

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

SAA Annual Meeting 2016, Atlanta

Thursday, August 4th, 2016

12:15-1:30 PM (Open Forum)

Hilton Atlanta, 255 Courtland St. NE, Room 213

Present:

Task Force Members:

Bill, Heather, Sam, Gordon, Julie, Robin

Visitors who signed in:

Tiffany Atwater, Danielle Emerling (West Virginia Univ), Ashley Gosselar (Univ of Chicago), Becky Sherman (Georgia Archives), Shaun Hayes (Univ of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Carol Waggoner-Angleton (Augusta Univ), India Spartz (Union College), Pam Hopkins (Tufts Univ), Linda Hocking (Litchfield Historical Soc), Alonso Avila (Univ of Iowa), Amy Chen (Univ of Iowa), Steve Murray (Alabama Dept of Archives and History), Dawn Schmitz (UNC Charlotte), Aisha Haykal (Chicago State Univ), Deborah Davis (Valdosta State Univ), Cynthia Laframboise (Nevada State Archives), Sean Noel (Boston Univ)

1. Introduction, welcome to the group, our charge, goals for the meeting, update on our work to date

2. Discussion: what would be useful to you, how might you use these guidelines:

- Janet Hauk Whitworth University- welcomes the document - gives weight and leverage to what we do. Audience is key, and in particular in relation to language, use more of ACRL Framework language (knowledge practices, etc);
- Historical society comment, national history day - thinks 8-12 graders, can see using this in teacher workshops and orientations to how to do research with primary sources - the learning outcomes groupings are the things their learners are learning for the first time. Would use these to set learning objectives for a session, to develop classroom activities
- Archives at university - getting resistance from higher level that teaching primary sources is even anything that archivists should be doing - faculty role.
- Subject librarian in history working with special collections a lot - useful as a document for communicating with faculty - helps them getting beyond the language of finding bibliographic, special collections can use as language in meetings with faculty, here's what we'd like to be able to do with you.
- Kris - In addition to learning outcomes, would be great if there was a pointer to pedagogical techniques, set up scenarios.
- Comment on word literacy: accrediting agency spells out information literacy in accreditation documents.
- Prefers guidelines to framework because it gets at real questions I am asked.
- Actual faculty member, next generation is much more engaged, impressed by attempt to be multidisciplinary. In doing so, will have to be vague, also suggestion making a distinction in writing this to an audience of academic, and on the track to academia

- Get on conference program for disciplinary groups who have focus on pedagogy. Targeting *History Teacher*.
- Language applicable when reaching out to disciplines beyond history. Focus on skills, and applicability of skills in the classroom regardless of what students are majoring in. UNC Greensboro.
- Broadness, vagueness is spot on. There are people they can see and apply this document to what they are teaching - sick of seeing case studies, I want to see use cases of the document after it's done. Each one of these sub points can turn into a use case example. Consider going a bit broader that could apply in museum, did we hit everything applicable
- Language about absences loves this aspect of it - but archivists and librarians and their role (not neutral) is not articulated here.
- Critical Thinking is THE key concept - do a better job of putting critical thinking front and center in this document.
- Likes the flexibility for different disciplines, things it's strong for
- OAH space for pedagogy discussion, imagine discussions are happening on assessment, that can be an angle for getting into conversations about this.
- Might have luck approaching smaller regional associations to get on disciplinary, AHA Tuning Project, programs for preparing future faculty at local universities
- K-12 teachers - national council of social studies, music teacher education, etc. to have feedback at that level
- Would like to see us add something - students have a lot of trouble with the materiality, and difference between digital copy, and the connections between the original and digital representations, careful on the language...some discussion about how detailed we get on this, and other aspects of the document.
- Got caught up on archival literacy portion, representational language of finding aids and that this is a power relationships, in Find section: finding aids are challenging, diverse and require a whole skill to interpret.
- Systems thinking - could be a useful lens to view this through, doesn't seem much a part of this document, but could be useful in a lot of ways to think through this more.
- Susan (faculty members) Part IV, Use and Incorporate B-E - awfully ambitious. Go beyond the primary sources..the things here are critical thinking and critical thinking does not = primary sources, these things happen in all kinds of sources. Is this too ambitious. Discussion about this, and in the end came back to this indeed being part and parcel and important.
- One of the strengths, going from specific to the broad and more general - we can all use our experience to read into it from there, appreciates this, thanks us.
- Levels, rubric...again mentioned.

Sam's Notes

- Still to be added

- Glossary
- Bibliography
- Beefed up intro laying out our charge
- Janet (Hauk?), Whitworth University
 - Audience is very key because it would drive the language used and the way that things are framed.
 - You have in the introduction “students who encounter” so it appears that this is meant to be used in an academic setting. If this is the case, it would seem in light of the ACRL Framework, we might use more of those words and concepts... e.g. “learning outcomes” vs. “knowledge practices.”
- Question for the group: Who should our audience be?
 - Historical Societies involved with national history day read “students” and think of middle and high schoolers. Could use these as a means of developing learning objectives for an instruction session.
 - Sean (?) at a university archives: when he’s brought this up with folks in higher levels that he works with, he gets resistance to the idea that primary source literacy is not something archivists should be involved in and should instead be the purview of faculty. How does one bridge that gap?
 - Subject librarian for history, doing lots of co-teaching with special collections. This document is helpful for communicating the concept of PSL to faculty.
 - Is literacy off-putting to faculty? Not necessarily, but you need to explain what exactly that is
 - Matt Herbison: Literacy is not going to be a problem for K-12 teachers
- In addition to learning outcomes, it would be great if there was a pointer to pedagogical techniques, e.g. scenarios for questions that you might pose to students in terms of how you would analyze documents, etc. Maybe publishing an SAA case study?
- We should run these guidelines by faculty to see how they react to the language.
- From a faculty member in the room: faculty have to be brought along slowly, but the next generation is shaping up to be much more engaged. Word of mouth is the way to go, even if it happens slowly.
 - She is really impressed by the attempt to be multidisciplinary. It’s important to appeal to disciplines besides history that employ historians (english, political science, etc.). In doing so you have to be vague and may need to rely on case studies, but she suggests we make a distinction in writing this document in making it academic (high school, college, etc.). It’s impossible to have a one size fits all solution for museums, members of the public etc.
 - Would like to see us add something clearer about materiality in analog original vs. digital surrogates. We need something in there about the skill set of thinking through the differences in how the documents are served up.
 - Comment on pt. 4 page 6: if this is a document about what primary sources are, we’re being very ambitious. All of this about contextualizing, synthesis, does not really fit with specifically primary source literacy. Maybe we could move this to a section at the end or a footnote or something to point to these ideas, but not

include them explicitly? [most people in the room disagreed with this suggestion (some of them quite vehemently!).]

- Erin Lawrimore, UNCG: UNCG has guidelines that read a lot like this. They find this language very applicable when they're trying to reach out to diverse disciplines, such as kinesiology. It made it possible to appeal to the applicability of these skills beyond the classroom, which made it appealing.
- Matt Herbison: I want to see use cases of this after it's done, not case studies. e.g. how you can use it to appeal to x or y audience. He thinks this is spot on but could go just a little bit further (broader). Make sure we're at least making it possible for museums to use this.
- Absences, privilege, silence are really good to have. Could use more clarity on the non-neutral role of archivists and librarians as gatekeepers to this stuff
- Critical thinking is the key factor within this document that applies to all disciplines. We could do more to put critical thinking front and center.
- Gene Hyde UNCA: Information Literacy Instructor turned archivist, really likes the flexibility to different disciplines. Can sell to different faculty members. Part of the sell is critical thinking and lifelong skills.
- Danna Bell: we keep hearing faculty faculty faculty. Do we want something like this to go to national associations for K-12 teachers?
- Sean from Boston University: he got caught up on the archival literacy aspect of it. In the "find" section, he suggests that we think about the fact that "finding aids" are challenging, diverse, and often require mediation, but maybe that's too nitpicky.
- Julie: We scrubbed the part about relationship of parts to the whole from the definition, but we never really picked that back up elsewhere in the document. Need to revisit.
- Alison Clemons, Yale: Could it be useful to frame parts of this document in terms of systems thinking?
- "electronic environment" as a way around "digital" or "digitized"
- Could consider laying this out in a scaffolded way: what could a beginner do, vs. intermediate, vs. expert users?

Gordon's notes

- Expression of excitement about the whole idea of guidelines
- Audience should be the major focus of discussion--need to pin down who our audience is; it will drive a lot of the language that we use and the way that things are structured
 - Historical society archivist--middle and high school students; teacher workshops; orientations to using primary sources; would use these to develop lessons plans to help these audiences
 - University archivist--document makes a lot of sense; resistance from administration and suggestion that faculty should be doing primary source literacy; how do you bridge the gap between roles of faculty and archivists? What is the role of the instructional librarian? Should we be providing guidance on these relationships?

- Subject librarian for history--useful as a way to communicate with faculty; preparing to teach a class; potential way to communicate value proposition of archives
- Faculty--reach out to faculty; they want to be involved and are willing to work with us; impressed by the attempt to be multi-disciplinary; write the document in an academic context and then adjust it as necessary; possibly create a second version
- Should we be using more of the words of the ACRL framework?
- Discussion of pedagogical techniques that could leverage the concepts in the document would be very useful
- Comment on literacy--at a West coast institution accrediting agency spells out literacy in documents and may be necessary to align with accreditation needs
- Are we planning to run the guidelines past faculty?
- Literacy is not going to be a hard sell to faculty; there are going to be audiences that don't understand the concept though that we may be trying to reach
- Should we produce use cases of how to use the guidelines once they are done? If you are a high school history teacher, how do you go about applying the guidelines?
- Appreciation of languages about absences and silences
- Need to make sure that users understand that archivists are mediating access to records
- The key concept in all of this is critical thinking--think about how to make this concept more prevalent in the document
- Really like the flexibility for multiple disciplines; it can be sold to different faculty members; highlight the importance of lifelong learning as a skill developed through primary source literacy
- Think about the relationship of the guidelines to assessment
- Think about how to reach out to the K-12 community
- Consider adding materiality issues--the difference between manuscripts and a digital copy of the same; how do you work with digital surrogates? What is the difference between a digitized item and a born-digital item? The idea of using the term "electronic environment" was proposed
- What is the role of archival literacy in the guidelines? People need to understand the complexity of finding aids
- The idea of navigating systems was floated as a conceptual construct
- Parts of Part IV seem awfully ambitious and go beyond just primary sources; discussion focused on potential usefulness of Part IV and there seemed to be consensus that it was useful
- One of the strengths of the document is that it goes from the specific to the broad; it allows readers to bring their own perspectives to the document
- Do we need to provide guidance on beginner, intermediate, advanced users of primary sources?