

**ACRL University Libraries  
Section  
Best Practices and  
Expectations for Committee  
Chairs and Discussion  
Group Conveners**

<b>Section Chair and Vice-Chair</b> .....	3
Chair .....	4
Vice-Chair .....	6
<b>Committees</b> .....	8
Academic Outreach.....	9
Award Committee .....	12
Communications Committee .....	15
Conference Program Planning Committee.....	19
Committee on the Future of University Libraries .....	22
Membership Committee.....	26
Nominating Committee.....	29
Procedures Committee .....	30
Technology in University Libraries Committee .....	33
<b>Discussion Groups</b> .....	36
Campus Administration and Leadership Discussion Group.....	37
Current Topics Discussion Group .....	41
Evidence-Based Practices Discussion Group.....	45
Mid-Level Managers Discussion group.....	49

## **Section Chair and Vice-Chair**

## Chair

### Role

- Serves as a member of the ULS Executive Committee, ACRL Leadership Council, and ACRL Communities of Practice Assembly (COPA).
- Serves as an officer of the section and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the section in accordance with the ACRL Plan for Excellence.
- Oversees the development, implementation, and reporting of the section's contribution to, and support of, the ACRL Plan for Excellence. This report is due in July after the ALA Annual Conference and consists of reports on all committee and discussion group activity for the year.
- Works and collaborates with the ULS Vice-Chair and Past Chair on the section's activities and initiatives.
- Leads the initiative in the selection of an Emerging Leader sponsored by ULS. The Vice-Chair coordinates the efforts to select the Emerging Leader.
- Chairs all meetings of the section Executive Committee at Annual and Midwinter Conferences.
- Works with the ALA office, ULS Committee Chairs, and ULS Discussion Group Conveners to schedule meetings and discussion group spaces and needs (except for the Program Committee) for the ALA Midwinter Meetings and Annual Conferences.
- Attends and participates in ACRL Leadership Council sessions (usually held Friday afternoons at the ALA Midwinter and Annual Conferences).
- Member of the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.
- Ex-Officio member of the ACRL Academic/Research Librarian of the Year Award.
- Represents ULS at ALA and ACRL functions when possible.

### At the beginning of your term:

#### Review:

- ULS Manual:  
<http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/uls/ULS%20Manual%20-%20Revised%20June%202013.pdf>
- ULS Governance Procedures:  
<http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/acrlsections/Official%20ULS%20governance%20procedures%20July%202014.pdf>

#### Communicate:

- Introduce yourself to the ULS Vice-Chair if you do not already know each other
- Introduce yourself to the ULS Executive Committee email list

### Advice

- Ask each Committee Chair and Discussion Group Convener to set goals for the upcoming year.
- Communicate often with the ULS Executive Committee.
- Be visible. Build relationships with committee chairs, committee members, and members-at-large.
- Be responsive to e-mails from people wanting to engage in ULS. Even if there is not an opportunity for them now, there could be in the future. The more engaged members we have, the better.
- Be patient and do not hesitate to ask questions or get support from the Vice-Chair, Past Chair, or Executive Committee (members-at-large are often looking for projects to work on).
- If you have any questions, contact Megan Griffin, [mgriffin@ala.org](mailto:mgriffin@ala.org).

## Vice-Chair

### Role

- Serves as a member of the ULS Executive Committee, ACRL Leadership Council, and ACRL Communities of Practice Assembly (COPA).
- Works and collaborates with the ULS Chair and Past Chair on the section's activities and initiatives.
- Appoints people to fill vacancies on all ULS committees and discussion groups in the spring (for terms beginning when Chair).
- Chairs the ULS Award Committee
- If ULS sponsors an Emerging Leader, coordinates the selection of an Emerging Leader on behalf of the ULS Executive Council

### At the beginning of your term:

#### Review:

- ULS Manual:  
<http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/uls/ULS%20Manual%20-%20Revised%20June%202013.pdf>
- ULS Governance Procedures:  
<http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/acrlsections/Official%20ULS%20governance%20procedures%20July%202014.pdf>
- ULS Award Committee best practices (See Below)

#### Communicate:

- Introduce yourself to the ULS Chair if you do not already know each other
- Introduce yourself to the ULS Executive Committee email list

### Appointments

- The first appointments to make are for the Nominating Committee and Conference Program Planning Committee, since their work starts in the spring prior to ALA Annual. These usually are made by January.
- In the spring, you will make the rest of the ULS appointments. This takes time and is important, so set aside time to do this well. It will happen in February and March.
- Megan Griffin will e-mail you and guide you through the process. Pay attention to her emails, as they provide detailed advice and guidance.
- Review all committee best practices to find out how many people ought to be appointed to each committee or discussion group.
- In general, appoint people for 2 year terms. Stagger terms so that (ideally) no more than half of a committee will reach the end of their appointment in a given year.
- Contact the ULS Chair for advice, since they went through the process the previous year.
- If you have any questions, contact Megan Griffin, [mgriffin@ala.org](mailto:mgriffin@ala.org).

**Advice**

- Communicate often with the ULS Chair, asking questions and collaborating on efforts, so that you are well-prepared for transitioning into the Chair role.
- Be visible. Build relationships with committee chairs, committee members, and members-at-large.
- Be responsive to e-mails from people wanting to engage in ULS. Even if there is not an opportunity for them now, there could be in the future. The more engaged members we have, the better.
- Be patient and don't hesitate to ask questions or get support from the Chair, Past Chair, or Executive Committee (members-at-large are often looking for projects to work on).

## **Committees**



## **Academic Outreach**

### **Committee's goal/mission**

To develop and maintain a community of practice to share information and foster best practices in campus outreach for academic librarians.

### **Ideal number of committee members**

10-12

### **Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee**

#### Online Discussions

We currently offer an online discussion series for librarians to discuss issues, ideas, and best practices related to academic outreach.

A variety of roles and responsibilities are required to run the discussion series:

- Scheduling dates & planning discussion topics
- Creating & managing discussions within the online platform (currently Google Hangouts on Air)
- Publicity
- Registration and communication with registrants
- Facilitation of discussions
- Collection & distribution of ideas, best practices, and resources from discussions (currently organized by topic and posted publicly to ALA connect)

#### Other Committee Work

We anticipate that other projects and work will grow out of these virtual conversations, or at in person conference meetings. Hopefully as we develop a successful workflow and everyone becomes comfortable with the process, that will allow more time for other committee work.

### **Other committee specific information**

NA

### **At the beginning of your chairship**

- Talk to the previous chair
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding
  - Are there subcommittees or sub-groups established
  - Are there any long term or ongoing projects
  - Any tips for taking charge of the committee
  - Get any files, email lists or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.)
- Find out what projects the board/chair are prioritizing for the coming year
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other

- Reconfirm sub-group or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable)
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects
  - Replace people who want to rotate off
  - Do all sub-groups need to continue

### **Running meetings**

- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before)
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, long term and short term projects
  - Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate)
  - Committees should consider having a minimum of 4 meetings per year.
  - Agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send out drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well
- Start meetings on time and end on time
  - 20 minutes before the end of the meeting and it looks like the meeting might need to be extended ask if people want/are able to continue
- Be sure to leave time for discussion
  - Encourage people who aren't participating in the meeting to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members and subcommittees or sub-groups to do
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise
- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting)
- After the meeting, notes should be transformed into meeting minutes. Official minutes should aim to capture the conversation at a high level and not attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips and pointers, please review Eli Mina's [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.
- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

### **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

### **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner
- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available

- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well
- Communication is essential

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding sub-group activities.
- If possible, maintain your membership in the committee and actively participate (offer to take on assignments)

### **Best Practices for Committee Participants**

- Respond to emails quickly
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot)
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work

## Award Committee

### Committee's goal/mission

To solicit, collect and review applications for the ULS Outstanding Professional Development Award and to select the most qualified individual for the annual award in accordance with the University Libraries Section Awards Committee's criteria.

### Ideal number of committee members

5

### Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee

Chair of the Committee (who is also Vice-Chair of ULS) should be responsible for:

- Liaising with the Conference Program Committee. Since the award is presented at ALA Annual, it's important to communicate with the chair of the Conference Program Committee.
- Picking up the award plaque and check at ALA Annual. The award plaque is usually at the ACRL Booth in the ALA Office, and the check is with an ACRL staff member at ACRL Leadership Council.

Other committee member potential roles:

- Liaison with the Membership Committee. The awardee should be recognized at the ULS Social (planned by the Membership Committee), if the awardee is present.
- Liaison with the Communications Committee. To both solicit applications for the award and recognize the award winner.

### Other committee specific information

Award details, including eligibility, criteria, and submission process is available at: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/awards/achievementawards/ulsaward>.

Chase Ollis, ACRL Program Coordinator, can answer any questions you have about the award process ([collis@ala.org](mailto:collis@ala.org)). He can provide you with official ACRL documentation about the process for section awards. Be sure to follow the timeline and process outlined in the documentation.

Meetings can be virtual or in-person at ALA Midwinter and Annual. Much of the work happens around ALA Midwinter as the committee scores applications and selects a winner, so an in-person meeting at ALA Midwinter is useful. It's also useful for some committee members to attend ALA Annual to help in physically picking up the award plaque and check, attending lunch with the award winner, presenting the award (if needed), and/or attending the ULS Social to toast the award winner.

The ULS Chair and Sponsor generally present the award at ALA Annual at the beginning of the ULS Program. Treating the award winner to lunch is another nice thing to do (and

can be coordinated with the Conference Programming Committee if they are treating speakers to a lunch).

### **At the beginning of your chairship**

- Talk to the previous chair (current chair of ULS)
  - Get any tips for running the committee
  - Get copies of any helpful documents, including the rubric for scoring applications.
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other.
- Schedule your first virtual meeting with the committee for July or August.
- Contact ACRL Program Coordinator Chase Ollis ([collis@ala.org](mailto:collis@ala.org)) to introduce yourself and ask for all documentation about section-level ACRL Awards.
- Review the timeline for the award and plan a schedule for meetings and milestones.

### **Meetings**

#### **When to meet**

- Meet virtually with the committee before the end of August since award applications are due in early December each year and promotion starts well beforehand.
- Have a minimum of 4 meetings per year:
  - July-August: discuss a promotion/communications plan for soliciting nominations
  - December: review application rubric and prepare for scoring
  - ALA Midwinter: review committee members' scores and select an award winner
  - ALA Annual: review past year's work and discussion transition to the incoming committee

#### **Agendas and minutes**

- Send meeting agendas to members in advance of the meeting (2 weeks before).
- Post all agendas to ALA Connect: <http://connect.ala.org/node/243916>.
- Transcribe official minutes (based on notes from the meeting) that capture the conversation at a high level. Don't attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips, review Eli Mina's [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.
- Send meeting minutes to Megan Griffin for ACRL's official records ([mgriffin@ala.org](mailto:mgriffin@ala.org)).

#### **Tips for running meetings**

- Leave time for discussion. Encourage people to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others.
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members to do.
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise.

- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting)

### **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting. Send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.

### **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Chair and ACRL and complete reports by any deadline.
- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available.
- Consider reflecting on and assessing the work of the committee to improve processes and identify priorities.
- Communication is essential.

### **At the end of your chairship**

- Write a (brief) end-of-year report of the committee's work and submit to the ULS chair.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee.

### **Best practices for committee members**

- Respond to emails quickly.
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee.
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments.
- Attend committee meetings (and always inform the chair if you cannot).
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair.
- Come to meetings prepared and ready to participate.
- Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments.
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested.

## Communications Committee

### Committee's goal/mission

To facilitate awareness of ULS and its professional development activities and programs through a variety of means including a brochure, electronic newsletter, discussion list, and website; to facilitate communication between ULS and its members, among the ULS committees, and with ACRL, ALA, and other organizations; to contact and provide information about ULS to new members.

### Ideal number of committee members

8-10

### Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee

This committee uses several digital communication portals (including social media) to accomplish its mission:

- [ULS Universe](#) (blog/website)
- [ULS Twitter feed](#)
- [ULS Facebook page](#)
- [ULS-L email list](#)
- [ULS e-newsletter](#)
- [ULS site on ALA Connect](#)

The committee chair should divide members into subgroups or teams of individuals who wish to work on a specific portal, with one person designated as lead for each. Ideally, most portals should have at least two people working on them so that no one is burdened with sole responsibility of administering, posting, and monitoring a portal 100% of the time (exceptions: ULS ALA Connect site does not need an admin, and ULS-L needs only one admin). Team members can decide among themselves how they wish to divide responsibilities for administering, posting, and monitoring a portal (e.g., the Facebook team may have three members and responsibility for the site rotates weekly among them). Optional: teams or individuals can rotate among portals every six months or annually if they wish to have more variety or experience in administering different types of media.

The committee chair should maintain a document online (e.g., on ALA Connect or Google Drive) where all committee members have access that outlines, at a minimum, the following information for each communication portal:

- Name of portal
- Frequency of updates for the portal
- The intended audience for the portal
- Privacy, copyright, or disclaimer notices as well as info about who can post or publish on the portal

- Admins for the portal (both the lead and the rest of the team) and their email addresses
- The purpose of the portal (e.g., what kind of content is posted or published)

This document should also contain marketing and promotion guidelines and tips as well as account usernames and passwords, and the committee chair should update it as needed.

### **Other committee-specific information**

In 2013, the committee developed an [online form](#) so that ULS committee chairs and discussion group leaders could request promotion of their activities. This form was developed using Google Forms, and when it is submitted, the responses are populated into a Google spreadsheet. The committee chair should make sure that all committee members have access to the spreadsheet and should update the form when appropriate and necessary.

### **At the beginning of your chairship**

- Talk to the previous chair.
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding.
  - Find out whether subcommittees or subgroups have been established.
  - Ask whether there are any long term or ongoing projects.
  - Ask for tips for taking charge of the committee.
  - Get any files, email lists, or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.).
- Find out what projects the board/chair are prioritizing for the coming year.
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term (this does not apply to the Communications Committee).
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other.
- Reconfirm subgroup or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable).
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects.
  - Replace people who want to rotate off.
  - Figure out whether all subgroups need to continue.

### **Running meetings**

- About six months before ALA Midwinter and Annual, the ULS Executive Committee Chair will send out an email asking whether you want to schedule an in-person meeting. If you do, then follow the chair's instructions in the email.
- If you prefer to meet virtually, schedule meetings within one month following Annual and Midwinter. You can meet via conference call, Google Hangouts, Adobe Connect, or other options (more info from ACRL [here](#)).



- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before). Ask members if they have any agenda items to add.
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business.
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, and long-term and short-term projects.
  - Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate).
  - Committees should consider having a minimum of 4 meetings per year. (The Communications Committee has traditionally had 2 meetings per year, which is fine.)
  - The agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send committee members drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well (if they are to be discussed in the meeting).
- Start meetings on time and end on time.
  - At 20 minutes before the end of the meeting, if it looks like the meeting might need to be extended, ask if people want/are able to continue.
- Be sure to leave time for discussion
  - Encourage people who aren’t participating in the meeting to participate, and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others.
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members and subcommittees or subgroups to do.
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise.
- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting).
- After the meeting, notes should be transformed into meeting minutes. Official minutes should aim to capture the conversation at a high level and not attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips and pointers, please review Eli Mina’s [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.
- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings, but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

### **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

### **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner.
- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available.
- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities.
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well.
- Communication is essential.

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and give reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding subgroup activities.
- If possible, maintain your membership in the committee and actively participate (offer to take on assignments).

### **Best practices for committee participants**

- Respond to emails quickly.
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee.
- Serve on subcommittees and subgroups and volunteer for assignments.
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot).
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary.
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate.
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments.
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested.
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work.

## Conference Program Planning Committee

### Committee's goal/mission

To present a program sponsored by ULS at ALA Annual

### Ideal number of committee members

At least 4, since there are duties to do during the program and it is unlikely that all committee members will be able to attend Annual or the program

### Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee

NA

### Other committee specific information

It is best to begin meeting immediately after or even before Annual, given that the proposal deadline is September 1. This FAQ is extremely useful for deadlines, links, etc.:

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/conferences/confsandpreconfs/annual/annualprogramsfaq>

### At the beginning of your chairship

- Talk to the previous chair
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding
  - Are there subcommittees or sub-groups established
  - Are there any long term or ongoing projects
  - Any tips for taking charge of the committee
  - Get any files, email lists or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.)
- Find out what projects the board/chair are prioritizing for the coming year
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other
- Reconfirm sub-group or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable)
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects
  - Replace people who want to rotate off
  - Do all sub-groups need to continue

### Running meetings

- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before)
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, long term and short term projects

- Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate)
- Committees should consider having a minimum of 4 meetings per year.
- Agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send out drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well
- Start meetings on time and end on time
  - 20 minutes before the end of the meeting and it looks like the meeting might need to be extended ask if people want/are able to continue
- Be sure to leave time for discussion
  - Encourage people who aren’t participating in the meeting to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members and subcommittees or sub-groups to do
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise
- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting)
- After the meeting, notes should be transformed into meeting minutes. Official minutes should aim to capture the conversation at a high level and not attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips and pointers, please review Eli Mina’s [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.
- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

### **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

### **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner
- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available
- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well
- Communication is essential

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding sub-group activities.
- If possible, maintain your membership in the committee and actively participate (offer to take on assignments)

### **Best Practices for Committee Participants**

- Respond to emails quickly
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot)
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work

## **Committee on the Future of University Libraries**

### **Committee's goal/mission**

To explore and document new directions in university libraries, and to support the ULS Executive Committee by brainstorming means through which ULS might better support university librarians in the future.

### **Ideal number of committee members**

Unknown. There have been 12-14 in recent years, but most meetings—which have been largely in person—seem to attract only 3-5 members.

### **Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee**

The 2014-2015 chair had only attended one meeting before becoming chair, so she didn't really have a good grasp of what the committee actually did or what subgroups might do. During 2014-2015, we sponsored two ULS Online Discussions, which were well-attended and well-received. There certainly could be a subgroup responsible for running one of those each year. Duties include coming up with a topic, recruiting presenters, working with the appropriate ULS committee to arrange logistics, publicizing the session, and moderating the discussion.

The 2014-2015 chair also was not sure of what the most effective way to handle the meetings at Annual and Midwinter would be. We ended up using our meeting time basically for a discussion forum at each (we even ended up changing the committee meeting label at Annual to discussion forum), so a subgroup to organize that would be another possibility.

We did not have any virtual meetings during 2014-2015. In retrospect, that was a mistake. That is the only way that some committee members would be able to participate.

### **Other committee specific information**

Figuring out a role for this committee is a big challenge. Many of the topics we've considered for a discussion forum or speaker panel overlap with other committees. The ALA also opened a Center for the Future of Libraries last year with much fanfare—but no contact with our committee—so figuring out a relationship with that Center would be useful. See <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future>.

### **At the beginning of your chairship**

- Talk to the previous chair
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding

- Are there subcommittees or sub-groups established
- Are there any long term or ongoing projects
- Any tips for taking charge of the committee
- Get any files, email lists or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.)
- Find out what projects the board/chair are prioritizing for the coming year
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other
- Reconfirm sub-group or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable)
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects
  - Replace people who want to rotate off
  - Do all sub-groups need to continue

### **Running meetings**

- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before)
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, long term and short term projects
  - Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate)
  - Committees should consider having a minimum of 4 meetings per year.
  - Agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send out drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well
- Start meetings on time and end on time
  - 20 minutes before the end of the meeting and it looks like the meeting might need to be extended ask if people want/are able to continue
- Be sure to leave time for discussion
  - Encourage people who aren't participating in the meeting to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members and subcommittees or sub-groups to do
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise
- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting)
- After the meeting, notes should be transformed into meeting minutes. Official minutes should aim to capture the conversation at a high level and not attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips and pointers, please review Eli Mina's [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.

- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

### **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

### **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner
- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available
- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well
- Communication is essential

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding sub-group activities.
- If possible, maintain your membership in the committee and actively participate (offer to take on assignments)

### **Best Practices for Committee Participants**

- Respond to emails quickly
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot)
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments



- Review documents and offer feedback as requested
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work

## **Membership Committee**

### **Committee's goal/mission**

To serve as a resource for all issues related to ULS members, recruit new members, promote involvement in ULS, maintain an up-to-date roster for all section committees and develop liaison relationships with the ULS Communications Committee and the ACRL Membership Committee.

### **Ideal number of committee members**

8-10

### **Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee**

The committee has a number of responsibilities including:

- Sending New, Reinstated and Dropped member letters
- Planning and marketing the ULS social for midwinter and annual
- Planning and marketing the On-the-fly mentoring at midwinter and annual

The chair ensures that there is one person assigned to send each of the types of letters, and at least one person assigned to plan and market on-the-fly mentoring and the online discussions. The chair also leads and manages the social planning as well as submits the monthly activity reports to the Sections committee google form. The Membership Chair Finally the membership chair and represents the membership committee to the ULS Executive Committee.

### **At the beginning of your chairship**

- Talk to the previous chair
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding
  - Are there subcommittees or sub-groups established
  - Are there any long term or ongoing projects
  - Any tips for taking charge of the committee
  - Get any files, email lists or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.)
- Find out what projects the board/chair are prioritizing for the coming year
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other
- Reconfirm sub-group or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable)
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects
  - Replace people who want to rotate off
  - Do all sub-groups need to continue

## **Running meetings**

- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before)
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, long term and short term projects
  - Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate)
  - Committees should consider having a minimum of 4 meetings per year.
  - Agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send out drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well
- Start meetings on time and end on time
  - 20 minutes before the end of the meeting and it looks like the meeting might need to be extended ask if people want/are able to continue
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  - Encourage people who aren’t participating in the meeting to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others
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- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise
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- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

## **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

## **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner

- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available
- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well
- Communication is essential

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding sub-group activities.
- If possible, maintain your membership in the committee and actively participate (offer to take on assignments)

### **Best Practices for Committee Participants**

- Respond to emails quickly
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot)
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work

## **Nominating Committee**

### **Committee Charge**

To choose, in accordance with the deadlines prescribed by the Executive Director of ACRL, a slate of nominees for the Section positions vacant as of the close of the next ALA Conference

### **Committee structure and Ideal number of members**

The immediate past-chair of ULS is the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Three additional ULS members shall serve on the Nominating Committee. Each member serves through one election cycle, which extends across two years.

### **Conducting Meetings**

Meetings may be virtual or face to face. Common practice is to conduct business outside the conference structure; usually virtually.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

An ACRL staff liaison will contact the Committee Chair to confirm the list of vacancies and provide a document outlining procedures and the key deadlines.

The Committee Chair distributes the information provided by the ACRL staff liaison, schedules meetings of the group and assures that deadlines are met.

### **Procedures**

Procedures for developing the slate include:

- Only two candidates should run for each vacant position.
- If the office requires two candidates to be elected, only three candidates should run for the vacant positions.
- Confirm nominees, prepare and distribute consent forms.
- The position of the candidates on the ballot shall be determined by lots conducted by the Nominating Committee
- As a courtesy share the slate with the ULS Executive Committee before sending it to ACRL. The ULS Executive Committee does not approve slates.
- The slate and signed letters of consent for each candidates are submitted to the ACRL.
- The Nominating Committee proofs the ballot and sends any needed revisions or corrections to the ACRL.

### **Best Practices for Committee Members**

- Be informed as to the roles and responsibilities of the vacant positions
- Actively recruit candidates for office, including lists of qualified candidates not elected in recent balloting
- Respond promptly to calls for meetings and offer feedback as requested.

## **Procedures Committee**

### **Committee's goal/mission**

To review and make recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the section's future direction, goals and objectives, and policies. To prepare and, subsequently, maintain and revise a policies and procedures manual for the Section. To ensure proposals and changes are consistent with the Bylaws of the Section. To make proposed revisions in the Bylaws of the Section.

### **Ideal number of committee members**

2-3

### **Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee**

The committee has a number of responsibilities including:

- Reviewing ULS policies and procedures as required by ULS Executive Committee;
- Making recommendations for actions on changes to existing policies as requested by ULS Executive Committee;
- Updating/revising/maintaining the ULS policies and procedures manual as necessary based on changes to procedures

The chair ensures requests for reviews and/or changes to existing procedures as listed in the bylaws are reviewed by the Procedures committee as necessary, and communicates activities of the community to ULS Executive Committee.

### **At the beginning of your chairship**

- Talk to the previous chair
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding
  - Are there subcommittees or sub-groups established
  - Are there any long term or ongoing projects
  - Any tips for taking charge of the committee
  - Get any files, email lists or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.)
- Find out what projects the board/chair are prioritizing for the coming year
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other
- Reconfirm sub-group or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable)
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects
  - Replace people who want to rotate off
  - Do all sub-groups need to continue

## **Running meetings**

- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before)
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, long term and short term projects
  - Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate)
  - Committees should consider having a minimum of 4 meetings per year.
  - Agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send out drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well
- Start meetings on time and end on time
  - 20 minutes before the end of the meeting and it looks like the meeting might need to be extended ask if people want/are able to continue
- Be sure to leave time for discussion
  - Encourage people who aren’t participating in the meeting to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members and subcommittees or sub-groups to do
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise
- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting)
- After the meeting, notes should be transformed into meeting minutes. Official minutes should aim to capture the conversation at a high level and not attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips and pointers, please review Eli Mina’s [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.
- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

## **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

## **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner

- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available
- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well
- Communication is essential

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding sub-group activities.
- If possible, maintain your membership in the committee and actively participate (offer to take on assignments)

### **Best Practices for Committee Participants**

- Respond to emails quickly
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot)
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work



## Technology in University Libraries Committee

### Committee's goal/mission

To explore uses of technology in university libraries in areas such as instruction, reference, and outreach, and to offer selective guidance and information to aid university librarians in employing new technologies.

### Ideal number of committee members

There have been 12-16 in recent years. This number seems ideal in that it guarantees a reasonable number of attendees at each meeting, and it allows for having several subcommittees.

### Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for committee

The committee has had several functions:

- To provide content for the TechBits sidebar that appears in each issue of *C&RL News*
- To share technology items of interest to ULS members and the public using social media, especially Facebook and Twitter
- To assist with the production of any technology-oriented professional development webinars

### Other committee specific information

The committee operates using two co-chairs, ideally such that each chair comes on during a different year, so that there is always continuity with the previous year.

### At the beginning of your chairship

- Have a virtual meeting with the outgoing co-chair and the continuing co-chair:
  - Find out what issues or projects were left outstanding
  - Are there subcommittees or sub-groups established?
  - Are there any long-term or ongoing projects?
  - Any tips for taking charge of the committee
  - Get any files, email lists or other helpful documents (passwords, etc.)
- Find out what projects the ULS Executive group are prioritizing for the coming year
- Work with other ULS committees involved in professional development activities, providing support for technology-related topics
- Set up an email contact list for your committee and email the committee members to have them introduce themselves to each other
- Reconfirm sub-group or subcommittee chairs' interest in serving (if applicable)
  - Get updates from these people on existing projects
  - Replace people who want to rotate off

- Do all sub-groups need to continue?

### **Running meetings**

- Send meeting agendas out to members well in advance of the meeting (typically 2 weeks before)
  - Agendas serve to keep the meetings on track and members focused on committee business
  - Separate the agenda into sections like operational matters, special projects, long term and short term projects
  - Consider including anticipated actions for each agenda item (this can be “no action needed” where appropriate)
  - The committee should have at least 4 virtual meetings per year, with one at the beginning of a typical academic year, one later in the same year (prior to ALA Midwinter), one in the new year after ALA Midwinter, and one near the end of the academic year and before ALA Annual.
  - Agenda should also be posted to ALA Connect.
- Send out drafts of reports prior to the meeting as well
- Start meetings on time and end on time
  - 20 minutes before the end of the meeting and it looks like the meeting might need to be extended ask if people want/are able to continue
- Be sure to leave time for discussion
  - Encourage people who aren’t participating in the meeting to participate and make sure no one dominates discussions to the exclusion of others
- Assign tasks and have meaningful work for members and subcommittees or sub-groups to do
- Give credit where credit is due and be generous with praise
- Keep good notes (or have someone volunteer to keep notes for the meeting)
- After the meeting, notes should be transformed into meeting minutes. Official minutes should aim to capture the conversation at a high level and not attribute specific comments to any one person. For tips and pointers, please review Eli Mina’s [Making the Meeting](#) resources on the ACRL website.
- Schedule the next meeting at the present meeting if possible. Often a decision can be made about preferred meeting slots for in person meetings but that does not guarantee ALA will allot the preferred slot.

### **Follow up after meetings**

- Contact people who did not attend the meeting and let them know what happened in the meeting. The chair may want to send members who missed the meeting a copy of the meeting minutes.
- Post meeting minutes to ALA Connect within two weeks of the meeting.

### **General things to remember**

- Be aware of reporting requirements to the ULS Executive Committee Chair and ACRL and complete reports in a timely manner
- Take advantage of mentoring from previous committee chairs and ULS Executive Committee members when available
- Consider setting up committee assessment to inform processes and priorities
  - Consider assessing meetings occasionally as well
- Communication is essential

### **At the end of your chairship**

- At some point you will need to suggest potential members to chair the committee after your tenure. Consider people who would be able to take over that role and reasons why they would be good choices for the role.
- Make your successor's life easier by having a summary ready of committee activities during your term and make sure they have all necessary materials to take over the committee, including information regarding sub-group activities.
- Hold a virtual meeting with your continuing co-chair and the incoming co-chair.

### **Best Practices for Committee Participants**

- Respond to emails quickly
- Be informed about the mission of the organization and the charge of the committee
- Serve on subcommittees and sub-groups, take on assignments
- Attend committee meetings (or inform the chair if you cannot)
- Review the agendas prior to meetings and make additions to the agenda prior to the meeting by contacting the chair if necessary
  - Come to the meetings prepared and ready to participate
  - Help keep meetings on time by contributing to discussions with relevant comments
- Review documents and offer feedback as requested
- Suggest possible committee members who would contribute to the committee's work

## **Discussion Groups**

## **Campus Administration and Leadership Discussion Group**

### **Discussion Group's goal/mission**

To provide a forum for discussion and presentations on current topics of interest related to campus administration and library leaders.

### **Ideal number of members**

2

### **Ideal responsibilities for group**

Plan agenda for discussion group meetings at midwinter and annual conference by determining topic and format. Agendas for previous conference meetings have included a call sent out on relevant listservs for proposals to present a topic and lead a discussion, optionally followed by a convener-led group discussion.

ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures includes a Chapter on Communities of Practice, which describes division-level committees

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/resources/policies/chapter4#4.10>). Many of these practices are smart for section discussion groups as well. Below are those same guidelines (as of 11/25/14), edited to be appropriate for a section:

### **Discussion Groups**

ULS discussion groups are intended to be an informal and flexible way for members with like-minded interests to discuss current issues facing the profession.

### **Discussion group leader expectations**

Discussion groups usually need one or two leaders. Leaders can be selected by the discussion group itself, at a Midwinter meeting, or can be appointed by the ULS vice chair. Either way, the ULS vice chair should officially appoint the DG leader(s) via the regular appointment method. ULS Discussion Group Leaders must be a member of ACRL and ULS.

### **Discussion group leader tasks:**

- Decide on meeting topic. If no topic was agreed to at a previous discussion, send out a call for ideas to the entire ULS community via its listserv (ULS-L) and the ULS blog.
- Advertise the meeting before conference. Generally, discussion groups are advertised via ALA Connect, CALDG email list, ULS-L, the ULS blog, and any other ACRL or other lists who might be interested in the topic.
- Consider co-sponsoring discussions with other ACRL DGs or other ALA groups, if appropriate. That can draw more people.

- Keep the group on topic and on time during the meetings.
- Send the meeting summary to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 2 weeks of the conference.
- Serve as moderator for group list:  
Campus Administration and Leadership Discussion Group  
acrleadershipdg@lists.ala.org
- Moderate the ALA Connect community or appoint a moderator. (*If your group does not have a space, contact your ULS Chair to request one from ALA.*)
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term.

### **Email Lists + ALA Connect Space**

ACRL discussion groups may host their email listserv on an outside server, or may request a listserv address from ACRL. Discussion group leaders and/or the appointed moderators are solely responsible for maintaining the listserv, which includes passing listserv instructions onto future discussion group leaders and/or moderators. Aside from creating the list and fixing technical problems, ACRL staff cannot provide further support. Also groups can use their ALA Connect Space to share, communicate and allow members to set up automatic updates when things are posted in the space. Jenny Levine at ALA can be contacted to arrange space through the ULS Chair if there is none

### **Meeting Format Guidelines**

- Some discussion topics work better if one or more speakers start up the topic. However, speakers should talk for no more than 20 minutes altogether. It is critical to any DG that more time is allotted for group discussion than for presentation. Presentations are best if they are informal, and if they engage the audience into considering the issues.
- Larger discussion groups may do round robins, with the small groups each presenting their thoughts at the end.
- Setting meeting objectives and asking participants to prepare answers to a few questions before conference is one way to help to make an effective discussion group meeting.
- ACRL and ALA rules indicate that discussion groups may not conduct *programs* at the ALA Midwinter Meeting or ALA Annual Conference. A meeting would be considered a program when one or more outside speakers are invited to present to the group for the duration of the meeting. A discussion group that conducted a program during the ALA Annual Conference would compete with ACRL-approved programs, which have been planned for over two years.

## **Suggested Timeline to Prepare for Meetings**

### Three Months Before Meeting

- Decide on discussion topic for upcoming meeting.
- Will a guest presenter participate or will attendees talk amongst each other for the duration of the meeting?
- Consider developing 1 or 2 objectives for the meeting.
- Prepare an agenda which includes a few questions to guide the discussion, meeting objectives and time limits for each agenda item.
- Prepare a set of “seed” questions to get or keep the conversation going.

### One Month Before Meeting

- Email the agenda to discussion group listserv and/or any other lists that might be appropriate. If appropriate, ask members to consider answers to each question.
- Post an advertisement for the discussion group meeting on ULS-L, the ULS blog, other ACRL listservs, and anywhere else appropriate.
- Prepare to keep attendees focused during the meeting in case the discussion gets off-topic. Depending on the set-up, it may help to have a facilitator or “plant” at each discussion table, to ensure continued discussion through use of seed questions prepared earlier.
- Prepare ideas to ensure all attendees have an opportunity to participate.
- Consider timecards so the discussion group leader knows when time is running out without being interrupted verbally.

### **At the Meeting**

- Arrive at room 30 minutes early to ensure proper set-up.
- Inform attendees of the meeting format.
- Ask an attendee to take minutes.
- Ask an attendee to be a timekeeper (or have one of the DG leaders be the timekeeper).
- Lead group in selecting a new leader for the next year (current leader may extend term another year if necessary; no more than 4 terms)

### **After the Meeting**

- Send a summary including the identity and contact information of the next year's discussion group leader to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 30 days of the meeting.

### **Scheduling Meetings**

Section chairs schedule meeting space for discussion groups for the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the ALA Annual Conference in the Fall. Discussion leaders should share any meeting format ideas when deciding on a seating arrangement. Most discussion groups should request seating in rounds or hollow square. Another option for discussion groups under 20 members would be conference-style seating, which is one large table. Discussion groups should not request theater-style seating as it is not conducive to audience discussion.

Note that Midwinter meetings tend to draw bigger crowds as there are no programs to attend. Base the size of the room on previous knowledge of attendance at any DG.

### **ACRL Support**

ACRL staff support division-level discussion groups by:

- Maintaining online discussion group leader rosters
- Working with ALA Conference Services to ensure meetings are listed in the onsite program book and online scheduler.
- Answering procedural questions
- Providing administrative support for online discussions in WebEx



## **Current Topics Discussion Group**

### **Discussion Group's goal/mission**

To organize informal discussion meetings and presentations on well-defined issues and problems of current interest to university libraries and librarians.

### **Ideal number of members**

2

### **Ideal responsibilities for group**

Plan agenda for discussion group meetings at midwinter and annual conference by determining topic and format. Agendas for previous conference meetings have included a call sent out on relevant listservs for proposals to present a topic and lead a discussion, optionally followed by a convener-led group discussion.

ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures includes a Chapter on Communities of Practice, which describes division-level committees

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/resources/policies/chapter4#4.10>). Many of these practices are smart for section discussion groups as well. Below are those same guidelines (as of 11/25/14), edited to be appropriate for a section:

### **Discussion Groups**

ULS discussion groups are intended to be an informal and flexible way for members with like-minded interests to discuss current issues facing the profession.

### **Discussion group leader expectations**

Discussion groups usually need one or two leaders. Leaders can be selected by the discussion group itself, at a Midwinter meeting, or can be appointed by the ULS vice chair. Either way, the ULS vice chair should officially appoint the DG leader(s) via the regular appointment method. ULS Discussion Group Leaders must be a member of ACRL and ULS.

### **Discussion group leader tasks:**

- Decide on meeting topic. If no topic was agreed to at a previous discussion, send out a call for ideas to the entire ULS community via its listserv (ULS-L) and the ULS blog.
- Advertise the meeting before conference. Generally, discussion groups are advertised via ALA Connect, CALDG email list, ULS-L, the ULS blog, and any other ACRL or other lists who might be interested in the topic.
- Consider co-sponsoring discussions with other ACRL DGs or other ALA groups, if appropriate. That can draw more people.

- Keep the group on topic and on time during the meetings.
- Send the meeting summary to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 2 weeks of the conference.
- Serve as moderator for group list:  
Campus Administration and Leadership Discussion Group  
acrleadershipdg@lists.ala.org
- Moderate the ALA Connect community or appoint a moderator. (*If your group does not have a space, contact your ULS Chair to request one from ALA.*)
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term.

### **Email Lists + ALA Connect Space**

ACRL discussion groups may host their email listserv on an outside server, or may request a listserv address from ACRL. Discussion group leaders and/or the appointed moderators are solely responsible for maintaining the listserv, which includes passing listserv instructions onto future discussion group leaders and/or moderators. Aside from creating the list and fixing technical problems, ACRL staff cannot provide further support. Also groups can use their ALA Connect Space to share, communicate and allow members to set up automatic updates when things are posted in the space. Jenny Levine at ALA can be contacted to arrange space through the ULS Chair if there is none

### **Meeting Format Guidelines**

- Some discussion topics work better if one or more speakers start up the topic. However, speakers should talk for no more than 20 minutes altogether. It is critical to any DG that more time is allotted for group discussion than for presentation. Presentations are best if they are informal, and if they engage the audience into considering the issues.
- Larger discussion groups may do round robins, with the small groups each presenting their thoughts at the end.
- Setting meeting objectives and asking participants to prepare answers to a few questions before conference is one way to help to make an effective discussion group meeting.
- ACRL and ALA rules indicate that discussion groups may not conduct *programs* at the ALA Midwinter Meeting or ALA Annual Conference. A meeting would be considered a program when one or more outside speakers are invited to present to the group for the duration of the meeting. A discussion group that conducted a program during the ALA Annual Conference would compete with ACRL-approved programs, which have been planned for over two years.

## **Suggested Timeline to Prepare for Meetings**

### Three Months Before Meeting

- Decide on discussion topic for upcoming meeting.
- Will a guest presenter participate or will attendees talk amongst each other for the duration of the meeting?
- Consider developing 1 or 2 objectives for the meeting.
- Prepare an agenda which includes a few questions to guide the discussion, meeting objectives and time limits for each agenda item.
- Prepare a set of “seed” questions to get or keep the conversation going.

### One Month Before Meeting

- Email the agenda to discussion group listserv and/or any other lists that might be appropriate. If appropriate, ask members to consider answers to each question.
- Post an advertisement for the discussion group meeting on ULS-L, the ULS blog, other ACRL listservs, and anywhere else appropriate.
- Prepare to keep attendees focused during the meeting in case the discussion gets off-topic. Depending on the set-up, it may help to have a facilitator or “plant” at each discussion table, to ensure continued discussion through use of seed questions prepared earlier.
- Prepare ideas to ensure all attendees have an opportunity to participate.
- Consider timecards so the discussion group leader knows when time is running out without being interrupted verbally.

### **At the Meeting**

- Arrive at room 30 minutes early to ensure proper set-up.
- Inform attendees of the meeting format.
- Ask an attendee to take minutes.
- Ask an attendee to be a timekeeper (or have one of the DG leaders be the timekeeper).
- Lead group in selecting a new leader for the next year (current leader may extend term another year if necessary; no more than 4 terms)

### **After the Meeting**

- Send a summary including the identity and contact information of the next year's discussion group leader to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 30 days of the meeting.

### **Scheduling Meetings**

Section chairs schedule meeting space for discussion groups for the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the ALA Annual Conference in the Fall. Discussion leaders should share any meeting format ideas when deciding on a seating arrangement. Most discussion groups should request seating in rounds or hollow square. Another option for discussion groups under 20 members would be conference-style seating, which is one large table. Discussion groups should not request theater-style seating as it is not conducive to audience discussion.

Note that Midwinter meetings tend to draw bigger crowds as there are no programs to attend. Base the size of the room on previous knowledge of attendance at any DG.

### **ACRL Support**

ACRL staff support division-level discussion groups by:

- Maintaining online discussion group leader rosters
- Working with ALA Conference Services to ensure meetings are listed in the onsite program book and online scheduler.
- Answering procedural questions
- Providing administrative support for online discussions in WebEx

## **Evidence-Based Practices Discussion Group**

### **Discussion Group's goal/mission**

To offer a forum for librarians and other information professionals to discuss as a community:

- Research-based decision-making in professional practice,
- Practical decisions that have been based on research studies, and
- How to establish evidence-based practices based on a very thorough search of the literature and a very through selection and analysis of the retrieved literature.

### **Ideal number of members**

3

### **Ideal roles and/or subgroups or responsibilities for group**

NA

### **Other DG specific information**

NA

ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures includes a Chapter on Communities of Practice, which describes division-level committees

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/resources/policies/chapter4#4.10>). Many of these practices are smart for section discussion groups as well. Below are those same guidelines (as of 11/25/14), edited to be appropriate for a section:

### **Discussion Groups**

ULS discussion groups are intended to be an informal and flexible way for members with like-minded interests to discuss current issues facing the profession.

### **Discussion group leader expectations**

Discussion groups usually need one or two leaders. Leaders can be selected by the discussion group itself, at a Midwinter meeting, or can be appointed by the ULS vice chair. Either way, the ULS vice chair should officially appoint the DG leader(s) via the regular appointment method. ULS Discussion Group Leaders must be a member of ACRL and ULS.

### **Discussion group leader tasks:**

- Decide on meeting topic. If no topic was agreed to at a previous discussion, send out a call for ideas to the entire ULS community via its listserv (ULS-L) and the ULS blog.

- Advertise the meeting before conference. Generally, discussion groups are advertised via ULS-L, the ULS blog, and any other ACRL or other lists who might be interested in the topic.
- Consider co-sponsoring discussions with other ACRL DGs or other ALA groups, if appropriate. That can draw more people.
- Keep the group on topic and on time during the meetings.
- Send the meeting summary to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 2 weeks of the conference.
- If the discussion group has a list run by ULS, moderate the email list or appoint a moderator. *(Not all groups have a list; contact your ULS Chair to inquire.)*
- Moderate the ALA Connect community or appoint a moderator. *(If your group does not have a space, contact your ULS Chair to request one from ALA.)*
- Plan to work with the ULS Online Discussion Series to produce one online discussion during your term.

### **Email Lists + ALA Connect Space**

ACRL discussion groups may host their email listserv on an outside server, or may request a listserv address from ACRL. Discussion group leaders and/or the appointed moderators are solely responsible for maintaining the listserv, which includes passing listserv instructions onto future discussion group leaders and/or moderators. Aside from creating the list and fixing technical problems, ACRL staff cannot provide further support. Also groups can use their ALA Connect Space to share, communicate and allow members to set up automatic updates when things are posted in the space. Jenny Levine at ALA can be contacted to arrange space through the ULS Chair if there is none.

### **ULS Discussion Groups with lists:**

- Campus Administration and Leadership Discussion Group:  
[acrleadershipdg@lists.ala.org](mailto:acrleadershipdg@lists.ala.org)

### **Meeting format guidelines**

- Some discussion topics work better if one or more speakers start up the topic. However, speakers should talk for no more than 20 minutes altogether. It is critical to any DG that more time is allotted for group discussion than for presentation. Presentations are best if they are informal, and if they engage the audience into considering the issues.
- Larger discussion groups may do round robins, with the small groups each presenting their thoughts at the end.
- Setting meeting objectives and asking participants to prepare answers to a few questions before conference is one way to help to make an effective discussion group meeting.

- ACRL and ALA rules indicate that discussion groups may not conduct *programs* at the ALA Midwinter Meeting or ALA Annual Conference. A meeting would be considered a program when one or more outside speakers are invited to present to the group for the duration of the meeting. A discussion group that conducted a program during the ALA Annual Conference would compete with ACRL-approved programs, which have been planned for over two years.

### **Suggested timeline to prepare for meetings**

#### Three Months Before Meeting

- Decide on discussion topic for upcoming meeting.
- Will a guest presenter participate or will attendees talk amongst each other for the duration of the meeting?
- Consider developing 1 or 2 objectives for the meeting.
- Prepare an agenda which includes a few questions to guide the discussion, meeting objectives and time limits for each agenda item.
- Prepare a set of “seed” questions to get or keep the conversation going.

#### One Month Before Meeting

- Email the agenda to discussion group listserv and/or any other lists that might be appropriate. If appropriate, ask members to consider answers to each question.
- Post an advertisement for the discussion group meeting on ULS-L, the ULS blog, other ACRL listservs, and anywhere else appropriate.
- Prepare to keep attendees focused during the meeting in case the discussion gets off-topic. Depending on the set-up, it may help to have a facilitator or “plant” at each discussion table, to ensure continued discussion through use of seed questions prepared earlier.
- Prepare ideas to ensure all attendees have an opportunity to participate.
- Perhaps make timecards so the discussion group leader knows when time is running out without being interrupted verbally.

#### **At the Meeting**

- Arrive at room 30 minutes early to ensure proper set-up.
- Inform attendees of the meeting format.
- Ask an attendee to take minutes.
- Ask an attendee to be a timekeeper (or have one of the DG leaders be the timekeeper).
- Lead group in selecting a new leader for the next year (current leader may extend term another year if necessary; no more than 4 terms)

### **After the Meeting**

- Send a summary including the identity and contact information of the next year's discussion group leader to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 30 days of the meeting.

### **Scheduling meetings**

Section chairs schedule meeting space for discussion groups for the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the ALA Annual Conference in the Fall. Discussion leaders should share any meeting format ideas when deciding on a seating arrangement. Most discussion groups should request seating in rounds. Another option for discussion groups under 20 members would be conference-style seating, which is one large table. Discussion groups should not request theater-style seating as it is not conducive to audience discussion.

Note that Midwinter meetings tend to draw bigger crowds as there are no programs to attend. Base the size of the room on previous knowledge of attendance at any DG.

### **ACRL staff support**

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## **Mid-Level Managers Discussion group**

### **Discussion Group's goal/mission**

To provide a forum for discussion and presentations on current topics of interest to mid-level managers in academic libraries.

### **Ideal number of members**

3

### **Ideal responsibilities for group**

Plan agenda for discussion group meetings at midwinter and annual conference by determining topic and format. Agendas for previous conference meetings have included a call sent out on relevant listservs for proposals to present a topic and lead a discussion, with a blind review process; and a convener-led group discussion.

ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures includes a Chapter on Communities of Practice, which describes division-level committees

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/resources/policies/chapter4#4.10>). Many of these practices are smart for section discussion groups as well. Below are those same guidelines (as of 11/25/14), edited to be appropriate for a section:

### **Discussion Groups**

ULS discussion groups are intended to be an informal and flexible way for members with like-minded interests to discuss current issues facing the profession.

### **Discussion group leader expectations**

Discussion groups usually need one or two leaders. Leaders can be selected by the discussion group itself, at a Midwinter meeting, or can be appointed by the ULS vice chair. Either way, the ULS vice chair should officially appoint the DG leader(s) via the regular appointment method. ULS Discussion Group Leaders must be a member of ACRL and ULS.

### **Discussion group leader tasks:**

- Decide on meeting topic. If no topic was agreed to at a previous discussion, send out a call for ideas to the entire ULS community via its listserv (ULS-L) and the ULS blog.
- Advertise the meeting before conference. Generally, discussion groups are advertised via ULS-L, the ULS blog, and any other ACRL or other lists who might be interested in the topic.
- Consider co-sponsoring discussions with other ACRL DGs or other ALA groups, if appropriate. That can draw more people.

- Keep the group on topic and on time during the meetings.
- Send the meeting summary to ULS Chair and ACRL staff liaison within 2 weeks of the conference.
- If the discussion group has a list run by ULS, moderate the email list or appoint a moderator. (*Not all groups have a list; contact your ULS Chair to inquire.*)
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program during the ALA Annual Conference would compete with ACRL-approved programs, which have been planned for over two years.

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