

TO: ALA Council

ACTION REQUESTED: Resolution Concerning the Proposed Closing of the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University (See attached.)

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

ALA Committee on Education: Patricia A. Antrim; Mary K. Biagini; Sharon Coatney; Karen E. Downing; Allison G. Kaplan; Michael J. Miller; Andrea Tomlinson; Ione Tara Damasco, Intern; Karen J. Klapperstuck, Intern; Linda Slusar, ACRL CJCLS representative; Caroline "Cal" Shepard, LEARNRT representative; Susan Roman, ALISE representative; Stephen L. Matthews, ALA Executive Board Liaison; Lynn Silipigni Connaway, Chair; Lorelle R. Swader, Staff Liaison

DATE: 6/28/2010

BACKGROUND:

In the Committee on Education's (COE's) role of "developing and recommending Association policies related to the full spectrum of education for all library and information studies personnel" the Committee has written a Resolution for Council concerning the proposed closing of the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at Louisiana State University (LSU). In the Committee's role of providing a networking platform for dialogues between Library and Information Science educators and practitioners, Beth Paskoff, Dean of the LSU SLIS, and Linda Smith, Associate Dean of the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science, participated in an open forum at the Education Assembly during the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, DC. This gave Dr. Paskoff and Dr. Smith a national platform to discuss the issues concerning their programs and to garner the support of practitioners and others in the library community. This also helped COE define our role in looking into this matter on behalf of Council and in supporting the programs during these challenges.

COE also is working with the Association of Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) liaison to the Committee and the current president of ALISE to coordinate our efforts in supporting the LSU SLIS.

**Resolution Concerning the Proposed Closing of the
School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University**

Whereas, the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at Louisiana State University (LSU) offers the only accredited Master of Library and Information Science degree in the entire state of Louisiana and has graduated more than 3,500 students since 1926; and

Whereas, the American Library Association recognizes the role of the LSU SLIS, as an accredited program that educates professional librarians who provide equitable access to a wide variety of scholarly and public information resources and services that meet the lifelong learning and educational needs of their constituencies; and

Whereas, the LSU SLIS has served as a model to the entire LSU campus on the innovative use of technology to deliver educational content and offers robust distance education options to students across the state, enabling them to continue to work, live, and serve in their home communities; and

Whereas, the LSU SLIS keeps tuition dollars in Louisiana by offering the Library and Information Science program and not forcing Louisiana citizens to spend their money on online programs offered by other states or moving to another state to receive the education desired; and

Whereas, free access to information, both in libraries and via the internet, is essential for state citizens' welfare, literacy, education, and communication, which is provided by professionally educated librarians; and

Whereas, LSU SLIS graduates make significant contributions to the preservation of the history of the state in government and local archives; without their work, future generations will not have access to the records of the past and the present; and

Whereas, the LSU SLIS has received federal dollars to recruit and educate new librarians for employment in southern Louisiana libraries that continue to experience staffing shortages because of the damage caused to communities by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

Whereas, the LSU SLIS contributes to increasingly needed diversity in state-wide and national library, archival, and information science professions; and

Whereas, LSU SLIS graduates provided the information and human services that Louisiana citizens needed in the wake of the catastrophic experiences of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as well as the Gulf oil spill; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association:

1. Strongly opposes the elimination of the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University.
2. Urges the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors and the Louisiana Board of Regents to continue to support the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University.

Mover: Committee on Education