College and University Archives Section

Annual Meeting

August 3, 2019

Section Chair, Ellen Engseth, welcomed all members in attendance. She also thanked all Steering Committee members for their work, welcomed Benn Joseph as our next Chair, and gave a summary of the work of the Steering Committee during the past year.

Section Business

* Greg Bailey and Christina Zamon provided a Nominating Committee report. Newly elected members of the section Steering Committee are Karen Trivette and Krista Oldham; Michelle Sweetser was elected to the Vice Chair / Chair-Elect role. The Nominating Committee acknowledged a number of write-ins for the positions and feedback from a couple of members on the lack of contested elections. They encouraged members to volunteer to serve and to run as candidates in future elections.
* Ellen noted that as Michelle Sweetser has moved into an elected role, we will be recruiting a new editor for the *Academic Archivist* blog. An announcement about the roles and responsibilities will be posted to the section listserv soon; if you have questions about the role, please ask Michelle or other members of the Steering Committee.
* As a member of the Editorial Board of *American Archivist*, Karen Trivette encouraged all section members to consider the journal as a platform for publication.

Section Program

Four of our peers provided brief presentations on social justice or campus history work that they have been involved with before a Q&A session. Ellen also invited interested potential authors to contact us with ideas for content on this theme, for either *Campus Case Studies* or the blog. Featured speakers were Lae’l Hughes-Watkins (Project STAND), Brigette Kamsler (George Washington University), David McCartney (University of Iowa), and Sandra Varry (Florida State University).

*Lae’l Hughes-Watkins*

* [Project STAND](http://standarchives.com/) is an online clearinghouse where academic institutions can provide researchers a centralized access point to historical and archival documentation on the development and on-going occurrences of student dissent.
* 60 participating institutions at present, private and public, research and community colleges.
* Over 400 collection assessments have been completed by partners; those are used to add content to the website.
* Ongoing work/projects:
  + A collaboration with Penn State faculty member who utilized material highlighted in the project
  + Will be revealing a toolkit at the Chicago forum/symposium in September for an audience broader than archivists and including student organizers as well
  + Plan to unveil a code of ethics for this kind of work in the future.
  + Have a featured collections committee that is going through assessments and interviewing archivists and creating features about the content, context of donation, challenges with access. Most recent work features a Native American community center at Stanford.
  + Have a Collections by Institution page as a way to highlight institutions that may not normally get attention and separate pages for all of the participating institutions so you can learn about their holdings.
  + Upcoming forums/symposia (STAND has an IMLS grant to fund them) centering voices of student organizers
    - Chicago: focusing on generational activism, September 19-20, 2019

*Brigette Kamsler*

* Special Collections open to the public in way that regular library is not, posing challenges for their work.
* Her [blog post](https://academicarchivist.wordpress.com/2019/06/24/classes-and-collaboration-in-the-university-archives/) touched on initiatives that have brought students into the archives, her remarks today will touch on the Impact from the influx of additional students as a result of those initiatives (40-60 classes).
* Background: their collections are stored off-site. Only 8 seats in reading room. Have had to extend into their presentation room to accommodate.
* They hired additional students to help staff the reading room.
* Regular use of materials meant that physical boxes coming apart and they were having challenges physically storying all of the boxes pulled for these requests.
* They created an Excel document as a one-stop place for staff to know what was going on, with information on instructor, who has been assigned to the course, dates, and a link to documents with pulling/planning selections, research guides, and the like.
* Created a guide for students to lesser-known collections that related to the themes.
* After scheduling a class, the staff gathers together to pull and collaborate and use information about use to help drive digitization decisions
* Students have begun to apply the skills and interests developed in their classes to other activities, such as problematic names of buildings on campus and the history of the mascot.

*David McCartney*

* Collaboratively-produced online exhibit on Iowa City in the 1960s: [Uptight & Laid-Back](https://dsps.lib.uiowa.edu/sixties/), focused on political activism on campus at the time, particularly moved by Steve Smith, a sophomore who completed a hunger strike to raise funds for Civil Rights workers and awareness in Iowa and Iowa City and campus of the issues facing the U.S. (Smith and approx. 12 other student members of SNCC participated).
* The exhibit went live 2.5 years ago and was a collaborative effort within the library system, including participation from university archives, digital scholarship and publishing studio, and preservation/conservation departments.
* They also had the opportunity to collaborate and reach out to alumni asking them to share stories (limited success with latter). It is possible that the interactive feature for submitting memories presented a technological barrier for older users of site. They are exploring how to improve the interface.
* There is currently little documentation of some activities on campus and they hope to ignite interest in storytelling through the exhibit and related promotion.
* Exhibit begins in 1959 with MLK visit on their campus and ends with 1973.
* Takeaways
  + Collaboration takes time.
  + If you build it, they might not come.
  + Collecting efforts are still necessary.

*Sandra Varry*

* Institution has a complicated history due to a variety of mergers and divisions of schools over the years.
* The archival program got a really late start. As they were approaching a 150th anniversary in 2002, they realized that no one knew where to find things, so they created a program called Heritage Protocol with a focus on student materials and also a museum.
* In 2016, FSU students joined in a national day of protest and pointed out that they had statues and buildings on campus highlighting people who owned slaves or had complicated relationships with desegregation. For example, Francis Eppes (grandson of Thomas Jefferson), who was involved with slavery and a recognized as a recent founder was memorialized in a prominent statue. And the B.K. Roberts Hall (home to the Law School) was named for a segregationist who voted to uphold segregation within the law school in 1949.
* The university president created an advisory panel in 2017 and asked the group to create a list of buildings and namings that might be controversial (a problematic task given unevenness of collecting).
* Varry was asked not to present on certain things. Some lists got cut but told leadership that she would be honest if received questions pertaining to certain topics.
* In a rush, they had to go through hundreds of feet of materials.
* Discovered that Eppes, who was considered a founder did not donate land through through plat maps, deeds, etc. Statue was removed but returned in May with information acknowledging him as a slave owner. It was disappointing; there was a lot of backlash at removing it, but it is no longer in front of the administration building.
* They are now examining their museum and how they can use it as their sphere of influence for telling the story. Get 1300 students or visitors each semester. In this space, they are conducting outreach and sharing of the information that the committee turned up in its work.