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Curricula of LIS Programs in the USA: A Content Analysis

Heting Chu
Long Island University

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Prologue

- The impact of many developments (technological and otherwise) on LIS education
- The curriculum as a window to view LIS education via
 - Required core
 - Electives
 - New courses

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Questions Addressed in this Study

- What is the required core in the LIS curriculum?
- What are the electives?
- What new courses have been added to the curriculum compared with that in the pre-Internet era?
- What are the implications for LIS educators?

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Data Collection & Analysis

- 45 out of 49 ALA-accredited LIS programs in the USA
- 45 curricula for the MLIS degree
- Content analysis of 2757 individual course titles and descriptions
 - Identify required courses
 - Extract new & unique courses
 - Group remaining electives

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Overview of Required & Elective LIS Courses

| | Required Courses | Elective Courses | All Courses |
|------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Max. | 9 (Washington) | 113 (Illinois) | 115 (Illinois) |
| Min. | 2 (Illinois) | 34 (Clarion, Denver) | 39 (Clarion) |
| Mean | 5.2 | 55.5 | 60.7 |

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Subject Distribution of LIS Required Courses

| Freq | Course | Freq | Course |
|------|------------------------|------|---------------------------------|
| 44 | Cataloging | 11 | Collection Development |
| 39 | Reference | 9 | Information Use & Users |
| 38 | Introduction to LIS | 7 | Internship/Practicum |
| 30 | Management | 5 | Information related courses |
| 22 | Research in LIS | 5 | Ethics & information policy ... |
| 14 | Information Technology | 9 | All other single courses |

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LIS Elective Course Clusters

- Archives & Preservation
- Information Technology
- Issues, Ethics & Info Policy
- Libraries/Librarianship
- Management
- Organization of Info
- Rare Books, History related topics
- Resources & Services for Subject Areas
- Resources & Services for Specific Groups
- School Media
- Technical Services
- ***Other courses***
- ***Individual options***
- ***Experimental courses***

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Archives & Preservation

- Archives
- Archives & Manuscripts Administration
- Conservation/Preservations
- Electronic Records Management
- Records Management

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New LIS Course Clusters (2-1)

| Freq | New Course |
|------|--|
| 27 | Digital Libraries |
| 24 | Website Design; Web Application; ... |
| 22 | Computer/Information/Internet Networks |
| 12 | Digitization; Digital Preservation/Design |
| 11 | Information Architecture |
| 11 | Cyberspace Law & Policy |
| 10 | Knowledge Management |
| 10 | Competitive/Business/Strategic Intelligence |
| 10 | Human Computer Interaction |

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New LIS Course Clusters (2-2)

| Freq | New Course |
|------|---|
| 9 | Interface; User Interface |
| 9 | Metadata |
| 8 | Computer/Network Security |
| 8 | Internet Reference |
| 7 | Information Seeking Behavior |
| 6 | Multimedia/Moving Images |
| 6 | XML; JAVA/C/Script Languages |
| 5 | Digital Publishing |
| 97 | Other courses that have a frequency less than 5 |

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Concluding Remarks

- More electives are offered in LIS while the core is reduced to as few as two courses.
- Over 10% of the 2757 courses examined in this study are new, reflecting the latest developments in the field.
- Factors other than technology contribute to the transformation of LIS curricula.
- A holistic approach should be taken to enhance LIS curricula for preparing information professionals for leadership in the new age.

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Thank you!

Questions &
Comments?

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