## Proposed GODORT Bylaws changes on the 2012 Ballot

This year the GODORT ballot contains several changes to the organization's Bylaws. The purpose of this document is to summarize the rationale behind these changes and explain how they affect the organization.

In accordance with our Strategic Plan, the goal for these changes is to provide for greater flexibility for membership participation as issues arise.

Membership will vote either yea or nay to the revisions. The proposed revisions will become the new Bylaws upon majority approval.

There are four main areas of change within the proposed new Bylaws. These changes are not new within the ALA organization. In looking at Bylaws of other ALA Round Tables and units, similar language can be found.

- (1) The following changes are made to meetings and quorums.
  - Meetings are now defined as in person, virtual, or a combination thereof.

As the number of members who can attend the Midwinter Meeting and the Annual Conference continues to drop, changes to the meetings section were made to allow for more flexibility for committee and task forces to meet officially outside of ALA conferences.

• Task forces are required to meet only once a year at the Annual Conference rather than twice a year.

Lack of a requirement for a task force meeting at the Midwinter Meeting does potentially mean one less opportunity for GODORT members during the Meeting. However, the changes do not preclude holding in-person meetings then.

• For Task Force meetings, a quorum is the number of people attending the meeting, rather than a specific number.

The Bylaws currently state that a quorum is 15 people. This has not been met at some recent Task Force meetings. Without a quorum, the task force is not able to conduct official business; therefore, the change provides each task force the opportunity to conduct needed business.

(2) The positions of Task Force Secretary and GODORT Parliamentarian have been removed.

Many academic institutions hold elected positions on national committees at a higher level than appointed positions. As a result, more and more elected positions have been added within GODORT. However, in the recent past, the number of people volunteering for elected positions has dropped. The Nominating Committee and the GODORT Chair spend significant time trying to fill all GODORT positions. Notably, the Parliamentarian position has remained unfilled in recent years.

Dropping the number of elected positions by 3 and eliminating one appointment allows for greater focus and recruitment time on positions such as task force chairs and positions within the Executive Committee.

Members of the Steering Committee share information about GODORT parliamentary procedures when needed.

(3) Discussion groups have been added to GODORT's structure.

The addition of formally recognized Discussion Groups is an option other units of ALA offer. This change allows GODORT to create these groups within our organizational structure.

(4) Separate articles about Task Forces and Standing Committees were removed from the Bylaws. Much of the information currently in the Bylaws about these groups is about policies and procedures and will be incorporated into the *Policies and Procedures Manual*, if not already there. General information was incorporated into a new article entitled "Task Forces, Committees, and Discussion Groups".

As a result of this change, additional responsibilities have been given to the Steering Committee.

• Task forces and committees are created, changed, or discontinued by the Steering Committee.

Two new provisions provide an opportunity for membership to have input into this process. One, task forces and committees may be created by the Steering Committee or by a submission of a proposal with twenty-five signatures of personal members. Two, upon the recommendation of the concerned body (i.e., a task force or committee), the Steering Committee may change or discontinue the status of a task force or committee. These provisions were added to alleviate any concern that the Steering Committee will gain too much authority as a result of the revision.

On one hand, the Bylaws revision does not change the current structure of GODORT. Task Forces and Committees currently remain the same, with their respective chairs being members of the Steering Committee. On the other hand, the revisions allow for the opportunity to have more timely changes to the groups we currently have and for the addition of new groups to meet the changing needs of our membership.