Department of Library and Information Studies Graduate School of Education University at Buffalo

> Student Exit Survey 2015-2016 Academic Year

Administered November 2016

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LIS Graduate Exit Survey: Fall 2016 Executive Summary

The survey was sent out to all University at Buffalo Department of Library and Information Studies recent graduates (February, June, September 2016). The survey comprised 28 questions, many of which were open-ended or if multiple-choice, offered the opportunity to provide written feedback. This report includes the number of different responses to all of the questions, shown in pie charts, tables or lists of comments as appropriate. Following is a brief summary of the major findings:

Questions 1 through 3 sought information regarding conferral dates, type of degree attained, and course delivery option. The vast majority of the 46 respondents (75% - 35 respondents) indicated that they had graduated in June 2016. Nine (20%) graduated in February 2016 and only 2 (4%) graduated in September 2016. Thirty-five (76%) of respondents received degrees in the MS program while 11 (24%) received degrees in School Librarianship. An overwhelming 91% (42) students indicated that their coursework was mostly online, while only 9% (4) students indicated that their coursework was mainly on campus.

Questions 4 through 23 asked the students to rate different concepts using a Likert scale. Each scale question was followed by an opportunity to provide open-ended comments on the previous response. Questions 24 through 27 are open-ended with varying responses. In this summary, only the more quantitative questions will be addressed.

The majority of student respondents seem happy with the instruction within the program as a whole with 39% (16) "strongly agreeing" and 49% (20) "agreeing" that the quality of instruction was excellent. When asked about the quality of interactions with faculty a majority (21 - 51%) "strongly agreed" that they were positive while 41% (17) "agreed". 44% agreed that interactions with staff were positive while 29% (12) strongly agreed. 27% (11) were neutral, indicating either that they had not interacted with the staff enough to contribute a rating or that they had had no interactions at all. This is likely due to the program being online. Interactions with the Department Chair were overwhelmingly positive, with 51% (29) strongly agreeing, 29% (12) agreeing, and 20% (8) neutral, the latter result again likely a reflection of the online program. Interestingly, when rating the statement, "*My interactions with my fellow students were generally positive*" the majority (23 – 56%) agreed while 37% (15) strongly agreed.

In terms of advising, the majority of respondents (18 - 44%) agreed that they had received useful information from their advisor, while 27% (11) strongly agreed. Five respondents (12%) were neutral, 15% (6) disagreed, and 5% (2) strongly disagreed.

When asked if they were prepared to enter the workforce in their chosen field, 49% (20) agreed, while 41% (17) strongly agreed. Three (7%) were neutral, while only one (2%) each indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed. The majority of respondents 49% (20) indicated they were confident in their ability to professionally succeed while 44% (18) agreed. Two (5%) were neutral and one (2%) each either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

A majority of the respondents (19 - 46%) indicated that they strongly agreed that they would recommend the LIS program to others, while 34% (14) agreed, 12% (5) remained neutral, and 7% (3) disagreed.

The responses for all of the questions, including the feedback in response to the openended questions follow. 1. Please indicate your conferral date below (when you will have finished all coursework and will be receiving your degree). *



February 2016 conferral (last semester was Fall 2015)	9	20%
June 2016 conferral (last semester was Spring 2016)	35	76%
September 2016 conferral (last semester was Summer 2016)	2	4%

2. My degree is in the School Librarianship program.



Yes	11	24%
No	35	76%

3. My coursework was primarily (online or on campus/in classroom).



Online	42	91%
On Campus / In Classroom	4	9%

4. The quality of instruction in my program was excellent. *



Strongly Agree	16	39%
Agree	20	49%
Neutral	3	7%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

5. Comments: The quality of instruction in my program was excellent.

- 1. The reason I felt so strongly about the quality of instruction is because every assignment and module was specifically chosen and worthwhile.
- 2. The quality of instruction in all but one of my classes was excellent.
- 3. Some teachers put forth a lot of effort, while others did not.
- 4. I had a couple of incredibly wonderful instructors, a couple of awful instructors, with the rest being above average to excellent.
- 5. As with most programs, it varied. I had several incredible teachers, and several teachers who didn't do a great job.
- 6. Amy Van Scoy, Brenda Battleson and Richard Stringer-Hye were outstanding and far exceeded excellent.
- About 80% of my instructors were excellent, the other 20% were a mix of justokay and there was one that was so unorganized, I would never take a class with again.
- I was very impressed by how effective my instructors were at running an online
 class that still felt engaging and encouraged collaboration. Course content was relevant and current and professionally-oriented.
- 9. I feel that my professors were truly dedicated towards producing students with skills and confidence.
- 10. Faculty was very knowledgeable in the field and they tried to make as many real life connections.
- 11. It was easy to get in touch with someone when I needed the help. I learned a lot about the library profession and I feel ready to move on to the next step.

I think many of the instructors were more focused on their own research than on instruction. Many relied on group assignments (way too many of these) in

12. order to cut down their own workload, which caused a lot of students to essentially have to do others' work while a certain portion of lazy or incompetent students slid by.

I truly wanted to click strongly agree, however LIS571 was a living nightmare for me. I am a highly qualified NYS high school teacher who holds a doctoral degree in Education from the University of Rochester. I offered teaching tips which were refused. I received two reams of paper at my house. I was told I had to create binders with this information. I do not like the way it was

- 13. organized. I really enjoyed the way the remaining four classes I took this semester were structured, as were my past courses, using folders, headings, and placing all readings and recordings online in one nice, neat, organized fashion. Having 3 hour slides with lectures to listen to were overwhelming. I am a FULL TIME TEACHER taking a FULL TIME COURSE LOAD. This course was the only one that I struggled with.
- 14. Most of the classes I took were really good. I enjoyed some more than others. Many times, the teachers made a difference. LIS 583 was a lot of work. I think

the discussion questions were difficult sometimes. They had many components, which overwhelmed me. LIS 523 User Education was a lot of work. I feel that the instructor's comments were really harsh, but she said that was to make me learn. It turned out positive in the end. I got a lot out of that class. It made me realize I was capable of teaching a class. She was at times, confusing, however, because she was not always clear with her instructions on assignments. LIS 514 was difficult. I liked working on the assignments, and learning about indexing. The instructor was really patient, and always answered my e-mails quickly. LIS 583 Public Libraries was an interesting class, in which I learned a lot about public libraries. I think we should not have had a final exam. I don't do well on tests, multiple choice, true/false are really confusing and I have not been in school for a long time before doing this program. We had access to our book and readings, but for 15 points, it made a difference in the grade I will receive for this class. We learned all semester and I think a final served no purpose. This class was the only one I had a final in. At times, this class felt like it was more work than the others.

A majority of the courses I took in the program were well taught. Dr. Battleson is an exceptional teacher, and I was lucky to take 3 or 4 courses with her. She does an excellent job of engaging the students in the class, whether the students are seated or online, and her courses provide the student with skills and information that will be beneficial to them when working in the field. Nearly all of the other professors I had did a good job with instruction, but Dr. Battleson

- 15. all of the other professors i had did a good job with instruction, but Dr. Battleson stood out. In LIS 571 One professor I had, and while s/he was very good about answering emails and communications with the students the course was organized to the point of being confusing, and the course was overloaded with information and should be pared down so that it is information organization related to libraries, not information organization as it is pertinent to a wide varied of fields and potential jobs.
- 16. Most classes were excellent though the quality would depend on the instructor.
- 17. All of my professors were knowledgeable and dedicated to educating my peers and me to the fullest.
- All of the professors I worked with over the course of my studies were veryinformative and I learned so much from them. I really got a lot out of the program.

 Instruction largely depends on what you make of it, but my courses were almost
 always well-organized, with clear rationale for each lesson and assignment. Projects with real world applications were a department priority.

20. Each and every professor in the program provided valuable, meaningful information and assignments.

Dr. Battleson and Amy especially are great instructors. I only had one badexperience with an instructor, and Dr. Julien tried to resolve that as quickly and fairly as she could.

22. Regardless of my classes being online, I never felt like I was missing anything that I may have received in a classroom setting.

Overall the quality was very good, I do feel there needed to be more content. For example, I learned about assistive technology in about 3 classes I was

 rol example, hearined about assistive technology in about 3 classes i was taking one semester. I would have preferred more time on pedagogy and instructional techniques. As someone who didn't already hold a teaching certification, I just didn't think there was enough of this. Also, some of the electives for the MLIS should be required of the school librarianship program. I think I would have liked digital retrieval information. A cataloging class specifically for school librarians would be really helpful. The class that helped me the most specifically in a school library was LIS 585. The courses I enjoyed the most were LIS 534 and 535 with Anne Perrault.

Some instructors are more effective than others in providing instruction. I felt
 some courses were much more challenging than others. Honestly, this master's seemed easier than the undergraduate work I completed.

- 25. Every teacher is slightly different in their style so that takes some getting used to.
- 26. This coursework not only prepared me for my future in librarianship but also has enhanced my skills for my current job as well.

I remained employed full time in the library field while in the program. I found
 that a few of the professors were out of touch with reality. I felt that I was down graded because I used practical experience instead of theoretical teachings.

 I liked all of the professors, especially Anne Perrault and Chris Hollister. Brenda
 White was also very accommodating and flexible, which was much appreciated. Overall, I have no complaints about professors.

29. Some instructors were better than others, which I think is natural in any educational institution, but there was one class that I absolutely hated.

Most professors have mastered the ability to teach many students (I understand
there were classes with both seated and online classes) at once, even from a distance.

- 31. The quality and wisdom of the professors was very evident, but several, while brilliant in their field, were poor educators.
- 32. The Entire program was uplifting and positive. The instructors were good

6. My interactions with faculty members were generally positive. * (Select no more than 1.)



Strongly Agree	21	51%
Agree	17	41%
Neutral	2	5%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

7. Comments: My interactions with faculty members were generally positive.

One of the professors made a comment I wasn't particularly fond of, saying how school is our priority over family, work etc. I had a 6 month old child at the time, so I was a little upset that a professor would make a statement like that

1. professor would make a statement like that.

Besides this particular professor, I thoroughly enjoyed working with the professors.

- 2. Nearly all of my professors were absolutely fantastic!
- 3. [No Answer Entered]
- 4. Again, with the exception of two instructors, I experienced positive interactions with faculty.

Yes. In my first semester, the 505 course did not run smoothly and that led to a lot of issues (that were worked out thanks to Dr.

- 5. Julien stepping in). Otherwise though, I've had nothing but good experiences with the faculty.
- 6. I received extensive, helpful feedback, and my instructors were always quick to respond to my emails.

My professors were all astounding people who helped me toachieve my best work. I am grateful for all their advice and their hard work.

- It was very positive, however I may have liked some more real
 "interactions." (A phone call, video conference at least once a semester)
- 9. I had a great experience with my teachers and they were eager to help me learn.

10. I found the majority of faculty members to be condescending.
 10. Many did not respond to questions promptly and responded in an unprofessional manner. This school really ought to hire instructors who have some background in education.

I strongly believe that new classes should be tried out on seated students before making them entirely online, give the professor's a chance to work out all of the bugs with students that can give

immediate feedback.
 I have had many instances where I had questions About new electives that should have been worked out before hand, and responses from professor's were not helpful, and even rude.

12. The majority of the teachers were excellent. Dr. Battleson was an amazing teacher. She was always there for me, from beginning to the end. LIS 581 taught me so much about being a manager and writing a resume and cover letter. Dr Battleson has a way of drawing people in. She has a great sense of humor. Dr. Van Scoy made her classes interesting and engaging. The reading material I thoroughly enjoyed in LIS 518. Dr. Nesset's class, LIS 523 User Education was a lot of work. I feel that her comments were really harsh, but she said that was to make me learn. It turned out positive in the end. I got a lot out of that class. It made me realize I was capable of teaching a class. She was at times, confusing, however, because she was not always clear with her instructions on assignments. Dr. Soergel was nice. He was really patient, and always answered my e-mails guickly. LIS 583 Public Libraries was an interesting class. Marie Bindeman was a good teacher.

I felt all of my communications with faculty were positive and they
all respond in a reasonable amount of time, and were always willing to clarify or provide assistance when needed.

 I was not sure how much other students interact with professors
 or their own advisors. I hesitated to contact them outside class. However, interactions within each class was great.

All professors offered an open and welcoming environment. They
gave positive feedback often that continually motivated me to succeed.

I only had one bad experience and it was more my fault than anything. My grandmother passed away at the end of spring 2014 and I let my work slide.

Without exception my professors were responsive when I hadquestions or concerns, and often went out of their way to help me resolve problems.

- 18. All professors were very timely in response to emails and posted questions in *UBLearns*.
- 19. Dr. B, Amy, and Dr. Julien have all been a great help to me and supported me personally as well as academically.

All of my instructors were accessible through email, phone and
discussion boards. Never did I feel I was a burden if I contacted them multiple times.

21. Yes.

The faculty are very approachable and helpful. Even being an online students, I felt as though I got to know my professors well and they were easy to approach when I had questions I needed to ask. They were quick to respond to emails.

23. Everyone was very helpful and responded quickly to email questions.

24. Generally, my interactions with faculty members were positive. A special thank you to Ben Poremski for his communication and working me through my needing to confer in June and contacting the registrar's office to be me graduated.

Again, for the most part there are few complaints, but one course25. I did not like at all and this was due to the instructor's lack of professionalism.

Most professors were very helpful. Christopher Hollister was
 exceptionally pleasant. I did feel that I struggled to get the help I feel I needed from *** this semester.

- 27. Most were more than willing to help in any way possible.
- 28. I had no issues getting in touch with my instructors.

8. My interactions with my fellow students were generally positive. * (Select only 1)



Total Respondents: 41

Strongly Agree	15	37%
Agree	23	56%
Neutral	2	2%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%

9. COMMENTS: My interaction with my fellow students were generally positive.

We all come from different backgrounds and life experiences, and not
1. knowing each other or where we come from was particularly difficult. That is the cons of an online class, but it was still a positive learning experience.

- 2. I believe that the student interactions were an integral part in the learning process, particularly since my classes were all online.
- 3. Never had a problem with other students during my time here.
- 4. No problems with fellow students.

Generally, yes. There were some students in the program who were not as dedicated to their work, which led to some challenges in group work.

5. Overall though, I've met some wonderful people and intend to stay in touch with all of them.

Leadership for student clubs and organizations seemed a real challenge.

- 6. But the students who did participate were generally very positive about the program and the career field in general.
- I took most of my classes online, so I had minimal personal interaction. I
 worked with a range of students during group projects, and the level of commitment and responsiveness definitely varied.

This program featured a great deal of collaboration which is surprising given
8. that the classes are often asynchronous or totally online. I got to know many of my colleagues very well and count them among my friends.

- 9. All group work that was assigned was very positive.
- 10. Everyone in class was friendly and easy to work with.

Much more positive experience with fellow students than with instructors

11. (excepting the ones who just didn't do anything and let everyone else do the work).

The majority of the time, all was good with my classmates. In the beginning,it was harder, because I wasn't used to working online with people. After

awhile, it got easier, and I didn't mind working on group assignments.

I felt that most of my interactions with students were positive, and many times if there were disagreements or differing points of view students were willing to discuss their perspective. While I do feel my interactions with

- 13. students were positive I do feel that being an online student many of the interactions with students and faculty are missed because of not being present. This is not a critique of your program, I just think it is an issue with any online course and felt it should be mentioned.
- 14. I think that students in the program were very nice though majority of interactions were online.
- 15. Projects, study groups, book clubs, etc. were all beneficial and positive.
- 16. I got along very well with all of my fellow students that I worked with.

The department isn't terribly big (especially within the school librarianship major), so you tend to encounter the same people from semester to

- Inajor), so you tend to encounter the same people from semester to semester. We became a closer-knit community than I expected for an online program, and I am very pleased with the quality of our interactions.
- 18. I thoroughly enjoyed group assignments. Being an online-only student, these assignments provided an opportunity to engage peers more closely

than just Discussion Board messaging.

- 19. The online learning forum always felt like a safe space to give and receive feedback and ask each other for support.
- 20. I wish more students were able to participate in department events.
- 21. There were a lot more group assignments in this program than I expected. They can be very challenging especially being an online student.
- 22. only a few of them are not ready to put in the time required.

Aside from one classmate, all my interactions with other students were
great. It was pretty easy to communicate in Blackboard and through Google Hangout and Zoom were two other softwares I tried.

Having taken most of my courses online, I had very few interactions with myfellow students, although I'd say that overall the collaborative work in which I participated was fine.

Group work was a great addition to most classes because it helps distance learners feel they have support within the class. It is also nice to meet

- 25. librarians/library students working in different fields. I was even able to meet with some online students who live nearby.
- 26. Group projects are a trial-by-fire method for student interaction, but most of these interactions were helpful and educational to me.
- 27. I learned a lot from my fellow students through the discussions. They were really important for learning.

10. My interactions with department administrative staff were generally positive. *



Strongly Agree	12	29%
Agree	18	44%
Neutral	11	27%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%

11. Comments: My interactions with department administrative staff were generally positive.

Total Respondents: 25

- 1. Sometimes I felt there was a disconnect because of all the emailing, but I generally felt the department administrators were excellent.
- 2. I didn't have very much contact with the administrative staff, but when I did, they were very helpful.
- 3. [No Answer Entered]
- 4. At times a little difficult to reach someone in person.
- 5. Ben is fantastic, and goes above and beyond.
- 6. Barb Routhier and Carol Novak were amazing left big shoes to fill! But Ben P. has been great (very responsive, very positive).
- 7. I did not have many interactions with administrative staff.
- 8. I didn't need to work with the administrative staff.
- 9. I had no problem working with the staff. They seemed eager to help.
- 10. The administrative staff couldn't be more unhelpful if they actively tried. The last time I sent in information about waivers (several emails) I never received replies and the waivers never went through. I've had rude treatment from several different departments for no other reason than I asked a question. It's quite remarkable. Do these people know nothing about customer service?
- 11. I interacted with department administrative staff only a few times, and each time was a positive experience.
- 12. Most of my interactions with the administrative staff of the department were generally positive. However, there were a couple times where I was not given information that was completely accurate or detailed that resulted in some frustrations and difficulties down the road, and a couple times questions feel through the cracks, and I did not receive a response until I had sent a follow up email later on.
- 13. They seemed not to be very friendly and positive.
- 14. I didn't have to contact the dept. administrative staff much but when I did, it was always a positive experience. All of my questions were answered and they were glad to assist me.
- 15. The staff of the LIS program is wonderful. They all know so much about their topics and even more.

The department administrative staff helped me resolve paperwork issues on several occasions.

- 16. As with any office my emails got lost in the shuffle now and then, but a follow-up was usually enough to get us back on track.
- 17. Responses to emails to the LIS office are a little slow sometimes.
- 18. Each time I reached out to an administrative staff member, I felt like they knew me and my situation well and always offered words of encouragement and guidance.

- 19. Very good about helping with the plan of study and making sure we are on track to graduate.
- 20. To have the main contact person retire was hard. I wasn't sure who the main person was after that. But someone was always able to respond to me so that was good.
- 21. Again, Ben Poremski was a miracle. He was able to work things out for me in this last semester because I had not applied for graduation on time.
- 22. Other than my instructors, I do not believe I interacted with any other type of staff (other than the dept. chair which will be answered in the following question), having taken my courses online.
- 23. I always received help quickly and with ease. Overall, I felt that the administration was very nice.
- 24. Very willing to help.
- 25. No issues.

12. My interactions with the Department Chair were generally positive.* (Select no more than 1)



Strongly Agree	21	51%
Agree	12	29%
Neutral	8	20%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

13. Comments: My interactions with the Department Chair were generally positive. Total Respondents: 21

- 1. I'm not sure I had many interactions with the Department Chair, but the emails were usually helpful and positive!
- 2. Strongly Agree.
- 3. Did not have much interaction
- 4. Yes, absolutely. Dr. Julien supports the students 100%, is willing to listen and help if she can, and overall, is working hard to turn around a program that was falling apart.
- 5. Really seems to respect students and their opinions (as evidenced by a commitment to holding town hall meetings)
- 6. Dr. Julien was always helpful and responded to my emails quickly, which I found impressive as I'm sure she's very busy.
- 7. I had no interactions with the department chair.
- 8. She was readily available when I had questions and she always communicated with the students.
- 9. I did not communicate with the department chair.
- 10. I do not feel I had many interactions with the department chair.
- 11. The department chair is always helpful and cares of me and other students.
- 12. Overall, the Department Chair is just a wonderful person who cares about the students and will help them succeed.
- 13. Our paths didn't cross much, but when they did the experience was positive.
- 14. Dr. Julien has been ever so helpful as my Advisor!
- 15. I do not recall interacting with the chair. I love how quick Dr. Julien was to respond to emails and was approachable at non-traditional work
- 16. hours. Sometimes I would email her late at night and still get a quick response. That shows she cares about her job 24/7 and helping others.
- 17. The Department Chair was very accessible and willing to help.
- 18. Did not interact with Heidi directly.
- 19. Overall I feel this was a positive interaction, although I do feel that perhaps more could have been done with my one unsatisfactory course and handling the unprofessional instructor.
- 20. Seemed genuinely concerned.
- 21. I really had no contact with department chair until the end of the program.

14. I received useful information from my faculty advisor. * (Select only 1)



Total Respondents 41

Strongly Agree	11	27%
Agree	18	44%
Neutral	5	12%
Disagree	6	15%
Strongly Disagree	2	5%

14. Comments: I received useful information from my faculty advisor.

Total Respondents: 28

- 1. Although I have had 3 different ones in my time in the program, I felt they were all very helpful. The inconsistency was a little odd though.
- 2. I had several advisors over the course of my time at UB, and most of them were helpful.
- 3. With most teachers the interactions were positive; however, I went through various advisers, some of which wouldn't show for meetings, and/or mis-directed me on my path to graduation.

Dr. Wang: I didn't really work much with Dr. Wang. This was not due to any issues with him, but simply because I assumed that as a graduate student, planning our course load is something we should be responsible for.

4. Dr. Battleson-White: I am glad I switched over for my last semester however, as Dr. Battleson- White is someone I really look up to in the department. She gives

excellent advice, is honest, and just really wants to help students succeed. She was particularly helpful with paperwork for graduation.

- 5. I did not feel my advisor had a genuine interest in my studies, which is okay because I am pretty proactive and had a clear path of study in mind. He was responsive, however, when I did make inquiries.
- 6. My advisor was helpful in providing information on practica and in advising me on my plan of study.
- 7. My advisor helped and guided me through the program.
- 8. I received great information until, trying to resend my official transcripts. I was given the wrong information, but other than that my advisors were wonderful.
- 9. I felt my advisor didn't know the answer to some of my questions and I just found he wasn't very helpful.
- 10. I was told incorrect information by about 3 different advisors that almost made me take the wrong courses and might have delayed my graduation. This is after I said to them, repeatedly (and politely) that I thought maybe what they were saying is incorrect. Let us go back to questions 4 & 10 condescending, rude people don't tend to listen to students even when the students are right.
- 11. I asked to switch advisors because my first one was not helpful, after finding a professor I liked and respected I requested a change.
- 12. I received e-mails from ** asking for my plan of study several times. We never discussed the need for a portfolio, or anything else.
- 13. Overall I received useful information from my advisor, however, more foresight or information on changing course offerings would have been helpful as I had to change some things around in my last two semesters because courses I listed on my plan of study were no longer offered during semesters I planned to take them.
- 14. She seemed to be very nice at first. However, she has become not to be responsive.
- 15. I had a bit of a rough start because there was a lack of communication between my advisor(s) and myself. Things quickly turned around and I was well informed.
- 16. She was always there when I needed her and was always able to answer any questions I had in a timely manner.
- 17. My advisor was new to the position, and still learning some of the ins and outs of certification and student teaching. However, she was always responsive to my needs, and willing to ask around
- 18. I haven't generally needed to go to my advisor for anything beyond getting my plans of study approved.
- 19. My advisor changed half-way through my program. Once my new advisor was in place, she was extremely helpful in providing me with accurate information and helping to guide me to the correct pathway after I was given a lot of incorrect information by my first advisor.
- 20. Very helpful in deciding the plan of study courses.
- 21. Both Dr. Wang and Dr. Soergel were very helpful in every aspect.

- 22. My advisor was great but seemed to disappear and only ask for a plan of study every semester. I was left to my own devices in choosing classes. My advisor was helpful in providing information on practica and in advising me on my plan of study.
- 23. My advisor, Ying Sun, was very helpful. If she couldn't answer a question, she directed me to someone who could. My advisor helped and guided me through the program.
- 24. Again, overall I had a great advisor, although I feel that my first semester could have been scheduled better since I took two courses that were virtually identical and I am not sure I gained any benefits from taking both. I wish I had had better guidance on that.
- 25. Ying Sun was a great adviser! She was very helpful and quick to respond to my questions. I thank her very much for her help and pleasantness.
- 26. I did not always receive helpful advice or instruction from by advisor and often found our communication to be more stressful than it was useful. I found that I was more likely to seek assistance from other faculty members and mentors.
- 27. Before Dr. Perrault left UB, yes.
- 28. Brenda Battleson White was awesome and helped me a lot.

16. I had access to appropriate specialized library software and related technology to support my educational needs.* (Select no more than 1)



Total Respondents: 41

Strongly Agree	13	32%
Agree	19	46%
Neutral	5	12%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	5%

17. Comments: had access to appropriate specialized library software and related technology to support my educational needs.

- 1. I was exposed to a lot of programs and resources I never would have before.
- 2. Strongly Agree.
- 3. The downstairs computer lab is awful! It is dirty, the computers are dated. I hope the school provides money to get that updated. In addition, Collaborate is not my favorite tool ever. After using it this semester, I was just left frustrated and disappointed. There has to be a better way!
- 4. Would have liked more access than just a semester-long access through a particular course.

- 5. I got to use a lot of technology that I had no experience using before, so this was very helpful real-world experience.
- 6. Occasionally, professors would mention not being able to get access for students.
- 7. Anything I needed for a class the teacher made sure I had access to.
- 8. Nope.
- 9. I'm not sure how to answer this question. I had access to OCLC, MARC, UBLearns library.
- 10. Sometimes many hoops had to be jumped through to get access to the software and related technology, but in the end I had access to everything I think I needed.
- 11. Instructors gave various chances to access to specialized software and technology.
- 12. I learned new software programs, tools, tricks, etc. through my programs. I have developed an even greater passion for technology.
- 13. All the applications necessary to achieve course objectives were provided.
- 14. The technology I used in my program was not anything that I did not already have available to me through my own personal computer or through my job placement. However, when I was using specialized programs for some computer application programs, the support provided to me was adequate.
- 15. I bought a new PC laptop and that was good enough, fortunately.
- 16. This included library website and databases.
- 17. Overall, I think so, although there were a few times that I had difficulty adapting programs that were meant for Windows OS with my Mac, but I was able to manage.
- 18. Sometimes finding the access point or log-in information was a challenge, but all the tools I needed could be found somewhere.
- 19. In the future I think it is EXTREMELY important for students to work with and see the EXACT software they will see when entering a library.



18. I am prepared to enter the workforce in my chosen field. * (Select only 1)

19. Comments: I am prepared to enter the workforce in my chosen field.

- 1. I got a job in the field and feel ready to start n two weeks!
- 2. Very Strongly Agree.
- 3. More through experience, rather than course work.
- 4. Generally, yes. Are we really ever prepared?
- 5. This is more the result of my own fault, not a true reflection of the program. While the coursework definitely helped me to gain exposure and access to the field, I regrettably did not take a practicum or directed study, so I was unable to apply what I learned in a real-world setting.
- 6. I definitely need more full-time experience but my classes prepared me for a career more effectively than I expected.

- 7. I feel nervous about starting my career.
- 8. I'm currently already working in the field and it is wonderful. UB's program gave my so much vital information that I can use in the library setting.
- 9. I feel ready to work more in the library field and move up.
- 10. Fortunately for me I already work in the field, now I have the MLS many jobs require in addition to years of experience. I feel bad for my classmates with no work experience.
- 11. This program has prepared me really well for my career. I feel much more confident about being a librarian now than when I started in this program.
- 12. I feel the program and my professors (in addition to having work experience) have prepared me to enter the workforce and be successful.
- 13. I think that I am prepared to, however, it is difficult especially for new graduates to get a job.
- 14. I believe through my coursework and previous field work experiences, I am definitely prepared.
- 15. Assignments requiring active learning at a local or academic library provided handson experience in the "real" world.
- 16. I feel extremely confident in my ability to be successful as a school library media specialist because of the instruction and support I received at UB.
- 17. I will definitely apply to some libraries but will try other places also.
- 18. Although I did enjoy my classes and some of the things I learned were useful, I have to accredit a lot of my learning from on the job experience over the tears as well.
- 19. While I feel my education was enough for me to pursue my career, I do need a "starting" point as I do not have any professional EXPERIENCE quite yet.
- 20. With the exception of cataloguing, I do feel confident in my knowledge of the field.
- 21. This occupation has been my dream for years, and now I feel that I have the tools needed to succeed.
- 22. I am prepared..... getting hired through all of the political bullcrap is the key to getting the Job. I think the degree is important, but yet there is still nepotism and other factors such as gender bias and age discrimination in the Library environment. Diversity is made known in our studies, but what you see in real world regarding hiring is another issue.

20. I am confident that I will be professionally successful. * (Select no more than 1)



Agree	18	44%
Neutral	2	5%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%

20. Comments: I am confident that I will be professionally successful.

- 1. I am absolutely confident of this!
- 2. Very Strongly Agree.
- 3. I landed a Librarian Trainee position in a public library on Long Island in May 2015, based in large part by my ability to answer interview questions based on my education. All of my coursework has been completed, and as soon as I receive my degree I will be upgraded into a Librarian 1 (same job duties, more money).
- 4. Absolutely, I have no doubt in my mind. I've worked hard to complete my degree, and I will work hard to find the right job.
- 5. I already have a job at a library!
- 6. I just need to get a job still.
- 7. I believe the classes in this program have prepared me for the library field and any situations I may come across.

- 8. I don't think it's because of UB.
- 9. I know that I will get a job as a librarian, and that I will be successful. That is because all that I learned in the classes and with my teachers in this program.
- 10. I am very confident that I will be professionally successful. My professors, their instruction, and their feedback on my work and assignments have helped me to learn and grown, and have shown me what I already did well and given me confidence in them.
- 11. I hope so, but I do not know at all. I even wonder if I can be hired.
- 12. I have always demonstrated great work skills and professionalism. I am extremely confident that I will do well.
- 13. I have learned valuable skills as a LMS student and was given multiple opportunities to demonstrate those skills in a professional setting.
- 14. I am not sure how easy it will be to get a position but I feel I should be able to handle the job if I get it.
- 15. I already have a Librarian Job that I got in March and I love working with the kids and teens and I am doing very well.
- 16. I have had several jobs already and have easily learned what is needed at each one, so I do not have any worries about that.
- 17. I am very confident in my professional ability. :)
- 18. Ye, because I am the type of person who makes connections, and I know how to play the game of selling myself. I am a scrapper with a lot of experience to bring to the table.

22. I would recommend this program to others. * (Select no more than 1.)



Total Respondents: 41

Strongly Agree	19	46%
Agree	14	34%
Neutral	5	12%
Disagree	3	7%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

23. Comments: I would recommend this program to others.

Total Respondents: 21

- 1. I did! One of my friends is also in the program, a semester behind me.
- 2. I have recommended this program to one of my old co-workers, and she will be starting this coming spring!

This program was a perfect match for me. It allowed me to continue working full time while pursuing my studies at home and on the

3. weekends. I have no doubt that this program taught me a lot about library and information science.

4. My "neutral" really has nothing to do with the program, and everything to do with the fact that it is hard to find work as a librarian. A lot of libraries are hiring with a Bachelors, so I would encourage folks to try that first. It's expensive, so you have to be certain!

I would also recommend that others take courses with the professors I
had; specifically, Amy VanScoy, Chris Hollister, Valerie Nesset, Brenda Battleson White are all amazing instructors!

- 6. I loved the program.
- 7. I already have. :)
- 8. This is a great program and it really prepares you.

I think for the price it is an amazing program. I have never even been on the campus, or been to Buffalo. I never met any of my teachers or

 classmates. It was really convenient to work from home. The teachers were really great, know what they are teaching, and have been amazingly helpful.

I felt this was a good program and I would recommend it to others. I would recommend they take seated classes if possible, but if the

- 10. commute for them is not do able, then the online program is a very good choice as well.
- 11. Only one concern is that many of classes are online.
- 12. This program is affordable, competitive, stable, flexible, interesting and offers great experiences. It truly prepares you for success.

I'll admit that I initially chose UB because of the cost, but it was an
 outstanding program and I would not hesitate to recommend it to someone who is worried that lower price means lower quality.

14. I have already referred 3 colleagues to UB for the Fall 2016 academic year!

- 15. For someone who is interested in Library Science, it is a good program.
- 16. I would only recommend the program to those who are already in the field.
- 17. Overall, the program was good. Individually, the classes and professors were good
- This seems to be a very successful program, given I have interacted18. with students from all over the world who could have gone to any school for their LIS degree and chose UB over those.
- 19. I do recommend this program to others.
- 20. The ability to complete the entire degree online is a huge help for those who live far away or have to work during school.
- 21. Yes I would recommend this program to others.

24. What were the major strengths of your program?

Total Respondents: 29

- 1. The classwork was structured so that is prepared us in every aspect of being a librarian.
- 2. The professors I had really made this program as exceptional as it is.
- 3. Offered the course work online letting us choose placements. We as grad students are so busy that this was a huge help.
- 4. Most of the courses I took offered useful, pertinent instruction on working in a public library.
- Several of the professors had extensive real-world experience, and that's what I
 really appreciated. I don't feel like I'm entering the job world blind to the issues that
 exist.

Most of the professors were very kind and always willing to help.

- 6. Great professors who were progressive in using new technologies
- 7. Real-world applicability of classes, knowledgeable, engaging, and helpful instructors, flexibility of online schedule, variety of electives.
- 8. collaborative work, great professors
- 9. The classes were great and I feel that I learned so much.
- 10. The classes I took fully prepared me for a librarian job such as Collection Development and Reference and Services for Children and Young Adults.
- 11. Dr. Battleson
- 12. Compassionate instructors, lively curriculum, relative and appropriate course work.
- 13. The strengths of this program were the teachers. Most of them were really engaging and know their material. Their helpfulness and knowledge prepared me for a career as a librarian.
- 14. The professors, most of the assignments. I feel both of them give the students a good foundation that gives us the skills and tools to be good librarians and also the skills to grow in the field.
- 15. Major strengths of the program were knowledgeable professors, online learning, technology and interacting with my peers on BlackBoard.
- 16. It was easy to choose courses according to what I wanted to accomplish. There was always an incredible amount to choose from and they all sounded interesting which made it difficult to decide what to take.
- 17. Well-developed online courses, a forward-looking curriculum, knowledgeable faculty, accessible technology, manageable cost.
- 18. Online program capability. Leveraging actual library experience as part of course work.
- 19. The knowledge of the staff members and their ability to maintain a safe and professional online learning environment far exceeded my expectations based on other online classes that I had taken at other colleges.

- 20. project based classes provided close to real life experiences, completing coursework in school libraries.
- 21. The required courses are very pertinent to the profession of library and information science.
- 22. Historical connection to traditional library science program; online access; affordability.
- 23. It was online, I had a great concentration in reference and instruction. Some of the instructors I had were great and very supportive.
- 24. Everything was done well overall.
- 25. I think the professors all have a passion for library science and teaching. I didn't have any professors that I disliked.
- 26. There was a wide variety of courses to choose from, I feel that many aspects of the LIS world are covered to give someone a well-rounded education.
- 27. The Reference course taught by Professor Hollister was my favorite class. I feel that his method of teaching and the videos he provided was the best for me while distance learning.

As previously stated, I also believe group work was helpful.

- 28. The familiarity with the various professors; it allowed me to approach classes knowing how the professor thought/graded.
- 29. The courses in adult programming and reference. Being able to study online was HUGE.

25. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Total Respondents: 30

1. I was not a big fan of professors who post lectures you have to sit and watch. The reason that some (if not most) of us choose online programs is because we don't have 2.5 hours to sit and watch a lecture.

I also think that there was a lot of dated material, like a whole class on MARC records was not a worthwhile use of a semester.

- 2. None.
- 3. Iron out the process of: When a student already has a job why make them student teach again? Or make them jump through hoops? Put a system in place where students know their requirements. I had to figure almost everything out on my own, rather than have guidance from an adviser.
- 4. More interaction with instructors via telephone or chat. New computer lab in the basement.
- 5. Stricter standards for students entering the program, as many students seemed to use this as an "easy" degree.
- 6. More projects that are related to what will be seen in employment.
- 7. require a practicum or directed study perhaps offer a winter session study abroad opportunity (one week or two weeks)
- 8. More assistance in obtaining practicum experience I felt like I had little assistance in finding these positions and work experience is so important! I also was frustrated to have so many required courses that I felt weren't as relevant to my interests, and prevented me from taking more electives.
- 9. more technology requirements
- 10. Online students should be contacted via phone calls or video conferences by faculty once a semester so they are able to make real life connections.
- 11. I would suggest more options for summer classes. I wanted to get ahead but I felt most of the classes offered in summer weren't the ones I needed.

Don't offer required courses in the summer unless you offer enough for people to take at least two relevant courses (this is required for financial aid)

STOP ASSIGNING SO MANY GROUP ASSIGNMENTS.

- 12. Hire some instructors that have worked as teachers (not grad assistants) or know something about teaching or else give them courses that already are constructed many of these people know nothing about evaluation or even how to relate to students. Also, is there a problem with hiring people from the USA? It's nice to be global but practically none of my instructors spoke English as a first language (and it was to everyone's detriment in most cases).
- 13. Professors for whom English is not their native language should take advantage of their TA's to proofread assignments and lectures to make certain they can be understood. TA's are a resource, use them. I think the diversity of the department is wonderful, but I have found that a language barrier and occasional negative or even hostile attitude of professors when students seek clarification, has made more than one course an unpleasant experience.

- 14. Revamp 571. Do I really need to know how to develop a database? What I do need to learn from this is: 1. Dewey Decimal System; 2. Library of Congress Classification, 3. MARC and CARL systems, 4. World Catalog, 5. Databases that are worthwhile to subscribe to in a public and/or school library, 6. How to classify information in a library. What I learned from 571...actually I don't know, I taught myself the entire curriculum which was way too technical and over my head. I asked for help from classmates, multiple public librarians (they had no idea what was going on), and my district technical staff. I was and am still lost. Now I have a 5 hour exam to work on and I have no idea how I am going to pass this course, which will keep me from graduating next week. I am currently carrying a 43/50 due to my hard work and diligence in the course. Having most of my assignments scored but not count toward my grade was also disenchanting. If I EVER did that at my public high school, my administrator would have my head! Who does this? Please have your superiors check in on this instructor. Also, three hour lectures twice a week are overboard.
- 15. I would not have a final exam in LIS 583. I don't remember learning about the need for a portfolio in LIS 505. When I was taking Dr. Van Scoy's class, LIS 518, I thought it would have been great if I knew how to search like this in LIS 505. We should have had some time in the beginning learning how to search. I had papers to write, but I did not know how to search, or what databases to use to find material. LIS 506 was a really difficult class. I don't know what to say to improve that class. I was confused a lot.
- 16. My biggest suggestion would have to be to review LIS 571 and what is taught and expected for the students to learn. I took the course with Dr. Soergel and felt there was too much in the course, and that it was organized and sub-organized to the point that it became confusing. In the course he explained that he is teaching as much as he is in the course because he does not know what kind of jobs we will have in the future, and that what he is teaching would help someone working in web design or other similarly related fields. But this is a course in the LIS program and should be more specific and geared towards LIS, it is not a general course on information organization, or a course from the course is to do what Dr. Soergel says and provide a background that will suit us whether we go into librarianship or web design or a variety of other fields or jobs, then the course should not be a required course for LIS but an elective.
- 17. I think that the core courses should be offered both spring and fall so that students aren't feeling overwhelmed about not being able to register for a much needed class.

18. n/a

Too many required classes are concentrated in the spring, especially for the school librarianship program. LIS 585 would fit well in the fall, where third semester students can take it between LIS 532 and LIS 525.

- 19. Most of the instructors in the school librarianship major are adjuncts. They do excellent work and I am very satisfied with their instruction, but it would be nice to see the next tenure track opening go to someone with expertise in our area, to alleviate our current underrepresentation.
- 20. more content courses for school librarians, more instructional methods courses, longer student teaching

- 21. Although I am glad I did not have to complete a practicum in order to graduate, I do think it is something that would be beneficial to all students to gain experience of being in an actual information environment. It would especially be helpful to students who have never had the opportunity or experience of working in a library setting.
- 22. My main problem with the online program was missing deadlines of assignments. It would be nice to have a consolidated calendar that shows all the deadlines with modification capability.

I would recommend that you look closely at someone's resume when they apply. If there is a possible way, give them credit for work performed in the library field. The first couple of required classes could easily be offered in a boot-camp style summer program. This would be for classes LIS 505 and LIS 506. Students could stay on campus for 2 weeks and get these classes out of the way.

23. I would offer the Portfolio as a required credited class. Move out the leadership elements and job searching like the resume, cover letter, and job search from LIS 581 to the Portfolio class. This would help the student focus on the portfolio and not feel overwhelmed and manage a barrage of assignments from classes.

Better screening of adjunct professors.

focus on career paths instead of offering a buffet style of classes

timely return of grades and assignments. Preferably before the end of the semester.

- 24. Offer the Management course during both semesters or allow students to take it prior to their last semester.
- 25. YES. My major suggestion and issue with my experience these last two years was how some information was transferred from the department to students, particularly regarding the LIS listserv. The reason I applied for graduation late was because I received zero reminders to my UB email. Upon figuring this out, I was told that all those reminders come through the listsery, which I was supposed to have subscribed to. Upon investigating, I found that the listserv information was listed within multiple folders in the MS Orientation section on UB Learns. What greatly upset me was that after 2 years, if I was supposed to have all this important information, why was the listserv not made more prominent? Why was an email not sent to remind us to subscribe to the listserv? Since listserv subscription is not required, I was frustrated that there seemed to be an assumption that all the LIS students were getting this information when they actually weren't. I had a friend, fellow LIS student, who had the same issue--not knowing the listery existed and not filling out her portfolio form on time. So my suggestion for improvement is to directly email the LIS students the link to the listserv and say its required for students to get important information about graduation, program requirements, etc. And if students aren't subscribed in their first semester, then maybe advisors could let them know again. For something so important, it wasn't communicated strongly enough that we needed to get on that. It created a real panic for me.
- 26. Perhaps in other classes they cover this, but I am not so sure that relaying information regarding 26. civil service employment and the various certifications is strong enough as I am still confused on some of that.

- 27. I personally feel that the Organization of Information course could have been more useful for public librarians. I feel that although theory is important, it is not what I will be working with directly now that many programs do this for us. I would have gotten much more out of a concise cataloging course. I also feel that a video and concise outline of terms for technology courses like 506 and 571 are imperative because it is very difficult to follow along. I honestly feel that they were a crash course in a second language and I found myself distressed most of the semester.
- 28. As the library profession evolves it would be useful for students if more courses discussed the possibilities outside of traditional librarianship and introduced students to these options.
- 29. No
- 30. Library field trips visiting people actually doing the job and or live feed interviews with people who are doing the job.

26. How did you find out about the MS/MLS program at UB?

- 1. Just simply googling library media specialist programs in New York State.
- 2. I searched for Library Science programs on Google.
- 3. A former Graduate working in the same school.
- 4. internet search
- 5. Probably online? I found it years ago.
- 6. ALA
- 7. completed a master's degree in another GSE department and knew LIS was part of GSE
- 8. I was already attending UB, so I looked to see if there was an MLS program here.
- 9. Online search
- 10. Someone mentioned it to me
- 11. Through the library I was working in at the time of enrollment.
- 12. Research
- 13. ALA website
- 14. Surfing.
- 15. I was looking for an online library science program on the Internet.
- 16. When I knew I wanted to go to school for librarianship I looked on the ALA's website for accredited programs.
- 17. I found out about the program through a friend.
- 18. researching different programs and came across it on google
- 19. I initially found it on a list of ALA-approved programs (at the time it was one of just four in New York State), and I gathered additional information online (mostly from the department website) and during a brief visit.
- 20. Online search.
- 21. I was looking for programs in Western/Central New York on the ALA website. Later, I found out that the English librarian at my undergrad school, Hazel McClure, whom I knew fairly well, is also an alumna of the program.
- 22. I contacted our district School Library System's Director and asked her what program she would suggest for me since I would need online classes.
- 23. SUNY Learning Network
- 24. I was googling LIS programs available to take as online students and UB was brought to my attention. I was debating between attending UB or Syracuse University and went with UB because everything can be completed entirely online. I am very happy with my choice.
- 25. Through a friend who knew someone who took it.

- 26. The American Library Association website.
- 27. ALA website
- 28. Research
- 29. Friends who previously attended
- 30. Once I decided to pursue an MLIS I looked around locally for one.
- 31. I searched online for ALA accredited programs.
- 32. I have known about it for several years, but can't remember where I first became aware of it. Possibly from a friend who graduated from the program many years ago.
- 33. A coworker had graduated from the program a short time before I started applying to schools.
- 34. Online, and through a friend who was a prison librarian for 30 years,

27. Why did you choose UB for your MS/MLS program? Total Respondents: 33

- 1. Cost, online access, reputation.
- 2. It was the most affordable program in NY, and it didn't require paying to take the GRE.
- 3. Closest, most viable option.
- 4. convenience, cost, program
- 5. Cost, obviously. Close to home. Familiarity.
- 6. Online The need to work full time while completing the program.
- 7. Took 505 for fun and Dr. Nesset's enthusiasm for the field was contagious!
- 8. I was attending UB in a different graduate program.
- 9. Online classes
- 10. Honestly, it was the school that seemed to best fit my needs. It was the only program I applied to, because it was the only school I wanted to go to. I briefly looked at SU but the cost was way to much, so I have to say that the cost of tuition was a factor.
- 11. It was the closest to where I lived in case I needed to get onto campus for some reason. It was also where a lot of my co-workers attended.
- 12. Because it was a SUNY school (in-state), it had an online program, and it was ALAaccredited
- 13. Cost and 100% online program
- 14. Cost.
- 15. I chose this program because the price was really good. Other programs were much more expensive. I did not have to take the GRE.
- 16. I chose UB because I did not want to go to school outside of New York State. I am from western New York and think highly of UB, and felt it provided a high quality education at a lower cost that other accredited programs in New York. Also, I believe things like the environment and energy use, efficiency, and how it is generated are important, and I wanted to support an institution that has similar feelings and has and is doing so much in regards to green energy, sustainability, and efficiency.
- 17. UB was affordable and I heard nothing but great things about the program.
- 18. I liked that I could do everything online, since I am located on Long Island, and I liked that it is a SUNY program. I got my undergrad through SUNY and wanted to stay within that.
- 19. For the relatively low cost and because it is an ALA-approved program.
- 20. The UB program course flexible scheduling capabilities matched with my personal life-style needs most closely.
- 21. UB came highly recommended to me as a solid online program. It is also a lot less expensive than Syracuse University, which would have been my next option.
- 22. close to home, cost
- 23. See comment in question 26.

- 24. It was accessible and affordable.
- 25. I chose UB because they offered an online only option, was ALA accredited and was also in state.
- 26. it was all online and it was also a SUNY school
- 27. Price
- 28. All online plus cheapest
- 29. It is a local school with a good reputation.
- 30. I needed a program that was inexpensive and flexible.
- 31. convenience and ability to choose online or seated classes
- 32. It was a 2-year program that I could complete online without having to travel backand-forth to school.
- 33. Because of its location. In NY for this type of degree, it is Syracuse or Buffalo. Buffalo is closer. Making it online was a HUGE benefit.

28. Please provide any additional feedback for us below.

- 1. Thank you for a wonderful two years! I've learned so much!!!
- I've really enjoyed the welcome receptions for new students (are local alumni invited?) and the town hall meetings - both great ways to interact with current students and faculty. The research lecture series were also very interesting, however, the scheduling during the day made it difficult to attend as many as I would have liked.
- 3. I think a collaboration between this program and UB Libraries to encourage students to work in the libraries here would be beneficial for all.
- 4. Great program.
- 5. Please revamp LIS571. I am willing to help in any way I can.
- 6. This program has made a difference in my life. Positive interactions with teachers like Dr Battleson, Dr Van Scoy have set me up to have a great future as a librarian.
- 7. The online program worked extremely well for me and I have enjoyed my time as a student in the department.
- 8. It was quite a lot of material in a short time. Even now it is still kind of vague because everything happened online. I am glad I was able to do it and I am in touch with many resources that are necessary for a librarian. Best wishes for improvements in the future.
- 9. Overall, I enjoyed my time at UB and I recommend it to others.
- 10. I wish UB was more active in placing graduates in jobs after they graduate. I think that would make a HUGE difference in the overall program.