June 29, 2001

To Whom It May Concern

The Master's Degree of [Student’s Name]: MIMS

The University of California, Berkeley, degree Master of Information Management and Systems (MIMS) is the successor degree to the Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) degree. Following campus practice the name of the degree follows the name of the School, which was changed in 1995. The MIMS degree differs from the prior MLIS degree because it is based on a new curriculum that had been designed originally for the MLIS degree, but was introduced for the MIMS degree.

When I served as Dean of the School I was frequently asked whether foreign library science degrees should be considered comparable to an ALA-accredited MLS degree when the appointment criteria include "Accredited MLS or equivalent." The question now arises as to whether the present Berkeley MIMS degree should be considered "or equivalent" to an ALA-accredited MLS degree for employment purposes. Berkeley's MLIS degree lost its accreditation by the Accreditation Committee of the American Library Association through an unexpected technicality: because admissions to the program were suspended in 1993. It has been intended to seek ALA Accreditation for the MIMS degree, but the degree has not yet been reviewed.

In the meanwhile, my recommendation is that prospective employers should examine the courses taken by individual graduates. All MIMS students are required to take 202 Information Organization and Retrieval 204 Information Users and Society, 206 Distributed Computing Applications and Infrastructure, and a course on management concepts and project management: 208 Analysis of Information Organizations and Systems.

Students interested in library work are encouraged to take the following electives:

- **Cataloging and classification**: The required introductory 202 Information Organization and Retrieval, is extended first by a broad and rather thorough introduction to bibliographic access (indexing, thesauri, classification, document representation,...) in 245 Organization of Information in Collections, and, starting in Spring 2001, by 290 Classification and Bibliographic Description, which uses Wynar's *Introduction to Cataloging and Classification*, to give a focused grounding in contemporary library practice.

- **Library services**: Course 285 Design of Library Services provides a broad introduction with visits to libraries and librarians as guest speakers. Technical aspects are commonly covered in 296a Seminar on Information Access (aka "The Friday Afternoon Seminar") led by Clifford Lynch and myself.
Official course descriptions for these courses are on the School's website and detailed course materials are usually available from each semester's course listings. See www.sims.berkeley.edu/courses

There is no doubt in my mind that a student who has successfully completed all of the courses mentioned above (as [Student’s Name] has) has as much grounding in librarianship as can be depended on in a graduate of an ALA-accredited MLS and, for that reason, should be considered to have the equivalent of an accredited MLS degree. It can be noted also that graduates of the Berkeley MIMS degree, a two year program, have a stronger grounding in library-relevant technology than is usually found in MLS programs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions: 510-642 3159.

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