

I-Schools Caucus
Wednesday, June 27, 2007
EDUCAUSE Conference Room
1150 18th Street NW, Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20036

Draft Minutes

ATTENDING

Bruce, Harry (Univ. Washington)	Foley, Henry "Hank" (Penn State)
Cantwell Smith, Brian (Univ. Toronto)	Griffiths, José-Marie (UNC)
Costello, Margaret (Syracuse)	Larsen, Ronald (Univ. Pittsburgh)
Dennis, Larry (Florida State)	Myers, Suzanne (Drexel)
DeSanto, Frank (Univ. Michigan)	Olson, Judy (Univ. Michigan)
Dillon, Andy (Univ. Texas)	Preece, Jenny (Univ. Maryland)
Dorr, Aimee (UCLA)	Shaffer, Kelly (Univ. Pittsburgh)
Fenske, David (Drexel)	Unsworth, John (UIUC)
Friedrich, Gus (Rutgers)	von Dran, Ray (Syracuse)

MBSA Participants

Schwartz, Mal	Stugis, Walter
Bennington, Bill	Brandon, Phil

VISITOR

Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic (J. J. Stossmayer University, Croatia)

Welcome and approval of agenda.

Ron Larsen called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. The agenda was approved as distributed. The minutes of the February 27, 2007 meeting were amended to include a statement recalling a "spirited" discussion of target audiences for the market research. The amended minutes are attached to these draft minutes.

International participation among iSchools

Gus Friedrich introduced Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic, who has been co-directing with Tefko Saracevic an annual conference in Croatia on "Libraries in a Digital Age" since 2000. At this year's conference (May 28-June 2, 2007), Gus provided a brief overview of the history and activities of the iSchool deans followed by reactions from Chris Borgman (UCLA), Karen Fisher (Washington), Olivia Frost (Michigan), and Barbara Wildemuth (UNC-CH). At the end of this program there was a discussion of whether and how we might engage more international participants. Tatjana introduced her school and the interest they have in collaborating with peers, particularly on topics such as digital libraries and digital records management. There is clear interest in Europe and Asia for iSchool collaboration.

Harry Bruce indicated that he is doing a similar presentation at CoLIS 6 (August 13-16, 2007) in Sweden. Gus Friedrich volunteered to distribute his presentation materials from Croatia for use by other Deans (sent on 6/29/07). All are encouraged to share such presentations; perhaps they might be stored on the i-Schools website.

Questions worthy of our consideration include:

- How can we build international programs that are sustainable and involve more than faculty exchange?
- How can we foster collaborative research?
- How can iSchools build international bridges facilitating interaction and working models for collaboration?
- How can we incorporate international relationships into our mission?

The opportunity exists to establish a global community of iSchools. The membership committee was encouraged to take an international perspective when considering new members.

I-Schools Marketing/Branding Campaign

Mal Schwartz initiated a status briefing on the branding campaign and the market research that tested logos and taglines. Full detail of this work with accompanying recommendations for marketing is provided in a CD distributed to deans in attendance. (The CD will be mailed separately to those not able to attend.)

John Unsworth suggested the punctuation on the tagline “Information. The power to transform our world.” be changed to “Information: the power to transform our world.”

Bill Bennington discussed the Public Relations Tactical and Branding/Marketing plans. José-Marie Griffiths suggested adding a goal and metric to measure iSchools’ presence in relevant and appropriate policy forums. We need to contribute to and be recognized for our role in and value to ongoing policy discussions and deliberations. Also, it was suggested that we add a field to the management tool to allow us to record successes/issues with each task.

The reference to “55” iSchools should be dropped, as this perceptually limits the domain of discourse to ALA-accredited schools, and we need to be (and currently are) more inclusive.

Mal reported that he introduced the iSchool marketing/branding material to the Syracuse BOV on 6/26/07. Responses from some Syracuse faculty and from the Syracuse BOV suggest that the marketing/branding story needs to be codified and presented to iSchool faculty, where this has to date largely been the purview of deans and marketing folks.

Ray von Dran opined that those who you would expect to be the most aggressive and forward looking can also resist change and hold on to old anchors. He noted, for example

that freshmen at Syracuse identify with “IST”, even though it no longer has any real meaning. They are responding and resonating to the school’s historic legacy and branding. In contrast, it appears that it is the older faculty and BOV members who “get it”.

It was noted that each school would be provided with a tool kit containing usable exemplars of all branding elements, all approved/suggested language, a style guide, and marketing plans.

In discussion of the material presented by MBSA, John Unsworth suggested we resist the proliferation of “i-possibilities”, noting that we own ischools.org and should use it, rather than “ifield” or “iPro” (which he observed is owned by another organization). He questioned whether we want to standardize on what we do or on building a better understanding of information science. The wikipedia entry for information science was referenced, with John noting that the UIUC Provost doesn’t think of IS as being in GSLIS.

José-Marie suggested that perhaps we should write wikipedia entries for iSchools.

David Fenske remarked that identification of the domain is important, and that the term “iField” could become its name.

Andy Dillon suggested that we need to address what *information science* stands for and craft it to our needs. The “iField” term feels a little too cutesy, except as an informal reference. Young faculty like *information science*, and don’t sense the historic baggage associated with the term.

Tatjana observed that *informatics* is used a lot in France, but in Croatia, it is called “informatology”.

John noted that informatics is typically narrower than information science.

Jenny Preece expressed concern, noting that IS has a history of being associated with libraries. She felt that the logo column looks like a book, reinforcing historic limitations on the field. If the logo misrepresents who we are, she feared it would cause problems with faculty, citing interaction design and human-computer interaction as examples of subdisciplines outside the scope of the domain she felt the logo conjured.

Brian Cantwell-Smith suggested simply referring to the discipline as *information* and dropping the *science* part. “We’re ischools and we study information.”

Harry Bruce noted that, while he considered himself an information scientist, we have too much invested as a group (and progress in) identifying *iSchools* to worry too much about the *science* part. He expressed willingness to adopt usage of the term iField.

Judy Olson suggested adding a wikipedia entry to IS saying “now known in its modern form as *information*.”

Reflecting on what appeared to be a growing consensus, David asked if we were in agreement on the terminology *information* and *information schools*,” where *iSchools* is simply a short form for “information school”.

Brian noted that “school” has different connotations in other places. In Canada, the term is “faculties” for example. He suggested agreement on *information* not loaded with an organizational form or structure. In Canada, maybe it becomes the *iFaculty*.

Harry suggested that we have made too much progress on *iSchool* to step back from it now, and David observed that at Drexel, they are a college, but still refer to themselves as an *iSchool*.

Moved & seconded – Members of the iCaucus agree to use *information* as the name of both the subject matter and the field and *information professional* as the term of reference for our graduates. Member schools will be known as *iSchools* and PhD graduates as *information scholars*.

The motion passed unanimously. (14 out of 19 deans in attendance)

The voting members agreed that there are some recommended forms of slang, such as *iSchool* and *iField* that follow in a natural way.

In a spirited discussion of the proposed logo, deans concluded that it is acceptable with some possible minor “tweaking” to be considered over lunch (later extended to a week). Those with design ideas to be considered met with MBSA over lunch. Revised logos are to be distributed to the deans within the next week, with a vote to follow during the second week, according to the following timeline:

- Direction from iCaucus members to MBSA regarding refinements: 6/27
- Refined options to consider sent to iCaucus members desiring revisions: by 7/3.
- Concerned iCaucus members “vote” on their desired logo: by 7/6
- MBSA sends final logo recommendation to all iCaucus members (incorporating concerned Deans’ vote/input): by 7/10
- Consensus agreement to logo recommendation by iCaucus membership: by 7/13

Marketing professionals from each i-School will gather in September for the “roll out” of the new marketing/branding materials. Dean Unsworth volunteered to host this meeting in UIUC’s Chicago Conference Center.

Future agenda item

Brian suggests that a more in-depth discussion of our relationship to CS and the CRA IT deans be placed on the agenda for a future meeting. This would allow adequate time for such a critical issue.

iCaucus committees...

Ron reviewed the candidate list of committees as shown on the agenda.

Harry suggested revisiting the original committee structure and roles, observing that we can't rely on the deans for all of the work, and need to engage staff more effectively.

See also slide 65 of Mal's presentation for committee structure and responsibilities.

Hank suggested we produce an annual publication that derived from the iConference; perhaps a proceedings. We should also consider an annual report, and perhaps an awards portfolio for the iConference.

Andy suggested that we focus on (1) getting the web site up and (2) running the iConference over the next year.

The group reinforced its commitment to five priorities:

- Launching an iSchools web site
- Marketing iSchools and the information profession
- Sustaining and expanding the iConference
- Developing appropriate iCaucus membership.
- Enhancing our strategic relationships with partners and sponsors

iSchools incorporation update

Alan Garfinkel, the University of Pittsburgh general counsel, joined the discussion by teleconference. A memo he authored was distributed with the agenda, identifying two options and his advice regarding them.

The first option is to form a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation (501c3). This has advantages of being perpetual, establishing a brand, and being instantiated in a concrete form. An application form 1023 needs to be filed with the IRS detailing the corporation's mission & goals, including a projected budget, within 18 months of incorporation. The organization must exist for charitable, research, or education purposes, which we clearly comply with. It must have a registered office in the state of incorporation; officers can rotate among members. The corporation is liable, not individuals.

The second option is to organize as a Collaborative, Consortium, or Center. Officers can still rotate, and we are "already half way there..." A potential disadvantage is that we would need to be careful about liability provisions; we would need to limit liability through an explicit indemnification provision. The organization will need to insure itself for liability, regardless of whether it is a corporation or a collaborative. This is not expensive, and can be handled through the risk management office of the university filing the necessary papers. Bookkeeping can be done internally, by part-time administrator, since there are no reporting requirements to the IRS.

With either alternative, the legal entity could be housed at one of the member universities.

Q. Is there any advantage to incorporating in Delaware?

A. No, not for a non-profit organization.

Q. Is either configuration easier to move?

A. Collaborative is “much easier to move.”

Q. What are the administrative costs?

A. The form 990 filed with the IRS would cost ~\$5K each year to develop and file, if we organize as a corporation. The university’s accounting firm could, perhaps, do the 990, also. There are no reporting requirements for a consortium or center.

Q. Is there any difference regarding banking?

A. You could expect fewer questions from the bank for a 501c3, but this should not be a problem.

Q. Is there any reason that non-US citizens/organizations could not participate in either a 501c3 or Collaborative agency?

A. No. International partners can be readily accommodated.

Q. Is there anything that would prevent Floridians from getting access to all of our records? (Florida has an open records law.)

A. State-related organizations are exempt under Pennsylvania law, but there is no problem divulging the information.

Moved & seconded – The iCaucus recommends legal instantiation as a collaborative or consortium, and empowers Ron Larsen to pursue whatever steps are necessary to accomplish this.

Motion was tabled in order to explore other means of managing our financial resources (see below).

Numerous questions arose regarding other (simpler) options:

- Can we do what we need to do without any legal structure?
- Can we define the iCaucus as a “project” of one of the member institutions?
- Can it be structured as a cost center in one of our schools?
- What is the assumed liability?
- Are there any carryover issues?
- Is provostial or general counsel oversight required to sign contracts?

Action: Each dean is to look for exemplars at their university and examine the feasibility of establishing the iCaucus as a “project” at their institution. Dean Fenske will discuss this with the solicitor at Drexel in light of their experiences with the IPL.

No timeframe was explicitly discussed for this action, but we are currently unable to collect or disburse money through CRA, so there is a sense of urgency behind this action item.

Proposed schedule: July 31, 2007 to report to Ron Larsen; Ron to summarize and distribute to membership by August 3, 2007.

iConference Update

Aimee Dorr reported on plans for the Feb 28 – March 1, 2008 iConference. The upcoming iConference sequence is: UCLA (2008), UNC (2009), UIUC (2010).

For the UCLA iConference, Aimee encouraged each of the member institutions to identify doctoral students and junior faculty for mentoring and senior scholars to do the mentoring.

Conference materials will go up on the iSchools website, rather than UCLA website.

Moved and seconded – \$45K be allocated to underwrite and subsidize, as necessary, the iConference for 2008.

Motion passed unanimously.

I-Schools membership

The CMU Heinz School (Dean Mark Wessel) has expressed interest in membership in the iCaucus. The request will be referred to the membership committee.

ASIST

Harry Bruce reminded the deans that we have an opportunity to present a panel session on the iSchools at the annual ASIST meeting, October 19-24, 2007, in Milwaukee, WI. Deans who plan to attend ASIST are requested to inform Harry.

Treasurer's report

The Treasurer's report will be sent out by email. CRA now refuses to handle any more iCaucus financial matters.

Ray von Dran steps down as dean

Ray announced that Liz Liddy has been named interim dean at Syracuse.

Ray's tenure and formative role in establishing the iCaucus was celebrated at the close of the iCaucus meeting.

Brian Cantwell-Smith and Gus Friedrich announced their plans to step down as deans of their respective schools at the end of the 2007-08 academic year.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.

