Ideas for the International Collaboration in the LIS Education and Research at Tsukuba

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ABSTRACT
This paper discusses our plans for the international collaboration with CiSAP and iCaucus members to facilitate the education and research programs in the library and information science (LIS). The LIS programs at the University of Tsukuba are first outlined and the background information is provided. Then we highlight some of the projects that have been successfully delivered in our institution. Also we discuss several focused future projects that are currently under development. This should demonstrate the strength of our programs and illustrate the benefits of the collaboration which are discussed subsequently.

1. INTRODUCTION
In 2009, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan initiated the Global 30 project to facilitate the internationalization of Japanese universities. The project aims to “elevate the international competitiveness of Japanese tertiary education while fostering students and researchers on internationalized campuses so as to give them the ability to play active roles in the global arena” (taken from the Global 30 website1). The University of Tsukuba was selected as one of the core universities by this project.

There has been a growing need of international collaboration at the Asia level, Pan-Pacific level, and world-wide level to expand the University education and research while considering the economic situation in the next few years. The education and research in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS) are not exception in this trend. As the largest organization to provide the LIS program in Japan since 1979, we are striving to establish and develop an international relationship with strong institutions at the Asia, Pan-Pacific, and world-wide levels.

This paper presents our ideas for the international collaboration with CiSAP and iCaucus members to strengthen the educational and research programs in LIS and related areas. The following sections are organized as follows. Section 2 provides the historical development and current structure of our organization. Section 3 highlights some of the projects that have been successfully delivered in our institution. Section 4 outlines our future directions by introducing the new projects which are currently under development. These sections should demonstrate the strength of our institution and help understand the collaboration ideas which are presented in Section 5. The paper concludes with a brief summary of our message.

2. BACKGROUND
This section provides the background information of our institution. Like many organization, our institution has been changing the structure to adapt to the dynamic nature of social, economical, and technical environment of Japan since the last couple of decades.

2.1 1979-2001: ULIS
While the formal library education in Japan can date back to 1921, it was 1979 when the University of Library and Information Science (ULIS) was established as the primary place to provide a comprehensive educational and research program of Library and Information Science (LIS) and related fields. To respond to the needs of the professionals with strong IT literacy from the public sectors and industries then, ULIS aimed to integrate LIS and IT programs with the staff of various background such as Arts, Science, Technology, Sociology, and Management.

2.2 2002-2005: SLIS AND GSLIMS
In 2002, ULIS merged with the University of Tsukuba. The University of Tsukuba is one of the Universities which adapt the “new” university system where the graduate schools and undergraduate colleges are managed (almost) independently. This allows us to develop the undergraduate (UG) programs in a flexible way than the conventional university systems. As a consequence, ULIS became the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) to provide UG courses, and Graduate School of Library, Information and Media Studies (GSLIMS) to provide the postgraduate (PG) courses and to perform research.

As of April 2010, the GSLIMS has 64 faculty members, being the largest LIS graduate school in Japan.

Meanwhile, the fields of LIS had been experiencing a massive expansion due to the development of the Information Communication Technologies since the late 1990s. This led us to re-structure our programs with greater emphasis of knowledge, as an extension from the conventional scope of information [1]. This direction became apparent when the structure of UG programs was re-organized in the University of in 2006.

2.3 2006-Current: CKLS
In 2006, the University of Tsukuba underwent the re-organization of the whole UG educational structure. As a consequence, the School of Informatics was jointly formed by the faculty members

1 Global 30 Project http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-kokusaika/
of GSLIMS and Graduate School of Systems and Information Engineering.

The result of this change can be found in Figure 1. Since this is the current structure of our LIS education and research, we will look into some details in the following sections.

2.3.1 Structure
As can be seen in Figure 1, our UG education of LIS is primarily provided by the College of Knowledge and Library Sciences (CKLS), which is part of the School of Informatics. The PG education and research is performed by the GSLIMS as described in Section 2.2.

The CKLS consists of three majors. The Major in Knowledge Studies focuses on the human in the interaction and communication of knowledge in a society; Major in Knowledge Systems focuses on the technologies which allow human to achieve effective and innovative knowledge communication; and finally, Major in Information Management and Libraries focuses on the society to provide effective management of information and knowledge institutions [1]. The overview of our structure can be found in Figure 2. The details of the design of CKLS are documented in [1].

2.3.2 Career path
Since this is the fourth year of the new structure, it is premature to discuss the performance of CKLS. However, the strength of our program can be seen from the range of career which our graduates have successfully pursued since SLIS. They include the major think tank firms, advertising agencies, publishers, telecommunication companies, Internet companies, medical institutions, public/private service sectors, financial firms, and various kinds of library and information centers.

3. HIGHLIGHTS OF CURRENT PROGRAMS
This section discusses some of the projects in CKLS and GSLIMS to highlight our activities.

3.1 Library Management Course for Information Specialists
There has been a growing need to offer a management program for the library and information specialists in Japan. Due to the traditional structure, much of the courses provided in Japanese universities are either primarily designed for full-time students. In particular, limited opportunities have been offered for information specialist who have a few years of work experience to develop their management skills.

To respond to such needs, GSLIMS has started to provide the library management course which offers the programs such as Public Services, Public Administration, Library Governance, Library Facility Planning, and other relevant materials. This course participates in the OpenCourseWare (OCW) program and most course materials are available online.

3.2 International Internship Program
The internship program has been a great opportunity for the 3rd year students in CKLS to have some real work experience at an

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**Figure 1** Current LIS education and research structure along with relevant schools at the University of Tsukuba. The focus in this paper is highlighted with bold.

**Figure 2.** Current Program structure of CKLS (Taken from [1]).
organization or company of their interest. Since 2009, we have extended the program to include international institutions as an internship host. For example, several students visited a library in Hawaii (U.S.) and Shanghai (China) in March 2010. This academic year we managed to expand the internship network to Vancouver and Tronto (Canada), Michigan (U.S.), and Busan (South Korea).

The international internship program aims to help students to develop world-wide communication skills and to gain a greater insight into the information and knowledge specialists abroad through work experience. Currently, a typical internship lasts 10 days. As described above, we have initially started the program with a collaboration in the Asia Pacific area. However, we are keen to expand this to Europe and North America.

4. COMING SOON
This section presents the future programs which are currently under development.

4.1 New International Master Program
We are currently working hard to start a degree program where all the lectures are provided in English. This is in the context of the Global 30 project mentioned in Introduction. The University of Tsukuba aims to increase the number of international students to the 25% across all the divisions by 2020. To achieve this goal, the development of new program that can be taught in English has progressed across the University. Since our graduate school has an advantage of having experienced staff in a range of domains, we aim to be the first in Japan to provide an Master degree program in LIS that can be taught in English. The objective is to attract more international students from Asian, Middle-East, and African countries to take a Master degree at the University of Tsukuba.

4.2 Archivists Program
Another strong demand from industry and administrative organizations in the recent years is to develop a program for archivists. Traditionally, the training course of archivists focused on the historical material in Japan. However, there has been a growing interest and need to develop the professional archivists for the publications administered by the administrative agencies. There have been some activities in U.S. and U.K. to publish the national statistics on the Web so that people can access to them for various use. The archiving of both public and internal documentation from the governmental agencies will bring the issues which are not necessarily covered by the conventional archivist program. Our archivist program aims to provide the new generation to the education of archivists.

5. COLLABORATION IDEAS
This section discusses our perspectives of the collaboration with CiSAP and ICircus members. The ideas presented here are aimed to distribute the common effort in education and research among the associated members to achieve a win-win situation.

5.1 International Exchange Program
As we described in Section 3.2, our college has recently started an international internship program. Currently we rely on faculty members’ personal “connection” to pool a set of potential venues for the program. However, this has imposed substantial work load to the faculty members in the organizing committee as well as host institutions. Ideally, we would like to have a network of internship host institutions so that the same place will be visited every two or three years.

To achieve such an international internship program, it is essential to form a good relationship with a number of libraries and LIS related departments across the world. Therefore, it would be great if we could collaborate on the development of international exchange programs based on the CiSAP and ICircus members. Establishing the Academic Exchange Agreements will enhance such development.

5.2 Satellite Lecture Program
As we described in Section 4.1, our graduate school is preparing a degree program on Information Science where all the lectures and supervision are provided in English. Our school has experienced lecturers in a wide range of discipline such as Arts, Social Science, Engineering, Life Sciences, Computer Science, apart from LIS. Nevertheless, offering a cutting-edge material to every lectures is not a trivial task.

Therefore, our second collaborative perspective would be to form a satellite lecture program where we can exchange the live lectures of modules that are of common interest among the member institutions. It will be realistic to start with a guest lecture style and later it can be developed to a larger scale. Of course, the e-learning environment such as the Open CourseWare program can be used to facilitate this collaboration.

5.3 International Standard for Archivists Education Program
The last but not least idea we would like to propose is to carry out a joint research on the development of Archivists education program. As we described in Section 4.2, the recent rapid growth of digital documentation within the administrative agencies have posed significant needs for developing the next generation of archivists. This issue seems to be fairly universal and it seems to make sense to study together to gain a comprehensive view of this problem, and to discuss the core skills and advanced skills which are likely to be required by this profession.

Therefore, our third collaborative perspective would be to carry out a joint research on the design and requirements of new archivists to establish an international standard for their educational programs. We believe this is something from which all participants will greatly benefit.

6. CONCLUSIONS
We have been the largest and primary place in Japan to provide the comprehensive educational and research program in Library and Information Science and related field since 1970s. Nevertheless, there is always a limit in which a single organization can offer. The ideas presented in this paper illustrated some of our perspectives of international collaboration to strengthen and expand the education and research of LIS worldwide. We hope that our ideas serve as a starting point of constructive discussions for the partnership.

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8. REFERENCES