University at Buffalo
Graduate School of Education

Handbook of Graduate Study

Department of Information Science

Graduate School of Education
University at Buffalo
State University of New York

2022-2023

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Graduate School of Education and the Department of Information Science supports and are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives are recognized, respected, and seen as a source of strength. Further, we wish to affirm our commitment to creating and maintaining a positive, welcoming, and inclusive environment that embraces diversity and strives to eliminate barriers to access, advancement, and full participation on the basis of race, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or veteran status for student, faculty, and staff.

Established in 1966, the Department of Information Science programs invite learners to explore the nature of information and its use, the conceptual foundations of information organization, the information needs of diverse people in a range of contexts, sources of information to meet these requirements, and the cutting edge technology to store and retrieve information, all in the context of the traditional values of librarianship, including intellectual freedom and equity of information access.

Overview of Graduate Program

Department Acronyms and Abbreviations
- IS: Information Science
- GSE: Graduate School of Education

Faculty Members

Samuel Abramovich (PhD, University of Pittsburgh), Associate Professor
Abramovich's research includes finding and understanding the learning opportunities presented by the intersection of the learning sciences and emerging technology, especially assessment for learning. This includes research on micro-credentials and digital badges, online rating systems, makerspaces and open education resources — all to help guide education improvement and reform. He is the director of the Open Education Research Lab, whose mission is to create a better understanding and improvement of open education in all its forms.

Dan Albertson (PhD, Indiana University); Department Chair and Professor
Albertson studies and writes about interactive information retrieval (IIR), with specific interests intersecting areas of interface design, human-centered computing and information management. A considerable amount of his work focuses specifically on visual and video information retrieval, including the users, information needs and tasks, and designs of retrieval systems. Albertson also engages rural and other disadvantaged communities in order to help find solutions for digital information sharing, access and learning.

Samuel Dodson (PhD, University of British Columbia); Assistant Professor
Dodson specializes in human-computer interaction and information retrieval to study how individuals learn and collaborate in online information environments. In his work so far, he has enjoyed investigating a range of issues in these areas, from the ethics of search engines to the information practices of engineers. His research focuses on the implications of how people make sense of information, as well as the design of systems that support learners' needs and potential.

Africa Hands (PhD, Queensland University, Brisbane, Australia); Assistant Professor
Hand's research centers on higher education and information access. Her current research agenda examines public libraries as an information resource to college bound patrons based on experiences working in both higher education (admissions and academic advising) and public libraries. Her work also explores the experiences of first-generation students - both as users of academic libraries and students and professionals in the LIS field.

Heidi Julien (PhD, University of Western Ontario); Professor

Julien's research focuses on information behavior and digital/information literacy. She has also conducted research on acceptance of altmetrics in the discipline of information science, and multiple analyses of methodological practices in information behavior research. Her work in digital literacy has focused on examining students' experiences of information literacy, librarians' experiences of the instructional role, and information literacy instruction practices in academic and public libraries in Canada, the United States and elsewhere. Her work in information behavior focuses on daily life contexts and on people's affective experiences.

Valerie Nesset (PhD, McGill University); Associate Professor
Nesset's research broadly investigates information behavior, in the intersection between information-seeking behavior and information literacy, specifically with elementary school students. Using empirical evidence attained through her work with young students and teachers, she has designed a visual process model — Beginning, Acting, Telling (BAT) — for teaching information literacy knowledge and skills in the classroom. Nesset also explores the use of participatory design methods to foster meaningful interaction and communication between two disparate groups — currently, university faculty members and IT professionals. As the inaugural UBIT Faculty Fellow, she developed and initiated the ongoing UB Faculty IT Liaison Program to generate opportunities for faculty and IT professionals to meaningfully interact and share knowledge to better understand and align IT services with faculty needs, and is investigating ways to apply the methods in other contexts

Dagobert Soergel (PhD, University of Frieburg, Germany); Professor
Soergel makes scholarly contributions in many areas within and outside of information science, emphasizing connection in a wide field of ideas, including knowledge organization, relevance, sensemaking, learning, problem solving and IT support for new ways of learning and assessment. For the coming years, he will focus on contributions of knowledge organization supported by information technology, to the transformation of learning and education.

Ying Sun (PhD, Rutgers University); Associate Professor
Sun's research spans several related fields, including information seeking, information retrieval and data mining. Her work in information seeking and information retrieval focuses on developing information systems to support task-specific and data-intensive information applications, such as legal e-discovery, intelligence analysis and medical information retrieval. Her work in data mining has focused on scientific information presentation in public media, automatic scoring system for STEM education and academic information on the web. She has also conducted research on systematic evaluation of interactive information systems.

Amy VanScoy (PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill); Associate Professor
VanScoy studies the professional thinking of information professionals and how professionals' use of formal and informal theory affects practice. She is interested in how practice is affected by professionals' beliefs, values and attitudes and by their conceptualizations of their work. Using primarily qualitative methods, Dr. VanScoy investigates professional thinking in both

national and international contexts. Her interest in diversity and inclusion inspired her to explore the topic within the context of racial and ethnic identity, as well, leading to a research paper award and a research grant sponsored by divisions of the American Library Association. VanScoy is interested in improving research and its application to practice. In addition to methodological papers and presentations, she investigates how various research methods are used to study practice.

Jianqiang Wang (PhD, University of Maryland); Associate Professor
Wang's research focuses on information retrieval in a multilingual and multimodal environment. He is particularly interested in developing retrieval models and techniques and evaluating them to support users' access to digital information. He has done extensive research in several areas, including cross-language information retrieval, spoken document retrieval and e-discovery. Recently, he has extended his work to the study of short text conversation in open social media domains.

Brenda Battleson White (PhD, University at Buffalo); Clinical Associate Professor
White teaches a range of courses, and serves as the Portfolio Manager for the MS in Information and Library Science program. She is also the program coordinator for the Undergraduate Minor in Information Studies.

Department Student Organizations

IS's Graduate Student Association (IS GSA)

The primary purpose of the Department of Information Science Graduate Student Association (IS GSA) is to:

1. Advocate IS student interests to the IS Department, Graduate School of Education, GSA Senate, and ad-hoc University committees to voice students' questions, comments, and concerns on Departmental and University operations.

2. Provide funding for student events, Department events, and conference reimbursement. Conference reimbursement is a mechanism to allow students to gain valuable conference experience without burdening the entire cost.

3. Host social events for its members, either through their own initiative or by supporting other organizations within the field of library science. This is achieved through parties, service activities and other sponsored events which provide the chance to network with those who will be their professional peers.

IS GSA homepage: https://ubwp.buffalo.edu/IS

Alumni Association

Alumni of the GSE are automatically lifetime members of the GSEAA (Graduate School of Education Alumni Association). As President John McKenna (EdD '08, Educational Administration) writes, "Whether you graduate this year or your commencement was 10 years ago, we know that today's professional market is difficult to navigate. It is during times like these that we, the Graduate School of Education alumni, can turn to one another for support." The Department of Information Science engages regularly with IS alumni, hosting alumni events, and sharing news online through the IS alumni listserv, IS Facebook and LinkedIn pages, and the annual Department of Information Science newsletter, *The Informed*.

Professional Associations

American Library Association

The American Library Association (ALA) is the major governing organization in the United States for library professionals. Their mission is:

> "To provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

The UB-ALA Student Chapter adapts the parent association's mission while also adding several other focuses. Predominantly, the student-run chapter plans and organizes events while providing opportunities for professional development, advocacy, and community service. Essentially, the chapter works to supplement the IS student's academic experience with professional development tools and information. This includes the opportunity to join other library based organizations as well as to apply for scholarships, grants, or participate in interesting seminars.

https://ubstudentala.wordpress.com
https://www.ala.org

For more information, contact Dr. Brenda Battleson White (blb@buffalo.edu).

Public Library Association

The Public Library Association (PLA), with more than 9,000 members, is one of the fastest growing divisions of the American Library Association (ALA), the oldest and largest library association in the world. Founded in 1944, PLA is a member-driven organization that exists to provide a diverse program of communication, publication, advocacy, continuing education, and programming for its members and others interested in the advancement of public library service.

https://www.ala.org/pla

For more information, contact Dr. Brenda Battleson White (blb@buffalo.edu).

Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T)
The Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) is the only professional association that bridges the gap between information science practice and research. For nearly 80 years, ASIS&T has been leading the search for new and better theories, techniques, and technologies to improve access to information.

Thousands of researchers, developers, practitioners, students, and professors in the field of information science and technology from 50 countries around the world have made ASIS&T an important part of their professional development.

Members share a common interest in improving the ways society stores, retrieves, analyzes, manages, archives and disseminates information.

https://www.asist.org/

For more information, contact Dr. Dan Albertson (dalbert@buffalo.edu).

New York Library Association
The New York Library Association (NYLA) is the voice of the library community in New York. NYLA, established by Melvil Dewey in 1890, is the oldest state library association in the country and represents school, college, special and public libraries, library staff, trustees, and students from around the state.

NYLA is the only statewide organization dedicated to advocating on behalf of all libraries and library staff to the state legislature, and serves as the spokesperson on library matters to the media and public policymakers.

https://www.nyla.org

For more information contact Dr. Brenda Battleson White (blb@buffalo.edu).

Other State Library Associations & Joint Memberships
Most states an Canadian provinces have their own library associations that address local and regional library matters just as NYLA does for New York state. All U.S. state library associations, including the District of Columbia Library Association, have agreements with the American Library Association to offer discounted joint memberships to students.

For more information contact Dr. Brenda Battleson White (blb@buffalo.edu)

The Master's (MS) Degree

General Introduction and Information

IS has two Master programs:

MS in Information and Library Science: Our fully-accredited master's program in information and library science focuses on enabling students to seek professional employment in a wide range of information careers in the United States and around the world. Our program, accredited by the American Library Association, is offered fully asynchronously online.

MS in School Librarianship: Our master's program in school librarianship, registered by the New York State Education Department, is authorized to recommend you for certification for the library media specialist, K-12 initial certificate. This fully asynchronous online program focuses on preparing students to teach in a 21st century school library. All courses include the latest research-based, best practices occurring in the school library field. Students will be exposed to strategies and techniques for teaching information literacy.

Example curriculum maps for these two programs are appended to this Handbook.

IS MS Program Academic Regulations

Overview

These are the current academic policies and regulations of the Department of Information Science (IS) MS Program as approved by the IS Faculty.[1] The IS Faculty has charged the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee with carrying out the academic policies of the Department and applying these regulations.

Students may appeal any decision related to academic regulations to the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee. If the initial decision is upheld, the student may then appeal to the IS Chair. The student may file further appeals following GSE and UB (https://grad.buffalo.edu/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html) procedures.

Planning the Student's Program

Advisement
Upon acceptance to the program, students are assigned a faculty advisor by the IS Chair or designee. The faculty advisor serves as a counselor on all academic matters. It is strongly recommended that new students communicate with their faculty advisor before classes start

---

[1] Unless specified otherwise, throughout this document "MS Program" means both the MS in Information and Library Science program and the MS in School Librarianship program.

and must have academic advisement in their first semester before registering for their second semester courses. Students are encouraged to seek academic advice from other faculty as well, but all formal approvals, such as approval of the plan of study or approval of non-IS courses must be given by the student's faculty advisor. If the student's faculty advisor is not available, the IS Chair or Chair's designee will act as faculty advisor. See the *IS Advising Policy* on the UB IS website (https://ed.buffalo.edu/current-students/is-students/advising.html) for more information. For all non-academic questions, such as fee waivers, financial aid, and housing, students should first consult with the UB 1Capen (https://www.buffalo.edu/1capen.html).

Plan of Study

Individual students must, in their first semester, develop a plan of study with their faculty advisor. This plan of study should be guided by the program objectives (https://ed.buffalo.edu/information/about/mission.html) and the student's own learning objectives. The plan of study should have some built-in flexibility by listing alternate courses. The plan of study can be changed with advisor approval; the changed plan must be submitted to the IS office with the student and advisor signatures.

A student can email his/her plan of study to the advisor as an attachment. An approved plan of study should be electronically signed by the student and academic advisor and submitted to isplan@buffalo.edu.

In general, the student can register only for courses listed in his or her most recent plan of study. Exceptions are made to accommodate contingencies at registration. See the *IS Advising Policy* (https://ed.buffalo.edu/current-students/is-students/advising.html) for details.

Study planner and portfolio

The Study Planner and Portfolio serves as a tool for planning the student's program of study and, upon completion of the program, demonstrates the meeting of program learning objectives as well as the student's educational and professional goals. This assessment portfolio should focus on the student's knowledge of the Information Science (IS) field and on professional competencies developed in both required and elective courses.

Students can use their assessment portfolio as a springboard for producing a professional portfolio, a tool that is common in the job application process.

A portfolio with a satisfactory grade is a graduation requirement for all students entering the program as of summer/fall 2012. For full instructions, please see the Department's Portfolio page at https://ed.buffalo.edu/current-students/is-students/portfolio.html.

Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA)

Grade Point Average (GPA) computation
Only letter grades received in UB courses are considered in computing the GPA.

UB policy provides for two GPAs: UB GPA and MS GPA, which are computed by different rules. The student's status in the program and eligibility for graduation are determined based on the MS GPA.

- **UB GPA.** The UB GPA is computed based on the grades in all graduate courses taken at UB. If a student repeats a course one or more times, all grades are used in computing the UB GPA.

- **MS GPA.** The MS GPA is computed based on: (1) courses taken at UB while matriculated in the MS program (i.e., MS in Information and Library Science or MS in School Librarianship) and taken with intent to apply the course to the MS (all IS courses and outside courses included in the student's plan of study at the time of registration) and, (2) IS courses taken before matriculation into the MS program. If a student repeats a course one or more times, only the best grade is used in computing the MS GPA.

Letter grades (weighted grades)
UB assigns quality points to grades as follows: A (4.0), A- (3.67), B+ (3.33), B (3.0), B- (2.67), C+ (2.33), C (2.0), D (1.0), and F (0.0).

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Grades of S/U are not included in grade point average but are used to evaluate the student's academic progress, with a grade of S considered equivalent to B (3.0) and a U that is directly assigned by the instructor (as opposed to a U resulting from an I/U) equivalent to F.

Incomplete (I/U)
An incomplete grade (I/U) will be given upon agreement between the student and instructor. Incomplete (I/U) grades may be given only when the student is unable to complete assigned required course work due to illness or other unforeseeable and compelling circumstances but work the student has completed indicates that the student is on his or her way to a passing grade (at least B (3.0) for a core course and C (2.0) for an elective course). Students must fill out a "Request for Grade of Incomplete" form – a contractual agreement between student and instructor outlining the conditions and deadlines for removing the incomplete grade. The instructor, at his/her sole discretion, may approve the request and defer giving the final grade or disapprove the request and submit a grade; the student may appeal the grade (see https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html - Grades). An "I/U" is not calculated into a student's GPA. Students who accumulate 9 or more credit hours of outstanding Incompletes will be placed on academic probation. According to UB policy, if an instructor does not change the incomplete grade to a regular letter grade by the agreed-upon deadline, the grade automatically becomes a "U" (Unsatisfactory) after one year. A course with a U grade resulting from an I/U is treated as if it was never taken.

Program Requirements

Credit-hours required for the degree
The MS degree requires 36 credits completed with a grade of C (B for a core course) or better or with a grade of S. At most 9 credits (25% of 36 credits formal coursework) with a grade of S can be applied to the MS without thesis option; 7 credits (25% of 30 credits formal coursework) with the thesis option. To count towards the degree, a course must have been taken with intent to apply to the MS (all IS courses and outside courses included in the student's plan of study at the time of registration as well as transfer courses). Courses with grades other than A, B, C, or S do not count toward the 36 credits. If such courses were taken with intent to apply to the MS, they are included in the computation of the MS GPA. All such courses are included in the computation of the UB GPA. See Grades and Grades and Grade Point Average, (p. 11) for information on the UB grading system and definition of UB GPA and MS GPA.

New York State Certification for School Librarianship[2] requires an additional 3 credit hours of LIS 525E, S, and P - School Media Center Practicum (student teaching), which may not be counted as part of the 36 credit hours needed for the MS degree.

While matriculated in the MS program, a student may take up to 6 credit hours not applied to the MS. These courses will appear on the student's transcript and may be used toward another UB program, for example the IS Advanced Certificate, according to the rules of that program, or are available for transfer to a program at another university according to the rules of that university and program.

Grade requirements for graduation
A 3.0 or better MS Grade Point Average (MS GPA) is required for graduation (See Grades and Grades and Grade Point Average, (p. 11)).

Course load
Students carrying 12 credit hours (9 credit hours for Graduate Assistants) in a semester are considered full-time. A student may take no more than 12 credit hours a semester, 8 credit hours in any single 6-week summer session or 12 credit hours in the entire summer.

4 - year time limit
All coursework within the program must be completed within four years from the beginning of the student's first semester in the program. A student may petition for an extension of the time limit.

Required courses for graduation
For the MS in Information and Library Science the following core courses are required:

---

[2] Note that New York State uses the term Library Media Specialist in its certification documents.

- LIS 507 Information Life Cycle
- LIS 508 Information Users and Use
- LIS 575 Research Methods

For the MS in School Librarianship in addition to the above, the following courses are required:
- LIS 518 Reference Sources and Services
- LIS 524 School Media Center Field Experience
- LIS 525 School Media Center Practicum
- LIS 532 Curriculum Role of the Media Specialist
- LIS 534 Resources and Services for Children
- LIS 535 Resources and Services for Young Adults
- LIS 538 Pedagogy for School Librarians
- LIS 568 Computer Applications in the School Library Media Center
- LIS 585 Management of School Libraries
- LAI 574 Teaching the Exceptional Learner in the Regular Education Classroom

To fulfill the MS requirements, a student must complete all required core courses successfully. Successful completion of a required core course is defined as completion with a grade of B (3.0) or better.

Waiver of a required course

If the student has knowledge and skills that fulfill the objectives of a required course; the course may be waived. The student must discuss the possibility of a waiver with his/her advisor and submit a waiver request (https://ed.buffalo.edu/content/dam/ed/main/docs/current-students/forms-checklists/LISPetitionCourseWaiver_2014May.pdf) with supporting documentation to the lead faculty for the course soon after admission, no later than two weeks before the start of the student's first semester or immediately after admission. An examination may be required before a decision is made. The lead faculty will communicate his or her decision to the student in writing (print or email) with copy to the IS office. The decision document will be placed in the student's folder. A course waiver does not imply credit for the course (exception being transfer credit courses).

Individual Study Courses (Practicum, Directed Study, Thesis)

Credit hour restrictions for individual study courses

Students may apply to the MS degree requirements no more than 9 credits total of LIS 525, 526, 527, 598, and 599 and no more than 6 credits total of 525, 526, and 527. The student completing a thesis must register for exactly 6 credits total of 599 (possibly over several semesters).

Credit and grading options for individual study courses Graded S/U (Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory)

LIS 525 School Media Center Practicum (student teaching), 3 credits

LIS 526 Practicum, 1 – 6 credits
LIS 527 Special Project, 1 – 6 credits

Graded with a letter grade
LIS 598 Directed Study, 1 – 6 credits
LIS 599 Thesis, total of 6 credits over all registrations

Prerequisites for individual study courses
To register for any of these courses, the student must have successfully completed nine credits, with six credits coming from LIS 507 and LIS 508. Students must also meet the requirements of the specific individual study course. For LIS 598, exceptions can be made by the instructor. For LIS 525 the student must have completed all other required MS in School Librarianship courses or be granted permission by their advisor.

Registration procedure for individual study courses
To register for any of these courses the student must submit the appropriate form (see https://ed.buffalo.edu/current-students/is-students/forms.html) to the IS office with all applicable signatures. The IS office will check whether the course is on the student's plan of study. If the course is included, the IS office will register the student; if not, the IS office will notify the student, the faculty supervisor, and the student's advisor that the plan of study needs to be updated (with the student's and advisor's signatures) before registration can take place.

LIS 525, 526, 527 Practicum and Special Project
Three special courses allow students to study operations in information agencies, including libraries, first hand:

- LIS 525 (School Media Center Practicum) is available only to students working toward school librarianship certification. Students must have completed all required courses for MS in School Librarianship or be in their final semester, have an MS GPA of 3.0 or better, or permission of advisor.

- LIS 526 (Practicum) provides a supervised field experience and an opportunity to practice and observe the operations of information agencies, including libraries, archives, and museums.

- LIS 527 (Special Project) offers an opportunity to work on special information problems, projects, and activities in information agencies.

For LIS 526 and 527, the form to be submitted includes the name of the information agency and a description of the work to be done.

Policy on paid practicum or paid internship

A student may not earn academic credit for paid employment. However, under special circumstances, a paid practicum may be considered if it offers unique learning opportunities and:

- The sponsor presents IS with a formal proposal describing the practicum requirements and benefits,

- There are no conflicts between the sponsor's requirements and IS requirements,

- The School is satisfied that the student will have ongoing learning experiences rather than initial or routine learning activities.

Paid practicum or internships proposals shall be submitted to the Admissions/Academic Standards Committee for review and recommendations to the IS Chair.

Academic credit may not generally be awarded for work at an agency at which the student was or is employed in a continuing position. An exception can be made for special studies done on work time that result in a report that qualifies as a student paper.

Directed Study (LIS 598)

Directed studies allow exploration of a topic for which no IS course is available or pursuit of research, and may be taken for 1 to 6 credits.

To register for LIS 598, students must find a faculty supervisor. The form to be submitted includes the title of the directed study and an abstract.

Thesis, LIS 599

The thesis is a 6 credit elective; however, the student may elect to use variable credit enrollment over several semesters. Prior to registering for the thesis, the student must follow the procedure outlined below:

- Committee

  The student will choose a committee of three faculty members who must agree to serve before the student registers for LIS 599. The committee will be constituted as follows:

  1. Chairperson - any IS full-time faculty member. The chairperson will be the student's major advisor for the thesis and will schedule all meetings.

  2. One additional member of the IS faculty

  3. One additional member drawn from any of the UB full-time faculty (see https://www.buffalo.edu/facultysenate/Governance/bylaws.html) who could be another member of the IS faculty.

- Duties of the Committee

  The committee will

  1. approve a formal prospectus

  2. guide the student through all phases of the research

  3. conduct an oral defense

  4. read the thesis and sign the cover page of the final approved copy

  5. determine all committee matters through a majority vote

- Intent to Complete a Thesis

  Prior to the beginning of the thesis work, the student will fill out an "Intent to Complete a Thesis" form (https://ed.buffalo.edu/content/dam/ed/main/docs/current-students/forms-checklists/LIS599-Intent.pdf) and submit it to their thesis supervisor for review and approval. The thesis supervisor will then forward the form to the student's academic advisor for signature.

- LIS 599 Registration

  The student will complete the "LIS 599 Registration form" (https://ed.buffalo.edu/content/dam/ed/main/docs/current-students/forms-checklists/LIS599-Registration.pdf), which should include the signature of the thesis supervisor and the signature of the academic advisor before the form is sent to the IS Office. An IS Office staff member will register the student in LIS 599. The student will have to complete this Form for every semester they work on the thesis.

- Thesis distribution

  The student must submit an electronic copy of the thesis to each member of the committee and to the IS office via isplan@buffalo.edu. The Graduate School accepts theses in electronic format only; theses should be submitted using the University at Buffalo's formal Thesis & Dissertation Submission process. (See https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/graduate/electronic-submission.html for information and helpful documents.) Note that with the MS degree, an M-Form is NOT required for graduation or thesis submission. Specific thesis formatting guidelines are provided on this site as well.

Non-IS and/or Pre-Matriculation Credits Applied to the MS Degree

Cardinal rule
All courses (including those that are part of the main body of course work) must meaningfully fit into the student's coherent program of study. All courses require prior permission of the advisor, but while exceptions may be granted for IS courses, no exceptions will be granted for non-IS courses.

If you start the MS program without bringing in prior coursework and you are not enrolled in another graduate degree program at UB to which you may want to apply IS courses or from which you may want to apply credits to the MS, you can take up to 12 non-IS credits, which may include up to 8 non-UB credits, in your MS program.

General rules on Non-IS and/or Pre-Matriculation Credits
*IS refers to courses offered by or cross-listed with the UB IS

- **Seven-year time limit prior to degree conferral on courses applied to the degree**
  Courses that have been taken more than 7 years *before conferral of the degree* cannot normally be applied to the MS. A student can petition for an exemption.

- **Conditions on courses taken outside UB**

  Courses taken outside UB must be from a regionally accredited institution, must be graduate level courses, and must have a letter grade of B (3.0) or above. Courses with grades of "S" or "P" are not transferable unless the student provides written documentation from the instructor(s) of the course, a department administrator, or the registrar at the institution, that an "S" or "P" grade in the course is equivalent to at least a B grade. Prior to taking courses outside UB, the student must update his/her plan of study with his/her faculty advisor.

- **Transfer courses**

  A transfer course is a non-IS (UB or non-UB) course completed before matriculation into the MS program. Transfer of a course is by no means automatic; it must be recommended by the student's advisor and approved by the IS Chair and the Graduate School. The possibility of transfer courses should be discussed between student and advisor by the end of his or her first semester. In order to transfer credits, the student must submit to their faculty advisor a Request for Transfer of Credit form (https://ed.buffalo.edu/content/dam/ed/main/docs/current-students/forms-checklists/TransferofCredit.pdf) along with the syllabus of the course(s), official transcript(s), and a statement justifying how these courses fit with the line of study the

student plans to pursue. The faculty advisor will forward these documents with a recommendation to the IS Chair for a final decision within IS.

If a transferred course is similar in content to an IS elective course the student cannot register for the IS course. It is up to the advisor to ensure that this is noted on the student's plan of study. If such a course is similar in content to an IS required course, the lead faculty for the IS required course must be consulted to decide whether the course to be transferred justifies a waiver of the IS required course. If not, the course cannot be transferred.

- **Limits on the number of courses taken outside IS and/or prior to matriculation into the MS program**

  In addition to approval from the faculty advisor, there are five independent limits on the number of courses taken outside IS and/or prior to matriculation into the MS program depending on the origin of the course and when it was taken. These limits are consistent with the principle that the MS requires at least 24 IS credits for graduation. The set of courses applied to the MS degree must comply with all five limits:

  1. At most 12 IS credits taken before matriculation into the MS program can be applied to the degree.

  2. At most 8 non-IS credits may be transferred into the MS program.

  3. At most 12 credits may be non-IS courses (cross-listed courses are considered IS).

  4. At most 6 credits can be shared with another UB graduate degree (cross-listed courses applied to both degrees count towards this limit).

  5. At most 8 credits may be from course work outside UB.

  * Advanced (post-graduate) certificates are not degrees. So limitations for using credits applied to other degrees do not hold for courses applied to a certificate.

IS courses taken prior to matriculation into the MS program
At most 12 such credits may be applied to the MS. These credits are considered as if they had been taken after matriculation: They do not count as transfer credits nor as courses taken outside IS.

Non-IS courses taken prior to matriculation into the MS program (at UB or another university)
These courses are transfer courses (counting to the limit of 8 transfer credits) and non-IS courses (counting to the limit of 12 non-IS credits). Special rules apply if the courses have been applied to another UB degree.

Non-IS courses taken while matriculated in the MS program (at UB or another university)

These courses are non-IS courses and count towards the limit of 12 non-IS credits. They are not transfer courses. Special rules apply if the courses have been applied to another degree. See the section immediately following.

Courses shared with another UB graduate degree (limit 6 credits)

Up to six credits may be shared with other UB degrees (10% of the sum of the credits needed for both programs). See https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html – Course Sharing Limits. These credits may be any combination of IS credits applied to the other degree or other degree credits applied to the MS. Shared courses must be approved by the "receiving" program. The programs involved will communicate as needed to make sure that the total of shared credits does not exceed the maximum. Non-IS shared credits taken before matriculating into the MS program are considered transfer credits but non-IS shared credits taken while matriculated in the MS program are not transfer credits. For those students who have earned an MS at UB within the recent past and wish to return to complete an MS in School Librarianship, depending on the courses taken, there may be exceptions to the 6-credit limit.

Courses taken outside UB (limit 8 credits)

At most 8 credits may be from coursework taken outside UB, whether taken before matriculation into the MS program and within the time restrictions or while in the MS program. Some courses at specified SUNY institutions can be taken through cross-registration; these count as UB courses.

Course Work

Time on task

As a general rule, time on task per credit hour, including class time and out-of-class readings and assignments, is 3-4 hours per week for 15 weeks, or 45-60 hours total. For a 3-credit course this means 9-12 hours per week, so a course load of 4 courses per semester corresponds to a demanding full-time job.

Repeating courses

A student may repeat a course only once (for a total of two attempts). A student may want to repeat a course in order to remove a failing grade, a grade below B (3.0) in a core course, a grade of Unsatisfactory, or to improve their record. If a student receives a grade lower than a B (3.0) in a required course, the student must repeat the course in the next semester in which it is offered. All course registrations will appear on the student's transcript. The best grade in each course will be used for computing the MS GPA; **all grades will be used for the UB GPA**.

Required core courses: Course resignations

Students may resign from required courses only once. Upon resignation, the student will be placed on academic probation and the course must be taken in the next available semester of registration.

Student Status in the Program

Good academic standing
A student is in good academic standing if he or she:

- maintains a MS GPA 3.0 or above (see Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA), p. 11),

- has a grade of B (3.0) or better in each required core course taken,

- has fewer than 9 credits of incomplete grades,

- complies with UB regulations

(https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/life-on-campus/community/rules.html).

A student in Good Academic Standing is eligible to register for courses unless there are problems with outstanding bills or other UB administrative requirements.
Note: A failing grade in an elective course does not make the student lose Good Academic Standing as long as the student's MS GPA remains 3.0 or above.

Provisional status
A student may be admitted provisionally to the MS when they do not meet all admissions requirements (most often because of an undergraduate GPA below 3.0) but their personal statements, transcripts, entrance examination scores, employment history, and letters of reference demonstrate potential for success. At the end of the semester in which the student has attempted 9 credit hours in the program, including two core courses (i.e., two of LIS 507, LIS 508, or LIS 575) (courses with a grade of (R) resigned do not count as attempted, but I and U do), the student's academic standing will be reviewed by a member of the IS staff. At the time of the review, if the student meets all the conditions of good academic standing and has no Incomplete or Unsatisfactory grades, provisional status is automatically lifted and the student is considered to be in Good Academic Standing.

If the student does not meet these conditions, their entire record will be reviewed by the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee. The committee will recommend to the IS Chair one of two actions:

1. Place the student on academic probation.

2. Dismiss the student from the program if the student's MS GPA (see Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA), p. 11) falls below 3.0 or if the student has 9 or more incomplete grades.

Applicants to the MS in School Librarianship program will not be admitted with a GPA below 3.0, UNLESS they already have another master's degree. Applicants with a low GPA who would like to take the School Librarianship program may apply for conditional admission to the MS in Information and Library Science program. Following completion of 12 credits and a GPA of 3.0, a student may apply to be in the School Librarianship program. This provides students the opportunity to undertake graduate work and test their success.

Academic probation

Students will be placed on academic probation when they no longer meet the conditions of Good Academic Standing. Once a student is placed on academic probation the process is similar to the one for students in provisional status.

At the end of the semester in which the student has attempted 12 credit hours (courses with a grade of Resigned do not count as attempted, but I and U do) after being placed on probation, the student's progress will be reviewed.

At the time of the review, if the student meets all the conditions of Good Academic Standing and has no Incomplete or Unsatisfactory grades, academic probation is automatically lifted. If the student does not meet these conditions, his or her entire record will be reviewed by the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee. The committee will recommend to the IS Chair one of two actions:

1. Continue the student on academic probation.
2. Dismiss the student from the program if the student's MS GPA (see Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA), p. 11) falls below 3.0 or if the student has 9 or more incomplete grades.

Continuous registration requirement

Graduate students must register (and pay all tuition and fees not covered by a tuition scholarship) for a minimum of one credit hour each fall and spring term until all requirements for the degree are completed. If continuous registration is impossible or inappropriate at any time, students must secure a leave of absence from the department in which they are enrolled and obtain approval from the GSE Graduate Degrees Committee. Students may not be on a leave of absence during the semester in which a degree will be conferred.

Leave of absence

Students unable to enroll in any fall or spring semester must submit a Graduate Student Petition Form (https://registrar.buffalo.edu/pdfs/gradleaveofAbsence.pdf) requesting a leave of absence from UB, explaining reasons for the leave and expected date of return. All requests must be made in advance and be supported with adequate documentation. The phrase "personal reasons" alone is not sufficient explanation for requesting a leave. Valid reasons include but are not limited to: health problems, caring for a family member, change in job

responsibilities, relocation. Leaves of absence do not extend the five-year time limit for completing the MS degree.

Normally, leaves are granted for one semester with a maximum of one year, but it may be possible to extend the leave if circumstances warrant.

The leave of absence petition requires the approval of the advisor, and the Department Chair.

Recipients of GEOP (Graduate Educational Opportunity Program) funding or of Schomburg or Presidential Fellowships must submit a copy of the *approved* Leave of Absence to the Graduate School, Office of Student Services.

Extension of the four-year time limit
The student may submit a request for extension of the 5-year limit to the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee, using this form: https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/forms/extension.html. The request must state the reasons for the extension and must be accompanied by the advisor's recommendation. Valid reasons include but are not limited to: health problems, caring for a family member, change in job responsibilities, relocation. Ordinarily, the request must be received no later than two weeks prior to the first day of classes of the first semester of the requested extension. The Committee or, if the Committee is unable to meet, the Chair, will decide on the request. If the student has completed courses on their record prior to matriculation that are to be applied to the MS and if the extension of the time limit means that some of these courses will be more than seven years old at the new date of degree conferral, the student needs to petition separately for an extension of the age limit on these courses.

Withdrawal from the program
Students can withdraw (resign) from the program by withdrawing from their current courses, alerting current instructors, and alerting the IS office or Chair. A student wishing to re-enter the program after withdrawing must re-apply.

Withdrawal from a course
Students planning to withdraw from a course during a semester may do so through the HUB registration portal. The Department asks that out of courtesy the student inform the course instructor.

Dismissal from the program
A student **may** be dismissed from the program for any of the following reasons:

1. On the determination in a review of provisional status or academic probation. Such dismissals are based on recommendations from the Admissions and Academic

Standards Committee to the IS Chair. If the committee cannot meet in a timely fashion and action is deemed urgent, the IS Chair may make the decision.

2. The student fails to meet the continuous registration requirement and has not been granted a leave of absence.

3. The student does not fulfill the degree or certificate requirements within the time limit considering any time limit extension(s) granted.

4. The student is convicted of a crime or his or her behavior disrupts course activities and/or presents a danger to other students, faculty, or staff. In such cases, applicable GSE and UB procedures will be followed.

After receipt of the dismissal letter, the student has two weeks to present to the chair of Admissions and Academic Standards Committee and the IS Chair the reasons or extenuating circumstances why he or she should not be dismissed. This may be done either in writing or in person. The dismissal will then be reviewed.

Reinstatement to the MS Program
Requests for reinstatement should be sent to the IS Chair. They will be reviewed by the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee and in accordance with UB and GSE policy.

Reapplication to the MS Program
Students who have attended the program within the past 5 years and have withdrawn before completion may request re-admittance (https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html - Returning Student Semester Record Activation and Associated Fee). If the student is accepted, the number of credits earned previously in the program that can be applied to the new program will be determined on the merits of the individual case in accordance with UB and GSE policy. Students who have not been registered in the program for over 5 years must reapply through the GSE's regular application process.

Special (Non-Matriculated) student status
Students not in the MS or a IS certificate program may be admitted as Special (Non-Matriculated) Students. Applicants must have completed a Bachelor's degree with a GPA of at least 3.0. This status is used primarily for one of two purposes:

1. A student who may eventually seek admission to the MS program may take courses in this status. If a student is later admitted to the MS program, they can apply up to 12 credits taken as a non-matriculated student to the MS. IS courses taken in this status count towards the minimum of 24 IS credits required for the 36-credit MS degree.

2. Practicing information professionals may take courses in this status for the purpose of continuing education, either regular 500-level courses or 700-level courses which are designed for professional education and are often 1-credit courses (not all 700-level courses count toward the MS degree).

Normally one or two courses a semester are the maximum taken under this status. Before a non-matriculated student registers for a course that has prerequisites, he or she must demonstrate fulfillment of these prerequisites, either by presenting a transcript that shows that the student has an MS or has taken a suitable course or by receiving permission of the instructor. Except for 700-level courses, priority for course registration is given to students matriculated in the MS.

The student must file a new Non-Degree Student application (https://ed.buffalo.edu/academics/courses/non-ub-students.html) for each semester.

Academic Integrity

IS follows the UB policy on academic integrity.

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university's imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas. See UB's Office of Academic Integrity (https://www.buffalo.edu/academic-integrity.html) for more information.

When an instance of suspected or alleged academic dishonesty by a student arises, it shall be resolved according to the procedures set forth herein. These procedures assume that many questions of academic dishonesty will be resolved through consultative resolution between the student and the instructor.

It is recommended that the instructor and student each consult with the Department Chair, School or College dean, or the Graduate School if there are any questions regarding these procedures.

For the process see: https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html - Academic Dismissal; Academic Integrity and Grievance Policies: Other Related University Policies.

Degree Conferral

Before Degree Conferral

All Master's candidates must:

1. Maintain continuous registration.
2. Complete a minimum of 36 credits of graduate study.

3. If chosen, finish a thesis based on independent research. *Note: the Master's thesis is optional and **not** a requirement*

4. Satisfactorily complete core coursework.

5. School Librarianship Students must complete LIS 507, LIS 508, LIS 518, LIS 575, LIS 585 and all requirements outlined in the "Plan of Study - School Librarianship," including student teaching and the required School Librarianship portfolio.

6. Have a current and approved IS Plan of Study form on record with the IS office.

7. Complete and submit an "Intent to Submit Portfolio" form to the IS office. (MS Information and Library Science students only).

8. Satisfactorily complete the required program portfolio. MS Information and Library Students should see the Portfolio Requirement for details. MS School Librarianship students will be provided with details of their portfolio requirement as part of LIS 525P.

Application for Degree

Students must apply for the degree through the student HUB only! This Application for Degree MUST be completed by the stated deadline. Failure to meet this deadling will result in a delay in conferral. If a student changes their graduation date, a Petition to Change Expected Conferral Date form (https://ed.buffalo.edu/content/dam/ed/main/docs/current-students/forms-checklists/conferral-pet-amend.pdf) must be submitted.

Research Opportunities & Internships

Open Education Research Lab: The University at Buffalo's Open Education Research Lab's core mission is to actively engage and support the study of SUNY's Open Education efforts. We provide consultation and research to the plethora of SUNY Open Educational efforts, with the aim of developing research that creates a better understanding and improvement of Open Education.

Faculty Research Profiles: https://ed.buffalo.edu/information/research/centers.html

International Students Information

Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
https://www.buffalo.edu/international-student-services.html

English Language Institute (ELI)

https://www.buffalo.edu/english-language-institute.html

Immigration and Visas
https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/start/immigration.html
https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/explore/funding/cost.html

Certification Programs

Advanced Certificates (AC) are short, focused programs at the graduate level designed to give students advanced skills in a particular subject area of specialization. A range of AC programs are offered online. These certificates can be taken concurrently with another program at UB, or as a stand-alone.

- Information and Library Science, AC: Our advanced certificate in information and library science is for you if you have completed your master's degree in information and library science and want to upgrade your competencies or wish to change career directions. This program requires the completion of 18 credit hours of interdisciplinary study tailored to your academic needs and goals.

Campus Resources and Services

a. IS Student Advisement:
https://ed.buffalo.edu/current-students/is-students/advising.html

b. UB Libraries:
https://library.buffalo.edu

Molly Poremski, UB Librarian, for the Department of Information Science.
poremski@buffalo.edu

c. UB Information Technology:
https://www.buffalo.edu/ubit.html

d. UB Student Services – 1 Capen:
https://www.buffalo.edu/1capen.html

e. UB Office of Financial Aid:
https://financialaid.buffalo.edu/

f. UB Office of Student Accounts:
https://www.buffalo.edu/studentaccounts.html

g. UB Career Design Center:
https://www.buffalo.edu/career.html

University Policy and Procedures

UB Graduate School Policy Library:
https://grad.buffalo.edu/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html

GSE Bylaws
https://ed.buffalo.edu/content/dam/ed/main/docs/policies/GSE-Bylaws-2021-02.pdf

The IS Department reserves the right to amend, alter, and update the policies, procedures, or other information provided in this handbook as needed. Changes, revisions, and amendments to the material in this handbook will be published on the IS Department website and in future editions of the handbook.