

## **Subject-Specific Information Literacy Standards: Information Literacy Consultants**

At the 2006 Midwinter meeting of ILAC, attendees suggested that an information literacy expert be involved earlier in the process before the subject-specific information literacy document is reviewed by the Section's Executive Committee, and that the person act as a consultant throughout the process to assist the Section in creating a document that meets core criteria and has sound content related to information literacy and educational outcomes. In addition to the consultation component of this process, information literacy expertise is required for the final review and recommendation, by the Information Literacy Advisory Committee and Standards and Accreditation Committee, to the ACRL Board about the final versions of the subject-specific information literacy documents. Experience over the past two years has indicated that separating these two functions is highly desirable.

The Institute for Information Literacy's (IIL) Executive Committee has experience selecting applicants for Immersion programs and librarians as new Immersion Faculty, thus seems best suited to handle the aspects of calling for, selecting, certifying, orienting, and tracking the use of the information literacy consultants. The IIL Executive Committee chair is a member of ILAC and, as needed, can bring questions and concerns to ILAC, which has an advisory function. Qualifications for the information literacy consultants include: strong understanding of and experience using the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*; expertise in teaching and learning issues; fluency with the language of student learning outcomes and assessment; experience working with information literacy principles in the context of specific disciplines; and experience working in collaborative environments. Consultants would not be responsible for approval of the final document for the Section's they work with but could serve as reviewers for other subject-specific information literacy standards.

ILAC seems best suited to give final review and recommendation of the subject-specific information literacy documents to the Standards and Accreditation Committee and the ACRL Board, particularly since the ACRL Executive Director is a member of ILAC. This arrangement would also separate the role of collegially advising Sections from the role of making final recommendations.

### **Recommendation:**

Charge the Institute for Information Literacy Executive Committee with:

- announcing a call for self-nominations as information literacy consultants
- overseeing the selection of people who qualify for the pool of information literacy consultants, perhaps in partnership with a subset of the faculty of the Institute for Information Literacy Immersion programs
- updating the ACRL Information Literacy Peer Consultants and Speakers Database with a new category of people identified and maintained by IIL Executive as information literacy consultants for the subject-specific information literacy documents
- providing an orientation (in-person or online) for people who qualify as information literacy consultants about their role, responsibilities, and the extent of their authority; the relationship of subject-specific information literacy standards to the original information literacy standards; general guidelines for subject-specific information literacy standards; and tips related to working within the ACRL structure between Sections and committees. Materials for the orientation would be designed in collaboration with ILAC.
- managing the pairing of information literacy consultants with Sections, including tracking which consultants are working with which Sections and ensuring that the consultant can work with the Section throughout the term of the project
- maintaining ongoing communication and feedback with the information literacy consultants to provide an avenue for resolution of problems and continued improvement with the process.

One or more information literacy consultants may be appointed as an official member of IIL Executive Committee.

Task the Information Literacy Advisory Committee with:

- developing orientation and training materials for people who qualify as information literacy consultants about their role, responsibilities, and the extent of their authority; the relationship of subject-specific information literacy standards to the original information literacy standards; general guidelines for subject-specific information literacy standards; and tips related to working within the ACRL structure between Sections and committees. Materials would be used as the foundation of the orientation for new consultants and developed in collaboration with the Institute for Information Literacy Executive Committee.
- reviewing Section's subject-specific information literacy documents
- providing feedback to the Section's chair and appropriate committee members about the recommendation
- communicating the final recommendations related to the documents to the Standards and Accreditation Committee and the ACRL Board

**Next Steps [Revised based on subject-specific guidelines draft document submission]:**

1. By 5/15: Beth will send to ACRL Sections Council, IIL Executive Committee, and participants in previous conference call, including current 'info lit experts' for comment by June 8
2. By 6/20: Beth will compile comments received, revise the proposal, and re-send to ILAC for preview and comment before ALA Annual Meeting.
3. On 6/24: ILAC to discuss final proposal and revisions
4. By 6/25: Beth will submit actions for the ACRL Board meeting at conference.

If the proposal were endorsed, these actions would follow shortly thereafter:

1. Officially notify IIL Executive Committee and ILAC of these new assignments, proposed to begin in July 2006. (These tasks are assumed to be covered adequately in the current committee charges for both groups, but the charges could be amended if necessary.)
2. Officially announce the approved process to ACRL Sections Council
3. Develop training materials for the orientation of the information literacy consultants, perhaps with feedback from the four people who served in similar types of roles over the past two years
4. Investigate possibility of handling orientation in format other than at ALA conference
5. Create a new category or tag for this certification in the Information Literacy Peer Consultants and Speakers Database
6. Draft the announcement for the information literacy consultants
7. Call for self-nominations for the information literacy consultants and review the people in the IL Peer Mentor Database for potential candidates to approach