

Measuring Success in Graduates of LIS Programs

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Abstract

The scant number of educational programs in library and information studies (LIS) that have been accredited by the American Library Association over the last five decades has resulted in a long tradition of extension courses taught at locations geographically remote from parent institutions and, more recently, the use of an expanding variety of instructional delivery methods. The present study is the first step in an investigation of the relationship between career success in LIS and the circumstances under which the MLIS or equivalent degree was earned. Before the relationship can be identified the question of “what is professional success?” must be answered.

How do we, as educators, assess the professional success of our graduates? What indicators or measures are appropriate for librarians, archivists, school library media specialists, and other information professionals? Are promotion to positions of greater responsibility, recruitment by other organizations, salary and other financial compensation, recognition by professional organizations, and other extrinsic rewards applicable? Are career satisfaction, professional involvement, and other aspects of the professional’s personal relationship with the job and the broader profession applicable?

In this interactive session, participants will examine an array of measures and indicators of professional success and consider their use in measuring professional success of information professionals. The implications of this discussion for LIS educational programs, and next steps in the research, will be considered, as well.