SCHOOL OF INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SCIENCE

Introduction

The School of Information and Library Science (SILS) was founded in 1931 and is one of the most highly regarded programs of its kind in the nation. The school first offered a minor in information systems in 1997 and initiated a major in information science in 2003. UNC–Chapel Hill is one of two universities in the state offering a bachelor's degree in information science and is one of only a small number of schools nationwide offering such a program.

Information science is the study of cognitive, social, technological, and organizational roles of information in all its forms. It rests on three foundational pillars:

1. content: the substance of the information being created, communicated, stored, and/or transformed;
2. people who interact with the content as creators of information, recipients of information, or intermediaries in the communication process; and
3. technology used to support the creation, communication, storage, or transformation of the content.

The bachelor of science in information science is designed to prepare its graduates for a variety of careers in the information industry, including information architecture, database design and implementation, web design and implementation, business systems analyst, and information consulting, as well as for graduate study. The minor in information systems provides students with an understanding of computing, multimedia, electronic information resources, and the internet that complements their major field of study. Students concentrate their studies in the junior and senior years.

Advising

The department's director of undergraduate studies and undergraduate student services coordinator work with current and prospective majors by appointment. Further information on courses, undergraduate research opportunities, the honors program, careers, and graduate schools may be obtained from the SILS website (https://sils.unc.edu/).

Students who are double majoring are encouraged to meet periodically with an academic advisor in the College of Arts and Sciences. It is the student's responsibility to make sure he or she is making good progress toward completing a second major outside of SILS. Information systems minors should continue to meet with their assigned advisor in their major department.

Career Opportunities

Career Services at SILS assists individuals in all aspects of career development, including assessing strengths and skill sets, developing a job search strategy, and connecting students and alumni with information professionals in their field.

SILS also works closely with University Career Services and its programs and services, including on-campus recruiting for both summer internships and professional positions. Students are encouraged to take advantage of both the offerings from Handshake as well as targeted events for SILS students.

Preparing for the Major in Information Science

Students are subject to the requirements in place when they are admitted as a degree-seeking student to the University; consequently, the School of Information and Library Science requirements described in this catalog particularly apply to students admitted to the University during the 2025–2026 academic year.

First-year students and sophomores who plan to apply for the B.S.I.S. must complete the following prerequisites.

Code	Title	Hours
INLS 161	Tools for Information Literacy	3
INLS 201	Foundations of Information Science	3
MATH 115	Reasoning with Data: Navigating a Quantitative World	3

Undergraduate students who have completed all prerequisite courses may apply for admission to the major program. Participation is limited, and admission is competitive. Criteria for admission include the candidate's academic record, work and extracurricular experience, and substantive thinking about the role of information in society (and, for applicants to the minor, in their major field). Candidates from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds are sought for the minor. Prior computer experience is not a criterion for admission to the minor.

Admission

To apply for admission, students must "Apply for Change of Major" in ConnectCarolina. Information regarding the application process is available on the school's website (https://sils.unc.edu/bsis/undergraduate-admissions/). Applicants are asked to provide the following materials:

- A current résumé, including information about work experience and/or extracurricular activities
- A brief essay (100–300 words) on why you want to pursue an information science (IS) major/minor. More specifically, 1) what experiences led you to realize you would benefit from further education in IS, and 2) how will pursing an education in IS enable you to achieve your future plans?

Applications for the spring semester are available September 1 through October 1. Applications for the fall semester are available February 1 through March 1. Applications are accepted only during the application windows. No late or paper applications are accepted.

Questions can be addressed to the Assistant Director of Undergraduate Advising and Programs, School of Information and Library Science, CB# 3360, 107 Manning Hall; by sending email to silsinfo@ils.unc.edu; or by calling (919) 962-0208.

Major

- Information Science Major, B.S. (https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/information-science-major-bs/)

Minor

- Information Systems Mino (https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/information-systems-minor/)r

Dual Bachelor's–Graduate Degree Programs

- B.S.I.S in Information Science to M.S.I.S or M.S.L.S (https://sils.unc.edu/bsis/undergraduate-dual-degree-options/)
- B.A. in Environmental Studies to M.S.I.S (https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/environmental-studies-major-ba/)
- B.S. in Environmental Science to M.S.I.S (https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/environmental-science-bs/)

Graduate Programs

- M.S.I.S. in Information Science (https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/information-library-science/)
- M.S.L.S. in Library Science (https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/information-library-science/)
- P.S.M. in Digital Curation and Management (https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/information-library-science/)
- P.S.M. in Biomedical and Health Informatics (https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/information-library-science/)
- Ph.D. in Information and Library Science (https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/information-library-science/)
- Ph.D. in Health Informatics (https://chip.unc.edu/academic-programs-phd/)

Courses

- Information and Library Science (INLS) (https://catalog.unc.edu/courses/inls/)
- Carolina Health Information Program (CHIP) (https://catalog.unc.edu/courses/chip/)

Professors

Jaime Arguello, Jeffrey Bardzell, Robert Capra, Tressie McMillian Cottom, Melanie Feinberg, David Gotz, Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Mohammad Hossein Jarrahi, Diane Kelly (Wilson Distinguished Professor), Christopher (Cal) Lee, Gary Marchionini (Cary C. Boshamer Distinguished Professor), Arcot Rajasekar, Brian W. Sturm.

Associate Professors

Bradley M. Hemminger, Marijel (Maggie) Melo, Ryan Shaw, Francesca Tripodi, Tzu-Yu (Danny) Wu.

Assistant Professors

Alexandra Chassanoff, William (Willie) Payne, Fei Yu, Yue (Ray) Wang, Joseph Winberry.

Professor of the Practice

Ericka Patillo (Associate Dean for Academic Affairs).

Teaching Associate Professor

Ronald Bergquist.

Teaching Assistant Professors

Michael Fox, Elliott Kuecker, Casey H. Rawson, Megan A. Winget.

Contact Information

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