



College of Communication and Information

School of Information Science

Library Science (MSLS) Exit Assessment

Purpose

The Exit Assessment is the culminating experience in the library science program and serves as the program exit requirement for the MSLS degree. It provides the opportunity for you to reflect on and evaluate what you have learned and gained from the program, based on the four program learning outcomes (LO):

- LO1: Describe how communities & individuals interact with/in information ecosystems
- LO2: Analyze the major tenets of information practice and apply them in multiple contexts
- LO3: Connect diverse communities & individuals with appropriate resources
- LO4: Explain the dependence of information retrieval on the organization of information

Resources

As you draft the exit assessment, refer to the resources available in this section in addition to those shared in your classes.

LO1

An information ecology or ecosystem is “a system of people, practices, technologies, and values in a local environment.”

LO2

To review the ALA Core Values, please see the [Core Values of Librarianship](#) page on ALA’s website.

To access current competency guidelines for various professional organizations, see the [Knowledge and Competency Statements](#) on ALA’s website.

LO3

To review the ALA statements related to Diversity, please see the [Diversity section](#) of the ALA Policy Manual.

LO4

"Knowledge Organization (KO) is about activities such as document description, indexing and classification performed in libraries, databases, archives etc." (Hjørland, 2008, p. 86)

Hjørland, B. (2008). What is knowledge organization? *Knowledge Organization*, 35(2/3), 86-101.

“Information retrieval is concerned with all activities related to the organization of, processing of, and access to, information of all forms and formats... The objective of an information retrieval system is to enable users to find relevant information from an organized collection of documents” (Chowdhury, 2010, p. 1).

Chowdhury, G. G. (2010). Introduction to modern information retrieval. Facet publishing.

Review other relevant terms in the [Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science](#) (ODLIS).

Submission

You will self-enroll in a Canvas course shell for the purpose of developing and submitting the Exit Assessment. The shell will contain resources to assist you, including a template to ensure your essay covers all required topics.

Learning Outcomes Essay Description

The Exit Assessment is comprised of the learning outcomes essay. Submission does not automatically guarantee a passing grade.

- The learning outcomes essay should be 10-15 pages (double-spaced). In the essay, you must discuss all required courses (all four core courses and at least one technology course) as well as multiple elective courses; you should also include any other relevant experiences (practicums, Alternative Spring Break, work experience, etc.).
- This essay provides an opportunity to (1) reflect on your work in the program, (2) demonstrate what you have learned, and (3) describe how your professional knowledge has grown. The learning outcome essay should be structured as described on page 2 of the Guidelines.

Structure of The Learning Outcomes Essay

- Introduction
- Personal goals/motivations for seeking the MSLS degree
- Discussion of concentration area(s) and reasons for focusing on it
- Learning Outcomes reflection: for *each* of the four outcomes describe:
 - The knowledge and skills pertaining to the learning outcome with which you entered the program
 - What you learned in the core courses pertaining to the learning outcome, synthesizing this into a well-rounded discussion
 - Your current knowledge of and comfort with the learning outcome **using examples from other courses and experiences**
 - Your future plans to continue mastering the learning outcome
- Discussion of plans for continuing education beyond the four learning outcomes
- Conclusion (overall summary)

Timeline for Exit Assessment Development

- **Throughout the program:** As you take core courses and electives, you will complete assignments that contribute to your grasp of the four learning outcomes. You should plan to keep notes that reflect on how the various assignments pertain to, and help advance your understanding of, the four learning outcomes.
- **Within the first 30 days of your final semester:** You must submit graduation paperwork and notify your adviser that you plan to submit the Exit Assessment.
- **At least two weeks before the Exit Assessment due date:** Submit your learning outcomes essay to the draft assignment in Canvas for review. Your adviser will provide input that you should incorporate/address in the final submission.
- **Exit Assessment due date:** You will submit your Exit Assessment by the due date posted at the beginning of each semester on the listserv, in the Student Hub, and in the Exit Assessment Canvas shell. Note that once you submit a document to the Final Learning Outcomes Essay assignment in the Exit Assessment Canvas shell, it is considered your final submission and it will be graded.
- **Two weeks after the Exit Assessment due date:** You will receive notification of the results of the Exit Assessment: pass or resubmit.
 - If the result is resubmit, you will have 1 week (7 days) to make revisions based on provided feedback and resubmit your essay in Canvas. Three days following your resubmission, you will receive the final result: pass or fail. If the submission fails, you will be able to resubmit the following semester, provided you have not received a final result of fail in a previous semester.
 - The Graduate School permits master’s students to re-take the final examination, in this case the Exit Assessment, twice. Per the “Requirements for Master’s Degrees” section of the [Graduate Bulletin](#), “A third examination is not allowed.”

Connecting Courses to Program Learning Outcomes

The charts below should help you connect courses (both core and elective) to the program learning outcomes. Note: these are suggestions. If you see a connection that is not mapped below, you can explain that in your learning outcomes essay.

Program Learning Outcome	Courses Covering the Outcome
1. Describe how communities & individuals interact with/in information ecosystems.	600, 603, 616, 617, 618, 625, 626, 627, 634, 636, 640, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 659, 665, 668, 672, 676, 690, 695
2. Analyze the major tenets of information practice and apply them in multiple contexts.	600, 601, 602, 603, 606, 610, 616, 617, 621, 625, 627, 629, 636, 640, 643, 644, 647, 648, 658, 659, 661, 662, 672, 676, 690, 695
3. Connect diverse communities & individuals with appropriate resources.	600, 603, 606, 610, 612, 613, 614, 616, 617, 618, 619, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 659, 672, 676, 690, 695
4. Explain the dependence of information retrieval on the organization of information.	601, 602, 617, 626, 630, 634, 636, 638, 658, 661, 662, 665, 668, 672, 690, 695

In addition, here is a chart mapping core course assignments to the program learning outcomes. This chart can be used *for reference* while completing the Exit Assessment*:

Program learning outcome	600	601	602	603
1. Describe how communities & individuals interact with/in information ecosystems.	Information Ecology Paper			Final Reflection
2. Analyze the major tenets of information practice and apply them in multiple contexts.	Community Engagement Observation Elevator Pitch	Searching Library Online Databases	Principles Papers Knowledge Organization Case Study	Strategic Plan
3. Connect diverse communities & individuals with appropriate resources.		Searching OPAC/Discovery Systems Searching Digital Libraries		Strategic Plan
4. Explain the dependence of information retrieval on the organization of information.		Searching Library Online Databases Searching OPAC/Discovery Systems Searching Digital Libraries	Omeka Digital Library Crosswalk Authority Control Essay Knowledge Organization Case Study	

*Depending on your semester, year of matriculation, and possible transfer credit, your core coursework may be different from the examples charted here. *You should discuss whichever core course works you completed while in the program and their connections to the current program learning outcomes.*

Faculty Role in the Exit Assessment

The faculty have two roles in the Exit Assessment process. They may advise you on the elements of your Exit Assessment, and they will grade the final Exit Assessment.

- **Advising:** Your adviser can give you feedback **one time** on your learning outcomes essay prior to final submission; if you desire feedback, you must submit the learning outcomes essay to the draft assignment in the Canvas at least two weeks prior to final submission deadline (see the timeline above) and preferably earlier to receive feedback. The draft should be complete and your best effort (i.e., treat it like it is your final submission). Advisors do not serve as editors and will not do line-by-line corrections.
- **Grading:** The Exit Assessment is graded Pass/Fail only, with one opportunity for revising the learning outcomes essay as outlined above in the timeline section. Your adviser and one other full-time faculty member will grade your final submission based on both content and the quality of the writing (see rubric below). You will be notified of the result only when the Exit Assessment has been fully graded.

Grading Rubric for the Exit Assessment

	Criteria	Exemplary (3)	Target (2)	Acceptable (1)	Unacceptable (0)
For each Learning Outcome #1-#4:	<i>Analysis</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">→ A score of exemplary exceeds target expectations for criteria area (see next column right) →</p>	The reflection moves beyond simple description of the relevant coursework to an analysis of how the course work contributed to student understanding of self and the program learning outcome.	The reflection demonstrates student attempts to analyze the experience but analysis lacks depth.	Reflection does not move beyond description of the learning experience(s).
	<i>Interconnections</i>		The reflection explicitly discusses the connection between content learned in the core courses, in other courses, and professional goals. If relevant, the reflection includes connections to professional experience.	The reflection provides some discussion of the connection between content learned in the core courses, in other courses, and professional goals. If relevant, the reflection includes connections to professional experience.	There is little to no attempt to discuss the connection between content learned in the core courses, in other courses, and professional goals.
	<i>Self-awareness</i>		The reflection demonstrates ability of the student to acknowledge own shortcomings, question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions, and/or assumptions and describe new ways of thinking as a result of program experiences.	There is some attempt at self-evaluation, but on a whole the reflection lacks depth.	There is little to no attempt to self-evaluate

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	Criteria	Exemplary (3)	Target (2)	Acceptable (1)	Unacceptable (0)
Overall:	<i>Planned application to real-world practice</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A score of exemplary exceeds target expectations for criteria area (see next column right)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p>	Reflection statement provides evidence of student's anticipated use of knowledge gained from the program to appraise, compare, contrast, plan for new actions or response, or propose remedies within the context of library and information practice.	There is some attempt to explain how knowledge gained from the program will be applied to the context of library and information practice, but examples provided are shallow or unrealistic.	No attempt is made to explain how knowledge gained from the program will be applied to the context of library and information practice.
	<i>Organization</i>		Reflection has a clear structure and few if any digressions or irrelevant discussion.	Reflection has a sense of structure, but also includes digressions or irrelevant discussion.	Reflection has no discernable structure and loses focus frequently.
	<i>Clarity</i>		Ideas are expressed clearly and are easy to follow.	Ideas are usually expressed clearly but are sometimes difficult to follow.	Ideas are not expressed clearly and are difficult to follow.

To pass the Exit Assessment, students must score no more than one Unacceptable across all criteria.