

Researching the Current North American Graduate Archival Curriculum

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The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)-funded research project, “Exploring New Frontiers in 21st Century Archival Education” (2020-2022) not only explores the current state of Master’s-level archival education, but also seeks to build capacity for the future. The proposed platform presentation centers on the following research question: how do faculty members and students, respectively, perceive the current graduate archival curriculum? We address this question through an exploratory mixed-methods case study. First, we conducted semistructured interviews with 33 full-time tenure-track archives faculty listed in the Society of American Archivists’ (SAA) Directory of Archival Education. Second, we disseminated an online survey (406 responses) to current archival graduate students and new archival professionals (five years or fewer in the field). We will discuss and juxtapose findings from each stakeholder group’s perspective. Our findings address the graduate archives courses perceived to be most important for students; course development, content (breadth and depth of topical coverage, balancing theory and practice, and readings and assignments), structure, and delivery methods; efficacy of graduate education for professional practice; and topics stakeholders would like to see more of in the curriculum. Ultimately, this presentation will provide not only a baseline understanding of the current graduate archival curriculum, but also recommendations for practice and suggestions for future research.

About the authors:

An Associate Professor at Drexel University’s College of Computing and Informatics, *Alex H. Poole* studies archives and records management, diversity, equity, and inclusion, information practices, digital curation, and digital humanities. Poole received both the Donald G. David Award and the Justin Winsor Prize from the American Library Association (ALA) in 2022, the Jesse H. Shera Award for Distinguished Published Research from ALA in 2019, the Bob Williams History Fund Research Paper Award from the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) in both 2018 and 2017, the Arline Custer Memorial Award for Best Article from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference in 2018, and the Theodore Calvin Pease Award from the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in 2013. His papers also earned runner-up, Best Short Research Paper, at iConference 2021, and third place, Best Short Research Paper, at the ASIS&T annual meeting, 2021. His articles have been published in *The Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, *Library & Information Science Research*, *The Journal of Documentation*, *The Library Quarterly*, *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, *The American Archivist*, *Archival Science*, *The International Journal of Information Management*, and *Information & Culture*. He serves on the editorial boards of *The Library Quarterly*, *Information & Culture*, and *The Electronic Library*. His work has been supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Drexel University Provost’s Office. Poole was educated at Williams College (BA, Highest Honors in History), Brown University (MA), and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (MLS) (Beta Phi Mu), and PhD.

Ashley Todd-Diaz is Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections and University Archives at Towson University. She also teaches as an adjunct professor in Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management and Drexel University's College of Computing and Informatics. Her interests include archives as organizations, perceptions of archives, and archival literacy. She holds a Ph.D. from Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management, an MSIS with a concentration in Archives and Records Administration from SUNY at Albany, and an MA in English and American Literature from New York University.