

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Task Force on Accreditation Process and Communications – Interim Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

No action requested. Information item only.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Barbara Stripling, Chair of Task Force on Accreditation Process and Communications

CONTACT PERSON: Barbara Stripling, 917 848-0582, bstripli@syr.edu

DATE: December 22, 2015

BACKGROUND: The Task Force is preparing a statement of the value of accreditation for the LIS profession based on the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) statement on the value of accreditation for higher education. The Task Force is also gathering information on the accreditation process and communications during accreditation among the Office of Accreditation, the Committee on Accreditation, the External Review Panel chairs, and the LIS Programs. A final report of recommendations will be submitted to the Executive Board at ALA Annual 2016.

ATTACHMENTS: Interim Report

December 22, 2015

To: ALA Executive Board
From: Task Force on Accreditation Process and Communications
Re: Interim Report

To this point, the Task Force has focused its efforts on the Internal Communications charge from the ALA Executive Board:

CHARGE: To make recommendations to the ALA Executive Board on the following areas:
Internal Communications, including specifically a joint ALA/ALISE statement on the value of accreditation to LIS; an articulation of the value realized by an institution when librarians or faculty members serve on the Committee on Accreditation or on an External Review Panel; a protocol for improved accreditation-related communication between ALA/COA and ALISE (including particularly the Council of Deans/Directors/Chairs; a clear description of the accreditation process that will be accessible to both individuals in practice and in the academy; and, a clear description of the COA/ERP relationship and communication.

Two subgroups within this Task Force have been formed to address this charge: Statement of Value; Communications and Process. In addition, the CAEP accreditation process is being charted and clarified.

Statement of Value of Accreditation Subcommittee

Subcommittee members are Sara Kelly Johns (chair), Sam Hastings, and Gerald Beasley.

This subgroup is preparing a joint (ALA + ALISE) statement on value:

- The value of accreditation to Library and Information Science education, the profession, libraries of all types, and the public
- The value of professional participation in the work of accreditation (through serving on the Committee on Accreditation and External Review Panels) for individual faculty members

The subcommittee is starting with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) statement on the value of accreditation and modifying it for LIS

accreditation: <http://www.chea.org/pdf/Value%20of%20US%20Accreditation%2006.29.2010buttons.pdf>

The subcommittee decided to focus on the value of accreditation and not to include the value of the LIS degree in our statement. Instead the statement will provide a link to two resources that provide guidance on the value of the LIS degree.

- *Re-envisioning the MLS: Findings, Issues, and Considerations* by John Bertot, Lindsay Sarin, and Johnna Percell.
<http://mls.umd.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/ReEnvisioningFinalReport.pdf>
- *Envisioning our Information Future and How to Educate for It* by Eileen Abels, Linda Smith, and Lynne Howarth.
<http://slis.simmons.edu/blogs/ourinformationfuture/>

Communications and Process Subcommittee

Subcommittee members are Kathleen Kern, Joan Howland, Audrey Church, Seamus Ross, and Barb Stripling.

A timeline has been developed of the accreditation process with communication and responsibilities for the four entities involved in accreditation – Office of Accreditation, COA, ERP, and the LIS Program. We will fill out this timeline with information we gather through surveys and interviews.

Surveys

We decided to develop surveys (using Survey Monkey) with about 10 questions for three audiences: Deans, Directors, and Chairs; ERP Chairs; and COA members. The survey will be organized around the following categories:

- Cost
- Effort – was the time in preparing the report worth the effort
- Clear expectations – what does meeting the standard look like? What and how much are they looking for?
- Communications to LIS Program – are they timely, helpful, supportive
 - ERP chair
 - Office of Accreditation
 - COA
- Value – to LIS Program, to institution
- ERP report – clarity, format, accuracy

The survey questions will be adapted for and distributed to ERP Chairs and COA members.

At the end of the survey, we will invite people to put forward their names and contact information if they would be willing to be interviewed. We will, of course, ensure confidentiality and anonymity of survey responses.

Interviews

We will craft interview questions based on what we learn from the surveys. We will interview those who volunteer and others who we identify from lists of former ERP chairs and members, former COA members, and deans and directors. We will also interview Laura and Karen in the Office of Accreditation.

CAEP Accreditation Subcommittee

The subcommittee member responsible for CAEP Accreditation is Audrey Church.

Some preparation programs for school librarians are accredited through CAEP and AASL rather than (or in addition to) the regular ALA accreditation process. Audrey Church has prepared a timeline of the CAEP process. We will include the CAEP accreditation process in our report, but not make recommendations for any changes in the process or communications, because those are determined by CAEP, not ALA.

Consultant

ALA has engaged a consultant to assess our accreditation process. The consultant's report will be made available to the Task Force in the spring 2016.

Final Report for ALA Annual

- **Implementation Plan for Improved Communications**
 - Based on the results of our mapping and the consultant's report, we can develop a plan for implementation of improved communication among all the entities that touch accreditation, both within the association and outside of it.

- **Recommendations for Changes to Accreditation Process**
 - Based on the consultant's report and information we have gathered, we will make recommendations for changes to the accreditation process.