

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

## AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER

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## Memorandum

**To:** Friends, Partners, Constituents and Others Interested in the AHC

**From:** Mark Greene, Director

**Subject:** 2004-09 Academic Plan

**Date:** 1 December 2003

Academic planning guides and focuses the university's efforts to improve. In the early spring of 2003 the university's Office of Academic Affairs released [\*Moving Forward III\*](#) (MFIII) to serve both as a catalyst for institution wide planning and as a guide to colleges, departments, and programs in developing unit-specific plans. MFIII identifies and frames important institution-wide issues that colleges, departments, and other academic units must address in their plans.

Attached is the final version of the American Heritage Center's academic plan. The plan reflects discussions at faculty and staff retreats, review by the Centers Board of Faculty Advisors and external Board of Advisors, and conversations with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The plan sets forth our current status (in comparison to the elite special collections across the nation), progress on action items identified in our 1999-2004 Plan; identification of our support for the university's areas of distinction and other issues defined by MFIII, and a set of specific action items.

Though the plan is formally completed, we welcome input from across the university, from across the state, and perhaps even from across the nation. Please send comments and/or concerns to me at [mgreene@uwyo.edu](mailto:mgreene@uwyo.edu) or by surface mail to

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## AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER: ACADEMIC PLAN, 2004-09

### INTRODUCTION.

The American Heritage Center (AHC) is the repository for the University of Wyoming's (UW) special collections and archives, including the university's rare books library and one of the largest manuscript collections in the U.S. The American Heritage Center aspires to be widely acknowledged—by the University community, by the people of Wyoming, by scholars world-wide, and by our professional peers—as one of the nation's finest special collections repositories, bringing international distinction to the University of Wyoming by advancing scholarly research and education at the university and beyond. Our mission is to preserve a clearly defined set of primary sources and rare books—reflecting the written, image, and audio history of Wyoming, the Rocky Mountain Region, and **select** aspects of the American past—and to make those sources accessible to all. Our diverse collections support casual inquiry and international scholarship; most importantly, we play an active and creative role in the teaching, research, and service missions of the University.<sup>1</sup>

The AHC brings state, national, and international distinction to UW because it is one of the largest and **best** special collections repositories in the United States. The Association of Research Libraries is the gold standard for university libraries and special collections.<sup>2</sup> The American Heritage Center would rank among the top half of ARL special collections, and often measures up well against the special collections of ARL's most elite members.<sup>3</sup>

For example, the size of AHC's collections, 87,050 cubic feet, dwarfs the mean size for ARL institutions overall (13,483 cubic feet), and is double the mean for Group 1 institutions (39,226)—even after significantly paring and refocusing our collections (see the Collections section, below), we will be among the nation's largest repositories. More importantly, our total research use (which includes visits, e-mail, telephone, and mail requests)—9,109 in calendar year 2002—places the AHC far above the mean for ARL special collections (6,339). A higher percentage of our users are undergraduates than at ARL institutions as a whole.

Even in areas where the AHC clearly needs to make significant improvement, we share that need with most ARL libraries. For example, growth space for collections is an “imminent or current problem” at 65% of ARL special collections. A full 45% of ARL institutions do not have formal collection development policies for special collections, a weakness the AHC is well on the way of redressing. Depending on whether the number of collections or the volume of collections is considered, the AHC has 16% or 34% of its collections unprocessed, respectively.<sup>4</sup> The ARL

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<sup>1</sup> As part of its academic planning process, the faculty and staff of the AHC developed a new mission and vision statement, to guide the repository in the coming years. This first paragraph is, nearly verbatim, a combination of our mission and vision statement.

<sup>2</sup> The University of Wyoming may decide, for strong economic reasons, not to apply for membership in ARL, but it remains the best benchmark for academic libraries and archives. ARL ranks its members by the number of volumes in their main research libraries. Group 1 institutions have 5 million or more volumes, while Group 4 universities have less than 2 million volumes. By number of library volumes, UW would be a Group 4 institution were it to join ARL. State universities in Group 1 include UC-Berkeley, UCLA, Illinois-Urbana, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio State, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. Of private schools Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale are Group 1. Group 4 state schools include UC Irvine, UC Riverside, Colorado State, Georgia Tech, Houston, Illinois-Chicago, Oklahoma State, SUNY Albany, and SUNY Stony Brook. Private schools in this group include Case Western and Rice.

<sup>3</sup> All ARL figures and references, unless otherwise noted, are taken from Judith M. Panitch, *Special Collections in ARL Libraries: Results of the 1998 Survey* (ARL, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> The ARL report does not make clear whether institutions were reporting based on number of collections or volume of collections. ARL implicitly defines “unprocessed” to mean that there are no access points (e.g., catalog cards, on-line catalogs, finding aids) for material. Traditionally, however, the AHC and many other archival

institutional mean for unprocessed manuscript collections is 27%; for Group 4 institutions the mean is 35%. The AHC is, however, behind in percentages of manuscript collections cataloged *on-line*.<sup>5</sup>

In the end, however, the AHC's ability to measure up statistically to the biggest and best special collections in the nation is of marginal relevance unless at the same time we are an integral and successful part of the University of Wyoming's academic mission and priorities. The AHC plays an active and successful role in the educational and service missions of UW, and brings increasing national and international prestige to the university. More specifically, the AHC vigorously contributes to several areas of distinction and issues defined in *Moving Forward III*. During the next five years, we intend to maintain our strong role in the academic life of the university, dramatically redefine our collecting policy and improve on-line access to information about our collections, reassess and refocus our outreach efforts, extend our leadership role in issues of electronic records and digital preservation, improve our collection storage (in both quality and quantity), and work to further improve perceptions of our programs.

### **PROGRESS ON THE 1999 ACADEMIC PLAN, AND 2000 MANAGEMENT REVIEW.**

135. *Action Item: The Vice President for Academic Affairs will work with the Libraries, the American Heritage Center, the Law Library and other collections to install a campus-wide, electronic, integrated information access system for our library, archives and museums.* The AHC and the Libraries should have their catalogs united by the end of the 2003 calendar year. The AHC and the Libraries have been actively cooperating to analyze and assess options for an integrated search-system that transcends the catalogs (and submitted a Heywood funding request--unsuccessful--to support research and implementation). There is currently no clearly superior and affordable solution for this charge without additional staffing, and work remains ongoing.

144. *Action Item: The Vice President for Academic Affairs will charge the American Heritage Center to determine appropriate space-saving strategies, including reconsideration of the scope of the University's archival and record-retention schedules. Such discussions should consider the deaccession of collections that are outside the AHC collection policy. The principal collection and preservation endeavors of the Center should focus on the history of Wyoming and the West.* Implementation of this charge began in earnest in the fall of 2002, with the inauguration of a comprehensive collection policy review by the AHC. In the first year, roughly 20% of the Center's collecting areas have been analyzed and defined, including recommending broad criteria for possible deaccessioning. Strategic deaccessioning has not begun (see below under Collections), but target of opportunity deaccessions have intensified.

*To implement action items 140 and 141, the Vice President for Academic Affairs empanelled a management review of the Libraries, AHC, and Museums, which reported in December 2000.* Of the top recommendations requiring action by the AHC, all have been begun or completed. "One of the highest, if not the highest priority, must be to improve relations between the Library and the AHC." This goal has been achieved. The Libraries and AHC have developed strong working relationships on such things as digitization, philanthropy, cataloging, digital repositories, and cooperative collecting of monographs, and have no significant areas of friction. Similarly, the AHC and the University Art Museum have worked together on outreach issues, donor relations, exhibits, and infrastructure needs; discussions about merging information desks to improve visitor services are

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repositories have used "unprocessed" to mean not *fully* cataloged, so the percentages would be much higher. It is also important to note that however defined, many archives do not permit researcher access to unprocessed collections; the AHC adheres to a much more liberal policy of permitting access to most unprocessed collections.

<sup>5</sup> By number of collections the figure is 20%, by volume of collection the figure is 24%; either is below the ARL mean of 46%--though nowhere near the minimum percent reported by an ARL special collection unit of *zero*. We are also behind the ARL average in percentage of rare books cataloged on-line: ARL mean, 73%; Toppan, 20%.

under way. “Inventorying UW’s material cultural [sic] resources”: This has improved to the point of parity with ARL special collections, and receives attention in the Collections section, below. “Reconciling the missions, operation, and resources” of the Libraries, AHC, and Museums. This has moved only to preliminary stages, and receives more attention in the Collections section, below.

### ACADEMIC PLAN, 2004-09

The AHC’s academic plan is organized around eight areas: Teaching and the Learning Environment; Collections, Outreach and Service; Information Technology; Facilities, Faculty and Staff, Funding, and Publicity. MFIII cites the AHC several times by name, and there are several other areas of distinction and issues that are significantly relevant to us—these are highlighted below through use of *italics*. MFIII specifically charges the AHC to commit additional resources to deepening curricular connections, to reshaping its collections, to outreach and scholarly discourse, to digitization and electronic records management, and to statewide cultural leadership. However, our overall staffing will likely decline in the 04-05 fiscal year. It thus may not be possible for us to accomplish everything suggested in MFIII during the next five years. We have, therefore, prioritized major action items based on the assumption that human resources will be smaller in the coming years. These formal action items are kept to a minimum of major objectives and placed at the end of this document; smaller proposed actions are identified in the narrative through underscores.

**Teaching and the Learning Environment.** *[W]e encourage other units, including the AHC...to pursue deeper connections with academic colleges and to promote even more vigorous contributions to UW’s academic life.* The AHC believes it provides, but must work harder to be perceived as providing, outstanding curricular support at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, in an unusually wide variety of departments and colleges at the university, taking full advantage of the breadth of our collections. **Last year (2002) we worked with more classes from more disciplines than the ARL mean (34), having been used by 41 courses in 17 departments from 3 colleges.**<sup>6</sup> By contrast, in 1999 we served half as many courses, from only 10 departments.<sup>7</sup>

The expectation for the AHC to do more in this area should be further tempered with recognition of staffing and classroom space constraints. Three of the six faculty members primarily responsible for curricular work (and for providing regular reference service to other patrons—see the Outreach section, below) are supported by private funds. One of these (along with one processing position) will be lost by the end of the 04-05 fiscal year (please see Faculty and Staff, below). Teaching conditions are difficult because the only available spaces are on different floors from the computers and other facilities of the main reading room. Resolution of the space problem is a matter both of fundraising and of resolving the Gordian Knot of the Hebard collection (see the Collection section, below), which currently occupies the most likely space for a classroom.

Notwithstanding this caution, supporting undergraduate and graduate education at UW is the highest priority for the AHC, and as such we will ensure that even in the face of shrinking resources our curricular efforts continue to gradually expand. We are therefore committed to exploring particularly likely opportunities for the AHC to add value to new courses throughout the university. Such courses would include, for example (as highlighted in their respective departments’

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<sup>6</sup> The departments were Art, African-American Studies, American Indian Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Geography and Recreation, History, Lab School, English, Music, Nursing, Pharmacy, Secondary Education, Sociology, University Studies, Women’s Studies, Zoology (the colleges: A&S, Health Sciences, Education). Several of the courses were multi-section, so the actual number of AHC faculty presentations to UW courses is 73.

<sup>7</sup> The improvement can be explained by noting that the AHC has employed for years every one of the strategies suggested at a recent ARL conference to increase student use of special collections: Robert L. Byrd, Director Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, “One Day ... It Will Be Otherwise’ Changing the Reputation and Reality of Special Collections,” 2001, <http://www.arl.org/special/byrd.html>.

academic plan drafts): American Indians in Hollywood Film, The Art of Commerce, History of American Journalism, Reporting and Newswriting, History of Documentary film, Map Use and Interpretation, graduate courses in American Music, and Environmental Politics. We will also continue our so far unsuccessful efforts to win a place on the agenda for New Faculty Orientation.

*Undergraduate research and inquiry-based learning constitute another form of personalized, connected education where UW can excel--a form of education in which the AHC already **does** excel, by providing the necessary tutoring and other assistance to undergraduates (and graduate students) to introduce them to the intellectual, creative, and logistical challenges of doing original research with primary sources. The AHC plays a significant role in *bolstering graduate education* in History (where we will play a crucial role in supporting the proposed Western History PhD program and the enhanced Public History program) and American Studies, and are pleased to be working with English in support of their proposed MFA. We believe we can partner with the Life Sciences in assisting *the proposed development of a graduate program in ecology*—the AHC has strong collections in conservation and land use. Moreover, AHC faculty teach courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level for four departments, further strengthening our support for and integration with the academic colleges.*

*Professions and issues critical to the region:...educators, engineers, business leaders, health-care professionals, and legal experts all require continuing professional education and the lifelong development of cross-disciplinary knowledge.* The AHC has good curricular relationships with Secondary Education, the Lab School, Pharmacy, and Nursing, assisting them in strengthening the critical professions of teaching and health-care. In addition, the AHC is working closely with Secondary Education, History, and American Studies to win grant support for teacher education workshops. This year the AHC took its first steps toward supporting work in the College of Business, through a fruitful collaboration in the assessment and acquisition of a collection that will find direct use in a marketing class. The AHC is forging stronger connections to the Law School, using as a base the development of a Simpson Institute symposium in 2004 on the controversy over Senate confirmation of federal judges. We intend to strengthen these relationships.

The AHC also strives to provide, for UW teaching faculty, a laboratory for *interdisciplinary inquiry* and an incubator for creative teaching. The breadth of our collections require that our faculty is of necessity expert in interdisciplinary efforts, a key reason we partner with a wider range of departments than do most special collections. The AHC's ability to support innovation has been incalculably enhanced by Academic Affairs funding teaching and research grants. We will do more to publicize and disseminate the results of these grants and other innovative uses of our collections—through our web site and in collaboration with ECTL--and we will pursue outside funding to expand the grants.

**Collections.** *We urge the AHC, as one of the nation's finest academic archives...to continue to focus its unique collections.... [T]he AHC has a distinguished tradition of outstanding collections related to the American West. UW can improve its stature as a center for study in this area of distinction.* Already during the past academic year we have significantly revised our "Types of Material Collected" guidelines,<sup>8</sup> which now clearly state our unwillingness to accept artifacts, art, general readership books and periodicals, drafts of published works and other categories of material that have too quickly filled our stacks in the past. This is an important effort, at the tactical level, to better define our collections. At the strategic level, the AHC is committed to completing a comprehensive collection analysis that will produce a clear, public statement of our collecting goals and priorities. This collection policy will reflect the university's commitment to *History and Culture of Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain Region as area of distinction.* In addition, the AHC has already committed additional resources (beyond those of the Michel gift) to quickly establish the Simpson Institute as an important and highly visible

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<sup>8</sup> Available now in a brochure and an information sheet.

program grounded on research collections of Wyoming's political leaders.

While “the principal collection and preservation endeavors of the Center” will focus on Wyoming and West, we believe it is important for select areas of national collecting to remain. As MFIII acknowledges, *UW still faces curricular challenges in counterbalancing the distinctive culture of the Mountain West with the rich array of cultures that characterize both the global community of scholars and the broader world that our students will enter.* We believe the AHC can and should play a judicious role in effecting that balance. It is a long and honored tradition for special collections—at both land grant and private universities—to pursue national collecting in well-defined areas.<sup>9</sup> “As one of the nation’s premier research universities,” UW can and should remain part of this broad humanistic tradition. A strict regional collecting policy would sacrifice the AHC’s current curricular support for courses such as Women in Music, Asia Through American Eyes, the African-American Novel (which uses our blues and jazz collections), and would dramatically reduce visitation by national and international scholars (as even a quick glance at our last few years of travel grant recipients will attest).

*[C]onnections between ENR and all of our academic colleges should be expanded....* One area in which the AHC holds strong collections for both the region and the nation is environmental and natural resources.<sup>10</sup> To date, however, faculty and students at UW have made relatively little use of these materials. The AHC will actively promote the research possibilities in these collections to RIENR and all affiliated faculty, particularly those in A&S. We will also ensure that RIENR faculty are consulted as we begin analyzing and defining our environmental and natural resources collections going forward.

*[M]uch of the work of embedding diversity in the institution’s curriculum and scholarship remains ahead of us.* The AHC plays a largely unsung role in strengthening diversity at UW. The holdings of the Toppan Rare Books Library are already used by courses such as the "Diversity" section of University Studies, “Borders in American Identity” (American Studies) and Native American History, and are used to reach out to groups such as the American Indian Scouting Association. The students in Introduction to Native American History use our manuscript collections routinely; in addition, we are pleased to be partnering with James Wangberg to develop an exhibit for the School of Agriculture on human diversity in agriculture.

However, it is true that the AHC manuscript collections are not as strong as they should be in documenting communities of color.<sup>11</sup> We welcome the initiative of AAST to forge connections with the AHC and the Denver Black Heritage Museum (and presumably the new African American Research Library). We will be cooperating with AIST and the Libraries to make existing Native American historical materials more accessible on-line.<sup>12</sup> We are also committed to exploring new and better ways of identifying and using existing collections to support diversity in the curriculum. “Asia Through American Eyes” is one example; “The Celluloid Indian: Native Americans in Popular Film” could make excellent use of our materials on the history Hollywood westerns.

*We recommend that the AHC and Libraries examine the future definition, development, and administration of the Hebard Collection. Similarly, the time is ripe for the Art Museum and the AHC to clarify responsibility for*

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<sup>9</sup> Just a few examples of national collecting areas at land grant universities: Minnesota (social welfare, history of computing, immigration, African American authors), Texas (media professionals, mathematics, literary figures, film makers, popular music, performing arts), Ohio State (polar exploration, cartoon art, theater), Illinois-Urbana (professional organizations--e.g. OAH, fraternities, marching bands, advertising, 3d Armored Division), Wisconsin (mass communication, social action, film and theater, labor), Michigan (radicalism, transportation, Revolutionary War, U.S. cultural and political history to 1920).

<sup>10</sup> We are currently updating our 1995 “Guide to Environmental and Natural Resources Collections.”

<sup>11</sup> The AHC’s most successful program in assisting with diversity in the curriculum is the Toppan Rare Books Library, which makes extraordinarily good use of its collections in this regard.

<sup>12</sup> We are currently updating our 1998 “Guide to Native American Resources,” which will be available on the web.

*and administration of art at the university. The AHC is committed to finding sensible solutions to two longstanding collections issues on campus: definition, administration, researcher access, and housing of the Hebard Collection; definition, administration, researcher access, and housing of “art.”*<sup>13</sup>

*One useful measure would be to develop a unified plan, perhaps in cooperation with non-UW cultural agencies, to improve and focus the preservation and documentation of UW’s collections....* With support from Academic Affairs, and in conjunction with the Libraries and Art Museum, AHC took the lead in establishing a loose information network of cultural resources professionals in Wyoming. We will continue to play a leadership role in both the Wyoming State Historical Society and the Wyoming State Historical Records Advisory Board.

Discussions have been underway for some time with the Wyoming State Archives aimed at better rationalizing collecting areas—in particular, the AHC and a legislative review have recommended that the archives relinquish its manuscript holdings to the AHC. The archives could thus better concentrate on the huge area of government records, including, perhaps, UW’s own records (which are in fact a subset of government records under the law)—just as the State Archives does not have the resources to do both government records and manuscripts, so the AHC has never had sufficient resources to operate and maintain a proper university archives (see Information Technology, below). The AHC has good relationships not only with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, but also with all the significant manuscripts repositories in Colorado.<sup>14</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that the AHC is roughly comparable to ARL institutions in the progress it has made cataloging collections,<sup>15</sup> this is a high priority activity for the next five years. A combination of professional training and workflow re-engineering in 02-03 should double the rate of processing done by each processing archivist. In addition, because each processor will be responsible for his/her own cataloging into the on-line system, we have eliminated future backlogs of on-line catalog records. The accessioning staff will be creating initial on-line catalog records for every new collection that we receive, meaning that intellectual access to new collections by researchers will be immediate. We have collaborated on an NEH grant proposal (decision due this winter) to speed our ability to place collection finding aids on our web site. Unfortunately, we have had to eliminate one of six positions in our processing department, a year earlier than anticipated, because of the poor returns on endowment income. The AHC will vigorously apply for grants to add processing personnel.

The backlog will also be reduced from the other end—that is, through deaccessioning collections that do not fit within our revised collecting policy. There are hundreds of such collections already identified, and more will be. Deaccessioning is labor intensive; with current (and soon to be reduced) staffing, deaccessioning may be held to targets of greatest opportunity. We will seek grants here, too, but deaccessioning is not a traditional area of grant support.

**Outreach and Community Service/ *Statewide leadership in cultural endeavors, the arts, and the humanities....*** *UW’s Art Museum, the American Heritage Center (AHC), and the University Libraries...have pivotal roles to play in advancing this area of distinction. We urge these units to explore further avenues of cooperation... and to increase outreach to the state and region.* The AHC has maintained an aggressive outreach and service program; while we remain committed to outreach and service, not all

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<sup>13</sup> We have no illusions that these problems have simple answers, or even that there will be no contention, but the time seems ripe given the solid relationship among the three institutions.

<sup>14</sup> The one exception is CU Boulder, but the repository there has been in complete turmoil for several years.

<sup>15</sup> A 2003 ARL report, “Hidden Collections, Scholarly Barriers: Creating Access To Unprocessed Special Collections Materials In North America’s Research Libraries” (<http://www.arl.org/collect/spcoll/ehc/HiddenCollsWhitePaperJun6.pdf>) noted that “Many participants at the Brown University ARL Conference on Special Collections in Summer, 2001 consistently listed materials backlogs as one of their institution’s major concerns.” It is such a significant problem that ARL is holding a national conference to discuss possible solutions.

of our outreach efforts have proven to be cost effective. In the coming years we will reassess and re-focus our outreach and service efforts.

Our single most effective service to the state is through our regular reference work. Approximately two-thirds of the 9,000+ on and off-site research requests handled by the AHC were from Wyoming, verifying our primary commitment to serve our state. While Colorado ranked second; it is noteworthy, however that New York was third and California fourth, reemphasizing the AHC's national reach, and the visibility it brings to UW. We have international reach as well; in 2002 we hosted researchers from Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom. **We wish to emphasize that number of research requests handled by AHC faculty have increased 58% in the past five years, jumping 10% in the last calendar year alone.** In addition, we provide lectures and bibliographic instruction to approximately two dozen public school and community college classes each year (double the number provided in 1999). We are proud of that work, and if resources permit we have identified as an outreach priority the cultivation of community college faculty (expanding outreach is not, however, one of our top ten priorities—see Action Items, below).

The AHC's widest-reaching outreach tools are History Day and our web site. History Day has seen rapid growth in the number of students participating (currently 1,000 statewide, and 300 at the state contest), with no concomitant increase in resources. To mitigate the strain on resources, the AHC will be drawing more formally on advice and support from American Studies and History to strengthen the program. The AHC web site, which has received national recognition twice in the last five years, and last year (2002) received more hits than the site of any other academic unit,<sup>16</sup> is currently being improved, specifically to make it easier for students and the public to navigate. Collaboration with the Libraries gives us the storage space needed to expand substantive content on the site in the years to come. To increase public accessibility, we began several years ago to mount our exhibits and (where we could obtain the speakers' permission) video of lectures on our web site. We have just completed our first collaboration with a UW course to produce a web site as the students' final project; that site is now hosted by the AHC.<sup>17</sup> The AHC has established internal processes and is pursuing necessary hardware specifically to increase the amount of collection material directly accessible on our site—we believe this is our most effective outreach venue.

AHC faculty members gave 131 presentations and tours to groups other than UW classes last year (the ARL mean is 54, the Group 1 mean 105). In addition, the AHC faculty gives a dozen presentations each year across the state as part of our speakers' bureau (last year they visited Cody, Jackson, Sundance, Cheyenne, and Afton).<sup>18</sup> AHC sponsors several public events during the year.<sup>19</sup> It is in this area—public outreach—that difficult decisions must be made to free human resources for higher priorities such as deaccessioning and improvements in the content of our web site.

*We urge the AHC... to enhance its presence as a national forum for scholarly discourse.* Similarly, in the face of probable reductions in overall staffing and efforts to increase curricular support, it is probable that the AHC will significantly reduce its efforts to create and administer symposia.

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<sup>16</sup> Our site received 126,117 visitors (962,794 page views) in 2002, seventh highest of all portions of the UW web site—more than any of the colleges and departments, more than Wyoming Public Radio, more even than the on-line staff directory.

<sup>17</sup> Amanda Rees's course in Tourism and Recreation did a web project on the history of dude ranching--  
<http://digital.uwyo.edu/webarchive/trgrants/2003/ranch/ranch.htm>

<sup>18</sup> In addition, the faculty gives another dozen presentations to outside groups visiting the AHC—e.g., the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Institute and the College Music Society's Regional Conference.

<sup>19</sup> These annually include an exhibit in the Art Museum, Coat Couture (for Family and Consumer Sciences), the Majewski Lecture, the Rentschler Lecture, a symposium, a Women's History Month program, an Archives Week program, and a Holiday program.

However, we plan to selectively pursue such opportunities where we can form strong partnerships with other university units, and where there is a strong likelihood of disseminating the forum beyond the generally small on-site audience. The planned 04 Simpson Institute symposium, for which we are partnering with History, Law, and Political Science, is likely to attract a national audience through extensive media coverage. We hope that our recent decision to financially support Michael Harkin's book on *The Ecological Indian* symposium held at the AHC last year, is only the first of many opportunities to assist the faculty in creating and disseminating scholarship. We would emphasize, too, that we will continue to promote scholarly discourse by providing the sources for scholars to research and publish in wide range of fields.

**Information Technology.** *[W]e propose that Academic Affairs and Information Technology organize a university-wide symposium on the issue.... The AHC should also take a leadership role not only in regional efforts to expand the popular reach of historical collections but also in university-level efforts to stay abreast of archives technology and access in the digital age.* Because of the significant expertise of AHC faculty in the areas of on-line archival access, electronic records, and digitization in general, we are collaborating with the IT department, UW Libraries, and the Registrar's office to hold a university-wide "digital summit" within the next 12 months. We have applied for funding, as part of a consortium, to place collection finding aids on the web. We have established an internal digitization committee to define standards and vet proposals for adding digitized collection material to our web site. We are one of the lead partners in the now regional Colorado Digitization Program and the affiliated Western Standards Group.<sup>20</sup> The digital summit and efforts to make information about more of our collections accessible on-line are our two highest priorities for this planning cycle.

Implicit in MFIII's call for us to stay abreast of archives technology at the university-level is recognition of our role as the university's archive. The university is one of the largest governmental units in the state. Unfortunately, the archive program has been understaffed since inception; in this age of mixed paper and electronic recordkeeping, we cannot reasonably speak about sustaining a decent university archives with the 0.25 FTE currently allocated. ARL does not report staffing for university archives; in our own survey of 14 schools,<sup>21</sup> only two (universities of Montana and Idaho) had less staffing for their archives than UW; at the other end of the spectrum, Utah State, University of Iowa, and Oregon State each have 3 or more FTE to manage university archives. To adequately deal with its public records responsibility, particularly with numerous pressing digital issues UW needs, we believe, either a full-FTE archivist or to shift its records burden to the state archives.

**Facilities.** Currently the AHC's physical facility does not measure up to the quality of its collections and programs. Building leaks, active and expanding since the building opened, pose a real hazard to the irreplaceable collections in both the AHC and the Art Museum. There are no less than 31 specific leaks in the AHC's portion of the Centennial Complex—19 are in storage areas, and four in public areas.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the security system is outdated and requires increasingly frequent repairs—repairs that are increasingly costly because the original vendor has been out of business for several years. Internal evaluations, as well as consultations with colleagues at other institutions, suggest that both an overhaul of the electronic security system and improvements in security staffing

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<sup>20</sup> The key product to date is Western Trails, supported by an IMLS (Institute for Museum and Library Services) grant, which demonstrates archives' and libraries' ability to broaden access to a collection of widely dispersed historical resources by creating a virtual collection of digital materials using the topic of 19th and 20th century Western trails and resulted in the creation of several best practices documents. See <http://digital.uwyo.edu>.

<sup>21</sup> Those that provided staffing information were: Arizona State, Iowa State, New Mexico State, Oregon State, Univ. of Arizona, Univ. of Denver, Univ. of Iowa, Univ. of Idaho, Univ. of Montana, UNLV, Univ. of North Carolina, and Utah State.

<sup>22</sup> See William Hopkins, "Location of Building Leaks Both active and inactive within the American Heritage Center as of October 15, 2002," report submitted to UW Facilities, 10/15/02.

are necessary to bring the Centennial Complex up to generally accepted archives, library, and museum standards.<sup>23</sup> In partnership with the Art Museum we will continue to work with the university to address the poor security system and the leaks.

Though much less acute, the AHC and the Art Museum must also resolve the issue of making appropriate use of the Centennial Complex first floor space known as the “restaurant.” Since the restaurant originally housed there closed a year after the building opened, the space has been used variously but infrequently (less than once a week) as a presentation room and special event dining room. Several realistic options exist for this space, including: re-opening a restaurant, dividing the space into offices or classrooms, upgrading the space into a small auditorium, or enhancing its appeal as a special event location. The AHC will work with the Art Museum to make a proposal to the university for better use of the Centennial Complex restaurant space.

Once the Toppan Rare Book Library endowment is fully realized, funds will be used to hire an assistant curator to concentrate on cataloging the 80% of the collection not yet on-line. To accommodate that position, additional workspace must be created in the library; our intention is to fully enclose the now partially enclosed “porch” outside the Colket room. We will also pursue internal space reallocations to increase space for processing large collections and for hosting undergraduate classes. However, the most important facility issue, after the roof and security, is shelf space for storing collections. We are confident that, through a combination of deaccessioning, restrained collecting, and fundraising to install additional compact shelving, we will defer serious space problems for ten to twenty years or longer.

**Faculty/Staff.** AHC archivists are faculty not eligible for tenure (Trustee’s Regulation V.D.). They are proud of having faculty rank, and as befits faculty members they have established a strong record of service, publication, and professional leadership at both the regional and national level. AHC faculty do far more than teach UW students about the resources of the AHC and how to use those resources (bibliographic instruction). Several of them serve as adjuncts in A&S departments, and together they taught ten full courses last year.<sup>24</sup> In addition, **AHC faculty gave guest lectures in 26 additional courses, in the departments of American Studies, Anthropology, Art, English, Geography, Secondary Education, University Studies, Women’s Studies, Zoology and Physiology.** AHC faculty is also active in university service: one of our assistant archivists now serves on the Faculty Senate executive committee. The faculty has committed to significantly revising its extended term and promotion criteria and procedures to further strengthen its bona fides.

Compared to ARL special collections, AHC’s permanent staff is significantly too small by two measures: the ARL mean is one permanent FTE for every 963 cubic feet of manuscripts in the collections; for the AHC it is one FTE for every 3,165 feet; we give 4.8 non-course presentations per FTE, while the ARL mean is 3.9. On the other hand, the ARL mean is one FTE for every 453 users (on and off site); for the AHC it is one FTE for every 331 users (this may be why we are so frequently told that service in our reading room far surpasses that of other repositories). This would suggest, on balance, a roughly proportional faculty/staff size, but also the possibility of some internal re-allocation of assignments.

However, as we have noted above, if current fiscal conditions prevail, we likely face the loss

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<sup>23</sup> William Hopkins and Robert Ankrom, “Security Review and Recommendations, September 9, 2002” and “Security Systems Survey, January 2, 2003.” AHC Associate Archivist Anne Marie Lane co-chaired the ACRL committee that in 2003 revised the guidelines for preventing and reacting to thefts in special collections libraries.

<sup>24</sup> American Studies 2010, Borders in American Identity; History 1290, History of the American West; History 2050, Introduction to Public History; History 4040, Archives I; History 4045, Archives II; History 4070, History of the Book (these last four History courses are part of the Public History concentration); Music 4040, Composition; Music 5340, Advanced Composition; Women’s Studies 4990, Women in Music.

of two faculty positions during this planning cycle, with one other position in question, and a fourth probably dependent on bridge funding—the latter two positions would be fully funded by endowment income, but for one endowment being under water and the other not yet realized.<sup>25</sup> While we are confident of bridge funding for one of these positions, our ability to support the other with current endowment income is less certain. The other two positions were created out of what were known to be finite resources (accumulated income in relatively small endowments)—to this extent the AHC over-extended itself during the last five years, in its successful effort to increase curricular interaction, service to researchers, and intellectual access to its collections. One of these has already been eliminated; the other is supported by funds that probably will be exhausted at the end of the 03-04 or 04-05 fiscal year. As the addition of these positions allowed AHC to expand its activities, so subtraction will lead to contraction. In a worst-case scenario, our intention is to concentrate human resources first and foremost on maintaining current levels of reference service and curricular interaction, while attempting to increase cataloging and deaccession activities.

**Funding.** The university's 1999 academic plan noted that "both the University Art Museum and the American Heritage Center were moved to the Centennial Complex without adequate state budgets to support them." Thanks to significant increases by Academic Affairs toward AHC faculty salaries during past five years, our state funding has increased slightly more than that for UW as a whole. (We respectfully note that as in 1999, the AHC currently receives less than 45% of its operating expenses from state appropriations, while the average for ARL **state** institutions is 75%.) We recognize that the proportion of state support will not increase in the near future, particularly given the need for funds to repair the Centennial Complex. However, certain functions will remain embryonic without additional public support, because they are unlikely to garner private dollars—one instance is the university archives function to maintain what are by statute government records.

We have in place a case statement focusing heavily on funding for faculty positions, both old and new, and will pursue that (and other funding) vigorously. In addition to shoring up our current staffing, we intend to approach the Libraries and Art Museum about a joint effort to endow a book and paper conservator position, to finally take advantage of the large and expensive conservation lab in the Centennial Complex. We will gladly assist the History Department's efforts to endow a chair in Western History. Perhaps equally important is our having begun the process of making the AHC's extensive contact information (with thousands of donors of collections) directly accessible to the Foundation in support of the university's broader fundraising goals. We are already planning collaborative fundraising efforts with RIENR, Outreach School, Art Museum, and Libraries.

**Publicity, Recognition, and Perception.** By most objective measurements the AHC is a successful, professional, forward-looking repository—more welcoming than many, providing better and faster service than most, and representing UW well both to scholars, citizens, and the library, archives, and historical professions. We are an increasingly integrated and collaborative administrative and academic unit on campus, and a key draw for two of the largest gifts during the Campaign for Distinction. During the past twelve months, the AHC has made a concerted effort to showcase its accomplishments and its confidence, by submitting numerous press releases to the News Service. We are refocusing internal resources to ensure an even stronger presence by the AHC to represent UW at national conferences (e.g., ALA, SAA, WHA). Without minimizing one bit the work still ahead, particularly in collecting policy and collection management, we believe the AHC can and does bring distinction to the university.

#### **ACTION ITEMS, 2004-09, in priority order**

- 1** Create a clear, comprehensive, and sustainable collecting policy--including clarification of

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<sup>25</sup> University Professorship Fund and the Toppan estate, respectively.

responsibility for the Hebard Collection and art collections.

**2** Eliminate the backlog of manuscript collections that are completely uncataloged, and reduce the backlog of collections not cataloged on-line to 40% (by volume) by 2009, by increasing the pace of processing, by concerted reappraisal and deaccessioning, and by active solicitation of grant funding.

**3** Eliminate leaks and improve security in the Centennial Complex.

**4** Lead in efforts to digitize primary source materials, particularly in collaborative projects, to increase the amount of scholarly content available worldwide on the Web.

**5** Raise private funds to fully endow sufficient faculty positions to maintain present staffing.

**6** Presuming that the Toppan endowment is realized by 2004 and creates at least 4.5% expendable income by 2005, increase the Toppan books cataloged on-line to 50% by 2009.

**7** If staffing remains stable, continue to expand direct support for the undergraduate and graduate curriculum, by approaching instructors of individual courses and by collaborating with broader programs such as the English MFA, the Public History masters, the Western History PhD, graduate degree in Ecology, and the American Studies joint European masters.

**8** Seek to enhance the visibility and prestige of the Simpson Institute, particularly by exploring further collaboration with Political Science, History, and the College of Law.

**9** Raise private funds sufficient to create a well-equipped classroom on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor; use Toppan endowment income to create rare books processing and cataloging area off the Colket room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

**10** Determine, in conjunction with Academic Affairs and the General Counsel, the university's obligations and needs in managing university records, and define a course of action to meet those obligations/needs.