



Dear SOIS Friends,

Greetings from the School of Information Studies at Dominican University! We are just beginning to feel the cool fall weather here in River Forest. The leaves are turning colors at their edges, and as each day goes by there are fewer moments of daylight. Growing up in Texas, I rarely experienced the seasonal cycles that we have in Illinois, and I never cease to appreciate and enjoy them.

These seasonal changes also make me reflect on the passage of time. At the end of this semester, I will have been the administrative head of our SOIS for nine and a half years, having started as GSLIS Dean in July of 2013. In that time, we changed our school name, expanded our degree offerings, revised our MLIS core curriculum, and joined the iSchools international consortium of information schools. This semester, we will complete another round of accreditation Self-Study work associated with the American Library Association's MLIS degree accreditation. That seems an ideal point for a leadership transition. Thus, I will be stepping down as SOIS Director at the end of 2022, returning to faculty for the Spring semester, and retiring in May 2023.

Working with the outstanding faculty, staff, students, Advisory Board, and Alumni Council of SOIS has been an amazing privilege as well as a joyful professional and personal experience. Many thanks to each of you for your ongoing support of our programs and the information professions more broadly.

Warm wishes to you all!

Kate Marek
Director and Professor

DOM*i***NICAN**

Chicago's iSchool
DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

WELCOME NEW SOIS DIRECTOR DR. DON HAMERLY



Welcome to Dr. Don Hamerly as the new Director of SOIS, effective January 2023. Don comes to this position having served as the director of the School Library Media Program since 2009 and as the founding director of the undergraduate Informatics program since 2015. During his thirteen years in the School of Information Studies, Don has taught courses in school librarianship, web design, informatics, research methods, and writing, and he has published in the areas of school librarianship, professionalism, and library history. “I am excited to step into the role of director and serve our students alongside my amazing colleagues in this time of challenge, change, and opportunity for our profession.”

ACCREDITATION VISITING PANEL – Please Join Us

Please consider participating in a social evening on campus with our External Review Panel for MLIS degree continued ALA accreditation. We are inviting Advisory Board members, alumni, adjunct instructors, and employers in the area to join us on campus on Sunday afternoon, October 16, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. to meet with our five External Review Panel members as they learn more about our program. The first hour together will be a social hour, followed by breakout groups for Q&A and discussion. We will gather on the first floor of the Rebecca Crown Library, in the newly remodeled Contemplation Space within the Learning Commons. This would be a great time for you to visit campus and see the library’s new look, as well as meet some old friends and contribute to our accreditation process. If you are able to join us, please RSVP to Janette Torres Arellano at jtorresarellano@dom.edu.

FOLLETT CHAIR DR. CUTCHA RISLING BALDY



This year's Follett Chair, Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy, will be in residence at Dominican during the period November 7-18. There will be various presentations and events associated with Dr. Baldy's visit, which is focused this semester on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. We plan to hold an event on Thursday, November 17 that will look at alternate ways of thinking about Thanksgiving food and traditions in the United States. In the Spring semester, Dr. Baldy will focus on issues surrounding indigenous land acknowledgment and land return. The annual Follett Lecture will be held in April.

[Watch the Follett Lecture page](#) for more details of events in November and in April.

BUTLER BOOK SALE

It's not too early to plan for our annual Butler Book Sale! The Book Sale will take place this year on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, December 8-10, with specific open times during that period still to be announced. Don't miss this annual opportunity for finding gift books as well as new books at a low cost for your library collections.

ALUMNI NEWS

Bethany Bates (MLIS 2018) is Database Coordinator at The HistoryMakers.

Doris Cardenas (MLIS 2015) is now Director of Archives at the Claretian Missionaries Archives USA - Canada.

Kristen Gravelin (MLIS 2018) is now Associate Archivist at the Claretian Missionaries Archives USA - Canada.

Heidi Knuth (MLIS 2012) was spotlighted in The Illinois Library Association's Newsletter on August 22, 2022. Heidi is the assistant department head for youth services at Bloomingdale Public Library.

Lori Moody (MLIS 2019) is the Manager, Photo Assets and Archivist Manager, of Photo Assets and Archivist, Expedia Group.

STUDENT NEWS

For this issue of *Off the Shelf*, we are offering you a closer look at some of the student work within SOIS. First, news about coursework tied to community service, and next a feature about an MLIS/MAYL dual degree student. Our students are doing great things, under inspirational faculty leadership!



Pictured are Todd Miller, MLIS student, and Kayla Perkins, the Cook County Community Impact Manager for PCs for People.

Todd Miller, a current MLIS student, hosted a computer giveaway on September 26 at the Niles-Maine District Library in partnership with PCs for People, a national nonprofit that works to get low-cost quality computers and internet into homes and nonprofits with low income. Todd works at the Niles Library and pitched the PC giveaway as an extension of his community-based project for the summer course LIS 710/INF 430 Information Divides with Professor Don Hamerly. The course requires students to find a community partner whose mission wholly or partly focuses on mitigating digital divide issues and work directly with the partner to learn

what they do and strategize potential new ways to address divides.

Todd and students James Simon and Breshayia Kelly went beyond the requirements of the course to commit to sustained work toward addressing divides in Chicago. James, a current MLIS student, attended a Chicago Digital Equity Council community conversation in Garfield Park and has plans to continue his relationship with the Chicago Area Broadband Initiative and the Quilt Corporation to help with digital divide mitigation efforts in the Chicago Lawndale neighborhood. Breshayia Kelly, an undergraduate informatics major, has challenged her church, Apostolic Faith Church of Chicago, to start a digital literacy program for the community it serves.

STUDENT FEATURE: EILIS CORCORAN

eye-leash kor-kor-uhn | she/her/hers

Current MLIS/MAYL Dual Degree Student



What got you interested in the dual MLIS/MAYL?

I worked as Professor Del Negro's graduate assistant in 2019 and 2020 and helped research to prepare the proposal for the program. I had also been interested in MAYL programs when initially applying for my MLIS but chose Dominican knowing there wasn't a program at the time. So, it worked out well for me!

Do you see it helping you in your future work?

Other than the obvious benefits with readers advisory and collection development, there are also benefits should I decide to pursue reviewing, awards committees, or something similar in the future.

Any new directions you see open to you with the MAYL focus?

At this time, I'm still going to be working as a youth librarian but might try to take on some reviewing or similar projects as well. In the future though, I'd be interested in pursuing future research or other academic pursuits.

For the MAYL, you have chosen to do a thesis as your final project. Talk a little about your focus on diversity, and how you will develop that in your thesis.

I'm writing about representations of disability and chronic illness in YA speculative fiction. This allows me to explore how disability representation has been impacted by the recent push for diversity in youth literature, which has been especially interesting regarding We Need Diverse Books' decision to move away from using #OwnVoices, as the term made authors feel like they needed to reveal personal information about themselves, including private health information. Currently, I've also been writing about how we can distinguish good representation from authors just by including disabled characters in their books.

Did you consider choosing a creative project for your thesis?

I did not. It's great that students have the option to do either, but I definitely knew that I was going to go the academic thesis route. I'd love to see what others do with the creative option though!

What has been your favorite part of the dual degree experience for you?

I've enjoyed getting to do a deeper dive into the literature, especially through literary theory. It strengthened my evaluation skills and allowed me to examine youth literature from a variety of perspectives (other than just the library world!). It's also been great to be able to apply my studies to my specific interests with my thesis.

What advice or suggestions do you have for people considering the Master of Arts in Youth Literature?

I'd recommend that you start keeping a list of ideas for final project topics early! I had a hard time deciding what I wanted to focus on because I had so many interests that felt varied. I can't even imagine how much harder it would have been if I had wanted to do a creative thesis! Keeping good records and track of topic ideas makes a huge difference across the board.

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS

Please send news for future "Off the Shelf" newsletters to sois@dom.edu.





DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

School of Information Studies
7900 West Division Street
River Forest, Illinois 60305
(708) 524-6845
sois@dom.edu | sois.dom.edu

[Email preferences](#) | [Privacy policy](#)

dom.edu

