

Diplomatic-informed archival pedagogy: a new instructional framework for the archival classroom

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Abstract:

This poster presents a diplomatic-informed archival pedagogy, a new and theoretically viable approach to archival instruction for novice researchers which seeks to address instructional challenges facing academic archivists. Current trends and work in archival instruction rely heavily on competency and skills-based instruction with large portions of class time devoted to basic orientation to the archives and rules for research. While these are important elements to impart to novice researchers, they can be prioritized at the expense of teaching students how to conduct archival research *independently*. The goal of this proposed pedagogical framework is to encourage archivists to devote class time demonstrating to students how to be researchers, not how to be archivists.

This framework applies diplomatics, the foundation of modern American historiography and paleography, pedagogically alongside self-determination-theory (SDT), a prominent theory of human motivation. Combined, diplomatics and SDT create a motivating and student-centered learning environment where students can learn how to use archives as experienced researchers would. Diplomatics provides a theoretical foundation, structure, and a guiding methodology for approaching archival instruction while SDT presents how to implement such an approach in a way which supports student feelings of connection, competence, and motivation to take charge of their own learning.

About the author:

Carly Dearborn is an assistant professor and the Public Policy Archivist at The Ohio State University Libraries where she manages the Ohio Public Policy Archives. She has a master's degree in information science from the University of Texas at Austin and a bachelor's degree from the University of South Dakota. Her research interests include student-centered archival instruction, congressional history, and collections as data. She has published in *Alexandria*, *The American Archivist* and *The Reference Librarian*.