Review of IFLA involvement in International Quality Assessment of LIS Education

Anna Maria Tammaro
University of Parma, Parma, Italy

Terry L. Weech
The iSchool @ Illinois, University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA

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Prior Research on Assessment models

- No one model for Quality Assurance
- A variety of approaches
  - Accreditation of Degree Programs
  - Certification of courses
  - Certification of individuals
Prior involvement of IFLA in LIS Education

1927 – IFLA founded – Regularization of LIS Education a concern.

1930-1932 IFLA explored Sponsoring LIS Summer Schools

1949 UNESCO report on LS education (Danton, *Education for Librarianship*)

1974 – Establishment of IFLA Section of Education and Training (SET)
IFLA Quality Assessment & LIS Professional Education


In 1986 Josephine Fang and others issued a report to the Education and Training Section on assessment of LIS Education. In 1987 a summary was published in the IFLA Journal. The final recommendations of this report are presented below:

“Final Recommendations
As a result of its investigations, the Working Group submits to IFLA the following recommendations:
1. To install an International Committee of Experts for the assessment of LIS education on an advisory basis;
2. To develop an International Resource Center for relevant information on LIS education;
3. To endorse the national and international recognition of LIS professional qualifications, and to promote the professional status of librarians and information scientists in all countries.” (Fang, et. al.(1987) *Guidelines to Equivalence and Reciprocity of Professional Qualifications* IFLA Journal, vol 3, p. 135)
What has been accomplished since 1986?

- Several IFLA Research Projects, including one done by Tammaro and Weech in 2008


  The objectives for this project were to explore the feasibility of developing guidelines to assess the quality of LIS programs internationally.

About eight years prior to our 2008 report, Pete Dalton and Kate Levison conducted a study of LIS qualifications throughout the world in which they recommended working with organizations such as NARIC. (National Recognition Information Centre)
What has been accomplished since 1986?

The 1986 study suggested as an alternative to working with NARIC the possibility of the involvement of professional organizations in each country taking more responsibility for establishing mechanisms for determining qualifications that would be assist in determining equivalency of assessment in different countries.

The Report by Dalton and Levison concluded with a note that they intended to continue the investigation of the issues involved in international assessment, but no record of a follow-up report has been located since the original 1986 report.
Where are we in the Search for International Assessment?

- None of the Prior Recommendations made 30 years ago (1986) have been implanted:
  - International Committee of Experts for the assessment of LIS education on advisory basis
  - Establish an International Resource Centre for relevant information on LIS programs to assist in “do it yourself” assessment
  - Establish international standards for LIS professional qualifications to be implemented by national bodies
Why have we not made progress?

- What specific barriers are there to establishing an International Assessment system?
Barriers to International Assessment?

- Economic (cost of establishing assessment programs)
- Social (concern that local and regional needs will not be recognized)
- Cultural (resistance to external assessment of internal programs)
Other things we might consider

- **Potential Role of National Governments**

- **Potential Role of National Associations**

- **Potential Role of Regional Associations**
  (EUCLID and ALISE, for example)

- **Potential Role of IFLA**
The initial reason for this Satellite

- After nearly 90 years of IFLA concerns about Library Education regulation, is it time to identify once and for all if it is possible to propose a method of identifying equivalent professional qualifications internationally?

- Can this Satellite meeting, using the information provided in the papers, panels, and discussions, develop a specific action plan that once and for all can suggest practical methods to implement International Assessment of LIS Education?

- This is not a small task, but an important one. After 90 years it is hoped that we can provide either the steps needed to move forward or to identify the specific barriers that must be overcome before further advancement can occur.
Thank you for your attention and best wishes for success.

Anna Maria Tammaro

e-mail: annamaria.tammaro@unipr.it

Terry Weech

e-mail: weech@illinois.edu