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Archives Annual Report, 2021-2022

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2021-2022 Tate Archives & Special Collections Report

November 18, 2022

Meg Miner, University Archivist & Special Collections Librarian

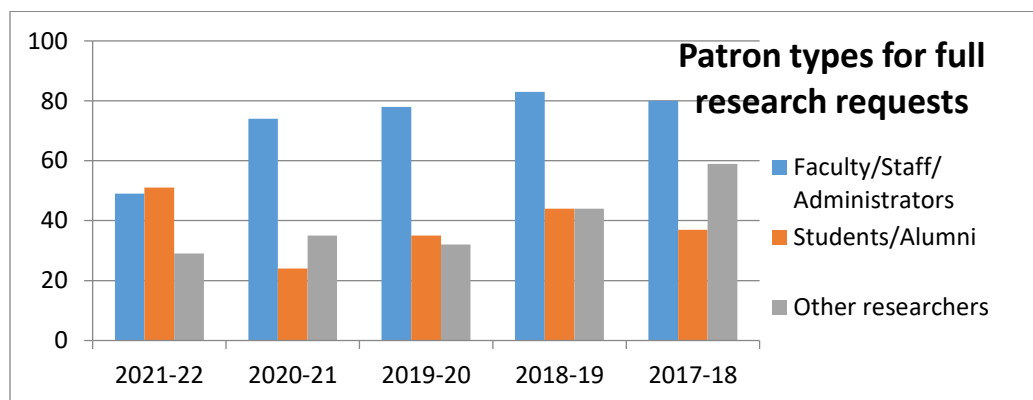
Staffing, Accessions and Service Summary

Julie Wood and two students assisted me in processing collections and providing services to our community this year. Both Julie and Amy Sutter harvested selected e-records (distributed online and by email) and added them to Digital Commons. Two Library Services students assisted with specific summer projects that could be completed at the Library Services Desk. One volunteer started creating custom boxes for books and artifacts in summer 2022. I will share more about this project in my final report next year.

Our holdings grew by 35 linear feet but we also deaccessioned 21 linear feet. Therefore, our collections within the department comprise a total of 1518 linear feet. We also accessioned 7.6 GB of digitized and born-digital materials, and we have a total of 2.27 TB in our preservation account with DuraCloud.

There were 225 patron encounters this year with 136 interacting with collections on-site. Seventy-eight of these were students enrolled in six courses. All of these were in the Humanities: two Gateways, one FYE, one lower and two upper division language courses. One of the classes took place entirely on Zoom. That group is not counted in our on-site visitor numbers but the 15 attendees did utilize online collections I prepared to meet the course needs. In another class, five students who were working with the materials on-site used their personal phones to live-stream the experience and collaborate on an assignment with classmates who were quarantined due to COVID19.

We fulfilled 129 requests for full research support with 51 originating with students or alumni and 49 from faculty, staff or administrators. Most questions (54) took between 21-60 minutes of staff time. There were 96 walk-ins that did not require full research assistance.



We loaned materials 21 times over this year. The ways in which these materials supported our community are described below.

Archives Accessions and Activities

We accessioned 21 linear feet in 19 donations of archival records and 7.6 GB of born-digital and digitized audiovisual recordings. Loans of archival collections this year supported two alumni reunion events, a departmental exhibit, an ORL exhibit, and a digitization project.

The largest personal donation came to us via the spouse of Karen Zander, Class of 1970. Zander was recipient of IWU's Young Alumni Award (1980), the School of Nursing Distinguished Alumni Award (1996), and an Honorary Doctorate (2001). [Zander's collection](#) is

primarily about her work in founding the Center for Case Management which continues its work to analyze and advocate for cost savings in healthcare without diminishing patient outcomes.

This was the first year for Julie Wood in her new role as Archives Processing & Metadata Specialist. As noted in previous reports, Julie has been involved in collecting and describing electronic archival records for many years. Beyond that, she has created individual book and collection-level records for special collections since before I arrived in 2002. Her full time presence in the archives has greatly benefitted our backlog of both analog collection processing and descriptive work in ALMA, ArchivesSpace and the Finding Aid. One notable result of this discovery work happened within days of Julie completing an extensive period of troubleshooting and working with ArchivesSpace support staff. We received our first request for archival material, from a collection Julie described, through the online request system. This was especially gratifying because the patron was a current student.

Julie also received formal training through online coursework. We've conducted on-the-job training in processing manuscript and archival collections, conducting research and assisting students and other patrons in using both archival and special collections. I am grateful for her interest in taking on this work, and I appreciate all who made this dedicated staff position possible. I am confident that the knowledge she is gaining in the unique practices of this unit will ensure a continuity in services as the new archivist acclimates into our community.

Although the University chose not to hold a traditional in-person fall Homecoming, the Classes of 1970 and 1971 did hold 50th anniversary reunions in the spring. We supported this event with exhibitions in the library, loaned materials for their off-campus dinners and digitized photographic negatives based on requests made by a member of the class. I also supported a request from Student Senate for an [after-hours opening and on-site exhibit](#) of the Hansen/Memorial Gym time capsule. The removal of this time capsule [was a major effort](#) made possible by the patience of a local mason and several Physical Plant personnel.

With the support of their supervisor, Katy Ritter, I trained two Library Services students on finding photos and information about people who have received IWU's three Alumni Awards: Distinguished, Loyal and Young Alumni. This assistance enabled me to publish details about these people in three [Digital Commons galleries](#). These collections will serve as biographical research resources and may also aid in promoting achievements by IWU alumni or inspiring current students. Although it is not considered a special collection, I also want to recognize the efforts these students made in helping me update and reformat the [Minor Myers, jr. Honors Collection descriptive guide](#).

A carryover item from last year's goals was formalizing selection criteria and access policies for the pandemic Zoom videos. Decisions seem likely to remain *ad hoc* on some level, but any recordings of alumni sharing insights into their post-IWU experiences (as in the Titan Talks series and the events organized by the Hart Career Center) appear to contain substantive biographical details. These events are open to the public and I have downloaded the videos from YouTube for preservation in our DuraCloud account. Both the public and the preservation locations are noted in the in-house audiovisual materials finding aid.

Special Collections Accessions and Activities

We accessioned 7 donations for special collections which equaled 13.9 linear feet. Notable among the special collections donations are nine works of 20th Century Chinese art. Six of these required conservation by a Chicago-based contractor. The work on the objects, framing, and the specialized display systems needed for those in scroll format were supported entirely through the library budget. I transported the objects to and from the conservator's studio.

The deaccessioned collections mentioned above were part of an Environmental Studies Collection (records from three local organizations, comprising 21 linear feet). I made this

decision in consultation with the boards of the Ecology Action Center, ParkLands Foundation and the John Wesley Powell Audubon Society. These organizational collections provided unique opportunities to support the curriculum and we were privileged to provide a home for them for almost 20 years. However, their primary user base over the years has been from the local community rather than IWU students as originally envisioned. I am grateful that our colleagues at the McLean County Museum of History agreed they were a more appropriate repository for long-term access and care. We retained the fourth manuscript collection from this group since it was created by alumna Sandra Steingraber. The final part of this grouping was a small collection of environmentally-themed books. I integrated most of them into other parts of special collections. The most immediate benefit from this decision has been the space gained in the vault which we have used to relocate faculty and alumni manuscript collections from the archives.

Loans of special collections materials were made to two faculty for use in their courses, the donor of one collection for ongoing research needs, a fundraiser for a local public television station, exhibitions of selections from the Campus Art Collection by the School of Art and two student organizations, and one digitization project that was funded through our participation in the previously-reported on [Peripheral Manuscripts Project](#). Due to the weight of the [medieval codex](#), I transported these materials to and from the digitization lab at Indiana University.

We also experimented with loans to two individual students for semester-long display of campus art in their homes. We determined that this practice was not sustainable due to the expense of framing-on-demand, the staff time needed to track and recover the items, and the insurance implications for items temporarily released from campus custody.

We will continue to encourage staff members to make selections from the Campus Art Collection for office displays. These are considered permanent loans and are tracked through formal loan agreements and location changes in the public-facing CONTENTdm collection and in the detailed inventory I maintain in GoogleSheets.

I also started working with an appraiser on our Campus Art Collection to mitigate risk of uncovered expenses in the event of loss. Next year's report will include more about this work.

Progress on last year's goals

I made progress on processing and describing previously digitized A/V recordings, but I still have not prepared cost estimates for the preservation needs in the Arends Collection. I have added this to a "future projects" list for consideration by the next archivist.

Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Abby Mann, our new Online Learning and School of Music Liaison Librarian, the faculty in the School for Music formalized an agreement for selecting and transferring digital recordings. The archiving practices they agreed to will be included in the library's updated Collection Development Policy.

I have not created a comprehensive publicly-accessible finding aid for links to digitized audiovisual materials. Julie and I have discussed but not resolved this issue. We don't receive inquiries about available content in different media formats very often, so it is possible that making the list publicly available is not as much of a priority as I have been thinking. However, the list contains important details about our preservation efforts for historical audiovisual records so it should be maintained offline.

Goals for 2022-2023

I will continue working on access and preservation locations for the remaining digitized media files. Julie and I will continue training on processes she hasn't engaged in previously.