NCES Academic Library Survey Minutes
2010 Advisory Committee Meeting, Boston, MA

Friday, January 15, 2010
8:00am – noon
Boston Convention Center, Room 209

Attending: Colleen Cook (ARL), Teresa Fishel (Oberlin Group), Bill Miller (ACRL), Kenley Neufeld (2-year), Rita Pellen (4-year), Tai Phan (NCES); Cindy Sheckells, Laura Hardesty, Jamie Hug (Census); Denise Davis (chair), Norman Rose, Caroline Jewell (ALA)

1. Preliminaries
   a. Introductions, Logistics (breaks, other)
   b. Minutes approval, 2009 Annual Conference Chicago [pending 1/27/2010]
   c. Agenda approved

2. Information Items
   a. NCES update (Tai Phan)
      i. Library Statistics Program update
         Reduced staff continues in the NCES LSP and the appointment of a new Commissioner has not yet occurred (John Easton remains in place).

         Other NCES updates:
         NCES received $200M more for longitudinal studies to analyze K-12 performance (teacher, student, etc.).
         National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is looking to develop a single test instrument, developing this from various state tests.
         More funding to expand 2-year institution programs or build additional campuses ($10B).
         Electronic Codebook tool being developed, will reside on the Data Tools website (http://nces.ed.gov/datatools/EDAT).
         NCES is moving back to its old building at 5th and Independence, SW

   ii. Data dissemination:
       ALS calendar for data release – The ALS 2008 data were released to the peer tool in June 2009 and the final report and public use data file were released within 8 months of the survey close (December 2009).
       Annual ALS – this decision cannot be made until a new Commissioner is confirmed because the justification and schedule require Commissioner’ approval, and OMB approval. Bill Miller expressed concerns for ACRL, as they anticipated the ALS becoming annual after the 2010 survey and have not funded an ACRL survey in 2011. NCES advised ACRL to continue its survey one additional year. The ALS advisory group will prepare a statement and work with the ALA Washington Office to encourage NCES to move forward with an annual ALS and encourage appointment of a new Commissioner.

3. Census update (Laura Hardesty, Cindy Scheckells, Jaime Hug)
   a. Jaime Hug, the newest Census staff member on ALS project, was introduced
   b. ALS 2008 – the new tables appear in the First Look supplement; copies of the First Look report will be mailed to all LRs and the advisory committee soon. The most significant response challenges came from the private for-profit institutions.
The response rate table for the ALS 2004-2008 was reviewed.

Census LSP staff are working with consultants to improve the Compare Academic Libraries tool. In addition to improvements made last year, Census is asking for suggestions. The committee requested some kind of time-series tables (e.g., multiple years for expenditures, collections, and services for an identified peer group).

ACTION: The ALS advisory committee will provide feedback by February 5, 2010. 
ACTION: Denise and Census staff will review the ALS definitions to be added to the compare tool (February 1, 2010); review/approval by the ALS advisory committee by February 26, 2010. 
ACTION: Comparison of the NCES ALS and ARL questions (overlap and gaps) will help the group consider future improvements. ALA staff will update the cross-walk table for review prior to the ALS advisory committee meeting in June 2010 (Washington, DC).

A MathStats unit at Census is conducting a non-response bias analysis to understand reporting challenges and data quality issues, and to improve future ALS response rates. The ALS Census group will share those findings when they become available.

The Census ALS group is making minor adjustments to the survey invitation letters and questionnaire to improve response rates for known low-response groups (private, for profit) by reorganizing text in the letter(s) and reordering the finance questions to follow the service questions.

Discussion of the private, for profit institutions resulted in a request that NCES and Census add an eligibility question regarding minimum expenditures to be eligible to respond. 
ACTION: Census will review the 2008 ALS data and determine the mean expenditure amount for the lowest 10% expenditure range to determine the dollar expenditure threshold for the new eligibility question.

4. **2010 Survey**
   a. Calendar, NCES ALS 2010 data collection – no changes to handout. The survey will open November 9, 2010 and close February 29, 2011. Follow-up will close on March 29, 2011 and analyses begin. Unless there are response rate issues, the edited unimputed data will be in the compare tool by June and the report and public use data file will be released by December 2011.
   b. OMB clearance for ALS 2010 – clearance package will be filed in February 2010.
   c. Survey design (randomize question sections, etc.) as noted above to improve response rate.
   d. Updating online help screens for respondents and may develop an online tutorial.
   e. ALA will contact LRs in spring 2010 to confirm continued support. (ACTION)
   f. ALA will update the LR training webinar and other tools. (ACTION)
   g. Based on feedback from the advisory committee, Census will identify the eligible respondents by state and send those lists to each LR in October 2010 in preparation for the survey opening. (ACTION)
   h. Due to delays moving to an annual ALS, Tai Phan asked Bill Miller to inquire with ACRL if some support would be needed for its 2011 survey. Bill will pass this question on to ACRL staff. (ACTION)
i. It was suggested that John Easton (and possibly Andy Duncan) be invited to speak with the ALS advisory committee at its June 2010 meeting. ALA will pursue that with NCES. (ACTION)

5. Updates, other surveys and projects that do or could have an impact on NCES/ALS
   a. ACRL – handout provided in advance by Mary Jane Petrowski (ACRL). Bill Miller reported that the 2009 ACRL survey opened last week. The 2008 ACRL reports were published in October 2009 and are for sale (http://www.alastore.al.org/ SearchResult.aspx?KeyWords=acrl). ACRL has signed a contract with Counting Opinions to develop an online tool for its data backfiles.
   b. ARL – handout provided in advance by Martha Kyrillidou. Colleen Cook reminded the group that ARL no longer captures membership criteria in its investment index, but does capture expenditure metrics (see July 2009 ALS minutes). ARL has developed a LibQual Lite version. As part of its member profiling activities, member libraries are being asked what they think a research library is. Carol Tenopir (UT, Knoxville) is conducting a return on investment study of academic libraries under an IMLS National Leadership Grant. The ARL Assessment Conference will be held in Baltimore October 25-27, 2010. Call for proposals is http://www.arl.org/news/pr/lac-3dec09.shtml.
   c. Oberlin Group - Terri Fishel reported that they are currently reviewing the results from member survey and she will have more to share in June. Ejournal pay per view issues are being discussed, as they raise “ownership” issues for libraries reporting in the Oberlin Group survey. They continue to study institutional repositories and may have draft analysis for the ALS advisory committee June 2010 meeting in DC.
   d. IMLS – did not attend
   e. ALA – handout provided in advance of the meeting. Denise Davis added that the latest Internet funding study findings (fall 2009) have been released in an issues brief titled “Perfect Storm” (http://www.alastore.al.org/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/issuesbrief-perfectstorm.pdf).
      ORS released a report prepared for ALA senior management on library trends and the economic downturn, Condition of U.S. Libraries (http://www.alastore.al.org/research/index.cfm). The report also was segmented into separate reports by type of library for easier use by divisions of ALA.
      Planning for 2015: The Recent History and Future Supply of Librarians, is a report prepared for the American Library Association Senior Management and Executive Board to inform its 2015 Strategic Planning Activities.
      ALA ORS has hired Harris Interactive to conduct its 2010 household survey. Findings from that study will be released as part of the ALA State of America’s Libraries report in April 2010.

HANDOUTS EMAILED WITH AGENDA: AC Minutes, July 2009 (Chicago), Committee Roster, 2010 questionnaire/instructions, ALA-ORS update, ARL Update, Travel reimbursement form