

Recommendations of the ALS Name/Mandate Working Group

Preamble

In December 2015, the members of the BCLA Academic Librarians Section (hereafter referred to as “the Section”) called for a working group to look at the Section’s name and mandate (1). This working group was charged with discussing whether the Section’s name should be changed to be more inclusive of all academic library personnel. The primary directive of this working group was to review the results of the November 2015 survey in which members provided feedback on this topic (2).

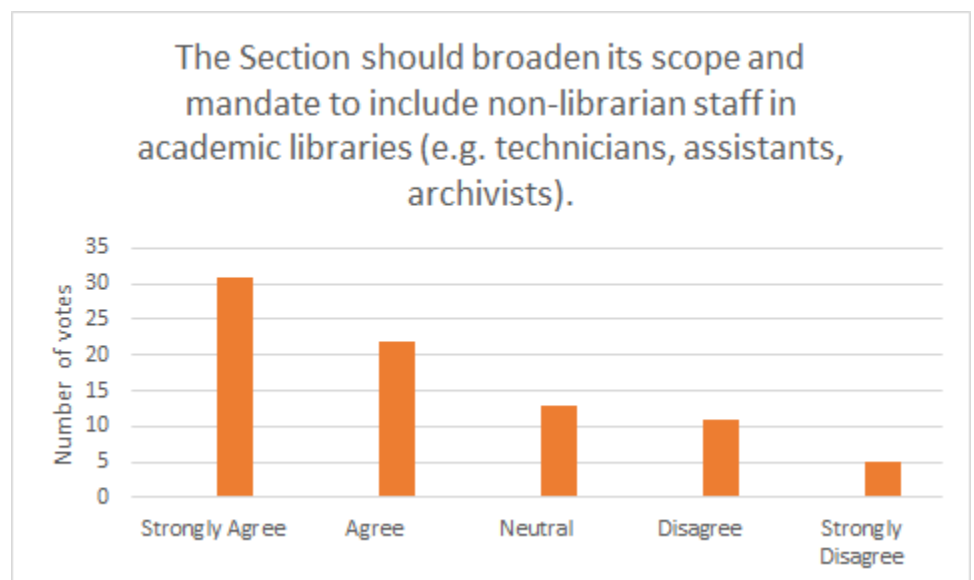
This fall, the working group was formed. The working group found that the survey responses indicated majority support for including all library personnel in the Section’s scope and mandate, with comments showing a preference for inclusive language that reflects the diversity of library personnel working in post-secondary institutions in BC.

Concerns, especially with regards to the changing roles of librarians and library technicians and the erosion of the Section’s scope¹, also emerged from the survey results (3). The working group acknowledges that these are important issues and encourages the Section to explore these concerns further; however, the group determined that these issues are not in scope for this working group (4).

Recommendations

1. Change the Section’s name to BC Academic Libraries Section (BCALS)

The working group proposes to change the Section’s name to the BC Academic Libraries Section, thereby broadening the scope of the Section to include all library personnel. This resolution is supported by the November 2015 survey of Section members, where 53 (64.63%) agreed or strongly agreed with broadening the Section’s mandate to include library personnel described as “non-librarian staff (e.g. technicians, assistants, archivists).” The working group proposes the name “BC Academic Libraries Section,” and its accompanying acronym, “BCALS”, as it received strong support in the results of the November 2015 survey.²



¹ Erosion of the Section’s focus is a concern that originally arose when the Section changed its name from Academic Librarians in Public Service to Academic Librarians Section in 2014, removing the public service focus (5).

² The top choice was BCAL; however, all other BCLA Sections include the word “Section” in their names, so the working group proposes going with the 2nd choice, BCALS.

2. Change the Section's purpose to include all academic library personnel

The Section provides professional development events and forums for discussion of issues in post-secondary academic libraries (6). The working group acknowledges that library personnel with different educational backgrounds are also interested and engaged in the issues discussed in this Section.

As such, along with a change in name, the working group proposes that the Section revise its purpose statement to include all academic library personnel:³

The purpose of BCALS is to promote the exchange of ideas among academic library personnel and to provide a network of professional expertise resulting in excellent programs, initiatives and services in the post-secondary libraries of British Columbia, using the latest methods, systems and technologies.

Further Reading

- 1) BCLA Academic Librarians Section. (2015, December). ALS December business meeting minutes. <http://bclaconnect.ca/als/files/2014/03/Minutes-December-Meeting-2015.pdf>
- 2) BCLA ALS survey results. (2015, November). <http://bclaconnect.ca/als/files/2016/11/BCLAALSNovember2015QuestionnaireResults.pdf>
- 3) Janyk, Roën. (2016). Academic Librarians Section update. *Perspectives*, 8(1). <https://bclaconnect.ca/perspectives/2016/01/31/academic-librarians-section-update/>
- 4) BCLA ALS working group meeting summaries. (2016, Fall) <http://bclaconnect.ca/als/files/2016/11/BCLAALSworkinggroupmeetingsummaries.pdf>
- 5) Summary of ALS name & constitution changes (2010-2016). (2016, November). <http://bclaconnect.ca/als/files/2016/11/SummaryofALSnameandconstitutionchanges2010-2016.pdf>
- 6) BCLA Academic Librarians Section. (2014, May). ALS Constitution and Bylaws. https://bclaconnect.ca/wp-uploads/2015/10/ALS_Constitution-and-Bylaws_Current_2011.pdf

BCLA ALS Name/Mandate Working Group

Krissy Bublitz

Library Technician

Chair, Library Technicians and Assistants Section

Shannon LaBelle

Librarian (Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre)

Ashley Edwards

Library Technician (Library Assistant, SFU)

Ali Moore

Librarian (Simon Fraser University)

Susan Gibbs

Library Technician (University of the Fraser Valley)

Elyse Neufeld

Librarian (Simon Fraser University)

Tamarack Hockin

MLIS Candidate & Library Technician

Allison Sullivan

Librarian (Langara College)

³ The decision to use the term "library personnel" was to reflect pre-existing language in the Section's existing constitution. Item 2(a) refers to "academic public services personnel."