

Heads of Special Collections -- HOSC

Conference Call Minutes

February 6, 2012, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Attendees: Peter Hanff (Berkeley), Daryl Morrison (Davis; chair), Michelle Light (Irvine), Tom Hyry (Los Angeles), Emily Lin (Merced), Melissa Conway (Riverside), Lynda Claassen (San Diego), Josue Hurtado (San Francisco), David Seubert (Santa Barbara), Christine Bunting (Santa Cruz), and Adrian Turner (CDL)

I. Aeon System

Several UC Special Collections have had demonstrations or online demonstrations and quotes for the Aeon special collections circulation system including San Diego, Riverside, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles. In the general discussion, there was positive interest in the product, but the cost is a major factor. In discussion about what was liked about the product-- mentioned were the patron empowerment, streamlining of circulation steps, and greater security control. However, inputting was needed throughout every movement of an item. UCI and UCD are not likely to be able to afford Aeon. Berkeley had invested in a bar coding project in the Millennium system for tracking circulation and Aleph might also meet that need. UCLA is serious about obtaining Aeon. If money were not an object, Aeon seemed like the best system. The Claremont Colleges have recently brought up Aeon. A possible visit to Claremont for those attending the book show in Pasadena might be arranged by Lynda Claassen.

We discussed the possibility of whether or not CDL could host the software; it would be technically possible, but unclear as to costs (could CDL host for cheaper than Atlas?) -- one factor would be whether or not we'd be looking at single vs. multiple instances. There may be additional costs for CDL to secure Windows-based licenses to run the software. Beyond hosting considerations, we also discussed the possibility of approaching the license on a consortial basis. We might consider possibilities for CDL to broker the license. We also discussed cost share model possibilities: the Tier 1 pricing would be too high for some of the campuses and a multi campus package might make the cost possible.

Adrian Turner will follow up with Christian DuPont to gather additional information on whether or not it would be possible for multiple UC campuses to share a single Aeon instance, and considerations, functionality issues, etc., and will report back.

- UI testing for link in OAC finding aids

II. NGTS POT 3 updates

Adrian Turner reviewed the POT 3 Archivists' Toolkit Implementation Lightning Team -- Archivists' Toolkit Implementation Survey and summary of results. His submitted report follows:

Over the course of November 30 through December 14, 2011, our team conducted a survey of current and potential Archivists' Toolkit (AT) users in order to assess the present implementation of AT and the needs of key user groups, primarily archives and special collections with the UC library system. Four primary points for effective implementation of AT emerged from the survey results.

Communications

- There is an expressed need for a succinct AT marketing brief- i.e., a description of its functionality, what kinds of benefits it offers, etc. -- which could be leveraged to secure broader administrative buy-in.

Integrating the AT into local workflows

- Several respondents indicated a need for support with connecting the AT into broader workflows and integrating the software with other systems. Examples include strategies for exporting, depositing, and re-using outputs within other systems, from preservation services to OPACs. Other examples include utilizing particular features in the application, such as customization options, using plug-ins, and importing legacy data. In regards to the latter, legacy data can encompass accession and collection data in a wide variety of formats, ranging from finished EAD records and legacy databases such as Microsoft Access and Filemaker Pro, to PDF and word processing files, or even paper records. Each of these formats has the potential to be migrated into AT, but the level of effort required varies according to the type of migration, and may also be impacted by staff and IT availability at each repository.
- One tactic towards developing a support framework would be to establish an expert UC user group and knowledge base, as a campus-wide resource for workflow strategies (as described in further detail below). Another tactic may be for particular campuses to strategically contract with the AT developer community, to facilitate legacy data mapping and reformatting, so that it can be migrated into the application.

Training

- The majority view was that in-person training on each campus would be preferred to a webinar format, or to sending multiple staff to a regional training workshop. The most indicated needs for training were in "Basics of Archivists' Toolkit," "Imports and data cleanup," and "Plug-ins," with eight of ten campuses expressing interest, followed by "Digital objects" and "Reports," with seven out of ten campus expressing interest. In total, nine out of ten special collection departments feel the need for training a total of forty-five staff members in some aspect of AT.
- Options not specifically covered in the survey, but which have emerged in discussion, are a "train the trainer" workshop series, whereby an expert user group is established across the campuses. Initial training for identified AT coordinators from the campuses could be provided at two regional locations (southern and northern California), as in-person workshops. These AT coordinators would, in turn, serve as local expert users and training resources for their local campus processing staff. The "train the trainer" series could be supplemented by campuses utilizing other existing training options, as needed. For example, supplemental training is available through the Society of American Archivists and Society of California Archivists, on an ongoing basis. The Orbis Cascade Alliance is planning to host a webinar-based AT training series, resulting in recordings that could be consulted on an ad hoc basis.

Ongoing usage support

- Ongoing support of AT will also be important. The expert user group mentioned previously could form the core of this support, with a formal charge and a key contact from each campus, similar to other all-campus or common-interest groups.
- Another tactic might be to create an online clearinghouse for documentation, best practices, and other resources pertaining to AT usage within the UC Libraries; this could leverage the existing AT user forum and listservs. This would serve as cross-campus developed resource for sharing information on strategies for exporting, depositing, and

re-using outputs within other systems, and utilizing particular features in the application (custom configurations, customized reporting, plug-ins, data import strategies, data export and reutilization in other systems).

Adrian solicited for feedback on the initial and tentative proposals -- specifically, in regards to the "train the trainer" approach and establishing a UC AT User Group. Would HOSC members be willing to appoint a staff member to attend the training session, and support travel -- and also appoint the member to serve on a UC AT User Group? It was suggested that any "train the trainer" series be offered in both northern and southern California. Multiple campuses also indicated support for the latter.

As the group gets further along with formulating its recommendations, it will be seeking more feedback from HOSC.

Adrian also reported on the POT3 Minimal Collection Record Lightning Team. He and Josue Hurtado are on the lightning team to develop a specification, constituting a minimum set of data elements required for UC single-level records describing material under archival control. They are leaning on DACS' "single-level minimum" recommendations to constitute a baseline, ground floor descriptive record; they will also provide encoding recommendations for EAD and MARC21 (leaning on BIBCO recommendations, for the latter). This specification may be useful in establishing a minimal descriptive record for unprocessed collections, backlogs, new accessions, and materials that would not otherwise be described. They are conferring with POT2.2, which is developing a larger specification for describing materials under bibliographic control, and other resources. As soon as they have a draft they will send it to HOSC for our archivists to review. They are mainly codifying practice that they believe is already being done.

Michelle Light reviewed the activities and status of the POT #3-Lightening Team 2 More Product Less Process (MPLP)

A survey was sent to both department heads and processors to gain more perspective and buy in to the MPLP approach and to identify any resistance. The department heads were invested in MPLP to clear out backlogs and provide processing metrics. The processors were more involved in process and showed a little more resistance to metrics. The survey was to engage the audience for a manual and gain concern about perceptions regarding MPLP. MPLP was generally seen as a useful philosophy. It does not appear that we need to build "buy in." There was something of a conflict as respondents were looking for specifics on how to handle all types of materials, yet they wanted flexibility and tools that were not too proscriptive- that will be a challenge. We decided not to call it an Implementation Manual but "Guidelines." It may be staged on a wiki, so that it can develop over time and processors can add case studies. There did not seem to be concern about change. Processors reported they often did not set priorities on which collections would be processed and the level of processing, that decision was made by curators. We did not survey the curators. The draft of the guidelines will be given to HOSC in July for comment and the formal release will be in August. The Lightning Team is trying to define MPLP better and the "golden minimum," create case studies, and develop the Guidelines Table of Contents.

Following Michelle's report, there was general discussion on who does the processing in departments and makes decisions about priorities and levels of processing. There was also discussion about the need for the MPLP guidelines to be described as a philosophy versus a processing manual and that the wiki would be a helpful approach.

III. Other Information from Adrian Turner, CDL

Adrian reported that Claremont is currently licensing Aeon, and will serve as an initial use case for linking from their OAC finding aids to Aeon. CDL anticipates supporting the Aeon linking within the next month. He will send an update as soon as the links are live.

-Invitation to share MARC collection data, for testing, for the Digital Public Library of America
The Digital Public Library has asked if they can harvest our EAD and MARC records in OAC, for the purpose of testing and developing their harvesting infrastructure. If interested follow up with David Weinberger (see e-mails from Adrian to HOSC listserv on 2/2/12 and 1/31/12).

-Google Analytics usage stats for OAC/Calisphere collections: testing update
We will soon be able to track use of our collections in OAC, using Google Analytics. The CDL is currently running AWStats for stats reporting; but this is an older system that doesn't provide much reporting flexibility. Google Analytics is the "industry standard" at this point. They are still testing. It will move into production mode in the next few months, and will be in touch as soon as the service is available. OAC contributors will need to obtain a free Google Analytics account, to use the service. CDL intends to migrate contributors completely to Google Analytics over the course of 2012-2013, and anticipates that it would stop running AWstats after December 2013.

-OAC Collection Record Tool/searchable PDFs

CDL is working on soon releasing a new "Collection Record Tool" (follow-up to HOSC notes from October 2011); plans to roll this out within this month or next month. It will comprise a simple, web-based template for creating collection-level descriptions, with a baseline level of descriptive elements (based on DACS); users can simply fill out the form, and hit a button for the description to be published in OAC. It will have a mechanism to generate an EAD export (for downstream re-use in other systems, such as Archivists' Toolkit). Geared to repositories that can't easily utilize more robust tools, such as AT -- or that aren't implementing EAD. The existing EAD web templates won't be replaced, but the new forthcoming templates will offer a simpler approach, and won't require EAD encoding knowledge.

The Collection Record Tool will also provide the option for users to upload one or more searchable PDF inventories. A key use case for this: situations where you have print or electronic versions of finding aids (or box lists, inventories, etc.), but not currently in EAD format, where you could quickly and cheaply convert into searchable PDF -- and could subsequently make these available through OAC. Any PDF submitted through the Collection Record Tool would be hosted and published in OAC. For the initial release, the PDFs won't be indexed for searching/browsing - but the next immediate release will support this.

There will be an update as soon as the service is available.

-Social Networks and Archival Context (SNAC) project update

The SNAC research and demonstration project is planning to secure next phase grant funding from the Mellon Foundation (see e-mails from Adrian to HOSC listserv on 1/9/12). CDL will continue on the project to enhance the prototype access system (a portion of Brian Tingle's and Adrian Turner's time will be on the project). A key goal is to demonstrate the use of EAC-CPF within a discovery context. It may also be used as a reference point for a national archival authority framework.

[Text taken from the e-mail:]

An update on the Social Networks and Archival Context (SNAC) project may be found at:

<http://socialarchive.iath.virginia.edu/>

In collaboration with our project partners at the University of Virginia, Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities and UC Berkeley School of Information, we are seeking support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a second phase of this research and demonstration project from 2012-2014. The SNAC project work to date funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, has included deriving names from OAC collection guides and other EAD finding aids; creating a test bed of archival name authority records in the new **EAC-CPF standard**; and developing a prototype access system to demonstrate how these records can be used to enhance access to archival resources (like those in the OAC) and cultural heritage materials broadly. CDL

has focused primarily on this last piece, and invited feedback. The next phase of SNAC would include a significant number of contributions of EAD files from many other regional consortia, as well as nearly 40 individual US and international repositories, ranging from the Library of Congress and Smithsonian Institution Archives to the Bibliothèque nationale de France. This will allow an integration of sources, for the visualization of relationships between names and records -- to ultimately demonstrating the viability of using EAC-CPF within an access system as part of broader, national archival name authority infrastructure.

IV. Campus round robin.

UC Berkeley- moved the Magnes Museum of Jewish Culture and Art collections into the department and celebrated the museum becoming part of the Bancroft on January 22, 2012. The opening took much of Elaine Tennant's attention.

UC Davis- will be undergoing a second round of interviews for a University Librarian. The department has worked with the Humanities Institute on an exhibit called Paper Takes displaying radical political pamphlets from extremist groups to show how uncivil words can have an effect on society. It was part of a larger project to respond to hate group activities that had occurred in the previous year. The Occupy Movement and the pepper spraying incident had a big effect on campus and the encampment is still on the Quad. Special Collections has been gathering signs, broadsides, and website information from the local movement. We are processing the Robert Mondavi papers through the Mondavi Trust and other private funding.

UC Irvine- has a temporary archivist to work on regional history collections for 1.5 years. There are two new library exhibits. One is on the Nobel Prize winner Sherwood Roland. The papers were processed under the CLIR grant. Project NOCK is a Southeast Asia Archives on refugee painting. There are Hong Kong Refugee Camp testimonials. Irvine is about to celebrate its 50th anniversary and is participating in campus wide meetings to support anniversary projects. They are being asked to create a "modern archive of digital photographs and documents." They are looking for ways to raise money and obtain staff for the projects.

UC Los Angeles-has undergone reorganization in the last eighteen months to form one large unit from five units. It has been a strategic planning process to bring the staff together to work as a unit and develop a mission statement and strategies. They have established curatorial groups to head small special collections, define collection policies, and define specific area strengths. Heather Bristin is the new Head of Public Services- her emphasis will be on new programs for instruction and outreach to undergraduate students. The first floor is going to open with a renovation that includes a research commons to allow for collaboration in the humanities/social sciences, research pods where people can work together, a new conference room, reading room, and café. Gerald Cloud is the new librarian at the Clark Library since early fall.

UC Merced-is recruiting a Digital Curation librarian who will do data management for faculty and their digital assets. They are developing policies for digital objects collections.

UC Riverside-has had some layoffs, but not as many as feared- the AUL for Scholarly Communications, .50 of the University Archivist's position; a budget analyst, an Administrative Assistant to the U.L. and a stacks manager in Rivera Library. The UCR Libraries will be celebrating the addition of the three millionth book on April 18, 2012 with a special ceremony. Special Collections & Archives is working on a policy for born digital collections in anticipation of the donation of the papers of two science fiction writers to the Eaton Collection. SC&A is also planning a formal security inventory using the 2009 ACRL/RBMS Guidelines Regarding Security and Theft in Special Collections. Upcoming events include Special Collections & Archives' hosting a two-day Science Fiction Studies Symposium on May 16 and 17, 2012 that will be open to all.

We are also already in the planning stages for the next Eaton Science Fiction Conference, "SF in Media," on April 11-13, 2013.

UC San Diego-an NHPRC grant for Herman Baca/Committee on Chicano Rights Papers started February 1, 2012; 50,000 items will be sent to LUNA for digitizing. Steve Coy, long time University Archivist, will retire next month. He will be a big loss, though he may come back on some "recall time." Steve has been instrumental in the Electronic Theses and Dissertation proposals and projects. San Diego has taken on extensive responsibilities in local arrangements for the RBMS Preconference in June and the SAA conference in August. The library is undergoing a self-imposed reorganization. The library is eliminating all branch libraries, including art, medicine, international relations, etc.; by setting up compact shelving in Geisel and reducing library locations; from being in 10 buildings, library collections and staff will now be in 2 ½ . Special Collections and Archives will report to AUL for Information resources; portions of some Special Collections staff may report to other units. Everything is to be worked out in the next 6 to 8 months. The emphasis is on programs rather than departments- for instance "Fulfillment Services" covers Acquisitions and Interlibrary Loan. (There was some chuckling over the heading "Fulfillment Services)."

UC San Francisco-Josue has been the Acting Head of Special Collections. Several large collections have come in Herskowitz, Michael Bishop. They are reformatting an audio visual Viet Nam oral history collection. They are working on LibGuides for Homeopathy and AIDS. They are doing a survey of their digital assets to determine formats, size, etc. , and looking at born digital files.

UC Santa Barbara-Denise Stephens is the new University Librarian. There are eight searches going on in the library due to retirements and people being recruited away. They are under contract with the Library of Congress to digitize 6,000 recordings. The new building project has been delayed six months and so late fall 2013 is the expected ground-breaking date.

UC Santa Cruz-Special Collections has moved into their newly renovated building. The grand opening was January 9. It was a big project to move all of the collections back. The new building has an exhibit floor for the Grateful Dead collection. An architectural firm made a major donation. The Grateful Dead website funded by the IMLS grant will launch in June.

Next Meeting Date: May 14, 2012 at 10:30 a.m.

Document owner: Michelle Light
Last reviewed: February 24, 2012