

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
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Chicago, Illinois**

**Standards Committee: Recommendation to Accept Revisions  
to the Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies  
(GPAS)**

(Prepared by Co-Chairs Carrie Hintz and Caitlin Christian-Lamb)

**BACKGROUND**

The Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS) define the academic preparation that graduates need and identify a common core of archival knowledge that all graduate programs in archival studies should deliver so that all graduates can excel in their professional duties. The Guidelines are reviewed every five years. This revision, which consists of minor and editorial changes, is the result of the regularly scheduled review process.

GPAS is an established SAA standard. It was approved by the Council in 2002 and underwent revisions in 2005 and 2011. The standard is on a five-year review cycle and, therefore, was up for revision in 2016.

**DISCUSSION**

The Committee on Education, with the assistance of SAA Education Director Solveig De Sutter, conducted the regular five-year review of GPAS to develop this new version. The changes were primarily editorial, tightening the language and updating terminology to ensure the ongoing relevance of the guidelines.

The revisions were then posted on SAA's website and member comments were solicited via the homepage and RSS feed, social media, and *In the Loop*. A number of comments were received regarding both editorial changes and substantive concerns. Due to time constraints, the Committee on Education focused on the editorial suggestions, which included updating terminology, adjusting language to cover the variety of archival materials, and emphasizing the importance of diversity and inclusion efforts.

During the next two years, the Committee on Education plans to conduct an in-depth study of graduate archival education in order to understand the changes currently taking place across these programs. A more substantial revision of the Guidelines will be submitted to the Standards Committee in the next two to three years.

The current GPAS revisions were submitted to the Standards Committee in October 2016. The Standards Committee reviewed the submission packet and agreed that, while the call for comments could have been circulated more broadly (the Archives and Archivists Listserv, for example), ultimately the call for comments was sufficient, especially for what is a minor revision to the guidelines. The comments that the Committee on Education received were reflected in the final draft, and the overall comments did not reflect any widespread disagreement in the SAA community or areas of significantly divergent opinion or practice.

On October 19, the Standards Committee voted in favor of recommending that the Council adopt the revisions to GPAS.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the proposed revisions to the Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies be approved (*strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition*).**

**Support Statement:** The Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS) define the academic preparation that graduates need and identify a common core of archival knowledge that all graduate programs in archival studies should deliver so that all graduates can excel in their professional duties. Ongoing review and revision of these Guidelines ensures that a set of guidelines that remain in line with the needs of the profession and adequately address new and emerging educational needs of students in archival programs.

**Impact on Strategic Priorities:** Adopting the revisions to GPAS supports SAA's strategic goal of enhancing professional growth through establishing robust guidelines for the education and training of new archivists.

**Fiscal Impact:** None.

**Society of American Archivists  
SAA-Developed Standard Review Procedure**

**Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS)  
Introductory Narrative**

**PURPOSE**

The Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS) define the academic preparation that graduates need and identify a common core of archival knowledge that all graduate programs in archival studies should deliver so that all graduates can excel in their professional duties.

Establishing minimum standards in terms of mission, curriculum, faculty, and infrastructure, these guidelines serve as a benchmark against which graduate programs in archival studies should measure themselves. SAA hopes these guidelines will improve the archival profession by encouraging the continued thoughtful development of more extensive and comprehensive educational programs.

**BACKGROUND**

The GPAS guidelines were approved by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council in January 2002, and subsequently revised by the Committee on Education in 2005 and 2011. GPAS replaced the “Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Degree,” adopted by the Council in 1994. By means of these guidelines, SAA endorses the development of coherent and independent graduate programs in archival studies. SAA believes that programs of the extent and nature outlined in these guidelines are the best form of pre-appointment professional education for archivists. For this reason, these guidelines supersede prior documents on archival education issued in 1977, 1988, and 1994.

**REVISIONS AND CONSULTATION**

The Committee on Education, with the assistance of SAA Education Director Solveig De Sutter, conducted the regular five-year review of GPAS to develop this new version. The changes were primarily editorial, tightening the language and updating terminology to ensure the ongoing relevance of the guidelines.

The revisions were then posted on SAA’s website and member comments were solicited via the homepage and RSS feed, social media and *In the Loop*. A number of comments were received regarding both editorial changes and substantive concerns. Due to time constraints, the Committee on Education focused on the editorial suggestions, which included updating terminology, adjusting language to cover the variety of archival materials, and emphasizing the importance of diversity and inclusion efforts.

In light of the substantive concerns brought forward by members, the Committee on Education will be conducting an in-depth review of the state of graduate archival education and present further revisions in the next two to three years.

**MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW PLAN**

This version addressed the most pressing concerns voiced in the member comments. Over the next two years, the Committee on Education will conduct an in-depth study of graduate archival education in order to understand the changes currently taking place across these programs. A more substantial revision of the Guidelines will be submitted to the Standards Committee in the next two to three years.

Policy dictated by the Council requires the Committee on Education to review the Guidelines every five years. The Committee plans to continue fulfilling this responsibility for the foreseeable future.

1                                   **Society of American Archivists**  
2                                   **SAA-Developed Standard Review Procedure**

3  
4                                   **Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS)**  
5                                   **2016 Recommended Revisions**

6  
7                                   **Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies [1]**  
8

9 Archivists systematically identify, select, protect, organize, describe, preserve, and make  
10 available to users archival materials [2] – that is, society’s records and documents broadly  
11 defined, regardless of form or medium. Archivists preserve and transmit society’s cultural and  
12 social heritage, protect the legal rights of individuals and institutions, and aid citizens in holding  
13 their governments and other organizations accountable. Thus, archives and archivists are  
14 essential in a democratic and educated society.

15 Graduate programs in Archival Studies provide students the training and understanding they  
16 need to excel in their professional duties. These programs have a higher duty as well: to keep  
17 archives relevant. In addition to maintaining technical competence, archivists in the future will  
18 have increasing responsibility to engage and educate the public, to diversify the historical record  
19 and the profession, to solve problems and use archival materials creatively, to perform in the  
20 digital realm, to advocate for the profession, and to enhance the public good. Keeping archives  
21 relevant requires graduate programs to prepare archivists to operate in these expanding fields.

22 Archival Studies programs must also prepare emerging professionals to work with the records of  
23 the future as well as those of the past, for graduates will practice in a vast array of institutions  
24 and professional positions. These guidelines define the academic preparation graduates need to  
25 meet these new challenges and identify a common core of archival knowledge that all graduate  
26 programs in archival studies should deliver.

27 Establishing minimum standards in terms of mission, curriculum, faculty, and infrastructure,  
28 these guidelines serve as a benchmark against which graduate programs in archival studies  
29 should measure themselves. The SAA hopes these guidelines will improve the archival  
30 profession by encouraging the continued thoughtful development of more extensive and  
31 comprehensive educational programs. [3]

32  
33  
34 **I.       ARCHIVAL EDUCATION: MISSION AND GOALS**  
35

36 Graduate programs in archival studies must define their mission, goals, and objectives. Some  
37 programs educate generalists with a broad knowledge of records and archives administration

1 while others prepare specialists in areas such as digital materials management, historical  
 2 manuscripts, or management of institutional archives. Still others emphasize interdisciplinary  
 3 studies that link, for example, archival, library, and museum knowledge. However, to qualify as  
 4 an archival studies program (as opposed to a more specialized historical manuscripts program or  
 5 a general information science program) the curriculum should focus on core archival knowledge  
 6 areas as the foundation of any specialization or interdisciplinary education.  
 7

8 Programs should state their mission, goals, and objectives in terms of the educational results they  
 9 seek. These should be consistent with the parent institution's mission and culture, and developed  
 10 through a broad-based planning process that involves the program's constituencies. [4] The  
 11 curriculum should express these program objectives and faculty should review and evaluate them  
 12 continually based on evolving professional responsibilities, competencies, and challenges.  
 13 Regardless of the organizational setting, master's-level archival studies programs must be  
 14 coherent, cohesive, and identifiable.  
 15

16 The importance and complexity of archival work require that individuals entering the profession  
 17 receive a strong graduate-level archival education based on core archival knowledge  
 18 complemented by knowledge drawn from other disciplines such as anthropology, economics,  
 19 education, history, law, library and information science, management, museum studies, and  
 20 sociology. A fully developed graduate program in archival studies must establish a curriculum  
 21 that:  
 22

- 23 ● Provides students with a solid foundation in the theory, methodology, and practice of  
 24 archival science, and in archival history and scholarship;
- 25 ● Strengthens this foundation by giving students the opportunity to acquire knowledge  
 26 from allied and complementary disciplines;
- 27 ● Assists students to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills related to all  
 28 forms of records in the context of business, government, public needs, scientific  
 29 research, or the protection of cultural heritage;
- 30 ● Prepares students to manage and preserve authentic and trustworthy records as well as  
 31 relevant materials regardless of format;
- 32 ● Prepares students to conduct and communicate scholarly research;
- 33 ● Prepares students to teach classes and workshops in archival literacy and the uses of  
 34 archival resources; and
- 35 ● Communicates to students the ethical and legal dimensions of their work and  
 36 impresses upon them a sense of their professional and social responsibilities for the  
 37 public good and serving diverse groups.  
 38

39 Graduate education, in contrast to training, is both academic and professional; therefore, it  
 40 includes both original research and experiential learning. Ultimately, archival education creates  
 41 an intellectual framework that enables students to understand the ideas on which their profession

1 is founded, to engage in the development of archival principles, and to apply this knowledge in a  
2 wide variety of settings. In contrast, archival training focuses on building skills or acquiring  
3 practical knowledge according to a replicable pattern or on developing a specialization in certain  
4 areas.

5  
6 The graduate of an archival studies program should have a thorough knowledge and  
7 understanding of archival principles and methods and should be prepared to work independently  
8 in the performance of all basic archival functions. [5] The variety and complexity of institutional  
9 settings and the increasingly digital and hybrid nature of records in our society require a broad  
10 range of skills and knowledge as well as a comprehensive understanding of archival theory and  
11 its practical application to manage and preserve current – as well as future – archival content.

12  
13 By educating students in the attributes of professionalism, a graduate program can cause students  
14 to realize that professional education is a lifelong undertaking, involving questioning accepted  
15 ideas and methods, revising received wisdom, and developing professional standards. Lifelong  
16 learning enables archivists to maintain knowledge and skills and to master new knowledge and  
17 techniques as their profession develops and changes.

18  
19 These guidelines, therefore, focus on the essential elements of master's-level graduate archival  
20 education, independent of institutional placement and degree offered. Different programs offer  
21 different emphases and specializations, ensuring students have a range of options in archival  
22 education. Knowledge from other disciplines brought to bear on the archival studies program  
23 enriches and expands the archival curriculum to meet a wide range of needs and interests.

## 24 25 **II. CURRICULUM**

26  
27 A graduate program in archival studies should provide students with a solid foundation in  
28 archival theory, methodology, and practice augmented by instruction in allied fields. Courses in  
29 complementary areas should be informed by an understanding of the nature of archives and the  
30 ways in which the methods and perspectives of these fields contribute to professional archival  
31 practice. Because archivists have responsibilities to their institutions, to the profession, and to  
32 the public at large, a graduate program in archival studies should also ground its instruction in  
33 matters of archival ethics, professionalism, advocacy, and justice.

34  
35 As stated above, the body of knowledge that a student should master as part of a graduate  
36 archival education comprises a) core archival knowledge and b) complementary knowledge, both  
37 supplemented by ethical and public interest concerns.

- 38  
39 **A. Core archival knowledge** provides the theoretical and practical basis necessary  
40 to work as a professional archivist. This includes knowledge of archival ethics

1 that promote responsibility toward the standards of the profession and the public  
2 good.

- 3 **B. Complementary knowledge** introduces students to other disciplines, knowledge  
4 of which will deepen their understanding of archival work, support its  
5 accomplishment, and teach others how archives function for the public good.  
6 Complementary knowledge also allows students to specialize in specific aspects  
7 of archival work or to function in cross-disciplinary settings.

8 Graduate programs should require eighteen (18) semester credit hours (or equivalent) of core  
9 archival knowledge. Based on the demands of the graduate program's institution and the interests  
10 of the student, the remaining credits may be in complementary knowledge areas. The curriculum  
11 should integrate research throughout, and an important element of any program should be an  
12 original research project resulting in a scholarly paper, thesis, or professional project. The  
13 program should also include practical experience such as a practicum or internship.  
14

## 15

### 16 **A. CORE ARCHIVAL KNOWLEDGE**

#### 17

#### 18 *Rationale:*

19

20 The identity of a profession is founded on a discrete body of knowledge and on a professional  
21 culture that arises from a common history, a united purpose, a shared vocabulary, and collective  
22 values, norms, and standards. Consequently, core archival knowledge is the heart of an archival  
23 studies program. It should occupy a dominant position in the curriculum and should be taught by  
24 full-time archival educators, professional archivists, or other individuals with a depth of archival  
25 knowledge relevant to the topic. Core archival knowledge embraces three separate but  
26 interrelated facets of archival studies: **Knowledge of Archival Material and Archival**  
27 **Functions** (theory and methodology associated with specific areas of archival work);  
28 **Knowledge of the Profession** (history of the profession and evolution of archival practice); and  
29 **Contextual Knowledge** (the contexts within which records are created, managed, and kept).  
30 Because archival knowledge and professional culture transcend geographical, national, and  
31 social boundaries, each component should incorporate international and multicultural  
32 perspectives.  
33

#### 34 *Components:*

### 35

#### 36 **1. Knowledge of Archival Material and Functions**

37

38 Archival education should teach the fundamental concepts concerning the nature of records and  
39 archives as well as archival functions (archival theory), the techniques for performing archival  
40 functions (archival methodology), and the implementation of theory and method in real  
41 situations (archival practice). Instruction should cover the history of archival theory and methods

1 and their articulation in the professional literature (archival scholarship). The scope of archival  
2 education should encompass all archival functions and current best practices. It should also  
3 address knowledge of project management and archival organizational management.  
4

5 **a) *The Nature of Records and Archives:*** The archival concept of records through time  
6 regardless of form or medium; the characteristics of records and their components, formal  
7 elements, and attributes; the trustworthiness of records and authentication; the perfection of  
8 records; the way records aggregate and their forms of aggregation; the diversity of ways in which  
9 individuals and groups create, maintain, and access records; the concept of archives and its  
10 history; the records tradition versus the manuscripts tradition in the United States; the concept of  
11 papers; the structure of archival bodies of material; and archives as a place and as an institution.  
12

13 **b) *Selection, Appraisal, and Acquisition:*** The theory, methods, policies, and procedures used to  
14 identify, evaluate, acquire, and authenticate archival materials, in all forms, which have enduring  
15 value to records creators, institutions, researchers, and society. Appraisal entails, among other  
16 things, understanding what makes organizational records and personal collections authentic,  
17 reliable, and useful to institutions, individuals, legal and financial authorities, and other  
18 constituents. Instruction should go beyond the theoretical to offer techniques that help archivists  
19 manage problems of backlogs and hidden collections they will face when practicing appraisal  
20 and processing. This instruction should also include donor relations, assessing creators, and the  
21 macro approach versus the micro approach to appraisal.  
22

23 **c) *Arrangement and Description:*** The intellectual and physical organization of archival records  
24 and papers in all forms, according to archival principles and institutional considerations, and the  
25 development of descriptive tools and systems that provide both control of and access to  
26 collections. Teaching methods and technology applications should link theory to practice.  
27

28 **d) *Preservation:*** The physical and intellectual protection of records and papers in all forms,  
29 including the activities required to ensure their continuing accessibility, such as digitization,  
30 reformatting, or migration. Preservation knowledge comprises a firm grounding in preservation  
31 history; research into the nature of the materials and treatments; current techniques and  
32 technologies; and administrative studies and management issues.  
33

34 **e) *Reference and Access:*** The policies and procedures designed to serve the information needs  
35 of various user groups, based on institutional mandates and constituencies, the nature of the  
36 materials, relevant laws and ethical considerations, user needs, and appropriate technologies.  
37 Instruction in this area should also include the study of user behavior, discovery and access  
38 techniques and technologies, user-based evaluation techniques, and the interaction between  
39 archivist and user.  
40

1 **f) Outreach, Instruction, and Advocacy:** The theories and practices used to identify archival  
2 constituencies and their needs and to develop programs that promote increased use,  
3 understanding of archival materials and methods, resources, visibility, and support. Includes  
4 primary source and information literacy as well as methods of promoting the value of archives to  
5 the public and other audiences. This component should also articulate the benefits the profession  
6 provides to society beyond competent management of the organizational records and personal  
7 collections in archivists' care.

8  
9 **g) Management and Administration:** The principles and practices used to facilitate all aspects of  
10 archival work through careful planning and administration of the repository, unit, or program, its  
11 institutional resources, and its policy making practices. At all career levels, archivists manage  
12 resources and make decisions, and often must demonstrate programmatic vision and innovation.  
13 Thus graduates should know the fundamental principles related to organizational management  
14 and policies, strategic planning, systems analysis, project and program planning, budgeting,  
15 administrative leadership, human resources management, financial management, resource  
16 allocation, fundraising, grant writing, and the management of buildings, facilities, storage  
17 systems, and other equipment.

18  
19 **h) Records and Information Management:** The principles involved in managing records and  
20 information from creation and for as long as the records will be needed by their creator for the  
21 purposes of its business, functions, or activities. The work of archivists relates closely to the  
22 responsibilities of records and information managers, and in some institutional environments the  
23 duties of each are blended together in a single function. All graduates of archival studies  
24 programs should be able to analyze a creator's structure, decision-making, and recordkeeping  
25 systems and apply that knowledge to decisions regarding other archival functions.

26  
27 **i) Digital Materials Management:** Graduates of archival studies programs should be able to  
28 apply their knowledge to archival materials in all forms. They should have an understanding of  
29 the nature, issues, and preservation challenges of digital organizational records and personal  
30 collections. They should have knowledge of file formats, media types, and complex information  
31 technologies for the creation, maintenance, use, and preservation of all types of records.  
32 Additionally, archival studies programs should teach students to develop management systems  
33 for records and to identify and implement appropriate technological solutions to facilitate all  
34 aspects of archival work. Although a graduate program might offer a distinct course in digital  
35 materials management, consciousness of the application of archival concepts and practices to  
36 digital materials should permeate all archival coursework.

## 37 38 **2. Knowledge of the Profession**

39  
40 Archival education should provide students with an understanding of how the profession has  
41 developed and how its specific practices have evolved. It should teach students about the nature

1 of archival institutions, units and programs; the values and ethics that archivists bring to their  
2 work; and the perspectives that archivists contribute to the information professions.

3  
4 **a) *History of Archives and the Archives Profession:*** A graduate program in archival studies  
5 should teach the historical development of record-making and recordkeeping systems and of  
6 archives in various civilizations. This instruction should cover the structure of the archival  
7 community internationally and in North America in particular; the types of archival repositories  
8 and programs in the United States and Canada, along with their policies and procedures; and the  
9 legislation and regulations governing records, archives, and archival work in the United States  
10 and Canada. Instruction also should address the history of the archival profession; its missions,  
11 roles, and values; and the profession's contemporary concerns.

12  
13 **b) *Records and Cultural Memory:*** Organizational records and personal collections in all forms  
14 constitute the documented memory of individuals and society. They provide the basis for holding  
15 governments and organizations accountable and for protecting the rights of individuals and  
16 groups. However, they are only part of the fabric of cultural memory. Archivists and archives  
17 work in cooperation with other professionals and colleagues (including, but not limited to, those  
18 who work for or on behalf of governments, organizations, historical societies, libraries, and  
19 museums) to preserve and provide access to cultural memory. Students should understand the  
20 interrelationships among archives and other stewards of cultural memory and the ways in which  
21 records complement that heritage and protect communities' documentation and rights.

22  
23 **c) *Ethics and Values:*** Our profession bases its ethics and values on the responsibilities of  
24 archivists to identify, preserve, protect, and make available records and papers. Graduate  
25 programs should make students familiar with the SAA Code of Ethics, its underlying principles  
26 and perspectives, and its relationship to related professions' codes of ethics. Students should  
27 understand how the archival profession's ethics and values inform decisions and how to apply  
28 those ethics and values to their work and to the public good.

### 30 **3. Contextual Knowledge**

31  
32 Graduates of archival studies programs should understand the contexts in which records are  
33 created and kept and the theories and practices of management and technology as they apply to  
34 archival work. This knowledge should be integrated in the core curriculum wherever applicable  
35 to foster a sound working knowledge that graduates can apply to their daily activities. Some of  
36 these areas of knowledge may also be studied more fully as disciplines in their own right;  
37 therefore, they are also listed under **Complementary Knowledge** below.

38  
39 **a) *Social and Cultural Systems:*** Knowledge of social and cultural systems is important for two  
40 reasons. First, graduates must understand the institutional and individual structures and systems  
41 that form the context in which records and papers are created, maintained, and used. They should

1 also understand the recordkeeping implications of social and cultural systems; the diversity of  
2 ways that individuals and groups create, maintain, and access records; and the organizational  
3 structures and procedures used by all types of institutions and organizations to ensure  
4 documentation and accountability. Second, graduates must understand the political, social, and  
5 economic dynamics within their organizational contexts to achieve their goals and objectives.

6  
7 **b) *Legal and Financial Systems:*** Records and papers, and the recordkeeping systems of both  
8 institutions and individuals, result from and, therefore, reflect the legal and financial systems in  
9 which they were created and demonstrate organizational and individual accountability. Archival  
10 core knowledge incorporates the origin, development, structure, and functioning of legal and  
11 financial systems, including federal, state, and local laws as well as the regulatory environment.  
12 This should include both public and private sector jurisdictions. Knowledge of legal issues also  
13 includes privacy rights, freedom of information legislation, and a wide variety of intellectual  
14 property rights, display and performance rights, and literary rights related to recorded material in  
15 all forms.

## 16 17 **B. COMPLEMENTARY KNOWLEDGE**

### 18 19 ***Rationale:***

20  
21 Archivists must rely on knowledge, methods, and perspectives derived from disciplines beyond  
22 their own. The interdisciplinary nature of archival studies arises from the complexity of archival  
23 materials, the contexts of their creation, the multiplicity of their potential uses, and the many  
24 roles that graduates of archival studies programs fill. Graduates should be knowledgeable about  
25 significant theories, methods, and practices in the following fields.

### 26 27 ***Components:***

#### 28 29 **1. Information Technology**

30  
31 Most contemporary records are created, stored, maintained, used, and preserved in digital form.  
32 Familiarity with networking, hardware, software, and digital systems in general is fundamental  
33 to performing archival functions in the 21st century. Graduates of archival studies programs  
34 should understand human/computer interaction (to design and develop effective systems for  
35 users), the importance of information standards, and how to evaluate systems and related  
36 services effectively. The curriculum could include opportunities to train in database design and  
37 management, spreadsheet applications, information architecture, website design and creation,  
38 desktop publishing, metadata schemas, markup languages, and basic programming skills.

#### 39 40 **2. Conservation**

1 Beyond the core archival knowledge of preservation, appropriate knowledge may be needed in  
2 conservation practices, that is, a range of intervention activities to stabilize materials in their  
3 original format by physical, chemical, or digital means. Graduates should have sufficient  
4 understanding of this discipline to be able to judge the efficacy of conservation treatments and to  
5 evaluate the appropriate conservation treatment for a document or group of documents. For  
6 digital materials, graduates should have sufficient understanding of digital object recovery  
7 techniques and digital security technologies.  
8

### 9 **3. Research Design and Execution**

10  
11 Understanding multiple methods of research design and execution is important to enable  
12 graduates to provide effective service to a wide variety of researchers and to evaluate archival  
13 operations from the perspective of users. Knowledge of and experience with research also allows  
14 graduates to assess the status of research in their own discipline, to undertake new research, and  
15 to blend theoretical and empirical aspects of archival studies into scholarly investigations.  
16 Finally, knowledge of research may allow archivists to use their repositories' collections to  
17 advance their own scholarship and provide enhanced reference and access.  
18  
19

### 20 **4. Organizational Theory**

21  
22 The study of theories of organizational development, management, and culture is important in  
23 archival education because it provides the tools for understanding the evolution, nature, and  
24 structure of organizations that create records and assists students in understanding how to  
25 successfully operate within the institutions that will employ them. Knowledge of different  
26 models of organizational structure, operations, behavior, and institutional culture provides  
27 valuable perspectives for understanding recordkeeping systems and the context of records  
28 creation, management, and use.  
29

### 30 **5. Library and Information Science**

31  
32 Institutions often administratively connect archives, libraries, and special collections.  
33 Departments relating to the information science profession can share physical space, technical  
34 resources, staff, stakeholders, and skill sets. Students in graduate archival education programs  
35 benefit from understanding the similarities and differences in these closely related fields in order  
36 to build collaborative relationships with information science colleagues, as well as  
37 complementary knowledge.  
38

### 39 **6. Liberal Arts and Sciences**

40

1 Frequently, students beginning archival studies already have a broad background in the liberal  
2 arts. Nonetheless, further graduate work in such disciplines can directly augment archival  
3 knowledge. Especially valuable is education in fields that help explain the context of records  
4 creation and the practice of recordkeeping, including accounting, anthropology, economics, law,  
5 philosophy, political science, and sociology, as well as science and the arts. Because the holdings  
6 of many archival institutions emanate from or concentrate on specific social sectors or  
7 movements, specialized knowledge in one or more humanities, social science, or science  
8 disciplines may be an important asset for appraisal and reference work in some settings.  
9

## 10 **7. Allied Professions**

11

12 The work of archivists and archival institutions intersects with that of other professions and  
13 endeavors involved in the identification, protection, and dissemination of recorded information.  
14 Among these are library and information science, computer science, museum studies, oral  
15 history, historic preservation, historical editing, social and community organizations, and public  
16 history. Archives administration is not a branch of any related profession; however, exposure to  
17 the distinct purposes and methods of allied fields will be advantageous to archives students.  
18  
19

## 20 **III. ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

21

### 22 **A. Faculty**

23

24 Graduate programs in archival studies must have a faculty capable of accomplishing program  
25 objectives. Faculty should have a deep understanding of the profession and archival work, strong  
26 ties to both the academic and professional communities, technological knowledge and skills, and  
27 a record of research and publishing within the field. They should be effective teachers and active  
28 participants in professional organizations. To meet these guidelines, a program must have a  
29 minimum of one full-time, tenure-track faculty member. Full-time faculty members must be  
30 eligible for appointment to the graduate faculty within the parent institution (in virtually all cases  
31 this equates, at minimum, to holding a doctoral degree) and must demonstrate expertise by  
32 contributions to archival knowledge through publications and professional service. The faculty  
33 must be sufficient in number and in diversity of specialties to carry out the major share of the  
34 teaching, research, and service activities required for the program and to deliver the core  
35 knowledge of archival studies to give stability to the program. In many instances, additional full-  
36 or part-time faculty will be required to fulfill program objectives. Part-time or adjunct faculty,  
37 when appointed, should balance and complement the teaching competencies of the full-time  
38 faculty. Programs are enhanced when adjunct or part-time faculty have extensive practical  
39 experience, demonstrated expertise through contributions to professional knowledge through  
40 publication and professional service, and excellent teaching credentials. In the interests of  
41 diversifying the historical record and the profession, it is incumbent upon graduate programs to

1 diversify their faculties and student bodies. Diversity in faculty, students, professionals,  
2 viewpoints, and experience is increasingly important to maintaining the relevance of archives.

### 4 **B. Program Duration**

6 The appropriate duration of a graduate program in archival studies should be consistent with that  
7 of all graduate programs in the hosting school or university in which it is situated. To cover the  
8 curriculum components outlined above adequately, however, a master's-level archival program  
9 should have a minimum of eighteen (18) semester hours or equivalent devoted exclusively to  
10 core archival knowledge, including practical experience. Remaining credits can be in areas of  
11 complementary knowledge or electives.

### 13 **C. Structure of the Learning Process**

15 Graduate education in archival studies requires several modes of instruction and learning.  
16 Coursework provides the best method of presenting archival theory, principles, and  
17 methodology, as well as many areas of interdisciplinary knowledge. Practical experience is  
18 necessary to apply theory to workplace settings and to provide experiential learning. Scholarly  
19 research enables students to explore dimensions of the field in greater depth and to contribute  
20 original research to the professional discourse.

#### 22 **1. Coursework**

24 Coursework is the basic venue for graduate-level archival education, and course format (e.g.,  
25 lecture, seminar, web-based, distance education) will vary. Coursework should also include  
26 opportunities for building an open, inclusive, and collaborative environment with fellow students  
27 and colleagues through group and/or outreach projects.

#### 29 **2. Practical Experience**

31 Experiential learning in the workplace will enhance knowledge acquired in coursework. In the  
32 context of master's-level archival education, practical experience is not an exercise to discover  
33 theory and methods empirically; rather, it allows students to verify their understanding of  
34 archival principles by applying them in real-life situations and to understand how to make  
35 adjustments so that archival principles fit archival practice. Practical experience also provides  
36 students with structured feedback on their applied archival skills and with mentoring by records  
37 professionals working in the field.

39 Any form of experiential learning must primarily serve the student's educational goals, even if a  
40 host institution or organization ultimately benefits from the work accomplished by the student.  
41 Any practical experience with a host institution or organization should be a structured program

1 related to the student's program of study. Faculty in collaboration with the designated host's  
2 internship supervisor should design the program and include provisions for regular feedback and  
3 evaluation.

### 4 5 **3. Scholarly Research**

6  
7 Scholarly research is an essential component of the archival studies curriculum because it  
8 enhances students' ability to think critically and rigorously about archival issues and strengthens  
9 their competence to analyze, critically review, and engage with the literature. Research also has  
10 the potential to provide original contributions to the archival literature and thus helps to  
11 invigorate the profession. Archival research can take many forms and borrow methodologies  
12 from a variety of fields in the humanities and social sciences. Although much archival research  
13 has been the result of an individual effort, education programs should introduce students to  
14 collaborative, creative research and encourage it within and outside their own discipline.

#### 15 16 **D. Resources and Facilities**

17  
18 Instructional and research resources and facilities for meeting the needs of students and faculty  
19 include access to core archival literature, library and multimedia resources and services,  
20 computers and information technologies, and accommodations for independent and group study.  
21 Facilities should be appropriately staffed, convenient, and fully accessible to users of varying  
22 needs. Students should develop skills in using digitized primary resources and digital  
23 repositories, and should have regular and frequent access to physical archives and manuscript  
24 repositories. Repository access can take the form of class visits, research assignments in the  
25 repositories, and opportunities for internships and other types of practical experience. It is  
26 particularly important for a program to have strong relationships with area repositories.

#### 27 28 **E. Administration, Placement, and Financial Support**

29  
30 The graduate program in archival studies must identify a program director or administrator who  
31 is responsible for making certain that the program achieves its mission, goals, and objectives.  
32 The program director must be one of the full-time tenure-track members of the faculty or staff of  
33 the home department. Depending on the scope and placement of the program, he or she may  
34 have the title of director, chairperson, or dean.

35  
36 Programs must provide career counseling and vigorous placement support for students. Career  
37 counseling is essential because students will encounter a variety of potential employment venues  
38 as well as numerous institutional and functional specializations. Vigorous placement support also  
39 is essential for students as they enter the job market because of the variety of ways in which  
40 employment opportunities are advertised or announced. Programs should also emphasize the  
41 importance of professional recommendations in the successful job search.

1  
2 The parent institution must provide the program with continuing financial support that is  
3 sufficient to develop and maintain it. The level of support must provide a reasonable expectation  
4 of financial viability and must consider the number of faculty, administrative and support staff,  
5 instructional resources, library and information services, and facilities needed to carry out the  
6 archival education program's mission, goals, and objectives.  
7

### 8 **III. CONCLUSION**

9

10 These guidelines define the minimum requirements for a graduate program in archival studies  
11 that is coherent, autonomous, and based on core archival knowledge. Within the guidelines,  
12 higher education institutions may create a wide variety of programs offering master's degrees.  
13 This range of options provides students with choices of direction and emphasis and ultimately  
14 enriches the profession by promoting diverse educational offerings around a common core of  
15 knowledge. These guidelines define the academic education needed to meet the challenges of  
16 serving as an archivist in the 21st century and provide a strong common basis for graduate  
17 archival education regardless of any program's institutional affiliation.  
18

19 [1] The "Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies" (GPAS) were approved by the  
20 Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council in January 2002 and revised by the Committee  
21 on Education in 2005, 2011, and 2015. GPAS replaced the "Guidelines for the Development of a  
22 Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Degree," adopted by the Council in 1994. By  
23 means of these guidelines, the Society of American Archivists endorses the development of  
24 coherent and independent graduate programs in archival studies. SAA believes that programs of  
25 the extent and nature outlined in these guidelines are the best form of pre-appointment  
26 professional education for archivists. For this reason, these guidelines supersede prior documents  
27 on archival education issued in 1977, 1988, and 1994.  
28

29 [2] Archival materials are recorded information, regardless of physical format or type of creator  
30 (public or private), that are created or received by an individual or organization carrying out its  
31 activities and that is set aside for preservation and future use. Archival records and papers are  
32 instrumental for evidence and accountability as well as for social and cultural memory. In these  
33 guidelines, the phrase "records and papers" will be used to encompass documentary evidence  
34 produced by organizations and individuals in all media (paper, digital, audio, and visual) and in  
35 any format.  
36

37 [3] For information about archival education programs in North America, including a directory  
38 of such programs, see the SAA website at <http://www2.archivists.org/gpas>.  
39

40 [4] The interdisciplinary character of archival education makes it possible to place a program in a  
41 variety of settings, such as a school of library and information science, a department of history, a

1 school of public administration, a law school, or a school of business administration. Two  
2 departments may also administer a program jointly, thereby emphasizing the interdisciplinary  
3 nature of the archival field.

4

5 [5] The Academy of Certified Archivists has developed a useful list of domains of archival  
6 knowledge. See the "Role Delineation" section of the Handbook for Archival Certification  
7 (found within the "Exam Handbook") online at <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org>.

**Society of American Archivists  
SAA-Developed Standard Review Procedure**

**Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS)  
2011 Version**

**Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies [1]**

Archivists are responsible for the identification, selection, protection, organization, description, and preservation of archival records and papers and, eventually, for their accessibility by any user.[2] By ensuring that archival documents are identified, preserved, and made available in a systematic fashion, archivists help to secure society's cultural heritage, protect legal rights and privileges, support reusability of research data and results, and contribute to the effective management of a wide range of institutions. Without careful selection of records, society's individual, commercial, cultural, institutional, scientific, and social heritages will be lost. Without the preservation of legal documents, individual and institutional rights cannot be preserved and protected. Finally, without the proper management of administrative records, governments and organizations cannot be held accountable. Records held in archives are, thus, essential in a democratic and educated society.

Per the Society of American Archivists' strategic plan, "The relevance of archives to society and the completeness of the documentary record hinge on the profession's success in ensuring that its members, the holdings that they collect and manage, and the users whom they serve reflect the diversity of society as a whole." A graduate program in archival education should embrace this philosophy through its course offerings, faculty, and student body. (See the entire strategic plan at <http://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-priorities>.)

Records come in all formats and on a multitude of media. Archivists and manuscript curators have centuries of expertise in managing and preserving paper-based records. The management and long-term preservation of digital objects, however, presents new and complex challenges for archivists. It is essential that archival education programs educate their graduates to preserve today's cultural, governmental, scientific, and personal documentary heritage, be it paper-based or digital.

The current guidelines recognize the growth and maturation of archival studies programs and serve as a benchmark against which graduate programs in archival studies may be measured. These guidelines establish minimum standards for archival education programs in terms of mission, curriculum, faculty, and infrastructure.

Graduates of such programs can anticipate careers in a variety of professional positions, from archives or records management to digital archives management or historical records preservation in institutions ranging from government or institutional archives and local historical societies and high-technology business enterprises. Graduates of archival programs are

increasingly in demand for information management positions, and the value of archival knowledge continues to gain recognition in an ever-broader range of organizational settings, such as digital forensics. These guidelines are intended both to define the academic preparation needed to meet these new challenges and to identify a strong common core of archival knowledge that the diverse institutions that provide graduate archival education should all deliver.

The ultimate goal of these guidelines is to improve the quality of graduate programs in archival studies, specifically by raising the minimum expectations of students and universities. By establishing these basic guidelines as minimum standards for archival studies programs, SAA also hopes to encourage the continued development of more extensive and more comprehensive programs and, by doing so, to improve the archival profession by better educating its members.[3]

## I. ARCHIVAL EDUCATION: MISSION AND GOALS

Any graduate program in archival studies must define its mission, goals, and objectives. Some programs may seek to educate "generalists" with knowledge of all areas of records and archives administration. Other programs may seek to prepare specialists in areas such as electronic records management, historical manuscripts, or management of institutional archives. Still other programs may emphasize interdisciplinary studies that link, for example, archival, library, and museum knowledge. However, to qualify as an archival studies program (as opposed to a more specialized historical manuscripts program or a general information science program) the curriculum should focus on core archival knowledge areas as the foundation of any specialization or interdisciplinary education.

The mission, goals, and objectives of the program should be stated in terms of educational results that the program seeks to achieve and should be consistent with the parent institution's mission and culture. [4] They should be developed through a broad-based planning process that involves the constituencies that the program seeks to serve. The curriculum should express these program objectives and should be reviewed and evaluated continually based on evolving professional responsibilities, competencies, and challenges. Regardless of the organizational setting, master's-level archival studies programs must be coherent, cohesive, and identifiable.

The importance and complexity of archival work require that individuals entering the profession receive a strong graduate-level archival education, which must be based on core archival knowledge. This knowledge must be supplemented, however, by knowledge drawn from other disciplines, including, but not limited to: anthropology, economics, history, law, library and information science, museum studies, and sociology. A fully developed graduate program in archival studies must establish a curriculum that achieves the following goals:

- Provides students with a solid foundation in the theory, methodology, and practice of archival science, and in archival history and scholarship;
- Strengthens this foundation by giving students the opportunity to acquire knowledge from other allied and complementary disciplines;

- Assists students in developing critical thinking and decision-making skills in relation to records in all forms in the context of business, government, public needs, scientific research, or the protection of cultural heritage;
- Prepares students to manage and preserve authentic and trustworthy digital records as well as relevant materials in a wide range of analog formats;
- Prepares students to conduct and communicate scholarly research; and
- Communicates to students the knowledge of the ethical and legal dimensions of their work and impresses upon them a sense of their professional and social responsibilities.

Graduate education, in contrast to training, is both academic and professional; therefore, it includes both original research and experiential learning. Ultimately, archival education creates an intellectual framework that enables students to understand the ideas on which their profession is founded, to engage in the development of archival principles, and to apply this knowledge in a wide variety of settings. In contrast, archival training focuses on building skills or acquiring practical knowledge according to a replicable pattern or on developing a specialization in certain areas.

The graduate of an archival studies program should have a thorough knowledge and understanding of archival principles and methods and should be prepared to work independently in the performance of all basic archival functions.<sup>[5]</sup> The variety and complexity of institutional settings and the nature of records in our digital society require a broad range of skills and knowledge as well as a comprehensive understanding of archival theory and its practical application to manage and preserve current – as well as future – archival content.

No graduate program in any discipline can provide all the scholarly and experiential knowledge needed for its practitioners. However, by educating students in the attributes of professionalism, a graduate program can cause students to realize that professional education is a lifelong undertaking, involving questioning accepted ideas and methods, revising received wisdom, and developing professional standards. Lifelong learning enables archivists to maintain knowledge and skills and to master new knowledge and techniques as their profession develops and changes.

These guidelines, therefore, focus on the essential elements of master's-level graduate archival education, independent of institutional placement and degree offered. The multiple options for such programs provide a rich diversity that enables master's programs to develop individual emphases and to provide different specializations. Knowledge from other disciplines brought to bear on the archival studies program enriches and expands the archival curriculum to meet a wide range of needs and interests.

## II. CURRICULUM

A graduate program in archival studies should provide students with a solid foundation in archival science. The curriculum should focus on archival theory, methodology, and practice and should be augmented by instruction in economics, history, information studies, law, management, and technology as they relate to archival work. Delivery of courses in these

complementary areas should be informed by an understanding of the nature of archives and the ways in which the methods and perspectives of these fields contribute to professional archival practice.

As stated above, the body of knowledge that a student should master as part of a graduate archival education comprises both core archival knowledge and complementary knowledge.

- **Core archival knowledge** provides the theoretical and practical basis necessary to work as a professional archivist.
- **Complementary knowledge** introduces students to other disciplines, knowledge of which will deepen their understanding of archival work and support its accomplishment. Complementary knowledge also allows students to specialize in specific aspects of archival work or to function in truly cross-disciplinary settings.

During the course of a graduate program, eighteen (18) semester credit hours should be in areas defined as core archival knowledge. Based on the demands of the graduate program's institution and the interests of the student, the remaining credits may be in complementary knowledge areas. Research should be integrated throughout the curriculum, and an important element of any program should be an original research project resulting in a scholarly paper or thesis. The program should also include practical experience, such as a practicum or internship.

## A. CORE ARCHIVAL KNOWLEDGE

### *Rationale:*

The identity of a profession is founded on an exclusive body of knowledge and on a professional culture that arises from a common history, a united purpose, a shared vocabulary, and collective values, norms, and standards. Archival core knowledge is the heart of an archival studies program. It should occupy a dominant position in the curriculum and should be taught by full-time archival educators, professional archivists, or other individuals with a depth of archival knowledge relevant to the topic. Core archival knowledge embraces three separate but interrelated facets of archival studies: **Knowledge of Archival Material and Archival Functions** (theory and methodology associated with specific areas of archival work); **Knowledge of the Profession** (history of the profession and evolution of archival practice); and **Contextual Knowledge** (the contexts within which records are created, managed, and kept). Because archival knowledge and professional culture transcend geographical and national boundaries, each component should incorporate an international and multicultural perspective.

### *Components:*

#### 1. Knowledge of Archival Material and Functions

Archival education should teach the fundamental concepts concerning the nature of archival material in all forms and archival functions (archival theory), the techniques for performing archival functions (archival methodology), and the implementation of theory and method in real situations (archival practice). Instruction should cover the history of archival theory and methods

and their articulation in the professional literature (archival scholarship). The scope of archival education should encompass all archival functions and should address both current best practices and related management issues.

**a) *The Nature of Records and Archives:*** The diplomatic and archival concept of records through time, in the analog as well as the digital environment; the characteristics of records (i.e. naturalness, interrelatedness, impartiality, authenticity, uniqueness) and their components, formal elements, and attributes; the trustworthiness of records (reliability, accuracy, authenticity, identity, and integrity) and authentication; the perfection of records (i.e. draft, original, copy, image); the way records aggregate and their forms of aggregation; the concept of archives (or archival fonds) and its history (including the concept of record group); the records tradition versus the manuscripts tradition in the United States; the concept of papers (differences between United States and United Kingdom); the structure of archival bodies of material; the macro approach versus the micro approach to the concept of archives; and archives as a place and as an institution.

**b) *Appraisal and Acquisition:*** The theory, methods, policies, and procedures used to identify, evaluate, acquire, and authenticate records and papers, in all forms, which have enduring value to records creators, institutions, researchers, and society. Appraisal entails, among other things, understanding what makes records and papers authentic, reliable, and useful to institutions, individuals, legal and financial authorities, and other constituents.

**c) *Arrangement and Description:*** The intellectual and physical organization of archival records and papers in all forms, according to archival principles and institutional considerations, and the development of descriptive tools and systems that provide both control of and access to collections. Teaching methods and technology applications should link theory to practice.

**d) *Preservation:*** The physical and intellectual protection of records and papers in all forms, including the activities required to ensure their continuing accessibility, such as digitization, microfilming, or migration. Preservation knowledge comprises a firm grounding in preservation history; research into the nature of the materials and treatments; current techniques and technologies; and administrative studies and management issues.

**e) *Reference and Access:*** The policies and procedures designed to serve the information needs of various user groups, based on institutional mandates and constituencies, the nature of the materials, relevant laws and ethical considerations, and appropriate technologies. Instruction should also include the study of user behavior, user education, information retrieval techniques and technologies, user-based evaluation techniques, and the interaction between archivist and user in the reference process.

**f) *Outreach and Advocacy:*** The theories and practices used to identify archival constituencies and their needs and to develop programs to promote increased use, understanding of archival materials and methods, resources, visibility, and support.

**g) *Management and Administration:*** The principles and practices that are used to facilitate all aspects of archival work through careful planning and administration of the repository, unit, or

program, and its institutional resources. At all career levels, archivists manage resources and make decisions and often must demonstrate programmatic vision and innovation. Thus graduates should know the fundamental principles related to organizational management, strategic planning, systems analysis, program planning, budgeting, administrative leadership, human resources management, financial management, resource allocation, fundraising, grant writing, and the management of buildings, facilities, storage systems, and other equipment.

**h) *Records and Information Management:*** The principles involved in managing records and information throughout their full life cycles, from creation and for as long as the records will be needed by their creator for the purposes of its business, functions, or activities. The work of archivists relates closely to the responsibilities of records and information managers, and in some institutional environments the duties of each are blended together in a single function. All graduates of archival studies programs should be able to analyze a creator's structure, decision-making, and recordkeeping systems and apply that knowledge to decisions regarding other archival functions.

**i) *Digital Records Management:*** Graduates of archival studies programs should be able to apply their knowledge to records in all forms. They should have gained an understanding of the nature, issues, and preservation challenges of digital records of organizations and individuals. They should have knowledge of file formats, media types, and complex information technologies for the creation, maintenance, use, and preservation of all types of records. Additionally, archival studies programs should teach students to develop management systems for records and to identify and implement appropriate technological solutions to facilitate all aspects of archival work.

## 2. Knowledge of the Profession

Archival education should provide students with an understanding of the ways in which the profession has developed and how its specific practices have evolved. It should teach students about the nature of archival institutions, units and programs, the values and ethics that archivists bring to their work, and the perspectives that archivists contribute to the information professions.

**a) *History of Archives and the Archives Profession:*** A graduate program in archival studies should teach the historical development of record-making and recordkeeping systems and of archives in various civilizations. This instruction should cover the structure of the archival community internationally, and in North America in particular; the types of archival repositories and programs in existence in the United States and Canada, along with their policies and procedures; and the legislation and regulations governing records, archives, and archival work in the United States and Canada. Instruction also should address the history of the archival profession; its missions, roles, and values; and the profession's temporary concerns.

**b) *Records and Cultural Memory:*** Records and papers in all forms constitute an important part of the written memory of individuals and society. They provide the basis for holding governments and organizations accountable and for protecting the rights of individuals. Archival institutions thus play a significant role in society. However, they are only part of the fabric of cultural memory. Archivists and archives work in cooperation with other professionals

(including, but not limited to, those who work for historical societies, libraries, and museums) to preserve and provide access to cultural memory. Students should understand the interrelationships among archives and other stewards of cultural heritage and the ways in which records complement that heritage.

**c) *Ethics and Values:*** The archives profession bases its system of ethics and values on the responsibilities of archivists in identifying, preserving, protecting, and making available records and papers in all forms and information resources for which they are responsible. Students should be familiar with the SAA Code of Ethics, its underlying principles and perspectives, and its relationship to other related professions' codes of ethics. Students should understand how the ethics and values of the profession inform decisions and how to apply those ethics and values to their work.

### **3. Contextual Knowledge**

All graduates of archival studies programs should have a basic understanding of the contexts within which records are created and kept and of management and technology theory and practice as they apply to archival work. This knowledge should be integrated throughout the core curriculum wherever applicable so as to foster a sound working knowledge that can be applied to daily activities. Some of these areas of knowledge may also be studied more fully as disciplines in their own right; therefore, they are also listed under **Complementary Knowledge** below.

**a) *Social and Cultural Systems:*** Knowledge of social and cultural systems is important for two reasons. First, graduates must understand the institutional and individual structures and systems that form the context in which records and papers are created, maintained, and used. They should also understand the recordkeeping implications of social and cultural systems and the organizational structures and procedures used by all types of public and private institutions to ensure accountability. Second, graduates must understand the political, social, and economic dynamics within their organization to achieve their archival repository's goals and objectives.

**b) *Legal and Financial Systems:*** Records and papers, and the recordkeeping systems of both institutions and individuals, result from and, therefore, reflect the legal and financial systems in which they were created and demonstrate organizational and individual accountability. Archival core knowledge includes the origin, development, structure, and functioning of legal and financial systems, including federal, state, and local laws as well as the regulatory environment. This should include both public and private sector jurisdictions. Knowledge of legal issues also includes privacy rights, freedom of information legislation, and a wide variety of intellectual property rights, display and performance rights, and literary rights related to recorded material in all forms.

## **B. COMPLEMENTARY KNOWLEDGE**

### ***Rationale:***

Archivists must rely on knowledge, methods, and perspectives derived from disciplines beyond their own. The interdisciplinary nature of archival studies arises from the complexity of archival

materials, the contexts of their creation, the multiplicity of their potential uses, and the many roles that graduates of archival studies programs fill. Graduates should be knowledgeable about significant theories, methods, and practices of some or all the following fields.

***Components:***

**1. Information Technology**

Most contemporary records are created, stored, maintained, used, and preserved in digital form. Familiarity with networking, hardware, software, and digital systems in general is fundamental to performing archival functions in the 21st century. Graduates of archival studies programs should understand human/computer interaction (to design and develop effective systems for users), the importance of information standards, and how to evaluate systems and related services effectively. The curriculum could include opportunities to develop skills in database design and management, spreadsheet applications, information architecture, website design and creation, and/or desktop publishing. Also valuable are an understanding of metadata schemas, familiarity with markup languages, and basic programming skills.

**2. Conservation**

Beyond the core archival knowledge of preservation, appropriate knowledge may be needed in conservation practices, that is, a range of intervention activities to stabilize materials in their original format by chemical or physical means. Graduates should have sufficient understanding of this discipline to be able to judge the efficacy of conservation treatments and to evaluate the appropriate conservation treatment for a document or group of documents. For digital materials, graduates should have sufficient understanding of digital object recovery techniques and digital security technologies.

**3. Research Design and Execution**

An understanding of research design and execution is important for enabling graduates to provide effective service to a wide variety of researchers and to evaluate archival operations from the perspective of users. It also allows graduates to assess the status of research in their own discipline, to undertake new research, and to blend theoretical and empirical aspects of archival studies into scholarly investigations.

**4. Historical Research**

History provides an understanding of the context in which records and papers are created, maintained, and used and of the cultural, economic, legal, political, and social systems that shape society. History assists graduates in understanding the evolution of organizations and their functions and the activities of individuals, thus contributing to more effective archival selection, appraisal, description, and user service. Graduates should also exercise the historian's skills in evaluating evidence and the context of its creation. Knowledge of research methods enables archivists to understand the potential uses of archival materials to provide more effective reference assistance for all users.

## **5. Organizational Theory**

The study of theories of organizational development, management, and culture is important in archival education because it provides the tools for understanding the evolution and nature of organizations that create records and assists students in understanding how to be successful within the institutions in which they will be employed. Knowledge of different models of organizational structure, operations, behavior, and institutional culture provides valuable perspectives for understanding recordkeeping systems and the context of records creation, management, and use.

## **6. Liberal Arts and Sciences**

Frequently, students beginning archival studies will already have a broad background in the liberal arts. Nonetheless, further graduate work in such disciplines can directly augment archival knowledge. Especially valuable is education in fields that help explain the context of records creation and the practice of recordkeeping, including accounting, anthropology, economics, law, philosophy, political science, and sociology, as well as science and the arts. Because the holdings of many archival institutions emanate from or concentrate on specific social sectors or movements, specialized knowledge in one or more humanities, social science, or science disciplines may be an important asset for appraisal and reference work in some settings.

## **7. Allied Professions**

The work of archivists and archival institutions intersects with that of several other professions involved in the identification, protection, and dissemination of recorded information. Among these are library and information science, museum studies, oral history, historic preservation, and historical editing. The most common overlapping relationship of this nature is with library and information science because archival repositories are often situated in libraries, where archivists benefit from familiarity with collection development, cataloging, and reference practices employed by librarians. Archives administration is not to be regarded as a branch of any related profession, including library and information science. However, exposure to the distinct purposes and methods of allied fields will be advantageous to archives students.

# **III. ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

## **A. Faculty**

The graduate program in archival studies must have a faculty capable of accomplishing program objectives. Faculty should have a deep understanding of the profession and archival work, strong ties to both the academic and professional communities, technological knowledge and skills, effectiveness in teaching, a record of research and publishing within the field, and active participation in professional organizations. A program that meets these guidelines must have a minimum of one full-time, tenure-track faculty member. Full-time faculty members must be eligible for appointment to the graduate faculty within the parent institution (in virtually all cases this equates, at minimum, to holding a doctoral degree) and must demonstrate expertise by

contributions to archival knowledge through publications and professional service. The faculty must be sufficient in number and in diversity of specialties to carry out the major share of the teaching, research, and service activities required for the program and to deliver the core knowledge of archival studies to give stability to the program. In many instances, additional full- or part-time faculty will be required to fulfill program objectives. Part-time or adjunct faculty, when appointed, should balance and complement the teaching competencies of the full-time faculty. Programs are enhanced when adjunct or part-time faculty have extensive practical experience, demonstrated expertise through contributions to professional knowledge through publication and professional service, and excellent teaching credentials.

## **B. Program Duration**

The appropriate duration of a graduate program in archival studies should be consistent with that of all graduate programs in the hosting school or university in which it is situated. To cover the curriculum components outlined above adequately, however, a master's-level archival program should have a minimum of eighteen (18) semester hours devoted exclusively to core archival knowledge, including practical experience. Remaining credits can be in areas of complementary knowledge or electives.

## **C. Structure of the Learning Process**

Graduate education in archival studies requires several modes of instruction and learning. Coursework provides the best method of presenting archival theory, principles, and methodology, as well as many areas of interdisciplinary knowledge. Practical experience is necessary to apply theory to workplace settings and to provide experiential learning. Scholarly research enables students to explore dimensions of the field in greater depth and to contribute original research to the professional discourse.

### **1. Coursework**

Coursework is the basic venue for graduate-level archival education, and course format (e.g., lecture, seminar, web-based, distance education) will vary. Courses should employ a variety of pedagogical techniques to teach the knowledge areas outlined in these guidelines as well as to strengthen students' analytical, writing, and speaking skills.

### **2. Practical Experience**

Knowledge acquired in coursework will be enhanced through experiential learning in the workplace. In the context of master's-level archival education, practical experience is not an exercise to discover theory and methods empirically; rather, it allows students to verify their understanding of archival principles by applying them in real-life situations and to understand how to make adjustments so that archival principles fit archival practice. Practical experience also provides students with structured feedback on their applied archival skills and with mentoring by records professionals working in the field.

Any form of experiential learning must serve the student's educational goals primary, even if a host institution ultimately benefits from the work accomplished by the student. Any practical experience with a host institution should be a structured program related to the student's program of study. The program should be designed by faculty in collaboration with the designated host institution's internship supervisor and include provision for regular feedback and evaluation.

### **3. Scholarly Research**

Scholarly research is an essential component of the archival studies curriculum because it enhances students' ability to think critically and rigorously about archival issues and strengthens their competence to analyze and critically review the literature. Research also has the potential to provide original contributions to the archival literature and thus helps to invigorate the profession. Archival research can take on many forms and can borrow methodologies from a variety of fields in the humanities and social sciences. Although much archival research has been the result of an individual effort, education programs should introduce students to collaborative research and encourage it within and outside their own discipline.

#### **D. Resources and Facilities**

Instructional and research resources and facilities for meeting the needs of students and faculty include access to core archival literature, library and multimedia resources and services, computers and information technologies, and accommodations for independent and group study. Facilities should be appropriately staffed, convenient, and fully accessible. Students should also have regular and frequent access to archives and manuscript repositories. Repository access can take the form of class visits, research assignments in the repositories, and opportunities for internships and other types of practical experience. It is particularly important for a program to have strong relationships with area repositories.

#### **E. Administration, Placement, and Financial Support**

The graduate program in archival studies must identify a program director or administrator. The program director is responsible for making certain that the program achieves its mission, goals, and objectives. The program director must be a full-time tenure-track member of the faculty or staff of the home department. Depending on the scope and placement of the program, he or she may have the title of director, chairperson, or dean.

Programs must provide career counseling for students as well as vigorous placement support. Career counseling is essential because of the variety of potential venues for employment for archival students and of the numerous types of institutional and functional specializations available. Due to the variety of ways in which employment opportunities are advertised or announced and to the importance of professional recommendations, students need vigorous efforts for placement support as they enter the job market.

The parent institution must provide continuing financial support that is sufficient to develop and maintain the program. The level of support must provide a reasonable expectation of financial viability and must consider the number of faculty, administrative and support staff, instructional

resources, library and information services, and facilities needed to carry out the archival education program's mission, goals, and objectives.

### III. CONCLUSION

These guidelines define the minimum requirements for a graduate program in archival studies that is coherent, autonomous, and based on core archival knowledge. Within them higher education institutions may create a wide variety of programs offering master's degrees. This range of options provides students with choices of direction and emphasis and ultimately enriches the profession by promoting diversity within a common core of knowledge. These guidelines are intended both to define the academic education needed to meet the challenges of serving as an archivist in the 21st century and to provide a strong common basis for the diverse institutions that provide graduate archival education.

[1] The "Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies" (GPAS) were approved by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council in January 2002 and revised in 2005 and 2011. GPAS replaced the "Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Degree," adopted by the Council in 1994. By means of these guidelines, the Society of American Archivists endorses the development of coherent and independent graduate programs in archival studies. SAA believes that programs of the extent and nature outlined in these guidelines are the best form of pre-appointment professional education for archivists. For this reason, these guidelines supersede prior documents on archival education issued in 1977, 1988, and 1994.

[2] Archival records and papers are recorded information, regardless of physical format or type of creator (public or private), that is created or received by an individual or organization carrying out its activities and that is set aside for preservation and future use. Archival records and papers are instrumental for evidence and accountability as well as for social and cultural memory. In these guidelines, the phrase "records and papers" will be used to encompass documentary evidence produced by organizations and individuals in all media (paper, digital, audio, and visual) and in any format.

[3] For information about archival education programs in North America, including a directory of such programs, see the SAA website at <http://www2.archivists.org/gpas>.

[4] The interdisciplinary character of archival education makes it possible to place a program in a variety of settings, such as a school of library and information science, a department of history, a school of public administration, a law school, or a school of business administration. Two departments may also administer a program jointly, thereby emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of the archival field.

[5] The Academy of Certified Archivists has developed a useful list of domains of archival knowledge. See the "Role Delineation" section of the Handbook for Archival Certification (found within the "Exam Handbook") online at <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org>.

**Society of American Archivists  
SAA-Developed Standard Review Procedure**

**Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS)  
Member Comments**

In June 2016, a call for member comments on the new GPAS recommended revisions was posted on the SAA website and shared via social media outlets and *In The Loop*. The call was open for two weeks, with links to both the current 2011 version and the new, recommended revisions. See the call here: <http://www2.archivists.org/news/2016/comments-sought-on-%E2%80%9Cguidelines-for-a-graduate-program-in-archival-studies>.

*Comments on 2016 Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies  
Respectfully submitted June 2016, Mark A Greene*

My interest and involvement with Guidelines for Graduate Programs in Archival Studies dates back to the last years of the extinct Committee on Education and Professional Development. I have watched the guidelines mature in almost every aspect, evincing SAA's increasing commitment to involvement in graduate education. This most recent iteration of the guidelines has many, many things to recommend it, from continuing dedication to hands-on learning and staunch support of the use of adjunct faculty from the ranks of practicing archivists to the persistent equal attention to both archives and personal collections and the enduring importance of disciplines such as history to forming a well-rounded archival education. Bravo for those components and many others.

So please take what follows as constructive criticism, aimed at making a good document better. My concerns fall into 4 categories: terminology; mission and goals; and faculty.

Terminology: While I have related concerns about curriculum content, I wish to suggest that notwithstanding the explanation in footnote 2, the phrase "records and papers" is a misleading anachronism. "Papers" has an almost universal meaning which belies the definition in the guidelines, that is, an analog item made of rag or wood fibers and capable of being touched and the information upon it read w/out the aid of an electronic device. By most people's understanding, "papers" cannot be digital by definition. As a former mss curator I have a keen interest in making clearer the term for analog or digital material created by individuals or families and thus distinct from "records" created by organizations or businesses. Let me propose the terms "records and documents," "records and personal collections," or "organizational records and personal collections".

Mission and Goals: Surprisingly, very few of the SAA strategic goals are reflected in the mission, goals, or curriculum of the guidelines. The strategic plan goals are

- Advancing the public standing of archivists.
- Ensuring the diversity of its membership and leaders, the profession, and the archival record.
- Fostering a culture of creativity and experimentation across the association.
- Providing an open, inclusive, and collaborative environment.
- Providing excellent member service.
- Social responsibility and the public good.
- Transparency, accountability, integrity, and professionalism in conducting its activities.

Translated from the goals of an organization to the goals of a profession (as I presume they are meant to be), all but bullet 5 seem to me to be not only worthy but critical goals for graduate education. Not all can be as easily converted to standard pedagogical methods, but I believe most can. For example, providing a collaborative environment might call on faculty to emphasize to a certain extent group projects; fostering a culture of creativity will demand of faculty their own willingness to experiment with new teaching methods aimed at supporting the ability of their students to fail w/out actually receiving a failing grade. I don't remember seeing any components in mission or curriculum that address "Social responsibility and the public good" or "professionalism" (or its related goal of professional socialization, which would normally take place outside the classroom by such steps as mentoring during conferences). And the curriculum section on advocacy and outreach is disappointingly brief and thin, and barely hints at the strategic goal of "Advancing the public standing of archivists."

Most worrisome, to me, is the absence of goals or curriculum content designed for "Ensuring the diversity of [professional] membership and leaders, the profession, and the archival record." The term "diversity" appears in the guidelines only 4 times, "multicultural" only once! Where are the goals of understanding the very different ways in which non-Western cultures apprehend and value records, access, "permanence", ownership, etc, seriously studying the reasons "under-documented" peoples are not being successfully recruited into the profession, and discussing the reasons that decades-long efforts to diversify the cultural record have been only partially successful? Where are introductions to critical race theory, to ethnicity as provenance, the increasing prevalence of community archives, etc. As with born-digital material (see below) diversity should not be relegated to one curricular component but rather imbued throughout the guidelines—hence my choice to promote it as part of the section on mission and goals.

More briefly, but no less importantly, I urge that the study of born-digital material (currently 1) i) Digital Records and Access Systems) be integrated throughout the curriculum rather than relegated to its own curricular component. I would argue that the time is long past to suggest to students or to the public that archivists still haven't come to grips with the fact that digital material is pervasive in our society and no more deserving of a separate learning goal than audio/visual materials. One mission of the guidelines should be to ensure that whatever specialty a student pursues, whether writers' mss or digital business archives, that they are fully comfortable appraising, preserving, providing access, and the like to digital as well as analog material—because it's a sure bet they will be called on to manage both analog and digital and mixed files, series, and record groups.

Curriculum: Many of my comments thus far have implications for the curriculum section, but please bear with me for a few brief notes of a more specific nature. For example, at the risk of marking myself completely obsessed by this topic, where is there any reference to backlogs and the need to make progress in revealing these hidden collections to researchers? This has implications for appraisal, processing, and reference/access teaching content I would imagine and is a nearly universal problem confronting new archivists. During all the years I've been teaching appraisal workshops for MAC and SAA attendees have expressed frustration at the poor instruction (particularly practical experience) they received regarding appraisal in graduate school. Just how to remedy this gap I do not know, except to suggest more emphasis on assessing creators and on donor relations (role playing exercises anyone?).

Policy-making, arguably a bedrock of archival management and practice, is given unsettling short-shrift in the guidelines (the word 'policy' appears nowhere in the document; 'policies' appears only 4 times). Archivists at all stages in their careers must understand the need and efficacy of policies, must be able to suggest and contribute to developing policies, and have the wherewithal to critique policies that are no longer effective. I would suggest that policy creation and assessment should be a distinct subset of Management and Administration along, perhaps, with strategic planning, grant-writing and fundraising, and (completely missing I believe) 'managing up'. And to reiterate a point raised earlier, where are aspects of diversity, multiculturalism, alternative ideals of intellectual property and tangible property ownership, and so many other components of non-Western and non-white perspectives and practice of archives? At first I supposed these matters would be the content of Social and Cultural Systems but was disappointed.

Faculty: Not only is there no reference to recruiting a diverse faculty, there seems to be little recognition of the need (and difficulty) of recruiting an increasingly diverse student body. Even if the means of changing the situation of Lilly-white faculties and student bodies are not yet apparent, let me suggest that the goal should remain clearly on the table.

Thank you for soliciting feedback. Good luck bringing it all together again!

Hello:

I have several comments on the revised guidelines. In general the guidelines hold up and there is not a need for major revisions. However, the format does not lend itself to thinking about different potential archival careers and some working backwards from recent job ads will lead to some gaps.

There are two areas I would like to highlight:

1. Teaching with primary sources. The past 2 years have seen teaching with primary sources unconfereces before SAA, a number of new books on this topic, tons of articles, etc. Yet the guidelines do not even include this in the description of what a reference archivist does. The new guidelines should ideally include this skill as a domain or its own, expand the types of evaluation under reference beyond user-based evaluation to at least user-based, program, and learning evaluation, and include learning theory as complementary knowledge. Working back from instructional archivist job description, one needs not only archival knowledge but also an understanding of teaching and learning, knowledge of measuring learning outcomes, and evaluation of the educational unit.

2. Research / research methods. I am not sure why historical research is still held above everything else or why it is separated from the larger discussion of research design. Is there no design in historical research. The whole section on research design needs to be beefed up and expanded. Anyone doing digital curation of research data needs to understand research design for the disciplinary data being curated, if curation includes helping formulate data management plans the archivist-curator needs to understand research design, etc. Look at job descriptions for digital curators and others to see how research is woven in to different jobs.

Research design and methods are key even if the archivist will not engage in research. It would also be good to reframe this section in terms of research questions and matching design to those research question (eg collecting the best evidence in the most systematic way) to address the research questions whether it be operational or to further some idea in the profession.

Good luck with the revisions.

Beth  
Elizabeth Yakel  
Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
University of Michigan

First, under “Appraisal and Acquisition” it mentions “procedures used to identify” materials, so I would title this section “Selection, Appraisal and Acquisition.”

Under “Preservation” it talks of “protection” of materials, so I would title this section “Preservation and Protection” or “Preservation and Security.”

I think that making these changes would make those headings more fully representative of their paragraphs.

Thank you.

Mott

*President of the Academy of Certified Archivists, 2015-16*

Thank you for putting the guidelines out for comment. I would like to simply add that the guidelines does not address the need for an archival education in media formats that aren't digitally based. Analog media is continuously overlooked and almost every archive has some form of audio, video, or film based analog media that is part of special collections. Simply adding in analog media formats to your introduction would be appreciated... "that is, society's records and documents broadly defined, paper-based[, analog media] or digital."

Also, Karen Gracy, of Kent State, is currently researching the need for curriculum guidelines for av based archival programs and presented a panel on it at last year's AMIA conference. She may be of aid in further revisions or you may be of service to her.

<https://www.kent.edu/slis/profile/karen-f-gracy-phd>

Thank you,

Carla

--

Carla Arton  
Film Digitization Specialist

17 June, 2016

Dear Education Committee members:

The following is some feedback on the proposed revisions to the SAA Graduate Education Guidelines that are based upon discussions with faculty colleagues here at UCLA and also my own thoughts. They are, for the most part, more about clarification and inclusivity than about specific content. However, as the 2011 position paper<sup>1</sup> put together by archival academics from countries around the world under the auspices of the Archival Education and Research Initiative<sup>2</sup> (of which I am the director) also states, I do believe that issues relating to diversifying the profession, being culturally competent, and working participatorily and equitably with diverse communities to address their archival and memorykeeping needs should be more integral to all graduate archival education programs.

Specific comments/suggestions:

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<sup>1</sup> Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI) Pluralizing the Archival Curriculum Group (PACG) (A. Gilliland, corresponding author), "Educating for the Archival Multiverse," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2011): 68-102.

<sup>2</sup> aeri.website.

In the first sentence in the introduction, replace "paper-based or digital" with "regardless of form or medium" - this would be more inclusive of the many ways in which records are created historically and today in different environments and communities. Under the section on mission and goals, the phrase "regardless of format" is used, which would also not be entirely consistent with this opening statement.

In the last sentence of the first paragraph of the introduction, "Thus, archives and archivists are essential in a democratic and educated society" again might be more inclusive and less elite in tone if it were phrased simply, "Thus, archives and archivists are essential to society."

In the first sentence of the second paragraph, the term "training" is a much narrower conception of the role and scope of professional education than is applied in most graduate programs and that fits better with the statements in the Mission and Goals section beginning "Graduate education, in contrast to training, is both academic and professional; therefore, it includes both original research and experiential learning." Perhaps it might be sufficient in the introduction to say that Graduate programs in Archival Studies prepare students to excel in their professional duties" Perhaps the language can be streamlined across the two sections or one of the statements could be removed altogether as redundant? The second paragraph also references the importance of addressing the diversity of society as a whole, but the more specific discussion later of curricular components does not reflect or reiterate this, even though it is a key strategic goal of SAA.

"Archival Studies programs must also prepare emerging professionals to work with the records of the future as well as those of the past, for graduates will practice in a vast array of institutions and professional positions." The two clauses in this sentence seem to be two different statements, rather than the second being a dependent clause.

Under Mission and Goals, " Regardless of the organizational setting, master's-level archival studies programs must be coherent, cohesive, and identifiable" is an appropriate statement, but it seems to conflict with the later statement in the Conclusion that the program must be "autonomous," something that would not be viable within the structures of many of the schools and departments currently offering graduate archival education in the US and that might well raise red flags in schools where the archival curriculum is only one component of school's portfolio.

The statement "Ultimately, archival education creates an intellectual framework that enables students to understand the ideas on which their profession is founded, to engage in the development of archival principles, and to apply this knowledge in a wide variety of settings" does not make any reference to critical and analytical skills as well as reflexivity that many academics believe are essential to being able to evaluate, challenge and build upon these ideas and principles.

Under Curriculum, UCLA and some other graduate education programs operate on the quarter system. Can the guidelines please include quarter credit hours equivalents for semester credit hours? Otherwise potential applicants to programs who use these guidelines become very confused.

The statement, "The curriculum should integrate research throughout, and an important element of any program should be an original research project resulting in a scholarly paper or thesis" is overly constraining. Many schools have moved away from a Master's thesis because their school or university established other culminating requirements or because they believe that an individual or collaborative research project or other applied research activity is more directly applicable to work as an archival practitioner. It might be more flexible to state that students should be trained in research design and methods and complete an original research paper, thesis or project on a professional topic as part of their program requirements. This seems to be closer in spirit to the statements made under 3. Research that come later in the guidelines.

The sentence "Because archival knowledge and professional culture transcend geographical and national boundaries, each component should incorporate an international and multicultural perspective" might also include community boundaries and/or perspectives.

Under 1a, presumably the assumption is that these guidelines will be used in Canada as well as the US, hence the strong Canadian orientation of this section. Nevertheless, it seems very odd to include the British notion of papers, which is not something familiar to most US archivists, among the examples of topics that should be covered. If this is to be included, then why not also include Spanish and French archival ideas drawn from Civil Law protocols and registrarial practices that do show up in parts of the US, or the influential ideas and terminology that have come from Australia and that are based in the records continuum? We were also perplexed by the phrase "the macro approach versus the micro approach to the concept of archives" - none of our faculty has ever come across this term, it is not in the *SAA Glossary*, and it seems strange to include it in baseline guidelines.

Under 1i., while it is essential to be able to work with digital records and access systems, the curriculum makes no mention of familiarity or skills with other media, including photographs, film, video and oral materials that are commonly found in archives. The same is the case under B.2.

Under 2b. could "the people's rights" be simply "people's rights"? This would seem to be a more inclusive statement.

Under 2c., should there not be a reference also to the ICA Code of Ethics?

Again, if diversity is considered to be an important goal, then cultural awareness and competency should be encouraged. One way to do this is suggesting under Complementary Knowledge, for example, ethnic, gender and sexuality, and area studies. Overall, in the Curriculum section, the

list of related areas of study with which students are supposed to be familiar ("Complementary Knowledge") are rather vaguely defined. (For instance, what kind of "Liberal Arts & Sciences" training are we being expected to provide?) The textual archive bias shows through pretty clearly here. For example, for media archives, familiarity with some key branches of media theory and media studies seems advisable. However, we are not sure that adding more areas that everyone must teach or offering tighter definitions of those areas are what's needed – the problem, instead, is in trying to stipulate which other areas of knowledges are "related" to archival studies. All knowledges can be connected in some way or other – SAA can certainly suggest some bodies of knowledge that schools might want to consider incorporating, but these areas shouldn't be written in as a firm requirement, since what's relevant will vary with the specific school and program. Let each program maintain its own orientation and adapt this part of its curriculum to that program's own goals and specializations.

The Introduction asserts that archivists play a vital role in democratic society by preserving and transmitting social and cultural heritage, so some more concrete mention in the curriculum section of how archivists are being trained to understand and fulfill that role would be helpful – some light reworking of the paragraph on Cultural Memory under "Knowledge of the Profession" might be the place for this.

If I can provide you with any further information regarding these comments, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,



Anne Gilliland, Ph.D.  
Professor and Director, Archival Studies Specialization  
Department of Information Studies

As an archives management student, I feel that it is really important for SAA, as part of the program accreditation process, to ABSOLUTELY require all programs to annually, openly report the number of archives students enrolled, the number who graduate each year, and to follow up on graduates to report their employment status in at least the 1-3 years following graduation.

Many schools are currently getting away with providing none of this type of employment info. by saying their program is too small to fall within the (federal?) requirement to report employment outcomes. The SAA has the clout to demand that all accredited schools do this. Does anyone currently know the total number (by state and nationally) of archivists graduating each year vs. the number of available positions? Don't students, many of whom go into significant debt to finance their archival training, deserve to get accurate data on their intended school's success rate in producing employed archivists?

I am tired of seeing SAA articles that (justifiably) rail against the absurdly low salaries for archivists when the supply/demand issues embedded in those low salaries can't even be addressed due to lack of data that SAA should be demanding as part of its oversight role. If anyone should know that data is power, archivists should!

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the guidelines....

Dannette Lank

Hello all -

Just a few comments. The document looks great!

A grammar thing that possibly hundreds have already pointed out: under Admin, C2 - Any form of experiential learning must serve the student's educational goals **primary**." Is this supposed to be primarily?

Also, point 2 is an opportunity to point out that students can gain experience in paid positions as well as unpaid ones. I'm not thrilled about encouraging programs to lock students into courses that require them to pay to work. Especially since even with an internship coordinator on the lookout, a few students inevitably end up with dysfunctional internships that don't serve them well. Maybe there's another model for work experience that we haven't stumbled upon yet.

Best,  
Stephanie Bennett  
Collections Archivist  
Wake Forest University