

LIBR 1295: Introduction to Archives & Museums (Summer 2024)

Instructor: Guy Robertson

Scope of course

This course is designed to introduce the major aspects of archival and museum studies. Students will learn through 13 online sessions and the completion of assignments including memos, a portfolio, and a term paper. There will be a final examination.

General learning outcomes

Having completed this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe the place of archives in the context of the information professions.
2. Describe the essential relationship between archival practices and records
3. Identify and work with the major components of archival arrangement and description
4. Develop archival inventories in different kinds of organizations
5. Develop and revise archival policies and procedures
6. Work with different kinds of archival filing systems
7. Describe the basics of electronic archives management
8. Develop vital records policies and procedures in different kinds of organizations
9. Describe basic photographic conservation techniques
10. Describe and implement various kinds of media migration: e.g. paper to microfilm and digital formats
11. Assist in the development of business continuity planning for archives and museums
12. Describe the roles of museums in modern society
13. Describe different kinds of museums, their policies and the characteristics of their collections
14. Assist in the cataloguing and classification of museum collections

Learning outcomes and critical elements

1. Describe the place of archives in the context of the information professions

- Describe the basic history of archives and the development of the archival profession

- Describe similarities and differences between archives management and other information professions; identify the major “shared tools”
- Identify and discuss the archival perspective on information control

2. Describe the essential relationship between records management and archival practices

- Describe the different roles and responsibilities of archivists in various organizations \
- Describe archivists’ perspectives on document processing, conservation and storage
- Identify potential conflicts between librarians, records managers, and archivists in areas of mutual concern

3. Develop archival inventories in different kinds of organizations

- Describe the ways in which archives are disseminated (or scattered) throughout organizations
- Implement onsite storage practices
- Describe and implement the best ways to collect and archival inventory data
- Describe the need for regular updates of archival inventories

4. Develop archival inventories in different kinds of organizations

- Identify various kinds of forms and other documents in different organizations
- Estimate the amounts of forms and other documents stored at different organizations
- Organize records inventory data effectively
- Update records inventory data as required

5. Develop and revise archival policies and procedures

- Understand and justify the appraisal of various kinds of archives
- Understand legislation governing archives
- Understand finding aid compilation and updating

6. Identify and work with different kinds of filing systems

- Identify the major kinds of archival filing systems in different organizations
- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of different filing systems
- Describe the ways in which filing practices have changed with the implementation of IT
- Set up an archival filing system in a small office
- Employ different archival classification systems

7. Describe the basics of electronic archives management

- Discuss the history and development of electronic archives
- Describe the advantages and risks involved in electronic archives
- Anticipate potential problems in converting to electronic formats

8. Develop vital records policies and procedures in different kinds of organizations

- Describe the differences between vital and non-vital records
- Describe the key points in vital records policies
- Describe in basic terms the relation between vital records and archives
- Describe the role of archives in business resumption and continuity

9. Work with photographic conservation techniques

- Recognize different kinds of media deterioration and their causes
- Implement emergency preservation and conservation techniques
- Plan and implement preservation and conservation programs in archives
- Plan different kinds of storage programs for photographic records

10. Describe and implement various kinds of media migration: from paper to microfilm and digital formats

- Describe the characteristics of microfilm and digital formats
- Describe the reasons for migrating to different media
- Justify migration costs and facilitate budgeting and purchasing
- Assist in the management of migration projects

11. Assist in the development of business continuity plans for archives

- Recognize the need for access to vital records and information following business disruptions
- Describe the roles of archives in a business continuity plan
- Describe and assist in the implementation of business recovery plans in archives

12. Describe the roles of museums in modern society

- Describe the purposes of national, regional, and local museums and their value to different communities
- Describe the educational aspects of museum programs and exhibits
- Describe museums' contributions to the survival
- Describe and discuss outreach and public relations programs for museums

13. Describe different kinds of museums, their policies, and the characteristics of their collections

- Describe specific, single-theme museums and collections
- Describe different kinds of museum exhibits and displays
- Describe exhibits and displays in venues aside from museums: libraries, archives, and other public spaces
- Describe the roles of library technicians in museums: library and records management workers, guides, conservators, and communications staff

14. Describe basic collection management practices in museums

- Discuss and describe conservation policies and techniques for a variety of artifacts
- Discuss intellectual controls for museum collection, including cataloguing and classification
- Describe basic display equipment and techniques
- Discuss collection security

15. Discuss appraisal techniques in archives and museums

- Describe the role of appraisers in museums, archives and library special collections
- Describe and apply different appraisal values in archives and museums
- Access information resources for appraisers

16. Discuss the future of archives and museums

- Describe challenges that archives and museums face in the short-, medium-, and long-term
- [Time permitting:] Discuss enterprise risk management (ERM) for archives and museums
- [Time permitting:] Describe and discuss proactive planning for archives and museums

Assignments and assessment

Students will be assessed on the basis of:

- Participation (10%)
- Term paper (25%)
- 2 memos (20%)
- Archival or museum equipment portfolio (20%)
- Final examination (25%)

Note: Students must submit **all** assignments and the final examination to receive credit for LIBR 1295.

Policies:

As a student at Langara College, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself and complying with the following policies:

[E1003 - Student Code of Conduct](#)

[F1004 - Code of Academic Conduct](#)

[E2008 - Academic Standing - Academic Probation and Academic Suspension](#)

[E2006 - Appeal of Final Grade](#)

[F1002 - Concerns about Instruction](#)

[E2011 - Withdrawal from Courses](#)

[B5003 - Copyright Compliance](#)