Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 16-17, 2023
Chicago, Illinois (Hybrid Meeting)

Committee on Education: Management Track Proposal
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BACKGROUND

The Management Track sub-team of the Committee on Education is submitting this item to Council to affirm and strategize around SAA resource commitment to this curriculum area. SAA Education already supports the DAS and A&D Certificate Programs and, in recent years, has articulated a commitment to Management training as well as Records and Information Management and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEIA) training.

In early 2020, SAA was awarded a 2-year cooperative agreement from NHPRC, totaling $20,000, to invest in management training for archivists who are typically promoted into managerial roles with archival expertise but without substantive training in core management areas such as finance, IT, personnel, and other topics. The cooperative agreement funds allowed SAA to pilot several programs, including Finance Basics, Technology Management, Practical IT, Navigating Workplace Conflict, Salary Negotiation, Disaster Planning, and Writing a Grant Proposal. We experimented with online formats (given the unplanned interruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic), onboarded new instructors, brought in experts from outside archives, and developed core curricula new to SAA. Over two years, we spent $24,825 of the $25,000 total funding allotted, creating 13 total programs that reached 672 people.

The NHPRC funding ended in June 2022, and we are in a "redefine goals and re-commit resources" stage of planning for the future of the Management Track.

DISCUSSION

With the 2020 NHPRC grant funding ends, SAA needs to consider the future of the Management track. Three primary questions need to be discussed: (1) Should this Management education program be a certificate or a track program? (2) Should the courses be arranged in tiers, or should participants be allowed to pick and choose the courses that best suit their professional needs? (3) Will participants be able to renew their participation?

This working group suggests expanding on the track program rolled out in 2022. While a certificate program like what's offered for A&D and DAS may provide greater traction for

those aspiring for professional advancement, we believe a track program will adequately address the needs of those who have been thrust into management positions without training those looking to expand their knowledge. The track program is also easier for SAA Education to administer because it does not require test banks and graders. However, the working group does propose the development of a certificate of completion, be it paper or electronic, that can be used to document the completion of a series of courses covering each competency.

This working group does not believe tiers are necessary for the management track program. The rigidity of the tier system makes it harder to provide an adequate number of relevant courses. In addition, the competencies we've identified for the management track do not easily align with the foundation, tactical, tools, and transformational structure. Instead, we propose having participants take one course from each competency to complete the management track. This will allow participants to choose the specific course within a competency that most addresses their professional needs.

Where those who earn a DAS or A&D certificate can renew that certificate over time by taking additional courses, the working group does not believe it will be necessary to make the management track renewable. While participants would be welcome to take additional courses over time, there would be no cumulative effect from these additional courses. This approach would eliminate the need for SAA Education to track renewal credits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the SAA Council approves the following Management track competencies (existing SAA courses and gaps identified for each):

Assessment
Responding to the increased need for accountability despite diminishing resources, leaders collect and review multiple inputs to measure, reflect on, and/or evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and/or value of initiatives, programs, policies, and projects to inform evidence-based decisions and encourage a culture of continuous assessment.

Courses
  • [none currently]

Gaps: assessment approaches; creating a culture of assessment; evidence-based decision making

Communication

Leaders effectively employ a wide range of well-developed verbal, non-verbal, and written communication methods to interact with employees and internal/external stakeholders, conveying information clearly and efficiently, perceiving and managing their own and other people's emotions, and using active listening for consistent, mutual understanding. Communication relates directly to successful collaboration, advocacy, marketing, and emotional intelligence.

Courses
- Salary Negotiation for Archivists, Sessions 1 & 2
- Building Advocacy and Support for Digital Archives

Gaps: communicating with a variety of stakeholders; emotional intelligence; marketing

Ethics
Leaders employ ethics in their decision-making and work to develop a culture where ethics are a part of organizational norms. Information ethics are especially significant for the archival manager, including areas like access to information, intellectual freedom, and the digital divide. (see also SAA Code of Ethics for Archivists)

Courses
- Ethics in Action

Gaps: access to information; intellectual freedom; digital divide

Legal Requirements
Leaders know the legal requirements of managing archives, including confidentiality, custody, intellectual property, and any relevant public records statutes. They also bear responsibility for navigating the policy requirements of their institution as well as any stipulations put in place by grant funders.

Courses
- Copyright Issues for Digital Archives
- Privacy and Confidentiality in Digital Archives
- Rights and Confidentiality

Gaps: physical/legal custody; public records; policies

Personnel Management
Leaders strive to cultivate the human resources in their employ, ensuring adequate training, support, compensation, and professional development with the goal of retention. Leaders seek to attract a diverse staff and actively work to develop their team's cohesion. Leaders utilize effective communication to identify common goals and minimize conflicts within the team.

Courses
- Managing Teams in the Archives Using the Tilmor Process
- Managing Your Career in a Crisis
- Navigating Workplace Conflict
- Remote Work in Archives: Zooming in, Sharing Points, Slacking Off
- Salary Negotiation for Archivists

Gaps: encouraging/designing professional development; diverse workforce; team building; communication

Resource management
Leaders continually assess, monitor, and advocate for the needs of staff, patrons, and collections and exhibit a high degree of accountability in managing budgets and facilities. Leaders practice sound financial planning techniques, observing the external and internal fiscal landscape, and develop budgets that reflect departmental and institutional missions and priorities.

Courses
- Finance Basics for Archives Managers
- Financial Management for Archivists
- Financial Planning in Uncertain Times
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities
- Protect Your Holdings AND Provide Access?
- Secure and Protect Your Collections
- Toward Financial Sustainability in Archives

Gaps: designing inclusive and accessible spaces

Strategy and planning
Leaders maintain an understanding of important trends and developments in the archives landscape, proactively conduct risk assessments, and embrace innovation and collaboration in order to develop strategic directions and priorities for archival programs. Leaders continually assess progress towards goals, exercise flexibility and willingness to learn from mistakes, and effectively steer programs through times of change or crisis. At a more granular level, leaders understand the project life cycle, utilize effective project management tools and techniques, manage project personnel, products, and services to ensure on-time/on-budget results, evaluate project outcomes, and disseminate project information.

Courses
- Advanced Project Management for Archivists
- Change Management: How Do You Tackle It?
- Disaster Planning
- Fundamentals of Project Management for Archivists
- Implementing "More Product, Less Process"
- Management of Cultural Institutions

Gaps: developing a strategic plan

Technologies/information systems
Leaders stay abreast of the changing technology landscape, identify technical infrastructure and support needs, evaluate technology tools and apply relevant criteria for selecting platforms, make strategic technology decisions and develop technology policies and procedures, communicate effectively with information technology professionals, and advocate for the technology needs of archives.

Courses
- Archival Collections Management Systems
- Assessment & Certification of Digital Repositories
- Building Advocacy and Support for Digital Archives
- Developing Specifications and RFPs
- Digital Archives and Libraries
- Digital Curation Planning and Sustainable Futures
- Digital Repositories
- Fundamentals of Research Data Curation
- Managing Digital Records in Archives and Special Collections
- Practical IT Security for Archivists
- Tool Integration: From Pre-SIP to DIP
- Tool Selection and Management

In order to offer courses for each of these competencies, the following courses will need to be developed. This list consolidates the gaps identified above, with the first three considered priorities for development. The working group recommends SAA Council support the development of these courses:
- Attracting/retaining a diverse workforce
- Data collection and analysis (both qualitative and quantitative)/developing a culture of assessment
- Developing a strategic plan
- Access to information/digital divide/intellectual freedom
- Communication skills (marketing, emotional intelligence, active listening) for a variety of internal and external stakeholders
- Designing inclusive and accessible spaces for staff and patrons
- Encouraging/designing professional development
- Legal questions of physical/legal custody
- Policies (developing/implementing)
- Public records obligations
- Team building

Support Statement:
The SAA's Management Track would provide flexible and practical professional development for archivists in management roles who often have little or no formal training in management. Built around a set of core competencies for archival managers, the track would allow participants to pick and choose courses based on their professional needs and individual job requirements. Participants who take at least one course from each competency would receive a professional development certificate acknowledging completion of the series. This track model allows SAA to serve the continuing education needs of archival managers without the significant investment of resources needed for a new certificate program with examinations and a renewal process. In order to offer courses addressing each of the competencies, SAA would develop new courses with a priority on courses addressing:
1. Attracting/retaining a diverse workforce
2. Data collection and analysis (both qualitative and quantitative)/developing a culture of assessment

3. Developing a strategic plan

Impact on Strategic Priorities:
The proposed Management Track relates to SAA's strategic goal #2: Enhancing Professional Growth. This proposal supports SAA's effort to provide access to professional development for archivists at any stage of their professional career. The Management Track specifically addresses strategic action 2.2, "Provide content, via education and publications, that reflects the latest thinking and best practices in the field." The objective of this proposed track would be to provide relevant and timely educational content and best practices in the area of archives management, using a framework of competencies developed with consideration for those outlined by allied archival and LIS organizations, such as the Academy of Certified Archivists, American Library Association, and the American Alliance of Museums.
The proposed track also advances SAA's strategic goal #3: Advancing the Field, with a focus on strategic action 3.4, "Support the development of executive leadership skills and encourage the participation in leadership opportunities by archivists in all stages of their careers." Acknowledging that advancing in the archival field will likely involve management and/or leadership skills and experience, the Management Track will offer opportunities for archivists to learn more about these skills through the course offerings. Additionally, this track offers further leadership opportunities for mid- and late-career archivists to pass along management experience through teaching a course in this track.

Since diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice are central to management and leadership work, a priority for this track is to include these themes throughout all courses. In this way, this proposal also aligns with priority 3 of the Work Plan on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, to "develop and offer DEI training for members and incorporate issues of equity and inclusion in all course and certificate offerings."[1]

Fiscal Impact:
The work of creating and sustaining content for the track and maintaining a regular curriculum review structure will fall to the Committee on Education (serving as liaisons to course developers) as well as the SAA Education staff and budget. It should be noted that SAA Education budgets annually for the creation of new content for all its curriculum areas – DAS, A&D, RIM, Management, and DEIA – and responds to additional needs articulated in grant proposals funded by SAA Foundation, Mellon, and other entities.
While three webinars per year for a track may seem like a small investment, we recognize that the SAA staff manages competing priorities in its budget of funds and bandwidth.
It is the intention of this proposal to affirm that Management is an area of ongoing concern and commitment for SAA and its Education resources.
The potential annual financial implications of this commitment include:

Creating (new) or revising (legacy) content for three (estimated) courses:
- Staff time – 20 hours minimum per webinar ("in kind")
- Honorarium for speakers – varies depending on length of program, individual or panel of speakers – estimated $1200 to $3000 per project

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[1] SAA's Work Plan on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/SAA-DEIA-WorkPlan_AsApproved111021.pdf

- Volunteer time – 10 hours per webinar for CoE member to act as liaison/subject matter expert.

Total Estimated Fiscal Impact
- 60 hours staff time
- $3600 to $9000 honoraria
- 30 hours of volunteer time