

Responding to Membership Needs for Continuing Education

**A Special Library Association (SLA)
Strategy for the 21st Century**

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SLA: Connecting People and Information

- 1909
- Over 12,000 members in 83 countries
- 52 Chapters – geographically dispersed
 - USA incl. Florida & Caribbean, Canada, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia & New Zealand
- 28 Divisions – subject interest groups
- Headquarters in Virginia, USA

Mission

- SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy, and networking initiatives

Membership Expectation

- The Association will deliver meaningful programs and activities to advance the information professional as a leader in business, government, and academia

Some Tactics to Fulfill Educational Expectations

- Provide increased availability of learning through:
 - Virtual Learning Series –live learning event (pay per site)
 - Career development series – curriculum style
 - Increased access points
 - Reduced prices for membership (\$69 vs \$119)
 - Well timed delivery of PD offerings (24x7)

Continuing Education Strategic Priorities

- **Innovation and Learning** delivered through a variety of media and methods such as:
 - Virtual seminars
 - Partnerships with universities
 - Partnerships with industry leaders
 - Online University administered by SLA
 - Experts globally

Structure for Delivering Continuing Education

- **Professional Development Department**
 - Works with the volunteer- PD Committee to prepare and review the PD offerings
 - Continuously improve all aspects of PD delivery mechanisms, methods, and evaluates the programmes
- **Professional Development Committee**
 - Works with the SLA Board to develop strategies for the professional development as well as for updating the Competencies
- **Divisions with common subject interest**
 - Focus on the annual stated requirements of constituents
- **Chapters which are geographically dispersed**
 - Focus on the annual stated requirements of constituents

Competencies Document - general

- *Competencies for Information Professionals of the 21st Century*
- Competencies relate to the practitioner's **knowledge of information resources, access, technology and management**, and the ability to use this knowledge as a basis for providing the highest quality information services.

Competencies Document –major areas

- Four major areas of competencies:
 - managing information organizations,
 - managing information resources,
 - managing information services
 - applying information tools and technologies.

Competencies Document- personal competencies

- Personal competencies:
 - Represent a set of **attitudes, skills and values** that enable practitioners to work effectively and contribute positively to their organizations, clients and profession

Integrating Competencies Document with Educational Offerings

- Courses and other educational opportunities developed for membership must always be mapped back to the competencies outlined in the Competencies manifesto and presenters are asked to indicate what competency or skill will be learnt for any course proposal submission.

Access to Continuing Education Offerings

- Annual conference
- Divisions
- Chapters
- Regional conferences
- SLA-Headquarters
- All year via electronic offerings at desktop

Membership Input

- **Solicited regularly** to get input into the curriculum
- **Evaluation** of the offerings after delivery
- **Standards** have been created by the Professional Development Committee against which presenters and courses are selected

Educational Priorities in Progress

- Click “Online University” in partnership with Elsevier
- Virtual Learning Series
- Career Development Series
- Internet-based video and audio delivery system
- Contracting with internationally recognized field experts - for global delivery
- Drexel Library School – offer online courses
- WISE (Web-enabled Information Science Education Consortium) Syracuse, U. of Illinois, Univ. of Toronto (Canada)



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CLICK UNIVERSITY
an BLA experience

Continuous Improvement

- The Continuing Education Programme is under continuous review and updating in order to remain relevant in the changing environment in which our members practice
- New things are being tried – some will continue and some will be aborted if the evaluation dictates so.
- Cont. Ed. is considered one of the chief benefits of membership in the Association – high priority for the Association