Assessment Reporting
Spring 2009 – Spring 2010

March 1, 2010 Report
Analysis / Actions / Improvement – Beginning to close the loop on one program SLO

Program Information

Degree Program(s):	MLIS	**Department:**	Libr. & Inform. Science
Department Chair:	Dr. Ken Haycock	**Phone:**	4-2490
Report Prepared by:	Jane Fisher	**Phone:**	4-2725

Archival Information

Location:	418F Clark Hall	**Person to Contact:**	Jane Fisher	4-2725

Does the information (e.g., Mission, Goals, and/or Learning Outcomes) posted on the web (see, http://www.sjsu.edu/ugs/assessment/programs/) for this program need to be updated?

No – the information is current.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)

Core Competency L: understand the nature of research, research methods and research findings; retrieve, evaluate and synthesize scholarly and professional literature for informed decision-making by specific client groups

Evidence for Need:

In 2006, curriculum review by SLIS faculty determined that students did not clearly understand the difference between scholarly research and reference work, and that not enough students were interested in or prepared to undertake a master's thesis (one of the culminating experience options). An environmental scan also showed that the top nationally ranked schools of Library and Information Science all required a course in scholarly research and research methodologies, which SLIS did not.

Also in 2006, SLIS defined and adopted 15 Core Competencies of the profession as Program (Student) Learning Outcomes. In Spring 2007 we began collecting data on the performance of graduating students in the LIBR 289 (e-portfolio) culminating experience course for the different Core Competencies / Learning Outcomes. Since we were looking at 15 learning outcomes, we decided to collect data on a three-semester cycle (5 each semester) – which meant that data on Core Competency L (understand the nature of research, research methods and research findings; retrieve, evaluate and

synthesize scholarly and professional literature for informed decision-making by specific client groups) would be collected for the first time in Spring 2008 from LIBR 289 students, and analyzed and reported on in the Fall 2008 SJSU WASC Report.

Analysis of the Spring 2008 data collected in the LIBR 289 culminating experience course on Core Competency L showed this SLO had a lower percentage of submissions needing zero or one revision than other SLOs. This finding matched the faculty perceptions in 2006/2007 that students needed more help understanding what this SLO meant and adequately demonstrating their mastery of this SLO. This was in line with what faculty expected to see, since we knew that a majority of the students who were enrolled in the Spring 2008 LIBR 289 culminating experience course had not taken the LIBR 285: Research Methods in Library and Information Science course.

Actions Taken (Changes to Curriculum):

Since faculty were concerned about student performance on this very important SLO, and to be in alignment with other top-ranked LIS schools, as part of a planned review of the MLIS curriculum SLIS made LIBR 285: Research Methods in Library and Information Science a required course for the MLIS degree for all students entering the program as of Spring 2007.

Before this was a required course, 1 - 2 sections of this course were offered every Fall semester (once a year).

After this became a required course, SLIS began offering LIBR 285 ever semester AND developed sections focused on specific topics of interest – from the original overview of research methodologies course to seven different topics (overview, action, historical, evaluation, post-modern, ethnography, youth services).

The number of sections offered has grown to approximately 5 sections each Fall and Spring, and 2 in Summer (12 a year).

Evidence of Student Learning after Change:

We have now collected and analyzed the Fall 2009 student performance data in LIBR 289 on Core Competency L for the 233 enrolled students, and can speak to whether the curricular changes we implemented (making LIBR 285 a required course) had the desired impact on the research SLO (Core Competency L).

As outlined in our October 2009 Interim Report on this SLO, our expectations were that as more students take the LIBR 285 research methods course, the data collected in the LIBR 289 culminating experience course on the research SLO (Core Competency L) would show an improvement in student performance on that SLO.

Checking student records for LIBR 289 Fall 2009 enrollees, we found that slightly more than half of the students had entered the MLIS program in Spring 2007 or later, and so had taken the required LIBR 285: Research Methods course.

The table below compares the Spring 2008 and Fall 2009 student performance data in LIBR 289 on Core Competency L: understand the nature of research, research methods and research findings; retrieve, evaluate and synthesize scholarly and professional literature for informed decision-making by specific client groups.

# of revisions for a satisfactory submission	Spring 2008	Fall 2009
0	63%	66%
1	25%	25%
2	8%	6%
3 or 4	4%	2%

As the table shows, there has been a small but visible improvement in student performance on this SLO in Fall 2009. More students passed this Core Competency on their first submission in Fall 2009 than in Spring 2008. And, while the same percentage of students needed 1 revision to achieve a satisfactory submission, fewer students needed 2 or more revisions.

While this improvement is small, the SLIS faculty are pleased with these first results of our LIBR 285 curricular change. We plan to collect data on this particular SLO in LIBR 289 for at least two more cycles, to see if the percentages of satisfactory submissions with zero revisions continues to improve as more LIBR 289 students will have taken the (now required) LIBR 285 research methods course. This loop is closing – but not yet closed.