



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARIES

University Archives Records Acquisition Guideline and Procedure

Acquisition Mission

The University of Alberta plays a fundamental role in the educational, economic, social and cultural development of the Province of Alberta and Canada. The University of Alberta Archives endeavors to selectively preserve the documentary heritage of this experience in cooperation with other provincial, national and international archival institutions.

The University of Alberta Archives serves three purposes.

- The Archives constitutes the institutional memory of its sponsoring body, the University of Alberta.
- The Archives serves the University Community as a resource centre for research and teaching activities.
- The Archives preserves a full and varied remembrance of non-official functions, activities, and experiences associated with the history and development of the general University Community and all its affiliated constituents.

Functional responsibility

- to preserve the university's institutional memory through the preservation of its records and publications of enduring value. The Archives is assigned authority to appraise, acquire, maintain, and make available documentary evidence, regardless of media, on the structure, policies, functions, and decisions of the University. The University Archivist operates in conjunction with the University Records Management Office to support the University records management program including the selection and appraisal and acquisition of the appropriate official university records. Responsibility for the final disposition of official university records into the UAA resides with the Board of Governors acting through the University Archivist, or designate.
- to acquire documents serving the institution's vocational roles of research and teaching. In order to formulate a balanced and valuable research and teaching resource the Archives shall maintain an appropriate dialogue with faculty and staff regarding acquisition needs.

- to preserve records providing an inclusive historical narrative of the University's various non-official constituents. Such records supply a context to the official records of the University, facilitate curriculum development and departmental policy, support public relations activities, and provide a sense of individual and collective identity to campus constituents. This historical resource is the unique memory of otherwise undocumented campus experiences. The University Archives is responsible to select records from appropriate campus groups to account for the historical experiences of students, faculty, campus employees, private organizations and individuals involved in university life.
- to liaison with other archival agencies within the province in a common endeavor to preserve the provincial documentary heritage and make this aggregated provincial resource available in a secure, networked, and accessible manner.
- to receive and preserve all archival material transferred to the UAA from faculties, departments and business units of the University of Alberta and its constituent parts.

Administrative Authorities and Scope

- The June 7, 1974 Board of Governor's policy statement (item 4) titled "The University of Alberta Archives Policy-Documents Retention and Disposal," assigns the University Archivist authority to draft and enforce disposition schedules for all official university documents.
- The 1969 "University of Alberta Archives Policy" assigns responsibility to the University Archivist for the following activities: advise on records management for the University; acquire, preserve and make available unofficial and/or private records; maintain a liaison with other archival agencies within the province in a common endeavor to preserve its academic and cultural heritage; ensure that the rules and regulations governing the access to and, the use of, material are observed.
- The Alberta *Post-Secondary Learning Act* mandates the University's programs and services to collect information in the course of their normal operations. Archival records schedules address the acquisition of appropriate records from University functions and activities..
- Donation agreements made with the Archives shall address the *Canadian Copyright Act* (R.S. 1985, c. C-42). The Archives requests copyright on donated material unless an agreement is established with the donor concerning the diffusion and licensing of discrete copyrighted material.

- In accordance with the *Cultural Property Export and Import Act* (R.S. 1985, c. C-51) the Canadian Cultural Export Review Board empowers Canadian archival agencies with responsibilities for cultural property identification and appraisal and sets the fair market value of gifts. The University of Alberta Archives is an authorized institution under this act.
- The provincial *Historical Resources Act* Chapter H-9 carries provisions concerning the authenticity of copies of records as evidence and proof and shall apply when the University Archives acquires, receives, transfers, disposes of, or verifies custody of records related to provincial bodies.
- As of 1999 the University of Alberta Archives became subject to the *Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (R.S.A. 2002 F -25) providing a framework for public access to records and for the protection of privacy. The Act requires reasonable security arrangements to protect personal information and empowers the Information and Privacy Commissioner to conduct investigations in government organizations to ensure compliance with rules for the destruction of records.
- An Archives is defined as the whole of the documents made and received by a juridical or physical person or organization in the conduct of affairs, regardless of date, physical form, or characteristics and preserved because of their enduring value. This is synonymous with the term fonds.
- As defined under the *Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* "record" means a record of information in any form and includes notes, images, audiovisual recordings, x-rays, books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers and papers and any other information that is written, photographed, recorded or stored in any manner, but does not include software or any mechanism that produces records.
- The *Income Tax Act* R.S.C. 1985 provides procedures and requirements for eligibility for federal tax credits to owners of private documents who decide to donate their material to public Archives.
- Artifacts, defined as a “products of human art or workmanship,” are not normally acquired under this Acquisition Policy unless there are extenuating circumstances or if they are official publications of the university.
- The University Archives does not generally acquire books or, published materials unless there are special or compelling reasons for them to accompany acquired archival records or, if they are official publications of the University.

Principles:

- 1.) Acquisitions are made in conformity with prevailing legislation relating to archival functions.
- 2.) Archival material donated to the University of Alberta or its Archives becomes the property of the institution.
- 3.) The University Archives's acquisition policy shall conform to the four main tenets of the 'total archives' approach to acquisition. These include the following:
 - the Archives will, at its discretion, acquire archival material through its acquisition criteria regardless of media.
 - the Archives, at its discretion, may acquire material that documents all relevant social, political, and economic strata of society it serves.
 - the archives will advise and, where appropriate, assist the University Records Office in the management of University records as part of the University records management program.
 - the Archives will work, where appropriate, support provincial, national and international archival institutions and organizations to maintain an integrated network of archival resources.
- 4.) All private records acquisitions must conform to the framework of the acquisition policy.
- 5.) Working with selected records officials the University Archivist will individually appraise and schedule the official records created by each discrete campus office.

Methods of Acquisition

- records disposal schedules
- gift/donation
- purchase (when and if funds are available)

Appraisal Criteria

With the growth of modern administration, developments in information technology, and growing research pressures from social history, the humanities and natural sciences

and genealogy, the University of Alberta Archives is under increasing obligation to preserve records containing both personal and official information while, their rate of creation is exploding. Recognizing this enormous amount of information, the Archives will apply appraisal criteria to selectively acquire only records determined to best define the operations and experiences of the University in all its manifestations. The Archives will appraise official records holding personal information on an individual office basis through records scheduling based on legislated authority. In addition, the University Archives will acquire non-official records according to the following appraisal criteria:

1.0. Evidential and Informational Criteria

1.1 Provenance

The identity of the creator of the records under consideration for acquisition is a principal appraisal criterion. The creator's profile must either relate to the thematic historical strengths of the University Archives's holdings (see 5.0), the identified areas of priority and specialization for university research and teaching or, be of such significance that the University Archivist decides acquisition is appropriate.

At the discretion of the UAA, individual faculty papers may be acquired if the person has made a significant contribution to his/her professional discipline or to the university community, professional or extra-curricular. This will be determined according to the professor's accomplishments in the following areas: membership on editorial boards of professional or academic journals; a strong publication list including significant academic monographs and respected journals; a high citation rate in the work of other academics; a high number of graduate student committee memberships; research grant awards; teaching citations; recommendations from other academics in relevant disciplines, significant personal accomplishments and community contributions.

1.2 Integrity, and completeness of the fonds

Completeness of a fonds is a valuable criterion when appraising records for acquisition. Preference will be given to records that thoroughly document the creator's administrative, operational and if relevant, private activities. All acquisitions will be inspected for the authenticity and integrity of the records.

1.3 Concentration of information

Preference will be given to material that offers a broad or thorough coverage of a particular subject area.

1.4 Usefulness for appropriate audience

The Archives will give preference to acquiring material that addresses the demand of a demonstrable and suitable audience. This will include: utility for the institution's operations; advocacy from a campus constituency; demands from active current research and teaching audience; suitability for addition to the provincial, national,

and international networks of archival resources (i.e. Archives Network of Alberta) and collaborative potential.

1.5 Uniqueness of Information

The Archives will give priority to records possessing unique or original information. The archival value of the material increases with its rarity. This includes material that is not otherwise available. Conversely, if its information is duplicated in secondary sources the material loses value as an archival acquisition.

1.6 Temporal value of the contents of Records

The age of information in a fonds varies in value according to the subject documented. Records dating from the 1980s gain value if they document, for example, genetic code mapping research, or the film career of Anne Wheeler.

1.7 Symbolic Value

Certain documents will gain in value because they evoke or embody the symbolic value of an event or topic. For example, documents such as *Treaty 8* or, the papers of eugenics pioneer J.M. MacEachran have an added symbolic value beyond their worth as documentation of events or people.

2.0 Physical and External Criteria

2.1 Quantity of Documents

A large fonds with a considerable amount of published material, ephemera or duplicate material taxes the Archive's resources, in terms of space and processing resources and does not contribute significantly to the resources of the repository. Such acquisitions will be given low priority.

2.2 Language

The University Archives can acquire and process records in French and English. There are offices and departments (i.e. Campus St. Jean) within the administrative orbit of the University that regularly create records in French when performing its mandated functions. Unless they are relevant to a particularly significant research project, acquisition priority or individual, such as the record of Ukrainian Studies the Archives may not have the resources to acquire and manage effectively records in any other language.

2.3 Physical Condition of Records

The Archives does not have the resources to undertake significant restoration and conservation projects and therefore, cannot accept records which require intensive conservation treatment. Records acquired must be legible and in a reasonable state of organization to facilitate processing. The Archives will accept records in all media including digital documents.

2.4 Media

Although the Archives operates on the principle of acquiring archival records of all media, certain media formats are difficult to preserve and place an irreconcilable burden on the Archives' resources. Such media includes:

- severely damaged records (see 2.3).

- electronic information created and/or stored on legacy software and hardware which is unavailable or difficult to upgrade.

- sound and moving image records recorded and/or stored on legacy formats (i.e. wax cylinder sound recordings) that require equipment currently unavailable or, difficult to access.

Such records will be reviewed on a case by case basis with acquisition predicated on resources.

2.5 Artifacts

The Archives shall focus its acquisition activities on records. The Archives shall not acquire objects with artefactual value unless they possess a unique relationship to the pre-existing holdings.

3.0 Contracts and Legal Obligations

3.1 Copyright

Copyright is a fundamental concern for every acquisition. The Archives expects donors to hold copyright on material under consideration for acquisition. The Archives requests donors to cede copyright to the University, but will nevertheless, consider accepting material without gaining copyright if the material is particularly relevant to the institution's holdings or appraisal criteria.

3.2 Access Status

The University Archives is subject to the *Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The Archives might not acquire records if its access is predominantly restricted under this Act or, in the event of a private donation, if the donor places unwieldy access restrictions on the records. Heavily restricted material will nevertheless be considered for acquisition if it is clear that written consent is available for reasonable research requests.

3.3 Legal Authority

The University Archives can only accept records from persons or offices holding legal authority to donate records to the Archives.

4.0 Institutional Resources

Since its inception in 1968 the University Archives has acquired hundreds of collections of non-university records. Combined with an increasing rate of accession and severely limited staffing, this places pressures on the institution's archival resources and ability to manage collections.

4.1 Cost of Physical Acquisition

The Archives does not have the resources to purchase archival records and documents for its holdings. The Archives shall assess costs in relation to benefits on all material to be acquired. Significant costs include professional appraisal and moving. The Archives can assume the costs of moving within the greater Edmonton area but may ask for donor support to meet appraisal costs and moving costs from outside Edmonton and its environs.

4.2 Cost of Processing

Costs of processing include a trained archivist to arrange, describe, index and make records available for research and related purposes, as well as, the cost of supplies and space to store the material.

4.3 Cost of Preservation

Costs of preservation include:

- a professional conservator to evaluate and work on the material conservation supplies.
- storage in a controlled environment.
- transferring the material to a digital, microfilm, microfiche or, other medium to reduce access to the original.

The Archives does not have ready access to a conservation laboratory but may infrequently access such facilities as Bruce Peel Special Collections or the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

4.4 Cost of Access and Reference

costs incurred in referencing and making accessible newly acquired records include professional time for a trained archivist; production costs for binding and reproducing finding aids; costs of encoding digital finding aids and posting these finding aids on the web site.

Focus of Private Records Acquisition Priorities

Private records acquisition priorities are an amalgamation of the traditional thematic strengths of the archival institution's holdings combined with a list of prioritized acquisition fields, addressing:

- the territorial, physical and integrity of records.
- teaching and research resource concerns.
- the broader national concerns for preserving the documentary heritage of a large Canadian university.
- the provincial interests in the documentary heritage of northern and greater Albertan society.

5.0 The University Archives holds traditional strengths in the following topics and will endeavor to build on these thematic strengths:

5.1 Literary and Performing Arts

To date the University Archives has acquired over 115 metres of material from various community theatre groups and individuals in Northern Alberta. Included in the 25 theatre specific fonds are over 4,000 photographs and approximately 20 hours of sound and moving image material documenting the theatrical community of the University of Alberta and the regional theatre environment. Donators of records concerning drama include Workshop West, Theatre Network, Catalyst Theatre, Chinook/Fringe Theatre, Nexus Theatre, Northern Light Theatre, Phoenix/Edmonton Actors Workshop, Studio Theatre, Stage Polaris, and Theatre Alberta.

The Archives also holds a number of significant holdings in other genres of literary and performing arts including the Violet Archer, O.C. fonds and the records of Wilfred Watson (Canadian author).

5.2 Native Studies

The University Archives has written a guide describing the University's archival holdings concerning Native peoples. The Archives selectively solicits records relating to Native peoples regardless of media.

5.3 Northern Alberta and Arctic Environmental Studies (including, inter alia, settlement, zoology, geography and biology)

The University Archives holds a considerable amount of records concerning the development and study of the Northern Canadian environment. Of particular note are the research records of:

- J. Dewey Soper (arctic and prairie naturalist).
- William Rowan (professor of geography).
- Dr. W.C. Wonders (Boreal Institute).
- Dr. W.A. Fuller (zoology professor).
- Dr. Milton Freeman (professor of zoology).

5.4 Earth Sciences, Engineering and Northern Resource Development

Directly related to the environmental records of the North, the University Archives has considerable holdings in Resource Engineering and Earth Sciences. The Archives holds the papers of the Scientific and Industrial Research Council of Alberta and the Research Council of Alberta covering the years 1917 to 1939. The Archives also possess the research records of:

- Gordon Hodgson (oil sands pioneer).
- Department of Geology
- Sidney Martin Blair (oil sands pioneer).
- Karl Clark (professor of mining).
- John A. Allan (professor of geology).

5.5 Medicine and Medical Science

The University Archives has 34 discrete medical holdings comprising official and non-official records and documents. Amongst the more significant documents include:

- the Alberta Medical Association,
- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta,
- The University of Alberta Faculty of Medicine
- Dr. Heber C. Jamieson,
- John S. McEachern Cancer Research Laboratory,
- University of Alberta Hospital,

5.6 Campus Organizations

The records of non-official campus organizations represent a valuable compliment to the official records of the University. Independently they also represent the historical perspective of vital university constituencies. Archival holdings of campus organization records include:

- The Students Union (correspondence, reports, minutes, directives, as well as bound copies of the Gateway, copies of the Evergreen and Gold yearbook).
- Association of Academic Staff: UA.

- Non Academic Staff Association.
- Richard Eaton Singers, and the Mixed Chorus.

5.7 Political Records of Alberta

The Archives holds a rich documentation of political figures from across the ideological spectrum on a local, provincial and federal political stage. Amongst the most significant holdings are records concerning:

- Peter J. Meekison (contributing authors of the Canadian Constitution).
- Alexander Rutherford Cameron (first Premier of Alberta).
- Ernest C. Manning (Premier of Alberta from 1943-1968).
- Doug Tomlinson--political activist.
- Bill Tuomi (political activist)

The UAA selectively acquires records relating to these and associated records, as part of its collections mandate, regardless of media.

6.0 Definition of Terms

Access:

The right or opportunity of finding, consulting, or approaching documents and/or information.

Accession:

1. The formal acceptance into custody and recording of an acquisition.
2. An acquisition so recorded.

Acquisition:

An addition to the University Archives's holdings. The commonest modes of acquisition are transfer, donation, or purchase.

Acquisition Policy:

An official statement issued by an archival institution identifying the kinds of material it will acquire and the conditions or terms which affect their acquisitions.

Archives:

1. The whole of the documents made and received by a juridical or physical person or organization in the conduct of affairs, regardless of date, physical form, or characteristics and preserved because of their enduring value. This is synonymous with the term fonds.
2. An agency of institution responsible for the acquisitions, preservation, and communication of Archives selected for permanent preservation.
3. A place in which Archives selected for permanent preservation are kept.

Authenticity:

1. The quality of archival documents to bear authentic testimony of the actions, processes, and procedures which brought them into being.
2. The quality of a document having the character and authority of an original.
3. The quality of Archives deriving from their being preserved in the continuous custody and for the information of their creator and its legitimate successors.

Description:

1. The process of recording information about the nature and makeup of Archives to achieve administrative and/or intellectual control.
2. A written representation of archival material.

Disposition:

The destination of archival documents as determined by their appraisal (either to the Archives or destruction).

Evidential Value:

The capacity of archival documents to provide information about their creator's activities.

Finding Aid:

A descriptive document created to allow retrieval of archival material.

Fonds:

The whole of the documents accumulated by individuals or corporate bodies in the conduct of personal or corporate activities.

Informational Value:

The capacity of archival documents to provide information about the persons, places, and subjects of which they speak.

Intellectual Control:

The control established over archival material by documenting in finding aids its provenance, arrangement, composition, scope, informational content, and internal and external relationships.

Official or Institutional Records:

Records produced by the academic and administrative units composing the University.

Records Schedule:

A document providing the descriptions of a records series and specifying its authorized length of retention and final disposition.

Territorial Provenance:

The origin of a group of documents with respect to geographical areas. The concept is linked to the principle that archival material should not be removed from the territory in which it was created.