December 17, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brian Butler
Dean, College of Information Studies

FROM: Elizabeth Beise
Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Modify the Master of Library Science - Youth Experience Specialization (PCC log no. 15021)

The proposal to modify the Master of Library Science by adding a Youth Experience Specialization has been administratively approved. A copy of the proposal is attached.

The change is effective Spring 2016. Please ensure that the change is fully described in all relevant descriptive materials.

MDC/
Enclosure

cc: Andrew Harris, Chair, Senate PCC Committee
Barbara Gill, Office of Enrollment Management
Reka Montfort, University Senate
Erin Taylor, Division of Information Technology
Pam Phillips, Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment
Anne Turkos, University Archives
Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
Alex Chen, Graduate School
Ann Weeks, College of Information Studies
The College of Information Studies (Maryland’s iSchool) plans to offer a Youth Experience (YX) specialization, one of the informal specializations for the Master of Library Science (MLS) program. This specialization helps prepare educational leaders and change agents to design and implement policies, programs, and technology to support young people’s learning, development, and everyday lives. Students who follow this specialization complete three “required” courses and four electives, in addition to the programmatic requirements of the degree (four core courses and a field study), for a total of 12 courses (or 36 credits).

Departmental/Unit Contact Person for Proposal:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES - Please print name, sign, and date. Use additional lines for multi-unit programs.

1. Department Committee Chair

2. Department Chair

3. College/School PCC Chair

4. Dean

5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required)

6. Chair, Senate PCC

7. University Senate Chair (if required)

8. Senior Vice President & Provost
PROPOSAL FOR
NEW SPECIALIZATION (INFORMAL)
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND AT COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND
YX: YOUTH EXPERIENCE SPECIALIZATION

COLLEGE OF INFORMATION STUDIES
INTERIM DEAN BRIAN BUTLER
MASTER OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

I. OVERVIEW and RATIONALE

The Youth Experience (YX) Master’s of Library Sciences (MLS) specialization at the University of Maryland will prepare leaders, educators, and change agents who 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 MLS program will enable candidates to design and implement policies, programs, and technology to support young people’s learning, development, and everyday lives.

Why a specialization in YX?

*Change in the landscape of information seeking and use and its impact on learning among youth*

Data from the Pew Research Center show that nearly one-fourth (24%) of teens are on the Internet “almost constantly” and 56% go online several times a day (Lenhart, 2015). This usage frequently includes visits to Facebook, the use of a smartphone, and photo sharing through Instagram or Snapchat. Though the numbers are slightly lower for younger children, researchers at the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop found that “at age 3, about one-quarter of children go online daily, increasing to about half by age 5. And by age 8, more than two-thirds use the Internet on any given weekday” (Gutnick, Robb, Takeuchi, & Kotler, 2011, p. 16). Given how ubiquitous technology has become in the lives of youth, the fact that education, learning, and information-seeking behaviors are changing is not surprising. No longer is education confined to the school building. Instead, youth are learning across both formal and informal learning spaces, including libraries, museums, community centers, and online environments, such as social media. Research shows that interest-driven learning “oriented toward educational, economic, or political opportunity” is the key to reaching today’s youth (Ito et al, 2013, p. 4). Those working with youth need to understand that, once motivated, youth seek learning opportunities that cross the boundaries of formal, structured education, informal social-based learning through mentors, and play-centric learning with peers (Barron, 2006). Information professionals must be prepared to meet youth in their own spaces, use technology to facilitate existing interests, and be in tune with what is personally relevant and motivating to them (Subramaniam et al, 2012; St. Jean et al, 2015).

Candidates in the YX specialization will have unique, interdisciplinary experiences and coursework that move beyond the bounds of traditional programs related to youth. We envision graduates of the specialization to be readily adaptable to the changing needs of youth. YX graduates will be able to understand the connections among myriad youth-related issues including learning, personal development, and changing technical and societal contexts. This interdisciplinarity will position graduates to pursue a variety of potential avenues as educators, YX designers, technology specialists, youth librarians, researchers, or policymakers. This lies in contrast to teacher education programs that often focus intently on the practices and concerns of teaching in school environments, and youth services programs that are bound by the practices of library settings.
Candidates in the YX specialization will have opportunities to engage with cultural institutions (e.g. libraries, museums, archives, government agencies etc.), national policy centers, and technology innovators via our experiential learning focused coursework and field study assignments.

Demand is there, supply is scarce

There are numerous youth-specific positions that are available that require the skills that the YX candidates will possess upon graduation (see the tab “Sample Job Description” in the Digital Youth Market and Field Analysis Google document). Realizing that there is a need for such trained individuals, the YX Specialization was developed based on a market analysis and extensive research on youth-related programs offered at other top ISchools, LIS, learning sciences, and educational technology schools across the nation (see the tab “Youth Services Programs”, “School Library Programs” and “Digital youth and Ed Tech programs” in the same Google document). The committee analyzed course offerings and descriptions from other institutions, and identified the niche and unique expertise that UMD’s iSchool has and can offer to candidates who are interested in working with youth in all environments. As a result of the analysis of course offerings, course description, and examples of jobs, multiple career pathways and course offerings emerged within the YX specialization (which will be discussed in the next section). A recent report on the hiring practices of legacy cultural institutions finds that “…managers [look] for curious generalists, not specialists, when hiring for project leads…” (Lutman, 2014, p. 12). This is the perfect opportunity for the meta-field of information science – an interdisciplinary discipline that brings together such diverse subjects as archival work, education, computer science, communication, human-computer interaction, library science, and information management to prepare information professionals to work with youth.

II. CURRICULUM

The Proposed Program of Study

Program Approach

The MLS with YX specialization will be implemented as an online program. Non-YX specialization candidates interested in select aspects of the YX specialization are welcome to choose courses to fit their individualized program plan (IPP).

Coursework

The college’s MLS degree requires the completion of 36 credit hours with a minimum 3.0 average. A candidate pursuing the YX specialization will take the following courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of course</th>
<th>Number of courses</th>
<th>Number of credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MLS Core Courses</td>
<td>4 courses</td>
<td>12 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field study | 1 course | 3 credits
---|---|---
YX Required Courses | 3 courses | 9 credits
YX Electives | 4 courses | 12 credits
| **12 courses** | **36 credits** |

**MLS Core Courses**

1. **LBSC 602 (Serving Information Needs)** An introduction to the skills necessary to interact directly with individuals through the exploration of user behavior theory, strategies to locate and evaluate information from print and electronic resources, and policies and procedures to ensure that all individuals can become information literate.

2. **LBSC 631 (Achieving Organizational Excellence)** Overview of the principles, practices, and techniques required for effective leadership and management. The innovative strategies, management responsibilities, and skills needed to achieve and sustain high organizational performance in information-based cultural institutions.

3. **LBSC 671 (Creating Information Infrastructures)** Foundations of acquiring and managing collections, information structures, indexing and discovery systems needed by information professionals. An introduction to the theoretical concepts, trends, systems, and technologies central to the information field.

4. **LBSC 791 (Designing Principled Inquiry)** Critical analysis of roles of information professions and institutions in integrating theory, methods, practice, policies, and values of the field, and applying them to the design of future information systems and services.

**Field study**

**LBSC 707 (Field Study in Library Science)** - Supervised experience within library operations and/or the opportunity to perform a study to solve a specific problem in a suitable library or other information agency.

**YX Required Courses**

Two existing courses LBSC 640 and LBSC 642 (required for school library and YX specialization) have been modified to cover YX in multiple settings and will now be offered as INST courses. These courses will have new course descriptions and course names. Additionally, a new course INST XXX (YX Design Thinking & Youth) has also been added as a YX required course.

1. **INST YYY (Facilitating Youth Learning in Informal and Formal Environments)**
   Foundational concepts in YX programs and services. Principles in working with youth and children. An introduction to theory, approaches to inquiry (standards/guidelines), resources, and services related to the information needs and interests of youth and children. [previously LBSC640]
2. **INST ZZZ (Promoting Rich Learning with Technology)** This course will introduce candidates to key theories about how people learn, and develop an understanding of how to integrate technologies to facilitate rich learning experiences. [previously LBSC642]

3. **INST XXX (YX Design Thinking & Youth)** Topics will include youth as makers, participatory design with youth, and learning theories and approaches (e.g., constructionism) that inform design experiences with youth. Additionally, YX professionals will reflect on their roles as designers through exploring topics such as research by design, and Human-Computer Interaction design principles.

**YX Electives (choose 4):**

Although the candidate can combine any four courses to complete the program, the committee has developed a selection of career pathways that the candidate might choose to follow. These pathways – education, social justice and diversity, information policy and leadership, and building and design – are listed in Appendix A with a variety of pre-existing courses suggested to fit within each pathway.

New electives will be made available as the specialization grows.

**III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT**

We expect that candidates in the YX specialization will:

- **Design and implement** policies, programs, and technology that benefit young people’s learning, development, and life endeavors;
- **Become change agents** for youth development which supports learning with new media;
- Adopt a **design thinking** approach and undertake youth projects that emphasize creating with youth for youth;
- **Identify best practices** and methods to be inclusive of all youth’s needs including youth from disadvantaged populations;
- **Apply core theories** and **models** from information science and learning sciences to address needs of youth;
- **Conduct research** on the emerging issues concerning youth and their daily lives; and
- **Partner** with schools, libraries, or cultural institutions to help with youth programming, education, and other projects related to youth development.

**IV. IMPACT ON COLLEGE**

There will be a minimal impact on college resources. Recruitment and web updates for the program will be handled by existing staff. The required YX courses will be taught by Drs. Mega Subramaniam, June Ahn and Tammy Clegg. Candidates will take the core courses according to the schedule offered by the College of Information Studies. Electives for the program are all existing courses and candidates will take the elective courses according to the schedule offered by the College of Information Studies and College of Education.
V. REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: YX SPECIALIZATION PATHWAYS

Education Pathway - General
LBSC 622 Information and Universal Usability
LBSC 641 Selection and Evaluation of Resources for Learning
LBSC 742 Collaborative Instructional Design and Evaluation
EDCI 633 Teaching for Cross Cultural Communication

Education Pathway – Reading
LBSC 645 Children’s Literature and Materials
LBSC 646 Literature and Materials for Young Adults
LBSC 745 Storytelling
EDCI 634 Methods of Teaching ESOL

Education Pathway - STEM
INFM 747 Web-enabled Databases
  - Suggested pre-requisite: INST 733 Database Design

Social Justice/Diversity Pathway
LBSC 620 Diverse Populations, Inclusion, and Information
LBSC 622 Information and Universal Usability
LBSC 735 Legal Issues in Managing Information
INFM 605 Users and Use Context
INST 612 Information Policy
EDCI 633 Teaching for Cross Cultural Communication
EDCI 634 Methods of Teaching ESOL

Information Policy/Leadership Pathway
LBSC 713 Planning and Evaluating Information Services
LBSC 735 Legal Issues in Managing Information
INST 607 E-government: Information, Communication, and Policy
INST 610 Information Ethics
INST 612 Information Policy
INST 627 Data Analytics for Information Professionals
INST 660 21st Century Leadership
INST 706 Project Management
  - Pre-requisite: LBSC631 Achieving Organizational Excellence (Core Course)
INFM 600 Information Environments
INFM 605 Users and Use Context
INFM 706 Project Management

Building/Design Pathway
INST 627 Data Analytics for Information Professionals
INST 733 Database Design
  • Pre-requisite: LBSC671 Creating Information Infrastructures (Core Course)

INFM 747 Web-enabled Databases
  • Suggested pre-requisite: INST 733 Database Design

Design Your Own Pathway
You may also pick any combination of four LBSC, INST, or INFM courses that make sense for your future career path.