

LIS Comprehensive Examination Guide

The following general guidelines are designed to help students prepare for the comprehensive examination, which is a research paper.

Please carefully read the below Web pages about LIS comps and the important procedures to take comprehensive examination.

LIS Comps webpage: <http://lis.cua.edu/courses/comps/>

LIS Comps Procedure: <http://lis.cua.edu/courses/comps/procedures.cfm>

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Faculty pointers for successfully passing your LIS comprehensive exams

Expectations on a take-home exam format

Students are expected to present their ideas in a professional manner, using graphs, models, tables, etc. as appropriate. The comps exam paper should NOT be a literature review paper. The paper should demonstrate competencies required by the question and reflect learning from coursework, knowledge of the literature, analytical ability, and ability to synthesize knowledge or ideas from various sources.

Reading list:

1. Locate the most recent syllabi for the core courses published on the "LIS course schedules" section of the LIS website. If more than one professor taught the course, then favor the most current syllabus written by full time faculty (i.e., faculty with offices in the law school). The textbooks and bibliographies from those four syllabi should constitute the start of your comps "reading list."
2. Spend some time reading recent journal articles. Look for current trends and topics covered in the four core courses. Try to find articles that supplement your textbooks, and fill in any gaps in your knowledge. See the list of journals below for more information.
3. Reread the items on your reading list with the goal to identify the:
 - main points of each document and
 - relevance of each document to its particular core course and LIS competencies
 - relevance of each document to at least one other LIS course (core or non-core)

Practice writing answers:

1. Locate a sample question or past comp question published in the "Comprehensive Exam" section of the LIS Web site. Begin your practice by writing outlined answers and ask your advisor or one of the other full-time faculty to review it.
2. When writing your answer remember to:
 - a. answer the question
 - b. answer all parts of the question, if it's a multi-part question
 - c. clearly state your answer and your evidence to support your answer by citing to the appropriate literature.
3. After you have gained confidence in writing a logical outline, then practice writing a paper.

Strategies during exam days

1. Plan out how much time you will spend on each section of the paper. It would be good to allocate your exam period including a preparation time before you begin writing a paper answering the question and a proofreading period at the end. This will give you a chance to look for minor errors and to review what you have written.

2. In the beginning, have moments to write down thoughts or ideas that you may have in response to the question. This pre-work will give you direction and focus in your writing. This will be helpful to improve the clarity and flow of your paper.
3. Organize your paper. An outline will help to organize your thoughts and make sure you address to each part of the question asked.
4. Gather and make a list of all the relevant materials and sources that you plan to include in your paper.
5. Have a thesis statement for each part and state it up front.
6. Take breaks. Writing can be exhausting. Try to schedule short breaks during exam days.
7. Proofread for meaning and mechanics.

A well-written (analytical) research paper

- Be sure to begin with an introduction.
 - Usually, an introduction includes a thesis statement which contains several meaningful propositions that would then be argued in the body of the paper. In the body, each proposition will be discussed in detail with appropriate evidence.
- Directly addresses the question.
- Demonstrates knowledge and an understanding of the theoretical/accepted principles in Library and Information Science (LIS) in answering the question.
- Demonstrates knowledge of current trends and issues in professional practice.
 - Do not merely assert that such and such a problem or issue is important. Instead, make an explicit assertion about the nature of the subject and indicate why and how you will approach the subject.
- Clearly identifies a set of key concepts that are derived appropriately from and connected to citations.
- Derives its central arguments and supporting evidence from citations from scholarly journals/sources in their respective area rather than using your personal experience. Having references demonstrates that your findings/argument mainly results from credible sources/facts beyond your personal experience. By doing so, you will show a reader why the points you are making are valid.
 - It would be okay to provide examples of personal experience within a larger context of the paper as a supplementary example. When you do so, it must be anonymous.
- Has an overall structure that is clear and appropriate to the topic.
 - You may use subheadings to organize your writing.
- Contains a section of summary conclusions that are consistent with paper's thesis statement. Also, your conclusions should reflect your own thoughts or interpretation on the subject matter.
- Employs APA style consistently and appropriately.
- Formats the bibliography properly using APA.
 - A minimum of 8 sources from peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles or books are required.
 - Additional sources such as Web sites, blog postings, news articles, and professional magazine articles may also be used and formatted in APA.
- Is easy to read and understand.
- Is free of major grammatical, typographical, and syntactical errors.
- Contains a complete and accurate list of references that match between paper and bibliography.

Reference on writing an analytical research paper

Purdue's guideline

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/1/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/02/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/05/>

A list of Journals for Readings

Do not feel that you have to read all of the journals on this list. Also, do not restrict your studying to solely items listed here. The following journals usually contain material that is relevant to the core LIS courses.

American Archivist

American Libraries (ALA)

Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science and Technology

College and Research Libraries

First Monday

Information Outlook (SLA)

Information Technology and Libraries

JASIST

Journal of Academic Librarianship

Journal of Academic Libraries

Libraries and the Cultural Record

Library Journal

Library Quarterly

Library Resources and Technical Services

Library Trends

Portal: Libraries and the Academy

RUSQ

Use online databases in our fields via CUA libraries, e.g., LISA, ERIC, Academic Search Premier, etc. (<http://guides.lib.cua.edu/libsci>). By searching those databases, you will be able to identify relevant topics and related articles to read.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Students will choose one question to answer.
- ☐ Essay will be between 2,000 and 2,500 words long, excluding bibliography and cover page.
- ☐ The text document should be formatted as follows: 12 pt. font, double-spaced, 1-in. margins. Files should be saved according to an established file naming convention and in one of the selected file formats (doc, docx or pdf).
 - ☐ Your filename must be in the format “<your test ID>-Question<#>.doc” (or docx or pdf). For example:

Say if your I.D. number was 205 and you answered question #1, then you would submit your file as: 205-Q1.doc, e.g.
- ☐ Do not include your name.
- ☐ Essay must have in-text citation in APA style.
- ☐ Essay must have a finalized bibliography on a separate page (with all sources used in your text) in proper APA format / sources listed in alphabetical order by author’s last name. You must have a minimum of 8 sources
- ☐ Essay will be submitted online via Blackboard (one file with everything) by 9 a.m. on Monday

Expectations and policies

ACADEMIC HONESTY, PLAGIARISM, and CHEATING

<http://graduatestudies.cua.edu/currentstudents/academintgrt.cfm>

Academic honesty is expected of all CUA students. Academic honesty is one of the foundations of the educational mission and Catholic commitment of this university. Academic dishonesty, including such practices as cheating, plagiarism and fabrication, undermines the learning experience, and, as it involves fraud and deceit, is corrosive of the intellectual principles and is inconsistent with the ethical standards of this university. In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion.

Categories of Academic Dishonesty

The following are the major categories of academic dishonesty:

A. Plagiarism is the act of presenting the work or methodology of another as if it were one's own. It includes quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing or utilizing the published work of others without proper acknowledgment, and, where appropriate, quotation marks. Most frequently, it involves the unacknowledged use of published books or articles in periodicals, magazines, newspapers and electronic media. However, any unacknowledged use of another's words, ideas or electronic processes constitutes plagiarism, including the use of papers written by other students, oral presentations, interviews, radio or TV broadcasts, any published or unpublished materials (including Web-based materials, letters, pamphlets, leaflets, notes or other electronic or print documents), and any unauthorized or inadequately credited use of foreign language, scientific and/or mathematical calculation and/or modeling programs or online services.

B. Improper use of one's own work is the unauthorized act of submitting work for a course that includes work done for previous courses and/or projects as though the work in question were newly done for the present course/project.

C. Fabrication is the act of artificially contriving or making up material, data or other information and submitting this as fact.

D. Cheating is the act of deceiving, which includes such acts as receiving or communicating or receiving information from another during an examination, looking at another's examination (during the exam), using notes when prohibited during examinations, using electronic equipment to receive or communicate information during examinations, using any unauthorized electronic equipment during examinations, obtaining information about the questions or answers for an examination prior to the administering of the examination or whatever else is deemed contrary to the rules of fairness, including special rules designated by the professor in the course.

E. Attempts to engage in any of the conduct described above or the facilitation of any of this conduct by another individual will be treated as conduct constituting academic dishonesty for purposes of this policy.

Please review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty, including requirements for appeals, at <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityfull.cfm>.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the school privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact Disability Support Services (at 202 319-5211, room 201 Pryzbyla Center) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. To read about the services and policies, please visit the website: <http://dss.cua.edu/>.

Citation Instruction

Example (in-text citation):

Wang and Lim (2009) identified trendy features of next-generation catalog systems including relevance ranking, federated searching, faceted navigation, spell checking, RSS feeds, and interoperability and social networking services such as tagging, reviews, ratings, and recommendations.

Or

There are trendy features of next-generation catalog systems, including relevance ranking, federated searching, faceted navigation, spell checking, RSS feeds, and interoperability and social networking services such as tagging, reviews, ratings, and recommendations (Wang & Lim, 2009).

Bibliography: At the end of the paper is a listing of all the works cited

Wang, J. & Lim, A. (2009). Local touch and global reach: the next generation of newtork-level information discovery and delivery services in a digital landscape. *Library Management*, 30(1-2), 25-34.

Resources for APA Citation

1. Tools you can use to create a bibliography in APA style

Citation Builder <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/citationbuilder/>

The screenshot shows the NCSU Libraries Citation Builder website. The page is titled "Citation Builder" and includes a list of citation types: book (in entirety), chapter or essay from a book, magazine article, newspaper article, scholarly journal article, and web site. A speech bubble points to the "scholarly journal article" option with the text: "1. Select a resource on the list, e.g. 'scholarly journal article'". Below the list, it mentions citation manuals like the APA and MLA handbooks. The footer contains contact information and social media links.

2. Click on
“APA6” instead
of “MLA7”

www.lib.ncsu.edu/citationbuilder/cite.php?source=...

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Citation Builder

Cite a scholarly journal article [change](#)

Citation style: **APA 6** MLA 7

in print on a website in a database

Fill in everything you know about your source:

Contributor(s): Author Anonymous
First MI Last / Corporation
[+ Add another contributor](#)

Article title:

Journal title:

Advanced info:
Volume Issue

Year published:

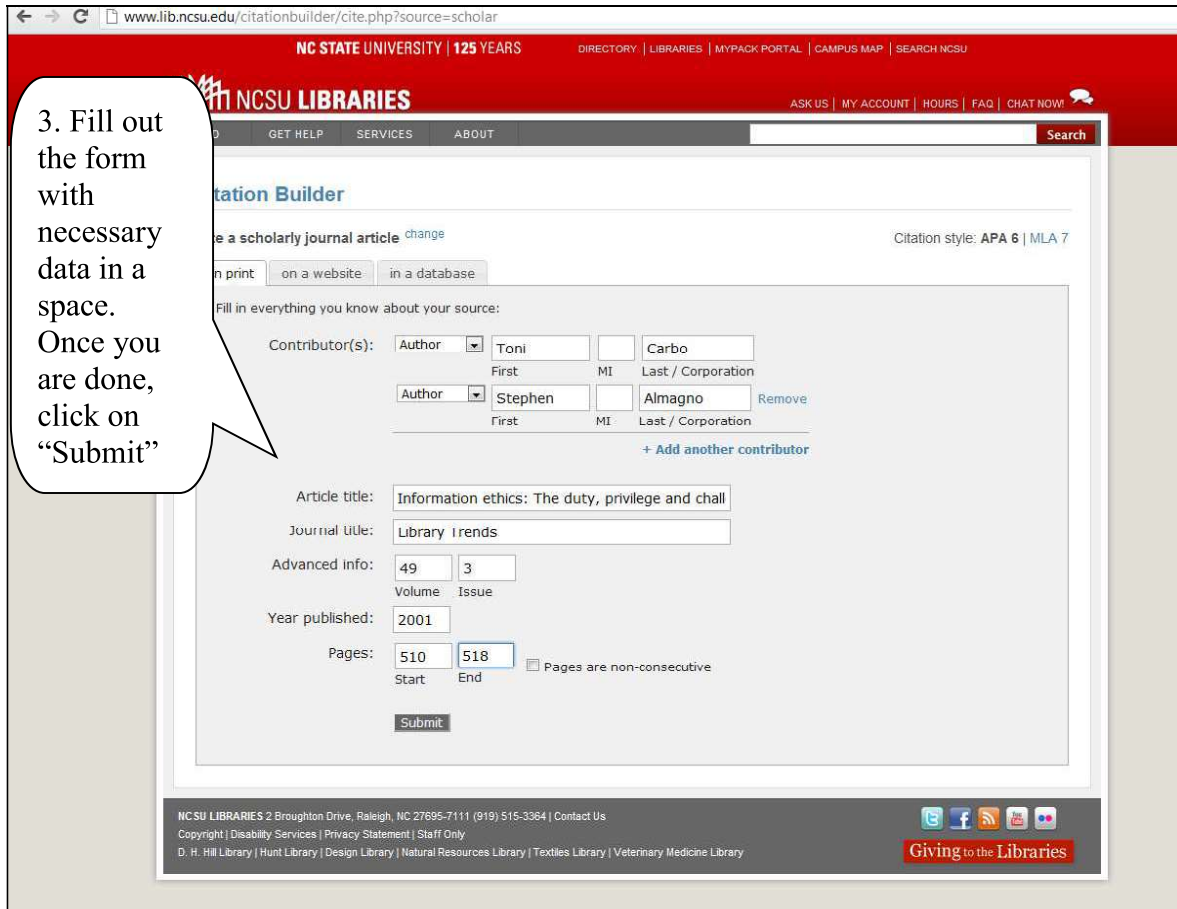
Pages: ☐ Pages are non-consecutive
Start End

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Giving to the Libraries

3. Fill out the form with necessary data in a space. Once you are done, click on "Submit"



The screenshot shows the NCSU Libraries Citation Builder web form. The browser address bar displays www.lib.ncsu.edu/citationbuilder/cite.php?source=scholar. The page header includes "NC STATE UNIVERSITY | 125 YEARS" and navigation links like "DIRECTORY", "LIBRARIES", "MYPACK PORTAL", "CAMPUS MAP", and "SEARCH NCSU". The main header features the "NCSU LIBRARIES" logo and links for "GET HELP", "SERVICES", "ABOUT", "ASK US", "MY ACCOUNT", "HOURS", "FAQ", and "CHAT NOW". A search bar is located on the right. The form itself is titled "Citation Builder" and includes a link to "Create a scholarly journal article" and a "Citation style" dropdown set to "APA 6 | MLA 7". Below this are buttons for "Print", "on a website", and "in a database". The main section is labeled "Fill in everything you know about your source:". It contains fields for "Contributor(s)" with dropdown menus for "Author" and text boxes for "First", "MI", and "Last / Corporation". Two contributors are listed: Toni Carbo and Stephen Almagno. There is a "Remove" button and a link to "+ Add another contributor". Other fields include "Article title" (Information ethics: The duty, privilege and chall), "Journal title" (Library Trends), "Advanced Info" with "Volume" (49) and "Issue" (3), "Year published" (2001), and "Pages" (Start: 510, End: 518). A checkbox for "Pages are non-consecutive" is present. A "Submit" button is at the bottom of the form. The footer contains contact information for NCSU Libraries, copyright notices, and a "Giving to the Libraries" button.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY | 125 YEARS

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Search

Citation Builder

Create a scholarly journal article [change](#)

Citation style: APA 6 | MLA 7

Print | on a website | in a database

Fill in everything you know about your source:

Contributor(s):

Author
First MI Last / Corporation

Author [Remove](#)
First MI Last / Corporation

[+ Add another contributor](#)

Article title:

Journal title:

Advanced Info:
Volume Issue

Year published:

Pages:
Start End ☐ Pages are non-consecutive

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4. You will see the following bibliographic citation in APA style. Copy and paste this in your bibliography in an alphabetical order of author's last name.

The screenshot shows the NCSU citation generator interface. A yellow box highlights the generated APA 6 citation: Carbo, T., & Almagno, S. (2001). Information ethics: The duty, privilege and challenge of educating information professionals. *Library Trends*, 49(3), 510-518. The interface includes fields for Contributor(s), Year published, Pages, and a Submit button. The citation style is set to APA 6.

Carbo, T., & Almagno, S. (2001). Information ethics: The duty, privilege and challenge of educating information professionals. *Library Trends*, 49(3), 510-518.

(Another tool)

RefWorks – freely available via CUA libraries (you need to create your personal account with RefWorks in advance.) <https://www.aladin.wrlc.org/Z-WEB/Aladin?req=db&key=PROXYAUTH&lib=6&url=http://www.refworks.com/refworks2/?r=authentication::init&groupcode=RWCatholicUofA>

2. Resources for APA style

- * Sample reference page: <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/index.html?section=apa>
- * In-text citation <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/index.html?section=apa&page=2>
- * Print sources <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/index.html?section=apa&page=3>
- * Online source <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/index.html?section=apa&page=4>
- * Purdue OWL guide <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- * <http://www2.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/workshop/citapa.htm>