PRISM Everything on One Page

published by the Office for Accreditation
at the American Library Association

Fall 2004 volume 12 number 2

COA Announces Accreditation Actions

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) of the American Library Association has announced accreditation actions taken at the 2004 ALA Annual Conference under the 1992 Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies.

COA has granted initial accreditation to the Master of Library and Information Science offered by the College of Education, University of Denver through spring 2011. This is the first new program accredited by the ALA since 1988.

COA has continued the accreditation of the following graduate programs leading to the first professional degree in library and information studies and has scheduled the next program review for spring 2011:

- Master of Library and Information Studies offered by the Department of Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Master of Science in Library Science and Master of Arts offered by the School of Library and Information Science, University of Kentucky.
- Master of Library and Information Science offered by the Department of Library and Information Science, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.
- Master of Library Science offered by the Division of Library and Information Studies, St. John's University.
- Master of Library and Information Science offered by the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, University of Western Ontario.

For information about a particular program, contact the school.

Contact information and a complete list of programs and degrees accredited by COA can be found in the Directory of Institutions Offering Accredited Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies.

The following institutions have programs being reviewed in the fall 2004 academic term:

- Dominican University
- Kent State University
- Queens College, City University of New York
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The following institutions have programs being reviewed in the spring 2005 academic term:

- Emporia State University
- Indiana University
- Louisiana State University
- University of Missouri, Columbia
- University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- University of Southern Mississippi

The American Library Association is a leading force in accreditation, having evaluated educational programs to prepare librarians since its creation in 1924. ALA's Committee on Accreditation is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accrediation (CHEA) as a reliable authority to determine the quality of education offered by graduate programs in the field of library and information studies.

Demystifying ALA Accreditation: What's Behind the Standards?

Adapted by Renée D. McKinney, OA Program Officer

This article is adapted from a presentation at the COA program, *Demystifying ALA Accreditation*, at the 2004 ALA Conference in Orlando. The presenters were: Jennifer Cargill (Louisiana State University), Bertrum MacDonald (Dalhousie University), Sharon McPherron, Phillip Turner (University of North Texas), and Robert Wedgeworth (Proliteracy Worldwide).

The 1992 *ALA Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies* are the foundation of ALA accreditation. The *Standards* provide the basis for guidance and assessment of graduate programs for librarians and information specialists. COA interprets and applies the *Standards* in continuously evaluating ALA-accredited programs.

ALA accredits LIS Master's programs in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. Accreditation of library and information studies education has long been a North American enterprise. ALA's *Standards* were developed with the recognition that our Canadian programs have unique characteristics and, as qualitative rather than quantitative standards, they allow all programs to be evaluated according to their own missions, goals and objectives.
The Committee offers the following commentary on the *Standards* to aid students,

practitioners, faculty, and employers in understanding how the *Standards* are interpreted and applied in the continuous accreditation process.

Standard I: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

In determining a program's compliance with Standard I, the Committee seeks evidence that the program has used a broad-based planning process to shape its mission, goals, and objectives. This broad-based planning process should involve the constituency the program seeks to serve, including employers, alumni, and current and potential students. The outcome of the planning process should be consistent with the values of the parent institution and the culture and mission of the school. Finally, the mission, goals and objectives should be clearly intended to foster quality education.

Standard II: Curriculum

In determining a program's compliance with Standard II, the Committee seeks evidence that the curriculum is based on goals and objectives and is the result of a systematic planning process that includes constituents. The Committee looks for a curriculum that contains a core and specified content. The curriculum should provide an opportunity to construct coherent programs of study and include a variety of learning opportunities. Any specializations should be driven by professional organizations (ASIST, AASL, SAA, etc.). The Committee seeks to verify that the curriculum was developed to meet the Standards regardless of form of delivery and is constantly reviewed in a process that includes constituents.

Standard III: Faculty

In determining a program's compliance with Standard III, the Committee seeks evidence that there are full-time faculty sufficient in number to carry out major share of program and that the faculty demonstrates high priority to teaching, research, and service. Accordingly, the faculty should demonstrate competence in teaching area(s), technology, teaching/pedagogy. The faculty can accomplish these goals through active participation in appropriate organizations, by evidencing a sustained record of research for each full-time faculty member, and by demonstrating their abilities in research and instructional planning and evaluations. The Committee seeks to confirm that the faculty is from multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual backgrounds and that faculty assignments make sense. Finally, the program should be able to provide evidence that explicit and equitable personnel policies and procedures exist, and that faculty are reviewed in a systematic process that includes constituents.

Standard IV: Students

In determining a program's compliance with Standard IV, the Committee seeks evidence that admissions procedures are consistently applied, fair, and leads to a qualified student body, that policies are consistent with mission, goals, and objectives, and that there are policies in place to recruit and retain multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual students. The Committee wants to confirm that information about the program and its operation is accessible and

understandable to students and that students receive evaluation, guidance, counseling, and placement assistance. Finally, the Committee seeks evidence that the program fosters a learning community, one that incorporates an evaluation procedure that includes constituents.

Standard V: Administrative and Financial Support

In determining a program's compliance with Standard V, the Committee seeks evidence that the program's administration possesses sufficient autonomy in the planning and functioning of the program and that it possesses resources sufficient to reach goals and objectives. The Committee also seeks evidence that the program's chief executive officer (CEO) is equal to other program leaders in different units within the institution. For example, this would mean that the CEO participates in campus-wide administrative forums and has comparable salary and autonomy to other CEO's.

The Committee also seeks evidence that financial support is adequate to provide necessary staff support for the administration and faculty, that the faculty and professional resources are adequate to serve the student needs, and that financial support to the program enables the program to meet its mission, goals and objectives. This includes financial and practical support for research, professional development, sabbatical leaves, and other release time for faculty development.

Standard VI: Physical Resources and Facilities

In interpreting a program's compliance with Standard VI, the Committee looks for evidence that the facilities are sufficient to accomplish the program's stated objectives, including that the physical facilities appropriate for the courses being taught, that students have access to relevant technology, that the program provides adequate support for facilities, and that it periodically reviews the facilities to ensure that they are adequate and to evaluate the need for improvements.

From the Director: OUTLOOK

A New Era

By Karen L. O'Brien, Interim Director, ALA Office for Accreditation

The Office for Accreditation entered a new era this past July as Ann O'Neill, Director for more than five years, returned to academic work. I worked with Ann for most of those years as she directed positive change in the spirit of partnership with programs, the Committee on Accreditation (COA), staff, and with internal and external constituents. Ann's advice and counsel to programs developing their Program Presentations made it possible for review panels and COA to work more effectively. During Ann's term, programs were able to

successfully meet conditions for continued accreditation—due in no small measure to her good counsel. I have heard this from programs and have seen it documented in review evaluations submitted post-visit by deans and university administrators.

Ann mobilized staff and COA to press on with initiatives despite increasing budgetary restrictions. She helped keep our sights on strategic plans for 2001-2004. Results achieved with that plan will inform the planning process the Committee and the Office will undertake this fall for 2005-2008. As part of the initiatives in the 2001-2004 strategic plan, Ann partnered with an external committee appointed by COA to review the current *Standards*. Although the committee did not recommend a complete overhaul of the Standards, their recommendations will be extremely useful in the new planning process.

Ann partnered with staff and 2000/2001 COA Chair Rick Forsman to achieve continued recognition of ALA accreditation by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation CHEA. She was also active within the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors ASPA, serving on their Board of Directors for two years.

Ann encouraged staff to constantly work to improve products and services. Staff member Renée McKinney led the initiative to collaborate with ALA's ITTS Department and LIS programs to provide the *Directory of ALA-Accredited Master's Library and Information Studies Programs* in a searchable online database format. The Office also made a variety of new materials available from the Resources for the External Review Panel page. In 2003, all of the various policies, processes, and procedures booklets were brought together into one publication, Accreditation Process, Policies & Procedures (AP3).

As Interim Director, it is with earnest determination that I continue Ann's approach to the work of the Office and ask for your partnership in the challenges ahead. Please join me in welcoming new COA members: Karen Adams, Director, University Libraries, University of Alberta; Thomas Leonhardt, Director, Scarborough-Phillips Library, St. Edward's University; Katy M. Marre, Professor of English University of Dayton; Nancy K. Roderer, Director, Welch Medical Library at Johns Hopkins University; and Virginia Walter, Chair, Department of Information Science, University of California, Los Angeles . As is the case each year, new members will immediately become immersed in the work of reviewing statistical, narrative and special reports from all programs at the 2004 COA Fall Meeting (November 19-21).

I hope that you will plan to join us in Boston at the 2005 ALISE Annual Conference on Friday morning, January 14, at COA's early bird session at 7:30 a.m. and in the Office for Accreditation's 2:00 p.m. (new deans) and 3:00 p.m. (all deans) sessions that same day. At the 2005 ALA Midwinter Meeting, please plan to join COA in their 4:00 p.m. open session Sunday afternoon, January 16.

I sincerely welcome your involvement and invite you to get in touch with me at kobrien@ala.org or phone 312-280-2434 to share your thoughts on what COA and the Office should have in mind in the strategic planning efforts for 2005-2008.

2004-2005 COA Roster

Robert Wedgeworth, Chair
President, Proliteracy Worldwide
rwedge@proliteracy.org
Term Expires 2005

Karen Adams
Director, University Libraries
University of Alberta
Term Expires 2008

Paula J. Fenza
Grants Manager
Mather Institute on Aging
Term expires 2005

Thomas Leonhardt
Director, Scarborough-Phillips Library
St. Edward's University
Term expires 2008

S. Michael Malinconico
EBSCO Professor of Library Service, School of Library and Information Studies
The University of Alabama
Term expires 2006

Katy M. Marre
Professor of English
University of Dayton
Term expires 2006

Nancy K. Roderer
Director, Welch Medical Library
Johns Hopkins University
Term expires 2008

Carla J. Stoffle
Director, University Libraries
University of Arizona

Term expires 2006

Danny P. Wallace
Director, School of Library and Information Studies
University of Oklahoma
Tem Expires 2007

Virginia Walter
Chair, Department of Information Studies
University of California, Los Angeles
Term expires 2007

Ann C. Weeks
Professor, College of Information Studies
University of Maryland
Term expires 2006

Mary Elizabeth (Ma'lis) Wendt
Associate Director
The New York Public Library
Term Expires 2005

From the COA Chair: PERSPECTIVE

Letter from the COA Chair, Robert Wedgeworth

In the coming year the Committee on Accreditation (COA) will concentrate on improving communications with external reviewers, developing a workshop for programs preparing their Program Presentations, and will intensify efforts to emphasize the importance of continuing accreditation.

At the ALISE Conference this January, COA will hold a session to seek input from programs on a proposal to begin offering workshops at the ALA's Chicago Offices for preparing Program Presentations. That session will be held on Friday morning, January 14, from 7:30-8:45 AM at the Hyatt Boston (Financial District) in the Dedham room on the 4th floor. The proposed Program Presentation workshops are intended to ensure that there is a clear understanding of what is expected in a Program Presentation.

External Review Panels (ERPs) are the on-site eyes and ears of COA. Their reports represent a separate level of review for programs. The concept of continuing accreditation involves recognizing that the information needs and interests of COA evolve as programs respond to new and different challenges. The availability of online program information and the implementation of distance learning options for students are two examples of changes that

have influenced the work of the Committee. ERPs and COA must work in concert as we deal with new phenomena. Therefore, COA will initiate a series of communications with our panelists to explore what changes they have observed in programs that may suggest new areas for further discussion.

Finally, the continuing review cycle of communication through Program Presentations, Annual Statistical Reports, Biennial Narrative Reports, and Special Reports provide a way for COA to maintain a better understanding of what is happening in ALA-accredited LIS programs and inform how the Committee can be helpful in maintaining and improving LIS programs offered to the public.

Robert Wedgeworth is President of Proliteracy Worldwide http://www.proliteracy.org in Syracuse, New York. He can be reached by phone at 315-422-9121 or at rwedge@proliteracy.org.

External Review Panelists Gratefully Acknowledged

External review panelists contribute a substantial amount of their time and energy participating in the accreditation process to assure quality in LIS education. We extend our appreciation to the following panelists who served during the fall 2004 academic term.

Chairs:

- **Judith J. Field**, Senior Lecturer, School of Library and Information Science, Wayne State University
- **June Lester**, Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Oklahoma
- **John Philip Mulvaney**, Library Director, Williams Library, Northern State University
- **Sydney Pierce**, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science, Catholic University

Panelists:

- **Elizabeth Aversa**, Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alabama
- **Dawn Bostwick**, Library Director, Nassau County Public Library System
- **Martha Brogan**, Consultant (New Haven, CT)
- **William E. Buchanan**, Professor, Department of Library Science, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
- **Michele Cloonan**, Dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College

- **John Cronin**, Chief Librarian, Boston Herald Library
- **Ann Curry**, Associate Professor, School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies
- **Donna Dziedzic**, Executive Director, Naperville Public Library
- **Mirah J. Dow**, Assistant Professor, Emporia State University
- **Vicky L. Gregory**, Director, School of Library and Information Science, University of South Florida
- **Steven Hagstrom**, Director, Library Services, Tarrant County College (Fort Worth, TX)
- **Violet H. Harada**, Associate Professor, Library and Information Science Program, University of Hawaii at Honolulu
- **Bruce Kingma**, Associate Dean, School of Information Studies, Syracuse University
- **Linda Marie Golian Lui**, Director, Edwin H. Mookini Library and Graphic Services, University of Hawaii at Hilo
- **Steven Matthews**, Librarian/Media Coordinator, Foxcroft School (Middleburg, VA)
- **Edward T. O'Neill**, Reseach Scientist, Online Computer Library Center
- **Marion T. Reid**, Dean Library and Information Services, California State University at San Marcos
- **Timothy Richards**, Director, Mardigan Library, University of Michigan-Dearborn
- **Blanche Woolls**, Director, School of Library and Information Science, San Jose State University
- **Arthuree Rosemille Wright**, Associate Director for Information, Reseach and Resource Services, Howard University Libraries

Committee on Accreditation Welcomes Five New Members

By Renee D. McKinney, OA Program Officer

Karen Adams joins the Committee on Accreditation with a long history of service to ALA and the Canadian Library Association (CLA). A former Executive Director of CLA, Ms. Adams is the Committee's Canadian member. Ms. Adams is the Director of the University of Alberta Libraries. Her four-year term on COA runs through the 2008 Annual Conference and is not renewable.

Virginia Walter is Chair of the Department of Information Studies in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Walter has been active member of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), serving as 2000-2001 president and is the 2004 recipient of the ALSC Distinguished Service Award. Her four-year term runs through the 2007 Annual Conference and is not renewable.

Thomas Leonhardt also joins the Committee with a long record of ALA service and is the current editor of "International Leads," a publication of the International Relations Roundtable. Mr. Leonhardt has served on External Review Panels since 1996. Dr. Leonhardt

is Director of the Scarborough-Phillips Library at St. Edwards University. His four-year term on COA runs through the 2008 Annual Conference and is not renewable.

The Committee's new public member is Katy M. Marre. Dr. Marre is Associate Vice-President for Graduate Studies and Research and Professor at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio. Her term on COA runs through the 2006 Annual Conference and is renewable for another two-year term.

Nancy K. Roderer rounds out this list of accomplished new Committee members, having served on External Review Panels since 1997. Ms. Roderer is Director of the Welch Medical Library at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. Her four-year term on COA runs through the 2008 Annual Conference and is not renewable.

Please join us in welcoming COA's valuable new members.