

Integrated Digital Image Resources
Faculty Advisory Committee
May 7, 2007

Present: Meg Bellinger, Hannah Bennett, Tracy Bergstrom, Ben Foster, Katherine Haskins, David Joselit, Ed Kairiss, Jack Meyers, Rob Nelson, Karen Kupiec, Lillian Tseng

Absent: Chip Benson, Ned Cooke, John Faragher, Bill Kelly, Christina Kraus, Christine Mehring, Alan Plattus, Chuck Powell

Guest: Katie Bauer

Recording: Rachel Dwight

Agenda:

1. Support for digital teaching
 - a. Service Level Agreement
 - b. Changes in position description (VRC Manager)
 - c. Switch to Portfolio
 2. Building the collections/Image Commons
 - a. Funding for IDIR
 - b. Digitization project progress
 - c. Selection process
 - d. Collection development policy planning
 3. Next steps/Future directions
 - a. Usability
 - b. ARTstor hosting
 4. New Business from Committee members.
-

Rob Nelson (co-chair) led the meeting.

The purposes of the meeting were to provide an IDIR progress report since the last Faculty Advisory Committee meeting in December, to introduce new business, and to begin planning for next year, making sure that the IDIR project team is on track and obtaining feedback on ongoing projects.

Agenda items:

Support for digital teaching

Katherine Haskins reported on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) reached among the History of Art faculty, the Library, and the Information Technology Services division (ITS). The SLA is a collaborative effort to clarify service expectations for faculty as well as staff as the VRC moves from traditional services to digital services. An SLA is particularly useful as it represents a mutual agreement or set of agreements on the scope of service expectations, for faculty as well

as staff. The hope is that the present SLA will serve as a model for others in the future who might be developing digital image resources and services. (A copy of the SLA is appended to the minutes)

As one of the terms of the SLA, the Library and AM+T Media Services will continue the same-day scanning service started last fall. There was some discussion about how the service would continue under new management starting next fall semester. A joint planning committee of Library, Media Services, and Instructional Technology Group (ITG) staff will meet throughout the summer to organize the service and have it ready by the start of the fall semester. Progress reports will be sent to David Joselit, Chairman of the History of Art department.

Another key component of the SLA is re-aligning the VRC management structure and staffing to support both technology and collections-based services. As a result, the newly-designated position of Visual Resources Collection Manager has been posted to the University job site, and also nationally on two specialist listservs for the Visual Resources Association and the Arts Library Society/North America. This is a Manager III position (mid-level, with substantial experience required). There is a strong technology component, and for that reason, the position will report to the head of the Library Web, Workstation, and Digital Consulting Services department. The IDIR Faculty Advisory Committee agreed that the technology element should be emphasized along with subject expertise. (A copy of the position posting is appended to the minutes)

Equally important to the success of the Service Level Agreement is staff training that will allow all VRC staff members to provide the necessary range of services to faculty and students, including at least basic assistance with all the digital image technology tools currently supported by the University. Karen Kupiec described the VRC's staff training goal to include an expectation of demonstrating core competencies in the following areas: (1) database organization and searching techniques: including the Digital Library (DL) and Luna Insight versions of the VRC collections, as well as other digital image sources such as ARTstor; (2) the digital image management and cataloging tool Extensis Portfolio; (3) digital image display software: Powerpoint/Keynote and the ARTstor Offline Viewer. It was suggested that staff should also be trained in the basics of digital photography and image manipulation software (i.e. Photoshop) as support for these skills is essential to the future development of the Image Commons as a shared resource, and skilled people will be needed to assist faculty and graduate students in this endeavor. It was agreed that (4) Photoshop and digital photography basics would be added to the VRC training program with an accompanying set of core competencies to be developed.

Karen Kupiec also reported that this spring, the VRC will switch from Luna Inscribe to Extensis Portfolio as its cataloging software. The change was prompted by the fact that Portfolio would better handle the large ingest of data anticipated with the large-scale digitization project now underway, and resolve the mounting frustration with the slowness of some of the cataloging processes with Luna Inscribe/Insight. The switch to Portfolio was also prompted by the fact that most History of Art faculty are already using Portfolio to manage their own image collections. Having the VRC using the same tool as the faculty will make it easier for VRC to assist faculty with this tool, and also to expedite data transfer from and to both institutional and personal image collections. The switch should happen by the end of May/beginning of June and shouldn't be noticeable to faculty or students. Developing Portfolio skills are part of the comprehensive VRC training program, and WWDCS will also track staff competencies with this tool.

Building the collections/Image Commons

Meg Bellinger announced that the IDIR digitization budget submitted last year was approved by the Provost in February, and will cover digitization, transfer of slides and photographs to LSF, and upgrades to the technology infrastructure.

The principal IDIR activity funded by the Provost is the large-scale digitization of approximately 50% of the 35-mm slide collection and a smaller percentage of the lantern slides or photographs. The project, begun in March is expected to add a total of 160,000 additional images, bringing the VRC collection in the Image Commons to include over 250,000 digital images by fall 2008. (A copy of an IDIR progress update is appended to the minutes).

The agreed-to strategy of having History of Art faculty take the lead on making the selections for digitization has not been going as quickly as hoped for. David Joselit, Chairman of the History of Art department, offered to address this issue at the next HSAR faculty meeting. Katherine Haskins noted that a call has been put out for graduate students to assist with selection as well. Meg Bellinger asked the Faculty Advisory Committee members in other departments to make suggestions about what they would like to see digitized as well.

Another IDIR objective that is rising to the top of the priority list is collection development policy planning. Katherine Haskins reported that she has begun to coordinate this work, and to identify the strategic questions most in need of answers, such as: do we accept slide collections that we cannot or may not digitize? May someone donate images but retain copyright, and if so, what would be the management implications of that decision? How will selection criteria be established and by whom? In particular, feedback on digital image collection development is needed in the following areas: scope, selection criteria/process, standards, documentation (including metadata), rights management, retention. David Joselit suggested a History of Art faculty advisory committee to advise on collection development issues, including selection decisions. This committee could also be employed to advise on and advocate for funding for digital image collection development.

The topic opened up a more detailed discussion on the rights management issues that are crucially important to faculty both as consumers and as producers of digital images. For instance, it was noted that some faculty members would not be comfortable donating copies of his own digital photography until the copyright retention issues are more fully addressed.

Next Steps/Future Directions

Katie Bauer spoke about her work as Usability and Assessment Librarian and briefly summarized a report she authored based on interviews with History of Art faculty regarding the Digital Library interface and related issues. These interviews were aimed at people who regularly use the digital collections, although follow-up work is planned to elucidate the needs and concerns of other Yale constituencies. The recommendations in the report include the need for a more robust gateway to digital image collections, the need for tutorials for frequent tasks done by faculty, and the need for better help and feedback functions. There were several comments about searching peculiarities, but the move to Portfolio, and a cleanup of metadata should help with that. (A copy of the usability report is appended to the minutes.)

Karen Kupiec reported on explorations between Yale and ARTStor, a major art image online resource, to improve ARTstor use on campus. The result is an impending agreement to have ARTstor host the VRC digital collection, making it possible for Yale affiliates to cross-search the VRC materials with ARTstor content. As they are anxious to improve their services and to raise the profile of their content at Yale, ARTStor staff are also looking for feedback, and will work with Katie Bauer and others to assess the use of their products and services at Yale.

New Business:

It was reiterated that the same-day digitization/scanning service should be fully staffed and ready to open for business by the beginning of the fall semester, and that any kinks in the workflow should be worked out beforehand, to assure that there would be no interruption in service. It was agreed that David Joselit would distribute the relevant information about the same-day service to History of Art faculty in August.

It was reiterated that copyright and rights management issues are a principal faculty concern and should be a top IDIR priority. Among the issues discussed were having copyright information embedded in image file, what image sizes would be made available, and the need to plan for the future, as people want to maintain control of their intellectual property. As one practical suggestion, Ed Kairiss recommended looking to the music/video industry for guidance, as they've been dealing with these issues for some time.

The next meeting of the IDIR Faculty Advisory Committee will be scheduled for approximately the third week of the Fall semester. Please look for emails regarding scheduling at the end of the summer.