

LBSCI 730: Archival Appraisal, Arrangement, and Access (Introduction to Archival Practice)

Fall 2023 | Thursdays 6:40-9:15 PM | RO-300i, Rosenthal Library
Queens College, CUNY

SYLLABUS

Instructor: Caitlin Colban-Waldron

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Phone number: (516) 382-6632

Office Hours: one hour prior to class AND by phone/Zoom appointment

Please allow 24 hours for a response to any communications outside of class. For quickest response, please copy both my QC email and Gmail, provided above.

A. Course description

This in-person course provides an in-depth exploration of the archival principles of Appraisal, Arrangement, and Access. The key principles of this course represent the hierarchy of archival practice: access to archives is dependent on the description of archives, which in turn is dependent on the arrangement of archives. Before arrangement is archival appraisal, which represents the archivist's foundational intervention into the process of records management and disposition. The nature of the archival record is shaped by these processes, and by extension, our relationship with history and the past. We will look closely at this process of shaping the archival record that takes place in the archive.

Within a practical and theoretical framework students will consider how recent advances in technology provide opportunities for more dynamic and interactive tools for archival access. Key concepts covered will include: the construction of archival finding aids, including content standards; the emergence of digital archives, including open-source software and metadata schemes; and modes of digital description, access, and repository management.

B. Course Learning Goals & GSLIS Program Objectives

Course objectives

The goals of the course are to:

1. Provide students with a basic knowledge and understanding of archival practice.
2. Provide students with opportunities to work through the stages of archival processing.
3. Engage students in current issues in discourse related to archival practice.

Student Learning Outcomes	Assignments	Student Learning Objectives (text appears on next page)						
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1. Gain hands-on experience appraising and arranging materials, and familiarity with digital archival technologies, as well as address hypothetical “real-world” scenarios re: archival management	Practicum and deliverables	x	x	x			x	
2. Become familiar with key professional best practices	Finding aid analysis		x					x
3. Conduct a survey on a topic related to contemporary archival practice	Access proposal				x	x	x	
4. Present experience in an engaging and professional manner to colleagues	Presentation and discussion lead				x	x		

Legend: GSLIS Program Objectives Stated as Student Learning Outcomes:

- A. Enable access to information and knowledge, including its creation, acquisition, organization and management, storage and retrieval
- B. Articulate the role and importance of ethics, values, lifelong learning and advocacy underlying the practice of the information professions
- C. Apply appropriate standards, policies, tools and practices in various specializations of information science, as articulated by representative professional organizations
- D. Design and conduct research studies, critically assess research claims, and synthesize and

disseminate findings

- E. Advocate for social justice, particularly in our metropolitan community, by understanding the needs, designing programs with, and amplifying the strengths of our underserved groups
- F. Identify, evaluate and implement current and emerging technologies to create, store, and present information in a way such that users can access it, process it, and experience it
- G. Explain and apply principles of effective management and leadership in the library and related information institutions in a rapidly changing society

C. Books and technology

The course website is: LBSCI730.commons.gc.cuny.edu. Please [register for a CUNY Academic Commons account](#) before our first meeting and follow the class page. More information about [taking a course on the Commons](#) can be found on the Help section of the Commons website.

This class follows a Zero-Cost Textbook model that will use various Open Educational Resources and/or library materials. You will not need to purchase a textbook for this class.

That means that all materials will be available one of the following ways:

- Linked directly from [course website](#)
- Sourced through [QC Library](#) resources like databases and journals

We will be utilizing the annotation tool [Hypothes.is](#), which works as a Chrome extension or a bookmarklet, depending on your browser. Instructions on how to download and use the tool will happen in our first class session.

Please use the [Hypothes.is group invitation link](#) to access highlights, notes, and discussions on the semester's readings.

You will be submitting all assignments through Dropbox, directly on the course website. I prefer PDFs, but will accept Word documents. Please use the following file name convention when naming files:

Lastname_Assignment#

D. Course schedule [SUBJECT TO CHANGE]

UNIT ONE: FOUNDATIONS

SESSION ONE: Archives and archivists

Thursday, August 31

Required reading:

LBSCI 730: Archival Appraisal, Arrangement, and Access Fall 2023 Syllabus

Assignments DUE:

none

SESSION TWO: Histories of archival practice

Thursday, September 7

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Cook. (2013). Evidence, memory, identity, and community: four shifting archival paradigms. *Archival Science*, 13(2-3), 95–120. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-012-9180-7>

Optional–foundational reading:

Cook. (1997). What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift. *Archivaria*, 43(43), 17–63.

Assignments DUE:

1. Welcome! Submission

UNIT TWO: APPRAISAL

SESSION THREE: Archives building

Thursday, September 14

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Cook. (1996). Building an Archives: Appraisal Theory for Architectural Records. *The American Archivist*, 59(2), 136–143. <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.59.2.9016827w6t4271wl>

Cox, R. J. (2002). The end of collecting: Towards a new purpose for archival appraisal. *Archival Science*, 2(3), 287–309. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435626>

Optional–foundational reading:

Society of American Archivists. “SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics.” Approved by SAA Council February 2005, updated August 2020.

Millar, L. A. (2017). *Archives : Principles and practices*. Facet Publishing. Chapter 10: Acquiring archives (pp. 179-212).

Assignments DUE:

none

SESSION FOUR: Making the appraisal decision

Thursday, September 21

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Lutz, C. (2022). Making a Scene: A Scenes Approach to a Local Music Archives. *The American Archivist*, 85(1), 268–287.

Optional–foundational reading:

Boles, F., & Young, J. M. (1985). Exploring the Black Box: The Appraisal of University Administrative Records. *The American Archivist*, 48(2), 121–140.

Purcell, A. D. (2015). *Donors and archives : A guidebook for successful programs*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Incorporated. Chapter 1: Donor preparedness and the archival program (pp. 28-47).

Assignments DUE:

none

UNIT THREE: ARRANGEMENT

SESSION FIVE: Processing, or establishing control

Thursday, September 28

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Rockefeller Archive Center, Guide to Processing Collections - Processing.
<https://docs.rockarch.org/processing-manual/processing/>

Dundon, K.; McPhee, L.; Arroyo-Ramirez, E.; Beiser, J.; Dean, C.; Eagle Yun, A., et al. (2020). Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries (Version 4). UCLA: Library. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4b81g01z>

Optional–foundational reading:

Faulder, E. & Jackson, L. U. (2022). Digital Processing: Exploring the Enigma. *The American Archivist* 85(1), 146–172.

Greene, M. and Meissner, D. (2005). “More product, less process: Revamping traditional archival processing.” *The American Archivist* 68(2), 208-263.

Assignments DUE:

1. Practicum deliverable: appraisal report

SESSION SIX: Preservation

Thursday, October 5

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Vinson, E. (2019). Reassessing A/V in the Archives: A Case Study in Two Parts. *The American Archivist* 82(2), 421–439.

Optional–foundational reading:

Northeast Document Conservation Center. “Preservation 101” (2015).
<https://www.nedcc.org/preservation101/welcome>

Optional–further reading:

Greene, M. and Meisner, D. (2010). “More application while less appreciation: The adopters and antagonists of MPLP.” *Journal of Archival Organization* 8(3-4). 174-226.

Assignments DUE:

none

SESSION SEVEN: Arrangement

Thursday, October 12

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Heil, J. M. (2013). The Procrustean Bed: A History of the Arrangement of the Al Purdy Fonds. *Archivaria*, 76, 27-54.

Darms, L. (2009). The Archival Object: A Memoir of Disintegration. *Archivaria*, 67, 143-155.
Retrieved from <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13212>

Optional–foundational reading:

Zhang, J. (2012). Original Order in Digital Archives. *Archivaria*, 74, 167-193.

Meehan, J. (2009). Making the Leap from Parts to Whole: Evidence and Inference in Archival Arrangement and Description. *The American Archivist*, 72(1), 72–90.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40294596>

Assignments DUE:

none

SESSION EIGHT: Description principles and standards

Thursday, October 19

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Baucom, Erin. “An Exploration into Archival Descriptions of LGBTQ Materials,” *American Archivist* 81(1). (Spring/Summer 2018): 65-83.

White. (2012). Crippling the Archives: Negotiating Notions of Disability in Appraisal and Arrangement and Description. *The American Archivist*, 75(1), 109–124.
<https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.75.1.c53h4712017n4728>

Optional–foundational reading:

Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS): <https://saa-ts-dacs.github.io/>

Douglas, J. (2016). Toward More Honest Description. *American Archivist* 79(1), p. 26-55.

Optional–further reading:

Wright, K. (2019). Archival interventions and the language we use. *Archival Science*, 19, 331–348.

Assignments DUE:

1. Practicum deliverable: arrangement schema

SESSION NINE: Metadata and digital description

Thursday, October 26

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Fear. (2010). User Understanding of Metadata in Digital Image Collections: Or, What Exactly Do You Mean by “Coverage”? *The American Archivist*, 73(1), 26–60.
<https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.73.1.j00044lr77415551>

Optional–foundational reading:

Zhang, & Mauney, D. (2013). When Archival Description Meets Digital Object Metadata: A Typological Study of Digital Archival Representation. *The American Archivist*, 76(1), 174–195.
<https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.76.1.121u85342062w155>

DCMI metadata terms. DCMI. (n.d.). <https://www.dublincore.org/specifications/dublin-core/dcmi-terms/>

Assignments DUE:

1. Practicum deliverable: DACS description elements

UNIT FOUR: ACCESS

SESSION TEN: Copyright, licensing, and intellectual property

Thursday, November 2

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

VanArendonk, K. (2022). TV has always disappeared. This feels different. *New York Magazine*.

Dryden, J. (2014). Just Let It Go? Controlling Reuse of Online Holdings. *Archivaria*, 77, 43-71.
Retrieved from <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13486>

Optional–foundational reading:

Hirtle, Hudson, Kenyon. (2009). *Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Guidelines for Digitization for US Libraries, Archives, & Museums*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Library. Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Assignments DUE:

1. Finding aid analysis

SESSION ELEVEN: Archival reference

Thursday, November 9

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Radick, C. (2016). Romance Writers' Use of Archives. *Archivaria*, 81, 45-73. Retrieved from <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13558>

Tucker, S. (1). Doors Opening Wider: Library and Archival Services to Family History. *Archivaria*, 62, 127-158. Retrieved from <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/12893>

Optional–foundational reading:

Duff, Yakel, E., & Tibbo, H. (2013). Archival Reference Knowledge. *The American Archivist*, 76(1), 68–94. <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.76.1.x9792xp27140285g>

Millar, L. A. (2017). *Archives : Principles and practices*. Facet Publishing. Chapter 12: Making archives available.

Optional–further reading:

Anderson, I. G. (2004). Are You Being Served? Historians and the Search for Primary Sources. *Archivaria*, 58, 81-129. Retrieved from <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/12479>

Assignments DUE:

1. Practicum deliverable: digital access record
2. Final project topic/form

SESSION TWELVE: Archival literacy and teaching with primary sources

Thursday, November 16

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Quagliaroli, J., & Casey, P. (2021). Teaching with Drawings: Primary Source Instruction with Architecture Archives. *The American Archivist*, 84(2), 374–396.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-84.2.374>

Emerling. (2018). Civics in the Archives: Engaging Undergraduate and Graduate Students with Congressional Papers. *The American Archivist*, 81(2), 310–322.

<https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-81.2.310>

Optional–foundational reading:

SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force. (June 2018). GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SOURCE LITERACY.

Roussain, J. (2020). Pedagogue in the Archive: Reorienting the Archivist as Educator. *Archivaria*, 90, 70-111. Retrieved from

<https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13757>

Optional–further reading:

Baines. (2023). Establishing special collections literacy for undergraduate students: an investigation into benefits and barriers of access. *Archives and Records (Abingdon, England)*, 44(1), 8–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23257962.2022.2149481>

Assignments DUE:

1. Practicum deliverable: reference request

THANKSGIVING, November 23–CAMPUS CLOSED, NO CLASS

SESSION THIRTEEN: Advocacy and outreach

Thursday, November 30

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

Buchanan, Gruning, J., Gursoy, A., & Barker, L. (2017). Surveying Archivists and Their Work toward Advocacy and Management, or “Enterprise Archiving.” *The American Archivist*, 80(2), 268–295. <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-80.2.268>

McWhite. (2010). “So, Your Institution Is Hosting a Presidential Debate...”: A Case Study of 2008 Programming by the University of Mississippi Archives and Special Collections. *The American Archivist*, 73(1), 219–234. <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.73.1.n374578518678vk2>

Optional–foundational reading:

Grabowski. (1992). Keepers, Users, and Funders: Building an Awareness of Archival Value. *The American Archivist*, 55(3), 464–472. <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.55.3.r9gmpjorj8530811>

Primer. (2009). Resources for Archives: Developing Collections, Constituents, Colleagues, and Capital. *Journal of Archival Organization*, 7(1-2), 58–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332740902892833>

Skinner, M., & Hulbert, I. G. (2022, August 22). *A*CENSUS II All Archivists Survey Report*. <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.317224>

Assignments DUE:

1. Presentations

SESSION FOURTEEN: Conclusions

Thursday, December 7

Required reading–annotation and discussion:

LBSCI 730: Archival Appraisal, Arrangement, and Access Fall 2023 Syllabus

Assignments DUE:

1. Presentations
2. Access and use initiative proposal and paper (12/17, midnight)
3. Extra credit deliverable: social media (12/17, midnight)

E. Assignments, due dates, and grading plan

GRADING PLAN & ASSIGNMENTS

The final grade for this course will be determined as follows:

Practicum	25%
Annotations	15%
Finding aid analysis	15%
Access/use proposal	15%
Presentation	5%
Class participation	25%

Practicum

5 hands-on exercises/deliverables in appraising and arranging materials, describing archival collections, and developing familiarity with digital archival technologies, as well as addressing hypothetical “real-world” scenarios re: archival management.

Each deliverable REQUIRES a 200-500 word reflection in addition to specific requirements. If you do not include a reflection you will not receive full points.

DUE: throughout, see COURSE SCHEDULE

1. Appraisal report: 9/28
2. Arrangement schema: 10/19
3. DACS description elements: 10/26
4. Digital access record: 11/9
5. Reference request: 11/16
6. Extra credit: social media post (2 points): 12/17

Annotations

Using the annotation tool [Hypothes.is](#), you will engage with the required readings listed in the course schedule. You are required to contribute at least one comment (CONNECT, SUMMARIZE, or QUESTION) and at least one reply on each week’s required reading for full points.

The tool works as a Chrome extension or a bookmarklet, depending on your browser. The start guide is linked above, but instruction on how to download and use the tool will happen in our first class session.

Please use the [Hypothes.is group invitation link](#) to access highlights, notes, and discussions on the semester’s readings.

DUE: Before class assigned

Finding aid analysis

5-7 pp paper that analyzes and critiques two to three finding aids you locate online from different repositories, measuring them against professional standards. Cite the weekly readings as part of your analysis and critique.

DUE: 11/2

Access and use proposal and paper

Write a 5-7 pp proposal for one access and use initiative for the Creative Services Video Collection, the Creative Services Photographs Collection, or another Queens College Special

Collections and Archives collection. You are free to be creative in your application of our learning objectives in Unit Four towards this initiative.

Must

TOPIC DUE: 11/9

PROJECT DUE: 12/17

Presentation

No shorter than 5 minutes and no longer than 10 minutes. Present on your access initiative.

DUE: 11/30 or 12/7

Class participation

This class is in-person for a reason! Participation in discussions and in-class exercises is *essential*. Attendance, active engagement with the readings and contributions to the class are mandatory in order to receive a passing grade.

F. Additional Information

CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Policy on Academic Integrity, as adopted by the Board is available to all candidates. Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. This policy and others related to candidates' issues are available to you at:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/studev/Documents/Academic%20Integrity%20Violation%20Form%20RV.pdf>.

USE OF CANDIDATE WORK

All programs in New York State undergo periodic reviews by accreditation agencies. For these purposes, samples of candidates' work are made available to those professionals conducting the review. Candidate anonymity is assured under these circumstances. If you do not wish to have your work made available for these purposes, please let the professor know before the start of the second class. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

Candidates with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: 1) register with and provide documentation to the Special Services Office, Kiely 171; 2) bring a letter to me indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to Queens College candidates, contact: Special Service Office; 171 Kiely Hall; 718-997-5870 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class and notify their professor by phone or email when they will not be or have not been there. Missing three classes or more will result in a failing grade, or with legitimate reasons, assignment of a grade of “incomplete.” Missing a scheduled guest speaker will count as two absences.

Your health and your family’s health should be your priority. If you are dealing with illness, sick family members, quarantine or isolation, a bad internet connection, increased anxiety, childcare challenges, or any other issues, please reach out and we will figure out accommodations. If some aspect of this class is not working for you, we will work together to find a solution.

Participation

Students are expected to show knowledge of the topics under discussion by sharing facts and insights from the class readings and/or personal experiences verbally in class and online through such vehicles as the Discussion Board on Blackboard, as requested. They are expected to ask questions, make comments, etc. Sitting in silence class after class is actively discouraged and will result in a low class participation grade.

COVID-19 Guidelines

In accordance with New York State and CUNY mandates, students attending in-person or hybrid classes must be fully vaccinated and submit proof of vaccination into CUNYfirst unless they have been issued an exemption by CUNY (CUNY Vaccine Exemption Form). Medical exceptions and religious exemptions must be submitted 30 days before the start of classes. All religious exemption decisions are final and not subject to appeal. Email studentreligiousexemption@cuny.edu if you have questions. Learn more here: <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/covid/>.

Face masks are not required at this time. That being said, I will wear a mask during every class and any office hours. With new variants circulating, Queens College encourages everyone—faculty, staff, students, and invited guests—to continue voluntary use of face masks, especially indoors. CUNY encourages the small number of students, faculty and staff that are still not vaccinated, and those who have been or will be granted a medical exemption or religious exception, to wear a mask.

It is possible that the course calendar or other aspects of the course may be adjusted due to COVID-19 and other contingencies at QC. Any changes will be posted to the course website in addition to emailed, so you should be sure to check your messages frequently.

Courtesy

Please turn off cell phones, pagers, and any other personal communication devices before class. Students found browsing or texting during class will be penalized. If you arrive late or

have to leave early, be unobtrusive in doing so. Be patient with fellow students who may not understand something as quickly as you do and ask questions if you are confused.

Late Assignments and Incomplete Grades

Assignments are due BEFORE or at the beginning of class on the due date. If you are going to be absent or late to class, you must make arrangements with the instructor for the paper to be delivered in time. Late assignments and papers will be given a lesser grade based on the assumption that by submitting an assignment after others, the student gains certain advantages. This same rule will apply to requests for an “incomplete” semester grade. Please note that incompletes are given at the discretion of the professor. They are not automatically assigned.

Writing

All papers submitted should be in Times New Roman, 12 point font with one inch margins, a cover sheet, and a reference list. Papers should be written in competent, grammatically correct American English, using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* style for organization, content, and citation format. Papers that do not meet these criteria will not be graded. Students should keep copies of all assignments submitted until they have been graded. Your instructor will discuss in class how to submit each paper.

Plagiarism

Copying the work of another author regardless of source, or the work of another student, is automatically grounds for failing the course. Using all or part of your own paper in multiple classes without prior permission is considered a form of plagiarism. This also includes asking people on professional Internet lists or working as professionals in the field to do your work for you.

Course Evaluations

Towards the end of the semester, access to online course evaluation will be enabled. Please remember to participate in the college online course evaluations. Your comments are highly valued, and these evaluations are an important service to fellow students and to the institution. Please also note that all responses are completely anonymous; no identifying information is retained once the evaluation has been submitted.