ALA accreditation at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>ALA-accredited MLIS programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Institutions with ALA-accredited MLIS programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>U.S. states (including Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico) with ALA-accredited programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Canadian provinces with ALA-accredited programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>ALA-accredited programs offering 100% online programs †</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Programs with candidacy status</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Program with precandidacy status</td>
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16,368 Total number of students enrolled in ALA-accredited programs in fall 2013 *

7,326 Graduates of ALA-accredited MLIS programs during the 2012-2013 academic year *

† As identified by the programs
* As reported by programs to the Office for Accreditation
COA announces accreditation actions

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) of the American Library Association (ALA) has announced accreditation actions taken at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference in Las Vegas, NV.

Continued accreditation status was granted to the following programs, with the next comprehensive review visits scheduled to take place in spring 2021:

- Master of Science in Library Science and Master of Science in Information Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill;
- Master of Library and Information Studies at the University of Oklahoma;
- Master of Library and Information Science at San Jose State University;
- Master of Science in Information Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

Information on accreditation statuses and types of reviews can be found in Accreditation Process, Policies and Procedures (AP3), third edition, Section I.

The following institutions have programs are being visited in the fall 2014 academic term. The accreditation decisions will be made by the COA at its meeting at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Chicago.

- East Carolina University
- Université de Montréal
- Queens College, City University of New York
- University of Wisconsin - Madison

The following institutions have programs that will be visited in the spring 2015 academic term. The accreditation decisions will be made by the COA at its meeting at the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco.

- University at Buffalo, State University of New York
- University of Missouri
- University of Puerto Rico

ALA accreditation indicates that the program meets or exceeds the Standards for Accreditation of Master’s Programs in Library and Information Studies, established by the COA and approved by ALA Council. The accreditation process involves rigorous, ongoing self-evaluation by the program and verification of evidence through an external review. The COA evaluates each program for compliance with the Standards, which address mission, goals and objectives; curriculum; faculty; students; administration and financial support; and physical resources and facilities.
A complete list of programs and degrees accredited by ALA can be found at http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/directory. Individuals who would like more information about a particular program should contact the program.

The ALA COA is a leading force in accreditation, having evaluated educational programs to prepare librarians since 1924. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognizes the ALA COA as the authority for assessing the quality of education offered by graduate programs in the field of library and information studies.

From the Director: Outlook

By Karen L. O’Brien, Director, ALA Office for Accreditation

Autumn, much more than spring, is a time for beginning in the Office for Accreditation as we welcome new members of the Committee on Accreditation (COA) and focus on planning at the start of a new fiscal year. ALA staff complete Performance Appraisal Forms to evaluate the completion of goals and improvement in an array of areas of competence, and determine next goals. This time feels especially transitional as the COA prepares to bring a revision of the Standards to the ALA Council at the 2015 Midwinter Meeting and review revisions for the next edition of Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3), due for release in 2015.

Three new members with extensive accreditation experience have joined the COA, one practitioner and two faculty:

- Brad Eden, Dean of Library Services, Valparaiso University
- Irene Owens, Dean of the School of Library Sciences at North Carolina Central University
- Terry Weech, Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Mary Stansbury, Chair of the Library and Information Science Program at the University of Denver is the new COA Chair.

Annual fee increase next fall
Twenty percent (20%) of the support for sustaining accreditation efforts comes from LIS programs in the form of fees; ALA funds the remaining 80%. Discussion is underway to raise the annual fee to $1,100, to be invoiced in October 2015.

Student learning outcomes assessment
Since the launch of the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) project in 2011, 400 institutions have now piloted the approach to assess student learning outcomes. There seems especially strong potential in it for graduate-level professional programs, particularly the “Tuning” aspect. It has helped professional programs to move to the assessment of proficiency, beyond
competency-based models that take more of a training approach to learning (see “Using the DQP to Structure Program Assessment in Northeastern University College of Professional Studies” at http://illinois.edu/blog/view/1542/116563).

I welcomed the invitation to participate in the October 8 unveiling of phase 2.0 of the project, which gave everyone a chance to take stock and to look ahead. Staff from Inside Higher Ed (IHE) and The Chronicle of Higher Education moderated panel discussions and IHE reported on the day-long event.

With the sessions that the Office and the COA have mounted at various ALA and ALISE conferences, steady progress with assessment is evident. Thoughtfully constructed frameworks like the DQP give institutions and their programs a great opportunity to systematize and prove their effectiveness.

**Upcoming COA decisions on Initial accreditation status**

East Carolina University’s Master of Library Science program is having its visit for initial accreditation this fall (Oct 27-28). The COA will make an accreditation decision at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting.

Chicago State University’s Master of Science in Library and Information Science program is scheduled for its initial accreditation visit in spring 2016, April 4-5. The COA will make an accreditation decision at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference.

**Opportunities to connect**

I invite you to give me a call at 312-280-2434 or drop me a line at kobrien@ala.org. I hope to see you in Chicago for the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting. You are welcome to get in touch to arrange a meeting with me there.

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**From the COA Chair: PERSPECTIVE**

By Mary Stansbury, Chair, Committee on Accreditation, and Associate Professor and Chair, Department of School and Counseling Psychology, Research Methods, and Information Science at the University of Denver

**Update on ALA Standards for Accreditation revision process**

The *Standards* revision process is moving into its next phase: submitting the proposed *Standards* to the American Library Association (ALA) Council for approval at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Chicago. During the five-year revision process, the Committee on Accreditation (COA) released three drafts and received many comments and suggestions from ALA members, employers, students, LIS educators, and constituent organizations. Comments on the *Standards* were fully considered in the preparation of the final draft.

Some of the comments related to policy or process issues, such as the number of external review panelists for a comprehensive review visit. The COA will focus on the review of

In addition to comments specific to the Standards or to processes, we also received several comments questioning the need for the Master’s degree as the entry level credential for the field. This topic has been around since John Cotton Dana’s time (1856-1929) and is unlikely to be resolved anytime soon. The COA’s charge does not include consideration of the academic level for entry level librarian credentials, so those comments have been forwarded to the ALA Committee on Education, which is responsible for developing and recommending policies related to education for librarianship. Ultimately, employers determine the required credentials for positions in their organizations.

The COA is grateful for the contributions from so many people and we have carefully considered all comments in drafting the proposed revised Standards.

The use of program statistics and Biennial Narrative Reports

The December 1 deadline is on the horizon for ALA-accredited programs to submit their annual statistical data and, for some programs, the Biennial Narrative Report (BNR). The COA reviews program statistics and Biennial Narrative Reports at its spring meeting. In reviewing the Annual Statistical Reports, we look for trends within each program as well as trends across accredited programs. For example, if we see that a program’s enrollment has increased dramatically from one year to the next, the COA would consider how that increase in enrollment affects the program’s compliance with the Standards. An increase in enrollment has implications for curriculum (Standard II), faculty (Standard III), administration (Standard V), and facilities (Standard VI). Programs are asked to submit an explanation with their statistics if the numbers in any category have changed dramatically from one year to the next. If that explanation was not submitted, or, the explanation doesn’t provide enough detail for the COA to be assured of compliance, the COA may ask for a Special Report from the program. A Special Report may sound sinister, but it’s simply the COA’s mechanism for receiving clarification from programs between full accreditation reviews.

Similarly, the Biennial Narrative Report, which mirrors the structure of the Standards, provides the COA with a picture of a program’s ongoing efforts to comply with each standard between comprehensive reviews. The BNR is also useful to programs as a starting point for the Program Presentation for the comprehensive review.

Continuous improvement is a primary purpose of higher education accreditation. Interim reports, such as Annual Statistical Reports, Biennial Narrative Reports, Annual Progress Reports, and Special Reports, are useful not only to the COA to demonstrate compliance with the Standards, but to the programs themselves as tools to facilitate continuous program improvement.
Spotlight on process and policy: How the Committee on Accreditation communicates with programs in the ALA accreditation process

By Laura Dare, Accreditation Manager, ALA Office for Accreditation

In each issue of Prism we focus on an aspect of process, policy, or procedure of ALA accreditation. This issue’s column takes a look at the how the Committee on Accreditation communicates with programs in the ALA accreditation process. If you have an idea for a future column, please send it to Laura Dare, ldare@ala.org.

The Committee on Accreditation and the Office for Accreditation, its supporting unit at ALA, reach out to programs in the accreditation process a number of times throughout the year. Communications can be divided into two main categories: 1) one-to-one correspondence from the COA to a specific program head and 2) information about ALA accreditation that is shared with a wider audience.

Accreditation decisions and responses to interim reporting are conveyed by letters from the Committee on Accreditation (COA) to the head of the program, with copies to relevant institutional administrators as appropriate. Most often, an accreditation decision is made following a comprehensive review, but a decision is also made in response to a Precandidacy or Candidacy application or to place a program on Conditional status between reviews following issuance of a Notice of Concern.

In line with the practices of other accreditors, the COA issues accreditation decisions in a letter with the following standard elements:

- The accreditation status granted;
- The basis for that decision (Program Presentation; report of the External Review Panel (ERP); the program’s optional response; the meeting with the COA, representatives from the program, and ERP Chair to close the review; and all reports from the program since the previous review);
- The year and term (spring or fall) of the next comprehensive review;
- Any issues of non-compliance with the Standards or requiring follow-up, citing specific standards and concerns;
- A request for follow-up reporting, if necessary; and
- A table with upcoming reports and due dates.

The COA also sends letters in response to all interim reports between comprehensive reviews (Annual Statistical Reports, Biennial Narrative Reports, Special Reports, Annual Progress Reports, Plans for Removal of Conditional Status). Standard elements of these response letters include:

- Acknowledgement of the COA’s review and analysis of report;
- Identification of any report elements that indicate non-compliance with the Standards or require follow-up, citing specific standards and concerns;
- A request for follow-up reporting, if needed; and
A table with upcoming reports and due dates.

The tone of the letters is collegial and professional, yet neutral. It’s important to note what the letters do not contain. The Committee’s letters do not list the standards with which the program is in compliance, nor do they offer praise for aspects of programmatic excellence. Respecting an institution’s autonomy and academic freedom, the COA does not give advice or prescribe actions for coming into compliance with the standards. Letters from the Committee to a program are held in confidence by the COA and the Office for Accreditation, although programs are encouraged to make those documents public.

In addition to the letters from the Committee directly to programs, the COA and the Office for Accreditation use various vehicles to convey accreditation-related information. Announcements of process or policy changes, interim reporting instructions, and notifications of accreditation-related sessions at upcoming ALA conferences are sent by email from the Office for Accreditation to program heads. Prism, the newsletter of the Office for Accreditation, is published twice a year. While Prism is written for a wide constituent group, it is especially relevant to those who apply the Standards: accredited programs and members of the profession (faculty and practitioners) who serve as volunteer external reviewers. The COA typically presents programs at ALA Annual Conference and often at ALISE conferences as well. Recent COA program topics have included student learning outcomes and the draft revised Standards for Accreditation. The Office for Accreditation web pages provide news and information about all things related to accreditation. In particular, the Resources for LIS Program Administrators section has a wealth of information specifically for programs in the accreditation process. Any major process or policy updates are conveyed through all of these channels. It can be redundant sometimes, but it’s important to make sure that programs stay informed.

One of the primary purposes of accreditation is continuous program improvement. Similarly, the ALA accreditation process undergoes changes as it incorporates developments in higher education and accreditation best practices. And the COA continually endeavors to improve its communication with programs in the accreditation process.

As always, we in the Office for Accreditation are happy to provide more information on the accreditation process. Contact us at accred@ala.org.

News and announcements

Required interim reporting now in progress
Annual statistical reports and biennial narrative reports are due to the Office for Accreditation on December 1, 2014. Instructions and the statistical questionnaire were sent by email on October 1 to each program head and to anyone indicated by the program as “to be copied on accreditation-related correspondence.” A corrected statistical questionnaire was emailed to the same list on November 5. Contact the Office at accred@ala.org or 312-280-2432 if you have questions.
Draft revised Standards update
The Committee on Accreditation (COA) issued a third draft of the revised Standards for Accreditation of Master’s Programs in Library and Information Studies on August 1, 2014. Comments on the third draft were gathered through October 24, 2014. The draft provides further clarification and incorporates many of the suggestions received on the prior drafts, released December 6, 2013, and May 14, 2014. The draft is the result of more than five years of review involving research, analysis, and discussion among COA members and stakeholders, both virtually and face-to-face.

Read the third draft of the revised Standards for Accreditation at http://www.oa.ala.org/accreditation/?page_id=326.

At its fall meeting in November 2014, the Committee will consider comments on the third draft as it prepares the final version to submit to the ALA Council for adoption at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Chicago.

External Review Panel Chair training at 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Chicago
Date: Friday, January 30, 2015
Time: 1:30 – 4:30pm
Location: Hilton Chicago, Grand Tradition

External Review Panelists who have participated in two or more on-site visits are invited to attend training for ERP Chairs. The session will prepare attendees to lead an external review of MLIS programs seeking accreditation. The session will include a panel discussion, featuring experienced ERP Chairs and Office for Accreditation staff. OA staff will present resources for Chairs to use in the review process. People who are currently assigned to chair a review are strongly encouraged to attend.

Program heads who want to learn more about the site visit and the role of the ERP Chair in the review process are also encouraged to attend.

Please RSVP by January 2 to Laura Dare, ldare@ala.org, and include “ERP Chair Training” in the subject line.

New External Review Panelists sought
The Office for Accreditation seeks experienced library and information professionals to participate in the accreditation process as External Review Panelists. We are particularly in need of librarians and educators with specializations and experience in the following areas:

- Archives and records management
- School librarianship
- Public librarianship
- Information science
- Information technology
- LIS graduate program administration
Service to diverse populations
French language skills
Spanish language skills

Find out more about what’s involved in serving on an External Review Panel at http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/resourcesforerp/ERP_service_info. If you are interested and meet the qualifications, please complete the External Review Panel Member Information Form, available at (on the Office for Accreditation website) http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/files/resourcesforerp/ERP_Information_Form.doc, and plan to attend the training session on June 26 at the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco.

If you know someone who might be interested in serving as an External Review Panelist, please encourage him/her to apply, or send a recommendation to Laura Dare, ldare@ala.org.

**AASL-CAEP program review training at 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Chicago**
Date: Friday, January 30, 2015
Time: 8:00am-11:00am
Location: McCormick Place Convention Center, W194a

New and experienced reviewers and program report writers are encouraged to attend this session to learn about the CAEP (formerly NCATE) program review process, the 2010 ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians, report preparation and review, and appropriate assessments. All programs submitting an initial report must now use the 2010 standards.

Reviewers who have not been trained on using the 2010 standards must attend this session in order to be assigned to review a program using those standards.

Please RSVP to Laura Dare, ldare@ala.org, by January 2, 2015, and include “AASL-CAEP training” in the subject line.

Prospective reviewers can find out more about the AASL-CAEP program review process at http://www.ala.org/aasl/aasleaducation/schoollibrary/informationprogram.

**AASL CAEP Coordinating Committee meeting**
Date: Friday, January 30, 2015
Time: 11:00am – 12noon
Location: McCormick Place Convention Center, W194a

Members of the AASL CAEP Coordinating Committee are strongly encouraged to attend. The meeting is also open to interested conference attendees.
External Review Panelists acknowledged

External review panelists contribute substantial time and effort to the accreditation process to assure quality in LIS education. We extend our appreciation to the following panelists who served during the spring 2014 academic term.

Chairs
- Eileen G. Abels, Dean and Professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College
- Hermina Anghelescu, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science, Wayne State University
- C. Olivia Frost, Professor Emerita, School of Information, University of Michigan
- C. Allen Nichols, Executive Director, Akron Bar Association

Panelists
- Denice Adkins, Associate Professor and LIS Coordinator, SISLT, University of Missouri
- José Aguiñaga, Library Faculty, Glendale Community College
- Rick J. Block, Metadata Librarian, Seattle University
- Pauletta B. Bracy, Director, Office of University Accreditation, North Carolina Central University
- Mirah J. Dow, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Management, Emporia State University
- Brad Eden, Dean of Library Services, Valparaiso University
- Edward Erazo, Associate Dean, Communication Department, Broward College
- Janine Golden, Associate Professor, Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California
- Lisa Hinchliffe, Coordinator for Information Literacy Services and Professor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Ingrid Hsieh-Yee, Ordinary Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, Catholic University of America
- Margaret Maes, Executive Director, Legal Information Preservation Alliance
- Corinne Nyquist, Librarian, Sojourner Truth Library, State University of New York at New Paltz
- Jennifer Paustenbaugh, University Librarian, Brigham Young University
- Toby Pearlstein, Director of Global Information Services (retired), Bain & Company
- Edna Reid, Associate Professor, Intelligence Analysis Program, Department of Integrated Science & Technology, James Madison University
- Catherine Arnott Smith, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Annabel K. Stephens, Associate Professor (retired), SLIS, University of Alabama
- Jennifer K. Sweeney, Adjunct Faculty, College of Information Science and Technology, Drexel University
AASL-CAEP recognition news

ALA policy B.9.2.2 states: "The master's degree in librarianship from a program accredited by the American Library Association or a master’s degree with a specialty in school librarianship from an ALA/AASL Nationally Recognized program in an educational unit accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation is the appropriate first professional degree for school librarians."

Spring 2014 AASL recognition decisions

The following programs, which are part of NCATE- or CAEP-accredited education units, received AASL National Recognition or National Recognition with Conditions during the spring 2014 semester. National Recognition is awarded to education master’s programs in school librarianship that have been reviewed and approved by AASL's program reviewers using the ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Programs for School Library Media Specialist Preparation (2003) or the ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010).

- East Central University (OK), Department of Education, M.Ed. in School Library Media
- Minnesota State University, Mankato, College of Education, M.S. in Library Media Education
- University of Central Oklahoma College of Education, M.Ed. in Instructional Media Education - library information option

Spring 2014 reviewers

We extend our appreciation to the following program reviewers and auditors who served during the spring 2014 semester:

- Mary Anne Berry, Retired/Adjunct, Department of Library Science, Sam Houston State University
- Judy Bivens, Associate Professor and Librarian, Trevecca Nazarene University
- Audrey Church, Coordinator, School Library Media Program, Longwood University
- Patsy Couts, Professor, Advanced Professional Services, College of Education and Professional Studies, University of Central Oklahoma
- Sherry Crow, Assistant Professor of School Library Science/Educational Media, College of Education, University of Nebraska at Kearney
- Gail Dickinson, Associate Dean, Darden College of Education, Old Dominion University
- Roxanne Forgrave, MLIS Program Coordinator and Professor, Olivet Nazarene University
- Dorothy Elizabeth Haynes, Director, School of Library and Information Science, University of Southern Mississippi
- Cynthia Houston, Associate Professor, Library Media Education Program, Western Kentucky University
- Ramona Kerby, Professor, School Library Media Program, McDaniel College
- Angel Kymes, Assistant Professor of Library Media and Information Technology, Northeastern State University
- Deborah Parrot, Assistant Professor, Clemmer College of Education, East Tennessee State University
- Rebecca Pasco, Professor and Coordinator, Library Science Education Programs, University of Nebraska at Omaha
- Barbara Ray, Associate Professor, Northeastern State University
- Linda Underwood, North Carolina Central University
- Holly Weimar, Assistant Professor/Acting Chair, Dept. of Library Science, Sam Houston State University

The next issue of *Prism* will be published in April of 2015. Stay tuned!