Improving Library & Information Science Education through Alumni Tracking

Results of the WILIS 2 Project

School of Information & Library Science, Department of Sociology and Institute on Aging, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, U.S.A.
Presenter

- Joanne Gard Marshall, Lead Principal Investigator
WILIS is a collaborative research partnership of the UNC Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science and the UNC Institute on Aging, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through its Librarians for the 21st Century Program.
The WILIS studies

- WILIS 1* is a comprehensive study of the career patterns of graduates of LIS programs in North Carolina since 1964.

- WILIS 2 is a project to develop a shared recent graduates survey that may be used by all LIS programs.

WILIS 2
Designing and testing a shared alumni survey
Project goals

- Use Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach to:
  - Refine the WILIS 1 career tracking model so that it can be used by all LIS programs with recent graduates
  - Recruit LIS programs to participate in a staged launch of the model
  - Conduct the surveys and provide participating LIS programs with access to their results
  - Explore options for sustaining the model
  - Disseminate findings and publicize the availability of the model
Study design

- Phase 1 test of model (8 LIS programs)
- Phase 2 launch of model (20 LIS programs)
- Phase 3 launch of model (11 LIS programs)
- Total – 39 LIS master’s degree programs
Participating programs

- Simmons College
- University of Alabama
- University of Arizona
- University of Central Missouri*
- University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign*
- University of Rhode Island
- University of Toronto*
- University of Washington
- Appalachian State University*
- Dalhousie University
- Dominican University
- Drexel University
- East Carolina University
- Long Island University
- Louisiana State University
- McDaniel College
- North Carolina Central University
- Old Dominion University
- San Jose State University
- Trevecca Nazarene University
- University at Albany, SUNY
- University at Buffalo, SUNY
- University of Alberta
- University of British Columbia
- University of California – Los Angeles
- University of Kentucky
- University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
- University of North Carolina – Greensboro
- University of North Texas
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Puerto Rico
- University of South Carolina
- University of South Florida
- University of Tennessee
- University of Texas – Austin
- University of Western Ontario
- University of Wisconsin– Madison
- Wayne State University
- William Paterson University
Survey sections

- Program Evaluation (e.g., courses, delivery format, requirements, preparation)
- Demographics (e.g., age group, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status)
- Previous Education (e.g., degrees, degree status)
- Technology Use (e.g., comfort with technology, using technology at work)
Survey sections

- Employment (e.g., previous job, current job characteristics, job satisfaction, career satisfaction)
- Leadership/Achievements (e.g., professional activities, aspirations)
- Continuing Education (e.g., topics and modes of delivery preferred)
Results
Overview

- **Response Rate**
  - Overall rate: 40.5% (n=3507)
  - Program rates – from less than 20% to over 80%

- **Demographic composition**
  - 78% female
  - 20% non-white

- **Employment status**
  - 93% employed; 5% seeking work
### Respondents by degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree – library science (MA, MLS, MSLS, MLIS)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree – information science (MSIS, MIS, MIST)</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Master’s degrees (MLS/MIS)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFA – Book Arts</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdS – Education specialist</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA – Managerial leadership in LIS</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=3507
Employment
### Current job

Which of the following best describes your current job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library setting, using LIS skills</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library setting, NOT using LIS skills</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-library, using LIS skills</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-library, NOT using LIS skills</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed using LIS skills</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed NOT using LIS skills</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=3111
Current job by type of library

- School (K-12): 16%
- Public: 24%
- Academic: 25%
- Special: 10%

N=3109
LIS graduates are also working in...

- Institution of higher learning – 5%
- Non-profit organization – 3%
- Primary or secondary education – 2%
- Technology company – 1%
- Government agency – 2%
- Archives – 2%
- Museum – 1%
- Computer industry – <1%
- Self-employed – <1%
- Library cooperative – <1%
- Other – 7%

N=3507
## Current job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salaried Respondents (n=2411)*</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarians (n=1865)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average annual salary</td>
<td>$35,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median annual salary</td>
<td>$35,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non–librarians (n=544)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average annual salary</td>
<td>$37,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median annual salary</td>
<td>$33,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Respondents with hourly wages (n= 629)***

| Librarians (n=459) |  |
| Average wage | $24.76 |
| Median wage | $21.00 |
| Non–librarians (n=170) |  |
| Average wage | $27.03 |
| Median wage | $18.00 |

*Reported in US dollars
Primary level of employment

- Senior administration (e.g., library director, assistant director, CEO): 8%
- Middle management (e.g., branch head, department head): 14%
- Supervisor: 18%
- Non-management: 60%

N=3097
Supervision

Do you supervise/manage other people?

*Check all that apply; multiple responses may add to more than 100%

- Students/temps: 48%
- Paraprofessionals: 38%
- Professionals: 14%

N=3078
Satisfied with LIS as a career?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=2969
Retention – LIS field

Do you think you will still be working in LIS 3 years from now?

- Yes: 91%
- No: 9%

N=3004
LIS program evaluation
Overall program experience

- Poor: 2%
- Fair: 14%
- Good: 42%
- Excellent: 42%

N=3507
Preparation for first job

How well did your program prepare you for your first job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Well</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequately</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=2594
My program provided me with...

- Basic knowledge of the field: 97%
- Information seeking skills/knowledge: 94%
- Research and evaluation skills/knowledge: 89%
- Organization of Information knowledge/skills: 87%
- Collaboration knowledge/skills: 82%
- Public service knowledge/skills: 79%
- Instructional knowledge/skills: 62%

N=3507

% who agree
My program provided me with...

- Skills I can apply on the job: 88%
- Information technology knowledge/skills: 83%
- Problem-solving skills: 77%
- A realistic understanding of what it is like to work in LIS: 73%
- Budget and finance knowledge/skills: 77%
- Advocacy knowledge/skills: 67%

N=3507
Effectiveness of course delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Face-to-face</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all effective</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat effective</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very effective</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Continuing education
Continuing education interests

- Technology training: 79%
- To develop subject expertise: 70%
- Management: 51%
- Communication and marketing: 44%
- Finance: 33%

N=3212
Continuing education modes

- Training sessions at your workplace: 71%
- Face to face workshops delivered in conjunction with conferences: 67%
- Webinars on special interest topics: 60%
- Online courses (self-directed and self-paced): 58%
- Online courses (regularly scheduled and part of a group): 54%

N=3193

*Check all that apply; multiple responses may add to more than 100%
Continuing education modes

- Face to face workshops located at your LIS program: 33%
- Courses located at your LIS program: 29%
- Face to face workshops delivered locally*: 75%
- Other: 4%

*Check all that apply; multiple responses may add to more than 100%
Value of alumni tracking

WILIS 2 evaluation
Paper survey
- Gathers information about experiences in the study, usefulness of WILIS 2 products and explores interest of LIS programs in participating in a shared alumni tracking system

Phase 1 programs: evaluation still in the field

Phase 2 & 3 programs: evaluation will be conducted in Spring 2011.
Preliminary Evaluation Results (n=4)

- 100% would like to continue surveying their alumni in the future

- 100% are interested in comparing results with those of other LIS programs

- How often would you like to conduct the survey (in years):
  Average 2.0, sd. 0.82
Study outcomes

- Over 500 variables for analysis
- Toolkit
- WILIS 1 model
- WILIS 2 model
WILIS 1 workforce projections

What types of libraries will experience the most retirements?

- Of those who will likely retire by 2013 (n=182)
  - 41% are school librarians (n=74)
  - 23% are public librarians (n=42)
  - 27% are academic librarians (n=49)
  - 9% are special librarians (n=17)

- 71% are from NC, SC, GA, and VA, but the other 29% are distributed across the US
WILIS 1 workforce projections

What types of libraries will experience the most retirements?

- Of those who will likely retire 10 years from now (2018) (n=357)
  - 43% are school librarians (n=154)
  - 23% are public librarians (n=81)
  - 25% are academic librarians (n=88)
  - 9% are special librarians (n=34)

- 78% are from NC, SC, GA, and VA, but the other 22% are distributed across the US
Ongoing activities

- WILIS 3 – A new project to prepare and archive the WILIS 1 and 2 datasets for ongoing use.

- Library Trends. Workforce Issues in Library and Information Science, Part 2. 59(1–2), Fall 2010. (For WILIS 2 article)

- Library Trends Workforce Issues in Library and Information Science, Part 1. 58(2), Fall 2009. (For WILIS 1 articles)