MLIS

Master of Library and Information Science
at the University of Maryland College of Information Studies (UMD iSchool)

The MLIS degree prepares students to lead information institutions such as libraries, archives, and museums, innovate to meet the information needs of individuals and communities, and advocate for information literacy, accessibility, and inclusivity. Our core courses provide students with foundational knowledge in information behavior, information services, management, and technology. Students also learn how information intersects with youth learning, ethics, human rights, information policy, and advocacy. Coursework can be completed fully online or in-person, however most students will take a hybrid approach, enrolling in both online and campus classes.

MLIS students can choose to develop advanced expertise through a specialization or career path. Current specializations include:

- **Archives and Digital Curation**
- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **School Library Certification**
- **Youth Experience (YX)**
- **Intelligence & Analytics**
- **Legal Informatics**

UMD's MLIS program is fully accredited by the American Library Association (ALA)

The MLIS Program also provides students with career guides that align coursework with careers in public librarianship, archives, law librarianship, school librarianship, youth services, academic librarianship, museums & cultural institutions, and PhD candidacy.

#4 IN THE USA
MLIS Masters Program

#6 IN THE USA
Archival Science Specialization

#5 IN THE USA
School Library Media

#2 IN THE USA
Youth Library Services

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Courses are taught by renowned faculty members who bring their research and professional experience into the classroom. Ana Ndumu, who conducts research at the intersection of Black identity, libraries, demography, and social inclusion, teaches courses on comparative and international librarianship as well as information ethics. Mega Subramaniam was named a Mover & Shaker by Library Journal for her work that is shaping the future of libraries. Paul Jaeger and Renee Hill have both been awarded the ALISE Excellence in Teaching Award.

Recent additions to the iSchool faculty include Ryan O'Grady, the former Deputy Director of the Enoch Pratt Free Central Library in Baltimore, MD; Diana Marsh, who served as a fellow at the Smithsonian's National Anthropological Archives; and Jason R. Baron, the first appointed Director of Litigation at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. Adjunct faculty members share years of experience from working at institutions like the Library of Congress and ALA's Advocacy and Public Policy Office.

CAREER PATHS

The MLIS program prepares students for careers in libraries, archives, government organizations, higher education institutions, cultural heritage institutions, startups, and many other information institutions. Graduates also find jobs in other sectors that value the skills and knowledge they gained during their MLIS Program. Because of the Program's unique multidisciplinary curriculum, practical skills training, and hands-on learning opportunities, our graduates are prepared to apply their skills directly and immediately in their careers. For many working students, the MLIS degree is an invaluable way to advance their careers and build their expertise.

Our graduates work as information professionals for organizations such as University Libraries, public and school libraries across the nation, the Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, the Smithsonian Institution, the Central Intelligence Agency, International Monetary Fund, Discovery Channel, National Agricultural Library and National Geographic, as well as dozens of major federal, state, public and private libraries and museums and other informational institutions across the United States.

> "A library degree is truly transferable. When I started library school, I thought I would be an academic librarian, but that is not the path I took. I have worked in public libraries, education, publishing, and government consulting, all using my library background!"
>
> **- Mary Ellen Icaza, MLS '98**

CURRICULUM & SPECIALIZATIONS

The Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program requires 36 credit hours of academic work to be completed with a minimum 3.0 GPA within five calendar years from the first semester of registration. Students are able to customize their MLIS degree by applying theirelectives to completing specializations that align with their career goals. The average time to MLIS degree completion is 2.22 years, but students have up to 5 years to complete the degree as part-time students.

Specializations

Archives and Digital Curation

This specialization focuses on the creation, management, use, long-term preservation, and access to records and information, both analog and digital, in a variety of disciplines and sectors of the economy. Information is at the very heart of a modern society's ability to learn, conduct business, recreate, and manage complex scientific, technological, industrial, and information infrastructures. It is a societal imperative that there be qualified professionals with the technical, intellectual, and social awareness required to manage complex collections in a variety of organizational settings.

Diversity and Inclusion

The importance of equal access to information by all members of society means that the study of information must be framed in the most inclusive terms possible. This specialization focuses on instruction about and research into the design, development, provision, and integration of information services, resources, technologies, and outreach that serve diverse and often underserved populations.

School Library Certification

This specialization provides candidates with a firm educational foundation in information studies while pursuing the requirements for School Library certification in the state of Maryland. Ideal for students interested in providing services in a K-12 school environment, the specialization has adopted an AASL-endorsed mission to provide students with a theoretical and research-based foundation in the issues and practices impacting the field. Course listings and requirements can be found on the School Library checklist.

Youth Experience (YX)

The YX specialization prepares leaders, educators, and change agents to deeply understand the dynamic contexts of youth. Today's children and adolescents need cultural institutions that can rapidly evolve their services, spaces, leadership, and programs. The YX specialization in the MLIS program enables candidates to design and implement policies, programs, and technology to support a young person's learning, development, and everyday lives.

Intelligence & Analytics

This specialization builds on the foundational skills gained during the MLIS Program, such as finding, organizing, synthesizing, and evaluating information, with additional emphasis on intelligence, research, data analysis, and information privacy and security. While the specialization has a focus on information security as it relates to the government and government contractors, graduates will be prepared for positions in a range of settings.

Legal Informatics

This specialization is intended for students who are interested in pursuing careers in public and academic law libraries but also for those who wish to work with legal information in a variety of settings, including government agencies, special libraries, public libraries, and archives. Students in the specialization will develop research and analytical skills, as well as an understanding of the broader social and political contexts that surround legal information and resources.

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HANDS-ON LEARNING

At the UMD iSchool, we believe that one of the best ways to learn – is to do. Our students have unmatched opportunities for applied learning through the Field Study requirement. Students spend 120-hours working at an institution of their choice while taking a course to support their experience and learning. Many students use this field study as a stepping stone to a career; completing a field study in a competitive organization is a valuable opportunity to get your foot in the door.

Recent students have participated in field studies at organizations such as: the National Cryptological Museum, the Smithsonian Folklife Archives & Collection, the National Gallery of Art, Baltimore City Archives, the US Department of Justice, Maryland State Archives, DC Public Library, PG County Memorial Library System, the Research Library at Yosemite National Park, and the National Park Service.

Our students are also able to participate in real-world research at our college's internationally recognized research centers and labs:

- **Center for Advanced Study of Communities and Information (CASCI)**
- **Center for Archival Futures (CAFe)**
- **Computational Linguistics and Information Processing (CLIP)**
- **The Human-Computer Interaction Lab (HCIL)**
- **Trace Research & Development Center (TRACE)**
- **The Social Data Science Center (SoDA)**

Many of our students also work with the University of Maryland Libraries and Special Collections and University Archives through graduate assistantships, part-time work, volunteering, and full-time jobs. The University of Maryland Libraries Research and Teaching Fellowship prepares MLIS graduate students to enter into a competitive academic job market.

Holly McIntyre (MLS '10), is the first ever archivist at NASA Goddard. She not only works hard to capture and preserve NASA Goddard's history, she's also focused on paying her expertise forward. She actively works with Goddard's Office of Education to create internship opportunities for current UMD iSchool students. For the last couple years, the Goddard Archives has hosted students looking to gain knowledge and experience to support their degrees.

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ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS & NEXT STEPS

- Complete the UMD Graduate School application. The Graduate School's Step-by-Step guide is a helpful resource for prospective applicants.
- Complete the MLIS Supplementary Application
- Pay the application fee to the UMD Graduate School.
- Upload transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate courses at each institution you have attended.
- Provide a Statement of Purpose describing your experiences and interests that will help you succeed in the degree program
- Submit the names and e-mail addresses of three academic or professional references.
- Upload a current resume or CV.
- Send TOEFL/IELTS scores to the University of Maryland (international applicants only).
- If you are a resident of the State of Maryland or believe you qualify as one, be sure to fill out the Maryland Residency section of the Graduate Application. **If you have questions about Residency Classification, email resclass@umd.edu.**

The admission requirements and curriculum are the same for both online and in-person students. Students in either program are able to take both in-person and online courses; the Program you apply to does not restrict your ability to take courses in either format.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to take the GRE?
The MLIS Program does not require the GRE. Additionally, HiLS students will no longer need to submit GRE scores for the History Department. Students may choose to submit scores, however it will not impact their admissions to either program.

My GPA was under a 3.0—can I still apply?
Yes. A cumulative gpa of under a 3.0 does not automatically exclude you from admission.

I've been out of school for a long time—do I need to get a recommendation from a professor?
Recommendations should come from individuals who can speak to your academic talents, work ethic, and intellectual strengths - they do not need to be from professors specifically.

Do you require a specific bachelor's degree (english, history, etc.)?
No, all undergraduate majors are welcome!

Can I meet with faculty?
Faculty do not advise MLIS or prospective students, please email mlisprogram@umd.edu so we can help answer your questions!

Do you do rolling admissions?
No, we do Spring and Fall admissions.

Is the program competitive in reviewing applications?
The MLIS Program does not put a cap on admissions. Each application is reviewed holistically to determine if an applicant will be a successful graduate student and member of the information profession.

How long after submitting my application will I receive a response?
Applications are not reviewed until the application deadline. Applicants should receive a decision 4–8 weeks after the deadline closes.

Is there any difference in beginning in the spring semester versus the fall semester?
Although core courses are offered in both the Spring and Fall, many electives are only offered once per academic year. There may be more graduate assistantships available in Summer/Fall because more students graduate in the Spring, vacating positions. Students admitted for the Fall are also able to take summer classes before they enroll for the Fall semester.

Can I complete the MLIS online?
Yes, the MLIS can be completed entirely online. That being said, elective course format and availability is subject to change – certain elective courses may only be offered on campus.

CONTACT US

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