

# The Library and Information Science Program of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP)

Rhodora Robles-Julian

Chairperson of the Department and Chief of the Extension Center of the College of Education  
Polytechnic University of the Philippines  
rrjulian@pup.edu.ph/dhoriesjulian78@gmail.com

## **Abstract**

*The Bachelor in Library and Information Science (BLIS) program was instituted in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) in June 1978 under the College of Arts and Science which aimed to address the increasing needs of the society for competent and professionally trained personnel to work in the library. The BLIS program is designed to provide knowledge and skills in the management of library operations, the systematic organization, conservation, preservation and restoration of books, historical and cultural documents and other intellectual properties. The program includes topics on the basic principles and fundamental laws of library science as well as the appropriate use of information resources. It also teaches essential skills in the integration of information technology and management information system for effective organization, use and delivery of learning resource and services.*

**Keywords:** Bachelor of Library and Information Science, Master in Library and Information Science, LIS curriculum, Library and information science education, Library education and training, Philippines

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines' (PUP) current four-year Bachelor in Library and Information Science (BLIS) program had its beginnings in 1978 during the 2nd Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Philippine College of Commerce (PCC) under the then College President Pablo T. Mateo, Jr. The PCC was created in 1904 until its transformation in 1978 into a state university or the present-day PUP (Polytechnic University of the Philippines [PUP], n.d.a). PUP has consistently offered affordable but quality education to poor but deserving and qualified students. To date, the PUP is the biggest institution of higher learning in the

country, in terms of student population (68,249 as of 2014). It has three campuses in Metro Manila and 21 other campuses in other parts of the country, most of them located in Luzon.

Through Resolution No. 1490, the Library Science curriculum was created and the Bachelor in Library Arts (BLA) became a degree in June 1978 under the university's College of Arts and Science, aimed to address the increasing need for a formal library science education and the need of other institutions to have competent and professionally trained individuals to perform different phases of library work.

The BLA was treated as a ladderized program which offered and provided the following curricula designed to enable the students to acquire and avail themselves of library staff job targets at various levels:

- One-Year course – Library Aide Certificate
- Two-Year course – Library Technician Certificate
- Three-Year course – Associate Librarian Diploma
- Four-Year course – Bachelor in Library Arts

In 1988, the course changed its name from BLA to Bachelor in Library Science (BLS) and in 1991 it became known as BLIS. In 1993, the College of Arts and Science was split up wherein the BLIS remained under the College of Arts. In 2001 the BLIS modified its curriculum which was based on the recommendation of the Committee for the Revision of the Library and Information Science Curriculum (CURLIS) submitted to the Board for Librarians (BFL) of the Philippines.

On May 8, 2013, the school's President, Mr. Emanuel C. De Guzman, issued Memorandum No. 019, Series of 2013, authorizing the vertical articulation of the College of Education, mandating that all teacher education graduate programs would be transferred to the College of Education, including the Library and Information Science (PUP, n.d.b).

The PUP BLIS Program goes along with CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) no. 24, series of 2015 wherein minimum standard and other requirements set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) are implemented in the university. The program adopted the objectives of the above-mentioned CMO that which prepares the students to their unique role in gathering, organizing, and coordinating access to the best information sources for the knowledge-based organization they belong, as well as in implementing standards for the ethical and appropriate use of information (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2015).

The creation of the PUP Department of Library and Information Science was envisioned to be a training department for globally competitive librarians and information analysts. The department serves as a gateway to the development and production of professionals possessed with thorough knowledge and skills to address the information needs of the community.

In August 2017, a proposed revision of the BLIS curriculum, which was anchored on the standards set by CHED, was presented and was approved by university officials. Under the new curriculum, BLIS students were required to finish 21 core courses, 19

general education courses, 6 information and communications technology (ICT) courses, physical education courses, and the National Service Training Program (NSTP) (PUP, n.d.c).

At present, the University offers the four-year BLIS program and a Master in Library and Information Science (MLIS) program. The BLIS program is designed to provide knowledge and skills in the management of library operations, the systematic organization, conservation, preservation and restoration of books, historical and cultural documents and other intellectual properties. The program includes topics on the basic principles and fundamental laws of library science as well as the appropriate use of information resources. It also teaches essential skills related to the integration of information technology and management information system for the effective organization, use and delivery of learning resource and services.

### **Student Development**

Some of the approaches used by the faculty members in teaching the program are classroom lectures to present and deliver the topics, as well as practicum exercises and tours to observe how libraries work and how different library operations are carried out to keep a library running smoothly. An orientation program is being conducted by the faculty during the first day of school aimed to motivate and develop students, and for the latter to love the course as well.

Also, during the first day of classes, a syllabus prepared by the faculty is presented to the students to obtain feedback regarding the assignments, topics covered, grading policy, other requirements, and house rules in the classroom. Discussion method is also used to create a dynamic interaction between the students and the professors. The semester would not be complete without a group project to involve students in their own learning, to create camaraderie among their classmates, to help them to be creative and resourceful, and to develop skills as part of the expected learning outcomes. Students are required to present their outputs through the use and integration of technology. For instance, they will present a video clip related to the assigned task to capture the attention of their classmates and to make the topic more interesting. The performance of students are evaluated through oral examination by means of graded recitation/oral defense; classroom participation and behavior and attendance. On their on-the-job-training, the students' supervisors, usually the one who handles the course, participate in the rating of students through the use of a rating instrument provided by the college. Outputs and

written assignments are graded by the teacher while practical application such as teaching/training practice is graded by the host library and by the faculty (Professional Regulation Commission [PRC], 2019). The students are also required to conduct and write an action research to develop their skills on research writing and become research oriented. They are trained to prepare and create a library development plan, a library project proposal, and a library manual. It is deemed necessary that the BLIS graduates are knowledgeable about the procedures involved in creating a library manual. In terms of practicum or on-the-job training, students are required to render and complete 150 hours service inside the campus library on the first semester of their third year, and another 150 hours training on their fourth year to each of the four types of libraries (i.e., academic, school, special, public).

On top of the academic and practical exercises, the students are also required to attend seminars organized by different professional organizations at least once in every semester. A number of BLIS students have also participated in the annual LIS Wizard, a national quiz bee organized by the Philippine Association of Teachers of Library and Information Science, Inc. (PATLS) which involves various colleges and universities. Likewise, the students have participated in other events such as the LIS Summit, National Book Week, College of Education Celebration Week, Library and Information Services Month activities. The LIS students are also actively participating in all of their community services and outreach programs. These include a project in a Barangay Reading Center in Peralta Street, Sta. Mesa, Manila. In their outreach programs, they conduct storytelling to students of select day care centers and visited the Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong City.

The graduates have also performed well in the Librarian Licensure Examination (LLE) administered by BFL. The BFL was created by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 6966 also known as “The Philippine Librarianship Act” which was enacted into law on September 19, 1990. The Board conducted its first licensure examination on December 3, 1992 (PRC, n.d.). Based on the result of the LLE in 2019, PUP has the greatest number of produced licensed librarians with an overall performance of 74.60 percent among examinees, with 86.27 percent of the passers being first takers. To give honor to new licensed librarians from PUP, there are testimonial dinners for the PUP graduates. Aside from these activities and distinctions, there are also students who have received awards and

grants such as the Temasek Foundation Scale Exchange Students, the President’s Lister and Dean’s Lister awards, the College of Education Outstanding Scholar Student, among others.

After finishing the course, BLIS graduates are expected to perform the following tasks:

- Help the public access information within a library
- Check out books, magazines, eReaders, and other materials for patrons
- Search for, acquire, and provide information regarding various inquiries
- Help users navigate the Internet, make copies using a copier, and check in books
- Acquire, prepare, and classify materials
- Write abstracts and summaries
- Oversee the management and planning of libraries
- Negotiate contracts for services, materials, and equipment
- Supervise library employees
- Select and purchase materials from publishers, wholesalers, and distributors
- Enter classification information and descriptions of materials into electronic catalogs
- Analyze collections and compile lists of books, periodicals, articles, audiovisual materials, and electronic resources on particular subjects
- Collect and organize books, pamphlets, manuscripts, and other materials in a specific field, such as rare books, genealogy, or music
- Develop and index databases and help train users to develop searching skills

The PUP-College of Education ensures the individual and collective growth of the faculty of the Department of Library and Information Science by providing programs for their continuous growth in terms of skills and competencies. The university allotted a separate budget for the professional growth of the faculty members and administrative staff. Financial assistance is given to faculty and administrative staff to encourage them to attend conferences, seminars and activities to update and enhance their skills in the field of librarianship and information technology. They are also encouraged to pursue their graduate studies wherein the university would provide scholarships and financial assistance as a support for the professional growth of the faculty.

It is the primordial goal of the university to enhance and maintain capable faculty, cultivate outstanding teaching-learning environment; produce quality research wherein financial assistance is also provided by the university, creative works, and publications, and to tender service as advisers, consultants, resource

persons, paper presenters, reviewers, and officers of national and international professional organizations.

To date, the program is guided by seven part-time faculty members who are all practitioners and one full-time instructor. Four out of the eight faculty members have doctorate degrees and the remaining four are all MLIS degree holders who likewise serve as full-time librarians with supervisory positions from various institutions in the country.

### Future Plans

It is with great pride that PUP is one of the universities that have produced professional librarians in the country who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to address the increasing information and data needs of the society. The students are taught and trained to become librarians who possess the ability to identify sources of information for the research needs of their clients, to create and design a library system to improve services, to encourage and promote reading to the younger generations, to create programs, services and activities that will enhance the ability of students to be more creative and resourceful, and to preserve and make information readily available to the communities they serve.

The University continuously and vigorously takes efforts to strengthen the PUP graduates in terms of knowledge, personal and professional competencies, as well as to raise the number of board passers during licensure examinations. With their in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge about library work provided to them by the University, PUP BLIS graduates are ready to face any or all challenges they face in their chosen careers, and are envisaged to contribute and make a profound difference in the lives of the people, communities and organizations they would be with.

### DECLARATION ON CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### DECLARATION ON SOURCES OF FUNDING

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### REFERENCES

Commission on Higher Education. (2015). *CHED Memorandum Order No. 24, series of 2015*. Retrieved from <https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CMO-no.-24-s.-2015.pdf>

Polytechnic University of the Philippines. (n.d.a). *About PUP*. Retrieved from <https://www.pup.edu.ph/about/>

Polytechnic University of the Philippines. (n.d.b). *Master in Library and Information Science*. Retrieved June 12, 2021, from <https://www.pup.edu.ph/coed/mlis>

Polytechnic University of the Philippines. (n.d.c). *Accomplishments*. Retrieved June 12, 2021, from <https://www.pup.edu.ph/president/accomplishments>

Professional Regulation Commission. (2019, September 16). *September 2019 Librarian Licensure Examination results released in three (3) working days*. Retrieved June 11, 2021, from <https://www.prc.gov.ph/article/september-2019-librarian-licensure-examination-results-released-three-3-working-days/4122>

Professional Regulation Commission. (n.d.). *Philippine Librarianship Act*. Retrieved June 13, 2021, from <https://www.prc.gov.ph/librarianship>

### AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

**Rhodora Robles-Julian** finished her Bachelor's Degree in Library and Information Science (2000), Master in Library and Information Science (2012) and Doctor in Public Administration (2018) at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Sta. Mesa Manila. She started working in 2001 at Systems Technology Institute and, right after passing the Librarian's Licensure Exam in 2001, she entered into government service when she served as Librarian at the Philippine Statistics Authority (formerly known as National Statistics Office) from 2001-2015. After 15 years she was given an opportunity to transfer to the National Library of the Philippines as Librarian from 2015-2020, and in November 2020 she started to work as a full-time faculty member of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines under the College of Education in the Department of Library and Information Science. She is currently the Chairperson of the Department and Chief of the Extension Center of the College of Education. She also served as Library Consultant for the Taguig City University, contributor of the Ninoy Aquino Library and Learning Resource Center Journal, and part-time lecturer at the Graduate School-Master in Library and Information Science.

	<p>This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.</p>
	<p>The PhJLIS is published by the School of Library and Information Studies, University of the Philippines Diliman. ISSN 2719-0471 (Online)</p>