

# PRISM

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## Congress on Professional Education

The Congress on Professional Education is scheduled for April 30 and May 1, 1999 at the Loews L'Enfant Plaza in Washington, DC. The Congress will focus on issues in three areas: higher education, Library and Information Studies education, and the profession.

A Steering Committee, three content subcommittees, and a Planning/Process Subcommittee have been established. The Steering Committee (chaired by Ken Haycock ([ken.haycock@ubc.ca](mailto:ken.haycock@ubc.ca)), is developing a process to examine the initial preparation of professional librarians.

The content Subcommittees are addressing the Issues in Higher Education (chaired by Joseph Mika ([aa2500@wayne.edu](mailto:aa2500@wayne.edu)), Issues in Library and Information Studies Education (chaired by Robert Martin ([rmartin@tsl.state.tx.us](mailto:rmartin@tsl.state.tx.us)), and Issues for the Profession (chaired by Ed Erazo ([eerazo@fau.edu](mailto:eerazo@fau.edu)).

The Planning/Process Subcommittee includes Sharon Hogan, Maureen Sullivan, Dawn Vaughn, and Judy Card.

Preliminary outcomes articulated for the Congress include:

- Discussion of philosophy, principles, ethics of the field;
- understanding accreditation: role, function and purpose, what does ALA accredit—one profession or many;
- discussion and possible consensus on core competencies;

- understanding of what is happening in LIS education,
- clarification of roles—individual, association, employer, educator;
- development of relationship of professional education to training and continuing education;
- discussion of future environment, what will we expect of future graduates.

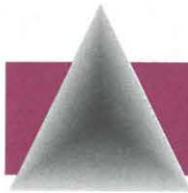
The Congress will focus on shared understanding, consensus and articulation of strategies relating to education for the first professional degree.

Outlines for the three areas of interest, instructions for submitting papers, and further information is available on the Congress web site ([www.ala.org/congress](http://www.ala.org/congress)). ▲

## Fall 98 panels appreciated

The Committee on Accreditation and the Office for Accreditation thank the following External Review Panel pool members who participated in the fall 1998 reviews: Gail Avery, Margaret Axtmann, Daniel Barron, James Benson, Lorene Brown, Donald Case, Marianne Cooper, Steven Hagstrom, Edward Harris, Patricia Gibson-Wood, David Loertscher, John Philip Mulvaney, Delia Neuman, Lorna Rees-Potter, Annabel Stephens, Betty Turock, Faye Vowell, Terry Weech, Jennifer Younger, and

*(continued on page 2)*



# The COA— who it is; what it does

*James C. Baughman*

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) is a standing committee of the Association. The president-elect of the Association makes the COA appointments, including its chair. (See Bylaws, Article VIII, Committees). COA consists of twelve members. To meet with the criteria for recognition of ALA as an accrediting agency, ALA policy allows for two members to be appointed from the public at large to represent the public interest. Public members do not hold the MLS and have no direct connection to the library information professions. The other ten members are appointed from the ALA membership. Qualified individuals are selected from a broad spectrum that encompasses library and information studies education and practice. COA has measured (four years) and staggered (typically two to three new members each year) terms.

The COA meets four times a year: Fall (November), Midwinter, Spring (April) and Annual Conference. Each meeting usually consists of three full-days, beginning early and ending late. This past fall meeting held in Chicago began on Friday and ended on Sunday afternoon. The agenda was full and varied with the predominant issue being the review and decision on individual school statistical and biennial reports. Each school submits an annual statistical report and a biennial report updating COA on such items as appointment of new faculty, changes in the curriculum, new laboratories, and progress toward COA recommendations from the last comprehensive review.

Other agenda items for this meeting included:

- Discussion and update on ALA's Congress on Professional Education to be held April 30-May 1, 1999 in Washington, D.C.

- Revision of the process documents ("green folder") materials. The COA is preparing a process document to be published as one volume.
- Appointment of External Review Panel (ERP) chairs and members
- Reviewing and answering correspondence from several accredited programs
- Discussion on Council Document #54 (The Library Education Resolution) from the last Annual Conference, including discussion on the COA's report to Council at the Midwinter meeting to be held in Philadelphia.

The Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference consist principally of the evaluation for the reaccreditation of currently accredited programs. The spring meeting is devoted to planning, evaluation, and professional development. The current COA strategic planning document centers, among other things, on potential changes ahead in the library and information studies field and their potential impact on accreditation. Examples of these changes include: increasing need to update the education of professionals, infusion of persons with primary training in other disciplines, continuing economic pressures, and continuing growth and application of technologies.

The COA hosts an open session during the ALA Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conferences on Saturday from 12-1pm. Anyone is welcome to meet with the COA to share ideas and discuss items. ▲

## Fall 98 (continued from page 1)

Faye Zipkowitz. A special thank you is extended to the panel chairs: Elizabeth Logan, Ann Prentice, Timothy Sineath, and Peggy Sullivan. ▲



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### OA Staff:

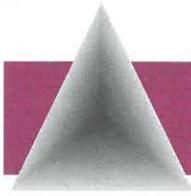
Ann O'Neill  
Director  
aoneill@ala.org  
800-545-2433 x2435

Mary Taylor  
Assistant Director and  
PRISM editor  
mtaylor@ala.org  
800-545-2433 x2436

Vivica Williams  
Administrative Assistant  
vivilliams@ala.org  
800-545-2433 x2432



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## Director shares early impressions

*Ann L. O'Neill*

As I write, I have been director of the Office for six months. I have been through my first Annual Conference and Fall Meeting with the Committee on Accreditation (COA). In this column, I would like share some of what I have learned so far.

The COA meetings at ALA's Annual and Midwinter Conferences are devoted primarily to making the accreditation decisions. For each program that has been reviewed, the Committee meets with the dean of the program and the chair of the External Review Panel (ERP). At this time, the dean or the chair answers questions from COA members, clarifies or expands upon information in the school's Program Presentation or in the ERP's report, or informs the Committee of changes that have occurred since the panel's visit. Deliberations occur after COA has met with all of the programs. Accreditation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and programs are not compared with each other. Even "easy" decisions are made with care. Following the decision, the Committee composes a letter advising the program of the decision and any compliments or concerns of COA.

The main focus of the COA Fall Meeting is reviewing the annual statistical reports from all the programs and the biennial narrative reports from half of the programs. These reports are used to monitor programs between regular accreditation visits. COA examines both reports for changes that may require an explanation from the program. The biennial narrative reports provide details about changes occurring at a program; for example, new faculty lines, changes in the curriculum, or changes in enrollment. At the Fall Meeting, COA also reviews any special reports that pro-

grams have been asked to submit as a result of their last accreditation visit.

I have been very impressed with the deliberations of the Committee and the care with which they examine reports. COA members devote much time and energy to these meetings. They serve on this Committee and take their duties very seriously because they have the best interests of the students and the profession in mind.

In my next column I will discuss another group of volunteers that helps the accreditation process—the many External Review Panel volunteers. ▲

### Committee on Accreditation American Library Association **1999 deadlines**

*All agenda items are due in the Office for Accreditation no later than one month prior to the COA meetings. These meeting and other deadlines for 1999 are as follows. Please note that interim reports are due on October 15 every year.*

<b>March 16</b>	<b>Agenda items for COA Spring Meeting</b>
<b>May 25</b>	<b>Agenda items for COA Annual Conference Meeting</b>
<b>October 1</b>	<b>LIS Directory updates due</b>
<b>October 12</b>	<b>Agenda items for COA Fall Meeting</b>
<b>October 15</b>	<b>LIS programs' interim reports due</b>
<b>December 14</b>	<b>Agenda items for COA Midwinter Meeting</b>

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# Schedule of Evaluation Reviews

**FALL 1998**

Arizona  
N.Y. - Buffalo  
North Texas  
Simmons

**SPRING 1999**

Alberta  
Brit. Columbia  
Denver  
Maryland  
Missouri-Columbia  
Pittsburgh  
Washington

**FALL 1999**

Emporia  
Hawaii  
Indiana  
N.C. Chapel Hill  
N.C. Greensboro

**SPRING 2000**

Long Island  
Oklahoma  
San Jose  
Rhode Island  
Texas-Austin

**FALL 2000**

Montreal  
N.Y.-Albany  
Wis.-Madison

**SPRING 2001**

Pratt Institute  
Puerto Rico

**FALL 2001**

Louisiana State  
Syracuse

**SPRING 2002**

Clark Atlanta  
Iowa  
South Florida  
S. Mississippi  
Tenn. Knoxville

**FALL 2002**

Alabama  
McGill  
N.C. Central  
So. Carolina  
Wayne State

**SPRING 2003**

Clarion  
Drexel  
Michigan  
So. Connecticut  
Texas Woman's  
Toronto

**FALL 2003**

Wisc.-Milwaukee

**SPRING 2004**

Calif.-Los Angeles  
Kentucky  
Rutgers  
St. John's  
Western Ontario

**FALL 2004**

Dominican  
Illinois  
Kent State  
Queens College

**SPRING 2005**

Catholic  
Dalhousie  
Florida State



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