Course Description

Appraisal is considered to be the archivist’s “first responsibility.” The responsibility is “first” because appraisal comes first in the sequence of archival functions and thus influences all subsequent archival activities, and it is “first” in importance because appraisal determines what tiny sliver of the total human documentary production will actually become “archives” and thus a part of society’s history and collective memory. The archivist is thereby actively shaping the future’s history of our own times.

The topic of appraisal remains one of considerable controversy in archives. The archival literature includes debates over the definitions and indicators of long-term value, the purpose of appraisal, who intervenes in appraisal decisions, when in the information life cycle do they intervene, and which methods work for which types of records and which types of organizations. The literature is replete with tensions between the theory and practice of appraisal and between questions of universalism versus specificity (by type of record, media, type of organization, time period, country, etc.).

One of the problems with the literature on appraisal is that there are few methods for rigorously evaluating the feasibility or effectiveness of different appraisal methodologies. As a consequence, we place—in this course—considerable emphasis on the outcomes of different theories and methods of appraisal and on implementation of appraisal recommendations and decisions. We will also look at appraisal and selection as particular types of information problems, namely: how do archivists make decisions about what to keep in an environment of great uncertainty about supply (what else is out there) and demand (especially future demand)? Finally, prevailing appraisal models were developed with organizational records and institutional practices of collecting in mind. Thus, we also place some emphasis on approaches that cater to community, personal, and literary archives.

Throughout the semester, we will keep examining the following themes/questions:

- The evolution of appraisal theories and ideas: what elements change and what elements stay constant?
- How do different institutions develop and implement their appraisal strategies?
- What strategies can we use to appraise non-institutional records?
- What roles do ethics and social justice play in archival appraisal?

The primary class format is discussion, both in small groups and as a class. There will also be short lectures and demonstrations.

Dr. Eric Hung
he / him / his
ehung124@umd.edu

Class Meetings:
Tuesdays, 6:00-8:45pm
HBK 0105

Office Hours
ELMS Chat Office Hours:
Mondays, 2:00-3:00pm,
or by appointment. If you want to meet in-person, I am generally on campus on Tuesdays.

Syllabus Policy
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Course Communication
- Time-sensitive announcements will be posted on ELMS and e-mailed to the class via ELMS.
- To contact me, please email via ELMS. I will reply to e-mails usually within 24 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends. If I have not replied within that time frame, please send me a reminder.
Learning Outcomes
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Explain the methodologies and tools that archivists apply to develop archival collections and select records for inclusion in archives.
2. Communicate how different organizational, temporal, and technological environments affect appraisal and selection of archives.
3. Make sound appraisal recommendations through research and organizational analyses, and to present them to different stakeholders.
4. Document and implement appraisal decisions.
5. Explain practical, legal, and ethical issues associated with appraisal and acquisition of archival materials.

Course Materials
All other required reading and viewing materials are available through ELMS.

Campus Policies
It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland’s policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity (e.g., cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic honesty, plagiarism)
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Grades and appeals

Please visit https://gradschool.umd.edu/course-related-policies for the Graduate School’s full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

Citations and Formatting
Please use APA or Chicago-style for citations. Papers should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins. You do not need to purchase a special font, but please use a font and font size that is known for accessibility, such as Arial, Helvetica, Lucida Sans, Tahoma, and Verdana. This syllabus uses Tahoma (https://www.boia.org/blog/best-fonts-to-use-for-website-accessibility).

Class Structure and Professionalism
Students are expected to contribute productively to weekly discussions, debates, and exercises. Your ability to contribute to these activities depends on your advance preparation. This includes: (1) completing all reading assignments and assignments on time, and (2) thinking through the discussion questions listed in the weekly overviews.

Community Standards
As a graduate course, the materials we discuss will be challenging. Many also involve deeply held beliefs, moral-ethical issues, and current hot-button issues. To ensure that every student can learn, the class environment needs to be welcoming and harassment-free. Your classmates
may have different perspectives on issues than you, but they still deserve your respect. For this course, I am adapting tenets from the “Norms for Courageous Conversations” developed by Diversity Best Practices (a division of Working Mother Media):

- Stay engaged and listen for understanding
- Take risks and speak your truth
- Become comfortable with intellectual discomfort
- Expect and accept non-closure

I will discuss these tenets in greater detail in the first lecture.

Assignments and Grades

Your final grade will be based on the following components:

- Appraisal Exercise (form) Feb. 18 15%
- Collection/Appraisal Policy Analysis (video presentation) Mar. 10 15%
- Case Study Paper (2,000-word paper) Mar. 31 15%
- Personal papers presentation (in-class presentation) April 5%
- ICD Recordings Database (DB contribution & reflection) Apr. 21 15%
- Web Archiving Project (website, reflection & presentation) May 12 15%
- Class Participation Weekly 20%

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Missed Deadlines

If you will not be able to meet an assignment deadline, contact the instructor before the due date to explain why you will need to submit the assignment late and what your plan is; these will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Unless prior permission has been granted, late work is accepted only if there is a medical or family emergency. This policy is in place to ensure all students have their work returned to them in a timely fashion.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities should inform me of their needs at the beginning of the semester. Please also contact the Disability Support Services (301-314-7682 or http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/). DSS will make arrangements with you and me to determine and implement appropriate academic accommodations. Inclusion is one of the iSchool’s core values, and I have attempted to make all materials and assignments accessible to people with varying abilities. However, if there is something else I can do to make the class more accessible please schedule a time to come talk to me. This will benefit not only yourself but also my future students.

Help is Available

You are expected to take personal responsibility for your own learning. This includes acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about
Everyone can benefit from some expert guidance on time management, reading, and writing, so I encourage you to consider visiting http://ter.ps/learn to schedule an appointment with an academic coach. Sharpen your communication skills (and improve your grade) by visiting http://ter.ps/writing and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center. Finally, if you just need someone to talk to, visit http://www.counseling.umd.edu. These services are a part of your tuition, so please use them. **Everyone needs help...** all you have to do is ask for it.

**Names/Pronouns and Self Identifications**

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering equitable classroom environments. In your introduction video, I invite you to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit https://trans.umd.edu to learn more. Additionally, it is your choice to disclose or not to disclose how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity. I will do my best to address and refer to all students according to their wishes, and I will do my best to not presume an identity. I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

**Additional Student Resources**

For more information on UMD’s Student Services, see http://www.studentaffairs.umd.edu/student-life. If you or someone you know feels unsafe, the university has resources (see list below). Read more about hate-based crimes here: https://ocrsm.umd.edu/files/Hate_Bias_FAQs_final.pdf

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<td>Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ocrsm.umd.edu">http://www.ocrsm.umd.edu</a></td>
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Course Schedule

Unit One: Course Introduction and the Earliest Appraisal Theories

Jan. 28 (Week 1): What is appraisal? What power should archivists hold?


Feb. 4 (Week 2): The original debate—Jenkinson vs. Schellenberg


Assign: Appraisal Exercise

Feb. 11 (Week 3): Critiques of Jenkinson and Schellenberg


Feb. 18 (Week 4): Collection/appraisal policies and donor relations

Readings: Various collection/appraisal policies linked on ELMS


Due: Appraisal Exercise
Unit Two: Appraisal Theories from the 1960s to the 1980s

Feb. 25 (Week 5): Documentation strategies


Assign: Collection/Appraisal Policy Analysis & ICD Recordings Database

Mar. 3 (Week 6): Macro appraisal and functional analysis


Mar. 10 (Week 7): Sampling, the black box, and the Minnesota method


Due: Collection/Appraisal Policy Analysis

Assign: Case Study Paper

Mar. 17 (Week 8): Spring break
Unit Three: Appraisal in the Era of Postmodernism

Mar. 24 (Week 9): The call to diversify collections; personal papers


Assign: Personal Papers Presentation

Mar. 31 (Week 10): Indigenous archives (Guest: Kendra Greendeer, U. of Wisconsin-Madison)


Due: Case Study Paper

Apr. 7 (Week 11): Web archiving


In-Class: Personal Papers Presentations, Session #1

Assign: Web Archiving Project
Apr. 14 (Week 12): Democratizing appraisal; Social justice archives


In-Class: Personal Papers Presentations, Session #2

Apr. 21 (Week 13): Social justice archives (con’d); literary/zine archives


Due: ICD Recordings Database

In-Class: Personal Papers Presentations, Session #3

Apr. 28 (Week 14): Community archives and post-custodialism


In-Class: Personal Papers Presentations, Session #4
May 5 (Week 15): TBA (finalizing plans on guest speaker)
Additional readings to be announced.

May 12 (Week 16): Reappraisal and deaccessioning; presentations of web archiving projects

Due: Web Archiving Project
In-Class: Web Archiving Project Presentations