

Museum Assessment Program

Organizational Assessment Final Report



The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) is supported by a cooperative agreement between the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Alliance of Museums.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) is a national, voluntary program which helps museums strengthen operations, plan for the future and meet standards through self-study and a consultative site visit from an expert peer reviewer. The program offers several assessment types that focus on multiple aspects of museum operations, allowing participants to work on various methods of self-improvement. Since 1981 over 5,000 museums have participated in over 6,500 assessments. MAP is supported through a cooperative agreement between the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), and administered by AAM. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org and www.imls.gov.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report reflects the Peer Reviewer's knowledge and perspective based on what was provided in the museum's MAP Application, its Self-Study Workbook and what he /she saw or was told while on the site visit. The report is a snapshot in time—from when the reviewer was there and what he or she saw and heard. The museum may have already addressed some issues discussed with the Peer Reviewer or made progress on some items listed in the report. The Peer Reviewer conducted this assessment on an individual volunteer basis, not as a representative of their employer, and was selected by AAM in consultation with the museum.

**American Alliance of Museums
Museum Assessment Program**

Organizational Assessment

The Janet Turner Print Museum/California State University – Chico
Chico, California
February 7 – 10, 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Janet Turner Print Museum (JTPM) at California State University-Chico (CSU-Chico), is a distinctive program housed in the College of Humanities & Fine Arts with relevance to the campus at large and poised to make great strides toward advancing town & gown relationships. With accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) a strategic goal, the Turner staff, Advisory Board, leadership and faculty of the College of Humanities & Fine Arts, are all aligned in evolving the infrastructure to further the already considerable impact the museum has had on pedagogic and cultural education goals of CSU-Chico.

The new location of the JTPM as of 2016 in a brand-new building sited at the gateway to the vibrant downtown area of Chico, provides a higher profile for the museum's exhibitions and programs which have already seen increased visitation and participation. The museum's endowment is a key asset to sustaining this operation as the California State University system does not provide a large budget investment in the program, although staff resources are provided in administrative leadership, fundraising, and faculty engagement.

The permanent collection is the vital and primary resource for exhibitions and teaching and its growth is a stated goal, with the establishment of an endowment for this purpose. There is a palpable commitment to the mission of the Turner by the staff, Advisory Board, and other constituents, many of whom are former students of or have been inspired by Janet Turner. There is great passion and respect for her and the legacy that she has left for CSU-Chico.

Out of necessity, the JTPM Advisory Board has guided much of the trajectory of the museum since the late 1980's, blurring some lines between governance and management. The two primary staff positions are part-time and have been so since the inception of the program.

Sustaining the excellence already achieved by an invested staff and leadership circle is not feasible. My primary recommendation is to establish a full time Director/Curator position and to refocus the Collections Manager position to be more specific to the stewardship goals articulated by the Advisory Board (digitization, acquisitions, core documents). This investment can be achieved in short and long-term ways and endowment may be the best vehicle in that the Collections Manager position is already supported by endowed funds. The Curator position is funded through CSU resources.

By making the case for the larger role the museum plays in the life of the university and acknowledging that the CSU system's resources are limited and competitive, enhancing the capacity of the Advisory Board to fundraise specifically for the operation and endowment is a worthy priority.

These and other actions identified in this report should be codified in a Janet Turner Print Museum specific strategic plan that embraces the larger goals of the CSU-Chico plan but charts specific initiatives and implementation tactics that strengthens and sustains this program.

INTRODUCTION

A program of the American Alliance of Museums, in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) helps small and mid-sized museums strengthen operations, plan for the future and meet national standards through self-study and a site visit from peer reviewers. One of four assessment areas (the others being Collections Stewardship, Community Engagement, and Leadership), the Organizational Assessment reviews all areas of a museum's operations to better prepare it to operate as a 21st century museum with a strong understanding of core museum standards and good practices that support sustainability. This assessment places significant emphasis on strategic planning as well as ensuring that operations and resources align with the museum's mission. This and the three other MAPs are often used as preparatory steps toward accreditation.

On February 8-10, 2018 Lisa Tremper Hanover, retired Director/CEO of The James A. Michener Art Museum and Philip & Muriel Berman Museum of Art at Ursinus College, Pennsylvania, conducted a MAP Organizational Assessment of The Janet Turner Print Museum (JTPM) at California State University – Chico (CSU-Chico). Please see Appendix A for the full agenda of the visit.

The robust agenda included meetings with all Turner staff, including student interns, key Art Department faculty, and leadership of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts which houses and supports the Turner with staff and financial resources. A meeting of the Turner Advisory Board of Directors was also held during my visit which was a pivotal conversation as it is this body that has taken on the mantle of steering the operation over the course of its 32+ years. Laura Nice, Director of Special Projects for the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, was the primary liaison and kept the entire process moving forward with professionalism and transparency.

The Turner identified as its MAP goals the following:

- Improve ability to develop new institutional, strategic, and disaster plans and examine and complete Core Documents.
- Improve ability to engage the campus and external communities in the life of the Turner Museum as a resource for learning and as donors.
- Prepare for Accreditation.

The Advisory Board has further defined key priorities around digitizing the 4,000+ prints and objects in the permanent collection, increase annual funds for growing the permanent collection with the establishment of an acquisition endowment, in addition to establishing the appropriate infrastructure and protocols to achieve accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM).

BRIEF INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

CSU-Chico is the second oldest of the 23 California State University institutions, founded in 1887. Located 2 hours north of Sacramento, the capital city of California, the University and town are centered in an agricultural region rich with pecan, walnut, and almond farms and a thriving rice production industry. With over 17,000 students enrolled, the University serves as a rich hub of academic, cultural, and economic strength for the community. CSU-Chico is a designated Hispanic Serving Institution which provides tuition and other financial aid to 1st generations from the Spanish/Latino population of California.

The Janet Turner Print Museum, founded in 1983 under the aegis of Janet Turner, Art Department faculty member (1959-1983), is a distinctive, independent program of CSU-Chico and housed in the College of Humanities & Fine Arts. Janet Turner had a long view of the value of teaching from the object and actively collected all genres of print-making from across cultures and historic genres, spanning six centuries. She designated a gift to the State of California of this important resource used for teaching and evolved the vision to one of access across disciplines with the appropriate infrastructure for the stewardship and exhibition of these works. In 1986 a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was accepted by the Chancellor of the California State University System detailing the oversight of the collection with explicit mandates for the storage, documentation, access, and exhibition of the works. In subsequent years Janet Turner's sister donated a significant gift of Turner's own work (paintings, prints, sculpture) and objects such as woodcuts and stage printings to

illustrate process to the University. Turner also dedicated Endowment funds to support the program.

The Turner Print Museum has been skillfully and efficiently operated for over 30 years by a part-time staff who have worked diligently to fulfill the vision of the founder and to create the appropriate professional infrastructure for the stewardship of the permanent collection.

The Turner Print Museum gallery was originally housed on the second floor of Laxon Hall, the primary performance space on campus. The collection was stored in Stiles, a building several blocks away. An interim move to the Chico Museum, an original Carnegie Library adjacent to campus, did little to promote access to these resources. After 20 years on the books, a brand-new Humanities & Fine Arts Building was approved for construction and incorporated in this was the integration of three exhibition spaces: The Janet Turner Print Museum, The Jacki Headley University Art Gallery and the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Gallery.

The new building, located on the perimeter of campus, adjacent to the vibrant downtown area of Chico, opened in May 2016. The Turner staff used the summer of 2016 to relocate the Museum's assets to the new spaces, which include a 1,500 square foot formal gallery and a 1,200 square foot collections, office and preparatory space. The Turner was ready for the start of the academic year in August 2016.

A regular schedule of changing exhibitions, drawn primarily from the permanent collection with occasional loans from working artists or collectors, serves the curricular goals of the University across disciplines, highlights printmaking techniques, and illustrates artistic, social, political, economic, and other cultural themes. Lectures, workshops, collaborative programs with departments, class visits, and K-12 outreach complements the program.

MISSION & PLANNING

“The mission of the Janet Turner Print Museum is to collect, preserve, curate, and exhibit a growing collection that expresses the talent, technique, and vision of print artists. We endeavor to create an internationally recognized museum for public enrichment, educational experiences, and research opportunities.”

This mission statement, first adopted in 2012 and reviewed in 2016, paints a necessary broad brush that encompasses the goals of stewardship and access specific to their print holdings. The Museum staff and stakeholders have remained focused and dedicated to fulfilling this mandate on a scale appropriate to the financial and intellectual resources.

The Mission Statement could further specify the museum’s role as an academic and educational resource for the University, placing the program appropriately in its context. Documenting the museum as being an integral part of the intellectual and cultural life of the University and the region sets the proper framework.

Now that the Museum is located in both a higher profile location and in professionalized spaces, there is more demand on limited staff time and they are responding with dedication and ingenuity. Catherine Sullivan, the curator of the Museum since 1993, utilizes her encyclopedic knowledge of the collection and easier access to the objects to respond to faculty requests, tours, and to conceive exhibition themes.

The Advisory Board has set some defined goals for the next 5 years, but it is not clear how much staff input is reflected in these mandates. There is no formal strategic plan, but the desire is there to create one. This does not need to be onerous, however the board and staff would benefit from a 1-day retreat with a facilitator followed by a series of focused meetings to structure a plan that is concert with that of the University.

Two previous assessments of the JTPM were conducted in 2001-2002, one a MAP Institutional Report and the other a Preservation Overview Survey by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA). Great strides have been made in implementing the recommendations of these two reports, particularly regarding the facilities, HVAC, security, collections storage and lighting. However, written policies are either outdated or non-existent. I would recommend revisiting the Preservation Overview Survey as it is still relevant and can provide the necessary guidance for the protocols and policies that need to be constructed such as the Emergency and Disaster

plan, a Facilities Plan (utilizing the AAM Standard Facilities document), Housekeeping/Pest Control and other Collections Handling procedures.

Other core documents such as an Institutional Code of Ethics and revisiting the Collections Management Policy should also be crafted. Access www.aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs/core-documents for guidance in this area.

As a Tier 3 member of the Alliance of Academic Museums (AAM), the Turner has free and unlimited access to numerous webinars, articles and sample forms/documents. There are online resources on everything from governance roles and staff roles, to fundraising and collections care.

In order to move forward with the Accreditation process, the Turner must have AAM verify the five core documents which are: Mission Statement, Institutional Code of Ethics, Strategic Institutional Plan, Disaster Preparedness/Emergency Response Plan, and Collections Management Policy.

Key Recommendations:

- Revisit the Mission Statement to further specify the museum's role as an academic and educational resource for the University, placing the program appropriately in its context
- Review the Preservation Overview Survey by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) from 2001-2002 for further guidance in crafting collections specific policies
- Institute a Strategic Planning process by engaging a facilitator and including Advisory Board, museum staff, Department of Art & Art History, and College of Humanities & Fine Arts representatives
- Utilize AAM Tier 3 membership to access support services to update/create Core Documents

INTERPRETATION & EDUCATION

The core responsibility of the Curator is to focus the efforts of the Turner on serving the academic needs and interests of the faculty and students at CSU-Chico and given the part-time nature of the two professional positions (the other being a Collections Manager), this is being achieved in an admirable way. The exhibitions, the hands-on access to objects, the attendant programming, artist and curatorial interactions all fulfill

the primary mission. Adding the programming for the school children/tours, Kids at Turner, and the weekly afterschool art making classes, along with marketing the exhibitions, lectures, workshops to the greater community have all met with success, again given the limited official time commitment allotted by the professional positions.

The staff has dreams of adding digital tours of their resources, developing traveling kits to bring the treasures of the Turner out into the schools or to other organizations eager to have these educational opportunities, and develop traveling exhibitions that take the Turner's collections to other institutions, broadening the knowledge of printmaking and the Turner's remarkable collection. Technology in the form of audio tours, podcasts, QR codes, website, digital tours, and so forth are a way to streamline access – but it takes enormous preparation, research, and financial resources to build the platforms. These are worthy goals. The fundamental need for at least one full-time professional will drive the prioritization and implementation of these dreams.

Communicating the message that the Turner is a print museum exploring the traits and value across art historical genres and not just dedicated to the work of Janet Turner is a long arc. A succinct message needs to be crafted and used in all publications, the website, press releases, and other communications.

The museum's website is relevant and current and leads people to the various programs and ways to support the Turner, including membership which is a reasonable investment. The museum utilizes Facebook and other forms of social media, but I am not clear who populates these platforms.

Assessment and capturing data is currently accomplished via surveys and documenting visitors. The staff has a good grasp on their audiences and are building mailing and e-mail lists which include alumni, community, stakeholder, and other users. This should be done on a regular basis and consistently. There doesn't need to be a sophisticated methodology; perhaps incorporate this kind of data management into the gallery attendant's responsibilities or install an iPad kiosk with a simple survey on it encouraging visitors to contribute information about their experience.

The Turner staff has a good grasp of their constituents and demonstrated success in serving the faculty and students of CSU-Chico through exhibition content, providing support for individual classes with object-based learning, collaborating on campus-wide initiatives, and developing programming that complements the permanent collection holdings which are also the primary source for developing and populating exhibitions.

Students have remarkable access to the collection through their coursework (which is cross-disciplinary and not just art department based), internships, and through the Museum Studies Certificate Program administered by the Department of Anthropology. The Valene L. Smith Museum of Anthropology has been the locus of museology courses because of its long history and faculty expertise.

The City of Chico markets itself as an arts destination and The Turner taps into networks which promote this distinction via The Chamber of Commerce and the Chico Area Museum Alliance (CAMA), among others. The Turner has a presence at community festivals and events, distributing information. This reach into the community is complemented by solid alliances made by the Turner staff on campus through the College of Humanities & Fine Arts, specific departments throughout the campus, and collaborations with their colleagues at the Valene L. Smith Museum of Anthropology and the Jacki Headley University Art Gallery and Master of Fine Arts Gallery.

Publications, as resources permit, are beautifully crafted and timely, documenting student-initiated installations, the Turner National Print Biennial Exhibition, and exhibitions with broad themes that resonate throughout the University curriculum.

It is remarkable that the Art Department does not demand nor command ownership of the Turner or the University Art Gallery but works to make these programs relevant to the entire campus and outward into the community, too. Access to the Zingg Recital Hall is a wonderful adjunct space for programming. In speaking with Asa Mittman, Chair of the Department of Art and Art History, he recognizes the value of the Turner program and the need to have professional museum and curatorial expertise. He includes the Curator in Department meetings to bridge communications for current and future faculty needs.

Eileen McDonald, the tenured printmaking professor, is a direct liaison with the Turner, serves on the Advisory Board, and on the Acquisitions Committee. I was able to spend time with three student interns who majored in printmaking, ceramics, and anthropology. They were eloquent in describing the experience of working in a museum environment, inspired to pursue work in the arts because of Catherine's enthusiasm and knowledge, along with the rigor of the coursework and the opportunity to curate exhibitions. The annual Ink & Clay student exhibition mounted by the Turner put their creative efforts into a formal environment and exposed them to the jury process. These are remarkable opportunities for an undergraduate student. The anthropology student took a printmaking course so that she could understand the

techniques of the medium. All of the students echoed the same aspects of trust, access with proper training, and the intellectual challenge of being a part of the JTPM environment.

Exhibitions are concentrated in the Fall and Spring semesters (5-6 installations annually) as the Turner is on a 10-month schedule; the museum is closed for the summer and the staff is on hiatus during this time. Additional display cases that are programmed with Turner collection resources are located in Ayres Hall, the Fine Arts Building across the plaza from the museum. Exhibition themes are tied to contemporary artistic, historical, social and other issues relevant to course topics and the Turner is the venue for student work and the Turner Biennial, held in conjunction with the Jacki Headley University Art Gallery.

The Curator for the Jacki Headley University Art Gallery, Kelly Linder who is also part time, oversees the programming for this non-collecting space and also teaches professional practices for the Museum Studies Certificate program. Now that the exhibiting spaces are physically aligned the synergy of the respective programs has resulted in many collaborations in exhibitions, student experiences, and programming.

Much of the educational outreach is managed through the Arts Education program, a division of the Art and Art History Department, through which the interns are drawn, and the Turner resources are part of that curriculum. The Turner links with the Anthropology museum to offer free school tours. The Kids at the Turner program is an afterschool experience and draws kids who have never been in a museum environment. The scale of the Turner is a wonderful introduction to demystifying this kind of art encounter.

Key Recommendations:

- Communicating the message that the Turner is a print museum exploring the traits and value across art historical genres and not just dedicated to the work of Janet Turner through a succinct message across all marketing and communication platforms.
- Keep Website relevant and activate Social Media
- Elevate town & gown relationships via network of cultural colleagues (CAMA) and business affiliations (Chamber of Commerce); the Curator is the institutional “face” of the program and should be a presence at certain community events.
- The part-time nature of the positions dictates how much can be accomplished in the K-12 arena; this is currently being done very well. I would not add more to the agenda.

COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP

The permanent collection houses prints dating from the 13th century to the present representing the art of Western and Asian cultures, prints and paintings executed by Janet Turner, ephemera and work plates/woodblocks that illustrate printmaking processes. The Turner also acquires works by students (through an endowed purchase prize) and acquires selections from the Biennial Exhibition. In addition, the University has charged the Turner with the stewardship of a CSU-Chico collection of paintings, prints, and works on paper donated over the course of the school's history which are not integral to the Turner's mission.

There is a Collections Management Plan that identifies key stewardship responsibilities and procedures, including accession and deaccession protocols. There is not a defined description of the current collection nor a plan for guiding future acquisitions and this would be a helpful narrative.

Adria Davis, the part-time Collections Manager for the past ten years, is self-trained. The job description is a hybrid of collections stewardship and preparator responsibilities, both of which she accomplishes with great skill. She holds an MFA in Photography from CSU-Chico and currently teaches in the Art Department as an adjunct. Her role has shifting priorities, dictated by the demands of the semester in terms of exhibitions and faculty access of objects which she uses as opportunities to qualify and add to documentation on collection pieces. She does repairs, hinging, hanging and other installation work while maintaining the collection database, supervise intern efforts related to the collection, and designs publications.

Adria is very thorough and, with additional training and a refocus of her primary responsibilities to collections-based stewardship/access, she would be able to inform the policies and procedures that need to be constructed. Adria does not inform Acquisitions Committee efforts, does not attend Advisory Board meetings, and is on a learning curve with regards to Facility Reports and other aspects of building the Collections Management Policy. If this position, which is funded through the Turner Endowment, cannot yet be evolved to a full-time position, consideration could be given to outsourcing or training interns to take on the physical aspects of the preparatory work and direct Adria's talents to enhancing the necessary actions of stewardship that are not being implemented.

The excel database, thoroughly populated but doesn't have the sophistication of collection specific databases that allow multiple fields, search options, and report

generation, is carefully maintained. Adria still references the original analog card catalogue and is cleaning up the original excel spreadsheet database. There is an opportunity to collaborate with the Meriam Library Special Collections department who have acquired a Content DM system for their special collections. They have offered to share this system with The Turner. The museum's current information can be migrated, and Adria has evaluated how fields would evolve when/if this collections database is implemented.

The move to the Turner's new space was an opportunity to review, organize, and rehouse the collection in a systematic way. Metal file drawers (many appropriated from the Meriam Library when they divested the furniture used to house their map collection) are organized by collection classifications (T = Turner objects governed by the Memorandum of Understanding; U = University collection; S = Janet Turner's original gift to California State University of 450 prints). Wood bins house framed works. All of the works are housed in acid-free folders, boxes, and otherwise protected with interleaving, bubble-wrap, ethafoam and other storage devices.

There are designated drawers for objects which must rest for two years after being exhibited, genre drawers to support certain faculty requests, ephemera drawers for the sketchbooks, woodblocks, and print stages. The documentation of all collection objects is thorough and kept on an excel database, parts of which can be accessed through the website. There is a Collections Management Policy that requires review and should be more thoroughly informed through resources such as Museum Registrar Methods edited by Rebecca Buck and Jean Gilmore, considered the bible for museum professionals. The Registrars Committee, a professional affiliation of the AAM, is also an important asset which can be tapped.

The policy also references the responsibility of conducting an inventory every two years, as staff resources permit, and a thorough inventory has not been conducted since 1990. This is critical stewardship protocol and while a daunting charge to conduct biannually, it is recommended that staff make a start by conducting focused inventories of specific genres and rotate among these on a schedule over the arc of 2-4 years.

Museum specific disaster/emergency protocols need to be composed and shared with the University wide safety/security force and a Standard Facilities Report, using the AAM approved document (<https://aam-us.org/ProductCatalog/Product?ID=891>), will bring together all of the information needed to inform those charged with the safety of the spaces, prospective lenders, and traveling exhibition organizations who will use this to determine that standards meet or exceed their requirements.

The University Collection of paintings and 3-D objects has been dormant and is not used for educational purposes nor display. University leadership might consider making a small investment to engage an external professional to evaluate and make recommendations for divesting these works. The Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG) Professional Practices for Academic Museums and Galleries document (referenced elsewhere in this report and in the Resources section; available through the Turner's membership in AAMG) addresses University Collections that are not specific to the museum's collecting practices.

Key Recommendations:

- The Collections Manager job description is a hybrid of collections stewardship and preparator responsibilities. Refocus the position with stewardship/access priorities and assess ways to engage interns/facility personnel in the physical aspects of exhibition preparation.
- Engage Collections Manager in shaping the Collections Management Policy, to inform accession/deaccession activities, the emergency preparedness plan, and other key collections documents that are necessary.
- Update the Collections Management Policy using AAM and AAMG resources; include a defined description of the current collection and a plan for guiding future acquisitions.
- Continue to seek grant funding for the collection digitization project (IMLS Cap Grant; reapply to NEH) and to improve collections storage furniture.
- Conduct an inventory.
- Reference the 2001 CCHA Report
- Divest the University Art Collection

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Two part-time professionals, a cadre of student interns and volunteers, and staff support through the CSU-Chico College of Humanities & Fine Arts, constitute the administrative structure of the JTPM. The staff positions have been in stasis since the founding of the museum in terms of time commitment but the Curator, Catherine Sullivan, has been creative in how the University resources at her disposal can be utilized in service to the program. Her official title, defined as Instructional Technician II, a permanent part-time position funded by the State System, has been massaged to give the position credibility internally and in the greater museum field. She has been the soul of the program since 1993 and its evolution and growth are a result of her

dedication to the founder's vision and respect for the JTPM's important role on in an academic environment. She is nearing the end of her tenure and this is an opportunity to make an investment in creating a full-time position that has the heft of title and responsibility for the administrative and curatorial agenda.

The Collections Manager position, mandated by the Memorandum of Understanding executed between Janet Turner and the Chancellor of the CSU System in 1986, is also a part-time blend of collections oversight and preparatory work. Student Interns and Gallery assistants provide the needed labor to keep the doors open and to support the efforts of the Curator and Collections Manager.

Both the Curator and Collections Manager have had access to professional museum organizations, webinars, workshops, and other training in the past but budget restraints in the past few years on the State level and in directing the Turner's financial resources, have precluded participation in these kinds of opportunities. As the museum seeks to further develop their core documents and elevate other protocols, re-prioritizing their already limited hours would be a good investment in the short term.

The Curator ostensibly reports to the Dean of the College of Humanities & Fine Arts. Initially this reporting structure was facilitated by an Assistant Dean but four years ago Laura Nice was engaged to oversee numerous Special Projects for the College and being an official liaison to the Turner is part of her responsibilities. She is an advocate for the program and has the authority to be the primary charge for the efforts of the JTPM Advisory Board, inform and manage the budget, and facilitate programing. Daria Booth, the Development Director for the College, also has responsibilities that include the fundraising agenda for the Turner.

The 2002 MAP Institutional Assessment discussed the need to provide full time leadership for the Turner and this remains the case. With AAM Accreditation as a stated goal, one of the criteria for eligibility is a full time Director or equivalent position. See the AAM website, specifically <http://aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs/accreditation/eligibility>.

The new facilities include a large, spacious archive room which serves as collections storage, office space, prep and class meeting areas. It was a large blank canvas that has been beautifully segregated with flat files (recycled from the Library Map storage system), bins, and office areas. While the current storage furniture is outdated, there are opportunities to seek funding for compact storage that would increase the footprint of the storage capabilities. They are as efficient as they can be given the parameters of the square footage. The Conservation Assessment Program (CAP), a program of the

Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS), referenced in the Collections Stewardship section is a potential funding source.

The primary gallery space, at 1,500 square feet, has an industrial look that provides a good backdrop to the changing exhibitions. There are still issues with the climate control and security systems, but these are being slowly addressed and typical with any new building. The lighting system is compromised by architectural baffles in the ceiling with louvers that interfere with the adaptability of the fixtures. The staff is not sure whose responsibility it is to mitigate issues such as the lighting, security system (which needs to be integrated with the University system) and an undersized HVAC system, but they are diligent in calling attention to these issues with the senior administration. Unfortunately, the gallery space cannot be manipulated with Mila Walls at this time because they would block the exit signage. This is a safety issue.

The Gallery space is monitored during all open hours by student assistants and there is swipe access throughout the building. There is one access point into gallery and the Library and Archive are secure. The Library space was originally intended as the Curator's Office, but it serves a nice research area where Janet's library is kept. While not part of the University catalogue system, it is shelved by genre and there are resource binders, monthlies, and other references available to students, faculty and guest curators.

There is excellent signage throughout the spaces.

The budget and financial structure for the Turner is complicated. There is a combination of State, Foundation, annual giving, endowment and specific project funding from the University which covers the operation. Given that, the budget is managed in a healthy manner. Specific endowments are dedicated to staff positions, general operation, awards, scholarships and acquisitions. For the size of the Turner, the overall endowment is over \$600,000 and there are opportunities to grow those endowment line items.

While the Curator directs some of the endowment funding, this position doesn't fully inform the budget process, which is managed by the Laura Nice, the Special Projects Liaison. The Advisory Board also significantly contributes to the Budget conversation and, in fact, directs some of the spending. This model should be streamlined with the Turner staff working in concert with the Liaison and weaning the Board from budget specific direction. The Governance section provides some guidance in how to evolve this process in a constructive way.

The development and fundraising agenda for the Turner is led by Daria Booth who is charged with oversight of all advancement needs for the seven disciplines served in the College of Humanities & Fine Arts, in addition to the Humanities Center programming. There is a Friends of the Turner group, an Annual Fund mailing, and a goal to raise the \$25,000 threshold for an Acquisitions Endowment. A relative new vehicle to add to annual operating dollars is exhibitions sponsorship and there has been success in garnering this kind of support.

Out of necessity, donor cultivation and stewardship cover a wide range of personalities and interests and balancing these priorities while preparing and engaging the appropriate staff to participate in the process is a juggling act. The Development Committee of the Turner's Advisory Board needs to be activated in a way that can help serve the funding needs of the museum; this will take some education and more input from both Laura Nice, as the lynchpin liaison between the College HFA and the museum, and the Curator, Catherine Sullivan. Building a pipeline of current and prospective donors from the alumni and Chico community, encouraging board members to share their network, and facilitating the conversations are all in place; a monthly meeting between the key Development and Turner staff outlining funding goals, prospective donors, and arranging opportunities to engage the donors, including board members, might be the right vehicle to move forward. The Turner's Opening Receptions, in which many Board members participate, is a wonderful way to engage prospects in a non-threatening way.

Key Recommendations:

- Focus on the priority of creating a full time Director/Curator position.
- The budget needs specific input and direction from museum staff in concert with the board and staff should also inform strategic priorities.
- Steward the board in fundraising practices.
- Streamline communications between Development and College of HFA leadership (liaison), museum staff, and Development Committee of the Board to further the identified funding priorities.
- Reinforce board participation as donors, on a level that is comfortable for the board member, and to include museum membership and annual fund contributions.

GOVERNANCE

In 1986 the Chancellor of the California State University System accepted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) drafted by Janet Turner detailing the provisions for the stewardship and access of her collection of fine art prints which included specific mandates for paid staff oversight, security, storage, insurance, exhibition, and educational points. An endowment was also included in her donation. The President of CSU-Chico further endorsed this agreement and the MOU has been the guiding document for the program since that time.

The Office of Business oversees all MOU's for CSU-Chico and ensures compliance. Inherent in this MOU and embraced by the University is Janet Turner's interest in providing visual resources, and the appropriate infrastructure, for the motivation, education and benefit of all CSU-Chico students.

An Advisory Board of Directors comprised of University representatives, faculty, alumni and community stakeholders has actively advised the JTPM and directed much of its resources, advised by Turner staff and the Dean of the College of Humanities & Fine Arts, or their designee. The Board must be Advisory in nature given the governance structure of CSU-Chico and its place in the larger California State University system. The Vice President also serves as the Treasurer and oversees budget development, monitors financial accounts, and keeps the financial records. This is an unusual arrangement, but the part-time nature of the museum oversight has necessitated some overlap into management of the operation by the Board. These Board Members are formally appointed and approved by the President of CSU-Chico.

In terms of composition, there is a strong representation of educators and arts and architecture expertise and they are looking to increase diversity in business and cultural backgrounds, age and ethnic representation, as well as to engage people with fundraising abilities. The Chico area is essentially homogeneous, yet my observation of the campus population indicated wide diversity.

I attended a meeting of the Advisory Board to get an overview of their process, actions, and implementation strategies. I was able to provide a context for the MAP process, how it fits into their stated priorities, and what results could be anticipated. I was able to clarify the difference between conducting a peer review assessment with tangible recommendations and an AAM Accreditation review which acknowledges high standards of professional practice.

The Advisory Board members embrace and are articulate about the mission of the JTPM and their role in the evolution and success of the program. The Bylaws specifically outline Board membership parameters and include participation by the Dean of the College of HFA (or designee, in this case Laura Nice, the Liaison), The Chair of the Department of Art & Art History (or designee), and a member of the CSU-Chico printmaking faculty.

These Bylaws were formalized in 2013 with some subsequent revisions, and they are robust in expectations. Terms are designated as 3 years with the ability to renew participation without limits. There are protocols to indicate interest in renewing membership, however it would be beneficial to set term limits, and rotate membership, keeping the option to return after a designated time off. There is no giving threshold, but members are encouraged to contribute financially to the museum and to assist in raising funds for the operation. At a minimum, Board members should also be paid members of the museum and contribute to the annual fund.

There are excellent, functioning Committees. The MAP Committee could evolve to become the Strategic Planning/Accreditation Committee which will educate its members about the requirements and continue to guide the operation in achieving the elements necessary to apply for this prestigious recognition. This is a long-term investment of time and resources but a worthy one. The Acquisitions Committee has a broader mandate and is engaged in the overall stewardship of the permanent collection and further divesting of works that are no longer relevant to the mission. A more inclusive title of Collections Committee would signify their charge.

This Board understands that access to the Turner's collection access, and the proper professional infrastructure, is a priority. They have stated that collections digitization and growing the permanent collection are priorities, and they are worthy ones. I would include endowment funds for full-time staff position(s) which would sustain the program and prepare it for a national stage as a premiere print-collecting and interpretation institution.

In talking with Robert Knight, Dean of the College of Humanities & Fine Arts, he acknowledged the importance of the JTPM to the College and to the University as a distinctive and effective educational resource. He noted that with Catherine's eventual retirement, the encyclopedic knowledge of the organization will be lost. By digitizing the collection, embracing the exhibitions, continuing class interactions with the collection, and programs that are a collaborative hub for the university, an investment in leadership needs to be made.

We discussed the scenario of hiring an Art Historian faculty member who has as one of their responsibilities the oversight of the three exhibition spaces which would bring a sense of cohesion. Curators would then be engaged for the Turner and the University Art Gallery. An Art Historian would be aligned with the Department of Art and Art History, thereby confusing the mission of the Turner as an independent resource for the internal and external communities.

I know the CSU-Chico resources are tight and being creative in how to envision giving the JTPM the full time leadership it deserves is admirable and should be accomplished in the best possible manner.

Key Recommendations:

- Governance Committee charged with Bylaws revisions to include term limits, possible giving parameters, and fine-tuning Acquisitions Committee to embrace the larger mandate of a Collections Committee.
- Endorse the creation of a Strategic Plan that encompasses and prioritizes all of the worthy goals identified by the Advisory Board and museum staff.
- Endorse and create a plan to evolve the Curator position to a full-time appointment.

SUMMARY

The Janet Turner Print Museum at CSU-Chico is a thriving program that is respected and supported by the constituents charged with its operation, understands its relevance to the campus culture, and is poised to be a significant presence as a premiere print collecting/exhibition museum program. The museum staff, academic leadership, faculty, the Advisory Board, the students, and visitors all recognize the value of the Turner on multiple levels; teaching, learning, artmaking, collecting, interpretation, and exhibitions are all approached with high standards and remarkable outcomes.

The physical environment of Chico, the CSU-Chico campus, and the JTPM is dynamic, interesting, and conducive to collaborations. The people involved with all of these arenas are passionate, articulate, and goal-oriented.

Conducting the work to create a Strategic Plan specific to the JTPM, within the context of its parent organization, will be the catalyst for the museum to move forward and build on an already dynamic and successful program. It is the passion and commitment of the museum staff, in concert with those in the College of Humanities

and Fine Arts charged with its administration, that has kept its founder's vision fresh, relevant, and impactful.

The key to sustaining and evolving the program is in creating a plan to galvanize resources to implement the key priorities articulated by the museum staff and Advisory Board. The lynchpin for guiding, informing, and prioritizing museum goals is the Curator position, in concert with College of HFA leadership and Advisory Board leadership.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Each section identifies key proposals to guide those charged with the administrative and fiduciary well being of the Janet Turner Print Museum at CSU-Chico. The following list provides a prioritized view of how the program might implement these recommendations:

As a Tier 3 member of the Alliance of Academic Museums (AAM), the Turner has free and unlimited access to numerous webinars, articles and sample forms/documents. There are online resources on everything from governance roles and staff roles, to fundraising and collections care.

Reference the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG) Guide to Professional Practices, which is a succinct guide to all facets of academic museum operations.

Constitute a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of key stakeholders from the museum staff, Advisory Board, College of Humanities & Fine Arts, Department of Art and Art History, other cultural organizations on campus, and students. Engage a facilitator to guide the discussions and to produce a succinct, achievable roadmap.

- As part of the planning, revisit the Mission Statement to bring focus on the museum's role as an academic and cultural resource for CSU-Chico.
- Identify AAM Accreditation and the Core Documents as a primary goal.
- A full-time Director/Curator position is critical to continuing the success of the program; consider how this can be achieved.
- Codify the goals of enhancing endowments, specifically for acquisitions and perhaps for staffing and collections digitization.

The Advisory Board might, over the long-term, bring more focus to their governance and fundraising priorities and entrust the Director/Curator with directing the resources of the program. Maintaining a direct liaison to the Dean of the College of Humanities & Fine Arts, who is an advocate for the program and has as their responsibility the needs of the museum, is important.

Refresh the Bylaws to provide term limits for board service that allows for a refreshed perspective. Revisit the constitution and charge of the MAP Committee (perhaps creating a Strategic Plan/Accreditation Committee) and the Acquisitions Committee (rename Collections Committee) would help the organization bring clarity to areas they are already evaluating. Reinforce board participation as donors, on a level that is

comfortable for the board member, and to include museum membership and annual fund contributions.

Streamline communications between Development and College of HFA leadership (liaison), museum staff, and Development Committee of the Board to further the identified funding priorities.

Collections Stewardship priorities include revisiting the CCHA Preservation Overview Survey, updating the Collections Management Policy, creating an Emergency and Disaster/Recover Plan, and adding a Standard Facilities Report to their repertoire. Consider providing the Collections Manager with a revised set of priorities and milestones such as creating a methodology for starting an inventory and pursuing a collaboration with the Merriam Library Special Collections Department to manage the database.

Divest the University Art Collection in a way that is beneficial to the University and takes the onus off the JTPM for storage and care.

RESOURCES

American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Useful Documents:

Pledge of Excellence: <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs/pledge-of-excellence>

Core Documents: <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs/core-documents>

Resource Library: <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/resource-library>

Information Center: <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/information-center>

Association of Academic Museums & Galleries (AAMG) Useful Documents:

Professional Practices for Academic Museums & Galleries (Attached) – This document provides succinct and cogent guidelines for all aspects of academic institution based museums. Appendices are accessed directly from the aamg.org website.

American Association of Museum Directors (AAMD) Useful Documents

Professional Practices for Art Museums:

<https://aamd.org/sites/default/files/document/2011ProfessionalPracticesinArtMuseums>

Art on Campus:

<https://aamd.org/sites/default/files/document/AAMD%20University%20Art%20on%20Campus%20Guidelines%2007.09.pdf>

Strategic Planning

Review the requirements for a strategic plan as defined by the AAM Accreditation Program. The plan must address all relevant areas of museum operations, list goals, list action steps, assign responsibility for accomplishing action steps, assign both the human and financial resources needed to implement the plan, list steps to obtain resources, and include a timeline.

Available on American Association of Museums' Website

- The Accreditation Commission's Expectations regarding Institutional Planning

Governance

Boardsource.org provides great articles, policies, procedures and protocols for non-profit leadership.

Collections Stewardship/Writing a Collections Management Policy

Museum Registration Methods, 5th edition, 2010, Edited by Rebecca A. Buck and Jean Allman Gilmore

Things Great and Small: Collections Management Policies, 2006, John E. Simmons, Author

A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections, 3rd edition, Marie C. Malaro, Author

The AAM Information Center offers a Fact Sheet (PDF) that outlines the typical components of a museum collections management policy.

Museum News presents an article that offers advice on crafting a collections management policy. http://www.aam-us.org/pubs/mn/MN_JF04_ManagingThings.cfm

Lisa Tremper Hanover - Itinerary

American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Museum Assessment Program Organizational Review - Janet Turner Print Museum, California State University, Chico

February 8 – 9, 2018

Thursday February 8, 2018

- 9:00 a.m. Initial Interview with Laura Nice, Academic Liaison,
College of Humanities & Fine Arts
- 10:00 a.m. Introduction to Staff/MAP Assessment Team; review of site
visit process and goals (Catherine Sullivan, Laura Nice, Daria
Booth, Karen Avis, Tom Thomson)
- 11:00 a.m. Tour of Janet Turner Museum & Archives facilities (Catherine
Sullivan)
- 12:00 a.m. Tour of Printmaking Studios (Professor of Printmaking and Turner
Board Member Eileen MacDonald)
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch – with students/interns (Gianna Benetti and Jazmin
Gonzalez)
- 2:00 p.m. Meeting with Catherine Sullivan, Curator, Head of Archive
- 3:00 p.m. Meeting with Adria Davis, Collections Manager/Registrar
- 4:00 p.m. Campus Tour (Laura Nice)
- 5:00 p.m. wrap-up
- 5:30 p.m. Lecture by William Breazeale (Curator, Crocker Art Museum),
“The Core of the Museum: Collections and Community,” followed
by a reception at the Turner Museum, and dinner

Friday February 9, 2018

- 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. Meeting of Turner Museum Advisory Board of Directors
- 10:00-10:30 a.m. Meeting with Susan Champion, Board Member and MAP Team
member
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Meeting with Robert Knight, Dean of the College of Humanities
and Fine Arts
- 11:30-12:30 Meeting with Daria Booth, Development Director of the College of
Humanities and Fine Arts
- 12:30-2:00 Lunch with Turner Donors/Board Members
- 2:00-2:30 Meeting with Kelly Weber, Curatorial Assistant
- 2:30-3:00 Meeting with Kelly Lindner, Curator, Jacki Headley University Art
Gallery

3:00-3:30 Meeting with Asa Mittman, Chair of Department of Art and Art History

3:30-4:30 Exit Interview with Laura Nice

6:00 Dinner with MAP Assessment Team, house of Tom and Mary Ann Thomson (Laura Nice will pick up and drop off)

Professional Practices for Academic Museums & Galleries

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Galleries in the 21st Century
aamg-us.org | communications@aamg-us.org

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**Appendices: The following information is ONLY available on the AAMG Website:
<https://www.aamg-us.org/wp/best-practices/>**

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INTRODUCTION

This document, prepared and approved by the Board of Directors of the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG), with considerable advice from academic museum professionals nationwide, aims to assist academic museum¹ staff and volunteers as well as those members of their parent organizations responsible for their success. These codified best practices draw from those of other museum organizations—American Alliance of Museums (AAM), Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), and Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC)—and are aligned with the categories currently used by AAM to better guide museums on the path to national accreditation or reaccreditation. Museums or museum directors that are members of any of the above are also charged to uphold the professional practices of those associations. *We are deeply grateful to Max Marmor and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for their support toward the printing and dissemination of this document.*

While all museums are educational in purpose, academic museums are unique in their mission to teach and train succeeding generations of students. Their primary purpose is to support the mission of their parent institutions. As learning laboratories, they advance research and student achievement. They build cross-cultural understanding; create cross-departmental and interdisciplinary teaching opportunities; strengthen analytical thinking and creativity; offer real-world work experiences; model inclusion and access; and further civic responsibility in their efforts to improve the lives of people in their communities. As object-based centers of research and teaching, they sustain on-campus learning. They often serve as the front doors of their universities, connecting town and gown, the academy and the public.

AAMG encourages museum directors, their academic supervisors, university administrators, trustees, and advisory boards to support and affirm these professional practices in their museums. By embodying excellence in their profession, academic museum staff can better serve the mission and goals of their parent institutions and their communities at large. They will be better informed to care for and interpret their collections, which represent our natural and cultural heritage, and better equipped to address the challenges facing our institutions of higher education, our society, and the world. In doing so, they will be recognized as essential partners in the enterprise of higher education.

Jill Hartz
President, AAMG (2011-17)

¹ The word “museum” is used interchangeably for museums, galleries, and collections. Similarly, “university” references universities as well as colleges.

MISSION & STRATEGIC PLANNING

Mission

A museum's mission statement is its core document. The mission guides the daily activities of its staff and the allocation of its resources. The museum mission should explicitly support the mission of its parent institution and, if it also functions as the off-campus community museum, it should affirm its service to the off-campus constituents and community in which it resides.

The mission statement should clearly articulate why the museum exists and how the mission is used to guide decisions about policies, priorities, actions, and responsibilities. The mission statement should be succinct and easily remembered by staff, volunteers, and university administrators. It should be approved by the university's governing authority and the museum's advisory board. The mission should be reviewed every 5-10 years for relevance.

As further assistance, AAM states the following:

All museums are expected to have a formally stated and approved mission that states what the museum does, for whom and why. A museum's mission statement is the primary benchmark against which to evaluate the museum's performance. One of the two core questions underlying any assessment of compliance with national standards is: How well does the museum achieve its stated mission and goals? This emphasis acknowledges an effective and replicable practice: Museums that use clearly delineated mission statements to guide their activities and decisions are more likely to function effectively.

A clearly delineated mission statement guides museum activities and decisions by describing the purpose of a museum—its reason for existence. It defines the museum's unique identity and purpose, and provides a distinct focus for the institution. A mission statement articulates the museum's understanding of its role and responsibility to the public and its collections and reflects the environment in which it exists. Activities of the museum should support, directly or indirectly, the mission.²

Institutional Plan

The museum's mission guides all aspects of its institutional plan. In turn, the plan articulates the museum's guiding principles, vision, and values and supports the ways in which the museum responds to challenges and changes in its operational environment. Approved by its governing authority and recommended to the director by its advisory board, the plan should offer a 3-5-year road map that aims to further both the university's strategic plan and the museum's mission and priorities. While inspirational and aspirational in nature, the plan should identify achievable goals, both short-term and long-range. By developing the plan in support of the university's strategic objectives, the museum may more easily leverage resources that make it valued by and valuable to the university and its constituents, both on- and off-campus. The plan should be reviewed regularly, revised as appropriate, and used as a staff performance assessment tool.

² <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/mission-and-planning>

All museum staff, as well as representatives of its constituencies and stakeholders, should provide input for the plan and be kept apprised of its development. Benchmarking often proves useful in determining goals and measurements that can be used to assess its implementation. Whenever possible, the parent institution and advisory board should help to advance the plan and allocate resources toward its success.

The plan should include and prioritize all relevant aspects of a museum's operations, from its physical plant, professional development, and evaluation practices to its collections, exhibitions, and educational goals. In all operations, the museum should be guided by integrity, inclusiveness, and excellence.

As further assistance, AAM states the following:

As evidence of its institutional planning, museums should have documentation of the planning process (e.g., committee lists, meeting minutes, planning schedules) and a current, comprehensive, timely and formal institutional plan that includes both strategic and operational elements. Each museum's written institutional plan should include a multiyear and an operational plan, a combination of the two or the functional equivalent.

Each museum's planning documents will look different. However, the plan(s) should: be captured in written documents and approved by the governing authority; be based on the mission; be tied to other relevant planning documents (e.g., financial plans, development plans, interpretive plans, collections plans); set priorities helping the museum make choices and allocate available resources; identify how the institution will secure the human and financial resources needed to implement the plan by bringing resources and goals into alignment; be living documents, continually used and updated by the staff and governing authority; establish measurable goals and methods by which the museum will evaluate success; and include action steps, establish timelines and assign responsibility for implementation.³

For accreditation purposes, AAM requires the following:

Museums operated by a parent organization for which museum management is not the primary purpose (e.g., a university, or government agency) are expected to have a museum/site-specific planning process and plan, both of which should be linked to the parent organization's planning. The parent organization's planning process and documents should also reflect support for the museum's mission and ensure that museum/site-specific goals can be achieved.⁴

See Appendix I for more on missions and strategic planning.

³ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/mission-and-planning>

⁴ Ibid

GOVERNANCE, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & LEADERSHIP

Governance & Organizational Structure

Academic museums serve faculty, students, and staff throughout the university, and their resources should benefit all within the academy. In support of its unique and broad-reaching services, the museum should function as a discrete unit of its parent institution, and its director should report to the highest academic officer, often the vice president of academic affairs or the provost. Given the museum's capacity for both discipline-based and interdisciplinary learning, personal student growth, faculty research, inclusion, access, and community relations, consideration should be given to aligning the director's position with that of a dean. In smaller institutions, it may be more advisable for the director to report to a dean (in some institutions, an academic dean would serve this purpose), but the director should not report to a department chair as it will be perceived by others within the academy as only being part of that department or school. As a result, conflicts of interest are likely to arise with regard to the museum's mission and use of its resources.

Good governance requires the academic museum to have the following documents:

- mission statement;
- institutional plan;
- articles of incorporation, charter, enabling legislation or other founding document (this may, at times, be found in the minutes of the university's board of trustees)
- documentation regarding the importance of the museum to the parent institution that affirms its commitment to support the museum (e.g., resolution of support passed by parent organization's trustees, memorandum of understanding or management agreement between the parent institution and the museum);
- document delegating operating authority to the museum director (may be a presidential memorandum or found in the parent institution's bylaws and/or board of trustee minutes, and in the formally approved job description of the director); and
- charter and bylaws for any support or advisory group for which the museum is its primary beneficiary.

See Appendix II for sample documents regarding the parent institution's commitment to the museum and the delegation of authority to the director.

An academic museum only functions effectively when the governing authority and director respect one another and work well together. It is the responsibility of the museum's governing authority (vice president, provost, or academic dean) to help determine and advance the museum's mission and approve its budget. Working closely with the director, the governing authority approves the museum's institutional plan and leverages resources to fulfill its mission. The governing authority leads the search for a new director and conducts annual performance assessments of the director, assuring that the museum operates ethically (upholds the public trust through ethical and responsible operations) and responsibly in all areas. The governing authority should become knowledgeable about museum practice and support the professional practices of the field, including but not limited to regulations regarding acquiring and deaccessioning objects in the museum's collections. It is the responsibility of the director to provide necessary information about museum practice and ensure that the governing authority is aware of ethical, governance, and operational concerns. In addition, the governing

authority should advocate on behalf of the museum and make available professional expertise at the university for the museum's benefit, including legal, financial, facility, security, and development support.

Advisory Boards

Academic museums often benefit from having their own advisory boards. Advisory boards are usually composed of university alumni and friends of the museum – including collectors, financial donors, and connectors – who have the capacity to advance the mission, financial sustainability, collections development, and institutional plan of the museum. They may also include faculty, staff, and students interested in learning more about academic museums or whose departments/schools benefit directly from their involvement in the museum. Advisory boards should have written operating papers, approved by the governing authority, that affirm their member responsibilities to legally, ethically, and effectively volunteer on behalf of the museum. There should also be a clear and formal division of responsibilities between the governing authority and any advisory board that supports the museum, whether separately incorporated or operating within the museum or its parent organization.

See Appendix III for sample advisory board charters and by-laws.

Staffing

The director of the museum should be a museum professional with leadership expertise, who is charged with the authority to manage the museum's daily operations. Depending on the size of the museum and its staff and the diversity of its collections, the director may be trained in a curatorial field or in areas such as education, collections, fundraising, marketing, or administration. The director represents the mission of the museum, provides vision, and upholds policies and procedures. Fund-raising acumen, diplomacy, and strategic thinking are all essential skills for the academic museum director.

Universities vary in their classification of professional museum staff. Some curators, directors, and educators have faculty status with tenure, while others have a staff/administrative appointment. AAMG recommends that in recognition of the core teaching (formal or informal) and research responsibilities of these positions, parent institutions seriously consider classifying them as tenurable faculty lines in the same way that many university libraries have faculty positions that do not have formal teaching obligations. When a parent institution employs a "faculty" museum professional, it should clearly define the criteria for evaluation for tenure and promotion, including peer-reviewed exhibitions, catalogs, and other museum-focused publications that demonstrate scholarly productivity and valuable research, writing, and creative work that is often disseminated outside of traditional academic publications.

The governing authority, staff, and volunteers should all have a clear and shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff at all levels should understand the chain of command. Both the museum and governing authority should support professional development for the museum staff, which, in addition to workshops available on campus, may be conducted as webinars or in-person workshops and conferences organized by museum organizations, non-profits serving museums in some capacity, or companies that serve museums.

Many academic museums take further steps to fulfill their missions as "teaching museums." They offer internships, fellowships, independent study, and volunteer and paid positions for students at the university, who may become emerging museum professionals or benefit from their museum experience in other career paths. Some may offer certificate and masters programs based in their facilities.

See Appendix IV for samples of staff positions, organizational charts, guest curator MOUs, and director search recommendations.

CODE OF ETHICS

The effectiveness of a non-profit institution is directly related to the public's perception of its integrity. That perception is based on the museum's public accountability and transparency in its mission and operations. As a unit of a parent institution, the academic museum must abide by the university's code of ethics and regulations.

Museums serve the public good. As such, the university museum should demonstrate that it is a good steward of its resources and a good neighbor of its community and region. The museum should be inclusive and offer opportunities for diverse interests and participation, reducing as much as possible, any barriers of access to its programs and facilities.

In addition to complying with the university's code of ethics, the academic museum must codify and formally approve its ethical responsibilities as a museum. While the AAM Code of Ethics or those of another organization may prove useful in developing one's own code of ethics, the museum should not simply adopt another's. The museum's code of ethics must affirm that it puts the public trust above the interests of the university, museum, or any individual. It must affirm that the museum puts the interests of the public ahead of the interests of the institution or of any individual, and it must apply to members of the governing authority, advisory board, staff, and volunteers and be approved by the governing authorities of the museum and the university. The code of ethics may be a completely separate document or it may be included in other museum policy documents. Ethical guidelines specific to areas of the museum's operations may be included in personnel, exhibitions, collections, and other documents. The code of ethics should contain language within it of how it will be implemented and how conflicts or challenges to its mandates will be addressed.

As further assistance, AAM states the following:

Developing and implementing an institutional code of ethics leads to informed oversight and benefits the institution in several ways. It creates internal agreement about which actions are consistent with the institution's mission. It serves as a self-made reference point for institutional choices. It also is a practical and effective tool in risk management—protecting both assets and reputation.

An institutional code of ethics expresses the institution's policies, consistent with the public service it affirms in its mission statement.

Museums are expected to abide by "standards and best practices as they are generally understood in the museum field." Some discipline-specific associations have issued ethics statements or guidelines applicable to their disciplines or members. Museums should adhere to these ethics guidelines if they are: broadly applicable to all museums in that segment of the museum field; non-prescriptive—describing desirable outcomes rather than endorsing particular methods of achieving these outcomes; based when possible on applicable existing, widely accepted principles in the field; developed through a broadly inclusive process that gathers input from museums of relevant disciplines, geographic location, size, governance type and other relevant variables.⁵

See Appendix V for sample Codes of Ethics.

⁵ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/public-trust>

FINANCIAL STABILITY & FUND-RAISING

The academic museum must legally, ethically, and responsibly acquire, manage, and allocate its financial resources in ways that advance its mission. It must operate in a fiscally responsible manner that promotes its long-term sustainability.

The role of the governing authority in this regard is to monitor, advise, and support the museum financially. Whenever possible, the parent institution should provide ongoing support for the museum's staff, security, and facility needs. Endowment or other secure funding sources may also provide sustainable support in these areas. Depending on the opportunities for earned income and private support, the parent institution may also be responsible for or contribute to additional budgetary needs, including collections care, off-site storage, supplies, staff professional development, and other general operating needs; public and university-based educational programs; exhibitions; marketing and publications; and visitor services.

Academic museums function best when they have their own development officers, who liaise with the university's central development office but have experience fund-raising for museums. This is because many supporters of museums are not alumni but members of the community, collectors, and supporters of museums, in general. A museum's financial resources include individuals as well as foundations and local, state, and federal grants organizations, such as the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Education.

Unless academic museums are "museum schools" or located within larger colleges, they rarely benefit from an alumni base; rather, alumni must either self-identify as museum supporters or be introduced to the museum through other university development officers. Those at colleges may have greater access to alumni and benefit from organizing their development operations more closely with their institutional advancement office.

AAM offers specific guidelines regarding business and individual donor support that academic museums need to take into consideration in addition to the regulations informing their own university fund-raising. Key among these are that fund-raising initiatives should protect the museum's assets and reputation and be consistent with its mission. At all times, public trust should be foremost, and donors' intent should be maintained.

In addition, AAM states the following:

Not-for-profit, charitable, educational and scientific organizations and those they serve have always benefited from the business sector and the generosity of individual donors. Businesses and individual donors also have benefited from their relationships with the museum community. Through association with museums, businesses seek to positively affect their enterprise by showing their commitment to a not-for-profit's mission, generating goodwill within communities in which they operate and increasing the recognition of their business identity. Through their generosity, donors reaffirm their commitment to the arts, sciences, history and lifelong learning and to creating a stronger and more civil society by making objects and information accessible. In addition, individual donors often have family connections or other close personal relationships with the museums they support.⁶

⁶ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/financial-stability>

As part of a parent institution, academic museums abide by the fund-raising policies set forth by their governing authority. These may include the types of support the university is willing to accept, levels of endowments and other naming opportunities, gift processing procedures, membership and affiliate organizations, and regulations regarding donor confidentiality. In addition, the museum should affirm that its fund-raising policies address business and individual donor support, and that the museum has the human and financial resources necessary for fulfilling its obligations in any donor relationship. Policies must address conflicts of interest in situations involving business or individual donor opportunities in which a member of the museum's governing authority or staff may have an interest. In such cases, the individual should recuse him/herself from any discussion or action related to the business or donor with which s/he has an association. Parameters regarding the use of the museum's name and logo—and, if appropriate, those of the university—should be clarified in advance, as should the benefits accruing to the donor.

COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP

Academic museums are responsible for the care, research, interpretation, and exhibition of important objects representing human cultures and the natural world from the earliest times to the present. Collections are held in trust for the public and made accessible for the public's benefit. As collections stewards, museums must be in compliance with applicable legal, social, and ethical obligations.

In most cases, academic museums steward their collections on behalf of their university, university foundation, or state, which serves as the legal ownership entity. Occasionally, academic museums hold their own non-profit status or have a foundation separate from the university that retains ownership of the collection. In those situations, the museum has greater control over the management of its collections, including opportunities for acquisitions and challenges associated with deaccessioning.

Acquisitions should be carefully considered to ensure pertinence to the collection and the museum's ability to care for them. Donations and bequests should, whenever possible, be unrestricted. When accepting donation and bequests, and when purchasing objects and specimens, the museum must confirm provenance and legal ownership, and comply with all laws and regulations. Restrictions by property rights (copyright, patents, trademarks, or trade secrets) or by its very nature (physically hazardous) should be carefully considered and documented. It is the responsibility of the donor to acquire any appraisals for tax purposes.

The museum and the university should have a clear policy regarding gifts of works appropriate to the museum that are offered to other areas of the parent institution. The museum should have first right of refusal for any museum-quality work. In addition, the museum should not be responsible for works not in its collection unless there is a written policy regarding its authority over those works and funds and staffing are provided to the extent necessary to manage and care for those collections. The parent institution is responsible for ensuring that all works owned by the university are covered by an insurance policy and that those premiums are covered by the parent institution. Because the museum is responsible for collections that are frequently used for teaching, it must make every effort to make those collections accessible to faculty, students, and other scholars, without jeopardizing the safety of those works.

Loyalty to the museum is paramount. All museum staff and volunteers should fully disclose any and all conflicts of interest in collecting practices, dealings, and relationships with donors to avoid the perception of special favors. Likewise, no staff or museum volunteer should compete with the museum for the acquisition of an object or specimen for their personal collection. If anyone is a practicing artist, designer, or fabricator, that person should not use the museum to advance their own work.

Like all museums, academic museums are expected to follow best practices in the care, management, research, acquisitions, and interpretation of their collections. These include the following standards noted in AAM's accreditation recommendations:

- The museum owns, exhibits or uses collections that are appropriate to its mission.
- The museum legally, ethically and effectively manages, documents, cares for and uses the collections.
- The museum conducts collections-related research according to appropriate scholarly standards.

- The museum strategically plans for the use and development of its collections.
- The museum, guided by its mission, provides public access to its collections while ensuring their preservation.
- The museum allocates its space and uses its facilities to meet the needs of the collections, audience and staff.
- The museum has appropriate measures in place to ensure the safety and security of people, its collections and/or objects, and the facilities it owns or uses.
- The museum takes appropriate measures to protect itself against potential risk and loss.

The museum collections policy is an essential document that delineates all collections management practices, including accessioning and deaccessioning. It notes documentation and inventory procedures, as well as access, storage, conservation and preservation, risk management, disaster preparedness, copyright and rights of reproduction, research and interpretation, and acquisition funds or endowments. The needs of any collections will vary, and museum collections staff should be knowledgeable in the standards of the types of objects for which they are responsible. In all cases, the museum must provide proper storage and HVAC, maintain accurate and timely documentation, and ensure proper intellectual control.

Collections may include different levels of importance and care, with study collections often available for class use. Other areas of the collection may be identified as loan collections, which may be installed in university buildings and the president's house, or teaching collections available to faculty for use in classroom settings, or research collections with access limited to those performing scientific analysis. If so, the parameters of the program, including inventory, identification of appropriate items and locations and potential fees, should be noted in the collections policy. AAMG also recommends that museums create collections development plans, identifying key areas of growth through gift, bequest, and/or purchase that further the museum's mission and institutional plan.

AAM requires the following with regard to collections stewardship:

- A current, approved, comprehensive collections management policy is in effect and actively used to guide the museum's stewardship of its collections.
- The human resources are sufficient, and the staff have the appropriate education, training and experience to fulfill the museum's stewardship responsibilities and the needs of the collections.
- Staff are delegated responsibility to carry out the collections management policy.
- A system of documentation, records management and inventory is in effect to describe each object and its acquisition (permanent or temporary), current condition and location and movement into, out of and within the museum.
- The museum regularly monitors environmental conditions and takes proactive measures to mitigate the effects of ultraviolet light, fluctuations in temperature and humidity, air pollution, damage, pests and natural disasters on collections.
- An appropriate method for identifying needs and determining priorities for conservation/care is in place.
- Safety and security procedures and plans for collections in the museum's custody are documented, practiced and addressed in the museum's emergency/disaster preparedness plan.
- Regular assessment of, and planning for, collection needs (development, conservation, risk management, etc.) takes place and sufficient financial and human resources are allocated for collections stewardship.

- Collections care policies and procedures for collections on exhibition, in storage, on loan and during travel are appropriate, adequate and documented.
- The scope of a museum's collections stewardship extends to both the physical and intellectual control of its property.
- Ethical considerations of collections stewardship are incorporated into the appropriate museum policies and procedures.
- Considerations regarding future collecting activities are incorporated into institutional plans and other appropriate policy documents.⁷

The following links to AAM standards may also be useful:

- **Standards Regarding Loaning Collections to Non-Museum Entities:**
<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship/loaning-collections>
- **Standards Regarding the Unlawful Appropriation of Objects During the Nazi Era:**
<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship/objects-during-the-nazi-era>
- **Standards Regarding Archaeological Material and Ancient Art:**
<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship/archaeological-material-and-ancient-art>

In addition, the following federal laws may be relevant:

- **U.S. Antiquities Act of 1906⁸**
Domestic antiquities cannot be removed from lands owned or controlled by the government with the permission of the Secretary of the department who has jurisdiction over the land in question.
- **Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979⁹**
This expansion of the U.S. Antiquities Act provides for the protection of archaeological materials on federal land.
- **The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966¹⁰**
Established the national register and provides for financial assistance for preservation projects and mandatory review of proposed changes to properties on the National Register.
- **The Endangered Species Act¹¹**
Prohibits the importation and exportation, and the sale, trace, or shipment in interstate and foreign commerce, of listed endangered or threatened species, their parts, and products made from them.
- **The Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹²**
Makes it unlawful to kill, capture, collect, possess, buy, sell, ship, import, or export most migratory game and non-game birds, including their nests or eggs, unless an appropriate federal permit is obtained.

⁷ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship>

⁸ <https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/anti1906.htm>

⁹ <https://www.nps.gov/archeology/tools/Laws/ARPA.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/ESACT.HTML>

¹² <https://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/migtrea.html>

- **The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act**¹³
Makes it unlawful to take bald or golden eagles or to sell, purchase, or barter their parts (including feathers) or products made from them.
- **The African Elephant Conservation Act**¹⁴
Eliminates the import and export of raw ivory into and out of the U.S. and restricts movement of worked ivory into and out of the U.S.
- **The National Firearms Act of 1934 and the 1968 Gun Control Act**¹⁵
Makes it illegal for any individual or organization to have a machine gun not registered with a permit. A state or federally funded museum can register all firearms under both of these acts legally. Most academic museums that are state funded would qualify. Museums at private universities would not qualify to keep these arms in their collections. Furthermore, directors and curators might want to apply for their “Collectors and Curios and Relics Federal Firearms License” to be able to obtain and curate the museum’s firearm collection.
- **The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990**¹⁶
Provides protection of Native American graves and for associated funerary objects and for unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and cultural patrimony.

Protecting the Collections

Academic museums collect, interpret, exhibit, and care for important objects representing human cultures and the natural world from the earliest times to the present. While these objects may be the actual property of the museum, the parent institution, or a university foundation, in all instances the governing authority must follow the museum’s collection policies to ensure that these invaluable educational, cultural, and natural objects are protected, preserved, and not treated as fungible property.

AAM states the following, specifically for academic museums:

- The Accreditation Commission requires museums operating within a parent organization to submit evidence (issued/approved by the parent organization’s governing body) documenting:
 1. the importance of the museum, and the collections in its care, to the parent organization;
 2. the parent organization’s commitment to use its resources to support the museum and its mission, and to protect the museum’s tangible and intangible assets held in the public trust; and
 3. the nature of the parent organization’s support and relationship with the museum.
- This evidence must articulate that the parent:
 1. values the museum as an intellectual and educational resource;
 2. sees the museum and its collections as essential components of what it does;
 3. is committed to the museum’s continued success in fulfilling its mission and meeting its public trust responsibilities, especially with regard to the collection (if one exists); and

¹³ <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/MidwestBird/EaglePermits/bagepa.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.fws.gov/international/wildlife-without-borders/multinational-species-conservation-acts-african-elephant.html>

¹⁵ <https://www.atf.gov/rules-and-regulations/national-firearms-act>

¹⁶ <https://www.nps.gov/nagpra/>

4. is committed to following AAM and museum field standards, particularly with regard to the museum’s collections, the use of deaccessioning proceeds, and collecting and gift-acceptance policies.
- This evidence can take a variety of forms:
 1. a resolution passed by the parent organization’s governing body;
 2. internal parent organization policy or agreement between the parent and the museum;
 3. section of the parent organization’s bylaws, other organizing or governance documents or policies (i.e., parent organization document that describes its administrative and organizational structure and operations, and how the museum fits into that structure);
 4. a section of the parent organization’s formally approved institutional plan that addresses the museum;
 5. other evidence that shows a history of support from the parent organization (e.g., financial reports) and demonstrates for the Commission that there is a precedent for future regular and stable support;
 6. a resolution stating the parent organization’s commitment that it will **not** consider the museum’s collections as disposable assets.
 - The Commission considers it a best practice, and strongly prefers, for the evidence to be approved by the corpus of the ultimate governing authority, not by an individual representing this governing body, or to whom authority for oversight of the museum has been delegated. The evidence must be a document(s) approved by the parent organization, not just by the museum.¹⁷

See Appendix VI for sample collections management documents and statements affirming the parent institution’s support of the museum’s collection and its collections policies.

University Collections

Universities have often acquired works of fine and decorative arts, outdoor sculpture, commemorative items, specimens of the natural world, and other objects that require professional care and oversight. Sometimes, the museum is charged with their management, while at other times, a university registrar or archivist manages the collections. On occasion, the university’s facilities management or physical plant department may have responsibility for items not in the museum’s collection and may contact museum personnel on an *ad hoc* basis when questions or issues arise. Many of these objects have come to the university through gifts and bequests; others through “Percent for Art” state and local programs that require a percentage of the budget for new buildings and renovations be allocated to commissioning or purchasing artwork for that location.

Museum professionals are often the only university personnel with the training and experience to care for and manage these collections. It is, however, a rare situation when an academic museum can assume those collections responsibilities without additional funding and staff. Unless university collections are managed professionally by others at the institution, the university should provide the necessary support to ensure that the museum is able to take responsibility for these key assets.

¹⁷ <http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/continuum/statements-of-support-ac-policy.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

See Appendix VII for sample documents for policies and procedures for public art on campus.

Object Loans

The museum's collections policies should detail policies and procedures regarding incoming and outgoing loans. It is standard practice for a museum to request loans to support exhibitions, research, and curricula. When the lender is an individual or business, the museum must make sure there are no potential conflicts of interest or an appearance of a conflict and that the lender has legal ownership of the work. In situations where works of art, loaned for an exhibition other than as a fundraiser, may be available for sale, the museum should not accept a commission or serve as a middleman in the process. If a lender is contributing funds for the project, such information should be clearly stated and readily available.

It is standard practice for a museum to lend objects from its own collection to other institutions. Again, policies and procedures should be delineated in the collections policy document, which aims to ensure the care and safety of loans and that their use is consistent with the museum's mission. The museum should require a standard AAM general facilities report¹⁸ from the borrowing institution that specifies appropriate facility, security, HVAC, and professional handling.

¹⁸ <https://aam-us.org/ProductCatalog/Product?ID=891>

EDUCATION, EXHIBITIONS, & INTERPRETATION

Museums must clearly identify their constituents. First and foremost are the university's students. Additional audiences will likely include faculty and staff, as well as K-12 schools in their city, town, or region; the general public in their area; and, increasingly, on-line audiences. To meet the needs of these diverse constituents, the museum should present stimulating, innovative, and inclusive programs and exhibitions that enhance the academic curriculum, emphasize cross-cultural understanding, provide broad educational experiences, and support collaborative and interdisciplinary opportunities.

University students usually participate in museum learning as part of their courses and extra-curricular activities. To engage the students, key members of the museum may be appointed to liaison with faculty, teaching and encouraging them to use the museum's resources – its collections, exhibitions, public programs, and staff expertise – in their curricula. These designated staff members may be “academic curators” or “museum educators.” Faculty and students whose disciplines fall outside the core areas of the collection and special exhibitions may find significant benefits in working with the museum's staff to strengthen faculty and student research, writing and communications skills, analytical thinking, visual and media literacy, and more. In these ways, the academic museum functions as a learning laboratory. Faculty may also work closely with the museum as **guest curators**¹⁹ and members of advisory committees (e.g., collections, exhibitions, and public programs). Because museums offer practical training and work experiences, in addition to independent study and other academic credit, students may hold internships, fellowships, volunteer or paid positions (including serving as a docent), or be engaged with the museum through student organizations and student museum membership programs.

In addition to supporting the mission and institutional plan of its parent organization, the museum's collections, exhibitions, and educational programs should also support the needs of other important constituencies, which may include K-12 populations and the local/regional community. The museum should be open to recommendations and feedback from its constituencies and rely on the expertise and interests of its curatorial and education staff. It may be useful to plan a four-year exhibition schedule (the normal graduation cycle of an undergraduate), aiming to present a range of cultures, media, ideas, and natural phenomena that in total will impart richness and diversity, as well as the importance of studying and preserving cultural and natural heritage.

Research

Research plays an important role in academic museums. In addition to supporting faculty and student research, museum staff members should conduct ongoing research specific to the collections, exhibitions, educational programs, and museum practices, as appropriate to their expertise, interests, and professional positions. Research should ensure that the museum is successfully addressing and prioritizing the needs of an increasingly diverse on- and off-campus audience. Evaluation, too, is an essential component of ongoing museum work, allowing for constituency input, thoughtful reflection, strategic planning, prioritization, and re-direction of initiatives. Ongoing visitor/constituency engagement surveys help museums understand their visitor demographics as well as what they are doing well and what they could improve. Research and evaluation are essential partners in strengthening museums and the field as a whole, and staff members should be encouraged to document and share their work with their governing authority as well as other academic museum professionals through publications, on-line communication vehicles, and conferences.

¹⁹ See [Appendix IV](#) for guidelines regarding guest curators.

Many museums work closely with faculty who teach museum studies. Some museum staff teach courses themselves, others serve as guest lecturers, and others supervise students who are expected to intern for a term or over the summer. Most programs do not prepare students in any significant way for professional positions in museums; rather, they offer historical, theoretical, and practical perspectives on museums and museum work. AAMG encourages museum professionals to re-envision these programs, such that on-site experience and academic studies reinforce one another and make museum studies graduates competitive (with graduates in other academic fields relevant to their future work, e.g., art history, history, science, anthropology, education, marketing, etc.) in their search for museum positions.

AAM offers the following recommendations regarding education, exhibitions, and interpretation:

- The museum clearly states its overall educational goals, philosophy and messages, and demonstrates that its activities are in alignment with them.
- The museum understands the characteristics and needs of its existing and potential audiences and uses this understanding to inform its interpretation.
- The museum's interpretive content is based on appropriate research.
- Museums conducting primary research do so according to scholarly standards.
- The museum uses techniques, technologies and methods appropriate to its educational goals, content, audiences and resources.
- The museum presents accurate and appropriate content for each of its audiences.
- The museum demonstrates consistent high quality in its interpretive activities.
- The museum assesses the effectiveness of its interpretive activities and uses those results to plan and improve its activities.²⁰

See Appendix VIII for samples of exhibition planning and program evaluation.

²⁰ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/education-and-interpretation>

Facilities & Risk Management

Academic museums are usually housed within a building owned by the university, which may or may not have been purpose built. While some museums may have their own facilities staff, others have facilities staff assigned to them from the university's facilities management or physical plant department. Similarly, climate control and security may be managed independently by museum staff or by others at the university. The less control the museum has over its building maintenance, HVAC, and security, the more important it is to communicate best practices to university staff responsible for those areas and to assure that funding is sustained to maintain the highest possible standards.

The director should participate in all decisions regarding the re-design, renovation, construction, repair, or capital improvements of the physical plant. The director should approve all planning and implementation of such in order to maintain appropriate museum standards for collections management, programs, and security. When the museum is used by other university or community groups or individuals, the director and appropriate staff should ensure the safety, security, and integrity of the collection, exhibitions, museum programs, and facility. Revenue generated from the rental of the museum should offset direct and indirect costs to the museum.

AAM further states that:

- The museum allocates its space and uses its facilities to meet the needs of the collections, audience, and staff.
- The museum has appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of people, its collections and/or objects, and the facilities it owns or uses.
- The museum has an effective program for the care and long-term maintenance of its facilities.
- The museum is clean and well-maintained, and provides for the visitors' needs.
- The museum takes appropriate measures to protect itself against potential risk and loss.²¹

Museums care for their resources in trust for the public. It is incumbent upon them to ensure the safety of their staff, visitors, and neighbors; maintain their buildings and grounds; and minimize risk to the collections that they preserve for future generations. Conscious, proactive identification of the risks that could potentially harm people and collections, and appropriate allocation of resources to reduce these risks are vital to museum management.

Minimizing risk to collections, visitors, and staff is predicated on a clear understanding of potential risks and the creation of a comprehensive plan to mitigate them. Regular reviews and updates should be made and clearly articulated with all appropriate museum and university staff. Because the academic museum should prioritize student learning, all efforts should be made to provide access to collections and exhibitions, which may require significant staff resources (collections staff, gallery attendants, security officers, attendants) and flexible time to meet academic program and class needs.

For **facility risk**, staff must ensure that the building is maintained and preventative maintenance accomplished, that spaces are used to the best of their potential in fulfillment of the museum's mission and that the building and its grounds are attractive and accessible to visitors. For museums in historic

²¹ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship>

structures, the preservation needs of the building need to be balanced against risk to people and collections within it.

For the *collections*, minimizing risk includes having an emergency preparedness plan, an integrated pest management plan, procedures for handling and storage of collections (e.g., museums in earthquake and hurricane zones will need to secure collections in storage and on view to avoid possible damage), use of hazardous materials, security of collections, and appropriate insurance.

For *collections and people*, risk management requires a well-trained security force that usually includes video surveillance and a physical presence in the galleries. The security program must have written protocol for staff access to the museum building and specific areas, supervision of students and volunteers, and annual security training and emergency preparedness drills for all staff and volunteers. A knowledgeable visitor services staff is essential. The frontline personnel can welcome and orient visitors to the museum, answer questions about the university and region or direct questions to others, make them feel welcome, and serve as an additional set of eyes. The museum is also expected to comply with university, local, state, and federal laws, codes and regulations and to make sure that those with whom it contracts for its various services are versed in museum practices in their specific areas.

Emergencies and the National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Academic museums should be or become compliant with NIMS. While every university senior staff member should be or become NIMS compliant and have a comprehensive emergency operations plan (EOP), every museum should have an additional plan that is under the operations command unit as its own support unit, known as a Museum Security and Recovery Unit. This unit would be activated, if a museum facilities and/or artifacts are exposed, threatened, and/or damaged from a disaster. The purpose of the unit is to implement procedures to protect the artifacts from outside looters and prevent further environmental damage. Senior museum officials in charge of collections, security, staff, and facility may need to take the following FEMA Courses:

- 1) ICS-100: Introduction the Incident Command System
- 2) ICS -200: Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- 3) ICS-700a: National Incident Management Systems (NIMS)
- 4) ICS-800b: National Response Framework, an Introduction
- 5) ICS-300: Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents
- 6) ICS-400: Advanced Incident Command System, Command, and General Staff

The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation (FAIC) of Historic and Artistic Works offers recommendations in this regard: <http://www.heritageemergency.org/initiatives/alliance-for-response/afr-home/>

See Appendix IX for samples of emergency preparedness plans and security plans and protocols.

RETRENCHMENT OR DOWNSIZING

An academic museum may, at times, be faced with a reduction in its operations due to its financial situation or that of the university. Any budget reductions required by the parent institution should be compatible with reductions in other areas of the university, i.e., the museum should not be singled out for more reductions than other areas. In the case of budget reductions, the museum should focus on its ability to fulfill its mission and serve its community, and take into careful consideration the effect of its actions on its staff, stakeholders, and the collections held in public trust.

Collections

Collections often receive special scrutiny during retrenchment either because of the expense of maintaining them appropriately or because of their potential as financial assets. In considering how to address collections during retrenchment, all parties should recognize that collections are held in trust for the public. A primary responsibility of the museum and governing authority is to safeguard this trust. The museum may determine that it is unable, in the long run, to appropriately care for some parts of its collections. In such cases, the most responsible action may be to deaccession and transfer material to another suitable caretaker in an orderly manner that safeguards the collections and their documentation. Museums may carefully consider whether it is appropriate for the material to remain in the public domain at another museum or nonprofit institution or whether it can responsibly be placed through public sale.

Deaccessioning should never be a fast or simple solution. It may take a great deal of time and other resources to research the material in question, determine its provenance, identify any restrictions on the title, and arrange for an appropriate and safe transfer. In the short run, it may actually require additional expenditures on the part of the museum to conduct the necessary research, prepare the documentation, arrange for disposition, and affect the transfer. Deaccessioning is part of a long-term, thoughtful decision on the part of the museum about how best to fulfill its mission with available resources. It is conducted in accordance with standards and best practices in the field, and with the museum's own code of ethics, collections planning and collections management policies.

AAMG recognizes that different museum organizations provide different guidelines for the use of deaccessioning funds. Some may be restricted by federal or international law. The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology,²² for example, stipulates that the "barter, sale, or purchase of scientifically significant vertebrate fossils is not condoned, unless it brings them into or keeps them within a public trust." AAMG recommends that funds from deaccessioning only be used for new collections acquisitions, unless the museum is no longer acquiring objects, in which case such funds may be used for the care of the existing collection. It does, however, recognize that the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) specifies that history museums can use such funds for acquisition or preservation.

As previously stated, proceeds from the sale of collection objects should not be considered as fungible assets used to sustain the parent institution. AAMG also affirms, along with AAM, AAMD, and AASLH that collections should be "unencumbered," i.e., they cannot be used as a collateral for a loan.

Because collections are vital to the mission of most museums, AAMG urges museums and their parent institutions to examine all possibilities for preserving and making accessible their collections rather than dismantling them.

²² <http://vertpaleo.org/the-Society/Governance-Documents/Impending-Public-Auction-of-Vertebrate-Fossils-by.aspx>

The AAMG Task Force on the Protection of University Collections²³ stands ready to help and advise academic museums and their governing authorities when faced with emergencies and financial retrenchment that seriously affects the sustainability of the museum's operations.

AAMG also recommends that academic museums consider the following options in retrenchment and downsizing situations:²⁴

Human Resources

Museums often reduce staff size in response to financial reductions. This may be accomplished by leaving positions temporarily unfilled, eliminating individual positions or eliminating whole departments or program areas. In considering the reduction of staff as a part of retrenchment, museums should consider the short-term and long-term needs of the institution. Leaving a position vacant when a staff member departs is less traumatic than laying off existing staff. It can also, however, leave key positions and vital roles unfilled at a crucial time. Museums must weigh the needs of the staff, the museum, and the institution in choosing a strategy for staff reductions.

Museums should also consider the impact of downsizing on the museum's programs and operations. The museum's mission is accomplished primarily through its staff, but many museums also rely on volunteers and partnerships with other institutions. Staff reductions are planned in light of the overall impact on the museum's mission and activities and as part of an overall strategy for scaling back operations, supplementing paid staff with volunteers or partnerships or other strategies for accomplishing the museum's goals.

Diversification of Funding

Museums that are part of a college or university or organized under a municipal, county, or state government have additional factors that affect their response to a financial crisis. When parent organizations need to make financial cuts, the museum may be asked to bear a disproportionate portion of the burden. Whenever possible, advocacy efforts on behalf of staff, faculty, and advisory board members should aim to reverse such a situation. It is especially important that museums within larger parent organizations increase their financial stability by cultivating diverse sources of income. Museums that derive significant portions of their income from outside sources are less dependent on funding from their parent organizations. This minimizes the impact of funding cuts from the parent and the likelihood that the parent will see eliminating the museum as an attractive financial strategy.

Membership

Museums can also develop a separately incorporated friends (membership) organization. A separate not-for-profit support group can provide significant income, serve as an advocate for the museum, and buffer it against sudden organizational changes. A formal memorandum of agreement between the parent organization and the friends group can ensure that the support organization has a voice in any decisions concerning the museum's future. This document should include policies and procedures for fundraising, maintaining and accessing funds, and the election or appointment of representatives who work directly with the museum staff.

²³ See **Appendix X**.

²⁴ <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/financial-stability>

University Operations & the Public Trust

Another strategy is to embed the museum in the parent organization's operations. A museum that is an integral part of its parent organization is less likely to be an immediate target for financial reductions by the university. By being strongly connected to the community served by the parent institution, reaching out to a broad constituency, attracting new sources of funding, garnering positive publicity and, most of all, being valued by a large number of people, a museum makes itself less vulnerable to cutbacks. An active and engaged constituency will encourage the parent organization to continue its support.

Parent organizations may not have a legal obligation to operate the university museum. The governing authority should be made aware of the possibility of the museum losing accreditation due to changes made as part of retrenchment. AAM, recognizing the public trust inherent in the stewardship of collections held in the public domain, urges parent organizations to consider the following ethical, moral, and practical issues.

First, museums are part of an institution's long-term strategy of civic engagement. Any decisions regarding the future of museums operated by a parent organization should take into account their long-term role in serving the broader public good. While in the short run, cutbacks to a museum may result in financial savings, in the long run they may damage the parent organization's ability to serve its community and reach out to a broad audience.

Second, museums operate in the public interest and hold their collections as a public trust. If the university's governing authority is considering downsizing or closing a museum, it has an ethical obligation to do so in a manner that safeguards the public's interest. The fate of the collections must be carefully considered. Having taken on the obligation of caring for collections, the university must plan to transfer this stewardship to another suitable caretaker in an orderly manner that safeguards the collections and their documentation. The new caretaker should be carefully identified based on its ability to care for the collections and to continue to provide public and scholarly access. As referenced earlier in this standard, this process may require additional resources in the short term and may not be a useful strategy for immediate cost savings.



Looking for Something?

If you have suggestions for topics and/or sample documents that we might add to AAMG's Professional Practices, please [email communications@aamg-us.org](mailto:communications@aamg-us.org)

Join your colleagues for informative and spirited conversations on museum practice on our listserv:
<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/AAMG-L/info>

For AAM's best practices, see:
<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/standards>

Characteristics of Excellence for Museums

1. PUBLIC TRUST & ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1.1 The museum is a good steward of its resources held in the public trust.
- 1.2 The museum identifies the communities it serves, and makes appropriate decisions in how it serves them.
- 1.3 Regardless of its self-identified communities, the museum strives to be a good neighbor in its geographic area.
- 1.4 The museum strives to be inclusive and offers opportunities for diverse participation.
- 1.5 The museum asserts its public service role and places education at the center of that role.
- 1.6 The museum demonstrates a commitment to providing the public with physical and intellectual access to the museum and its resources.
- 1.7 The museum is committed to public accountability and is transparent in its mission and its operations.
- 1.8 The museum complies with local, state, and federal laws, codes, and regulations applicable to its facilities, operations, and administration.

2. MISSION & PLANNING

- 2.1 The museum has a clear understanding of its mission and communicates why it exists and who benefits as a result of its efforts.
- 2.2 All aspects of the museum's operations are integrated and focused on meeting its mission.
- 2.3 The museum's governing authority and staff think and act strategically to acquire, develop, and allocate resources to advance the mission of the museum.
- 2.4 The museum engages in ongoing and reflective institutional planning that includes involvement of its audiences and community.
- 2.5 The museum establishes measures of success and uses them to evaluate and adjust its activities.

3. LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- 3.1 The governance, staff, and volunteer structures and processes effectively advance the museum's mission.
- 3.2 The governing authority, staff, and volunteers have a clear and shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.3 The governing authority, staff, and volunteers legally, ethically, and effectively carry out their responsibilities.
- 3.4 The composition, qualifications, and diversity of the museum's leadership, staff, and volunteers enable it to carry out the museum's mission and goals.
- 3.5 There is a clear and formal division of responsibilities between the governing authority and any group that supports the museum, whether separately incorporated or operating within the museum or its parent organization.

4. COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP

- 4.1 The museum owns, exhibits, or uses collections that are appropriate to its mission.
- 4.2 The museum legally, ethically, and effectively manages, documents, cares for, and uses the collections.
- 4.3 The museum's collections-related research is conducted according to appropriate scholarly standards.
- 4.4 The museum strategically plans for the use and development of its collections.
- 4.5 Guided by its mission, the museum provides public access to its collections while ensuring their preservation.

5. EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION

- 5.1 The museum clearly states its overall educational goals, philosophy, and messages, and demonstrates that its activities are in alignment with them.
- 5.2 The museum understands the characteristics and needs of its existing and potential audiences and uses this understanding to inform its interpretation.
- 5.3 The museum's interpretive content is based on appropriate research.
- 5.4 Museums conducting primary research do so according to scholarly standards.
- 5.5 The museum uses techniques, technologies, and methods appropriate to its educational goals, content, audiences, and resources.
- 5.6 The museum presents accurate and appropriate content for each of its audiences.
- 5.7 The museum demonstrates consistent high quality in its interpretive activities.
- 5.8 The museum assesses the effectiveness of its interpretive activities and uses those results to plan and improve its activities.

6. FINANCIAL STABILITY

- 6.1 The museum legally, ethically, and responsibly acquires, manages, and allocates its financial resources in a way that advances its mission.
- 6.2 The museum operates in a fiscally responsible manner that promotes its long-term sustainability.

7. FACILITIES & RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The museum allocates its space and uses its facilities to meet the needs of the collections, audience, and staff.
- 7.2 The museum has appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of people, its collections and/or objects, and the facilities it owns or uses.
- 7.3 The museum has an effective program for the care and long-term maintenance of its facilities.
- 7.4 The museum is clean and well-maintained, and provides for the visitors' needs.
- 7.5 The museum takes appropriate measures to protect itself against potential risk and loss.

Characteristics of Excellence for Museums In Plain English

Public Trust & Accountability

- » Be good
- » No really—not only be legal, but be ethical
- » Show everyone how good and ethical you are
- » (don't wait for them to ask)
- » Do good for people
- » Know which people
- » And to be on the safe side
- » Be nice to everyone else, too
- » Especially if they live next door
- » Avoid cloning
- » Look something like the people you are doing good for
- » And maybe a bit like your neighbors
- » Let other people help decide what games to play
- » And what the rules are
- » Share your toys

Mission and Planning

- » Know what you want to do
- » And why it makes a difference to anyone
- » Then put it in writing
- » Stick to it
- » Decide what you want to do next
- » When you are deciding what to do, ask lots of people
- » for their opinion
- » Put it in writing
- » Then do it
- » If it didn't work, don't do it again
- » If it did work, do

Leadership and Organizational Structure

- » Make sure everyone is clear about who is doing what
- » The board knows it is governing
- » The director knows she is directing (and the board knows it too)
- » The staff know they are doing everything else
- » And have it in writing

Collections Stewardship

- » Know what stuff you have
- » Know what stuff you need
- » Know where it is
- » Take good care of it
- » Make sure someone gets some good out of it
- » Especially people you care about
- » And your neighbors

Education and Interpretation

- » Know who you are talking to
- » Ask them what they want to know
- » Know what you want to say
- » (and what you are talking about)
- » Use appropriate language (or images, or music)
- » Make sure people understood you
- » And ask them if they liked it
- » If not, change it

Financial Stability

- » Put your money where your mission is
- » Is it enough money?
- » Will it be there next year, too?
- » Know when you will need more \$
- » Know where you are going to get it from
- » Don't diddle the books

Facilities and Risk Management

- » Don't crowd people
- » Or things
- » Make it safe to visit your museum
- » Or work there
- » Keep it clean
- » Keep the toilet paper stocked
- » And if all else fails, know where the exit is
- » (and make sure it is clearly marked)