

COLLEGE STUDENT AS ARCHIVES' CONSULTANT? A NEW APPROACH TO OUTREACH PROGRAMMING ON CAMPUS

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ABSTRACT: Archivists agree that documenting student culture requires an understanding of student experience, current campus issues, and extracurricular activities. Yet few consult and partner with students in planning and implementing their documentary programs. This article illustrates how the use of student “consultants,” through a class survey project and as part of a permanent archives student advisory committee, can cultivate successful outreach and collection-development programs.

Over the past thirty-five years, archivists have taken an increasing interest in the value of student documentation. Student scrapbooks, minutes, publications, and photographs offer a unique glimpse into campus life, grass roots movements, societal issues, and national events. Archival scholarship extols the research potential of these documents and outlines strategies for capturing student experience more fully. At the same time, it ignores the role students can and should play in planning and implementing any documentary program related to student life and culture.

This article illustrates how the University of Illinois' Student Life and Culture Archival Program (SLC Archives)¹ has enlisted “student consultants” in its outreach programming to ascertain student perceptions of the archives and to determine how students document their extracurricular activities and institute their record-keeping practices. Through two small-scale projects—a survey project of classes that visited the SLC Archives in the fall of 2003 and a student advisory committee that provided input and feedback on archival programming—the SLC Archives has made first steps in establishing a responsive, informed, and student-centered documentary program.

Studying Students: The Value of Student Documentation

Archivists first began actively documenting student life and culture in the late 1960s in response to a new social history research movement that focused on the “under-documented” of society. Instead of examining university presidents or professors' roles in higher education as in the past, historians and others began to look at student experi-

ence and the extra-curriculum.² Historical studies such as Calvin Lee's *The Campus Scene, 1900–1970* (1970) and later, Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz's *Campus Life* (1987), are notable products of this movement. More recently, Lewis Mayhew, Patrick Ford, and Dean Hubbard have written of the importance of student "out of class room" experience as "one of the most potent educational forces affecting the student's development."³ Scholarship concerning student culture has informed not only historical understanding but also student administration practices and curriculum development.

Archivists slowly responded to this interest in student extracurricular life by implementing collection-development activities. Before the late 1960s, extracurricular life largely had been ignored, since many archivists believed such documentation was unimportant or outside their collection scope.⁴ By the mid-1970s, archivists such as Harley Holden and Timothy Walch discussed the significant research potential of student documents. Others discussed the legal ramifications of providing access to students' personal records in light of the Buckley Amendment of 1973.⁵ By 1978, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) proclaimed that "from both a research and an administrative standpoint, institutions of higher learning have a special obligation to preserve the records of individual students, student organizations and campus life."⁶ Over the past 27 years, this assertion has continued to gain supporters. In 1992, SAA's college and university archives manuals highlighted the value of student documentation for historical research.⁷ A few years later, two masters theses confirmed that archivists valued student organization and extracurricular documentation. These authors also reported, however, that few archivists had time to actively collect student material and none had records management programs for student organization records.⁸

Documenting Students: A Look at Archival Scholarship

If archivists value student documentation, why aren't they devoting more attention to these materials? Most likely, it is because student experience is a difficult and time-consuming subject to capture. Constant turnover in the student population, the frequent founding and dissolving of student organizations, student organization name and officer changes, and the diversity of student body activities are but a few notable problems. Those who have written on the challenge of documenting student experience have stressed the importance of outreach in addressing students' transient existence by suggesting such strategies as working with student administrators to document organizations, contacting student leaders about the archives, speaking at student meetings, posting exhibits in highly visible areas, and creating handouts and brochures to distribute at events.⁹ Interestingly, although archivists in earlier studies have confessed to having little time to actively document student culture, a 2002 survey of SAA's College and University Archives Section members found that academic archives' outreach efforts were overwhelmingly directed toward the student population.¹⁰ Perhaps these efforts were aimed at improving use, rather than acquiring student materials.¹¹ Nevertheless, this finding supports the assertion that students are an important outreach target.

Largely missing from archival research on student documentation is the notion that students can and should be active participants in the archives' documentary program. Only a few archivists have written about this consultative approach. In 2001, The Ohio State University (OSU) Archives hosted a one-time meeting of honors students to gather suggestions for creating a greater archival presence among the student body. Although some of the students' suggestions were unrealistic, the OSU Archives received valuable feedback about its current programs and useful ideas for greater visibility.¹²

In 2003–2004, Chris Prom and the author examined student organizations' record-keeping practices in a study funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). In addition to analyzing the informational value of students' Web sites and offering best practices guidelines for long-term capture, they also surveyed students regarding their record-keeping practices. Students provided valuable information concerning the types of records the groups saved, the formats they used, and how they stored them.¹³ The projects described in the following paragraphs build on and expand the scope of these efforts and studies.

Fostering Archives and Student Engagement: Two Projects

Based on the author's experience, a student documentation project should address three significant issues. First, it is critical to investigate how students perceive the archives. Students' lack of understanding about the archives and its role at the university is one of the most challenging and important issues for the archivist to address. Most students' views are formed by the stereotypes presented in films, the news media, and popular publications. The archives is generally depicted as a dark, dusty, isolated room, usually in a remote area, that contains forgotten and unimportant mementos of times past. It is a place of noncurrent, cast-off materials managed by quiet individuals who revel in the past. These stereotypes and inaccurate assumptions hinder archivists' ability to administer students' programs. Students will not value the mission and activities of the archives if they do not have a keen understanding of what archivists do and why they are important.¹⁴

The second question to consider in program planning is the way in which students document their own activities and lives. What role has technology played in student organizations' record-keeping practices? What types of materials are these organizations producing and who is in charge, internally, of documenting their activities? Students at the beginning of the twentieth century created elaborate scrapbooks to memorialize their college experiences. How are students in the twenty-first century representing their extracurricular culture? Some are using blogs (Web diaries), personal Web pages, or on-line social networking services such as MySpace or Facebook, to express their thoughts and connect with friends. Student letters to family and friends, which in past decades have been so valuable for tracking student daily life, now have been replaced with E-mail and phone conversations. The archivist must understand how students document and save their campus culture in order to plan an effective archival documentation strategy.

Finally, it is necessary to ask the question, What would motivate a student or student organization to transfer materials to the Archives? What tangible benefits can the archivist offer—better access to the group's records, "free" storage of inactive materials, assistance with student organizations' celebrations or anniversary events? Can we simply convey to students that their culture is an integral part of the university's historical tapestry that elicits research interest? Most often, students do not know that their records are important beyond their own use and are surprised to learn someone is interested in them.

To address these issues, the SLC Archives initiated two projects, a student class survey and an archives student advisory committee.

Student Class Survey Project

In November and December 2003, the staff conducted a survey of seven classes that had visited the SLC Archives that semester for instruction concerning a range of topics and assignments. The survey addressed students' perceptions about the archives before and after the class visit, use of technology in everyday life, and record-keeping practices (see appendix 1). Staff distributed surveys to students during a class period after the archives visit. All students signed consent agreements that outlined the research purpose and voluntary nature of the survey and stated that participants' confidentiality would be maintained.

The classes involved in the survey included one section of Rhetoric 101: College Writing I, two sections of Rhetoric 103: College Composition I, and two sections of Rhetoric 105: Principles of Rhetoric, which are the mandatory, introductory freshman rhetoric courses.¹⁵ Also included in the survey were two upper-level classes: English 381: Theory and Practice of Written Composition and Anthropology 199: Ethnography of the University. During each class's archives visit, the SLC archivist provided an introduction to the archives, including a discussion of the definition, purpose, and collection scope of the archives, a comparison of archival vs. library research strategies, information about finding and accessing archival materials, and archival database instruction. In addition to this overview, the SLC archivist outlined ideas and resources for the specific assignment at hand. Assignments included a short paper and presentation on a subject of student or university history (Rhetoric 105), an examination of a "conflict zone" on campus, such as a protest, debate, etc. (Rhetoric 103), a final paper project that examined forms of student writing outside the classroom (English 381), an essay comparing and contrasting the student experience of any alumnus with that of the student (Anthropology 199), and an essay on a personal artifact that represented the student's life as a student (Rhetoric 101 and 103).¹⁶ Each class viewed a number of archival materials that represented samples of the types of information and sources found in the archives—student rules and handbooks, student personal correspondence and scrapbooks, publications by and for students, etc. Of the 96 students who completed the survey, 68 were freshman, 2 were sophomores, 1 was a junior, and 24 were seniors.¹⁷

It is important to note that this survey group represents a typical semester of class use in the SLC Archives. It does not represent a sampling of the UI student body, which had an enrollment of 38,870 students (graduate and undergraduate) in fall 2003.

Archives Student Advisory Committee

In addition to the survey project, the SLC Archives also established a Student Advisory Committee to solicit student views and ideas about archives' programming, identify student documentary activities, introduce students to the archives, and assist the archives in collecting student materials (see appendix 2). Composed of student leaders from a number of representative student organizations—fraternity and sorority leadership groups, student government, religious and social action groups, athletic clubs, and cultural organizations—the committee serves as a sounding board for new programs and provides input into the ways in which the archives can better reach and serve the student body. In addition, these leaders can promote the archives to their peers and encourage other groups to transfer and use records and documents in the archives.¹⁸

The director of registered student organizations supported the project by attending meetings and promoting the importance of the committee to the students who were involved.

In collaboration with the director, the archivist invited student leaders from a variety of organizations—including service, political, social, professional, and recreational groups—in order to insure representation of diverse experiences. In addition, leaders represented groups that previously had deposited records with the Archives and those that had had little or no contact with the SLC program. Highly visible, well-connected, and historically “important” organizations—such as Illinois Student Government and the Illini Union Board—were also invited. Finally, the archivist invited a few umbrella groups such as the Greek Councils, whose members were involved in other related organizations.

Although these projects have resulted in invaluable advice and information for developing outreach and documentary programming, it is important to re-emphasize that survey project participants and advisory committee membership represent a small fraction of the total student population on campus. There are more than one thousand registered student organizations on campus and an uncountable number of informal groups and clubs. These projects, which are discussed in the following paragraphs, are first steps in gaining an understanding of student culture on campus.

Project Findings

Student Perceptions of the Archives

Section I of the class survey addressed students' awareness and perceptions of the archives. The first group of questions focused on the archives' visibility on campus. Survey results indicated that 7 freshman (10.2% of all freshman in the study) and 6 seniors (25% of all seniors in the study) had heard of the SLC Archives or University Archives prior to attending the class visit. Overall, 13.5% of the total number of students in the survey had prior knowledge of the archives.¹⁹ Of these, however, only 3 seniors and 1 freshman had used the Archives prior to class. Although these statistics are low, it is important to remember that first-semester freshmen, who had had little time to encounter the archives, comprise 70.8 % of the survey population.²⁰ In positive terms, the freshman rhetoric classes' visits offered the SLC Archives the opportunity to introduce students to the archives early in their college careers. As expected, the number of seniors who had heard of the Archives is higher (25% of all seniors in the study) than that of freshman.

Part I of the survey also addressed students' perceptions of "an archives" before and after their class visit. Before the visit, students envisioned that the archives was much like a library or museum but with "old documents, books, and artifacts of years past" or "big stacks of paper just filed away like folders in a doctor's office." One student expected an archives to contain "a bunch of old stuff in a dusty old room from past students." Two students thought of the archives in terms of a video game they played frequently. One student explained, "a James Bond video game was the only exposure to the word 'archives' I have ever had." Another was surprised the archives wasn't in the basement. Overall, students described the "imagined archives" with stereotypical words—old, dusty, antique, and "museum-like."

When asked whether their perceptions of the archives changed after their class visit, 49 of 92 students who completed Section I of the survey responded yes (53.2%), 37 responded no (40.2%), and 6 (6.5%) responded "yes and no" or stated that they had no perceptions prior to the visit. Most students whose perception changed emphasized their surprise that the archives contained personal materials written and saved by ordinary students, such as beanies, "dance invites," scrapbooks, and diaries. A couple of students were surprised that student life materials were not automatically placed in the archives, but instead she or he "now realize[d] that librarians and students have to actively seek archival material." One student responded that before the visit he or she thought of archives in terms of a "holding facility" but after the visit, "thinks of it in connection with documentation and information."

Unfortunately, those students whose perception did not change after the visit did not expound on the reasons, except to say that the archives looked like a library or a museum. On the other hand, students who didn't have a perception of the archives prior to the visit, came away with a positive experience. One student explained, "I felt as though it was extremely useful, and almost captivating because it is amazing to see the history of U of I in something, aside from newspaper articles. I never had a perception but now my perception is a good one."

The final question in Section I of the survey required students to list what they liked and disliked about the archives or the visit. Overwhelmingly, comments were positive. Students responded with words such as “interesting” and “fascinating.” They cited “helpful staff” and listed certain items (such as scrapbooks) they enjoyed. Among freshmen, comments included: “I liked it all. I don’t like learning history and the reproducing on a test, but I really enjoy just looking through things like the archives.” Others said, “I liked getting to see all of those old things from my school’s past” and “I liked that the archives had so many unique information sources.” One student responded, “I liked seeing old pictures and reading old articles about my sorority. The visit opened my eyes to the wonderful aspects of the archives and its respect for history.” A senior commented, “I liked how everything is collected and documented. I loved looking through authentic pieces (like letters and scrapbooks). I disliked how no one knows about it.”

The most common “dislikes” about the archives were the distance of the archives from the main campus (a twenty-minute walk) and confusion about how to find and access materials in the archives. A few students stated that they would prefer to use books or magazines as resources. One student expressed that the archives had an “old museum feeling to it” which he or she thought was a “bad” thing.

These students’ comments may seem predictable. Certainly, their attitudes reflect larger society’s misconceptions of archives. That said, few researchers have asked students about their perceptions of the archives. Their responses provide useful clues for improving archives-student interaction.

Student Documentation Practices

Section II of the survey concerned students’ documentation practices, specifically use of technology, extracurricular life, and personal record-keeping practices. Not surprisingly, 83.3% of students who completed Section II use a cell phone on campus. Table 1 and Table 2 outline the means with which students communicate with friends on campus and friends and family out of town. As seen in Table 1, most students used phone, E-mail, and on-line chat several times a day to communicate with friends on campus. Of these, phone use, several times a day, is the favored method of communication. Not surprisingly, phone use and E-mail were also favored methods for communicating with friends and family out of town (Table 2). In both Table 1 and Table 2, students indicated that postal mail was infrequently used.

Table 1: Students' Communication with Friends on Campus (N=96)

Means of Communication and Frequency of Use	Don't Use (%)	Once a Week or Less (%)	Few Times a Week (%)	Daily (%)	Several Times a Day (%)
Phone	3.1	7.3	20.8	18.8	50
E-mail	9.4	15.6	21.9	26	27.1
On-line Chat	28	4.2	14.6	17.7	35.4
Other*	88.5	3.1	2.1	3.1	3.1

*Most students left this category blank, which registered as "don't use." One student answered with an "X" instead of a number, with the comment: "I usually see them day to day."

Table 2: Students' Communication with Friends or Family Out of Town (N=96)

Means of Communication and Frequency of Use	Don't Use (%)	Once a Week or Less (%)	Few Times a Week (%)	Daily (%)	Several Times a Day (%)
Phone	6.3	13.5	30.2	25	25
E-mail	18.8	26	21.9	22.9	10.4
Post	49	46.9	3.1	1	0
On-line Chat	36.5	11.5	12.5	16.7	22.9
Other	96.9	1	0	0	2.1

The survey also inquired about students' use of computers for personal reasons. As seen in Table 3, nearly half of the respondents (45.9%) spent more than five hours of personal time on the computer each week.

Table 3: Students' Use of Computer per Week for Nonacademic Reasons (N=96)

Time on Computer per Week	Less than One Hour (%)	One to Five Hours (%)	Five to Ten Hours (%)	Ten to Twenty Hours (%)	More than Twenty Hours (%)	Left Question Blank (%)
Responses	13.5	38.5	19.8	14.6	11.5	2.1

In addition, of the students completing Section II of the survey (N=96), 20.8% had personal Web sites, and 6.3% maintained personal blogs. Only 1% had both a Web site and a blog. Those who did maintain Web sites and blogs used them to discuss a variety of subjects, as shown in Table 4. Students were to mark all categories that

applied. Students who marked the category “other” listed such topics as: personality, career/résumé, philosophies, eportfolio, feelings, and campus life. One student commented, “I show dogs, dog related stuff: shows, food, genetics.” When students were asked if they read Web sites or blogs written by other students, 36.5% answered yes and 63.5% answered no.

Table 4: Topics of Student Web Sites and Blogs (N=24)

Topics	Responses (%)
Social Life outside the Classroom	41.7
Politics and Current Events	12.5
Entertainment, Music, Popular Culture	20.8
Sports	12.5
Coursework or Academic Topics	50
Other	25

Finally, the survey inquired about the types of materials students saved to remember their college days (Table 5). Again, students were instructed to mark all categories that applied. Interestingly, photo albums or scrapbooks received the most marks, followed by course notes and materials, letters, electronic photos, E-mail, newspapers or flyers, and other hard copy and electronic documents. Within the “other categories,” students listed: “anything I’ve written,” booklets by departments and organizations, eportfolio (portfolio for education program), memos from Bridge/Transition (summer academic program for incoming freshman who need extra academic assistance), “notes from friends and cards received from various people,” student publications, and “ticket stubs to things I attended.”

Table 5: What, if anything, are you saving to remember your college experience? (N=96)

Type of Document	Positive Responses (%)
Photo Albums or Scrapbooks	59.4
Electronic Photos	32.3
Letters	40.6
E-mail	30.2
Newspapers or Flyers	27.1
Course Notes or Materials	55.2
Other Electronic Docs	5.2
Other “Hard copy” Docs	13.5

The SLC Archives' student advisory committee also provided information concerning record-keeping practices, but from the standpoint of student organization leaders. At its November 2003 and March 2004 meetings, committee members outlined the types of materials they kept, how these materials were maintained, and what problems and issues student organization leaders faced in keeping records. Not surprisingly, student organizations favored electronic communication. Several of the leaders distributed minutes, reports, newsletters, and event notices via E-mail or through their organization's Web site. Others saved their records on CDs. Many did not know whether members in their groups were saving these documents in paper form after they were sent or posted. Overall, no one in the group had a systematic method for keeping their records. While some stored files in their assigned cubicles in the Union, other group leaders reported that individuals in the organization keep active records in their own files. In addition, some groups had an assigned "historian" or an academic advisor who helped with record keeping. Most groups dumped "unneeded" records at the end of each semester, especially at the end of the school year.

Committee members in the November meeting expressed their frustration with the amount of information lost with each frequent leadership turnover. One student joined the archives committee specifically to find answers to this problem. She hoped the Archives could outline the types of records that had long-term importance and provide advice on transferring records and information from one student leader to another.

Motivation for Transferring Records: Selling the Archives to Students

The Student Advisory Committee in March 2004 specifically addressed ways in which the Archives could connect with students about its programs. Committee members provided advice about what programs or activities would work, and voiced skepticism about other project ideas introduced by the SLC Archivist. The Archivist described some of the projects the SLC Archives had undertaken in the past, including: an annual mass E-mailing to student organization presidents (more than a thousand) about the archives and its interest in student organizations' records, an archives booth at Quad Day (student organization fair at the beginning of fall semester), distribution of an SLC Archives brochure at the Registered Student Organization (RSO) Office, Archives' hosting of student organizations for tours and meetings, and a history project with social fraternities and sororities on campus.

It became clear from the discussion that two issues should guide student outreach programming in the archives. First, the Archives should target individual groups rather than the whole student organization population, and second, the Archives should make it as easy as possible for students to transfer records to the Archives. Committee members were not surprised that the SLC Archives mass mailing to all registered groups resulted in 12–15 responses each year. They explained that because student leaders receive so much E-mail from campus groups, the RSO office, and other student leaders, they do not spend time reading through those that require no action. Instead, members suggested targeting student groups who had transferred records to

the Archives in the past. Most agreed that an organization would be interested in what the Archives had concerning that group and that this introduction would enable the Archives to pursue more material on a regular basis. Committee members stressed that asserting “student history is important” would not impress students. Showing students how their particular organization’s history has been saved and can be saved in the future would be more effective. Members felt that once the Archives had established relationships with several targeted groups, other groups would show an interest too. In addition, instead of mass E-mail blasts, members suggested that the Archives create a colorful letter with photographs to send to targeted groups via campus postal mail. One member remarked that she loved getting postal mail (and she paid attention to it) since it came so infrequently! E-mail was too routine.

The second issue to consider when promoting the archives to student leaders is that they are extremely busy and, for the most part, cannot or will not go out of their way to arrange their records for the Archives or drive to the Archives to transfer them. Committee members suggested that the most effective means of acquiring student organization records is to go to the student organizations. One member advised that at the end of each semester, the Archives should install an “archives bin” next to the trash cans in the student organization suite in the Union. By the bin, the Archives should place empty boxes and envelopes for students to fill with their organization’s records and label with the student’s name and contact information. In addition, the Archives should accept digital information, since students would not take the time to print out paper copies. Other suggestions included placing colorful archives posters in places where students would see them: the Union, Student Affairs Office, and the Levis Center (where the office for prospective visiting students is located).

Impact on and Implications for the Archives

The survey and advisory committee findings point to ways in which the archives can and should reach out to students to better document extracurricular life on campus. Not surprisingly, survey findings illustrate that students connect with the archives best on a personal level. Most students in the class survey indicated that they enjoyed looking at the scrapbooks, diaries, and artifacts of past students, even if their perception of the archives after the class visit was unchanged or if they were confused by general principles and policies of archival arrangement and access. Student organization leaders said as much when they suggested that the Archives target individual groups by introducing them to their own historical documents and personal history in the Archives.

Survey and committee findings concerning student documentary activities underline the importance of electronic methods of communication in extracurricular culture. However, students in this study also indicated that traditional correspondence, newspaper articles, scrapbooks, flyers, posters, and other paper-based documents are very much part of their culture.

Advisory committee members’ suggestions for encouraging students to transfer their records to the Archives illustrate a gap in how the SLC Archives and student leaders view outreach practices. Instead of introducing student groups to the Archives

through on-site tours and meetings, committee members suggested that the Archives take its message to the Union, the Student Affairs Office, and other student organization meeting places through a drop-off box and colorful posters. They advised the Archives to focus more narrowly on impressing targeted organizations with their own historical archival documents, and then work its way out to other groups, rather than implementing global outreach efforts through mass E-mails or mailings.

Finally, committee members expressed that archivists were not alone in their frustration with the transient nature of the student body. The short terms of student organization leadership positions, coupled with annual membership turnover, left leaders struggling to find information about past years' activities and events. The Archives can fill an important need by promoting the usefulness of the Archives for preserving organizational knowledge and history, which can in turn make student leaders' job easier.

In the end, how viable are these suggestions? Archivists wear many hats, balance multiple responsibilities, and manage limited funds. Do they really have time to develop personal contacts with organizations and their leaders and become involved in student activities? It's important to remember that this undertaking is a step-by-step process without deadlines. By targeting student organizations whose records are held currently by the archives, the archivist can narrow the list of organization contacts significantly. Word of mouth among student groups and the advisory committee's public relations activities will provide more awareness of the archives' program, without direct involvement of the archivist. Creating posters to hang in student-centered areas on campus, establishing an archives drop-off location in the student services building, and producing a flyer for distribution in student mailboxes are doable projects that can net great results.

Although the SLC Archives has not implemented all of the students' ideas, this study has changed the way staff thinks about approaching and documenting students on campus. Most helpful have been the students' insights on global vs. targeted outreach strategies. The SLC Archives "targets" specific groups whose records it holds in order to add to or update these holdings. Staff members develop personal contacts with disbanding student groups, fraternities celebrating centennials, and other groups gathering for homecoming and reunions. To document student culture "globally," the Archives works with the Registered Student Organization Office to capture student organizations' Web sites. This hybrid approach has worked quite well.

Advisory committee members insist that because students will not flock voluntarily to the Archives, the staff should create an archival presence in the students' environment (i.e., the Union, student organization offices, etc.). On the other hand, class survey results show that those students who are required to come to the archives for a class or organization visit, find the experience meaningful and interesting. The SLC Archives has emphasized class use in its outreach work. By increasing the number of students who set foot in the building and use archival sources, the staff is making connections with student leaders and organization members who can see the value of their student records firsthand.

Student culture is dynamic; it must be examined, engaged, and explored regularly. The process of documenting student life and culture on campus requires the archives,

therefore, to understand, as best as possible, students' record-keeping needs and practices, activities, and experiences. Consulting with and engaging students on these important issues will enable the academic archives to provide a richer, more complete historical record of student culture for years to come.

Appendix 1

Archives Survey

Male/Female (circle one) Age _____ Major _____

Academic Year (circle): Freshmen Sophomore Junior Senior

Section I: Archives Visit

Before your class visit to the Archives, had you ever heard of the Student Life and Culture Archives or the University Archives?

YES

NO

If yes, had you used either Archives for any reason prior to your class visit this semester?

YES

NO

Before your class visit, what was your perception of "an archives"? What did you think an archives did, looked like, or contained?

Did this perception change after your class visit? If so, how?

What did you like or dislike about the archives and your visit?

If yes, please provide the URL (optional):

Which topics do you discuss on your website or blog (check all that apply):

- Social activities, discussions of life outside the classroom
 Politics and current events
 Entertainment, music, popular culture
 Sports
 Coursework or academic topics
 Other (Please describe) _____

Do you read websites or blogs written by other students?

YES

NO

What, if anything, are you saving to remember your college experience (check all that apply).

- Photo albums/scrapbooks
 Electronic photos
 Letters
 Email
 Newspapers/flyers
 Course notes or materials
 Other electronic documents (please describe below)
 Other "hard copy" materials (please describe)

Appendix 2

Student Life and Culture Archival Program University of Illinois Archives Student Advisory Committee

The Student Advisory Committee for the University of Illinois Archives' Student Life and Culture Archival (SLCA) Program is composed of 10-12 representatives from a diverse range of student organizations. Meeting once or twice a semester, the group serves as an advisory panel or "sounding board" for archives staff concerning student activities and issues, and archives programming. Committee members also serve as archives "ambassadors" by raising student body awareness of the archives and its services through day to day contact on campus.

Advisory activities:

- Provide creative ideas to enhance visibility of the archives and its services among students and to effectively meet student organization's needs.
- Provide archives staff with understanding of issues facing students on campus and information regarding current activities
- Provide archives staff with information concerning how student organizations operate and how they document their activities (web vs. paper, who keeps the records, whether records are maintained/destroyed); identify student organization needs

"Ambassador" activities:

- "Talk up" the archives and its activities, when opportunities arise, in conversation with other students
- Provide students with archives brochure and information
- Suggest organizations deposit their records with the archives

SLCA Program Background:

The UI Archives' SLCA Program was established through an alumnus' endowment in 1989 to document student culture and experience nationally and at the University of Illinois. In addition to maintaining the country's largest collection of national fraternity materials and other national student organization records, the Program actively documents student life at UI through the collection of student administrative office records, student related publications, alumni personal papers, and importantly, student organization records.

These materials are heavily used by researchers—undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and genealogists—to study the social fabric of the university. Student organization records also are used by the organizations themselves for administrative purposes.

SLCA Program Activities:

In order to document student activities on campus, serve students' research needs, and raise awareness of the archives' programs among the student body, the SLCA Program currently:

Provides an online holdings database which includes an inventory list of student organization records

Provides assistance with research paper topics and assignments

Conducts tours of and hosts meetings at the Archives Research Center

Highlights student organization activities and collections in monthly exhibits at the Main Library

Conducts oral history interviews with alumni from specific time periods

With outside funding, sponsors a program to compile chapter histories for all UI social fraternities and sororities

Provides archives information at student events such as Quad Day and Homecoming

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NOTES

1. The University of Illinois Archives' Student Life and Culture Archival Program was established in 1989, with an endowment from the foundation of alumnus Stewart S. Howe, to document student life and culture nationally and at the University of Illinois. Beginning in 1992, the endowment provided for a full-time archivist and an operating budget.
2. Frederick Rudolf, "Neglect of Students as an Historical Tradition," in *The College and the Student*, ed. Lawrence Dennis and Joseph Kauffman (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1966): 53, 47.
3. Calvin B. T. Lee, *The Campus Scene, 1900–1970: Changing Styles in Undergraduate Life* (New York: McKay, 1970); Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1987); Lewis B. Mayhew, Patrick J. Ford, and Dean L. Hubbard, *Quest for Quality: The Challenge for Undergraduate Education in the 1990s* (San Francisco: Jossey-Ball Publishers, 1990): 96.
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7. William J. Maher, *The Management of College and University Archives* (Metuchen, NJ: Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press, 1992): 246; Helen Willa Samuels, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities* (Metuchen, NJ: Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press, 1992).
8. Thomas K. B. Cherry, "Academic Archives and Student Organization Records," (masters thesis, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, January 1995): 22; and Lynn E. Pritcher, "Archiving the History of Higher Education: Records Management and Student Organizations," (masters thesis, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, July 1997): 31, 40.
9. See John B. Straw, "From Classrooms to Commons: Documenting the Total Student Experience in Higher Education," *Archival Issues* 19 (1994); Marjorie R. Barritt, "Documenting Students at Colleges and Universities in the United States: Academics, Alumni, Athletics and Much More," *Janus* 2 (1998); and Ellen D. Swain, "Connecting Students of the Present, Past and Future: An Activist Approach to the Collection and Use of Student Documents in the University Archives," *Journal of Archival Organization* 1:1 and 2 (2004). Tamar Chute discusses outreach to students in her article, "Selling the College and University Archives: Current Outreach Perspectives," *Archival Issues* 25:1 and 2 (2000).
10. Tamar Chute, "What is in a Name: Outreach vs. Basic Services: A Survey of College and University Archivists," *Journal of Archival Organization* 1:2 (2003).
11. For studies concerning students and use of archives, see Mark A. Greene, "Using College and University Archives as Instructional Materials: A Case Study and An Exhortation" *Midwestern Archivist* 14:1 (1989); and Laurie L. McFadden, "Making History Live: How to Get Students Interested in the University Archives" *College and Research Libraries News* 59:6 (June 1998).

12. Tamar Chute, "The Unremembered Country: Connecting to Undergraduate Students and Their Organizations at OSU," (paper presented at the Midwest Archives Conference Spring 2000 meeting, Chicago, Illinois, May 4-6, 2000).
13. Christopher J. Prom and Ellen D. Swain, "From the College Democrats to the Falling Illini: Identifying, Appraising, and Capturing Student Organization Web Sites," *American Archivist* 70:2 (forthcoming).
14. I discuss this at length in "Connecting Students of the Present, Past and Future." See also David B. Gracy II, "Archivist, You Are What People Think You Keep," *American Archivist* 52 (winter 1989): 73, and Sidney J. Levy et al, *The Image of Archivists: Resource Allocators' Perceptions* (Society of American Archivists: Chicago, IL, 1984): 2-3.
15. Rhetoric 101 and Rhetoric 103 form a two-semester course sequence for students who tested lower on the placement test. Rhetoric 105 covers the material in one semester.
16. The teaching assistant for one section of Rhetoric 101 and two sections of Rhetoric 103 asked students to write about an artifact that represented their life or experience as a student. The sections visited the SLC Archives to view types of materials students had saved from their college days in years past.
17. Ninety-six students participated in the survey; one student didn't provide his/her class year on the survey form.
18. The SLC Archives Student Advisory Committee was inspired by a similar committee established for the University of Illinois Library by the university librarian. In addition, the Archives is following the lead of The Ohio State University Archives' one-time meeting of honor students that provided useful information for its program. See note 12.
19. Although 96 students participated in the survey, only 92 students completed Part I. Four of the students did not attend the class trip to the SLC Archives. Therefore, compilations for Part I are calculated with 92 as total population ($N=92$).
20. All but the two sections of Rhetoric 105 visited the SLC Archives in September, October, or November of 2003. The Rhetoric 105 sections visited during the first week of December, 2003.

