



BOBCATSSS 2010 @ Parma, Italy

Dates: Monday 25th, Tuesday 26th, Wednesday 27th January, 2010

**Bridging the digital divide:
libraries providing access for all?**

“Undergraduate LIS Education in the U.S. and Europe: Practices and Trends”

Charlotte Dugan

Library Science Department, Missouri State University, Springfield, MO USA

charlottedugan@missouristate.edu

Presentation type: Paper

Purpose of this paper

The purpose of this paper is to examine and compare undergraduate LIS education in the U.S. and Europe and developments and future trends in their place in preparing librarians and information specialists for information occupations.

Background

In the USA, undergraduate courses have long played a role in training and education for work in librarianship. In addition to accredited schools of library science offering Master’s degrees, many universities have offered courses in library science for those who wished to be trained in working as school librarians, archivists, and other related occupations. In discussions of the internationalization of LIS education, differences in tiered approaches to LIS education have been noted in Europe and other countries along with the specific types of careers these programs prepared students for. Today there is a trend toward providing undergraduate programs to meet new societal demands in information consumption. These new “information technology” undergraduate programs have largely grown out of the iSchool movement concerned with the relationship between information, people and technology and the belief that expertise in all forms of information and information technologies as well as understanding the uses and users of information was necessary to meet the challenge of information needs in today’s world. <http://www.ischools.org/>

Methods used for the study

Literature will be reviewed to analyze the LIS undergraduate programs in the U.S. and Europe. Curricula for these programs will be analyzed by looking at course offerings and descriptions online and contacting the identified schools to obtain pertinent information.

Findings

With the varieties of LIS education in the US and Europe, it is expected that there may be many points of comparison and analogy between the US and European LIS undergraduate courses and programs including similarities and areas of “uniqueness.”

Importance and interest of the study

The topic of undergraduate LIS education is one that has a rich historic background in the development of LIS education in both the US and Europe. Analyzing and comparing these programs should be of interest to all involved in LIS education particularly as it has evolved over time

Value of paper

What is new in this paper is the recognition that undergraduate LIS education has been around a long time meeting changing library and information societal needs. Comparing the US and European models of such education could determine the value of the undergraduate “tier” for educating and training librarians and information specialists.

Charlotte Dugan is Assistant Professor in the Department of Library Science and Reference Librarian at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO USA. Her research interests are Evaluation of Library Instruction and Education and Training for Reference.