Class sessions: Thursdays, 4:55-7:35; Location TBD

Instructor: Larry Weimer, LDW214@nyu.edu

Course overview:

The course will familiarize students with concepts, practices, and issues related to the management of institutional archives, that is, archives focused on documenting the particular institution of which the archives and the archivist are, typically, a part. The range of institutions having an archive is wide: government, business, professional, cultural, activist, religious, educational, and more. The course will consider both the commonalities and the differences in archival matters faced by these institutions.

Although the course will consider various documentary forms, the course will principally emphasize the particular management challenges faced by institutional archives. That is, the course has the dynamic leadership role of an institutional archivist within the broader organization as a central concern. Accordingly, the course will emphasize broad management issues such as advocacy, collaboration, strategic planning, appraisal, and access. In doing so, the course considers the diverse institutional cultures, corporate needs, and legal and ethical frameworks that an institutional archivist must work within or, when possible, shape. The course also aspires to embrace the evolving professional landscape faced by a digital age institutional archivist that requires ongoing partnering with records creators, records managers, technologists, lawyers, public and investor relations, and other associates in the organization to be successful.

Course objectives: Students will:

- Understand the leadership roles an institutional archivist must play to be successful within an organization.

- Gain a familiarity with the discipline of records management and information governance, and their relationship to the institutional archivist.

- Be introduced to the legal and ethical environment of institutional records and archives, especially in relation to matters of privacy and confidentiality.

- Gain familiarity with essential management practices, such as strategic planning, personnel management, budgeting, etc.

- Understand the implications for archivists of the differing objectives and cultures found within various institutional contexts (government, educational, business, etc.)
Student work required (percent of grade):

- Class attendance and active participation in class discussions. (40%)

- Ten papers of 1300-1500 words each, providing the student’s analytical comments and insights in response to the week’s readings. Due at weeks noted below. (30%)

- Paper of about 1500 words providing the student’s analytical comments and insights regarding an assigned records management website, and related presentation to the class. (Further details will be provided in class). Due week 5. (10%)

- Identify a records manager or archivist at an institution, interview her/him in relation to the course themes, and present a PowerPoint summarizing the interview results to the class. The type of institution to be contacted by the student will be assigned by the instructor. A site visit is not required or expected in order to get us beyond the familiar New York contacts and press for new, nationwide possibilities. No written report is required. Due week 14. (20%)

Students are encouraged to monitor their choice(s) of sources of current news and/or commentary (listservs, blogs, news websites, newspapers, etc.) to identify matters of relevance to institutional archives generally, but in particular for matters related to the “theme” of the upcoming class, and to refer to it as appropriate during class discussion and in their weekly papers.

Student work is due on the dates noted in the syllabus. The assignment grade for papers will be reduced if received after that date. All papers are to be submitted to the instructor in hard-copy. No student work will be accepted after May 4, the date of the last class. No incompletes will be granted.

There are no excused absences from attending and participating in class. Students should be aware that in-class presentations, which cannot be made up, are required at weeks 5 and 14, so missing either of those sessions will result in a grading penalty for both the missed class and the assignment.

Readings:

With minor exception, all readings are available on-line or on reserve at Bobst. For those texts available only in physical book form and that are used extensively in the course, students might consider acquiring their own copies of this useful professional literature for convenience and ease of ongoing reference during the course and beyond.

Some classroom courtesies:

Please mute any electronic devices used during class for notetaking, reference to readings, etc.

No audio or video recording is permitted.

Drinking covered beverages is permitted during class. Eating is not permitted during class. (All classes will have a 10 minute halftime break.)
Note: Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

**Week 1 (January 26) Introduction**

Class overview: Introduction of course objectives, scope, and expectations. A selection of SAA Campus Case Studies will be reviewed in class in connection with the course themes.

**Week 2 (February 2) The institutional archivist I**

Class overview: The institutional archivist must have support within the organization to succeed—or even to be part of the institution at all. The potential sources of the archivist’s support are varied and will be as ever-changing as the institution itself. Further, to effectively perform archival work, an archivist will be dependent on collaborations with others. In short, the institutional archivist is a part of a corporate structure and management team, and will act and lead—or fail—with that structure. Setting the foundation for the rest of the course, this class and the next will consider the role of the institutional archivist, not merely as a manager of the archive, but as a leader and advocate within a corporate setting.

**Reading assignments:**


**Other assignments:** Response paper
**Week 3 (February 9) The institutional archivist II**


**Other assignments:** Response paper, specifically focusing on the Guthrie book.

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**Week 4 (February 16) Documenting the institution**

Class overview: Although the documentary and collecting focus of the institutional archivist is clear—the institution itself—appraisal is still a major concern. Although much collecting in an institution will occur tactically and opportunistically, the institutional archivist also needs to develop a strategic view, not only to drive her/his own activities most effectively, but also to channel as efficiently as possible the archivist’s claims on the resources of the institution, perhaps especially when dealing with electronic records. This class considers some ways of understanding organizations and some strategic appraisal approaches archivists have proposed to engage with institutions and the records they create.

**Reading assignments:**


**Other assignments:** Response paper
Week 5 (February 23)  Records management I

Class overview: In some institutions, the archivist will also be called on to be a records manager. In others, the roles will be clearly separate, but the archivist will need to collaborate with the manager to accomplish her/his objectives. This class and the next look at institutional records and their retention and management, and the role of the records manager. The class considers some of the standards, principles and practices guiding records management and information governance. Part of this class will feature a panel of records managers as guest speakers.

Reading assignments:


   Chapter 17: “Records and information management: legal considerations for archivists” (p. 183-188) (Bobst Reserve).
   Chapter 18: “The implications of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act for records managers and corporate archivists” (p. 189-193)

Patricia C. Franks, Records & information management, (Chicago: Neal-Schuman, 2013): Chapter 2 (p. 29-55), Chapter 4 (p. 85-112), Chapters 6-8 (p. 145-226), and Chapter 12 (p. 311-336). (Bobst Reserve)

ARMA International, GARP: Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles and Maturity Model for Information Governance. Both on-line at http://www.arma.org/r2/generally-accepted-br-recordkeeping-principles


Other assignments:  Response paper
Week 6 (March 2)  Records management II

Class overview: This class continues the consideration of records management, here looking at specific examples of programs, policies, procedures, and schedules as found on the websites of various state governments (which include information for state universities/colleges and other institutional units below the state level).

Assignment:
Each student will be assigned a records management program website to review and assess in relation to the course readings. A written evaluation will be submitted. Each student will also make a presentation to the class about their principal observations. Further direction will be provided for the assignment during week 4. We will be looking at these program sites not just from a records scheduling standpoint, but also to consider policies, what we can learn about organizations and processes from them, and how as archivists we might be able to use the schedules and records management process/manager in appraisal and other operational ways.

Week 7 (March 9)  Law and ethics

Class overview: This class considers certain aspects of the legal and ethical framework within which institutional records and archives are maintained, especially with respect to the tension between privacy/confidentiality and access/use/disclosure.

Reading assignments:

  Chapters 1-3: “The ‘legal’ framework” (p. 3-36)
  Chapter 10: “Access and privacy issues in archives” (p. 101-123)
  Chapter 11: “Balancing confidentiality concerns and legal privileges with access to lawyers’ papers” (p. 125-131)

  Menzi L. Behrnd-Klodt, “Chapter 3: The tort right of privacy: what it means for archivists...and for third parties,” (p. 53-60)
  Heather MacNeil, “Chapter 4: Information privacy, liberty, and democracy,” (p. 67-81)
  Barbara L. Craig, “Chapter 15: Confidences in medical and health care records from an archive perspective,” (p. 246-256)
  Martin L. Levitt, “Chapter 7: Ethical issues in constructing a eugenics web site,” (p. 112-125)


Other assignments: Response paper

**Spring Recess (March 16)  No class**

**Week 8 (March 23)  College & university archives I**

Class overview: This class begins the course’s shift from a cross-institutional perspective to one that examines archival issues in the context of particular types of institutions. College and university archives will be considered first, over the course of two sessions. This first session will focus on appraisal and collecting strategies.

Reading assignments:


In addition, each student will be assigned one or two articles from the following list to read and to brief the class on.


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*, Vol. 65 (Spring/Summer 2002) p. 56-69. (This essay is also in the Prom and Swain collection noted next, at p.117-133.)


*Campus case studies*, Society of American Archivists, (on-line at: [http://www2.archivists.org/publications/epubs/Campus-Case-Studies](http://www2.archivists.org/publications/epubs/Campus-Case-Studies)). Skim:

Tim Pyatt, “Case 6: Managing public affairs records in the digital age.”

James W. Rogers, “Case 8: Sports schema crosswalks: appraising, converting, and preserving proprietary schema to open source standards.”

Julia Hendry, “Case 10: Managing UIC Medical Center policies using DSpace.”

Alexis A. Antracoli, “Case 12: Podcasts in the archives: archiving podcasting content at the University of Michigan.”


Other assignments: None
**Week 9 (March 30) College & university archives II**

**Class overview:** This class continues a consideration of college and university archives, broadening the prior week’s emphasis on appraisal to a discussion of the larger role of the institutional archivist in a college/university setting. Part of the class will feature a panel of college archivists as guest speakers.

**Reading assignments:**


**Other assignments:** Response paper reflecting on the readings of the past two weeks. Prepare two questions to ask the panel of guest speakers.
Week 10 (April 6)       Business / Corporate archives

Class overview: This class focuses on business/corporate archives, meaning those maintained principally in support of a commercial or professional enterprise. Part of the class will feature a panel of corporate archivists as guest speakers.

Reading assignments:

- Peter Emmerson, “Chapter 5: From cultural luxury to the ‘way we do things . . .?’: The influence of leadership in archives and records management,” p. 91-113.

- Paula M. Stigman, “Putting the mouse to work: management strategies at the Walt Disney Archives,” p. 53-60
- Shelley Bookspan, “Corporate records and environmental liability in the era of Superfund,” in p. 109-113


Other assignments: Response paper. Prepare two questions to ask the panel of guest speakers.
**Week 11 (April 13) Museum and other non-profit institutional archives I**

**Class overview:** Non-profit institutions span a wide range of cultural, religious, educational, policy, activist, and other public missions. This week considers issues related to these institutions, with particular focus on certain major types. Part of the class will feature a panel of institutional archivists from the non-profit sector as guest speakers.

**Reading assignments:**

- Deborah Wythe, “The museum context,” p. 9-19
- Deborah Wythe, “Appraisal,” p. 28-34
- Susan K. Anderson, “Research use: ethics, restrictions, and privacy,” p. 55-64
- Catherine Herbert, “Restitution of Nazi-looted art,” p. 185-190.


**Other assignments:** Response paper. Prepare two questions to ask the panel of guest speakers.
Week 12 (April 20) Reflections; Government I

Class overview: The class will open with discussion reflecting on the presentations of the three panels of guest speakers from the past three weeks. The class then moves this week and next into the wide-ranging government context, looking to include some coverage of federal, state, and local jurisdictions, cutting across the executive, legislative and judicial branches. This first session focuses on the contested terrain of the private/public document divide and the tension between open and restricted access to government records.

Reading assignments:

- Chapter 15: “Access to public records’ (p. 155-165)
- Chapter 16: “Replevin: Protection and recovery of missing public records” (p. 167-181)


Other assignments: Response paper reflecting on the presentations of the three panels of guest speakers from the past three weeks.
Week 13 (April 27) Government II

Class overview: This week focuses on certain other concerns related to government records, including the need for even government archivists to form collaborations to acquire records, and appraisal issues related to the large quantity of records generated by government bodies. The documentation of the U.S. Congress will be emphasized as a case study in the class because it well illustrates many of the themes, especially the role of the archivist as advocate and activist.

Reading assignments:


Chad Owen, “’Three little words’: is e-mail unmanageable?,” Archival Issues, Vol. 32, No. 1 (2010), p. 33-45. (On-line via Bobcat)


Other assignments: Response paper
Week 14 (May 4)  Student “field reports” and closing reflections

Class overview: This class will review and reinforce the themes and major points of the course, particularly as illustrated by the students in reporting on the results of their interviews with institutional archivists and by a review of a case study of a corporate archive.

Reading assignments:


Other assignments:

Each student will present a PowerPoint on the results of their interview with an institutional archivist.