

Library and Information Science, MA

Students who pursue the Master of Arts in library and information science gain an understanding of the foundations of library and information professions, including the history of the fields, ethical and philosophical concerns, and principles of stewardship for a variety of forms of documentation and records. Students are taught the theory and practice of strategic management within information organizations, preparing them for careers and leadership in a broad variety of information organizations. They gain the knowledge needed to anticipate future trends in information access and organization. Students study the close relationship between research and practice. Finally, students become knowledgeable about the factors that underlie users' information needs and appropriate strategies to assist them.

The MA in library and information science has held continuous accreditation from the American Library Association since 1971. The degree prepares students to work in public libraries, K-12 school libraries, academic libraries, law libraries, archives, and special collections.

The School of Library and Information Science combines online education with on-campus opportunities and collaboration allowing online students to participate in real-time learning experiences with their on-campus classmates. Both full- and part-time enrollment options are available for on-campus and virtual coursework. For more information about the online program option, see Online MA in LIS on the School of Library and Information Science website. Not all coursework for this program is taught in person. On-campus students will be required to take some online coursework to complete the degree requirements.

Learning Outcomes

Gateway Knowledge

Students will understand the historical, social, cultural, and civic contexts of various library and information service roles in the United States, and students will internalize key values of the profession such as intellectual freedom, information equality, and community well-being. Students will also learn best practices in professional communication and development.

Information Resources

Students will understand the lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information from creation to use and the best practices for developing collections—including acquisition, selection, purchasing, processing, storage, and deselection—with special attention to emerging formats and genres of information resources.

Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education

Students will understand that lifelong learning and continuing education are organizational goals for libraries and information centers to provide as well as professional goals for library and information workers to seek out. Students will understand best practices for professional development and

also best practices for teaching and learning in libraries and information centers.

Management and Administration

Students will understand best practices for project and team management, strategic planning and communication, organizational workflows and assessment, library advocacy and development, and community partnerships and engagement.

Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information

Students will understand how to evaluate, represent, and organize information and knowledge across cultures and communities as well as how to devise, maintain, and use systems of organization in both physical and digital environments toward efficient discovery and retrieval by diverse users.

Reference and User Services

Students will understand the techniques for discovering, retrieving, evaluating, and synthesizing information from diverse sources, and students will understand methods for learning and describing the information needs of various users and communities and how libraries and information centers can work with these communities toward meeting their needs.

Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Students will understand the methods of intervention-oriented research and assessment methods in libraries and information centers, and students will recognize, evaluate, and apply the different types of evidence that information professionals use to measure the success of services, practices, and facilities.

Information Equity

Students will understand that a central value of libraries and information centers is to mitigate information inequality, and students will endeavor to improve library and information practices through informed, respectful, and inclusive interventions that recognize and centralize social difference across race, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion, age, education, literacy, and other vectors.

Technological Knowledge and Skills

Students will understand and identify the technological infrastructure that enables library and information services, and students will be able to evaluate existing and emerging technologies toward inclusive and effective practice.