TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Task Force on the Accreditation Process and Communications update

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Update on activities of Task Force on the Accreditation Process and Communications

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Barbara Stripling, task force chair

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

DRAFT OF MOTION:
No motion – report is informational only.

DATE: March 28, 2016

BACKGROUND: The attachment that follows includes information on task force activities to date as well as indication of next steps.

The task force decided that it would be important to gather in-depth information on perceptions and opinions about the current accreditation process and communications, so that our recommendations can be based on evidence rather than anecdote. We developed Survey Monkey instruments with open-ended questions for four constituencies in order to triangulate the feedback: deans, directors and chairs; current and past COA members; current and past ERP panelists; and the Office of Accreditation. The link to the survey for deans and directors was distributed by the ALISE office, the link to the survey to ERP panelists was sent out by the Office of Accreditation, and the links for the other two surveys were sent by a task force member, Joan Howland.

Although the questions on the survey were modified slightly for each constituency, the following questions comprised our overall frame:

1. Please provide a brief statement of your overall impression of the purpose and process of ALA Accreditation. How did/does the process feel to you and your colleagues? When was your last review?

2. Please provide an indication of the cost – including time – of your last review -- for instance, how many people were involved, staff/faculty hours, data collection.

3. How did the biannual reports help you in preparing your Program Presentation? In what ways did your program benefit from the effort involved in preparing documentation to support the Program Presentation?

4. Did the guidance on preparation of the Program Presentation give you a sense of what is needed to meet the Standards – and, if not, how might the guidance be improved? If you attended the orientation or training sessions, were they helpful – and how might they be improved? Was your communication with the ALA Office for Accreditation during the process helpful – and how could it be improved?

5. What might be eliminated from the Program Presentation package without jeopardizing the clear picture of the program needed for accreditation purposes? How helpful would it be to have a checklist, rubric or template to guide the preparation of the Program Presentation?

6. In what ways did you find or not find the level of communication with the ERP Chair effective and adequate? What is your understanding of the communication between the ERP and COA?

7. How does the accreditation process affect the value of your students' education? What is the impact of accreditation on continuous improvement and innovation? How were you able to leverage the accreditation process – as a carrot and/or a stick – within your school and on your campus?

8. Does your Institution encourage participation by faculty members on External Review Panels or the Committee on Accreditation?

9. What other programs does your school include? In which other specialized accreditation program does your school participate? What aspects of any of those programs would you

particularly recommend to us? (Please indicate the accreditation program, to enable us to follow up.)

10. Please feel free to comment on any other essential issue related to accreditation.

Our task force has received results from all four surveys and is currently in the process of analyzing them. We will analyze the feedback from each constituency separately and then compare the results to assess the overall picture.

In addition to the survey results, the task force has gathered relevant documents about library program accreditation, accreditation in other fields, and accreditation processes used in higher education. Much of this documentation has been provided by Mary Ghikas, who continues to support the task force with guidance, information, and alerts about issues we need to consider.

Our task force is looking forward to receiving the report from the consultant hired to assess ALA's accreditation process for the Committee on Accreditation. We hope to receive the report this spring after COA reviews and approves it.

It is our goal to have recommendations for the Executive Board to consider at Annual Conference; however, like the Task Force on the Context of Future Accreditation, we may need to ask for an extension to the fall Executive Board meeting.