STANDARD I: MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

I.1 A school's mission and program goals are pursued, and its program objectives achieved, through implementation of an ongoing, broad-based, systematic planning process that involves the constituency that a program seeks to serve. Consistent with the values of the parent institution and the culture and mission of the school, program goals and objectives foster quality education.

Our Parent Institutions: The Florida State University & The College of Communication & Information

The Florida State University (FSU), founded in 1851 as the West Florida Seminary[1], "developed from one of the nation's preeminent women's colleges into a comprehensive graduate-research university, offering a broad array of academic and professional programs at all degree levels," [2] and enjoys the Carnegie Foundation's highest designation: RU/VH: Research Universities/Very High research activity[3]. Recently, FSU has experienced significant change in its top administration. On February 1st, 2010 Dr. Eric J. Barron became the 14th president of FSU[4], and on August 1st, 2011, Dr. Garnett S. Stokes became provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs to "oversee[s] the overall academic mission of the university."[5]

With a student body of 40,838 (Fall 2010), women account for 54.8% (22,379) and minorities 27.2% (11,108) of total enrollment. Graduate enrollment constitutes 20.9% of the student body (8,535)[6] , which includes 613 School of Library & Information Studies graduate students. The Graduate School is responsible for implementing graduate polices and for providing broad oversight of graduate education at FSU[7]. However, responsibility for degree program development and management is delegated to the University colleges and other academic units: "The Graduate School supports graduate students in every program at The Florida State University. We provide assistance in academic matters, advice on University-wide degree requirements, information on the availability of financial assistance including assistantships,

[1] http://fsu.edu/about/history.html
[2] http://president.fsu.edu/plan/strategicPlan_Nov2009.pdf , p. 7
[3] http://www.fsu.edu/about/
[4] http://president.fsu.edu/biography/index.html
[5] http://provost.fsu.edu/stokes/
[6] http://www.fsu.edu/about/students.html
[7] http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Inside-Graduate-Education/FSU

fellowships and scholarships, as well as approval for theses and dissertations."[8] In her welcome statement Graduate School Dean Nancy Marcus remarked,

> Graduate study is a time of exploration and immersion in a particular specialty. It is a time for the free exchange of ideas, acquisition of new skills, and creation of new knowledge. It is a time when faculty change from being your teachers to being mentors and colleagues. Graduate study at The Florida State University is the right choice for a student who aspires to make a difference and have a long and distinguished career.[9]

As our parent institution, FSU insists that we strive to prepare our graduate students to have meaningful impact in their chosen academic fields and progress towards the achievement of life-long personal and professional success.

Since the 2005 ALA accreditation visit, the FSU School of Library & Information Studies (SLIS) has undergone dramatic change. In July 2009, the College of Information, at the time our parent organization, merged with the College of Communication, to become the College of Communication & Information (CCI).[10] SLIS is one of three schools now making up CCI; the other two are the School of Communication[11] and the School of Communication Science & Disorders.[12] The SLIS community received the merger well. In recent SLIS community surveys, 83% of current students, 43% of employers, and 43% of alumni surveyed indicated that the impact of the merger on the SLIS master's program was beneficial or very beneficial; while 3% of students, 0% of employers, and 40% of alumni felt that it was detrimental or very detrimental [see *Appendix I.1 -2012COA_Alumni_Survey_Results_0419; Appendix I.2 – 2012COA_Employer_Survey_Results_0424;* and *Appendix I.3 – 2012COA_Student_Survey_ Results_0411*]. Although the merger has presented SLIS with short-term challenges, specifically regarding internal administrative support, research support, and technical support capacity, it also promises future opportunities for innovative interdisciplinary collaborations. In a statement on the College's website, CCI Dean Larry Dennis described the ways in which the merged College would enable the broader goals of its constituent schools,

> FSU's College of Communication & Information has become one of the international leaders in the iSchool movement by exploring the critical relationships between people,

[8] http://gradschool.fsu.edu/About-Us
[9] http://gradschool.fsu.edu/About-Us/Welcome-from-the-Dean
[10] http://cci.fsu.edu/
[11] http://www.comm.cci.fsu.edu/
[12] http://www.commdisorders.cci.fsu.edu/

> information, communication and technology. Our programs emphasize professions and activities that enable our graduates to gain knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century. Through a combination of education, research and service-learning, we harness the finest traditions of three people-focused, service-oriented disciplines into one organization dedicated to helping every person use information and communication to participate fully in today's society[13].

The iSchools organization is an important means of connecting with peer institutions, growing interdisciplinary scholarship, and increasing profile to students and researchers. Dean Dennis points to participation in the iSchools organization as a way to leverage and maximize CCI's core of the School of Library & Information Studies with two complementary Schools.

And, for as much benefit as the College may receive from iSchools organization membership, independently, SLIS also brings many strengths to the iSchools. In the area of Library & Information Studies, *U.S. News & World Report* ranks SLIS's graduate program 14th nationally,[14] giving specific recognition to the following specialties: Digital Librarianship 11th, School Library Media 3rd, and Services for Children and Youth 3rd.[15] Although it is no secret that "dramatic changes in the state's economy [have] affected legislative appropriations"[16] to Florida's institutions of higher education, SLIS is currently able to take advantage of two important revenue streams outside of legislative appropriations to support its graduate programs, and is therefore better able to support these programs than news reports might lead one to expect. These revenue streams are discussed in Standard V. This kind of support and unique status as both an outstanding LIS program and Florida's only member of the iSchools organization allows SLIS to be secure in the knowledge that not only are we an outstanding graduate program for the state of Florida, but we also lead our state and the LIS community as *Florida's iSchool*.

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[13] http://cci.fsu.edu/about/
[14] http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-library-information-science-programs/library-information-science-rankings
[15] http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-library-information-science-programs/college-of-information-134097
[16] http://president.fsu.edu/plan/strategicPlan_Nov2009.pdf , p. 3.

Our Constituencies: Students, Faculty, Employers and Alumni

In his *Welcome to the FSU College of Communication & Information*, Dean Dennis stated,

> Our strong sense of community and our commitment to supporting each other in the pursuit of excellence help make the College a great place to work and to study. Evidence of this community can be found in the activities presented in the student and alumni newsletters, and student organizations, both on-campus and online.[17].

SLIS (and previously, CI) has always strived to create a collaborative, inclusive, supportive and intellectually stimulating environment for its community. Founded in 1947, SLIS "is proud that, in its more than half-century history, it has produced many graduates who occupy positions of significant leadership and responsibility"[18] within the information fields. Our Master's degree graduates have held positions across a wide range of information provision environments. According to our recent survey of alumni, 24% currently work in academic libraries, 19% in public libraries, 12% in school libraries, 10% in special libraries, 38% in other information settings, 11% in information technology (IT), 8% in other information settings, and 1% in multiple types of libraries. Only 66 (14%) reported that they did not work in an information setting [see *Appendix I.1 -2012COA_Alumni_Survey_Results_0419*]. Our 134 male and 435 female current Master's students come from a variety of places and peoples [see *Appendix I.4, Tables I.1 – Residency and Gender and I.2: Race/Ethnicity and Gender*]**.** In the past, this diversity and success were supported by input from the CI Board of Advisors who are now part of the CCI Leadership Board[19]. SLIS has therefore recently created a Master's Advisory Board to continue to gain advice and guidance on the School's efforts to maintain and broaden its participation and impact.

Our Planning Process

In February 2009, FSU approved its 2008-2009 to 2013-2014 Strategic Plan [see *Appendix I.5 – CCI Strategic Plan 2011*]. To better align with the University's new 8 Strategic Priorities, during the fall of 2011, CCI updated its Strategic Plan [see *Appendix I.6 – SLIS Fall 2011 Strategic Plan*] as follows:

> *SP 1.0* Recruit and graduate the best and most diverse students.

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[17] http://cci.fsu.edu/about/
[18] http://slis.fsu.edu/About-The-School
[19] http://cci.fsu.edu/alumni-friends/leadership-board/

SP 2.0 Enrich the student experience while supporting and improving undergraduate, graduate and professional education.

SP 3.0 Recruit, develop, and retain the best and the most diverse faculty and staff.

SP 4.0 Enhance research and creative endeavors.

SP 5.0 Foster academic excellence.

SP 6.0 Ensure operational excellence while maintaining financial integrity.

SP 7.0 Strengthen the public service mission of the University.

SP 8.0 Build the University's national reputation.

Since the merger—with much of the administrative capacity shifted to CCI—planning has been executed at the College level. In Fall 2011, however, then SLIS Director Dr. Corinne Jorgensen and Dr. Lynne Hinnant (Assistant in Information Studies, with a Master's in Public Administration) guided the SLIS faculty through a semester-long strategic planning process that included a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Retreat facilitated by former FSU President Dale W. Lick on November 18th, 2011 [see *Appendix I.6 – SLIS Fall 2011 Strategic Plan*]. The planning process culminated in December 2011 with the identification of the following three Action Plans:

1. Clarify with the Dean the School's existing organizational structure, relative to the College of Communication & Information, based on the two tentative organizational charts recently created at the request of the School's faculty members.

2. Increase the School's administrative capacity by creating, funding, and staffing the following new positions: Associate Director; Assistant Director in charge of Graduate Programs; Assistant Director in charge of Undergraduate Programs (to be filled by the current Director of Undergraduate Programs); Research Coordinator (with PhD or comparable degree); and Instructional Designer. If any of these positions are filled with existing faculty or staff, their current positions need to be retained by the School and filled.

3. Increase the School's technical capacity by creating, funding and staffing the following positions: Online Information Technology Specialist and Webmaster; Technical Services Coordinator (including server management); Student Technology Support Position(s). If any of these positions are filled with existing faculty or staff,

their current positions need to be retained by the school and filled. [See *Appendix I.6 – SLIS Fall 2011 Strategic Plan*].

As of the end of Spring 2012 semester, Action Plan 1 was complete with the finalization of both the CCI and SLIS organizational charts [see *Appendix I.7 – Organizational Charts*]. Action Plans 2 and 3 had not been addressed prior to September 4, 2012, at which time Dr. Kathleen Burnett assumed the position of Interim Director. Once Dr. Burnett was in place, at the September 10, 2012, faculty meeting, the faculty began discussion of a reorganization plan that would ensure that SLIS has sufficient capacity to operate effectively and efficiently in the delivery of all of its degree programs. As part of the plan, three program directors were appointed to staggered three-year terms to better distribute the workload previously carried by a Director and Associate Director. Ebrahim Randeree will continue as Director of Undergraduate Programs and Finance. Dr. Lynne Hinnant will serve as the Director of Graduate Programs and Human Resources. Dr. Linda Swaine will serve as Director of Articulation and Assessment. As Interim Director, Dr. Kathleen Burnett will focus her attention on promulgating the School's vision and core values; recruiting students and faculty; reaching out to external constituencies; and guiding faculty development.

The faculty will resume the strategic planning process in Spring 2013, following communication of the results of the accreditation review. This will allow for the time to address current capacity issues and to take advantage of the guidance and direction of ALA's Committee on Accreditation. We are committed to putting in place a robust and sustainable planning and review process that reflects our interest in, and concern for, student learning outcomes.

Our Culture: Core Values, Vision and Mission

In concert with our position as Florida's iSchool and the University's Carnegie RU/VH classification, SLIS strives to operate as a collaborative, inclusive, supportive, and intellectually stimulating community of diverse constituencies. To that end, the School has recently adopted the following core values:

The School of Library & Information Studies is committed to:

- Excellence and innovation in research, teaching and service;
- Interdisciplinary collaboration to actively engage and solve information problems;

- Service and leadership in the profession, nationally and internationally;
- Recognition and respect for ensuring diversity establishing access, and encouraging responsibility;
- Continual professional development to meet the emerging demands of the information fields [see *Appendix I.6 – SLIS Fall 2011 Strategic Plan*].

The faculty have affirmed that these core values are reflected in our vision statement, *People & Information: Making Vital Connections*. This vision statement continues to provide a cohesive overarching direction for engagement with our various constituencies through our diverse degree programs, and resonates clearly with our long-term planning as a leading LIS program and as Florida's iSchool. We look forward to substantively revising our long-standing mission statement as we resume strategic planning in Spring 2013. To better represent our current understanding of the School's mission using more active language, on September 10, 2012, the faculty voted to modify the mission statement as follows:

> We believe that the access to and use of information technology, services, and products is of profound individual and societal importance. As part of a comprehensive research university, The Florida State University's School of Library & Information Studies promotes excellence and innovation in research, teaching and service in line with this overarching goal. Specifically, SLIS enacts this commitment to ensuring information access for all people, in all their diversity, by:
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> - Providing degree programs solidly based on the theoretical, conceptual and practical foundations of the field;
> - Encouraging and supporting the use of innovative teaching strategies and the conduct of interdisciplinary and collaborative research to promote information access among diverse populations; and
> - Emphasizing at all levels and among all its constituents (faculty, staff, students and alumni) the importance of leadership, proactive and ethical service, and the need to be responsive to the ever-changing technological, political, and economic environments.

Our Program Goals and Objectives

The provision of high quality instruction in all of its degree programs is the foundational goal of SLIS; we seek to assure that this goal is met through recruitment, selection, retention and evaluation of faculty, staff, and students. SLIS fosters faculty, staff, and student research through the encouragement of collaboration, grant and contract seeking, and the support of two affiliated Institutes and one Center. Public service by faculty, staff and students on behalf of local, regional, state, national, and international agencies and professional associations is encouraged and supported. These goals are reflected in the School's reward systems for faculty, staff, and students, and form the basis for its degree program objectives (found in the descriptive material for each program in Standard II).

During the 2011-2012 SLIS strategic planning process, the faculty revised the Program Goals and Objectives [*see Appendix I.6 – SLIS Fall 2011 Strategic Plan*]. These revisions ensure that our goals are stated in terms of educational results to be achieved (outcomes) in accordance with the core values of FSU and CCI, as well as with the culture and mission of the School. Approved on September 10, 2012, the revisions resulted in the following five program goals:

1. To develop graduates who are well versed in the theoretical, conceptual, and practical foundations of Library and Information Studies through a curriculum grounded on research, theory and practice.

2. To develop leaders capable of responding innovatively and effectively to the rapidly changing political, economic and technological environments impacting the information professions.

3. To develop information professionals committed to addressing users' needs and to providing high quality and ethical service within culturally diverse environments.

4. To prepare information professionals who can adapt to rapid technological changes and who can find innovative ways to improve access to information in a variety of contexts.

5. To foster commitment to professional growth through active and ongoing engagement in professional associations and the literature of the field.

I.2 Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect:

I.2.1 the essential character of the field of library and information studies; that is, recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use, encompassing information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management;

I.2.2 the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field;

I.2.3 appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations;

I.2.4 the value of teaching and service to the advancement of the field;

I.2.5 the importance of research to the advancement of the field's knowledge base;

I.2.6 the importance of contributions of library and information studies to other fields of knowledge;

I.2.7 the importance of contributions of other fields of knowledge to library and information studies;

I.2.8 the role of library and information services in a diverse global society, including the role of serving the needs of underserved groups;

I.2.9 the role of library and information services in a rapidly changing technological society;

I.2.10 the needs of the constituencies that a program seeks to serve.

The five program goals discussed in *Our Program Goals & Objectives* above are stated in terms of educational results to be achieved, and reflect the characteristics mentioned in I.2 [*see Appendix I.8 - Table I.3 SLIS Program Goals and Characteristics from Standard I.2*]. The process used to ensure that the SLIS Program Goals guide the development and review of the curriculum is discussed in detail in Standard II.2.

SLIS Program Goals		Standard 1.2 Characteristics
Goal 1	*To develop graduates who are well versed in the theoretical, conceptual, and practical foundations of library and information science through a curriculum grounded on research, theory and practice.*	***I.2.1*** ***I.2.2*** ***I.2.5*** ***I.2.6*** ***I.2.7***
Goal 2	*To develop leaders capable of responding innovatively and effectively to the rapidly changing political, economic and technological environment impacting the information professions.*	***I.2.2*** ***I.2.3*** ***I.2.5*** ***I.2.7*** ***I.2.9***
Goal 3	*To develop information professionals committed to addressing users' needs and to providing high quality and ethical service within culturally diverse environments.*	***I.2.3*** ***I.2.8*** ***I.2.9*** ***I.2.10***
Goal 4	*To prepare information professionals who can adapt to rapid technological changes and who can find innovative ways to improve access to information in a variety of contexts.*	***I.2.5*** ***I.2.6*** ***I.2.7*** ***I.2.9***
Goal 5	*To foster commitment to professional growth through active and ongoing engagement in professional associations and the literature of the field.*	***I.2.2*** ***I.2.3*** ***I.2.4*** ***I.2.5***

Table I.3: Program Goals and Characteristics from Standard I.2

I.3 Within the context of these Standards each program is judged on the degree to which it attains its objectives. In accord with the mission of the school, clearly defined, publicly stated, and regularly reviewed program goals and objectives form the essential frame of reference for meaningful external and internal evaluation. The evaluation of program goals and objectives involves those served: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.

Our Review Process

Outcomes-based evaluation is accomplished at SLIS by measuring program performance in terms of the program goals. Faculty are committed to systematic planning and evaluation. During the period under review, we have successfully established and implemented a curriculum review process to clearly define, publicly state, and consistently review our program goals and objectives. We have begun a strategic planning process to further SLIS's development as Florida's iSchool and as a leading Master's program, and have laid the plans for the next iteration of this ongoing process. Nonetheless, we recognize that we still have work to do. Changes in institutional leadership, unanticipated impacts of the merger of SLIS into the College of Communication & Information, and unprecedented political and economic uncertainty have challenged our ability to prioritize planning and evaluation at the School level. Nonetheless, our goals and objectives form the essential frame of reference for external and internal evaluations, impacting all activities of the School. The evaluation of our performance in meeting our program goals and objectives involves gathering information from students, faculty, employers, alumni, having these stakeholders evaluate the results, as well as having them assist in the development and implementation of Actions Plans to address identified disparities. To supplement the processes we began seven years ago in response to the guidance provided by the ALA Committee on Accreditation, we have implemented surveys of three of our most important constituencies (students, alumni, and employers), and have plans to deploy these routinely in the future. We have also established an advisory board from which we will solicit input regularly (twice a year) and additionally as needed.

Internal Evaluation: Students, Faculty and Administration

A recent survey of current of SLIS Master's students [see *Appendix I.3 – 2012COA_Student_Survey_Results_0411*] indicated that they were satisfied with their overall experience at SLIS (89.9% agree or strongly agree). SLIS has instituted a number of effective processes to ensure that student input on the Master's degree program is solicited and honored. Students participate in three main ways. First, over the past three years, our Directors have had an "open door" policy that includes communication by email and phone, and student/Director visits held via Blackboard Collaborate (such as the popular semi-formal annual "Chats with the Director"). The most recent student communication event was held on September 29th, 2011. Second, the Master's and Specialist Committee, which consists of faculty, students, and staff, annually evaluates and recommends improvements to the Master's degree curriculum, program goals, and objectives. Third, during our recent reorganization, SLIS appointed Linda Swaine, Ed.D., as Program Director for Articulation and Assessment. In this role, she will lead our efforts to find a sustainable solution to evaluating student learning outcomes and ensuring their incorporation into the review processes for all of our degree programs. Dr. Swaine's work will help SLIS to continue to comply with the University's method for assessing Institutional Effectiveness (IE) and conducting ongoing quality improvement, instituted in the 2003-2004 academic year. This method is consistent with the basic principles underlying the ALA Standard I.3 in that it requires that program outcomes be expressed in terms of educational results to be obtained; that measures be established to determine whether the results are obtained; that the results be measured; and that the information be made available publicly. It is the opinion of the Dean of the College of Communication & Information that the University's online compliance reporting system that supports this process is neither extensible nor sustainable. For SLIS to continue to improve, the evaluation process is now assured by a dedicated staff person. SLIS is also committed to hiring an additional full-time staff member to support Dr. Swaine's efforts. SLIS is continuously refining program objectives to align with both ALA and FSU requirements and expectations. As previously mentioned, in fall 2011, the SLIS faculty began an intensive Strategic Planning process, in which basic organizational capacity issues are being intensively discussed and objectively evaluated with current and future needs in mind. To date, this strategic planning has resulted in three unanimously agreed upon Action Plans specifically addressing SLIS's immediate and long-term capacity needs. Our recent reorganization was undertaken specifically to begin to fulfill these Action Plans. We still have work to do in this regard, but we are confident that this work will be accomplished over the next two years.

External Evaluation: Employers and Alumni

In a recent survey, the vast majority (90.3%) of alumni indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with their SLIS Master's degree education [see *Appendix I.1 - 2012COA_Alumni_Survey_Results_0419*]. In a related survey, employers ranked our program highly (33.3% one of the best, 58.3% above average, 8.3% average), and appreciated our responsiveness to their organizations' employment needs (26.3% one of the best, 52.6% above average, 21.1% average) [see *Appendix I.2 – 2012COA_Employer_Survey_Results_0424*].

Specific questions relating to the types of organizations that employ our graduates have been included in the *Alumni Survey* instrument [see *Appendix I.1 - 2012COA_Alumni_Survey_Results_0419*], to assist in SLIS's ongoing efforts to maintain an updated list of employers of Master's graduates. In addition to the CCI Leadership Board, SLIS recently established a Master's Advisory Board, made up of five library and information professionals, to focus specifically on the needs of the Master's program. Development Officer Mafe Brooks' appointment was recently converted from a shared appointment with University Libraries to a full time appointment with CCI/SLIS. The full-time appointment of Ms. Brooks, an additional Development Officer (Mr. David Judy) at CCI, and a CCI Development Coordinator (Betsy Crawford), has helped to coordinate and bolster SLIS's alumni outreach. We also anticipate that the appointment of three Program Directors at SLIS will result in the Director being more engaged in these efforts.

Summary

Since our last accreditation renewal, SLIS has undergone tremendous change, including the 2009 merger with the then College of Communication into the College of Communication & Information. This transition, coupled with challenges posed by the state and national economic and political climates, has resulted in an organizational capacity shortfall, which the faculty and current administration are dedicated to, and have taken the important first steps towards, resolving. An indication of this commitment is the continuously high level of productivity demonstrated by the faculty in esteemed research, significant service to the profession, and superior teaching, even under the current capacity constraints. Also important is the perception of our major constituencies (students, alumni and employers) that the merger has or will benefit. As we build upon our most recent strategic planning efforts, we believe that we will not only continue to be leaders in providing quality education to future generations of library and information professionals, but we will also prepare future leaders who will help envision and establish the next stage of our ever changing field.