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SLIS Update

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SLIS Update
Elizabeth Haynes, Interim Director

Welcome to the first issue of the second year of *SLIS Connecting*. These are exciting times for the School of Library and Information Science. We are conducting faculty searches for two positions, a new certificate program has been approved, there are new enhancements to the undergraduate program, and there are other developments as well.

The Graduate Certificate in Youth Services and Literature has been approved and a plan of study is now available. The certificate requires 15 credit hours, 12 of which may be taken as part of the SLIS master's degree curriculum. The Certificate can also be earned with a related master's degree or as post-master's certificate for those holding an MLS. The Graduate Certificate in Youth Services and Literature joins the pre-existing Graduate Certificate in Archives and Special Collections. The new certificate will also allow us to draw upon the resources of the de Grummond Collection, an archival collection of books and original source materials in children's literature, as well as the expertise of some of our fellow departments in the College of Education and Psychology with approved electives from the Department of Curriculum, Instruction & Special Education and the Department of Child and Family Studies.

Our undergraduate program leading to a bachelor's degree has been approved as a fully-online program. SLIS undergraduate courses were already online, but it is now possible for Southern Miss students to take online courses through the Mississippi Virtual Community College when Southern Miss courses are not offered in an online format. Another addition to our undergraduate program is the approval of an online minor in library and information science. The minor consists of 18 hours with three required courses and three electives from departmental courses.

We are in the process of searching to fill two faculty positions and hope to bring those searches to a successful conclusion by the end of March so stay tuned. In other personnel news, Dr. M. J. Norton was recently named Interim Dean of Libraries for Southern Miss. She will serve in that position until a

new Dean of Libraries is appointed, and I was named as Interim Director of the School of Library and Information Science.

We are also looking forward to the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival in April. Noted children's author Jon Scieszka is the recipient of The University of Southern Mississippi Medallion. For more detailed information be sure to read about the festival in this issue.

The School of Library and Information Science had a big presence at Mississippi Library Association's Annual Conference in Natchez with five presentations, a booth, and a breakfast. Other recent presentations and future presentations are highlighted in this issue.

Earlier this month (Thursday, February 7th) the announcement was made that Dr. Rodney Bennett will become the 10th president of The University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Bennett comes to us from the University of Georgia where he was Vice President for Student Affairs. We look forward to a new era at Southern Miss under his leadership as we move further into the 21st century.



Dr. Elizabeth Haynes received her MLS and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. She has been a school library media specialist and district library administrator for the El Paso (Texas) Public Schools. For three years, Dr. Haynes was a library media specialist for the Texas Education Agency. She joined the faculty of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg in 1998.