

# MASTER OF LIBRARY SCIENCE PROGRAM

## WOMACK EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEPARTMENT

### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



## Candidacy Application

for Accreditation by the American Library Association

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY.

[mtsu.edu](http://mtsu.edu)



**Office of the President**

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



December 1, 2023

Committee on Accreditation  
Office for Accreditation  
American Library Association  
225 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1300  
Chicago, IL 60601

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**. In recent years, one of our initiatives at MTSU has been to increase the number of accredited programs that we offer in an effort to position our university as a state-of-the-art institution that promotes high standards of excellence.

As part of that service, **Middle Tennessee State University** believes that it is appropriate to continue our efforts to seek ALA accreditation for our Master of Library Science (MLS) Program and to move on to the next step of this process. Accreditation is important given that it is verification to the public/prospective applicants that a program has met 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. As a result, we would encourage you to please consider moving the MLS Program from precandidacy to candidacy status.

This candidacy application 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**

College of Education Building 202  
MTSU Box 93  
Murfreesboro, TN 37132  
Office: (615) 898-2874 • Fax: (615) 898-5188



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

Dear Committee on Accreditation:

As 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 College of Education is dedicated to advancing our program towards ALA accreditation, making it a valuable component of 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. 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. Additionally, 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 for your time and energy as you consider our candidacy application.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neporcha Cone". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Neporcha Cone, Dean

**CANDIDACY APPLICATION**

Master of Library Science Program

**Master of Library Science**

Womack Educational Leadership Department

College of Education

Middle Tennessee State University

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

December 1, 2023

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## ACRONYMS

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: 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

CSWE: Council on Social Work Education

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

edTPA: Educative teacher performance assessment

FJE: Fairness, justice, and equity

FTT: Full time temporary, renewed every 3 years

GPA: Grade point average

HBCU: Historically Black Colleges and Universities

IRB: Institutional Review Board

LMS: Learning Management System

LIBS: Prefix for MLS courses

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

MAC: MLS Program Advisory Board



MEd: Master of Science in Education; see glossary

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

MOU: Memo of Understanding; 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 Colleges and Schools

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 twice a year and advises the faculty at other times as requested.

**Adjunct faculty:** Part-time faculty.

**Asynchronous:** The online delivery format for MLS 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 learning management system (LMS) used by MTSU for the delivery 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.

**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 assessments and artifacts chosen by the student.

Faculty Success by Watermark: A system for reporting and managing individual faculty activities, similar to an electronic portfolio. Previously called Digital Measures.

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

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

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.

Field Experience: All candidates in the MLS Program must successfully complete a 100-hour field experience (AKA internship) unless they are working on initial licensure where they are completing 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.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU): Higher education institutions founded to serve black Americans.

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

Key assessments: Assessments identified by the MLS Program as key indicators of 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 (MEd): Degree program offered by COE. Before the MLS was available, 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: Tenured, tenure-track, non-tenurable full-time faculty, and adjuncts.

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

MTSU Online: The department that is responsible for ensuring quality in online courses and programs.

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.

Quest for Student Success 2025: MTSU's core mission to "to produce graduates who are prepared to thrive professionally, committed to critical inquiry and lifelong learning, and engaged as civically, globally responsible citizens."

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. The survey contains both qualitative and quantitative data and covers both the content and delivery of each course.

Summative assessment: Evaluated student learning at the end of a course or program.

Tenn-Share: A library consortium in Tennessee.

University Writing Center: Provides writing services for students and faculty.

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.





## INTRODUCTION TO CANDIDACY APPLICATION

Master of Library Science Program

Middle Tennessee State University

December 1, 2023

Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) respectfully submits this Application for Candidacy to the ALA Committee on Accreditation. The Master of Library Science (MLS) Program Coordinator and faculty have the full support of the Chair of the Womack Educational Leadership Department (ELD); the Dean of the College of Education; Graduate Studies; the Provost and the President. While working on this application, the MLS Program Coordinator and program faculty worked together with the Womack Educational Leadership Department Chair; Dean and Associate Dean of the College of Education; College of Education's Center for Fairness, Justice and Equity (FJE); Graduate Studies; MTSU Online; Dean of the Walker Library; the Provost; Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness; the MLS Program Advisory Council; employers; alumni; and current students. The College of Education has long been committed to service and excellence. Our slogan "Difference Makers" embodies all that we strive to accomplish as part of the Middle Tennessee State University community, which has a long-standing culture of commitment to assessment and continuous improvement. Included in this commitment of both the COE and MTSU is the creation of the MLS Program and the dedication to achieving and maintaining ALA accreditation.

The mission statement of MTSU states, *"Middle Tennessee State University takes pride in its role as a comprehensive, diverse, and 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."* The spirit of this mission is embodied by the commitment of the administration of both the ELD and the COE; the College of Education's Center for Fairness, Justice and Equity (FJE); Graduate Studies; MTSU Online; Walker Library; and the LT & ITC in creating and supporting the MLS Program as it endeavors to equip graduates for their chosen career as librarians and information professionals. The Dean of the COE, Dr. Neporcha Cone, is new to MTSU this year and has embraced the MLS Program, as has Associate Dean Robyn Ridgley, who has been instrumental during this process. The Provost's Office has provided funding and guidance for accreditation. MLS Program faculty benefit from several University units across campus including the Walker Library; LT & ITC; the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP); College of Graduate Studies; MTSU Online; Technology, Innovation, and Pedagogy Services; and Creative and Visual Services.

The MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC), created in 2016 and reconstituted in 2020, is comprised of librarian leaders from several school districts and academic and public libraries, as well as a library vendor and two student members.

Future plans include establishing a Student Advisory Board, which is a natural next step learned from the Town Halls that are conducted once a year.

### **History of Library Science at Middle Tennessee State University**

The Master of Library Science Program was approved by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission in 2015 and implemented in Fall 2016 as a fully online program. This degree approval was a natural progression as MTSU has a long history of integrating library science in its education program. Founded in 1911 as a Teacher's College, the first library course was offered in 1917 and taught by the first librarian at MTSU, Betty Avery Murfree. In 1970, Library Services was offered as a minor. By 1980, it was a graduate minor. In the 1990s, the program progressed from a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision with a Concentration in Library Service to a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision with a Concentration in Library Science. In 2006, the Tennessee Board of Regents gave its approval for the Library Science Program to be fully online, making it a pioneering leader in online programs at MTSU with faculty developing and teaching online asynchronous classes early on. MLS Program faculty have been involved in the Online Faculty Mentor program since 2018 and have been committed to providing excellent instruction to our mostly nontraditional student body of working professionals. The asynchronous online format provides greater flexibility and positions the program to better serve students who work full-time jobs or have other obligations outside of their graduate studies.

After approval for the Master of Library Science Program in 2015 and implementation in 2016, the process of seeking ALA accreditation began. The MLS Program was granted precandidacy status by ALA in 2020.

The only ALA accredited program in Tennessee currently is at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, which has held ALA accreditation since 1972. The Peabody College at Vanderbilt Library School was accredited by ALA in 1931 but the program closed in 1988.

MTSU, with over 20,000 students and more than 100 graduate programs, with 30 online programs of study, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The College of Education (COE) earned national accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP) in 2022. Also in 2022, MTSU achieved R2 Carnegie Classification status.

### **The Master of Library Science Program's Vision and Mission**

The Master of Library Science Program is situated in the Womack Educational Leadership Department in the College of Education at Middle Tennessee State University, located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Although we have a few students from other states, our program primarily focuses on serving students residing in Tennessee. After achieving ALA accreditation, we will explore increasing the number of students from out of state.

#### *Vision*

To meet society's current and future information needs pertaining to the discovery, acquisition, organization, provision, and ethical and effective use of information regardless of media format.

### *Mission*

To prepare the next generation of 21st century information professionals through impactful research, creative entrepreneurship, learner-centered teaching, and innovative professional practice.

### *Planning Process*

This candidacy application was a collaborative effort between the MLS Program Coordinator, MLS Program faculty, the Chair for the Womack Educational Leadership Department; the Associate Dean of the College of Education; and the Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness; as well as administrative staff and offices of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). The MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC) has been instrumental in helping us shape the direction of our program.

The following groups of people were instrumental in the creation of this document.

### **MLS Program Advisory Board (MAC)**

Patricia Bashir, Children's Manager, Nashville Public Library, TN  
Kaitlyn Benavides, Library Specialist, Rutherford County Schools, TN  
Stephanie Bandel, Scholarly Engagement Librarian, Austin Peay University, TN  
Kathy Boudreau, Retired Faculty, Middle Tennessee State University, TN  
Blake Hopper, Assistant Principal, Claiborne County Schools, TN  
Kate Huddelston, Director, Stones River Regional Library, TN  
Lindsey Kimery, Coordinator of Libraries, Metro Nashville Public Schools, TN  
Anne Lehue, Senior Manager, Collection Development, Ingram Library Services  
Brandon Owens, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Wilberforce University, OH  
Kathleen Schmand, Dean, Walker Library, Middle Tennessee State University, TN  
Rita Shacklett, Director, Rutherford County Library System, TN  
Two current MTSU MLS student representatives.

### **MLS Program Faculty**

Holly Hebert, Assistant Professor and MLS Program Coordinator  
Dr. Frank Lambert, Associate Professor  
DeAnne Luck, Lecturer  
Kathryn Moisant, Adjunct  
Dr. Karen Nourse, Adjunct  
Kathleen Schmand, Adjunct

### **College of Education**

Dr. Neporcha Cone, Dean  
Dr. Robyn Ridgley, Associate Dean  
Dr. Donald Snead, Chair for the Womack Educational Leadership Department

### **Middle Tennessee State University**

Dr. Mary Hoffschwelle, Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness  
Dr. David Butler, Dean, College of Graduate Studies

This candidacy application was compiled through a working committee consisting of COE administration and program faculty with input from the Provost's Office and the MLS Program Advisory Council. Going forward, the Self-Study will also be written by the working committee, led by Holly Hebert, MLS Program Coordinator. Select students will also provide input. Each Standard will have a lead author as listed below who will be responsible for gathering appropriate documentation:

Standard I: Systematic Planning  
Holly Hebert (Program Coordinator, Faculty)

Standard II: Curriculum  
Frank Lambert (Faculty)

Standard III: Faculty  
Holly Hebert (Program Coordinator, Faculty)

Standard IV: Students  
DeAnne Luck (Faculty)

Standard V: Administration, Finances, and Resources  
Dr. Robyn Ridgley (Associate Dean, COE)  
Dr. Donald Snead (Department Chair, Womack Educational Leadership Department)

The MLS Program Coordinator and MLS Program faculty will continue to gather documentation to provide evidence for the self-study and will write the first draft with help from the Womack Educational Leadership Department Chair and the Associate Dean of the College of Education. Neporcha Cone, Dean of the College of Education; and David Butler, Dean of Graduate Studies; and Mary Hoffschwelle, Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will be kept apprised of the progress during the Candidacy Phase and the writing of the Self-Study Report.

### ***Program Development***

The MLS Program was approved by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) in 2015, with the first MLS students admitted in Fall 2016. The MEd-Library Science concentration students admitted prior to Fall 2015 completed that program of study under the old rules with the last MEd students graduating in 2018. Precandidacy applications were made in 2016 & 2019, and precandidacy status was granted by ALA in June 2020. Since Spring 2020, 81 students have been admitted into the MLS Program (degree seeking) and 63 students have graduated with their MLS or completed their PreK-12 Library Information Specialist endorsement.

Several new courses have been created, taught, and redesigned since 2016, such as LIBS 6201 Public Libraries in 2019, LIBS 6401 Academic Libraries and Librarianship in 2021, LIBS 6700

Special Libraries and Librarianship and LIBS 6106 Introduction to Leadership in 2022. In addition to our MLS students, the MLS Program has a strong non-degree school library endorsement program which meets Tennessee state standards. Endorsement students who decide to complete the full MLS can easily be admitted to the program, and several have been admitted. At the current time, our COE licensure office does not have a cooperative agreement with other states.

Also, in 2022, after extensive collaboration with the Master of Social Work Program, the first dual master's degree at MTSU, the MLS/MSW was approved by THEC for Fall 2023 admission. The program coordinators for each of these programs are working together to develop the - admissions and marketing plan for this dual degree. The Master of Social Work Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

The MLS Program also collaborates with the Master of Arts in History- Public History concentration that allows our MLS students to take an introductory archives class as an elective. Master of Education in Literacy students take our LIBS 6310 and 6311 Literature courses as electives for their program.

The MLS Program faculty and adjunct faculty all hold current Graduate Faculty Status through the Graduate Council in the College of Graduate Studies. The MLS Program Coordinator, Holly Hebert, is in the process of obtaining tenure and being promoted to Associate Professor in the Womack Educational Leadership Department with the final approval to come at the MTSU Board meeting in [June 2024](#). Dr. Frank Lambert was granted tenure in 2023 and was promoted to Associate Professor. DeAnne Luck was rehired as a full-time Lecturer in 2022, a position she has held since 2016. Concerted effort has been made to recruit adjunct faculty whose skills and expertise complement the full-time faculty. There are presently three MLS Program adjuncts and one in the process of being hired for Summer 2024.

### ***Planning for Candidacy***

Since 2020, MLS program faculty have been planning for the Candidacy period by working together within our department as well as with the Associate Dean of the College of Education, the MLS Advisory Council (MAC) and with current MLS students to strengthen the Program and collect evidence to support our progress into the Self-Study phase. Among these activities are the following highlights:

- The Vision and Mission statements were established in 2019, along with the Program Goals, Objectives, and Student Learning Outcomes. They were most recently reviewed throughout the Summer 2023.
- Six courses have been either created or redesigned since 2020 to create pathways for students who wish to pursue careers in public, academic, and special libraries in addition to school libraries.
- Regular meetings of the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC) were held in 2021, 2022, and 2023.
- Student Town Hall meetings were initiated in 2021 and are now held yearly.



- MLS Program faculty met regularly in 2020, 2021, and 2022, with increased monthly meetings in 2023 in order to focus on creating a continuous improvement process and create structures for data collection and analysis to facilitate this continuous improvement.
- In Summer 2023, three monthly meetings with the MLS Program faculty, Associate Dean, Dr. Robyn Ridgley, and Department Chair, Dr. Donald Snead, were held to finalize all key assessment rubrics connected to the program SLOs and to collect data for analysis. Data was collected in LiveText Watermark and shared in the MLS Program Microsoft Teams folder.
- [The MLS Program website](#) continues to be updated with new information. Most recently, in August 2023, the Program Coordinator information was updated, along with the updated [Library Science Handbook](#), to reflect current changes.

This Candidacy Application includes a report on the action steps from the Precandidacy document, along with a detailed narrative showing our progress in meeting each of the ALA Standards as well as a timeline and budget for Candidacy. The following evidence shows how the MLS Program has met or exceeded Standards, is ready for Candidacy and has the capacity for completing the Self-Study and hosting an External Review Panel visit in 2026. This work will continue in conjunction with ongoing program assessment for our other accrediting agencies, namely CAEP for educator preparation accreditation, and SACSCOC, our institutional accrediting body, which require ongoing data collection, analysis, and yearly reporting for continuous improvement.

## REPORT ON ACTION STEPS FROM THE PRECANDIDACY APPLICATION

### Standard I: Systematic Planning

*I.1 Goal: The MLS faculty will refine existing systematic planning processes.*

The MLS faculty will discuss program goals, data collection, and data analysis at regular semesterly program meetings throughout the year.

Action: The MLS faculty met for regular semester meetings from 2020-2022 and increased the frequency in 2023 to monthly meetings, including summer, to discuss program goals, data collection, and data analysis. Most recently the program goals were examined in meetings from May – July 2023 where rubrics for all key assessments were finalized and implemented with data being collected in LiveText Watermark, a data management system.

*I.2 Goal: The MLS faculty will increase engagement of constituencies in systematic planning.*

MLS faculty will hold biannual MLS Program Advisory Council Meetings.

Action: MLS faculty held annual MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC) meetings from 2020-2022. In the 2023-2024 school year, biannual meetings have been instituted with the MAC meeting on September 11, 2023, with the next meeting scheduled for February 27, 2024. New members of the MAC for 2023-2024 include leaders from school, public and academic libraries. The current makeup of the MAC includes 11 professional members and two current MTSU MLS student representatives. Members represent three separate school districts, three academic institutions, three public library institutions, and one library vendor. Three of the MAC members are also alumni of our program. Meeting topics have included results from surveys, trends in library science, curriculum changes, implementation of the ePortfolio, etc.

*I.2.1 Goal: The MLS faculty will engage MLS students in robust community dialogue. The MLS faculty will hold the Annual Town Hall Meeting for MLS students.*

Data from the Annual Town Hall Meeting will feed into the MLS Program Advisory Council processes.

Action: Town Hall Meetings with MLS Students were held via Zoom in November 2021, March 2022, and September 2023. The outcomes of these Town Hall Meetings were brought to the MAC for discussion after each meeting. While attendance was less than we hoped for, with 5-10 students participating, the Town Hall Meetings have made it possible for student voices to be heard. Feedback from students included feeling happy with the asynchronous online format, interest in mentoring, and concern about ALA accreditation and generally being happy with the program.

*I.2.2 Goal: The MLS faculty will identify alumni perceptions of strengths and weaknesses of MLS' capacity to prepare students for professional life.*

MLS faculty will survey Program alumni regarding their perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the MLS Program's capacity to prepare students for the workforce.

Action: The MLS Program Coordinator created an Exit Survey that has been distributed to MLS program graduates nearly every semester since June 2019. A total of 64 graduates have completed the survey. Results from those who completed the survey show that students are satisfied with the program as a whole and that it helped prepare them for their career. Strengths include caring, knowledgeable faculty who are approachable, the asynchronous online format, and collaboration with peers. Weaknesses reported include preparation for teacher licensure (namely edTPA), opportunities for coursework in other areas, especially archives, and the field experience being burdensome.

*I.2.3 Goal: MLS faculty will develop a steady pipeline of students and prospective students.*

MLS faculty will distribute handouts/slides to prospective students and employers at state conferences and university graduate program fairs.

Action: The MLS Faculty have had a booth at the Tennessee Library Association Annual Conference every year since 2018 and have plans to continue to do so each year. Starting in 2022, MLS faculty had a booth at the Tennessee Association for School Librarians Annual conference and have plans to do so each year. MLS faculty have participated in graduate fairs on the MTSU campus yearly since 2020. The MLS faculty offered the first virtual information session via Zoom in February 2023. Plans are to offer information sessions once in the fall and once in the spring going forward as they have generated increased interest in the program. Information session flyers are distributed via email to school districts and public libraries across the state via various listservs for school, public, and academic libraries. The Program also notifies the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance and select colleges and universities including Tennessee State University and Fisk University.

## **Standard II: Curriculum**

*II.1 Goal: The MLS Program will refine and expand curriculum to ensure students have a variety of experiences across coursework that address the learning outcomes identified for the Program and to grow the Program.*

MLS faculty will apply CAEP metrics/assessment rubrics to course work, modifying where necessary. The CAEP common assessment rubrics are tied to AASL standards.

Action: MTSU initial licensure and aligned advanced programs included in the College of Education's CAEP accreditation in 2022. MLS faculty have applied common assessment rubrics aligned with InTASC and CAEP standards to the key assessments in appropriate coursework. One example of identifying key assessments aligned with the common assessment rubrics is the selection assignment taught in LIBS 6310, 6311, and 6115. Although these key assessments are in core courses taken by everyone, the CAEP data specifically addresses how initial licensure students plan, instruct, and assess student learning in the school library.

Courses in Public Librarianship (LIBS 6201), Academic Librarianship (LIBS 6401), and Special Libraries (LIBS 6700) have been added to the curriculum to create pathways for students interested in those areas. Additional classes supporting the pathways are being planned, such as LIBS 6620 Engaging Communities through Library Programs.

The Student Learning Outcomes have been mapped to core courses as shown in Table 1.5.

*II.1 Goal: MLS faculty will propose new catalog changes to expand course options.*

MLS faculty will complete developing courses.

Action: MLS faculty have continued to develop new courses as well as redesign older courses which is especially important in an online environment. New courses include LIBS 6201 Public Libraries in 2019, LIBS 6401 Academic Libraries and Librarianship in 2021, LIBS 6700 Special Libraries and Librarianship and LIBS 6106 Introduction to Leadership in 2022. As noted above, additional courses are planned, such as LIBS 6620 Engaging Communities through Library Programs.

### **Standard III: Faculty**

*III.1 Goal: MLS faculty will encourage and foster excellence in teaching, service, and research.*

The MLS Program will encourage faculty to participate in at least one MTSU professional development opportunity.

Action: MLS faculty have far exceeded this goal and have participated in many professional development opportunities both on campus and through state and national library organizations such as TNLA, TASL, RUSA, ALA, PLA, and iFederation. MLS Program faculty often share opportunities with each other. In addition, Dr. Lambert was awarded tenure in 2023 which requires high quality in teaching and high quality in either service and/or research. Ms. Hebert is going through the tenure process this academic year (2023-2024) and, at this time, has received initial approvals from the Womack Educational Leadership Department Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Department Chair. The MTSU Board of Trustees will make their final determination in June 2024.

*III.2 Goal: The MLS Program will offer new courses through an MLS/MSW dual degree with Social Work.*

MLS and MSW will develop a list of expert adjuncts and faculty.

Action: In 2023, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission granted permission for MTSU to offer a dual MLS/MSW degree starting in August 2023. Both the MLS and MSW departments are working together to start implementing this program. Full-time faculty and adjuncts from both programs with expertise in their respective areas have been identified.

*III.2 Goal: The MLS Program will request a new faculty line(s) and fill the new faculty line(s).*

As MLS student enrollment increases, MLS faculty will evaluate teaching loads of current and temporary full time and adjunct faculty.

Action: In 2021, interviews were conducted for another MLS faculty position, but the search failed due to the inability of the applicant and MTSU to come to an agreement on compensation. Due to cost-cutting measures by the university, no new lines have been given. It is expected that as enrollment increases in the MLS Program, a new faculty line will be requested. In the meantime, several new adjuncts who are experts in their fields have been and are continuing to be added to the program faculty to help with faculty teaching loads.

#### **Standard IV: Students**

*IV. Goal: The MLS faculty and Advisory Board will develop and initiate recruitment, admission, financial aid, and other policies to attract and retain students that reflect the diversity of our communities.*

The MLS faculty will continue working closely with the College of Graduate Studies to tweak digital marketing content and approaches. Since it has been proven effective, digital marketing will continue to be a key component of the Program's strategic recruitment.

Action: Digital marketing is continuing to play an important role in recruitment for MLS Program. Several student profiles have appeared on the website and social media. In 2023, an advertisement aired on a local news channel. The MLS Program has worked with Creative and Visual Services on campus to design and update our MLS Program flyer. The Information Session flyers are created digitally by the MLS Program graduate assistant twice a year. The College of Graduate Studies also hired a new Director of Strategic Digital Marketing in August 2023, and the MLS Program Coordinator is working with that staff member to increase our digital marketing. Opportunities to recruit from organizations such as the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance and select Historically Black Colleges and Universities, including Nashville-based Tennessee State University and Fisk University, have occurred. Efforts to increase retention are focused on advising, increasing clear communication to students in a timely manner, and the addition of a peer mentoring program.

#### **Standard V: Administration, Finances and Resources**

*V.1 Goal: The MLS Program director and the department chair (administrative head) will make full use of available campus resources and relationships that support the Program's goals and mission.*

The MLS Program will continue to identify campus and other resources related to assessment, technology, leadership training & mentorship, best practices, student support and curriculum design.



Action: The MLS Program works closely with the College of Education's Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity; along with the Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC); the Walker Library; the Writing Center; Graduate Studies; MTSU Online; Academic and Instructional Technologies; and the College of Education's Data Management Specialist, among others. These entities support the Program in achieving the goals and mission by providing varied resources and human capital.

## STANDARDS NARRATIVE

### **Standard I: Systemic Planning**

*I.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.*

The MLS Program is situated in the [Womack Educational Leadership Department](#) within the [College of Education](#) and receives support from the [College of Graduate Studies](#) while also in as well as [MTSU Online](#), which supports all online programs at MTSU. The MLS Program is an outgrowth of a long-standing quality school librarian program reaching back decades to positively impact school libraries in Middle Tennessee and statewide. Currently, our student body includes those seeking their Master of Library Science as well as those completing the PreK-12 Library Information Specialist add on endorsement. Coursework allows students the flexibility to choose pathways focused on school, public, academic, or special libraries.

#### ***Vision***

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.

#### ***Mission***

To prepare the next generation of 21st century information professionals through impactful research, creative entrepreneurship, learner-centered teaching, and innovative professional practice.

#### ***Student Learning Outcomes***

Upon completion, MLS Program graduates and endorsement completers should be able to:

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

#### ***Program Goals***

The MLS Program at MTSU will provide candidates:

- With customizable curricula that are 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;
- With an appreciation of the importance of advocacy for their profession and for their institutions;
- With an initiate's understanding and beginning attainment of the American Library Association's (ALA's) [Core Competences of Librarianship](#) within the [Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies](#) articulated and enforced by ALA, as well as other related standards such as the American Association of School Librarianship's [ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards \(2019\)](#).
- With practical work experience in a library or related institution through a supervised field experience.

### ***Program Objectives***

- Job placement for graduates or non-degree endorsement completers of the MLS Program: 80% of MLS Program graduates or endorsement completers who respond to our employment survey will report they have secured a position in librarianship or related profession (e.g., archivist, museum staff, knowledge manager, indexer) within one year following the completion of their degree or non-degree plan of study.
- Professional skills of MLS Program graduates or non-degree endorsement completers: 80% of respondents to the MLS Program's employer and employment surveys will agree or strongly agree that our graduates or endorsement completers have the skills and attributes to become and remain successful information professionals.
- Satisfaction of MLS Program graduates or non-degree endorsement completers: 80% of respondents to the MLS Program exit survey will agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with their graduate education.

### ***Values***

The MLS Program subscribes to the [Core Values of Librarianship](#) put forth by the American Library Association (2019) and to specific values that the program holds.

The MLS Program's clearly articulated values, vision, mission, student learning outcomes, goals, and program objectives, available publicly on the [MLS Program's website](#), have guided the program's annual fulfillment of SACSCOC requirements.

These values also were evident from the program's participation in the College's self-study and review for accreditation through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

Additionally, program faculty and constituents have reviewed the current values, vision, mission, outcomes, goals, and program objectives yearly since 2020.

### ***Constituents***

The MLS Program Advisory Council includes information professionals who represent school, public, academic, and special libraries, and a library vendor as well as two student

representatives. These professionals include school library leaders from three Tennessee School Districts, the Dean of the Walker Library at MTSU, the Director of the Stones River Regional Library, and the Director of the Rutherford County Public Library system, among others. In 2021 and 2022, MLS Program faculty met with the MAC once a year to obtain feedback on the program's vision, mission, goals, and outcomes. Beginning in 2023, the MAC meets twice a year in September and February

The student body provides feedback for program improvements. Student feedback continues to play an important role in decision-making. Students give feedback in several ways, through everyday interactions with faculty, course evaluations at the end of every semester, and two surveys that the program distributes. The MLS Program administers online student exit surveys every semester to graduating students via email to better 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 exit survey response rate has varied per semester, but from Spring 2022- Summer 2023 the average was 65%.

The MLS Program also collects data from our alumni through an online employment survey distributed yearly via email to graduates at least six months after their graduation date. This survey helps inform program faculty about our graduates' success in finding employment in the library and information science field and other fields and communicates to the program how well the professional competencies learned during their plan of study have applied to their current professional positions from their personal perspective. In this survey alumni are invited to give the contact information of their employer if they feel comfortable doing so, so that the employer can be sent an employer survey. The response rate for the 2022 survey was 53%. The questions are designed to collect data from students on how well their experiences align with the vision, mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes of the program and to suggest revisions and additions to the program. Going into Candidacy, we will look at possible ways to elicit a higher response rate for all of our surveys by streamlining questions and looking for optimal times to send out the survey requests.

These data are supplemented by employer data collected by a survey distributed by the COE 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.

In Spring 2023, we sent out a retention survey to those who had left the program in the last several years and had not returned. The response rate was 28% but, considering some of them had been gone for a few years, we were happy with the results. The main reasons mentioned for leaving the program were lack of ALA accreditation, personal reasons, financial issues, the quality of advising, and changed career directions. Four of the respondents indicated interest in coming back, and one reenrolled and is set to graduate Fall 2023.

Table 1.1

*MLS Program Constituents*

<b>Constituent Group</b>	<b>Description</b>
Students	Current MLS Program graduate students completing the Master of Library Science; non-degree school library endorsement only students; students from other departments (such as the M.Ed. in Literacy Program) taking our courses as electives.
MTSU Faculty & Staff	MLS Program faculty, including full-time tenured and tenure-track, and full-time temporary; Part-time adjunct faculty from both MTSU and organizations and libraries outside of MTSU; Administrative and Support Staff.
MTSU Community	Administration, faculty, librarians, staff, students, and alumni of Middle Tennessee State University.
MLS Program Advisory Council	Representatives from professional practicing librarians in school, public, academic and library related organizations; employers; current students; alumni.
Librarians and Library Organizations	Professional practicing librarians and the organizations who work with library professionals, such as Tennessee Library Association (TNLA), Tennessee Association of School Librarians (TASL), Tenn-Share, the Association of Library and Information Science Educators (ALISE), the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), the American Library Association (ALA).
Employers	Institutions and libraries who hire and employ librarians of all kinds including public libraries, academic libraries, public and private schools and school districts, special libraries, and library related organizations such as archives and museums.
Alumni	Graduates of the MLS Program; students who obtained the non-degree school library endorsement; graduates of the previous MED program.
Future and Potential Students	MTSU alumni of bachelor and other graduate programs; paraprofessionals in academic, public, and school libraries; elementary and secondary education teachers both in private and public schools; current students in bachelor's and associate's programs; individuals in other sectors seeking a career change.

I.1.1 Continuous review and revision of the program's vision, mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes

Inputs from external and internal constituents about the program's vision, mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes are gathered regularly as seen in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2

*Data from Constituents*

<b>Constituent Group</b>	<b>Type of Data</b>	<b>Direct/Indirect</b>	<b>How often</b>	<b>When</b>
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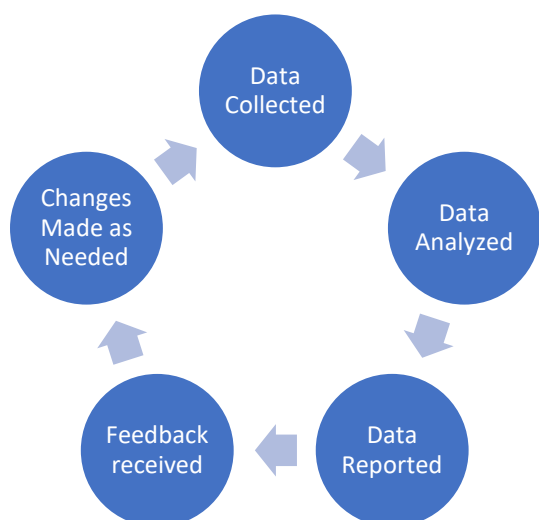


MAC	Feedback ( <a href="#">Appendix 1A</a> )	Direct & Indirect	Biannually	Fall, Spring
Students	Key Assessment Data linked to SLOs ( <a href="#">Appendix 1B</a> )	Direct	Every Semester	Fall, Spring, Summer
Students	Course Evaluations ( <a href="#">Appendix 1C</a> )	Direct	Every Semester	Fall, Spring, Summer
Students	Course Comments	Indirect	Every Semester	Fall, Spring, Summer
Students	Town Hall Questions and Comments ( <a href="#">Appendix 1D</a> )	Indirect	Yearly	Fall
Graduating Students	<a href="#">Exit Survey</a>	Direct & Indirect	Every Semester	Fall, Spring, Summer
Alumni	<a href="#">Employment Survey</a>	Direct & Indirect	Yearly	Summer
Previous Non- Completers	Retention Survey ( <a href="#">Appendix 1E</a> )	Direct & Indirect	Yearly	Spring

After data are collected and analyzed, it is reported in MLS Program faculty meetings which occur monthly via Zoom or in person. Data are discussed at the College of Education's Data Day which occurs once every Fall and once every Spring. Data are also provided to the MAC for discussion and feedback. This ongoing process is visualized in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1

*Continuous Revision Process*



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

The MLS Program regularly assesses attainment of program goals, program objectives, and student learning outcomes. The MLS Program has aligned courses to the program's student learning outcomes and identified key assessments to measure student development and progression toward achieving the student learning outcomes as seen in Table 1.5. Key assessment rubrics ([Appendix 1A](#)). These rubrics are uploaded into the College's online data system, [LiveText by Watermark](#), by the students and scored by the faculty teaching the course at the end of the semester. All program-developed assessment rubrics were adapted from [AAC&U VALUE Rubrics](#) and are aligned with the ALA's Core Competencies of Librarianship (2022). MLS Program faculty score the key assessments every semester.

Additional data related to attainment of programs goals and objectives, student learning outcomes and satisfaction with the program are collected through [exit](#), [employment](#), [employer](#), [retention](#), and [field experience supervisor](#) surveys. Students preparing to be school librarians are required to take and pass licensure assessments (i.e., Praxis test, edTPA). These data are reviewed annually by MLS Program faculty and the MAC.

Table 1.3

### *Supporting Data for Program Goals and Objectives*

<b>Program Goals: The MLS Program at MTSU will provide candidates:</b>	<b>Supporting Data</b>	<b>How Often &amp; When</b>
With customizable curricula that is 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	Exit Survey Retention Survey Course Evaluations Town Hall (Future) Student Advisory Board	Each Semester Yearly Each Semester Yearly Each Semester

With an appreciation of the importance of advocacy for their profession and for their institutions	Key Assessment in LIBS 6000	Each Semester
With an initiate's understanding and beginning attainment of the American Library Association's (ALA's) <a href="#">Core Competences of Librarianship</a> within the <a href="#">Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies</a> articulated and enforced by ALA, and other related standards such as the American Association of School Librarianship's <a href="#">ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards (2019)</a> .	Key Assessment Data  Employer Survey  Field Experience Supervisor Survey	Each Semester  Yearly  Yearly
With practical work experience in a library or related institution through a supervised field experience.	Field Experience Supervisor Survey	Yearly
<b>Program Objectives:</b>		
Job placement for graduates or non-degree endorsement completers of the MLS Program  Job placement for graduates or non-degree endorsement completers of the MLS Program:  80% of MLS Program graduates or endorsement completers who respond to our employment survey will report they have secured a position in librarianship or related profession (e.g., archivist, museum staff, knowledge manager, indexer) within one year following the completion of their degree or non-degree plan of study.	Exit Survey  Employer Survey Field Experience Survey  Praxis Scores, TEAMS data	Each Semester  Yearly  Yearly
Professional skills of MLS Program graduates or non-degree endorsement completers  80% of respondents to the MLS Program's employer and employment surveys will agree or strongly agree that our graduates or endorsement completers have the skills and attributes to become and remain successful information professionals.	Exit Survey  Employment Survey  Employer Survey	Each Semester  Yearly  Yearly
Satisfaction of MLS Program graduates or non-degree endorsement completers  80% of respondents to the MLS Program exit survey will agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with their graduate education.	Exit Survey	Each Semester

### *1.1.3 Improvements to the program based on analysis of assessment data;*

Data from the above sources are reviewed by the program faculty. This review occurs during program faculty meetings and during the two college-wide data days that occur in Fall and Spring where there are breakout sessions for each program to discuss their data ([Appendix 1F](#)). Performance of students and feedback from surveys are used as a basis for a discussion about support to students, improvements to curriculum, course content, assignment design and/or grading.

Program meeting minutes ([Appendix 1G](#)) outline improvements that have been made based on review of data. One recent example ([Appendix 1A](#)) of a program improvement based on data is the revision of the approach used for students to complete the required 100-hour field experience. Previously, students completed the field experience by spending 60 hours in one library and 40 hours in at least three other libraries. Student surveys and data from courses suggested that this approach was challenging for students to organize and complete. After discussion and consulting with the MLS Program Advisory Council, the decision was made to allow students to complete the field experience in one placement, thereby providing extended time for learning.

*1.1.4 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 mission and the vision of the MLS Program are aligned with the core mission of MTSU as stated in the University's mission and values <https://www.mtsu.edu/about/mission.php>. MTSU “takes pride in its role as a comprehensive, diverse, and 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...” as well as the [College of Education's](#) commitment to supporting the University by “providing comprehensive student-centered learning environments through excellence in teaching, basic and applied research, creative endeavors, quality advisement, and diverse partnership programs.”

#### ***MLS Program Vision***

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.

#### ***MLS Program Mission***

To prepare the next generation of 21st century information professionals through impactful research, creative entrepreneurship, learner-centered teaching, and innovative professional practice.

In keeping with the core values and goals of the College of Education and the University and with their full support, the MLS Program faculty have created new strategic goals that will guide us through the Candidacy period and through the Self-Study.

1. Continue to refine and improve the process of systematic planning and assessment by:
  - a. Further developing and applying effective data collection tools; and
  - b. Systematically analyzing outcomes and promptly reporting data to stakeholders for discussion and feedback to identify and implement needed changes
2. Create, sustain, and engage an active Student Advisory Board
3. Expand marketing and recruitment efforts, with an emphasis on increasing program student body diversity
4. Strengthen stakeholder involvement by developing or further expanding relationships with the community, employers, and field experience sponsors
5. Increase full-time faculty as justified by enrollment numbers to meet the demand that will come with ALA accreditation
  - a. Recruit a more diverse and representative adjunct base with expertise in the program pathway areas of school, public, academic, and special libraries.
6. Further develop methods to encourage and celebrate faculty endeavors in teaching, research, and service
7. Engage students in additional and more structured opportunities for collaboration, research, and service
8. Continue to develop, update, and revise curriculum to meet the professional needs of 21st century information professionals

These new strategic goals will be communicated to stakeholders for comment and then added to the program website.

The strategic plan through 2026 ([Appendix 1H](#)) includes these new strategic goals.

Communication to constituents is given in various ways including our website, email announcements, meetings at library organizations such as TNLA and TASL, social media, contact through field placements, Town Halls, and MAC meetings. See Table 1.4 for details about communication by each type of stakeholder.

Table 1.4

*Communication to Constituents*

<b>Constituent Group</b>	<b>Type of Communication</b>
Current Students	Orientation sessions, Town Hall, Group Facebook page, program emails
Prospective Students	Information sessions, program website, Library Association Conferences, email distribution to teacher and library organizations, such as TASL, TN Libraries, TNLA, and TECA

Alumni	Library Association Conferences, Alumni gatherings, Facebook group
Employers	Through contact during field placements, at Library Association Conferences, announcements through library listservs with TASL, TNLA and TN Libraries
MTSU Community	COE Meetings, MAC, College fairs, program website

*I.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 website 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 Competences of Librarianship](#) (2023) within the [Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies](#) as well as 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:

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

The link between the MLS Program's student learning outcomes in relation to the more specific standards in I.2 along with the listed core courses that help students realize these outcomes are presented in Table 1.5. More details follow the table.

Table 1.5

*Standard Alignments with MLS Program Student Learning Outcomes and Related Courses*

Standard	MLS Program SLOs	Related Core Courses
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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 Librarianship
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 Librarianship; LIBS 6015 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction, LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User services
I.2.3 Appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations;	Embrace opportunities for practice in librarianship and other information professions	LIBS 6000 Librarianship; LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries; LIBS 6105 School Library Management
I.2.4 The importance of research to the advancement of the field's knowledge base	Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and other information professions through innovative practice, teaching, leadership, and research.	LIBS 6060, Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries; LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries; LIBS 6105 School Library Management
I.2.5 The symbiotic relationship of library and information studies with other fields	Create and sustain robust information organizations of various types and sizes; Embrace opportunities for practice in librarianship and other information professions	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
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 Librarianship; LIBS 6015 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction, LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User services, LIBS 6310 Materials for the literacy of children, LIBS 6311 Materials for the

		literacy of young people and adults
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 Information Technology for Information Professionals
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 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction; LIBS 6115 Collection Development & User Services; LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries; LIBS 6105 School Library Management

To measure how well student performance in their course work correlates with their meeting or exceeding MLS Program SLOs, MLS Program faculty adapted eight AAC&U Value Rubrics into key assessment rubrics ([Appendix 1I](#)) designed to meet the standards above. These rubrics are uploaded into the College of Education's LiveText Watermark, a data management system. Each semester, students in MLS Program courses upload completed assignments into LiveText. The faculty teaching each course scores assignments using the rubrics at the end of the semester.

Student learning outcomes address:

*I.2.1 The essential character of the field of library and information studies;*

MLS degree students are advised to start their studies by completing our core courses early on in their coursework to give them a basic foundation. These core courses provide our students with a solid foundation in librarianship, address any prerequisites for our electives, and 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 history of information and libraries; what it means to be a librarian, the different types of libraries and library standards, intellectual freedom, ALA Core Values, the role of the library in society, and ethics.

*I.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 especially about research ethics, while making links to other ethical considerations from other courses such as LIBS 6000 and LIBS 6015 about various related topics such as confidentiality and anonymity.

*I.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. See [Table 2.2](#) for courses leading to the various pathways in school, public, academic, and special libraries.

*I.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 and/or research to guide practice, students practice preparation for creating such research studies by developing a research proposal of original action, basic, or applied research.

*I.2.5 The symbiotic relationship of library and information studies with other fields;*

Many of our students are current classroom teachers who hope to move into school librarianship or public librarianship. Others are students looking for a second career. Both groups bring in knowledge and skills that are often related to library science, providing a natural connection to the symbiotic relationship of library and information studies to other fields.

Core courses emphasize the principles of this standard as well. LIBS 6060 Understanding Research for Evaluation in Libraries; LIBS 6020 Organization of Information (archives and museums); LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries or LIBS 6105 School Library Management (students take one management course) by emphasizing the role of the library in supporting other fields of study.

In addition to the courses mentioned below, our dual MLS/MSW program has a natural symbiotic relationship between libraries and social work. Our relationship with the History department that allows our students to take a beginning archives course, HIST 6615 is another example.

*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;*

Along with the work of two MLS Program Faculty, Holly Hebert, and Frank Lambert, 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 specifically address the role of serving the needs of underserved groups. Other courses also offer additional content focused on serving diverse constituents and a diverse global society.

*I.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; 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.

Assignments using different types of technology help students gain practice in real life scenarios. For instance, in LIBS 6015 Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction, students create a reference LibGuide. In LIBS 6105, 6310, 6311, and 6115, students create a selection list which is created and customized in Excel. Other examples of technology use are Powtoons, infographics created with Canva, PowerPoint Presentations, videos, podcasts, etc.

*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 school library constituency by providing outstanding qualified graduates who become librarians in schools across the state of Tennessee and beyond. Our CAEP accreditation testifies to this excellence as does our Praxis II Library Media Specialist Subject Assessment pass rate (97.4%) and average examination score (168).

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

The MLS Program regards teaching and service as integral to the professional skills for all librarians. As a result, two of the three program goals address teaching and service to the field. Goal 1 supports the development of customizable curricula “to meet the interests and needs for continued growth and development as an information professional.” The second goal states that we will provide candidates “with an appreciation of the importance of advocacy for their profession and their institutions....” Resulting program objectives target job placements and acquisition of the skills and attributes to be successful in the profession. These goals and objectives guide the program in embedding opportunities for candidates to value teaching, service, and the many other roles of librarians, while also honoring their individualized interests and needs. Advocacy is specifically targeted in the program goals. A variety of opportunities exist to engage in service to local libraries and the profession through field placements in LIBS 6550 and in YOED 5510 for school librarian students seeking initial licensure.

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, one of the MLS Program’s student learning outcomes includes the following text: “Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and other information professions through innovative practice, teaching, leadership and research.”

The MLS Program’s devotion to this standard is demonstrated in two other ways. One way is with LIBS 6015 Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction whose core goal is service to users. Therefore, analysis of users’ needs is the starting point for many assessments of our students’ competencies. The second way this student learning objective will be reinforced is the content of a new course, LIBS 6345 Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals. The description for this course is found in our [Library Science Handbook](#). Finally, students, through their required field experiences, are given the opportunity to apply what they have learned. As part of a student’s formative assessment during their field experience, students seeking PreK-12 Library Information Specialist endorsement are evaluated by their field

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

Students are actively encouraged to take part in professional library organizations such as TASL, TNLA, ALA, AASL, etc. These organizations provide opportunities for service. For example, TNLA hosts student interns at their annual conference who provide a few hours of service in exchange for having the conference fee waived. Students have also volunteered at the Southern Festival of Books where TNLA/TASL/Tenn-Share/Friends of TN Libraries have a joint booth.

*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.*

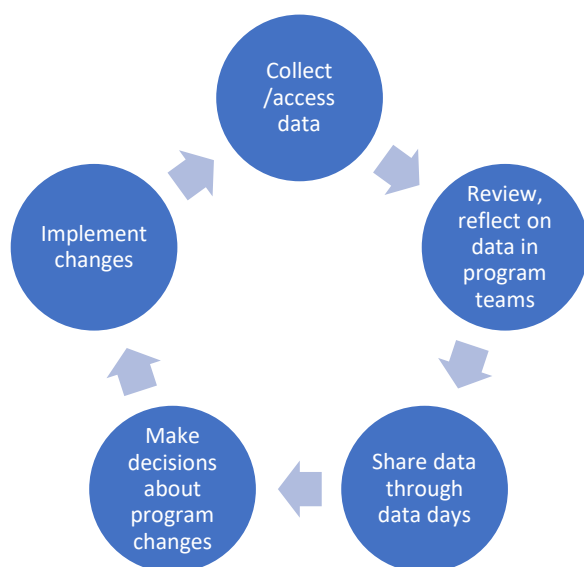
*1.4.1 The evaluation of program goals and objectives involves those served: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.*

The MLS Program will meet twice a year in February and September, starting in 2023, with the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC). MAC includes academic, special, public, and school librarians as well as a librarian who represents an important library vendor, Ingram Content Group. The policy document that articulates the MAC's charge as well as providing a listing of founding MAC members is found in [Appendix 1J](#). Two student representatives are included in the MAC to add their input. The MAC reviews the MLS Program's program goals and objectives as well as data about meeting these goals and objectives. Meeting agendas and notes provide evidence of this engagement and discussion ([Appendix 1A](#)).

*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.*

All programs in COE engage in a Quality Assurance System that has the following cyclical components. Similar to Figure 1.1, Figure 1.2 shows the continuous improvement process in COE.

Figure 1.2  
*Quality Assurance System*



The MLS Program faculty meet monthly to discuss program needs and decide about any proposed changes. Each semester, the College holds a college-wide data day in which all programs meet to review data, make decisions, and collaborate with colleagues across the College. See ([Appendix 1F](#)). The MLS Program faculty meet monthly and once a semester to review data collected within courses, through surveys, and/or the University enrollment systems with the goal of evaluating student learning outcomes, program goals and related objectives. The MLS Program continues to hone data collection methods and systems to ensure measures are aligned with student learning outcomes and to ensure that data are reviewed regularly with intentional decision-making guiding improvement efforts.

*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 1K](#)) 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 when 80% of that year's graduates realized similar success. Based on this information and the continuing strength of our graduates' success in finding such employment in past employment surveys as well as based on feedback from the MAC, the MLS Program made changes to its plans of study ([Appendix 1L](#)) 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 are now only required to complete one 100-hour field experience. Students will still have the option to complete another field experience as an elective. This change gives our MLS students much more flexibility in designing their plan of study with the goal of increasing their options to enhance their knowledge of library and information science in their chosen area.

In sum, the MLS Program employs a robust and regular regimen of continuous review and revision of the program’s vision, mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes that aligns the Program with the College’s goals and provides meaningful data to guide program improvement.

Table 1.6 represents our plan for candidacy for compliance with Standard I.

Table 1.6

*Plan for Candidacy: Standard I*

<b>Plan for Candidacy</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Further develop data collection points in LiveText and spreadsheets and create a matrix showing when and where data are collected.	August 2024
Modernize forms for ease of use and improved data collection	May 2024
Develop template for survey reports and meeting minutes	February 2024
Continue to invite guest speakers into classes.	December 2025
Create and distribute Employer and FE surveys.	January 2024
Create program newsletter to distribute to students, alumni, MAC, FE Sponsors, Employers and Friends.	March 2024

## **Standard II: Curriculum**

*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 Master of Library Science degree consists of 12 three credit hour courses for a total of 36 credit hours. Students also obtaining their initial licensure as school librarians complete an additional residency course, YOED 5510 The Teaching Internship, which brings their total credit hours to 42. Non-degree endorsement students take 8 three credit hour courses for an additional 24 credit hours total to obtain the PreK-12 Library Information Specialist endorsement. The different plans of study are outlined in the [Library Science Handbook](#).

Courses are delivered 100 % asynchronously online with modules delivered weekly. Students have the option of attending periodic live Zoom sessions with guest speakers who are librarians in the field with an option for watching recordings of these sessions. Most students choose to attend the live Zoom sessions as they get to ‘meet’ their fellow students, the teacher, and the guest speakers and thereby make professional connections.

Courses are offered in all three terms, Fall, Spring, Summer, with rolling enrollment that allows students to start and end in any of those terms. Students can go at their own pace with some taking one course at a time, and others taking three courses per semester. Some students complete their coursework in a year while others take up to the allowable maximum of six years. Some students opt not to take courses during the summer, and this is not counted as a stop out. The course rotation is planned to spread out courses throughout the three semesters, so that students can start and finish during any given semester. Fewer courses are offered in the summer, but the needs of graduating students are kept in mind so as not to impede graduation. If students run into difficulties completing the program due to personal reasons, they can complete a stop out form available from the College of Graduate Studies and stop out for a semester without having to reapply for admission. Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher per the [Graduate Catalog](#).

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

- The ALA Core Competencies of Librarianship (initiate level of attainment)
- 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, PLA, ACRL, and ALSC (initiate level of attainment).
- Benchmarking the MLS Program’s curriculum with that of other LIS programs across North America for general guidance

- Student performance as assessed by the use and application of key assessment rubrics adapted from AAC&U Value rubrics and based on the ALA Core Competencies for Librarianship discussed in Standard I.

The MLS Program maps all courses and has verified through a series of Program meetings that all ALA core competencies are covered ([Appendix 2A](#)). As needs are identified, the curriculum is modified to address the need. One example of a curriculum revision came from a faculty meeting held in June 2023. It was determined that LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services, which had previously been changed to an elective, was a vital course for all our students as it addressed cross-cutting competencies. As a result of this analysis, discussion, and realization, the course was changed back to a core course. The MAC fully supported this decision ([Appendix 4L](#)).

Table 2.1 below maps courses to the Standard II elements (theory, principles, practice, legal and ethical issues, and values). When a course is initially proposed (or substantially revised), the faculty developer of the course in collaboration with all program faculty, identifies the course goals and objectives that will drive instruction each time a course is taught. New and substantively revised courses are approved through department, college, and the Graduate Council curriculum committees.

### ***Courses***

The descriptions of the core courses consisting of 8 courses/24 credit hours in the MLS Program shown in the [2023-2024 Graduate Catalog](#) are:

#### **LIBS 6000 Librarianship**

Presents the broad field of librarianship as a profession. Emphasis on the place of the library as an essential resource for communities and the role of the librarian in provision of service to all users. The e-portfolio will be planned and designed.

#### **LIBS 6015 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction**

Evaluation and use of print and electronic reference materials, programming for literacy skills, the reference selection process, emerging technologies for reference, and initial search strategies

#### **LIBS 6020 Organization of Information**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the concepts and theoretical foundations of organizing information with an emphasis on organizing library resources.

#### **LIBS 6030 Information Technology for Information Professionals**

This course presents basic information technology concepts and skills necessary for library and information science professionals.

#### **LIBS 6060 Understanding Research and Evaluation in Libraries**

Studies of research methods, qualitative and quantitative research, and statistical analysis to assist decision-making skills based on research results and to design empirical research projects. Emphasis on practitioner skills to evaluate processes, products, services of libraries.

### LIBS 6100 Library Management

Administration and management of the library. Trends, governance, information literacy issues, and other elements of managing the modern library will be addressed. Prerequisites: 6 credits of LIBS 60xx courses.

### Or LIBS 6105 School Library Management

Encompasses the administration and supervision of the modern school library and its programs. Goals are based on ALA and/or AASL standards. Initiates exploration of library improvement and instruction for learning.

### LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services

The study of library collections and their relationship to user services. Includes studies of the evolution of library collections, the development of information needs, analysis of stakeholder needs, library mission, collection analysis, selection aids, and collection maintenance.

Table 2.1

### *Courses Addressing Elements in Standard II*

Standard II Element	Courses Addressing Element
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 6060 Understanding Research and Evaluation in Libraries
	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

### ***Pathways of Interest***

The MLS Program has created several informal suggested pathways for students with interests outside of school librarianship that include courses focused on a specific library setting. These pathways are flexible but provide direction for students with specific learning and career goals. Students meet with their advisor to discuss their career goals and which electives would be most beneficial for them.

Table 2.2

### ***Pathways***

<b>Public</b>	<b>Academic</b>	<b>Special</b>
Core Courses	Core Courses	Core Courses
LIBS 6201 Public Libraries	LIBS 6401 Academic Libraries	LIBS 6700 Special Libraries
*LIBS 6620 Engaging Communities through Library Programs	LIBS 6330 Digital Library Collections	**HIST 6615 Essentials of Archival Management
LIBS 6106 Introduction to Leadership in Libraries	LIBS 6106 Introduction to Leadership in Libraries	LIBS 6106 Introduction to Leadership in Libraries
LIBS 6310/6311 Materials for Literacy of Children/ YA & Adults	LIBS 6345 Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals	LIBS 6320 Information Searching Strategies

\*LIBS 6620 Engaging Communities through Library Programs is in the proposal stage with plans for approval to be offered by Spring 2025.

\*\*HIST 6615 is offered through the History Department which has given permission for our students to take it as an elective.

In addition, courses approved, but not yet developed include LIBS 6331 Library Systems and Automation and LIBS - 6820 - Advanced Metadata Management of Library Resources

### ***Systematic Planning and Continuous Revision***

We believe that the MLS Program's current goals and student learning objectives (SLOs) guide the program to focus on student's ongoing success in securing employment as an information professional and serving as a future leader in our discipline and profession. The MLS Program relies on data from multiple sources for continuous revision and systematic planning of the MLS Program's curriculum.

These data sources include:

- Key assessment rubric data
- Course evaluations distributed through our learning management system, D2L, at the end of every semester
- Input through various student reflections in course assignments
- Comments and questions made during classes as indications that clarification is needed in a particular lecture or assignment.
- Town Hall Meetings
- MAC Meetings
- Exit and Employment surveys
- Retention survey
- Future Field Experience and Employer surveys

These data are reviewed at faculty meetings at least once a semester for data that is collected more frequently and yearly for the rest. Outcomes are reported to the MAC for feedback. Suggestions have centered mainly around the surveys, but going forward data will be reported according to the schedule in [Table 1.2](#).

MLS faculty members continue to develop, design, update and revise courses to keep them current and relevant. MTSU Online tracks new course development and course revisions. MTSU Online pays faculty for these projects with funds from MTSU Online. For new course developments, faculty are paid \$4000, and for course revisions, faculty are paid \$3000 as seen on the [MTSU Online Course Development Process](#) webpage. Course development and revision proposals are accepted three times a year according to the calendar on this same page. Once a proposal is received, it is reviewed and either accepted or denied by the MTSU Online office staff. If accepted, it is assigned to an Instructional Designer who will work with the faculty member during the development or revision process. Each online course has designated a 'lead developer'. See [Table 3.2](#), who is responsible for the content of the course and making revisions.

All course descriptions can be found in the [Library Science Handbook](#) and the [MTSU Graduate Catalog](#). Courses denied revision can be applied for the next term.

*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 various aspects librarianship and introduce students to the basic curriculum expectations as listed above in Standard II.2.

*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;*

Students learn to assume a leadership role in services and collections through the coursework in LIBS 6015 Introduction to Information Intermediation, Resources, and Instruction, and LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services. In addition, the MLS Program offers two management courses: LIBS 6100 Management of Libraries for students seeking focused learning in public, academic, or special libraries; and LIBS 6105 School Library Management. These survey courses address everything from human resource management to financial management. In order to supplement these management courses and based on input from the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC), the MLS Program developed LIBS 6106, Introduction to Leadership in Libraries. This course focuses specifically on leadership as one important attribute of library management and allows our students to meet and 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 various 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 faculty include content, such as journal articles, book chapters, etc., in their courses that 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 any course assignments.

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., Infometrics). 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 implementing their proposal by conducting the research under an MLS Program faculty member's supervision. Completion of this course facilitates our students' abilities to meet or exceed the following MLS Program SLO: "Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and other information professions through innovative practice, teaching, leadership, and research."

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

Our core course, LIBS 6030 Information Technology for Information Professionals, examines how technology can serve as a vital tool for librarians. Besides learning hands-on skills, such as building a Web page, other related concepts are integrated into course assessments such as, metadata and encoding standards, as well as principles of information architecture (IA) and user experience design (UXD). All of these concepts are included in 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 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 multiple courses that benefit our students through the reinforcement and contextualization of these competencies. With the application of new MLS Program key assessment rubrics, the MLS Program has data that directly measures students' meeting these competencies. Doing so demonstrates how our courses help our students realize the Program SLO, "Create and sustain robust information organizations of various types and sizes," by giving them the education and skills required to address technology-related issues and the practice of adapting to new technology, a skill they will need throughout their careers. Faculty stay current on technology through professional development and reading in various professional journals in order to keep up with changes that should be implemented in the curriculum. Courses are revised periodically to make these changes. For example, LIBS 6330 Digital Library Collections is being extensively revised in 2023 because it has been several years since the last revision during which time digital collections have changed significantly.

### *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 negatively affect underserved groups. As an example of implementing this standard, the MLS Program assesses students during their field experience LIBS 6550 Field Experience in terms of how their programming and instruction can accommodate diverse learners. In LIBS 6060, Understanding Research and Evaluation for Libraries, 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 courses such as LIBS 6115 Collection Development and User Services where the course and its related

assignments direct students to identify perceived needs of communities and build strategies to address those needs based on analysis of data which, if a PreK-12 school or higher education institution, can come from enrollment and course content data in addition to census data. These courses address the Program SLO of “Appreciate and address the information needs of diverse (access, ability, location, identity) communities.”

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

The MLS Program continues to benchmark with other library science programs and also implements changes to its curriculum based on alumni employment survey data and with input from the working information professionals who constitute our MLS Program Advisory Committee (MAC). MLS courses are regularly updated to ensure that the content provided to students changes as the field changes. Where applicable, most course assignments allow students to complete the assessment requirements in the setting in which they would like to work following graduation (i.e., school library, public library, etc.), 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 a course in which the rapidly changing field is considered and integrated in regard to how technology affects our profession. In this course, students are introduced to 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 the library OPAC’s new encoding standard such as BIBFRAME is discussed in LIBS 6020 Organization of Information. The use of AI in libraries should be evaluated as a topic for future consideration. These courses address the corresponding Program SLO of “Advance the Library and Information Science discipline and advance information professions through innovative: research; entrepreneurship; teaching; and, practice.” Additionally, MTSU promotes this standard in part by requiring regular updates to its online courses to ensure content provided to students is changing as the field changes.

#### *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. Based upon the high proportion of Tennessee students in the program, membership in organizations such as ALA, AASL, TNLA and TASL is recommended. Students can take advantage of student rates and get a discount when joining ALA and TNLA at the same time. Students are encouraged to present at TASL, TLA, and other professional conferences. Faculty give notice of workshops and webinars offered by various professional library organizations. The required field experience allows professional development hours completed in this way to be used as part of their observation hours. The management course LIBS 6100 includes a module on ‘Skills and Career Planning.’ LIBS 6105 focuses on lifelong learning in its ‘Advocacy and Marketing’ module, and LIBS 6106 addresses professional development. The following SLOs address this standard and are supported by the courses mentioned here: “Represent the profession according to professional codes and standards and according to community expectations;

Embrace opportunities for practice in all facets of librarianship and other information professions.” Regarding the last SLO, our students also access such opportunities based on the diverse sites where they have completed their LIBS 6550 Supervised Field Experience. These sites include school, public, academic libraries, as well as historical research centers, archives and museums. Further professional development is encouraged through the MLS Program’s private group Facebook page whose membership is comprised of 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.*

All incoming MLS Program students are encouraged to take a new student survey about their interests and goals. This helps the advisor quickly collect information about student interests and goals in preparation for advising appointments. The advisor and student fill out a plan of study which aligns with their goals and the requirements of the program. This allows students to plan their progression of study as they envision it leading ultimately to their chosen career path as an information professional. Should these students have interests in other information-related disciplines, such as archives or museums, they may request a substitution for an elective in one of those areas. This is addressed on the MLS Program website “...students are allowed to propose alternative electives in other disciplines.” MLS students have successfully completed 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 have had one MLS student complete their MLS degree while working on their Ph.D. in Public History. Upon graduation, that student became Dean of Libraries for an HBCU in Nashville.

The MTSU Department of Public History offers classes in archives and museum studies; thus, there is no need for the MLS Program to offer duplicate and competing courses in these related information-based disciplines. This is a very practical arrangement with our sibling department as the MLS Program also has been fortunate to have master’s and doctoral students of Public History complete MLS Program courses such as LIBS 6020 Organization of Information as electives for their own respective programs. Thus, MTSU offers students who wish to pursue information-based graduate studies the best of options in librarianship, archival studies, and museum studies. Similar sharing of related curriculum occurs also between the MLS Program and the Master of Education in Literacy program.

[Appendix 1L](#) outlines a proposed plan of study shared with current and prospective students. 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 (42 credit hours). The proposed degree-seeking and non-degree plans of study seen in Appendix 1K have undergone review by MLS Program faculty and have been submitted for review and approval by appropriate university curriculum committees [MTSU College of Graduate Studies | Middle Tennessee State University](#). We anticipate all revised plans of study to be accepted formally by Spring 2024 and appear in the MTSU Graduate Course

Catalog by Summer 2024. Besides these plans of study, MTSU's first, new 60-credit hour dual degree in Master of Library Science and Master of Social Work ([Appendix 2C](#)) has been approved and is being offered as of Fall 2023. This dual degree's creation has been substantiated through the need for social workers in public libraries as 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 as ideal new librarian candidates by these same participating libraries.

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 suggests students start their course work with the core courses. Not only are the core courses prerequisites for some electives, but students need to complete 9 credit hours in these courses before they may take their relevant management course or their field experience.

Students have the opportunity to meet each semester with their advisor, currently the MLS Program Coordinator, who reaches out to them via email ([Appendix 2D](#)). Students can book an advising time that works for them using a Microsoft Bookings Calendar. Together, the student and advisor discuss the student's progress, and the advisor facilitates any needed changes to their program of study. For instance, one student discovered during her field experience that school librarianship was not for her, so with the help of her advisor, she dropped her plans for licensure and changed her remaining electives. Based on examples like these, we believe that "[c]ourse content and sequence relationships within the curriculum are evident."

*II.4 Design of general and specialized curricula takes into account the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations.*

The MLS Program integrates "knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations." [Appendix 2E](#) outlines the work completed by the MLS Program in 2021 to map coursework to CAEP standards and AASL standards while ensuring that 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](#).

*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.*

Ongoing evaluation of the MLS Program's curriculum is coordinated with general program evaluation. The MLS Program has many related data sources to assist it with its curriculum's ongoing evaluation. These sources include:

#### **End of Semester Course Evaluations**

- End of semester course evaluation surveys are collected for each course every semester.



- Input on the success of course assignments is solicited from the students in the class as well as the effectiveness of the teacher and responsiveness to student questions.
- The instructors note comments made in these evaluations as indications that some clarification to assignment instructions might be needed, as well as some adjustments might be needed in the video lectures. ([See Table 2.3](#)).
- The Associate Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives compiles these data and distributes it to MTSU 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 ([Appendix 1C](#)).

### **End of Semester MLS Program Meetings**

- The instructor for each course 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. (See [Table 2.3](#)).
- The Program Coordinator collects any other related course data they may have received directly from students and conveys these findings to instructors to guide discussions and decisions to determine if courses need complete or partial revision. Optionally, the Program Coordinator will call a course review meeting, similar to what was done in April 2018 and in June 2023, prior to the proposal and design of new classes.
- ALA's Core Competencies of Librarianship are considered in relation to the current curriculum in order to identify any potential gaps based on the MLS Program's course coverage.
- Anonymous Exit Surveys from graduating students are compiled 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 that was not represented in this curriculum ([Appendix 2F](#)).
- Faculty revise their syllabi every semester, updating dates, important information, and any needed changes. Faculty have the academic freedom to make changes to the content, providing they keep the same goals and objectives that are found for each course in the University catalog. Copies of syllabi are collected by one of the Womack Educational Leadership Department administrative assistants each semester.

### **Biannually at MAC Meetings**

- Meet with the MLS Program Advisory Council (MAC) to get input from our constituents in the field about any possible new trends or suggested changes to the curriculum. For instance, as the new LIBS 6620 Engaging Communities Through Library Programs course is being developed, members of the MAC have offered input into the name for the course and suggested content.

### **Monthly at MLS Program Faculty Meetings**

- 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 has 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. New courses such as: LIBS 6030, LIBS 6201, LIBS 6106, LIBS 6700, and LIBS 6401 have been created in the last few years.
- Review and revise survey instruments on an ongoing basis. For example, the MLS Program Employment Survey has undergone a number of iterations, generally adding questions to the questionnaire as data needs change for assessment purposes.
- New trends and findings in literature are discussed during these meetings. For example, incorporating the use of AI in our coursework was discussed at the September 2023 faculty meeting.

*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, the Program Coordinator and faculty use a MTSU provided MS Teams folder, accessible by all faculty, to house all recorded minutes and video recordings of program meetings and all other related pertinent data for accreditation purposes. This includes meeting minutes with other stakeholders such as our MAC and student Town Hall meetings. Table 2.3 identifies the data collected to demonstrate how decisions are made for the program.

Table 2.3

*Data Collection Procedures Leading to Curriculum Decisions*

Practice	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3
Data Collection	All meeting minutes (monthly for program, biannually for MAC)	All student <a href="#">course evaluation surveys</a> incl. comments from class (each semester)	<a href="#">Key Assessment rubrics</a> (each semester)
Evaluation Process	<a href="#">Exit Portfolio Rubric</a> (each semester)	Graduate and constituency input ( <a href="#">exit survey</a> each semester; biannually for MAC)	Graduate employment input (yearly <a href="#">employment survey</a> )

Revision Process	Program faculty minutes of meetings	Changes recorded in class/curriculum revisions	End of semester student course evaluation of results
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All data are archived and accessible immediately, regardless of the physical location of the person accessing these data. All data may be made available without difficulties to the Committee on Accreditation members when they make their respective site visits.

*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.*

Curriculum changes based on input from data collection have been implemented during the precandidacy phase as shown above. During candidacy, the faculty will begin a more formal process of evaluating the curriculum as shown in the schedule on Table 2.4.

Table 2.4

*Systematic Curriculum Evaluation*

Course	Evaluation Date
LIBS 6000	Fall 2023
LIBS 6015	Fall 2023
LIBS 6020	Spring 2024
LIBS 6030	Spring 2024
LIBS 6100	Summer 2024
LIBS 6105	Summer 2024
LIBS 6106	Fall 2024
LIBS 6115	Fall 2024
LIBS 6201	Spring 2025
LIBS 6310	Summer 2025
LIBS 6311	Summer 2025
LIBS 6320	Fall 2025
LIBS 6330	Fall 2025
LIBS 6340	Spring 2026
LIBS 6345	Spring 2026
LIBS 6401	Spring 2025
LIBS 6550	Summer 2026
LIBS 6700	Summer 2026

At semester end meetings of the MLS Program faculty in Fall, Spring, and Summer, two courses and their assignments will be evaluated based on input from the faculty who teach it, and the other data points mentioned in Table 2.3. This schedule will be reevaluated at the end of 2026 for needed adjustments. If a course needs an obvious realignment or is being revised before it is scheduled to be reviewed, then the evaluation will occur at that time. See figure 2.1 for a graphic of the systematic process for curriculum.

Figure 2.1

*Systematic curriculum process*

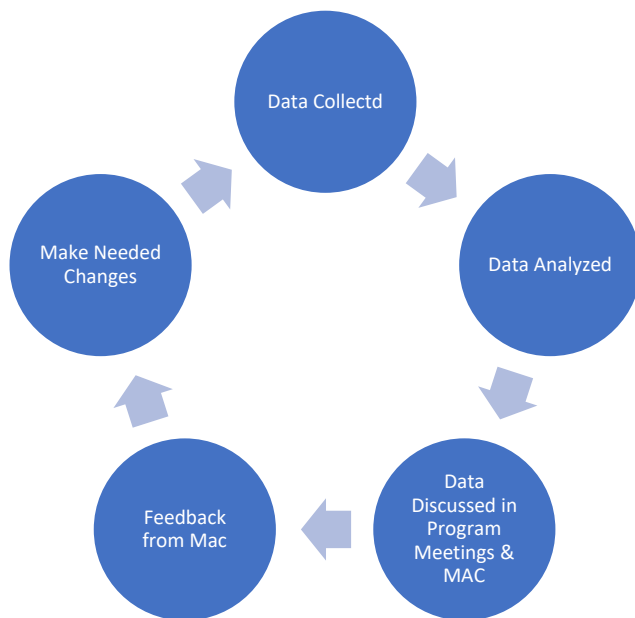


Table 2.5 represents our plan for candidacy for compliance with Standard II.

Table 2.5

*Plan for Candidacy: Standard II*

<b>Plan for Candidacy</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Continue to develop elective courses for pathways	December 2025
Continue to revise core courses and elective courses	December 2025

### Standard III: Faculty

*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 Womack Educational Leadership Department, College of Education, and the College of Graduate Studies at MTSU. All MLS Program full-time faculty meet MTSU policies that pertain to faculty appointments, such as [Policy 202 Faculty Definition, Roles, Responsibilities, and Appointment Types](#), Policy 204 [Policy 204 Tenure](#), and [Policy 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty](#). Additionally, all MLS Program faculty including adjuncts maintain graduate faculty status. This [Graduate Faculty status](#) is renewed every five years.

Currently, the MTSU Master of Library Science Program has three full-time faculty members and three part-time adjunct faculty members, and we are in the process of hiring a fourth adjunct faculty member. Ms. Hebert is tenure-track, Dr. Lambert is tenured, and Ms. Luck is non-tenure track full-time faculty. [Appendix 3A](#) includes the CVs for program faculty members. 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 for school, public, academic, and special libraries. The MLS Program will 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 better integrate academic librarianship and librarianship in other information environments into the MLS curriculum.

Current part-time faculty (adjuncts) include Katie Moisant (school librarian), Karen Nourse (academic librarian), and Kathleen Schmand (academic librarian). Pat Bashir (public librarian) is in the process of being hired. Adjuncts are recruited from various organizations connected to the MLS Program or faculty. When there is a need for an adjunct for a specific course, Program faculty discuss professionals in the field who they know might be a good fit. Several of these adjuncts were guest speakers in MLS courses before becoming an adjunct in the program. Since 2020, approximately 60 guest speakers have been invited into MLS courses, most of them joining a panel discussion offered via Zoom.

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](#) which is coordinated by the [Annual Faculty Assessment Calendar](#). During this process, faculty must upload their credentials to an electronic system, [Faculty Success by Watermark](#) which tracks faculty progress toward tenure and/or promotion. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are evaluated yearly on their teaching, research, and service. Evidence for teaching includes syllabi, course evaluations, peer reviews, mentoring activities, etc. Lecturers are full-time faculty, but they are evaluated on instruction only.

The Womack Educational Leadership Department recently instituted peer reviews of teaching which are completed by fellow faculty in the department at least once a year. Online faculty review other online faculty. [Appendix 3B](#) provides an example of a peer review for Holly Hebert. Course evaluations by students are also considered. [Appendix 1C](#) provides faculty course evaluations from Spring and Summer 2023.

Evidence for research includes curriculum vitae, pages from journal articles, title pages from books, abstracts, presentations, and other artifacts. Additionally, faculty submit information regarding awards, accolades, student comments, etc.

Finally, faculty submit documentation of service activity, such as serving on department, college, university, and professional committees, and community boards.

In summary, Table 3.1 outlines all full-time and adjunct faculty credentials, specialty areas, and courses taught. Areas of expertise and training highlight the diversity of specialties and provide evidence of the balance provided by full-time and adjunct faculty.

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

<b>Full-Time Faculty</b>	<b>Degrees</b>	<b>Specialty Areas</b>	<b>Lead Instructor</b>
Frank P. Lambert, PhD, Associate Professor, Tenured, Appointed 2016, Promoted 2023	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, EdD Candidate, Assistant Professor, Tenure Track, Appointed 2017	EdD Assessment, Learning, and Student Success – Higher Education, MTSU [est. May 2024], MLIS, Wayne State University, MSed-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	MSLIS, 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, School Librarian, 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
Karen V. Nourse, PhD, Professor, Adjunct Faculty, Appointed 2023	PhD, Middle Tennessee State University MS in Education, Radford University (VA) MLIS, University of North Carolina at Greensboro	Academic Libraries, Young Adult & Adult Literature, Digital Collections, School Libraries	LIBS 6311 LIBS 6401 LIBS 6330
Kathleen Schmand, Dean of Walker Library, MLIS, MOL, Adjunct	MLS, University of Pittsburgh MS in Organizational Leadership, Northern Arizona University	Academic Libraries, Leadership	LIBS 6106

In addition, since the MLS Program is online, full-time faculty develop and redesign LIBS courses frequently. Courses go through an extensive evaluation process during development and during each redesign as seen on the [MTSU Online Course Development Process](#) page. Compensation is provided to faculty for each course development and redesign.

Table 3.2

*Recent course Developments and Revisions*

Course	Course Title	Approval	Status	Lead
LIBS 6620	Engaging Communities through Library Programs	Pending approval 2024	New Course	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6330	Digital Library Collections	Approved October 2023	Revision	Karen Nourse
LIBS 6320	Information Searching Strategies	7/27/2023	Revision	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6105	School Library Management	5/20/2023	Revision	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6550	Supervised Field Experience in LIBS	2/6/2023	Revision	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6106	Introduction to Leadership in Libraries	11/2/2022	New Course	Kathleen Schmand/ Christy Groves
LIBS 6700	Special Libraries and Librarianship	4/1/2022	New Course	Stephanie Bandell-Koroll
LIBS 6100	Management of Libraries	3/8/2022	Revision	Holly Hebert

LIBS 6015	Intro to Information Intermediation	10/28/2021	Revision	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6401	Academic Libraries and Librarianship	3/29/2021	New Course	Rachel Kirk & Jason Martin
LIBS 6000	Librarianship	4/30/2020	Revision	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6115	Collection Development & User Services	3/3/2020	Revision	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6030	IT for Information Professionals	10/21/2019	New Course	Frank Lambert
LIBS 6340	Integration of Learning Theory, Programs and Technology	9/30/2019	New Course	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6345	Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals	9/30/2019	New Course	DeAnne Luck
LIBS 6201	Public Libraries	9/27/2019	New Course	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6311	Materials for Literacy of Young People and Adults	4/3/2019	Revision	Holly Hebert
LIBS 6060	Understanding Research for Eval.	2/8/2019	Revision	Frank Lambert

#### *Recent Course Developments and Revisions*

Note: LIBS 6700, LIBS 6401, and LIBS 6106 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 and either, research or service, with the other area being at least sustained quality. Dr. Lambert was promoted to Associate Professor and granted tenure in 2023. Ms. Hebert submitted her tenure materials in September 2023. We recognize the research and/or service Ms. Luck chooses to engage in and involves her in course revision and curriculum instruction because of her instructional expertise. Dr. Nourse, an adjunct in the program, is a tenured faculty member in the Walker Library who was promoted to full professor in the Walker Library in 2023. Through MTSU Online <https://mtsu.edu/online/faculty/index.php> and the Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC) <https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/>, MLS faculty benefit from a variety of learning experiences and opportunities in the form of trainings, webinars workshops, book clubs, and faculty learning communities ([Appendix 3C](#)) available on campus both in person and virtually. MLS Program Faculty also participate in professional development offered for free by organizations such as WebJunction, ALISE, iFederation, etc. Ms. Hebert and Ms. Luck often join the LIS Pedagogy Chat [Schedule & Registration — LIS Pedagogy Chat](#), an international discussion which is offered virtually.



Dr. Lambert (2022), Ms. Hebert (2019), and Dr. Nourse (2014) have all completed the LT & I TC Academy of Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows Program [https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/faculty\\_fellows.php](https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/faculty_fellows.php). Dr. Lambert (2021-2022), Ms. Hebert (2018-2019; 2021-2022), and Dr. Nourse (2013-2014; 2023-2024) have participated 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](https://www.mtsu.edu/online/faculty/faculty_mentor_program.php). Ms. Hebert also led a book group discussion in Fall 2020 for the LT & ITC ([Appendix 3C](#)). Compensation is provided for participation in FLCs, Faculty Fellows, and for serving as an OFM.

*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. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance [Institutional Equity & Compliance | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#) helps to "Ensure an institutional focus on access, diversity, equity and inclusion." Policies and guidelines for faculty recruitment can be found in several documents listed here.

[https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit\\_documents/FacultyRecruitmentGuide.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentGuide.pdf).

[https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit\\_documents/FacultyRecruitmentProcessOverview.p df](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentProcessOverview.pdf)

[https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit\\_documents/Reference\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/Reference_Guide.pdf)

The College of Education Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity provides many events for faculty and students throughout the year <https://mtsunews.com/fairness-justice-equity-center-fall-events>. MTSU also offers a Diversity Fellowship program that supports doctoral students <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/accessdiversity.php> and <https://mtsunews.com/diversity-fellowship-program-fellows-2023/>

The MLS Program follows MTSU's policies and procedures related to recruitment of faculty. 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 has 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 Provost Office to learn more about how to attract diverse applicants.

*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 work experience in academic libraries. Ms. Hebert has work experience in public and academic libraries, while Ms. Luck has work experience in school, academic, and special libraries, Ms. Moisant has work experience in school libraries, and Dr. Nourse has work experience in academic and 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 ([Appendix 3D](#)). In addition, Dr. Lambert was awarded the MTSU Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award in 2021 [https://www.mtsu.edu/communicator/archives/Fall\\_2021\\_Communicator.pdf](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 3.3 outlines faculty roles in professional organizations over the past three years.

[Table 3.3](#)

*Program Faculty Activities in Professional Organizations 2020-2023*

Name	Organization	Role	Year
Holly Hebert	TNLA	Member, Recording Secretary	2010- 2020, 2022-2024
	TASL	Member	2018-
	Tenn-Share	Conference Committee	2019-2021
	ALA	Member	2017-
	ALA LIRT – Adult Learners Committee	Member, Co-Chair	2020-2022
	ALA LIRT – TOP 20 Committee	Member	2021-2023
	AASL	Member	2018-
	ARSL	Member	2020-
	PLA	Member	2018
	RUSA – Genealogy	Member	2021-2023
	ALISE	Member Co-Chair Juried Panel Committee	2018- 2021-2022, 2023-2024

	ALISE – SIG Curriculum	Member, Co-Chair	2021-2022 2023-2024
Frank Lambert	ALISE	Member Doctoral Poster Session Judge	2022
	ALA	Member	Current
	Southeast Library Association (SELA)	Member	Current
DeAnne Luck	TNLA	Peer Reviewer for Tennessee Libraries Journal	2021-
	TNLA	Member	1992-
	ALA	Member	1991-
	TASL	Member	1992-
Katie Moisant	TASL	Member	2011-
Karen Nourse	ACRL/EBSS	Secretary	2021-2023
	ACRL/EBSS	Online Learning Research Committee; Chair	2019-2023
Kathleen Schmand	ALA	Member	2013-
	ACRL	Member	2021-
	SELA	Member	2021-

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

Table 3.4

*Tenure track Faculty Committees and Roles 2020-2023*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Year/s</b>
Holly Hebert	University	Distance Education	Member	2021-2024
	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
Frank Lambert	University	IRB	Member	2022-2025
	University	Library	Member	2020-2025
	University	Teaching with Technology	Member	2020-2022

	University	Faculty Search Committee – Online	Member	2020
	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
Karen Nourse	University	University Council for Sponsored Scholarship	Member	2022-2024
	University	General Education	Member, Secretary	2017-2020
	University	Curriculum	Member, Secretary	2015-2017
	College (Education; EdD program)	Faculty Search Committee	Member	2023
	College (Education; MLS program)	Faculty Search Committee	Member	2021
	College (Education; MLS program)	Faculty Search Committee	Member	2015
Kathleen Schmand	University	Library Committee	Ex Officio	2021-
	University	Graduate Council Committee	Ex Officio	2022-
	University	Computer Executive Committee	Member	2022-2024
	University	Outstanding Teaching Award Committee	Member	2021-2023

MTSU faculty have numerous resources to draw from in support of pedagogy and technology. Faculty have many opportunities through the year to participate in various professional development training and collaborations 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 training and workshop activities during the precandidacy stage 2020-2023 is provided ([Appendix 3C](#)).

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 indicating students perceive their teaching to be of high quality ([Appendix 1C](#)).

In addition to the regular evaluation of course evaluations 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 and annual review of tenured faculty. Tenure-track faculty are expected to maintain a rating of high quality in the areas of teaching and either service, or research, and at least quality in the other area [https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/fac\\_handbook/contents.php](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/fac_handbook/contents.php). The Womack Educational Leadership Department is currently evaluating their tenure and promotion policy to update research requirements. The current policy is located at [https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/tp\\_policies/EdLdrshipPT2015.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/tp_policies/EdLdrshipPT2015.pdf).

MLS Program faculty continue to maintain quality in research activities, both in content and quantity. The tenured/tenure-track faculty have engaged in a variety of scholarly activities leading to contributions to the field and professional development of others. Table 3.5 outlines the scholarly work of Dr. Lambert and Ms. Hebert for the past 3 years.

Table 3.5

*Scholarly and Professional Works of the Two Full-time Tenure-Track Faculty 2020-2023*

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

MTSU has a fairly high teaching load of 4/4 without reassigned time, so the main focus is on teaching. The full-time temporary position has a load of 5/5. <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/forms/wkguide.pdf>.

*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 nurtures an intellectual environment that enhances the accomplishment of program objectives.*

MLS faculty have all been trained at different universities across North America. [Table 3.6](#) outlines the degree granting institutions, degrees, and areas of study for each faculty member. As outlined in [Table 3.3](#), MLS Program faculty are actively involved in pertinent and varied professional organizations, as well as engaged 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 (See [Table 3.5](#)). Additionally, one MLS Program faculty holds teacher licensure (Luck), another is pursuing a doctorate in assessment (Hebert), 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 (Lambert).

As the Program moves through the candidacy stage, faculty development will be documented in their OFDs and annual reviews in Faculty Success 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 3.6

*Faculty Terminal Degrees*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Type of Degree</b>	<b>Area of Study</b>
Holly Hebert	Middle Tennessee State University	EdD	Assessment, Learning and Student Success – Higher Education (Est May 2024)
	California State University – Hayward Wayne State University	MSEd-OTL MLIS	Online Teaching & Learning  Library and Information Science
Frank Lambert	University of Western Ontario	PhD, MLIS	Library and Information Science

DeAnne Luck	University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign	MSLIS	Library and Information Science
	Trevecca Nazarene University	Initial Teacher Licensure, Librarian Endorsement	
Kathryn Moisant	University of Tennessee – Knoxville	MLIS	Library and Information Science
	Middle Tennessee State University	Initial Teacher Licensure	
Karen Nourse	Middle Tennessee State University	PhD	Literacy Studies (Reading comprehension focus)
	Radford University (VA)	MS	Education
	University of North Carolina at Greensboro	MLIS	Library and Information Science
Kathleen Schmand	Northern Arizona University	MS	Organizational Leadership
	University of Pittsburgh	MLS	Library Science

*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 current course coverage. [Table 3.7](#) outlines expertise of faculty and the courses they generally teach. Quality of instruction is ensured by matching faculty competencies with the courses.

MLS Program faculty workloads reflect the requirement of those set by the Provost at MTSU <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/forms/wkguide.pdf>. MTSU faculty generally teach 4-3 credit hour courses per semester. Teaching loads can be reduced through reassigned time given for research, service, or administrative activities beyond typical expectations. Across the College, program coordinators receive 3 credit hours of reassigned time for program coordination duties. Course reassigned time is applied for yearly.. The Department Chair has authority to grant a faculty member up to 3 credit hours of reassigned time per semester, while the Dean may grant an additional 3 credit hours of reassigned time per semester. MLS faculty voluntarily teach during the summer (with further compensation) as the MLS Program has a rolling enrollment across Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. Currently, Holly Hebert has course reassigned time for serving as the MLS Program Coordinator with advising duties. Dr. Lambert is teaching 4-3 credit hour

courses per semester. Ms. Luck, as a lecturer, has no service or research requirements and teaches 5-3 credit hour courses per semester. Although not required, she does regularly participate in professional development through MTSU Online and LT & ITC, as well as through professional organizations.

MLS Program full-time faculty receive extra compensation for teaching summer courses and can teach up to three, except for the MLS Program Coordinator who has a summer stipend and can teach two courses in Summer. [Policy 221 Faculty Compensation during Summer Session](#) provides Summer teaching guidelines.

The MLS Program will continue to assess teaching assignments based on the needs of the program as well as the needs of individual faculty members. MLS Program faculty work within the parameters of the university workload requirements which is seen in [Policy 208 Determining Faculty Workload and Instructional Staffing](#).

Table 3.7

*Faculty Expertise and Teaching Assignments*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>Teaching Assignments</b>
Holly Hebert	Collection Development, Library Management, Public Libraries Academic Libraries, Field Experience, Materials for the Literacy of Young People and Adults	LIBS 6000, LIBS 6100, LIBS 6115, LIBS 6201, LIBS 6311, LIBS 6550
Frank Lambert	Cataloging, Research, Technology, Management	LIBS 6020, LIBS 6060, LIBS 6030, LIBS 6100, LIBS 6105
DeAnne Luck	School Library Management, Reference & User Services, Children's Literature, Digital Collections, Instructional technology and strategies courses	LIBS 6015, LIBS 6105, LIBS 6310, LIBS 6320, LIBS 6330, LIBS 6340, LIBS 6345
Katie Moisant	School Library Management, Reference & User Services, Children's & YA Literature courses, Digital Collections,	LIBS 6105, LIBS 6015, LIBS 6310, 6311
Karen Nourse	Academic Libraries, Digital Collections, Materials for the Literacy of Young People and Adults	LIBS 6401, LIBS 6330, LIBS 6311
Kathleen Schmand	Leadership	LIBS 6106

*III.8 Procedures are established for systematic evaluation of all faculty: evaluation considers accomplishment 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, the Department and College will continue to assess the full-time faculty's qualifications and capacity to accomplish program objectives through the University's annual performance review process [Microsoft Word - AnnualFacultyAssessmentCalendar2023-24-R3.docx \(mtsu.edu\)](#). During this process, faculty upload their yearly teaching, research, and service activity to Faculty Success, an online system for tracking faculty progress toward tenure and/or promotion and annual evaluation of tenured and non-tenurable faculty [Faculty Success | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#).

During the review cycle of 2020-2023, MLS Program faculty were evaluated annually per MTSU policies and procedures, following the faculty assessment calendar <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/docs/AnnualFacultyAssessmentCalendar2023-24.pdf>. Prior to tenure, faculty were reviewed annually by the Department Chair and Department Promotion and Tenure Committee. A third-year review occurs during the tenure-track process to allow feedback to be provided by the Department Committee, Department Chair, College Committee, Dean of the College, and Provost. This feedback is used to simulate the promotion and tenure review process and provide extensive feedback on progress toward tenure and promotion. Dr. Lambert was granted tenure in 2023, while Ms. Hebert is undergoing tenure and promotion review this academic year.

Tenured faculty are evaluated annually by the Department Chair. Annual performance reviews address teaching, research, and service providing strengths and areas for growth in each area. The Department Chair also evaluates full-time lecturers and adjunct faculty annually through the Faculty Success system. There is an opportunity for faculty to respond to reviews and meet with the Department Chair. 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>.

For teaching, faculty upload student course evaluations from every course taught during the year, mentoring activities, advising, student course evaluations ([Appendix 1C](#)), and peer review. Online faculty are reviewed by peer faculty who also teach online. An example of a peer review is in ([Appendix 3B](#)). Faculty are encouraged to undergo peer review for tenure and promotion.

For research, evidence of scholarly activities includes pages from journal articles, title pages from books, abstracts, conference presentations, poster sessions, and other artifacts. Much of the MLS Program 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 and can thus prepare students for positions in these institutions. The data that result from this research can then be used for program improvement.

Finally, faculty submit documentation of service activity, such as service on department, college, and university committees, involvement in professional library organizations, and participation



in community activities. The MLS Program will encourage innovation by supporting applications for innovations grants and nominating faculty for awards.

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 update the Field Experience Handbook [https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/Field\\_Experience\\_Handbook.pdf](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 to ensure continuity in the program delivery and effective implementation of assessment.

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. 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.

Table 3.8 represents our plan for candidacy for compliance with Standard III.

Table 3.8

*Plan for Candidacy: Standard III*

<b>Plan for Candidacy</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Create program newsletter to distribute to students, alumni, MAC, FE Sponsors, Employers and Friends.	March 2024
Plan for strategic faculty hires by identifying needed areas of expertise.	December 2025
Continue to search for qualified adjuncts who would add diversity to our faculty by developing relationships and recruiting diverse guest speakers who could be potential adjuncts.	December 2025

## Standard IV: Students

*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 policies follow those developed and articulated by MTSU and are consistent with the University's mission and values, as articulated at <https://www.mtsu.edu/about/mission.php>. Highlights from the mission statement that align with the MLS Program's approach to admission, recruitment, and retention include: "takes pride in its role as a comprehensive, diverse, and 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..."

The University indicates it will engage in a variety of activities to fulfill its purpose. Notable actions taken that align with the MLS Program include:

- fosters a student-centered environment conducive to lifelong learning, personal development, and success;
- enhances access through unique programs, distance learning, and advising to meet the needs of a diverse student population;
- supports student learning through effective teaching methods, emerging technologies, experiential and integrative learning, research, and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities;

Furthermore, the University practices community standards of "Honesty and Integrity" and "Respect for Diversity" and are inherent within the MLS Program.

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 policies that are followed by the Program. The Program-specific policies and procedures are outlined in the specific sections of the Master of Library Science Handbook (<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/LIBS-Handbook.pdf>) such as Admission, Advising, Financial Aid, Career Center, Registration, and Graduation.

### **Recruitment**

MLS Program faculty are responsible for program quality, which includes attracting and admitting eligible, high-quality applicants. The MLS Program is included in recruitment activities conducted by the University, Graduate Studies, the College of Education, and the Womack Educational Leadership Department such as career fairs, graduate fairs, and the COE Showcase. In addition, the MLS Program has and will continue to conduct various recruitment activities to attract students such as those shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

### *MLS Program Recruitment Activities 2020-2023*

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Date</b>
MTSU Undergraduate Seniors	Email	October, 2023
TNLA Annual Conference	Booth	2018 - 2023
TASL Annual Conference	Booth	2022, 2023
ARSL Annual Conference	Booth	Sept 2022
MTSU FJE Showcase of COE Programs	Booth	Sept 2022 & 2023
TN Teachers, current library employees, area college students	Online Information Sessions ( <a href="#">Appendix 4A</a> )	May 2022, Feb 2023, May 2023, Oct 2023
MTSU Graduate Fair	Booth	Nov 2021, 2022
MTSU Graduate Fair	Online Appointments	9-23-2020

In addition to the MLS Program website <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/>, program information is also shared via social media using primarily the [COE Facebook](#), the [College of Graduate Studies Facebook](#), and the [MLS Program Facebook pages](#) for students and alumni, which is a closed group. The COE and College of Graduate Studies also have Instagram pages. We use the X (formerly Twitter) handle #mtsumls. TikTok is banned at all state-funded universities in Tennessee by a [new state law](#).

In print, the MLS Program flyer ([Appendix 4B](#)) is our main promotional material distributed in the office, in various campus offices, and at our vendor booth at conferences.

As noted in Table 4.2, various efforts have been made to promote the MLS program using media outlets. The MLS Program faculty will continue to look for opportunities to promote the program in the media.

Table 4.2

### *MLS Program in the Media*

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Link</b>
TNLA Newsletter	Hebert named Program Coordinator at MTSU	Summer 2023	<a href="https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/summer_2023.pdf">https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/summer_2023.pdf</a>
MTSU COE Facebook Page	Student and alumni highlights	Jan, Feb 2023	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation/posts/683831466863846">https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation/posts/683831466863846</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation/posts/694185319161794">https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation/posts/694185319161794</a>
MTSU Website	ALA Precandidacy	August 2021	<a href="https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library-masters-aug2021/">https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library-masters-aug2021/</a>

Podcast Interview	MLS Program	March 2021	<a href="https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library-science-march2021/">https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library-science-march2021/</a>
TNLA Newsletter	ALA Precandidacy	Winter/Spring 2020	<a href="https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/summer_2023.pdf">https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/summer_2023.pdf</a>
TASL Talks	ALA Precandidacy	August 2020	<a href="https://tasltalks.wordpress.com/2020/08/17/mtsu-granted-precandidacy-status-by-ala/">https://tasltalks.wordpress.com/2020/08/17/mtsu-granted-precandidacy-status-by-ala/</a>
MTSU Website	MLS Program Graduate Story	December 2019	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/97/mtsu-online-mls-program-gives-fisk-librarian-deeper-understanding-of-profession">https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/97/mtsu-online-mls-program-gives-fisk-librarian-deeper-understanding-of-profession</a>
MTSU Website	MLS Program Graduate Story	November 2019	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/101/mtsu-s-online-mls-program-boosts-librarian-skills-of-adult-learner-to-next-level">https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/101/mtsu-s-online-mls-program-boosts-librarian-skills-of-adult-learner-to-next-level</a>

Recruiting and retaining students who reflect the diversity of our communities is a priority for the Program. The student body does not currently meet this goal, as seen in Table 4.3. In addition to the above activities, the Program will focus on increasing the diversity of enrolled students through the following recruitment strategies which build on activities that are already being done such as sending recruitment emails and informational flyers to TECA and local HBCUs:

- Develop closer ties with teachers and educators throughout the state, including the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA) <https://www.tneca.org/>,
- Continue to work with the FJE, the College of Graduate Studies, and other organizations on and off campus to increase our applicant pool.
- Build relationships through community library boards and other related community activities. Dr. Lambert recently served as a member of the Rutherford County Library Board.
- Expand the Program's reach through digital marketing to attract diverse applicants.
- Reach out to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to further develop relationships and recruiting efforts, and other collaborative opportunities. There are seven HBCUs in the state of Tennessee, and four are in the Middle Tennessee Area: Tennessee State University, Meharry Medical College, Fisk University, and American Baptist College.
- Simplify admissions procedures where possible.
- Survey to understand how the use of the following activities increase diversity: the use of student travel grants and loans, graduate assistantships, discounts, employee waivers, and scholarships.

Table 4.3

### *Demographics of MTSU MLS Students Compared with Tennessee Demographics*

<b>Population</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Mixed/Other</b>	<b>White</b>
MLS Students Fall 2021-Spring 2023	2.6%	2%	2.6%	4%	88.8%
TN Residents Population 2022	16.7%	2.1%	6.4%	2.8%	78.3%

Source: US Census: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/TN/PST045222>

### *Admissions*

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 admissions policies that are followed by the MLS 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. <https://mtsu.edu/graduate/apply.php>

Individual programs may have higher admission requirements than those of the College of Graduate Studies, but currently the MLS Program follows these minimum requirements as articulated below, although the Mean GPA of admits is over 3.0 as presented in [Table 4.4](#).

The criteria for admission to the MLS Program are:

- an earned bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college;
- official transcripts from all previous college-and university-level work showing a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.75;
- three letters of recommendation from professionals;
- 500-word essay (Statement of Purpose) answering the following prompt: "As a next step on your path of being a lifelong learner, why do you want to pursue a graduate degree in library science?"

Letters of recommendation can come from employers, work colleagues, community leaders, teachers, etc. In considering each applicant, the Statement of Purpose (SOP) is scored with a rubric ([Appendix 4C](#)). In Fall, 2023, an overall admission rubric ([Appendix 4D](#)) was piloted which will help the MLS Program Coordinator to more evenly assess applicants in the future as the program grows.

Following candidacy, and once accreditation is achieved, these minimum criteria will be reviewed as applications increase. However, as the table below demonstrates, 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.

Table 4.4

*Mean GPA of new MTSU MLS Students*

Academic Year	Mean GPA	Number of New Admits
2022-23	3.42	27
2021-22	3.34	25
2020-21	3.04	36
2019-20	3.29	38
2018-19	3.31	22
2017-18	3.17	31
2016-17	3.43	29

Table 4.5 below shows 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 first-year students 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.

Table 4.5

*MLS Program Applications, Acceptances, Conditional Acceptances*

Year	Applications	Acceptances	Conditional Acceptances
2022-2023	40	28	2
2021-2022	42	26	1
2020-2021	52	31	0
2019-2020	62	32	3
2018-2019	47	36	3

Retention efforts have focused on better communication with students, especially new students. An online Orientation session via Zoom has been instituted for new students on the first evening of class each semester. They have been very well attended and well received. Through this session, students are made aware of resources that promote student success and retention, such as the library services available to distance students and the advising/registration process. ([Appendix 4E](#)). In Spring 2023, we started an informal peer mentorship program matching experienced MLS Students with new students and have had several students participate each

semester since then. Holly Hebert also conducts an ePortfolio Q &A via Zoom each semester to help students with creating and adding to their ePortfolio.

In Spring 2023, a retention survey was sent out to students who had left the program in the last several years without finishing. Nineteen respondents answered and, as a result of the survey, one student came back to school and is set to graduate in Spring 2024. The main reasons mentioned for leaving the program were lack of ALA accreditation, personal reasons, financial issues, the quality of advising, and changed career directions.

### ***Financial Aid***

The MLS Program continues to support and promote any and all financial aid offered nationally as well as by MTSU and other local and state organizations, 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>, along with Graduate Assistantships (one GA for the MLS Program and others available in the Walker Library). More information is available at <https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/funding.php>. The MLS Program makes information about additional financial resources available to students through its Web site (<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2>) and the MLS Handbook. 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 Edwards and other Education-specific MTSU scholarships are described on the College of Education website: <https://www.mtsu.edu/education/scholarships.php>

The MLS Program promotes this, and other scholarships offered by professional library associations, through communications with its students. Several of our students have received scholarships from state professional organizations, including the “[Diversity in School Librarianship Scholarship](#)” which is a joint partnership between TASL and TNLA. The College of Graduate Studies has also instituted several scholarships, including one for new graduate students which can be seen at <https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/funding.php>.

### ***Career Services***

The Career Development Center at MTSU offers all students and graduates career placement opportunities at <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. Students often comment that they are appreciative of our posting these opportunities. Networking opportunities provided by Field experiences, student teaching, observations, and professional organizations are also useful for



career development including finding employment. Individual consultations with students' advisor on career issues are always available.

### ***Constituents***

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 reside in Tennessee. However, considering the MLS Program is 100% online, we can admit students from other states, although only a few have applied to date. All activities completed by students in the MLS Program, including classwork, student support, or administrative tasks, can be completed by students online (excepting observations and Field Experiences, which can be completed locally). All registration and financial aid activities can be completed through MT One Stop (<https://www.mtsu.edu/one-stop/>), and support services such as the Writing Center, FJE and Disability & Access Center (see [Table 4.8](#)) offer online services. The MTSU Online (<https://mtsu.edu/online/>) office provides specific support to both online students and faculty. University policies (<https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/>), specifically the 300 and 500 series, address needs of both in-person and online students. These policies and procedures are particularly relevant to the needs of the majority of our students who already work full-time, regardless of where they live.

*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 Catalog (<https://catalog.mtsu.edu/index.php?catoid=37>) as the document of record for all academic policies and programs. Table 4.6 outlines the information accessible and available on the MLS website. Each semester, the MLS Program will take inventory of the website and ensure 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. One struggle in this area is in maintaining up to date information on our website. Changes are not able to be made as quickly as we would like. We continue to work on this.

Table 4.6

### ***Resources on the MLS Program Website***

Page	Link
About	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/about">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/about</a>



Careers	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/careers">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/careers</a>
Requirements (Admissions, Curriculum)	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements</a>
Degrees and Endorsements (Admissions)	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/degrees">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/degrees</a>
Outcomes (progress toward goals & objectives)	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info3">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info3</a>
Vision	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info</a>
Faculty	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/faculty">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/faculty</a>
Resources (Handbooks (evaluation of student performance through Field Experience and ExitPortfolio), Financial, Aid, Career, etc.)	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2</a>
Online Delivery	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/delivery">https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/delivery</a>

Other resources include several online information sessions ([Appendix 4A](#)) about the MLS Program that are open to the public. They are publicized through state-wide library email lists and directly to many area school districts and colleges. Printed MLS Program flyers are also available at various events throughout the year ([Appendix 4B](#)).

Included on the MLS Program website pages is information about program goals and objectives, descriptions of curricula, information about faculty, admission requirements, availability of financial aid, criteria for evaluating student performance, assistance with placement, and other policies and procedures. Some of this information is included in each of the three program handbooks: [Library Science Handbook](#), [Field Experience Handbook](#), and [exitPortfolio Handbook](#), which are updated regularly.

*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 and their possibility of success. Each year the MLS Program will review its admissions policies to assure the policies reflect current priorities. The current requirements (published at <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/requirements>) are:

- an earned bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college;

- official transcripts from all previous college-and university-level work showing a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.75;
- three letters of recommendation from professionals;
- 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>

Applicants can apply directly from the MLS Program webpages:  
<https://www.mtsu.edu/applynow/application/login>

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 using the following prompt: "As a next step on your path of being a lifelong learner, why do you want to pursue a graduate degree in library science?" Each statement of purpose is assessed using a pre-established rubric ([Appendix 4C](#)), which generates a baseline score of the applicant's aptitude for graduate studies in library science. The rubric is freely available to potential applicants in the Master of Library Science Handbook (<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/LIBS-Handbook.pdf>).

The Program Coordinator uses the internal Admission Rubric to assess all the requirements and determine the applicant's overall potential for success in LIS graduate studies ([Appendix 4D](#)).

In a few cases, applicants can be admitted on a conditional basis, following the policies of the College of Graduate Studies:

Conditional admission—The granting of temporary admission into a graduate program with certain stipulations being placed upon the student. Continuation in the program as a degree-seeking student is contingent upon fulfilling specific requirements described in the conditional admission letter. Conditional admission into the College of Graduate Studies may be granted if the applicant has less than the minimum requirements, i.e., either the required minimum grade point average for graduate study or the test scores (but not both) are not met. Such admission is at the discretion of the graduate dean.

The most common requirement to be waived is the 2.75 GPA, based on extenuating circumstances and/or current professional work as reflected in letters of recommendation. Students who are admitted conditionally must earn a 3.0 GPA in the program their first semester in order to continue. To date, all conditional admit students have completed their MLS degree work successfully.

Table 4.7 outlines the number of students in the MLS Program, retention of students by admitted year, average time taken to complete degree, and number of graduates each academic year. These data demonstrate 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. These data are publicly available through University dashboards at <https://www.mtsu.edu/iepr/bi.php>.

Table 4.7

### *MLS Program Retention and Time to Degree 2017-2023*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Enrollment Fall</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>	<b>Time to Degree</b>	<b># of Graduates</b>
2022-2023	45	82.2%	Not yet available	37
2021-2022	61	82.0%	21 months	50
2020-2021	63	87.3%	19 months	55
2019-2020	44	88.6%	17 months	39
2018-2019	46	93.5%		43

*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.*

The curriculum of the MLS Program allows students to construct plans of study to fit their needs while still meeting the requirements. Admitted students use information from their advisor, the published course recommendations for various tracks, and the course rotations (<https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/LIBS-Handbook.pdf>) to create an individual plan of study tailored to their goals. Students can see their official degree plan in DegreeWorks which is available via [PipelineMT](#), an online system that helps with Registration, Financial Aid, Billing & Payment, and Academic Resources. New students are also given a blank Plan of Study to plan their courses with ([Appendix 4F](#)). The MLS Program Coordinator works with each student as they continue through the program and consults the plans of study when constructing the Program's course schedule each semester, ensuring the offered courses meet all the students' needs. The Program Coordinator will evaluate the effectiveness of the initial Degree Plan by comparing screens from the University's degree audit system, Degree Works, to the individual plans and comparing individual audits of the student's goals stated at the time of admission. In some semesters, particularly summers, a course will be offered that does not meet minimum enrollment in order to ensure that students can graduate on time. The administration has been supportive of arranging faculty compensation and/or duties to allow this to happen. Since it is possible for students to take approved courses outside of the program, that can be an option as well.

The current academic advisor for the MLS Program is the Program Coordinator, who makes initial contact, admits students, and is their advisor about academic issues throughout the program. Students are contacted at least once per semester regarding their progress in the program via email. In Fall 2023, the MLS Program Coordinator started using Microsoft 365 Booking which integrates with Outlook Calendars and allows students to quickly and easily sign up for an online appointment via Zoom. Within courses, students are encouraged to ask questions through email, online synchronous "office hours," a Discussion Board dedicated to student questions, online conferencing, or telephone, any time they have issues or concerns. Holly Hebert and Frank Lambert have offices in the College of Education and have regular student "visitation hours" weekly for local students who wish to meet face to face.

The Program Coordinator also advises students on the field experience and exitPortfolio and guides students through these two important assessments. Students are provided with the

ExitPortfolio Handbook ([https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/ExitPortfolio\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/ExitPortfolio_Handbook.pdf)) and the Field Experience Handbook ([https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/Field\\_Experience\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/docs/Field_Experience_Handbook.pdf)) at the beginning of the program and these are consulted many times as the students' progress through their course work. The exitPortfolio begins during the students' first semester and undergoes a formative assessment at the end of each semester until completion, using a standard rubric ([Appendix 4G](#)). This process of systemic evaluation results in a 98% pass rate on the exitPortfolio.

The Field Experience is highlighted during the admissions process and the New Student Orientation so that students will know what is required. It is discussed again as the students near the end of the program. Students are responsible for arranging their own placements (except for initial licensure students), but assistance in identifying possibilities and making contacts with practicing professionals is provided by Program faculty. Placements must be approved by the faculty teaching LIBS 6550. Students and their sponsor sign an agreement that outlines the parameters of the field experience before the class starts. There have been very few cases where the student's first choice of placement was denied when the placement was not deemed to be at a library that could offer the student an appropriate learning experience. The field placement instructor, currently Holly Hebert, is in contact with the supervising librarian throughout the placement and often visits the student and supervising librarian during the semester if feasible. Supervising librarians receive a packet of information about the field experience and sign an agreement for the placement as outlined in pages 6-10 of the [Field Experience Handbook](#). Alumni are regularly surveyed as they exit the program about their satisfaction with the program and the advising they received as a student ([Appendix 2F](#)). Employment survey data is also available ([Appendix 1J](#)). The data gathered about advising, placements, and program of study coherence are used to inform program improvements.

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 the first day of every semester for incoming students ([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. Program faculty often hear about job opportunities around the state and inform students who are a good match for open positions. Because the program is in precandidacy for ALA accreditation, communicated job opportunities, especially those from out of state, are checked for requirements before being relayed to students.

*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 students in decision making and gauge their involvement by observing student involvement in town halls, advisory councils, course development, and policy development. Between 2021 and 2023, three Town Hall meetings were held online to listen to students and give them agency over their learning experience ([Appendix 1D](#)). Due to these meetings, the Program faculty instituted better communication about some areas where the students had the most questions, such as detailed requirements for the Field Experience.

Two student representatives are also part of the MLS Advisory Council and share the student perspective in the Council meetings, held twice a year in September and February ([Appendix 1I](#)). Students who are perceived leaders in the program are chosen and invited to participate. The MLS Program Graduate Assistant is present during monthly MLS faculty meetings and is often asked for input. Discussions involving individual students are saved for the end of the meeting and the GA is dismissed prior to any sensitive information being discussed.

#### *IV.5.2 Participate in research;*

Students are encouraged to participate in research and submit articles and book reviews for publication. In 2021, after encouragement from Holly Hebert and completion of a book review assignment, a student was selected as a Library Journal reviewer and published a [book review](#). 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 submission from one of our students was accepted with revisions ([Appendix 4I](#)). In another instance, Holly Hebert collaborated with our Graduate Assistant in 2023 and their publication was accepted with revisions to *Public Library Quarterly* ([Appendix 4J](#)). Students are often invited to co-present with faculty at the TASL and TLA Conferences. In November 2023, two students co-presented with DeAnne Luck at the annual TASL conference ([Appendix 4K](#)).

Students are encouraged to participate in professional associations, attend conferences, and pursue publication. TASL and TNLA give student membership discounts. TNLA also has a conference internship program that helps to pay for chosen interns to attend the annual conference. [Table 4.10](#) outlines MLS students who have been selected for this internship program.

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 will continue to encourage faculty mentors and student participation.

#### *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 current academic advisor for the MLS Program is the Program Coordinator, who makes initial contact, admits students, and is their advisor about academic issues throughout the program. Students are contacted at least once per semester regarding their progress in the

program via email. In Fall 2023, the MLS Program Coordinator started using Microsoft 365 Booking which integrates with Outlook Calendars and allows students to quickly and easily sign up for an online appointment via Zoom. Within courses, students are encouraged to ask questions through email, online synchronous “office hours,” a Discussion Board dedicated to student questions, online conferencing, or telephone, any time they have issues or concerns. Holly Hebert and Frank Lambert have offices in the College of Education and have regular student “visitation hours” weekly for local students who wish to meet face to face.

The MLS Academic Advisor, Ms. Hebert is available to meet with students throughout their time in the program. She is also the advisor for the field experience which can lead to a job offer in some cases. There have been at least four students in the last two years who have been hired by the field experience host site. 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. These resources are announced in course syllabi, through emails from the university, and from program faculty. Special opportunities, such as the Mental Health First Aid Certification training that was advertised by email and in classes in 2023. A list is also provided on the [MTSU Online](#) website.

Table 4.8

#### *Student Resources at MTSU*

<b>Name of Campus Service</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Link</b>
Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center	Transition services, encouragement, career opportunities	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/military/">https://www.mtsu.edu/military/</a>
Counseling Services	Online and in-person mental health counseling	<a href="https://mtsu.edu/counseling/">https://mtsu.edu/counseling/</a>
Intercultural and Diversity Affairs	Diversity and inclusion resources, services, and programs	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/idac/">https://www.mtsu.edu/idac/</a>
James E. Walker Library	Resources, reference, research, and technology services	<a href="https://library.mtsu.edu/home">https://library.mtsu.edu/home</a>
University Writing Center	Academic tutors, writing groups, workshops	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/">https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/</a>



Career Development Center	Career advising, resume help, job & internship resources	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/career/">https://www.mtsu.edu/career/</a>
Disability & Access Center	Test proctoring, adaptive technology center, accommodations	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/dac/">https://www.mtsu.edu/dac/</a>
Information Technology Division	IT support for students	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/itd/">https://www.mtsu.edu/itd/</a>
Student Support Services	Services for students transitioning from foster care and students experiencing homelessness	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/nextstep/">https://www.mtsu.edu/nextstep/</a>
Student Food Pantry	Food pantry for students with short and long-term food needs.	<a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/foodpantry/">https://www.mtsu.edu/foodpantry/</a>

#### *IV.5.5 Form student organizations;*

As the MLS Program progresses through candidacy, student involvement will continue to be an essential part of the Program's culture. The MLS Program will encourage the formation of a Student Advisory Board and to hold their own student body meeting to assess interest among themselves. Students have access to Zoom and Microsoft TEAMS for meetings and can choose to use either platform for their meetings. When the MLS Program achieves 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 (<https://www.mtsu.edu/sos/> and <https://mtsui.edu/graduate/resources.php>).

As outlined in Table 4.9, faculty arrange in-person outings for library tours and other events for students who wish to attend. These allow students to make connections with each other and the faculty while learning more about the profession and meeting area librarians. Event attendance typically runs low, with between 1 and 10 students attending. However, MLS Program faculty believe these events are still a valuable addition to the student experience. Further plans for student engagement will hopefully be crafted once the Student Advisory Board is instituted.

Table 4.9

#### *In-person Student Events*

Date	Event
11/4/23	Community Archiving Workshop with Smithsonian Archivist, Nashville
10/21/23	Tour of Nashville Public Library, lunch, Attend Southern Festival of Books
3/15/23	Tour of Meharry Medical Library, Fisk University Library, lunch
12/2/2022	Tour of Nashville Public Library
6/26/21	Tour of Tennessee State Library & Archives, lunch

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 (<https://www.mtsu.edu/sos/> and <https://mtsu.edu/graduate/resources.php>).

#### *IV.5.6 Participate in professional organizations*

The MLS program encourages students to be involved in professional organizations. Students are highly encouraged to become members of at least one professional organization, such as ALA, TLA, AASL, or TASL, etc. ([Appendix 4K](#)). As noted in IV 5.2, students have participated with professional organizations by participating in conference sessions with faculty and engaging with professional journals through co-authorship. The MLS Program will continue to encourage and measure student involvement in professional organizations through use of student attendance and presentation at conferences and other professional meetings. The MLS Program will also use publications by students to gauge the level of student involvement in outside professional development.

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

Table 4.10

#### *Students Awarded TNLA Conference Internships*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year</b>
Shanda Hall	2022
Ola Bradford	2021
Sarah Schultz	2021
Cara Brown	2020
Christy Schwab	2020
Ryan Ogle	2019
Courtney Zeitler	2018
Cassandra Taylor	2018

*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 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 key



assessments aligned with ALA competencies and common assessment rubrics used for CAEP accreditation for school library students. MLS Program faculty collect this data in LiveText each semester; the Program Coordinator analyzes the data; and it is discussed, reflected on by faculty, and decisions made based on the data. Past adjustments of courses and curriculum based on the data have included inclusion of more information on budgeting and managing personnel in LIBS 6100 & 6105 and the addition of LIBS 6030 as a core course to improve skills needed to successfully complete technology-heavy assessments such as the LibGuide.

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.” The key assessments and common assessment rubrics are designed for assessing student assignments.

The Student Learning Outcomes for the MLS Program are:

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

Key assessments measured with rubrics in LiveText:

- Budget (LIBS 6100 & 6105)
- Cataloging (LIBS 6020)
- Censorship (LIBS 6310 & 6311)
- Cultural Humility (LIBS 6015, 6310, & 6311)
- LibGuide (LIBS 6015)
- Research Proposal (LIBS 6060)
- Role of the Library (LIBS 6000)
- Selection (LIBS 6105, 6115, 6310, & 6311)

Other data related to students admitted, retention, progression through the program, and completion are collected. These data along with student learning data, exit surveys, and student surveys allow the program to reflect on recruitment, admission, retention, completion and other administrative and academic policies and activities. The MLS Program faculty meet monthly to discuss issues and feedback to make changes as needed. At the end of each semester, Program faculty participate in the College of Education Data Day, a full day of in-person meetings devoted to reviewing semester data at the college and program level, including data-based goals for each program ([Appendix 1G](#)). An example of changes made based on data include course

changes for initial licensure students based on student struggles with the edTPA process and student/sponsor feedback.

*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. Table 4.11 outlines the specific measures used with details about provided about the frequency and method for review of the data.

Table 4.11

*Direct and Indirect Measures of Student Learning Outcomes*

<b>Direct Measures</b>	<b>Method and Frequency of Review</b>	<b>Indirect Measures</b>	<b>Method and Frequency of Review</b>
Assignment and Course grades	Individual faculty throughout semester, Monthly meetings	Student Feedback	Individual faculty throughout semester, Monthly meetings
Key Assessment rubric data	Fall and Spring Data Day	Student Course Evaluations	Individual faculty at end of semester, Monthly meetings
ExitPortfolio Rubric	Fall and Spring Data Day	Field Placement Sponsor feedback	Program Coordinator, discusses with Faculty
TEAM rubric or Library Program Rubric completed during Field Experience or Student Teaching	Program Coordinator, discusses with Faculty	Student and Employer Surveys	Fall and Spring Data Day
EdTPA scores for initial licensure students	Fall and Spring Data Day	Program faculty observations	Individual faculty throughout semester, Monthly meetings
Librarian Praxis scores	Fall and Spring Data Day		

The MLS Program faculty meet monthly to discuss issues and feedback to make changes as needed. At the end of each semester, Program faculty participate in the College of Education Data Day, a full day of in-person meetings devoted to reviewing semester data at the college and program level, including data-based goals for each program ([Appendix 1G](#)). An example of changes made based on data include addition of required courses for initial licensure students,

based on low TEAM and edTPA scores and student/sponsor feedback.

*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 MLS Faculty continue to meet regularly to discuss the results of surveys; course, assessment, and key assessment rubric scores; Field Experience, Student Teaching, and Praxis scores; feedback from students, sponsors, and other stakeholders; and possible improvements based on these data. Monthly meetings allow the faculty to discuss immediate matters. Semester end meetings will help program faculty keep track of progress toward existing goals and the Fall and Spring Data Days promote in-depth analysis of the semester/year data and formulation of larger goals for the Program.

For example, analysis of the curriculum and courses during the program meetings during the summer of 2023 ([Appendix 4L](#)) resulted in revision of assessments in LIBS 6020 and 6030 to better meet the needs of students in obtaining the 2023 ALA Core Competences. Rubrics were created to evaluate Key Assessments. These assessments are intended to provide evidence of leaning outcomes and aligned with ALA competences. As the Program moves through Candidacy, the faculty will continue to use these evaluations of student learning to continuously improve at both the course and program levels.

Table 4.12 represents our plan for candidacy for compliance with Standard IV.

Table 4.12

*Plan for Candidacy: Standard IV*

<b>Plan for Candidacy</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Investigate student advisory groups at other institutions and create a plan to start a group.	August 2024
Identify and foster opportunities for faculty-student and student-student research or activity collaborations.	May 2025
Identify and plan for service opportunities.	May 2025
Make targeted efforts to recruit at other colleges that do not have MLS	December 2025

## Standard V: Administration, Finances, and Resources

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." One goal of the University is to attract and retain high quality faculty with excellent teaching and research skills and who are community oriented. The University is committed to strengthening its faculty through the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty. Further goals and aspirations are communicated through the current Academic Master Plan. In Fall 2023, MTSU began engaging in a two-year strategic planning process to develop an integrated 10-year strategic plan to begin May 2025. MTSU is governed by a state appointed governing board 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 is given authority and 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. A strong evaluation process ensures that administrative and academic officers continue to demonstrate the capacity to lead the University. MTSU's Organizational Chart can be viewed here [https://www.mtsu.edu/budget/docs/Oct22\\_23OrgCharts/President\\_OCT\\_2022.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/budget/docs/Oct22_23OrgCharts/President_OCT_2022.pdf).

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

*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.*

Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), a state-supported university, reported approximately 16,901 undergraduate and 2,113 graduate students (unduplicated) for the 2023-2024 academic year per [PowerBI](#). The academic structure (colleges, departments, and faculty) at MTSU is part of a standard higher education layout under the leadership of the University Provost. The College of Education is one of eight colleges within the university and houses the Department of Elementary and Special Education (ELSE) and Womack Educational Leadership

Department (EDL). 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 programs and ensures that graduate policies and procedures are updated as needed to meet student and faculty needs. The [Graduate Council](#) “plays a crucial role in the oversight and planning of all MTSU graduate courses and graduate degree programs.” 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 EDL department with a Program Coordinator who has responsibility for the daily activity of the unit. The MLS program receives administrative support directly from the Department Chair, College of Education Dean and Associate Dean, College of Graduate Studies, and all administrative assistants in the department. Furthermore, administrative support is provided from other offices across campus such as technology support from [Information Technology Division](#) , [MTSU Online](#), the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research \(IEPR\)](#), and [Walker Library](#), as well as other entities as needed.

The intellectual content in the program is determined by the program faculty, who have the knowledge and expertise to develop and revise content included in all courses and field experiences. Non-substantive changes occur within the program after review of data, developments in the field, feedback from students, or other means. University procedures are followed when making substantive changes. Those procedures include review and approval through Department, College, and Graduate Council curriculum committees with ultimate approval by the Provost. Alignment with other courses and standards occurs as all changes are made. Collaboration with Program faculty and faculty with expertise in other areas occurs as needed to ensure content is appropriate and of high quality.

The selection and promotion of faculty occurs using university procedures. Selection of candidates begins with the posting of an open position. Position descriptions are drafted by the Department Chair with input from Program faculty. Approval for the position and posting of the position is ultimately determined by the Provost. Faculty lines are determined based on the needs of the program as well as overarching needs of the Department, College, and University. When positions are posted, a search committee formed by the Department Chair including MLS faculty as well as other faculty in the Department and following procedures established by the University, review applications, select candidates for interview, interview, and share strengths and weaknesses of all interviewed candidates with the Department Chair. The Department Chair, in collaboration with the Dean and based on the feedback from the search committee, makes the final decision on the selection of candidate to make the hiring offer.

Promotion and tenure of faculty is guided by the promotion and tenure processes established by the Department, College, and University <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/tenpro/>. The Department promotion and tenure committee reviews tenure and promotion materials based on the Department, College, and University policies and makes a recommendation. The Department Chair independently reviews tenure and promotion materials based on the Department, College, and University policies and makes a recommendation. If the Department committee and

Department Chair disagree on a recommendation, they meet to discuss with each submitting an independent recommendation. The College promotion and tenure committee reviews tenure and promotion materials and the recommendations from the Department committee and Chair and makes a recommendation based on the Department College, and University policies. The Dean of the college reviews tenure and promotion materials and the recommendations from the Department committee and Chair and independently makes a recommendation based on the Department, College, and University policies. If the College committee and Dean disagree on a recommendation, they meet to discuss with each submitting an independent recommendation. The Provost reviews materials and recommendations made thus far in the process based on the Department, College and University policies. The Provost makes a recommendation and forwards it to the President of the University. A candidate for promotion and tenure may initiate an appeals process at this point in the process. After the appeals process, the President will review all recommendations and make a promotion and/or tenure decision based on the Department, College, and University policies. Finally, the MTSU Board of Trustees must approve all promotion and tenure recommendations. Once receiving tenure and promoted to associate professor, MLS faculty participate in the Department promotion and tenure committee and are eligible to be elected to the College promotion and tenure committee.

The selection of MLS students is determined by the Program within the general guidelines of the institution. The MLS Program determines, with approval through the Department, College, and University curriculum committees, admission criteria for acceptance into the MLS Program. Each applicant's application materials are reviewed by the MLS Program Coordinator and decisions for admission are made based on the approved admission criteria. If questions about an applicant's application arises, the Program Coordinator would solicit feedback and input from other MLS Program faculty and consensus would be reached about the admission decision.

*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.*

MLS faculty have opportunities to be represented throughout the University. Service is one avenue to make visible and represent the MLS Program in all areas of the University. The MLS Program faculty serve on formal and informal committees throughout the University both voluntarily and by appointment. Faculty members actively communicate with programs in the EDLR and with other faculty, administration, and supporting staff in the COE. MLS Program tenured and tenure-track faculty members can serve on committees at the Department, College, and University level as well as the Faculty Senate. MTSU's [Policy 32 University Committees](#) articulates details about university committees. See [Table 3.4](#) for committees that faculty serve on.

The MLS Program has administrative connections with other programs in the COE and programs across the University. MLS Program faculty have been invited to collaborate in research and



participate on dissertation committees across programs, such as in 2020 when Dr. Lambert served on a dissertation committee for a PhD candidate in the History department. In 2023, Holly Hebert collaborated with Dr. Ashlee Hover, Program Coordinator for the M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction Teaching and Innovation in PK-16 concentration, in an online presentation at the Online Learning Consortium's [OLC Accelerate 2023 Conference](#). These connections are exemplified further through the development of the MLS/MSW dual degree graduate program. In February 2024, the MLS Program will be an integral part of a Club Marvel event ([Appendix 5A](#)) on campus involving faculty and students from the MLS Program and COE in partnership with the Murfreesboro City Schools and The Rutherford Arts Alliance.

Funding and resource allocation decisions for the MLS Program are made on the same basis as for comparable units within the institution and/or department. 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 submitted to the College Dean. The College Dean then negotiates with the Provost to obtain the funds needed to support the various programs within the College of Education. When specific budget requests are made, additional resources may be allocated for specific program needs. To date, funding has consistently been allocated.

*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 title, salary, status, and authority comparable to other program coordinators in the Department and College with similar faculty ranking. Salary and faculty status of each faculty member of the Womack Educational Leadership Department can be seen here on the public MTSU salary website <https://www.mtsu.edu/hrs/salary/employee-salary-database.php?first=&last=&dept=educational+leadership&title=>. 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:

- advise and mentor students, establishing student plans of study;
- 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;
- oversee program policies and their dissemination through the MLS Program handbook; coordinate marketing, recruitment, and retention efforts;
- maintain student progress and completion data;
- collect data for continuous program improvement;
- advise department chair on course demands, oversee curricular changes; and,
- interact with the MLS Program Advisory Council, accrediting bodies, and other external groups.

The MLS Program Coordinator anticipates program monetary needs for the academic year and presents the Department Chair with requests for funding which includes such items as faculty travel, ALA fees, cataloging software, marketing, etc.

The current program coordinator is Holly Hebert who holds the faculty rank of assistant professor. Ms. Hebert has received department approval for tenure and will receive a salary increase and promotion to Associate Professor in Summer 2024 pending approval for tenure by the College, Provost, President, and MTSU Board of Trustees. She has demonstrated leadership skills and administrative ability through her involvement in Department, College, and University committees, often as a co-chair or chair. See [Table 3.5](#). Ms. Hebert was chosen to lead the MLS program as Program Coordinator in August 2023 after proving herself as a capable, reliable, and hardworking member of the MLS Program faculty. Ms. Hebert is active in the library field and serves as Recording Secretary for the Tennessee Library Association. She has been a faculty member at MTSU in MLS Program since 2017. She has an MLIS from Wayne State University, which is a terminal degree, and is a Doctoral Candidate for the Ed.D. in Assessment, Learning, and Student Success: Higher Education Concentration with an expected graduation of May 2024).

*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 head, Department Chair, of the department nurtures an inclusive environment by supporting the Program Coordinator in her oversight of students and curriculum in the MLS Program. The Faculty are given the opportunity to give input on decisions related to curriculum, course scheduling, hiring and budget. Furthermore, at the College and University level, the Faculty are given opportunities to interact with other faculty in an active scholarly, intellectual, and social environment through data days, research luncheons, faculty learning communities, committee work, and other opportunities provided throughout the academic year.

The Program Coordinator creates an environment in which faculty solve problems and make collaborative decisions. Through program meetings, ([Appendix 4L](#)) decisions that support the mission and program goals are made. Department and College meetings provide opportunities for MLS faculty to problem-solve and be involved in decision-making that impacts the Program, Department, and/or College ([Appendix 1F](#)).

Student and faculty interaction occurs through various means both in and outside of class. Students interact with program faculty at TNLA and TASL conferences, meet-ups such as tours of libraries in Middle Tennessee, which almost always involves lunch. See [Table 4.9](#). In the past three years, program faculty have led tours to the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville Public Library, the Meharry Medical Library, and the Fisk University John Hope and Aurelia E. Franklin Library. Students and faculty also interact on our Facebook group page and through email and through Zoom, phone calls and in person visits. In October 2023, there was a meet-up at the Southern Festival of Books in Nashville where a student and faculty member both volunteered their time to work at the joint TNLA/TASL/Tenn-Share/Friends of TN Libraries booth. Again, lunch was involved.



*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 administrative support to help achieve the program's goals from the Department Chair, College of Education Dean and Associate Dean, the College of Graduate Studies, and the Division of Academic Affairs. Annually, the MLS Program Coordinator and faculty review the mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes of the program and submit a required assessment report reflecting student learning outcome and program goals, results, and future steps to be taken ([Appendix 5B](#)). In addition, 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 the previous semester or year, respectively. The results from data day are used to gauge accomplishments and program improvements ([Appendix 1F](#)). Faculty are provided opportunities to provide feedback on data day and other systems established to support data-based decision-making.

The Educational Leadership Department is served by two full-time office staff. The MLS Program hires a dedicated graduate assistant each year. The College has a Data Management Specialist, Office of Professional Laboratory Experiences, and Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity whose support is outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

*Support Available to Womack Educational Leadership Department*

<b>Administrative Support</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
Department administrative staff (2 full-time, Diana Hill and Tamika Dews)	Support with hiring adjuncts, communicating with students and others, purchasing of supplies and program materials, budget tracking, and other administrative tasks
Graduate Assistant (20 hours per week per semester)	Support with preparing data collection efforts, summarizing of data, student activities
Data Management Specialist (Imam Anerin)	Supports with the College online data systems
Office of Professional Laboratory Experiences (Executive Director, Tiffany Dellard; Patti Agnew and Vance Rugaard, Job-Embedded Student Supports; Flora McCullough, Licensure Officer; Quinton Goodman, Placement Coordinator and Admission to Teacher Education support)	Supports with all things related to admission to teacher education, school partnerships, placements of students in schools, licensure recommendations and supports.
Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity (Michelle Stevens, Director; Lisa Strayer, Executive Assistant; Tara Wallace,	Supports with ensuring inclusive and supportive environments across the College,

Recruitment & Engagement Specialist; Mia Zellers, Student Engagement Coordinator)	provides training on cultural humility, and supports students in a variety of ways.
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*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, instructional resources, and facilities needed to carry out the program's teaching, research, and service.*

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 to be included in the College budget request.

The MLS Program has a stable trajectory of enrollment and is expected to continue to grow, especially if the program earns ALA accreditation. The MLS Program's online format allows students in various professional and personal situations to enroll and successfully complete the program. Resources of mentorship and funding that support updating online courses is provided through [MTSU Online Course Development Process](#).

MTSU has a centralized budget system for faculty lines and departmental support. All faculty and department funding are housed within and determined by the Provost's office. 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, including class size, course section fill rate, and faculty teaching load, are key sources to support new faculty line requests. Funding for faculty lines is enrollment driven. Faculty lines are justified when enrollment has reached a level in which current staffing does not adequately support the program and/or there are specific nuances within a program to justify a new line (e.g., dissertation requirements, accreditation requirements). Faculty line requests are generated by the Department Chair and submitted to the College Dean for consideration. The College Dean considers all of the needs of the College and submits requests to the Provost. New faculty lines are determined by the Provost's Office based on a justification provided by the College Dean and available funding provided by the University. During times of enrollment decline across the university, faculty lines are prioritized by the institution. Historically, if faculty lines are needed in order to adequately support a program, the Provost's Office will approve new faculty lines. Presently, the program is supported by one tenured and one tenure-track faculty, one full-time lecturer, and adjuncts who are Walker Library faculty, practicing librarians, or others who meet the qualifications and have graduate faculty status.

Funding for travel is provided through the department and other sources, such as MTSU Online, and the Provost's office. Faculty whose work has been accepted for presentations at state, regional, and national conferences are supported with funding. Faculty are allocated as established amount from the budget each year which varies from year to year. Priority is given to faculty who are on the tenure-track and working towards tenure. Every year there are faculty who for whatever reason do not travel during a given year, and that money is allocated to those who need it, especially to those who have been invited to speak or had their proposals accepted at conferences. In addition, the Provost office designates \$500 per year for travel for each tenure-track faculty member and there is a Faculty Professional Development Travel Grant that faculty can apply for <https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/awards/faculty-travel-grant.php>.

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs provides internal grant opportunities and start-up funds to support research and creative endeavors (<https://www.mtsu.edu/research/funding-faculty.php>). Professional development opportunities are provided by the Learning Teaching & Innovative Technologies Center. Program faculty regularly take advantage of these opportunities and have also been involved in leading presentations for the LT & ITC. Ms. Hebert has led a book group as well as given a presentation on the MLS Program ePortfolio process. Department support for professional development also can be requested and is supported as funds are available. For a list of professional development activities that MLS Program faculty have engaged in since 2020 ([Appendix 3C](#)).

*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 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. Cost of living increases occur as possible. For example, a 3.2% increase was provided for all faculty and staff for the 2023-24 year (<https://www.mtsu.edu/newsletter/newsletters/PresidentsNewsletterFall2023.pdf>). Longevity pay is provided each year for employees with three or more years of service (\$100 per year served) and is covered under [Policy 843 Longevity Pay](#). Salary increases are across the board and not based on merit.

*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 Office of Research and Sponsored Programs offers learning sessions on external and internal funding sources (<https://www.mtsu.edu/research/workshops.php>). The University has several internal grants designed to enhance the research capacity of faculty, awarding reassigned time from teaching and summer stipends for faculty development. The University provides allocations to the department for travel and professional development opportunities. Ms. Hebert received the [Information Literacy Curriculum Integration Grant](#) from Walker Library in 2018,

the [Faculty Professional Development Travel Grant](#) in 2022, and also was a part of the group of COE faculty who was awarded an [MT Engage Week Event](#) grant in 2022 ([Appendix 5C](#)). Dr. Lambert has been awarded the Faculty Travel Grant in 2019 and in 2022.

All MTSU graduate students including MLS students have many opportunities to secure financial aid including scholarships through the University (<https://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/funding.php>). 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 the [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.

Computers are replaced on a 5-year rotation, with faculty having the option to choose PC or Apple products. All full-time program faculty have university issued laptops for use in office or at home. An Information Technology Specialist (Chris Benton) is assigned to the College to support updates of software, technical support with devices and software, and other related needs. MTSU uses Microsoft Teams and Zoom to facilitate virtual meetings and collaborative work. A suite of other apps and software are available to support faculty and staff with research teaching, and collaborative work (e.g., Qualtrics, Microsoft Office 365, NVivo, SPSS, Adobe Creative Cloud). These resources sufficiently support the needs of the faculty. If an additional software is needed, a request can be made to purchase a license.

MTSU uses the online learning management system Desire 2 Learn (D2L) Brightspace <https://www.d2l.com/brightspace/> for online courses and for supporting all other course types. There is a help desk and online support for faculty and students who may need assistance with using the system. ITD provides new user training and advanced training to support faculty with maximizing the resources available.

Students have access to on campus services through computer labs, writing labs, and other instructional support services. Furthermore, laptops and other multi-media equipment can be [borrowed](#) from Walker Library. Most support services on campus are also available to online students virtually, including Walker Library, The Writing Center, Counseling Services, Tutoring, and the Career Development Center. They are included in the information in each course syllabus, through emails, and are listed on the [MTSU Online Student Services](#) website. Campus-wide access to Zoom and MS Teams have made collaboration and access to colleagues easier.

MLS Program faculty also have access to the following services.

### 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 as preparation to compete for subsequent external funding or 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.

### Learning, Teaching, & Innovative Technologies Center Programs & Services

A variety of opportunities are provided by the Center to support teaching and learning activities. Faculty fellows, faculty learning communities, workshops, one-on-one consultation services, along with other activities are provided for all faculty and graduate assistants.

Faculty Learning Communities through the LT & ITC have been utilized recently by program faculty. See Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

#### *Faculty Involvement in Faculty Learning Communities*

<b>Faculty Member</b>	<b>FLC</b>	<b>Year</b>
Holly Hebert	Connecting Online Graduate Students to the University Community	2021-2023
	Using a Showcase ePortfolio	2018-2019
Frank Lambert	Successfully Engaging Students in the Virtual Learning Environment	2021-2022

*V.10 Physical facilities provide a functional learning environment for students and faculty; enhance the opportunities for research, teaching, service, consultation, and communication; and promote efficient and effective administration of the program.*

The College of Education has space in six buildings on campus, with the primary facility being the College of Education building. There are 27 classrooms and 4 computer labs in the COE building. The College has one large meeting space and 3 additional classroom spaces in the Learning Resources Center, and two classrooms/meeting rooms in the Miller Education Center. There are four Centers with offices in other buildings (Learning Resources Center; Miller Education Building; Dyslexia Center; Fairview Building; Project Help building).

The MLS Program is housed in the College of Education building with faculty offices, meeting rooms, and graduate assistant space to accommodate the teaching, research, and service needs of the program. Ms. Hebert and Dr. Lambert are on campus several times a week. COE faculty are required to be in the office for 6 hours of “student office hours” per week and office hours are posted on their office doors. As faculty in an online program, all MLS Program faculty are available at other times for consultation either via Zoom/Teams meeting, email, or phone. MLS Program adjunct faculty are not required to be on campus since it is an online program but are required to respond promptly to student needs during the semester.

Adjunct faculty who are not otherwise employed on campus are not issued computers, but have full access to the Walker Library and the other support services including instructional support, such as [D2L Bootcamp](#) and [MTSU Online Instructional Support](#) as well as Online Faculty Mentors. Ms. Hebert has served as an Online Faculty Mentor since 2020.

*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.*

MLS Program faculty are equipped with spacious offices with fully wired Internet access, VOIP phone service, and ample furnishings to allow them to do their jobs efficiently. Additionally, MTSU faculty computers or laptops are replaced every five years. Students have access to ample computer labs, as well as access to a substantial physical and virtual library and information sciences collection in our Walker Library which is open until 2 am Sunday through Thursday. 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. MTSU Online provides student resources for online students [Resources for Online Learners | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#). Tech help and computer support is provided by ITD. Adjuncts and students are not provided with laptops but do have access to the University’s Microsoft software licenses. Faculty have access to a wide variety of software including Microsoft Office 364, Adobe Creative Cloud, NVivo, Qualtrics, SPSS, etc.

### ***Library Resources***

[The James E Walker Library](#) is one of the leading Tennessee university libraries in its size for high-impact services and research collection. The library collection offers users access to 1.5 million physical and electronic volumes, nearly 525 databases, and millions of journal, 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 Walker Library offers a variety of study spaces for students to choose from including individual, group, and dedicated graduate student areas. Students can schedule a presentation practice room or easy recording studio to help with a course project. Additionally, students will find computers, laptops, scanners, and printers in tandem with expert staff to assist them. 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. Students can explore a multitude of advanced and creative technologies available in the Makerspace that includes creating multimedia projects, 3D printing, augmented and virtual reality, robotics, and much more.

Walker Library serves as a home to other student services, including tutoring, the Writing Center, an adaptive technology lab, and a Starbucks. The library is a learning and research hub for student work and creative activity. See a list of resources provided by the Walker Library in Table. 5.3.

Table 5.3.

*Resources provided to MTSU MLS Students and Faculty by James Walker Library, 2023-2024*

Resource	Description
Adaptive Technology Lab	<p>The MTSU <a href="#">Adaptive Technology Center</a> (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 <a href="#">Disability &amp; Access Center</a>. If you are working in the ATC and have library-related questions, please <a href="#">ask a librarian</a> or ask an ATC assistant to do so.</p> <p>All public computers in the library contain current versions of JAWS, ZoomText, textHELP Read&amp;Write Gold and Kurzweil 3000 <a href="#">software</a>. 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 2023, DSI launched an open press and partners with faculty on digital humanities projects, open journals, and other digital initiatives. Need to rewrite previous sentence.</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 students who enhance research by</p>

	<p>using digital tools, collaborating on digital projects, and disseminating research through digital platforms. You can find out more about DSI at: <a href="https://dsi.mtsu.edu">dsi.mtsu.edu</a>.</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 e-books 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 e-books in Material Type); conduct a JEWL search (limit to books); or search a specific resource to find an e-book title. Librarians assist both faculty and staff in obtaining the information that they need. Both faculty and students can make purchase requests.</p>
Equipment (borrow)	<p>Computers, multimedia equipment, calculators, headphones, etc.</p> <p>Location: Technology Services Desk, 1<sup>st</sup> floor &amp; MakerSpace</p> <p>Loan Period: Loan periods vary depending on the equipment item. Some laptops are available for 3-day loans and others for 2 weeks. Most equipment circulates for 3 days including calculators, headphones, digital cameras, and more. 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: <a href="https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/equipment">https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/equipment</a></p>
Full-text databases	<p>Walker Library provides 523 databases to the MTSU community. We provide core Library Science databases such as those listed below along with several Education Databases that also include Library and Information Science content.</p> <p>Emerald eJournals Premier  Library Literature &amp; Information Science Full Text  LISTA (Library, Information Science &amp; Technology Abstracts)  Library Literature &amp; Information Science Retrospective: 1905-1983</p>



Library Science Collection	The Library Science collection as a print collection is large; however, it is growing at a slower pace than the library's digital collections. The library prefers e-books and has sufficient digital depth to support the MLS courses taught. As mentioned above, students and faculty have access to an extensive list of full-text databases that support all courses in the MLS Program.
Makerspace	<p>The Makerspace, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. It is a welcoming space for users of all abilities, disciplines, levels and interests.</p> <p>Who may use the Makerspace?  MTSU faculty, staff, and students who have been trained on the equipment. Makerspace Equipment Training is available upon request.</p> <p>Most MakerSpace equipment must be used in the library; however, a selection of multi-media equipment is available for check-out. MakerSpace equipment is free to use, but some equipment requires user supplied materials such as the laser cutter or vinyl cutter.</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:  <a href="https://library.mtsu.edu/makerspace/equipment">https://library.mtsu.edu/makerspace/equipment</a></p> <p>Additionally, the library provides access to an Easy Recording Studio, Green Screen Room, Presentation Practice Room, and Podcast Studio through the MakerSpace.</p>
MT Open Press	A component of the digital scholarship initiatives at Walker Library that is interdisciplinary, collaborative, and emphasizes interactive technologies to expand participation, access, analysis, and dissemination of scholarship. Two books have been published a result of this work through MT Open Press.
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. Interlibrary Loan 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	Student printing on the MTSU campus is free and unlimited for all students.
Reference services	Services are provided in-person, through text, chat, and telephone. 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 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: <a href="https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/software">https://library.mtsu.edu/technology/software</a> . The following link provides a list of available software for MTSU owned computers: <a href="#">Tech Support   Middle Tennessee State University (mtsu.edu)</a> .
<a href="#">Womack Curriculum Collection</a>	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.
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 goals and expected outcomes. The university has a [“One Stop”](#) facility for admission, registration, financial aid, and billing 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. MTSU provides the same supports virtually for online students as they do face-to-face for campus students. A complete list of supports and services are available on the [website](#) and include advising, counseling, library services, writing support, tutoring, and others (<https://mtsu.edu/online/resources.php>). The [Disability and Access Center](#) identifies and provides accommodations to ensure success for students with documented disabilities. They support faculty with implementing needed accommodations within their courses, including online. The MLS Program faculty encourages students to access all the resources and supports available.

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 online. 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 MLS Program has

their own liaison who works with students and faculty [Articles & Databases - Library Sciences - Walker Library at Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#). 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

Instructor Resources Toggle Dropdown

Tutorials

Personal Assistance

Copyright and Fair Use

Plagiarism ([Plagiarism - Distance Learning - Walker Library at Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#)).

The library has recently purchased \$10,000 in new monographs for the MLS Program with the vast majority (~75%) in e-book format ([Appendix 5D](#)). 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. These purchases also cover a range of library environments: academic, public, school, and others. Access to ebooks varies from single user to multiuser at a time. Faculty can place books on course reserve, and students who live at a distance can request print materials from other institutions through Walker Library's [interlibrary loan system](#). Faculty and students are able to [request](#) the purchase of MLS materials.

Additionally, the library subscribes to the two most popular periodical databases for Library Science and Information Science 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 the two primary resources that are available to ALA-accredited library science schools across North America. Furthermore, 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, creating an additional human resource for all MLS students.

Walker librarians collect materials specifically for the MLS Program on an ongoing basis ([Appendix 5E](#)). 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.

*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 electronic and physical resources and facilities through regular faculty meetings, leadership team meetings and Dean's Cabinet. The Program frequently evaluates their resources in relation to their program and student needs. The MLS Program frequently assesses and makes decisions about admission policies, course delivery and content, and other policies. If specific needs are identified, they are shared with the department chair who supports meeting the need or getting support from other entities on campus. When policies or procedures in other units on campus are creating barriers or challenges for MLS applicants or candidates, the program coordinator, department chair, associate dean, or dean will share the concern and work with the unit to problem-solve.

*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 ongoing systematic and institution-wide research-based planning, assessment, and evaluation processes (See [The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research](#)). The MTSU effectiveness process has resulted in documented continuous improvement that provides evidence that the review process supports the [University's mission](#). All academic programs are required to assess program quality through student learning outcomes and program goals that facilitate program improvement. The process involves the program coordinator who reports to the department chair. Program coordinators submit annual reports that contribute to university-wide annual assessment ([Appendix 5A](#)).

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 on the MLS Program's TEAMS folder. 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. In addition to funding from the Educational Leadership Department, the MLS Program has received funding support from the College of Graduate Studies and MTSU Online. For example, funding for DeAnne Luck's full-time lecturer position is funded by MTSU Online, which also gives the MLS program funds regularly to have a vendor booth at conferences.

*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 in the College of Education at MTSU undergoes established review processes each year to align with procedures for regional accreditation as well as the College's continuous improvement processes. As noted in V.14, the Program Coordinator completes an annual report in which student learning outcomes and program goals are analyzed using collected data with results and analysis summarized and future actions identified (Appendix 5A). Semi-annual College data days supplement this work by providing targeted sharing of data, collaborative

analysis across programs, and identification of next steps or actions (Appendix 1G). When administration, finances, and/or resources are needed to improve in an area, they are identified as next steps or actions and a request to the Department Chair is made. These processes are documented through program meetings, data day notes, and online required reports for SACSCOC, CAEP, and ALA.

Table 5.4 represents our plan for candidacy for compliance with Standard V.

Table 5.4

*Plan for Candidacy: Standard V*

<b>Plan for Candidacy</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Continue to work with MSW to implement dual MLS/MSW degree.	December 2025
Involve FJE more in our program diversity initiatives	December 2024
Continue to build relationship with the Public History program in the Department of History to explore possibilities for an archival certificate.	December 2025

## PLAN FOR CANDIDACY PERIOD

### *MTSU MLS New Strategic Objectives and Action Steps*

<b>ALA Standard</b>	<b>MLS Strategic Objectives</b>	<b>Action Steps for Candidacy Plan</b>
I	Continue to refine and improve the process of systematic planning and assessment by: further developing and applying effective data collection tools; and systematically analyzing outcomes; and promptly reporting to stakeholders for discussion and feedback to identify and implement needed changes	<p>Further develop data collection points in LiveText and spreadsheets and create a matrix showing when and where data is collected. TARGET: August 2024</p> <p>Modernize forms for ease of use and improved data collection. TARGET: May 2024</p> <p>Develop template for survey reports: TARGET: February 2024</p> <p>Create Communication Calendar. TARGET: January 2024</p>
I	Strengthen stakeholder involvement by developing and further expanding relationships with the community, employers, and field experience sponsors.	<p>Continue to coordinate guest speakers in classes. TARGET: December 2025</p> <p>Create and distribute Employer and FE surveys. TARGET: January 2024</p> <p>Create newsletter for MLS Program news to distribute to students, alumni, MAC, FE Sponsors, Employers and Friends. TARGET: March 2024</p>
II	Continue to develop, update, and revise curriculum to meet the professional needs of 21st century information professionals.	Continue to develop and revise core courses and elective courses for pathway areas. TARGET: December 2025
III	Further develop methods to encourage and celebrate faculty endeavors in teaching, research, and service; Increase full-time faculty as justified by enrollment numbers to meet the demand that will come with ALA accreditation; Recruit a more diverse and representative adjunct base with expertise in the program pathway areas of school, public, academic, and special libraries.	<p>Create research sharing time in faculty meetings, celebrate faculty endeavors in the newsletter and on social media. TARGET: March 2024</p> <p>Plan for strategic faculty hires by identifying needed areas of expertise. TARGET: December 2025</p> <p>Continue to search for qualified adjuncts who would add diversity to</p>

		our faculty by developing relationships and recruiting diverse guest speakers who could be potential adjuncts. TARGET: December 2025
IV	Create, sustain, and engage a Student Advisory Board.	Investigate student advisory groups at other institutions and create a plan to start the group. TARGET: August 2024
IV	Engage students in additional and more structured opportunities for collaboration, research, and service.	Identify and foster opportunities for faculty-student and student-student research or activity collaborations. TARGET: May 2025 Identify and plan for service opportunities. TARGET: May 2025  Make targeted efforts to recruit at other colleges that do not have MLS programs
IV	Expand marketing and recruitment efforts, with an emphasis on increasing program student body diversity	Explore being a sponsor at conferences. Plan targeted efforts at student groups on campus. TARGET: January 2025
V	Identify and facilitate opportunities to collaborate with other MTSU academic departments	Work with MSW to implement dual MLS/MSW degree. Involve FJE more fully in our program. Build relationship with Public History program in the Department of History to explore the possibilities of an archival certificate. TARGET: December 2025

## TIMELINE FOR CANDIDACY

Recurring Events	Prepare for External Review Panel (ERP) Review	Self-Study	Evaluate Performance Outcomes
2023			
December 2023 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates.		December 1, 2023. Application for Candidacy Submitted  Pay Candidacy Application Fee	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 February if necessary.
2024			
January 2024  MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.  Conduct online new student orientation.		January 18-19, 2024. CoA Committee meeting.	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 February
February 2024  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. Consider and implement MAC advice and input from February meeting as part of our self-study. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September.



Virtual Info Session			
March 2024  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; Program Coordinator will be responsible for all content with help from faculty and administration.	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.
April 2024  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.	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.
May 2024  MLS Program meeting Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates Conduct online new student orientation.			Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in February.
June 2024  Prepare/have prepared exit survey report			
July 2024  Send out employment survey questionnaire to 2022 calendar year graduates.	Clear suggested ERP Chair for conflict of interest.		All Standards: In preparation for September 2024 MAC meeting, send MAC members copies of March 2024 & June 2024 exit survey reports and July 2024 employment survey report.

<p>August 2024</p> <p>Prepare for new academic year. Annual state-of-the-university meeting. Annual College of Education meeting. MLS Program meeting.</p> <p>Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates.</p> <p>Conduct online new student orientation.</p>		<p>MLS Program meeting: review self-study outline and plan developed over the summer months.</p>	<p>Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in February.</p>
<p>September 2024</p> <p>Annual MAC meeting MLS Program meeting</p>			<p>All Standards- Consider and implement MAC advice and input from September meeting as part of our self-study.</p>
<p>Ed. Leadership Department meeting.</p>			
<p>October 2024</p> <p>MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.</p> <p>Virtual Info Session</p>	<p>Pay Annual Fee</p>	<p>Compile Plan for Self-Study October 30 – Finalize calendar for Self-Study</p>	<p>Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in February</p>
<p>November 2024</p> <p>MLS Program meeting</p>			<p>Standard I – V: Faculty conduct annual review of program outcomes and strategic objectives</p>

Ed. Leadership Department meeting.			as part of MLS Program meeting. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in February.
December 2024  College of Education annual accreditation data day.		Dec. 1, 2024- Plan for Self- Study due.	
2025			
January 2025  MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates. Conduct online new student orientation.	Jan. 30, 2025 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 2025 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 February.
February 2025 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Faculty submit materials for annual review of Outline of Faculty Data.  Virtual Info Session			Standard II: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 2 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Consider and implement MAC advice and input from September meeting as part of our self-study. Prepare discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
March 2025 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 2025  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 2025  Send out exit survey questionnaire to recent graduates Conduct online new student orientation.	Calendar check for ERP visit with key administrators. Secure dates if possible.	MLS Program faculty write drafts for assigned standard for self-study.	
June 2025  Prepare/have prepared exit survey report		MLS Program faculty write drafts for assigned standard for self-study.	
July 2025  Send out employment survey questionnaire to 2022 calendar year graduates.	Schedule rooms for ERP meetings and lodging if necessary.	Submit draft of whole self- study to COE Director of Assessment and Accreditation as well as Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness.	All Standards: In preparation for September 2025 MAC meeting, send MAC members copies of March 2025 & June 2025 exit survey reports and July 2025 employment survey report.

August 2025  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.  Conduct online new student orientation.			
September 2025 Annual MAC meeting MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.		Draft of Self-Study due September 1, 2025, to COE Director of Assessment and Accreditation as well as Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness. 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. Consider and implement MAC advice and input from September meeting as part of our self-study.
October 2025 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting.  Virtual Info Session	Oct. 1, 2025 -Submit draft of self-study to ERP and COE Director of Assessment and Accreditation as well as Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness (4 mos. before scheduled visit). Consult with ERP Chair		Standards I-V. Consider and implement MAC advice and input from meeting as part of our self-study.

	and COE Director of Assessment and Accreditation and Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness regarding draft. Work with ERP Chair to develop detailed agenda for ERP visit.  Pay Annual Fee		
November 2025 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 2025 College of Education	Final Self-Study Due	Revise self-study. Submit final self-study (Dec. 1,	
annual accreditation data day.		2025; 6-8 weeks before scheduled visit)	
2026			
January 2026 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 2026 MLS Program meeting Ed. Leadership Department meeting. Faculty submit	ERP Visit		Standard II: Faculty discuss and review each Standard 2 criterion and develop action plan to address any deficiencies. Prepare

materials for annual review of Outline of Faculty Data.			discussion points to share with MAC in September if necessary.
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## BUDGET FOR CANDIDACY

Faculty are supported through salary & benefits. The MLS Program Coordinator has course release time in Fall and Spring semesters and receives a summer stipend. The following are budget projections through the Candidacy period. These items include funding from the College of Education, The Womack Educational Leadership Department, The FJE, MTSU Online, and the Provost's office.

*January 2024- December 2024*

TOTAL	\$27,744
Conference attendance & travel (ALISE, TASL, TLA, ARSL, ALA)	5,000
Conference booths & sponsorship	1,500
Consultant	3,000
Master's Graduate Assistant	9,144
Summer Stipend for MLS Program Coordinator	5,000
Advertising	700
Candidacy Application Fee	1,000
ALA Annual Candidacy Fee	2,000
ALISE Institutional Membership	400

*January 2025- December 2025*

TOTAL	\$26,744
Conference attendance & travel (ALISE, TASL, TLA, ARSL, ALA)	5,000
Conference booths & sponsorship	1,500
Consultant	3,000
Master's Graduate Assistant	9,144
Summer Stipend for MLS Program Coordinator	5,000
Advertising	700
ALA Annual Candidacy Fee	2,000
ALISE Institutional Membership	400

*January – February 2026*

TOTAL	\$6,100
Advertising	100
ERP Visit & Printing	6,000



## DOCUMENTATION LIST

### **STANDARD I**

[Womack Educational Leadership Department](#)

[College of Education](#)

[Graduate Studies](#)

[MTSU Online](#)

[Core Competencies of Librarianship](#)

[Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies](#)

[ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards \(2019\).](#)

[Core Values of Librarianship](#)

[MLS Program's website](#)

[Appendix 1A MAC Meeting Minutes](#)

[Appendix 1B Key Assessment Data Linked to Student Learning Outcomes](#)

[Appendix 1C Student Course Evaluations](#)

[Appendix 1D Town Hall Meeting Minutes September 5, 2023](#)

[Exit Survey](#)

[Employment Survey](#)

[Appendix 1E Retention Survey](#)

[LiveText by Watermark](#)

[AACU Value Rubrics](#)

[Employer Survey](#)

[Retention Survey](#)

[Field Experience Supervisor Survey](#)

[Appendix 1F Data Day Meeting Notes April 27 2023](#)

[Appendix 1G MLS Program Meeting Minutes May 23 2022](#)

[Quest for Success 2025](#)

[College of Education Mission Statement](#)

[Appendix 1H Strategic Plan for Candidacy Period](#)

[Appendix 1I Key Assessment Rubrics](#)

[Library Science Handbook](#)

[Appendix 1J MAC Formation Document](#)

[Appendix 1K Example Report of Alumni Employment Survey 2022](#)

[Appendix 1L MLS Program Plans of Study](#)

### **STANDARD II**

[Library Science Handbook](#)

[Graduate Catalog](#)

[Appendix 2A Course Standards Alignment](#)

[2023-2024 Graduate Catalog](#)

[MTSU Online Course Development Process](#)

[Appendix 2B MTSU MLS Program Course Descriptions](#)

[Appendix 2C MLS/MSW Dual Degree Proposal](#)

[Appendix 2D MLS Advising Email for Fall 2023](#)

[Special Libraries Association's Competencies for Information Professionals.](#)

[Appendix 2E Standards Matrix 4-20-23](#)

[Appendix 2F Example of MLS Program Exit Survey Report](#)  
[Employment Survey](#)  
[Exit Portfolio Rubric](#)

### **STANDARD III**

[Policy 202 Faculty Definition](#)  
[Policy 202 Faculty Definition, Roles, Responsibilities, and Appointment Types](#)  
[Policy 204 Tenure](#)  
[Policy 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty](#)  
[Graduate Faculty status](#)  
[Appendix 3A MLS Program Faculty CVs](#)  
[Annual Performance Review Process](#)  
[Annual Faculty Assessment Calendar](#)  
[Faculty Success by Watermark](#)  
[Appendix 3B Example of Peer Review](#)  
[MTSU Online Course Development Process](#)  
[MTSU Online](#)  
[Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center \(LT&ITC\)](#)  
[Appendix 3C MLS Program Faculty MTSU Trainings and Workshops 2020-2023](#)  
[LIS Pedagogy Chat](#)  
[Faculty Fellows Program](#)  
[Faculty Learning Communities](#)  
[Online Faculty Mentor Program](#)  
[MTSU Community Standards](#)  
[MTSU Faculty Recruitment and Retention Policies](#)

- [https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit\\_documents/FacultyRecruitmentGuide.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentGuide.pdf)
- [https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit\\_documents/FacultyRecruitmentProcessOverview.p  
df](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/FacultyRecruitmentProcessOverview.pdf)
- [https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit\\_documents/Reference\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.mtsu.edu/provost/recruit_documents/Reference_Guide.pdf)
- [MTSU's diversity fellowship program supports doctoral students from dissertation to professorship – MTSU News](#)
- <https://mtsunews.com/fairness-justice-equity-center-fall-events>

  
[Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity in the College of Education](#)  
[Appendix 3D MLS Program Faculty Online Teaching Certifications](#)  
[MTSU Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award](#)  
[MTSU University Committees](#)  
[Information Technology Division \(ITD\)](#)  
[Faculty Handbook](#)  
[Educational Leadership Department Tenure and Promotion Policy](#)  
[Faculty Workload](#)  
[Policy 221 Faculty Compensation during Summer Session](#)  
[Policy 208 Determining Faculty Workload and Instructional Staffing](#)  
[Office of the University Provost | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#)  
[202 Faculty Definition, Roles, Responsibilities, and Appointment Types](#)  
[Field Experience Handbook](#)

## **STANDARD IV**

[MTSU Mission and Values](#)

[College of Graduate Studies](#)

[Library Science Handbook](#)

[Appendix 4A Information Session Flyer](#)

[MSL Program Website](#)

[COE Facebook](#)

[College of Graduate Studies Facebook](#)

[MLS Program Facebook](#)

[Tennessee State Law Banning TikTok](#)

[Appendix 4B MLS Program Flyer](#)

**MLS Program in the Media**

- [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/summer\\_2023.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tnla.org/resource/collection/67D9B2E1-B81F-47CE-8475-FD9071EEBE16/summer_2023.pdf)
- <https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation/posts/683831466863846>  
<https://www.facebook.com/MTSUEducation/posts/694185319161794>
- <https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library- masters-aug2021/>
- <https://mtsunews.com/lambert-library- science-march2021/>
- <https://tasltalks.wordpress.com/2020/08/17/mtsu-granted-precandidacy- status-by-ala/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/97/mtsu-online-mls-program-gives- fisk-librarian-deeper-understanding- of-profession>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/online/news/post/101/mtsu-s-online-mls-program- boosts-librarian-skills-of-adult-learner-to-next-level>

[Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance](#)

[U.S. Census Facts Tennessee 2022](#)

[MTSU Graduate Program Admission](#)

[Appendix 4C Statement of Purpose Rubric](#)

[Appendix 4D Admission Rubric](#)

[Appendix 4E Email about New Student Orientation](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

[Graduate Scholarships](#)

[College of Education Scholarships](#)

[Diversity in School Librarianship Scholarship](#)

[Career Services](#)

[MT One Stop](#)

[MTSU Online](#)

[University Policies](#)

[Graduate Catalog](#)

**Resources on the MLS Program Website**

- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library- science-mls/about>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library- science-mls/careers>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library- science-mls/requirements>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library- science-mls/degrees>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library- science-mls/info3>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library- science-mls/info>

- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/faculty>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/info2>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/programs/library-science-mls/delivery>

[Library Science Handbook](#)

[Field Experience Handbook](#)

[exitPortfolio Handbook](#)

[MLS Program Admissions Requirements](#)

[PowerBI Data](#)

[PipelineMT](#)

[Appendix 4F Example Plan of Study](#)

[Appendix 4G ExitPortfolio Rubric](#)

[Appendix 1D Town Hall Minutes](#)

[Appendix 4I Student Paper Acceptance](#)

[Library Journal Book Review](#)

[Appendix 4J Faculty/Student Paper Acceptance](#)

[Appendix 4K Faculty Co-Presenting with Students](#)

[Scholars Week](#)

**Student Resources at MTSU**

- <https://www.mtsu.edu/military/>
- <https://mtsui.edu/counseling/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/idac/>
- <https://library.mtsu.edu/home>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/career/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/dac/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/dac/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/nextstep/>
- <https://www.mtsu.edu/foodpantry/>

[ALA Student Chapters](#)

[Student Organizations and Services](#)

[Graduate Resources](#)

[Appendix 4L Summer 2023 Program Meeting Minutes](#)

[TNLA Conference Internships](#)

[MTSU Online Course Development Process](#)

## **STANDARD V**

[MTSU Organizational Chart](#)

[Information Technology Division](#)

[MTSU Online](#)

[Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#)

[Planning and Research \(IEPR\)](#)

[Walker Library](#)

[Policy 32 University Committees](#)

[OLC Accelerate 2023 Conference](#)

[Appendix 5A Club Marvel Event](#)

[MTSU Salaries](#)  
[5B Annual SACS Report](#)  
[MTSU Online Course Development Process](#)  
[Office of Research and Sponsored Programs](#)  
[2023-2024 Salary Increase](#)  
[Policy 843 Longevity Pay](#)  
[Information Literacy Curriculum Integration Grant](#)  
[Faculty Professional Development Travel Grant](#)  
[MT Engage Week Event](#)  
[Appendix 5C MT Engage Week Event](#)  
[Graduate Scholarships](#)  
[Leniel Edwards Endowed Scholarship in Library Science.](#)  
[Information Technology Division \(ITD\)](#)  
[MTSU Online](#)  
[Learning Teaching & Innovative Technologies Center](#)  
[Desire 2 Learn \(D2L\) Brightspace](#)  
[Walker Library Technology Equipment](#)  
[MTSU Online Student Services](#)  
[MT Internal Grant Opportunities \(MT-IGO\)](#)  
[Office of Research and Sponsored Programs](#)  
[Learning, Teaching, & Innovative Technologies Center Programs & Services](#)  
[Faculty Learning Communities](#)  
[D2L Bootcamp](#)  
[MTSU Online Instructional Support](#)  
[Resources for Online Learners | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#)  
[The James E Walker library](#)  
[Adaptive Technology Center](#)  
[Disability & Access Center](#)  
[Ask a librarian](#)  
[Walker Library Technology Software](#)  
[Digital Scholarship Initiatives](#)  
[Walker Library Equipment](#)  
[Walker Library Software Applications](#)  
[Tech Support | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#)  
[MTSU One Stop](#)  
[MTSU Online Resources](#)  
[Disability and Access Center](#)  
[Articles & Databases - Library Sciences - Walker Library at Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#)  
[Plagiarism - Distance Learning - Walker Library at Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](#)  
[Appendix 5D Examples of books purchased by the Walker Library for the MLS Program](#)  
[Interlibrary Loan](#)  
[Library Request Form](#)  
[Appendix 5E Continuing Library Expenditures for MLS Program](#)  
[The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research](#)

## University's mission

## **FINAL SYNTHESIS AND OVERVIEW**

The Master of Library Science Program at Middle Tennessee State University has been a leader for school library science education for decades. Building on our solid history of school library education, the MTSU MLS Program was approved by THEC to offer the Master of Library Science degree starting in Fall 2016. Since then, it has expanded to serve students wishing to work in public, academic, and special libraries, while still maintaining a core of students pursuing school library careers. The MLS Program at MTSU was accepted into ALA precandidacy status in 2020. With the addition of THEC's approval of the MLS/MSW dual master's degree in 2023, we expanded students opportunities even more. Course development has increased the range of specialty coursework aligned to career pathways that students can pursue. Relationships with partners on campus; employers; field experience supervisors; alumni; guest speakers from the library community both local and as far away as New Zealand; MLS Advisory Council members; and librarians across the state have enabled our program to grow into a program that maintains a solid high-quality reputation in Tennessee.

In this application for candidacy, we believe that we have shown significant evidence of compliance with each of the Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies (2015).

### **Standard I: Systematic Planning**

Throughout this application we have shown evidence of our systematic planning and continuous improvement processes which involve our various constituents. Student learning outcomes are derived from the program's mission, vision, goals, and objectives. We are sufficiently supported by program, department, college, and university policies, practices, personnel, and resources that give us the opportunity to thrive, while understanding and accepting the need for continuous improvement in both execution and consistency.

### **Standard II: Curriculum**

Our curriculum has been carefully developed and redesigned to meet the needs of our constituents while adhering to current standards. Our faculty is comprised of experienced online educators well versed in their area of expertise and in course development and delivery. Best practices in assignments, assessed by consistent rubrics are the foundation of our curriculum which is informed by our vision, mission, program goals and objectives and, most importantly, our student learning outcomes. We plan on continuing to build and hone our curriculum to better serve our students and other constituents.

### **Standard III: Faculty**

Our full-time faculty, although small in number, have many years of experience both in working in the field and in teaching at the graduate level. Tenured and tenure-track faculty have sustained, active engagement in research and service. Our adjunct faculty from both within and outside of the institution add unique expertise and diversity to enhance the overall experience for

our students. We recognize the need to continue to grow and diversify our faculty and plan on doing so as faculty lines are approved.

#### **Standard IV: Students**

Our students are the heart of our program, and their experience while at MTSU and later in their career reflects the quality of our program. From admission to completion, students are provided support and information that leads to successful matriculation and completion of the program. We have provided evidence of the significant support that our students receive in multiple areas such as library services, writing help and tutoring, advising, financial aid, counseling services, and many other supports outlined in this document. Students have opportunities to engage in program feedback and improvement, research, and learning outside of coursework. We plan on implementing a Student Advisory Board this next year which will be a vital organization that will benefit both the students and our program.

#### **Standard V: Administration, Finances, and Resources**

The MLS Program has autonomy to build and grow our program while operating within the structure of the Womack Educational Leadership Department within the College of Education at MTSU. We are supported by the infrastructure of these entities which include administrative, financial, academic, technological, and instructional support consistent with the other programs at the university. Faculty in the MLS Program are represented in committees and workgroups across campus and are an integral part of the faculty at MTSU. The MLS Program Coordinator reports to and consults with the Chair for the Womack Educational Leadership Department regularly, yet the day to day program procedures, policies, and activities are guided by the MLS Program Coordinator with support and collaboration from the MLS Program faculty. MLS Program faculty have intellectual freedom to develop the curriculum and set the direction of the program. The MLS Program Coordinator establishes the schedule and agenda for program and MAC meetings and works independently with our constituent groups. We will continue to evaluate our effectiveness and show systematic improvement by refining the documentation and implementation of our processes along with our communication with our various constituents.

In summary, MTSU has a long history of library science education with a fully online Master of Library Science Program in place and growing since 2016. Now in our seventh year, we have built a high quality program with a strong reputation that serves its constituents, from students and alumni to employers, and the professional library community well. We believe this candidacy application shows solid compliance with the Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies (2015).