THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
Program Review

SELF-STUDY

The self-study document should address the issues in the list below approved by the unit administrator, dean, AC/GC program review committees, and provost. For ease of reference, the sections of the self-study response documents should be numbered to correspond to the issues in this list. The document should directly and succinctly address each issue, and should be only as long as necessary.

Each section of the self-study should review the current situation and suggest improvements to be implemented over the next ten years. The document should provide a comprehensive picture of the program(s) at all sites (Gulf Park, Hattiesburg, Keesler, etc.), and should draw attention to differences between sites when applicable. **Supporting evidence (data, documents, etc.) should be provided for all responses, so that the program strengths and challenges are clear. Thus, the document should provide the basis for future action.**

Attachments should be added where indicated and as you believe will enhance meaningfully the self-study. Address undergraduate #3 and graduate #4, unless you have only the undergraduate or graduate degree.

Questions that inform the institution's responses to its accreditor, SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges), are indicated by "**SACS**" and the principle number. (Eg. **SACS 4.1**)

Programs should contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with any questions about the program review process: 601-266-6775.

If the program has an external accrediting agency, the program should submit:
- List the degree program(s) accredited by the external accrediting agency. (Note: if one degree program is accredited by the external accrediting agency, but another program is not, the one not accredited by the external accrediting agency must go through the internal Program Review process. For example: if the undergraduate program is accredited by an external agency, but the graduate program is not, then the graduate program must go through the internal Program Review process).
- A copy of the last accreditation report from the external accrediting agency. (A copy of the self-study for the agency should be made available if requested by an Academic or Graduate Council member.)
- Additional items from the University Self-Study document (if the department chooses to respond).
- Any other relevant materials.

<u>**Internal Program Review Self -Study format:**</u>

1. School, department, or program goals for the review process: Briefly describe what each unit hopes to achieve with the review process. This is an opportunity to emphasize for the readers of the self-study the major issues that the review will address. Please indicate the process by which the Self-Study was created, including faculty program review committee members, other stakeholders involved, and the activities used to conduct the review.

   This self-study will cover the Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science degree in Library and Information Science (degree change from B.A. to B.S. in LIS degree was approved beginning fall 2015). This degree has a growing number of majors since it was recently approved as a fully online program. The purpose of the review process is to assess the growth and strengths of the program as well as identify areas of potential growth and development.

   This report was prepared by a faculty committee consisting of Dr. Teresa Welsh, Dr. M. J. Norton, Mr. Edmand Pace, and Dr. Elizabeth Haynes. Dr. Haynes was Director of the School of Library and Information Science at the time that the report was started. Dr. Welsh was Director of the School when the review process was concluded. Dr. Norton is the former Director of the School, and Mr. Pace is undergraduate advisor and instructor of some of our undergraduate courses.

2. Unit Mission, Goals, and Objectives: Provide a copy of the current mission, goals, and objectives, which should be found in the WEAVE online assessment system (Attachment A1a and A1b). Be sure to articulate how the unit mission, goals, and objectives relate to those of the college and the university.

   The LIS BA/BS program supports the mission of the college and the university through provision of curriculum designed to serve the needs of students interested in the field of library and information science. The purpose of the LIS BA/BS program is to prepare student to work in a library or archive and, in addition, to prepare them for graduate studies in an MLIS program. See Attachment A2 for a comparative table of strategic mission and goals at the university, college, and unit levels (The University of Southern Mississippi/College of Education and Psychology/School of Library and Information Science/ LIS B.A./B.S. Program).

3. Undergraduate Program: **Bachelor's Degree in Library and Information Science**
   3.1   Audience:
            a. Is the program strategically oriented to serve a particular stakeholders (or audiences) and meet University objectives?
               The purpose of the undergraduate library and information science major (B.A./B.S.) is to educate students for careers in the information fields; in libraries the bachelor's degree is a paraprofessional degree. The curriculum prepares future information specialists for roles that include modeling and valuing collaboration, effective communication, information based problem-solving, an appreciation of and respect for diversity, recognition and sensitivity to standards of ethical conduct and how to organize, access and evaluate print and non-print information resources in a variety of settings. The undergraduate program addresses a growing interest in information technology and issues skills among new graduates and in preparation for

emerging roles in archives and preservation, school library media support, and material management.

b. Does the program have a sound reputation for academic quality? Yes

c. What evidence demonstrates sound reputation for academic quality?
Satisfaction of practicum supervisors and their willingness to work/mentor our students (Attachment B1.489 Practicum Evaluations).

The LIS 489 practicums are individualized experiences so that some students might not be asked to demonstrate entry level copy cataloging or basic cataloging or other skills so not all categories are reported. The twenty students who were evaluated by their on-site practicum supervisors were rated an average of 2.9 out of 3 points (97%) for beginning skill level and rated 2.8 out of 3 points (93%) for their quality of work.
The students were rated 4.5 out of 5 points (90%) for reliability; 4.6 (92%) for attitude/conduct and following policies and procedures; 4.5 (90%) for initiative and for productivity.

Placement in graduate programs in a variety of disciplines (Attachment B2. Students in Grad Programs). (**SACS 4.1**)
From 2010-2014, there are 47 LIS undergraduates, 23 of which (49%) were accepted into graduate programs.

3.2 Curriculum:
a. Is the curriculum up-to-date and comparable to that of similar departments, schools, or programs at other schools that are considered strong and admirable? Yes (Attachment B3. Undergrad LIS Programs).

b. Is the program's length (hours in the major) appropriate for the discipline? (**SACS 4.4**)
Yes, the library and information science major (LIS) requires completion of the general education core (GEC) as well as 45 hours of major-area courses, 6 hours of major requirements outside the department, an 18-hour minor, and enough electives to bring the total number of hours to 124 (Attachment C. LIS Degree Plan).

c. Is the teaching of speaking and writing skills integrated into the curriculum?
Yes. Speaking and writing assignments are required in all LIS courses and are included in student learning outcomes for WEAVE. At least one speaking-intensive (SI) course and one writing-intensive (WI) course is required in the general education core (Attachment C. LIS Degree Plan).

d. Do upper-level courses have prerequisites appropriate for advanced study?
Yes. All but one of the required major courses are upper level. There is not a defined sequence of courses since each course tends to deal with a different topic of library science (i.e. reference, cataloging) but students are expected to have completed most core courses in the major before doing the capstone practicum (Attachment C. LIS Degree Plan)..

3.3 Learning Outcomes:

a. Does the school's or department's assessment program show that students acquire core knowledge and skills appropriate to the discipline? If not, what changes to the curriculum should be considered?
Yes, student learning outcomes are being met, as indicated by assessment measures used in WEAVE. The faculty monitors the assessments and considers changes and modifications as indicated by curriculum changes and other indicators.

b. What data are used to evaluate and measure learning outcomes?
Assessment measures used in WEAVE based on class assignments and performance in the capstone practicum project as evaluated by on-sight library mentors/supervisors.

3.4 Effectiveness:
a. Is there evidence showing that students complete their degree with appropriate knowledge, skills, and professional accomplishments?
Yes, capstone practicum evaluations by professionals in the field.
b. Does the program effectively prepare students for professional employment or graduate programs after graduation?
Yes, most students go on to graduate programs or get jobs (Attachment B2. Students in Grad Programs).

c. How many students graduate annually?

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
11	12	7	7	10

From 2010 – 2015, there were 47 graduates with LIS bachelor's degree, an average of 9 per year.
There are currently about 54 LIS undergrad majors in the program so we anticipate the graduation numbers will increase in the next few years.

d. What evidence is used to evaluate effectiveness?
Retention rate (70%), graduation rate (90% in 6 years or less), and practicum evaluations (Attachment A1, Attachment B1).

3.5 Technology (**SACS 3.4.12**):
a. What technologies are used by students in the program, and why?
Library technology is at the leading edges of information transfer, so students must be familiar with and employ a wide variety of technology tools to be adequately prepared for the field. Students use online learning/teaching software such as Blackboard, and Blackboard Collaborate classroom; online database resources, standard computer application tools such as word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software, emerging Web management tools and social communications systems. Some students also benefit from training in digitization techniques if their interests lie in that direction.

b. How does the use of these technologies enhance student learning and how is it appropriate for meeting objectives of the program?
Careers in librarianship require technology-based interactive skills. Students learn how to manage these tools through the class methods we implement, and the variety of tools we require them to employ. Whether the students go directly into a traditional library paraprofessional position, an archival role,

office management, or school library, they are prepared by our emphasis on technology.

    c. How is access to the technology and training in the use of the technology given?
Students are required to take LIS 201: Introduction to Information Literacy, which is a computer competency course in the General Education Curriculum. They are also required to take at least one technology-intensive course, choosing among, LIS 416: Technology in the School Library, LIS 457: Computers Applications in Libraries or LIS 458: Internet Resources and Applications.

3.6   Student quality:
    a. Are admissions to the major appropriately selective and are top applicants successfully recruited and retained?
Students with at least a 2.0 will be considered for admission into the LIS Major, however, students may with permission take some LIS courses to determine their interests or gain LIS related course work.
    b. If necessary, what steps could be taken to improve these measures?
We are following University policy on admissions.

3.7   Independent Learning:
    a. Do students have adequate opportunities for independent research/scholarly activity, internships, and service learning? If not, how could these opportunities be enhanced?
Yes. Students are required to take a capstone practicum of 150 hours in a library or archival placement. Several service learning courses are available, including LIS 417: Literature and Related Media for Children, LIS 408: School Libraries, and LIS 428: Storytelling, among others. Students are allowed to take LIS 492 Special Problems in Librarianship as an independent study. LIS majors in the Honors College complete an Honors Thesis under LIS faculty supervision and LIS 489 practicum capstone requires a research paper.
If not, how could these opportunities be enhanced? Faculty are actively encouraging students that show interest in research to submit those works to the Undergraduate Research Symposium and for undergraduate research awards, and even co-publication opportunities when appropriate.

3.8   Student satisfaction:
    a. Are students pleased with their experiences in the program and with the opportunities it offers them?
Yes. We have received positive feedback from focus groups held each year at the Mississippi Library Association annual conference. We are developing an undergraduate exit survey to gather additional data.

3.9   Honors:
    a. Does the Honors College attract a reasonable level of student participation from your program and provide appropriately enriched experiences for Honors students?

Yes. We generally have one or two students who are associated with the Honors College. LIS faculty mentors them on their honors thesis and encourages them to participate in the undergraduate research symposium.

b. What changes or enhancements might be proposed?
Honors students could benefit from several of our basic reference courses, and technology-focused offerings.

3.10 Dual classes:
a. How many combined undergraduate/graduate courses are part of the required undergraduate curriculum in your unit? (**SACS 3.6.1**)
Five required courses and two required as an option from a selection of five available:
REQUIRED: LIS 401: Reference and Information Services, 405: Cataloging and Classification, 411: Development of Library Collections, LIS 440: Information Ethics, LIS 445: Sources of Information for a Multicultural Society may be taught as combined undergraduate/graduate.
REQUIRED Options: Technology course options LIS 416: Technology in the School Library, LIS 457: Computer Applications in Libraries, or LIS 458: Internet Resources and Applications may be taught as combined undergraduate/graduate. Literature options LIS 417: Children's Literature or 418: Young Adult Literature may be taught as undergraduate/graduate.

There are 4 other cross-listed electives available; each of the cross-listed courses are taught separately whenever each class is large enough and some courses, such as cataloging, collection development, and children's literature, are regularly scheduled as separate courses.

b. How are differences in research and independent learning addressed in combined classes? (**SACS 3.6.1**)
Undergraduate students and graduate students do not have the same assignments and do not have the same level of expected outcomes.

3.11 Faculty credentials:
a. Do all faculty, adjuncts, and graduate student teaching assistants meet minimum SACS and other accrediting requirements of 18 graduate credit hours in area of teaching? Yes

b. Are other standards applied in your unit? If so, what are those standards?
A full-time faculty member is required to have at least a master's degree in library and information science to be hired as an instructor or adjunct. Graduate teaching assistants are in the master's degree program in library and information science, have had a minimum of 18 hours of coursework, and assist teaching a class for one semester before they are permitted to teach that class.

4. Graduate Program: Master of Science in Library and Information Science degree is accredited by the American Library Association.
http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/directory/alphalist

5. Assessment Plans

5.1 Results of assessment:
a. Is the unit's mechanism for program assessment adequate?
Yes, but we wish to strengthen it. We hold an annual focus group as well as review semester WEAVE assessments of the program. An undergraduate survey is in development to give a more complete assessment.

b. Describe any changes in the program made in the past five years as a result of assessment.
Changes in curriculum as a result of feedback from students, graduates, and employers at the annual focus group include
- Added LIS minor: LIS 201: Introduction to Information Literacy, LIS 401: Reference and Information Services, either LIS 457: Computer Applications in Libraries, or LIS 458: Internet Resources and Applications, and three additional LIS electives.
- Modified undergraduate degree from B.A. to B.S., omitted requirement for 12 hours of language, and added requirements:
    o Technology course requirement: LIS 416: Technology in the School Library, LIS 457: Computer Applications in Libraries, or LIS 458: Internet Resources and Applications
    o LIS 415: Library Management was updated and revised to LIS 415: Public Libraries to focus on public libraries as requested by graduates, students, and employers
    o LIS 417: Children's Literature OR LIS 418: Young Adult Literature, instead of requiring both
    o LIS 440: Information Ethics
    o LIS 445: Sources of Information for a Multicultural Society
    o Minor in another discipline or 18 credit hours of courses within the College of Education and Psychology

5.2 Improvements:
a. What steps are being planned to improve the assessment mechanism?
Plan to continue annual focus group and WEAVE assessment; in the process of developing an undergraduate exit survey instrument to administer each semester to graduating LIS students.

6. General Education Curriculum, and Honors Curriculum
All departments that have undergraduate degrees are part of the General Education Curriculum because they provide, at minimum, capstone courses. Therefore, all undergraduate programs MUST respond to this section.
6.1 Contributions to the GEC:
a. What have been the unit's contributions to the general education curriculum over the past eight years?
LIS 201 (GEC 06) and LIS 489 (GEC 09). A proposal to designate LIS 491 a speaking-intensive (SI) course has been submitted to Academic Council for approval.

b. Are those contributions adequate or could other contributions be made?
SLIS Curriculum Committee and faculty feel that those contributions are adequate. A possible future contribution could be to designate an LIS course as writing-intensive (WI).

c. Does your unit have an adequate budget to teach GEC courses?
    We could offer more sections of LIS 201 with another instructor or faculty
    position; SLIS is in the process of hiring an assistant professor for fall 2016
    and plan to submit a proposal to hire another faculty position in 2017.
    Graduate teaching assistants are not always available to teach LIS 201 since
    availability depends on how advanced they are in the program and their
    aptitude for teaching.

d. How are written and oral communication skills addressed in GEC courses
    that your unit offers?
    In LIS 489, students research and write a scholarly paper. The paper
    includes scholarly sources as well as information gathered onsite and from
    organizational documents and Web sites. The paper is assessed based upon
    content, appropriate use of research with documentation and consistent
    citation of sources, compliance with standard research formats, number of
    errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage, and word choice aids
    clarity, vividness, and credibility. In addition to the scholarly paper, students
    also keep a journal chronicling their 150 hour practicum in a library or
    information center.

    In regard to our communication skills, LIS 489 students make a 10 to 15
    minute oral presentation to a group of students and/or faculty. The
    presentation is assessed for content, organization, language, verbal and
    nonverbal delivery, as well as the quality of the supporting PowerPoint
    presentation or other mediation. Students are also ranked by their practicum
    supervisor on a number of competencies, including several that focus on oral
    communication (see Attachment A1. WEAVE report).

    While LIS 201 is designated as a Computer Competency Requirement (GEC
    06), students are required to write a paper and give an oral presentation on
    their research topic.

e. Of the essential skills (writing, math, and oral communication), and the
    other areas (1) acquisition and integration of knowledge, (2) aesthetic
    understanding, (3) development of logical and critical thinking, and (4)
    responsibility, self and society areas incorporated in the GEC, which do your
    courses cover?
    Our courses cover writing, oral communication, development of logical and
    critical thinking. Two recent requirements, LIS 440: Information Ethics and
    LIS 445: Information Sources for Multicultural Populations encourage
    development of responsibility to self and society.

f. How are learning outcomes assessed in each of these areas addressed in your
    unit? How have they improved because of assessment?
    Learning outcomes are addressed by means of assessment via grading
    rubrics for each class and reported through GEC and WEAVE reports
    (Attachment A1).

6.2   GEC class size distribution:
        a. Do the class sizes in the GEC make the most effective use of faculty
            resources in your unit while maintaining high quality in these classes?

LIS 201 is taught in both face-to-face and online formats. The face-to-face classes are limited in size because they are taught in a computer lab. We limit our online classes to a maximum of 40 students but typically have fewer than 40. We offer several sections each semester with a variety of times and formats to meet the needs of students who have to take that class.

6.3 Adequacy of the GEC:
a. How is the general education curriculum addressing the needs of students in your programs?
The GEC curriculum does a good job of meeting students' needs for a broad foundation. Writing skills, in particular, have improved since the inception of QEP (Quality Enhancement Program) for faculty.

b. If the GEC is not addressing students' needs, how do you provide feedback to the GEC committee?
N/A

c. How do students meet the writing and speaking requirements specified within the GEC?
Students take IT 360 for the writing intensive class, CMS 111 or CMS 330 for the speaking intensive class (LIS 491 is in the approval process for designation as a SI course), and LIS 489 for the capstone class, which contains both writing and speaking components.
LIS 201, the required computer-competency course, includes a writing and speaking component as well.

d. How are degree plans monitored to insure that GEC requirements are met?
These are monitored through the advising process.

6.4 Faculty credentials:
a. How many faculty in your unit have completed the Quality Enhancement Program (QEP)?
Five faculty members have completed the QEP training and are QEP Teaching Fellows – Drs. Bomhold, Haynes, Norton, Welsh and Yu.

7. Special Programs
7.1 Contributions to special credit only programs:
a. What have been your unit's contributions to special programs such as co-ops, summer graduate education, and study abroad over the last eight years?
Since 2007, SLIS has offered 6 credit hours of study-abroad credit in British Studies (LIS 480 and LIS 487), a 4-5 week program based in London and Edinburgh.

b. How are teaching loads and budgetary requirements met to cover these programs?
British Studies hours are not counted toward the faculty teaching load; course registration and budget are handled by the USM International Programs Office, one of the largest and oldest study-abroad programs in the country. Faculty are not paid a salary but rather a per-diem stipend; dorm housing is provided at King's College, London, and the University of Edinburgh.

7.2 Contributions to non-credit special programs:
  a. What have been your unit's contributions to non-credit programs such as workshops, camps, science fair, REUs (Research Experiences for Undergraduates) over the last eight years?
  One faculty (Dr. Welsh) is a Faculty Affiliate of the Center for Undergraduate Research and has mentored student's research and another (Dr. Creel) is a research mentor for an Honors College student.

  b. How are teaching loads and budgetary requirements met to cover these programs? Not counted as teaching load but as service.

7.3 Honors courses:
  a. What have been the unit's contributions to honors sections over the past five years? We do not offer any honors courses but have an occasional LIS student in the Honors College. We have one student in the program this year and Dr. Creel is mentoring her honors thesis.
  b. Are those contributions adequate or could other contributions be made? Offering a section of 201 as an honors section is a possibility since multiple sections are taught and this course can fulfil the computer competency requirement.

8. Instructional Productivity, Class Sizes, and On-Line/Non-Traditional Teaching
  8.1 Productivity:
    a. Are the unit's FTE, SCHs and other measures of instructional productivity (number of majors, graduation rates, graduate enrollments, etc.) acceptable in comparison with other units in the University and with similar units elsewhere given department commitments to honors sections, writing intensive and speaking intensive classes and other classes where caps on enrollments are low to control for quality? If these numbers are low, what steps can be taken to improve them?

    Unlike most departments, our primary enrollment is at the graduate level. Our undergraduate program is growing; recently, the undergrad program was approved as a fully-online degree and that has attracted additional students. The professional degree in our field is the master's degree, and most students go into the bachelor's program knowing they will need to continue on to the master's to obtain a professional position in the field.

  8.2 Class size distribution:
    a. Does the distribution of class sizes make the most effective use of faculty resources, consistent with the demands of the discipline and received appropriate approvals?
    The class sizes are consistent with our current enrollment in the program. Enrollment is trending upward which should make class sizes more effective in terms of faculty resources. Use of cross-listed courses also enhances effective use of resources.

    b. Are there opportunities to adjust class sizes, eliminate unproductive offerings, or achieve other economies while maintaining academic quality? Yes, our Dean strongly encourages this.

8.3   Innovative learning:
a. Has innovative teaching and learning been introduced to the program(s) in the past eight years?
Yes, service learning and innovative technology techniques. Because our classes are online, our students are expected to be technologically competent and we are always pushing the envelope in that area. Three of our faculty have won teaching awards (Drs. Creel, Griffis, and Welsh) and one received the online class of the year award (Dr. Creel) and was asked to participate as a panelist in a teaching forum. Two are service-learning fellows (Drs. Bomhold and Creel) and five are QEP Teaching Fellows QEP Teaching Fellows (Drs. Bomhold, Haynes, Norton, Welsh and Yu).

b. Is innovative teaching and learning encouraged and supported?
Yes, faculty discuss and share new ideas to use in the classroom and are encouraged through faculty support and recommendations from other faculty experiences. When funds are available through summer teaching grants, LEC opportunities, or even college funding, faculty may have a course buy-out to pursuit a promising idea. Faculty have attended numerous technology workshops and conference presentations as part of their professional development.

c. What have been the results of innovative learning, and how has that information been used to improve the program?
Innovative teaching techniques are shared among the faculty through workshops and presentations. Successful usage of various techniques has encouraged other faculty members to become more innovative in their turn. Especially in the area of technology, the competence of our students has improved. One example is the requirement of an e-portfolio in technical courses.

8.4   Online, hybrid, and other non-traditional format courses:
a. Has the department or school made appropriate use of distance learning technology?
Yes, the bachelor's degree was recently approved as a fully-online program.

b. Is the number of non-traditional course offerings in the major or program appropriate to the discipline?
Each course offered online must go through an approval process at the department and college curriculum committees, and by USM Academic Council.

c. How are issues of academic integrity addressed in non-traditional formats?
Instructors use timed quizzes, Turnitin, and take-home essays to assess learning, and grade class participation in online sessions and discussion board postings.

8.5   Adjunct and Graduate Student Credit Hours:
a. What percentage of student credit hours is generated by adjunct and graduate teaching assistants in your units? (staffing analysis formulae)
(**SACS 2.8**)

Adjuncts teach one or two undergraduate courses per semester and graduate teaching assistants teach two lower-level undergraduate courses per semester, which is about 16% - 18% of SCH.

8.6   Advising:
a.   How is advising of students handled in your program?
SLIS has an undergraduate coordinator and advisor who handles most of the advising but the director and faculty who teach undergraduate courses are available for advising as well so there is typically always an advisor available.

b.   Do you assess your advising process? If so, how?
Regular faculty meetings include discussion of any new policies or resources related to advisement and approval of any curriculum changes proposed by the Curriculum Committee. The undergraduate advisor is a member of the Curriculum Committee and is the SLIS representative on the college Student Success Committee that focuses on recruitment and retention. Advising will be part of the exit survey being developed by the Curriculum Committee.

c.   How is advising figured into faculty teaching loads?
Advising is considered service and is not considered in faculty teaching load calculations.

8.7   Special Problems Courses:
a.   Do faculty teach one-on-one, for example special problems, dissertation hours, or project hours, where they work with students individually? What is the department's policy on these?
Faculty teach special problems courses; participation is voluntary, considered a service activity, and not calculated in faculty teaching loads.

b.   Are these courses handled differently during the summer? No

c.   How do these factor into the teaching load?
These courses are not generally calculated in faculty teaching loads but are considered service.

8.8   Faculty credentials:
a.   How do faculty attain the skills and credentials to teach online and other non-traditional format classes (workshops, certification)?
Faculty participate in campus training and webinar opportunities. All faculty are expected to attend Blackboard training, five faculty members have gone through QEP training, and two are service-learning fellows.

9. External Partnerships
9.1   Advisory Board:
a.   Does the unit have an external advisory board or similar body? If so, how does it function? If not, should one be established?
SLIS has an Advisory Board of distinguished graduates of the program and other LIS professionals. Due to the recent retirement of several members,

the Board has recently added some new members. Communication with the Board is primarily electronic, with email updates and request for feedback via surveys. Advisory Board members are invited as special guests to annual events such as the Mississippi Library Association Alumni Breakfast, MLA SLIS Focus Group session, and the Southern Miss Children's Book Festival. Advisory Board members have served as practicum mentors to LIS students and provide feedback to faculty and students about practicum opportunities in their communities as well as jobs, workshops, etc. The Advisory Board also serves in an advisory capacity during program reviews such as ALA Accreditation.

9.2   Local connections:
a.   Does the unit have appropriate connections with local agencies and corporations that facilitate research interactions, internships for students, and local economic development?
     Advisory Board members, a representative from the Mississippi Department of Education, as well as SLIS graduates and other information professionals send SLIS information about practicum and internship opportunities as well as jobs, professional development workshops, etc. that is disseminated to students via posting on the student listserv.

b.   Could such connections be established or improved?
     SLIS Director responds with an email of appreciation to each information professional that sends information about a job, internship, or scholarship opportunity to let them know the information will be disseminated via student listserv as a way to encourage them to send additional information.

9.3   National and International connections:
a.   Does the unit have connections with national and international corporations and agencies that facilitate research interactions or internships for students?
     SLIS faculty are members of several national and international organizations (such as ALA, SAA, SLA, PLA, etc.) and subscribe to national and international listservs such as IFLA in order to receive information about internships, job, scholarships, and fellowships that can be disseminated to students. SLIS faculty regularly attend national and international conferences.

b.   Could such connections be established or improved?
     Yes, it may be possible to improve these through greater participation in professional organizations and more directed requests to alums and advisory board members to forward information about internship, scholarship and fellowship opportunities.

9.4   Alumni relations:
a.   What efforts have been made to cultivate alumni and friends, and to seek financial contributions for departmental programs?
     SLIS Connecting e-journal is published in the spring and fall to connect with alums, students, prospective students, and other information professionals. Information about opportunities to donate to scholarship funds through the USM Foundation is included in each issue and information about USM

Foundation scholarship fund drives is disseminated through SLIS social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter), student listserv, and alumni listserv.

b. How effective are those efforts and how might they be improved?
A recent endowed scholarship has been created to honor retired SLIS Director Dr. Elizabeth Haynes. A number of USM faculty, staff, and alumni have donated to this fund and information about how to donate to this and other SLIS scholarships is regularly promoted through social media and listservs.

10. Scholarly Productivity and Professional Development
  10.1 Research, scholarship, or creative activity:
    a. What have been the accomplishments of tenured and tenure-track faculty over the past five years and are reasonable expectations in this area being met?
    Consider such measures as the percentage of faculty who regularly published, displayed, or performed their work (as appropriate), the quality of the venues in which their work has appeared, recognition in the form of awards, prizes, editorial appointments, professional society involvement, etc. Note Faculty vitas will be attached to the self-study so only a summary of accomplishments with notable highlights is necessary in this section.

    Five out of seven (71%) tenure-track faculty have a high degree of scholarly activity (see Attachment D1. SLIS Tenure-Track Faculty Scholarly Productivity, 2010-2015 and Attachment D2. Faculty CVs). The two faculty who were less productive during the past five years were serving in administrative positions with heavy administrative duties.

  10.2 External support:
    a. Does the school or department have an appropriate level of external support via grants and contracts, given funding opportunities in the discipline and the accomplishments of the faculty?
    Yes. Five faculty members have secured or worked on grants in recent years and some of these were awarded multiple grants. Dr. Griffis recently received a prestigious research grant from ALISE (Association for Library and Information Science Education). Dr. Creel recently received the Carnegie-Whitney grant from ALA. Grant opportunities in the library science field tend to be modest in amounts with few large grants available.

    b. Are there unexplored avenues for external support that should be explored?
    Other grant opportunities and sources of support could be explored with additional time and resources.

  10.3 Technology transfer:
    a. Has the faculty pursued opportunities in the development of intellectual property and in technology transfer?
    We provide educational information about these activities to several classes. Several faculty have authored or co-authored scholarly books or book chapters that are used as textbooks or reference books.

    b. Are such opportunities available that should be explored?

There are research opportunities to be explored and several faculty members have indicated an interest in this area. Chase Kasper, the Director, USM Office of Technology Development, is available to assist faculty in developing intellectual property, particularly related to technology, and applying for patents.

10.4   Faculty development and workload flexibility:
a. Does the unit have a program for faculty development that encourages the establishment of strong programs of research, scholarship, or creative activity and guidelines for workload assignments that require alternative contributions for faculty without such programs?
Yes. Tenure-track faculty are expected to conduct research and publish. Expectations for amount of publication are predicated on the basis of a three-three workload with additional teaching and governance obligations incumbent on members of a small department.

b. Are criteria for reappointment, tenure, and promotion clear and understood among the faculty?
Yes. All faculty members have a copy of the tenure and promotion guidelines and access to the *Faculty Handbook*.

c. Do new faculty receive adequate start-up funds to begin research or creative activities?
New faculty can request start-up funds commensurate with their submitted research plan. All faculty hired in the last five years have received start-up funds.

d. Do faculty have opportunities for sabbatical leaves?
Yes, there are opportunities available on the same basis as all other University faculty but must be approved by the college dean.

10.5   Mentoring of junior faculty:
a. Are junior faculty given appropriate guidance in instruction and professional development, including clear guidelines for tenure and promotion and regular written feedback on their work by the appropriate personnel option?
Yes. There is both a formal and informal mentoring program in the department. Junior faculty are aware of the tenure and promotion guidelines and are regularly evaluated by the director, which is the governance option chosen by the department.

b. If the unit does not have a formal mentoring program, should one be established? N/A

11. Administration of the School, Department, or Program
11.1   Governance document:
a. Does the unit have a written instrument of governance or similar document sufficient to ensure that faculty and staff understand how important decisions are made? If not, is such a document needed?
We adhere to the *College of Education and Psychology Bylaws* and the *Faculty Handbook* of the University as well as the *SLIS Handbook*.

11.2   Unit administration:
   a. Are the roles of director, chair, coordinators, and other faculty members holding administrative appointments clearly specified?
       Yes. The only administrative appointment in the School of Library and Information Science is the director.

   b. Are such appointments properly compensated (by salary and/or release time)? Yes

11.3   Multiple Sites:
   a. How does the program address resources and faculty needs at different sites?
       The program is online. All faculty are at one site – Hattiesburg.

11.4   Communication
   a. Are communications between the director, chair, or coordinator and the faculty, staff, and students effective?
       We believe that communication among all parties are effective.

   b. Describe the means and frequency of communication and suggest enhancements.
       Faculty meet at monthly faculty meetings. The director has an open-door policy and communicates frequently by means of email and personal interaction. The collegiality of the department is exceptional. Students receive communication through blast emails via SOAR, announcements through Blackboard classes, and communication through listservs and social media.

   c. Are communications by the director, chair, or coordinator effective within the college, the university, and the community?
       The director is in frequent communication with the dean of the college and meets regularly with other chairs in the college. When necessary, the director communicates with other University officials and also uses the university public relations department listservs to publicize the school both internally and externally. The school has a social media presence with an active Facebook page, LinkedIn page, YouTube account, and Twitter account.

   d. Is the director, chair, or coordinator effectively communicating and encouraging faculty to collaborate with others in the college and across the university?
       Yes. All faculty are involved in college and/or university committees and councils. Drs. Bomhold, Creel, Griffis and Yu have all been involved in cross-departmental collaborations in research projects.

11.4.   Staff support:
   a. Are sufficient staff assigned to the unit to support the essential activities of faculty and students? If not, what are the highest priorities for new positions?
       Yes, the school has efficient and effective staff who support the activities of faculty and students.

11.5.   Administrative credentials:

a. Do directors, chairs, and coordinators hold the highest terminal degrees in their areas? Yes

11.6. Supervision and training of graduate teaching assistants:
   a. Do GTAs receive special training (or take particular courses) to acquire good teaching skills?
   GTAs spend a semester assisting in an existing class before being assigned to teach that same class. They are observed and mentored by the lead instructor for that class (LIS 201).

   b. Who observes and mentors GTAs in classroom/lab situations?
   Mr. Edmand Pace, the lead instructor for LIS 201, and the school's director.

12. Resources
  12.1 Operating budget:
   a. Is the operating budget of the unit sufficient to support its essential activities? If not, what are the highest priorities for an increase in operating funds?
   The operating budget is sufficient and comparable to other units in the college. Additional funds could be used for recruiting and for faculty and student professional development.

  12.2 Tenure-track faculty positions:
   a. Does the unit have sufficient tenure-track faculty positions? If not, what would justify a request for additional positions and to what areas should those positions be allocated?
   SLIS needs an additional tenure-track faculty and is in the process of hiring an assistant professor for fall 2016 to teach graduate and undergraduate courses. We anticipate an increased enrollment over the next year and plan to submit a permission to hire for another assistant professor for fall 2017.

  12.3 Non-tenure track positions:
   a. Does the department have an appropriate allocation of continuing non-tenure track instructor positions and funds to hire part-time lecturers?
   SLIS employs one non-tenure track instructor. The College of Education and Psychology funds adjuncts and is now funding two adjuncts to teach courses until new SLIS faculty member can join us in fall 2016.

   b. Should plans be made to convert vacated non-tenure track positions to tenure-track lines?
   No. We have no vacated non-tenure track positions, and plan to add only tenure-track lines as part of both our undergraduate program development and to maintain our graduate program's accreditation.

  12.4 Physical facilities:
   a. Are the unit's physical facilities (offices, computers, laboratories) adequate to support its essential operations? If not, what modifications or additions should be considered?
   Yes. The school has a recently-refurbished office suite. One of the physical classrooms used by the school is a computer lab that was recently completely upgraded. All the classrooms in the school are available for other programs to use.

12.5   Library: (Be sure to address different needs with undergraduate and graduate programs.)

    a.   In consultation with the Library's collection development coordinator, specify how your program library needs have been assessed and addressed.

      We request needed materials through our library coordinator and contribute support for databases and reference tools we feel are critical to students' needs. We coordinate with our college librarian, Michele Frasier-Robinson, who is available for training and who maintains a LIS LibGuide page: http://libguides.lib.usm.edu/library_information_science
Upon our request, Ms. Frasier-Robinson recently conducted an assessment of library resources available to LIS students (Attachment E).

    b.   Are university library resources sufficient for programs in your unit?
Yes, University Libraries provides access to the major databases as well as print and online resources required for library and information science.

    c.   How are funds provided for library resources?
An allocation is assigned to the school from the library from which we may request materials. The school contributes to the cost of several databases and e-resources from our student course fees.

12.6   Graduate assistantship stipends:

    a.   Is support available for graduate students sufficient for the graduate program to be competitive regionally or nationally as appropriate to its goals? Yes

    b.   Do you have enough GAs to meet the unit's mission and goals?
Yes, we have five GAs.

12.7 Other resources

    a.   What are the other resources that impact the program?
Being an online program requires that the faculty and staff of the program have high speed reliable computer and network access without fail so we are happy that USM upgraded its servers during fall break. When there are equipment or network failures our classes are significantly impacted. There is a need for more funding for faculty upgrades to new computers

    b.   Is access to those resources adequate to support the program?
The University makes every attempt to maintain full access and support for all computer and network technology including a needed upgrade this fall.

      How could access be improved, if necessary?
It would improve efficiency and access if there were more and better communication between LEC and i-Tech. Since many of our classes are in the evening, 24-hour on-call help is needed. Since all our programs are online, there is a need for more funding for state-of-the-art computers for faculty.