

ARCS 2015 Conference Session Review

On Campus Loans: Balancing Stewardship, Tradition and Politics.

Presenters:

Nicole Linderman, Assistant Registrar, Harvard University

Sonja Reid, Registrar, The University of Texas at Austin

Trevor Weight, Senior Registrar, Brigham Young University

Review Submitted by:

Thapepong Ploypailin, Registrar, Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles, Thailand

The ARCS Conference session “On Campus Loans: Balancing Stewardship, Tradition and Politics” focused on Loan Activities between University museums and other academic departments where facilities are not of museum standard with respect to security or environmental conditions. Presenters introduced an optimal arrangement for administrators in the museum’s line of governance. It is necessary to work collaboratively with them to obtain support for the museum’s collections. First, Sonja Reid reviewed basic of campus loan issues. When collections are loaned for the decoration of university offices, the practice should be limit objects of lesser value, infrequent use, lower environmental sensitivity, etc. Basically, the museum must restrict the loan agreement to a defined term with routine condition reporting by the registrar or another trained staff member.

Nicole Linderman presented “Taming the Wild West of Campus Loans in Cambridge, MA”. She gave examples of loaned objects such as portrait paintings and antique collections in the university loan program. Loan policy starts once the Director approves. She suggested that the loan agreement require at least: guidelines for installation, preparation and procedures to deal with collections, annual contract and curatorial review, facility report, photography, light sensitive works, security and cleaning schedule.

Trevor Weight presented “Change it. Sell it. Enforce it”. He recommended in loan process that we should *change* loan document to be simple and easy for general staff, remove works of art which had increased in value beyond what our risk management analysis was comfortable with, be firm about policy enforcement and work with campus departments such as interior design and facilities management to aid in management of loans He suggested working with borrower as if you were *selling* products; explain the situation and agreement clearly and give more choices with fewer restrictions. Last, *enforce*, ask borrower to check collections frequently. It will be better to have good relationship. Good communication with the borrower will result in easier working relationship.

Nicole Linderman presented “Crafting a standard ‘non-museum’ loan policy across multiple cultural institutions”. She talked about how to communicate with other organizations which have various collections, staffs and transportation capabilities. Some places do not have registrars, vehicles or preparators. Documentation is necessary to ensure basic museum standards. Remember that non-museum staff do not understand wording in the agreement, museum environmental conditions, appropriate handling and procedure when things go wrong.

So, she suggested writing a loan policy, agreement and guidelines clearly and easy-to-read for borrower. Loan documents should cover; policy statement, scope of the program, materials, environment, security, costs, insurance, period of loan, documentation, transportation, handling and installation, display, risk management, return of loan and responsibilities of Borrower.