The GSLIS curriculum is built into our everyday culture and is woven into everything we do. As stated in Chapter 1, GSLIS’s mission statement is to provide students with an educational foundation that addresses the theories, history, ethics, values, and technologies associated with the information professions and that prepares students to manage and lead information organizations at all levels, from the local to the global, and to meet the challenges of the future. With this mission, the faculty shape a curriculum that will prepare graduates to deal with the changing needs and expectations of the information professions. As a part of that mission, the curriculum is developed and maintained to meet the requirements of the American Library Association’s Accreditation Standards.

**Standard 2.1: The curriculum is based on goals and objectives, and evolves in response to an ongoing 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.

The program goals of the Master of Science program (Chapter 1, Figure 1.2.) insure that we help students meet their long-range needs as maturing professionals as well as their immediate needs upon entering the profession, and remind us to be attuned to the variety of contexts and settings in which our graduates will shape their careers.

These goals and the objectives (Chapter 1, Figure 1.3.) guide our deliberations about core and elective curricular areas, and keep us mindful of the domain knowledge and practical experience that employers will expect of our graduates.

The student learning outcomes (Chapter 1, Figure 1.4.) are the foundations for the assessment of our success in fostering learning. Our current work on student learning outcomes guides work on specific learning outcomes at the course level, and underpins the development of rubrics and other assessment tools. Through this multipart framework (vision, mission, program goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes) we achieve a curriculum which is intellectually sound and rigorous, while also preparing our students for success when they graduate and for the future.

Developing, maintaining, and evaluating learning goals is the responsibility of the Curriculum Committee, made up of the entire faculty. The Committee works on curriculum issues, standards, and expectations, discusses the reworking of existing courses as needed, and votes on the creation of new courses and the removal of

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2 Per a May 2010 faculty vote, the configuration of the Curriculum Committee will be changing in Fall 2010. A smaller committee of faculty will meet regularly to discuss curriculum issues and make recommendations to the full faculty for vote. To be fully inclusive, meetings will continue to be open to all; the faculty vote reflected the desire to change to a more efficient and effective use of time and resources. The membership of the committee will be largely faculty (from all levels); all faculty are required to serve on the committee on a rotating basis. At the same time, staggered, non-consecutive terms will insure that no one group serves for a prolonged time.
outdated ones. Curriculum meetings are scheduled at least once a month during the regular academic year. As noted in the previous chapter, student representatives are included at all of these meetings to insure that their voice is heard. All resolutions are voted on during subsequent faculty meetings.

Since the last COA visit, GSLIS has introduced several changes to the curriculum. While the faculty works to keep the curriculum up to date regularly, there have been two separate formal curriculum reviews over the past seven years. In the 2004-2005 academic year, the faculty instituted an extensive curriculum review to implement a change in the structure of credit hours and courses offered. At that time, GSLIS shifted from offering most courses for four credits, with certain topics and electives offered in two-credit courses, to all courses offered for three credits. This process required the faculty to review the curriculum and revise or combine courses to fit the new credit offerings. While the number of credits required for graduation (36) did not change, the required number of courses to graduate increased from nine to twelve, thereby enabling students to have a more comprehensive academic experience.

Our second large-scale update was affected by a college-wide Academic Business Review (ABR). GSLIS had already begun to thoroughly review and revise the mission statement and student learning objectives when, due to the way the College was impacted by the nationwide budget crisis, Simmons hired a consulting firm in Fall 2009, the Deloitte Group, to help the College improve coordination between departments, to improve financial decisions, and to minimize redundancy. During the process, each School formed its own committee to analyze and make suggestions based on the data collected. GSLIS reviewed course electives and, as required by the President and Provost’s Office, evaluated them based on currency, relevancy, and overlap with other courses (in the School and as compared to other offerings throughout the College). The faculty also considered how often each course has been offered, the enrollment numbers, the ability of tenure-track faculty to teach the course, and the balance of adjunct to tenure-track courses. The goal was to maintain a strong and relevant collection of electives available to students on a regular schedule. After the review process, the faculty voted to eliminate nineteen courses; in the ensuing months, new courses were voted into the curriculum to address specific subject areas (see Appendix 2-1 and 2-2 for the course changes during these two periods).

Part of the ongoing curriculum process is to put together a two-year course-schedule plan to provide students with a reliable resource for planning their coursework. Faculty were surveyed and asked to provide their teaching preferences for the next two academic years. Staff responsible for scheduling courses are now comparing these preferences to the overall needs as determined by previous feedback and information collected through the advising statements all students are required to complete during their first semester. Special consideration is given to the changing demographics and enrollment patterns that have been developing over the last several semesters as well as to the College’s changing policies as a result of the ABR. In consultation with the Dean, a two-year schedule will soon be presented.
The curriculum at GSLIS is strongly supported by opportunities in the LIS community. Given our geographic location, GSLIS students have many opportunities to supplement their coursework with practical experience. The Boston area has an abundance of libraries, educational institutions, archives, museums, and IT/Information industry organizations. These provide a wealth of opportunities for students to gain practical and professional experience while working on their degrees.

Students in the Archives Concentration and the School Library Teacher Program are required to have internship or practicum experiences as part of their coursework. SLTP students are expected to complete 75 hours of fieldwork as part of three courses: LIS 406: Organization and Management of School Library Media Centers, LIS 407: Reference/Information Services, and either LIS 481: Children’s Literature and Media Collections or 483: Young Adult Literature. In addition, SLTP students are expected to complete a practicum in either a preschool through 8th grade or 7th through 12th grade setting. Archives students are required to complete an internship as part of two courses, LIS 438: Introduction to Archival Methods and Services and, up through the 2009-2010 academic year, LIS 440: Archival Access and Use.

At the May 2010 faculty meeting, two votes were taken that further strengthened this component of the GSLIS program. First, a change was made to the internship component of LIS 440 in response to the quality of the internship experience and the growing number of students in the program. As a result, internships will no longer be part of LIS 440; they will be expanded into a stand-alone course that will provide a more comprehensive field experience for students in the Archives concentration. Second, the faculty voted into place an internship course that will provide the possibility of the same type of experience for every GSLIS student that Archives and SLTP students currently enjoy. This new course will debut in Spring 2011.

Standard 2.2: 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 curriculum at GSLIS meets the expectations and needs of the LIS profession. To qualify for the master’s degree, students must complete 36 credit hours. Of these hours, five core courses (15 credits) provide an educational foundation of the principles, theories, issues, and values of LIS. Faculty advisors assist students in selecting their remaining seven electives to guide the students toward their professional goals.

Students have a wide range of electives to choose from, allowing for a generalist perspective or a focused perspective in an area such as Information Technology,
Information Organization, or Youth Services. In the case of the Archives Concentration and the School Library Teacher Program, students have more structured course choices to insure they are prepared for the specific demands of the profession. Because this has been such a successful model, the faculty have been working to create other areas of specialization that, though not requiring tracks for students to follow, provide some more structured guidance for students wishing to pursue a particular subject path.

For example, the faculty in the area of Information Organization have developed the following “guide” for students interested in study beyond LIS 415, the core class focusing on Information Organization. (See Figure 2.1.)

The following core courses are required of all students (with exceptions noted below)—giving all Simmons graduates a similar foundation of professional knowledge:

- **LIS 403: Evaluation of Information Services**
- **LIS 404: Principles of Management**
- **LIS 407: Reference/Information Services**
- **LIS 415: Information Organization**
- **LIS 488: Technology for Information Professionals**

As a group, the core courses provide at least an introduction to the concepts laid out in the student learning outcomes. The expansion from nine to twelve courses enabled the School to institute five core classes (instead of the previous three) that include all courses the faculty feel are essential and basic for any information professional. Since Fall 2005, all entering students have been required to take LIS 488, which, prior to that, was an elective. Also, the change in credits allowed the faculty to require LIS 403 and LIS 404 rather than have students choose one of these.

While there is no required sequence of courses, students are encouraged to enroll in LIS 407, LIS 415, and LIS 488 within the first few semesters to build their learning experience. This is recommended also because these courses are prerequisites for many of the elective courses. Students are advised to take LIS 403 and LIS 404 at different points in their study depending on the students’ experience and academic goals. With these being prerequisites for a much smaller group of electives, faculty are able to advise students to take these classes at a later point, depending on the schedule of electives (see Appendix 2-3 for a list of prerequisites).

Although all five courses are required for GSLIS students, the management component of the core requirements in certain professional settings may have a focus different from that in other LIS settings. As a result, GSLIS offers substitutions for **LIS 404: Principles of Management** for students in the Archives Concentration and the School Library Teacher Program. **LIS 442: Establishing Archives and Manuscripts Programs** may be taken in place of LIS 404 for students in the Archives Concentration, whereas in the School Library Teacher Program, students enroll in **LIS 406:**
Figure 2.1: Guide to Information Organization Area

- LIS 415 Information Organization
  - LIS 419 Indexing & Thesaurus Construction
    - LIS 440 Archival Access and Use
      - LIS 531S Metadata
        - LIS 469 XML
          - LIS 531R Library Automation Systems
            - LIS 418 Technical Services
  - LIS 531A Introduction to Cataloging & Classification
    - LIS 417 Advanced Subject Cataloging
      - LIS 531M Advanced Descriptive Cataloging
Organization and Management of School Library Media Centers. Both courses provide an overview of management principles in a focused setting to prepare students for unique challenges in Archival and School Library settings. Should a student transfer out of a particular concentration, a recent faculty vote now automatically guarantees that any one of these management courses will fulfill the overall Management core requirement.

The core courses help students create a foundation for their educational experience and their eventual professional career. Part of this preparation is for students to learn concepts related to the idea of “encompass[ing] information and knowledge” (creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization, description, storage & retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management). While many of the concepts are clearly covered in specific courses—for example, LIS 403: Evaluation of Information Services deals extensively with evaluation and assessment in the LIS professions and LIS 404: Principles of Management focuses on management—many other concepts, such as communication, synthesis, interpretation, analysis, and identification, are covered across the curriculum. All courses require students to consider, analyze, and synthesize the information presented. Many courses require students to give class presentations, thereby providing opportunities for demonstrating communication skills, as well as interpretation, analysis, and dissemination.

Some GSLIS students come to the program with experience in LIS and related professions. However, as the average age of students decreases—resulting in an increasing number of students entering the program straight out of college and with no experience in a library or archives—the need for foundational coursework increases. In Spring 2010, GSLIS designed and implemented LIS 531P: Foundations in Library and Information Science to fill this need. This course is an introduction to library and information science, exploring LIS professions, services, and institutions, as well as addressing fundamental concepts and theories of information. Topics covered include settings in which an LIS professional might work (libraries, information centers, archives, and the information industries), the history of the information professions, the organizational structures of information institutions, the needs of users and their information-seeking behavior, and concepts, theories, and practices. The class engages with current issues and trends affecting the LIS professions in today’s society.

Standard 2.3: The Curriculum

The curriculum at GSLIS allows students to build a strong foundation of knowledge and skills that can be applied to the LIS professions. The goal is to prepare graduates who are able to meet the COA Standards as leaders, thinkers, learners, and service professionals. The Student Learning Outcomes reflect this goal and provide a basis from which to format courses and to encourage continued growth. Faculty are
expected to identify which outcomes are directly addressed in each course and to review and revise as needed based on current research, the state of the field, and the general knowledge base of students.

**Standard 2.3.1: fosters development of library and information professionals who will assume an assertive role in providing services;**

As professionals, GSLIS graduates need to be leaders and decision makers to insure good service in organizations and in the profession at large. One of the student-learning outcomes focuses on the role of leadership in the curriculum. While many courses may introduce or reinforce the concept of leadership, the required management course, LIS 404 (and LIS 406 and 442 for SLTP and Archives students, respectively), provides a strong base for building managerial and leadership skills for students.

**Standard 2.3.2: emphasizes an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the finding of basic and applied research from relevant fields;**

Courses at GSLIS provide a basis of theoretical knowledge and practical application of that understanding. Course descriptions present an overview of the theoretical concepts and the potential applications of the course materials. This is accomplished in different classes through use of textbooks, reliance on articles from professional journals, guest lecturers, and a wide range of assignments designed to integrate course and reading understanding into practical output from the students. Faculty are expected to review and update courses based on current trends and research conducted in relevant fields; courses are also influenced by faculty members' own research in their area of study and in the courses they teach. For example, the instructors of LIS 407: Reference/Information Services met in Summer 2009 to discuss the changing nature of reference and what this means to the content and teaching of this course. Course content was revised to reflect the fact that the focus is now moving away from knowledge of specific resources to information seeking.

**Standard 2.3.3: integrates the theory, application, and use of technology;**

The Technology Orientation Requirement (TOR) is a self-paced introduction to the technology and resources students will use in the GSLIS program. It is a series of
readings, short quizzes, and hands-on activities that insures new students are prepared to use the technology required for their courses, regardless of which specific LIS track they take. The TOR is required for all part-time and full-time students, although non-degree and auditing students are also encouraged to look through the materials. It was created by a committee of faculty, staff, and students who specifically chose the format and content most pertinent to the LIS curriculum.

The TOR is guided by curriculum-wide GSLIS student outcomes and focuses on building technology skills and concepts that will be reinforced while students are in courses at GSLIS and afterwards. The purposes of the TOR are to:

- Develop or reinforce information and communication technology skills foundational to library and information science at Simmons GSLIS
- Analyze technology-related problems and develop solutions drawing on a basic technology skill set
- Demonstrate knowledge of the foundational components of information retrieval, particularly in library and information science resources
- Identify and assess sources of professional information
- Demonstrate the ability to learn new technologies
- Demonstrate the ability to stay current with technology, information science, and library science development

After new and incoming students complete these requirements, they will have a solid foundation of technological knowledge which they can use in various ways as they move through the GSLIS program. The importance of technology to LIS professionals is emphasized and students are encouraged to learn skills not just through their coursework, but also through free workshops offered by the GSLIS Technology Lab in many different areas of technology—software, hardware, usability, etc. The Technology Lab is the center of GSLIS technology services for students, faculty, and staff. The Lab has nearly 50 computers, Mac and PC, with scanners, printers, and other input/output equipment. Students have access to all of the technology, software applications, server-based services, and equipment required for their coursework.

**Standard 2.3.4: responds to the needs of a diverse society including the needs of underserved groups;**

In Spring 2004, GSLIS held a day-long retreat to address ways to encourage diversity—among students and faculty, as well as throughout the curriculum. The GSLIS Diversity Action Plan (DAP) was developed based on the discussions with faculty, students, and staff. In addition, diversity is addressed in many courses across the curriculum. Some courses, such as **LIS 422: Literacy and Services to Underserved Populations**, spend the entire semester dealing directly with the issue. Others address specific aspects at various points. In LIS 407, for example, there is discussion of how to provide quality
service to diverse users; LIS 404 deals with diversity in the workplace. Further examples are listed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIS 403</td>
<td>Evaluation of Information Services (Core Course)</td>
<td>Each address information needs of diverse populations, issues in providing services to underserved groups, and ethical standards of the information professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 407</td>
<td>Reference/Information Services (Core Course)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 408</td>
<td>User Instruction</td>
<td>Includes readings on providing instruction to diverse groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 422</td>
<td>Literacy and Services to Underserved</td>
<td>Considers the role of libraries in dealing with functional illiteracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 450</td>
<td>Organization and Management of Public Libraries</td>
<td>Includes services to special-needs communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 453</td>
<td>Collection Development and Management</td>
<td>Covers identification of user needs and issues of intellectual freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 467</td>
<td>Web Development and Information Architecture</td>
<td>Includes consideration of design elements for challenged computer users in light of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Accessibility Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Addresses Web design for a global community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 475</td>
<td>Organizational/Information Ethics</td>
<td>Examines the ethical implications of decisions made within various organizational contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 481</td>
<td>Children's Literature and Media Collections</td>
<td>Includes discussion of materials and services reflecting special needs, ethnic and cultural diversity, and different lifestyles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 482</td>
<td>Library Programs and Services to Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 490</td>
<td>International and Comparative Librarianship</td>
<td>Compares American and foreign library systems and addresses the contributions of international organizations; students also discuss issues related to diversity and ethnicity of users and library staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 493</td>
<td>Intellectual Freedom and Censorship</td>
<td>Addresses First Amendment and Library Bill of Rights issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS 530J</td>
<td>Information Services for Diverse Users</td>
<td>Examines special needs and potential contributions of groups traditionally underrepresented in information settings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Standard 2.3.5:** responds to the needs of a rapidly changing technological and global society;

Technology is an important aspect of the information professions. At GSLIS, this is reflected in several ways, with courses focused on technology and related topics, the offering of courses in blended and online formats, and the attachment of E-learning or Moodle to all classes.
As noted above, every student must complete the TOR. In addition to this requirement, a variety of classes in the curriculum focus on technology and other educational opportunities are offered through the Technology Lab and Continuing Education workshops. Occasionally there are additional opportunities offered in GSLIS such as the Fall 2007 Information Architecture Project. During that semester, seventeen members of the GSLIS community met to work on a full redesign of the information architecture for the GSLIS websites. Six students undertook the project as an independent study under the supervision of Terry Plum, Assistant Dean for Technology and Adjunct Professor. The tasks completed by all of these students were overseen by Jennifer Doyle, Director of GSLIS Curriculum & Communications, and Caryn Anderson, the previous Program Manager for the Doctoral Studies program, along with Linnea Johnson, Assistant Manager of Information Technology and Adjunct Professor.

GSLIS also provides several Web 2.0 areas of learning for students, inside and outside the standard curriculum. In addition to online classroom management systems, faculty use tools such as wikis and social media outlets (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, and blogs) as part of their delivery of content and class communication.

Students are encouraged to explore emerging technologies, as information recipients and as information creators. This learning process occurs inside and outside the traditional classroom—preparing students for the ever-changing environments in which they will work as LIS professionals.

Technology, however, is not the only area in which GSLIS addresses the dynamic environment of the information professions. To address the dynamic and shifting nature of the field, the LIS 500s are specifically “Topics” courses, developed to respond to issues as they arise. After the classes are offered two or three times, the faculty decides whether to vote the courses into the permanent curriculum. These courses are given some leeway in terms of class enrollment to allow the faculty to adjust the content as necessary as well as for the course to find an audience.

While the faculty creates current and relevant coursework, GSLIS also recognizes the importance of reaching out to active professionals to communicate new expectations in LIS, as well as to assist with teaching and course content. Some courses, such as LIS 484: Literature of Science and Technology and LIS 531T: The Medieval Manuscript: From Charlemagne to Gutenberg, are taught off-site (at the MIT Libraries and the Boston Public Library, respectively), thereby allowing student to learn in an environment where the work is actually taking place or where library holdings improve the learning experience.

**Standard 2.3.6: provides direction for future development of the field;**
GSLIS faculty encourage students to look to the future in many of their courses at Simmons. Students are continually reminded that LIS is a changing profession and are advised how to work with those changes. The faculty also continue to look ahead through their research and service, and also through organized schoolwide efforts. Many of our retreats deal with the topic of future directions for the School; the Fall 2009 Retreat was titled “Trend-Spotting,” and featured the panel discussion, “Perspectives on Trends and Developments in Libraries and Archives Today.” The panel was followed by a discussion focusing on the “Effects of the Trends on GSLIS and LIS Education.”

The commitment to provide direction is pervasive throughout the School, with many departments contributing to the overall goal. The Tech Lab’s series of emerging technologies workshops, noted in Chapter 1, is only one example of the educational process designed to prepare students for future developments. GSLIS Continuing Education offers discounted rates to current students and alumni to allow them to keep their skills up to date. Initiatives such as the Digital Curriculum Laboratory and Usability Lab (see Chapter 6 for further details) put GSLIS in the forefront of incorporating newer technologies into the prevailing practice of the field. Additionally, the topic is addressed in specific classes.

### Standard 2.3.7: promotes commitment to continuous professional growth.

There are many opportunities for students to interact with current LIS professionals, through coursework, through student organizations, and through internships at other organizations. GSLIS faculty often invite local professionals into their classes as guest lecturers; many faculty members also take their students on field trips to local institutions as varied as WGBH (public broadcasting television station) and the EPA Library, experiences that allow students to connect their coursework with life in the professional world. Adjunct faculty, many of whom are local practitioners, bring their own personal experiences and connections with them to the classroom, further expanding students’ exposure to the professional world beyond Simmons. Because many of our student organizations have a direct relationship with the local chapters of professional organizations, students have additional opportunities for laying a foundation of professional growth prior to leaving GSLIS.

Through its Continuing Education programs, GSLIS also offers a variety of workshops for library and information professionals. Current and past workshop topics include taxonomies and controlled vocabularies, new technologies, business research, ILL, genealogy, game design, book appraisal, Japanese anime and manga, digital imaging, EAD, and many others. Continuing education programs are open to practicing librarians/information professionals, to current GSLIS students who wish to earn
professional credits while they update skills and knowledge, and to those with a passing or personal interest in the field.

Workshops are held on weekends or online for the convenience of practicing librarians and other professionals. We offer more than 40 workshops each semester at our Boston and GSLIS West campuses, online, and elsewhere throughout New England.

Current Simmons GSLIS students are encouraged to enroll and get a 50% discount on workshop prices. Simmons GSLIS Alumni attending CE workshops also receive a discount. These courses are an important component of our commitment to providing continuing professional growth to our students, while they are enrolled in the master’s or doctoral program and after they complete their degrees.

Simmons also gives students the opportunity to advance their professional careers by earning a Ph.D. GSLIS doctoral programs began in 1973 with a Doctor of Arts degree. The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program was established in 2005. Simmons offers students a small, focused program: an opportunity to work one on one with faculty in a collaborative environment that is enriched by interaction with students, alumni, and a thriving library and information science community.

GSLIS offers two foci for doctoral studies:

**Ph.D. / LIS**
The Ph.D. in Library and Information Science (LIS) is a small, strong program composed of students who form a cohesive and collaborative cohort, and who are nurtured from enrollment through to completion of the dissertation. The program is unique in its guided preparation in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service. The Ph.D./LIS program is flexible and studies can be conducted at various intersections of setting, audience, and activity. Students emerge from the program with research and teaching experience, a professional activity record, and a portfolio documenting their achievements and mastery of areas of study and practice.

**Ph.D. / MLIP**
The Ph.D. concentration in Managerial Leadership in the Information Professions (MLIP) emphasizes leadership-competency development and original research in a non-residential program. Students are full-time library managers who have already attained a mid- to senior-level position in their career and are poised to make lasting contributions to the LIS field. The MLIP concentration began in 2005 and continues with a multi-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This innovative program focuses on creating successful future leaders in library and information settings and generating rigorous research to improve the knowledge base and practice of managerial leaders. The MLIP program nurtures and strengthens the intellectual and interpersonal assets of students as working managers while actively involving leading practitioners in shaping the educational experience.
Standard 2.4: 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.

Curriculum and Programs of Study

One of the strengths of the GSLIS program is the ability of students to be as specific or as general in their course of study as they want. As the nature of the information professions evolves, so do the expectations of the job market. With core courses as a foundation, students may choose to focus on a specific area, such as preservation management or children’s/youth services, or decide on a generalist program. Students are given a variety of tools to construct their plan of study before they even arrive on campus. The GSLIS website provides easy access to information regarding the requirements for each of the Master of Science areas of concentration: Library and Information Science, Archives Concentration, and School Library Teacher Program (SLTP). As previously noted, all students are required to take the core courses (with some slight variation for the specialized programs); the specialized programs (Archives and SLTP) have additional requirements which are detailed on the GSLIS website.

Students in the general Library and Information Science program also have several tools to assist in making decisions regarding their coursework. For example, to assist students with the process, the GSLIS faculty has recently created a website that provides potential program tracks in the areas of Information Organization, IT and Systems, Management and Leadership, Reference and Information Services, and Youth Services.

The tracks were created in a collaborative process among the faculty who are the primary instructors in each area. Once these tracks were created, faculty and students could make comments and suggestions. Building upon the core courses, the tracks are dynamic and can evolve as new courses are developed and changes are introduced.

Advising plays a major role in helping students plan their course of study. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor based on the student’s stated interests and faculty teaching and research focus. The website and Student Services Office also help students with the planning process.

New students attend an intensive orientation and advising day. The first half of the day is spent in presentations from faculty, students, and professionals from the local area.
The afternoon is devoted to one-on-one sessions with the advisor to work on the student’s plan of study.

Archives Management Concentration
http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/academics/programs/archives.php

Students enrolled in the Archives Management concentration take the same core courses as other master’s students, with the one exception being in the Management area, as noted above. They must also complete three core Archives courses—LIS 438, LIS 440, and LIS 456—as well as one course each from approved lists of Preservation and Archives electives. As part of their program requirement, they complete several supervised archives or preservation internships at local institutions.

The Archives faculty meet regularly to discuss course content and program requirements, thereby insuring that the program continues to evolve to meet the demands of the field. In Spring 2010, at the recommendation of the Archives faculty, the faculty voted to remove the internship component from LIS 440 and instead create a stand-alone Archives internship that will allow a broad range of internship choices while also allowing faculty better oversight of the internship experience for students and site supervisors than they were able to have when the internship was part of the other course.

School Library Teacher Program
http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/academics/programs/teacher.php

For students who seek certification as school library teachers, the GSLIS School Library Teacher Program provides exceptional academic and professional training. The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) endorses our program and external accrediting agencies commend us on the program’s outstanding quality. Simmons SLTP students are noted for their exceptionally high pass rates on the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). The SLTP also prepares students for NASDTEC library teacher licensure.

SLTP students follow a specific set of courses, including **LIS 460: Technology and the School Library Media Center**, **LIS 481: Children’s Literature and Media Collections**, and **LIS 483: Young Adult Literature**. They also complete supervised practicums in the public schools totaling 200 hours (300 for the practicum equivalent experience) for the Standard Certificate. Practicums are held in more than ten public school systems in the greater Boston area and are supervised by the director of the program and by LIS professionals working in the schools.
**Dual Degree Programs**

**Archives/History (MS/MA)**  
http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/academics/programs/archives-history.php

Increasingly, archives employers have recognized that skills required for archivists include technical training and historical knowledge, and they seek applicants with master's degrees in library and information science and history. To meet the needs of students pursuing these positions, the GSLIS and the Simmons College Department of History offer a dual degree program in Archives Management leading to a Master of Science in Library and Information Science and a Master of Arts in History.

Applicants to this 57-credit-hour program must be admitted to master's programs in the Simmons College Department of History and to the Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

**LIS / Children's Literature**  
http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/academics/programs/lis-childlit.php

The Library Science/Children’s Literature dual degree program offers a unique opportunity for students interested in the synthesis and comparison of two distinct approaches to children’s literature to earn a professional (Master of Science) and an applied (Master of Arts) degree. As children's literature has re-entered mainstream discussions of adult and young people's reading, librarians, teachers, booksellers, and publishers have become increasingly interested in critical and pragmatic discussions of this diverse and growing body of texts. The Center for the Study of Children's Literature at Simmons offers a Master of Arts in Children’s Literature that studies historical, critical, and theoretical contexts in works for children. The Graduate School of Library and Information Science offers specialized literature and service courses to students interested in increasing their familiarity with these materials with an eye towards professional youth services in libraries. While both graduate degree programs reference the same literary history and body of material, each is characterized by distinct perspectives and methodologies. The dual degree program encourages students to consider the similarities and differences among these perspectives and methodologies, and to think critically about the way these inform the study of children’s literature and its selection and application in a professional setting.

**Bachelor of Science/ Master of Science**  
http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/academics/programs/bs-ms.php

The demand for scientific, technical, and engineering librarians has always been great and remains so today. There are job opportunities for people with master’s degrees in library and information science combined with undergraduate preparation in the sciences. Openings exist in academic, industrial, and non-profit environments. The
joint B.S./M.S. program provides a pool of appropriate candidates for positions in these areas.

**Standard 2.5:** When a program includes the study of services and activities in specialized fields, these specialized learning experiences are built upon a general foundation of library information studies. The design of specialized learning experiences takes into account the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by the relevant professional organizations.

While the GSLIS curriculum is built on the foundation of LIS theory and application, it is influenced by a myriad of expectations of competencies and by such organizations as the American Library Association (ALA), Society of American Archivists (SAA), American Society of Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), and the American Association of School Libraries (AASL), to name just a few. In addition, the Massachusetts Department of Education provides the requirements and evaluations of the SLTP program. Each program and dual degree offered by GSLIS is influenced by the standards of the respective professional organizations.

At the same time, we take advantage of the wealth of resources in the local area and bring in specialists to teach our more specialized courses. For example, Anita Silvey, who teaches **LIS 420: Book Publishing and Librarianship**, spent over fifteen years as publisher of children’s books for Houghton Mifflin Company and eleven years as Editor-in-Chief of *The Horn Book Magazine*, and is the author of three books, including *Everything I Need to Know I Learned from a Children’s Book* (October 2009). Raquel Ortiz, who teaches **LIS 437: Legal Information Sources** and is the Associate Director of the Law Library at Boston University School of Law, has her M.S. from Simmons GSLIS and her J.D. from Suffolk University Law School. (For more about our adjuncts’ backgrounds, see the appendix to Chapter 3.) All of the Simmons GSLIS faculty are fully versed in the requirements, principles, and practices of their fields, and all GSLIS courses promulgate these principles and practices.

**Standard 2.6:** The curriculum, regardless of forms or locations of delivery selected by the school, conforms to the requirements of these Standards.

GSLIS classes are offered in a variety of formats to insure they reach the widest span of students. Our main campus in Boston offers classes morning, afternoon, and evening, and also on Saturdays. Classes generally meet once a week for three hours, giving students and faculty the opportunity spend a concentrated amount of time together. Learning takes place in small classes and group discussions, with lectures, team projects, collaborative work and presentations, internships, and site visits. Our
collegial environment is interdisciplinary and international. As a result, GSLIS graduates are prepared to work in many professions and draw upon many skills.

Simmons offers a part-time Master of Science degree program at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley (GSLIS West), Massachusetts, attracting students from Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Although fewer courses are offered, it is possible for students to complete the degree at GSLIS West, depending on specialization. GSLIS students studying at GSLIS West also may take courses at the Boston campus. Similarly, students enrolled in Boston may choose to take courses at the GSLIS West campus.

In the GSLIS West program, blended courses, described below, have created opportunities for full-time faculty located in Boston to teach at GSLIS West, in effect blending the faculty. The Dean’s Fellow for GSLIS West, whose primary responsibility is library support for GSLIS West, delivers to the students and faculty the same, if not higher, levels of library service available to the GSLIS community in Boston. Internships, especially in archives, are available throughout the Pioneer Valley, and students who take these archival internships often end up working in the same institutions after graduation. Several career and placement workshops and panels are run each year with the librarian from the Simmons Career Education Center (CEC) offering face-to-face workshops at GSLIS West. Most of the career resources from the CEC are available online. Similarly, every semester GSLIS Tech Lab workshops are offered at GSLIS West, but recently the Tech Lab has been scheduling all Boston workshops as face-to-face and online synchronous classes using Elluminate. Additionally, the LISSA West group, the student organization, schedules social events, colloquia, and speakers throughout the year.

Simmons has been a member of the WISE (Web-based Information Science Education) Consortium since 2005. Through this consortium, GSLIS students are able to take courses through WISE’s select group of fifteen schools. GSLIS also offers online classes directly, and is proud to boast WISE’s only three-time repeat winner of its annual online teaching award, Linda Braun. Several of our newer faculty members have a background in online teaching and, in Fall 2009, an ad hoc committee was established to take a broad look at how to incorporate online teaching into our program without sacrificing the quality face-to-face instruction for which we have become known.

In addition to fully online courses, Simmons offers classes in a blended—or “hybrid”—format that combines the flexibility and technology of online learning with the face-to-face interaction of an in-person class. There are fewer face-to-face meetings, and since much of the content is delivered online, students are expected to work with wikis, blogs, Web sites, and eLearning, and also to be able to play video-recorded lectures and podcasts, and use Skype, IM, and other social-networking tools.

The development of some of these blended courses is possible due to a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation’s Sloan Program in Asynchronous Learning, Anytime, Anywhere, Online. The Sloan Foundation chose Simmons for this award to show that a
college can offer high-quality blended classes and still maintain the close student/faculty relationships that are a part of the college experience. This program makes “high quality learning, education and training, available anytime and anywhere, for those motivated to seek it” (see http://www.sloan.org). The $225,000 grant has helped Simmons establish blended learning programs beginning with the five core courses offered in a blended format at the GSLIS West campus as well as a program in the School of Health Sciences.

Standard 2.7: 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.

GSLIS engages in regular, judicious evaluation of the curriculum through regularly scheduled Curriculum and Faculty meetings and through annual retreats. Such work results in the addition of new courses as well as the weeding of courses that are no longer relevant.

After the decision to switch from four-credit to three-credit courses and the expansion of program requirements from nine to twelve courses, GSLIS undertook a massive curriculum review during the 2004-2005 academic year (as noted earlier in this chapter). Beginning with the change from three to five core courses, the faculty examined every course in the GSLIS catalog by working within seven “clusters”—Management, Reference, Research, Organization, Technology, Children/Youth/SLTP, and Archives/Preservation. Overall, 11 courses were dropped from the curriculum and 70% of the remaining courses were changed in some way. At the same time, the focus on clusters enabled Faculty to fully examine subject area offerings and insure that a full range of classes was being taught. As a result, some classes were added.

Understanding the need of students to adjust for these comprehensive programmatic changes, the faculty made relatively few changes to the curriculum in the following two years other than to introduce the new courses into the schedule. At the same time, plans were being made to prepare for the next cycle of review.

To maintain a strong link to practice, GSLIS also solicits input from alumni and employers for feedback on the curriculum. In 2008, as preparation for the discussion of a new mission statement and set of M.S. student learning outcomes, GSLIS conducted focus groups of faculty, staff, adjuncts, employers, and students. The discussions were formed by the following questions:

- What do we want GSLIS graduates to be able to DO?
- What do we want GSLIS graduates to KNOW?
What do we want GSLIS graduates to be able to THINK ABOUT?

The purpose of the focus groups was to get a broad view of the expected educational outcomes from the curriculum from a wide range of stakeholders. The focus groups helped us to refine the outcomes. The answers from the various groups highlighted the cohesion among and discrepancies between the stakeholder groups.

At the same time, we participated in the College's strategic-planning process (see Chapter 1 Appendix 1-1). By keeping in mind the expectations of the various GSLIS stakeholder groups, GSLIS has been able to plan out curriculum and work with respect to larger institutional expectations.

The results of the focus groups also informed the faculty discussion on the Student-Learning Outcomes, and subsequent revision, to reflect a broader view of the LIS professions. During Fall 2009, the faculty adopted three outcomes focused on leadership, learning, and flexibility. These qualities are central to the curriculum and central to the College as reflected in the strategic-planning process and the future of the information professions. The three outcomes are:

- Graduates demonstrate critical thinking in their practice of library, archives, and information science
- Graduates communicate clearly and effectively in a range of formats to a variety of audiences
- Graduates demonstrate leadership capability in practice and service and in diverse communities

Implicit in student learning outcomes is the expectation that GSLIS graduates will be able to assume an assertive role to provide service, to use critical thinking to analyze and integrate theory into practice, and to adapt to the evolving needs of users and to the dynamic technological and social environment, and will use these skills to manage organizations and influence the future of the LIS professions. Still in the construction process, rubrics for the student learning outcomes are being developed to help assess how well the outcomes are incorporated into the curriculum. As part of the review process, a three-level measure has been proposed for each course:

- I: the outcome is introduced (e.g., part of the lectures or readings)
- R: the outcome is reinforced (e.g., forms part of one or more of the assignments)
- E: the outcome is emphasized (e.g., forms a major component of an assignment, and is expected to be mastered by the student)

Although this is still in its early stages, the measures are a tool to address the outcomes as part of the curriculum process and to focus the curriculum on the GSLIS mission and the needs of the LIS professions.
Conclusion

GSLIS offers a rich and diverse program aimed at producing graduates who will lead and be successful in the LIS professions. Our varied selection of courses exceeds the number of offerings in most LIS programs. The curriculum and the review process insure that GSLIS faculty continually assess and update the academic program to stay current and relevant to LIS and related fields. This on-going process guarantees continued growth in the curriculum and the quality of GSLIS graduates.