DRAFT LLAMA Education Plan

A new leadership and management training program for LLAMA

LLAMA’s mission is “To advance outstanding leadership and management practices in library and information services by encouraging and nurturing individual excellence in current and aspiring library leaders.” Specifically, LLAMA aims to provide targeted, high quality professional and leadership development opportunities by delivering wide ranging continuing education in leadership and management. In addition, LLAMA seeks to articulate leadership competencies that support the profession.

A new leadership and management curriculum

Based on discussion at the LLAMA Board, Reorganization Task Force, and supported by results from webinar evaluations, CE surveys of all LLAMA members, an extensive review of library leadership training needs by the Bill and Milinda Gates Foundation, and other sources, it’s clear that LLAMA needs to offer a focused and organized leadership and management curriculum for library leaders. The proposed curriculum will be based on the 14 new LLAMA foundational leadership competencies being presented by the Competencies Committee at the Annual Conference. (Attachment B)

Key considerations in the proposed curriculum:

- Startup: the initial goal will be to develop 2-3 courses, based on the most pressing needs. For example: the three most highly rated leadership competencies are Communication skills, Change management, and Team building. These could provide the general topics for the initial courses.
- Ultimately, each course may be offered multiple times within a 2-3 year period on a rotating basis depending on demand and capacity.
- Target Audience: the curriculum will need to address leaders at various points in their careers, from beginning manager to advanced director or dean, though middle management appears to be the strongest market, as indicated by LLAMA surveys and the Gates Foundation report.
- Development: the development and implementation of a new multi-part curriculum is beyond current staff capacity, so there will need to be an RFP for course development and instruction. The role of the Program Officer in this process will be to define the initial curriculum needs, and coordinate the development of an RFP.
- Member Support: a proposed new LLAMA Content Coordinating Team will help support the course development. The exact role of this team still needs to be developed.
- Delivery: while some face-to-face component, such as a preconference at an Annual Conference, may be developed, the primary delivery method will be online. This will help make the new curriculum affordable and convenient to access for members. This delivery platform is supported by findings in the LLAMA SWOT Analysis (attachment A), the Bill and Melinda Gates report “Cultivating Global Library Leadership: a Review of Leadership Training Programs for Librarians Worldwide”, ALA’s Task Force on Education Initiatives (TFEDI) report. The need for online education is also reported in
many articles I’ve read and workshops I attended on distance learning, including the 2015 Distance Learning Conference in Madison, WI.

- **Cost:** Course development costs can be broadly estimated based on online courses currently offered by other ALA units. For example: AASL pays a $500 honorarium plus 10% of registration fees for course development and delivery; YALSA pays $750 plus $20 student; ALCTS pays $500 for course development and $400 for course delivery. Additional costs will depend on the content delivery software selected for purchase. Development costs will be highest in the first three years, after which they will decline and net revenue will increase. However, some additional expenses will need to be budgeted to keep course materials current as leadership practices themselves evolve. Currently, the Board envisions a three-year spend down of a portion of the operating fund of approximately $25,000 a year.

- **Pricing:** pricing will ultimately be based on agreed upon program goals, development costs, implementation timeline, etc. After further feedback and direction from the Board and Reorganization Task Force, a three-year profit/loss estimate will be developed.

**Moving towards curated content**

LLAMA’s greatest strength has always been the diversity of its member types and the content generated and shared by members, whether in the form of conference programs, pre-conferences, institutes, discussion groups, webinars, articles in LL&M, or other platforms. The sheer volume of content produced is impressive. LLAMA has produced high quality content in the past; but it has had a problem demonstrating in an easily understood way how such varied content fits into the whole of LLAMA.

Coordinated (or curated) content that logically relates to other content produced has several advantages over how LLAMA content is currently produced. First, it more directly supports LLAMA’s mission. Second, it becomes more meaningful, more valuable, and ultimately a richer experience for the learner. And third, curated content is easier to market, because it benefits from a shared and more easily understood identity.

LLAMA’s current reorganization process provides an excellent opportunity to find new ways to coordinate LLAMA’s many different content streams. Currently, webinars are proposed by presenters in and outside of LLAMA, reviewed by the CE Committee and produced with staff support. Conference programs are produced by section committees and approved by the Program Committee. Discussion groups develop topics for dialogue and sharing at the time of the session through a round-robin querying of attendee interests. Pre-conferences are proposed by member committees or individual members and approved by staff. LL&M articles are submitted by individuals within the profession at large and selected by the editors through a traditional review process. At no point is there an overarching organization to all the content produced.
To help resolve this, we recommend the establishment of a new LLAMA Content Coordinating Team that would oversee all of LLAMA’s content in order to assure it is organized in a structured way, and fills member needs. It is likely the team would need sub teams to manage the various strands of content. The exact structure for the proposed committee will need more discussion and development.

Next steps

- Define the type of leadership development program that needs to be developed in terms of focus and style of approach and incorporate this into an RFP.
- Develop an RFP and hire a consultant to plan overall curriculum, develop specific courses and manage the initial roll-out.
- Establish a composition, charge, and working plan for the LLAMA Content Coordinating Team
- Research, select and purchase technology to support leadership training.

Change in staff roles
In addition to current duties, the LLAMA Program officer will:

- Supervise the curriculum development consultant
- Work with the LLAMA Content Coordinating Team and other member groups to develop a plan/model for aligning and evaluating content and outcomes for delivery.

Suggested timeline

Fall 2016:  RFP for leadership course developers
Post MW17:  Continue course development / CE expansion
By Annual 2017:  Call for recommendations for appointment to LLAMA Content Coordinating Team
Attachment A

SWOT Analysis of LLAMA CE Program - May 2016

How well does LLAMA currently provide management and leadership continuing education for the profession?

STRENGTHS

- Consistent quality
- Provides consistent source of revenue with very low overhead
- Highly rated: est. 80% would recommend webinars to peers
- Diverse management and leadership topics have wide appeal
- High quality presenters (for the most part)
- Entire webinar process works smoothly but is flexible enough to allow for ongoing tweaking
- Good mix of content appealing to beginning managers all the way up to directors/deans.
- Good reach to different types of libraries (mainly academic and public) and geographic areas, including other countries
- Fees are competitive in the marketplace
- GTW is a stable and accepted platform and is easy to use
- Good growing mailing list or participants and providers
- Strong learning objectives: provide effective selling points; make speakers accountable to LLAMA and audience; make LLAMA accountable to audience; and provide criteria for evaluation.
- Recording is easy and easily stored and shared
- Recordings are valued by participants

WEAKNESSES

- Only two staff -- limits capacity
- Revenue seems to be falling and we don’t know why. (Could be due to many different things but we can only guess).
- No live interaction -- Audience has to type in questions
- No overall organization to topics
- Content is dependent on needs/wants to presenters, not LLAMA.
- We don’t know much about who our customers are (beyond general supervisory level and type of library)
- Marketing is very broad, not targeted
- No coordination of different content offered by LLAMA: Conference programs; pre-conferences; MW institutes, LL&M articles.
- Archive access data is unknown.
- Speaker honorariums are too low to attract the best presenters/experts/course developers

OPPORTUNITIES

- Our surveys consistently show that LLAMA members want more leadership and management education, learning opportunities. The need is there.
- The market for online library leadership training is good – there is a definite gap
- Online education is increasingly accepted and preferred
- LLAMA has the opportunity to be a leader in online library leadership education
• Untapped market for those wanting leadership training at a middle management level.
• New leadership competencies provide legitimacy and good framework for leadership education.
• Webinar archive can be leveraged to increase value of membership; or repackaged to enhance Leadership Competencies series.
• LIS programs provide no or little leadership and management education – there’s a gap
• Acceptance of online education continues to grow.
• Partnerships with other providers (Can we outsource course development or add our brand to already developed programs?)
• Strengthen relationships with current network of presenters

THREATS/CHALLENGES
• “If we present it, they will come” approach to program planning. We have been lucky so far, but luck could run out as competition increases.
• Don’t know who our competition is. Could change any day.
• There are a lot of library leadership trainings available – though not online
• Webinars may be getting more sophisticated? Do our customers expect more? Does GoToWebinar still support our brand?
• Are we competing with ourselves by offering past webinars for fee to members?

Summary: What does this SWOT tell us?

• LLAMA has a strong brand of producing good products that can be built upon, though current CE topics lack overall organization.
• There is a gap in library leadership training opportunities that are convenient and affordable.
• Online education is increasingly accepted and is the wave of the future.
• LLAMA’s new leadership competencies can provide a good organizational framework for a new leadership competency education series, and for future webinars.
• Programs must be automated so that they are easily accessed and made available multiple times throughout the year.
• New technology will be required. (Course management system – CMS)
Attachment B

Proposed LLAMA Leadership Competencies (rated by importance to LLAMA members)

- Communication skills (60.3%)
- Change management (59.9%)
- Team building (personnel) (54.3%)
- Collaboration and partnerships (44.7%)
- Emotional intelligence (40.8%)
- Problem solving (33.7%)
- Evidence based decision making (33.3%)
- Conflict resolution (personnel) (31.6%)
- Budget creation and presentation (30.9%)
- Forward thinking (30.1%)
- Critical thinking (29.1%)
- Ethics (28%)
- Project planning and scheduling (26.2%)
- Marketing and advocacy (26.2%)