

New York University
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
G57:2031 Advanced Archival Description

Instructor: Thomas J. Frusciano
Spring 2009
Tuesday, 5:00 p.m. to 7:35 p.m.
Electronic Resource Center PC lab 1
Elmer Holmes Bobst Library
70 Washington Square South

Course Overview

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of advanced archival descriptive techniques. It focuses on the use of standards adopted by the international archival community for the purpose of creating and exchanging data concerning historical records. Particular emphases will be devoted to issues surrounding the historical development and use of the U.S. MARC Archival and Mixed Collections (AMC) format for archival control; an introduction to web-compatible technologies such Extensible Markup Language (XML); the history, development, and use of the Encoded Archival Description (EAD), including an examination of the administrative and technical issues involved in implementing EAD as a descriptive standard; and the implementation of the Archivist Toolkit for collection management of archival holdings. We will also examine digital library developments, including the use of object metadata, and how that impacts the archival profession. Finally, we will examine the issues and concerns surrounding the development of digital projects and collections in our repositories.

Course Requirements

Students enrolled in this course are required to read selections in the archival literature devoted to both theoretical and practical concerns of archival description. There will be a series of short assignments to engage you in this literature and to review specific cataloging and EAD projects and implementations. Each student will also create archival cataloging (AMC) records and EAD finding aids for selected historical collections.

Basis of Evaluation of Student Performance

(1) Response paper. Short essay (3-5 pages) on the assigned readings on the history and development of the AMC format. The major focus of this essay is to incorporate your particular reaction to the issues, problems, and solutions offered in the literature. **Due February 10.**

(2) AMC records. Each student will produce archival/bibliographic records using the MARC AMC format. These records will be constructed from archival finding aids and will incorporate authorized names and subject headings to facilitate efficient searching. **These records will be created in class February 17 and completed by February 24.**

(3) Critical review of three (3) EAD Web sites. Each student will select three web sites, either individual repositories or consortia, and assess the strength and weaknesses with regard to EAD implementation, ease of navigation, searchability, and general usefulness as a reference tool. **Class presentation on March 3.**

(4) EAD finding aids. Each student will be provided with a completed finding aid that you will mark up in EAD using an XML authoring software program. The completed and validated finding aid will be transformed to html for delivery on the web by using an XSL stylesheet and transformation program. **Finding aids will be marked up during class on March 10 and March 24, with final versions completed by April 7.**

(5) Final reaction paper. Each student will write and submit a final paper summarizing the main issues that we discussed throughout the semester and the impact on the archival profession. **Papers due May 5.**

Required Reading

- Kathleen D. Roe, *Arranging and Describing Archives & Manuscripts* (Society of American Archivists, 2005)
- *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (Society of American Archivists, 2004)

Describing Archives is available in the NYU Bookstore. It may also be ordered from the Society of American Archivists at a discounted rate for members (you are urged to join as a student member).

<http://www.archivists.org/> Journal articles assigned throughout the course will be available as pdf files on Blackboard. They are also available in the journal collections within Bobst Library (check for e-journals) and in the History department's Reading Room on the 7th Floor of the King Juan Carlos III Center, 53 Washington Square South. Other sources will be distributed in class.

Suggested Websites

The following websites will be useful references throughout the course:

- Library of Congress <http://lcweb.loc.gov/marc/>
- Library of Congress Authorities -- <http://authorities.loc.gov/>
- EAD Tag Library, available at: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/eat/tglib/>
- EAD Application Guidelines, available at: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/eat/ag/aghome.html>
- The Official EAD Website at the Library of Congress -- <http://lcweb.loc.gov/eat/>
- The EAD Help Pages maintained by the Society of American Archivists -- <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/eat/>
- Rules for Archival Description (RAD) -- <http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/archdesrules.html>
- International Standard Archival Description General (ISAD (G)) -- <http://www.ica.org/en/node/30000>
- International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families (2nd Edition) -- <http://www.ica.org/en/node/30230>
- International Standard for Describing Functions -- <http://www.ica.org/en/node/38665>
- International Standard for Describing Institutions with Archival Holdings -- <http://www.ica.org/en/node/38884>

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

January 20 Introduction to Archival Description and Descriptive Standards

This session will serve as an introduction to the course and provide some historical context to the world of archival description. The move toward descriptive standards and adoption of those standards will be explored within the context of traditional descriptive practices.

January 27 Archival Description: A Review of Essential Components

This session will continue our discussion and review of archival description, including a critical examination of traditional descriptive tools created by archivists and manuscript curators, specifically the finding aid, and the move toward the development of AMC and EAD.

Readings:

Kathleen D. Roe, *Arranging and Describing Archives & Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), chapters 1-4.

Kent M. Haworth, "Archival Description: Content and Context in Search of Structure," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 7-26.

Michael J. Fox, "Stargazing: Locating EAD in the Descriptive Firmament," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 61-74.

Society of American Archivists, *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (Chicago, 2004), pp. v-xxi.

Michelle Light and Tom Hyry, "Colophons and Annotations: New Directions for the Finding Aid," *American Archivist*, Vol 65, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2002), 216-230.

February 3 The AMC Format: Communications Vehicle and Cataloging Conventions

This session will serve as an introduction to the U.S. MARC Archives and Mixed Materials (AMC) format. We will explore the structure of the AMC format in detail, with emphasis on fixed and variable length fields, data content and data values, and discussion of cataloging conventions used to create AMC records. We will be consulting the MARC Standards website maintained by the Library of Congress <http://lcweb.loc.gov/marc/> to explore the specific elements (fields, subfields, and indicators) for AMC cataloging.

Readings:

H. Thomas Hickerson, "Archival Information Exchange and the Role of Bibliographic Networks," *Library Trends*, 36, No. 3 (Winter, 1988), 553-572.

Richard P. Smiraglia, "New Promise for the Universal Control of Recorded

Knowledge," *Describing Archival Materials: The Use of the MARC AMC Format* (also contained in *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, Vol. 11, Nos. 3/4 (1990), 1-16).

Michael J. Fox, "Descriptive Cataloging for Archival Materials," *Describing Archival Materials: The Use of the MARC AMC Format*, (also contained in *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, Vol. 11, Nos. 3/4 (1990), 17-34).

Robert P. Spindler and Richard Pearce-Moses, "Does AMC Mean 'Archives Made Confusing?': Patron Understanding of USMARC AMC Catalog Records," *American Archivist*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Spring 1993), 330-341.

Rita L. H. Czeck, "Archival MARC Records and Finding Aids in the Context of End-User Subject Access to Archival Collections," *American Archivist*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Fall 1998), 426-440.

February 10

Application of Cataloging Conventions and Descriptive Standards

Archivists and curators must "play by the rules" in order to create both bibliographic records and online finding aids for their historical collections. This session will examine several cataloging conventions used to "standardize descriptive practice" while allowing flexibility for cataloging unique materials.

These include the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2nd ed. (AACR2); *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscript Collection: A Cataloging Manual for Archival Repositories, Historical Societies, and Manuscript Libraries* (APPM); the Library of Congress Name and LC Subject Authorities (NAF, SAF); Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH); the Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT), and *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS). During this session we will also discuss authority control and the potential for moving authority control in an archival context beyond the library focus on "Headings Management" by focusing on some innovative work done by archivists to provide archival reference data and authority data to complement bibliographic databases of historical records.

Readings:

Steven L. Hensen, "Squaring the Circle: The Reformation of Archival Description in AACR2," *Library Trends*, 36, No. 3 (Winter, 1988), 539-552.

Claire Gabriel, "Subject Access to Archives and Manuscript Collections: An Historical Overview," *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (2002), pp. 53-63.

Alden Monroe and Kathleen D. Roe, "What's the Purpose? Functional Access to Archival Records," in *Beyond the Book: Extending MARC for Subject Access* (Boston, 1990), 157-170.

David Bearman and Richard H. Lytle, "The Power of the Principle of Provenance," *Archivaria* 21 (Winter 1985-86), 14-27.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard (Chicago, 2004). Review chapters 1-8.

Additional Suggested Readings:

Edward Swanson, "Choice and Form of Access Points According to AACR2," *Describing Archival Materials: The Use of the MARC AMC Format* (also contained in *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, Vol. 11, Nos. 3/4 (1990), 35-62).

Avra Michelson, "Description and Reference in the Age of Automation," *American Archivist*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (Spring 1987), 192-209.

Helena Zinkham, Patricia D. Cloud, and Hope Mayo, "Providing Access by Form of Material, Genre, and Physical Characteristics: Benefits and Techniques," *American Archivist*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Summer 1989), 300-319.

Max J. Evans, "Authority Control: An Alternative to the Record Group Concept," *American Archivist*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Summer 1986), 249-262.

Assignment: Response Paper

Each student will examine the assigned articles on AMC and write a short response paper. This paper should highlight the main themes discussed in the literature, comparing and contrasting viewpoints expressed by the authors. The focus of the paper should be your reaction to these issues. How important are they? What questions do they raise for archivists and researchers? **Papers are due February 10.**

February 17

Creating AMC records

This session will serve to review the components of a bibliographic record by examining examples of archival finding aids handed out in class. We will attempt to solve conflicts in choices of headings, and suggest appropriate data elements to include in these records. Sample records and an AMC template will be distributed in class to facilitate our creating AMC records. **Completed AMC records will be due on February 24.**

Readings:

Describing Archives: A Content Standard, pp. 85-197. We will incorporate these sections and chapters of *DACS* in our class discussion and record creation. We will also search the Library of Congress Name and Subject Authority Files (NAF and SAF) and the AMC file in RLIN to assist our selection of appropriate terms.

February 24

Encoded Archival Description (EAD): Theory, Context, and Structure

This session will begin our exploration of the Encoded Archival Description (EAD), with particular emphasis on the theory and context for its development, the benefits of creating a specific Document Type Definition (DTD) in SGML/XML, and the actual structure of EAD.

Readings:

Daniel V. Pitti, "Encoded Archival Description: The Development of an Encoding Standard for Archival Finding Aids," *American Archivist*, Vol. 60 (Summer 1997): 268-283.

Janice Ruth, "The Development and Structure of the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) Document Type Definition," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 27-59.

Steven L. Hensen, "Archival Cataloging and the Internet: The Implication and Impact of EAD," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 75-95.

Dennis Meissner, "First Things First: Reengineering Finding Aids for Implementation of EAD," *American Archivist*, Vol. 60 (Fall 1997): 372-387.

Jennifer A. Marshall, "The Impact of EAD Adoption on Archival Programs: A Pilot Survey of Early Implementers," in *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2002): 35-51.

Additional (optional) readings:

Redding, Clay. "Reengineering Finding Aids Revisited: Current Archival Descriptive Practice and Its Effect on EAD Implementation," *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (2002): 35-50.

Roth, James M. "Serving up EAD: An Exploratory Study on the Deployment and Utilization of Encoded Archival Description Finding Aids," *American Archivist*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2001): 214-237.

Daniel Pitti, "Introduction to XML," available at:
<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/~dvp4c/xmlintro.html>

March 3**EAD: Markup Issues and Case Studies**

We will continue to explore the world of EAD, including tagging examples for specific levels of description and the inclusion of attributes and encoding analogs. We will also discuss various EAD implementations by various individual repositories and consortia based on your critical review assignment.

Suggested Readings:

David Seaman, "Multi-Institutional EAD: The University of Virginia's Role in the

American Heritage Project," *American Archivist* 60 (Fall 1997): 436-444.
 (<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/amher/>). See also the VIVA Project
 (<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/vhp/>)

Leslie A. Morris, "Developing a Cooperative Intra-Institutional Approach to EAD Implementation: The Harvard/Radcliffe Digital Finding Aids Project," *American Archivist* 60 (Fall 1997): 388-407.
 (http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=oasis)

Nicole L. Bouché, "Implementing EAD in the Yale University Library," *American Archivist* 60 (Fall 1997): 408-419. (<http://webtext.library.yale.edu/>)

Mary A. Lacy and Anne Mitchell, "EAD Testing and Implementation at the Library of Congress," *American Archivist* 60 (Fall 1997): 420-435.
 (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/ead/>)

Charlotte Brown and Brian E. C. Schottlaender, "The Online Archive of California: A Consortial Approach to Encoded Archival Description," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 97-112.
 (<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>)

Timothy P. Hoyer, Stephen Miller, Alvin Pollock, "Consortial Approaches to the Implementation of Encoded Archival Description (EAD): The American Heritage Virtual Archive Project and the Online Archive of California (OAC)," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 113-136. (<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/amher/> and <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>)

Meg Sweet, Matthew Hillyard, Derek Breeden, and Bill Stocking, "EAD and Government Archives," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 147-168.
 (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a>)

Richard Rhinehart, "Cross-Community Applications: The EAD in Museums," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 169-186. (<http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/moac/>)

Assignment: Critical Review

Prepare for class presentation a critical review of 3 projects or EAD implementations. You may select from the projects represented in the above readings or those any other EAD site. **Class presentations on March 3.**

March 10

Marking Up Finding Aids in EAD

During this session we will create EAD finding aids. We will examine several "Best Practice Guidelines" that have guided various EAD implementations

Readings:

Michael Fox, *The EAD Cookbook*, 2002 Edition, available at: <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/ead/tools.html>

Please bring a copy of the *Cookbook* to class.

Christopher Prom, "The EAD Cookbook: A Survey and Usability Study," *American Archivist* Vol. 65, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2002): 257-275.

Hannah C. Frost, "Guidelines Counseling: A Comparative Analysis and Evaluation of EAD Implementation Guidelines," *Journal of Archival Organization* Vol. 1, No. 3 (2002): 73-86.

Best Practice Guidelines:

RLG EAD Advisory Group. *RLG Best Practice Guidelines for Encoded Archival Description*.

<http://www.oclc.org/programs/ourwork/past/ead/bpg.pdf>

Library of Congress EAD Recommended Best Practices:

<http://www.loc.gov/ead/practices/lcp2002.html>

March 17

SPRING BREAK

March 24

EAD Markup II

We will continue marking up our finding aids in EAD during class and address all specific issues, questions, and concerns. We will also devote our attention to the development of stylesheets for delivering EAD finding aids over the World Wide Web. We will discuss XSLT encoding protocols, develop a prototype stylesheet for EAD, and examine those available in the *EAD Cookbook*. The stylesheets will enable us to transform the EAD-XML file into an html document for accessibility on the Web.

Completed EAD finding aids will be due April 7.

Readings:

Michael Fox, *The EAD Cookbook*, 2002 Edition, Section 5: "Publishing Tools," pp. 27-50, available at: <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/ead/tools.html>

March 31

Managing the Descriptive Life Cycle using the Archivist Toolkit

This session will explore the use of collection management software to record data and manage collections from the point of accessioning through the production of finding aids and cataloging records. Janet Bunde of the NYU Archives and Sybil Round of the Archivist Toolkit will demonstrate the utility of the Archivist Toolkit in managing collection data, particularly focusing on its use at NYU.

Readings:

Archivist Toolkit Website: <http://www.archiviststoolkit.org>

Lisa Spiro, *Archival Management Software: A Report for the Council on Library and Information Resources* (<http://clir.org/pubs/reports/spiro2009.html>)

Please consult the NYU EAD finding aids at: <http://library.nyu.edu/findingaids/>

April 7

EAD as a Reference Tool

While generally receiving strong support from the archival community, EAD has its critics. During this session we will explore the strengths and weaknesses of EAD as a viable reference tool, with particular focus on design, terminology, navigation, and searching capabilities. We will also continue marking up finding aids and address individuals' questions and concerns.

Readings:

Kathleen Feeney, "Retrieval of Archival Finding Aids Using World-Wide-Web Search Engines," *American Archivist* 62 (Fall 1999): 206-228.

Helen R. Tibbo and Lokman I. Meho. "Finding Finding Aids on the World Wide Web," *American Archivist* 64:1 (Spring/Summer 2001): 61-77.

Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, "Popularizing the Finding Aid: Exploiting EAD to Enhance Online Discovery and Retrieval in Archival Information Systems by Diverse User Groups," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001): 199-225.

Richard Szary, "Encoded Finding Aids as a Transforming Technology in Archival Reference Service," in *Encoded Archival Description on the Internet* (Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press, 2001), 187-197.

Elizabeth Yakel, "Encoded Archival Description: Are Finding Aids Boundary Spanners or Barriers for Users?" *Journal of Archival Organization* Vol. 2, Nos. 1/2 (2004): 63-77.

Matthew Eidson, "Describing Anything That Walks: The Problem Behind the Problem of EAD," *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (2002): 5-28.

Jihyun Kim, "EAD Encoding and Display: A Content Analysis," *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2004): 41-55.

April 14

Other Digital Library Standards

While archivists have adopted AMC and EAD as structure standards, and now DACS as a content standard, the digital library world has developed other metadata standards that foster accessibility and interoperability of electronic resources. How do these fit into the world of archival description? In this session we will examine the various digital library standards that exist, including Dublin Core (DC), the Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), the Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS), the Text Encoding Initiative

(TEI), and the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH).

Readings:

Christopher Prom, "Does EAD Play Well with Other Metadata Standards? Searching and Retrieving EAD Using the OAI Protocols," *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (2002): 51-72.

Bradley Westbrook, "Prospecting Virtual Collections," *Journal of Archival Organization* Vol.1, No. 1, (2002), 73-80.

William E. Landis, "Nuts and Bolts: Implementing Descriptive Standards to Enable Virtual Collections," *Journal of Archival Organization* Vol.1, No. 1, (2002), 81-92.

Robin L. Chandler, "Building Digital Collections at the OAC: Current Strategies with a View to Future Users," *Journal of Archival Organization* Vol.1, No. 1, (2002), 93-103

Suggested websites (please review each one):

Dublin Core: <http://dublincore.org/>

METS: <http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/>

MODS: <http://www.loc.gov/standards/mods/>

TEI: <http://www.tei-c.org/>

OAI: <http://www.openarchives.org/>

April 21

Digital History: Development of Digital Collections and Digital Projects

In addition to providing online access to metadata on our historical collections, many repositories are also providing access to collections of digital objects or are constructing digital projects around certain subjects or historical themes. This session will explore this work and the issues that surround these developments.

Readings and Websites to be assigned.

April 28

EAC and Other New Developments

This session will constitute the final one on EAD and provide an opportunity to explore some new developments in the area of archival description, specifically the development of the Encoded Archival Context (EAC) to record and share information on records creators and Encoded Archival Guide (EAG) for sharing information on archival holdings.

Readings:

Encoding Across Frontiers: Proceedings of the European Conference on Encoded Archival Description and Context (EAD and EAC), Paris, France, 7-8 October 2004, edited

by Bill Stocking and Fabienne Queyroux (New York: Haworth Information Press, 2005). Co-published simultaneously as the *Journal of Archival Organization*, Vol. 3, Nos. 2/3 (2005). Please review the following articles:

Daniel V. Pitti, "Technology and the Transformation of Archival Description," 9-22.

Richard V. Szary, "Encoded Archival Context (EAC) and Archival Description: Rationale and Background," 217-227.

Per-Gunnar Ottosson, "EAC and the Development of National and European Gateways to Archives," 261-274.

Suggested Websites:

EAC Home Page at <http://www.library.yale.edu/eac/> and the EAC Beta Release site at:

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/eac/>

LEADERS Homepage: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/leaders-project/> and LEADERS' Toolkit:

<http://leaders.sourceforge.net/>

May 5

Advanced Archival Description: Wrap-Up Session

Our final session will explore the issues, problems and concerns raised during the course of the semester. Each student will also provide a summary of their final paper.

All work must be handed in on May 5.

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