

## SIMMONS COLLEGE

### GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Fall 2007

#### **LIS 441: Appraisal of Archives and Manuscripts**

Class Hours: Thursday, 6 – 9pm.

Instructor: Jeannette A. Bastian

Office Hours: Thursday 3-5 and by appointment.

Phone and email: 617-521-2808; bastian@simmons.edu

**Course Description:** This course examines archival appraisal, the most critical task of the archivist. Through appraisal, the archivist determines which records have continuing value for long-term preservation. Appraisal of records not only affects all other archival functions but significantly impacts which part of the human documentary record will be preserved as part of society's collective memory.

#### **GSLIS Student Learning Outcomes**

Outcome #1: Demonstrate the ability to apply standards relevant to specific information service activities.

Outcome #4: Analyze, synthesize, and communicate information and knowledge in a variety of formats.

Outcome #7: Apply relevant research studies to tasks requiring problem solving and critical thinking.

Outcome #9: Respond to diversity among individuals and communities through policies, collections and services

#### **Additional Course Outcomes:**

1. Students understand the history and basic theories of archival appraisal
2. Students understand the methodologies and techniques of archival appraisal
3. Through practical experience students evaluate appraisal and acquisition policies.

Students must satisfactorily meet all the requirements described in the syllabus. Extenuating circumstances or other valid reasons for not making up the course assignments will be considered by the instructor, but the student will be required to provide evidence of the severity of the circumstances preventing the student from completing the assignments. Unexcused late submissions of assignments will lead to a half reduction in your grade each day the assignment is late.

The **Academic Support Center (ASC)** at <http://my.simmons.edu/academics/asc/> offers writing tutors and will help students with learning challenges. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and anticipate that you will need a reasonable accommodation in this class, it is important that you contact the Director of the Academic Support Center at 617-521-2471 early in the semester. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations.

Students should be aware that Simmons follows a College Honor Code. It can be found at <http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/student-info/honor-code.shtml>

### **Course Requirements:**

**1. Appraisal Report: Due December 13.** Student will evaluate the collecting or appraisal policy of an archival repository. The student will visit the repository or may use an online repository if it has both its policies and collections online, will evaluate the collection and the policies, interview the appropriate staff, read in the appropriate literature and prepare a short paper (at least five pages double-spaced) and be prepared to discuss it in class. The paper will address the following:

- Description of the institution, the institution's collection, its policy and/or practice (if it lacks a formal policy).
- Evaluation of the institution's policy and/or practice based on standard archival and records practice, supported by the archival literature
- Suggest alternative or additional appraisal strategies that might be appropriate and effective for the institution and why. These must be grounded in the existing archival literature
- Suggest ways in which the success of the policy and practice could be measured and evaluated.

Writing and footnoting style must adhere to a standard citation system such as APA or *Chicago Manual of Style*.

**2. Group Reports: Due Dates As Assigned in Syllabus.** Groups will be assigned to investigate and report to the class on an appraisal strategy from the following list (some class time will be given for the preparation of this assignment):

Macro-Appraisal  
Sampling  
The Black Box  
Minnesota Method  
User-based Appraisal  
Documentation Strategy  
Electronic Records

Presentations may be power-point or web presentations. All presentations must include the following:

- Discussion of the appraisal strategy and how it works?
- Key proponents of this strategy? Review of their writings.
- Advantages and disadvantages of this strategy
- Your critical assessment

**3. Case Study: Due October 18.** Students will be responsible for reading and analyzing one case study, presenting it to the class and submitting a report (at least five pages double-spaced) on it. The case study will be assigned by the instructor. The analysis should include the following:

- What is the case study about?
- What are the appraisal issues ?
- How were the appraisal issues resolved ?
- Your thoughts on the issues and their solutions? Were there other options?
- How does the appraisal literature support or not support the solutions?

**Case Studies:** (each student will be assigned one):

- Jeremy Brett, "A Case Study of the Web-Site Appraisal Process as Applied to State Government Agency Web Sites in Wisconsin," *Archival Issues*, 27 (2) (2002): 99-110
- Tamar G. Chute and Ellen D. Swain, Navigating Ambiguous Waters: Providing Access to Student Records in the University Archives," *American Archivist* 67 (Fall/Winter 2004): 212-233.
- Brian Keough and Amy C. Schindler, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Documenting Environmental Activism in New York State," *Archival Issues* 28 no2 121-35 2003/2004
- Michele Christian, "Documenting Student Life: The Use of Oral Histories in University Archives," *Archival Issues*, v. 27 no. 2 (2002) p. 111-24.
- Robert Horton, Cultivating Our Garden: Archives, Community, and Documentation, *Archival Issues*, v. 26 no. 1 (2001) p. 27-40.
- Nancy Deromedi, "Personal Faculty Web site: Exploring Archival Issues and Digital Convergence," *Archival Issues*, 29 no. 1 (2005): 9-18.
- Colleen McFarland, "Documenting Teaching and Learning: Practices, Attitudes, and Opportunities in College and University Archives," *Archival Issues*, 29 no. 1 (2005): 19-35.
- Todd Daniels-Howell, " Reappraisal of Congressional Records at the Minnesota Historical Society: A Case Study," *Archival Issues*, 23 (no.1, 1998): 35-40.
- Julie Herrada, "Letters to the Unabomber: A Case Study and Some Reflections," *Archival Issues* 28 (1) (2003-2004): 35-46.
- Tom Hyry, Diane Kaplan and Christine Weideman, "Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't': Assessing the Value of Faculty Papers and Defining a Collecting Policy," *American Archivist* 65 (Spring/Summer 2002): 56-69.
- Diane E. Kaplan, "The Stanley Milgram Papers: A Case Study on Appraisal of and Access to Confidential Data Files." *American Archivist* 59, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 288-297.
- Elisabeth Kaplan, "We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity," *American Archivist* 63 (Spring/Summer 2000): 126-151.
- Brian Keough, et. al., "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Documenting Environmental Activism in New York State", *Archival Issues* 28 (2003/2004):121-135.
- Karen M. Lamoree, "Documenting the Difficult or Collecting the Controversial," *Archival Issues* 20:2 (1995): 149-154.

- T. Z. Laver (2003). In a class by themselves: Faculty papers at research university archives and manuscript repositories. *American Archivist*, 66 (Spring/Summer 2003), 159-196.
- Sheila Powell, "Archival Reappraisal: The Immigration Case Files," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92): 104-116.
- Nancy Carlson Shrock, "Images of New England: Documenting the Built Environment," *American Archivist* 50 ( Fall 1987): 474-98.
- Joel Wurl, Documenting Displacement: The Migration of Archival Sources From Post-WW II East European Émigré Groups, *Archival Science*, 5 (1) 2005): 79-

**Response Papers (four): Due at the classes indicated.**

Write a one to one and a half page (approximately 300-350 word) response paper on the readings assigned for that week. Summarize your thoughts on the readings and raise any questions you may have. The weekly reading assignments below indicate which weeks require response papers. **Response papers must be emailed to me the day before the class.**

**Grading:**

- Class Participation and Response Papers: 25%
- Group Project: 25%
- Appraisal Paper: 25%
- Case Study: 25%

**Recommended Texts;**

- Richard J. Cox, *Documenting Localities: a Practical Model for American Archivists and Manuscripts Curators* ( Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1996).
- Richard J. Cox, *No Innocent Deposits; Forming Archives by Rethinking Appraisal* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004).
- Barbara Craig, *Archival Appraisal, Theory and Practice* (Munchen: KG Sauer, 2004).
- Nancy E. Peace, ed., *Archival Choices, Managing the Historical Record in an Age of Abundance* (Lexington, MA.: D.C. Heath, 1981).
- Helen W.Samuels, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1992).
- 

**Syllabus:**

**September 6. Introduction. An Appraisal Mindset.**

Case Study: Ohio Penitentiary Records

**September 13. Archival Appraisal: Basic Definitions, Role of Records Management.**

Required Readings

Richard J. Cox, *No Innocent Deposits; Forming Archives by Rethinking Appraisal* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004). Chapter 9 (p.231-258).

Nancy E. Peace, "Deciding What to Save: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice," in *Archival Choices: Managing the Historical Record in an Age of Abundance*, ed. Nancy E. Peace (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1984), pp. 1-18.

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

Case Studies in class:

Susan Steinwall, "Appraisal and the FBI files case: for whom do archivists retain records?" *American Archivist*, v. 49 (Winter 1986) p. 52-63

James Gregory Bradsher, "The FBI Records Appraisal" *Archival Issues*, 25, nos. 1 and 2 (2000):101-118.

**September 20. Functional Analysis, Value and Significance. Response Paper #1.**

Required Readings

Hans Booms, "Society and the Formation of Documentary Heritage: Issues in the Appraisal of Archival Sources," *Archivaria* 24 (Summer 1987), pp. 69-107.

Terry Cook, "Mind Over Matter: Towards A New Theory of Archival Appraisal," in Barbara L. Craig, ed., *The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh A. Taylor* (Ottawa: Association of Canadian Archivists, 1992), pp. 38-70.

F. Gerald Ham, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts*, 15-24; 51-65.

**September 27. Collecting Policies, Intrinsic Value.**

Required Readings

Frank Boles, "Mix Two Parts Interest to One Part Information and Appraise Until Done: Understanding Contemporary Record Selection Processes," *American Archivist* 50 (Summer 1987).

Timothy L. Ericson, "At the 'rim of creative dissatisfaction': Archivists and Acquisition Development," *Archivaria* 33 ( Winter 1991-92):66-77.

James M. O'Toole, "On the Idea of Permanence," *American Archivist* 52 (Winter 1989): 10-25.

Faye Phillips, "Developing Collecting Policies for Manuscript Collections," *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984): 30-42.

#### **October 4. Collecting – What and Why People Collect. Response Paper #2.**

##### Required Readings

Richard J. Cox, *No Innocent Deposits; Forming Archives by Rethinking Appraisal* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), chapters. 1 and 2.

Carolyn Heald, "Are We Collecting the 'Right Stuff'?" *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995): 182-188.

Molly McCarthy, "Consuming History?" *Common-Place* 1 (January 2001), available at <http://www.common-place.org/vol-01/no-02/ebay/>.

Adrian Cunningham, "Collecting Archives in the Next Millennium," paper presented to the Australian Society of Archivists annual conference, Adelaide, July 1997, available at <http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/acunning7.html>.

Bill Brown, "The Collecting Mania," *University of Chicago Magazine* 94 (October 2001), available at <http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0110/features/mania.html>.

#### **October 11. Government Appraisal Policies**

**Guest Lecturer:** Marvin Kabakoff, Senior Records Analyst, National Archives & Records Administration

##### **Required Readings**

National Archives and Records Administration, "Strategic Directions: Appraisal Policy," <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/appraisal.html>

National Archives of Australia, "Why Records are Kept: Directions in Appraisal," [http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/disposal/why\\_keep/summary.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/disposal/why_keep/summary.html)

## **October 18. Reappraisal and Deaccessioning**

### Required Readings

Leonard Rapport, "No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Records," *American Archivist* 44 (Spring 1981): 143-150.

Karen Benedict, "Invitation to a Bonfire: Reappraisal and Deaccessioning of Records as Collection Management Tools in an Archives – A Reply to Leonard Rapport," *American Archivist* 47 ( Winter 1984): 43-49.

James Currall, Michael Moss, and Susan Stuart, "Privileging information is inevitable," *Archives and Manuscripts*, 34, no. 1, (May 2006): 98-122,

### **Begin Case Studies**

## **October 25.**

### **Appraisal Models: Documentation Strategy, Black Box**

#### Required Readings

Richard J. Cox, "The Archival Documentation Strategy: A Brief Intellectual History, 1984-1996 and Practical Description," *Janus* 2 (1995): 76-93.

Timothy L. Ericson, " 'To Approximate June Pasture', The Documentation Strategy in the Real World," *Archival Issues* 22:1 ( 1997): 5-20

Helen W. Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," *American Archivist* 49 (Spring 1986): 109-24.

Terry Abraham, "Documentation Strategies: A Decade (or More) Later," paper presented at the Society of American Archivists, Washington, DC, August 31, 1995, available at <http://www.uidaho.edu/special-collections/papers/docstr10.htm>.

## **November 1. Appraisal Models: Macroappraisal, Minnesota Method**

## Required Readings

Catherine Bailey, "From the Top Down: The Practice of Macro-Appraisal," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 89-128

Terry Cook, "Macro-appraisal and Functional Analysis: Documenting Governance Rather than Government," *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 25 (1), (2004) : 5-18.

Normand Fortier, "Transparency, Compliance, and Accountability: Developing a Knowledge Infrastructure for Macroappraisal at Library and Archives Canada," *Archival Science Online First* (2006), 18p.

Adrian Cunningham and Robyn Oswald, "Some Functions are More Equal than Others: The Development of a Macroappraisal Strategy for the National Archives of Australia", *Archival Science Online First* (2006), 22p.

## **November 8: Appraisal Models: Electronic Records Part I.**

### **Guest Speaker: Leah Weisse, WGBH**

## Required Readings

Mary Ide and Leah Weisse, "Developing Preservation Appraisal Criteria for a Public Broadcasting Station," *The Moving Image* 3.1 (2003) 146-157,  
[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/the\\_moving\\_image/v003/3.1ide.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/the_moving_image/v003/3.1ide.html)

Bruce Ambacher, *Thirty Years of Electronic Records* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2003), ch. 5 and 6.

## **November 15: Appraisal Models: Electronic Records Part II**

Peter Botticelli, Records Appraisal in Network Organizations, *Archivaria* 49 (Spring 2000): 161-91. <http://journals.sfu.ca/archivar/index.php/archivaria/issue/view/426>

Frank Upward, "Structuring the Records Continuum - Part One: Postcustodial principles and properties,"  
<http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/research/rcrg/publications/recordscontinuum/fupp1.html>

Victoria Electronic Records Strategies, <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/vers/vers/default.htm>  
TBA



Dan Zelenyj, "Archivy *Ad Portas*: The Archives-Records Management Paradigm Revisited in the Electronic Information Age," *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999): 66-84.

**November 22: THANKGIVING HOLIDAY**

**November 29: Sampling, User-based .**

**Guest Speaker: Joan Krizack, Northeastern Univ.**

Required Readings

Terry Cook, "Many are Called but Few are Chosen: Appraisal Guidelines for Sampling and Selecting Case Files," *Archivaria* 32 ( Summer 1991): 25-50.

Mark Greene, "'The Surest Proof': A Utilitarian Approach to Appraisal," *Archivaria* 45 (Spring 1998): 127-69.

Margaret J. Dixon, Beyond Sampling: Returning to Macroappraisal for the Appraisal and Selection of Case Files, *Archival Science* , Online First (2006), 29p.

**December 6: Manuscripts and Memory**

**Meet at Simmons Archives. Donna Webber Guest Speaker**

Required Readings

Adrian Cunningham, "Beyond the Pale? The 'Flinty' Relationship between Archivists Who Collect the Private Records of Individuals and the Rest of the Archival Profession," *Archives and Manuscripts* 24 (May 1996): 20-26.

Richard J. Cox, *No Innocent Deposits; Forming Archives by Rethinking Appraisal*. Ch. 9.

Roy Rosenzweig, "Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (2003): 735-762.

**December 13: Student Appraisal Reports Due**