ACRL/RBMS - SAA Task Force on the Development of Standardized Statistical Measures for the Public Services of Archival Repositories and Special Collections Libraries

ALA Annual Conference 2016, Orlando, FL
Saturday, June 25, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
Location: HYATT Regency Orlando, Room Bayhill 29

Members present: Moira Fitzgerald (Yale University), Emilie Hardman (Harvard University)

Members who joined via Skype: Christian Dupont, ACRL/RBMS co-chair (Boston College), Gabriel Swift (Princeton University), Sarah Polirer (Cigna Corporation)

Members who could not attend: Amy Schindler, SAA co-chair (University of Nebraska, Omaha), Tom Flynn (Winston-Salem State University), Jessica Lacher-Feldman (Louisiana State University), Sarah Polirer (Cigna Corporation), Bruce Tabb (University of Oregon), Elizabeth Yakel (University of Michigan)

Visitors: Sarah Allison (New Mexico State University), Anne Bahde (Oregon State University), Lisa Conathan (Yale University), Mark Danley (United States Military Academy, Westpoint), Julia Gardner (University of Chicago), Sarah Horowitz (Haverford College), Athena Jackson (Penn State University), Robin Katz (University of California, Riverside), Sara Logue (Princeton University), Heather Smedberg (University of California, San Diego)

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

The meeting was convened at 1:00pm. Task force members and visitors introduced themselves. Three task force members joined the meeting remotely via Skype. Hardman volunteered to take minutes.

Hardman indicated the meeting was primarily concerned with collecting community feedback on the draft to further inform the task force's work during revisions and refinements of the standard in the year to come. Brief background on the task force's charge and draft document was given.

A visitor requested that the committee considering adding language for the benefit of adminstrators who may read the standard to explain that its purpose is not produce numbers that can be used for comparative purposes across repositories, or even year-to-year within a repository, absent of any context. Suggestions about what this language might be were discussed and committee members emphasized that the document provides options for advanced metrics that might help repositories do more contextualized story-telling work locally. Further, it was suggested that the committee do more work to flesh out the intended audience for this document and develop some pointers on how to make use of it as a tool locally.

Strong suggestion and agreement that the SAA and RBMS build in a timeline for revisiting and reshaping the document. It made need to be refined after it is has been used "in the wild." To this point, several guests and committee members volunteered to use and report on the process of

using the standard to gather and report out findings for the next fiscal year. Given the diversity of institutional representation on the taskforce it was thought that if each member could participate in a year one assessment of the standard it may be useful to some final refinements before the official release.

Several specific requests for the committee to address were also made:

- Within the document, there are some places where the rationale for collecting a measure or calculating a metric are made, but this is uneven and would be helpful across the board if the committee would return to the document to add these considerations throughout.
- Might a redirect service in the document be helpful. When being told not to count something in a particular way, if the question might naturally arise of where this information may be captured elsewhere, could the document point to that place?
- Could the committee add in a measure for citation counts?
- Likewise, digital scholarship contributions: how to count them?
- Questions about unprocessed collections: the use of these was seen as more complicated and there is a desire to capture the impact they have on the reading room (staff and patrons), as well as within classes? Do we need to raise this as an issue for counting: unprocessed, underprocessed, MPLP, etc. Need to perhaps advocate an indicator for a change in descriptive status that could be reasonably tracked and reported out; this could be built into an advanced measure.
- Would the committee consider adding an example report in an appendix?

Finally, a reoccurring theme regarding the need to establish a data repository and benefits of creating an interface for collection, reporting, and sharing of data was raised. There was a suggestion that the standard be shared out through meetings which emphasize a hands-on component and illustrate how different places with different sets of tools and practices get this data out and report on it.

Dupont mentioned that in July, the RBMS web team will experiment with posting the document on the RBMS website using the Hypothe.is plug-in for the WordPress platform, which will facilitate commenting on individual sections and paragraphs of the document, and thus at a more granular level than the SAA microsite commenting capabilities allow. Comments may also be directed by email to the task force co-chairs. He added that the task force will host a public forum on the draft at the upcoming SAA Annual meeting, which will be held on August 3-6 in Atlanta.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.