INFORMATION SECTION

1. Unit and Chief Administrator

Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS)
John M. Unsworth, Dean and Professor

2. Parent Institution, Chief Executive, and Chief Academic Officer

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Phyllis M. Wise, Vice President and Chancellor [effective October 1, 2011]
Richard P. Wheeler, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost
[Dean Unsworth reports to the Provost]

3. Accrediting Agency for the Parent Institution

Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

4. Name and brief description of program

Master of Science

GSLIS graduates understand both the theory and the practice of library and information science (LIS): they have studied the foundations and principal ideas of the discipline, and they have been introduced to the values and expectations of the profession. We foster critical thinking about the literature of LIS and related fields, and we encourage high standards of professionalism and service. Our graduates are prepared to develop and evaluate resources and programs, and to understand the needs of many different kinds of users. Students who have completed our program are equipped to anticipate social and technological changes, and to promote change that advances the profession, improves technology, and encourages positive social transformation.

For the master’s degree, a student must complete 40 semester hours of graduate study. There are two enrollment options:

On campus. Students can pursue the degree on a full- or part-time basis.

LEEP. The LEEP distance education option brings students to campus only for brief periods of study; remaining coursework is completed online, using a variety of information technologies to communicate synchronously and asynchronously. Full- or part-time study is available. [Note that LEEP originally stood for Library Education Experimental Program. The designation LEEP has been retained for the online enrollment option, even though the spell-out is no longer applicable.]

We are seeking accreditation of our MS program including both enrollment options. There is substantial integration between these options. Although LEEP students have priority for enrollment in sections of courses designated as LEEP, on-campus students can elect to take these sections on a space-available basis. On-campus courses have made increasing use of asynchronous communication and web-based technologies, so the modes of teaching and learning in the two enrollment options have become more similar over time. All students must meet the same standards for admission and satisfy the same degree requirements. As we work to sustain our tradition of excellence in graduate professional education while pursuing new initiatives, we welcome the review by the Committee on Accreditation.
Historical Background

In 1893, Katharine L. Sharp founded a department of library science at the Armour Institute in Chicago. It was the first such school in the Midwest and the fourth in the United States. In 1897, Katharine Sharp accepted an invitation to move her school to Urbana to become part of the University of Illinois, the longest continuous university affiliation of any library school in the United States. Since 1926, when accreditation of library education programs was initiated, the School’s entry-level professional credential program has been accredited by the American Library Association. In addition to the MS program, GSLIS offers the MS/K-12 Library Information Specialist Certification Program, Certificate of Advanced Study (with the option of choosing to pursue a concentration in Digital Libraries) and the Doctor of Philosophy degree. GSLIS also participates in educational programs administered by the Illinois Informatics Institute: an undergraduate minor in informatics, the bioinformatics MS degree program, and the informatics PhD degree program (https://www.informatics.illinois.edu/display/infoed/Home).