

Using an Archives Practicum for Screening Students

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It began with a simple phone
call in September 2015



HIS 3930 Junior Seminar
3 sh (may not be repeated for credit)
Prerequisite: HIS 3002



The Junior Seminar acts as a “capstone” course for history majors in their Junior year. This course provides the student with an opportunity to refine and practice skills learned in previous courses and to produce a work of historical scholarship. Each student will conduct original research and write a paper based on primary and secondary sources. At the end of the semester the student will give an oral presentation.

Working in Archives

Number of students

Fall 2015

1

Spring 2016

14

Spring 2017

14

Fall 2018

6

Spring 2019

10

Students can choose history venue of their choice depending on their personal interest (e.g. museum studies, hospitality, etc.)

Reasons for Choosing to Volunteer in the Archives

- on campus (location, location, location!)
- close to classes
- scheduling
- recommendations of peers and faculty
- research resources for course paper



What Do We Have Them Do:

- simple sorting of unprocessed materials
- check-in of newspapers
- filing of rare books, newspapers, daily receipts, etc.
- inventories of collections
- scanning of newspapers
- answering simple reference questions, sometimes complex questions



Our Goals for Each Student:

- basic knowledge about archives
- knowledge about types of materials
- experience with tools
- experience in description
- empowerment



WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED IN THE PROCESS:

- a) orientation period for each student
- b) interview of their interests
- c) keeping track of their hours as well as projects
- d) encourage the asking of questions
- e) the meaning of being 'ghosted'
- f) don't schedule everyone at the same time
- g) not everyone can read handwriting
- h) not everyone can write
- i) treatment as a job (promptness, accuracy, communication)

Chair of History

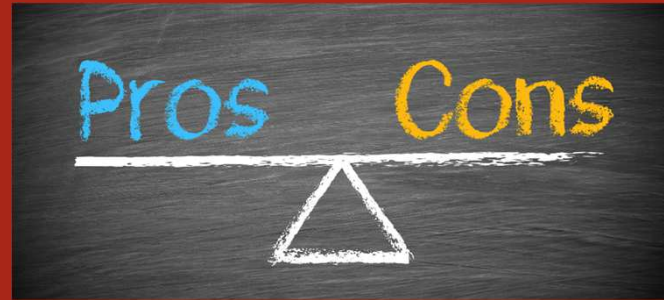


- "yes, we use you as a screener" (blush)
- the students love it
- great experience
- students are learning what an archives is
- have developed topics and research

Students



- many describe their work as “fun”
- some comment on the ‘community’
- some discover that this is ‘not for them’
- handling materials raises their interest
in research and primary sources



- staff time to train as well as plan projects
- staff time to oversee, review, and check work
- workspace

We do feel it is our mission in a university to teach and if the archives can be an active part of the process, then we welcome the opportunity.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE

THE MOST SHOCKING THING
(TO THEM!)

THAT HISTORY STUDENTS TELL US
DURING AND AFTER THIS EXPERIENCE

THAT ARCHIVES COLLECT
MATERIALS “NOW”
TO HAVE THEM
IN THE FUTURE!!



THANK YOU!