

ACRL/RBMS-SAA Joint Task Force on the Development of Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy

ALA Annual Meeting 2017, Chicago

Saturday, June 24, 2017

8:30 am-10:00 am

Location: Hilton Chicago, Conference Room 4a

Task Force Members Present: Anne Bahde, Oregon State; Sarah Horowitz Haverford; Robin Katz, UC Riverside; Leah Richardson, George Washington U; Heather Smedberg (Chair), UC San Diego; Morgan Swan, Dartmouth

Task Force Members Absent: Sam Crisp, Augustana; Gordon Daines, BYU; Julie Grob, University of Houston; Bill Landis, Yale (chair); Sammie Morris, Purdue; Lisa Sjoberg, Concordia

Visitors: Christian Dupont, Boston College; Samuel Huang, University of Florida; Cindy Krolikowski, Wayne State U; Sara Logue, Princeton; Karla Nielsen, Columbia University; Lindsey O'Brien, Newberry Library; Kelsey O'Connell, Columbia College; Blynn Olivieri, University of West Georgia; Emily Spunaugle, Oakland University; Shannon Supple, Smith College;

Heather provided background on the origin and charge of the task force, and described the overall approach to our work, our relationship to the ACRL IL Framework, our communication and feedback methods, and an overview of the approval process yet to come. She noted that even in their draft stage, several task force members have been approached by people who have already employed the guidelines to create rubrics, develop learning objectives, serve as a jumping off point for conversations with faculty and fellow librarians, as training for new librarians, and more.

Discussion of Next Steps - Approval processes for ACRL and SAA:

Guidelines have been sent to the RBMS Executive Board to be voted on at Monday 6/26/17 Exec Meeting. Once approved RBMS Executive Board will send to the ACRL Information Literacy Framework & Standards Committee for review and final submission to the ACRL Standards Committee. They will also go through a similar process through SAA, starting with the Standards Committee, followed by SAA Council. These processes are likely to take several months.

Discussion of final draft, revisions process, next steps, and future ideas:

The visitors asked questions and offered suggestions for next steps, and together, the task force members and other meeting attendees discussed opportunities for professional support and growth that could stem from these guidelines, and other next steps. Questions included: Whether artefactual literacy was adequately addressed - We think the guidelines are in deed relevant for artifactual literacy and material culture, but it's not the be-all end-all of that work. We

wanted to make sure the guidelines were relevant for primary sources in all formats, including in situations where the artefactual nature was not as crucial, but also didn't want to lose the importance of materiality. This was one of many times we aimed to thread the needle to get the right level of specificity and broadness in the learning objectives. In this case, more of the discussion of the life of the object is in the core ideas section, although there are also mentions of artifacts and materials culture in the learning objectives (including 4E).

The task force noted another similar challenge of specificity vs. generality was in articulating the audience. Wanted to ensure the guidelines would be seen to be more broadly relevant than just archivists and special collections librarians, and that users of primary sources themselves were not pigeonholed. Similarly, the definition of primary source itself led to much discussion. The task force tried to keep in mind a variety of user experiences, disciplinary perspectives, historical and current research topics, and variety of source types, formats, and "homes" throughout the process, including materials housed in special collections & archives, tweets related to social movements like #blacklivesmatter, government information, court cases, born-digital, digitized, and original analog formats.

The task force received feedback throughout the process that people wanted tools for "helping the teacher." To this end we included references in the appendices, but have refrained from doing more than our charge. Instead, we are seeding ideas for projects to build off of the guidelines. For example, Bill has been working with SAA RAO and the publications committee to develop a case study series based on the guidelines. RBMS has not had an official body to talk about these issues, but Exec will voting to establish an Instruction & Outreach Committee on Monday and so there is likely to be strong support for future initiatives.

Through the feedback, we also heard a desire for a crosswalk to the ACRL IL Framework. We saw that as outside our scope, but certainly necessary and something that could be done as a follow-up project or publication. There was a suggestion that a review of the guidelines with an eye to the BEAM approach could be an interesting project (BEAM Approach on how to use a source: Background, Exhibit, Arg, but that it should work for our community. Our guidelines may not neatly crosswalk with the Framework, since the Framework was intended perhaps to function at a different level. The goal is to function on a more practically applicable level, within the larger philosophical space the guidelines promote.

Other projects that could stem from the guidelines include the creation and sharing of rubrics for assessment. And of course, the sharing of more specific learning outcomes, class exercises, full-class curricula and syllabi. Christian suggested a website that allows you to click to see outcomes based on these objectives, or to click to see exercises, etc. could be really useful. To that end, The guidelines and the in-development Teaching with Primary Sources exchange (<http://rb.teachwithstuff.org/>) could together be a very strong tool, perhaps even redesign the Exchange to build around the guidelines.

There was also discussion about ways to ensure the conversation around the guidelines lives outside our field, including ways to demonstrate to the colleagues we collaborate with, what our commitments are and to hear other opinions. For example, send people to other, disciplinary conferences to talk about how the guidelines can be applied.

Karla suggests the task force signal some of the next steps and future ideas discussions when we post the guidelines -- so that people know we did consider these things, and that others can take initiative to build on our work. This is just the beginning! We want to release the guideline and see what people do with it.