Prism

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† As identified by the programs
* As reported by programs to the Committee on Accreditation.

News and announcements

Interim reporting

An email with instructions for regular interim reporting was sent to program-designated contacts (heads of programs and those also to be copied) on November 3, 2021. Any head of program who has not received the emailed instructions should contact the Office at accred@ala.org. The Committee on Accreditation (COA) will review the reports in preparation for its spring 2022 meeting (April 21-22,2022) and prepare a response at that time.

New external review panelists sought

Find out more about what is involved in serving on an external review panel at http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/resourcesforerp/becomereviewer/ERPform. If you are interested or want to recommend someone, the External Review Panel Member Information Form is accessible from that page.

Especially sought are reviewers with expertise in:

- Archives and records management
- Cultural heritage information management
- Curricular review and redesign
- Distance education
- School librarianship
- Public librarianship
- Information science
- Information technology
- LIS graduate program administration
- Service to diverse populations
- French language skills
- Spanish language skills

CoA announces accreditation actions

At the COA meeting at the 2021 Annual Conference

Continued Accreditation status was granted to the following program with the next comprehensive review visit scheduled to take place in spring 2028.

- Master of Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh. Follow up reporting due by March 1, 2022, on Standards I.1 (program's mission and goals pursued through implementation of an ongoing, broad-based, systematic planning process), I.1.1

(continuous review and revision of the program's vision, mission, goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes), I.1.2 (assessment of attainment of program goals, program objectives, and student learning outcomes), I.1.3 (improvements to the program based on analysis of assessment data), I.1.4 (communication of planning policies and processes to program constituents), I.5 (program has explicit, documented evidence of its ongoing decision-making processes and the data to substantiate the evaluation of the program's success in achieving its mission, goals and objectives), I.6 (program demonstrates how the results of the evaluation are systematically used to improve the program and to plan for the future), II.6 (documented evidence to substantiate evaluation of curriculum), III.1 (faculty capable of accomplishing program objectives), III.3 (policies to recruit and retain faculty from diverse backgrounds), III.6 (faculty with diversity of backgrounds and skills and an intellectual environment that enhances the accomplishment of program objectives), III.7 (faculty assignments relate to the needs of the program and to the competencies of individual faculty members), and IV.2 (current, accurate, and easily accessible information about the program is available to students and the general public).

Precandidacy status was granted to the Master of Science in Library Science and Information Services at the University of Central Missouri.

From the Director of the Office: Of Note

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

A year and eight months working mostly remote during this pandemic has tested and refined approaches to the review process. Reviewers and the Committee on Accreditation are navigating this remote terrain with heroic diligence. Yet, the loss in gaining fuller understanding through in-person connection is significant and feels overwhelming at times.

Library and Information Studies programs are showing an enhanced ability to provide narrative and supporting data coherently by virtual means. Brief virtual windows are being employed to provide sensitive information normally shared in person.

Attendee and presenter feedback on the reviewer training conducted in August 2021 included a request for training focused on virtual visits, which is now in the planning stages.

Visits delayed for a year are going forward with visitors able to choose whether to be in-person or work remotely. Office staff and the Committee on Accreditation (CoA) are hoping to be meeting in-person again in January 2022.

This fall we welcome to the ALA Committee on Accreditation (CoA) three accomplished professionals with significant accreditation experience:

Gail Dickinson, Professor, Darden College of Education & Professional Studies, Old Dominion University

Joyce Illfelder-Kaye, Consultant in private practice; former member of the American Psychological Association Commission on Accreditation; Consultant to Internship programs seeking accreditation; former Associate Director, Training, Pennsylvania State University

Win Shih, Director, Integrated Library Systems, University of Southern California Libraries

Linda C. Smith has been appointed Chair of the Committee in the fourth and final year of her CoA term. Dr. Smith is Interim Executive Associate Dean in the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Don't miss her inaugural column Perspective in this edition. She will continue as lead of the CoA Subcommittee on Standards Review. Revision efforts are proceeding and will shortly result in a roll out of the draft for comment.

The CoA Subcommittee on Policy and Planning will continue its work on a template for the Self-Study as the Standards revision process proceeds. The CoA decision in May 2020 to offer a one-year delay to next visit for comprehensive reviews has freed up their docket for that work. The Accreditation Working Group that the ALA Executive Board appointed by prompting of the [Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness](#) and the CoA concluded its work. Its [recommendations](#) are available and being worked on with a top-level select group that includes Karen Schneider at Sonoma State University Library who is the Committee on Accreditation's ALA Executive Board Liaison; Patty Wong, ALA President 2021-2022; Nicole Cooke, Augusta Baker Endowed Chair, School of Information Science, University of South Carolina; and ALA Executive Director, Tracie Hall.

Tech Developments

Although paperless cloud platform document sharing is the way that we have worked in the Office for Accreditation with reviews for many years, the shift to video conferencing has intensified the commitment to thorough reviews. Kudos to all of you who have made this work effective.

-- Wishing you and yours good health!

From the CoA Chair: Perspective

By Linda C. Smith, 2021-22 Chair, Committee on Accreditation (Interim Executive Associate Dean, School of Information Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

It is my privilege to serve as Chair of the Committee on Accreditation (COA) in my fourth and final year as a member of the Committee. In addition to my service on COA, my involvement with accreditation has included serving on and chairing external review panels with site visits to programs in both the US and Canada, preparing multiple program presentations/self-studies for Illinois, and facilitating site visits by external review panels including a virtual site visit in 1997. In a May 2021 report on standards review practices, the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors noted (https://aspa-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Standards-Review-Practices-May-2021.pdf), p. 3): "Professions advance and evolve through academic and field research, practitioner experience, and technological developments. To ensure that accreditation standards reflect state-of-the-art practice, accreditors review and update their standards on a periodic basis to consider changes in education delivery methods and competency requirements for entry into practice for the given profession or field of study." COA has responsibility for undertaking this review and update for the *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library & Information Studies.* In the past 70 years, there have been five different editions of the standards: 1951, 1972, 1992, 2008, 2015. A priority for COA in 2021-22 is coordinating development and review of proposed revisions of the 2015 standards.

Concurrently the ALA Committee on Education has undertaken and is seeking feedback on an update of the 2009 statement of *ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship.* The *Core Competences* are intended to "reflect basic knowledge gained through LIS education, job on-boarding, and ongoing professional development early in a library career" and have been expanded to include a ninth area, Social Justice, in addition to the eight outlined in the 2009 statement (https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/2021-update-alas-core-competences-librarianship).
T
he subcommittee of COA preparing proposed revisions of the 2015 standards has identified several goals for this work, including:
- Identify standards that need to be revised or updated to reflect the current institutional context of LIS education and/or the needs of the profession
- Place more emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion, making it clear what programs should demonstrate
- Revise standards that are difficult to interpret and/or not clearly written
- Reduce redundancy
- Omit standards that are not relevant to achieving educational quality

To date the subcommittee has prepared a draft revision of the standards and engaged experienced external review panel members to provide further review and feedback. The COA

meeting scheduled for mid-November will include further review of the draft revision and development of a timeline for soliciting feedback more broadly. In order to involve the range of stakeholders concerned with accreditation of LIS programs, we will employ an open process with public calls for comment, using both an online survey and multiple virtual public forums. We will also engage with accredited programs through the Association for Library and Information Science Education. The feedback provided will lead to further proposed revisions of the standards. The final step is seeking approval from ALA Council.

During my term as Chair of COA, I welcome your comments and questions, so please feel free to contact me at lcsmith@illinois.edu.

In profile: Teresa Welsh

Dr. Teresa Welsh retired in August after serving for 18 years as University of Southern Mississippi faculty and since 2015 as Director of the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS). After graduating *summa cum laude* from the University of Southern Mississippi with a BA degree in anthropology, Certificate in Humanities, and minors in social studies and classical studies, she earned an MLIS and later a Ph.D. in communication and information from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville (UTK). In addition to being published in scholarly journals and conference proceedings, she has authored several book chapters, co-authored two books on information literacy, co-edited (with Dr. Stacy Creel) a refereed e-journal *SLIS Connecting*, and contributed a regular column "SLIS Notes" to *Mississippi Libraries*.

From 2007-2019, she taught a British Studies summer study-abroad course on libraries, archives, and special collections in London and Edinburgh; since 2015, she has chaired the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival Steering Committee. Under her leadership, SLIS maintained ALA accreditation, and enrollment doubled from 200 undergraduate and graduate students in 2015 to more than 400 students in 2021.

Dr. Welsh has been honored by USM with a promotion to Professor Emeritus of Library and Information Science. In her honor, two endowed USM Foundation funds have been established: Dr. Teresa S. Welsh LIS Scholarship Endowment and Dr. Teresa S. Welsh Children's Book Festival Lecture Endowment (http://usmfoundation.com/tw).

Q. Describe your role at the University of Southern Mississippi.

A. I joined the faculty at Southern Miss School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) in 2003 and served as Professor and Director for the past six years before retiring in August 2021. As Director, I also served as Chair of the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival Steering Committee and as Chair of the SLIS ALA Accreditation Steering Committee.

Q. Every ALA-accredited program must undergo a comprehensive program review at least every seven years. How do you feel your background prepared you for the comprehensive review process you led?

A. Participating in the ALA-accreditation review process and helping develop the self-studies in 2005 and 2012 was valuable preparation for the 2019 comprehensive review. Another practical experience was serving on the University Assessment Committee, which annually evaluates the WEAVE assessment reports for each program at USM.

Q. Do you recall what the biggest struggles were with the review?

A. The two biggest struggles with the review process were time and money. It takes substantial time to plan and prepare for a comprehensive review, and costs increase each cycle.

Q. What did you find most difficult about working on the Self-Study?

A. The most difficult and most rewarding aspect of the self-study was its comprehensive nature. Gathering and compiling the required information from many different sources and weaving it into a document with a logical flow was a challenge.

Q. What do you feel is the most important aspect of preparing for a comprehensive review?

A. I believe the most critical aspects are participation and communication:

- Participation from faculty and staff is vital, and SLIS faculty and staff worked in teams to address each standard.

- A SLIS accreditation steering committee (consisting of the director and two faculty experienced with the accreditation process) compiled and edited the standard reports into the self-study, which was then shared with SLIS faculty, staff, advisory board, alumni listserv, and an external reviewer for review and revision.

- Communication is essential – internal communication among faculty and staff, and external communication with the Office for Accreditation, including reviewing the accreditation guidelines and documentation on the Office website, and what's published in *Prism.*

Q. What advice would you give someone involved in working on a program's comprehensive review for the first time?

A. In addition to the importance of participation and communication, I would pass along the two most useful pieces of advice given to me:

1. When I was new faculty at SLIS, a consultant on accreditation stated that our most important product was our graduates, and that ALA CoA wants to know where they are working and how many have leadership positions. From that, I began an Excel file of our MLIS graduates, from the first class in 1966 to the present, which includes graduation year, their name, email, position title, organization, and location.

2. When I was in the doctoral program, Dr. Elizabeth Aversa, Director at the University of Tennessee, in her class on bibliometric research, taught that the most effective way to present data in a report was in bullet points or tables.

Q. Is the information gathered for the comprehensive review useful to you in other parts of your work such as grant funding, program evaluation, general school accreditation processes, etc.?

A. Yes, the information is definitely useful for WEAVE assessment reports for SACSCOC University accreditation, CAEP accreditation, ALISE statistical reports, and grant funding applications.

Q. How did the program prepare for the review visit? What was that experience like?

A. SLIS was fortunate to have a great review committee chair who clearly communicated what equipment and information they needed and what interviews and meetings to schedule. SLIS discussed and planned the schedule in faculty/staff meetings. Our two SLIS staff arranged the logistics of the visit.

The on-site review visit was a great, positive experience. The External Review Panel members were professional, collegial, and competent. They thoroughly reviewed program records and statistics and met with university officials, faculty, staff, students, alumni, advisory board members, and employers. They visited online classes and conducted interviews and surveys of students and alumni.

Q. What recommendations would you give to other program leaders regarding the accreditation and the comprehensive review process?

A. In addition to the above recommendations, previous director Dr. Elizabeth Haynes advised me to volunteer for accreditation review or program assessment committees, participate in ALA accreditation workshops, and read *Prism.*

Q. Do you have any general observations about the accreditation process that you'd like to share?

A. Yes, I found the accreditation process to be thorough, comprehensive, and effective in ensuring a quality MLIS education program. Due to rising costs, it would be helpful if ALA CoA would consider extending the accreditation cycle from seven years to ten years, with annual statistical reports and biennial reports.

External review panelists acknowledged

External review panelists contribute substantial time and effort to the accreditation process to assure quality in LIS education. We extend our appreciation to the following panelists who served on accreditation reviews during the spring 2021 academic term.

Chairs

Gail K. Dickinson, Professor, Department of STEM and Professional Studies, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Old Dominion University

Panelists

Jennifer Weil Arns, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina
John-Bauer Graham, Dean of Library Services, Houston Cole Library, Jacksonville State University
Sarah Meghan Harper, Professor & K-12 School Library Media Concentration Coordinator, School of Information, Kent State University
Tyler O. Walters, Dean, University Libraries, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)

AASL-CAEP recognition news

The AASL-CAEP Coordinating Committee continues its rollout of the new 2019 ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards. All preparation programs must convert to the new standards by Spring of 2022. To support these efforts, the committee held a series of six webinars for faculty in school library preparation programs as part of their effort to support implementation of the new standards during March and April 2020. For more information and to view the archived webinars, visit the CAEP Accreditation page on the [AASL website](#).

ALA policy B.9.2.2 states: "The master's degree in librarianship from a program accredited by the American Library Association or a master's degree with a specialty in school librarianship from an ALA/AASL Nationally Recognized program in an educational unit accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation is the appropriate first professional degree for school librarians."

Spring 2021 AASL recognition decisions

The following programs, which are part of a CAEP-accredited education unit, received AASL National Recognition or National Recognition with Conditions during the spring 2021 semester. National Recognition is awarded to education master's programs in school librarianship that have been reviewed and approved by AASL's program reviewers using the ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians.

- Sam Houston State University, School Librarian
- Trevecca Nazarene University, School Library Media Specialist
- University of Central Missouri, Library Media Specialist (K-12)
- University of Central Oklahoma, Instructional Media

Spring 2021 reviewers

We extend our appreciation to the following program reviewers and auditors who served during the spring semester:

Judy Bivens, Chair, Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program, Trevecca Nazarene University
Angela Branyon, Assistant Professor, College of Education, University of West Georgia
Elizabeth A. Burns, Assistant Professor, Dept. of STEM Education and Professional Studies, Old Dominion University
Kelly A. Carney, Assistant Professor of Library Media, Northeastern State University
Audrey P. Church, Coordinator, School Library Media Program, Longwood University
Patsy Couts, Professor, Advanced Professional Services, College of Education and Professional Studies, University of Central Oklahoma
Sherry Crow, Professor and Department Chair, Advanced Education Programs, Fort Hays State University
April Dawkins, Assistant Professor, Library & Information Science (LIS) Department, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Gail K. Dickinson, Professor, Department of STEM and Professional Studies, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Old Dominion University
Lesley Farmer, Professor, Librarianship Program, California State University Long Beach
Carl Harvey, Associate Professor, School Librarianship, Longwood University
Ramona Kerby, Professor, School Librarianship Program, McDaniel College
Kimberly McFall, Assistant Professor and Program Director, Curriculum and Instruction, Marshall University
Janice Newsum, Assistant Professor of School Library and Information Science, College of Education, University of Houston-Clear Lake
Vandy Pacetti-Donelson, Director of Library and Instructional Design, United States Sports Academy
Ellen M. Pozzi, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Professional Studies, William Paterson University
Brenda F. Pruitt-Annisette, Coordinator, Media Services, Fulton County Schools Library
Michelle Robertson, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Advanced Professional & Special Services, University of Central Oklahoma

The next issue of *Prism* will be published in April 2022. Please stay tuned!

Send comments or feedback to accred@ala.org.