



**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Womack Educational Leadership Department

Master of Library Science

Candidacy Application for Accreditation
by the American Library Association

1301 E Main St, Murfreesboro, TN 37132
www.mtsu.edu

January 2023

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Cope Administration Building 116
1301 East Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37132
Christy.Sigler@mtsu.edu; or 615-898-2185.

The MTSU policy on non-discrimination can be found at www.mtsu.edu/titleix.



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Womack Educational Leadership Department
Master of Library Science

January 9, 2022

Committee on Accreditation-Office for Accreditation
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street Chicago, IL 60611-2795

Dear Committee on Accreditation:

Please let this application document serve as Middle Tennessee State University's (MTSU's) official request for candidacy status for its Master of Library Science (MLS) Program for American Library Association (ALA) accreditation. MTSU is a dynamic public institution that serves its students and enriches the citizens of Tennessee, the nation, and the world through rigorous academic programs, strategic partnerships, and active civic engagement.

As part of that service, MTSU offers a Master of Library Science Program to educate the next generation of information professionals whose graduates are already having a positive impact on American society. It is appropriate to seek accreditation for the program in order to support the professional needs of our students and other stakeholders in public, school, academic, and special/corporate libraries and other information-based institutions both within Tennessee and nationwide.

Thank you for your consideration of our candidacy application.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "L".

Frank Lambert, Ph.D., MLIS
Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator
MLS Program
Womack Educational Leadership Department
Frank.Lambert@mtsu.edu
615-898-2583

Office of the President

Middle Tennessee State University
110 Cope Administration Building
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
o: 615-898-2622 • f: 615-898-2507



December 22, 2022

Committee on Accreditation
Office for Accreditation
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street Chicago, IL 60611-
2795

Dear Committee on Accreditation:

Middle Tennessee State University has a long tradition of serving the educational and professional needs of the **Mid-South** and is accredited by the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges**. MTSU seeks to increase the number of accredited programs to position our university as a state-of-the-art institution that promotes exacting standards of excellence.

As part of its service, **Middle Tennessee State University** believes it is appropriate to continue our efforts to seek accreditation for the Master of Library Science (MLS) Program and to move on to the next step of this process. Accreditation is important as verification to the public and prospective applicants that a program meets rigorous curriculum and programmatic standards. Graduates of an American Library Association-accredited Library Science program will not only be highly competent in the practice of their trade, but they also will be more competitive in the marketplace. Thus, the University seeks to move the program from pre-candidacy to candidacy status.

This plan has my full support. I am confident that the Master of Library Science Program will meet the ALA standards for accreditation within the scheduled time frame. However, we understand that candidacy status in no manner guarantees or implies that the program will be accredited or that accreditation is automatic at the end of the candidacy period.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of our candidacy application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sidney A. McPhee".

Sidney A. McPhee
President

College of Education

MTSU Box 93 • COE 202
1301 East Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
615-898-2874
mtsu.edu/education



Committee on Accreditation
Office for Accreditation
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street Chicago, IL 60611-2795

Dear Committee on Accreditation:

As **Interim Dean of the College of Education at Middle Tennessee State University**, I am writing to you to express my full support for the candidacy application of the **Master of Library Science Program**. **The program will serve the Mid-South region and build an active base of support from alumni and friends of libraries.**

Middle Tennessee State University has dedicated increasing resources to advance our Library Science program through intentional and purposeful planning and action. The plan for accreditation began many years ago, and we celebrated the recognition of "Pre-Candidacy" Status. Through intentional hiring of key faculty and with collaboration from our faculty at the MSTU Walker Library, we are ready to apply for "Candidacy". The faculty and I have seen the MLS Program grow and strengthen as we have dedicated ourselves to advance our program towards ALA accreditation, making it a valuable component of the College of Education's graduate program offerings. I respectfully request your consideration and support for the MTSU College of Education's MLS Program application to advance to Candidacy status.

With the increasing support we have received in the past few years and anticipate into the future from our university administration, I am confident that the Master of Library Science Program will meet or exceed the ALA standards for accreditation within the scheduled time frame. We understand that we will need to continue to increase support and expand our dedication to the program as we strive to advance through each successive level on our journey toward ALA Accreditation.

Thank you for your time and energy as you consider our candidacy application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Vanosdall".


Dr. Rick Vanosdall, Interim Dean

Waiver – Candidacy Status

The undersigned acknowledge that Candidacy Status in no manner guarantees or implies that the Master of Library Science (MLS) Program offered by Middle Tennessee State University will be accredited at the end of the Candidacy period. (*Accreditation Process, Policies and Procedures*, 4th ed., I.9.2 Candidacy status application requirements)

 12/22/2022
Signature, chief executive officer of the Institution, e.g., President Date

SIDNEY A MCPHEE PRESIDENT
Name, printed Title

 12/19/2022
Signature, chief academic officer of the School, e.g., Dean Date

RICK Vanosdall Dean - Interim
Name, printed Title

 12/16/2022
Signature, chief academic officer of the Program, e.g., Director Date

DONALD SNEED Department Chair, Edu. Leadership
Name, printed Title

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*****To access all appendices to this document, please visit**

https://mtmailmtsu-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/hhebert_mtsu_edu/EkopC99sFpdlpvIVxjukSn8B0RGyjtU91ByesXwHYtRTjw?e=B7pBRr

and use the following password: @MTSU2023!

Acronyms & Initialisms

AASL: American Association of School Librarians; a division of the American Library Association dedicated to school library professionals.

ACRL: Association of College and Research Libraries; a division of the American Library Association dedicated to academic library professionals.

ALA: the American Library Association

ALISE: Association for Library and Information Science Education; professional organization for individuals and institutions that educate in LIS.

ARSL: The Association for Rural & Small Libraries

CAEP: Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation; see glossary

COE: College of Education

COI: Certified Online Instructor

D2L: Desire2Learn Brightspace; course management system/learning management system/online learning platform

EDTPA: Educative teacher performance assessment

FJE: Fairness, justice, and equity

GPA: grade point average

HBCU: Historically Black Colleges and Universities

IRB: Institutional review board

LIBS: prefix for the MLS courses

LMS: Learning management system

LT & ITC: Learning, Teaching, & Innovative Technologies Center

MLS: Master of Library Science; see MLS Program in glossary

MOU: Memo of Understanding; see glossary

MSED: Master of Science in Education; see glossary

MTSU: Middle Tennessee State University

#MTSUMLS: Twitter hashtag for the MTSU MLS Program

OFD: Outline of Faculty Data

OFM: Online Faculty Mentor

RUSA: Reference and User Services Association; a division of the American Library Association serving all types of libraries in reference, user services, readers advisory, and collection development.

SACS: Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges

SELA: Southeastern Library Association.

SLO: Student learning outcomes

STEM: Science, technology, math, and engineering

TASL: Tennessee Association of School Librarians

TNLA: Tennessee Library Association

TSLA: Tennessee State Library and Archives

THEC: Tennessee Higher Education Commission

YALSA: Young Adult Library Services Association; a division of the American Library Association devoted to serving teens and adolescents.

Glossary

Advisory Board: An MLS Advisory Board (MAC) was formed in Fall 2020 and consists of representation from the MLS constituents including employers, students, alumni, and faculty. The MLS Advisory Board meets once a year and advises the faculty at other times as requested.

Adjunct faculty: Faculty hired in an adjunct role with the university.

Asynchronous: The online delivery format for MLS courses, not requiring student presence online on a certain date at a certain time.

D2L/Brightspace The learning management system (LMS) used by MTSU for the delivery of all online courses.

Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity in the College of Education (FJE): assists the University by supporting all existing diversity, equity and inclusion programming, supporting the professional and personal development needs of the faculty, staff, and students of the College of Education, and offering educational opportunities, support, and advocacy for community partners. The FJE engages in the recruitment and retention of diverse educator candidates, advanced degree seeking students, and COE faculty members.

CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) Training: online training in research ethics

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP): the accreditation agency that employs evidence-based assessment to assure quality and supports continuous improvement for K12 preparation programs.

Course release: A reduction in the instructional load to allow time to work on non-instructional activities.

Curriculum mapping: The process of linking program objectives to student learning outcomes and specific courses.

Curriculog: a web-based proposal management system that follows the university curricular approval procedures

Curriculum matrix: The visual representation of curriculum mapping showing connections.

D2L/Brightspace The online learning management system (LMS) used by MTSU for delivery and student access of all online courses.

DegreeWorks: a comprehensive academic advising, transfer articulation and degree audit tool that helps students and advisors plan and track student progress toward degree.

Digital Measures: A Watermark electronic platform for reporting and managing individual faculty activities, similar to an electronic portfolio. Now renamed "Faculty Success".

Endorsement, as Library Information Specialist: A term used by the Tennessee Department of Education to signify a licensed teacher is qualified to be a school librarian for PreK-12 in a public school. It generally requires completion of an approved program of study such as that at MTSU.

exitPortfolio: The capstone assessment used by the MLS program; A digital showcase that displays learning, experiences, and skills demonstrated through a curated selection of key and choice assessments.

fieldPortfolio: The capstone assessment of the field experience, showing formative and summative assessments and key assignments along with other indicators of the experience.

Field Experience: All candidates in the MLS program must successfully complete a 100-hour field experience (AKA internship or practicum), unless they are working on initial licensure where they are completing student teaching residency.

Field Experience Sponsors: Individuals who agree to supervise MLS Program students during their field experience and work together to develop a plan specialized to each student's needs along with the needs of the institution.

Formative assessment: An assessment of student ability during the learning process which shows areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU): A group of universities formed before 1964 whose mission was to provide education to black Americans.

James E. Walker Library: MTSU's academic library.

Junior faculty: Non-tenured, tenure-track faculty.

Key assessments: Assessments identified by the MLS Program as key indicators of student learning outcomes (SLOs).

Lead faculty: Faculty who have ownership of the official online course shell for each LIBS course. Lead faculty develop and redesign each course.

Learning, Teaching, & Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC): A center housed in the Walker Library that provides support to faculty.

LiveText by Watermark: A data collection and assessment software product used by the COE to collect and document aggregated data used for program improvement and institutional effectiveness.

Master of Education (M.Ed.): Degree program offered by COE. Before the MLS, students were prepared for school librarianship and earned this degree with a concentration in library science.

Microsoft Teams: Software used to house program data and documents and also used for communication.

MLS Program: Comprises all the stakeholders of the program including administration, faculty, students, MAC members and others who provide input to the program, participate in continuous improvement planning, and have a specific interest in program success.

MLS Program faculty: Full-time faculty, lecturers, adjuncts, and the program coordinator.

MTSU College of Graduate Studies: The college that administrates the graduate programs at MTSU and identifies graduate faculty who qualify.

MTSU Online: The MTSU administrative unit concerned with the development, improvement, and administration of all online programs and their courses at the university.

Non-tenurable: Full time, temporary, non-tenure track faculty, with contracts renewed every 3 years.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning & Research (IEPR): Provides leadership and support for all academic programs and administrative units in assessing student learning, student experiences, and/or efficiency and effectiveness as part of a continuous quality improvement program designed to impact learning and teaching and meet accreditation standards.

Online Faculty Mentor (OFM): Experienced online faculty who are appointed to a 2-year term to serve as mentors to online faculty at MTSU.

Outline of Faculty Data (OFD): The tool used to reflect all professional activities performed by a faculty member during the year.

School district: A school district; the terminology used in Tennessee to describe the organization of K-12 schools.

Student Course Evaluations: A survey for students to anonymously rank their experiences in each course every semester by professor and content that contains both qualitative and quantitative data.

Summative assessment: An assessment used to summarize the learning of a student.

Tenn-Share: A library consortium in Tennessee.

University Writing Center: Provides tutoring, resume service, writing groups, and workshops.

Womack Educational Leadership Department: A department within the College of Education. The MLS Program is housed in this department.

Zoom: an online video conferencing tool.

University Administration and Program Faculty

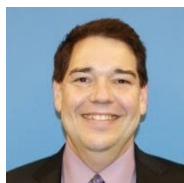


[Dr. Sidney A. McPhee](#)

President, Middle Tennessee State University



[Dr. Frank Lambert](#), Assistant Professor
MLS Program Coordinator

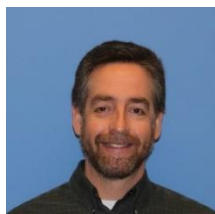


[Dr. David Butler](#)

Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies



[Ms. Holly Hebert](#), Assistant Professor
MLS Program Faculty



[Dr. Rick Vanosdall](#)

Interim Dean, College of Education



[Ms. DeAnne Luck](#), Lecturer
MLS Program Faculty



[Dr. Donald Snead](#), Professor

Chair, Womack Educational Leadership Department, MLS Program Director

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY (MTSU)
Master of Library Science (MLS) CANDIDACY PROPOSAL

Report of Program's Status

Unit	Master of Library Science Program, Womack Educational Leadership Department
Chief Administrator of the Unit	Donald Snead, Interim Department Chair, Womack Educational Leadership Department
Parent Institution	Middle Tennessee State University
Institutional Accrediting Body	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
Chief Executive Officer	Sidney McPhee, President
Chief Academic Officer	Mark Byrnes, Provost
Library Science reports to:	Rick Vanosdall, Interim Dean of the College of Education
Program Seeking Candidacy	Master of Library Science
Brief Program Description	The Master of Science in Library Science Program is a 36 (minimum) semester credit hours program. Once admitted to the program, candidate must complete 36 semester credit hours which includes 15-hours of major field core courses, a 3-hour library administration course, 12 hours of electives, 6 hours of field experience, and complete a culminating e-portfolio on a Web-based site as they move through the program to be assessed by at least two faculty members in the candidate's final semester. This program, along with the College of Education, is CAEP-accredited.
Contact Information	Master of Library Science Program Middle Tennessee State University College of Education Building 1301 E Main St, Murfreesboro, TN 37132 www.mtsu.edu

Introduction and Overview

The MTSU Master of Library Science (MLS) Program has evolved and improved its methods of program self-assessment in preparation for applying for the American Library Association's (ALA) candidacy phase of program evaluation. Always with an eye on the learner, we have aligned our values, vision, mission, and goals to guide the MLS Program through to accreditation. Related to this, we also have instituted technological and administrative processes and workflows to help us address our vision, mission, and goals. In addition, we have lined up resources necessary to sustain a vibrant program. Finally, we have many sources of data at both the Program and the College levels to improve our ability to deliver positive outcomes for our students, our program, our college, our university, and our community as a result of ongoing program evaluation and improvement that support evidence-based decisions.

Before 2000, the program existed as a face-to-face Master of Education in Administration and Supervision with a concentration in Library Services. Students were licensed teachers seeking a master's degree and an endorsement as school librarians. The State of Tennessee implemented enhanced licensure standards in 2001. In preparation for the new standards, the name of the concentration changed to Library Science and all courses were revised in 2000. This was an opportunity to shape the program as a Library Science generalist education rather than solely focus on school librarianship. Completion of the MLS degree fulfills teacher licensure requirements for school librarians. School librarianship did remain as the primary goal of students, but a few candidates began to enter the program to pursue careers in public librarianship after graduation. In 2002, the conversion of the program to a completely online program began. The Tennessee Board of Regents approved the program as a fully online program in 2006. The program's purpose evolved to add a teacher piece to a librarian rather than adding a librarian piece to a teacher. With the inclusion of two required supervised field experience courses per then-Tennessee Department of Education standards, hands-on professional practice in the profession grounded the program then as it does now. The MT Engage principal foci of integrative and reflective learning are incorporated into the Library Science program so that the program is in full compliance with MT Engage. With development and full introduction of a large number of contemporaneous courses that address virtually all aspects of librarianship, the MLS Program is educating public and academic librarians with the same rigor that has distinguished our school library media specialists.

In 2018, MTSU's MLS Program was ranked #12 out of the 20 most affordable online Master's in Library Science degrees ranked by College Choice <https://mtsunews.com/college-choice-masters-library-science/>. The MLS Program was the only program or school from Tennessee to make that list. This makes the MLS Program one of the best values in library science education, preparing quality information professionals in a low-cost graduate environment. When this is considered along with Intelligent.com's ranking of the MLS Program in 2022 as the 4th best out of 46 online MLS Programs, which was a *significant* improvement from our original ranking of 13th place for 2021, this value proposition becomes even more prominent for both MTSU and the MLS Program.

Because of the significant progress the MLS Program has made in terms of its overall quality as a library science program, Middle Tennessee State University is applying formally for the MLS Program to start its candidacy process towards accreditation by the American Library Association (ALA), with the understanding that at the end of the two-year candidacy period the MLS Program will have its self-study reviewed by ALA's Committee on Accreditation (CoA). The

Program, which launched in its current form and degree offering in fall 2016, is located in the Womack Educational Leadership Department in the College of Education. The program graduates primarily school librarians, contributing towards our 97+% Praxis 5311 School Library Media Specialist examination passing rate. However, a growing number of MLS Program students and graduates also work in public libraries and academic libraries. The MLS program was nationally accredited by the *National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)* and is now, as of April 2022, accredited by the *Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)*.

Program Values

The MLS Program subscribes to the Core Values of Librarianship put forth by the American Library Association (2019). In relation to the ALA Core Values, the MLS Program regards the following as it relates to our discipline and profession as most essential: access, confidentiality/privacy, democracy, diversity, education and lifelong learning, intellectual freedom, the public good, preservation, professionalism, service, social responsibility, and sustainability.

Program Vision & Mission

The *vision* of the MLS program is to meet the information society's current and future needs pertaining to the discovery, acquisition, organization, provision, and ethical and effective use of information regardless of media format. The *mission* of the MLS program is to prepare the next generation of 21st century information professionals through impactful research, creative entrepreneurship, learner-centered teaching, and innovative professional practice.

Program Outcomes

Graduates and endorsement completers are able to: represent the profession according to professional codes and standards and according to community expectations; appreciate and address the information needs of diverse (access, ability, location, identity) communities; embrace opportunities for practice in all facets of librarianship and other information professions; engage in advocacy and outreach for the profession of librarianship and other information professions; create and sustain robust information organizations of all types and sizes; and advance the Library and Information Science discipline and advance information professions through innovative research, entrepreneurship, teaching, and practice.

Program Goals

The MLS Program at MTSU provides candidates with customizable curricula grounded in library and information science theory and practice that they can tailor to meet their interests and needs for continued growth and development as an information professional; appreciation of the importance of advocacy for their profession and for their institutions, which provide access to information resources; and attainment of the American Library Association's (ALA's) Core Competencies of Librarianship within the Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies articulated and enforced by ALA, and other related standards such as the American Association of School Librarianship's Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians.

The MLS program develops and encourages collaborative relationships with libraries that are willing to provide professional initiation field experiences so that candidates receive a diverse and effective practitioner's experience through pedagogical support exemplified by the Program's coursework.

Program Objectives

The MLS program meets specific program objectives to fulfill its obligations to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. These objectives are:

Job placement for graduates/completers (endorsement seeking) of the MLS Program:
80% of all MLS Program students will have secured a position in librarianship or a similar information-based profession (e.g., librarian, archivist, museum staff, knowledge manager, indexer) or information-based organization within one year following their graduation/completion of their degree or non-degree plan of study.

Professional skills of MLS Program graduates or completers (endorsement seeking):
80% of employers of the MLS Program's graduates and/or our graduates themselves will respond in some form of agreement that our graduates/they have the skills and attributes to become and remain successful information professionals.

Satisfaction determination of MLS Program graduates/completers (endorsement seeking):
80% of all MLS Program student graduates will agree that they are satisfied with their graduate education.

Department

The MLS Program's academic "home" is within the Womack Educational Leadership Department, which is one of two departments in the College of Education. The Chair of the Womack Educational Leadership Department, Dr. Donald Snead, is the chief administrative officer of the department. He is responsible for representing the department and its associated programs, including the MLS Program, to the university administration and to the Dean of the College of Education. Besides the MLS Program, the Chair of Educational Leadership is also the chief administrative officer of programs in Administration and Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction, M.Ed. in ESL Program, and Professional Counseling. The Chair is in essence the MLS Program's administrative director and has standing and salary similar to other Program Directors and Chairs in the COE.

College Mission

The MLS program supports the mission of the College of Education with student-centered learning environments through excellence in teaching, basic and applied research, creative endeavors, quality advisement, mentorship from practicing librarians, diverse field experiences and diverse partnership programs.

MTSU History

On September 11, 1911, Middle Tennessee State Normal School opened as one of three teacher preparatory schools in the state of Tennessee. MTSU occupies more than 1,000 acres in Rutherford County including a 500-acre main campus, an agricultural campus, an aerospace facility at the Murfreesboro Airport, and the Miller Horse Science Center.

MTSU houses a wide variety of nationally recognized academic degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's, specialist, and doctoral levels. The University is composed of eight undergraduate colleges, with more than 40 departments and over 140 degree programs. The College of Graduate Studies offers more than 100 degree programs. Since 1911, MTSU has graduated more than 100,000 students. Despite the University's growth from a campus of 100 acres, 125 students, and a faculty of 18, to an academic city of 1,000 acres, more than 22,000 students, and a faculty of more than 950, the institution is still essentially a "people's university" with a concern for the diverse needs of the community that it serves.

Middle Tennessee State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master, and doctoral degrees. MTSU maintains a close and personal quality of interaction with faculty and students and the community it serves.

In January 2022, MTSU was notified that it had attained [R2 'high research activity' Carnegie classification status](#). The research activities of MLS Program status made a small yet strong contribution towards that status by having two tenure-track assistant professors as part of its faculty complement.

Program Accomplishments

Middle Tennessee State University's (MTSU's) Master of Library Science (MLS) Program has made tremendous strides in its program and administrative development since its first application for precandidacy in 2016, as well since we were granted precandidacy for accreditation status in 2020. The MLS Program began offering the library science discipline's terminal degree in August 2016. Prior to this date, the Womack Educational Leadership Department, the administrative home of the MLS Program, offered a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision Degree, with a Library Science Concentration. During that time, the program trained teachers as students in principles of librarianship rather than educating students to become librarians and other types of information professionals. Shortly after August 2016, the former Program Coordinator of the MLS Program prepared and submitted two applications for precandidacy towards accreditation: one in November 2016 and another in April 2017. Following extensive improvement in the MLS Program's course offerings and other related actions, the MLS Program was awarded precandidacy for accreditation status in June 2020.

Briefly, below are some of the MLS Program's accomplishments since the adoption of the Master of Library Science degree in 2016.

- 1) The MLS Program, along with the rest of the College of Education, earned accreditation by the *Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation* (CAEP) in April 2022, both for the initial licensure of school librarians as well as an advanced program for preparing school librarians who are licensed already. The self-report and site visit, completed in Fall 2021, and the subsequent analysis of all College data, including that of the MLS Program, determined there were no areas for improvement, and no stipulations for our new CAEP accreditation. Because of this, MTSU's College of Education and our education partners at the university have received the CAEP *Frank Murray Award for Continuous Improvement*. The MTSU College of Education is one of *only 32* EPPs in the nation to receive this award.
- 2) Six (6) new 100% online courses have been approved and are being offered to our students: LIBS 6401; LIBS 6106; LIBS 6700; and, LIBS 6201, These new courses address several important and diverse topics appropriate to our discipline, such as public, academic, and special librarianship, library instruction, and library leadership, among other topics. With the inclusion of these courses, the MLS Program is now a truly comprehensive librarian/information professional graduate education program.
- 3) MTSU has provided substantial investments in both financial, in-kind, and administrative support from other university academic units such as MTSU Online, the College of Graduate Studies, and the James E. Walker Library. These investments demonstrate the University's immediate and long-term interest in the MLS Program attaining and maintaining ALA accreditation.
- 4) The MLS Program has renamed a number of courses and updated descriptions while the courses undergo revision to reflect contemporary terminology used in the discipline.

- 5) New data collection instruments have been designed and created to help the MLS Program engage in a culture of systematic planning, help faculty achieve program objectives, and monitor how the Program can improve student success.
- 6) MLS Program faculty have designed a number of appropriate program and dispositional rubrics for CAEP accreditation process. Applying these rubrics will provide the MLS faculty additional data for quality assurance. These quality assurance measures will enhance the Program's curriculum, which will equip our students to be successful in their graduate education and professional lives.
- 7) The MLS Program is in the process of creating a dual degree option with the Master of Social Work Program. Students will graduate with both the MSW and the MLS degree for a combined 60 credit hours. This proposed dual degree is being reviewed by university curriculum committee and by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) with anticipated offering in Fall 2023. In addition, the MLS Program has worked with MTSU's Master of Arts in History with the Public History concentration to allow MLS students interested in archival studies to pursue related elective course work in the MPH Program and to allow students in the MPH Program to complete relevant MLS Program courses (see [Appendix 2](#)). The MLS Program continues to review additional possible partnerships with our fellow university programs in order to make MTSU the destination for a library science education in Tennessee and the southeast United States.

Consistent with MTSU's mission of being a student-focused tertiary educational institution, the accomplishments and opportunities listed above have placed MTSU's MLS Program on a path for long-term success to meet and exceed ALA's accreditation standards. However, the faculty of the MLS Program have even loftier goals. All of us are working towards these goals beyond the most immediate and important goal of achieving recognition of ALA accreditation. Once the MLS Program has achieved accreditation, we will propose that our degree change from the Master of Library Science to the Master of Library and Information Science based on the inclusion of new courses, and course content changes, that address firmly many of the topics claimed to be the focus of the iSchools or Information Schools. Finally, as the MLS Program's student enrollment continues to grow, we plan to propose to MTSU's senior administration that the MLS Program become its own administrative department or school within the College of Education, similar and equal to that of our current administrative parent, the Womack Family Educational Leadership Department.

Size of the Program

Table 1 - Number of Degree-Seeking and Non-Degree Seeking Candidates from Year 1 of the MLS Program to Today

Academic Year	Full-Time Headcount, MLS (Unduplicated)	Part-Time Headcount, MLS (Undup.)	Endorsement (non-degree) students (Undup.)	Total Headcount (Undup.)	FTE (9 credits/ semester), MLS & Endorsement (Duplicated)	MLS/M.Ed. Graduates/ Academic Year
2016 (Year 1)	6	37	18	42	34	11
2017	16	47	13	55	48	13
2018	21	67	16	72	76	21
2019	20	67	16	75	74	12
2020	25	74	7	84	88	25
2021	25	72	6	80	75	22

2022 (Fall only)	11	35	1	46	32	5
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**All student headcount data available publicly at <https://mtsu.edu/iepr/bi.php>.*

The MLS Program offers rolling enrollment, with student intake at the beginning of the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Because of this, and to help our current and future students' progress as quickly as they are able through their respective plan of study, the MLS Program offers a balanced course rotation. Core, mandatory courses are offered at least twice per year, with the exception of our two library management courses, and electives are offered once per year. With the introduction of so many new elective courses in the course rotation schedule, the schedule is reviewed each semester to make changes to course offerings so that we minimize the likelihood of any course cancellations. Program faculty also teach an undergraduate education course (LIBS 4150 Books, Media, and Literacy for Children). The graduate faculty load at MTSU is 12 credits per full-time tenured faculty member with a floor of 8 and a cap of 15 students per course section taught. The load for full-time temporary faculty (non-tenure track) is 15 credits as they have no research or service responsibilities. The load for an adjunct is a maximum of 9 credit hours per semester. There are 3 full-time faculty for the MLS Program (2 on tenure track, 1 full-time temporary). Adjuncts are employed for courses over the workloads of the faculty. The Department Chair is relieved of instruction load and the Program Coordinator has a reduced load due to administrative demands. All faculty must obtain graduate faculty status <https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/faculty/index.php>.

The Summer teaching load is assigned at the request of the faculty member. It is paid on a separate faculty contract. Faculty may teach up to 9 credits during the Summer semester. Fall and Spring semesters are 15 weeks in length, while the Summer semester is concentrated into 12 weeks.

As was mentioned in the MLS Program's precandidacy application, our expectation that our enrollment numbers, comprised of a combination of licensure and non-licensure students, would increase substantially even though ALA-accreditation had not yet been obtained, has been realized. While the majority of our students continue to be concentrated in the school licensure area, our number of students interested in generalist librarian studies has increased substantially. With the adoption of a new student intake survey, the MLS Program can now make determinations as to where our students plan initially to focus their studies; in either school, public, academic, or special/corporate librarianship. Once candidacy with the American Library Association is attained, the MLS Program will work quickly to complete the process for accreditation through our data collection, analysis, and program changes as needed. During the 2 years in which accreditation is still not in place, we anticipate that student enrollment will continue to increase as the accreditation review process approaches.

There continues to be very high interest in the Program and partnerships are being formed to recruit students. Even though the MLS Program is 100% online for its course work, we draw students from across the state; however, we enroll new students primarily from the Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin, TN Metro Area, a geographic region of over 2 million persons.¹ Just under 50% of our students come from Rutherford, Davidson, and Williamson

¹ U.S. Census Bureau (2021). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin, TN Metro Area <<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/31000US34980-nashville-davidson-murfreesboro-franklin-tn-metro-area/>>

counties, all part of the Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN metro area. Without ALA accreditation, the program will remain as it is now—primarily for school licensure with a minority of students finding employment in public, academic, and special libraries.

Governance of the Program

The College of Education serves under the direction of the Dean who assumes leadership to identify, implement, and evaluate standards of excellence for the preparation of reflective education and information practitioners. The Dean has a college budget and sees to the health of the college as a whole. The Dean reports to the Provost.

The MLS Program's academic "home" is within the Womack Educational Leadership Department, which is one of two departments in the College of Education. The Chair of the Womack Educational Leadership Department, Dr. Donald Snead, is the chief administrative officer of the department. He is responsible for representing the department and its associated programs to the university administration and to the Dean of the College of Education. Besides the MLS Program, the Chair of Educational Leadership is also the chief administrative officer of programs in Administration and Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction, M.Ed. in ESL Program, and Professional Counseling. The Chair is in essence the MLS Program's administrative director and has standing and salary similar to other Program Directors and Chairs in the COE.

The **Department Chair**, as the chief administrative officer of the Womack Educational Leadership Department:

- Allocates the departmental budget.
- Hires faculty in the program.
- Oversees the health of the Library Science Program as a whole.
- Analyzes data submitted by the Program Coordinator.
- Sets goals and objectives in collaboration with the Program Coordinator.
- Is a liaison to the university and college administration and communicates all relevant information to the Program Coordinator.

The **Program Coordinator** has the responsibility for developing, reviewing, and updating curriculum, identifying program and student learning outcomes, assessment, program management, student recruitment, and advising. Other responsibilities for the MLS Program's Program Coordinator include:

- Submitting budget requests to the Program Director and the University library for materials needed in the program and spending the funds allocated to the program.
- Communicating with the Graduate Studies office.
- Setting policies and procedures for admissions, curriculum, advising, and program accountability.
- Overseeing admission to the program.
- Supervising curriculum design and the movement of curriculum changes through the University processes.

- Serving as the advisor for all MLS students.
- Determining teaching assignments.
- Recommending the hiring of specific faculty for the program, including tenure-track, full-time temporary, and adjunct faculty.
- Supervising student recruiting activities and other marketing and promotional events.
- Initiating interdisciplinary relationships for courses and collaboration, including research, between academic programs on campus.

The Program Coordinator has standing and salary similar to other Program Coordinators in the department and college based on his tenure-track rank. The departmental secretaries and executive aides handle the preparation of documents for travel, purchasing, and hiring as well as ordering supplies, support MLS Program instructors, schedule courses based on direction from the Program Coordinator, assist students generally, and route prospective students to the Program Coordinator for application guidance.

Committee Structure for the Curricular Process

Curriculum at MTSU is assessed at several levels of the university's administrative structure.

At the **departmental** level: Departmental Curriculum Committee

At the **college** level: College Curriculum Committee

At the **Graduate Studies** level: The Graduate Council

At the **Provost** level: The Vice Provost for Academic Programs and the University Provost

MTSU Online requires all new and revised online courses to be designed in conjunction with instructional designers and must meet their approval along with that of the Department Chair once the course's content has been loaded completely into the course shell

https://www.mtsu.edu/online/faculty/faculty_course_development.php.

The Program Coordinator or Program faculty who wish to create new courses following consultation with the Coordinator initiates the new course proposal for curricular changes. At any level, the proposal may be rejected and returned. Committees can table the proposal until additional information is provided. The proposal is submitted to the Departmental Committee for approval; if approved the proposal moves to the College and then on to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council has a subcommittee, which meets on curriculum changes and then proposes a consent calendar for curriculum changes. Once approved, the Graduate Council publishes the minutes (monthly) and then implements the changes at the semester indicated on the proposal.

Closing Introductory Comments

With this background of the MLS Program presented to you above within the larger context of Middle Tennessee State University and the region that the university serves, we would now like to demonstrate how the MLS Program has been working towards ALA's accreditation standards and readiness for candidacy status for accreditation. We recognize clearly the importance of adhering to standards in our discipline and profession. Librarian preparatory programs, like the MLS Program, must adhere to standards for the information professions so that our graduates

can meet their own respective potential while also succeeding in serving their communities' information needs according to the MLS Program's vision and mission.

Standard I

SUMMARY STATEMENT AND OVERALL GOAL:

The MLS Program has progressed rapidly since its inception as a full library science program in 2016. The MLS Program is highly confident with that, with candidacy status plus the achievement of the action steps listed above, we will be ready for a successful self-study and site visit in early 2025. With the work achieved already prior to formally applying for candidacy, we believe that we have substantively met or exceeded most of the Standards for accreditation. The MLS Program will continue to measure our progress with the Standards on an on-going basis.

The MLS Program has aligned its courses to the Program's student learning objectives (SLOs) (see Table 1.1). The faculty identifies individual students who are not successful in attaining the SLOs not only by grades, but also through responses to course specific activities such as field experience mentor assessment feedback, course discussion posts, communications between instructor and student, etc. Examination of the courses, course assessments such as assignments, papers, discussions, etc., admission policies, and remediation plans yield the evidence that help program staff decide what changes or refinements are needed to the course to improve student outcomes. The MLS Program also makes the determination that these actions are taken based on the assessment of other data collected in various forms by the Program. These data include Praxis II examination scores by students focusing on school librarianship; the assessment of rubric data collected in LiveText for the purposes of maintaining CAEP accreditation; analysis of student exit survey data submitted by graduating students; grading of students' exitPortfolio culminating assignment using a CAEP-oriented rubric; and, analysis of graduating students' employment survey data collected six months after the students' graduating semester.

While benchmarking the MLS Program's attributes with those of other library and information science (LIS) programs has been very helpful for the Program's development, the major and primary driver for change in the MLS Program is the assessment of all data that are collected. Data sources include exit, employment, and employer surveys, our work with our professional constituency of practicing information professionals across the middle Tennessee region, and LiveText, a data service subscribed to by the College of Education, which houses rubrics and their use for assessing key student learning outcome assessments for our accreditation efforts with the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparers (CAEP). The Program also analyzes and assess the Statements of Purpose written and submitted by applicants to the MLS Program as part of the admissions and CAEP accreditation processes. In addition, the Program analyzes data from field experience assessments for both school and generalist library students as a formative mid-program assessment. Finally, the Program assesses the students' exitPortfolios, using another CAEP rubric based again on our stated student learning objectives (SLO) just prior to graduation (a passing grade on the exitPortfolio record is needed to graduate). The assessments mentioned above enable systematic assessment of student progress toward graduation and enable uniform understanding by faculty of what is happening in the Program. The ongoing reviews of the data enable the Program Coordinator to bring to MLS Program instructors' attention potential deficits in current learning methodologies and pedagogies so they may be adjusted to be brought into line with desired outcomes.

In order to fulfill its [mission](#), Middle Tennessee State University "fosters a student-centered environment conducive to lifelong learning, personal development, and success." This

particular goal of mission fulfillment has been taken on as seriously by the MLS Program. By focusing on student success, all other University stakeholders are regarded as important partners. The MLS Program considers relationships with alumni, employers, and community practitioners as invaluable. The relationships are nurtured and sought after. Volunteer work, provision of educational opportunities, and serious discussion on solutions to current problems are essential components of faculty work. Faculty service on public library boards and in public library branches and on MTSU's standing University Library Committee are examples of such work. Data from our student exit surveys and the alumni employment surveys further substantiate that we are meeting program and student learning goals and objectives.

The MLS Program archives data such as reports of exit and employment survey results and meeting minutes and videos for future reference by all MLS Program faculty and for substantiation. Changes to the MLS Program are recorded in meeting minutes by the Program Coordinator that are then stored on the MLS Program TEAMS folder. For less formal decision making and given the distributed nature of the 100% online MLS Program, emails between the Program Coordinator and other program faculty are retained long-term, as per state records retention requirements. These communications also may be used as evidence of substantiation of decisions made for program improvement and future planning. In fact, when addressing the concerns of students with an eye on school librarianship who were enrolled in the MLS Program in Spring 2022, and who also were pursuing initial teacher licensure through the study and application of edTPA teaching standards, emails became a primary source of data that led to changing the MLS Program's plan of study for MLS degree seeking students pursuing initial licensure. Our students felt that they were unprepared for the use of edTPA, which started being used by the Tennessee Department of Education and the College of Education in Fall 2021 without informing the MLS Program of this change. Those emails led to meetings first with all students affected by that change, and then with College of Education Faculty who advised the MLS Program with the best way to change its curriculum/plan of study for those same initial licensure students. Now, thanks to the students who contacted the Program Coordinator in Spring 2022 by email, the details/data contained in those emails, the meeting minutes and videos of our meetings with MLS students and College faculty, and the guidance of the MLS Program's Advisory Council (MAC) who agreed that a change was necessary, the MLS Program has submitted already official curriculum changes to this plan of study that will become formalized in Fall in 2023. This is but one example, but an important one, of how the MLS Program uses all types of data, regardless their formality, to meet numerous standards and improve the MLS Program and our students' educational experiences during their time with us.

1.1 The program's mission and goals, both administrative and educational, are pursued, and its program objectives achieved, through implementation of an ongoing, broad-based, systematic planning process that involves the constituencies that the program seeks to serve. Elements of systematic planning include:

1.1.1 Continuous review and revision of the program's vision, mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes

The MLS Program's clearly articulated values, vision, mission, student learning outcomes, goals, and program objectives have served the Program well through their review through updates for the MLS Program's assessment data we submit annually in fulfillment of SACSCOC requirements. They also served the Program well through its self-study for our Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Regardless, with the MLS Program on the precipice of possible candidacy, Program faculty and their program constituents

will review the values, vision, mission, outcomes, goals and program objectives in a more robust manner starting in January 2023. This will be a more focused and robust review than we have had in the past, using a SWOT review of the MLS Program that will, along with our collected assessment data, help us determine if these values, vision, mission, outcomes, goals, and program objectives suit us as well with *possible* ALA accreditation as they have with CAEP and SACSCOC accreditation.

As it stands now, the MLS Program's decisions have been informed by the numerous communities served by the MLS Program. One such community is the information professionals who represent school, public, academic, and special libraries, a library vendor, and two student representatives, all of whom serve on the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC) and with whom MLS Program faculty meet once a year. Council members give their feedback to proposed changes to the Program's foundational statements and to other related documentation once per year, at the same time as when the faculty complete their review of the Program's foundational statements and other related documentation, thus far always at the beginning of the Fall semester.

The other community the MLS Program relies on for program and SLO improvements is our student body. Student feedback has been, and will continue to play, an extremely important role in decision-making as the Program works towards accreditation. The MLS Program will continue using student exit surveys to understand the student experience in the MLS Program. The exit survey asks students about advising, curriculum, the field experience (practicum), MTSU physical facilities, and administrative and support staff. The MLS Program will also continue collecting data from our graduates/alumni through an employment survey disseminated at least six months after a calendar year cohort's graduation. This survey helps inform Program faculty about our graduates' success in finding employment in the library and information science fields and to communicate to the Program how well the professional dispositions learned during their plan of study have applied to their current professional positions both from their respective perspectives and from the perspective of their respective employers. These data are supplemented by employer data collected and supplied to the MLS Program from the College of Education's Associate Dean who serves also as the College's Director of Assessment and Accreditation.

1.1.2 Assessment of attainment of program goals, program objectives, and student learning outcomes;

The MLS Program assesses attainment of program goals, program objectives, and student learning outcomes regularly as part of its contribution to MTSU's accreditation with the Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The MLS Program, like all MTSU programs, must assess its success of reaching both student learning and program outcomes; it does the same for the College of Education's Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP) accreditation for again measuring program and student learning outcomes; and, finally, for the ALA accreditation we are working towards. In preparation for the progression toward candidacy, the MLS Program has aligned courses to the Program's goals and objectives and initiated techniques to measure this progression and course alignment (Table 1.1).

Student learning outcomes are represented by certain key assessments. Students include these key assessments on their final exitPortfolio which also includes their reflections on the

assignments associated with the assessments. The rubric for assessing the exitPortfolio was developed for our CAEP accreditation and is the final measure of the Program's assessment of a student's path through their studies.

We will continue reviewing these assessments and the rubrics associated with them. We also will record the results of this review formally and carefully during our monthly program faculty meetings to determine if they meet our program's student learning objectives still. This will help ensure this record of our efforts communicate accurate data for our next CAEP review and our eventual ALA self-study exercise.

I.1.3 Improvements to the program based on analysis of assessment data;

The MLS Program relies substantially on data collected through our various assessment tools to make program improvements. It relies on its various surveys (exit and employment), surveys from the College of Education (employers), the MLS Program Advisory Council comprised of students and practicing library professionals, and on our rubric data that we use for assessing our students for our CAEP accreditation. The MLS Program also relies on assessment data from outside sources such as Praxis to help ensure those whom we educate for school librarianship are successful based on their pedagogical knowledge of librarianship.

The MLS Program has benefited from adherence to this standard. Nowhere has this been seen more than it does for our students' clinical experience, regardless whether it pertains to the MLS Program's field experience or to student teaching. As an illustrative example, former Tennessee Department of Education school endorsement policy mandated that school librarian education preparation programs required its school library endorsement students complete 200 clinical hours in school libraries. While conforming to that policy, the MLS Program allowed students to complete their clinical hours in two 100-hour blocks in two different semesters to not be too onerous on student personal and professional time. These 100-hour blocks are broken down into 60 ours of hands-on work at one site library and 40 hours of observation at a minimum of three different libraries. Program faculty felt that this was a rather convoluted approach to having students complete hands-on experience. Based on feedback from student surveys and from especially the MLS Program Advisory Council, the MLS Program has submitted a formal curriculum revision to MTSU to instead allow students to complete one mandatory 100-hour field experience in the library of their choice and allow students to complete one additional 100-hour field experience in another library as an elective in case the student believes that they require more hands-on experience.

Individual faculty benefit personally and professionally from these assessment data. For instance, the MLS Program's Coordinator relies on exit survey data to gauge the effectiveness of his student advising whereupon he adjusts this responsibility accordingly based on this feedback.

The MLS Program has a long and successful record in using assessment data to improve program and student learning outcomes. The MLS Program will now take greater care to record these decisions, related deliberations, and the resultant outcomes. The MLS Program video records all meetings that have been held since pre-candidacy status was granted; however, more detailed minutes must be recorded to help Program faculty recall better past discussions and resultant outcomes

I.1.4 Communication of planning policies and processes to program constituents. The program has a written mission statement and a written strategic or long-range plan that provides vision

and direction for its future, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals, and is supported by university administration. The program's goals and objectives are consistent with the values of the parent institution and the culture and mission of the program and foster quality education.

The MLS Program ensures constant communication between its faculty and its constituents in many different ways. However, there are numerous instances where these communications are more formalized for the purposes of program assessment. For instance, each year when we meet with our MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC), we revisit the MLS Program's vision, mission, goals, and other related topics to determine if based on the MLS Program's performance is matching these. It is challenging to meet MAC members in person at an annual retreat, so we attempt to meet over Zoom. The major benefit of such virtual meetings is that we may record the meeting for further future review and posterity. Our MAC was instrumental in helping us make a final determination about the future make up of our field experience (practicum). Since the MLS Program is a practitioner-based program, faculty were concerned that making only one field experience mandatory and the other one an elective would affect the reputation and quality of our graduates as practice-ready librarians. However, the MAC agreed unanimously that this change to our plans of study would benefit students in other ways, such as having 3 credit hours "freed" from one of the two formerly mandatory field experience that could be used for one of our new elective courses. When other data are considered, such as the topics graduating students believe should be offered as they express in their respective exit survey, we believe that the MAC helped us make an excellent decision. The MLS Program WILL produce practice-ready librarians still, but they will have a broader and deeper understanding and knowledge of librarianship.

The primary strategic plan of the MLS Program has been articulated as follows:

- 1) Work towards, and achieve, American Library Association accreditation;
- 2) Once accredited by ALA, propose to MTSU and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) that the MLS Program offer a Master of Library *and Information Science* (MLIS) degree to reflect the changes in our curriculum that incorporates concepts, theories, and practices claimed by the information sciences;
- 3) Change the name of the MLS Program accordingly based on the new degree name; and,
- 4) Work on an academic unit status change to the MLS/MLIS Program to become its own department or school within the College of Education with its own department/school chair who would report directly to the College's Dean. This would give what we would anticipate being a quickly growing, ALA-accredited LIS department/school control over its financial resources.

We anticipate that actions 2-3 would be accomplished within one year after earning accreditation from ALA. Action 4 would depend on enrollment numbers and the respective size of the then-LIS department/school, but we hope this could be done prior to our first post-initial accreditation self-study and review.

1.2 Systematic Planning. Clearly defined student learning outcomes are a critical part of the program's goals. These outcomes describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation. They enable a faculty to arrive at a common understanding of the expectations for student learning and to achieve consistency across the curriculum. Student

learning outcomes reflect the entirety of the learning experience to which students have been exposed.

The MLS Program's student learning outcomes (SLOs) are available on the Program Web site along with the Program's vision and mission. These outcomes were determined through consideration of the Program's vision and mission in conjunction with consideration of ALA's [Core Competencies of Librarianship](#) (soon to be updated) within the [Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies](#) and other related standards such as the ALA/AASL (American Association of School Librarianship)/CAEP (Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation) [School Librarian Preparation Standards](#) (2019). Upon completion of their studies, MLS Program graduates and endorsement completers should be able to:

- Represent the profession according to professional codes and standards and according to community expectations
- Appreciate and address the information needs of diverse (access, ability, location, identity) communities
- Embrace opportunities for practice in all facets of librarianship and other information professions
- Engage in advocacy and outreach for the profession of librarianship and other information professions
- Create and sustain robust information organizations of all types and sizes
- Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and advance information professions through innovative: research; entrepreneurship; teaching; and, practice

The link between the MLS Program's student learning outcomes in relation to the more specific standards in I.2 along with the core courses that help students realize these outcomes are presented in Table 1.1. More details follow the table.

Table 1.1 Standard Alignments with MLS Program Student Learning Outcomes and Related Courses

	MLS Program SLOs	Related Courses
I.2.1 The essential character of the field of library and information studies;	Represent the profession according to professional codes and standards and according to community expectations	LIBS 6000 <i>Librarianship</i>
I.2.2 The philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field;	Represent the profession according to professional codes and standards and according to community expectations.	LIBS 6000 <i>Librarianship</i> ; LIBS 6015 <i>Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction</i>
I.2.3 Appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and	Embrace opportunities for practice in all facets of librarianship and other information professions	LIBS 6000 <i>Librarianship</i> ; LIBS 6100 <i>Management of Libraries</i> ; LIBS 6105

documents of relevant professional organizations;		<i>School Library Management</i>
I.2.4 The importance of research to the advancement of the field's knowledge base	Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and advance information professions through innovative: research; entrepreneurship; teaching; and, practice	LIBS 6060, <i>Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries</i> ; LIBS 6100 <i>Management of Libraries</i> ; LIBS 6105 <i>School Library Management</i>
I.2.5 The symbiotic relationship of library and information studies with other fields	Create and sustain robust information organizations of all types and sizes; Embrace opportunities for practice in all facets of librarianship and other information professions	LIBS 6060 <i>Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries</i> ; LIBS 6020 <i>Organization of Information</i> (archives and museums); LIBS 6100 <i>Management of Libraries</i> ; LIBS 6105 <i>School Library Management</i>
I.2.6 The role of library and information services in a diverse global society, including the role of serving the needs of underserved groups	Appreciate and address the information needs of diverse (access, ability, location, identity) communities.	LIBS 6000 <i>Librarianship</i> ; LIBS 6015 <i>Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction</i>
I.2.7 The role of library and information services in a rapidly changing technological society	Engage in advocacy and outreach for the profession of librarianship and other information professions	LIBS 6030 <i>Information Technology for Information Professionals</i>
I.2.8 The needs of the constituencies that the program seeks to serve.	Appreciate and address the information needs of diverse (access, ability, location, identity) communities; Engage in advocacy and outreach for the profession of librarianship and other information professions	LIBS 6015 <i>Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction</i> ; LIBS 6115 <i>Collection Development & User Services</i> ; LIBS 6100 <i>Management of Libraries</i> ; LIBS 6105 <i>School Library Management</i>

Student learning outcomes address:

1.2.1 The essential character of the field of library and information studies;

All MLS degree students are advised to start their studies by completing our core courses as early as they can in their graduate studies. These core courses provide our students with a solid foundation in librarianship, address any prerequisites for our electives, and these courses prepare them well for their required field experiences.

The MLS Program's LIBS 6000 *Librarianship* course addresses this specific standard through course topics such as: the Profession of Librarianship; the History of Librarianship; Different Types of Libraries; Different Types of Librarians; the Role of the Library; Censorship; and, Ethics in the Library.

1.2.2 The philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field;

Three MLS Program core courses address this specific standard: LIBS 6000 *Librarianship*, LIBS 6015 *Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction*, and LIBS 6060 *Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries*. LIBS 6000 and 6015 instruct the student especially about the formative documents created by ALA such as the ALA Bill of Rights whereas LIBS 6060 instructs students about research ethics especially, while making links to other ethical considerations from the other courses for various related topics such as confidentiality and anonymity.

1.2.3 Appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations;

Besides LIBS 6000 *Librarianship*, LIBS 6100 *Management of Libraries*, and LIBS 6105 *School Library Management*, our courses in public, academic, and special libraries also address this standard.

1.2.4 the importance of research to the advancement of the field's knowledge base;

The MLS Program's LIBS 6060 *Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries* course addresses this specific standard through the introduction of numerous quantitative and qualitative research methodology topics to students and how these methods may be used to assist with data-driven decision making as a practicing information professional. For professional environments that require research for the purposes of promotion and/or tenure, students practice preparation for creating such research studies by developing a research proposal of original action, basic, or applied research.

1.2.5 The symbiotic relationship of library and information studies with other fields;

LIBS 6060 *Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries*; LIBS 6020 *Organization of Information* (archives and museums); LIBS 6100 *Management of Libraries*; LIBS 6105 *School Library Management*, all of which are required courses, address this standard.

1.2.6 The role of library and information services in a diverse global society, including the role of serving the needs of underserved groups;

Along with the work of two MLS Program Faculty who serve on the advisory board of the College of Education's Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity, our courses LIBS 6000 *Librarianship* and LIBS 6015 *Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and*

Instruction address the role of serving the needs of underserved groups as do our other courses.

1.2.7 The role of library and information services in a rapidly changing technological society;

The MLS Program's LIBS 6030 *Information Technology for Information Professionals* addresses this standard in considering, among many other topics, the political nature of technological artifacts and how these have impacted library services; or the ethics of how certain technological artifacts, such as search engines, affect information retrieval and how librarians serve the role of helping their patrons find the best information for their needs accordingly.

1.2.8 The needs of the constituencies that a program seeks to serve.

Our courses LIBS 6015 *Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction*; LIBS 6115 *Collection Development & User Services*; LIBS 6100 *Management of Libraries*; and LIBS 6105 *School Library Management* address this standard in numerous ways.

In addition, the MLS Program meets the needs of our constituency of school libraries by providing outstanding qualified graduates for librarians for schools across the state of Tennessee and beyond as our CAEP accreditation testifies and as our Praxis II Library Media Specialist Subject Assessment pass rate (97.4%) and average examination score (168) attests. In addition to other metrics, the MLS Program tracks our graduates' Praxis score.

1.3 Systematic Planning. Program goals and objectives incorporate the value of teaching and service to the field.

As a unit in the College of Education, the MLS Program regards teaching as integral to the professional skills and dispositions for all librarians. While this is emphasized particularly with our licensure students, the MLS Program also provides our generalist students opportunities to develop further their appreciation of teaching and service to the field. In support of this, it should be noted that one of the MLS Program's student learning outcomes includes the following text: "Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and advance information professions through innovative: research; entrepreneurship; teaching; and, practice."

The MLS Program's devotion to this standard is demonstrated in two ways. One such way is with our core course, LIBS 6015 *Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction*. Service to users is the core of teaching. Therefore, analysis of users' needs is the starting point for many assessments of our students' competencies. The second way this student learning objective is reinforced also by the availability of a new course, LIBS 6345 *Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals*. The description for this course as found in our [*Library Science Handbook*](#) is as follows: "This course is intended to provide students with an introduction to the concepts, theories, and practice of instructing users in information environments. The focus of the course will be on instruction for adult users in academic, public, and other library settings. This course is designed for students with little or no background in educational theory. The course will include readings, discussions, and reflections in addition to observations of library instruction. Students will create instructional sessions and materials, both traditional and electronic." This course is offered every Spring semester and has proved to be one of our more popular electives. Finally, students, through their required field experiences, are given the opportunity to *apply* what they have learned as it pertains to teaching/instruction. As part of a student's formative assessment during their field experience, students seeking school library media specialist endorsement are evaluated using the TEAM rubric by their field

experience site sponsor and our generalist (public, academic, special) librarian students also are evaluated for the program/lessons created by the student using a rubric similar to that of TEAM rubric, ensuring as-rigorous evaluation of our generalist librarian students.

1.4 Systematic Planning. Within the context of these Standards each program is judged on the extent to which it attains its objectives. In accord with the mission of the program, clearly defined, publicly stated, and regularly reviewed program goals and objectives form the essential frame of reference for meaningful external and internal evaluation.

1.4.1 The evaluation of program goals and objectives involves those served: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.

The MLS Program has formed, and consulted at least twice, the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC). It is comprised of academic, special/corporate, public, and school librarians as well as a librarian who represents an important library vendor, Ingram Group. The policy document that articulates the MAC's charge as well as providing a listing of MAC members is found in [Appendix 1A](#). Note as well that the MAC includes two students so that their voices may be heard as it pertains to the evaluation of the MLS Program's goals and objectives. As it stands currently, the MAC finds the MLS Program's program goals and objectives sufficient moving forward; however, these will continue to be revisited at each annual MAC meeting and will be documented in the respective meeting minutes.

1.5 Systematic Planning. The program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of the program's success in achieving its mission, goals and objectives.

Considering the size of the MLS Program's faculty complement (2 tenure-track, one full-time temporary), there is not yet the need to form program committees to assist with ongoing decision-making processes. However, the Program has determined a definite need to increase the frequency of our own program meetings to document evidence in a more formal and more regular process. These meetings started during Fall 2022 and are scheduled to occur either immediately before or after the Educational Leadership Department's own meetings, which also started holding monthly meetings during the same semester. Regardless the frequency of Department meetings in the future, the MLS Program will continue to hold program meetings monthly, with the exception of Summer semester. This frequency will also help with memory retention of past meetings, resulting in better recall of past decisions and more time-efficient meetings.

As a result of these meetings and other data sources, the MLS Program maintains, and will continue to build upon, the substantial empirical evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes that will demonstrate to the COA in our future self-study for accreditation that the Program is achieving its mission, goals, and objectives. All data used for this purpose are stored on a shared folder on MS Teams so that all Program faculty have access to these files.

Examples of these data include: 1) exit and employment survey raw data and the reports created based on these data for faculty reading and review; 2) MLS Program meeting minutes and videos of these meetings; and 3) meeting minutes and videos for our annual MLS Program Advisory Council meetings. These data are supplemented further by 1) *employer* survey data shared directly with the MLS Program by the College of Education's Dean's office from their own data collection instruments designed to assist with CAEP accreditation; and 2) individual data such as emails shared between Program faculty and between Program faculty and students, all of which must be retained by individual faculty as per state legislated records

retention policies. All data stored in the MS Teams folder contain all pertinent documents and other data that pertain to the program's development since its creation in 2016. An example of how these data assist with the systematic evaluation used to improve the program and to plan for the future may be found below in I.6.

I.6 Systematic Planning. The program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation are systematically used to improve the program and to plan for the future.

The data sources described above in standard I.5 have assisted the MLS Program with decision making for program improvement and for increasing student learning. For example, our 2021 employment survey ([Appendix 1B](#)) revealed, based on a 67% response rate, that 100% of MLS graduate respondents found employment in information-based professions during that calendar year. This was a substantial improvement over 2019 where only 60% of our graduates had found employment in information-based professions during the height of the COVID pandemic, and an improvement over the 2020 results, where 80% of that year's graduates realized similar success (it also was noted that the 2019 employment-finding rate was below the MLS Program's stated [program objective](#) of "80% of all MLS Program students will have secured a position in librarianship or a similar information-based profession (e.g., librarian, archivist, museum staff, knowledge manager, indexer) or information-based organization within one year following their graduation/completion of their degree or non-degree plan of study"). Based on this information, and the continuing strength of our graduates' success of finding such employment in past employment surveys, as well as based on feedback from our MLS Advisory Council, the MLS Program is making a change to its plans of study ([Appendix 1C](#)) for all student types (degree seeking MLS students and non-degree endorsement-only students). Instead of requiring students to complete two 100-hour field experiences (3 credit hours each, 6 credits total), they will, upon final approval of this proposed change, be required to complete only one 100-hour field experience, and they will have the option to complete another one if they wish as an elective. This gives our MLS students much more flexibility in how they decide to design their plan of study as this gives them another 3 credit hours to use for another course elective, increasing their options to increase their knowledge of library and information science. This also will help improve our course electives enrollments as we have had challenges in having some of these classes reach the MTSU minimum enrollment requirements of 8 students.

Standard II

II.1 The curriculum is based on goals and objectives and evolves in response to an ongoing systematic planning process involving representation from all constituencies. Within this general framework, the curriculum provides, through a variety of educational experiences, for the study of theory, principles, practice, and legal and ethical issues and values necessary for the provision of service in libraries and information agencies and in other contexts. The curriculum is revised regularly to keep it current.

The Mission/Goals/Objectives of the MTSU College of Education's Library Science program drive the Program's curriculum design. With an eye toward pre-candidacy, then candidacy, the Program uses the following to inform its curriculum:

- The ALA competencies (initiate level of attainment)
- The MTSU College of Education Framework
- The Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) / Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards
- The competencies from professional library organizations such as SLA, AASL, RUSA, and ALSC (initiate level of attainment)
- Benchmarking the MLS Program's curriculum with that of other LIS programs across the English-speaking world for general guidance

The Program maps all courses and verifies that all ALA core competencies are covered. ([See Appendix 2A](#)) While the mapping is not thoroughly exhaustive, it does demonstrate in a number of cases that many courses may address the same competency but according to the goals of the specific courses. Table II.1.1 below maps courses to the Standard II elements (theory, principles, practice, legal and ethical issues, and values). After the instructor, in consultation with the Program Coordinator, assigns the course's goals, then the instructor determines the course's objectives.

THE CURRICULUM

Table II.1-Courses and Elements in Standard II

Theory	LIBS 6000 Librarianship
	LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services
	LIBS 6020 Organization of Information
	LIBS 6015 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction
	LIBS 6030 Information Technology for Information Professionals
	LIBS 6340 Integration of Learning Theory, Library Programs, and Technology
	LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries OR LIBS 6105 School Library Management
	LIBS 6106 Introduction to Leadership in Libraries
Principles	LIBS 6020 Organization of Information
	LIBS 6030 Information Technology for Information Professionals
	LIBS 6060 Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries
	LIBS 6330 Digital Library Collections
	LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services

Practice	LIBS 6015 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction LIBS 6020 Organization of Information LIBS 6060 Information Technology for Information Professionals LIBS 6201 Public Libraries and Librarianship LIBS 6310-6311 Materials for Literacy of Children (Young People and Adults) LIBS 6320 Information Searching Strategies LIBS 6330 Digital Library Collections LIBS 6345 Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals LIBS 6401 Academic Libraries and Librarianship LIBS 6550 Supervised Field Experience in Library Science LIBS 6700 Special Libraries and Librarianship
Legal / Ethical	LIBS 6000 Librarianship LIBS 6030 Information Technology for Information Professionals LIBS 6060 Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries OR LIBS 6105 School Library Management
Values	LIBS 6000 Librarianship LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services LIBS 6201 Public Libraries and Librarianship LIBS 6401 Academic Libraries and Librarianship LIBS 6700 Special Libraries and Librarianship

SYSTEMATIC PLANNING AND CONTINUOUS REVISION

We believe that the MLS Program's current goals and student learning objectives (SLOs) are conducive towards our student's ongoing success in securing employment as an information professional and to serve as our discipline and professional as a future leader. Regardless, the MLS Program relies *extensively* on data from multiple sources for continuous revision and systematic planning of the MLS Program's curriculum. These data sources include:

- Input through various student reflections through course assignments
- Interpret comments and questions made during classes as indications that clarification is needed in a particular lecture or assignment.
- Use LiveText to collect assessments and scoring rubrics.
- Review assessment results to the program faculty during the MLS Program's regular end of semester (to become *monthly* starting January 2023) meetings and then consider revising of any assessment artifact, reassignment of goals to another course and modification of objectives. These assessment results come from MLS Program exit and employment surveys delivered via Qualtrics as well as from our MAC's input at our annual meeting.
- Provide opportunities for students to formally evaluate each course. This is a University-wide practice now done completely online. The instructors examine the results when the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research (IEPR) makes those data available (2 months after class ends).
- Use D2L (online learning platform) mid-semester "in-class" anonymous surveys. This is particularly helpful with classes with minimum, but small nonetheless, enrollments as the formal, end of semester student class evaluations do not have their data released if the response rate is 40% or less to protect student anonymity and confidentiality.
- Collect data from key assessments, instructor data, and student evaluation of instructors and courses, discuss results with the instructors and then discuss with instructors which courses might complete or partial revision.

MLS faculty members continue to update courses to prevent stagnation. *MTSU Online*, MTSU's Distance Education unit, tracks full course revisions and pays faculty for these revisions, every three years. However, not all courses need such a full revision. A course in Research Methods, for example, does not necessarily need revision from start to finish; nor does a course that always receives outstanding student and faculty peer reviews. Typically, though, the latter instance is due typically to continuous activity of course revision as part of good pedagogical practice.

In April 2018, in preparation for precandidacy, the MLS Program underwent an extensive curriculum and course audit. Classes were identified for removal from the MTSU course catalogue, classes were moved to electives, and new classes were determined for offering as core courses. This led to a refining of the MLS Program curriculum that "saved" students credit hours for electives and helped students attain critical core competencies that they may have missed depending on the courses they selected. Since then, all of our curriculum decisions have been informed based on the inputs reported above. For such an example, please read the text as it pertains to Standard I.1.4. This is part of our regular systematic process toward program improvement. However, moving forward we will attempt engage in more careful recording of qualitative data inputs to assure the CoA that we indeed follow systematic planning processes.

II.2 Curriculum. The curriculum is concerned with information resources and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use. Within this overarching concept, the curriculum of library and information studies encompasses information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation and curation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, use and users, and management of human and information resources.

The list of courses and their descriptions are in [Appendix 2B](#). All courses delve into the literature of librarianship and deal with finding appropriate materials for users. The MLS Program's core courses introduce all students to the basic curriculum expectations as listed above in Standard II.2.

The curriculum:

II.2.1 Fosters development of library and information professionals who will assume a leadership role in providing services and collections appropriate for the communities that are served;

The MLS Program offers two management courses: LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries for students seeking concentration in public, academic, or special libraries; and LIBS 6105 School Library Management. These are survey courses that address everything from human resource management to financial management. As a result, there is only one module in these classes that address leadership, ethics, and accountability. In order to supplement these management courses, and based on input from the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC), the MLS Program has created and now offers LIBS 6106, Introduction to Leadership in Libraries. This course focuses specifically on leadership as but one important attribute of library management, allowing our students to more than exceed our program SLOs of "Engage in advocacy and outreach for the profession of librarianship and other information professions" and "Create and sustain robust information organizations of all types and sizes."

II.2.2 Emphasizes an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields;

MLS Program courses rely substantially on the use of the most appropriate, applicable, and up-to-date knowledge from the library and information sciences as well as from other disciplines as appropriate. To assist students with access to this evolving body of knowledge, MTSU's Walker Library provides access to two library and information science periodical databases as well as access to a predominantly e-book collection of monographs that grows annually. Additionally, MLS Program instructors embed a librarian from Walker Library in their D2L courses as a reliable information seeking source who can help students find appropriate materials that would pertain to a course assignment.

Related to this sub-standard, the MLS Program's LIBS 6060 Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries introduces students to how knowledge creation is conducted using well-established data collection methods found in the social sciences generally and in librarianship particularly (e.g., Informetrics). This culminates in the student developing and writing a research proposal of either basic, applied, or action research for an original study. Students who do extremely well with this one assignment are encouraged to consider applying their proposal by conducting the research under a MLS Program faculty member's supervision.

II.2.3 Integrates technology and the theories that underpin its design, application, and use;

A new (2019) core course, LIBS 6030 Information Technology to Information Professionals, examines how technology can serve as a vital tool for librarians to use in their future professional lives. Besides learning hands-on skills, such as building a Web page, other related concepts are integrated also into course assessments such as, with this current example, metadata and encoding standards as well as principles of information architecture (IA) and user experience design (UXD). All of these inter-related concepts are also related to other MLS courses such as the core LIBS 6020 Organization of Information or an elective such as LIBS 6330 Digital Library Collections where specific concepts such as metadata creation and usage, encoding, IA, and UXD are also presented, but in forms that are more directly applicable for these two courses. This is but one example of the many ways that the MLS Program's curriculum addresses core competencies through other courses that also benefits our students through the reinforcement and contextualization of these competencies.

II.2.4 Responds to the needs of a diverse and global society, including the needs of underserved groups;

Several courses address this curriculum standard. Our core course LIBS 6000 Librarianship introduces students to the core values of librarianship. Consideration of a topic such as censorship in and of itself starts students thinking about how this topic can affect underserved groups negatively. For assessment of this application of this standard, the MLS Program assesses students during their field experience LIBS 6550 in terms of how their programming and instruction can accommodate diverse learners. In LIBS 6060, students conduct a needs assessment of their hometown using census data and then are encouraged to consider those data vis-à-vis their own personal, anecdotal knowledge of their hometown. This needs assessment is continued in elective courses such as LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services as the course and related assignments direct students to identify perceived needs of communities and strategies to address those needs based on analysis of primary data. In addition, the Program will assess the capability of LIBS 6310 to teach students how to search

holdings of Pura Belpre and Coretta Scott King Award books in local libraries and to reflect on the need for these holdings.

II.2.5 Provides direction for future development of a rapidly changing field;

MTSU promotes this particular standard in part by requiring regular updates to its online courses. Additionally, the MLS Program continues to benchmark with other library science programs and implements changes to its curriculum based on alumni employment survey data. Where applicable and if appropriate, most course assignments allow students to complete the assessment requirements in the setting in which they would like to work (i.e., school library, public library, etc.) following graduation, allowing students to consider and anticipate how these different library environments will be changing. With library and information sciences being a professional graduate discipline, being up to date on changes in our discipline and profession are emphasized throughout our courses. LIBS 6030 Information Technology for Information professionals is an example of such a course where these changes need to be considered regarding how technology affects our profession by introducing a resource such as the annual “Library Systems Report” in *American Libraries* for topical discussions and as a resource for more formal assignments that asks students to consider how certain related topics might progress into the future. The Library of Congress’s further development of what *might* prove to be library OPAC’s new encoding standard such as BIBFRAME is discussed in LIBS 6020 Organization of Information. Each faculty member’s particular practicing concentration prior to becoming members of the academy serves our students very well in this standard.

II.2.6 Promotes commitment to continuous professional development and lifelong learning, including the skills and competencies that are needed for the practitioner of the future.

The Program encourages its students to engage in professional activity, both formally and informally. Membership in either ALA and/or the Tennessee Library Association are recommended. Students must join one division of ALA. Alternately, school librarians can join the Tennessee Association of School Librarians (TASL). Students are encouraged to present at TASL, TLA, and other professional conferences. Instructors give notice of Summer workshops offered by TASL and other local associations. The required field experience allows professional development hours completed with TASL to fulfill up to 10 hours of field experience observation hours. Our management course LIBS 6100 includes a module on ‘Skills and Career Planning.’ LIBS 6105 focuses on this in its ‘Advocacy and Marketing’ module, and LIBS 6106 addresses professional development substantially.

Further professional development is encouraged through the MLS Program’s private group Facebook page whose membership comprises current and former MLS students and program faculty.

II.3 The curriculum provides the opportunity for students to construct coherent programs of study that allow individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of program requirements established by the school and that will foster the attainment of student learning outcomes. The curriculum includes as appropriate cooperative degree programs, interdisciplinary coursework and research, experiential opportunities, and other similar activities. Course content and sequence relationships within the curriculum are evident.

[Appendix 1D](#) shows our current and prospective students their appropriate plan of study based on their incoming status as a new student. There are two degree-granting plans of study: the “regular” MLS degree (36 credit hours) and the MLS degree + initial licensure for students who

wish to become school librarians but have no teaching experience (39 credit hours currently, to become 42 credit hours. The associated degree-seeking plans of study seen in 1D are undergoing review currently by appropriate university curriculum committees, and we anticipate both being accepted formally by Fall 2023). Besides these plans of study, also being reviewed is MTSU's first new dual degree in Master of Library Science and Master of Social Work ([Appendix 2C](#)). This dual degree's creation has been substantiated through the need for social workers in public libraries being reported in numerous media resources and articles published in the library literature. Additionally, an empirical study in progress by Dr. Frank Lambert with data collected from public libraries in the southeastern United States demonstrates that, in many public library settings, students with graduate educations in both library and information sciences and social work would be considered very seriously as ideal new librarian candidates by these same libraries.

To address the MLS Program's own [Web site information](#), that "...students are allowed to propose alternative electives in other disciplines," MLS students have completed successfully graduate courses in archival studies offered by MTSU's Department of History as well as courses in literacy offered by the College of Education's Master of Education in Literacy. We also have had one MLS student complete their MLS degree while working also on their Ph.D. in Public History through the same department.

Through the use of a carefully scheduled course rotation in addition to the strategic use of prerequisite requirements, and along with individual student advisement, the MLS Program guides students to start their course work with the core courses. Not only are the core courses required for some electives, but students need to complete 9 credit hours in these courses before they may progress towards completing their relevant management course or before they may complete their field experience. Based on this, we believe that "[c]ourse content and sequence relationships within the curriculum are evident" as seen in [Appendix 2D](#)

[II.4 Design of general and specialized curricula takes into account the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations.](#)

As indicated by the MLS Program's recent successful accreditation for the first time by CAEP, the MLS Program considers very seriously "the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations." As [Appendix 2D](#) demonstrates, the MLS Program engaged in 2021 in an exercise where all MLS Program courses were mapped to CAEP and AASL standards while ensuring too that our courses met ALA core competencies. More specialized courses, such as LIBS 6700 Special Libraries and Librarianship, include information about the Special Libraries Association's competencies for information professionals. LIBS 6401, Academic Libraries and Librarianship, include the ACRL *Framework of Information Literacy for Higher Education* as one of its readings (although the *Framework* is applicable, with suitable modification, for all library types).

[II.5 Procedures for the continual evaluation of the curriculum are established with input not only from faculty but also representatives from those served. The curriculum is continually evaluated with input not only from faculty, but also representatives from those served including students, employers, alumni, and other constituents. Curricular evaluation is used for ongoing appraisal and to make improvements. Evaluation of the curriculum includes assessment of students' achievements.](#)

On-going evaluation of the MLS Program's curriculum, along with the program generally, goes hand-in-hand. The MLS Program has many related data sources to assist it with its curriculum's ongoing evaluation. These sources include:

END OF COURSE MAY-AUGUST-DECEMBER

Input on the success of course assessments is solicited from the students in the class. (Table II.2 in Standard II.6)

The instructors note comments and questions made during the class as indications that some clarification may be needed in the assessments and some adjustments might be needed in any video recorded lectures. (Table II.2 in Standard II.6)

Student reflection on course effectiveness is collected through end-of-course/semester student evaluations organized by the Associate Vice Provost for Data Analytics & Student Success before distribution to MLS Program Faculty. Comparative student evaluation data based on measures of central tendency from Department of Educational Leadership, the College of Education, and MTSU as a whole are included for benchmarking.

END OF SEMESTER MAY-AUGUST-DECEMBER

The instructor presents possible concerns about assessment results to the program faculty as other faculty might be teaching that course in future semesters. The following are considered: revision of any assessment artifact; reassignment of goals to another course if deemed appropriate; and, modification of course objectives. (Table II.2 in Standard II.6).

The Program Coordinator collects any other related course data they may have received directly from students and conveys these findings to instructors if and when appropriate, who discuss which courses need complete revision or partial during program faculty meetings. Optionally, the Program Coordinator will call a course review meeting, similar to what was done in April 2018 prior to the proposal and design of new classes.

Graduating students' exit survey results are written into a short report by the MLS Program's Graduate Assistant at the end of every semester and are disseminated to program faculty prior to program faculty meetings. The exit survey asks respondents if there was a topic they would have liked to study more that was not represented in this curriculum (see [Appendix 2E](#)).

ANNUALLY

Meet with the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC) to get input/information from the profession directly about desired dispositions that could be addressed in our courses that include the *ALA Core Competencies for Librarianship*.

ONGOING

Review of student progress by MLS Program faculty during program meetings. Due to the sensitive nature of this discussion, notes are not kept, but communications in emails between program faculty and affected students give some indication of these actions.

Survey alumni six months after graduation about the effectiveness of the MLS Program in preparing them to be librarians through our employment survey.

Survey employers of graduates. The College of Education have supplied these data based on their own surveys for CAEP accreditation; however, the response rate was extremely low. Thus, the MLS Program will develop its own, targeted employer survey for distribution once a year along with its alumni employment survey. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for distribution of the survey for regular data collection from employers, just as they have been for all survey data collection.

Determine additions or deletions to current course offerings and timeline for development or deactivation. This is based on enrollments and student feedback. We have already made several such determinations since 2016 such as: the discontinuation of LIBS 6900; moving LIBS 6010 from a core to an elective status, now LIBS 6115; and, create a new core course, LIBS 6030.

Review and revise survey instruments (self-administered questionnaires) on an ongoing basis.

II.6 The program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of the curriculum.

To document that ongoing decision-making takes place between the pre-candidacy stages, the Program Coordinator and faculty use a MTSU provided MS TEAMS folder, accessible by all faculty, to house recorded minutes of program meetings and all other related pertinent data for accreditation purposes. This includes meeting minutes with other stakeholders. Table II.2 identifies the data collected to demonstrate how decisions are made for the program.

Table II.2 - Procedure to Collect Evidentiary Data

Practice	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3
Data Collection	ALL Meeting minutes	All student course evaluation surveys	Comments from class
Evaluation Process	Exit Portfolio	Graduate and constituency input	Graduate employment input
Revision Process	Program faculty minutes of meeting	Changes recorded	End of year evaluation of results

II.7 The program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation of the curriculum are systematically used to improve the program and to plan for the future.

To demonstrate progression from the pre-candidacy to the candidacy stage, the faculty will create one-year plans that incorporates any needed changes in the program. The Program Coordinator will continue examining the previous year's plan to see if it was executed and identify successes/failures. The projected year's plan will incorporate areas and practices that need attention as identified in the candidacy calendar included in this document. Data from the key assessments that are assessed using CAEP-based rubrics in LiveText will assist faculty with this evaluation. Additionally, the data from the rubric used to assess the students' final culminating assessment, the exitPortfolio, will complement the LiveText data.

Standard III

III.1 The program has a faculty capable of accomplishing program objectives. Full-time faculty members (tenured/tenure-track and non-tenure-track) are qualified for appointment to the graduate faculty within the parent institution.

The MLS Program is housed in the College of Education and the College of Graduate Studies at MTSU. All MLS Program faculty need to meet MTSU policies that pertain to faculty appointments (policy 202 <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/academic-affairs-institution-and-faculty/202.php>), tenure (policy 204 <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/academic-affairs-institution-and-faculty/204.php>), and promotion (205 <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/academic-affairs-institution-and-faculty/205.php>). Additionally, all full-time MLS Program faculty must attain graduate faculty status in order to teach to graduate students. This status is reapplied for every five years <https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/faculty/gfmember.php>.

The MTSU Master of Library Science Program has three full-time faculty members and one part-time faculty member currently ([Appendix 3A](#) and cf. Table 3.1 below). The MLS Program continues to evaluate the capacity of the full-time faculty members and part-time faculty members to deliver our core and elective courses which include librarianship, research, the organization of information, reference and user services, collection development, literature, field experience, leadership and management, and technology in the areas of school, public, academic, and special libraries. The MLS Program will also continue to utilize the faculty's strengths to think strategically about the Program's trajectory. In addition, the MLS Program will continue to evaluate the capability of part-time faculty to help shape the conversation about how to integrate academic librarianship and librarianship in other information environments into the MLS curriculum.

As the MLS Program moves through the candidacy phase, it will continue to assess the full-time faculty's qualifications and capacity to accomplish program objectives through the university's annual performance review process <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/tenpro/index.php> which is coordinated by the annual faculty assessment calendar <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/docs/AnnualFacultyAssessmentCalendar2022-23.pdf>.

During this process, faculty must upload their credentials to an electronic system, Faculty Success by Watermark <https://www.mtsu.edu/facultysuccess/index.php>, which tracks faculty progress toward tenure and/or promotion. Full-time faculty are evaluated yearly. Evidence of scholarly activities includes curriculum vitae, pages from journal articles, title pages from books, abstracts and other artifacts. Faculty also submit information from peer reviews and student course evaluations. Additionally, they submit information regarding awards and accolades. Finally, faculty submit documentation of service activity, such as sitting on college, university, and professional committees, and community boards.

Table 3.1 - *Faculty Degrees, Specialty Areas, and Instruction*

Full-Time Faculty	Degrees	Specialty Areas	Lead Instructor
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Frank P. Lambert, PhD, Assistant Professor, Tenure Track, Appointed 2016	PhD, University of Western Ontario MLIS, University of Western Ontario	Organization of Information, Data, Research, Technology, Academic Libraries	LIBS 6020 LIBS 6030 LIBS 6060 LIBS 6106 LIBS 6401 LIBS 6700
Holly S. Hebert, MLIS, Ed.D candidate, Assistant Professor, Tenure Track, Appointed 2017	EdD Assessment, Learning, and Student Success – Higher Education, MTSU [In progress] MLIS, Wayne State University, MEd-OTL, California State University – East Bay	Collection Development, Library Management, Public Libraries Academic Libraries, ePortfolio, Field Experience, Young Adult & Adult Literature	LIBS 6000 LIBS 6100 LIBS 6115 LIBS 6201 LIBS 6311 LIBS 6550
DeAnne Luck, MLIS, Lecturer, Appointed 2015	MLIS, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Teaching Certificate, Librarian Endorsement, Trevecca Nazarene University	School Library Management, Reference & User Services, Children's Literature, Digital Resources, Instructional Strategies, Search Strategies, Academic Libraries	LIBS 6015 LIBS 6105 LIBS 6310 LIBS 6320 LIBS 6330 LIBS 6340 LIBS 6345
Kathryn Moisant, MLIS, Adjunct Faculty, Appointed 2005	MLIS, University of Tennessee Knoxville Teacher Licensure, Middle Tennessee State University	School Library Management, Children's Literature, Reference	Not required

In addition, since the MLS Program is online, full-time faculty develop and redesign LIBS courses frequently, which go through an extensive evaluation process during development and during each redesign https://www.mtsu.edu/online/faculty/faculty_course_development.php.. Compensation is provided faculty for each course development and redesign.

Table 3.2

Recent Course Developments and Revisions

Course	Course Title	Approval	Lead
LIBS 6320	Information Searching Strategies	In Progress for 2023	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6105	School Library Management	In Progress for 2023	DeAnne Luck

LIBS 6550	Supervised Field Experience in LIBS	In Progress for 2023	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6700	Special Libraries and Librarianship	4/1/2022	Stephanie Bandell-Koroll
LIBS 6100	Management of Libraries	3/8/2022	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6015	Intro to Information Intermediation	10/28/2021	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6401	Academic Libraries and Librarianship	3/29/2021	Rachel Kirk & Jason Martin
LIBS 6000	Librarianship	4/30/2020	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6115	Collection Development & User Services	3/3/2020	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6030	IT for Information Professionals	10/21/2019	Frank Lambert
LIBS 6340	Integration of Learning Theory, Programs and Technology	9/30/2019	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6345	Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals	9/30/2019	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6201	Public Libraries	9/27/2019	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6311	Materials for Literacy of Young People and Adults	4/3/2019	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6060	Understanding Research for Eval.	2/8/2019	Frank Lambert

Note: LIBS 6700 and LIBS 6401 were designed in a collaborative effort with MTSU librarians

III.2 The program demonstrates the high priority it attaches to teaching, research, and service by its appointments and promotions; by encouragement of excellence in teaching, research, and service; and through provision of a stimulating learning and research environment.

The MLS Program encourages and celebrates faculty excellence in teaching, research, and service. Faculty are expected to maintain sustained quality or high quality status of teaching,

research and service. Dr. Lambert and Ms. Hebert are tenure track with Dr. Lambert having submitted his tenure materials in September 2022 and Ms. Hebert submitting her tenure materials in September 2023. Ms. Luck, as a non-tenurable lecturer, is encouraged, but not required to engage in service and research.

Through MT Online <https://mtsu.edu/online/faculty/index.php> and the Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC) <https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/>, faculty benefit from a variety of learning experiences and opportunities in the form of trainings, webinars workshops, book clubs, and faculty learning communities ([See Appendix 3B](#))

Dr. Lambert (2022) and Ms. Hebert (2019) have both completed the LT & ITC Academy of Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows Program https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/faculty_fellows.php. Currently, Dr. Lambert (2021-2022) and Ms. Hebert (2018-2019; 2021-2022) are both involved in Faculty Learning Communities <https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/FLC/>. Ms. Hebert has been an Online Faculty Mentor (OFM) since 2020 https://www.mtsu.edu/online/faculty/faculty_mentor_program.php. Compensation is provided for participation in FLCs, Faculty Fellows, and for serving as an OFM. Ms. Hebert also led a book group discussion in Fall 2020 for the LT & ITC ([See Appendix 3B](#))

III.3 The program has policies to recruit and retain faculty from diverse backgrounds. Explicit and equitable faculty personnel policies and procedures are published, accessible, and implemented.

MTSU is committed to diversity among faculty and students. MTSU's Community standards include:

"Respect for Diversity. The MTSU community is composed of individuals of different races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, religions, cultures, and ways of thinking. We respect individual differences and unique perspectives as we acknowledge our commonalities". <https://www.mtsu.edu/hrs/relations/handbook.php#StatementofMission>.

MTSU has policies and procedures that show the inclusive nature of faculty recruitment and retention.

- https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentGuide.pdf.
- https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentProcessOverview.pdf
- https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/Reference_Guide.pdf
- <https://grad.uchicago.edu/fellowship/middleee-tennessee-state-university-underrepresented-minority-dissertation-fellowship/>
- <https://mtsunews.com/fairness-justice-equity-center-fall-events/>

The MLS Program is dedicated to hiring qualified faculty from diverse backgrounds and reviews preliminary interview candidates to ensure hiring committees are upholding this commitment. In addition, diverse faculty members are present on all COE hiring committees. The MLS Program follows MTSUs policies and procedures in this regard.

Table 3.3

Diversity of Current MLS Program faculty and leadership

Name	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Dr. Snead	Male	Black
Dr. Lambert	Male	White (Canadian)
Ms. Hebert	Female	White
Ms. Luck	Female	White
Ms. Moisant	Female	White

The MLS Program recognized the need for more diverse faculty and is committed to working with the College of Education's Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity (FJE) <https://www.mtsu.edu/fjecoe/> to help with this goal. The FJE was established in the COE in 2022. As new faculty are hired in the future to accommodate Program growth or to fill vacancies, the Program will seek support from the University Human Resources on how to draw diverse applicants. The Program will measure progress in this area by analyzing the pool of applicants and the individuals invited to interview for positions.

III.4 The qualifications of each faculty member include competence in designated teaching areas, technological skills and knowledge as appropriate, effectiveness in teaching, and active participation in relevant organizations.

Each Program faculty member draws from their experience and competence in the different program areas of public, academic, school, and special librarianship, which all complement each other. For instance, Dr. Lambert has experience in academic libraries. Ms. Hebert has experience in public and academic libraries, Ms. Luck has experience in school, academic, and special libraries, and Ms. Moisant has experience in school libraries.

As faculty in an online program, MLS Program faculty are competent with technology and teaching online. Ms. Hebert (2020) and Ms. Luck (2021) have both completed certifications of online teaching ([See Appendix 3C](#)). In addition, Dr. Lambert was awarded the Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award in 2021 https://www.mtsu.edu/communicator/archives/Fall_2021_Communicator.pdf.

In addition to serving on college and university committees in various roles, MLS Program faculty are members of several relevant professional organizations including ALA, AASL, ACRL, ALISE, PLA, ARSL, TLA, TASL, SELA, and RUSA ([Appendix 3A](#)).

Table 3.4

Program Faculty Activities in Professional Organizations 2020-2022

Name	Organization	Role	Year
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Dr. Lambert	ALISE	Doctoral Poster Session Judge	2022
	Sage Publications	Book Chapter Reviewer	2020-2021
Holly Hebert	TLA	Recording Secretary	2020, 2022-2024
	LIRT –Adult Learning	Co-Chair	2020-2022
	LIRT – TOP 20	Member	2021-2023
	ALISE – Membership	Member	2020-2021
	ALISE – Juried Panels		2021-2022
	ALISE – SIG Curriculum	Member	2021-2022
	RUSA – Genealogy	Member	2021-2023
	Tenn-Share Conference Committee	Member	2019-2021
DeAnne Luck	TLA	Peer Reviewer for Tennessee Libraries Journal	2021-

In addition, MLS Program tenure-track faculty serve on various department, college, and university committees <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/comm.php>

Table 3.5

Tenure- track faculty university committees and roles 2020-2022

Name	Area	Committee	Role	Year/s
Dr. Lambert	University	IRB	Member	2022-2025
	University	Library	Member	2020-2022
	University	Teaching with Technology	Member	2020-2022
	University	Faculty Search Committee – Online	Member	2020

		Learning Officer		
	University	Faculty Search Committee – Dean of the Library	Member	2020
	College (Social Work)	Faculty Search Committee	Member	2022
	College	FJE Advisory Council	Member	2022-
	College	Faculty Search Committee	Member	2021
Holly Hebert	University	Distance Education	Member	2021-2023
	University	Grade Appeals	Member, Chair	2020-2024
	University	Faculty Travel Grant	Chair	2020-2022
	College	Curriculum	Co-Chair	2020-
	College	FJE Advisory Council	Member	2022-
	College	Scholars Week	Member	2020-
	College	Faculty Search Committee	Chair	2021

MTSU faculty have numerous resources to draw from in support of pedagogy and technology. Faculty have many opportunities through the year to attend pedagogical training through the LT & ITC. In addition, the Information Technology Division provides both technical and informational support of the D2L platform and other software such as Qualtrics, NVivo, Microsoft Office, and Adobe products <https://www.mtsu.edu/itd/>. A list of faculty activities during the precandidacy stage 2020-2022 is provided ([See Appendix 3B](#)).

Faculty are evaluated by student course evaluations every semester on a five-point scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. MLS Program faculty consistently score between 4-5 ([See Appendix 3D](#)).

In addition to the regular evaluation of the faculty vitae to assess performance, the Program Coordinator will continue to mine data from the full and part-time faculty vitae to ensure faculty qualifications align with program needs. The Program's needs will continue to be assessed by student applications to the Program, student reflections

during courses, student field experience reports, student exitPortfolios, student exit surveys, alumni surveys and employer surveys.

III.5 For each full-time faculty member, the qualifications include a sustained record of accomplishment in research or other appropriate scholarship (such as creative and professional activities) that contribute to the knowledge base of the field and to their professional development.

As the Program moves through the candidacy stage, faculty qualifications will continue to be documented in their curriculum vitae and analyzed by the MLS Program to highlight accolades and contributions in the field ([Appendix 3A](#)). Additionally, MTSU reviews faculty research performance annually as part of the tenure track reappointment process. Tenure-track faculty are expected to maintain a rating of quality or high quality in the areas of teaching, service, and learning https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/fac_handbook/contents.php.

MLS Program faculty continue to maintain a high quality of research activities, both in content and quantity.

Table 3.6

Scholarly and Professional Works of Faculty 2020-2022

Type of Work	Quantity
Peer Reviewed Journal Article	6
Book Chapter	2
Presentations	8
Poster Sessions	3
Book Reviews	9

III.6 The faculty hold advanced degrees from a variety of academic institutions. The faculty evidence diversity of backgrounds, ability to conduct research in the field, and specialized knowledge covering program content. In addition, they demonstrate skill in academic planning and assessment, have a substantial and pertinent body of relevant experience, interact with faculty of other disciplines, and maintain close and continuing liaison with the field. The faculty nurture an intellectual environment that enhances the accomplishment of program objectives.

MLS faculty have all been trained at different universities across North America. As mentioned above, MLS Program faculty are actively involved in various pertinent professional organizations, as well as engagement with faculty in other departments at MTSU through their various committee work and involvement in learning and pedagogical activities such as book groups and FLCs. Additionally, one MLS Program faculty hold teacher licensure, another is pursuing a doctorate in assessment, and another has been involved with faculty in other disciplines such as serving on a PhD in Public History dissertation committee while working also with the Department of Social Work in developing a new dual degree program.

As the Program moves through the candidacy stage, faculty development will be documented in their curriculum vitae and analyzed by the Program to highlight accolades and contributions in the field and to highlight ways faculty have engaged students and other faculty outside of the Program in their intellectual pursuits.

Table 3.7

Faculty Terminal Degrees

Name	Institution	Type of Degree	Area of Study
Frank Lambert	University of Western Ontario	PhD, MLIS	Library and Information Science
Holly Hebert	Middle Tennessee State University	EdD	Assessment, Learning and Student Success – Higher Education (Est 2023)
	Wayne State University	MLIS	Library and Information Science
DeAnne Luck	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	MLIS	Library and Information Science
	Trevecca Nazarene University	Initial Teacher Licensure	
Kathryn Moisant	University of Tennessee - Knoxville	MLIS	Library and Information Science

	Middle Tennessee State University	Initial Teacher Licensure	
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III.7 Faculty assignments relate to the needs of the program and to the competencies of individual faculty members. These assignments assure that the quality of instruction is maintained throughout the year and take into account the time needed by the faculty for teaching, student counseling, research, professional development, and institutional and professional service.

MLS Program faculty continue to teach in their specific areas of expertise and competency. As mentioned above, the faculty strengths complement one another and span the breadth of our current course coverage. MLS Program faculty loads reflect the requirement of those set by the Provost at MTSU <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/forms/wkguide.pdf>. MTSU faculty currently teach a 4/4 load, with course release given for certain activities. Course release is applied for yearly. MLS faculty also voluntarily teach during the summer (with further compensation) as the MLS Program has a rolling enrollment across Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. Currently, Dr. Lambert has a course release for being the MLS Program Coordinator and Ms. Hebert has a course release for being the advisor for the exitPortfolio. Ms. Luck, as a lecturer, has no service or research requirements, although she does regularly participate in professional development through MTSU Online and LT & ITC, as well as through professional organizations.

As the Program moves through the candidacy stage, it will pay attention to the distribution of courses to each faculty member. The Program will consider these data against data from student evaluation, data from exitPortfolios, and the total weight of responsibilities carried by individual faculty members. MTSU workload policy and documentation requirements structure this analysis process.

Table 3.8

Faculty Expertise and Teaching Assignments

Name	Expertise	Teaching Assignments
Frank Lambert	Cataloging, Research, Technology, Management	LIBS 6020, LIBS 6060, LIBS 6030, LIBS 6100, LIBS 6105
Holly Hebert	Collection Development, Library Management, Public Libraries Academic Libraries, ePortfolio, Field Experience, Young Adult & Adult Literature	LIBS 6000, LIBS 6100, LIBS 6115, LIBS 6201, LIBS 6311, LIBS 6550
DeAnne Luck	School Library Management, Reference & User Services, Children's Literature, Digital	LIBS 6015, LIBS 6105, LIBS 6310, LIBS 6320, LIBS 6330, LIBS 6340, LIBS 6345

	Resources, Instructional Strategies, Search Strategies, Academic Libraries	
Kathryn Moisant	School Libraries, Reference, Management, Collection Development, YA & Adult Literature	LIBS 6105, LIBS 6015, LIBS 6115, LIBS 6311

III.8 Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of all faculty; evaluation considers accomplishment and innovation in the areas of teaching, research, and service. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

As the Program moves through the candidacy phase, it will continue to assess the full-time faculty's qualifications and capacity to accomplish program objectives through the University's annual performance review process. During this process, faculty must upload their credentials to Faculty Success, a program that tracks faculty progress toward tenure and/or promotion. Evidence of scholarly activities includes curriculum vitae, pages from journal articles, title pages from books, abstracts and other artifacts. Faculty also submit information from peer reviews and student course evaluations. Additionally, they submit information regarding awards and accolades. Finally, faculty submit documentation of service activity, such as sitting on committees and participation in community activities.. The Program Coordinator uses the type of evidence identified above to evaluate the competency of part-time faculty. The MLS Program will encourage innovation by supporting applications for innovations grants and nominating faculty for awards. The MLS Program will use awards generally, grant awards and intellectual products to gauge innovation among faculty members.

As part of the annual performance review process, faculty are also evaluated by peer reviews and student course evaluations <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/tenpro/index.php>.

III.9 The program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of the faculty.

As the Program moves through the candidacy stage, it will continue to document ongoing decision-making with meeting minutes and recordings, as the Program meetings are now held online. All meeting minutes are available and accessible to all MLS Program faculty and leadership as they are hosted on a shared drive using Microsoft Teams which is maintained by the University ([See Appendix 3E](#)).

During the review cycle of 2020-2022, MLS Program faculty were evaluated annually per MTSU policies and procedures. Dr. Lambert submitted his paperwork for tenure in September 2022, and he and Ms. Hebert were reviewed according to the faculty assessment calendar <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/docs/AnnualFacultyAssessmentCalendar2022-23.pdf>. In addition,

Ms. Luck was reappointed in Spring 2022 as part of the 3-year cycle for non-tenurable appointments <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/academic-affairs-institution-and-faculty/202.php>.

III.10 The program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation of faculty are systematically used to improve the program and to plan for the future.

As the MLS Program moves through candidacy, it will continue to use student evaluations, student surveys, and student reflections to indicate areas for improvement in the Program and in curriculum delivery.

In the area of teaching, MLS Program faculty continue to be held to a high standard in the quality of teaching which is observed through teaching innovations, peer-review and student course evaluations. In the area of service, MLS Program faculty continue to provide a high level of department, college, university, and professional community engagement and service as shown in Tables 3.4 and 3.5. This service and community engagement especially expose MLS Program faculty to the challenges Tennessee libraries face, allowing faculty to make adjustments to the program to improve program and student learning outcomes.

In the area of research, MLS Program faculty continue to sustain a high level of research publications and presentations with the help of the numerous MTSU resources available for faculty success at the college and university level. Much of the faculty research has focused on either Tennessee libraries and/or libraries in the Southeastern United States. As a result, MLS Program faculty are well aware of the challenges many of these libraries face based on empirical evidence. The data that result from this research can then be used for program improvement.

MLS Program improvements continue to be made by the evaluation of faculty through annual review, which includes peer-review and student course evaluations. These reviews are considered when making changes in course content, teaching and advising assignments. One recent example of changes made to faculty assignments is the replacement of adjuncts with full-time faculty for the field experience program. After MLS Program and adjunct faculty review, it was determined that Ms. Hebert would take over the LIBS 6550 Supervised Field Experience course in Summer 2022 and will be updating the Field Experience Handbook https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/Field_Experience_Handbook.pdf in 2023 along with a redesign of the LIBS 6550 in 2023. This is in addition to Ms. Hebert's responsibilities as the exitPortfolio advisor. It was felt that both the exitPortfolio experience and field experience are better managed by full-time faculty going forward.

Standard IV

IV.1 The program formulates recruitment, admission, retention, financial aid, career services, and other academic and administrative policies for students that are consistent with the program's mission and program goals and objectives. These policies include the needs and values of the constituencies served by the program. The program has policies to recruit and retain students who reflect the diversity of North America's communities. The composition of the student body is such that it fosters a learning environment consistent with the program's mission and program goals and objectives.

The MLS Program's policies on recruitment, admission, retention, financial aid, career services, and other academic and administrative issues follows those developed and articulated by MTSU. Given that the MLS Program is devoted to educating students in a post-baccalaureate setting, the College of Graduate Studies (<https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/>) provides the bulk of the related policies that are emulated by the Program. The College's admissions requirements include the following criteria:

- Applicants with a minimum of a bachelor's degree may apply to the College of Graduate Studies.
- Applicants must have an overall undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 (on a 4.00 scale) to be considered for admission.
- Applicants who attended graduate school at another institution must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 on all graduate work and a minimum of 2.75 on all undergraduate work to be considered for admission.

And, individual programs may have higher admission requirements than those of the College of Graduate Studies. (Admission Requirements-<https://mtsu.edu/graduate/apply.php>)

At this point in time, the MLS Program follows these minimum requirements as articulated below. Following candidacy, and once accreditation is achieved, these minimum criteria might be reviewed. However, as the table below demonstrates clearly, new students admitted to the MLS Program possess considerably higher baccalaureate GPAs on average than the MLS Program's minimum GPA requirement for admission, showing the quality of students that the MLS Program attracts.

Academic Year	Mean GPA	Number of new Admits
2016-17	3.43	29
2017-18	3.17	31
2018-19	3.31	22
2019-20	3.29	38

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy, it will continue to demonstrate a clear understanding of its stakeholders' needs. Chief among these stakeholders are the students and prospective graduate students who historically have resided mainly in Tennessee. However, considering the MLS Program is 100% online, our stakeholders are no longer limited to one politically defined region of the United States. All activity in the MLS program is constructed to produce candidates with strong library and information practitioner credentials regardless where they live. Graduates exit the MLS Program possessing the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to serve as information professionals in various settings in order to enrich the lives of individuals and support society's progress.

As the MLS Program moves through candidacy, the program will analyze and integrate the results of the following activities:

- Relationship building through community library boards and other related community activities
- Digital marketing to expand the Program's reach and attract diverse applicants
- Outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to create collaboration opportunities and agreements and increase diversity
- Assuring our admissions requirements align with our values
- Simplifying admissions procedures where possible
- Continued revision of the *MLS Program Handbook*, the *Field Experience Handbook* and the *exitPortfolio Handbook* <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2>
- Surveying to understand the use of student travel grants and loans, graduate assistantships, discounts employee waivers, and scholars who complete the MLS Program
- Continue to collect data efficiently by multi-purposing data collected for various reasons including other accreditations such as CAEP.

MLS Program faculty are responsible for program quality, which includes attracting and admitting eligible, high-quality applicants. To establish consistency in applicant evaluation, the MLS Program Coordinator reviews the three letters of recommendation and the 500-word statement of purpose to determine the applicant's fit with the Program. Each statement of purpose is assessed using a pre-established rubric, which generates a baseline score of the applicant's aptitude for graduate studies in library science. The Program applies other rubrics throughout the student life cycle to assess key MLS Program competences. These rubrics include field experience reports and exitPortfolio reflections, which provide critical data for CAEP accreditation, AASL national recognition, and ALA accreditation.

The criteria for admission to the MLS Program are:

1. an earned bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college;
2. official transcripts from all previous college-and university-level work showing a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.75;
3. three letters of recommendations from professionals;
4. 500-word essay (Statement of Purpose) regarding applicant's reasons for seeking the MLS at MTSU. <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements>

The MLS Program has tried and will continue to try various recruitment activities to attract students such as those shown in Table 4.1. Developing closer ties with teachers and educators throughout the state, including the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance <https://www.tneca.org/>, while continuing to work with the FJE, the College of Graduate Studies, and other organizations on campus and off to recruit and retain students is a priority.

Table 4.1

MLS Program Recruitment Activities 2020-2022

Audience	Form	Date
TLA Annual Conference	Booth	2018 - 2022
TASL Annual Conference	Booth	September 2022

ARSL Annual Conference	Booth	September 2022
MTSU FJE Showcase of COE Programs	Booth	9-22-2022
Local Teachers	Online Information Session	May 2022
MTSU Graduate Fair	Booth	11-16-2021
MTSU Graduate Fair	Online Appointments	9-23-2020
TLA (See Appendix 4D)	TLA Newsletter	Winter/Spring 2020

In addition to the MLS Program website <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/>, program information is also pushed out via the COE Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation>, Twitter #mtsumls, and the MLS Program Facebook page for students and alumni <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2275466432763691>. See [Appendix 4C](#) for the main MLS Program Flyer. The MLS Program will continue to look for opportunities to promote itself in the media as shown in Table 4.2

Table 4.2

MLS Program in the Media

<i>Venue</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Link</i>
<i>MTSU COE Facebook Page</i>	<i>MLS Program at TASL Conference</i>	September 2022	https://www.facebook.com/profile/100057109973520/search/?q=library%20science
<i>MTSU Website</i>	<i>ALA Precandidacy</i>	August 2021	https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library-masters-aug2021/
<i>Podcast Interview</i>	<i>MLS Program</i>	March 2021	https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library-science-march2021/
<i>TLA Newsletter</i>	<i>ALA Precandidacy</i>	Winter/Spring 2020	https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/2020_26-1-2_Winter_Spring.pdf
<i>TASL Talks</i>	<i>ALA Precandidacy</i>	August 2020	https://tasltalks.wordpress.com/2020/08/17/mtsu-granted-precandidacy-status-by-ala/
<i>MTSU Website</i>	<i>MLS Program Graduate Story</i>	December 2019	https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/97/mtsu-online-mls-program-gives-fisk-librarian-deeper-understanding-of-profession
<i>MTSU Website</i>	<i>MLS Program Graduate Story</i>	November 2019	https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/101/mtsu-s-online-mls-program-boosts-librarian-skills-of-adult-learner-to-next-level

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Table 4.3

MLS Program Applications, Acceptances, Conditional Acceptances

<i>Year</i>	<i>Applications</i>	<i>Acceptances</i>	<i>Conditional Acceptances</i>
<i>2021-2022</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2020-2021</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2019-2020</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>2018-2019</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>3</i>

Table 4.3 above shows the reader the number of new student applications the MLS Program has received over the last four academic years, the number of acceptances received from students, and the number of conditional acceptances offered to, and received from, students. Conditional acceptances receive deeper scrutiny than regular acceptances, requiring a judgement call from the Program Coordinator based on the student's potential for success as demonstrated through their letters of recommendation and the trajectory that their GPA followed from freshman through to senior. Additionally, as part of a conditional acceptance, students must achieve and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in their first two semesters in the MLS Program. To date, all conditional admit students have completed their MLS degree work successfully.

The Career Development Center at MTSU offers all students and graduates career placement opportunities <https://www.mtsu.edu/career/>. In addition, job opportunities are regularly posted on the MLS Program Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2275466432763691> and emailed to students through their MTSU email.

The MLS Program continues to support and promote any and all financial aid offered by MTSU, and especially financial aid that will reduce students' debt burden after graduation. Information and applications for graduate financial aid is easily accessible at <https://www.mtsu.edu/financial-aid/graduate.php>. The MLS Program makes additional financial resources available to students through its Web site (<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2>). In 2021, the MLS Program had its first endowed scholarship established. The *Ms. Leniel Edwards Endowed Scholarship in Library Science*, offered once a year and worth \$2,500, is awarded based on the following criteria:

- Have an overall minimum 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale at the time of the application.
- Scholarship recipients must have been admitted to the Master of Library Science Program in the College of Education.
- Financial need, as determined by the university, will be considered.

The MLS Program promotes this, and other scholarships offered by professional library associations, through communications with its students.

All academic and administrative policies that are pertinent especially to the MLS Program are articulated in its handbooks, all of which are accessible easily through its Web site. These handbooks include the overall program [Library Science Handbook](#), the [Field Experience Handbook](#), and the [exitPortfolio Handbook](#), which guides students in the completion of their

final, culminating portfolio assignment. These handbooks are updated on an ongoing basis to ensure students have the most recent and accurate information available to them. The *Library Science Handbook* and *Field Experience Handbook* are being revised currently to reflect the new anticipated changes to our plans of study that require a field experience or student teaching for initial licensure.

IV.2 Current, accurate, and easily accessible information about the program is available to students and the general public. This information includes documentation of progress toward achievement of program goals and objectives, descriptions of curricula, information on faculty, admission requirements, availability of financial aid, criteria for evaluating student performance, assistance with placement, and other policies and procedures. The program demonstrates that it has procedures to support these policies.

As the Program moves through candidacy, communicating with stakeholders will be essential to its forward trajectory. The MLS Program will continue to update its website (<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/>) as new information is needed, acquired, and available. The MLS Program also consults the Graduate Catalogue (<http://catalog.mtsu.edu/index.php>) as it serves as the document of record for all academic policies and programs. Each semester, the MLS Program will take inventory of the website and measure its accuracy. The MLS Program will gauge the usability of the site by the number of inquiries it receives about information that cannot be located on the site or information that is inaccurate.

Table 4.4

Resources on the MLS Program Website

<i>Page</i>	<i>Link</i>
<i>About</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/about
<i>Careers</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/careers
<i>Requirements</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements
<i>Degrees and Endorsements</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/degrees
<i>Outcomes</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info3
<i>Vision</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info
<i>Faculty</i>	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/faculty

Resources	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2
Online Delivery	https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/delivery

IV.3 Standards for admission are applied consistently. Students admitted to the program have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; the policies and procedures for waiving any admission standard or academic prerequisite are stated clearly and applied consistently. Assessment of an application is based on a combined evaluation of academic, intellectual, and other qualifications as they relate to the constituencies served by the program, the program's goals and objectives, and the career objectives of the individual. Within the framework of institutional policy and programs, the admission policy for the program ensures that applicants possess sufficient interest, aptitude, and qualifications to enable successful completion of the program and subsequent contribution to the field.

Admissions processes are critical to aligning the MLS Program with the needs of the student body. Each year the MLS Program will review its admissions policies to assure the policies reflect the priorities of the field. The MLS Program will continue to review the credentials of admitted students each year to assure consistency in the way admissions criteria are applied. Admissions standards are published at <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements> and applicants can apply directly from the MLS Program pages <https://www.mtsu.edu/applynow/application/login>. The GRE Test is not required for entrance to the MLS Program <https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/gre-waivers.php>. Table 4.5 below records the number of students in the MLS Program and other statistics that the Program considers seriously to make decisions about student admissions and retention. We believe that it demonstrates also that the Program's admissions policy and process are successful in admitting students who will be successful in progressing through and graduating from the MLS Program.

In a few cases, applicant requirements, such as a 2.75 GPA, can be waived if the MLS Program Coordinator determines the need in light of extenuating circumstances. Applicants can be admitted on a conditional basis https://www.mtsu.edu/ucat/graduate/08_10/2008-10_Glossary.pdf.

Table 4.5

MLS Program Retention and Time to Degree 2017-2022

Year	Enrollment Fall	Retention Rate	Time to Degree	# of Graduates
2021-2022	45	82.0%		25
2020-2021	61	87.3%	19 months	20
2019-2020	63	88.6%	17 months	14
2018-2019	44	93.5%		21

IV.4 Students construct a coherent plan of study that allows individual needs, goals, and aspirations to be met within the context of requirements established by the program. Students receive systematic, multifaceted evaluation of their achievements. Students have access to continuing opportunities for guidance, counseling, and placement assistance.

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy, it will demonstrate how the curriculum allows students to construct course plans of studies to fit their needs but still meet the program student learning outcomes. The MLS Program will continue to demonstrate this development by comparing screens from the University's degree audit system, Degree Works, by student and comparing individual audits by the student's goals stated at the time of admission.

Advising policies and published course recommendations for various tracks.

<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/LIBS-Handbook.pdf>

•Examples of programs of study for a sample of students.

<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/LIBS-Handbook.pdf>

Alumni are regularly surveyed as they exit the program about their satisfaction with the program and the advising they received as a student. (See Appendix 4A). Employments survey data is also available (See Appendix 4B). Data is used to inform any needed program changes.

The current academic advisor for the MLS Program is the Program Coordinator, Dr. Lambert who makes initial contact, admits students, and is their advisor about academic issues throughout the program. Ms. Hebert is the field experience and exitPortfolio advisor and guides students through these two important assessments.

In Fall 2022, an online new student orientation was implemented to better assist students in the beginning week of classes. The MLS Program will continue to offer a new student orientation on or about the first day of every semester for incoming students (See Appendix 4E).

The Career Development Center at MTSU offers all students and graduates career placement opportunities <https://www.mtsu.edu/career/>. In addition, job opportunities are regularly posted on the MLS Program Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2275466432763691> and emailed to students through their MTSU email.

IV.5 The program provides an environment that fosters student participation in the definition and determination of the total learning experience. Students are provided with opportunities to:

IV.5.1 Participate in the formulation, modification, and implementation of policies affecting academic and student affairs;

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy, it will continue to devote attention to the inclusion of students in decision making processes. Each year, the faculty will create opportunities for involving student in decision making and gauge their involvement by observing student involvement in town halls, advisory councils, course development, and policy development. In 2022, two Town Hall meetings were held online to listen to students and give them agency over their learning experience (See Appendix 4F).

IV.5.2 Participate in research;

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy it will analyze data from the LIBS 6060 Research Methods course to see if that course serves as a launching pad for students to engage in further research. These data will be cross-referenced with data about student participation in conferences and student publication in journals and other media.

Students are encouraged to participate in professional associations, attend conferences, and pursue publication. In Fall 2022, *The Serials Librarian* journal was identified as having a column called “Voices of the Future” that publishes student papers that are deemed of outstanding quality and the first paper from one of our students was accepted with revisions ([See Appendix 4G](#)).

In the Spring semester every year, MTSU hosts Scholars Week <https://www.mtsu.edu/scholarsweek/>. COE participates along with all the other colleges. The MLS Program hopes to put in place opportunities that allow students to participate in this forum in the near future.

IV.5.3 Receive academic and career advisement and consultation;

As the Program progresses through candidacy, it will use data from the online Advisor Form from the College of Graduate Studies and the degree audit system, Degree Works, to indicate the level of career and academic advisement given to students.

The MLS Academic Advisor, Dr. Lambert is available to meet with students throughout their time in the program. Ms. Hebert is the advisor for the field experience which can lead to a job offer in some cases. Ms. Hebert is available for questions and consultation about field placements and curating exitPortfolios that will showcase student work for possible future employers.

The Career Development Center at MTSU offers all students and graduates career placement opportunities <https://www.mtsu.edu/career/>. In addition, job opportunities are regularly posted on the MLS Program Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2275466432763691> and emailed to students through their MTSU email.

IV.5.4 Receive support services as needed;

The University, COE and the MLS Program provide students with a host of resources that can be accessed remotely or in person. As the MLS Program shifts moves through candidacy, survey questions, added to existing surveys, will indicate the extent to which students use these resources.

Table 4.6

Student Resources

Name of Campus Service	Resources	Link
------------------------	-----------	------

Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center	Transition services, encouragement, career opportunities	https://www.mtsu.edu/military/index.php
Counseling Services	Online and in-person mental health counseling	https://mtsu.edu/counseling/
Intercultural and Diversity Affairs	Diversity and inclusion resources, services, and programs	https://www.mtsu.edu/idac/
James E. Walker Library	Resources, reference, research, and technology services	https://library.mtsu.edu/home
University Writing Center	Academic tutors, writing groups, workshops	https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/
Career Development Center	Career advising, resume help, job & internship resources	https://www.mtsu.edu/career/
Disability & Access Center	Test proctoring, adaptive technology center, accommodations	https://www.mtsu.edu/dac/
Information Technology Division	IT support for students	https://www.mtsu.edu/itd/index.php
Student Support Services	Services for students transitioning from foster care and students experiencing homelessness	https://www.mtsu.edu/nextstep/ssss.php
Student Food Pantry	Food pantry for students with short and long-term food needs.	https://www.mtsu.edu/foodpantry/
Clothes Closet	Gently used professional attire for students	https://mtsunews.com/aauw-clothing-drive-spr2019/

IV.5.5 Form student organizations;

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy, student involvement will be an essential part of the MLS Program culture. The MLS Program will encourage the formation of student organizations. The Program will gauge interest at the Program's Town Hall in forming student organizations. The Program will encourage students to hold their own student body meeting to assess interest among themselves. Success in this area will be gauged by the number of new student organizations, the number of members in one or more organizations and the level of activity from the group.

When the MLS Program reaches ALA accreditation, it will encourage students to form an ALA Student Chapter <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/how-start-ala-student-chapter> to increase involvement with the profession while still a student.

In addition, MTSU has many already established student organizations on campus of all types, sizes, and purposes that MLS Program students are encouraged to become involved with (cf. <https://www.mtsu.edu/sos/> and <https://mtsu.edu/graduate/resources.php>).

IV.5.6 Participate in professional organizations

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy, it will continue to encourage students to be involved in professional organizations. The MLS Program will use student attendance and presentation at conferences and other meetings to gauge student involvement in professional development. The MLS Program will also use publications by students to gauge the level of student involvement in outside professional development. Students are highly encouraged to become members of at least one professional organization, such as ALA, TLA, AASL, or TASL, etc.

TLA provides students each year with an opportunity to be a conference intern at the annual TLA conference. For the past five years, 2018-2022, MTSU MLS Program students have been awarded conference internships every year <https://www.tnla.org/page/539>.

IV.6 The program applies the results of evaluation of student achievement to program development. Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of the extent to which the program's academic and administrative policies and activities regarding students are accomplishing its objectives. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, students, staff, and others are involved in the evaluation process

As the MLS Program shifts moves through candidacy, it will continue using the MLS Program Exit Survey as one means of systematic communication that enables faculty to develop a clear understanding of students' experiences in the MLS Program and to gauge whether the MLS Program is meeting its objectives. Additional tools to measure student achievement include CAEP-based rubrics. MLS Program faculty collect data in LiveText each semester and the Program Coordinator analyzes the data. The data collected in LiveText are designed explicitly to help the MLS Program determine whether "the program's academic and administrative policies and activities regarding students are accomplishing its objectives." All but one CAEP rubric is designed for student assignments, and in Spring 2022, faculty will begin collecting data for the next CAEP evaluation. Thus, the MLS Program's CAEP accreditation will help inform ALA accreditation efforts partially and vice versa.

IV.7 The program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of student learning outcomes, using appropriate direct and indirect measures as well as individual student learning, using appropriate direct and indirect measures.

The MLS Program uses a combination of direct and indirect measures to assess program and individual student learning outcomes. Direct measures include individual assessments, grades for those assessments, and outcomes on CAEP rubrics. Indirect measures include student feedback, student course evaluations, feedback from field placement sponsors, and program faculty and advisors.

IV.8 The program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation of student learning outcomes and individual student learning are systematically used to improve the program and to plan for the future.

The alignment of ALA, InTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium), CAEP and College of Education standards provides a prescribed set of assessments to ensure MLS student learning is evaluated in a consistent manner. The MLS Program collects these data to improve course structure, assessments, and program policies.

The MLS Program will continue to gauge MLS program and academic development based on student input gathered through exitPortfolios, student exit surveys, and course evaluations.

Table 4.4 describes the MLS Program's use of these data.

Table 4.4

Sources of Evidence of Student Performance

Data for Students	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3
Data	LiveText	Surveys	Email (anonymized) communications between instructors and students
Student learning	Alumni surveys	Changes recorded	Field notes taken during class assessments
Recording	Meeting minutes and video	Instructor notes about class assessments as seen fit	Policy Changes

The program incorporates student learning evaluations in making curriculum decisions...”

- Minutes of meetings where evaluations informed curriculum or other committees toward improvement of the program.

- Descriptions of decisions made with evaluation data

Standard V

V.1 The program is an integral yet distinctive academic unit within the institution. As such, it has the administrative infrastructure, financial support, and resources to ensure that its goals and objectives can be accomplished. Its autonomy is sufficient to assure that the intellectual content of its program, the selection and promotion of its faculty, and the selection of its students are determined by the program within the general guidelines of the institution. The parent institution provides both administrative support and the resources needed for the attainment of program objectives.

The mission of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) involves teaching and learning, research, and community service, as articulated through the institution's mission statement: "Middle Tennessee State University embraces its role as a comprehensive, innovative institution whose distinctive bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral programs prepare graduates to thrive in their chosen professions and a changing global society. Students, faculty, and staff generate, preserve, and disseminate knowledge and collaboratively promote excellence through teaching and learning, research, creative activity, and public engagement." Further goals and aspirations are communicated through the Academic Master Plan.

One goal of the University is to attract and retain high quality faculty with excellent teaching and research skills and who are community oriented. This University is committed to strengthening its faculty through the recruitment and retention of highly quality minorities and women faculty. MTSU is governed by a state appointed governing board (gubernatorial appointment) with legal authority over the institution. The Board is an active policy-making body that is responsible for ensuring a reasonable budget and adequate tuition and fees to provide a sound educational program.

The President is the Chief executive officer of the institution. The President of MTSU is given authority and the responsibility to select and delegate duties to university officers or employees. MTSU has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead the institution. MTSU administrative and academic officers have extensive experience in higher education administration. A strong evaluation process ensures that administrative and academic officers continue to demonstrate the capacity to lead the University.

Additionally, MTSU has degree-granting authority from Tennessee Higher Education Commission and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The University is accredited by SACSCOC to award certificates, baccalaureate, master, specialist, and doctoral degrees. Degree programs offered at a distance are identical in requirements to those offered on the main MTSU campus.

During candidacy the MLS Program will continue demonstrating it is an integral unit within the institution ([See Appendix 5A](#)). It also will continue to demonstrate that is an integral part of the support network for local schools and other information-based institutions including local public, academic, and school libraries and their respective boards and districts.

Integral Academic Unit

Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), a state-supported university, has approximately 17,438 undergraduate and 2,668 graduate students. The academic structure (colleges, departments, and faculty) at MTSU is part of a standard higher education layout governed by the university's provost. The College of Education is one of eight colleges within the university and houses the Department of Elementary and Special Education (ELSE) and Educational Leadership (EDLR). The responsibility for curriculum development, academic programs, and program coordination is delegated to the college deans by the provost. The deans, thereby, delegate this responsibility to the departmental chairs and through the chairs, to faculty members. The College of Graduate Studies serves as an advocate for graduate studies and ensures that graduate policies and procedures are updated as needed to meet student and faculty needs. There is constant opportunity for collaborations with college deans, department chairs, graduate program coordinators, and faculty to ensure excellence in all graduate programs regardless of program location and methods of course delivery.

The Master of Library Science program (MLS) is housed in the EDLR department with a Program Coordinator who has responsibility for the daily activity of the unit. The MLS program receives administrative support directly from Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, and all administrative assistants in the department.

Furthermore, administrative support is provided from other offices across campus such as technology support from [ITD](#) , [MTSU Online](#), [Center for Learning and Teaching](#), [Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment](#), and Walker [Library](#).

Responsibility for the selection of prospective new faculty is left to the recommendation of the current MLS Program and College of Education faculty members University operating within the MTSU hiring policies and procedures and according to SACSCOC standards for faculty qualifications.

The MLS Program works with the College of Graduate Studies to plan, initiate, and maintain contact with prospects, prepare the content of promotional materials, and maintain the program website to aid in recruitment and admission of students to its program.

Financial Support and Resources

Course Support – Online Program

While the MLS Program as an academic unit within the College of Education develops its own curriculum, course *delivery* infrastructure is the responsibility of University College's MTSU Online unit. MTSU Online is a nationally recognized program. MTSU Online was recognized and endorsed by the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) for outstanding quality endorsement in 2017. In 2021 and again in 2022 MTSU was recognized by Newsweek as one of the best schools for online learning.

University College is the administrative unit responsible for supporting online academic programs at MTSU via MTSU Online. The College provides financial support for faculty teaching online. For the MLS Program, this support includes paying for all adjunct instructors, as well as the one temporary, full-time instructor. MTSU Online supports online course development and redesign by paying stipends to faculty of \$4,000 for developing new courses and \$3,000 for course revisions every 3 years. MTSU Online provides an instructional designer who works closely each faculty course developer during the design process. Additionally, MTSU Online has

provided the MLS Program with substantial financial support for marketing the Program as well as providing individual travel financial support for full time temporary faculty whom are unable to secure travel funding through the Department's travel fund.

MTSU Online began in Fall 1997, offering seven courses with 53 student enrollments. MTSU currently offers 32 fully online programs (undergraduate and graduate) with various concentrations and over 850 courses. Over 12,000 student enrollments in online and hybrid (online and face-to-face) courses are recorded each fall and spring semesters. The flexibility of online courses allows students to better fit their education around other commitments. (www.mtsu.edu/online/index.php)

As an online program, support is critical to student success. MTSU Online manages all the online and distance learning programs offered by MTSU to meet the unique needs of students whose access to higher education is often limited by family, work, and other responsibilities by removing barriers of time and location; supporting faculty who deliver course content and degree programs in innovative ways; and fostering a student-centered learning environment to promote the success of nontraditional students. Through the collaboration of many campus resources, MTSU Online is able to more effectively serve nontraditional and adult learners by offering a variety of undergraduate and graduate degree programs, with the option of taking courses online, on campus, or a combination of both. MTSU Online also provides helpful resources and tools for students and faculty to ensure academic success. MTSU Online provides technical and instructional support for distance learners at all times. The University provides support staff for learning services and the learning management system.

MTSU Online supports faculty members in developing and delivering online and hybrid courses. Faculty may also develop and teach the following types of alternative delivery courses:

- synchronous online via video conferencing
- web-assisted
- web-enhanced

In its handbook, *Types of MTSU Distance Courses*, MTSU Online defines online course types and scheduling codes. Only existing MTSU courses approved by the University Curriculum Committee, or the Graduate Council may be developed for online delivery. Those courses must not have been developed previously by another faculty member.

Development Assistance

Faculty members are provided the following resources to guide them throughout the course development process:

- an instructional designer to coach and advise the instructor during development
- training about research and practice in effective online teaching
- training about best practices for integrating technology in instruction
- training about using the university's learning management system

MTSU Online assigns each online course developer an instructional designer that works closely with the developer to assist the designer throughout the process and to conduct a review of the course upon completion. Instructional designers assist in planning course design, implementing best practices to enhance course pedagogy, and ensuring a successful online student learning experience.

Learning Management System Training

MTSU Online requires faculty new to online course development (including full-time and full-time temporary) to complete training on how to effectively use the MTSU-supported learning management system, D2L Brightspace. MTSU Online also requires completion of the "Online Instructor Certification" self-paced course within the learning management system.

Responsibilities

Online course developers sign contracts of three years in duration. MTSU Online expects course developers to serve as the lead developers for their courses for that period of time. Lead developer responsibilities include:

- updating the master course shell each semester as needed
- meeting each semester with any new instructors of the course to familiarize them with the content and to assist in updating the welcome page, faculty contact information, and calendar
- uploading approved course content into the shells of each active section
- working with their department to obtain textbooks and other course materials for sectional faculty
- working with their department to schedule the course¹

At the end of the three-year contract period, course developers are eligible to redesign their online and hybrid courses if needed. They receive a redesign fee for their efforts. If the original course developer is unavailable or unwilling to redesign the course, the department chair must assign a new lead developer, or the course will be removed from the online inventory. The peer review/chair approval process also applies to course redesigns.

Development Fees

Generally speaking, MTSU Online supports online course development and redevelopment by paying faculty stipends of \$4,000 for developing new courses and \$3,000 for significant course revisions. MTSU Online has supported the development of online courses since 2016. Stipends are based on the number of credit hours of the course. A description of course design payment appears in Table V.1.2.

Development Deadlines

Online course development must be complete and the course ready for review by these deadlines:

- Spring Semester delivery – October 1;
- Summer and Fall delivery – March 1.

Brief Description of the Development Process

Course developers complete the following steps to develop and deliver an online course:

- Complete and submit a Course Proposal Form, which is approved by the department chair, dean, and Chief Online Learning Officer.
- Submit a draft syllabus using the accessible syllabus template.

- Sign and submit an Online Course Development Agreement.
- Complete a series of meetings with an assigned instructional designer to plan and develop the course.
- Complete the Online Instructor Certification course and training on the learning management system.
- Complete development of the course using the resources mentioned above.
- Conduct a self-evaluation of the completed course using the Peer Review Form.
- Receive approval from the department chair or program coordinator (who reviews the course) in order for the course to be scheduled.
- The department notifies the scheduling center that the approved course can be scheduled.
- The course development stipend is paid to the course developer.

Table 5.1 MTSU Online and Hybrid Course Development/Redesign Fees (Effective June 1, 2019)

Credit Hours	Development Fees	Redesign Fees
1	\$1000	\$1500
2	\$2500	\$2000
3	\$4000	\$3000
4	\$4000	\$3000

Generic Design

MTSU Online recommends at least two semesters be allotted for completion of a new online course. Because department chairs have the option to assign instructors to teach online and hybrid courses they did not develop, courses must be developed accordingly. Course developers serve as lead developers of their approved courses and are responsible for updating course content and sharing it with sectional instructors.

The MTSU MLS Program is a fully online master's program. Table 5.2 lists the guidelines for online programs at MTSU.

Table5.2. MTSU Online Programs Definitions and Guidelines

Term or Guideline	Description
Online Faculty Mentor (OFM) Program	<p>The Online Faculty Mentor (OFM) Program was created in 2005 to serve as a continuous online course development quality improvement process for the university. Through the 2021-22 year the program combined mentoring and peer review processes for online course development and course redesign. The mentors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ conducted peer review (using the Peer Review Form) ▪ engaged instructional faculty in review of best practices for online teaching. ▪ Starting in 2022, the OFM Community Program provides topic-focused groups open to all faculty which discuss best practices in online teaching, while the instructional designers work with individual instructors on particular courses.
Eligibility	Full-time MTSU faculty who develop online courses and who have completed the required training are eligible to serve as OFMs.
Course Developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adds the instructional designer, and department chair or school director to the course being developed. ▪ Conducts a self-evaluation of the course using the Peer Review Form. ▪ Shares the self-evaluation with the instructional designer and department chair. ▪ Revises the course design based on feedback. ▪ Receives development stipend usually within eight (8) weeks of course approval. ▪ Teaches the course in the target semester. ▪ Serves as the lead developer of the course for the term of the three-year contract, the duties of which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ updating the master shell each semester as necessary ▪ familiarizing other professors with instruction of the course and assisting in updating welcome page, contact information, and calendar ▪ sharing and uploading the course for sectional instructors ▪ working with the department to obtain textbooks and other course materials ▪ working with the department to schedule the course.
MTSU Online	<p>Requests course review and approval by sharing the completed Peer Review and Course Approval forms with the appropriate department chair or school director.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For Approved Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MTSU Online adds the approved course to the Approved Distance Courses inventory. ○ Backs up the course content onto a private server in the MTSU Online Office for security and archival purposes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emails the Scheduling Center that the course designer's department/school may add the course to the target semester schedule. ○ Completes a pay document to compensate the course developer per the fee noted in the development agreement. ○ Emails the course designer that the pay document has been completed. ▪ For Non-approved Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modification instructions (determined by the chair/director) are sent to the course designer by MTSU Online. ○ When revisions are complete, the instructional designer conducts a review. ○ If approved, MTSU Online sends the Approval Form to the Chair/School Director. ○ When the course is approved, the instructions for Approved Courses above apply.
Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair, school director, or program coordinator reviews the course design and content. ▪ Signs Course Approval Form to either approve or not approve the course for delivery. Modification instructions must be included for non-approved courses. ▪ The signed original Course Approval Form or a scanned/signed copy must be sent to MTSU Online. ▪ Adds course to the semester schedule. ▪ Schedules meeting rooms as required for hybrid courses. ▪ Schedules meeting rooms for optional meetings for online students, if requested by instructor.

The University offers the following workshops to support online course development and delivery:

- New Faculty Professional Development Series
- Developing and Maintaining Research Collaborations
- Providing Effective and Efficient Feedback on Student Writing
- Crafting a Course Assignment Using the Charrette Process
- How Humans Learn: The Science and Stories behind Effective College Teaching
- Lifelong Kindergarten: Cultivating Creativity through Projects, Passion, Peers, and Play
- Creating a Transformative Classroom Experience with Global Learning
- Mindfulness Meditation Practice
- Wikipedia as a Teaching Tool
- Understanding by Design: Backward Course Design for the College Classroom
- Addressing Mental Health Issues in the Classroom
- The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting Up a Generation for Failure
- Lower Ed: The Troubling Rise of For-Profit Colleges in the New Economy
- Navigating Controversial Issues in the Classroom and in Research: Academic Freedom at MTSU
- How to Make Microsoft Word Documents Accessible
- D2L ePortfolio

- Introduction to D2L
- D2L Gradebook - Have you switched to using an online gradebook?
- D2L Quizzing - More than just a setup!
- D2L Dropbox - Student Work: Collecting, Grading, Feedback and More!
- D2L Rubrics and Discussions - Creating and Grading Student Interactivity and
- Planning for Digital Accessibility

Faculty D2L Bootcamp Course

The D2L Bootcamp Course is a self-paced course. It has been created to help faculty:

- find detailed references for using various D2L features
- access videos for understanding D2L feature use
- revise online materials
- serve as a model for some options in designing online materials
- review samples of accessibility in action within a D2L course and become more aware of accessible design
- explore tips for creating online communication, assessment, and presence

Awards and Proposals

Faculty may make proposals using Technology Access Funds for new initiatives.

The Faculty Instructional Technology Center on campus provides training for new instructors and offers continuing education for all online instructors (such as accessibility and software use).

AIT Awards and Grants and Innovation Grants

The Teaching with Technology Committee (TWTC) accepts applications for projects related to the exploration of new technologies and/or the innovative and effective integration of existing technologies into teaching and learning. These projects demonstrate improved and more effective course instruction in meeting instructional objectives with technology thus supporting student success.

Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award

The Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award is presented each year to faculty members who demonstrate excellence in the development of technology-based teaching materials, as well as the successful integration of instructional technology into the classroom. The Committee chooses up to three distinguished awards, which are accompanied by a check for \$3,000 from the MTSU Foundation. Award recipients are honored at the Fall Convocation in August. Dr. Lambert won this award in 2022.

Criteria for the Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award

The nominees submit materials in support of their nomination that address the following:

Instructional materials development

- Describe the technology-based teaching materials that you use.
- Describe the procurement/development process.

- Describe the hardware and software you utilize in the development phase.
-

Classroom/curriculum integration

- Describe how the materials are used in your courses.
- Describe how the materials are used by your students outside of your classroom.
- Describe the hardware and software used in the classroom.
-

Materials evaluation

- Describe your technology-based materials evaluation process.
- Outline your evaluation results.
- Describe how your evaluation results are used.
-

Mentoring and publication

- Illustrate how you share your instructional materials and knowledge with your colleagues.
- Describe any publication, conference participation, or educational training related to instructional technology.
-

Additional information

- Describe your methods for learning more about instructional technology.
- Describe your requirements for student use of instructional technology.
- Highlight your plans for future use of instructional technology.
- Innovation: Describe how what you do is unique to your area.
- Impact: Describe how your use of Instructional Technology has impact beyond your classroom (community, university, OR globally).
- Note: Members of the committee may not nominate themselves nor accept a nomination for the Outstanding Instructional Technology award (individually or as a group member) while serving on the committee.

Nomination and Selection procedures - Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award

- A call for nominations will be sent out in January each year.
- The nominees' supporting materials should be sent digitally to Faculty Instructional Technology Center at itdacad@mtsu.edu
- The Instructional Technologies Development Committee review the materials and select finalists.
- Finalists will be invited to demonstrate their technology-based instructional materials before the Teaching with Technology Committee.
- Awards are announced at the Fall Convocation in August.

V.2 The program's faculty, staff, and students have the same opportunities for representation on the institution's advisory or policy-making bodies as do those of comparable units throughout the institution. Administrative relationships with other academic units enhance the intellectual environment and support interdisciplinary interaction; further, these administrative relationships encourage participation in the life of the parent institution. Decisions regarding funding and

resource allocation for the program are made on the same basis as for comparable academic units within the institution.

The MLS program faculty serve on formal and informal committees throughout the University based on their will to serve. Faculty members actively communicate with programs in the EDLR and with other faculty, administration, and supporting staff in the COE. MLS Program faculty members can serve on committees at the departmental, college, and university level as well as Faculty Senate. MTSU's Policy 32 articulates details about university committees (<https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/governance-and-compliance/032.php>). Service is one avenue to make visible and represent the MLS Program in all areas of the University.

The MLS program has administrative connections with other programs in the COE and campuswide to other academic units. MLS Program faculty have been invited to collaborate in research and participate on dissertation committees across programs. These connections are exemplified further through graduate degree program development as demonstrated by the creation of the MLS/MSW dual degree.

Funding and resources allocation decisions for the MLS program are made on the same basis as for comparable units within the institution and/or department. Each year the University is rather considerate in allocating funds based on their formula. The MLS Program Coordinator informs the Department Chair of funds needed for the upcoming fiscal year. The Department Chair then prepares his budget request which is sent to the College Dean. The College Dean then negotiates with the University President and Provost to obtain the funds needed to support the various programs within the College of Education. However, if a program makes a specific budget request, with the approval of the Department Chair and Dean, then additional resources may be allocated for specific program needs.

V.3 The administrative head of the program has title, salary, status, and authority comparable to heads of similar units in the parent institution. In addition to academic qualifications comparable to those required of the faculty, the administrative head has leadership skills, administrative ability, experience, and understanding of developments in the field and in the academic environment needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.

The administrative head of the program (known as Program Coordinator) has authority to ensure that students are supported in their academic program of study. The administrative and academic head of the unit has the title of department chair. The Associate Dean works in conjunction with the department chair and program coordinator in overseeing the curriculum and in reviewing the academic degree to which they are assigned. The MLS Program Coordinator has the responsibility to:

- a. advise and mentor students, establishing student plans of study;
- b. suggest courses and recommend part-time, full-time, adjunct faculty to ensure courses are offered on a regular rotation in adequate numbers of sections to meet student needs;
- c. oversee program policies and their dissemination through the MLS Program handbook; coordinate marketing, recruitment, and retention efforts;
- d. maintain student progress and completion data;
- e. collect data for CAEP assessment rubrics;
- f. survey student needs and satisfaction;
- g. advise department chair on course demands, oversee curricular changes; and,

- h. interact with the program Advisory Council, accrediting bodies, and other external groups.

The current program coordinator is [Dr. Frank Lambert](#). Dr. Lambert holds the faculty rank of assistant professor. Presently (22-23AY), he is completing his sixth year, and is a candidate for tenure and promotion. The current Associate Dean is [Dr. Robyn Ridgley](#). She has served as faculty, department chair and in professional organizations. She presently serves as data coordinator for CAEP accreditation. Based on her leadership, during the last CAEP visit, the COE and departments received no stipulations or notifications of areas for improvement.

V.4 The program's administrative head nurtures an environment that enhances the pursuit of the mission and program goals and the accomplishment of its program objectives; that environment also encourages faculty and student interaction with other academic units and promotes the socialization of students into the field.

The administrative heads (Associate Dean and Department Chair) nurture an inclusive environment by supporting the Program Coordinator in his oversight of faculty assignments and students in the MLS Program. The faculty are given opportunity to give input on decisions related to curriculum, course scheduling, hiring and budget.

Furthermore, at the College and University level, the program coordinators are given opportunities to interact with other faculty in an active scholarly, intellectual, and social environment through Research luncheons and the [Learning Teaching and Innovative Technologies Center](#)

The Department Chair provides administrative and financial support along with guidance to allow the program to pursue goals and objectives. There are avenues to support the goals, objectives, and needed resources of the MLS Program through the Walker Library and other programs on campus. The Program Coordinator has partnered regularly with rural libraries in Tennessee both to nurture and receive nurturing by offering free workshops to assist librarians and paraprofessional library associates learn more, and apply, descriptive cataloguing principles as articulated in *Resource Description and Access* (RDA). The Program Coordinator further nurtures an environment that enhances the pursuit of the mission and program goals and the accomplishment of its program objectives by having served on two public library Board of Directors; one for a county library system (Rutherford County Library System), the other a regional library system (Stones River Regional Library). Faculty and students are socialized into the field through a required internship, attending conferences, publishing in practitioner journals, presentations at conferences and again, partnering with local libraries. Travel monies are available for tenured and tenure-track faculty, and financial support has been provided for an MLS Program exhibitor booth at relevant conferences.

The MLS Program, through the leadership of the Program Coordinator, has developed a MLS Program Advisory Council that meets regularly to provide guidance to the MLS Program based on current practitioner needs and perspectives.

The Program Coordinator shares in the administration of the program for recruitment and marketing, maintaining connections with constituents, and providing input for all program decisions.

V.5 The program's administrative and other staff support the administrative head and faculty in the performance of their responsibilities. The staff contributes to the fulfillment of the program's mission, goals, and objectives. Within its institutional framework decision-making processes are determined mutually by the administrative head and the faculty, who regularly evaluate these processes and use the results.

The MLS program receives support to help achieve the program's goals from the Dean and Associate Dean in the COE, Educational Leadership Department Chair, and Office of Provost. Twice during the academic year, the COE holds data day, during which each program's faculty reviews together the program's vision, mission, goals, and assessment data from previous semester. The results from data day are used to gauge accomplishments and what needs to be done moving forward.

The Educational Leadership Department is served by two full-time office staff, a shared computer technician, data manager, and graduate assistants. The MLS Program hires a dedicated graduate assistant each year. The program marketing and recruiting, and website development is assisted by Dean's office and [social media campus networks](#).

V.6 The parent institution provides continuing financial support for development, maintenance, and enhancement of library and information studies education in accordance with the general principles set forth in these Standards. The level of support provides a reasonable expectation of financial viability and is related to the number of faculty, administrative and support staff.

As a state-supported university, MTSU receives funding from the State of Tennessee and controls its expenditures in accordance with the State funding formula and General Assembly rules. In addition to State Appropriations, the University receives financial resources through tuition and fees, grants, contracts, auxiliary services revenues, private gifts, and endowments. The University's financial stability is evidenced by audit opinions, net assets enough to accomplish the University's mission, and sound budgeting practices.

All eight colleges within the University receive funding from the budget allocated. To date, the University has been very considerate in allocations of funds. Budgeting requests begin at the College level. However, departmental budget requests are submitted to the Dean of the COE. The College level budget is determined through a collaborative process among the executive leadership of the university.

The MLS program is one of the most promising graduate programs in the university. A stable trajectory of enrollment growth is expected which ensures that enrollment-graduation rate-based funding continues. The MLS program has adapted to distance learning, which allows students in various professional and personal situations to enroll and successfully complete the program.

Faculty lines are stable and are distributed by the Provost and allocated through collaborative discussions among the Department Chair and Dean. Data taken from the Academic Performance Solutions (APS) platform (class size, fill rate, course sections fill rate, consolidation, and expansion of sections) is a key source to support new faculty lines request. Presently, the program is supported by two tenure track faculty and one full-time instructor. Frequently, adjuncts/library staff are used to teach courses.

V.7 Compensation for the program's faculty and other staff is equitably established according to their education, experience, responsibilities, and accomplishments and is sufficient to attract, support, and retain personnel needed to attain program goals and objectives.

Faculty compensation is an area of concern for the university. The salary of program faculty is equitable to other faculty in the college and in the university. The university is working to adjust faculty salaries to be more closely aligned with “sister” or comparable universities. The university provides support to junior faculty for research and creative innovations. The university strongly encourages external grant funding for research and service projects.

V.8 Institutional funds for research projects, professional development, travel, and leaves with pay are available on the same basis as in comparable units of the institution. Student financial aid from the parent institution is available on the same basis as in comparable units of the institution.

Program faculty have the same opportunity to apply for internal and external grants as other faculty. The Vice [Provost for Research and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies](#) offers learning sessions on external funding sources as well as internal funding through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (OSRP). The university has several internal grants designed to enhance the research capacity of faculty, awarding reassigned time from teaching and summertime stipends for faculty development. The university provides allocations to the department for travel and professional development opportunities. MLS students have many opportunities to secure financial aid. The MLS Program recently established its first endowed scholarship that is restricted to MLS students, the [Leniel Edwards Endowed Scholarship in Library Science](#).

V.9 The program has access to physical and technological resources that allow it to accomplish its objectives in the areas of teaching, research and service. The program provides support services for teaching and learning regardless of instructional delivery modality.

The MLS program has access to several technological services. MTSU [Information Technology Division \(ITD\)](#), [MTSU Online](#), and [Learning Teaching & Innovative Technologies Center](#), provide instructional designers, teams of designers, and instructional technologists to partner with faculty on course design or redesign, course development, implementation, and evaluation in both face-to-face or online delivery methods. Students have access to on campus services through computer labs, writing labs, and other instructional support services.

Examples:

Graduate Writing Groups

The Graduate Writing group meets weekly to discuss techniques for writing at the graduate level. From papers and presentations to theses and dissertations, this group of graduate student writers will help you to sharpen your academic writing skills and develop new strategies for improving your writing. <https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/writing-groups.php> .

MT Internal Grant Opportunities (MT-IGO)

MT-IGO awards are intended to provide seed funding for tenured and tenure-track faculty in the preliminary stages of a larger research or creative activity agenda or program, in preparation to compete for subsequent external funding to support the continuation and amplification of their

scholarship. Two tiers are available: Tier I is intended for research and creative activity projects *in preparation to compete for successive external funding to support the continuation and amplification of scholarship*. These projects align to external funding sources upon completion. Tier II is intended for research or creative activity that *currently do not have the potential for external funding but advance scholarship in the faculty member's field or provide innovative opportunities for faculty and student engagement in scholarly activity*.

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Reporting to the Vice Provost for Research, this office deals with matters related to research and sponsored activity in the University. It supports faculty through Education and Training, Proposal Development, Pre-submission Review, and Awards Management.

V.11 Instructional and research facilities and services for meeting the needs of students and faculty include access to information resources and services, computer and other information technologies, accommodations for independent study, and media production facilities.

With the MLS Program being 100% online, there is little need for physical resources and facilities for the delivery of face-to-face instruction. However, faculty are well served with spacious offices that are fully wired Internet access, VOIP phone service, and ample furnishings to allow them to do their jobs efficiently. Additionally, MTSU faculty office computers or laptops are replaced every three years. Students have access to ample computer labs both in the College of Education and campus-wide, as well as access to a substantial physical and virtual library and information sciences collection in our Walker Library. The Program's online learning platform Desire 2 Learn (D2L) Brightspace is supported by a 24 hour Help Desk available for students to contact and seek assistance at all hours of the day. In addition, there is built-in help and tutorial services to assist students and faculty in utilizing the D2L platform. Distance learners have access to on campus services through computer labs, writing labs, and other instructional support services. MTSU Online lists online student resources at <https://www.mtsu.edu/online/resources.php>.

Library Resources

The James E Walker library is one of the leading Tennessee university libraries in its size for high-impact services and its research collection. The library collection offers users access to 1.5 million physical and electronic volumes, nearly 550 databases, and millions of journals, magazine, and newspaper articles, as well as streaming audio and video. Electronic resources are available anytime, anywhere to MTSU students.

Walker Library provides the necessary research and study support for students. The library offers a variety of study spaces, including collaborative study rooms to work on group projects and presentation practice rooms; current technology such as computers, laptops, scanners, and printers; and expert staff to assist in conducting research and effectively using technology.

Students can easily find subject expertise and research support at the Reference Desk, via chat or email, or by making an appointment with a subject liaison. Walker Library is an innovative work and study space on campus where students can find technology and expert assistance in utilizing a variety of software and devices across the library. Students can explore the multitude of technologies available in the Makerspace including, creating multimedia projects, 3D printing, augmented and virtual reality, robotics, and much more.

Walker Library also hosts other student services, including tutoring, the writing center, an adaptive technology lab, and a Starbucks coffee shop. The library provides a full range of student support in one location and is a hub for student work and creative activity

Table 5.3. – Resources provided to MTSU MLS Students and Faculty by James Walker Library, 2019-2020

Resource	Description
Adaptive Technology Lab	<p>The MTSU Adaptive Technology Center (ATC) is located on the first floor of the library in room 174. The ATC is open to the public, with priority given to MTSU students registered with the Disability & Access Center. If you are working in the ATC and have library-related questions, please ask a librarian or ask an ATC assistant to do so.</p> <p>All public computers in the library contain current versions of JAWS, ZoomText, textHELP Read&Write Gold and Kurzweil 3000 software. In addition, at least one public computer on each floor is equipped with a large screen monitor, low vision keyboard, trackball mouse and a CCTV document viewer.</p>
Digital Media Resources	<p>Digital Scholarship Initiatives is located in Walker Library.</p> <p>Digital scholarship is scholarship that is enhanced by the design of digital projects, incorporation of digital tools, collaboration among digital partners, and dissemination through digital platforms. Digital scholarship is changing the nature of how research is conducted, produced, and shared.</p> <p>Digital Scholarship Initiatives (DSI), an extension of the mission of the Walker Library as an active partner in the scholarly communication process, supports the educational mission of the university by providing access to information. In 2022, DSI began piloting an open press and partners with faculty on digital humanities projects, open journals, and other digital projects.</p> <p>Digital Scholarship Initiatives began at Walker Library in 2014 as a way to further the library's collections digitally. Several initiatives continue to grow including JEWL Scholar, the institutional repository; Journal Hosting services; the creation of a collaborative Digital Partners group; and a Digital Scholarship Lab (DSL) dedicated to faculty and advanced</p>

	<p>students who enhance research by using digital tools, collaborating on digital projects, and disseminating research through digital platforms. You can find out more about DSI at: dsi.mtsu.edu .</p> <p>Digital Collections and Partners</p> <p>Our digital collections document diverse elements of the history of Middle Tennessee State University, Rutherford County, and the state. They have been developed by the James E. Walker Library in collaboration with a variety of partners.</p> <p>On-campus partners include the Albert Gore Research Center, the Center for Cedar Glade Studies, the Center for Historic Preservation, the Center of Popular Music, and the Public History program of the Department of History.</p>
E-books	<p>Holdings</p> <p>Walker Library provides access to over a million ebooks through several vendor platforms for MTSU users. They support the academic teaching and research areas of the university including the MLS program and College of Education.</p> <p>Depending on the vendor and any restrictions, users can either download or print chapters from a specific title. Some titles offer unlimited use while others are restricted to a single user. Users can search the catalog (choose Ebooks in Material Type); conduct a JEWL search (limit to books); or search a specific resource to find an ebook title.</p>
Equipment (borrow)	<p>Computers, multimedia equipment, calculators, headphones, etc.</p> <p>Location: Technology Services Desk, 1st floor & MakerSpace</p> <p>Loan Period: Loan periods vary depending on the equipment item. Some laptops are available for 3-day loans and others</p>

	<p>for 2 weeks. Most equipment circulates for 3 days including calculators, headphones, digital cameras, and more.</p> <p>Items may be renewed in person, online, or via phone.</p> <p>Overdue items may be charged a \$20 fee and the replacement cost if an item is lost is based on the actual item cost. All of this information can be found at: https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/equipment</p>
Full-text databases	<p>Walker Library provides 533 databases to the MTSU community. We provide core Library Science databases such as the two listed below along with several Education Databases that also include Library and Information Science content.</p> <p>Library Literature & Information Science Full Text</p> <p>LISTA (Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts)</p>
Library Science Collection	<p>The Library Science collection as a print collection is large; however, it is growing at a slower pace than the library's digital collections. Digital versions of current library science materials are available and this collection has sufficient depth to support the MLS courses taught. Full-text Library Literature and Information Science is available as well as numerous other databases that complement these core resources.</p>
Makerspace	<p>The Makerspace, located on the 2nd floor of the James E. Walker Library, offers a wide variety of equipment and technologies along with knowledgeable staff. The MakerSpace makes available advanced technologies for experiential learning and creative expression. The Makerspace is a welcoming space for users of all abilities, disciplines, levels and interests.</p> <p>Who may use the Makerspace?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MTSU faculty, staff, and students who have been trained on the equipment. ▪ Makerspace Equipment Training is available upon request. <p>Most MakerSpace equipment must be used in the library; however, a small selection of multi-media equipment is</p>

	<p>available for check-out. MakerSpace equipment is free to use, but some equipment requires user supplied materials.</p> <p>Makerspace Equipment and Software</p> <p>Users will find a range of equipment from Mac computers, 3D printers, AR/VR technologies and applications, a laser cutter, vinyl cutter and more. Users have access to needed software and tools to support all of the operations in the Makerspace. For a detailed list of equipment, please visit: https://library.mtsu.edu/makerspace/equipment</p> <p>Additionally, the library provides access to an Easy Recording Studio, Green Screen Room, and Podcast Studio through the MakerSpace.</p>
Online student services	<p>Walker Library provides extensive access to students regardless of their location. Online student services provide access to print materials via U.S. Postal Service. Delivery is free, but the return postage is the responsibility of the student.</p> <p>Interlibrary Loan through ILLIAD provides access for non MTSU items. The students may obtain a statewide library card (TALC) that allows them to borrow from other colleges/universities in the state. The library embeds a librarian in each online course so that students have a specific consultant. Reference is available through email, phone, or chat.</p> <p>The majority of the library's collections are electronic, however, if a chapter of a book from a print item is needed the library can provide scan on demand access for online students.</p>
Printing allowance	<p>A printing allowance of 300 pages per semester is given to each MTSU ID card holder. There is a 5-cents/copy fee after the allowance is exhausted.</p>
Reference services	<p>Services are provided in-person, through text, chat, and telephone phone. The library creates and delivers numerous subject and course based research guides to help get the user started. A relevant FAQ is also available for students to use</p>

	to get started with their research when the library may be closed.
Software applications	A complete list of available software applications can be found at: https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/software . The following link provides a list of available software for MTSU owned computers: https://mtsu.edu/itd/site-license.php
Womack Curriculum Collection	This room houses a large collection of children's materials (picture books, novels, and non-fiction) as well as materials for teaching and school librarianship. The textbook depository resides in the Curriculum Collection.
Writing Center	The University Writing Center assists writers of various experiences, backgrounds, and skill levels in developing responsible, informed writing practices. Students are able to schedule an appointment to discuss their writing project in person or online.

V.12 The staff and the services provided for the program by libraries, media centers, and information technology units, as well as all other support facilities, are appropriate for the level of use required and specialized to the extent needed. These services are delivered by knowledgeable staff, convenient, accessible to people with disabilities, and are available when needed.

Academic support is adequate for students and faculty to meet program mission and expected outcomes. The university has a [“One Stop”](#) facility for admission, advising, financial aid services. Other services such as counseling, career planning, remote library connections, disability, and technology support are available to all students regardless of mode of delivery. Online students have access to a 24 hour help desk as well as built in help tutorials.

The MLS Program will continue to assess holdings at Walker Library and the usability of those holdings for MLS students in cooperation with the collections librarian assigned to education and library sciences. This assessment has historically considered the range of the materials and the volume of materials.

Given that the MLS Program is 100% online, remote access to Walker Library is a critical resource for the MLS students. A key resource provided specifically to online courses is the distance librarian. The distance librarian is currently Ms. Sharon Parente. Students and instructors may contact her by phone, in person, or by email. They may be able to walk in for a session or schedule a meeting. The current distance librarian's subject specialties include Advertising, Business Communication & Education, Communication & Speech, Distance Learning, Entrepreneurship, Journalism, Marketing, Mass Communication, Media Arts (Electronic Media Communication), Public Relations, Social Work, Sociology, Statistics & Data. The distance librarian maintains research or subject guides in these areas.

The distance librarian shares the following online support services and resources:

- Library Research Guides

- Articles
- Journals A-Z
- Books
- Streaming Videos
- Music
- Remote Library Access-MTSU
- Remote Library Access-TN eCampus
- Instructor Resources Toggle Dropdown
- Tutorials
- Personal Assistance
- Copyright and Fair Use
- Plagiarism (https://library.mtsu.edu/prf.php?account_id=57827)

Librarians at Walker Library hold faculty status and require the terminal Master of Library Science and/or Information Science from an ALA-accredited degree program. The library has recently purchased \$10,000 in new monographs for the MLS Program with the vast majority (~75%) being in e-book format ([see Appendix 5B](#)). Additionally, the library subscribes to the two most popular periodical databases that contain full-text access to periodical articles: *Library Literature & Information Science Full Text* and *LISTA (Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts)*. Thus, both MLS Program faculty and students have access to all of the human and intellectual resources that are available to ALA-accredited library science schools across North America.

[Appendix 5B](#) contains examples of the books purchased by the University to support the MLS Program in its drive towards accreditation with ALA. The University purchased 97 new resources, to be managed by Walker Library, for the MLS Program. Of these, 72.2% were ebooks and 27.8% were print books. The large percentage of ebooks reflects the fact that most MLS students engage remotely with the MLS Program. These purchases also cover a range of library environments: academic, public, school, and others.

V.13 The program's systematic planning and evaluation process includes review of its administrative policies, its fiscal and support policies, and its resource requirements. The program regularly reviews the adequacy of access to physical resources and facilities for the delivery of face-to-face instruction and access to the technologies and support services for the delivery of online education. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty, staff, students, and others are involved in the evaluation process.

The Program, Department, College, and College of Graduate Studies constantly review access to physical resources and facilities through regular faculty meetings, leadership team meetings and Dean's Cabinet. The Program evaluates frequently their resources in which recommendations are made. The MLS Program is an online degree program; therefore, most of the Program infrastructure resides with Graduate Studies and *MTSU Online*. The MLS Program frequently assesses and gives feedback to Graduate Studies about its ability to admit students as quickly as possible on behalf of MLS. The Program works closely with *MTSU Online* to understand how the online infrastructure functions or may be altered.

V. 14 The program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of administration, finances, and resources.

MTSU has a history of conducting an ongoing systematic and institution-wide research-based planning, assessment, and evaluation process (See [The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research](#)). The MTSU effectiveness process has resulted in documented continuous improvement and provides evidence that supports the [University's mission](#).

All academic programs are required/designed to assess program quality and facilitate program improvement. The program review process is systematic in nature and include evaluation from an out-of-state consultant. The process involves the Program Coordinator who reports to the Department Chair.

The Program Coordinator for the MLS program holds meetings and keeps meeting notes and email communications that include commentary from more senior administrators pertaining to finances and resources as evidence of ongoing decision making. This evidence is housed either on the MLS Program's TEAMS folder or the Program Coordinator's email where such emails are retained as per state records retention requirements to meet public access requirements and requests. Such evidence includes decisions pertaining to purchasing resources such as RDA Toolkit and Cataloger's Toolkit as well as requests for funding for promotional activities at conferences across Tennessee. These latter requests also are not merely for funding from the Educational Leadership Department; other similar funding requests between the MLS Program and the College of Graduate Studies and MTSU Online exists too.

V. 15 The program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation of administration, finances, and resources are systematically used to improve the Program and to plan for the future.

Each program at MTSU undergoes an established review process to ensure that there is a quality program that is rigorous and appropriate for an accredited higher education offering and is aligned with the institutional mission and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Institutional research provides data and analysis to the program through a variety of sources. The MLS Program consults several different sources to accomplish this standard. Concurrent use data are sought from RDA Toolkit and Cataloger's Desktop's sponsoring organizations to make decisions regarding changes to ongoing subscription needs to ensure that monies spent on these resources are spent wisely. In turn, student exit survey and employment data are used to determine if these two resources, as one example, results in monies well spent in terms of developing information professionals that are hired in their profession within a reasonable amount of time and then thrive and meet the MLS Program's vision and mission.

Plan for Candidacy

Plan for Candidacy for Standard One

1. Move towards monthly program meetings during school year starting immediately January 2023 (8 monthly meetings/academic year, held after Departmental monthly meetings).
2. Start another, closer discussion of the MLS Program's values, mission, vision, goals, student learning objectives, and program objectives starting immediately, January 2023, with the *possibility* of an ALA self-study due in 2 years as but one part of this consideration.
3. Continue recording data for these meetings, ensuring quality and full data are captured, especially meeting minutes.
4. Use data from multiple sources for program review and revision consideration in MLS Program monthly meetings.
5. Share meeting discussions from Spring 2023 that pertain to the Program's values, mission, vision goals, student learning objectives, and program objectives with MLS Program Advisory Council meeting in September any changes that have been discussed in Spring 2023 meetings. Get feedback from MAC, make changes to the MLS Program if possible and feasible.

Repeat the process starting in August 2024 through to April 2025, taking into consideration changes to the profession as reported in MLS Program constituent data and other sources such as discipline and professional literature.

Plan for Candidacy for Standard Two

1. Ensure that Curriculum is an agenda item on ALL monthly program meetings during school year (8 monthly meetings/year, after Departmental monthly meetings).
2. Consider the extent that our current curriculum, which *has* gone through extensive revision, is meeting still the MLS Program's goals and student learning objectives. If not, then what needs to change? Our expectations of SLOs, or goals, or the curriculum? (End of each semester/two meetings per academic year).
3. Review previously collected data that pertain to curriculum from data sources outlined above in Table II.2 (At least the end of each semester OR the next meeting that follows the data collection, analysis, and reporting).
4. Address any and all student concerns raised by faculty in monthly program meetings (monthly)
5. Continue recording data for these meetings and ensuring production of effective related minutes. Ask graduate assistant to help with creating these minutes to ensure full faculty attention and participation, asking them to leave once specific student discussions proceed.

Plan for Candidacy for Standard Three

1. Program Coordinator will continue to monitor faculty-student headcount ratios when conducting required annual report due in April. He will report to the Department Chair's attention any significant changes in the ratios.
2. All faculty review the MLS Program's adjunct instructors (meeting in January 2023). Suggest additional potential instructors and contact these instructors to gauge their enthusiasm for teaching in the MLS Program. Create a list of these instructors for easy access from multiple faculty and administrators.
3. Continue to have faculty capabilities reviewed compared to MTSU standards through the review of their annual submissions of Outlines of Faculty Data.

Plan for Candidacy for Standard Four

1. "Freeze" new course creation until all MLS Program electives may be offered at least once a year without any cancellations due to low enrollment.
2. Review and encourage course revision among faculty. Revision could be complete or partial. Discuss particular trends in librarianship heard/read about as part of monthly meetings.
3. Review professional and student constituents' needs for curriculum following review of employment survey data and following annual MAC meeting.

Plan for Candidacy for Standard Five

1. Have MLS Program Coordinator and/or faculty consult formally with Department Chair about financial needs for MLS Program ahead of start of fiscal years (July 1, 2023 and July 1, 2024) to ensure candidacy budget needs can be met still.
2. Record carefully all sums of monies supplied by the Department of Educational Leadership and other academic and administrative units that were contributed to the MLS Program's program goals and student learning objectives and record how these sums contributed to the MLS Program's successes.

Overall Plan for Candidacy

1. Assign chapters for writing self-study at first MLS Program meeting. Program Coordinator would be responsible for three chapters, the other tenure-track faculty would be responsible for the remaining two.
2. Ensure data sources for all standards are clearly understood and acceptable. Discuss and implement any other data sources that will help ensure a successful self-study and accreditation assignment.
3. Ensure all faculty and administrators understand clearly the ALA accreditation process, regardless their level of involvement in administrative matters. This includes adjunct faculty understand the value they bring to the MLS Program's accreditation efforts.
4. Ensure all related accreditation communications are received and understood by all faculty members.

Timeline for Candidacy

Recurring events	Prepare for External Review Panel (ERP) Review	Self-Study	Evaluate Performance Outcomes
January 2023 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates. Conduct online new student orientation.		January 9, 2023. Application for Candidacy Submitted	Standard I: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 1 criterion and compare to program's goals and SLOs. Develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
February 2023 MLS Program meeting. Review report based on last exit survey. Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Faculty submit materials for annual review of Outline of Faculty Data.		Receive CoA candidacy decision. Acknowledge and clarify any needed changes, amend candidacy plan and timeline as needed based on CoA feedback.	Standard II: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 2 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
March 2023 MLS Program meeting. Ed. Leadership Department meeting	Submit 3 dates for ERP visit	Announce Candidacy decision to Constituents. Assign chapters for writing to MLS Program faculty; 3 to Program Coordinator, 2 to rest of faculty.	Standard III: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 3 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
April 2023 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting	Notify administrators and other key staff and constituents of ERP visit dates – put on calendars. Determine format of ERP visit; in-person or virtual	Develop outlines for further/ongoing data collection. Create plan for the self-study for consideration and building through summer.	Standard IV & V: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 4 & 5 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare

			discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary. Faculty discuss Standard V (budget etc.) in preparation for new fiscal year requests
May 2023 Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates			
June 2023 Prepare/have prepared exit survey report			
July 2023 Send out employment survey questionnaire to 2022 calendar year graduates.	Clear suggested ERP Chair for conflict of interest.		All Standards: In preparation for September 2023 MAC meeting, send MAC members copies of March 2023 & June 2023 exit survey reports and July 2023 employment survey report.
August 2023 Prepare for new academic year. Annual state-of-the-university meeting. Annual College of Education meeting. MLS Program meeting. Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates.		MLS Program meeting; review self-study outline and plan developed over the summer months.	
September 2023 Annual MAC meeting MLS Program meeting			All Standards- Consider and implement MAC advice and input from meeting as part of our self-study.

Ed. Leadership Department meeting.			
October 2023 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.		Compile Plan for Self-Study October 30 – Finalize calendar for Self-Study	
November 2023 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.			Standard I – V: Faculty conduct annual review of program outcomes and strategic objectives as part of MLS Program meeting.
December 2023 College of Education annual accreditation data day.		Dec. 1, 2023- Plan for Self-Study due.	
January 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates. Conduct online new student orientation.	Jan. 30, 2024 - Submit Plan for self-study to College of Education Director of Assessment and Accreditation & ERP Chair (due 12 months before visit). Conference call with Director and ERP Chair. Receive feedback about plan.	January 2024 MLS Program Meeting-Review with faculty finalized outline and create overall plan for writing self-study. Choose protocols for collecting evidence and written work. Start writing self-study.	Standard I: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 1 criterion and compare to program's goals and SLOs. Develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
February 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Faculty submit materials for annual review of Outline of Faculty Data.			Standard II: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 2 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
March 2024 MLS Program meeting		Complete and submit drafts of MLS Program's	Standard III: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 3

Ed. Leadership Department meeting		respective standards for review and commentary.	criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
April 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting		MLS Program faculty write drafts for assigned standard for self-study.	Standard IV & V: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 4 & 5 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary. Faculty discuss Standard V (budget etc.) in preparation for new fiscal year requests
May 2024 Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates	Calendar check for ERP visit with key administrators. Secure dates if possible.	MLS Program faculty write drafts for assigned standard for self-study.	
June 2024 Prepare/have prepared exit survey report		MLS Program faculty write drafts for assigned standard for self-study.	
July 2024 Send out employment survey questionnaire to 2022 calendar year graduates.	Schedule rooms for ERP meetings and lodging.	Submit draft of <i>whole</i> self-study to CoE Director of Assessment and Accreditation as well as Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Partnerships	All Standards: In preparation for September 2023 MAC meeting, send MAC members copies of March 2023 & June 2023 exit survey reports and July 2023 employment survey report.
August 2024 Prepare for new academic year. Annual state-of-the-university meeting. Annual College of Education meeting.		MLS Program faculty respond to feedback, collect any missing evidence, write final draft of self-study.	

MLS Program meeting. Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates.			
September 2024 Annual MAC meeting MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.		Draft of Self-Study due September 1, 2024, to CoE Director of Assessment and Accreditation as well as Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Partnerships. Compile any missing evidence. Confirm dates on calendar for MTSU faculty, staff, administrators, and others involved in ERP visit. Review draft feedback.	Annual MAC meeting. Share current plans for ERP visit. Update on self-study. Share potential dates with MAC and inform of potential involvement with ERP members.
October 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.	Oct. 1, 2014 -Submit draft of self-study to ERP and CoE Director of Assessment and Accreditation as well as Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Partnerships (4 mos before scheduled visit). Consult with ERP Chair and CoE Director of Assessment and Accreditation and Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Partnerships regarding draft. Work with ERP Chair to develop detailed agenda for ERP visit.		Standards I-V. Consider and implement MAC advice and input from meeting as part of our self-study.
November 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.	Announce ERP visit and invite stakeholders to meet with ERP team. Finalize scheduled events for ERP visit.	Respond to feedback. Revise self-study.	Standards I-V: Faculty conduct annual review of program outcomes and strategic objectives as part of MLS Program meeting.
December 2024 College of Education		Revise self-study. Submit final self-study (Dec. 30,	

annual accreditation data day.		2024; 6-8 weeks before scheduled visit)	
January 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates. Conduct online new student orientation.		Prepare for ERP visit. Secure any on-campus evidence. Finalize the schedule.	Standard I: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 1 criterion and compare to program's goals and SLOs. Develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
February 2024 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Faculty submit materials for annual review of Outline of Faculty Data.	ERP Visit		Standard II: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 2 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.

Budget

Faculty are supported through salary & benefits. The Program Coordinator receives a course release in Fall and Spring semesters and a summer stipend. The following are budget projections and include funds from other administrative units such as MTSU Online and James A. Walker Library as it pertains to the collections and online journal databases devoted to the MLS Program.

2022-23

EXPENSE ITEM	DOLLAR AMOUNT
Faculty Salary & Benefits	\$323,027.68
Conference attendance & travel (Ed. Leadership & MTSU Online)	\$5,106
Master's Graduate Assistant	\$11,520
Pre-Candidacy Fee	\$2,000
MTSU Online-Marketing	\$1,400
Library Collections-Ongoing materials	\$7,500
Library Collections-One-time materials	\$4,500
RDA Toolkit	\$500
Cataloger's Desktop	\$525
TOTAL	\$356,078.68

2023-24

EXPENSE ITEM	DOLLAR AMOUNT
Faculty Salary & Benefits	\$327873.10
Conference attendance & travel (Ed. Leadership & MTSU Online)	\$5,106
Master's Graduate Assistant	\$11,520
Candidacy Fee	\$1,000
MTSU Online-Marketing	\$1,400
Library Collections-Ongoing materials	\$7,500
Library Collections-One-time materials	\$4,500
RDA Toolkit	\$500
Cataloger's Desktop	\$525
TOTAL	\$359,924.10

Documentation List

Appendices are located in the One Drive accessible from this link:

https://mtmailmtsu-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/hhebert_mtsu_edu/EkopC99sFpdlpvlVxjukSn8B0RGyjtU91ByesXwhYtRTjw?e=B7pBRr

Password: @MTSU2023!

Standard I

MTSU Mission Statement <https://www.mtsu.edu/about/mission.php>

ALA Core Competencies

<https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf>

ALA Standards for Accreditation

https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/standards/Standards_2015_adopted_02-02-15.pdf

School Librarian Preparation Standards

https://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aasleducation/ALA_AASL_CAEP_School_Librarian_Preparation_Standards_2019_Final.pdf

MLS Program Handbook <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/LIBS-Handbook.pdf>

Standard II

MAC (Appendix 1A)

Employment survey (Appendix 1B)

MLS Program Objectives - <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info>

New Program of Study (Appendix 1C)

MLS Program Map (Appendix 2A)

Plans of Study (Appendix 2C)

MLS Program Website <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/about>

Program Alignment (Appendix 2D)

Exit Survey Reports (Appendix 2E)

Standard III

MTSU awarded R2 status <https://mtsunews.com/r2-research-announcement-march2022/>

Listed among Best Colleges Princeton Review <https://mtsu.edu/rankings/index.php>

MTSU nationally ranked for affordability <https://mtsunews.com/college-choice-masters-library-science/>

MTOonline ranked among best schools for online learning

<https://www.newsweek.com/americas-best-online-learning-schools-2022>.

MLS Program faculty CVs (Appendix 3A)

MTSU Tenure and Promotion Policy <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/tenpro/index.php>

MTSU Annual Faculty Assessment Calendar

<https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/docs/AnnualFacultyAssessmentCalendar2022-23.pdf>.

Faculty Success Portal <https://www.mtsu.edu/facultysuccess/index.php>

Graduate faculty appointments and members

<https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/faculty/gfmember.php>

MT Online course development policy

https://www.mtsu.edu/online/faculty/faculty_course_development.php.

MT Online <https://mtsu.edu/online/faculty/index.php>

LT & ITC <https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/>

MLS Program Faculty Learning Activities (Appendix 3B)

MTSU Community Standards

<https://www.mtsu.edu/hrs/relations/handbook.php#StatementofMission>.

MTSU faculty recruitment

guide https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentGuide.pdf

MTSU faculty recruitment process

https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentProcessOverview.pdf

MTSU recruitment documents

https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/Reference_Guide.pdf

MTU Minority Dissertation Fellowship <https://grad.uchicago.edu/fellowship/middleee-tennessee-state-university-underrepresented-minority-dissertation-fellowship/>

FJE <https://mtsunews.com/fairness-justice-equity-center-fall-events/>

Office of Intercultural and Diversity Affairs <https://www.mtsu.edu/idac/>

Certifications of Online Teaching (Appendix 3C)

Faculty CVs (Appendix 3A)

MTSU University Committees <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/comm.php>.

Information Technology Department <https://www.mtsu.edu/itd/>

Faculty Learning (Appendix 3B)

Faculty Course Evaluations (Appendix 3D)

MTSU Faculty Handbook https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/fac_handbook/contents.php.

MTSU Faculty Load <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/forms/wkguide.pdf>

MTSU Annual Faculty Assessment Calendar
<https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/docs/AnnualFacultyAssessmentCalendar2022-23.pdf>.

FTT Appointments <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/academic-affairs-institution-and-faculty/202.php>.

MLS Program Field Experience Handbook https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/Field_Experience_Handbook.pdf

Standard IV

MLS Program exitPortfolio Handbook <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2>
Statement of Purpose <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements>

Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance <https://www.tneca.org/>,

MLS Program Website <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/>,

COE Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation>,

MLS Program Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2275466432763691>.

MLS Program Admission Requirements <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements>

Apply Now <https://www.mtsu.edu/applynow/application/login>.

GRE <https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/gre-waivers.php>.

Conditional Acceptance https://www.mtsu.edu/ucat/graduate/08_10/2008-10_Glossary.pdf.

Exit Survey (Appendix 4A)

Employment Survey (Appendix 4B)

New Student Orientation (Appendix 4E)

Town Hall Meetings (Appendix 4F)

Student Prospective Publications (Appendix 4G)

MTSU Scholars Week <https://www.mtsu.edu/scholarsweek/>.

Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center
<https://www.mtsu.edu/military/index.php>

Counseling Services, <https://mtsue.edu/counseling>

Intercultural and Diversity Affairs <https://www.mtsu.edu/idac/>
James E Walker Library <https://library.mtsu.edu/home>
University Writing Center <https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/>
Career Development Center <https://www.mtsu.edu/career>
Disability & Access Center <https://www.mtsu.edu/dac>
Information Technology Division <https://www.mtsu.edu/itd/index.php>
Student Support Services <https://www.mtsu.edu/nextstep/ssss.php>
Student Food Pantry <https://www.mtsu.edu/foodpantry/>
Clothes Closet <https://mtsunews.com/aauw-clothing-drive-spr2019/>
ALA Student Chapters <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/how-start-ala-student-chapter>
MTSU Student Organizations <https://www.mtsu.edu/sos/>
TLA Conference Internships <https://www.tnla.org/page/539>.

Standard V

COE Organizational Chart (Appendix 5A)
MTSU ITD <https://mtsu.edu/itd/>
MT Online <https://www.mtsu.edu/online/index.php>
LT & ITC <https://mtsu.edu/ltanditc/index.php>
Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment <https://mtsu.edu/iepr/index.php>
Walker Library <https://library.mtsu.edu/home>
OFM <https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/164/online-faculty-mentoring-ofm-community-program-underway>
MTSU Social Media <https://mtsu.edu/university-college/social.php>
Funding for Research <https://mtsu.edu/research/funding-faculty.php>
Leniel Edwards Endowed Scholarship <https://www.mtsu.edu/education/scholarships.php>
Writing Groups <https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/writing-groups.php>
Walker Library Makerspace <https://library.mtsu.edu/makerspace/equipment>
Adaptive Technologies Center <http://mtsu.edu/dac/atc.php>
Disability and Access Center <http://www.mtsu.edu/dac/index.php>
MTSU Software Applications <https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/software>
MTSU One Stop <https://mtsu.edu/one-stop/>

MTSU Plagiarism Policy <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/academic-integrity.php>

Example of Library Resources bought for the MLS Program (Appendix 5B)

Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Research <https://mtsu.edu/iepr/index.php>

MTSU University Mission <https://mtsu.edu/about/mission.php>

Final Synthesis and Overview

Middle Tennessee State University's Master of Library Science Program is a relatively young program in its current iteration, with the MLS degree being offered only six years ago. Even though the name of the degree changed from the M.Ed. to the MLS, MTSU's College of Education, and the Womack Educational Leadership Department particularly, have given the MLS Program all of the resources needed to help it maintain its long tradition of educating outstanding school librarians. With the goal now of seeking and earning ALA accreditation being codified with the MLS Program having attained pre-candidacy status in 2020, the Program has embraced both ALA's and CAEP's standards and has implemented accordingly many processes and data sources to help ensure that the Program graduates now outstanding academic, public, and special librarian candidates based on ALA's standards of excellence particularly.

While the MLS Program may be considered to be "small" based on faculty and student headcounts, this actually makes it an excellent time to pursue ALA candidacy for accreditation. The small size of the program gives us tremendous flexibility to change and evolve to help ensure that our students are receiving one of the best possible professional graduate educations offered by MTSU.

We believe that the MLS Program's vision and mission will serve it well in the coming years. Its program outcomes are reasonable and achievable, and that our student learning outcomes are measurable and informative where, should there be any changes in the discipline and profession that will require curriculum modification that we can implement these changes quickly and effectively. The issue our initial licensure students faced as it came to learning about edTPA prior to their student teaching clinical assignment is such an example, and it serves also as an example of the flexibility the MLS Program has to make these changes immediately.

In this application for ALA candidacy for accreditation, we believe that we have demonstrated general compliance with each of the standards. In those rare cases where some program modification may be required to ensure *explicit* compliance, the MLS Program has processes and related data that will result in the additional information that would be expected in our first self-study.

Standard One: For systematic planning, we present strong evidence of systematic planning practices involving constituents and how well this planning can be supported through our strong and effective data collection practices established and solidified during the MLS Program's pre-candidacy status. However, we can improve the quality of our qualitative data, and we shall do so immediately with our first program faculty meeting. Regardless, there is no need for MLS Program leaders to make decisions about program improvement without sufficient empirical data support; the data are there. We appreciate how well compliance with standard one will help us identify ways to improve the program and to continue educating our students to become the premiere information professionals we believe that we educate currently.

Standard Two: The MLS Program's curriculum required a lot of updating to ensure it addresses current and future competencies our students will need to become successful information professionals. The MLS Program and its partners, such as MTSU Online, have made significant investments in its curriculum. Careful consideration based on constituent feedback and thorough program benchmarking has created a curriculum that addresses not only the basic

dispositions required of all practicing professionals, but the curriculum also incorporates implicit information professional dispositional specializations in courses such as Public Libraries and Librarianship, Academic Libraries and Librarianship, and Special Libraries and Librarianship. Each of these courses were designed from the ground up by practicing professionals who work daily in those areas of librarianship. The end result is an effective and efficient curriculum without unhelpful redundancies that address all of our profession's dispositions.

Standard Three: Even though the MLS Program is comprised of only three full-time faculty, they have the professional practice and academic experience combined to ensure that the Program can address the MLS Program's objectives achieved through the teaching and mentorship of students. Even though MTSU was awarded a "promotion" to R2 status, it has been made quite clear to all faculty across the university that we will maintain the university's first priority of remaining a student-focused public tertiary educational institution. The MLS Program supports and embraces this orientation fully.

Standard Four: Although it is rare to meet our students in face-to-face situations due to the 100% online nature of the MLS Program, our students remain our primary focus and all faculty work very hard at establishing and maintaining our relationships with them both during and after their studies. Our students have also been invaluable sources of information for program improvement and their input about the MLS Program will always be considered seriously as they prove to be our most important constituents.

Standard Five: As the MLS Program has developed and gone through pre-candidacy, its stature amongst other programs has increased considerably. In many cases, the MLS Program's Program Coordinator has been approached by, and has advised, other program coordinators seeking information about how to increase enrollments, improve their own programs, and other pertinent information to help them and their own respective programs succeed. As the MLS Program proceeds through candidacy, we expect this stature to increase, resulting in real changes to student enrollments that will then receive further support from university administration. We hope that this will lead to the MLS Program becoming one of the largest graduate education programs at MTSU, leading to further changes as articulated in our strategic plan. We are firm believers that success breeds more success, and we look forward to testing this maxim further.

All three full-time faculty members have "bought in" to having the MLS Program adhere to and exceed all ALA standards. We are excited to move the MLS Program forward to bigger and better things to not only the MLS Program's and its students' benefit, but also to helping our graduates' future communities. There is no better profession than librarianship that can demonstrate how information can help and empower individuals to achieve their potential. It is an honour for us to play such a pivotal role in this worthy outcome.