

LASSA PEP Survey 2008-2009

RESULTS AND COMPILED COMMENTS – SUMMARY

Question 1: What program are you enrolled in?

Total responses: 69

MAS – 10.1%	7/69
MLIS – 69.9%	48/69
Joint – 20.3%	14/69
MACL – 0%	0/69
PhD – 0%	0/69

Question 2.1/2.2: Do you expect that class scheduling will affect your ability to graduate in the timeframe you would like? (i.e. daytime to evening ratio and/or winter to summer ratio)

Total responses: 69

Yes – 18.8%	13/69
No – 81.2%	56/69

Summarized Comments:

- January intake students have less options (co-ops, courses, professional experience)
- Not enough courses offered in the summer
- More afternoon/evening courses should be offered
- More morning courses should be offered
- Summer courses should not be as condenses; hard to work and take a class at the same time
- More online courses in summer sessions
- Most of the summer courses offered are focused on children's services
- Need earlier information on how and when courses will be offered
- Some courses only offered during the summer
- Some courses are only offered very rarely (e.g., Law, Cataloguing, Information Design)

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Question 3.1/3.2: Do you expect that the number of courses offered will affect your ability to graduate in the timeframe you expected?

Total responses: 68

Yes – 20.6%	14/68
No – 79.4%	54/68

Summarized Comments:

- Need more summer course
- Need more variety in courses
- Certain courses are never offered
- Some courses have very long wait lists
- More courses offered on the archival side. More coordination between scheduling archival and library courses to prevent conflicts for joint students.
- Concerns that certain courses are not offered enough, influencing ability to graduate (e.g., cataloging courses, digital collections)
- Required courses (e.g., 505) should be offered in the summer as well

Question 4.1/4.2: Do you expect that the variety of courses offered will affect your ability to graduate in the timeframe you expected?

Total responses: 53

Yes – 22.6% [<i>Choice One – see below</i>]	12/53
No – 77.4% [<i>Choice Two – see below</i>]	41/53

Summarized comments:

[Editor's Note: There was a slight error in the question. Instead of being able to select 'Yes' or 'No', the survey display 'Choice 1' and 'Choice 2'. Since the previous two questions had followed the 'Yes' and 'No' format, this is not believed to have been a major source of confusion]

- Many cataloguing courses in the fall and winter sessions are currently TBA and may not go ahead unless a suitable instructor is found.
- Will wait until electives that are interesting or relevant to my career interests are offered
- Some courses of interest don't seem to be offered often or at all (e.g. Science Librarianship).
- Have taken a lot of courses that would not have otherwise been interested in in order to graduate in a reasonable amount of time
- Trouble finding courses in my last semester that I was both interested in AND hadn't taken before.

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- Too many "required" courses. L503 and 501 and ARST 540 and 573 share many themes. There may be a better way of structuring these so that joint students can take more elective courses.
- Joint students should be allowed to take courses outside of SLAIS
- This will depend on whether or not Cataloging is offered in the fall.

Question 5: Do you have any suggestions for additional courses to be covered in your program area? Or are there any courses you would like to see offered more regularly?

[Editor's Note: Only the suggestions that occurred most frequently are listed here. For a complete list of suggested courses, see the Detailed Report]

Complete comments:

- MAS: I would like to see more courses on digital preservation, electronic records management, records management, law, advanced diplomatic, and business records.
LIS: I would like to see cataloging offered more regularly, and a digital preservation course.
- I wish the 1 credit courses were revised to be 1.5 with additional hours dedicated to them.
And they were more of them (1 credit classes) since they are more interesting, specialized, and practical.
- A course on public speaking should be part of the core curriculum replacing 502, which could be an elective course. If not workshops should be offered in public speaking to SLAIS students as part of the core curriculum, perhaps in 503 course. Many students have a lot of anxiety surrounding it and we need to be more confident, seeing it is a major part of our job when graduating- it is an essential component. Also as part of a course either in the core or as an elective, we need to have regular workshops in Voyager and in Horizon as they are part of the skill set we need to successfully deliver in student librarian & GAA positions and then eventual career positions. Many of us are going into these jobs feeling "blind " to library back end systems and it would eliminate a lot of anxiety.
- A comprehensive "live" (not online) course in Academic Librarianship
- Thomas Quigley's Public Librarianship course need t be regularly presented, either by him or by another i.e. Chris Middlemas, who is also a wonderful teacher.
- 505 and 504 should be offered in the summer terms. Both of them every summer for January intake students.
- Two suggestions for 1 credit classes: content management systems, customer service 101
- Wish instructional role of the librarian class was offered more. A class on teaching skills should be mandatory! I think it's more important than management.
- Cataloguing.
- I was hoping to take a course in legal librarianship.

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- I wish Digital Libraries was offered more frequently. I also wish Information Design / Web Documents was offered more frequently (I was unable to schedule this course during my entire two years at SLAIS).
- I am a first term student. I do not know yet.
- less children's courses, more information science research courses.
- Advanced diplomatics. Copyright. Advanced preservation.
- Having such courses as Science & Technology Librarianship (LIBR532) offered at all would help. Apparently it has never been offered, and there are no plans for it in the next while.
- More management and human resources courses, please! Management and HR are often important components of professional librarianship, and with only one course in management offered regularly I feel very unprepared in this area!
- Yes -- I find it misleading that slais posts a list of all classes offered, ever, but due to staffing shortage some of the courses I wanted to take upon entering slais have not been offered at all. It would be better if slais only listed what courses will actually be available for the next 2 years to avoid misleading students into thinking they will be able to take a course that is not actually active.
- Yes -- there needs to be a course in the MAS program which offers some training in, or at least a thorough explanation of, EAD.
- I don't have suggestions for more course topics, but I would love to see more courses offered in an online format or in alternate locations - for example, if some of the public library courses could be offered at VPL or BPL.
- More practical courses. E.g. Dreamweaver, social software?, teaching Encoded Archival Description Rethink the core for the MAS Advanced Arrangement & Description, Advanced Record keeping seem more appropriate than some other archives courses I have taken, like database design, research methods. Preservation of digital records was great for theory, but follow up on it and teach some practical how-to classes to learn how to implement digital records preservation
- would like to see more technical courses, policy-making, politics and ethics, government issues and advanced government documents.
- it would be nice to see financial management/human resources management offered more frequently, and more one credit courses. A lot of the courses seem really interesting/valuable, but I just don't have the time to take everything, so it would be nice if some courses, like financial management or marketing were offered as one credit courses so we can at least get an introduction to the topic.
- It would also be nice to have more variety in summer courses (not the same ones offered over and over again). And it would be nice if the classes were more evenly distributed throughout the week, even if great classes are offered we can't take them when they're all offered at the same time (last semester there was about 6 MLIS courses offered on monday, and only one on some other days of the week).

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- Advanced Arrangement and Description and Advanced Records Management are only being offered concurrently over four evenings in the second summer semester. While these courses are extremely valuable to all Archives and Joint students, it would be beneficial if they could be offered during the Fall or Winter semesters.
- Academic librarianship. User services targeted towards specific communities.
- The second year of the MAS program needs complete overhaul. The offerings this year were terrible. Advanced Records Management and Advanced Arrangement and Description should be standard. Also, we are in desperate need of a technology course that actually covers things we will encounter in the workplace, i.e. EDRMS systems. We do not need specialized niche classes, not unless we have the basics covered, which at the moment we do not.
- digital libraries, business, government, more technical offerings (full course on website design), overview course on systems
- I think digital collections issues should be offered every semester, and there should be a regular option for scholarly communications - not in the summer. I also think the LIBR equivalent of Records management should be offered more than once a year.
- I would like to see more of a focus on academic libraries and instruction. I think teaching and instruction is such an important part of academic librarianship, and all librarianship. At least one more course on teaching and instruction would be helpful.
- During my 2 years at SLAIS, the courses on public libraries and academic libraries were never offered; I would have liked to take both.
- A course on Copyright legislation should be added. Courses on advanced arrangement and description and advanced records management should be offered more frequently. Additional courses on digital records should also be considered.
- Academic libraries, cataloguing - both more frequently
- Cataloguing should be offered every year, Law should be every second year, Instructional Role of the Librarian is so popular that it should be offered probably twice a year (and NOT conflicting with required courses (e.g., 505/504)).
- More digital classes offered more frequently. More Academic-oriented classes.
- While I answered "No" for all of the above, I am taking courses I don't want to be in specifically so that I do graduate on time. The courses I want are not offered often enough, if at all. It's ridiculous that I was unable to take cataloging before I graduated. Judging by the number of jobs I see that require a small portion of cataloging, I am disqualified for many positions.
- No
- I would like to see courses with a substantial practical component, like a practicum or internship but as part of a course in the program.
- More technology courses taught by a greater variety of teachers (e.g. to benefit from different teaching styles, different perspectives, different strengths, etc.). I would like history of the book to be taught more regularly. I would love to see courses on multicultural/cross-cultural librarianship, marketing/advocacy/fundraising, storytelling, graphic novels, reading theory, human-computer interaction, a full-term course on

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government documents, a cross-listed and full-term course on genealogy/local history, special collections, knowledge management.

- LIBR 511 should be offered more often and I would have liked to take the History of the Book class, but it will never be offered in my time here.
- more record keeping courses, and practical courses. Because we get so little practical experience, it would be great if we could take more that one professional experience. while and internship might be helpful, I can't afford to take 4 months off without pay.
- Classes related to archiving and arts should be offered more. The current non-textual materials course could be expanded into several courses.
- A class or two on non-verbal communication and interpersonal relations. As a customer service based field, we need to have not only the theoretical knowledge of how information systems work, but also be able to deal with people so that they feel welcomed and seen as people. Also, classes on things like running a business - budgeting, event planning, etc. - the more vocational aspects of the job.
- I would like to see more instruction classes (library instruction, archival instruction). Perhaps a chance to go through the College of Education to learn about teaching skills and methods? As a joint student, I was unable to do this.
- We need more cataloguing/classification and IT courses, taught by professors who have worked with these subjects in a professional manner.
- I wish I'd been able to take the cataloging class (511?) and Public Libraries...and course on multicultural services would also be really relevant and useful.
- practical cataloguing course covering basics of classification systems and marc records that practicing librarians will need to know regardless of area.
library 2.0 stuff
- It truly seems like SLAIS is much more public library focused, and children's services in particular. There is a dearth of classes related to topics within academic libraries. For example, I have been here two years and the Academic Libraries course was never offered. Possible suggestions include courses related to electronic content, or vendor negotiations, for faculty relationships.
- policy development, change management, knowledge management, and other business courses; academic and special libraries specialization courses; history of recordkeeping; legal courses
- KNOWLEDGE ORGANIZATION. Especially 511 offered more than every two years.
- Summer courses were full in one day. Seems like we need to have a few more scheduled to spread things out a bit. Also -- very important -- for a field that prides itself on using technology, it is disappointing to see virtually no on-line classes offered except during July-August. There should definitely be more on-line course offerings during regular terms!
- Information design is a big area, including theories of design and specific aspects like XML (which was listed as a course on the website but I've never seen it offered here!)
- Many of the 1 credit courses would be more beneficial as 3 credit courses. For example, Risk Management.
- Advanced Arrangement & Description.

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- perhaps offering the courses that are posted would be a start. LIBR 570 (3) Marketing in Information Organizations & LIBR 578 (3) Planning and Design of Libraries are 2 classes I would have really liked to have taken. These two courses are posted on the COURSES -- OVERVIEW page of SLAIS, however they have not been offered throughout my time at slais. Nor is there any plans to do so in my final semesters.
- There absolutely should be a course, open to both MAS and MLIS students, about copyright.

Question 6.1: Have you attended a LASSA event (social or academic) this year? This could include a potluck, bowling night, or LASSA meeting.

Total responses: 69

Yes – 52.2%	36/69
No – 47.8%	33/69

Question 6.2: If you answered yes to the above question, which events did you attend?

Total responses: 36

Potluck parties – 75%	27/36
LASSA Meetings – 47.2%	17/36
Bowling – 19.4%	7/36
Other – 8.3%	3/36

Question 6.3: If you did not attend a LASSA event, please explain why.

Summarized Comments:

- No time
- Activities located far from residence
- Can't be on campus except for classes
- Event time conflicted with schedule
- LASSA is seen by many MAS students to be library oriented
- Not a priority
- Did not enjoy previous LASSA events
- Unsure when LASSA meetings or events are actually held
- Events not always inviting; some LASSA members not very nice

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Question 7.1: Did you attend a New Student Orientation?

Total responses: 69

Yes - 76.8%	53/69
No - 23.2%	16/69

Question 7.2: How can the New Student Orientation be improved?

Summarized Comments:

- A map of all libraries with highlighted locations
- Meetings with advisors should be mandatory (and with profs who are not visiting or very new)
- Alcohol
- More information about courses, coop, GAA
- Tours were repetitive
- Better veggie options; better food
- Matching with student mentors ahead of orientation
- Better venue
- Information overload
- Try to fit less in; provide info on an information question/answer period
- Maybe split orientation into two parts
- Though the event was run quite well
- Better if not mandatory
- More info on courses and instructors

Question: 7.3 Why didn't you attend the Orientation?

Summarized Comments:

- Not a new student
- In class

Question 8.1: Did you attend a Student Group Information Session?

(e.g., LASSA, SLA, BCLA/CLA, etc)

Total responses: 68

Yes - 51.5%	35/68
No - 48.5%	33/68

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Question 8.2: How can the Student Group Information Session be improved?

Summarized Comments:

- Make a single 'cheatsheet' with all acronyms clearly listed and list differences and responsibilities of each group
- It was fine
- Felt it was just a way to improve resumes
- Great having it prior to potluck instead of at orientation
- Very informative
- More inclusive; more extra-curricular events

Question 8.3: Why didn't you attend a Student Information Session

Summarized Comments:

- Long-time student; didn't need an orientation
- Only on campus for classes
- Already belong to groups
- Not enough time; work obligations
- No interest

Question 9.1: Did you use the LASSA book sale wiki?

Total responses: 69

Yes – 58.0%	40/69
No – 42.0%	29/69

Question 9.2: Please give us your thoughts on how the LASSA wiki could be improved.

Summarized Comments:

- It needs to be more organized and I am confused by the website and the wiki. Please pick one
- It is only really useful for the book sale. The other information is only updated occasionally and is kind of tangential anyway.
- I was happy.
- It's pretty well done as is.
- It needs to be updated more often.
- Make people delete their posting after the book is sold.
- This is a fantastic resource. Is there any way to let incoming students know about it before they start so they don't go out and buy new text books?
- More books

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Question 9.3: Aside from the book sale page, have you used the LASSA wiki in the past year?

Total responses: 69

Yes – 15.9%	11/69
No – 84.1%	58/69

Question 9.4: If you answered yes to 9.3, please indicate what you used the wiki for (check all that apply):

[Editor's Note: Question 9.4 recorded 12 responses as "yes", but question 9.3 recorded 11 "yes" responses. The response do not match.]

Total responses: 12

Summarized Comments:

Job interview preparation – 75.0%	9/12
Work and experience information – 66.7%	8/12
Any other topics (pop culture, favourite blogs, favourite web 2.0 stuff, sustainability & charities, library & archival links) – 33.3%	4/12
New student handbook – 16.7%	2/12
Orientation Recap – 0%	0/12
Critical theory reading group – 0%	0/12

Question 10.1: Have you used the LASSA website in the last year?

Total responses: 67

Yes – 28.4%	19/67
No – 71.6%	48/67

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Question 10.2: If you answered yes to 10.1, please indicate what you used the website for (check all that apply):

Total responses: 19

Summarized Comments:

View upcoming events – 36.8%	7/19
View meeting times – 31.6%	6/19
View committee information – 21.1%	4/19
As a link to the LASSA wiki – 21.1%	4/19
Reading meeting minutes – 15.8%	3/19
Read information for new students – 15.8%	3/19
Read the news archive – 15.8%	3/19
Read previous PEP survey results – 5.3%	1/19

Question 10.3: What suggestions would you make to improve the LASSA website?

Summarized Comments:

- Please re-design the website... it needs it!
- RSS feed capability
- Needs a fresher look
- There's too much confusion between the wiki and the website. Why not make one that includes everything we need to know. I think a great option would be a discussion board where students could discuss issues, post questions, and keep updated.
- Post meeting minutes promptly! Also make it easier to find the constitution.
- Advertise more.
- Profiles of LASSA members

Question 11.1: Other than LASSA events, have you attended an event sponsored by another student group this year?

Total responses: 67

Yes – 71.6%	48/67
No – 28.4%	19/67

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Question 11.2: If you answered yes, which groups sponsored the events you attended? (check all that apply):

[Editor's Note: Question 11.1 recorded 48 responses as "yes", but question 11.2 recorded 49 "yes" responses. The response do not match.]

Total responses: 49

SLA@SLAIS – 38.8%	19/49
ACA – 34.7%	17/49
BCLA/CLA – 24.5%	12/49
Librarians Without Borders – 22.4%	11/49
ASIS&T – 16.3	8/49
CHLA – 10.2%	5/49

Question 12.1: Do you plan to attend the SLAIS Career Expo?

Total responses: 69

Yes – 49.3%	34/69
No – 50.7%	35/69

Question 12.2: If you answered yes to Question 12.1, and have subsequently attended the Career Expo, please give us your thoughts on how the Career Expo can be improved?

[Editor's Note: The Career Expo was held during the time the survey was open. The survey team was aware that students filling out the survey before the date of the Career Expo would not be able to answer this question. The question was included in an attempt to receive feedback from those filled out the survey after attending the Career Expo..

Summarized Comments:

- More lead time for planning!
- Job recruiting would be nice.
- Greater emphasis on archival speakers and professionals
- I think the Career Expo could offer mock interviews
- This year they provided us with info regarding who our one-on-ones were with prior to the expo. Very helpful!
- It would be great to have some more guidance for networking during the lunch and coffee breaks.

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Question 13.1: Did you attend any SLAIS colloquia this year?

Total responses: 65

Yes – 58.5%	38/65
No – 41.5%	27/65

Question 13.2: If you answered yes to question 13.1, were the topics within the subject domain of your program or outside the subject domain? Please explain.

Summarized Comments:

- Both. And they were interesting. I think they are a good idea. It's nice to stay in touch with the outside world.
- Within
- Outside, but the topic interested me.
- Some were within and some were not. But it was nice to have a range.
- Both. Very informative overall.
- Yes, they were excellent!!! Can't say enough good things about the colloquia.

Question 13.2: If you answered no to question 13.1, please explain why you did not attend any SLAIS colloquia this year.

Summarized Comments:

- Almost always on Wednesdays and I work that day. Days need to rotate more. I would have liked to attend more.
- Too busy.
- Topics don't interest me.
- Colloquia times conflicted with other commitments
- They are very research oriented. Not interesting to those interested in libraries, and not research.
- No time!
- It would be nice to have the powerpoints and speaking notes posted to the SLAIS website so those unable to attend can still benefit.

Question 14.1: Did you attend a Director's Forum this year?

Total responses: 68

Yes – 32.4%	22/68
No – 67.6%	46/68

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Question 14.2: If you answered no to question 14.1, please explain why you did not attend a Director's Forum.

Summarized Comments:

- Time conflicts
- I am soon to graduate
- Too busy, don't care
- Attended the last two years and thought too few questions asked, did not feel genuine
- No time

Question 15.1/15.2: Are there any barriers preventing you from participating in student group activities?

Total responses: 68

Yes – 61.8%	42/68
No – 38.2%	26/68

Summarized Comments:

- Scheduling conflicts
- Busy with homework
- No time
- Long commute to UBC
- Doesn't interest me
- LASSA is not very welcoming

Question 16: Do you have sufficient opportunity to interact with students from SLAIS programs other than your own? Please explain.

Summarized Comments:

- Yes, if you are Joint then you are able to interact more
- No, and don't care
- Only if we share classes
- Not many events draw interest from everyone
- More opportunities need to be available for mingling, the programs are cliquy

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Question 17: LASSA's budget is largely made up of your student fees. What other activities or programs would you be interested in seeing LASSA organize?

Summarized Comments:

- Kitchen ideas: water cooler, new kettle, coffee
- Pub nights at a consistent time (e.g. every Monday at 9pm)
- Fundraising events for library-related organizations
- Copy card for SLAIS students
- Workshops
- A session on how to select courses
- More social activities that bring MAS, MLIS and MACL together (ideas: pumpkin carving, games night, BBQ, pub crawl, swimming)

Question 18: Please give your thoughts or concerns on any other aspects of student life at SLAIS that you feel were not covered in this survey.

Summarized Comments:

- Improvement of student-faculty relations
- More classes offered at 11 and 12
- Wish there was more interaction between SLAIS and the University Archives, Special Collections and Librarians
- Class sizes feel large
- General negative attitude among students at SLAIS
- More interaction between students in different years and programs – there is a disconnect and tension between groups
- LASSA needs to be more transparent and inviting; meetings should be advertised better

Question 19: Please give us your thoughts on how the PEP survey can be improved.

Summarized Comments:

- Better proofreading – there was an error with the choice options on question 4.1
- Add more “Unsure” or “I don’t know” options to questions
- Felt some of the wording was confusing
- Slanted towards the MLIS side – more MAS and MACL representation would be appreciated
- More transparency as to where this data is posted and what is done with it
- Length is good
- Prize incentive may get more responses
- Desire for questions about quality of courses/instruction – *[Editor’s Note: This type of question is beyond the scope of the LASSA PEP Survey. Questions regarding quality are covered by course evaluations]*