

MLIS Program Committee Report

October 4, 2016

Submitted by Erin Zerhusen

The following members of the MLIS Programming Committee met on Tuesday, October 4, 2016:

- Tammy Clegg
- Courtney Douglass
- Ursula Gorham
- Renee Hill
- Paul Jaeger
- Lindsay Sarin
- Jasbir Thiara
- Tyler Vachon
- Jeff Waters
- Erin Zerhusen

The committee met to:

- Discuss two new course proposals: INST 607 Government Information and LBSC 735 Legal Information
- Discuss changes to the Advanced Special Student Policy
- Discuss the post-CIDLIS Town Hall
- Discuss the application review process
- Discuss scholarship review
- Discuss the results from the Incoming Student Survey
- Discuss GPA/GRE requirements for admissions

The Committee explored five main topics during the meeting.

1. **Course Proposals: INST 607 & LBSC 735**

- The committee heard updates from Paul and Ursula regarding the proposed Government Information and Legal Information courses. The courses are in the process of being redesigned slightly and their names are being changed. The new assignments will reflect a more practical orientation for the course and the new names will reflect a more specific direction for the roles and practices of information professionals in legal and government institutions.
- After hearing this update the committee agreed to suspend a vote on the proposals until they receive the updates via email.

2. **Changes to the Advanced Special Student Policy**

- The committee heard updates from Jeff regarding the previously discussed changes proposed for the Advanced Special Student course enrollment policy. The new proposal broadens the window where Advanced Special Students can enroll in iSchool courses from two weeks to one month in the hopes of eliminating early semester administrative bottlenecks.
- The committee approved these changes to the policy unanimously.

3. **Post-CIDLIS Town Hall**

- The committee heard from Erin about the diversity-focused Town Hall event to take place following CIDLIS. Tyler will be assisting facilitators Renee and Maggie in planning the event. The goals of the Town Hall will be to come away with actionable items for the iSchool to work on, and the event planners are working on developing questions and discussion topics that will help steer participants towards an actionable plan.
- The committee had some feedback to share about the event. Tammy suggested using small breakout groups to help encourage those who might otherwise be intimidated by a large group to participate. Paul noted that the originally planned date (10/21) would likely see reduced participation due to the reception currently planned to take place immediately after CIDLIS. Those planning the event will consider new workable dates and return to the committee with updates.

4. **Learning Outcomes Collection**

- The committee heard a FIY from Lindsay regarding forthcoming changes in university policy regarding Learning Outcomes collection. The Graduate School is in the process of reassessing graduate assessment

outcomes this academic year and will be issuing new reporting methods next year. There likely will not be changes coming this year, but programs are being discouraged from making any changes to their currently collection and reporting methods before these new standards are clear.

5. Application Review Process

- The committee heard from Erin regarding the programming committee's role in application review. The program has received forty-eight applicants for the Spring 2017 semester which marks a significant increase from Spring 2016. As the application process begins the Program Coordinator will be working alongside Specialization Directors to consider applications and updating the committee as appropriate.

6. Scholarship Review

- The committee will be hearing from Erin via email regarding the programming committee's role in reviewing applications for the scholarships circulated by Tetyana this month. The committee also heard of possible adjustments to the HiLS-specific scholarship, which requires students to have been in the HiLS program for a year, given the previous suspension of new HiLS admissions.

7. GPA/GRE Requirements

- The committee heard from Erin regarding the current requirements for waiving the GRE. Current requirements are such that a student's undergraduate GPA is considered even if the student has earned a master's degree, something that can possibly discourage students who have shifted academic priorities and excelled in their field after the completion of their undergraduate degree. Lindsay noted that this policy is often flexible in practice, to which Tammy suggested that the committee might consider more flexible language given the possibility for traditionally underrepresented groups to disqualify themselves based on the requirement. Courtney noted that the test itself could prove to be prohibitively expensive for some would-be applicants and that some people will only submit applications to programs that do not require the test.

8. Incoming Student Survey Results

- The committee heard from Erin regarding the recent Incoming Student Survey Report. The committee learned that more than 80% of respondents indicated that they would be working part-time while pursuing the degree and about 50% have at least two years of relevant work experience. The report indicated that the majority of respondents stated an interest in the private sector, though the lack of stratification between MLIS, MIM, and HCIM students could explain this somewhat. Just over 20% of respondents are unsure about what they want out of their degree, but 77% noted interest in conferences and approximately 60% noted interest in academic publishing.