

# **Syllabus:7710 Archival Theory and Issues**

## **Syllabus MLIS 7710: Archival Theory and Issues, Fall 2012**

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### **Contact Information:**

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\*\*The email address above is for emergency contact only. We will write to each other through WebCT. You don't want your class emails to mix with my regular emails. We could both miss something.

### **Course Description:**

An introduction to archival theory and practice. The course explores archival history and the profession, including legal issues, standards and ethics, terminology and concepts, research tools, and methods and practice

Students will:

1. Explain archival history and current theory as defined by the profession
2. Apply principals of archival theory by either completing an analysis of a current archival issue or through a field experience
3. Use standard archival practices to organize and describe an archival collection
4. Assess areas of disaster vulnerability for an archive
5. Discuss digital resources used for online archives
6. Recognize the importance of networking with peers and leaders in archives in Georgia
7. Identify career options within the field of archives

### **Books:**

Text Books: Purchase from Society of American Archivists website-- Join SAA and get discount, but you don't have to join to buy books. Amazon seems to have them at a very high price, so I suggest getting them from SAA at

<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/store/storeFront.html?Action=Store>

**UNDERSTANDING ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS** (Archival Fundamentals Series II)  
Cox, Richard J and O'Toole, James M. Society of American Archivists, 2006.

**ARRANGING AND DESCRIBING ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS** (Archives and Foundation Series II) -Kathleen Roe. Society of American Archivists, 2005.

**PRESERVING ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS (2ND ED.)** -Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler  
Society of American Archivists, 2010.

Other Readings will be posted on E-Reserve or BlazeView.

On the reading. This is a graduate class. Most weeks the readings will be in the range of 80-100 pages. Do not get behind.

**E-Reserves Reading:** Almost every week you will be responsible for articles that are not in your books. These articles are on E-reserves on Odum Library under my name. The password is **arch**. Here are instructions from the library on accessing E-reserves:

Go to library homepage: [www.valdosta.edu/library](http://www.valdosta.edu/library)

Go to **Course Reserves** tab in bottom left box on library homepage

Put in instructor's last name [**Davis, Deborah**]

Find the title of the Article--located under the title the library location will be **Electronic Reserves**, click on that.

It will prompt for a password. The password is **arch**

Document should appear.

If there are problems it could be you are using the wrong password, or try a different browser. You must have at least version 8.0 of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Any questions should be directed to Donna Jones 229 333-7082. Or email her at [djones@valdosta.edu](mailto:djones@valdosta.edu)

## **Schedule for Semester:**

**A Reading Log (discussion) is DUE each week by Friday. Some of these are "required" of all students and are marked below. There are four of these. Two weeks do not have reading logs attached, leaving a total of 10 weeks for regular reading logs, of which you have to do 8. Use your dropped logs wisely. Please feel free to submit early. Your reading log should indicate that you have read and thought hard about that reading. I'm not big on page limits, but a non-required reading log should be at least a page, but not more than two, double-spaced, unless otherwise specified.**

## **Week 1. August 13-17: Introductions, Role Delineation**

Topic: Archives Background and History

Readings:

Chapter 1 of *Understanding Archives*, pp 1-43

Fleckner – “*Dear Many Jane*” – *American Archivist* (AA) Vol. 54 pg. 8-13—short and on choosing Archives as a profession.

Foote – *To Remember and Forget* – AA Vol. 53 pg. 378-392—one of the most memorable readings of the semester.

**Assignment:** Counts as first reading log. Please complete early in week: Introduction, who you are, why you are taking class, what do you do—conclude with a short reaction to one of the readings.

## **Week 2. August 20-24**

Topic Archives, Background and History

Readings: A lot of readings this week, over 100 pages. Don't get behind. Skim Creatively.

*Understanding Archives* : chapter 2, pp 45-86

Posner – *Some Aspects of Archival Development Since the French Revolution* – AA pg. 159-172

Panitch – *Liberty, Equality, Posterity?* – AA Vol. 59 pg. 30-47

Gilliland-Swetland – *Provenance of a Profession* – AA Vol. 54 pg. 160-175

Cook – *Blessings of Providence* – AA Vol. 46 pg. 374-399

**Assignment: Choose an Archives to visit—make initial contact and get appointment**

## **Week 3. Aug 27-31**

Topic: Selection and Appraisal pt 1

Readings: Required:

*Understanding Archives*, pp. 87-131

Samuels – *Who Controls the Past* – AA Vol. 49 pg. 109-124

O'Toole – *On the Idea of Uniqueness* – AA Vol. 57 pg. 632-658

Recommended:

Cox – *Documentation Strategy* – *Archivaria* pg. 11-31

Ericson – *At the Rim* – *Archivaria* pg. 66-77

**Assignment, Due Sept 5, Adopted Archives Description**

## **Week 4. September 4-7**

Topic: Selection and Appraisal pt 2

Readings:

*Understanding Archives*, pp 133-146 and glance over "Bibliographic Essay"

Boles – *The Big Picture: Mission Statements, Records Management and Collection Development Policies from Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts* pg. 43-74

Boles and Young – *Exploring the Black Box* – AA Vol. 48 pg. 121-140  
Greene – *The Surest Proof* – *Archivaria* pg. 127-169

### **Week 5. September 10- Sept 14**

Preservation pt 1

Readings:

Ritzenthaler – *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts*, pages 1-108

**Due Sept 14: Reading Log Assignment: Using Boles Big Picture, examine mission and collection development statements from your Adopted Archives and the ones supplied in Blazeview to compare and contrast the content and comment on their function and adequacy. 2 pp, required reading log.**

### **Sept. 15 Optional Extra Credit Field Trip to Morrow**

### **Week 6. Sept 17-Sept 21**

Preservation pt 2

Readings:

Ritzenthaler-- *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* pages 109-221

### **Week 7. Sept. 24-28**

Preservation and Disaster Planning pt 1

Readings: Begin: O'Toole – *On the Idea of Permanence* – AA Vol. 52 pg. 10-25

Conway – *Archival Preservation Practice* – AA Vol. 53 pg. 204-222

Paton – *Preservation Re-Recording of Audio Recordings* – AA Vol. 61 pg. 188-219

Disaster Plan materials

**Assignment, begin work with Adopted Archives on Vulnerability Assessment**

### **Week 8. Oct 1-5**

**\*\*\*October 4 is the last day to withdraw passing.\*\*\***

Preservation and Disaster Planning pt 2

Readings: Catch up week for preservation: Complete any unread materials from preservation section, get ahead on Roe for next week

**Assignment: Adopted Archives Vulnerability Assessment due Oct. 7**

### **Week 9. Oct. 8-12**

Arrangement and Description pt 1

Readings:

*Arrangement and Description*- Roe, Chapters 1-3 and 1/2 , pp Introduction - p. 70

Hackbard-Dean, *Collections that Grow*, p 105-120 (see readings for week for link to article)

**Assignment: Final decision on work proposal/research paper—email me what you decide.**

**No reading log as run up to break.**

**Week 10. Oct. 17-19 (Oct. 15-16 is fall break)**

The Practice of Arrangement and Description

Readings: Complete *Arrangement and Description*-Roe c. 4 and appendices, pp 71-105, plus skim appendices.

**Assignment: Look over collection for Arrangement and Description Exercise**

**Week 11. Oct. 22-26**

Arrangement and Description pt 2

Readings:

Bearman and Lytle – *Power of the Principle of Provenance* – Archivaria pg. 14-27

Michelson – *Description and Reference* – AA Vol. 50 pg. 192-208

Hedstrom – *Descriptive Practices for Electronic Records* – Archivaria pg. 53-63

Pitti – *Encoded Archival Description* – AA Vol. 60 pg. 268-283

**Assignment: Ask any questions needed about Arrangement and Description Exercise.**

**Week 12. Oct. 29-Nov. 2**

Arrangement and Description, with a twist

Readings:

\*\*Greene\_Meissner *More Product, Less Process* p.1-61

\*\*Prom – *Chapter 12: Optimum Access? Processing in College and University Archives* p. 1-37  
*see readings for week for link to articles*

I would appreciate it if you all did this log, even though it is one of the 8 out of 10.

**Assignment: Arrangement and Description Exercise Due Nov.4**

**Week 13. Nov. 5-9--Society of Georgia Archivists Annual Meeting in St. Simon's Island, Nov. 8-9**

Outreach and Reference:

Readings:

Finch – *In the Eye of the Beholder* – AA Vol. 47 pg. 111-123

Conway – *Facts and Frameworks* – AA Vol. 49 pg. 393-407

Yakel and Hensey – *Understanding Administrative Use* – AA Vol. 57 pg. 596-615

**Read one of the above user studies and the items below from *Advocating Archives***

Hohmann, Judy P. "Money Talk" in *Advocating Archives*

Mooney, Phillip F. "A Modest Proposal: Marketing Ideas for the Expansionist Archives" in *Advocating Archives*

### **Week 14. Nov. 12-16**

Online Presence and Displays

Readings: Stielow, Frederick, "Creating Website and Display Options" in *Building Digital Archives, Descriptions, and Displays*

Bearman and Hedstrom – "Reinventing Archives for Electronic Records" in *Electronic Records Management* – ERMPS pg. 82-98

Henry – *Schellenberg in Cyberspace* – AA Vol. 61 pg. 309-327

Guilland-Swetland – *Digital Communications* – Archival Issues pg. 39-50

Web Page discoveries

**Required Reading Log, Due Nov. 16: class creates annotated list of Archival web pages, each contributing one or two on the discussion posting.**

### **Week 15. Nov. 19-20, Rest of the week is Thanksgiving.**

Law and Ethics

Readings:

Online case studies--in the learning module marked Week of April 21-25

**Required Reading Log due November 26 : each student responding to a case study online, length of 1-2 pages.**

### **Week 16. Nov. 26-30**

Management

Readings:

Burke, Frank G. "The Art of the Possible: The Archivist as Administrator." in *Successful Archival Programs*

Brown, Lauren R. "Archival Programs in the Academic Library" in *Successful Archival Programs*

Dearstyne, Bruce W. "Leadership of Archival Programs." in *Successful Archival Programs*

Jimerson – *Redefining Archival Identity* – AA Vol. 52 pg. 332-340

Grabowski – *Keepers, Users, and Funders* – AA Vol. 55 pg. 464-472

**No Reading Log**

**Final papers due December 3, 2010, Good Luck and please fill out evaluations.**

**Assignments: See Assignments Tab on Blazeview homepage for more info and due dates.**

**Reading Logs (Participation) -20% for the 8 (non-required) reading logs. You may choose any 8 of the 10 (non-required) reading logs to do. You must do 8.**

**Two weeks do not have reading logs due. And an additional 4 weeks have "required" logs due, thus you can't skip them. The 4 required logs count an additional 20% of your grade or 5% each.**

**A Reading Log (discussion) is DUE each week by Friday, unless otherwise indicated. Some of these are "required" of all students. There are four of these. Check the due dates for when they are due--it might not be on Friday. Two weeks do not have reading logs attached, leaving a total of 10 weeks for regular reading logs, of which you have to do 8. Use your dropped logs wisely. Please feel free to submit early. Your reading log should indicate that you have read and thought hard about that reading. I'm not big on page limits, but it should be at least a page, double-spaced, but not more than two, unless otherwise specified. The required logs will be longer. There must be evidence of reading and engagement with that reading. You should bring in the readings, and also outside points of view such as your experience or your Adopted Archives' experience.**

**First Required Log: Introduction (see syllabus): 5%--pretty much a freebie: counts as first reading log. Please complete early in the week. Includes an introduction, who you are, why you are taking the class, where you work, previous experience with archives, what you like to do, and conclude with a short reaction to one of the readings.**

#### **Adopted Archives Description: 15%**

Adopt an Archives. Pay it a visit, meet the Archivist and describe that Archives. (Not the policies, mission statement, collection development policy--that's for later--BUT DO GET THEM). If you work in an archives, go somewhere else. Use your own working archives in your commenting on readings, but make this assignment a new one. You need to know how big it is physically. How big is its collection? Does it include a museum? What does it collect, generally? What formats? What climate control? How many Staff? Levels of education and experience? Certification? Any volunteers? How used? How governed? Organization? Reporting structure? How funded? Grants? Endowments? Funds for collection development? Biggest strengths according to Archivist? Biggest Weaknesses or needs? Processed or Unprocessed collections? Percentages? Web presence? If they have one, get to know it. Digitizing program? Write this up as a narrative. I want to see this place (you may use pictures) and know this Archivist from your writing. While there please try to get policy statements: mission and collection development, usage policy, and any forms like deed of gift, accession, processing, etc. that they are willing to give you. But these are for later, just to save you a trip. Remember these people are helping with your education. They are important. We are not going to judge them, just use them as a way to describe the many different archives out there and explore the challenges of different archives.

(Also, show your Adopted Archives the syllabus, so they can say if they are OK with the Vulnerability Assessment and the possibility of work if you are interested.)

In this class we are not here to assign "right or wrong" or even demand standards of other archives. If you see something later that contradicts your reading of "good practice" of course you should write about it, but you must first ask that archives why that is the way it is....Why the big backlog? Why the humidity? Etc. You will generally find that things are the way they are not

because of ignorance or neglect but because of some constraint you may not be aware of--bring the constraint to the forefront and explore it.

Length 3- 5 pages, not counting pictures, but pictures are encouraged. If you do a good job, it will probably be on the longer side.

### **Required Log-- Policy Statement Assignment: -- 5%**

Using information from *Understanding Archives*, other readings, the policy statements you got from your archives and others found on the internet at SGA's Form's Forum (<http://soga.org/resource/forms>) , describe the type of policy documents you have found and explore how they cover various elements such as collection development, legal ownership, usage, and other things you notice. You might do a compare and contrast to come up with what you think would be the most effective policy statements, pulling from your many examples. at least 2 pages. (by the way, policies have a lot of white space on them.)

See Also the **Extra Credit Tab** on the syllabus for extra credit trips worth 5 points added to your final grade--could be the difference between an A and a B or, more critically, between a B and a C.

### **Adopted Archives Vulnerability Assessment-10%**

Go to your adopted Archives, and with the help of the staff, do the "Vulnerability Assessment" and write up the findings. This is the first step of a disaster plan. Length determined by instrument.

### **Arrangement and Description Exercise:-- 10%**

Scanned pieces of a collection will be put on E-Reserve or Web-CT and you will have to arrange it, determine the series, and describe all its parts in a finding aid. Some web research for bio/history may be needed as well. Finding Aid of 1-3 pages.

**Required Reading Log, Web page bibliography 5%:** class creates an annotated bibliography of Digital Library or Digital Exhibit Sites. Each student annotates 2.

**Required Reading Log: Case Study 5%:** Each student responds to an Archival Ethics case from Materials posted on Blazeview. Read some of the cases, without reading the author's response. Then pick one to comment on. Write up a few paragraphs of comments, and then read the author's comments on the cases. Then comment on how the author "solved" the case. You should not expect to agree with the author on all parts of your case.

### **Final Paper: -- 25%**

Research Paper either 10-12 page paper on topic of interest in the Archival World

Or Do an approved "mini-internship" of 30 hours in an **archives where you do not already work** and write up your project: 5-7 pages. You must have a note accepting you from your archives, describing your project and clearance from me before you begin.

### **Field Trips:**

The field trips for this class are optional because this is a predominantly online program and we do not want to make barriers for our students. However, the information and contacts you will make from these two field trips can be important. In the last class people used the information and people they met to plan meaningful internships, find out about jobs, and decide on a career path. I hope all of you can come and take advantage of these opportunities. Even though they are optional, they do carry extra credit. Together these field trips are worth 5 points added to your final grade. That is significant and can make a letter grade difference in your final grade. I am aware that some of you live outside of Georgia, and thus outside of access to these field trips. If that is the case you have two choices; 1) find something similar to these field trips, like a state or regional conference and a visit to a major archives or conservation lab and document your experience with words and pictures or 2) just don't worry about it and make sure you don't need the extra credit.

**First Trip:** worth 2 points extra credit: To Atlanta. We will be visiting the State Archives in Morrow where Christine Wiseman, the state's very knowledgeable preservation officer—and recent President of SGA, will talk to us about preservation and give us a tour of the preservation and conservation labs, the vaults, etc. **Date: September 15.** I've also proposed a lunch at Olive Garden beforehand for those that wish so we can get acquainted.

**Second Trip:** worth 3 points extra credit. The second trip is not just a few hours on one day. We will be going to the Society of Georgia Archivists Annual Meeting (Conference) on St. Simon's Island.

The SGA Meeting is **November 8-9**, with most of the activities taking place on the 8th. SGA is an amazing conference because SGA is very tied in to national trends in archives. The same year "More Product, Less Practice" (check your syllabus) appeared at SAA (Society of American Archivists), we had one of the originators to speak at SGA. When Archon and Archivists Toolkit, the standards for integrated archival systems, appeared in 2006-07, we got a panel with the creators at SGA. The author of the most popular book on Description in the field (which we are using), Kathleen Roe, was the keynote speaker two years ago. Georgia does very right by its archivists with this organization.

The student rates are very reasonable. The food is usually excellent and the Thursday night reception and scholarship auction is one of the best events I've ever attended at a conference. Plus you get to come to the beach. What's not to like.

The opportunity to attend this conference while you're taking the class is not to be missed. It's worth taking time off work if you can afford it. Get together with your classmates and share a motel room because it will be really worth it. The website is here: <http://soga.org/annualmeeting> I'll be updating you about the conference as the class goes on.

## **Grade Composition:**

20% Optional Reading Logs (8 out of 10 required):

20% Required Reading Logs, 4 at 5% each

15% Adopted Archives Assignment

10% Preservation Vulnerability Assessment

10% Arrangement and Description Assignment

25% Final Paper/Mini Internship Project

## **Grading Standards:**

### **General Grading Scale**

**A** excellent work - among the best work seen at the graduate level

**B** satisfactory work - better than average work at the graduate level

**C** honest attempt - needs moderate to major revisions to be satisfactory

**D** perfunctory or missing work

### **Final Grading Scale**

**A** - always satisfactory, often excellent

**B** - mostly satisfactory, occasionally excellent

**C** - sometimes satisfactory, often needs revisions

**D** - rarely satisfactory, often perfunctory, late or missing

**F** - lacking even an attempt to learn or do, dishonesty, plagiarism

**Incomplete Policy:** It is getting harder to get Incompletes at VSU. Here is part of the stated policy

Sometimes for **non-academic** reasons (e.g. serious illness, death in the family), a student needs to request an Incomplete grade for a course. There are three factors to keep in mind: (a) The student must be passing the course; (b) The student must be almost finished with the course; (c) The student must initiate contact with the professor to make the request.

Note the emphasis on "non-academic reasons" and the reasons given. You cannot receive an Incomplete for falling behind. Be sure to check the "Withdraw by" date on the syllabus if you feel overwhelmed in the class. Incompletes are for when life disasters make it impossible for you to complete the work, not for when bad habits or over-committing do.

## Technical Requirements

All class materials will be placed on a password-protected Web site using the BLAZEVIEW management program. If you are a new Blazeview user, Click on Blazeview for students, getting started on the first Blazeview page. View the "GettingStarted" tutorial first. Then return to the Blazeview page and login using your BlazeNet email ID and password.

To meet all class requirements, you should be prepared to:

- (1) create PowerPoint slide presentations -As I will be doing most of the work at home, please save to the **2003 version**;
- (2) view all PowerPoints placed on the course BLAZEVIEW site - (Again, see note to Save as 2003 version);
- (3) Use the E-Reserves Feature of Odum Library found under "find it" on the left bar of the web page. If you have problems, call Circulation at 333- 5869 (daytime preferred).
- (4) use at least Adobe Acrobat Reader 8.0 (this is important for E-Reserves.)
- (5) check discussion groups as needed; and
- (6) keep electronic backup copies of each assignment and project you submit.

Documents other than the PowerPoint presentations must be submitted using a word processing program compatible with Microsoft (MS) Word. The preferred document format is **MS Word 2003**; if you are using Word 2007, I can read your documents, but you won't be able to read other folks' stuff. If you are using WordPerfect, save your documents in Rich Text Format (rtf). Documents that can not be opened on VSU equipment will be returned to you for re-formatting. Pasting your text into an e-mail is not an acceptable solution for submitting papers (it's good if you are doing discussions) and will not be accepted.

We may do some video and audio during this class, as well as Live Classroom. That will be announced well in advance.

The university's Information Technology department provides step-by-step guides on how to use VSU's email and other sources. The IT Help Desk is at <http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/> and their phone hot line is 229-245-4357.

UPDATED 8-17-2010

## **Academic Dishonesty**

"Valdosta State University expects that graduate students will pursue their academic endeavors and conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. All work that a student presents to satisfy course requirements should represent his or her own efforts, including appropriate use and acknowledgement of external sources. Specific regulations related to student conduct and behavior is contained in the *Student Handbook, Student Code of Ethics*.

\*\*By taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to SafeAssign, a tool within BlazeVIEW. For more information on the use of SafeAssign at VSU see [SafeAssign for Students \(http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/SafeAssignforStudents.shtml\)](http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/SafeAssignforStudents.shtml).

## **Distance Learning Support**

A VSU reference librarian, Ms. Ginger Williams, is responsible for coordinating library services for off-campus VSU students. She may be reached by email at [ghwilliams@valdosta.edu](mailto:ghwilliams@valdosta.edu) or by phone at 229-245-3745. An online guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library Web site at

<http://www.valdosta.edu/library/services/distanceeducation.shtml>

## **Special Needs Statement**

Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of our institution to discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee of the institution based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin or handicap of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent executive orders as well as the Title IX section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students requiring classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability should discuss this need with the professor at the

beginning of the semester. Students must register with the Access Office for Students With Disabilities, in Farber Hall, phone nos:

229-245-2498 (V/VP)

229-219-1348 (TTY)

Web site: <http://www.valdosta.edu/access/>