The Kress Fellows for Applied Research project at the Ackland Art Museum has provided three graduate students, from the Art Department, the School of Education, and the School of Library and Information science, with unique opportunities to collaborate in a museum environment and to learn ways in which seemingly different professions can benefit from working together. The collaborative effort is the topic of this case study examining driving forces and motivations for collaboration between information professionals, educators, museums, and other interested parties. Many instances of collaboration are driven by shared administration, interests or values as defined by Günter Waibel in his work entitled Collaboration Contexts: Framing Local, Group and Global Solutions, which offered the basis for analysis of previous collaborative efforts involving libraries, museums, and educators and also sheds light on the current collaborative project taking place at the Ackland Art Museum.

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KRESS FELLOWS FOR APPLIED RESEARCH AT THE ACKLAND ART MUSEUM: A CASE STUDY OF COLLABORATION

by
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Introduction

Collaboration has become a popular phrase in Library circles in recent years as digital collections have developed and funding sources have promoted partnerships between different organizations. Similarly, the role of a librarian has morphed into a more technical position dealing with a vast array of resources far beyond books. In an ever changing information landscape, how can information professionals find ways to collaborate with professionals in other disciplines to reach broader audiences and further facilitate the dissemination of information? By looking at examples of successful collaboration projects across the profession, and exploring in detail an ongoing collaborative effort at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, it will become possible to identify trends in professional collaboration and consider applications of collaborative efforts more broadly within the information profession.

Many motivating factors are often behind collaborative efforts and identifying variables that serve as common motivators can improve both the understanding and implementation of collaboration. While each project is different, many projects are similarly driven by funding and objective. By further exploring the role of funding in collaborative projects it may be possible to identify how to solicit funding for upcoming projects or how to design a project based around potential financial support. Just as the availability of funding can encourage or direct a collaborative project, a lack of funding can also lead to the need for collaboration in order to accomplish desired goals.
Beyond the elements of funding, collaboration projects involve groups or individuals joining together to accomplish something. Patterns can be identified in the nature of the groups that gather and the specifics of desired accomplishments. Exploring professional resources that discuss reasons behind certain types of collaboration will make it possible to then examine particular instances of collaboration based upon established criteria. The close examination of instances of collaboration will allow for more observable patterns and themes to emerge.

Upon identifying common themes and trends in collaborative projects, it will be possible to delve into a current collaborative project taking place at the Ackland Art Museum on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Considering past trends in collaboration at the museum, current funding resources, and determining how the project fits in with the established patterns and themes of collaboration will offer a lens for future analysis of similar collaborative project. Additionally, such an in depth exploration will allow and for further enhancement of current collaborative efforts as well as upcoming instances of collaboration at the Ackland Art Museum.
Review of Literature and Previous Instances of Collaboration

Funding: A Driving Force

Within the last fifteen years, a common trend in academic settings has been for libraries, museums, and archives to come together to make resources more widely accessible. In order to understand trends towards collaboration in libraries and museums, it is vital to recognize the driving force behind many collaborative efforts: funding. Some collaborative projects have been developed in order to gain grant funding for various projects and other collaborative efforts are attempts at pooling resources in efforts to cut costs. After recognizing trends in funding for collaboration, it will be possible to consider other significant themes in collaborative projects. As proposed by Gunter Waibel, collaborative efforts are often based upon common administration, common interest, and common value (Waibel 2010). Considering how these themes come into play by looking at examples of various collaborative projects will offer a framework for considering underlying themes and motivations for collaborative efforts.

Though not the only source of funding for collaborative projects, the Institute of Museum and Library Services has been a significant contributor to collaborative projects in the library and museum field for more than a decade. Since the founding of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, more often referred to as the IMLS, in 1996, the federal agency has lent its support to the 122,000 libraries and more than 17,500 museums across the United States. According to the IMLS homepage, “the mission of IMLS is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and
cultural and civic engagement,” (Institute of Museum and Library Services 2012). According to a 2004 article by Liz Bishoff, “more than half of the IMLS grants awarded in 2000 went to collaborative initiatives, which private foundations encourage as well,” (Bishoff 2004). For example, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has offered its support to collaborative projects since early in the 1990s and the Kress Foundation also encourages applicants to consider incorporating collaboration into grant proposals. Bringing together individuals and institutions from different fields can certainly enhance or expand services for traditional and changing audiences.

While the IMLS cannot be credited with beginning collaborative efforts, its National Leadership Grants led to a tremendous increase in collaboration between libraries and cultural heritage institutions such as museums and historical societies. Offering valuable resources to institutions can certainly serve as a motivator for applicants. According to the 2010 National Leadership Grants Grant Program Guidelines produced by the IMLS, National Leadership Grants “support projects that have the potential to elevate museum, archival, and library practice within the context of national strategic initiatives” (Institute of Museum and Library Services 2010, 8). The IMLS looks for three main characteristics in grant proposals: strategic impact, innovation, and collaboration. In terms of collaboration, the Program Guidelines say “While partners are not required in all NLG categories, the Institute has found that involving carefully chosen partners with complementary competencies and resources can create powerful synergies that extend project impact,” (Institute of Museum and Library Services 2010, 8). Successful collaboration certainly holds the potential to broaden the impact of projects as new audiences and resources are brought together.
Allen and Bishoff explored instances of Library, Archives and Museum (LAM) collaboration where IMLS funding supported the projects. In 2001 Nancy Allen was serving as dean and director at University of Denver, and Liz Bishoff was serving as project director at the Colorado Digitization Project. The two worked together on the Colorado Digitization Project and also explored other IMLS funded Academic Library and museum collaboration. “The IMLS presented these communities with incentives to develop joint projects, and to work together to create ways of better meeting common goals and purposes, of creating better and more accessible collections that meet the needs of a knowledge society,” (Allen and Bishoff 2001, 61). When funding is scarce and the pressure to make collections more widely available increases, institutions are often motivated to form or adapt projects based upon criteria established by funding sources such as the IMLS.

**Understanding Common Administration, Common Interest, and Common Value**

Having established that funding is often an initiator for collaboration, it is important to further consider the motivations for collaborative efforts as projects are planned and implemented. Günter Waibel of OCLC Research wrote a short report for the Yours, Mine, Ours: Leadership Through Collaboration event in which he identified three collaboration contexts and common motivators. The report was entitled “Collaboration Contexts: Framing Local, Group, and Global Solutions” and introduced the ideas of common administration, interest and values. Waibel briefly defined and illustrated what was meant by each of these ideas in his report. Upon gaining an understanding of what is meant by common administration, common interest, and common value it will become
possible to use these themes to explore the interplay between these commonalities and instances of Library, Archive, and Museum and even educational collaboration.

Essentially, common administration refers to the idea that “We work together because we have the same employer.” Common interest is based upon the idea that “we work together because we have common interests.” Common value is based upon the idea that “things work at scale because the community subscribes to the same values” (Waibel 2010). These three themes of commonality were more widely discussed within the framework of collaborative environments. In terms of local collaboration, Waibel wrote “from the perspective of a large institution (e.g., a university campus) with many units (e.g., libraries, archives, and museums), incorporating collaboration into the underlying work culture is foundational to realizing that institution’s potential and achieving its mission,” (Waibel 2010, 4). It is vital to recognize the benefits of departments working together for the common good and to achieve the overarching goals of an institution.

Waibel then addressed group collaboration when he wrote the following, “because the local benefit of this type of collaboration can be readily perceived, common interest collaborations are generally accepted as a way to achieve broad outcomes,” (Waibel 2010, 5). He went on to address the challenges of common interest collaboration projects in the way that they require a great deal of planning and project management. Common interest collaboration can also become complicated when interests change and “commonalities may dissipate over time,” (Waibel 2010, 6).

Unlike common administration and common interest collaboration, common value collaboration shifts the focus from the institution or institutions involved to the
audience being served. Waibel wrote “collaboration around values is driven by a shared vision which allows an entire community to respond to challenges in a consistent manner, and invisibly aligns all of us in an effort to realize a shared vision,” (Waibel 2010, 6). Collaboration offers the potential for successful projects that accomplish much more by working together than ever would have been available without combined efforts. Ultimately, Waibel concluded that “finding the appropriate collaboration context for a given challenge, and building relationships along the continuum so all parties derive the maximum benefit, are hallmarks of successful long-term collaborations,” (Waibel 2010, 8).

As mentioned previously, Waibel’s report stood as the basis for the Yours, Mine, Ours: Leadership Through Collaboration event held at the Smithsonian Institution in September of 2010. The event offered a way to continue to build upon the success of the workshops that the OCLC had held in 2007-2008. Topics discussed included the importance of strong leadership in collaborative efforts with Waibel’s three common themes used to direct the conference Waibel’s report for the conference took the idea of collaboration beyond the walls of single institutions and explored local, group and global solutions to collaboration. The event was endorsed by the Joint SAA, ALA, and AAM Committee on Archives, Libraries & Museums (CALM) and serves as a sign that collaborative efforts are being supported by a broad range of cultural institutions and their professional organizations. This event was developed and offered as a free event that could be attended in person, or by way of streaming video that could be watched remotely at any time. This further demonstrates an interest in collaboration and the importance of collaborative efforts within the information services fields of libraries,
archives, and museums and other cultural heritage institutions. While collaboration takes work, combining efforts and resources generates the potential for a greater impact and increased success in reaching desired audiences. Information professionals can greatly benefit from a discussion of not just what collaboration is or why it happens, but how professionals should go about planning and implementing collaborative efforts in varied environments.

Waibel’s report for the Yours, Mine, Ours conference was in part the result of work he had been doing with OCLC to explore the potential for collaboration at various universities and institutions. In 2007, Yale University held a day-long meeting for “sixteen representatives of various Yale University libraries, archives and museums” to discuss and explore collaborative opportunities (Zorich 2007, 2). The study at Yale was conducted as a part of a larger, two year, five institution series of LAM (Libraries Archives and Museums) workshops held at RGL Partner institutions during 2007 and 2008. In addition to meeting summaries, findings from these workshops have been published in the report Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives, and Museums by Diane M. Zorich, Gunter Waibel and Ricky Erway of OCLC Research.

Common Administration Collaboration

A clear example of common administration collaboration can be seen by considering the meeting held at Yale University where libraries, museums, and archives came together to improve services. While some efforts towards collection collaboration were successful at Yale prior to the 2007 meeting, the LAM community at Yale sought to
develop a plan for sustainable collaboration that was not associated with a specific project or funding source. The initial push for collaboration came to Yale with the Collections Collaborative program funded by the Mellon Foundation. The Mellon funded program was aimed at improving access to and increasing use of collections in Yale’s libraries, archives, and museums. Meeting participants considered past collaborative efforts at Yale and also identified and discussed current collaborations taking place at Yale. They considered motivations for collaboration, obstacles, and a vision for the future before digging into details of implementation and structuring the collaboration.

Working to collaborate within a single institution requires absolute support from the libraries, archives and museums involved and from administrative offices and policy makers across campus. While common administration may be the initiator for collaboration, it is important that collaborative projects can maintain support from administrators. In academic settings, administrative support can be gained by demonstrating that shared goals for university success are at play and that resources can be combined to increase the potential impact of services. For example, the meeting summary produced by Yale identifies the need for changes in the university’s funding approach, organizational hierarchy, and lack of communication between university committees. In addition to these administrative changes, the report also points to integrating collections into teaching and founding a “Yale Federation of Collections” to help identify overarching priorities and serve as the voice of all libraries, archives and museums across campus (Zorich 2007). Library and museum services and resources needed to be more closely aligned with university goals and objectives.
The motivations behind past collaboration at Yale have generally focused on the potential to better serve collections, researchers, the University mission, and to share resources to accomplish goals with limited funding. In the fall of 2011, Yale’s new University Librarian began restructuring the library system to streamline access to digital collections and to develop a centralized system that will simplify workflow and reduce duplication of efforts (Gorman 2011). The goals of improving access and reducing expenses seem to be common themes within collaborative projects across Yale’s campus and beyond. Yale’s collaborative efforts stand as an example of common administration collaboration and also demonstrate how a need to decrease spending can impact collaborative efforts.

Much like trends at Yale to move towards collaboration on campus, the University of Kansas has begun to value LAM collaboration across its campus. The approach to collaboration has been unique, however. Brian Rosenblum, Associate Librarian for Digital Scholarship at the KU Libraries spent a semester as the Keeler Family Intra-University Professor. During this semester, Rosenblum was able to set aside his departmental responsibilities in the Libraries and devoted his time to the Spencer Museum of Art. He wrote a report that detailed his experiences, the past of collaboration between the museum and libraries, and potential collaborative opportunities that he saw for the future. The Keeler Professorship offered Rosenblum the chance to take a closer look at the museum and allowed him to see ways in which the libraries could benefit from working with the museum as well as ways that the museum could benefit from working with libraries. During his Keeler semester, Rosenblum interacted with Spencer Museum of Art staff, contributed to an application for an IMLS grant to
manage the museum archives, and attended the “Yours, Mine, Ours: Leadership Through Collaboration” conference at the Smithsonian Institute.

The driving force for this collaborative project was clearly common administration, as Rosenblum was employed by the University of Kansas during his time in the libraries and during his time in the museums. It was because of that shared administration that Rosenblum was permitted to take a semester off from his normal departmental responsibilities in order to “enhance…knowledge of an academic specialty, broaden the depth of a defined field of study or start a new academic endeavor and promote collaboration across disciplines,” (Rosenblum 2010). His experience helped him to identify ways in which the libraries and the Spencer Art Museum could work together to support their own departmental missions and the mission of KU. Rosenblum was also exposed to personal and professional development opportunities that will have a lasting impact on his career.

Rosenblum’s main observation and recommendation was that long term relationships based upon collaboration would benefit the libraries and the museum more than short term, project based collaborative efforts. Building lasting relationships between the University of Kansas Libraries and the Spencer Art Museum could improve services offered to the campus community and could aid both parties in accomplishing independent institutional goals. As the university community benefits from collaborative resources and services, shared administration could recognize the value of the libraries and the museum and offer further support. The learning and collaboration that resulted from Rosenblum’s Keller Family Intra-University Professorship demonstrates what can be accomplished when university departments focus on building ties and working
together towards common missions of gaining approval from shared administration and
serving the entire university population.

**Common Interest Collaboration**

Allen and Bishoff, 2001, explored both risk and success factors for collaboration
by looking at four IMLS funded digitization projects. These projects all included at least
one university working with another cultural heritage institution of some sort. Unlike
collaborative efforts at Yale, these collaborators did not share common administration.
Rather, they shared common interest. Waibel pointed out that many grant funded
projects fall into the category of common interest as individuals or organizations realize
that they do not have the necessary resources to find solutions to an issue on their own.
Collaboration allows institutions to pool resources to work towards accomplishing a goal.
The projects that Allen and Bishoff explored include the Colorado Digitization Project,
the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s “Digital Cultural Heritage
Community,” the digitization project involving the University of Kansas Archive and the
Kansas State Historical Society, and the “Smart Web Exhibits” project developed by
Carnegie Mellon University Libraries, Carnegie Natural History Museum and the CMU
Computer Science Department. Although each project faced different challenges, a
common thread seen among all projects was that “in projects where partners have prior
experience working together, many of the risk factors have already been addressed,”
(Allen and Bishoff 2001, 67). Because project partners did not share common
administration, having worked together would have given partners a set of shared
experiences to draw from and would have reduced the importance of establishing clearly defined roles and responsibilities for involved parties.

In addition to considering past experience working together, Allen and Bishoff noticed that certain issues were common among all projects. While the size of projects influenced some risk factors, issues relating to mission and values had to be addressed regardless of the size of the project. Although a common interest was generally shared, each institution would have set its own priorities and expectations for the collaborative projects. It seems as though academic libraries and museums or other cultural heritage centers need to strive to see things from the perspective of partner institutions and consider issues from both sides in order to appreciate the diversity present in collaborative projects. Understanding institutional partners, or working to gain an understanding of and appreciation for partner institution(s) is key in successful common interest collaboration.

While collaboration between Libraries, Museums, and Archives draws a great deal of attention, and often funding from large sources, libraries have worked to build collaborative projects with other organizations and institutions as well. One event has learned how to bring together schools and Libraries, Museums, and Archives as the result of common interest. Kate Manuel argued that National History Day is a valuable resource that should be used to help students learn information skills to help them at any age. Manuel drew the following quote from the Blueprint for Collaboration to support her argument, “all educators – teachers, faculty, and librarians – share roles in helping students acquire information literacy skills effectively. Collaborative efforts that enhance the ability of these groups to fulfill their mission are imperative” (AASL/ACRL Task
Force on the Educational Role of Libraries 2006). The Blueprint for Collaboration Task Force was specifically focused on the inherent values of helping students in many different categories. National History Day emphasizes the importance of connecting students to primary resources. Teachers, librarians and archivists have a shared interest in facilitating connections between students and primary resources. Manuel went on to explore the ways in which National History day benefits students and helps them to learn skills through practical research application. The common interest shared between parties involved in National History Day is what allows for such an event to be orchestrated.

National History Day is made possible by teachers and librarians collaborating together to provide students with hands on experience with primary source research. As seen in common interest collaboration, individual parties would be unable to address an issue by themselves in the way that collaborators can together. Teachers would not otherwise be able to offer students the research experience, and librarians do not have ready access to reach out to middle school and high school students on a regular basis. Similarly, teachers cannot demonstrate the importance of using primary sources in conducting historical research without incorporating primary resources into the learning experience. Librarians can certainly provide unique services to enhance student learning and appreciation for research, especially when such instruction is in conjunction with other learning in educational environments. While National History Day takes a great deal of planning and management, it can have a remarkable impact on student learning that would not be otherwise achieved.
Common Value Collaboration

Collaborative efforts between teachers and librarians reach beyond events and into daily instruction as well. Librarians can be valuable members of school and teacher communities as they build relationships with teachers and students, and progress towards common goals. Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the role of librarians in educational environments and how librarians can impact student learning and success. Patricia Montiel-Overall conducted a qualitative study of teacher and librarian collaboration in which she explored twenty-first century changes that have led to increased librarian involvement with students and increased librarian collaboration with teachers.

Montiel-Overall framed her research by first establishing that “although traditionally school libraries have been considered integral to the physical culture of schools, their role in student academic success has only recently surfaces as an essential part of school cultures,” (Montiel-Overall 2008, 145-146). As teachers are spread thin and asked to do increasingly more with fewer resources, and as the demand on students to learn information literacy skills increases, librarians are becoming more directly involved in the learning process. While common administration has always been present in school/library collaborations, values have changed over time. Collaborative efforts between teachers and librarians demonstrate characteristics of both common administration and common value collaboration. With increased emphasis on student learning objectives and information literacy skills, teachers and librarians have found themselves sharing the common value of educating students. Throughout her study, she pointed to examples of librarians interacting with students to facilitate learning and she
reported that students reacted positively to the changes in instruction methods as learning moved away from traditional classroom learning. Montiel-Overall also pointed to studies that demonstrated “a strong relationship between student’s academic achievement and the school library,” (Montiel-Overall 2008). Improving academic achievement is essential in schools and librarians can offer instructional services and research assistance to help students develop competencies in information literacy while reducing the burden on teachers.

Collaboration between teachers and librarians requires a supportive work environment and a willingness to work together because of shared values. Montiel-Overall identified five major themes inherent in the collaborations that she explored. The themes of school culture and positive attributes of collaborators certainly get at the impact of shared administration and how things can be made easier when organizational culture leads to shared values among employees. The themes of communication, management, and motivation can be related to both common administration and common value. Shared administrators and policies lead to effective communication and management and shared motivations demonstrate an emphasis on a common value. Teacher and librarian motivation is likely driven by the common value placed on student learning and what students can gain from effective collaboration between teachers and librarians.

The need for strong relationships between librarians and teachers reaches beyond K-12 schools and into universities. James Hooks and Frank Corbett explored the ways in which teacher/librarian collaboration could increase information literacy and improve the success of students (Hooks and Corbett Jr. 2005). The study focused on the importance
of collaboration between Masters of Education faculty and university librarians to ensure that graduate students were truly learning and applying information literacy skills. The article identified major challenges in information literacy instruction as relating to the unfamiliarity and embarrassment of students and faculty when interacting with libraries and librarians. Another significant challenge in traditional information literacy teaching models is that one single instruction session at the library is not enough to leave a lasting impression. In order for students to learn and apply information literacy skills effectively, this study demonstrated that librarians need to be accessible and an integral part of the learning process. When it is clear that librarians are invested in the success of faculty and students, a common ground is reached and shared values can lead to increased learning.

By exploring the relationship of a librarian with faculty members and students, Hooks and Corbett were able to observe an improvement in the application of information literacy skills. Projects such as annotated bibliographies helped students to engage with databases and other library resources to critically assess and clearly communicate information on sources of interest to them. The university librarian was involved in the actual course instruction along with faculty for the duration of a course, rather than a onetime instruction session in the library. The teacher and librarian were equally invested in the success of students and the learning that could take place.

Fostering a relationship between the librarian and faculty and students in the Masters of Education program benefited all parties involved. Students and faculty gained an understanding of information literacy and were more able to conduct effective research as a result of working closely with the librarian. The librarian was able to
impart knowledge on how to take advantage of library resources, was able to teach information literacy skills, and demonstrated the value of the library and its services in a unique method of outreach. Hooks and Corbett wrote “Our experience with fully integrating the library and its resources into the ongoing Masters in Education cohort provides yet another model of how library resources can be effectively integrated into the academic curriculum,” (Hooks and Corbett Jr. 2005). Integrating library resources into the curriculum further establishes the value of librarians to academic programs and offers librarians additional methods of outreach while also benefiting students and faculty. Collaboration between librarians and educators can happen at any academic level and, if done successfully, benefits not only the students but also teachers and librarians as resources are combined and learning is enhanced. Shared administration and the common value placed on educating students provide the framework for successful collaboration between teachers and librarians.

Librarians are often trained in instruction and can help in teaching class sessions to various age groups. Teachers can also take advantage of the array of resources that librarians are able to identify for both instructor and student audiences. Because librarians are often associated with educational institutions in the same ways that teachers are, collaborative efforts can take place under the umbrella of shared administration. Shared administration often eases the burden of sorting out management and workflow issues that arise when collaborators come from different environments. Teachers and librarians often have common goals and can benefit from collaboration with one another in order to more effectively reach students. Librarians can become more familiar with the needs of students and teachers by interacting through collaborative projects.
Regardless of the environment in which collaboration takes place, it is essential for collaborators to be committed to the project and willing to work together towards a shared vision.

**Challenges and Risks Associated with Collaboration**

While considering what motivating factors can lead to collaboration, it is also important to consider challenges that can arise once collaborative projects are underway. Allen and Bishoff were able to identify challenges that each group of collaborators saw as they set out to work with one another to move towards common goals. They pointed to organizational culture differences and dissimilar interpretations of how work was to be accomplished. Upon examining four instances of IMLS funded collaborative grant projects, Allen and Bishoff identified common risk factors that emerged as themes. Risk factors included: knowledge-base, project complexity, internal project resistance, organizational culture, interpretation vs. identification, and differences in how libraries and museums view access. Many of these risk factors get at the fundamental differences between libraries and historical societies or museums. While cultural heritage institutions are interested in sharing artifacts and information of the past with visitors, libraries and museums have traditionally approached information management and dissemination in different ways. Allen and Bishoff did clarify that risk factors were unique for each project but “in projects where partners have prior experience working together, many of the risk factors had already been addressed” (Allen and Bishoff 2001, 9). Building lasting relationships among collaborators over time can certainly reduce challenges that
can arise in collaboration when groups are entirely unfamiliar with one another’s values and organizational cultural.

Allen and Bishoff were not the only researchers to recognize the risks that go along with collaboration. Although the IMLS is an avid supporter of collaborative projects, the institute is also aware of the risks associated with collaboration. The IMLS guidelines for National Leadership Grants explain that “proposals should show understanding of the challenges of collaboration and propose means for addressing them,” (Institute of Museum and Library Services 2010, 8). The IMLS is very clear that collaboration is not without its challenges. Institutions must be prepared to address challenges and issues that arise so projects can reach successful completion. While collaboration holds the potential to bring about great success, it also holds the potential for problems and challenges as organizations struggle between personal (institutional) objectives and striving for the collective goals of the collaborative project. Collaboration is not always easy and the IMLS is committed to funding successful projects, so it is important that they emphasize the need for effective communication and problem solving in collaborative efforts.

Emerging Themes

Having established different environments in which collaboration can take place such as libraries, museums, archives, and K-12, undergraduate, and graduate schools, it has been possible to explore instances of collaboration that fell into the three categories of common administration, common interest, and common value collaboration as introduced by Gunter Waibel in his report Collaboration Contexts: Framing Local,
Group and Global Solutions. Furthermore, challenges and risk factors associated with collaboration have been identified. Considering the role that grant funding often plays in collaboration has offered a basis for recognizing underlying motivators for collaborative efforts in multiple environments.

While each instance of collaboration is unique, trends and themes can be drawn from common administration, interest, and value collaborations. Common administration collaboration offers a set of shared institutional values that can ease the challenges of working with new groups and allows for clear project objectives, but often limits the reach of a collaborative project to within the walls of a single institution. Collaborating under shared interest is often associated with grant funded projects and allows for more to be accomplished by collaborators than could have been accomplished alone. Common interest collaboration projects can face personnel challenges as interests and resources change over time. Collaboration motivated by common values is not constrained by geography or resources, because the focus has shifted from the project itself, to serving a specific purpose or group. Common value collaboration attracts together people and institutions that are similarly motivated to collectively bring about change. Such abstract ideals associated with common value collaboration can be challenging to carry out, and projects may lose focus over time. Advantages and challenges can be associated with any type of collaboration, so it is important to consider what sort of collaborative effort might best fit a project and weigh the challenges against the benefits. Understanding how funding can be an initiator for projects and how shared administrators, interests, or values serve as a motivator has offered a lens for examining a collaborative project at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
Collaboration at the Ackland Art Museum

First, we will consider the history of collaborative projects at the Ackland Art Museum and explore the role of funding in past and current projects. Then we will identify elements of common administration, interests, and values that are shared within the framework of the current collaborative project. Upon discussing elements of the current collaborative project, finally we will explore challenges that arose with this collaborative project and actions that can be taken to improve the project in the future. Additionally, this case study of the collaborative project known as the *Kress Fellows for Applied Research* at the Ackland Art Museum can serve as a point of reference for future collaborative efforts elsewhere.

The Ackland Art Museum is currently collaborating with students in three different departments across UNC’s campus to enhance awareness of collection materials and to support the university’s mission of research. The project is entitled the *Kress Fellows for Applied Research* and has brought together three graduate students and staff at the Ackland Art Museum to conduct in depth research and develop resources for art historians, K-12 educators, the general public and visitors of the Ackland both online and in person (Allmendinger and Kass 2011). The project is currently in a scaled down, trial year, but expects to expand next year and continue into the future. Lessons learned this year will be included in the next grant application and will be used to improve the project’s scope and impact next year.
Project Funding

The *Kress Fellows for Applied Research* project has been funded by the Kress Foundation. The Kress Foundation has been a long time supporter of European art and the “individuals and institutions engaged with the appreciation, interpretation, preservation, study and teaching of the history of European art and architecture from antiquity to the dawn of the modern era,” (Kress Foundation 2012). According to the foundation’s website, they “make grants in defined program areas and offer professional development fellowships for historians of art and architecture, art conservators and historic preservation professionals, art museum curators and educators, and art librarians,” (Kress Foundation 2012). Max Marmor, current president of the Kress Foundation, is well aware of the way that rapid changes in technology have changed the way that Art is experienced and studied. Marmor’s particular interests in digital collections and collaboration with libraries come from his own professional background as an art librarian (Marmor 2010). Marmor has worked to lead the Kress to maintain a core set of values and objectives amidst the flood of changes in the art world and beyond. By staying true to the initiatives that the Kress Foundation has always served and simply adapting some of the methods used to carry out these initiatives, Max Marmor and the Kress foundation have “sought to strike just this balance between tradition and change,” (Marmor 2010).

The Ackland Art Museum’s rich history of working with the Kress Foundation helped to demonstrate the ways in which the Kress Foundation values collaboration. The first major instance of Kress funding came for the *Old Masters in Context* project. This project brought together graduate students and large university classes to explore how
four different non-western art objects may have been originally seen in the 15th, 16th, 17th and 19th centuries. Four year-long exhibits each focused on one or more objects from each time period and presented the objects in an original context rather than in a traditional museum display. The Ackland Art Museum even displayed items on loan from the Rare Books Collection, housed in the Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Graduate students assisted with conducting research and co-authoring catalogs for each exhibit. Other university students involved with the project were primarily from history and religion classes that visited the museum to learn from the exhibits. This first project brought together museums staff with university students and staff and with the Special Collections library on campus.

The next significant project funded by the Kress Foundation included an online resource that focused on three 18th century works from the Ackland’s collection. The project was called Witness to an Age in Transformation. A senior staff member at the Ackland worked with faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students who took part in First Year Seminar courses at UNC Chapel Hill. Graduate students conducted preliminary research on the three art objects; faculty instructed the courses and undergraduate students took part in courses in the Art, English, and History departments.

More recently, the Ackland Art Museum received funding for three years from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for the Contrapposto Series. Graduate interns participated in projects to raise awareness of Early Modern European collections to faculty across campus who taught courses related to Early Modern Europe. The Medieval and Early Modern Studies Group (MEMS) was used to help spread information
about collection holdings across campus. A large portion of the Early Modern European collections consists of prints and drawings that could benefit instructors. Graduate interns served as curators for focused exhibitions that included items from the Wilson Library Rare Books Collections. Interns also promoted the exhibits to MEMS and other faculty across campus and even designed and taught classes related to Early Modern European Studies.

With the positive history of past collaborative Kress project funding at the Ackland Art Museum, Carolyn Allmendinger, Director of Academic Programs, and other museum staff set out to find ways to include greater research components in a collaborative project. They wanted to focus less on an exhibit and instead focus on acknowledging different kinds of research that can be done with art objects. Past Kress funded projects had focused heavily on classroom instruction that supported UNC’s core mission of teaching. Numerous exhibitions associated with Kress projects could be classified as public service, in support of another of the university’s core missions. The newest Kress project will emphasize research and UNC’s core mission of fostering an environment conducive for research. The “Kress Fellows for Applied Research” grant proposal included plans for a significant, three year long series of projects.

A History of Collaboration

The Ackland Art Museum has been interested in better serving the University community and improving access to collections in varying degrees for the past twenty years, since a liaison to the university was established. The current Kress funded project brings together graduate students from three departments to work with the museum to
demonstrate a commitment to the university’s research initiatives. The museum has focused on the other two main objectives of the university (teaching and public service) with previous Kress grants, but wants to focus more heavily on shedding light on the research component of art education and arts appreciation. In addition to focusing on the university’s mission of research, the *Kress Fellows in Applied Research* project also offered the Ackland Art Museum a way to take advantage of growing relationships with various departments across campus.

For more than 15 years, the Ackland Art Museum has been developing a relationship with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and with the Art department. Art History graduate students from the department have been working with the Ackland Art Museum on increasingly significant projects for the past ten to fifteen years. The collecting focus of the Ackland and teaching focus of Art History and the Art Department have aligned in the past fifteen or so years and such commonality has allowed for tremendous collaboration. The Ackland has reached out to provide Art History students with work experience and the museum has benefited from the contributions of students. Museum staff have challenged themselves to consider what can be done to make the Ackland an increasingly useful resource for students and teachers in the Art program.

In much the same ways as the Ackland Art Museum has built relationships with the Art department, the museum has also sought out a relationship with the large and well respected education program on UNC-CH’s campus. Teaching is an important objective for the Ackland, and many museum resources have been targeted at K-12 audiences. Graduate students in the School of Education have experience developing educational
resources and are grounded in education practices that can be applied to the arts. Fostering a relationship with the School of Education has allowed the Ackland Art Museum to more broadly serve the breadth of the University and to increase opportunities to teach art to K-12 audiences across the state. The museum currently has staff members who focus on educational outreach to K-12 audiences as well as university audiences and adults. The Ackland Art Museum has seen that in many ways, teaching art to K-12 students is similar to teaching art to older audiences. The Ackland Art Museum has been interested in further exploring the potential for a growing relationship with the School of Education, and the *Kress Fellows for Applied Research* offered just that.

In the last ten years, the Ackland Art Museum has been aware of the School of Library and Information Science and has offered Field Experiences for students. Field Experiences are internship based work opportunities where students need learning experiences and employers have work projects that need to be done (UNC School of Information and Library Science 2012). One major factor that brought together the School of Information and Library Science and the Ackland Art Museum was a museum employee with ties to SILS. A former registrar for the museum had previously earned her Master’s of Science in Library Science from SILS and she strongly encouraged the museum to enlist the help of students from the department for various museum projects. Working with different students from the School of Library and Information Science over the past few years has helped museum staff to understand the broad range of skills that students have to offer. The Ackland Art Museum has an ongoing digitization project funded by the IMLS and knows that they will need help designing a user friendly interface after digitization has been completed. Museum staff are interested in
maintaining relationships with SILS for Field Experiences, but would also like to explore ways to broaden their idea of what librarians and information professionals can do.

Based on past experiences working with staff and students from numerous university departments, staff at the Ackland Art Museum saw the potential for a great collaboration between the Art Department, the School of Education and the School of Information and Library Science. As staff began to talk about the possibilities, they realized how well such collaboration could fit within the objectives of the museum. The museum also recognized how students could benefit from working with professionals from other departments and in a museum environment. Art History graduate students can benefit from being exposed to professionals in other areas, as Art Historians have traditionally followed a very narrow career path to become an art curator or a professor. Graduate students from the School of Education can benefit from adapting teaching techniques for museum resources and audiences. Information and Library Sciences students can gain experience working with different kinds of information and targeting resources to K-12 and museum audiences. The museum can also benefit from having fresh perspectives on how to approach art research and how to reach out to new audiences with unique resources.

After the idea of such a collaborative effort was introduced, the Ackland Art Museum was faced with the challenge of identifying a funding source to support a new project in a time of increasing budget cuts. Based on its successful history working with the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Ackland Art Museum chose to develop a project targeted at the goals of the Kress Foundation. The museum has a strong collection of European Art and is comfortable formulating projects around the Kress theme of the
History of Art. Additionally, the museum seeks to continue to build a successful, long term relationship with the Samuel H. Kress Foundation as the foundation offers many unique and coveted opportunities for museums.

The Ackland Art Museum is in the planning phase of developing a similar project that will focus on the Asian art resources which will be presented to the IMLS. There is more potential for growth and expansion within the Asian art collection, resources, and growing interest than with the European art collection, so the museum chose to take that application to the IMLS. Unlike the Kress Foundation, the IMLS always requires matching funds for grant projects. Because there is so much room for the Asian collection to grow, and because it is a younger collection, the museum should be more able to acquire matching funds for an Asian art project than a European art project.

Although numerous variables influenced the decision to apply for funding from the Kress Foundation, the greatest impact may have been the positive history of working with the Kress on successful collaborative projects such as *Old Masters in Context*, *Witness to an Age in Transformation*, and *Contrapposto*.

The Samuel H. Kress Foundation is interested in promoting the History of Art, Conservation, and Digital Resources, relating specifically to European Art from antiquity to the 18th century (Kress Foundation 2012). The Ackland Art Museum applied for a grant to support a collaborative project focusing on the History of Art that would bring together graduate students from Art History, Education, and Information and Library Sciences to emphasize the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s commitment to research. The original proposal included hiring three graduate students each year for a total of three years. Each year’s cohort of students would focus on several European art
objects in the collection and would produce resources for Art History specialists, K-12 educators, and the general public. Resources would emphasize ways to research art topics and to enhance art appreciation. Due to a lack of funding availability from the Kress Foundation, the Ackland Art Museum was asked to present a modified proposal that greatly downsized the project for a trial year.
Kress Fellows for Applied Research in Action

Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Ackland Art Museum hired an advanced PhD candidate from the Art History program to conduct research on a European object from the collection. The funerary relief of No’om, a Roman/Syrian object from the Ackland’s permanent collection was selected as the focus of research. In the spring of 2012, a graduate student from the School of Education was hired to develop K-12 lesson plans based upon the art historical research that had already been collected and put into a research paper. Also in the spring of 2012, I was hired as the student from the School of Library and Information Science to develop other resources for other audiences. The role of the librarian or information professional in this collaborative project was not as clearly defined as the roles of the other two contributing students.

Shared Interest

One could argue that the driving force behind developing this collaborative effort was common administration. After all, the Ackland Art Museum is located on UNC’s campus and the graduate students that were hired to work on the project were all enrolled graduate programs at UNC. While shared administration was an element in this collaborative effort, Waibel identified common administration as units coming together to justify existence and work towards an institutional mission. Because entire departments were not involved in working with the Ackland Art Museum on the most
recent Kress funded project, it is difficult to frame the project within common administration.

Common administration collaboration doesn’t quite seem to fit because of the structure of the project. Departments did not officially partner with the museum in this endeavor and were not involved beyond assisting with publicizing the position and supervising related, but separate, research. Furthermore, unlike collaborative efforts at Yale, administrators and cooperation from each department were not required for this project to succeed. If fully funded in coming years, the Kress Fellows project may require added departmental support and administrative oversight, but for the time being the collaborative effort does not correlate closely with common administration as defined by Waibel and demonstrated by projects as discussed in the review of relevant literature. Rather, three graduate students independently decided to partake in the Kress Fellows for Applied Research project because of a shared interest. Each of the graduate students were interested in the project’s objective of researching a European art object and developing resources to reach out to specific audiences.

While the art historian’s interest may have been somewhat obvious, the educator was passionate about arts integration, and the information professional was drawn to the project because of the Classical nature of the art object selected and the potential to work with information in a non-traditional environment. Each student had also demonstrated a commitment to developing resources to enhance the museum’s array of materials supporting an understanding of the art object. As can be seen with common interest collaboration, more could be accomplished through working together than could have been accomplished individually. The very basis of the project is the complete set of
resources that can only be produced by each student contributing her own set of skills and inclinations to the project.

As demonstrated by Allen and Bishoff, some efforts at collaboration were indeed made easier because all involved parties were associated with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and were familiar with certain community standards. Defining audiences and sorting out budget issues was simplified as a result of shared administration. However, because entire departments, or units, were not involved in the collaboration, management responsibilities clearly rested with the Ackland Art Museum staff member who oversaw the project. The need for clear supervision, as seen in other common interest collaboration was evident in the Kress Fellows for Applied Research project. Similarly, the focus had to remain on the products of the project, as each graduate student could easily get wrapped up in specialized work and forget to work together towards related resources. Common interest collaboration is often demonstrated by groups coming together to accomplish something multifaceted and unique. For instance, National History Day could not take place without teachers, archivists and librarians all working together. Because people enter into projects from different environments with personal motivations, it is vital to maintain focus on the tasks at hand. Superior leadership can help projects stay on track and succeed.

The Kress Fellows for Applied Research have been directly supervised by Carolyn Allmendinger and fellows have had the opportunity to interact with other museum staff for direction and feedback. Allmendinger was familiar with the project because of her involvement in developing the grant proposal and her personal passion for arts education. Her background in Art History and experience working in the Ackland,
with different university programs for several years, has prepared her to supervise this project. Despite a heavily loaded schedule, Allmendinger has worked as a sort of liaison and project manager for the Kress fellows. When possible, she conducted weekly meetings to check on the progress of different elements of the project. Along with progress checks, she helped to explain what sort of museum resources are available and helps the three graduate students access necessary resources. Resources have included simple office supplies, a meeting with the Director of Communications and the Chief Curator for the museum, as well as making connections for proper training for website editing and an introduction to the museum’s current array of educational resources.

Clear supervision has helped this project to move ahead towards completing significant resources to help targeted audiences appreciate, understand, and perhaps even research No’om for themselves. Although the supervision has been consistent and clear, there has been plenty of room for changes and necessary adjustments. While the expectations and objectives for the Art History and Education fellows were clear aside from specific details, as the SILS fellow, I was left with quite a bit to decide. Brainstorming produced what was clearly too many ideas for the scope of the project. However, many ideas held great potential and were attractive to Allmendinger and the objectives of the museum and specifically the objectives of the Kress project. Over time, technical limitations and direction from other museum staff members helped to shorten the list of deliverables to a few manageable resources. While Allmendinger expressed her interest in some projects more than others, she was willing to let things play out to see which deliverables would be the best overall fit. The balance between clear direction and
supportive flexibility helped the three fellows to stay on task and still explore unique resources to help bring No’om to life for audiences of all ages and near and far.

**Project Deliverables**

To date, the Art History Fellow has conducted research for and written an art historical paper that explores the funerary relief, its iconography, significance, past ownership and how it ended up at the Ackland Art Museum. Her paper was targeted at an art historical audience and included specific terminology and stylistic traits of an academic research paper. In addition to the research paper, she also presented at an “Art for Lunch” museum event held at the Ackland Art Museum. This talk was directed at a non-expert audience who understood and appreciated basic elements of art. The presentation was well attended by museum supporters, staff, friends and visitors. The Art History Fellow has completed her significant deliverables for the project and has shifted focus to assisting with research for other project objectives.

The Education Fellow has taken the work presented in the Art History Fellow’s research paper and has designed lesson plans for various K-12 classrooms. She has worked to integrate the lesson plans into core curriculum standards and has tailored lesson plans to fit within classroom themes set forth by the state of North Carolina. Some lesson plans focus directly on discussing No’om as the central theme of the class session while others use No’om as a way to explore the roles of women in family and society, or the way that art can be interpreted by contemporary and future audiences. She has focused on providing teachers with resources so that lesson plans can be easily implemented into the curriculum. Several lesson plans have been targeted at 9-12
audiences, as the Ackland Art Museum would like to expand its relationship with high schools. The museum has had successful relationships with area elementary schools for many years, but has not had the same success in working with older students. Plans are currently in a rough draft stage and the duration of the project time will be spent refining lesson plans. The Education Fellow has targeted resources at teachers and intends to work with advisors in the School of Education for feedback and direction on the lesson plans.

I was tasked with the responsibility of reaching out to all non-specialists and non-teacher audiences. Specific audiences included visitors to the museum, visitors to the website, members of the university, members of the community, and Google searchers. Unlike the other fellows, tangible deliverables were not described in the position description or project scope. Original ideas were numerous and included online resources for the website, printed materials, interactive audio tours, videos, enhanced metadata, and an online resource guide of relevant research tools and resources.

Due to obvious limitations relating to time and financial support, as well as political issues in the museum, the project list was downsized significantly. One print item in the form of a brochure will be available to museum visitors and an online object will be available for remote viewers. Both the web and print resource point audiences toward references for further study and draw attention to various aspects of the bust. The resources are intended to encourage audiences to take a closer look at the details of the artwork and gain a greater understanding of the significance of the style and content of the piece. Additionally, the website will contain a bibliography of resources for educators, art enthusiasts, and general audiences. A sort of video presentation of
information presented in the Art History Fellow’s “Art For Lunch” talk may also be included on the project website. Depending on time and available resources, a guide of related art objects in the Ackland Art Museum may be compiled to aid visitors in further considering the significant themes relating to the funerary bust of No’om.

The idea for an audio tour was cut because the museum no longer supports the software required for audio cell phone tours and there has not been enough interest to justify the yearly charges associated with the service. The website’s structure and method for editing along with a lack of in house technical support led to the abandoning of an online, interactive resource that would have simulated the environment in which the funerary relief would have been originally displayed. While enhanced metadata would benefit audiences who visit the website and attempt to search the museum’s catalog of objects, the museum database is not easily navigable for changes to be made. In addition to the difficulty of changing the record, the museum seems to be facing opposing views about how metadata records should be created or enhanced and if objects in the collection should be treated entirely equally, or if more attention can be offered to unique objects. Crossing these potential resources off of the list helped to provide a more manageable set of expectations. Although some of the proposed resources could have been quite interesting and beneficial, the flexibility inherent in the project allowed for the changes to be made easily. The resources that will be developed should have a significant impact on intended audiences and perhaps other ideas can be explored further in future years.
Risk Factors and Challenges

Perhaps the biggest setback in terms of resource development was the inability to use the library resource known as LibGuides to design an interactive guide of compiled relevant resources that may be of interest to indented audiences. Because the project was not officially partnered with a campus library, access to LibGuides (a subscription service) was unavailable. Getting in touch with both the librarian responsible for the university’s LibGuides contract and with the Art Librarian who has worked with the museum in the past did not result in any more positive news. Unfortunately, although the resource that would have been created could have increased library use and benefited many audiences, including university members, the lack of formal partnership disallowed use of the product. Other similar such products for making course or subject guides for libraries may be open source but require a tremendous amount of technical preparation before information can be added to a guide. Although a LibGuide would have offered a visually appealing way for website viewers to explore relevant resources, a bibliography will offer the same content in more simplified manner.

While lacking official departmental partnerships allowed this project to be interest driven rather than influenced heavily by administration, there were setbacks due to that lack of a partnership. Certain resources such as the LibGuides software were unavailable to the project. Interestingly, I would have benefited more from a strong partnership with the University Libraries than from a partnership with the library graduate program, but both relationships could have been beneficial. Similarly, the Education Fellow relied on personal relationships with teachers and faculty in the School of Education to solicit feedback rather than working with the department for such
guidance. Perhaps the long standing history of the Art Department working with the Museum, and the overlap of subject matter in the two areas can be used to explain why the Art History Fellow did not seem to lack the same access to resources as the other two fellows. Perhaps considering a more official partnership with departments could allow easier access to university resources, or it could simply complicate the program beyond what is manageable. As with many collaborative projects, it is necessary to determine what advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Additional challenges arose because of various internal pressures and perspectives. Searchability of objects on the museum’s website is rather difficult to non-specialist audiences. I quickly identified setbacks in searching for the item and wanted to improve the item record metadata to enhance item retrieval. Because of the nature of museum registers, this task would have been complex, but not impossible. However, upon meeting with the Chief Curator, it became clear that enhancing the searchability of one single item was not an option. In the interest of equality, the Chief Curator does not want any one item to be given more attention than another, either in the gallery or the online database. If something needs to be enhanced, he believes that everything should be enhanced. Unfortunately, there is no way for every database record to be enhanced with current resources. The database records are only part of the problem, as the search algorithm may also need some significant work. This is an issue that the museum has been aware of for some time now, but resurfaced with the feedback of an information specialist.

Other tensions associated with the online search function are the result of a lack of clearly defined audience. Museum specialists may be able to identify appropriate search
terms to locate an item of interest while average internet users would not. The purpose of the Kress project is to reach out to many different audiences, perhaps audiences more broadly defined than the museum’s traditional targeted audience. These issues are similar to issues that arise when library and museum professionals work together. As keepers of information and artifacts of the past, librarians and museum professionals have a great deal in common. However, methodological approaches to managing information and providing access are often quite different. Perhaps in time, the Ackland Art Museum will more clearly determine what is best in terms of the online collection search feature. An ongoing IMLS funded digitization project will certainly result in the need for an access system.

Website challenges have been further compounded by the lack of technology support. The University of North Carolina IT Department set up the basic museum website and then implemented a new support system that requires the museum to pay for any additional technical support. The museum does not employ an information technologist or anyone else whose primary responsibility is managing technical issues. As such, resources are currently limited and many significant modifications to the website are limited to the technical expertise of currently employed staff with other responsibilities. Such a lack of internal tech support, along with the lack of accessible and affordable outside tech support has caused for delays in gaining my web editing privileges as well.

Many internal pressures are related to the changing relationship between the university and the museum, and larger trends in providing remote access to collection materials. Unfortunately, when funding sources are low, it is unlikely for the museum to
be able to bring in an information technology specialist who could work to resolve challenges and delays associated with the online search function and museum technology in general. The dichotomy between preservation and access is clearly at play in the way that the Chief Curator is primarily focused on preserving the simplicity and equality of database records. Perhaps changes to the way that items are searched and retrieved could allow for supplemental information to be attached to the item record without being a part of the database record.

The Ackland Art Museum is far from alone in facing challenges of determining how to facilitate online access while still properly representing an object using appropriate museum terminology. As online resources become more widely available, institutions feel pressure to put everything online and to make it as easy to navigate as possible. Museums are torn between protecting the uniqueness of visiting a gallery in person and providing access to anyone with a computer. A lack of resources such as technical expertise and funding also further perpetuate the challenges of online search functions because the resources simply do not exist to improve everything all at once.

Fortunately, for the purpose of the Kress Fellows for Applied Research project, the online record for the object No’om can be directly linked from resources so that intended audiences need not attempt to retrieve the online record themselves. An important part of collaboration is recognizing when issues directly impact you and should be resolved, and when issues that arise may be for partner institutions to work out on their own. Avoiding potential challenges that reach beyond the scope of a collaborative project will help to keep collaboration on track.
Considering that the past year has been a pilot for the program, it is reasonable to say that the program has been a success. Many limitations have been associated with a lack of time and resources. Other challenges have worked themselves out as the fellows and Allmendinger worked together with museum staff to clarify the project’s scope and objectives. Expanding the project to offer fellows additional time to work on developing resources, and offering competitive compensation packages should draw additional interest in the program and allow for more to be accomplished. With additional time to work, perhaps students could focus on more than one object in the collection. Such comprehensive and details resources on single objects can increase appreciation for and understanding of the collections in the Ackland Art Museum significantly.
Conclusion

Collaboration has been increasingly popular in libraries, museums, archives, and education environments for the past several decades. While some collaborative efforts can present significant challenges and are often met with setbacks, institutions can benefit from coming together to accomplish more collectively than could have been accomplished individually. Financial pressure can lead to certain collaborative projects, as many grant agencies require collaboration to receive funding awards. Regardless of the financial influences of collaboration, groups and individuals join together because of shared employers, shared interests, or shared values.

Exploring examples of collaboration in the fields of libraries, archives, museums and educational settings has made it possible to identify trends in motivations as defined by Günter Waibel. Recognizing the motivating factors behind collaboration can help collaborators to anticipate potential challenges, and circumvent roadblocks. Knowing that issues may arise as values change, or realizing that collaborators come from different work cultures and will require stable oversight and management can ease the pressures associated with different types of collaboration. Recognizing shared commitments to employers, values or interests can also help to build long term relationships that will allow for fruitful collaboration for years to come.

The Kress Fellows for Applied Research project has offered three graduate students at UNC the opportunity to interact with peers from different disciplines and has also strengthened the Ackland Art Museum’s relationship with the Kress Foundation.
Additionally, the museum has gained valuable resources that can be used to reach out to varied audiences and further accomplish the missions of the museum as well as the entire University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill community. Perhaps future projects will be even more fruitful with the development of additional resources, and perhaps even the establishment of permanent collaboration initiatives with departments and schools across campus. Shared interests of the three Kress Fellows and the strong direction offered to the project by Carolyn Allmendinger led to profitable collaboration that benefited both the individuals involved and the museum as a whole.

Future collaborative projects at the Ackland Art Museum, across the University of North Carolina and beyond can benefit from the example of forward thinking demonstrated by the grant writers who recommended that students from three different disciplines be brought together to work towards a common objective. Collaboration is often viewed within the realm of LAM or between schools and librarians, but institutions need to focus on expanding horizons to consider how multiple groups of professionals and academics can come together to benefit broader audiences and achieve greater goals. Young professionals can benefit from being exposed to one another and to new and unique environments. In a world of changing expectations and decreasing positions of employment, it is increasingly important to broadly define one’s own area of expertise and comfort. Looking beyond traditional roles and traditional collaborative partnerships can lead to increased benefit for individuals and organizations as they all work towards common goals.
Works Cited


