Next Generation Technical Services
UC Unique Collections
Phase 1 report -- revised
January 25, 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UC unique collections are vast, rich, and, in many cases, underutilized resources. Currently UC is not realizing the full potential of these assets. The NGTS Unique Collections team investigated current practices and issues pertaining to processing, cataloging and description, reformatting, and other technical services workflows regarding these materials throughout the UC system.

The team conducted surveys of archives and special collections units, visual resource collection units, and Scholarly Communications Officers, and studied existing data on campus workflows relating to theses and dissertations, compiled by the NGTS 21st Century Emerging Resources team.

The findings of the surveys direct UC libraries to improve access to UC unique collections. Responses call for sharing expertise and resources UC systemwide, and for developing systemwide operational support. Our research revealed opportunities for systemwide leadership and collaboration in allocating resources, developing and promoting standards and best practices, deploying tools, and training staff.

The issues and suggestions presented in this report are taken directly from the survey responses. We must stress that these should not be construed as firm recommendations, as the team has not yet discussed and investigated the feasibility of the suggestions. That will come during phase 2 of our work. Issues are organized around four common themes that emerged from the data, identifying areas of need and opportunities for UC-wide collaboration and standardization.

Issues/suggestions

1 Shared strategies for processing and cataloging unique materials

Short-term

1.1 **Invest in cataloging**. Hire additional staff (permanent and temporary) to concentrate on cataloging UC's collection of unique materials.

1.2 **Utilize entire staff**. Train staff from other departments of the library to process archives, manuscript, and image collections, and to do copy cataloging of rare printed materials.

1.3 **Exploit existing resources**. Identify expertise (language, subject matter, format, etc.) across campuses and create a "knowledge center" for technical services department staff to consult as needed.

Mid-term

1.4 Improve authority control by developing centralized or shared authorities for cataloging.

1.5 **Work as one.** Reconsider staffing model to establish a workforce of technical service staff (whether consisting of current staff or hiring temporary staff), possibly based at the RLFs, that can travel between campuses to process unique collections on-site. Costs and benefits could be shared by all libraries.

1.6 Share, or provide systemwide support for, catalogers to do METS wrapping and help position/prepare material for entry to DPR.

Long-term

1.7 **Rethink current structures.** Create organizational structures that facilitate sharing technical services expertise among units that are administratively separate.

2 Systemwide coordinated implementation of standards, guidelines, and training

2.1 Share processing manuals and cataloging documentation

2.2 Develop and provide additional best practices guidelines for:
- a) descriptive standards, e.g., DACS and DCRM,
- b) copyright and permissions policy for unique materials, and
- c) reproduction policy for unique materials.

2.3 Provide CDL guidelines that address aggregate digital objects entities with minimal metadata.

2.4 Provide regular training, including online tutorials and webinars, to help staff keep abreast of changes in requirements and standards, and on usage of shareable content creation and management utilities (see Section 3).

3 Shareable content creation and management utilities

Short-term

3.1 CDL explores hosting of archival management systems Archivists' Toolkit and Archon, for cross-campus use.

3.2 UC campuses share local utilities (open-source digital collection utilities; and EAD, METS, and MARC encoding and data conversion utilities) with other campus repositories, when possible. Examples include UCB's GenDB application and EAD Web Templates, and UCLA's SCREAD toolkit.

3.3 CDL continues to host and maintain open-source EAD and METS encoding and data conversion utilities, such as 7Train and EAD Web Templates, for cross-campus use.

Mid-term

3.4 Investigate cross-campus implementation of "turnkey" digital collection utilities (CONTENTdm, CollectionSpace).

4 Systemwide support for born-digital special collections, archives, and UC scholarship

Short-term

4.1 Expand eScholarship to support more kinds of shareable research content (i.e., UC scholarly output), particularly research data, electronic lab notebooks, and multimedia documenting research or creative activity.

4.2 Investigate systemwide solutions to help campuses manage electronic theses and dissertations throughout their life cycle.

Mid-term

4.3 Investigate systemwide solutions to support the entire life cycle of born digital archival materials.

4.4 Implement a systemwide solution for electronic theses and dissertations.

Long-term

4.5 Implement a systemwide solution for born digital archival materials.