

# In a Class by Themselves: Faculty Papers at Research University Archives and Manuscript Repositories

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## Abstract

Faculty papers are common in university archives and/or university manuscript collections, but little current literature exists about their acquisition, appraisal, administration, processing, and use. The survey reported herein examined the practices and policies on faculty papers employed by repositories in ARL-libraries and at formerly designated Research I universities. It reports criteria used to identify potential donors, how (and if) archivists pursue of faculty papers, formats of materials sought and retained, level of processing, and use by patrons and staff. More generally, it gauges practitioners' opinions toward what are often perceived to be large, yet underused collections.

In a 1965 letter to the editor of the *American Archivist*, historian Robert Higham chastised the archival profession for not making the effort to acquire and preserve the personal papers of university faculty. He wrote:

A number of university libraries are asking their publishing faculty members to give them manuscripts of their works. Yet they do not wish to accept the correspondence and papers of these men. But what good are manuscripts, galleys, page proofs, and the like without the papers, not necessarily all the notes, which are related to them and to the author's life as a whole? Future researchers, when faced with nothing but the semi-finished and finished product, may well paint an erroneous picture of their man and his mind. Correspondence, notes, memoranda, and even course reading lists would be and should be valuable sources. Of those who say otherwise, let us ask, "What have you spent in the past in the way of time, effort, and money to acquire these very materials for those who have achieved even a modicum of fame? *Think not of the past and the present but of the needs of researchers 100 years from now!*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Higham in "Editor's Forum," *American Archivist* 28 (October 1965): 613. Higham's italics.

Were these words the disappointed ravings of an academic, slighted, perhaps, by an archivist's refusal of his faculty papers, or a legitimate call to action at the time? Maynard Brichford conducted an analysis a few years after this letter was written and found that faculty papers amounted to about 11 percent of the collections reported by the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections between 1962 and 1969, while the papers of other professional groups such as businessmen, politicians, literary figures, military leaders, and lawyers comprised about half the NUCMC listings.<sup>2</sup> Higham would be happy to know that a 2001 survey found faculty papers comprise, on average, 22.6 percent of holdings at the archival repositories at twenty-four research universities.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, faculty papers continue to be an area of archival enterprise that archivists and manuscript curators find difficult to navigate to their satisfaction, and many archivists question the utility of such collections. A perception exists that they are often large, take up valuable staff time and stack space, and return little on that investment in the way of use. Aside from the question of whether to collect faculty papers, Higham's letter reflects several other issues related to their acquisition, such as what type of materials to collect and which faculty members should be approached. Is Higham's standard of "those who have achieved even a modicum of fame" a sufficient criterion?

If this historian thought archivists underdocumented faculty by not collecting their papers, the collection and administration of faculty papers is an area about which archivists have written little. Faced with the prospect of acquiring and appraising the life's work of an internationally known physicist at Louisiana State University (LSU) whose papers easily took up three rooms, I turned to *Library Literature* in hopes of finding guidance from my archival forebears, only to retrieve no relevant hits on a keyword search of "faculty" and "papers."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, other authors have noted the lack of current literature on

<sup>2</sup> Maynard Brichford, "University Archives: Relationships with Faculty," *American Archivist* 34 (April 1971): 176. While Brichford's analysis of NUCMC data does not provide an exact point of comparison for my efforts to ascertain the extent of faculty papers in repositories' holdings, his is the best measure for this time period of how well university faculty, as a professional group, were represented in the archival record.

<sup>3</sup> Author's survey. See below for further results.

<sup>4</sup> The *Library Literature* database begins with 1984, so I also searched the printed index back to 1936. Through this search and mining footnotes found in other relevant articles, I identified twenty-two publications that at least mention faculty papers: Frances Fournier, " 'For they would gladly learn and gladly teach'—University Faculty and Their Papers: A Challenge for Archivists," *Archivaria* 34 (Summer 1992): 58–71; Helen Willa Samuels, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists; Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1992); Association of Research Libraries, *University Archives in ARL Libraries: Spec Kit #107* (Washington, D.C.: Systems and Procedures Exchange Center, Association of Research Libraries, Office of Management Studies, 1984); Frederick Honhart, "The Solicitation, Appraisal, and Acquisition of Faculty Papers," *College and Research Libraries* 45 (May 1983): 236–41; Nicholas C. Burckel and J. Frank Cook, "A Profile of College and University Archives in the United States," *American Archivist* 45 (Fall 1982): 410–11; Mary E. Janzen, "Pruning the Groves of Academe: Appraisal, Arrangement, and Description of Faculty Papers," *Georgia Archive* 9 (Fall

appraisal of personal papers, in general, and the emphasis on corporate and governmental records in discussions of archival theory.<sup>5</sup> However, the attendance and discussion at a session at the 2000 SAA annual meeting in Denver on the faculty papers policy developed by Yale's Christine Weideman, Diane Kaplan, and Tom Hyry attest to the interest in the profession about this class of personal papers.<sup>6</sup>

While faculty papers are subject to the same appraisal considerations as any collection, they present unique challenges. By their very nature, universities contain multiple disciplines, and acquiring and processing the papers of faculty members from those diverse disciplines require a degree of subject knowledge and technical expertise that archivists may not possess. Other questions relate to ownership: Are the materials the property of the university or the faculty member, and who owns copyright in them? The presence of student work and letters of recommendation presents privacy concerns. Similarly, data on research conducted with human subjects also raises issues of confidentiality and privacy. If a faculty member has been associated with multiple institutions, determining which is the most appropriate repository for his or her papers is another consideration. On the other hand, the faculty member may feel a subject-specific repository is the better choice. Institutional political factors may also play a part, for as Maynard Brichford has noted, faculty are often sources, advocates, and frequent users of our archives, manuscript holdings, and programs.<sup>7</sup>

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1981): 31–41; Jane Wolff, "Faculty Papers and Special-Subject Repositories," *American Archivist* 44 (Fall 1981): 346–51; F. W. Ratcliffe, "Archival Responsibilities of University Libraries," *Journal of Librarianship* 12 (April 1980): 71–83; Maynard Brichford, "Academic Archives: Überheferungsbildung," *American Archivist* 43 (Fall 1980): 449–60; Annabel Straus, "College and University Archives: Three Decades of Development," *College and Research Libraries* 40 (September 1979): 432–39; Laurence R. Veysey, "A Scholar's View of University Archives," in *College and University Archives: Selected Readings* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1979), 145–54; Maynard Brichford, "Appraisal and Processing," in *College and University Archives: Selected Readings*, 8–18; Miriam I. Crawford, "Interpreting the University Archives to the Librarian," in *College and University Archives: Selected Readings*, 58–67; David B. Potts, "College Archives as Windows on American Society," *American Archivist* 40 (January 1977): 43–49; Nicholas Burckel, "The Expanding Role of a College or University Archives," *Midwestern Archivist* 1 (Spring 1976): 3–15; Maynard Brichford, "University Archives: Relations with Faculty," *American Archivist* 34 (April 1971): 173–81; Harley P. Holden, "The Collecting of Faculty Papers," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 19 (April 1971): 187–93; Walter Rundell, Jr., "Personal Data from University Archives," *American Archivist* 34 (April 1971): 183–88; J. Frank Cook, "The Archivist: Link Between Scientist and Historian," *American Archivist* 34 (October 1971): 377–83; Robert M. Warner, "The Status of College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 31 (July 1968): 235–37; Dellene M. Tweedale, "Procurement and Evaluation of Materials for a University Archives," *College and Research Libraries* 26 (November 1965): 517–24; Clifford K. Shipton, "College Archives and Academic Research," *American Archivist* 27 (July 1964): 395–400.

<sup>5</sup> Riva A. Pollard, "The Appraisal of Personal Papers: A Critical Literature Review," *Archivaria* 52 (Fall 2001): 137, 139; Barbara L. Craig, "The Archivist as Planner and Poet: Thoughts on the Larger Issues of Appraisal for Acquisition," *Archivaria* 52 (Fall 2001): 176.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Hyry, Diane Kaplan, and Christine Weideman, "Though this be madness, Yet There Be Method in it': Assessing the Value of Faculty Papers and Defining a Collecting Policy," *American Archivist* 65 (Spring/Summer 2002): 56–69.

<sup>7</sup> Brichford, "University Archives: Relationships with Faculty," 173.

The dearth of current information relating to faculty papers and the above considerations were the reasons for conducting a survey of archivists and manuscript curators at institutions similar to LSU. The purpose was twofold: to ascertain and create a base of information on the practices and policies of the acquisition, appraisal, administration, processing, and use of the personal papers of faculty members; and, to use that information to formulate guidelines for collecting and processing faculty papers at the LSU Special Collections.

### Review of Previously Published Survey

Though there is much interest in faculty papers among archival professionals at colleges and universities, Frederick Honhart's 1983 article is the only systematic survey to date that concentrates specifically on them.<sup>8</sup> Until his work, faculty papers were mentioned only incidentally in larger studies of university archives. A 1966 survey of colleges and universities in the United States and Canada conducted by SAA's College and University Archives Committee found that collections of faculty members' personal papers were found largely, though not exclusively, at the "larger institutions."<sup>9</sup> The criteria defining a "larger institution" were not given. In their 1982 survey of 110 academic repositories randomly selected from the SAA directory, Nicholas C. Burckel and J. Frank Cook undertook to obtain comparative information about staffing, budgets, holdings, services, facilities, descriptive practice, and usage at college and university archives. They reported that 87 percent of the public institutions surveyed collected faculty papers, compared to 78 percent of private schools. Further, 88 percent of large and 80 percent of small colleges and universities kept them.<sup>10</sup> Again these institutional sizes were undefined. Burckel and Cook also discovered confusion over the definition of college and university archives. Whereas some repositories were responsible for only the official records of the university, others also collected materials such as faculty papers and student organizations' records.<sup>11</sup>

In his survey, Honhart examined the criteria and methodology used by archivists at thirty-eight repositories to determine which faculty members to solicit and how they dealt with issues unique to faculty papers. At the same time, he offered suggestions and guidelines for the solicitation, appraisal, and acquisition of faculty papers. He found that only four repositories (10.5 percent of his sample) had a published statement defining what were considered official records and what were considered the private papers of faculty, though they

<sup>8</sup> See Honhart, "The Solicitation, Appraisal and Acquisition of Faculty Papers."

<sup>9</sup> Warner, "The Status of College and University Archives," 237.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in Nicholas C. Burckel and J. Frank Cook, "A Profile of College and University Archives in the United States," 421.

<sup>11</sup> Burckel and Cook, "A Profile of College and University Archives in the United States," 420.

were unanimous in agreeing that the records of administrative functions carried out by faculty fell into the former category, and research and teaching materials, as well as student records, were considered faculty property.<sup>12</sup> Such agreement was not found, however, when it came to appraisal decisions. Universal appraisal criteria proved illusive, but the age, size, and recognized areas of excellence of the university were all given as considerations. Respondents also consistently cited a faculty member's reputation in his or her respective discipline, service to the institution, or community activities irrespective of contributions to the university or academic discipline as determining factors. Moreover, 79 percent believed the archivist or archives' staff, not interdepartmental committees, should make the decision to solicit.<sup>13</sup>

When addressing the question of the most appropriate repository for placement of papers when faculty have been associated with multiple institutions or even governmental administrations, Honhart's respondents unanimously favored keeping papers intact as opposed to dividing them among institutions. Opinion and practice were not universal, however, on the question of what to do with publications found in faculty papers. Participants reported housing them with individual holdings, adding them to a general faculty publications collection, or retaining them with the papers.<sup>14</sup>

Honhart's was the first, and heretofore, only attempt to gather information systematically about professional practice regarding faculty papers,<sup>15</sup> although in her 1992 work, which concentrated more on faculty's attitudes about their papers, Frances Fournier also interviewed and corresponded with selected university archivists about their opinions of faculty papers. Some valued them highly and therefore pursued them, while others deemed them of little importance and so accepted but did not solicit them. As Honhart had found, Fournier's contacts also did not agree about which faculty members' papers merited acquisition and preservation.<sup>16</sup>

Honhart's and Fournier's research and suggestions for best practice are useful, but they do not provide general information about faculty papers in repositories or specific data about solicitation, appraisal, processing, and

<sup>12</sup> Honhart, "The Solicitation, Appraisal and Acquisition of Faculty Papers," 236.

<sup>13</sup> Honhart, "The Solicitation, Appraisal and Acquisition of Faculty Papers," 237–38.

<sup>14</sup> Honhart, "The Solicitation, Appraisal and Acquisition of Faculty Papers," 240.

<sup>15</sup> Frances Fournier has studied the other side of collecting faculty papers, surveying faculty members themselves on their attitudes about preserving their papers in archival and manuscript repositories and their perceived usefulness of their papers to others. She found they pragmatically assigned value to their records based on how they assisted them in their work, not on any consideration of their historic value. Further, their emphasis on the importance of their published work militated against their preserving the documents that led to that publication, and they also generally had little sense of the possible use by others of their unpublished research files. Fournier, "For they would gladly learn," 63.

<sup>16</sup> Fournier, "For they would gladly learn," 66.



to requesting specific information about holdings, the survey also inquired if the respondent would be willing to complete a more extensive questionnaire. Fifty-one responses were returned, yielding a response rate of 42 percent. Of those, 29.4 percent were from private institutions, and 70.6 percent were from public universities. Three respondents declined to participate in the second survey. In May 2001, the follow-up survey, consisting of twenty-two questions was sent, again via e-mail,<sup>19</sup> to the forty-eight remaining archivists. Twenty-four completed surveys were returned, a response rate of 50 percent.<sup>20</sup> Private schools represented 37.5 percent of these replies, and public institutions, 62.5 percent.

The survey focused on the administration, acquisition, processing, and use of faculty papers, in addition to general information about the size of faculty collections in relation to other holdings. The goal was to gain some specific information about who is responsible for faculty papers, what criteria are used to identify potential donors, whether faculty papers are actively pursued, what genres of materials are sought and retained, what priority faculty collections are given in processing, and how these materials are used by patrons and staff. More generally, I wanted to gauge other archival professionals' opinions about what I perceived to be often large, yet underused collections.

### Preliminary Survey

The question of the most appropriate type of repository for faculty papers continually arose in a review of the literature on faculty papers. Are they official records or personal papers, and, consequently, do they belong in university archives or manuscript repositories? Maynard Brichford considers it "the definite responsibility of the archivist" to acquire faculty papers and admonished against quibbling over distinctions of university and personal property, urging, "If they are valuable, take them."<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Helen Willa Samuels advocates evaluating the evidence available to document specific functions of a university without labeling it as "administrative" or "faculty" papers.<sup>22</sup> In practice, however, an administrative unit, usually within the library, is assigned the task to ensure these records are acquired, preserved, and made accessible. Much as Burckel and Cook's survey revealed, this survey shows there is still no agreement

<sup>19</sup> The first survey offered those willing to answer the second one the option of receiving it via standard mail. Three of the fifty-one respondents chose this method of receiving the second survey. The second questionnaire was developed with the assistance of the LSU Center for Assessment and Evaluation.

<sup>20</sup> The answers provided were not always clear or usable, and if that was the case for a question, that institution's response was excluded for that individual question, and it was not counted in calculating percentages. The number of usable responses, from which percentages and numbers were calculated, will be indicated.

<sup>21</sup> Brichford, "Appraisal and Processing," 9–10.

<sup>22</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 25.





FACULTY PAPERS AT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES  
AND MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES

**Table 1** Collecting Focus of Repositories

Collecting Focus	# of Repositories (n=21)	% of Repositories
University only	8	38.1%
University and nonuniversity (i.e., local history, geographic areas, specific disciplines, topic, or era)	9	42.9%
Nonuniversity topics only	4	19.0%

Further, among the institutions at which faculty papers are treated as personal papers, they constitute an average of 22.2 percent of all manuscript collections and 20.2 percent of repositories' total linear feet of holdings. The average collection of faculty papers is 12.1 linear feet in size, compared to a 17.2 linear feet average size for all manuscript collections. This statistic is contrary to the perception that faculty papers are larger than nonfaculty personal papers.<sup>23</sup>

#### Collection Development

Collection development, or appraisal and acquisition—deciding which donors to solicit, which collections to accept, and which materials in a collection merit retention—is perhaps the most difficult aspect of archival work. One must view a prospective collection in light of the evidential and informational value it contains, the anticipated use by and research value to patrons, and the documentation it provides of a topic the repository has identified as one of its focus areas, determining which materials within the collection best represent those topics. These considerations must be balanced with institutional priorities and repository staffing, space, and financial resources. Consequently, this section of the survey endeavored to gauge at what level those responsible for faculty papers pursued faculty collections, what criteria and means are used to identify prospective and desirable donors, how faculty papers fit into their stated collecting mission, and what genres and categories of materials are accepted or retained and why.

The collection development policy is one tool archivists have developed to assist them in appraisal. Thirteen of twenty-four (54.2%) respondents have such

<sup>23</sup> These numbers are based only on the responses from the eight archivists at repositories where faculty papers are treated as personal papers in a manuscript repository. Six of those eight provided usable data. Since few if any would argue that collections of faculty papers are larger than institutional record groups, the appropriate comparison is against other collections of personal papers. Respondents at archives where faculty papers are part of university archives did respond to the question, however. At those institutions, faculty papers constitute an average of 27 percent of the number of holdings and 11.1 percent of total linear feet of holdings. The average group of faculty papers is 6.5 linear feet in size, compared to a 20.9 linear feet average size for all record groups. Thus, faculty papers in manuscript repositories are 1.9 times larger, when measured in linear feet, than faculty papers in university archives, and they comprise 1.8 times the number of manuscript repositories' holdings.

a written policy, and of those thirteen, ten include a statement regarding faculty papers. These statements indicate faculty papers are primarily collected to enhance documentation of the university's academic and administrative history, including both the accomplishments of faculty and the history of the university as a community, beyond the documentation found in "official records."

Such thinking is in line with those who have advocated the collection of faculty papers. Helen Willa Samuels argues faculty papers should be considered "part of a common pool of potential documentation" for the seven functions of modern academic institutions that she has identified: to sustain the institution, confer credentials, foster socialization, provide public service, conduct research, promote culture, and convey knowledge.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Frances Fournier advocates collecting faculty papers for the understanding they can bring to studying the university's functions: teaching, research, community service, and maintenance of institutional infrastructure.<sup>25</sup> Maynard Brichford contends faculty papers can clarify and expand upon issues and decisions discussed in official records and formal accounts. Moreover, according to Brichford, academics merit documentation because they have traditionally "played a central role in preserving and perpetuating human knowledge and culture" and "have been largely responsible for the development of academic disciplines."<sup>26</sup> He is not alone in finding an application beyond university history for faculty papers. David B. Potts and Laurence R. Veysey have also argued that they provide "windows on American society" and intellectual life.<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, the literature indicates overwhelming support for collecting faculty papers, but respondents to the survey did not universally agree. To the question "do you accept faculty papers if they are offered," 29.2 percent replied they accept all and 70.8 percent accept some (n=24); none reported that they refused all offers. Both groups provided the following explanations for why they acquire such materials (the number of repositories giving each reason follows in parentheses):<sup>28</sup> to document the university's history and the town-gown relationship (12); to record the development of academic disciplines and faculty's accomplishments, stature, and involvement in them (6); in consideration of political expediency or the best interest of the repository or university (4); to build the

<sup>24</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 25, 20.

<sup>25</sup> Fournier, "For they would gladly learn," 59.

<sup>26</sup> Brichford, "University Archives: Relationships with Faculty," 178, 175–76. See also, Brichford, "Überheferungsbildung," 449, 453, 460.

<sup>27</sup> Potts, "College Archives as Windows on American Society," 93; Veysey, "A Scholar's View of University Archives," 147.

<sup>28</sup> When respondents provided explanations or other examples than those listed by me, the number of respondents who provided the same explanation or example is given in parentheses. Percentages for these are not given since other participants did not have them as a choice and the results would therefore be skewed. They are provided for your information.





FACULTY PAPERS AT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES  
AND MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES

**Table 4** Methods of Identifying Prospective Donors

Method	# of Repositories (n=20)	% of Repositories
University newsletter and press releases	13	65.0%
Monitor obituaries	10	50.0%
Contact with departments	9	45.0%
Other	8	40.0%
No established method	5	25.0%

**Table 5** Genres Present in Faculty Papers (By category and ranked within)

Function	Genre	% Indicating Genre Present in Held Faculty Papers (n=24)
TEACHING	Lecture notes	95.8%
	Syllabi	83.3%
RESEARCH	Research/subject files	100.0%
	Drafts	91.7%
	CV/Résumé	91.7%
	Data	87.5%
	Reprints	70.8%
PROFESSIONAL SERVICE	Correspondence/ Memos	100.0%
	Reports	100.0%
	Minutes	91.7%
	Conference materials	75.0%
	Agendas	70.8%
UNIVERSITY SERVICE	Correspondence/ Memos	91.7%
	Reports	87.5%
	Minutes	75.0%
	Agendas	66.7%

Once a targeted faculty member has agreed to donate his or her papers, the task begins of determining which types of materials within those materials best provide the information sought. Archivists or curators often initiate this process as they box and transfer collections to the repository or by providing guidelines to faculty donors of what and what not to transfer themselves.<sup>30</sup> Exercising this judgment proceeds during the collection's processing as individual items or categories of materials are weeded.

It would seem that past archivists and curators "kept everything." Respondents were given a list of genres associated with teaching, research, and university and professional service and asked which were found among the faculty papers at their repositories (see Tables 5 and 6). With the exception of meeting agendas from both university and professional service and research

<sup>30</sup> An example of these guidelines can be seen at <<http://www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/arch/guidelines/faculty.html>> (1 March 2003).

**Table 6** Formats Present in Faculty Papers (Ranked overall)

Genre	% Indicating Genre Present in Held Faculty Papers (n=24)
Research—Research/Subject files	100.0%
Professional—Correspondence/Memos	100.0%
Professional—Reports	100.0%
Teaching—Lecture notes	95.8%
Research—Drafts	91.7%
CV/Résumé	91.7%
Professional—Minutes	91.7%
University—Correspondence/Memos	91.7%
Research—Data	87.5%
University—Reports	87.5%
Teaching—Syllabi	83.3%
University—Minutes	75.0%
Professional—Conference materials	75.0%
Research—Reprints	70.8%
Professional—Agendas	70.8%
University—Agendas	66.7%

reprints, each type is present at over three-fourths of participating repositories, with research/subject files and professional service correspondence and reports found at all of them.

Participants were also asked to provide examples of other genres, both within the functional categories and in general. Six indicated the presence of unlisted materials for teaching, with the following cited by one repository each: grade books, student work (exams, papers, etc.), photographic materials (including slides), course development notes, course outlines, correspondence with students, videos of lectures, awards, and visual aids such as specimens. In the area of research, one respondent added scholarly correspondence, and another, field recordings. Photographic materials related to the university were cited by three repositories, and university audiovisual recordings by one. Though three indicated their collections contained additional forms of materials pertaining to professional service, they did not give examples. Seven wrote they also had general “other” genres, including photographic materials (5), scrapbooks (1), memorabilia (1), clippings (1), audiovisual recordings (1), personal papers such as diaries and correspondence with family and friends (3), postcards (1), and posters (1).

While responses to this question provide general information about what is found in faculty papers, the more helpful and relevant question for practitioners is, What are these archivists and curators currently retaining from newly acquired (or newly processed) collections and why? To address this point, respondents were given the same choices of genres as in the previous question and asked to mark all that applied (see Tables 7–10). They also were asked to

**Table 7** Genres Retained in Newly Acquired and Newly Processed Collections for Teaching

Genre	% Indicating Genre Retained in Newly Acquired/Newly Processed Collections (n=24)
Lecture notes	87.5%
Syllabi	79.2%

list any other genres that they accepted and retained.<sup>31</sup> Responses are reported below, as each category is considered in turn. Types of materials not specific to teaching, research, or service that were also cited include the following: photographs (4), scrapbooks (2), artifacts or memorabilia (2), personal papers such as memoirs, diaries, appointment calendars, and correspondence (3), and audiovisual recordings of interviews, speeches, or lectures (1).

Respondents reported that these kinds of materials, and those examined and reported below, effectively document the teaching, research, and service missions of their universities (11), as well as institutional history (3), thus explaining collection and retention of them. Others wrote that their understanding of the pattern of use of certain genres drove their appraisal decisions (2) or that they erred on the side of caution and preservation (2). Four evinced a desire to document “the whole person.” At the same time, availability of information elsewhere, as in the case of reprints and some professional and university service files (7) and the perception that faculty papers are not used enough to warrant their collection, processing, and administration (3) were cited as reasons not to accept or retain faculty papers.

### Teaching

Undoubtedly, teaching is the most obvious part of faculty members' job responsibilities, though institutions of higher learning weigh this aspect of faculty's work differently depending on their mission. Instruction is the most readily apparent activity that accomplishes what Samuels has termed the university's function of conveying knowledge, and she advocates the retention of reading lists, syllabi, tests, and lectures to document this activity.<sup>32</sup> Miriam Crawford contends such materials warrant preservation because they illustrate

<sup>31</sup> My questions on appraisal were targeted to identify which genres were deemed most valuable for documenting research, teaching, and professional and university service, and why, regardless of their physical format and realizing that professors increasingly use technology in all their teaching, research, and communication. Additionally, though this question about genre and follow-ups to it were included in the collection development section, responses actually represented appraisal decisions made both at the time of acquisition and while a collection was being processed, whether it was recently acquired or part of a backlog.

<sup>32</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 65.

teaching methods used during a particular period of an institution's history.<sup>33</sup> Mary Janzen similarly argues for their significance in documenting the history of pedagogy, as well as the development of new and important ideas in a discipline.<sup>34</sup> Frances Fournier believes instructional materials also contribute to the history of a discipline by illustrating specific areas stressed at certain times in instruction. They also, she contends, show accepted academic standards.<sup>35</sup> The vast majority of respondents, 87.5 percent, collects lecture notes and 79.2 percent collects syllabi. Correspondence with former students (3), reading lists (2), recordings of classes (2), research proposals with faculty comments (1), letters of recommendation or related/similar correspondence (1), correspondence about students with administrators or family members (1), course development notes and outlines (1), and student work (1) were all also cited. Few provided their reasons for acquiring these materials, beyond the general reasons given above; two repositories identified them as ways to document student life and faculty interaction with students. Respondents who do not retain such materials indicated they did not because they employed "easier" ways of documenting curricular matters (1) or had other mechanisms of collecting syllabi (2). Another consideration was privacy in regard to student work and performance (1).<sup>36</sup>

### Research

At research universities such as those represented in this survey, research materials are likely to comprise a large portion of faculty papers. The very nature of research—the research process and the dissemination of results—raises issues of documentation and appraisal. As Samuels points out, conceptualizing and formulating research plans often occur in informal conversations or in a moment of inspiration; consequently, that process is less likely to be as well documented as the execution and results of the research itself. Further,

<sup>33</sup> Crawford, "Interpreting the University Archives to the Librarian," 63.

<sup>34</sup> Janzen, "Pruning the Groves of Academe," 35.

<sup>35</sup> Fournier, "'For they would gladly learn,'" 60.

<sup>36</sup> Respondents provided their own reasons for or against a given genre, and I did not provide a list of possible reasons from which to choose. Nevertheless, given university archivists' familiarity with the Buckley Amendment, it was surprising that only one respondent mentioned a concern about student privacy and three volunteered they collected such student-related genres as letters of recommendation, student work, and correspondence with parents and administrators about students. Most literature about student privacy is in the context of university records such as transcripts and applications, but it can still be applicable to student records found in faculty papers. See Marjorie Rabe Barritt, "The Appraisal of Personally Identifiable Student Records," *American Archivist* 49 (Summer 1986): 263–75; Mark A. Greene, "Developing a Research Access Policy for Student Records: A Case Study at Carleton College," *American Archivist* 50 (Fall 1987): 570–90; Charles Elston, "University Student Records: Research Use, Privacy Rights, and the Buckley Law," *Midwestern Archivist* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1976): 16–32.





they cited other uses for the data collected during research (5) and the fact that not all data make it into the publication (3). Indeed, when responses to this question are viewed in combination with the others about what to retain to document research and why, the biggest debate seems to center around data, which 79.2 percent retain (see Table 8). As one respondent put it, "Most of what we collect today is records related to research that has some enduring historical value. For example, anthropological, sociological, biological, and zoological studies often generate unpublished data that transcend the original intent of the research. In a sense, the research serves as an archive of information on a particular culture, ecosystem, or animal species at a given point of time."<sup>40</sup>

Samuels makes a similar argument about data. Observational data, primarily the fodder for research in the physical, biological, and some social sciences, is time-bound and unrepeatable. As such, it can serve as a snapshot of natural phenomenon and have historical use in the future. She also contends that the data and its future users are better served by its being deposited in a subject-appropriate repository.<sup>41</sup> Conversely, experimental data is repeatable because it is the product of an experiment whose parameters and methods can be documented and repeated. Similarly, the data used in research such as historical and literary study—primary documents and texts—can be revisited and reviewed. In Samuels's estimation, such data rarely should be preserved in their entirety. As responses to question 7 show (Tables 3 and 4), however, the appropriateness of such data to a repository's collecting areas is a prime appraisal criterion. The 20.8 percent who do not accept data cite privacy concerns (2),<sup>42</sup> issues of preserving data in fragile media or maintaining the equipment necessary to access the data therein (1), or its geographically dispersed and incomplete nature (1).

Samuels also argues that drafts rarely provide "evidence of the substantive intellectual process."<sup>43</sup> According to Mary Janzen, they are seldom consulted, and she advises considering their degree of order and completeness when making retention decisions.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, a majority of respondents, 79.2 percent,<sup>45</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Respondent #19. Direct quotes from respondents will be identified by the unique number assigned to each survey participant.

<sup>41</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 124–25. For more on faculty papers in subject repositories, see Jane Wolff, "Faculty Papers and Special-Subject Repositories." For more on appraisal decisions about observational and experimental data, see Paul Lewison, "Toward Accessioning Standards—Research Records," *American Archivist* 23 (July 1960): 297–309.

<sup>42</sup> As with concerns about student privacy, it was also unexpected that more respondents did not indicate confidentiality and privacy considerations in relation to data from experiments in which humans are subjects. The issue was not specifically addressed by the survey. Diane Kaplan offers an excellent case study of implementing an access policy for such records in "The Stanley Milgram Papers: A Case Study on Appraisal of and Access to Confidential Data Files," *American Archivist* 59 (Summer 1996): 288–97.

<sup>43</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 132.

<sup>44</sup> Janzen, "Pruning the Groves of Academe," 36.

<sup>45</sup> See Table 8.

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**Table 9** Genres Retained in Newly Acquired and Newly Processed Collections for Professional Service

Genre	% Indicating Genre Retained in Newly Acquired/Newly Processed Collections (n=24)
Correspondence/ Memos	91.7%
Reports	87.5%
Minutes	79.2%
Agendas	62.5%
Conference materials	50.0%

retains drafts. Those who explained this decision believe drafts do show the author's thought and creative processes (7), and they also consider the significance of the work (2). Three repositories give special consideration to drafts of literary manuscripts, which were deemed to be more illustrative of the creative process.

Another category of research file—reprints and other near-print items—is often amassed by faculty members. Today, that information is easily available elsewhere through interlibrary loan and document delivery, and most respondents cited this availability as justification for not retaining such files with faculty papers. As a compromise, Honhart advocated compiling a bibliography of those items removed.<sup>46</sup> A related question inquired how printed volumes or personal libraries given with the papers are handled, and the results were as follows (n=24): nineteen (79.2%) send the volumes to the library's book collection (though two of those also retain offprints and reprints with the faculty papers); one (4.2%) retains the library as a named collection; and four (16.7%) indicated their practice varied by collection.

### *Professional Service*

As officers, committee members, and reviewers, faculty provide service to their respective disciplines and professional organizations. Such participation speaks to a faculty member's standing and stature in his or her field. Documentation of that participation and standing is found in professional correspondence, reports, and minutes. Responses in this survey reflect this thinking and emphasis in both their number and content. However, two respondents volunteered that the organizations should have the copy of record of reports, minutes, agendas, and conference materials, so unless the materials in a faculty member's papers specifically relate to his or her service, they are considered strong candidates for weeding. Further, the promotional rather than substantive

<sup>46</sup> Honhart, "The Solicitation, Appraisal and Acquisition of Faculty Papers," 124.

nature of conference materials also warranted their removal for one repository, if significant marginalia and notes were not present.

### *University Service*

Through their university service, primarily on committees, faculty members sustain their respective institutions by recruiting and advancing faculty, developing curricula and university academic policies, participating in internal governance, and recruiting graduate students.<sup>47</sup> This participation is documented through correspondence, reports, minutes, and agendas, all of which are accepted or retained by a majority of respondents (see Table 10). Additional university-related materials that are accepted or retained include photographs and video recordings (1), as well as general university history (1), with documenting “radical” faculty members’ activities given as an example.

**Table 10** Formats Retained in Newly Acquired and Newly Processed Collections for University Service

Genre	% Indicating Genre Retained in Newly Acquired/Newly Processed Collections (n=24)
Correspondence/ Memos	87.5%
Reports	79.2%
Minutes	70.8%
Agendas	62.5%

A primary consideration for retention expressed by respondents was whether the university service papers of a faculty member duplicate what is held in the official records. At the same time, as stated earlier, documenting university history is a chief reason archivists gave for accepting faculty papers, and, as Brichford argues, they give a view of policy decisions not always captured in the official record.<sup>48</sup> Another author contends that additional documentation of university activities, such as that provided by faculty papers, provides evidence of both the individuals involved in decision making and the corporate culture of an institution.<sup>49</sup>

It should not be surprising then that no clear cut answers emerged in response to the question, “How does your institution handle the argument made by some archivists that a university function or activity of which a faculty member was a part is documented in the records of the university in the university archives, so preserving his or her records of that activity is not neces-

<sup>47</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 154; Fournier, “‘For they would gladly teach,’” 62

<sup>48</sup> Brichford, “University Archives: Relationships with Faculty,” 178.

<sup>49</sup> Samuels, *Varsity Letters*, 154. See also Straus, “College and University Archives,” 432.

sary?" Eight of twenty-four (33.3%) disagreed with "some archivists," citing the lack of official university records programs to collect committee records (4) and the additional information faculty papers could provide to enhance the official record (3). On the other hand, four of twenty-four (16.7%) agreed that retaining such materials in faculty papers was not necessary if the same information is found in university records. The remaining twelve participants indicated they handled this issue in both ways. In general, they agreed with the statement but keep duplicates in faculty papers when they are heavily annotated, thereby enhancing the official record (3); when the individual's role in the committee was significant and could be delineated from the committee itself (3); or when the individual's papers would make no sense without them (1). Additionally, if the faculty member's papers were not duplicates but rather represented the most complete set of committee records, they were either retained in his or her papers with appropriate cross-references (2) or removed to the appropriate record group (4).

One can find an argument advocating the preservation of almost any of the genres listed in Tables 7–10 above in either the literature or this survey. However, the practicalities of the restrictions of space, funding, and staff resources, as well as the volume of modern collections, require some decisions about what to accept and keep in faculty papers.

Research/subject files are apparently considered the most important aspect of faculty papers, with 95.8 percent of respondents retaining them. Professional correspondence and CVs/resumes each scored 91.7 percent. Professional reports, lecture notes, and university correspondence grouped together at 87.5 percent. Research drafts and data, professional minutes, university reports, and syllabi were reported evenly at 79.2 percent. These were followed by university minutes (70.8%), professional and university agendas (both 62.5%), professional conference materials (50%), and research reprints (41.7%). To determine which category or function is better documented, and hence, one could conclude, deemed most important to document, the percentages for each category's genres were averaged: teaching (83.4%), research (77.5%), university service (75%), and professional service (74.2%). If the reprints, which were an outlier at 41.7 percent, are excluded for research, that category's average increases to 86.5 percent. One would expect research to be the primary focus at research universities.

Respondents' reports of what was in their existing collections of faculty papers versus what they presently acquire or retain in newly obtained or newly processed collections can also serve as an indicator of whether archivists who currently have responsibility for acquiring and appraising faculty papers have become more selective than their forebears. One would expect that they have become more discriminating, given the American archival profession's attempts to develop appraisal theory that reconciles the expanding documentary

**Table 11** Comparison of Retention of Individual Genres in Previously Held and Newly Acquired or Processed Collections, Ranked According to Percentage Retained in Newly Acquired or Processed Collections

Genre	% Indicating Retained in New (n=24)	% Indicating Present in Held Faculty Papers (n=24)	% Change
Research—Research/Subject files	95.8%	100.0%	-4.2%
Professional—Correspondence/Memos	91.7%	100.0%	-8.3%
Research—CV/Résumé	91.7%	91.7%	0.0%
Professional—Reports	87.5%	100.0%	-13.5%
Teaching—Lecture notes	87.5%	95.8%	-13.5%
University—Correspondence/Memos	87.5%	91.7%	-4.2%
Research—Drafts	79.2%	91.7%	-12.5%
Professional—Minutes	79.2%	91.7%	-12.5%
Research—Data	79.2%	87.5%	-8.3%
University—Reports	79.2%	87.5%	-8.3%
Teaching—Syllabi	79.2%	83.3%	-4.1%
University—Minutes	70.8%	75.0%	-4.2%
Professional—Agendas	62.5%	70.8%	-8.3%
University—Agendas	62.5%	66.7%	-4.2%
Professional—Conference materials	50.0%	75.0%	-25.0%
Research—Reprints	41.7%	70.8%	-29.1%

universe with shrinking resources and recognizes that bulky collections to which thoughtful appraisal and selection criteria have been applied are eminently more usable and relevant.<sup>50</sup>

At first glance, the general decline in the percentage of repositories that acquire or retain specific genres in newly acquired or processed collections versus the percentage of repositories that indicated the same type of material was present in its previously held faculty papers (see Tables 11 and 12) gives the impression that archivists and curators have put that appraisal theory into practice. However, when the data are analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, that impression is shown to be false.<sup>51</sup> The test found a 0.878839 correlation between the two data sets, which indicates they bear a very

<sup>50</sup> On the evolution of appraisal theory from one grounded in the assumption that records of value are scarce to one that recognizes and emphasizes that there is an overabundance of records, see, among others, the following: Richard Cox, "The Documentation Strategy and Archival Appraisal Principles: A Different Perspective," *Archivaria* 38 (Fall 1994): 11–36; Timothy Ericson, "At the 'rim of creative dissatisfaction': Archivists and Acquisition Development," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991–1992): 66–77; Mark Greene, "The Surest Proof: A Utilitarian Approach to Appraisal," *Archivaria* 45 (Spring 1998): 127–69; Helen Willa Samuels, "Who Controls the Past?" *American Archivist* 49 (Spring 1986): 109–24; Ole Kolsrud "The Evolution of Basic Appraisal Principles—Some Comparative Observations," *American Archivist* 55 (Winter 1992): 26–35. For commentary on and discussion of this paradigm shift, see Luciana Duranti, "The Concept of Appraisal and Archival Theory," *American Archivist* 57 (Spring 1994): 328–44; Frank Boles and Mark A. Greene, "Et Tu Schellenberg? Thoughts on the Dagger of American Appraisal Theory," *American Archivist* 59 (Summer 1996): 298–311.

<sup>51</sup> The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient measures the extent of a linear relationship between two data sets.

**Table 12** Percent Change in Retention of Individual Formats in Previously Held and Newly Acquired or Processed Collections, Ranked

Genre	% Change
Research—CV/Résumé	0.0%
Teaching—Syllabi	-4.1%
Research—Research/Subject files	-4.2%
University—Correspondence/Memos	-4.2%
University—Minutes	-4.2%
University—Agendas	-4.2%
Professional—Correspondence/Memos	-8.3%
Research—Data	-8.3%
University—Reports	-8.3%
Professional—Agendas	-8.3%
Research—Drafts	-12.5%
Professional—Minutes	-12.5%
Professional—Reports	-13.5%
Teaching—Lecture notes	-13.5%
Professional—Conference materials	-25.0%
Research—Reprints	-29.1%

strong, direct relationship; in other words, there was little meaningful change between what was kept in the past and what is presently retained.

One possible explanation of this apparent continuity in appraisal decisions is that practitioners continue to adhere to the older paradigm of appraisal theory, which assumes a scarcity of records, instead of putting into practice current theory, which assumes or emphasizes an abundance of materials. For example, even though research reprints showed the greatest decline in retention in this sample, the rate at which they are kept is still questionable. Given the accessibility of those articles through interlibrary loan and document delivery, retaining them as part of a faculty member's papers is unnecessary. This explanation is not to say, however, that not changing is "bad" in all instances. Rather, it is to realize that some genres duplicate information available elsewhere (reprints, conference materials, minutes, agendas) or offer little insight into the research process (drafts of nonfiction, repeatable data), and therefore are candidates for removal. Such considerations are necessary, because, as other authors have noted, the abundance of modern documentation requires active and discriminating selection and appraisal.<sup>52</sup>

### **Processing**

Processing encompasses the range of activities performed to arrange, describe, and preserve a body of archival materials and begins with the

<sup>52</sup> See note 50.

**Table 13** Processing Priority Assigned to Faculty Papers

Priority Level	Number (n=23)	Percentage
Low	3	13.0%
Medium	12	52.2%
High	3	13.0%
Other	5	21.7%

archivist's first screening of a collection. Decisions about which genres to accept or retain in those early stages represent a first pass in selection, and the archivist acquires a sense of the collection's arrangement scheme, if one exists, or what an intelligent and appropriate arrangement would be. At the same time, that firsthand experience with the collection informs the priority the collection is given in the processing queue. Considerations of donor stipulations, physical condition, availability of resources, competing priorities, and the perceived value to researchers affect that judgment. To determine whether, as a class, faculty papers are treated any differently in terms of processing than other manuscript collections or record groups, respondents were asked to rate the level of priority for processing they assign faculty papers, in general, compared to their other holdings.

Those whose answers are categorized as "other" volunteered that all collections are processed in the order they are received (1) and that processing priority for faculty papers varies by collection and does not differ from how the priority of other, nonfaculty materials are determined (4).

A related question is What form of finding aid is generally ultimately produced for faculty papers? As Megan Floyd Desnoyers suggests, establishing and meeting an ideal standard level of processing is not feasible given growing backlogs, the size and volume of contemporary collections, and limited archival budgets, and, therefore, practitioners should look at processing as a "range of choices along a continuum for each of the four essential processing activities: arrangement, preservation, description, and screening."<sup>53</sup> This survey question was most concerned with description. Four levels of description were identified: an accession description only; a container list only; a partial inventory comprised of a biographical/historical note, a scope and content note, and a container list; and a full inventory, which was defined as containing the elements of a partial inventory plus series descriptions and index terms. Keeping Desnoyers's argument in mind, each collection should be evaluated individually for the relative merits and necessity of one level of finding aid over another. This part of the survey was meant, however, to discover what, if any, patterns, existed for faculty papers as a category.

<sup>53</sup> Megan Floyd Desnoyers, "When Is a Collection Processed?" in *A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice*, ed. Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1984), 310–11.



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**Table 14** Form of Finding Aid

Form of Finding Aid	Number (n=24)	Percentage
Full	14	58.3%
Partial	2	8.3%
Container list only	1	4.2%
Accession information only	0	0.0%
Other	7	29.2%

Of those who indicated “other” and provided explanation, one indicated only that a Web summary is created, and five said that the form of finding aid varied by collection.<sup>54</sup> More significantly, at only two of twenty-four repositories (8.3%) did this form or level of description differ from that ultimately produced for other collections or record groups. In one instance, faculty papers as a category always receive full inventories, whereas other collections may only receive a container list. The other repository reported the use of collections of faculty papers as teaching materials for graduate and practicum students and that their work results in only a Web summary. Further, at the 79.2 percent (19 of 24) repositories that create MARC records as part of their description activities, all create them for faculty papers.

**Table 15** Processing Priority and Form of Finding Aid

Priority	Full	Partial	Container List Only	Other
Low (3 of 23, 13%)	1	0	0	2
Medium (12 of 23, 52.2%)	8	2	0	2
High (3 of 23, 13%)	2	0	0	1
Other (5 of 23, 21.7%)	3	0	1	1

Does the form of finding aid produced bear any correlation to the processing priority assigned to faculty papers? As Table 15 shows, a consistent majority of those who assigned high (66.7%), medium (66.7%), or an “other” (60%) processing priority produced full finding aids, while only for the lowest priority did a majority (66.7%) provide less than a full inventory. Even of the latter, one stipulated that the finding aid varied by collection, so a full inventory was a possibility.

### Use

As stated earlier, some archivists expressed their perception that faculty papers are little used, leaving them reluctant to expend resources to collect and

<sup>54</sup> It is important to note that such a caveat does not imply a less-full description is provided. Rather, “varying by collection” entails all of the possibilities listed, which includes a full inventory.

**Table 16** Comparative Use of Faculty Papers to Nonfaculty Papers and Records

Impressions Comparative Use	Statistics		
	From Statistics (n=13)	From Impressions (n=10)	Combined (n=24) <sup>55</sup>
Lower	30.8% (4)	50.0% (5)	37.5% (9)
Higher	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.2% (1)
Same	61.5% (8)	50.0% (5)	58.3% (14)

process these collections. This section of the survey sought to explore that impression and to identify who uses faculty papers and for what purposes. Respondents were asked to rate how the frequency of use of faculty papers at their respective repositories compared with that of their other holdings. They were also asked to indicate whether their answers were based on statistics or their impressions.

Respondents who based their response on impressions split evenly between lower and the same use, with none believing faculty papers receive higher use than nonfaculty papers. The experience of those who based their responses on statistics differs, however. Only 30.8 percent of them finds use to be lower, a higher percentage (61.5%) finds it to be the same, and one (7.7%) finds it higher. Without having impressions versus statistics for every repository, of course, one cannot say how accurate archivists' perceptions of use versus actual use are. The responses do show, however, that the impression exists that faculty papers receive less use, and, as respondents have expressed, that influences their decisions about acquisition and appraisal of faculty papers.

Regardless of how their amount of use compares with other collections, faculty papers are used, and the survey sought to identify by whom. Such information, as well as for what the collections are used, which is also discussed below, would be helpful in identifying which types of materials to retain or accept in collections. Respondents were given various user groups/patron categories and asked to mark all that applied. Table 17 records those results, showing use by patron category ranked by the combination of responses based on statistics and impressions.<sup>56</sup>

Reported other users of faculty papers are lawyers (1), historians (1), and "anyone" (1). Not surprisingly, scholars in related fields, other faculty members, and graduate students comprise the heaviest users of faculty papers. Given these patrons' academic bent, it logically follows that faculty papers are most often

<sup>55</sup> All twenty-four respondents answered this question, but one did not indicate the bases for his/her answer that use was the same, so it was only included in the combined total.

<sup>56</sup> The numbers in parentheses in the "From Statistics," "From Impressions," and "From Statistics and Impressions" columns represent that patron category's ranking within that individual group. In instances where reported use among patron categories was equal, the rank is given as the same, hence there are multiple number ones, number twos, etc. in a given column.



types of use reported by participants are articles in alumni/faculty publications (1), litigation over copyright infringement, product liability, and negligence (1), documentaries (1), and Web pages (1).

Why study which collections are being used, by whom, and for what? As stated earlier, some archivists surveyed expressed their belief that faculty papers receive less use than their other collections, a perception that influences their decisions about pursuing and accepting similar materials, prioritizing collections for processing, and screening materials within collections for retention. A sampling of comments illustrates this thinking:

They are largely unused materials, and I am not willing to commit my limited resources to soliciting materials that even when processed and described in detail will not likely ever be used. (Respondent 21)

[We] don't solicit [faculty papers because it] requires enormous investment of staff time and resulting records are among the least heavily used. (Respondent 4)

At the same time, others found faculty papers to be useful in responding to patrons' needs, or anticipate that they will be, and this has influenced them to pursue, acquire, and make available those materials:

They are very useful and worth collecting here, but this may not be universal. (Respondent 12)

It is our responsibility to build these collections and document this history now, so that a record will be available for future research. I think some of the collections may not be consulted for many years, but they all have tremendous potential. (Respondent 14)

A very important component of our archives. They contain buried treasures of information . . . faculty papers will be particularly useful in the documentation of our university's history. (Respondent 20)

Indeed, one author who has surveyed the professional literature about the role use plays in archival enterprise has identified the theme that use is the ultimate reason for keeping archives.<sup>60</sup> It would seem that those surveyed here apply their knowledge of and experience with the use of faculty papers, as well as the use anticipate faculty papers will receive, to formulate their approach to them. Some archivists, however, are uncomfortable with the idea of assigning value based on use, and indeed, considering use in this way begs the question of whether past use, either of a specific collection or type of collection, such as

<sup>60</sup> William J. Jackson, "The 80/20 Archives: A Study of Use and Its Implications," *Archival Issues* 22, no. 2 (1997): 133–34.

faculty papers, is an indicator of future use.<sup>61</sup> Of course use, whether anticipated or past use of similar collections, is just one factor to consider in appraisal decisions. One respondent's comments point to what faculty papers offer in the way of documentation of institutional mission, regardless of the amount of use they receive or the administrative burden they pose: "Although faculty papers are often time-consuming to process, complex to administer, and receive less use than other parts of the Archives holdings, they are extremely important to collect because they document the core mission of a large academic institution such as [this one]—teaching and research—in a way that the archival records of the University can not."<sup>62</sup>

Indeed, other factors, among many to examine in considering faculty papers, or any collection, are whether the information is duplicated elsewhere, how the collection meets the repository's mission (or documents that of its parent institution) and fulfills its collection development policy, and whether the repository can service the collection in terms of necessary equipment and staff support and expertise.<sup>63</sup>

Additional criteria that appraisal theorists have identified are the value of the information, costs of retention, and implications of appraisal recommendation or decisions. These are further broken down as follows: value of the information—content, use (current and potential, as well as limitations on), relationship to other documentation, and functional characteristics (position in organization of creator and unit, unit activities, and the record's original purpose); costs of retention—cost of acquisition, processing, preservation or conservation, storage, and servicing for reference purposes; and implications of appraisal recommendation for external relations and internal policies.<sup>64</sup>

## Conclusion

Despite checklists, black boxes, and collection development policies, there is neither an accepted, professionwide formula for evaluating collections, nor a common and interoperable set of definitions or taxonomy for evaluating how a collection would measure up if such a formula existed, as previous researchers of appraisal practice have found.<sup>65</sup> Such decisions ultimately come down to the

<sup>61</sup> See Karen Benedict, "Invitation to a Bonfire: Reappraisal and Deaccessioning of Records as Collection Management Tools in an Archives—A Reply to Leonard Rapport," *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984): 47–48.

<sup>62</sup> Respondent #7. Identifying information has been removed from quotations and statistics.

<sup>63</sup> Taken from "Appraisal Checklist," in Faye Phillips, *Local History Collections in Libraries* (Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1994), 147–49. See the checklist for additional factors.

<sup>64</sup> Frank Boles in association with Julia Marks Young, *Archival Appraisal* (New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1991): 20–23.

<sup>65</sup> Boles and Young, *Archival Appraisal*, 18–19.

educated and professional judgment of the individual archivist or curator. In the case of faculty papers, as studied in this survey, that certainly proved to be the case. Repeatedly, participants wrote that their decisions about faculty papers, from choosing whom to solicit, to appraisal and processing decisions, were largely made on a case-by-case basis. Further, their answers often revealed inconsistencies in both their thinking and practice regarding faculty papers. For example, twelve repositories that accept and/or solicit faculty papers, half of the respondents, reported that they did so to document the university's history. On the other hand, eight of those same twelve repositories reported judging whom to solicit or accept based on the appropriateness of his or her papers to other collecting areas. Additionally, one would expect that the percentage of respondents who disagreed with the statement that because a faculty member's published research is preserved and available in its published form, preserving the files, drafts, and data that produced the publication is not necessary, to be roughly equal to the percentage of repositories that reported retaining data, drafts, and files. This was not the case. Though 62.5 percent disagreed with the above statement, 79.2 percent reported that they retain data and drafts, a difference of 16.7 percent.

Perhaps this disconnect between opinion and practice is evidence of archivists' continued adherence to an older paradigm of appraisal theory that assumes a scarcity of records, instead of putting into practice current theory, which assumes or emphasizes an abundance of materials, thus requiring active and discriminating selection and appraisal. A particularly illustrative example of this tension is the fact that 42 percent of respondents' retain reprints, despite these research libraries' access to the effective interlibrary loan network and document delivery services. Additionally, data provided by respondents showed their selection decisions differed little from those made in the past. Given the lack of resources and space faced by many repositories and the size and volume of modern collections, archivists will be forced to reconsider their appraisal process and employ a theory that recognizes these limitations.

Indeed, participants acknowledged their lack of and need for a policy on faculty papers, and that also explains why they were often hesitant to make generalizations about their practice. The appropriate place and treatment of faculty papers is not even standardized across the profession. As the survey showed, some institutions view them as records appropriate for the university archives, while others treat them as personal papers properly suited to a manuscript repository. Nevertheless, commonalities among participants emerged. A majority of repositories both accepts and solicits collections, and documenting university history is the primary reason they do. Ultimately, respondents agreed that faculty papers should not be treated any differently than other collections in how they are appraised or processed. What is sought and retained in faculty papers is largely agreed upon. Research/subject files, vitas, drafts, and data;

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lectures and class syllabi, professional correspondence, reports, and minutes; and university correspondence and reports are most widely accepted, retained, and valued. Among the three functions of faculty—research, instruction, and service—research is best documented, and, therefore, one concludes, considered the most significant. Additionally, a majority finds that use is equal to that of other types of collections. The appropriateness of topics in faculty papers to other collecting areas and the faculty member's stature in the field of the creator were agreed upon criteria for solicitation or acceptance of individual collections.

These commonalities have led to the following guidelines, which are now used when accepting, evaluating, and processing faculty papers at LSU. Only unique data, interviews, or field recordings that offer possibilities for reinterpretation are retained. Reprints and offprints are not kept; instead, a bibliography is created and appended to the collection's inventory. Drafts of nonfiction are only retained if they have significant and substantial annotations or the author received a very prestigious award for the work. Research files primarily containing photocopies of articles or documents in other repositories are discarded because they are available elsewhere. Only materials related directly to the faculty member's participation in or personal service to the profession or university are preserved. Collections that relate to some aspect of Louisiana or the Lower Mississippi Valley, beyond the connection to the state by virtue of the creators' employment at LSU, are more actively acquired and given a higher processing priority than faculty papers that do not.

Employing these content-oriented criteria makes some collection development decisions easier, but judging which faculty members' stature in their respective professions warrants the acquisition of his or her papers remains a subjective determination. Indeed, evaluating that stature is the point at which drawing conclusions across institutions seemed to become meaningless in the survey because of the subjectivity of individual archivists' perceptions and decisions. While having a professionwide, clear-cut prescription for handling faculty papers would make our jobs as those responsible for them easier, the institutional priorities, corporate cultures, subject strengths, user communities, and organizational missions of our respective repositories make a reliance on such a formula, if one existed, inappropriate. The practices of other, similar institutions can, however, offer guidelines and resources in formulating policies.

**Appendix A**

Dear Colleague,

I am conducting a survey of archivists at ARL Libraries and institutions previously designated as Research I universities under the Carnegie classification to ascertain what institutions similar to mine, Louisiana State University, are doing with the personal papers of their faculty members. Specifically, I'm interested in how you identify which faculty members to solicit, what criteria merit solicitation or acceptance of offered papers, which categories of materials you retain, how published materials are handled, and any information about how these collections are used. My purpose is two fold; there is a surprising dearth of literature on the subject, and I intend to write a policy on faculty collections for my institution so that we can make the most effective use of our resources.

This initial survey is to ascertain which repositories are collecting faculty papers, either through active solicitation or acceptance when they are offered, and to identify who at an individual repository is responsible for acquiring them. I will then send a follow-up survey in mid-April to those who respond to the first one. The second survey will be longer and more extensive, asking for specific information about how faculty papers are handled. If you are not the most appropriate person at your institution to answer these surveys, please forward this message to the person who is.

The first survey is below. Please copy it into a new email and reply. I have set up several groups and am sending this to multiple people at once, so please be sure to respond just to me. If you would prefer, you can mail it to me at the address below. Please respond by April 4.

Thank you for your consideration and your time. I hope you find that you can participate.

Sincerely,

Tara E. Zachary  
Assistant Curator for Manuscripts Special Collections, LSU Libraries  
Hill Memorial Library Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
(phone) 225-578-6546



FACULTY PAPERS AT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES  
AND MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES

PRELIMINARY SURVEY, Faculty Papers

Name:

Title:

Collection:

Institution:

Address:

Email:

1. Does your repository contain personal papers of your institution's faculty?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is your repository presently soliciting or accepting donations of faculty papers?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
3. If you answered yes to #1 and/or #2, are they part of University Archives or Manuscripts? As part of your answer please give the overall administrative structure of your repository's archive and manuscript collections. (For example, the manuscript collections at LSU and the University Archives are each a separate unit within LSU Special Collections. One person is not responsible for both.)
4. Do you have a written policy regarding faculty papers?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you have any established method of ascertaining how often faculty papers are used and/or how and what they are used for?
6. Are you willing to participate in the second phase of this survey?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
7. If you answered yes to #6, would you prefer to receive it in an email or in hard copy by regular mail?

Please send me the next survey by email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me the next survey by regular mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**

Dear colleague,

The second phase of the survey is below. Please return it to me by May 31. If you have any questions, please contact me at tzachar@lsu.edu or 225-578-6546.

Thanks for your assistance and overwhelming willingness to participate!

Tara E. Zachary  
Assistant Curator for Manuscripts  
Special Collections, LSU Libraries

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For all questions, please answer in terms of the administrative unit to which faculty papers belong, manuscript collection or University Archives. The answers you provide will be used to give statistics and qualitative information and anecdotes. All information provided will be confidential and any identifying information will be removed.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Approximately how many total collections or record groups are in the unit containing faculty papers? How many linear or cubic feet?
2. Approximately how many collections of faculty papers does your repository have? How many linear or cubic feet?
3. What is the collecting focus (topical, geographical, chronological) of the unit containing faculty papers?

**COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT**

4. Do you have a written collection development policy for the unit containing faculty papers?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you do, is there a statement regarding faculty papers? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If so, please quote it here or attach a copy. (For those that have a written policy specifically for faculty papers, please also attach or send a copy.)

5. Do you actively solicit faculty papers? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Why or why not?
6. Do you accept faculty papers if they are offered (passive)?  
Yes, I accept all faculty papers offered. \_\_\_\_\_



General other:

10. What format and/or types of materials do you keep from newly acquired collections (whether solicited or accepted). Mark all that apply.

Teaching

- lecture notes  
 syllabi  
 other (please list):

Service

- professional  
 memos and correspondence  
 agendas  
 reports  
 minutes  
 conference programs and notes  
 other (please list)

Research

- research/subject files  
 drafts of papers, articles, or books  
 data  
 reprints of articles  
 resume or curriculum vitae  
 other (please list):

university

- memos and correspondence  
 agendas  
 reports  
 minutes  
 other (please list)

General other:

11. Of the formats marked in #10, why do you accept or retain the ones you do?

12. Of the formats not marked in #10, why don't you keep them?

13. Some archivists argue that if a faculty member's published research is preserved and available in its published form (book or article), preserving the files, drafts, and data that produced the research is not necessary. How does your institution handle this issue?

14. Some archivists argue that a university function or activity of which a faculty member was a part (service on committees, for example) is documented in the records of the University in the University Archives, so preserving his or her records of that activity is not necessary. How does your institution handle this issue?

15. If printed volumes/faculty's library are given with the papers, do you generally:

- retain them as part of the manuscript collection  
 remove them and add appropriate volumes to the library's book collection  
 retain them as a named collection (named for the faculty member)  
 other (please explain)

FACULTY PAPERS AT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES  
AND MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES

Comments on collection development:

**PROCESSING**

The purpose of this section is to determine whether, as a class, faculty papers are treated any differently in terms of processing than other collections or record groups.

16. What level of priority for processing are faculty papers assigned, in general, compared to other collections or record groups?

- Low  
 Medium  
 High

17. What form of finding aid do you generally ultimately produce for faculty papers?

- full inventory (includes bio note, scope and content, series descriptions, index terms, container list)  
 partial inventory only (includes bio note, scope and content, container list)  
 container list only  
 accession description only  
 Other (please describe)

Does this differ from the form or level of description you generally ultimately produce for other collections or record groups? Yes  No  If yes, how does it differ?

18. Does your institution produce MARC records for archives and manuscripts in general?

Yes  No

If yes, do you produce MARC records for faculty papers as part of their processing?

Yes  No

Comments on processing:

**USE**

19. If you have a method of collecting statistics on a collection's use, in terms of frequency of use, how does usage of faculty papers compare to the other collections or record groups in your repository?

- Lower than other collections or record groups

- Higher than other collections or record groups  
 About the same as other collections or record groups  
 Other (please explain)

20. If you don't have a method of tracking a collection's use, what are your impressions of how frequently faculty papers are used?

- Lower than other collections or record groups  
 Higher than other collections or record groups  
 About the same as other collections or record groups  
 Other (please explain)

21. Who uses your faculty papers? Mark all that apply.

- other faculty members at your institution  
 scholars in the same or a related field from other institutions  
 professionals in a related field but who are not scholars  
 documentary makers  
 graduate students  
 undergraduate students  
 general public  
 other (please explain)

These answers are based on: Statistics  My impressions

22. For what kinds of projects are your faculty papers used? Mark all that apply.

- exhibitions  
 new research resulting in articles, books, or documentaries  
 student papers  
 University history  
 honorary compilations  
 other (please explain)

These answers are based on: Statistics  My impressions

23. In general, what are your thoughts about faculty papers?