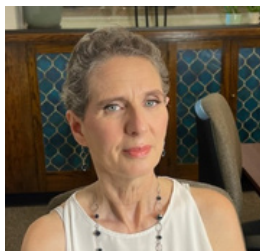


# STATE OF THE STACKS



## INTERIM DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED



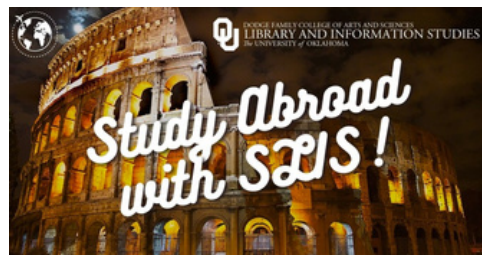
Dr. June Abbas, SLIS Acting Director

Dr. June Abbas has been named the School of Library and Information Studies Interim Director for the next academic year! We wish her well as she takes on this vital role in the department on July 1, 2023.

## THANK YOU DR. BURKE

On behalf of the School of Library and Information Studies faculty and staff, we'd like to thank Dr. Susan Burke for her many years of dedication and service to SLIS. As Director, she not only was instrumental in strengthening the foundation of our programs but also ensured that they would continue to thrive for years to come. Through her unwavering dedication, she guided us through a successful accreditation process, and as a result, our Master's program is stronger than ever. We welcome her back as a SLIS faculty member and look forward to her contributions.

## STUDY ABROAD WITH SLIS!



For the first time ever, the School of Library and Information Studies is offering a study abroad class! This summer, Dr. Buffy Edwards will be leading students on an adventure through Italy. They will be exploring ancient archives, museums, and libraries. The group will be touring historical places in Rome including the Coliseum, Forum, Pantheon, the Vatican, and St. Peter's Basilica, Florence's Cathedral Complex and the Palazzo Vecchio Medici Chapel and other places of note in Arezzo and Siena.

SLIS will also be offering a summer 2024 Italy Study Abroad class. Contact [Dr. Edwards](#) for more information.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Important News
- Faculty Spotlight
- OLA Conference
- Faculty Achievements
- Staff Achievement
- Student Achievements
- OLISSA Student Spotlight
- Alumni Association Update
- SLIS Program Offerings and Keep in Touch

## DR. JUNE ABBAS

Hello everyone. I am currently a Professor and Acting Director of SLIS. I have been at OU for almost 15 years (wow! has it been that long already?). Prior to coming to OU, I began my academic career at the University of New York in Buffalo, NY. After attaining tenure and promotion at UB, we opted to move out of the cold winters and come to Oklahoma and the hot summers. We have lived in several US states, such as South Dakota, Texas (twice), New Mexico, Kansas, New York, and now Oklahoma. We plan to retire here or in Utah (see below why).

I am blessed to be the lifelong partner and wife of Charles (40 years this summer) and mother to two young men, Clifford and Ben. Every day is a new adventure that I am happy to share with them. I graduated from UNT in 2001 with my PhD in Information Science, from Emporia State University in 1998 with my MLS, and worked in various public and special libraries for over 10 years. I fondly remember when we first had access to the Internet in the Sioux Falls, S.D. Public Library when I was a library assistant while attending undergraduate school.

My research connects the three pillars of our field, information and knowledge organization, information behavior, and information retrieval within human centered design. I am also passionate about library services to youth and underserved populations. I am currently involved in a research group at OU called the OU Humanitarian Innovation Research Group (OU HIRG). which includes an interdisciplinary group of researchers from OU's various colleges and departments, such as Social Work, Architecture, Business, Education and Math, and the Innovation Hub. We are proudly working to provide solutions to integration issues faced by refugees when migrating to a new host country. You can check out our recent NPR podcast (Episode 28). The team's portion begins about 7 minutes into the podcast:

<https://www.npr.org/podcasts/953571690/focus-black-oklahoma>

I currently have two research grants from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), one with Dr. Jung to explore makerspaces and maker programming for youth with disabilities in US public libraries, and another with Drs. Noyori-Corbett and Ruan in which we are investigating trauma-informed public library services for refugees in US public libraries.

I teach a range of courses related to the organization of information and knowledge including Information Organization, Digital Collections, Online Information Retrieval, Data Stewardship, among others. I am also teaching a special topics doctoral level course Theories of Knowledge Organization and the Doctoral Seminars for research and scholarly writing.

When I have time, I love to read mysteries of all kinds, to sew (making two little girl dresses right now), to knit, and to watch movies with my sons. In the summer I am often out fishing with my youngest son or walking with our two German Shorthaired Pointers.

I am not a cook. My husband, however, is a wonderful cook and he loves to experiment in the kitchen. I am also gluten-free and lactose intolerant so my diet and feeding me can be challenging, but he has developed the best gluten-free bread I have yet found! When we do eat out, I love Indian food of all regions. I especially love dosas.

Our favorite vacation spot is in Utah near Moab and Green River. We spent hours jeeping through the valleys and riverbeds, digging for various kinds of rocks and dinosaur bones. We also love petroglyph spotting through the canyons near Moab and on the way to Salt Lake City. Anywhere in the Southwestern United States where there are jeep trails and rock hounding are favorites of my family.

The best thing about SLIS is...the people. The SLIS faculty and staff are really a family. We truly enjoy working together; we respect each other's contributions and ideas, and also providing the best educational experience we can to our students.

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## OLA Conference

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# OKLAHOMA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

This year the Oklahoma Library Association's conference was held on March 8-10th at the Embassy Suites in Norman. It was met with much enthusiasm and about 400 LIS affiliated attendees celebrated the advancement of our craft.

SLIS had a booth in the exhibitor hall that seemed a gathering place of students, alumni, and many supporters of our school and program. We handed out Mardi Gras beads (as was the theme for the OLA Scholarship Bash), candy, SLIS swag, and of course the student and alumni ribbons. The turnout of our alumni and students was so great, that we will be ordering many more ribbons for future conferences!



SLIS Mar-TEA-Gras Basket



Stacy Smith (right) with SLIS student volunteers at OLA.

The SLIS department participated in the auction at OLA with a Mar-TEA-Gras themed basket filled with goodies that would delight tea and coffee drinkers alike. It brought in over the expected amount and was one of the first baskets to gather bids. So, it goes without saying, our SLIS faculty and staff are adept at taking a project and running with it to the benefit of everyone.

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## Faculty Achievements

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Dr. June Abbas, Acting SLIS Director, was awarded the Edith Gaylord Presidential Professorship. "The Presidential Professorships were established to recognize those faculty members who excel in all of their professional activities and who relate those activities to the students they teach and mentor." (<https://www.ou.edu/facultyawards/awards>)

For more information about the event: <https://www.ou.edu/news/articles/2023/april/faculty-tribute#4.5>



Dr. Abbas (second from the right) with other Presidential Professorship recipients



Dr. Jung (light-blue jacket) with the Happy Teacher Project Team

Dr. Yong Ju Jung and her team was awarded the 2023 Vice President for Research and Partnership Award for Excellence in Transdisciplinary, Convergent Research for the University of Oklahoma Happy Teacher Project. The team, led by Dr. Kyong-Ah Kwon, will be "Investigating teacher well-being across Oklahoma with results that will be transformational to other states and contexts."



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## **Faculty Achievements Continued**

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Dr. Jiqun Liu's new research book, *A Behavioral Economics Approach to Interactive Information retrieval: Understanding and Supporting Boundedly Rational Users*, was featured in OU's Data Institute For Societal Challenges (DISC) newsletter (January 12, 2022). This book (published by Springer) is part of his National Science Foundation project and "brings together insights from information seeking and retrieval, cognitive psychology and behavioral economics, and shows how this new interdisciplinary approach can advance knowledge about users interacting with diverse search systems, especially their seemingly irrational decisions and anomalies that could not be predicted by most normative computational models."

DISC article: <https://tinyurl.com/46ttbx6v>

Dr. Lu has been made a co-PI of a recently awarded ICAST/DISC grant, entitled "Leveraging Big Data to Improve Quality in Infants' and Toddlers' Language Learning Environments." The research team will use AI techniques to understand how children acquire language skills. His role is to use Natural Language Processing techniques to understand the complexity and lexicon of children's language. The team is comprised of interdisciplinary researchers from education, linguistics, computer science and SLIS.

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## **VIRTUAL STUDENT INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT FAIR**

Virtual Student Internship Placement Fair On April 25th, OU SLIS hosted a very successful internship placement fair with more than ten representatives from sites interested in having OU SLIS interns. The event was open to both undergraduate and graduate students with more than fifteen students attending. Many students attending the fair were able to connect with the representatives, landing excellent internships. The internship placement fair was designed to give SLIS students the chance to meet with potential site supervisors and explore internship opportunities through personal connections. Attending this fair was mutually beneficial to both students and participating sites. During the fair, site representatives shared a brief statement about their site and the internship opportunities available, followed by one-on-one or small group sessions with interested students in breakout rooms. Drs. Edwards and Youssef, co-planners, are excited about these kinds of opportunities to connect our students with respected industry leaders, and believe that the event was mutually beneficial for all. Additionally, these are great opportunities because internship experiences can lead to potential employment opportunities, and we believe that this fair was the perfect platform to discover new talent. Plans are to hold a Virtual Student Internship Placement Fair again in the fall and spring semesters.



Stock Image From Canva

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**Upcoming Event!**

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## **3RD ANNUAL VIRTUAL SUMMER INSTITUTE**

### Join us for the 3rd Annual Virtual Summer Institute

June 2, 2023 8:30 - 3:30

#### **Developing Responsive Library and Information Science Technology Leaders**

The OU School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) is hosting a summer institute on June 2, 2023, 8:30 - 3:30. The keynote address, *Mentoring with Passion*, features Dr. Joe Terantino, an associate professor of Foreign Language Education and English Language Learning and Stella V. Andersen Endowed Professor in Secondary Education, has experience working and leading mentoring programs in a variety of settings. Other sessions include *Career Chats; Learn What it Takes To Have a Career in Your Field*, *Reading the Rainbow*, and *Design Thinking*.

**The event is FREE but registration is required.**

**Questions?** Contact Dr. Buffy Edwards at  
buffy@ou.edu

Registration



Schedule



DODGE FAMILY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
**LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES**  
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA



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Please join us for the 3rd Annual Virtual Summer Institute! This free event is open to undergraduate and graduate students and practitioners in and around Oklahoma. It has been a resounding success in the past, and this year, it's on June 2! This event requires registration.

Annual Virtual Summer Institute: <https://tinyurl.com/virtual-summer-institute>

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## Staff Achievement

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Sarah Moran, SLIS Admin and Finance Coordinator, was awarded the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences, Dean's Outstanding Staff Award for 2023, which recognizes "staff members in the departments and programs within the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences for their outstanding job performance"

View the list of award recipients:  
<https://www.ou.edu/cas/faculty-staff/awards>



Dean Wrobel and Sarah Moran at Kaleidoscope Award Luncheon

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## Student Achievements

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Undergraduate Capstone Students (see below for more information)

Capstone Students Contributions: Awesome work from our SLIS capstone students Khai Huynh, Ryan Linehan, Sarah Kopp and, Angilson Reyes on the creation of a website for a local car dealership in Tulsa, OK.

Congratulations to Matthew Blanchard (2022 grad), Teacher Librarian, Jefferson Elementary, Norman Oklahoma. Matt was the recipient of The Dr. Frances Laverne Carroll Student Paper award for his paper "Makerspace Access in School Libraries". This is awarded every year by the OU SLIS Alumni Association to an outstanding paper written by a current OU SLIS student.



Matthew Blanchard, MLIS Student



Cheyenne Weller, MLIS Student

One of our SLIS students, Cheyanne Weller, is the co-chair for the Inaugural STEAM Fest at Moore Public Library March 18th. The Norman Transcript wrote a great article about the event.

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## Student Achievements Continued

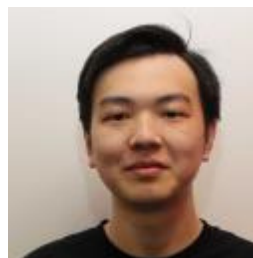
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The Fresh Takes Session – OU SLIS students sharing innovative projects, ideas and papers during the OLA conference included fast-paced presentations and great Q&A's. Topics included Learning from Goodreads (Keisha Swaim); TikTok: YA Fantasy Recommendations (Kayla Ashley); SPIN THE CHALLENGE TREND: Bolster your Mission Statement to Reframe the Reconsideration (Maria Kindel); and Analyzing the Metropolitan Library System's Spanish Collection (Sharon Mathews).



At OLA Conference; Back row: Maria Kindel (2022 grad), Kayla Ashley (2023 grad), Baylee Bozarth (2022 grad). Front row: Sharon Mathews (2023 grad), Keisha Swaim (2023 grad)

Ben Wang (SLIS PhD student) was accepted to this year's LIS Education and Data Science Integrated Network Group (LEADING) fellowship program! Most of the fellowship training and work will be completed during summer 2023.



Ben Wang, SLIS PhD Student

**Thank you!**

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## OKLAHOMA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



Keisha Swaim and John Gage,  
MLIS Student Volunteers at OLA



Beth Quetschke, MLIS Student Volunteer  
and Dr. Buffy Edwards at OLA

Thank you, OLA, for providing a great learning experience by supporting Student Volunteers. The following students, Melodie Pennington, Linda Fowler, Cheyanne Weller, Keishia Swaim, John Gage, Megan Gentry, Taylor Bellamy, Susan Conway, Diana Dawson, Beth Quetschke, Michael Beard, and Sharon Mathews worked at the conference this year. By volunteering the registration fee for the conference was waived! Tara Jaronek, OLA Student Volunteer organizer shared, "I have to tell you that I have been very impressed with your students. They are representing the program VERY well and I look forward to when they enter the profession, and I can work more alongside them".

-Dr. Buffy Edwards



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## Student Achievements Continued

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Ryan Linehan,  
BSIST Student

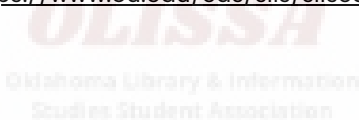
Ryan Linehan, a senior pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Information Science & Technology (BSIST) degree, has accepted a position as “Deployment Engineer” with Paycom. As a Deployment Engineer, Linehan’s responsibilities include collaborating with Quality Assurance, Development, and IT teams in the deployment, testing and debugging of the enterprise application systems, deploying new application software and updates to web applications, web services, windows services, and scheduled tasks. He will be providing level 1 support for software releases and enterprise systems, testing and level 1 production environments, including issues related to source code repositories, debugging application issues to identify problems, and level 1 production environments by reviewing errors and program code. Linehan shared that earning the BSIST degree gave him an edge for the job in several ways, the degree itself met the job’s education requirement and the coursework helped Ryan develop skills that made him a good candidate for the position. For example, during his internship, Ryan gained authentic and extensive working knowledge of the Microsoft Desktop Operating System by providing technical support to coworkers. The Database Design and Information Organization course provided skills in SQL and coding in that environment, where he learned about relational databases and server and client server concepts. Ryan’s capstone project provided hands-on experience with MySQL when his team created a website attached to a MySQL database, and the Cybersecurity course furthered skills and knowledge related to the TCP/IP protocol, along with TCP and UDP ports. Linehan shared, “the position required accomplished troubleshooting skills, and if being in IT has taught me anything, it is that the solution will not just appear, so it is important to learn how to troubleshoot and solve your own problems. Just looking up an answer for a solution won’t do the trick, so you need to step back and think about how you got into this situation. Take a couple steps back and try to think about a solution for the big picture; what you truly want, then go from there and accomplish the small steps until you believe you have enough information or knowledge to complete the “original” task at-hand.” Congratulations, Ryan!

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## OLISSA Spotlight

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The Oklahoma Library and Information Studies Student Association (OLISSA) has evolved over the past year. With a larger board than in previous years, we have multiple students with different focuses that have come together to increase our outreach and communication with fellow graduate students. Together they have provided professional resources and created an online community that has grown by 150% over one year by hosting social activities, including study sessions, in-person meet-ups, and online discussions. Listening to the input of our members and working with the faculty throughout the year, we have been able to weigh in on important issues. New ideas and the creation of more resources are in the works for the upcoming year, and we hope to continue helping our members in the future. Connect with OLISSA: <https://www.ou.edu/cas/slis/slisconnections/olissa>



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## Alumni Association

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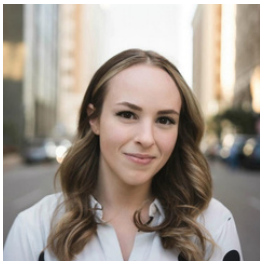
Congrats to Tara Coleman on receiving the "I Love My Librarian Award"! Learn about Tara's contributions: <https://ilovelibraries.org/love-my-librarian/tara-coleman/>

Kristen Burkholder, Access Services Librarian at Dulaney-Browne Library at Oklahoma City University, has accepted a position with the University of Connecticut. Kristen has served within the Oklahoma Library Association for many years and is the current treasurer of the OU SLIS Alumni Association. Kristen will be greatly missed in Oklahoma, but we are excited for this new opportunity she is following.



Lisa Wells and SLIS Alumni President, Michael Hull at OLA

Lisa Wells, Executive Director of Pioneer Library System receiving Outstanding Alumni award presented by OLA President Michael Hull, OU grad.



Elizabeth Szkirpan, SLIS Alumna

Elizabeth Szkirpan, alumna from 2017 will be joining the Harvard Business School's Baker Library in Boston, Massachusetts on July 17 as their Collection & Discovery Specialist on the Curriculum and Research Services team. Elizabeth served as the 2020-2021 Beta Phi Mu Lamda Chapter Vice President/President Elect, the 2021-2022 President, and the 2022-2023 Past President. According to Elizabeth, "I am looking forward to a new challenge, learning about a different tradition of librarianship, and the opportunity to learn from my colleagues in a business education environment." Congratulations, Elizabeth, on this new opportunity!



*Congrats*  
**2023**  
*SLIS Graduates!*

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## Current SLIS Offerings

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The School of Library and Information Studies  
Program Offerings:

- Doctor of Philosophy in Information Studies
- Master of Library and Information Studies
- Master of Arts in Museum Studies  
(Coming July 2023!)
- Bachelor's/Master's Accelerated Program
- Graduate Certificates
- Bachelor of Science in Information Science  
& Technology (BSIST)
- Bachelor of Arts in Information Studies  
(BAIS)
- Information Studies Minor



The Master of Library and Information Studies program at the University of Oklahoma is accredited by the American Library Association Committee on Accreditation, with the status of Continued accreditation. The next comprehensive review visit is scheduled for Spring 2029.

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## Keep In Touch!

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Thank you for reading the SLIS State of the Stacks newsletter! If you have news to share and want to be featured in the next newsletter or on social media, **[click here](#)** to let us know so we can share it.

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Please consider donating to our scholarship fund:



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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/OUSLIS>