

**American Library Association
Committee on Accreditation**

**Accreditation Decisions and Actions Taken – Spring 2018 Meeting (April 12-13, 2018) and
Conference Call (April 27, 2018)**

Issued May 1, 2018

Members of the 2017-2018 ALA Committee on Accreditation: Terry Weech (Chair), Rachel Applegate, Theresa Byrd, Kathleen De Long, Brad Eden, David Eichmann, Robert Holley, R.E. LeMon, Dale McNeill, Loretta Parham, Karen Snow, and David Weigle.

At its Spring Meeting, held April 12-13, 2018, the ALA Committee on Accreditation (COA) took the following actions:

Accreditation Decisions

Granted Candidacy status to the following program:

- Master of Library and Information Science at Southern Connecticut State University.

Reports from programs

- Reviewed and responded to the following reports from accredited programs and programs with Candidacy or Precandidacy status: 64 annual statistical data reports, 26 biennial narrative reports, one Candidacy status annual progress report, one Precandidacy status annual progress report, and three special reports.
- Denied the requests from two programs for postponement of their comprehensive reviews.

Committee Matters

- Met with one program, via conference telephone, at the request of the program.
- Issued a Notice of Concern to one program.
- Discussed the additional follow-up to the ALA-COA Interim Report, due to CHEA by May 1, 2018.
- Reviewed plans of the COA Policy and Planning, Communications and Outreach, and Standards Review Subcommittees.
- Reviewed and approved the following policy adjustments to *Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3)*, fourth edition:

➤ ***Section I.1 The role of accreditation:***

Inserted the following after the last sentence of the third paragraph:

While COA recognizes that there are many information disciplines that provide important contributions to the education of a professional librarian and that professional education in librarianship may contribute to the skills

and accomplishments of information professionals outside of librarianship, the accreditation process overseen by COA was entered into by ALA and COA “... in order to acknowledge the central role of the COA accreditation process to the recognition of librarianship as a distinct and autonomous profession...” (ALA-COA MOU 2010).

Rationale: To more effectively communicate the Committee on Accreditation’s mission and role in the accreditation of programs leading to the professional degree in library and information studies.

➤ **Section I.2 Accreditation terminology:**

Added the following definitions:

CHEA: The Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Officially recognizes the American Library Association as the accrediting agency for master’s-level programs in library and information studies.

COA: The Committee on Accreditation - The autonomous committee that administers the accreditation review process of educational programs for the profession of librarianship.

ERP: The External Review Panel - A group of two to six library and information faculty and practitioners appointed by the COA through the Office for Accreditation to visit a program and verify information in the Self-Study. Panelists are also vetted by the program to avoid any conflicts of interest.

LIS: Library and Information Studies - In the context of ALA-COA communications, LIS has this specific reference. In other contexts, including some ALA-accredited programs, LIS may refer to Library and Information Science, but this is not the specific meaning in the context of COA accreditation.

Rationale: To provide precise definitions for common acronyms used throughout AP3.

➤ **Section I.10 Candidacy status and Initial accreditation of additional programs:**

Removed the last sentence of the first paragraph and replaced it with:

~~All candidate programs must have an on-site comprehensive review.~~ Each candidate program must be reviewed by a separate External Review Panel and undergo an on-site comprehensive review even if the reviews are scheduled concurrently with another accredited program. The school is responsible for the fees and expenses for each of the additional programs being accredited.

In the second paragraph, replaced the phrase, “from the accredited degree” with “from the accredited program.” It now reads as follows:

Indications that a course of study is a separate program from the accredited ~~degree~~ program and should be brought forward for Candidacy status include:

Rationale: To provide a solution to issues that arise when a school with multiple accredited programs seeks to migrate an accredited program to another campus and/or administrative structure.

➤ **Section I.15 Accreditation decisions:**

Added the bold text to the last paragraph and revised the “effective for” statement:

Any standard on which a program has follow-up reporting (**following a comprehensive review or interim reporting review**) is made public by the Office for Accreditation **in the Directory of ALA-Accredited Programs and** as a part of the usual means (e.g., press release, Accreditation Decisions and Actions Taken reports, and *Prism*).*

** Effective ~~beginning with decisions in January~~ for all programs beginning in May 2018*

Rationale: For fuller public disclosure on COA decision making in response to:

- Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) standard 12B: Demonstrates Accountability
- ALA Task Force on Accreditation Communication and Process recommendation 16: “Make accreditation decisions and documentation publicly available.”

➤ **Section I.22 Institutional or programmatic changes:**

Added the bold text to the third paragraph:

Any change in **organizational structure and/or** executive administration **relevant to the accredited program** must be communicated in writing to the Office for Accreditation within 30 days. Examples of **organizational or** executive administration changes that must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- **The placement of an ALA-accredited program in a different administrative unit**
- Chief executive officer of the institution, e.g., president;
- Head of the accredited program, e.g., dean, director, chair;
- Chief academic officer of the institution, e.g., provost.

Rationale: To specify indicators that should initiate a notice to the Office for Accreditation and the Committee on Accreditation for enabling oversight of the impact of institutional or programmatic changes that might impact the accreditation status of a program.

During its April 27, 2018, conference call, the Committee on Accreditation (COA) took the following action:

Committee Matters

- Reviewed and approved the following policy adjustment to *Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3)*, fourth edition:
 - ***Section II.7.4 Examples of evidence that might be used to indicate compliance with the 2015 Standards for Accreditation:***

Added the bold text to section V. Administration, Finances, and Resources:

V. Administration, Finances, and Resources

- Organizational charts for the program, the school/college of which the program is a part, and the institution as a whole
- Description of relationships of program and school/college to the institution with regard to autonomy, support and resources
- Minutes of meetings of faculty, committees, advisory boards and other relevant groups that provide evidence of administrative structures, decisions made, and plans promulgated by the program
- Descriptions of institution-wide opportunities for faculty, staff, and student participation
- **Documentation that leadership ensures opportunities for student involvement in the field such that each can graduate prepared for employment**
- Lists of faculty, staff, and student appointment/election to school, collegiate, and university administrative and academic entities
- Materials and data on the school's financial structure: budgets, budget analyses, and data reflecting the use of the analyses for decision making
- Information on availability of funds for research, professional development, travel, leaves with pay, and student financial aid
- Criteria used to award professional development, travel, leaves, and other forms of funding to individual faculty, staff and students
- Comparative data on budgets and funding over 5 to 10 years to show trajectories of support
- Information on administrative personnel: demographics, salaries, curricula vitae, and other data compared to similar units in the institution
- The school's evaluation policy for administrative personnel, data reflecting its implementation, and data reflecting the use of the results of evaluations
- Maps, floor plans or descriptions of physical facilities, including off-campus and satellite facilities
- Description of ADA compliance for all facilities where the program holds face-to-face instruction, student professional organization meetings, in-person orientations, and program social events
- **Documentation that leadership ensures student health and safety**

- Information on the library that supports the school and program: assessment of library services, budget, collections, services, usage data
- Information on library support and access to materials, user instruction, and other resources for distance education students and faculty
- Descriptions of technology resources: support services, computer labs and equipment, faculty and staff computing equipment, network resources
- Information on technology support for distance education students and faculty
- Description of institutional facilities available to faculty, students, and staff
- Descriptions of faculty, staff and student use of the facilities available for technology, instructional, and continuing education related to teaching and learning in the program
- Information on how resources such as libraries, technology support, and instructional support are evaluated and how participants contribute to such assessments

Rationale: To meet CHEA Standard 12A5, which calls for the accrediting organization to “refer to resources only to the extent required for students to emerge from institutions or programs appropriately prepared, or to address health and safety in the delivery of programs.”