LIS 625-02: Management of Archives & Special Collections  
Fall 2015

Class Hours: Wednesdays 6:30 – 9:20p  
Office Hours: Thursdays 3:00-6:00pm, and by appointment  
Credits: 3  
Prerequisites: LIS 653 Knowledge Organization, or by permission  
Location: PMC 611

Bulletin Description:

An examination of the nature of archives and the principles underlying their management. The acquisition and processing of archival material; appraisal principles and techniques; conservation of textual and non-textual materials, including control of the physical environment; use of archival materials; and administration of archival repositories are studied in depth.

Course Goals:

The goal of this course is to provide students will the basic underlying principles and practices necessary for becoming an archivist. It is also intended to provide a basic groundwork for future class in the archives area (such as in Digital Archives, Preservation/Conservation, Appraisal, etc.), as well as the practicum in archives (on-site archival practice at a local institution). The course will focus primarily on analog paper records, and suggest that students studying archives should continue on by taking the next course in the sequence, LIS 665 Projects in Digital Archives.

Student Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the social function of archives, and how it differs from and intersects with libraries and museums.
- Demonstrate understanding of core archival principles and practices, such as collection development, appraisal, donor relations, arrangement and description, legal/ethical issues, and access/reference.
- Process an archival collection using archival standards, specifically DACS and EAD.
- Think critically about the role of archives for sustaining personal and societal memory.

Course Schedule and Readings

8/26 – Course Introduction

- Overview of Syllabus and Projects
- Assign weekly presenters of class readings
- Post a photo of yourself and fill-out your profile on the LMS
9/2 – So you (might) want to be an Archivist? Introduction to the profession


Further Reading:


Society of American Archivists, Standards Portal: http://www2.archivists.org/standards

Reflection Questions:

What is an archivist? How is an archive similar and different from a museums and libraries?

9/9 – Collection Development and Archives (Re-)Appraisal

Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What ought one to consider when considering taking in an archival collection?

9/16 – Donor Relations


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What issues does the archivist need to work through with a donor or potential donor?

9/23 – Arrangement and Description I: Conceptual Overview


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

How does archival processing differ from library cataloging? Why should we or shouldn’t we catalog archival material like we do with other materials, such as books in a library and objects in a museum?

9/30 – Arrangement and Description II: Processing Collections


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What is a backlog? What is MPLP? How does iterative processing differ from “traditional” processing?

10/7 – Arrangement and Description III: DACS and EAD


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What is the difference between DACS and EAD? Why would you want to use DACS or EAD?

10/14 – Archival Management Systems


Further Reading:

Archivists Toolkit: http://www.archiviststoolkit.org/
Archon: http://www.archon.org/
ArchivesSpace: http://www.archivesspace.org/

Reflection Questions:

What do archival management systems do? What is the difference between, say Archivists Toolkit and Archives Space?

10/21 – Preservation & Conservation for Archivists

Northeast Document Conservation Center (NDCC) Preservation Leaflets:


2.2 Monitoring Temperature and Relative Humidity https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/2.-the-environment/2.2-monitoring-temperature-and-relative-humidity

2.4 Protection from Light Damage https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/2.-the-environment/2.4-protection-from-light-damage

2.5 Protecting Paper and Book Collections During Exhibition https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/2.-the-environment/2.5-protecting-paper-and-book-collections-during-exhibition

Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What are the most important issues to consider when attempting to preserve and conserve paper-based materials?

10/28 – Legal and Ethical Issues


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What aspects should be in every donor agreement? How do you explain to donors why your archive wants the copyright to their work?
11/4 – Records Management for the Archivist


Further Reading:


Reflection Questions:

What is the relationship between records management and archives?

11/11 – Archival Reference and Access


Further Reading:


Reflection Question:

What is your professional approach or philosophy with regard to archival reference?

11/18 – Outreach and the Archivist as Educator


Further Reading:
Reflection Questions:

Do you gravitate toward the idea of archivist as educator? Please explain.

11/25 – No Class; Thanksgiving Holiday

12/2 – Issues in Archives and Social Memory/Public Memory


Further Reading:


**Reflection Questions:**

A growing body of scholars is working to problematize the archive. What are the problems? Do you have a problem with the archive?

12/9 – No Class; Studio Week

12/16 – Presentations

**Textbooks, Readings, and Materials**

No textbook is required for this course. All readings are available online via the LMS (http://lms.pratt.edu).

**Course Requirements**

Students’ course grades will be determined by performance on the following activities:

1. Class Participation (20%)
2. Weekly Responses (20%) – 11 responses required over the course of the semester
3. Class-wide project: Archival Curation and Processing Project (50%)
4. Self-assessment (10%) – due December 17, last day of class

**Class Participation**

Students are expected to be prepared and to contribute to class discussions each week with scholarly analyses and insights. In addition, each week one student or a team of two students will present their perspective on the topic of the readings for the week. This is an opportunity to consolidate your (or your team’s) understanding on a topic, to present your perspective, to make novel connections to other domains, and to relate the readings to real-world experience. Presenters may use the reflection questions posed (available on the LMS) to guide their presentations, or may choose their own direction in discussing the topic. Presenters should be prepared to make around a 10-minute presentation, employ some visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint) and conclude with some questions or issues they would like to discuss more thoroughly. Remember that everyone in the class has read the week’s readings, so it should not simply be a summarization of what we have already read.

The schedule of presenters will be decided on the first day of class.

Please note that the course is 2 hours and 50 minutes, and you will be expected to attend the entire time. Also, forms of digital distraction (working on email, social media, etc.) will be interpreted by the instructor as reduced participation in the course.
**Weekly Responses**

Each week, students are expected to write at least two paragraphs that reflect on the readings. Reflections can be in response to the essential questions posted on the LMS. Students responses should be posted on the LMS by 6pm (at the latest) on the day of class (late responses will receive a reduced grade). Please do not bring in a hard-copy or email unless the LMS is unavailable. The purpose of these responses is to allow students the opportunity to reflect on the readings and share their reflections with the other members of the class. Students are encouraged to read the responses by their fellow classmates (this is, however, not a requirement). Based on interests, students may choose two weeks NOT to do a weekly response. This means by the end of the semester, each student should have posted 11 responses.

Please note that the instructor will refer to these responses during class discussion and may ask students to further clarify or expand on their response.

**Archival Processing and Curation Project**

The objective of the Archival Processing and Curation Project is to provide students with hands-on learning experiences relevant for work as future archivists. The collection that will be focused on are records related to Pratt SILS that are stored on-site. Pratt SILS is the oldest library school in the country, beginning with the Institute offering classes in librarianship in 1890. Additional records related to SILS are available at the Pratt Institute Archives in Brooklyn and can be consulted as needed. The on-site records back to the nineteenth century, including program reports, student records, course offerings, and more.

The major deliverables of the project are the following:

1. An processing plan for the collection (should be delivered by earlier half of semester) – 10%
2. A DACS/EAD finding aid for the collection (delivered by final class) – 10%
3. A digital and/or physical exhibition of items from the collection celebrating the history of SILS (delivered by final class) – 10%
4. A class-wide report that documents the work completed (deliver on final class) – 10%
5. A presentation on the work completed (delivered on final class) – 10%

The class-wide report should be 20-30 pages and document the work completed by the class. This report should highlight a) achievements and work completed in the project, b) challenges that have been overcome, as well as those that did not, c) discussion of decisions that you made (e.g., decisions based on something you read for class or some other resources, and cite as needed), and d) future directions for the project as perceived by project team. Since the project is dynamic, please include all relevant work products as evidence of the work completed (e.g., copy of the finding aid, photographs of exhibition, processing plan, website screenshots, etc.).

Students are expected to be involved in several aspects of the class-wide project, especially archival processing, however, one or two students should take a leadership role in the following:

- Leader(s) of the processing plan
- Leader(s) of the finding aid
- Leader(s) of digital surrogate creation (if decide to make surrogates)
- Lead curator(s) (selecting items for exhibition, writing didactics)
- Lead exhibition designers/builders (e.g., printing/mounting graphics/didactics, create website if needed).
- Lead report assembler
- Lead presentation assembler
- Lead in access policy and legal/ethical considerations
- Lead Wikipedian (if important findings are made, then updating relevant Wikipedia pages)
Students will be assessed by the quality of their contributions to the class-wide project and ability to integrate their contributions into a larger whole.

Self-Assessment

In one page, reflect on your contribution to the class project. What role did you play? What were your specific contributions? How would you rate your performance, and how does it compare to your fellow group members? Please submit by the end of the final class electronically via the LMS.

Notes on Assessment and Evaluation

1. All assignments must completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course
2. SILS is going green: all work must be submitted electronically via the LMS.
3. Students with extensive absences (three or more for any reason) will be required to drop the course.

E-Portfolio

Starting Fall 2012, all students entering the MSLIS degree program are required to complete an e-portfolio that must be approved by their advisor before they will be permitted to graduate. The e-Portfolio provides students with an opportunity to showcase their best work from the courses they have taken at SILS, and an opportunity to demonstrate they have met the learning objectives of a Master of Information and Library Science.

Students must demonstrate that their work fulfills at least one of the following learning outcomes:

1. **Research** - Students carry-out and apply research
2. **Communication** - Students demonstrate excellent communication skills and create and convey content
3. **Technology** - Students use information technology and digital tools effectively
4. **User-Centered Focus** - Students apply concepts related to use and users of information and user needs and perspectives
5. **LIS Practice** - Students perform within the framework of professional practice

Detailed information on the learning outcomes, requirements and how to create your e-portfolio is available from: [http://www.pratt.edu/academics/information_and_library_sciences/about_sils/sils_eportfolio/](http://www.pratt.edu/academics/information_and_library_sciences/about_sils/sils_eportfolio/)

The class project can be used in the e-portfolio to satisfy multiple learning outcomes based on your specific contributions to the project. Please consult your instructor for assistance on incorporating the course project into your e-portfolio. Note that when assembling your e-portfolio, you will be asked about your specific contributions to group projects. Thus, you should retain your “Self Evaluation” so that portions of it can be re-used in your e-portfolio.

Pratt’s grading scale:

- Superior work: A 4.0 (96-100)  A- 3.7 (90-95)
- Very good work: B+ 3.3 (87-89)  B 3.0 (83-86)  B- 2.7 (80-82)
- Marginal work: C+ 2.3 (77-79)  C 2.0
- Failed: F 0.0 (0-69)

Policies

All Institute-wide policies are listed in the Bulletin under “Community Standards,” which include policies on attendance, academic integrity, plagiarism, computer, and network use. Students who require special accommodations for disabilities must obtain clearance from the Office of Disability Services at the
beginning of the semester. They should contact Mai McDonald, Disability Services Coordinator, in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Main Building, Lower Level: 718-636-3711.

**Notes on Research, Archiving and Photographs**

1. Students taking this class may be asked to participate in faculty-sponsored research for advancing knowledge in the field of Information and Library Science. This research will exclude any personally identifiable information. If you object to this practice, please communicate with the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

2. Student work may be retained by Pratt SILS and disseminated, including through electronic networks (e.g., repositories, websites). Students retain intellectual property rights on their work but Pratt has the right to use and display your work (for more information see Pratt’s Intellectual Property Policy available at: [http://www.pratt.edu/provost/Final_Approved_by_BOT_Effective_01-01-08.pdf](http://www.pratt.edu/provost/Final_Approved_by_BOT_Effective_01-01-08.pdf))

3. Students in the class may be photographed during class related activities. Photographs may be archived in institutional archives or websites. Photographs may be name tagged. If you object to being included in such photographs, please communicate with the instructor at the beginning of the semester.