

VSU MLIS Stakeholders Meeting Minutes
October 3, 2014 7:00 – 7:50 am
GaCOMO Conference: Augusta Convention Center Oglethorpe C

- I. Introduction and updates – attending meeting are MLIS faculty, current students, alumni, employers, and the Program Advisory Board representatives from the Georgia Public Library Service and the University System of Georgia. (7 students, 22 alumni, 9 other stakeholders, 6 faculty members).
 - a. In July 2014 the MLIS Program was moved to the College of Education and Human Services under Dean Brian Gerber. We are now the Department of Library and Information Studies and we continue to offer the ALA accredited Master of Library and Information Science degree. There have been no changes to the MLIS degree program content.
 - b. Dr. Wallace Koehler, the founding MLIS Program Director retired in July 2014 and Dr. Linda Most has been named interim department head.
 - c. The current MLIS faculty have had a successful year. Dr. Anita Ondrusek was promoted to full professor and received the university's inaugural excellence in online teaching award. Dr. Changwoo Yang was promoted to Associate Professor. Dr. Colette Drouillard has two publications coming out, and Dr. Harold Thiele and Dr. Xiaoi Ren are working on new research projects.
 - d. The department is lucky to have Mrs. Jewel Eller Suddeth as a full time limited term faculty member for this year to teach in the management track.

- II. Program news
 - a. Enrollments are steady and application numbers are growing, with more out of state applications coming in each semester. For the first time in its history the MLIS Program participated in the ALISE joint recruiting booth at the 2014 annual ALA conference in Las Vegas and we are planning to do so again at ALA 2015 in San Francisco.
 - b. Number of students graduated – 66 in AY 2013-14.
 - c. Findings from our Spring 2014 employment surveys of our 2012 graduates by type of institution: 38% academic, 35% Public, 6% special, 3% school, 21% still looking for a professional position. On the average our graduates report that it is taking 18 months after graduation to secure a professional position.
 - d. Participation here at the annual GaCOMO meeting is one very visible way to see the breadth and depth of the impact our students and graduates are having on libraries in the state of Georgia.

- III. Accreditation status – our American Library Association accreditation is no longer on conditional status. It has been continued to 2020 on cycle. As part of ongoing accreditation we will continue to report to ALA on the status of the program as required. ALA is in the process of revising the Standards for Accreditation of Masters of Library and Information Science Programs. These changes will impact LIS education moving forward. The changes are about ensuring that the schools are transparent and accountable to their students and to the profession. The goal of the revisions of the Standards is to make sure all students receive a well-rounded

education as defined by the discipline's stakeholders. Please review the standards on the ALA website and comment if you feel you have something to contribute.

- IV. Comments, questions or suggestions about the program from attendees:
- a. What are the things we are doing right?
 - i. Providing students with a mix of both theoretical and applied learning experiences
 - ii. Providing a degree program that is respected both in and out of state.
 - iii. Enrolling and graduating more out-of-state students
 - iv. Nationally competitive tuition rates for a focused library-centered professional degree.
 - b. Your priorities for the program as students, alumni, stakeholders, employers?
 - i. Continuing education opportunities for working librarians, perhaps even a certificate in leadership or management. Response: at this time the opportunity to take courses as a non-degree seeking student is available but no certificate is currently awarded. Note from the floor that public librarians in Georgia need to complete ten hours of continuing education every two years to maintain their state licensure.
 - c. Where do you see the need in the field? What direction should the curriculum take?
 - i. From Merryll Penson (USG): an awareness of how people will work in the future, that they may hold fifty different jobs instead of one career position and may need:
 1. Project management skills
 2. The ability to work across multiple settings and collaborative environments
 3. An understanding of collaboration as part of the normal day-to-day work processes and activities
 4. Shift the focus on technologies in the workplace to include more emphasis on digital technologies in the workplace rather than on hardware
 5. Understand that the need for community building is important across all types of libraries
 6. More awareness of the impact of copyright laws and the issues they cause with interlibrary loan services
 7. Negotiating contracts and licensing agreements
 8. Financial management, especially reading and creating a budget
 - ii. From the group: An awareness of the difference between learning specific skills and understanding knowledge areas
 1. Not how to enter data into a specific software application but how that category of software works and what it is used for
 2. Some understanding of the principles of cataloging with an awareness that real skill and learning are going to come when those principles are applied in a workplace setting, possibly offering advanced certificates in professional cataloging

- d. Discussion of professional mentoring possibilities:
 - i. Could GPLS offer limited term mentoring programs in specific areas of need?
 - ii. Add a component into the program about interviewing for professional positions, possibly as part of the Capstone course
 - iii. The student organization has discussed sponsoring online programs on job hunting skills and a two-part article on successful interviewing techniques ran in the student newsletter
 - iv. The university offers graduate students and alumni interviewing and resume resources
 - v. The Atlanta Emerging Librarians group is also an excellent source of professional development resources and programs
- V. Alumni Association update (Dr. Ondrusek)
 - a. Working to establish a formal alumni association
 - b. Alumni would then be represented on the Program Advisory Board
 - c. Wendy Wilmoth volunteered to work with the alumni

Concluding remarks from Dr. Most included thanks to everyone for attending the meeting, an invitation to those interested to join the Program's Facebook group, and an invitation to everyone to share their ideas for the program with Dr. Most.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 am.