

**Society of American Archivists
Council Conference Call
October 6, 2017
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST**

**Consent Agenda: Ratify Council Interim Actions
(Prepared by Executive Committee Member Kris Kiesling)**

BACKGROUND

Current parliamentary policy agrees on validating board decisions made remotely, and ratifying the Council's online and conference-call decisions via the Consent Agenda does not conflict with any existing SAA policy.

DISCUSSION

Given the Council's use of an e-mail discussion list to function as a group and make decisions remotely, approving interim Council actions via the Consent Agenda contributes to streamlining the group's work and improves access to the interim decisions of SAA's elected decision makers.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Council between August 15, 2017, and September 14, 2017, be ratified:

- Reconvened an SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force to Revise the Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries. (See Appendix for Joint Task Force description.) (August 15, 2017)
- Approved the minutes of the [July 24](#) and [July 29](#), 2017, Council meetings. (September 8, 2017)
- Approved the minutes of the [August 22, 2017](#), Council conference call discussion of the location of the 2019 Annual Meeting. (September 13, 2017)
- Elected four Class B members to the SAA Foundation Board: Sharmila Bhatia (2017-2020), Waverly Lowell (2017-2020), Dennis Meissner (2017-2020), and Michele Pacifico (2017-2020). (September 14, 2017)

SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force to Revise the Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries (Affiliated Group)

I. Purpose

The SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force to Revise the Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries (hereafter “Task Force”) is responsible for reviewing and revising a [Joint Statement](#) that was last released by the two organizations in 2009. The Task Force should recommend any and all revisions that would bring the Statement up to date, and should consider two points raised by the SAA Committee on Public Policy:

- Born-digital materials. The last revision of the Joint Statement (2009) was approved prior to the growth of the use of digital forensics software in cultural heritage institutions. (See, for example, *Digital Forensics and Born-Digital Content in Cultural Heritage Collections*, by Kirschenbaum, Ovenden, and Redwine, 2010, and the development of the revised OAIS reference model, 2012.) Software used by creators often collects additional information about the document without the creator being aware of its collection. This information can be retrieved by the use of digital forensics software. The Committee suggests that input on the Joint Statement be collected from individuals who are familiar with the capture of born-digital documents to ensure that the general tenets of the Joint Statement are revised to adapt to an increasingly digital world.
- Existence of research materials. Point 2, regarding Intellectual Accessibility, states that a repository “should inform researchers... of the collections in its custody.... The existence of original research materials should be reported, even if they are not fully accessible.” However, Point 1 on Responsibility states that a repository “should not... conceal the existence of any body of materials... unless required to do so by law, institutional access policy, or donor or purchase stipulation.” This last qualifying phrase established a seemingly contradictory standard wherein legal, institutional, or donor restrictions could eclipse a researcher’s right to basic knowledge about the existence of materials as stipulated in Point 2. The Committee suggests that the Joint Statement be revised to clarify this issue.

The Statement will be submitted for approval by the executive bodies of SAA and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and ACRL’s Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS). The Task Force will recommend a plan for periodic review of the Statement at the time the Statement is submitted to SAA and ACRL/RBMS for approval.

II. Selection, Size, and Length of Term

The Task Force is charged for a period that begins in September 2017 and continues through the August 2019 SAA Annual Meeting. The Task Force will include six members, with an equal number of members appointed by SAA and ACRL according to their normal appointment procedures. A Task Force member may be a member of both organizations but will be appointed to the Task Force representing one organization only. In addition to the committee members, *ex*

officio members and liaisons may be appointed by each organization according to its normal procedures.

Due consideration will be given by each organization to appointing members who have the requisite knowledge and experience in access to research materials in archives and special collections libraries, and particularly those with knowledge of changes in this area since the 2009 Statement was issued.

One member appointed by each organization will be designated to serve as a Task Force co-chair. The co-chairs will be responsible for convening Task Force meetings, leading Task Force work, ensuring that deadlines are met, following procedures of their respective organizations, and communicating as needed or required with the executive bodies and staffs of their respective organizations.

III. Reporting Procedures

The Task Force co-chairs will report to the SAA and ACRL/RBMS executive bodies according to the following schedule:

- Interim report at the January 2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting and the January 2019 SAA Council conference call meeting.
- Final report at the June 2019 ALA Annual Conference and the August 2019 SAA Annual Meeting.

More frequent reports are welcome but not required.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities

To fulfill its purpose as described above, the Task Force is specifically charged to:

- Consult broadly with the archives and special collections communities to ensure that the revised Statement reflects current and emerging practices relating to provision of access to research materials.
- Conduct one or more public comment periods to solicit input on draft version(s) of the Statement, and address public comments in all reports to the SAA and ACRL/RBMS executive bodies.

V. Meetings

The Task Force will carry out its charge primarily via electronic mail, conference calls, and online meetings in accordance with the meeting policies of the respective organizations. Face-to-face meetings may also be scheduled during the SAA Annual Meeting (pending space availability) and the midwinter and annual meetings of the American Library Association. Task Force members will be encouraged but not required to attend face-to-face meetings in person.

Minutes will be prepared for each face-to-face meeting and any conference call or online meeting that meets policy definitions for a meeting, and the minutes will be posted within thirty days to the public websites of the respective organizations.