



Annual Report 2006 ARLIS/NA SEI Long-term Task Force

Submitted: April 2007

Original Charge:

"The SEI Long-Term Planning Task Force is charged with 1) establishing a five-year strategic plan to develop the pedagogical goals for the SEI, including the consideration of an advanced track to provide continuing education for those who are seasoned professionals, the consideration of a certification program, and the establishment of instructor qualifications; and 2) exploring the long-term management, direction, and structure of the SEI. As part of its charge, the SEI Long-Term Planning Task Force will conduct an analysis of the educational needs of image professionals. Consultation with the VRA Education Committee, the ARLIS/NA Professional Development Committee, the investigators of the IMLS grant studying the educational needs of image professionals, and other appropriate professional groups is expected."

Summary

In considering our charge we took a careful look at what the SEI currently offers, how it is being received, and where we could foresee it going in the next five years. In this context, we developed a five year plan which builds on the current mission of the SEI, which is "to provide a standardized and sustainable program for visual resources training, with a focus on issues related to the transition from analog to digital collections." (SEI website, introduction). We do this, recognizing that the landscape of digital images changes rapidly and continually: "As an ongoing endeavor, the ARLIS/NA-VRA Summer Educational Institute will change in focus and emphasis each year to meet the needs of new professionals and of institutions facing the demanding metamorphosis from analog slide collections into digital image resources. With each successive year, more emphasis will be placed on digital topics, and more attention will be given to emerging national and international cataloging guidelines, image resources, and advances in presentation technology, while maintaining the core knowledge base necessary for any type of image collection management."

Within this context we considered in detail the next three upcoming SEI sessions; that is, 2007, 2008 and 2009. The session in 2007, at Indiana University, will closely resemble SEI 2006, with one or two important changes. For example, more time will be spent on topics such as digital asset management systems, presentation systems, and catalogs, and the differences among them. The curriculum also emphasizes system and asset interoperability to a greater extent. The idea of a transition from analog to digital is no longer felt to be germane; rather the assumption has been made that the transition has happened. For SEI 2008, to be held at James Madison University, emphasis will be extended on interoperability issues, both within and outside the visual resource arena. Given how quickly the system landscape changes, much time again will need to be spent on digital asset management, display, and discovery systems. Finally, with SEI 2009, to be held at Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Science, we hope to move beyond the still image, to look at

issues dealing with digitized moving images and perhaps audio. As these sessions are held, participants are surveyed; sections may be dropped or augmented depending on those survey results. Overall, while some of the “boot camp” approach continues, the envisioned track becomes more theoretical, deals more with interoperability of visual resources with other library and non-library resources and systems, and assumes the need for more training in managing and archiving digital assets and less in creating them.

Balancing this vision is of course the reality of demand for SEI. As with SEI 2006, SEI 2007 is fully enrolled, with a sizable waitlist (17 as of April 20, 2007). Clearly the workshops are meeting needs, and as long as that is true it seems counterproductive to make SEI into something else. Similarly, other organizations (and our organizations) continue to offer opportunities that may alleviate the need for SEI to delve into those areas. For instance, with the publication of CCO, and the development of CCO training modules and classes, this is an area that SEI will not need to cover.

The committee discussed the idea of a two-track SEI; one for beginners and the other more advanced. At the same time, it seems that some of the more advanced and closely focused sessions might overlap with sessions held at annual conferences or in other venues, including continuing education opportunities at library schools.

Recommendations

As stated below, we feel that an SEI advisory board should be established by VRA and ARLIS. This should be a permanent (vs. ad hoc) group that would look at issues such as instructor choice and qualifications, staffing, and curriculum. The board might include some SEI “veterans”; those who have worked on implementing and planning an SEI session.

Another issue that arose, but was not within the scope of this group, is that of student scholarships. The implementation teams have received requests each year for a reduced rate or scholarship to be made available to current library school students who wish to enroll in SEI.

While the group considered the question of accreditation for SEI, we felt that it was not really feasible for SEI, given the volunteer nature of our organizations and groups that plan and carry out the workshops. Further, this an area better handled by library schools. On the other hand, it would make sense for the SEI advisory board to reach out to library schools to find out what overlap is offered or where some synergies between SEI and the graduate school curricula might be found.

Finally, it is the opinion of the Long Term Planning Task Force that we have discharged our duties to the extent possible, and that this group should now be disbanded.

Summary of Activities

1. Discussions with both Presidents and Board Liaisons regarding approval of 2008 and 2009 SEI locations:

- 2008 SEI approved for James Madison University

- 2009 SEI approved for Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Task Force member Hemalata Iyer resigned due to teaching commitments and longer-than-expected activity of the Task Force. A replacement has not been named.

2. Exploration of possible options and models for future SEI or SEI-like joint educational opportunities:

ACCREDITATION

- Fry met with Associate Director of IU School of Library and Information Science Deborah Shaw to discuss pros and cons of accreditation for SEI type activities.
- Accreditation, i.e. formal affiliation with an existing library program for course credit, primarily benefits two groups of participants: those currently enrolled in a graduate library science program who need credit hours to graduate and those holding positions which require specified numbers of hours of continuing education on a regular basis, such as school librarians.
- It does not directly benefit practicing professionals whose jobs do not require documented continuing education credit.
- Accreditation is also expensive, as most participants would have to pay out of state enrollment fees.
- Shaw also indicated that since many professional organizations at the state, regional, and national level provide excellent continuing education opportunities, at a more reasonable cost, IU has not found this to be a particularly viable activity for their graduate program to sponsor, though they frequently partner with professional organizations in hosting workshops.
- The above is in contrast to Simmons and Pratt, where the urban environment guarantees a large number of professionals seeking accredited continuing education, particularly those in the K-12 environment.

CERTIFICATION

- Fry also consulted with Sandra Taylor, Librarian for Manuscripts at IU's Lilly Library and a long-time active member of SAA about certification of archivists and the Academy of Certified Archivists.
- Archivists are similar to Visual Resources professionals in many respects, including variety of academic backgrounds, importance of subject and technology and skills, and lack of a single, identifying credential for the field.
- The SAA is a much larger organization, however, than even the combined memberships of ARLIS/NA and VRA. As a separate volunteer organization, with it's own officers and advisory board is needed to create and administer the examinations, it is unlikely that our organizations could manage this, much less agree on annual examination questions.
- While certification is gaining in acceptance within the archival profession, it is still not mandatory, and many librarians with an MLS do not choose to undertake the certification process. It seems to have most importance in the commercial sphere, i.e. consulting and appraisal.
- Another type of certification that is relevant to the future of the SEI would be that offered by the University of Arizona School of Information

Resources and Library Science. Their new Certificate Program in Digital Information Management is a 6 course, 18 hour program that falls somewhere in between short workshops and programs and full library science degrees. It is done entirely online. http://ceao.arizona.edu/dist/sirls_welcome.html. The two organizations could perhaps collaborate with an existing SLIS program to institute such a certificate program tailored to our particular flavor of Digital Information Management.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

- UCLA operates a program very similar to the SEI through its Continuing Education program, and this is certainly a possibility to be studied further. While the three-day UCLA program **3 Day UCLA Extension Course in Document Imaging and Document Management** is primarily directed toward a different clientele than SEI, the structure and coverage of its 3-day workshop may offer a viable pattern for continuing to offer the “digital transition” boot camp type SEI while pursuing more specialized image metadata training venues.
- Continuing Education credits would offer a level of recognition somewhere between full graduate school accreditation and the current certificate of completion offered to SEI graduates.

SPECIFIC IMAGE METADATA WORKSHOPS

- Although this would seem to fall into the activities of the various entities promoting CCO and Core 4.0, the idea of an SEI II, specifically devoted to image cataloging and metadata, is a logical next step.
- This could continue to be a regular, but traveling venue, an established program at a host institution, or an occasional partnership with a host institution, like the one-day workshop on **Describing Photographs in the Online Environment which** will be hosted at Indiana University this coming may as a partnering of the SAA and the Indiana University, Bloomington, SAA Student Chapter. This workshop, like many other SAA specialized workshops will offer both continuing education credits and ACA certification points, and serves as a good model for our future endeavors.
- Several library School venues, including Simmons, IU, and Illinois, might be amenable to hosting this type of workshop on a regular or semi-regular basis. National and Regional conferences may still be the most popular venues for this type of educational opportunity however, as travel expenses can be reduced.
- Another example of this type of workshop is that given at the 2006 AMIA (Association of Moving Image Archivists) annual conference. **Cataloging and Metadata 101** is a workshop designed for professionals in the field of moving image management, including archivists and catalogers. This workshop is being repeated as a regional workshop (in NY in May, 2007, and in California at a later date). AMIA is more like ARLIS and less like SAA in that it is smaller, and all of the workshops are done by volunteers. This workshop is not offered for any type of continuing education credit.

FUTURE OF THE SEI LONG-TERM TASKFORCE

- The next two SEIs, 2007 at IU and 2008 at James Madison, will be crucial in determining if the “boot camp” coverage addressing all major areas is still what our constituents most need, or if demand is starting to shift to the interoperability of established system and the growing demands of

image metadata. By the 2009 SEI in Boston, it should be clear whether the SEI as originally conceived fulfilling its purpose.

- Looking toward that pivotal point, it is time to propose a permanent guiding body for the SEI, one composed of past chairs, SEI alumni, a current Implementation Team representative, and board liaisons to both organizations. This advisory body could become the custodians of each year's SEI survey responses and could take responsibility for polling the membership as to real continuing education needs, in concert with or as part of, the activities of the appropriate standing bodies charged with continuing education and professional development in both parent organizations.

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