

# PRISM

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## ***Prism: the Office for Accreditation newsletter***

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[www.ala.org/accreditation](http://www.ala.org/accreditation)

We welcome your comments and questions! Please contact us at [accred@ala.org](mailto:accred@ala.org).

### **In this issue:**

- ALA accreditation at a glance**
- News and announcements**
- COA announces accreditation actions**
- From the Director: Outlook**
- From the COA Chair: Perspective**
- Spotlight on process and policy**
- External Review Panelists acknowledged**
- AASL-CAEP recognition news**

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## **ALA accreditation at a glance**

64	ALA-accredited programs
59	Institutions with ALA-accredited programs
33	U.S. states (including Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico) with ALA-accredited programs
5	Canadian provinces with ALA-accredited programs
29	ALA-accredited programs offering 100% online programs †
2	Programs with candidacy status
15,197	Total number of students enrolled in ALA-accredited programs in fall 2014 *
6,735	Graduates of ALA-accredited programs during the 2013-2014 academic year *

† As identified by the programs

\* As reported by programs to the Committee on Accreditation



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## News and announcements

### **External Review Panel Chair training at 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston**

Date: Friday, January 8, 2016

Time: 1:00 – 4:00pm

Location: Seaport Hotel, Back Bay Complex

External Review Panelists who have participated in two or more on-site visits are invited to attend training to serve as an ERP Chair upon appointment by COA. The session will prepare attendees to lead an external review of programs seeking ALA accreditation. The session will include a panel discussion featuring an experienced ERP Chair and Office for Accreditation staff. OA staff will present resources for Chairs to use in the review process. People who are currently assigned to chair a review are strongly encouraged to attend.

Program heads who want to learn more about the site visit and the role of the ERP Chair in the review process are also encouraged to attend.

Please RSVP by December 18 to Laura Dare, [ldare@ala.org](mailto:ldare@ala.org), and include “ERP Chair Training” in the subject line.

### **AASL-CAEP program review training at 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston**

Date: Friday, January 8, 2016

Time: 8:00am-11:00am

Location: Hyatt Regency Boston, Quincy

New and experienced reviewers and program report writers are encouraged to attend this session to learn about the CAEP (formerly NCATE) program review process, the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians*, report preparation and review, and appropriate assessments. A “homework” assignment will be sent in advance so that attendees can be familiar with some of the documents used in the training.

Reviewers who have not been trained on using the 2010 standards must attend this session in order to be assigned to review a program using those standards.

So that we have sufficient training materials on hand, please RSVP to Laura Dare, [ldare@ala.org](mailto:ldare@ala.org), by December 18, 2015, and include “AASL-CAEP training” in the subject line.

Prospective reviewers can find out more about the AASL-CAEP program review process at <http://www.ala.org/aasl/aasleducation/schoollibrary/informationprogram>.

### **AASL CAEP Coordinating Committee meeting at 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston**

Date: Friday, January 8, 2016

Time: 11:00am – 12noon

Location: Hyatt Regency Boston, Quincy

Members of the AASL CAEP Coordinating Committee are strongly encouraged to attend. The meeting is also open to interested conference attendees.

### **Statistical data collection**

All programs in the ALA-accreditation process are required to submit this year's annual statistical data via the ALISE survey. Surveys must be completed by December 1 to avoid a late fee from the Office for Accreditation. Logins were sent from the ALISE database team to program heads on October 2. If you haven't received a login or are unable to access the survey, please contact the ALISE survey team at [slisresearch@gmail.com](mailto:slisresearch@gmail.com) and they will help you get set up. The Office is scheduled to receive the results of the survey in March so that COA can review and respond to the data at its spring meeting in April 2016.

### **New edition of Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures**

The fourth edition of the Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3) manual was released in June of 2015. This edition reflects some significant changes as well as copy edits, clarified language, and standardization of terms based on constituent feedback and COA review. Some sections have been reordered or reorganized to make more logical sense. Notable updates to individual sections are summarized or excerpted in the Release Notes. Please consult the complete AP3 document for specific language. The fourth edition supersedes the previous edition and was effective upon release, with exceptions noted in individual sections in the document.

### **Disclosure of accreditation status requirement**

Per AP3, I.7: As a public protection, including for prospective students, any reference to ALA accredited status or display of the ALA Accredited logo must include the specific status as granted by COA: Candidate, Conditional, Continued, Initial, Precandidate, or Withdrawn. Specific language to use is indicated in individual status sections of AP3: I.11.2, I.12.1, I.13.1, and I.14.

### **Notification requirement of institutional or programmatic changes**

As many institutions and programs are going through organizational changes, the Office for Accreditation reminds program heads of notification requirements. From AP3, I.22: Any change in executive administration must be communicated in writing to the Office for Accreditation within 30 days. Examples of executive administration changes that must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- Chief executive officer of the institution, e.g., president;
- Head of the accredited program, e.g., dean, director, chair;
- Chief academic officer of the institution, e.g., provost.

### **Improvements to the Directory of ALA-Accredited Programs**

Recent updates to the directory of ALA-accredited programs have made it easier for prospective students and other stakeholders to search and retrieve the most current information. Users can now search the database of ALA-accredited programs by institution or select multiple states and filter by distance ed options and areas of specialization. The printable PDF directory of all accredited programs is now generated on demand from the current database, a big improvement from the previous twice-yearly updates.

Programs are encouraged to check their directory listing to make sure it reflects current information. Need to change your directory entry? Log in to [http://www.ala.org/cfapps/lis\\_edit/login/index.cfm](http://www.ala.org/cfapps/lis_edit/login/index.cfm) to edit your program's listing in the searchable database of accredited LIS programs or contact the Office for assistance.

### **New External Review Panelists sought**

The Office for Accreditation seeks experienced library and information professionals to participate in the accreditation process as External Review Panelists. We are particularly in need of librarians and educators with specializations and experience in the following areas:

- Archives and records management
- School librarianship
- Public librarianship
- Information science
- Information technology
- LIS graduate program administration
- Service to diverse populations
- French language skills
- Spanish language skills

Find out more about what's involved in serving on an External Review Panel at [http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/resourcesforerp/ERP\\_service\\_info](http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/resourcesforerp/ERP_service_info). If you are interested and meet the qualifications, please complete the External Review Panel Member Information Form, available on the Office for Accreditation website, and plan to attend the training session on June 24 at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in Orlando.

If you know someone who might be interested in serving as an External Review Panelist, please encourage him/her to apply, or send a recommendation to Laura Dare, [ldare@ala.org](mailto:ldare@ala.org).

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### **COA announces accreditation actions**

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) of the American Library Association (ALA) has announced accreditation decisions made at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco.

Continued accreditation was granted to the following program, with the next comprehensive review visit scheduled to take place in spring 2022:

- Master of Information Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico

Continued accreditation with release from Conditional accreditation status was granted to the following program, with the next comprehensive review visit scheduled to take place in spring 2022:

- Master of Science in Information and Library Science at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York.

Accreditation was withdrawn from the following program; an appeal is pending:

- Master of Arts in Library Science at the University of Missouri.

Information on accreditation statuses and types of reviews can be found in *Accreditation Process, Policies and Procedures (AP3)*, third edition, Section I.

The following institutions have programs that are being visited in the fall 2015 academic term. The accreditation decisions will be made by the COA at its meeting at the 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston.

- Dominican University
- Emporia State University
- University of Hawaii
- Long Island University
- Syracuse University

The following institutions have programs that will be visited in the spring 2016 academic term. The accreditation decisions will be made by the COA at its meeting at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in Orlando.

- Catholic University of America
- Chicago State University
- University of Iowa
- University of South Florida
- University of Tennessee

ALA accreditation indicates that the program meets or exceeds the *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies*, established by the COA and approved by ALA Council. The accreditation process involves rigorous, ongoing self-evaluation by the program and verification of evidence through an external review. The COA evaluates each program for compliance with the *Standards*, which address mission, goals and objectives; curriculum; faculty; students; administration and financial support; and physical resources and facilities.

A complete list of programs and degrees accredited by ALA can be found at <http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/directory>. Individuals who would like more information about a particular program should contact the program.

The ALA COA is a leading force in accreditation, having evaluated educational programs to prepare librarians since 1924. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognizes the ALA COA as the authority for assessing the quality of education offered by graduate programs in the field of library and information studies.

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## From the Director: **OUTLOOK**

**By Karen L. O'Brien, Director, ALA Office for Accreditation**

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) will enjoy continuity in leadership with Joan Howland taking on the role of Chair in the fourth and final year of her term. Joan comes out of law librarianship and is a Professor of Law and the Associate Dean for Information and Technology at the University of Minnesota. COA public member Candace Wells (Professor Emerita, Wichita State University) has accepted a second two-year term as a public member of the COA and has agreed to lead the COA subcommittee on Communications and Outreach.

Two new COA members bring considerable leadership and accreditation experience: Susan Roman, Professor and Dean Emerita, Dominican University, and Robert Holley, Professor, Wayne State University.

### **Implications of the new Standards and AP3**

Office for Accreditation staff have been assessing the completion of our goals and setting our sights for 2016. Having administered the revision of the Standards and the new edition of *Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3)*, our focus now turns to determining the training and information needs for implementation of the changes.

LIS program personnel have been attending reviewer training sessions in greater numbers and have provided some very useful feedback on those sessions as well as through the evaluations of comprehensive reviews provided at five specified points in the review process. The latest training session in San Francisco at the 2015 ALA Annual Conference and the information session provided by COA, highlighted the differences in standards and process. Attendees at the training discovered in an exercise using a self-study that addressed the prior version of the Standards, how the new Standards differ. As part of our planning efforts, we need to determine whether to provide sessions separate from the trainings for LIS program personnel, perhaps in a more “workshop” mode.

### **Statistical reporting**

A majority of programs have now completed the ALISE annual statistical survey provided by the efforts of the team led by Dan Albertson at the University of Alabama. Results will be made available to the Office in March for COA review at its spring meeting in April 2016. Special

thanks to ALISE leadership, especially Eileen Abels and Samantha Hastings, for working with the Office to see this project through.

### **Informing the ALA Executive Board on accreditation**

Two task forces have been established to inform the ALA Executive Board on accreditation. Those efforts are well timed to align with and catalyze ALA president-elect Julie Todaro's initiatives, especially in professional and leadership development, a key strategic action area.

The ALA Executive Board strengthened ties with the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) by taking action to change appointment protocol to include an ALISE recommendation of a dean, director, or chair for LIS faculty appointments to COA.

### **Initial accreditation decisions**

Chicago State University's Master of Science in Library and Information Science program is scheduled for its initial accreditation visit in spring 2016, April 4-5. The COA will make an accreditation decision at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference.

University of Southern California's Master of Management in Library and Information Science program is scheduled for a visit in fall 2016 with an accreditation decision to be made in January 2017.

### **CHEA alert**

Reporting for ALA's continued status as a recognized accreditor in good standing is now approaching under the 2010 Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) Standards. The last comprehensive review, completed in 2013, was conducted under the 2006 CHEA Standards. The interim report due to CHEA in June 2016 will address all of the standards, with a particular focus on two main areas, both having to do with standard 12.B Demonstrates Accountability:

- Implemented accreditation standards that require programs to routinely provide reliable information to the public on their performance, including student achievement as determined by the institution or program
- Inform the public of the basis for final decisions to grant or reaffirm accreditation and, in the case of denial or withdrawal of accreditation, to provide specific reasons for the decision accompanied by a response, related to the final decision, from the institution or program

Program personnel should be on the alert for information requests from the Office and COA regarding the first point and for more transparency on COA decisions.

### **Opportunities to connect**

I invite you to give me a call at 312-280-2434 or drop me a line at [kobrien@ala.org](mailto:kobrien@ala.org). I hope to see you in Boston for the 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting. You are welcome to get in touch to arrange a meeting with me there.

**By Joan S. Howland, Chair, Committee on Accreditation and Roger F. Noreen Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Information & Technology, University of Minnesota Law School**

I am honored and humbled to serve as the 2015-2016 Chair of the ALA Committee on Accreditation (COA.) One of the most important responsibilities of our profession is to work collaboratively through the accreditation process to ensure that future generations have the knowledge, skills, training, commitment, ethical values, and support to respond to the evolving information needs of diverse populations in all environments. This responsibility, core to the work of ALA since the 1920s, has always been replete with boundless possibilities and fraught with daunting obstacles. I am confident that all members of ALA, just like those who have preceded us, will work together in the spirit of cooperation, common values, openness, and altruism to seize every opportunity and face down every challenge.

I recently celebrated, with both astonishment and gratitude, my fortieth year as a law librarian. I suspect that like many of those reading this column, I stumbled into my area of expertise like “Alice falling down the rabbit hole.” During my last semester in graduate school, without a focused career path but in dire need of a steady paycheck, I tumbled (with the help of an overturned book cart – but that is a story for another day) into a position as a reference librarian at the Stanford Law Library. This fortunate happenstance resulted, after ten years at Stanford and the completion of a law degree, in administrative positions at the Harvard and U.C. Berkeley Law Libraries (including the privilege of serving as an adjunct at the former U.C. Berkeley School of Library & Information Studies, teaching a course in legal bibliography and research methodology). Twenty-two winters ago, I joined the University of Minnesota Law School as a faculty member and Director of the Law Library. Over the past four decades, I have been on the “receiving end” of nine American Bar Association (ABA) sabbatical accreditation inspections, and have served on forty domestic and international law school accreditation teams. I completed a five-year term on the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar Accreditation Committee. I am in my ninth year as a member, and am the immediate Past-Chair of the Section’s Council which oversees the accreditation process for more than 200 law schools in the United States. I have served on numerous ALA External Review Panels and have been a member of COA since 2013.

The over-arching goal of the accreditation process is to ensure that students enrolled in graduate library and information studies programs receive a comprehensive and rigorous education that prepares them to respond effectively and ethically to the information needs of increasingly diverse populations. The accreditation process is necessary to protect consumers, including students, employers, and the individuals who utilize the services of graduates of LIS programs. Unlike many professions, such as medicine, dentistry, and law, there are no national examinations or licensing requirements for our chosen careers. Therefore, the quality assurances underlying the ALA accreditation process are especially vital.



Under the able leadership of 2014-2015 COA Chair Mary Stansbury, COA completed a multi-year review and revision of the *Standards for Accreditation* which were approved by the ALA Council in February 2015. In line with COA's priorities when initiating the review project, the resulting standards are less prescriptive and more flexible, with an eye toward encouraging programmatic creativity and experimentation. The new standards also are designed to reflect ALA's awareness of the diversity of LIS programs and their missions. COA remains grateful to the constituent stakeholders who shared astute insights and wise counsel at the hearings and other meetings convened during the revision process. This assistance was invaluable.

Subsequent to the approval of the new standards, COA moved forward with a review of accreditation policies, procedures, and processes. This review was motivated by a desire to ensure that COA activities, especially those associated with external reviews, were updated to be consistent with the revised standards. At its meetings in April and June 2015, COA devoted considerable effort to developing strategies designed to increase transparency and broaden understanding of accreditation policies, procedures, and processes. One of my priorities as Chair during the coming year will be to encourage as much communication as possible between COA and its many constituencies, including the LIS programs, students, and employers.

I am very pleased that ALA President Sari Feldman has appointed two task forces on LIS program accreditation, the Task Force on Accreditation Process and Communication and the Task Force on the Context of Future Accreditation. Authorized by the ALA Executive Board at its meeting in June 2015, these task forces stem from a collaboration of the Executive Board and the ALISE leadership. I am honored to have been appointed to the task force addressing issues associated with process and communication, and I look forward to working with and learning from the others involved in this critical work.

Over its long history, ALA has evolved and thrived as an organization by not simply encouraging but demanding mutual respect and understanding among its membership. Therefore, it seems appropriate to end this column by referencing a quote attributed to Charles Darwin, "In the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed."

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## **Spotlight on process and policy: Transitioning to the 2015 Standards for Accreditation**

**By Laura Dare, Accreditation Manager, ALA Office for Accreditation**

In each issue of Prism we focus on an aspect of process, policy, or procedure of ALA accreditation. This issue's column takes a look at the process of transitioning to the 2015 *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies*, as well as some resources available to assist programs and reviewers with demonstrating and evaluating compliance with the new standards. If you have an idea for a future column, please send it to Laura Dare, [ldare@ala.org](mailto:ldare@ala.org).

Whenever a revision of the *Standards for Accreditation* is adopted, there is a phase-in period during which two sets of standards are in use. It's a matter of fairness. Most programs are now using the 2015 *Standards* (2015s) for reporting, but some programs continue to report to the 2008 version. Programs that were already in the comprehensive review process when the new standards were adopted will continue to use the 2008 *Standards* (2008s) until the next accreditation decision, although they have been given the option to switch to the 2015s. Programs that are placed on Conditional status under the 2008s will continue using those standards during the Conditional accreditation period. The majority of programs, however, were notified in April 2015 that they must now report to the 2015s.

Having two sets of standards concurrently in use can be challenging for everyone involved in the accreditation process. Program heads must be careful to use the correct standards version in their reporting (refer to the April 2015 letter from the COA or contact the Office for Accreditation if you're not sure which standards to use). External review panelists need to be sure they're using the correct version when analyzing and verifying evidence in a Program Presentation or Self-Study. The COA needs to make sure it is reviewing and responding to program reports using the correct version. The Office for Accreditation staff is responsible for coordinating everything and keeping everyone on track.

Fortunately, there are several safeguards and tools to aid in the transition. Correspondence from the Office for Accreditation (OA) to programs and External Review Panels states which version of the Standards is in use. Program Presentations and Self-Studies must identify the standards version being used in the review. Each program's Correspondence Log, a reference tool developed for the COA to use as it reviews and responds to a program's reports, states the standards version (color-coded!) in use. The Correspondence Log also contains excerpts from each COA letter to the program, upcoming reports with due dates, next comprehensive review date, and program/institution contact information. (Program heads are welcome to contact the OA for a copy of their program's current Correspondence Log.)

The OA has developed an Excel spreadsheet that maps the 2008 standards and elements to the 2015s, available on the Office for Accreditation website. Programs are encouraged to use the spreadsheet as they transition to the new standards. The mapped standards may be especially helpful in the development of a Self-Study, particularly if the program is drawing from a previous Program Presentation. The COA relies heavily on the mapped standards, particularly for ongoing issues of compliance.

Section II.7.4 of *Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures* (AP3), fourth edition, provides examples of evidence to indicate compliance with the 2015s. New in this version is the suggestion to include summary data in chart or table format to make it easier for readers to interpret the information. Those programs using the 2008 Standards should consult Section II.6.4 of AP3, third edition, for examples of evidence to indicate compliance with the 2008s. Programs in the comprehensive review process are encouraged to use these lists to stimulate ideas regarding how to best demonstrate compliance in the Program Presentation or Self-Study.

At the External Review Panelist training this past June at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco, attendees participated in a group exercise to analyze the Standard I section of an actual Program Presentation – applying the 2015 *Standards* to a document written to the 2008s. It was clear from the resulting discussion that the participants understood the differences between the two sets of standards and that they were able to identify additional evidence that would be needed to demonstrate compliance with the 2015s.

See the *Standards* implementation schedule (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards>) and contact the Office for Accreditation if you have questions about which standards version to use.

As always, we in the Office for Accreditation are happy to provide more information on the accreditation process. Contact us at [accred@ala.org](mailto:accred@ala.org).

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## External Review Panelists acknowledged

External review panelists contribute substantial time and effort to the accreditation process to assure quality in LIS education. We extend our appreciation to the following panelists who served on accreditation reviews during the spring 2015 academic term.

### Chairs

- Eric Albright, Director, Hirsh Health Sciences Library, Tufts University
- Edward Erazo, Associate Dean, Communication Department, Broward College
- Mary Elizabeth (Ma'lis) Wendt, Associate Director (retired), New York Public Library

### Panelists

- Eileen G. Abels, Dean and Professor, School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College
- José Aguiñaga, Library Faculty Library Media Center, Glendale Community College
- Jennifer Weil Arns, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina
- Diane L. Barlow, Special Assistant to the Dean, College of Information Studies, University of Maryland
- Diane Covington, Chemistry and Biology Librarian, Mellon Institute Library, Carnegie Mellon University
- Dorothy Elizabeth Haynes, Associate Professor (retired), School of Library and Information Science, University of Southern Mississippi
- June Lester, Professor Emerita, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Oklahoma
- Dale McNeill, Assistant Director for Public Service, San Antonio Public Library

- Linda C. Smith, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Programs, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Jana Varlejs, Associate Professor (retired), Department of Library and Information Science, Rutgers University

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## **AASL-CAEP recognition news**

ALA policy B.9.2.2 states: "The master's degree in librarianship from a program accredited by the American Library Association or a master's degree with a specialty in school librarianship from an ALA/AASL Nationally Recognized program in an educational unit accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation is the appropriate first professional degree for school librarians."

### **Spring 2015 AASL recognition decision**

The following program, which is part of an NCATE- or CAEP-accredited education unit, received AASL National Recognition during the spring 2015 semester. National Recognition is awarded to education master's programs in school librarianship that have been reviewed and approved by AASL's program reviewers using the *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010).

- University of Central Missouri, M.S. in School Library Media

### **Spring 2015 reviewers**

We extend our appreciation to the following program reviewers and auditors who served during the spring 2015 semester:

- Mary Anne Berry, Retired/Adjunct, Department of Library Science, Sam Houston State University
- Audrey Church, Coordinator, School Library Media Program, Longwood University
- Roxanne Forgrave, MLIS Program Coordinator and Professor, Olivet Nazarene University
- Janice Newsum, Library Specialist, Department of Library Services, Houston Independent School District

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The next issue of *Prism* will be published in April of 2016. Stay tuned!  
Please send comments or feedback to [accred@ala.org](mailto:accred@ala.org).