CAA/SAH Task Force to Develop Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure in Digital Art and Architectural History
SAH Office, Charnley-Persky House
1365 N. Astor St., Chicago
Friday, July 10, 11:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Members: DeWitt Godfrey (CAA President), Ken Breisch (SAH President), Suzanne Preston Blier, Whitney Davis, Linda Downs (CAA Executive Director, ex officio), Gabrielle Esperdy, Michelle Miller Fisher, Pamela Fletcher, Anne Collins Goodyear, Betty Leigh Hutcheson (CAA staff, ex officio), Paul Jaskot, Bruce Mackh, Tara McPherson, Abby Smith Rumsey, Pauline Saliga (SAH Executive Director, ex officio), Ann Whiteside

Present: Breisch, Godfrey, Blier, Davis, Downs, Esperdy, Miller Fisher, Goodyear, Hutcheson, Jaskot, Mackh, Rumsey, Downs, Hutcheson, Whiteside, Mackh, Jaskot, Rumsey, Saliga, Whiteside

Absent: Davis, Fletcher, McPherson

Minutes

I. Greeting and Introductions (Ken Breisch and DeWitt Godfrey)

II. Report from Seth Denbo, Director of Scholarly Communications, American Historical Society (AHA)
Process and Feedback used by AHA: The committee used Google Hangout for teleconferencing. Ten people identified key issues through an ad hoc process, concentrating on what to accomplish in the AHA guidelines, what the focus of the guidelines should be, and what could and could not be achieved. The committee did not seek to change the tenure process but to make sure that scholarly work gets credit that it deserves. The committee assigned portions of the guidelines to individuals and small groups to write up. One long, face-to-face meeting brought guidelines into focus. The entire process included much discussion and interaction.

The committee received feedback on the draft guidelines at a January 2015 meeting of ten department chairs. The document was revised based on comments from this meeting. There was a community discussion forum on the AHA website, and the ability to provide feedback was announced through social media. Comments were welcome in any format.

Important points from the guidelines include: a broad definitions of digital history and of scholarship that are not so prescriptive as to be unusable by many groups.
- "The AHA puts forward 'a broad working definition of digital history' as 'scholarship that is either produced using computational tools and methods or presented using digital technologies.'"

- "At its heart, scholarship is a documented and disciplined conversation about matters of enduring consequence."

Recommendations in the guidelines were aimed at departments and individuals. The move towards digital history is a methodological shift similar to past ones, such as incorporating cultural or public scholarship into the canon. This idea underlies the guidelines.

In addition to listing responsibilities of departments and individuals, the AHA document recommends forming a digital history working group to maintain a directory of historians capable of acting as expert outside reviewers of projects, maintain a curated gallery of digital scholarship, increase reviews of digital scholarship in *American Historical Review* and implement a means in the journal of featuring digital projects and peer review of them.

Q&A:
What were major sticking points in the process (psychological and structural)? The project seems to move from AHA acting as a resource to AHA acting as a liaison. AHA shouldn't insert itself into the process of providing tenure and promotion and risk being an impartial body. The working group will provide material ancillary to the guidelines such as a preliminary taxonomy of projects

What are the roles of collaborators on projects? Historical context of different roles is a big sticking point: make the guidelines useful but don't be too prescriptive.

Is this a living document? Will you update ancillary materials?
Guidelines are set by vote by council; ancillary materials aren't, so they can be changed.

What is the composition of AHA working group?
The group is still in formation. AHA will seek diversity in geographical and temporal representation in the group. They will look for people that know disciplinary history, are embedded in digital humanities centers, people that work outside these centers, and people at all stages of their careers.

Suggestions:
- Bring academic technologists into the working group.
- When hiring faculty as digital humanists, provide guidelines that give a description of their role and career path, so they don't become IT support.

III. Report from Raym Crow, Chain Bridge Group
During spring 2015, surveys were administered to CAA and SAH members to gather perspectives on practices and procedures for evaluating digital art and architectural history for advancement and tenure. Points of note:

- The number of respondents who have used digital tools is low, though the expectation of future use of digital tools is high. SAH respondents ranked higher in use of digital tools.
- Peer review ranked in the middle for importance of digital resources characteristics (Exh. 6).
- The creation of tools for research and teaching ranked highest for activities to consider for tenure or promotion; scholarly blogging ranked lowest (Exh. 8).
- Respondents had low awareness of tenure and promotion criteria; a large number of SAH respondents thought the scope of digital scholarship covered by evaluative criteria was too narrow; CAA respondents considered them more appropriate (Exh. 10).
- Survey results show an overall lack of confidence in the ability of departments and universities to evaluate digital scholarship.
- The most highly ranked barriers to digital scholarship include lack of training or access to resources and lack of funding (Exh. 18).

IV. Report from Alice Lynn McMichael, Researcher

The guidelines should address examples or criteria so that departments can consider how to develop their own. The UMass Amherst draft statement on guidelines could be used as a guide. The AHA guidelines discuss digital history as a methodological shift, comparing it to the development of theory as a way of considering history. Some scholars use it, and some don't. Those that do should be acknowledged and given credit for their work.

The AHA guidelines are strong on collaboration; however, we should be careful when addressing roles so that the guidelines don't promote a subclass of scholars whose work is technical. Think about roles in art history and design that are different from those in the discipline of history.

Should the guidelines include case studies? This might have the effect of framing other people's work.
- Taxonomy in the document should not be constraining or limiting.
- Guidelines are not enough; there is a need for stewardship, mentoring, and sustained training.
- Visual and digital literacy need to be a part of graduate curriculum. The guidelines should provide an indication of the necessary basic skills for graduate students.
- Time is a part of every discussion around digital work. Students are expected to learn digital tools and platforms on their own. Often training and funding for training come from a department or institution that is different from the department or institution where credit is being given.
- Essentially the task force is "managing up" to improve the evaluation system. The guidelines should be used to empower scholars and as evidence for students and faculty to present to advisors, administrators, and committees.

V. Guidelines Planning
How will we define the scope of the guidelines?
- Exclude business models and open access in relation to publishing.
- Define what the guidelines are intended to do and what they aren't intended to do.
- Draw a line at skills use, and instead emphasize how skills are put to use and how effectiveness is measured. (The IFA Mellon Research Initiative report equates learning digital skills to learning a language. In studio art, the use of digital tools is not controversial; it is the dissemination and exhibition of digital work that is controversial. Artists have to inform their reviewers of the value of the work.)
- Include language that discusses process; constructing a database is not scholarship in the traditional sense, but it is an intellectual endeavor that encompasses a point of view and critical decision making.
- Distinguish between digital structure and content; consider design as argument.
- Allow for process to be evaluated; e.g., find a means to capture the years spent building an extensive database.

Will the guidelines be a living document?
The guidelines should function as an advocacy tool. CAA guidelines are reviewed every three years.

What definitions and statements do we want to make? We should be explicit about what the guidelines should do or not do.

What are the limits of digital scholarship?
- Venues for presentation are limited. The guidelines should discuss dissemination rather than publication.
- Venue assessment is a standard part of portfolio review. The venue of publication for a journal article is considered.
- Self-publishing is controversial. Should we offer guidance on this?

How can we mitigate the confusion around peer review? What audience is the work intended to address?
- The scholarship should be evaluated with the audience in mind.
- The guidelines might give examples of post-publication review; e.g., Press Forward.
- Include impact assessment, such as citations, as peer review.

Do we want to include scenarios with possible outcomes?
- Yes, but keep them separate from the guidelines; these should be ancillary material.
- Use scenarios defined as structures, not as case studies.
- Address different faculty levels and spheres that they occupy; many do not realize that they are already digital humanities stakeholders.

How can we address the disparity between graduate students, faculty members, and designers taking part in collaborative projects?

- Design field uses levels of contribution and defines types within levels. A scholar, designer, or graduate student might take on a research role in one project and design an interface or database for another.
- Iowa State University has guidelines that address levels and activities for high-impact hires. Bruce Mackh will circulate these.

Do we address public scholarship?
- Scholars should have data plans or sustainability plans.
- There should be transparency around preservation issues.

Should sustainability be addressed?
- Scholars should have data plans or sustainability plans.
- There should be transparency around preservation issues.

Should the guidelines reference those from other disciples, such as social science? E.g., define best practices for doing quantitative analysis.

There is a need for a registry of projects that provide vetting and review.

Ideas for the Preface
- Frame the guidelines as maintaining the integrity of the field.
- The guidelines are shaping the field to move away from requiring only print publications as a measure of accomplishment
- The guidelines should advocate that the field stays abreast of the way scholarship absorbs new tools. Books and slides were once new technologies.
- Alice Lynn's report should be excerpted in the guidelines to let people know about the lack of resources.
- An historiography of digital scholarship would provide a context for its evolution.
- Address rigor and quality as fundamental to scholarship.
- Avoid bifurcating scholarship into traditional and digital categories.
- The framing portion of the document should include teaching as a part of scholarship.

Summary of Discussion Points
- The role of the preface is to provide a roadmap, an evolution of digital scholarship, and a general historiography of digital scholarship.
- There are distinct expectations for evaluating a project: technology/process/content; dissemination/audience; digital space is democratic; evaluation should include preservation and support.
- Publication should be defined beyond its current parameters; peer review is no longer an adequate measure for publication in a broader sense. Publication is dynamic; peer review will adapt.
- Impact measures to consider: digital innovation grant or other monies; awards of distinction (as other types of peer review).

- Define the nature of collaboration in digital projects; how structures are determined and what the roles are.
- How can the format be made useful? Through case studies, scenarios, questions to be answered.
- Best practices in sustainability should be included in projects or a statement of what parts of a project should be available at a later point.
- Training and education should be part of the road map. Language training is built into academic systems; digital training is not. The framing document should include teaching as a part of scholarship.

Schedule
October 2: Draft
October 16: Face-to-face
December 1: Comments
December 15: Final Draft

Teleconference after October 2 deadline to discuss guidelines.

Linda, Pauline, and Betty Leigh will report on dissemination, including sessions at mutual conferences and webinars.

Assignments
Introduction (Abby and Ken)
- Purpose
- Definitions
- What is in and what is out
- Road Map
- Historiography

Description of digital scholarship evaluation (Paul, Suzanne, and DeWitt)
- Technology
- Process
- Content
- Evaluation
- Equal value to all scholarship
- Same as learning a language
- When does the tool become an element of analysis

Dissemination (Gabrielle, Ann W., and Tara)
- Democratic access
- What publication means
- Inadequacy of existing peer review and how guidelines may contribute to changing peer review impacts publishing

- Support of citations and other impact measurements

Collaboration (Bruce, Anne G., Ann W.)
- Teams
- Roles of contributors

Stewardship and preservation (Gabrielle, Ann W., Tara)
- What do we keep? What is the value of keeping versions of digital projects? What is the core part of the scholarship that should be preserved?
- Preservation plans should be transparent.
- Has the scholar had a conversation talked with librarian about preservation? Scholarship is a sustained conversation over generations—emphasize that creators have a responsibility to put it in the right format.
- Scholars should work in collaboration with librarians and archivists and should have data plans for sustainability. It is the scholar responsible for sustainability?

Format (Michelle)
- Case studies
- Ways in which digital scholarship has been cited
- Types of projects; pick case studies or scenarios, include those that rely on databases and modeling

Training (Preface Material?)
- Digital skills are treated as parallel to language skills, but there is no infrastructure to support it. Every university should support institutes for digital literacy.