

## **ENDORSED JANUARY 2011 BY THE MEMBERSHIP**

### **The Oberlin Group: A Consortium of Liberal Arts College Libraries**

#### **Organizing Principles**

##### *Purpose and Shared Values —*

The Oberlin Group is an independent, non-profit, unincorporated association of liberal arts college libraries.<sup>1</sup>

The Oberlin Group provides a forum for member directors and staff to discuss issues of common concern, to share accomplishments and information on best practices in library operations and services, and to help members anticipate and adapt to the challenges of college library administration and liberal arts education.

Directors at member institutions agree to attend the group's annual meeting, to pay annual dues, to cooperate in resource sharing, and to contribute to an annual statistical survey. The Group may collaborate with other associations to further its goals and may take other forms of collective action in support of policies affecting our libraries and institutions.

The Oberlin Group fosters an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Members value its collegial and egalitarian ethos, and rely on the informality and open communication within the group to create a supportive environment for sharing ideas and experiences and for developing our institutions and ourselves. Leadership of the group is a mutual responsibility, and all members are expected to contribute to the good of the order. Decision making through consensus building is the preferred mode of operation.

##### *Membership —*

Membership in the association is by invitation and is held by the institution. The institutional representative is the library director (or equivalent role). Each library will have one voice when the group deliberates, votes, and takes positions.

The membership year will be a calendar year starting on January 1, with invoices for annual dues to be distributed in December of the previous year.

##### *Composition and Responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee —*

Three members designated on a rotating basis for three-year terms, along with a Treasurer and the host director(s) of the upcoming annual meeting, constitute a Coordinating Committee. All member institutions will be expected to serve on the committee, though an individual might be excused from accepting appointment or defer appointment for a variety of reasons such as

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<sup>1</sup> A history of the Oberlin Group is on its Web site at <http://www.oberlingroup.org/brief-history-oberlin-group>.

impending retirement, service as Statistics Coordinator, other major professional duties (e.g. national office or home institution responsibilities).

Each year the current committee will identify a willing member for the rotation to be affirmed at the annual meeting. Committee terms begin at the conclusion of the annual meeting.

The Coordinating Committee:

- Monitors and approves expenditures from the treasury and keeps the membership apprised of the group's fiscal status.
- Negotiates and approves contracts with consultants and/or other associations on behalf of the membership.
- Manages consultant relationships, either directly or through appointment of ad-hoc committees.
- Reviews requests for new members and presents recommendations at the annual meeting
- Handles external inquiries and communications on behalf of the Oberlin Group.
- Plans and conducts annual meeting program.
- Prepares and publishes minutes of the annual business meeting.

The Committee will identify a Convener who may speak on behalf of the Group.

Structure of the Inaugural Coordinating Committee for 2011/2012:

- For 2011/2012, one member will be appointed to a three-year term, one to a two-year term, and one to a one-year term to begin the rotation.
- Sabrina Pape and Jeff Katz [co-hosts of the 2012 meeting]
- Treasurer [continuing appointment]

*Volunteer Roles —*

In addition to the Coordinating Committee, the following roles may be filled on a volunteer basis, term limited only by willingness to serve.

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- Statistics Coordinator. Volunteers should be willing to serve a minimum of three years.
- Listserv Coordinator

*Ad-hoc Committees or Interest Groups* may be formed at any time, but should keep the Coordinating Committee informed of activities.

*Meetings —*

An annual meeting of members of the Oberlin Group will be held in the fall. The annual meetings are held on the campus of the hosting institution or institutions. Each member is responsible for payment of a registration fee. Each meeting will include a business meeting where formal requests for support of specific issues, requests for consideration of new members, or changes in the organizing principles are discussed.

a. Proceedings for Annual Meetings

An agenda of business items will be shared with the membership prior to the annual meeting. One member of the coordinating committee and one representative of the hosting institution will serve as the meeting conveners and leaders. Meetings will be run informally and agreement reached by consensus unless a member specifically requests that proceedings be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order Revised* (<http://www.robertsrules.org/>).

b. Minutes

Prior to the start of the business meeting, a member of the Coordinating Committee will be designated as the secretary for the annual meeting. Minutes of the business meeting will be shared with the group by email and then posted on the Oberlin Group website, <http://www.oberlingroup.org/annual-meetings-oberlin-group-directors>

Oberlin Group directors may choose to meet at annual meetings of ALA, or Educause, or other regional meetings, but these meetings are informal, more often social, and are not expected to take the place of the annual meeting.

*Making Changes to the Organizing Principles —*

Requests to make changes once the principles are approved should be submitted to the coordinating committee and shared with the institutional members. The following conditions are required for submitting requests for consideration:

- It is supported by at least five institutional members.
- It is submitted in time to be shared with the entire membership at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting.

Adoption of changes will be based on approval by two thirds of the members, which means 52 out of the current 80. Voting will take place at the annual meeting and members not able to attend may submit their votes to the coordinating council prior to the meeting. Results of the vote will be included in the minutes of the annual business meeting.