Partnering with Scholars

Exposing a City's Hidden Collections

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UNCAP
Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project

- 3-year Mellon-funded project
- Partners
  - Library
  - Faculty
  - Graduate Students
  - Local Archive-holding Institutions
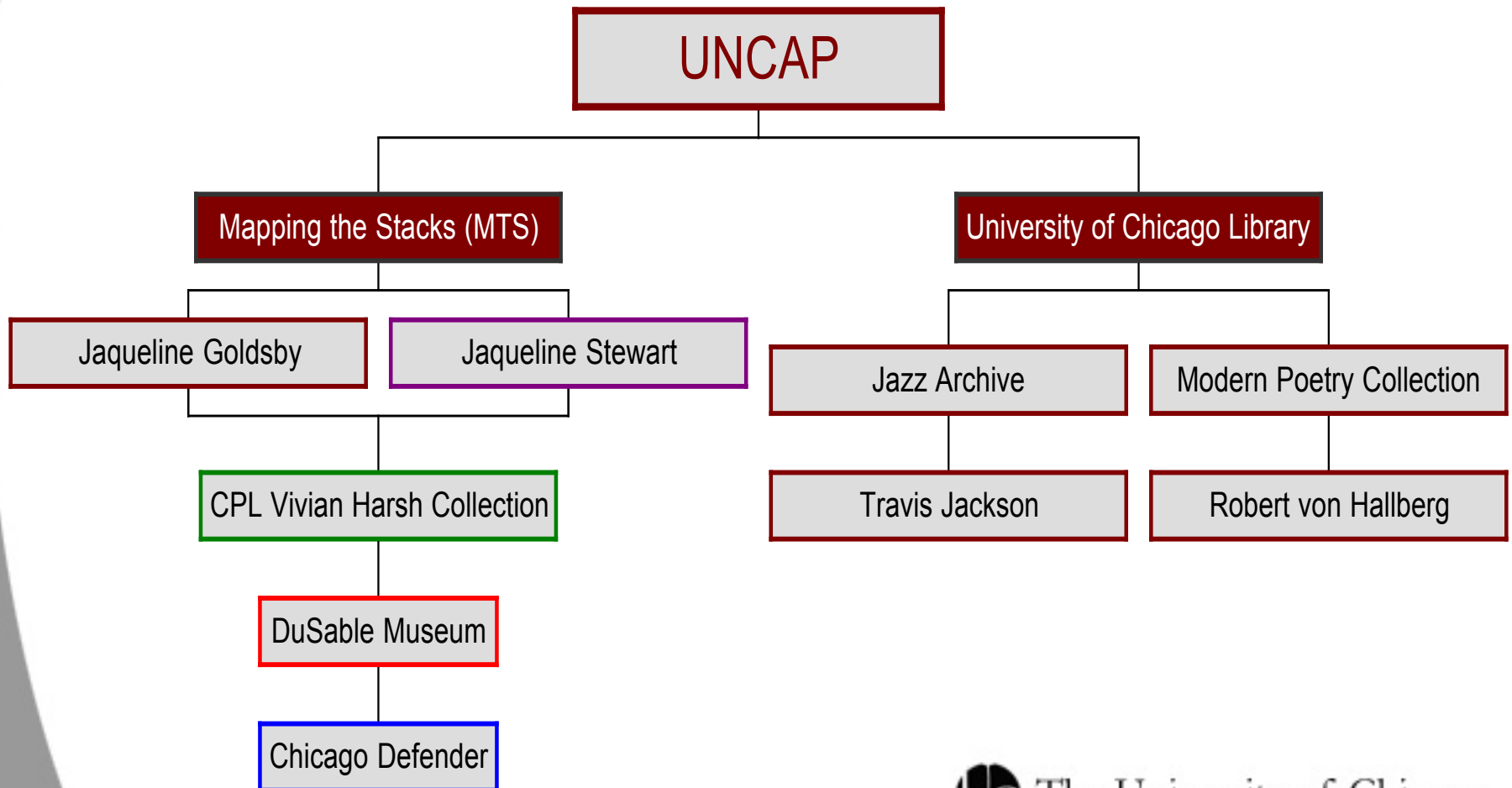- Precursor project: Mellon Officer's Grant

UNCAP Goals

- City-wide hidden collections initiative
  - Identifying and processing collections supporting African American cultural history
- Faculty-Library collaboration
  - User-driven collections, programs, services
  - Process and preserve important research materials
  - Train graduate students to process collections in their field
- Cross-institutional discovery tool

Hidden Collections Initiative

- Library
  - Founding member of ARL *Special Collections Task Force* (2003 Working Conference at LC)
  - More Product, Less Process (Greene and Meissner)
  - Library-wide hidden collections initiative

- English Department Prof's Goldsby and Stewart
  - Post-depression, pre-civil rights era African American literary and cinema history
  - Mapping The Stacks: Mellon Officer's Grant
    - "to identify primary source materials (books, films, photographs, newspapers, magazines, manuscript archives, recorded oral histories, and other ephemera) in need of processing and cataloguing."
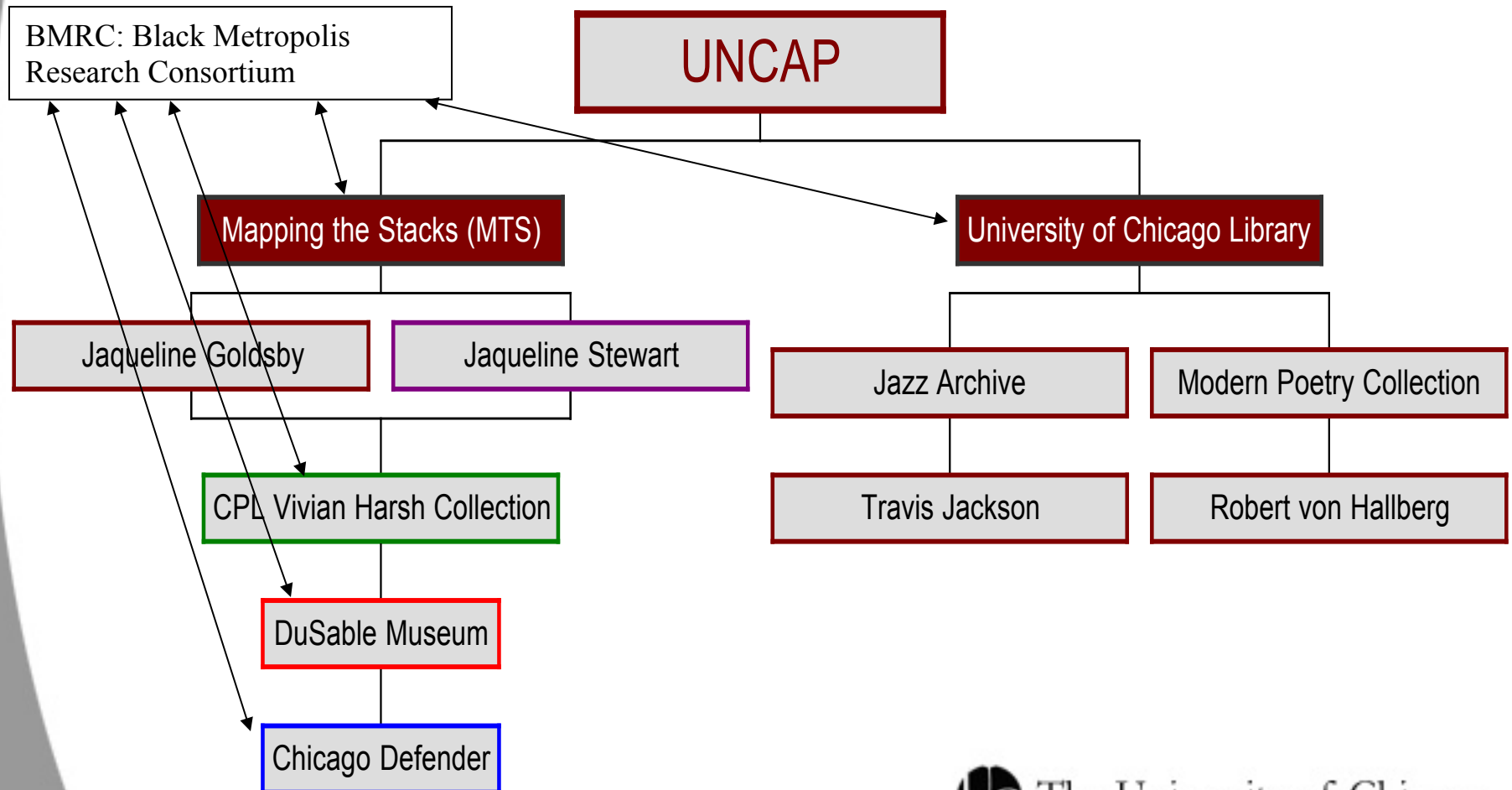
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Organizational Architecture

Organizational Architecture 2?
Related Initiatives

Faculty-Library Collaboration:
User-driven Collections, Programs, Services

- Not just consultation - Not just scholarship
  - User involvement in Library decision-making and processing
- No one size fits all
  - Processing level dependent on
    - Nature of collection
    - Institutional context and mission
    - Needs of researchers using collection
- Faculty as emissaries in community for collection-building

Faculty-Library Collaboration: Training Graduate Students

- Primary source research skills
  - Hunting is fun, but overwhelming
  - Discovering patterns and relationships
- Fostering interdisciplinary investigation and conceptualization
  - English (including Poetry and Poetics), Cinema and Media Studies, History, Art History, and Music
- Discovery for seminar and dissertation research

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Faculty-Library Collaboration: Faculty Benefits

- Discover new areas of research
  - Curriculum development
  - Scholarship production
- Student recruitment
- Fostering collaborative research in humanistic fields
  - Breaking the mold of individualistic research
  - Science model

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Cross-institutional Discovery Tool

- One Tool For:
  - Multiple institutions with differing needs
  - Hierarchical relationships within project
  - Collection survey and finding aids
  - Multiple formats
    - Personal and institutional papers
    - Radio transcripts
    - Image collections
    - Oral histories
    - Sound recordings
    - Newspaper clippings
    - Stock arrangements
    - Etc.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Training students and faculty in archival standards
  - Ease vs. expertise
- Marrying goals of faculty and library
- Politics of inter-institutional cooperation vs. user needs
  - 800 lb. gorilla problem
- Collaborations with libraries in other areas undertaking similar initiatives

Architecture

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