**SLA Unit Restructuring Proposal**

**Alternative Version by Janice Keeler**

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| **SLA Unit Restructuring Proposal 6/2019** | **Alternative Version 1/2020** |
| **SLA Purpose**: creating cutting-edge programs and building opportunities to connect with like-minded colleagues about emerging trends and best practices. | **SLA Purpose:**   * Create cutting edge programs * Provide networking opportunities and enable identification of members in similar roles, industries and geographies by the maintenance of various types of membership units * Provide services to members and professional development opportunities to volunteer leaders by planning and presenting at events; leading and participating in board meetings and unit strategic planning discussions; writing articles, producing newsletters and managing unit websites, creating budgets and learning financial software, managing archives, and other services units may choose to provide. * Conducting research or collecting examples, then communicating the value of information professionals to employers to help stem job reduction |
| **Unit Names**: Replace SLA’s current unit naming convention with “Communities.” | * Retain “chapters” for geographic units * Distinguish between industry-specific divisions and cross-industry divisions, whatever they might be called, but not just “communities”. Perhaps Industry Communities of Practice and Cross Industry Communities of Practice. See appendix. * Change names of Caucuses to Special Interest Group (SIG). Caucus sounds political |
| **Leadership Structure:** Revise the current executive and advisory board structure with the following three core roles: Convener, Program Planner and Membership Chair. Establish and fill additional roles on an as-needed basis, as determined by the Community. | * Take the opposite approach; allow units to start with all existing board and committee roles and let each unit decide each year based on need and volunteer availability how to staff the roles of Chair/President Elect, Chair/President, Secretary and Treasurer. Past Chair/President could be optional, but the Elect role is pretty important to get the next chair up to speed enough to be effective. Secretary and Treasurer could be combined for small units. * Allow unit flexibility in the number of committee chairs based on the number of services they want to offer. Some units may be able to support a newsletter or website, and this should be up to them. |

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| ***Leadership duties.*** Redefine roles so that leaders can focus on program development and the creation of networking opportunities. Explore new models for community management and consider the transfer of administrative functions to SLA staff. These functions could include the management of community finances, the coordination of outreach and fundraising, and the maintenance of websites. | See row above. In terms of Administrative functions being transferred to SLA staff:   * Centralized management of community finances should be optional, but available for units who want to do that. Some unit person(s) would still have to be responsible for budgeting and deciding how to spend “community” finances, unless this proposal means units would lose all control. Certainly centralizing audits and reporting from the online Quickbooks accounting system on SLA’s accounting firm server would be an excellent idea rather than expecting volunteer treasurers to do that. Treasurers could maintain their records in Quickbooks, submit bank statements to HQ quarterly or annually, write checks as needed and let SLA do the rest. * Coordination of fundraising centrally is a good idea, except for units that have particularly strong existing relationships with vendors and successful programs. Some aspects of SLA financial arrangements need work, but that is a separate set of issues to be addressed. I think the option 1 and 2 policies should be revised: AV is a core cost of a conference and should be part of overall conference expenses, not unit responsibilities, whoever does the fundraising. * Maintenance of websites is really two issues. Apparently the technical work of upgrading the sites has been a lot of pain for volunteers, and centralizing the IT aspects may make sense. However, it seems likely that content management would still need to be done by the units; how would staff know what programs to announce, etc.?   An explanation of how SLA could pay for this extra HQ work is needed. |
| ***Unit requirements.*** No minimum number of members needed and no extra charge for membership in any Communities. Simply pay one fee for SLA membership and participate in as many communities as you’d like! This allows for more cross-pollination, inclusivity, and removes financial barriers to wider participation. Members would also get access to any programming anywhere for the same price, regardless of their unit affiliation(s). | * SLA cannot afford to drop any revenue streams. * There is no evidence that people want to participate in all units or that the nominal cost of unit membership is a deterrent. The proposal would dilute the networking value of the units’ specific purposes and possibly make unit marketing of less interest to vendor partners who now pay for targeted marketing. * Allow each member to join three units for free, and make all caucuses free, but retain the nominal charges for unit membership. The free units would be one chapter, one industry unit and one cross-industry unit. The units would still get revenue from dues allocation based on membership. * Units charges for webinars should be:   + Free to unit members   + Not exceeding the cost of annual unit membership for non-unit SLA members; adding a unit should be simplified so that registering for a session could make them become a unit member.   + Charges for non-SLA members should be up to the unit based on market rates in their industry. This is a way to encourage people to join SLA. |
| ***Unit governance.*** Formal cabinet meetings would be replaced with less formal meetings, and cabinet positions on the board would be replaced with some form of Community Liaisons. | Cabinet meetings should certainly become less formal and bureaucratic – allow people to submit issues up to a week before the meeting and also allow new business onsite for other issues as needed. Cabinet positions on the board are important and should not be demoted to “liaisons”. It is vital that somebody on the actual board is responsible for staying in touch with the units. In fact, cabinet meetings should be held by webinar as needed between the Leadership Summit and AC in times when unit input on important issues such as this restructuring proposal should be considered. |

Appendix: Unit Restructuring Proposal Details

SLA needs revenue, so instead of making all units free, we could reduce financial burdens to members by the following:

1. Make all caucuses free, and allow units that can’t find enough volunteers for a full slate of activities become caucuses (preferably called Special Interest Groups (SIGS) or something else.) The units as described in the restructuring proposal sound like current caucuses in terms of networking and programming as their sole functions.
2. Retain unit membership dues at a nominal level but allow each member three free units instead of two to somewhat reduce financial burden. Given what we were told about the low interest in multiple units currently, this should probably suffice for most people, and they could still add additional units for a low cost. SLA’s cost problem for some members is the overall dues, not the unit costs.

Proposed free units:

* 1. One Chapter
  2. One Industry Unit
  3. One Cross-Industry Unit (see below)

Note, there is some lack of clarity on the SLA website as to whether two units are divisions or sections, based on the way the Divisions page is formatted compared to the list of Divisions on the Member Directory Search. See comments below.

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| **Proposed Grouping into Industry and Cross- Industry Units** | | |
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| **SLA Divisions on SLA site 1/11/2020** | **Sections** | **Comments** |
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| **Industry Units (Based on nature of employer organization)** | | |
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| **Academic** |  |  |
|  | Higher Education Administration |  |
|  | Scholarly Communications |  |
| **Biomedical & Life Sciences** |  |  |
|  | Medical |  |
| **Business & Finance** |  |  |
|  | Advertising & Marketing |  |
|  | Corporate InfoCenters |  |
|  | College & Univ. Bus Libraries |  |
|  | Financial Services |  |
| **Chemistry** |  |  |
|  | Material Research & Manufacturing |  |
| **Education** |  |  |
| **Engineering** |  |  |
|  | Aerospace |  |
|  | Architecture, Building Engineering, Construction & Design |  |
|  | Petroleum and Energy Resources | Listed under Engineering on Divisions Page on www.sla.org, but listed as a Division in Member Directory Search |
| **Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Resources** |  |  |
|  | Forestry & Forest Products |  |
| **Government Information** |  | Not clear as a division on Divisions Page on www.sla.org (no link), but listed as a division in Member Directory Search |
| **Insurance & Employee Benefits** |  |  |
| **Legal** |  |  |
| **Military Libraries** |  |  |
| **Pharmaceutical & Health Technology** |  |  |
|  | Medical Devices & Diagnostics |  |
| **Physics-Astronomy-Mathematics** |  |  |
| **Science-Technology** |  |  |
| **Social Sciences & Humanities** |  |  |
|  | Geography & Map |  |
|  | Nonprofit |  |
|  | Museums |  |
|  | Labor Issues |  |
| **Transportation** |  |  |
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| **Cross-Industry Units** |  |  |
| **Competitive Intelligence** |  |  |
| **Information Technology** |  | This is both industry and cross-industry, so if members get one industry unit free and one cross-industry unit free, people in high-tech industries ought to get IT plus one other cross-industry unit free |
|  | Communications and Social Media |  |
|  | Digital Asset Management |  |
|  | Information Systems |  |
|  | Technical Services |  |
|  | Web Management |  |
| **Knowledge Management** |  |  |
| **Leadership & Management** |  |  |
|  | Consulting |  |
|  | Content Buying |  |
|  | Marketing |  |
| **Solo Librarians** |  |  |
| **Taxonomy** |  |  |