

SAA Student Chapter
QUEENS COLLEGE
ANNUAL REPORT
2021- 2022



Officers

President: Maura Sobocinsky Johnson (Fall 2021) / Sarah Barlow-Ochshorn (Spring 2022)

Vice President: Aimee Lusty, (Fall 2021) / Melissa Lino (Spring 2022)

Treasurer: Sarah Barlow-Ochshorn (Fall 2021) / Julia Keiser (Spring 2022)

Secretary: Eric Silberberg (Fall 2021) / Alexandra Pucciarelli (Spring 2022)

Social Media Coordinator: Oscar Zamora-Flores (Spring 2022)

Faculty Adviser: Professor Johnathan Thayer

Twitter: https://twitter.com/qc_saa

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/341316593344/>

<https://sites.google.com/view/qcsaa/home>

Charter

It was an active year for the SAA@QC student chapter. The chapter re-chartered with Queens College (QC). This allowed for the chapter to gain official recognition as a student chapter of the Society of American Archivists (SAA). The annual chartering process has proved to be a challenge for the club in the past, likely due to the required attendance at on-campus meetings, often during business hours, of the Office of Student Development and Leadership. The shift to virtual meetings and acceptance of forms by email has greatly increased our ability to participate and benefit from official recognition by the college. The chapter plans to re-charter and retain its status with the college and SAA in the upcoming 2022-2023 academic year.

Budget

In the Spring 2022 semester, the chapter was able to provide honorariums for some of our speakers through funding provided by the Queens College Office of Student Leadership and Development at Queens College. As mentioned before, the required meetings to do so could be difficult for working students to attend, but the shift to virtual meetings has greatly increased the chapter's ability to benefit from the college's support for student activities.

New Officers for 2022-2023

Following the policies of the Queens College Office for Student Leadership and Development, new officers are elected in April for the upcoming academic year and begin their term in June. For the 2022-2023 academic year the chapter has five officers.

President: Sarah Barlow-Ochshorn

Vice-President: Julia Keiser

Treasurer: Amanda Hellberg

Secretary: Oscar Zamora-Flores

Marketing and Social Media Coordinator: Pamela Padilla

Membership and Meetings

The club has a flexible and open definition of membership: the listserv, meetings, and events are open to all Queens College students, and members may participate as they wish. The Fall chartering and election processes are the only activities that require verification of members. Statistics and recordkeeping for membership is further addressed in the "Administrative Activities" section below.

The board met and communicated as needed for planning events. Fall and Spring “socials” also functioned as informal membership meetings. An additional membership meeting was held during the Spring semester as a required part of the election cycle. All meetings were held through Zoom. Now that pandemic conditions are changing, the club plans to survey students at the start of the Fall 2022 semester to evaluate how comfortable members will be meeting in person, day and time preferences, and whether on or off-campus locations would be preferred.

Outreach and Communication

The chapter maintains several sources for communication: a Google Group listserv, a Twitter, and a website. The listserv is primarily utilized for disseminating event postings, chapter announcements, job postings, and other professional opportunities. Students typically join the listserv by RSVP'ing to our events on a google form. Our Twitter account is less formal and is primarily used for sharing archives-related news and chapter events. The website keeps a record of our past and future events, and also includes non-QCSAA events that we think would be of interest to members. The chapter also has a Facebook Account, however this resource was not utilized this year as we primarily post events in a more commonly-used Facebook group for all Queens College GSLIS students. We also make use of the Queens College GSLIS listserv to publicize events, as well as a GSLIS student-run Discord.

Events Recap

Field Trip: Off the Record at the Guggenheim Museum

September 12, 2021, Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, 8 attendees

QCSAA kicked off the Fall 2021 semester with its first in-person event since December 2019: a field trip to see the exhibition Off the Record at the Guggenheim Museum. Students met at Central Park for a picnic before heading over to the museum. It was refreshing to meet and see other students in-person, after over a year of solely interacting with each other over video conferencing and online class discussion boards. The event drew in students from library studies, the archives certificate program, and the library media specialist tract. We toured the exhibition and informally discussed recurring themes and parallels relating to concepts we had learned in our library and archival studies.

Fall 2021 Virtual Meet & Greet

October 12, 2021, Zoom, 8 Attendees

Green-Wood Cemetery Meetup

December 12, 2021, Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY

At the end of the Fall 2021 semester (and with several board members preparing to graduate), the club gathered for a self-guided tour of Green-Wood Cemetery, a National Historic Landmark. This was a relaxed opportunity to see each other in person, meet and catch up with colleagues, and celebrate the end of the semester.

Spring 2022 Social

February 07, 2022, Zoom, 8 Attendees

Budget: \$0

The club started the Spring 2022 semester with an informal social and information session. In addition to getting to know each other, students brainstormed club offerings and public programming ideas for the coming semester.

Queens College Outreach-Club Day

Ask an Archivist with Zakiya Collier

February 15, 2022, 7pm Zoom, 30 Attendees

Budget: \$250, Office of Student Leadership and Development

Suggested by board member Julia Keiser, organized by board member Sarah Barlow-Ochshorn, and moderated by board member Melissa Lino, this event invited archivist and memory worker Zakiya Collier to talk about her experiences in the field. The event was especially well attended thanks to the inclusion of Professor Stumm's class.

Ask an Archivist with Connection to Kith and Kin

March 15, 2022 6pm Zoom

Budget: \$0

Suggested, organized, and moderated by board member Melissa Lino, the Ask an Archivist Connection to Kith and Kin event invited indigenous community members and Canadian librarians to discuss Vancouver Public Library's *Connection to Kith and Kin*, a community-led program that provides free support to Indigenous people wishing to explore their family records online. Much effort and thought was put into the planning of this event, however it had an unfortunate and disturbing outcome due to a pornographic Zoom bombing incident. This incident taught us important lessons about Zoom security, and we have put protocols into place since the event to ensure our virtual events are safe and secure.

Chat With an Archivist: Isaac Fellman

May 16, 2022, 7pm Zoom, 13 Attendees

Budget: \$0

Suggested, organized, and moderated by board member Alexandra Pucciarelli, this event brought Isaac Fellman, archivist at the GLBT Historical Society and author of a recent archives themed novel, to talk to students. The conversation focused on his introduction to and experience in the field, as well as the intersection between archival praxis and the creative process.

QC SAA + A.R.T. Job Applications Panel

May 23, 2022, 7pm Zoom, 16 Attendees

Budget: \$600 (honoraria for 3 speakers), Office of Student Leadership and Development

Speakers: Corinne O'Connor, Lead Archivist at the Winthrop Group (QC Alumna); Nicole Martin, Associate Director of Archives and Digital Systems at Human Rights Watch; Anna McCormick, Librarian for Archival Arrangement & Description at New York University

Responding to suggestions gathered at the Spring 2022 Social, the club collaborated with Archivists Round Table of New York in planning this panel discussion and Q&A with three working archivists who had experience in human resources/hiring.

Since it included a collaboration and more speakers, organizing this event was instructive. Planning for the event began in early March. Once the club set a possible date and had approval of a budget for modest honoraria from the Office of Student, Colleen Daw and Cristina Fontánez Rodríguez (a QC alumna) from Archivists Round Table of New York were able to secure speakers. We learned a good deal about the school's requirements and process through planning this event. For example, we initially thought the school would be reluctant to fund a budget of this amount, but learned through the required approval meetings that other clubs were requesting much higher budgets for their activities. We also learned that it is easier to reschedule an event than it is to get it on the calendar for approval, and that you don't need to have your speakers lined up before submitting a budget request (the main point being to submit your paperwork early even if you are missing information or need to use a tentative date). Finally, the actual payment process for vendors (speakers) is quite convoluted: there is no good way for speakers to provide private information (SS#'s) securely, and CUNY is transitioning to a new system that requires even more from speakers. Although we feel it is more ethical to provide honoraria to speakers, we can't control how frustrating the process may be for speakers to actually get paid by the college. For future events, we think it is best to secure budgets from the school when possible, but we recommend being transparent with speakers so that they can decide themselves if they want to go through the process to receive their honoraria.

Conferences and Publications

AERI Liberation Board

The SAA Student Chapter of Queens College CUNY and the Archival Technologies Lab organized a session dedicated to archival liberation at the Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI). All MLS and PhD students (and recent graduates) with an interest in archival studies were encouraged to participate by creating a vision board that depicted how they understand archival liberation as a fundamental aspiration of archives or archivists. This vision board explained, championed, and critiqued how archives serve liberatory struggles, the responsibilities of archivists as activists, and other areas that touched on the liberatory potential of archives.

Archival Outlook

Chloe Baker, Sarah Barlow-Ochshorn, Maura Johnson, Melissa Lino, Aimee Lusty, and Eric Silberberg. Building Community Virtually In An SAA Student Chapter. Archival Outlook. November/December 2021.

<https://mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?m=30305&i=728963&p=16&ver=html5>

Administrative Activities

In the Spring 2022, the club met to discuss some of the administrative challenges we experienced and noted gaps in and loss of know-how/documentation for the club and its activities, most of which we believe to be caused by lack of procedures and planning for end-of-term transfer, onboarding and transitions. Examples that caused concern included:

- General recordkeeping: while there had been clear efforts to establish and maintain continuous recordkeeping of the clubs activities (ex: meeting minutes, annual reports, charter and by-laws), by Spring 2022 there were many gaps and inconsistencies and the GDrive had become difficult to use. Most notable, there had been an introduction of new annual sub-folders for each leadership cohort, use of and failure to transfer personal GDrive folders, an abundance of unfiled and shared documents, and in some cases a lack of documentation altogether.
- Maintenance of social media account information: since 2015, the club has created several different websites, as well as duplicate social media accounts. Rather than building on prior work, it appears that leadership teams have started anew, perhaps without knowing that they were creating duplicate sites.
- Maintenance of membership data and listserv: for a number of years, the club had managed its membership and listserv through a Google Group, which had 224 members by February 2021. It is not clear why use of the Google Group ended at that point, but by Spring 2022 board leaders were unaware of it. There appeared to be no current membership data, and new students were being added to club emails manually through bcc's until a membership spreadsheet was created that semester.

We understand the recordkeeping challenges as most likely being related to the difficulty of maintaining membership and leadership with the faster pace of turnover for graduate students. However, we also believe that the board is set back each semester/year when it must do the heavy lifting to get up and running without the benefit of lessons learned and systems built by previous leadership teams.

In the coming semester, we would like to prioritize record keeping with the goal of improving the onboarding process and developing procedures that can ensure continuity in the groups activities and recordkeeping. More specifically, we hope to:

- Create an on-boarding "read-me" file for new board members
- Organize the Google Drive
- Develop check-lists, guides, tips and/or other tools and procedures for key activities like re-chartering and event planning.