AALL Committee Activities and Action Plan

Name: Pamela Rogers Melton
Title: Chair
Email: prmelton@law.sc.edu

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Committee Name: Research & Publications Committee

Committee Charge: The Committee shall review and propose changes to the Association's Research Agenda, work within the Association and with other library associations to encourage research, and administer the Association's research grant program by reviewing applications, making awards, and monitoring research activities.

The Committee shall promote and encourage participation in AALL Publications opportunities, as well as in other non-AALL professional publications. The Committee shall coordinate with the Public Relations Committee to promote the Association as a publisher to non-AALL members and other organizations.

The Committee shall oversee the AALL publications Series and other AALL publications, as needed. In doing so, the Committee may evaluate proposals for new publications, recommend continuation or cessation of AALL sponsorship of a publication, recommend editors, and develop editorial processes, or take other actions as needed.

Major Activities for 2009-2010:

The merged committee has operated fairly smoothly in the first year after the merger. The Committee evaluated 3 grant proposals for the AALL/Wolters Kluwer Law and Business Grant. Two grants totaling $5000 were awarded. A grant in the amount of $2775 was awarded to Stacy L. Bowers for her project entitled Reintroducing the Value of Law Librarians to Public Librarians Through the Identification and Use of Emerging Technologies and Resources. A grant in the amount of $2225 was awarded to Susan Nevelow Mart for her project entitled The Effects of Automation on the Relevance of Citator and Digest Results in Westlaw and Lexis. The AALL Research Fund: An Endowment Established by LexisNexis is currently open to grant applications. A grant of up to $440 will be awarded this spring. The Committee in 2009-2010 also approved final reports and/or final products from the following previously-awarded research grants: Charles Dyer, Bibliography and Essay on Cognitive Science and Linguistics for Law Librarians; Karen Kalnins, Oral Histories of Oklahoma Judges and Attorneys; and John Doyle, Law Review Submissions. The Committee granted an extension to Scott Frey to complete his project, A Search Engine for Law-Related Public Domain Books.

The Committee fulfills a number of other AALL publication-related charges, including reviewing proposals for additions to the AALL Publication Series, published by William S. Hein & Co., Inc. Last year, the Committee received one proposal for the Series. The Committee Chair and the AALL Director of Publications conducted an initial review of the proposal for consistency with the AALL Publications Statement of Purpose, financial soundness, and general feasibility. Unfortunately, the proposal did not meet the threshold requirements for the Series and was therefore not forwarded to the Committee for a full review.

In late Fall 2009, the Committee received a charge from the Executive Board directing it to establish the process for awarding an annual Distinguished Lectureship Award. A subcommittee drafted a description and nomination form and will advertise the new award through various AALL email discussion lists and publications beginning March 15. The deadline for nominations will be June 1, the Committee will make its decision by November 1, and the first Distinguished Lecture will be given at the 2011 Annual meeting in Philadelphia.

Proposed Activities for 2010-2011:

The Research and Publications Committee will continue to administer the AALL/Wolters Kluwer Law and Business Grant Program, the AALL Research Fund: An Endowment Established by LexisNexis and the Distinguished Lectureship Award. In addition, the Committee will evaluate publication proposals. The Committee will continue to merge the tasks of this still new committee and search for ways to expand the current activities to fulfill the Committee's Charge. One area that should be discussed relates to the financial condition of both grant funds. Both funds have suffered in the recent past and grants have been reduced to a substantial degree. The Committee will explore ways to further develop revenue for these grants.

The previous Chair of the Committee had begun a system of tracking grants awarded by the Committee. The current Chair, with AALL staff, is reviewing that monitoring process to make sure the information on the past and current grant projects is complete and to determine if modifications need to be made. This
tracking process should be continued and refined.

The Committee will also update its' website, with special emphasis on providing publication tips to our members.