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# Library and Information Science Curriculum in Thai Universities Compared with IFLA Guidelines for Professional Library/Information Educational Programs

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## Abstract

All higher education curriculums in Thailand follow the Standard Criteria for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs passed by the Office of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. LIS programs also agree with the Standard for Libraries in Higher Education set by former the Ministry of University Affairs. This study compared courses offered in the curriculum of nine LIS master degree programs in Thai universities with IFLA Guidelines for Professional Library/ Information Programs, item G2: curriculum elements. It was found that there are 43 courses on Application of ICT to all facets of Library and Information Products and Services; 28 courses on Information Resources Management; 12 courses on Assessing Information Needs and Designing Responsive Services. Only one course on Evaluation of Outcomes of Information and Library Use and two courses on local resources. Other issues in G3: Curriculums are also discussed.

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*Keywords:* Library science curriculum; Information science curriculum; IFLA Guidelines; Thai universities

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## 1. Introduction

The Ministry of Education has passed the Standard Criteria for Graduate Program (.Ministry of Education, 2005) and Thailand Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (Ministry of Education, 2009) which all graduate programs in Thailand have to follow. Library and Information Science programs also agree with the Standard for Libraries in Higher Education set by former the Ministry of University Affairs (2001). According to

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social change and technological development LIS curricula have been changing continuously in many countries. Varalakshmi (2006) surveyed the need of Indian LIS Professionals and Alumni and suggested the revision of LIS programs in India; Nagata, et al. (2006) revealed that in Japan the topics on Library System Management and Foreign Languages have declined, on the contrary References Services; Information Literacy Instruction; Intellectual Property/Copyright have raised and Serviceability and Knowledge of Digitized Media are highly appreciated. Chu (2006) analyzed curricula of LIS programs in the USA. He found that more elective courses are offered while the core requirements are reduced as few as two courses. In Greece a curricula in the framework of “integrated information” (with courses on information technologies and information science) is in use (Giannakopoulos et al., 2012). In Thailand Na Lampun, et al. (1998) surveyed LIS Master Degree curricula in Thai universities and found that courses are classified into eight groups, i.e. Organization and Management; Technical Services; Information Resources; Services; Information Technology; Seminar; Research; and Professional Training. Four years later Surasiang and Tuamsuk (2002) analyzed LIS curricula of the same programs and found that there are slightly change. Professional training courses declined while Communication Skills, Information Law and Information Resource Development emerged. From then on research on LIS curriculum in Thai universities are not found.

Endorsed by the IFLA Professional Committee, IFLA (2012) has revised and launched the Guidelines for Professional Library/Information Educational Programs, which LIS Programs should value. Thus the author aims to compare LIS master degree curricula in Thailand with the IFLA Guidelines hoping it would be useful for Thai LIS programs in their curriculum developing.

## **2. Methodology**

This study is a documentary research using content analysis technique. The process is as follows:

1. The author studied the IFLA Guidelines for Professional Library/ Information Educational Programs, 2012
2. Collected curricula of LIS master programs of nine universities, i.e. Burapa, Chiangmai, Chulalongkorn, Khonkaen, Prince of Songkla, Ramkhamhang, Srinakarin Wirote, and Thammasat from their web sites
3. Analyzed the course contents collected
4. Matched the courses of the nine programs with 11 elements of IFLA Guidelines item G2
5. Compared details of framework in G1 and G3 with The Standard Criteria for Graduate Program and the Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF: HEd)
6. Made a conclusion

## **3. IFLA Guidelines for Professional Library/Information Educational Programs**

The Guidelines were endorsed by the IFLA Professional Committee at its meeting in August 2012 set the framework for library and information educational programs. It comprises:

- G1 The Larger Framework
- G2 Curriculum elements
- G3 Curriculum
- G4 Faculty and Staff
- G5 Students

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