PRISM

Teleconference registration reaches 350

Interest continues to build for the accreditation teleconference scheduled for September 8, 1994. More than 350 people have registered to attend at 65 downlink sites across the U.S. and Canada. From Alaska to Hawaii, librarians and library educators have volunteered downlink sites for this important event. The broadcast will originate at the University of South Carolina using the Library and Information Science Distance Education Consortium facilities.

Attendees will learn about the revised ALA accreditation process and be able to participate in a national discussion with their colleagues. The teleseminar is expected to broaden the base of participants in the new accreditation process.

The teleconference is sponsored in part by a grant from the H.W. Wilson Foundation, plus support from the American Library Association, the Medical Library Association, Special Libraries Association, the American Association of Law Libraries, Society of American Archivists, American Society for Information Science, and the Association for Library and Information Studies Education. ▲

COA reviews interim reporting

At its Spring planning meeting, COA reviewed in depth the interim reporting process. Responding both to internal concerns and external suggestions, COA reviewed the entire interim reporting process to bring it into alignment with the continuous planning and evaluation approach that characterizes the *1992 Standards* and accreditation process.

Highlights of the revision include a mechanism for providing more in-depth analysis of the narrative report. With the implementation of the four-year term for COA members, and the establishing of the Office database, more consistent analysis of trends over time is now possible.

COA also revised its process for communicating responses to schools. Customized letters will be prepared and sent to the dean or director of the school who will acknowledge its receipt and indicate whether a response or additional material will be sent. The dean may address a response to COA and/or ask to meet with COA at the Midwinter Meeting. This procedure provides an opportunity for negotiation or submission of additional materials or clarification of the report before it is conveyed back to the dean with a copy to the institution's president.

A status report

Herman L. Totten

The American Library Association's Committee on Accreditation is approaching its first three site visits under the *1992 Standards*. The reviews of these graduate schools will implement of the new climate of openness and dialogue that characterizes the new accreditation process. The three schools, Arizona, Louisiana, and Tennessee, will be the first to be reviewed by an external review panel. These schools and five others are participating in the "maiden voyage" through the uncharted waters of this new process. During the past year, the COA and the schools have worked together in a spirit of openness, communication, and collegiality to implement successfully the new process developed by the COA in consultation with an Ad Hoc Advisory Panel.

The development of the new process by the COA has been an incremental operation assisted and supported by the academic community, the Advisory Panel members, and the federal government. As the COA moves on to the next step it is appropriate to examine where we are now, what we have accomplished, and where we should be going. Because accreditation is a voluntary procedure, a concern of the Ad Hoc Advisory Panel and the COA was to establish a process fundamentally comprising the rigor of past COA evaluations, but assuring that the evaluation would be beneficial and developmental for each program. I believe that we have achieved that goal as evidenced by the first Program Plans and Draft Program Presentations completed by the three schools. Each school utilized this process positively to shape and focus the accreditation experience to benefit its individual program.

The creation of a new process warranted the development of training and documentation materials for the member schools. To meet the first of these two needs, two seminars on out-comes assessment and accreditation were held by the Committee. The initial seminar held in Chicago was sponsored by the Department of Education, and provided a forum for representatives from the eight programs to learn about the new accreditation process, how outcomes assessment can be incorporated into it, and how to prepare the Program Plan and Program Presentation. A follow-up seminar was held in Los Angeles during the ALA Midwinter Meeting.

The need for documentation on the new process was met in a number of ways. Continuing the spirit of collegiality, the eight schools consented unanimously to share their Program Plans and Program Presentations with each other and to provide ongoing assistance and support to their peers who will be going through subsequent cycles of the evaluation and accreditation process. Proceedings of the two seminars and other resource materials will also be made available to LIS educators through a clearinghouse that will be developed in the Office. In addition, beginning in 1993, the Interim Reports of schools that are annually submitted to COA were input into a database housed and maintained in the Office. Most importantly, in May 1994, the Office provided a documentation packet to support the *1992 Standards* and the new process to each of the LIS programs. The packet of resource materials by the Committee includes a copy of the *1992 Standards*, the list of *Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies Accredited,* the *Guidelines for the Program Presentation,* the *Guidelines for the External Review Panel,* the *Guidelines for Appeals to the Executive Board of the ALA*, and other resource materials.

The spirit of openness and dialogue between COA and the academic and professional community will be continued through the teleconference on accreditation to be held on September 8, 1994. This interactive seminar will be accessible to librarians, educators, and information professionals in locations throughout North America. Participants in the tele-

Reflections on accreditation
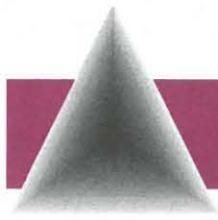
Prudence Dalrymple

Over the last few months, I've had the opportunity to talk several times with deans, directors, and external review panel chairs about their plans for developing Program Presentations for accreditation review. The decision to have three-way conversations among the Director of the Office, the Panel Chair, and the dean or director was made at the Midwinter Meeting, and it has turned out to be a wise one. The chance to interact and give informal guidance and suggestions typifies the spirit that has been articulated by the COA and its advisory panel. Although each conversation has its own particular flavor, all have been uniformly useful. Throughout these months, I have been helped immeasurably by the collective insight of the capable chairs who are guiding schools through a process that is challenging for even the most senior and seasoned deans.

Recognizing that the Program Presentation is both a *process* and a document has been difficult for some programs. Those that already have a strategic planning process in place find that preparing for the Program Presentation is a natural by-product of that process. Schools for whom the planning process is less familiar struggle harder and longer to realize that the goal of the Program Presentation is not the creation of a massive document, but simply a tangible record of the planning that should already exist to ensure that a program has set appropriate goals and objectives and is making reasonable progress toward achieving them.

Moving from a descriptive accumulation of data to a more analytic approach is also a new departure. It is very tempting to rely on the inventory of descriptive materials formerly

Committee on Accreditation
American Library Association

Upcoming Meetings

Please join us for meetings of the Committee on Accreditation of the American Library Association. They are scheduled as follows:

SUMMER

- ALA 1994 Annual Conference
  Miami Beach, Florida, June 25 – 27, 1994

June 25, 1994	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
June 25, 1994*	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
June 26, 1994	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
June 26, 1994	2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
June 27, 1994	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- COA/SCOLE Conference Program

June 27, 1994	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

FALL

- COA Fall Meeting* – Chicago, Illinois
  November 18 – 20, 1994

WINTER

- ALA 1995 Midwinter Meeting
  Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
  February 4 – 6, 1995

February 3, 1995	3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(Deans/Directors meeting)	
February 4, 1995	8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
February 4, 1995*	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
February 4, 1995	8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
February 5, 1995	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
February 5, 1995	2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
February 6, 1995	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
February 6, 1995	2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

*Closed meetings

Globalization conference on professional education

Five hundred educators and accreditors from Canada, the U.S., and Mexico met May 18-21 in Cancun, Mexico to discuss the Globalization of Higher Education and the Profession: The Case of North America. Representatives from approximately twenty professions attended plenary sessions describing postsecondary preparation for professional practice in the three countries. Each professional group also met separately to explore ways to improve mobility of professionals in North America either through reciprocal agreements or by establishing common accreditation and certification standards. Many accreditors such as ALA's Committee on Accreditation already accredit professional programs in both the U.S. and Canada.

A call for continuous quality improvement, outcomes-based assessment, and qualitative approaches to measuring educational achievement was sounded throughout the conference, as educators and accreditors worked toward establishing common measures of assuring consistent professional education and certification. At the concluding session, twelve key professions reported on progress achieved toward establishing tri-national accreditation standards and practice. Copies of the papers presented at the plenary session were distributed at the final session. A directory of participants will be distributed during the summer to facilitate continued discussions among educators, professionals, and accreditors.

Pru Dalrymple, Director, Office for Accreditation represented the profession of librarianship and met with Helen Ladron de Guenara, Vice-President of the Collegio Nacional de Bibliothecarios, (Professional Librarians Association of Mexico) and with Dr. Victor Gonzalez, Vicerector Ejecutivo (Provost) of the Universidad de Guadalajara.

The conference was co-hosted by the Universidad de Guadalajara and the Center for Quality Assurance in International Education, a not-for-profit educational center based at One Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C. It was sponsored by the Secretaria de Educacion Publica, (the Mexican Ministry of Education). A follow-up conference is planned for Fall, 1995 in Ottawa, Canada. ▲

SCOLE/COA program in Miami

The second annual SCOLE/COA joint program entitled "Thriving, Not Just Surviving! the Higher Educational Context for Successful LIS Programs," will be held Monday, June 27 from 2-4 p.m. in the Bayfront Room B in the Intercontinental Hotel. Today's society demands that professional educational programs be accountable to their publics-- society, employers, and students while university administrators demand conformity to academic norms of research and publication, as well as demonstrable links to the central mission of the institution. How does LIS education not only survive but thrive amidst these often conflicting demands? Keynote speaker Donald Henderson, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Emeritus, at the University of Pittsburgh will speak to these issues and respondents will address the university environment for programs of library and information studies. The panel of respondents includes Martha Hale, Professor at the School of Library and Information Management, Emporia State University and Marcia Bates, Professor and Chair, GSLIS, University of California-Los Angeles. Margaret M. Kimmel, President of SCOLE, will moderate the program. ▲

Educational policy statements

As a service to programs seeking accreditation or reaccreditation, the Office makes available a list of educational policy statements prepared by various speciality organizations in the field of library and information studies. Any LIS program, but particularly those preparing for review, should consider these statements as indicated in the *1992 Standards* (pp. 4, 12).

American Association of Law Libraries, Educational Policy Committee. *Guidelines for Graduate Programs in Law Librarianship.* Chicago: American Association of Law Libraries, 1988.

American Library Association, American Association of School Librarians, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Committee. *Curriculum Folio Guidelines for the NCATE Review Process: School Library Media Specialist Initial Programs, revised edition.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1993.

American Library Association, Association of Library Services for Chicago, Education Committee. *Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries.* Chicago: American LibraryAssociation, 1989.

American Library Association, Public Library Association, Education of Public Librarians Committee. *Entry Level Public Librarian Competency Statement.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1993.

American Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Division, Education Committee. *Young Adults Deserve the Best.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1989.

Medical Library Association. *Platform for Change: The Educational Policy Statement of the Medical Library Association.* Chicago: Medical Library Association, 1991.

Society of American Archivists, Committee on Education and Professional Development. *Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies.* Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1993.

Special Libraries Association, Professional Development Committee. *Graduate Education Position Statement.* Washington, DC: Special Libraries Association, 1992. ▲

COA sets criteria for external review panels

At its Spring planning meeting, COA confirmed the following criteria for external review panel members:

• five years experience in the profession or in higher education or three years employment in an information-related field;

• demonstrated interpersonal and team participation skills;

• flexibility in scheduling and a willingness to commit up to four consecutive days during the academic year;

• demonstrated analytical skills;

• demonstrated logical, clear report-writing ability;

• ability to communicate effectively with a broad-range of constituencies regardless of culture, gender, ethnicity or race, including administrators staff, students, and the public;

• appreciation and understanding of the context of higher education;

• ALA membership not required. Individuals wishing to serve on external review panels must attend the teleconference on September 8, 1994, and complete an application which will be distributed to interested individuals at each downlink site. COA will review applications during its Fall 1994 meeting. ▲

Sites for teleconference named

Sixty-five sites have been named for the accreditation teleconference on September 8, 1994. Participants are now being matched with sites and confirmation letters will be sent out during summer. Sites can accommodate from 5 to 20 participants. Registrations will be accepted through June 16. The teleconference is jointly sponsored by the American Library Association and the H.W. Wilson Foundation.

Alaska State Library, Juneau, AK
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Arizona State Library, Phoenix, AZ
University of Arizona-Video Services, Tucson, AZ
San Jose State University, San Jose, CA
University of California, Los Angeles, CA
Colorado State Library, Denver, CO
University of Colorado Health Service Center, Denver, CO
Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
Tampa Bay Library Consortium, Tampa, FL
Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA
University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA
College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL
University of Illinois, Champaign, IL
SAA Annual Conference site, Indianapolis, IN
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN
Lake County Public Library, Merrillville, IN
Emporia State University, Emporia, KS
University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA
Simmons College, Boston, MA
University of Maryland, College Park, MD
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
Missouri State Library, Jefferson City, MO
Missouri State University, Jefferson City, MO
St. Louis Community College, St. Louis, MO
University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO

University of Southern Mississippi Hattiesburg, MS
Montana State Library, Helena, MT
North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC
Nebraska Library Commission, Lincoln, NE
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Long Island University, Brookville, NY
Queens College, CUNY, Flushing, NY
University at Buffalo, SUNY, Buffalo, NY
Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
Kent State University, Kent, OH
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
Clarion University, Clarion, PA
North Hampton Community College, Bethlehem, PA
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
University of Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR
University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX
University of North Texas, Denton, TX
University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX
Salt Lake City Community College, Salt Lake City, UT
Virginia State Library & Archives, Richmond, VA
University of Washington, Seattle, WA
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI
West Virginia Library Commission, Charleston, WV
Lethbridge Community College, Nobleford, Alberta, Canada
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Status

conference will be eligible to serve as members and chairs of the External Review Panels that evaluate master's programs seeking accreditation. The new packets of accreditation resources, as well as other specially-prepared materials for the seminar, will be provided to all conference participants. We look forward to continuing to foster the climate of dialogue through this teleconference.

The COA is moving on towards the external reviews of the eight schools during the 1994-1995 academic year. Each External Review Panel Chair has been appointed and is communicating in a collegial manner with the graduate program and the Director of the Office for Accreditation.

The COA is currently engaged in meaningful discussion with a diverse number of library and information studies professional associations. This dialogue will result in the various organizations nominating outstanding members of their associations to serve as members of the external review panels. Inclusion of information professionals from other associations in addition to ALA ensures that the panels will bring the broadest background of information professionals to the evaluation process. The inclusion of these information professionals continues the new cooperation that was begun with the review and revision of the *Standards*.

This climate and spirit of openness, dialogue, and collegiality will be extended and continued through the culmination of the initial round of reviews for the eight schools. At that time the new process will be evaluated by all participants, educators, administrators, and the COA as to its effectiveness. ▲

Reflections

required by the self-study and indeed, many of these same data are useful as the benchmarks of achievement. On the other hand, raw data in large quantity has the potential to give Panel members indigestion.

Perhaps the most challenging concern is maintaining balance. We all struggle to balance standardization and flexibility, theory and practice, uniformity and uniqueness. COA must respect the autonomy of the program while also assuring that it meets the standards the profession has established; these decisions must be made consistently and equitably.

The COA that serves over the next year will be charged with both the challenge and the opportunity to engage in its own planning and evaluation process similar to that undertaken by LIS schools. COA is due for renewal of its recognition by CORPA, the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditors, the successor to COPA. As COA prepares its materials for the recognition process, it, will be reminded of its responsibility both to LIS educators and the LIS profession to adhere to the very highest standards of excellence in peer review. ▲

Interim reporting

Annual data collection in cooperation with ALISE will continue as in the past, with a common, standard due date of October 15. Because of the tight timeline between receipt of reports and COA's Fall Meeting, COA voted to impose a late processing fee for reports not received by the designated date.

Biennial narrative reports will also be due October 15. More specific guidelines as to the content of biennial narrative reports will be sent to deans and directors of accredited programs during the summer. ▲

Accreditation Teleconference Advisory Panel

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Penny Hazelton
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8