

University of Alabama Student Chapter of the Society of American Archivists

2015 Annual Report (December 2015)

Members:

Angela Houser, President
Kacey Davis, Vice-President
Natalie Thompson, Secretary
Hannah Bowser, Treasurer
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Cara Eiland
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Former Members from school year 2014-2015:

Alissa Helms
Christina Tidmore
Jeffery Hirschy
Rachel Helms
Paige Crumbley
Andrew Chalk

Advisor:

Dr. Robert Riter

Archival Outreach

The University of Alabama Student Chapter of the Society of American Archivists (UASAA) has spent the majority of 2014-2015 year establishing the archives for the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) here at the University of Alabama. Throughout the fall semester of 2014 we created policies for records management and guidelines for the appraisal of materials. In the spring semester we created and proposed a budget to begin the organization of the records and to sustain them. With the approval of our budget by the administration we were able to begin ordering supplies for the records that SLIS holds. We have also begun work with the Book Arts program by cataloging, organizing, and doing preservation on the artist books that each student must create as part of their thesis. A team of three students are heading this project in conjunction with the professors in the program. They hope to have it near completion or complete by the end of the spring semester.

Archival Programming

Throughout the year we have hosted several guest speakers to do informal talks on work within an archive and the best practices in order to get a job after graduation. We were pleased to host Donelly Walton, the Head of the Manuscripts Collections at the University of Alabama, for two sessions last spring and this fall. The first session was a question and answer about the archival profession and the ways that a student could gain an edge into the field. The second was a CV and cover letter workshop for archives student. She gave examples from her CV as a student and what she would look for as a potential employer in a cover letter. Dr. Robert Riter, professor of Archival Studies, gave a lecture in the spring on how to prepare a CV for the profession and where to begin searching for job positions in the field. We have also had the pleasure of speaking with Martha Bates, an archivist with the university, about her career path in becoming an archivist. Though we had other lectures scheduled conflicts arose and they had to be cancelled. We hope to reschedule them in the coming semester. Finally, three members of the group presented a panel to the alumni and current students of the program about the SLIS archives and the work that has been put into the planning, the history of the project, and the records management role that has been creating because of it.

Networking Activities

UASAA students have not only been active in this group but also in the American Library Association and the Special Libraries Association. The members create archival experience not only in the school archives but can boast a variety of internships both at home and abroad. Through the work that they do they encourage other students to consider work in an archive because they know that even though their work may be in a library they may still work in an archive.

Future Goals

Looking towards the coming year we plan on continuing with both the SLIS archives project and the Book Arts artist books. Even though our numbers have been fluctuating we have been able to maintain a solid interest in the project. We will be using that interest to create new outreach opportunities outside of our program. We hope to get graduate students from the History, Archeology, and Anthropology departments interested in the group and the project so that they will have experience with this type of work before they enter their chosen profession.