



PRISM

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COA announces accreditation actions

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The Committee on Accreditation (COA) of the American Library Association has announced the accreditation actions taken at the 2000 ALA Midwinter Meeting under the *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies*. COA has continued the accreditation of the following graduate programs leading to the first professional degree in library and information studies. The programs reviewed were: Master of Library Science, School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University; Master of Library and Information Science, Library and Information Science Program at University of Hawaii; Master of Library Science (continuing accreditation) and Master of Information Science (initial accreditation), School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University; Master of Science in Library Science (continuing accreditation) and

Master of Science in Information Science (initial accreditation), School of Information and Library Science at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Master of Library and Information Studies, Department of Library and Information Studies at University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

Graduate programs leading to the first professional degree in library and information studies at the following universities will be reviewed in academic year 2000–2001: State University of New York University at Albany, University of Montreal, University of Puerto Rico, and University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Individuals wishing further information about a particular program should contact the school. A complete list of programs and degrees accredited by COA can be found at <http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oa/lisdir.html>. ▲

Spring 2000 panels contribute to profession

The Committee on Accreditation and the Office for Accreditation thank the following External Review Panel pool members who participated in the spring 2000 program evaluations: Camile Alire, Dawn Bostwick, Lorene Brown, Daniel Callison, Ellen Gay Detlefsen, Anne Diffendal, Martin Dillon, Jean Donham, Nancy Eaton, Leigh Estabrook, Edward Garten, Marjorie Hlava,

Dianne McAfee Hopkins, Edward R. Johnson, Judith Meadows, Barbara Moran, James Nyce, James Rettig, Judith Robinson, Jerry Saye, Stuart Sutton, Herman Totten, Terry Weech, Thomas Wilding.

A special thank you is extended to the panel chairs: Judith J. Field, Robert Grover, John Richardson, Jr., Timothy Sineath, Jennifer Younger. ▲

Letter from the chair

Beverly P. Lynch

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) held its annual meeting with Deans, Directors, and Chairs during the Midwinter Meeting of the ALA. This meeting is the opportunity for COA and representatives of the programs to review policies and procedures of the COA and to discuss areas of mutual interest and concern.

The COA also holds an open meeting during the Annual Conference of the ALA. This meeting is an opportunity for interested persons to talk with the Committee about accreditation and the role voluntary accreditation plays in the field of Library and Information Studies. This year the meeting is scheduled from 12 noon to 1:00 on Monday at the Chicago Hilton and Towers in the McCormick Room.

Emerging from the meetings with program representatives, the Office for Accreditation will begin this summer to test a program of submitting statistical reports on-line. And the Office will introduce a revised and expanded daylong training program for new panel members, which will be held during the ALA annual meeting. The training program will include new training materials and case studies. Brooke Sheldon, a past chair of the COA, volunteer facilitators, and members of the Office staff will conduct the program.

The accreditation of Library and Information Studies programs depends heavily upon the contributions of those professionals who agree to chair External Review Panels and to serve on those panels. A list of the Spring 2000 volunteers is included in this issue of PRISM. This contribution to the profession is often unrecognized; the COA acknowledges it here with its grateful thanks. Also rarely acknowledged are the contributions of two members of the COA who repre-

sent the public interest. These people serve two year terms which can be renewed once. Their role is critical to the service accreditation provides to the public interest. The general public currently is represented on the COA by Susan Estabrook Kennedy and Caroline Stern. On behalf of the COA and the profession I wish to acknowledge their very important, and voluntary, contributions to the Committee and to LIS accreditation.

This year the COA will complete the review of all programs accredited under the 1992 *Standards*. In 1997 the COA asked a Task Force, chaired by Carl Orgren and comprised of Diane Mittermeyer, Keith Swigger, and Fred Roper to review the 1992 Standards. That Task Force reported that no substantive change was required; the COA concurred. In June 2000 the COA again will appoint a small Task Force in order to determine if changes are needed and, if so, what those changes might include. The Task Force will be comprised of members of the LIS programs, the practitioner community, and other associations.

The COA held its spring meeting in Ottawa, Canada. It met with representatives of the Canadian Library Association and members of the Canadian information community and heard an excellent summary of LIS education in Canada. Seven programs in Canada are accredited by the COA.

The American Library Association has begun a process to review the structure of accreditation. The central question is whether accreditation should be carried out as it is now, within the framework of the American Library Association, or whether another structure would better serve the needs of the information profession. Discussions of this review are scheduled for the first membership meeting of the ALA. A draft proposal has been



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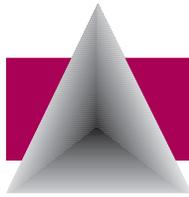
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OA faces major change

Ann L. O'Neill

Change is one part of the continuous nature of accreditation. This applies not only to the programs and to COA, but also to the Office for Accreditation. So it is with sadness and joy that I tell you about a change in the Office. Vivica Williams, who has been the administrative assistant in the Office for 16 years, accepted the ALA career incentive package and left us on April 14, 2000. Although I am sad to lose Vivica, I know from our conversations that this was the correct decision for her to make. Following some much-deserved time-off, Vivica will pursue her life-long dream of a career in real estate.

Vivica is not a person who wants to have a fuss made over her, but I do want to give you some idea of what she meant to the Office and COA. It is hard to tell you everything Vivica did, not just for the Office, but for everyone with whom she came in contact. During her time at ALA, Viv worked for four different Office for Accreditation directors (Elinor Yungmeyer, June Lester, Prudence Dalrymple, and myself), an acting director (Mary Taylor), a great many members of COA, numerous accredited programs' deans, directors, and chairs, External Review Panel (ERP) members, and countless members of the general public. She handled the correspondence to and from the Office and COA, billings to the programs, reimbursements for members of COA and ERPs, the phone, plus hotel and meeting arrangements for COA. Through everything, Vivica was always friendly and helpful to everyone and did her best to get prompt, correct answers to questions.

Vivica has great knowledge of how things work at ALA, and who to go to for the right answer, form, or signature. I found her long-term knowledge of how the Office, COA, and ALA worked to be invaluable to my learning about the job.

After I announced to the accredited programs' that Vivica was leaving, several of the deans, directors, and chairs contacted us. All of them said they couldn't imagine an Office for Accreditation without Vivica. I'm not sure I can either.

Viv—we'll all miss you. Best of luck in everything you do. ▲

ALA annual conference meetings

Open session with the Committee on Accreditation

Monday, July 10, 12:00–1:00, McCormick Room, Hilton

External Review Panel Workshop

Friday, July 7, 8:30–4:30, Williford B Room, Hilton

External Review Panel Chair Sharing Session

Friday, July 7, 4:30–5:30, Williford B Room, Hilton

How to get involved

Contribute to assuring quality education in library and information studies. People with an understanding of and appreciation for the peer review process are needed to participate as chairs or panel members in the process for library and information studies programs at the Master's level. Please consider the following criteria:

- 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 is not required.

If you or a colleague meet the above criteria, please provide the External Review Panel Member Information requested on the form (see p. 5). All external review panel applicants receive the newsletter *PRISM*. This newsletter reports the activities of the Committee on Accreditation and the Office for Accreditation, accreditation within the professions generally, and accreditation for the library and information studies programs specifically.

ALISE classification guide

01 Information Science/Information Services	25 machine, machine-machine)	52 Audio-Visual
02 Library Science/Library Services	26 Management or Administration	53 Maps
03 Information Systems/Information Resources Management	26 Marketing; Planning; Public Relations	54 Serials
04 Cognitive Processes	27 Networking or Cooperation	55 Government Publications
05 Communications Technologies (including telecommunications)	28 Collection Development	56 Archives
06 Artificial Intelligence/Expert Systems	29 Preservation of Materials	57 Records Management; Corporate Records
07 Foundations of Library and Information Science/Core	30 Intellectual Freedom and Censorship	58 Rare Materials
08 Historical, Societal, Philos. Treatment of Library & Information Science	31 Storytelling	59 Audience: Children
09 Education for Library and Information Specialties	32 Bibliotherapy	60 Audience: Young Adults
09.1 Distance Education	33 Reference or Information Services	61 Audience: General Adult Population
10 International and Comparative Library and Information Science	34 Information and Referral/Community Information	62 Audience: Aged
11 Classification	35 Computer Programming	63.1 Audience: Handicapped and Institutionalized
12 Descriptive Cataloging	36 Database Design or Management	63.2 Audience: Ethnic Groups; Cultural History
13 Subject Cataloging	37 Automation and Computerization	63.3 Audience: Professional and Scholarly Groups
14 Technical Services	38 Online Searching/Computerized Information Retrieval	64 Academic Libraries
15 Indexing and Abstracting	39 Bibliographic Instruction/User Education	65 Public Libraries
16 Technical Writing	40 Bibliography	66 School Media Centers/Libraries
17 Publishing; Book Arts	41 Instructional Technology/Design; Media Production	67 Law Libraries or Information Centers
18 Research Methods; Statistics	42 Information Policy; Economics of Information	68 Arts or Music Libraries or Information Centers
19 Bibliometrics	43 Science and Technology	69 Medical Libraries or Information Centers
20 Not used	44 Social Science	70 Other Subject-specialized Libraries or Information Centers
21 Facilities Planning	45 Humanities	71 Corporate Libraries or Information Centers
22 Reprography	46 Business/Economics	72 Governmental Libraries or Information Centers
23 Information Systems: Analysis, Design or Evaluation	47 Medicine	73 Information Industry (for profit)▲
24 Communication (human, human-	48 Law	
	49 Music	
	50 Art	
	51 Area Studies	

External review panel member information

Name: _____ Circle one: Mr. Ms. Dr.

Preferred Mailing Address:

Office phone: _____
Home phone: _____
Fax: _____
Email: _____
SS#: _____

Current position title: _____

Employer: _____

Experience:

Dates: _____ Title: _____ Employer: _____
Dates: _____ Title: _____ Employer: _____
Dates: _____ Title: _____ Employer: _____
Dates: _____ Title: _____ Employer: _____

Check all that apply: Adjunct faculty Dean Faculty Practitioner

Education: Degree: ____ Year: ____ Institution: _____ Field: _____

Language(s) proficiency: French: speak read only
Spanish: speak read only

Other Relevant Training or Experience (with accreditation or with higher education):

Areas of Specialty: Using the ALISE Classification Guide (see page 4, please list no more than three primary and three secondary):

Primary: _____ Secondary: _____

I give my permission for this information to be shared with master's programs in library and information studies:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please return this completed form with your most current vita to:

Office for Accreditation
American Library Association
50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611
fax: 312-280-2433

Library and information studies education: diversity/equity

Jane B. Robbins

Over the past two years, members of the Committee on Accreditation have held a number of discussions regarding the closely related but differentiated issues of diversity and equity. These discussions were most often engendered by portions of Program Presentations or External Review Panel reports that addressed issues of diversity in all standards areas but most frequently in the Curriculum, Students, and Faculty standards. This column represents my personal perspectives on diversity and equity; however, it has been discussed with members of the Committee on and Office for Accreditation.

This column is offered in the hope that it may be useful to all of us engaged in our accreditation enterprise.

If the library and information professions intend to credibly champion universal equality of access and opportunity for their public, then they must demonstrate their allegiance to the principles of diversity and equity.

In nations based on legal and ethical principles of individual equality and democratic participation, in this case the United States and Canada, diversity serves as a fundamen-

tal measure of representativeness. Diversity can be understood as the extent to which organizations at all levels of our society reflect and accommodate the demographic characteristics of the general population. Diversity as detailed in the *Standards for Accreditation 1992* (p.5) includes "...age, ancestry, color, creed, disability, gender, individual lifestyle, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status." At its best, diversity promotes pluralism, understanding, and inclusion in the creation of dynamic and cohesive communities. In education and employment, measures of diversity can reflect concrete advances and achievements in implementing the democratic ideals of fairness and equality; yet these measures also serve to indicate systematic structural biases that deprive particular groups of power, opportunity, and economic independence.

The American Library Association promotes diversity as a core professional value, and advocates libraries as a great democratic institution, serving all people of all ages, income level, location, or ethnicity, and providing the full range of information resources needed to live, learn, govern, and work. Indeed, U.S. Census Bureau population estimates predict that the racial and ethnic balance of the population will continue to change over the next few decades, resulting in the slow evolution of a nation without one clear majority group thus increasing the imperative

to assure that all groups have an equal opportunity to participate in society. However, if the library and information professions intend to credibly champion universal equality of access and opportunity for their public, then they must demonstrate their allegiance to these principles within their own profession and its organizational structures and hierarchies.

Equity means understanding and working affirmatively to amend historical and contemporary misrepresentation in key societal arenas, notably education and employment. Racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudicial exclusion serve to prohibit some people from reaching parity in our diverse societies; therefore, the existence of equity programs and evidence of actions taken in pursuit of their goals can be used to measure commitment to diversity. Such programs and actions should be essential and valued components of accredited library and information science programs. There is little evidence in Program Presentations and External Review Panel (ERP) reports that schools have developed equity programs and action plans to achieve diversity.

Education is the key effort to actualize diversity and equity not only because a master's degree is a prerequisite to professional entry into the field, but also because educational attainment contributes to the creation of leaders and has a significant impact on earnings levels throughout workers' lives. The U.S. Department of Labor reports improvement in the wage gap between men and women as well as certain ethnic and racial categories; still, pay inequities persist for women, minorities, and the disabled. The composite wage difference between these groups and their white male counterparts is frequently

explained by significant differences in skills and educational levels (U.S. Department of Labor 1999). Further, the rapid pace of technological change may increase the wage gap between well-educated workers and those who are not. It is this situation that the library and information studies educational recruitment and retention efforts can address directly by providing a diverse student cohort with the skills necessary to compete in an information economy that accurately reflects the full diversity of American citizenship.

Many key higher education organizations, such as the Association of American Universities and the American Council on Education, have issued useful statements and action plans regarding diversity and equity; several of these are readily available via the Internet. It should be imperative that those responsible for our accredited programs be familiar with these documents and use them or other similar materials in the preparation of their diversity and equity activities. Over 15 years ago James Boyer (Eric Document 240 224) detailed a five-step process leading to truly multicultural education: awareness, analysis, acceptance, adoption, and actualization/advocacy.

My analysis of the development of library and information studies programs as expressed in Program Presentations and ERP reports is that we remain at the awareness and analysis end of this continuum with few of us moving through the acceptance, adoption and actualization stages. This is a seriously flawed condition and requires committed attention from our programs and their stakeholders.

—*Jane Robbins* is Dean and Professor at Florida State University School of Information Studies

Open session with the Committee on Accreditation

You are invited to attend the annual open session with the COA. This year's forum addresses *ALA Standards for Accreditation* and the processes used in implementing the *Standards*. Institutional accreditation, general and specialized, has undergone change in the

last decade. These changes will be discussed with particular emphasis on the ALA's *Standards* and processes.

Monday, July 10 from 12 noon to 1:00 in the McCormick room at the Hilton. ▲

Letter from the chair

taken to some of the professional associations interested in the education and training of library and information professionals.

There are many issues on the matter of the structure of accreditation in our field. It behooves everyone in the profession to have an understanding of these issues. The COA is responsible for the execution of the accreditation

continued from page 2

program of ALA, and to develop and formulate standards of education for library and information studies for the approval of ALA Council. The Committee, while not participating formally in this review of structure, will participate in the discussion and assist in developing the understanding of the issues. ▲



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