Committee Members Present:
Rebecca Bostian, Lis Chabot, Rhonna Goodman, J.B. Hill, Kitty McNeill, Bill Nelson, John Pollitz, and Rob Strong.

Visitors Present:
Dave Harrison

The Chair, Bill Nelson, made a request for volunteers for recorders for the Saturday and Sunday meetings. Rebecca Bostian volunteered for Saturday and Kitty McNeil volunteered for Sunday.

Chair Nelson reported that Committee member Bob Fernekes was attending the ULS Standards and Guidelines Committee meeting rather than the CLS meeting and would have a report for the Sunday meeting. He also reported that members Karl Bridges and Kelly Jacobsma requested and received an excused absence for the midwinter meeting.

A membership list was passed around for editing along with a signup sheet.

Discussion on the proposal for virtual CLS committee meetings instead of attendance at midwinter was extensive and included the following points:

- If CLS is not at midwinter, their voice is not heard by ALA
- Members have to come anyway because they are members of other division/section committees
- Leadership development would be more problematic
- Lack of revenue would be a problem since vendors attend midwinter based on the number of participants
- Library budgets sometimes don’t support two meetings per year
- Vitality and purpose of the section could be lost if midwinter were only a virtual meeting
- Rules/requirements would be necessary for successful virtual meetings
- It would be useful to have virtual meetings in addition to real meetings
- Travel is not as easy since the September 11 tragedies.

The majority of the committee was opposed to eliminating the midwinter meeting and felt that only if all of ALA eliminated midwinter should CLS do so.

Chair Nelson and member Hill reported on the standards preconference workshop at Tulane University, co-sponsored by the Louisiana ACRL and CLS. Member Hill reported LA ACRL made money on the preconference, which had 57 participants (61 pre-registered) from 26 states and 53 different institutions. The four-hour format seems to be the most appropriate with other
workshops having been conducted in Virginia, Iowa, and Missouri since last summer. Chair Nelson reported that he and member Fernekes continue to be willing to conduct workshops and wondered whether the committee should pursue a preconference at Philadelphia midwinter and also at ACRL. It was determined that both should be pursued along with development of phase II of the promulgation of the new standards. Exploration of joint programs with ULS and CJCLS will be made with a focus on best practices of implementation of the standards and with outcomes of those implementations especially regarding accreditation.

It was noted that the generic document circulated prior to midwinter for the ULS adoption of joint standards was essentially the CLS standards with only minor changes; CJCLS seems to have more reservations about it. Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Bostian
Recorder
Bill Nelson explained the current move by ACRL to develop a generic set of standards based on the CLS standards. The standards would have a generic core possibly with appendices, etc. relating to specific library type. The standards focus on outcomes assessment and use peer groups/points of comparison for quantitative data. The standards encourage you to think broadly and are mission driven.

Using a standard model for all three sections (CLS, ULS, and CJCLS) would give libraries credibility with accrediting bodies. Proposed changes to the CLS standards for use by ULS are minor.

Bill Nelson confirmed that ACRL will publish the workbook he and Bob Fernekes developed. The workbook includes checklists and specific examples for applying the standards. The working title for the book is “Standards and Assessment for Academic Libraries: A Workbook." The expected publication date is prior to the next ALA annual conference.

In response to a question about where the accreditation agencies are going, Lis Chabot explained that the various regional accreditation standards are changing and the new SACS standards are meant to be flexible and less onerous, time consuming, and expensive. Since the new standards are less prescriptive, Bill Nelson suggested using the CLS standards as a basis for evaluation during the accreditation process.

The need for consistent use of data for comparison between peer libraries was raised.

Lis mentioned the challenge of evaluation of online services and resources, including getting relevant data from vendors. She emphasized that data may already exist on our campuses (website hits).

The group emphasized the need to plan education programs to support the seven topics of discussion listed above. Thus far, few institutions are known to have applied all of the standards. Some institutions are doing some selected portion.

Gary Hunt proposed an idea for a future program: “New Approaches to Accreditation: Challenges and Opportunities for Academic Libraries.” The program should include individuals from accrediting agencies and from institutions.

Question raised: Is there a concern that if we look at outcomes rather than input measures we will have less hard data to take to administrators? We will no longer have the 6% of E&G figure to use. The new standards suggest use of quantitative data based on peer comparison and multiple regression analysis.

The group discussed that technology skills assessment is very different from critical thinking assessment. Becky Bostian mentioned the value of determining which courses will focus on particular skills. Lis noted the advantages of connecting instruction to specific course content, goals, and objectives. Bill Nelson pointed out that Becky Bostian led the staff at her former library in applying the new standards to the library at Governors State University. The evaluation is online at the university website: http://www.govst.edu/library/assess.htm

Related work mentioned during the discussion that may be of interest:
• LIBQUAL/SERVQUAL – OhioLink project and health sciences library project
• North Central Accrediting Agency – Traditional 10-year or Continuous improvement cycle much like the Baldrige award
• Lis Chabot – College wide assessment day – Mary Baldwin College
• LAMA/LOMS website – survey instruments and project reports, located at Hollins
• CLIP notes – User Surveys
• Forthcoming issue of Portal (available through Project MUSE) on LIBQUAL
• Program from ALA Chicago 2000 on CLS website - gives examples for the CLS standards
• CLS program in Atlanta 2002 “Will the real student please stand up?” Assessing student use of the library
• LAMA program for Toronto: “Got Data, Now What” program will focus on closing the loop and use of data for marketing the library
• LAMA preconference for Atlanta: “Seizing and managing opportunities: selecting, interpreting information to make the library a success”

5:30 - Brief meeting of CLS Standards Committee

Bill Nelson reported that he talked with Larry Hardesty and confirmed that there would be an assessment track for the ACRL meeting in Charlotte. The ACRL website lists it as the “Assessment & Accountability track,” including such things as: accreditation, needs assessment, benchmarking, usability studies, standards, metrics, outcomes, evaluation of services, and conflict of personal values with institutional or organizational values. Larry strongly suggested that the committee propose both a preconference workshop (the Bill and Bob show) and a program.

The committee agreed to propose both. Bill will do the proposal for the workshop. Lis Chabot will take the lead and draft a proposal for the committee to respond to via e-mail for the program. The proposed topic will be the one suggested during the discussion group: “New approach to accreditation: challenges and opportunities for libraries.” It was suggested that we approach the ULS Standards and Guidelines Committee as a possible co-sponsor of the program. [Note: Bill Nelson subsequently attended a meeting of the ULS committee; that committee was very interested in the idea and we will follow up with the chair, Lori Goetch.]

Bill Nelson mentioned Ralph Russell, a retired academic librarian and part-time SACS (Southern Assn. of Colleges and Schools) assessment team leader, as a possible speaker; her resides in Atlanta. Susanna Pathak, Virginia Commonwealth University, is another possible speaker.

Kitty McNeill, Recorder

Last Update: April 22nd, 2002