



University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

Department of Library and Information Studies
Graduate School of Education

Library and Information Studies Advising Policy

Approved by the LIS Council on December 3, 2009

Preamble

A student's program of study is a large investment of time and energy. Good advising ensures that this investment is spent wisely by having students reflect on how they can best match their talents and interests to career objectives and select courses that support these career objectives.

This document describes the elements of the advising process and the mutual faculty and student responsibilities in this process. Additional interactions between students and faculty advisers are encouraged within reasonable demands on faculty time.

Advising process

Upon admission, students will be assigned a faculty adviser by the Chair or the Chair's designee. Personnel in the LIS office will be responsible for sending faculty an updated list of their advisees with email addresses and other appropriate information as technically feasible four weeks before each semester starts and as needed thereafter.

The student and the faculty advisor are mutually responsible for establishing and maintaining communication. Newly admitted students are encouraged to communicate with their faculty advisers as soon as possible; such communication will generally be made by email or by telephone. A notice to this effect will be included in the admission package.

New students must communicate with their faculty advisers before classes start to consider the following issues:

- Transfer of credits (up to six credit hours of acceptable course work can be transferred).
- Waiver of a required course - this is rare and must be approved by the lead instructor of the course but should be considered.
- The student's program of study for the first semester.

Students are required to have academic advisement in their first semester before registering for their second semester. The purpose of this advisement shall be to discuss the abilities and knowledge students bring to the program, their interests and career objectives, and, on that basis, their Plan of Study, also taking into account the special requirements for the type of information agency in which the student may seek employment. Upon request of the student, the faculty advisor will meet with her/him in person at a mutually agreed time, but alternate means of communication may be used.

An agreed-upon plan of study must be signed by the student and the faculty adviser and submitted to the LIS office by the student. A duly signed Plan of Study must be on file in the LIS office before the student can register for classes in the second semester and beyond. This provision will be enforced as resources and IT systems at UB permit. Electronic signatures and electronic filing will meet this requirement once the appropriate systems are in place.

Before talking to her/his adviser, a student must review the pre-advisement form (compiled, in part, automatically from the student's application data and included in the admissions packet), amend it as necessary, and transmit it to her/his adviser. This entails the student's becoming familiar with the course offerings – both LIS courses and other relevant courses on campus as listed in the admissions packet – and making some preliminary selection of courses.

Students are encouraged to communicate with their adviser if and when they consider a change in career objectives or in courses they want to take. One opportune time for consultation is before registration, after the class schedule for the next semester is published.

Special provision for students who start classes in the summer

Students who begin the MLS program in the summer must communicate with their faculty advisers – by email or other means – before registering for classes or by May 15, whichever is earlier. If students wish to take non-core courses in the fall, they must have a Plan of Study on file before fall classes start. Therefore, students must meet or communicate with their advisers in the week before fall classes start, preferably on the day of orientation. Otherwise, students can meet with their advisers in the middle of the fall semester to develop a Plan of Study.

Change in adviser

Occasionally circumstances arise that call for consideration of a change in adviser. A student wishing to change advisers should communicate informally with the faculty member who would be the new adviser and then submit the Change-of-Adviser form to the office. A change in adviser must be approved by the Chair in order to keep advising loads equitable. If a faculty member leaves, her/his advisees will be notified and assigned another advisor by the Chair or the Chair's designate.

Notes

Plan of Study forms are available at the LIS Office (534 Baldy) or online:

<http://gse.buffalo.edu/gsefiles/documents/departments/LISPlanOfStudy.pdf>
http://gse.buffalo.edu/gsefiles/documents/departments/LMS_POS_2014.pdf

Pre-advisement forms will become available starting September 2010. If you do not find one in your packet, just compile the information and send it to your adviser so he or she can become familiar with your background and interests