

**External Review Panel Report**  
**on the**  
**University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**  
**College of Social Sciences**  
**School of Communication and Information**  
**Master of Library and Information Science Degree Program**

**Conducted on behalf of the American Library Association  
Committee on Accreditation**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Master of Library and Information Science (MLISc) degree program (henceforward abbreviated to LIS or the program) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) is offered by the School of Communication and Information (SCI) in the College of Social Sciences (CSS). The degree program is offered to students who reside on O'ahu as well as neighboring islands and emphasizes face-to-face course delivery. The program has been accredited by the American Library Association since 1967 with the last granting of Continued accreditation status granted on January 10, 2016. An External Review Panel (ERP) appointed by the American Library Association's Committee on Accreditation reviewed the Self-Study (SS) and conducted a site visit on October 8-10, 2023, for the purpose of gathering evidence for the Committee on Accreditation in evaluating the program for continued accreditation.

The following report is based on a wide variety of evidence reviewed by the ERP, including the SS as well as syllabi; faculty CVs; faculty, committee, and Advisory Board meeting minutes; program website; student records; course observations; onsite interviews; survey data; ePortfolio examples; Internship and Practicum documentation; Promotion and Tenure policies; the strategic plan and other planning documents; and summaries of changes made in the curriculum, policies, and other aspects of the program since the last review. In addition, the ERP Chair provided feedback on the SS Plan and then on the Draft SS, as gathered from all members of the ERP, on July 7, 2023. The program corresponded with the ERP Chair in advance of the visit on the schedule of meetings, course observations, constituent interactions, and many other details.

While onsite, the ERP toured the Hamilton Library, which houses both the main library for the university as well as the offices and other facilities allocated to the LIS program. The ERP conducted a packed schedule of meetings ([Appendix A](#)) with groups and individuals both face-to-face and over Zoom during the visit. The ERP also conducted lunch meetings with numerous student leaders and students

on-campus. [Appendix B](#) contains the complete list of the individuals the ERP interacted with at three different constituent activities during the site visit. The extensive list indicates the high regard the constituents have for the program and its administrators and faculty. The ERP also observed at least one class of each of LIS 633 Indigenous Librarianship online synchronously on Zoom/hybrid, LIS 601 Introduction to Reference and Information Services face-to-face/hybrid, LIS 605 Metadata Creation face-to-face/hybrid, and LIS 665 Digital Instruction asynchronously ([Appendix C: Courses Observed](#)).

The exit briefing was conducted on October 10, 2023, with April Nozomi Quinn (Director of Program Development and Review), Denise Konan (Dean, College of Social Sciences), Ross Sutherland (Associate Dean, College of Social Sciences), Hye-ryeon Lee (Chair, SCI), and Rich Gazan (LIS Program Director) and is recapped in the summary at the end of this report.

The ERP sincerely appreciated the superlative support and hospitality extended before and during the visit. The ERP Chair particularly thanks Rich Gazan, LIS Program Director, and Mandi Hull, LIS Program Coordinator, for their assistance throughout the process and commends all of the faculty for their timely response to all requests for additional information. The attention to detail by the program administrators and faculty before, during, and after the site visit confirmed their commitment to developing “reflective, compassionate leaders in the information professions” (SS, p. 12).

## STANDARD I: SYSTEMATIC PLANNING

The program employs an ongoing planning process in which an annual faculty planning meeting is the “primary venue” for decision-making (I.1, SS, p. 15). The agenda for the annual meeting is developed by the LIS Program Director based on initiatives of the previous year along with accumulated input from faculty and/or the advisory board (Onsite Interview, LIS Program Director, Professor Rich Gazan). The annual planning meeting is complemented by monthly faculty meetings (to which student leaders are invited), program committee meetings, advisory board meetings, and such events as a student town hall (2022) and an LIS summit (2018). Also, the small faculty size (5-7 during the review period) and collaborative environment facilitate responding to situations that call for more immediate response (Onsite Interviews, Faculty).

[Appendix 1-10](#) demonstrates that the program engages in continuous review and revision with a summary of recent planning efforts, including a review of mission, values, and goals, and an analysis of student assessment comparing Student Learning Outcome (SLO) attainment before and after implementing the ePortfolio (I.1.1, SS, p. 18). Further evidence of ongoing review is seen on the program’s [Strategic Planning web page](#) dating from 1997 and continuing to 2025. Annual summaries include lists of activities and progress aligned to goals (I.1.2, SS, pp. 18-19). While the program engages in these planning activities, much of this work might be characterized as problem-solving, rather than “big picture,” long-range planning. Now that the program is a part of the SCI, the time is right to set forth a dynamic forward-looking vision for the future as an integral member of the SCI (Onsite Interviews, Provost Michael Bruno and SCI Chair Hye-ryeon Lee). The autonomy gained by joining the new college creates the responsibility to forge an innovative, new future characterized by leadership in libraries in Hawai’i and beyond (Onsite Interview, Provost, Michael Bruno). The effort may include

crafting a long-range, multi-year plan for the program's faculty and curriculum in the context of its new home in the SCI, in order to compete for limited resources (Onsite Interviews, Provost and SCI Chair).

Examination of minutes available in [Appendix 1-10](#) and [Appendix 1-22](#) reveals extensive participation by constituents. As a further indicator of constituent engagement, the LIS Program Director reported that when the program was developing its request for a new faculty line for Hawaiian Librarianship, the Hawaiian library community was consulted (Onsite Interview, LIS Program Director).

The program uses assessment data for improvement. For example, the SS (I.1.2, p. 21) describes a programmatic change to address the need for support for technology instruction observed in student performance assessment. The role of the only graduate assistant was shifted from distance learning support to technology instruction. Since this change in fall 2018, student attainment in SLO 4 (Technology) as measured in ePortfolio outcomes is now on par with that of other SLOs (SS, p. 21).

The program uses both quantitative and qualitative data to assess student attainment of SLOs. Table 2-7 shows quantitative measures of student achievement for each program SLO (SS, p. 63). Qualitatively, the program employs faculty reflections to assess formative attainment of SLOs. Examination of faculty reflections provided in [Appendix 1-15](#) reveals a range of perceptions on such topics as pedagogy, student engagement, and course content (I.1.3, SS, p. 21). In interviews, faculty reported that they found these reflections helpful in improving their teaching strategies (Onsite Interviews, Faculty). Results from student surveys have led to program improvements. For example, student survey data led to the requirement for an internship ([Appendix D](#)) in each of the professional pathways, except General/Custom (II.1.2, SS, p. 40).

The program website lists four current [program goals](#). The program monitors its attainment of its goals as documented in summaries posted on the program's [Strategic Plan](#) website (I.1.4, SS, pp. 21-22). A few specific examples may characterize the attention to goals. For example, the approval of the

Hawaiian Librarianship faculty position, as well as the recent \$1.5 million endowment for student support, and the extensive discussion of values reported from the *LIS Summit: Strategic Planning Meeting April 8, 2022* ([Appendix 1-8](#)) demonstrate progress toward Goal 1: “Nurture a professional LIS community where Native Hawaiian concepts and values support well-being and knowledge.”

Regarding Goal 2, [Appendix 1-22](#) documents how the curriculum evolves in response to stakeholder input. One example was a discussion of “soft skills” among stakeholders, followed by faculty action to explore “soft skills” through a survey and subsequent implementation of the findings (e.g., adding practice with presentation skills to LIS 691/692). The engagement of the advisory committee documented in [Appendix 1-22](#) demonstrates the outreach to the community expressed in Goal 3. A range of topics were documented. Examples include, but are not limited to, review and revision of SLOs, commitment to Hawaiian values consistent with those stated at the institution level, program reorganization (i.e., the move to the SCI), and the professional pathways (I.1.4). In addition, the attendance by alumni and employers at the opening reception for the ERP was large and engaged. Finally, [faculty](#) and [adjunct](#) CVs examined onsite revealed efforts toward Goal 4: “Undertake, document and share research and creative activities with social impact” (I.1.4, SS, pp. 21-22).

Table 1-1 (SS, p. 13) and Figure 1.1 (SS, p. 12) illustrate the tight alignment of the program goals and values with those of the parent institution. SLOs ([posted on the LIS website](#)) are aligned with elements of Standard I.2 as shown in Table 1-3 (SS, p. 23). Each SLO is aligned with at least one core course (“Curriculum Map by SLO and Pathway” Excel spreadsheet linked in SS, p. 23). An examination of syllabi reveals that the SLOs relevant to each course are clearly stated on each [course syllabus](#) (I.2).

Regarding Standard I.2.1, the syllabus for LIS 610 Foundation of the Information Professions includes such topics as “Libraries, Librarianship & Values,” “Professional Ethics & Codes,” “Intellectual Freedom,” and “Librarianship as a Profession.” In response to Standard I.2.2 regarding philosophy,

principles and ethics, the syllabus for the core course LIS 601 shows that such documents as the ALA Code of Ethics, RUSA Behavioral Guidelines, Professional Competencies for Reference Services, the ALA Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to Read Statement are read early on.

The [professional pathways and specializations](#) offered by the program align with the principles of specialization identified in policy statements of specific professional organizations (I.2.3, SS, p. 25). Also, courses within each pathway provide references to specific documents from areas of specialization aligned with the pathways (II.4, SS, pp. 58-60). Specific courses further address specializations; for example, in LIS 615 Collection Management, the syllabus attends to the distinctions in collection management policy across specializations. Research methods in LIS are integrated throughout the curriculum as delineated in [Appendix 2-20](#) (I.2.4). Relevant research methods addressed in each course are identified on the syllabus.

Standard I.2.5 focuses on the relationship of LIS with other fields. Currently, students may apply up to 9 credits from external programs (with advisor approval) to their degree; recent years (since 2020) have seen 17 instances of this option (Table 4-11, SS, p. 134). With the move to the SCI, exploration into identifying courses in the programs within the SCI that can be cross-listed is forthcoming according to the Chair (Onsite Interview, SCI Chair, Hye-ryeon Lee). She also indicated that she has initiated school-wide forums for faculty to share research interests in an effort to find opportunities for cross-disciplinary research.

Per Standard I.2.6, Hawai'i's ambient diversity and mid-Pacific location creates unique opportunities for students to experience LIS in a global context (SS, p. 26). SLO 4 ("Evaluate and apply information technologies") responds directly to I.2.7 regarding the role of the field in a changing technological society. However, loss of technology-focused faculty in recent years has affected the program's strength in the area of information technologies; constituents in interviews encouraged

attention to this situation, so that students are well prepared for the profession (Onsite Interviews, Alumni and Employers). In response to Standard I.2.8, the core courses LIS 630 “Community Engagement” and LIS 631 “Introduction to Hawai‘i and Pacific Librarianship” aim at the importance for a library to meet the needs of its constituencies. In LIS 630 (2021), the [syllabus](#) lists readings related to community needs assessment and engagement and includes an assignment to complete a case study wherein students assess a community’s information needs. According to the [2021 syllabus](#) for LIS 631, students develop a LibGuide for an identified Pacific Island/Political Entity.

Table 1-4 (SS, p. 27) summarizes goals and work related to valuing teaching and service (I.3). Two current goals in particular speak to the value of teaching and service:

Goal 2: “Faculty, students and staff collaborate to enhance the overall student experience by evolving a program that prepares students to thrive in the present and future workplace.”

Goal 3: “Broaden outreach and increase community engagement and advocacy in addressing community information needs and challenges.”

Table 1-5 (SS, p. 29) summarizes outcomes for LIS goals as well as activities contributing to attainment of goals and objectives (I.4). Identified goal attainments include such accomplishments as the move to a more flexible approach to core competencies, the development of curricular pathways, measures of employer satisfaction, expansion of distance learning opportunities, and enhanced facilities.

Table 1-6 (I.6, SS, pp. 32-33) provides a timeline of selected meetings of stakeholders from 2015 to late 2022, which demonstrates the program’s ongoing decision-making processes and the evaluation of the program’s achievement of mission, goals, and objectives (I.4). While there is a great deal of reflection and assessment activity and collaboration, the program would benefit from further documentation of the flow of assessment findings into decision-making (I.5, Onsite Interview, Faculty).



Examples of how input is used to improve the program and inform planning appear in the minutes from stakeholder meetings from 2015-2022 in [Appendix 1-22](#). For example, the 2018 “gallery walk” asked practicing professionals to identify skills their employees need, the status of the current curriculum, and related subsequent actions to be taken. At the same session, the topic of indigenous knowledge expressions was discussed. Also, the 2021 advisory board meeting minutes report changes to the ePortfolio process in response to student, staff, and faculty feedback (I.6). The program embraces a “flexible, adaptive, community-based approach” to the planning process, remaining “keenly aware that plans may change” (SS, p. 33). The program’s learning assessment process was featured as a best practice by the University’s Assessment and Curriculum Support Center in 2021 at the [Graduate Program Learning Assessment: Processes, Tools, and Resources event](#).

The reorganization of the program and its move to the SCI afforded an opportunity for comprehensive self-examination and review. The university initiative to become the “Hawaiian Place of Learning” (as reflected in the [2015-2025 strategic plan, Our Kuleana to Hawai‘i and the World](#)) encourages the program to capitalize on its unique character and to enact the value statement from the program [mission, vision, and values website](#): “...We honor and strive to continuously deepen our understanding and practice of the Native Hawaiian values....” The addition of the faculty line for Hawaiian librarianship advanced this effort.

## **STANDARD II: CURRICULUM**

As discussed in I.2 and I.3 (SS, pp. 22-28), the curriculum aligns directly with both the UHM strategic goals and the LIS program goals (Table 2-1, SS, p. 37). The SS, SLOs (SS, p. 38), and [course syllabi](#) provide extensive evidence that the curriculum provides for the study of theory, principles, practice, and legal and ethical issues and values necessary for the provision of service in libraries, information agencies, and other contexts (II.1, SS, pp. 36-45). Each pathway has core-eligible courses,

electives, and courses that require prerequisites, which indicates the flexibility of the curriculum to meet student needs (II.1, Curriculum Map by SLP and Pathway linked from SS, p. 35). The curriculum has been under continuous review and revision since November 2015 in annual planning, monthly faculty meetings, and retreats with major changes documented in [Appendix I-2](#). Changes included revising the SLOs, assigning all courses to one or more of the six SLOs, defining core-eligible courses and six pathways ([Appendix 2-15](#)), developing specializations, and adopting the ePortfolio as the culminating experience to replace oral exams ([Appendix 2-16](#)) (II.1.4, SS, p. 45). The faculty regularly revise syllabi, readings, and assignments, and discuss broader curriculum policies in monthly faculty meetings (Minutes 2016-2023 in [Appendix 1-8](#); between meeting Google Doc in [Appendix 2-17](#)), which students and adjunct faculty are invited to attend (II.1.2, SS, p. 39). Revision of the curriculum is based on students' course evaluations, faculty's course self-reflections, and feedback from alumni and other stakeholders via surveys conducted every five years and various meetings (II.1, SS, p. 36).

Students need [39 credits to earn the degree](#) and 18 credits or six courses of them must be core courses. There are one or more core-eligible courses aligned with each SLO (II.3, SS, p. 54). As outlined in the SS (pp. 45-53) and provided in greater detail on its [website](#), the program offers multiple courses to meet the content identified in II.2. Table 2-3 (SS, p. 45) lists the SLOs and courses that address various information processes. As documented in Table 2-4 (SS, p. 46), the curriculum includes a variety of core courses and electives ([course syllabi](#)) that ensure that all students experience a curriculum that includes courses that provide opportunities to develop skills in leadership, research, technology, a diverse and global society, future development of the field, and professional development and lifelong learning (II.2.1-II.2.6, SS, p. 46). For leadership, the 2019 employer survey ranked LIS students highest in the area of "Manage and work effectively in collaborative problem solving and team projects" ([Appendix 2-18](#)).

Another indicator of program graduates' leadership abilities is the number of recent graduates who reported that they were already serving in leadership roles ([Appendix 2-1](#), II.2.1, SS, p. 47).

The program requires each syllabus to include the research methodologies taught in the course (II.2.2, SS, p. 48). Course SLOs were not found on the syllabi examined by the ERP; however, the syllabi all include the full list of program SLOs addressed in the course. Students must take at least one SLO 4 Technologies core course, each of which includes theoretical, practical, and critical perspectives as well as practice (II.2.3, SS, p. 49). While the technology curriculum has been provided by adjuncts and a graduate assistant, Stanislava Gardasevic, she will be graduating in fall 2023 and the I3 tenure-track assistant professor for information technology for social good (Table 2-15; SS, pp. 79-80; [Appendix 3-15](#)) will be needed to to infuse technology into the curriculum at the level that is appropriate for LIS students to carry libraries and archives in Hawai'i into a technology-permeated future.

Results of the 2018 alumni survey indicated that 90% of participants (N=21) felt they were well prepared to "Analyze and apply knowledge about the information needs and perspectives of Indigenous cultures and/or diverse communities" from their coursework in the LIS program ([Appendix 2-8](#), II.2.4, SS, p. 51). The merger into the new SCI created new possibilities for students and faculty to adopt global thinking with an interdisciplinary approach (II.2.5, SS, p. 52). For professional development and lifelong learning, Table 2-4 (II.2.6, SS, p. 46) lists ten core-eligible and twelve elective LIS courses that include components of the Lifelong Learning standard. Similarly, [Appendix 2-21](#) maps the ALA/AASL/CAEP Standard 5 that relates to "ongoing professional learning" to two of the program's six SLOs: SLO 2 Professions and SLO 6 Management (II.2.6, SS, p. 52).

The ERP examined 12 student advising records (two from each of the six pathways in [Appendix 2-22](#) and supplemented by six others viewed onsite), which confirmed that students are consistently able to construct coherent programs of study as required in II.3. Students meet with their advisors

during the course registration period (or NSO for new students) to update their pathway-specific advising sheets for the upcoming semester. The master student advising record is maintained by the LIS Program Coordinator and this process could be improved (Onsite Interview, Faculty). Advising tools include the [course descriptions and syllabi summaries](#) along with the next semester schedule and the three-year [course schedules](#), which reveal a well-planned rotation of core and elective courses. Course content and sequence are evident in students' study plans although students take some electives before some core courses because of the timing of the offering of electives.

Students are prepared for their courses and the ePortfolio through the First Semester Seminar (FSS), which has ten weekly meetings in which students get to know one another and learn about the ePortfolios, meet the faculty and other students, and hear guest speakers. Students stated that the FSS was instrumental in helping them feel connected and oriented to the expectations of the program (Onsite Interviews, Students). Students finish and present their ePortfolios in the required LIS 691 Masters Seminar in their last semester before graduation (II.3, SS, p. 53).

Further adding to flexible and coherent curricular customization for students, pathways offered include Academic/Special, Archives, Asian Studies, Public, School Library Media, and General/Custom (II.3, SS, p. 53) while students may follow specializations in Asian Studies Librarianship, Community and Cultural Informatics, and Information Technology, which can be combined with any pathway (II.3, SS, pp. 53-54). Coursework in Hawaiian Librarianship is not aligned with a particular pathway or specialization. Students may apply up to three graduate-level courses from other campus departments (IV.4, Table 4-11, SS, p. 134) or from other universities although the numbers of students taking this option have dwindled in recent years to six in AY 2022-23 (SS, p. 134). There are also nine dual degree programs: Master's with [American Studies](#), [Asian Studies](#), [Hawaiian Language](#), [Hawaiian Studies](#), [History](#), [Information & Computer Sciences](#), [Learning Design and Technology](#), and [Pacific Islands Studies](#); and a

juris doctor in [Law](#). Students can also study abroad at The University of Tsukuba, Japan, or Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand (II.3, SS, p. 56). Of students who graduated in AY 2021-22, 92% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their ability to craft a course of study that met their needs ([Appendix 2-4](#)).

As required in II.4, the curriculum considers the [statements of knowledge and competencies](#) from all the relevant professional organizations as listed by pathway (SS, pp. 57-60). Table 2-2 (II.1.1, SS, p. 38) indicates the alignment of LIS SLOs, ALA Core Competencies, and Courses in each of the six pathways.

The program emphasizes the importance of “many voices heard and considered” (II.5, SS, p. 60) in its continuous curricular [assessment philosophy](#). The program takes

a holistic approach to examining our curriculum that includes: course evaluations and observations by students and instructors; survey responses contributed by graduating students, alumni, and employers [dated now]; conversations at LIS summits and retreats with members of the professional community; discussions with the LIS Advisory Board [not reinstated since the pandemic]; and achievements and reflections captured in students’ culminating theses, oral comprehensive examinations, and ePortfolios (II.5, SS, pp. 60-61).

The program also describes its curriculum review process as an “ongoing procedure as we continually review our program throughout the year...we begin with a planning meeting at the start of each year to set goals and objectives for the upcoming year. In our monthly faculty meetings, specific action items related to different aspects of the curriculum are introduced” (II.6, SS, p. 71). The curricular changes made during the review period included ([Appendix 2-19](#)): replacing the oral comprehensive examination with an ePortfolio; establishing professional pathways; requiring an internship for most

pathways; delivering more technology-related courses; and advancing Native Hawaiian and Indigenous librarianship (SS, p. 73).

Table 2-5 (II.5, SS, p. 61) itemizes the types of assessment metrics used for ongoing curriculum appraisal. Evaluation of the curriculum comes primarily from student course evaluations and faculty reflective comments on strengths and areas for improvement (II.5, SS, pp. 62- 63) supplemented by input gathered at town halls and summits (SS, p. 66). The faculty abandoned the five-point-scale, quantitative assessments of courses by SLO after 2017-2019 (results in Table 2-7, SS, p. 63) after realizing they were not “meaningful” because they showed “miniscule” differences (Onsite Interview), which “did not provide...sufficient details regarding possible areas for instructional adjustments” (SS, p. 63). They replaced the course SLO assessments with faculty reflections that are shared with the LIS Program Director and other faculty. Examples of faculty reflections that resulted in course changes are listed on SS, pp. 63-65.

Table 2-12 (II.5, SS, pp. 70-71) outlines the stakeholder input sessions specifically addressing the curriculum that took place from 2018-2022 (only one session after 2019 included students, but none included alumni, employers, or Advisory Board members; the others listed were all faculty meetings) and that resulted in changes to the curriculum. In addition, the alumni and employer surveys were important sources of “confirmation” of the findings from the primary sources listed above; however, the alumni (2018) and employer (2019) surveys are only administered every five years and hence are “not frequent enough to inform change” (SS, p. 66, Onsite Interviews, Faculty). The student input received in the graduating student surveys in 2016-2018, which tracked student perceptions of “I feel I gained sufficient entry-level knowledge needed for...” (Table 2-10, SS, p. 67), reflected ratings below 60% in several key areas. Ratings improved to above 84% in all curricular areas in 2018-2022 after the curriculum was revised (Table 2-11, SS, pp. 67-68). The graduating student survey was last updated in

2018. The major curricular changes made between fall 2016 through summer 2018 are listed on SS, p. 68.

Significant changes have occurred in the assessment of student mastery of the curriculum during the review period (II.6, SS, pp. 71-83). The oral examination option was phased out and replaced with the ePortfolio for students who started in fall 2018 and going forward. The rationale for shifting to an ePortfolio is described on SS, p. 72. The evolution of the ePortfolio is described in [Appendix 1-5](#). The ePortfolio consists of: an introduction, a resume, an artifact for each of the six SLOs accompanied by a reflective essay, and a concluding statement (SS, p. 72). Initially, the ePortfolio artifacts could come exclusively from core courses until student input resulted in greater flexibility (artifacts could come from any course or out of curriculum projects) beginning in spring 2021. Two faculty assess the essays on a P/F basis (SS, p. 74). The reflective essay responds to several [guiding questions](#). The ePortfolio pass rate is extremely high on nearly all SLOs, ranging from 88-97% as indicated in Graph 2-3 (SS, p. 74), which calls into question the criteria for passing; however, [Appendix I-12](#) indicates that 9 of 26 students who completed their ePortfolios since AY 2019-2020 were asked to revise their first attempt before passing. The program attributes the high pass rate to the combination of the FSS and LIS 691 Masters Seminar experiences and the peer feedback received in LIS 691 (LIS Program Director). Examples of the ePortfolios are included in [Appendix 2-26](#). The thesis option is still selected by a minority of students (five during the review period). Beginning in spring 2023, theses were evaluated by committee members using a [thesis evaluation form](#) (SS, p. 65).

Per Standards II.5 II.6, and II.7, curricular evaluation is conducted every semester through student course evaluations and faculty reflections and changes are implemented to improve the curriculum through discussions with the LIS Program Director and other faculty during faculty meetings (Table 2-5, SS, p. 61). There is consistent evidence that student and faculty input provide ongoing

appraisal and improvement of the curriculum (SS, pp. 60-87). Input from alumni and employers was not gathered since 2018/2019, but input was gathered at least annually before the pandemic. Student achievement is not only captured in course activities and assignments tied to the SLOs, but also integrated through the culminating ePortfolio project, which is scaffolded from the FSS through to LIS 691 Masters Seminar (SS, pp. 85-87).

The ERP noted several strengths in the curricular alignment (II.6) of all core and elective courses to six distinct SLOs, development of six distinct pathways along with three specializations, implementation of onboarding (FSS) and final (LIS 691 Masters Seminar) required courses, required internship or practicum, and the culminating ePortfolio assessment. These flexible structures create an especially strong preparation with significant available customization for student interests, including incorporating courses from outside the LIS (campus and beyond) and study abroad opportunities.

The program made tremendous strides in its goal of becoming a Native Hawaiian place of learning as reflected in the [2015-2025 strategic plan, Our Kuleana to Hawai'i and the World](#) (SS, p. 80) when it added courses in 2017-2018 and hired Keahiahi Long in fall 2023 (II.6, SS, pp. 80-83). During the review period, the program focused on adding curricula on “Native Hawaiian and indigenous themes technologies; instruction in information literacy and planning for information services; and inclusion of field experiences” (SS, p. 83). The program’s curricular goal is to “develop a curriculum that explores the crossroads between traditional LIS foundations and Hawaiian and Indigenous knowledge to uniquely position ourselves as a program, and to educate our students and ourselves in pono (appropriate or just) ways of connecting people and information, grounded in aloha ‘āina” (SS, p. 88).

### **STANDARD III: FACULTY**

Recent changes to the faculty (III.1, SS, pp. 89-94) include: two of the seven full-time faculty, Associate Professor Vanessa Irvin and Assistant Professor Tonia Sutherland, accepted faculty positions at



other institutions. Sutherland still will teach as an adjunct and serve on dissertation committees. Rich Gazan, Professor, transitioned from a split position with the ICS Department to full time in the LIS Program in fall 2022 (III.1, SS, p. 89). This transition was part of the reorganization to the new SCI in the CSS (SS, p. 89). Meera Garud was transitioned from an annual Instructor for the School Library Media and Public Librarianship pathways to a regular I2 Instructor. Keahiahi Long was hired as a new, tenure-track Assistant Professor position for Hawaiian librarianship in September 2023. She also is a doctoral student in CSS with Rich Gazan serving as her chair. The ERP learned that the library will begin recruiting for a new Data Services Librarian, a tenure track position, who will work in Hamilton Library and teach one course per semester for LIS (Onsite Interviews, University Librarian, Clem Guthro and LIS Program Director, Rich Gazan).

The expertise and experience of the full-time faculty relate to the program goals and each is qualified for appointment to the graduate faculty within the university (III.1, SS, p. 90). The review of the faculty involvement in thesis and dissertation committees ([Appendix 3-1](#)) as well as the [faculty](#) and [adjunct](#) CVs and the list of courses taught, including enrollment counts ([Appendix 3-2](#)), provided information about faculty expertise in relation to the program goals and within the guidelines for faculty within the parent institution. In general, the expertise and experience of part-time, adjunct faculty as presented and confirmed by examination of documentation onsite provide breadth and diversity of subject expertise and professional experience that differs from and complements that of the full-time faculty. With five faculty, the program relies on adjunct faculty to teach courses in both the pathways and the specializations. The adjunct faculty (Table 3-5, SS, pp. 92-93) are experts in the areas in which they teach, such as government documents and archives. Data on the use of full-time and adjunct faculty for instruction show that the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty averaged 63% for the period since the last comprehensive review as stated in Table 3-3 (III.1, SS, p. 91).

Faculty work lives are covered by the [“UH faculty collective bargaining agreement](#), standards provided by the [Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Excellence](#), and evolving [faculty workload policies and assignments guidelines between UHM and the faculty union](#)” (III.2, SS, p. 94). UHM defines itself as a research-intensive university (R1), where priorities include teaching, research, and service. The program also encourages excellence in teaching, research, and service (III.2, SS, pp. 94-95). The faculty have a 2-2 teaching load and “the usual enrollment is between 8-20 students per course” (III.2, SS, p. 95; Onsite Interviews, Faculty). The LIS Program Director has a reduced teaching load of 2-1 and Assistant Professor Long has a reduced teaching load of 1-1 while she has an IMLS grant. Associate Professor Noriko Asato teaches one course per semester and oversees the internships with 8-12 students per semester (Onsite Interview). Faculty are not required to teach in the summer session and most choose not to do so (Onsite Interviews, Faculty).

SCI Digital Learning Initiatives support faculty in developing and delivering hybrid, synchronous, and asynchronous courses (Onsite Interviews, Faculty and Director of Digital Learning Initiatives and CSS Online Programs, Laura Armer). The faculty also were pleased with the equipment and technology support they have received from the SCI for their individual use and for use within the teaching and learning spaces (III.2, Onsite Interviews, Faculty).

The allocation for travel is equitably distributed to the programs from the SCI and the program allocates its own travel funds. The faculty are involved in the Hawai‘i Library Association as evidenced during our discussions and a review of faculty CVs and the ERP’s interactions with the Hawai‘i library community and the students (Onsite Interviews, Faculty, Employers, Alumni, Students). Several faculty and staff received service awards during the review period (III.2, SS, p. 97).

The program provides a stimulating learning and research environment as evidenced by the ERP’s meetings with faculty, students, alumni, and local library community as well as the faculty CVs

(Onsite Interviews, Faculty, Students, Alumni, Employers). Since the faculty is small, they believe they have created a new culture that has a “nice feeling” and that provides autonomy for the program (Onsite Interviews, Faculty). The faculty have been scheduling longer and more meetings to discuss the improvements as well as teaching, learning, and research (Onsite Interviews, Faculty).

Although there is no formal mentorship program for junior faculty, we were told by the junior faculty that they have mentors within the program, the university, and the LIS community at large (Onsite Interviews, Faculty). The SS (III.2, p. 94) states that “senior LIS faculty review drafts of contract renewal and tenure and promotion documents of junior faculty members, in addition to giving day-to-day advice on teaching and research.” This was corroborated by ERP meetings with the faculty as a group and individually (Onsite Interviews, Faculty). Several of the ERP members met with the coordinator of the [Native Hawaiian Initiative](#) that was “developed by CSS faculty as they work to expand the network of cooperating faculty across disciplines” that is available to the faculty and students (Onsite Interview, Native Hawaiian Initiative Coordinator, Kamakana Aquino). Evidence of the faculty’s commitment to student learning and mentorship is included in the SS (III.2, SS, p. 95).

Policies addressing recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty exist at multiple levels from the UH Board of Regents to the [Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Excellence](#) (OVPAE). The UH Board of Regents has adopted executive policies on [Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention](#), [Recruitment and Selection Procedures](#), [Dual Career Faculty Partner Hires](#), and [Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#). OVPAE offers the [Search Advocates](#) program that “provides trained search process advisors for faculty search committees to ensure diversity and minimize bias” (III.3, SS, pp. 97-98).

The program provided information about the diversity of current faculty members (Onsite Interviews). The full-time faculty is composed of three females and two males. There are two

Caucasians, one Asian, and one Hawaiian. By national origin, three individuals are from the U.S., one is Native Hawaiian, and one is from Japan. Examination of full-time and adjunct faculty CVs revealed that faculty have the qualifications for their respective designated teaching areas, technological and teaching skills, and knowledge appropriate to their responsibilities along with active participation in relevant organizations (III.4, CVs; Table 3-7, SS, p. 99; SS, pp. 99-108). Table 3-6 (III.4, SS, p. 101) “highlights four aspects of the teaching effectiveness of the faculty. These are considered exceptionally high scores and strong evidence of our teaching effectiveness and positive impacts on students’ learning.” Students speak very highly of the quality of the teaching and the attention given to the teaching and the students by the faculty. The faculty demonstrate a concern for the well-being, learning, and professional experience and networking of the students (Onsite Interviews, Faculty and Students).

Each full-time faculty member has a sustained record of accomplishment in research or other appropriate scholarship to contribute to the knowledge base of the field and to their professional development (III.5). According to the SS,

The full-time LIS faculty members active during some or all of the review period combined to publish more than 20 refereed journal articles, over 70 refereed conference papers and presentations, and 15 book chapters while they were members of the LIS faculty. Also, during the review period LIS faculty publications were cited more than 2000 times and LIS faculty members served as Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, or Co-Investigator on grants in excess of \$1.3 million (III.5, SS, p. 102).

The faculty hold advanced degrees from a variety of institutions and evidence diversity of backgrounds (III.6, Table 3.14, SS, p. 108). In addition, faculty demonstrate skill in academic planning and assessment, relevant professional experience, interaction with faculty in other disciplines, and continuing liaison with the field (III.6, SS, pp. 108-110).

The faculty serve and chair committees in the CIS Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program; serve on university committees, including the Faculty Senate; and work with faculty from other disciplines, both on campus and at other universities on grant-funded projects and other research projects (III.6, SS, pp. 107-110; CVs; Onsite Interviews, Faculty).

Faculty assignments relate to both the needs of the program and to the competencies of the individual faculty members (III.7, SS, pp. 110-111). Faculty consider the students' needs when determining the courses that will be taught: "...LIS faculty consistently put student needs and mutual support above their individual teaching plans and course preferences" (III.7, SS, p. 110; Onsite Interviews, Faculty).

Evaluation of faculty is systematic (III.8, SS, pp. 111-112) according to the procedures in the [UH faculty collective bargaining agreement](#) and the tenure and promotion processes that are administered by the [Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Excellence](#) (OVPAE). A complete list of [Department Personnel Documents](#) is explained in detail (III.8-III.9, SS, pp. 111-112). With the transition from ICS to SCI, new tenure and promotion criteria will need to be developed at the SCI level. Discussions are underway with the Union and the SCI document will have to be approved at every level (III.8-III.9, SS, p. 112-113; Onsite Interviews, Faculty and SCI Chair).

Changes are made to improve the program and plan for the future as a result of the faculty evaluation process to include "faculty workload, capacity, and overall life situations" (III.10, SS, p. 114). [Appendix 3-2](#) provides extensive examples of changes to teaching assignments to accommodate faculty and student needs (III.10, SS, pp. 114-115). The program will begin its next phase of strategic planning in Spring 2024 (Onsite Interview, LIS Program Director).

The LIS Program has benefited from the new assistant professor position that was filled by Keahiahi Long, who is a native Hawaiian, who served as the librarian at Kamakakūokalani Center for

Hawaiian Studies, and who has taught courses in Foundations of Hawaiian Collections, 'A'ole I Pau: Kanaka Worldviews and Librarianship, as well as Hawaiian Archival Research. She was a practitioner of Hawaiian librarianship and a co-founder of Nā Hawai'i 'Imi Loa, a Native Hawaiian library association. This hire suits the mission and goals of the University and highlights this LIS Program for its specialization in Hawaiian librarianship.

## **STANDARD IV: STUDENTS**

Per Standard IV.1, the program formulates, reviews, and revises policies for student recruitment, admissions, retention, financial aid, career services, and other administrative policies that are consistent with the program's mission, goals, and objectives (IV.1, SS, pp. 117-121). The SS provides an overview of the program's recruitment activities, such as maintaining partnerships with the state public library system and the department of education (IV.1, SS, p.121; IV.2, SS, p. 128). Of note is the program's recruitment initiative within the [military community](#) (I.V.1, SS, p. 121). Regarding Standard IV.1, during the site visit, students and alumni were unanimous in their praise of the program's administrative policies and the consistent and steady support they received from beginning their applications to program completion (Onsite Interviews, Alumni and Students). Students emphasized that they are confident in bringing issues to the program staff, which indicated a culture of trust and mutual respect (Onsite Interviews, Students).

The program works to recruit and retain students who reflect the diversity of Hawaiian and other communities in the Pacific region (I.2.8, SS, p. 22; IV.1, SS, pp. 117-120; Table 4-3, SS, p. 120). Specifically, the cultural make-up of the student body indicates that the program's goal of representative recruitment within Hawai'i's communities has been successful. For example, Table 4-3 (IV.1, SS, p. 120) data shows that about 1/4 of enrollees between 2015-2022 are Native Hawaiian, another 1/4 are Asian American, slightly more than 1/4 are White, and the rest made up of Black,

multiracial and a few international students for an average total of 54 students per year (IV.1, SS, p.120). The data maps well onto available census data regarding the cultural make up of Hawai'i, which is quite different from that of the Continental U.S., and North America in general, as presented in Table 4.1 of the SS (IV.1, SS, p. 118). Nevertheless, overall enrollment numbers have decreased by 6% ([Appendix 4.1](#)) and the SS attributes this decline to changes in funding processes for out-of-state students, as well as the increasing cost of living in Hawai'i (IV.1, SS, p. 120).

With regards to aspects of Standard IV.1 that deal with recruitment and retention, as covered in the SS (IV.1, SS, pp. 117-121), the constituents interviewed onsite made up of employers (who are by and large also alumni) spoke with enthusiasm about the mutually-beneficial relationships they enjoy with the program (Onsite interviews, Alumni & Employers). Some interviewees stated that they often refer their non-professional employees (i.e., library assistants) to the program (Onsite interviews, Alumni and Employers). Another offshoot of the program's relationships with alumni and employers is that they embrace the internship and practicum programs (Onsite Interviews, Alumni and Employers). Importantly, students are set up for success in their job searches because 90% have already had productive experiences as interns (Onsite Interviews, Faculty, Alumni, Employers, and Students). The program could definitely handle more students. Overall enrollment at the UH is showing signs of growth after a pandemic-related dip (Onsite Interview, Provost).

[Admissions policies](#) align with the university's general approach to graduate admissions and applicants are directed to options for [financial aid](#) and [enrollment policies](#) when they apply (IV.1, SS, p. 123; Onsite Interviews, Students). The [program website](#) comes up with a search for MLIS, LIS, or librarianship on the UHM [main page](#) (IV.2, SS, p.127). Navigating around the LIS program site itself is straightforward, and includes a prominent link for [prospective students](#) on the front page, as well as on

all pages under the “[Admissions](#)” tab. Of particular note is the clear (and encouraging) information in the [FAQ](#) directed towards older students and those with GPAs below 3.0.

Standards for admission are applied consistently (IV.3, SS, p. 130). For admission, students must have earned a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution in alignment with the UHM’s [Graduate Division Admission Requirements](#). Policies and procedures for waiving admission requirements are stated clearly and applied consistently (IV.3, SS, p. 132; Onsite interview, Admissions Committee). The SS explains the criteria for admission (IV.3, SS, pp. 130-132), which offers insight into what a strong candidate in this program might possess beyond the completion of a bachelor’s degree. Specifically, the program seeks candidates with demonstrated “hard skills, like writing and soft skills like leadership, problem solving and...service orientation” (IV.3, SS, p. 130). The program states that they seek out candidates who will value their small, collaborative learning environment (IV.3, SS, p. 130).

The program is also specific about the criteria for denial of admission and alternatives to regular admission (IV.3, SS, p. 132; Onsite Interview, Admissions Committee). Per Standard IV.3, the admissions committee can recommend that promising candidates who do not meet the 3.0 GPA threshold become a [Post-Baccalaureate Unclassified \(PBU\)](#) student who is not yet admitted, but allowed to take up to 12 credits from the program (IV.3, SS, pp. 131-132). Upon successful completion at 3.0 GPA or above in these courses, the student is moved from conditional to regular status (IV.3, SS, p. 132). The program’s admissions committee described their admission by exception or conditional admission policy for those who have not completed all the admissions requirements. Students admitted by exception between 2016 and 2022 (11 of 122) had a “91% persistence rate (graduation or continued enrollment)” (IV.3, SS, pp. 132-133; Onsite Interview, Admissions Committee). With student privacy policies, the ERP was unable to identify specific students who were admitted by exception; hence, the ERP was not able to verify from affected students how this process worked for them.



The SS explains, and the program website aligns with, the program's overall approach to admissions, which is, like their whole program, intentionally Hawai'i focused as stated in several places in the SS (I.4, SS, p. 33; IV.3, SS, p. 130). Continental U.S. and International applicants must demonstrate their appreciation of and interest in the program's unique offerings (e.g., Asian Studies librarianship) (IV.3, SS, p. 131) as the program seeks to become "an environment where traditional Hawaiian values and knowledge are embraced" (I.4, SS, p. 33). Many students, alumni, and employers confirmed they are involved in culturally-specific, Hawai'i-focused work in all types of libraries and archives (Onsite Interviews, Students, Alumni, and Employers).

Regarding Standard IV.4, the SS and conversations with student representatives revealed that students construct coherent plans of study (SS, pp. 133-136; Onsite Interviews, Students). As described in the SS (IV.4, SS, pp. 133-134), the students we interacted with onsite agreed that some of their classes are quite small, but none thought this impeded their learning (Onsite Interviews, Students). Also, students told the ERP that some courses were not offered frequently, which meant they had to take electives before core courses, wait to take specific courses, or not take them at all. While some students never get to take some courses, they are nonetheless able to construct plans of study that meet their needs (IV.4, SS, p. 135; [Appendix 2-4](#); Onsite Interviews, Students). Moreover, they emphasized that their faculty advisors were always supportive and helpful as they navigated semesters when they had trouble finding enough courses (Onsite Interviews, Students). Additionally, the SS indicated that students' levels of satisfaction with faculty guidance and academic advising have improved from 62% in 2016 to 92% in 2022 (IV.4, SS, p. 133). Further, the ePortfolio, covered more broadly in Standard II (IV.4, SS, p. 135), is one example of how students receive systematic, multi-faceted evaluation of their achievements. For instance, the program indicates that because of its small size, all faculty are able to "jump into action when we see students struggling" and that students are offered a range of options to

obtain the support they need (IV.4, SS, p. 135). Malia Perreira, Associate Director of the Kokua Program (which is UHM's office for students with disabilities) confirmed that MLIS students with disabilities are provided with tailored support that will best help them meet their potential (Onsite Interview).

Regarding placement services, the program also provides myriad opportunities for students to gain practical experience via internships, practicums, and employment opportunities (IV.4, SS, pp. 135-136). With regards to internship and practica (discussed more fully in Standard II), the ERP verified via discussions with the program's internship (Noriko Asato) and practicum (Meera Garud) coordinators, placement sponsors (who are almost all program alumni), and participating students that these are exceptionally well-designed initiatives (Onsite Interviews, Employers, Students, Noriko Asato, Meera Garud).

Per Standard IV.5, students have opportunities to participate in policy-making regarding academic and student affairs (IV.5, SS, p. 136; Onsite Interview, Students). For example, student feedback on the ePortfolios led directly to significant changes about what students could select as an "artifact." Onsite consultations with students indicated that they felt heard by the program faculty and staff and were able to freely give their feedback either in formal settings such as faculty meetings, informal discussions, or in the hallways (Onsite Interviews, Students).

Regarding IV.5.2, it was evident that students had opportunities to participate in research during the review period to include past students' participation in scholarly journal editing as well as IMLS grants with faculty (IV.5.2, SS, p. 137). However, current students and faculty told ERP members that students have not had the opportunity to participate in research with LIS faculty since the departure of two professors who had grants (Onsite Interviews, Students and Faculty). However, the ERP found evidence that faculty are still actively promoting student research beyond the classroom. For example, the ERP noted a listserv post from a faculty member about a [current call for posters](#) (LIS Students listserv

message, October 11, 2023). However, it is not clear how often current LIS students prepare and present their work outside of the classroom. When asked onsite, students indicated that they knew of these research opportunities, but were focused on their course work (Onsite Interviews, Students). Another factor that might limit student involvement in extracurricular research is the fact that most of them have at least one part-time job (Onsite Interviews, Students).

Students receive academic and career advice and other support services (IV.5.3 and IV.5.4, SS, p. 139). Regarding Standard IV.5.5, student organizations include the following (IV.5.5, SS, p. 140), among many others,

- Hui Dui
- American Library Association Student Chapter
- Nā Hawai'i 'Imi Loa

and evidence supports substantial participation by students, regardless of their location in Hawai'i. The ERP confirmed with students that they: a) know about their student organizations; b) have joined them; and c) have assumed leadership roles in them (Onsite Interviews, Students). In addition, students indicated that they participate in professional organizations (IV.5.5, Table 4-14, SS, p. 140), such as the Association of Hawai'i Archivists. The president of the student chapter of Nā Hawai'i 'Imi Loa expressed excitement about participating in the forthcoming International Indigenous Librarians' Forum 2023 (Onsite Interview, Students).

Regarding Standard IV.6, the program uses performance-based, self-report, indirect, and longitudinal measures to incorporate the results of the evaluation of student achievement and to demonstrate the success of policies to inform program development (IV.6, SS, p. 147). As discussed in Standards I & II, the SS indicates that multiple processes contribute to the program's overall evaluation of student achievement, as well as the processes taken to continuously develop the program. For example, [Appendix 1-5](#) documents the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the ePortfolio

based on stakeholder input, particularly the views of graduating students. The changes implemented have led to more flexible ePortfolio guidelines. A review of student ePortfolios ([Appendix 2-26](#)) indicated that students present a range of materials and experiences that indicate their achievement of each SLO, i.e., collection proposals, instructional videos, community outreach project narratives, literature reviews, and professional philosophy papers.

Regarding Standards IV.7 and IV.8, [Appendix 1-2](#) demonstrates how the program applies direct and indirect measures of student learning to decision-making, program planning, and improvement (IV.7 and IV.8, SS, pp. 148-149). The data presented in the SS, as well as that found in [Appendix 1-2](#) and [Appendix 1-5](#), were corroborated onsite with faculty (Onsite Interviews, Faculty). Students confirmed that they were satisfied with the changes to the curriculum and student learning experiences during this review period (IV.7 and IV.8; SS, pp. 148-150; Appendices 1-2, 1-5, 1-22, 2-1, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6). The ERP also noted that several of the concerns noted in the [Appendix 2-1](#) regarding Question 9 that asked “How could your LIS experience have been improved?” have been at least somewhat or fully addressed. Specifically, the expansion of access to hybrid courses, more opportunities for neighbor island students to meet together with face-to-face students, and the addition of a faculty position in Hawaiian Librarianship have all been accomplished during the review period ([Appendix 2-1](#)).

The ERP noted that the atmosphere of student life in the program, including the neighbor island cohort, was collegial, upbeat, and positive. We were particularly struck by the diversity of the student body and the ways in which the students enthusiastically engaged with Indigenous and Hawaiian librarianship. The SS states that “Our students must understand and balance critical decolonial perspectives with professional norms, standards, and technological skills, so they can work effectively within information organizations in Hawai’i or anywhere in the world” (IV, Summary, p. 150). The ERP saw significant evidence of progress towards the aspirational goal of contributing to the cultivation of a

new generation of information professionals who possess the thoughtful and critical attributes needed to both decolonize LIS and advance the field's equity aims overall in the SS, onsite, through student, alumni, employer, and faculty interviews, and in classroom observations (I.1, SS, p. 13; I.1.1, SS, p. 16; I.2, SS, p. 22; II.1.1, SS, p. 36; IV, Summary, p. 150).

## **STANDARD V: ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

According to interviews with Provost Michael Bruno and his team, as well as with Dean Denise Konan, the administration of the University is supportive of the program, and positioned to support it moving forward, within the context of its new academic and administrative home ([SCI](#), a department-level unit within [CSS](#)) (V.1, SS, p. 152). The SCI is the largest school in CSS and CSS has one-fifth of all UHM students (Onsite Interview, CSS Dean). Recent examples of administrative support include the approval of the formation of the new SCI and an exemption for a new hire from a pandemic-era hiring freeze (13 Assistant Professor in Hawaiian Librarianship).

The administration also affirmed that the university will continue its commitment to the program. As a separate program newly within the SCI housed in the CSS (Table 5-1: [UH Mānoa Colleges and Schools](#) with Number of Majors, SS, p. 152), the program showed sufficient autonomy to assure that the program determines its intellectual content, selects and promotes its faculty, and selects its students within general guidelines of the institution ([Appendix 5-2](#); V.1, SS, pp. 153-154; Onsite Interviews; Review of Documentation Onsite). Personnel appointment decisions, as well as promotion and tenure decisions, start with an initial report produced by the program, which then proceeds through a School-level committee, followed by an independent assessment and recommendation by the Chair to the Dean and beyond ([LIS Tenure and Promotion Criteria](#), V.1, SS, p. 154). The SCI is working on its Tenure and Promotion Policy (Draft in [Appendix 5-4](#), SS, p. 155).

The program is fairly represented on the institution's advisory and policy-making bodies, both within the SCI (Rich Gazan serves on the Council of Program Directors) and at the institutional level (Andrew Wertheimer has served as an elected member of the Faculty Senate) (V.2, SS, pp. 155-157). Likewise, decisions regarding funding and resource allocation for the program are made on the same basis as for comparable academic units within the institution (V.2, Onsite Interview, Administrative Services Manager of the SCI, Kat Tagaca; [Appendix 5-2](#)).

Rich Gazan, LIS Program Director, has served as administrative head of the program since 2015, reporting to Hye-ryeon Lee, Chair of SCI. Dr. Gazan is granted a 25% course release for his role as LIS Program Director, though it seems likely that his actual commitment of time is substantially greater (V.3, Onsite Interview, LIS Program Director, Rich Gazan). The ERP determined through interviews with the SCI Dean and the 2022 Memoranda of Understanding ([Appendix 5-2](#)), which serve as the foundational documents for the SCI ([Appendix 5-1](#)), that the head of the program has authority to ensure that students are supported in their academic program of study. Evidence from [Dr. Gazan's CV](#), multiple stakeholder surveys, and his experience in the position indicates that the administrative head has academic qualifications comparable to those required of the faculty, and the leadership skills, administrative ability, experience, and understanding of the field and the academic environment to fulfill the responsibilities of the position (V.3, SS, pp. 157-158).

Evidence indicates that the administrative head is perceived to nurture an environment that enhances the pursuit of the program mission and goals and the achievement of its objectives, based on multiple observations and interviews with faculty, students, and other stakeholders (Onsite Interviews; [Appendix 3-14](#)). Students and faculty are encouraged to interact with other academic units, particularly within the context of the SCI, with cross-listed courses and the flexibility to take courses across

programs; and students are socialized to the field (V.4, SS, pp. 158-160; Onsite Interviews, SCI Chair and Faculty).

Evidence indicates that decision-making processes are determined by, evaluated by, and the results used by the administrative head and the faculty (V.5, SS, pp. 160-163). Under the 2022 Memoranda of Understanding ([Appendix 5-2](#)) and per discussion with the SCI Chair and LIS Program Director, decision-making is largely devolved to the program level within the SCI, including on curricular matters, with advisory and oversight functions at the SCI level. The program currently has one FTE staff member, Mandi Hull, who is responsible for all administrative, student, and faculty support services. [Appendix 2-4](#) indicated that 98% of graduates from 2020-2022 believed that “the LIS staff was helpful.” It is clear from our collective observations that there is broad acknowledgement that this level of staffing is insufficient, particularly in the context of the new SCI configuration and staffing challenges in many other units within the SCI.

Evidence indicates that the parent institution provides continuing financial support for development, maintenance, and enhancement of the program (V.6, SS, pp. 163-164), at present. According to the “[College Focus](#)” budget process document (Examined Onsite, SS, p. 164), “[t]he budget system is an equitable, open, and cooperative process that facilitates long-term planning and timely implementation. The process is designed to support college, department, and program development, and to assure a balanced budget.” Standard university metrics (i.e., credit hours, number of majors, number of graduate majors, and number of faculty) are used in college-level operating budget allocations. At present, detailed, line-item budgets are neither utilized nor produced (and thus were not available for inspection). Annual operating funds are allocated from the SCI following a consultative process, from which expenditures are made (separate from restricted Foundation funds, which reside

within the unit). As SCI and LIS practices evolve, more detailed budgetary documents may emerge, which might assist in future, longer-range planning (V.6, SS, pp. 163-164).

Examination of faculty compensation documentation by the ERP revealed that it is equitable with compensation in other units within the SCI ([Appendix 5.1](#)) and sufficient to attract, support, and retain personnel (V.7, SS, p. 165). Institutional funds available for research, professional development, travel, and leaves are comparable to other units (V.8, SS, p. 148; Onsite Interview, Kat Tagaca). Further, student financial aid is available from the parent institution on the same basis as in comparable units (V.8, Onsite Interviews, Students, particularly those from Neighbor Islands).

Per Standards V.9, V.10 and V.11, physical and technological resources support qualify as appropriate for accomplishment of program goals and objectives (SS, pp. 166-170). The program is housed in space on the basement level of Hamilton Library, the main library on the campus, with individual office spaces for faculty and staff, a student commons with kitchen, conference and meeting rooms, and classrooms. Some previously-occupied space has been loaned to advising staff in the College of Natural Sciences. It is anticipated that those spaces will be returned to the LIS Program in 2025. In 2022, as the program joined the SCI, all faculty were provided with new laptop computers with basic software suites, and the classroom spaces received upgraded computing, projection, and telecommunications infrastructure, which the faculty has warmly embraced, along with support from IT staff from the CSS, which can be easily and readily accessed. Instructional development and online teaching resources are also available at the College and campus level.

Per Standard V.12, staff and services provided by knowledgeable and accessible library staff are available as program needs arise and there are many professional and collegial connections between the program and library personnel (SS, pp. 170-172).



Per Standard V.13, V.14, and V.15, the ERP found ample evidence, from individual and collective conversations, that the faculty engages in ongoing and extensive discussion, deliberation, and consultation regarding all aspects of the program, and demonstrates substantial care, compassion, and willingness to exert great effort on behalf of their students and the program (SS, pp. 172-176). There is also considerable connection and reflection with students, employers, and the professional community, which results in a strong sense of community, and shared purpose. However, it can also feel ad hoc at times; as one faculty member said, “when something isn’t working, we hear about it” (Onsite Interview).

## **SUMMARY**

The program educates nearly all of those who lead and work in libraries of all types in the state of Hawai‘i. As libraries are a vital source of accurate information, history, engagement, and knowledge creation, the program provides an essential service to the people of Hawai‘i. Continuous nurturing of the program is an important responsibility of UHM, CSS, and SCI. There is great potential for the program to continue as the predominant LIS program both within Hawai‘i as well as to expand to the broader region.

The ERP identified the following major strengths of the program:

- The program has five dedicated and passionate faculty who do whatever it takes to support the students to achieve their educational and career goals and to further libraries across the state and beyond. A deeply collaborative environment affords all faculty the opportunity to participate in decision-making. The LIS Program Coordinator, Mandi Hull, provides phenomenal support to both students and faculty as do the LIS Program Director, Rich Gazan, and all of the faculty.
- The university [strategic plan](#)’s emphasis on “Becoming a Native Hawaiian Place of Learning” provides a unique focus for the program. With the hiring of the Assistant Professor in Hawaiian

Librarianship, the program is well positioned to take a leadership role in the progress towards this key goal.

- The ERP was extremely impressed with the diversity of the LIS student body, exposure to which helps the students learn to engage with the variety of people they will interact with in their employment settings.
- The faculty have embraced hybrid instructional methods that are flexible to adapt to students' lives.
- The reorganization to bring the program into the SCL appears to be a positive change leading to greater program autonomy and promising opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and research.
- The curriculum is highly flexible to accommodate student interests. Students can change directions during their program with advisor approval. Students are extremely pleased with the flexibility of the program.
- The LIS 690 Internship program offers over 100 potential placements and a well-developed planning and assessment process with frequent check-ins between supervisors and students and the course coordinator. Practicums are equally well structured and assessed.
- The assessment of student learning includes a variety of measures through course assignments, internships, practicums, ePortfolios/theses, and independent studies.
- Students have the opportunity to engage in a variety of highly-active student organizations, benefit from travel funds to attend conferences, and appreciate strong support and mentorship from faculty as well as internship/practica supervisors and employers.
- Classrooms are equipped with up-to-date technology and Zoom assistants enable faculty to focus on teaching while students focus on learning during classes.

- There are collaborative relationships among faculty, and between faculty and stakeholder groups (students, alumni, employers, and the statewide professional community).

The ERP identified the following areas of concern for the program:

- The ERP observed that the LIS program currently has one of the smallest number of full-time faculty (five) of any of the ALA-accredited programs. Faculty and staff burnout is a major concern. The program is down two full-time faculty members since the last accreditation review. Since the two faculty members departed, the existing faculty have had difficulty maintaining their research agendas and students have not been able to work with faculty on their research. The heavy service and teaching load could be a catalyst for faculty to seek other opportunities outside of the LIS program and the university. In addition, there is only one graduate assistant to support the faculty, she has been teaching the bulk of the technology courses, and she will graduate in December 2023. Faculty need research support.
- If UHM is going to maintain a professional school in LIS, it is imperative that they provide more staffing including: the shared Data Services Librarian, the I3 assistant professor position in Information Technology for Social Good, and the I2 instructor in Professional Engagement. Librarianship is a technology-intensive discipline that must constantly evolve and press forward with evaluating and embracing new technologies. LIS students should practice understanding, critiquing, analyzing, and applying emerging technologies in their graduate programs, in order to be prepared to serve as change agents in libraries.
- Anticipating potential needs in the workforce (retirements), the program could expand marketing and enrollment both inside Hawai'i and beyond and consider offering the program totally online to some students.

- To date, the program has engaged in a shorter-term planning process, which might be characterized as largely problem-solving. Now that the program is a part of the SCI, the time is right to set forth a dynamic forward-looking vision for the future as an integral member of the School. The LIS program might lead the planning initiative among the five SCI programs.
- While there is a considerable degree of reflection and assessment activity occurring among the faculty and collaboration with its multiple surrounding communities, the program would also benefit from further documentation of the flow of assessment findings into systematic planning and decision-making. Program constituents (alumni, employers, students, and Advisory Board members) demonstrate a high level of commitment and enthusiasm for the program, and their perspectives might be valuable in planning.
- There is a wide variety of courses, and faculty have been extremely flexible in picking up courses that are outside their areas of expertise to fill in gaps, but students have to navigate the complexities of infrequent offerings.
- Planning processes, while highly collaborative, thoughtful, and caring, are not well documented, nor is the incorporation of systematic assessment data and input in forward planning.
- Additional professional support staff are needed.
- The College of Natural Sciences Advising Offices temporarily occupy approximately one-third of the space originally reserved for the LIS program in the basement of Hamilton Library while a new facility is constructed for them. The LIS program would benefit from having the space returned to them in 2025, so they can expand lab and student research initiatives.

Appendix A: [Schedule of Site Visit](#)

Appendix B: [Attendees at Stakeholder Welcome Reception, Student Leaders' Lunch, and Student Lunch](#)

Appendix C: Courses Observed

Course	Instructor	Mode Offered	Mode Observed
LIS 655 Digital Instruction (SLO 4)	Meera Garud	Asynchronous	Asynchronous
LIS 633 Indigenous Librarianship (SLO 5)	Keahiahi Long	Zoom/In-Person	Zoom
LIS 601 Introduction to Reference Services (SLO 1)	Rich Gazan	Hybrid	In-Person
LIS 605 Metadata Creation for Information Organization (SLO 3)	Suzhen Chen and Margaret Joyce (adjuncts)	Hybrid	In-Person

Appendix D: [MLISc Internship Details](#)