

LES Governance Procedures

Note: All ACRL sections have voted to migrate their Bylaws to a more flexible set of guidelines called Governance Procedures. This migration took place over 2008-2009.

The LES Planning Committee edited and revised the existing LES Bylaws to make them conform to ACRL's guidelines for Governance Procedures, as well as to LES practice.

These Governance Procedures were last edited in March 2009.

Governance Procedures of the Literatures in English Section

A. Name

The name of the organization shall be the Literatures in English Section (LES) of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, hereinafter referred to as the Section.

B. Purpose

ACRL Sections are established primarily for the purpose of building communities of learning and providing professional development and networking opportunities for their members. A Section's name, purpose, and mission are as proposed by the Section and approved by the ACRL Board. The ACRL Board ascertains that overlaps between the mandates of various Sections are minimized.

The objectives of the Section shall be to represent members of ACRL who specialize or are otherwise professionally involved in the selection, acquisition, organization, and use of information resources related to literatures in English, to enhance those members' professional development, and to promote the improvement of library resources in support of study and research activities in this field. The Section may initiate or sponsor programs, discussion sessions, publications, and other projects related to literatures in English in academic and research libraries.

C. Membership

Any member of the Association of College and Research Libraries may elect membership in this Section.

The number of "community of practice" affiliations included in the basic ACRL dues is determined by the ACRL Board. The dues for additional affiliations are also set by the ACRL Board.

D. Relationship to ACRL Board

The Board shall be authorized to establish Communities of Practice (including Sections), to monitor their activities, and determine their continuance in consultation with the respective groups. The Board shall also be entitled to establish policies to govern the activities of Communities of Practice. (ACRL Bylaws, Article XV)

The Board liaison role provides a critical connection between membership structures and the ACRL Board of Directors. This liaison role can be particularly helpful in providing perspective, guidance, and insight regarding ACRL policies, procedures, and initiatives; soliciting feedback from Communities of Practice regarding proposed Board actions; and providing helpful advice regarding Action Plan Proposals and Board Action Forms which community of practice leaders will need to submit for official ACRL Board and ACRL Executive Committee action/decisions. The liaison relationship is meant to enhance communication; it is not an advocacy role and for that reason Board members are asked to liaison with communities in

which they have not been active. (Tip Sheet for Board Responsibilities)

The Board of Directors is the voice for the association. Sections, committees, and other established units are not authorized to speak for the association except through the Board. This is to say that unit leaders should refrain from issuing statements, taking positions, or endorsing any statements or positions except with Board approval. (ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures, Chapter 5.12.8, Use of ACRL's Name)

E. Meetings

Section meetings at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and ALA Annual Conference are scheduled by the Section chair.

ACRL units are encouraged to work outside of Midwinter and/or Annual Conference to increase group participation, efficiency, and productivity. Electronic meetings are conducted within the environment of ALA/ACRL bylaws and policies. In all cases these requirements must be adhered to, although they may have to be adopted to fit the virtual environment.

The ALA Policy Manual 7.4.1 defines a meeting as "an official assembly, for any length of time following a designated starting time, of the members of any board, committee task force, commission, etc., during which the members do not separate except for a recess and in which the assembly has the capacity to formalize decisions." Conference calls, Internet chat sessions (and their equivalents), and in-person meetings are recognized as meetings subject to the open meetings policy (ALA Policy 7.4.4). Committees must confirm all decisions made in these forums by affirming the actions at the next face-to-face meeting.

There is a distinction between carrying on work of a committee electronically and conducting an electronic meeting. Asynchronous electronic discussions by electronic mail or other asynchronous communication methods do not constitute meetings because they are not an official assembly with a designated starting time (ALA Policy Manual 7.4.1).

The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure (Alice Sturgis) applies to meetings of the Section to the extent that it is applicable, upholds the integrity of the voting processes, helps facilitate progress, and ensures equality, fairness, and common sense.

Section E1. General Meetings. The Section shall hold a membership meeting at the time and place of the Annual Meeting of the American Library Association (ALA).

Section E2. Committee Meetings. Committee Meetings shall be held during the Annual and Midwinter Meetings of ALA. All Section meetings, except those dealing with nominations and awards, are open to registered attendees of the Annual and Midwinter Meetings.

Section E3: Quorum. A quorum consists of the majority of the voting members of a committee, whether the meeting is face-to-face or virtual.

F. Officers

Each Section will have a vice-chair/chair-elect and a chair to ensure succession.

Section F1. Officers. The officers of the Section shall consist of a chair, a vice-chair/chair-elect, an immediate past chair, and a secretary.

Section F2. Terms. The vice-chair shall serve one year in that office, followed by one year as chair, followed by one year as immediate past chair. The secretary shall serve a term of one year. All terms shall begin and end at the adjournment of ALA Annual Conferences.

Section F3. Duties of Officers.

F3a. Chair. The chair shall be the chief executive of the Section, the chair of the Executive Committee, and one of the Section's representatives to the ACRL Leadership Council and the ACRL Sections Council. The chair is responsible for section projects pursued during his or her term, administration of requests for budget allocations and reimbursement of expenses, and submission of reports on all Section activities to the ACRL Board. The chair is also responsible for scheduling Section programs, meetings, and events at the Midwinter Meeting and the Annual Conference.

F3b. Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. The vice-chair/chair-elect shall plan and coordinate all programs and projects to be pursued during his or her term as chair, and shall make appointments of all standing committee members and chairs whose terms will begin during his or her term as chair. The vice-chair/chair elect shall be responsible for submitting budget requests for his or her term as chair, participating in ACRL budget orientation, and responding to inquiries relating to the Section. The vice-chair/chair-elect serves on the Executive Committee and the ACRL Conference Program Planning Committee. He or she serves as a substitute on the ACRL Leadership Council and the ACRL Sections Council when either the chair or the immediate past-chair is unable to attend.

F3c. Immediate Past-Chair. The immediate past-chair serves on the Executive Committee and is ex-officio on the Planning Committee. He or she also serves on the ACRL Leadership Council and the ACRL Sections Council.

F3d. Secretary. The secretary shall be responsible for maintenance of all section records and for recording the minutes of all Section and Executive Committee business meetings at the Midwinter Meeting and at the Annual Conference. All records shall be submitted according to ACRL and LES guidelines. The secretary shall be responsible for collecting and distributing all archival documents to the ALA Archives as appropriate.

G. Executive Committee

The Section Executive Committee is responsible for the stewardship of the Section and the coordination of its activities, provided that it operates within the Section mandate and budget as determined by membership level (ACRL Guide to Policy and Procedure, Basic Services, 4.3.2).

A Section's Executive Committee may establish and appoint standing or ad-hoc committees to assist it in fulfilling the Section's mandate.

Section G1. Membership. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Section and a member at large elected for a one-year term. In addition, the chairs of all standing committees and discussion group leaders are voting members of the Executive Committee. **Note: this is an inclusive policy that has served LES well for many years. Prior to 2009, there was no formal language governing the role of Discussion Group leaders on Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may wish to revisit this change if it causes problems for Discussion Group leaders in future.**

Section G2. Responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility to act for the Section and to make decisions on matters which require action before the next scheduled Section meeting, and to supervise the administration of established policies, programs, and operations. The Executive Committee meets at the Annual Conference and the Midwinter Meeting of ALA. The chair may call special meetings. If necessary, the Executive Committee may make decisions by electronic means or by conference call during the period between regularly scheduled meetings. The Executive Committee shall appoint the Section newsletter editor, website editor, wiki coordinator, blog coordinator, and e-list owner for terms of three years with the option of renewal. (This renewal exceeds the typical ACRL limit of 4

consecutive years on a single committee, and should only be used for positions with specialized duties, in consultation with ACRL staff.) All terms shall begin and end at the adjournment of ALA Annual Conferences.

Section G3. Voting. A simple majority of the elected Executive Committee members present shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the committee.

H. Committees and Discussion Groups

Section H1. Standing Committees. General Provisions. The Executive Committee may establish and dissolve standing committees to consider matters of concern to the Section that require continuity of attention. When such a committee is established, its function, name, and size shall be determined. Unless otherwise approved by the Executive Committee, members of standing committees shall be appointed for terms of two years and may be reappointed for a second, but not a third consecutive term.

In no case shall a person serve on a committee for more than five consecutive years, with the exception of members with special duties as outlined in section G.2 above. Appointments shall be made in such a manner as to provide continuity in membership. All terms shall begin and end at the adjournment of ALA Annual Conferences, with the exception of Nominations Committee.

The current LES Standing Committees are Conference Program Planning, Membership, Nominations, Planning, and Publications.

H1a. Conference Program Planning Committees. The vice-chair/chair-elect shall appoint a Conference Program Planning Committee to plan and implement programs for the ALA Annual Conference which concludes his or her term of office. The Conference Program Planning Committee coordinates program sponsorship with other ALA units as appropriate. The vice-chair/chair-elect may choose to chair the committee or to appoint one of the members as chair. ACRL does not require sections to plan programs every year. Due to the lead time required to plan a conference program, the Section may have two active Conference Program Planning Committees, one in its second year completing its planning for the upcoming Annual Conference and one in its first year preparing for the Annual Conference after that.

H1b. Membership. Membership Committee coordinates recruitment activities for the Section and any education activities for the promotion of literatures in English librarianship within ALA.

H1c. Nominations Committee. Nominations Committee prepares the slate of new officers. See I. Nominations and Elections below for appointment and charge.

H1d. Planning. The Planning Committee develops and revises a strategic plan for the Section. It also identifies issues that might be developed into a Strategic Action Plan by the incoming Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. Planning Committee annually reviews the Section's governance procedures and recommends revisions to the Executive Committee.

H1e. Publications Committee coordinates all publications and communications associated with the Section, including the newsletter, the website, the wiki, the blog, and the electronic list. It identifies publication needs, encourages research and writing, and recommends new publications to the Executive Committee.

H1f. Size of Standing Committees. Aside from the Nominating Committee, the Section's standing committees must have no fewer than five (5) appointed members, including the chair. The terms should be staggered.

Section H2. Ad Hoc Committees. The Section Chair may appoint Ad hoc committees for

short-term projects and needs after consultation with the Executive Committee. Ad hoc committees shall expire at the end of the term of the chair who appointed them unless their term is extended by vote of the Executive Committee.

Section H3. Discussion Groups. The Executive Committee may establish discussion groups upon application of ten or more Section members. Written proposals for new discussion groups shall include a brief mission and goals statement. Discussion groups shall be composed of any interested Section members. Each discussion group shall have a chair and a recorder, both chosen by the group members in any manner compatible with ALA, ACRL, and LES guidelines. A discussion group may be dissolved at its request by the Executive Committee of the Section and shall be so dissolved if it becomes inactive (as evidenced by failure to meet at three consecutive ALA Conferences) or fails to comply with the provisions of this document.

Identification of new discussion group chairs is done informally with a call for volunteers. The discussion group notifies the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect of names of interested volunteers. The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect appoints the discussion group chair for a two year term. The discussion group chair can either arrange in advance for a recorder or can issue an informal call for a volunteer recorder at the start of a discussion group meeting.

Section H4. Terms. With the exception of the Nominating Committee, the term of office for elective and appointive positions of the Section shall be the period beginning with the adjournment of the annual conference and ending with the adjournment of the annual conference at the end of the one, two, or three year term.

I. Nominations and Elections

To be nominated, elected, and continue to serve on a Section's Executive Committee, a person must be a current member of the Section (with ALA, ACRL, and section dues—if applicable—paid).

11. Nominations. The vice-chair/chair-elect shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least three members, but no more than five, designating one of the appointees as committee chair. The term of office for Nominating Committee members shall begin at the conclusion of the Midwinter Meeting and end at the conclusion of the following Midwinter Meeting. The vice-chair/chair-elect may not be a member of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall solicit candidates from the general membership for the offices of vice-chair/chair-elect, secretary, and member-at-large of the Executive Committee. There should be at least two candidates for each office. Nominations put forth by the Nominating Committee shall be filed with the executive director of ACRL and with the secretary of the Section within the deadlines specified by ACRL. All nominees must be members in good standing of the Section, and must consent to their candidacy in writing.

12. Statement of Objectives. To assist the membership of the Section in making informed choices, each candidate shall be asked to provide a brief statement of objectives for the Section in time for the statement to be published prior to balloting.

13. Additional Nominees. Nominating petitions for candidates other than those of the Nominations Committee signed by no fewer than 20 members of the Section shall be accepted and placed on the ballot if they are filed with the executive director of ACRL at least three months before the date on which the ballots are to be distributed. Written consent of the nominees must accompany such nominations. All nominees must be members in good standing of the Section.

14. Elections. Elections shall be conducted by ballot in accordance with the procedures and

deadlines established by ACRL/ALA. For each office, the candidate receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be elected. In case of a tie, the winner shall be chosen by lot.

J. Vacancies

J1. Vacancies. In case of a vacancy in the office of chair, the vice-chair/chair elect shall serve as chair for the remainder of the uncompleted term, and shall continue in that office for the term for which he or she was originally elected to serve as chair.

In case of a vacancy in the office of vice-chair/chair-elect, the Executive Committee will appoint an acting vice chair. When the next regular election is held, a chair and a vice-chair/chair-elect shall be elected.

If vacancies occur in the offices of chair and vice-chair within the same term, the Executive Committee shall elect as chair one of its members for the remainder of the term. When the next regular election is held a chair and a vice-chair shall be elected. The successful candidate for chair shall then serve a one-year term as chair and a one-year term as immediate past-chair.

In case of a vacancy in the office of secretary, the chair shall appoint a replacement.

In case of a vacancy in other positions, such as member-at-large or committees or task forces, the chair shall appoint a replacement, whose term will end at the start of the term of the next elected member (following Annual conference in the same or subsequent year.)

K. Amendments to Governance Procedures

These Operating Procedures may be amended by the following process.

K1. Proposals for changes to these Governance Procedures may be proposed in writing by the Executive Committee, by any standing committee of the section, or by any five or more members of the Section, as long as they are not in conflict with ALA/ACRL bylaws, policies, or procedures. Proposals shall be submitted to the section chair.

K2. Procedures for making changes.

K2a. Minor editorial changes may be brought to the attention of the chair who will forward them to the Executive Committee. After an appropriate time for members of the Executive Committee to comment, the Executive Committee will vote on the changes. An electronic vote is sufficient, but shall be affirmed at the next conference.

K2b. Proposals for substantive changes to these Governance Procedures must be brought to the chair, who will inform the Executive Committee of the proposals. Executive Committee will determine a suitable time period for commentary from the Section's membership and also will determine how to communicate the proposed changes to the Section's membership. Once the time for commentary has ended, the Executive Committee votes on the proposed changes. If the vote is taken electronically, it must be affirmed at the next annual or midwinter conference. The chair will oversee posting of the revised Governance Procedures to the Section's website, wiki, or other electronic media. The chair will also include a formal announcement of the changes in the next issue of Biblio-Notes.

K3. A current copy of the Section's Governance Procedures shall be made available to the Executive Director of ACRL per ACRL Bylaws, Article XV, Section 3*. The chair may accomplish this by providing the Executive Director of ACRL with a link to the URL for the current copy.

* Available at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/aboutacrl/resourcesforwork/tipsheets/tip27procedures.cfm>