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Master I. A. M. of Zwolle, Dutch, ca. 1440-1504. The Last Supper, ca. 1485. Engraving. Plate: 13 5/8 x 10 5/8 inches (34.61 x 26.99 cm). Mat: 21 1/4 x 16 inches (53.98 x 40.64 cm). Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 35-44/2. Image courtesy of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

New Challenges, New Directions

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A Strategy for the Future: Campus Collaborations

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Introduction

As academic visual resources collections have made the transition to digital format, the materials within these collections are more readily available across a broad range of academic disciplines. New technologies are emerging with the potential to support visual teaching and learning across

disciplines. Visual resources professionals are seeking ways to support these technologies and, perhaps more importantly, the new literacies and pedagogies that incorporate these technologies. By promoting the visual resources collection to new user groups, as well as educating them about how images can be incorporated into the curriculum, the visual resources professional fosters visual literacy and media literacy skills that are crucial to the twenty-first century student.

However, the visual resources professional cannot do this alone. Collaborations with other units on campus such as the library, instructional technology groups, teaching centers, and academic computing departments enable visual resources professionals to bring their expertise to a larger audience on campus. By partnering with other units on campus, the visual resources professional plays a vital role in supporting faculty use of institutional image collections, innovative teaching approaches, and new technologies.

The Problem

Professor Jones, teaching a new interdisciplinary course called Representing Justice, is looking around campus for materials to support her course. The course is cross listed in the law and literature departments and Professor Jones hopes to introduce students to both textual and visual representations of justice. She is a lawyer by training and her own education has prepared her well for textual analysis, yet she is concerned about finding images and possibly video to support the course and how to create assignments with the images that will engage and educate her students. She is uncertain where to go for this type of help so she begins by asking someone at the library reference desk, who first suggests Google Images as a standard response to questions involving images. Together the two find some interesting images that are limited to what a generic Google search offers, and this process does not help Professor Jones answer her bigger questions about integrating the images into her course in a meaningful way. A Google Image search will also retrieve images of various sizes, many of which are not large enough for projection in the digital teaching environment.

Professor Jones next approaches the technology group on campus, thinking they may have some ideas about how to deliver images and how to integrate them into course assignments. She discovers an instructional technology group that offers to build a course Web site for the images. The group also has some ideas about assignments to engage the students, but they are not sure of the best place to find content. They also think immediately of Google. Finally, she learns about the Visual Resources Collection, but only after spending several days with different groups on campus. And, after all of this she still has not encountered any of the pedagogical experts on campus who might help her with course assignments.

This situation, which is more common than we would like to admit, points to a need for cross-institutional support to better assist faculty members like Professor Jones. Yale has addressed this need through two mechanisms; the first is the creation of a position within the Visual Resources Collection that addresses faculty's digital teaching needs and the second is the formation of a library-based center to coordinate a team of support specialists from the library and instructional technology groups to assist faculty with the use of library collections, new pedagogical practices, and effective technology solutions in their courses. While many institutions may not have the ability to create a new position, we hope to illustrate that existing visual resources collections and library staff, as well as staff from associated units such as academic technology centers, could adapt their roles to incorporate outreach activities. Additionally, the center we will describe requires only the collaboration, time, and interest of entities on campus since the Collaborative Learning Center at Yale has no budget or dedicated staff.

Part of the Solution: Outreach in the Visual Resources Collection

In 2007, the Yale Usability and Assessment Librarian conducted faculty interviews to assess the services provided by the Visual Resources Collection (VRC); a collection administered by the Yale University Library.[1] The report noted that the Library, specifically the VRC, needs staff to help foster the adoption of digital tools such as presentation and image editing software that faculty utilize for teaching. As a result of these findings, the position of Technology Specialist for the VRC was designed as a dedicated technical professional who could offer specialized instructional support to faculty and teaching assistants pertaining to all aspects of the Library's digital image collections and teaching in the digital environment.

For most of its approximately sixty-year history as part of the library system at Yale University, the VRC focused on supporting the History of Art curriculum with a few faculty patrons from other disciplines such as Asian Studies, Classics, Divinity, and Anthropology, but the transition to the digital format opened the door to increased use in these disciplines and the arrival of faculty from academic areas who had not made use of analog visual materials. Not only do faculty and students in other disciplines need images from the VRC, they also need technical support for using those images. The Technology Specialist is able to provide reference services for navigating the complex world of local, vended, and other Web digital image resources especially for users new to finding and integrating digital images and other multimedia in the classroom.[2]

Additionally, the Technology Specialist is tasked with keeping current on issues of image management software, presentation software, and interesting Web 2.0 tools now vital to educational support. As the primary training and support person for the VRC, this position focuses on outreach and instruction rather than on duties of managing a digital image collection, such as acquiring new content and cataloging images. As with any outreach position, however, a thorough

knowledge about all aspects of visual resources curatorship is required since not all digital image collections are well served by sufficiently detailed metadata and search mechanisms. Outreach activities include individual one-on-one faculty training, fielding image reference questions, addressing image research in library instruction sessions for specific courses, and teaching specialized classes on image editing or ARTstor. This position blends the role of reference and instruction librarian, digital image specialist, and instructional technologist. As Mayer and Goldstein noted in their survey about libraries supporting visual culture, "this new demand for images has not only strengthened rationalization for subscribing to image databases, it has impacted library instruction and reference services." (Mayer et al. 2009, 16)

One example in which the Technology Specialist encountered a patron new to the VRC and to using media in the classroom was an interaction with a lecturer in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program at Yale. Maria Trumpler, teaching a seminar called "Women, Food, and Culture," discovered that the VRC could scan print images for digital projection in class to spark discussion. Although this type of activity certainly occurred in classrooms before the digital age, most courses outside art and art history were historically rooted in analyzing and discussing text-based works. Access to digital visual media allows for new types of classroom pedagogies and assignments based on the visual rather than on discussions only about written texts. In addition to utilizing the scanning services, the professor also met with the Technology Specialist for an introduction to ARTstor, a library resource she had been unaware of before working with the VRC. She subsequently discovered other interesting images through this vended resource, such as images of charred walnuts from Pompeii. This professor noted that using images in her class increased student's enthusiasm to participate in classroom discussion.

This example illustrates one of the advantages of having a dedicated VRC staff member supporting faculty teaching; the professor was offered an in-depth session focused on integrating images into her course, including advice on resources and search strategies for finding relevant materials. A beneficial consequence of such meetings is that the faculty member then refers another colleague to the VRC. This type of faculty advocacy is invaluable to the future of visual resources collections as faculty support and interest is necessary for generating greater institutional support. Wood, in an article "Changing the Educational Program," articulates a need for faculty champions, "Those champions must be found in the faculty if an innovation is to be profound and long-lasting. Administrators should not be shy about seeking out faculty champions." (Wood 1990, 53).

Beyond developing individual champions, it is vital that visual resources professionals also develop a reputation as the image experts on a campus for all image collections, not just those contained or administered by their department. For example, visual resources collections administered by libraries are more apt to contain images relating to all aspects of visual culture such as anthropological images or advertisements since general library patrons are not constrained by the limits of a single discipline such as art history. The scope of visual resources collections are broadening in accordance to requests from patrons in fields outside of art and art history.
With the increased prevalence of images available online, Professor Matt Jacobson in American Studies noticed how he could use images as evidence in his lectures and rely not only on the texts that were assigned to students. However, he was unsure how best to incorporate multimedia into his classroom experience. With help from the Technology Specialist in the VRC, Professor Jacobson became confident in his mastery of finding and downloading images, as well as audio and video clips, and integrating them into PowerPoint presentations. He noted in an e-mail:

Working digitally has not only expanded the archive of my teaching immeasurably, but it has allowed me to elaborate certain historical and analytical points in ways unimaginable without the aid of such images. Just to take one example, images of Martin Luther King, Jr. being violently subdued by Birmingham police convey King's "outlaw" status and the hatred of him in his lifetime for a generation of students who have only known King as a loved and revered national figure. A true understanding of the civil rights era and the stakes involved is impossible without an understanding of this dimension, articulated so eloquently by a pictorial archive that was out of my reach before the availability of digital images online. I could make similar comments about each of the twenty-four lectures in my lecture set.[3]

Sometimes, having a visual resources staff member who can help faculty find resources (regardless of where they find it) and determine the best way to use it in an external software program is invaluable. Again, this facilitation of image use in teaching and learning, leveraging the skills and expertise of the visual resources professional, is key to supporting a range of faculty needs in the digital classroom.

Another Part of the Solution: The Collaborative Learning Center

In the last decade and a half, the Yale Library has been rethinking its core service model related to faculty and student support. As library materials have increasingly moved online, the library's physical space has undergone a radical re-envisioning, raising questions such as: What is the appropriate use of library space in a changing patron and resource environment, and what is the value of visual resources analog slide and photograph collections for that matter, when users no longer need to visit a specific office for their information needs? What do information professionals have to offer that cannot be acquired over the network?

The library literature is full of answers to these questions; the Yale Library's answer to these questions lies in effective collaboration across campus units in support of student and faculty information needs, and such collaboration

requires a dedicated physical space with suitable equipment to foster the creative use of digital media. The Collaborative Learning Center (CLC), established in 2007, was created to bring together the expertise and support services of units across campus engaged in teaching and learning activities. The Center is housed in the Bass Library but maintains a presence campus-wide since staff from across campus support the CLC's mission. Staff from the Graduate Teaching Center, the Center for Language Study, Information Technology Group, and the broader Yale University Library (including the Visual Resources Collection) all work together to ensure that faculty teaching objectives and student learning outcomes are supported and achieved.

This Center grew out of faculty support models tested during two grant projects; the Imaging America project funded by the J. Paul Getty Foundation and the Eli Project funded by the Davis Family Foundation.[4]

These grant projects responded to the emerging need to support faculty use of new media and technology in their teaching. The Getty Grant in particular was called Imaging America because it was implemented to help the campus determine how to support teaching with digital images. The Library knew that support for digital teaching objects would become increasingly important and this funding helped the Library establish a role as the leader on campus in this area.

A further goal of these explorations with faculty was to discover a new service model in the library whereby faculty learning objectives were supported by small teams of experts across the campus. For instance, an American Studies course support team might include an instructional technologist, a visual resources curator, a history librarian, and a staff member from the graduate teaching center well-versed in educational theory.

While these grant projects supported over twenty professors and Yale courses, the challenge was to create a sustainable model for this type of activity. In the fall of 2007, the CLC was established as an institutional home for these faculty support services. A year later, the newly-hired VRC Technology Specialist began to coordinate faculty outreach activities for the Visual Resources Collection and built a relationship with the CLC. To date, the Center has supported over thirty courses in its two-year existence.

The core of the CLC service model is course consultation. During this process, a team of experts from across campus including VR professionals meet with faculty about a particular course or instructional problem. Imagine Professor Jones' issue described above; this is the type of problem a course consultation is designed to address. During a consultation, the team explores the course objectives, assignments, and the particular content collections, technology, and new teaching approaches that would best support the course. We call the members of this team course supporters, as each individual brings his or her own area of expertise to the particular curriculum or pedagogical need. Because we are drawing on the knowledge and expertise of existing staff, we have not had to hire anyone to provide this new type of service for faculty. The glue that holds this service together is a willingness to collaborate and to establish strong relationships among departments who share common goals. We believe this process is one that institutions, regardless of their size or stature, could implement even with limited resources and may find that increased productivity and diminished duplication of effort is the result.

Through this course consultation process we have realized that our VRC staff and our art librarians are uniquely prepared to support courses because they bring a practical and theoretical understanding of visual literacy. VR professionals and art librarians have a skill set that has been finely honed over years of working with visual resources, to teach users across the disciplines about how to use images as both illustrations and as evidence. An abundance of visual materials has become available digitally in the last decade enabling humanists and social scientists to integrate these materials into their teaching and learning. Yet, most professors in these disciplines, as well as their students, do not have training in using visual materials effectively. Additionally, VR professionals and art librarians have discovered that there are conversations across their institutions about competencies and life-long learning skills that students need to acquire that involve critically thinking about the visual world in which they live. Visual literacy is a skill or set of skills that visual resources professionals are uniquely positioned to support and they are vital to almost every course involving use of new media or technologies. In turn, having visual resources professionals involved in course support of this nature allows the visual resources department to become involved in some of these larger, exciting conversations about the future of student learning.

Visual Resources Expertise: A Vital Component of the Collaborative Learning Center

In just over two years, the CLC and the VRC Technology Specialist have worked together on a variety of projects that have directly supported courses and have increased the use of images in teaching and learning across campus. Several examples will illustrate the range of our activities.

One such collaboration involved Seth Fein, an American Studies/History professor. Early in the consultation process, Professor Fein reflected, "I've always used media in the classroom, but it was cumbersome, changing VHS tapes to show clips from different sources, dragging out the overhead projector and the slide projector to show images and graphs... the transition to digital allowed me to use the media in a fresh way, visually juxtaposing images or clips from a video in ways I hadn't really been able to do so before."

However, he also noted that to learn multimedia management and presentation software that allowed him to seamlessly integrate various types of media took many hours and required assistance from technical professionals as well as subject specialists across different units like the

Library, Instructional Technology Group, and Visual Resources Collection.[5] The experience of this professor is an example of why collaborative efforts on campus are important; he was provided with a level of support that allowed him to expand his pedagogical tool set. The CLC provides the framework for support staff to come together in support of faculty from a range of disciplines with streamlined service that ultimately benefits the students. Collaboration with the CLC allowed the Technology Specialist to build important interdisciplinary relationships quickly.

Video became the focus of another course consultation arranged by the CLC with an American Studies professor, Matthew Jacobson. This case led to the creation of a video workshop series for faculty and graduate students in American Studies. It became apparent during the consultation that Professor Jacobson was not alone in his need for instruction on creating and editing video. As is true with many departments on campus, American Studies did not have access to video training through the department even though the students and faculty were increasingly recording video as part of their research and teaching. The Technology Specialist, who has a background in video production, was able to offer a three-part workshop for the department. The workshop consisted of how to plan, shoot, and edit with emphasis on the techniques and skills necessary to achieve a meaningful result for the student assignments. The workshop includes three classes totaling a six-hour time commitment. This series was intended to provide an overview and beginning hands-on skills. It also utilized and built upon a new media equipment service from the CLC.[6] The Technology Specialist has developed a condensed version of the video series catered to specific courses integrating student created video assignments into the curriculum. Before that initial course consultation facilitated by the CLC, course support staff did not recognize this need for video production training in the humanities. The CLC has thus provided a needs assessment mechanism for faculty to articulate ways in which course support staff on campus can work together to provide solutions to instructional problems.

Another outcome of collaboration between the CLC and other non-library support units on campus is an active outreach program called Teaching with Technology Tuesdays (TwTT). TwTT is a weekly series offered for those teaching at Yale (support staff, faculty, and graduate students) interested in innovative instructional activities utilizing new media technology.[7] The program was set up to introduce instructors to a range of technologies that might enhance their teaching. Each week a new technology is introduced such as Flickr, blogs, Facebook, Skype, or Twitter. A five- to ten-minute introduction is offered, followed by a professor describing the pedagogical benefits of a specific technology. The attendees engage in a discussion of how others might utilize this technology in their own teaching and share ideas as well as practical information. The results of these sessions are twofold: the instructors learn about technologies that their students are already using in other contexts and they develop the ability to implement technological innovations in their own classroom. In over two years of offering this series, 25 percent of the sessions have focused either on images or video, and those sessions tend to be the most heavily attended reflecting the broad application of visual materials in a variety of learning environments. These image-based sessions were possible due to close collaboration with VRC staff and their content and image expertise.

Conclusion

Despite the current economic climate and increasingly limited resources at most academic institutions large and small, we feel that the future of the visual resources profession lies in strong partnerships with others on campus to support curriculum-based needs and the academic institution's mission. We have found that through strong collaborations, we have been able to create a new service model for supporting faculty and scaling up our existing course support efforts. By embracing new technologies, supporting faculty learning objectives, and collaborating with librarians, technologists, and pedagogical experts, visual resources professionals can expand their scope within institutions. We believe that existing VR collections could explore the possibility of re-allocating staff time to outreach and collaboration activities. Even VR collections that are administered by academic departments will benefit by seeking outreach opportunities, collaborating with support staff from libraries and academic IT units, and making a case for engaging faculty beyond their traditional audience.[8] The connections made by the Technology Specialist at Yale are an example of how visual resource professionals can integrate their expertise and collections in ways that inform and ensure the future of the profession.

Bibliography

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Notes

1. A note of thanks to Kathleen Bauer, the Usability and Assessment Librarian at Yale.

2. Noted in the introduction written by Robert Carlucci, Yale's VRC Manager, of the first-year assessment of the Technology Specialist position.

3. Reproduced with author's permission.

4. Both these grant projects involved support for visual materials and teaching. The Getty Grant, "Imagining America," was focused solely on supporting interdisciplinary

image use in courses. For general articles on these two grant projects see: Max Marmor. "Towards User-Centered Digital Image Libraries." *CLIR Issues*, no 20 (March/April 2001) http://www.imaginar.org/dppd/DPPD/82%20pp%20Scholars%20as%20Partners%20in%20Digital%20Preservation.pdf; Max Marmor and Barbara Rockenbach. "Image Matters: A Binocular View (Yale + Luna Imaging) of the Digital Marketplace.: *Library Hi Tech News*, Volume 18, Issue 7; Danuta A Nitecki, William Rando. "A library and teaching center collaboration to assess the impact of using digital images on teaching, learning, and library support." *VINE*. Bradford: 2004. Vol. 34, Iss. 3; pg. 119; or Eli Project, http://www.library.yale.edu/eli.

5. Printed with permission.

6. http://clc.yale.edu/media-equipment

7. http://clc.yale.edu contains the current schedule for TwTT. This outreach program is similar in nature and structure to one that Betha Whitlow, Washington University, has created: "Exploring the Impact of Web 2.0 on Our Faculty Constituents, & Present Strategies for Integrating Them Into a Web 2.0 Age Through the Use of Flickr, Facebook, RSS, Zotero, Google Docs and Other Technologies." This program was integral in inspiring and continuing our series.

8. Robert Carlucci, Yale's VRC Manager, supplied many edits, one of which pointed out that over half of the VR collections may still be department-based collections and not administered through the library.