

The University of Iowa
School of Library and Information Sciences
Fall 2021

Course	SLIS 6350: Archives: Theory & Practice
Course Schedule	Thursdays 1:00 – 3:30
On-Campus	3083 Main Library
Online	https://uiowa.zoom.us/j/95120558655
Instructor	Prof. Lindsay Mattock
E-mail	lindsay-mattock@uiowa.edu
Office	3086 Main Library
Office Hours	Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00 on Zoom or by appointment https://calendly.com/lmattock

Course Overview

Archives are the records of people and places. Archival theory is historically rooted in governmental record keeping, but has expanded to embrace records of many media types that document institutions, organizations, communities, and individuals. This course will explore the history of archival thought and address conceptualizations of “the archives,” how archives are formed, the methods by which records are selected and described, and the ways in which archival records are used to construct histories. We will explore how value is assigned to records through archival appraisal, how archivists prepare collections for access, and how these materials are represented in archival finding aids and other discovery tools. The course assignments are practice-based, providing opportunities for students to engage with local archival collections.

Acknowledgements

This syllabus and assignments were developed in collaboration with University of Iowa Processing Librarian Jenna Sliver-Baustain, Outreach & Engagement Librarian Elizabeth Riordan, and Community and Student Life Archivist Aiden Bettine. The grading mechanism for this course was based on the work of Prof. Andrew Forbes, developed with the support of the [Assessing Assessment Faculty Learning Community](#) in collaboration with the [Center for Teaching](#), and influenced by many conversations and workshops sponsored by the [Obermann Center for Advanced Studies](#).

Course Topics and Schedule

Week 1 August 26	Course Expectations & Goals
Week 2 September 2	Introduction to Archival Theory
Week 3 September 9	Archives as Evidence
Week 4 September 16	Archives and Memory
Week 5 September 23	Identity-Based Archives
Week 6 September 30	Community Archives
October 7	<i>Mid-Term Learning Conferences</i>
Week 7 October 14	Archival Processing
Week 8 October 21	Archival Finding Aids
Week 9 October 28	Archival Descriptive Standards
Week 10 November 4	Intro to Archival Appraisal
Week 11 November 11	Appraisal Roundtable 1
Week 12 November 18	Appraisal Roundtable 2
November 25	<i>Fall Break</i>
Week 13 December 2	Appraisal Roundtable 3
Week 14 December 9	Archival Silences
<i>Finals Week</i>	<i>End of Term Learning Conferences</i>

Course Texts and Assigned Reading

There are no required textbooks for this course. The required readings for each week are listed at the end of the syllabus. Required and recommended readings are available on the course ICON page. All assigned materials are available on ICON or through the University Libraries.

Course Assessment

Your assignments throughout the course will NOT receive a letter grade. Instead, your assignments will be marked as complete or incomplete based on the assignment checklists provided below. While you will not receive a letter grade, you will receive feedback from your peers and professor intended to help you to reflect on the assignment, what you have learned, and how you can continue to build your knowledge of archival theory and practice. You will complete a self-assessment at mid-term and end of the semester and assign a grade to your performance in consultation with Prof. Mattock. The professor reserves the right to change this grade in the event that your reflection is incomplete or the grade is misaligned with your personal assessment.

Assessment Schedule

Assessment	Due Date
Archival Theory Reading Notes	Weeks 2-10
Mid-Term Self-Assessment	October 3
Mid-Term Learning Conference	October 4-8
Processing Plan & Assignment Reflection	October 21
Appraisal Roundtables	Weeks 11-13
Finding Aid & Assignment Reflection	December 9
End of Term Self-Assessment	December 12
End of Term Learning Conference	December 13-17

Archival Theory Reading Notes

We will have many opportunities to put archival theory into practice this semester, but must first familiarize ourselves and engage with the history of archival thought and the core theories that drive archival work. We will work together to generate a robust set of class notes throughout the semester to help us to learn and engage with the archival theory that we read together. During weeks 2-10 you will submit your reading notes to the weekly discussion board before our Thursday class meeting. Your readings notes should identify and define the key concepts, outline the key takeaways, reflect on your understanding of the material, and pose topics for discussion. A set of prompts have been provided on ICON, but you may feel free to be creative with your approach to note taking. Consider handwriting your notes and uploading a picture, sketching a mind map, creating an infographic, or posting a power-point slide. Your notes should represent your understanding and perspective so that we can all learn from one another.

Assignment Checklist

- Submitted before our class meeting weeks 2-10 to the appropriate Discussion Board
- Defines the key concepts from each of the required readings
- Discusses the connection to the weekly topic and/or course themes
- Outlines the key takeaways from each required reading
- Reflects on how your understanding of archival theory has changed (or not)
- Poses at least one question or topic of discussion for class

Processing Plan, Assignment Reflection, and Peer Review

This semester we will develop a processing plan for a collection from University of Iowa Special Collections. The collections will be introduced during our Week 2 class meeting. Over the following weeks, you will work in small teams to develop a processing plan following the guidelines provided by Special Collections. We will spend time in-class developing our processing plans, although you will be expected to spend additional time outside of the classroom to complete this assignment. The Processing Plan Form, processing guidance, and collection materials are available on ICON. You will submit your completed Processing Plan Form along with a short reflection that assesses your experience completing this assignment. You may work together on your Processing Plan Forms, but must submit an individual reflection for this assignment. During our October 21 class meeting, you will be assigned to review several of your peers' assignments. You will be provided with a rubric to help to guide your feedback. This gives you an opportunity to practice evaluating and assessing the work of others while learning from your peers.

Assignment Checklist

- Processing Plan Form is submitted to the appropriate ICON Assignment link by 1:00 pm, October 21
- Assignment Reflection is submitted by 1:00 pm, October 21
- The Processing Plan Form is complete and provides detailed responses that would allow a colleague to enact your plan.
- The Assignment Reflection represents your original work, responds to each of the prompts, and critically engages with your learning experience
- Your peer reviews respond to each of the prompts in the provided rubric. The feedback is presented in a collegial manner, respecting the thoughts, perspectives, and ideas of your classmates, and avoiding negativity and attacks.

Finding Aid, Assignment Reflection, and Peer Review

After completing the Processing Plan, you will develop a finding aid for your collection. We will follow the guidelines from *Describing Archives A Content Standard* (DACS) and Encoded Archival Description (EAD). You will also use the Finding Aid Spreadsheet and accompanying instructions to prepare the finding aid for ingest into ArchivesSpace (ASpace), an archival

collection management platform. We will spend time in class building the finding aid, although you will be expected to spend additional time outside of the classroom completing this assignment. The Finding Aid Worksheet, Finding Aid Spreadsheet, Spreadsheet Instructions, and relevant archival standards are available on ICON.

For this assignment, you will submit the completed Finding Aid Worksheet and Finding Aid Spreadsheet, along with a short reflection that assesses your experience completing this assignment. You may work together on your Finding Aids, but must submit an individual reflection for this assignment. During our December 9th class meeting, you will be assigned to review several of your peers' assignments. You will be provided with a rubric to help to guide your feedback. This gives you an opportunity to practice evaluating and assessing the work of others while learning from your peers.

Assignment Checklist

- Finding Aid Form and Spreadsheet are submitted to the appropriate ICON Assignment link by 1:00 pm, December 9
- Assignment Reflection is submitted by 1:00 pm, December 9
- The Finding Aid Form and Spreadsheet are complete and follow the guidelines in the instructions.
- The Assignment Reflection represents your original work, responds to each of the prompts, and critically engages with your learning experience
- Your peer reviews respond to each of the prompts in the provided rubric. The feedback is presented in a collegial manner, respecting the thoughts, perspectives, and ideas of your classmates, and avoiding negativity and attacks.

Appraisal Roundtables

There are a wide range of appraisal methodologies available in the archivist's toolbox. During Weeks 11-13, you will choose from a selection of appraisal methodologies and focus your reading and discussion on a small subset of methods. During our class sessions these weeks, you will first work together in small groups to discuss the details of your selected methodology. Following this group discussion, each group will present their methodology to the class. You must lead discussion once during weeks 11-13. You must sign up for your methodologies and leadership week using the form on ICON by end of day, Thursday, October 28 or your topics and leadership date will be selected for you.

Assignment Checklist

- Sign up for ONE method for each week and select ONE week to serve as the roundtable leader by end of day, October 28
- Read the required reading for your method (marked with an **) and one additional reading each week
- Contribute to the group discussion each week, sharing your understanding of the methods that you have selected

- Serve as roundtable leader once, sharing the findings from your group discussion and teaching the class about your selected methodology

Self-Assessment and Learning Conferences

Your letter grade this semester will be assigned in consultation with the professor, looking at the entire body of the work that you have produced, alongside a reflection on how your knowledge and skills have developed during the semester. You will complete a self-evaluation at mid-term and at the end of the semester that will help you to reflect on your experience, evaluate your performance against the assignment expectations and classroom norms, and consider how you will continue to develop your skills and knowledge outside of the classroom. The evaluation is available in ICON under the Assignments tab. Following the submission of your self-assessment, you are also required to set a 30-minute meeting with the professor to discuss your evaluation and determine your letter grade for the course. Meetings must be scheduled through the office hours link.

Assignment Checklist

- Your Mid-Term Self-Assessment is submitted by 11:59 pm, Sunday, October 3
- The Mid-Term Self-Assessment is complete, responding to each of the prompts honestly and completely.
- You meet with the professor to discuss your assessment by 11:59 pm, Friday, October 8
- Your End of Term Self-Assessment is submitted by 11:59 pm, Sunday, December 12
- The End of Term Self-Assessment is complete, responding to each of the prompts honestly and completely.
- You meet with the professor to discuss your assessment by 11:59 pm, Friday, December 17

Grading Scale

A	4.0	C+	2.33
A-	3.67	C	2.00
B+	3.33	C-	1.67
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	F	0

- An A- or higher demonstrates excellent comprehension of the ideas, concepts, and theories addressed in the course materials, as well as an ability to insightfully communicate your ideas, both in the classroom and in your assignments.
- A grade of B+ to B- indicates above average work, carefully prepared but lacking the insight and strength demonstrated by A work.

- A grade of C+ to C- indicates average work which simply meets the minimum requirements for the assignment, demonstrating only basic effort.
- D's are given to work that is below average, in terms of effort and preparation, quality of intellectual ideas, or actual execution.
- F's are given for work that utterly fails to comprehend, analyze, or reflect upon the material under consideration or that misapprehends the assignment in some fundamental way.

Course Policies and Expectations

Course Expectations

During our first class session, we will work together to articulate the norms and expectations of the classroom. This will set the standard for how we interact with each other this semester, what we set out to accomplish together, and how you will assess your performance over the course of the term.

Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. I believe that my role is to help facilitate your path through the course material as we learn together. Neither the instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, or demeaning. At a minimum the expectations for the professor and student are as follows:

Instructor's responsibilities:

- Treat all students with courtesy and respect.
- Be open to constructive input from students in the course.
- Ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in the course.
- Respond to student e-mail request in a timely manner (please allow 24hrs during the week and 48hrs over the weekends for my response).
- Provide assignment feedback in a timely manner (within two weeks of due date).

Student's responsibilities:

- Arrive to class having read all of the materials due for that day and prepared to share your thoughts and ideas.
- Refrain from coming late and leaving early.
- Be an active participant in class discussion. To be prepared you must listen, think, read, and share.
- When speaking, use courteous, respectful language and keep comments and questions relevant to the topic at hand.
- Operate in discussion with respect, accountability, and patience. This is an environment for learning and we will all be challenged by the course material at times.

- Be an active participant in group activities and assignments. Take responsibility for your contributions, respond to your classmates in a timely manner, submit your work on the agreed upon deadlines, and be open to constructive criticism.

Office Hours

Office hours are your chance to have a conversation outside of our normal class meetings. You can stop by to ask questions about something that you don't understand, clarify a point from class discussion, voice a concern, or to just talk about your interests. I will be available 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after each class session in the classroom and our Zoom meeting room. Open office hours will be held on Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00 online at <https://uiowa.zoom.us/j/97554407059>. You may pop into the zoom meeting anytime during these scheduled hours. If these times are inconvenient, I also encourage you to schedule an individual appointment at <https://calendly.com/lmattcock>.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Citation is one of the key competencies of information literate individuals and as such it is crucial for LIS professionals to learn the standards and practice of proper attribution. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are following these standards. Any student engaged in plagiarism, cheating, or other acts of academic dishonesty, will be subject to disciplinary action.

Plagiarism can be avoided by following the guidelines for proper citation and paraphrasing. Sections 13.1-13.6 of the *Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition* <chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/ch13/ch13_toc.html> may be referenced for guidance. The University Writing Center <writingcenter.uiowa.edu> is another on-campus resource that is available to all students enrolled in course at the University.

Acts of plagiarism will be evaluated by the professor on a case-by-case basis and will be reported to the department. No credit will be given for plagiarized assignments. Minor transgressions will be documented in the student's departmental file. If the case is deemed to be sufficiently egregious, the offence will be reported to the Graduate College and may result in expulsion from the program. Please review the policies in the *School of Library and Information Science Student Handbook* <slis.grad.uiowa.edu/current-students> and the *Graduate College Rules and Regulations* <grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal>.

Absences for Religious Holy Days

The University is prepared to make reasonable accommodations for students whose religious holy days coincide with their classroom assignments, test schedules, and classroom attendance expectations. Students must notify their instructors in writing of any such Religious Holy Day conflicts or absences within the first few days of the semester or session, and no later than the third week of the semester. If the conflict or absence will occur within the first three weeks of the semester, the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible. See Operations Manual 8.2 Absences for Religious Holy Days for additional information <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/paid-absences/religious-diversity-and-university-calendar>.

Zoom Policies and Attendance

All students are expected to attend class in the mode that they registered for. On-campus students may attend class via Zoom in the event of an extenuating circumstance. If you are feeling unwell or cannot make it to campus due to inclement weather, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

This course is live-streamed. The zoom sessions are only be available to students registered for this class. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit, written consent of the faculty member. Further, students may not share these sessions with those not in the class or upload them to any other online environment. Doing so would be a breach of the Code of Student Conduct, and, in some cases, a violation of state and federal law, including the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Extenuating Circumstances and Incomplete Grades

Extenuating circumstances (illness, bereavement, etc.) may interfere with your ability to participate fully in the course. It is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible if such a circumstance will prevent you from attending a class session or completing the coursework according to the set schedule. We will work together to determine the best path forward for your particular situation. Incomplete grades will only be granted under these circumstances.

Mental Health

Students are encouraged to be mindful of their mental health and seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling overwhelmed and/or struggling to meet course expectations. Students are encouraged to talk to their instructor for assistance with specific class-related concerns. For additional support and counseling, students are encouraged to contact University Counseling Service (UCS) at 319-335-7294 during regular business hours to schedule an appointment. Additional information about UCS can be found at <http://counseling.uiowa.edu>. After hours, students are encouraged to call the Johnson County Community Crisis Line at (319) 351-0140 or

dial 911 if having a mental health emergency. Find out more about UI mental health services at: <http://mentalhealth.uiowa.edu>.

Student Disability Services

The University is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. If a student has a diagnosed disability or other disabling condition that may impact the student's ability to complete the course requirements as stated in the syllabus, the student may seek accommodations through Student Disability Services (SDS). SDS is responsible for making Letters of Accommodation (LOA) available to the student. *The student must provide a LOA to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, but requests not made at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity for which an accommodation is sought may not be accommodated.* The LOA will specify what reasonable course accommodations the student is eligible for and those the instructor should provide. Additional information can be found on the SDS website <https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/students/>.

Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity

The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod>; 335-0705 or diversity.uiowa.edu.

Required Reading and Topic Schedule

The reading schedule is subject to modification. The reading is to be completed before the assigned class session. All assigned materials are available on the ICON course page or through the University Library.

Week 1 | August 26 – Course Expectations and Goals

Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner, "Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently)," *CBE-Life Sciences Education* 13 (Summer 2014): 159-166.

Week 2 | September 2 – Introduction to Archival Theory

Michelle Caswell, "'The Archive' is not an Archives," *Reconstruction* 16, no. 1 (2016): <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7bn4v1fk>

Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Archival Science* 13, nos. 2-3 (June 2013): 95-120

Kenneth M. Price, "Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection: What's in a Name?" *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3.3 (2009): <http://digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html>

Week 3 | September 9 – Archives as Evidence

Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg, "Authoritative History and Authoritative Archives" and "The Turn Away from Historical Authority in the Archives," in *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 13-49.

Ciaran B. Trace, "On or Off the Record? Notions of Value in the Archive," in *Currents of Archival Thinking*, eds. Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil (Libraries Unlimited, 2010), 47-68.

Week 4 | September 16 – Archives and Memory

Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg, "The Social Memory Problem," in *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 97-115.

Laura Millar, "Touchstones: Considering the Relationship between Memory and Archives," *Archivaria* 61 (2005), 105-126.

Week 5 | September 23 – Identity-Based Archives

Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg, "Contested Archives, Contested Sources," in *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 116-139.

Huiling Feng, "Identity and Archives: Return and Expansion of the Social Value of Archives," *Archival Science* 17 (2017): 97-112.

Week 6 | September 30 – Community Archives

Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg, "The Archivist as Activist in the Production of (Historical) Knowledge," in *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 140-160.

Rishika Dugyala, "Evanston Organizes: Evanston's Black Community Lacked Recognition for Decades. Shorefront Legacy Center Amis to Give it to Them," *Daily Northwestern* November 8, 2018: <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2018/11/08/city/shorefront-legacy-center-works-to-preserve-north-shores-black-history/>

Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd, "Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream," *Archival Science* 9 (Nos. 1-2, 2009): 71-86.

Week 7 | October 14 – Archival Processing

Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2005): 208-63.

Robert S. Cox, "Maximal Processing, or, Archivist on a Pale Horse," *Journal of Archival Organization* 8, no. 2 (2010): 134-148.

Week 8 | October 21 – Archival Finding Aids

Michael Rush, Lynn Holdzkom, Prudence Backman, Daniel Santamaria, and Andrea Leigh, "Applying DACS to Finding Aids: Case Studies from Three Diverse Repositories," *American Archivist* 71, no. 1 (2008): 210-227.

Sam Winn, "The Hubris of Neutrality in Archives," <https://medium.com/on-archivy/the-hubris-of-neutrality-in-archives-8df6b523fe9f>

Elizabeth Yakel, "Archival Representation," *Archival Science* 3 (2003): 1-25.

Week 9 | October 28 – Archival Descriptive Standards

Jennifer G. Eidson and Christina J. Zamon, "EAD Twenty Years Later: A Retrospective of Adoption in the Early Twenty-first Century and the Future of EAD," *American Archivist* 82, no. 2 (2019): 303-330.

Anne Gilliland, "Standardizing and Automating American Archival Description and Access," and "Archival Description and Descriptive Metadata in a Networked World," in *Conceptualizing 21-st Century Archives* (SAA, 2014), 83-130.

Week 10 | November 4 – Introduction to Archival Appraisal

Fiorella Foscarini, "Archival Appraisal in Four Paradigms," in *Currents of Archival Thinking, 2nd Edition*, eds. Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil (Libraries Unlimited, 2017), 107-133.

Terry Cook, "'We Are What We Keep; We Keep What We Are': Archival Appraisal Past, Present and Future," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 32, no. 2 (2011): 173-189.

Week 11 | November 11 – Appraisal Roundtable 1

Select one of the following and an additional reading focusing on the same methodology
Terry Cook, "Many are Called but Few are Chosen: Appraisal Guidelines for Sampling and Selecting Case Files," *Archivaria* 32 (Summer 1991), 25-50.

Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young, "Exploring the Black Box: The Appraisal of University Administrative Records," *American Archivist* 48 (Spring 1985): 121-140.

Mark Greene, "'The Surest Proof:' A Utilitarian Approach to Appraisal," *Archivaria* 45 (Spring 1998): 127-169.

Sheila Powell, "Archival Reappraisal: The Immigration Case Files," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92): 104-116.

Week 12 | November 18 – Appraisal Roundtable 2

Select one of the following and an additional reading focusing on the same methodology

Helen Willa Samuels, "Improving our Disposition," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92): 125-140.

Terry Cook, "Macroappraisal in Theory and Practice: Origins, Characteristics, and Implementation in Canada, 1950-2000," *Archival Science* 5 (2005), 101-61.

Laura Millar, "Discharging our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada," *Archivaria* 46 (Fall 1998): 103-146.

Helen Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," *American Archivist* 49, no. 2 (Spring 1986): 109-124.

Week 13 | December 2 – Appraisal Roundtable 3

Select one of the following and an additional reading focusing on the same methodology

Jeannette A. Bastian, "Taking Custody, Giving Access: A Postcustodial Role for A New Century," *Archivaria* 53 (2002): 76-93.

Isto Huvila, "The Unbearable Lightness of Participating? Revisiting the Discourses of 'Participation' in Archival Literature," *Journal of Documentation* 71, no. 2 (2015): 358-386.

Sue McKemmish, "Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice," *Archival Science* 1 (2001): 333-359.

Michelle Caswell, Ricardo Punzalan, and T-Kay Sangwand, "Critical Archival Studies: An Introduction," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): <https://doi.org/10.24242/jclis.v1i2.50>

Week 15 | December 9 – Archival Silences

Simon Fowler, "Enforced Silences," in *The Silence of the Archive*, eds. David Thomas, Simon Fowler, and Valerie Johnson (Chicago: Neal-Schuman, 2017): 1-39.

Valerie Johnson, "Dealing with the Silence," in *The Silence of the Archive*, eds. David Thomas, Simon Fowler, and Valerie Johnson (Chicago: Neal-Schuman, 2017): 101-116.

Alana Kumbier, "Inventing History: The Watermelon Woman and Archive Activism," in *Ephemeral Material: Queering the Archive* (Sacramento: Litwin Books, 2014): 51-73