

ALL-SIS Executive Board

Teleconference Board Meeting 30 September 2011

Minutes

Present: Kumar Jayasuriya, Leah Sandwell-Weiss, Debora Person, Jack McNeil and Edward Hart.

1. Minutes of Board meetings of 18 August approved.
2. ALL-SIS for AALL Leadership Academy Follow – awarded to Jennifer Wondracek of University of Florida
3. Listservs are being switched to egroups on AALL website. Barbara Ginsberg managing them as she did listserves.
4. Approval of terms in tentative draft of Hein contract to post newsletter on Heinonline. Chair directed to request final draft and to submit it to Kate Hagan for signature.
5. The Board will not endorse the formation of a Consumer Advocacy Caucus, but will direct news of its development to the SIS membership.
6. VIP Guest for Boston: Board approves approaching Dean John O’Brian, current chair of the Council of the ABA Section on Legal Education and Bar Admissions. We would like him to speak at the SIS Business Meeting and possibly either the Director and Middle Managers’ Meetings.
7. Continuing Education Committee sponsoring a webinar on Legal Project Management on 12 October 2011.
7. Bluebook Committee: Mission and charge approved. See Appendix below for text.
8. Statistics Committee: Reviewed and replied to report from U.S. News Taskforce. See Appendix for text.
9. Suggestions Chair made for Future Summit attendees.

Jen Davit, Melanie Oberlin, Jason Zarin, Abby De Santos, Julie Graves Krishnaswami, Molly Brownfield, Dennis Kim Prieto, Annemarie Zell, and Joe Custer

11. Tentative next call 18 November, Friday at 11 a.m. EST

Appendix

Bluebook Committee Mission and Charge

Mission:

To advocate on behalf of academic law libraries a comprehensive Bluebook that meets the needs of the Bluebook editors while considering the resources available to law libraries as they meet the needs of their student journals.

1. Serve as a clearinghouse for member input, suggestions and comments regarding the current edition of the Bluebook.

- The Committee, on behalf of ALL-SIS, would forward information to the Bluebook editors

- The Committee would create a web form for members to submit comments; the committee would gather additional information as necessary prior to submitting to Bluebook editors

2. Solicit input and suggestions for next edition of the Bluebook

- As the editors begin the process of compiling the next edition of the Bluebook, solicit input from the membership to submit to the editors

3. Serve as the centralized contact for the Bluebook editors to solicit information from law librarians

4. Expand the Model Policies for Services to Journal Staff to include individual library policies, especially as related to Bluebook issues

- coordinate with appropriate Committee (Student Services)

5. Assume advocacy role within each state and work to have electronic version of that state's legislation become an official version

- develop sample letters to be submitted to appropriate state legislative group advocating for official e-versions

- work with appropriate AALL Committee(s) in this goal

Statistics Committee

- 1) The first recommendation and the attached letter did not indicate whether the TF was aware of the work done on this problem by Theodore Seto, who both wrote on the topic and presented at the 2007 AALL meeting. His work is notable among all the previous writings on the US News rankings for parsing out with some specificity the impact the library has on a school's ranking, based on the then-current criteria: 0.75%. It seems unlikely that this figure has changed much in the intervening years. This committee calls this to your attention for two reasons:
 - a. the expert analysis suggested by this first recommendation seems already to exist, and therefore it may be unnecessary for ALL-SIS to do more than update the available conclusions.
 - b. In light of Seto's work, the problem seems not to be how the library data are reported, but the size of the impact library data will have, whatever form it takes. If ALL-SIS intends to lobby US News for significant changes, the first preference should perhaps be to increase the importance of the library for determining the school's rank. Otherwise it makes little sense for ALL-SIS to expend much effort worrying about what data are used to calculate a factor that is, in most cases, insignificant to the school's final rank.
- 2) The second TF recommendation proposes that ALL-SIS search for alternative ways to report library data, beyond volume count. We agree with the TF that volume count is an uninformative statistic in this context, because, as Seto concludes, it reflects the past commitment of the school to the library, and not the current commitment which should be more relevant to assigning rank. The suggestion in the cover letter that this alternative might be found in budget data may be a step in the right direction, but only, in our opinion, were it normed in some way. Rich private schools will always spend more than small public ones, so in that sense the raw numbers would merely reflect that initial reality. Library Expenditures per student+faculty was one suggested alternative, keeping within the context specified by the TF that the data used be from the limited information within the ABA questionnaire. Another possibility is to express expenditures as a function of the student/faculty ratio, a figure US News already includes. We believe that such figures would be more meaningful than either the current volume counts, or a raw expenditures amount. We did not discuss whether better results would be obtained by using different variations of expenditure reports (e.g., materials, materials + supplies and other infrastructural outlays, or whether this should include salaries).