VI. Physical Resources and Facilities

VI.1 A program has access to physical resources and facilities that are sufficient to the accomplishment of its objectives.

The School moved to the Library and Information Science Building (a remodeled fraternity house) at 501 E. Daniel Street in January 1994. In summer 2001 two new wings that more than doubled the size of the building were completed and fully occupied. In summer 2008 the 2nd floor east wing space formerly occupied by CARLI (Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois) staff was made available to GSLIS when CARLI operations consolidated in a building south of the main UIUC campus area. As of 2008, all GSLIS units are located in one building with all space in that building supporting the work of GSLIS faculty, staff, and students. In the summer of 2009, permanent shared office space on 2nd floor east was made available to the LIS Librarian, who now holds daily office hours on-site.

The building includes classrooms, conference rooms, lounges, kitchenettes, the GSLIS data center, several collaborative meeting spaces, office space (for faculty, staff, TAs, Post Docs, RAs, and emeritus faculty), studios for LEEP instruction, space for the Center for Children’s Books (formerly in an old house some distance from the main LIS building), space for the Center for Informatics Research in Science and Scholarship (CIRSS), space for the Community Informatics Initiative (CII), a large doctoral study area with computers, and two computer labs for classes and research groups. This space provides an excellent environment for teaching, research, and service activities as well as making GSLIS a more visible presence on campus. GSLIS schedules most courses in the building and LEEP students in residence for their required on-campus sessions also benefit from these facilities.

Sources of evidence:
Floor plans of the Library and Information Science Building [Room numbers given in parentheses]:
Basement (http://www.fs.uiuc.edu/ada/0331PLANB.html; http://accreditation.lis.illinois.edu/support/images/Basement.gif)
[West wing: Center for Children’s Books (24); center: computer lab (12A), data center (12B), kitchenette (14); east wing: classroom (46), student lounge (50), and computer lab (52)]
First Floor (http://www.fs.uiuc.edu/ada/0331PLAN1.html; http://accreditation.lis.illinois.edu/support/images/FirstFloor.gif)
[West wing: Administrative Office suite (112); center: conference room (109), staff offices, and staff lounge (119); east wing: lecture hall (126), conference room (131), loading dock and kitchen]
Second Floor (http://www.fs.uiuc.edu/ada/0331PLAN2.html; http://accreditation.lis.illinois.edu/support/images/SecondFloor.gif)
[West wing: PhD student office space (212) and RA office space (211); center: faculty offices, IT and research staff offices; east wing: kitchenette, lounge (233), LIS Librarian office (244), GSLIS Help Desk (245), faculty offices, and conference room/classroom (242)]
Third Floor (http://www.fs.uiuc.edu/ada/0331PLAN3.html; http://accreditation.lis.illinois.edu/support/images/ThirdFloor.gif)
[West wing: Center for Informatics Research in Science and Scholarship; center: LEEP studios, instructional technology and design group, faculty and teaching assistant offices; east wing: Community Informatics Initiative, conference room/classroom (341), faculty and research staff offices]
VI.2 Physical facilities provide a functional learning environment for students and faculty; enhance the opportunities for research, teaching, service, consultation, and communication; and promote efficient and effective administration of the school’s program, regardless of the forms or locations of delivery.

The Library and Information Science Building that the School occupies has many good features. All full-time faculty have private offices of adequate size in the central and east sections of the building, floors 2-3. Resources used most intensively by students within the building are typically in the east wing, floors B-2--classrooms, the lounge and kitchenette area, the GSLIS Help Desk, and the computer laboratories. Because all GSLIS research centers are also housed at the same site, students and faculty can easily consult with the staff and use the resources of those units, such as the Center for Children’s Books. The School’s own information technology (IT) and instructional technology and design (ITD) staff have offices in the building, so that help is readily at hand when problems arise. Office staff are co-located in an office suite, enabling students to easily locate staff to answer questions and provide assistance when needed. The daily presence of the LIS Librarian or her staff member in a highly visible shared office (next to the IT Help Desk) increases the opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to seek assistance in finding and using LIS information. (For the current Librarian’s Office Hours schedule, see: http://www.library.illinois.edu/lsx/about/officehours.html.) Having a building serving as the hub of all GSLIS activities fosters a sense of community among students, faculty, and staff. During on-campus sessions LEEP students also spend much of their time in the Library and Information Science Building, giving them an enhanced sense of being part of the School.

Source of evidence:
Building Facilities (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk/facilities)

VI.3 Instructional and research facilities and services for meeting the needs of students and faculty include access to library and multimedia resources and services, computer and other information technologies, accommodations for independent study, and media production facilities.

Computer and information technologies

To ensure that all students and faculty have access to the library and technology resources needed to support their work, GSLIS has built a high-end infrastructure for academic and research computing. An on-site data center provides for high-performance, high-reliability computing with redundant cooling, battery power, and gigabit Ethernet to the campus backbone. 65 servers (including dedicated, virtualized, and clustered machines) and 70 terabytes of storage are kept online, with 24x7x365 monitoring. Automated backups are performed regularly, to on-site and off-site archival servers. System reliability is very high, with most systems running for months with only a few minutes of downtime. Server software that is managed on-site includes: Apache, SAMBA, LDAP, MySQL, Drupal, WordPress, Moodle, Confluence, XEN (machine virtualization), qmail & mailman, CAS authentication, and Subversion.

All GSLIS personnel are provided with network file storage (accessible through a variety of protocols including WebDAV, SFTP, and SMB), Moodle learning management system accounts, Linux shell access, web hosting, shared printer access, relational database accounts, mailing lists, wiki access, source code control, PHP/Perl/Python/Java programming environments, and more. File server space and shell access are disabled two years after graduation, but all other services are provided indefinitely to alumni. As of July 2011, 5000+ people have active accounts on our systems.

The information technology (IT) and instructional technology and design (ITD) staff are responsible for assisting GSLIS faculty, staff, and students (on-campus and LEEP) with GSLIS computer
resources. Group and individual workshops, online tutorials, training materials, and technical support are provided. In addition, IT and ITD staff provide audio-visual equipment and service for recording and broadcast needs, for on-campus and for LEEP live sessions. The GSLIS Help Desk is staffed 8 am - 5 pm Monday-Friday for walk-in, e-mail, chat, or telephone assistance. ITD staff provide additional technology support 5 pm – 9 pm Monday-Thursday, and class support at additional times.

The Learning Resources Laboratory (LRL) and Computer Teaching Laboratory (CTL) --- computer labs in the LIS Building available to all GSLIS students -- are technology resource centers that support the curriculum and instructional mission of GSLIS. These labs provide physical computing facilities as well as access to electronic library-related resources. Each lab has dual-boot Macintosh computers which run Mac OS 10.6 and Windows 7 (21 workstations in the LRL; 32 workstations in the CTL). They have high speed (wired) access to the internet and are on the GSLIS local area network. Both labs have a full suite of software, including base productivity software and specialty packages requested by instructors each semester. The LRL also houses a black and white laser printer and a color laser printer for student use. These labs are available 24/7 to GSLIS students through a card access system which controls access to the building as well as other secure areas of the building.

All classrooms and conference rooms in the LIS Building have a data projector or LCD screen and a dual-boot Macintosh. Additionally, the conference room on 1st floor east has a VCR and a sound reinforcement (PA) system with wireless microphones. The lecture hall on 1st floor east has a document camera, a VCR, integrated lighting controls, a sound system with wireless microphones, and a lockable AV cabinet. Individual and common area computers are all on a 4-year replacement cycle.

There is an 802.11a/g/n wireless network throughout the building to enable students to access computing resources with their personal computers and mobile devices. Online documentation provides guidance to users on different topics including: accounts and passwords, UIUC and GSLIS computer resources, hardware and software, HTML and web pages, and ways to get help. IT staff also guide students to contact other campus units for training that complements what is available through GSLIS. The initial ten-day on-campus stay for LEEP students includes several workshops to familiarize them with technologies to be used in their subsequent courses. On-campus students who enroll in LEEP courses on a space-available basis are also expected to attend special technology training sessions.

IT staff maintain a Moodle virtual learning environment that serves as the GSLIS intranet. All faculty, staff, and students have logins. Alumni logins remain valid so that they can access the GSLIS community forums and online course materials after graduation and remain involved in the life of the School. The Moodle home page includes links to GSLIS Community Forums, links to all course sites as well as project and student group sites that maintain forums and documents on Moodle, academic support (advising guide and related links), tech support (guides, tutorials, and related links), a regularly updated listing of GSLIS news and events, and updates from GSLIS student services, ITD, and IT staff. GSLIS contracts with the campus to use Elluminate web conferencing software for LEEP live sessions, online meetings and office hours, and special events. A Confluence wiki supports collaborative authoring for course assignments and research projects. A user directory supports easy access to profiles of faculty, staff, alumni, and students by category (e.g., Master of Science). Everyone is encouraged to provide a photo and a profile of background and interests, which supports community building in classes and across the School. Official mailing lists enable easy communication with defined groups of people within the School (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk/forums_lists).

Multimedia resources and media production

GSLIS IT and ITD staff are collaborating with others in the recently-established Center for Multimedia Excellence on campus (http://will.illinois.edu/cme/about). The CME is an interdisciplinary
group of campus media, IT, library, and communication staff who are committed to developing best practices for rich media on the Illinois campus. The CME is a virtual organization with members volunteering their time and knowledge to campus projects. The goal is to develop shared knowledge, best practices, and resources for media production, publishing, accessibility, and preservation, so as to improve the quality and impact of media used for education, research, outreach, and public service. Plans are under way for a new service program housed in the Undergraduate Library focused on media creation, information technology training in multimedia hardware and software, and instruction in media literacy. At GSLIS faculty, staff, and students have access to equipment for audio and video recording and software for audio recording/editing, video editing and encoding, and screen recording and capture.

Independent study

As students have 24/7 access to the Library and Information Science Building, they have many options for using the space for independent or small group study. Because there is wireless access throughout the building, students make use of lounges and public areas at any time and also use the various classrooms and labs when other classes and meetings are not scheduled in the space. During LEEP on-campus sessions, the building receives particularly intense use as students take advantage of opportunities to interact with each other face-to-face during their limited time on campus.

Library resources

The University Library holds in excess of 12 million volumes and is the second largest academic library in the U.S., behind Harvard. [Source: ARL Statistics 2008-09, http://www.arl.org/stats/annualsurveys/arlstats/arlstats09.shtml] The University Library consists of a Main Library and numerous departmental libraries. Until May 2009, a separate, full-service Library and Information Science Library was located on the third floor of the Main Library building, about three blocks from the LIS Building, in quarters once occupied by the School. As part of the University Library’s New Service Model Programs, the LIS Library was discontinued as a physical service point with a separate collection. The collection of approximately 30,000 volumes was transferred to other departmental libraries as dictated by the books’ subjects (the Communications Library, the Education & Social Science Library, the Engineering Library, the Main Library Reference department, and so on). Core materials in library science were relocated to the Main Library book stacks. Less used and fragile materials were transferred to the Oak Street Library Facility, a high-density storage building. The University Librarian designated discretionary gift funds to upgrade incomplete records for 4,500 older LIS serials (15,000+ volumes), thereby enhancing bibliographic access to the historic collection of library annual reports and in-house publications and allowing them to be transferred to Oak Street.

The closing of the library was based on decade-long evidence of falling use, as measured by hourly headcounts of patrons and periodic samples of reference activity. Furthermore, as research and teaching in LIS grew ever more interdisciplinary, it became increasingly infeasible to contain all the relevant literature in one departmental library. The transition to a new service model should not be viewed as an abandonment of library support for LIS, but rather as the natural extension of the LIS Library’s attention to meeting the needs of GSLIS faculty and students (especially LEEP students), whose information-seeking activities increasingly occur online. The proactive acquisition of ejournals and ebooks (including full cataloging of numerous open access titles) has led to increased use of electronic resources, although the overall budget for LIS content has not been reduced. Indeed, one-time funds were made available in FY10 to support new database subscriptions, and the acquisition of both printed and electronic books continues at a steady pace. A request feature in the online catalog permits users to order books from any campus library, to be picked up at any campus library or delivered to GSLIS (or, in the case of LEEP students, delivered to their homes). On-campus faculty and students and LEEP faculty and students within the state of Illinois may also request books from any of the 76 member libraries of the
Consortium of Academic Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) who participate in the online I-Share union catalog (http://www.carli.illinois.edu/mem-libs/members_i-s.html).

Several other departmental libraries have been closed or merged in recent years, including libraries supporting the fields of physics, city planning, geology, international and area studies, foreign languages, and biology. As with those initiatives, the LIS Library transition was carefully planned by a team that included a faculty representative from GSLIS, Associate Dean Linda C. Smith. Students and faculty members also provided input via town hall meetings, a formal channel on the Library web site for written comments, and an informal web petition organized by a doctoral student. This input directly influenced decisions about services, such as retaining a separate collection of printed cataloging reference tools and exemplary thesauri, now gathered on the “Information Organization Table” in the Main Library reference room. Details of the project are documented on the New Service Model web site, which includes meeting minutes, user feedback, and reports compiled by members of the team (http://www.library.illinois.edu/nsm/comm_lis).

Sources of evidence:
Help Desk (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk)
Computer Labs (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk/facilities/labs)
Software Support (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk/software)
Audiovisual Equipment (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk/hardware)
File Storage (http://www.lis.illinois.edu/helpdesk/filestorage)
Moodle (http://groups.lis.illinois.edu/itdweb/moodle/moodle_guide.html)
Elluminate (http://groups.lis.illinois.edu/itdweb/Elluminate_Tutorial/index.html)
Library Gateway (http://www.library.illinois.edu)
Online Journals & Newspapers (http://openurl.library.uiuc.edu/sfxcl3/az)
Library New Service Model Programs (http://www.library.illinois.edu/nsm/)
Library & Information Science Virtual Library (http://www.library.illinois.edu/lsx/)
Online and Continuing Education Student Resources from the Library (http://uiuc.libguides.com/distance_learners)

VI.4 The staff and the services provided for a program by libraries, media centers, and information technology facilities, as well as all other support facilities, are sufficient for the level of use required and specialized to the degree needed. These facilities are appropriately staffed, convenient, accessible to the disabled, and available when needed, regardless of forms or locations of delivery of the school's program.

As mentioned in VI.3, the LRL and CTL are available 24/7 to all GSLIS students. The LIS building has an ID-card operated security system for access after 6:30 pm on weekdays and any time on weekends, allowing all GSLIS students access to the building. Also, the GSLIS Help Desk and ITD staff are available Monday – Friday and some Saturday hours to assist with technical questions. A ticketing system is also in place for students to submit technology questions. This system is monitored during all business hours to provide quick turnaround on technical questions.

The GSLIS building has an elevator, so that offices, classrooms, and labs are fully accessible to people with physical disabilities. More generally the UIUC campus is a leader in working to make the campus accessible and to provide support services for students with disabilities. Working with staff in the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES), GSLIS staff have found ways successfully to accommodate the needs of both hearing-impaired and visually-impaired students enrolled in on-campus and LEEP courses. For example, interpreter services have been used in on-campus classes (http://www.disability.illinois.edu/services/interpreter/) while real-time transcribers have assisted in
providing a written log of oral presentations in LEEP live sessions so that hearing-impaired students can fully participate.

The goal of the new service model for LIS library services is to be simultaneously more personal and more virtual. The model is designed to support a high degree of flexibility in anticipating and responding to changing user needs, emerging publishing models, and new technologies, both now and in the future. With staffing reduced to a full-time librarian, Susan Searing, and a full-time high-level staff member, Sandra Wolf, steps have been taken to strengthen opportunities for GSLIS students and faculty to interact with the library subject specialists. Acutely aware of their position as role models for library public service provision, Sue and Sandy hold daily office hours at GSLIS, Monday-Friday, with added weekend hours during the mid-semester LEEP on-campus sessions. In addition, both Sue and Sandy are available at announced times through the University Library’s virtual chat reference. However, the primary channel used by GSLIS faculty and students to pose reference questions is email.

The former LIS Library web site was transformed into the LIS Virtual Library (http://www.library.illinois.edu/lsx) and several features were developed to match user needs. These include:

- A specialized LIS Easy Search, a federated search of major databases in LIS and related disciplines, which also searches the online catalog, a variety of ebook sources, and IDEALS, the UI’s institutional repository.
- A virtual new book display.
- A news feed that highlights relevant new library resources and workshops, as well as events and information from the wider LIS world.
- How-to videos to orient students to LIS library services and specific information search strategies, such as journal alerts.
- Research guides, on the LibGuide platform, which range from general topics (“Finding LIS articles”) to specific assignments for particular classes.
- Selected links to web sites, listed by topic. These lists are maintained as link rolls on the social bookmarking web service, Delicious.

Google Analytics data for the second half of 2010 indicated that the LIS Virtual Library was visited on average 52.4 times per day. Information about the use of specific pages within the site is informing priorities for updating content and tweaking the layout and navigation. The LIS Virtual Library is maintained in the University Library’s content management system, which has been designed with particular attention to the needs of users with disabilities. In addition, the LIS Librarian disseminates important library-related news via GSLIS student, faculty and staff e-mail lists.

As the University streamlines services and eliminates redundancies, LIS students have benefited. Although most course reserve readings are now electronic, some GSLIS faculty still find it necessary to place printed volumes on reserve for on-campus classes. Print reserves are now handled by the Main Library circulation desk, which is open longer hours than the former LIS Library. Since the last self-study, the separate library service unit within the university’s Online and Continuing Education division was eliminated, and its activities were assumed by the University Library. As before, the LIS Librarian provides specialized reference and instruction services to LEEP students, backed up by the central Reference, Research, and Government Information Services (RRGIS) unit. A graduate assistant in RRGIS has been assigned to assist the LIS Librarian with outreach to LEEP students. In 2011, for example, the graduate assistant developed a series of short instructional videos (http://www.library.illinois.edu/export/lsx/learn/How_To_Videos.html). The provision of books and articles from the print collections is handled by the Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery department. The LIS Librarian plays an increasingly important role in the shaping of student learning. She is an ex officio member of the GSLIS Curriculum Committee, and she has worked with several instructors to
design assignments that develop students’ discipline-based information literacy while meeting the courses’ main learning objectives. In 2010, she conducted 51 instructional sessions; her workshops, tours, and guest lectures in GSLIS classes reached 1,269 students. (These figures have more than doubled since the last self-study.) For many of these sessions, she prepared online LibGuides, to which students continue to refer frequently. For example, a basic guide on searching for journal articles was accessed 3,233 times in 2010, while a guide designed for a particular assignment in some sections of Libraries, Information and Society (LIS 502) was accessed 8,956 times in the same year.

Reference transactions are also “teachable moments.” Beginning in March 2010, the LIS Librarian and staff member began using Desk Tracker software to record all reference transactions. In the ensuing ten months of 2010, 459 questions were answered. Thirty-eight percent of the queries were posed by faculty, 49% by students, and 10% by alumni, community members, and others. Fifty-one percent were asked and answered via email. Finally, although the LIS Virtual Library is not designed as a laboratory-library, it nonetheless offers opportunities for GSLIS students to engage in real-life pre-professional work for credit. Examples include: two students enrolled in an independent study course who focused on the design and usability testing of the interface to the LIS Virtual Library; a practicum student who updated selective lists of topical web links and conducted user research that led to a classified rather than alphabetical arrangement; and a group of students who, as a class assignment, developed a marketing plan for the LIS Virtual Library.

Sources of evidence:
Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (http://www.disability.illinois.edu/)
News from the LIS Librarian (http://www.library.illinois.edu/lsx/news/)

VI.5 The school’s systematic planning and evaluation process includes review of the adequacy of access to physical resources and facilities for the delivery of a program. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, staff, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

There is ongoing attention to monitoring the adequacy of resources and facilities. While the Assistant Dean for Infrastructure is directly responsible for the IT infrastructure and the building infrastructure, the entire senior administrative staff is involved with discussing the needs of the program in monthly meetings. Instructional technology staff regularly gather and respond to feedback from students and faculty on possible technological enhancements. For example, at the conclusion of each semester, faculty teaching LEEP courses are contacted and asked for feedback “about anything from on-campus, to training, to live session support as well as anything else (technologies or services) that could be improved upon.” As a result of concerns expressed by both faculty and students about the limitations of the “home-grown” technology supporting LEEP live sessions, GSLIS adopted the much more sophisticated Elluminate web conferencing service. Help Desk staff analyze “tickets” logging questions, comments, and problems on an ongoing basis to guide enhancements for user (faculty, staff, student) support. Limits on financial resources mean that not all requested improvements can be realized, but faculty, staff, and students know that suggestions for improvements are welcome and will be considered.

Demands on space come from daily use by faculty, staff, and students who work on-campus as well as intensive use during LEEP on-campus sessions each semester (when as many as 7-8 courses meet all day for each day over a 5-day period and many special events are scheduled). Logistics Committee members (staff representing academic programs, student services, information technology, and instructional technology) debrief after each LEEP on-campus session to assess whether space and technology resources have been effectively utilized, taking into account feedback from LEEP students in planning for future LEEP on-campus sessions. Students have access to all shared space (computer labs, classrooms, lounges) in the building 24/7 when it is not in use for a scheduled class or meeting. In spring
2011 on-campus master’s students were surveyed on their preferences for enhancements in space allocation and furnishings in the GSLIS building that could be considered if funds were available at the end of the fiscal year.

When space in the building becomes available for new uses, the Assistant Dean for Infrastructure consults with the Dean and faculty, staff, and students, as appropriate, on the most appropriate new use for that space. When 2nd floor east became available to GSLIS in summer 2008, careful planning considered optimal use of this new space, recognizing the value of locating a visible help desk in that space as IT services sought to become more user-oriented. Over time, faculty offices have been consolidated on floors 2 and 3, fostering more interaction among faculty. The 1st floor central corridor is now dedicated to administrative staff offices, providing co-location for the teams associated with student services, advancement, and publications as well as the K-12 program coordinator. We continue to look for ways to improve the attractiveness of the space. Assistant Dean for Advancement & Alumni Relations Diana Stroud is leading the initiative to enhance the GSLIS building with donated artwork, with donations coming from alumni and friends of the School.

Assessment has been especially important in the process of developing and implementing a new library service model for LIS. The University Library conducts periodic assessment activities, including the LibQUAL+ surveys of user expectations and satisfactions. The last LibQUAL+ survey, in spring of 2008, revealed that the Library overall meets the minimum service expectations of its users, but not their desired expectations. Service gaps were most evident in the area of information control, including unmet needs for electronic journals and easy-to-use online access tools. (Since the survey, the VuFind interface to the catalog was implemented, considerable progress has been made toward a redesign of the Library home page, the locally developed federated search tool was enhanced, and usability testing occurred.) Although GSLIS students and faculty are usually over-represented among the respondents to campus-wide library surveys, their numbers are still too small to provide actionable data about the GSLIS community’s unique needs and satisfaction levels. Nonetheless, heeding the LibQUAL+ findings, the LIS Librarian increased her efforts to build the digital collection and to develop tools, such as the LIS Easy Search, to facilitate access. Progress is constrained by the current budget climate for state-supported higher education in Illinois.

To supplement the wider assessment efforts and to provide evidence on which to ground the new service model, the LIS Librarian has conducted several smaller, one-time studies. These included a user survey of students, faculty and staff in 2008 before the final decision to close the LIS Library was made. That survey revealed that virtual services were more frequently used than on-site services. Further, graduate students in LIS highly valued access to LIS-specific commercial databases and to locally produced resource guides and web pages that supported their coursework. Faculty, on the other hand, placed highest value on the virtual new book shelf and on the role of the library web site as a portal to disciplinary information (“LIS Library Service Survey,” 2008). In the summer of 2010, a follow-up survey of GSLIS and Library faculty identified the benefits and drawbacks of the new service model from the users’ perspective. GSLIS faculty were enthusiastic about the increased presence of the LIS Librarian in the LIS Building, while lamenting their lost ability to browse the shelves of a single collection (Searing and Greenlee, 2011).

The LIS Librarian also regularly surveys LEEP students shortly after their on-campus orientation week. Student feedback on the librarian’s workshops, tours, and LibGuides, although consistently very positive, has over the years resulted in meaningful service improvements (Searing, 2007).

**Sources of evidence:**
