

College and University Art Museum Program

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Museums and Conservation Program
Angelica Zander Rudenstine, Program Officer

Summary Report by
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This report summarizes key results of a fifteen-year initiative of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: the College and University Art Museum Program (1990-2005). It was prepared for electronic distribution at <http://mac.mellon.org>.

Notes to the reader

For the sake of conciseness, the name of the college or university (“Vassar”) is generally used in place of the name of the museum (“The Frances Lehman Loeb Museum of Art”).

Square brackets [] contain names of institutions illustrative of the point being made in the text. These are representative but not necessarily exhaustive citations.

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CUAM Participating Institutions

All the CUAM museums have further developed their academic programs since the time period covered by this report. As an aid to readers interested in learning what the museums are now doing, they have generously given permission to provide links to their websites.

[Bowdoin College Museum of Art](#)
[University of Chicago, David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art](#)
[Cornell University, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art](#)
[Dartmouth College, Hood Museum of Art](#)
[Emory University, Michael C. Carlos Museum of Art](#)
[Harvard University Art Museums](#)
[University of Kansas, Spencer Museum of Art](#)
[Oberlin College, Allen Memorial Art Museum](#)
[Princeton University Art Museum](#)
[Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art](#)
[Rutgers University, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum](#)
[Smith College Museum of Art](#)
[University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley Art Museum](#)
[University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Ackland Art Museum](#)
[Vassar College, Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center](#)
[Wellesley College, Davis Museum and Cultural Center](#)
[Williams College Museum of Art](#)
[Yale University Art Gallery](#)

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I. Introduction

A. Program Overview

In the early 1990s, and after wide consultation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation outlined a number of concerns common to many of the leading college and university art museums in the country. Campus museums were becoming divorced from the academic pursuits that defined their parent institutions and, as a consequence, losing some of their educational value to the larger institution. In a discussion paper tracing the history of these art museums and their companion art history departments, Neil L. Rudenstine (then Executive Vice President of the Foundation) suggested that over time both had become more complex and more “professionalized,” so that “what had previously been a single small-scale conglomerate [on each campus] was now two comparatively independent, semi-autonomous units with separate staffs.” Communication and collaboration between them had become more difficult. During the 1980s, the change of emphasis in academic art history from connoisseurship to theory and the social construction of meaning had only enlarged the distance between the museums and art history faculties. The very restricted budgets of campus museums gave them few flexible funds for activities to strengthen their pedagogical programs.

The Foundation initiated the College and University Art Museum Program (CUAM) to engage with this situation and identified two objectives:

- To discover and institutionalize effective ways that would enable museums and academic departments to collaborate fruitfully;
- To strengthen the educational role of the museum and its collections in the teaching and training of undergraduates and graduate students.

A group of college and university museums was invited to submit proposals for a three-year effort to address these objectives; if the initial grant showed progress, a second three-year grant would be offered, followed by an endowment challenge grant intended to institutionalize some of the gains that had been achieved. By the conclusion of the CUAM program in 2005, eighteen museums had received initial three-year grants; fourteen continued with a second three-year grant, and thirteen of these accepted and matched a challenge from the Foundation to establish a permanent endowment.

In its CUAM program, the Foundation recognized the museums’ potential to engage effectively and deeply with the academic and curricular agendas of their parent colleges or universities and sought to maximize that capacity. Without being directive about the means to be employed, and in full recognition that the circumstances on each campus warranted different approaches, the Mellon Foundation’s College and University Art Museum program:

- emphasized building long-term relationships with faculty and encouraged involvement by faculty from a range of disciplines, beyond art and art history;

- urged use of the permanent collection, particularly through activities linked directly to course offerings and to student or faculty scholarship;
- encouraged training of students in skills related to museum work through formal courses, connoisseurship, and conservation and through hands-on, object-based projects and internships;
- welcomed publications and symposia that enabled faculty and students to present their research to the scholarly world;
- emphasized qualitative rather than quantitative success.

Evaluation and Report

As the CUAM program was drawing to a close in spring 2005, the Mellon Foundation commissioned an evaluation to examine whether the Foundation’s overarching goal—the broader integration of these museums into the academic life of their parent institutions—had been accomplished. Was there any marked change in the way the museums were perceived on their campuses since the program began? Were the collections now being more widely used by faculty in their teaching, and students in their learning? Were relations with faculty largely concentrated in the departments of art history and the visual arts, or were a wider range of disciplines currently involved?

All the participating museums’ proposals, reports, and correspondence with the Foundation were reviewed. During fall 2005, site visits were made to the thirteen museums that had received six years of spendable grants and successfully completed an endowment challenge. On each campus interviews were conducted with museum staff, faculty, a senior academic administrator, and in some instances students, board members, and others who had been involved in some aspect of the Mellon-funded program. Over 160 people were interviewed, some by telephone, including previous directors who had been in place for significant parts of the grant period, as well as directors of the five museums that did not complete the full grant sequence. This report summarizes the evaluation submitted to the Foundation in 2006.

B. Summary Results

The CUAM grant recipients represent a diverse sample of college and university museums; the group includes public and private institutions, at both colleges and universities; long-established and recently-created museums, with a broad range of collection sizes and operating budgets. The CUAM program was profoundly successful in guiding these recipient campus museums toward closer integration with the educational enterprise of their colleges and universities. The program helped to redirect the mission of the campus museums; the museums became resources for—and partners in—a far greater range of the educational activities of their institutions than had been the case previously.

Summary: Program Outcomes (See Section II)

The study found a dramatic and positive increase in academic involvement in the thirteen museums that completed the sequence of Mellon awards, and continuing efforts in the five that did not. At the thirteen campuses,

- faculty reported that the experience of working with museum collections transformed their teaching, and to some extent, their research;
- deans and provosts gained an appreciation of the value of their museums to the curriculum, and many of them subsequently committed resources to extend these efforts;
- many more students had substantive, first-hand involvement with collections through classes and internships;
- interdisciplinary collaboration expanded as museum and curricular goals aligned;
- scholarship on the permanent collections deepened;
- within the museums attitudes changed as the power of working within the academic arena was realized;
- museum spaces were reconfigured to accommodate classes.

A general shift within the field of college and university museums toward strengthening links with their academic programs has arguably been led, to a considerable extent, by the example of the CUAM museums.

Summary: Factors influencing Program Success (See Section III)

The following factors contributed to the success of the CUAM program:

- the design and administration of the program;
- directors who were strongly committed to the program;
- a dedicated staff position (“curriculum coordinator”) to manage the effort;
- faculty interest, involvement and support, including the creation of faculty advisory committees;
- ability of museum staff to support the curricular activity, given the considerable amount of work involved;
- availability of classrooms and/or study spaces in the museum;
- a trend in academic inquiry toward consideration of visual and material culture in many disciplines;
- the economic recession of the early 1990s, which gave the Foundation’s program prominence at recipient museums;
- donors who identified with the goals of the program and helped establish an endowment to institutionalize successful changes.

Factors Impeding Progress:

Various institutional barriers to easy collaboration between faculty and curators had some negative impact, as did attitudes of some art department faculty members toward their campus museums.

Summary: Activities Pursued (See Section IV)

Encouraged by the Foundation to design programs that would suit their individual situations rather than conforming to a single model, the museums experimented with a very broad range of activities, most of which fall into the following categories:

- student internships and fellowships;
- faculty incentives for development of courses using the collection; art conservation classes; and class use of collection objects from storage;
- exhibitions, ranging from small course-support shows to multi-year projects involving scholarly research of a collection by multiple academic partners;
- visiting scholars-in-residence;
- symposia; visiting lecturers;
- scholarly publications, including collection catalogues, exhibition catalogues, and journal articles;
- a few limited technology projects to make collection records accessible to staff, faculty and students.

The common denominator of these activities was the increased use of the museum's collections by faculty and/or students for educational and scholarly purposes.

II. Assessment of Outcomes

This section documents the substantial shift in focus that the central group of museums achieved over several years of concentrated effort to integrate their activities into the academic program of the larger institution. To be sure, specific CUAM activities did not always succeed; some efforts failed and others had to be redesigned. Factors affecting the success of CUAM initiatives are discussed in Section III. The specific types of activities pursued are covered in Section IV.

A. Outcomes: Faculty—Teaching

When the CUAM museums sought to dedicate their resources more directly to the academic program, faculty partners needed to test the value of using the collections in their teaching. In interviews, faculty who had begun to teach regularly in the museum were emphatic in describing how meaningful the program was for their students. “Original works force and inspire original thought,” as one professor put it. Another noted that increasingly student learning depends upon “virtual” information. Faculty, in response, find the museum especially valuable as a place that can present “real” objects; analysis of art by students brings an “authentic” and very important dimension to the class. Faculty underlined the importance of being outside the normal learning venues—classroom, lecture hall, library—and in front of actual works of art. The effort lends an aura of *gravitas*, “something different about thinking and learning, a new mode of attention, new setting;” “there is nothing between the student and the early 19th century artist;” “the object is more important than an image [of it]...when we went and saw something, there was a different kind of silence.” According to several interviewed faculty, working with objects broadens the learning and thinking process of their students.

CUAM museums began to reach out beyond art history to other disciplines. By adopting a stance that the collections can inform many disciplines and are a resource for the whole institution, museums broadened their mission dramatically. Mellon encouraged multi-disciplinary academic use of the museum. “You find yourself collaborating very productively with members of departments that have not in the past been your natural, narrowly defined, constituency.” Class visits in 2001-02 at Bowdoin, for example, came from twenty-one separate departments. Museums in large research universities in some cases reached an even larger range of disciplines: in 2003-04, the Johnson Museum at Cornell served the schools of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Landscape Architecture, Linguistics, Engineering, Math, Technology Studies, Physics, Criticism and Theory, and Labor Relations, to name a few. Cornell’s director made it clear that, through the CUAM program, “we have become an integral part of the curriculum and the educational life of this university, in a way we were not before....”

Although most of the CUAM institutions shifted their attention from art history to the curriculum more broadly, the change was not easily or quickly accomplished. In most cases, neither the museum nor the new faculty partners had a tradition of such collaboration. Several museums devised strategies during the first three-years to help faculty newcomers. Specially designed in-depth programs allowed faculty to acquaint themselves with the museums’ collections, which were relatively unfamiliar even to some members of the art

departments: “I never had a really adequate idea of the breadth or depth of the Baroque collection and its potential for addressing the variety of aesthetic, iconographic, and thematic issues raised in my classes,” said an art historian. Other faculty wrote similarly: “this project has not only helped me to familiarize myself with the...Native American collection but has strengthened my interest in American Indian religion in general and its manifestation in material objects in particular;” and, “I was amazed to learn after thirty years here how numerous and varied are the objects from sub-Saharan Africa.”

Faculty members indicated that their museum experience had changed their teaching permanently; their partnering museums also made a permanent shift in their attention to teaching and the curriculum. A religion professor at Emory observed, “I resisted having the museum become indispensable..., but every time, it hooked me, and it has changed how I think about teaching.” The gains in class use of the museum experienced during the grant years are being sustained over time. Some statistics on usage are available. At Dartmouth in 1991-92, prior to the Mellon award, there were 32 class visits to study collections in storage, and in 1996-97, there were 108. This growth was maintained through 2004-05, when there were 103. The number of class visits to the galleries (as opposed to storage) demonstrates a similar pattern: 1996-97, 45 classes; 2003-04, 61 classes. At Smith, Emory, Chicago, Williams and elsewhere, evidence indicates that faculty and their museums have continued to work together.

Once the CUAM program had established some degree of success on campus, an important momentum developed, and faculty members recruited other faculty. A classicist induced colleagues in English and economics to make use of his museum’s rich collection of coins. At Rutgers, five French faculty members, a third of the department, were teaching at the Zimmerli: “It has now become central to the life of the department,” one said.

The opportunity to teach from museum collections has had a positive effect on searches for new faculty and staff at several colleges or universities. “I use WCMA [Williams] as a recruiting tool for new faculty. They can use WCMA in ways they cannot use [nearby off-campus museums].” Teaching with collections may also serve the cause of faculty retention. “I love the museum,” said a professor at Bowdoin, “it has kept me here in the frozen tundra for nineteen years.” Indeed, when a faculty member who has been making active use of the collections does depart, the search often gives preference to a candidate who will continue this method of teaching. Special strengths such as Rutgers’s collections and course offerings in Russian and Soviet art, or Emory’s pre-professional conservation program, have also become assets in recruiting students with specialized interests.

B. Outcomes: Deans and Provosts

As the CUAM museums became recognized on their campuses for contributing to the academic agenda, administrators began to take note. In the words of one college president: “These initiatives have had a significant impact at [the college], sharply focused the...Museum’s mission, and defined an important direction for its future activities.”

Deans and provosts expressed respect for their much more effective campus museums, regarding them as resources, rather than resource drains. Energized faculty members described their museum-curricular activities to the administrators, reinforcing the museum

director's own reports. Regular conversations between directors and administrators about the efforts to link the museums with the curriculum promoted cooperation with and problem-solving for the new museum goals. Administrators have been responsive to their museums' needs (including staff and space) to better serve the academic mission.

One museum staff member's description of the change in attitude of her campus administrators applies to many: "Pre-Mellon we had a desire to be embedded, but we were sitting on the fringes....We kept repeating that the museum is not about campus life, it is part of the academic program. If you offer these programs over and over, you educate the faculty about what the museum means to the curriculum. It is a process....In the end, it completely changed the attitude of the faculty and the administration. They needed that education."

One former director credited the Mellon program and its impact on campus with averting a potential disaster for her museum. "Within the past year, the idea of selling works of art from the Museum's collection to bolster the College endowment was raised by a faction of the ... Board of Trustees," she wrote to the Mellon Foundation. "Pointing to the increasing use of the collections by an ever larger constituency on campus, as well as to the strength of our programming with the department of art, was a major factor in convincing the Board that such a notion was extremely ill-advised." A former provost, now college president, came to recognize during the grant period the value of special collections at both the museum and the rare book library: "we want the resources because they support our core mission across the curriculum," she explained.

The desire to continue museums' engagement in their colleges' academic endeavors was highlighted in the round of recent director searches at CUAM museums [Williams, Chicago, Smith, RISD, Dartmouth, Kansas]. Newly sensitized deans and provosts actively sought candidates who fully understood the museum's new academic mission and were eager to support it. This augurs well for the continuation of the initiatives begun under the CUAM program.

Dedicating resources to the curriculum made the museum "a player" on campus. "The museum can deliver, which places it on a par with other entities," explained a Vice-President for Academic Affairs. As an example, he mentioned that the university had recently hosted the Dalai Lama. When the administration was putting together a committee to plan that visit, the museum came to mind immediately as an obvious partner; prior to the CUAM efforts, the museum would not have been on the institutional radar screen, he said.

Over time, the success of the academic programs, and the realization that the institution and the museum had the same priorities, generated respect and trust on the part of the administration. The success also leveraged resources. At Rutgers, the university assumed the cost of museum internships. At Emory, the administration, persuaded of the value of the conservation program, picked up the cost of the conservator's position. At Williams, the college spent significant funds to convert a gallery into a classroom designed for the study of art from storage. At Smith, Cornell, Chicago, and Kansas, major capital programs have been instituted or completed that include classrooms where works of art can be examined, study-storage areas, and "teaching" galleries.

One institution finally undertook a long-deferred major expansion of its museum building. Many people at this college emphasized that the capital project would not have happened had it not been for the CUAM program, which had spurred the museum to reexamine its mission and focus on its curricular role. “The driving force in making [the building project] happen and making this the largest project we’ve done ever,” said the Dean, “was the sense that this is part of the academic enterprise. We’re not renovating a museum that serves [our geographic region], but one that directly serves the teaching mission.” While the museum was closed for renovation, the college also assumed the cost of securing temporary spaces so that teaching from the collection could go on uninterrupted.

C. Outcomes: Students

Many undergraduates simply had not looked at art in a serious way before their CUAM classroom experience. “For many students this may be the first experience in a museum and for most the first one-on-one engagement with a work of art,” wrote a Dartmouth professor. A former analyst of international education projects, now a faculty member at Wellesley, worried that the evaluation of the CUAM program would overlook one critical result: “The benefit to students is not measurable, but is the most important legacy of the Mellon projects, to my mind.”

A primary goal of the CUAM program was the involvement of students with museum collections in intellectually rigorous ways. In class evaluations, students reported finding the confrontation both challenging and energizing. “To actually see and handle objects similar to those we had been studying was very enlightening. I could understand fully, finally, the problems we had discussed in class” said a student enrolled in “*Dis-Playing the Primitive*.” “Bio majors who took the Art/Environmental Studies course, *Picturing Nature*, came to realize that art history is not easy—it is a different—and extremely challenging—way of thinking,” said another recent graduate.

Faculty throughout the study recalled students who had been exceptionally inspired by the experience, and often lamented the lack of museum work in their own undergraduate experience. Three Smith alumnae now in senior positions at the college did not recall any class work at the museum when they were undergraduates and were enthusiastic about the change. Students also noted the difference: “My father, Class of ’66, claims he never set foot in the museum his entire college career, but things have changed as the museum and its collections are incorporated into class material...”

The CUAM program created almost 300 internships at the graduate and undergraduate level, and several museums continue to use at least a portion of the endowment income for internships. In evaluations, student interns reported a new-found interest in—and respect for—collections and operations. Many interns are known to have continued in the field, either pursuing graduate work or positions in museums, or both. At Bowdoin, for example, over half of the post-graduate Mellon Curatorial Interns continued to graduate school; at the time of this study, all were working in the arts or higher education.

Art history graduate students, the field’s future curators and professors, engaged collections, wrote for publication, and combined the internship experience with their regular studies.

The opportunity for beginning intern/scholars to write for publication was offered through many projects: at Yale, for example, through the exhibition catalogue *I, Claudia*; at Kansas *Decade of Transformation: American Art of the 1960s*; and at Chicago graduate students from Spanish, French, comparative literature and art history wrote for *Theatrical Baroque*. “It is difficult to quantify the impact, but graduate students have had day-to-day access that would not have been feasible otherwise,” said a curator at Harvard. “Internships that are specifically for Harvard students have been a way to re-involve graduate students in the life of the museum, a major way of rebuilding relations.” At institutions where the art history department is not actively using the museum, internships have provided a much-needed means to connect students with the museum collections.

Students found dissertation topics through their Mellon-related coursework or internships. An undergraduate at Emory wrote a thesis supervised by the faculty curator, drawing on the Carlos Museum’s holdings of art of the ancient Americas. She subsequently received an internship at the Dallas Museum and was applying to graduate school. A graduate student exploring links between art, literature and performance for a joint doctorate at Rutgers and a Parisian university has published some of her research and may be invited to do an exhibition at a museum in Montmartre. A student in Renaissance literature presented her museum-based research at French studies conferences and secured a collegiate teaching job. An intern’s work on a Frans Snyders painting at the Fogg evolved into her dissertation on 17th-century decoration in Antwerp. She is now an academic art historian.

It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to trace the subsequent career paths of those students involved in CUAM projects, although many are known to have pursued further training related to museum work or are now pursuing museum careers. Several have been hired to serve as faculty liaisons at their campus museums, furthering the museums’ academic initiatives. Many are still engaged in graduate study; whether they end up in academia, museum work, or other fields, their museum experience will probably inform their future lives and careers.

D. Outcomes: Interdisciplinary Learning and Collaboration

During the years of the CUAM program, most of the colleges and universities engaged in extensive curricular review. In interviews, faculty and administrators reported revisions that support interdisciplinary learning and faculty collaboration. Strengthening the humanities through interdisciplinary centers or core curriculum offerings was a common approach [Williams, Wellesley, Dartmouth, Chicago], as was the expansion of academic programs that draw course offerings and faculty from several academic departments. Williams is experimenting with “experiential” learning, Smith seeks more cross-departmental work, and Bowdoin recently instituted a “creative” requirement for graduation. At Emory, faculty were encouraged to seek “out of the classroom” teaching activities; they found the museum a ready participant—sixty faculty used it in 2004-05. The larger institutions’ curricular goals of open, experiential, cross-disciplinary, and out-of-the-classroom academic experiences lend themselves to precisely the resources that museums can offer. College and university efforts to revise the curriculum have coincided with the museums’ active search for faculty partners from many disciplines.

Museums that had successful academic programs were recognized as venues where interdisciplinary activities could flourish. The chair of art history at Chicago described the museum as a “place for collaboration; there is no other natural venue for collaboration between faculty.” He and a professor of “social thought” and their graduate students worked together on an exhibition about the pictorial function of Greek and Near Eastern texts. The provost at Smith described their major curricular review as urging learning across academic divisions and said that the museum has been and will continue to be a good locus for this. Targeting academic goals in this more open environment made it possible for campus museums and faculty to generate cross-disciplinary programs.

When developed with faculty and students, interdisciplinary programs at the museums thrived. Study groups, symposia, joint publications, and performances reverberated positively across campus; one theater project with an exhibition, international symposium, and a performance was cited as “a university high point” at Kansas. When faculty were brought together by the museum in collaborative and cross-disciplinary projects such as the Idea<>Form project at Smith (a campus-wide exploration of the nature of creativity), a different and valuable peer-to-peer intellectual engagement occurred. “I see the museum as a catalyst for conversations that cross all the usual boundaries on campuses,” said the former director. “It is a role we should embrace, and Idea<>Form gave us an opportunity to do so.”

The CUAM museums, noted one director, often became an “arena for cross-fertilization.” Faculty and administrators also cited the interdisciplinary connections provided through the museums’ initiatives with outside scholars, through residencies, visiting professorships, symposia, and lectures, as enriching opportunities for faculty and students. The Associate Provost at Chicago observed that it was particularly productive to invite symposium papers from scholars both inside and outside the university because of the intellectual interaction that resulted.

E. Outcomes: Faculty – Research

In interviews, faculty who had participated in academic projects with their museums highlighted the positive effect on their teaching; less often did they acknowledge any effect on their own scholarship. Sometimes, however, work with the collections did provoke such research. In one such case, a classical art historian reported that, while the 19th-century photographs she discovered during her museum residency were not germane to the course she was developing, “Self and Society in the Roman World,” they were enormously provocative and will appear later in her scholarship. Similarly, a sociologist/anthropologist who had never brought the study of art to her research found that her museum residency opened a major new line of inquiry for her scholarship.

The collections inspired faculty scholars. By encouraging a humanities professor to teach with the collection, the museum director at Chicago initiated an impressive chain of scholarship with graduate and post-graduate research: the initial undergraduate seminar developed an exhibition with programming at the museum; a separate exhibition was organized by graduate students at the university library; an NEH Summer Seminar was conducted for college and university teachers who used the two exhibitions; the essays of the NEH student/professors were published and a learned society formed; the society has

organized further symposia; the professor has published two books examining the manifestation of philosophical themes in art.

Echoing a theme heard more than once, an Associate Provost suggested that no university art museum can sustain advanced scholarly research, but the experience of some faculty argues otherwise. A professor used his museum residency to mine the late nineteenth-century French periodicals in the collection for research on nineteenth-century American literature. His findings were presented at the MLA and have been incorporated into a book. The course release he was granted allowed him to advance his scholarship, and the museum work also gave him an opening for discussions with senior faculty. He believes that their awareness of his collection-based research operated in his favor in securing tenure.

F. Outcomes: Museum Collections

The Mellon CUAM program was based on the premise that campus museum art collections merited study, teaching, and publication within the academic program of the college or university. Yet at the outset of the program, attention to the collection at many of the museums had taken second place to the development of loan exhibitions. In several places a dismissive attitude to campus collections continues to be held by individual faculty members, who, in interviews, cited collection shortfalls: “collections are uneven,” “there are gaps,” “there is nothing in my area,” “the collections can’t support. . .” The Mellon program encouraged the museum staff to move beyond such assessments, to reexamine their holdings, and to forge academic connections.

At several institutions, strong sub-collections not routinely covered in art history classes were rediscovered through in-depth research, exhibition, teaching and academic programming. By investing substantively in these collections, the museum was able to present a deeper interpretation of these works, and their significance to faculty was highlighted. As a result, use of the collections grew. For example, when Emory reinstalled its holdings of art of the Americas, the Spanish department’s introductory course, “The Hispanic World: Language, Society, and Culture,” began to use the museum regularly. The Native American and Oceanic collections at Dartmouth, British drawings and Northwest Coast Indian collections at Princeton, the previously unpublished South Asian collections at Williams, Russian and non-conformist Soviet art at Rutgers, Asian textiles at Kansas, and many other holdings benefited from intensive scholarly investigation that was carried out by curatorial staff, faculty, undergraduate and graduate interns, conservators, and scholars in the field. Discoveries they made have been documented in symposia, lectures, collection databases, catalogues, and scholarly papers; this work will be a permanent legacy of the CUAM effort.

In the 1990s, art historians and those in other academic disciplines were eager to consider a broader range of visual material. The museums’ new academic programs capitalized on this heightened interest in material culture by encouraging staff and faculty to revisit collections for that purpose. Museum staff were able to direct faculty to “all kinds of objects” long relegated to storage but rich in significance and meaning in the current context. A Brown art historian who is interested in design scoured the RISD storerooms and discovered objects of interest such as Renaissance escutcheons and French wallpaper samples. She believes that

the resulting cross-media European design show had a lasting impact on the museum's thinking about how to display its holdings. One senior curator credits the CUAM program with reeducating him in his own approach to the permanent collection. He has become more open-minded to proposals from faculty and graduate students through his museum's strategies: rethinking the installations of the permanent collection, "gambling" on short-term collection focus shows, and committing spaces to areas of collection strength. His own receptiveness, in turn, fosters new ideas in studying the collections.

G. Outcomes: Museums—Internal Change

Prior to the CUAM program museums were evolving into largely autonomous units on campus. Staff generated exhibitions and scholarship, developed outreach for the community, and took pride in presenting programming for a broadly defined audience. But both faculty and students were using the museum less and less. Outside funding for collection scholarship or campus initiatives was intermittent at best. Consequently, the CUAM program, which sought a focus on the curriculum, had to overcome a certain momentum that had developed in the opposite direction.

A number of internal problems challenged the success of the endeavor. Initiating a major restructuring of programmatic effort initially met with resistance from an already over-extended staff. Curators found collaborating with academics frustrating. Classes in the galleries interrupted school groups. Pulling works from storage for faculty challenged museums that were short of space and manpower. Electronic cataloguing was sometimes not up to the task of answering queries. Academic schedules and exhibition planning deadlines did not align well.

To adjust their operations and programs to accommodate the new academic activity, campus museums had to think deeply about their missions. This reexamination led to the decision that commitment to the academic program should take precedence. Internal logistical challenges were resolved over time by reorganizing operations. The benefits and rewards of campus involvement became evident. Rather than feeling endlessly torn between serving "town" and "gown," staff members developed new clarity about the hierarchy of their constituencies. Their commitment to putting the academic audience at the center of their endeavor was one of the profound consequences of the Mellon program. "Transformative" was the adjective most often used as museum staff members described the positive effect of the CUAM initiative within their museums.

In several cases, the CUAM program came at a time of external challenges as well, when the museum was adrift or at a turning point. Emory's museum had just received a major infusion of collections, space, and funding, but had based its identity on international projects with little benefit to the campus. Similarly, the Williams museum, under an earlier director with international ambitions, had become, some felt, a costly irrelevancy. At Wellesley the new Davis Museum and Cultural Center was trying to define what it meant to be a cultural center as well as a museum. At Bowdoin a curatorial position had been eliminated, and the college questioned recommended capital improvements. The director at Cornell described his university's financial situation in 1990 as "sad." The Mellon initiative literally saved the day, he said, especially the endowment challenge, which allowed him both to educate donors about the core academic mission and to secure it for the long term. The

new academic focus was of critical importance in helping these museums define or redefine themselves.

By the completion of Mellon's involvement, the CUAM museums had defined and demonstrated what it means to be a serious "teaching museum." A recent Williams project is typical of the shift: *Kara Walker: Narratives of a Negress* (co-organized with the Tang Teaching Museum at Skidmore) and the companion collection-based show, *Representing Slavery*, intersected with a record number of classes (ten), had faculty co-curators and catalogue authors, led to an important acquisition for the collection, and had excellent campus turnout for the associated programming. The project was "all Mellon" in its manifestation, but it used no Mellon funds. The definition of a successful project has changed for the CUAM museums: "now staff always ask, 'how would this proposal affect our work on the permanent collection? How can we engage the university community?'" a staff member explained.

H. Outcomes: Museum Field

Although it fell outside the bounds of this study to investigate the broader universe of campus museums, an important shift toward curricular and campus engagement has taken place in recent years in the college and university community. In the 1990s, at the outset of the CUAM program, colleges and universities, and their museums, were struggling financially. As morale at many non-CUAM campus museums was sinking, the Mellon museums by contrast were energized; their focused problem-solving was beginning to bear fruit, and they were leading the field with new strategies to engage their academic colleagues. Through formal presentations at professional organizations, as well as informal exchanges among staff, faculty and students, news spread of the successes at the CUAM campuses, and their new clarity of purpose in support of an academic mission resonated within the field at large.

Once the idea took hold, many campus museums moved forward without Mellon support. For example, a recent web article at Oberlin, "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Using the Allen Memorial as a Teaching Tool," cited thirty-nine professors outside the art department who took their students to the museum the previous year, in courses such as "Death and the Art of Dying," and "Chinese and Japanese Thought and Religion." Meanwhile at Yale, Stanford, UC Berkeley, and UNC positions for academic coordinators were created.

In other respects the program influenced some directors as they moved out of the academy into larger institutions. A former CUAM director, newly arrived at an independent city museum, immediately began discussions with faculty at the neighboring university to start a joint program which is now evolving. At least two other interviewees credit their experience with Mellon's program for guiding their new museums toward close involvement with campus constituencies. "The impact of the Mellon program is larger and deeper than you would expect. The model gets passed along," one said.

III. Factors Affecting the CUAM Program's Success

This section addresses the broad factors perceived to have contributed to or inhibited the success of the CUAM initiatives. Factors that may continue to play a role in the future are noted.

A. Factors Affecting Success: Design and Administration of the Program

The following aspects of the Foundation's design and administration of the program contributed to its success, and provide a useful model for other museums:

- study and identification of an important problem;
- articulation of goals to address the problem;
- encouraging recipients to design programs appropriate to their local situation;
- the expectation of experimentation, with latitude to learn from failures;
- regular, clear and detailed external feedback;
- the long term commitment required for substantive change;
- provision for sustainability.

Interviewees acknowledged and appreciated the fact that Mellon first surveyed the field, then formulated the question "How can the Foundation help connect the museum to the curriculum?," but did not prescribe the answer. The Mellon grant to Dartmouth "held out the promise of significant change," remembered the former director, but made it clear that "the accomplishment is up to you; we will measure according to your criteria."

The Foundation seemed to expect plans to evolve as experience was gained; according to one respondent, "The process of change was built into Mellon's program. The six years of spendable grants provided enough time for experimentation and for genuine change to take place." Many directors praised the Foundation's very careful critiques of draft proposals and reports. "We knew clearly what Mellon was looking for in a successful project," one said. "We felt as though we were in it together. It was a partnership. This is the other side of clarity: we had to perform, but it was a partnership, never adversarial."

"What has been good about the Mellon structure? Having two three-year grant cycles," said an administrator. "It took that long to bring people aboard. You need to look tentatively at first, to figure out how not to have [the engagement with the museum] be superficial." "Long-term sustainability was the object," said a director, "Mellon was looking for real systemic change."

The endowment phase of the CUAM funding structure was cited for enabling the most successful aspects of the program to continue. Other foundation "grants were not unlike Mellon in that the money was for a strategic operating fund, but...[they] assumed that the grants would be transformative and would lead to long-term strategies that would keep the work going. They lacked the care toward the future that Mellon had."

B. Factors Affecting Success: Museum Leadership

In order to accomplish the institutional change the CUAM program sought to effect, leadership and commitment from the top were critical. The same attention will be necessary to move the program effectively into the future. A thoroughly committed leader is needed to provide the intellectual spark to initiate cross-departmental collaborations, galvanize museum staff, and unravel bureaucratic obstacles at the college or university.

Directors excited about embedding the museum in the academic activities of the college are the best positioned to carry the message to faculty and senior administrators. Those who devise the program are usually more personally engaged than their successors. Working with these committed “founding” directors is, itself, an inducement to some faculty to become involved with the museum, and when these directors depart, it can have an adverse effect.

Almost all of the CUAM museums experienced at least one change of director during the course of the program, and a few closed entirely or in part for renovation and expansion campaigns during the grant period. Building projects forced suspension of activities and distracted staff from their focus on carrying out the program’s agenda. New directors needed time to understand their institution’s dynamic and to see how best to carry the Mellon initiatives forward. Some placed activities on hold while they conducted strategic planning processes or other types of self-study. Inevitable change of this kind—staff turnover and capital projects—can cause a hiatus in the institution’s progress toward its goals which effective planning can ameliorate to some extent.

Lack of attention at the highest level will be a concern as the endowment-funded initiatives continue perhaps without the personal commitment and problem-solving energy initially invested by the leadership into developing curricular links. Newer directors may feel that they have inherited a well-established program and will turn their attention to some other arena, but without enthusiastic leadership from the top, there is a danger that the effort to integrate the museum into the academic agenda will falter.

C. Factors Affecting Success: “Curriculum Coordinators”

One of the strongest factors in museums’ success under the CUAM program—together with the director’s commitment—was having a dedicated staff member to coordinate the effort. Having identified faculty as a primary constituency, the more successful museums assigned one person to function as a liaison with them on behalf of the museum.

“Curriculum coordinators” got to know faculty members and their academic interests. They were proactive, contacting faculty to inform them about new acquisitions, future exhibitions, and other events that might bear relevance to their teaching and research. Coordinators could take the initiative to engage individual faculty members; without a dedicated faculty liaison, the staff usually fell into reactive mode, responding only to those faculty who approached the museum with a request. The position was construed differently at each museum; see below, Activities Pursued: Staffing.

The “curriculum coordinators” were able to stay focused on their task, rather than being distracted by competing responsibilities. In many cases the coordinators picked up work that would otherwise have fallen to other museum staff; at a minimum, they made certain that faculty members were linked with the appropriate curators and others likely to address their needs. They were able to establish clear communication channels: faculty knew whom to call to initiate any museum-based activity. They functioned as a central clearing-house for negotiating demands on staff, space, and other resources.

Already, however, some CUAM institutions are finding that the coordinators cannot fully meet faculty demands, because their own time, other staff members’ time, and spaces such as classrooms and teaching galleries are oversubscribed, partly owing to the fact that additional responsibilities gravitate toward successful “curriculum coordinators.” Resolving issues such as these will be critical to enhancing a museum’s future engagement with both faculty and students.

D. Factors Affecting Success: Faculty and Administration

The success of the CUAM program is also due in large measure to the faculty and administrators at the participating colleges and universities. Deans and provosts at CUAM institutions were willing to offer release time, condone cross-listing and occasional interdepartmental offerings, and find other ways to circumvent bureaucratic roadblocks.

The Foundation’s insistence that CUAM activities be academically rigorous spurred the museums to attract faculty interested in substantive inquiry. Individual faculty members were willing to do the extra work to make use of collections in teaching; they were enormously creative in discovering links between their subjects and the museums’ holdings; they were patient with institutional barriers; their enthusiasm was manifest and contagious.

Museum leaders found junior faculty in general more open to new ways of teaching than senior faculty, and they made efforts to reach newcomers soon after their arrival on campus. However, it is not certain whether time invested in preparing a course that involved teaching with museum objects, especially if it included an exhibition and/or catalogue, would help or hinder a junior faculty member seeking promotion. One Harvard professor cited university museum loan exhibitions—such as those undertaken at UCLA, Iowa, and Yale—as central factors in changing her field. Another academic had been told some years ago that she would not get tenure if she published a collection catalogue; but she felt that this would no longer be true.

Museums unable to support all faculty requests often gravitate toward selecting senior faculty initiatives over junior, on the grounds that their courses were more likely to be repeated; and the familiarity they develop with the collection would benefit their work over a longer period of time. The danger is that, by not working with junior faculty, the museum is likely to miss promising new approaches and may create a situation in which it once again becomes marginalized.

Art department faculty are not unanimous in embracing involvement with their campus museums. Some take a more theoretical approach to the field; others—particularly those in the current fields of so-called indigenous cultures or in archaeology—question the entire

museum enterprise. Despite some difficulties, however, faculty members at all the CUAM institutions undertook valuable scholarly projects with their museums and continue to be involved.

E. Factors Affecting Success: Administrative Turnover

In the early stages of the CUAM initiative, deans and provosts often played important roles in support of programs and in facilitating activities. Many of them came to appreciate the intellectual benefits of the museum's involvement in the curriculum and were helpful in circumventing institutional obstacles. As new administrators have arrived, and new directors been appointed, some institutions run the risk of losing focus on the central purposes of the Mellon endowments: to strengthen the museum's role within the academic and curricular agenda of the larger institution. It will be critical going forward, therefore, to find ways of insuring continuity and commitment to what has been accomplished.

F. Factors Affecting Success: Advisory Committees

The Mellon Foundation encouraged directors to set up advisory faculty committees as they developed CUAM activities. Several took this advice at the outset [Emory, Smith, Chicago, Cornell, RISD], and others were in the process of establishing a committee as the program ended. Advisory committees have been useful sounding-boards for directors, providing new ideas and ensuring that program offerings make sense in the faculty/student context. They have helped museum staff understand faculty constraints, so that the programs could operate more effectively. Simple matters of timing, such as knowing when departments set their course offerings for the coming year or when faculty must apply for sabbaticals, enable museums to announce course-development opportunities and research fellowships at the optimal moment.

Members of advisory committees may also provide information about funding available in various faculty coffers (for guest speakers, library materials, and other ancillary costs). At Smith, a predominantly-faculty advisory committee reviews course proposals after screening by museum staff for logistical feasibility. And they have brought their critical capacity (and experience with undergraduate writing) to bear in judging the submissions in an annual competition for the best student essay on a work in the collection.

Members of advisory committees have also frequently served as advocates for the program with other faculty members, administrators, and interested alumni. They have learned about their museums, have come to know staff members as colleagues, and have themselves participated directly in CUAM initiatives.

G. Factors Affecting Success: Museum Staff, Academically-qualified Curators

The director and the "curriculum coordinator" are not the only personnel critical to the success of the CUAM program: many other members of the museum's staff are also important. Curators, registrars, and art handlers are likely to have direct involvement, and in

the case of faculty-organized exhibitions, almost everyone on staff may have a role. Their cooperation, enthusiasm, and support for the academic mission are essential.

Staff members were almost universally praised by faculty and interns interviewed. But the program inevitably made considerable demands on an often minimal staff who were then forced to make choices. For example, museums that initially offered both undergraduate and graduate internships gravitated, over the years, toward graduate students since they require less supervision. It is understandable that overworked museum staff would be forced to establish such priorities, but it would be unfortunate if internships for undergraduates were to be available only at liberal arts colleges.

H. Factors Affecting Success: Inequities between Museum Curators and Faculty Members

One of the knottiest problems affecting the CUAM outcomes is the unequal status of academically-qualified curators and faculty members. Ideally for the success of faculty/museum collaboration, curators and faculty members would function as peers with similar responsibilities, appointments, salaries and benefits. Each would support the other's research, and they would mentor students in close collaboration. Academically-qualified curators, given time for research and course development, would have significant potential to teach and otherwise contribute to the academic enterprise. Yet on many campuses there is reluctance to grant such curators faculty status. This inevitably diminishes the ultimate impact by the museum on the core academic mission.

Some museums are experimenting with adaptations of the old professor/curator model, by creating positions for curator/lecturers [Princeton, Emory]. Some museums still maintain faculty curators [Kansas, Chicago], despite the complications regarding appointments, promotions, and tenure. At Cornell, curators have short but regular research sabbaticals—an exception among CUAM museums. Despite the accomplishments of the CUAM program and the search for new models of interaction and parity, faculty and curators continue largely to exist in parallel, intersecting from time to time, but remaining in most cases far from comparable in status or opportunity. This remains a dilemma which should be addressed over the coming years if campus museums are to reach their full potential as partners in the academic agenda. Nonetheless, faculty members and curators have gained mutual understanding and respect from working together in a variety of ways through the Mellon projects. They understand each other and their respective roles, responsibilities and talents better than before. That can only be to the long-term benefit of the academic enterprise, even though structural barriers to true parity remain.

I. Factors Affecting Success: Museum Facilities

Success at teaching from the collection relies on the museum's ability to provide access to original works of art. A space in which originals can be studied and the staff to make artwork available are essential. A "teaching gallery" in which works can be installed informally for class use throughout the semester is highly desirable. For institutions involved in teaching aspects of conservation, a laboratory space large enough to accommodate a class is needed; to train students to examine objects in detail, it can be

important to have the capability to project what is being shown under a microscope, so that an entire class can be looking at the same image.

Smith used CUAM funds to create a classroom at the program's inception. Williams, Bowdoin, Chicago, Cornell, Kansas, Wellesley and Dartmouth—responding to faculty enthusiasm—have created such spaces with institutional funds. Several museums have planned or already built additional classrooms and teaching galleries as they expand their facilities with non-Mellon funds [Smith, Cornell, Bowdoin]. Princeton has seminar rooms adjacent to the collection storage areas of five of its six curatorial departments. Harvard's recently announced expansion plan describes an institution that will, in its new quarters, put study rooms at its core. "We are giving almost equal weight to study centers and galleries," said the director. "We asked ourselves, 'What is it we can do that other people cannot?'...and time and time again we came back to the Mongan Center [the Fogg's study area for prints, drawings and photographs] and the Busch-Reisinger study center as models." Yale, too, has prioritized access to collections that are not on exhibition in its recent renovation and expansion plans.

As discussed above, however, several institutions have already reached the point where demand for their new specialized classrooms exceeds supply. Until they can grow or find new ways to make objects available for teaching, their service to courses can expand only in public galleries.

J. Factors Affecting Success: Currents in Academic Inquiry

The CUAM program came into being at a propitious time when new attention was being given to visual culture in a much wider variety of academic disciplines than had traditionally been the case. Scholars developed a heightened interest in material objects—works of art among them—as original source documents and began to seek ways to incorporate them into their work. This era also saw the pendulum in art history beginning to swing from the theoretical to revived interest in the physical object. The goal of the CUAM program, to connect campus museums with the curriculum broadly, made an ideal match for these new paths of investigation and inquiry.

During the 1990s many institutions were also eager to promote interdisciplinary inquiry and offer students out-of-the-classroom intellectual experiences. Colleges focused on the importance of introducing students to other cultures, as multiculturalism and globalization began to dominate intellectual discourse. Participating museums devised offerings that positioned them as a nexus for cross-disciplinary and experiential learning, and as natural sites for exploring the world's many cultures.

K. Factors Affecting Success: Continuity

Since the leaders of campus museums rarely have a formal (voting) role in the curricular debates at their institutions (or even attend faculty meetings), it will be a challenge for them to maintain genuine participation in responding to new trends and developing their contribution to the academic agenda. The more structures for intellectual exchange between

faculty and museum staff exist, the better attuned the latter will be to developing currents in academic inquiry and the more effective will be their contribution.

L. Factors Affecting Success: Economic Climate for Museums

The economic position of the more successful CUAM museums within their larger institutions is stronger now because, as their value to the academic endeavor was heightened, more institutional resources were allocated to them. When the CUAM initiative was launched, however, most colleges were struggling financially and many museum budgets had been cut or frozen. At most of the CUAM museums, the spendable grants from Mellon represented a significant fraction of their operating budget. The grants were substantial enough to make a difference and to encourage a shift in priorities.

Support from government programs has had an enormous influence on programming decisions at campus museums. In the 1990s, cuts to the NEA budget and slashing of some states' arts funds reduced funding for activities aimed at a broad general public or the K-12 audience. This retrenchment reinforced the CUAM museums' decision to focus on the academic aspects of their activity. More recently, however, the elimination of IMLS General Operating Support grants has removed an important source of funding for the underlying costs of museum operations. Fiscal stresses will, from time to time, reduce the resources available to the museum, but activities that relate directly to the academic mission are less likely to lose college support than others.

There is always a possibility that museums will "follow new money" in the future, in directions that will take them away from the focus on their campus audiences and dilute the attention they currently pay to curricular concerns. However, the experience of the CUAM program has strengthened the educational value of the museums to their parent colleges and universities, thus making a clear argument for protecting the core academic mission and resisting other pressures.

M. Factors Affecting Success: Fundraising

Mellon encouraged the museums to craft broad language governing the use of endowment income. The Foundation recognized that the museums would need latitude to adapt their specific activities over time, but it also insisted that the endowment's use be tied to the fundamental general purpose of embedding the museum in the academic mission of its parent institution.

Establishing an endowment dedicated to academic initiatives was central to Mellon's design for the long-term sustainability of its program. Most CUAM museums reported little difficulty in getting approval to raise funds for this purpose, even though this meant somewhat repositioning fundraising priorities on campus. The fact that the purpose of the endowment aligned with the academic mission of the college or university was undoubtedly one reason such fundraising was authorized. The success of the thirteen CUAM museums in raising almost six million dollars in matching funds demonstrates that museum donors are willing to support academic endeavors.

Directors used the targeted fundraising as an opportunity to educate their supporters about the role of a “teaching museum” on a college campus. In several cases, individuals who gave matching endowment funds have subsequently made additional donations to the museums, specifically to further the academic dimension of their activity, though some donors inevitably preferred to support bricks-and-mortar, major loan exhibitions, or highly visible publications. Some directors found that only alumni would understand (and be willing to underwrite) the academic agenda.

Deans and provosts came to see the museum’s curricular efforts as a way of making their institution’s work visible and comprehensible to outsiders, including funders. An administrator at Emory explained, “One of the distinctive qualities of a research university is dealing with material culture. We need to persuade people why universities are worth investing in. They are not a ‘private good;’ the art collection is a broader public good. It is a way the university can translate its mission to individuals beyond its own alumni.”

IV. Activities Pursued

Each of the participating museums designed activities that would connect museum, faculty, and students in order to accomplish the CUAM program's objectives. The broad categories of activities are outlined in the sections below. Museums rethought activities that were not successful and began new ones as their relationships with faculty and students deepened. Over time, the CUAM museums managed to circumvent most institutional obstacles.

A. Activities Pursued: Internships

Student internships with substantive curatorial, conservation, or research content were offered by a large majority of the museums, in recognition of the power of such opportunities to engage students and teach them how to learn from original works of art. Internships were variously conceived as facilitating work on course-related exhibitions; providing access to works in storage to meet growing academic demands; improving storage conditions or cataloguing aspects of the collection; and as a way of making progress on museum research projects. In an effort to put internships into a broader context, some museums devised opportunities for interns to gain exposure to various departments of the museum, speak informally with visiting museum professionals, and pursue readings on museum issues.

There was considerable experimentation with the level (post-BA, graduate, undergraduate), duration (summer, semester, academic year, full year, multi-year), time commitment (ranging from ten hours per week to full time), and definition of appropriate projects. Intern selection was sometimes informal, but more often it involved review of applications by a committee of faculty and/or staff, thereby introducing them to ways in which museum activity could be beneficial to academic performance and reminding them that the museum was providing financial support for students (particularly graduate students). Museums became aware of external factors affecting their ability to recruit interns including the need to offer stipends competitive with teaching fellowships, and taking account of the pressure students are under to complete dissertations expeditiously, therefore precluding long-term demanding internships.

At the urging of the Mellon Foundation, museums sought interns from disciplines beyond art history, with moderate success. Vassar, for example, attracted interns from English, history, Victorian studies and geography/urban studies. Emory attracted science majors to conservation internships. Dartmouth's interns were drawn from areas related to the fields of individual faculty in CUAM residencies. RISD's collaboration with Brown University generated interns from comparative literature, semiotics, modern cultural and media studies, visual arts, anthropology, archaeology, and religion.

While certain internship configurations proved successful on particular campuses, no single format emerged as a standard or an ideal that worked well at all participating institutions. Key ingredients to success proved to be 1) clarity and realism in defining the museum's expectations; 2) a good match between the student's interests/abilities and the museum's needs; 3) a willing and active supervisor; 4) flexibility to address institutional barriers. Interns who developed camaraderie with their supervisors and with other interns had more

rewarding experiences than those who worked in comparative isolation. Because of their value to program goals, several museums anticipate using CUAM endowment income to support internships [Bowdoin, Cornell, Dartmouth, Emory, Harvard, Kansas, RISD].

B. Activities Pursued: Course Development and Study Grants to Faculty

In order to engage directly with the curriculum, sixteen of the participating museums supported development of courses by faculty or staff that incorporated the study of original works from the collection. In some cases, new courses were born; in others, existing courses were redesigned. Museum staff offered courses on their own, usually in “museum studies” or conservation; in a few instances, they co-taught courses with departmental faculty members. Princeton and Dartmouth brought in outside experts to study underutilized aspects of their collections and teach courses in their specialty; at Dartmouth the outsiders initiated collaborations with faculty; Rutgers launched a series of academic offerings in Russian and Soviet non-conformist art that has given its art history program a distinctive area of strength; Smith made course development the primary focus of its CUAM activity.

To enable faculty members to familiarize themselves with the collections relevant to their fields and develop their courses, several of the museums offered financial incentives. Because of regulations on faculty compensation, these took the form of summer stipends [Smith], course-release grants [Dartmouth, Rutgers], short faculty residencies [Dartmouth], study grants [Chicago], or research grants [Rutgers]. Some institutions found that faculty did not need a financial incentive [Bowdoin, Kansas], or that student assistance in preparing the course [Chicago, Brown/RISD], or support for graduate students [Chicago] would be more helpful.

Courses were frequently linked, whether in concept development, research and writing, or installation and interpretation. A course might have been based on a current exhibition or on a permanent collection display; curated by a professor or by museum staff at a professor’s request. Some exhibitions have been based on existing courses, or have been stimulated by an individual professor’s research interests. Some institutions encouraged a wider spectrum of departments to make use of their holdings, helping faculty (some of whom had no experience teaching with original works of art) to find ways to integrate such objects into existing courses. This would frequently demand ingenuity on the part of museum staff, but once non-art historians became confident that their perspectives were valid, and improved their own “visual literacy,” most eagerly embraced the pedagogical possibilities, and enthusiasm for this method of teaching was palpable.

A few truly interdisciplinary courses, co-taught by faculty from two or more departments, were developed [Rutgers], but there are significant institutional disincentives at most places to teaching of this kind, despite the expressed wish of many provosts and deans to endorse them. Courses cross-listed in two departments at Bowdoin and Emory provided some level of interdisciplinarity.

Courses taught by museum staff received mixed reviews. Some art departments were reluctant to offer courses taught by individuals who had not passed through the departmental selection process. Co-teaching with a regular faculty member (under whose name the course would be listed) was a way of circumventing this problem. Several

instances of such collaboration were successful despite the lack of institutional recognition for museum staff. Some departments with small enrollments worried that popular museum courses would siphon students away from the department's other offerings, jeopardizing the department's ability to maintain faculty size. At least two art history departments [RISD, Rutgers] offer "museum studies" courses in which no museum staff members take part. Academic administrators are generally aware of the barriers keeping academically qualified museum staff out of the classroom, but there seems to be little incentive to overcome them.

The impressive numbers of class visits to the museum reported by some institutions indicate successful efforts to create bridges to the curriculum. Bowdoin's final report in 2001 showed 110 different classes, involving 1329 students, meeting in the museum in one academic year to study 2813 objects not on public view. Williams reported 3200 student/faculty visits to look at 1650 works of art in its new Rose Study Gallery in 2004-05—a 300% increase over pre-Mellon levels—and an additional 1600 class-related student visits to the galleries. Smith class visits increased by 80% over the six years of spendable grants, with 3608 student visits in the last year, 1998-99. Cornell, with a much larger student body, recorded participation by 25,000 students in museum programs during 1999, although these were not all class-related visits.

C. Activities Pursued: Exhibitions

Exhibitions are the major way in which museums use their collections for public benefit and as a vehicle to disseminate the fruits of research. All the museums in the study used exhibitions as an effective tool in creating links with the academic agenda, and these were invariably tied to the curriculum and collections. Some were curated or co-curated by faculty members, growing out of a research residency. They may have been spawned by courses or might serve as the inspiration for subsequent courses. Other exhibitions were the products of Mellon-supported courses, involving the work of students and faculty. Still others were devised by student interns, by "curriculum coordinators," or by graduate students and professors working together outside class. One interesting variant at Chicago consisted of a graduate seminar that planned an exhibition, an undergraduate course taught from the subsequent exhibition, and a collection-based catalogue published after the exhibition so that contributions from students in both courses could be incorporated.

The exhibitions ranged from large-scale, multi-year endeavors involving substantial new research to smaller curricular exhibitions mounted informally in "teaching" galleries or other designated spaces. Most of the exhibitions depended entirely or heavily upon the institution's permanent collections, although outside loans were sometimes involved. Some museums implemented long-term installations of aspects of their permanent collection, incorporating the results of research done under Mellon auspices [Princeton]. In other instances a museum's reinstallation of a collection sparked coursework drawing upon it [Emory]. In some cases museum staff produced collection-based exhibitions after consultation with faculty about what would best complement a course [Wellesley].

Exhibitions also provided unusual and important opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. For the *Beautiful Suffering* exhibition at Williams, faculty from different departments jointly organized the exhibition with museum curators and contributed chapters to its catalogue from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, teaching separate courses in their

home departments based upon the show. The third of Vassar's exhibitions on the Magoon Collection, *Boundaries, Landmarks, and Nodes*, was a collaboration between the museum's curator, an outside expert, and Vassar faculty in geography and art; all contributed to the catalogue and symposium. At Princeton, faculty from various departments were invited to give guest lectures in a course given by a visiting scholar. Their perspectives found their way into didactic materials for the eventual reinstallation of the museum's African holdings.

Without question, exhibitions proved to be powerful ways of engaging faculty and students in dialogue. Brochures, catalogue entries, catalogue essays, and didactic materials offered opportunities for student contributions. The tangible end product, with immediate feedback from colleagues and the critical press, elicited students' best work. "I became emboldened by what I could get the students to do. When students feel responsibility, they will come through," said a Bowdoin professor: "I like the way they learned from each other." Students made it clear in interviews that they understand an exhibition's significance as an opportunity to publish early in their careers. Faculty observed that they can derive many of the same benefits, although for junior faculty such work may in many cases not be "counted" in the tenure process.

The CUAM program radically changed the way museum staff members think about exhibitions. Proposals are now increasingly screened for their relevance to the teaching program and their potential for creating new connections with faculty in a variety of disciplines. Success is, to a growing extent, defined as meeting these objectives.

D. Activities Pursued: Programs

The CUAM initiative spawned numerous programs in addition to exhibitions. Academic symposia, linked to CUAM-inspired courses and exhibitions, were almost always interdisciplinary to some degree [Dartmouth, Emory, Oberlin, Smith and elsewhere]. At Rutgers a series of symposia allowed students and faculty from various fields to present their research on collection objects. At Oberlin, interdisciplinary forums brought together faculty from different departments to speak on a single theme. At Dartmouth, each visiting curatorial specialist met with faculty from various departments for a colloquium on the part of the collection he was studying, helping faculty understand how this material might be relevant to their own teaching and research.

Visiting scholars under the CUAM program frequently presented public lectures and/or held sessions with students on their topics. Presentations by living artists were sponsored or co-sponsored [Oberlin, Harvard]. At Williams a small portion of Mellon grant funds was used to co-sponsor events (organized by departments across the campus) that had relevance to the museum's mission.

Faculty from multiple disciplines participated in generating programs, and benefited from discourse with colleagues outside home departments. Kansas offered a concert in conjunction with an exhibition on Central European theater designs. Smith students in a dance course that examined pictorial space presented their creations in a public performance in front of the paintings. Oberlin planned a nature walk in conjunction with its American Landscape initiative, and Williams offered a Japanese tea ceremony. These are but a few of

the many programs devised by or in consultation with faculty beyond art departments in support of their museum-linked courses.

As museums embraced the goal of forging more curricular links, they recognized the merits of involving faculty and students in decisions about which programs to offer. Several museums changed the makeup of program planning committees to add faculty representation and formed student liaison groups [Smith, Wellesley]. As museum staff came to know faculty members and their interests through their work together on CUAM activities, and students through their internships, it became natural to consult them informally as well. At Williams, planning committees comprising relevant faculty, students, staff and administrators were convened on an *ad hoc* basis to brainstorm and then design programs in connection with major exhibitions. Committee members became committed to the programs' success, encouraging colleagues and friends to take part.

E. Activities Pursued: Publications

The CUAM program's focus on scholarly content of publications kept the academic substance of the project at the core and fostered the inclusion of faculty and students. The Mellon Foundation welcomed the use of CUAM funds for research publications, but not for general informational brochures, newsletters, and other ephemera.

Exhibition catalogues and focused brochures were paramount among the publications funded under the grant program. Princeton devoted an issue of its *Record* to the research on the African collections conducted by a faculty member and the speakers at her symposium. Oberlin devoted an issue of its *Bulletin* to the American Landscape project. Berkeley launched a student journal.

Mellon funds advanced several scholarly collection catalogues. Williams undertook a catalogue of its American paintings, inviting contributions from numerous scholars; and a catalogue of its Indian paintings, written by a former professor and his graduate students. Kansas completed a catalogue of its Asian textiles. Vassar, in issuing the catalogues for three exhibitions based on the Magoon Collection, essentially created a catalogue of these holdings. Chicago and Bowdoin, similarly, continue to publish their collections through catalogues associated with regular CUAM exhibitions.

F. Activities Pursued: Conservation

Conservation initiatives played a supporting role in the programs at Kansas, Princeton, and Chicago. Two museums made conservation a major focus of their CUAM activity: Emory used grant funds to hire its first conservator, who worked on the collection, taught courses, and supervised conservation interns. The university later absorbed the conservator's salary, and Mellon funds were then used for a visiting conservation specialist each year. The visiting conservators, in addition to working on specialized treatments, taught portions of the conservation classes and advised on intern projects. Over the years of the CUAM program, Emory built a reputation as one of the few universities to offer pre-graduate training in conservation; it established a professional conservation laboratory and performed significant collection care and research.

Harvard's Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies has a long and distinguished history. CUAM support was used to engage conservators more directly in the education of graduate students. In addition to co-teaching courses in anthropology and art history, they also advised thesis projects, offered conservation tutorials, and oversaw independent studies. Graduate fellows' research topics, all utilizing works from the collection, included Japanese pigments, Whistler oils, Degas's painting pentimenti, Raphael drawings and related prints, a Jacques Stella painting, and materials analysis of a Ghirlandaio painting. Curatorial interns often worked in the laboratories on various substantive projects.

G. Activities Pursued: Technology-based Initiatives

Early in the CUAM program, several museums proposed projects involving collection databases, digital imaging campaigns, and publication on CD-ROM or the Web [Chicago, Cornell, Oberlin]. Harvard, Vassar, and Wellesley proposed more limited initiatives of this kind. The museums argued that having basic data and images of works in the collection readily available would be highly useful for faculty and students in making use of the museum's holdings, and for staff in meeting faculty requests. Mellon discouraged new technology projects and subsequent expansions of the original ones after it became apparent that the ambitious projects were depleting CUAM resources disproportionately in relation to the central goals of the initiative.

H. Activities Pursued: Special

Several additional activities deserve brief mention.

Williams instituted its Labeltalk exhibition program as a strategy to engage faculty outside the arts. A group of objects from the collection was chosen for display and faculty were invited to write about them. Three faculty-authored labels, written from different disciplinary perspectives, were mounted beside each work and replicated in the accompanying brochure. The program helped illuminate the debate about curatorial "voice," while also giving the surprisingly interested public some insight into what happens in a liberal arts institution. Over the years of the Mellon grants, nearly 40% of the faculty contributed label text. The program proved an effective way of drawing faculty members into the museum and beginning their "conversation" with works of art. Many who originally came to the museum through Labeltalk came back to explore possibilities of teaching from the collection. These shows also brought in students who might not otherwise have visited the museum and gave them insights into how to consider tangible objects through various disciplinary lenses.

At Bowdoin, a program called RSVP, similar to Labeltalk, has been undertaken three times. Staff select an exhibition from the photography collection on a general theme (children, transportation) and invited respondents are asked to choose a work about which to write. The exhibition is hung with the commentaries of the respondents. "Faculty learn from other faculty and see their colleagues in new ways," explained the director.

At Smith, the museum's campus-wide examination of the creative process addressed a request by a faculty committee for intellectual endeavors that would engage students across

majors, residential houses, and class years. Studio faculty members each selected a faculty partner to document in some form (text, poetry, video, etc.) the process by which they created a series of related works. *Idea<>Form*, an exhibition at the museum and its associated catalogue, presented both the art and the faculty partner's response. During the same semester, outside speakers examined the nature of the creative process in the sciences and social sciences, and several courses engaged this discussion. Presentations by faculty of their music, dance, and poetry compositions, with explanations of their creative processes, and visits to faculty artists' studios carried the conversation further. Smith also established an annual prize for the best student essay on a work in the collection, as an incentive to encourage students to develop critical skills in response to original works of art.

I. Activities Pursued: Staffing

Many of the museums augmented their staffs, recognizing that their existing staff could not manage all the activities the CUAM initiative would generate. Some museums hired additional preparators or print room staff to help manage the flow of objects used in teaching [Smith, Rutgers]. Short-term cataloguers were hired to work on collection databases [Chicago, Cornell, Rutgers, Oberlin] and digital image campaigns [Chicago, Cornell]. Emory used Mellon funds to hire conservation staff. Over half of the CUAM museums created a "curriculum coordinator" position, responsible for serving as a liaison with faculty and students and facilitating the use of the collection in teaching. [Both Cornell and Dartmouth had established the position before the CUAM program was established.]

The title, level of academic preparation, and term of appointment for the "curriculum coordinator" varied from museum to museum. Bowdoin, for example, hired a series of recent graduates for one- (later two-) year stints as Mellon Curatorial Intern. They found that recent graduates had a good rapport with current undergraduates and, knowing many faculty members at first hand, were successful in persuading them to work with the collections. Faculty, in turn, took a mentoring attitude toward these young coordinators, seeing it as part of their role to help them make the transition from student to junior professional. At the other end of the spectrum, RISD and Chicago hired a Ph.D. with a track record of research and publication who could immediately be perceived as a young faculty peer. Smith opted to redefine its senior Curator of Education as having responsibility for its primary audience—faculty and students—and hired an Associate Curator of Education to work with family and school audiences.

Although interviewees at several universities said that the Ph.D. was an important credential in initially establishing the credibility of the coordinator, after only a short while it became clear that a welcoming personality, broad familiarity with the collection, energy, and openness to ideas were also important qualities for a successful coordinator.

Terms of the "curriculum coordinators" varied from fixed periods (one year, two or three) to open-ended appointments; and titles were also diverse, including Coordinator of Academic Programs, Academic Liaison, Coordinator of the Mellon Project and Special Programs, Associate Curator for Academic Programs, etc. Several of the positions began as part-time, but most became full-time over the course of the CUAM program.

V. Conclusion

The CUAM initiative was indeed transformative at the participating museums. As Mellon had hoped, the program gave rise to widespread reexamination of mission and priorities, and a consensus that contributing actively to the core academic agenda of their colleges and universities should be the primary focus. Led by directors who embraced this newly articulated objective, and often with advice from faculty members, the museums each defined creative ways to engage faculty and students in learning from their collections. Staff and space were allocated to this purpose, even though this often meant reducing some other area of the museum's endeavor. The change in orientation was systemic, and the new approach came to affect nearly all members of the museum staff.

Through internships and fellowships, courses, symposia and exhibition development projects, faculty and students from many disciplines incorporated close examination of original works of art into their teaching, research, and learning and were energized by the experience. The museums came to be seen as central to the educational endeavor, as "players" with an active role on campus, rather than as marginal luxuries. Administrators came to understand that their campus museums were valuable resources for the academic mission. Indeed, they were frequently forthcoming with additional support or with permission to raise outside funds to strengthen the museum's academic initiatives. Donors developed a deeper understanding of the distinctive role of a campus museum, and many were motivated to help underwrite that endeavor. As a result, the CUAM institutions emerged at the end of Mellon's program with a clear sense of direction, a genuine relevance to the educational process on their campuses, a new band of enthusiasts for what works of art can teach, and improved financial health.

It is reasonable to expect that the CUAM program will have positive long-term effects. The many individuals who have benefited from close scholarly association with original works of art through this program--whether as faculty members, museum curators, educators, or students--will carry that experience forward and incorporate it into whatever they do in the future. Additionally, many of today's students will become tomorrow's faculty members and museum professionals; they will remember the impact of learning from original works of art and will attempt to replicate that experience for their own students and future museum visitors.

The Mellon Foundation has recognized that the best campus museums are uniquely positioned to contribute to the core academic goals of a liberal arts education through their approaches to scholarship and their engagement with complex interdisciplinary issues, and by demonstrating that original works of art demand and foster the most rigorous critical thinking. While campus museums are not in general financially strong, they benefit from the wealth of remarkable works of art, as well as faculty members, students, and library research facilities that surround them. These associations connect the museum to rich ideas from a variety of disciplines, bringing added meaning to their collections and programs. By engaging fully with the academic program of their colleges or universities, the most effective campus museums thus serve as models for the museum field and as stimulating training grounds for future citizens of all kinds, as well as for academics and museum professionals.

VI. Afterword

It is our firm belief, after conducting this evaluation, that most college and university museums can benefit from the Mellon initiative and can replicate many of the same outcomes on their own campuses, even without the stimulus of a Mellon grant. The museums will be richly rewarded by embracing the central, academic mission of their college or university. The following points are offered as possible directions to consider:

- Examine the mission and priorities. Are you a “teaching museum” based on a college or university campus? If so, who is your primary audience?
- If you conclude that faculty and students should be your primary audience, allocate your available resources accordingly. It may be necessary to reduce some other aspect of your endeavor. Don’t promise more than you can deliver.
- Leadership from the top is essential. The changes reverberating from your new endeavors will affect most or all of the museum’s staff, and it is important that the changes be embraced at the highest levels in order that they can become systemic.
- Involve faculty in your discussions about how best to encourage academic use of the museum’s collections and exhibitions. Many museums found it useful to name a faculty advisory committee.
- If at all possible, designate a “curriculum coordinator” to serve as liaison with faculty and students and to facilitate their use of the collection in teaching. Find a space where objects from storage can be examined by students and faculty, singly or in classes.
- Talk to colleagues at other college and university museums about what they have tried and found successful, recognizing that every campus is different. You will need to devise initiatives that respond to the particularities of your local situation.
- Start by working with those who are the most eager to work with you, flexible and understanding. Save the difficult cases for later, when you have a record of success.
- Don’t be afraid to fail. If something isn’t working, analyze the reasons and drop it or change it. Evaluate your successes, too, to understand what features to keep and build on. Involve the administration and faculty in evaluation.
- Allow enough time for the results to emerge. Systemic change doesn’t come about quickly.
- Plan for the long-term sustainability of the most successful aspects of your initiatives.