Yale University Library Integrated Digital Image Resources

**Vision**

Yale University Library’s Integrated Access Program supports the teaching and research mission of the University by creating access to the entire range of Library resources, in every format. One of our goals is to establish and maintain enduring, accessible digital collections. There are numerous such collections in different parts of the Library system, serving teaching and research in different disciplines. Our aim is to help faculty and students in any discipline discover and make use of digital collections, wherever they may have originated, and whatever academic purpose they may serve. They also need to be able to use digital collections alongside and as a complement to the Library’s great wealth of collections in book and other physical formats.

We are now launching an ambitious new project to transform the Visual Resources Collection of the Arts Library. This world-class digital image collection and service will serve the teaching and research needs of ladder, new, and visiting faculty and the classroom and independent learning needs of students. In order to achieve this vision, a partnership of faculty, IT colleagues, and Library leadership will work together to develop a flexible new model. The Library’s Integrated Digital Image Resources will respond to changing needs, and will provide a foundation for innovative solutions to the challenges of digital and multi-media teaching. The model will be one that can extend to digital image collections and their use in any discipline within Yale’s curriculum and research programs.

**Problem/Challenge:**

Faculty at Yale are making rapid transitions from an analog to a digital teaching reality. Individual faculty needs are developing at different paces and require new and more customized approaches to support. The faculty are now deeply engaged in the issues as they try to harness the value of digital technologies in their professional activities, respond to student needs and maintain flexibility in course preparation. Meanwhile, the digital tools, library support services, and content collections continue to develop and have not reached maturity or operational stability. In many cases, faculty have to choose from a variety of software tools and content sources but need guidance in how best to select or make use of them. The models for providing services are evolving. We must work towards the integration of multiple content sources and services, in order to meet the current and future needs of the faculty and students.

The Library is in the process of developing the model to combine the collection, service, and technology issues into a coordinated, integrated approach to support digital teaching and research. We have established some innovative support programs for digital teaching, working with grants that support our ELI (Electronic Library Initiatives) program. Until now, however, many of our service units have been constrained by a lack of deeper technical knowledge and ready access to critical partnerships. We need to build on our experience within the Library to date, a clearer understanding of current faculty
needs, an assessment program to gather feedback continuously in the ever-changing digital world, and a program to assess individual preferences. Integrated support for digital teaching and learning is one of the highest priorities identified in the Library’s strategic planning.

The Library proposes to undertake a project involving:

- broad-based research (user assessment at Yale, learning from other university programs outside of Yale, research technology trends and futures),
- planning (develop a project plan based on faculty feedback/research),
- implementation (rationalization of collection development through digitization of existing resources, acquisition of new materials in digital form, and contributions from faculty members, as well as designing and developing a support service and infrastructure).

The principal goal of such a project is to create a sustainable library program in support of digital teaching, and to develop a model that meets faculty need and that is applicable across disciplines.

**Integrated Digital Image Resources (IDIR) Project**

In order to address the issues outlined above and to work to remove many of the barriers to digital teaching at Yale, it is proposed that we undertake a collaborative effort between faculty, Library and IT to work with the Visual Resource Collection, staff, and services to develop the Yale Integrated Digital Image Resources (IDIR). While the ultimate goal is to provide integrated and coherent digital collections and services throughout the Library, initially the IDIR project will feature teaching and learning with digital visual resources. In doing so, the project will first focus on meeting the needs for visual resources of the Department of the History of Art and the Schools of Architecture and Art, and other traditional users of the Visual Resource Collection. We will begin by improving access to and services to support the digital collection. The needs and concerns expressed over digital teaching needs of these principal constituencies are urgent and profound. As well, the capital building program for the Arts Building, scheduled to be completed by September 2008, presents us with an opportunity to fulfill the ambitious expectations for new facilities and levels of technology infrastructure support, and new classroom teaching and library services within the new building.

**Tactics**

1. Develop an advisory group with members of the Architecture, Art, and History of Art faculty (and a member from at least one other faculty/school). We will invite a senior faculty member to chair the group.
2. Integrate with current planning in the Library for the Digital Production and Integration Program (DPIP).
3. Develop a project plan, schedule, and budget.
4. Build on the work of the ELI program that currently is focusing [with funding from the Davis Educational Foundation], on improving support of teaching
undergraduates through collaborative explorations and assessments conducted by
staff from the Library, ITS, Graduate School and other campus units.
5. Partner closely with IT – Academic Media and Technology.
6. Align digital architectural design with the Provost’s Digital Landscape Committee
   plans.
7. The project will be directed by Meg Bellinger, Associate University Librarian for
   Integrated Access and Technical Services, working closely with Danuta Nitecki,
   Associate University Librarian for Public Services. Katherine Haskins, currently
   director of the Arts Libraries, will move from that position to take on the
   management of this strategically critical project, reporting to Meg Bellinger.

Principal Goal
The Integrated Digital Image Resources project aims to establish a sustainable model for
Library support of digital teaching collections and services. The project will develop,
achieve faculty and administrative buy-in, and write and implement a project plan and
budget to enable the Yale University Library to meet faculty and student service needs
for research and teaching with digital images in the arts for the next 5 to 10 years. By fall
2008, the Visual Resources Collection will be transformed into collections and services
that will meet both short and longer-term needs of the faculty for teaching with images.

Objectives
1. Develop a faculty advisory committee – March 2006
2. Faculty and student user needs assessment program/etc working with Library
   Usability Program and ELI program—Complete by Sept. 06
   a. Literature search and review (Visual Resources Association website, etc.)
   b. Environmental scan of technology trends
   c. Scan of top 3 to 5 programs in peer institutions (e.g. Princeton, Harvard,
      Penn State, Virginia/James Madison University, MIT, Cornell)
4. Intellectual property best practices (drawing from the work of ELI program, the
   Visual Resources Association and the College Art Association, and others) with
   Digital Landscape Committee (Sept 2007)
5. Finalize RFP and implement recommendations for the digital conversion of the
   VRC through DPIP (by June 2006 to run through January 2008).
6. Identify and integrate image management and delivery tools working with ILTS,
   CMI (Classes v2) and ITG. Sept. 2007
7. Develop a collection strategy and policy to integrate image collection resources,
   including personal and departmental collections (e.g. Classics) working with
   Integrated Library Technology Services, Collections Collaborative, Collection
   Development Council, and other holders of ‘special’ image collections. Sept.
   2007
8. Recommend and implement a service plan for integrated digital visual resources,
   working with Public Services Managers Council, ITG and Arts Library. Dec.
   2007
10. Develop training program for VRC staff and others providing support of teaching with digital images. July 2006 and ongoing
11. Collection development policy and procedure/best practices (acquisition, digital conversion, and faculty personal and departmental contribution – other Yale resources)
12. Measure and assess faculty and staff satisfaction. (Ongoing)