

## **Report From the Interim Dean, School of Library and Information Sciences**

It has been four months since I received the appointment as Interim Dean of the School of Library and Information Sciences. It has been a hectic and at times unsettling period. Yet at the end of the month of October, I feel satisfied at our accomplishments. In September, Associate Dean Lionnell Parker was appointed Interim Director of the Shepard Library. On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, Program Assistant Patricia Zollicoffer, whose primary duties were in enrollment management transferred to another position. She now works for former Dean Benjamin. F. Speller who is developing the doctoral program in Information Science. Mr. Parker is in effect on leave until a Library Director is appointed for the Shepard Library. This meant that in a five week period, we lost two-thirds of our office staff and all who worked in enrollment management. This came at the time in which our annual report to the American Library Association Committee on Accreditation was due. Additionally, class schedules for the spring 2004 semester were due in the Registrar's office, and pre-registration was set to begin. With the help of remaining faculty and staff, we weathered the storm. We also were given the benefit of the assistance and advice of former Dean Speller and for this we are grateful. I feel confident that there will be far fewer mistakes in our printed schedule for spring 2004 than in the past. We will avoid the confusion which has often resulted in changes of class location. I have chosen to not have our class schedule printed on our web page until I could verify all information including day, time, and location of classes with the Registrar's office. Pin numbers are available however, and pre-registration has begun.

### **Reorganization of Office Staff**

Ms. Virginia Purefoy-Jones has been appointed Assistant to the Dean. She continues to serve as Head of the SLIS Library. Her dual appointment will end when a new Dean of the School of Library and Information Sciences is appointed. Mr. Tim Bailey is the new office assistant for enrollment management. Mr. Bailey's duty hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Saturday as needed. He will be available to answer questions from our evening students and assist teachers in setting up their classes for PowerPoint and other presentations. We also have employed three graduate assistants to help our faculty and staff with their research and professional activities. They also assist us in the many daily activities of running the School of Library and Information Sciences office.

### **Programs and Classes**

Students have asked for a clarification of our policy on enrollment in distance education classes. Confusion may be caused by the fact that we offer a completely on-line MLS degree. We also have agreements with both the Department of Librarianship and the Joyner Library at East Carolina University. Contrary to a recent misunderstanding, these agreements remain unchanged. East Carolina students may take 18 hours including the basic core at ECU and transfer them to NCCU. What we have planned is on-line MLS courses formerly offered on campus only. We hope that this will benefit all of our programs and students. Our on-line degree should now be more nearly a duplicate of our

site based MLS degree. For the first time in the spring 2004 semester, we will offer **Organization of Information** (4400) and **Social Sciences Resources and Services** (5220) on-line. This course was inadvertently left off of the original schedule. The on-line courses are numbered 701 and should now be available for registration by our distance education students. The East Carolina program is not a distance education program. Nor is it a component of the on-line MLS degree. Students at ECU can satisfy some of their requirements by taking classes on-line. All Internet courses will have the 701 designation. All other students should enroll in classes with the 101 designation. During the spring and summer sessions, we are also planning to strengthen our online course offerings in Information Science. This will eventually lead to an online Master of Information Science Degree. We hope that within the current academic year, this will come to fruition.

### **Miscellaneous Matters**

Our enrollment was ten students less in September 2003 than in September 2002. The decline was in MIS enrollment. I assume that this was as a result of a weak national economy. The MLS program grew by 20 per cent and nearly off-set the decline in the MIS program. Small though it may be, the indications are that this decline is only temporary. Fall applications have been heavy. Especially notable is the number of applicants from abroad. International students total five per cent of our current enrollment. When permanent residents who are not U.S. citizens are included, international students total ten per cent of our student body. The mold problems of the University and the Shepard Library have been well documented. Sections of the library will be restricted for repairs, but it appears that our classes and offices may not have to move while renovation is in progress. The Search Committee to select a new Dean of the School of Library and Information Sciences has been working diligently. Names of two applicants have been forwarded to the Provost. The first interviews of prospective candidates will begin soon. I hope that you will agree it has been a busy and fruitful school year thus far.

Robert M. Ballard  
Interim Dean