

University of Illinois Archives

FY23 Annual Report

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I. Unit Narrative

Throughout FY23 the University of Illinois Archives continued to engage in a broad array of programmatic areas designed to capture our institutional history and provide that history as a backdrop to the broader aspects of social memory. We have done this in support of our core constituents: students, faculty, alumni, and administrators as well as the general public and scholars from around the world.

By focusing on enhancing inclusiveness and diversity within our programming efforts and by emphasizing the acquisition of materials that better reflect the broader university community we believe we are becoming an even greater resource for social memory which in turn supports student success and scholarship across the globe.

Below is a brief glimpse into our activities and accomplishments during FY23 followed by challenges, changes, goals, and some statistics.

Major activities and accomplishments during FY23

- Student Life and Culture provided archival resources and narration skills for “*Visionary Violet: Historical Segment*” a documentary short video about Violet Jayne, first Dean of Women at the University of Illinois. The video was produced by UI Public Affairs/Big Ten collaboration. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKPR9ob0NhE>
- Student Life and Culture program oversaw the digitization and conservation of the Hillel Bulletin, a publication of the first Hillel Foundation for Jewish Campus Life launched on the campus of the University in 1923, in advance of the 100th anniversary of the Hillel Foundation in Spring 2023. These materials are now available through the Library’s Illinois newspaper website:

<https://idnc.library.illinois.edu/?a=cl&cl=CL1&sp=THB&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN->
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- The Sousa Archives and Center for American Music continued its outstanding reputation for outreach on many fronts, notably on social media with 31 different Facebook and Twitter media posts bringing awareness and interest to various holdings that reached 2,418 individuals who actively engaged with these postings 370 times.
- The ALA Archives program provided a significant amount of reference work for the 75th anniversary of the Library History Round Table and 50th anniversary of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table. The ALA Archives also participated in the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago by providing a display of materials and giving a talk for the “Treasuring Our Treasures” donor event and an exhibit on intellectual freedom.
- The Archives upgraded the Women in Science Lecture Series to a hybrid format with the start of Spring 2023. For seven lectures, there was a total of 530 registrants and 231 synchronous attendees. This initiative helps bring attention to women scientists on campus as well as tie their work to archival holdings when possible, thereby providing context to their work and an opportunity for the audience to engage directly with the speakers.
<https://distributedmuseum.illinois.edu/about/women-in-science-lecture-series/>
- The Illinois Distributed Museum (IDM) program focused on public engagement during FY23 by establishing two in-person walking tours and writing social media posts and news articles. The Office of Undergraduate Research is offering to collaborate with IDM by marketing the walking tours for us during FY24. <https://distributedmuseum.illinois.edu/>
- The Multicultural program of the Archives is leading a project to research the archives’ records documenting Black students from the University’s origins to the late 1960s. The content from these records are being consolidated into a single source to provide information about Black student enrollment. The OVCDEI will feature this project in a short film to be shown for the first time during the University’s annual diversity breakfast in early November 2023. An ultimate goal of this project will be to find a thoughtful and ethical method to make the information more broadly available while respecting students’ rights to privacy.
- The Archives made slow but steady progress on several administrative tasks throughout FY23. One such task is the barcoding project which involves putting barcodes on every box of materials held by the Archives and updating the Library catalog and Archon records so as to make tracking materials when the building project is completed and materials get transferred in bulk.

- In the Spring of 2023, the University Archives successfully launched its first digital newsletter as a means of supporting outreach and awareness of the broad array of activities and resources available through the various programmatic areas.
- University Archives was involved in a large number of outreach, engagement, and instructional activities, including 276 distinct classes and tours. These events provided opportunities to immerse university students in learning sessions that equipped them to better conduct research using primary source materials. These efforts also provided opportunities to expose K-12 students from local area schools to archival materials in ways that stirred their curiosity and provided exposure to unique and historical musical instruments curated by the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music (SACAM).

Major challenges faced by the unit during FY23

The departure of William (Bill) Maher as University Archivist and Director has been a major challenge. Bill's retirement was not unexpected but his tenure in his position as well as his deep, deep knowledge of the holdings of the Archives made him an invaluable member of the Archives team. His experience and what it brought to the overall services provided by the Archives to the university community will be missed for a very long time.

Significant changes to unit operations, personnel, service profile, or service programs

The most significant change to the unit has been in its area of personnel. We lost the University Archivist and Director as of December 31, 2022. While an Interim Archivist (Joanne Kaczmarek) was appointed, the understandable changes in management style with this change in personnel has also impacted daily operations, thereby causing personnel to make occasional adjustments.

Progress on Unit Annual Goals for FY23

1. Recruit and hire an established professional archivist to take on the several divergent responsibilities held by the first two University Archivists.

The position was posted during the second half of FY23 but the position was not filled during this time period.

2. Support the highly talented but overworked existing professional staff to ensure their continued sense of pride and satisfaction in their work.

Monthly meetings with staff were established for the second half of FY23, allowing for the Interim University Archivist to gain a better understanding of the work and concerns of individuals and to provide an opportunity to begin addressing concerns.

3. Ensure the survival and growth of the synergy between staff and all types of archives users that has been our hallmark for more than a half century.

It is unclear as to what progress has been made in this area since the goal was written in such a way as to make measuring success towards accomplishing it a difficult task.

4. Secure increased funding to hire students for arrangement and description work to address the growing backlog of unprocessed analog and digital materials, especially in areas emerging from archives programs that have distinguished the University of Illinois Archives amongst its national peers.

During the second half of FY23, funds were secured to support a variety of activities, including those associated specifically with this goal, but with a priority focus on tasks to better ready the Archives for the eventual move to a new location.

5. Negotiate with the American Library Association to renew our longest standing triennial archives services contract which expires in 2023.

This goal was accomplished during the final 3 months of the fiscal year.

6. Respond to campus records creators needing a system to avoid scattered electronic records with little structure and virtually no accessibility.

This goal was NOT accomplished but it is also not clear as to the nature of the “system” referenced by the goal.

7. Balance the differences among the programs, priorities, and resource needs of the Archives' constituent projects (outstanding user services, faculty papers, RIMS, SLCA, NASA, SACAM, and Multicultural Archives) amidst the constraints of the physical separation of these sub-units in three buildings and of their sometimes competing needs.

It is difficult to conclude whether the balancing of “differences among the programs, priorities, and resource needs of the Archives’ constituent projects” as envisioned when this goal was written was accomplished.

Proposed Unit Annual Goals for FY24

1. Establish a strategy for identifying and securing documentary evidence of the activities of multicultural student organizations.
2. Develop and demonstrate a plan for routinely acquiring and processing digital content associated with administrative records & the papers of alumni and faculty.
3. Develop and demonstrate a plan to digitize construction document photographs to support general operations of Facilities and Services and/or deaccession these materials back into the custodial care of F&S.
4. Increase stable operational support for Sousa Archives and Center for American Music (SACAM) and oversight of all processing activities, both digital and analog.
5. Complete the barcoding of 60% of all archival holdings and begin staging materials for transfer in preparation for the building project move.
6. Begin using AEON for all archival materials (regardless of where they reside) and establish a more efficient process of working with researchers through the use of AdobeSign.
7. Encourage and provide professional development opportunities for all University of Illinois Archives staff that benefit both the individual and the University of Illinois Archives.

Needs to support FY24 Goals and Overall Mission

The needs to support the FY24 goals for the Archives and our primary mission include:

1. Support for administrative tasks and general processing for SACAM program.
2. Support for oversight of both physical and digital processing for all programs within the University of Illinois Archives.
3. Continued support for barcoding and other building-project related preparation activities.

II Statistical Profile

Facilities (Main Archives room 146)

- at tables - 30
- at carrels – N/A
- at public workstations - 2
- at index tables – N/A
- in group study rooms – N/A
- informal/other – 14 in conference room and exhibition space – 8 standing

Number of hours open to the public per week (if applicable)

- Summer II 2022 – 35.5 hours
- Fall 2022 – 35.5 hours
- Spring 2023 – 35.5 hours
- Summer I 2023 – 35.5 hours

Personnel

Faculty and Academic Professional Staff – all are in FTE positions (in chronological order by appointment to position):

1. FACULTY - University Archivist and Director: William J. Maher, December, 1977 – December 2022
2. (vacant) FACULTY – Assistant University Archivist (I think that technically position is still occupied “on paper” by Chris Prom)
3. FACULTY - Archivist for Student Life and Culture: Ellen Swain, September, 1999 –
4. FACULTY - Archivist for Electronic Records: Joanne Kaczmarek, September, 2002 – (Interim University Archivist, January 2023 -)
5. FACULTY - Archivist for Music and Fine Arts: Scott Schwartz, September, 2003 –
6. AP - Archival Program Officer: Reference: Linda Stahnke Stepp, March, 2006 –

7. AP - Archives Program Officer–Reference and Accessioning: Jameatris Rimkus, June, 2012-
8. FACULTY - Archivist for Faculty Papers: Susanne Belovari, November, 2014–
9. AP - Archives Program Officer, ALA Archives: Cara Setsu Bertram, January, 2013–
10. AP - Illinois Distributed Museum Coordinator: Kristen Allen, November 2017 –
11. AP - Archives Program Officer– Archives Research Center: Katie Nichols, June 2019 –
12. AP - Archives Program Officer– Coordinator: Digital Projects, Preservation and Digitization: Sarah Harris, June 2019–
13. FACULTY - Natural and Applied Sciences Archivist: Bethany G. Anderson, November, 2019-
14. FACULTY - Archivist for Multicultural Collections and Services, Jessica Ballard, March 2020 – . (Academic Resident, August 2017-February 2020)

Academic Hourly Positions

1. AH – Nolan Vallier (.5 FTE) July 2022 – June 2023 - Hired for all around support of Sousa Archives (Endowment Funds)
2. AH – Jonas Yela (.2 FTE) July 2022 – June 2023 – Hired for all around support of Sousa Archives (Endowment Funds)
3. AH – Sammi Merritt (1 FTE) July 2022 – June 2023 - Hired for Reference support
4. AH – Jessie Knoles (.75 FTE) July 2022 – April 2023 - Hired .5 FTE for COVID doc. project and .25 for NCTE, ARLIS/NA, and AALS Archives support
5. AH – Spenser Bailey (.5 FTE) April 2023 – June 2023 - Hired for NCTE, ARLIS/NA, and AALS Archives support

Graduate Assistants

1. ALA Archives GA – 25% - Faith McConnan – [funding from ALA](#) – processing materials, reference, operations
2. ATO GA – 25% - Eli Hubbard – [funding from ATO](#) – processing materials, reference, operations

3. Student Life & Culture – 25% - Spenser Bailey – funding from general Library allocation – processing materials, reference, operations
4. Sousa Archives GA – 25% - Claire Kittel – funding from general Library allocation – processing materials
5. Sousa Archives GA – 25% - Maia Perez – funding from general Library allocation – processing materials
6. AD Council Archives GA – 25% Paul Gilbert – [funding from Ad Council](#) – processing materials, reference, operations
7. Central Archives GA – 25% - Marcella Lees – funding from general Library allocation - processing materials
8. Central Archives GA – 25% - Melissa Gauger – funding from general Library allocation – processing materials
9. Doris Duke Project GA – 25% - Sally Johnson - [funding from Campus Research Board](#) – general support including processing and overall coordination for Doris Duke Foundation project.
10. Faculty Papers GA – 25% - Lana Tutterow - [funding from Faculty Papers allocation](#) – processing materials

User Services

N/A

Other statistics (optional)

Distinct number of reference inquiries addressed: 11,389

Distinct number of record groups used (indicates repeated use of some record groups): 7,112

Tours and Classes: 276 with 4,573 participants