The ARTstor Users Group session attracted a full house. It began with the four ARTstor speakers providing updates on ARTstor progress and projects over the past year in their particular areas. A question period followed.

Max Marmor provided an overview of collection activities, mentioning the initial process of establishing and negotiating collection licenses and the complex rights issues elicited by many new aspects of the ARTstor project. He emphasized that ARTstor aims to serve as a campus-wide resource that engages users across the disciplines, in addition to providing depth and breadth required by art scholars and researchers. In addition to the Charter collections, new and upcoming collections include: Islamic Art and Architecture; World Sculpture from the Berlin State Museums, including classical, African, and Native American sculpture; Image of the Black in Western Art; the Visual History of Women in America; the Clarence Ward Archive of French Romanesque and Gothic Architecture, American colonial architecture; the National Gallery of Art Photograph Collection; as well as Images from the Frick Art Reference Library Photoarchives encompassing European paintings sold at auction and the Sansoni Archive, covering sites in Italy, 1920s-1960s

Barbara Rockenbach provided an overview of library relations. She reported on current ARTstor subscribers (365) and the recent availability of ARTstor in Canada, as of March 2005. Barbara also discussed ARTstor progress in interoperability. Users are not presently able to download large images at this time—400 pixels largest—but current and future possibilities include the ability to integrate personal content in the Java-based offline image viewer presentation tool; an XML gateway that will allow for federated searching; and search and retrieval APIs (Applied Program Interfaces). ARTstor is working with its affiliate organizations (JSTOR and Ithaka) to develop a common XML gateway that will allow for federated searching into ARTstor. This will allow users at participating ARTstor institutions to search for and view metadata and link back into ARTstor to view the high resolution images using the resource of their preference. The gateway will be adapted for use with ARTstor and will be available in the fall of 2005. ARTstor has also begun work to further develop searching and retrieving protocols developed by the Open Knowledge Institute (OKI). ARTstor will be working with partners at the University of Virginia, Tufts, and ADD to develop Open Source Interface Definitions (OSIDs) that will define specific acts performed by users (such as “previewing” a collection of images) and that will permit the organization and retrieval of various metadata or image formats (thumbnails or various size JPEG files), depending on what may be exported from a given repository. These protocols are being
developed in conjunction with other repository projects (such as Fedora and VUE) so that, when they are published, they will be part of a community-wide effort to establish some common practices for these operations. This effort is scheduled for completion in 2005.

Kimberly Harvey provided an update on metadata accomplishments and future plans. Recent accomplishments include reconciling minor variants and augmenting and standardizing repository information, measurements, and techniques. Other improvements have included the addition of earliest and latest dates, to enable limiting searches by date ranges; and addition of creators, including variant forms/spellings of artist names—using the Union List of Artist Names (ULAN) from the Getty and the LC Name Authority file (LCNAF).

Future Efforts include:
- Cross-collection browsing, based on users’ desire to browse across time periods, nationalities, etc.
- Moving toward a unified data scheme, from current VRA Core basis to Categories for Description of Works of Art (CDWA), to meet needs of museum catalogers and academic researchers.
- A new version of the Offline viewer, which incorporates user feedback and suggestions, to be released summer 2005.

Nancy Allen reported that museums are benefiting from ARTstor exposure and the hope is that museums may consider contributing data and collections to ARTstor; that they will work with ARTstor not only as subscribers, but also as content contributors. This relationship would be beneficial because of the “richness of continually evolving museum cataloging records,” according to Allen. ARTstor hopes to establish a mechanism to harvest such data interactively on a regular basis and is working with the Getty on this effort. Regarding the status of AMICO participants—of the thirty-nine museums invited to join ARTstor earlier this year, nineteen have signed on with ARTstor so far. Of the 118,000 images in AMICO, ARTstor now has 43,000. Negotiations are ongoing.

Regarding progress in obtaining rights to contemporary art—ARTstor now has approximately 60,000 images. Why not there yet? ARTstor is working on a more favorable and sustainable agreement—a lump-sum license payment per year—and hopes to get there soon. Nancy reported on advancements in K-12 museum education, the second most active group of ARTstor and that a new package for museums that will include both JSTOR and ARTstor has been announced.

**Questions:**

Have any of the thirty-nine museums turned ARTstor down? No.

Regarding the development of the ARTstor architecture collection, Marmor reported this is a high priority area. ARTstor is considering sponsoring photography to document contemporary architecture, including plans, sections, etc. ARTstor is also very serious about virtual reality, using 3-D to enhance perspectives, etc. in this effort.

Pricing? ARTstor is committed to acquiring 500,000 images by its target date 2006, with no anticipated increase in fees. Whether there will be additional fees for additional collections, as is the situation with JSTOR, is difficult to anticipate. They welcome suggestions on how ARTstor could be self-sustaining.

There was a suggestion that a local user’s council, like that of OCLC be established.
Brief mention was made of the pilot project to use local content. Presently there are ten to twelve institutions involved. ARTstor has built a tool to allow users to include and create individual collections. Trying to create an automatic ingestion/update process for the client. More information by 2006.