Society of American Archivists Council Meeting
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Final Report: Task Force on Sections and Roundtables
(Prepared by Mark J. Duffy)

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BACKROUND STATEMENT

The Task Force was established by a vote of Council at its August 16, 2005, meeting: "That a task force of five individuals (two Council members and three nonmembers of Council) be charged to examine the definitions, functions, and purposes of sections and roundtables and present a report to the Council at its January 2006 meeting."

In appointing the Task Force, the Council asked for attention to an apparent lack of clarity in the distinctions between SAA's sections and roundtables. The Council had been made aware of a number of ambiguities and dated requirements affecting these structural units and Council's communication and working relationship with them. Council members expressed their interest in developing sections and roundtables as venues for future leadership and activities designed to increase member participation and commitment to the archival profession. Council asked the Task Force to address specific instances of section and roundtable redundancy and to review the Handbook's descriptions and definitions for sections and roundtables. The members of the Task Force were appointed and charged in February 2006 and began its work in March. It has performed its work by email and one conference call.

Members of the Task Force entered into their assignment by discussing the merits and weaknesses of existing structures and evaluating the functional relationships that have emerged within and among these units, SAA Council, and the membership. The task force examined the Council Handbook and the Task Force on Organizational Effectiveness (TFOE) report of 1997. The review process offered an opportunity for SAA leaders to be in contact with the leadership of sections and roundtables to assess the accuracy of their understandings. These returns are attached to the report. The Task Force brought together a sample of perspectives with members who had served as section and/or roundtable leaders. Staff added their expertise to the conversation.

DISCUSSION

The nature of the discussion – how to improve the work of the Society's two main membership units – lent itself to a variety of incremental improvements around which the group sought agreement. Many of the Task Force's recommendations are mechanical in nature, but together they represent an attempt to meet a changing environment in the way associations of volunteers communicate and do business. The Task Force found itself in unanimous agreement on several overriding themes relating to the purpose and essential value of the sections and roundtables.

- *Sections have a pivotal role in sustaining organizational growth, membership identification, and leadership development.*

The Task Force recognizes the centrality of sections in developing new member affinity, retaining veteran members, and linking individual members to the Society's larger professional and public agenda. Organized around the principal venues and functions of archival practice, the sections offer a formal vehicle for communicating information widely and for transmitting organizational and professional values to new archivists. They are the organizational backbone for welcoming members into professional and social networks. Many opportunities exist within the sections for recruitment and developing next generations of professional leaders.

The Task Force envisions with these recommendations that sections will have the resources to renew their focus on issues that are having the greatest influence on their respective spheres of archival practice. Section leaders are asked to commit themselves more vigorously to implementing the Society's goals of professional advancement and public awareness of archival issues. Strengthening sections will require changes to the annual meeting calendar and to the expectations of what can be accomplished by these units. The Task Force believes strongly in designating additional meeting time for sections at the annual meeting, providing resources to support special projects and programs, allocating resources for electronic publication and communication to ensure organizational continuity and flow of information, and bringing section leaders together annually for structured discussion and orientation. Council should make a sustained effort to sponsor the development of the skills and loyalty of these future leaders and to invite them to shoulder more of the ordinary but important tasks of governance and planning for the profession.

- *Roundtables offer an organizational culture of openness, innovation, and professional growth that binds members in common interest.*

The roundtables are in many instances successful models of how the Society can grow from within as its members gather in professional communities of interest. Their emphasis is on identifying and finding new approaches to specific topical issues or matters of continuing professional innovation. Some roundtables are more actively engaged in work than others, but all rely on the energy generated from within their voluntary participants. The Task Force appreciates the grassroots nature of roundtables and supports the widest possible latitude in permitting these units to advance their particular issues, acknowledging that these efforts can feed directly into the program and priorities of SAA. Because of their topical focus, roundtables have the important feature of being a bridge between the Society and the profession beyond. The roundtables are the Society's limbs that can be used to gather new members and spotlight talented individuals who are expert in specific areas of professional knowledge and innovation.

The Task Force recognizes the steady evolution of roundtables into communication vehicles rather than governing units. By exploiting new technologies, roundtables will be best positioned to pursue their goals, especially if they are allowed maximum flexibility and streamlined organizational structure. The Task Force recommends minimum reporting responsibilities, openness to the wider profession, and direct communication

channels to Council and staff as needed. Roundtables are uniquely positioned to take advantage of electronic networking, and the Task Force urges that resources be devoted to supporting multiple communication vehicles within the Society's management capabilities. While the Society should continue to offer roundtables opportunities to meet for special sessions in appropriate physical spaces at the annual meeting, the automatic reservation of dedicated spaces to support informal roundtable gatherings is no longer a justifiable expense in light of the Society's investment in communication technology.

- ◼ *The Society expects its section and roundtable leaders to model behaviors that demonstrate high standards of professional responsibility.*

    Members of the Society should expect an engaged leadership that understands their role in shaping the culture of the Society. The Task Force endorses a more rigorous accountability of section and roundtable leaders to their members. For roundtable leaders, these responsibilities are few but nonetheless key to measuring effectiveness: communication with members, timely annual reporting, transition planning, generating internal discussion, and alerting other SAA units and Council to significant professional concerns. Section leaders have similar responsibilities, but by virtue of their more central place in the governance of the Society, section leaders assume additional obligations to be more involved in executing the program and goals of the Society. The Task Force endorses new requirements of section leaders to meet and collaborate with their peers in other sections, to report faithfully on their progress, to standardize their governance and administrative policies, to respond to Council assignments and requests, and to significantly broaden their professional horizon and activities.

- ◼ *Sections and roundtables are vital communication channels for the Society and should be supported by Council in their strategic information purpose.*

    The advance of modern communication technology has changed the way that sections and roundtables reach their members. Electronic lists and websites have become routine for making announcements, planning meetings, soliciting comment, publishing statements, profile members, and building a visible presence within the Society. The Task Force recognizes that virtual ties will become ever more important to sections and roundtables in accomplishing their work and measuring their effectiveness.

    The Task Force endorses the concept of providing support for multiple electronic lists, discussion groups, and published websites. Keeping these electronic channels open and accessible to diverse audiences within the professional community is a valued ideal insofar as communication is the chief means for recruiting new members, designating exclusive benefits to enrolled members, and raising the public profile of the Society. The Task Force understands that an appropriate balancing of these goals requires that sections and roundtables work with the SAA staff to maximize continuity and effectiveness in delivering the Society's communication services to members.

- *The management of sections and roundtables involves a creative tension between member participation and centralization of services.*

  Voluntary associations rely on the participation of their members to maintain interest, retain membership, and foster commitment. Participation takes many forms, some erudite and others mundane. All are valuable to maintaining goodwill and the bonds of trust. Some member activities are better outsourced or performed by SAA staff for reasons of efficiency; but other activities, especially in the area of communication and governance, are effectively managed by sections and roundtables, often for the sake of developing an appropriate independent identity, member loyalty, and sense of community. The Task Force struggled with issues of centralization versus unit control at the level of specific allowances: who should manage electronic lists, can anyone join an e-list, should units be allowed to design their own websites, is it best to standardize terms of office?

  The Task Force makes recommendations along these lines, but the group was generally reluctant to remove operational decisions from the control of section and roundtable volunteers, even if efficiency might argue otherwise. Likewise, the Task Force could not find an agreeable way to enforce a request articulated by TFOE that Council turn more routinely to sections and roundtables in the governance and deliberations of the Society – a recommendation that has not been customarily followed. The Task Force urges Council, staff, and officers to be work more intentionally to incorporate the sections and roundtables in the decision-making process as perhaps the most effective way to nurture the desirable values of leadership and responsibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

The Task Force presents three separate resolutions for Council action.

RECOMMENDATION 1.
That The specific recommendations of the Task Force on Sections and Roundtables be adopted as amended to take effect at the close of the 2007 annual meeting.

RECOMMENDATION 2.
That sections and roundtables be informed of changes in policy and practice and asked to comply with all new requirements as adopted by Council in the Task Force recommendations before the close of the 2007 annual meeting, and that Council show lenience in this first year of implementation with respect to new reporting deadlines.

RECOMMENDATION 3.
That Council direct a revision be made, in consultation when appropriate with sections and roundtables officers, to those parts of official documents affected by the approved Task Force recommendations with particular reference to the following items:
- **Council Handbook, section X. Roundtables and section IX. Sections;**
- **Council Handbook Appendix B: Selected List of Current SAA Policies and Procedures: Guidelines for SAA Web sites (June 1997); SAA Policy on Unit Directories (August 1996); Guidelines for the Establishment of Listservs by**

Organizational Units (June 1995); Policies Regarding Function Space and Staff Support for Groups that meet at the SAA Annual Meeting (January 1992); and
- **Website documents "Description of Sections" and "Description of Roundtables" and "Frequently Asked Questions About Sections and Roundtables";**

and that this revision be completed and submitted to the Executive Committee for review before presentation to the first in-person meeting of Council in 2007.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force was pleased to conduct this review and recommends that Council follow its handbook guidelines and review section and roundtable operations on a triennial basis. More frequent organizational reviews would allow future committees to examine specific problem areas and focus in on solutions in greater detail than was possible in this instance (the previous review having occurred in 1997).

The Task Force offers the following recommendations, some of which, if accepted will result in changes in policy as outlined in the SAA Council Handbook. Handbook sections affected in one form or another by the recommendations are cited within the text. The Task Force offers these easily amendable recommendations as a first step in the process of revision. It is the recommendation of the Task Force that specific changes to the Council Handbook be crafted by whatever process Council deems appropriate after adoption of these amended recommendations.

1.0 Sections

1.1   *Mission, purpose and function.* The Task Force endorses the mission statement for SAA sections as formulated in the Council Handbook (IX.I):
> 1. Serve as advocate for interest around which the section is formed
> 2. Encourage and provide communication
> 3. Perform work
> 4. Integrate new members
> 5. Develop leadership

Handbook references to each section's areas of professional activity should be strengthened to recognize their responsibility to professional development and to advancing the archival profession in their field of interest. (IX.III)

1.2   *Goals, objectives, and activities.* Sections are asked to examine their mission and goal statements for currency and to be specific about their objectives and activities. (IX.II)
- The Council and section handbooks should contain explicit language on the responsibilities of sections to advance the work of the profession in their field of practice.
- As governing units of the Society, the sections are expected to contribute to the professional discourse and advance the Society's priorities as identified by Council.
- Sections should be explicitly reminded of their obligation to respond to requests or tasks assigned to them by Council. (IV.V.1)
- Responsibilities of section leaders should be clearly set out in the Council Handbook.

- Section goals should be clearly articulated with reference to implementation strategies and activities.
- The section should make explicit reference to their annual goals in their annual report.
- Sections should publish information on their activities prominently as part of their website and annually review information on SAA's main website.

1.3 *Recognition and standing.* Council shall establish SAA sections for groups organized to advance professional practice within broad areas of common archival interest and affiliation such as institutional settings, archival functional categories, record formats, or programmatic activities (see recommendation 3.8 below). Council will consider the merits of each application in light of existing SAA groups and the accompanying statement of intent and goals. (XI.XII)
- New applications for recognition as a section shall be submitted no later than the mid-winter meeting of Council for action before the next annual meeting.
- Application shall be made by petition to include:
  - ‣ signatures of at least 300 individual members of SAA;
  - ‣ a publishable statement of purpose and goals of the section;
  - ‣ a statement on why a separate section would be advantageous to the Society.
- Sections that do not maintain an official membership level of at least 300 individual members for two consecutive years will be dissolved after due notice and an opportunity for section officers to appeal. Council will offer to designate such groups as roundtables without re-application.

1.4 *Membership and Privileges.* Each individual SAA member will continue to be eligible for membership in any two sections. Sections should receive priority support from the Society's budget for special projects approved by Council, have dedicated meeting space and equipment at SAA annual meetings, receive electronic communication support, and communicate to Council through liaisons. The Task Force makes a number of recommendations with respect to electronic lists and reports. (IX.I.4(a-c); IX.X)
- All official electronic lists of SAA sections will be centrally hosted and managed by the SAA office.
- All sections will be supported with separate electronic discussion and e-mail lists for members and for section leaders.
- Section list subscriptions will be limited to individual SAA members only. SAA members, who are not members of a particular section, may subscribe annually to that section's electronic lists with the permission of the section chair.
- All section chairs and designee(s) will have access to an electronic announcement list for their members. These will be hosted and maintained by the SAA office staff.
- The SAA office will host section websites, the content and design of which shall be the responsibility of the section's website coordinator and steering committee.
- All section offices and steering committee members will be subscribed automatically to the SAA leader announcement list ("saaleaderlist"). The chair will forward appropriate leader list announcements to section members.

1.5 *Governance.* The selection and rotation of section leaders should have a minimum uniformity. At least two officer positions and two steering committee members are required. Sections may create additional positions or extend terms to create productive and effective mechanisms for achieving continuity while ensuring recruitment and development of new leaders. (IX.VI; IX.I.4-5)

- Every section shall have a chair, vice-chair/chair-elect, and a minimum of two steering committee members. The officers and steering committee members of every section shall be chosen by election.
- All section officers and steering committee members must be individual SAA members in good standing.
- SAA offices will maintain membership lists for sections. Section membership will be added to SAA's online member directory.
- Sections may elect or appoint additional officers and members to the steering committee. Sections are encouraged to retain continuity and recruit leadership by designating other positions of responsibility (e.g., web coordinators, newsletter editors, committee chairs, etc.), to carry out the program and work of the section.
- The chair and vice-chair/chair-elect shall serve consecutively. The vice-chair/chair-elect shall succeed the chair at the conclusion of the annual meeting that coincides with the term of office. All officers and committee members shall begin their terms at the close of the SAA annual meeting.
- The term of office and the number of consecutive terms a person may serve in one section office or on the steering committee shall be set in the section's bylaws.
- Section bylaws are subject to review and comment by Council.
- Sections are encouraged to create special or standing sub-committees in order to execute the goals of the section, develop leaders, and recruit members into the work and goals of the Society (IX.IV).

1.6 *Section leadership meetings.* Each section is guaranteed space and equipment support for a two-hour annual membership meeting. In addition, a block of time, no less than a two-hour period, should be designated for meetings of the section leadership. Sections will be asked to use these meetings for purposes of program planning, project development, and initiatives relating to archival practice or professional development. (IX.III, .VII)

- Sections leaders should use the extra meeting time to review progress on section goals, establish agenda for the year ahead, and consider responses to the major issues affecting their areas of professional activity.
- Organizational business and annual meeting program proposals that can be otherwise developed by electronic communication should not be the main business of the section leaders' planning meetings.
- The suggested time for this meeting is the afternoon of the day set aside for committee and task force meetings to allow for adequate travel time.
- Section leadership meetings shall be open to all section members including past officers, candidates for election, and new archivists who are interested in participating in section activities.

1.7 *Annual section and SAA leadership forum.* The SAA annual meeting should include in its schedule a block of time for a leadership forum of section officers, committee chairs, Council, and those roundtable conveners who request to attend. The purpose of the forum is to exchange information on issues that have impact on the wider profession and to discuss strategic responses to these concerns. (IX.IX.1)

- Attendance at the forum by the section chair and chair-elect shall be required. Failure to send representatives to the leadership forum may result in loss of section meeting privileges.
- If either a section chair or chair-elect cannot attend the forum, they shall designate one other member of the section leadership to attend in their place.
- Attendance by SAA officers, the executive director, and Council members shall be required.
- Roundtable conveners may attend the leadership forum meetings upon advance request and approval by the president.
- The agenda of the annual forum shall be decided in consultation with section and committee chairs.
- The meeting agenda shall include a reminder to section leaders of their responsibilities in the areas of reporting, communicating with members, and duties assigned by Council.
- The president or designee shall report on the involvement of sections leaders in the activities and appointments of Council in the past year.
- The format of the forum may vary but a substantial amount of the block of time shall be allocated for dialogue in which leaders may describe new initiatives, seek collaborations with others, and exchange views on the direction and performance of the Society's program and work.
- The results of the annual leadership forum should be circulated for review and comment by section leaders, and subsequently reported to the general membership by publication on the SAA's website.
- The leadership forum should not conflict with the additional time being requested for section leadership meetings. The forum would achieve maximum effect if it followed the section leadership meetings without necessarily adding the burden of early meeting arrival for section leaders.

1.8 *Section Handbook.* Sections should compile and make available on the main SAA website, as well as the section websites, key leadership information identified as the "Section Handbook," which should be reviewed annually by the section steering committee and used to orient officers and steering committee members. The Section Handbook should contain at a minimum:

- statement of purpose and current goals,
- section bylaws,
- specific duties of the officers,
- SAA reporting requirements of the section, and
- annual reports of the section.

1.9 *Annual reporting requirements.* Section annual reports shall be required and filed with the executive director within 60 days of the close of the annual meeting (IX.II; IX.V).
- Section annual reports shall be posted on the SAA website.
- The annual report should be a brief summary to include:
  ‣ an accurate list of section leadership and contact information,
  ‣ a verified count of annual meeting attendees,
  ‣ a summary of work accomplished,
  ‣ goals for the ensuing year, and
  ‣ other pertinent information on section activities.
- Failure to complete and file an annual report within six months of an annual meeting places the section in a probationary status and may result in a loss of section privileges. Failure to file an annual report within one year of the close of the annual meeting will result in a notice of the section's dissolution from the president. Sections receiving such notice may file an appeal with Council.

1.10 *Leadership report.* The chair of each section shall convey to the executive director or designee an electronic list of the names of section officers and steering committee members within 14 days of the close of the annual meeting. The chair shall include in that list all individuals who should be subscribed to the SAA leader announcement list (saaleaderlist).

1.11 *Consultation.* Sections are incubators for developing leaders who go on to take positions in SAA. Leadership development is a more productive process in an organizational environment that nurtures consultation and participation. (IX.I.5; IX.IX.2)
- The Task Force endorses a previous task force recommendation that section leaders be appropriately consulted in the decision-making and deliberative processes of the Society. Whenever possible, section leaders should be included in appointments to committees and task forces, when such appointments are appropriate to inform the subject or achieve a diversity of opinion. (VII.A; VIII)
- The president or designee shall make a report on steps taken to achieve the goal of leadership consultation at the annual leadership forum. This report shall be published in the forum summary on the SAA website.
- Section leaders shall submit their concerns and requests to Council through designated Council liaisons, who shall be eligible to address Section annual membership meetings, attend the section's leadership meetings, and participate in all section electronic discussion groups.

1.12 *Communications – SAA section websites and electronic lists.* Sections may create their own websites, provided however, that they follow all SAA policies, register these publications with the SAA office, use the uniform SAA logo, and establish links to the SAA website. Section leaders are encouraged, however, to work with SAA staff to develop websites hosted by SAA servers in order to maintain an archival record.
- Electronic lists maintained by sections remotely will not be considered a replacement for official SAA communication services (see also recommendation I.4 above).
- Council Handbook references to section communications should be revised to highlight the tools and content possibilities of electronic communication and delete references to required section newsletters. (IX.VIII)

1.13 *Professional leadership*. Section officers will be asked to acknowledge annually that they understand and will comply with the responsibilities of their position.
- The president or designee will contact section chairs and vice-chairs/chairs-elect annually by e-mail to request that they read those sections of the SAA Council and section handbook that relate to sections and particularly to their duties and responsibilities.
- Section officers will be required to acknowledge by e-mail reply that they have read and understood these policies and guidelines and will comply with the expectations of their office.
- The annual notice to section officers will include a set of guidelines that summarize their required duties and remind them of other leadership responsibilities to create a welcoming and productive professional environment. The annual notice and guidelines should include reference to:
  - ‣ timely and regular communications with section members, Council liaisons, and the SAA office;
  - ‣ compliance with reporting requirements;
  - ‣ review and update of SAA's main website;
  - ‣ notification if unable to perform duties of office to which elected;
  - ‣ broad participation of the section membership and recruitment of new leaders;
  - ‣ understanding and supporting the Society's objectives and policies;
  - ‣ attendance at the annual leadership forum meetings.

2.0 Roundtables

2.1 *Purpose statements*. The Council handbook and other official publications should acknowledge the role and function of roundtables as communities of interest engaged in generating ideas and meeting the intellectual interests of the membership in areas of topical interest. Existing roundtables will be asked to update their current purpose statement on the SAA website and other official publications.
- Council should recognize the evolution of roundtables into online communities with virtual existence and offer this status as a basis for establishing new roundtables in the mission statement paragraphs on "Encouraging…Communication" and "Performing Work". (X.I.2-3; X.II))

2.2 *Recognition and standing*. Council may establish roundtables upon submission of a group's application. Council will consider the merits of each request in light of existing SAA groups and the specific statement of intent and goals of the applicant group.
- New applications for recognition shall be submitted no later than the mid-winter meeting of Council for action before the next annual meeting (X.X).
- Application shall be made by petition to include:
  - ‣ signatures of at least 25 individual members of SAA (X.I.4(c));
  - ‣ a publishable statement of purpose and goals of the roundtable;
  - ‣ a statement indicating why a separate roundtable would be advantageous to the Society.

- Roundtables that do not maintain an official membership level of at least 25 individual members and meet annual reporting requirements will be dissolved as an official SAA roundtable. (X.X)

2.3 *Membership and Communication.* Individual SAA members may select up to two roundtables to join in order to measure interest and establish an official list of roundtable members. In lieu of guaranteeing meeting space at the annual meeting, the Society will support roundtables with multiple electronic lists, websites, and other communication vehicles as they become available. (X.I.4)
- Roundtables shall annually elect an SAA member as the convener, who may also be known as the chair. This person must be an individual member of SAA. No person may serve as convener of a roundtable for more than three successive years. (X.IV.1(b-d))
- The SAA office shall maintain the official list of roundtable members to assist in allocating resources and tracking member services. (X.I.4(d))
- SAA offices will host and manage electronic discussion and announcement lists for all roundtables.
- SAA members may subscribe to an unlimited number of roundtable electronic discussion lists. Staff and Council liaisons will monitor lists to identify issues of wider importance and to assess the unit's effectiveness. (X.I.4.(b); X.VI)
- Participation in roundtable electronic discussions shall be open to non-members of the Society, who may subscribe to one electronic list on an annual, renewable basis with the consent of the roundtable convener. (X.I.4.(a))
- Roundtable conveners will coordinate communication with the SAA office and Council and will forward appropriate messages from the SAA leader announcement list ("saaleaderlist") to members. (X.VI)
- Roundtable conveners may submit requests, including special funding requests, directly to Council through the executive director. (X.VII; X.VIII)

2.4 *Roundtable Meetings.* Roundtables will be eligible to reserve shared or dedicated space as appropriate at the annual meeting to conduct face-to-face organizational and strategy meetings at the annual meeting, and in compelling cases, to sponsor programs of special interest to SAA members. Roundtables will have to meet certain conditions in order to secure the limited space and other resources available during the annual meeting. (X.V)
- New roundtables are eligible for a dedicated meeting room at the SAA annual meeting for their first organizational meeting after approval by Council.
- Roundtables that request a meeting room may be allocated *shared* meeting space at the annual meeting. The following criteria may be used among others to evaluate the allocation of shared space.
  - ▸ The roundtable has a minimum enrolled membership of 150 (or other appropriate number set by Council) SAA individual members or submits a compelling statement of need.
  - ▸ The SAA office receives a request for space by the deadline established by the executive director.
  - ▸ All reporting requirements for the previous year have been met. (X.I.4(a))

- Roundtable requests for a *dedicated* meeting room and/or *equipment rental* at an SAA annual meeting will be evaluated and determined by the executive director from among the following criteria:
  - ▸ the convener submits a timely request before deadlines published by the SAA office in which a compelling statement of need is presented,
  - ▸ the roundtable has organized a special presentation or program,
  - ▸ the roundtable has an official membership of no less than 150 (or other appropriate number set by Council) members,
  - ▸ the roundtable is engaged in a collaborative exercise with another roundtable or section,
  - ▸ the membership and expected attendance are large enough to warrant dedicated space in order to accommodate members,
  - ▸ all annual reporting requirements for the previous year have been met, including the convener's acknowledgment of leadership responsibilities. (X.I.4(a))
- Roundtables allocated dedicated meeting space at one annual meeting will not receive priority over other roundtables requesting dedicated space at the next annual meeting.
- Roundtables that do not meet at one annual meeting but wish to reserve space at a subsequent meeting may request allocation of space without penalty.

2.5   *Annual reporting requirements.* Roundtable conveners are required to report the name(s) of their convener(s) for the coming year to the SAA office within 14 days of the close of the annual meeting. Conveners are required to complete and file SAA's standard annual report form within 60 days of the close of the annual meeting. The convener is responsible for acknowledging receipt and compliance with the annual notice of leadership responsibilities and for contacting Council regarding all other issues of concern to the roundtable's members. (X.III; X.IV.1(a); X.X)
- Failure to submit an annual report for any one year by the close of the next annual meeting will result in the automatic dissolution of the roundtable. Roundtables dissolved by Council may re-apply for recognition.

2.6   *SAA roundtable websites.* SAA staff will maintain on the Society's main website (http://archivists.org) broad information on the goals, leadership, and activities of SAA roundtables.
- Conveners are responsible for updating information maintained on the main SAA website (http://archivists.org).
- SAA will offer to host individual roundtable websites, the content and design of which shall be the responsibility of the roundtable and convener. (X.VI)
- Roundtables may create websites and additional electronic lists on file servers not located with SAA, provided however, that they follow all SAA policies, register these publications with the SAA office, use the uniform SAA logo, and establish links to the SAA website.
- Roundtable leaders should be aware that data maintained off the SAA servers cannot be easily archived or validated. (X.VI)

2.7   *Professional leadership*. Roundtable conveners will be asked to acknowledge annually that they understand and will comply with the responsibilities of their position.
- The president or designee will contact roundtable conveners annually by e-mail to request a response that they have read pertinent sections of the Council Handbook.

2.8   *Leadership forum*. Upon request of the convener, the president may extend an invitation to the roundtable convener to attend the annual leadership forum. Attendance for roundtable conveners will not be mandatory. (X.VII.1)

3.0 SAA Council

3.1   *Leadership expectations*. The president or designee will annually contact section chairs and vice-chairs/chairs-elect and roundtable conveners by e-mail to remind them of their responsibilities as officers of the Society, including existing requirements in the Council handbook and additional guidelines that will promote leadership skills.
- The Task Force is opposed to a prescriptive code of conduct, but recommends several approaches to cultivate the qualities of leadership that will raise the standard of professional behavior throughout the organization.
  - Annual distribution of published leadership requirements with a return acknowledgment required (see recommendations 1.13 and 2.8).
  - Regular consultation with section and roundtable leaders and recruitment of leaders for appropriate tasks and activities of the Society. (IV.V.1)
  - Attendance by officers and Council members at the annual leadership forum. The executive committee of Council will consult with section leaders and committee chairs to develop the meeting agenda.
  - A brief annual orientation for section officers at the annual forum.
  - A fully developed program session at the 2007 leadership forum on issues of leadership development in the professional archival community.
  - Appropriate recognition of section and roundtable leaders in member publications and gatherings.

3.2   *Liaisons to sections*. Council liaisons will focus their attention on meeting and becoming familiar with the concerns of the members and leadership of the sections to which they have been assigned. Section liaisons will remain affiliated with the sections that they have been selected at the beginning of their terms in order to foster continuity of knowledge and communication. Section assignments should be carefully discussed with new Council members before assignments are made. Section liaisons will continue to:
- be the chief point of contact between Council and the section membership,
- attend the annual meeting of the section,
- attend, if possible, some part of the section leader's meeting,
- report to Council observations on the progress or concerns of the section,
- convey actions of Council meetings,
- monitor and participate in section electronic list discussions,
- alert section leaders of areas of unmet responsibility.

3.3   *Liaisons to roundtables*. A formal Council liaison to roundtables is not required to promote the work of the roundtables or communication with Council. Roundtables may bring issues of concern directly to Council through the officers or executive director. Council member attendance at annual roundtable meetings will not be required. Council may assign liaisons to roundtables as needed with a reduced workload in order to:
- monitor electronic list for key discussions and pending issues,
- convey requests from Council for advice or input on an issue,
- alert conveners of Council schedules and annual deadlines,
- represent Council at roundtable meetings when strategic issues may be discussed.

3.4   *Annual meeting program*. Representatives of the Program Committee will visit section and roundtable meetings to present their early plans for the next meeting, to explain the program building process, to explain the section and roundtables endorsement process, and to advise sections and roundtables on how to submit well crafted proposals in collaboration with other SAA units. (IX.III.5; X.II.3)

3.5   *Virtual membership*. The transformation of roundtables to virtual communities of interest comes at a time of enhanced communication possibilities and increasing hard costs for renting space and equipment at the annual meeting. The Task Force offers to Council and the membership committee the possibility of creating a fee-based service to non-members who wish to access the virtual roundtables as they emerge. The group is not convinced of the present value of this proposal in light of unintended impact on membership and the still evolving state of electronic discussion groups in SAA's roundtables, but brings the idea to the attention of Council and staff for further analysis.

3.6   *Specific section and roundtable changes*. The Task Force reviewed the currently recognized sections and roundtables for relevancy, duplication, and identity.
- The Task Force encourages Council to consider applications for section status that are based on a range of member affiliations, including institutional venue, archival functional activities, record formats, or programmatic activity. Council should examine each request for section status in terms of the archival practices or community of interest that uniquely define a field of specialization.
  - The current practice of arranging sections into two categories (institutional and functional) no longer effectively captures the organizational interests of the profession. Sections should be allowed to form and exist without necessarily fitting into pre-conceived categories (much like the roundtables). (*Note:* the two categories are not defined in Council's governing documents.)
- The Task Force supports the idea of permitting roundtables to flourish until such time as low membership numbers, attendance, list activity, or failure to report warrants their dissolution. SAA can accommodate this open-ended approach to roundtables by replacing the commitment to dedicated annual meeting space with electronic communication services.
- The executive director should conduct an annual review of roundtable enrollment numbers, electronic list subscribers and activity, annual reporting compliance, and other communication with roundtables conveners in order for Council to make decisions more regularly on the continuing status of roundtables.

- The Task Force was asked to review existing sections and roundtables and bring forward recommendations on their status.
  - ▸ The Task Force gave considerable attention to the request that it review the status of the Electronic Records Section, Visual Materials Section, and the Oral History Section as examples of groups not falling with the institutional and functional categories traditionally considered as defining features of an SAA section. The Task Force concluded that these sections continue to serve the interests of their members and that the qualifications for creating a section should be such that similar affiliations can be accommodated in the future.
  - ▸ The Women's Collections Working Group is not to be confused with the Women's Collections Roundtable. The WCWG should be notified that they are not recognized as an official SAA group and may not use its services or trademarks.

3.7 *Triennial Review*. SAA Council shall conduct a review of policy regarding sections and roundtables no less once every three years.

4.0 Executive Offices

4.1 *SAA electronic lists*. The SAA office should utilize features of new AMS software to support multiple lists and discussion forums for sections and roundtables.
- The SAA leader list (saaleaderlist) will be opened to all current section leaders and roundtable conveners.
- Announcement lists. Each section and roundtable will be supplied with an announcement (or broadcast) list. Section chairs and roundtable conveners will be eligible to post to the list, and members will be subscribed automatically.
  - ▸ To reduce administrative tracking by the SAA office, authorized posters to the section announcement lists could be a subset of those authorized as part of the SAA leader list (saaleaderlist).
- Discussion lists. Each section and roundtable will be supplied with an electronic discussion list. SAA members will be allowed to subscribe voluntarily to two section discussion lists and an unlimited number of roundtable lists as a member benefit.
- Each section will be supplied with a leaders' discussion list upon request.
- SAA headquarters staff will be responsible for managing list software, troubleshooting member subscriptions, and working with officers to maintain accurate subscription lists and policy compliance. As subscriptions to electronic lists will be one of several criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of sections and roundtables, headquarters staff will report annually on the number of electronic list subscribers, including those subscribers of roundtables lists who are not members of SAA.

4.2 *SAA website (http://archivists.org)*. The SAA website pages pertaining to sections and roundtables should be redesigned to highlight the sections and roundtables with greater visibility on the home page and easily navigable sub-pages that contain essential data on

leadership, purpose, and function. Links to section content pages and related section websites should be smoothly integrated with helpful descriptive text.

- Introductory pages should include SAA policies on sections and roundtables, annual leadership forum reports, and other useful information (calendars, events, member benefits information, non-member applications to roundtable lists, etc.).
- The main SAA website pages on sections and roundtables should follow a template, including standard logos, clean uncluttered layouts, and links.
- Deeper levels should contain the contents of the Section Handbook (see 1.8 above) as well as profile information (mission, purpose, activities), automatically generated leaders lists, electronic list subscription information, descriptive links to the section website, and other data as required.
- Staff should work with section and roundtable leaders and their web coordinators to create an ownership interest in these pages.
- The main SAA website should not be used to replace or replicate subsidiary websites or pages of sections or roundtable websites.

4.3 *SAA website: section and roundtable subsidiary sites.* The existing policy that permits sections and roundtables to retain hosting services on local or third-party computer servers should be continued. Sections and roundtables should be encouraged, however, to migrate their websites to SAA servers for purposes of continuity and archival retention.

- Subsidiary governing units of the Society shall have primary creative control over the design and content of their websites regardless of where they are hosted provided that no unit website may conflict with the SAA main website or with SAA policies and practices relating to publication, privacy and confidentiality, and ethical conduct.
- SAA staff should work with section and roundtable web coordinators to demonstrate the advantages of availing their units of SAA's services in this area.

4.4 *New or revised duties.* Elements of this report involve new tasks to be completed by the SAA office staff. Among the new tasks being recommended are (IX.XI):

- report on subscriber numbers for section and roundtable electronic discussion lists;
- publish section and roundtable annual reports to the SAA website;
- coordinate the update of section and roundtable purpose and function statements for the main SAA website;
- gather and update Section Handbook documents for posting on the SAA website;
- circulate for comment and publish a summary of the annual leadership forum to the SAA website with a list of sections represented, and a report on section contributions or involvement in Council activities;
- revise the section annual report form to solicit information on section goals, activities and plans for the ensuing year; revise the roundtable annual report form to streamline questions on goals and activities;
- create templates for SAA sections and roundtable websites hosted on SAA servers;
- add individual section membership to the online membership directory;
- distribute, collect, and report on annual statements of compliance by section chairs, vice-chairs, and roundtables conveners;
- maintain and report on official enrollment membership for roundtables;

- revise the annual notice on availability of meeting rooms for roundtables – provide new requirements and deadlines for obtaining shared or dedicated space and draw attention to other informal spaces available for small group gatherings;
- verify attendance numbers for section and roundtable meetings at the annual meetings;
- report annually to Council on the allocation of resources to roundtables;
- report annually on existing roundtables for current enrollment numbers, annual meeting attendance, electronic list subscribers and activity, compliance with annual reporting requirements, and other communication with roundtables conveners in order for Council to make regular decisions on the continuing status of roundtables.

Appendix A.

New requirements of section leaders
- Review section bylaws to regularize officer positions and terms in compliance with recommendations by annual meeting 2007.
- Submit names of section's officers and steering committee within 14 days of close of meeting.
- File the section's annual report within 60 days of the close of the annual meeting.
- Initiate conversation with appropriate SAA office staff to migrate section electronic lists to SAA mail servers.
- Review section purpose and function statements for posting on SAA website.
- Work with SAA staff to create a "section handbook" to include bylaws, position descriptions, goals, and other documents useful in leadership transition for posting on the SAA website.
- Designate section representatives to the 2007 leadership forum if the chair or vice-chair/chair-elect cannot attend.
- Read and acknowledge receipt of annual notice of leadership responsibilities.
- Review section policy on website hosting and register third-party websites with SAA offices.

New requirements of roundtables leaders
- Establish electronic lists if currently not available by utilizing the services of the SAA offices.
- Submit names of roundtable's conveners within 14 days of close of meeting.
- File the roundtable's annual report within 60 days of the close of the annual meeting.
- Work with SAA staff to update purpose and function statements for posting on SAA website.
- Read and acknowledge receipt of annual notice of leadership responsibilities.
- Review section policy on website hosting and register third-party websites with SAA offices.

ver. 10/16/06