LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES, MLIS

The program leading to the master of library and information studies (MLIS) degree is a 36-credit-hour program, one of approximately 55 programs in the United States and Canada accredited by the American Library Association and the only ALA-accredited program in the state of Alabama. The degree prepares graduates to work in any type of library—public, K–12, academic or special—and information center and in entrepreneurial and research environments, especially those using advanced information technologies.

Regular Admission Requirements

An applicant whose credentials meet the following minimum requirements may be considered for regular admission:

- a grade point average of at least 3.0 overall or 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours in a degree program, based on a 4.0 system
- an acceptable score on the entrance examination (minimum test scores: general test of the GRE verbal and quantitative = 300 or MAT = 50th percentile)

Not every student whose credentials meet the stated quantitative standards is admitted.

Information about the GRE is available from the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ 08540. The MAT is given by the testing service of most colleges and universities and may be taken by appointment. Applicants should plan well in advance so that examination results are available when needed to support an application for admission. Braille editions of the GRE and the MAT can be obtained from The University of Alabama, Test Service, Box 870108, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0108.

Application instructions may be obtained from the Graduate School’s website.

Exceptions to Admissions Policy

An applicant whose credentials do not meet the stated requirements may be considered for conditional admission if the following minimum requirement is satisfied:

- a grade point average of at least 2.5 overall and a GRE or MAT score acceptable to the School and the Graduate School

Under exceptional circumstances, an applicant may be considered for admission if the applicant meets either the GPA requirement for regular admission (GPA of 3.0) or the entrance exam score requirement as outlined above. If such an applicant is admitted, it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain permission to continue in the program after the first 12 semester hours of graduate-level work have been completed. Permission to continue is earned by achieving a GPA of "B" or better (3.0) in the first 12 semester hours. If the 12 hours are completed in a term in which the total credits exceed 12, the evaluation is made on the basis of all graduate-level work completed at the end of that term of enrollment. Students admitted under this circumstance who do not meet the 3.0 requirement after their first 12 hours of graduate-level work will not receive permission to continue in their graduate program and will be dropped from the program.

Nondegree Admission Requirements

A student may be admitted as a non-degree student if that person has either a 3.0 undergraduate GPA or an acceptable test score: 50th percentile on the MAT or 300 on the GRE general test. No more than 12 hours may be taken as a non-degree student and applied to a degree.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Degree Requirements

Candidates for the MLIS degree must earn a minimum of 36 semester hours of credit, completing all work with a grade average of “B” or better. A thesis is not required. All MLIS students must complete, as part of the minimum 36 hours, the following 18 hours of required courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LS 500</td>
<td>Organization Of Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 501</td>
<td>Intro Library Info Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 502</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 507</td>
<td>User Centered Information Services</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 560</td>
<td>Information Technologies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select one of the following:</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 508</td>
<td>Management Theory and Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 530</td>
<td>Public Libraries</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 531</td>
<td>Academic Libraries</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 532</td>
<td>School Media Centers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 533</td>
<td>Spec Libr &amp; Info Centrs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours 18

Thesis and Coursework Plans

Two plans are offered for the master’s degree:

Plan I: Thesis

Candidates for the master’s degree under the thesis plan must earn a minimum of thirty-six hours of credit, including fifteen hours of required courses, a three-hour required management and administration course, and six hours of thesis credit (LS 599); no more than six hours of thesis credit may be counted toward the degree.

Intent to elect the thesis option must be formally declared within the first nine hours of enrollment in graduate LIS courses. The declaration of intent must indicate the subject area of the research and the faculty member who has agreed to direct the thesis.

The student must identify a three-person thesis committee, to consist of at least two full-time SLIS faculty members, at least one of whom must be a full member of the graduate faculty; a third committee member may be a faculty member from another department of the University, a faculty member from another institution, or a well-qualified practitioner. All committee members must hold appropriate Graduate Faculty status.

The student must obtain committee approval for a prospectus for the thesis project prior to enrolling in thesis credit; a formal defense of the prospectus will constitute the final examination for the MLIS degree.

The student must complete and successfully defend a thesis that meets the requirements established by the Graduate School. The thesis defense shall be made orally before the student’s thesis committee and will be open to the public.

Plan II: Coursework

Candidates for the master’s degree under the coursework plan must earn a minimum of 36 hours of credit, including 15 hours of required courses and a three-hour required management and administration course.

Plan I: Thesis

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The student must complete and successfully defend a thesis that meets the requirements established by the Graduate School. The thesis defense shall be made orally before the student’s thesis committee and will be open to the public.
Transfer of Credit and Credit for Non-Letter Graded Courses

Graduate credit may be transferred from another regionally accredited university or may be elected from the offerings of other departments. Thesis credit cannot be transferred from another university. More than nine hours of credit can be applied toward the MLIS for any combination of graduate courses taken outside SLIS, directed research courses, internships, and thesis credit. These hours may be combined as follows:

Plan I: Thesis
Six hours of thesis credit and three hours of credit for directed research course or internship; or:
Six hours of thesis credit and three hours of approved credit for graduate work taken outside SLIS.

Plan II: Coursework
Six hours of approved credit for graduate work taken outside SLIS and three hours of credit for a directed research course or internship; or:
Six hours of credit for any combination of directed research courses and internships and three hours of approved credit for graduate work taken outside SLIS.

Time Limit
All requirements for the master’s degree must be completed during the six years (18 consecutive semesters) immediately preceding the date on which the degree is to be awarded.

Thesis

A thesis evidencing research capacity, independent thought, and the ability to interpret materials is required of all master’s degree candidates who pursue Plan I: Thesis. The subject chosen must be related to library and information studies and must be approved by the student’s thesis director, the student’s thesis committee, and the SLIS Director.

The thesis committee must include three individuals, including at least two full-time SLIS faculty members, at least one of whom must be a full member of the graduate faculty; a third committee member may be a faculty member from another department of the University, a faculty member from another institution, or a well-qualified practitioner. All committee members must hold appropriate Graduate Faculty status.

The candidate must give members of the examining committee a minimum of two weeks to read the thesis before the date of the final oral examination. A final oral examination is required of all students completing a thesis. All members of the thesis committee must be members of the UA graduate faculty and must attend the final oral examination unless there are extraordinary circumstances warranting the graduate dean’s approval of the absence prior to the defense meeting.

Theses must comply with the regulations set out in A Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations, available on the Graduate School’s website. Approval of the thesis by the graduate dean is necessary before graduation.

The thesis should be completed, if possible, while the student is in residence at the University. To request permission to complete a thesis in absentia, the student must, before leaving the University, submit a satisfactory outline of the thesis, as well as evidence that adequate facilities are available where the work will be done, to the head of the student’s major department.

Protection of Human Subjects for Research

Scientific research involving human subjects has produced substantial benefits for society, but it also has posed troubling ethical questions. The mission of the University’s Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects is to ensure that research involving human subjects is conducted ethically. University and federal policies require that review and approval to use human subjects in research precede the research.

In the case of thesis research that involves the use of human subjects, the principal investigator – normally the student – is responsible for contacting the college Human Research Review Committee to obtain approval for the planned research. Both the student and the thesis chair are responsible for completing Institutional Review Board training; guidelines for training can be found at http://osp.ua.edu/site/irb_training.html.

The request form for IRB approval can be accessed from http://osp.ua.edu/

Application for Graduation

Each candidate for a master’s degree must apply for graduation through the Office of the Graduate School during the first week of the term in which requirements for the degree are to be completed. The form “Application for Degree” is required for this purpose, and must be completed online.

Student Learning Outcomes for the MLIS

Teaching

Upon completing the SLIS MLIS program, all students should:

• have acquired a basic core of knowledge in the field: the creation and production, organization and access, selection and evaluation, preservation, dissemination and use of information
• understand the nature of professional ethics, display a committed professional attitude, value the role of professional associations, and be committed to individual professional development
• understand the opportunities and challenges of a variety of information settings, their functions and the users they serve and be able to approach the design and management of services and systems
• value teaching and service as ways to advance the field
• have knowledge of current research, an understanding of research processes and methods and an ability to analyze and critically evaluate research and apply it to professional duties
• understand the significance of concepts and contributions of other disciplines to library and information studies and the importance of library and information studies theories, principles, and concepts to other disciplines
• be aware of and sensitive to the impact of information practices, services, and programs on diverse, underserved and multicultural communities
• understand the appropriate technologies and their applications within particular contexts for the organization, retrieval, management, and dissemination of information
• be able to communicate cogently, clearly, and persuasively
• support the development and improvement of library and information services in general with special focus on the people of Alabama and the southeastern United States
Research and Creative Activities. The SLIS faculty:

- publish papers and reports in journals, monographs, and other publications devoted to librarianship, information science and related disciplines
- present the results of research, inquiry, and creative endeavors to peers at professional meetings and exhibitions
- undertake applied research projects including consulting assignments that augment and advance knowledge

Service

The SLIS faculty and staff provide advice and assistance to libraries and information centers that help them to enhance the services they provide.

- The SLIS faculty and staff undertake consulting assignments.
- SLIS provides opportunities for faculty and students to participate in professional associations, to promote the profession and to assume leadership and policy-making roles.
- SLIS faculty, staff and students participate in the work of the University and the School through service on committees and working groups.

Class A School Library-Media Certification

For admission to the Class A School Library-Media program, a candidate must have a valid bachelor’s level or valid master’s level professional educator certificate in a teaching field or a valid master’s level professional educator certificate in another area of instructional support. Effective June 1, 2017, two full years of full-time professional educational work experience in P-12 school system(s) is also required for admission.

Applicants with out-of-state licensure who are employed or seeking employment in another state are responsible for knowledge about professional licensure requirements in the prospective states. An applicant with out-of-state licensure who intends to apply for Alabama certification must first apply for the prerequisite certification in Alabama before applying for Class A School Library-Media certification in Alabama.

All applicants must have a criminal history background check as required by the Alabama Department of Education.

Students pursuing Library Media certification should refer to the State-approved program checklist to ensure that requirements are met. In addition to completing an approved program of study, the candidate is required to earn a satisfactory score on a comprehensive examination administered by the School of Library and Information Studies and earn a passing score on the Praxis for Library Media Specialist.

The approved program of studies for certification is as follows:

### Instructonal support area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LS 500</td>
<td>Organization Of Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 501</td>
<td>Intro Library Info Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 504</td>
<td>Media Prod &amp; Utilization</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 507</td>
<td>User Centered Information Services</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 532</td>
<td>School Media Centers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 542</td>
<td>Instruct Design &amp; Dev</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 560</td>
<td>Information Technologies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 572</td>
<td>Intern Sch Media Cntrs (requires a minimum of 300 clock hours)</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Foundation of professional studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPE 500</td>
<td>Intro Exc Childr/Youth (or its equivalent)</td>
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</table>

### Survey of Special Education Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

### Electives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LS 520</td>
<td>Early Childhood Materials &amp; Story Programs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 521</td>
<td>Matl &amp; Services Childrn</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS 522</td>
<td>Matl Serv Young Adults</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total semester hours: 36-39

1 Three semester hours are to be earned in courses that meet the foundation of professional studies requirement, as defined by the granting institution. Students who have not already completed a survey course in special education must also take SPE 500 Intro Exc Childr/Youth (or its equivalent). Such students must complete a minimum of 39 semester hours for the degree.

2 Students who have not already completed a survey course in special education must also take SPE 500 Intro Exc Childr/Youth (or its equivalent). Such students must complete a minimum of 39 semester hours for the degree.

If courses equivalent to any of these required courses have been taken previously, substitutions may be made, with the approval of a faculty adviser.

For candidates admitted to the Class A Library Media program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, a minimum GPA of 3.25 on all courses in the Alabama State Board of Education approved library media program is required for certification.