

**ACRL/IRIG Visual Literacy Standards Task Force Open Meeting  
ALA Midwinter 2011, February 16, 2011 (virtual)  
Meeting Minutes**

**Task Force Members:** Denise Hattwig (chair), Joanna Burgess, Kaila Bussert, Ann Medaille

**In attendance:**

Virginia Allison, Joan Beaudoin, Stephanie Beene, Angie Beiringer, Barbara Blummer, Ann Breitenwischer, Sherrie Brittig, Joanna Burgess, Kaila Bussert, Sean Connin, Jane Darcovich, Julia Deal, Kathleen DeLaurenti, Kim Detterbeck, Carrie Donovan, Marcia Dursi, Kim Edwin, Elizabeth Evans, Ilene Frank, Rosemary Franklin, Leslie Fried, Jackie Fritz, Leigh Gates, Kimberly Gay, Heather Glaser, Richard Graham, Denise Hattwig, Karen Holt, Trudy Jacoby, Bill Kelm, Robin Leech, Kathleen Lonbom, Peggy McBride, Ann Medaille, Elizabeth Meyer, Liz Muller, Barbara Natanson, Amelia Nelson, Ellen Petraits, Mark Pompelia, Wayne Pricer, Peter Reid, Shilpa Rele, Denise Rosenblatt, Chris Schafer, Rebecca Shows, Sharon Simes, Loanne Snavelly, Tara Spies Smith, Linda St. Clair, Kristin Strohmeyer, Rhonda Super, Holly Tomren

**Minutes:** Ann Medaille

**Standards Discussion:**

Denise opened the meeting with a discussion about the Introduction to the standards and an invitation for general comments. Ilene commented that she liked the inclusion of “creation” in the standards. Amelia liked the open introduction with its connection to broader society. Stephanie liked the fact that the standards were less art-centric, with more emphasis on contemporary culture, as well as the emphasis on evaluation and critical thinking. Sherrie wanted to know where these skills would be learned – in art classes or the library? She asked if the standards were something that needs to be addressed collaboratively or through the libraries. Julia thought that art students already had a high degree of VL.

Loanne asked whether a person can be VL without creating images? Stephanie said that in her institution, emphasis is mostly placed on critique and evaluation, while Ilene felt that this document was not about creating images, but it emphasized a few basic creation skills. Joanna explained that creation is an important component – you have to be able to create to add content. Denise pointed out that creating images includes things like creating concept maps and sketching out ideas. Discussion continued about the degree of creation skills needed to be VL.

Julia mentioned that people are living in a visual world and that VL skills are part of natural development. She mentioned map reading and reading facial expressions. Denise explained that the VL standards do not venture into areas such as reading facial expressions because they are specifically focused on representations.

The discussion of creation veered into the topic of digital literacy. Joanne pointed out that technology/digital skills can’t necessarily be separated from the creation process.

Sean wanted to know whether the cognitive aspects of viewing had been considered, as well as the interaction between visual material and text. Denise explained that the interaction between text and visual materials is addressed in the standards.

Stephanie felt that the hardest part of VL comes with “understanding ethical, legal, social, and economic issues surrounding creation and use.” Denise felt that these concepts can be introduced in ways that are not overwhelming; Trudy agreed. There was much discussion about ways to teach ethical issues to students and faculty. Jackie suggested using LibGuides to teach information about copyright and Creative Commons. Ellen suggested teaching images like citing text. Joanna felt that faculty are often appreciative when copyright is introduced into an instruction session.

Marcia thought it was important to include something about visual learning and literacy as a way of understanding information, but Joanna and Denise mentioned that learning styles are not addressed in the standards.

Sherrie felt that Standard 4 did not address the ways that mass media influence our thinking as a society. Denise and Joanna felt that some of these issues were touched on in Standards 3 and 4, although mass media was not explicitly mentioned. Jackie felt that the standards should include something about the impact of visuals on society. Peter suggested that some media skills such as assessing the impact of media on society may be more appropriate to media/communication studies.

Sean commented that the word “images” implied a static representation and wondered how the standards spoke more broadly to the range of visual media. Denise said that the standards should address both static and moving images, and she welcomed suggestions about ways that moving images could be better incorporated throughout the standards. Sharon said that she was comfortable with the term “visual materials” and equated it with both static and moving images.

Marcia wanted to know the extent to which the VL standards should mirror the IL standards. Denise explained that the VL standards mirror the IL standards and use some of the same language, but are still different.

Elizabeth objected to standard 3.1.a (looking and observing details) and felt that it was redundant with other learning outcomes. Denise explained that the processes of looking and seeing were discussed extensively in the literature. Marcia agreed that this was very important and that that students need to learn how to observe.

Loanne thought that Standard 3 was a good place to address “hidden messages.” Ilene thought that a phrase like “recognizing point of view or bias” should be added. Stephanie thought that original intent is important.

Loanne wanted to make sure that Standard 2 was open to image search systems that were more image based rather than text based. Denise explained that specific details had sometimes been left out to allow for changing technologies. Kathleen liked the open language of the standards.

Sean felt that Standard 5.1 seemed too broad. Denise explained how it was distinguished from the other PIs. Loanne felt that “scholarly projects” in 5.3 was too narrow and suggested that it say “scholarly and other projects” to emphasize lifelong learning. Marcia wanted to remove 5.3.a because it can’t be addressed in a library instruction session.

**Implementation and Assessment Discussion:**

Discussion then moved on to implementation. Participants talked about working with faculty in different ways. Rhonda suggested working with faculty to develop assignments that used data visualization. Stephanie mentioned infographics. Participants talked about working with art and non-art faculty and interdisciplinary approaches to implementation. Denise said that implementation would be the next step in this process, and Joanna noted that measurement is important too, but that it was a different piece from implementation. Faculty may not be able to take that on – can librarians help? Denise suggested using rubrics based on the standards or having students do self-assessment/reflection. Stephanie suggested sharing project ideas through the blog or listserv.

The participants then talked about other ways to spread the word about the VL standards, such as CAA, ARLIS, and the Journal of Visual Literacy.