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Executive Summary

The top five priorities for the Graduate School of Library and Information Science are:

1. Participating as an equal partner in the Illinois Informatics Initiative and in informatics components of other strategic research initiatives
2. Recruiting and retaining excellent faculty and students, including those from underrepresented groups
3. Maintaining leadership in digital libraries and in literature and librarianship for youth
4. Consolidating strength in social/community informatics
5. Building strength in information history, economics, and policy

The resources required for this are detailed in Section VI, below, but they can be summarized as follows: in order for GSLIS to achieve its goals, campus needs to increase our recurring state budget by about $2.5M and provide a one-time infusion of about $3M, beyond which GSLIS will raise at least $9M in its capital campaign and increase the millions that it brings in each year in research funding.

GSLIS has multiple, substantive, and long-standing collaborative relationships with other units on campus, and we are eager to expand and deepen those relationships in ways that bring concrete benefits to other units on campus, in the form of new curricula, research funding, excellent faculty and graduate students, and opportunities for engagement that contribute as much to campus as they do to local, state, regional, and international communities. The expertise we offer in the history, creation, organization, analysis, preservation, and use of information resources is a prerequisite for progress in science, business, education, and culture. With that expertise, we can contribute to the success of the campus as a whole, across the entire spectrum of its new initiatives in research, teaching, public engagement, and economic development.

A word about the competition we face is also appropriate in this summary. On the day that the first draft of this unit strategic plan was due in the Office of the Provost, U.S. News and World Report released its rankings of masters programs in library and information science, with GSLIS in the #1 position. Maintaining this position since 1999, in a time of declining state support, is an accomplishment of which the School can be proud, but it has not been easy, and it is not something that we can take for granted. The territory that we work in is enormously diverse and full of exciting possibilities, especially in faculty research and doctoral education, and the top positions are hotly contested. The University of Michigan—a school that we consider to be among the best of our competitors—has about $12M/year in state funding, a full-time faculty of 35 (not counting adjuncts or research scientists), a support staff of 50, and an enrollment of only about 300: GSLIS has $4M/year in state funding, with an enrollment of nearly 500 students, 22 full-time faculty and a staff of 28. In 1999, the University of Washington was ranked 18th overall in the U.S. News poll, but seven years later, it is at number four: in the intervening period, its faculty has grown by more than 700 percent, from 6 to 44. In that same period, our faculty has grown from 15 to 22, or 33 percent, while our graduate-student population has increased from 333 to 494, or 48 percent, and we have added an undergraduate minor.
The general instructions for completing these unit-level strategic plans included advice to streamline plans, emphasize critical initiatives, and identify which of our priorities we would fund with our own resources. No doubt, this is good general advice across the campus as a whole, but in the case of GSLIS, we are already so focused, so efficient, and so underfunded that it is frankly difficult to respond as instructed. Measured against our peers at other universities, we have done remarkably well with severely limited resources, and we cannot continue to be a top-ranked program by doing less or by focusing more narrowly. More importantly, information science—the discipline that GSLIS represents—is an area with rapidly expanding horizons and enormous potential to garner new research funding, to attract students to new academic programs, and to provide badly needed expertise to a very broad range of employers. Our record of making the most of limited resources and our potential as an engine to drive collaboration, especially across Green Street, justifies the modest investment we are requesting from campus.

Page five of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Strategic Plan (hereafter, the Campus Plan) says: “our strongest departments are equal to any in the nation, and must be sustained at that level.” Since 1999, GSLIS has been the only #1-ranked school or college in the University of Illinois system, in any national ranking. As this campus and the University of which it is a part put their strategic plans into action, we at GSLIS sincerely hope that future decisions will bear out the stated commitment to excellence. Moreover, we hope that the campus will make these decisions because it recognizes the value that GSLIS can bring to campus-wide strategic initiatives, to developing and strengthening interdisciplinary programs, and to online learning—whether in the Global Campus or the local one.
Section I: Overview

We live in a world where reliable curation, accurate retrieval, and effective use of information make the difference between success and failure. In government, success might mean preserving endangered digital census data, or it might mean thwarting planned attacks; failure might result in a society that cannot learn from its own history, or in ham-fisted immigration and profiling practices that deprive the nation (and this campus) of needed talent and diversity without substantially increasing our security. In business, success might mean being able to find and share software source code, and failure might mean having to rewrite that code at great expense, or being unable to defend a product liability lawsuit, at even greater expense. In communities, success might lower the costs of social services (by making preventive health information available to HMO members, for example) or it might improve the quality of life (by inculcating literacy and encouraging self-determination in individuals, families, and neighborhoods); in these contexts, the consequences of failure can be poverty, crime, and despair. Finally, as the rate at which recorded information is produced steadily increases, to the point where the sheer amount of it doubles every three years (“How Much Information? 2003,” http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/research/projects/how-much-info-2003/), the importance of understanding the many processes by which people become informed—the very understanding fostered in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science—is also rapidly increasing, not only for the world at large, but also, and perhaps most acutely, for universities themselves, since the university is quintessentially an institution that exists in order to create and disseminate information and, by making it usable, turns it into knowledge. In the 21st century, as we continue our transformation to a digital society, programs such as ours will be the common element in great universities—and among those great universities, great programs in information science, such as ours, will raise the best above the rest.

In its overview, the Campus Plan points out that Information technology (IT) has become a ubiquitous, indispensable component of research, information management, and decision-making, and addressing areas of national need. Illinois, a world leader in information technology, will develop an integrative approach to the study of knowledge creation and decision support systems. The Illinois Informatics Initiative will focus on emerging applications areas in the natural sciences, the humanities, the social sciences, and the arts, and on decision support in areas such as business processes and disaster response. We will extend the synergy between humans and computers and will provide opportunities for cross-disciplinary interaction both on our campus and around the world. We will create new degree and certificate programs that will accelerate the integration of IT into all curricula on campus and will produce the next generation of leaders in the IT revolution.

For more than 100 years, GSLIS has prepared students for careers as leaders in the information professions. As one of the oldest LIS schools in the country, Illinois helped establish and develop the methods used in the field of library and information science today. Our Ph.D. program—the oldest of its kind now extant in this country—is recognized today as one of the very best, and our doctoral students go on to positions of prominence in research and teaching, at schools like ours and in senior positions in various libraries. Our graduates are adept at using the latest technology
and methods for reference, research, information organization, and other professional tasks, and the School recruits faculty with strong theoretical and methodological foundations who understand both libraries and the broader context of information systems and services.

In its current configuration, the four major areas of research and doctoral education in GSLIS are:

- Information History, Economics, and Policy
- Information Retrieval and Digital Libraries
- Librarianship and Literature for Youth
- Social Informatics

We have key faculty leaders in all of these areas, and we have internationally recognized strength in most of them. We will continue to build and maintain that strength, and over the next five years we plan to expand into other areas as well—particularly bio- and health informatics, cultural/museum informatics, and scholarly/scientific communication.

As one of the four partners (with Computer Science, NCSA, and the Library) who developed the concept of the Illinois Informatics Initiative, as one of five units offering an option in the campus-wide bioinformatics master’s, and as one of the units centrally involved in planning the cross-campus IT minor, GSLIS is also deeply and demonstrably committed to research and teaching in emerging application areas, and we have an established track-record of creating and seizing opportunities “for cross-disciplinary interaction both on our campus and around the world.” A very concrete sign that GSLIS is already a kind of interdisciplinary crossroads for the campus might be found in the fact that of its twenty core faculty, nine have joint appointments, zero-time appointments, or stated affiliations in a total of twelve other departments on campus:

- Chip Bruce – 0% Engineering, Bioengineering; Curriculum & Instruction
- Leigh Estabrook - 0% Sociology
- Les Gasser - 0% Computer Science
- Christine Jenkins - 0% Gender and Women's Studies
- Linda Smith - 0% Coordinated Science Lab
- Mike Twidale - Computer Science (Dept Affiliate); Beckman Institute (Institutional Affiliate)
- John Unsworth - 0% English; the Library
- Dan Schiller - 25% at the Institute of Communications Research
- Susan Davis - 75% at the Institute of Communications Research

GSLIS also provides zero-time appointments for seven faculty members in other parts of the University:

- Nosh Contractor, Speech Communication, Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Paula Kaufman, University Library
- Robert McChesney, Institute of Communications Research, College of Communications
- Bruce Schatz, Medical Information Science, College of Medicine
- Susan Searing, University Library
- Terry von Thaden, Human Factors, Institute of Aviation
- ChengXiang Zhai, Computer Science, College of Engineering
The Campus Plan talks about the urgent need “to facilitate boundary-crossing interactions among departments and colleges when new knowledge and sharpened engagement with problems of the larger society are the reward.” We at GSLIS believe that library and information science has just such a boundary-crossing role, as demonstrated by the fact that GSLIS faculty collaborate on funded research projects with faculty in plant biology, microbiology, anthropology, psychology, educational psychology, speech communication, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, electrical and computer engineering, chemical engineering, computer science, physiology, animal science, the Institute for Genomic Biology, the Beckman Institute, NCSA, the Library, the Mortenson Center, the Coordinated Sciences Lab, and the Fire Services Institute. We have significant untapped potential to work with faculty in the humanities, as well, and GSLIS Dean John Unsworth and faculty members J. Stephen Downie and Allen Renear (all of whom are internationally recognized leaders in humanities computing) have been actively involved in working with Vernon Burton and others to develop plans for the Center for Computing in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS). Unsworth has also served on the advisory committee for NCSA’s Institute for Advanced Computing Applications and Technology. We also propose to reinvent Prairienet as part of our Community Informatics Initiative, turning it into an engine to drive externally funded research and service learning in connection with community-based and community-oriented information resources.

By any measure, over the past ten years GSLIS has been an extremely productive unit, nearly doubling its enrollment, increasing grant expenditures by more than 65% and increasing private giving by more than 62%. It has done this at a time when state funding has been steadily declining, using new resources largely derived from its ground-breaking and highly successful online program, LEEP (Library Education Experimental Program), which was in turn enabled by a campus investment in GSLIS (of over half a million 1996 dollars). LEEP now enrolls half of our 500 students, but we do not have the capacity to expand it much further. Therefore, in order to realize our significant future potential in research, teaching, public engagement, and economic development, GSLIS must have new investment from the campus—and, we will argue, current opportunities as well as past return on investment should give the campus confidence that new investment is warranted.

In order to seize some of the most important emerging opportunities and serve some of the most important emerging needs in the information professions, we need to do new hiring in a number of areas, including molecular-level bioinformatics (where GSLIS has $250,000 of NSF funding for three years of curriculum development), medical/health informatics, cognitive science, information retrieval, human-computer interaction, data mining and visualization, knowledge discovery, information organization, data curation and management, archives and preservation, information policy, political economics of information, intellectual property, bibliometrics, document-modeling and documentation, information history and history of the book, cultural informatics, and scholarly communication. In order to hire (and indeed, in order to retain) the best faculty, we need a budget that will allow us to remain competitive—not only with other schools of library and information science, but with computer science and the computational sciences as well. With upcoming retirements, we will also need to hire in areas that consolidate and preserve our existing strengths, for example in children’s literature and youth services. In order to do such hiring, we also need additional office and research lab space: happily, there is
the possibility of regaining 4,000 square feet in our current building, if CARLI (the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois) can be relocated to another building.
Section II: Strategic Intent: Mission, Vision, Principles, and Themes

Mission:
The stated mission of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science is to provide:

- Graduate education for leaders in research and practice in the fields of library and information science;
- Groundbreaking research to advance preservation of and access to information in both traditional and digital libraries and in the many settings outside of libraries where large amounts of critical information are collected;
- Useful service to librarians and other information service providers, as well as to the citizens of Illinois.

For its part, the Campus Plan states that

[T]he overall mission of the University of Illinois . . . is to transform lives and serve society by educating, creating knowledge, and putting knowledge to work on a large scale and with excellence. We serve the state, the nation, and the world through innovation and creativity in research and scholarship. We prepare students for lives of impact and address critical societal needs through the transfer and application of knowledge.

Vision:

We see these two—the mission of GSLIS and the mission of the University—as being obviously complementary and tightly linked. “Putting knowledge to work on a large scale and with excellence” is precisely what we are about, and while we understand that there’s more to knowledge than information, we also know that innovation and creativity, impact on critical societal needs, and the transfer and application of knowledge increasingly require expertise in creating, managing, and preserving information resources, as well as in the historical, ethical, and social dimensions of those activities. Information systems now co-evolve with their uses and their users, and in every discipline, every business, and almost every home, we don’t just consult information resources—we build communities around them, we collaborate through them, and we create new knowledge with them. Expertise in “putting knowledge to work” is what we cultivate and share at GSLIS, and it has been at the heart of our field, in research, teaching and service, for more than a century.
Principles:

In Library and Information Science, not only do we study how people develop and use information tools and resources across all the fields of endeavor: we also study interdisciplinarity itself—why it is done, how to make it work, what are its characteristic information problems, etc. For example, at the moment, GSLIS faculty members are working on:

- Improving neuroscientists' ability to synthesize existing research results, share information, and support different modes of discovery and collaboration;
- Breaking new ground in music information retrieval and music digital library research;
- Addressing long-term research problems in electronic publishing and document modeling;
- Building computer-based models of language evolution to allow societies of autonomous agents to develop their own languages, and to provide a foundation for theories of dynamic information systems of all kinds;
- Developing human and computer information systems to support biodiversity work and moving information retrieval systems out of libraries and into work environments where scientists, volunteers, high school teachers, and students generate and use information;
- Producing software (called iLabs) to support online collaboration in projects like the Ethnography of the University, and in community projects like SisterNet (www.sisternetonline.org).

Information science addresses itself to some of the same problems dealt with in computer science and management information systems (such as data-mining, interface design, information retrieval, competitive intelligence, and document modeling), but it does so with a focus on the human beings who use information, it engages with domain experts to address their information needs (as do engineers, for example), and it retains, even in its most technical pursuits, an awareness of the ethical, legal, and political dimensions of the information society. This more human-focused approach is increasing in importance as a generation of success in overcoming basic hardware, software, and networking constraints has put us in position to confront the challenges and opportunities inherent in a truly global information infrastructure. Perhaps for this reason, in the first three years of the 21st century "the number of undergraduate students declaring as computer-science majors at Ph.D.-granting schools plunged by some 30%" ("By the Book," Information Week, August 16, 2004), while in that same period of time GSLIS applications increased by more than 50% and our yield on admissions approached 100%.
Themes:

- **Information History, Economics, and Policy:** The study of information in historical and political-economic contexts is as profoundly important as it is undeveloped. GSLIS has a fundamental commitment to this field, and believes its significance will be increasingly widely recognized.

- **Information Retrieval and Digital Libraries:** Digital information forms an increasingly essential part of transactions in education, industry and government. Although librarians' and archivists' roles are independent of the form in which information is expressed, the nature of digital information both poses challenges for the design of the information environments that they manage and presents opportunities to expand the services that they can provide.

- **Librarianship and Literature for Youth:** Youth services librarianship is a rich concentration involving the study of children’s and young adult literature; storytelling and folklore in the oral tradition; young reader/writer interactions in multiple literacies; and information professionals in public and school settings.

- **Social Informatics:** Social informatics as an area of research seeks to understand the way information and communication systems and technologies shape and are shaped by the social context of their creation and use. Studies explore what pre-existing practices in information and communication produce particular designs and uses of information systems, how invisible technical and social infrastructures facilitate or limit access to information resources, and how anticipated and unanticipated appropriations of technology lead to new uses and practices.

- **Online Education:** GSLIS now enrolls about half of its master’s and CAS students, and teaches more than 20 classes a semester, in LEEP, a program that has a 95% retention rate, extremely high approval ratings from current and former students, and an innovative hybrid model that begins with an on-campus “boot camp” and then brings students and faculty face-to-face once a semester thereafter. All classes meet in real time once a week, but the technology used is accessible for students on dialup connections (as well as for students with disabilities). LEEP or LEEP components are also being used for continuing and professional development, virtual reunions, and on-campus classes. We are now working on more thoroughly and effectively blending LEEP with the on-campus classes, and we are evaluating next-generation infrastructure as well.

- **Undergraduate Education:** We remain committed to our undergraduate minor in Information Technology Studies. The Campus Plan (p. 40) says that there is “no interdisciplinary undergraduate IT program” at UIUC: this is a puzzling statement, since GSLIS has offered an interdisciplinary minor in this area, and has enrolled hundreds of students in the classes for that minor, since 2001. Given that, it is also puzzling that at this point in the Campus Plan the five-year goal is to spend $100,000 annually in
Computational Science and Engineering, which does not do undergraduate education in this area, rather than in GSLIS, which does. This needs to be discussed further, but meanwhile we are actively working with Computer Science, LAS, Communications, and others to evolve our program into a core component of a campus-wide IT minor. It is critical that campus administration remove structural impediments to this kind of program (in particular, the current formula for distributing tuition to departments that teach students in minors), but assuming that such impediments are removed, GSLIS can contribute a core component of this program.
Section III: The GSLIS Planning Strategy

Distinctiveness:

Among units on campus, what makes GSLIS distinctive is the depth and breadth of its interdisciplinarity. Faculty members come from backgrounds in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, computer science, and library and information science, and they collaborate widely across campus. Important, also, are the distinctive advantages that GSLIS has from co-location at UIUC with other units: every academic unit on campus has provided significant advantages to us, as we hope we have to them, and our partnerships with the Library, NCSA, and the Press give us a truly unique position in the world of library and information science.

Beyond our local context, what makes GSLIS distinctive among other schools of its kind is that it has held the center, as the territory of its research and teaching has rapidly expanded and diversified over the last decades. There is one faculty at GSLIS, without departments or divisions—though we have amicably identified four distinct focal points for research, and quite effectively coordinated them with research centers and with teaching programs. Students in the professional degree program are not tracked into different programs for different types of library jobs, as often happens in other places, but they are permitted to design highly individualized courses of study that answer to their own evolving interests and needs, making them attractive not just to public, school, academic, and corporate libraries, but also as information professionals in companies like Google, Amazon, and Microsoft. Our placement record indicates that what employers find distinctive about our professional master’s students is their background in academic research libraries (acquired in part through experience as graduate assistants in the UIUC libraries), and also their highly adaptive conceptual and technical skills, which are often mentioned in employer surveys.

What makes GSLIS distinctive among schools with online programs is that we have held the center there as well: over the last ten years, we have worked hard to include our online students in every aspect of the life of the School, so that there is one student body, half online and half on campus, and not two. Everything from graduation to visiting speakers to the meetings of student groups is streamed live to the online students, and archived online for future reference. Many on-campus students take online courses, all online students visit the campus at least once a semester, and we are currently experimenting with teaching to both audiences simultaneously.

As demonstrated in the newly released rankings from U.S. News and World Report (see Appendix A, “Competitive Benchmark Analysis”), the areas within our professional master’s that are perceived, among others in the field, as distinctive strengths at GSLIS include digital libraries, children’s literature and librarianship, information systems, health librarianship, and law librarianship.

And with respect to doctoral study and faculty research, what makes GSLIS distinctive is, very simply, excellence. That excellence is demonstrated in the School’s record of attracting and
retaining top faculty and doctoral students, in its record of tenure and promotion, in the placement of its graduates, in the highly regarded journals that it publishes, in its ability to attract external grant funding for research, and in the ground-breaking publications of its faculty. Such across-the-board excellence deserves—and indeed requires—continued and increased investment from the campus, the University, and the State, as well as access to private giving from major donors in the capital campaign, many of whom will be interested in what we do, if they are made aware of it.

**Competitive Benchmark Analysis:**

We are one of the charter members of the newly formed group of schools of information (see www.ischools.org, which we host), a group that also includes many of the public institutions against which the campus as a whole is benchmarking itself (e.g., Berkeley, Michigan, Texas at Austin, UNC-Chapel Hill), as well as some significant private institutions. In addition to the University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science, the other members of the I-Schools project are, at present:

- University of California–Berkeley’s School of Information
- University of California–Irvine’s Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences
- University of California–Los Angeles’ Graduate School of Education and Information Studies
- Drexel University’s College of Information Science and Technology
- Florida State University’s College of Information
- Georgia Institute of Technology’s College of Computing
- Indiana University’s School of Informatics and its School of Library and Information Science
- University of Maryland’s College of Information Studies
- University of Michigan’s School of Information
- University of North Carolina’s School of Information and Library Science
- The Pennsylvania State University’s School of Information Sciences and Technology
- University of Pittsburgh’s School of Information Sciences
- Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey’s School of Communication, Information, and Library Studies
- Syracuse University’s School of Information Studies
- University of Texas–Austin’s School of Information
- University of Toronto’s Faculty of Information Studies
- University of Washington’s Information School

I-Schools define themselves by their interest in the relationship between information, technology, and people. Members of the group are characterized by engagement in research and doctoral education, and by their understanding that expertise in all forms of information is required for progress in science, business, education, and culture. This expertise must include understanding of the uses and users of information, as well as information technologies and their applications. “Bridging Disciplines to Confront Grand Challenges,” the first conference of the I-
Schools community, took place on September 28-30, 2005, on the campus of Penn State University.

These schools are (with the exception of Berkeley, Georgia Tech, Penn State, and UC-Irvine) a research-oriented subset of schools granting the professional master’s degree in library and information science. The exceptions here are instructive, however:

- the I-School at Berkeley offers a Master’s of Information Management and Systems and a Ph.D., and it describes its curriculum as covering human-computer interaction, sociology of information, information assurance, information design and architecture, and information economics and policy;
- the I-School at Georgia Tech is the College of Computing (which is not part of the College of Engineering): it offers a bachelor’s of science in computer science and in computational media, a master’s of science in bioengineering, computer science, information security, and human-computer interaction, and a Ph.D. in algorithms/combinatorics/optimization, bioengineering, computer science, and human-centered computing;
- the I-School at Penn State is the College of Information Sciences and Technology, which offers a bachelor’s, master’s, and Ph.D. in Information Sciences and Technology;
- UC-Irvine’s I-School is a school of Information and Computer Science, offering master’s degrees in computer science, informatics (including interactive & collaborative, software, and biology & medicine), and statistics, and Ph.D.s in the same areas.

As we compete for faculty and doctoral students, we are competing with these schools, too, and they operate on the level of computer science and engineering with respect to teaching loads, startup packages, salaries, fellowships, postdocs, and the like. In order to continue to excel in some of the most important areas of information science, and in order to expand into others, GSLIS needs the resources to support aggressive recruiting and retention of faculty members and doctoral students. Indeed, this year’s doctoral graduates are getting starting offers from other schools that exceed what some of our associate professors earn, here at GSLIS.

Professional schools of library and information science were just ranked (March 31st, 2006) in U.S. News and World Report: the last ranking prior to this was in 1999. In the overall and subspecialty rankings (listed in Appendix A), you will see nearly all of the I-Schools that grant the master’s of library and information science: among these, the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign is ranked number one overall, tied with UNC-Chapel Hill, as it was in 1999. Illinois also ranks number one in the subspecialties of digital libraries and children’s/youth services, in the top five in law librarianship and in information systems, and in the top ten in health librarianship. Since the last rankings in 1999, GSLIS has been and now continues to be the only school or college in the University of Illinois system that is ranked number one in this national survey.

The campus strategic plan, in its discussion of U.S. News graduate school rankings, says “While we do not endorse their methodology and are concerned about the consistency of departmental responses to the U.S. News surveys, their results generally correspond with anecdotal faculty opinions of peer department quality.” In fact, peer assessment is all that U.S. News claims for its rankings, at least for schools like ours, so it’s quite correct to note that these rankings are not an
objective measure of value. Still, they do represent a collective judgment from within the field, and given their visibility they are very likely to have an impact on the number and quality of applicants that the ranked schools will receive. They may also have an indirect effect on the perceived competitiveness of grant proposals, and they do contribute to the overall reputation of the University and of this campus. The *U.S. News* rankings are listed in detail, with some commentary, as part of Appendix A: Competitive Benchmark Analysis.

We have not in the past had an agency that ranked the Ph.D. programs in these schools, but in the new taxonomy of disciplines from the National Research Council, information science is recognized as an emerging discipline in the category of Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering ([http://www7.nationalacademies.org/resdoc/Taxonomy.html](http://www7.nationalacademies.org/resdoc/Taxonomy.html)) and rankings are expected in December of 2007. In these rankings, we will be competing not only with the LIS I-Schools, but with many more schools that look like the I-Schools at Berkeley, Georgia Tech, Penn State, and UC-Irvine. And although we have a very solid LIS Ph.D. program, in order for us to be competitive in the context of “physical sciences, mathematics, and engineering,” we will certainly need new investment from campus.

**Strategic Analysis:**

On campus, the most important emerging opportunity for GSLIS is the Illinois Informatics Initiative (I³), which GSLIS helped to develop, along with Computer Science, NCSA, and the Library. With an annual state budget of about $4M, we are much smaller than these other units, but we have expertise that will be critical to the success of this venture, and we need some venture capital from the campus administration, so that we can pull our weight in the Initiative, as a more equal partner.

I³ is one of a handful of research areas called out in this strategic plan, and it has considerable significance for each of the others—in critical research, integrated sciences for health, and sustainable energy development—as well. The goal of this initiative is described as follows on page 38 of the Campus Plan:

> With the Illinois Informatics Initiative we will lead an integrated approach to information systems, focusing on knowledge creation in the natural sciences, the humanities, the social sciences, and the arts, and on decision support for business and government. The initiative will address both the social and technical aspects of information systems, as well as their reliability. The brief and remarkable history of the World Wide Web demonstrates that university research can have enormous social and technical impact on the rest of the world. The Illinois Informatics Initiative aims to invent the information environments of the future and educate those who will build and use them.

The emphasis of I³ is on social aspects of computing, the effective use of information resources in the practice of science, humanities, or social science research, information organization, and other topics that are at the heart of library and information science. GSLIS has unique expertise in examining systems from a socio-technical perspective, with an eye toward not only *efficient* but also *effective* use of information. As currently budgeted in the Campus strategic plan, though, I³ only comes in for a little over a million dollars in funding—just barely more than the
increase proposed for the Critical Research Initiatives, and far less than the tens of millions to be devoted to the health sciences and sustainable energy initiatives. However, since significant parts of both the health and energy initiatives require informatics expertise, perhaps these categories of funding will not prove to be mutually exclusive. We also note that State participation is projected for the health sciences and energy initiatives, but not for informatics (which may explain why projected funding levels are so different). Given that it is generally accepted that we live in “an information economy,” and given the impact of information-based businesses in areas like Boston, Washington D.C., Palo Alto, and other parts of the country, we think campus needs to re-evaluate its assumptions and revisit the potential for State investment in the Illinois Informatics Initiative.

In any case, the territory in which such an initiative will operate is very much up for grabs: for example, in his 2003-2004 report to the President, the Dean of Engineering at MIT talks about how the School “strives to address the societal challenges of the 21st century through leadership anchored in technical excellence and innovation,” and about the programmatic themes it has singled out for special emphasis, among which “the Big Four O’s” are "bio-, info-, macro-, and nano-.” We will need to leverage joint appointments, the history of collaboration, and the good working relations that exist between GSLIS and Computer Science, NCSA, and the Coordinated Sciences Lab, so that UIUC can compete effectively with other universities in the evolving interdisciplinary field of information science. Even so, if the University of Illinois wants to compete in the same league as MIT, as it could, then a serious strategic investment here is warranted.

It’s also worth pointing out that, of all of the areas in that MIT list, "info" is the one that bears most directly on the future of the university itself, as GSLIS has demonstrated in assembling its many cross-campus and multi-institutional collaborations. To take an example that is currently in progress, consider the $2.7M National Digital Information Infrastructure Preservation Program (NDIIPP) project, which is co-directed by John Unsworth (GSLIS) and Beth Sandore (University Library). This project brings together faculty and staff in GSLIS, the Library, NCSA, and WILL, to form the UIUC component of a partnership that includes OCLC (a major non-profit library-services organization in Dublin, Ohio), plus five state library systems (Illinois, Arizona, Connecticut, North Carolina, Wisconsin), the Perseus Project at Tufts University, and the Vincent Voice Library at Michigan State. This partnership, one of nine nationwide funded by the Library of Congress, addresses both practical and theoretical problems in digital preservation, as well as research issues in areas like semantic analysis of documents, information quality assessment, and information trust. Through projects such as these, we can also help UIUC demonstrate the value of its faculty expertise—not only in GSLIS, but in other schools and colleges as well—to the businesses, the communities, and the economy of the State of Illinois, and we can help UIUC move ahead of other public research universities in accomplishment and reputation, provided that the campus and the University can see beyond size to recognize not only the considerable accomplishments but also the even greater potential of GSLIS. We have unique competitive advantages to offer in actually carrying out the strategic plan, in leveraging other existing strengths at UIUC, and in accomplishing some of the research breakthroughs that UIUC needs in order to move from middling to cutting edge in the public’s perception.
Section IV: Reinforce and Build Comprehensive Excellence

Goal: Unit-Specific Goals for GSLIS

Our goals at GSLIS are clear:

- Be one of the world leaders in understanding the processes by which people become informed;
- Put that understanding into action in ways that make a difference;
- Retain top ranking of the professional degree program, and perform competitively in the forthcoming, first-ever ranking of Ph.D. programs in information science, conducted by the National Research Council;
- Expand the faculty in key research areas, in connection with curricular and engagement objectives of the School and campus strategic initiatives;
- Continue to increase external grant funding and private giving.

Our specific research, curricular, outreach, and economic development goals are deeply connected to the strategic initiatives in the Campus Plan, and they will be related to that document in what follows, but there are also some unit-specific intellectual components that seem appropriate to lay out here, while acknowledging that their value (and some of the resource needs identified in connection with them) may best be realized in connection through the campus-wide strategic initiatives.

- **Information History, Economics, and Policy**: Subjects of particular interest include:
  - globalization and information technologies;
  - social studies of finance and personal investing;
  - social studies of mobile communication;
  - history of libraries, information science and knowledge management;
  - social history of telecommunications and information infrastructures;
  - the political economy of global information;
  - policy and strategic issues in electronic scholarly publishing.

- **Hiring needs**: At least two junior faculty members, with background in some combination of the following areas: archives and preservation (including professors of practice), museum informatics, information policy, political economics of information, intellectual property, information history, publishing, and history of the book. We also need to hire a senior faculty member as director of the Library Research Center, to replace Leigh Estabrook, who is retiring.

- **Research Center**: The Library Research Center
• **Information Retrieval and Digital Libraries**: Research questions bear on various information genres, user communities, stages of the information life cycle, and architectural concerns for systems and services. Particular areas of focus for information retrieval and digital library research at the University of Illinois include:
  o document modeling;
  o knowledge representation systems;
  o information retrieval;
  o automatic text classification and mining;
  o multimedia information management;
  o human-computer interfaces;
  o multi-agent systems;
  o knowledge management systems;
  o information quality;
  o information use in scientific and scholarly work;
  o interoperability efforts on the use of digital collections;
  o healthcare informatics;
  o biodiversity informatics;
  o digital preservation.

• **Hiring needs**: At least two junior faculty members, with expertise in some combination of the following areas: molecular-level bioinformatics, medical/health informatics, information retrieval, human-computer interaction, data mining and visualization, knowledge discovery, information organization, data curation and management, document-modeling, digital preservation, bibliometrics, documentation, cultural informatics, electronic publishing (including professors of practice), scientific communication, scholarly communication. We also need at least two research scientists in this area.

• **Research Center**: The Information Science Research Lab

• **Librarianship and Literature for Youth**: Questions that drive research in this area include the following:
  o How does knowledge in the form of oral, print, and electronic texts shape, reflect, and enrich the lives of children and young adults?
  o How do stories, books, visual media, and other forms of knowledge cross boundaries of age level, culture, history, time, place, medium, and meaning?
  o How do we understand and facilitate connections between young readers/writers and texts/information?
  o How is literacy affected in the transitions between traditional and electronic environments?
  o How have youth services librarians, both individually and as a community, acted as canon shapers and intellectual freedom advocates in the history of publishing for youth?

• **Hiring needs**: At least one junior faculty member with some expertise in some combination of children’s literature, folklore, children’s digital libraries, literacy, storytelling, school media (including professors of practice). We also need to make at
least one senior hire to replace Betsy Hearne, who is retiring, as director of the Center for Children’s Books.

- **Research Center:** The Center for Children’s Books

- **Social Informatics:** Research includes both descriptive and analytic accounts of social relationships as well as studies of ethical and policy questions, as well as the exploitation of information technology as a tool to understand social relationships. Since information systems pre-date computing technology, the field considers historical and philosophical foundations as well. Example questions include:
  - How do groups, organizations, and communities use information systems to address their problems?
  - How can we account for the complexity and diversity of distributed, collective practice?
  - What tools are needed to mediate work on concrete tasks within communities?
  - What is the most effective process for developing shared capacity in the form of knowledge, skills, and tools?
  - How can we best conceive the relationships among digital and other technologies, information, communication, and organizations?
  - How does talking through computer media change perceptions of others, and the bases of community?
  - How do new forms of information and communication technologies affect networks of practice? What do these technologies afford for networks of practice?

Specific topic areas include:
  - community informatics;
  - distributed collective practice;
  - collaboration systems for online work, learning, and knowledge distribution;
  - e-learning in school, university, corporate, and lifelong learning settings;
  - educational informatics;
  - information technology applied to societal problems;
  - social impacts of technologies;
  - equitable access and social justice;
  - new literacies;
  - evaluation of emerging technologies;
  - studies of appropriation and diffusion of technologies.

- **Hiring needs:** at least one junior hire with a background in some combination of cognitive science, collaborative systems, community informatics (including professors of practice), information trust, ethics and complex systems, e-learning, communities of practice, sociolinguistics, semiotics, social studies of science and technology.

- **Research Center:** Prairienet, as part of the Community Informatics Initiative: this needs additional resources as detailed below.

There are clearly a number of interests shared among more than one of these four broad areas: for example, faculty in both social informatics and in information retrieval and digital libraries are interested in *information communities*, though in somewhat different ways; those in librarianship and literature for youth are interested in *literacy issues*, and so are those in social
informatics; faculty in information history/economics/policy care about archives and preservation, and so do the faculty in information retrieval and digital libraries.

**Emerging Areas of Emphasis:**

At least one other area of shared interest seems likely to emerge over the next five years as full-fledged areas of research and teaching in its own right: scholarly/scientific communication, now a concern of digital libraries, information history/economics/policy, and social informatics, is an area where we envision growth, perhaps including new degree programs and possibly new or redefined research centers. Increasing our work in this area (and its visibility) would bring needed intellectual resources and needed attention to a set of problems of profound importance to research and scholarship around the world and also to the larger culture these activities serve.

Some research areas that are subtopics in GSLIS now also have already demonstrated potential to rise to campus-wide importance over the next five years and, in collaboration with other units, become the focus of new programs of research and teaching—for example, bioinformatics, health informatics, or museum informatics (and cultural informatics generally).

- We already have a GSLIS option in the campus bioinformatics master’s (one of five offered, along with those in Animal Sciences, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Computer Science, and Crop Sciences), but we need to expand faculty in this area in order to contribute as we should and could to this broad and important emerging discipline. GSLIS is, as far as we know, the only unit on campus with external funding to develop the curriculum in this area, having just won $250,000 over three years from the National Science Foundation on the argument that “current bioinformatics programs are computation-centric and focus primarily on molecular biology. While they make a valuable contribution to science, greater progress in research can be made by expanding the area of scientific and information technology expertise covered by information professionals supporting scientific research. The GSLIS program will be unique in that the main focus is on training scientific communication specialists (SCS) within a much broader scope of biological informatics to include integration of scale from the biomolecular to ecosystem.”

- With respect to health informatics, evidence of potential includes our recent national ranking in health librarianship (see Appendix A); another indicator is the fact that the new head of Medical Information Science in the College of Medicine (Bruce Schatz) was for the past decade a member of the GSLIS faculty (and we need to hire to replace him); also obviously important here is the relevant ongoing work by faculty in social informatics and digital libraries, and doctoral research by students like Tim Hogan (whose research “focuses on understanding the information behavior of people living with chronic and/or acute health conditions, as well as the development of effective information services and systems for these communities”).

- As for museum and cultural informatics, GSLIS faculty have long been involved in these issues: both Mike Twidale’s and Bryan Heidorn's research bears on this area and involves using ideas of ubiquitous computing to enhance museum visiting both onsite and online, and on the integration of digital versions of traditional sources of information with digital representations of specimens and artifacts. Boyd Rayward, Bryan Heidorn, and others have also been involved in campus-wide discussions of a certificate in museum studies,
to which GSLIS can contribute a fundamental component, helping to make the Spurlock Museum, the Krannert Art Museum, and the Rare Book and Manuscripts Library integral to UIUC’s educational and research programs in new ways. Rayward, Twidale, Unsworth and others are also involved in discussion with Professor Jonathan Fineberg (Computer Science, Art History) about future collaboration with the Phillips Gallery in Washington, D.C. And finally, Downie, Renear, Palmer, and Unsworth have worked for years in the area of humanities computing.

Resources:

- $1M recurring for new faculty hiring
- $800,000 one-time for start-up
- $500,000 one-time to develop new research and teaching programs in scholarly and scientific communication

**Goal: Strengthen Excellence in Disciplines Critical to National Stature**

We understand that the disciplines meant here are, in the words of the Campus Plan, “basic life sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities,” and we approve of investment in these areas: a one-sided investment in the technical, as against the social, will not get UIUC where it wants to go, in terms of comprehensive excellence. However, we believe that we can play an important role in leveraging the investments that UIUC has already made—and will no doubt continue to make—in engineering and computer science, to the advantage of these disciplines. To offer only one of several possible examples, two faculty members in GSLIS—Allen Renear and John Unsworth—have previously run interdisciplinary humanities research computing institutes or centers, at Brown University and the University of Virginia, respectively. Both have been working with Vernon Burton and Thom Dunning on planning the Center or Institute that will serve arts, humanities, and social sciences as they grapple with advanced computing. This effort is central to “leveraging leadership in high-end computer engineering”—and in order to raise its standing overall, UIUC will need to raise the profile of humanities and social sciences, the core of a liberal-arts undergraduate degree. GSLIS can help to do that, by identifying opportunities, forging partnerships, and providing both focus and expertise to leverage existing excellence in information science, computer science, the libraries, and engineering through “translational research” in humanities and social-science informatics.

As for world-class interdisciplinary research and scholarship, something also called out in the Campus Plan at this point, a few examples from the GSLIS faculty will have to stand for the many that could be presented:

- Chip Bruce was selected by the Institut National des Télécommunications, Evry, France, to become an Associated Partner in the ProLearn 'Network of Excellence' (part of the Information Society Technology program of the European Commission, for technology-enhanced professional learning), and as Senior Participant for a National Science Foundation / Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft (NSF/DFG) project, which involves work with seven universities in Germany on technology-supported enhancements for learning.

- Boyd Rayward is one of four co-investigators (designated in Flemish as "Promotors") on a project funded from 2006 through 2009 by the Flemish Research Fund entitled "Paul
Otlet’s (1868-1944) spatial analogies. The convergence of virtual knowledge environments, networks, cities and architecture.” He has also recently experimented by means of video-conference technology with offering a joint doctoral seminar with the Royal School of Library and Information Science in Copenhagen, with a connection to the University of Tromso in Norway, on a comparative study of the history and development of public libraries in Scandinavia and the U.S.

- Mike Twidale has collaborations with faculty in Computer Science, University of Waikato, New Zealand; Computer Science, University of Nottingham, UK; Informatics, University of Sussex, UK; Psychology, Sociology, Computer Science, University of Lancaster, UK; Computer Science, University of Tasmania, Australia; Department of Computer Systems Engineering, Universidad de las Américas-Puebla, Mexico.

**Resources:** Although GSLIS is not named among the units targeted for the $2.5M recurring (for senior faculty appointments) here, we respectfully suggest that with ten percent of that amount we could usefully participate in cluster hires in the areas of math, humanities, social science, and life sciences.

**Goal: Ensure Excellence in Academic Programs and Services for Undergraduate Students**

Although GSLIS is a graduate school and has no undergraduate majors, that does not mean we are not interested in undergraduate education. The most obvious way in which we already do contribute to undergraduate education is through our Information Technology Studies minor, offered since 2001. The Campus Plan refers to a goal of developing “undergraduate and graduate interdisciplinary academic programs that link to emerging areas of scholarship” and we are among the small group of units already engaged in those activities—in developing the campus-wide IT minor, and in offering an option in the campus-wide bioinformatics master’s program. We are involved in both of these because both programs offer significant scope for engaging new categories of students in the work that we do at GSLIS, and because we believe we can, in fact, help to ensure excellence in them.

The Campus Plan also talks about plans to “enhance student retention and graduation rates and enable the development of innovative educational models that best serve students in the twenty-first century.” In this regard, UIUC has no better, more experienced or more proven resource on campus than the Graduate School of Library and Information Science. We not only know how to do these things: we study them. We not only train students using these methods: we train students who can support these activities. If campus really wants success in online education, or in blended learning, or simply in effectively deploying instructional technology to reduce the cost and increase the effectiveness of large lecture courses, it should invest in GSLIS. We have been doing this kind of work since 1996, with external funding and other forms of recognition (from the Sloan Foundation, for example), and GSLIS would gladly stack its practices and programs in this area up against those of any other unit in the world, in terms of learning outcomes, student satisfaction, faculty satisfaction, or (an important point) durability of both systems and information.
Resources: We suggest that at least half of the $200,000 set aside here to “hire upper-level undergraduates to manage virtual labs, online dialogs” would be much better spent, for the same purpose, on graduate assistantships for GSLIS students previously trained in supporting online education in the LEEP program. We have many such students, and we can easily provide more. Their training is not simply technical, but also social and pedagogical: they have been an important part of the success of our LEEP program, and they can contribute substantially to the success of similar programs elsewhere on campus. We also assume that half of the $200,000 designated here to develop two cross campus undergraduate minors will go to the IT minor, and at least a majority of that will be available to the two units (computer science and GSLIS) who are offering core components of that minor.

Goal: Ensure Excellence in Graduate Education

With respect to this goal, the Campus Plan notes, “more graduates of master’s-level programs are needed in key areas to meet the demand for a better-educated workforce required by the rapidly developing technology base of the economy.” The Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics agrees: according to their recent report on “Tomorrow's Jobs,” by 2012

- Employment in computer systems design and related services will grow by 54.6 percent and add more than one-third of all new jobs in professional, scientific, and technical services.
- Employment in the information supersector is expected to increase by 18.5 percent, adding 632,000 jobs by 2012. Information contains some of the fast-growing computer-related industries such as software publishers; Internet publishing and broadcasting; and Internet service providers, Web search portals, and data processing services. Employment in these industries is expected to grow by 67.9 percent, 41.1 percent, and 48.2 percent, respectively.
- Over the 2002-12 period, a 23.3-percent increase in the number of professional and related jobs is projected, a gain of 6.5 million. . . About three-quarters of the job growth will come from three groups of professional occupations—computer and mathematical occupations, healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, and education, training, and library occupations—which will add 4.9 million jobs combined.

(http://www.bls.gov/oco/oco2003.htm)

It is not just information science that has job-market value, but also library science, albeit increasingly in non-library settings. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Outlook Handbook for 2004-2005,

Jobs for librarians outside traditional settings will grow the fastest over the decade. Nontraditional librarian jobs include working as information brokers and working for private corporations, nonprofit organizations, and consulting firms. Many companies are turning to librarians because of their research and organizational skills and their knowledge of computer databases and library automation systems. Librarians can review vast amounts of information and analyze, evaluate, and organize it according to a company’s specific needs. Librarians also are hired by organizations to set up
Librarians working in these settings may be classified as systems analysts, database specialists and trainers, webmasters or web developers, or local area network (LAN) coordinators. (http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos068.htm)

The Campus Plan also calls, at this point, for building “flexible models for interdisciplinary training to pervade entire degree programs.” At GSLIS, we not only already have such a model, but it is part of our research agenda to help others think through and articulate the proper balances between consistency, stability, and nimbleness in knowledge institutions—beginning with an understanding that nimbleness and adaptivity are not always assets, nor always the right response to environmental stimuli. If that expertise is wanted, it is available. We can also help with the five-year goal of developing “prototype professional master’s programs in the life sciences, the social sciences, and humanities.” In fact, we are already involved in discussions about just such a program with the Department of English, one that would graduate students trained either for library faculty positions (as subject-area specialists, for example) or for professional academic computing support positions (in humanities computing). We are also open to exploring the possibility for joint Ph.D. programs, where it is clear that employment opportunities exist to offset the opportunity cost of advanced graduate work.

**Resources:** Ten percent of the $3M for fellowships (“particularly international and underrepresented”) would allow us to pursue the admission of master’s and doctoral students to joint degree programs, and perhaps to admit students to GSLIS whose research or education would focus on interdisciplinary training in other parts of campus.

**Goal: Foster an Inclusive Campus Community**

Here it must be said that Prairienet has long played what is probably the campus’ most critical role in connecting informatics to community organizations and citizens across the State in order to meet specific needs and contribute to overall well being. Project-specific examples range from our wireless project for the municipality of Homer, to the forty community tech centers and innovative training programs that we’ve set up in East St. Louis (where disadvantaged young people learn IT and how to set up a small business to support those tech centers), to partnering with Habitat for Humanity, to our unique research and education collaboration with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in the Paseo Boricua neighborhood of Chicago. No other UIUC degree program connects inclusivity and a Chicago presence the way we do, let alone addresses informatics. We are also founding partners in the Illinois Community Technology Coalition (http://www.iletc.org/) and our faculty and staff are frequently called upon as consultants for informatics in community contexts across (and beyond) Illinois.

Finally, in terms of gender diversity, we excel at providing opportunities for undergraduate and graduate women to engage with advanced information technologies. This provides a vital complement to the field of computer science where—despite heroic efforts—gender disparity could be described as dismal and worsening.

**Resources:** Although the focus of the campus, with respect to inclusiveness, seems to exclude graduate students, we would argue that graduate/professional education is quite important to achieving the long-range goals of diversity programs in this university, and
therefore we request that ten percent of the $3M annually in scholarships, $250,000 annually for recruiting, and $1,200/student in merit aid would be available to GSLIS.

**Goal: Enhance the Campus Work Environment**

Here again, Prairienet must be mentioned, as it was the primary architect of the emergency drop-in childcare system that the campus now uses. That system was developed in response to a request from campus to find a way to reduce employee absence and stress associated with the lack of adequate childcare services in the area. Also, we’ve long heard from UIUC employees that their Prairienet accounts are a valuable asset for their families and help them appropriately separate official electronic communications from personal ones. And anecdotally, we can report that computer training provided by Prairienet to its building service worker helped her move on to a higher paying job.
Section V: Strategic Initiatives

Initiative: GSLIS Unit Initiatives

Research:
- Maintain preeminence in digital libraries, children’s literature and youth services.
- Achieve preeminence in social informatics.
- Build a broader faculty base for long-term excellence in information history, economics, and policy.
- Hire to develop and extend expertise in health informatics, bioinformatics, museum informatics.
- Organize to make visible expertise in scholarly communication.

Curricular:
- Migrate our successful online education program (LEEP) to contemporary open-source software, and continue to experiment with blending on-campus and online classes, online continuing education, and collaboration with corporate partners who are massively invested in online instruction.
- Further develop the CAS (advanced graduate degree) in Digital Libraries, increasing enrollment to at least 15 students/year.
- Further develop the GSLIS track in the campus-wide Bioinformatics Master’s program, increasing enrollment to at least 15 students/year.
- Offer core and elective courses in the campus-wide IT minor.
- Participate in campus-wide efforts to develop a museum studies program.
- Develop joint MSLIS/JD program with the Law School.
- Develop joint MSLIS/MA program with the English Department.
- Explore the possibility of other joint master’s degrees in humanities/social science.
- Explore the possibility of offering professional education in publishing, with a focus on scholarly/scientific communication.

Public Engagement and Economic Development:
- Build on successful outreach and continuing education programs at the Center for Children’s Books in conjunction with campus-wide priorities for public engagement in the public schools, statewide.
- Maintain Prairienet’s record of successful community engagement in the local community, the state, and the region, and develop new programs to more successfully integrate it in research and teaching, in GSLIS and across the campus.
• Continue to develop the GSLIS Corporate Roundtable—begun in summer 2004 and which brings together GSLIS faculty and graduate students on the cutting edge of research with leaders in the business community. Our goal is to move Roundtable members toward collaborative projects, establishing internships for GSLIS students, and cultivating interest in an informatics cluster in the Research Park.

• In consultation with faculty and external constituents, determine the future direction of the Library Research Center, which has provided valuable information-gathering and analytical services to libraries around the state and across the nation for over forty years.

• Expand successful Continuing and Professional Development activities, including summer Rare Book School and the Illinois Summer School for Chinese Academic Librarians.

As one example of a strategic initiative in GSLIS that could have long-term impact across all four of the University’s missions with modest investment from funds already identified in the Campus Plan, consider the following proposal for re-programming Prairienet in the context of GSLIS’s Community Informatics Initiative (see http://www.cii.uiuc.edu/), and in the context of the campus-wide Illinois Informatics Initiative.

Here’s how Prairienet now describes itself and its mission:

Prairienet, founded in 1993, is a member- and donation-supported community information network for Champaign-Urbana and the surrounding East-Central Illinois region and its mission is to:

• Strengthen community organizations by helping them provide and retrieve networked information.
• Empower individuals by providing access to networked information and by teaching the skills necessary to access and use this information.
• Facilitate information and resource sharing in support of community development efforts.
• Promote equity of access to computer resources for everyone in the community.

In practice, though there’s been some connection between these activities and teaching in GSLIS, there has not been very much connection with research, in GSLIS or elsewhere. However, in the last year or so, we have seen a rising interest (at GSLIS and elsewhere) in Community Informatics (CI for short), an emerging area of research concerned with “the use of Information and Communications Technologies for personal, social, cultural or economic development within communities” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_informatics). This teaching and research interest—which we do not think will be limited to GSLIS faculty, by any means—can find in Prairienet an indispensable partner. Here’s how.

**Prairienet as a Community Informatics Laboratory and Workshop:**

Staff from the offices of the provost and the chancellor who reviewed the first draft of the GSLIS strategic plan asked whether “continuing with Prairienet [is] the right investment and strategic direction for the unit?” and commented that “it does not seem ideal from a strategic perspective.” We wish to be quite clear on this point: whether it makes sense to continue with Prairienet depends entirely on whether the campus is willing to make a continuing commitment, of the sort
outlined below, to turn this into a center that drives community-focused informatics research and service-learning courses for faculty and students across campus. We think that a modest recurring investment here will return at least matching dollars in the form of grants, and will return much more than that in terms of faculty research opportunities and service-learning opportunities for the campus as a whole. For GSLIS, such a redesigned Prairienet would fit very well with the research focus on community informatics. We also note that shutting Prairienet down will have a significant price in terms of university public relations, and we will want the campus to share in that cost, as they have shared in the benefits that Prairienet has provided.

Here is our plan for a redesigned and sustainable Prairienet:

**CII Research fellows:** Prairienet staff will bring to the attention of faculty across campus opportunities for CI research in connection with community activities that Prairienet is either already involved in or knows about. When faculty step forward to express an interest in these opportunities, Prairienet staff will work with them to develop a brief fellowship proposal; fellows will be chosen in a competitive application process judged by a group that includes Prairienet staff, CI faculty who are not competing for fellowships, community representatives, and possibly others. Fellows, once selected, will be in residence for a year, with half-time teaching release (reimbursed to the home department by Prairienet at a rate to be determined—perhaps $20,000), a research assistant or grad hourly, and some funds for travel and consumables. Total budget should be around $35,000 per fellowship; at least another $15,000 will be needed for Prairienet staff costs in connection with each fellowship, because these fellows will need Prairienet staff to work with them, and with the community groups, on developing and completing their research projects. If we have three of these fellowships/year, that's $150K, of which about $45K goes to Prairienet, the rest to participating units. The payback to the campus on this investment is external research funding, and Prairienet staff will need to work with fellows on developing external research grant proposals, budgeting appropriately for staff support and resources in those grants, and so on. Successful proposals will have their grants run through Prairienet, and a reasonable portion of the ICR will be returned to Prairienet, the rest going to the faculty members' home unit.

**Curricular Development:** Prairienet staff will bring to the attention of faculty across campus opportunities for service learning and other teaching in connection with community activities that Prairienet is either already involved in or knows about. When faculty step forward with an interest in developing a course, Prairienet staff will work with them to develop a preliminary proposal, which will be vetted by a committee that includes Prairienet staff, CI faculty, community representatives, and others. Faculty whose proposals are successful will receive summer money (say roughly $10,000 per faculty member) to do course development, and they will commit to teaching the course at least once a year for the next three years. A portion of Prairienet staff time will also be charged to these projects—on the order of $5,000 per project—and that amount will go to support Prairienet operating costs. If we ran four of these a summer, the cost would be about $60,000 for this program, about $20,000 of which goes to Prairienet directly, and the rest to participating units. Lab fees would be collected each time the courses were taught, and that income would go back to Prairienet, whose staff would support the service-learning component of the classes.
Funding: A certain amount of recurring funding from campus would be required to prime the pump here—about $210,000 per year for the direct costs of the programs described above. That constitutes about 11% of the relevant resources in the Campus Plan. Long-term sustainability for the activities that grow out of those programs would come from writing staff into grant budgets, collecting a portion of ICR on funded grants, and collecting lab fees on courses. We do not imagine that the entire activity could be self-funded, starting with a zero budget each year and recouping all operating costs from grants and fees, but we are confident that a program like this could bring in more in external funding each year than the campus would be committing up front, so in that sense it would return the investment. The other returns on investment, beyond the financial, would be research outcomes, economic development, bi-directional engagement between the campus and the community, and valuable opportunities for teaching and learning, all of which go to various stated objectives of the Campus Plan in very direct, visible, and productive ways.

Resources: $210,000 recurring to foster community informatics research and teaching opportunities for faculty and students across campus, in conjunction with Prairienet

Initiative: Implement Interdisciplinary Approaches to Emerging Opportunities

The planning group for I³ is now drafting a proposal for an organizational structure that would permit core units in the Initiative to manage its resources: in designing it, our emphasis is on developing something agile and lightweight that can respond quickly and creatively to new research and teaching opportunities, without having to reshuffle or dissolve existing schools, colleges, or departments. This kind of virtual organization is going to be important for other projects in this university, and for other universities, in the future, and with the necessary support provided from Campus and the necessary trust and goodwill established among the principals, it will be a very effective example.

Critical Initiatives in Research and Scholarship

The Campus Plan, at this point, calls for expanding "the capacity of the campus to expedite the creation of multidisciplinary programs or projects that explore of innovative ideas and accelerate the translation of research advances," and it aims to accomplish this by additional investment in the Critical Research Initiatives program. In general, GSLIS supports this, but we suggest that some of this funding might also be devoted to smaller Research Board grants which—being easier to apply for and easier to get—promote early speculative work, in contrast to the larger CRI grants, which increasingly resemble NSF bids. The funding process in place at the Academy for Entrepreneurship is another useful alternative and complementary model.

In more unit-specific terms, if GSLIS faculty are involved in research projects with faculty in humanities, arts, and social sciences (through emerging structures like NCSA’s Institutes and the Center for Humanities and Social Science Computing, for example) then we can lend expertise
in collaborative proposal development and large-scale project management, which is not generally to be found in the humanities especially, and which is really only learned by doing.

Finally, if we’re able to do the necessary hiring (see unit strategic initiatives, above) in health informatics, community informatics, and other areas, we would also have a role to play in collaboration with Carle Clinic, working on the more social side of translational biomedical research.

**Illinois Informatics Initiative**

John Unsworth, Dean of GSLIS, Marc Snir, Head of Computer Science, Paula Kaufman, University Librarian, and Thom Dunning, Director of NCSA, worked together to develop the Illinois Informatics Initiative (I3), so GSLIS is deeply and directly interested in this strategic initiative, and we believe it can help to raise the profile of the university as a whole, in applied interdisciplinary research, improving the quality of both graduate and undergraduate education, and helping to attract and retain the best faculty.

Many GSLIS faculty and students do research related to the analysis of socio-technical systems, taking careful account of use-in-context. Digital library research is relevant here, as is research into information history, economics, and policy, research in social and community informatics, and research in children’s digital libraries and new media literacies—where, for example, a project called BookNet will, for the first time, use the kind of recommender strategies familiar to users of Amazon.com to free children’s literature from its history of hidebound categorization by race, class, ethnicity, gender, and genre. In all of these areas, GSLIS can collaborate with the library and with faculty in departments south of Green Street as well as to the north. Community informatics is an area where GSLIS has a special investment, and we note the surge of interest in social informatics more generally, both on campus and in the research community at large. GSLIS is also playing an important role in the discussions of the future NCSA institutes, and the putative Center for Computing in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, and we are ready to do more in this area.

If translational research is the future, we can help to translate research across Green Street; if interdisciplinarity is the future of UIUC, a stronger, larger GSLIS can help the campus figure out how to do interdisciplinarity right, since interdisciplinarity itself (and the navigation of emerging knowledge terrain) is an object of study in library and information science, and GSLIS faculty are adept at the practice as well as the theory of interdisciplinarity. We note, for example, that although the Campus Plan at this point says “professional staff in NCSA . . . are weakly coupled to research and scholarly activities across campus,” this is not the case with GSLIS, where we have several active research projects that depend on collaboration with NCSA, and where NCSA professional staff sometimes teach, too. We have similar collaborations with faculty in the library who work in the area of digital libraries, and we have cross-appointments of faculty and cross-listing of courses with Computer Science, as well as many intersecting research interests. For all those reasons, we regard the core group of four units that has been planning the Illinois Informatics Initiative as a stable, well-tested, and congenial partnership from which to develop a
broader framework for participation in this campus-wide strategic initiative, and we are pleased to do our part in that effort.

**Integrated Sciences for Health Initiative and Illinois Sustainable Energy and the Environment Initiative**

“The Goal,” according to the Campus Plan at this point, is to “apply Illinois’ expertise in the physical sciences, engineering, and life sciences to improve human health.” Information science should be included in this list: at this point in the evolution of medicine, you cannot have better human health without better healthcare informatics, for both the patient and the healthcare workers. That seems to be understood when just a few lines later “health informatics” is listed as one of five areas of expertise that we can bring to bear here—but the faculty member who now runs the revived department of medical information sciences in the college of medicine is Bruce Schatz, who for the previous ten years was a faculty member at GSLIS, and we are as likely a home for new faculty working in this area as is the College of Medicine. We also have other faculty doing related work—for example, Carole Palmer’s work with neuroscientists, to specify information technology needed to 1) improve neuroscientists' ability to synthesize existing research results and share information and 2) support different modes of discovery and collaboration. Through field studies at neuroscience labs we are identifying high impact information, critical information problems, and constraints on the transfer and exchange of information within research teams and between specializations and disciplines. [See http://www.isrl.uiuc.edu/~neuro/]

Progress across the three main strategic initiatives (informatics, healthcare, energy) is interdependent. For example, progress in healthcare depends on progress in informatics and environmental issues; the reverse is also often true. As a specific example, the Informatics Initiative clearly impacts and can benefit from work in healthcare informatics (e.g. patient records, medical error/safety). Synergies like these are not clearly stressed or exploited in the strategic plan, and GSLIS may be able to contribute to their integration, by stressing informatics issues in the other two realms (such as information organization, access to information, knowledge management, information seeking behaviors, social informatics, design of information systems and interfaces). Unless that happens, it is certain that informatics costs will be duplicated across the other two areas, while at the same time the Informatics Initiative will be starved of resources.

We can also help with the five-year goal of “infrastructure created to support collaboration and interaction with community health-care institutions,” since that is precisely the kind of work that Palmer, for example, already does in neuroscience (see above) and—in another frame of reference—that the GSLIS Community Informatics Initiative does with the recipients of healthcare (see for example http://www.sisternetonline.org/, “a network of African American women committed to nurturing healthy lifestyles and community activism” developed in collaboration with Prairienet, using Community Inquiry Lab software developed in GSLIS).
**Initiative: Enhance the Quality and Diversity of Undergraduate Students**

The Community Informatics focus on social justice, self-determination, and effective use of information technology for community betterment means the GSLIS track in the IT minor can be a draw for underrepresented minorities: if it is, GSLIS can offer those students unique opportunities through Prairienet.

Also of interest here is the newly established Youth Literature Interest Group (YLIG), which draws from faculty and doctoral students in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, the College of Education, the Department of English, and American Indian Studies on the UIUC campus, as well as from Illinois State University and Eastern Illinois University. In monthly discussions and presentations, the group explores issues of lifelong literacy through interdisciplinary research on texts, contexts, and aesthetics in children’s and young adult literature, and those discussions frequently deal with cultural difference and underrepresented groups. A high quality interest group of this sort has the potential to draw in high quality undergraduate students (including future K-12 teachers), and by drawing them not only from across campus but also from across the State, it can help to increase both diversity and the sense of community, among both graduate and undergraduate students.

**Initiative: Prepare Students for Leadership in a Global Environment**

As has already been pointed out, the GSLIS Information Technology Studies minor has been offered for a number of years: we have recently hired a new faculty member, Lori Kendall, who will direct this program. In the minor, students complement their major studies with both information and technology skills, learning where to find information, how to use it strategically, and how to design information spaces, understanding the role of information in organizations and in society, exploring design, access, and use of information and communication technologies, and considering how policies on access to these resources are set and how they affect us. All of these are skills and concepts that are important to leadership in a global information age.

We also have a strong global connection in our informatics work, from our work with Latino, Korean, and other immigrant groups, to working directly with communities around the world, (for example, Prairienet director Paul Adams being invited by top government officials and the head of the major oil company in Sao Tome, to assist with rural networking, digital libraries, and other informatics initiatives there). Another example of connecting student engagement and learning with the local-global and informatics initiatives is the Korean Cultural Center that two of our students have established almost single-handedly. It includes developing new Korean-language IT capabilities, the development of a cadre of student volunteers, and significant programs—they expect 500 people at an exhibit of Korean photos in coming weeks, and they are currently setting up a UI summer culture camp at the request of families in Korea.

The Campus Strategic Plan announces the ambition that “Illinois will become the leading public research institution that engages undergraduates in civic commitment activities and other learning experiences that connect academic content with experiential learning.” The Plan notes
that very few academic units offer credit-earning civic engagement and/or community-based learning courses, and it calls for reallocating $250,000 annually to support new courses. As has already been articulated above, GSLIS (through CII/Prairienet) could help departments across campus achieve this goal, by developing service-learning courses with community engagement as their focus, and developing proposals for externally funded research projects in community informatics that would offer opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students. This will help to accomplish something else that the strategic plan calls for, namely “increase student engagement with faculty in research or creative activity.” There are a number of areas in which we would like to develop professors of practice, and this is certainly one of them.

**Resources:** $100,000 for one professor of practice, from campus reallocation

**Initiative: Strengthen and Diversify the Research Portfolio**

Perhaps because GSLIS is a professional school, the Campus Plan tends to regard it as an educational rather than a research unit, but in FY ’05 its faculty brought in $10.5M in new grants, with principal investigators at a rate of 100% of faculty headcount, effectively equal to the rate of 100.8% in Engineering, and many times higher than that in other professional schools (for example, Business at 25% or Law at 10%) according to 2005 data from the Division of Management Information. Our research funding comes from a more diversified mix of sources than in almost any other place on campus: we receive funding from government agencies in the sciences, engineering, humanities, and social sciences, as well as in museum and library services. In fact, the day before this unit strategic plan was due to be submitted, GSLIS was contacted by Joint Experimentation Directorate (J9) of the US Joint Forces Command, a unit chartered by the Secretary of Defense to be the lead agency in conducting experimentation relating to new processes, organizational structures and technologies. By their own account, they made the contact because “the UIUC Graduate School of Library and Information Science has a national reputation, and your own areas of research interest, particularly social informatics, seem to be very appropriate to our current areas of experimentation . . . with new, multi-national and inter-agency organizational structures conducting civil/military exercises in a highly distributed, synchronous communication environment. [We are] very willing to explore the possibility of funding [unclassified] research that would help us learn more about operating in a multi-cultural, multi-national, distributed knowledge environment.” It remains to be seen what will come of this contact, but it is at least noteworthy in a discussion of GSLIS’s potential to “strengthen and diversify the research portfolio.”

The campus plan calls for expanding support from foundations and also strengthening corporate connections: GSLIS can contribute to campus success in both areas. We have multiple strong connections to, and current funding from, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts, ongoing connections to and past funding from the Sloan Foundation. Our relatively new but successful Corporate Roundtable draws information systems managers, special librarians, project managers, and other information professionals from regional companies in sectors as diverse as insurance, manufacturing, natural resources, and health services, for bi-monthly meetings at which case studies are presented and analyzed by faculty and graduate students. These companies (Caterpillar, Archer-Daniels-Midland, Abbott
Laboratories, State Farm, Arch Coal, Kaplan Test Prep, and others), sought us out because they identified key information problems within their organizations that need to be addressed in order for the company to succeed. In Caterpillar’s case, to take only one example, the problem is knowledge management and digital preservation: every tractor they make comes with thousands of lines of code on embedded microchips, and they need to make sure they don’t write the same program twice (no small challenge, in terms of knowledge management, in a global corporation), and they need to preserve the source code for the life of the tractor (20 years, on average—no small challenge, for digital preservation).

The UIUC technology incubator comes up at this point in the Campus Plan: one of the next new residents of the Enterprise Works building is a music information retrieval startup that is a spin-off of work done by GSLIS faculty member J. Stephen Downie, in collaboration with the Automated Learning Group at NCSA (with funding from NSF and Mellon, and now from Illinois Ventures), called One Llama Media Inc.

The campus plan also calls for identifying new sources of funding for initiatives in education, social sciences, humanities, and the arts: here again, investment in GSLIS will pay off across campus, as we work in collaborative research projects in all of these areas, with funders like the National Humanities Center (which recently invited the Dean of GSLIS to consult on plans for a new funding initiative in Digital Humanities), the National Science Foundation (whose new director of the Office of Cyberinfrastructure, Dan Atkins, is former dean of the I-School at Michigan, and an advisor to the American Council of Learned Societies Commission on Cyberinfrastructure for Humanities and Social Sciences, chaired by the Dean of GSLIS), as well as the aforementioned private foundations, some of whom routinely make million-dollar grants in digital humanities or social science.

The Campus Plan announces the intention to “develop a presence in Washington D.C. that enables faculty to understand the research funding landscape and puts Illinois in a position to influence national science policy.” We would very much like to participate in this effort, and connect it to lobbying efforts by schools like ours, through the Computing Research Association (http://www.cra.org). We also want to ask, though, why the focus should be only on national science policy? Equally important, and potentially more productive of new research funding for UIUC, are Washington’s policy and research bodies in the areas of education, culture, and telecommunications, among many others.

**Resources:** As seed money to encourage faculty at GSLIS to develop research or consulting projects with our Corporate Roundtable partners, $50,000 of the $200,000 in private and redirected funds that the Campus Plan designates for fostering a stronger entrepreneurial culture. Input on the development of a UIUC presence in DC.

**Initiative: Initiate a Geographic Strategy: From Local to Global**

**Orchard Downs:** If this new development is to have “state-of-the-art informatics and communications technology” and if that is to be deployed in the context of “healthy, community-based lives” then GSLIS has much to offer here, especially through its Community Informatics
Initiative. Unfortunately, neither CII nor Prairienet personnel have been invited to serve on the advisory committee. We would be happy to do so, if invited.

Local public schools: In considering what UIUC can offer to the local schools and how we can profit from them, the campus strategic plan focuses understandably on the College of Education, but it would be a mistake to overlook the things that GSLIS has to offer, like technology preparation for teachers, learning opportunities for K-12 students, or training for K-12 library information specialists. We would also argue for the inclusion of local libraries in the scope of this initiative, as another form of public educational institution. We have many connections to local public libraries, including formal practicum experiences for students, guest lectures from local librarians, faculty who serve libraries in various ways, and students who volunteer in the libraries informally. It is also worth noting that GSLIS is piloting an after-school program at BT Washington elementary school for new Spanish-speaking immigrant children, in response to a dire need expressed by local families, and enthusiastic support from the school. Our program operates three days a week, serves 15 children, and is staffed by about 16 volunteers (including undergraduate and graduate students from across campus who participate via service-learning courses). GSLIS faculty member Ann Bishop has written several grants to extend the program next year and increase the number of students involved.

Resources: $75,000 for a master teacher in Children’s Literature/Youth Services/School Media. This might come out of the $200,000 annually that’s now earmarked in the campus plan for the College of Education (for a literacy enrichment academy): school librarians, children’s librarians, and media specialists such as those we train and certify, have something to contribute on this front. With $25,000 of the $100,000 targeted to enhance math, science, and technology preparation for teachers, we can contribute to that effort as well.

Chicago: We are already working to recruit and mentor a cohort of Latina/o students eager for a career that gives them the opportunity to contribute to their communities. The GSLIS program in Community Informatics emphasizes social entrepreneurship and community library and information services, so that they are prepared to apply what they’ve learned to the creation of innovative information services implemented within and across a range of community-based and public interest organizations. We will conduct the track as a blended experience that emphasizes service-learning while “in residence” in Chicago neighborhoods, yet offers students experience with online learning and integrates them with the GSLIS on-campus program. The CI track in Chicago also benefits UIUC campus-bound students and faculty, as well. Campus-based students participating in the CI curriculum will have a new opportunity to experience urban CI in a living laboratory environment via weekend and intensive summer courses in Chicago. All students and faculty with an interest in social informatics will have increased opportunities to participate in unique Chicago activities both virtually and through fieldtrips. Faculty will have new opportunities to teach Chicago classes on-site or through LEEP. A strong, permanent Chicago presence also provides a new avenue for GSLIS to develop activities that unite the School with our largest contingent of alumni and the wide range of Chicago organizations (from the Chicago Public Library to the American Library Association to Corporate Roundtable members) with whom we maintain important relationships. More deeply, the CI track in Chicago brings new knowledge and perspectives to GSLIS teaching, scholarship and engagement in social
informatics. A community of inquiry that crosses socioeconomic and cultural boundaries in equitable and productive ways can strengthen our School’s (and our field’s) knowledge of community library and information systems. It can also contribute, simply but powerfully, to the social and intellectual life of GSLIS.

In a separate program driven from the Center for Children’s Books, federal funding will allow us to deliver a two-year series of seminars on children’s literature for librarians and teachers, offering new approaches to the selection, evaluation, and use of children’s books, in order to strengthen reading comprehension and critical thinking skills among youth. This project, called LIFTS (Literature is Important for Thriving Students) will feature seminars at the Center for Children’s Books in Champaign and at a site in the Chicago area, with priority given to teams that promote a collaborative approach to identifying and using high quality literature. The CCB will work with the Illinois School Library Media Association (ISLMA) and two Illinois state library systems—Lincoln Trail Libraries System (LTLS) and the Metropolitan Library System (MLS)—to bring librarians and teachers together for this training.

**Resources:** $100,000/year from the $600,000 annual campus reallocation for six projects that will “identify and strengthen focused, visible, and sustained engagement efforts that address Chicago’s most pressing societal problems.”

**Regional:** Regionally, GSLIS and the Library have organized major Midwestern LIS programs and research libraries in a collaboration called LAMP (LIS Access, Midwest Program) intended to recruit qualified and interested but underrepresented minority students from work experiences as undergraduates (or staff) in research libraries, into the professional degree program and, where appropriate, into doctoral education. Assistant Dean for Student Affairs Rae-Anne Montague led the writing and submission of a grant proposal for LAMP now pending at the Institute of Museum and Library Services, to provide start-up funding for the program. As part of LAMP, participating LIS programs in the region would provide fellowships and mentoring, and GSLIS would use its experience in fostering online cohorts to provide a continuing sense of community for these students as they pursue degrees across the Midwest.

**Resources:** Program funds on the order of $50,000 recurring, from sources identified elsewhere in the Campus Plan for diversity and recruiting.

**International:** This past summer, GSLIS ran a summer school for 20 directors and deputy directors of academic research libraries around mainland China: the attendees dubbed it “GSLIS Huangpu,” a reference to a famous Chinese military academy that produced the most prestigious generals in China. We’ll be repeating this in the coming summer and for many years to come, and we’ll be working to cultivate support for the program from the Beijing office of the Ford Foundation and from Chinese government sources. The program will be the basis of a long-term effort to establish and sustain an alumni network in China, and it has already provided new opportunities for our many Chinese graduate students. We are exploring joint degree options with Chinese universities, and we would be interested in University-based industry agreements involving graduate students who could participate in industry-based internships.
Section VI: Garner and Manage Resources to Achieve Strategic Goals

The campus plan notes that reallocation will be differentially applied and “some units will be protected.” We argue strongly that GSLIS should be protected from reallocation. We are currently funded at about $4M/year in state funding, and we are a highly effective and efficient academic unit, by many significant comparative measures: Computer Science, for example, has more than twice the tenure-system faculty that GSLIS has, and more than twice the state funding, and seven times the assignable space, but GSLIS has more net graduate tuition, we award more degrees per faculty FTE, we have nearly the same percentage of faculty acting as PIs on grants, and our grant and contract expenditures per faculty FTE are up more than 30% in GSLIS this past year. Unlike Computer Science and most other units on Campus, though, GSLIS does not have undergraduate majors to subsidize its graduate program: it does have some undergraduate minors, but the way minor tuition is apportioned on this campus makes it very difficult for a program without majors to cover costs on classes for minors, let alone generate tuition income that would offset the cost of graduate education. Budget recisions in recent years have cut our modest budget to the bone, and additional reallocation taxes would fatally impair our ability to partner with other campus units, to assist campus in realizing its strategic goals, and to realize our own potential or retain our top-ranked position in the field.

If it weren’t for the online education program that GSLIS has been running since 1996, GSLIS would be in dire straits financially: LEEP students are generally part-time students with full-time jobs, and so they don’t often need assistantships, which means net tuition income from this part of our master’s program is a good deal more than from our on-campus master’s students. LEEP students also tend to be more out-of-state than on-campus students, and minority enrollment in LEEP is twice what it is on campus. Even with LEEP, however, this year has been a real challenge for GSLIS in financial terms. Like the rest of the campus, we’ve seen flat or declining state dollars for the last several years, and in recent years the Campus has been taxing units for “campus unavoidables” and mandating unfunded salary programs for faculty and academic professionals. Over the same period, we have tried to cope with this by controlling the number of assistantships we sponsor, by raising in-state tuition above the campus base rate, by addressing efficiency issues having to do with enrollment and curricular management, by discontinuing some administrative positions and some auxiliary units, and by limiting our use of adjunct faculty. All the same, it will be a real accomplishment if the GSLIS budget balances at the end of this fiscal year. The basic problem is that, as a small unit, we are hit disproportionately by flat-rate “across-the-board” cuts. After several years of such cuts, we are left with no slack and no flexibility in our budget, so reallocation is not a viable strategy for us: we have nothing to reallocate.

If the campus and the university are serious about rewarding excellence and investing in the future, it is time to affirm what GSLIS has accomplished, what it represents in the Informatics Initiative, and what it has to offer in transforming the University of Illinois. UIUC will not maintain its position, much less gain on the competition, without taking some risks and making
some targeted investments that are in excess of what others are doing in the same area. You have
strength on which to build, in GSLIS, and there is reason to believe that the study of information
will be to the 21\textsuperscript{st} century what physics was to the first half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, or computer
science was to the second half.

Obviously, these are not easy times in which to find new money in any university, but every
year, colleges and administrative units on this campus carry forward millions of dollars—money
tied up, no doubt, in commitments to start-up funds, building projects, and the like. In the non-
academic world, commercial banks routinely manage to put such “committed” but idle funds to
work, investing them in projects that develop the economic potential of businesses and
communities. This campus needs to find a way to invest such resources too, and GSLIS needs
part of that investment, to enable it to realize its potential as a component of UIUC’s future.

\textbf{Resource Summary:}

\textbf{Reinforce and Build Comprehensive Excellence}

\textbf{Unit-Specific Goals:}

\textit{Information history, economic, policy}
\begin{itemize}
  \item two junior faculty members, possibly hired in conjunction with the Illinois
        Informatics Initiative, to increase our engagement in this critical area
  \item one senior faculty member (as director of the Library Research Center) to replace
        Leigh Estabrook, who is retiring.
\end{itemize}
$300K$ recurring, $300K$ one-time

\textit{Information Retrieval/Digital Libraries:}
\begin{itemize}
  \item two junior faculty members, possibly hired in conjunction with the Illinois
        Informatics Initiative or the Coordinated Sciences for Health or Sustainable
        Energy initiatives.
  \item two research scientists, for externally funded research projects
\end{itemize}
$400K$ recurring, $200K$ one-time

\textit{Literature and Librarianship for Youth:}
\begin{itemize}
  \item one junior faculty member
  \item one senior hire (as director of the Center for Children’s Books) to replace Betsy
        Hearne, who is retiring.
\end{itemize}
$200K$ recurring, $200K$ one-time

\textit{Social informatics:}
\begin{itemize}
  \item one junior faculty member
  \item additional resources as detailed below
\end{itemize}
$100K$ recurring, $100K$ one-time
Emerging Areas of Emphasis: Scholarly/Scientific Communication:

- $500K one-time to develop new research and teaching programs in this area.

Space:

- In order to do new hiring, we need to be able to occupy the rest of 501 E. Daniel St. It’s difficult to estimate what it would cost to relocate CARLI, or to pay off the contribution that Steve Rugg’s office made, on their behalf, to renovating the building in the mid-1990s. $1.5M one-time?

Goal: Strengthen Disciplines That Contribute to National Excellence:

- $250,000 recurring, toward cluster hires in the areas of math, humanities, social science, and life sciences.

Goal: Ensure Excellence in Academic Programs and Services for Undergraduate Students

- $100,000 recurring, for graduate assistantships to help other campus units with managing online education, virtual labs, etc.
- $100,000 (one-time) for developing our half of the core for the undergraduate minor in information technology studies

Goal: Ensure Excellence in Graduate Education

- $300,000 for fellowships to recruit minority, international, and interdisciplinary students (to be matched by fellowship endowment funds raised by GSLIS)

Goal: Foster an Inclusive Campus Community

- $250,000 recurring for recruiting faculty from underrepresented populations
- $60,000 recurring in merit aid for minority graduate students ($1,200/student for an estimated 50 students)

Resources to Reinforce and Build Comprehensive Excellence: $1.96M recurring $2.9M one-time

Strategic Initiatives:

Initiative: GSLIS Unit Initiatives

- $210,000 recurring, for the direct costs of a redesigned Prairienet program

Initiative: Implement Interdisciplinary Approaches to Emerging Opportunities

- Most of the resources requested above, under “Reinforce and Build Comprehensive Excellence/Unit-Specific Goals,” are resources that would help GSLIS to do its part in the Illinois Informatics Initiative (which we see as also contributing to informatics elements of the health and energy initiatives)

Initiative: Enhance the Quality and Diversity of Undergraduate Students

- Resources requested above, under “Strategic Initiatives/GSLIS Unit Initiatives” would have an impact here.
Initiative: Prepare Students for Leadership in a Global Environment
- $100,000 recurring, for one professor of practice.

Initiative: Strengthen and Diversify the Research Portfolio
- $50,000 one-time seed money to encourage entrepreneurship
- Resources requested above, under “Reinforce and Build Comprehensive Excellence/Unit-Specific Goals,” would have a decided impact here as well.

Initiative: Initiate a Geographic Strategy: From Local to Global

**Local:**
- $75,000 recurring, for a master teacher in Children’s Literature/Youth Services/School Media
- $25,000 recurring, to enhance math, science, and technology preparation for teachers.

**Chicago:**
- $100,000 recurring for the Community Informatic Corp, a project that will “identify and strengthen focused, visible, and sustained engagement efforts that address Chicago’s most pressing societal problems.”

**Regional:**
- $50,000 recurring, for diversity and recruiting, in support of the LAMP program

Resources Needed for Strategic Initiatives:
- $560,000 recurring
- $50,000 one-time

Total Campus Funding Requested:
- $2.52M recurring
- $2.95M one-time

GSLIS Capital Campaign and External Funding:

The stated goal for the GSLIS capital campaign is $9M, more than 42% of which has been raised already. Our stated priorities in the campaign are endowed chairs and professorships, graduate fellowships, minority recruiting and retention, curricular innovation, research centers, and discretionary funds for recruiting and retaining top faculty. So far, we are having the greatest success in raising endowment for graduate fellowships.

GSLIS has strong connections to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and the Pew Charitable Trusts, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Kauffman Foundation, the Sloan Foundation, and a number of smaller private foundations. GSLIS also regularly receives research funding from the National Science Foundation, DARPA, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Library of Congress, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, and the Illinois State Library. Our Corporate Roundtable draws information professionals from regional companies including Caterpillar, Archer-Daniels-Midland, Abbott Laboratories, State Farm, Arch Coal, Kaplan Test Prep, and others.
## Appendix A: Competitive Benchmark Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Competitors</th>
<th>Research/Scholarship</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Engagement/Service</th>
<th>Economic Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science departments, nationally and internationally</td>
<td>Computer Science departments, nationally and internationally</td>
<td>UNC-Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science</td>
<td>Michigan’s School of Information</td>
<td>Michigan’s School of Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC-Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science</td>
<td>UNC-Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science</td>
<td>Florida State’s College of Information</td>
<td>University of Maryland, College Park, College of Information Studies (for work in the DC area)</td>
<td>University of Maryland, College Park, College of Information Studies (for work in the DC area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Washington School of Information</td>
<td>University of Washington School of Information</td>
<td>Syracuse University’s School of Information Studies</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison, Library and Information Studies</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison, Library and Information Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse University’s School of Information Studies</td>
<td>Syracuse University’s School of Information Studies</td>
<td>Pittsburgh University’s School of Information Sciences</td>
<td>Dominican University, Chicago</td>
<td>Dominican University, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan’s School of Information</td>
<td>University of Michigan’s School of Information</td>
<td>University of Texas at Austin School of Information</td>
<td>Indiana University--Bloomington</td>
<td>Indiana University--Bloomington</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
U.S. News and World Report’s 2006 Ranking of Library and Information Studies

Rank : School : Average : [1999 average: 1999 rank]
(5.0 highest)

Overall:

1. University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign 4.5 [4.4: 1]
   University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill 4.5 [4.4: 1]
3. Syracuse University (NY) 4.3 [4.0: 3]
4. University of Washington 4.2 [3.0: 18]
5. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor 4.0 [4.0: 3]
6. Rutgers State University 3.9 [3.9: 6]
7. Indiana University–Bloomington 3.8 [3.9: 6]
   University of Pittsburgh 3.8 [4.0: 3]
   University of Texas–Austin 3.8 [3.6: 10]
10. Florida State University 3.7 [3.5: 12]
11. Drexel University 3.6 [3.7: 9]
   University of Wisconsin–Madison 3.6 [3.8: 8]

The top three remain as they were in 1999 (though each has risen slightly in its score, which means that it’s gotten even more competitive to be in the top rankings over the past seven years). Note, though, that Washington jumped up to fourth from 18th in 1999, knocking Michigan down to fifth from its tie for third in 1999.

Here are some of the rankings in significant sub-specialties within the master’s program:

Archives and Preservation
[1999 ranking in brackets]

1. University of Texas–Austin [1]
2. Univ. of Maryland–College Park [2]
   University of Michigan–Ann Arbor [3]
5. Univ. of California–Los Angeles [6]
6. Simmons College [8]
7. UNC–Chapel Hill [5]
9. SUNY–Albany [not ranked in 1999]
GSLIS was not in the top rankings here, either in 1999 or in 2006: this is an area of increasing importance, as archival materials become increasingly electronic, raising new issues in preservation, information assurance, information organization, and access. There is research funding in data curation from places like NSF as well as the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and there are good opportunities to collaborate here with NCSA, as well as with the Information Trust Institute. We need to hire in this area, and should not cede it to other schools, in the future.

**Digital Librarianship**

[not an area of ranking in 1999]

1. U. of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
2. Syracuse University
3. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
4. UNC–Chapel Hill
5. University of Washington
6. Drexel University
7. Rutgers State University
8. Indiana University–Bloomington
9. Univ. of California–Los Angeles
10. University of Pittsburgh

These rankings are new, and it is gratifying to see GSLIS at the top, outpacing private universities (Syracuse) and our major competitors among the publics (Michigan, Chapel Hill), as well as aggressive newcomers. We have a new advanced graduate degree in digital libraries, and this will certainly help to drive enrollment in that program—but we can’t rest on these laurels for very long: this is an area where there has been, and will likely continue to be, considerable research funding (NASA, DARPA, NSF, NEH, IMLS, Mellon) and that raises the potential for relatively quick and externally funded changes in position.

**Health Librarianship**

[1999 ranking in brackets]

1. University of Pittsburgh [1]
4. University of Washington [not ranked in 1999]
5. Texas Woman’s University [not ranked in 1999]
6. Univ. of Maryland–College Park [6]
8. Syracuse University [not ranked in 1999]
10. Univ. of South Carolina–Columbia [4]
This is an area with considerable potential for research funding, and with good opportunities for job placement as well. To have made it into the top ranks over the last seven years, after having been out of the ranking before, is certainly good news, but others not previously ranked have risen higher in this category in the same period of time. An investment in hiring at GSLIS in conjunction with the campus initiative in Integrated Sciences for Health (or the Illinois Informatics Initiative, or both) is likely to pay off here in the future.

**Information Systems**

[1999 ranking in brackets]

1. Syracuse University [2]
3. University of Washington [not ranked in 1999]
5. Drexel University [1]
   - University of Pittsburgh [3]
6. UNC–Chapel Hill [7]
7. Indiana University–Bloomington [8]
   - Rutgers State University [5]
8. Florida State University [not ranked in 1999]

Here we’ve risen one place since 1999, and that’s good news. This subspecialty ranking, along with digital libraries, might be considered an index of the perceived technical emphasis in the School, and students graduating with training in this area would be employable in many contexts, not just in libraries. Again, an investment in hiring at GSLIS, in connection with the Illinois Informatics Initiative would pay off here.

**Law Librarianship**

[not an area of ranking in 1999]

1. University of Washington
2. Catholic Univ. of America
3. University of Texas–Austin
4. Indiana University–Bloomington
5. U. of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
   - UNC–Chapel Hill

This area was not ranked in 1999, and it is good news that we’re in the top five, especially as we are discussing a joint MSLIS/JD program with the Law School, and students who graduate in this area have the potential to be among some of our more highly paid alumni, but this is a competitive area, and we need to hire in order to make further inroads here.
School Library Media
[1999 rankings in brackets]

1. Rutgers State University [1]
2. Univ. of South Carolina–Columbia [3]
3. Univ. of Maryland–College Park [not ranked in 1999]
4. Syracuse University [10]
5. Florida State University [2]
6. San Jose State University [5]
University of Washington [not ranked in 1999]
8. Indiana University–Bloomington [7]
University of Pittsburgh

GSLIS was not in the top rankings here, either in 1999 or in 2006. This is disappointing, because we have been building a program in this area, in conjunction with the teacher certification program across campus. Support from campus in connection with its initiatives involving the public schools, teacher preparedness, and professors of practice could help us crack the top rankings in this area. Note the rise to 6th on the part of Washington, after having been unranked in 1999.

Services for Children and Youth
[1999 rankings in brackets]

1. Florida State University [2]
   U. of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign [7]
3. Rutgers State University [1]
5. Univ. of California–Los Angeles [not ranked in 1999]
   Univ. of Maryland–College Park [not ranked in 1999]
   University of Wisconsin–Madison [4]
8. UNC–Chapel Hill [8]
10. Simmons College [6]

For GSLIS, this is a really significant result, inasmuch as a large number of our master’s and Ph.D. students work in this area. To have jumped, in seven years, from seventh place to first is a great achievement, and faculty members in this area are justly proud of the vote of confidence from peer institutions. Washington’s also in the wings here, though, after not having been ranked in 1999. Perhaps not coincidentally, they have recently established the nation’s first endowed chair in children’s literature and youth services.
Appendix B: Distinctive Assets Across Four Missions

We note that the campus strategic plan, in this section, under “research/scholarship” cites UIUC’s preeminence “in the areas of physical science, computing and information systems, engineering disciplines, and agriculture.” Information science (as distinct from computing and information systems) is also an area of preeminence for the campus, in research and scholarship. On a related note, the Campus plan mentioned “noteworthy success in some professional programs,” but only under the heading of education: while it is true that some of the professional programs that are most often mentioned in the campus plan do not do very much externally funded research, GSLIS does quite a bit. Under Engagement/Services, “community internet access” is mentioned as a strength, but it is not noted that this service has been provided for the last ten years at the expense of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, under the name of Prairienet. Likewise, although GSLIS is noted as an exception to campus’s otherwise “limited reach of e-learning”, the GSLIS online program (LEEP) is not conceived or proposed as an asset that could be leveraged by the rest of campus, with modest investment.
## Appendix C: SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWOT</th>
<th>Research/Scholarship</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Engagement/Service</th>
<th>Economic Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td>History of interdisciplinary research makes GSLIS a good partner in cross-cutting initiatives on campus, nationally, and internationally.</td>
<td>Excellent professional program, excellent doctoral program, highly productive full-time faculty</td>
<td>School media and children’s librarianship; community informatics initiative; library research center; center for children’s books</td>
<td>Many graduates of the professional degree program remain in-state; full-time librarians correlate with economic well-being. Also, faculty research productivity contributes to economic development by bringing in new jobs and purchasing, in connection with research grants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
<td>Under-funded and under-staffed to collaborate as an equal partner with campus units like Computer Science and NCSA, or to compete with computer science departments nationally and internationally.</td>
<td>Small tenure-system faculty means too much reliance on adjuncts and retired faculty</td>
<td>Research centers need to become the centers of public engagement as well: none of them has completely figured out how to do that yet, or how to integrate that with teaching</td>
<td>We’re a small school, so our economic impact is easily overlooked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Many research opportunities in knowledge management, social informatics, health informatics, information policy, youth literature and literacy, digital libraries, digital preservation, electronic publishing and scholarly communication.</td>
<td>New advanced graduate programs for practitioners, new programs in continuing and professional development, stronger undergraduate minor as part of campus-wide IT studies.</td>
<td>Increasing demand for school librarians; tremendous need for better community information services and facilities; critical period in US and world history in the area of information policy; looming digital library problems, particularly in preservation.</td>
<td>Our potential to offer good careers for underrepresented minorities is far from fully exploited at present. We are working on a regional program, but we need some support to prime the pump on this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT ↓</td>
<td>Research/Scholarship</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Engagement/Service</td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td>Nationwide, computer science departments are already large and well funded: their enrollments are dropping and our more human-centered kind of information science looks like promising territory to them. We aren’t currently in a position to compete with CS departments for faculty, students, or research dollars.</td>
<td>Declining out-of-state enrollment means that we are not competing successfully for some of the best graduate students nationwide, partly because of high out of state tuition, partly because of a need for more merit-based fellowship money</td>
<td>Demands on a small tenure-system faculty in the areas of research and teaching may tend to drive engagement and service to the periphery, unless we can figure out how to integrate all three.</td>
<td>None except failing to fully engage GSLIS research with the problems that will shape life in the information society, business in the information age, and literacy of all kinds in the future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Environmental Assessment

The Campus Plan notes that “nationally, the median age is rising. The Urbana campus must continue to produce cutting-edge knowledge that helps aging citizens live healthier, fuller lives.” It might also note, though it does not, that people are working longer as they live longer, and that most people now have multiple careers in a lifetime. That is good news for professional schools like ours, who have a tradition of educating people for second and third careers, and also for online education and the GSLIS expertise there. See Section IV, “Goal: Ensure Excellence in Graduate Education,” above, for an environmental assessment from the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, with respect to jobs for graduates of schools like ours.

The campus plan points out that as tuition rises, “the Urbana campus must maintain accessibility for lower-income and first-generation students.” Here again, GSLIS has a history of considerable generosity to its students, especially in the form of tuition waivers for assistantships, and it helps students prepare for careers in areas where jobs are reliably available, and steadily increasing in number, diversity, and remuneration.

“Competition for the best faculty continues to intensify,” says the Plan, and it notes that UIUC has a special, geographical challenge in recruiting and retention. We think that GSLIS has something to contribute here, as its research, carried out in a campus-wide living laboratory and in the community, can help to erase distance, facilitate collaboration with colleagues at other institutions, and bring distant resources to our faculty, students, and residents.

UIUC “should supplement its strong residential focus and capture innovative e-learning opportunities, such as focused programs for workforce development and adult-learning needs.” GSLIS is working with Kaplan testing, State Farm, and other regional companies interested in just these issues, and a recent Corporate Roundtable meeting was devoted to discussion and comparison of e-learning methods and goals in GSLIS and in these businesses. We expect funded research and consulting to follow.

Under “Economic Development and Research Trends,” the campus plan points out that “The Urbana campus should develop more graduate and professional programs that are relevant and engaging to potential students.” Obviously, it should also develop those graduate and professional programs that already meet this description, and GSLIS is one of those.
Appendix E: Statutory and Regulatory Mandates

We are subject to relatively few of the more onerous and expensive statutory and regulatory mandates listed in the campus plan: our faculty don’t work with animals or with toxic chemicals or radioactive materials; we don’t produce hazardous waste; we don’t work directly with DNA, we don’t work with controlled substances, blood-borne pathogens, infectious medical waste, etc. We are, of course, subject to the civil service system, labor laws, civil rights laws, whistleblower laws, Department of Naval Research grant-related agreements and requirements, FERPA, etc.

From the point of view of GSLIS, perhaps the most onerous and expensive statutory mandate is the one that requires us to give full tuition waivers to university employees who enroll in our program, to certain categories of citizens of the state of Illinois, and to employees of other state universities in Illinois. Waivers of this sort are mandated each year for between ten and twenty percent of our on-campus students, and for an increasing number of students in our online program as well: this has an impact on our state budget, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars, that we can neither predict nor control.