SAA Standards Committee/Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards
Meeting Minutes
2009 Annual Meeting - Austin, Texas
Tuesday, August 11, 2009
9 am – 5 pm

Members Present: James Cassedy, Chatham Ewing, Doris Malkmus, Mark Matienzo, Cory Nimer, Polly Reynolds, James Roth, Michael Rush, Sibyl Schaefer, Margery Sly, Kathryn Young
Other Attendees: Jackie Dooley, Brian Doyle, Ben Primer, Tara Laver

Meeting called to order at approximately 9:10 a.m.

SAA website and Standards Web Portal—*Brian Doyle*
Brian Doyle, Director of Member and Technical Services at SAA and who was responsible for staffing the Website Working Group talked about the upcoming changes to the SAA website as well as the plans for the development of the standards web portal. SAA is in the process of updating their website to a format that would be able to handle more social networking and community-driven functionality. Brian noted that the needs of groups like the Standards Committee have driven this initiative. Last year, SAA selected Drupal as their content management system. They have completed wireframes and have finalized content types. A draft of the site will be unveiled later this month.

SAA has budgeted funds for the coming year for the standards web portal, which will be a module of the larger SAA website. A task force (members not yet determined) will meet in Chicago in October to discuss the desired objectives of the portal (What will the portal do? What type of content will be included? How will it be categorized? Who is the audience?). SAA intends to hire a grant writer in May 2010 to write an NHPRC grant. The grant award would be used to hire a developer to create the module. Helen Tibbo, the incoming Vice President/President-Elect, will be in charge of appointments. Standards Committee/TSDS members present at the meeting agreed that the Standards Committee should have some kind of representation on the portal task force. Brian outlined some qualifications that might be useful for members on the task force: practical knowledge in Drupal, grantwriting skills, and knowledge of standards content. The SC agreed that we should send Helen Tibbo nominations from the Standards Committee along with a description of other skills that would be useful (see later discussion for these decisions).

ACTION:
Polly will e-mail Helen Tibbo about appointments to the task force.

Standards Committee Report—*Polly Reynolds*
Polly Reynolds, Chair of the Standards Committee, highlighted some of the accomplishments of the Standards Committee over the past year. The Standards Committee successfully reviewed and revised our mission and procedures and submitted a total of three reports to Council. (Council's reactions to the report are discussed later.) The Standards Committee endorsed two sessions for the 2009 annual meeting, which

were both approved. The committee also recommended that the *Archival and Special Collections Facilities: Guidelines for Archivists, Librarians, Architects, and Engineers* be approved as an official SAA standard. SAA Council officially adopted the *Facilities Guidelines* as an SAA standard on February 27, 2009. Several groups consulted the Standards Committee about their projects: Orphaned Works: Statement of Best Practices (Working Group on Intellectual Property), Functions Thesaurus (Records Management Roundtable), and the Deaccessioning Guidelines (Acquisition and Appraisal Section).

ACTION:
None

NISO Liaison report—*Polly Reynolds*
Kathleen Dow, NISO liaison, was unable to attend the meeting, but sent along her report before the meeting. Polly presented some of the highlights. Kathleen wanted some ideas on how she might get more participation among the Standards Committee (and SAA) on the NISO votes. Members agreed with Kathleen's idea of involving other sections and roundtables within SAA. A long discussion ensued about opening up votes to the entire SAA membership. Some individuals felt that the vote should be open and available to all voting SAA members while others felt that groups like the Standards Committee should "digest" the information first before sending it out to the entire SAA. Concerns about access to these documents (since they are often drafts and closed) were also raised. A suggestion was also raised about forming a NISO subgroup that would be solely responsible for reviewing NISO proposals.

ACTION:
Polly will pass along the above recommendations to Kathleen Dow. Polly will also ask Kathleen how far the NISO membership vote can be extended (i.e. can these documents be circulated to the entire voting SAA membership?) and how other organizations handle NISO votes among their members.

TSDS Report—*Mike Rush*
Mike Rush highlighted TSDS activities this year. TSDS commented on the RDA draft and revised the EAC working group charge. In February, TSDS agreed that EAD needed revision. However, Mike has been unable to contact Kris Kiesling to discuss the revision in further detail. The EAD working group will meet on Sunday, August 16, 2009, and has the revision on its agenda. TSDS voted earlier this year to disband TSDS due to the expansion of the Standards Committee. Reports from the EAC Working Group, Canadian Committee on Archival Description, International Council on Archives, EAD Working Group, and ALA's Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access were submitted prior to the meeting. Members brought up major concerns or questions about the reports. The group discussed the harmonization of the ICA standards as well as the ICA-AtoM software. The group felt that perhaps Archivists' Toolkit staff might be interested in looking at the software. Mike submitted the revised EACWG charge to the Council, which will be approved once Standards Committee structures are finalized and improved by the Council.

ACTION:
Sibyl will mention the ICA-AtoM software to the Archivists' Toolkit staff.

Standards Committee Remission—*Polly Reynolds*
Polly reviewed some of the recommendations for the Standards Committee remission that were presented to SAA Council at the August meeting.

SAA Council Update—*Margery Sly*
Margery discussed Council's comments to the Standards Committee noting that Council was pleased with the report and adopted the recommendations in principle. A few minor adjustments will be needed. Margery discussed some of the areas still needing to be addressed:

1. Length of chair appointment
    Council wondered why the Standards Committee chair was appointed for two years, and not three when the term for the members was three years. At the meeting, the group discussed that we intended an individual to serve on the committee for at least one year in order to "learn the ropes" before becoming chair. The Standards Committee will make the chair appointment language more clear.
2. Financial implications
    SAA Council felt that they would be willing to support a midyear meeting (as we recommended), but only as "budget permits." The Council Handbook already has language discussing the budgeting of midyear meetings for committees. In addition, Nancy Beaumont would be looking at the current SAA staff to see who might be appropriate to assist the Standards Committee on special projects. Margery felt that we might want to explain that staff support would be necessary for day-to-day assistance and not just special projects.
3. Council oversight
    Council agreed with the recommendations in the document that Council should make final decisions on the adoption of best practices, standards, and external standards. They also felt that Council should see any declined standards proposals. The original procedures for standards development and review had not previously included Council oversight in declined proposals. The Standards Committee will make the changes.
4. Subcommittee appointments
    Council felt that the SAA Vice-President (based on Standards Committee recommendations) should make subcommittee appointments, rather than the subcommittee chair (as it was presently stated).
5. Working Groups/Subcommittee Designations
    Council was concerned with the naming of the subgroups reporting to the Standards Committee, most notably "working groups." In SAA, "working groups" have a very specific connotation: a group appointed by the SAA Vice-President consisting of individuals with specific expertise and appointed indefinitely. The Standards Committee working groups as we had outlined them did not function in this particular way. After much discussion, the members in attendance agreed that we would rename working groups "development and review teams."
6. Maintenance and Review

Council wanted to see sections V.C. to V.E. of the standards procedures expanded.
7. Guidelines
Council wanted guidelines to be described in more detail (and how they fit in with the procedures for best practices and/or standards). (See Deaccessioning Guidelines)

Council would like the report with the changes submitted by September 15, 2009.

Margery also drew the Committee's attention to the work of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws' Study Committee on Authentication of Online State Legal Materials. They may produce a model law or other material that could become a standard. She will forward the SAA representative's report to the Committee.

ACTION: Polly, Mike, and Margery will make the above changes to the reports and documents and pass them along to the Standards Committee for review. The Standards Committee will review sections V.C.-V.E. in the procedures and send comments to Polly by September 1.

2010 Program Committee—*Ben Primer*
Ben Primer gave a brief presentation about the 2010 annual meeting. The meeting will be August 10-15 in Washington, D.C. There will be 70 sessions and there will be no theme. Program proposals will be due September 24, 2009.

ACTION: A Standards Committee member will post an announcement to the Archives and Archivists list asking for proposals that the Standards Committee might endorse.

12:00-1:15 pm   Break for lunch

Deaccessioning Guidelines—*Tara Laver*
Tara Laver, Chair of the Acquisitions and Appraisal Section joined the Standards Committee meeting to update the group about the deaccessioning guidelines proposal submitted to the Standards Committee earlier this year. The group received initial support from Council for the proposal and is now working on developing the project. They will have a preliminary planning meeting at the SAA meeting. Laura Uglean Jackson at the American Heritage Center in Wyoming has agreed to become chair of this new group. The Standards Committee discussed with Tara how the group should proceed in light of the new recommendations and changes to the Standards Committee. We had some discussion about whether the deaccessioning guidelines would be a standard, best practice, or guideline, which led into a discussion about whether a guideline is considered a standard (and what the procedures should be). We agreed that the group should proceed with the planning and we will be in contact with the group about what procedures would be appropriate to follow (once guidelines have been better described).

ACTION: A Standards Committee member will follow up with Tara once the Standards Committee has finalized their report. Polly will also appoint a member of the Standards Committee to be a liaison to this group.

Functions Thesaurus—*Sibyl Schaefer*
Sibyl updated the Committee on the progress of the RMRT's Functions Thesaurus project. The functions thesaurus group has finished defining terms and hope to move the online thesaurus to the SAA website. They hope to be finished by Christmas. The Standards Committee discussed what the implications might be for the ongoing maintenance and review of the thesaurus if it was to be an SAA project. Russell James (chair of the RMRT committee) expressed an interest in learning more about the best practice definition and procedures.

ACTION: Sibyl will follow up with Russell once Council approves the Standards Committee's report.

MOU with ARMA—*Jim Cassedy*
Jim noted that not much has progressed on this project. Polly has been in touch with Nancy Kunde about possible contacts at ARMA. Margery will move the MOU with ARMA higher on the Council agenda. State government guidelines for born-digital records that Margery brought up during the Council report might be a good potential first project.

ACTION: Margery will discuss the MOU with Nancy Beaumont. Polly will pass along potential contacts to Jim Cassedy.

Facilities Guidelines Update—*Polly Reynolds*
The Facilities Guidelines will be available in print at the annual meeting with the online publication to follow. Tom Wilsted and Michele Pacifico, co-chairs of the Task Force on Archival Facilities Guidelines, wanted more information on the future of the group and ongoing maintenance and review. The Facilities Guidelines group also will be looking into the process of developing a national standard (perhaps through NISO), but was not sure how to go about doing this. The Standards Committee agreed that the task force should be charged as a subcommittee (already written in the recommendations to Council). We had a lengthy discussion about the designation of a "guideline" as a standard, but we ultimately agreed to keep the name as is. Committee members were not familiar with the NISO process, but agreed that it was probably costly and labor-intensive. Someone suggested perhaps the Facilities group pair with ARMA.

ACTION: Polly will be meeting with Michele Pacifico tomorrow to discuss some of these issues. A Standards Committee liaison to the Facilities guidelines will be appointed. Polly will also contact Helen Tibbo about appointments to this subcommittee.

Technology Best Practices Task Force Recommendations—*Polly Reynolds*
In February, the Technology Best Practices Task Force presented their final report to SAA Council with the recommendation that the Standards Committee "create working groups to identify common practices and best practices in focused areas of electronic records and digital asset management." Many meeting attendees felt that while the development of technology best practices was important, the Standards Committee was not quite ready to continue the work of the task force. A more specific charge and scope

would be required. The Committee agreed that the development of such a working group might be more appropriate once the standards web portal has been completed.

ACTION: Polly will place this item on the agenda next year.

International Collection Standard Identifier—*Jackie Dooley*
Prior to the Standards Committee meeting, Jackie Dooley brought an ISO proposal for an International Collection Standard Identifier (ICSI) to the Standards Committee's attention. The Committee agreed with Jackie that this proposal has some relevance for SAA as it may have some implications for both MARC as well as DACS and EAD. Polly noticed that this proposal was included in Kathleen Dow's NISO report, but it had never been brought to the Standards Committee (Kathleen had entered an "abstain" vote .)

ACTION: Polly will follow up with Kathleen to see why an "abstain" vote had been entered and find out if the Standards Committee can still comment on the proposal.

Orphaned Works: Statement of Best Practices—*Margery Sly*
In February SAA Council approved "Orphaned Works: Statement of Best Practices" as a best practice. Council moved forward with the proposal because the Intellectual Property Working Group wanted to get the document out. The document can be found on the SAA website.

ACTION: The Standards Committee will point to the document from the standards web portal, when the portal is complete. Margery will discuss the review process with the IPWG at their meeting.

RDA Update—*Cory Nimer*
Last December, TSDS submitted comments on RDA to ALA, which included some SAA comments that they sent to the JSC. The JSC responded that it "would ignore" TSDS comments and considered stating in the RDA introduction that RDA does not apply to archives. Cory is not sure if they have moved away from this position. RDA testing will occur after the draft is available in November. Any changes must be proposed to the JSC. Cory also reported that JSC would prefer requests for revision from the international archival community as a whole. TSDS/Standards committee attendees expressed concern for this statement.

ACTION: Cory will follow up and Mark will assist.

Standards Portal—*All*
Meeting attendees felt that the Standards Committee should have some representation on the portal task force that will be meeting in October. Sibyl nominated herself as she has worked with Drupal in the past. Meeting attendees nominated Aprille McKay since she has served on both the Website Working Group as well as the Standards Committee. Since Aprille will no longer be on the Standards Committee following the annual meeting, the meeting attendees also nominated Laura Davis (she was unable to attend the meeting). We discussed some of the qualifications that Polly will include in her e-mail to

Helen: knowledge and/or experience with standards, grant writing, Drupal, data & data types, and Web 2.0 technology.

ACTION: Polly will send an e-mail to Helen with the nominations as well as the other necessary qualifications. Polly will also follow up with Aprille and Laura.

DACS Revisions—*Mike Rush*
Chatham, a member of the DACS working group, updated the committee with some of the thoughts about the DACS revision process. Review of DACS was scheduled to be completed this year. The working group has been concerned with process and the ongoing funds to maintain the standard. Currently, the DACS working group would like to wait for RDA to be completed before moving forward with major revisions. The Standards Committee will ask the DACS working group to submit a report that would explain that the revision of DACS would be postponed until RDA is complete.

ACTION: Polly and Margery will be meeting with Bill Landis tomorrow regarding DACS. Chatham volunteered to draft a report about DACS (after talking to Bill Landis) that will be included in the Standards Committee's annual report; Doris will assist Chatham.

Subgroup Membership—*Mike Rush*
The terms of the DACS working group members will expire following the annual meeting. The membership of DACS led into a general discussion about membership of all subcommittees and groups reporting to the Standards Committee. Many felt that while it is important to maintain current members for some period of time to maintain continuity and expertise, these subgroups also need "new blood" to give some diversity and alternative perspectives. However, finding new members with the appropriate amount of technical expertise is difficult. Some individuals felt that while expertise was important, other factors should also be considered for nominations. It was suggested that the Standards Committee charge of the subcommittees include some broad qualifications for the membership. Mike will write a draft of the EAD charge that will be a model for other subcommittees. In terms of membership, the meeting attendees agreed on the following: subcommittee chairs and members will be charged for the length of the review cycle (5 years). After the review cycle is complete, the chair will have the option of renewing. Members may also continue to serve on the subcommittee but two new members will be required.

ACTION: Mike will write up a draft of the EAD charge. Polly will add membership language to documents/charge.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:20 p.m.