

Exploring the Present with the Past: Incorporating Archival Exploration in Teaching Disease Prevention

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Providing opportunities for students to explore historical artifacts add texture and context to the material they are currently learning. In the HSC 292: Community Public Health course, students learn about disease prevention and health promotion within communities by exploring specific topics related to social determinants of health, health disparities, epidemiology, health systems, and communicable disease. Forming a partnership in spring 2019, the HSC 292 course and JoAnn Rayfield Archives developed projects to incorporate archival material in linking past to future health issues and events. These projects have continued every Spring. Working with the Rayfield Archives, students are introduced to archival research methods and collections. Students then utilize historical artifacts and create physical and virtual displays to link past community health events to current public health issues. IRB approval was received to measure students' awareness gains for working with the archival material and how this worked impacted their knowledge in public health. This presentation highlights the logistics of the archives project, showcases methods for incorporating archives into coursework and research, and provides recommendations for future implementation.

About the authors:

April K. Anderson-Zorn is the university archivist for Illinois State University. Anderson-Zorn holds a master's degree in History from the University of Central Florida, an MLIS from Florida State University, maintains a Digital Archives Specialist certificate through the Society of American Archivists, and is a certified archivist. Anderson-Zorn is active in SAA and the Midwest Archives Conference, presenting topics and authoring articles related to university archives outreach projects and tools.

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