cataloging Track).

Most of the Program's students enroll in from one to three courses per semester and the typical time to the degree is from six to eight semesters. Program completion data is provided at Standard IV. The course rotation schedule fully accommodates this pattern of matriculation to graduation.

II.4.2 The curriculum includes as appropriate cooperative degree programs, interdisciplinary coursework and research, experiential opportunities, and other similar activities.

Almost since its initial accreditation the Program has partnered with the University's College of Education and Human Services to offer the Dual Program of Study for MLIS and Concurrent Media Certification (State of Georgia). In Georgia, school media specialists must be certified teachers but many students who already hold an education degree or another relevant degree and are interested in pursuing the school media certification wish to earn the MLIS credential as well. The Dual Program makes this goal possible for VSU's students. Nine students have successfully completed the Dual Program and six have declared their intention to pursue this track and to apply for admission as non-degree seeking students in the College of Education and Human Services (source Standard IV, Table IV.12)

The Program is working with the University of [West Georgia's Public History Program](#) and [Clayton State University's Master of Archival Studies Program](#) to identify ways of providing students with additional opportunities to personalize their programs of study to support work in archives and public history collections, and all three schools have agreed in principle to make selected courses available to each other's students. While there has been little demand from MLIS Program students for these courses, the opportunity is available to interested students. The program supports interdisciplinary studies more broadly to the extent that students can transfer in up to nine credits from other programs or institutions with the approval of their advisors and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Opportunities for *specialized learning* are available to all students through MLIS 7950 Independent Study in Library and Information Science. With the approval of their advisors and under the direction of a faculty member, students may pursue specialized learning through supervised reading and research in areas of study not normally available in regular course offerings. The student and the faculty member agree upon course learning outcomes and sign a formal agreement which is then placed in the student's permanent file. The student and the instructor then meet regularly to review the student's progress. The independent study agreement template is available at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/documents/MLIS7950GUIDELINES.pdf>

Interdisciplinary learning is offered through the cross-listing of selected courses with other academic units within the university. MLIS 7270, Information Management is cross-listed with and taught by the Public Administration program as PADM 7110. MLIS 7970 Libraries and Literacy in History is cross-listed with the History department and is taught alternately and/or jointly by a member of the History faculty and a member of the MLIS faculty. MLIS 7998 Web Programming is cross-listed with Public Administration and is taught by a member of the PADM faculty.

Experiential opportunities are available to all students through MLIS 7960 Supervised Fieldwork. Students are encouraged to enroll in MLIS 7960 late in their programs of study after they have a sense of the type of library or information environment in which they would like to gain hands-on experience. The fieldwork course is mandatory for students declaring tracks in

Cataloging, Reference, or Health Sciences Librarianship. Students must have the permission of their advisors and the Supervised Fieldwork instructor in order to enroll in MLIS 7960. MLIS 7960 requires 120 hours of participation in an approved library or information center. Learning objectives specific to the students' interests and goals are identified collaboratively by the student, the on-site supervisor, and the course instructor and confirmed using a signed work agreement. Under exceptional circumstances students may repeat MLIS 7960 once for a total of six credits maximum. Students log and post their hours and a summary of their activities via the course website four times during the semester. At the end of the fieldwork experience students submit documentation or artifacts that present highlights of their learning. Guidelines for MLIS 7960 are available at http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/documents/MLIS7960GUIDELINES_20090601.pdf

MLIS 7960 has been offered every semester since before the Program's initial accreditation. Summer supervised fieldwork has been offered but is discouraged because the summer semester is not long enough to allow most students to complete the required 120 hours of fieldwork while still meeting their other academic, family, and workplace obligations. Over 130 MLIS students have been placed in approximately 50 different fieldwork sites, primarily within the State of Georgia during the current accreditation period. For the Fall 2013 semester one student has been placed in a fieldwork site in the University of California system. Additionally, nine Dual Program students have completed 100 hour fieldwork placements through the College of Education and Human Services.

II.4.3 Course content and sequence relationships within the curriculum are evident.

As documented at Standard II.2.2 the MLIS program numbers its core courses and electives to indicate their alignment by topic, though there is by necessity some break in the numbering as well as some overlap of courses across the different tracks. All MLIS courses fall into the university's 7000 numbering sequence, indicating that these courses are open to graduate students only.⁹ Course numbering is revised as necessary when a track is reviewed in order to keep the logic of the relevant course offerings apparent. For example, during the 2012-13 review of the Cataloging Track, MLIS 7370 Information Architecture, for which the 7300 series course number indicates a subject relationship to Cataloging, was reviewed and the course was renumbered as MLIS 7570 and moved to the Technology track where the content more closely aligns with the other 7500 series courses.

The *Graduate Catalog* is available on the university's Academic Affairs website and in print <https://ww2.valdosta.edu/catalog/>. Complete course descriptions and prerequisites for both core and elective courses are published in numerical order in the *Graduate Catalog* and repeated on the MLIS Program webpages at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/courses.shtml>. Course syllabi are also available on the MLIS webpages so that students can explore a course's scope, content, and student learning outcomes in more depth as they plan their programs of study, at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/syllabi.shtml>. Outlines of the subject tracks are also published in the *Graduate Catalog* and on the Program webpages at <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/program.shtml>.

⁹ 2012-2013 Graduate Catalog, Valdosta State University, page 32.

II.5.1 When a program includes study of services and activities in specialized fields, these specialized learning experiences are built upon a general foundation of library and information studies.

Regardless of specialization, track, or other customized program of study chosen, all students must complete the six core courses and one collection development elective (effective Fall 2013) as described above. The core curriculum has been designed to provide all students in the Program with a firm general foundation in the core competences of library and information studies. In many cases the core courses serve as prerequisites for specialized electives, thereby anchoring the tracks and ensuring that students have acquired the foundational knowledge needed before pursuing specialized study in any one area of library and information studies.

II.5.2 The design of specialized learning experiences takes into account the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations.

The Program's curriculum review process takes into account standards and competencies identified by relevant professional organizations whenever it reviews a course or a track of courses. The recent review of existing courses and the development of new courses that together make up the youth services track was grounded in YALSA's [*Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth*](#) and guided by an advisory board composed of experts and specialist practitioners in youth services as described at Standard II.1.

The comprehensive review of the Cataloging track was begun by mapping proposed course learning outcomes to relevant sections of multiple competency statements prepared by a wide range of professional organizations, including especially: ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship; the Association of College and Research Libraries' [*Competencies for Special Collections Professionals*](#); the Federal Library and Information Center Committee's [*Federal Librarian Competencies*](#); and the WebJunction [*Competency Index for the Library Field*](#). Other specialized professional organization's competency statements were then reviewed to see if any significant subsets of cataloging competencies had been overlooked.

Professional standards are incorporated into individual core courses as appropriate to the course content. For example, in MLIS 7000 Foundations of Library and Information Science, codes of ethics from several LIS professional associations inform the work that leads to Student Learning Outcome Assessment 4.2, The Ethics Project Assessment. In MLIS 7100 Information Sources and Services, the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) [*standards, practices, and behavioral guidelines*](#) are used extensively as resources to inform student learning and their application is evaluated as part of SLOA 1.1, The Reference Transaction portion of the Applied Library Experience Notebook.

II.6 The curriculum, regardless of forms or locations of delivery selected by the school, conforms to the requirements of these Standards.

The MLIS Program is now delivered 100% online with full consent of the faculty and university administrators. It does not operate from any locations other than the main campus of the university. When the Program received its initial accreditation in 2007 all courses except MLIS 7000 Foundations of Library and Information Science, and MLIS 7800 Capstone were delivered as online courses. As the Program's enrollment has grown, and to meet the needs of the Program's students, these two courses have been thoroughly reviewed and transitioned to online delivery (see discussion and evidence at Standard II.7, *MLIS Curriculum Review History*). Evaluation of student performance in both delivery modes was assessed and no differences were found. (Source: Appendix II.D, Ad Hoc Committee Report on MLIS 7000 Delivery Method)

During the current accreditation cycle the Program has employed part-time instructors as needed to deliver second or third sections of core courses. In all cases, all sections of core courses are standardized. Starting in 2011 with the development and in 2012 with the phasing in of the Student Learning Outcome Assessments, these assessments are housed across all sections of core courses and applied uniformly by both full-time and part-time instructors.

All course instruction and content is delivered through the University's online learning platform. Until May 2013 courses were delivered using Blackboard's WebCT/Vista legacy platform. In May 2013, as part of the statewide upgrade of online course delivery software implemented by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, the University moved its online course offerings and all its online support for face-to-face classes to the Desire2Learn (D2L) software platform. Desire2Learn is now in use by all University System of Georgia member institutions, thus enabling the USG to provide extensive platform support for all D2L users including students. The University's eLearning Department has provided extensive training to faculty to facilitate switching software platforms and the transition has gone very smoothly. <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/elearning/blazeview-d2l.php> The MLIS Program faculty are migrating their courses to the new learning environment as they are offered.

The University offers extensive online learning resources and support for students through the University's Information Technology Help Desk and through the USG online and telephone D2L help services, linked on the [BlazeVIEW D2L homepage](#). Program faculty are including tutorials in their courses as needed to make sure students are able to use the tools provided.

Students are introduced to the online learning platform when they arrive on campus for their MLIS program orientation. Prior to Spring 2011, when the face-to-face on-campus orientation was instituted, students came into the online learning environment with different levels of comfort and familiarity with the software and with online learning, depending upon their backgrounds and prior learning experiences. Since the implementation of the face-to-face orientation, student comfort levels with online learning at the start of their studies have increased and the faculty who teach the Foundations course (MLIS 7000) have noted anecdotally that the students as a group are more at ease with the software and able to move around in the learning environment successfully within the first week of class.

The MLIS Program's core curriculum is fully mapped to the *Standards* and the *Core Competences of Librarianship* as this chapter has demonstrated. In 2012 the Program began the process of evaluating its success at meeting its goals and objectives through the evaluation of student learning outcomes that are grounded in the Standards (See Table II.2, *Alignment of MLIS Program Objectives, Core Courses, and SLOAs to ALA Accreditation Standards and Core Competences*).

All full-time faculty members are evaluated annually according to University policy. Teaching performance is a key aspect of this evaluation (see discussion at Standard III: Faculty). Each semester the University requests that students complete and submit the Student Opinions of Instruction (SOI) for each course in which they are enrolled. The results are shared with the instructor and reviewed by the Program Director after grades are submitted. SOIs are included in the faculty members' annual evaluations and discussed with part-time faculty as appropriate.

The Program feels that all these checks and assessments assure that the Program conforms to the requirements of ALA's *Standards*.

II.7 The curriculum is continually reviewed and receptive to innovation; its evaluation is used for ongoing appraisal, to make improvements, and to plan for the future. Evaluation of the curriculum includes assessment of students' achievements and their subsequent accomplishments. Evaluation involves those served by the program: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.

II.7.1: The curriculum is continually reviewed and receptive to innovation; its evaluation is used for ongoing appraisal, to make improvements, and to plan for the future.

The MLIS curriculum is reviewed systematically under auspices of the Curriculum Committee. Revisions are conducted to make sure that course offerings remain aligned with (1) the Program's Goals and Objectives, and (2) the most current and relevant professional standards and outcomes measures. Starting in AY 2012-13, revisions are informed by the findings from the systematic analysis of the Student Learning Outcome Assessment results. When a core course or track is identified as needing revision, the Curriculum Committee asks a faculty member with relevant expertise to take responsibility for guiding the revision as the subject specialist for that area. The faculty member then convenes an advisory group of experts in the subject area including practitioners, faculty from other schools, and alumni while consulting relevant professional standards to determine the scope and content of the course, or the track and the courses it encompasses.

The Curriculum review process

The Program's Curriculum Committee meets at least monthly during the academic year. It brings its recommendations to the Program faculty as a whole for review and approval. Once the MLIS Program completes its review of a course or track, the recommended revisions are brought to the University's Graduate Executive Committee for review and approval. The Graduate Executive Committee is the body that serves in an advisory capacity to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean supervises and coordinates all educational programs at the graduate level

throughout the University with the assistance of other deans, directors, department heads, and the Graduate Executive Committee by making recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. From the Graduate Executive Committee course changes are referred to the Academic Committee of the Faculty Senate and the Vice President of Academic Affairs for review, then to the Faculty Senate for final consideration. The [Graduate Executive](#) and the [Academic committees](#) meet regularly during the academic year to review proposals for curriculum change, new or revised courses, or new degrees as they relate to academic programs.

MLIS Curriculum Review History

In 2007 at the time of original accreditation the core courses and a range of electives were in place and three curriculum tracks were available:

- Cataloging and Classification
- Library Management
- Reference Sources and Services

This section documents the review of core courses and creation of new tracks during the current accreditation period. Additional tracks were integrated into the curriculum as the student body grew and enough interest in additional areas of LIS specialization developed. Additional electives have been added to the curriculum as the program has grown. Table II.6 summarizes key events in the MLIS Curriculum during the current accreditation period.

Table II.6: MLIS Program Curriculum Review History AY 2007-08 to AY 2012-13

Time Period	Actions Taken
AY 2007-08	Development of Health Sciences Track and Technology Track begins
2008 Spring semester	Dual Program in MLIS and Media Specialist Certification negotiated and approved by the MLIS Program and the College of Education and Human Services
AY 2008-2009	Full review of all six core courses by the MLIS Curriculum Committee took place as part of preparation for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' (SACS) scheduled review of the university's accreditation. The Curriculum Committee reviewed all core course syllabi. Expected learning gains as stated in ALA's <i>Core Competences of Librarianship</i> were compared to the MLIS program's course learning objectives. If not present, the committee added learning outcomes to reflect those Competences. Curriculum Committee members interviewed MLIS professors responsible for those courses and made recommendations on the terminology and format to be used to revise objectives. Following the recommendations of VSU consultants, the committee asked all faculty members to use the term <i>Learning Outcomes</i> on syllabi and to incorporate specific outcome-based language as recommended into those outcome statements.
2008 (Fall semester)	Technology track launched and announced in 2008-09 Graduate Catalog
2009 Spring semester	Feasibility of expanding Archival Studies offerings explored. Two relevant elective courses added to the curriculum – see discussion below.
2009 Fall Semester	Health Sciences Track launched and announced in 2009-10 Graduate Catalog
2009 Fall Semester	MLIS 7100 instructional redesign implemented MLIS 7200 instructional redesign initiated. MLIS 7800 Capstone course delivery mode reviewed and piloted as online course to align with balance of curriculum and to accommodate more widely dispersed student body (originally taught as a hybrid model in which the small enrollment facilitated occasional weekend face-to-face seminar meetings and face-to-face delivery of final presentations). Student performance in both delivery modes assessed and no differences found.
2010 Spring Semester	MLIS 7000 Foundations of Library and Information Science course content reviewed and delivery mode (originally the only course taught on a four weekend intensive face-to-face

Time Period	Actions Taken
	model) piloted as an online model with one face-to-face weekend at the start of the semester. Goal is to align course with balance of the curriculum.
2010 Fall Semester	MLIS 7000 Foundations instructional re-design implemented, transfer to online delivery approved; face-to-face orientation for new students initiated. MLIS 7800 Capstone, transfer to fully online delivery approved.
2011 Spring Semester	Face-to-face first weekend of MLIS 7000 becomes a required program orientation rather than a course introduction.
2011 Fall Semester	SLOAs and Program Objectives incorporated into core course planning for Spring.
2012 Spring Semester	SLOAs added to all core course syllabi. MLIS 7700 and MLIS 7800 thoroughly reviewed as part of the SLOA development process. Instructors assigned to both courses met several times to review and reconcile course content and agree upon formative and summative student learning outcomes across all sections.
2012 Fall Semester	Youth Services Track launched and announced in 2012-13 Graduate Catalog; review of Cataloging Track begins (see discussion below).
2013 Fall Semester	Dual Program reviewed and announced in 2013-14 Graduate Catalog.
2013 Fall Semester	MLIS 7300 instructional re-design approved, and revisions adopted with course name change from <i>Cataloging and Classification</i> to <i>Organization of Information</i> . Revisions to Cataloging and Classification track effective and published in 2013-14 Graduate Catalog.
2013 Fall semester, anticipated	Review of Technology Track to begin
2014 Fall semester, anticipated	Review of Reference Track to begin

Cataloging Track Revision

In Fall 2012 the Curriculum Committee initiated a full review of the core course MLIS 7300 Cataloging and Classification and of the elective courses that make up the Cataloging Track. Revision was triggered by the move to RDA and FRBR as the new cataloging standards and tools and their adoption by the Library of Congress and other national libraries and relevant professional associations. The following table summarizes the changes made to the relevant courses. All changes will be effective in the Fall 2013 semester.

Table II.7: Cataloging Track Revision, effective Fall 2013

Original course name and number	Revised Course name and number	Rationale
MLIS 300 Cataloging and Classification	MLIS 7300 Organization of Information	Revised to provide a broader overview of organizational principles that are relevant to all aspects of LIS work and to prepare interested students for specialized study in cataloging and classification
	MLIS 7310 Intro to Descriptive Cataloging (new course)	Picks up the introductory material on descriptive cataloging from MLIS 7300
MLIS 7330 Cataloging the Web	MLIS 7330 Metadata and Advanced Cataloging	Updates course content and reflects advances in the field
MLIS 7350 Advanced Cataloging	MLIS 7355 Subject Cataloging and Classification	Course content from two courses revised and realigned into one course
MLIS 7355 Advanced Classification		
MLIS 7360 Indexing and Abstracting	MLIS 7360 Indexing, Abstracting, and Thesaurus Construction	Course content updated to reflect advances in the field
MLIS 7370 Information Architecture	MLIS 7570 Information Architecture	Moved to Technology Track

Archives Track Discussions

Beginning in May 2008 Program representatives participated in discussions with the University Archivist and other stakeholders to explore the feasibility of expanding offerings in Archival Studies. MLIS 7710 Archival Theory and Issues has been taught in the Program since before initial accreditation and has consistently experienced high enrollment. In Fall 2008 a faculty member with interests in archival studies and preservation was hired and his research showed that employers of archivists seek candidates who have the skills attained in MLIS programs, specifically in cataloging with metadata, preservation and the creation and management of digital libraries. In Spring 2009 the Program was approached by the University of West Georgia's [Public History program](#) and the Clayton State University [Master of Archival Studies program](#), both of which sought access to core MLIS skills for their students. Discussions about developing memoranda of understanding to support the cross-listing of courses between the three programs ensued but at the time the UWG and CSU courses were not offered online and their face-to-face courses would not meet the needs of the VSU Program's students. In Spring 2010 UWG Public History courses were cross-listed with the Program. Both UWG and CSU subsequently moved their courses online.

In Fall 2012 representatives from Clayton State renewed the conversation about cross-listing courses to allow students from all three institutions to have access to each other's courses, but demand for the outside courses on the part of the MLIS Program's students is not high. Further, the MLIS Program has elected not to pursue creation of a formal track in Archival Studies because this subject area is not within the scope of the Program's mission and the faculty does not include someone qualified to oversee the track and its component courses. However, based on findings from the previously described research into the needs of employers of archivists and the input of stakeholders, the Program has added specific courses relevant to the needs of students who wish to pursue careers in special collections and academic libraries including: Metadata (as MLIS 7330 Cataloging the Web, added in 2006, revised in 2013 to Metadata and Advanced Cataloging), Digital Libraries (MLIS 7580, added in 2008), and Preservation (MLIS 7730, added Fall 2010).

Receptiveness to innovation

As implied in the discussion above, the Program is receptive to innovation in the curriculum within the scope of the Program's mission and goals. The University makes possible the development and delivery of Special Topics courses, numbered in the MLIS Program as 799x, through which the faculty and students can explore timely topical content or content intended to address a short-term need. Any faculty member may propose a Special Topics course and such a course proposal is reviewed by the curriculum committee and the faculty prior to the course being offered for the first time. Special Topics courses may be offered three times as such, after which they should be reviewed and considered for permanent inclusion in the curriculum. The University's flexible policy for the creation of a Special Topics course makes these courses excellent vehicles for testing new courses for addition to the curriculum. The process for making a successful Special Topics course permanent begins with review by the curriculum committee, assignment of a permanent course number, and a recommendation to the faculty. The recommended course is then submitted to the Graduate Executive Committee for review and

recommendation to the Academic Committee of the Faculty Senate and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and then for vote by the Faculty Senate.

Table II.8: Special Topics courses offered AY 2007-08 to AY 2012-13

Course Name	Dates Offered	Status
Legal Information Sources and Services	delivered Fall 2009	subsequent offerings did not make minimum enrollment
Legal Reference for Academic and Public Libraries	scheduled for Fall 2012	did not make minimum enrollment
Genealogy for Librarians	delivered Summer 2011, 2012, 2013	due for review and consideration for permanent number
Papers and Manuscripts	delivered Summer 2011	On hold pending additional demand
Community Building, grant-funded	delivered Summer 2011, Fall 2011, Summer 2012	Under consideration for addition to Summer course offerings
Advanced Seminar in Public Libraries, grant-funded	delivered Spring and Fall 2012	No further offerings planned
Web Programming, cross-listed with Public Administration	delivered Summer 2012	Next scheduled offering would be Summer 2014, must be reviewed first
Georgia Knowledge Repository Internship, grant-funded	Delivered Summer 2013	Future offerings depend on status of the GKR project grant
Special Topics Courses added to the permanent curriculum		
Young Adult Literature	First delivered Fall 2011, now offered every other year	Added to the curriculum as MLIS 7423 and included in Youth Services Track
Youth Electronic Resources (formerly Technology for Youth)	First delivered Summer 2011 Maymester, revised to seven week summer course, delivered Summer 2012, Summer 2013	Added to the curriculum as MLIS 7425 and included in Youth Services track. Offered annually.
Adult Services in Public Libraries	First delivered Summer 2010	Added to the Curriculum as MLIS 7222 and delivered Summer 2012. Next scheduled for Summer 2014.
Rare Book Librarianship	First delivered Summer 2010	Added to the Curriculum as MLIS 7740 and offered in Spring 2012. On hold pending additional demand.

Source: Appendix II.E, MLIS Curriculum Development: New Courses and Curriculum Reviews Summer 2005 - Summer 2013.

II.7.2 Curriculum evaluation is used for ongoing appraisal, to make improvements, and to plan for the future.

Curriculum evaluation is used to confirm that course content remains current, and to identify areas of the curriculum where improvements need to be made or course content needs to be updated, as illustrated above. The curriculum evaluation process is one of the ways the Program addresses Program Goal 2, to use data gathered and analyzed through the assessment system to make program-related decisions. Curriculum evaluation is also used to plan for the future, as indicated by the scheduled review of the technology and the reference tracks for AY 2013-14, and 2014-15 respectively. With the implementation of the Student Learning Outcome Assessment rubrics starting in 2012, the Program is beginning to collect very specific data that will indicate where core course content needs to be reviewed and revised to better support program-level student learning outcomes and to make program-related decisions. The rubrics

measure Target, Acceptable, and Unacceptable outcomes and the Program has decided that any outcome that achieves below 90% Target or Acceptable must be addressed by the faculty. A full discussion of the first findings from the application of the SLOA review process is provided at Standard IV.

II.7.3 Evaluation of the curriculum includes assessment of students' achievements and their subsequent accomplishments. Evaluation involves those served by the program: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.

Individual faculty members monitor the effectiveness of their courses through assessment of student achievement at the course level. The Program has begun to evaluate the core curriculum's effectiveness through analysis of the Student Learning Outcome Assessment results. Data reporting details of student achievement are presented at Standard IV, Students. As these data indicate, overall, the MLIS Program's students perform well across the range of courses offered. The SLOAs thus far applied have pointed to specific assessment elements in need of attention within the curriculum but overall indicate that the Program is meeting its objectives. An example of the SLOA process at work uses a summary of findings from SLOA 4.3, The Career e-Portfolio, housed in MLIS 7800 Capstone. With a goal of 90% of students achieving proficiency, levels of either target or acceptable, the data compiled as of Spring 2013 for SLOA 4.3 shows that students in Fall 2012 achieved that goal in five of the six performance points. In Spring 2012, the Presentation component of the scoring rubric was the only area in which three scores of unacceptable and one non-submission reduced proficiency to 87%.

In Spring 2013, the Capstone instructors provided two opportunities for students to increase their design skills. (1) They provided links to archived presentations of exemplary design quality from previous students. (2) They referred their students to a tutorial on the principles of visual design (available as a PowerPoint on the course website). Scores on the Capstone Presentation in SLOA 4.3 did improve in proficiency to 97%. The tutorial is now incorporated into the learning materials provided on the Capstone course website, and faculty will continue to monitor its use and possible effects. The full data display is available at Standard IV, Students, Table IV.15.

The Program tracks its alumni and has documented that many have attained leadership positions in libraries and information centers in the State of Georgia. Some have gone on to earn further advanced degrees in Higher Education Leadership and some have earned the Ph.D. and are now teaching in other LIS programs. Many of the Program's graduates present at professional conferences and have published at the state and the national level. Student placement data is available on campus in the MLIS Student Placement Spreadsheet.

Feedback from current students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders obtained as part of the Indirect Assessment Cycle also informs course revision and the introduction of new courses. In Fall 2012, the Program began surveying students each semester as they exited the program. In Fall 2012 the Program Director surveyed 29 exiting graduates with 17 responses (58%). The Graduating Student Exit Survey items focus on perceived level of preparation to perform in the areas of librarianship as specified in the Program Objectives. Students have the opportunity to comment on their MLIS preparation in a final, open-ended question. A similar survey administered to exiting graduates in Spring 2013 yielded no returns. To assure responses the

Capstone Exit Survey is now administered at the end of the course using the anonymous survey tool available through the course software starting with the Summer 2013 graduating class. The Capstone professor surveyed 14 summer graduates, eliciting 9 responses (64%). Responses from Fall 2012 and Summer 2013 are presented in Table II.9.

Capstone students rated the Competences expressed in survey questions 5 and 6 the highest (100% marking either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” in both the Fall 2012 and Summer 2013 respondents that they felt able to integrate research into work and to demonstrate professionalism). Preparation to perform library technical services as expressed in question 3 received combined “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” ratings below 90% from both the Fall 2012 and Summer 2013 Capstone students. The Summer 2013 students “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that they felt prepared to perform the areas represented in questions 1, 2, and 4 at rates of 94-100%. The Fall 2012 ratings in this same areas came in lower at 78% students marking “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” on the preparation in those areas. Responses from Spring 2012 and Summer 2013 are presented in Table II.9.

Table II.9 Capstone Exit Student Survey Responses, Fall 2012 (n=17), Summer 2013 (n=9)

Questions	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F12	Su13	F12	Su13	F12	Su13	F12	Su13
1. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to perform administrative functions effectively in a library or information center.	6 35%	2 22%	10 59%	5 56%	1 6%	2 22%	0 --	0 --
2. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to provide effective public service in a library or information center.	10 59%	4 45%	7 41%	3 33%	0 --	1 11%	0 --	0 --
3. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to perform library technical services effectively in a library or information center.	5 29%	0 --	10 59%	7 78%	2 12%	2 22%	0 --	0 --
4. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to use existing and emerging technologies effectively to meet needs in libraries and information centers.	7 41%	0 --	10 59%	7 78%	0 --	1 11%	0 --	0 --
5. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to integrate relevant research to enhance my work in libraries and information centers.	10 59%	4 45%	7 41%	5 56%	0 --	0 --	0 --	0 --
6. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to demonstrate professionalism in my work.	10 59%	3 38%	7 41%	5 62%	0 --	0 --	0 --	0 --
7. In addition, please provide comments/recommendations that you perceive will enhance any of your survey responses.	Open-ended comments from Fall 2012: 5 responses; 12 blank				Open-ended comments from Summer 2013: 9 responses; 0 blanks			

*One (1) respondent in the Summer 2013 survey answered “neutral” to questions 2 and 4. These responses were not counted.

Source: Appendix II.F, MLIS 7800 Exit Surveys

In Spring 2012, the Program conducted its first survey of alumni who graduated between Fall 2007 and Fall 2011 (n=229). The response rate was 102 (46%). The survey items centered upon the program objectives and the results were reported in the *Plan for the Removal of Conditional Accreditation* (Appendix I.A, pp. 13-14).

Table II.10. Alumni Survey Responses, Spring 2012 (*Percentages rounded*).

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A or not answered
1. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to perform administrative functions effectively in a library or information center.	34 (33%)	57 (56%)	8 (8%)	0	3 (3%)
2. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to provide effective public service in a library or information center.	48 (47%)	52 (51%)	1 (.9%)	0	1 (.9%)
3. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to perform library technical services effectively in a library or information center.	31 (30%)	53 (52%)	13 (13%)	1 (.9%)	4 (3.9%)
4. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to use existing and emerging technologies effectively to meet needs in libraries and information centers.	38 (37%)	53 (52%)	10 (10%)	1 (.9%)	0
5. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to integrate relevant research to enhance my work in libraries and information centers.	62 (61%)	38 (37%)	0	0	2 (1.9%)
6. The VSU MLIS program prepared me to demonstrate professionalism in my work.	65 (64%)	31 (30%)	4 (3.9%)	0	2 (1.9%)
7. In addition, please provide comments/recommendations that you perceive will enhance any of your survey responses.					

Source: Appendix II.G, VSU MLIS Alumni survey

Additional data collected on Alumni Surveys:

- Are you currently employed in a position aligned with your MLIS degree?
- If yes, where are you employed?
- If in a library, please identify the type of library:
- Do we have your consent to contact your employer for information regarding your preparation?
- If yes, please provide contact information (name of direct supervisor, address, e-mail address, phone number):

Findings from both the Capstone student exit surveys and the alumni survey informed the Program's decision to prioritize review of its technology offerings for AY 2013-14.

The University-administered Student Opinion of Instruction survey (SOI) for each course allows students the opportunity to provide immediate anonymous evaluation of course content and instruction and anonymous feedback to each instructor every semester. SOI data are returned to the faculty member and the Program Director after grades are posted. The Program Director reviews any areas of concern with the faculty member in question. The SOI is administered online and typically receives low return rates though instructors are encouraged to remind students to complete the SOI in course time. In an online program this reminder takes the form of

providing a link to the SOI tool and posting messages informing students of the importance of this process to the faculty and the Program because of its contribution to individual course and overall curriculum evaluation and improvement.

The Systematic Evaluation and Planning Cycle (SEP Cycle) developed as part of the *Plan for the Removal of Conditional Accreditation* (Appendix I.A) provides opportunities for all the Program's constituents and stakeholders to be involved in curriculum and Program evaluation. Student, alumni, and employer input; faculty professional development and continuing education experiences, and input from other constituents are now all components of curriculum evaluation and contribute to the Program's ability to meet its program goals.

Standard III: Faculty

III.1 The school has a faculty capable of accomplishing program objectives. Full-time faculty members are qualified for appointment to the graduate faculty within the parent institution and are sufficient in number and in diversity of specialties to carry out the major share of the teaching, research, and service activities required for a program, wherever and however delivered. Part-time faculty, when appointed, balance and complement the teaching competencies of the full-time faculty. Particularly in the teaching of specialties that are not represented in the expertise of the full-time faculty, part-time faculty enrich the quality and diversity of a program.

III.1.1 The school has a faculty capable of accomplishing program objectives.

The Valdosta State University (VSU) Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program has a full-time faculty of seven. Of these, two are tenured. The other five are on tenure track. One holds the rank of professor, two the rank of associate professor, and four the rank of assistant professor. The faculty members have varying lengths of service at VSU. The Program does not employ any full-time non-tenure track faculty. Part-time instructors are engaged on a per course basis as needed.

The MLIS Program is led by a Program Director who is the equivalent of department head. Program administration is supported by an Assistant Program Director. Both are members of the faculty on twelve-month administrative appointments. Both receive one course reassignment in Fall and Spring semesters, and teach one course during the Summer semesters. The other five faculty members chair or participate in MLIS committees. They have ten-month academic appointments. Ten-month faculty may teach during summer semester if they so choose and depending on student demand and summer funds availability. They receive compensation for summer teaching equal to 10% of base salary for each summer course taught.

The MLIS faculty have expertise and experience that addresses the Program's objectives. That expertise is demonstrated in faculty curriculum vitae listing their academic training, professional experience, their teaching, and in their research agendas. That expertise will be documented throughout this chapter. As new or replacement faculty lines are considered, the curricular needs of the Program define the search. These needs are identified during faculty meetings where search criteria are established.

III.1.2 Full-time faculty members are qualified for appointment to the graduate faculty within the parent institution...

All VSU MLIS full-time and part-time faculty members are appointed as members of the VSU Graduate Faculty. The VSU Graduate Executive Committee, a committee of all departments with graduate programs chaired by the Graduate School Dean, approves two "levels" of graduate faculty: (1) full and (2) associate. Full members are appointed for a period of five years, associate members for three years. The Graduate School sets criteria for each status (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/categories-and-terms-of-membership.php>)

based in part on years of service to VSU. New full-time faculty in their first year of VSU service and all part-time are appointed as temporary members (See Table III.1).

Table III.1: Current Faculty Graduate Faculty Status

Faculty Member	Graduate Faculty Status
Drouillard, Colette	Associate
Koehler, Wallace	Full
Most, Linda R.	Associate
Ondrusek, Anita	Full
Ren, Xiaoi	Temporary
Thiele, Harold	Associate
Yang, Changwoo	Associate

III.1.3 ...and are sufficient in number and in diversity of specialties to carry out the major share of the teaching, research, and service activities required for a program, wherever and however delivered.

As the number of students enrolled in the MLIS Program has grown, the number of faculty lines has increased. The first faculty member was hired in 2000. Twelve students were admitted in 2001 and two additional faculty members were hired. In 2007, the MLIS Program received its initial ALA COA accreditation. An immediate consequence of accreditation was a dramatic increase in applications for admission. As enrollments increased, VSU administration authorized additional full-time faculty lines. In July 2013, the administration authorized creation of the position of Assistant Program Director (Appendix III.A) as a twelve month position, to be filled by a current faculty member. As of Fall 2013, the Program has a Program Director and an Assistant Program Director, and five tenure track faculty members. The Program employed five former faculty members and included the former University Librarian, George R. Gaumond, as part of the faculty during the review period.

As documented in faculty curriculum vitae (Appendix III.B) and highlighted in the following series of tables, faculty have diverse expertise congruent with the Program objectives. This expertise is demonstrated through academic training, scholarship, professional experience, and professional and academic service. Faculty have earned doctorates in library and information science fields or other disciplines. Faculty with doctorates in fields other than LIS have earned the MLIS or equivalent degree (See Tables III.2 and III.3).

Table III.2: Current Full-time Faculty with Year of Appointment, Rank, Degree, and Specialization

Name	Rank	Degree	Broad Specialization
Drouillard, Colette 2010-	Assistant Professor	MEd, Idaho State U. MSLIS, Florida State U. Ph.D., Florida State U.	Youth Services
Koehler, Wallace 2001-	Professor & Program Director	MS(IS), U. of Tennessee Ph.D., Cornell U.	Information Policy Information Ethics Public Libraries
Most, Linda R. 2009-	Associate Professor & Assistant Program Director	MSLIS, Florida State U. MA, Florida Atlantic U. Ph.D., Florida State U.	Public Libraries Library Management Information Sources and Services
Ondrusek, Anita 2005-	Associate Professor	MLS, Pratt Institute Ph.D. Pennsylvania State U.	Collection Management Information Sources and Services Health Information Information Literacy Online Searching Instructional Design
Ren, Xiaoi 2013-	Assistant Professor	MSIS, Peking University, China Ph.D., U. at Albany, State U. of New York	Information Sources and Services Information Policy Public Libraries
Thiele, Harold 2010-	Assistant Professor	MLIS, U. of Texas Ph.D., U. of Pittsburgh	Cataloging and Classification Archival Studies Health Information
Yang, Changwoo 2010-	Assistant Professor	MSLIS, Florida State U. Ph.D., Florida State U.	Management of Information Institutions Applied Library Technologies Digital Libraries Human Computer Interaction

Table III.3: Former Full-time Faculty with Years of Appointment, Rank and Degree

Name	Rank	Degree
Gaumont, George R. 2001(founding) - 2010	University Librarian & Professor	MSLS U. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Ph.D. U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Green, Ravonne A. 2004-2008	Assistant Professor	MSLIS, Geo. Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt U. Ph.D., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State U.
Meehan, William F., III, 2008-2012	Assistant Professor	MLS, Indiana U. D.A., Middle Tennessee State U.
Oguz, Fatih 2007-2011	Associate Professor	MBA, Yeditepe U., Istanbul, Turkey Ph.D., U. of North Texas
Slone, Debra 2012-2013	Assistant Professor	MLIS, U. of California at Berkeley Ph.D., U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Yontz, Elaine 2001-2010	Professor	MSLS, Florida State U. Ph.D., U. of Florida

The full-time MLIS faculty participate in the profession by publishing in peer-reviewed and professional journals and delivering presentations of their work at professional meetings. Tables III.4 and III.5 show the number and types of articles and papers published by VSU MLS faculty members since 2007. Faculty scholarly productivity reflects their teaching and service

obligations. The faculty engage in extensive service to the department, university, profession, and community. For example, all faculty employed in 2011-2012 were engaged together in developing the student learning outcome assessment methodology now in use and described at Standard II: Curriculum. Faculty serve on MLIS, VSU, and University System of Georgia committees and also on state, regional, national, and international association committees. Two faculty members are members of the local public library board.

Table III.4: Current Faculty Scholarship Record from date of hire: 2007-2013

	Peer reviewed publications	Non-peer reviewed publications	Conference Papers, Presentations, Posters*	Book Chapters	Monographs
Drouillard, Colette	2	1	6		
Koehler, Wallace	2	3	9		1
Most, Linda R.	3	3	17		
Ondrusek, Anita	2		13	1	
Ren, Xiaoi	New Faculty Member				
Thiele, Harold			4		
Yang, Changwoo	3		8		

*Individual titles, conference, and publication venues are listed on faculty CVs

Table III.5: Former Faculty Scholarship Record: 2007 to Termination

	Peer reviewed publications	Non-peer reviewed publications	Conference Papers, Presentations, Posters	Book Chapters	Monographs
Green, Ravonne A.	4	9		1	2
Meehan, William F., III	1	4	9		
Oguz, Fatih	1		1		
Slone, Debra					
Yontz, Elaine	1	1	14	1	

At the Program and the university levels, individual faculty productivity is evaluated for each calendar year and submitted in February as part of the self-evaluation and faculty evaluation process. Further evaluation occurs at the pre-tenure review (after three years of appointment), the tenure review, promotions reviews, and post-tenure review (five years after the grant of tenure). The evaluation process is discussed in full at Standard III.8

III.1.4 Part-time faculty, when appointed, balance and complement the teaching competencies of the full-time faculty. Particularly in the teaching of specialties that are not represented in the expertise of the full-time faculty, part-time faculty enrich the quality and diversity of a program.

The VSU MLIS Program has augmented its course offerings through the limited and judiciously considered utilization of part-time faculty. As a matter of departmental policy, core courses are taught or led by full-time faculty. A part-time faculty member who teaches a core course does so under the supervision of a full-time faculty member who has expertise in the area.

Part-time faculty are asked to teach elective courses in their areas of expertise. They are sought out to teach in areas where the full-time faculty may lack expertise. For example, a part-time faculty member offers a summer course entitled Genealogy for Librarians. For the review period a total of 289 courses were offered: 229 (79%) were taught by tenure track faculty and 60 (21%) were taught by part-time faculty as is shown in Table III.6. During this same period 118 core classes were offered: 102 (86%) were taught by full-time faculty and 16 (14%) were taught by part-time faculty as is shown in Table III.7. Included in the count of courses taught by full-time faculty were the Capstone courses (MLIS 7800) taught by George Gaumond, the University Librarian, prior to his retirement.

Table III.6: Full-time and Part-time Faculty Teaching by Academic Year

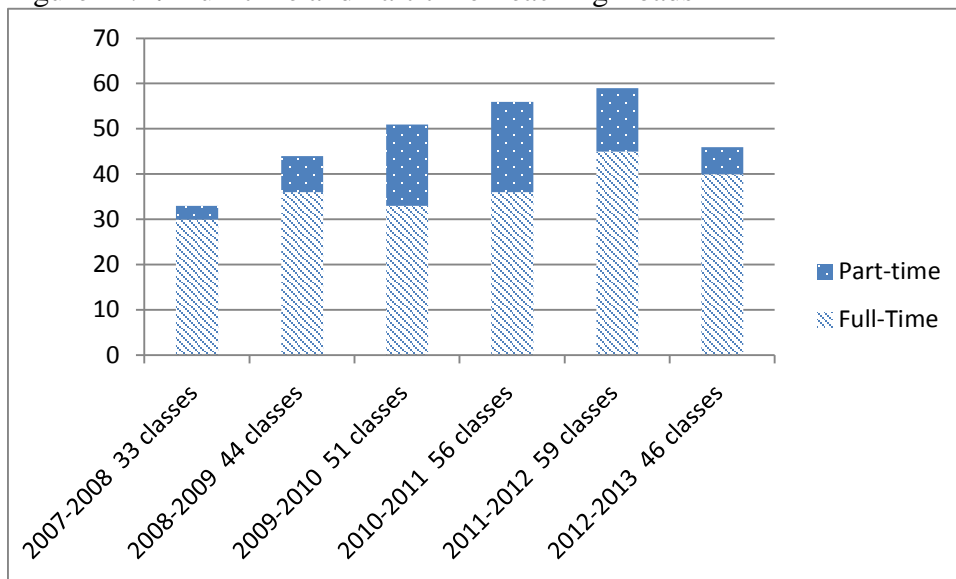
School Year	Full-time	Part-time
2007-2008 33 classes	32 (97%)	1 (3%)
2008-2009 44 classes	39 (89%)	5 (11%)
2009-2010 51 classes	36 (71%)	15 (29%)
2010-2011 56 classes	37 (66%)	19 (34%)
2011-2012 59 classes	45 (76%)	14 (24%)
2012-2013 46 classes	40 (87%)	6 (13%)
Total 2007-2013 289 classes	229 (79%)	60 (21%)

Table III.7: Full-time and Part-time Faculty Teaching Core Courses by Academic Year

School Year	Full-time	Part-time
2007-2008 11 sections	11 (100%)	0 (0%)
2008-2009 17 sections	16 (94%)	1 (6%)
2009-2010 22 sections	16 (73%)	6 (27%)
2010-2011 26 sections	19 (73%)	7 (27%)
2011-2012 23 sections	21 (91%)	2 (9%)
2012-2013 19 sections	19 (100%)	0 (0%)
Total 2007-2013 118 sections	102 (86%)	16 (14%)

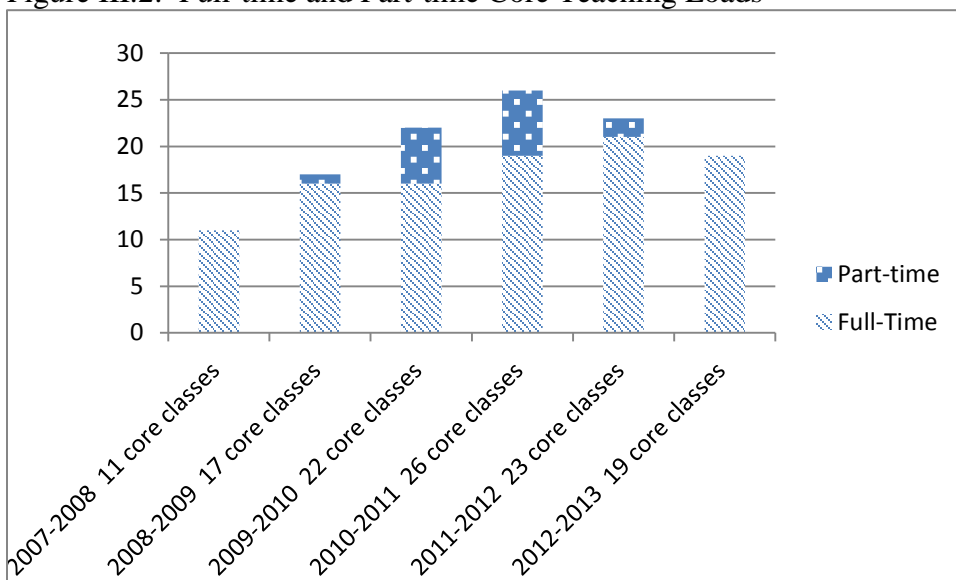
The increase in part-time faculty teaching load, as shown in Figure III.1, corresponds to an increase in enrollments after accreditation in 2007. In 2009 the Program recognized that if the rate of increase of admissions were not controlled, its ability to meet its objectives would be overwhelmed. Even in the face of the economic crisis, the MLIS Program was authorized an additional line. At the same time, following an evaluation of MLIS resources, the Program determined that it could sustain an admissions stream of approximately 50 students per semester. As the increased numbers of students that resulted following accreditation moved through the program, the MLIS Program employed more part-time faculty. With the addition of the new faculty line and stabilization of admissions, the need for part-time faculty has been reduced below 15%.

Figure III.1: Full-time and Part-time Teaching Loads



The increase in part-time faculty core teaching load, as shown in Figure III.2 below, corresponds to an increase in enrollments after accreditation in 2007. As the surge of students admitted following accreditation moved through the program, the MLIS Program employed more part-time faculty to teach core courses. With the addition of the new faculty line and stabilization of admissions, the need for part-time faculty teaching core courses has been reduced to 0%.

Figure III.2: Full-time and Part-time Core Teaching Loads



Part-Time Faculty. The Program has engaged twenty-five former and current part-time faculty who have taught during the review period. Part-time faculty members may come from other departments of the University, may be working librarians and library managers with expertise in their areas, or specialists in specific areas of information technology, and may be alumni of the

Program. Their CV's are located at Appendix III.C. All part-time faculty teach online and all have remote access to the University's online teaching and learning resources. Appendix III.D lists the courses taught by, and the qualifications of each part-time faculty member.

Standard III.2 The school demonstrates the high priority it attaches to teaching, research, and service by its appointments and promotions; by encouragement of innovation in teaching, research, and service; and through provision of a stimulating learning and research environment.

Standard III.2.1 The school demonstrates the high priority it attaches to teaching, research, and service by its appointments and promotions;

VSU and the MLIS Program place a high priority on strong teaching, scholarship, and service. The University and the Program evaluate candidates for appointment along several criteria. To be appointed to the faculty, the applicant must hold the PhD or equivalent at the time of appointment. Candidates are expected to have the subject background and teaching skills necessary to eventually cover the range of courses offered in a given specialization. Similarly, a candidate's propensity for successful scholarship and service are considered.

Once a candidate is invited to campus, s/he undergoes an interview process that includes a presentation that incorporates research and teaching philosophies. During the current accreditation period the candidate also met with the Dean of the Graduate School and a representative of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (VPAA) as part of the interview process. Starting in AY 2013-14 the meeting with the VPAA will no longer be part of the hiring process. Candidates are engaged throughout the interview process to address their teaching, scholarship, and service expectation.

Once appointed, faculty are encouraged to take full advantage of the resources available and are counseled to develop effective strategies to be successful. Senior faculty and the Program Director mentor the new faculty member at the Program level throughout the first year of service. This mentoring includes sharing syllabi and course resources already in place for the courses assigned to the new faculty member as well as more general mentoring regarding early career development. The Office for the Vice President of Academic Affairs provides a university-wide orientation and first-year support for all new faculty as described at <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/vp-office/welcome-new-faculty.php>. Criteria for promotion and tenure will be presented at Standard III.8.

Standard III.2.2... by encouragement of innovation in teaching, research, and service;

VSU and the MLIS Program encourage teaching, scholarship, and service innovation in a number of ways. There are a number of funding pools to promote professional and curriculum development currently available. Appendix III.E documents awards to MLIS faculty from these pools as well as from funding sources no longer available.

- The VPAA offers funding to seed research. Faculty may request up to \$5000 (\$7500 if two or more applicants) to develop research programs and additional funding. These funds may be used to support travel, hire graduate assistants, and support equipment and software purchases.
- The VPAA provides awards for academic excellence in advising, teaching, professional activity, and service (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/vp-office/excellence-awards-criteria.php>)
- The VPAA manages applications for the reassignment of time for scholarly, academic leave, and other related activities (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/vp-office/academic-forms.php>).
- The VPAA provides funding to promote instructional improvement (<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/facdev/FacultyDevelopmentforInstructionalImprovement.shtml>)
- The VPAA provides funding for professional presentations (<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/facdev/ProfessionalPresentation.shtml>)
- The Director of the Center for International Programs and the VPAA provide additional funds for travel outside the United States and its possessions for professional presentations (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/international-programs/dept/vsu-global/vsu-internationalization-fund.php>)
- Each college provides funds managed by its dean to support professional travel.
- Each department is allocated funds managed by the department head or program director to support professional or departmental travel. The MLIS Program has received approximately \$16,000 per year over the report period.
- The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Administration (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/research/office-of-sponsored-programs-research-administration/>) provides assistance to identify sponsored research grants, grant development, and grants management.
- The Faculty Senate Committee on Committees assist individual faculty members identify VSU Faculty Senate committees on which they may wish to serve. Statutory committees of the Faculty Senate draw their membership from across the faculty with seats apportioned by size of program. The MLIS Program's participation is included under the Library faculty's service allocation (http://ww2.valdosta.edu/facsen/committees/documents/Statutory2012_2013.pdf)
- The MLIS Program encourages its faculty to stand for election as officers and serve on committees of professional organizations. MLIS faculty have provided service to The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE), American Library Association (ALA), Georgia Library Association (GLA), International Federation of Library Associations and Organizations (IFLA), and other professional organizations.

The [Center for eLearning](#) provides a range of applications to assist the teaching mandate. MLIS faculty are encouraged to seek training in relevant tools to support their teaching and course design and management. The list of all professional development and training taken by the faculty is found at Appendix III.F These applications include:

- [Quality Matters®](#), a proprietary program, is designed to assist faculty to improve the quality of online and hybrid course offerings.
- [Atomic Learning®](#) is a proprietary resource that provides tutorials for faculty and students in a wide range of software applications.

- Qualtrics® is a survey and statistical analysis tool introduced to the university in Spring 2013.
- Respondus® is an examination development and submission tool.
- Turnitin® is a plagiarism check tool.
- Smartermeasure® is a “learning readiness tool.”
- Desire2Learn (D2L) is the learning management system the university converted to in Summer 2013. Before the conversion, classes were provided to faculty to familiarize them with the new course management platform. Continuing tutorials are available to faculty face-to-face through the Center for eLearning, and online from the software company itself.

Standard III.2.3 ...and through provision of a stimulating learning and research environment.

As indicated in sections III.2.1 and III.2.2, VSU and the MLIS Program provide a wide range of technology and funding support for faculty research and teaching. The University has centralized much of its educational hardware and software in the Center for eLearning. Online learning support at VSU has grown dramatically since 2001 when the MLIS Program opened. In 2001, online teaching assistance was almost non-existent. By 2007, university-wide support for the system-wide teaching platform, on-line course development, and software applications was extensive. Between 2007 and 2013, the number of offices and professional staff continued to expand.

MLIS faculty members have relied on the Center for eLearning for support for online courses, especially for guidance and training when new software is introduced. Faculty attend group classes addressing new software or software updates as appropriate. eLearning also offers one-to-one consulting and training which has been used more heavily by MLIS faculty because this service allows for more targeted assistance than the group classes, which tend to be aimed at faculty members less experienced with online learning or who are less frequent users of the software. During the current accreditation period MLIS faculty members Drs. Ondrusek and Yontz were leaders in the development of the HUB Learning Co-operative, the peer-to-peer online teaching and learning co-operative started alongside of the Center for eLearning to encourage faculty to support each other in the early days of online learning at VSU <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/hub/>.

VSU encourages faculty to engage in scholarly endeavors and to share the fruits of that research. As demonstrated above, the University provides resources to initiate research, to promote grant opportunities, and to present the research. VSU and the MLIS Program assist faculty to acquire the necessary computing hardware and software to accomplish research goals. These resources are documented at Standard VI. VSU offers new faculty a \$3000 start-up grant. Dr. Yang received First Year Resources funding in the form of a course release in Spring 2011 to support his research, and new faculty member Dr. Ren plans to use her funds to support travel within the state to collect data in furtherance of her research.

The Program is continually reviewing its balance of teaching, research, and service to support its faculty and their successful promotion in rank. During the past year, the University completed its

review and revision of its Tenure and Promotion policy (Appendix III.G). The Program reviewed its Tenure and Promotion policy (Appendix III.H) to ensure its alignment with the University policy and peer programs. The details of these policy updates are provided at Standard III.8.

Standard III.3 The school has policies to recruit and retain faculty from diverse backgrounds. Explicit and equitable faculty personnel policies and procedures are published, accessible, and implemented.

Standard III.3.1 The school has policies to recruit and retain faculty from diverse backgrounds.

The MLIS Program is guided by University System of Georgia (USG) and Valdosta State University (VSU) policies to ensure explicit and equitable selection and retention policies for its faculty. The Program complies both with the spirit and the letter of those policies. The specific USG and VSU policies are referenced in Standard III.3.2.

The Program publishes its position openings in accordance with university policy on the university's list of available positions, with the State Board of Regents' employment clearinghouse, and with *Inside Higher Education*. Additionally, the Program announces faculty openings through the jESSE e-mail list (<http://web.utk.edu/~gwhitney/jesse.html>) and the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) job board (<http://www.alise.org/job-placement>). Members of the faculty attend the ALISE annual conference to advertise and recruit potential faculty. Copies of all position openings for the reaccreditation period are available in Appendix III.I.

The twelve current and former full-time faculty members employed during the current accreditation period include seven women. Of those twelve, one is African-American, and three are foreign nationals (China, South Korea, Turkey). The seven current faculty members include four women and two foreign nationals (China and South Korea).

There have been 25 part-time faculty employed between 2007 and 2013. Of these, 15 are women. One is a foreign national (UK). Two are African-American, one Hispanic-American, and one Arab-American.

The Program does not have data on religion or sexual orientation and it does not consider either in the selection or retention of its faculty.

Standard III.3.2 Explicit and equitable faculty personnel policies and procedures are published, accessible, and implemented.

The USG has promulgated strong direction that addresses equitable and explicit policies:

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity

conducted by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia or any of its several institutions now in existence or hereafter established (See BOR Policy Manual regarding Equal Employment Opportunity Policy).

http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/equal_employment_opportunity

These USG policies are mirrored by those of VSU:

Valdosta State University is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, working and studying. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, Board of Regents' policy, and University policy, the University prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, or student body from discriminating against any other member of the University community because of that person's race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disabled status, or status as a disabled veteran.

<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/vsu/policies/documents/3002.1Non-DiscriminationPolicy.pdf>

The Office of Social Equity (OSE) at VSU (<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/ose/>) has the responsibility to oversee the application of equitable personnel policies. Responsibilities include certifying faculty search pools as compliant with equity policies. The Office also responds to and investigates equal opportunity concerns.

The MLIS Program makes all its hiring recommendations in full compliance with USG and VSU policies.

Standard III.4 The qualifications of each faculty member include competence in designated teaching areas, technological awareness, effectiveness in teaching, and active participation in appropriate organizations.

Faculty competence in designated teaching areas is documented first through the record of their academic training, provided in Table III.2. Second, most of the faculty have come to their academic careers after years of relevant professional experience. The VSU MLIS faculty have had diverse experiences working in a variety of library types and settings including a former academic library director, a public library board chair, reference librarians, consultants, catalogers, and information brokers. Much of this experience, augmented by their academic credentials and research experience, provides the faculty with the specialized knowledge required to cover program content. This experience is documented in Appendix III.J.

Third, faculty are expected to remain conversant with changes in their areas of expertise, and much of this awareness is an outgrowth of their professional development and service. For example, the migration to Resource Description and Access (RDA) has prompted a shift in the way cataloging and classification is taught. It also means that not only must instructors be conversant with RDA, but also with the application software and instructional software being developed and used in the field. During the period under review (2007-2013), MLIS faculty have held membership in a range of professional associations. Faculty have made and attended presentations, held office, published in association journals, and served on association committees. When faculty attend professional conferences as part of their service or scholarly

responsibilities, they also attend sessions relevant to their teaching areas. This range of participation contributes to professional development. Appendix III.K provides evidence of faculty service to the professional community in their areas of expertise. Additionally, the MLIS Program holds an institutional membership in the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE).

Technological Awareness

VSU actively promotes the technological awareness of its faculty by providing opportunities to enhance skills through the programs offered by the Center for eLearning, described above. The array of technology assistance helps faculty gain competence with new software and tools as the University adds them to its resources. The University's Office of Training and Communication (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/it/its/css/training/>) schedules training across all the educational technologies used at VSU in addition to those related to online learning, as well as offering training in a number of other academic and administrative topics. The Center for eLearning (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/elearning/>) supports faculty in online course development and students in use of online learning technology.

During the Spring 2013 transition from WebCT/BlackBoard to the Desire2Learn learning management system (LMS), the Center for eLearning offered numerous iterations of [a series of five training sessions](#) to introduce faculty to the new LMS. All members of the MLIS faculty attended and participated in the training sessions. Individual consultations were also made available and a university-wide faculty open work session was offered with Center for eLearning staff who provided answers as university faculty members moved courses to the new platform for the first time. Within the MLIS Program faculty support each other and act as software and technology resources for each other by sharing their knowledge of specific course delivery platform features and other software.

MLIS Program faculty actively participate in the university's annual Online Lifeline conference, organized by the Center for eLearning. Drs. Yontz, Ondrusek and Drouillard have served on the conference steering committee in recent years (Appendix L.1, pg. 2; L.2, pg. 19) Drs. Most and Yang have presented posters and Dr. Ondrusek has led conference sessions in different years (Appendix III.L.1, pg. 13; Appendix III.L.2, pgs. 6, 13).

Effectiveness in Teaching

Effectiveness in teaching can be assessed both directly and indirectly. Students contribute to one element of the direct assessment of faculty performance and course content through their participation in course evaluations, known as the Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI) and collected for every course each semester. The online version of the SOI was piloted in 2008 and the MLIS Program was one of the early participants, with the first online results available for Summer 2009. <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/vp-office/sois/welcome.php> The University sends the SOI link to students through email and individual faculty members post the link in their course websites, along with instructions on how to access and complete the survey. Individual instructors are asked to encourage students to participate in the SOI process. While the University places great emphasis on the SOI, the

VPAA's office recognizes that it is difficult to obtain high return rates without unduly influencing students. The SOI results are also used in the annual Faculty Evaluation process described at Standard III.8. Aggregated Program SOI results by semester are reported in Table III.8.

Table III.8 MLIS Program Aggregated Student Opinion of Instruction Results, 2009 - 2013

Summary Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI) Aggregated Data, 2009- 2013													
Semester	Su09	F09	Sp10	Su10	F10	Sp11	Su11	F11	Sp12	Su12	F02	Sp13	Su13
Mean*	4.41	4.36	4.45	4.58	4.27	4.4	4.58	4.28	4.06	4.71	4.19	4.24	4.32
Response Rate	17%	41%	39%	42%	23%	34%	26%	46%	43%	11%	44%	53%	34%
Enrolled	24	441	514	515	187	553	299	495	510	234	424	382	178
Respondents	4	179	202	216	43	188	79	228	219	25	188	202	60
*5(strongly agree), 4(agree), 3(neutral), 2(disagree), 1(strongly disagree)													

SOI questions 1-10 are Likert Scale questions scored 5(strongly agree), 4(agree), 3(neutral), 2(disagree), 1(strongly disagree). Questions 11 – 14 are open questions with comment boxes provided for text responses.

The SOI statements and questions are:

1. Course assignments were clearly explained in the syllabus or other handouts.
2. Course policies (for example, attendance, late papers) were clearly explained in the syllabus or other handouts.
3. The instructor was well prepared for class.
4. The instructor made effective use of class time to cover course content.
5. Course assignments were returned in a timely manner.
6. The instructor explained grading criteria (for example, grammar, content) clearly
7. The instructor was willing to discuss course-related issues either in person or by email / telephone.
8. The instructor responded to student questions on course material in a professional manner.
9. This course increased my knowledge of the topic.
10. This course helped me further develop my academic skills (for example, reading, writing, speaking, critical analysis, performance, artistic abilities, etc.).
11. On average, how many hours per week did you spend on this course?
12. What were the best features about this course?
13. What are your instructor's strengths?
14. What suggestions would you give your instructor for improving the course?

The response rates for the SOI are known to be low across all programs on campus and the Office of the VPAA is continuing to work to develop incentives to increase student participation levels. Disaggregated SOI data for Summer 2009 and forward are available in Appendix III.M; SOI data for semesters prior to Summer 2009 are available on site.

A second category of assessment of teaching effectiveness is voluntary course peer review, conducted annually for the Program's tenure-track faculty and described at Standard III.8. The

faculty use the findings from peer review of their courses to modify or clarify course design and content as recommended.

Indirect assessment of teaching effectiveness is conducted through analysis of the Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA) data, collected from 2012 forward and fully discussed at Standards II and IV.

Finally, the faculty's active participation in appropriate organizations is documented in Appendix III.K.

Standard III.5 For each full-time faculty member the qualifications include a sustained record of accomplishment in research or other appropriate scholarship.

VSU values faculty scholarship as one expression of its mission, as articulated on the Academic Affairs webpage. Funding sources for faculty scholarship have grown over the years since 2007. A complete overview of funding opportunities available to MLIS faculty from 2009 forward is published in the [Faculty Funding Opportunities 2010-2011](#).

Among the grants available through the University is the [Faculty Scholarship Support Fund](#), managed by the Faculty Scholarship and Research Committee of the Faculty Senate. The committee reviews applications and makes awards in three different categories: Faculty Scholarship for Instructional Improvement, Course/Curriculum Development, and Professional Presentation. The MLIS faculty have consistently secured Professional Presentation grants to fund conference presentations. Other funding received by MLIS faculty for scholarship development starting in 2009 came from VSU Strategic Focus grants and from an initiative to fund reassignment time for research to new faculty.

The University began placing additional emphasis on faculty development starting in 2011 with the launch of the [Faculty Excellence Initiative](#), intended in part to “Expand the boundaries of current knowledge, and explore the practical applications of that knowledge, through excellence in scholarship and creative endeavors”. One of the results of this initiative is the expansion of funding to encourage faculty to present papers at regional, national, and/or international academic conferences.

The intent is that an academically active faculty will make VSU more visible in the academic community at large. This in turn will not only help the university to attract and retain qualified faculty but also will lead to necessary quality improvements in faculty instruction, research, guidance, and counseling to the students. The faculty development funding goes beyond the departmental and college level resources as an additional financial resource for the faculty who wish to pursue professional growth and development, but who are subject to limited departmental funds (<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/facdev/>).

All the above funding sources combined with other ad hoc sources of funding received since 2007 by MLIS faculty are documented in Appendix III.E.

Through the University Tenure and Promotion (T&P) Policy, individual colleges and departments have wide latitude in defining the scope of scholarship. The University policy stresses the importance of both publication and presentation at professional meetings. The MLIS T&P policy acknowledges the importance of both and includes a preference for publication and presentation in both academic and professional venues. Faculty members are encouraged to establish their own individual research agendas and collaborative research is encouraged but not required. Evaluation of faculty scholarship is part of the T&P process. It is also included as one section of the three part annual faculty evaluation conducted at the departmental level, then reported to college deans, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost as described in the University's Faculty Evaluation Model (Appendix III.N) The T&P process will be fully presented at Standard III.8.

VSU encourages funded research and service grants. It does not require them for tenure or promotion. The Program currently participates in two grants funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services. One grant provides scholarships for students who focus on community building and public libraries. The grant was submitted through the Georgia Public Library Service, the "State Library" and the Program is the content provider (Appendix I.I). The second, under the lead of the Georgia Institute of Technology Library, is testing the viability of a USG-wide repository of academic product. The GALILEO Knowledge Repository (GKR) project has developed a database from participating universities (see <http://www.library.gatech.edu/gkr/>). VSU MLIS faculty serve on its steering and technology committees.

The faculty publish findings from their research in peer-reviewed and professional journals, documenting their record of accomplishment in research and other areas of scholarship. They also present their findings at academic and professional conferences. The numbers of publications and presentations are documented in Tables III.4 and III.5. Titles and venues of publications and presentations are listed on faculty curriculum vitae (Appendix III.B).

Standard III.6 The faculty hold advanced degrees from a variety of academic institutions. The faculty evidence diversity of backgrounds, ability to conduct research in the field, and specialized knowledge covering program content. In addition, they demonstrate skill in academic planning and assessment, have a substantial and pertinent body of relevant experience, interact with faculty of other disciplines, and maintain close and continuing liaison with the field. The faculty nurture an intellectual environment that enhances the accomplishment of program objectives. These characteristics apply to faculty regardless of forms or locations of delivery of programs.

Standard III.6.1 The faculty hold advanced degrees from a variety of academic institutions.

Table III.9: Faculty Holding Advanced Degrees During the Accreditation Period

Name	Rank	Degree
Drouillard, Colette 2010-	Assistant Professor	MEd, Idaho State U. MSLIS, Florida State U. Ph.D., Florida State U.
Koehler, Wallace 2001-	Professor & Program Director	MS(IS), U. of Tennessee Ph.D., Cornell U.
Most, Linda R. 2009-	Associate Professor & Assistant Program Director	MSLIS, Florida State U. MA, Florida Atlantic U. Ph.D., Florida State U.
Ondrusek, Anita 2005-	Associate Professor	MLS, Pratt Institute Ph.D. Pennsylvania State U.
Ren, Xiaoi 2013-	Assistant Professor	MSIS, Peking University, China Ph.D., U. at Albany, State U. of New York
Thiele, Harold 2010-	Assistant Professor	MLIS, U. of Texas Ph.D., U. of Pittsburgh
Yang, Changwoo 2010-	Assistant Professor	MSLIS, Florida State U. Ph.D., Florida State U.
Former Members of the Faculty during the accreditation period		
Gaumont, George R. Founding - 2010	University Librarian	MSLS U. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Ph.D. U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Green, Ravonne A. 2004-2008	Assistant Professor	MSLIS, Geo. Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt U. Ph.D., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State U.
Meehan, William F., III, 2008-2012	Assistant Professor	MLS, Indiana U. D.A., Middle Tennessee State U.
Oguz, Fatih 2007-2011	Associate Professor	MBA, Yeditepe U., Istanbul, Turkey Ph.D., U. of North Texas
Slone, Debra 2012-2013	Assistant Professor	MLIS, U. of California at Berkeley Ph.D., U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Yontz, Elaine 2001-2010	Professor	MSLS, Florida State U. Ph.D., U. of Florida

Standard III.6.2 The faculty evidence diversity of backgrounds, ability to conduct research in the field, and specialized knowledge covering program content.

The VSU MLIS faculty have diverse backgrounds as evidenced by their professional experiences documented in Appendix III.J. They have continued to develop their specialized knowledge of specific areas of program content through their ongoing participation in professional service to the field, documented in Appendix III.K. Faculty ability to conduct research in the field is congruent with the university standards and initiatives as described at Standard III.2.

Standard III.6.3 In addition, they demonstrate skill in academic planning and assessment, have a substantial and pertinent body of relevant experience, interact with faculty of other disciplines, and maintain close and continuing liaison with the field.

The faculty have developed skill in academic planning and assessment during their time at VSU. The Program follows a model of collaborative governance that involves all faculty members in Program planning. Faculty take rotating leadership roles in different facets of Program and

academic governance as documented in Appendix III.O and learn from each other and from their experiences. Senior faculty mentor newer colleagues in the management of committee work. This model of governance allows all faculty to participate in academic planning generally, and each faculty member also takes leadership of curriculum review and revision as relevant to individual areas of expertise, as described at Standard II. All current faculty participated in the design of the Systematic Evaluation and Planning Cycle developed as part of the Program's *Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status* (Appendix I.A), described at Standard II. The faculty have worked together to develop and integrate program assessment through Student Learning Outcomes into the curriculum as documented at Standard II. The Program has also consulted and will continue to consult with the University's chief planning officer.

The faculty interact with other faculty collaboratively both within and beyond the university. Within the university faculty serve on the Faculty Senate and serve on campus-wide committees alongside of other faculty members. Program faculty have contributed their expertise to the support and development of online learning campus-wide through their leadership in the Online Lifeline annual conference and the Hub Learning Cooperative described earlier in this section. Faculty interact with their peers across the field through attendance at professional conferences, service on professional association committees, and participation in the peer review process at the university and the disciplinary levels. All of these discipline-oriented and university-level collaborative and service activities allow the faculty to maintain close and continuing liaison with the field and many are documented in Appendix III.K.

Standard III.6.4 The faculty nurture an intellectual environment that enhances the accomplishment of program objectives. These characteristics apply to faculty regardless of forms or locations of delivery of programs.

The faculty are actively engaged in the improvement of course content and do so by working collaboratively through the Program's curriculum review and revision process to systematically apply findings from the Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOAs) to the curriculum to accomplish program objectives. This collaborative process results in an intellectual environment that is focused on developing skilled entry level professional librarians and information practitioners in accordance with the Program's objectives as discussed at Standards I and II.

The students' perspective of the Program's intellectual environment is created and maintained starting with the presentation of Program Objectives on all relevant syllabi. Students are guided in their coursework and the online course environment is managed to create an intellectual atmosphere that supports the accomplishment of the program's objectives. Courses are kept up to date through the curriculum review process described in Standard II and through the course peer review process described at Standard III.8. Faculty encourage students to ground their coursework in real-world settings whenever possible.

The faculty encourages students to participate in the annual [Graduate Research Symposium](#), and Program students have presented findings from their course research projects both in person and remotely via Skype since the symposium's inception in 2009 (2009-1 participant; 2010-3; 2011-1; 2012-2 (co-presenters); 2013-2). For those presenting via Skype, faculty mentors deliver their

posters and facilitate the internet connectivity required to support the students' participation. One MLIS faculty member serves on the Graduate Research Symposium Planning Committee.

All faculty teach all their courses using a learning management system (BlazeView, based on the Desire2Learn platform) and take full advantage of all the tools and resources available to create and nurture a stimulating intellectual environment aligned with Program objectives. Familiarity with online learning is a required attribute for all candidates for open faculty positions and candidates are asked to describe their experience with online teaching and learning as part of the search process.

III.7 Faculty assignments relate to the needs of a program and to the competencies and interests of individual faculty members. These assignments assure that the quality of instruction is maintained throughout the year and take into account the time needed by the faculty for teaching, student counseling, research, professional development, and institutional and professional service.

While Faculty teach courses for which their professional experience and educational backgrounds make them particularly suited, faculty assignments follow from the Program's curricular planning process. Every effort is made to permit faculty to offer the courses they may prefer, but the Program must be guided by the curricular needs of its students and the resources available. The Curriculum Committee course rotation schedule is used to project faculty teaching responsibilities and help faculty plan their time most effectively. A full discussion of the course rotation schedule and faculty responsibilities by subject area is available at Standard II.

At the current time, the Program has a teaching load of three courses each in Fall and Spring for its ten-month faculty. Courses are capped at 25 but faculty have the authority to override in additional students if they wish to do so to help a student complete a prerequisite or the final course in a track in a timely manner. It is common for the Program faculty to also teach in the summer because of the year-round nature of the student body. Summer teaching is voluntary for ten month faculty and offers an additional stipend. The Program's director and assistant director are on twelve-month contracts and teach two courses each in the fall and spring, and one in the summer. Each section of a course offered by a faculty member is considered to be a separate course for purposes of calculating the teaching load. New faculty are assigned a 2-3 teaching load in their first year. Faculty members are expected to be able to teach multiple courses including cores and electives, with recognition of their areas of expertise factored into all course assignments. Appendix III.P shows the current two year teaching assignment rotation for full-time faculty.

The average advising load for faculty for the past several years has ranged from 40 - 50 students. A full description of faculty advising responsibilities and resources is provided at Standard IV: Students.

During the current accreditation cycle, the Program has been allocated two master's students as graduate assistants through funding from the Graduate School. One position has been funded as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA, program discontinued for 2013-14 due to budget

constraints) and the other is funded through the Graduate Student Strategic Assistantships funding pool (GSSA, continuing in 2013-14). Graduate assistants may be used to support faculty members in teaching and research (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/graduate-assistantships.php>). In the MLIS Program, graduate assistants do not teach or grade because the program does not offer undergraduate courses and graduate students may not teach or grade the work of their peers. Graduate assistants may help faculty with the preparation of teaching materials as appropriate. Graduate assistant time is allocated to the faculty on request basis using a sign-up sheet. Faculty members ask for assistance on a project by project basis or as their needs arise, and graduate assistant time is negotiated based on departmental priorities. Graduate Assistant support has helped faculty members maximize the time needed to perform their other responsibilities.

Standard III.8 Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of faculty; evaluation considers accomplishment and innovation in the areas of teaching, research, and service. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process

Standard III.8.1 Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of faculty

Tenure and Promotion

The BOR establishes the general time in rank and other criteria for promotion and the grant of tenure within the USG. Promotion and tenure are formally granted by the BOR upon the recommendation of individual university presidents. New faculty are not appointed with tenure unless there are exceptional mitigating circumstances. Depending on experience and record, faculty can be appointed at various ranks. Tenure is not transferable from one USG institution to another.

Each university establishes the specific criteria and processes by which its faculty are promoted or tenured. In 2011, VSU amended its university-wide tenure and promotion (T&P) policies (Appendix III.G). Colleges and departments were directed to review existing T&P policies to be consistent with general guidelines developed by a newly created university-wide T&P committee. This committee makes recommendations to the VPAA and VSU President.

Within broad guidelines, each VSU college defines the teaching, research and scholarship, and service requirements for the promotion and tenure of its faculty. The MLIS Program published its first T&P policy in 2005 (Appendix III.H.1). That policy was later rewritten and adopted in 2013 to insure compliance with the new university-level policy. An ad hoc committee chaired by Dr. Ondrusek convened during AY 2012-13 and developed the new MLIS T&P policy (Appendix III.H.2) after review of the University policy, other VSU departmental and college policies, and those of several peer and aspirant LIS programs. The most recent MLIS T&P policy applies to MLIS faculty hired after to Spring 2013 and/or applying for tenure or promotion after Fall 2014.

The promotion and tenure processes are straightforward. Faculty are notified at the beginning of the academic year in which they become eligible for pre-tenure review, consideration for tenure,

consideration for promotion, and post-tenure review. Committees are created consisting of at least three tenured VSU faculty of equal or superior academic rank. Administrators in a direct supervisory position over the faculty member may not serve. That precludes the University Librarian and the Program Director. Where sufficient tenured faculty of appropriate rank do not reside in a department, faculty from other VSU departments may be asked to serve. The MLIS Program must include faculty from outside the department to staff its T&P committees. At the same time, MLIS faculty are sometimes asked to join the T&P committees of other departments. Dr. Koehler, for example, sat on a Social Work committee in 2010.

In a new faculty member's third year, that faculty member is required to submit a dossier in support of pre-tenure review. That document demonstrates the teaching, service, and scholarship achievements of the candidate. Departments and colleges are responsible for defining the standards for teaching, service, and scholarship within the general parameters of the University policy. The pre-tenure review process is designed to give the candidate guidance and insight into building a successful career and in demonstrating that process through a dossier. It is otherwise not a personnel action.

The dossier is submitted for committee review in the second semester of that academic year. In a faculty member's fifth year, s/he may apply for promotion to associate professor and for tenure. A dossier and committee, similar to the pre-tenure review, are required. A faculty member may elect to postpone a tenure application to the sixth year, when it is required. An associate professor may request promotion to professor after five years in rank. Before 2012, departmental or college level tenure and promotion recommendations were forwarded to the VPAA for action. The recommendations of the VPAA passed through the University President to the BOR. Since 2012, the University Tenure and Promotion Committee reviews departmental recommendations for compliance with university-wide conformity. That Committee makes its recommendations to the VPAA.

A faculty member denied tenure is given a terminal one-year contract for the following academic year. A successful candidate is notified by the VPAA and the action becomes effective at the beginning of the next academic year.

Since 2005, when the first two faculty members became qualified for tenure and promotion, no recommendation for tenure or promotion has been denied MLIS faculty as is shown in Table III.10. The VPAA is empowered to terminate non-tenured faculty on the recommendation of the department head and the dean. This process is outside the tenure and promotion process. This process generally results in a one-year, terminal contract for that faculty member. This has occurred twice to MLIS faculty since 2005.

Table III.10: MLIS Tenure and Promotion Actions 2007-2013

Faculty Member	Promotion to Associate Professor	Promotion to Professor	Tenured
Koehler, Wallace		2006	2006
Most, Linda	2013		
Oguz, Fatih	2010		
Ondrusek, Anita	2008		2009
Yontz, Elaine		2006	2006

Annual Faculty Evaluation Processes

Outside the tenure and promotion process faculty undergo several university-wide evaluation processes. First, all faculty are evaluated annually on a calendar year basis by their immediate supervisor. In February, each faculty member is required to complete and submit an Annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan, in which the faculty member is expected to provide goals for the coming year and report on achievement of goals from the previous year.

Second, faculty participate in course-level student evaluations of teaching. VSU provides access to the university-wide online evaluation, the Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI), toward the end of each semester for each course and section taught. The SOI assessment becomes available to instructors and supervisors shortly after grades are posted. SOIs remain available for evaluation thereafter (Appendix III.M). SOIs are expected to be incorporated in all formal evaluation processes including Tenure and Promotion applications and the annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan.

Additionally, all untenured tenure-track MLIS faculty are expected to submit at least one course a year to peer review. Tenured faculty may request a course review. The faculty member may ask an MLIS peer to undertake the review or seek a qualified reviewer at another LIS school. The review is expected to address the appropriateness of the course organization, appropriate use of technology, and the quality of information development and teaching. Faculty use the findings from peer review and from the Student Opinion of Instruction reports to inform their course revisions and/or redesign.

Standard III.8.2 Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process

The faculty are intimately involved in the evaluation process. In the annual evaluation, tenure and promotion, and graduate faculty decision processes, individual faculty members initiate the processes on their own behalf. Because many of these evaluation processes are considered confidential, there is little direct participation by others except for committee members who review said documentation.

Students are directly involved in Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI) course and instructor assessments as previously described. These SOIs are integral to other VSU-based assessments. All stakeholders – faculty, students, alumni, librarians, and employers – assist in the ALA COA process.

The VSU MLIS Program also calls upon its stakeholders to provide advice and direction. It does this in two ways. It asks its Advisory Board to comment on all initiatives and reports, except those that are otherwise confidential. It also convenes a stakeholders meeting at the annual October meeting of the Georgia Council of Media Organizations as described at Standards I and IV. Stakeholders attending have included students, alumni, librarians, and the faculty.

Standard IV: Students

Since its initial accreditation by the American Library Association (ALA) Committee on Accreditation (COA) in Summer 2007, many developments have precipitated changes in the Valdosta State University (VSU) Master in Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program's policies and its learning environment that directly affected its students and those individuals considering application to the Program. These developments included increased interest in the Program resulting in rapid growth of enrollment; the transition of the Program to an entirely online delivery format; the demand for courses that resulted in the expansion of the curriculum; an expansion of scholarships and increased fieldwork and employment contacts; and the revision of the objectives of the Program based upon student learning outcomes. The contents of this chapter explain the measures taken by the Program to respond to those changes. In addition, the evidence provided demonstrates that the VSU MLIS faculty and administration employed systematic planning to develop and sustain the Program in accordance with all sections of ALA COA Standard IV.

IV.1 The school formulates recruitment, admission, financial aid, placement, and other academic and administrative policies for students that are consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives; the policies reflect the needs and values of the constituencies served by a program. The school has policies to recruit and retain students who reflect the diversity of North America's communities. The composition of the student body is such that it fosters a learning environment consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

IV.1.1 The school formulates recruitment . . . policies for students that are consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

It is the policy of the Valdosta State University (VSU) Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program to recruit students throughout Georgia. The Admissions and Recruiting Committee is a standing departmental committee. Since the Program's initial accreditation in 2007, that Committee, in consultation with the MLIS faculty and the VSU Graduate School, has coordinated recruiting efforts based on the Program's mission to educate librarians for Georgia's academic, public, and special libraries. The [overview of the Program on the website of the Graduate School](#) and the [home page of the MLIS website](#) make clear the online nature of the Program. The Program provides opportunities for potential students to consult with faculty and meet students and alumni at the annual Georgia Council of Media Organizations (GaCOMO) conference, and faculty recruiters visit individual sites around the state (Table IV.1). Research on historically black colleges and universities (Appendix IV.A) preceded recruiting on those campuses, 2010-2012.

The following recruiting materials have been used since 2007:

- Handouts on "Why Librarianship" (Appendix IV.B.1) and "Why VSU" (Appendix IV.B.2)
- MLIS Brochures formatted for a general audience (Appendix IV.B.3), an IMLS scholarship opportunity (Appendix IV.B.4), and the health sciences librarianship track (Appendix IV.B.5).

Table IV.1: VSU MLIS Travel Related to Student Recruiting

Faculty Members	Recruiting Sites	Dates
MLIS faculty and students/alumni	Georgia Council of Media Organizations (GaCOMO) conferences – an annual event at which the MLIS Program sponsors a booth staffed by faculty and MLIS students/alumni.	2007-2013 Early fall
Dr. Ondrusek	Atlanta -Fulton Public Library Staff Development Day	2013 October
Dr. Koehler	Paine College Augusta State University	2012 October
Dr. Ondrusek	Macon State College Library Darton State College Library Albany State University, James Pendergrast Memorial Library Columbus Public Library (Columbus State University co-sponsored and advertised)	2011 September 26-28
Dr. Ondrusek	Atlanta Fulton County Public Library Staff Development Day Atlanta University Center, Robert W. Woodruff Library Morehouse School of Medicine Sturgis Library, Kennesaw State University	2010 October 11-13
Dr. Koehler	Atlanta Fulton County Public Library Staff Development Day	2009

IV.1.2 The school formulates . . . admission . . . policies for students that are consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

Because of an influx of applications, the Program began accepting students in both the fall and spring semesters in Fall 2007. The VSU Graduate School permits graduate programs to establish the cut-off date for admissions so long as it is no later than July 15 of each year. Dates for MLIS applications are currently October 15 for the spring semester and March 15 for the fall term.

The University's *Graduate Catalog* specifies these requirements for application to the Graduate School: a completed graduate application, official transcripts from previous degrees, a medical form, proof of English language proficiency for international applicants, and any supplemental materials required by individual degree programs (see the *Graduate Catalog* section on [Application Procedures](#)). The departmental committee that reviews applications considers each applicant's entire admission packet, including the [supplemental materials](#) required by the MLIS Program consisting of a résumé, an essay, and three letters of recommendation with accompanying rating forms.

This selection process seeks to identify individuals whose career goals resonate with the Program's mission and goals that center upon educating entry-level librarians for academic, public, and special libraries. The Program's objectives target performance in these areas: professional practice (specifically in administrative, service, and technical functions of libraries and information centers); applying existing and emerging technologies; integrating research into practice; and demonstrating professionalism. The narratives by the applicants and comments

from their references in the supplemental materials help the departmental selection committee to assess the applicant's prior exposure to the library profession and that person's ability to articulate an informed opinion on some aspect of the state of the profession.

Several changes to admission requirements were enacted during the accreditation reporting period of Fall 2007 to Spring 2013. These changes include a request from the MLIS Program to accept Miller Analogies Test (MAT) scores as an alternative to Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores in AY 2007-2008 (approved by the Graduate School); an elimination of GRE/MAT scores for admission to the Graduate School in AY 2010-2011 (initiated by the Graduate School); and a revision of the MLIS admission requirements at the end of the Spring 2011 semester (to maintain rigor in its admissions). These developments will be further explained at Standard IV.3.2.

IV.1.3 The school formulates . . . financial aid . . . policies for students that are consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

The [VSU Office of Financial Aid](#) serves all students matriculated into the MLIS Program or enrolled in MLIS courses. Under most circumstances, graduate students must enroll in at least two courses at three credits each to qualify for government-assisted loans.

The VSU MLIS Program sponsors or administers [several scholarships](#) that cover one-course tuition. In this category are two merit-based scholarships: the H. W. Wilson grant (Appendix IV.C.1), requested and replenished on a four-year cycle (the Program has been funded twice); the MLIS Merit Scholarships (Appendix IV.C.2) that replaced a previous \$1000 award to an incoming student meeting criteria of high GPA and entrance examination scores. In addition, a portion of the H.W. Wilson funds are provided to the MLIS student awarded the ALA Student-to-Staff fellowship (Appendix IV.C.3) to cover travel to participate at the annual meeting. A one-time contribution from an anonymous donor for short-term awards covering one-course tuition was available between 2008-2012. The MLIS Awards and Scholarship Committee select recipients based upon criteria specified in the guidelines for each scholarship. The Program sponsors one non-monetary award, the George Gaumond Award (Appendix IV.C.4), bestowed annually to one student who shows exceptional leadership and scholarship.

MLIS students also qualify for several external scholarships related to the pursuit of a library and information science degree. For example, Georgia residents currently enrolled in, or accepted by, a Master's program in library and information science are eligible for the Hubbard Scholarship of \$3000 and the Charles Beard Scholarship of \$1000. Both of these scholarships are administered by the Georgia Library Association with [guidelines](#) available on its website; one application form (Appendix IV.C.5) serves both scholarships. As other scholarships or financial aid opportunities applicable to MLIS students are identified, they are posted on the MLIS Program web site.

In 2010, the Georgia Public Library Services secured a grant worth \$680,327 through the [Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program](#), part of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, for creating a curriculum on the theme Librarians Building Community. The grant funded tuition, laptops, and joint student memberships to ALA-GLA (Georgia Library Association) for 42

scholarship students in the VSU MLIS Program between 2010 and 2014. For specific details on the grant, refer to these web pages: [Grant Proposal Abstract](#) ; [VSU Press Release, Grant Announcement](#); and the [Scholarship Application](#).

The VSU Graduate School allocates two [graduate school assistantships](#) to the MLIS Program. These assistantships pay tuition based on enrollment in six graduate level credit hours each fall and spring. In AY 2010-2011, the University System of Georgia instituted an eTuition rate that applies to in-state and out-of-state online students, and the tuition remission for the graduate assistants was based on this rate. Stipends also increased steadily between AY 2007-2008 and AY 2012-2013. During these academic years, the MLIS Program consistently was assigned two graduate assistants (GAs) except in AY 2012-2013 where one GA and one graduate student strategic assistant (GSSA) were assigned to the Program. Financials for the MLIS graduate assistantships by academic year are available in Appendix IV.D for review. Because the graduate assistantship stipulates a fourteen-hour a week work requirement, the assistantship is only awarded to students resident in or near Valdosta. The Graduate School or other scholarship-granting bodies administer all other financial aid programs at Valdosta State University. For AY 2013-2014 the Program is only assigned one graduate assistant.

The University System of Georgia (USG) provides [tuition remission](#) as an incentive for full-time employees of the thirty-one colleges and universities to enroll in degreed programs in the System. Individuals who have been full-time employees for six months or more and who meet other requirements may attend any USG unit tuition free for up to nine credit hours per semester. In Fall 2012, 24% of the MLIS enrollment consisted of USG employees on tuition remission (Appendix IV.E).

Once enrolled in the Program, an increasing number of students either have identified external scholarships on their own, or faculty mentors have advised them to apply for external scholarships. An accounting of scholarships, grants, and assistantships for which amounts are on record lists the value of that funding as \$892,424 (Appendix IV.F). These grants, assistantships, and scholarships are itemized in Table IV.2.

Table IV.2: Scholarships, Awards, and Financial Aid grants, Fall 2007 – Spring 2013

Scholarships and Assistantships	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Value
<i>Internal funding</i>								
VSU Graduate Assistantships	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	\$73,696.
VSU MLIS Scholarship \$1000	1	1	Scholarship replaced by the VSU MLIS Merit Scholarship.					\$2000.
VSU MLIS Merit One course tuition			3	3	1	1	1	\$6053.
VSU MLIS Short-term One course tuition		2	2	1	1	1	Funds spent	\$4437.
H. W. Wilson One course tuition			3	2	2	1	1	\$6435.
H. W. Wilson student travel to GLA reimbursement			6					\$ 497.
ALA Student-to-Staff Intern \$400 expenses			1	1	1	1	1	\$1200.
SOLIS travel stipends						2		\$104.
VSU Minority Grad				1				\$675.

Scholarships and Assistantships	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Value
Internal funding								
One course tuition								
	Total for internal funding							\$95,097.
External funding								
Beard Scholarship (GLA) \$1000	1		1	1		1		\$4000.
Hubbard Scholarship (GLA) \$3000			1	1	1		1	\$12,000.
Paraprofessional Awards (GLA) \$250	1		2	1		2	TBA	\$1500.
Smyrna Internship \$2500 Stipend			1	1	1	--	1	\$10000.
Laura Bush 21 st Century Librarian Program (IMLS) \$680,327				15	12 (fall) 15 (spring)			\$680,327.
	Total for external funding							\$707,827.
Individually secured by recipients								
Spectrum Scholarship \$5000		1						\$5000.
E. J. Josey Scholarship \$2000		1						\$2000.
REFORMA Scholarship \$1500			1					\$1500.
National Archives Award for Excellence \$1000			1					\$1000.
Emory Libraries Fellowship 2-yr. salary \$80K						1		\$80,000.
	Total for known values of individually-secured funding							\$89,500.
*CNN internship and stipend				1		1		
*JP Morgan Chase MLK Archives internship + stipend					1			
*Ringling Museum internship + stipend					1			
*Smithsonian Archives of American Art internship + stipend			1					
*McGraw Fellowship Darien Public Library, CT						1		
*Federal Librarians Adelaide Del Frate Conference Sponsorship			1					
*NASIG Conference Sponsorship			1					
*SEAALL Conference Sponsorship					1			
*Georgia Health Sciences Library Assoc. Conference Sponsorship						1		
* Value of these awards not disclosed or unknown.								
Value of known funding								\$892,424.

Source: Appendix IV.F, Awards and Scholarship Report, August 2013

Note to the reviewers on statistical reporting in the following Standards:

Statistical tables are included in Standards IV.1.4, IV.1.6, IV.1.7, IV.3.4, and IV.4.1. Statistics in these Standards rely mainly on aggregated matriculation counts rather than enrollment numbers for consistency. The ALISE reporting guidelines which use enrollment figures now require conversions from part-time enrollment to full-time enrollment. These numbers do not accurately reflect the preponderance of part-time students who enter and graduate from the VSU MLIS Program. Therefore, the tables included in this report present aggregated data from the MLIS departmental database collected during the reporting period from Fall 2007 to Spring 2013 using a baseline of 541 matriculated students who entered the Program in Fall and Spring semesters. It also provides a snapshot of the Fall 2012 enrollment based on the University's new data collection system. Since students graduate in Fall, Spring, and Summer terms, a baseline of 363 graduates from the Fall 2007 to Summer 2013 terms is included. Employment statistics are based upon the MLIS employment tracking system using a baseline of 371 students who graduated between Fall 2007 and Summer 2013. The VSU MLIS department adopted LiveText as the tool used to collect and analyze data on student performance in its core assessments in Fall 2012. Data presented in Standard IV.6.2 derives from analyses generated by LiveText.

IV.1.4 The school formulates . . . placement, and other academic and administrative . . policies for students that are consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

Placement of MLIS students primarily takes the form of matching students who request fieldwork to appropriate field sites. The Program maintains a Fieldwork Sponsor Contact Chart (Appendix IV.G) of constituent institutions that have hosted fieldwork or expressed an interest in sponsoring MLIS interns since 2010. When a student requests placement in a site not on file with the Program, the faculty acting as the current fieldwork liaison contacts the head administrator of that site to explain the MLIS fieldwork course and to verify that the potential sponsor qualifies as a field site. The database indexes only those sites that meet the requirements of the MLIS Fieldwork course (described in Standard IV.4.1). To date, there are approximately 80 sponsoring libraries and agencies listed in the database covering the full range of opportunities in academic, public, and special libraries as stated in the Program's mission.

By policy, the Program provides recommendations on avenues to employment and job announcements on its websites. Beyond those public forums, personalized assistance with placement for students and graduates is a process that relies heavily on professional partnerships between state stakeholders and the faculty. The numbers of placement sites and the rates of graduates who secured positions there reflect the relative success of these partnerships.

Employment data is collected continuously from these sources:

- An exit e-mail issued to Capstone students at the end of their final semester
- The VSU MLIS Facebook to which many of the alumni subscribe
- LinkedIn accounts shared by various faculty with alumni
- Encounters with alumni at conferences and other professional gatherings
- Self-reports from alumni who remain in contact with faculty

Statistics for all graduates for the full lifespan of the MLIS Program, starting in Spring 2003 when the second graduate of the Program secured a professional position, were updated in the department's Graduate Tracking Data Table (Appendix IV.H) as of August 2013. At that time, graduates totaled 395, and active employment status had been ascertained for 371 of those alumni. Specifically, graduates were considered "active" contributors to data collection if they reported employment in LIS professional positions (178), LIS paraprofessional positions (116), non-LIS careers (50), and unemployment (27). Those graduates classified under the categories of "status unknown," "retired," or "deceased" were not considered active in terms of employment.

Using these definitions, a classification of positions secured by graduates of the MLIS Program shows that academic libraries provide the most employment with public libraries second as employers, and special libraries in third position (Table IV.3). Full tables that show MLIS employment data classified by library type (Appendix IV.I) and by year of graduation (Appendix IV.J) from the inception of the Program are also available.

The 294 graduates employed in LIS jobs represent 79.25% of graduates whose *active employment statuses* are known. Of those same 294 graduates, 178 represent employment in professional positions, or about 48% (rounded) of alumni whose *active employment statuses* are known. There are 31% (rounded) of graduates whose employment status are known who either remain in, or have secured jobs in, paraprofessional positions in libraries. The 50 graduates employed in non-LIS careers represent about 13.5% (rounded) of alumni reporting job status. The 27 reports of unemployment represent only 7% of total graduates whose employment statuses are known.

Anecdotal reports from graduates indicate a number of possible explanations for MLIS degreed graduates accepting or continuing in paraprofessional positions. One factor is the lagging economy which has resulted in freezes or elimination of professional positions in many libraries in Georgia. Consequently, many newly-minted MLIS graduates consider a paraprofessional position as a means for gaining experience in a library system which may give them an advantage in the hiring process when professional positions become available.

Table IV.3: Employment classifications based on known active employment status (n=371)

LIS Employment Status Classifications	Academic Libraries	Public Libraries	Special Libraries	School Media	Independent Schools	For-profit Sector	Archive/Sp. Coll.	LIS Schools	Sub-totals
LIS Professionals	87	43	21	9	5	7	4	2	177
LIS Para-professionals	56	49	6	3	0	0	2	0	120
Sub-totals	143	92	27	12	5	7	6	2	294
Employed in non-LIS careers									50
Unemployed									27
Totals									371

Source: Appendix IV.K, MLIS Employment Statistics Summary

IV.1.5 The . . . policies reflect the needs and values of the constituencies served by [the Valdosta State University] program.

In accordance with the mission of the Program, it is the academic, public, and special libraries in Georgia that help define the values and needs to be addressed in the policies of the Program governing recruitment, admission, financial aid, placement, and other academic and administrative mechanisms. The applications to the Program provide evidence that many applicants work in libraries as paraprofessionals who have been encouraged by their employers to obtain the MLIS degree in order to advance to professional positions. Given these conditions, the Program strives to maintain admission standards stringent enough to help the faculty assess the level of academic preparedness among applicants and, at the same time, flexible enough to provide access for those individuals singled out by stakeholders (e.g., employers and leaders in Georgia's libraries) as applicants possessing the potential to succeed in an MLIS degree program.

IV.1.6 The school has policies to recruit and retain students who reflect the diversity of North America's communities.

The MLIS faculty recruits in venues that include individuals from among the diverse populations of North America's communities. Aggregated data from the VSU MLIS files from Fall 2007 – Spring 2012 reports 20.6% (rounded) minority candidates and 22.2% (rounded) male candidates who matriculated during those six academic years (Table IV.4).

Table IV.4: Ethnicity and gender classifications of MLIS candidates matriculated, Fall 2007 - Spring 2013

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian/ Pacific Islanders	Black	Hispanic	White	Intern'l	Total Male	Total Female	Total
Male	0	1	9	4	102	0	116		
Female	2	10	74	13	325	1		425	
Sub- totals	2	11	83	17	427	1			541

Source: MLIS Student Database (on-site)

The data on minority enrollment in the VSU MLIS Program during that same six-year period compares favorably to the trend data available from ALA on annual changes in minority enrollment in ALA-accredited schools (Table IV.5). During five fall semesters of comparisons, the VSU MLIS data on minority enrollment actually showed an increase in Fall 2009-Fall 2010 when the majority of other programs reporting experienced a decrease in minority enrollment.

Table IV.5: Trend comparisons on VSU MLIS minority enrollment to other ALA-accredited programs

Semester/Year	MLIS Programs reporting changes in minority head counts, range=1-19		VSU MLIS trends
	Increased	Decreased	
F07-F08	26 programs	18 programs	Decreased
F08-F09	26 programs	12 programs	Increased
F09-F10	15 programs	28 programs	Increased
F10-F11	20 programs	20 programs	Decreased
F11-F12	11 programs	30 programs	No change

Sources: MLIS Student Database (on-site); [ALA Data on Program Performance](#)

As described in Standard IV.1.1, increased diversity is a recruiting priority in the Program's strategic planning. By continuing to work with various stakeholder groups in the state, further plans to recruit students from a wider range of ethnicities are under development.

IV.1.7 The composition of the student body is such that it fosters a learning environment consistent with the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

The VSU MLIS Program attracts many of its students through its commitment to providing a quality asynchronous distance-learning format and its mission centered upon educating information professionals for various types of libraries. The online format makes the program accessible to adult learners seeking an MLIS degree across the state of Georgia, and its reputation has spread to states beyond Georgia. A viable learning environment depends, in part, on sustaining a diverse student body – one in which students can identify with classmates who share their professional aspirations while, at the same time, gain exposure to a broad range of perspectives. To this end, the Program seeks to maintain a student body comprised of individuals from a wide variety of life experiences but with enough confluence of career goals to achieve a critical mass of like-minded students to sustain course enrollment in specialized topics.

The age variations within the past six years of enrollments reflect a significant amount of diversity, and this same category has undergone the greatest changes in terms of generational representations within the learning environment (Table IV.6). When ALA initially accredited the Program in 2007, students 20-25 years old made up less than 1% of students; currently, that age group makes up 7% of students. From 2001-2007, the highest percentage of students fell into the 35-44 year-old range (44.2%); from 2007-2013, the most heavily represented age groups shifted down to the 25-29 year-old range (29%) and the 30-34 year-old range (21%). Gender distribution over the matriculated student data from 2007-2013, when cross-tabulated with age groupings, shows that both the male and female students seem to cluster into the 25-34 year-old age ranges. Again, this is a change in trends from 2001-2007 in which males clustered into the 30-54 year-old age ranges, while female students ran the gamut from the 20-24 to the 54-and-older age ranges. In summary, the VSU MLIS students are younger and somewhat more homogeneous in age now than they were six years ago.

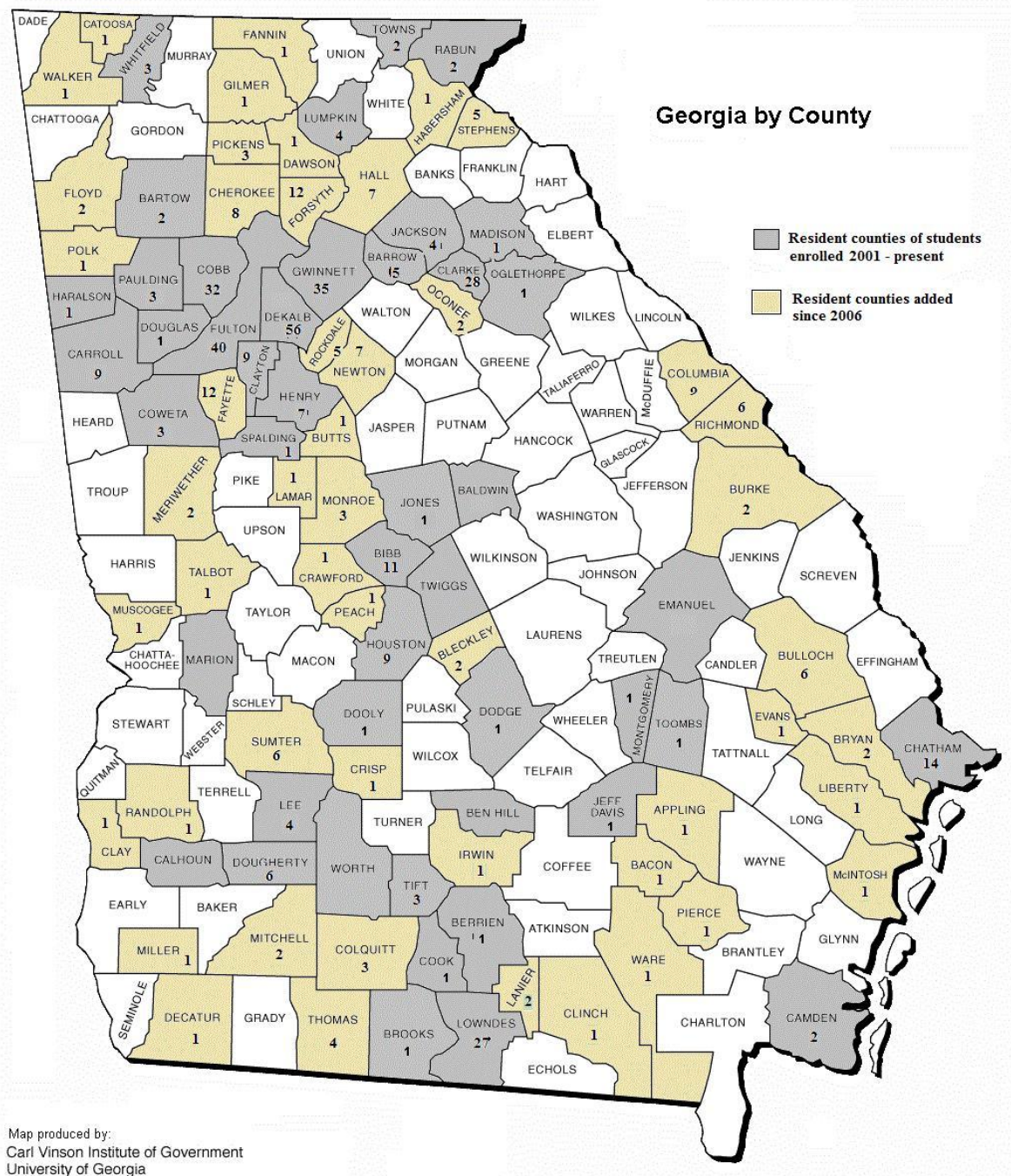
Table IV.6: Age* and gender classifications of matriculated MLIS candidates,
Fall 2007- Spring 2013

	<20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	>54	Total
Male	0	4	35	30	16	11	9	6	5	116
Female	0	35	124	86	57	42	35	31	15	425
Sub-totals	0	39	159	116	73	53	44	37	20	541

*Age at year of entry into the program. Source: MLIS Student Database (on-site)

Geographical distribution of the MLIS students is striking in that it reflects the success of the Program in reaching many communities across the state. Of the 159 counties that lie within Georgia's boundaries, the students enrolled in the VSU MLIS program from academic years 2001 through 2006 resided in 46 of these counties; there were three out-of-state students. At the end of the Spring 2013 semester, students from 89 counties in Georgia had matriculated into the VSU MLIS Program (Figure 2). Although the Program has a Georgia-centric mission, that mission does not preclude acceptance of students from outside the state and the reach of the Program extends now into 13 other states in the continental U. S. Out-of-state students currently in the Program reside in Alabama (2, one of whom works in Georgia), Florida (3), Arizona (1), Tennessee (1), Illinois (1), Ohio (1), Missouri (2), Montana (1), California (1), and Oregon (1). Several students originally residing in Georgia re-located to Arizona (1), California (1), Massachusetts (1), Nevada (1), and Virginia (2) after matriculating into the program and completed their degree as residents of those states. Two students followed their military spouses abroad, one to England and one to Malta, and completed their MLIS degree requirements from those countries.

Figure IV.1: Geographic disbursement of VSU MLIS students, 2001-2013*



* Shaded counties without numbers designate counties from which students enrolled, but were not retained.
Sources: MLIS Student Database (on-site); Data by County (Appendix IV.L)

The most current enrollment trends by semester are reflected in a snapshot of data from the Fall 2012 enrollment summary published by the University (Table IV.7).

Table IV.7: MLIS Enrollment Major Summary Report, Fall 2012

Gender	Male: 50			Female: 150		
Ethnicity	American Indian/ Alaskan: 1	Asian: 5	African American: 28	Multiracial: 5	Other: 1	White: 160
Top 5 counties	Dekalb: 16	Fulton: 10	Bibb: 8	Richmond: 7	Out-of-State: 6	

Source: VSU Data Warehouse (on-site); Major Summary Report – LIS Enrollment - Fall 2012 (Appendix IV.M)

In summary, the downward shift in age groups of students combined with the geographic expansion of the Program beyond the borders of Georgia present challenges to the MLIS faculty in maintaining a learning environment that meets the needs of all students. The online learning system recently adopted by the University provides both multimedia features and tools for developing community-centered activities that can be integrated into courses as well as the means to deliver virtual lectures, so the Program is well-positioned to address the learning styles of many generations of learners. However, class activities that are, in many courses, largely Georgia-centric will need to be re-examined if the Program revises its mission to include national, or international, recruitment.

IV.2 Current, accurate, and easily accessible information on the school and its program is available to students and the general public. This information includes announcements of program goals and objectives, descriptions of curricula, information on faculty, admission requirements, availability of financial aid, criteria for evaluating student performance, assistance with placement, and other policies and procedures. The school demonstrates that it has procedures to support these policies.

IV.2.1 Current, accurate, and easily accessible information on the school and its program is available to students and the general public.

The University, the VSU Graduate School, and the VSU MLIS Program maintain information about the Program in print and electronic formats. The primary dissemination tools for the MLIS Program are websites (maintained by the Graduate School and the MLIS Program), and the Graduate School’s online and print catalog (updated annually). Updates on the Program’s conditional status and its plan for removal of that status are prominently posted on the [MLIS homepage](#).

IV.2.2 This information includes announcements of program goals and objectives, descriptions of curricula, information on faculty, admission requirements, availability of financial aid, criteria for evaluating student performance, assistance with placement, and other policies and procedures.

The [MLIS homepage](#) contains direct links on its Main Menu to a: “Program Overview” page that lists mission, goals, and objectives followed by an overview of the curriculum; “Faculty & Staff” page with links to faculty profiles and CVs; a page on “Admissions” that links to all pertinent policies and procedures; a page on “Scholarships & Awards” that includes financial support recommendations; links to “Syllabi” both archived and current on which the Program Objectives are listed and mapped to Student Learning Outcomes for each core course; page on “Employment” that makes the role of the MLIS Program as an intermediary conduit to

employment opportunities clear; and all other policies related to “Academic Advising,” “Tech Requirements,” “Student Resources,” and Course Descriptions.”

IV.2.3 The school demonstrates that it has procedures to support these policies.

The procedures that support these policies are, by and large, implicit or embedded in the content provided on each webpage referenced in the Standard above.

IV.3 Standards for admission are applied consistently. Students admitted to a program have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; the policies and procedures for waiving any admission standard or academic prerequisite are stated clearly and applied consistently. Assessment of an application is based on a combined evaluation of academic, intellectual, and other qualifications as they relate to the constituencies served by a program, a program's goals and objectives, and the career objectives of the individual. Within the framework of institutional policy and programs, the admission policy for a program ensures that applicants possess sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to enable (successful) completion of a program and subsequent contribution to the field.

IV.3.1 Standards for admission are applied consistently.

The VSU MLIS Program uses a qualitative admission method that evaluates individuals on an applicant-by-applicant basis. The Graduate School receives and processes all application packets, then forwards copies of all complete files to the MLIS Program director. A departmental Admissions Committee, a sub-committee of the Admissions and Recruiting Committee, comprised of the Program director and at least two faculty members, reviews the admission packets and makes recommendations on the applicants to the Dean of the Graduate School.

The committee receives the packets within a week following the deadline for applications, reviews each file individually, then, meets as a group to apply admission criteria and select candidates for admission. In case of a lack of agreement on an applicant's qualifications, the Committee consults other MLIS faculty members. Ultimately, the Program Director in consultation with the University Librarian (the Program's Dean) and the Dean of the Graduate School makes the final decisions for all admissions.

IV.3.2. Students admitted to a program have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; the policies and procedures for waiving any admission standard or academic prerequisite are stated clearly and applied consistently.

The requirements for application to the Graduate School, as outlined in the University's *Graduate Catalog* and on the web site of the VSU Graduate School include:

- A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution
- One official transcript from every college or university attended
- Medical form(s) as stated in the *Graduate Catalog*
- Application fee in the amount stated in the *Graduate Catalog*

The additional requirements established by the MLIS Program underwent changes in the AY 2010-2011. At the start of the fall semester of that academic year, the Dean of the Graduate School began a review of admission and retention standards for graduate programs. She proposed eliminating the GRE/MAT requirements as a graduate school standard, leaving that requirement as an option to individual programs. The MLIS faculty reviewed the completion rates of students admitted with entry examination scores below the cut scores and found those graduation rates to be no different from students admitted with scores meeting the entry examination requirements. The MLIS faculty agreed to follow the lead of the Graduate School and eliminate the GRE/MAT requirement for admission.

To better evaluate an applicant's goals, the former essay requirement was replaced by an essay requirement that prompts the applicant to describe how earning an MLIS will further career plans. To evaluate writing abilities, the application now includes the composition of a second essay that prompts the applicant to explain either challenges or opportunities to the profession. To qualify for consideration as entry on probationary status, applicants with GPAs below 3.0 must submit a letter of exception in which they explain low performance in their previous degrees and steps they will take to succeed in a graduate program. The faculty based the model for the new essay requirements upon models used at other schools of library and information science.

Starting in Fall 2011, students applying for admission to the MLIS Program in Spring 2012 could apply under the former requirements or under the new requirements. Starting in Fall 2012, the [new requirements](#) went into effect (Table IV.8).

Table IV.8: Changes in documentation evaluated for admission to the MLIS Program

MLIS Admission Requirements, 2007-2012	MLIS Admission Requirements, 2012-present
<p>An essay describing the student's background, interest, and experience in librarianship and information science.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Either GRE or MAT scores in these ranges:</p> <p>For Graduate Record Examinations taken BEFORE October 2002: A GRE score of at least 950 (verbal score plus either the quantitative or analytical score).</p> <p>For Graduate Record Examinations taken AFTER October 2002: A combined verbal and quantitative GRE score of at least 950 or a verbal score of at least 450 and an analytic score of at least 4.0.</p> <p>Miller Analogy Test results are to be in the 45th percentile or higher for the entire group.</p>	<p>Two application essays that describe the student's interest in the program based on these prompts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will earning the Master of Library and Information Science degree at Valdosta State University help you further your career plans? (not to exceed 250 words) 2. Pick one topic. Explain what you think are the most important (a) challenges OR (b) opportunities facing the library and information science profession today (not to exceed 500 words). <p>-----</p> <p>If the applicant's GPA when re-calculated might not meet the minimum GPA requirement of 3.0, the student must submit a Letter of Exception (not to exceed 250 words) that explains:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Circumstances that contributed to the GPA below 3.0 AND 2. The adjustments the student will make to assure maintenance of a GPA of 3.0 or better

The following required documentation remains in effect for applicants from 2007 to the present:

- An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) for the last two years of one's undergraduate degree, or, at least 3.0 in a Master's degree from an accredited institution.
- Three letters of recommendation – Letters from a professional acquainted with the applicant's academic or vocational background must be accompanied by the general evaluation form supplied by the Graduate School
- A résumé or curriculum vitae
- For international students, a score of at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or a score of at least 213 on the TOEFL Computer-based Test.

The MLIS Program uses the graduate student classifications from the Graduate School to specify the admission status of its students. The majority of students matriculate into the Program as “regular” admissions. These students have met all the admission requirements set forth by the Graduate School and the MLIS Program. The departmental Admissions Committee may recommend “probationary” admission for students who do not meet one or more criteria pertaining to academic requirements to the Dean of the Graduate School. Students admitted on a probationary basis remain in this category during their first nine semester hours of work. To convert to “regular” status, students must achieve a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Probationary students are eligible for financial aid, but they are not eligible for the MLIS-administered scholarships. Standard IV.4 contains specific information on the current state of all the students admitted to the MLIS Program on probation.

IV.3.3 Assessment of an application is based on a combined evaluation of academic, intellectual, and other qualifications as they relate to the constituencies served by a program, a program's goals and objectives, and the career objectives of the individual.

The sources of the letters of recommendation, previous work experience as reflected on the résumés or curriculum vita, and the responses to the first essay that prompts applicants to describe how earning an MLIS will further their career plans provide the departmental Admissions Committee with qualitative information on which to judge whether the applicants' career objectives fit the constituencies served by the Program. The responses to the second essay that is to address either challenges or opportunities facing the profession are judged on these criteria: attention to the selected theme (either challenges or opportunities), organization of the narrative into a cohesive essay, conveyance of a sense of the profession, and application of standard rules of English composition. The transcripts and GPAs from previous degrees provide additional data on the academic backgrounds of applicants.

IV.3.4 Within the framework of institutional policy and programs, the admission policy for a program ensures that applicants possess sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to enable (successful) completion of a program and subsequent contribution to the field.

As described in Standard IV.3.3, the MLIS faculty structured the admission standards for the Program to take into account multiple aspects of the potential for success for every applicant. Retention based on tracking the students retained from entry in the fall to their enrollment in the

following fall semester is high. Over a four-year period, using admissions from Fall 2007 to Fall 2011, retention rates ranged from 92.5% to 98% and averaged 94.4% (Table IV.9).

Table IV.9: Retention statistics represented by fall semesters, 2007-2012

Semester of entry	New enrollments		One year later	Retained students
F 2007	51		F 2008	50 (98.0%)
F 2008	40		F 2009	37 (92.5%)
F 2009	53		F 2010	49 (92.5%)
F 2010	71		F 2011	66 (92.9%)
F 2011	36		F 2012	35 (97.3%)
Total enrolled	251		Average rate	(94.4%)

Source: MLIS files (on-site)

However, a candidate's ability to complete the Program often becomes apparent as that student progresses through a program of study (Table IV.10). The aggregated statistics on the retention rate for MLIS students over a four-year period, examining *all* students enrolled from AY 2007-2008 to AY 2010-2011, produces an aggregated retention rate of 80%. A comparison of the fall-to-fall semester retention rates of *newly admitted* students produces a higher average of 94.4%. This difference between annual and aggregated retention rates suggests that attrition in enrollment occurs after students complete their first few semesters.

Using the same aggregated data from AY 2007-2008 to AY 2010-2011, the overall graduation rate for that period computes to 71.85%, with 8.15% of those students still enrolled. Given that a large percentage of the enrollment consists of part-time students with full-time jobs, it is not unusual for completion of the Program to take more than two academic years, and subsequent graduations may boost that statistic in the coming academic year. The Report on Status of Students Accepted on Probationary Status (Appendix IV.N) maintained by the department shows that 130 students matriculated into the program on probation between Fall 2007 and Spring 2013, and 112 of these students (86% rounded) converted to regular status. The retention rate (77% rounded) for these students seems on par with the Program's overall 80% retention rate. The graduation rate for these probationary students is difficult to calculate since many of the students are still moving through their courses. At the time this report was written, 75 students (58% rounded) of those accepted on probation since Fall 2007 had graduated.

Table IV.10: Aggregated retention and graduation data for matriculated MLIS candidates, AY 2007/2008-2012/2013

AY of matriculation into the MLIS program	New enrollments	Graduated	Still enrolled	Withdrew	Dismissed
2007/2008	95	77	3	13	0
2008/2009	75	72	2	13	1
2009/2010	118	81	6	15	7
2010/2011	117	61	22	25	7
Sub- totals F2007-S2011	405	291 (71.85%)	33 (8.15%)	66 (16.3%)	15 (3.7%)
2011/2012	69	6	53	6	4
2012/2013	67	1	61	3	2
Sub- totals F2011-S2013	136	7	114	9	6
Partial totals	541	298	147	75	21
*Matriculated pre-Fall 2007	N/A	65	0	4	1
Totals (non-additive)	541	363	147	79	22

* Statistics on students admitted prior to Fall 2007 whose academic status carried over into the reporting period Fall 2007 – Spring 2013; Source: MLIS files (on-site); MLIS Student Database (on-site); Demographics on Graduation and Retention (Appendix IV.O)

Graduation trends by gender and ethnicity are reflected in data aggregated from AY 2007-2008 to AY 2012-2013 (Table IV.11). A total of 74 minority students in which international students are included, comprised 20.4% (rounded) of total graduations for this reporting period. Males comprised 21% (rounded) of total graduations for this same reporting period.

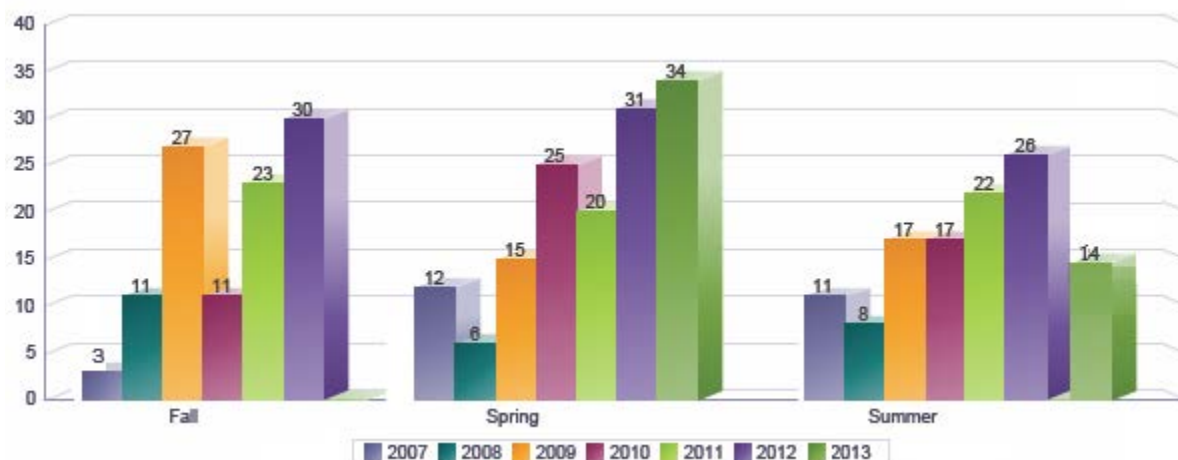
Table IV.11 Ethnicity and gender classifications of MLIS candidates graduated, Fall 2007 - Spring 2013

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian/ Pacific Islanders	Black	Hispanic	White	Intern'l	Total Male	Total Female	Total
Male	0	0	6	2	67	1	76		
Female	1	9	42	12	222	1		287	
Sub-totals	1	9	48	14	289	2			363

Source: MLIS Student Database (on-site); Demographics on Graduation and Retention (Appendix IV.O)

Graduation trends by semester are reflected in the data summary published by the University (Figure IV.2). These statistics show that the peaks in graduations between Spring 2011 and Spring 2013 correlate with the peaks in enrollment in AY 2009-2010 and AY 2010-2011. In essence, the majority of the students seem to be moving through the Program in a two to three year period at a steady rate.

Figure IV.2: MLIS Degrees conferred by semester, Fall 2007-Summer 2013



Source: VSU Data Warehouse (on-site); MLIS Degrees conferred by semester (Appendix IV.P)

A candidate's desire to complete the Program also contributes to retention and graduation. In Spring 2011, a Program faculty member and her graduate assistant contacted 56 students who were making normal progress with GPAs of 3.0 or better but had not enrolled in two or more semesters. Email messages asked them to respond to why they left the program and whether they planned to return. Twenty students responded (see the Attrition Contact List with Responses Sp2011, Appendix IV.Q). The reason given the most was the perceived lack of employment opportunities. The second most-reported reason was the amount of time or type of assignments involved. A frequent response was: "It was not for me" or "It was not what I thought it would be." In an effort to address some of these concerns, the faculty developed awareness-building activities for the Program's orientation, to be discussed in Standard IV.4.3.

Students who withdraw in academic trouble or who are dismissed are another concern in terms of admissions, retention, and graduation. Under Graduate School standards, to remain in the Program a student must maintain a 2.5 GPA or higher; to graduate from the Program, a student must have a 3.0 or higher GPA. Prior to Fall 2011, when a student received a grade below B, the Dean of the Graduate School issued a warning letter (see Sample Grade Warning Letter, Appendix IV.R.1). The Dean of the Graduate School proposed more stringent retention requirements in Fall 2010, and these were approved by the faculties in Spring 2011. The new policy established a deficiency point system for grades below B in all VSU graduate programs. A grade of C results in 1 deficiency point, and a student receiving a D, F, WF, or U acquires 2 deficiency points for any of those grades; three deficiency points result in dismissal from the program. This system went into effect in Fall 2011. The MLIS faculty followed suit by establishing a grade requirement for its six core courses of B or higher; a student earning a C or lower in a core course must repeat the course and accumulates deficiency points. This policy also went into effect in Fall 2011. The [Graduate Catalog 2012-2013](#) (pp. 164-166) publishes this information. Students receive letters of notification to their home addresses informing them of deficiency points (see Sample Grade Deficiency Points Warning Letter, Appendix IV.R.2) and of dismissal. Advising measures for a student whose GPA begins to decline or falls below 3.0 are intensive in the MLIS Program. These efforts will be described in Standard IV.4.3.

IV.4 Students construct coherent programs of study that allow individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of program requirements established by the school. Students receive systematic, multifaceted evaluation of their achievements. Students have access to continuing opportunities for guidance, counseling, and placement assistance.

IV.4.1 Students construct coherent programs of study that allow individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of program requirements established by the school.

The curriculum and the advising structure of the VSU MLIS Program work in tandem to encourage students to articulate their individual professional needs, goals, and aspirations from their entrance into the Program to their final Capstone experience. Advising is a key component in helping students to construct coherent programs of study. The assignment of students to faculty advisors is based whenever possible on the students' interests and goals. A request to change an advisor requires a rationale and submission of an online form. The first contact between the Program and an admitted MLIS student is generally in the form of an email welcoming the student to the program. All students are advised that enrollment in the MLIS 7000 Foundations of Library and Information Science course in their first semester is required. Advisors of probationary students generally recommend that they take just that course. Advisors of students who wish to take two or more courses in any given semester in that first year suggest enrollment in the core courses. Students holding graduate assistantships must attend full-time, defined as six or more hours.

Several aspects of building a coherent program of study are pointed out to students in the early stages of their student careers. When the *Foundations* course was conducted in-person, the first session was an orientation to the Program. When the *Foundations* course transitioned to an online format in Spring 2010, advisors encouraged students to attend a face-to-face orientation at the start of the semester of enrollment, and the percentage of students who attended approached 100 percent. Since Spring 2011, all MLIS students are required to attend a face-to-face orientation on the VSU campus as their introduction to the Program. Part of the orientation is devoted to explaining the core courses and their relationships as prerequisites to elective courses.

On an individual basis, each student's advisor receives the student's application file, including the student's essay on career goals. The advisor uses this information to start a dialogue on what direction a student might want to take in preparing for the profession. An automated registration system used by the University allows students to register only after their advisors unlock their accounts. The University schedules an advising week each semester for student-advisor consultations, and the MLIS Program publishes these dates along with information germane to course selection in advising bulletins posted to student email accounts.

The University requires that all departments include an Academic Advising page on their websites. The [MLIS Program's advising page](#) includes links to materials on:

- Orientation materials
- A Proposed Course Schedule (courses projected in advance)
- Optional Tracks
- Dual MLIS and School Media Certification materials
- Program of Study forms
- Graduation Application forms

Although students are not required to plan course selections more than one semester in advance, their advisors encourage the students to do so. The advantage of developing a planned program of study is difficult to convey to students with minimal prior exposure to the profession. To assist those students, and, in fact, all MLIS candidates, the Program assures that core courses are offered two to three times in every given academic year, and elective courses addressing the Program's objectives (e.g., library management, information organization, information services, collection development, and professional issues such as ethics and diversity) as well as those electives required to complete track requirements rotate regularly onto course offerings in a two-year cycle as documented at Standard II: Curriculum. The MLIS Curriculum Committee posts a schedule of course projections for two years in advance on the MLIS website. Using this schedule, students see the "big picture" in terms of numbers and variety of courses from which they may choose; they can target those courses related specifically to their academic goals; and they can prepare, both financially and mentally, for the course loads they need to complete their programs of study.

Students have the option to declare a track of concentrated study in Cataloging and Classification, Library Management, Reference Sources and Services, Technology, Youth Services, or Health Sciences Librarianship as described under Standard II. For students who wish to acquire concurrent certification for the Georgia school media specialist and the MLIS degree, a Dual Program is an option and is most often declared after the first semester of the student's program of study.

Students who request transfer of courses from a previous degree or from non-degree graduate courses completed at another institution and students who declare the Dual Program must complete a Program of Study form. This is a plan approved by the advisor, Program director, and the Dean of the Graduate School that charts their courses according to articulated career goals.

Other options that assist students in meeting career goals include a reciprocal agreement for cross-listing courses with the graduate program in Public History at the University of West Georgia, cross-listed courses with several VSU departments, an Independent Study option, and a 120-hour Supervised Fieldwork course as described under Standard II. The fieldwork course is mandatory for students declaring tracks in Cataloging, Reference, or Health Sciences Librarianship; [guidelines and documents necessary to fulfill fieldwork obligations](#) are available on the Program's website. The fulfillment of the Dual Program requires a 100-hour internship divided equally among elementary, middle, and high school libraries and supervised by a faculty member in the VSU College of Education. Since Fall 2007, 128 MLIS students completed fieldwork requirements for credit; 72 of those students were enrolled in tracks (Table IV.12).

Table IV.12: Track enrollments, Spring 2007 – Spring 2013

Tracks 2007-2013	Management	Cataloging	Reference	Technology	Health Sciences	Dual Program	Totals
Completed	19	13	13	14	8	11	78
Declared						4	

Source: MLIS Student Database (on-site); Students Graduated with Tracks Report (Appendix IV.S)

IV.4.2 Students receive systematic, multifaceted evaluation of their achievements.

Students receive continuous feedback on their academic progress on three levels – as individual guidance, through evaluations of their coursework, and on a programmatic level. The faculty provide individualized feedback through consultations between students and their advisors and/or their instructors. For example, students who show exceptional interest or academic performance in a particular branch of the profession are encouraged to present at conferences or apply for internships. Their scholarship is cited on the [Student News | Presentations](#) webpage. Following the advice of their professors, several students have published their Capstone papers or authored articles for high-impact journals, and their works are listed on the [Student News | Publications](#) webpage. Select MLIS students have presented their research at Valdosta State University's [Graduate Research Symposium](#) each year since its inception in 2009. Links from that webpage lead to abstracts for these MLIS poster presentations: 2013, p.21 | 2012, p.16 | 2011, p.13 | 2010, p.17 | 2009, p.14.

On the course level, students receive feedback on their assignments in a number of formats. Support staff from the [eLearning center at VSU](#) train faculty in the use of rubrics, and this tool is widely used by the MLIS faculty. Viewing the rubric results allows students as well as faculty to identify academic strengths and areas that need improvement. The VSU course learning software allows for instant feedback to assignments, and the newly-adopted courseware includes ADA-compliant tools that allow audio and video feedback. If needed, the course instructor provides recommendations to supplemental tutorials for those students who need to fill gaps in their skills, generally in technology or advanced writing.

In accordance with the systematic assessment cycle, adopted in Fall 2011 by the MLIS Program, student learning outcome assessments are strategically placed within core courses to evaluate the efficacy of the Program in achieving its goals and objectives. The students submit specified core assessments to a database (LiveText is the program used on the VSU campus); the faculty use standardized rubrics to score student outcomes on those assessments and to classify performances as Target, Acceptable, or Unacceptable. The final course grade for a student generally correlates with this rating, so this is one more level of feedback on academic performance available to students. The student learning outcome assessment cycle is described in full at Standard II: Curriculum.

IV.4.3 Students have access to continuing opportunities for guidance, counseling, and placement assistance.

MLIS faculty first introduce students to the continuing opportunities for assistance in constructing programs of study during the new student orientation established in Spring 2011. At this two-day face-to-face orientation held on the VSU campus, students meet the faculty, are oriented to the basic tenets of the LIS profession, discuss academic honesty issues, meet with their advisors, attend a peer advising session where they interact with current students and alumni, step through the logins to all VSU network accounts, interview each other in small groups, obtain their VSU IDs which entitle them access to educational resources across the state, and receive introductions to online library resources as well as to the learning management system (LMS) they will use to participate in classes and submit assignments for all their courses.

If there are hardship circumstances that interfere with attendance, the *Foundations* instructor assumes responsibility for acclimating those students to the online learning environment by referring them to the orientation materials (e.g., handouts) stored on the course website and providing links to tutorials on the LMS.

As discussed in Standard IV.3.4, part of the attrition in enrollment can be attributed to students who concluded after several semesters in the Program that “It was not what I thought it would be.” Several segments of the orientation for new students are designed to clarify the current state of the profession and to provide previews of faculty expectations in areas such as time management, course loads, and technology preparedness. It is too early to evaluate whether this intensive orientation to the Program will help alleviate the gradual attrition curve reflected in the data from the years prior to the implementation of the orientation. To date, responses on the evaluation form (Appendix IV.T) for the orientation indicate that the presentations provided meaningful information and helped to alleviate anxieties about the online learning environment.

In addition to the MLIS student orientation, the University provides a multitude of support services to online students. The VSU Web site includes illustrated tutorials and help screens for every conceivable online transaction that a student needs to perform. From 2005-2012, the MLIS Program published a directory to these support services called *The E-hiker’s Survival Guide* (Appendix IV.U). The *Guide* began with instructions on how to obtain the VSU student ID number and steps students through other online procedures such as finding course listings, registering, dropping and adding courses, gaining access to library materials, getting into course Web sites, and reporting problems with Internet connections.

Between 2007 and 2011, the Program periodically published an electronic newsletter in the form of an *Advising Bulletin* (Appendix IV.V). It listed departmental announcements, pending deadlines for registration and fee payments, scholarship opportunities, and courses slated for coming semesters. One issue each semester was devoted to listing the textbooks assigned to the next semester’s courses, including online ordering availability from the VSU bookstore. From 2012-2013, the *Bulletin* was published on an ad hoc basis.

Access to library resources through online subscriptions and through interlibrary loan is of tremendous importance to the MLIS students. Both the *E-hiker’s Survival Guide* and the *Advising Bulletin* provided instructions on how to find materials through the website of the Odum Library, the primary access point for borrowing and downloading materials. Tutorials and special pages for distance education students are included on this Web site. In fact, the Library designates one of the reference librarians as the contact person for distance-education students. VSU students also have reciprocal borrowing privileges with all other libraries in the University System of Georgia. This information is now provided to all incoming students as part of the MLIS Program face-to-face orientation.

In Spring 2010 the dissemination of some of the information once provided through *The E-hiker’s Survival Guide* and the *Advising Bulletin* transferred to a password-protected website called the *MLIS Village* (available via D2L or onsite). This is part of the University’s learning courseware network and, therefore, includes tools to create discussions, chats, live classroom sessions, and folders for files that students can view, print, or download. A MLIS faculty

moderator enrolls students as members and manages the site. She posts news from the department and professional organizations along with job and meeting announcements. Links to services both on-campus and sponsored by external organizations direct students to materials and events on career awareness and counseling, placement listings, and workshops for undergraduate and graduate students and alumni. Workshop topics include résumé preparation, job search strategies, and interviewing skills. In addition, individual faculty send *ad hoc* emails to students to alert them to employment opportunities or grants and scholarships as those opportunities arise.

Advising measures for a student whose GPA begins to decline or falls below 3.0 are intensive in the MLIS Program. The student's advisor provides the first line of consultation. The advisors receive copies of the letters issued by the Graduate School alerting the student to grades received below a B and/or deficiency points. Generally, the advisor will recommend that the student reduce his/her course load. If failing grades were the result of hardship circumstances (defined by the VSU Student Affairs office), the advisor will provide the contact to the VSU Student Affairs official who reviews such cases and the link to the policy in the [Graduate Catalog \(2012-2013 p. 30\)](#) that outlines criteria and procedures for applying for a hardship withdrawal. If a student is dismissed, the VSU Graduate School policy requires a one-year "wait" period before the student may re-apply for admission. Again, the advisor guides the student who wants to re-apply through this process. If a student's GPA is so far below the 3.0 required to enter the Capstone course that it is not possible for the student to achieve a 3.0 within remaining courses, the student is advised of those circumstances.

IV.5 The school provides an environment that fosters student participation in the definition and determination of the total learning experience. Students are provided with opportunities to form student organizations and to participate in the formulation, modification, and implementation of policies affecting academic and student affairs.

The VSU MLIS Program supports a student organization and hosts activities, online and in-person, to instill a sense of community among students and to invite them to participate as stakeholders in their own learning experiences.

Students of the VSU MLIS Program formed the Student Organization of Library and Information Science (SOLIS) in 2001. Today, SOLIS is recognized by VSU as a [student association](#) and by the American Library Association as an official student chapter. All MLIS students are automatically members of SOLIS with no dues or initiation rites imposed. The organization holds elections for officers annually in August. SOLIS maintains a [website](#) and publishes a [newsletter](#) that it archives on the SOLIS website and distributes electronically to all students and alumni. An MLIS faculty member acts as the advisor for the organization and oversees financials for fund-raising activities. A MLIS alumni group receives assistance from the Program for obtaining member contacts and issuing mailings, however, this is an independent organization that operates under its own policies and procedures. MLIS graduates also are initiated into the [University's Alumni Association](#) en masse at the VSU graduation ceremony. The rights and privileges associated with membership in that organization apply to all MLIS graduates.

The president of SOLIS and the president of the MLIS Alumni Association hold seats on the VSU MLIS Advisory Board. As members, these officers receive invitations to Advisory Board meetings, are given a forum at general stakeholder meetings (Appendix I.D), and may schedule private consultations with the Program Director. The Alumni Association's Acting President and the SOLIS president and secretary/treasurer served as reviewers of the ALA COA Program Presentation 2013; the Alumni Association's Acting President will serve on the search committee for a new department head scheduled for Fall 2013. The MLIS Program initiated a town hall meeting in Fall 2012 at the Georgia Council of Media Organizations (GaCOMO) conference. All students and alumni were invited, and the event was publicized in the SOLIS newsletter and in announcements posted to the MLIS Village student website. This tradition will continue at the Fall 2013 conference.

In addition, the students and alumni of the MLIS Program maintain a Facebook page. An alumna and a faculty advisor share responsibility for moderating the site. Whereas the MLIS Village is a proprietary site that focuses on news and announcements related more to current students, the Facebook site (access on-site or with "friend" approval) provides a social media forum for students and alumni.

IV.6 The school applies the results of evaluation of student achievement to program development. Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of the degree to which a program's academic and administrative policies and activities regarding students are accomplishing its objectives. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, staff, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

IV.6.1 The school applies the results of evaluation of student achievement to program development.

Between AY 2006-07 and AY 2011-12, the MLIS Program's educational outcomes were based on five broad Competences related to knowledge utilization and organization; professional behavior; investigative, experiential learning; communication abilities; and management skills. The Program's outcome assessments were based on course-based activities such as authorship of scholarly papers, completion of a professional portfolio, and fulfillment of supervised fieldwork. For full details on these educational outcomes used prior to 2012, see Standard I.1.

In Fall 2011, the MLIS faculty worked with two assessment specialists from the University to revise the Program's objectives based upon a student learning outcome (SLO) model. Student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs) complete with scoring rubrics were also developed. A planning cycle that targets systematic review of the SLOAs and use of data to improve the Program was implemented.

IV.6.2 Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of the degree to which a program's academic and administrative policies and activities regarding students are accomplishing its objectives.

These new SLOAs and a complete outline of how the SLOA-based evaluation model would be phased into the Program's planning cycle were articulated in the March 1, 2012 *Plan for the Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status: Systematic Planning Based on Student Learning Outcomes* (Appendix I.A) accepted by COA on April 14, 2012.

In effect, the faculty developed and began to implement SLOAs as direct assessment measures based on nine student learning outcomes (SLOs); eight SLOAs are integrated into the six core courses, and one SLOA may be fulfilled in the context of a guided elective. The nine SLOAs map directly to the new Program Objectives (Table IV.13). Table I.4, showing the relationships of the Program Objectives to both direct and indirect measures (e.g. surveys), can be found under Standard I. Table II.2, showing the inter-relationships of the Program Objectives to SLOAs, MLIS core courses, ALA Standards, and ALA Core Competences, can be found under Standard II.1.2. A complete accounting of the role of curricular planning associated with the student learning outcomes along with links to syllabi and rubrics is included under Standard II.1.1.

Selected SLOAs went into effect according to a planned schedule as outlined in the *Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status* (Appendix I.A, p. 8). The VSU [Graduate Catalog \(2012-2013 pp. 164-165\)](#) published the revised Program Goals and Program Objectives. The Program communicated these standards to potential students on its website. The faculty notified current students of these changes via inclusion of the Program Objectives mapped to student learning outcomes on all syllabi of core courses and guided electives immediately affected by the new standards; announcements on the student website; and at the town hall meeting held at the fall conference of GaCOMO.

Table IV.13: Alignment of Program Objectives with Student Learning Outcome Assessments

Program Objectives <i>Graduates of MLIS Program will:</i>	Student Learning Outcome Assessments (SLOAs)
PO 1. Perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers by demonstrating skills in information resources; reference and user service; administration and management; organization of recorded knowledge and information.	SLOA 1.1 Applied Library Experience Notebook (ALEN) 1.1.1 Journal Analysis 1.1.2 Reference Consultation Project 1.1.3 Management Client Report 1.1.4 Original Cataloging Project SLOA 1.2 Collection Development Project
PO 2. Use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.	SLOA 2.1 Social Cataloging Technology Project SLOA 2.2 Reference Transactions Assessment SLOA 2.3 Career e-Portfolio Website
PO 3. Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.	SLOA 3 Research Proposal
PO 4. Demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists.	SLOA 4.1 MLIS Foundational Knowledge Articulation Assessment SLOA 4.2 Ethics Project Report SLOA 4.3 Career e-Portfolio

Source: Adapted from *Plan for Removal of Conditional Status March 2012* (Appendix I.A, p. 4)

Direct Assessment via Student Learning Outcomes

The schedule for the implementation of the nine SLOAs gradually introduces the assessments into the core curriculum. The faculty selected these three student learning outcome assessments (SLOAs) as starting points on the implementation calendar.

SLOA 3, the completion of a research proposal, the only assessment for PO 3, embedded in the Research Methods course.

SLOA 2.3, the construction of an ePortfolio as a website, one of three assessments for PO 2, embedded in the Capstone course.

SLOA 4.3, the documentation of professionalism in the form of a career ePortfolio, one of three assessments for PO 4, embedded in the Capstone course.

Program Objective 3 (Integrating Research) – SLOA 3 - Constructing a Research Proposal

A requirement of the Research Methods course is the completion of a research proposal.

Program Objective 3, the ability of students to “integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers,” is assessed by SLOA 3 applying a rubric to those proposals. Originally, the rubric contained eight components (Table IV.14). Based on the results of a pilot study using that rubric in Fall 2011, the eight components were reduced to these four components of the proposal: the abstract, the literature review, research design and methods, and the conclusion.

A second assessment concern addressed in the pilot study of SLOA 3 was inter-rater reliability. Twelve proposals (25%) were selected at random from the Fall 2011 class and rated by three faculty members using the original rubric (eight areas assessed). An analysis of inter-rater reliability revealed low *absolute value* inter-rater agreement when the eight areas were assessed separately for the pilot group (overall mean of 44.4% agreement). The level of agreement among the three raters on student achievement of the standard as a whole, i.e., the degree to which students met the standard when *acceptable* and *target* categories were merged, was more consistent (overall mean of 83.6% agreement).

The inter-rater analysis indicated a need to insure better definitions and more consistent applications of the definitions for *unacceptable*, *acceptable*, and *target* performance when evaluating assessments related to SLOA 3. This exercise also raised two questions: (a) whether all eight elements measured the program objective and (b) whether research proficiency should require successful performance on all elements of the rubric. The discussion related to the first question centered on the relationship (or lack thereof) between these elements of the assessment and the program objective. The faculty ultimately agreed that two of the eight components, “effective communication” and “use of style guide,” did not directly measure students’ abilities to integrate research. One other component, “area of focus” of the proposed study, was deemed redundant and, thus, dropped. Finally, two components, “research design” and “research methods,” were collapsed into one component, “design and methods.”

Table IV.14: Data display used to pilot test the original 8-component rubric for SLOA 3

Student Name	Abstract	Literature Review	Area of Focus	Research Design	Research Methods	Conclusion	Effective Communication	Use of Style Guide	Total Number of Target or Acceptable Items (attained a score of 2 or 3)	
<i>Sample Data Row</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>6 of 8</i>	
Student A										
Student B										
Student C										
Student D										
Student E										
Student F										
Student G										
Student H										
Student I										
Student J										
Student K										
Student L										
Total Target									Number and % of students with all 8 acceptable items who successfully accomplished the assessment	
% Target										
Total Acceptable										
% Acceptable										
Total Unacceptable									Number and % of students with fewer than 8 acceptable items who did not successfully accomplish the assessment	
% Unacceptable										

Source: Print reports on pilot test of Program Objective 3 (on-site)

Full implementation of the revised rubric began in Spring 2012. Since that time, the SLOA for Program Objective 3 has been applied to six sections (n=128 students) of Research Methods taught by four different professors. Results, so far seem promising. The faculty set a goal of 90% of students achieving performance levels of either target or acceptable. The data compiled as of Spring 2013 shows that 119 students of 128 (93%) achieved that goal (Table IV.15). In Spring 2012, there were two criteria in which students performed below the 90% level - articulation of design and methods (85%) and writing a conclusion (85%). Scores on those criteria progressively improved in the ensuing semesters. There are several possible reasons for improvement in student performance in this SLOA: progressive refinement of teaching methods; smaller class sizes in Spring 2013; and individual differences in students and/or teachers. More longitudinal data is needed to determine whether the improved performance will prevail.

Table IV.15: Revised Data Display used to collect data for SLOA 3

SLOA Data to fulfill assessment of Program Objective 3	Abstract				Literature Review				Design and Methods				Conclusion			
	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Total	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Total	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Total	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Total
Target	33	27	30	90	26	29	32	87	13	23	28	64	17	27	33	77
Acceptable	12	18	6	36	21	15	4	40	27	20	8	55	23	17	2	42
Unacceptable	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	7	2	0	9	7	1	1	9
$n = 47+45+36=128$	47	45	36	128	47	45	36	128	47	45	36	128	47	45	36	128
Total Successful (Target+Acceptable)	45	45	36	126	47	44	36	127	40	43	36	119	40	44	35	119
%Target	70	60	83	70	55	65	89	68	28	51	78	50	36	60	92	60
% Acceptable	26	40	17	28	45	33	11	31	57	45	22	43	49	38	5	33
% Unacceptable	4	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	15	4	0	7	15	2	3	7
% Successful (Target+Acceptable)	96	100	100	98	100	98	100	99	85	96	100	93	85	98	97	93

Source of statistics: LiveText Rubric Reports for Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013 (Appendix IV.W)

Program Objectives 2 and 4 – SLOAs 2.3 and 4.3

The assessments for two program objectives are embedded in the Capstone course. These include:

SLOA 2.3, constructing an ePortfolio website to demonstrate the ability to use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers (currently assessing 11 competencies).

SLOA 4.3, assembling a career ePortfolio to demonstrate professionalism as librarians or information specialists (currently assessing six competencies).

Program Objective 2 (Technology) – SLOA 2.3 – Constructing an ePortfolio Website

Using a method similar to the process used to pilot SLOA 3, in Spring 2012, three faculty members independently reviewed Capstone documents selected at random from Fall 2011. The inter-rater reliability on all components on the rubrics was high, almost 100%. Full implementation of both rubrics began in Fall 2012. Since that time, the SLOAs for Program Objectives 2.3 and 4.3 have been applied to three sections (n=63 students) of Capstone taught by two different professors.

The columns for Fall 2012 in Table IV.16 represent the performances of students as scored under the original 13 performance points. Using a goal of 90% of students achieving performance levels when combining target and acceptable levels, the data for SLOA 2.3 shows that students in Fall 2012 achieved that goal in 12 of the 13 performance points. The Font component of the scoring rubric was the only area in which deficient scores resulted (89%).

At the review of SLOAs in December 2012, the faculty agreed to remove two of the 13 components from the rubric for SLOA 2.3, the criteria assessing the composition of artifacts and the criteria assessing linking from page-to-page, based upon reports from the faculty assessors

that these were redundant. As a result, these two performance points were discontinued and, subsequently, are not scored in Spring 2013 in Table IV.16.

By Spring 2013, all students had achieved proficiency scores (either acceptable or target) in the revised rubric measuring 11 components. However, aggregated target scores across both semesters were achieved by 50% or more of Capstone students in only four areas: browser compatibility (95%), link functionality (63%), selection of purposeful artifacts (75%), and inclusion of relevant content beyond minimal specifications (57%). The latter two performance points require considerable technical effort to finesse the links to that content.

Table IV.16: Data Display SLOA 2.3

SLOA Data to partially fulfill assessment of Program Objective 2	Web Development				Web Organization				Browser Compatibility			
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total
Target	8	1	8	17	26	3	5	34	29	31	14	74
Acceptable	19	31	5	55	4	29	8	41	1	2	0	3
Unacceptable	3	1	1	5	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
$n = 30+33+14=77$	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77
Total Successful (Target+Acceptable)	27	32	13	72	30	32	13	75	30	33	14	77
%Target	27	3	57	22	87	1	36	44	97	94	100	96
% Acceptable	63	94	36	71	13	96	57	53	3	6	0	4
% Unacceptable	10	3	7	7	0	3	7	3	0	0	0	0
% Successful (Target+Acceptable)	90	97	93	93	100	97	93	97	100	100	100	100

Table IV.16 continued.

SLOA Data to partially fulfill assessment of Program Objective 2	Artifacts-Content				Artifacts-Purpose				*Artifacts-Composition			Font				Graphics			
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	*Spring 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total
Target	30	6	7	43	30	17	13	60	7			13	6	4	23	19	5	2	26
Acceptable	0	27	7	34	0	16	1	17	23			10	27	6	43	10	28	11	49
Unacceptable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			7	0	4	11	1	0	1	2
$n = 30+33+14=77$	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30			30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77
Total Successful (Target+Acceptable)	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30			23	33	10	66	29	33	13	75
%Target	100	18	50	56	100	52	93	78	23			43	18	28	30	63	15	86	34
% Acceptable	0	82	50	44	0	48	7	22	77			34	82	44	56	34	85	79	64
% Unacceptable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			23	0	28	14	3	0	7	2
% Successful (Target+Acceptable)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100			77	100	72	86	97	100	93	98

Table IV.16 continued

SLOA Data to partially fulfill assessment of Program Objective	Overall				Copyright Compliance				Link Design				Link Function				*Link Pg-to-pg		
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Sum m 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Total
Target	20	7	7	34	7	0	2	9	22	9	8	39	26	14	10	50	27		
Acceptable	7	26	6	39	23	32	12	67	7	24	6	37	2	19	3	24	2		
Unacceptable	3	0	1	4	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	3	1		
$n = 30+33+14=77$	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30		
Total Successful (Target+Acceptable)	27	33	13	73	30	32	14	75	29	33	14	76	28	33	13	74	29		
%Target	67	21	50	44	23	0	14	12	74	27	57	51	87	42	71	65	91		
% Acceptable	23	79	43	51	77	97	86	87	23	73	43	48	6	58	22	31	6		
% Unacceptable	10	0	7	5	0	3	0	1	3	0	0	1	6	0	7	4	3		
% Successful (Target+Acceptable)	90	100	93	95	100	97	100	99	97	100	100	99	93	100	93	96	97		

* These performance points were determined to be redundant at the December review of SLOAs and were discontinued.
Source of statistics: LiveText Quick Rubric Reports for Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Summer 2013 (Appendix IV.W)

In terms of the evaluation of the ePortfolio websites, two issues related to the learning environment are noteworthy. (1) The Capstone students receive feedback from the instructors on their sites and have one more opportunity to refine the design of the site and correct errors or omissions prior to the final scoring of SLOA 2.3. (2) Starting in Fall 2012, the *Foundations* core course incorporated the production of the shell for a website that includes the basic elements of an ePortfolio into its required activities. The creation of this shell is not an SLOA, but the faculty plan to monitor whether its inclusion as a graded activity eventually influences the overall quality of performance in SLOA 2.3.

Program Objective 4 (Professionalism) – SLOA 4.3 – Assembling a Career ePortfolio

The columns for Fall 2012 in Table IV.17 represent the performances of students as scored under six performance points. Using a goal of 90% of students achieving proficiency, levels of either target or acceptable, the data compiled as of Spring 2013 for SLOA 4.3 shows that students in Fall 2012 achieved that goal in five of the six performance points. In Spring 2012, the Presentation component of the scoring rubric was the only area in which three scores of unacceptable and one non-submission reduced proficiency to 87%.

In Spring 2013, the Capstone instructors provided two opportunities for students to increase their design skills. (1) They provided links to archived presentations of exemplary design quality from previous students. (2) They referred their students to a tutorial on the principles of visual design (Appendix IV.X; available as a PowerPoint on the course website). Scores on the Capstone Presentation in SLOA 4.3 did improve in proficiency to 97%. The tutorial is now incorporated into the learning materials provided on the Capstone course website, and faculty will continue to monitor its use and possible effects.

At the faculty review of SLOAs in December 2012, the Program Director expressed concerns about using the Reflective Essay written by Capstone students as an assessment based upon

confidentiality and anonymity. As a result, the reflective essay requirement was placed on hold (and is not reported in data display Table IV.17) until further discussion about its removal was held at the August 2013 SLOA review meeting.

Table IV.17: Data Display SLOA 4

SLOA Data to partially fulfill assessment of Program Objective 4	Resume				Prof Dev Plan				Presentation			
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Total
Target	12	18	13	43	15	5	11	31	16	10	13	39
Acceptable	16	14	1	31	12	28	3	43	10	22	1	33
Unacceptable	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	3	1	0	4
Not submitted	1	--	--	1	1	--	--	1	1	--	--	1
$n = 30+33+14=77$	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77
Total Successful (Target+Acceptable)	28	32	14	74	27	33	14	74	26	32	14	72
% Target	40	55	93	56	50	15	79	41	54	30	93	51
% Acceptable	53	42	7	41	40	85	21	56	33	67	7	43
% Unacceptable	3	3	0	2	7	0	0	2	10	3	0	5
% Not submitted	3	0	--	1	3	0	--	1	3	0	--	1
% Successful (Target+Acceptable)	93	97	100	97	90	100	100	97	87	97	100	94
Table IV.17 continued. SLOA Data to partially fulfill assessment of Program Objective 4	Paper				Effective Communication				Use of Publication Style Guide			
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Total	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Total
Target	15	11	10	36	13	13	11	37	12	14	8	34
Acceptable	13	21	2	36	16	19	2	37	16	19	5	40
Unacceptable	1	1	2	4	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	2
Not submitted	1	--	--	1	1	--	--	1	1	--	--	1
$n = 30+33+14=77$	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77	30	33	14	77
Total Successful (Target+Acceptable)	28	32	12	72	29	32	13	74	28	33	13	74
% Target	50	33	72	47	44	39	79	48	40	42	57	44
% Acceptable	44	64	14	47	54	58	14	48	54	58	36	52
% Unacceptable	3	3	14	5	0	3	7	3	3	0	7	3
% Not submitted	3	--	--	1	2	--	--	1	3	0	--	1
% Successful (Target+Acceptable)	94	97	86	94	98	97	93	96	94	100	93	96

Source of statistics: LiveText Quick Rubric Reports for Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Summer 2013 (Appendix IV.W)

Remaining Program Objectives and Associated SLOAs

The implementation of the other SLOAs associated with Program Objectives has proceeded according to schedule with the exception of SLOA 1.1.2, the Reference Consultation Project, and SLOA 2.2, the Reference Transactions Assessment. The hire of a temporary instructor to cover the core course in which these assessments are embedded led to a decision to delay implementation of those SLOAs until Fall 2013.

All other remaining SLOAs (1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, and 4.2) were beta tested in AY 2012-2013 and are scheduled to launch fully in AY 2013-2014. The VSU MLIS department has acquired a subscription to an assessment database (LiveText), and all data from the pilot assessments and implemented assessments are stored and managed through that online tool. Table IV.18 outlines the status of the student learning outcomes.

Table IV.18: Status of Student Learning Outcome Assessments

SLOAs	Status of SLOA Implementation		
	Beta	Fully implemented	Delayed Beta
SLOA 1.1, Element 1	Fall 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 1.1, Element 2			Fall 2013-Summer 2014
SLOA 1.1, Element 3	Fall 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 1.1, Element 4	Summer 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 1.2	Summer 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 2.1	Fall 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 2.2			Fall 2013-Summer 2014
SLOA 2.3	Fall 2011-Summer 2012	Fall 2012-Summer 2013	
SLOA 3	Fall 2011-Summer 2012	Fall 2012-Summer 2013	
SLOA 4.1	Fall 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 4.2	Fall 2012-Summer 2013		
SLOA 4.3	Fall 2011-Summer 2012	Fall 2012-Summer 2013	

A periodic, systematic review of the SLOA implementation process was conducted by the faculty within each semester of AY 2012-2013 (Table IV.19). During the first three reviews (8/7/2012, 12/10/2012, and 2/14 and 2/18, 2013), the faculty approved a few actions concerning more precise language and better consistency in scoring the rubrics. They also identified a number of performance points that require further scrutiny after data collection in Spring 2013. The SLOA review of August 21, 2013, was part of a faculty retreat. In that review, the faculty identified performance points, i.e., criteria from the rubrics that assess student learning in particular competences, in which acceptable scores dipped below the 90% mark. The development of action plans is required for performance points in which unacceptable scores reach 10% or higher, and action plans have been implemented for Fall 2013.

Files documenting the outcomes of the August 21, 2013 review of the SLOA Rubrics are available for examination: Fall 2013 Revisions – SLOA Information and Rubrics (Appendix IV.Y.1); SLOA Driven Action Plan, Fall 2013 (Appendix IV.Y.2).

These summaries of the SLOA review meetings are available for examination: SLOA Review Meeting Aug7_2012 (Appendix IV.Z.1); SLOA Review Meeting Dec10_2012 (Appendix

IV.Z.2); SLOA Review Meeting Feb14+18_2013 (Appendix IV.Z.3); and SLOA Review Meeting Aug21_2013 (Appendix IV.Z.4).

Table IV.19: Review Schedule of Student Learning Outcome Assessments

Dates of Reviews	Focus of Review	Actions Approved
August 7, 2012	All scoring guides from SLOAs beta tested.	Elimination of some elements approved; Title of SLOA 1.1.2 changed from Reference Simulation Project to Reference Consultation Project.
December 10, 2012	Individual components of SLOAs.	Removal of style guides as an assessed component; wording on “Effective Communication” component revised; SLOA 1.1.4 and 2.2 cut scores changed to 90%; Proposed change of SLOA 4.1 from two assessment levels (Acceptable and Unacceptable) to three levels (Target level to be added) so as to conform to other SLOAs (to be applied in Spring 2013).
February 14, 2013	Rubrics that are out of Beta testing and were fully implemented in Fall 2012.	Modified to include a fourth column labeled “Did not submit” to recognize students who may have withdrawn from a course or who did not complete the assessment for any reason.; Any rubric which shows performance at 10% or more at Unacceptable will trigger an action plan.
February 18, 2013	PO 3 housed in the Research Methods course.	Discrepancies in mastery of the concepts of research design and methodology targeted for observation and discussion at next review.
	PO 4.1 housed in the Foundations course	Redesign of the three-level rubric completed and implemented.
	PO 4.2 housed in the Capstone course.	Recommendation to revise the rubric to include a non-participation element in Spring 2013; to be reviewed again in the next review.
	PO 4.3 housed in the Capstone course.	Discussion of the seven performance points, with the Capstone Presentation element showing unacceptable results; Validity of the reflective essay as an assessment point discussed; Both areas to be included in the next review.
August 21, 2013	Fall review of the Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA) results for Spring and Summer 2013.	Rubrics were reviewed for continuing relevance to program outcomes and adjustments to the rubrics to bring them into better alignment with program outcomes were proposed and accepted by the faculty.

In conclusion, in keeping with the procedures spelled out in the Systematic Evaluation and Planning Cycle (SEP Cycle), the faculty has followed through on the progression from beta testing to implementation of SLOAs associated with Program Objective 3 in the Research

Methods course and Program Objectives 2.3 and 4.3 in the Capstone course. As scheduled, the faculty reviewed the SLOAs periodically from Fall 2012 through Summer 2013. At the end-of-Summer term review in August 2013, the faculty reviewed all available data from both the fully implemented SLOAs and from the SLOAs beta tested in 2012-2013. In essence, the review included data from all SLOAs except 1.1.2 (Reference Consultation Project) and 2.2 (Reference Transaction Project). Where unacceptable levels of 10% or higher are in evidence, action plans will be developed for those performance points and will be instituted in AY 2013-2014.

IV.6.3 Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, staff, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

In addition to the direct measures for student learning outcomes, the Program employs indirect measures as part of its Systematic Evaluation and Planning Cycle (SEP Cycle). The cycle calls for the periodic survey of the Program's stakeholders according to this schedule (see the Plan for Removal of Conditional Accreditation Status March 2012, Appendix I.A, pp. 13-14):

- Student Survey, conducted at program exit (Appendix IV.AA.1)
- Alumni Survey, conducted 1 year after graduation, to be administered to graduates from Spring 2012 in Fall 2013 and periodically thereafter (Appendix IV.AA.2)
- Employer Survey, conducted every 3 years, cycle to start with administration in Spring 2014 (Appendix IV.AA.3)

Indirect Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes / Periodic Surveys

A full accounting of the results from surveys issued during this reporting period is found under Standard II.7.3

Indirect Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes / Additional Stakeholder Involvement

Further, the Program involves its constituents in its evaluation process through venues that include surveys administered by the University and meetings extended to students, alumni, employers, and other agencies across the state of Georgia that benefit from the resources made available to them through access to a graduate program in library and information science.

As discussed in Standard IV.5, the VSU MLIS Program initiated a town hall meeting for stakeholders at the Georgia Council of Media Organizations (GaCOMO) conference in Fall 2012. A request to hold a meeting at the 2013 conference has been approved. In addition, constituents from representative institutions serve on the Program's Advisory Board, and a broad array of constituents served as advisors for this ALA COA Program Presentation review. Follow-up on the status of students who received the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarians IMLS grant (in progress) will also collect feedback from the students who benefitted from those scholarships.

Currently enrolled students receive notifications from the University to evaluate their courses at the close of each semester. These surveys, called the [Student Opinion of Instruction](#) (SOI), are conducted online and a [sample SOI is available for inspection](#). The MLIS faculty post the instructions on how to find these surveys in their course websites and encourage students to complete them. The tenure and promotion review boards on campus require that summaries of these surveys be included in the dossiers of faculty applying for job actions and the results must

be included in each faculty member's annual review. The University recognizes the shortcomings of reliance upon these surveys in terms of return rates and is taking steps to implement peer reviews and other alternative assessments of program efficacy on a campus-wide basis.

The VSU [University Tenure and Promotion Guidelines](#), adopted 2011 by the Faculty Senate, revised September 2012 (Appendix III.G), require at least one peer review of a course in the dossier of a candidate applying for tenure or promotion. The VSU MLIS Tenure and Promotion Guidelines were revised in 2012-2013, adopted by the MLIS faculty April 2013 (Appendix III.H.1). The revised Guidelines will take effect in Fall 2014. These Guidelines include the requirement of an annual peer review.

Conclusion

Students who consider enrollment in a program, who decide to enter a program, who complete that program, and who assume leadership roles in the profession as the result of their education coalesce into a force that drives growth and change in any profession. The faculty of the VSU MLIS Program understand the importance of policy-making as it applies to its students and has completely embraced the notion of a student learning outcome centered planning process as an impetus for programmatic growth and improvement. As evidenced in this chapter, systematic planning based on student learning outcomes is a data-driven evaluation process that requires training, resources for storing and tracking data, careful monitoring over time, deliberation on results, and resources to create and implement action plans. Its continued success relies largely on factors related to institutional support as discussed under Standard I and Standard III.

Standard V: Administration and Financial Support

Administration

V.1 The school is an integral yet distinctive academic unit within the institution. Its autonomy is sufficient to assure that the intellectual content of its program, the selection and promotion of its faculty, and the selection of its students are determined by the school within the general guidelines of the institution. The parent institution provides the resources and administrative support needed for the attainment of program objectives.

V.1.1 The school is an integral yet distinctive academic unit within the institution.

The Valdosta State University (VSU) Department of Library and Information Studies is the equivalent of other academic departments on campus. VSU is organized by colleges, each with its various departments. The Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program is administratively placed in Odum Library as its sole academic unit. The University Librarian serves in the capacity as dean.

The VSU administrative organization (Appendix V.A) is headed by the President, Vice Presidents, Deans, and Department Heads. At VSU department heads, directors, and other officers serve at the pleasure of the University President. The President is the chief executive officer. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and Provost is the chief academic officer. As is shown in the Odum Library organization chart (Appendix V.B), the University Librarian reports to the VPAA. In turn, the MLIS Director answers to the University Librarian. By virtue of his status as a department head, the Director is a member of the [Council of Department Heads](#). The University Librarian sits on the Deans' Council. Both the Council of Department Heads and the Dean's Council are advisory in nature and also serve as conduits of information from the Administration to the faculty and staff.

The MLIS Program was created by the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR) in the late 1990s (Appendix V.C). The Program hired its first faculty member in 2000 and two more in 2001. In the initial submission to the BOR, VSU proposed establishment of a Department of Library and Information Studies. The Program was created as a unit within the department. As the only unit within the Department of Library and Information Studies, the "Program" identity came into common use. Dr. George Gaumond, then University Librarian, served until 2002 as the Program Director. Dr. Wallace Koehler assumed the directorship from 2002 to the present.

In July 2013, Dr. Linda Most, newly promoted to associate professor, assumed the office of Program Assistant Director. The position was authorized by the VSU administration at the request of the MLIS Program because of the increased administrative load resulting from program growth and the increasing infrastructure required for the systematic program assessment process (Appendix III.A). As Assistant Director, Dr. Most became a twelve-month employee in an administrative line while continuing to hold faculty rank. Additionally, because the Program Director has announced his intention to retire at the end of July 2014 and the possibility of retirement by another senior faculty member exists, the need for administrative continuity was

anticipated. Dr. Most is well positioned and well skilled to learn and undertake administrative duties.

V.1.2.1 Its autonomy is sufficient to assure that the intellectual content of its program

VSU's MLIS Program is an autonomous teaching unit housed within the library and equivalent to other academic departments, operating under the supervision of a Dean, Vice President, and President. The MLIS faculty are institutionally competent to develop and implement its curriculum and intellectual content, within the context of the institutional processes of the University, the expectations of quality of stakeholders, and the standards of the profession. To frame the intellectual content of the Program, the MLIS Program consults with its stakeholders, applies the standards and ethics as defined by professional groups, and complies with the procedures as established by the University and applied by the Graduate Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate.

The Program's process for developing its curriculum is described in detail at Standard II: Curriculum. The responsibility for curricular content of specific courses is inherent in individual instructors, the Curriculum Committee, and the MLIS faculty as a whole. Individual instructors insure that their course content is consistent with the learning objectives defined in the course and the program. Part-time faculty construct courses and teach with guidance from full time faculty. Part time faculty teaching core courses do so under the supervision and guidance of the faculty member charged with responsibility for the area. In these courses, standardized syllabi are employed.

V.1.2.2 ... the selection and promotion of its faculty...

V.1.2.2.1 selection...

VSU departments, including the MLIS Program have wide discretion in the selection of new faculty as well as in specifying the qualifications and expertise of those individuals. Upon authorization by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (VPAA), departments initiate new faculty searches. The University requires that appointees to the teaching faculty have the appropriate terminal degree in hand at the time of appointment. For the MLIS Program, the appropriate terminal degree is the PhD or equivalent. To date all MLIS faculty have held the PhD, with one exception. That former faculty member holds the Doctor of Arts. Since 2007 and because of budgetary concerns after 2008, all new appointments to the VSU faculty have been at the entry-level, assistant professor level. The MLIS Program has been permitted to fill all vacancies, and even during the economic downturn in the State, was authorized one new faculty line after 2008 to help meet additional student demand. In addition, it has long been USG Board of Regents policy (Regulation 8.3.7.4) that new faculty are not hired with tenure, except under exceptional circumstances.

Departments define additional qualifications and requirements. The MLIS Program assesses its programmatic and curricular needs when either new or replacement lines are open. All faculty members participate in defining the parameters of the search process. These qualifications and requirements are demonstrated in the position announcements published by the MLIS Program and by the University in appropriate venues (Appendix III.I.1-13). The Program advertises on the

ALISE website and the JESSE email list. The University also advertises positions in the Clearinghouse, a statewide venue, and *Inside Higher Education*.

At VSU, individual departments have limited discretionary control over initial salary offers to new faculty members. The VPAA is responsible for faculty appointments and for initial salaries. The Program Director usually negotiates appointments and salaries. Salaries are negotiated within limits specified by University policy. The University sets departmental salaries based on studies provided through a subscription to the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR, see <http://www.cupahr.org/surveys/>). Formal appointments are made by the VPAA.

V.1.2.2.2 promotion...

The BOR establishes the general “time in rank” and other criteria for promotion and the grant of tenure within the USG. Promotion and tenure are formally granted by the BOR upon the recommendation of individual university presidents. Each university establishes the specific criteria and processes by which faculty are promoted or tenured. In 2011, VSU amended its university-wide tenure and promotion (T&P) policies. Colleges and departments were directed to review existing T&P policies to be consistent with general guidelines developed by a newly created university-wide T&P committee. This committee makes recommendations to the VPAA and VSU President.

Within broad guidelines, each VSU college defines the teaching, research and scholarship, and service requirements for the promotion and tenure of its faculty. The MLIS Program published its first T&P policy in 2005 (Appendix III.H.1). That policy was later amended and adopted in AY 2012-2013 to insure compliance with the university-level policy. The 2013 T&P policy (Appendix III.H.2) applies to faculty hired in 2013 and thereafter. The T&P policy at VSU and as it applies to the MLIS Program is discussed in detail at Standard III.8: Faculty.

V.1.2.3... and the selection of its students are determined by the school within the general guidelines of the institution.

The Dean of the Graduate School has the formal responsibility for the admission and dismissal of VSU graduate students and may grant waivers to Graduate School admission policies and academic policies. The MLIS Program has primary responsibility in defining the number and qualifications of students it accepts and dismisses. The Program establishes, within limits set by the Graduate School, applications deadlines and required applications documentation. For example, the Graduate School requires that all applicants hold at minimum bachelor’s degrees from regionally accredited institutions of higher learning. Students from foreign institutions must submit transcripts that have been evaluated by authorized agencies. Individual departments define appropriate grade point averages, undergraduate majors, standardized test scores if required, and other applications requirements. The Graduate School has two classes of acceptance: regular and probationary. Probationary students convert to “regular” once they complete nine hours of course work with a 3.0 GPA or better. Departments determine the cut-off points between probationary and regular. A detailed description of the Program’s admissions standards and policies is provided at Standard IV: Students, Section IV.3.

V.1.3 The parent institution provides the resources and administrative support needed for the attainment of program objectives.

Valdosta State University receives funding each year from the University System of Georgia appropriated by the State Legislature. Salaries and related fringe benefits for faculty and staff are budgeted directly by the VSU President and administrators and are not subject to college or departmental discretion.

Each department receives two discretionary budget lines: operating and travel. Within wide latitude, departments may utilize those resources to meet departmental needs. The Program's Planning and Budget Council provides guidance in establishing priorities for the use of those funds. The Program Director has the first authority to authorize spending. Operating funds are used to cover telephone and postage expenses, to purchase furniture, electronic equipment, and a range of office supplies. Travel funds are used to underwrite professional travel within the state, the country, and the world. Travel to teach has first priority, followed by administrative travel. Travel in support of scholarship (conference presentations and research) is promoted.

As is shown at Standard III: Faculty, MLIS faculty like all VSU faculty members have access to a number of other resources to support travel. During FY 2006-07 through FY 2012-13, faculty have applied for and received an increasing amount of VSU funding from outside the department (Appendix III.E). This stems from both an increasing number and level of resources from outside the department and requests from MLIS faculty. New funding pools have increased opportunities for both research and scholarly presentation. Most recently, in August 2013, the Graduate School announced competitive faculty scholarship funds (Appendix V.D) to support research, presentations, and graduate student recruitment for individual members of the graduate faculty.

As is documented at Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities, USG and VSU provide the Program with extensive physical and virtual resources and facilities. Those resources include office facilities at VSU, the Desire2Learn (D2L) teaching and learning platform, extensive access to other reaching and learning resources.

V.2 The school's faculty, staff, and students have the same opportunity for representation on the institution's advisory or policy-making bodies as do those of comparable units throughout the institution. The school's administrative relationships with other academic units enhance the intellectual environment and support interdisciplinary interaction; further, these administrative relationships encourage participation in the life of the parent institution.

V.2.1 The school's faculty, staff, and students have the same opportunity for representation on the institution's advisory or policy-making bodies as do those of comparable units throughout the institution.

MLIS faculty, staff, and students have the same rights and obligations of all other VSU faculty, staff, and students. The MLIS Program is represented throughout the governance structure of

VSU. There is one exception. The VSU Colleges (Arts, Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and Nursing) each have college level committees. The MLIS Program is the only academic department in Odum Library. There are therefore no college level academic committees in Odum Library.

Formal faculty representation in university governance includes the election of MLIS faculty to the [Faculty Senate](#) (Dr. Yontz, 2003-2006, Dr. Ondrusek 2008-2011, Dr. Drouillard 2013-2016), faculty membership in a range of USG, VSU, Odum Library, and departmental committees.

The Program's involvement in VSU's administrative infrastructure, including the [Department Heads' Council](#) and the Deans' Council parallel that of other academic departments. Because the Program instructs graduate students only, Program faculty participate closely with the Graduate School. Faculty members have also participated on search committees for administrative officers of the University to include the Dean of the Graduate School and the Library Dean. Dr. Ondrusek played an important role in a major change in University policy as a member of the new University tenure and promotion committee and as the chair of the departmental committee to amend its tenure and promotion policies. This service by the faculty is shown in Appendix III.K: Faculty Professional Association Memberships, Offices, and Service, as well as at Standard III: Faculty.

Program staff may participate in departmental deliberations. They are also represented on the [VSU Council on Staff Affairs](#).

Opportunities for MLIS students to participate in VSU and MLIS Program governance are limited by the distributed nature of the student body. MLIS students are represented through their [Student Organization of Library and Information Science](#) (SOLIS). The SOLIS president is a member of the MLIS Program Advisory Board (Appendix I.B). Alumni have also established their own organization and although it is not an official VSU organization, the Program hosts the MLIS Alumni [website](#). The alumni association president is a member of the Advisory Board. The students, alumni, and other stakeholders who make up the MLIS Program Advisory Board have agreed to participate in the drafting and review of this Program Presentation document.

MLIS students are afforded the opportunity to submit proposals and present at the annual VSU Graduate Research Symposia. The Program also encourages students to participate in the ALA Annual Conference Student-to-Staff program and hosts the Beta Beta Mu chapter of the International Library and Information Studies Honor Society, Beta Phi Mu.

V.2.2 The school's administrative relationships with other academic units enhance the intellectual environment and support interdisciplinary interaction; further, these administrative relationships encourage participation in the life of the parent institution.

The MLIS Program has a number of administrative linkages with other academic units across the campus. Odum Library faculty, who are academically qualified, are asked to teach part time in the Program. MLIS faculty have placed students in the Library as interns. Cooperation of Library and MLIS faculty in the development of research proposals for external funding has proven successful. MLIS and Library faculty share three elected representatives for Faculty Senate

Offices. In AY 2013-14, two of the Library's senators are elected from the Library, the third from MLIS. Other elected positions shared between the two groups include the Senate's Academic Committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee. VSU and USG service is documented at Standard III: Faculty.

MLIS faculty have served on tenure and promotion committees for other colleges. At the same time, faculty from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education and Human Resources have served on MLIS TENURE AND PROMOTION committees.

This range of formal networking has led to informal networking among VSU faculty, to include MLIS faculty. Individual MLIS faculty have formed working relationships with the faculty of other colleges to promote the intellectual environment of VSU. Through these formal and informal networks, the faculty support the "life of the parent institution." At the same time, VSU MLIS faculty participate with faculty members at other USG institutions to promote intellectual interaction and cooperation. The MLIS faculty have participated with other USG agencies in two IMLS grants (Appendix I.I) and are to begin participation with a third in AY 2013-2014. The MLIS Program is also seeking to develop cooperation in archives education with Clayton State University and the University of West Georgia. These linkages are discussed at Standard III: Faculty.

V.3 The executive officer of a program has title, salary, status, and authority comparable to heads of similar units in the parent institution. In addition to academic qualifications comparable to those required of the faculty, the executive officer has leadership skills, administrative ability, experience, and understanding of developments in the field and in the academic environment needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. The school's executive officer nurtures an intellectual environment that enhances the pursuit of the school's mission and program goals and the accomplishment of its program objectives; that environment also encourages faculty and student interaction with other academic units and promotes the socialization of students into the field.

V.3.1 The executive officer of a program has title, salary, status, and authority comparable to heads of similar units in the parent institution.

The Program is an academic department and parallel to other academic departments in other Colleges and Divisions. The Program Director answers to the University Librarian, a dean who answers to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, as do other college deans. The title "Program Director" is an artifact arising out of the establishment of the Program in 2000.

Dr. Koehler is appointed to the faculty on a twelve-month salary. He is a tenured professor. His compensation since 2008 has been \$89,648. This salary is comparable with other VSU department heads, as is shown in Table V.1.

Table V.1: Arts and Sciences and Education and Human Services Colleges
Department Head Salaries in AY 2012-13

Departments in Arts and Sciences and Education and Human Services Colleges	Department Head Salaries
Political Science	\$ 103,753
Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice	\$ 102,750
Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology	\$ 96,634
Modern and Classical Languages	\$ 96,060
Adult and Career Education	\$ 96,043
Biology	\$ 95,335
Kinesiology and Physical Education	\$ 92,855
Chemistry	\$ 91,508
Mathematics and Computer Science	\$ 90,000
Philosophy and Religious Studies	\$ 89,290
Physics, Astronomy, and GeoSciences	\$ 86,420
English	\$ 85,837
Middle/Secondary Grades Education	\$ 83,978
History	\$ 70,412

Source: VSU Budget Database DVD, 2013 (available on-site).

V.3.2 In addition to academic qualifications comparable to those required of the faculty, the executive officer has leadership skills, administrative ability, experience, and understanding of developments in the field and in the academic environment needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.

The Program Director, Dr. Koehler brought previous administrative and teaching experience in academia to the position. Dr. Koehler holds the PhD from Cornell University and the MS (IS) from the University of Tennessee. He is in his twelfth year on the VSU faculty. He has published extensively to include two editions of a well-received textbook in information studies. He participates in professional associations at the state, national, and international levels where he has held positions of leadership. He serves on the board of the local public library and has been its chair for six of those years. He has had professional LIS experience in a special library and with an information brokerage.

V.3.3 The school's executive officer nurtures an intellectual environment that enhances the pursuit of the school's mission and program goals and the accomplishment of its program objectives;

Dr. Koehler seeks to lead by example and through consensus building. His leadership style and commitment to students and the profession support the Program's MGO and are congruent with the ALA COA Standards. He seeks to lead through facilitation of consensus building and transparency in MLIS policies and procedures.

V.3.4 ...that environment also encourages faculty and student interaction with other academic units and promotes the socialization of students into the field.

Dr. Koehler has been active in encouraging cross-listing of courses, collaborative teaching across departments and institutions, and supports collaborative research across institutions and

disciplines. One example of his nurturing of an intellectual environment is his promotion of student publication and participation in professional associations. He is a strong supporter of student internships and works to develop connections between potential internship placements and current students. Dr. Koehler's research demonstrates his interest and involvement in promoting national and international interaction among library professionals and MLIS students through his many LIS contacts in the United States and Africa as well as his active involvement with [VSU Brown Scholars](#). He came to VSU after many years in academic teaching and research positions.

As discussed at Standard V.2.2, the MLIS Program interacts with other VSU academic units. The interaction through placement of MLIS students as interns in Odum Library (as well as other libraries at other institutions) contributes to student socialization into the field. The MLIS Program maintains good relationships with its alumni. This, in turn, has increased opportunities for MLIS students to network with a range of information agencies to develop professional relationships. For example, while the MLIS Program does not require its students to undertake internships or to make presentations at professional meetings, it encourages its students to do so. Furthermore, the Program has been able through its VSU Foundation account to support student participation in the ALA Student to Staff program.

V.4 The school's administrative and other staff are adequate to support the executive officer and faculty in the performance of their responsibilities. The staff contributes to the fulfillment of the school's mission and program goals and objectives. Within its institutional framework the school uses effective decision-making processes that are determined mutually by the executive officer and the faculty, who regularly evaluate these processes and use the results.

V.4.1 The school's administrative and other staff are adequate to support the executive officer and faculty in the performance of their responsibilities. The staff contributes to the fulfillment of the school's mission and program goals and objectives.

As the only academic department answering to the University Librarian, much of the administrative support for the MLIS Program is derived from the library ancillary staff. These include computer services, administrative assistance, and supplies management. Other VSU services are provided by [The Center for eLearning](#) and the [VSU Information Technology Helpdesk](#). eLearning manages the online teaching platform and consults with faculty, staff, and students to facilitate online learning. The Information Technology Helpdesk is available to assist local and distance students, faculty, and staff with access to the various online management and communications services available to the VSU community. The [Office of Strategic Research and Analysis](#) provides access to data through the Data Warehouse and other data depositories.

As the Program has grown and as demands placed upon it have increased, the Program periodically reassesses its staff and administrative support needs. As a result of that process, the Program has made periodic requests for additional administrative lines. In 2005, the secretarial position was expanded from part-time to full-time. The MLIS Program was allocated two graduate assistants who provide assistance in teaching and research until AY 2013-2014. In

2013, a faculty member position was redefined from ten-month to twelve-month to populate a newly created assistant director position.

The MLIS staff are integral to the success of the Program. The Program added its first full time secretary in 2008. A part time clerk was employed under an IMLS grant in 2010 to manage scholarship student records and to serve as a first point of contact for the students. Her appointment will end in March 2014. Both the secretary and clerk help relieve the faculty of secretarial and clerical duties. The departmental secretary has become conversant with a complex and changing set of purchasing and travel procedures.

Both the secretary and the part-time clerk are important first points of contact for students, prospective students, and others. This increases the effective and efficient use of staff and faculty time. Staff management of departmental files improves the filing process and more importantly the retrieval process. This contributes to the smooth functioning of the department and therefore to the implementation of the Program's mission, goals, and objectives.

V.4.2 Within its institutional framework the school uses effective decision-making processes that are determined mutually by the executive officer and the faculty, who regularly evaluate these processes and use the results.

The Program periodically assesses the resources available to it, to include faculty, staff, and other resources as it seeks to fulfill its mission, goals, and objectives. These assessments are performed by the faculty and the director at the Program's annual retreat (Appendix I.E) and its monthly faculty meetings (Appendix I.F).

In implementation of its student learning outcome assessment cycle, the Program faculty meet after the close of each semester to review program assessment findings from the previous semester (Appendix IV.Z), to consider the assessments, to evaluate the utility of each of the assessments, and to make recommendations for curricular changes (Appendix IV.Y.2) or modification of the assessment tools (Appendix IV.Y.1).

The faculty meets monthly (Appendix I.F) to consider a range of concerns and to approve the recommendations of its committees. The Program faculty have a number of standing committees that address the business of the Program. Perhaps the most important of these is the Curriculum Committee. The Committee re-evaluates MLIS curriculum and tracks based on SLOA findings, stakeholder inputs, and changes to the profession. The faculty most recently amended the cataloging and classification courses and the cataloging track based on stakeholder input and the recent implementation of the Resource Description & Access (RDA) descriptive cataloging standard. The Program's core cataloging course, MLIS 7300, was revised to focus on the broader scope of information organization the LIS field and elective courses were redesigned or developed to meet these changing needs. In AY 2013-14, the Program is undertaking a review of the technology track. These reviews are discussed in detail at Standard II: Curriculum.

The Program has amended its [admissions policies](#) as well. As discussed in detail in Standard IV: Students, the Program changed the applications procedure by dropping the GRE/MAT requirement and added additional writing and analytic requirements. The Program has since

undertaken to limit its offers of admission because of limited departmental resources. It is too soon to determine, but the Program believes that its retention and graduation rates will improve as a result of these changes.

Financial Support

V.5 The parent institution provides continuing financial support sufficient to develop and maintain library and information studies education in accordance with the general principles set forth in these Standards. The level of support provides a reasonable expectation of financial viability and is related to the number of faculty, administrative and support staff, instructional resources, and facilities needed to carry out the school's program of teaching, research, and service.

The primary budget for the Program is allocated by the University from state funds through the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. Because the program is physically and administratively within the Library, many support functions are included in the Library budget. These include computer support and library services. Other functions are provided at the University and System levels, including provision and service of the learning management system, email services, and Internet. These resources are not reflected in the 2007 through 2012 departmental budget expenditures in Table V.2.

Table V.2: MLIS Department Budget Summary FY 2007-2012

Category	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Salaries- Regular Faculty	\$290,539.32	\$298,097.87	\$358,913.76	\$317,249.49	\$367,552.82	\$392,225.32
Salaries- Part-Time Faculty	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 22,856.25	\$ 18,400.00	\$ 14,635.18
Salaries- Summer Faculty*	\$ -	\$ 22,602.50	\$ 22,161.60	\$ 29,897.20	\$ 45,170.20	\$ 32,202.25
Salaries- Casual Labor	\$ 7,245.50	\$ 712.80	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Salaries- Staff	\$ -	\$ 19,352.43	\$ 26,875.35	\$ 33,817.11	\$ 36,855.72	\$ 32,250.94
Fringe Benefits	\$ 74,863.14	\$ 91,557.06	\$107,142.92	\$ 97,609.94	\$113,544.79	\$127,875.25
Travel	\$ 18,289.79	\$ 19,241.34	\$ 11,586.48	\$ 9,700.24	\$ 12,402.05	\$ 13,951.93
Operating and Supplies	\$ 12,739.86	\$ 8,365.87	\$ 9,418.96	\$ 11,555.88	\$ 12,319.17	\$ 12,422.03
Total Expenditures	403,677.61	463,929.87	\$545,299.07	\$522,686.11	\$606,244.75	\$625,562.90

Source: VSU PeopleSoft Financials (available on-site), General Ledger (available on-site)

The MLIS budgets as presented in Table V.2, show MLIS based expenditures at the end of the indicated fiscal year. The part-time and summer faculty lines are not a part of the beginning of the year budget projections and are not considered a formal part of the departmental budget. The VPAA's office is responsible for these expenses. The casual labor line represents the cost for part-time administrative assistance, replaced in 2008 by a full time secretary (as shown in staff salaries).

The travel and operating budgets vary year to year but the total of the two is less variable. Departments, including the MLIS Program may, at their discretion, move monies from one line to another.

V.6 Compensation for a program's executive officer, faculty, and other staff is equitably established according to their education, experience, responsibilities, and accomplishments and is sufficient to attract, support, and retain personnel needed to attain program goals and objectives.

To establish salary ranges, VSU uses the College and University Professional Association Human Resources ([CUPA-HR](#)) [peer](#) and aspirational non-unionized public university salary data to set salary ranges for its employees. The Program shows that CUPA-HR and ALISE data are at variance and that its departmental compensation is not competitive with professional norms across other ALA accredited MLIS programs. This point is developed further in Standard V.6.1.

From 2008 until the end of the review period, University System of Georgia employees, including VSU faculty did not receive salary increases except for those related to promotion or tenure action. In 2010, hourly employee compensation was evaluated across the University. A number of these employees were reclassified and as a consequence, their promotions resulted in greater compensation. The University recently engaged in a salary study, based on CUPA-HR data. Some faculty and staff salary adjustments resulted based on longevity and salary compression calculation. Individual MLIS salaries were adjusted upward from a few hundred dollars to just over \$2000 per annum in August 2013.

V.6.1 Compensation for a program's executive officer, faculty, and other staff is equitably established according to their education, experience, responsibilities, and accomplishments...

The Program provides departmental compensation data for all faculty and staff. MLIS Program faculty and staff are compensated at a slightly lower rate than their VSU peers. As is shown in Standard V.3.1, the Program Director's salary is comparable, but falls in the lower third of department head salaries.

CUPA-HR does not report department head salaries. Each year, the Program Director's contract indicates the salary the director would receive if he were to leave the directorship and be appointed as a ten month full professor. That figure is stated in the contract and is \$74,707.50 per year. According to CUPA HR data, the average salary for all full professors at all library and information science programs for all departments is \$87,861. Full professors at non-research doctoral granting institutions receive, on average \$82,325. Professors at masters granting institutions receive \$76,708. VSU offers a number of doctorates in education and a doctorate in public administration. The only library science degree it offers is the Master of Library and Information Science.

MLIS Program faculty members are paid at a rate slightly lower than their peers at VSU. According to the CUPA- HR report of VSU salaries, Arts and Sciences assistant professors

receive on average \$50,400 per year. In the College of Education and Human Services the average assistant professor receives \$51,280. The MLIS assistant professor median salary is \$47,500. On average, MLIS assistant professors in AY 2012-2013 had three years of experience on the faculty. According to CUPA- HR data, non-research doctoral granting institutions pay LIS assistant professors on average \$57,637. Master’s degree granting institutions pay those assistant professors \$53,144. Similarly, according to the ALISE Library and Information Science Education, Statistical Report for 2012 (Appendix A.1, Table I-13-a), the mean salary for LIS assistant professors in the Southeast for academic year 2011-2012 was \$58,078. The comparisons are shown in Table V.3.

Table V.3: Comparison of Selected Salaries AY 2012-13

	MLIS	VSU A&S	CUPAHR-LIS	CUPAHR-All	ALISE-SE
Professor (AY)	\$ 74,707		\$ 87,861	\$82,325	\$104,426
Ass't Prof (AY)	\$ 47,500	\$ 50,400	\$ 57,637	NA	\$ 58,078
Dept Head (FY)	\$ 89,000	\$ 91,137	NA	NA	\$175,574

V.6.2 ...and is sufficient to attract, support, and retain personnel needed to attain program goals and objectives.

Demonstrating whether VSU MLIS salaries are “...sufficient to attract, support, and retain personnel needed to attain program goals and objectives” is a complex matter. The MLIS faculty are aware that their salaries are slightly below what their VSU peers receive and substantially below reported ALISE data. Yet there are reasons why one accepts any position other than monetary remuneration.

The VSU MLIS Program has never had to fail a position search because a group of applicants has been unwilling to accept an offer of employment. However, offers of employment have been declined because of a lack of perceived employment opportunities for trailing spouses, the relative isolation of Valdosta from major metropolitan areas, and because of the salary offer.

Like every other academic department, the VSU MLIS Program has experienced faculty turnover. Of four who resigned voluntarily, two left for substantial salary increases.

V.7 Institutional funds for research projects, professional development, travel, and leaves with pay are available on the same basis as in comparable units of the institution. Student financial aid from the parent institution is available on the same basis as in comparable units of the institution.

There is clear support of faculty travel by the department and by the University through travel grants for research and scholarly presentations. The University provides several funding opportunities for faculty. The Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs manages the award of sabbatical leaves as well as two funding pools awarded on a competitive

basis by a faculty committee that answers to the VPAA. The MLIS Program has had faculty appointed to the committee. The first funding pool provides up to \$5,000 to provide seed funds for research proposals. The MLIS Program together with the Odum Library faculty have a proposal pending. The second pool provides up to \$1,000 to individual faculty to make presentations at professional meetings. The MLIS faculty have each been successful in securing these monies each year. This funding success is documented at Standard III: Faculty.

The VPAA provides professional development funds that are managed by each college dean. Each academic department also receives an allocation from the University planning and budget process to support departmental travel for teaching, administration, student recruiting, research presentations, and professional development. Faculty seeking departmental support for presentations and professional development are expected to exhaust other funding opportunities. No MLIS faculty has yet applied for sabbatical leave.

The Director of the Center for International Programs (CIP) manages a [funding pool to support travel to meetings outside the United States](#) and its possessions. A committee of university faculty assists the CIP in assessing applications. The MLIS Director has been a member of that committee since 2005. Several awards have been made to MLIS faculty to support international travel.

Program students also qualify for all financial assistance available to graduate students. The MLIS Program has one scholarship funded by internal funds, one funded by Wilson funds, and several state-wide and national LIS professional scholarships as detailed at Standard IV: Students.

V.8 The school's systematic planning and evaluation process includes review of both its administrative policies and its fiscal policies and financial support. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, staff, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process. Evaluation is used for ongoing appraisal to make improvements and to plan for the future.

The MLIS Program and Odum Library planning processes are congruent with the campus plan. Timetables and deadlines clearly establish ongoing VSU-wide review and reporting. One consequence of the planning process has been the rationalization across VSU of all program initiatives. All initiatives are ranked at the departmental, college, and university levels and are approved and funded based on their congruence with the overall [Strategic Plan](#) and their assigned priority.

Timetables and deadlines clearly establish ongoing VSU-wide review and reporting. The Program initiates its planning process through an annual faculty retreat (Appendix I.E) and monthly faculty meetings (Appendix I.F). The faculty have an opportunity via the MLIS annual faculty retreat to provide input at the beginning of the academic year in August. To facilitate the planning cycle, the MLIS Program's Planning and Budget Council periodically receives planning proposals from the faculty and staff. These proposals are reviewed in committee and reported to the faculty for action. At VSU, the fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. All new spending proposals must be encumbered by March 15. The Planning and Budget Council meets in early

March to assess the year's plans and remaining budget. The Program Director has the administrative competence to transfer balances from the operating and travel budgets to the other. Adjustments are made on the recommendation of the Planning and Budget Committee.

Standard V.4.2, addresses aspects of the Program's planning and review process. The MLIS Program actively seeks stakeholder input into its decision processes, particularly those that have implications for curriculum and therefore the competencies of the Program graduates.

Evaluations based on surveys, student learning outcome assessments, literature reviews, and university-based assessments ensure continuing improvement in the Program. Students are surveyed at the time when they apply to the program, at graduation, and sporadically during their time in the Program. Alumni and stakeholders are asked for input each year at the Stakeholders Meeting (Appendix I.D) during the annual conference of the Georgia Library Association.

Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities

Since 2000, the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program has been housed both administratively and physically in Odum Library, the central library of Valdosta State University (VSU). Odum Library is located in the southern portion of the main campus as shown in the map at Appendix VI.A.

In 2004, the library grew in physical size and staff when a new four-story addition doubled the size of the Library to 84,551 gross square feet. The Library houses physical classroom space, computing facilities, multi-media production facilities, IT and distance learning support facilities, and an Internet Café and coffee shop. Library resources and support, technology support for day-to-day computing, and distance learning support are especially strong at VSU.

The VSU MLIS Program is an asynchronous distance learning program. Infrastructure and technologies to support distance learning are essential to achieve the MLIS Program's objectives. Therefore, both the virtual resources and facilities required to support successful distance education programs, and the physical resources and facilities necessary to house them are discussed in each section of this standard.

VI.1 A program has access to physical resources and facilities that are sufficient to the accomplishment of its objectives.

The physical facilities available to the MLIS Program in Valdosta and across the state provide strong support for the online learning environment. The MLIS Program offices are located on the fourth floor of Odum Library (Appendix VI.B.1). The Program's office suite was expanded during Summer 2013, incorporating an area previously occupied by under-used faculty study carrels. This renovation added two new faculty offices, one graduate assistant office, and expanded the administrative area to include a copier/file/mail room (Appendix VI.C). The expanded suite now houses the entire MLIS faculty and full-time staff in one location. Prior to expansion the two most recently hired faculty members had been housed in empty offices located elsewhere in the library.

The library location has many advantages. Odum Library provides all the necessary physical resources and facilities to support the objectives of the MLIS Program. The Program also uses the University's physical and virtual infrastructure to support online learning, teaching, and research.

VI.2 Physical facilities provide a functional learning environment for students and faculty; enhance the opportunities for research, teaching, service, consultation, and communication; and promote efficient and effective administration of the school's program, regardless of the forms or locations of delivery.

VI.2.1 Physical facilities provide a functional learning environment for students and faculty;

University physical facilities available to the Program provide strong support for the online learning and teaching environment. All full time faculty have private offices equipped with desktop computers and updated software, printing, and peripheral devices (Appendix VI.D).

The University's online learning management system, BlazeView, operating on the Desire2Learn course management platform, is the primary learning environment for the Program's students. BlazeView D2L was selected as the learning management system used across the USG in 2012 and the USG provides [extensive centralized support and training](#) for students and faculty. The BlazeView D2L course management software and the USG's support resources provide an up-to-date and fully functional online learning environment for students and faculty.

Because the MLIS Program is an online program, technology support for the online learning and teaching environment is crucial. The University provides excellent technology resources and services for students and faculty. The Library has its own IT support unit and houses the Center for [eLearning](#), the [HUB Learning Cooperative](#), the [Media Center](#), and the [IT Helpdesk](#). Program faculty receive full IT support from these units. Odum Library also provides abundant support for [distance education](#). Students and faculty have full access to generous library services and resources from Odum Library regardless of where the students are located by using the Odum Library [Anywhere Access portal](#). Odum Library offers remote access to library databases and resources. Reference services are available via email, phone, [live chat](#), and text message, as well as face-to-face. Additionally, as students attending a University System of Georgia institution, VSU students have full privileges at other USG libraries.

Between 2007 and 2010, the Program delivered its MLIS 7000 Foundations of Library and Information Science course in a face-to-face weekend intensive format. To deliver the courses off-campus classrooms at [Middle Georgia State College](#) (Macon State College until January 2013 when the name was changed) and the headquarters branch of the Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library were utilized.

The MLIS 7000 course delivery format was migrated to a fully online presentation in 2011. As a consequence, the MLIS Program no longer conducts required instruction in face-to-face format. The Program has since offered optional instruction sessions at Middle Georgia State College (MGSC) in face-to-face mode at the discretion of course instructors. The most recent weekend instruction session held at MGSC was convened in October 2012. MGSC is located at the geographic center of the state. Part of the MGSC mandate is to provide classroom and Internet access to academic programs across the University System of Georgia.

Beginning in Spring 2011, a two-day face-to-face orientation for new students has been held at Odum Library each Fall and Spring semester (Appendix VI.E). During the orientation, several Odum Library classrooms and conferences rooms are used (Table VI.1).

Table VI.1: Odum Library Classrooms and Conference rooms

Room #	Square footage	Library support	Computing support	Room characteristics
Odum 1470	732	Yes	Yes	1 multimedia instructor station
Odum 1480	883	Yes	Yes	1 multimedia instructor station
Odum 3270	1869	Yes	Yes	60 student computers 2 multimedia instructor stations
Odum 4240	315	Yes	WiFi	Conference room
Odum 4260	315	Yes	WiFi	Conference room
Auditorium		Yes	Yes	110 seats, 1 multimedia instructor station

VI.2.2 enhance the opportunities for research, teaching, service, consultation, and communication;

The physical facilities of the University support faculty research, teaching, service, consultation, and communications. VSU's library and library services are adequate to support research and teaching. The University provides licenses to many software programs in support of research to include SPSS and Qualtrics survey software. MLIS faculty are able to engage in meaningful service to the department, the University, the community, and the profession because of the facilities offered. The University provides effective means of communication, to include telephony and networked computing resources.

VI.2.3 and promote efficient and effective administration of the school's program, regardless of the forms or locations of delivery.

After a recent renovation in Summer 2013, the Program is now more comfortably housed with adequate room for all administrative activities, faculty, and support staff in the same suite. The physical resources allow for ample electronic and physical storage; and adequate administrative equipment to include copiers, computers and telephones

University physical facilities available to the Program provide strong support for the online learning and teaching environment, and for faculty research needs. All full-time faculty have individual offices equipped with desktop computers and updated software, printing, and peripheral devices (Appendix VI.D). Faculty have access to laptop computers, iPads, digital cameras and recorders, and other hardware they may need to support course development, teaching, and research activities. Full-time faculty have on-campus access to physical and digital research tools including the library's physical and digital collections, SPSS statistical software, and Qualtrics survey software. The library also houses experimental programs and resources like the University's MakerSpace 3D printer, and the V-Text Institutional Repository, both of which are accessible to students and to faculty. The University's archives and special collections are also housed in the Odum Library and are accessible to all members of the VSU community for both research and learning. Part-time faculty have access to all the library's collections and

services, to the Center for eLearning's resources and services in support of online teaching, and to the USG's Desire2Learn Help Center.

VI.3 Instructional and research facilities and services for meeting the needs of students and faculty include access to library and multimedia resources and services, computer and other information technologies, accommodations for independent study, and media production facilities.

VI.3.1 Instructional and research facilities and services for meeting the needs of students and faculty include access to library and multimedia resources and services...

The Program's and the University's students and faculty have access to an extensive collection of online resources including many [scholarly databases and bibliographic resources dedicated to the library and information science literature and practice](#). These include *Library Literature and Information Science* (LLIS); *Library and Information Science Abstracts* (LISA); and *Library, and Information Science and Technology Abstracts* (LISTA) which now includes *Information Science and Technology Abstracts* (ISTA). The major databases are available through Georgia Library Learning Online (GALILEO), an online portal to electronic library resources shared by educational institutions in Georgia. Students access the GALILEO collection of databases through the Odum Library Anywhere Access portal <http://library.valdosta.edu:2048/login> using their BlazeView login and password.

Additionally Odum Library subscribes to an extensive collection of dedicated digital Library and Information Sciences resources selected specifically to support the MLIS Program and indexed at <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/library/tutorials/subject-and-course-guides/library-and-information-science/welcome.php>. A direct connection to this collection and all the Odum Library and GALILEO databases is provided through BlazeView, the University's course management system. Students may also access the Odum Library's Library and Information Science collection from outside the University or the learning management system through the Anywhere Access portal <http://library.valdosta.edu:2048/login> using their BlazeView login and password.

Some of the LIS-related primary reference resources are electronic and therefore readily available online. One example is the "[Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers](#)," one of eight titles in the online Gale Directory Library. Because of the state's GALILEO Interconnected Libraries (GIL) Express service, all enrolled MLIS students have walk-in access to all University System of Georgia libraries. These libraries often hold LIS-related print reference resources. Within the constraints of fair use and copyright, document delivery service is available to MLIS students and can provide photocopies from print reference works. All reference resources required for graded assignments have been electronically reserved or are available via online subscriptions. Through assigned course passwords, students are able to access specific items placed on electronic course reserve through the [GIL@VSU Library Catalog Course Reserve link](#) at any time from any Internet-connected computer.

Resource sharing within Georgia is outstanding. VSU MLIS students have online and physical access to University System of Georgia (USG) and public library collections across the state.

The following state-level resources, combined with the holdings of the VSU Library, provide the content necessary for learning and research within the MLIS Program:

- [GALILEO](#): access to over 100 databases indexing thousands of periodicals (see GALILEO Database list for a list of available databases through GALILEO).
- [GIL Express](#): The service allows all currently enrolled students and faculty and staff access to all eligible circulating materials at all USG libraries.
- [GIL-Find](#): the Catalogs of the University System of Georgia Libraries
- [Georgia Online Database](#) (GOLD): a state-wide union catalog and ILL facility that includes more than 200 libraries
- [VSU ILL](#): interlibrary borrowing beyond the USG. Circulating items and journal articles.
- [PINES](#): interlibrary borrowing of circulating items among 256 Georgia public libraries in 124 counties

As of Fall 2012, Odum Library holdings consist of approximately 453,757 bound volumes and 2558 serials including periodicals, newspapers, magazines, etc. The total number of physical items in the Odum Library collection decreased slightly from 1,939,298 in FY2011 to 1,911,906 in FY2012. This has been attributed to an increase in the electronic collection.

The VSU Library collection in support of the MLIS Program continues to expand. Odum Library has 7,618 titles in Z and 368 titles in ZA. Approximately 18% of the titles are available in ebook format (Appendix VI.F).

Faculty may ask the Media Center to stream video clips for access inside course websites using the features of the BlazeVIEW D2L learning management system. Once the video has been uploaded to the server faculty can link to the video from a course website to provide easy access and viewing by MLIS students.

VI.3.2 ...computer and other information technologies,

Computing and information technologies

The MLIS Program benefits from an extensive online learning support environment on campus and within the library. All faculty and staff are provided with networked computers in their offices. Faculty can also access their files using any other networked computers anywhere on campus through Active Directory, the log-on system for the VSU campus network (Appendix VI.D). Each faculty member has access to the departmental network drive, so faculty can share files over a mapped network.

Recently, the University Web Team launched a [new university web site](#), including direct links to essential information for all VSU community members. The [MyVSU](#) webpage <http://www.valdosta.edu/main/myvsu.php> provides a directory of the university portals that students, faculty, and staff must access regularly. This page includes links to portals such as [Banner](#), [BlazeVIEW](#), and the [Student Portal](#). It also provides access to the University's network of personal webpages and personal file storage for faculty, staff, and students. All students and faculty also have off campus access to the [MyVSU](#) pages server.

Center for eLearning

[The Center for eLearning](#) is located on the [second floor](#) of Odum Library (Appendix VI.B.2). The Center for eLearning provides training, instructional design consultation, and course development support for all VSU faculty who teach in online, hybrid, and technology-enhanced courses using [BlazeView](#). MLIS Program faculty take full advantage of relevant Center for eLearning resources as documented at Standard III: Faculty.

From Blackboard to Desire2Learn

The MLIS Program and all online programs in the USG began using WebCT, later merged with Blackboard, as the online learning management system at about the time the MLIS Program was launched. In 2013 all online and hybrid programs in the USG completed the transition to Desire2Learn (D2L) the USG's new learning management system. VSU migrated from Blackboard to [Desire2Learn](#) at the start of the Summer 2013 semester. Training and support mechanisms are available to all faculty and students through the [USG D2L help center](#).

Information Technology (IT) Helpdesk

The Helpdesk responds to all non-BlazeView IT related problems, including but not limited to password reset for VSU electronic accounts (i.e., Banner, BlazeVIEW, Mypages), data recovery, software support other than for BlazeView, and manages campus technology status alerts. An incident ticket tracking system allows faculty, staff, and students to submit a work order any time and to check the status of an incident at any given time. All incidents can also be submitted through the email or by calling the IT Helpdesk. BlazeView is supported through the USG's centralized Desire2Learn Help Center.

The [IT Helpdesk](#) also provides Web pages of frequently-needed instructions and consults with students via telephone, email, and Web-based request forms. It is physically located on the [second floor](#) of Odum Library, next to the circulation desk and is the first point of contact for technical support for faculty, staff, and students. IT Helpdesk assistance is available in person, by telephone, or by email during the following times:

Monday -Thursday: 8am-9pm

Friday: 8am-5pm

Saturday: 11am-5pm

Sunday: 1pm-9pm

VI.3.3 ...accommodations for independent study, and media production facilities.

Independent Online Study

VSU has contracted with [Atomic Learning](#) for a wide range of online training resources. Atomic Learning provides over 50,000 short, show-and-tell video training tutorials on over 205 of the most common applications (i.e., various operating systems, bibliography tools, Photoshop, HTML5, CSS3, etc.). Atomic Learning tutorials are available online for faculty, staff, and student use at anytime from anywhere once the user logs in through the MyVSU portal.

Media Center

Located on the first floor of the Odum Library (Appendix VI.B.1), the [Media Center](#) provides specialized tools and equipment for working with digital media and for producing multimedia products and presentations. The Odum Library Media Center provides on campus assistance to students and faculty in media content development, media presentations, and access to a wide variety of traditional and digital media equipment and software.

The Media Center houses sixteen specially equipped and configured workstations, each dedicated to the development and creation of digital media content. The Media Center also provides specialized input and output tools, including devices for high-quality slide and flatbed scanning, photographic-quality print output, capturing from and recording to videotape, and recording to CDs and DVDs. Also available is a wide assortment of software tools for producing, editing, presenting, and distributing digital media materials; these include the Adobe Pro, Macromedia software collections, Camtasia 7.0, Impatica for Powerpoint, and other products ([List of software products](#)). Finally, the Media Center provides the VSU campus community with a wide variety of traditional A/V and digital equipment for check-out purposes. In principle, Media Centers housed in other USG libraries offer reciprocal on-campus use of their software and hardware resources to VSU's distance learning students who live in their communities as specified by local policies.

VI.4 The staff and the services provided for a program by libraries, media centers, and information technology facilities, as well as all other support facilities, are sufficient for the level of use required and specialized to the degree needed. These facilities are appropriately staffed, convenient, accessible to the disabled, and available when needed, regardless of forms or locations of delivery of the school's program.

VI.4.1 The staff and the services provided for a program by libraries, media centers, and information technology facilities, as well as all other support facilities, are sufficient for the level of use required and specialized to the degree needed.

As the result of years of successful experience with online programs, the University has a well-developed infrastructure that provides the services and support described in the previous sections to meet the needs of the MLIS program. The Odum library is well [staffed](#), and houses the University's online learning resources and media center. The staff and services provided by the library and the Center for eLearning offer appropriate support for MLIS students and faculty. The Odum Library is accessible and the librarians make any accommodations needed to support access to facilities or materials for disabled patrons. The Program also has developed a close relationship with the University's [Access Office](#) to provide unique support to meet the needs of online students with disabilities or other special needs.

VI.4.2 These facilities are appropriately staffed, convenient, accessible to the disabled, and available when needed, regardless of forms or locations of delivery of the school's program.

Services for Distance Education

Odum Library employs 17 librarians and 30 staff members including nine reference librarians. The Library is open 112 hours per week while online resources are available 24/7.

The reference librarians provide all necessary services for distance students. The Library maintains a Web page of directions and features [online services](#) for distance students as well as a [guide](#) to resources specific to MLIS study. MLIS students may contact reference librarians by telephone, email, text message, and live chat during their hours of operation. [Interlibrary Loan requests](#) can be made on-line, and materials can be shipped to off-campus users, frequently at no charge. [Embedded librarians](#) are also available to support online and hybrid classes from within course websites. An embedded librarian maintains a presence in a BlazeVIEW class (Appendix VI.G) for the entire duration of the course if the instructor so wishes. With a librarian embedded in a course, students taking online classes are more aware of the library resources available to them. The embedded librarians who work with the Program faculty and embed in MLIS courses also model exemplary information provision services to current MLIS students.

- Distance education services available to all VSU students include:
 - [Anywhere Library Access](#)
 - [Live Chat](#)
 - [GIL-Find](#)
 - [Document Delivery Service \(ILL Odum Express\)](#)

Center for eLearning

[The Center for eLearning](#) is [staffed](#) by eight professionals with credentials in distance education and instructional technology support. They provide faculty and students with troubleshooting support for online learning and provide professional development and training opportunities. The Center for eLearning is committed to providing updated resources and guides for each of the systems in use by the University.

Access Office for Students with Disabilities

The Access Office is located in Farber Hall. [Six staff and one graduate assistant](#) provide support to students with any accessibility issues they may have regarding buildings, services, or activities on campus or in the distance learning environment. In addition, students with a disability who are experiencing barriers in a course may contact the Access Office for assistance in determining and implementing reasonable accommodation. The Access Office provides [services](#) for hearing-impaired and visually impaired students. For example, students who are deaf or hard of hearing may request interpreting services for the MLIS on-campus orientation. Students with disabilities can receive a text or course materials in alternate formats (e.g., e-text, braille, audio files, etc) upon request ([Alternate Media Request Form](#)). The Access Office also assists in obtaining captioned copies of videos for instruction. If the material is not available in a captioned format, the Access Office staff will provide a transcript of the video ([Captioning Request Form](#)). Access Office services include:

- [Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)
- Assistive Technology [Captioning Service](#)
- [Testing](#)

Media Center

[The media center](#) is [staffed](#) by three professionals and five student technicians. MLIS faculty most often utilize media services to develop course-related media content to support online instruction. The services include audio and video editing, digital imaging, scanning, media transfer and duplication, BlazeVIEW video streaming, and traditional audio and video services. The services are also available to all students. The staff members are available Monday-Friday from 8am to 7pm.

Accessibility

Accessible parking is available on the south and east sides of the library. Wheelchair-accessible elevators are located in the original library building, as well as the library addition, so that the MLIS Program office suite, classrooms, and conference rooms are fully accessible to the disabled. Various adaptive technology equipment and software are also available upon request.

Resource list for adaptive equipment and technology in Odum Library:

- Adjustable workstation
- Television equipped with closed captioning capability
- Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Jaws
- MS Narrator
- PDF Equalizer
- Universal Reader Plus
- Victor Reader

VI.5 The school's systematic planning and evaluation process includes review of the adequacy of access to physical resources and facilities for the delivery of a program. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, staff, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

VI.5.2The school's systematic planning and evaluation process includes review of the adequacy of access to physical resources and facilities for the delivery of a program.

Facilities are regularly reviewed in the University's strategic planning cycle. The VSU Planning and Budget Council (PBC) develops an annual budget plan for recommendation to the President based on input received from all departments of the University. The Council monitors the budget plan throughout the year via weekly meetings (PBC [meeting minutes](#)) to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.

The MLIS Program is provided with the necessary physical resources and facilities to offer its Program, to support student and faculty teaching and learning, and to meet research requirements. The Program continues to evaluate the available library and technology resources to ensure they meet student and faculty needs. MLIS faculty members make recommendations for physical and

technology needs during their monthly faculty meetings (Appendix I.E) and annual faculty retreat (Appendix I.F). All comments and requests regarding facilities and resources are forwarded through the Program Director. Requests that fall within the purview of the Program are approved and implemented at that level. Office assignments, for example, are at the discretion of the Program Director after consultation with the faculty. Requests related to physical plant, repairs, keys, etc. require Program Director and University Librarian approvals. Supplies can be purchased at the discretion of the Program Director. Major equipment and computer related purchases require approvals from several levels, including the Program Director and the University Librarian.

VI.5.2 Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, staff, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

MLIS faculty, staff, and students are engaged at the departmental level, as described in Standard VI.5.1 with the evaluation of the physical and virtual resources available to the Program. In addition, MLIS faculty can and do serve on university committees that influence resource decisions. These include membership on or representation to the University Faculty Senate, the Technology Committee, University Assessment Committee and the Planning and Budget Council.

Synthesis and Overview

The Valdosta State University (VSU) Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program is among the newest of the schools of library and information science in North America. The Program first began admitting students in 2001 and was first accredited in 2007. This Program Presentation is its first application for reaccreditation. During its first accreditation period, the Program endeavored to remain in compliance with ALA COA Standards and with the principles of the profession. Since its placement on conditional accreditation in 2010, the Program has developed a plan and a rigorous process to address deficits in systematic planning and plan implementation. The Program's 2012 Plan to remove conditional accreditation, accepted by ALA COA, indicates that the Program has addressed an area of concern. Since 2012, the Program has implemented that plan. In this Program Presentation, the Program has examined its compliance with each of the six ALA COA Standards in detail. This Program Presentation serves to demonstrate that the plan and its processes are integrated across all Program activities and in its observance of the ALA COA Standards.

As reflected in our Mission, Goals, and Objectives, the MLIS Program views as its purpose is to train librarians for 21st century libraries. This responsibility ranges across library practices that incorporate traditional yet cutting edge approaches to the profession. The Program's objectives focus on the development of qualified entry-level librarians who will provide service to libraries and to the patrons and customers of these libraries. The Program has promulgated a comprehensive plan to assess its ability to graduate qualified librarians. That process is permanent and constant. The systematic nature of that plan was demonstrated in Standard I.

The MLIS Program is fully invested in its systematic and ongoing assessment and planning process, one that is grounded in the assessment of student learning outcomes. That process is demonstrated throughout the Program Presentation. The process drives all decision making. The student learning outcome process was developed in 2011. The plan was submitted to ALA COA in March 2012 and was accepted in April. Since the plan was accepted the MLIS Program has followed it closely, implementing the assessments that derive from the plan, and modifying the curriculum and the assessments as the evaluation process indicates.

Valdosta State University is a public, higher education institution. As shown in Standard V, almost all financial and all infrastructural support is provided by the University System of Georgia and Valdosta State University by state appropriations or tuition revenue. A significant majority of Program graduates have been from Georgia and most of those graduates are employed in Georgia. Since 2007, the number of applicants from outside the state has been increasing. In Fall 2013, the Program admitted its first fully online student from outside the United States.

The MLIS Program's curriculum defines the Program. The curriculum has been developed over the past 12 years to provide students with current and well-defined core knowledge of

librarianship and to provide its students with additional skills in areas of their interest. The curriculum's primary focus is on librarianship. The Program has developed programs of study to guide students interested in particular aspects of the practice.

The Program's curriculum is reviewed systematically and regularly. Stakeholders, including students, alumni, and librarians, are consulted as part of every major assessment. This process has been followed from the beginning, when in 2002 academic and public library directors in Georgia were asked which skills were most needed in graduates. They responded that management and cataloging abilities were the greatest deficiencies of recent LIS graduates. Management and cataloging and classification courses have been required by the MLIS Program from its beginning.

The Program's curriculum committee meets monthly during the academic year. It brings recommendations ranging from minor correction of catalog copy to major curricular changes to the monthly faculty meeting for consideration by the whole. Since 2012, student learning outcome assessment has played an important role in evaluating the Program's curriculum and in amending its courses to better prepare its graduates for the profession.

The Program has a dedicated full-time tenure-track faculty. It has also been successful in recruiting part-time faculty to teach electives courses in their areas of expertise. The number of full-time faculty has increased from one in 2000 (a year before students were admitted), to three in 2001. Since 2007, the number of faculty has increased from five to seven. As is shown in Standard III, the faculty possess diverse backgrounds and skills. Before a new faculty search is initiated, the faculty carefully consider the needs of the department and undertake to define the desired expertise.

Faculty are appointed with ten-month contracts with an option to teach in summer, as needed. Since 2007, ten-month faculty have had the opportunity to teach one or two summer courses. The Program Director has a twelve-month contract. Since August 2013, the newly appointed Program Assistant Director has also been paid on a twelve month basis.

All full-time faculty must hold an appropriate doctorate before they are appointed to the faculty. With the exception of the two faculty members hired in 2001, all new faculty have been appointed as entry level assistant professors. Faculty have developed scholarship and service agendas that complement their teaching and are in alignment with the expectations of the Program and the University. Each faculty member applying for tenure or promotion to date has been successful. Three assistant professors were promoted to associate professor a year earlier than the typical timeframe.

Students are the reason for a Program's existence. In 2001, the MLIS Program admitted 12. Between 2002 and 2006, the Program admitted about 20 per year. Once the Program was accredited in 2007, the number of applicants and therefore admissions increased significantly. Beginning in 2008 to accommodate that increased demand and to redistribute it, the MLIS

Program began accepting students in both Fall and Spring semesters. As is shown in the discussion under Standard IV, most students have been from Georgia. A small but increasing number have been from elsewhere in the United States. A small number have been foreign nationals. MLIS students and graduates represent varied demographics. The majority have been women. The average age of MLIS students has decreased somewhat since accreditation.

As is shown in the Standard V discussion, the University System of Georgia and Valdosta State University are the primary sources of VSU MLIS Program funding. At the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1-June 30), each college and department receives its annual budget. That budget consists of salaries and fringe benefits for full-time faculty, operating funds and travel funds. The MLIS Program also receives a small amount of money, the result of indirect overhead income from two IMLS grants. The operating and travel funds are discretionary. Within applicable USG and VSU regulations, the Program Director has the authority to spend the funds. Monies may also be transferred from one fund to the other. These decisions are made after consultation with the Program's Planning and Budget Committee and the faculty as a whole. Travel funds are dispersed to support the objectives of the Program to support teaching, to recruit new applicants, and to promote faculty scholarship and professional development. The Program provides funds through its VSU Foundation account to help underwrite student scholarship and professional development.

The USG and VSU provide the physical and virtual resources the MLIS Program relies upon to deliver its curriculum. The USG supports the online teaching platform, now Desire2Learn. VSU provides extensive support to faculty, staff, and students enrolled in online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses. These resources are described in detail in Standard VI. VSU makes available office suites, computing and other equipment, and supplies to the Program. These resources make it possible for the Program to operate effectively.

Conclusion

The VSU MLIS Program has endeavored to provide quality education to students of library and information science and to provide information agencies with qualified and knowledgeable graduates. To meet its mission, goals, and objectives, the MLIS Program engages in strategic and systematic assessment and planning. The Program weighs the outcomes of its assessment processes and amends its teaching and policies consistent with those assessments. The Program continues to evaluate the tools it uses to assess itself. The Program has presented this Program Presentation in detail. It does so in the belief that it is compliant with the letter and the spirit of the six Standards by which it is evaluated.