

**Society of American Archivists
SAA-Developed Standard Review Procedure**

**Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS)
Introductory Narrative**

PURPOSE

The Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies (GPAS) define the academic preparation that graduates need and identify a common core of archival knowledge that all graduate programs in archival studies should deliver so that all graduates can excel in their professional duties.

Establishing minimum standards in terms of mission, curriculum, faculty, and infrastructure, these guidelines serve as a benchmark against which graduate programs in archival studies should measure themselves. SAA hopes these guidelines will improve the archival profession by encouraging the continued thoughtful development of more extensive and comprehensive educational programs.

BACKGROUND

The GPAS guidelines were approved by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council in January 2002, and subsequently revised by the Committee on Education in 2005 and 2011. GPAS replaced the “Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Degree,” adopted by the Council in 1994. By means of these guidelines, SAA endorses the development of coherent and independent graduate programs in archival studies. SAA believes that programs of the extent and nature outlined in these guidelines are the best form of pre-appointment professional education for archivists. For this reason, these guidelines supersede prior documents on archival education issued in 1977, 1988, and 1994.

REVISIONS AND CONSULTATION

The Committee on Education, with the assistance of SAA Education Director Solveig De Sutter, conducted the regular five-year review of GPAS to develop this new version. The changes were primarily editorial, tightening the language and updating terminology to ensure the ongoing relevance of the guidelines.

The revisions were then posted on SAA’s website and member comments were solicited via the homepage and RSS feed, social media and *In the Loop*. A number of comments were received regarding both editorial changes and substantive concerns. Due to time constraints, the Committee on Education focused on the editorial suggestions, which included updating terminology, adjusting language to cover the variety of archival materials, and emphasizing the importance of diversity and inclusion efforts.

In light of the substantive concerns brought forward by members, the Committee on Education will be conducting an in-depth review of the state of graduate archival education and present further revisions in the next two to three years.

MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW PLAN

This version addressed the most pressing concerns voiced in the member comments. Over the next two years, the Committee on Education will conduct an in-depth study of graduate archival education in order to understand the changes currently taking place across these programs. A more substantial revision of the Guidelines will be submitted to the Standards Committee in the next two to three years.

Policy dictated by the Council requires the Committee on Education to review the Guidelines every five years. The Committee plans to continue fulfilling this responsibility for the foreseeable future.