

Fall 2011 – Comprehensive Exam

1. Standards and conventions for interoperable metadata are essential building blocks in facilitating effective resource discovery and access across ever-growing distributed digital collections. Discuss three issues in maintaining and adhering to these standards and conventions.

Explain how you as an information professional responsible for managing metadata would balance the requirements of adherence to standards and interoperability against local priorities for a library, archives, or other information management setting of your choice. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

2. Libraries and information services are increasingly providing ebooks to their communities, sometimes instead of printed books. As the use of ebooks in libraries grows, collection development criteria and acquisitions procedures must change. Explain three important criteria for the selection of traditional library materials and three additional important factors that must be considered in selecting ebooks. Also discuss two important steps in acquiring ebooks that differ from traditional acquisitions processes. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

3. Choose two of the following types of information centers: academic library, archives, public library, school library or specialized (corporate, government, etc.) library. Compare and contrast the metrics that the two types of information centers you selected would use to measure their output or work performed; the level of customer satisfaction with their services; and their value to their constituency. In your answer, provide specific measures and methods for each metric discussed. For one of your chosen settings, justify your choices of measures and methods and explain how they would contribute to your management of the information center. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

4. Cloud computing, mobile devices, and other digital technologies have stimulated popular interest in personal archives, personal collections, and similar personally generated information materials, and the sharing of many personal information artifacts. Discuss two implications of these technologies on human information behavior in society. Also discuss how the two implications will affect the work of librarians and information professionals. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

5. Almost every library and information professional at some time in his/her work will be confronted with ethical issues. Ethical issues can arise in any functional area of a library, archive or other information setting, such as acquisitions, disposal (deaccessioning or weeding), information organization or cataloging, system design, access services, reference or research services, preservation, etc. Select three different functional areas in a library, archive, or information setting of your choice. Discuss one ethical issue in each functional area. For each issue, state what the ethical issue is, why it is important, and how you would act to address it. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

6. Technology standards are important for cooperative and collaborative efforts in the delivery of library and information services in all sectors. These efforts include virtual reference (QuestionPoint), preservation (LOCKSS and CLOCKSS), instruction (ALA PRIMO), bibliographic metadata sharing (OAI-PMH), and others. Select a cooperative or collaborative

program of libraries, archives, or information services, which may be one of those mentioned or another. Explain what the program is and what its mission is. Discuss one technology standard or convention, other than metadata standards, that enables it to function. Discuss the management challenges that are unique to it, and how participating libraries can evaluate its effectiveness for their own goals and missions. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

7. Explain the purposes of and the relationships between resource descriptive rules (e.g., AACR2, RDA, DACS), encoding standards (e.g., MARC21, EAD), and controlled vocabularies (e.g., LCSH, AAT). Discuss how the three tools work together to provide quality resource access to users. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

8. The Reference and User Services Association has defined five main areas of reference service performance that contribute to a successful reference interview: Approachability, Interest, Listening/Inquiring, Searching, and Followup. Select any three of these areas. Define each of the areas selected. For each area, compare and contrast the requirements for successful reference performance depending on whether the reference interview is face to face or virtual. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

9. Librarians are often characterized as "information intermediaries". It is also said, however, that we live in an era of "disintermediation" -- or eliminating the middleman. Explain the traditional role of librarians as information intermediaries and give an example of a librarian acting in this role. Then explain disintermediation and give an example of it in any aspect of society. Finally, explain how you think the roles of librarians and information professionals are evolving in response to disintermediation. Your answer should demonstrate a thorough understanding of broad societal trends that affect library and information professionals. Include references to the literature as appropriate.

10. Describe the major elements of an information literacy model or competency standard, such as the Big6 model, AASL Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning, or the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Discuss how continuing rapid changes in information technology, such as the use of mobile devices and ubiquitous access to Web-based information, are affecting the content of information literacy instruction for two elements of your chosen model. The technological changes also have important impacts on delivery methods of information literacy instruction. Discuss one impact on the delivery methods of information literacy instruction, and how instruction librarians are changing their instructional strategies in response to that impact. Include references to the literature as appropriate.