SLIS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
Toni Samek, Professor and Chair

◦ SLIS is strategic about where it is going and where the field of library and information studies will be in five and ten years time.

◦ Our job is to build critical capacity for our program's overall standing and reputation well into the future, at an appropriate scale, and by engaging in socially responsible models of education.

◦ We count on all of you to hold us to task.

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Inspire exemplary contribution to the *global information professions in service of public good*.
- Recognized as effective and important player in LIS *research and scholarship*.
- Stimulating model for *educational advancement*.
- Supported as academic home held in the *highest regard* by students and alumni.
- Engaged as *intercultural hub* for professional cooperation with vibrant LIS communities.
- *Sustainable* by continuous recruitment and retention of the best faculty, staff, students, and sessionals.
- Readily *succeed* in next scheduled accreditation rounds and institutional reviews.

THERE IS NO SCHOOL WITHOUT STUDENTS

- 170 graduate programs across 18 faculties.
- Of these, SLIS has the most grad students.
- Numbers alone don't tell the whole story. Attracting the calibre of people is what is most important.
- SLIS alum are best characterized by an appreciation for the mighty tripartite of academic courage, compassion and conviction (our recipe for mover and shaker).

SLIS STATUS

- Competitive – lots of applications. 201 apps for our Feb 1, 2016 deadline (123 online + 78 on campus).

- September 2016, will exceed 300 students.

- Incoming students have on average a 3.6 GPA.

- 7 students convocated November 2015; 46 students to convocate June 2016 (including 20 online students).

- 6 Indigenous students (3 on campus + 3 online); 4 more applied.

SLIS STATUS

- 5 international on campus students (USA X 2; China, Iran, St. Kitts).

- 70% of online students living outside of Alberta, across our nation and beyond.

- Canadians currently taking our program from Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Japan, and the United Arab Emirates.

- Transparent program assessment materials:

  https://uofa.ualberta.ca/education/departments/school-of-library-and-information-studies/about-us/program-assessment

SLIS STATUS

- 81 percent response rate on June 2015 exit survey; 100% would recommend our program.

- Latest Placement Survey evidences varied professional opportunities achieved by our 2014 graduates, for example:
  - Information Management and Records Analyst
  - Open Data Coordinator
  - Scholarly Communications Librarian
  - Community Services Librarian
  - Collections and Readers' Advisory Librarian
  - Library Director
  - Document Control Administrator

SLIS STATUS

- State of optimism.

- Last LIS school in Canada to reside in a Faculty of Education (and our has an ethos of social justice). Context matters.

- Generalist MLIS (less specialization or streaming).

- Strong sense of self-identity. "Library" and "Information" in *balance*.

- Well balanced faculty profile from assistant, to associate, to full professor.

NEW COLLEAGUE 2016-17

- Dr. Keren Dali comes to SLIS after teaching for four years at the University of Toronto iSchool, completing two years of postdoctoral SSHRC-funded research at Western University in Ontario, and spending one year as a Visiting Professor at GSLIS, Queens College, New York.

- Dr. Dali's primary interests are in researching diversity and immigrant communities; reading practices in libraries and beyond; connections between information literacy and leisure behaviors; relationships between LIS and Social Work; and LIS education, with the focus on creativity and the issues of accreditation.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

- Effective September 2013, the U of A MLIS leads as the first and only pure or 100% online option for an MLIS program of study in Canada.

- The only online instructional stream in North America with guaranteed Canadian LIS curricular content.
  - Approximately 25 US LIS schools offer pure online MLIS programs.

RECRUITMENT

- Revenue generation opportunity to greatly enhance our recruitment footprint and thus our ability to achieve a more diverse student population.

- Staff recruiter, Grace Jamieson, has become a regular face at a range of conferences (e.g., Atlantic Provinces Library Association; British Columbia Library Association; Canadian Library Association; Library Association of Alberta; Ontario Library Association; Pacific Northwest Library Association; Rural Libraries Conference). Please visit our booth!

MLIS 48 CREDITS IN CANADA

- Majority of the US schools require students to complete 36 credits to obtain their MLIS degrees.

- We require two IT courses.

- The majority of the schools only required students to take one IT course, many did not specify an IT requirement while a few others required students to enter *with* an proficiency in IT already.

COMBINED PROGRAMS

- Master of Arts in Humanities Computing / MLIS
- Master of Business Administration / MLIS

- Master of Public Administration / MLIS
- Juris Doctor (JD) / MLIS
- Master of Resource and Environmental Management / MLIS
- MLIS / MA in Journalism
- MLIS/MA in Middle Eastern and North African Studies

COMBINED PROGRAMS

- MLIS / MA in Applied History
- MLIS/Master of Divinity
- MLIS/M Ed
- MLIS/ Master of Science
- MLIS / MA in History
- MLIS / MA in English

- Master of Social Work / MLIS
- Master of Science in Information Technology with a concentration in Health Information Technology

OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER ED

- Partner with Centers of Teaching and Learning on online learning and data analytics, with special emphasis on big data.
- Offer expertise on campus on expressive freedoms, information ethics and information policy, intellectual property, etc.

- MICRO MLIS credential offerings in trans-disciplinary high demand areas, such as:
    - project management,
    - cultural resource management,
    - data management,
    - intellectual property management,
    - knowledge management; and
    - health information management.

- Emergent degrees, (e.g., data science).

LIS ACADEMIC SIGNATURE

- Raising profile in teaching and learning in areas such as:

  ◦ knowledge organization
  ◦ data management
  ◦ information policy
  ◦ information ethics
  ◦ bibliometrics
  ◦ online learning analytics
  ◦ **literacy in all its forms**
  ◦ **info sci and ed technologies**

  ◦ Other academic units on campus have expressed interest in the MLIS ePortfolio; colleagues from the Faculty of Medicine plan to adopt it in the radiation therapy program.)

RHETORIC AND REALITY

- IFLA adopted its *Multicultural Library Manifesto* in 2008.

  - Meanwhile, contemporary scholarship in library and information studies suggests North American MLIS graduates are not completing their degrees with a solid foundation in the core library value of diversity.

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

- Jaeger et al. (2011) note that within LIS "there has been tension about whether the field should focus on diversity in terms of race and ethnicity, in terms of *legally protected populations*, or in broader terms."

- Theses scholars argue for a focus on "legally protected populations based on race, ethnicity, gender, and disability, as well as populations with access challenges related to literacy, poverty, language, sexual orientation, and age, among others."

PRESSING TOPICS

- recruitment into library and information programs
- diversity in the hiring process
- gender identity, information and documentation
- digital library labour, digital citizenship, and group information rights
- race and civil rights
- globalization and global migration
- traditional cultural expression
- universal access to information for people with disabilities

LANDMARK CANADIAN BOOK

- **Aboriginal and Visible Minority Librarians: Oral Histories** (June 2014)

Deborah Lee & Mahalakshmi Kumaran (Editors)

- "This book is not only for librarians in Canada and for those who aspire to become librarians, it is also for deans, directors, and faculty of libraries and library schools, managers and supervisors in libraries, human resources personnel, and other decision-makers in the field."

  ◦ Required text our LIS 541 LIS Services in Culturally Diverse Society course

EDUCATION IS A PROCESS

You can compress teaching.

You cannot compress learning.

Toni Samek (2013).
"You Can't Hurry Love": Slow Library Education in Culturally Diverse Society". International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, World Library and Information Congress 2013 Paper Repository.

Also in French and Spanish translations.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Summary of the Final Report

- As part of a growing trend towards demanding better government accountability and transparency, and the evolution of new privacy and freedom of information legislation, archives have become more directly connected to struggles for human rights and justice." (307)

SEE RECOMMENDATIONS 69 & 70

http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Exec_Summary_2015_05_31_web_o.pdf

PRIOR NATIONAL LEVEL RECOMMENDATION

Royal Society of Canada's Expert Panel Report on the Status and Future of Canada's Libraries, Archives and Museums. 10 NOV 2014.

- Recommendation 56 - draft an introductory program of **Indigenous Archival Studies** to be offered in communities and reserves across Canada.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- SLIS is mindful the University of Alberta made its home on Treaty #6 territory.

- Developments include focused attention on Indigenous concerns, for example:
  - Fall 2016 1-credit course on Archives and Indigenous Identity with Dr. Frank Tough (Professor and Associate Dean, Native Studies Faculty) is secured;
  - Liaising with Anne Carr- Wiggin re internships;
  - Recruiting adjunct interest from the Native Studies Faculty; and
  - Director of Aboriginal Students Services Centre, Shana Dion, is helping SLIS on the subject of recruitment.

IFLA Code of Ethics for Library and Other Information Workers 2012

- IFLA's Code Section 6 on colleague and employer/employee relationship includes the directive:

  - "Librarians and other information workers share their professional experience with colleagues and they help and guide new professionals to enter the professional community and develop their skills. They contribute to the activities of their professional association and participate in research and publication on professional matters."

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

- We affirm the importance of student and alumni self-articulation in communicating knowledge, values and competencies to employers, stakeholders, and society more broadly.

- Quality LIS programs do not just offer disciplinary degrees. They also offer a broader education that sits underneath the LIS degree – one that serves the student as citizen. Because quality education lasts a lifetime.

- Our thriving MLIS program continues to be central in our School's undertakings. SLIS has effectively managed its work in ways that have moved the School and program forward in exciting ways. SLIS continuously *earns* its recognition. This practice is inspired by rigorous reflection on our history, matrix, and trajectory.