

Current North American Graduate Archival Curriculum

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The image shows the spines of several old, thick books with yellowed pages, arranged vertically on the left side of the slide. The books are slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth. The background is a light, neutral color.

Literature review

- Host department: History vs. LIS
- Education vs. training
- Instructors: practitioners vs. research faculty
- Theory vs. Practice
 - Technology/hands-on
- Society of American Archivists/professional associations' role
- Curriculum: duration, content
- Individual cases: programs, courses

Methodology




Research question: What are faculty, students, and recent graduates' assessments of the current state of graduate archival education?



Semistructured interviews with 33 full-time archival faculty



Survey of 406 graduate students and new archival professionals



Faculty. Most important courses

- 61% - Introduction to Archives
- 55% - Arrangement and description
- 33% - Appraisal
- 18% - Internship/practicum

Students: Most useful topics for CAreer Preparation

Rank	Topic	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Mod Useful	Slightly Useful	Not Useful	Total	Average
1	Arrangement and description	146	76	22	3	0	263	4.2
2	Practicum/internship/fieldwork	141	37	16	3	2	233	3.9
3	Metadata	120	65	26	8	2	245	3.9
4	Finding aids	104	82	25	5	2	241	3.9
13	Diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI)	78	44	21	8	2	227	2.9
16	Appraisal	68	83	37	9	2	247	3.2
22	Social justice	55	43	29	8	6	224	2.5
30	Community archives	42	61	41	13	2	232	2.6
32	Research/thesis	33	39	27	11	5	224	1.9
43	Participatory archives	24	36	30	12	2	221	1.7
48	International archives	6	25	41	22	3	219	1.4

applicable Course topics (n=213- 247)

- 60.5% - Postmodernism
- 59% - Digital forensics
- 54.5% - International archives
- 51.5% - Participatory archives
- 35% - Social justice
- 31% - DEI
- 29.7 % - Community archives



What course(s) they would like to add

Faculty

- 42% - Nothing/full coverage
- 33% - Digital archives and curation
- 15% - Multi-media archives
- 12% - Social justice

~~Students/New~~

professionals (n=128)

- 34% - Curation
- 13% – Advocacy/outreach/donor relations
- 12.5% – DEI/social justice
- 12% – Job/career outlook/preparation

Preparation for professional practice

Preparation for professional practice	Percent	N=
Extremely well	7.2%	19
Very well	35.61%	94
Moderately well	44.32%	117
Slightly well	7.58%	20
Not well at all	5.30%	14
Total	100%	264

Improvements

Recommendation to better prepare students	Percent	N=
Hands-on/practical experience	43%	73
Course content	41%	69
Course offerings	26%	45
Career guidance/mentorship	20%	34
Faculty	10%	17
No need for a graduate program	2%	4
Under-resourced	2%	3
Impacted by COVID	2%	3
Increased rigor	1%	1



Discussion

- Disjuncture between students/new professionals and faculty perceptions of what is needed and what is being done currently
 - Terminology/definitions
 - DEI/social justice
 - Theory and practice
 - Hands-on/practical
 - Technology

Further research

- Other instructors
 - Full-time faculty
 - NTT faculty
- Middle career practitioners' reflections
- Fusing theory and practice (praxis)
 - Specifics of technology

