Section One – the iSchool Context

What is information ... how much is there?

First, you should know that the Information Sciences incorporates many disciplines and areas of expertise to address the types and management of available information, the needs of people to find and use this information, and the technology to meet those needs. Think of it as an umbrella of professions and academic areas that explore the possibilities and challenges surrounding a key resource – information.

Each day, information is created, sought, and utilized by individuals, corporations, governments, and societies. The world needs experts to help find, organize and store, validate, and secure forms of information ranging from books and pictures to Web sites and databases. Now, perhaps more than ever, trained and creative professionals are needed to understand users and uses of information in order to design and build real-world and virtual systems to manage the volume of data produced every day.

- In 2002 – 5 exabytes produced (a stack of books from the sun to Mercury)
- In 2006 – 161 exabytes produced (a stack of books from the sun to Jupiter)
- In 2010 – 1,200 exabytes produced (2 stacks of books from the sun to Pluto)

What is an iSchool?
The iSchools are interested in the relationship between information, people and technology. This is characterized by a commitment to learning and understanding the role of information in human endeavors. The iSchools take it as given 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.

The iSchools organization was founded in 2005 by a collective of Information Schools dedicated to advancing the information field in the 21st Century. These schools, colleges, and departments had been newly-created or evolved from programs formerly focused on specific tracks such as information technology, library science, informatics, and information science. While each individual iSchool has its own strengths and specializations, together they share a fundamental interest in the relationships between information, people, and technology. The iSchools organization is governed by the iCaucus.

iSchools promote an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the opportunities and challenges of information management, with a core commitment to concepts such as universal access and user-centered organization of information. The field is concerned broadly with questions of design and preservation across information spaces, from digital and virtual spaces such as online communities, social networking, the World Wide Web, and databases to physical spaces such as libraries, museums, collections, and other repositories.
Our school is proud to be a founding member of the international coalition of institutions of higher education that offer graduate and research programs focusing on information – this group is composed of “information schools” and is generally referred to as “The iSchools.” Each iSchool offers different degree specializations and research foci, but we all explore the relationships and connections between people, information and technology. www.ischools.org

What does this iSchool do?

The mission of the School of Information Sciences is to connect people, information, and technology. The iSchool at Pitt has a long and distinguished tradition of producing leaders for the Information Sciences and the associated professions. For more than a century, this school has offered degree programs addressing Information in its many forms: the management and organization of information, the systems to control and secure it, and the needs of the people and organizations that depend upon that information.

Goals of the School

- Promote excellence in education at the undergraduate, master’s and doctoral level in the Information Sciences.
- Advance knowledge in the information sciences as an internationally-recognized center for high-quality, innovative, and leading edge research.
- Provide strong professional, technical, and policy leadership by the iSchool faculty at the local, state, national and international levels.
- Promote recognition of the School of Information Sciences for its production of seminal research, curricular leadership, superior professional and PhD students, and service to the professional and regional communities.
- Foster intellectual vitality in the iSchool community.

We help students develop the knowledge critical to

- Understanding human behavior as it relates to information needs, acquisition and use.
- Designing innovative solutions for managing and utilizing information.
- Analyzing issues and policies regarding societies’ use of information.
- Assuring information is usable and accessible throughout space and time.

Since its founding, the iSchool has offered rigorous academic programs that have shaped the Information Professions, the disciplines within the Information Sciences, and the world. Just as society’s needs have changed, so have our academic offerings, which have grown to represent the full spectrum of information – from creator to user to storage and transmission. Our school offers degree programs in Information Science (undergraduate and graduate), Library and Information Science (graduate), and Telecommunications (graduate). Students studying here at the iSchool have several advantages:

One of the most significant features of our programs is the emphasis placed on looking at information holistically. This outlook permeates the curriculum and prepares graduates for a world of opportunities in almost any field...any corporation or organization...any country or geographic region! It’s impossible to imagine a type of organization or business that doesn’t rely upon information to be successful. Therefore, iSchool alumni can create fulfilling careers in any economic or government sector.

Why will you benefit by studying at an iSchool?

We are home to numerous successful research faculty, who are engaged in the leading edge of defining the future for their professions. The benefit to you is that the faculty members bring this curiosity and engagement into the classroom to challenge you. They have high expectations of themselves and of you.

What does it mean to study at an iSchool?
At Pitt’s iSchool, you will learn how to

- Develop, deploy, and manage information resources and services
- Harness technology to accomplish your goals
- Use information strategically to advance the mission of an organization
- Be sensitive to context: Institutional, social, technological
- Be aware of events across the profession and in a global context
- Be fluent in all forms of pertinent technology appropriate to your specialization

**Section Two – Details about the iSchool at Pitt**

*The University of Pittsburgh*

The Pittsburgh Campus comprises 16 undergraduate, graduate and professional schools. It offers undergraduate and graduate certificate programs; baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degree programs; and professional practice degree programs. Including the regional campuses (5 in all), Pitt provides 456 distinct degree programs, augmented by numerous dual, joint, and cooperative degree program options. In fiscal year 2013, the University conferred 8,949 degrees.

The University of Pittsburgh is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and additionally by various specialized accrediting agencies. Furthermore, Pitt is an elected member of the Association of American Universities, an invitation-only organization of 61 preeminent doctorate-granting research institutions in the United States and Canada.

Pitt is committed to educating the whole student, determined that every graduate, regardless of degree earned, should leave the University with four key attributes: communications skills, motivation, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of self. Pitt students become perceptive, reflective contributors to our diverse community of faculty, staff, administrators, and fellow students. In recent years, graduates from the University of Pittsburgh have won the Nobel Peace Prize, the Pulitzer Prize, and the Nobel Prize in medicine.

*History of the iSchool at Pitt*

For more than 100 years, the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh has been educating leaders in the Information Professions. The institution was founded as the Training School for Children’s Librarians in 1901, and it has continued to evolve to meet the growing demands of society in terms of information and the modes by which such information is produced, retrieved and utilized. In 1961, the School joined the University of Pittsburgh and over the next decade expanded its curricular offerings to include a doctoral program and a Master’s degree program in Information Science. A Telecommunications program was added in the 1980s, and in 1996, the name of the School was changed from the School of Library and Information Sciences to the School of Information Sciences, to reflect the expansion of its academic programs. The history of the School is a reflection of the history of the Information Professions – growing and changing in response to societal needs and the incorporation of new technologies.

Today, the School offers the following degree programs:

- Bachelor of Science in Information Science
  - Concentrations in User-Centered Design, Information Systems, and Networks and Security
- Master of Science in Information Science
  - Specializations in Big Data Analytics, Geoinformatics, Database and Web Services, Human-Centered Computing, Information Security, Telecommunications and Distributed Systems
- Master of Science in Library & Information Science (on-campus)
Specializations in Academic Libraries; Archives and Information Science; Digital Libraries; Information Technology; Public Libraries; School Library Certification; Resources and Services in Health, Reference, and Children and Youth

- MLIS: Pitt Online (Master of Library & Information Science)

General program of study

- Master of Science in Telecommunications
- PhD in Information Science
- PhD in Information Science with a concentration in Telecommunications
- PhD in Library & Information Science.

The iSchool Senior Administration

- Dean -- Ronald Larsen
- Associate Dean -- Martin Weiss
- SIS Council Chair -- Daqing He
- Director of Administration -- Sandra Brandon

Academic Program Chairs

- Undergraduate Information Science – Bob Perkoski
- Library and Information Science – Sheila Corrall
- Graduate Information Science and Technology – Peter Brusilovsky
- Telecommunications and Networking – David Tipper

The iSchool Senior Staff

- Manager of Personnel and Administration -- Sharon Bindas
- Director of Constituent Relations -- Marci Carothers
- Manager of Student Services -- Wesley Lipschultz
- Director of Distance Education, eLearning Partnerships and Outreach -- Jeffrey Lawson
- Manager, Information Technology and Networking -- Mark Steggert

Student Services at the iSchool

- Student Services Specialist – Brandi Liskey Belleau
- Admissions Coordinator -- Ninette Kay
- Enrollment Manager -- Shabana Reza
- Data Architect -- Olena Sherbinin
- Administrative Secretary -- Marcy Walls

The iSchool faculty and their areas of teaching and research expertise

- The faculty are multidisciplinary, multicultural
- Have academic backgrounds in Information Science; Library Science; Computer Science; Electrical Engineering; Mathematics; Physics; Psychology; Business; Education; History and Philosophy of Science; Sociology...
- International (from 15 different countries)
- Professional leaders
  - Editors of scholarly publications
  - Reviewers for federal government research programs
Consultants to organizations, companies and governments around the world
Expert advisors within the University and the community

A complete list of all iSchool personnel is available at [http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/people/directory.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/people/directory.php).

**What are some of the major research projects hosted by the iSchool at Pitt?**

The School of Information Sciences has a long tradition of outstanding research programs and laboratories. As part of a major research university, the iSchool is dedicated to expanding the body of knowledge and creating the next generation of information technologies through its research.

iSchool research projects have the potential to change the way people interact with information. This could fundamentally impact how society evolves: how corporations do business, how services are provided in both developed and developing countries, and how our digital lives are to be protected.

The research endeavors at the iSchool span a broad range of technologies, disciplines, and topics, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer and network security</th>
<th>Advanced Database management</th>
<th>Copyright and Fair Use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human-centered computing</td>
<td>Museum recordkeeping</td>
<td>Decision support systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive systems</td>
<td>Large scale and distributed systems</td>
<td>Science &amp; Technology Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children and young adult information behavior and literacy</td>
<td>Adaptive Web systems</td>
<td>Cyberscholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of archives</td>
<td>Medical informatics</td>
<td>Multi-lingual information search and retrieval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social informatics</td>
<td>Skills and competencies of information workers</td>
<td>Information and network security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless network systems and their survivability</td>
<td>Policy implications of new technologies</td>
<td>Spatial information and Geoinformatics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-source computing</td>
<td>Digital Humanities</td>
<td>Big Data Analytics</td>
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**Who funds the research and curriculum development at the iSchool?**

- The iSchool receives more than $2 million in research funding each year from prestigious organizations including the National Science Foundation, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Department of Defense, National Institutes of Health, Office of Naval Research, Gates Foundation, and Google. Students – both undergraduate and graduate – are invited to learn more about potential research opportunities at the iSchool at [www.ischool.pitt.edu/research](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/research).

**Section Three – Student policies and resources**

**iSchool and Pitt Web sites**

Most information – specific to the iSchool -- you need will be posted to the School’s Web sites at [www.ischool.pitt.edu](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu) or [http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisint/index.html](http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisint/index.html). The University will post all general Pitt information to [www.pitt.edu](http://www.pitt.edu).

**Pitt’s Academic Calendar**
Each term, there are specific dates by which you must register for courses, drop or add courses, and when the University is observing a holiday. This information, called the academic calendar, is all available at http://www.registrar.pitt.edu/course_calendars.html. The iSchool hosts a calendar of School events – just look for the link on the School's homepage at www.ischool.pitt.edu.

Student Conduct Code

The University of Pittsburgh is committed to the advancement of learning and service to society. This is best accomplished in an atmosphere of mutual respect and civility, self-restraint, concern for others, and academic integrity. The University has crafted a Student Conduct Code, outlining the expectations and responsibilities of students.

Academic Integrity

The University and the iSchool have clearly defined their expectations of all community members with regard to their obligations to exhibit honesty and to respect the ethical standards of the library and information professions in carrying out his or her academic assignments. More details are available at http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/about/academic-integrity.php.

Statute of limitations

The Master's Degree program must be completed within four years of the first term in which courses were taken after admission. The normal part-time course load is 6 credits per term, which permits part-time students to complete the program in six terms. The faculty, in response to a student petition, must approve exceptions to the four-year limit if extenuating circumstances exist.

Transfer of Credits

Up to six (6) credits of graduate-level course work can be transferred from an accredited institution of higher education, provided that the credit was not applied toward a previous degree or certificate. Courses that you wish to have transferred must have been taken within four (4) years preceding the date of initial enrollment in the program. You must demonstrate that the course(s) are relevant to your career objectives and to the curriculum. To have credits transferred, you must also obtain the advice and written approval of your faculty advisor.

Leave of Absence

For a variety of reasons, students may need to take a semester or more off from school in upcoming semesters (to withdraw from a current semester, see resignation). These reasons may include financial challenges, family issues, personal issues, health, etc.

A leave of absence occurs when a student takes time off from her/his studies and then returns without penalty. The University of Pittsburgh allows such a break for up to one calendar year before the student's direct association with the University expires.

http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~studentservices/policies/leave.html

The University of Pittsburgh Library System

The mission of the University Library System (ULS) at the University of Pittsburgh is to provide and promote access to information resources necessary for the achievement of the University's leadership objectives in teaching, learning, research, creativity, and community service, and to collaborate in the development of effective information, teaching, and learning systems.
The University of Pittsburgh libraries and collections provide an abundant amount of information and services to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and researchers. The University’s 26 libraries and collections have surpassed 6.1 million volumes. In addition, they contain more than 5.4 million microforms, and over 87,000 current serials.

Guides and tutorials on how to access library resources remotely are available at http://www.library.pitt.edu/help-guides

**e-billing at the University of Pittsburgh**

You will use the my.pitt.edu student portal to take care of all financial matters here at Pitt. You can pay your tuition bill here, determine your financial aid award, and see if any payments are overdue. Once you are on the student portal, simply click on “Student Center Login,” “Self Service” and then on “Campus Finances.” The University of Pittsburgh will post tuition bills electronically at the portal, www.my.pitt.edu. More information is available at http://www.bc.pitt.edu/students/makingpayments.html.

You will use the my.pitt.edu student portal to take care of all financial matters here at Pitt. You can pay your tuition bill here or determine if you have any overdue payments. Again, go to “Student Center Login,” and click on “Self Service” and then on “Campus Finances.”

**Computer Accounts at Pitt**

- Once you accepted your offer of admission to the School, you were sent an e-mail (to the e-mail addresses on your application) containing your Pitt Computing Account ID and password. You’ll need both to access the University’s portal, www.my.pitt.edu. Here, you can register for classes, pay tuition bills, and more! Don’t have the log-in/password information? E-mail helpdesk@pitt.edu.
- E-mail – The University and the iSchool communicate with all students through e-mail to official University e-mail addresses (student@pitt.edu). Even if you use other e-mail services, you are responsible for checking (or forwarding) your official Pitt e-mail. Critical information about courses, your academic and financial status, and University or School events is transmitted through list servs sent to the official Pitt address of students. No official communication will be sent to a non-Pitt e-mail address.
- Student center portal – The address for the student portal is my.pitt.edu. This is the gateway to your course schedule, registration, academic record, financial information, and to University resources such as the University Library System. You will need your official Pitt user information (username and password) to access this portal.

**Responsible computing**

This policy establishes restrictions regarding the access and use of University owned and maintained computers, computer systems, computer networks, electronic communications facilities, and other related computing facilities used to store and process data, text, and software used by the University.

http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/10/10-02-05.html

**Disability Services**

It is the policy and practice of the University of Pittsburgh to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no qualified individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities of the University of Pittsburgh. Students who require accommodations because of a physical, learning or other disability must be evaluated by the Office of Disability Resource Services (ODRS). The ODRS will document and verify the student’s status and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations.
The Office of Disability Resource Services is located at 216 William Pitt Student Union. Please contact Ms. Lynette Van Slyke at (412) 648-7890 for an appointment for an evaluation. It is extremely helpful to submit to that office any medical information that will assist in this evaluation. Limited testing is administered by that office at no charge to the student. If a more extensive evaluation is needed, the student may be required to pay for additional testing to verify a learning or other disability.

Career and Job Search Tools

Career and Job Search – Being in a major university exposes you to a number of resources to help you find the right job after graduation.

Career Development and Placement Assistance – [http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/CDPA](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/CDPA)

FutureLinks – [http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cdpa/futurelinks](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cdpa/futurelinks)


Pitt ID

Many MLIS: Pitt Online students may be on-campus during their program of study (or live in the region). If you’d like to take advantage of the benefits of having a Pitt ID and are on campus, stop by Panther Central in the Litchfield Towers. Your Pitt ID can provide access to Pitt facilities, and services both on and off-campus. For more information about acquiring your Pitt ID, visit [http://www.pc.pitt.edu/card/index.php](http://www.pc.pitt.edu/card/index.php).

Section Four – Details about the MLIS: Pitt Online Program

The iSchool faculty have determined that all students will, upon completion of the MLIS degree, be able to:

- draw upon a common body of professional knowledge that reflects the principles and procedures relevant to all type of libraries, archives, and information centers and their various clienteles;
- define the scope of the information professions, emphasizing its interdisciplinary aspects and the global information environment;
- communicate effectively in written, oral, and electronic formats, whether working independently or as members of a group or team;
- articulate current professional issues and affirm a commitment to continuing professional development;
- integrate theory and research findings with application and practice;
- demonstrate professional attitudes and a philosophy of service that incorporates the ethical foundations of the information professions into professional practice and have an understanding of the social responsibilities of those professions;
- apply basic principles of selection, acquisition, organization, retrieval, preservation, management, and use to all types and formats of information resources;
- serve as intermediaries in the information-seeking process through their understanding of client needs and knowledge of a multiplicity of resources;
- apply information technologies to various functions in library and information environments; and
- plan and evaluate information service in both traditional and innovative settings to meet current needs and future direction.

Specifically, graduates will be able to:

- Draw effectively upon the ethics, values, principles, knowledge and history of library and information science and other related disciplines;
- Apply the principles of the information life cycle (selection, organization, dissemination and preservation);
• Advance the intelligent and ethical applications of information technologies;
• Apply the principles of management (planning and assessment, budgeting, human resources development and evaluation) to various functions in information environments;
• Plan, implement, evaluate and advocate for reference and user services to meet the needs of diverse users;
• Promote the ideals of open access to information and of intellectual freedom;
• Understand and apply research in library and information science; and
• Demonstrate a commitment to the advancement of the information professions through advocacy, continuing education and lifelong learning.

**ALA-accreditation**

The Master of Library and Information Science degree program has been continuously accredited by the American Library Association since 1926. The program has a 100+ year tradition of educating librarians and informational professionals. In addition to our online and on-campus MLIS programs, we also offer a rigorous Doctor of Philosophy in Library and information Science (on-campus only) for those seeking careers as faculty members and researchers and administrators.

A degree from an ALA-accredited program is a necessity for career placement, advancement, and mobility in all types of libraries.

**US News & World Report Ranking**

Our MLIS program is ranked tenth in the 2014 *U.S. News and World Report* rankings of the 62 accredited programs in the U.S.

**Who is my advisor and how do I communicate with them?**

You were notified of your faculty advisor in your admission letter. You can verify your advisor by accessing the Pitt Portal and selecting "Student Center Login" then "Self Service" and then "Student Center." Advising interactions may take any form that is mutually comfortable and convenient for both you and your advisor - phone, e-mail, face-to-face, Skype, IM, Facebook, etc. If you need to find your advisor's contact information, you may do so at our School’s faculty/staff contact page. If you need or wish to change your advisor, you may follow these procedures to do so.

**Role of Advisor**

Advisors/faculty should

• assist students in identifying academic goals
• recommend courses to be taken during each term of study
• clearly map the requirements each student must meet, including course work, languages, research tools, examinations, internships, thesis or dissertation
• provide students with information for self-enrolling in classes
• provide a delineation of the amount of time expected to complete each step.
• evaluate student progress and performance in a regular (i.e., no less than annual) and informative way.
• assist students in independently monitoring their own progress toward achieving their educational and career goals
• make the appropriate referrals to other resources within the University and iSchool community

The Library profession is constantly evolving to manage the almost daily advances in technology – as well as the increasing sophistication of library users. The MLIS: Pitt Online program will give you the essential skills and theoretical knowledge necessary to succeed as an information professional in a wide variety of positions and library facilities. You’ll take four core courses to gain competency in organizing, retrieving, and managing information...
centers. These courses will provide a familiarity with various technologies and types of library institutions. Complete details are available at [http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/academics/general.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/academics/general.php).

- For more details about advising policies at Pitt, please visit [www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html)

### Core Courses

- **LIS 2000 Understanding Information** (taken in the first term)
- **LIS 2005 Organizing and Retrieving Information** (taken in the second term)
- **LIS 2600 Introduction to Information Technology** (taken in the first term)
- **LIS 2700 Managing Libraries & Information Centers in Changing Environments** (taken in the second term)

After you complete the core courses, your plan of study can be designed around your individual and career interests by taking a series of eight elective courses. For example, you might be considering working with a specific type of collection or patron group. Or, your interests may lie more toward foundational library activities such as indexing, cataloguing or digitizing. This program of study will give you the greatest career flexibility in that you would be prepared to work in institutions such as public, academic, corporate or special libraries.

Please note that not all online courses are offered each term. You should work with your advisor to plan a coherent course of study based on projected course offerings.

Visit [http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/academics/general.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/academics/general.php) to see elective course offerings.

### WISE courses

As a member of the WISE (Web-based Information Science Education) consortium of schools, the iSchool is pleased to make WISE course offerings available to its students. These online courses are taught by faculty from WISE host schools using course-management systems specific to their environment and academic calendar. You will have the opportunity to take electives of interest at other WISE schools, without having to transfer credits. You must note the varying delivery methods and academic calendars among WISE schools. MLIS: Pitt Online students may take up to two WISE courses. More information is available at [http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisint/academics/lis/wise.html](http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisint/academics/lis/wise.html)

### Field Experiences/Practicum

Some students want to gain practical experience while in the degree program. You can, in some cases, do this Field Experience or Practicum Courses. However, several states will not permit online students to take such courses for credit. Therefore, if a Field Experience or Practicum Course is of interest to you, please visit our FAQ page ([http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/about/faq.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/about/faq.php)) to determine if your home state permits such a learning experience for credit.

### How do I register for courses?

At the University of Pittsburgh, you can register for classes online at the portal, [www.my.pitt.edu](http://www.my.pitt.edu). You are strongly encouraged to contact your academic advisor to determine the appropriate courses and schedule. When you were admitted to the degree program, we sent you the name and contact information for your advisor.

Instructions are available [here](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/about/faq.php). In brief, once you’ve logged into the portal, click on: Student Services and then on Self-Service Enrollment. If you have any difficulties, e-mail us at [registration@sis.pitt.edu](mailto:registration@sis.pitt.edu).

International Students: If your official letter of admission to the School indicated that you must take the English Language Proficiency Test, click [here](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/online-mlis/about/faq.php) for more information. You must complete this test prior to registering for classes. If you are not required to take the English Language Proficiency Test, we encourage you to begin registering for courses.
Registration cautions/warnings

Please be advised that there are restrictions placed on some classes (prerequisites or co-requisites) and there are deadlines associated with dropping and adding classes, withdrawing from classes during a semester, etc. There are also different procedures, rules, and consequences for doing these things that depend on the time of year (before the semester starts vs. the first week of classes vs. later in the semester) and how many credits you are taking. Please familiarize yourself with the "Courses/registration" section of our policies and procedures Web site so that you will be aware of these deadline and consequences in advance. Please also review the section below on dropping and adding courses, paying particular attention to the appropriate time frames for each option.

Dropping/adding classes and monitored withdrawal

If students want to make changes to their schedules after they have registered, here are their options:

1) **Drop/add** - up through the drop/add deadline at the beginning of the semester (typically the first week of the semester for 12 week summer sessions, and the first two weeks of the semester for the fall and spring semesters), students can make adjustments to their schedules without penalty (i.e. these changes do not show up on students' transcripts).

2) **Late add/drop** - the Registrar will, in rare cases, accept late adds and drops but only under extenuating circumstances (ex. death in the family, car accident, serious illness) and these are granted or denied by Student Services.

3) **Monitored withdrawal** - after the drop/add period and up until the monitored withdrawal deadline, a student can still drop courses, but at that point a "W" will show up on the student's transcript (rather than a grade) for any course dropped.

4) **Appeal for late withdrawal** - after the monitored withdrawal deadline has passed, students may withdraw from individual classes only in extraordinary circumstances with permission of the dean by following the procedure described at the monitored withdrawal link.

5) **Drop all classes for the term** - if students wish to drop all of their classes and leave the semester entirely, they can do this, but how and whether or not students get any money back (and how much) depends on when they do it.

http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~studentservices/policies/dropadd.html

Attendance at On-Campus Experience

Attendance at the on-campus weekend is strongly recommended. This weekend will provide you with an opportunity to meet your classmates and faculty and to participate in events that supplement coursework learning. However, we do realize that the cost and time for travel to Pittsburgh may be prohibitive in some cases, so attendance is not mandatory.

Online Course Participation Policy

The asynchronous design of the courses allows for students to participate at any time or any location. Just as on-campus students are required to attend each class session and to participate in class activities, online students are required to participate actively in each learning activity as required by the individual instructor and to complete each course assignment on time. It is the responsibility of students to make arrangements for participating in the course consistently throughout the term. An instructor has the option to lower a student’s grade for lack of timely participation.

Grading Policies for the MLIS: Pitt Online Program
MAINTENANCE OF A 3.0 QPA

Each student must maintain a 3.0 Quality Point Average (QPA) for the 36 credits of graduate level coursework required for the MLIS degree and must have a 3.0 QPA at the completion of the 36 credits to graduate from the MLIS program.

ACADEMIC JEOPARDY

If at the end of a semester your overall GPA falls below a 3.0 or you have a grade in a core course below a "B," you may be placed on academic probation. A letter communicating the details would be sent and/or e-mailed to you, but essentially you would be required to bring your academic performance up to or above the minimum standards within a credit/timeframe specified in your letter or you would be dismissed from the program. Please be advised that University policy allows you to attempt to successfully complete a course only two times; if you do not have an acceptable grade ("C" or better for electives, "B" or better for core courses) after two attempts, you will not be allowed to take the class again. If you have unsuccessfully attempted a core course twice, this would also mean dismissal from the program.

GRADES FOR CORE COURSES (Updated 03/29/2010)

A student must earn a grade of B or better in each core course and must maintain a QPA of 3.0 each term with no grade for an elective course below a C. If a grade of B or better is not earned in a core course, the student must register for the course in the next term offered and earn a grade of B or better. A core course may be repeated only once.

GRADES FOR ELECTIVE COURSES

All students must earn satisfactory grades in each elective course taken. Grades of C-, D+, D, D-, F and Unsatisfactory are unacceptable for credit toward graduation. A course for which such a grade is earned must be replaced with another course or retaken, with a higher grade earned. In either case, a higher grade must be earned and a 3.0 QPA be maintained. A course for which a grade of C- or lower was earned may be repeated only once.

More information about the grading policies is available at http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisint/academics/lis/lis_grading_policy.html. Any changes to these policies will be noted on this Web page. Please make sure that you review and understand these policies.

Technology for Pitt Online

The staff at Pitt Online has created an orientation for new students that will walk you through an overview of the distance learning platform, the technical requirements necessary, how to access courses and to move through the course, online student resources, submitting your assignments, and some tips to utilize the online learning management system. You can view the presentation at:

https://courseweb.pitt.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/Pitt%20Online/common/New%20Student%20Orientation/player.html

Textbooks

The texts for your courses are available through the Book Center. You can see the required/optional texts for a course on the course schedule pages at http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisint/courses/index.html. Pick the correct term and the appropriate program (GIST, LIS, Tele). At the top of the page, you'll find a link marked “Required Textbooks”. For more information about the book center and textbook ordering, please visit http://www.pittuniversitystore.com/
Once you have identified the required books for your courses, how you obtain them is a matter of personal choice rather than program mandate. Here are a few possibilities based on what prior students have done:

- If the editions you need are available at a local library, you may be able to check them out there.
- Some of these may be available for purchase as eBooks.
- You may buy copies through whatever online service you prefer.

Expectations of students in MLIS: Pitt Online Courses

Since information, the focus of the iSchool, exists in an institutional, political and technological context, you need to learn how to be sensitive to that environment and how to treat information appropriately. This leads to a lifelong discipline of maintaining an awareness of current events within your particular specialization as well as in the information related professions in general.

All graduates use information technologies to varying degrees. We expect you to acquire a level of technological fluency that is appropriate for your specialization.

Finally, we expect you to develop the skills to think critically about facts, theories and assertions that you are faced with.

When you enroll at the iSchool, you will have access to a number of people and institutional offices dedicated to your success. Your progress will also be impacted by the amount of effort you put into your studies. To help you to understand the processes and the available resources, here are some guidelines about responsibilities of the student, the advisor/faculty, and the University.

Students should

- expect to devote an appropriate amount of time and energy toward achieving academic excellence and earning the advanced degree;
- read and become familiar with the regulations and policies concerning graduate study as described in school bulletins and program brochures and Web sites;
- participate fully in courses for which you are registered by attending class and completing assignments on time;
- take the initiative to contact their advisor or iSchool staff if experiencing academic difficulties;
- be aware of time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and program staff;
- take the initiative in finding answers to questions and in planning their professional careers;
- communicate regularly with faculty advisors, including the period after completion of their coursework;
- be available for scheduled meetings with academic advisors and instructors;
- alert the advisor to uncertainties they may have about program requirements, normal progress, and performance expectations;
- inform advisor/instructor, in a timely fashion, whenever a serious problem interferes with your ability to attend classes or to complete assignments;
- read your university e-mail, which is the primary conduit of information;
- observe academic deadlines and be familiar with academic calendars with regards to deadlines for add/drop, enrollment, withdrawal, finals, and milestones;
- keep track of progress toward degree and to notify the advisor of any discrepancy in your academic record;
- ask questions if the student doesn’t understand a policy, procedure, or academic program requirement.

Who do I talk to about...

Students typically have a variety of questions throughout their studies - what classes should I take? How do I provide proof to my employer that I am registered for classes? Who should sign this form for me? Please use this outline to...
guide where you direct your questions in order to ensure accurate information and to maximize the efficiency of your time in gathering information!

**Student Services** (5th floor IS Building, 412-624-5230, registration@sis.pitt.edu)

- Admissions, registration, graduation procedures/questions
- Policy issues
- Resource information
- Social, educational, professional events outside of the classroom

**Your faculty advisor** ([http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/people/faculty-by-program.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/people/faculty-by-program.php))

- Which classes would be best/sequencing of classes
- Mentorship, outside of the classroom skill development, etc.
- See elements of good advising for further details: [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html)

**University Registrar** ([http://www.registrar.pitt.edu/](http://www.registrar.pitt.edu/))

- Legal proof that you are a student at the University of Pittsburgh
- Legal proof of your grades/academic performance
- Legal proof of graduation

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**Section Five -- The iSchool Community**

Our faculty, staff and administration are dedicated to promoting the responsible use and management of information, to the academic and professional success of our students, and to contributing to the associated Information Professions. Faculty and students join the iSchool thanks to its multi-disciplinary approach to information and the rigor of our academic and research programs. They enjoy the environment at the School: a significant international population which represents the global nature of the field, the fostering of collaboration in the classroom and in the research lab which mirrors the team-approach to problem-solving in the professions and academia, and the supportive staff who help students to successfully navigate their programs of study.

As a student, you may participate in the culture and activities of the iSchool in a number of ways. Many of our colloquia are posted online for viewing at [http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/colloquia/index.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/colloquia/index.php). Of course, if you’re in the Western Pennsylvania region, please feel free to attend any iSchool event, which will be noted at the “Calendar” link on the iSchool homepage.

The iSchool is home to a number of student organizations which may be of interest to you. Please review the list of organizations located at [http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/resources/student-organizations.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/resources/student-organizations.php). Feel free to contact the organization if you are interested in participating in their activities. Also, many professional organizations offer membership opportunities – this is a great way to begin building a professional network. In addition to the brief list below, there are usually national or international organizations for each state in the US and for many specific specialties.

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<th>American Library Association</th>
<th>Special Libraries Association</th>
<th>Public Library Association</th>
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<tr>
<td>Association of College and Research Libraries</td>
<td>American Society for Information Science and Technology</td>
<td>Medical Library Association</td>
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We invite you to join us on a number of social networking sites:
Alumni – how can they be part of your learning experience?

Many iSchool alumni volunteer to review current students’ professional resumes and to conduct practice telephone interviews – all to help prepare students for a very competitive job market. See http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/alumni/connect/resume-reviews.php for more information about how alumni will help you to secure a challenging position after graduating from the iSchool. And, don’t forget to join the iSchool Society when you graduate! More details are available at http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/alumni