

## SLIS Connecting

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# Spotlights: Faculty, Alum, and Courses

USM School of Library and Information Science

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## Spotlight Faculty – Dr. Chris Cunningham



Dr. Sandy Hirsh presents 2015 ProQuest Doctoral Dissertation Award to Dr. Chris Cunningham

Dr. Chris Cunningham, who joined the SLIS faculty in 2016, holds a PhD from the University of South Carolina, MLIS from UNC Greensboro and a BA in History from UNC Charlotte. His dissertation and research focus on the digital divide and applications of ICT's both globally and domestically.

He was worked in both the corporate and academic worlds, with a diversity of experiences ranging from Chief Information Officer to Program Coordinator to Corporate Librarian, prior to working on his doctorate. In 2015, he won the Proquest Doctoral Dissertation Award from ASIS&T. *Government Structure, Social Inclusion and the Digital Divide: A Discourse on the Affinity Between the Effects of Freedom and Access to Online Information Resources* examined the relationship between democracy and access to online information.

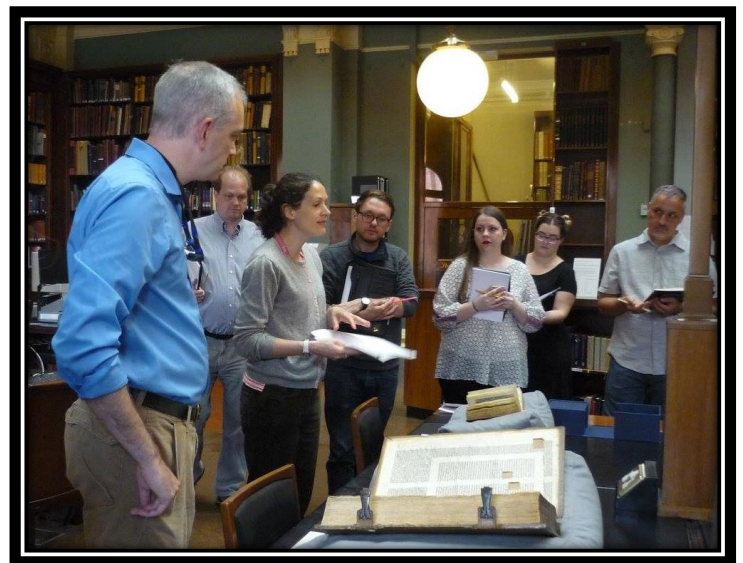
Chris' advisor, Dr. Kendra Albright, noted that, "The particular strength of this dissertation is that much of the research on the digital divide looks at the changes over time in general access (e.g., the information rich vs. the information poor), rather than on the impacts of the digital divide caused by other aspects; in this case, the effects of democracy on information access.

It raises important new questions and reveals new data that can contribute to policymaking for future digital divide issues." The jury agreed, noting that "the analysis of elements related/contributing to the digital divide remains a vitally important topic and, to the author's credit, this is a strong effort at applying quantitative examination to a serious issue."

He is a technophile, who enjoys seeing how the latest and greatest new technological innovations work. He is always looking for methods to use to leverage technology to increase productivity and efficiency while still keeping the human touch involved in its use. He currently teaches courses related to information science and technology (see courses spotlight for more information).

In summer 2017, Dr. Cunningham led the British Studies LIS course on British Libraries, Archives, and Special Collections. The study-abroad course, based in London, included day trips to the University of Oxford, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Bletchley Park. For more information about Dr. Cunningham, see his e-portfolio at <http://christopheracunnin.wixsite.com/drcswebsite>.

For more information about British Studies, go to [www.usm.edu/slis](http://www.usm.edu/slis) and click on the British Studies image. See the Spotlight Courses on Information Science and British Studies below.



Dr. Cunningham and British Studies students, National Art Library, London

## Spotlight Alum - Tamara Nelson



In June, Tamara (MLIS, 2009) celebrated 3 years in her position at University of Mississippi Medical Center as Instructor/Reference Librarian. In May, she presented a poster entitled “Preparing for Practice: Strengthening Third-Year Medical Students’ Awareness of Point-of-Care Resources,” at the Medical Library Association (MLA) 2017 Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington.

She was recently nominated to serve as Secretary/Treasurer/Webmaster of the Medical Library Education Section of the Medical Library Association (MLA). The Medical Library Education Section serves as an ambassador for current students and new graduates pursuing a career in medical libraries. They strive to provide excellent and timely professional development opportunities, and advocate participation in the medical library community. Students and new graduates offer unique perspectives, and they encourage them to share their insights and experiences to educate and inspire MLA members.

MLES proudly sponsors the “New Voices” forum at MLA’s annual meeting. “New Voices” is a forum for up-and-coming medical librarians with great ideas and research. Participants are selected by MLES members to present at the meeting, and awarded a travel scholarship.

## Spotlight Courses - Information Science and Technology

**LIS 457/557. Information Technology and Libraries**  
Examines various applications and contexts in which computers and other forms of information technology are utilized in different types of information centers and libraries. This course focuses on practical application and real-life training using various software applications. This course is typically offered in the fall.

**LIS 458/558. Web Design and Evaluation**  
Introduces the practical and theoretical issues related to Web design and development as well as other Internet resources and applications. This course walks you through how to design and build your own website as well as edit other websites. This course is typically taught in the spring.

**LIS 651. Fundamentals of Information Science**  
Examines the evolution of information science, communication and information theory, information organization and retrieval, and bibliometrics. This course is offered in fall, spring, and summer.

**LIS 653. Library and Information Database Systems**  
Foundation of constructing library and information databases, impacts of bibliographic standards, library functions and interconnectedness on these database applications, and evaluation and measurement. This course is not yet on the schedule but is expected to be offered in 2018-19.

**LIS 656. Online Information Retrieval**  
Become a super-searcher and learn applications and issues related to the online resources currently available. This course is a hands-on search course. A variety of databases are accessed, including Proquest databases such as *Dialog*, and exercises are completed using them.

This is a course designed to explicitly teach students how to use a wide variety of databases as well as compare-and-contrast them. This is typically offered during the summer.

## Spotlight Courses – LIS 580/587: British Studies



**British Studies Class of 2017**  
**University of Westminster Marylebone Hall**



**National Art Library**  
**V&A Museum, London**

Twelve LIS graduate students, or post-graduates as they are known in the U.K., earned six credit hours of study-abroad credit in USM British Studies. The 2017 class was a diverse group of scholars from six universities: San Jose State University, Simmons College, University of Alabama, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, University of South Carolina, and The University of Southern Mississippi.

Students accompanied faculty to sites such as Oxford, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Bletchley Park - and had time to explore sites of interest on their own. Students and faculty were headquartered at University of Westminster Marylebone Hall in London, a five-minute walk from Regent's Park. In addition to participating in lectures and behind-the-scene tours, students are required to submit book reviews, a reflective journal/blog, and research paper on an approved topic.



**Beatrix Potter Archive**  
**Blythe House, London**

### **British Studies 2018**

British Studies faculty are beginning to plan for the next class scheduled for June 2018. Information is available at the British Studies link at:

[www.usm.edu/slis](http://www.usm.edu/slis)

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Note: This program includes extensive walking and taking stairs.



**Dr. Cunningham and Students**  
**British Library Conservation Studio**