All in the Family:
Library Services for LIS
Online Education

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Library Services for LIS Online Education

As of April 2004:

- 56 ALA-accredited LIS masters programs
- 38 offer online courses (68%)
- 11 offer entire degree online (20%)
- 12 use other forms of distance education - remote face-to-face classes, satellite broadcasts, etc. (21%)
Varieties of LIS online education:

- Synchronous, asynchronous, and/or mixed
- Purely distant or some on-campus
- Distinct program/degree or integrated

Q: How many online LIS students in the US?
A: No accurate count
This paper will:

• Review the literature on library services for LIS online education

• Describe UIUC’s LEEP program

• Outline library services to LEEP, and who’s responsible for them

• Examine 3 factors that impact library services to LEEP
Three factors that impact library services to LEEP:

4. The information-intensive curriculum
6. The library as place
3. Librarianship’s professional values
What can we learn from the literature?

• Relatively little written specifically about library services for LIS online education:
  - Most writing on LIS distance teaching and learning omits the library (e.g., Barron [2003]).
  - Most writing on library services focuses on other modes than online (e.g., Stephens [1998], Douglas [2002]).

• LIS faculty are generally satisfied with library support for their online courses (Alzamil, 2002).
Establishing appropriate library services is not always simple, given institutional cultures and organizations (Burnett & Painter, 2001).

Online LIS students desire rich electronic collections, rapid delivery of print materials, reference service and technical support on evenings and weekends, training options matched to their needs, and a single point of contact (Kazmer, 2002).

Potential employers of LIS online grads stress importance of exposure to a large university library collection (Wynkoop, 2003).
Latham and Smith (2003):

• LIS online students have good access to basic services and collections.

• Marketing strategies vary. Most librarians rely on their websites to inform students. The content and quality of websites varies.

• Most librarians have no special training in distance ed services.

• Needs assessment and evaluation techniques are under-utilized.
LEEP Facts

- Began in 1996
- Enrollment approximately 225 (half of student body)
- Won Sloan-C Award for “Most Outstanding Asynchronous Learning Network Program,” 2001
- Live synchronous classes, plus asynchronous components
- Resident and distant teachers
- Intensive on-campus orientation ("boot camp")
- On-campus sessions each semester
Access to collections:

- Local and consortial online catalogs
- Electronic journals, indexes/abstracts, and reference tools
- E-reserves
- Virtual New Books Shelf
- E-books
- Delivery service for print, ILL
Access to services:

- Toll-free phone numbers
- Chat, email and phone reference
- Online FAQs, tip sheets, tutorials
- Boot camp library orientation / training
- Marketing via web boards and email
Organizational Structures & Cooperation:

5 key players:

- Central UIUC library services
- Academic Outreach Library
- LIS Library
- Virtual reference service (multiple UIUC libraries)
- GSLIS faculty and tech staff
Library Services for LIS Online Education

Central services:

- Local and consortial online catalogs
- Searchable database of e-journals, indexes, and reference tools
- Proxy server
- Trouble-shooting access problems
- Interlibrary loan
- University Library website
Academic Outreach Library:

- Article delivery
- Book delivery
- Phone and email reference
- Trouble-shooting patron validation problems
- On-site training
- Web site
Library Services for LIS Online Education

LIS Library:

- E-journals, e-books, indexes, reference tools
- E-reserves
- Virtual new books shelf
- Phone, email, and chat reference
- On-site tours and training
- Online BI (synchronous and asynchronous)
- Website
Reference Library & other libraries:

- E-indexes and reference tools
- Email, phone, and virtual (chat) reference
- Website
Graduate School of Library & Information Science (GSLIS):

- E-reserves
- Tech support for on-site library training
- Tech support for synchronous BI
- Website with prominent links to library
Library Services for LIS Online Education

PLUS:

• Function follows expertise and resources
• Distance ed support services semi-integrated

MINUS:

• Confusing to remote users
Factors in common with most distance ed library services:

- Adult learning styles and ranges of experiences with libraries
- Opportunities and limitations of computer-mediated communication
- Overlaying new services on existing organization and culture
Library Services for LIS Online Education

Unique factors that impact library services to LEEP:

4. The information-intensive curriculum
2. The library as place
3. Librarianship’s professional values
Factor 1: The LIS Graduate Curriculum

- Information retrieval and use are at the heart of the discipline.
- Information literacy is required for graduate-level work and lifelong professional learning.
- Students demonstrate their knowledge by creating information products.
• Few off-campus students live near rich, open-access LIS collections.

• LEEP students are:
  - 21% of UIUC’s distant students
  - 63% of the Academic Outreach Library’s active users
Factor 2: The Library as Place

LEEP students consistently highly praise the library orientation tour. Why?

• A welcome break from sedentary classes and workshops
• Personal touch
• Framework for navigating the Library in cyberspace
Factor 3: Professional Ideals

- Interactions with information professionals shape students’ views of the profession.
- We strive to be good role models, and to demonstrate vigorous service values.
- Being true to our professional ideals requires us to modify what we do and how we do it... and when!
Personal rewards:

• We experience new energy and inspiration.
• Students and faculty thank us -- in writing.
• Our colleagues perceive us as innovators and guides.
Library Services for LIS Online Education

Questions?

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LIS Library:  http://www.library.uiuc.edu/lsx
Academic Outreach Library:
          http://www.continuinged.uiuc.edu/outreach/library/library.cfm
LEEP:  http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/gslis/degrees/leep.html