March 2018 Update

News from the Operations Committee

The Operations Committee met on February 7, 2018.

The highlights of the meeting:

- The BYU Record Linking Lab (RLL) has been testing the SNAC API to add links to FamilySearch entities that are the "sameAs" SNAC entities. RLL reported that all worked very well. RLL offered to not only provide the links, but also to report SNAC entity descriptions that appear to mistakenly combine two or more entities or identities. Though it would not be economically feasible to address everything identified in the report, we will explore using it to flag such descriptions for both editors and research users.

- Daniel reported on the meeting of the Bitcurator NLP advisory board. Of possible interest to SNAC members is [OSSArcflow](#), a Bitcurator project underway to explore workflows among BitCurator, Archivematica and ArchivesSpace.

- Discussed holding Members Meeting contiguous with SAA in August, with proposal to be sent to the SNAC list for member comment.

- Discussed [SNAC Ethos](#) (or descriptive principle) statement drafted by Mike Rush to be submitted to Operations as a recommendation.

- Working groups provided monthly updates.

General Updates from Working Groups

Communications

The Communications Working Group is creating a draft SNAC Cooperative slide deck for members to use when giving presentations and project updates. The group plans to review the draft during its next meeting on March 12.

Editorial Policy and Standards

The group held a virtual meeting on February 26, and plans on holding the next one in early April. A final draft of an "[ethos statement](#)" for SNAC will go to the Operations committee for their March meeting.

The group has spent time on the issues related to the SCM metadata--including renaming it ! The two resulting reports can be found here:

1) https://docs.google.com/document/d/165AfkxWKFlPH2U0hxsWObjGuap01boACNQ6oQQj49Is/edit

2) https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yR0b80_0bx6OgSvfHeBCDSbgaFx1B3dxfcNXF5spa_k/edit

SNACSchool

February 28 marked our fifth SNACSchool event. This class included new editors from the Southern Historical Collection (UNC-Chapel Hill), Purdue University, and the National Archives. It also marked the end of our first major phase of SNACSchool. The SNACSchool Working Group will meet on March 6 to discuss future phases. The next phase will involve developing new training modules for new SNAC functionality, and hopefully, new self-paced training modules. Stay tuned!

We're planning the next SNACSchool event to coincide with the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Washington, D.C. The tentative date is Wednesday, August 15th. Place and time are still to be determined. If you have not yet completed SNACSchool, and you're planning to attend SAA, please consider signing up for the class. You can contact NARA's SNAC Liaisons Dina Herbert of Jerry Simmons to register for the event.

Technology Development Update

The SNAC Technology Team has a number of initiatives underway, or in research/design phase. The following two are active.

Resource description is being substantially enhanced to enable revising existing descriptions, as well as to facilitate linking holding institutions through a simple search and select (rather than the current need to find the holding institution and copy/paste its SNAC ID). Related to this, an analysis is underway to explore expanding the types of resources to which SNAC links.

SNAC "sameAs" relations are being analyzed in preparation to enhance the creation of "sameAs" links to ensure that only approved sources (authority or biographical files) employed, and that links are reliably and consistently created. Related to this endeavor is exploring the VIAF API to verify and update "sameAs" relations derived from VIAF, and for expanding the "sameAs" destinations in SNAC descriptions.

Expanding both resource types and "sameAs" source destinations, in addition to raising practical maintenance issues (identity resolution and link maintenance), also raise important policy issues, and so the Editorial Policy and Standards Group is being informed and consulted as the work unfolds.

Other Announcements/ Requests for Participation

SNACSchool

The SNACSchool Working Group is seeking new volunteer members! Please consider being a part of the group that shapes SNAC's education program! If you have experience in professional development, and planning and executing training programs, please consider joining this effort. We're also looking for volunteers to be SNACSchool instructors. Jerry Simmons will reach out to SNAC members for help, but please do contact the Working Group if you are able to help.

Planning the next in-person SNAC Cooperative Members meeting

The SNAC Cooperative will have a two-day Members Meeting in 2018. Given that the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) graciously hosts these meetings in Washington, D.C., and that the Society of American Archivists (SAA) (plus COSA and NAGARA) will hold its Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. August 12-18, it has been proposed to have the SNAC 2018 Members Meeting contiguous to the SAA Annual Meeting.

The potential dates for the SNAC Members Meeting are Monday, August 13, and Tuesday August 14. A SNACSchool Session is proposed for Wednesday, August 15.

Because the current grant could not accommodate funding anyone beyond SNAC staff for travel, holding the meeting during SAA will potentially stretch the local funding, on one hand, and enable participation by others who might not be able to secure funding for both.

Please see Daniel Pitti's email of March 1 sent to snac-coopmembers@lists.village.virginia.edu for more information. To comment or provide additional thoughts, kindly email Daniel at dpitti@virginia.edu or Ivey Glendon at img7u@virginia.edu.