



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Department of Library and Information Science

The Comprehensive Examination Results

One of the central indicators of student learning in the program is the comprehensive examination required for completion of the MSLIS degree. The format of the comprehensive examination is a take-home research paper format. The purpose of writing a paper is to have students demonstrate knowledge of the philosophy, history, social roles, and major challenges of the profession, including applications of technology, organization of resources, provision of services, and management of libraries and other information agencies. They must demonstrate knowledge of current practices and issues, the ability to monitor and deal with changes, and the ability to apply research findings. The comprehensive examination is offered three times a year.

The faculty analyze the results of the comprehensive examination each semester to evaluate the extent to which the students in the MSLIS program demonstrate mastery of knowledge. Table 1 below shows the comprehensive examination pass rate. Table 2 further presents details of mean scores of each trait based on a rubric.

Table 1. *Comprehensive Examination Pass/Fail Results per semester*

| Semester | # of students taking | # of students failed | Mean scores (12 points meeting the expectation) | Details |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Fall 2016 | 15 | 1 | 12.6 | 66.7% of students (N=10) with scores \geq 12 points 33.3% of students (N=5) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2017 | 9 | 0 | 13.2 | 89% of students (N=8) with scores \geq 12 points 11% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Summer 2017 | 12 | 0 | 15.1 | 100% of students (N=12) with scores \geq 12 points |
| Fall 2017 | 9 | 0 | 13.11 | 66.7% of students (N=6) with scores \geq 12 points 33.3% of students (N=3) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2018 | 6 | 0 | 14.67 | 83.3% of students (N=5) with scores \geq 12 points 16.7% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |

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|-------------|----|---|-------|---|
| Summer 2018 | 9 | 0 | 16.25 | 100% of students (N=9) with scores \geq 12 points |
| Fall 2018 | 8 | 1 | 14.25 | 87.5% of students (N=7) with scores \geq 12 points 12.5% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2019 | 19 | 1 | 14.21 | 89.5% of students (N=17) with scores \geq 12 points 10.5% of students (N=2) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Summer 2019 | 17 | 0 | 14.94 | 88.2% of students (N=15) with scores \geq 12 points 11.8% of students (N=2) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Fall 2019 | 5 | 0 | 14.25 | 80% of students (N=4) with scores \geq 12 points 20% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2020 | 14 | 0 | 15.5 | 92.86% of students (N=13) with scores \geq 12 points 7.14% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Summer 2020 | 12 | 2 | 13 | 58.3% of students (N=7) with scores \geq 12 points 41.7% of students (N=5) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Fall 2020 | 10 | 1 | 12.8 | 60% of students (N=6) with scores \geq 12 points 40% of students (N=4) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2021 | 18 | 1 | 14.2 | 83.3% of students (N=15) with scores \geq 12 points 16.7% of students (N=3) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Summer 2021 | 13 | 1 | 14.06 | 84.6% of students (N=11) with scores \geq 12 points 15.4% of students (N=2) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Fall 2021 | 9 | 1 | 14.31 | 88.9% of students (N=8) with scores \geq 12 points 11.1% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2022 | 12 | 1 | 14.5 | 83.3% of students (N=10) with scores \geq 12 points 16.7% of students (N=2) with scores $<$ 12 points |

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|-------------|----|---|-------|---|
| Summer 2022 | 8 | 0 | 15.5 | 100% of students (N=8) with scores \geq 12 points |
| Fall 2022 | 13 | 0 | 13.7 | 92.3% of students (N=12) with scores \geq 12 points 7.7% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2023 | 9 | 1 | 15.11 | 88.9% of students (N=8) with scores \geq 12 points 11.1% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Summer 2023 | 7 | 0 | 12.86 | 85.7% of students (N=6) with scores \geq 12 points 14.3% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Fall 2023 | 9 | 0 | 14.44 | 88.9% of students (N=8) with scores \geq 12 points 11.1% of students (N=1) with scores $<$ 12 points |
| Spring 2024 | 7 | 0 | 15.43 | 100% of students (N=7) with scores \geq 12 points |
| Summer 2024 | 6 | 0 | 15.83 | 100% of students (N=6) with scores \geq 12 points |

Table 2. Means of each rubric trait and total scores

| | Demonstrated understanding of relevant information, principles and concepts | Demonstrated ability to apply relevant theories, principles and concepts appropriately in response to the question | Demonstrated ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate relevant principles in response to the question | Ability to locate and retrieve relevant, appropriate, and authoritative information | Ability to analyze and synthesize the information found | Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in writing, with use of graphical elements if appropriate |
|-----------|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Fall 16 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2 | 2.2 | 2 | 2.1 |
| Spring 17 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| Summer 17 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.5 |
| Fall 17 | 2.33 | 2.33 | 2 | 2.11 | 2 | 2.33 |
| Spring 18 | 2.33 | 2.5 | 2.42 | 2.5 | 2.33 | 2.42 |
| Summer 18 | 2.63 | 2.63 | 2.75 | 2.75 | 2.75 | 2.75 |
| Fall 18 | 2.38 | 2.38 | 2.25 | 2.38 | 2.25 | 2.5 |
| Spring 19 | 2.47 | 2.42 | 2.26 | 2.42 | 2.47 | 2.11 |
| Summer19 | 2.41 | 2.53 | 2.59 | 2.59 | 2.35 | 2.47 |
| Fall 19 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.4 |
| Spring 20 | 2.64 | 2.71 | 2.57 | 2.5 | 2.36 | 2.71 |
| Summer 20 | 2.27 | 2.14 | 1.95 | 2.27 | 2.05 | 2.23 |
| Fall 20 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Spring 21 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.3 |
| Summer 21 | 2.46 | 2.46 | 2.15 | 2.15 | 2.38 | 2.46 |
| Fall 21 | 2.33 | 2.22 | 2.55 | 2.33 | 2.55 | 2.33 |
| Spring 22 | 2.5 | 2.33 | 2.33 | 2.67 | 2.25 | 2.42 |
| Summer 22 | 2.88 | 2.5 | 2.38 | 2.75 | 2.38 | 2.63 |
| Fall 22 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.6 |
| Spring 23 | 2.78 | 2.33 | 2.67 | 2.22 | 2.56 | 2.56 |
| Summer 23 | 2.43 | 2.14 | 2.00 | 2.43 | 2.43 | 2.29 |
| Fall 23 | 2.22 | 2.78 | 2.33 | 2.33 | 2.56 | 2.22 |
| Spring 24 | 2.86 | 2.57 | 2.29 | 2.71 | 2.57 | 2.29 |
| Summer 24 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 2.67 | 2.17 | 2.83 | 2.17 |

(Note: The faculty developed the rubric for scoring the comprehensive examination to determine how well students could demonstrate their learning outcomes in the six areas, using a 3-point scale: 3 = exceeding expectations, 2 = meeting expectations, and 1 = failure to meet expectations. The rubric is intended for the program-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning; a separate decision is made by the faculty on whether a student passes or fails the examination.)