Message from the Director

It’s been a whirlwind year at SLIS – particularly as we’re currently (early summer) in the final stages of the reaccreditation process with the American Library Association’s (ALA) Committee on Accreditation (CoA). This is an extensive exercise involving all of the faculty and staff, as well as many of the students and alums. So far the process has been quite positive, with the program presentation and the site visit by the External Review Panel (ERP) resulting in an ERP report very supportive of our work since our last reaccreditation seven years ago. I meet with CoA during the ALA meeting in Orlando on June 25 and we will be notified of the outcome in early July. To support this current cycle, and make our assessment activities far more iterative, we’ve fielded an open portal to our assessment data available through the “Program Outcomes” link on the SLIS home page (http://slis.uiowa.edu). One of my major goals in this process was to create a means to capture, visualize (check out the outcomes dashboard!), and assess alumni and employer perceptions regarding both importance of and satisfaction with the educational goals of the program. Now that we have this framework in place, we will be doing rolling assessments of newly graduated students and experienced alums as a means of maintaining the currency of this information.

Continuing on my CoA theme, the Council of Deans and Directors (of the LIS programs) voted at their last meeting in January to request through the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) that ALA identify seats on CoA designated to be representatives from the Council. Interestingly the ALA Executive Board had already voted last summer to designate one such seat to the Council. The end result of all this, and after a brief lapse of sanity on my part, is that I was elected by the Council and approved by ALA to begin a four-year term on CoA beginning this July. This should be an interesting experience, as many of our peer programs seek substantially better clarity on accreditation criteria, particularly under the new standards. Both ALISE and the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) are seeking improved communication regarding goals and expectations regarding accreditation in the rapidly evolving field of library and information science.

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David Eichmann, Director

Inside this issue

• An ALA “Emerging Leader”
• Mellon Postdoctoral Scholar
• Teacher Librarian Update
• Alum Presentation at SHARP
• Alum Working in Abu Dhabi
Once again, in November, the American Library Association (ALA) recognized a collection of newer professionals in the field with the title of “Emerging Leader.” Every fall, 50 library workers are selected from a pool of applicants to participate in the program. The Emerging Leader course consists of two full days of training: one at the Midwinter Conference and one at ALA’s Annual Conference. These days serve as an introduction to the American Library Association’s history and values, then allows the teams to work together on their assigned project. These two days of training culminate in a poster session at the Annual Conference, which is open to the public.

At Annual, the teams present their project work, sharing their research and findings with attendees. The project that is assigned to each group is based on their interests and affiliations. This year, the projects set out by the different sponsors were all very engaging, and ranged in topic from coming up with a digital calendar to evaluating the MLIS. See here for previous years’ projects: http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/ala-emerging-leaders-2014-final-projects. This year was especially fascinating, as there were so many opportunities to change fundamental processes in the Association as a whole.

During the time between Midwinter and Annual, each team works on its project, often digitally, as team members come from across the nation. As the teams work together they watch webinars and participate in professional development to discover more about their individual leadership styles, resolving conflict, and how to become involved in ALA work. Another mission of the Emerging Leader program is to facilitate deep immersion into the professional association, while offering opportunities to become involved in committee work. The networking opportunities are huge, as one meets not only peers involved in the program, but is also given the chance to meet current ALA leadership.

I was fortunate to be selected for this fantastic program which is open to newer library professionals. The requirements are that the working experience of the applicant is less than five years, the ability to attend both Midwinter and Annual, membership in ALA, and being prepared to serve on a committee or round table at the completion of the program. I would urge every student to apply for this opportunity and begin serious involvement in ALA, as it is an enriching environment which celebrates contributions and curiosity. Applications can be sent in May for the following year class.

For more information on the program: http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/leadership/emergingleaders.

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Leila Rod-Welch ('11) was previously selected as an ALA 2014 Emerging Leader.
This rapid evolution is also reflected in the increasing visibility of the digital humanities in SLIS. Jim Elmborg is part of a team from Grinnell College and the University of Iowa that received a grant in the Spring of 2015 from the Mellon Foundation – “Digital Bridges for Humanistic Inquiry” – fostering collaboration between a private liberal arts college and a major research university. The interactions between the students and faculty of the two institutions have been most interesting. This last Spring, I was part of a team including librarians from Cornell, Harvard, and Stanford awarded another grant from the Mellon Foundation – “Linked Data for Libraries (LD4L)” – where we will be exploring how libraries can exploit linked data (aka the Semantic Web) to fashion the next generation of library metadata. This project will be building upon the BIBFRAME initiative at the Library of Congress. The coming year looks to be as rich as the last!

Addendum, June 26, 2016:

I received notification today that the School has been reaccredited for a full seven years, with our next comprehensive review scheduled for spring 2023. The Committee on Accreditation identified no weaknesses in the program and no interim reports are required. This is great news and I congratulate Carol, Vicki, and Chris, as well as the faculty, on a job well done!

Christina Boyles - Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Scholar

Christina Boyles is the Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Scholar of Digital Humanities at the University of Iowa. In this position, she helps facilitate collaborations between faculty at Grinnell College and the University of Iowa. She also is involved with the graduate certificate in Public Digital Humanities at the University of Iowa.

Christina’s primary academic interests are gender, race, and access, particularly their relationship to the digital humanities. The findings in her book project, (Eco)systems of Oppression: Environmental Abuses in Communities of Color, suggest that the EPA does not adequately address the needs of marginalized communities because they spend their funds on maintaining pristine landscapes (like nature reserves) instead of focusing on cleaning up toxic waste, water pollutants, and refuse left behind by commercial industries.

She also has two articles forthcoming in Feminist Debates in the Digital Humanities and Digital Diversity. The first, entitled Feminism or Funding?: Digital Humanities at Women’s Colleges argues that digital humanities programs at women’s colleges often have to hide their feminist leanings in order to gain support, both financial and otherwise, from internal and external agencies. The second, Hashtags and Harassment: The Failure of Social Protest on Twitter, asserts that protests organized through Twitter are inherently violent and therefore ineffective at achieving positive social change.

Lastly, Christina is in the process of developing a series of mailable makerspaces with Assistant Professor Lindsay Mattock and SLIS student Andrew Petersen. The goal of this project is to promote digital literacy in marginalized communities by providing them with access to digital tools and training. Doing so gives users the opportunity to design and build tools useful to their communities and simultaneously increases their knowledge of computer processes, design thinking, and project management.
Today’s teacher librarian is increasingly essential to an effective instructional program and learning environment in our K-12 schools. In a time of decreased funding for public education and often a lack of understanding of the many roles a teacher librarian plays in supporting student learning, many schools are finding it more and more difficult to support adequate staffing and resources in their school libraries. Our challenge: “How do we effectively advocate for the teacher librarian position in every school?”

Ultimately, it is the very work that teacher librarians do every day that is our greatest advocacy tool. Every day in libraries and schools across Iowa, school librarians teach information skills and digital citizenship. They nurture the literacy development and love of reading in their students. They support classroom teachers through professional development activities focused on effective use of technologies and resources to support instruction and student learning. Teacher librarians are teachers first and foremost, who have a specialized array of skills that only licensed teacher librarians possess. It’s imperative that we draw attention to the significant ways the work of the teacher librarian supports learning to advocate for the specialized skills they bring to the school setting.

As the coordinator for the Teacher Librarian Program, I have the opportunity to visit schools with library programs led by many of our graduates. The work of our graduates exemplifies their expertise, their training, and their focus on supporting student achievement.

Elizabeth Campbell (’91), the teacher librarian at Hopewell Elementary in Pleasant Valley CSD, in collaboration with one of her teachers, was granted permission to start a TED Ed club to promote a “A Culture of Readers.” Students created goals and action plans to promote reading, resulting in the creation of reading websites, readers’ theater presentations, podcasts, and other school events. Beth relates, “In the process, our students were able to videoconference with other TED Ed clubs around the world to talk about how to solve problems and work through difficult situations. Our students saw first-hand that they have the power and ability to make a difference in the world.”

Students at Washington Elementary in Mt. Vernon are embarking on a “Global Read Aloud” that coincides with other classes throughout the world. Mary Priske (‘11) shares that her goal is to assist teachers in making global connections with other classrooms, and along the way, assist them with the technology necessary to make these connections. “It is a great way to move literacy beyond the four walls of our school, expose students to an exemplary read aloud selection, and make authentic connections with other classrooms around the world.”

Sam Garchik (‘10), Ottumwa High School’s teacher librarian, is teaching a new class called, “The Bulldog News Network.” He teaches students video production skills in addition to a vast array of 21st century skills that have cross-curricular connections. Inherent in each of these activities is a focus on literacy development, the effective

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The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP) is an international organization dedicated to book history and print culture. SHARP describes their research focus as, “the composition, mediation, reception, survival, and transformation of written communication in material forms from marks on stone to new media.

Perspectives range from the individual reader to the transnational communication network” (sharpweb.org). There are over 1,000 members from more than 40 countries who provide a truly global perspective of book history. Due to its large international community, the conference location rotates between the Western and Eastern hemispheres each year—typically North America and Europe.

I first learned about SHARP while attending the Digital Humanities Summer Institute in 2012. Adrian van der Weel, the keynote speaker and my course instructor, highly encouraged joining SHARP if we were interested in book history. I joined the same afternoon and after three summers, I was finally able to attend the annual conference this past summer (2015) in Longueil/Montreal as a master’s student poster presenter. I presented my final poster from the University of Iowa’s School of Library and Information Science program titled Regenerating the local catalog: An approach for augmenting bibliographic information for early printed texts. The theme this year was “The Generation and Regeneration of Books” and was hosted by the Groupe de recherches et d’études sur le livre au Québec, the University of Sherbrooke, McGill University, and the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. The conference was truly a bilingual event with presentations in both French and English. Over 350 people traveled to Québec to participate.

Scholars from all disciplines and librarians alike attend SHARP, and the conference program reflects this diversity. I attended sessions on special collections instruction, cataloging, and pivotal collectors. “Old Books and New Tricks: Regenerating the Library Visit” has been the most helpful session on special collections instruction out of all the conferences I have attended. Gale Burrow from Claremont College presented on how to

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Student Funding

SLIS Scholarship
Yunsup Kyun

Joyce Hartford/Grace Wormer Scholarship
Kara Wentworth

ILA Jack E. Tillson Scholarship Award
Katheryn Lawson

H. W. Wilson Foundation Award
Bethany Kluender

turn a one-time visit into a two-part lab series that focuses on primary research in the first lab and the secondary sources in the second lab. Karla Nielsen demonstrated how Book Traces, a crowd-sourced web project aimed at identifying unique copies of 19th- and early 20th-century books on circulating library shelves, was successfully carried out at Columbia University. Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) post-doctoral fellow at Southwestern University, Charlotte Nunes, discussed the emotional connection her students experienced while transcribing Latino oral histories and the importance of capturing the students’ oral histories on their project work. The last presenter, Amanda Watson from Yale, showed how she has collaborated with special collections to integrate technology into the class visit. All four presenters illustrated creative methods of teaching that I look forward to incorporating into my professional career.

Because of my interest in copy specific cataloging and in relation to my own work on cataloging 16th-century books at the University of Iowa, the panels on “Pivotal Collectors” and “Early modern Women and the Book (II): case Studies in Ownership, Circulation, and Collecting” served as interesting comparisons. In the first panel, presenters discussed the familiar issues of how to catalog and organize famous personages’ personal collections. In the second panel, speakers addressed the problem of how to find someone’s books after the collection has been separated and sold. In her presentation “Finding Frances Wolfreston in Online Public Access Catalogues: How Electronic Records Can Lead Us to Early Modern Women Readers,” Sarah Lindenbaum demonstrated how Frances Wolfreston’s unique signature as noted in various catalog records enabled her to trace the dispersion of her books. The discussion surrounded the general value of provenance notes and included mention of Provenance Online Project, also known as POP.

Other presentations on embroidered bindings (Amanda Pullan) and the history of dog-earring books (Ian Gadd) were equally exciting and all of the SHARP panels appealed to my love of book history. The most fulfilling aspect of the conference was SHARP’s dedication to encouraging emerging scholars. There was a specific dinner for master’s and PhD candidate presenters. The poster session and PhD candidate papers did not conflict with other sessions, thus allowing all conference attendees to engage with their research. I personally benefited from the feedback and encouragement I received during the poster session. Most importantly, I left SHARP feeling welcome and excited to be a member of the organization and enthused about book history as a discipline.

Relevant links:
Sparks, Jillian A.  Regenerating the local catalog: An approach for augmenting bibliographic information for early printed texts http://ir.uiowa.edu/slis_student_pubs/1 accompanying digital exhibit: http://sparks.omeka.net

SHARP’s website: http://www.sharpweb.org


Book Traces: http://www.booktraces.org/

Provenance Online Project (POP): https://provenanceonlineproject.wordpress.com/
By Kelly Grogg

Librarians for Social Justice is a community group which was organized in the fall of 2015 by Kelly Grogg, a current SLIS student at the University of Iowa. This group chooses to support various fundraising and volunteer projects throughout the year. This year, they worked on a project to raise money for Caring for Cambodia, an organization that provides education to Cambodian Children. Through personal fundraising, as well as a Book Brunch hosted at Public Space One, the group successfully raised $1,000 toward purchasing new books in the local language for the six libraries in Cambodia this organization operates. Ella von Holtum, a member of the newly formed group, said, “I think it’s great to actually do something to create a network of people who can work together to do things outside of a professional context, but still with service and the values of librarianship in mind.”

Librarians for Social Justice continues to grow in membership and is currently looking to identify new projects in the Iowa City area. If you’re interested in staying up to date with their activities, please feel free to follow them on facebook and twitter.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/ibs.social.justice/
https://twitter.com/Libs4Justice

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https://www.facebook.com/groups/ibs.social.justice/
https://twitter.com/Libs4Justice
Timothy Barrett’s research continues to focus on the surprising stability and aesthetic properties of 15th century European papers. Knowing more about both is key to the care and conservation of rare books, and to the manufacture of modern paper used in the publication of archival documents. Barrett’s earlier research completed in 2012 showed that 500-year-old papers that are still light in color, supple, and strong tend to have higher levels of calcium and gelatin in them. Papers found to be browned and weak are lower in these components and higher in iron content. Calcium compounds, such as calcium carbonate, may have occurred naturally in the water supply used to make the paper, or it may have been added to lighten the color of the finished paper. Regardless of source, we now know it served as an alkaline reserve, helping to protect the paper from airborne acidic pollutant gases by keeping the paper pH near neutral. Gelatin was added to the paper to stop ink from bleeding when it was written on, but it also made the paper much stronger and abrasion resistant. It also appears to have a positive affect on paper pH. A full report on Barrett’s research is available at paper.lib.uiowa.edu.

More recently Barrett and his students have been working to reproduce preindustrial hand papermaking work routines in an effort to learn how a team of three people could routinely make 2,000 sheets in a single day. Barrett’s underlying interest is in the impact of such high production rates on the aesthetic properties of the paper. His experiments have shown that making paper with more calcium and more gelatin doesn’t yield paper with 15th century aesthetic properties. He is now convinced that the high production of paper as a utilitarian commodity resulted in sheets that were well made, but also possessed of small inconsistencies and other marks of the maker that gave the each sheet a special appeal. Duplicating these characteristics is key to making an ideal paper for rare book conservation work. See Barrett’s latest research in two short films on YouTube. Search “Chancery Papermaking” to find them.

This fall, Jennifer Burek Pierce spoke at the Library Administrators Conference of Northern Illinois about the research that informed her ALA Editions book, Sex, Brains, and Video Games: A Librarian’s Guide to Teens in the Twenty-First Century. The talk highlighted newer research on adolescent development, cognition, and culture, and it forms the basis for a new and revised edition of the book, which is anticipated in 2017.

Her research will appear in the third volume of The Annual Review of Cultural Heritage Informatics. The essay, ‘Olivier Optic and Young America: Reading Library Shelves and Publishing Records for Insights into the Past,” is co-authored with Mikki Smith, a SLIS alumna and doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Library & Information Science at the University of Illinois. Another co-authored essay appeared in Miseducation: A History of Ignorance-Making in America and Abroad, recently released by Johns Hopkins University Press.

In addition to heading the Editorial Advisory Board of the UI Press, she continues to write for the Chronicle of Higher Education.
She will begin serving as ALISE Parliamentarian, a position which involves a year of apprenticeship before taking on full responsibilities in the last two years of the three-year appointment.

**Dave Eichmann’s CTSAsearch project** has expanded to 74 institutions, their 421,605 researchers, and 7.6 million publications. This project is also collaborating with colleagues at the Oregon Health & Science University on integrating CTSAsearch with NIH’s ScIEnce biosketch system, the OpenVIVO project, and the ORCID researcher identity system. Three papers on CTSAsearch and a panel session were presented at the 2015 VIVO Conference, one paper at the IEEE/ACM Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining, one at the Science of Team Science Conference, and one at the 3rd WWW Workshop on Scholarly Big Data: Towards the Web of Scholars. He also served as a member of the Scientific Program Committee and session chair for the 2015 and 2016 AMIA Joint Summits on Translational Science.

His most recent project is the newly funded Linked Data for Libraries (LD4L) Labs, lead by a team from Cornell University and also including teams from Harvard and Stanford. LD4L Labs seeks to enable libraries and their users to easily create, use, and benefit from linked data specifically designed for libraries and scholars, and from broader sources of linked data on the web. Eichmann will be focusing on linkage of data between the 23 million catalog records from Cornell, Harvard, and Stanford and visualizing the semantic relationships in those data.

**Jim Elmborg** continues to divide his time between critical library practice and digital humanities in the hopes that one day he can merge the two into one coherent field. This goal seems far from achievable.

In the realm of critical library practice, Professor Elmborg has published two articles this past year, *Tending the Garden of Learning: Lifelong Learning as Core Library Value* (Library Trends, winter 2016) and *Making a Third Space for Student Voices in Two Academic Libraries* (with Heidi Jacobs, Kelly McElroy, and Rob Nelson in RUSQ, 2015). He will participate in a panel for the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Instruction Section at ALA in Orlando to discuss “Authority is Constructed and Contextual.” Finally, he will teach a new course in the fall semester on Critical Information Practice.

In Digital Humanities, Professor Elmborg continues to serve on the Provost’s Steering Committee for the faculty cluster in digital humanities. He also directs the newly created graduate certificate in public digital humanities, which will graduate its first cohort of students in Spring of 2016. And, he is co-director of Digital Bridges for Humanistic Inquiry, a 1.6 million dollar grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to foster collaboration between a private liberal arts college and a major research university. Grinnell College and the University of Iowa are partners in this grant.

Professor Elmborg has been promoted to full professor as of spring 2016. He is thankful for the many students and SLIS colleagues who have been part of this very enjoyable ride. He looks forward to many more years of SLIS adventures.
Julia Leonard completed two artist books in 2015, one entitled Beauty Persists and an ongoing series, A History...Vol I-IV, both consider aspects of history, ecology, and our connection to place, both natural and constructed. These are the first two in a body of work that utilizes ‘found’ or ‘constraint’ based writing; this in combination with visual materials and structural experimentation. In Fall 2105, she curated along with faculty member Beth Yale an exhibit, Micrographia, in conjunction with a symposium, Scientific Books and their Makers. Book artists were invited to respond to scientific books ranging in subjects held in the UI Libraries Special Collections and John Martin Rare Book Room. The exhibit was on display at the Merker Gallery in North Hall and the Special Collections Reading Room.

Lindsay Mattock continues her work with MIMC: Mapping the Independent Media Community, http://thestudio.uiowa.edu/mimc/, a digital humanities project aimed at mapping the network of media arts centers and other media arts organizations operating throughout the United States during the 1970s and 1980s. This collaboration with Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA and the Digital Scholarship & Publishing Studio at the University of Iowa received a Major Project Award from the University’s Internal Funding Initiatives for 2015-2016. The Award was used in part to support the work of SLIS Student Research Assistants Patrick Curtis and Kara Wentworth. Mattock shared some of the initial findings from MIMC at The International Association of Audio Visual Archives Annual Conference in Paris, France in October and MISFITS: Time-Based Media and the Museum hosted by Carnegie Museum of Art in November.

Summer 2016

9/11 Memorial Museum, New York, N.Y.: Rebekah Walker
Rebekah will be actively engaged this summer as an exhibition intern at the 9/11 Memorial Museum. Her primary focus will be on moderation and content development for a series of exhibition media pieces involving user-generated content, undertaking research for upcoming special exhibitions, and providing project management support. Specific activities include performing research and drafting text for a registry documenting experiences of 9/11 witnesses and survivors as well as rescue and recovery workers.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.: Erica Knapp
This summer the Roosevelt Library plans to further develop its online research collections with the support of Erica. Projects include capturing and publishing up to 5,000 additional documents, and up to 1,000 additional photographs, to the FRANKLIN
Partnering with Christina Boyles, Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Mellon Postdoctoral Scholar in Digital Humanities, Mattock continues her research in digital pedagogy. Boyles and Mattock are working to develop a Mobile DH Makerspace utilizing LittleBits, Raspberry Pi, and Arduino technologies. This project will teach students how to “build” physical objects that operate in digital environments. In doing so, they will develop new and innovative pedagogical approaches with these tools that will influence the work of students enrolled in the Public Digital Humanities Certificate and the LIS MA programs. Boyles and Mattock hope to present on this work at the Digital Humanities 2016 Annual Conference in Kraków, Poland and the HASTAC Annual Conference at Arizona State University over the summer.

Iulian Vamanu’s research of the information practices of converts to Christian denominations and Islam yielded a first article in the most recent issue of the Journal of Religious & Theological Information (“Closer to God”: Meanings of Reading among Recent Converts to Christianity and Islam). Another study of his, focusing on the constructions of Native heritage in digital environments and titled “New Mediations of Native Cultural Heritage: The Case of the TimeTraveller™ Machinima Project,” will appear in the upcoming volume of the Annual Review of Cultural Heritage Informatics.

Three projects on which Iulian has been working aim to describe trends in the conceptualization of heritage in Library and Information Science research over the last two decades; to articulate a notion of Indigenous curatorial practice emerging from statements by North American Native curators; and to describe the phenomenology of papermaking experience of students and faculty affiliated with the University of Iowa Center for the Book. Iulian has also partnered with the Iowa Mennonite School in Kalona, IA to enable students registered for the Organizational Management course in Spring 2016 to apply management principles and tools within a concrete organizational context and thereby support a learning community in the State of Iowa.

Student Interships

online public access system and the National Archives Catalog. Erica will play a central role in capturing, managing, and describing these digital assets while gaining valuable experience in all aspects of archival work including preservation.

National Park Service, Tribal Relations and American Cultures Department, Washington, D.C.: Kara Wentworth

The National Preservation Education Council sponsors Kara’s position as an Archives Assistant at the National Parks Service, Tribal Relations and American Cultures Department. Kara will undertake research and administrative projects, contributing to national historic preservation programs and the federal government’s preservation and management of historic properties. Projects include processing paper and digital records; creating finding aids and filing plans; and preparing materials for transport to the National Archives and other agencies.
The Application Process and Arrival.
I first heard about the position at Zayed University (Z.U.) from a friend via email. A former colleague had gone on to work at Z.U. and was recruiting for her replacement, as she had been promoted to library director. The entire interviewing and hiring process from the point I applied took nine months – far longer than I was used to in the U.S. In addition, there were long and silent pauses between each step, leading me to think that someone else had been offered the position. I had to pay about $600 out of pocket to get my documents attested and that process took a speedy six weeks. Once my documents were stamped by all the correct officials (notary public, state office that oversees the notaries, U.S. State Department, and then the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) embassy in Washington, D.C.) I submitted them to Z.U. with a few other forms to begin the U.A.E. Federal Clearance process. It took approximately three to four weeks for the government to clear me for hiring, and then Z.U. offered me a contract. Six weeks later I left the U.S. for sunny Abu Dhabi.

Between signing a contract and arriving, my work situation changed significantly in two ways. The university hired a new president, and my job which was to be the Learning Commons Supervisor for Abu Dhabi was changed to be the Learning Commons Supervisor for Abu Dhabi and Dubai. I was kept in the loop on these changes, but until I arrived, I really didn’t have any feel for how these changes would affect me.

A part of almost everyone’s story in academia in the U.A.E. is the sheer amount of uncertainty we lived with until, and sometimes even after, we arrived. Until the moment you receive a contract everything is tentative and it feels like you have little control over the process. The embassy could run out of stamps delaying your attestation for weeks while new stamps are printed, or you could be turned down by U.A.E. Federal Clearance, and not be told why. I assumed when I arrived that the uncertainty I lived with would go away. Instead, I have become very comfortable living with uncertainty due to extensive practice.

Zayed University vs. most U.S. Universities. Z.U. is one of three federal universities, along with the Higher Colleges of Technology (H.C.T.), and United Arab Emirates University (U.A.E.U.). All three government universities teach primarily in English, except for the Arabic language and Islamic culture courses. The three federal universities are considered a government ministry, and we are required to follow U.A.E. government guidelines for many things that private universities are not obligated to follow. It takes months of advance preparation work to bring guest lecturers onto campus, which eliminates a lot of spontaneous opportunities. It takes eight university signatures to get permission to take a class of students off campus, and then each female student needs to bring a signed permission slip from her parents or her husband in order to attend the field trip.

Z.U. is the only federal university that has gender segregation among the students. There is no gender segregation when it comes to university employees, and male professors can teach female students, and vice versa. Originally Z.U. was a women’s university, but after about ten years it was changed to admit men. Still, there is a huge gender imbalance at the university with about 8,000 female students and about 1,500 male students between both campuses.
The two campuses handle segregation differently. The Dubai campus was not built to accommodate segregation, so the only way to segregate the populations was to cordon off one wing for the males, and then to have all the females leave campus by 5:15 p.m. After that time, the campus is male students only. Male classes may start as early as 2 p.m. in the male wing, but due to space constraints, the bulk of the classes are in the evenings, which is not popular for the men. Most university services stop between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m., which makes it important for services to make accommodations for male students. For example, the library has a service desk in the male wing staffed between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. so the men have some access to library help before they are able to come into the physical library.

The Abu Dhabi Campus was designed to accommodate segregation. The building is bisected, with half for the males and half for the females. We have significantly more female students than male, so the female side bustles with people and activity, while the male side is often quiet and still. The second and third floors contain the research and reference collections and are not gender segregated; access to these floors is dependent on a published schedule of male and female days and times.

Another difference between working in the U.A.E. and in the U.S. is that U.A.E. practices censorship. The internet is censored at the ISP level. Books have to pass through a review body. Class textbooks have white stickers placed over “the naughty bits.” The library stance on censorship is that we will not censor books. If a book is challenged by a student (which has happened multiple times) we have a process to address the curricular value of the book that brings in local staff members and relevant faculty members in coordination with the library. There are three options: the book stays on the shelf, the book is moved to our special collections (which is just the books with curriculum value that may shock some sensibilities), or the book is removed from the collection due to objectionable content and a lack of curricular relevance. The three federal universities may also have books challenged by government officials, and that process is out of the library’s control. Knowledge of this impacts collection development and leads to some self-censorship in ordering.

**Working as a librarian in the U.A.E.** I came to Z.U. as the Learning Commons Supervisor, but due to some unmet needs of the organization, I became the Electronic Resources Librarian. The actual day-to-day work in both positions is comparable to work I’ve done in academic libraries in the U.S. I have some information literacy sessions I teach for certain classes, and for my subject liaison area I work on a service desk for several hours a week. At one point I supervised two staff members, but now I contact vendors when our database access isn’t working.

The biggest change in the direct work I do is in collection development. Our primary vendor is in Canada, and if everything lines up perfectly when I submit a book order to technical services, the book will be on the shelf in three to twelve months. The faculty we support aren’t used to a semester on average to see the books they want. If our primary vendor doesn’t have it, and it is not produced locally, we can’t get it due to purchasing guidelines which follow government purchasing rules. We do have Interlibrary Loan through the British Library, which usually takes several weeks, and we have fairly rapid article delivery service with a turnaround time between four and ninety-six hours.

**Living in the U.A.E.** One of the best things about living in the U.A.E. is that I have met and worked with people from so many places: Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Oman, Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Sudan, the Philippines, etc. My son goes to an international school with an American curriculum, and his school has students from over 25 countries attending. Americans make up about 2% of the U.A.E. expat population, so it is an opportunity for me and my son to live as minorities, albeit generally favored ones.

The Abu Dhabi campus is beautiful, and we often have diplomatic visitors to campus. **continued on page 14**
SLIS would like to take this opportunity to thank all donors for their continued support of the department and programs here at Iowa.

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Upcoming SLIS 50th Anniversary

In 2017 SLIS will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary. Initial planning is underway to coincide with the Iowa Library Association Annual Convention to be held October 18th-20th in Coralville, IA.

We could not have reached this milestone without your support. If you are an alum, keep up-to-date on our plans by filling out the form on the SLIS website: https://slis.grad.uiowa.edu/alumni or send your email to SLIS@uiowa.edu.

Also, if you plan to attend any future conferences we have badge ribbons that we’ll send to you if you’re interested.

Kate Holvoet on Working in Abu Dhabi - continued

I have met the Japanese Ambassador to the U.A.E. when he came to donate a cache of books on Japanese popular culture to the university. I have been able to learn more about Islamic art and culture, and I live within visual distance of the Sheik Zayed Grand Mosque, which is one of the most beautiful buildings I have ever visited.

Due to the crazy high housing prices, most academic jobs in the U.A.E. provide housing. I lucked into a great place because I came at an odd time of year and the Campus Director was leaving, so I got his three bedroom apartment. I have floor to ceiling windows and more light in my living room than I probably will for the rest of my life in the U.S.

Would I recommend living and working in the U.A.E.? I have found it fascinating to live here and see how so much of the rest of the world lives. The Persian Gulf is a cross-road, and meeting people from all over has been enlightening. This is a good place for young academics just getting started, as the pay is quite reasonable and travel to most places is affordable. It’s also a good place for families if both parents are employed. Unemployed spouses often find it difficult to get engaged with local groups or events and can become bored. Outdoors loving people may find it challenging in the U.A.E., with harsh summer weather for up to six months of the year. Winter is lovely, but too short. It’s very safe for children and the international schools vary from okay to excellent (with corresponding prices). The people who are successful here are able to deal with ambiguity and have patience to work out the issues in daily living.
goals for the future is to learn more about Tableau and D3 and learn more about data visualization, so if you're looking at a project that needs data vis, then shoot me an email! A lot of the things I learned while in SLIS, both in class and out, have been invaluable to me in this journey, and still are every day. Two areas, however, stand out the most. I learned in class how to effectively use search engines utilizing optimal terms and how to take advantage of filtering. My out-of-class experiences taught me that making connections with classmates, faculty, and staff is critical in pulling together collaborators of widely varied backgrounds, both because of our focus on the structures and crossroads of information, and our dedication to understanding and serving those who want to learn and discover. I think SLIS is a great place to start making the connections to make that happen.

In order to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our alumni and the diversity of the SLIS program, we’d like to collect your alumni information. Please help us by filling in the form located at http://slis.grad.uiowa.edu/alumni-profiles. You will be able to select how this information can be used.

Advocating Through Practice - continued

use of technologies, information literacy, and critical thinking: core outcomes for students K-12. Advocating by “doing” and articulating specific learning outcomes brings attention to the valuable work of the teacher librarian and the importance of a strong library program.

The School of Library and Information Science remains committed to advocating for effective school library programs by preparing highly trained professionals who will assume teacher librarian positions across the state. This commitment is evident in curricular revisions which have strengthened the teacher librarian component of our M.A. in Library and Information Science degree, the continued synchronous class offerings conducted via video conferencing to address constraints faced by working teachers, and through the continued monetary stipend to help offset tuition costs for qualified teachers.

SLIS offers an exemplary program that prepares the teacher librarian to teach and support the skills and understandings needed by today’s students. Our program prepares the teacher librarian to be an instructional leader in their school and a constant voice that instills the love of learning in each and every student. Effective school library programs are essential for every K-12 school and SLIS remains committed to preparing highly trained professionals to lead these programs.
Make a gift to the SLIS fund to assist Iowa students like this cohort of SLIS scholars.

Thank you!

www.givetoioawa.org/slis