**Minutes for the Winter 2021 ACRL Chapters Council Meeting (Tuesday, February 2, 3:00-4:30 PM Eastern Time)**

**Attendees**

Ali Larsen, Chair; Dawn Behrend, Vice-Chair; Eric Edwards, Secretary; Lisa Nickel, Past Chair; Leslin Charles, *Chapter Topics Newsletter* Editor; Edward Kownslar, Listserv Administrator; Carrie Dunham-LaGree, Legislative Representative; Kara Malenfant, ACRL Interim Executive Director; Lauren Carlton - ACRL Program Coordinator, Member Services; Lucy Bellamy, California Chapter; Kate Blocksidge, Ohio Chapter; Rachel Bridgewater, Oregon Chapter; Rachel Callison, Western Pennsylvania/West Virginia Chapter; Camille Chesley, Eastern New York Chapter; Melissa Clark, Texas Library Association’s College and University Libraries Division; Jess Denke, Delaware Valley Chapter (Pennsylvania); Monika Glowacka-Musial, New Mexico Chapter; Mandi Goodsett, Ohio Chapter; Erin Jerome, New England Chapter; Laura Johnson, North Carolina Chapter; Rebecca Kelley, Louisiana Chapter; Anne Kish, Montana Chapter; Alyssa Koclanes, Florida Chapter; Lori Kupsky, Missouri Chapter; Brian Maass, Nebraska Chapter; Kelleen Maluski, New Mexico Chapter; Jess McIntosh, Ohio Chapter; Tina Mesa - Texas Library Association, College & University Libraries Division; Ekaterini Papadopoulou, Washington Chapter; Lamonica Sanford, Georgia Chapter; Sandy Schiefer, Missouri Chapter; Amy Thielen, Washington Chapter; Alyssa Valenti, New Jersey Chapter; Heather VanDyne, Kansas Chapter; Velappan Velappan, North Carolina Chapter

Chair Ali Larsen called the meeting to order at 3:44 PM. (The meeting itself followed a separate guest presentation.)

**Updates from the Chair**

The 2021 ACRL Chapters Council elections will take place in the spring. Check the Chapters Council listserv for more information. Background on the responsibilities of the various officers (Vice-Chair and Secretary) is available on the Chapters Council webpage, at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/chapters/acr-cco>.

The submissions period for the Spring issue of the *Chapter Topics Newsletter* opens soon. Editor Leslin Charles will put a call out on the listserv February 16. The deadline is April 30.

**Report from ACRL Leadership**

Ms. Kara Malenfant, ACRL Interim Executive Director—This year’s ACRL Conference is all-virtual (April 13-16), and registration is open. Additional updates will become available in the next few weeks, including information on special programming, such as online social-networking opportunities. People who have submitted a poster proposal should receive notification tomorrow (February 3) of the submission’s status. Anyone who has submitted a proposal for a paper or a panel discussion and would be interested in learning the status will need to contact Margot Conahan, Manager of Professional Development, at mconahan@ala.org.

There is currently a call for volunteers to serve on division and section committees of ACRL. The deadline is Friday, February 12. The expectations for committee service have been changing recently (even before COVID-19), with some committees not requiring in-person meetings, while other committees strive to meet at least once a year. There is no specific requirement that committees meet in person; whether or not a committee might find an in-person meeting useful often depends on that committee’s specific charge.

The ALA Annual Conference will take place entirely virtually, from June 24 to 29. Information on registration should become available soon.

Ms. Lauren Carlton, ACRL Program Coordinator, Program Services—There are currently no formal guidelines for how often state or regional chapters of ACRL need to meet. The general rule, however, is that each chapter should strive to meet at least twice a year.

All chapters should have received their budgets. At the current time, ALA and ACRL are facing financial challenges, so chapters need to be especially conscientious when submitting expense requests. Chapters should consider whether an expense is actually necessary now or can wait until later. The current ACRL chapter officers listed on the official roster of chapter leaders should have received the budget information. Remember to update that information annually, depending on when the new leadership takes office.

As a reminder, each chapter has two free ACRL webinars available to show per calendar year. A list of webinar options is available at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/conferences/elearning/acrlpresents>. Anyone with questions may contact Lauren Carlton, at lcarlton@ala.org. There is not currently an option for closed-captioning during the webinars.

In terms of the number of sites that may view a webinar, the past limit was six, although there might be restrictions on how many sites can show a webinar simultaneously. Margot Conahan might be able to provide clarification. With the current limitations on travel and in-person gatherings due to COVID-19, chapters will probably need to show the webinars virtually. Lauren Carlton will check whether the restriction on the number of webinar host sites is different for virtual viewings.

The Chapters Speaker Bureau is another opportunity for statewide and regional chapters to provide their members with ACRL-related updates and insights. The link to more information is <http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/chapters/officersspeakers>. Chapter leaders can contact ACRL officers directly about these virtual learning opportunities.

ACRL will be transitioning all of its listservs from a single platform onto ALA Connect. (This will be an ALA-wide transition that includes the ACRL Chapters Council listserv.) The Chapters Council is trying to create a private database so that the listserv administrator can add new members. The current understanding is that any ALA members, not just Chapters Council members, should be able to create a free account and join. Signing up will require having an e-mail address that one can use for completing any administrative tasks.

Subscribers will no longer have the ability to post to the forum directly; instead, someone will post in the online community for a person. The platform would still essentially work like a listserv, however. The ultimate goal is to provide more functionality.

ACRL will post reminders about creating a free Connect account. There will be an overlap period between when the old listserv is retired and the new platform becomes operational. The instructions from ACRL will include a clear timeline.

Lisa Nickel confirmed that the ARCL Chapters Council already has a Connect account. (The link to the account is <https://connect.ala.org/acrl/communities/community-home/digestviewer?communitykey=d13ad230-4f52-451f-9618-e8b4a8cccc0a&tab=digestviewer>.) She will check whether non-members are currently able to join.

Ms. Carrie Dunham-LaGree, ACRL Legislative Representative—There is not currently an updated ACRL legislative agenda, as it is still early in the new presidential administration. The committee held a meeting last week. It will build on the current agenda and consider more ambitious goals that might be possible with Democratic control of the White House and Congress.

National Legislative Day will take place in April this year, as an all-virtual event. There is not currently an official schedule. Anyone interested in participating should continue checking the listservs and newsletters for updates. Please direct any questions on ACRL-related legislative issues to carrie.dunham-lagree@drake.edu.

**Announcements from the Chapters**

Chair Larsen asked the statewide and regional chapter representatives in attendance to share any interesting initiatives or projects they are undertaking, or any issues their chapters are facing related to COVID-19. The North Carolina Chapter announced that its annual conference will take place virtually on Thursday, May 6, with a theme of Transforming Our Future: How Our Practices Today Inform our Futures Tomorrow. The call for proposals has gone out to listservs, with a deadline of Sunday, March 7.

The California Chapter reported that the SCIL (Southern California Instruction Librarians) Interest Group recently hosted a virtual workshop titled, “Unmute Your Mic”, which focused on how libraries continued outreach during the stay-at-home orders. For details and slides, please go to <http://www.carl-acrl.org/ig/scil/>. Additionally, the California Chapter’s 2022 meeting is in the preliminary planning stages, but no specific information, such as the meeting dates or a theme, is available yet.

The Kansas Chapter is currently working on planning its conference. The Ohio Chapter is also planning its annual meeting, which will take place in October. Lisa Nickel shared that there is a document from 2020 containing recent chapter conference themes. The information is available at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1A40J91MkSixyLnPX3UC1uVHBoWjZSFJf4pVWHS2RSWE/edit#gid=0>.

**Old Business**

Chair Larsen reminded everyone about the ongoing Chapters Directory project, for which the Chapters Council is gathering information from the statewide and regional organizations. The compiled information will go into a Google document that chapters can use for their reference. (The document is available at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iOui-OYDKNMG1eTWiBk3okGi_duXHWl5MA6dFeaW9Ok/edit#gid=0>.) The goals of compiling the information are to determine how statewide chapters use their membership numbers or reach out to members, along with how chapters work with their statewide or regional library organizations. Some of the information the document contains is basic background, in addition to how a chapter’s annual meeting or conference is organized.

The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed completion of the project. Additionally, some chapters have seen leaders change jobs or leave the profession altogether, so the lack of continuity might also be making it difficult to obtain response. So far, five chapters have responded.

Suggestions for improving the process of collecting data, including adding or adjusting the criteria that the Google document contains, are welcome. Please contact Lisa Nickel. The Chapters Council will hold a working meeting on the project in the near future. Let Dawn Behrend if you wish to be part of that meeting. There will also be an announcement on the listserv.

**New Business**

ALA has drafted a letter in response to efforts for including librarians in the 1b vaccination group at the federal level. Advocating for a similar approach at the state level is more complicated, since each state has its own rules and there is debate surrounding the extent to which libraries, including academic and research ones, are actually utilized. There is a channel within ALA that studies these types of resolutions. A response should come relatively soon, but, again, the focus remains on the federal level. There may eventually be language in the resolution addressing the issue at the state level, also.

Chair Larsen reported that at a recent Chapters Relations Council meeting, concern was expressed regarding the proposed leadership structure of ALA under the Forward Together plan. The concern was that Chapters would not have an adequate voice within the proposed structure. A letter was drafted and sent by members of the Chapters Relations Council to express these concerns.

Chair Larsen launched a discussion on the best practices for chapters to recruit and retain members. As part of this discussion, individual chapters shared their approaches for recruiting and retaining members, along with any challenges that have arisen. Chair Larsen noted that all statewide chapters are independent and can make their own policies, independent of any guidelines or rules from the national organization. The New England Chapter reported that only one-eighth of regional organization’s members are also affiliated with ACRL nationally. The Louisiana Chapter doesn’t charge members of ACRL to join the statewide organization, but instead adds those individuals to the membership automatically. (It receives a list from the national organization and uses this information to update the current roster, since membership lapses during the summer.) The Louisiana Chapter does have a process for registering new members, so that the organization can obtain additional information. The Florida Chapter, also, relies on the annual membership list from ACRL.

In terms of dues, several chapters reported that they must follow the fee structures of their statewide library organizations, especially if those organizations directly govern the ACRL chapters. This the approach that the Iowa Chapter follows, as does the North Carolina Chapter. The New Jersey Chapter noted that, even though it is under the statewide library association (New Jersey Library Association), members can belong to either NJLA or ACRL, or both organizations. This situation makes recruiting and retaining members especially challenging. The Delaware Valley Chapter automatically makes anyone who attends a Chapter-sponsored program a member for a year.

Chair Larsen noted that, since ACRL chapters are under their statewide organizations, it can be hard to reach a consensus on the issue of recruiting and retaining members. It might be worth exploring what feasible options exist within the current structure, including fee rules, for making joining and staying in a statewide or regional chapter seem more worthwhile. Additionally, many members of ACRL may not be aware that the statewide and regional chapters even exist. Lauren Carlton stated that ACRL would be glad to add chapter members to the roster on its website. She noted that there is a map showing where the statewide organizations are located, at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/chapters/roster>.

Chair Larsen announced that the date and time for the next meeting of the Chapters Council are still to be determined. The meeting will definitely have a virtual format. One of the advantages of meeting virtually is that more people can attend, allowing greater participation and input from a wider range of chapters. She asked people to submit potential agenda items, with one current possibility being examples of library programming that has replaced in-person meetings and events during the ongoing pandemic. Additionally, it might be possible to have a guest speaker at the next meeting, and she encouraged any recommendations.

There being no further business, Chair Larsen adjourned the meeting at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Eric Edwards, ACRL Chapters Council Secretary, on February 22, 2021