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FORT HAYS
STATE
UNIVERSITY

PROPOSAL FOR A
DIGITIZATION, EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, AND
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
PARTNERSHIP
WITH THE
HARRY S. TRUMAN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

FORSYTH LIBRARY

Forward Thinking. World Ready.

FORSYTH LIBRARY DIGITIZATION, EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, and CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT PROPOSAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forsyth Library supports the mission and vision of Fort Hays State University by providing responsible stewardship for knowledge-based resources and access to the scholarly materials. To build on this focus, the Library has increased its efforts to carefully and systematically digitize primary resource materials. The carefully-planned enhancement of those efforts has included acquiring additional equipment and the addition of professionals to the Library staff.

Digitization at Forsyth Library encompasses internal collections as well as external partnerships with museums and historic societies. The digitization of internal collections has allowed Forsyth Library to offer public access to University Special Collections and Archives such as the Lyman Dwight Wooster glass slide collection, the Benjamin Franklin Letters, the FHSU Master's Thesis collection, and the FHSU Art Collection. External partnerships have enabled museums such as the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, Kansas, the Sternberg Museum of Natural History, and historical societies such as the Stafford County Historical Society to allow public access to rare and historic documents such as the AS-204 investigation flow charts and diagrams.

Given its expertise and experience with digitization projects, Forsyth Library proposes a digitization, educational opportunities, and civic engagement partnership project with the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum. The project will cover the training and placement of an FHSU graduate assistant as an intern at the Truman Library and the on-site digitization of selected Student Research Files by the intern. Forsyth Library proposes to align these efforts with the needs of the Truman Library, with the needs of Fort Hays State University's American Democracy Project and Seven Revolutions course, and with many of the overall objectives of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

The alignment of needs between the University and the Truman Library and Museum also establishes the foundation for an institutional relationship based on educational opportunities and civic engagement. Positive outcomes from this type of relationship could occur through representatives from the Truman Library and Museum offering presentations at the University, scholarly presentations by University faculty at the Truman Library and Museum, the use of Truman Library and Museum digitized archives within educational toolsets available for use by other institutions involved in the American Democracy Project, and the possible display of University-owned displays that promote civic literacy at the Truman Museum and Library.

Forsyth Library proposes to establish this project through the use of existing OOE funds and through funds allocated through the University and private sponsors. Given the approval of the participants, the appointment of a graduate assistant as an intern and the project may begin as early as Fall 2011.

RATIONALE AND VISION FOR THE PARTNERSHIP

As academic libraries in general—and Forsyth Library in particular—become increasingly fluent in the art of digitization, the opportunities for providing access to knowledge resources continue to increase. This emphasis allows scholars to gain access to an incredible breadth of rare and historic documents. In addition, the capability to engage in collaborative research and digitization projects with other libraries and museums offers an opportunity for academic libraries to become not only knowledge stewards but also essential locations for prompting students and faculty to participate in civic engagement and democracy.

While the partnership between Forsyth Library and the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library has a basis in digitization, the rationale for the partnership goes beyond preservation and access. Indeed, the rationale builds from the desire of both libraries to utilize digital objects for educational purposes. Forsyth Library and Fort Hays State University believe that already digitized and soon-to-be digitized objects owned by the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library will enhance students' understanding of governance, leadership, and decision-making. As students participate in courses such as the Seven Revolutions, their studies about future trends should have a firm basis in an understanding of past decisions that affected policies, governance, and national and international relationships.

The rationale for the partnership also builds from the heartfelt desire of the staff of both libraries and the faculty, students, and administration of the University to promote a larger understanding and participation in democracy. Establishing a nurturing environment for civic engagement is a responsibility that academic and presidential libraries should readily assume. Forsyth Library and the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library have an opportunity to promote civic engagement through the scholarly discussion of topics that took center stage during the Truman Presidency and remain in the spotlight today.

Although this proposal speaks about a partnership between Forsyth Library, the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, and Fort Hays State University, the rationale should reach towards a vision that includes the capability of multiple academic institutions to encourage participation in the 21st century democracy. As an example, the combination of digitization, educational opportunities, and civic engagement could involve the sharing of reusable learning objects that contain video, audio, text, and photographs between institutions. Thus, the project provides the opportunity for FHSU and Forsyth Library to fundamentally re-conceptualize commonly-held roles.

Democracy and Civic Engagement

The digitization of archives held by the Presidential Library and the use of those digital objects in teaching also establishes the environment for participation in the 21st century democracy and a further understanding of civic engagement by University faculty, staff, and students. Scholarly review of the governance of the Truman Administration and a comparison between the challenges faced by the Truman Presidency and present-day challenges may provide the basis for larger discussions. A considered study of the events that influenced President Truman's leadership style and policy-making may provoke a greater overall understanding of leadership and power. With this, Forsyth Library has the opportunity to provide a unique place for civic engagement.

All this points toward the leadership role that academic libraries—and Forsyth Library in particular—should have for the promotion of civic literacy. Forsyth Library should work with the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum staff to present engaging programs about consistent problems that confront democracy. These programs should identify methods for assisting students about finding and evaluating information essential for critical thinking. Because Forsyth Library has become immersed in the Learning Commons philosophy, the contemplation of deliberative democracy within the facility becomes a natural step.

With this, Forsyth Library should work closely with the Truman Library to foster critical thinking and considered conversations about a broad range of topics in support of the American Democracy Project. Given the overall objectives of an academic library, this sponsorship should address informational and controversial topics. This sponsorship should allow faculty, staff, students, and the community to engage in thoughtful discussions that deepen our understanding about diverse opinions. Whether Forsyth Library adopts methods such as Study Circles or Conversation Cafes, the opportunity exists to allow experts, students, faculty, and the community to interact and become part of participative democracy. Librarians have a natural place in this opportunity because of the need to guide research and participation by students.

This proposal suggests that the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum could have a role similar to that of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in their work with academic institutions to promote civic engagement. A partnership between Forsyth Library and the Truman Library and Museum could strengthen participation in the University's Constitution Day, voter registration, and voter education activities. The partnership could also result in the establishment of a Truman speaker series, the presentation of a series of cooperative forums that promote active discussions about civic literacy, and the showing of University-owned displays at the Truman Library that would show rare and historic documents while promoting civic engagement and service to our country.

DEFINING GOALS, ASSESSMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION

Internship, Digitization, and Educational Opportunity Goals

The initial goal for the proposed partnership involves the placement of a Fort Hays State University graduate or undergraduate student at the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library as an archival intern. Within those responsibilities, the intern will:

- digitize Student Research Files,
- describe photographs,
- preserve photographs and manuscripts, and
- author lesson plans related to the information contained within the Student Research Files

Forsyth Library staff will work closely with the FHSU Graduate School, the sponsoring FHSU academic department, and the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library staff to establish the appropriate criteria for the internship. While the University will advertise and interview for the position, the Truman Library staff will also interview and have the final hiring decision. Placement of the intern will occur during the 2011 Fall semester. The internship will last a maximum of 8 weeks with the intern working 32 to 40 hours per week for a total of 256 to 320 hours.

One part of the internship has the purpose of assisting the Truman Library with the digitization of archives found within Student Research Files. Forsyth Library staff will provide initial training about digitization standards and best practices as well as assist the sponsoring academic in evaluating the success of the internship. The sponsoring academic department will have the responsibility for defining learning outcomes. All digitized objects will remain as property of the Truman Library.

Educational Opportunities

Forsyth Library and Fort Hays State University faculty and staff will work with the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum staff to identify digital objects that will assist with teaching about President Truman's leadership style and decisions, and the effect of Truman Administration policies. This proposal requests that the Truman Library staff provide permission

for use of the digital objects and that the University share any adaptation of the objects with the Truman Library. The Presidential Library will receive credit for use of the objects.

The Truman Library digital objects hold great significance within the context of the Seven Revolutions project and the Seven Revolutions course taught at FHSU. Although the Seven Revolutions project has the primary objective of identifying and analyzing the key policy challenges that face policymakers and leaders into the year 2025, that identification and analysis cannot occur without the study of the impact of past policies, decisions, and strategies. Any attempt to foster strategic thinking about long-term trends has a basis in dimensional thought.

When considering the challenges that affect strategic thinking into the year 2025, the Seven Revolutions project focuses on:

- Population
- Resource management and environmental stewardship
- Technological innovation and diffusion
- The development and dissemination of information and knowledge
- Economic integration
- The nature and mode of conflict, and
- The challenge of governance

A quick look at the Truman Library's Student Research Files discloses that parallels exist those files and the Seven Revolutions focus. The following list shows a sample of the Student Research File topics that align with the Seven Revolutions trends:

- Planning for the Postwar World: President Truman at the Potsdam Conference, July 17-August 2, 1945.
- The Attempt to Achieve Stable Economic Growth During the Truman Administration.
- The Fair Deal-President Truman's Vision of the American Future.
- The Development of an Energy Policy During the Truman Administration.
- President Truman's Fight for National Health Insurance, 1949-53.
- Creating a New Balance of Power: The Integration of Western Europe.

The use of digital objects may have a far-reaching impact in the educational environment if those objects become integrated into open source reusable learning objects or RLOs. The impact of RLOs becomes apparent through the grouping of text, audio, video, and image files within a multimedia package. Academic institutions may use "reusable" learning objects for different contextual needs, courses, or programs. Open source reusable learning objects allow the sharing of the multimedia packages. After having developed the RLOs with the assistance and approval of the Truman Library, FHSU and Forsyth Library proposes the sharing of the RLOs with other academic institutions involved in the Seven Revolutions project and the American Democracy project.

Other Educational opportunities may also involve personal presentations by the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum staff at the University or the use of video or audio

presentations by the Presidential Library in University courses. Additional educational opportunities may occur through on-site research at the Presidential Library by University faculty and students. Each of these activities should have the overall goal of increasing learner outcomes and increasing student engagement and satisfaction.

Assessment

Faculty and staff representing Fort Hays State University will work closely with the Truman Library and Museum staff to:

- set annual objectives for the partnership,
- define key performance indicators that describe the progress towards objectives,
- reviewing the satisfaction of the intern with the project and objectives,
- reviewing the satisfaction of the sponsoring academic department and University with the project and objectives, and
- reviewing the satisfaction of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum staff with the project and objectives.

Implementation

This proposal requests that the internship portion of the project begin during the Fall semester of the 2011 academic year. Given this timeline, formal interviews for the internship will occur during the late Spring 2011 semester. Training for the intern at the Forsyth Library facility will occur during the Summer 2011 semester. The internship will occur from late September through mid-November 2011. During the internship period, the FHSU intern will work with the Truman Library and Museum staff Monday through Thursday. The intern will have time for personal research and writing on the Friday of each week. Although the intern will not receive a salary for work completed at the Truman Library and Museum, the University will provide a stipend that will cover living expenses that include travel, lodging, and food.

The proposal also exists that work begin on the educational opportunities portion of the project during the Fall 2011 semester. When approved by the Truman Library and Museum staff, University faculty and staff will have an opportunity to begin work with materials held by the Museum for the creation of reusable learning objects. In addition, staff from the University and the Truman Library and Museum will begin conceptual work on a speaker series, the display of

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University-owned archives, and possible civic engagement activities during the late Spring 2011 semester.

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