

CYBER-INFRASTRUCTURE STEERING COMMITTEE (CISC)

Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2011

Present

Grace Agnew, Chair	Melissa De Fino (guest)	Aletia Morgan
Kalaivani Ananthan	Ron Jantz	Tibor Purger
Isaiah Beard	Rhonda Marker	Mary Beth Weber
John Brennan	Chad Mills	

Excused

Linda Langschied
Jane Otto
Ryan Womack

AUL Update

Agnew said goal-setting will be the topic of the next meeting. Among potential goals to consider are completing the context object, maximizing project management capabilities, providing better tracking and accountability for digital projects, and continuing to leverage EAD finding aids. She encouraged the team to consider additional goals.

Agnew stated the Data Management courses were going well. She was impressed with the initial data models generated by the class. Currently, the participants are codifying entity attributes into a registry using XML. She also said the class will provide basic guidance for research metadata.

Marker has been invited to deliver lectures about open access, rights issues, and the preservation of scholarly research at Chulalongkorn University College of Public Health Sciences in Bangkok, Thailand in November. Agnew congratulated her and reiterated as we continue moving forward with research data opportunities like this will arise.

NSF Social Sciences Metadata Grant

Agnew and Jantz led the discussion to determine the committee's interest about approaching the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) to discuss the possibility of applying for the NSF Social Sciences Metadata grant. The Libraries would not be the lead Principal Investigators (PI). Assuming they wanted to participate, the PI(s) would come from SAS with the Libraries in a supporting capacity. The grant application deadline is January 31, 2012.

From the Libraries perspective the crux of this work would be developing a common framework and vocabulary allowing researchers to access and link data from three existing survey databases (ANES, PSID, GSS). The databases contain different structures and vocabularies and are currently incompatible with each other. We would create the infrastructure for researchers to link this disparate data via the repository.

Both Agnew and Jantz said receiving this grant would provide the Libraries with a valuable opportunity to exhibit expertise in metadata, vocabularies, data management, and using an event model approach across multiple entities. We could begin to trace resource usage across boundaries. The application process by itself could help further crystallize our thinking around data management. It could also demonstrate how aligned we are with the direction of other big institutional repositories (inter-disciplinary as opposed to an intra-disciplinary research capability). Additional considerations expressed by the committee follow.

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Ananthan – We need to understand the impact this project will have on existing RUcore services. We must also continue to stabilize RUcore, WMS and our testing methodology. Beard echoed these thoughts.

Mills – We should continually revisit the capabilities of Fedora and understand if commonly held assumptions about what it can and cannot do remain accurate. Fedora may have additional functionality we could leverage for this type of project.

Marker – We must remain mindful of the tension between long-term strategic approaches and completing existing projects. We must understand the impact this may have on available resources. She added we need to continue to address preservation policies for digital resources.

De Fino – This would be a high profile project and a valuable service to provide. We need to fully understand the risk and impact this project presents. As the state university of New Jersey, we also need to remain attentive of our responsibility to the research and resources of the University and the state.

Brennan – Taking on this project will help provide additional clarity for the future direction of the repository. Weber echoed these thoughts.

Morgan – The repository is complex and we must continue to enhance the public interface.

Womack was excused, but provided a written summary of his thoughts prior to the meeting. He noted given the expertise needed to work with the data, it was most appropriate that SAS be the PI for the grant. He would be happy to participate and contribute.

Agnew added the focus of the University is learning and research. Projects such as this demonstrate a strong commitment from the Libraries to the University's mission. She agreed we needed to continue to be vigilant of our core services while evolving in a way which best meets the maturing needs of our user community. She acknowledged the challenges this grant would bring, but noted if we received the grant the work would not begin until October 2012. This would afford us time to readjust priorities and resources, if needed.

The consensus was that we approach SAS to gauge their interest about applying for and partnering on the grant. Agnew thanked the group for their feedback and input.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28 at 10:00 in the Technical Services Conference Room.

Submitted by John Brennan
September 27, 2011