New Perspectives on Internship and Practicum Requirements in Archival Education

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Illinois State University, Dr. Jo Ann Rayfield Archives

Archival Internship Procedures at the ISU Archives
In the beginning . . .

• Public History at the University of Central Florida.

• Looking for hands-on experiences for their students.

• Semester of meetings, came up with program that was beneficial to both sides.
Archival Internships at Illinois State University Archives

- Humanities students (history, anthropology, English, political science).
- Graduate students with some exception for undergraduate students.
- Move away from history education to public history.
- Open to area colleges, including University of Illinois MLIS students.
The Internship

• Syllabus that is specialized per department.
• For us, all interns must complete a set of readings and processing deadlines.
• Added department assignments are the student’s responsibility.
• Practice collection: < 1 linear foot
• Project collection: < 4 linear feet
• Collection sizes are variable.
Timeline

• *First week*: complete assigned readings
• *2nd – 6th week*: process a ‘practice’ collection
• *7th – 12th week*: process main collection
• *12th – 15th (finals) week*: write EAD encoded finding aid
• For a 3 credit hour course, students will work 10-12 hours a week
• Some will go offsite; we train/practice onsite
• Match the student’s interest to a collection
Readings

• SAA Fundamentals, Series II
• Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives, Gregory Hunter
• A Modern Archives Reader, Daniels & Walch, eds.
• Assorted articles
Readings, cont.

- Seven areas:
  - Early Archivists & European Tradition
  - Archival Theory
  - Archival Management
  - Arrangement & Description
  - Copyright
  - Databases & Websites
  - Preservation
Non-Interns

- Many of our interns become volunteers.
- Some want the experience on their resumes, either for grad school entrance or jobs.
- We train volunteers the same as we do credit hour students.
- Same training for community members/alumni who request it.
Staff Commitment

• Because of limited staffing, we can only take a handful each term
• Upwards of 5 interns, depending on location and work
• Early term, 1-2 hour workday commitment
• Mid/later term, check-in’s & evaluation
Results & Future

- Went from zero processed collections to 86 processed as of this month (600+ linear feet).
- 75% of those are student processed.
- Provides career options for students looking outside of education.
- Will be offering exhibit internships in the Fall.
- Will implement our own digital archive later this year and hope to offer internship in digital archives processing by Spring 2016.