Society of American Archivists

Digital Archives Specialist Subcommittee

Virtual Annual Meeting

July 15, 2024

Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- 2023-2024 highlights
- Program update: renewal by petition
- Curriculum updates
- Curriculum survey results
- 2024-2025 preview
- Q&A + feedback forum

2023–2024 DAS Subcommittee Members

- Katherine Fisher
- Krista Oldham
- Lauren Burroughs*
- Alison Anderson
- Sally Benny*
- Nolan Eller
- Angela Fritz
- Brandon Jackson
- Larissa Krayer*
- Maren Read
- Pamela Campbell

2023–2024 Highlights

- New comprehensive exam
- Webcast audits
- Curriculum survey
- DAS handbook
- Process for “Option B,” or renewal by petition

Renewal by Petition

- Alternative DAS certificate renewal pathway
- Approved activities substitute for up to two DAS courses
- Timeline
  - November 2023: SAA Council approved proposal
  - Spring 2024: DASS developed and beta-tested process
  - Summer 2024: DASS & SAA Education finalize guidelines
  - Fall 2024: Two-year pilot phase begins
  - Summer 2026: DASS and SAA Education assess pilot

Curriculum Updates

New courses:

- OAIS (coming early 2025)
- Project Management: Fundamentals and Advanced (revised and added to DAS program)

Updated courses:

- Accessioning and Ingest of Digital Records
- Appraisal of Digital Records
- Introduction to PREMIS

Courses identified for revision (timeline TBD):

- Foundational webcasts
- Introduction to XML Analysis and Manipulation

Curriculum Survey Results

2024 DAS Course Offering Survey

Summary Report
July 15, 2024

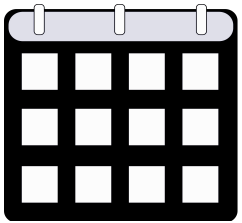
20

questions

- Demographics
- Goals & preferences
- Satisfaction
- Open-ended feedback

3½

weeks



- February 7 - March 1, 2024

4+

distribution channels

- Official SAA blasts
  - In the Loop
  - SAA Announcements
  - Education eNews
  - SAA Leaders List
- Shares by members to other networks.

380

responses

- 2014 survey: 102 responses
- 2016 survey: 103 responses

Strengths

- Overall, positive view of program
- Strong interest in course content
- Strong interest in helping drive improvements to the program

Opportunities

- Setting and meeting expectations
- Questions about logistics (certificate progress, how to renew, contacting someone for more info)

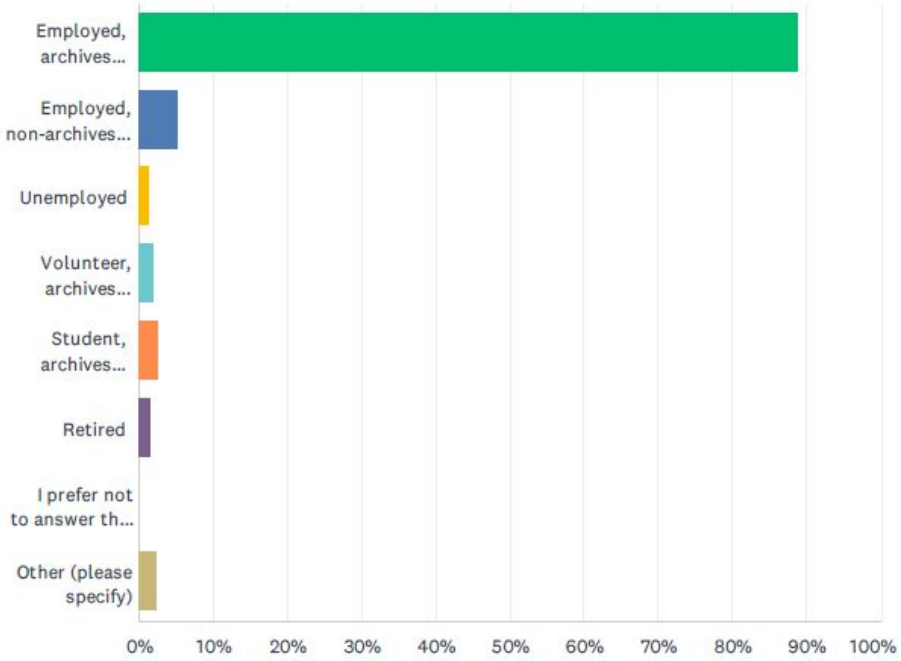
Challenges

- Courses are not revised frequently enough
- Courses are not offered frequently enough
- Comprehensive exam
- Cost is a barrier for many

Survey Results

Demographics

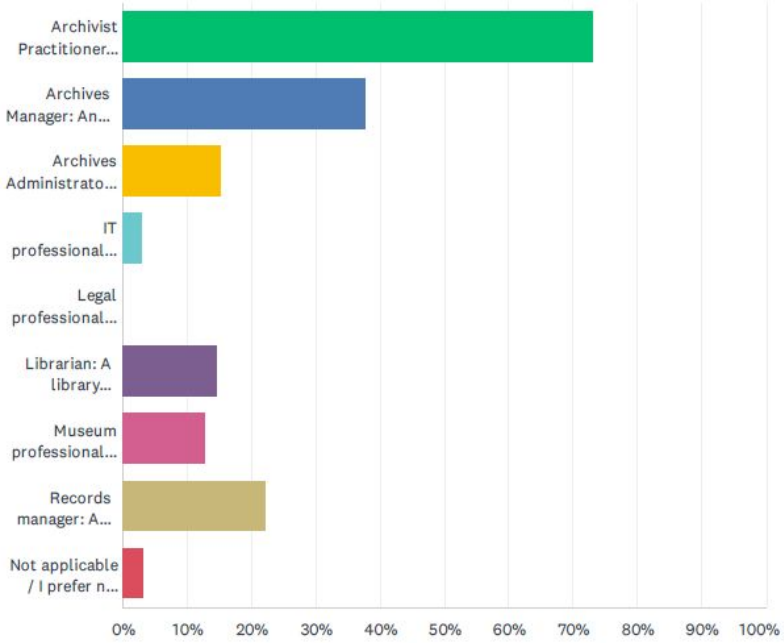
Who took the survey?



Current employment status

- 89% Employed, archives related position
- 5% Employed, non-archives related position
- 3% Student, archives related field

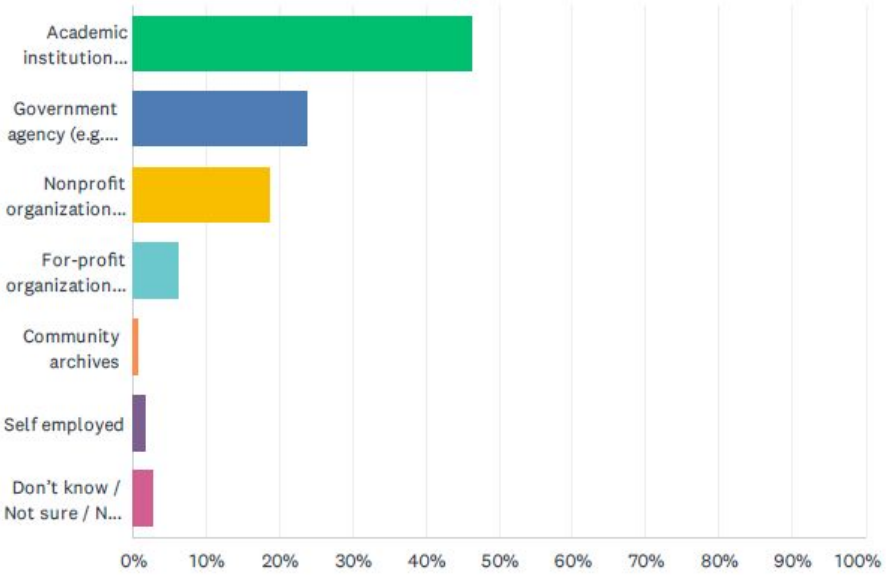
Who took the survey?



Current or desired future role

- 73% Archivist Practitioner
- 38% Archives Manager
- 22% Records Manager

Who took the survey?



Current employer

- 46% Academic Institution
- 23% Government Agency
- 19% Nonprofit Organization

Certificate/other certification status

DAS certificate status

- 31% Current certificate holder
- 26% Considering a certificate
- 25% Not seeking a certificate
- 14% Certificate in progress
- 4% Past certificate holder (expired)
- Other
  - Took DAS courses but not within time frame
  - Took DAS courses but didn't take the exam

Other certificate/certification status

- 23% ACA certification
- 4% SAA Arrangement & Description certificate
- 2% Records Manager certification (CRA/CRM)
- 5% Other
  - Digital curation
  - Government Archives and Records Administration (GARA) certificate

275 participants skipped this question

Professional development funding

- 75% Employer-funded
- 49% Self-funded
- 5% Grant-funded

Goals & Preferences

Why are you interested in DAS?

- 74% To do my current job better
- 56% To list certificate on resume or CV
- 19% For course content only, not interested in certificate
- 15% To get a promotion
- 14% Continuing education requirement for Certified Archivist
- 14% Continuing education for current job
- 8% Other
    - General career development, skillset expansion, get better job/future job prospects

Preferred delivery format & length

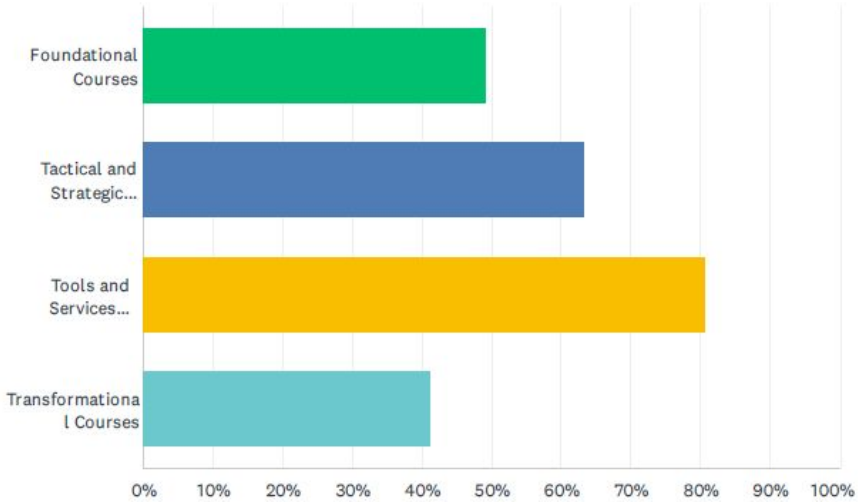
In order of preference:

1. Online synchronous
2. Online asynchronous (pre-recorded)
3. In-person synchronous

- Online synchronous
  - Spread over multiple days
- Online asynchronous
  - 60-90 minutes
- In-person synchronous
  - Most common 1 day
    - Keep costs down

Need for breaks was evident

What courses are you interested in?

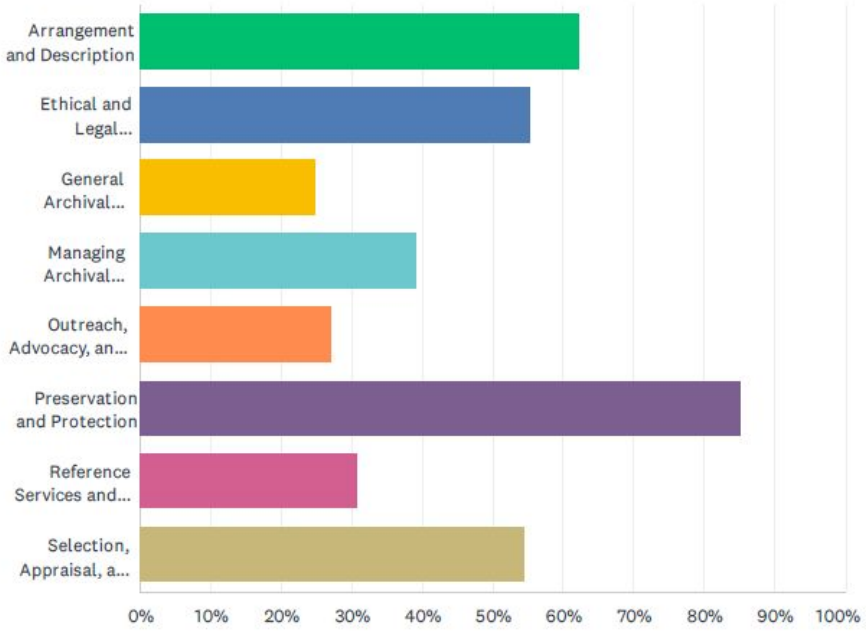


DAS Tiers

- 81% Tools and Services courses*
- 63% Tactical and Strategic course
- 49% Foundational courses
- 41% Transformational courses

***Question 17 responses indicated the want/need for tool specific training.**

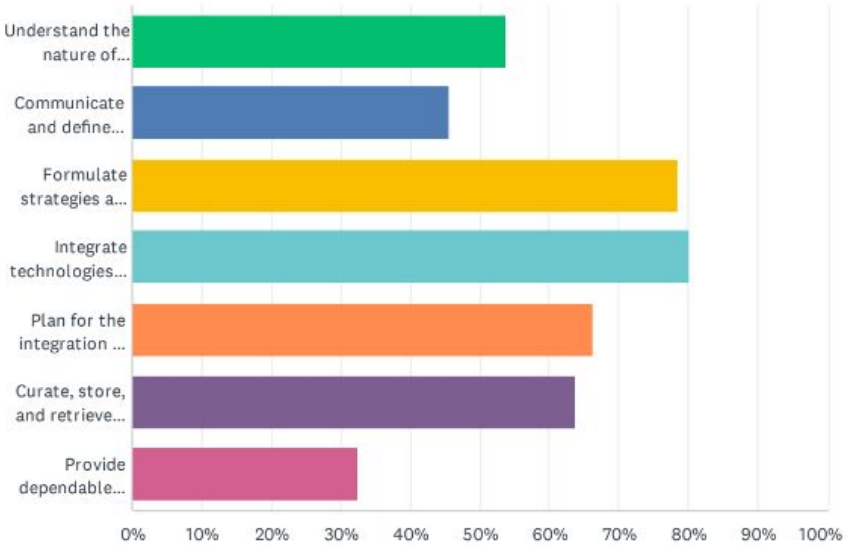
What courses are you interested in?



Archival Continuing Education (ACE) Category

- 85% Preservation and Protection
- 62% Arrangement and Description
- 56% Ethical and Legal Responsibilities
- 55% Selection, Appraisal, and Acquisition

What courses are you interested in?

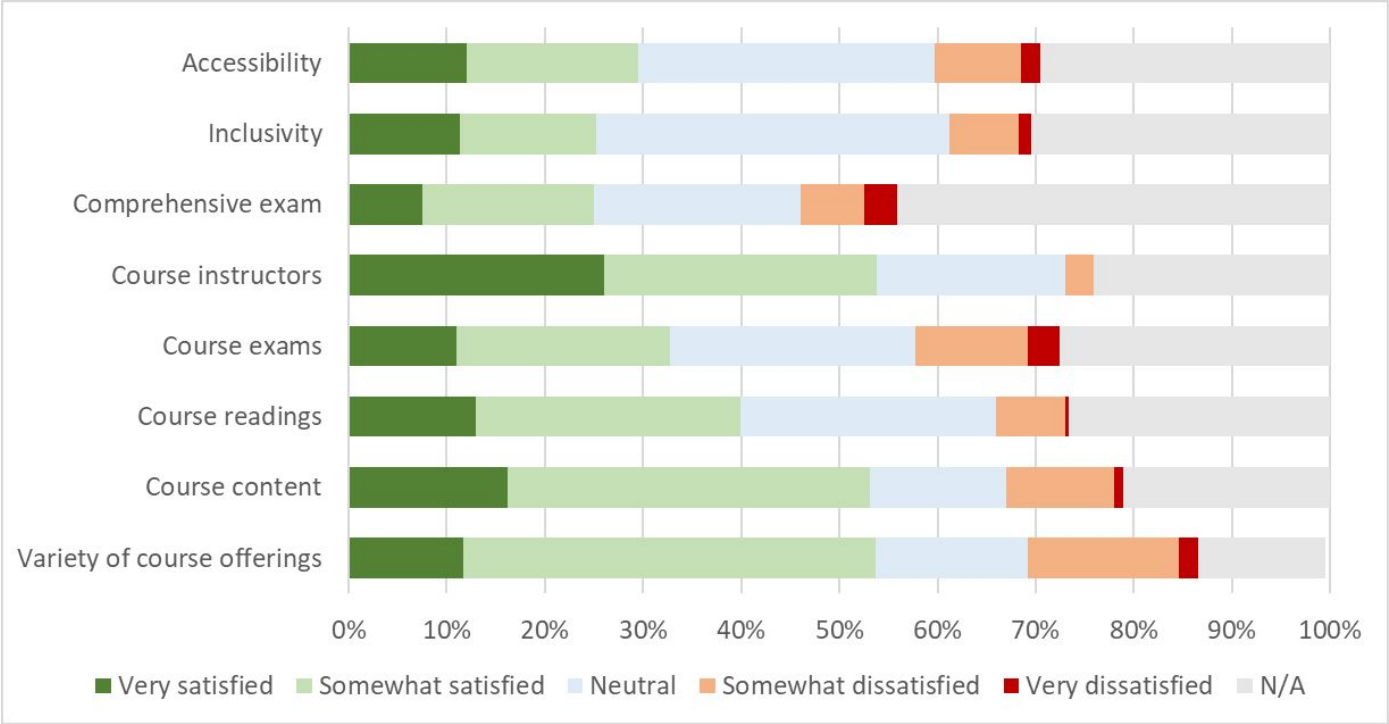


DAS Core Competency

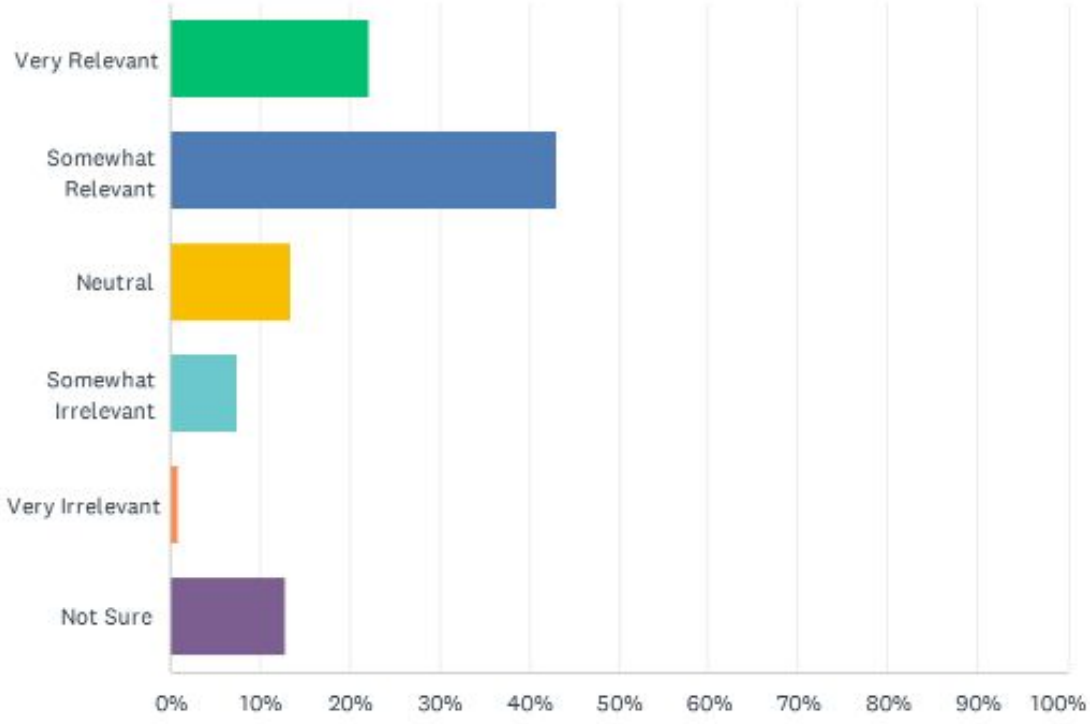
- 80% Integrate technologies, tools, software, and media within existing functions for appraising, capturing, preserving, and providing access to digital collections.
- 78% Formulate strategies and tactics for appraising, describing, managing, organizing, and preserving digital archives.
- 66% Plan for the integration of new tools or successive generations of emerging technologies, software, and media.
- 63% Curate, store, and retrieve original masters and access copies of digital archives.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction



Do you feel the DAS course offerings are relevant to today's digital archives landscape and issues?



Open Ended Feedback

Course Ideas

- **Hands-on training in specific tools, software, and workflows**
  - Specific tool integration
  - Preservica, Archivematica
  - ArchivesSpace, Omeka
  - Outlook/Office 365 and any integrations
  - Open source tools
  - Archiving social media
  - PREMIS
  - Migration strategies/tools; crosswalking between XML, JSON, etc.
  - Command line, coding, scripting, automation, XML/XSLT/XQuery, Python, Git
- Artificial intelligence (AI) issues
- Technology management
- Procurement, working with vendors
- Information security terminology & standards

And many more ideas...

Program Logistics

- Certificate progress
  - Want more clarity around an individual's certificate progress, tracking courses completed, and how to renew
  - Difficulty contacting someone to get more information
- Timelines
  - Certificate expires after 5 years, but course content is not refreshed within that timeline
    - Lots of comments saying courses should be reviewed every X years
  - 2 year window for completing coursework is tight
    - Courses are not offered frequently enough
    - Courses are expensive and hard to get funding for so many courses in such a short time

Content & Delivery

- Webinars
  - Many comments about the age of pre-recorded webinars, “ancient content”
- Course readings
  - Need to be updated
- Course exams
  - Obscure questions not relating to content delivered in course
- Comprehensive exam
  - Frustrations with exam questions/content
  - Would like to see resources for preparing for exam:
    - Regional study groups, review sessions
    - Course materials from all foundational courses

Accessibility Issues

- Closed captioning, sign language interpreter
  - Want transcripts for webcasts (not just captions, but downloadable transcripts)
- Recording quality - poor audio, video, glitchiness
- Color/visual contrast in presentation materials
- Need breaks during courses
- Need accommodations in comprehensive exam; people are choosing to not take the comprehensive exam even though they've completed the necessary coursework
- Financial & travel challenges (in-person courses are not accessible to those who can't travel)
- Course frequency (courses should be more frequently available)

Takeaways

Comprehensive Exam

- Coordinating with Psychometrician or Exam Managers
- Item bank maintenance
  - Authoring new items for the exam
  - Reviewing existing items on a regular basis
- Maintaining the comprehensive exam reading list (Zotero library)
  - Coordinating with Course Development Team to add citations from new courses
  - Removing outdated resources
  - Ensuring links and citations are correct
  - Ensuring PDF on microsite is updated every year

Course Offerings

- Overhaul webcasts and explore new course offerings
  - Webcasts are our first priority
  - Developing OAIS foundational course

- Renewal by petition (pilot phase coming soon)

Accessibility

Broad spectrum of challenges highlighted in survey responses that could be categorized as accessibility issues

Webcasts

- Captions, transcripts

Synchronous courses

- Breaks, frequency of offerings

Exams

- Delivery format, accomodations

Web Presence, Transparency

- Mission, scope, goals
  - What the program is, and what the program is not
  - How we define digital archives specialist
- Clarity around your own certificate progress and how to renew
- How to host courses

Q&A

2024–2025 Preview

- Curriculum enhancement
- Organizational efficiency
- Communication

Q&A

Feedback

- What experiences have you had with the DAS program, positive or negative?
- What is confusing about the DAS program?
- Are there topics, competencies, or potential courses you'd like the DAS Subcommittee to consider adding to the program?
- How can we improve communication?