

INFORMATION/LIBRARY SCIENCES

What can I do with this degree?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Service to Faculty and Students
Reference
Circulation
Technical Services
 Acquisitions
 Cataloging
 System Automation
 Indexing/Abstracting
 Archiving
Special Collections
Media Services
Teaching
Administration/Management
Research
Publishing

Universities and colleges

Earn a master's degree in library or information science from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA).
Any bachelor's degree in liberal arts is good preparation. Classes in communications, foreign languages, business management, computer science and statistics can be helpful.
Related undergraduate degree is useful when working with particular specialties such as art or agriculture.
Develop excellent computer skills.
May work one-on-one with students and faculty or teach and present seminars. Others may work in more technically-oriented positions such as systems design or database management.
Gain experience in business and management to work in administration.
Work part-time in a college or university library to gain relevant experience.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND MEDIA CENTERS

Teaching
Administration
Technical Services

K-12 Schools
 Public and private
Public school districts

Many states require a master's degree in library science and a specialty certification. Some states also require teaching certification or student teaching in a library/media center.
Work or volunteer experience related to children and teaching is useful.
May help teachers develop curricula, prepare lesson units, team teach or provide staff development.
Collections usually include non-print media; media center may house computer labs.
Become familiar with various technologies and develop strong computer skills.
Learn to work both independently and with groups.

AREAS

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

User/Reader Services
Reference
Information and Referral Services
Youth Services
Special Collections
Technical Services
Acquisitions
Serials Management
Collection Development
Cataloging
System Automation
Archiving
Administration

EMPLOYERS

Central libraries
Library branches
Library services to jails, retirement homes,
hospitals, etc.
Bookmobiles

STRATEGIES

Develop a broad liberal arts background and earn a master's degree in library or information science from an ALA accredited program.
Take many computer courses. Should enjoy working with new technology.
Some librarians specialize in a particular subject area, such as government collections or technology, or a particular type of materials, such as maps or photography.
Creativity, a flair for drama, a positive attitude, and an enjoyment of children are important for those working in youth services. May coordinate events and plan programs for youth of all ages.
Take courses in child development and psychology.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS

Large hospitals, medical schools
Law firms, law schools, bar associations
Large corporations
Industrial and scientific collections
Research labs
Local, state and federal government agencies
Nonprofit organizations
Public libraries
Colleges and universities
Art schools
Museums and art institutions
Galleries
Historical societies
Publishing houses
Advertising and public relations agencies
News organizations and electronic media
Picture services
Motion picture studios
Television stations
Trade and professional associations

Earn a master's degree in library or information science from an accredited program.
Most positions require a bachelor's degree in a field related to the collection topic, e.g. business, science, art, etc. Some require graduate degree in the field. Many law librarians have the Juris Doctor (law degree).
Knowledge of foreign languages may be required in certain fields.
Special collections librarians generally have interests, skills, and knowledge related to collection.
May work with particular populations in special libraries, e.g. lawyers or doctors.
Develop skills in research and a solid background in information technologies.
Special collections exist on a countless array of topics, not all are included here.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

INFORMATION SYSTEMS/TECHNOLOGY

Design/Development
Management/Operation
Database Administration
Computer Support
Network Administration
Programming
Systems Analysis
Training

Libraries
Public, academic and special
Data processing centers
Corporations
Research centers
Government
Universities

Professionals involved in information systems help organizations with the storage, retrieval, and management of records or information and incorporate and support information technology into an organization.

An undergraduate degree in management information systems (MIS) or computer science is the preferred background before earning a master's in information science.

Build a strong computer background in programming skills using several languages, various operating systems, database management, software and networks.

Increase employment opportunities through product-related certification or by earning Certified Computing Professional (CCP) status conferred by the Institute for Certification of Computing Professionals. CCP's must pass an examination and meet various requirements.

Gain related experience through internships, co-ops or part-time employment.

Develop excellent written and oral communication skills. May work with technical and non-technical staff.

Learn to work well on a team.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Information service agencies
Research centers
Self-employed/consulting
Large corporations

Provide information research and services to corporations, writers or individuals needing information or references on a particular subject.

Develop excellent research, writing and organizational skills.

Expertise in an industry or subject area may be helpful.

Supplement undergraduate curriculum with courses in business to gain an understanding of marketing principles.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

Database producers
Distributors of electronic publications
Electronic publishers
Self-employed

Create and distribute publications in electronic form.
Develop writing skills through classes in English, journalism or technical writing.
Learn advanced website design and programming.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Qualifications important to the field include the ability to work well with people, good written and oral communication skills, intelligence and curiosity. Research and computer skills, an eye for detail and a general love of learning are also essential.
- Understanding trends in media, computers/technology, and publishing is important to success in profession.
- Virtually any undergraduate degree can offer good preparation for graduate programs.
- Supplement undergraduate curriculum with courses in communications, media, computers, business or technology. Some areas of information or library sciences may require related bachelor's or master's degrees.
- Choose master's degree programs in library or information science that are accredited by the American Library Association to maximize employment opportunities.
- A doctorate, either Ph.D. or DLS, may be required for research and university teaching in information science programs or to reach the highest levels of library administration.
- Currently most library science professionals work in school and academic libraries, but employment opportunities are growing most for information scientists in settings such as corporations, consulting firms and information brokers and in environments involving information on the Internet.