

# UW-Madison SLIS Laboratory Library Archives Collection Development Policy and Management Plan

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## **I. Introduction**

This report examines the issues and problems facing the lack of archival collection development policies for libraries and small institutions seeking to develop archival collections. The setting of our analysis is the SLIS Laboratory Library at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Our context is the SLIS Laboratory Library's acceptance of a collection of materials from the Susan Brant/Wisconsin Intellectual Freedom Coalition. It will be the goal of this project to create a collection development policy for the SLIS Laboratory Library utilizing this recent addition as a basis.

## **II. Project Analysis**

The problem to be addressed by this report is the fact that the SLIS Laboratory Library lacks an archival collection development policy to direct its appraisal and acceptance of such materials. The library has been using a general collection development policy plan created by SLIS students, but such plan is too broad, unspecific and unrealistic for the creation and maintenance of an archival collection. Because the SLIS Laboratory Library wishes to become a responsible repository for both the current collection and any future related collections they needed to implement a clear, concise, and realistic policy for archival materials. This report will therefore attempt to fill this void by carefully examining the situation at hand through an examination of current literature and existing collection development plans, offering, in the end, a collection development policy and management plan to carry out set tasks in the fulfillment of the SLIS Laboratory Library's mission.

## **A. Mission and Roles**

The SLIS Laboratory Library archives collection development policy will conform to and supplement the SLIS Laboratory Library mission, although in a narrow and specific context. The SLIS Laboratory Library mission states:

The School of Library and Information Studies Laboratory Library, including its Computer Lab, provides materials, services, and facilities to support the teaching, research, and service mission of the School. Essential to this mission is the development of a comprehensive collection of materials in the fields of library and information studies, its organization for use, provision of bibliographic access to it and the provision of a laboratory setting in which students can learn through observation, experience, and research.

The four roles of the SLIS Laboratory Library are learning support, teaching laboratory, research support, and support of the School's service mission.

With few personnel, resources, and time to devote to developing and maintaining an archival collection, any such material transferred to the library must therefore fit a more narrowly defined collection development policy. This is done in our attached archival collection development policy and management plan.

## **B. Environment**

The SLIS Laboratory Library serves as a teaching, departmental, and laboratory library that provides support for SLIS students, faculty, and campus librarians. In addition, the library provides the resource collection in library and information studies for librarians throughout Wisconsin. Our archival collection development policy will therefore need to fulfill this function as well.

## **C. Data**

Creating an archival collection policy for a non-traditional archival repository with little or no resources and staff to devote to active and ongoing

collecting presents a wide range of problems and issues to fully consider.

Specific components of such to be addressed include: lack of experience (both with respect to staff, institutional setting, and makeup); limited resources (e.g. budget, personnel, and physical space); and administration (i.e. appraisal, processing, security, preservation, and conservation).

Addressing these matters will require consideration of a variety of literature, data and policies affecting small library archival collections. Following a review of the pertinent literature and existing policies of similar collections, data will need to be gathered. The type of information here needed includes:

1. Information regarding intended scope and mission of collection.
2. Information regarding both existing and potential future personnel and resources (e.g. budget, physical space, etc.).
3. Information regarding administration of the collection (e.g. appraisal, processing requirements, and preservation and conservation procedures and requirements).

From these specific needs arise corresponding questions concerning:

1. Whether such a project should even be undertaken in the first place?
2. Or, if it is to be done, how should it be administered in the future given the SLIS department's lack of commitment to the archival program?
3. Where will the collections be housed?
4. How much of an already dwindling library budget will be committed to initiating and maintaining the collection?
5. Who will process, appraise, and preserve the materials?

These are just a few of the questions facing our project, which we will explore more fully in our collection development plan.

Fortunately, data can be found in existing collection development policies, professional literature written on the development and administration of new or small library archival collections, and by interviewing the SLIS Laboratory

Library Director to get her and the library's perspective on the problem along with the means and information needed to address these considerations.

#### **D. Plan**

The unique circumstances of the situation at hand, namely the uncertainty facing budgeting and personnel issues, prevent any detailed project planning with respect to creating and implementing both a timeline and assignment of responsibilities. However, an effort will be made nonetheless to recommend possible, albeit perhaps unlikely scenarios or courses of action.

##### **1. Timeline**

The Director, utilizing the policies and recommendations in the attached collection development policy plan, will seek out an archival student or other such student with relevant experience in archival materials to process materials in the collection according to the guidelines spelled out below. If no such student can be found, a practicum may be arranged whereby a student may work with an archivist at the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) to acquire training while working on the collection over a one year term. Individual working hours and schedules will need to be worked out between said parties. Further additions and acquisitions will require similar individual negotiations and commitments with SLIS students, faculty and WHS archivists.

## **2. Assignment of Responsibilities**

Primary responsibility for the administration of the collection, including appraisal and securing of a deed of gift and any access restrictions, will fall upon the Director. Processing will be assigned to archival students, practicum students, student volunteers, or perhaps even student library staff. Creating descriptive finding aids and bibliographic entries will be the joint responsibility of those students involved in the processing work and the Director, who will oversee the process to ensure and facilitate access. The responsibility of preservation and conservation will be negotiated between the Director, staff and specialists at either UW's Special Collections or the Wisconsin Historical Society.

## **III. Background and Alternative Solutions**

Understanding the context for our elaboration of a collection development plan required examining pertinent literature and alternative models and management strategies.

### **A. Literature Review**

In the field of archives important literature written concerning the creation of collection development policies dates back to the 1970s. The foremost author/archivist then, and perhaps now, is Gerald F. Ham. In a number of articles and books, Ham (e.g. 1974; 1975, 1984) calls for a move away from passivity towards activity in the archivist profession, motivating archivists to actively take part in creating systematic collection development policies aimed at dealing with the lack of direction in the overall field and as a means of “controlling what comes through the door.”

Other authors who have written authoritatively on the subject include Jutta Reed-Scott (1984), Faye Phillips (1984) and Cynthia Sauer (2001). Reed-Scott sees collection development policy as an important “first step” in overall collection management; whereas Phillips sees collection development as an essential way to improve funding concerns (Sauer 310-311). Sauer informs that less than 50% of the 3500 archives repositories surveyed use collection development policies, primarily still the result of the recency of the trend itself.

Adding to the professional literature is a number of recent articles. Terry Abraham (1991) points out that the so-called ‘documentation strategy model’ for selecting primary source materials that emerged in the 1980’s, was nothing more than collection development reworded and possibly a little more complicated. The author favors the older term as more relevant, flexible, and subservient to research needs rather than a top down approach that sets unrealistic demands and standards simply for the sake of setting them. Dorothy T. Frye (1993) here points to the importance of linking the larger institution’s mission with the mission of the smaller department’s archival collection policy. This idea was helpful to our linking the mission of the archives collection policy to the SLIS Laboratory Library.

Finally, there was specific literature in the form of existing collection development policies that we used in developing our own policy statement for the SLIS Laboratory Library. One particularly helpful guidebook in creating the collection policy, especially for an archives policy within a library, was the manual entitled *Creating a Collection Policy for Local Historical Records in Public Libraries* (1998), which provided an overall structure and model of the anatomy of a collection policy’s structure.

Other specific examples of the organization and language that we chose to use in our policy came from the collection policy of the Lake Superior Maritime Collections (2000), whose selection criteria, preservation and conservation section, and formats sections were very helpful in creating our own unique guidelines. In terms of finding some direction in composing our ‘purpose and scope’ section we viewed the Northern Michigan University’s collection development policy and procedures statement (1995) as an excellent model. Perhaps the most influential models that we encountered were the University of Auckland’s (New Zealand) Library archives collection development policy (2002) and the University of Northern Colorado’s archives division collection policy (1990), which are very detailed and thorough in their elaboration of the many issues and roles facing archival repositories.

### **B. Alternative Strategies**

Three alternative strategies exist to actively pursuing a SLIS Laboratory Library archival collection. First, it might be possible to partner with the Wisconsin Historical Society to transfer materials to their care and work as a result towards a common plan to collect or solicit similar materials in the future. A similar and second option is to partner with the University Archives in transferring said materials to their existing holdings of SLIS Director and administrative materials. A third and final option to consider is not to develop an archival collecting policy itself and simply subsume the present materials, once processed, into special collections within the SLIS holdings.

### **C. Resources, Personnel and Budget**

In order to implement our collection development policy, the SLIS Laboratory Library would need to hire additional staff. Because of a limited budget, this is not

currently an option. The Library Director, the CCBC, and other student volunteers are currently processing the Brant collection. For future collections, the Library Director will attempt to obtain help from SLIS students focusing in archives through possible independent studies or practicum opportunities.

#### **D. Recommendations**

##### **1. Best Alternative**

Given present circumstances, the best alternative appears to be going forward with developing a narrow and focused collection of materials conforming to the existing collection's core focus of intellectual freedom. Partnering with either the University Archives or Wisconsin Historical society would not only unnecessarily burden these already pressed institutions, but also result in materials outside their scope and responsibility. Furthermore, and considering the SLIS Department's strengths, particularly with respect to research and teaching, keeping the collection in-house along with related material would prove immensely beneficial to all involved parties. Finally, and in contrast to subsuming the collection within the SLIS Laboratory Library's special collections, the very nature and sheer size of the collection warrants individual treatment.

##### **2. Plan for Implementation**

After interviewing Michele, the SLIS Laboratory Library Director, early in the planning stage, it became apparent that any plan for implementation would need to be determined later. Due to budgetary and staff restrictions, the SLIS Laboratory Library is not able to proceed with a decisive plan at this time.

Because Michele was actively involved in analyzing the collection development policy, the assumption is that after completion, the policy itself will be used as a vital tool to creating a responsible repository. Michele does plan though to take our plan to her advisory board for input and analysis before putting it into effect.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The SLIS Laboratory Library strives to excel at supporting the teaching, research, and service mission of the school. As a new director, Michele is eager to expand the collection of the library. With that in mind, and using the laboratory library's mission as a guide, we were able to devise a clear, concise collection development policy for archival materials. In addition, by reviewing published works on collection development, along with already implemented policies, we were able to successfully bridge the gap between academic libraries and archives repositories. Lastly, by using the Brant collection as a model for future archival collections, we met our goal to create a narrow subject area (i.e. libraries and intellectual freedom, particularly as concerning its history of research and advocacy), which is imperative in implementing a successful collection development policy.

## **V. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: SLIS Laboratory Library Archives Collection Development Policy**

#### **A. Description of Collection**

The SLIS Laboratory Library archives, although not intended to be an archives in the traditional sense given its budgetary, personnel and physical constraints, aims to nevertheless become a resource for collected information concerning the issue of intellectual freedom, both within the state of Wisconsin and as it relates to the larger library community. As a department with leading faculty actively researching and teaching on the subject of intellectual freedom, as well as having partners such as the CCBC and Wisconsin Historical Society, the UW-Madison SLIS therefore provides a likely place for research on the topic. As a result, efforts should be made to secure such materials.

#### **B. Purpose and Scope of Collection**

The SLIS Laboratory Library archives collection development policy will conform to the SLIS Laboratory Library mission. The purpose of the SLIS Laboratory Library archives collection development policy is to:

1. Establish operational guidelines for the development of an archival collection of materials to meet the educational, research and teaching needs of students, faculty and the public at large.
2. To serve as a resource and laboratory to stimulate and nourish creative teaching, research, and learning through the use of primary research materials and provide instruction in the use of those materials.
3. To encourage the collection of papers, artifacts, historical materials, documentation and other information that will stimulate the SLIS community to study the issue of intellectual freedom, understand its history and promote advocacy efforts.
4. To provide bibliographic access to materials through print, electronic and other suitable means.
5. To provide information services that will assist in the continued use and access to archival materials.
6. To implement records management by formulating policy and procedures that will ensure the collection and preservation of the SLIS Laboratory Libraries archival materials.
7. To provide adequate facilities for the retention and preservation of materials.

Given these numerous goals, specific priorities for collecting will involve:

1. Collecting, providing access to and preserving primary and secondary resource materials emphasizing the history of research and advocacy of intellectual freedom in Wisconsin, especially with respect to the Wisconsin Intellectual Freedom Coalition.

2. Documenting efforts by Wisconsin, other states and national groups aimed at challenging library collection policy and other related matters of intellectual freedom.

### **C. Selection Criteria**

Material is likely to be acquired primarily by donation. It is the procedure of the SLIS Laboratory Library to encourage donations as long as the material supports its mission and is considered to be of historical and research value. In general, the SLIS Laboratory Library does not have the financial means or the personnel to purchase and maintain collections.

Selection is a continual process of assessing and weighing the focus and research value of the materials, both within the collection and those that may potentially be acquired. Responsibility for evaluation of materials for possible inclusion in the collection falls primarily upon the Director, in consultation with faculty and associated staff and organizations. Library staff will work with relevant academic and recognized subject specialists to collect materials furthering the library's archival mission. Items considered for inclusion in the collection shall also be evaluated by weighing their likely costs of preservation and conservation, as well as their long-term scholarly or historical value.

The library Director will formalize transactions in writing, securing a Deed of Gift (see Appendix II below) with appropriate access conditions stated as necessary for material deemed appropriate for accession and retention.

Material not collected:

1. The SLIS Laboratory Library is not responsible for the personal and professional papers of the Director of the SLIS Graduate Program, which are administered by the University Archives.
2. Collections identified as particular strengths of other UW institutions, Wisconsin Area Research Centers, and the Wisconsin Historical Society.

### **D. Formats**

Material will be acquired regardless of format, provided adequate preservation, conservation and means of access can be secured or supported by the library partnered with the University Archives and Wisconsin Historical Society if necessary.

In order to provide access to the collection, the SLIS Laboratory Library archives will participate in various resource sharing projects, including possible digitization projects with the University of Wisconsin-System, the University Archives, the Digital Content Group, and Wisconsin State Historical Society. Finally, the library, through its web page, will maintain electronic links to other intellectual freedom collections and related materials of note.

## **E. Administration**

The development of a collection that meets institutional, instructional and research needs is the joint responsibility of the SLIS faculty, associated faculty and the SLIS Laboratory Library Director. Faculty and institutional requests are a necessary part of the selection procedure. The Library welcomes faculty recommendations and solicits faculty help in building the collection. While it is the prerogative of every faculty member to participate in the selection process, the final responsibility for development of the library archival collection—including adequacy and quality of selections—rests with the Library Director.

To permit research use of materials, items and collections shall be arranged, described, and cataloged in accordance with standard library and archival procedures. To promote widespread awareness of its holdings, the library shall make descriptions of collections and items available on its website, and, as possible, on the Wisconsin Historical Society's online archival catalog (ArCat) and through national databases such as RLIN. Library regulations and close staff supervision shall be employed to promote the security and proper use of materials by researchers.

## **F. Users**

Collections will be available to all members of the university and to other serious researchers or interested parties. UW affiliation is not required to examine or utilize collections. As a public domain, no restrictions on access will be placed on archival material. It is advised though that interested patrons contact the Director in advance to gain access.

## **G. Processing**

The Director will be responsible for securing students or staff with appropriate archival training or knowledge to undertake either as a part of their normal library work or through a negotiated practicum the arrangement, description, and preservation of collections and records series to be maintained in the archives.

### **1. Arrangement**

- i. Records will be organized according to standardized archival principles of provenance and original order. Where no apparent order exists, the order will be determined by the potential uses of the series.
- ii. All folders and containers of materials will be clearly labeled.
- iii. Arrangement of collections and series on the shelves in the stacks or processing room may be arbitrary so long as materials can be quickly accessed and retrieved.

### **2. Description**

Students or staff with appropriate archival experience will develop guides, catalogs, lists, inventories, registers, and ideas designed to describe the holdings of the collection to potential users to enable staff to retrieve materials.

## **H. Preservation and Conservation**

When the SLIS Laboratory Library archives accessions materials to its holdings, it shall take care to ensure their long-term preservation and accessibility to researchers. Preservation is accomplished by an appropriate combination of environment controls, materials, handling techniques, and conservation treatments. Materials shall be housed in closed stack areas with environmentally stable conditions and will not circulate outside the library. Acid-free boxes, folders, and other containers shall be employed to house materials, and item-level conservation steps shall be taken when appropriate.

### 1. Priorities for minimizing deterioration:

- i. Minimize fluctuations of temperature and humidity
- ii. Only trained personnel will undertake preservation and conservation efforts.
- iii. Materials should be inspected for the presence of vermin, mold and mildew and steps should be taken to eliminate any such organisms.
- iv. Especially brittle, damaged or torn documents should be repaired or copied in accordance with approved methods.

The library director will develop a disaster plan of action in the event of fire or water damage, or other casualty.

## **I. Procedures and Security**

The following conditions apply specifically to the SLIS Laboratory Library's archival collection:

1. The archives will be kept in a locked facility or restricted area with access to such limited by keys or other secure means
2. Archival material will be used in the confines of the archives or other designated areas.
3. All users will be required to complete a standard registration form recording the user's name, address and listing of the records series requested and used.
4. Readers handling archival materials may use only pencils.
5. Records will be returned to the stacks or to a restricted temporary storage area immediately after use.
6. The SLIS Laboratory Library promotes the use of its materials and allows for photocopying of documents, except when documents are too frail to be handled or in cases of restrictions set by the donor.
7. The use of all materials will conform to copyright regulations.

## **J. General Conditions**

The following conditions apply to the SLIS Laboratory Library's collecting of archival materials:

1. The Scope of the collection meets the criteria outlined in Section IV above.
2. The collection is appraised according to archival principles to ensure it is of permanent retention value.

3. The SLIS Laboratory Library must be able to accommodate the material.
4. The material becomes the property of the SLIS Laboratory Library, or its responsibility, and will be administered at its discretion.
5. The donor has the legal right to transfer ownership of the collection to the UW-Madison SLIS Laboratory Library.
6. The material may be used in one or more courses of instruction.

#### **K. Specific Conditions**

An accession register will be maintained, recording the date, title, office, extent, condition, and transferring party or donor of the material.

The Director will maintain a file containing information on every organization or individual with which the Director has discussed records transfer or donation. The information will include dates of contact, agreements or transfers or donations, current status of contract, and supporting correspondence or phone memoranda.

The SLIS Laboratory Library recognizes it has a long-term commitment to archival materials in its care, and that the removal of materials will only be done under special circumstances so as not to deter potential donors and researchers. In the rare and unlikely event that the library wishes to de-accession any archival material, these procedures should be followed:

1. Whenever possible, material should be offered to other institutions, especially other UW repositories, Wisconsin Area Research Centers and the Wisconsin Historical Society.
2. If no other institution wished to take the material, the library may dispose of the material according to normal withdrawal criteria, and in consultation with the donor where feasible.

Exhibitions and displays featuring archives and manuscripts are recognized as useful educational and promotional opportunities as long as environmental guidelines and security controls are in place. Where this is not possible, the use of facsimiles for display is advised. These controls also apply to lending material to other institutions. Written agreements including insurance terms should also be supplied.

This document will be revised periodically as necessary, and submitted to the Library/IT Committee, as well as appropriate faculty, staff and students for input and approval.

## Appendix 2: UW-Madison SLIS Laboratory Library Archives Deed of Gift

I, \_\_\_\_\_, own the materials described below and voluntarily donate them to the UW-Madison SLIS Laboratory Library to become its permanent property and to be administered in accordance with established policies. The purpose and intent of this gift is to transfer and assign all legal rights, ownership, physical custody, and interest I possess of these materials, including the rights to reproduce, publish and display the materials, to the Library, except as specified below. The materials shall be maintained, organized and made available for research under the usual procedures of the Library. I understand that the materials will not be made available to researchers until a standard inventory of their contents has been prepared and a copy received by me. The Library may use its discretion to dispose of material that its representatives determine to be inappropriate for its collections or have no historical value, unless instructions to return unwanted materials to the donor are stated below.

Title and description of materials donated:

Restrictions on the use of and/or access to these materials:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Donor or Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Donor Name:

Donor Address:

Donor Phone:

*This deed of gift confirms a legal relationship between the donor and repository that is based on trust and common understanding. This relationship ensures that the materials donated are preserved and made available to future generations.*

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