ILISE: Promoting Diversity Through a Shared and Inclusive Curriculum

Simmons University School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) Dean Sanda Erdelez and co-PIs Laura Saunders, Professor and SLIS Associate Dean, and Ramin Naderi, PhD student and Dean's Fellow for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, seek a 3-year IMLS National Leadership Grant of $249,510. In support of Goal 2, "build the capacity of libraries and archives to improve community well-being," the grant will implement a nationwide system to develop, audit, and share LIS courses with an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) focus. A documented lack of attention to EDI in LIS degree programs limits the ability of all students to engage in social justice and EDI work. It undermines efforts to recruit and retain students from historically marginalized backgrounds who do not see themselves and their concerns reflected in the curriculum. The challenge of developing and delivering such courses is exacerbated by the lack of diversity among LIS professors and the hesitancy that some instructors feel in taking on these topics. The proposed program will begin to address these challenges by: 1) refining and sharing tools for EDI audits of LIS curricula, along with training for the tools; 2) developing the Inclusive Library and Information Science Education (ILISE), a course-exchange platform similar to WISE consortium, whereby LIS schools can share EDI-focused or EDI-fostering courses and students can seamlessly take and transfer credits for these courses across participating schools; and, 3) engaging faculty, students, and alumni from marginalized communities and/or with sustained body of work focused on EDI, in providing curricular and program feedback. The project team will be guided by a review board of current students and alums from historically marginalized backgrounds, including the current SLIS Library Fellows, and an advisory board of LIS program faculty and directors to consult on policies for the course-sharing platform.

Project Justification

Goal 2 of the National Leadership Grants program for Libraries is to "build the capacity of libraries and archives to improve community well-being." As demographics of the United States continue to shift toward a "minority-majority" population, emerging LIS professionals must be prepared with the EDI skills, such as cultural competence and community engagement, to interact effectively with patrons from all backgrounds. Such preparation will require curricula integrating EDI courses and topics that will help prepare all students to engage effectively with their communities. Further, however, a decolonized curriculum, or one that acknowledges the ongoing challenges and systemic biases in the field and engages students in how to challenge those issues, could also be important to attracting and retaining a more diverse student body, ultimately leading to a more diverse profession that better reflects the communities being served.

Despite decades-long efforts to diversify, the field of LIS remains overwhelmingly white (DataUSA, n..d), and anecdotal evidence suggests the field also lacks diversity in other areas, such as socioeconomic backgrounds and disability status. Efforts to increase diversity within the profession and across LIS curricula, from scholarships for master's students to post-masters residency programs, from EDI training to themed conferences, exist but seem to have met with limited success (Hathcock, 2015; Vinopal, 2016). Many systemic barriers impede progress, including the length and cost of the master's degree; the prevalence of unpaid internships as one of the only methods for gaining work experience, and the lack of representation in the field and degree programs (Farkas, 2019; Kendrick, 2019; Vinopal, 2016; Yung, Fraser & Winn, 2020). A lack of curricular confrontation of systemic bias that characterizes the field of LIS compounds these issues. As Martin, McCann, Morales, and Williams (2013) noted, "discourse on the social norms and cultural values of the profession and its members focus on celebrating multiculturalism. Considering the racial demographics of the U.S. library profession, where is the explicit

discussion of racism? And to take it a step further, where is the discussion of white privilege and whiteness?"

EDI and social justice are considered values and core competences of librarianship (ALA, 2023; 2019). As such, LIS programs are responsible for designing curricula to ensure graduates acquire a strong understanding of diversity and the skills to support equity and social justice in their careers. These are complex topics, and instructors and programs must find ways to integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice throughout the curriculum. However, a demonstrated lack of attention to these topics exists (E.g., Honma, 2005; Pawley, 2006; Poole et al, 2021). Indeed, there are challenges to developing and delivering such a curriculum. First, it is important to recognize that instructors' identities, experiences, and work status can impact their ability to address topics such as bias and oppression (de la Rosa, Simons & Elkins, 2021). Unpublished research shared at the ALISE Leadership Academy showed that many LIS faculty feel they understand the importance of the EDI curriculum and report some level of comfort with the content but acknowledge challenges in putting that knowledge into action (Bright et al, 2021). Further, some institutions are facing external pressures from interest groups seeking to restrict institutions' ability to address topics such as LGBTQIA+ and racism, often incorrectly labeled as critical race theory. These efforts could have a chilling effect and deter some faculty and programs from engaging in EDI-related curricula and initiatives.

The current project will work to reduce these barriers and support the development of a more inclusive LIS curriculum in two ways. First, SLIS will build on existing programs to develop and refine tools to support EDI audits of existing curricula which will be openly shared with other programs. Second, SLIS will work with LIS program administrators nationwide to develop ILISE, a platform, and set of policies through which participating LIS programs can share EDI-focused courses by facilitating cross-registration and transfer of credits for students in these programs. Both outcomes are described in more detail in the Project Work Plan Below.

The target audience for this project is current and prospective LIS students. All LIS students will benefit from an EDI-focused curriculum that will help them develop the cultural competencies and understandings to better prepare them for working with diverse populations. Further, LIS students of color and from other marginalized backgrounds might appreciate a decolonized curriculum that acknowledges and respects their backgrounds and seeks to actively include their experiences in the curriculum. Beneficiaries of the program will be the patron communities, which emerging professionals will better serve with a stronger understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion. LIS faculty in participating programs will also benefit from tools and resources to support them in diversifying their courses and the ability to connect with colleagues and open their curriculum to courses that can supplement their existing offerings. The participating LIS programs will become more resilient to changes (e.g. faculty composition, budget, etc.) and enjoy sustainability in their capacity to offer EDI and cultural competency-fostering courses.

Over the past several years, with the support of internal resources, SLIS has been developing resources and programs to begin addressing some of these barriers, including:

1. Launched the *Library Fellows Program,* which offers talented students from marginalized backgrounds tuition support; meaningful, paid work in an LIS setting at either half or full-time for the duration of their program; and mindful mentorship;
2. Engaged a Ph.D. student as the *Dean's Fellow for the DEI Initiatives* to develop, test, and implement a process to conduct an EDI audit of the SLIS curriculum; and,
3. Developed a partnership with San Jose University's School of Information on the *iLead project*, funded by the IMLS as a planning grant to develop a leadership program with an EDI focus.

The proposed project will build on these existing resources to address two outstanding issues: a lack of diversity in LIS program curricula and access to EDI courses for students. The project will result in several concrete deliverables:

1. An open-access set of tools to undertake a curriculum EDI audit; and training/mentoring on undertaking an EDI curriculum audit;
2. ILISE - a system for sharing EDI courses across LIS programs nationwide.
3. A participatory design process will engage MLIS students and recent alums from historically marginalized backgrounds to inform the project's development, especially the curriculum.

This project directly supports Goal 2 by increasing access to EDI courses, establishing replicable practices, and providing support for developing and improving EDI-focused courses. It will also provide mechanisms for advancing the cultural competence and social justice practice of emerging LIS professionals.

This project differs from existing initiatives in several important ways. Some LIS programs, or individual faculty members within those programs, are engaged in developing and delivering EDI courses and/or taking a broader look at how EDI is addressed throughout the curriculum (See e.g., Adkins et al, 2021; Cooke, Sweeney & Noble, 2016; Dali & Thomson, 2023; Mehra, 2022). These efforts are commendable but are often the work of one or two faculty members and, as such, might not permeate throughout the curriculum. Even when the efforts are at the program level, they are generally not developed collaboratively or shared systematically, and, as a result, their impacts are usually localized to the specific program. This project, on the other hand, will be national in its scope. The EDI toolkit will be openly licensed and widely shared, facilitating the development of EDI-enhanced courses in LIS programs nationwide and worldwide. Likewise, ILISE, the course-sharing platform, will allow participating LIS programs to open their EDI-enhanced courses to students in participating LIS programs, wherever they are located. As described in the Project Work Plan below, this course-sharing platform will allow students to register for courses listed in the catalog (as space allows), regardless of which school offers the course, and then seamlessly transfer the credits to their program. In this way, the platform will open up courses with EDI areas of focus to students who might not otherwise have had an opportunity to take such a course and will allow LIS programs to enhance their curricula with courses that they might not otherwise be able to offer, depending on their faculty time and expertise, ability to add new courses to their curricula, and so on. Importantly, LIS programs do not have to be part of the ILISE course-sharing platform to use the EDI toolkit. The toolkit will be openly licensed. Any LIS school or faculty member anywhere in the world can use the tools to help them audit their own program and courses and develop new courses that integrate EDI topics.

Project Work Plan
This project involves two separate, though complementary, streams of activity: the development, testing, and sharing of the EDI toolkit(e.g., rubric, accessibility review tools, and protocols for surveys and focus groups) and the development and implementation of the ILISE course-sharing system. Each part of the project will be supported by its own advisory board: a student and alumni review board for the curriculum EDI audit tools and a faculty/administrator advisory board for ILISE, the course-sharing platform. The PI and co-PIs will work closely together in these two areas. This section describes the project activities.

Immediately upon funding, the project team will recruit and convene a faculty/director advisory board as described below. This advisory board will consult on policies and procedures for the course-sharing platform, including course selection methodology, basic enrollment policies, procedures to ensure a seamless transfer of credits, and assessment standards. These faculty and administrators will also ensure alignment with their respective schools and promote the platform with their faculty and students.

The project team will also recruit and convene the student and alumni review board to develop a participatory process for developing the curricular EDI tools. This call will be open to all interested students and alums, but with an intentional focus on inviting students and alums whose backgrounds and lived experiences will offer insight into issues of EDI in the curriculum. To acknowledge the labor inherent in this work, advisory board members will be paid a stipend for their participation. This advisory board will be invited to share their general experiences with current curricula, including gaps and opportunities for improvement. They will work with the Dean's Fellow for DEI to review, test, and advise on the audit tools as they are developed and implemented. This participatory design will allow for member-checking and triangulation and support the audit results' credibility, dependability, and overall rigor.

PHASE ONE

During Phase One, the project team will develop an EDI toolkit that will include tools and strategies for undertaking an EDI audit of the curriculum to facilitate the integration of EDI topics into courses. Already in development, this toolkit will include a rubric for assessing EDI content at the course level; strategies for assessing and addressing the accessibility of courses and course materials; and protocols for implementing surveys and focus groups of faculty, students, and/or alums.

Rubric. As noted, the rubric has already been developed and tested on several courses in the Simmons University SLIS program (See Supplemental Documents 1-3 for the rubric and Supplemental Document 4 for a review of an existing course based on that rubric). An external reviewer or group of reviewers can implement this rubric. For instance, co-PI Ramin Naderi applied the rubric shown in Supplemental Documents 1-3 to a course in development by an SLIS faculty member and provided the report shown in Supplemental Document 4, which the faculty member then used to improve EDI aspects of the course. However, the rubric could also be implemented directly by a faculty member or group of faculty members as a self-guide to review any courses in their curriculum. While extremely useful, this rubric is limited in that it focuses only on the course syllabus, which often does not capture all facets of a course. Further, while a syllabus can outline how a faculty member plans to address certain topics, it cannot predict how well that implementation will succeed. In addition, the rubric is meant to be applied to one course at a time, meaning that a more comprehensive review of the curriculum would be time and labor-intensive. Finally, partly because of its focus on the syllabus, the rubric mostly addresses the perspective of the faculty member(s) who developed it. As such, additional tools and perspectives are necessary to gain a fuller picture of EDI in the curriculum.

Surveys, Focus Groups, and Checklists. During Phase One, the project team will begin to develop those additional tools, including additional checklists, a survey instrument, and protocols for focus groups. A survey and focus groups will allow LIS programs to get a more holistic overview of their curricula by asking questions about the program as a whole instead of focusing just on individual courses. Further, it can allow the programs to bring in the perspectives of current students and alums, who can provide insight into how well the courses and program are meeting intended EDI-related goals and outcomes from their perspective, the extent to which the courses and programs are implicitly or explicitly inclusive in their approaches, lived experiences, and field experiences, and whether certain perspectives might be missing, as well as surfacing any concerns or questions these communities might have. Likewise, faculty surveys and focus groups could help elicit aspects of the courses that are not as fully visible or addressed by the syllabus, thereby giving a more rounded overview of the course. The toolkit will include a bank of suggested focus group questions and recommended protocols for recruiting participants and implementing the focus group and a set of surveys (one for faculty, one for current

students, and one for alums) that can be used as-is or adapted for local purposes. Finally, the project team will develop additional checklists that could be applied by external reviewers or used by faculty for a self-administered review. These checklists will focus on areas such as developing an inclusive syllabus and course website and accessibility of course materials. The trustworthiness and quality of these tools will be examined in various ways. A pilot study will be conducted to test the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. An exploratory case study (Priya, 2021) will examine the credibility and dependability of the focus group protocols (Parker & Tritter, 2006), including but not limited to the methodological aspects (sampling and recruitment, implementation methods, etc.), line of inquiry (study framework, discussion questions, etc.), data gathering and analysis techniques, and finding utilization and ethical recommendations. Finally, input from expert reviewers will help secure the accuracy and reliability of the checklists.

Other materials may be developed with input from the student review and faculty/administrator advisory boards. All materials will be openly licensed and systematically shared through a project website, free webinars/tutorials, conference presentations, and publications. LIS programs across the country can access, adapt, and use these tools within their programs. Users do not have to be involved in the ILISE course-sharing platform to access and use the toolkit. Further, the project team could be hired as consultants if any LIS program wanted an external audit of the curriculum or dedicated training in using the tools.

Policies. During this phase, the project team will also develop policies and infrastructure for the Inclusive Library and Information Science Education (ILISE), an infrastructure and set of policies modeled on the [WISE](#) consortium to allow LIS programs to "share" EDI-focused courses, WISE was a web-based course-sharing system developed before the widespread adoption of online curricula that allowed participating LIS programs to share distance learning courses with students across programs. The system allowed on-the-ground programs to supplement their curriculum with online courses, and online programs could expand their curriculum to courses and topics beyond their local offerings. Participating schools would select courses to add to the WISE catalog. Students from any participating school could register for these courses with credits automatically counting toward their home degree program. The WISE program was launched through IMLS funding in 2006, and within a year, it had over a dozen participating institutions and had served over 250 students (Brown, et al., 2007). By the fall of 2010, the consortium had grown to 18 members and 595 courses, serving almost 1000 LIS students (Schisa et al., 2011). WISE was discontinued in December of 2023 partly because of an increase in local online course offering capabilities and administrative complexities of adopting courses into the accepting school's curriculum.

The current project would implement a similar model but with key differences:

Course content: This program would focus on EDI courses. Just as online courses were in demand when WISE was founded, EDI courses are currently needed, but as described above, they are especially challenging to develop and implement.

Course-sharing administrative model and policies: Rather than the complex administrative model implemented by WISE, the current project will involve an advisory board of administrators from LIS programs around the country to develop a streamlined system and set of policies in which courses shared through the project will result in automatic transfer of credits, thereby reducing the administrative complexities associated with the original system.

Administrative Advisory Board: Heidi Julien, University of Buffalo; Lisa O'Connor, UNC Greensboro; Anthony Chow, San Jose State; Denice Adkins, University of Missouri; Lenese Colson, Valdosta State; Eric Meyer, UT Austin; and Jamie Naidoo, University of Alabama have already expressed interest in this program and a willingness to join the advisory board to help develop this course-sharing system. More institutions will be invited to join upon funding.

Roles and responsibilities of the Administrative Advisory Board: In addition to helping to develop policy, part of the role of this board will be to encourage participation within their institutions by identifying qualifying courses, encouraging faculty participation, and promoting them to students. As with the original WISE system, courses will still be run by the originating institution but will be open to students in other institutions as space permits. As such, intellectual property rights of any courses shared through the current project will be retained by the creating faculty in adherence to their own institution's intellectual property policy. Also, like the original system, the advisory board will work with the project team to establish standards or guidelines to determine what kinds of courses will be shared.

Project manager: Currently, the project team will recruit and hire a program manager. The project manager will develop and maintain the infrastructure for the course-sharing platform and the project website, maintain documentation and files and share with advisory boards as appropriate, manage logistics for meetings, take meeting minutes, and track progress toward deadlines.

PHASE TWO
Launch. In Phase Two, the ILISE course-sharing platform will be launched. With the assistance of the faculty advisory board, the project team will solicit, review, and promote courses to be shared across programs. During this time, Dr. Erdelez will continue to oversee the administration of the course-sharing platform, recruit participants, and promote the curriculum audit tools and training.

Audit. As the ILISE platform is launched and courses are submitted, the student/alumni advisory board will work with the project team to use the audit tools to help review and provide feedback on the initial courses submitted to the course-sharing platform. As courses are submitted for the first semesters of the ILISE platform, the advisory board will implement the EDI audit tools to review and provide feedback on the courses, which will then be shared with the submitting faculty member. The review is meant to be formative and offer the faculty ideas and insights into EDI aspects of the course rather than a gatekeeping tool. This review will be implemented for the first two to three semesters as the ILISE platform is established and a more permanent process is implemented.

Throughout the grant, the project team will have monthly check-ins to track progress toward goals and meet six times per year with each advisory board to gather input and feedback on the overall project and its deliverables.

Sustainability. During Phase Two, Ramin Naderi and Laura Saunders will also develop and deliver training for LIS faculty to implement the curriculum audit tools and offer consulting on such audits.

The project is being built with sustainability in mind. The Dean's Fellow for DEI is an existing position at Simmons SLIS and will persist after the close of funding for this project. After the initial semesters, as guidelines for the course-sharing and the audit tools are established, the protocol will shift to the participating programs and faculty. They will be given access to the audit tools and training in using them and encouraged to conduct their own self-audits of courses, although there will be an option to request an audit from the DEI Fellow and ILISE project team.

Diversity Plan
Diversity is central to this project. MLIS degree students will directly benefit from broader access to well-vetted courses with an EDI focus. However, the project will also impact the field and the communities these librarians serve by graduating students with a stronger grounding in EDI and, along with the other programs implemented by SLIS and SJSU described above, helping to increase the representation of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities. Upon successful completion, this nationwide course-sharing platform will democratize graduate students' access to

EDI-advancing MLIS courses, regardless of their geographic location and political landscape. It will empower students of marginalized backgrounds by incorporating their perspectives in the audit process. The IMLS funds will be utilized to establish the system (i.e., platform, workflows, administrative protocols). The project team will foster and leverage strategic partnerships between SLIS, SJSU, and other potential partners to secure the sustainable growth and stability of the platform. This sustainable access to EDI-advancing courses will make MLIS programs more just and sensitive to the nuances of serving diverse communities. Consequently, the graduates from these programs are better equipped to serve these communities. Furthermore, this initiative will enhance the appeal of participating MLIS programs to students of marginalized backgrounds who otherwise might not feel they belong in the field of LIS. By bridging geographical and political gaps, this project embodies our commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable LIS discipline and profession.

Project Results

1. <u>Curricular Audit Toolkit & Faculty Training</u>: Tools and training materials for inclusive pedagogy and anti-racist education (e.g., a rubric to review syllabi, checklist of language and policies that promote inclusiveness, accessibility checklists; a process to identify curricular gaps; and protocols for surveys and focus groups with faculty, students, and alums to further understand how EDI topics are integrated into courses beyond what is visible in the syllabus) to be shared on the project website through open access licenses and conference presentations, social media, free online webinars (e.g., through ALISE webinar series and LIS Pedagogy Chat), and other outreach. **Goal alignment:** Openly licensed curriculum audit tools will help programs review and improve their curriculum, while free training will assist in using the tools. Diversity audits can result in specific recommendations for improving attention to EDI in the curriculum, leading to LIS programs with stronger attention to EDI areas such as cultural competence and social justice and LIS program graduates better prepared to work with diverse populations. A more EDI-focused curriculum also addresses one of the barriers to diversifying the profession and could, along with other initiatives, help recruit and retain a more diverse student population.

2. <u>Curriculum Sharing Platform</u>: National platform for sharing MLIS EDI curricula similar to the WISE consortium. WISE is an existing platform developed to facilitate the sharing of courses and the transfer of credits across LIS programs nationwide. As of 2023, UNC is relinquishing administrative oversight of the program. SLIS, in partnership with SJSU through their collaborative iLead project, will adapt, extend, and rebrand this system as a platform focused on sharing EDI courses. Working with the curriculum audit materials and the advisory board, the project team will develop a set of outcomes and a rubric for vetting courses. Submitted courses will go through a review using the audit tools, and programs will receive feedback on their courses. Accepted courses will be made available to students in LIS programs nationwide, with streamlined transfer of credits. **Goal alignment:** Similar to 1) Curricular audit tools above, this will enhance EDI in the curriculum and make that curriculum more accessible to students in LIS programs nationwide.

References

Adkins, D., Buchanan, S. A., Bossaller, J. S., Brendler, B. M., Alston, J. K., & Sandy, H. M. (2021). Assessing Experiential Learning to Promote Students' Diversity Engagement. *Journal of Education for Library & Information Science, 62*(2), 201–219. https://doi-org.ezproxy.simmons.edu/10.3138/jelis.2019-0061

American Library Association. (2023). *Core competences of librarianship*. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org

.educationcareers/files/content/2022%20ALA%20Core%20Competences%20of%20Librarianship_FINA L.pdf

American Library Association. (2019). *Core values of librarianship*. https://www.ala.org/advocacy/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues

Bright, K., Colón Aguirre, M., Alabi, J, Hinchliffe, L.J., Saunders, L., & Wong, MA.. "Moving Beyond Diversity Day: The Way to Social Justice is through Action." ALISE Academy. ALISE Annual Conference. September 2021.

Brown, P., Forsyth, E., Kingma, B., & Shaffer-Mannion, R. (2007). WISE libraries: Building the online course of the future. World Library And Information Congress: 73rd Ifla General Conference And Council 19-23 August 2007, Durban, South Africa. http://www.ifla.org/iv/ifla73/index.htm

Cooke, N. A., Sweeney, M. E., & Noble, S. U. (2016). Social Justice as Topic and Tool: An Attempt to Transform an LIS Curriculum and Culture. *Library Quarterly, 86*(1), 107–124. https://doi-org.ezproxy.simmons.edu/10.1086/684147

Dali, K., & Thomson, K.M. (2023). *Inglorious pedagogies: Difficult, unpopular and uncommon topics in library and information science education*. Rowman & Littlefield.

De La Rosa, S., Simons, R. N., & Elkins, A. J. (2021). Teaching with Color: Calling in White Faculty to Address Whiteness in the LIS Curriculum. *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science & Technology, 58*(1), 703–706. https://doi-org.ezproxy.simmons.edu/10.1002/pra2.535

Farkas, M. (2019, May 1). Barriers to diversity: The problems of LIS internships and practica. *American Libraries*. https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2019/05/01/barriers-diversity-lis-internships/

Honma, Todd. 2005. Trippin' over the Color Line: The Invisibility of Race in Library and Information Studies. *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 1*(2). http://escholarship.org/uc/item/4nj0w1mp

Kendrick, K.D. (2019, February 13). Tweet-dux: White supremacy and racism in the PoC low-morale experience. *Renewals*. https://renewerslis.wordpress.com/2019/02/13/tweet-dux-white-supremacy-and-racism-in-the-poc-low-morale-experience/

Martin, R., McCann, H., Morales, M., & Williams, S. (2013). White screen/white noise: Racism and the internet. *Urban Library Journal 19*(1), 1-12.

Mehra, B. (2022). *Social Justice Design and Implementation in Library and Information Science*. Routledge.

Pawley, Christine. 2006. Unequal Legacies: Race and Multiculturalism in the LIS Curriculum. *Library Quarterly, 76*(2): 149–68.

Parker, A., & Tritter, J. (2006). Focus group method and methodology: Current practice and recent debate. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 29*(1), 23–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/01406720500537304

Pen America. (2023, November 9). New report: Legislatures introduce 110 educational gag orders in 2023. https://pen.org/press-release/new-report-gag-orders-in-2023/

Poole, A. H., Agosto, D., Greenberg, J., Xia Lin, & Erjia Yan. (2021). Where Do We Stand? Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice in North American Library and Information Science Education. *Journal of Education for Library & Information Science, 62*(3), 258–286. https://doi-org.ezproxy.simmons.edu/10.3138/jelis.2020-0018

Priya, A. (2021). Case Study Methodology of Qualitative Research: Key Attributes and Navigating the Conundrums in Its Application. *Sociological Bulletin, 70*(1), 94–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022920970318

Schisa, K., McKinney, A., Faires, D., Kingma, B., Montague, R.A., Smith, L.C., & Sterna, M. (2011). *Web-based information science education: Leveraging the power of the network to re-define the global classroom*. IGI.

Vinopal, J. (2016, Jan 13). The quest for diversity in library staffing: From awareness to action. *In the Library with the Leadpipe*. http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2016/quest-for-diversity/

Yung, J.Y; Fraser, K., & Winn, D. (2020). Diversity initiatives to recruit and retain academic librarians: A systematic review. *College & Research Libraries, 81*(1). https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/17484/32063

Schedule of Completion

Time Frame	Activity	Project Team
August 2024	Convene student/alumni advisory board Convene faculty/administrator advisory board Post job for program manager	Sanda Erdelez Laura Saunders Ramin Naderi
September-December 2024	Hire and train program manager	Sanda Erdelez Laura Saunders Ramin Naderi
	Pilot test and refine EDI audit rubric	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
	Develop EDIaudit student survey	
	Develop EDI audit faculty survey	
	Develop EDI audit focus group questions	
	Secure IRB approvals for surveys and focus groups	
	Review existing program policies for transfer of credit	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board
	Draft policies and procedures for course-sharing platform	
	Recruit LIS programs for course-sharing	
	Begin to solicit courses for course-sharing platform	
	Develop project website and website for course-sharing platform	Program manager
January-May 2025	Run pilot EDI audit student survey	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders

	Run pilot EDI audit faculty survey	Student Advisory Board
	Run EDI audit focus groups	
	Recruit and train EDI reviewers for course-sharing platform	
	Develop course evaluation for courses shared through course-sharing platform	
	Finalize policies and procedures for course-sharing platform	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
	Begin reviewing courses submitted to platform	
	Continue to recruit LIS programs for course-sharing	
	Continue to solicit courses for course-sharing	
	Open registration for initial course-sharing semester	
May-August 2025	Compile results of surveys and focus groups	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
	Develop handbook and procedures for use of EDI audit rubric, surveys, and focus groups	
	License & post EDI audit materials to project website and begin marketing	
	Manage course-sharing platform, continue to recruit LIS programs and solicit courses	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
September- December 2025	Market EDI audit tools through social media, listservs, conferences, and publications	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
	Offer training on EDI audit tools	

	Manage initial offering of course-sharing courses	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
	Administer course evaluations for courses shared through course-sharing platform	
	Enroll second semester of course-sharing courses	
January-May 2026	Analyze course evaluations from course-sharing platform. Use results to refine rubric and other EDI audit tools.	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
	Continue to market EDI audit tools	
	Continue to offer training on EDI audit tools	
	Continue to recruit LIS programs and solicit courses for course-sharing platforms	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
	Review policies and procedures from first semester of course-sharing and refine as needed	
	Enroll second semester of course-sharing courses	
	Administer course evaluations for second semester of course-sharing courses	
June-August 2026	Evaluate course-sharing program	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
	Enroll third semester of course-sharing courses	
	Continue to market EDI audit tools and offer training	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
September-December 2026	Share evaluations of course-sharing program with faculty advisory board and consider platform and policy changes	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager

	Continue to market course-sharing platform and invite additional programs and courses	
	Enroll fourth semester of course-sharing courses & evaluate third semester courses	
	Continue to market EDI tools and offer training	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
January-May 2027	Share evaluations of course-sharing program with faculty advisory board and consider platform and policy changes	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
	Continue to market course-sharing platform and invite additional programs and courses	
	Enroll fifth semester of course-sharing courses & evaluate fourth semester courses	
	Continue to market EDI tools and offer training	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board
	Recruit and train new Dean's Fellow for DEI to take over Ramin's duties as he graduates	Sanda Erdelez Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Program manager
Summer 2027	Evaluate course-sharing program	Sanda Erdelez Faculty/administrator advisory board Program manager
	Continue to market course-sharing platform	
	Continue to market EDI audit tools and offer training	Ramin Naderi Laura Saunders Student Advisory Board

<u>**Digital Products Plan**</u>

Type

This project will result in several digital projects.

The project team will create a project website which will act as a repository for other digital materials created in the course of the project, and will be a resource for LIS faculty nationwide to access and use the materials. The team will also use the space to provide updates on the project, including the development of the course-sharing platform. The website will be created in Google Sites, which is supported by Simmons University, and will be hosted on the Simmons University server. Simmons University will maintain the integrity of any web-based platforms used to deliver content, such Google Drive and Google Sites applications. Users will not be able to manipulate the underlying code or programming of these platforms. However, as described in more detail below, the materials and content hosted on these sites will be publicly available and shared without restriction.

The main digital products produced by this project will be the diversity audit tools, which are meant to be adopted and used by LIS faculty. Therefore all the audit tools, including the rubrics, survey and focus group protocols, etc., will be available through the project website. The final materials will be determined with input from the student advisory board. Because the intention is for these materials not only to be used but to be adapted as necessary for local audiences, most materials will be shared as "view-only" Google document and Google slides, which practitioners can copy or download in order to make their own edits.

Finally, the project team intends to create a white paper describing the project, its outcomes, and next steps or further research. This paper will also be shared on the project web site as a PDF.

Availability

As described above, all materials related to the project will be shared as open access materials on the project website and will be accessible to all standard web browsers. No special equipment will be needed to access the project site or materials. The project team will promote availability to the materials through public announcements, postings on the site, and through social media sites, including using the official social media accounts of Simmons and SLIS. The project team will also promote the site through publications and presentations. The project will rely on underlying metadata in the Google suite, and metadata will be preserved and maintained as part of the overall web site and project maintenance.

Access

All materials will be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA), meaning that materials can be adapted, remixed and built upon for non-commercial purposes as long as derivatives attribute our work and are shared under identical licensing terms.

The project team will also address access in terms of accessibility. All materials and learning objects will be reviewed for compliance with accessibility standards before being shared. For example, PDFs and slides will be scanned for screen readability, all images will include alt-text, and videos will be closed-captioned.

Sustainability

Project staff will be responsible for maintaining the site for the duration of the grant, after which time the PI will take over the administration of the site, with support from Simmons University Technology. The purpose of the digital products that will be created for this project are to be used by librarians and LIS students as they create and deliver civic literacy curricula and/or explore participatory curricular development. As such, the final products as described above must be accessible and maintained after the grant period ends. The principle investigator will take over site administration and maintenance after the grant period ends. However, diversity audit materials may have a "shelf life" and information contained in them might become outdated or superseded. The intention will be to maintain and promote the site and the project products for 5 years after the grant period ends. After that time, the site and materials will be reviewed by the PI to determine their ongoing relevance. The PI will also consider information provided by Google Analytics as to the access and use of the site and materials. If the materials still seem relevant and are being accessed, the PI will continue to maintain the site. If the materials seem outdated, the site will be archived.

Simmons University maintains a number of project web sites, including one in support of a previous IMLS grant, which has also been preserved through server upgrades and migrations (https://slis.simmons.edu/blogs/disinformation/). The school has the technical infrastructure and support to maintain and preserve the materials as necessary.