



Ethics of Reappraisal

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Agenda

- **Introduction**
 - BYU repository background
 - Description of project
 - Processing observations
 - Results
- **Ethics Discussion**





Introduction

Reappraisal Pilot at BYU

BYU repository background

Foundation and History

- 1956 – BYU University Archives established
- 1957 – BYU Special Collections, including UA, established
- 1960s – Scope expands to include mining and the economy
- Ensuing decades broadened to history of American West and Mormonism

BYU repository background

Organizational structure

- 2020 reorg
 - 11 faculty and 4 staff - Acquisition, management, and reference
 - Archival Processing Section under Cataloging & Metadata Department
 - Collection Management unit under library-wide Collections Care Department

BYU repository background

Storage space

- Prior to 2000, collections scattered
- Underground expansion in 2000 created a 100,000 linear foot storage facility as part of the library space
- Collections were moved in and we had 20 years worth of growth space
- Campus administration will not allow further expansion or off-site storage
- Library administration wants backlogs addressed before looking at internal options for expansion

Description of project

- Initial reappraisal work focused on locating official records among the papers of university administrators
- Project sought to evaluate and adapt the Total Cost of Stewardship philosophy to reappraisal actions
- Methodology included:
 - Identifying relevant professional papers collections
 - Identifying non-permanent materials for transfer
 - Tracking resources and results for planning broader project

Processing observations

- Re-processing is required in some manner for all reappraisal decisions.
- Re-processing required staff labor due to complexity, in addition to student resources. Processing rate measured at 3.5 hours/linear foot.
- Legacy finding aids led to additional re-processing (discovery of materials needing attention, discrepancies in finding aids, and housing issues).
- Collections utilizing MPLP needed additional reprocessing to enable reappraisal to take place.
- How can we take a different approach to processing, analyzing investment of time and description for each collection rather than a default.
- No significant space gains during the pilot.

Project Results

As part of our pilot project, we reappraised 10 faculty collections that had previously been classified as manuscript collections.

- Following the completion of the reappraisal pilot project 7 of these collections were retained as manuscript collections, and 3 collections, that were found to include university records, were transferred to University Archives.
- As part of our pilot project, we were surprised to discover that many of these 10 collections contained extensive collection materials that documented a faculty member's academic career prior to their employment at BYU. Based on existing collection development policies, professional materials not related to the faculty member or administrator's career at BYU, will be offered to the donor or the donor's family.

Project Findings and Outcomes



Apart from our detailed and specific reappraisal project outcomes, the most important or key project findings, included:

- The need for significant resource investment to sustain a viable reappraisal program.
- The need for ongoing collaboration between archivists, curators, collection managers, and Records and Information Management office staff to facilitate ongoing reappraisal activities for all faculty collections.
- The need for new administrative and “workflow” mechanisms to facilitate more seamless and efficient collaboration.
- The development of new and innovative methodologies and techniques to appraise and re-appraise faculty collections.
- The revision of collection development policies to align more closely with reappraisal project guidelines and policy procedures and library and university goals.

Future Steps

- Engage in strategic discussions with library administrators regarding pilot project findings, future-plans, and concerns regarding faculty collections.
- Implement fully defined and sustainable collaborative workflow and ethical best practice guidelines to support expanded reappraisal activities for faculty collections.
- Hire a full or part time reappraisal archivist to supervise all reappraisal activity.
- Standardize and fully integrate reappraisal activity into all curatorial and archival work.



Ethics Discussion

[Google form poll](#)

Thank you

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