



Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies

Preface

The current ACA Guidelines for the Development of a Two-Year Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies date from 1990.¹ Although the guidelines have been periodically reviewed, they have not been brought before ACA membership for a full revision. In 2017, the Education Committee was asked to review the 1990 Guidelines in order to determine whether they should be left in place, revised, or replaced. The Committee concluded that the Guidelines, while still relevant and in many respects an admirable expression of a distinctively Canadian perspective on professional education in Archival Studies, did not adequately reflect diversity in contemporary archival practice, archival thinking, and the profession itself.

As part of the ongoing process to update the 1990 guidelines to reflect the constantly changing nature of the profession, the ACA has decided to endorse an edited version of the current Society of American Archivists (SAA) *Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies* (2016)² as the starting point for this process. The SAA Guidelines have been in place since 2002, with revisions in 2005, 2011 and 2016, and are an up-to-date reflection of archival theory, methods and practice, and approaches to archival education in the United States. The ACA will undertake continuing review of these new guidelines with regularly issued updates, in order to ensure that its educational standards reflect rapidly changing responsibilities of the profession, and encompass all areas of professional practice as they apply to all phases the record's existence.

There is considerable commonality between the ACA and SAA guidelines with respect to core archival principles, knowledge and practice. However, the ACA recognizes the importance of local context to archival practice in a deeper way. Thus, some changes have been made to the endorsed SAA guidelines to reflect concerns of particular importance within the Canadian context. The guidelines presented below incorporate changes recommended by the Education Committee to address perceived gaps in the SAA Guidelines with respect to the Canadian context, and draw heavily upon the content of the ACA's 2018 Strategic Plan, and *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*.³ These additions are broadly grouped as:

1. Archives as a Source of Social and Cultural Memory

While the SAA Guidelines acknowledge that “records are only part of the fabric of cultural memory”, changes have been made to them to better highlight the relationship archives have with non-documentary sources and evidential practices that maintain cultural and



Association of
Canadian Archivists
Association canadienne
des archivistes

organizational evidence and memory, and the social, cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts of the records for which Canadian professionals are responsible.

2. Indigenous Contexts

The SAA guidelines are entirely silent on the Indigenous contexts of archives and archival practice in North America. Archival education in Canada should acknowledge and address that Canada is settled on Indigenous lands. Additionally, it should address Indigenous social memory and embodied memory practices, the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous approaches to recordkeeping, and the consequences thereof. Archival education in Canada should be consistent with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action*, the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and the First Nations Information Governance Centre *Ownership, Control, Access and Possession Principles*.

3. Diversity

Although diversity is a major theme within the SAA guidelines, these ACA guidelines strengthen it. Archival education should

- a. seek to foster and support plurality and inclusion as essential to a diverse and dynamic profession,
- b. support greater participation by groups underrepresented within the profession,
- c. recognize the diversity of pathways into the profession and the need to accommodate students with diverse physical and learning needs,
- d. address the variety of record sources and record media within the Canadian tradition of total archives, and
- e. place the total archives tradition within a broader context of memory practices that share a common goal of preserving and communicating authentic, reliable and trustworthy information.

4. Users and Use

The SAA guidelines only minimally recognize the need for archives to be fully engaged with user communities and to promote the multitudinous uses of archives. The ACA guidelines further develop use as a major theme and will continue to do so in subsequent revisions.

5. Entry to the Profession

Absent from the SAA guidelines is the acknowledgement of an essential and common attribute of Archival Studies graduate education – that students of Archival Studies have rarely



encountered archives or the archival discipline before beginning their program, and may have a non-existent knowledge of archival theory, methods and/or practice. This situation is very different from most other graduate programs, which assume basic knowledge attained during undergraduate studies. During their graduate studies students must have sufficient exposure to archival theory, methods and practices to enable them to graduate as job-ready records professionals.

Next steps

In addition to the issues identified in the Education Committee's above recommendations, the process of integrating these recommendations into the SAA Guidelines has drawn attention to topics that the ACA feels the guidelines should address at a level of detail greater than in the current revision. This will be done in the next iteration of the Guidelines, but existing archival programs are encouraged to address these areas presently.

1. The role of policy in archival education

Policy is a core tool for archivists. Virtually every aspect of what archivists do is in some way shaped by policy and shapes policy. However, there is only a single mention of policy in the existing SAA guidelines. Future versions of the guidelines should consider the relationship of archives and records and archives professionals to policy instruments, the role of policy in guiding archival practice and shaping recordkeeping activities, and how both should be articulated as an education requirement.

2. The role of law in archival education.

Archival work frequently interacts with aspects of the law. Many archival activities are governed by law, and knowledge of the juridical context in which records are created is critical to understanding the full context of the creation and use of records. Knowledge of areas of law affecting archival practice receives only passing mention in the SAA guidelines, and the requirement for focused study in those areas (e.g. privacy, freedom of information, copyright) should be strengthened.

3. Indigenous contexts

Some effort has been made to incorporate Indigenous context into this version of the guidelines, but in an admittedly piecemeal way that inserted it where it best fit in the existing framework. New guidelines should develop a more integrated treatment of issues pertaining to the relationship of archives and archivists to indigenous communities, cultures and traditions.



4. Complementary knowledge area

Several reviewers provided commentary on the relevance and importance of sections within the complementary knowledge section. The complementary knowledge areas should be reviewed and reorganized.

This document, the ACA Guidelines, contains the SAA Guidelines edited for Canadian purposes. The ACA is grateful to the SAA for its permission to use its guidelines in this manner.



Introduction

Archivists are concerned with the creation, management, selection, acquisition, organization, description, preservation, and provision of access to records.⁴ Their knowledge and skills are essential to activities that accompany the entire existence of the record, from the design of record creating and record keeping systems, the management of records for their use by records creators, the appraisal for selection and acquisition of records that should be permanently preserved, the documentation of their content and context, the intellectual and legal control of those records as well as the physical care and custody of those in archives, and the facilitation of their discovery and use by diverse users.

Graduates of Archival Studies programs will be responsible for the records of the present, past and future. Archival education is not addressed only to those wishing to work as archivists in archival institutions or programs. It is relevant to a wide range of activities, and graduates will practice in diverse types of institutions, businesses, communities, and professional positions. Archivists seek to facilitate the reliable and accurate creation of records that can be maintained as authentic throughout their existence, and to manage, organize, preserve, and provide access to records using methods that maintain and protect their trustworthiness. They do so in order to capture evidence of human activity and to preserve and transmit this evidence and the memory of it into the future, thereby supporting the assertion and defence of individual and collective rights, holding governments, organizations and individuals accountable for the exercise of their respective powers, and to secure the transfer of society's memory and culture into the future. Archivists play a crucial role in facilitating accountability within a democratic society.

Graduate programs in Archival Studies provide students with the education and understanding they need to excel in their professional duties. These programs are responsible for ensuring archivists possess knowledge and skills relevant to the challenges posed by constantly changing workplaces, technological, and social environments, and the expectations of records creators, users, and society at large. In addition to maintaining technical competence, archivists in the future will have increasing responsibility to engage and educate the public, to ensure the preserved material is representative of the time, place, society and culture from which it originates, to foster and support diversity within the profession, to solve problems and use archival materials creatively, to perform in the digital realm, to participate in



professional associations activities and advocate for the profession, and to be responsive to users requirements regarding modes and means of access to records, so as to enable and ensure the continuing realization of a public benefit from the records entrusted to their care.

These guidelines keep into account the fact that graduates need to be able to meet new challenges as they encounter them, and identify a common core of archival knowledge that all graduate programs in archival studies should deliver. They establish minimum standards in terms of mission, curriculum, faculty, and infrastructure, and are intended to serve as a benchmark against which graduate programs in archival studies should measure themselves and be measured. The guidelines are intended for programs dedicated to Archival Studies. The ACA recognizes that there are many paths into the profession, and that archival education also exists outside of Archival Studies programs as a component of programs granting degrees in related disciplines. For those programs, the guidelines should be interpreted as aspirational rather than prescriptive. The ACA supports all efforts at archival education, and hopes that these guidelines will improve the archival profession by encouraging the continued thoughtful development of more extensive and comprehensive educational programs.

Mission and Goals

Archival studies programs seek to graduate records professionals who will work as archivists, records managers, and records specialists in other fields. Their primary purpose is teaching an understanding of the nature and use of records and of the systems in which they are created and maintained throughout their existence, from the point of records creation and use for the purposes for which they were created to their subsequent uses by other parties for diverse purposes.

Graduate programs in archival studies must define their mission, goals, and objectives. Some programs educate generalists with a broad knowledge of records and archives administration while others prepare specialists in areas such as digital materials management, historical manuscripts, or management of institutional archives. Still others emphasize interdisciplinary studies that link, for example, archival, library, and museum knowledge. However, to qualify as an archival studies program (as opposed to a more specialized public history program or an archival concentration within an information studies program) the curriculum should focus on core archival knowledge areas as the foundation of any specialization or interdisciplinary education.



The mission, goals, and objectives of the program should be stated in terms of the educational outcomes they seek and the competences they provide. They should be consistent with the parent institution's mission and culture, and developed through a broad-based planning process that involves the program's constituencies.⁵ The curriculum should be directly related to the competences it is intended to develop, and faculty should review and evaluate it continually based on evolving professional responsibilities and challenges. Regardless of the organizational setting, master's-level archival studies programs must be coherent, cohesive, and clearly identifiable.

The importance and complexity of archival work require that individuals entering the profession receive a strong graduate-level archival education based on core archival knowledge complemented by knowledge drawn from other disciplines such as anthropology, economics, education, history, law, library and information science, computer science, management, museum studies, and sociology. A fully developed graduate program in archival studies must establish a curriculum that:

- Provides students with a solid foundation in the theory, methodology, and practice of archival science, history of recordkeeping and archives, and archival historiography and scholarship;
- Strengthens this foundation by giving students the opportunity to learn supporting areas of knowledge, and methods of allied and complementary disciplines;
- Assists students to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills related to all forms of records in the context of business, government, public needs, scientific research, or the stewardship of cultural heritage;
- Prepares students to manage and preserve trustworthy (i.e., reliable, accurate and authentic) records as well as any related materials regardless of form;
- Prepares students to conduct and communicate scholarly research;
- Prepares students to teach classes and workshops in archival literacy and the uses of archival resources;
- Communicates to students the ethical and legal dimensions of their work and impresses upon them a sense of their professional and social responsibilities for the public good and at the service of diverse groups; and
- Exposes students to a diversity of perspectives about records and archives, including diverse archival traditions, how these traditions manifest in different types of records, archives and archival institutions, and how they affect relationships with allied disciplines.



Graduate education is both academic and professional; therefore, it includes both original research and experiential learning. Ultimately, archival education creates an intellectual framework that enables students to understand the ideas on which their profession is founded, to engage in further development of archival principles, methods and practices, and to apply this knowledge in a wide variety of settings. Its training component focuses on building skills or acquiring practical knowledge according to a replicable pattern, or on developing a specialization in certain areas. Training occurs in the context of experiential learning.

The graduates of an archival studies program should have a thorough knowledge and understanding of archival concepts, principles and methods, and should be prepared to work independently in the performance of all archival functions. The variety and complexity of institutional settings and the increasingly digital and hybrid nature of records in our society require a broad range of skills and knowledge as well as a comprehensive understanding of archival science and its practical application to the management and preservation of current – as well as future – records.

A graduate archival program should educate students in the attributes of professionalism, and take students to the realization that professional education is a lifelong undertaking, and involves questioning accepted ideas and methods, revising received wisdom, and developing professional standards. Lifelong learning enables archivists to maintain knowledge and skills up-to-date and to master new knowledge and technologies their profession develops and changes.

These guidelines, therefore, focus on the essential elements of master's-level graduate archival education, independent of institutional placement and name of degree offered. Different programs may offer different emphases and specializations, but shall ensure students have a sufficient range of options and focuses. Knowledge from other disciplines brought to bear on the archival studies program enriches and expands the archival curriculum to meet a wide range of needs and interests.

Curriculum

A graduate program in archival studies should provide students with a solid foundation in archival theory, methodology, and practice augmented by instruction in complementary fields. The latter should be informed by an understanding of the nature of archives and the ways in which the methods and perspectives of a complementary field contribute to



professional archival practice. Because archivists have responsibilities to their institutions, to the profession, and to the public at large, a graduate program in archival studies should also ground its instruction in matters of archival ethics, professionalism, advocacy, and justice.

As stated above, the body of knowledge that a student should master as part of a graduate archival education comprises a) core archival knowledge and b) complementary knowledge, both supplemented by ethical and public interest concerns.

1. Core archival knowledge provides the theoretical, methodological and practical foundation necessary to work as a professional records manager or archivist. This includes knowledge of archival ethics that promote responsibility toward the standards of the profession and the public good.
2. Complementary knowledge introduces students to other disciplines, thereby deepening their understanding of archival work, support its accomplishment, and teach others how archives function for the public good. Complementary knowledge also allows students to specialize in specific aspects of archival work or to function in cross-disciplinary settings.

Graduate programs in archival studies should require at least eighteen (18) credit hours (or equivalent) of core archival knowledge. Schools that include archival education as a concentration in a degree in an allied discipline (e.g., information science, public history, digital forensics, library science) may necessarily take fewer hours. Such programs should take into consideration the scope of what is considered core archival knowledge within these guidelines, and decide how that knowledge relates to the focus and perspective of the degree being offered. Based on the demands of the graduate program's institution and the interests of the student, the non-core knowledge credits may be in specialised aspects of archival work or in complementary knowledge areas. The curriculum should integrate research throughout, and an important element of any program should be original research resulting in a scholarly paper, thesis, or professional project. The program should also include experiential learning in the form of a practicum, an internship, a professional project, or a co-op.



A. Core Archival Knowledge

Rationale:

The identity of a profession is founded on a discrete body of knowledge and on a professional culture that arises from a common history, a united purpose, a shared vocabulary, and collective values, norms, and standards. Consequently, core archival knowledge is the heart of an archival studies program. It should occupy a dominant position in the curriculum and should be taught by full-time archival educators, professional archivists, or other individuals with a depth of archival knowledge relevant to the topic. Core archival knowledge embraces three separate but interrelated facets of archival studies: Knowledge of Archival Material and Archival Functions (theory and methodology associated with specific areas of archival work); Knowledge of the Profession and the Archival System (history of the profession, its ethical code, and the evolution of its practices, and the international and national records and archives framework); and Contextual Knowledge (the juridical-administrative contexts within which records are created, managed, and kept). Because archival knowledge and professional culture transcend geographical, national, and social boundaries, each component should incorporate international and multicultural perspectives.

Components:

A.1. Knowledge of Archival Material and Functions

Archival education should teach the fundamental concepts concerning the nature of records and archives as well as records and archival management functions (archival theory), the ways of performing such functions (archival methodology), and the implementation of theory and methodology in real situations (archival practice). Instruction should cover the history of archival science and of its articulation in the professional literature (archival scholarship). The scope of archival education should encompass all records and archival functions and current best practices. It should also address knowledge of project management, archival organizational management, and risk and security management, as well as knowledge of the law directly affecting any such management (e.g. privacy, copyright).



A.1.a) The Nature of Records and Archives:

The archival concept of records through time, regardless of form or medium; the characteristics of records and their components, formal elements, and attributes; the trustworthiness of records and authentication; the status of transmission of records and their authority; the way records aggregate and their forms of aggregation; the diversity of ways in which individuals and groups create, maintain, and access records; the concept of archives and its history; various national archival traditions (e.g. the concept of total archives in Canada, the public records tradition in the US); the structure of archival bodies of material; archives as a place and as an institution; and the role of archives, archival institutions, and archival systems within the broader landscape of memory institutions.

A.1.b) Appraisal for Selection and Acquisition:

The theory, methods, policies, and procedures used to develop and authorize retention and disposition schedules, and identify, evaluate, select, acquire, and authenticate archival materials in all forms that have enduring value to records creators, institutions, researchers, and society. Appraisal entails, among other things, understanding what makes community, institutional, organizational and personal records trustworthy and useful to themselves and other communities, institutions, organizations individuals, in addition to legal and financial authorities, and other constituents. Instruction should go beyond the theory and present strategies and techniques that help archivists manage problems of backlogs and hidden accessions they will face when practicing appraisal and processing. This instruction should also include deaccessioning, rescheduling, reappraisal, donor relations, assessment of creators, and the many international approaches to selection and acquisition.

A.1.c) Arrangement and Description:

The intellectual and physical organization of the records of all types and form acquired by an archives according to archival principles and institutional considerations, and the development of descriptive tools and systems that provide both control of and access to archival fonds and other aggregations of records. Teaching methods and technology applications should link theory to practice.



A.1.d) Preservation:

The physical and intellectual protection of records of all types and in all forms, including the activities required to ensure their continuing accessibility, such as digitization, reformatting, or migration. Preservation knowledge comprises a firm grounding in preservation history; research into the nature of the materials and treatments; current techniques, technologies and services; and administrative studies and management issues.

A.1.e) Reference and Access:

The policies and procedures designed to serve the information needs of various user groups, based on institutional mandates and constituencies, the nature of the materials, relevant laws and ethical considerations, and appropriate technologies. Users of archives include both researchers and records creators: students should be aware of different types of user groups and their respective needs and rights. Instruction in this area should also include the study of user behavior, discovery and access techniques and technologies, user-based evaluation techniques, and the interaction between archivist and user.

A.1.f) Outreach and Advocacy:

The theories and practices used to identify archival constituencies and their needs and to develop programs that promote increased use, understanding of archival materials and methods, resources, visibility, and support. It includes primary source and information literacy as well as methods of promoting the value of archives to the public and other audiences, and articulation of the benefits the profession provides to society beyond competent management of the records in the archivists' care. Students should understand the juridical, administrative, sociological, and historical contexts in which records and archives exist, and how these affect the relationships of archives and archivists to the communities they serve. Students should be aware of the ways in which archives and archivists have at times impinged upon, undermined and displaced other memory traditions originating from juridical traditions not shared by contemporary archival practices.

A.1.g) Management and Administration:

The principles and practices used to facilitate all aspects of archival work through careful planning and administration of the repository, unit, or program, its institutional resources, and its policy making practices. At all career levels, archivists manage resources and make



decisions, and often must demonstrate programmatic vision and innovation. Thus, graduates should know the fundamental principles related to organizational management and policies, risk management, strategic planning, systems analysis, project and program planning, budgeting, administrative leadership, human resources management, financial management, resource allocation, fundraising, grant writing, and the management of buildings, facilities, storage systems, and other equipment.

A.1.h) Records and Information Management:

The principles and methods involved in managing records and information from and often before creation and for as long as the records will be needed by their creator for the purposes of its business, functions, or activities. Records and information managers and archivists share the same body of knowledge, and their duties are increasingly blended together in a single professional responsibility. All graduates of archival studies programs should be able to analyze a creator's structure and decision-making, to design and develop its records system, and to apply such knowledge to decisions regarding all archival functions.

A.1.i) Digital Materials Management:

Graduates of archival studies programs should be able to apply their knowledge to archival materials in all forms. They should have an understanding of the nature, characteristics and preservation challenges of digital organizational records and personal fonds. They should have knowledge of file formats, media types, and complex information technologies for the creation, retention and disposition, maintenance, use, and preservation of all types of records. Additionally, archival studies programs should teach students to develop management systems for records and to identify and implement appropriate technological solutions to facilitate all aspects of archival work.

A.2. Knowledge of the Profession

Archival education should provide students with an understanding of how the profession has developed and how its specific practices have evolved. It should teach students about the nature of records programs as well as archival institutions, units and programs; the values and ethics that records and archives professionals bring to their work; and the perspectives that they contribute to the information professions.



A.2.a) Archival Systems and the Archives Profession:

A graduate program in archival studies should teach the historical development of record-making and recordkeeping systems and of archives in various civilizations. This instruction should cover the structure of the archival system internationally and in North America in particular; the types of archival repositories and programs in Canada and the United States, along with their policies and procedures; and the legislation and regulations governing records, archives, and archival work in Canada and the United States. Instruction also should address the history of the records and archives profession; its missions, roles, and values; and the profession's contemporary concerns.

A.2.b) Records and Cultural Memory:

Organizational and personal records in all forms constitute the documentary memory of individuals and society. They provide the basis for holding governments and organizations accountable and for protecting the rights of individuals and groups. However, they are only part of the fabric of cultural memory. Archivists work in cooperation with other professionals (including, but not limited to, those who work for or on behalf of governments, organizations, historical societies, libraries, and museums) to preserve and provide access to cultural and social memory. Students should understand the relationships among archives and other stewards of cultural memory and the ways in which records complement that heritage and protect communities' documentation and rights. Students should also be familiar with relationships between documentary and non-documentary approaches used to maintain cultural and social memory, including the embodied culture of oral traditions and the socially distributed memory practices of many Indigenous cultures, and the various contexts in which these approaches are applied.

A.2.c) Ethics and Values:

The records and archives profession bases its ethics and values on its responsibility to manage, preserve, protect, and make available records. Graduate programs should make students familiar with the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the Association of Canadian Archivists, its underlying principles and perspectives, and its relationship to similar codes issued by other professional associations of records managers and archivists, and to related professions' codes of ethics. Students should understand how the records and archives profession's ethics and values inform decisions, how professional ethics and values interact



with local or jurisdictional ethics and values, and how to resolve potential conflicts in order to conduct their work consistently with relevant ethical obligations in pursuit of the public good.

A.3. Contextual Knowledge

Graduates of archival studies programs should understand the juridical-administrative contexts in which records are created and kept, the methods and practices of their management, and the technology involved in records creation, management, preservation and access. This knowledge should be integrated in the core curriculum wherever possible to foster a sound working knowledge that graduates can apply to their daily activities. Some of these areas of knowledge may also be studied more fully as disciplines in their own right; therefore, they are also listed under Complementary Knowledge below.

A.3.a) Social and Cultural Systems:

Knowledge of social and cultural systems is important for two reasons. First, graduates must understand the institutional and individual structures and systems that form the context in which records are created, maintained, and used. They should also understand the recordkeeping implications of social and cultural systems; the diversity of ways that individuals and groups create, maintain, and access records; and the organizational structures and procedures used by different types of institutions and organizations to ensure documentation and accountability. Second, graduates must understand the political, social, and economic dynamics within their organizational contexts to achieve their goals and objectives.

A.3.b) Legal and Financial Systems:

Records and the recordkeeping systems of both institutions and individuals result from and reflect the legal and financial systems in which they were created and ensure organizational and individual accountability. Archival core knowledge incorporates the origin, development, structure, and functioning of legal and financial systems, including federal, state, and local laws as well as the regulatory environment. This should include both public and private sector jurisdictions, privacy rights, freedom of information legislation, and a wide variety of intellectual property rights, display and performance rights, and literary rights related to recorded material in all forms.

A.3.c) Indigenous communities

Canada is founded on Indigenous lands, and Indigenous memory traditions predate archival approaches to cultural and social memory. Graduates of archival studies programs should have



knowledge of contemporary published guidance on information governance as it pertains to Indigenous communities, and knowledge of protocols, particularly Indigenous-authored protocols, for social memory and knowledge management. Graduates should also understand historical and current power relationships between Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous social structures, how power imbalances are both reflected in and maintained by archives and ways of addressing them. In particular, students should be familiar with the role of archives within processes of colonizing Indigenous lands and in the displacement and elimination of Indigenous communities and cultures.

B. Complementary Knowledge

Rationale:

Archivists must rely on knowledge, methods, and perspectives of other disciplines. The interdisciplinary nature of archival studies arises from the complexity of archival materials, the contexts of their creation, the multiplicity of their potential uses, and the many roles that graduates of archival studies programs fill. Graduates should be knowledgeable about significant theories, methods, and practices in the following fields.

Components:

B.1. Information Technology

Most contemporary records are created, stored, maintained, used, and preserved in digital form. Familiarity with networking, hardware, software, and digital systems and services in general is fundamental to performing archival functions in the 21st century. Graduates of archival studies programs should understand human/computer interaction (to design and develop effective systems for users), the importance of information standards, and how to evaluate systems and related services effectively. The curriculum could include opportunities to train in database design and management, information architecture, website design and creation, metadata schemas, markup languages, authentication methods and basic programming skills.

B.2. Conservation

Beyond the core archival knowledge of preservation, some knowledge may be needed of conservation practices, that is, of a range of intervention activities needed to stabilize



materials in their original format by physical, chemical, or digital means. Graduates should have sufficient understanding of this discipline to be able to judge the efficacy of conservation treatments and to evaluate the appropriate conservation treatment for a document or group of documents. For digital materials, graduates should have sufficient understanding of digital object recovery techniques and digital security technologies.

B.3. Research Design and Execution

Understanding multiple methods of research design and execution is important to enable graduates to provide effective service to a wide variety of researchers and to evaluate archival operations from the perspective of users. Knowledge of and experience with research also allows graduates to assess the status of research in their own discipline, to undertake new research, and to blend theoretical and empirical aspects of archival studies into scholarly investigations. Finally, knowledge of research may allow archivists to use their repositories' holdings to advance their own scholarship and provide enhanced reference and access.

B.4. Organizational Theory

The study of theories of organizational development, management, and culture is important in archival education because it provides the tools for understanding the evolution, nature, and structure of organizations that create records and assists students in understanding how to successfully operate within the institutions that will employ them. Knowledge of different models of organizational structure, operations, behavior, and institutional culture provides valuable perspectives for understanding recordkeeping systems and the context of records creation, management, and use.

B.5. Library and Information Science

Institutions often administratively connect archives, libraries, and special collections. Departments relating to the information science profession can share physical space, technical resources, staff, stakeholders, and skill sets. Students in graduate archival education programs benefit from understanding the similarities and differences in these closely related fields in order to build collaborative relationships with information science colleagues, as well as complementary knowledge.

B.6. Liberal Arts and Sciences

Frequently, students beginning archival studies already have a broad background in the liberal arts. Nonetheless, further graduate work in such disciplines can directly augment archival



knowledge. Especially valuable is education in fields that help explain the context of records creation and the practice of recordkeeping, including accounting, anthropology, economics, political science, and sociology, as well as science and the arts. Because the holdings of many archival institutions emanate from or concentrate on specific social sectors or movements, specialized knowledge in one or more humanities, social science, or science disciplines may be an important asset for appraisal and reference work in some settings.

B.7. Allied Professions

The work of archivists and archival institutions intersects with that of other professionals involved in the identification, protection, and dissemination of recorded information. Among these are specialists in library and information science, computer science, museum studies, oral history, historic preservation, historical editing, social and community organizations, and public history. The archival profession is not a branch of any related profession; however, exposure to the distinct purposes and methods of allied fields will be advantageous to archives students

Administration, Faculty, and Infrastructure

A. Faculty

Graduate programs in archival studies must have a faculty capable of accomplishing program objectives. Faculty should have a deep understanding of the profession and archival work, strong ties to both the academic and professional communities, technological knowledge and skills, and a record of research and publication within the field. They should be effective teachers and active participants in professional organizations.

To meet these guidelines, a program must have a minimum of two full time, tenure-track faculty members. Full-time faculty members must be eligible for appointment to the graduate faculty within the parent institution (in virtually all cases this equates, at a minimum, to holding a doctoral degree) and must demonstrate expertise by contributions to archival knowledge through publications and professional service. The faculty must be sufficient in number and in diversity of specialties to carry out the major share of the teaching, research, and service activities required for the program and to deliver the core knowledge of archival studies to give stability to the program. In many instances, additional full- or part-time faculty



will be required to fulfill program objectives. Part-time or adjunct faculty, when appointed, should balance and complement the teaching competencies of the full-time faculty. Programs are enhanced when adjunct or part-time faculty have extensive practical experience, demonstrated expertise through contributions to professional knowledge by means of publication and professional service, and excellent teaching credentials. In the interests of diversifying the historical record and the profession, it is incumbent upon graduate programs to diversify their faculties and student bodies. Diversity in faculty, students, professionals, viewpoints, and experience is increasingly important to maintaining the relevance of archives.

B. Program Duration

The appropriate duration of a graduate program in archival studies should be consistent with that of all graduate programs in the hosting school or university in which it is situated. To cover the curriculum components outlined above adequately, however, a master's-level archival program should have a minimum of eighteen (18) credit hours or equivalent devoted exclusively to core archival knowledge, plus, practical experience. Remaining credits can be in areas of complementary knowledge or electives.

C. Structure of the Learning Process

Graduate education in archival studies requires several modes of instruction and learning. Coursework provides the best method of presenting archival theory, principles, and methodology, as well as many areas of interdisciplinary knowledge. Practical experience is necessary to apply theory to workplace settings and to provide experiential learning. Scholarly research enables students to explore dimensions of the field in greater depth and to contribute original research to the professional discourse.

C.1. Coursework

Coursework is the basic venue for graduate-level archival education, and course format (e.g., lecture, seminar, web-based, distance education) will vary. Coursework should also include opportunities for building an open, inclusive, and collaborative environment with fellow students and colleagues through group and/or outreach projects.

C.2. Practical Experience

Experiential learning in the workplace will enhance knowledge acquired in coursework. In the context of master's-level archival education, practical experience is not an exercise to discover



theory and methods empirically; rather, it allows students to verify their understanding of archival science by applying its concepts and principles in real-life situations and to understand how to make adjustments so that archival theory and methodology fit archival practice. Practical experience also provides students with structured feedback on their application of archival skills and with mentoring by records professionals working in the field.

Any form of experiential learning must primarily serve the student's educational goals, even if a host institution or organization ultimately benefits from the work accomplished by the student. Any practical experience with a host institution or organization should be a structured program related to the student's program of study. Faculty, in collaboration with the designated host's internship supervisor, should design the program and include provisions for regular feedback and evaluation.

C.3. Scholarly Research

Scholarly research is an essential component of the archival studies curriculum because it enhances students' ability to think critically and rigorously about archival issues, and strengthens their competence to analyze, critically review, and engage with the literature. Research also has the potential to provide original contributions to the archival literature and thus helps to invigorate the profession. Archival research can take many forms and borrow methodologies from a variety of fields in the humanities and social sciences. Although much archival research has been the result of an individual effort, education programs should introduce students to collaborative, creative research and encourage it within and outside their own discipline.

D. Resources and Facilities

Instructional and research resources and facilities for meeting the needs of students and faculty include access to core archival literature, library and multimedia resources and services, computers and information technologies, and accommodations for independent and group study. Facilities should be appropriately staffed, convenient, and fully accessible to users of varying needs. Students should develop skills in using digitized primary resources and digital repositories, and should have regular and frequent access to physical archives and manuscript repositories. Repository access can take the form of class visits, research assignments in the repositories, and opportunities for internships and other types of practical experience. It is particularly important for a program to have strong relationships with area repositories.



E. Administration, Placement, and Financial Support

The graduate program in archival studies must identify a program head who is responsible for making certain that the program achieves its mission, goals, and objectives. The program head must be one of the full-time tenure-track members of the faculty or staff of the home department. Depending on the scope and placement of the program, he or she may have the title of director, chairperson, or coordinator.

Programs must provide career counseling and vigorous placement support for students. Career counseling is essential because students will encounter a variety of potential employment venues as well as numerous institutional and functional specializations. Vigorous placement support also is essential for students as they enter the job market because of the variety of ways in which employment opportunities are advertised or announced. Programs should also emphasize the importance of professional recommendations in the successful job search.

The parent institution must provide the program with continuing financial support that is sufficient to develop and maintain it. The level of support must provide a reasonable expectation of financial viability and must consider the number of faculty, administrative and support staff, instructional resources, library and information services, and facilities needed to carry out the archival education program's mission, goals, and objectives.

Conclusion

These guidelines define the minimum requirements for a graduate program in archival studies that is coherent, autonomous, and based on core archival knowledge. Within the guidelines, higher education institutions may create a wide variety of programs offering master's degrees. This range of options provides students with choices of direction and emphasis and ultimately enriches the profession by promoting diverse educational offerings around a common core of knowledge. These guidelines define the academic education needed to meet the challenges of serving as an archivist in the 21st century and provide a strong common basis for graduate archival education regardless of any program's institutional affiliation.



Endnotes

¹ Association of Canadian Archivists. *Guidelines for the development of a two-year curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies* (1990). Originally published in *Archivaria* 29 (Winter 1989-90). Available online at https://archivists.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/about_aca/56%20-%20guidelines_mas_web.pdf

² Society of American Archivists. *Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies* (2016). Available online at <https://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/graduate/gpas>. The "Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies" (GPAS) were first approved by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council in January 2002 and subsequently revised by the Committee on Education in 2005, 2011, and 2015. The current version of GPAS was revised by the Committee on Education and adopted by the SAA Council in November 2016, at the recommendation of the SAA Standards Committee. GPAS replaced the "Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Degree," adopted by the Council in 1994.

³ Association of Canadian Archivists. *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* (2017). Available online at https://archivists.ca/sites/default/files/website_files/policy/aca_code_of_ethics_final_october_2017.pdf

⁴ Records are recorded information, regardless of physical format or type of creator (public or private), made or received by an individual or organization carrying out its activities and set aside for preservation and future use. Records are instrumental for evidence and accountability as well as for social and cultural memory.

⁵ The interdisciplinary character of archival education makes it possible to place a program in a variety of settings, such as a school of library and information science, a department of history, a school of public administration, a law school, or a school of business administration. Two departments may also administer a program jointly, thereby emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of the archival field.