

## **INTRODUCTION**

This manual is intended to serve as a guide to the organization, procedures, and policies of the African American Studies Librarians Section (AFAS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), both for candidates for office of the Section, and for newly appointed committee members, committee chairs, and discussion group conveners.

The acceptance of a committee appointment or candidacy is extremely important to the Section. It is through concerned volunteer efforts that the association produces the fundamental benefits and products, which are so essential to professional development and improved service in individual libraries.

It is hoped that this manual will be effective in setting you off on the right foot and enabling you to build on the achievements resulting thus far from the hard work of your predecessors.

For additional information, readers are urged to refer to the current ALA Handbook of Organization and [ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures](#), or to contact a member of the AFAS Executive Committee or the office of the ACRL Executive Director.

## **CHAIR**

### ***FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:***

1. Serves as an officer of AFAS, and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the Section and ACRL.
2. Chairs all meetings of the Executive Committee and General Membership at Annual and Midwinter Conferences.
3. Attends meetings of Section committees, where possible.
4. Serves as an ex-officio member/ or Chair of the Conference Program Planning Committee.
5. Schedules all AFAS committee meetings and programs for Midwinter and Annual Conferences, after consulting with committee chairs.
6. Notifies ALA Conference Arrangements Office of meeting times and space needs for all Section meetings and programs.
7. Prepares “thank you” letters to members, vendors, etc. when appropriate on behalf of the Section.
8. Submits an annual report to ACRL Board of Directors on AFAS activities.
9. As primary contact for the Section, responds to inquiries from members and non-members regarding AFAS interests and activities.
10. Co-represents, with vice chair/chair elect, AFAS on ACRL Sections Council.

11. In addition to the functions and responsibilities listed above and in the Officers' Responsibilities: Section Chair section of ACRL's Guide to Policies and Procedures, the chair should refer to the Checklist of AFAS Chair.
12. Submits archival materials to AFAS Secretary.

***CHECKLIST FOR AFAS CHAIR*** (see also [Section 4.4.1 Section chair](#) of the *ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures*):

Review

***GENERAL PRACTICAL ADVICE:***

Before Conferences:

- Stay in touch with other Section officers between conferences, especially the Vice-Chair to ensure a smooth transition between leadership.
- Keep the general membership apprised of ongoing projects and events via AFAS-L.
- Make a "To Do" list for use during conference so you will remember your commitments.
- Get as much work done before the conference as possible; this includes contacting ACRL staff with your questions, and exchanging documents with Section officers, writing reports, etc.

***SIX WEEKS BEFORE EACH CONFERENCE:***

- Prepare agenda for Executive Committee meetings; it will help to review minutes of Executive Committee meetings at previous conferences and reports/activities of other AFAS committees.

***FOUR WEEKS BEFORE EACH CONFERENCE:***

- Send agenda to all Executive Committee members and AFAS committee chairs; be sure to include the schedule of all AFAS committee meetings and their locations (this information is available from the Final Schedule of Meetings, sent out by the ALA Conference Arrangements Office about six weeks before the conference).
- After review by officers and committee members, send agenda to entire membership via AFAS-L.

***DURING EACH CONFERENCE:***

- Take notes of announcements and items of interest to be shared with AFAS Executive Committee and membership.

***DURING ANNUAL CONFERENCE:***

- Prompt newly elected vice chair/chair elect to begin appointing committees, especially the Conference Program. Planning Committee, which is responsible for program two years hence.
- Transfer all pertinent documents pertaining to ongoing projects or unfinished business.
- Review membership of other AFAS committees with vice chair/chair elect, and be available for input on possible appointments.

*AFTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE:*

- Send thank you letters to AFAS committee chairs, outgoing officers, and others as appropriate including vendors.
- Send archival materials to Secretary for submission to ACRL.

*SAMPLE LETTERS*

*SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER TO AFAS COMMITTEE CHAIR FROM AFAS CHAIR*

Dear [committee chair name]:

As the AFAS Chair for [date], I personally wish to express my thanks for the contributions you made to the African American Studies Librarians Section of the Association (AFAS) of College and Research Libraries as Chair of the AFAS... Committee last year. Your committee did an excellent job of [list committee/chair activities] that contributed to a very successful year for our Section.

I appreciate the high level of commitment and professionalism which you brought to this responsibility. Again, thank you for all your hard work.

Sincerely,  
[name]  
AFAS Chair [date]

*OFFER OF THANK YOU LETTER TO SUPERVISOR FROM AFAS*

Dear [ person's name]:

As Chair of the African American Studies Section (AFAS), I would like to thank you for your contributions to AFAS. With your permission, I would like to send a letter of appreciation to your supervisor or Library's Dean/Director to acknowledge your contributions to AFAS. Your hours of volunteer service have enriched AFAS and the profession. If you would like me to do this, please give me the following information:

Name and mailing address of supervisor or dean/director  
Accomplishments you wish cited in the letter

Please return the above information to me by [date]. I will send you a blind copy of the letter. Let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
[name]  
AFAS Chair [date]

## **VICE CHAIR/CHAIR ELECT**

### ***FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

1. Serves as an officer of AFAS, and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the Section and ACRL.
2. Attends meetings of the Annual and Midwinter Conferences as a member of the Executive Committee, including those at Annual and Midwinter Conferences prior to taking office.
3. Immediately after assuming office as vice chair/chair elect after the Annual Conference, appoints a Nominating Committee, with the AFAS Past Chair as the committee chair, which is responsible for producing a slate of candidates for Section office. (See also [Section 4.3 Section committee appointments](#) of the *ACRL Policies and Procedures*.)
4. Appoints a Conference Program Planning Committee, with chair, which is responsible for planning the Section's program at the Annual Conference during year as chair. Serves as ex-officio member of the committee and serves as Chair until one is selected.
5. Makes appointments to all other AFAS committees by March 1 for terms beginning when term as chair begins. (See Sample Letter for Making Committee Appointments)
6. Posts message requesting volunteers for committee appointments to AFAS-L and BCALA-L prior to and following ALA Midwinter. (See Sample AFAS-L message for committee volunteers)
7. Writes an article for the Spring issue of the AFAS Newsletter prior to term as chair.
8. Responds, as needed or requested by the chair, to inquiries from members and non-members regarding Section interests and activities.
9. Co-represents AFAS, with the AFAS Chair, on the ACRL Sections Council.
10. Serves on the ACRL Conference Program Planning Committee. Reports to ACRL Vice Chair/Chair Elect at meeting of the committee on AFAS program being planned for Annual Conference during year as chair.

***CHECKLIST FOR AFAS VICE CHAIR/CHAIR ELECT*** (see also [Section 4.4.2 Section vice-chair/chair-elect](#) of the *ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures*):

Review [Section 4.3 Section committee appointments](#) and [Section 7.1 Appointments](#) of the *ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures*.

***AFTER ANNUAL AND BEFORE MIDWINTER AS NEWLY ELECTED VICE CHAIR/CHAIR ELECT:***

Work with past chair who is also chair of next Nominating Committee to appoint two additional Nominating Committee members.

Appoint chair and members of next Conference Program Planning Committee. If possible, chair should be located in conference host city or in close proximity.

Begin work on other committee appointments. Post message requesting volunteers for committee appointments to AFAS-L and BCALA-L. (See Sample AFAS-L message for committee volunteers)

*AFTER MIDWINTER:*

Complete committee appointments. Make certain that all committee appointees submit ACRL Appointment Forms to you. Fax forms to ACRL.

Write proposal for conference program idea, with the chair and members of the Conference Program Planning Committee, and submit to ACRL by May 1 or requested date.

*SAMPLE AFAS-L MESSAGE FOR COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS*

*SAMPLE LETTER FOR MAKING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS*

Dear (name):

Because of the interest you have shown in the work of the ACRL African American Studies Librarians Section, I am writing to invite you to be (a member / chair) of the AFAS (committee name) Committee. I believe that your experience and talents would be an asset to the work of the committee, and that your continued active participation will help us move toward our goals.

As (a member / chair) of the AFAS (committee name) Committee, your term would begin after the ALA Annual Conference in (place), (year), and end after the Annual Conference in (place), (year). You will be expected to attend both the Midwinter and Annual Conferences during that year (years, for two-year appointments).

If you are able to accept this appointment, please complete the enclosed (or attached if e-mail) ACRL Appointment Acceptance form and mail or fax it to me as soon as possible or before (insert date). If you are unable to accept this invitation to join us as a committee (member / chair), please let me know immediately.

Should you have any questions, call me at (office and/or home telephone numbers) or e-mail me at (e-mail address).

I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Sincerely yours,

(name)

Vice Chair/Chair Elect  
ALA/ACRL African American Studies Librarians Section

## **SECRETARY**

### ***FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

1. Attends, if possible, the Executive Committee meetings at Annual immediately preceding taking office.
2. Takes minutes and attendance at Executive Committee meetings at ALA Annual and Midwinter and within one month of each meeting sends a draft to members of Executive and to the ACRL/ALA office.
3. Emails draft minutes to membership via AFAS-L prior to next Annual or Midwinter meeting.
4. Brings paper copies of draft minutes to next Annual or Midwinter Executive meeting for approval. Makes corrections if any and submits approved minutes to ACRL/ALA office.
5. Attends and takes minutes at AFAS membership meetings.
6. For AFAS bylaws changes approved by Executive Committee, distributes the changes to the AFAS membership in one of the following ways: at least 30 days before the annual membership meeting sends out as an AFAS-L message, or publishes in College and Research Libraries News.
7. At ALA Annual reminds committee chairs that archival materials are due by August 1. Reviews and compiles received materials and sends reminders to chairs who have not submitted materials. On September 1 after all materials received, forwards to the ACRL office.
8. Passes minutes and agenda of Executive Committee meetings to successor at end of term in office.

## **PAST CHAIR**

### ***FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

1. Serves as an officer of the section and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the section and ACRL.
2. Serves as a member of the Executive Committee; attends meetings of the Committee at Annual and Midwinter Conferences.
3. Serves as Chair of the Nominating Committee.
4. Other tasks according to the section bylaws or as assigned by the section Executive Committee.

*CHECKLIST FOR PAST CHAIR AS NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR:*

The Nominating Committee prepares the slate of candidates who will stand for office. The chair of the Nominating Committee leads this effort. All candidates must be members of AFAS.

1. Review [Section 7.3 Nominations \(divisional and sections\)](#) and [Section 7.5 Nominating Committee Calendar](#) of the *ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures* and any other documentation provided to you by ACRL, such as the list of offices to be filled and a list of candidates who have stood for office in the past.
2. Prepare list of potential nominees, with back-up names in priority order should someone decline or withdraw. (All candidates must be members of AFAS.)
3. Contact potential nominees, describe position for which they are being asked to run and term of office (with beginning and ending dates). If person is undecided about accepting a nomination at that moment, negotiate a date by which he or she will give an answer and arrange to call back at that time.
4. Provide each nominee with a position description from the AFAS Manual or ACRL Tip Sheets. Offer to supply contact information for past officers who can answer additional questions.
5. When a candidate accepts a nomination, the nominating committee chair instructs the nominee in writing to submit a letter of consent indicating his/her willingness to stand for the office on the upcoming ballot. When all letters of consent have been received by the nominating committee chair, they are forwarded to the appropriate ACRL staff member.
6. When a letter of consent is received, the nomination committee chair sends a letter of thanks to the candidate along with an ACRL Biographical Data Form. The chair instructs each candidate to send the completed form (via email) to ACRL.
7. When written confirmation has been received from all nominees, notify ACRL, AFAS Chair, and Nominating Committee members of the slate.

**SECRETARY**

*CHECKLIST FOR AFAS SECRETARY*

*DURING MIDWINTER AND ANNUAL CONFERENCES*

Attends, if possible, the Executive Committee meetings at Annual immediately preceding taking office.

Takes minutes and attendance at Executive Committee and Membership meetings at ALA Annual and Midwinter.

*AFTER MIDWINTER AND ANNUAL CONFERENCES*

Within one month of each meeting sends a draft of Executive Committee and Membership to members of Executive for corrections.

Upon approval from Executive, emails draft minutes to membership via AFAS-L prior to next Annual or Midwinter meeting.

Brings paper copies of draft minutes to next Annual or Midwinter Executive meeting for approval. Makes corrections if any and submits approved minutes to ACRL/ALA office and submits approved minutes to the AFAS Publications Committee Chair to post on the AFAS web site.

#### *DURING ANNUAL CONFERENCES*

At ALA Annual reminds committee chairs that archival materials are due by August 1. Reviews and compiles received materials and sends reminders to chairs who have not submitted materials. On September 1 after all materials received, forwards to the ACRL office.

Passes minutes and agenda of Executive Committee meetings to successor at end of term of office.

#### *BYLAWS*

For AFAS bylaws changes approved by Executive Committee, distributes the changes to the AFAS membership in one of the following ways: at least 30 days before the annual membership meeting sends out as an AFAS-L message or publishes in College and Research Libraries News.

### **MEMBER AT LARGE**

#### *FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES*

1. Serves as an officer of the AFAS Executive Committee works to advance the goals and objectives and goals of the Section and ACRL.
2. As a member of the AFAS Executive Committee, attends meetings of the Section at Annual and Midwinter Conferences.
3. May serve as chair/co-chair of the Membership Committee.
  - The AFAS Membership Chair composes, for Executive Board approval, letters to send to new, re-instated and dropped members.
  - Produce membership reports for AFAS Executive Committee meetings.
  - Serve as AFAS representative for the ACRL Membership Advisory Committee and attend meeting of this committee at ALA Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference.
4. Other tasks as assigned by AFAS Executive Committee



## **NEWLETTER EDITOR**

### *FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES*

1. Responsible for compiling, editing, and formatting the Section newsletter according to ACRL guidelines. (See also [Section 4.5 Newsletters](#) of the *ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures*)

## **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

### *PRELIMINARIES:*

1. Assume responsibility for the work of your committee immediately after the Annual Conference (all committee appointments begin at that time). The first required meeting for all members is the Midwinter meeting following the appointment.
2. Make arrangements with outgoing chair to discuss the work and direction of the committee and any specific responsibilities that have been assumed by members (this should be done at Annual Conference if possible).
3. Make arrangements to have archival material transferred to you from outgoing chair.
4. Be ready to make suggestions to vice chair/chair elect for committee appointments to your committee.

### *SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES:*

1. Maintain a roster of current committee members, with office, home and e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.
2. Chair meetings of the committee at Annual and Midwinter conferences.
3. Report on committee's activities at meetings of the AFAS Executive Committee.
4. Submit meeting time and space needs to AFAS Chair in the summer.
5. Send agendas of committee meetings to ACRL and to AFAS Chair.

### *MEETING LOGISTICS:*

1. Start on time.
2. Ask a member to take minutes, if there is no secretary.
3. Start a sign-up sheet; ask all attendees to sign (name and institutional address) and indicate whether they are members or visitors.

4. Ask for self-introductions of all in attendance; welcome all, especially new members.
5. Call for approval of minutes of last meeting.
6. Make announcements, i.e., time and place of related meetings.
7. Review committee's charge.
8. Discuss agenda items; call for reports from members; try to have enough copies of all documents for all those present; keep the discussion focused; establish time constraints, if necessary, for each agenda item.
9. Summarize discussion; set action items and make individual assignments; establish deadlines for correspondence or other reports; develop preliminary agenda for next meeting.
10. Set date and time needs for next meeting.
11. Close the meeting.

Updated June 9, 2006 by L Pillow

Updated August 4, 2011 by H Martin (links updated)