

Integrated Digital Image Resources Faculty Advisory Committee

May 9, 2006
2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
SML Lecture Hall

Present: Meg Bellinger, Hannah Bennett, Chip Benson, Tracy Bergstrom, Ned Cooke, Katherine Haskins, Ed Kairiss, Chris Kraus, Mary Litch, Christine Mehring, Jack Meyers, Rob Nelson, Alan Plattus, Karen Reardon

Absent: John Faragher, Chuck Powell, Ben Foster, Lillian Tseng

Recording: Rachel Dwight

Ned Cooke welcomed the group to the first meeting of the Integrated Digital Image Resources (IDIR) Faculty Advisory Committee meeting, and thanked everyone for agreeing to be a part of the committee. Introductions of committee members were made.

Ned explained that the IDIR Faculty Advisory Committee came about through many different departments coming together, e.g., Art, History of Art, the Library, IT etc., with the hope of combining resources and sharing the workload of developing an accessible digital image collection. He asked Meg Bellinger to discuss the charge. (The draft charge can be accessed [HERE](#).)

Chip Benson said that he feels there has been a fixation on archiving digital materials, making the actual use of the materials by faculty secondary. He believes there need to be more emphasis on use for teaching, especially in a practical, immediately available way. Ned agreed, and said that this is the next step to moving from an Art History project to a Yale-wide project. Meg said that this is really an experimental model for the future; no one really has an answer yet.

The importance of structure and standards were agreed upon. Chip asked how the standards will be set – for example, currently an instructor will scan images from a book, not mark it with any metadata, use it for a class and then lose the files. Even if the files aren't lost, they are essentially useless as they are impossible to find again. Rob Nelson said we need protocols from the library and IT departments that are not too difficult to use, and the faculty needs to help that effort by complying with the protocols. What is needed is a good system for entering information.

Meg emphasized that collection priorities need to be established, then we can determine where to start, and how to standardize. WE need to consider the possibilities.

Chip described a project to digitize images for a history of photography course he had worked on with Christine and Mary that worked well. That collection is up to about 10,000 images now, and each image contains basic metadata for searching. Their goal is to put them in the library collection so anyone at Yale can use them.

Rob Nelson suggested there should be an agency regulating the digitization of images that might even help decide what ought to be digitized. Meg added that you also need to decide what to archive, and how to manage the cost. Alan Plattus reminded everyone that technology moves so quickly, you have to set up a system that can migrate, and you can't "wait for the right time" because it will never be the right time... Most importantly, the faculty has to continue teaching and using images, and can't wait for this. Meg said that one approach is to develop individual collections that are unified by standards – it may well be more cost effective to do it simply and well now, than to keep redoing it.

Chip asked if there weren't already a system in place – for example, Digital Library (DL)? Katherine Haskins said that there are a few, Portfolio and Insight are examples. Alan asked if there could be a demonstration of these at the next IDIR FAC meeting and the committee agreed. Karen Reardon pointed out that there is no personal ingest for DL. Katherine said we are exploring options for ingest of personal materials and mentioned ongoing projects with the Classics and History of Art departments. Initial results from these projects demonstrate cataloging rates of up to 40 images an hour, these projects are using the streamlined Yale Core metadata elements set. Karen said there are over 125,000 searchable images available now in Library collections, and Meg added that there is already a lot of infrastructure in place.

Rob, Chip and Alan began a discussion of the different points of view that need to be considered: instructors and what they need to use, historians and what they want to save, etc. Who will select what is digitized, and from which point of view? Alan suggested that great depth in a few areas is more usable as a start, rather than a little of everything, and repeated his request for demonstrations and training in the software that is currently available at the next meeting.

Katherine said that at this time, Yale is using a 'just in time' model for digitization where images are digitized more or less on demand. She would like to move toward a 'just in case' model that would operate more like a library. Using this model you would continue to work on demand, but also have selectors who can fill in the gaps. Ned asked what kind of images we want, and Rob said this committee needs to think beyond just History of Art – maps are needed, especially. Alan said that you also have to consider the different levels of demand/need—the general image for illustration a point vs. a specific, high-quality image required for a photography class, for example.

Meg said that time will be spent this summer looking at studies and research that has been done on campuses about digital image use (Penn State and others), and a synthesized report of the findings will be presented at the next IDIR meeting to begin the discussion about how Yale users want to use the images. She asked the committee what should be done over the summer, and how to determine what is important? Rob said he would like it if someone from each department could be consulted to tell us specifically what they want and how they want to use it. Karen, noting results from the grant-funded Library ELI projects, said that faculty requested digitization of archival correspondence and other diverse content from the Beinecke collection. Mary Litch agreed and said that an important thing to remember is that data fields vary widely between departments. Meg asked Mary and Karen to make a list of faculty outside of History of Art that might be consulted on their needs and usage. Karen suggested looking at the Getty grant website for some ideas, and Mary offered to make a spreadsheet of terms used, etc.

Rob felt that the crucial thing is to make the images accessible via searching. Katherine brought up the idea of 'social tagging,' which allows users to add searchable terms to an image. She also

mentioned some New York museums that have begun opening images to the public so they can add searchable terms.

Ned said that has ideas for fall, but needs to decide what to do over the summer. Rob added the committee needs to talk about what the two-year goal is, and how success will be measured. Meg distributed a copy of the draft charge and requested that everyone look at the 12 objectives and respond with feedback as soon as possible. This feedback will be used to prioritize goals to be started/accomplished over the summer.

It was decided that the committee would meet again in the fall after the third week of classes, and will try to meet a few times in the fall to get things going. Rachel Dwight will begin looking for a time and date for the meeting after the first week and will be communicating via an IDIR email mailing list.