

LISC Strategic Directions 2012-2016

Introduction

It is widely recognised that in the unfolding knowledge society, information and knowledge are at the heart of development and economic growth, and that the flow of information is critical for innovation, invention and the process of creating new knowledge and ideas. Knowledge is a national economic asset, playing an important role in national, social and individual development. Library and information professionals systematically organise these resources, which they also mediate by various means for their effective use by constituencies across all sectors. Library and Information Science (LIS) education, through teaching, continuing education and research programmes, is necessary to provide these professionals with the requisite knowledge and skills to achieve the goals of the LIS sector in an evolving and technologically oriented knowledge society.

Founded as the School of Librarianship in 1939, the Library and Information Studies Centre (LISC), is the oldest source of professional education in Library and Information Science in Africa. The Library and Information Studies Centre (LISC) is located organisationally within the University of Cape Town Libraries and offers, through the Faculty of Humanities, programmes in Library and Information Studies: the Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Studies, Masters' programmes and PhD studies. The Humanities Faculty oversees registration of its students, has academic oversight of both its curricula and programmes, and its quality assurance. LISC, through its teaching and research programmes, offers the LIS sector a postgraduate route for attaining professional qualifications and further specialisations.

In 2012, the University of Cape Town (UCT) re-affirmed its commitment to the continuation of library and information studies at UCT. The newly named Library and Information Studies Centre (LISC) undertook a radical review of its teaching and research programmes which are now firmly located within a focused strategic framework informed by the strategic directions of its parent organisation, the University of Cape Town. This strategic framework is presented in this document.

LISC Strategic Directions 2012-2016 is deemed to be robust, dynamic and fit for purpose to provide LIS teaching, learning and research for a new generation of library and information professionals. The mission and the vision are aligned to that of the Institution and for a 21st century library and information environment. The vision and mission are as follows:

Vision

To be the school of choice in Africa for Library and Information Studies

Mission

To provide dynamic and innovative Library and Information Studies programmes and research, informed by global scholarship and our location in Africa

Core values

Academic and intellectual leadership

Excellence in scholarship

Excellence in teaching and learning

Relevant and cutting-edge LIS research

Social justice

Foundation Statement

Education for library and information environments in South Africa and the African continent

Niche areas

In support of its mission, LISC has three niche areas, namely, sector specialisation, subject foci and level of study specialisation.

Sector specialisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic and research libraries• Public libraries
Subject foci	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact analysis and assessment• Research librarianship
Level of study specialisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Postgraduate diploma• Master's• Doctoral• Post-doctoral

Strategic themes

Provide **dynamic and relevant curricula** for a new generation of librarians and information professionals

Offer **innovative teaching and learning** experiences for effective delivery of curricula

Achieve **research excellence** through actively engaging in research and publication in the LIS domain

Recruit and retain students and staff for innovation, growth and development of academic and research programmes

Grow partnerships in **social and community engagement** to advance South African/African development and social justice

Strategic Actions

Provide **dynamic and relevant curricula** for a new generation of librarians and information professionals:

- Offer programmes of choice for South Africa and the rest of Africa that lead to internationally competitive qualifications
- Design and implement curricula that embrace new and emerging areas of specialisation in the LIS sector
- Produce leaders for relevant LIS contexts

Offer **innovative teaching and learning experiences** for effective delivery of curricula:

- Engage in inspired and dedicated teaching that accommodates different learning styles
- Adopt teaching and learning methodologies that support collaborative learning and critical thinking in a blended environment
- Provide an intellectually stimulating environment for peer-to-peer learning and that between experts and learners

Achieve **research excellence** through actively engaging in research and publication in the LIS domain:

- Cultivate a scholarly environment to accelerate independent and team research for publication
- Build research partnerships at the national, continental and international levels
- Exploit opportunities to enhance LISc's visibility as a centre of research excellence

Recruit and retain students and staff for innovation, growth and development of academic and research programmes:

- Create robust publicity and marketing opportunities to attract high quality national and international students and staff
- Cultivate a stimulating scholarly environment to advance excellent teaching and research, and learning experiences

Grow partnerships in **social and community engagement** to advance South African/African development and social justice:

- Establish LISC as a source of intellectual guidance for policy makers
- Position LISC as an intellectual leader within relevant communities for development and social justice