

Association of College & Research Libraries
ALA/ACRL American Library Association
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Board of Directors/Budget & Finance Action Form

To: ACRL Budget & Finance Committee/ACRL Board of Directors

Subject: Student Membership Dues Assessment (2017-2023) and FY25 Rate

Submitted by: David Free, ACRL Senior Communications and Membership Strategist

Date submitted: January 16, 2024

Background

In June 2017, the ACRL Board of Directors approved reducing ACRL student membership dues by 87.8% from \$41 to \$5 effective September 1, 2017, for a three-year period (September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2020).

Doc C1 provides a brief assessment of the impact of discounting student dues since FY18. Key findings include:

- As of August 2023, ACRL student membership has increased 16.3% (+102) over August 2017 and now stands at 729 which is 9.5% of all ACRL personal members.
- Student membership is the only ACRL personal dues category to show an increase since FY17. All other personal dues categories declined over the six-year period.
- ACRL student dues are the lowest of all ALA divisions.

Stakeholders

The ACRL Budget and Finance Committee is being asked to consider maintaining the ACRL student membership dues at \$5 for FY25.

Fiscal and Staffing Impact

It is expected that student membership dues revenue to remain at or near FY24 levels in FY25. Staff will communicate the FY25 dues rate to ALA Member Relations & Services to ensure the join/renew materials reflect the correct rate.

Budget & Finance Action Recommended

That the ACRL Budget and Finance Committee approves a recommendation to the ACRL Board of Directors a student dues rate of \$5 for FY25.

Electronic submission is preferred for all Board actions. If electronic submission of the entire document is not possible, please send the Action Form to ACRL Program Officer Allison Payne electronically at apayne@ala.org and the remainder in hard copy.

Board Action Recommended

That the ACRL Board of Directors approves the ACRL Budget and Finance Committee's recommendation a student dues rate of \$5 for FY25.

Strategic Goal Area Supported

Please see the [ACRL Strategic Plan](#), and select from the drop-down the goal area that will be affected most by this action.

☐ **Value of Academic Libraries**

Goal: Academic libraries demonstrate alignment with and impact on institutional outcomes.

☐ **Student Learning**

Goal: Advance innovative practices and environments that transform student learning.

☐ **Research and Scholarly Environment**

Goal: Librarians accelerate the transition to more open and equitable systems of scholarship.

☐ **New Roles and Changing Landscapes**

Goal: Academic and research library workforce effectively navigates change in higher education environments.

☐ **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**

Goal: TBD

☒ **Enabling Programs and Services**

ACRL programs, services, and publications that target education, advocacy, and member engagement.

ACRL LLX24 Joint Board/B&F Doc C1

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2024 Update on ACRL Student Membership

Background

In June 2017, the ACRL Board of Directors approved reducing ACRL student membership dues by 87.8% from \$41 to \$5 effective September 1, 2017, for a three-year period (September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2020). After the three-year pilot period, the ACRL Budget and Finance Committee assessed the impact of the change and decided to recommend continuing to offer discounted student dues. The \$5 student membership rate has been extended annually through FY24.

As the table below shows, the only ACRL personal membership category to post an increase since 2017 is student membership.

ACRL Personal Membership Type	FY17	FY23	% Change
International	251	154	-38.6%
Non-Salaried	349	254	-27.2%
Regular	7,737	5,821	-24.8%
Retired	350	180	-45.6%
Support Staff	155	76	-51%
Students	627	729	16.3%

As of August 2023, ACRL student membership has increased 16.3% (102 members) over August 2017 levels and now stands at 729 which is 9.5% of all ACRL personal members. Student membership was approaching FY12 levels (when library schools were providing free memberships to their students) before the COVID pandemic struck. Student membership has declined by 23% (227 members) since 2021, however.



The chart below compares ACRL student membership and membership dues with other ALA divisions. The \$5 dues level is clearly an attractive price point for students to join ACRL versus other ALA divisions.

Division	Student Members FY23	FY23 Dues
ACRL	729	\$5
AASL	664	\$40
ALSC	299	\$20
CORE	151	\$30
PLA	391	\$36
RUSA	188	\$25
UNITED	44	\$25
YALSA	319	\$27

Market Penetration and Future Conversations

While reasons for why students join ACRL are difficult to discern, the number of ALA-accredited enrollments is one metric to consider as the Board/Committee holds strategic conversations for future initiatives. In 2022, there were 18,249¹ student enrollments for ALA-accredited programs. The Board/Committee may choose to explore market penetration and strategies for recruiting and retaining student members, as they consider financial sustainability strategies for the division and how to best support the evolving profession.

¹ ALISE 2023 Statistical Report. May 2023. <https://ali.memberclicks.net/alise-statistical-reports>