



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School of Information

Faculty of Arts

Annual Alumni Survey Results 2024

Introduction

The following online survey was distributed to graduates of the Master of Archival Studies (MAS), Master of Library & Information Studies (MLIS), and Master of Archival Studies/Master of Library & Information Studies (MASLIS) graduates whose degrees were conferred between September 2023 and May 2024.

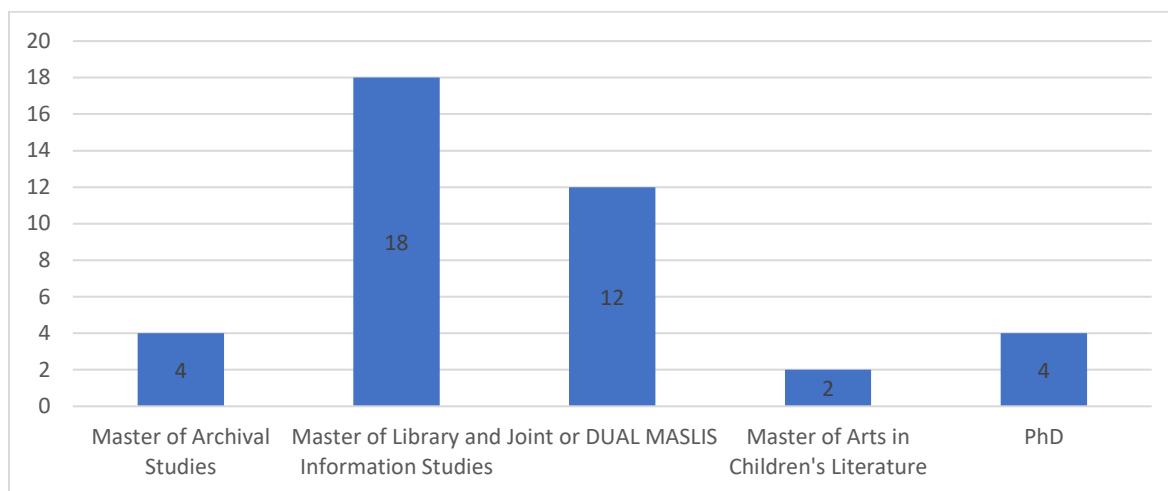
A total of 111 graduates were eligible to complete the survey: 65 MLIS, 10 MAS, 25 MASLIS, 6 MACL, and 4 PhD graduates. A total of 41 graduates completed the survey for a total response rate of 37.27%. Of the 41, 18 are MLIS graduates, 4 are MAS graduates, 12 are dual MAS/MLIS graduates, 2 are MACL graduates, and 4 are PhD graduates.

Questions about the survey can be directed to the Educational Services Manager at ischool.edsm@ubc.ca.

Key findings

- **93%** of the respondents are currently employed, which is comparable to data from previous years.
- Of the 40 respondents who indicated that they are employed, 36 (**90%**) reported being employed in a position related to their iSchool degree, comparable to data from previous years.
- 88% of respondents were either employed before completing their degree or within six months of graduation, comparable to data from previous years.

What degree did you complete at the iSchool?



Did you transfer from one program to another?

DUAL to MAS	1
DUAL to MLIS	1
MAS to DUAL	0
MLIS to DUAL	0
I did not transfer programs	38

If you did change your degree program, can you please provide your rationale for the decision?

LIS components of the dual degree did not align with my career interests or goals.

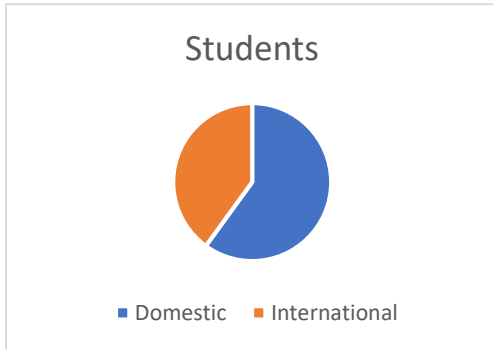
Information schools seemed more in line with internet technology and HCI issues. They also seemed like they have more potential research projects in the area than communication schools

I completed the archival core and then realized that I wasn't very interested in archival studies, so I switched to the MLIS so that I could focus all of my attention there.

Did you complete any sub-specializations or concentrations as part of your degree?

First Nations Curriculum Concentration	4
Designing for People	2
Blockchain@UBC	2

Were you attending as a domestic or international student?



Responses:
 Domestic 24
 International 16

When was your degree conferred?

Answer	Response	%
November 2023	10	27%
May 2024	27	73%
Total	32	100%

What is your age group?

Answer	Response	%
20-29	23	58%
30-39	12	30%
40-49	3	8%
50-59	2	5%
60+	0	0%
Total	32	100%

The iSchool is actively working to foster an equitable and supportive environment for students of diverse backgrounds, particularly in terms of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and ability. Do you feel that the iSchool provided a supportive environment for students with your background? What could the iSchool do better?

I became a Permanent resident of Canada during my studies, so my status changed from International to local midway through the program. Being an immigrant and a mother, I found it especially challenging to complete the degree. I think that offering special support to parents and possibly additional work options at the iSchool for students with children, would be very helpful. Also, coming from a Spanish-speaking country, I think the programs would benefit from having collaborations with other countries

N/A

Yes. The iSchool was a great place to be a part of!

I am a white cis woman, so I can't answer this question. I appreciate the iSchool's efforts, however, and feel that they make for a thriving, interesting student body.

My background is not diverse. I felt comfortable but can't speak for minorities!

Absolutely.

I think it does a good job including queer theory and other literature and an opportunity to explore these related topics in classes.

At first it didn't, but it made major improvements towards the end.

N/A

Im from the US and felt like the teachers accommodated us well. We obviously had many examples and readings from a US context.

I think the issue with the iSchool is that it feels like it only supports students of my background. This became super transparent during the peak of the Israeli genocide of the Palestinian peoples.

It's getting better than it was, and I'm encouraged by the curriculum reviews and the increase in diversity within cohorts. At the same time, there is still a long way to go, particularly when it comes to decentering whiteness in the profession. One tangible, immediate action that the iSchool can do of hiring more diverse professors and staff. During my degree, I saw the few professors of colour take on enormous labour in providing additional mentorship and support to students of colour. In at least one instance, this mentorship made a significant difference in the student's decision to continue with the program as opposed to dropping out because of the racism (both casual and direct) that they encountered from the field. It's incredible that these professors were willing to do this work, but it also shouldn't be on them to serve as the

primary (sometimes only) support for students and new professionals of colour. The obvious solution is to hire more staff of colour. Not only does this reduce the pressure on professors of colour to be the sole trailblazer/mentor/representation for students of colour, but it enriches the curriculum and the profession by embracing many different voices and perspectives. And then beyond the initial hiring, the iSchool must work to retain these staff with fair working conditions, competitive salaries, and equitable career prospects. Hiring 10 different teaching staff from diverse backgrounds but keeping them on an adjunct instructor contract by semester is not only unjust, but demonstrates to students from those backgrounds that they will be poorly treated as professionals once they graduate, providing less incentive to stay in the program. In order to attract and retain students from diverse backgrounds, the iSchool must first look to the example it sets with its own makeup.

Mostly yes! I'm white though, so, that's easy. I do wish that accommodations were easier to access, though, because I didn't have a great experience with the Center for Accessibility.

From my point of view (re: gender and sexuality), the iSchool did do a good job of supporting students with diverse backgrounds. However, my decision to not follow through with the iSchool co-op program was the lack of support offered by the supervisor (Jane) - both towards myself and my colleagues. The co-op program did a bad job at facilitating international placements, providing support for BIPOC students, and providing support for students with mental health and disability accommodations. Just as an aside, not being able to work for a living wage in Vancouver was detrimental to my mental and physical health causing me great difficulty while I was taking course work (worried about housing, food, bills, and tuition).

Yes

More support for international student needs, such as immigration concerns

No. There was little to no support from the school itself for equity-denied students. This became especially clear when in-school movements in support of Palestine were actively and briskly censored by the iSchool administration.

I felt supported by the iSchool, but do not come from backgrounds that are particularly diverse as far as the field of librarianship/info work

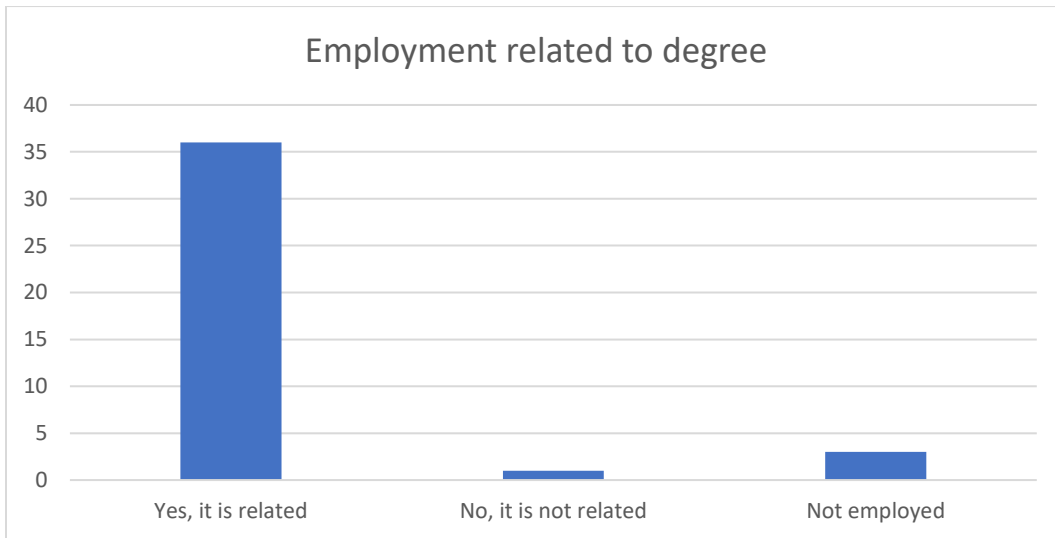
More students and professors of a similar background to me

Are you currently employed?



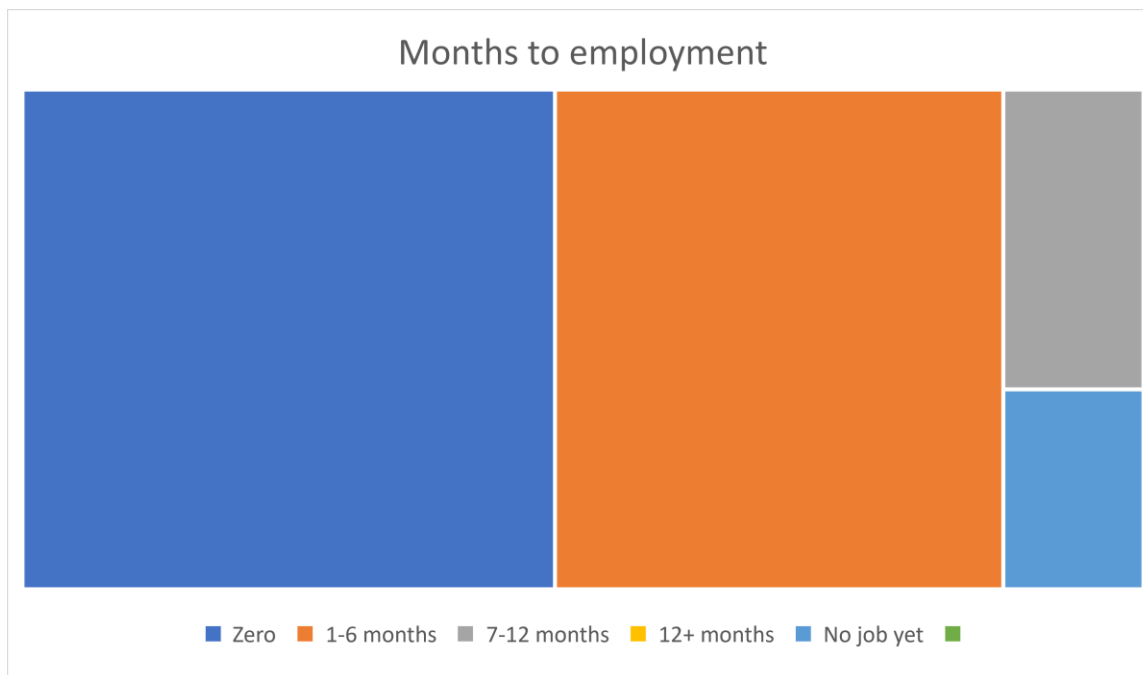
Yes	37 (93%)
No	3 (8%)

If you are currently employed, is your employment related to your iSchool degree?



Yes, it is related	36 (90%)
No, it is not related	1 (3%)
Not employed	3 (8%)

How many months elapsed between the completion of your degree and your first job placement?



Answer	Response	%
Zero – I obtained the position before completing my degree	19	48
1-6 months	16	40
7-12 months	3	8
More than 12 months	0	0
I have not received my first job placement	2	95
Total	40	100%

What best describes your work status?

Answer	Response	%
Employed full-time in a single position	20	50
Employed full-time in multiple positions	1	3
Employed part-time in a single position	4	10
Employed part-time in multiple positions	2	5
Not employed	2	5
Employed full-time in a single contract position	11	28

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Employed part-time in a single contract position	0	0
Total	40	100%

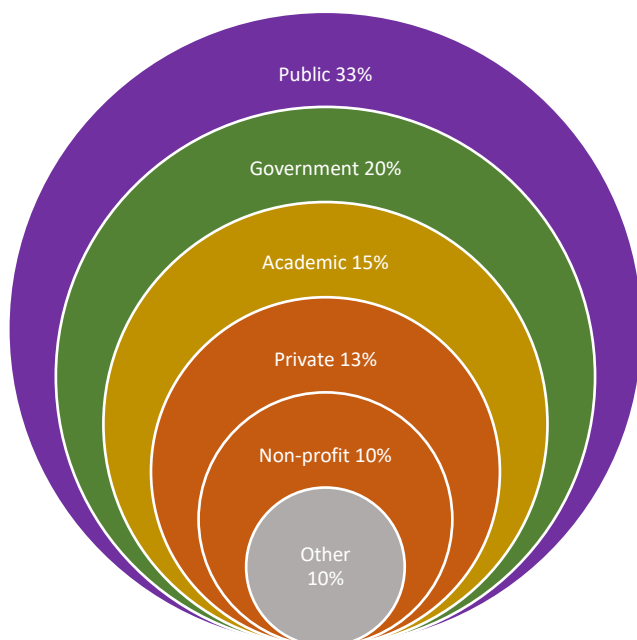
Did you obtain your full-time position as your first job placement?

Answer	Response	%
Yes	20	74
No, I worked multiple contract positions prior to obtaining full-time employment	7	26
No	0	0
Total	27	100%

What is your current salary range?

Answer	Response	%
Less than \$25,000	4	10
\$25,000-49,999	4	10
\$50,000-74,999	19	49
\$75,000-99,999	9	23
\$100,000 or more	3	8
Total	39	100%

In what type of organization is this position?



Answer	Response	%
Academic	6	15
Public	13	33
Private	5	13
Government	8	20
Non-profit	4	10
Other	4	10
Total	40	100%

Where is this position located?

Answer	Response	%
Metro Vancouver	24	62
Lower Mainland (Whistler to Hope)	3	8
Other part of BC	2	5
Other Canadian province/territory	0	0
Outside Canada	10	26
Total	39	100%

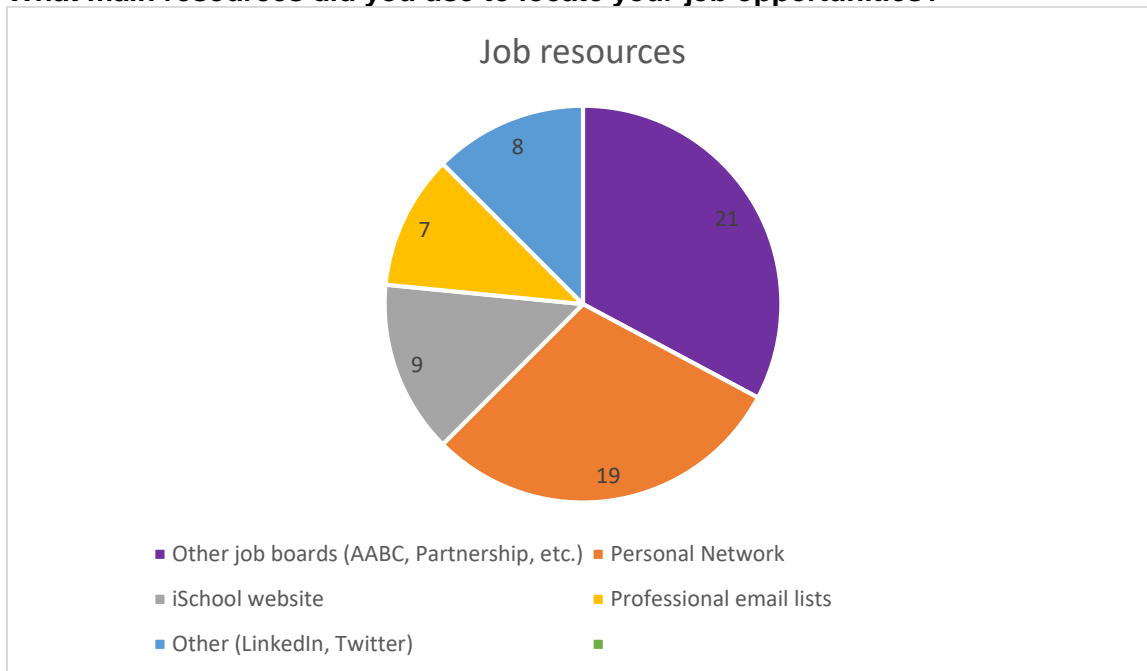
Job titles

Records and Archives Intern (full-time)
Policy Analyst
Casual Public Services Librarian
Fine Arts Leader, Theatre, Film & Creative Writing Programs, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby
Program Manager
Managing Partner & CTO
Data Services Librarian
Auxiliary Librarian (Aux not offered in work status selection)
Corporate Records Officer
Research Specialist
Cultural Heritage Officer
Records Assistant
Project Records Manager
Records Management Assistant
Programming and Outreach Librarian (Teens & Adults)
Librarian
Archivist
Assistant Professor
N/A, but first job was Associate User Researcher
Law Librarian
Archivist
Digital Preservation Specialist
Head librarian in Cordova Alaska
Librarian
Librarian I Auxiliary
Youth Associate Librarian
Librarian I
Records Assistant
Reference Librarian
Instructional Designer
Consultant
Public Service Librarian, auxiliary (I also started a PhD program in September which meant that I wasn't actively looking for full-time work right out of my MLIS).
Archivist
Digital Collections Specialist
UX Designer
Officer, Alumni Data and Strategic Initiatives

How would you rate your job satisfaction in your current role? (10 being a perfect job, and 1 being the worst job possible)

Answer	Response	%
10	6	15
9	8	21
8	11	28
7	8	21
6	1	3
5	2	5
4	1	3
3	1	3
2	0	0
0	1	3
Total	39	100%

What main resources did you use to locate your job opportunities?



Are you a member of a professional organization?

Yes 31 (78%)
 No 9 (23%)

Upon graduation, please rate the level to which you felt prepared for the job market in the following areas:

MLIS Competencies:

1. Draw upon knowledge of: professional ethics, the rights of Indigenous peoples, and principles of equity, diversity and inclusion to guide their practices							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	0	4	16	5	25	4.04
2. Identify information needs and respond through the design and provision of information products and services							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	8	14	2	25	3.68
3. Organize and manage information to facilitate access, reflection, and use in a range of contexts							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	4	15	5	25	3.96
4. Employ information systems and current technologies to address real-world situations, informed by social and cultural perspectives							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	1	7	13	3	25	3.64
5. Reflect in an informed and critical manner on information infrastructures and practices, acknowledging the role of power and privilege, the ongoing influence of colonization, and the value of diverse worldviews							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	3	11	10	25	4.2
6. Communicate clearly using a range of media suited to diverse audiences and goals							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	0	7	10	7	25	3.88
7. Demonstrate effective collaboration, decision-making and leadership in team settings							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	5	12	7	25	4
8. Design and conduct research and evaluation studies to inform evidence-based decision-making							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	3	4	12	5	25	3.68
9. Develop respectful reciprocal relationships with professional and community groups							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	3	4	12	6	25	3.84
10. Contribute to the advancement of the field through informed practice, service and/or research							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	3	4	11	5	24	3.67

MAS Competencies:

1.1 understand the nature of records and recordkeeping in diverse contexts (historical, cultural, institutional, etc.)							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	2	7	4	14	4
1.2 within diverse contexts, identify, develop, apply and assess requirements, policies and procedures for the creation, use, management of, and access to trustworthy records							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	2	1	10	1	14	3.71
1.3 apply knowledge of technologies to real world record creation and recordkeeping problems and situations, and assess the impact and usability of emerging technologies for archival purposes							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	6	6	1	14	3.5
1.4 apply knowledge of law and ethics to all functions and activities related to records and archives							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	4	6	3	1	14	3.07
1.5 engage critically and creatively with emerging professional and societal issues							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	0	1	7	6	14	4.36
2.1 articulate ideas about recordkeeping theories and practices accurately, fluently, and thoughtfully in a variety of communication modes for diverse audiences							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	0	8	4	2	14	3.57
2.2 demonstrate effective collaboration on recordkeeping problems and projects within team and small group settings							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	0	1	9	4	14	4.21
3.1 synthesize and apply existing archival and related scholarship to identify and analyze significant theoretical and practical questions							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	0	8	5	1	14	3.5
3.2 employ methods and approaches to research specific to archival science							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	2	5	6	1	14	3.43
4.1 critically engage with and contribute to the development of the philosophy, principles and ethics of the profession							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	1	6	5	2	14	3.57
4.2 assess and apply legislative and policy frameworks governing records and archives systems							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	0	3	7	4	0	14	3.07
4.3 advocate for change when these are inadequate to recordkeeping principles and best practices							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average

	0	1	5	5	3	14		3.71
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What continuing education or professional development activities have you participated in since graduation? (check all that apply)

Answer	Response	%
Participated in a course or workshop	22	73
Delivered a course or workshop	8	27
Attended work-related conference	16	53
Other continuing education activities	19	63

What, if any, of the following activities during your iSchool degree contributed to your career success to date?

Answer	Response	%
Co-op	10	31
Professional Experience (for credit)	16	50
Internship or Practicum (for credit)	2	6
Employment at iSchool (such as STA or research assistant-ship)	11	34
Employment at UBC (such as GAA or student librarian)	25	78
Student Leadership (such as LASSA, ACA Student Chapter, ASIS&T Student Chapter)	4	13
Networking with graduates and other professionals during your time as a student	14	44

Thinking of your education at the iSchool, what areas or topics best prepared you for the positions you have been in since graduation?

Work Experience: 25 Group Work: 8 Children's Services: 5 Management: 6 Cataloging: 2 Research: 13 Arrangement and Description: 7 Communication: 10 Reference Service: 10 Public Librarianship: 7 Info Design: 5 Programming: 5	Database Design: 8 Collection Management: 4 Legal Courses: 6 Records Management: 8 Archival Theory: 6 Project Management: 8 Preservation: 9 Aboriginal Literature/Material: 1 Marketing: 3 Info Visualization: 8
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Please indicate below any additional feedback you have about the UBC iSchool degree programs.

The program was excellent, but I wasn't prepared for how difficult it is to find librarian jobs in Vancouver. Knowing about the reality of the job market in the city, and how precarious and poor-paying contract positions are, would have been valuable.

I truly enjoyed my time in the MA in Children's Literature Program. Professors were extremely knowledgeable and kind, making it a wonderful experience. iSchool staff were also very helpful. I do believe there could be more opportunities for MACL students, so that we don't feel so alone and separated from the rest of the iSchool.

For the last 8 months of my PhD, unable to secure a position at the school, I worked my current non-profit full-time job alongside dissertation writing and completion. Needless to say, this was not ideal, slowed my timeline, and pushed me close to burn-out. Students are working hard to complete their degrees amidst rising international tuition fees and a cost of living crisis, but my experience is that those in the faculty and administration have very limited understanding of the financial realities faced by their students, many of whom live below the poverty line. More financial support for PhD students (particularly international students who have very limited options for awards and face additional unique financial pressures) beyond their 4th year (because no one in the history of the department has completed their PhD in that time frame) would make a huge difference. I am incredibly grateful to the school for the continued employment opportunities, which gave me so much experience and without which my degree (which I loved) would not have been possible. Thank you!

I felt most unprepared in a leadership sense. I don't necessarily think that fresh graduates like myself should emerge fully-fledged ready leaders on the level that a librarian with many years experience and managerial experience in the workplace would be, but I felt that it was easy to ignore the management classes and scrape by. What would have been really interesting is if these were also more tied to courses like Academic Libraries and Public Libraries (to talk about what it's like on the ground as a manager in either sphere). I did the Blockchain@UBC program, so I actually graduated a bit later than May of 2023, which I believe contributed to the success I've had so far in my career in that I was able to learn to assess emerging technologies and manage research data (hence my current position).

My coursework felt more theoretical, as though I was learning how to write papers about archival studies rather than how to be an archivist. My coop experience however was what actually taught me how to do the work. I think coop or professional experience should be mandatory, or courses should at least have more of a practical component!

Extremely thankful for the guest speakers who spoke about outreach, particularly bookmobiles as I now operate one. The support of the faculty at the iSchool is invaluable as well.

More practical skills...give students a box of materials and have them arrange and describe them in groups and rehouse them properly. Then discuss why they chose that arrangement and description with the class. Practice describing various records/items or doing research to describe something you don't know the provenance or what it is (how do you describe an unknown item especially if it's in another language). I think in general, more practical components in courses, rather than heavy theory based courses, would be really helpful for application in archival positions. More on building the practical skills

of interacting with and donor relations (I.e.) explaining why a archive can take something or can't take something based on collection policy or other policies

For students focusing on UX, the Designing for People program was really helpful. The cross-disciplinary collaboration, research-focused coursework and opportunity to work on a project with a sponsor helped train students with hands-on UX research and design skills.

Although I'm relieved that new MAS students will no longer have to take Duranti's classes the way she designed them, I think it was absolutely ridiculous that students were forced to take Archival Diplomats when it's worthless in basically every archival job. It was completely apparent that the decision to leave that class in the core was based on her salary and the grant money she was bringing in to the department. As a department that espouses it's supposed commitment to EDI initiatives, it's embarrassing to consider how long she was employed given that she was openly racist in her classes. Like many iSchool graduates, it is the one black spot on my transcript, and I wish I could've opted out of it.

The teaching provided by working (or former working) professionals was by and large invaluable. While the solely academic courses were good to establish a theoretical background, most of the best instruction came from professors with direct work experience in the field. They provided informed insight into the realities of the profession and the very best instructors were able to show the connections between the theories and best practices we learned in the classroom with the professional practices they used every day.

I wish that the library core had included a survey course on librarianship and other information careers, so I had a better understanding of what the different pathways were as I began my degree.

My professional and work experiences were my greatest asset when it came to job hunting (and successfully having a job) after graduation. Beyond the base theories for archives and libraries I learned in my mandatory first year classes, the part of the iSchool that most prepared me for my work position post-graduation was the connections I made with my colleagues, professors, and work/professional experience supervisors. Being able to talk to people about their career paths, having good references, and having a network of friends who tell you about job opportunities was incredibly valuable.

Expand the MAAC program's faculty members

It would be nice if there are more meaningful course projects done and connection with the local community or the real world. The specialization topics are limited. The MLIS program lacks training in UX and UI design.

The actual coursework delivered by the iSchool did not significantly prepare me for my work past the program. If anything, the extracurriculars that I pursued and connections that I made, professionally, are what have led to my success. I realise that my situation is a bit unique because I did not do the MLIS program wanting to go into full-time professional work and instead wanted to continue in PhD Studies (which I have successfully pursued).

Lack of support for students who are pursuing a UX related career pathway. Would be great if there're more UX courses offered, more resources (professional network with local industries, mentorship) provided

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Although I rated myself a 5 on “Ability to design and conduct research and evaluation studies to inform evidence-based decision-making” this skill set comes from my undergraduate degree in honours psychology from the University of New Brunswick. I was actually deeply disappointed and surprised by the lack of quality in research design and statistical analysis education provided by this Master’s level degree. I have TA’d much more in-depth and clear research design and stats courses at the undergraduate level. I have deep concerns that graduates of iSchool programs will not be able to produce quality academic research. Particularly quantitative research

The following questions are UBC Faculty of Arts Co-op Education related questions.

Did you apply to and were you accepted into the Arts Co-op program during your time at the iSchool?

Yes 70% (23)
 No 30% (10)

If no, why didn't you apply to co-op?

Answer	Response	%
I already have relevant work experience.	2	20
I am not interested in work experience.	0	0
I am an international student.	1	10
I don't have time to do Co-op work.	1	10
I prefer short-term work placements or unpaid work.	0	0
Other (please specify)*	6	60
Total	10	100%

*

- I didn't learn about these opportunities until later in my studies. I wish I had known earlier
- N/A - PhD
- I would have had US loans to pay for housing and living expenses and wouldn't have gotten any credit towards my degree.
- I applied to be a graduate research assistant
- There was no co-op for MACL
- I was working full-time.

For those accepted in the Co-op program, how many Co-op terms did you complete?

Answer	Response	%
Zero	12	55
1 term	4	18
2 terms	4	18
3 terms	2	9
Total	22	100%

If you didn't complete any work terms, what was the reason?

Answer	Response	%
Applied for jobs but didn't get hired	2	15
I did not see any jobs that interested me	3	23
My personal or academic plans changed	1	8
Found a job outside of Co-op	4	31
Others*	3	23
Total	13	100%

*

- Could not hold Co-op and TA at same time
- Because it didn't count for credit
- Shortage of relevant and logistically feasible job postings, including a lack of advance notice before the position's start date (including positions requiring relocation)

Did you feel the Co-op Program (training, advising, and work experience) gave you a competitive edge when searching for a full-time work?

Yes 29% (6)
 Maybe 24% (5)
 No 48% (10)

After your experience in our Co-op Program, would you recommend other students to participate in the Co-op Program?

Yes 38% (8)
 Maybe 29% (6)
 No 33% (7)