

Unit Chair Responsibilities

As the chair of a TLA unit (which is defined as a division, round table, or district), you have accepted a leadership position within the Texas Library Association. With this position come certain responsibilities to ensure the work of the Association in promoting Texas libraries.

As a TLA unit chair, you are expected to stay in contact with your committee members, as well as your assigned Executive Board liaison and the TLA Office. You are also responsible for delegating the work of the unit to other unit officers and to subcommittee members, making sure they have what they need to complete assignments, and following through with them to ensure assignments are completed.

Office Charge

- 1 Contact the past chair of your unit to determine status of work program and outstanding projects. Retrieve files (TLA will reimburse any shipping costs.)
- 2 Determine and execute a plan of action, and cooperate with other TLA units, TLA committees, and the TLA Office in accomplishing goals.
- 3 Review TLA Bylaws for Association policies. Contact the TLA Office for interpretations.
- 4 Review your unit's Bylaws and ensure their currency. Determine that unit Bylaws are broadly available on the unit's website.
- 5 Evaluate unit's website for inclusiveness and currency and determine what content needs to be added. TLA website guidelines are on the TLA website.
- 6 Participate in TLA's strategic planning process by focusing outcomes on goals and objectives in the plan.

Administrative

- 1 Attend the Incoming Officers' Briefing at Annual Conference.
- 2 Download and read the materials from the Incoming Officers Briefing section of the TLA website.
- 3 Meet all deadlines set for Chairs by the Executive Board, TLA Office, Council, Chairs of TLA Committees (e.g., Publications Committee), or *Texas Library Journal* editor.
- 4 Schedule, prepare agenda, conduct, and maintain records of all meetings. Meetings should be scheduled during Annual Conference, Annual Assembly, and at other times deemed necessary by the Chair. Instant minutes of each meeting must be sent to the TLA Office within 24 hours, followed by comprehensive minutes within two weeks of the meeting. The Instant Minutes form is found on the TLA website.
- 5 Maintain close communication with the Executive Board liaison to convey unit concerns to the Executive Board.
- 6 Request meeting space for unit meetings during Annual Conference and Annual Assembly. The Annual Assembly Meeting Request Form may be found on the TLA website.

- 7 Prior to each Council meeting, work with the unit Councilor and Alternate-Councilor to submit the progress report form to the TLA Office for distribution to the full Council. If either Councilor is unable to attend, appoint a representative from your unit.
- 8 After elections are held, submit the incoming officer report to the TLA office by May 15 for the directory. Report to the TLA Office all resignations and changes of contact information throughout the year.
- 9 Adhere to the TLA archives policies and procedures which are found on the TLA website.
- 10 Prepare in consultation with the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee resolutions requiring the approval of Council to be represented as Association policy. Also communicate these resolutions to the Executive Board through your Executive Board liaison. Resolutions must be submitted to the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee six (6) hours in advance of a Council meeting. All resolutions not submitted in advance will require two-thirds vote of Council for consideration. Note that all resolutions involving legislation must be routed to the TLA Legislative Committee for review and recommendation to the TLA Council. More information about how units interact with the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee can be found on the TLA website.
- 11 Submit any intended publications to the TLA Publications Committee, whose responsibility is to assure the quality of the publications: Publications Committee guidelines.
- 12 Transfer files to your successor at Annual Conference or immediately afterwards. (TLA will reimburse any shipping costs.)
- 13 Plan and arrange for elections within the unit. Results of elections must be reported to the TLA President and to the TLA Office.
- 14 Notify the Executive Director and Executive Board liaison of any new unit awards, scholarships, or stipends for transmittal to the TLA Executive Board for approval.
- 15 Obtain TLA letterhead and envelopes, if desired, at Annual Conference and Annual Assembly.
- 16 Report recipients of unit awards, scholarships, or stipends to the TLA Office to ensure publicity in Association newsletter and journal.
- 17 Send copies of all major electronic and print correspondence to the TLA Office, including correspondence received by the Chair if it impinges on TLA as a whole.
- 18 Obtain mailing lists of unit members from the TLA Office, as needed. Complimentary rosters are provided at Annual Conference and Annual Assembly. Note that a full roster of current or previous unit members may be found any time by accessing the Members Only Section of the TLA website.
- 19 Become familiar with unit publishing policies and procedures by reviewing documents on the TLA website.

Conference Planning

- 1 Determine if your unit plans to sponsor a conference program.
- 2 Sign up for a conference program time slot during Annual Assembly.
- 3 Coordinate with the Conference Program Committee and the Program Committee liaison to focus on the conference theme and to avoid duplication of content.

- 4 Make contact with speakers, agree on program goals and content, and negotiate honorarium and travel expenses, if any, within TLA policy and unit budgetary limits. Note that no personal expenses or honorarium shall be paid by TLA for TLA members and other Texas librarians presenting at Annual Conference, Annual Assembly, or District meetings with the exception of Executive Board members representing the Association at District meetings and TLA members and other Texas librarians who speak at District meetings other than their own. The Executive Director must sign speaker agreements. Conference planning forms are located on the TLA website.
- 5 Be responsible for a conference program by setting objectives, securing speakers, defining the program scope, and completing necessary forms with the TLA Office to ensure inclusion in the preliminary and final printed programs.
- 6 Attend the Conference Program Planning Training Session during Annual Assembly.
- 7 Commit to meeting all program planning deadlines and to providing speakers with information they need to conduct an effective program.
- 8 Assist with speaker travel and housing arrangements and with AV/handout/and other needs by documenting requirements on the various conference program forms provided by the TLA Office.

Financial (forms and information are on the Officer Resources page on txla.org)

- 1 Prepare and submit a budget to the TLA Office by May 1.
- 2 Obtain prior authorization from the Executive Board for projected expenses not budgeted. All expenditures must be documented and invoices submitted to the TLA Office for reimbursement no later than June 1 of the year following the close of term of office. The reimbursement form is on the TLA website and more guidelines on TLA's reimbursement policy are contained in "How to Get Bills Paid."
- 3 Monitor monthly financial reports of your unit by accessing the Members Only Section of the TLA website and report any corrections to the TLA Office.
- 4 Submit to the TLA Executive Director for signature all contracts, speaker agreements, and other forms of obligations to be financially binding on the Association.
- 5 Be aware that TLA will charge back to all units costs associated with their conference programs and activities.
- 6 Do not solicit vendors who exhibit at TLA conferences for any financial support without the approval of the Executive Director.
- 7 Develop unique job descriptions for the chair and the unit treasurer to identify roles of each person in financial management.

Leadership Tips

- 1 By using the electronic discussion list established for you by TLA, stay in regular contact with your unit officers and provide information about your plans and future meeting times, locations, etc. Ensure that everyone has a set of minutes from the last meeting and a copy of the unit's work program and goals for the year.

- 2 Encourage attendance and participation by all unit officers. Identify ways for officers and subcommittee members to participate even if they are unable to attend Annual Conference or Annual Assembly.
- 3 Identify and mentor emerging leaders within your unit and promote their continued involvement in TLA to Association officers.
- 4 Prior to each meeting, remind committee members of the meeting time, location, and agenda.
- 5 During the meeting, be sure to:
 - a Pass a sign-up sheet and request verification of name, address, telephone, and e-mail.
 - b Distribute the agenda and pace the meeting so that all items can be covered.
 - c Assign roles as needed, i.e., minute taker.
 - d Explain duties – minute taker will record minutes for the meeting and prepare instant minutes for TLA (Have form available).
 - e Explain purpose of the meeting or the committee charge.
 - f Involve all members in discussion.
- 1 Encourage unit officers and subcommittee members to continue their discussions and to file progress reports by using electronic technology such as the electronic discussion list (listserv) that is automatically set up by the TLA Office for each unit's executive committee.
- 2 Assign subcommittees, if necessary, to complete charge, with realistic deadlines.
- 3 Communicate with members of the unit via print and electronic newsletters. Use the electronic discussion list that is set up by the TLA Office for each unit.
- 4 After any meeting, ensure that comprehensive meeting minutes are sent to committee members, TLA Office, and the Executive Board Liaison.
- 5 Maintain contact with unit officers and subcommittee members and follow through to ensure any delegated assignments are completed.

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